

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Keller, Christian and Anna, Farmstead

other names/site number Kohl, Mel and Ruth, Farmstead

**2. Location**

street & number 936 Kohl Country Lane [N/A] not for publication

city or town Gerald [X] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Franklin code 071 zip code 63037

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

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

( See continuation sheet for additional comments [ ]. )

Mark A Miles  
Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO

June 19, 2009  
Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title

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

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:

[ ] entered in the National Register  
See continuation sheet [ ].

[ ] determined eligible for the  
National Register  
See continuation sheet [ ].

[ ] determined not eligible for the  
National Register.

[ ] removed from the  
National Register

[ ] other, explain  
See continuation sheet [ ].

Signature of the Keeper

Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Franklin County, Missouri

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**5. Classification****Ownership of Property**

☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

**Category of Property**

☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing      Noncontributing

2 buildings1 sites1 2 structures                                 objects3 3 Total**Name of related multiple property listing.**N/A**Number of contributing resources  
previously listed in the National  
Register.**0**6. Function or Use****Historic Function**DOMESTIC: Single DwellingAGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: Agricultural  
FieldAGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: Agricultural  
OutbuildingAGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: ProcessingAGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: Animal Facility**Current Functions**DOMESTIC: Single DwellingAGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: Agricultural  
FieldAGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: Agricultural  
OutbuildingAGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: ProcessingAGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: Animal Facility**7. Description****Architectural Classification**MID-19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURYOTHER/German Bankhouse**Materials**foundation STONE/Limestonewalls BRICKroof ASPHALTother WOOD/Weatherboard**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history

☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past

☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

Property is:

☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ **B** removed from its original location.

☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.

☐ **D** a cemetery.

☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ **F** a commemorative property.

☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

ETHNIC HERITAGE/European/German

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT  
ARCHITECTURE

### Periods of Significance

1855-1889

### Significant Dates

1855

### Significant Person(s)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Keller, Christian, Builder

### Narrative Statement of Significance

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

## 9. Major Bibliographic References

### Bibliography

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

#### 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:

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

\_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**Acreage of Property 77 acres**UTM References**

A. Zone Easting Northing

B. Zone Easting Northing

C. Zone Easting Northing

D. Zone Easting Northing

☒ See continuation sheet**Verbal Boundary Description**

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

**Boundary Justification**

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

**11. Form Prepared By**name/title Karen Bode Baxter, Timothy P. Maloney, Ruth Keenoyorganization Karen Baxter, Preservation Consultant date 5/15/2009street & number 5811 Delor telephone (314) 353-0593city or town St. Louis state MO zip code 63109**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets****Maps**A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.**Photographs**Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.**Additional Items**

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

**Property Owner**

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

name Mel and Ruth Kohlstreet & number P. O. Box 197, also 1166 Valley Vue Pt. telephone (636) 458-2395city or town St. Albans state MO zip code 63073

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Keller, Christian and Anna Farmstead  
Franklin County, MO

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### Narrative Description

#### SUMMARY

The Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead is located in the rolling hills of central Missouri, about two miles north of the community of Gerald in Franklin County. A mile northeast of Gerald, U.S. Highway 50 diverges from its old route, still known as Old Highway 50, and just north of this connection, Tegeler Road angles northwest past its intersection with Wheeler Road (the southern line of Section 36 in which this farmstead is located). From that point, Tegeler Road meanders north to the southeast corner of the farmstead, forming a Y-intersection near the middle of Section 36 where the gravel road, now named Kohl Country Lane, leads into the asymmetrical seventy-seven acre property. Marking the end of the road in a shallow valley framed by woods is the 1855-1860, one-and-one-half story, gabled roof, brick, German bank house clustered tightly with its associated outbuildings. The farmhouse (a contributing building) is nestled on the hillside at the east side of the property, looking downhill across the pasture toward Cedar Fork Creek (originally known as Keller Creek), which marks the edge of the woods spanning to the ridge that forms the western edge of the property. The house is positioned as a useful reference for the pioneering farmers, with its corners forming the compass points; the northwest elevation and the simple entry provide easy access to the wooded northeast corner of the property with its spring-fed pond (non-contributing site because of its 1977 expansion). The pond has provided water to the house and farm since Keller established the farm in the 1850s. The dwelling's native stone foundation is not exposed at the north corner, and the land slopes downhill from this point. The stone foundation forms a fully exposed floor level along the southeast elevation, where the kitchen and lower level entry is positioned. Though originally serving as the rear entry, the kitchen entrance is now used as the primary entry and faces the drive to the property, providing easy access to the small, two-story, gabled roof barn with a shed-roofed extension (a contributing building) that is situated just ten feet from the east corner of the house. Southeast of the house is a hipped roofed chicken coop (a non-contributing structure). A wooden picket fence frames the yard, surrounding the sides and lower level of the house. An old cistern pump (leading to the cistern that is a contributing structure) is located near the south corner of the fence. At the end of the road, the short driveway parallels the south side of the fence and leads into the shed-roofed section of the barn. A fence intersects the southwest façade and the northwest side of the barn. Within the rear yard, obscured by the house, is a non-contributing above ground pool. The property encompasses two contributing buildings (the farmhouse and barn), one contributing structure (the cistern), two non-contributing structures (the chicken coop and the pool), and one non-contributing site (the pond).

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### Narrative Description

#### CHRISTIAN AND ANNA KELLER FARMHOUSE

Built between 1855-1860 and designed to nestle into the side of the hill, this one-and-one-half story, end gabled, brick bank house appears to be a two-and-one-half story house since the rock faced, limestone foundation is fully exposed on the rear elevation. The house is made of local diaspore clay bricks laid in a simple running bond pattern with brick segmental arches used for the window and door openings. The window sills, as well as the foundation, are cut limestone blocks, also found locally. Located near the center of the gable ridge is a brick chimney. The northwest elevation, the original façade, has a series of irregularly spaced, segmental arched openings, with the simple entry doorway located near the north corner in the gable end. The door is an original wood plank, Dutch door with large iron strap hinges. On the other half of the façade are two multipaned, sashed windows. On the upper level is another tiny sashed window opening.

Both side elevations have a sawtooth brick course just below the eaves and below the brick wall is the stone foundation that is progressively more visible toward the rear (southeast elevation). While the northeast elevation has only one sashed window near the north corner, the southwest elevation has two sashed windows aligned below two gabled dormers with weathered lap siding. Another sashed window is situated in the foundation level near the south corner.

The rear (southeast gable end elevation) is now used as the primary entry, utilizing the doorway in the fully exposed stone foundation level. The entrance, located at the lower level, originally served as direct access to the kitchen from the cistern, barn and chicken coop. This door is a simple wood plank door with a small square light divided into four panes by narrow muntins. South of the door is a wood sashed window in the foundation level. The corners of the foundation are laid with massive limestone quoins, and the window and doorway have small stones set to create the segmental arched openings. On the main level there are two additional sashed windows, as well as another tiny sashed window on the upper level.

The interior of the lower level is divided into four primary spaces separated by massive limestone walls. The floors on this level are brick. The south room serves as the kitchen while the east area incorporates a modern restroom off the entry vestibule. Both of these areas have finished ceilings, with exposed wood beams. In the vestibule is the open straight flight staircase to the main level along the interior stone wall. This original staircase features a turned balustrade railing that has a shaped top rail that curves into the top of the hand carved, conical, rolled wood newel post. Cut deep into the bank of the hill, the other two rooms have barrel vaulted stone ceilings and were originally used for food storage to store the artichoke and other plant seedlings for the next year's farm crops. The stone wall is deep enough between the south (kitchen) and west rooms to incorporate the cooking hearth, which served double duty since there were vent holes into the west room that could be opened to let that room serve as a smokehouse. The west room still retains some of the meat hooks and a shallow shelf used for smoking meats.

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### Narrative Description

The main level of the house has plaster walls with exposed joists and wood flooring from the upper (attic) level serving as the ceilings. The floors on this level are the original wide, pine floorboards with tall, flat baseboards. The doorway between the front two rooms is a segmental arched opening since this wall, while plastered, is a continuation of the stone masonry interior demising wall. The doors to the back rooms, which originally led to two bedrooms, are the original simple wood doors. The door to the east bedroom is wood plank while the one in the south bedroom is a two panel door. Simple mitered corner trim surrounds these doors, the main Dutch style door, and the windows. The main level is also divided into four primary spaces, with the north room serving as an entry foyer with the staircase from the lower level having a matching rolled newel post. The partially enclosed straight flight staircase to the upper level is accessed from the east bedroom and is directly over the lower stairs. This staircase has a turned wood newel post and balusters with beadboard walls. The west room, now serves as the living room, has a brick chimney flue and a dated antique cast iron wood-burning stove.

The upper (attic) level has been left open as a sleeping loft with the side walls angled with the roofline. The interior walls and ceiling on this level were finished recently with drywall. This level retains the original wood post support and pine floorboards, including the floorboards set loosely to form a secret storage compartment that folklore indicates as the location that the Kellers successfully hid their money when Confederate raiders rampaged across the property. The staircase on this level is finished identical to the main staircase with a matching newel post and open railing.

The house, which is the central feature of the property site, is situated at the north end of Kohl Country Lane. It is surrounded at the east by the barn, at the south by the cistern and road, at the north by the pond (located approximately 350 feet north of the dwelling), and at the west by open pastures/fields.

### BARN

The transverse crib barn was likely a late nineteenth century addition to the property. This assumption is based on the barn's frame construction members. Some of the wood indicates hand-hewn framing, whereas other pieces of lumber indicate rough saw marks, probably ripped by a planing mill. The barn is a frame structure, with studs notched into the joist and roof framing, not nailed, which is exposed on the interior. The main portion of the barn is two stories tall and has a shallow pitched end gabled roof with a new standing seam metal roof. The front faces southwest with a six-over-six wood sashed window on each level. On the southeast elevation, there is a shed roofed, one-story, dirt floor wing (originally used for wagon and machinery storage). A large doorway connects to the driveway on the façade and two small four-light windows on the side elevation. The roof decking has been replaced and now has an asphalt shingle roof. On the other side of the main two-story section of the barn, set on the back half, is another shed roofed wing. The small wing retains its old paired, wood planked doors on the

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### Narrative Description

back (northeast) wall and a small wood sashed window on the side elevation. Most of the barn's exterior has been overlaid with wide, horizontal masonite siding; but from the interior, it is evident that the original siding was wide horizontal planks laid over the original stud framing. Some walls are supported by what appear to be concrete footings. There is older five-inch weatherboard siding on the northwest elevation in the interior corner created by the entry to the summer kitchen and the adjacent one story wing. Also visible is an old vertical board door that leads into the one story wing.

In the main section of the barn, the ground level is divided into four rooms. The rear half is split between a storage room with a small vertical board door and a horse stall with a dirt floor that opens into the shed roofed wagon storage section (to the southeast). The front half has a concrete floor poured within the original wall footings. This appears to have served as a summer kitchen with a cistern pump on the northwest wall and brick chimney flue in the south corner. Sturdy paired, six panel doors connect to the shed roofed wagon storage section and a nine light, two panel wood door leads outside (northwest elevation) where it is in close proximity to the south corner of the house. The small north wing holds a much smaller enclosed storage room with a herringbone patterned brick floor.

A steep enclosed staircase in the west corner extends along the southwest wall to access the open hay loft on the upper level via an exterior, wood plank door on the northwest elevation. The hay loft retains its original wood flooring and exposed framing. The barn, which is a contributing building, is situated immediately east of the house.

### CHICKEN COOP

The date of construction for the chicken coop is unknown, but appears to be an early twentieth century structure based on the poured concrete slab foundation and stud framed walls which are finished with stucco over older wood plank siding. The coop retains original six over six wood sashed windows on each elevation. An original wood plank entry door is located on the southeast elevation at the east corner. On the interior, the wood shelves and chicken nesting boxes are still intact along with the original wood plank siding and exposed studs and roof joists. The shallow, pyramidal roof of the chicken coop has a small cupola-like vent at its peak. The chicken coop is non-contributing due to its age and current exterior finish, which post-dates the period of significance. The structure is situated southeast of the house and barn.



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#### POND

Clearly visible in aerial photographs, the pond is triangular in shape with a curved spillway along the base of the pond's equilateral triangle. The top half of the triangle formed the original pond, dating back to 1855 (possibly earlier) and the original triangular shape was documented by the Soil Conservation Service's 1977 plans to increase the pond's capacity. The 1977 alterations extended the base of the pond's original triangular shape, which nearly doubled the pond's original size. Some of the original underground pipe system remains intact, extending along the east side of the pond and connecting to the house. The pond is nestled into the edge of the wooded hillside north of the farmhouse and outbuildings. Today the associated spillway is ninety-seven feet across the base of the pond, forming a ten-foot wide levee. The fill height is nearly eighteen feet deep. Due to the 1977 alterations, the pond is a non-contributing feature.

#### LANDSCAPE AND SETTING

The Keller farmhouse and related outbuildings are situated within the northeast quadrant of the associated seventy-seven acre parcel. As noted, a small road, Kohl Country Lane, leads to the farm from Tegeler Road, which extends northeast/southwest approximate 375 feet southeast of the property boundary. Kohl Country Lane was the original road to the farm. Though current farm acreage of seventy-seven acres is significantly reduced from the original one-hundred and sixty acre parcel, the historic landscape patterns are clearly visible. Outside the nominated parcel, the surrounding parcels are still primarily small farms and wooded hillsides. Even though some properties have been legally subdivided into subdivision parcels they have not been developed and have no physical evidence of changes to land use yet. Located centrally within the parcel are two large fields. The fields are divided centrally by a brook that extends east-to-west across the parcel from the house and outbuildings (east), emptying into Cedar Fork Creek (west). Cedar Fork Creek extends south/north near the western border of the farmstead. Each of the central fields encompasses thirteen acres – a total of twenty-six improved acres currently being used for cattle grazing and hay production. According to 1870 and 1880 agricultural census records, Christian Keller's farmstead held a total of thirty-five "improved" acres (tilled land). The 1880 census also indicates that the farm had five acres used for meadows, pastures and/or orchards. Additionally Keller's farm held 120 acres of wooded acreage. This is illustrated by the current farm setting, which is bordered at all sides by heavily wooded acreage. An 1877 atlas of the county illustrates that at that time, the farm held 160 acres. The farmhouse and associated fields/orchards that appear on the map are consistent with the current farm layout. The fields/orchards are situated immediately west of the house and adjacent to each other. Outbuildings are located east of the dwelling. Also visible on the atlas is Cedar Fork Creek, which follows the same general path as illustrated on the atlas.

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### Narrative Description

#### ALTERATIONS AND INTEGRITY ISSUES

The Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead retains its original 1855-1860 German bank house, its most important resource, which has only been minimally altered to accommodate twenty-first century living requirements. While some of the windows have been replaced with aluminum multipaned windows, they were selected to closely match the remaining original wood sashed, six over six windows, some of which remain in the house. Some kitchen cabinetry and bathrooms have been added, but all without moving the primary interior walls. Besides this, the only other alterations are the recently completed wall and ceiling finish added to the upper (attic) level, the incorporation of electrical wiring, and the replacement of the roof with an asphalt shingle roof. The original diaspore brick and limestone foundation walls are in good condition and the house retains an original Dutch entry door.

Because of the barn's utilitarian character and its frame construction, it did not hold up as well as the brick house, requiring new roof decking on the shed roofed section when a new roof was installed recently. Some of the siding has been overlaid with newer masonite siding, although some of the older wide board horizontal siding is still visible under the masonite siding and in the sheltered area on the north and east sides of the barn. The interior corner facing west into the fenced yard actually has some older five inch weatherboard siding. A concrete floor was added at some point within the west room, probably when it served as a summer kitchen since it has the pump to the cistern.

The chicken coop retains its original configuration, interior walls and shelving ledges for the hens' nests, but like the shed roofed wing of the barn and the house, it has new asphalt roofing. The stucco finish on the exterior appears to be a more recent alteration, but the original windows and plank door are still intact. Though it is non-contributing, the coop adds to the overall rural character of the property.

The pond was enlarged by the Soil Conservation Service in 1977, more than doubling its capacity. The pond's original triangular pond shape still forms the upper triangular section with the new spillway at the base to the southeast. Some of the piping that led from the pond to the cisterns and pumps to serve both the house kitchen and the barn is still intact underground, as are the pumps in the barn and the cistern head in the yard. As is true for the chicken coop, the resource adds to the property's architectural integrity and character, though the feature itself is not a contributing element because of the 1977 enlargement.

The only nonhistoric resources on the property are the above ground swimming pool (obscured by the house), the pond, and the chicken coop. While the historic outbuildings and the pond have had some alterations, land use and activities remained constant following subdivision of the original farm parcel into smaller lots (after 1890). The surrounding landscape (beyond the current seventy-seven are parcel) remains rural in character. Spatial organization of the house, outbuildings, fields, pastures, and wooded areas of the farm remain unchanged in character since

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### Narrative Description

1890, and the farm has never been developed for any alternative use. Additionally, subsequent property owners (after 1890) continued to use the house, outbuildings, and farmstead in the same manner for which these resources originally served. Overall, the Keller Farm retains integrity and associations that contribute to its character of a mid-to-late nineteenth-century farmstead.

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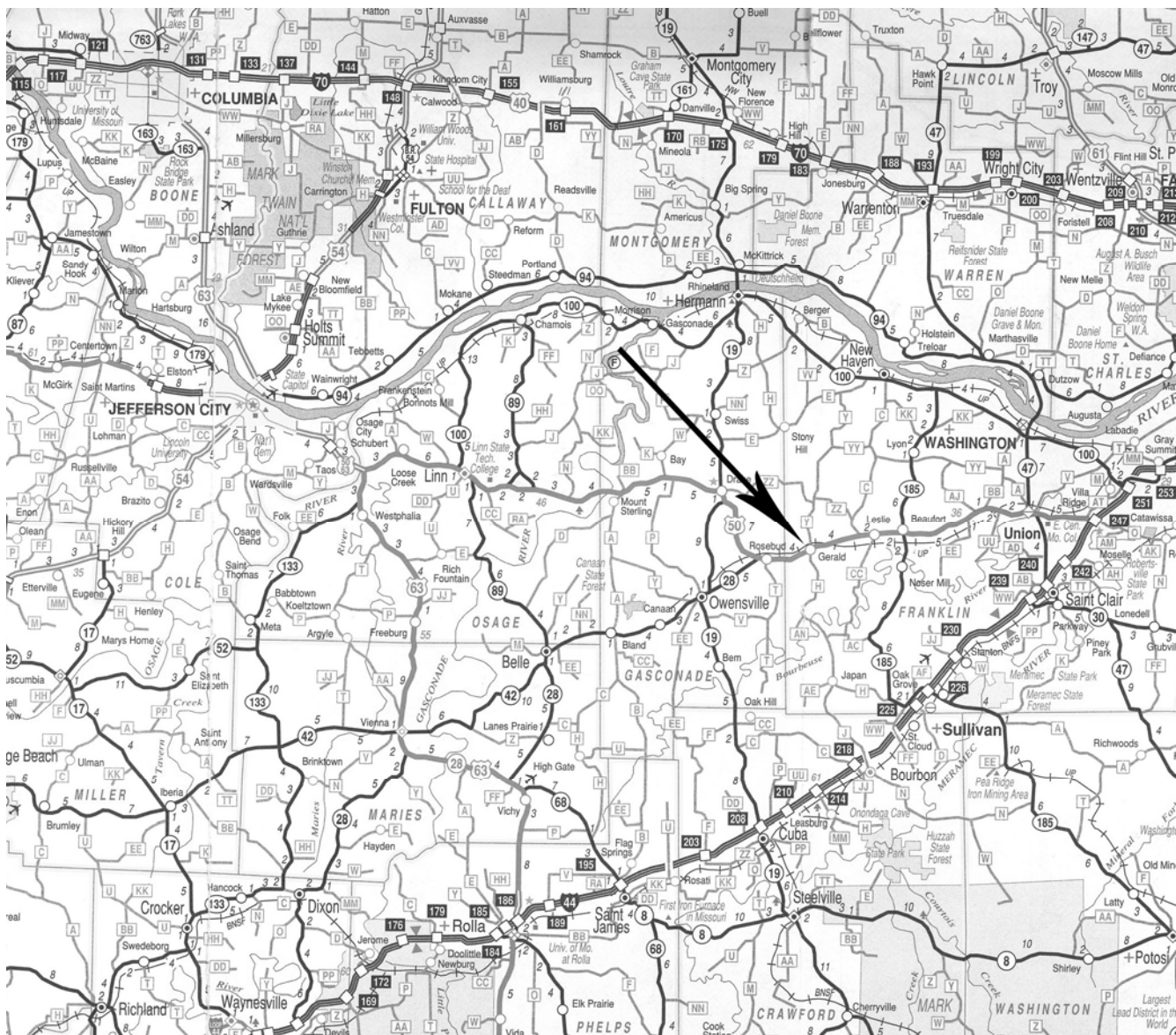
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Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
Franklin County, MO

Map of Missouri Locating Gerald

Missouri Official Highway Map, 1997-98



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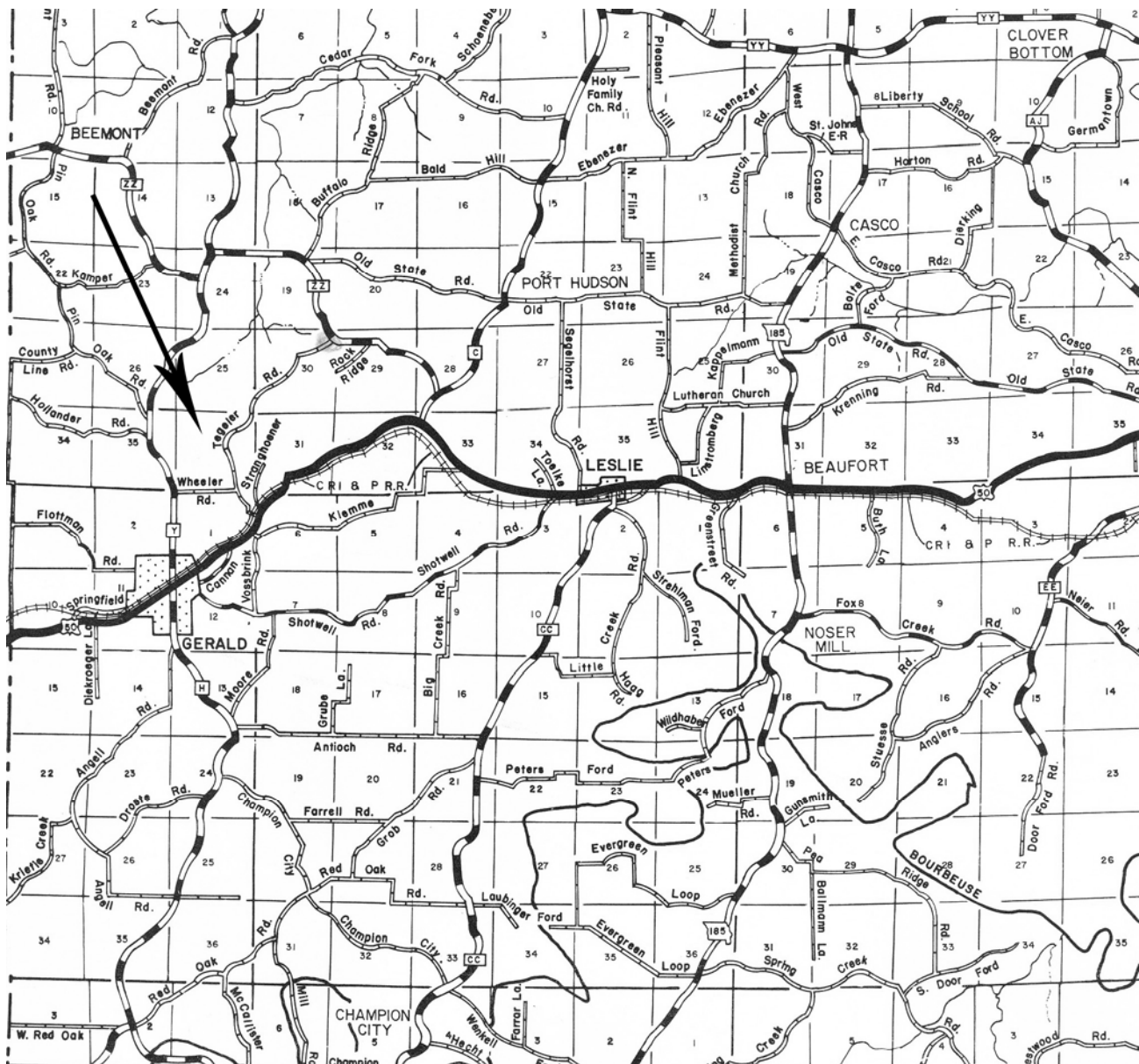
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Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
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Franklin County Map Locating Property

From *General Highway Map*, Franklin County, Missouri



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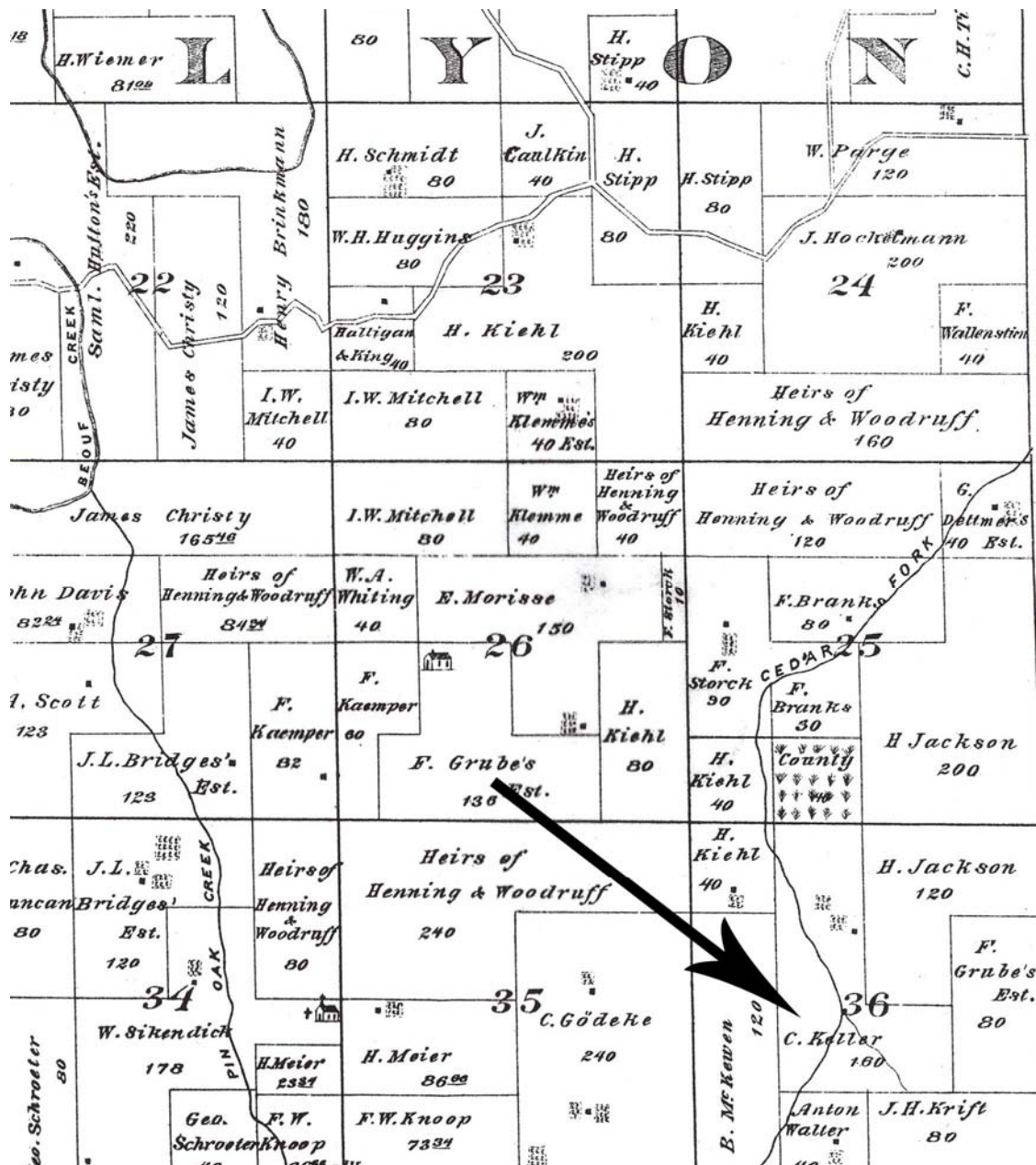
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Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
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Historic Atlas Locating Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
(Note: square dot represents location of farmhouse)

From Atlas Map of St. Louis County, MO





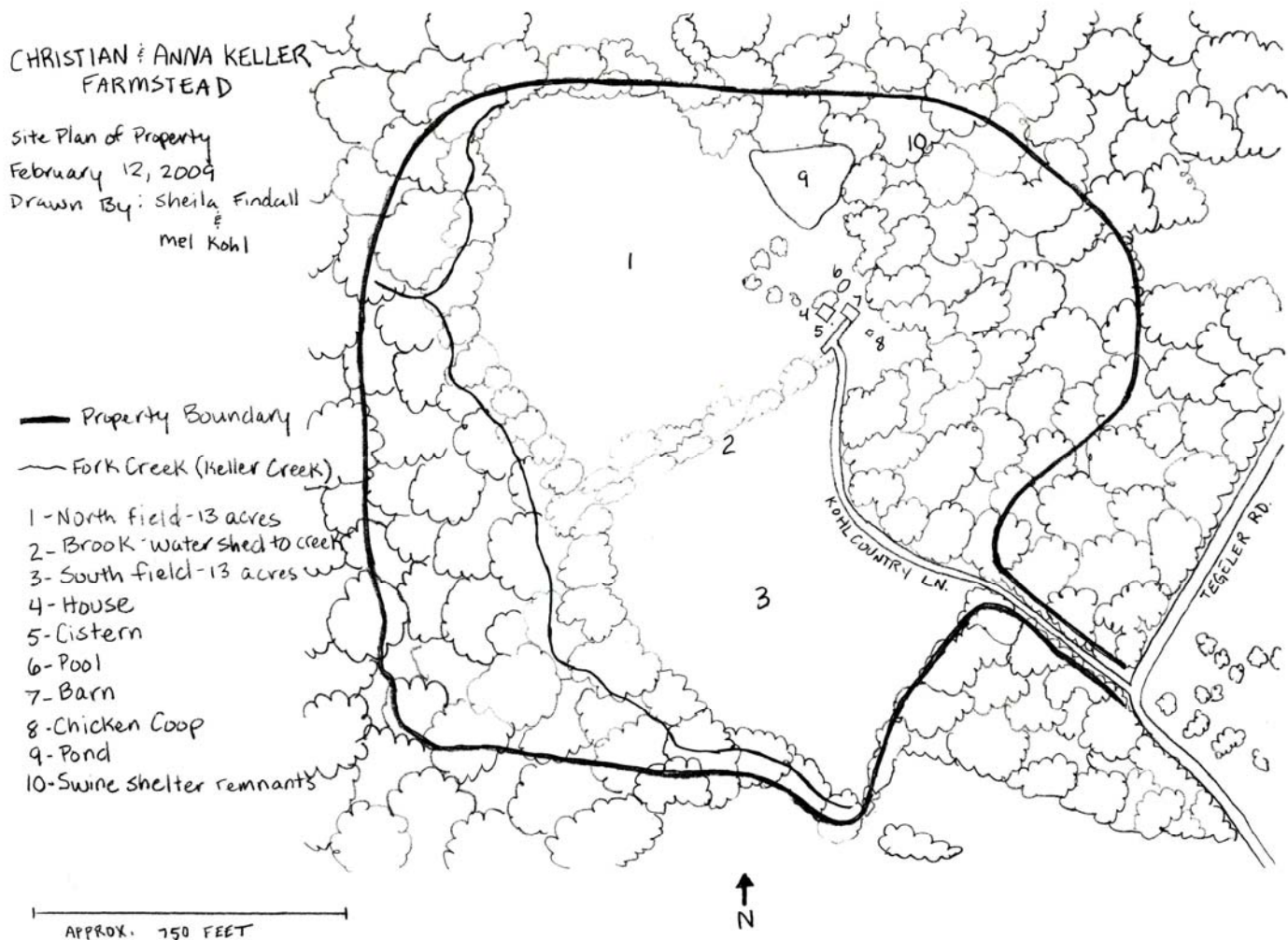
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Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
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## Site Map of the Property



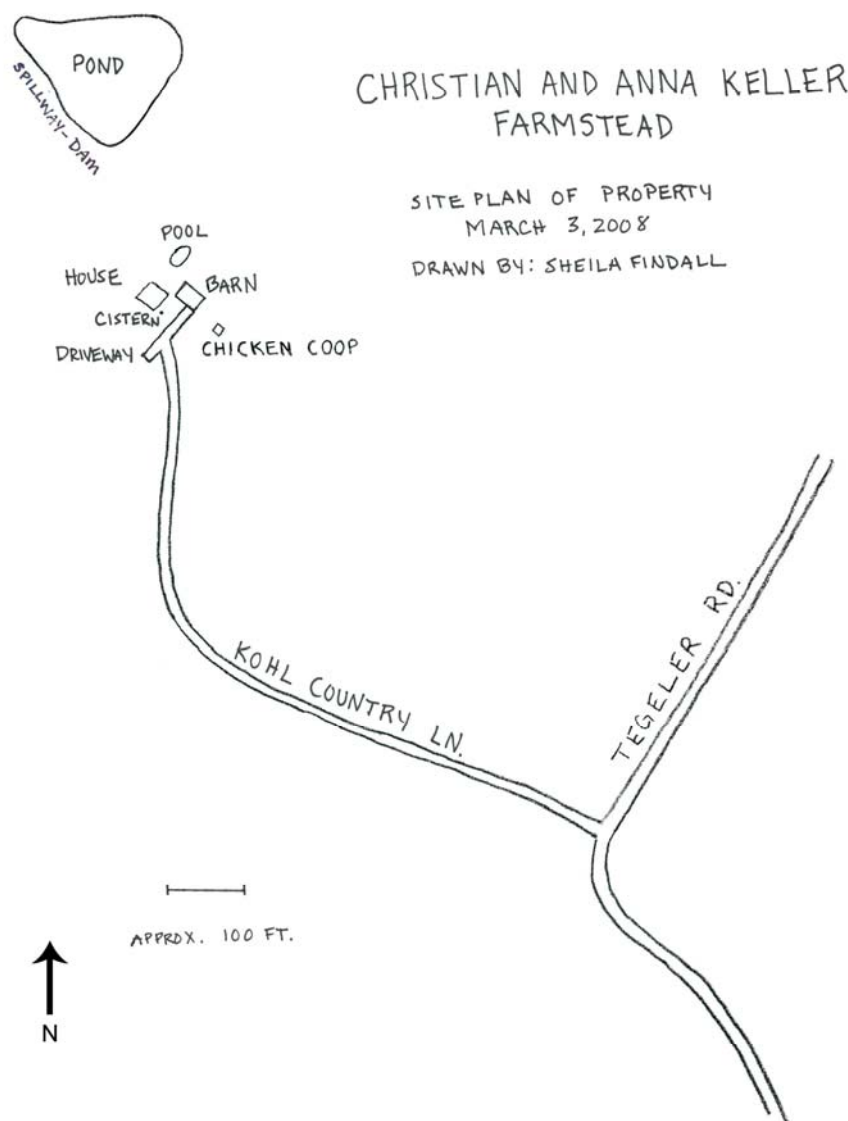
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Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
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## Site Map of the Property





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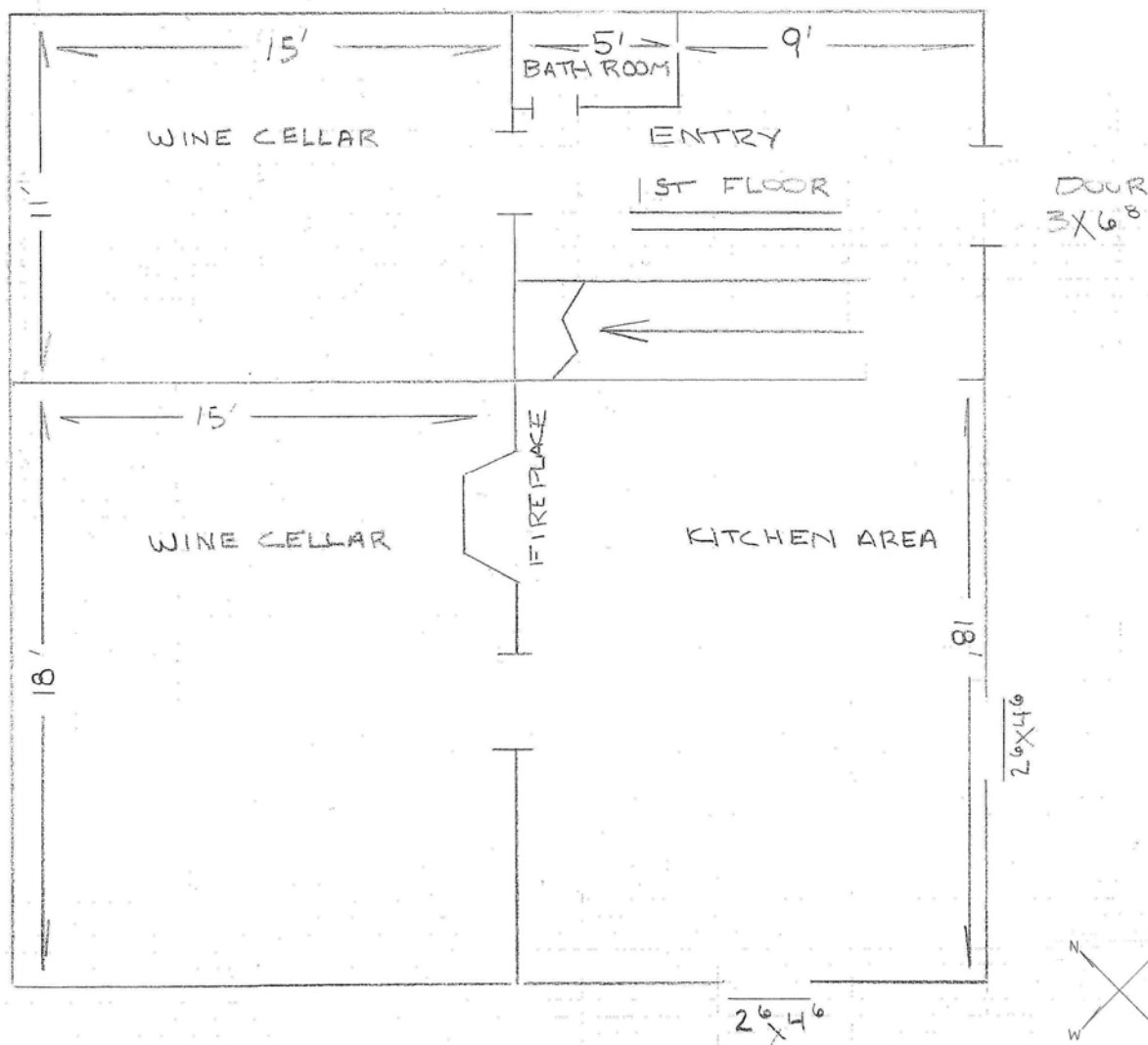
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Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
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First Floor Plan

Drawn By Mel Kohl, February, 2008



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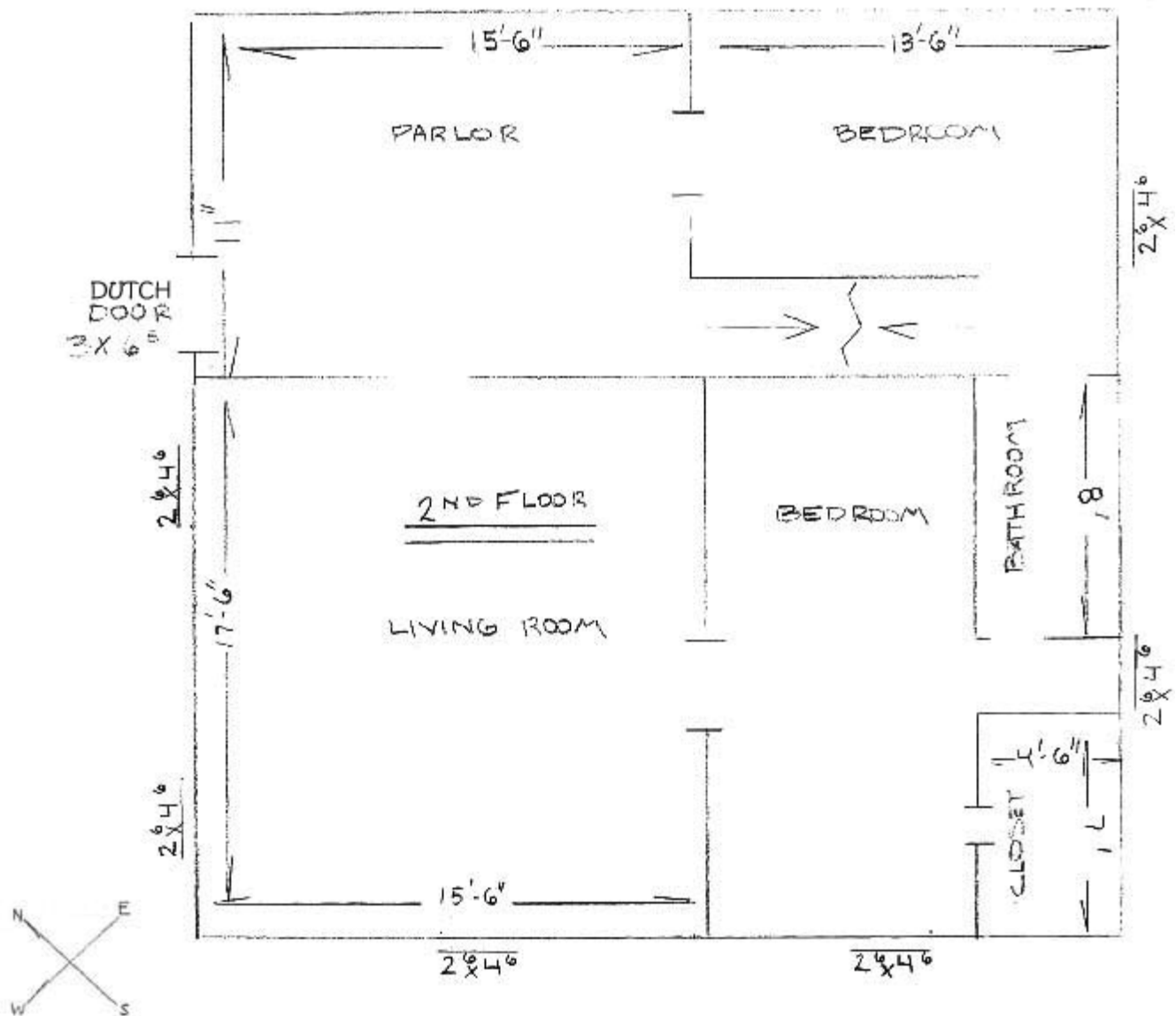
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Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
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Second Floor Plan

Drawn By Mel Kohl, February, 2008



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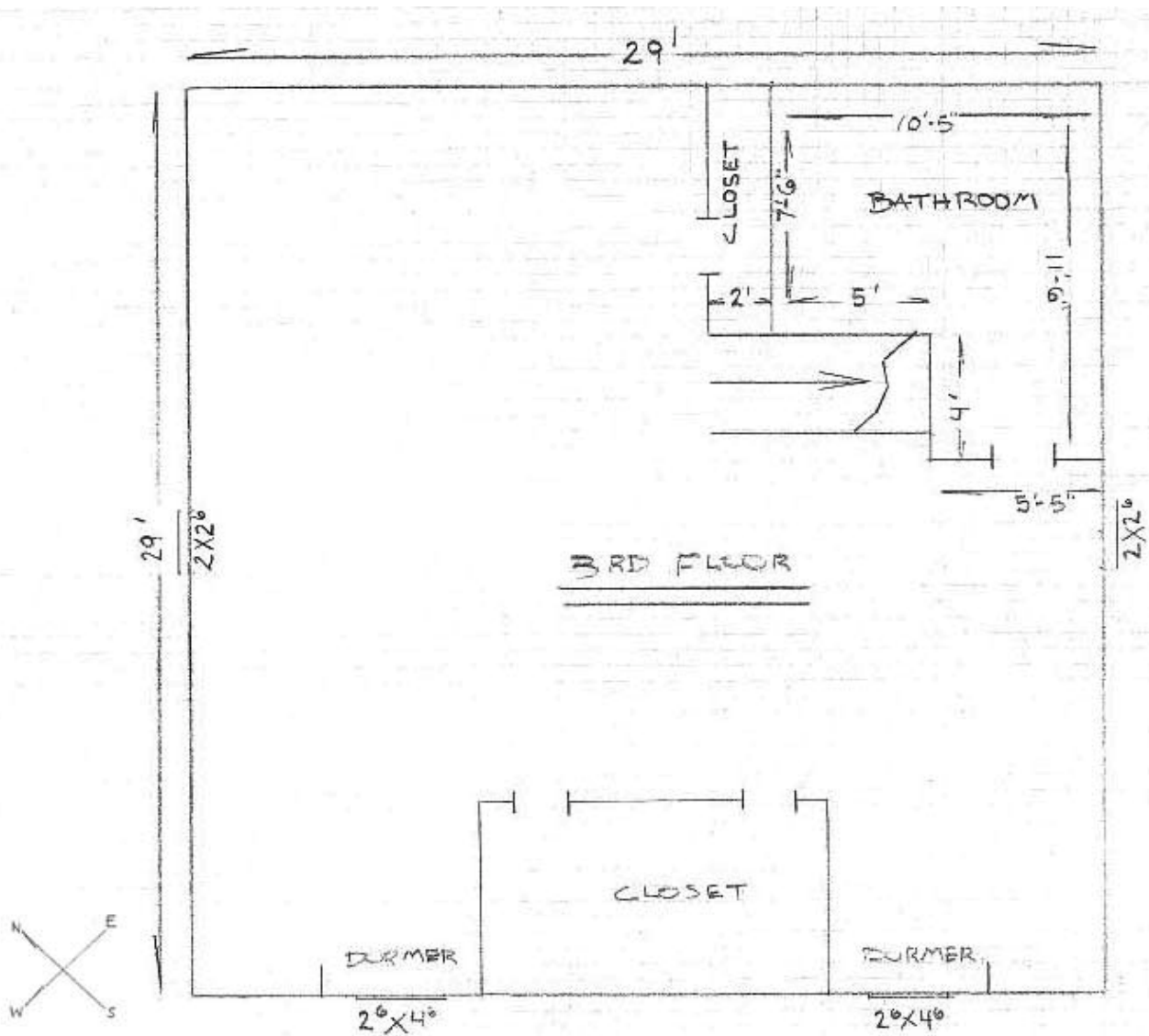
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Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
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Third Floor Plan

Drawn By Mel Kohl, February, 2008



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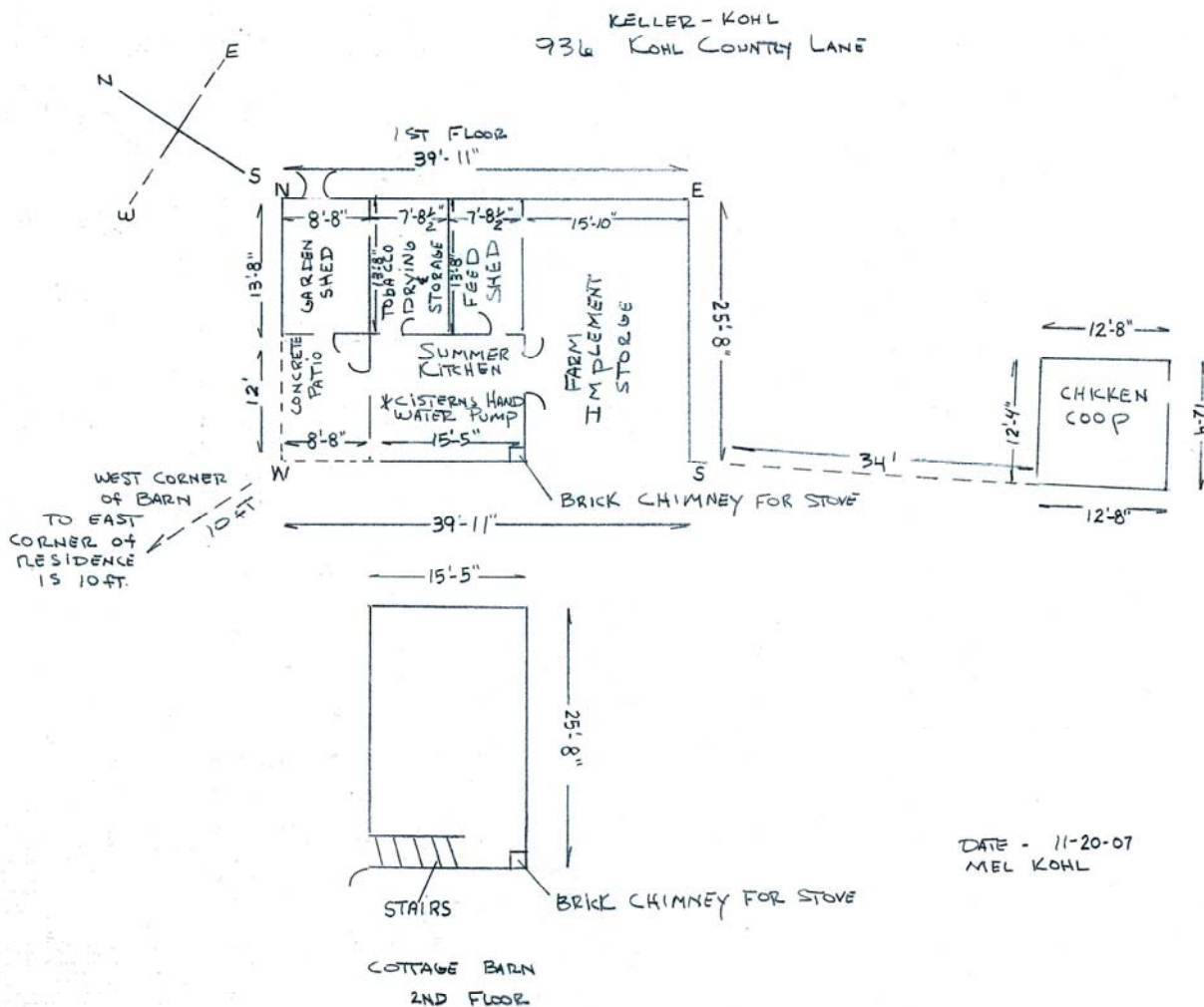
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Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
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Floor Plan of the Barn and Chicken Coop

Drawn By Mel Kohl, November, 2007



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### Narrative Statement of Significance

#### SUMMARY

The Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead, located outside of Gerald, on Kohl Country Lane in Franklin County, Missouri is locally significant as a reminder of the influx of German immigrants into mid-Missouri (especially during the 1850s), and the architectural and cultural influences that the population introduced to Missouri. Like many German immigrants, Christian Keller moved to Missouri in the 1850s, no doubt in response to the wave of revolutions that began to spread across Europe during the mid-1840s. The Keller Farmhouse, which holds an internal smokehouse and food cellars, was constructed between 1855 and 1860 using diaspora clay bricks that Keller made himself. The dwelling is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C: Architecture for its unique design as a bank house, a distinctly vernacular German architectural design. The farmstead is eligible under Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage, European as a mid-1800s German farmstead; and Criterion A: Exploration/Settlement as an excellent example of a German style farmstead/home characteristic of Missouri's early German settlements. The Christian Keller Farmstead has a period of significance that extends from 1854, when Christian Keller first purchased land and started his farm; through 1889, when the Keller family sold a portion of the farmstead. The Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead holds three contributing resources: a German bank house-style farmhouse, a late nineteenth-century barn, and a cistern well connected to an artificial pond by an underground pipe. There are three non-contributing resources: a chicken coop constructed after the period of significance, an above ground swimming pool, and the 1850s artificial pond that was significantly enlarged during the 1970s.

#### EARLY FRANKLIN COUNTY HISTORY

The area that is now Franklin County was originally occupied by the Osage, Shawnee and Delaware Indians on lands that had previously been under the control of the Mississippian civilization that dominated the region. Today, Franklin County retains an archeological site that was discovered in the mid-1800s by Samuel T. Adams on a farm above the Missouri River. The Adams Farm contained a series of graves, approximately 4 ½ feet long, lined with rock set on its side. The graves had bone fragments, flint, copper, chalcedony arrow and spear heads, and ornamental devices. Local Native Americans attributed the graves to an ancient extinct race that disappeared before the tribes had entered the area, but the precise origins are not known.

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### Narrative Statement of Significance (Continued)

By the 1830s, Springfield Road (created during the early years of settlement) ran through the area, serving as a mail, stage coach, and trade route.<sup>8</sup> In addition to the road, a cattle trail crossed Keller's land and Keller Creek (now known as Cedar Forks Creek), where travelers stopped to camp for the night. The creek was protected by two hills, an area that was also frequently used by Native Americans. Both cattleman and Native Americans routinely used the spot after the Keller's lived on the farm, which granted the creek its nomenclature as Keller Creek. The cattle route extended to Shotwell, which was later developed as Gerald.<sup>9</sup> Shotwell had a small store where settlers purchased food, clothing and tools. The store also served as a site for settlers to sell their farm produce. The business housed the area's first post office and provided overnight lodging for cowboys driving cattle to market in St. Louis. Shotwell formally became known as Gerald during the early 1900s, shortly after the Rock Island Railroad Company constructed a depot.<sup>10</sup> A local doctor, William P. Fitzgerald, suggested that the town be named for one of the chief engineers on the Rock Island Railroad, Major Marvin. Marvin refused the honor and insisted on calling the stop "Fitzgerald" after the doctor. Dr. Fitzgerald often traveled as a train passenger and suggested that to avoid confusion that may arise when the brakemen called his name at the station, that the town be named "Gerald," which was ultimately adopted.<sup>11</sup> When Christian Keller purchased his farmstead in the 1850s, Gerald (then known as Shotwell) was the nearest settlement to the Keller Farmstead, located two miles south of the farm.

One of the greatest economic booms to the area relates to Franklin County's diaspore clay deposits. Diaspore is refractory clay that had an extremely high fusion temperature, resisting heat to as much as 1800 degrees Celsius (iron melts at around 1200 degrees Celsius). After 1917, due to the clay's unique qualities and rapidly increasing mining operations in Franklin County, diaspore clay became one of the region's most valued mineral resources. It was shipped worldwide for use in the boilers of ships, including Liberty ships during World War II, as well as to international foundries.<sup>12</sup> The value of the mineral as a refractory material created such a huge demand that by the mid-1940s, the region's diaspore clay pits began to close as the mines were depleted.

Prior to Franklin County's early twentieth-century diaspore clay boom, the resource was used as a regional building material. The clay was easy to obtain because deposits reached the ground's surface, and relatively pure stretches of clay were available in each vein. The deposits were usually cone shaped with a circle of sandstone around the clay pit.<sup>13</sup> Erosion eventually made the pit more visible within the sandstone rings, which eroded much slower than the diaspore clay and created a raised ring.<sup>14</sup> The clay's ease of access made it a natural choice for local brick making. Once the clay's refractory properties became known, it became a regional favorite and was used extensively in buildings and foundations. In the example of the Keller farmhouse, the entire house (not just the foundation, which was a more typical practice) was constructed of diaspore clay bricks. Keller made the bricks himself, probably utilizing clay removed from the hillside into which the house was built.

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### Narrative Statement of Significance (Continued)

#### GERMAN IMMIGRANT INFLUX

Franklin County, Missouri is in the middle of an arc of German settlement in Missouri that extended from southeast Missouri along the Mississippi River, followed the river north, and slowly decreased, ending north of St. Louis. A second swath of Germans moved west from St. Louis along the Missouri River towards Kansas City, slowly thinning out as the band of German settlements extended westward along the river. Franklin County's position in the midst of this stretch of German immigration brought a large number of the immigrants who remained in the county, establishing a series of communities that supported large and distinct German populations.<sup>15</sup> Although it was almost fifty years after the founding of the United States before German immigrants started arriving in significant numbers, once immigration from Germany began, it quickly grew from a few people into a steady stream. By 1860 approximately 90,000 German-born immigrants lived in Missouri. By 1890 that number was approaching 125,000 German-born Missourians.<sup>16</sup>

During the 1830s, the ample arable land and natural resources of Franklin County were drawing immigrants in significant numbers. Among the immigrants moving to Franklin County were large numbers of Germans who moved to the state before revolutions rocked Europe. This German influx occurred in large part because German writer Gottfried Duden made a three year-long trip to Missouri and resided on a farm in Warren County. Following his return to Germany, Duden wrote a book about Missouri, *Bericht ubereine Reise nachden westlichen Staaten Nordamerika's* (which translates to *Report of a Journey to the Western States of North America*) focusing on practical tips for prospective immigrants, including reviews of the land and weather. After the book was published in 1827, a few German immigrants began to move into Missouri. The migration increased significantly during the three decades that followed.<sup>17</sup>

Duden's stay occurred during a period of particularly mild winters and cool summers, further burnishing what was already a glowing description of wide open lands with soil so rich that "a farmer barely has to do more than sow his seeds and wait to reap the profits of his crop."<sup>18</sup> Duden's experience was also aided by the fact that the Americans in the area, who were traditionally welcoming to new immigrants, went out of their way for Duden because he had trained as a doctor and offered his skills to the local residents.<sup>19</sup> Duden's experience was more idyllic than that for many of the immigrants who followed him.

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### Narrative Statement of Significance (Continued)

The first wave of Missouri's German immigrants were educated and aristocratic, and most settled in what is now Warren County, northwest of Franklin County. By 1835, there was a flourishing German settlement in the Lake Creek region of that county. This first large settlement, though not in Franklin County, was significant because it represented the first German settlement of note and led to creation of the "Berlin Society." This society was the first of many established to assist settlers emigrating to the United States.<sup>20</sup> Many of the immigrants associated with these early societies were mocked as "Latin farmers" because they were well educated yet lacked practical farming experience.<sup>21</sup>

In striking contrast to the earlier generation of German immigrants, by the late 1830s and early 1840s, most of the state's German immigrants consisted of individuals and families of modest means.<sup>22</sup> The second large wave of German immigration occurred in the years leading up to and following the 1848 revolutions that occurred in Europe, particularly in Germany. The conditions of overcrowding, lack of economic opportunity and advancement, and lack of governmental respect for individual rights and freedoms led to the revolutions and inspired large numbers of immigrants. This second wave of immigrants, which Keller was a part of, was able to prosper and realize opportunities not available in the German states during the mid-1800s. The second wave of immigrants arrived with knowledge of agriculture and farming and did a much better job of starting successful farms than did earlier immigrants. Part of their success was based on the ability to choose good land, even though available land had been reduced by earlier immigrants. As noted by geologist, Russel Gerlach, a map of the best soil in Missouri would "be almost identical to a map of German settlements."<sup>23</sup> The knowledge that these immigrants brought with them from Germany was an important part of their success. In some cases, it was only a few years before they were able to expand their farms and purchase land, often from earlier settlers who were not equipped for farm life. Keller may have been a cabinet maker in Germany, but his Missouri farm was successful enough that he was able to enlarge his farm soon after he started working the land.

The glowing reviews (of Duden and those who followed) encouraged Germans to make the long trip not only to America, but into the center of the country, far from the eastern seabards where most immigrants initially arrived to the United States. Duden's book helped inspire the initial wave of immigration to Missouri, and that wave built upon itself. New arrivals established themselves in Franklin County then became a draw for people that followed. Many who resided in Missouri offered a destination where family or friends were established, which led to a development pattern that drew more and more Germans to the area. By the 1850s, Franklin County had developed a dispersed rural commons settlement pattern with a heavy German influence that shaped the history of the county and the state. The influx of Germans impacted the local culture to the extent that it continues to influence Franklin County today.<sup>24</sup>



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### Narrative Statement of Significance (Continued)

German influences in the area were evident even prior to the large population flux during the 1850s. By the time the Kellers arrived in Missouri, many residents in the area - even those not of German descent - had introduced staple German dishes into their diets and routinely turned to local German artisans and merchants for goods and services. Additionally, the area adapted German architectural styles, frequently incorporating German designs in buildings previously dominated by Federal and Greek-Revival influences.<sup>25</sup> After the arrival of German immigrants, stone foundations and half-timbered buildings became more common, as did other German vernacular architectural styles such as house barns and bank houses. The vernacular architecture of the area changed with obvious German influences that ranged from methods of construction to ornamental fixtures and carved wood details.<sup>26</sup>

A large majority of Missouri's antebellum German immigrants were abolitionists and unionists. Their presence was one of the key reasons that Missouri remained in the Union during the Civil War, despite the fact that it was a slave state. As a result, the region witnessed extensive guerrilla fighting between Union and Confederate forces. Many Confederate attacks took place in isolated farming communities, which directly impacted the state's German population that (outside of St. Louis) largely resided in rural settings. German styles of construction, particularly in relation to bank houses and house barns, were originally designed to conserve land in an overcrowded country. In Missouri, however, such styles were effectively adapted to provide increased security during Indian raids and the Civil War. An excellent example of the area's German architecture is the Pelster House Barn located outside of New Haven, Franklin County. This building was a single construction house and barn that housed animals in the lower area. Grain storage, dairy equipment and farm implements were stored above, and a living area was attached to the upper section of the house.<sup>27</sup> In a similar vein, the Keller House is a bank house, which was built into the side of a hill. This construction eliminated one direction of potential attacks by Native Americans - a serious consideration during the 1850s. In addition, the Keller house had a built-in smoke house and food storage cellars inside the house. The kitchen chimney/cooking hearth funneled smoke through a storage area in the house. The storage room was used to smoke meats when it was not in use as a root cellar. The house's design allowed access to provisions when it became unsafe to leave the house. A pipe that connected the farm's pond to a cistern (intact today) insured that water was available from within the house through the kitchen pump. Such details as these are visible in the design of the Keller Farmhouse and illustrate the impact of German building methods in central Missouri.

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### Narrative Statement of Significance (Continued)

#### KELLER FAMILY HISTORY

Among the German immigrants arriving to Franklin County during the 1850s was Christian Keller. It is not clear exactly when Keller arrived to the United States or Franklin County, but in April 1854, he purchased forty acres of farmland from the United States Government.<sup>28</sup> In 1855, the Gerald (Shotwell) Post Office was established, and within the following five years, Keller built a house for his family out of handmade bricks and purchased at least another eighty acres of land.<sup>29</sup> Keller built his farmhouse as a bank dwelling (into a hillside), aligning each corner with a compass point. This traditional form of German building was devised as a means of maximizing the usable land. A large hill would not be suitable for farming, and building into the hillside created a cellar by using land that would otherwise be underutilized. As Keller dug into the hill, clay was probably removed to create the bricks used to build the house.<sup>30</sup>

The three-level Keller house has a walk-out basement, with the lowest level built into the hill. This technique provided building support and warmth, as well as security (as noted earlier). During the Civil War, the Kellers witnessed at least one violent incident when five men on horseback rode full speed into the yard. A neighbor, Burgaster Decas, was visiting the Kellers at the time and tried to hide behind a tree. One of the gunmen killed Decas, and the men proceeded to ransack the farm.<sup>31</sup> The men, whom Anna Keller, Christian's wife, referred to as "rebels" in the family's oral tradition, raided the house. Although the men failed to find a well-hidden \$500, they did take the best horse and some chickens.<sup>32</sup>

In Missouri's 1860 census report, Christian Keller is identified as a forty-five year old Prussian farmer, with a forty-three year old wife, Anna (also from Prussia) and three children, all born in Missouri. Keller's children in 1860 included an eight-year old son, Henry; a four-year old daughter, Missy, and a six-year old daughter whose name is not legible on census records. The family farm was worth \$1,500, and the Kellers owned \$325 worth of personal property.<sup>33</sup> Missouri's 1870 census identifies the Keller's youngest daughter as Lizzie, twelve years of age in 1870. It is uncertain whether or not Lizzie is the daughter identified as six years of age in 1860 (which, if so, indicates that one of the census records is in error). No female daughter, age 16, is noted in the 1870 census. Remaining statistics regarding family names/ages in 1870 are consistent with information provided in the 1860 census.

By 1870, the value of the family holdings had increased to \$3,200 in real estate and \$960 worth of personal property.<sup>34</sup> By 1870, the farm consisted of 160 acres, as indicated in agricultural census records – eight acres of which were purchased in 1856. In 1870, the farm held thirty-five

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Narrative Statement of Significance (Continued)

acres of tilled (improved) farmland and 125 acres of woodland. Farm value was estimated as \$3,000, and farm equipment was worth an estimated \$240. The Kellers had four horses, three milk cows, three "other" cattle, eighteen sheep, and nine pigs. The value of livestock was estimated as \$455. The farm produced an annual yield of 150 bushels of winter wheat, 150 bushels of Indian corn, and 320 bushels of oats. The Kellers also produced 50 pounds of wood, 30 bushels of Irish potatoes, five tons of hay, and 20 gallons of molasses in 1870. The family's home manufacturing interests yielded \$60 in 1870. An additional \$75 was raised by selling livestock. The family's estimated annual farm production in 1870 was \$675.<sup>35</sup>

In 1877, Christian Keller's son, Henry, received a patent for a straw cutting machine that prepared straw for feed and he also designed a new type of plow.<sup>36</sup> An 1878 Franklin County atlas illustrates that the farm was 160 acres at that time, featuring two orchards/fields just west of the farmhouse. The map is not detailed enough to show the pond or any outbuildings.<sup>37</sup> The Keller Farm remained viable in 1880, though production declined significantly after 1870. As in 1870, the farm had thirty-five acres of improved land in 1880. Further delineation of unimproved land had been divided by 1880 as five acres of meadows, pastures, and/or orchards and 120 acres of woodland. The farm's value decreased to \$2,000 by 1880, with only \$100 in farm implements, \$200 invested in livestock, and \$230 as the estimated value for all farm productions. The family still had three milk cows, seven "other" cows, three calves, but no horses or pigs. The Keller's had sheep (four) and lambs (four), which were sold to raise money. Additionally, the farm was producing butter in 1880, a total of 150 pounds on annual average. Crops included six acres of Indian corn, six acres of oats, nine acres of wheat, one-third acre (one gallon) of sorghum (molasses), one-third acre of Irish potatoes (20 bushels), one-fifth acre of sweet potatoes (20 bushels), and one acre of apples.<sup>38</sup> The diminishing production in farm output and value recorded in 1880 is an indication that the farm was probably designed to serve the family's needs, which decreased after the Keller children left home.

Like the thousands of people who moved to Missouri from Germany, the Kellers benefited from immigration to the United States. This new open land offered opportunities. During the mid-to-late 1800s, Germany was over-populated and traditionally land was equally distributed among all sons, leading to small and barely productive farms. America allowed immigrants to live on farms large enough to support their families. For families like the Kellers, who were not only industrious but also inventive, there was an even greater opportunity to prosper. The Kellers maintained the land and continued to live on the farmstead until 1889 (possibly afterward), when Charles H. and Louise Meyer purchased a portion of the farmstead (acreage unknown). Over the next 117 years, various other sales were made, dividing and reuniting portions of the farm until the current seventy-seven acre parcel containing the farmhouse, outbuildings, and central farmstead was purchased by the current owners.<sup>39</sup>

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### Narrative Statement of Significance (Continued)

#### GERMAN ARCHITECTURE

The Keller house typifies German-Missouri vernacular architectural methods common throughout Franklin County. As such, the dwelling is a good representative example of its style and methods of construction. Many German farmhouses built in Missouri (particularly in Franklin County) were constructed of brick with low eaves and high pitched roofs, as is true for the Keller house.<sup>40</sup> Missouri's German houses and barns were frequently "banked" – constructed into hillsides – which provided additional warmth, structural support, and protection from both the elements and other people. Many German buildings in Missouri have limestone foundations for walls. Foundation walls were typically thicker in German bank houses in the area's non-German farmhouses. In the example of the Keller house, the foundation is wider than the brick walls, and the stone foundation is recessed into the bank behind the house. These houses, whether bank houses or free standing, were usually constructed of brick made locally on the house site. The Keller house is typical of German architectural methods not only because it is a bank house design, but because it was built of local diaspora clay bricks. The clay for these bricks most likely came from the farm grounds, and it is believed that Christian Keller made the bricks himself. The house has a steeply pitched roof with low overhanging eaves, typical of Missouri's German vernacular architecture. Gabled roofs were by far the most common style for German farmhouses. Some farmhouses had Dutch doors in second floor gables. Cornices were often simple sawtooth or corbelled cornices. The Keller house is a good example of this technique, supporting a sawtooth cornice on the side of the gable. Like many German buildings throughout central Missouri, the Keller Farmhouse has slightly arched windows and doors. The windows are short and wide, which was typical for the 1850s. As decades passed, newer buildings tended to have taller and narrower windows.<sup>41</sup>

The Keller house demonstrates its vernacular construction with a straightforward floor plan. The interior of the house included an indoor smokehouse on the lower level. The smokehouse was in a barrel roofed room off the kitchen and abutted the wall where the cooking hearth and chimney were located. Even today, the rear of the chimney has small holes located in the smokehouse room and an exterior vent on the back wall to draw the smoke into and through the smokehouse. There are still hooks in the ceiling for hanging meat. Although an internal smokehouse is a very unusual feature, some of the farms in the area retain exterior smokehouses. Almost every farm would have had one when they were actively being farmed. Like many of the German houses in the area, the Keller House has interior plaster walls and a brick kitchen floor. The Keller House demonstrates many other typical German vernacular architectural features, including cut stone window sills, dormer windows, arched brick lintels and brick cornices at the eaves. The brick

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was laid using a simple common bond pattern, and most interior wood trim is simple rather than elaborate. Some of the upper floor area has exposed beam ceilings, also typical of other German farmhouses in Franklin County.

The Keller House is one of the few extant German farmhouses in the rural area near Gerald. At least seven rural antebellum houses are located within a ten mile radius of the Christian Keller Farmstead. However, not all of these houses are German vernacular in design. Two of the houses are Federal style. The Keller House is also significant because (unlike many of the area's antebellum houses) the house was constructed by a German immigrant. Keller typified the common experiences of many of his fellow Germans. He moved to Missouri and built a house for his family from local materials. He also established a successful farm in his new home in Missouri. Despite arriving in Missouri as a single immigrant family, rather than with a large group of immigrants, the Kellers thrived in their new home. Keller's family was able to follow in his footsteps. His son started his own farm and learned skills from his father that enabled him to develop two patents for farm equipment. Christian and Anna Keller developed and maintained a successful farmstead and retained many aspects of their German culture. This is best demonstrated by the design of the Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead, which is a significant representation of the German influences that remain prevalent throughout Franklin County.

### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Atlas Map of St. Louis County, MO*, (St. Louis: Atlas Publishing Co., 1878), 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 9.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 12, 13.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* 11.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* 14.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* 15.

<sup>8</sup> Gerald, Missouri, Mel and Ruth Kohl's Archives and Notes, "Gerald Wanderings: The History of Gerald, 1830-1976," 6.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* 7.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

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<sup>12</sup> W. D. Keller, *Diaspore- A Depleted Non-Renewable Mineral Resource of Missouri: A Historic Overview of Missouri's Most Basic Industrial Mineral*, (Columbia: Missouri Division of Geology and Land Survey of Natural Resources, 1979), ed. Ser. 6, 1-3.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. 12.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. 7.

<sup>15</sup> Howard Wright, Marshall Goodwin, and James W. Goodwin, eds., *The German American Experience in Missouri*, (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1986) 27-28.

<sup>16</sup> Debbie Sheals and Becky L. Snider, *Historic Resources of Washington, Missouri*, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 1999, 6-8.

<sup>17</sup> Charles Van Ravenswaay, *The Arts and Architecture of German Settlements in Missouri; A Survey of a Vanishing Culture*, (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1977.)28.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. 28.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. 23-24.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. 31.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. 24,32.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. 11.

<sup>23</sup> Robyn Burnett and Ken Luebbering, *German Settlement in Missouri, New Land, Old Ways*, (Columbia, MO, University of Missouri Press, 1996), 33.

<sup>24</sup> *Goodspeed's History of Franklin, Jefferson Washington Crawford and Gasconade Counties Counties, MO*, (Greenville, SC: Southern Press, Inc., 2001), 229.

<sup>25</sup> Van Ravenswaay, 20.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. 23.

<sup>27</sup> Friends of The Peltzer House Barn. "Peltzer House Barn," Tour Brochure.

<sup>28</sup> H. F. Hanson. "Abstract of Title for Real Estate Situated in the County of Franklin County and State of Missouri, to wit: the Northeast qr. of the Southwest qr. and the Northwest qr. of the Southeast qr. of Section 36, Township 43 North of Range 4 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> P.M. containing 80 acres more or less." Union, MO: H. F. Hanson, Abstractor.

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### Narrative Statement of Significance (Continued)

<sup>29</sup> Land Patents for Christian Keller, Franklin County, Missouri (Section 36, Township 43-N). April 15, 1853 and January 15, 1856. (Available at Bureau of Land Management website: [www.glorerecords.blm.gov](http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov)). Access date: 19 December 2008.

<sup>30</sup> Gerald, Missouri, Mel and Ruth Kohl's Archives and Notes, "Letter from Henry Ketterer to Cousin Theodore, March 5<sup>th</sup> 1975."

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census of the United States, 1860 Population, 2:923.

<sup>34</sup> United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census of the United States, 1870 Population, 1:206.

<sup>35</sup> Missouri Agricultural Census. Lyon Township, Franklin County, 1870. Pages 5-6.

<sup>36</sup> "Gerald Wanderings: The History of Gerald, 1830-1976," 131.

<sup>37</sup> C.S. Jeffries. *Atlas Map of Franklin County, Missouri*, (St. Louis: St. Louis Atlas Publishing Company), 1878.

<sup>38</sup> Missouri Agricultural Census. Lyon Township, Franklin County, 1880. Page 43.

<sup>39</sup> "Gerald Wanderings: The History of Gerald, 1830-1976," 131.

<sup>40</sup> H. F. Hanson.

<sup>41</sup> The discussion is based upon Van Ravenswaay, pages vii-viii and Sheals and Snider, 5-17, 27-42.

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United States Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census. *Eighth Census of the United States, 1860: Population*, 2:923.

United States Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census. *Ninth Census of the United States, 1870: Population*, 1:206.

## UTM References

|         |         |          |         |         |          |
|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|----------|
| A. Zone | Easting | Northing | B. Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 15      | 646750  | 4254825  | 15      | 646840  | 4254380  |
| C. Zone | Easting | Northing | D. Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 15      | 646560  | 4254320  | 15      | 646200  | 4254420  |
| E. Zone | Easting | Northing | F. Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 15      | 646200  | 4254920  | 15      | 646380  | 4254820  |

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
Franklin County, MO

Section number 10 Page 31

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### Verbal Boundary Description

THE EAST HALF OF THE NORTHWEST QR., AND THE WEST HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST QR. OF THE NORTHEAST QR. ALSO PART OF THE NORTHWEST QR. OF THE NORTHEAST QR. DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWING: BEGINNING AT A POINT 220 YARDS WEST OF THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SAID QR. QR. SECTION, THENCE WEST TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER THEROF, THENCE NORTH 220 YARDS ALONG THE WEST LINE OF SAID QR. QR. SECTION TO A CORNER, THENCE SOUTHEAST TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING. ALL IN SECTION THIRTY SIX (36), TOWNSHIP FORTY-THREE (43) NORTH, RANGE FOUR (4) WEST OF THE 5<sup>TH</sup> P.M., EXCEPTING THEREFROM A STRIP OF GROUND OF THE UNIFORM WIDTH OF 12 CHAINS OFF THE NORTH SIDE OF THE NORTHEAST QR. OF THE NORTHWEST QR. IN SECTION 36, TOWNSHIP 43 NORTH, RANGE 4 WEST OF THE 5<sup>TH</sup> P.M. ALSO EXCEPTING THEREFROM PART OF THE WEST HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST QR. OF THE NORTHEAST QR. IN SECTION THIRTY-SIX (36), TOWNSHIP FORTY-THREE (43) NORTH, RANGE FOUR (4) WEST OF THE 5<sup>TH</sup> P.M. DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: BEGINNING AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF LOT 1 OF ROY'S RANCH, A SUBDIVISION AS PER PLAT OF RECORD IN PLAT BOOK M, PAGE 327, THENCE NORTH 0 DEGREES 18 MINUTES WEST ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID WEST HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST QR. OF THE NORTHEAST QR. 663.02 FEET TO AN IRON ROD, THENCE SOUTH 63 DEGREES 03 MINUTES WEST 487.84 FEET TO AN IRON PIPE, THENCE SOUTH 44 DEGREES 46 MINUTES EAST 622.43 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING AND ACCORDING TO PLAT OF SURVEY MADE BY EDWARD P. TURNER. REGISTERED LAND SURVEYOR DURING THE MONTH OF AUGUST, 1984.

### Boundary Justification

These boundaries incorporate the current boundaries of the farm according to the property's legal description. The main area of the farm and all of the historic structures on the farm are included within the confines of this legal description. The acreage was all part of a larger farm owned and operated by German immigrant Christian Keller, some acreage of which was first sold as early as 1889. Other acreage once owned by Keller is no longer associated with the farm and has not been evaluated for significance.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**  
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**Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead**  
**Franklin County, MO**

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**Photo Log**

Photographer: Sheila Findall

November 2007

Negatives with Karen Bode Baxter: 5811 Delor Street, St. Louis, MO 63109

Photo #1: Exterior, looking north at southwest and southeast elevations of the house, barn and chicken coop

Photo #2: Exterior, looking south from across the lake north of the house

Photo #3: Exterior, looking east at the northwest façade and southwest elevation of the house

Photo #4: Exterior, looking south at northwest and northeast elevations of the house and barn

Photo #5: Interior, house, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, north room, looking north from south corner

Photo #6: Interior, house, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, east room, looking south from north corner

Photo #7: Interior, house, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, south room, looking north from south corner

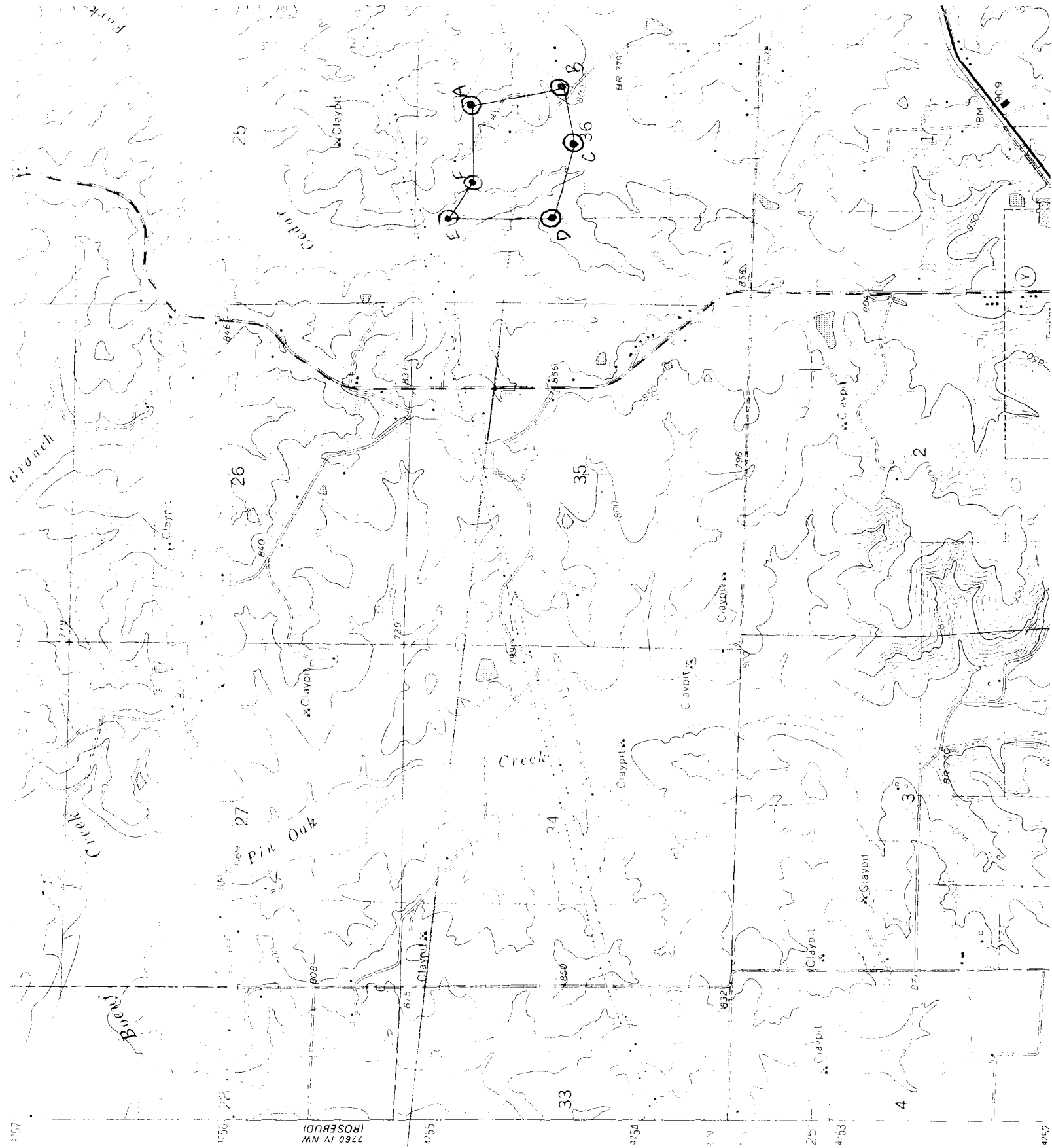
Photo #8: Interior, house, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, west room, looking north from south corner

Photo #9: Interior, barn, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, looking northwest into summer kitchen from storage

Photo #10: Interior, barn, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, looking northeast into garden shed

Photo #11: Interior, barn, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, looking west from east corner

Photo #12: Interior, chicken coop, looking west from east corner



Christian and Anna  
Keller Farmstead  
Franklin County MO

- A-15-646750/4254825
- B-15-646840/4254380
- C-15-646540/4254220
- D-15-646200/4254420
- E-15-646200/4254420
- F-15-646380/4254820

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
Franklin County, MO

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### Narrative Statement of Significance (Continued)

Franklin County's earliest American frontiersmen began to settle the area in 1803, when Kincaid Caldwell moved into the region.<sup>1</sup> Relatively few people entered the county over the following decade, but after the War of 1812, American settlers started arriving in larger numbers. Most of these earliest settlers came from the southern United States. As the population grew, extending further west from St. Louis along the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, the larger Missouri counties were subdivided. Franklin County was formed in 1818 out of the southwestern portion of St. Louis County. The county was named for Benjamin Franklin and the original county seat was located at Newport. Newport, which held Franklin County's first store, was located more than twenty miles from the Missouri River.<sup>2</sup> Despite its relative isolation from large settlements, however, settlers from around the world were attracted to Franklin County. The area was easily accessed via the state's early transportation routes, including the Missouri River, which in turn granted access to the Mississippi River. Additionally, the county held rich farmland and a plethora of mineral resources. With increasing settlement, the county was again divided in 1820 when Gasconade County was formed from the western portion of Franklin County. Shortly afterward, in 1826, the Franklin county seat was moved to Union.<sup>3</sup>

Franklin County was able to grow consistently not only because of its rich farmland, but due to rich supplies of other natural resources. The first lead mine was discovered in the county and worked beginning in the late 1780s.<sup>4</sup> Additional lead mines opened at the turn of the century, and new discoveries of lead deposits were soon discovered elsewhere in the county, including the Golconda Lead Mine, a surface mine that averaged production of 300,000 pounds per year. The county also had large deposits of iron, zinc, copper, and fire (diaspore) clay, and a glass deposit was mined near Labadie. Also mined were Egyptian and ornamental marble deposits. All of these heavy, bulky goods were profitable because the Missouri River formed the northern border of the county, making shipment to the Mississippi River easier than land transportation. By the mid-1800s, the Missouri Pacific and the St. Louis-San Francisco Railroads provided service to the area.<sup>5</sup>

### LYON TOWNSHIP/ GERALD HISTORY

In 1807, the first settlers arrived to what is now Franklin County's Lyon Township, originally part of the Boeuf Township. Though exact identities of these settlers have been lost, local traditions provide a fair amount of information.<sup>6</sup> The first Euro-American settlers in the Lyon Township area arrived in 1819, when Robert, Absolom, and James Greenstreet; William and James Hummel; Robert and William Larimore; Enoch Greenstreet and Richard Richison established farms in the area. A steady trickle of people entered the township over the following decades and by 1865, the population had grown sufficiently that Lyon Township was formed from Boeuf Township.<sup>7</sup> By that time, the area had a large German population and a distinctly German heritage.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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**SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD**

**NRIS Reference Number:** 08000867

**Date Listed:** 8-6-09

**Property Name:** Keller, Christian and Anna Farmstead

**County:** Franklin

**State:** Missouri

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

  
Signature of the Keeper

8-6-09  
Date of Action

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**Amended Items in Nomination**

The barn should be classified as noncontributing until research can confirm that it was built during the period of significance or that it relates to the one of the areas of significance that obviously pertain to house (Ethnic/German, Exploration/Settlement, or Architecture). The building is documented as a "late nineteenth century" addition to the property. With its masonite siding and other features that may convey a later construction date or remodeling, a convincing case for its construction during the period of significance (1855-1889) has not been made.

The evolution of the building needs to be explained. A thorough examination of the building's materials and structure should reveal a chronology of construction of the various sections and may lead to some conclusions about a construction date. Which part was built first? Was the summer kitchen added to or was it attached to an earlier building? Further research about the building's uses over time should help explain the form and features of the building. For example, although known as a "barn" today, when used as a summer kitchen the building could have housed other domestic functions, such as housing for hired hands. Interestingly, the drawing on page 7-16 labels the building as a "Cottage Barn." If this term has local or regional meaning, this should be explained. The shuttered, sash windows upstairs convey an impression other than "hayloft," used to describe the second floor on page 7-4.

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**Notification and Distribution**

The Missouri State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

This record was distributed to the following:

National Register property file

Nominating Authority, without nomination attachment





Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
Franklin County, MO  
Photo No. 1





Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
Franklin County, MO  
Photo No. 2





Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
Franklin County, MO  
Photo No. 3





Christian and Anna Kelly Farmstead  
Franklin County, MO  
Photo No. 4



Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
Franklin County, MO  
Photo No. 5





Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
Franklin County, Mo  
Photo No. 6



Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
Franklin County, MO  
Photo No. 7





Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
Franklin County, MO  
Photo No. 8



Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
Franklin County, MO  
Photo No. 9





Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
Franklin County, mo  
Photo No. 10





Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
Franklin County, MO  
Photo No. 11



Christian and Anna Keller Farmstead  
Franklin County, Mo  
Photo No. 12