

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name Roberts, J. F., Octagonal Barn

other names/site number Clark Octagonal Barn

2. Location

street & number junction of Highways B and 48 [n/a] not for publication

city or town Rea [X] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Andrew code 003 zip code 64480

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [])

Claire F. Blackwell 6 Oct. 99
Signature of certifying official/Title Claire F. Blackwell/Deputy SHPO 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:	Signature of the Keeper	Date
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register See continuation sheet [] .	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet [] .	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, explain See continuation sheet [] .	_____	_____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property		
		Contributing	Noncontributing	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	1	0	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	0	0	sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	0	0	structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	0	0	objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	1	0	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
 AGRICULTURE/agricultural outbuilding

Current Functions
 AGRICULTURE/agricultural outbuilding

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 OTHER: octagonal barn

Materials
 Foundation stone
 walls wood
 roof metal
 other wood

Narrative Description

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

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

ARCHITECTURE

Periods of Significance

Circa 1900

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person(s)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major 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: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

A. Zone	Easting	Northing	B. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	351140	4436010			
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 Andrew M. Halter/Intern

organization DNR/DSP/Historic Preservation Program date July 14, 1999

street & number Post Office Box 176 telephone (573)751-4692

city or town Jefferson City state Missouri zip code 65102

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 Mr. and Mrs. Paul Allen Clark

street & number 16040 Highway 48 telephone (816) 526-2422

city or town Rea state Missouri zip code 64480

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Roberts, J.F., Octagonal Barn
Andrew County, MO

Summary: The J. F. Roberts barn is located at the junctions of highways B and 48, one mile east of Rea, Andrew County, Missouri. The barn was built circa 1900 to house livestock and provide storage for farm supplies. This two story octagonal wood frame structure is constructed with interior post and beam framing. The walls are painted white and covered with car siding; this was added in 1955, and covers the original wood siding. A pent roof covers the lower portion of the building; a central projecting hipped roof covers the area that is used for hay storage. Seamed metal might have been the original roofing material; however, the present roofing material is corrugated tin. This roofing material was replaced prior to 1946. Missouri's northern region is typified by gently rolling hills. The Roberts farm is located between the Platte and One Hundred and Two Rivers which is a smaller upland area of rolling topography, which is best developed in the northern part around Rea.¹ The barn is situated among other farm buildings on the Clark farm, so the function of the barn and its relationship to the property is clearly visible. The foundation, siding and roofing materials, windows and door locations, and most mechanical equipment, all of which are subject to renovation and replacement throughout the normal use of a barn, while these feature are important they are secondary to the overall integrity of the buildings which remains.

Narrative: The barn is a two story octagonal structure, with interior post and beam framing. The walls are painted white and covered with car siding, added in 1955, it covers the original wood siding. A pent roof covers the lower portion of the building; an eight sided hipped roof covers the central area used for hay storage. Seamed metal might have been the original roofing material; however, the present roofing material is corrugated tin. This roofing material was replaced prior to 1946.

The main level is accessed through the principal barn entrance, a 12' wide and 9' high opening on the south elevation. It has a metal gate, but no door. This elevation like all the rest measures 23' in length and 9' in height. The interior of the ground floor is articulated by a post and beam support system into two rings and a central hay loft, all octagonal. The rings are articulated by support posts.

The southeast and southwest elevations have no openings. The north, northeast, and northwest elevations each have an opening or window that is 2.6' wide and 2.11' tall; these were originally used to clean manure out of the barn. They each have a wood insert that can easily be taken out and do not require glass panes that can easily be broken. The east elevation has an opening that is 12' wide and 9' high. It has two doors that are replacements, which are each 6' wide and 9' high.

The west elevation has one opening that is 12' wide and 9' high. This opens into a shed addition added to the barn in 1952. This shed addition is constructed of car siding, similar to that used on the exterior of the barn. The addition measures 24' across the front and 19' across the rear; the west elevation is 14' wide. The interior has a water trough. In the center of the rear wall is a spigot, used to water cattle.

¹ Twelfth Census of the United States. Volumes V & VI, Agriculture part I & II. (Washington: U.S. Census Office, 1902), pg. 308.

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Section 7 Page 2

Roberts, J.F., Octagonal Barn
Andrew County, MO

The interior of the building remains much as it was when it was built. The outer ring is 12' wide. All eight sides are enclosed to form a manger, each section is 13' in length, 4' in height, and 3' wide. In the center is a hay mow used to store hay.

The second story is reached by a ladder constructed of 2x4s attached to interior supports. The upper section of the southeast elevation has two doors that open to allow a hay fork to transport hay into the center area for storage. Each of the remaining elevations have an opening or window with a wooden insert that can be opened to provide ventilation and light.

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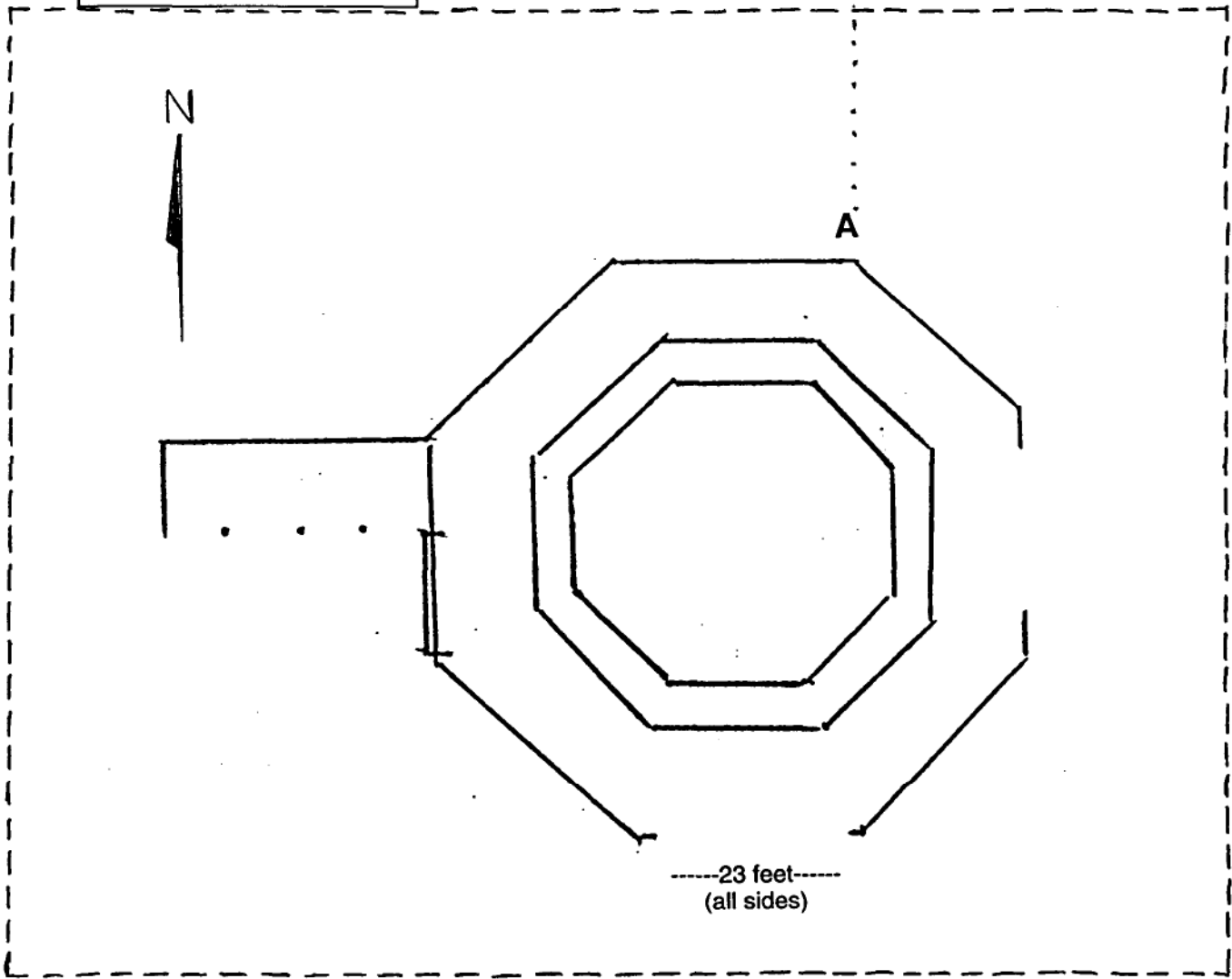
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Section 7 Page 3

**Roberts, J.F., Octagonal Barn
Andrew County, MO**

Site plan: lower level
(not to scale)

Boundary: - - - - -



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Section 8 Page 4

Roberts, J.F., Octagonal Barn
Andrew County, MO

Summary: The Roberts Octagonal Barn, Rea vicinity, Andrew County, is significant under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture. Constructed circa 1900, the Roberts Barn provided shelter for cattle and storage for farm supplies. The Roberts barn is a well preserved representative example of a early 20th century farm building and in Missouri it is a rare example of an uncommon building form. There are fifteen round and polygonal barns known to exist throughout the state, three of which, including the Roberts barn, are of octagonal design. Octagonal barns were promoted between 1850 and 1900 as a way to save money, time and space. Promoters of octagonal barns believed that they were superior to rectangular barns because they were less expensive to build, contained more space, had a self supporting roof, were more resistant to wind and had a shorter distance between any two points in the barn.² This was a time when farmers accomplished nearly all of their work by hand, and convenience counted. The octagonal barn form is a product of a historical movement within American agriculture aimed at making farm practices more efficient and economical.

Architecture

Eric Arthur and Dudley Witney stated in their book, The Barn, A Vanishing Landmark in North America, "if the ordinary rectangular barn is considered a vanishing landmark in North America, those of unusual geometric shape must be fast approaching extinction."³

When farming began on the subsistence level, few if any farm outbuildings were required. Most farms consisted of the house, a smokehouse, possibly a summer kitchen and maybe a small barn. With surplus crops and the evolution of farming from a way of survival to more of a market economy, farmers began to build more farm buildings. These buildings tended to be small and built for a single function with examples ranging from corncribs to hay barns to livestock shelters to storage sheds. By the last half of the nineteenth century, at a time when farming was much more economically based, farmers began to construct large multi-purpose barns. It was best summarized by Byron D. Halstad in Barn Plans and Outbuildings, "With the increase of wealth, and we may add of good sense and enlarged ideas, among the farmers of the country, there is a gradual but very decided improvement in farm architecture. The old custom was to build small barns, to add others on three sides of a yard, perhaps of several yards, and to construct sheds, pig pens, corn houses, and such minor structures as might seem desirable. Compared with well arranged barn, a group of small buildings is inconvenient and more expensive to keep in good repair."⁴

Therefore, farmers were being called to combine their different barns and their functions of equipment, grain, hay, straw, and animal storage into one barn, a necessary departure from the past in order to accommodate the new equipment and bolster the efficiency of the farmer who was increasingly concerned

² Lowell J. Soike. Without Right Angles, The Round Barns of Iowa. (Des Moines: Iowa State Historical Department, Office of Historic Preservation, 1983), pg. 10-11.

³ Eric Arthur and Dudley White. The Barn, A Vanishing Landmark in North America. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1988), pg. 147.

⁴ Reprinted as Barns, Sheds, and Outbuildings. (Brambleboro: Stephen Greene Press, 1977), pg. 3-18.

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Section 8 Page 5

Roberts, J.F., Octagonal Barn
Andrew County, MO

with profits. Efficiency could be increased because instead of several buildings to maintain and travel between, all functions could take place under one roof, thus freeing up the farmer for other pursuits. This trend continued into the twentieth century and although some specialized barns, particularly dairy barns, came back into vogue in the second decade of the twentieth century, many farmers followed the multi purpose precedent.

Rectangular barns were easy and cheap to work with, Elliot Stewart admitted. Stewart an advocate of octagonal barns believed that with new technology of the hay fork made it possible to increase production, taking more hay into a mow than was possible by hand, this resulted in a larger and higher rectangular barns required the introduction of interior posts which obstructed operation.⁵ What Stewart termed "concentration" was another consideration. Following the advancement in agriculture elsewhere in the United States Stewart was motivated to consolidate all the functions in one barn.⁶

As farming grew more into an economically based business rather than just a way of life, innovations were sought that could help the farmer increase efficiency, productivity and profits. The farm journals were full of new ways to achieve these ends, with the ideas being presented by innovations with such intense conviction that is seemed the new idea was rooted deep in one's psyche and would thus render the user complete and thoroughly modern.

The Genesee Farmer stated in their April 1854 issue that octagonal barns presented advantages over all other types for dairy purposes and fattening meat cattle. One can have the feed for all in the center of the barn.⁷ Octagonal barns provided farmers with more space for less money than what they would spend on a square barn. The octagonal barn was popular between 1850-1900.

Elliot W. Stewart is credited with the initial design and promotion of the octagonal barn in the United States.⁸ In the summer of 1874, in upstate New York, Elliot W. Stewart lost four rectangular barns to fire. Stewart a lecturer at Cornell University and editor of the Livestock Journal decided to replace the four barns with a single new barn of octagon design. He felt that the 5,350 square feet of space provided by his eighty-foot diameter octagon would be as beneficial as the 7,000 square feet of space contained in those destroyed. Stewart built the barn and then sat out to publicize his achievements in the Livestock Journal. Listing the advantages of the octagonal barn over rectangular barns. Stewart clarified that octagonal barns were cheaper to build because fewer materials were needed to enclose the same area as a rectangular barn with the same wall height; the roof of octagonal cones was very strong and self-supported, thus freeing up interior spaces from poles and purlins; octagonal barns were resistant to wind and could be built taller than rectangular barns in windy locations; for feeding, square or circular barns had

⁵ Allen Nobel and Hubert Wilhelm. The Farm Barns of the American Midwest. (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1995), pg. 195.

⁶ Soike, pg. 10-11.

⁷ Genesee Farmer. Octagon Barns. April 1854, pg. 119

⁸ Arthur and White, pg. 147-149.

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Roberts, J.F., Octagonal Barn
Andrew County, MO

shorter distance between any two points in the barn.⁹ At a time when farmers moved everything by hand inside the barn, convenience counted.

Readers began writing to the paper to obtain copies of his plan. The Cultivator and Country Gentleman of Albany and the American Agriculturist of New York City reprinted Stewart's article in their publications. The idea continued to flourish as seen by two books, Dairy Farming by J. P. Sheldon, which outlined the advantages of octagonal structures to dairy farmers and Feeding Animals written by Stewart. In addition and equally important to the development of the octagonal barn form was the fact that the barn could combine several functions under one roof. Storage of animals, feed and equipment was made economical and efficient in comparison to the many small barns that were previously used to do the work of this one structure. The octagon shape lent itself well to the practice of post and beam construction that the farmers used for building oblong barns. The straight sides of the octagonal were joined together at an angle so that the walls could easily be built with post and beam. Therefore, the octagonal barn seemed to be a logical step into the future while using a familiar construction technique of the past.¹⁰ In 1884, a pleased Stewart noted his satisfaction not only with his own octagon barn but also the fact that some 30 to 40 had been built in various parts of the country. Stewart did not recommend the true circular plan because he felt it too expensive to build.

An Iowa agriculturist, Lorenzo S. Coffin, constructed an octagonal barn in 1867 for the same reasons that Stewart built his, but Coffin did not publicize his barn until after Stewart began his octagonal barn campaign. The differences between Coffin's and Stewart's designs revolved around two main points: entries and the type of roof adopted. Coffin built his barn in a natural depression so that both the lower and upper entries were on natural grade while Stewart accessed his upper level with a ramp, often earthen. Stewart's roof, on the other hand, was far superior with his sectional cone virtually free of support posts. Coffin's modified hip design required posts which were continually in the way, clogging up the floor area of the hay mow.¹¹

After World War II, changes in farming forever changed the face of the farms built environment as large tractors and equipment eclipsed the productivity and efficiency of horse-drawn and early gas and steam powered implements. Consequently, the historic barns that had served the farmer well and stood as testaments to his hard work and new stature in the American mainstream economy became obsolete. Fewer draft animals were needed and the new, large equipment did not fit into the old structures. This trend continues today and historic barns and other agricultural outbuildings are disappearing from the Missouri and American landscape at alarming rates.

Agriculture has always been an important part of the history and development of Missouri. Beginning as subsistence farming or raising just enough to survive, agriculture eventually grew into a surplus and as the

⁹ Soike, pg. 10-11.

¹⁰ Soike, pg. 10-11.

¹¹ Sokie, pg. 12-16.

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Roberts, J.F., Octagonal Barn
Andrew County, MO

surplus became bountiful, farming evolved into a business. Concurrent with this development, farmers started to think of efficient agricultural practices and as a result, new multi purpose barns began to be built. These multi-purpose barns incorporated several functions, crop, animal, and equipment storage into one structure, thus replacing the numerous buildings that previously served the needs of the owners.

Historical Background

Andrew County is located in northwest Missouri, and was named in honor of Andrew Jackson Davis, a prominent resident in 1841. Platte township was formed in 1872.¹ To understand the importance of this octagonal barn, the agricultural history of Missouri must be explored. Geographically, Missouri was comprised of the northern region, typified by gently rolling hills and fertile farm land. Specifically Andrew County, the divide between the Platte and One Hundred and Two Rivers is a smaller upland area of more rolling topography, which is widest and best developed in the northern part around Rea, which is where the Roberts Farm is located.¹²

At the time of the 1900 census, Andrew County was well supplied with railroads. There were no paved roads, but they did have a good system of earth roads. Telephone lines and mail delivery reached each home. St. Joseph was the principal market for all farm products. Hogs, sheep, and cattle were shipped there by rail. The population for Andrew County in 1900 was 15,150, of which 10,000 lived on farms. The population actually living on farms, there was one person for every 27 acres.¹³

Since the early settlement there have been no major changes in the principal agricultural products of this region. The leading crops then and in 1900 were corn, wheat, oats, clover and bluegrass and other grasses of various kinds for hay and pasturing. Corn was the most important crop in all parts of the county, especially important in the northeastern part of the county where stock raising dominated. Corn was the leading crop for the state at that time as well. The raising and feeding of livestock has always been an important part of agriculture. In 1900 agriculture as a whole consisted largely of stock raising and grain farming, in which nearly all grain except for wheat is marketed in the form of livestock or livestock products.¹⁴

In 1900 the typical farm in Andrew County was well improved and equipped. Well constructed, woven wire fences and cross fences were common. The houses were modern with surrounding lawns and shade trees. There was usually a home orchard and well kept garden. Other farm improvements included one or more large well painted barns, hog houses, poultry houses, a garage, and other out buildings.¹⁵

¹² Twelfth Census of the United States. Volumes V & VI, Agriculture part I & II. (Washington: U.S. Census Office, 1902), pg. 308.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pg. 356.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pg. 308.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pg. 412.

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Roberts, J.F., Octagonal Barn
Andrew County, MO

Farms ranged in size from a few acres to several hundred acres, although there were not many large farms. The most common size was 160 acres. According to census records in 1900 the average farm size for the county was 111 acres.

J. F. Roberts married Maud Wilson on August 21, 1894. They began housekeeping on what was referred to by family members as the south farm which was owned by his father John Pierce Roberts. J. F. Roberts soon decided that the south farm was not best for year around use. He convinced his father J. P. Roberts to move to Rea which would allow him use of both farms. It is here where he built his octagonal barn to house short horn cattle¹⁶. After he became situated at his new farm, the Cloverdale Stockfarm¹⁷, J. F. Roberts along with his father contacted Columbus Hobson a local carpenter to draw plans and construct a cattle barn which would best serve their needs. There is no documentary evidence available stating why J. F. Roberts chose to construct an octagonal barn. One might assume that since many universities at this time were promoting barns of the round and polygonal form, he contacted some one at Northwest Missouri State Normal School, in Maryville. Farm journals of this era often provided readers with articles and even in some instances, plans for barns of this type.

In 1946 Clifford Clark and his son, Paul acquired the farm, where they began raising Aberdeen Angus Cattle. The barn is still used to provide shelter for cattle and storage of farm supplies, its original intention. The Clark farm is very much an active farm.

¹⁶ Letter from Clyde Roberts to Mrs. Francis Clark, 1998.

¹⁷ Andrew County Centennial Celebration. (Savannah, Missouri, 1941), pg. 56.

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Roberts, J.F., Octagonal Barn
Andrew County, MO

Articles:

Dickerson I. W. "Round Versus Rectangular Barns." Wallace's Farmer, 1918.

Wing, Joseph E. "Octagon Cattle Barn." Breeder's Gazette, 1902.

"Octagon Barns." Genesee Farmer, 1854.

Books:

Andrew County Centennial Celebration. Savannah, Missouri, : N.p., 1941.

Arthur, Eric and Dudley White. The Barn, A Vanishing Landmark in North America. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1988.

Fowler, O. S. A Home For All. New York: Fowler and Wells, 1854.

History of Andrew and DeKalb Counties, Missouri. Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1888.

McMackin, Dorothy J. Newspaper Gleanings of Andrew County and Surrounding Area. Slayton, Oregon: Jordan Valley Heritage House, 1986.

Nobel, Allen, and Hubert Wilhelm. The Farm Barns of the American Midwest. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1995.

Paul, Lilah Townsend. Picture Book of Andrew County. Savannah, Missouri: Savannah Reporter, 1904.

Radford, William A. Radford's Practical Barn Plans. Chicago: The Radford Architectural Company, 1909.

Schnitzius, Joseph E. Maps of Andrew County, Missouri. Savannah, Missouri: N.p., 1935.

Soike, Lowell J. Without Right Angles: The Round Barns of Iowa. Des Moines: Iowa State Historical Department, Office of Historic Preservation, 1983.

Twelfth Census of the United States. Volumes V & VI, Agriculture part I & II. Washington, D.C.: United States Census Office, 1902.

Maps:

Atlas of Andrew County, Missouri. Philadelphia: Acme Publishing Company, 1898.

Atlas of Andrew County, Missouri. Philadelphia: Acme Publishing Company, 1909.

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**Roberts, J.F., Octagonal Barn
Andrew County, MO**

Atlas of Andrew County, Missouri. Philadelphia: Acme Publishing Company, 1926.

Letters:

Roberts, Clyde, son of J. F. Roberts, to Mr. and Mrs. Paul Clark, 1998.

10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description: Beginning at the northeast corner of the barn (see point A on accompanying site plan), proceed north thirty feet; then proceed east thirty feet to the point of beginning; then proceed south 135 feet; then proceed west 160 feet; then proceed north 135 feet; then proceed east 160 feet to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification: The boundary has been drawn to include only the octagonal barn. Originally the barn was part of a grouping of historic farm buildings. However, most of the historic buildings have been replaced or altered. Because of this loss of integrity, the entire farmstead was not considered significant under the area of agriculture. The octagonal barn was evaluated as significant in the area of architecture, as representative of progressive farming methods and trends embodied in a functional, somewhat experimental, and relatively unique agricultural building. It is the only building which represents the area of significance.

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Section Photographs Page 11

**Roberts, J.F., Octagonal Barn
Andrew County, MO**

The following information is the same for all photographs:

Roberts, J. F., Octagonal Barn
Highways B and 48, Rea vicinity, Andrew County, Missouri
Scott Myers
July 1, 1999
Missouri Cultural Resource Inventory, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Jefferson City, Missouri.

List of photographs

- Photo 1. The approach to the J.F. Roberts Octagonal Barn, camera facing east.
- Photo 2. J. F. Roberts Octagonal Barn camera facing north.
- Photo 3. J. F. Roberts Octagonal Barn view of primary entrance.
- Photo 4. J. F. Roberts Octagonal Barn camera facing west.
- Photo 5. J. F. Roberts Octagonal Barn camera facing east.
- Photo 6. J. F. Roberts Octagonal Barn interior view showing manger.
- Photo 7. J. F. Roberts Octagonal Barn interior view showing barn peak and construction techniques.

















Clark Barn

*ZEKAN-ROBBINS
Photographers*