NPS Form 10-900
Oct. 1990

OMB No. 10024-0018

NATIONAL REGISTER
LISTED

APR 22 2009

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A) Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-9000a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Holmberg and Johnson Blacksmith Shop

Other name/site number 113-3550-0051

2. Location

Street & number 122 N. Main Street ☐ not for publication

City or town Lindsborg ☐ vicinity

State Kansas Code KS County McPherson Code 113 Zip code 67456

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.)

Patrick Zollner DSHPO 2-27-09

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Kansas State Historical Society

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 commenting official /Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I herby certify that the property is Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

☒ 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:)

Holmberg and Johnson Blacksmith Shop
Name of Property

McPherson County, Kansas
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- [x] private
- [ ] public-local
- [ ] public-State
- [ ] public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- [x] building(s)
- [ ] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	1	total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter Categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Vernacular

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation
Walls - Brick
Roof - Corrugated Metal
Other

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

Holmberg and Johnson Blacksmith Shop
Name of Property

McPherson County, Kansas
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register

☒ **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 likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

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

☐ **B** removed from it 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

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

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

c.1900-1954

Significant Dates

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder
Unknown

9. Major Bibliographical 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:

Holmberg and Johnson Blacksmith Shop
Name of Property

McPherson County, Kansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property- less than one

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	14	613586	4270158
2			
3			
4			

☐ 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 Brenda R. Spencer

Organization Spencer Preservation Date 31 October, 2008

Street & number 10150 Onaga Road Telephone 785-456-9857

City or town Wamego State Kansas Zip code 66547

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 SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

Name Jim Prugh

Street & number 2151 S. Parfet Drive Telephone 303-988-4521

City or town Lakewood State CO Zip code 80227-1944

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16) U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

7. Narrative Description

The Holmberg and Johnson Blacksmith Shop is a one-story brick structure located in downtown Lindsborg, Kansas. The building is an excellent representative of an early permanent commercial building. It is rectangular in form with a gable roof that is obscured from street view by a stepped brick parapet on the front facade of the building. The upper facade features a sign painted c.1900 by Ephraim Malm of the Malm Brothers Painting Company in Lindsborg, a firm later known throughout the Midwest for their decorative stenciling process. The building has a central door flanked by individual windows on the street facade, rather than a traditional commercial storefront. Original features including the forge, sliding door, a ceiling fan, and hooks, rings, and window grills, are extant and clearly portray the building's original function as a blacksmith shop.

Setting

The Blacksmith Shop is located in the center of the 100 block of N. Main Street in downtown Lindsborg. The building at 122 N. Main, is located on the east side of the street facing west. It is a free-standing structure, set back from the street. Historically, the wagon shop was located in an attached building/addition off the rear of the brick structure (which functioned as the blacksmith shop). The wagon shop is no longer extant. A contemporary garage/shop is located at the rear of the property, currently occupied by a separate business and accessed off the alley at the rear. A small rear bay connects the historic brick building to the rear shop. The site is uniquely configured with a small commercial bay c.1920 located off the front northwest corner of the original building. This bay originally extended from the corner of the building to the sidewalk, flush with the adjacent commercial building on the north. It has been expanded to the east and is now flush with the addition on the rear of the blacksmith shop. A wood deck/porch was constructed on the front (west) and south sides of the blacksmith shop in the 1980s. The deck has a flat roof structure with opaque fiberglass panels, wood posts, and a wood porch rail. The position of the building set back from the sidewalk, creates a small green space in front of the building that is landscaped as a flower garden. See "additional documentation" at the end of the nomination for site plan.

Exterior

The historic brick structure is a simple rectangular form with a gable roof. The roof is corrugated metal, obscured by the parapet on the front facade. The front facade is red brick with a stepped parapet. The original entrance was a sliding wood door in the center of the front facade. A pair of paneled wood doors in the original opening now serves as the primary building entrance but the historic door and hardware are in place and visible on the building's interior. The entrance is flanked by a single window on each side. Single windows are also located along the south facade; the north facade now abuts the building at 124 and the former windows are infilled. The existing windows are 2/2 double-hung wood windows. It appears that the window sashes have formerly been replaced but massive aged timbers are in place at the sills, clearly reflecting the original construction. The upper facade is a painted sign designed and painted by Ephraim Malm around the time the brick building was constructed c.1900. The sign reads, "Holmberg and Johnson Blacksmith and Wagon Shop" and includes a large shield. The sign has been formerly been repainted but retains its original design.

The small brick storefront was constructed off the northwest corner of the blacksmith shop between 1912 and 1926. Addressed as 124 N. Main Street but included in the legal description of 122 N. Main, the space is believed to have always housed a separate commercial business. The "building" is a narrow rectangular plan with brick facades visible on the south and west sides. The existing front facade is contemporary, comprised of board and batten siding and a gabled parapet over the original brick. The original brick on the front facade is visible on the south side. The only openings in the front facade are a single door and a projecting bay

window. There are two individual windows on the south facade that overlook the porch on the front of the blacksmith shop. One of these windows is a modern projecting window, the other is a 2/2 double-hung wood window like those in the blacksmith shop. In recent years (c.1970s), the building was expanded to the east and is now accessible from the rear bay on the blacksmith shop.

The existing brick building was constructed as a blacksmith shop c.1900, replacing a former frame structure. The brick structure is in near-original condition, clearly portraying its historic design and function. The 1905 Sanborn Map (the first available following the 1899 construction), illustrates a wagon shop was located off the rear of the blacksmith shop and a small free-standing frame structure near the rear of the site. The rear structure was labeled "Blacksmith Wholesale" on the 1912 Sanborn Map. Neither of the rear elements remains. The ends of the north and south brick side walls are visible on the rear/east facade. Metal siding sheaths the rear facade above and around the existing small rear connecting bay. The siding likely indicates the profile of the original wagon shop where it connected to the rear of the blacksmith shop.

The existing rear bay is a one-story frame structure with vertical wood siding and a flat roof. This bay spans between the blacksmith shop and the rear shop, and spans north behind the commercial storefront at 124 N. Main. The rear shop/garage is a frame structure with a concrete slab floor and metal roof and siding. The plan form is rectangular with a gambrel roof. There is a garage bay off the alley on the east facade and sliding doors on the south, as well as two-light slider windows on the north, south, and east facades. The connecting bay and rear shop are contemporary construction and hold no historic significance.

Interior

The interior of the blacksmith shop is one large open space with a brick fireplace and chimney in the northeast quarter that functioned as the original forge (see "additional documentation" for historic image). The walls are exposed brick as they were historically. The 1926 Sanborn Map indicated that the building had an earthen floor; the existing brick floor has been installed since that time. The floor is not level; it tapers to a large metal plate in the center of the floor. From the historic photo of the building interior, it appears that this was the original wheel stand. As noted above, the original sliding wood doors on the west wall (front entrance) are intact and visible from the building's interior, including the track and hardware. Other features dating to the building's original function include hand-made metal bars/grates at some windows, and rings and hooks on the perimeter walls that were likely used to tie livestock while they were being shod. The ceiling is exposed joists with gypsum board between joists (painted black). An old ceiling fan is extant and ceiling-mounted florescent lights have been installed.

The rear bay has contemporary finishes including sheetrock walls and ceilings, vinyl tile and an exposed concrete floor. A paneled wood Dutch-door is in place between the rear bay and the rear shop; it is unclear if this is an old door re-located to a new opening or a replica. The rear shop is unfinished with a concrete slab floor and exposed structure on the walls and ceiling. The storefront addition at the northwest corner of the blacksmith shop is accessible from the street, and from the rear bay of the blacksmith shop that spans to the north behind the adjacent storefront addition. The commercial space is long and narrow with contemporary finishes including sheetrock ceiling, wood paneling on the walls, and carpeting. The blacksmith shop itself is the only interior space that retains historic features and finishes, clearly portraying its historic function.

Summary

Constructed c.1900, the Holmberg Johnson Blacksmith Shop retains a high degree of historic integrity, rarely found in commercial properties. The building is distinguished by a painted sign on the stepped parapet, historic window openings and the original timber sills, and the original sliding door that is visible on the interior.

Distinctive interior features, including the original forge, ceiling fan, window grills, and rings in the wall, combined with its utilitarian exposed finishes, convey the building's historic function. The existing storefront bay corresponds to the c.1920 configuration off the front northwest corner of the blacksmith shop but the building has been expanded and the storefront and interior have been modified. The existing rear bay and garage/shop have no historic significance. The porch and front doors are the only exterior modifications to the original brick structure. The alterations and additions do not significantly alter the building's character-defining features. The blacksmith shop clearly conveys its original design and character.

8. Statement of Significance

The Holmberg and Johnson Blacksmith Shop is being nominated to the National Register as an intact example of an early commercial building in downtown Lindsborg, Kansas. The building is significant under Criterion A in the area of Commerce. The shop is significant as a representative of early commercial businesses constructed by Swedish immigrants who founded the town of Lindsborg and is a rare example of a commercial building that retained its original use as a blacksmith shop nearly throughout its entire period of significance (1900-1954). The period of significance spans from the construction of the existing brick blacksmith shop c.1900 to 1954, the date the building ceased to function as a blacksmith/welding shop. The building portrays a high degree of historic integrity rarely seen in historic commercial buildings and is significant as an outstanding representative of a vernacular, utilitarian building that reflects its original use through original features such as the forge. The building is also significant as an example of the work of local artist, Ephraim Malm. The Malm Brothers and Company brought recognition to Lindsborg in the early twentieth century when their stenciling process was purchased and marketed by the Acme Company of Detroit.

Lindsborg

Centrally located in the state, the town of Lindsborg lies in northern McPherson County in the Smoky Hill River Valley. Although Swedes are credited with founding the town of Lindsborg, the Smoky Hill River Valley was home to Native Americans long before any towns were platted. The Indians gave the region the name Smoky Valley. According to records of sixteenth century Spanish explorers including Don Francisco Vásquez de Coronado, the inhabitants of what is now the Lindsborg area were semi-nomadic Native Americans who belonged to the Wichita tribe. Spaniards called these Kansas natives, Quivirans. The Kansas-Nebraska Act opened the area for settlement and westward expansion ultimately pushed Native Americans from the region. Kansas experienced phenomenal growth during the 1860s. By the late 1860s, the availability homestead and railroad land brought European immigrant groups to settle and farm the land in central Kansas. [1]

The town of Lindsborg began with pioneer Swedish immigrant settlement in 1869. An advance party arrived in 1868 and constructed a small building near what is now called Coronado Heights. The First Swedish Agricultural Company of Chicago purchased 13,160 acres of railroad land for the Swedish immigrant group from Värmland Province of Sweden.[2]

Swedes from the First Swedish Agricultural Company arrived in this valley from Chicago in 1869 to locate their new town. The name Lindsborg was derived from the first syllable of the last names of several officers of the Swedish Agricultural Company (SAC)-Lindgren, Lindale, Linde, and Lindh. Ultimately deciding on the present town site in Section 17, Lindsborg was laid out in November of 1869 using a tape measure and square; a post office was established in December the same year. The SAC formed The Swedish Trading Company and built a company store in the new town. They sold shares to area Swedes, making goods available locally.[3]

McPherson County was organized in March, 1870 and named after James B. McPherson. Lindsborg won the county seat at an election held in May, 1870 but its success was short-lived. Centrally located in the county, the county seat was moved to McPherson in June, 1873. Lindsborg was re-platted and officially recorded in 1876, making Lindsborg the first city in the official records of McPherson County.[4]

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[1] *Prelude to the Future: Multiple Faces of the Lindsborg Legacy: A Swedish-American Community in the Heart of Kansas* (Lindsborg: Chamber of Commerce, 1999). On-line at http://www.lindsborg.org/history.html
[2] Ibid.
[3] Emory Kempton Lindquist, *Smoky Valley People: A History of Lindsborg, Kansas* (Lindsborg: Bethany College, 1953) 147-152.
[4] Ibid.

Most of the early immigrant settlers were farmers as the organization's name suggests but it was these new Swedish Americans who established businesses along Main Street as well. Early settlers experienced the trials of all pioneers, including Mother Nature's wrath in the form of the grasshopper plague of 1874. However, the town emerged stronger and experienced expansive growth in the 1880s. The McPherson branch of the Union Pacific Railroad from Salina arrived in Lindsborg in 1879 and Lindsborg was incorporated as a city of the third class in that year. The first complete listing of Lindsborg businesses dates to 1878 and illustrates a comprehensive offering of goods and services. Dr. Carl Swenson came to Lindsborg and founded Bethany College in 1881, a remaining resource that is inextricably tied to the community's development.

By 1883, the town had grown to a population of 600 and boasted three elevators and two mills, illustrating its agrarian roots and importance of the local grain market. Lindsborg was also served by three local newspapers, including the *Kansas Posten*, the only Swedish paper published in the state. The first local bank was established and the town was gaining a reputation for it educational offerings. In addition to its public school housed in a new brick structure (1882), Bethany College had grown to an enrollment of 80 students in its short two-year history.[5]

A number of the existing commercial buildings on Main Street date to the 1880s and 1890s, a period of expansive growth. A brick yard was established south of town in 1879 by A.J. Swenson (later moved) accounting for the prominence of brick commercial structures. The community continued to prosper through the agricultural boom years in the first two decades of the twentieth century. By 1909, Lindsborg's population had reached 2000 and the value of local property more than doubled in a twenty-year period.[6] The Lindsborg Commercial Club was organized in 1903 (precursor to the Chamber of Commerce), street lights were installed in 1915 and Lincoln and Main Streets were paved in 1918.[7]

Declining crop prices stifled growth in the 1920s but the town persevered and passed the 3,000 mark in population in the 1930s. Growth stabilized in the following decades and Lindsborg maintains a population of approximately 3,300 today. The local business offerings have moved away from basic goods and services toward visitor business. Bethany College continues to be an anchor in the community and an attraction for visitors including their annual production of *The Messiah* at Easter. A 1914 article in the *Topeka Daily Capital* labeled Lindsborg "a cultural center" and the community maintains that designation today with a concentration of local artists and an ongoing effort to preserve and promote the town's Swedish heritage and cultural ties.

In the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, Swedish-American settlers built permanent buildings to house the businesses that were established to service the growing town. Many of these commercial buildings remain today reflecting the town's origins and its early development.

The Blacksmith Shop

Following the death of Alfred Linblade in 1956, the blacksmith shop (having been Lee's Welding since 1954) was sold to F.C. Thompson and stood vacant for a few years. Efforts to clean up the building spurred local interest in its history and the *Lindsborg News-Record* researched the property and featured an article on its history.[8] At that time, two of the men closely tied to the building's long-time use as the local blacksmith shop, were still alive and the primary source of information in the article. The article reports that Jacob Christian built

[5] William C. Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas- McPherson County, Lindsborg*, 1883.
[6] Ruth Bildt, *Pioneer Swedish-American Culture in Central Kansas* (Lindsborg: Lindsborg News-Record, 1965) 148-155.
[7] Smoky Valley People, 164.
[8] "Old Holmberg-Johnson Shop Has an Interesting History," *Lindsborg News-Record*, 15 June, 1959.

the original blacksmith shop, a frame structure, in 1874 and operated it for about ten years. The first Lindsborg business directory lists J. Christian as a blacksmith (1878).[9] Jacob Christian was one of the early town founders; he was elected to serve as councilman in 1879 when Lindsborg was incorporated as a city of the third-class.[10] Christian apparently brought Peter Grandquist into the business and later sold it to Grandquist and Olaf B. Berglund. An 1884 Atlas lists Christian and Grandquist as blacksmiths.[11] Grandquist and Berglund reportedly split shortly thereafter and Berglund continued in the downtown location. Deed records include transactions from Grandquist to Berglund in 1887 and 1891.[12]

The original frame building was reportedly moved to the rear of the site and the existing brick shop built in the 1890s.[13] The footprint of the building changed between 1896 and 1905 according to the available Sanborn Maps. The construction of the brick building likely dates to c.1900 when Holmberg and Johnson came into the business. The newspaper article relates Oskar Holmberg's account of their purchase of the business. He and Janne Johnson were working in McPherson at a blacksmith shop and wanted to open their own business. They were traveling to Marquette by train to explore a business prospect. They were waiting on the train in Lindsborg when they visited Berglund at his shop. That visit led to their purchase of his business. Holmberg and Johnson first leased the shop (July, 1900) and then bought the building in 1901 for the sum of $1,250.[14]

Oskar Holmberg was born in Sweden c.1869 and immigrated to the United States in 1887. In the 1900 Census, he was listed as a plumber and in the 1910 Census as a blacksmith.[15] Janne Johnson was born in Sweden in 1870 and immigrated to the United States in 1878; he was listed as a blacksmith in the 1920 U.S. Census.[16] Holmberg and Johnson built a successful business that included erecting fire escapes on numerous downtown buildings and buildings at the college. The sign on the building still bears the names Holmberg and Johnson, although Holmberg left the business in 1905.[17] G. Edwin Johnson came to work for Holmberg and Johnson in 1904. Janne Johnson brought in Alfred Linblade as a new partner after Holmberg's departure. Linblade operated the shop until 1954 when he sold it to Cecil Lee of Lee Welding Service. Linblade worked for Lee until his death in 1956. Shortly thereafter, Lee moved his shop to a new location on S. Main Street.

The building was vacant for some time following the closure of the blacksmith/welding shop. In the 1970s, it was purchased by John & Jan Rathlef who restored it and operated a dress boutique. In recent years, the building is perhaps best-known as the home to Richard Miller's Yocop Pottery and Dala Horse Factory from 1982 – 1996 (Yocop Pottery was located in the small storefront at 124 N. Main from 1973-1981). The building later housed a gift shop and now serves as home to a local produce market.[18]

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[9] Smoky Valley People, 154.
[10] Ibid, 153.
[11] Map of the City of Lindsborg and Business Directory in *Edwards Atlas*, 1884.
[12] Numeric Index to City and Town Lots (Index to land transfers 1886-1940) McPherson County on file at the Kansas State Historical Society Museum.
[13] "Old Holmberg Johnson Shop..."
[14] Deed Records.
[15] U.S. Census Records for Lindsborg, McPherson County, Kansas.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Holmberg left to work at the City power plant where he stayed for seven years. He later worked in Great Bend and then moved to Idaho. He returned to Lindsborg in 1948 and was living in Lindsborg at the time the article was published in 1959.
[18] Modern history of building was taken from the *Lindsborg Business Directory 1884-2005* by the Smoky Valley Historical Association. The source of their data was Sanborn Maps, City Directories/Phone Books, and input collected from private individuals.

The Malm Brothers

The facade sign painted by Erik Ephraim (Eph) Malm has no doubt, contributed to the legacy of the Holmberg and Johnson Blacksmith Shop. Eph Malm was hired by Holmberg and Johnson to paint the sign on their new blacksmith and wagon shop in 1900. Years later, the Malm Brothers gained notoriety when the Acme Company purchased and marketed Malm's decorative stenciling process.

G. N. (Gustaf Nathaniel, known as Nat) Malm was born in Sweden in 1869. He came to the United States (Omaha, Nebraska) in 1889 and to Lindsborg in 1894. Malm started an art and decorator studio and developed a successful painting business that later became known for their unique stenciling designs. Nat's brother E. E. (Erik Ephraim, known as Eph) joined him in the firm in 1898 (a second brother C. G. Malm joined them in 1907). By 1900, the business had grown beyond the town of Lindsborg with clientele throughout the area in Salina and McPherson; Malm Brothers and Company employed twelve painters. They built a store on Main Street in 1902 and opened a branch store in Herington, Kansas soon thereafter. It was Nat's interest in decorating and painting that led to the development of a stenciling system intended to make quality decoration widely available. The system was designed so that anyone could apply decorative art to the interior of a building. Malm's process involved stencils that he designed and hand cut and included detailed instructions for their use. He tested the commercial application of the process on city hall, a bank, two hotels and several residences in Salina. Demand for his services was great and the firm grew to employ twenty painters and decorators. Nat was the artist and Eph managed the firm. They formally developed a set of twenty patterns with complete instructions for their use. This "system" was purchased by the Acme White Lead and Color Works Company in Detroit in 1912.[19] The formal affiliation occurred in 1913 and Acme named Malm as chief designer of their decorating department. The stenciling system was called the Acme Quality Decorator's System and put Lindsborg on the map. One of Nat Malm's requirements had been that he was able to maintain his residence and the shop in Lindsborg. Eph Malm was hired by Acme to be their field representative and stayed in that role until 1934 when he was brought to the national headquarters in Detroit. Nat spent time in Detroit training Acme representatives in the system; he traveled and promoted the system throughout the United States but spent most of his time designing and developing the stencils in Lindsborg.

With Nat's focus on the stenciling system, Oscar Gunnarson was brought in to manage the painting operations and ultimately made a partner. The death of Nat Malm in 1928, followed by the onset of the Great Depression, saw the demise of the stenciling trade. The last catalogue was published by Gunnarson in 1936 featuring stencils by both Malm and Gunnarson. When the Malm Brothers store was sold in 1948, Gunnarson continued at a new location until his death in 1962.[20]

Despite its relatively short life-span, the Malm Brother's decorative system brought recognition and notoriety to Lindsborg, a community that is still known for its local artists. Although the facade sign by Eph Malm predates the stenciling business, it stands as a visible symbol of the humble beginning of the Malm Brothers painting business and a significant feature of the Holmberg-Johnson Shop.

Summary

The Holmberg and Johnson Blacksmith Shop is nominated to the National Register as an intact example of an early permanent commercial building in downtown Lindsborg. The existing building was constructed c.1900

[19] Ironically, Malm first offered the system to the Sherwin-Williams Company and was near an agreement when Malm rejected their proposal due to their requirement for him to move to Chicago. Acme contracted with Malm soon after the Sherwin Williams deal was rejected. However, Sherwin Williams acquired the Acme Company in 1920.

[20] Emory Lindquist, *G.N. Malm: A Swedish Immigrant's Varied Career* (Lindsborg: Smoky Valley Historical Association, 1989) 11-38.

and despite subsequent changes in partners and ownership, the building continually functioned as a blacksmith for eighty years. Due in large part to the sign on the front of the building, the building is locally known as the Holmberg and Johnson Blacksmith and Wagon Shop. A distinguishing characteristic of the building is the facade sign, painted c.1900 by Ephriam Malm. The Malm Brothers Co. later developed a decorative stenciling system that was purchased by the Acme Company of Detroit resulting in national exposure for the town of Lindsborg.

9. Bibliography

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10. Geographic Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nomination is for the property known as 122 (and 124) N. Main Street in Lindsborg, Kansas defined as S10' LOT 3, Main Street, Lindsborg, EXCEPT the E60' of said LOT 5 AND EXCEPT a tract described as beginning at the SW COR OF SAID LOT 5, thence N 13.04', thence E100.44', thence S13.04', thence W .44' of the N 5' of the S 18.04' of the E50' of Lot 5, Main Street, Lindsborg, McPherson County, Kansas according to the recorded plat thereof.

Boundary Justification

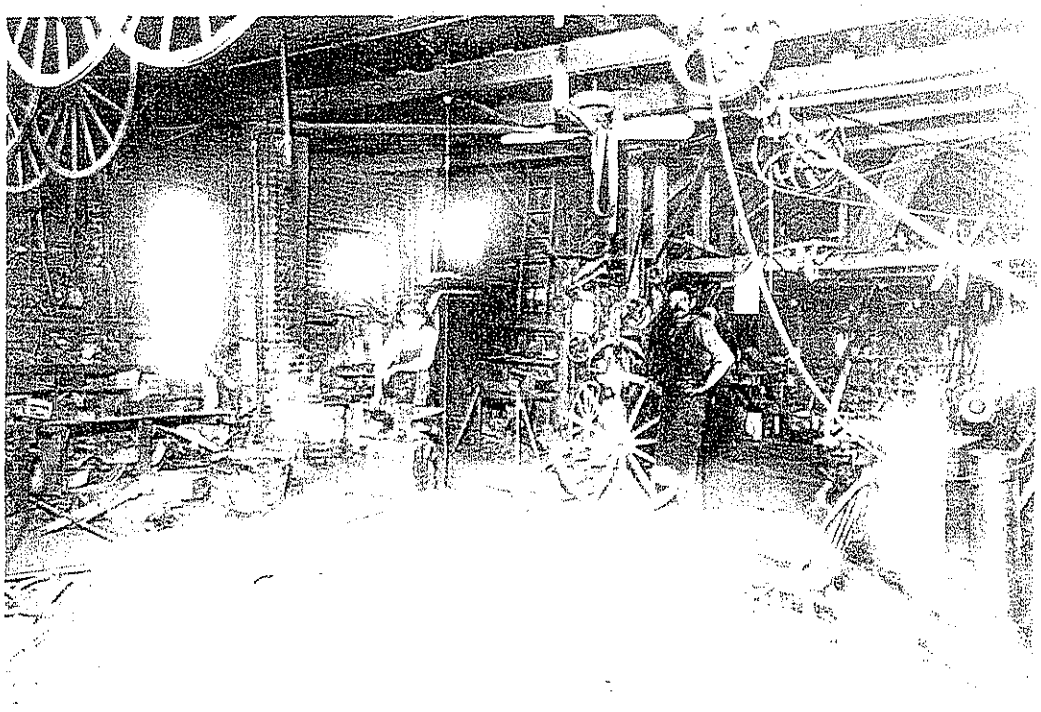
The boundary reflects the site on which the building is located and described by the legal description above.

Additional Documentation

Photographs
Photographer: Brenda R. Spencer
Date: September 25, 2008
Original Files: Original digital image files provided on disc with nomination.

Photo #	Camera Direction	Description
1	E	West/front facade
2	NE	Storefront bay at NW corner of blacksmith shop
3	E	South and west facade
4	NE	Detail of typical window on south facade
5	NW	South and east facades, and rear connecting bay
6	W	East and south facade of garage/shop at rear of property
7	NW	Interior view of front entrance with sliding door and track
8	E	Interior view of blacksmith shop
9	N	Detail of forge in NE corner of blacksmith shop
10	SE	Interior view of blacksmith shop
11	SE	Interior view of window with grill and rings set in frame
12	E	Ceiling fan extant on building interior

Historic Documentation



Interior view Holmberg Johnson Blacksmith Shop c.1900s (forge and ceiling fan are extant)
Source: Photo Collection, Old Mill Museum, Lindsborg

Page from Malm Brothers Stenciling Catalog reproduced from the book G.N. Malm – A Swedish Immigrant's Varied Career by Emory Lindquist, 1989, p.28.

The Malm Stencils

Stencils are coming more and more in use, and the progressive Painter and Decorator must have a large assortment from which proper selection as to size and style can be made.

To the Amateur Decorator the Stencil offers possibilities, useful and interesting, as a great variety of household articles may be ornamented and decorated by the use of stencils. Cloth, muslin, felt and fabrics of every kind may be embellished with stencil decoration and the Furniture may be refinished and made new by enamelling and stencilling.

The MALM STENCILS have met with favorable response on account of their originality in design as well as their practicability in execution. They are HAND-CUT from FLAT, THIN, TOUGH stock and they are wrapped FLAT ready for use.

They are offered in One Part Stencils Pages 4 and 15.

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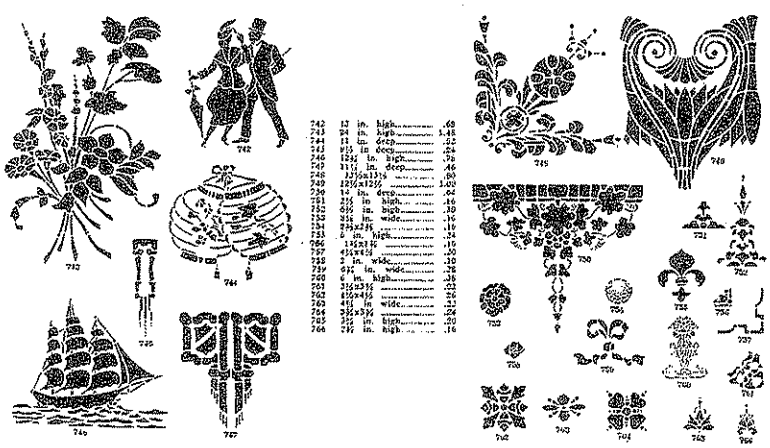
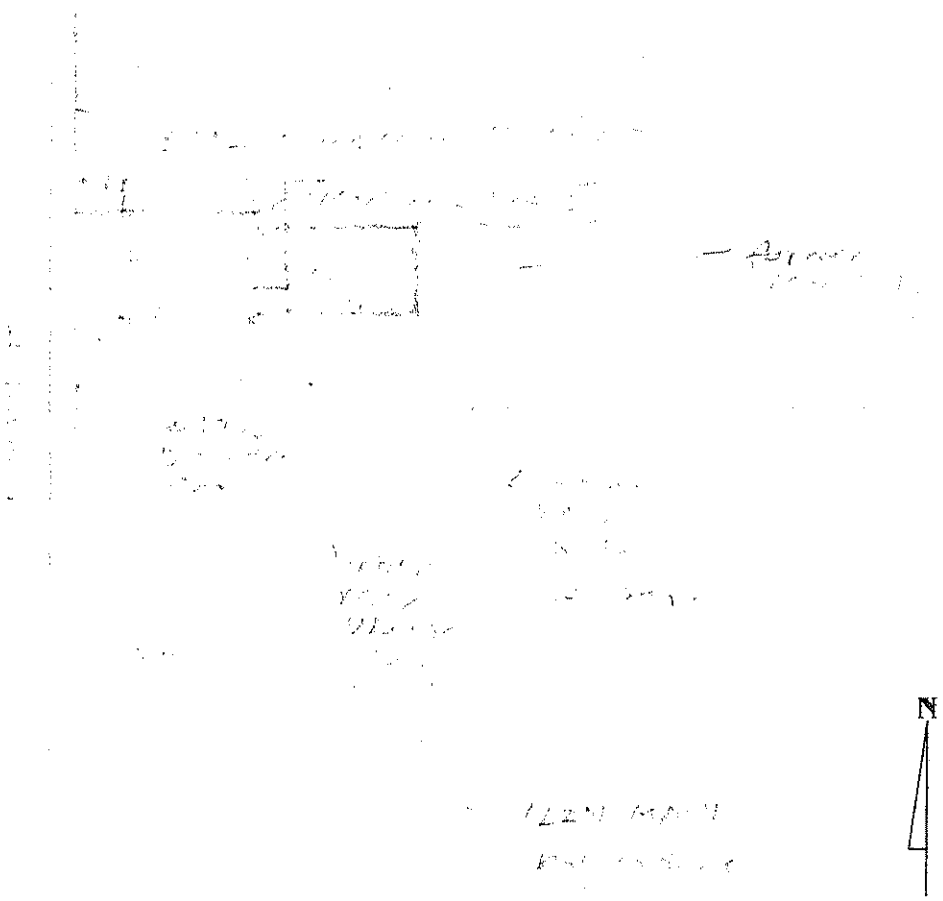
Interlocking Art Stencils Pages 21 and 37.



The cover and page excerpts from the 44 page catalog copyrighted 1925 by Malm Brothers and Company, Lindsborg, Kansas.



Sketch of Site Plan
B. Spencer, 2008