

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

Historic name Pratt-Mertz Barn

Other names/site number KHRI # 197-0000-00003

Name of related Multiple Property Listing Historic Agricultural-Related Resources of Kansas

2. Location

Street & number 34107 K18 Hwy

NA

 not for publication

City or town Manhattan

NA

 vicinity

State Kansas Code KS County Wabaunsee Code 161 Zip code 66502

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Signature of certifying official/Title Patrick Zollner, Deputy SHPO Date _____

Kansas State Historical Society
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

Pratt Mertz Barn
Name of Property

Wabaunsee Co, Kansas
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: agriculture
outbuilding

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: agriculture
outbuilding

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: Vernacular Barn

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE: Limestone
walls: STONE: Limestone

roof: ASPHALT
other: WOOD CUPOLA

Pratt Mertz Barn

Name of Property

Wabaunsee Co, Kansas

County and State

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources, if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary

The Pratt-Mertz Barn is a two-story multi-bay limestone barn constructed in 1876 by Samuel G. Pratt. The main portion of the barn has a gable roof with composition shingles and an original wood cupola that features a hipped roof, paired arched louvers on each side and ornate wood brackets. Interior stalls and haymow were removed in the 1950s. The south facade is open on the second floor to a 1-1/2 story shed bay. Two one-story gabled bays, original to the barn's construction are located off the northeast corner, the first is a loafing shed open on the east. The north wall of the loading shed extends eastward to form the south wall of a chicken house that features built-in roosts in the north and west walls. Except the south shed bay which has replacement corrugated metal roof and wood poles, all bays share limestone detailing that includes cut-stone quoins with tooled margins and matching sills and lintels at original masonry openings. Elliptical arched openings in the east and west ends of the two-story main barn are a distinguishing characteristic, the east arch featuring a keystone inscribed with the builder's initials and date of construction "S.G.P. 1876."

Elaboration

The Pratt-Mertz Barn is located ten miles southeast of Manhattan just east of the Riley County line, in the northwest corner of Wabaunsee County, Kansas. The property lies along Deep Creek in the Kansas River Valley at the northwest quarter of Section 23 of Wabaunsee Township. Located on the south side of K-18, the barn is accessed from a gravel drive on the east. A limestone house lies north of the road, addressed at 37410 K18 Highway (known as Zeandale Road in Riley County).

The two-story limestone barn built in 1876 is the primary extant resource reflecting early Wabaunsee County settler Samuel Pratt's agricultural pursuits. No other historic agricultural outbuildings remain of the Pratt farmstead and most significantly, the original farm now straddles K18/Zeandale Road. The Golden Belt Highway, now K18, was completed in 1910 and literally split the farmstead with the house north of the road and the barn south of the road. The 1885 limestone house has been remodeled and expanded on several occasions including a 1960s second-floor addition on the east wing that has somewhat compromised its historic integrity. A 1960s machine shed is located east of the barn on the south parcel. The three existing buildings do not meet the qualifications for a "farmstead" or "associated grouping" set forth in the Historic Agricultural-Related Resources Multiple Property Submission (Davis and Spencer, 2010).¹ For these reasons, the Pratt-Mertz Barn is nominated as an individual resource, representative of the Vernacular Barn Property Type.

Lying at the north end of the Flint Hills region of the Kansas River valley along Deep Creek, the land has an abundance of stone outcroppings used to build many of the early residential and agricultural buildings including the Pratt barn. The use of native stone to build the barn gives the barn its classification as a Vernacular Barn. The river valley provides rich farmland and lush vegetation. Deep Creek, that runs approximately 25 feet south of the barn, is tree-lined and a consistent source of fresh water in non-drought years. In addition to the old road from Manhattan to Topeka which became the Golden Belt Highway and later Highway K18, other transportation lines crossed the Pratt farm. As seen on the 1883 Atlas (*Figures 7-8*), the Manhattan-Alma-Burlington Railroad (MAB) ran diagonally across the farm between Deep Creek and the old Manhattan-Topeka Road. The Chicago Rock Island and Pacific Railroad was built in 1887 just south of the MAB in Wabaunsee County and MAB was unable to compete, their tracks were removed in 1898. Today, K-18 and Deep Creek are the predominant landscape features (the Rock Island lines were removed in 1984). The chicken house at the northeast corner of the drive is located only a few feet from the edge of K-18. A gravel drive is located east of the barn which turns to the east accessing a metal machine shed east of the barn. The south bay of the barn is open air and used for sheep pens and other livestock as needed. A wood fence extends west from the northwest corner of the barn. Livestock panels enclose a small corral at the west end of the barn south of the wood fence. South and west of the barn is a pasture with tree-lined Deep Creek along the south and the road along the north. A huge oak tree is located northwest of the barn shading the barn and west corral.

The barn was constructed in 1876 by Samuel Pratt, documented by a dated keystone. A random-coursed natural-faced limestone structure, the main two-story portion of the barn has a gabled wood-frame roof with composition shingles. The

¹ Christy Davis and Brenda Spencer, *Historic Agriculture-Related Resources of Kansas* Multiple Property Nomination to the National Register, 2010.

Pratt Mertz Barn

Name of Property

Wabaunsee Co, Kansas

County and State

original central cupola remains with a hipped roof of wood shingles and metal ridges. The wood cupola has twin arched louver panels on each side providing ventilation. A distinguishing feature is its ornate eave brackets of carved wood.

The two-story limestone barn is irregular in massing with three bays projecting on the north and south. Measuring approximately 30' x 50', the main barn is a simple rectangular form with flat elliptical arched openings at the ground floor and a rectangular small door opening in the gable ends on the east and west sides. On the south, a full-width shed bay extends from the gable eave measuring 19' x 50'. Although this bay appears to have been reconstructed, a shed bay was clearly part of the original barn. Except short stone wing walls at the east and west ends, the south limestone wall is only one story; the upper story (south wall of the haymow) was open to the south shed bay likely for ease of feeding livestock. The head plate/beam at the eave of the south side has failed but it was a large hand hewn timber. The lower chord of the roof trusses were notched to rest on this beam confirming that it was part of the original barn design and construction. Interim supports have been installed for shoring until beam is replaced. There are single door openings in the center of the north and south sides, each have a hinged wood barn door. The arched openings on the east and west had sliding wood barn doors; the west door is in place but in poor condition. The east opening is open air with no door but the track from the sliding door is extant. Other masonry openings include single double-hung window south of the central arched opening on the east and small slot windows along the north and south, likely corresponding to original stalls. Remnants of the historic slot "windows" include a wood perimeter frame with louver panels or a pivoting panel for ventilation.

Two one-story bays on the north convey their original function through their original design and physical features that remain today. A one-story gabled bay (12' x 18') projects from the east end of the north facade with a side-facing gable roof; its peak abuts the north stone facade. The west facade features an original rectangular window opening. This bay is open on the east with no evidence of a former enclosure suggesting it was built for use as an open loafing shed for livestock. The fourth section of the barn is an original chicken house, located in a one-story gabled bay off the northeast loafing shed. The north wall of the loading shed extends east forming the south facade of the chicken house. Measuring approximately 14' x 17', the chicken house has a man door and single window on the south facade and one window on each the north and east facades. The east window is paired three-light casements and the north opening is a louver panel. A unique original feature is built-in roosts in the west and north limestone walls, clear evidence that this bay was built for use as a chicken house.

Although it is not uncommon for gable-roof barns to have multiple one-story additions, the limestone construction and detailing suggests that all three secondary bays were original to construction of the Pratt Barn.

The barn has a number of distinguishing stone features including the elliptical arched door openings and the small rectangular slot windows. The stone facades are random-coursed natural-faced limestone with cut corner stones set in quoins. The corner stones and sills and lintels at most door and window openings are cut stone with a hammered face and tooled margins. The two one-story bays on the north feature the same corner quoining and cut-stone sills and lintels with tooled margins that match those on the main body of the barn. The south shed bay has non-original wood posts and a corrugated metal roof but is open to the haymow along the south facade suggesting it too is original to the barn's 1876 design.

Historically, the barn was built for livestock with stalls on the north and south accessed from the wide central corridor. A U-shaped haymow was in place that was designed to load hay into the haymow from inside the barn on the east. The stalls and haymow were removed in the 1950s with no remnants of the interior framing. The barn is a large open area with a parged finish in some areas. The wood trusses are exposed at the roof and the floor is dirt in the main barn, south bay and northeast loafing shed. There is a concrete floor in the chicken house.

The barn is in fair to good condition and has been maintained with a sound roof. The masonry is generally in good condition, although there is some structural damage in the north wall of the chicken house and cracks and deterioration are common at masonry openings. There are some areas of widespread loose and missing mortar and the parged interior coating is compromised on most surfaces and evidence of some former repairs and repointing. In addition to the masonry repair, the primary issue appears to be the structural wood components, some of which have completely failed and are in need of major repair or replacement generally at the opening in the south wall and roof framing. Although the interior of the barn has been altered with removal of the haymow and stalls, those alterations took place nearly seventy years ago, likely to expand use of the barn. Today, the barn remains in use for livestock and occasional hay storage as well a facility for agricultural meetings and tours. The exterior of the barn retains a high degree of historic integrity, clearly portraying its original 1876 design and function. The distinguishing feature of the property type – construction of locally-available limestone – is clearly conveyed by the Pratt-Mertz Barn with its limestone exterior and masonry detailing intact with no significant modifications.

Pratt Mertz Barn
Name of Property

Wabaunsee Co, 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 listing.)

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

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

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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1876 - 1966

Significant Dates

1876

1966

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

Samuel Pratt

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance spans from the barn's original construction by S.G. Pratt in 1876 to 1966. Purchased by Harold D. Mertz in 1966, the barn has been part of a multi-generational Mertz family farm (River Creek Farms) for the past 53 years, a period far longer than any previous owner including Samuel Pratt.

Criteria Considerations (justification)

NA

Pratt-Mertz Barn
Name of Property

Wabaunsee Co, KS
County and State

Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary

The Pratt-Mertz Barn is being nominated to the National Register under the Multiple Property Submission-*Historic Agriculture-Related Resources of Kansas* (Davis and Spencer, 2010). The barn is locally significant under Criteria A & C in the areas of Agriculture and Architecture.

Constructed prior to the nearby limestone farmhouse (built 1885) it reflects the important role of the barn as a dominant and essential building on early Kansas farms. This barn helps to convey the history of an early Kansas farm established by Samuel G. Pratt in 1866 and the barns' ongoing role as part of a long-established family farm in the Kansas River Valley in Wabaunsee County. The period of significance spans from the barn's construction in 1876 to 1966 when it became part of the Mertz family farming operation, a role that continues today.

The barn is a good representative of the "Kansas Vernacular Barn" property type reflecting the vernacular tradition of using locally available materials. The two-story native limestone barn has a gabled-roof with wood cupola and attached loafing shed, chicken house, and shed bay for livestock feeding. Limestone detailing includes quoined corners and masonry openings with sills and lintels of cut stone with tooled margins and elliptical arched door openings, the east with an engraved keystone bearing the craftsman's initials and date of construction – S.G.P. 1876. The barn retains a moderate degree of historic integrity portraying the primary characteristics of the property type.

Elaboration

The farm was established in 1866 when S.G. Pratt bought fifty six acres in the SE1/2 of Section 23, Range 10 Township 9 (later named Wabaunsee Township). Now part of River Creek Farms, a family farming and stock operation that consists of multiple farmsteads assembled by the Mertz family in the last hundred and thirty years. The Pratt farmstead is the eastern-most of three farms that comprise River Creek Farms (*Figure 1*)

Historic Agriculture-Related Resources of Kansas MPS

The Pratt-Mertz Barn is an example of the Kansas Vernacular Barn property type as identified in the *Historic Agriculture-Related Resources of Kansas* Multiple Property Nomination. The property type is distinguished by the use of native materials, typically limestone, and complex roof forms. Because they are generally masonry construction, Kansas Vernacular Barns lack the large hay hoods and large hay doors common among other barn types. Such openings would jeopardize the structural integrity of a masonry wall. Instead, they generally feature a small hay door on the gable end or broad side.²

Although the barn has a gable-roof, its native limestone construction is the predominant distinguishing characteristic and like barns defined by this property type, the Pratt-Mertz barn lacks the hay hood and large gable-end hay door that is a defining feature of most gable-roof barns. As noted in the narrative description above, hay was loaded into the haymow from inside of the barn, a functional characteristic common in the Vernacular property type. In addition to hay storage, the barn was originally designed for livestock shelter with horse stalls along the perimeter walls. The barn also features multiple original bays designed for specific purposes namely cattle shelter and feeding, and a chicken house. The Pratt-Mertz Barn is a good representative of the Vernacular Barn property type. Among its character-defining features are its stone details including the elliptical arched openings, the quoined corners of each bay, and cut sills and lintels with tooled margins. The engraved keystone and the prominent wood cupola with hipped roof, paired arched louver panels and ornate wood brackets also contribute to the barn's historic character. Unique detailing and embellishments by the barn's builder is a common vernacular trait.

The Pratt-Mertz Barn

Samuel George Pratt (1828-1903) was born on 25 January 1828, near Boston, MA. He married Anna C. Scott (1832-1913) in Penobscot, ME in 1852, but the marriage did not last; the two were divorced six years later.³ The West was calling him; he moved to Kansas sometime after the birth of his son Arthur in 1854 and before the summer 1863. On 1

² Christy Davis and Brenda Spencer, *Historic Agriculture-Related Resources of Kansas* Multiple Property Nomination to the National Register, 2010.

³ *Maine Divorce Records 1798–1891*. Augusta, Maine: Maine State Archives. Ancestry.com. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

Pratt-Mertz Barn

Wabaunsee Co, KS

Name of Property

County and State

July 1863 Pratt registered for the draft as a single resident of Wabaunsee, Kansas where he is listed as a farmer.⁴ Pratt served as an infantryman, a corporal in Company B, 14th Kansas Cavalry Regiment.⁵ Two years later the 1865 Kansas State Census records Pratt back farming in Wabaunsee and lists him as single.⁶

In 1866, Pratt bought the land along Deep Creek in the northwest corner of Wabaunsee County⁷ and set about establishing a successful farming operation. He married Margaret Kramer (1844-1907), sixteen years his junior, on 1 March 1871 and to this union a son John W. was born in 1873.⁸ The 1880 Federal Census shows fifty-one year old Samuel Pratt with his wife Margaret and son John in Wabaunsee Township; Samuel is listed as a farmer.⁹

The Pratt-Mertz Barn was built in 1876. A hand engraved keystone in the east arched door opening has the "1876," the year the barn was completed and "SGP," initials of the builder/owner of the barn, Samuel G. Pratt. The barn is the first-known permanent/masonry structure erected likely replacing earlier wood-frame barns or sheds. An 1879 article about a picnic and drive through the Deep Creek neighborhood refers to the Pratt farm and in 1881 Pratt hosted a Clydesdale Stallion at his farm for the season.¹⁰ In 1884 construction began on a new house at the farm (likely replacing a former frame house).¹¹ The existing stone house was completed in 1885, the carpentry work done by L. Howell.¹² That same year, Pratt built a large stone cattle shed and the local newspaper referred to the Pratt Farm as one of the best-supplied with stock shelter in northern Wabaunsee County.¹³

By 1884, Samuel's sister Elizabeth W. Pratt (1821-1907) joined him in Kansas and in 1892 built a small home in Wabaunsee near the Congregational Parsonage.¹⁴ An 1885 Atlas of Wabaunsee County shows that Elizabeth Pratt owned a 114 acre parcel in Section 26 south of the S.G. Pratt farm (*Figure 8*). In 1892 John, son of Sam and Margaret was in a serious accident with their mule team.¹⁵ He was run over and it was feared he would die before medical help arrived but John did indeed recover after a long convalescence. Sam and Margaret divorced in 1898 but in 1899 he deeded the farm - 57 acres in SW ¼ of Section 23 to Margaret.

The following year Sam traveled to Maine after learning that Anna's (his first wife) husband died. The two decide to remarry on September 20, 1900 in Passadumkeag, Penobscot, ME and headed back to Kansas to the Wabaunsee County farm. On 5 May 1903, Sam filed a will leaving ten dollars to each of his sons, John W and Arthur S., and splitting his remaining property between his wife Anna and sister Elizabeth.¹⁶ Samuel G. Pratt died 20 May 1903 and was buried in the Wabaunsee Cemetery.¹⁷ Anna returned to Maine where she is listed on the 1910 census living with relatives. She died in 1913. Sam's sister Elizabeth died in 1907, leaving the farm to be divided between Sam's two sons Arthur and John.

The step brothers sold their father's farmstead to Harry J. Taylor in 1907 ending the Pratt family's association with the property¹⁸ Samuel G. Pratt left a physical legacy interpreted by the 1876 stone barn and 1885 stone residence. The next

⁴ National Archives and Records Administration. *Consolidated Lists of Civil War Draft Registration Records (Provost Marshal General's Bureau; Consolidated Enrollment Lists, 1863-1865)*; RG 110, NAI 4213514; Vol. 1. Ancestry.com. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010.

⁵ Newspaper article quoting a 1889 survey of ex-soldiers and sailors in Wabaunsee County. *The Alma Enterprise*, 6 September 1889, 2.

⁶ 1865 Kansas Territory Census; Roll: ks1865_7; Line: 16. Kansas State Historical Society. *Kansas State Census Collection, 1855-1925*. Accessed on Ancestry.com. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2009.

⁷ Deeds record purchases of a 40 acre tract and a 26 acre tract in the Southwest ¼ in Section 23 Range 10N Township 9E in Wabaunsee County.

⁸ *Kansas County Marriage Records, 1811-1911*. Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas. Accessed on Ancestry.com. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2016.

⁹ *1880 United States Federal Census*, Wabaunsee, Wabaunsee, Kansas; Roll: 398; Page: 353C; Ancestry.com. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2010

¹⁰ *Manhattan Nationalist*, 19 May 1881, 5.

¹¹ *Manhattan Nationalist*, 27 Jun 1884, 1.

¹² *Manhattan Nationalist*, 27 March 1885, 5.

¹³ *Manhattan Nationalist*, 25 December 1885, 5.

¹⁴ *The Alma Enterprise*. 1 Nov 1895 and *Manhattan Nationalist*, 6 and 13 May 1892. Deed records show rental of Pratt farm land to sister Elizabeth.

¹⁵ *Manhattan Nationalist*, 25 November 1892, 7. (two other mentions in December 1892)

¹⁶ Kansas. Probate Court (Wabaunsee County). *Kansas, Wills and Probate Records, 1803-1987*. Ancestry.com. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2015.

¹⁷ *The Alma Enterprise*, 29 May 1903, 1.

¹⁸ Quit Claim Deeds were recorded in 1905; warranty deeds in 1907.

Pratt-Mertz Barn

Name of Property

Wabaunsee Co, KS

County and State

owner, H.J. Taylor was successful at the farm but moved to a larger farm in 1910 in nearby Riley County. There were five subsequent owners over the next fifty years, the longest duration being Amelia Cornell 1925-1943.¹⁹ In 1966, the Pratt farm was purchased by Harold Dale Mertz and his wife, Jeanne beginning the next chapter in the farm's history, an ongoing association that would tie the Mertz and Pratt families as the Mertzs carry on the tradition of farming in the Kansas River Valley.

The Pratt farmstead is the eastern-most of three farms that comprise River Creek Farms –the Mertz family farming operation along Deep Creek in Riley and Wabaunsee Counties. The central farm is the Abner Allen Farm, a stone house and outbuilding now the home of Bob and Mary Mertz that was listed on the Register of Kansas Historic Places in 2018. The west farm has a two-story frame home with multiple modern farm buildings, the home of Harold A. Mertz, now home to Joe and Kim Mertz and the heart of the River Creek farming operation.

Today, the house and barn built in 1885 and 1876 by Samuel G. Pratt are owned by Joe and Kim Mertz. The Mertz family farming operation in the Kansas River Valley dates back to 1891 when Sherman and Mary B. (Thierer) established their own farm near Wabaunsee, a home where they would raise seven children. In 1924, their son Harold A. married Edna Hutchinson and began life together in a farmhouse just down the road from his father's residence – establishing the present day headquarters of River Creek Farms (western-most house which is now occupied by Joe and Kim – not included in nomination). Harold D. joined the family business in 1948 and married Leola Jeanne Kueny in 1950 moving into the Mertz farmhouse and raising five children including Joe and Bob, the present owners of River Creek Farms. Harold D. purchased the adjacent Abner Allen and Pratt farms for the additional land and their native stone buildings. Harold, Joe, and Bob lived side by side in the three adjacent homes, Harold and Jeanne moving into the Pratt house, Bob and his wife Mary in the Allen house, and Kim and Joe in the Mertz farmhouse.

Mertzs have long been active in the local, state and national agricultural industry. Harold D. was recognized in 1977 as Kansas Master Lamb Feeder, feeding 5600 head of sheep. Jeanne Mertz established the "One Kansas Farmer Feeds..." campaign in 1980 and was a long-time leader of Kansas Agri Women (*Figure 2*). With the loss of Harold and Jeanne in recent years, Joe and Bob continue the Mertz family tradition. Today the Mertz name is known widely in Kansas farm and livestock circles for their Simmental Bulls and their involvement and leadership in the agriculture=al industry at state and national levels. Still used for livestock and events, the Pratt-Mertz Barn is in good hands. It continues to be used as a part of the daily farming operating occasionally housing livestock and hay. Perhaps more significantly, the barn serves as a venue for agricultural tours and meetings, including an annual *Feast of the Fields*, a rural outreach farm-to-table event that attracts primarily urban guests (*Figure 4*), and Secretary of Ag Sonny Perdue's visit to Kansas in 2018 (*Figure 3*). The barn was the location of fifth-generation Abram Mertz's wedding in 2011; Abram is active in the marketing side of River Creek Farms (*Figure 5*). After inheriting the barn, Joe and Kim Mertz are dedicated to maintaining the barn to ensure the Pratt-Mertz Barn stands another 130+ years as a testament to the commitment of their families and to the early settlers who established these farms in the Kansas River Valley of Wabaunsee and Riley Counties.

The Pratt-Mertz Barn is representative of early settlement in Wabaunsee County and pre-dating the house by nearly ten years, conveys the importance of livestock shelter to these early settlers. The barn is the predominant agricultural building remaining on the Kansas River Valley farm that served Samuel G. Pratt for nearly forty years and has now been a part of the Mertz farming operation for more than fifty years (since 1966). The barn is a good representative of the Kansas Vernacular Barn property type reflecting the use of available local materials (limestone), and construction by local farmers and landowners. It is nominated to the National Register under the Historic Agriculture-Related Resources of Kansas MPS, locally significant under Criteria A and C in the areas of Agriculture and Architecture.

¹⁹ John W. Day (1910) Amelia H. Cornell (1913), E.J. Fischer (1925), A.E. Faransson (1943) A.L. McGehee (1955).

Pratt-Mertz Barn

Wabaunsee Co, KS

Name of Property

County and State

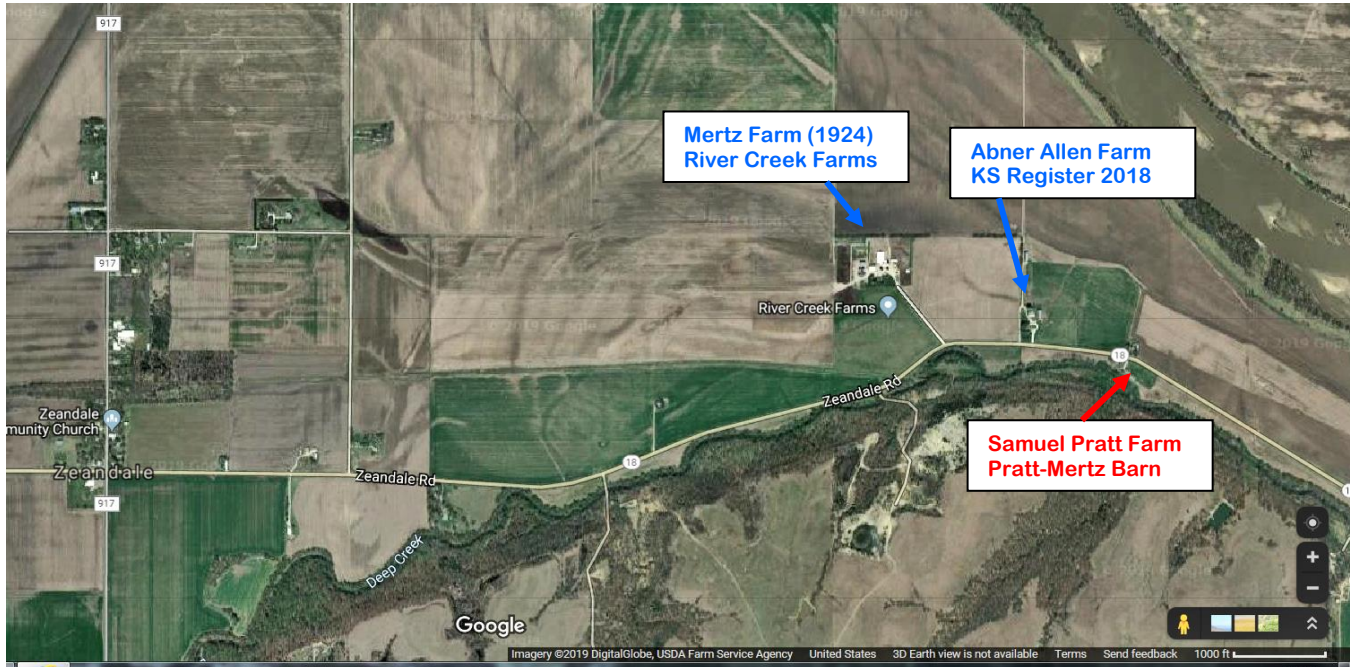


Figure 1 – Map illustrates the three farms that make up River Creek Farms owned by the Mertz family including the Samuel Pratt farm with the Pratt-Mertz Barn built in 1876. Google Maps 2019

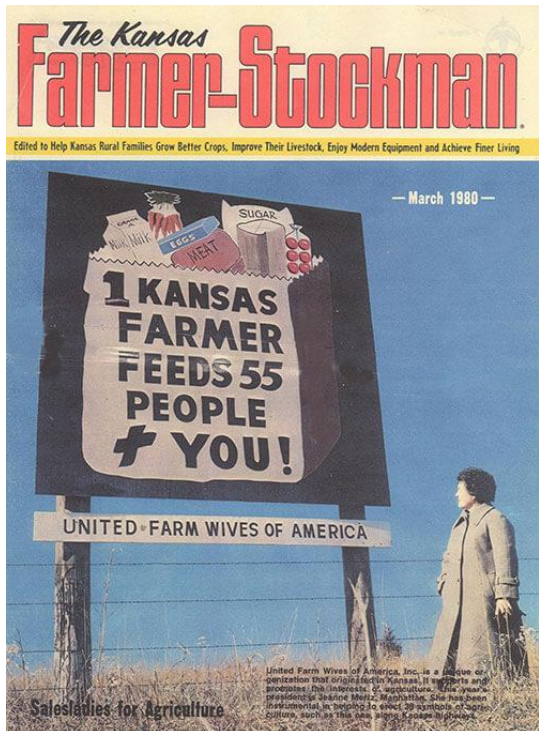


Figure 2 Left – Jeanne Mertz with the Kansas Farmer sign in 1980 (rivercreekfarms.com)

Right – Sign at River Creek Farm today, just east of the barn

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Sonny Perdue meets members of the Mertz family before he participates in an agriculture discussion panel with Senator Pat Roberts (R-KS) and Senator Jerry Moran (R-KS) at River Creek Farms in Manhattan, Kansas May 30, 2018. USDA Photo by Preston Keres

Pratt-Mertz Barn
Name of Property

Wabaunsee Co, KS
County and State



Figure 3 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Sonny Perdue participates in an agriculture discussion panel with Senator Pat Roberts (R-KS), and Senator Jerry Moran (R-KS) 30 May 2018 in the Pratt-Mertz Barn at River Creek Farms in Wabaunsee County.

Upper Left: View from west end of barn, looking east (Courtesy Meaghan Kline, US Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry);



Figure 4 – Lower Left: Feast of the Fields outreach dinner held annual in the barn (Mertz family photo, August 2018)

Left: Looking southwest inside barn (USDA Photo by Preston Keres)



Figure 5 – Lower Right: Great-great-grandson of Sherman Mertz Abram Mertz wedding held in the barn in 2011 (Mertz family photo, 28 May 2011)

Pratt-Mertz Barn
Name of Property

Wabaunsee Co, KS
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

1865 Kansas Territory Census; Roll: ks1865_7; Line: 16. Kansas State Historical Society. *Kansas State Census Collection, 1855-1925*. Accessed on Ancestry.com. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2009.

1880 United States Federal Census, Wabaunsee, Wabaunsee, Kansas; Roll: 398; Page: 353C; Ancestry.com. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2010.

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Ancestry.com. *Kansas State Census Collection, 1855-1925* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2009.

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Wabaunsee County Historical Museum.

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 # _____

recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Pratt-Mertz Barn
Name of Property

Wabaunsee Co, KS
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one

Provide latitude/longitude coordinates OR UTM coordinates.

(Place additional coordinates on a continuation page.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>39.162756</u>	<u>-96.387557</u>	3	_____	_____
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The barn is located on a parcel in the SW ¼ of S23 T10N, R9E beginning at a point on west line of the SW ¼ 989' south of the NW corner then: E 754', S400', NWLY 420', NWLY 356', N233 to POB and all that portion of SW ¼ lying south of Highway K18. The nominated property is limited to a twenty foot boarder around the footprint of the barn on the W, E, and S, and by K18 Highway on the north.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The above parcel reflects the legal description of the parcel on which the barn is located (inherited by Joe and Kim Mertz) comprised generally of the portion of the original Pratt farmstead with the house and barn-and bisected by K18.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Brenda R. Spencer

organization Spencer Preservation

street & number 10150 Onaga Road telephone 785-456-9857

city or town Wamego state KS zip code 66547

e-mail brenda@spencerpreservation.com

Property Owner: (complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Joe and Kim Mertz

street & number 7160 Zeandale Road telephone 785-456-9650

city or town Manhattan state KS zip code 66502-1517

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Pratt-Mertz Barn
Name of Property

Wabaunsee Co, KS
County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each digital image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to a sketch map or aerial map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photograph Log

Name of Property: Pratt-Mertz Barn

City or Vicinity: Zeandale (Manhattan)

County: Wabaunsee State: Kansas

Photographer: Brenda R. Spencer

Date

Photographed: 17 July 2019

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- | | | |
|------------|----|--|
| 1 of #20: | W | View of barn from K18 east of property with house on right (north of road) |
| 2 of #20: | NW | Barn from SE with house in distance north of road |
| 3 of #20: | N | Pratt House (1885) north of highway from barn |
| 4 of #20: | S | North facade of barn from K18 immediately N of barn |
| 5 of #20: | SE | View of barn from west on K18 |
| 6 of #20: | NE | West facade and open bay on south from corral SW of barn |
| 7 of #20: | N | South facade of barn open to upper floor (original haymow) |
| 8 of #20: | NW | East/front facade with open south bay |
| 9 of #20: | W | East/front facade of barn |
| 10 of #20: | SE | Detail of wood cupola original to barn's construction in 1876 |
| 11 of #20: | SW | Chicken house in foreground located NE of two-story main barn |
| 12 of #20: | W | Detail of original window opening with dressed stone sill and lintel |
| 13 of #20: | NW | Chicken house and loafing shed, two bays off NE corner of main barn |
| 14 of #20: | W | Built-in chick roosts in west wall of chicken house |
| 15 of #20: | SW | Elliptical arch opening at east end of barn with engraved keystone |
| 16 of #20: | W | Keystone inscribed with owner/builder's initials and date "1876 S.G.P.) |
| 17 of #20: | NW | View from east door inside barn with north and west walls shown |
| 18 of #20: | N | Interior view of N barn wall with small ventilation slot windows with louvers and pivots |
| 19 of #20: | SE | Interior view of east and south walls with south wall open to shed lean-to |
| 20 of #20: | SE | Detail of hewn timber (header of south facade open to shed lean-to) resting on stone wall and supporting roof trusses at SE corner inside barn |

Figures

Include GIS maps, figures, scanned images below.

Pratt-Mertz Barn
Name of Property

Wabaunsee Co, KS
County and State

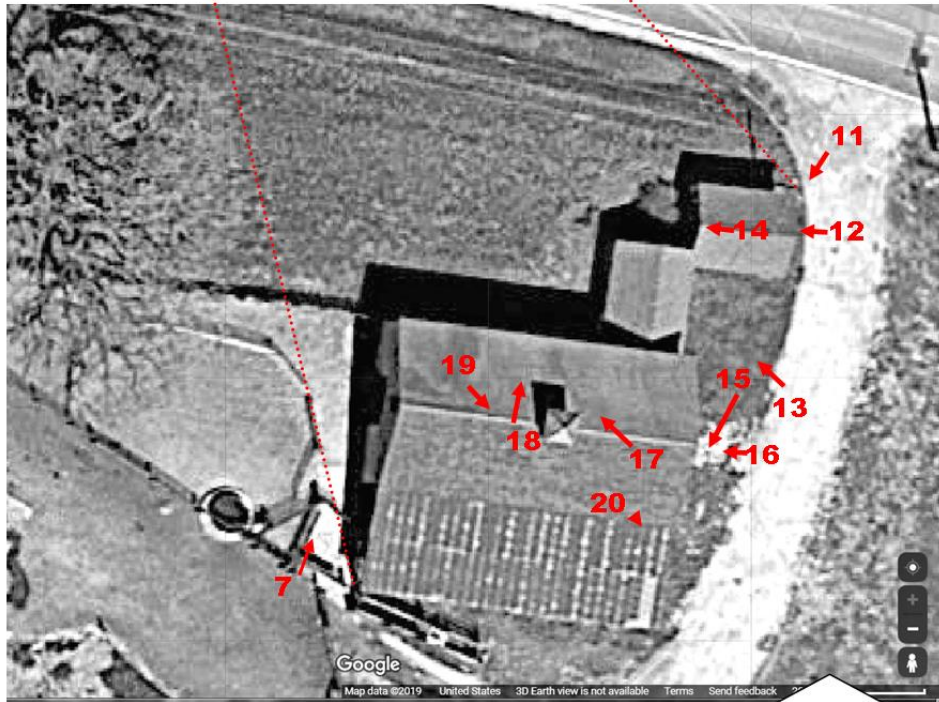


PHOTO KEY

PRATT-MERTZ BARN

34107 K18 Hwy, Manhattan, Wabaunsee County, KS

Aerial View from Google Map 9 July 2019

Pratt-Mertz Barn

Name of Property

Wabaunsee Co, KS

County and State

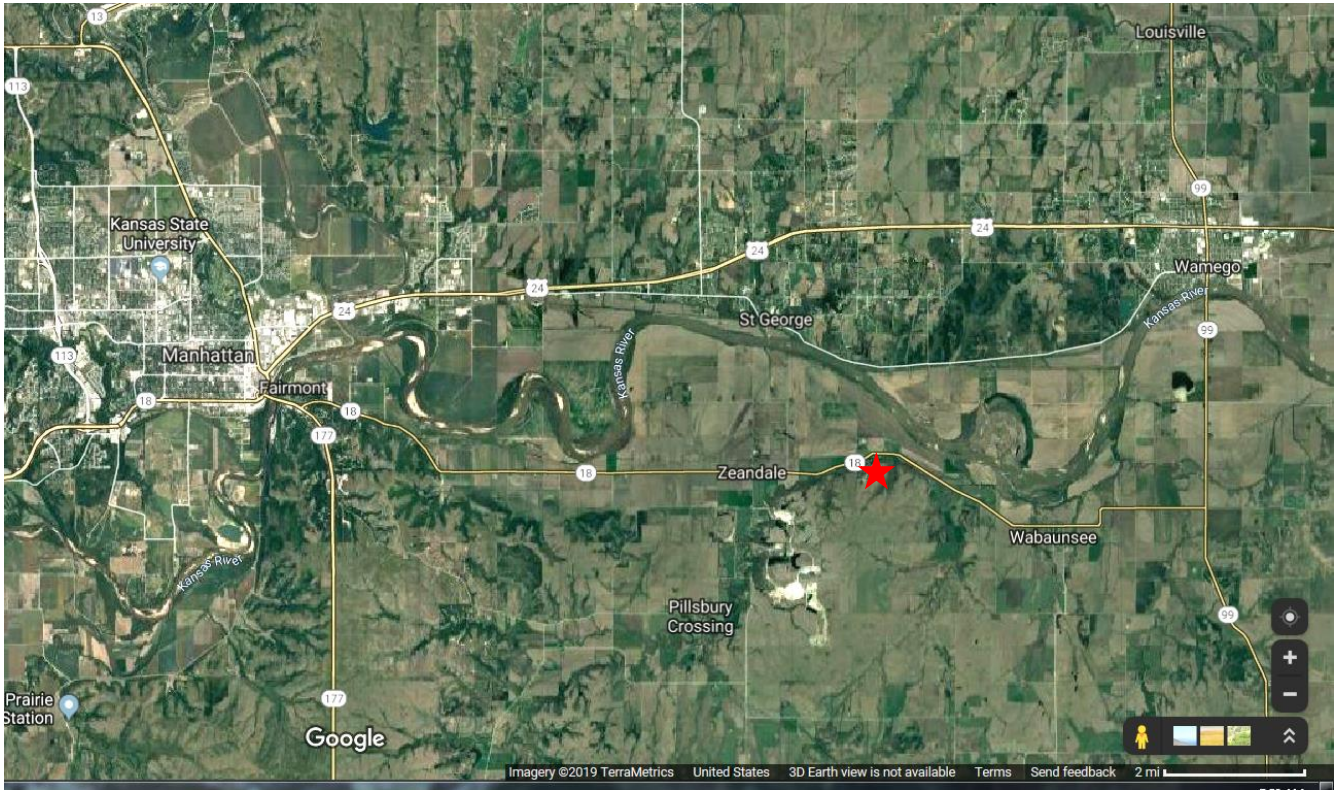


Figure 6 – Context and Site Maps showing location and boundary of nominated site
Pratt-Mertz Barn, 34107 K18 Hwy, Manhattan, Wabaunsee County, KS
Lat/Long: WGS 64 39.162756 -96.387557
Downloaded at Google Maps 15 July 2019

