

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

| | |
|------------------|--|
| FOR NPS USE ONLY | |
| RECEIVED | |
| DATE ENTERED | |

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Governor John Hopwood Mickey House

AND/OR COMMON

Polk County Historical Museum

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

South end of State Street

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Osceola

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Third

STATE

Nebraska

___ VICINITY OF

CODE

31

COUNTY

Polk

CODE

143

3 CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | PRESENT USE |
|---|--|---|--|
| ___ DISTRICT | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED | ___ AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | ___ PRIVATE | ___ UNOCCUPIED | ___ COMMERCIAL ___ PARK |
| ___ STRUCTURE | ___ BOTH | ___ WORK IN PROGRESS | ___ EDUCATIONAL ___ PRIVATE RESIDENCE |
| ___ SITE | PUBLIC ACQUISITION | ACCESSIBLE | ___ ENTERTAINMENT ___ RELIGIOUS |
| ___ OBJECT | ___ IN PROCESS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED | ___ GOVERNMENT ___ SCIENTIFIC |
| | ___ BEING CONSIDERED | ___ YES: UNRESTRICTED | ___ INDUSTRIAL ___ TRANSPORTATION |
| | | ___ NO | ___ MILITARY ___ OTHER: |

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

People of Polk County

STREET & NUMBER

Polk County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Osceola

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Nebraska

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Registry of Deeds, Polk County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Osceola

STATE

Nebraska

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

___ FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION | | CHECK ONE | CHECK ONE |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED | <input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED | | |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The John Hopwood Mickey House is a 2½-story frame structure purportedly built about 1884 by the then former state legislator. The main portion of the house is tee-shaped and features a moderately pitched gable roof. An extension (probably original) to the rear (south) of the house gives the overall plan a cross configuration. This wing is 1½ stories in height and is sheltered with a hipped roof. Flanking the rear extension and filling the space between the rear extension and the main tee-shaped structure are two one-story lean-to additions which are presently enclosed porches. An ell-shaped porch enhances the main entrance facades.

On the exterior the original wood siding has been replaced with light gray asbestos siding. However, the roof, with its cresting which recalls victorian detailing, maintains its original character. Inside, the house has seen superficial alteration; however, the 14 rooms of the original house are intact, as well as much of the woodwork and three fireplaces. The house continued to be used as a residence for many years after Mickey's death. Later it was used as the St. Francis Hospital, until 1956, when it was converted back into a residence for the manager of the new Annie Jeffrey Memorial Hospital. In 1967 it became the property of the Polk County Commissioners, who have leased the property to the Polk County Historical Society for use as a museum.

The society has arranged 17 different rooms containing more than 7000 articles which have been contributed since 1967. These period rooms cover a wide variety of topics including "Bedroom of 1900," "Library," "Doctor's Office with Hospital Room," "Parlor," "Grandma's Kitchen," Old General Store with its Post Office" and the "Enclosed Back Porch." Also included within the museum is a meeting room, and photograph, art, toy and musical instrument displays.

The Mickey House is located on its original site at the south end of State Street. Landscaping remains much the same as it was originally; however, a number of buildings and objects have recently been located or reconstructed on the property. A listing of these buildings or objects are as follows: 1) an 1872 log house originally built by John Benson of Polk County (placed on a concrete floor and foundation), 2) a "house" recently constructed of sod, 3) an early day church fitted with furniture and objects from churches all over the county, 4) the old District 17 frame schoolhouse, 5) a garage converted into Grandpa's Shop," 6) a windmill, 7) a log veneered pump-house, 8) an old school bell, 9) the old District 4A School flagpole and 10) miscellaneous frame buildings. The grounds surrounding the Mickey house, then, are intended to serve as an outdoor museum.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

| PERIOD | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS | <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> ART | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | | |

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1883-1884

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

John Hopwood Mickey was born near Burlington, Iowa on September 30, 1845. He served in the Civil War, enlisting as a private in Company D, 8th Iowa Cavalry in 1863. At the close of the war he returned to Iowa and attended Wesleyan College at Mount Pleasant for two years.

Mickey came to Nebraska in 1868, homesteading in Polk County. In 1870 he was elected as first County Treasurer, holding his office in his home. He served in this capacity for 10 years, while farming. In the fall of 1871, a committee of three including John H. Mickey was appointed to select forty acres of land upon which a county seat could be located. Mr. Mickey and William F. Kimmel were then commissioned to survey and plat the town of Osceola.

Mickey engaged in a banking career throughout most of his life, with interruptions periodically due to his involvement in politics. In 1879 he founded the State Bank of Osceola and was its president for many years. He was elected to the state legislature as a member of the House in 1880 and served for one term. In 1902 Mickey was elected governor on the Republican ticket, and served two terms in this capacity. During his four years as governor, an outstanding feature of his administration was his record-breaking exercise of executive clemency by granting twelve pardons and sixty-five commutations. After Mickey's second term as governor expired, he and his family moved back to their hometown of Osceola, where he resumed his career in banking. He died in 1910 at the age of 43 after an extended illness.

In March of 1881, the Union Pacific Railroad deeded 160 acres to Mrs. Morinda Mickey, wife of John. A portion of this farm later became part of the city of Osceola. The house, located at the south end of State Street, was built by Mickey ca. 1883-1884. It is now leased by the Polk County Historical Society for use as a museum.

John H. Mickey was a very influential and respected citizen of both Osceola and Nebraska, as well as being one of Osceola's founding fathers. His home stands as a reminder to the townspeople of one of their most prominent residents



Photo 1 of 7 – northwest façade
Photo by D. Murphy, 1976, NSHS (7602/1:32)



Photo 2 of 7 – southeast façade
Photo by D. Murphy, 1976, NSHS (7602/2:3)



Photo 3 of 7 – northeast façade
Photo by D. Murphy, 1976, NSHS (7602/2:7)



Photo 4 of 7 – outdoor museum looking south
Photo by D. Murphy, 1976, NSHS (7602/2:5)



Photo 5 of 7 – outdoor museum looking east-southeast
Photo by D. Murphy, 1976, NSHS (7602/1:36)



Photo 6 of 7 – outdoor museum looking southeast
Photo by D. Murphy, 1976, NSHS (7602/1:34)



Photo 7 of 7 – house with outdoor museum looking south
Photo by D. Murphy, 1976, NSHS (7602/2:8)