

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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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 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Axford-Coffin Farm

other names/site number Cranberry Lake Farm

2. Location

street & number 384-388 W. Predmore Road not for publication N/A
city or town Oakland Township vicinity N/A
state Michigan code MI county Oakland County code 125
zip code 48363

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

X Brian D. Grewa
Signature of certifying official

1/23/02
Date

MI SHPO
State or Federal agency and bureau

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>8</u>	_____ buildings
<u>1</u>	_____ sites
<u>4</u>	_____ structures
<u>1</u>	_____ objects
<u>14</u>	_____ Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>DOMESTIC</u>	Sub: <u>single dwelling</u>
<u>AGRICULTURAL/SUBSISTENCE</u>	<u>processing</u>
_____	<u>storage</u>
_____	<u>animal facility</u>
_____	<u>horticultural/facility</u>
_____	<u>agricultural outbuildings</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>LANDSCAPE</u>	Sub: <u>park</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

GREEK REVIVAL
BUNGALOW/CRAFTSMAN

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE
roof ASPHALT
walls WOOD: weatherboard
other _____

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

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8. Statement of Significance
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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.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a 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.

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Section 7 Page 1 Axford-Coffin Farm
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Description

Cranberry Lake Farm comprises a farmstead of 16.659 acres on the south boundary line of a 191-acre parcel of land, which is bordered by Predmore Road to the south, Romeo Road to the north, and privately owned parcels to the east and west in Oakland Township, Oakland County, Michigan. This farmstead includes a main dwelling; a caretaker house; several agricultural outbuildings including sheds, a silo, and barn foundation; country estate features including a carriage house, greenhouse, springhouse, pond with pump house, flagpole remnant, and outdoor oven/fireplace; and natural elements including an apple orchard, mature trees, ornamental plantings, and grassy fields within the 16.659 acres. The 16.659-acre parcel was named Cranberry Lake Farm by township officials to distinguish it as a special part of Cranberry Lake Park. The surrounding acreage to the north, east and west make up the remaining 175 acres of the township-owned Cranberry Lake Park created from several adjacent parcels purchased by the township in 1996.

Cranberry Lake Park has a variety of natural habitats that include open meadows, woodlands, wetlands and the west and south shoreline of Cranberry Lake from which the park took its name in 1996. Most of the park acreage was the former Coffin farmstead of 167 acres and it has a network of existing grass and dirt trails used by visitors. No built structures exist on the park property other than those inside the 16-acre parcel named Cranberry Lake Farm. The township park commission has no plans to develop this park but to maintain passive recreational usage open to the public at no charge. No hunting is permitted. The entire park including the farm site is zoned Recreation-Conservation (RC) and has remained undeveloped in its natural state for over 30 years. Beyond the park and along Predmore Road, which is dirt based and has low traffic volume, are large parcel residences, some with gardens and outbuildings to stable horses. Property zoning here is Very Low Density Residential (VLDR).

The main building complex occupies a central portion of the 16.659-acre parcel, which is also the highest point within the property. The main house, standing within the loop toward its west end, is set back 59 feet from the road and faces south. A driveway loops around behind the main house, with four outbuildings situated close to the driveway behind the house.

The gravel drive, lined with mature maple trees, visually defines the focus of the farmstead. Within the drive are a variety of landscaping plants including lilac, apple, crabapple, juniper, and smoke bush. Volunteer trees have grown up here and there among the older plantings. Much of the land within the driveway loop is mowed grass, but east of the house is an open area with some trees and shrubs and a sunken pond contained within a fieldstone wall. Between the porch and this pond stands a flagpole broken off about 12 feet up. These features with surrounding shrubs and plants lie in immediate view of the east-facing porch. The ruins of a stone pump house stand near the pond's north side. Beyond the pond and east of the driveway, a fieldstone outdoor oven/fireplace stands among trees.

The four frame outbuildings situated close to the driveway are of domestic and agricultural use. The largest is a side-gable-roof, one-story caretaker or tenant's dwelling. This house has the remains of a greenhouse extending to the west, connecting it to a gable-roofed carriage house. The small greenhouse has low fieldstone walls and a low-pitched wooden roof framework that once supported wooden window units. The carriage house is a plain wooden structure with a variety of exterior materials with vertical sheathing predominating. Between the carriage house and the main dwelling stands a small gable-roofed clapboarded springhouse, the fourth outbuilding in the main house complex.

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Description (continued)

Two other agricultural outbuildings stand to the north along a grass path about 200 feet away from the main house complex. A long frame shed with sloping shed roof and red bevel-edged siding faces south. Behind it to the northwest is a small wood frame outbuilding with front-gable roof, door, and six low windows, some missing their four-light sash. The landscape to the south of the long shed retains vestiges of a fenced garden or pasture area with an orchard of over mature apple trees also partly enclosed with a fence.

To the west of the main dwelling and drive and located near Predmore Road stand the remains of a barn. Only a deteriorating silo survives. Part of its roof has fallen in. Nothing remains of the adjacent barn except for its concrete foundation. Vestiges of pasture type fencing are evident to the immediate west.

The main dwelling is a Greek Revival house believed to date from the 1840s that was enlarged and modernized probably in the 1930s and 40s in matching Greek Revival style but with fieldstone fireplace and chimney that possess an Arts and Crafts flavor. The house as originally built was of upright-and-wing form with the façade south-facing. The southern two-thirds of the upright and the first story of the westward-extending ell form the original house, but the upright was later extended to the north and the wing raised from one- to two-story height. Various side and rear additions and two stone chimneys have given the house a more complex form. It contains almost 2,200 square feet including the long east side porch, and has a fieldstone foundation, fieldstone chimneys, wood clapboard siding above a simply detailed water table, narrow board cornerboards, raking cornices with returns above a broad entablature, and double-hung wood sash windows set in simple frames.

The house's original orientation was southward. The upright's south facade is characterized by a central entry above a one-step stone stoop that is framed with simple pilasters and a flat-topped entablature. A six-over-six wood sash window flanks the front entry on either side. The second floor front windows in the upright also contain six-over-six wood sash, slightly smaller in size compared to the first floor and placed closer to the center of the gable wall.

The wing, extending west from the upright, reflects additions made in the early twentieth century. It was one but is now two full stories in height, with its roof ridge slightly higher than that of the upright. The south façade's west two windows in the first story appear to be original. The second-story windows in the south façade cut through the entablature to the base of the cornice. A shed roofed addition occupies the angle between the upright and wing. The exterior of this addition is finished similar to the rest of the house and displays six-over-six windows that fill most of the wall space.

The west gable end of the wing displays a projecting fieldstone, exterior chimney rising in its center. The fenestration is comprised of two windows on either side of the stack, a short four-over-four single sash window high up in the wall in the first story on either side of the chimney and standard six-over-six above each in the second story.

A shed-roof one-story addition runs the entire width of the wing along its north side and also fronts part of the west side of the upright. This addition is characterized by large four-pane wood sash. At its west end a broadly projecting pent roof shelters triple windows that form the entire end wall.

The upright appears to have been lengthened by about one-third. A broad fieldstone chimney stack projects above the ridge at the junction of the two sections. The main focus of its east elevation is a full length, open, shed-roof porch. Accessed by a semicircular concrete step built upon fieldstone, the porch features a poured concrete floor, and

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five Tuscan wood columns support the slanting roof. The upright's east wall is pierced by single and paired six-over-six wood sash windows and an entry door flanked by sidelights. The uppermost portion of the wall, little more than the entablature, projects above the upper end of the porch roof, and contains five three-light frieze band windows. Above the eaves two large pedimented gables break the roofline directly above the cornice, each containing a triangular "fanlight" window. These windows front a small attic space inside. All of the east façade fenestration and trim in the original upright section, except for the cornice and frieze, is work of the 1930s and 40s. An older photograph shows no attic gables or frieze windows, a narrower shed-roof porch supported by chamfer-edge posts, and two six-over-six windows and a simple board-frame entrance in the east side wall beneath the porch.

The northern or rear third of the upright is slightly wider east-west than the original part, with the extension to the west. Since the ridge of the addition's roof maintains the line of the older part's ridge, the upright's rear gable is asymmetrical, with its western slope broader but more shallow.

Entrances from the east porch and south façade of the upright provide access to a large living room that occupies the entire original part of the upright. From the living room, a doorway leads west into the dining room, which occupies the east half of the wing's first floor, including the shed-roof south-side addition. The kitchen and a staircase occupy the upright's west end. Upstairs in the wing are two bedrooms, separated by a bath. In the upright's rear addition are a bedroom and bath in the first story and larger bedroom upstairs. Three staircases – one in the northwest angle between the upright and wing, one in the living room, and one along the north side of the wing near the west end – provide access between floors.

The living room, the house's largest room, is a two-story space. A massive fieldstone fireplace and chimney stack built of uncoursed fieldstones of varied size dominates the north end of the room. It contains a firebox with segmental-arch head formed by a curving piece of metal. Directly above the firebox's midpoint is a mammoth arrowhead-shaped stone whose rounded upper point is encircled by a row of small rounded stones. The living room staircase to the second story rises in dogleg fashion at one end of the stack and then across its front above the firebox, forming a part of the fieldstone chimney stack structure. A simple pipe rail serves as its only handrail. The walls below a second-story level balcony that occupies the room's west and south sides are finished in stained vertical boarding constructed with the joints between pieces deliberately made very uneven, but the original shouldered architrave door and window trim survives intact. A wrought-iron chandelier hangs from the ceiling.

The grounds within and around the driveway today form the focus of the farmstead. The land sloping downward away from the porch to the east contains a rusted flagpole vestige about 12 feet high, small trees and shrubs, and an oblong pond. The pond is 72 feet long, 33 feet wide at the widest point at the west end and 18 feet wide at the widest east end point. It is edged and contained by a cobblestone wall varying from 12 to 16 inches wide and 2 to 3 feet deep around the pond. Water levels are seasonal in the pond and vary from dry to 2 feet. The pond is 200 feet from the porch. The driveway alongside this area has mature maple trees on each side at deliberate intervals all the way to the Predmore Road junction.

About 9 feet away from the northwest shore of the pond stands a small pump house ruin, 3 feet high, 12.6 feet long and 5 feet wide. The walls of the cement-lined fieldstone structure are badly deteriorated with much stone debris on the ground. The roof is gone with only a few remnants visible. An exposed cast-iron pump motor inside is marked

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E.E. Meyers and Bro. Co., Ashland, Ohio, "Century" model, and stands next to a well pipe.

About 42 feet northeast of the east end of the pond and across the driveway stands a tall fieldstone outdoor oven/fireplace among mature trees and low brush. It is 7 feet high and 4 feet wide. The 6.6 feet in length is divided into a 3.6-foot front lower section for open grilling over a small pit area. The 3-foot by 4-foot stack houses the oven area and flue. The structure is brick-lined with a wrought iron decorative front panel.

Directly north and adjacent to the main house stand four outbuildings: a springhouse, carriage house, greenhouse, and caretaker's or tenant's house. The springhouse is a small, one-story side-gable structure located west of the main house and covering 182 square feet. A shed-roofed leanto extension spans the north side of the structure. It is clad in lap wood siding over red vertical wood sheathing. The lap siding has lost most of its white paint and is in a deteriorated state making portions of the underlying sheathing visible. The roof is covered in layers of asphalt shingles over wood shingles.

The carriage house is a one-and-a-half-story side-gable structure located north of the springhouse across the driveway. Standing on concrete block footings, the building is finished in vertical board siding on a frame of six-by-six-inch timbers. The roof is clad in layers of asphalt shingling over wood shingles. The building covers about 432 square feet. On the south front, a shed-roofed dormer projects at the attic level, its front flush with the main façade. The dormer was fronted by six, now mostly destroyed, six-light windows. The west side features two first-floor windows and one attic-level window. A section of concrete slab pavement fronts two large sliding wood doors that dominate the south façade of the main floor.

The greenhouse is a small one-story structure that connects the southwest corner of the caretaker house to the northeast corner of the carriage house. It is largely a below-grade structure, exposed along the north side. It has a fieldstone foundation wall supporting a roof consisting of a wooden frame that held glazed window frames. No glazing remains. The ridge of the roof framing runs east-west. Wooden window frames fit into the wooden roof frame (only one example survives). The dirt-floor structure is 14 feet by 11 feet in ground dimensions and covers 154 square feet.

The caretaker's house is a 918 square foot one-story building with a side-gable roof. The front portion of the south-facing building facing the driveway and main house has a fieldstone foundation matching the house's, but the rear portion has a concrete block foundation. A small enclosed gabled porch extends out from the façade off center fronting the entrance. The house has wood clapboard siding, wooden frame windows, an asphalt shingle roof, and interior masonry chimney.

The two other outbuildings stand about 200 feet north of the main house complex. The shed is a one-story shed-roofed structure and the larger of the two. It is long and narrow with its ridge running east-west and covers 1,494 square feet. The shed is framed in wood and clad in horizontal wood siding. The roof is covered in wood shingles in an advanced state of deterioration. The taller front side faces south and contains twelve tall windows. The east and west elevations each has a large sliding and a standard-size door. The shed's form suggests a chicken coop, but the interior is divided into four stalls on one side suggesting a barn for horses or other large animals.

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The north elevation has twelve small square openings aligned with the twelve on the south side for livestock ventilation. The foundation is of poured concrete. Local tradition states that the building was formerly a chicken coop and then a horse stable. These uses are consistent with its size, access door arrangements and fenestration. It has an inside water pump and electrical service vestige.

A fenced area containing an open field directly east of the remaining apple orchard fills the area between the caretaker house and this long shed. The fencing is of metal post strung with metal mesh wire. The open area is about 48 feet east and west by 142 feet north-south and its north side borders the shed. The apple orchard is mostly intact with 8 rows east-west with 19 trees remaining in the rows. The orchard area is 200 feet east-west and 110 feet north to south in ground dimensions. The east end of the orchard borders a wooded wetland.

The outbuilding near the shed is a small one-story front-gable structure located about 60 feet northwest of the shed. The wood frame building is clad in horizontal lap siding and deteriorated roll roofing. It features an entry door and a small window opening on the south façade. Sash and glazing are absent. There are two windows each in the east and west façades and one on the north. Provision for electric power, a water pipe, small corner brick chimney, and base for a wood stove suggest it may have been a brooder house for poultry. It covers 187 square feet. Beyond (north of) this outbuilding are grassy areas with trails and stands of trees.

The barn foundation and silo with fenced barnyard or pasture vestiges are located west of the main house complex and near Predmore Road. The dominant structure is a concrete block silo with a round floor plan. The interlocking concrete blocks are held in place with steel hoops. The silo is capped with the remnants of a wood-frame metal-clad roof, most of whose metal roof panels have fallen inward. The originally adjoining barn is no longer standing. The concrete foundation enclosed just over 1,400 square feet of floor space, and photographs of the barn taken before it burned in 1981 appear to show a dairy barn. West of the silo is dilapidated fencing with wooden posts partially strung with electrified type metal wire.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance 1840-1951

Significant Dates 1939
1951

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder N/A

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

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9. Major Bibliographical References
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(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 # _____

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Significance

Founded as a farm by John Axford in the 1830s and 40s and reconstituted as a country retreat by Detroit businessman and U. S. Congressman Howard A. Coffin beginning in 1939, Cranberry Lake Farm reflects the establishment of country retreats by prosperous Detroiters in the countryside of Oakland County and, more particularly, Oakland County's Oakland Township and vicinity, in the early twentieth century when the automobile and improving roads made these areas more readily accessible. In this rapidly developing suburban area of Oakland County Cranberry Lake Farm provides an increasingly rare example of one kind of retreat that made use of old farm places. The house and other surviving buildings and landscaping provide an example of how former farm places were adapted to country estate or retreat uses while retaining elements of their former agricultural character. The main house, in particular, possesses architectural significance in reflecting both the Greek Revival character of the building as originally constructed and the informal Greek Revival-inspired and Arts-and-Crafts-influenced tastes of the early twentieth century.

Historically Cranberry Lake Farm has four distinct usage periods. From 1837 to about 1925, the original local pioneer Axford and then Kline families established and operated a farm on this land. It is thought that John Axford, who owned the property from 1837 to 1848, established the farm and that he built the original frame house probably in the 1840s. Jacob Kline purchased the farm in 1848 and Kline family members retained ownership until 1925. Frequent changes of ownership between then and 1939, including property transfers through foreclosure in 1929-31, suggest that little development on the property probably took place between 1925 and 1939. Little is known about the farm prior to its ownership by the Coffins. The now-destroyed barn and the surviving outbuildings look to be styled to accommodate dairy cows, chickens and larger fowl such as turkeys. In 1925, Kline relatives Thaddeus and Henrietta Zawadski lived on the farm. According to a local resident and descendant, Walter Poplowski, Mr. Zawadski was a state milk inspector and farmer. The barn, silo, pastures, shed and other outbuilding, carriage house, greenhouse, and springhouse were all present during the Zawadskis' ownership. Former resident caretaker Margaret Blanchard confirms the existence in 1936 of the main house without the east porch and the north addition to the upright, and of a smaller version of the caretaker's house.

After the foreclosures in 1929-31, the farm entered its second period as a country estate. In 1939 Howard Aldridge Coffin, a Detroit businessman, and his wife, Abbie S. C. Coffin, bought the property and converted it into a country estate, altering the center complex of the main house, its surrounding outbuildings, and grounds and adding new features including a flagpole, pond with a pump house, and outdoor oven/fireplace and expanding or rebuilding the caretaker's house. During the period of the Coffins' ownership, from 1939 to 1951, dairy farm operations may have continued. However, the deed of sale from the Coffins to the next owners, George H. and Guitenna Williamson, in 1951 notes that the sale is "Subject to tenancy of the tenant house which is occupied on a month to month basis" (Oakland Co. Deeds, Liber 2796, p. 527). This suggests that only the house, not the farm, was subject to tenancy.

When the Coffins sold the property in 1951, Cranberry Lake Farm entered its third period as a tenant farm operation. Owner George Williamson lived in California and a series of tenants lived on or used the farm for such activities as cattle farming, a retarded boys group home, horse farm operation, hippie commune, and simply as tenant caretaker housing. Township records show no permits for updating the site during this 45-year period.

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Significance (continued)

In 1996 the Charter Township of Oakland acquired the entire property. The township established the farm as Cranberry Lake Park, but defined a 16-acre "Cranberry Lake Farm" parcel to recognize the farmstead itself, the only part of the park that retains evident historic features, for its historic significance to the township. Now in the fourth and current period, Cranberry Lake Park and Farm are part of the township's network of parks and open to the public. The property possesses significance in terms of social history for illustrating and representing a common theme in the early twentieth-century history of Oakland Township and County and other heretofore rural areas on the Detroit periphery: the establishment of rural retreats by prosperous Detroiters in the early twentieth century once the automobile and highway development made the countryside accessible. Oakland County is unusually rich in lakes and hilly topography, the residue left by the last period of glaciation. Judging from the fact that several of the early twentieth-century estates in the Oakland Township area were located on lakes, it seems likely that the lakes were an attraction for those seeking retreats in the country. Road improvements also made locating rural retreats in the county feasible. The first improvements to Woodward Avenue beyond the north Detroit city limits took place in 1908, when the stretch between Six and Seven Mile roads just north of Highland Park, then in a rural area outside of the city limits, was rebuilt with a concrete surface. This is claimed to be the country's first mile of concrete-paved rural highway (Roise and Fraser, p. 18). The concrete surface was extended within the next few years to Royal Oak and beyond and, after becoming Michigan Route 1, was frequently upgraded as traffic volumes rose. Rochester Road (including Main Street in Royal Oak) was improved beginning around 1915. State highway maps included in the 1915-16 and subsequent *Biennial Reports of the State Highway Commissioner* illustrate the progress of improvement. The 1915-16 report's map shows some improvements to the road well south of the farm between Royal Oak and Rochester. The 1917-18 one shows the entire distance from Royal Oak north through Rochester to what appears to be the north line of Oakland Township, just beyond the farm site, improved as an "important connecting county road." The 1931-32 map shows the road north as far as Rochester as State Route 150. By 1936, Route 150 was a concrete-surfaced highway and the stretch northward from Rochester, for the first time labeled State Route 130, is shown as having a surface of "bituminous macadam, retread or oil aggregate." The widened Woodward Avenue and upgraded Rochester Road would have provided ready access to the Cranberry Lake Farm property.

Improvement of this and other primary roads in Oakland and nearby areas including Rochester and Addison and Orion townships led to the establishment of a number of rural retreats. By the late 1930s, the prominent and wealthy Buhl families owned a large farm-turned-estate (now Addison Oaks, an Oakland County park) on the north side of Romeo Road in Addison Township. Matilda Dodge Wilson already was living in the palatial Meadow Brook Hall to the south in nearby Rochester, which now is part of Oakland University. The Fred B. Darden family built a smaller version of Meadow Brook Hall on their own 37-acre parcel north of it on Adams Road. Elizabeth Shelden, wealthy Detroiters from the Warren and Buhl families and the widow of Allen Shelden, owned her 800 plus acre country estate off Winkler Mill Road in the southeast corner of the township. She raised hunting dogs and small fowl including pheasants on her estate. On a more agrarian scale Charles E. Wilson, General Motors CEO, owned two cattle farms in the area, one of them on Romeo Road, the north border of Cranberry Lake Park. The Kern family owned a farm on Oakland Township's western border shared with Orion Township. A 1947 township map shows some of these and other similar properties in the hands of well-known Detroit families. Some of these estates maintained cattle

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operations, dairy herds, and apple orchards. For example, Detroit attorney William Henry Gallagher had a large tenant run dairy and apple orchard farm on Silver Bell Road in Oakland Township, four miles south of Cranberry Lake Farm.

Howard Coffin, a Detroiter with his primary residence at 19347 Berkeley Avenue in the fashionable Sherwood Forest subdivision near Palmer Park, joined the ranks of prominent Detroit families with rural retreats in Oakland Township with the purchase of the farmstead at 384-88 Predmore Road in 1939. It seems likely that Coffin, too, maintained some form of agricultural usage of the farm for at least a time, but it seems fairly certain that Cranberry Lake Farm was maintained by the Coffins between 1939 and 1951 principally as a rural retreat from business and political life in Detroit and Washington D.C. Mr. Coffin was 62 when he purchased the farm and 74 when he sold it.

The Cranberry Lake Farm dwelling the Coffins refurbished as a summer house exhibits several features that are typical of the phenomenon of farm to summer home conversions. The full-width east side porch the Coffins added suggests leisurely enjoyment of its view of the side yard with its plantings, lawn, and man-made pond, and the outdoor oven/fireplace suggests an active but informal home and social life during the warm-weather months – as does the living room, with its two-story height, barnboard siding, and massive fieldstone fireplace and chimney. The north addition included additional bedroom space, including a master bedroom overlooking the living room.

These conversion changes to Cranberry Lake Farm may have been influenced by the nearby Log Cabin Club, a recreational subdivision of small rustic bungalow cottages on small lots developed in the 1920s on Cranberry Lake. The Log Cabin Club property included 100 small parcels on 158 acres on the lake's north and east shore directly across from Coffin's property, which fronted on the lake's west and south shores. The Log Cabin Club billed itself as "the Summer Playground of Nations, a strictly private and exclusive community in a setting of natural resources" -- "Where on every side of the property are to be found the beautiful suburban homes of Mr. Scripps of the Detroit News [neighboring Orion Township due west], Mr. Lawrence Buhl and Mr. Walter Buhl of Buhl Sons Co., Mr. Allen Shelden of Grosse Pointe Farms, Mr. F. Shinnick, Mr. Fisher, Mr. Wilson and many of Detroit's most prominent business and professional men." Possibly the Bungalow-Craftsman style of the Log Cabin Club's cottages may have influenced Coffin's choice for his rustic interior renovations of the living room and his use of cobblestone, but in a little grander manner than the neighboring bungalows.

Howard Coffin was born June 11, 1877, in Middleboro, Massachusetts, to parents George Henry Coffin and Jenny C. (Guild) Coffin. He came to Detroit in the early 1910s and became controller of the Warren Motor Car Company. He later served as assistant to the president of the Cadillac Motor Car Company, secretary of the Detroit Pressed Steel Company and as state manager for the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company. He became vice-president of the White Star Refining Company in 1925 and served as general manager of the Michigan-Ohio Division of the Socony-Vacuum Oil Company into which White Star was absorbed until his election to Congress in 1946.

Coffin was elected to serve as U. S. Representative from the Michigan 13th District and served one term, 1947-1949. The 80th Congress, of which Coffin was a member, saw several key votes. These included limiting the president to two consecutive terms in office, the Taft-Hartley Act (also known as the National Labor Management Relations Act) rent control, reducing the individual income tax, and authorizing the President to help the Greek and Turkish governments with funds. Coffin supported all these efforts.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 9

Axford-Coffin Farm
name of property
Oakland County Michigan
county and State

=====
Significance (continued)

Coffin was also actively engaged in philanthropic issues in the Detroit area. He served as president of both the Detroit chapter and the National Council YMCA. In wartime, he assisted with the direction of the United War Chest and with the USO. He served as a member on the Board of Appeals for the Selective Service system. In other areas, he was a trustee at Grace Hospital in Detroit and served as president of the Detroit College of Law. He was also a trustee for alma mater Brown University. Coffin died in February 1956 when he was 79. Coffin's home in Sherwood Forest near Palmer Park reflects his status as an affluent homeowner. It is a formal, two-story, brick, Tudor style structure with the only side yard on the block.

Cranberry Lake Farm remains substantially intact since the major changes made in the 1930s and reflects architectural and social history significance for the period of the 1840s to 1951. The property is a noteworthy example of a older farmstead in a rural setting modified into a recreational retreat of the 1930s that still exists today. Many other estates and retreats in the surrounding area from this period have not survived alteration or exist only as ruins if at all. But Cranberry Lake Farm will remain an integral part of Cranberry Lake Park and continue on as a publicly owned site in its rural setting. A master plan for restoration and future use of the property was completed in 1998 by Kessler Associates, Inc., Architects, of Detroit, for the Charter Township of Oakland. Restoration is planned as funds become available.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 9 Page 10

Axford-Coffin Farm
name of property
Oakland County Michigan
county and State

Section 9: Bibliography

Files

CLF files, Oakland Township Historic District Commission Records, 4393 Collins Road, Rochester, MI. 48306.

Coffin H. A, folder, Archives, Burton Library, Detroit Public Library, Woodward Ave. Detroit, MI. 1997.

Deeds file, Oakland County, Oakland County Courthouse, 1200 N. Telegraph Road, Pontiac, MI. 48341.

Francis, Edward, FAIA; Cranberry Lake Farm Master Plan, Kessler Associates Inc., 309 Jefferson Ave., Detroit, MI. 1998.

Johnson, Dane; Oakland Township Historic District Building Descriptions, 384 – 388 West Predmore Road, September 2000. Pages 11-14.

Oakland Township Parks and Recreation 5 Year Plan, Oakland Township Parks and Recreation Commission, December 1999, page 54.

The Log Cabin Club, promotion material and map, Oakland Township Historic District Commission Records, 4393 Collins Road, Rochester, MI. 48306.

The Arts and Crafts Society, Ann Arbor, MI. website www.arts-crafts.com/archive, 2000.

Books

Durant, Samuel W., History of Oakland County from 1817 – 1877, L.H. Everts & Co., Philadelphia, PA. 1879.

Whiffen, Marcus; American Architecture since 1780, A Guide to Styles, The M.I.T. Press, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA., 1969.

Maps

Township maps, Oakland Township Historic District Commission, collection of, 1872, 1896, 1908, 1921, 1927, 1947. Plat Map, The Log Cabin Club, Charter Township of Oakland, 4393 Collins Road, Rochester, MI. 1927.

Other

Photograph, 1920's of the main house. Loaned and described by Walter Poplowski, Oakland Township resident who visited the house in the 1920's summers.

Narrative, description of main house area from 1930s by Margaret Blanchard, Rochester Hills resident who lived in the caretaker house 1933 - 1936.

Primary Location of Additional Data
 State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other

Name of repository: Oakland Township Historic District Commission Records

=====
10. Geographical Data
=====

Acreage of Property 16.6590 acres

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	
1	<u>17</u>	<u>324460</u>	<u>4739250</u>	3	<u>17</u>	<u>324670</u>	<u>4738910</u>
2	<u>17</u>	<u>324680</u>	<u>4739250</u>	4	<u>17</u>	<u>324470</u>	<u>4738910</u>
		<u>See continuation sheet.</u>					

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 JAN BELLAMY-GENEE, FRANK QUINN, MICHAEL STOCK, TONYA WEAVER
DR. LAUREN SICKELS-TAVES, JANINE L. SAPUTO
organization OAKLAND TWP. HISTORIC DISTRICT COMM. date 11 NOVEMBER 2001
street & number 4393 COLLINS telephone (248)651-7810
city or town OAKLAND state MI zip code 48306

=====
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.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 10 Page 11

Axford-Coffin Farm
name of property
Oakland County Michigan
county and State

Section 10: Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

Starting approximately 1300 feet west of the intersection of Rochester Road and Predmore Road, the property line lines approximately 740 feet westerly along the north side of Predmore Road, thence northerly approximately 1000 feet, thence easterly approximately 570 feet, thence southerly approximately 1000 feet to the point of the beginning.

Boundary Justification

This property contains the historic farmstead. The remainder of the former farm retains no identified historic features.

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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name: Charter Township of Oakland

street & number: 4393 Collins Road

telephone: 248-651-4440

city or town: Oakland

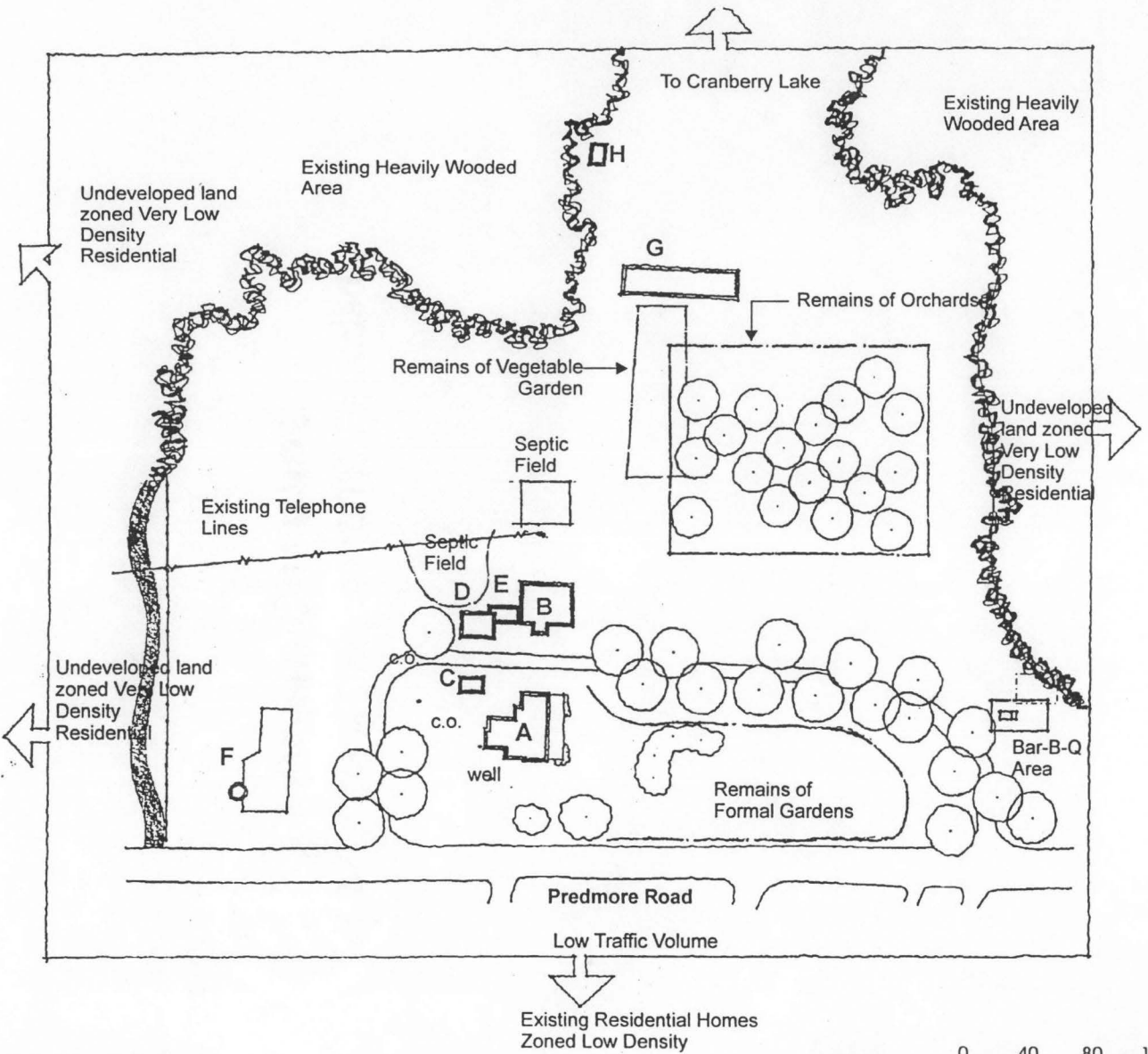
state:MI__ zip code: 48306

=====
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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

KEY

- A Main House
- B Guest House
- C Spring House
- D Carriage Barn
- E Green House
- F Silo/Barn
- G Shed
- H Out Building



EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

CRANBERRY LAKE FARM

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Axford--Coffin Farm
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MICHIGAN, Oakland

DATE RECEIVED: 1/29/02 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/13/02
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/01/02 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/15/02
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 02000159

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: Y NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 3/15/2002 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA accept A&C

REVIEWER Patrick Andrus DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE _____ DATE 3/15/2002

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



< > 7 30 T065 N N N 1 +30 B10

Ax Ford-Coffin Farm Oakland Co. MI #1



Coffin Farmstead

Oakland Co. Mi

2

< >s 14 2 T067 N N N-4 +37 B10

Axford - Coffin Farm Oakland Co. Mi #2



Coffin Farmstead
Oakland Co, Mi

1

< >s 51 9 T078 N N N-1 -20 B10

Axford - Coffin Farm Oakland Co. Mi #3



Coffin Farm, Mich
Cass County, MI

3

< > s 51 11 T078 N N N-5 +30 B10

Axford-Coffin Farm Oakland Co MI #4



< >s 7 17 T102 N N N-7 +03 B10

Axford-Coffin Farm Oakland Co. MI #5



Coffin Farmstead
Oakland Co, MI

4

< >s 51 5 T078 N N N-6 +23 B10

Axford-Coffin Farm Oakland Co. MI #6



< > s 11 2 T067 N N N-2 -03 B10

Axford-Coppin Farm Oakland Co. MI #7



DANGER
NO ENTRY
BUILDING UNDER
RENOVATION

< > s 13 1 T067 N N N 1 -20 B10

Axford-Coffin Farm Oakland Co. MI #8



Coffin Farm
Oakland Co.

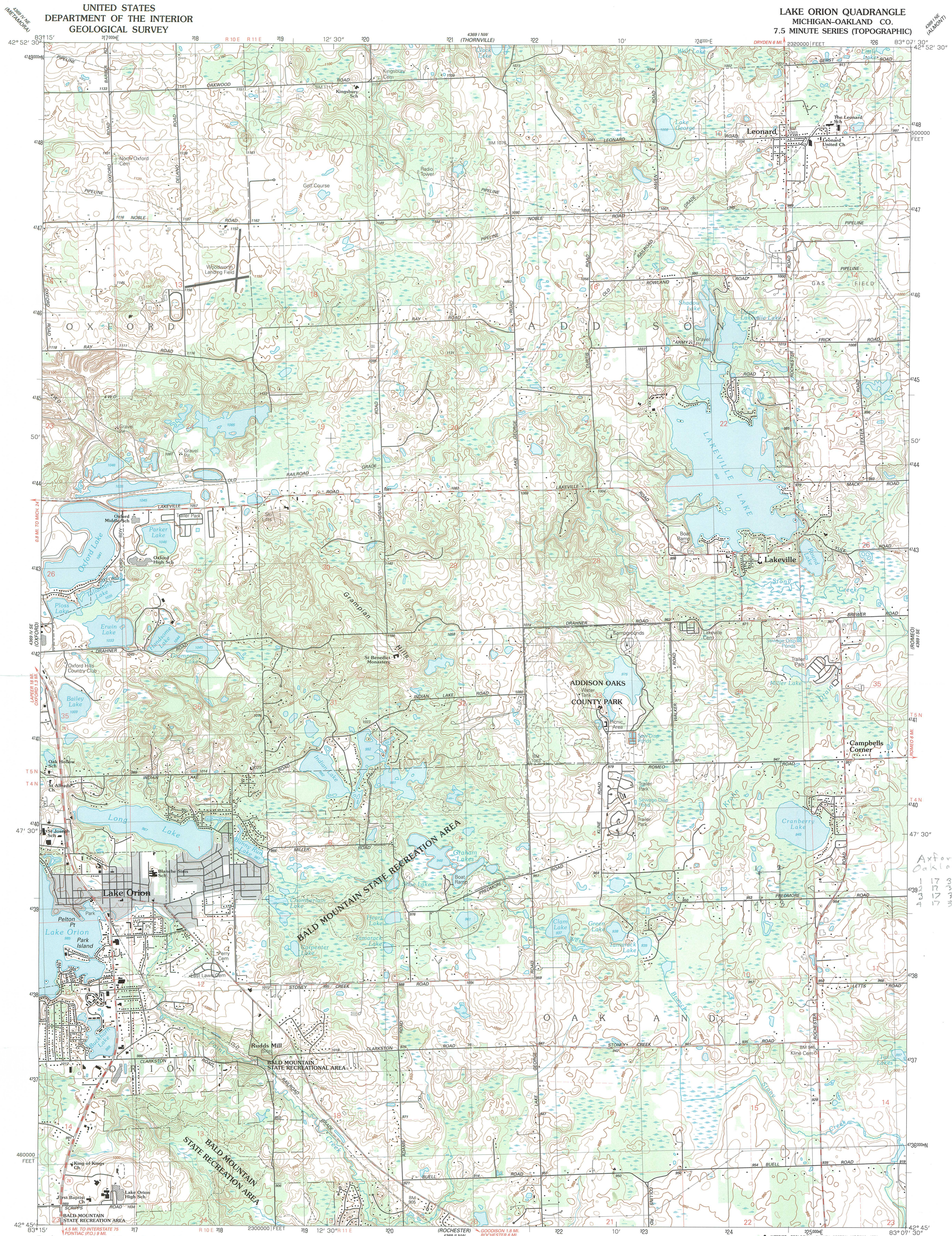
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Ax Ford - Coffin Farm Oakland Co. MI #9



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Axford-Coffin Farm Oakland Co. MI #10



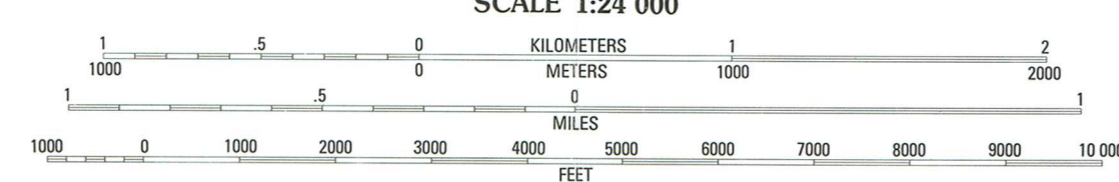
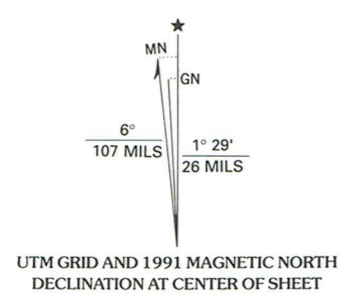
Oxford Coffin Farm
Oakland Co. MI

1	17	324460	4739350
2	17	324630	4739250
3	17	324670	4738910
4	17	324470	4738910

Produced by the United States Geological Survey

Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA
Compiled from aerial photographs taken 1986
Field checked 1988. Map edited 1991
Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Michigan coordinate system, south zone (Lambert conformal conic)
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 17
1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983, move the projection line 7 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map
Gray tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



SCALE 1:24 000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route



LAKE ORION, MICH.
42083-G2-TF-024
1991

DMA 4369 1 SW-SERIES V862

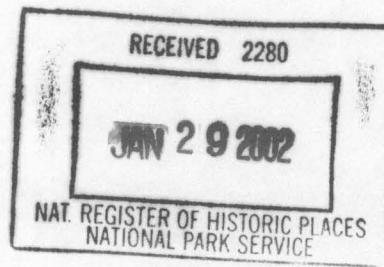


State of Michigan
John Engler, Governor

Department of History, Arts and Libraries
Dr. William M. Anderson, Director

State Historic Preservation Office

Michigan Historical Center
717 W. Allegan Street
P.O. Box 30740
Lansing, MI 48909-8240
517/373-1630



OK

January 23, 2002

Ms Carol D. Shull, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
800 Capitol Street, NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Ms Shull:

Enclosed are national register nomination materials for the Axford-Coffin Farm in Oakland County, Michigan. This property is being submitted for listing in the national register. No written comments concerning this nomination were submitted to us prior to the submission of this nomination to you.

Questions concerning this nomination may be addressed to Robert O. Christensen, National Register Coordinator, by phone at 517/335-2719 or by e-mail at ChristensenRO@mi.gov.

Sincerely yours,

Brian D. Conway
State Historic Preservation Officer

BDC:roc