

***History of the Farm House***

**Origin**

While under construction in 1860, the Farm House was the only building for miles on the wild prairie of Story County, Iowa. As the Iowa Agricultural College and Model Farm developed, the Farm House became the campus' cultural hub. Students working at the Model Farm came to the house to receive their daily assignments. In addition, it was the first home to many farm managers, deans of the Agriculture College, and their families during the early years of the college.

**Restoration**

The Farm House received the honor of being designated a National Historic Landmark in 1965. When the last resident, Dean Floyd Andre, moved out in 1970, work began to preserve and develop the home into a museum. The house was restored to reflect its first fifty years, 1860 to 1910. Funding for the project came from public and private donations as well as a federal grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior. The Farm House Museum formally opened on July 4, 1976 in honor of the nation's Bicentennial Celebration.

**Today**

University Museums is composed of the Farm House Museum, the Brunnier Art Museum, the Christian Petersen Art Museum, Elizabeth and Byron Anderson Sculpture Garden and the Art on Campus Collection. The Farm House Museum and its collection of art and historic objects are utilized by classes and programs across Iowa State for educational and cultural enrichment.

***Major Events***

- 1846: Iowa becomes the 29th state
- 1860: Farm House construction begins
- 1869: Iowa Agricultural College officially opens
- 1891: Dean Wilson and family move into the Farm House
- 1948: Farm House used for home management courses
- 1970: Dean Floyd Andre moves out of the Farm House
- 1983: University Museums established
- 1858: Iowa legislature establishes the Iowa Agricultural College and Model Farm
- 1864: Iowa legislature awards the Iowa Agricultural College 30,000 acres from the Morrill Act
- 1897: Dean Curtiss and family move into the Farm House
- 1898: Electricity is extended to the Farm House
- 1965: Farm House is named a National Historic Landmark
- 1976: Farm House Museum officially opens
- 2010: Farm House Museum celebrates 150th anniversary



1864



1908



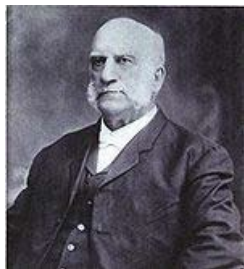
1932



2009

# Noteworthy Residents

Residing in the Farm House from 1868 to 1869, **Adonijah Strong Welch** was the first president of Iowa Agricultural College. While serving as United States senator to Florida, Dr. Welch wrote his inaugural speech in the upstairs bedroom of the Farm House. While completing his term as senator, Dr. Welch accepted the position of president, serving the college from 1869 to 1883. As president, he is credited in developing the early campus, creating courses in Agriculture and Mechanical Arts, and supporting women's right to a college education. His wife, **Mary Welch**, also developed domestic science courses, which later led to the formation of the College of Family and Consumer Sciences (now the College of Human Sciences).



**Seaman Asahel Knapp** and his family inhabited the Farm House during his employment at Iowa Agricultural College from 1880 to 1885. Knapp was appointed to the head position of the Agriculture Department in 1879 and served as president of the College from 1883 to 1884. His policies adhered to the purpose of the *Morrill Act of 1862*, which focused on educating the everyday farmer in practical techniques that would support a career in agriculture. This philosophy allowed agriculture students to experience and experiment with farming first hand. His wife, **Maria Hotchkiss Knapp**, assisted in housing students and staff.

Before his career at Iowa State Agricultural College, **James "Tama Jim" Wilson** served as a state legislator to Iowa and as a congressman to the United States. As a strong supporter of more agricultural courses at the College, Wilson was elected as the first Dean of Agriculture from 1890 to 1897, when he and his family lived in the Farm House. In 1897, newly-elected President William McKinley selected Wilson as United States Secretary of Agriculture. Wilson continued in this position to become the longest-serving U.S. Cabinet member, serving four consecutive terms under Presidents McKinley, Roosevelt, and Taft.



**Charles Franklin Curtiss** began as a student at Iowa Agricultural College and worked his way from professor to Dean of Agriculture as an appointee of James "Tama Jim" Wilson. He and his family lived in the Farm House from 1897 to 1947, making them the home's longest residents. For many Iowa State alumni, the Farm House continues to be the "Curtiss House." In addition to publishing his work with the Iowa Agricultural Experimental Station, Dean Curtiss was deeply involved in promoting Iowa Agricultural College through livestock judging competitions and by creating the first agriculture engineering program.

## Farm House Museum

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Additional Information on the Farm House and other University Museums Information sheets are available at the University Museums office - 290 Scheman building (2nd floor) 515-294-3342 or visit us online at [www.museums.iastate.edu](http://www.museums.iastate.edu)