

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name Pitsenbarger, Ananias, Farm  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number SR 23 (Dry Run Road) apx. 1/4 mi. S of intersection with CR 23/1  not for publication  
city or town Franklin  vicinity  
state West Virginia code WV county Pendleton Code 071 zip code 26807

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 for 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.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional  
comments.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
I hereby certify that the property is:		
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:)	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Pitsenbarger, Ananias, Farm  
Name of Property

Pendleton County, West Virginia  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

**Category of Property**

**Number of Resources within Property**

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property		
Contributing	Noncontributing	
15	1	buildings
5	1	sites
2	1	structures
		objects
22	3	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

N/A

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

AGRICULTURAL/SUBSISTENCE: animal facility,  
processing, agricultural outbuilding, storage

**Current Functions**

VACANT/not in use

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

No Style

**Materials**

foundation Stone

walls Wood: log, weatherboard

roof Metal: tin

other Wood, stone

**Narrative Description**

See Continuation Sheets

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

- 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**

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B.** removed from its original location.
- C.** birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
- 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.

**Levels of Significance** (local, state, national)

Local

**Areas of Significance**

Agriculture

Ethnic Heritage: European

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

c.1830-1961

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Propst, John

Pitsenbarger, Ananias J

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

See Continuation sheets

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government – Pendleton Co. Courthouse – deeds, wills
- University – WVU – pictorial archives
- Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Pitsenbarger, Ananias, Farm  
Name of Property

Pendleton County, West Virginia  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 130 acres

**UTM References**

1	<u>17</u>	<u>646463</u>	<u>4271270</u>	3	<u>17</u>	<u>645773</u>	<u>4269821</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>17</u>	<u>646703</u>	<u>4269884</u>	4	<u>17</u>	<u>645888</u>	<u>4271051</u>

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

See Continuation Sheets

**Boundary Justification**

See Continuation Sheets

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Jeffrey W Munn, Teresa W Munn (with Erin Riebe, National Register Coordinator)  
organization \_\_\_\_\_ date January 18, 2011  
street & number 13 W Old Street telephone 757 291 3907  
city or town Petersburg state VA zip code 23803

**Property Owner**

name Jeffrey W Munn and Betty Lynne Munn  
street & number 13 W Old Street telephone 757 291 3907  
city or town Petersburg state VA zip code 23803

**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 listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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### **LOCATION and SETTING**

The Ananias Pitsenbarger Farm (see Figures, Page 20) is located across Dry Run Road from the historic village of Dahmer near Franklin, West Virginia. The surrounding area is rural with similar size homesteads dotting the landscape. Today, the Pitsenbarger property includes approximately 130 acres of rolling hills, several springs, old stands of sugar maples, fruit trees, open hay fields, and wooded areas. Trees have encroached on the fields over time, but the many stone and split rail fences (photos 19-20) make it clear where fields and pastures were once laid out. Some of the chestnut rails survive from trees harvested during and after the chestnut blight in the 1930s. A fenced flower and vegetable garden was beside the house in which herbs, grapes, berries, and “old time” flowers were grown. Paths and lanes through the property primarily follow those laid out in the 1800s and were used by natives and settlers traveling through.

Historically, the property included 23 buildings (see Figures, Page 20). The house (photos 1-6), situated in a “bowl” near the main spring, and 15 log and frame outbuildings remain. The cellar house (photo 11), two hog pens, a stable (photo 12), woodworking shop (photo 14), carriage house (photo 13), chicken coop (photo 9), granary (photo 10), shed, WPA privy (photo 14), and spring house (photos 7-8) are clustered near the house with three small hay barns (photo 16) in adjacent fields and a large double-crib log hay barn (photo 15) situated a few hundred yards up the hill to the southwest of the house. A blacksmith shop, wash house, cider house, still house, cattle weigh scale house, corn crib and a small hay barn no longer exist. The foundation of the sugar shack and scale house (photo 17) remain. The only modern buildings on the property are a few hundred yards away from the old homestead. They include a log home built about 1986, and an open-air pole barn structure built in the 1990s next to the newer log home. Very little has changed to the property or buildings over the years. The most visible change has been the replacement of pole press roofs that were on some of the outbuildings. They were replaced with standing seam metal roofs due to their deteriorating condition.

The property also includes the Pitsenbarger Cemetery located on a hilltop to the south of the homestead and the grave site of Henry Amick, an early owner of the property and Revolutionary War soldier. A modern cemetery is also located on the property.<sup>1</sup>

### **DESCRIPTION<sup>2</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to the graves and cemeteries listed, the Pendleton County Historical Grave Register lists the location of Godfrey Imber’s grave site as on the Pitsenbarger property; however, its location is unknown. The exact location of the site may be on property outside of the current proposed boundary. The exclusion of this site from this nomination does not preclude it from listing in the future should the location be determined.

<sup>2</sup> The exact construction dates of the outbuildings are unknown. However, round log buildings were generally not popularized until the turn of the century. Furthermore, a large addition was constructed on the 1845 house c.1900. Thus, it is likely that the round-log outbuildings were constructed during the same time period. The granary and spring house are dated c.1845 since they were constructed with hewn logs similar to the original section of the house.

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### **1 – Pitsenbarger House**

**1845/c.1900**

### **Contributing Building**

*Exterior* (photos 1-4, also see page 21)

The original section of the house, constructed in 1845, includes the two-and-one-half story section on the north end, which is slightly wider than the later one-and-one-half story c.1900 addition. The house rests on a foundation of coursed rubble stone and is clad in weatherboard siding. It has a gable roof of standing-seam metal. This original section is constructed of large hand-hewn logs measuring 10” to 11” wide.

The main (east) elevation of the original section has a centered door and a six-over-six, double-hung sash window to each side. Centered above the windows on the second story are two smaller, four-over-four, double-hung sash windows. There are two doors and one, six-over-six, double-hung sash window on this elevation of the addition. A shed-roof porch extends the length of the house.

The rear (west) façade of the original section includes four windows similar to those on the main elevation. This façade of the addition includes a door with a small adjacent window and a two-over-two, double-hung sash window. The north elevation of the house has a squared and coursed rubble stone, exterior chimney. There are no windows on this elevation. The south elevation, within the c.1900 section of the house, has an interior stone chimney. There are two small, double-hung sash windows in the gable end of the addition as well as the south gable of the original section of the house.

Since the house was built on a small hillside, the c.1900 addition has an exposed basement level. It includes a door and a small fixed window.

*Interior* (photos 5-6)

The north end of the house (constructed in 1845) includes two rooms on the first floor, a stone fireplace on the north wall. The living room is 16’ x 13’ and the adjacent room is 16’ x 8’. The partition wall between these rooms is not insulated and has no supporting studs. There is no door or pass through to the addition. From the living room, a staircase leads to the second floor which includes two rooms in the same configuration as the first. Another narrower staircase leads to the attic space at the attic level. The log construction is visible on the staircases. The attic level has wide-planked flooring and was never finished space. The attic reveals the roofing system of 5” round logs numbered with simple slash marks in order from one to nine.

The kitchen and pantry were located in the addition on the south end of the house. Both were reached through separate doors from the outside. The pantry, situated adjacent to the original house includes a staircase leading to the attic space. The kitchen includes a fireplace with adjacent built-in, floor-to-ceiling wall cupboard on one side and a wood stove with matching cabinet topped with a sink under the window to the opposite side.

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The interior wood walls of the house were painted or whitewashed, and also covered with layers of newspapers and magazines for insulation. Layers of linoleum cover the wooden floors. The floors appear to be original planks underneath later coverings. The ceilings are wooden planks, as are the interior doors. There is old trim molding in the main rooms at the floor and ceiling. There are wooden shelves built inside the cellar, and a wooden cider barrel remains. The floor of the cellar was made from wooden planks.

With regard to alterations, the original roof was replaced with standing seam metal, likely in the mid-twentieth century. The original roof material is unknown, though wood shakes/shingles were common to the area and existed on many of the outbuildings. Electrical service with a minimal number of outlets and light sockets was run into the house in the mid-twentieth century and updated in the 1990s. A plumbing pipe which runs from the spring to the sink in the kitchen at the southeast corner was replaced c.1990. Water no longer runs to the sink. A wood stove is in the kitchen, age not known. An oil heater was added in the northern section of the house in 1972 at the fireplace opening.<sup>3</sup> The heater was removed a few years later when the personal effects of the last son, Gilbert, were auctioned off. The fireplace was blocked off and is not operational. The surround to the stair in the pantry has been replaced, likely in the 1990s.

### 2 – Cellar house (photo 11)

c.1900

Contributing building

The cellar house, built into a hillside, is a rectangular building with gable roof and exposed stone foundation on the south elevation. It measures approximately 17'6" x 12' 5". This building is post and beam construction, covered with clapboards. The exposed, full-level foundation includes a door opening and window. A small, double-hung sash window is centered above. The remains of wooden bins and a cider barrel remain inside. A door on the east elevation leads to the upper level, likely the kitchen. A square opening on the north elevation leads to the loft area and is reached by a wood ladder.

### 3 – Chicken Coop (photo 9)

c.1900

Contributing building

This building is an 11'4" x 14'2" log and beam framed (mortise and tenon) structure resting on large stones, covered with weatherboard. It is rectangular in shape and has a gable roof (standing seam metal) with overhang. The door, constructed of wood planks, is on the north elevation and a small window is on the south elevation within the gable. There are two roosting boxes on the exterior of the building, one above the door and one to the left of the door, and several inside. Slanted boards lead down from the sides under the roosting boxes to funnel chicken manure into a moveable wooden box. A mule or horse-drawn sledge was used to remove this box and carry it to a field in need of fertilizer.

### 4 – Granary (photo 10)

c.1845

Contributing building

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<sup>3</sup> Johnny Arvin Dahmer, *The Dahmer Letter 1968-1982* (Baltimore, MD: Gateway Press, Inc., 2002), 290.

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The granary is 13'4" x 11' and was made of massive 12-16" squared-off logs set on large stones. It has a standing seam metal (replacement), gable roof. The logs are joined with a half-dovetail notch method. There are waist-high wooden bins inside on either side of a central walkway. The floor is wood, with very tight floor joints. There are no windows. The door is on the north elevation and is constructed of wood planks with iron hardware. This building has a deep roof overhang of 5'3", creating a recessed porch on the north facade.

**5 - Spring house** (photo 7-8)

**c.1845**

**Contributing building**

The spring house is made of squared-off logs set on local stones. It has a low-pitched gable roofline with exposed rafters and standing seam metal roof added c.1990. The previous roof was of wooden shakes. A wood door on the east elevation faces the head of the spring. Spring water runs through the building and there are still large stones and some wood shelving inside where food would have been stored. Concrete cisterns capture the water which used to run to the old house and still runs to the newer log cabin used by the current owners. The spring house is near the house to the south. The base of the building is 11'4" x 9'10" and the roof overhangs the east side approximately 9', creating a porch. The roof overhang on the north and south sides is about 2' deep.

**6 - Horse/mule stable** (photo 12)

**c.1900**

**Contributing building**

The stable is a round-log, rectangular building, approximately 18' x 21', set on local stones with doors on the north and east elevations. The notching is saddle V-shape. There are two stalls, or cribs, inside. A floor for the hayloft above is made of round wooden poles installed during construction. The building includes two doors; one on the east and one on the north façade with the door on the east for animals. Of note are the original wooden hinged doors. Some of the wooden hinges remain today. The gable roof is now standing seam metal with exposed rafters, constructed c.1990. The weatherboards in the gable end replaced the original boards c.1985.

**7 - Carriage House** (photo 13)

**c.1900**

**Contributing building**

This building is made of post and beam framing set on large stones, with weatherboard siding. It has pass-through doors large enough for a carriage or wagon, and a side area on the west side with work shop. There is one window on the south side and a tin roof. The building is 20'4" x 16'3" and sits adjacent to and just southwest of the house.

**8 - Woodworking Shop** (photo 14)

**c.1900**

**Contributing building**

Gable-front building post-and-beam framing set on large stone foundation with weatherboard covering. It has pass through doors large enough for a carriage or wagon and a side area on the south side with a workshop. The interior includes a long workbench and vise. There is one window and a standing seam metal roof. The roof was made of wooden shakes until the late 1980s or early 1990s. The building is 22'4" x 17'6" and is located just west of the house.

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**9 – Double-crib log barn** (photo 15) **c.1900** **Contributing building**  
Double-crib log barn with side gable roof and open breezeway and saddle V-notching and logs left round. This 43' x 52', three-bay building used to be open at the center back so hay wagons could drive through after depositing hay in the upper lofts. The door opening on the front (east) elevation is 17' wide. The back (west) elevation is now closed in with wood planks. The north and south elevations of the barn have two levels providing for a hay loft with pole log floors on each end, over a storage area, once likely used for animal shelter. The floor in the center section is made of large wood planks, some wider than 12", placed closely together. There is a door for each of the storage rooms on the east side, each with wooden hinges. The north elevation has a shed-roofed lean-to.

**10 – Storage building** **c.1900** **Contributing building**  
This log framed, log pole roof building is 15'6" x 17'3" with one door on the north elevation. The door and a window opening on the south facade have been boarded. Weatherboards cover the building. There is a shallow roof overhang on the north side, creating a porch.

**11-13 – Hay barns** (photo 16) **c.1900** **3 Contributing buildings**  
Three of the four hay fields near the house have round-log hay barns which are each approximately 12' x 15'. All have German dovetail joints and two of the three barns have doors with wooden hinges. The roofs were replaced c.1990 with gable, standing-seam metal roofs. At the time the roofs were replaced, the top courses of logs were removed, reducing these to one-story buildings. This does not affect the overall integrity of these buildings. These hay barns were used to store rectangular hay bales until 2008 when larger round bales were made instead. The hay barn in the field next to Henry Amick's grave had a pole press roof well into the 1960s<sup>4</sup>.

**14 – Hog pen**<sup>5</sup> **c.1900** **Contributing site**  
Rectangular pen measuring approximately 11'10" x 7'10". This pen is made of round logs with German dovetails and has a door on the south facade. The roof and some of the upper logs of this pen are missing.

**15 – Hog pen** **c.1900** **Contributing building**  
The largest of the hog pens stands to the northwest of the house, at the edge of the fence line that runs north of the house. This pen is 11'6" x 16' and is made of round logs with a German dovetail joint. There is a door on the east elevation and an access hole in the north wall where food was passed through into the trough. The shed roof on this pen was replaced with standing seam metal c.1990. Emergency repairs were

<sup>4</sup> Gerald Milnes, "The Barns of Pendleton County," *Goldenseal*, Spring 1998, vol. 24, no. 1, 55.

<sup>5</sup> This property is not being considered at this time for the potential archaeological significance of the sites of the former house or outbuildings, however, archaeological significance of the sites is not precluded. Sites of former resources that are identifiable as ruins are considered contributing since they have tremendous associative significance.

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made to put the roof back on after it slid off in a windstorm in 2009. A course of logs was removed at that time. A hog run ran along the fence between this hog pen and #14. The hog run continued north and eastward from the house to the edge of the woods bordering the Eastern hay fields.

**16 – Sugar shack ruins** **c. 1900** **Contributing site**  
This was the building where maple sap was boiled down to make syrup. Its ruins are situated in a grove of sugar maples, at the edge of a field northeast of the house. The sugar pan, rock fire pit walls, some support poles, roof poles and clapboards remain, though the building has now collapsed.

**17 – Cattle scale building ruins** **c.1900** **Contributing site**  
(photo 17)  
The rock foundation of this building remains. It was situated just north of the large two-crib log hay barn. The wood plank fencing remains next to the foundation showing the holding pen area and the ramp to load cattle into wagons or trucks.

**18 – WPA privy** **c.1930** **Contributing building**  
A wood privy is situated just west of the house. It has a concrete base and seat stack with a wooden lid. This is a wooden frame building which shows old white and green-blue paint. There are square vent holes covered with screen and a metal roof. The outhouse is operational.

**19 – Modern house** **1986** **Noncontributing Building**  
One-and-one-half story log house with side gable roof and shed-roof porch, half of which is enclosed. The house is approximately 36' x 28' with a full basement.

**20 – Modern pole barn** **1990** **Noncontributing structure**  
Rectangular shape, gable-roof, open-air pole barn measuring 32'4" x 25'9". It has a standing seam metal roof and some wood planks under the roofline. It is located just behind, to the south, of the modern house.

**21 – Pitsenbarger Cemetery** **1926** **Contributing Site**  
(photo 18)  
The Pitsenbarger Cemetery is located southeast of the double crib log barn, at the corner of two fields. It contains the graves of Ananias J. Pitsenbarger (1851-1926), his wife Susan Virginia Dahmer (1851-1934), W.C. Pitsenbarger (1886), C.A. Pitsenbarger (1889), J. Alben Pitsenbarger (1879-1967), Sarah E. Pitsenbarger (1875-1959), and Gilbert Pitsenbarger (1884-1973). Most of the headstones and footstones are small and unadorned. Two headstones are larger with minimum detailing; Gilbert's and J. Alben and Sarah's, who share a headstone. The small family cemetery is surrounded by a simple wire fence supported by wood posts.

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**22 – Munn Cemetery**

**c.1990**

**Noncontributing Site**

There is a new cemetery for the Munn family located to the southwest of the new log cabin, on the hilltop to the west of the old log double crib hay barn. There are several graves here dating from the 1990s. The graves have modern headstones and are bordered by a wooden split rail fence along the southwest side of the plots.

**23 – Henry Amick Grave**

**c.1830**

**Contributing Site**

The grave of Henry Amick, a Revolutionary War soldier (1762-1830), is located by itself in a field to the East of the old homestead, at the base of Amick's Knob.<sup>6</sup> Part of Amick's knob lies in the Ananias Pitsenbarger Farm. The original stone marker was removed and replaced with a modern marker in the 1990s.

**24 – Split rail fencing (photo 20)**

**c.1930**

**Contributing structure**

Split rail fencing of chestnut is situated throughout the property mostly along the west and northeast property line. Some is in better condition than other areas.

**25 – Stone fencing (photos 19-20)**

**c.1845**

**Contributing structure**

Walls of rubble stone stacked approximately 3' to 6' high throughout the property.

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<sup>6</sup> Pendleton County Historical Society, *Moments in Time: A Pictorial History of Pendleton County, West Virginia* (Marceline, Mo.: Walsworth Publishing Co., 1988; reprint 2003), 146.

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### **STATEMENT of SIGNIFICANCE<sup>7</sup>**

The Pitsenbarger Farm is locally significant and eligible for listing in the National Register under *Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage* as a center of Germanic culture and practices in Pendleton County. It is also eligible under *Criterion A: Agriculture* as an important example of a self-sufficient farming operation. Lastly, it is eligible under *Criterion C: Architecture* for the collection of farm buildings that exhibit historic techniques of pioneer architecture common to the Pendleton County area, and represent ancient German influences related to home and farm building. Traditional tools and methods were used for construction and harvesting, aided only with the power of horses and mules. It is a significant domestic and agricultural complex representative of the period beginning with the construction of the early outbuildings in the mid nineteenth century to the construction of the youngest outbuildings in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth.

The period of significance begins in c.1830, dating to the earliest resource of the property, a grave site of one of the original property owners, to 1961, the National Register's 50-year cut-off date. During this entire time, and through the 1970s, the farm was an important center of German culture and a significant self-sufficient farm. This period also encompasses the construction dates of all of the architecturally significant resources (between c.1845 and c.1930).

#### *History*

The Pitsenbarger Farm is located within the long, narrow South Branch Valley. The valley stretches northeast to southwest along the South Branch of the Potomac River between the Allegheny Mountains to the west and the Shenandoah Mountains to the east. Rich agricultural potential of the area lured settlers in the first half of the eighteenth century and continued to be attractive to agriculture throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Original settlers to the South Branch Valley came primarily from southern and central Pennsylvania and were of Scots-Irish or German descent. Settlement from Pennsylvania into the valley was primarily a result of topography. The various parallel mountain ridges east of the valley generally discouraged migration from Tidewater areas. With settlement increasing in the area, the Virginia General Assembly created Pendleton County on December 4, 1787 out of Augusta, Harding, and Rockingham Counties.

The 130 acres of the Pitsenbarger Farm as it exists today (see page 20) is what remains of a larger farm whose boundaries have fluctuated over the years. The original two parcels were land grants to Nicholas Amick (also spelled Emick or Emig) in 1792 and 1793. Amick, whose father was a German immigrant to Pennsylvania, and his wife Susanna sold all or part of these parcels to Abraham Pitsenbarger in 1799 before

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<sup>7</sup> This property is located within the area defined in the South Branch Valley Multiple Resource Area cover document (accepted 1986). However, since that document has limited context and was based only on a partial survey, this nomination has been prepared to stand alone.

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they moved to Kentucky.<sup>8</sup> Three years later, in 1802, Pitsenbarger, along with Henry Amick (Nicholas Amick's cousin) purchased a 75-acre parcel that was originally surveyed in 1787.<sup>9</sup> The homestead where Henry Amick died in 1830 once stood on the Pitsenbarger farm though its location is unknown.<sup>10</sup> It was likely located near where his grave is currently located at the base of high ground commonly known as Amick's Knob.

Another piece of the current parcel was owned at one time by John and Sarah Propst, also of German ancestry. Propst built the original section of the existing house in 1845 by way of a frolic (a work party similar to a barn raising). His grandson, Ananias J. Pitsenbarger, acquired this parcel later by will, and expanded the house c.1900. In 1925 Ananias purchased part of a nearby parcel owned by Joel Washington Dahmer, grandson of Joel Dahmer (1811-99), a deputy sheriff, constable, and school teacher operating a "pay school" on the Propst Farm, later known as "Ananias Pitsenbarger's Meadow."<sup>11</sup> Dahmer was also widely accepted and respected as a "healer" or "witchdoctor."<sup>12</sup> Ananias and wife Susan (daughter of Joel Dahmer) and children J. Alben, Gilbert, and Sarah (Sissy) lived here. Gilbert and J. Alben sold parts of the acreage off to neighbors during their later years. After Gilbert died in 1973 the farm passed to Mabel Helmick who had moved to the Pitsenbarger Farm from a Poor Farm in Upper Tract to help the elder Pitsenbargers.<sup>13</sup>

Since the early nineteenth century, the farm provided the sustenance and livelihood of its owners. The Pitsenbargers raised cattle, sheep, ducks, chickens, pigs and did their own butchering. Sheep shearing was done by a travelling shearer until the 1970s. Bee hives were maintained (some old hives are still stored on the property) and maple sap was boiled for sugar. The property included a blacksmith house and still house for those functions. There was also a separate kitchen, cider house, and wash house at one time.

Crops grown were corn, hay, tobacco, herbs (used as healing teas), and vegetables.<sup>14</sup> Cherry, pear, apple, berries, nuts and ginseng were harvested. The spring house near the homestead kept butter, milk and perishables cool. The two cellars held cider and food stores into the winter. The hard cider and apple

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<sup>8</sup> Pendleton County Deed Book 3, page 78. Located at the Franklin, W.Va courthouse.

<sup>9</sup> Pendleton County Deed Book 3, pg 355. Located at the Franklin, W.Va courthouse.

<sup>10</sup> *The Dahmer Letter 1968-1982*, 53; Also, the district is not being considered at this time for the potential archaeological significance of the Amick House site or other sites on the property; however, archaeological significance of the sites is not precluded.

<sup>11</sup> Pendleton County Deed Book 56, page 275. Also, *The Dahmer Letter*, 290.

<sup>12</sup> Gerald C. Milnes, *Signs, Cures & Witchery: German Appalachian Folklore* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2007), 62.

<sup>13</sup> Don Mills, ed., *Pendleton Co. West Virginia Past and Present*, (Marceline, MO: Walsworth Publishing Company, 1991; reprint, 2007), 61 (page numbers are to reprint addition).

<sup>14</sup> *Signs, Cures & Witchery*, 72.

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brandy, which were specialties of the place and were made in large quantities, helped earn the farm its nickname “Loafer’s Glory.”<sup>15</sup> Crops were grown for the family and their animals and processed on site.

Livestock and poultry were kept for food and clothing and trees were harvested for construction materials and for their fruits, nuts, and sap. The farm had its own beehives for honey production as well as its own woodworking shop, a sugar shack for processing maple syrup and maple sugar, and its own blacksmith shop for forging tools. It also had its own still house for production of cider and liquor.

### *German traditions*

From 1799 until 1973 the farm was owned by three successive families of German descent. The historical timeline of the ownership of the farm is representative of the way German settlers homesteaded in this remote part of West Virginia. These pioneer families maintained extremely close alliances and often inter-married with their neighbors, keeping Old World traditions alive. The practice of Germanic traditions and folkways remained strong in this area and numerous oral and written accounts point to the Pitsenbarger Farm’s importance with respect to folk lore, occult beliefs, and traditions. There are published accounts of Ananias Pitsenbarger’s belief that he had been bewitched, and the effects it had on him and his farm.

Gerald Milnes’ 2007 book, *Signs, Cures, and Witchery: German Appalachian Folklore* provides a look into the Appalachian beliefs and practices among the ancestors of early German settlers in the Appalachian frontier. Based partially on oral history and contemporary accounts, the work recounts how the early German settlers established esoteric systems and traditions based on folk spirituality. These traditions were sustained through the centuries and continue today. The Ananias Pitsenbarger family were the subject of an entire chapter in Milnes’ book. Ananias (1851-1926) was the grandson of John Propst who built the original section of the historic house.

Ananias Pitsenbarger and his family, wife Susan and children James Alben, John Gilbert, and Sarah Elizabeth were the last of the Pitsenbargers to live on the farm. Gilbert remained on the farm until 1973 when he died. They were the fourth generation in America, with ancestors on the property since 1802. Like many other families in this region of the South Branch Valley, the Pitsenbargers held on to the Germanic folkways of their ancestors. One Pennsylvania German tradition Ananias continued was fishing on Ascension Day, the day Christians commemorate the ascension of Jesus Christ into heaven. To Ananias, it was a day when fish migrated up the rivers. Such tradition sought to illustrate that nature was aware of Godly activities. Other traditions he held on to included building with Old World and traditional techniques (such as with wooden hinges and pole-press roofs) even when nails were available and using horse-drawn

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

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sleds for hauling rather than a tractor. The Pitsenbargers even reared peafowl, a bird that often appears in Germanic folk art and is believed to bring good luck.<sup>16</sup> Peafowl are known also as useful guard birds.

Milnes' work cites interviews with Pitsenbarger neighbors and other locals who related that the Pitsenbargers often consulted witchdoctors and Ananias believed in such practices as "whipping toads" to make hens lay more eggs, using herbal plants for healing and curing, and consulting witchdoctors.<sup>17</sup> Neighbor Johnny Arvin Dahmer defined witch doctors as individuals who cured people of sickness they believed was brought on by the supernatural.<sup>18</sup> In an 1877 document, Ananias swore in writing to a Pendleton County Court official that he did not accuse a neighbor of being a witch and stealing the milk from his cows. The statement below was signed by Andy Dyer.

This day personally came Ananias J. Pitsenbarger and made oath before me that he never told John Morgan Propst that "Old Lize Dahmer had bewitched all from his cows, that she took all the milk and butter from his cows, that she took 8 and 10 lbs twice a week to the store. That he never told said Propst that "Old Lize Dahmer was so drunk she wasn't able to go over from her house to Jack Dahmer's; and that he never told said Propst that Joel Dahmer had stolen a jug from him."<sup>19</sup>

Though Ananias swears that he never made such accusations, the document serves as evidence that such folklore and beliefs continued to be present in the area. Though Ananias died in 1926, the beliefs and practices carried on through the last Pitsenbarger's tenure on the property. The last family member to live on the property, Gilbert, was known to have used a "witch ball" for occult consultation before making important decisions.<sup>20</sup> According to a local historian, their occult items were sold off when the farm was auctioned in 1973.

The Pitsenbarger home was a center for traditional music and festivities as well. J. Alben Pitsenbarger was a fiddle player. Other neighborhood musicians joined in during frolics on the property. Any time a major event was scheduled that required numerous people (hog butchering, corn shucking, apple pressing, etc.), it ended with a feast and dancing. Also, because the farm was on the primary path over Jack Mountain connecting the South Branch with the South Fork, their visitors were many. Because they were accommodating and generous, and perhaps because of the quality of their hard cider, the Pitsenbarger place was sometimes referred to as "Loafer's Glory."<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 65, 67, 69-70, and 72.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 72, 86, and 100.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.

<sup>19</sup> Andy Dyer, 27 August 1877. Document in the hand of author, Petersburg, V.A.

<sup>20</sup> *Signs, Cures & Witchery*, 169.

<sup>21</sup> *Signs, Cures & Witchery*, 65 and 67.

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### *Architecture*

The architecture is locally significant as an intact collection of Pendleton County farm buildings. The original section (photos 3, 5-6) of the farmhouse was constructed in 1845 during a period of extensive construction and prosperity associated with the general economic and agricultural conditions of the South Branch Valley just before the Civil War. It stood as a modest house with exposed logs for more than half a century until it was added on to (photo 4) and sided c.1900 by Ananias Pitsenbarger. Like many other farms of the South Branch Valley, the original settlement period home (Amick's house) no longer exists and the later house was added on to in order to meet the needs of the family. Ananias constructed several of the outbuildings and added to the house during the second period of major construction in the South Branch Valley.

As a self-sufficient farming operation with the farm operators holding on to Old World tradition, there were numerous outbuildings. In addition to the farm house, today the property includes a large double-crib barn, a granary, a chicken coop, a spring house, three hay barns, two hog pens, a cellar house (possibly a summer kitchen), a horse stable, a carriage house, a woodworking shop, a storage building, and the remains of the sugar shack and cattle scale.

The property is also significant as an excellent collection of log buildings indicative of building practices in nineteenth and early twentieth century Pendleton County. Early German settlers to the region brought with them from Europe traditional building methods of constructing houses and outbuildings of horizontal logs. To construct in this manner in western Virginia was easy since wood was in great abundance. The earliest log barns constructed in then Virginia were of a basic design that were added to as needed. There were no building plans except in the builder's own mind. Like many traditions, building methods were learned by observation and hard work.<sup>22</sup> In Pendleton County, and especially on Ananias' farm, early practices of building with wood logs continued through the late eighteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Settlers to the area brought two distinct barn types with them. One of these, the double-crib barn (photo 15), is found on the Pitsenbarger Farm. In general, the double-crib log barn is one-and-one-half stories in height and includes two cribs (log rooms) constructed under one roof. Animals were housed in the cribs and hay was stored in the upper floor, sometimes called "mows." The area between the two cribs was often used as the "threshing floor."<sup>23</sup> The double-crib barn at the Pitsenbarger Farm was likely constructed c.1900.

The granary (photo 10) and springhouse (photos 7-8) are possibly the oldest of the log outbuildings on the property, likely dating to the same time period that Propst constructed the 1845 section of the house. As opposed to most of the other outbuildings on the property with round-log construction, the granary has hewn

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<sup>22</sup> Schultz, Leroy G. "Log Barns of West Virginia," *Goldenseal*, Spring 1983.

<sup>23</sup> "The Barns of Pendleton County," 52 and 55.

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logs. In general, such buildings have logs hewn on both sides, but the top and the bottom of the logs remained rounded, often with the bark attached. Round-log buildings were rarely constructed prior to the twentieth century.<sup>24</sup>

This area, towards the northern section of the Alleghenies, yielded three forms of notching including saddle notching, V-notching, and full dovetail notching. It was in this area that half-dovetail notching, as used on the granary (photo 10), first became common practice. Half-dovetail is a notch in which, when viewed from the end, the top side is angled and the other three sides are straight. On many early farms, houses were constructed with full dovetail notching and the outbuildings were constructed with half-dovetail. It is possible, then, that the house has full dovetail notching under the clapboard siding that was added c.1900. Further south, almost all houses had half-dovetail notching with saddle notching on outbuildings, a form also introduced by the Germans.<sup>25</sup>

The notching of the other outbuildings on the Pitsenbarger Farm includes a variation of the V-notch, sometimes referred to as the Saddle V-notch. This type of notching was generally used on unhewn round logs constructed in the late nineteenth century and first decades of the twentieth century. Since the bottom of the log was left in the round and the top was V shape, the ends appear pear-shaped.<sup>26</sup> Many of the outbuildings on the Pitsenbarger Farm employ this type of notching, suggesting that Ananias constructed them around the turn of the century when he also made the addition to the house (photos 12, 15-16).

Following Old World tradition, some of the logs on the barns were held in place with wooden pegs, and some doors on the horse stable, small log hay barns, and double crib log barn have wooden hinges. The buildings that are not log were built with small log or timber framing with mortise-and-tenon joints and pegs and covered with weatherboard. Old iron hardware remains on some of the doors, which was likely forged in the blacksmith shop.

In addition to the buildings, the property also includes two types of fencing, split-rail and stone fencing (photos 19-20), both common types of agricultural fencing. By 1870 the split rail fence accounted for more than eighty percent of all fences in West Virginia. It is also known as a "worm fence" for its zigzag shape. The shape helped to increase stability of the fence since there are no posts. A worm fence was made by laying a rail approximately 11' long and 4" to six" inches thick on the ground and then stacking up to nine rails high in each section overlapping rails in the adjacent section. Later, like the fencing at the Pitsenbarger

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<sup>24</sup> Michael J. Pulice, "Notes on Defining, Dating, and Documenting Early Log Structures in Southwest Virginia," *The Quarterly Bulletin of the Archeological Society of Virginia*, June 2010, vol. 65, no. 2.

<sup>25</sup> Fred Kniffen and Henry Glassie, "Building in Wood in the Eastern United States: A Time-Place Perspective," *Geographical Review*, January 1966, vol. 56, no. 1, p. 63; and Leroy G. Schultz, "Log Barns of West Virginia," *Goldenseal*, Spring 1983, vol. 9, no. 1.

<sup>26</sup> John B. Rehder, *Appalachian Folkways* (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 87-88.

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Farm, the fences were secured with crossed diagonal stakes where each section came together.<sup>27</sup> The stone fence on the property was likely constructed prior to the split rail fence. Stone fences lasted much longer than wood and they became widely used in the decades after the Revolution.<sup>28</sup> On the property, the Propsts and/or Pitsenbargers likely made use of the various natural stone outcroppings dotting the area.

As a whole, the collection of domestic and agricultural resources on the Pitsenbarger Farm is representative of regional farmsteads associated with small-farm general production throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The collection aids in the interpretation of farmstead architecture within the architectural and agricultural history of the South Branch Valley. The house, outbuildings, and acreage represent an important remnant of a period of cultural landscape development in the South Branch Valley largely influenced by settlers of Scots-Irish or German descent. In addition, with so many log buildings, especially dependencies, disappearing from the landscape, those remaining on the Pitsenbarger Farm form an extremely important collection.

### **SUMMARY**

The history of the Ananias Pitsenbarger Farm and the remaining log and frame buildings illustrate a historic and self-sufficient Appalachian mountain farm complex from the mid 1800s through the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and is an excellent example of mountain family institutions and traditions that date to the preindustrial era. Built by hand from local materials and resources, and expanded over a long period, it reflects the hardiness, dedication, skill, abilities and frugality that was necessary to survive in a geographically rugged region with virtually no industry. The hand-hewn logs, use of wooden pegs for construction, hand-carved wooden hinges on the log barn doors, home-made bee hives, forged nails and iron latches, all reflect of a time and independent spirit that goes all the way back to the settling of the frontier as the colonies expanded westward. The history of the Pitsenbarger family also provides a glimpse into the impact of Germanic folklore, culture and traditions on mountain families in their beliefs and actions. The property provides a glimpse into Pendleton County's mountain farm life built on ancestral tradition. To this day, former neighbors and visitors of the Pitsenbarger property continue to relate stories of the Pitsenbargers, their property, and their traditions, demonstrating the continued significance of the homestead.

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<sup>27</sup> Gary Kulik, "The Worm Fence," in *Between Fences*, ed. Gregory K. Dreicer (Washington, D.C.: National Building Museum and New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997), 21-22.

<sup>28</sup> Anne Stillman, "Fences and the Settlement of New England," in *Between Fences*, ed. Gregory K. Dreicer (Washington, D.C.: National Building Museum and New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997), 16.

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Pitsenbarger, Ananias, Farm

**Name of Property**

Pendleton County, WV

**County and State**

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# **National Register of Historic Places**

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### **VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The National Register boundary includes approximately 130 acres and the following two parcels: District 03-Franklin, Map 42, parcel 0020 and District 03-Franklin, map 42, parcel 0019 as recorded at the Pendleton County Courthouse.

### **BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The National Register boundary is what is currently associated with the Ananias Pitsenbarger Farm. Over the years, since 1799 and throughout the period of significance, acreage has been added to and sold from the farm. All of the property and resources within the boundary were historically associated with the farm. The boundary encompasses all of the significant historic resources.

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# **National Register of Historic Places**

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Photographer:            Jeffrey Munn (unless noted otherwise)  
Date:                      winter/spring 2010 (unless noted otherwise)

Photo 1 of 20:            Pitsenbarger Farm; camera facing northeast

Photo 2 of 20:            Pitsenbarger Farm; camera facing east (photo by Aubrey Von Lindern, SHPO, April 2011)

Photo 3 of 20:            Pitsenbarger house (#1); camera facing north/northeast

Photo 4 of 20:            Pitsenbarger house (#1); camera facing east/northeast

Photo 5 of 20:            Interior, living room of original section of house

Photo 6 of 20:            Interior, staircase from second floor to third in house

Photo 7 of 20:            Springhouse (#5); camera facing west

Photo 8 of 20:            Springhouse interior (photo by Aubrey Von Lindern, SHPO, April 2011)

Photo 9 of 20:            Chicken coop (#3); camera facing south/southwest

Photo 10 of 20:           Granary (#4); camera facing southwest

Photo 11 of 20:           Cellar house (#6); camera facing east/northeast

Photo 12 of 20:           Horse stable (#6); camera facing northwest

Photo 13 of 20:           Carriage house (#7) next to chicken coop (#3); camera facing northwest

Photo 14 of 20:           Woodworking shop (#8) and WPA privy (#18); camera facing northwest (photo by Aubrey Von Lindern, SHPO, April 2011)

Photo 15 of 20:           Double-crib barn (#9); camera facing southwest (photo by Aubrey Von Lindern, SHPO, April 2011)

Photo 16 of 20:           Hay barn (#13); camera facing northeast

Photo 17 of 20:           Cattle scale ruins (#17); camera facing south

Photo 18 of 20:           Pitsenbarger cemetery (#21); camera facing south

Photo 19 of 20:           Stone wall (#25); camera facing west.

Pitsenbarger, Ananias, Farm

**Name of Property**

Pendleton County, WV

**County and State**

**United States Department of the Interior**

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Photo 20 of 20:            Stone wall (#25) with split rail fence (#24) in background; camera facing north

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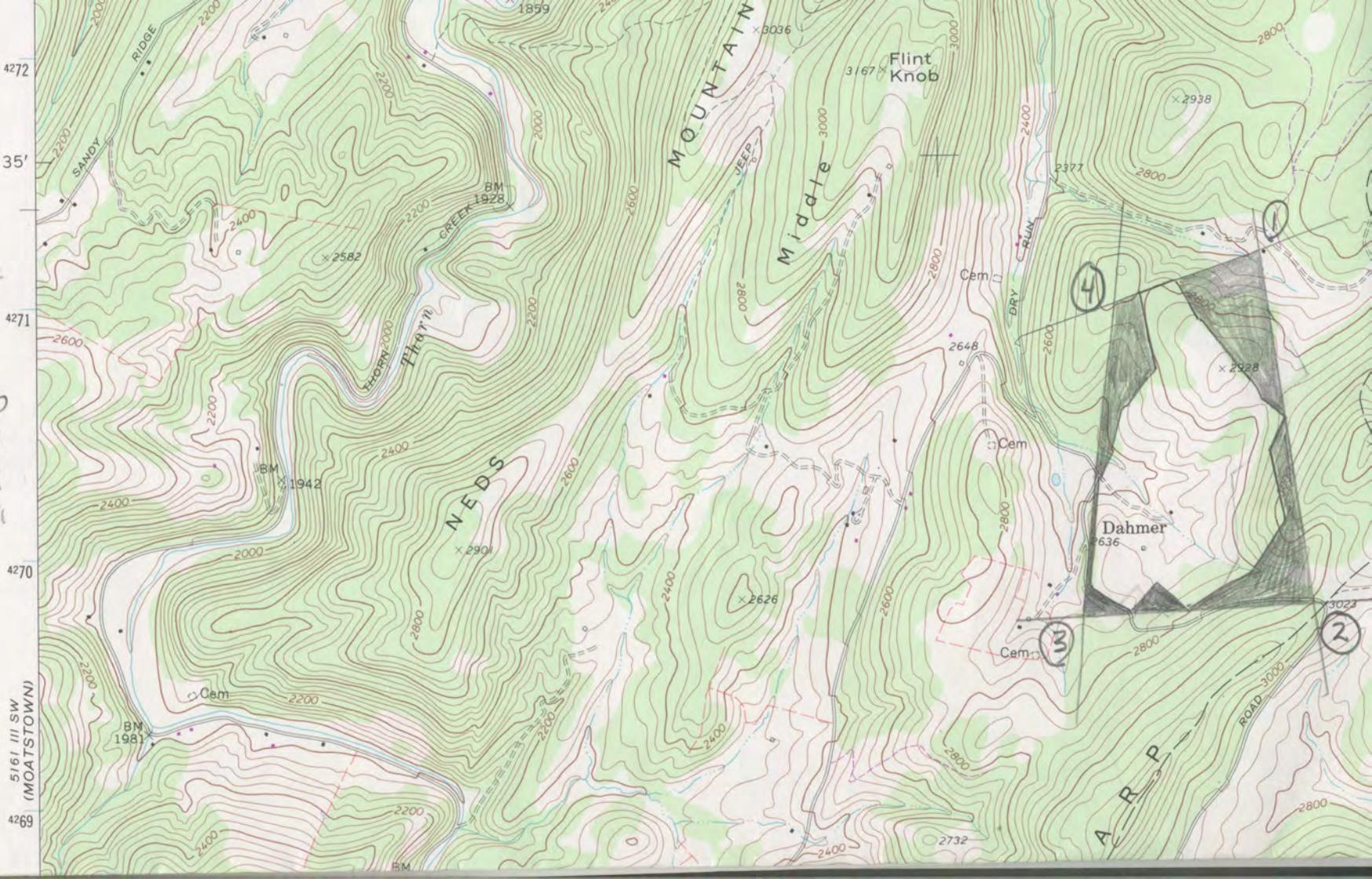
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Photo 1 (see photo log)

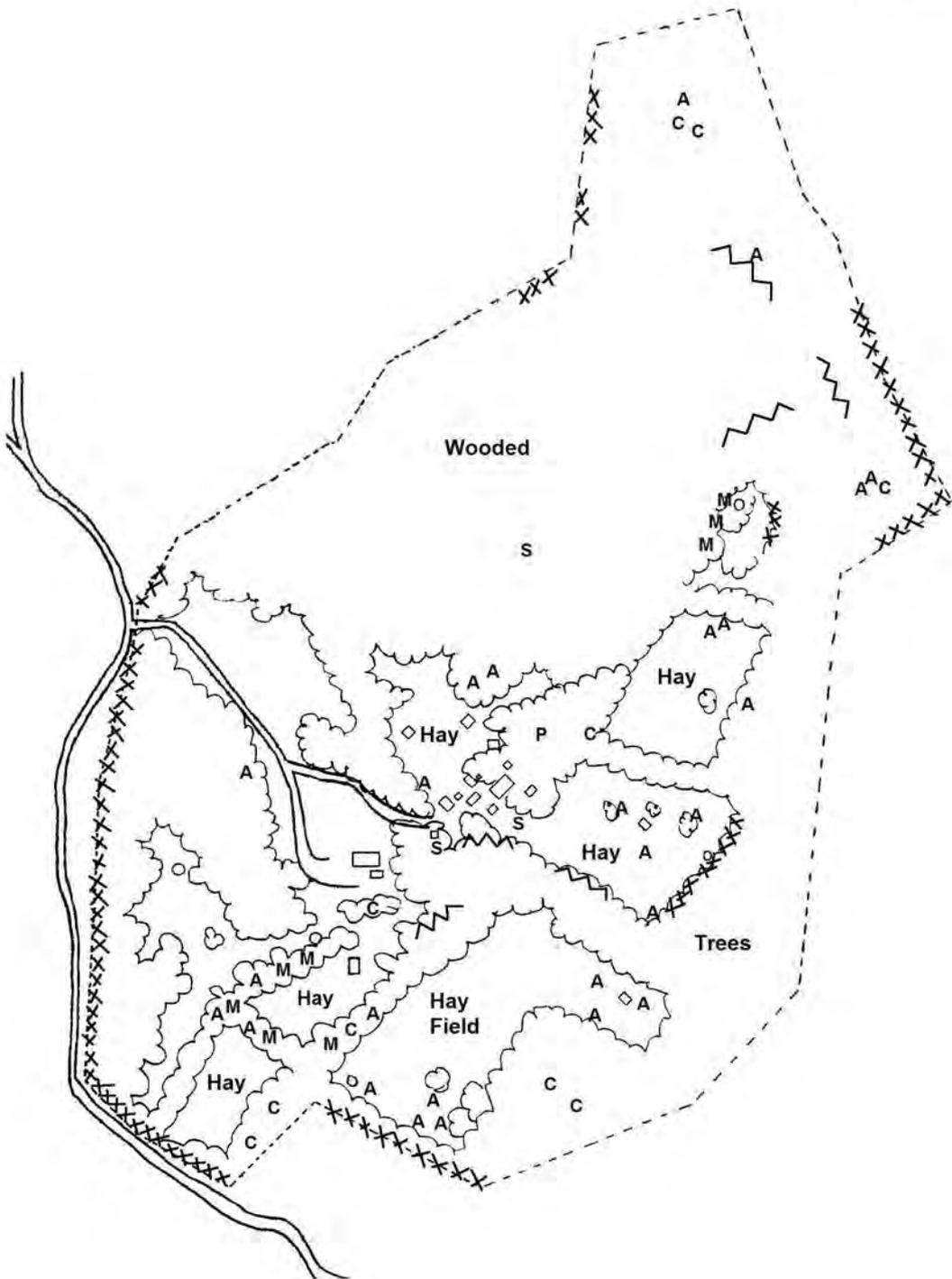
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Farm  
Pendleton Co., WV

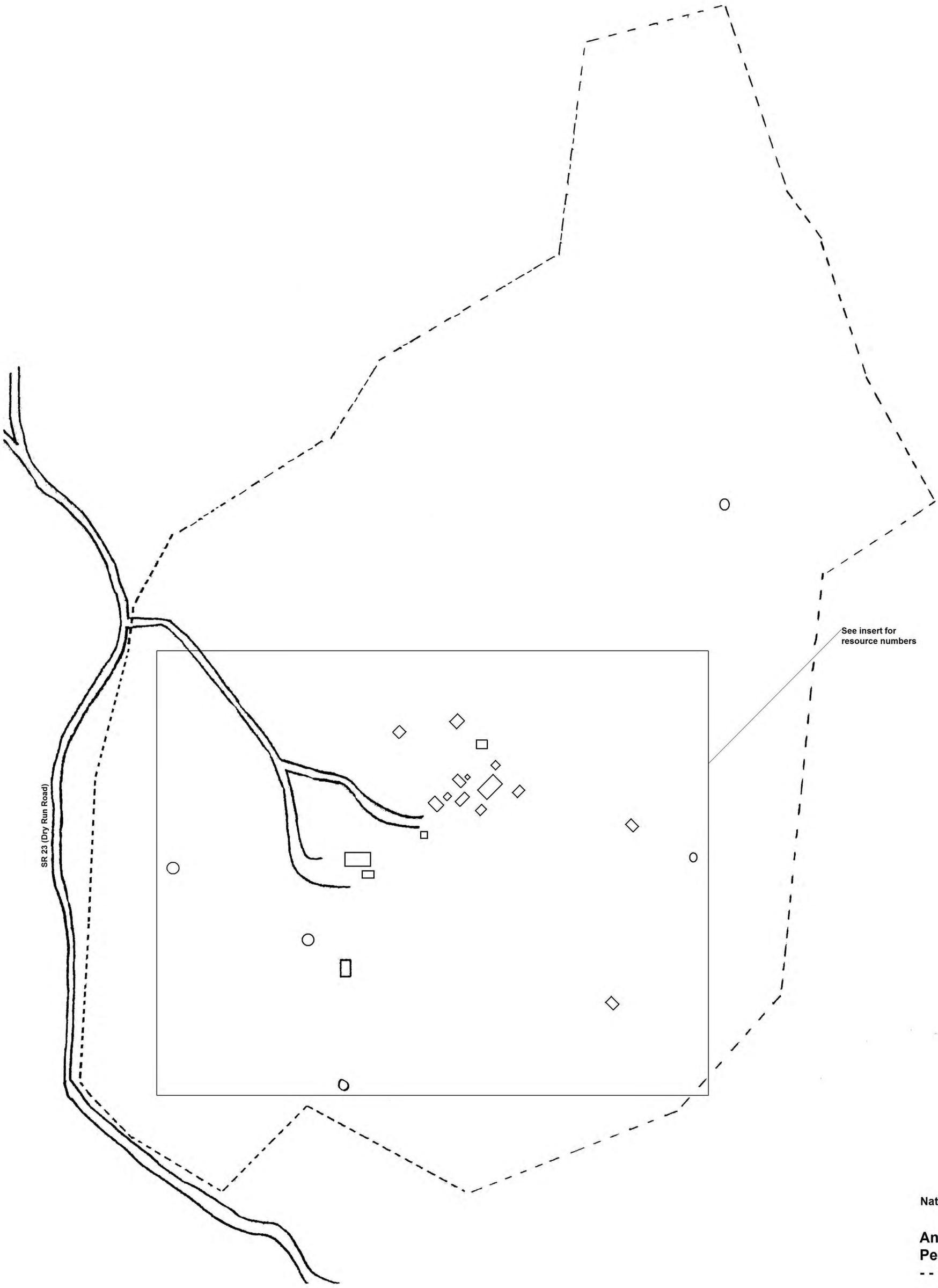
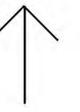
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Ananias Pitsenbarger Farm  
Pendleton County, WV

- National Register Boundary
- Buildings
- Sites
- XXX Split rail fence
- ∩ Stone fence
- S Spring head
- A Apple trees
- C Cherry trees
- P Pear trees
- M Sugar Maple trees





SR 23 (Dry Run Road)

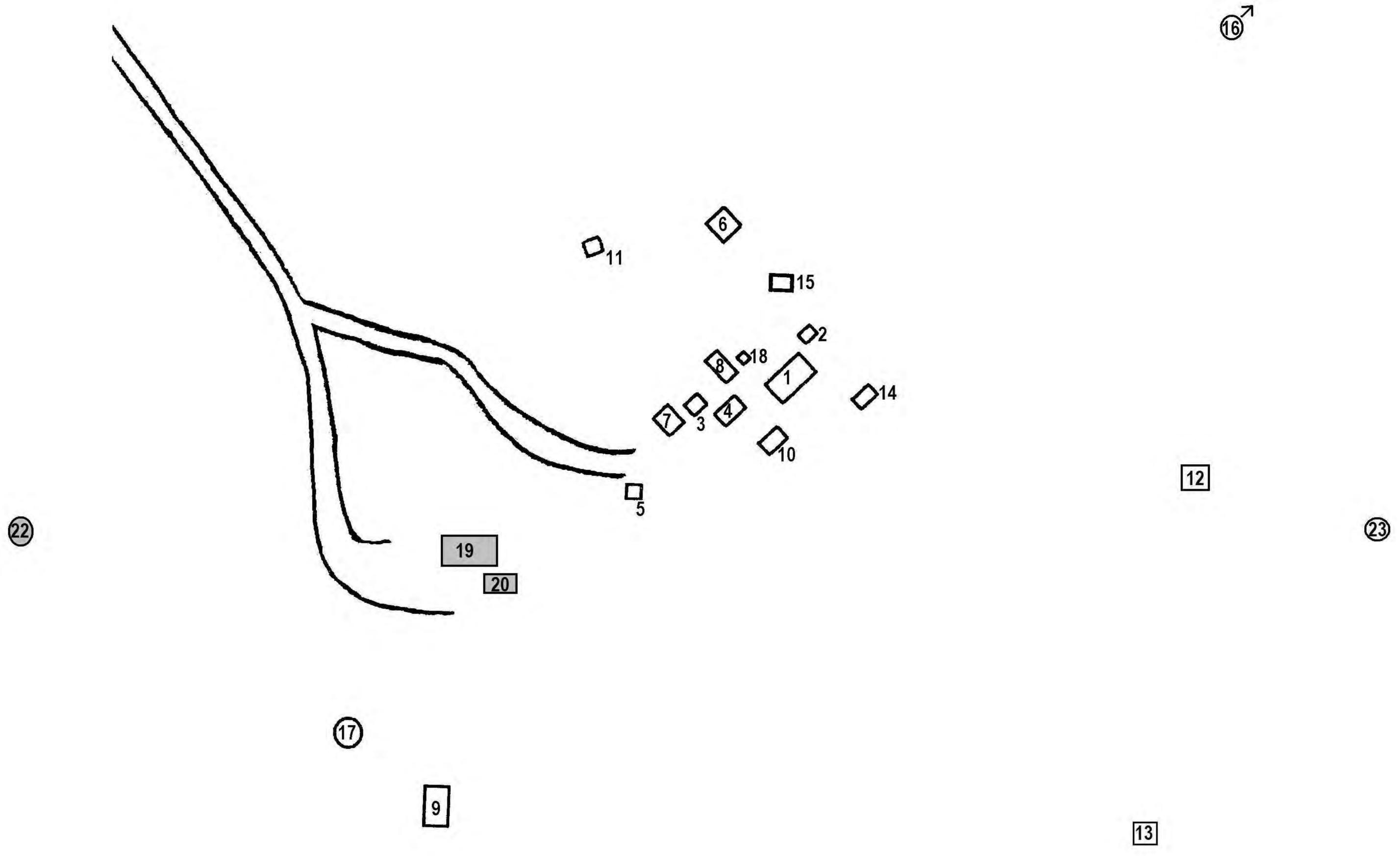
See insert for resource numbers

National Register Boundary Map

Ananias Pitsenbarger Farm  
Pendleton County, WV

--- National Register boundary

not to scale



**Resource Location Map**

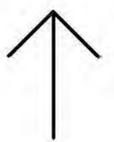
Ananias Pitsenbarger Farm  
 Pendleton County, WV

building 
  site  
 contributing 
  noncontributing

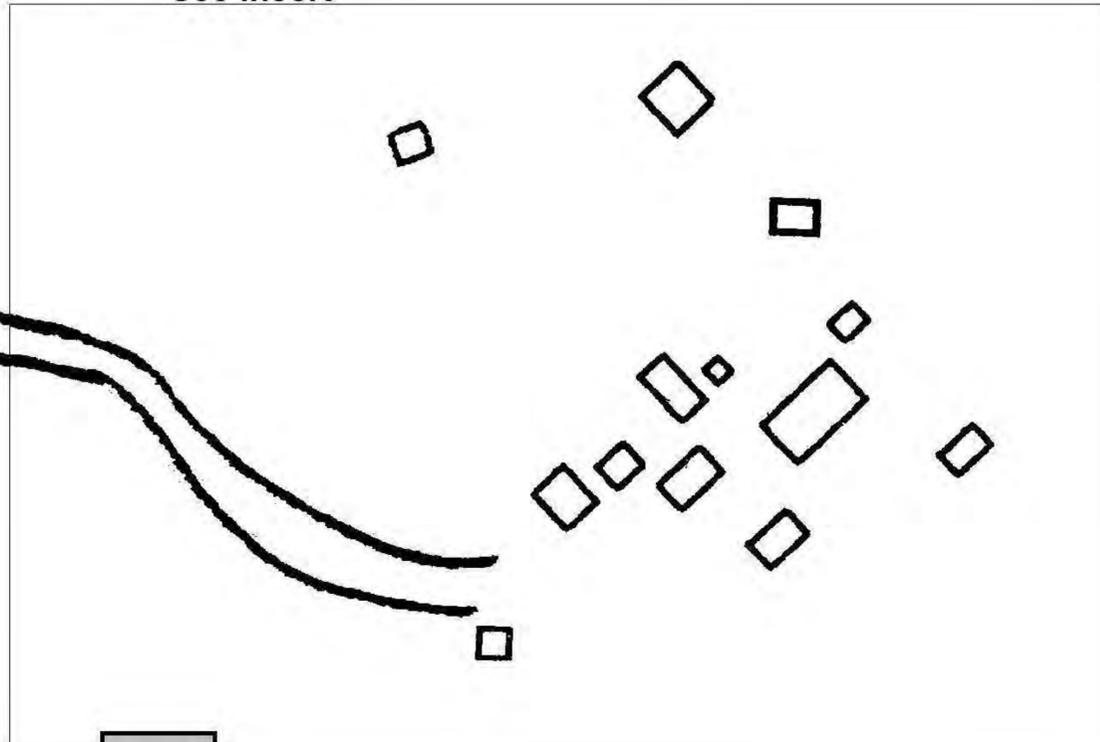
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16 ↗



See insert



12

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### Photo Vantage Point Map

Ananias Pitsenbarger Farm

Pendleton County, WV

□ building ○ site

□ contributing ● noncontributing

① → photo vantage points

not to scale

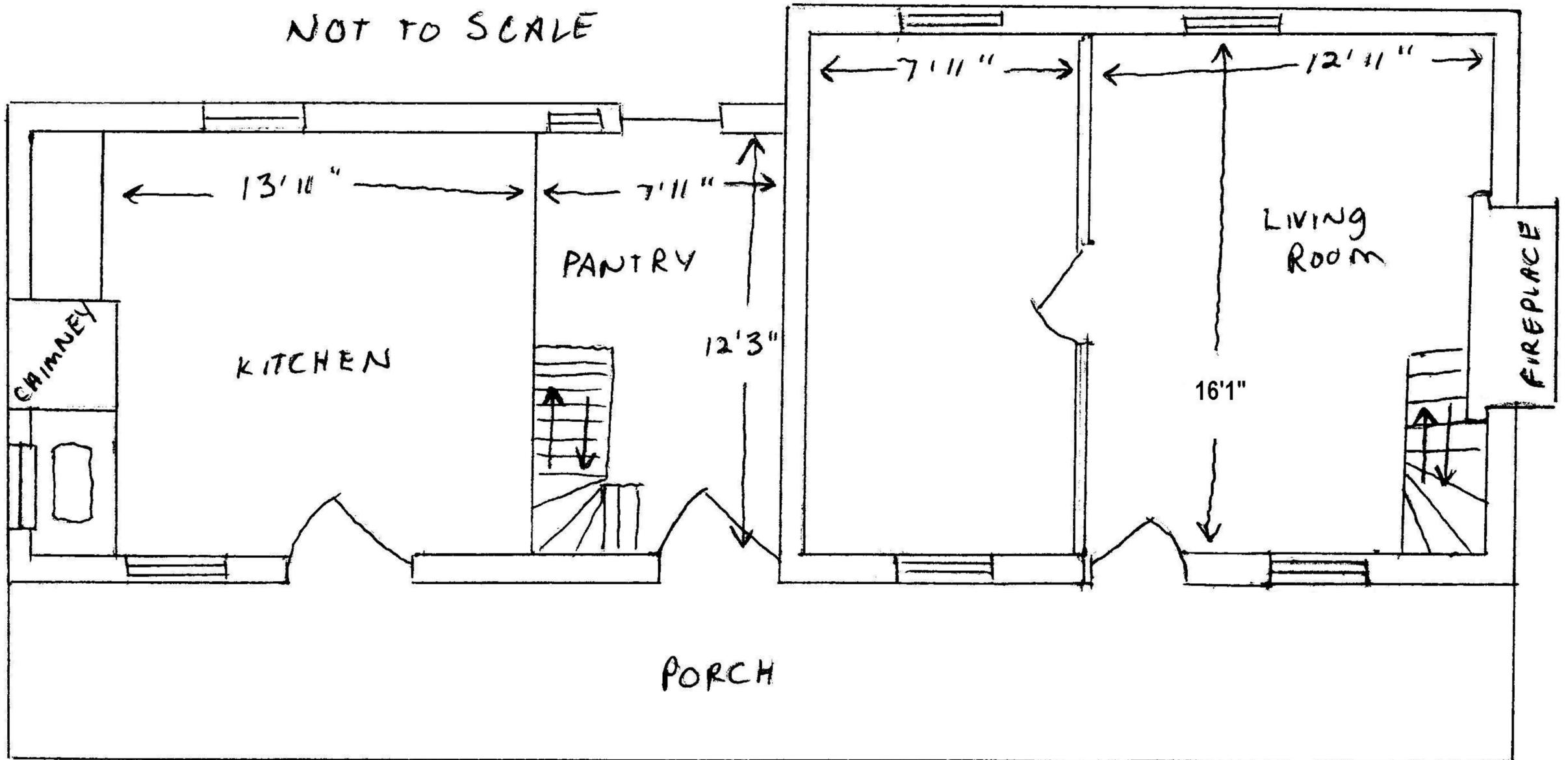
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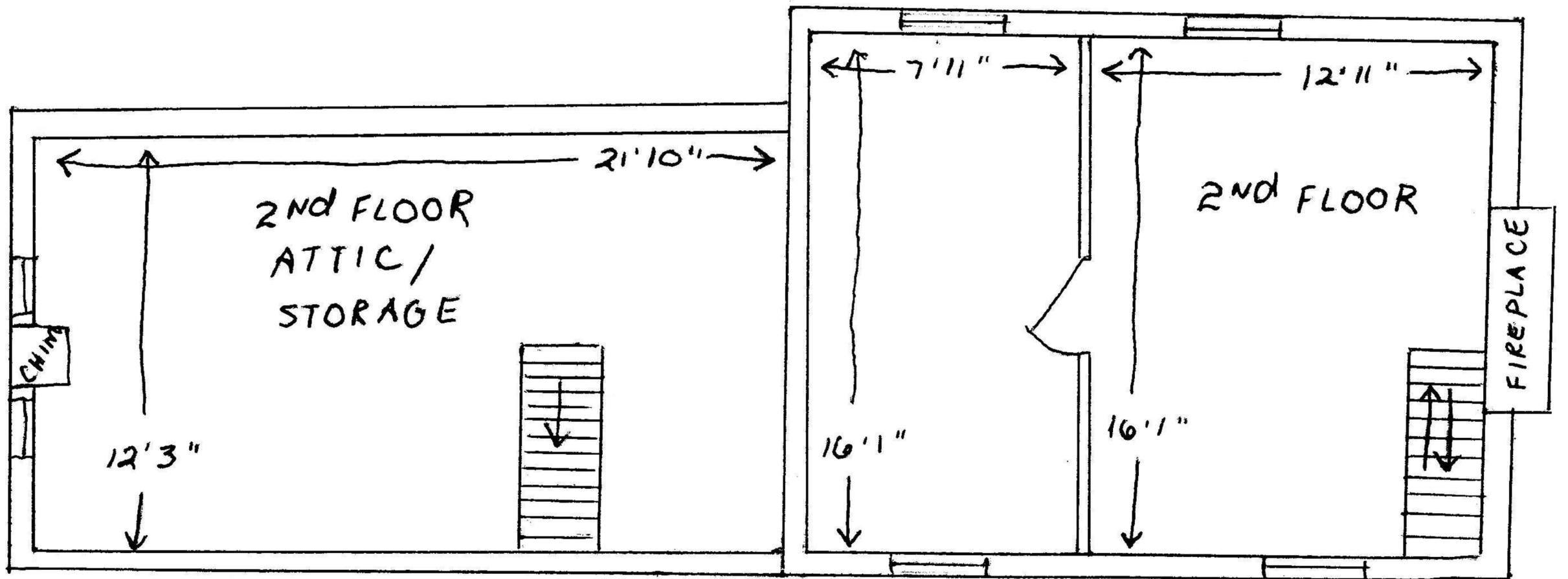
ANANIAS PITSENBARGER HOUSE  
PENDLETON COUNTY, WV  
FLOOR PLANS



NOT TO SCALE

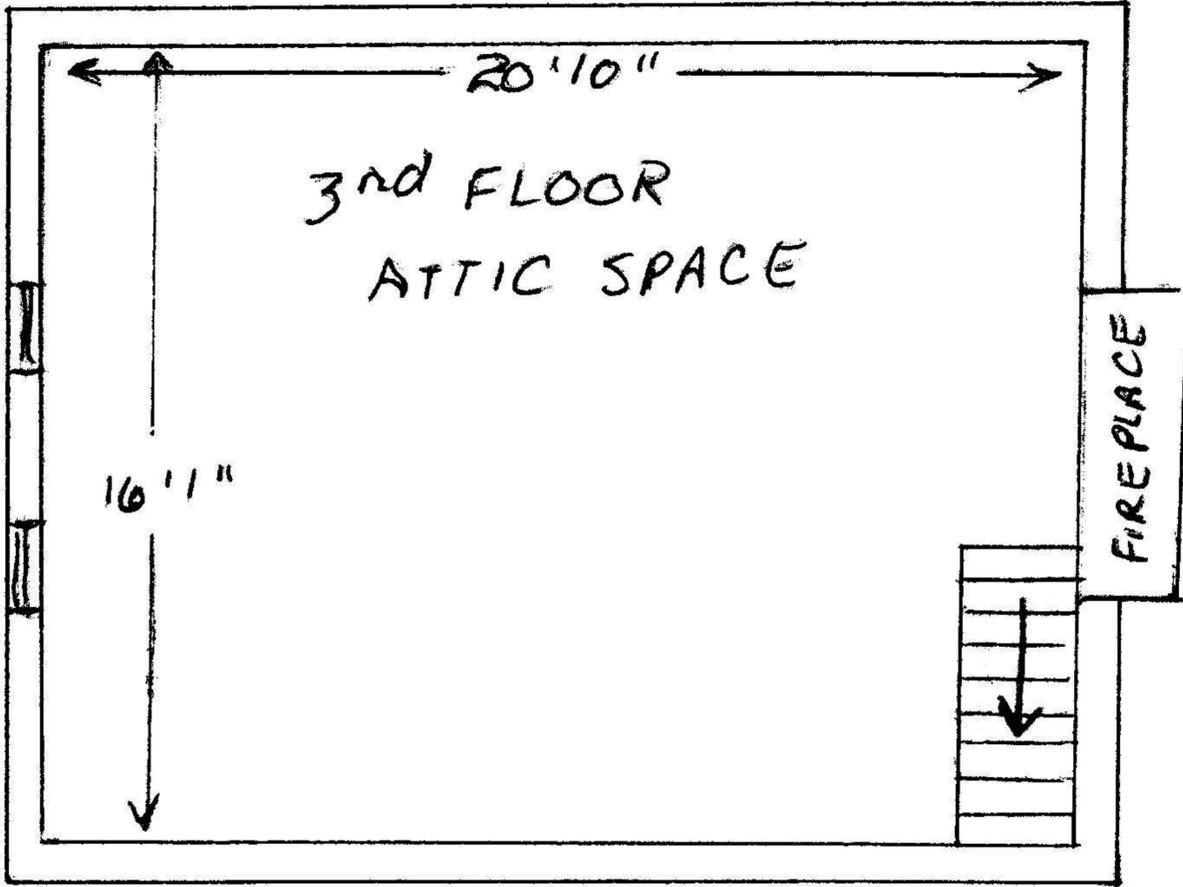


ANANIAS PITSENBARGER HOUSE  
PENDLETON COUNTY, WV  
FLOOR PLANS



NOT TO SCALE

ANANIAS PITSENBARGER HOUSE  
PENDLETON COUNTY, WV  
FLOOR PLANS



NOT TO SCALE





































THOMAS PITSENBARGER  
1874 - 1944

PITSENBARGER  
J. ALBEN 1870 - 1947      SARAH L. 1875 - 1952



