

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Edgefield
other names/site number GB-0038-0014B

2. Location

street & number 461 Brownstown Road ☐ not for publication
city or town Renick ☐ vicinity
state West Virginia code WV county Greenbrier code 025 zip code 24966

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/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/title

Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
6	0	buildings
0	1	sites
2	0	structures
0	0	objects
8	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC / single dwelling = house

DOMESTIC / secondary structure = meat house

DOMESTIC / secondary structure = storage shed

DOMESTIC / secondary structure = cistern

AGRICULTURE / animal facility = barn

AGRICULTURE / agricultural outbuilding = tractor shed

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC / single dwelling = house

DOMESTIC / secondary structure = storage shed

DOMESTIC / secondary structure = fireplace

AGRICULTURE / animal facility = barn

AGRICULTURE / storage = shed

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS :

Classical Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: STONE

walls: WOOD: weatherboard

roof: METAL: tin panels

other: chimneys: BRICK; porches: WOOD

cornices: WOOD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Edgefield
Name of Property

Greenbrier County, WV
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☒ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE

Period of Significance

1935 - 1960

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

Floy Whiting Whorrell

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance)
SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

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

☐ University

☐ Other

West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office,
Name of repository: Charleston, West Virginia

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): GB-0038-0014B

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 91
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 17S 0556094 4205619
Zone Easting Northing

3 17S 0556851 4205460
Zone Easting Northing

2 17S 0556752 4206335
Zone Easting Northing

4 17S 0556260 4205239
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)
SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)
SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

11. Form Prepared By

name/title W. Scott Breckinridge Smith, Principal

organization HistoryTech, LLC

date 15 May 2012

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Location & Setting

Edgefield is located on the northern edge of the Greenbrier County village of Renick (formerly known as Falling Spring), which lies on the west side of the Greenbrier River, and is fourteen miles north northeast of the county seat of Lewisburg. The 91-acre property occupies the foothills of a spur of Falling Spring Mountain, and is on the north side of Brownstown Road (County Route 7). The house at Edgefield lies approximately 2,000 feet east of the Seneca Trail (U.S. Route 219) and 2,000 feet north of the center of the village of Renick. The elevation of the property ranges between 2,060 and 2,180 feet above sea level, and is almost completely occupied by rolling farm fields, except for a copse of mature trees (including a small orchard) that surrounds the farmhouse. A small pond is sited approximately 600 feet northwest of the house. Most dwellings in the vicinity (including the Edgefieldhouse) are oriented towards, and sited within 200 feet of, Brownstown Road. The property consists of a ca. 1897 farmhouse along with numerous domestic and agricultural buildings and structures, including a coal shed, meat house, cistern, granary, machine shed, and two barns.

Narrative Description

Inventory of Resources

The following is a list of resources located within the boundaries of the property. All resources have been evaluated as either contributing or non-contributing based upon the areas of significance identified under Criterion B: Agriculture and based upon the period of significance spanning the period 1935 to 1960. All non-contributing resources have been so noted for having been significantly altered so that they no longer reflect their historic appearance or character during the period of significance.

Name/Description of Resource	Date of Construction	C/NC Status
Edgefield House	1897	Contributing Building
Wood/Coal Shed	ca. 1900	Contributing Building
Meat House	ca. 1900	Contributing Building
Cistern	ca. 1920	Contributing Structure
Fireplace	ca. 1945	Contributing Structure
Granary	1948	Contributing Building
Barn	ca. 1900, 1911, 1957	Contributing Building
Machine Shed	ca. 1920	Contributing Building
Far Barn	ca. 1910	Non-Contributing Site

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Edgefield House

The house is a frame, two-story, three-bay building with a side gable roof that features a central front gable (ornamented by an arched louvered vent). Clad with smooth wood weatherboard siding; the transition between exterior wall and roof of the house is treated with a smooth rakeboard and friezeboard. The dwelling is covered by five-v metal roofing, and the foundation consists of rusticated ashlar stone set in mortar. The façade of the house is oriented towards Brownstown Road, which lies approximately 100 feet to the southeast, and is dominated by a full-height (two-story) open porch that is supported by four large square columns. Early 20th century photographs indicate that the front of the house originally had a two-story, two-level porch supported by four sets of Tuscan columns and vertical spindle balusters on the second floor (See figures 1 and 3 in "Additional Documentation"). In the spring of 1958, Floy Whiting Whorrell completed a series of major alterations to the house's façade, which included the replacement of the former two-story, two-level porch with the current two-story open porch (see photograph number 1).

The façade is generally fenestrated by 2/2 double-hung sash windows, and the front entry consists of a partially glazed single-leaf door (trimmed by raised panels, scrollwork, and rosettes) surrounded by a glazed transom and sidelights. A mid-20th century aluminum and louvered glass storm door is also mounted within the doorway opening. The entry is flanked by a pair of polygonal bay windows that are topped by metal railings. Above the front entry is a second floor door that once led to the second floor level of the front porch, but now opens onto a small balcony with a metal railing. The main block of the house contains an interior brick single-flue chimney that serves the eastern rooms along with a later exterior brick flue chimney on the western gable end (see photograph number 3).

To the rear of the house is a two-story ell with an asymmetrical gabled roof. The northeast side of the ell features a recessed two-story porch supported by Tuscan columns spanned by railings of vertical spindle balusters (which appear to be original to the house). A small, one-story, shed-roofed porch projects from the rear of the main block of the house, and connects to the first floor of the ell's porch. Typical fenestration on the rear ell consists of a mix of 2/2 and 6/6 double-hung sash windows, and the ell contains a large stone interior chimney with a brick stack. Four doorways provide access to the interior of the house from the first floor of the ell's porch (one of these, a narrow board-and-batten door, encloses a narrow staircase that leads to the northernmost second floor chamber of the ell). On the second floor porch of the ell, two doors access the interior of the house, while a third (board-and-batten) door opens into a small chamber on the north end of the porch. A narrow ladder (permanently attached to the wall of the house) leads to an attic access hatch. The ceiling of the second floor porch consists of relatively wide (six-inch) beaded boards. A small, low shed-roofed addition on the northern gable end of the rear ell encloses the access stairs for the house's cellar. The western side of the rear ell features a one-story, shed-roofed porch (see photograph numbers 2, 4, and 5).

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The interior plan of the main block of the dwelling is that of a typical I-house with a central hall flanked by a pair of rooms. The dominant feature of the entry hall is the straight-run staircase, which features plain square balusters along with a massive faceted wooden newel post with a diamond-shaped mahogany inlay. The right-hand, or easternmost, chamber features a simple mantel supported by a pair of Ionic columns and trimmed with a floral applique (see photograph number 6). The left-hand, or westernmost, chamber boasts a built-in storage cabinet in its east wall. Most interior trim consists of smooth boards, and several of the vertical four-panel doors exhibit hints of decorative painting (probably to emulate quarter sawn oak) under later layers of paint. Flooring in the house generally consists of random-width pine tongue-and-groove boards.

The rear ell contains two primary rooms on the first floor. The dining room is accessed directly from the westernmost parlor in the main block of the house, and features a simple mantel next to a built-in china cabinet. The mantel now surrounds an opening for a small stove, but originally held a fireplace served by a massive stone chimney which can be seen in the adjacent kitchen (see photograph number 7). The kitchen lies just to the north of the dining room, and has a dumb waiter that connects to the one-room cellar below. The perimeter of the room is trimmed with vertical board (approximately 6 inches in width) wainscoting. This room is dominated by two features: the enclosure of the narrow staircase that leads from the ell's porch up to the chamber above the kitchen and the backside of the large stone chimney that provides a fireplace for the dining room. While the underside of the staircase is plastered, the vertical wall section is clad with vertical boards of random width. A small section of kitchen wall (between the kitchen and dining room) to the left of the chimney and under the staircase is clad in random-width horizontal boards. The chimney is constructed of hewn stone, and displays evidence of limewash as well as later scarring to assist the adhesion of a coat of plaster. This chimney, along with the dining room and kitchen sections, may represent part of a smaller house that pre-dated the 1897 construction of Edgefield by George W. Whiting, although further investigation is needed to confirm this.

The plan of the second floor is similar to that of the first, with two bed chambers flanking the central hall in the main block. Two smaller bed chambers, along with a lavatory, are located in the second floor of the rear ell. Below grade, most of the house only has a crawlspace, except for a root cellar directly underneath the kitchen. This cellar is accessed by a concrete stairway covered with a small shed-roofed frame addition on the northern gable end of the wing. At the bottom of the staircase, the cellar is secured by a board-and-batten door constructed of three wide vertical beaded boards. The stone walls of the cellar are limewashed, and the ceiling is plastered. While most framing elements visible in this section display circular saw marks, the building's outer sill plate, which appears to be constructed of oak, exhibits evidence of adze work.

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Wood/Coal Shed

This simple building lies north of the house, is covered by a shed roof of five-v metal roofing panels, and is clad by vertical boards of random width. The façade is oriented east, and is fenestrated by a large wooden door that slides horizontally on a track along with a small door (above head height) that may provide access to a separate storage area. The remaining three elevations have no openings. This building is featured in photograph number 9.

Meat House

Like many buildings of the region used for the curing and storage of meat, this building is referred to as the "smoke house" by the Whiting-Whorrell family. No heat source has been identified, and the building does not have an odor of smoke, so the hams cured within were likely treated only with salt. Located approximately 8 feet north of the gable end of the house's rear ell, the building has a shed roof (covered with five-v metal panels) that slopes to the north (away from the main house), and is clad in smooth weatherboard siding on all elevations but the rear, which has vertical board siding similar to that which is found on the wood shed. The weatherboard siding on the three sides visible from the main house likely helped establish the building as part of the domestic, rather than agricultural, dependencies. The only opening is on the south (front) elevation, and is a door constructed of four wide vertical boards with interior battens. The building's primary design feature is a storage loft that is cantilevered over the entry door, creating a "hood" on the exterior. The vertical wall under this hood and surrounding the entry door is clad in wide horizontal boards. The form of this meat house is thought to be very unusual for the region.¹ This building is featured in photograph number 8.

Cistern

Located approximately 30 feet north of the gabled ell of the main house, the visible (above-ground) features of the cistern include a concrete slab (lid) with a small concrete raised hatch.

Fireplace

Just to the east of the cistern is an outdoor fireplace or barbeque grill that was constructed of hewn stone that originally served as part of the chimney and foundation of an outbuilding that was in deteriorated condition by the mid-20th century.

Granary

The granary is a low, square frame building located approximately 175 feet northeast of the main house. Its low-pitched front gable roof is covered by metal five-v panels and is clad in vertical board siding overlaid by sheets of faux brick asphalt siding. The building has a concrete floor, and features remarkably-intact built-in grain bins on the west and north walls (some are slatted and some are solid). A large horizontally-sliding door provides access to the interior space from the north gable end, and the north gable end and east side both contain a pedestrian-scaled doorway. This building is featured in photograph number 10.

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Barn

This large gable-roofed barn measures approximately 60 feet by 80 feet, and is sited approximately 260 feet northeast of the main house. Most of the building's exterior is clad in vertical board siding, and the roof consists of metal five-v panels. The southern gable end features a hay hood over the upper hay door. The first 12 feet of the ground level of this elevation are open, except for southwestern corner, which was enclosed with concrete masonry units to form the dairy. The structural elements of the barn are a combination of circular-sawn timbers and hand-adzed members joined with mortises and tenons. The northern end of the barn (a later addition) houses an intact silo constructed of redwood staves and iron tensioning rings (see photograph number 12). An inscription in the silo's concrete foundation indicates that it was constructed in 1911. The dairy section, which was built in 1957 during Floy Whiting Whorrell's ownership, is constructed completely of concrete for ease of clean-up. An innovative feature, the facility has a raised deck on which the cows stood during the milking process. This allowed the people conducting the milking to operate at a comfortable stance instead of bending over. The dairy could accommodate three cows at a time, and used surge milkers. This building is featured in photograph number 11.

Machine Shed

Similar to the granary, the machine shed is a low shed-roofed building located approximately 425 feet northwest of the main house. The shed is covered by a low-pitched gable roof of five-v metal panels, and is clad by vertical board siding. A pair of large horizontally-sliding doors provides access to the interior from the southern gable end. This building is featured in photograph number 13.

Far Barn

The "Far Barn," (called so because it was approximately 1,000 feet northeast of the main house) was of a similar form to the other barn, but smaller, measuring 45 feet by 50 feet. The gable-roofed building featured a prominent hay hood on its southeastern gable end, and had a large shed-roofed section on its southwest side. The building was destroyed during the 29 June 2012 Derecho (defined by the National Weather Service as a "violent and long-lived windstorm"). Photograph number 14 shows the barn prior to its destruction.

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Summary Statement of Significance

Built or expanded in 1897 by Pocahontas County livestock dealer George W. Whiting, Edgefield represents a remarkably intact turn-of-the-century farmstead in the northern Greenbrier Valley. The house, along with its associated outbuildings, has a period of significance spanning between 1935 and 1960, which reflects the time during which Floy Whiting Whorrell (a daughter of G. W. Whiting) actively managed the farm. It is locally significant under Criterion B in the area of agriculture for its connection with Floy Whiting Whorrell, a widow who operated (and later owned) the farm. Floy made her mark on the community as a single female farm operator, which was certainly not the norm in Greenbrier County during the mid-20th century. She also expanded Edgefield's production capacity and introduced innovations in dairy farming to the area, including surge milkers and elevated milking platforms. The property displays significant integrity of location, association, feeling, design, materials, setting, and workmanship.

Historical Context

Local tradition holds that the first settlers of European descent near the Falling Spring vicinity were Robert McClanachan, Thomas Renick, and William Renick, who acquired land in 1769.² Christopher Walkup is said to have settled the site of the village of Falling Spring (now Renick) in 1778, the year after Greenbrier County was formed out of portions of Montgomery and Botetourt Counties by the Virginia General Assembly. The rich limestone soil of the upper Greenbrier Valley soon attracted additional families who made a livelihood of agriculture, particularly livestock-raising. By 1783, a Presbyterian congregation had been established at Falling Spring, and the Methodists followed suit in 1830.³ At this time, any commercial activity that may have been occurring at Falling Spring was likely described in the same breath as Frankfort, which lay a few miles to the south. In 1835, Frankfort boasted 2 mercantile stores, 2 taverns, a tanyard, tailor, and "various other mechanics." It was also noted that the area conducted "very extensive" sales of livestock on an annual basis.⁴ In 1839, a post office was established at Falling Spring, with Hiram Scott as the Postmaster (James H. Renick assumed the role in 1845). By 1851, J.H. Brown was operating the community's only dry goods store.⁵ Three decades later, the village had grown, but only modestly: it had a population of 40 residents and was served by a general store operated by McCoy Walkup & Co., blacksmith George A. Kerr, and hotel proprietor A.J. Hanna. The community's only farmer of note in 1882 was R. W. Renick, a descendant of the area's first white settlers.⁶

Ten years earlier, in 1872, Robert W. Renick (1829-1912) acquired the 410-acre "Falling Spring Farm" near the Greenbrier River from his father Benjamin Franklin Renick (1800-1889), who retained a life estate in the property. The tract, which spanned from the northwestern boundary of the current Edgefield south to the Greenbrier River, included Benjamin Renick's home along with a house and lot (presumably along the river) that contained a storehouse that had been converted to a dwelling occupied by John Nelson Hanna.⁷

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In 1880, R.W. Renick and his wife Elizabeth sold the northern portion of Falling Spring Farm (the 179 acres on the north side of what is now known as Brownstown Road) to Abraham Layton of Licking, Ohio for a not inconsiderable \$5,377.50. The tract contained buildings valued at \$100.00, and its core comprised the modern-day Edgefield property.⁸ Layton died in Ohio in 1884, and his widow Sarah A. Pickering acquired the property three years later. Just prior to her 1890 death in Ohio at the age of 68, Sarah gave the 179-acre tract, along with her land in Pocahontas County, to her brothers John Pickering and Reuben H. Pickering. Two years later, John sold Reuben his share of the farm for \$1,507.50.⁹

Reuben Harrison Pickering (1836-1904), a farmer, was born in Rockingham County, Virginia, and married Harriet A. Swartz in 1875. By 1880, the Pickerings had relocated to Greenbrier County and established a farm in the Falling Spring District.¹⁰ In 1892, the same year that he acquired full title to the farm that would become Edgefield, Pickering constructed additional buildings, bringing the total value of improvements on the farm to \$1,000.00. He also sold just over an acre of the farm to an individual with the surname of Bruffy [sic], according to the 1893 Land Tax record. This was likely Newton Samuel Bruffey (1858-1929) of nearby Pocahontas County. By 1880, Bruffey was residing at the Falling Spring residence of his uncle, James A. Watts, and was a clerk in a local store, along with his cousin H.L. Watts. Eleven years later, in 1891, Bruffey was operating his own general store (under the style of "Bruffey & Whiting") at Falling Spring. He also became Postmaster of the village in 1893. While the community's population had shrunk since 1881 by almost half to 25 souls, the establishment of Bruffey and Whiting's business was a harbinger of the rapid growth that was soon to come to the Falling Spring community.¹¹

In January of 1897, Bruffey's business partner and brother-in-law, George W. Whiting, purchased the 96.84-acre core of Pickering's farm on Brownstown Road (also known as the "Back Road," according to the 1920 Census). In the deed, Pickering noted that he sold Whiting the tract that contained Pickering's house. Whiting was to take possession of the farm in April of that year, but Pickering retained the rights to the next season's crop of wheat (Whiting would be entitled to the straw). Born in 1858 to English-born Ebenezer Whiting (1817-1869) and Sally McMillion (1818-1890), G. W. Whiting married Elizabeth Jane Bruffey (1860-1945) in 1879 in Pocahontas County. The family homestead was located at Droop Mountain, and George and Elizabeth lived there until moving approximately seven miles south to Falling Spring in the mid-1890s (if Whiting physically worked at Bruffey's store in the early 1890s, he may have "commuted" the relatively short distance between Droop Mountain and Falling Spring).¹²

While the appearance, configuration, and location of Pickering's house on the property is unknown, it is thought that the present dwelling at Edgefield contains a core that pre-dates G.W. Whiting's arrival. While further investigation is needed to confirm this, the rear ell of the main house exhibits some evidence (including a massive stone chimney with remnants of limewash) that an older section lies within. Regardless of the state of buildings on the property when he acquired it, Whiting immediately began expanding the building stock of the farm, constructing \$1,000.00 worth of improvements by 1898.¹³ Whiting continued to acquire land in the area, purchasing a town lot in Falling Spring in 1901, and two nearby

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tracts containing 162 acres in total in 1901 and 1902.¹⁴ George and Elizabeth's household in 1900 included their nine children (a tenth child, Paul, was born in 1902) along with Mason M. Taylor, a 23-year-old white farm laborer.¹⁵

During the first few years of the 20th century, George and Elizabeth Whiting conveyed two parcels totaling four acres to Rev. Joseph S. Wickline (1843-1925), George's brother-in-law. Wickline and his wife Sarah C. Whiting (1847-1939) had just relocated to Renick from Denton, Maryland, and constructed a house and small farmstead just west of Edgefield. Decades later, George and Elizabeth gave an adjacent 1-acre lot to their daughter Floy, but it was never built upon.¹⁶

In 1901, the village of Falling Spring had grown significantly, almost quadrupling in a decade to 91 residents, and had a physician, dentist, barber, two blacksmiths, and a jeweler. One of the community's two hotels was operated by R.W. Renick, and Newton S. Bruffey operated one of three general stores. G.W. Whiting was listed as being a dealer in livestock.¹⁷ A turn-of-the-century checkbook owned by Whiting (issued by the Bank of Marlinton) also indicates that he was a wholesale and retail dealer in flour, grain, hay, salt, and fertilizer. In addition to being a farmer and merchant, Whiting served on the Board of Directors of the Renick Bank (his brother-in-law, Rev. Joseph S. Wickline, was the bank's President). Local oral history holds that during the Great Depression, Whiting gave his own money to local families who lost their deposits in the banks.

Contributing significantly to Falling Spring's growth at the turn-of-the-century was the construction of the Greenbrier Division of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, which reached Falling Spring by 1900. By 1905, the 100-mile rail line was complete, and connected the Chesapeake and Ohio main line in Greenbrier County with Winterburn in Pocahontas County. According to railroad company documents, Whiting may have sold timber to the Greenbrier Division during its construction in 1899.¹⁸

Polk's "West Virginia State Gazetteer and Business Directory" for 1904 reported that Falling Spring's population had again risen sharply (by over 50%) to 150 people. The community boasted four general stores (including that of N.S. Bruffey), three livestock dealers (W.T. Givens, Joseph S. McClung, and G.W. Whiting), and several other businesses. In March of 1913, the United States Postal Service recorded that the name of the village's post office had been officially changed from Falling Spring to Renick.¹⁹

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Whiting continued to expand and diversify his farming operations, adding (amongst other improvements) a redwood stave silo in 1911 (see photograph number 12). Still extant, this silo was enclosed within a later addition of the barn, and is in relatively pristine condition (most silos of this type were exposed to weather over the past century, and have deteriorated). By the end of the first decade of the 20th century, the value of buildings on the property had risen to \$1,600.00; this valuation remained constant through 1920. George's agricultural operations included the production of hay, grains, cattle, hogs and sheep.²⁰

In 1917, George and Elizabeth's seventh child, Floy, then 23 years old, married William James Whorrel, Jr. of Morgan County, West Virginia. The first known written mention of the property name of "Edgefield" is credited to a note that Whorrel wrote to George and Elizabeth Whiting while he was courting Floy. W.J. Whorrel expressed to his future in-laws his appreciation for a dinner and the gratitude "of an old bachelor for the home-like atmosphere." Born in 1892, Whorrel was working as a clerk in a drug store (probably for J.W. Kogelschatz) in the Tucker County town of Parsons in 1910. He passed the Era Course in Pharmacy in 1912, and by June of 1917, he was established in Greenbrier County as the owner of Renick Drug Store. In January of the next year, their son William James Whorrel, III was born. Whorrel, who may have developed a dependency to some of the remedies in his store, fell while climbing Renick Hill in February of 1919, and died shortly thereafter (the official cause of death was listed as "drug poisoning").²¹ William's death left Floy to care for their infant son with the aid of her aging parents.

In 1920, George and Elizabeth Whiting shared their home with Floy Whiting Whorrell²², her son William, and three more of their adult children: sons Paul and Thomas and daughter Bradford.²³ By 1930, the Whiting household had reduced in size considerably, containing only George, Elizabeth, Floy, and her son William (or "Billy"). Floy's occupation was noted as being a maid for the family, and interestingly, the Whiting household was the only home in the vicinity to own a radio set.²⁴ Floy overcame her family's early tragedy by becoming adventurous, outgoing, and independent. In 1931, Billy Whorrell turned 13 years old, and Floy bought him a used Harley-Davidson motorcycle. Soon thereafter, she became the local Harley-Davidson dealer for the Renick area, and bought a new motorcycle for Billy when he turned 18.

George W. Whiting died in 1936, and ownership of the farm transferred to his wife Elizabeth. Floy remained by her mother's side at Edgefield while Billy Whorrell left Renick to attend the Coyne Electrical School in Chicago. In 1943, Billy enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps and attended an Accelerated Learning Program for airmen at Catawba College. He trained in Fort Myers, Florida (amongst other locations), and was preparing to enter the Pacific Theatre of operations when World War II ended. He was discharged in 1945 and began working for Whiting Oil Company, which was owned by his uncle, Milton Whiting. Later that year, his grandmother, Elizabeth Bruffey Whiting, died. Elizabeth's will directed that her stock in Whiting Oil Company be divided amongst her five daughters. While her brother Milton received actual ownership of Edgefield, Floy (then 50 years old) received all of the household furniture, provisions, and chickens, and resumed the role of farm manager (a job that she had been performing increasingly as her parents aged).²⁵ Milton was the

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most financially successful of the ten Whiting children (he founded Standard Oil & Gas Company in 1921 [which became Whiting Oil Company five years later]), but only looked after the affairs of Edgefield from a distance, as he was actively involved in civic and business affairs in Clifton Forge, Virginia (Whiting even served as mayor of the community). Floy managed the day-to-day operations of the farm, and her entrepreneurial spirit served her well.

Robert Renick (likely a descendant of former owner Robert W. Renick) also worked on the farm, and took orders from Milton. Generally, Milton was responsible for Edgefield's livestock (hogs and cattle) and for ensuring the upkeep of the buildings on the property. For example, in the fall of 1948, he directed Renick in the construction of the chicken house (demolished) and granary. In November of 1950, Whiting wrote to Renick chiding him for barely getting the cattle in to safety before foul weather approached. In the same communication, he provided guidance for Renick's project of opening a hole in the stone wall of the cellar and constructing the present concrete stairs and shed addition (previously, the cellar was likely accessed by stairs from the kitchen above).²⁶ In addition to cattle, Milton and Floy also raised registered pure-bred pigs on the property, including three sows named "Whiting's Fashion Lady," "Edgefield Beauty," and "Lady Renick."

As a farm, Edgefield was not large by Greenbrier County standards. In 1950, the property was one of 2,474 farms in the county. On average, these farms were just over 112 acres in size (one-sixth larger than the state average), but at 97 acres, Edgefield was certainly on the smaller end of the scale.²⁷ However, the Whitings did a great deal with their relatively small farm, and created a very comfortable life for the greater family.

Milton Whiting died at the University Hospital in Charlottesville, Virginia in April of 1955 and bequeathed Edgefield, along with a house in the village of Renick, to his sister Floy. Two years later, Floy developed plans to expand Edgefield's operations by constructing a modern dairy. The asset statement that she filed with the Greenbrier Valley Bank in Lewisburg gives an accurate account of the state of the property in 1957. At that time, there were 20 cows, 10 calves, 30 sheep, and 5 hogs on the farm. 8 acres of the 97-acre farm were planted in wheat, 4 acres in clover, and 24 acres in meadow. She had on hand 200 bushels of corn, 2 tons of hay, and 2 tons of clover. In all, the farm stock was valued at \$7,100.00. The value of the land for the entire farm was \$23,000.00, and the house in Renick was valued at \$3,000.00.²⁸

Floy constructed the dairy within the farm's largest barn (see photograph number 11). Completely built of concrete, the facility could accept three milking cows at a time, and was easily sanitized between milking sessions. The cows were brought in on an elevated concrete deck, which let the farm operators milk the cows without bending over. Automatic surge milkers purchased from local dealer Earl Kidd were installed in the dairy. The Surge Bucket Milker was invented by Herbert McCornack in 1922, and became successful because it had a natural surging action as the milker moved back and forward while milking. The tug-and-pull movement created by the milker was similar to the tugging and pulling of a calf. By 1955, the Surge Bucket Milker enjoyed a 76% share of the U.S. market, but oddly, it had not made its way into the Renick area of the Greenbrier Valley. In 1950, only 5% of Greenbrier County farms reported the use of an electric milking

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machine of one type or another. Others farms, including that owned by the neighboring Harrison family, eventually followed suit and installed surge milkers. Thus, Floy Whiting Whorrell, a widow in her mid-sixties, became somewhat of a dairy farming pioneer in the area.

In addition to the dairy, Floy used the loan from the Greenbrier Valley Bank to renovate the main house. Likely inspired by the columned facades of the nearby Greenbrier Resort or more distant locations such as Mount Vernon or Charleston, South Carolina, Floy removed the house's two-story front porch and replaced it with a full-height, open portico supported by four massive square columns. Floy was determined to make her mark on Edgefield, and these changes reinforced to the greater community that she was "in charge" (see photograph number 1).

Over the next few years, Floy's health began to decline, and her physician advised her to slow her activities. Her response to his advice was, "I'd rather wear out than rust out." Floy died in January of 1960 at the hospital in Clifton Forge, Virginia, surrounded by family members who had arrived to celebrate her discharge, which was scheduled for the next day. Floy left Edgefield to her son, William "Bill" J. Whorrell, III. In addition, she gave Bill's two daughters Yvonne and Gail \$2,000.00 each to help them pay for college (Floy earned this money by selling eggs from the farm to area residents). Living in Pulaski, Virginia, Bill Whorrell rented Edgefield to neighbor Joe Glenn Harrison. Following William's death in 1996, his daughters Yvonne and Gail have continued to rent the property to a member of the Harrison family. Thus, the farm has been in continuous operation by the Whiting family and descendants for over 100 years.

Summary

Edgefield is a remarkably intact late-19th century Greenbrier County farmstead. The home, along with its domestic and agricultural outbuildings (which include a meat house of unusual form and an intact early redwood stave silo), create an indelible image on the landscape of the outskirts of the village of Renick, and connect the present with a time when agrarian families and communities interacted with nature on a far more basic and fulfilling level. While developed by George W. Whiting during the first three decades of the 20th century, the property is significant for its connection to his daughter, Floy Whiting Whorrell, who, as a widow, managed and expanded the farm's production, introducing dairy farming advancements to the area including surge milkers and elevated milking stations.

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10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property consists of two contiguous parcels of land in Greenbrier County, West Virginia on the northwest side of Brownstown Road (County Route 7). These are identified as Parcel #'s 5 (90 acres) and 40 (1 acre) of Tax Map 60.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundaries represent the land associated with Edgefield during the ownership of Floy Whiting Whorrell.

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Name of Property: Edgefield
City or Vicinity: Renick
County: Greenbrier State: West Virginia
Photographer: W. Scott Breckinridge Smith
Date Photographed: April 2012

View: Front (southeast) elevation
WV_Greenbrier County_Edgefield_0001.tif

View: Wood / coal shed
WV_Greenbrier County_Edgefield_0009.tif

View: Northeast elevation
WV_Greenbrier County_Edgefield_0002.tif

View: Granary
WV_Greenbrier County_Edgefield_0010.tif

View: Southeast & Southwest elevations
WV_Greenbrier County_Edgefield_0003.tif

View: Barn
WV_Greenbrier County_Edgefield_0011.tif

View: Northwest (rear) elevation w/ rear of meat house
WV_Greenbrier County_Edgefield_0004.tif

View: Redwood stave silo inside barn
WV_Greenbrier County_Edgefield_0012.tif

View: View from the north
WV_Greenbrier County_Edgefield_0005.tif

View: Machine shed
WV_Greenbrier County_Edgefield_0013.tif

View: Interior parlor, 1st floor
WV_Greenbrier County_Edgefield_0006.tif

View: Far barn
WV_Greenbrier County_Edgefield_0014.tif

View: Interior dining room, 1st floor
WV_Greenbrier County_Edgefield_0007.tif

View: View of barns from the south
WV_Greenbrier County_Edgefield_0015.tif

View: Meat house
WV_Greenbrier County_Edgefield_0008.tif

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ENDNOTES (Sections 7 and 8)

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² Virgil Anson Lewis, "History of West Virginia," Philadelphia: Hubbard Brothers, 1889, p. 521

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¹¹ Greenbrier County Land Tax Record, 1893; 1880 United States Census, Population Schedule, Greenbrier County, WV; "West Virginia State Gazetteer and Business Directory," Philadelphia: R.L. Polk & Co., 1891-92, p. 166.

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²² Floy apparently added the second "I" to her married name after her husband's death.

²³ 1920 United States Census, Population Schedule, Greenbrier County, WV

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²⁷ Otis K. Rice, "A History of Greenbrier County," Lewisburg, West Virginia: Greenbrier Historical Society, 1986, p. 395.

²⁸ Greenbrier County Will Book 14, p. 298; Financial Statement of Floy W. Whorrell, Renick, WV. Greenbrier Valley Bank, Lewisburg, WV.

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- FIGURE 2.** Detail of an early 20th century image of Edgefield (taken from the east). The Wickline farmstead can be seen in the distance (to the west of Edgefield).
- FIGURE 3.** ca. 1930s aerial photograph of Edgefield taken from the south
- FIGURE 4.** ca. 1930s photograph of Floy Whiting Whorrell in riding dress on her Harley-Davidson motorcycle



FIGURE 1. ca. 1910 photograph of George W. Whiting (center) and sons in front of the Edgefield house

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FIGURE 2. Detail of an early 20th century image of Edgefield (taken from the east). The Wickline farmstead can be seen in the distance (to the west of Edgefield).

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FIGURE 3. Detail from a ca. 1930s aerial photograph of Edgefield taken from the south

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FIGURE 4. ca. 1930s photograph of Floy Whiting Whorrell in riding dress on her Harley-Davidson motorcycle

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FEET

"EDGEFIELD"

GREENBRIER CO., WV

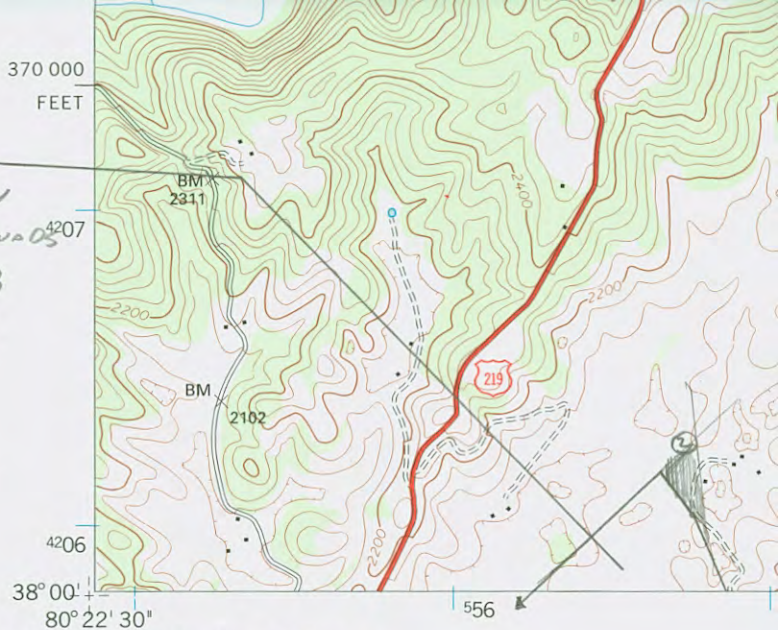
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- ④ 17S 05S6260
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Areas outside the National Forest System lands may not have been revised ④
Topography compiled 1973. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1990
Partial field check by U.S. Forest Service 1995

North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection and 10 000-foot ticks:
West Virginia coordinate system, south zone (Lambert conformal conic). Blue
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator ticks, zone 17

North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks
The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute
intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software

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GREENBRIER COUNTY, WV

DRUMP + ANTHONY QUADS

GB-0038-0014B

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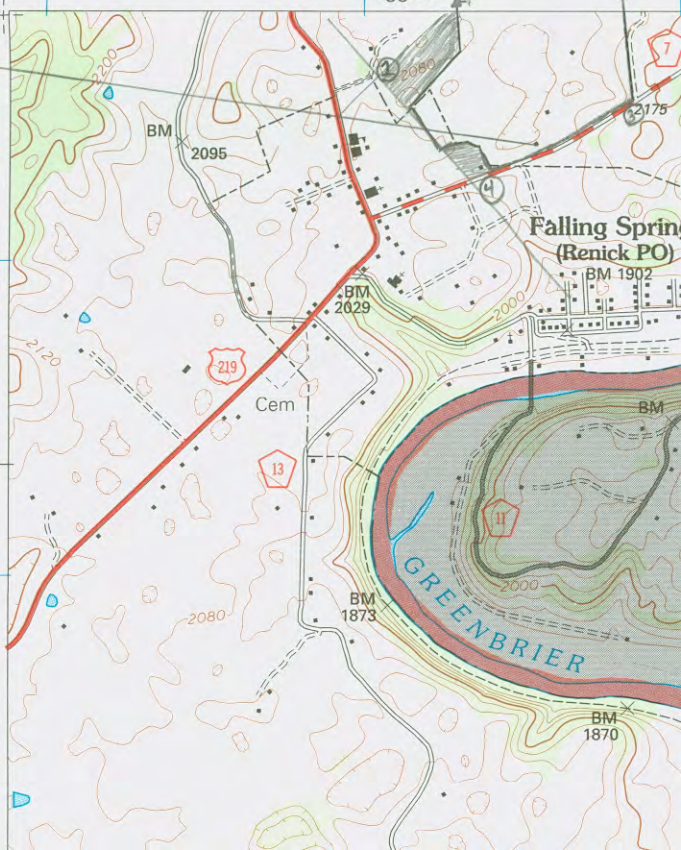
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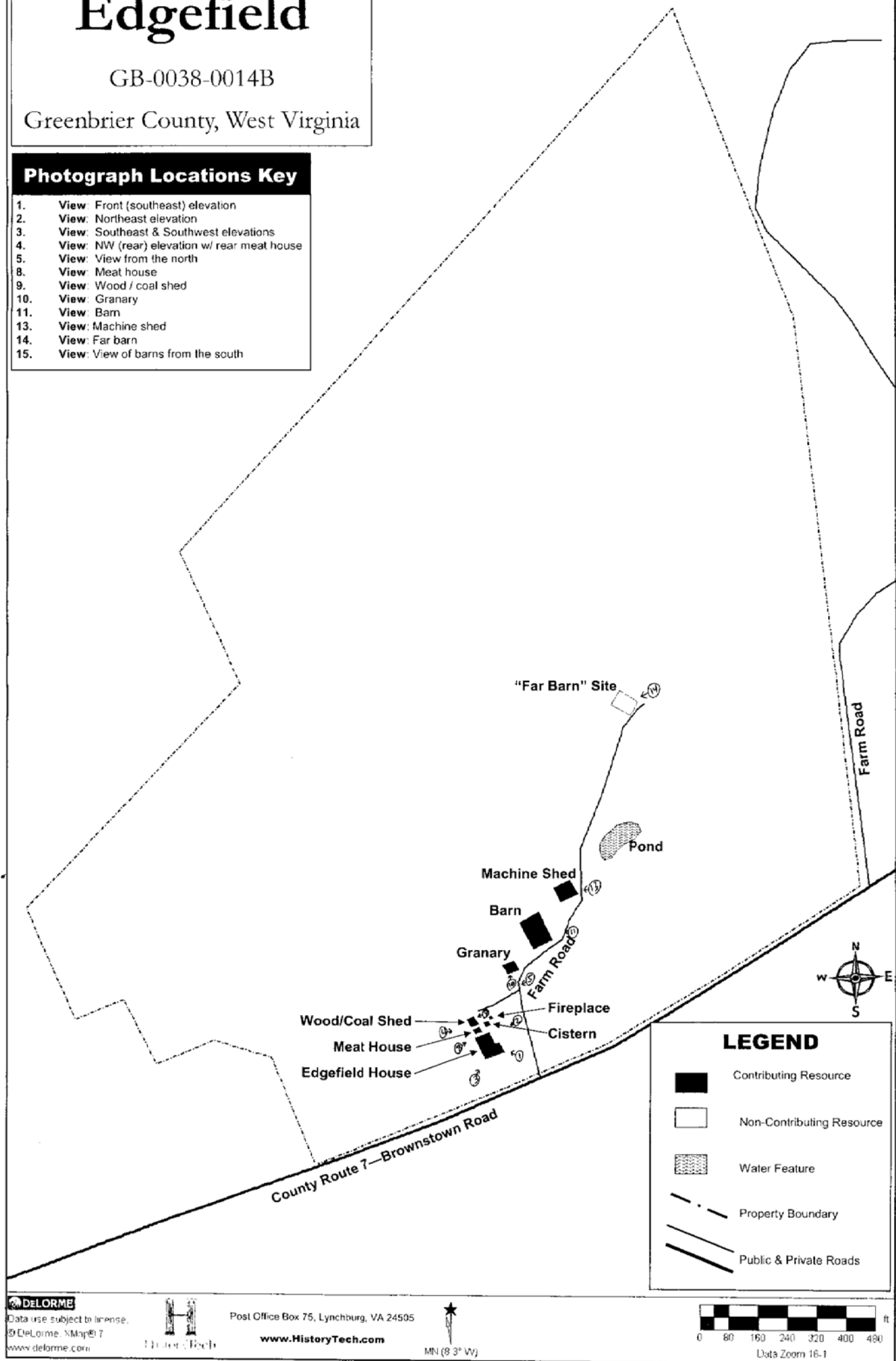
Edgefield

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Greenbrier County, West Virginia

Photograph Locations Key

1. View: Front (southeast) elevation
2. View: Northeast elevation
3. View: Southeast & Southwest elevations
4. View: NW (rear) elevation w/ rear meat house
5. View: View from the north
8. View: Meat house
9. View: Wood / coal shed
10. View: Granary
11. View: Barn
13. View: Machine shed
14. View: Far barn
15. View: View of barns from the south



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MN (8 3" W)



Photo 1

View: Front (southeast) elevation



Photo 2

View: Northeast elevation



Photo 3

View: Southeast & Southwest elevations



Photo 4

View: Northwest (rear) elevation w/ rear of meat house



Photo 5

View: View from the north



Photo 6

View: Interior parlor, 1st floor



Photo 7
View: Interior dining room, 1st floor



Photo 8
View: Meat house



Photo 9

View: Wood / coal shed



Photo 10

View: Granary



Photo 11
View: Barn



Photo 12
View: Redwood stave silo inside barn



Photo 13

View: Machine shed



Photo 14

View: Far barn (now non-extant)



Photo 15

View: View of barns from the south