

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

## 1. Name

historic Harner Homestead

and/or common Renahan Residence

## 2. Location

street & number 1818 Listravia

\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Morgantown

\_\_\_ vicinity of

congressional district 2nd

state West Virginia

code 54

county Monongalia

code 061

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Christopher Renahan

street & number 1818 Listravia

city, town Morgantown

\_\_\_ vicinity of

state West Virginia

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Monongalia County Courthouse

street & number High and Walnut Streets

city, town Morgantown

state West Virginia

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title WV Historic Properties Inventory has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_ yes  no

date September 1983

\_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_ county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Unit, Dept of Culture and History  
Cultural Center, Capitol Complex

city Charleston

state West Virginia

# I. Description

## Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

Check one  
 unaltered  
 altered

Check one  
 original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

## Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Harner Homestead is an excellent example in Monongalia County of the traditional "I" house (with ell) decorated by Classical Revival details and featuring a two-story wood porch on the center bay of the main facade. This type of house is often seen in southeastern West Virginia, i.e. along U.S. 219, but it is rare for Monongalia County - one other example in Blacksville was recently "remuddled" and a second (in Pentress) has only three bays instead of the traditional five bays. The Harner Homestead is certainly the grandest home in the Sabraton area of Morgantown and is one of the oldest houses in present-day Morgantown that has retained such a high degree of architectural integrity.

This is basically a wood frame structure with clapboard siding. It sits on a cut stone foundation and has an asphalt gable roof over the main part of the house and over the "ell." There are four brick interior chimneys, one on each of the original house and two at the west end of the "ell." The "ell" addition is not part of the original house; the date of the addition is not known, although it does appear on a late nineteenth-century photograph. Two one-story wood-frame shed roof additions (clapboard siding) - occupy most of the space between the original house and "ell."

The main feature of the main (east) facade is the two-story wood porch with paired with wood pillars on the first and second floors supporting a triangular pediment and gable roof. There is a wood balustrade around the first and second floors of the porch. A one-story wood porch with hipped roof support-d by wood columns was along the north side of the building and is an undated twentieth-century addition, as it is not shown on a late nineteenth-century photo. One of the windows on the north side has been converted to a door (with a small, single-light transom) to give access to the porch, and there is another door to the porch further west on the north facade.

Fenestration is still original, with double-hung windows, pediment lintels and wood surrounds predominant. Two small fixed sash windows with wood surrounds flank the chimneys at the north, south and west ends. The door leading to the front porch on the first and second floors have multi-light sidelights and are panelled; there is a multi-light transom over the first floor door. The door from the kitchen to the porch on the northside is panelled and has a multi-light transom.

Much of the interior wood work is original or may date from the late nineteenth century when the "bull's eye" motif was common. The "bull's eye" appears in the first floor main hall and in the north and south parlors, for example, and these rooms would have been the most public spaces. The rest of the woodwork in the house is basically more classical in detail, with entablature lintels. There is a handsome built-in bookcase in the south wall of the south parlor. Built-in cabinets also flank the window and door on the north side of the north wall; these openings have elliptical arches that, with the bookcases, give the effect of a palladian windows. The dining room, first floor kitchen, west bedroom and northeast bedrooms also have built-in cabinets with panelled doors. Interior doors are also panelled with entablature lintels. Fireplaces in rooms with chimneys have simple woodwork and mantels.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below					
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)		

**Specific dates** c. 1852 **Builder/Architect** unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Harner Homestead is architecturally significant as one of the oldest houses in Morgantown (c. 1852), as a fine example of an "I" house (with e11) decorated with Classical Revival details that has retained a high degree of integrity inside and out, and as one of only three known houses in the county to feature the two-story front porch so common in southeastern West Virginia; one of the other two houses with this porch has been badly altered and the third is only a 3-bay building instead of the traditional 5-bay. The house is also historically significant as its owners represented the two waves of settlement in this part of Monongalia County; first, the Harners were large land-owners and farmers, and the land is still legally referred to as the "Harner Homestead"; second, George Sturgiss purchased the house in 1902, and, while we do not believe he lived there, he used the Harner and adjoining Beall farms as the base of his new Sturgiss City (now, the community of Sabraton), which he developed to provide a community for workers in the Sabraton Tin Plate Mill, a major industry that he purchased in 1905 and which was one of the key factors in Morgantown's extraordinary industrial growth and rising immigrant population in the 1890s - 1910s.

When the actual original house on the property was built is unknown. There is some indication that there was a smaller house on the land when Philip Harner bought it in 1850. Some of the early tax records called the property the Costolo Place; a Samuel Costolo had owned it in 1839 prior to selling it to James Johnson who sold it to Caleb Dorsey. Dorsey sold it to Harner in 1859. The Harners farmed the land.

It is believed that the present house was built around 1852. In 1852 (for the tax year 1851) Philip Harner was taxed for a building assessed for \$200; the next year, a notation on the tax record states that \$2000 was added for the buildings, presumably for the County; This farm consistently appeared on the tax records as being located two miles east of the courthouse. Many other Harner names appear on deeds and old maps for this part of the county. The present owner, Christopher Renahan, found the words, "September 9, 1867 G.W. Smith" on the back of one of the closet doors on the first floor.

On August 14, 1885, Philip and Sarah HARNER sold the house and 111 7/8 acres to their son, William T. HARNER for \$3356.25. The deed includes personal considerations for the elder Harners until their deaths: the use of five rooms, the garden and two cows. There is no mention of any other building on this particular part of the original farm. On July 10, 1902, William and Nancy HARNER sold approximately 100 acres to George STURGISS for \$20,000. Harner requested that he and his family be able to live in the house until November of the same year, presumably until the house he was building next door was finished.

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Continuation sheet

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Item number 8

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Harner retained one acre directly adjacent to the family house and shortly after 1902 erected several houses.

It is believed that Sturgiss did not live in the house. Perhaps he had planned to, but his wife, Sabra, died in May 1903. His address was 149 High Street, Morgantown, for many years. Sturgiss was one of the wealthiest and most prominent men in the county, if not the state, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He owned extensive property. He had run for the office of governor in the late nineteenth century but did not win. Soon after purchasing the Harner and adjoining Beall farms, Sturgiss laid out the town of Sturgiss City, known as Sabraton after his death in 1920. He sold his lots in Sturgiss City primarily to workers at the adjoining Sabraton Tin Plate Mill, a company he purchased in 1905.

On September 3, 1914, Sturgiss and his second wife, Charlotte, sold the "house and buildings thereon" (all of the old "Sabraton Harner Homestead Lot") to Edwin R. JONES. The deed specifically states that Philip Harner, deceased, had resided in the house prior to his death. Whether the house at the rear, 1812 Listravia was on the land, we are not sure. Tradition and tax records seem to indicate that the house was built within the year by Jones or his son, Leonard H. Jones, who supposedly received it as a wedding gift from his father. Although Leonard may have lived in it early in his married life while his parents were living in the large front house, many elderly Morgantown residents remember the house as being "fashionably elegant" and used for elaborate parties while Leonard and his wife Sara lived there. The little house at the rear was known as "the cottage," and was evidently the servants' quarters. The city directories list Edward Jones as postmaster and owner of a general store in Sabraton. Jones owned several early houses at the southern end of Listravia. Leonard was also postmaster (1914-1922) and owned a large hotel, now gone, at the southern end of Listravia. Leonard eventually owned L.H. Jones Equipment Company of which he is primarily remembered.

The two houses remained in the Jones' family for many years and by the late 1940s and 1950s were rented, although the large house was lived in by relatives of Leonard's. The large house (1818) was sold in 1965 to Emily J. Brand (no information) who owned it until 1976 when Bessie E. Franks (no information) purchased it. Both Brand and Franks evidently rented it. The present owner, Christopher A. Renahan, employed at the Fort Martin Power Plant, bought the house in 1977. The house has rental apartments in it now, but not all are occupied. During those years when the area was canvassed for the Morgantown City Directory, seldom was anyone living in the house or was at home. Invariably the house was listed as being "vacant."

1818 Listravia has not changed greatly since a photograph was taken of it in the late nineteenth century. A side porch, door and window have been added. The back and south side of the house have had additions also. The house is similar in style to a house in Pentress and one in Blacksville, built about the same time. They are relatively unique to this part of West Virginia.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet #2

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than an acre

Quadrangle name Morgantown North, WV

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A 

1	7	5	9	2	6	4	0	4	3	86	3	6	0
Zone				Easting				Northing					

B 

Zone				Easting				Northing					

C 

Zone				Easting				Northing					

D 

Zone				Easting				Northing					

E 

Zone				Easting				Northing					

F 

Zone				Easting				Northing					

G 

Zone				Easting				Northing					

H 

Zone				Easting				Northing					

Verbal boundary description and justification

Sabraton Harner Homestead Lot Map 33, Plot 45  
95 x 156 x 170 x 90 feet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Nancy Moore and Dolores Fleming

organization West Virginia University History Dept date 22 September 1983

street & number West Virginia University telephone 304-293-2421

city or town Morgantown state West Virginia

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Commissioner, Department of Culture and History

date November 29, 1983

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

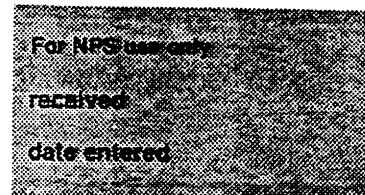
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Continuation sheet

2

Item number

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Page

1

Deed Books 20:392; 66:255; 131:206, etc.

Tax Books

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

Morgantown City Directories

Will Books: 173: 284 esp. helpful

The New Dominion Industrial Edition, May 1906

Industrial Supplement of the Post Chronicle, January 1913

Prosperity & Education Edition of New Dominion, 1903

Morgantown District Industrial & Business Survey, 1921

Interviews: Chris Renahan, Susan Hess Cook, Theodore Hess,  
Donald Longfellow, Joseph Laurita, Jr., Dr. Barbara  
Howe, Susan Beates, Gregory Losh

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

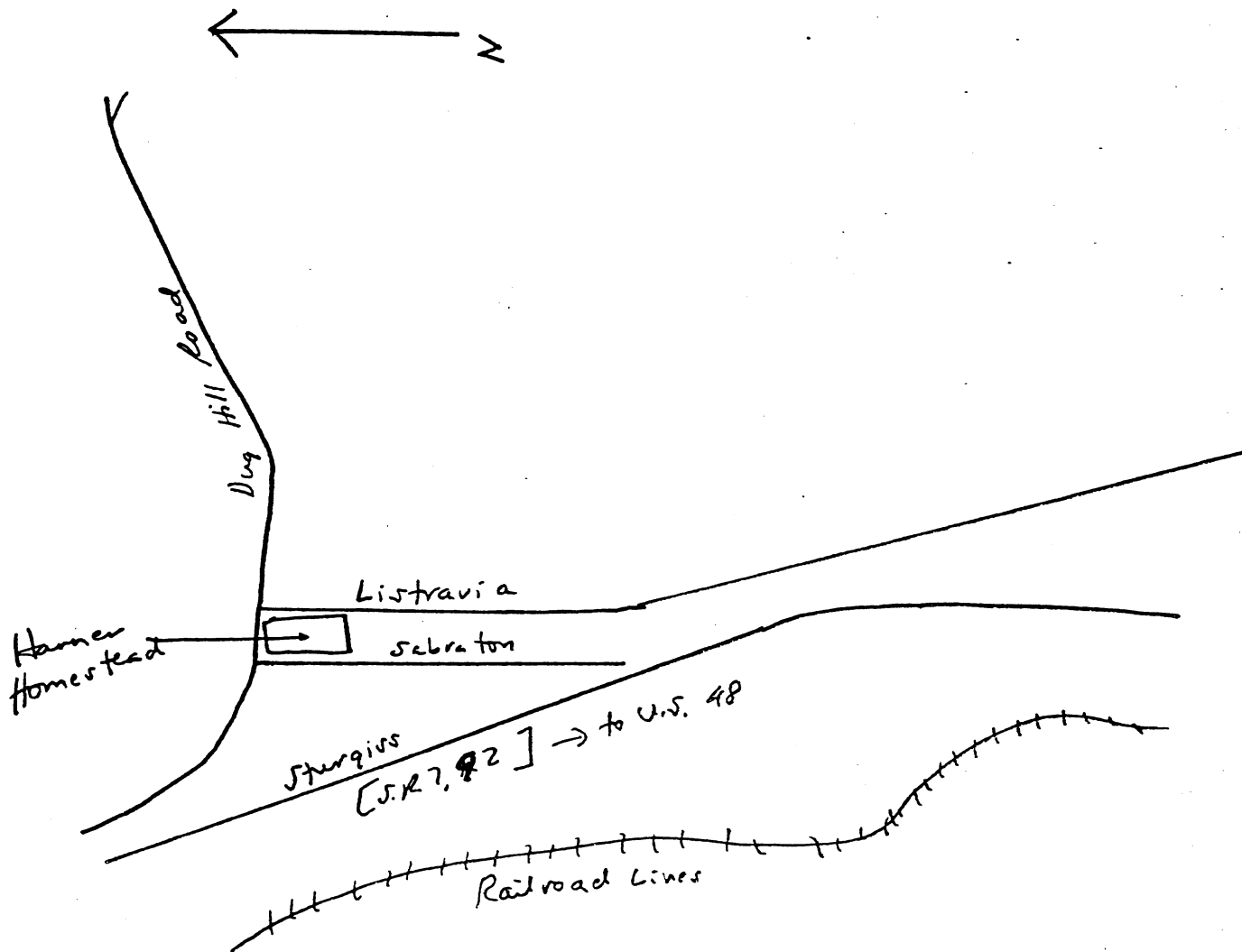
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Continuation sheet Harner Homestead

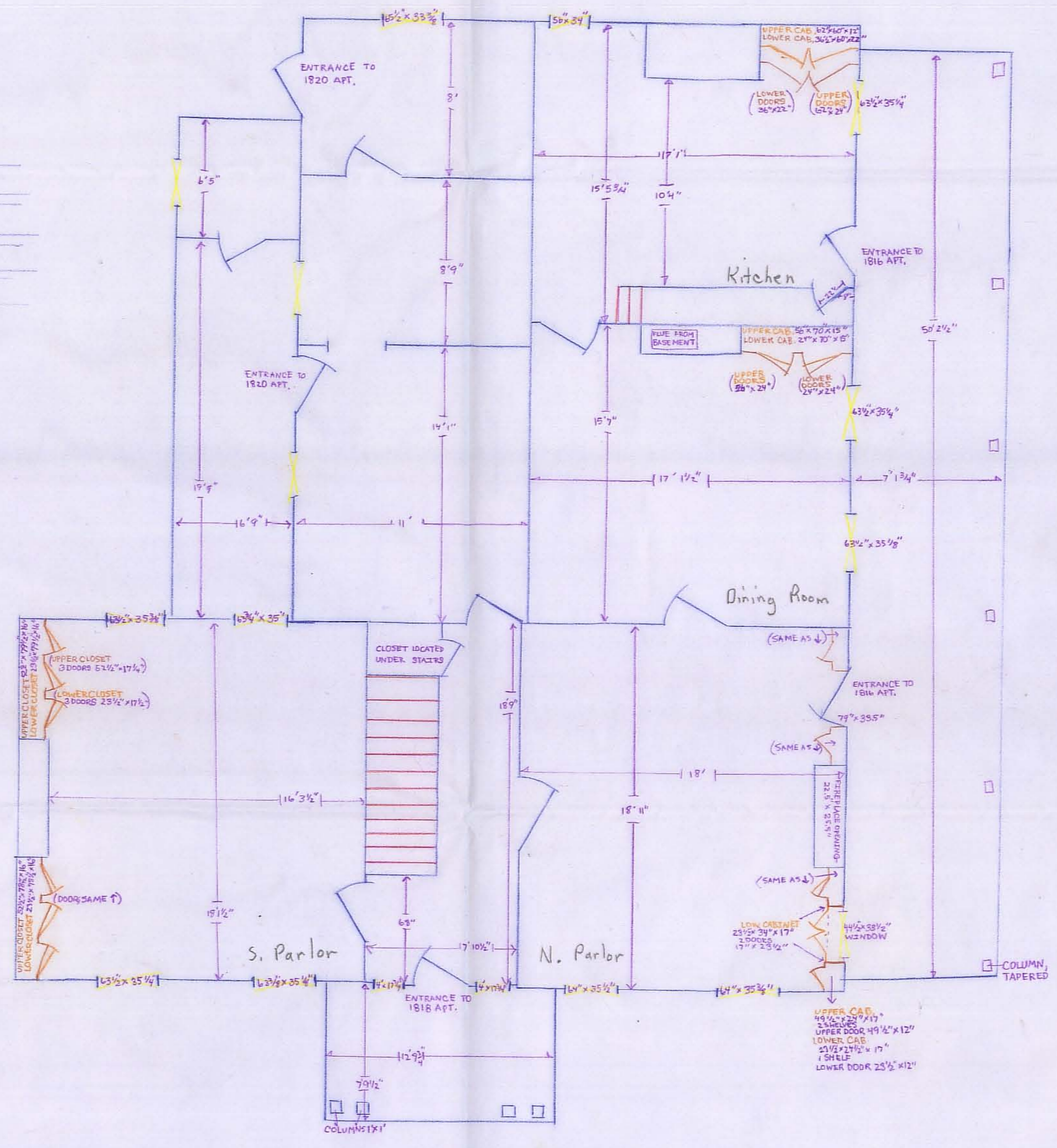
Item number Sketch Map

Page



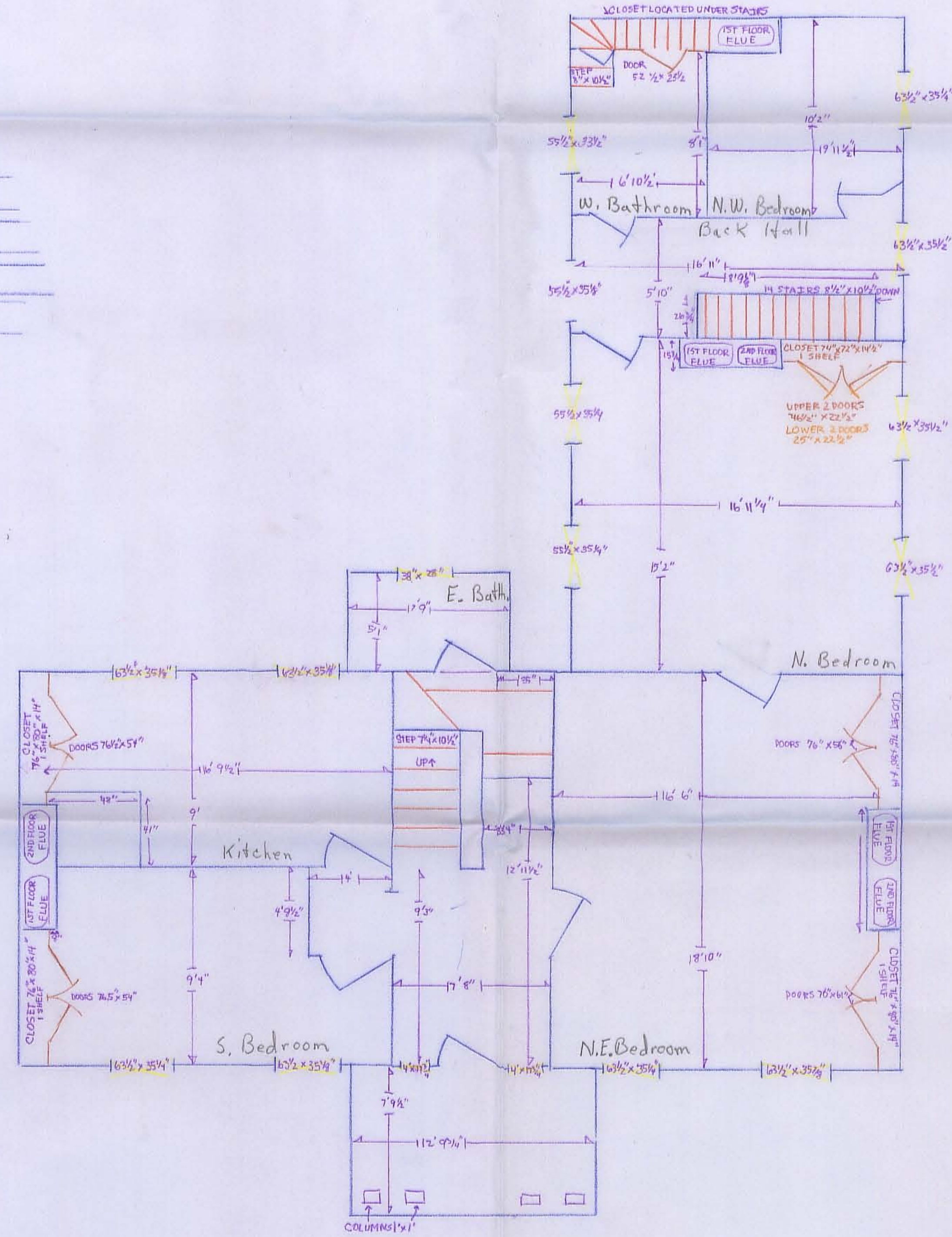
Not To Scale

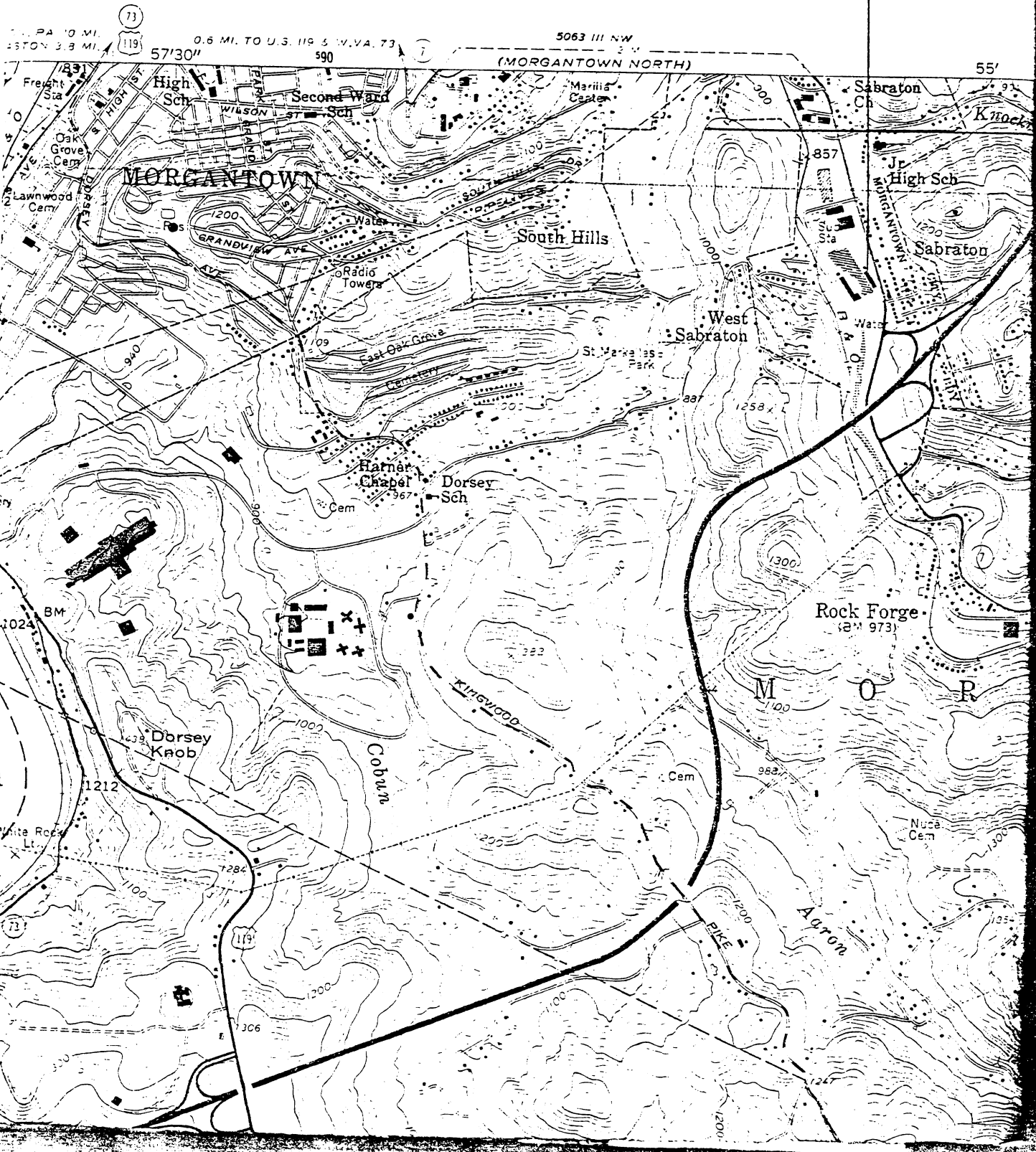
1<sup>ST</sup> FLOOR PLAN  
 HARNER HOMESTEAD  
 1816, 1818, 1820 LISTRAVIA AVE.  
 MORGANTOWN, WEST VIRGINIA





2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR PLAN  
HARNER HOMESTEAD  
1816, 1818, 1820 LISTRAVIA AVE.  
MORGANTOWN, WEST VIRGINIA





PA 10 MI.  
ESTON 3.3 MI.

73

119

0.6 MI. TO U.S. 119 S.W.VA. 73

5063 III NW

57'30"

590

(MORGANTOWN NORTH)

55'

MORGANTOWN

South Hills

Sabraton

Jr High Sch

Sabraton

West Sabraton

Harnar Chapel

Dorsey Sch

Rock Forge  
(AM 973)

Dorsey Knob

Coburn

Aaron

PIKE

73

119

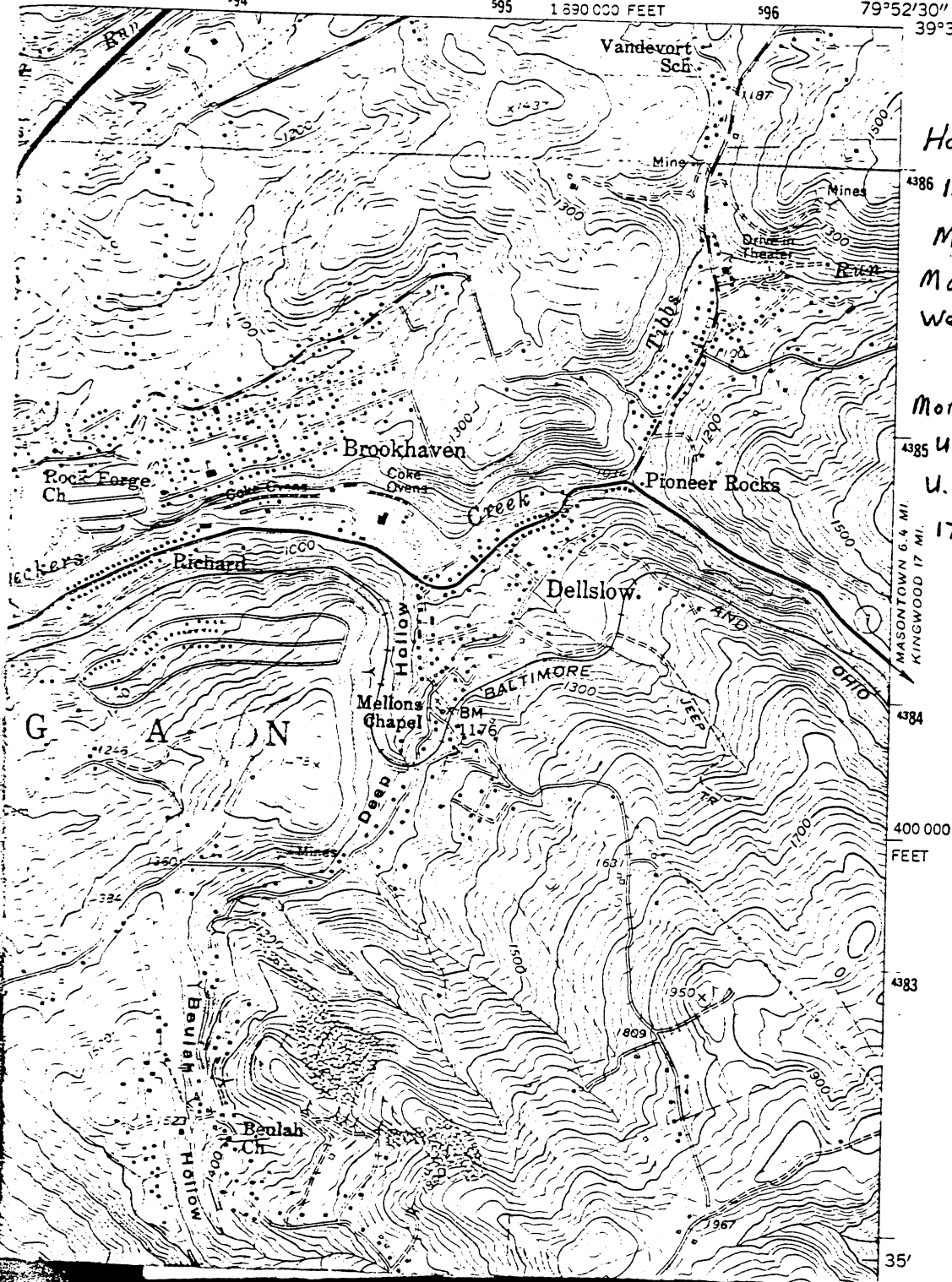
306

1200

MORGANTOWN SOUTH QUADRANGLE  
 WEST VIRGINIA  
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)  
 SW/4 MORGANTOWN 15' QUADRANGLE

5063 III NE  
 (LAKE LYNN)

594 595 1 690 000 FEET 596 79°52'30" 39°37'30"



*Harner Homestead,  
 1818 Listravia Road  
 Morgantown,  
 Monongalia County,  
 West Virginia*

*Morgantown South, W. Va.  
 U.S. G.S. Quadrangle  
 U.T.M. Coordinates  
 17/592640/4386360*

MASONTOWN 6.4 MI.  
 KINGWOOD 17 MI.

400 000  
 FEET

35'