

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

MASON - DRENNEN HOUSE

historic name: Mason-Drennen House

other name/site number: Mason, Martin Bibb House; Drennen-Mason House; Drennen Springs Hotel

2. Location

street & number: Intersection of State Route 39 and State Route 129

city/town: Drennen

vicinity: X

not for publication: N/A

state: WV

county: Nicholas

code: 067

zip code: 26667

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide x locally. (See continuation sheet.)

Susan M. Perce
Signature of Certifying Official

10/26/98
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

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

Date

Mason-Drennen House
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4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is: Signature of Keeper Date of Action

_____ entered in the National Register	_____	_____
_____ See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
_____ determined eligible for the	_____	_____
National Register	_____	_____
_____ See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
_____ determined not eligible for the	_____	_____
National Register	_____	_____
_____ removed from the National Register	_____	_____
_____ other (explain): _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property:

(Check as many boxes as apply)

☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____ 3 _____	_____ 2 _____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
_____ 3 _____	_____ 2 _____	TOTAL

Name of related multiple property listing

N/A

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling
DOMESTIC: Secondary Structure

Current Functions

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling
DOMESTIC: Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

EARLY REPUBLIC/FEDERAL

Materials

Foundation	<u>Sandstone</u>
Walls	<u>Clapboard</u>
Roof	<u>Metal</u>
Other	<u>Tongue & Groove Horizontal</u> <u>Board Siding; Log Construction</u>

Narrative Description

(See continuation on sheets.)

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.)

 x **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

 See SLR **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

 x **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.

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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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

Exploration/Settlement

Commerce

Transportation

Entertainment/Recreation

Architecture

Period of Significance

1832-1940

Significant Dates

1832

1860

1921

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Drennen, Jacob

Drennen, A.E.

Mason, Martin Bibb

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(See continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☒ Other

Name of Repository: Nicholas County Historic Landmarks Commission
616 Church Street
Summersville, WV 26651

10. Geographical Data

Acres of Property: 2.5 acres

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

<u>17</u>	<u>500680</u>	<u>4235260</u>	<u>Gilboa Quad Map</u>
Zone	Easting	Northing	

Verbal Boundary Description
(See continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(See continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Michael Gioulis, Historic Preservation Consultant
Wilma Richardson

Organization: Nicholas County HLC

Date: April 1, 1998

Street & Number: 612 Main Street

Telephone: 304/765-5716

City or Town: Sutton

State: WV

Zip: 26601

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

Name: Edsell Crandall

Street & Number: 210 Jackson Avenue

Telephone: 304/872-2464

City or Town: Summersville

State: WV

Zip: 26651

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The Mason/Drennen House, containing log and frame construction, is located in the central portion of Nicholas County on State Route 39, south of Summersville, approximately 11 miles from the village of Drennen. It is located on the south side of the road between the new paved SR 39 and the historic Weston to Gauley Bridge Turnpike, which is now an unpaved driveway/lane. Although SR 39 is a north-south route, at this location its alignment is east-west due to a bend following the creek alignment. To the south of the road is Peters Creek. The grounds are relatively flat and there is a large field to the east of the house that is cultivated. To the west of the house and outside the boundaries, there is a new trailer in the triangle formed by the old and new roads and this is the location of a former store owned by Jacob Drennen. At this intersection, State Route 129 intersects as well. This is the road to Kesslers Cross Lanes, another early settlement village.

On the grounds are the house (contributing); a large barn on the south east corner of the nominated site (contributing); a small barn/shed adjacent to the large barn (contributing); a new concrete block garage (non-contributing); and a small concrete block pump house (noncontributing). In all, there are three contributing buildings and two non-contributing buildings.

Main House

The house sits parallel to the road. There is a fence to the east of the house dividing it from the field. The fence runs behind the garage, than follows the old road and connects to the barn. The barn is directly opposite the creek at the point where the road fords the creek.

The house is a two-story, side gable with a rear gable, two-story wing. The main portion of the house was constructed ca. 1818 and 1835 and the rear wing was added ca. 1910. There is a full length, two-story porch on the front of the house that wraps around the east gable and one on the side of the wing in the rear. The porch has an exterior stair at the gable end. This was for access to the upper rooms without traveling through the first floor rooms when the house was used as an inn. The rear porch originally had stairs but these were removed when the porch was connected to the interior rooms on the second floor.

The house is nine bays wide and one bay deep. The rear frame wing, added in 1910, on the west side, is four bays deep and one bay wide. The west three bays of the front main block were the first portions of the house to be built and date to ca. 1818, and are a single log pen plan. The remaining bays on the main block were added to the pen in 1835 and then a roof was applied that tied the two construction periods into one unit. The rear wing was added in 1910. The front remaining six bays date from Jacob Drennen's ownership of the house, ca. 1835. The log pen has a coursed rubble fieldstone chimney on the east end as an exterior chimney. When the east addition was added this became an enclosed dogtrot. It is now fully enclosed and the chimney is only visible from the roof or by removing boards on a second floor closet. There is a new concrete block and brick chimney on the west gable end and a central chimney and small kitchen chimney in the 1910 addition.

The front porch is two stories tall with a shed roof. There are chamfered decorative posts supporting the roof and floor. These divide the porch into ten bays. The posts also form three entrance bays that are on an axis with entrance doors in the front facade. There are stone steps at the

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first floor level to each of these porch entrances. The second floor porch has a balustrade with a jig saw carved balustrade. This was also true on the first floor but the wood trim has since been lost. The same details are repeated on the wraparound portion of the porch. The rear porch has similar details, though not as finely executed. The first floor portion of the porch on the east end has a one bay enclosure that was used to store and cure meat. The hollowed log used for salting is still extant in the room. There is also graffiti from the Mason period of occupancy. The roof is a standing seam metal roof that has been coated with asphalt paint a number of times.

The siding on the main block of the house is clapboard siding on east, and north sides, and the east side of the wing. The siding in the rear portion of the main block, and in the dogtrot when exposed, is hand riven tapered clapboard siding. On the 1910 addition and the west gable end of the original log pen, there is German novelty siding. The log portion was sided at the time of the addition to blend the two construction periods.

Windows in the original portions of the building are six over six, single-hung wood sash with pegged mortise and tenon joints. The windows in the 1910 addition are two over two, double-hung sash. The wooden doors are four panel with mortise and tenon pegged joints.

Trim in the original portions consists of a flat band with a beaded edge backband. This is true for the windows and doors. On the 1910 addition the trim is a plain surround with a small cove hood. There is scallop sawn trim at the edge of the porch floors.

The front facade is divided into nine bays. The plan is arranged into three rooms. Each room has a door to the porch flanked by windows. On the second floor there is the same arrangement, with the addition of a bay that contains a large original door opening into the dogtrot. The second floor rooms in the wing have a single window and entrance door.

The floor plan on the first floor consists of three rooms in the main block and two rooms in the wing. There is a staircase in the rear of the center room on the front. This accesses the second floor. The rooms of the ca. 1835 addition are connected with a door in the dividing wall. There is no direct access to the log pen without going on the porch. The log pen, the center room on the front and each wing room, have fireplaces.

On the second floor the plan arrangement is similar. There originally was a single log pen on the west end. The east two rooms were divided into two larger rooms facing the front porch, a room with a narrow hall and two small sleeping rooms in the rear corner on the east side and a single room on the rear center where the stair is currently located. The rear of the wing contains two rooms. The arrangement is the same with the exception of the removal of the hall and sleeping room dividers in the rear corner room. This arrangement allowed for a fairly large number of sleeping rooms for the inn. The hall in the rear corner room is accessed from a door on the end gable wall to the second floor porch. The rear center room now has a door to the rear porch. The door is not original.

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Finishes on the interior are tongue and groove wood floors. The floors are wide boards except in the 1910 addition. Ceilings in the original portions are tongue and groove boards with three beads in the center of the board. The ceilings in the addition are tongue and groove boards. Walls have wallpaper over wooden horizontal boards. The boards in the 1835 section are poplar. The second floor dividing walls in the rooms are vertical boards.

Interior doors are the same as the exterior. Trim on the interior is simpler with plain butt. jointed trim on doors in the dividing walls and trim similar to the exterior in other locations. There is a wide base molding approximately 12 inches tall. This is common of the ca. 1835 period of construction in this region of Nicholas County.

Barn ca. 1910

Large two-story, gable end with three bays. There is a one bay shed extension on the side. The siding is batten and board and the construction is pegged mortise and tenon post and beam. There is a small shed roof on the west side. The west side also contains feeding windows for horse stalls. on the interior the first floor is divided into a center bay for working and feeding with flanking stall and animal bays. Horses were on the west wide and other animals on the east. The shed addition is used to store equipment. The upper level, the hayloft, has board scanting flooring that is not attached. This was common in historic barns of the period to allow for access to loading and feeding of the hay. Contributing

Small shed/barn ca. 1910

Gable end, one bay, one-story, batten and board structure. Contributing

Garage ca. 1960

one bay, concrete block, end gable modern structure. Noncontributing

Well/Pump House c. 1950

Small gable roof, concrete block building. Noncontributing

The house and barns reflect the importance of this early homestead and tavern in Nicholas County. The barns are within the time period and would have assisted in the quartering and maintenance of horses for guests.

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The Mason/Drennen House is significant under Criterion A for its association with Transportation being sited on the Weston to Gauley Bridge Turnpike; for Exploration/Settlement being an early settler's home in Nicholas County; for Commerce as an early inn; and for Recreation with the mineral springs retreat and early 20th century picnic and public recreation area. The building is also significant under Criterion B for its association with Jacob and Charles Drennen and Martin Bibb Mason. The period of significance, 1832 to 1940, refers to the purchase of the house and land by Jacob Drennen in 1832 and the ending date of 1940 refers to the end of the heyday of the property as a retreat and recreation area.

The oldest portion of the Mason/Drennen House was originally constructed by William Powell in 1818. This is the same year that Nicholas County was formed. Originally the land was owned by Michael Baker, who was a preacher at nearby Gilboa. Baker did not live in the county very long. He settled in 1807 and stayed a few years. Powell acquired some of Baker's land and built a "cabin" on the land. It is described in Campbell's history as a cabin near "...Charles M. Drennen's celebrated Sulphur Springs ..." He then sold his property to Sam Neil two years later.

Neil was one of the original settlers in the area. He settled in 1809, and lived about two miles below Drennen. He did not acquire the property for use as a residence but probably was speculating in real estate at the time.

Neil sold the property in 1832 to Jacob Drennen. The total acreage was 137 acres and the sale price was one dollar, so it is assumed that the log cabin did not have a large value. Drennen then built the addition on the cabin and operated a post office and store in town. At the time, transportation through Nicholas County was limited to a few roads or bridle paths. The major roads connected to the Kanawha and James River Turnpike at Gauley Bridge, Settlement of the county occurred in two directions. The primary direction was from Charleston and Kanawha County, to the south and west along the Turnpike and Gauley Bridge, This is indicated by the early settlement of communities along Peters Creek. These communities include Lockwood and the Morris settlements; Drennen's settlements in and around the town of Drennen; and the Kesslers Cross Lanes vicinity. Access to all of these town would have occurred past the Mason/Drennen house and store. This This would have made the location particularly valuable, and the business location significant to the local area.

Jacob Drennen raised a large family in the house and was important to the settlement activities of the early county. The first post office in Nicholas County was located at the Nicholas County Court House in 1820. The mail was carried on horseback from Gauley Bridge but the road was not officially a post road until 1827. The second post office was on the road at the midway point between Summersville and Gauley Bridge. This was near the village of Victor. The third post office in the county was also on the road to Gauley Bridge. This was Jacob Drennen's store and post office in Drennen. Jacob was appointed Post Master in 1831.

The fact that the first three post offices in the county were located in the county seat, and along the soon to be turnpike road; indicates the importance off this route as a connection with the Kanawha Valley and the Kanawha and James River Turnpike.

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The Weston to Gauley Bridge Turnpike was incorporated in 1848. The road ran through Nicholas County and followed the alignment of the old bridle path between Gauley Bridge and Summersville. The road, which is still visible, ran directly in front of the Mason/Drennen House and forded Peters Creek at the barn. The road was an important link to the south, and to the northern counties of Braxton and Lewis. The Civil War interrupted the improvement and maintenance of the road and it fell into disrepair during and immediately following the War.

By 1880 though, the road had again become an important link and there was daily service to Gauley Bridge. The town of Drennen was an important link in this service. Routes split at Drennen, traveling north through Kesslers Cross Lanes or Gilboa, on alternate days.

Charles M. Drennen acquired the property in 1860 in exchange for the care of his father and mother for the remaining years of their life. He is the person who developed the property as an inn or "tavern" and as a mineral springs resort. With the significance of the road and daily passenger service past the tavern, Charles Drennen was well located to succeed. The springs are reported to have been a popular recreation area in the latter part of the 19th century, and into the 20th century. Governor MacCorkle's (MacCorkle was elected as governor in 1892) wife spent some summers at the "Drennen Springs Hotel."

Charles Drennen remained at the house and raised his family. He conveyed the home to his son, A. E. Drennen, with the same care provisions that his father had applied to his receiving the property. In 1919, the house left the Drennen family hands and by 1921 had been exchanged at least three times. Martin "Bibb" Mason acquired the property in 1921 through his marriage to Elizabeth Dorsey,

Mason was the son of Marian and Caroline Mason. The Mason family was prominent in the county at the time. Mason continued to run the property as an inn and as a recreation area. Many residents of the county remember picnicking and having Sunday "retreats" to the spring site and the inn. There were dances and entertainment available. At this time, the inn was known as "Mary's Entertainment."

Mason was also appointed by the County Commission as a representative of the County in a dispute with Clay County over the county boundary lines at Bintree. Nicholas County was successful in their efforts and Bintree is within the county. Martin's son, Robert, inherited the house from him and lived there until his death.

The architecture of the house is southern in appearance with the wide porches across the front facade being appealing to guests of the inn. The original section is a log pen with an early addition in 1835, and a rear wing in 1910. The materials and construction reflect their time periods, with the pierced cutout balustrade being a typical folk art style found in West Virginia.

The Mason-Drennen House is a rural homestead and commercial enterprise which took advantage of its location along the Weston-Gauley Bridge turnpike to host travelers and those who wished to take the waters of the nearby mineral springs. The log and clapboard house is still evocative of its time period and construction periods. The house and property is closely associated with both the Mason and Drennen families.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brown, W.G., History of Nicholas County, 1951, reprinted 1981, **The News Leader**, Richwood, WV.

Campbell's History of Nicholas County, unpublished, 1893,

Nicholas County West Virginia History 1985. Summersville, WV: Shirley Grose & Associates, 1985.

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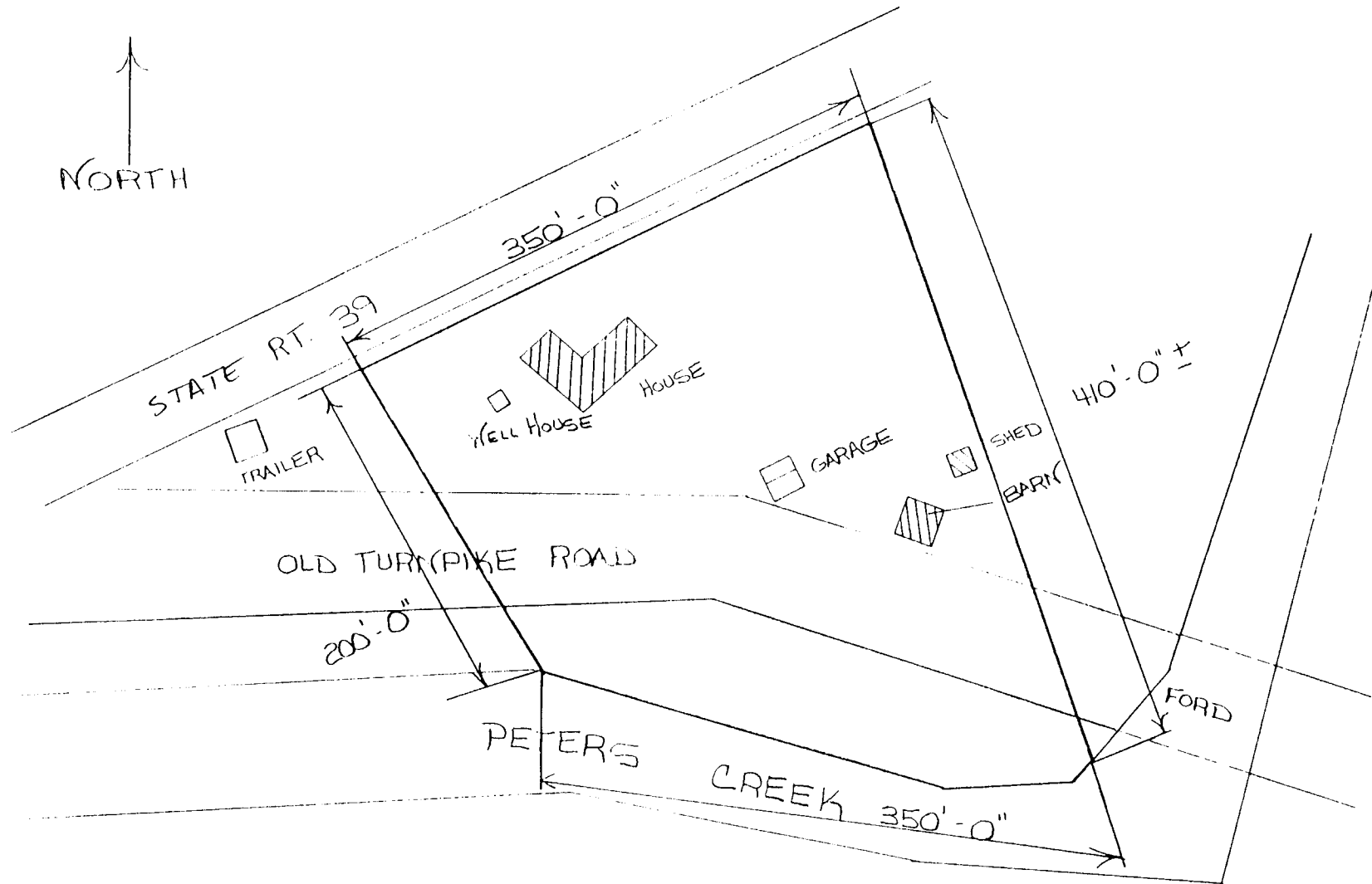
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

Beginning at a point at the north side of the intersection of the old Turnpike Road and Peters Creek; thence north to the south side of State Route 39, approximately 410 feet; thence east along the south side of the road to a point in line with a point 50 feet west of the north west corner of the house, approximately 350 feet; thence south to the north side of Peters Creek, approximately 200 feet; thence east following the north bank of Peters Creek to the point of origin.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:



The boundaries encompass the immediate site of the house and outbuildings associated with the property as well as a portion of the original alignment of the Weston to Gauley Bridge Turnpike that runs in front of the house. State Route 39 and Peters Creek form north and south natural boundaries respectively.

NORTH



NO SCALE

KEY:

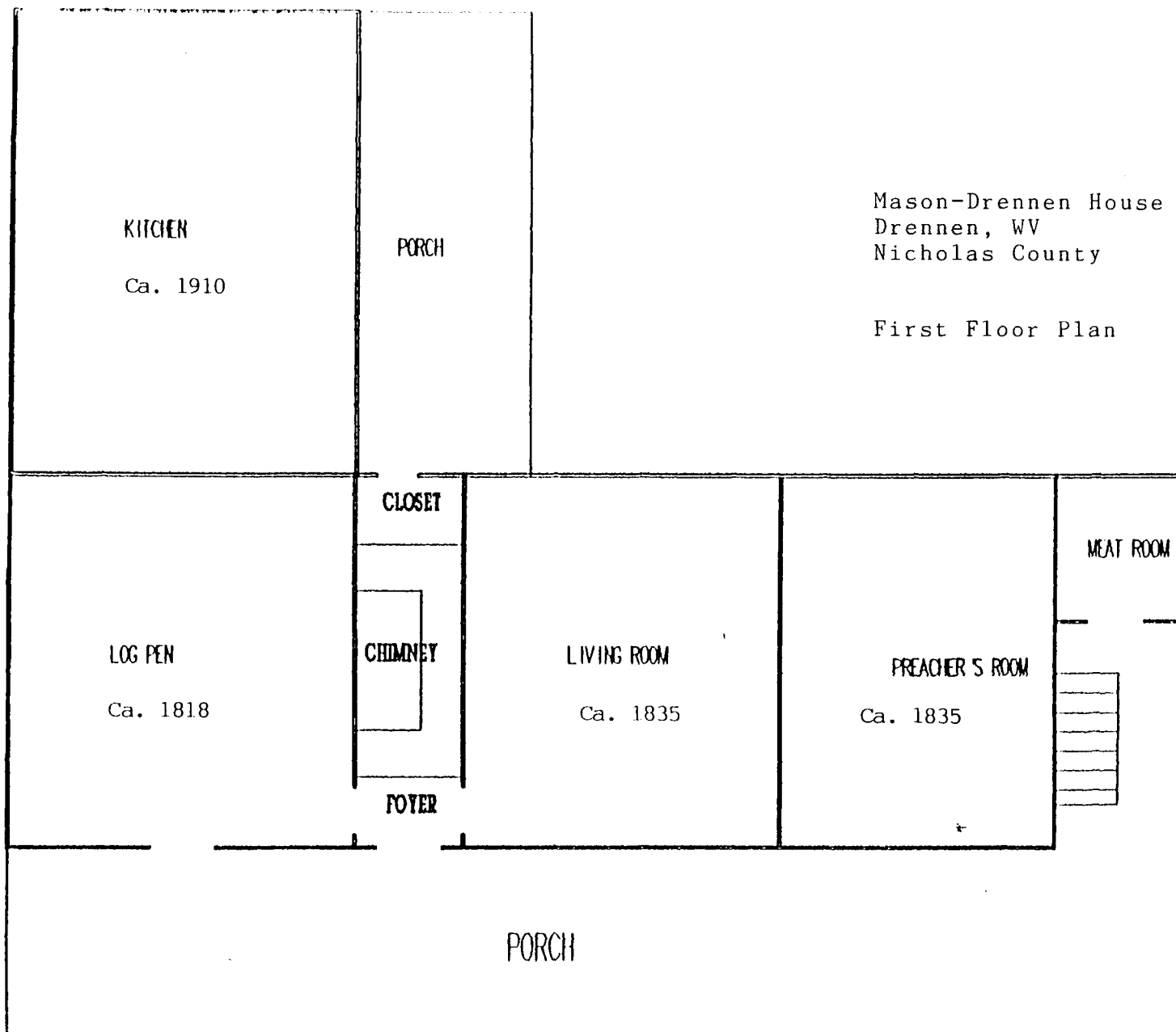
-  - CONTRIBUTING
-  - NON CONTRIBUTING

DATE
8/5/91

MICHAEL GIOULIS
SUTTON, WVA

DRENNEN MASON
HOUSE

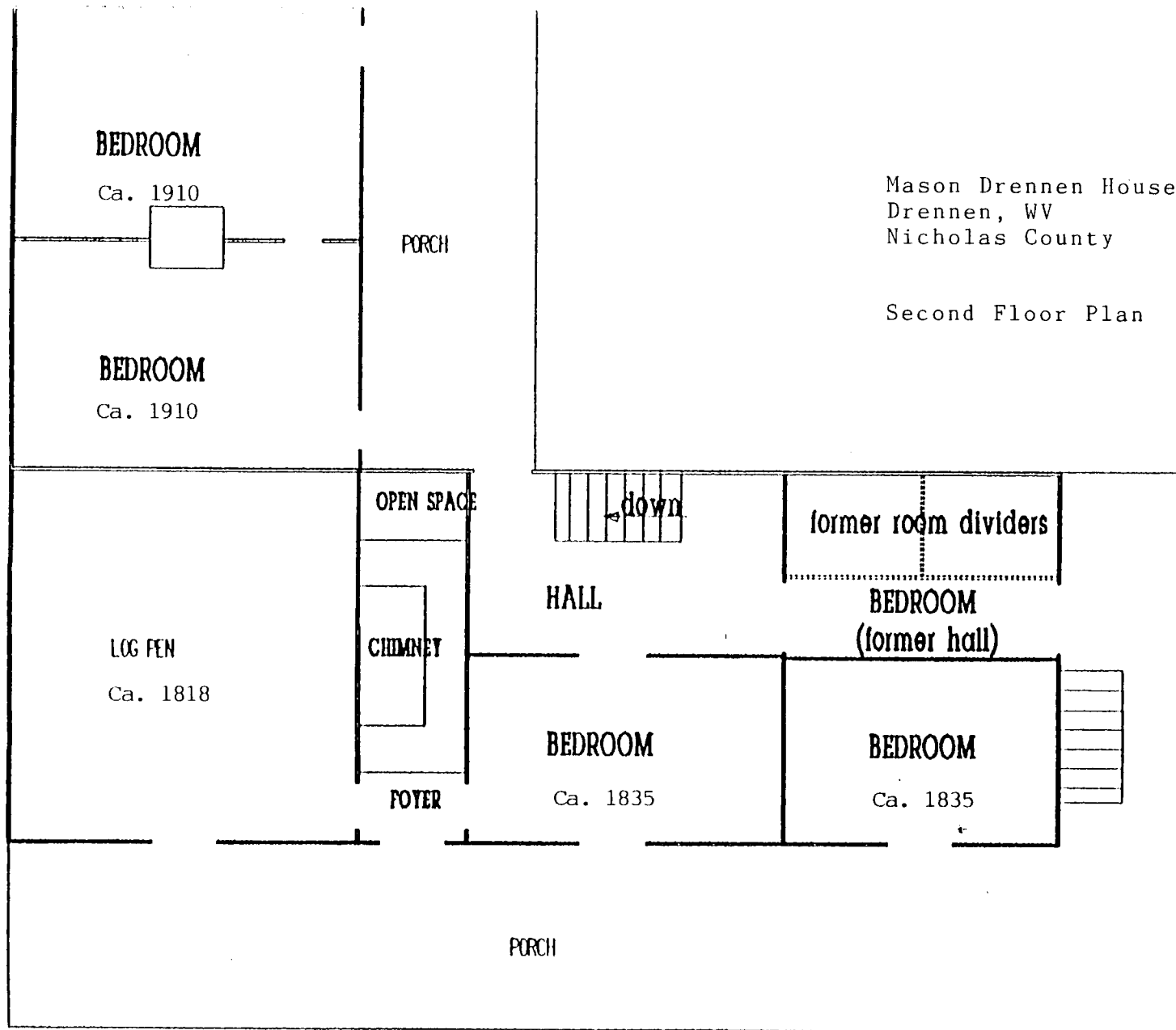
DWG.
1 OF 1



Mason-Drennen House
Drennen, WV
Nicholas County

First Floor Plan

FIRST FLOOR PLAN NOT TO SCALE



SECOND FLOOR PLAN NOT TO SCALE

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Name of Property Mason - Drennen House
Address Jct Sr 39 & Sr 129
Town Drennen
County Nicholas County, WV

Photographer: Mike Gioulis

Date: Fall 1991/Spring 1998*
*Photographs were taken and submitted in 1991 with the grant. A site visit on March 18, 1998, verified the condition and materials of the buildings. No changes were noted.

Negatives: Mike Gioulis, Sutton, WV

- Photo 1 Front Facade, Southeast Elevation
Camera facing NW
- Photo 2 Front and West Elevation
Camera facing N
- Photo 3 Rear or North Elevation
Camera facing SE
- Photo 4 View from SR 39, rear of property
Camera facing SW
- Photo 5 Porch of House
Camera facing SW
- Photo 6 Porch and stairs on house, 2nd floor
- Photo 7 Porch and stairs on house, 1st floor
- Photo 8 Interior, front room
Camera facing E
- Photo 9 Barn and section of old turnpike
Camera facing SE

MASSACHUSETTS
 DRENNEN HILLS
 UTM ZONE 17
 EASTING 500680
 NORTHING 4235260

6/11/64

