

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

1. Name of Property NICHOLLS RESIDENCE AND WOOLEN MILL SITE

historic name: _____
other name/site number: _____

2. Location

street & number: State Route 67 - Not for publication: N/A
Wellsburg-Bethany Pike
city/town: Wellsburg vicinity: N/A
state code: WV county: Brooke code: 009 zip code: 26070

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.)

William S. Janner 10/1/97
Signature of Certifying Official 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

4. National Park Service Certification

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

Nicholls Residence & Mill
Name of Property

Brooke County, WV
County and State

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5. Classification

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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

1		buildings
1		sites
1		structures
		objects
3	0	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)

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

INDUSTRY: Mill

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

=====

7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification:

(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

SECOND EMPIRE

Foundation Stone

Walls Brick

Roof Slate

Other Wood trim

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Nicholls Residence & Mill
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8. Statement of Significance

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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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Industry

Architecture

Archaeology: Historic/Non-aboriginal

Period of Significance

1795 / 1839

1893 - 1917

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Significant Dates

1795
1839
1893

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References
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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: Owner

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=====
10. Geographical Data
=====

Acreage of Property: Approximately 1 acre

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

17 533940 4456215 Steubenville Quad Map
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By
=====

Name/Title: Katherine M. Jourdan, WV SHPO
and Paula Hamilton, owner
Organization: WV SHPO Date: 7 August 1997
Street & Number: 1900 Kanawha Blvd, East Telephone: 304/558-0220
City or Town: Charleston State: WV Zip: 25305-0300

=====
Property Owner
=====

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

Name: William and Paula Hamilton
Street & Number: Rt. 1, Box 100 B Telephone: 304/737-1172
City or Town: Wellsburg State: WV Zip: 26070

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The Nicholls residence rests on a low bluff above Buffalo Creek, along State Route 67. The two and a half story red-glazed brick home is a blend of styles with the Second Empire tower and mansard roof dominating the structure. The full front porch is Colonial Revival with Doric columns and a decorative pediment over the steps.

The first floor has a center entrance with a leaded glass door and transom with "Nicholls" inscribed. The windows are all 1/1 double-hung sash with stone lintels and sills. The center bay of the house projects out slightly with paired windows over the entrance and the central tower with Palladian windows. The entablature has a wide fascia and dentil trim, with low brackets under the eaves. There are four chimney stacks made of three circular brick flues linked at the top.

The two sides of the house are symmetrical with three bays divided by the exterior chimneys. The center bay has two openings on each floor including a door on the first floor. Between the chimney is a pedimented gable dormer with paired windows. The east side has a low hipped porch with spindles and wooden posts. The west side has a modern metal awning from the 1930s. The rear or south side has five bays on the second floor and a center pedimented gable dormer with rosette. A two bay garage has been attached to the first floor and is a noncontributing element.

The interior of the home has elegant woodwork of oak, and walnut. The fireplaces vary from room to room, but include Ionic columns, tile, egg and dart molding, and unique butterfly shaped columns in the back parlor.

The central staircase is paneled on the side, and the newel post is covered with a fern design. Each floor essentially has four large rooms with a central hallway. The third floor is open with a small room in the tower that served as an office for the mill business.

Stories among the Nicholls family involve a major change to the house over time, when the earlier home was encapsulated by the Second Empire design. A small hall off the kitchen appears to be a section of the earlier home and has a cross panel door leading to the cellar.

A small contributing brick structure is to the west of the home near the side drive. A low gable cover with asphalt shingles lifts off and inside is a brick-lined circular well with a pump on the outside rim.

The house overlooks Buffalo Creek with the property extending across the road to include the site of a mill along the creek bank. Archaeological exploration by SHPO Staff member Pat Trader in May 1997, found the sandstone block remains of the mill foundation. The foundation rose to a height even with the top of the bank and a clear rectangular image was found. A stone wall is clearly visible immediately adjacent to the creek, with a lower dirt depression towards the south bank. The stone wall and the foundation supported the shaft holding the mill wheel. The open area for the wheel has filled in over time to form the dirt depression. Opposite the site on the north bank is another stone footing for the dam which stretched between the two banks of the creek. The mill site retains good integrity, with a potential to yield additional information.

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A brick lane leads down from the roadway to the creek and foundation. Visible along the roadway are the wooden ties associated with a short-lived rail line between Wellsburg and Bethany, WV.

A map of the property from 1842 (Deed Book 15) clearly shows the earlier L-shaped house noted as the "Old Mansion", as well as the well, saw mill, factory, finishing house, and engine house. The property has been subdivided by earlier owners, and the site of the finishing house can be discerned in the open field next to the residence.

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The Nicholls property is significant under Criteria A for Industry, being associated with the brick industry and milling history of Brooke County, Criteria C for Architecture, and Criteria D for Archaeology. The period of significance for the property is 1795 and 1839 for the mill site, and 1893 to 1917 for the house and grounds.

Research on the property has been traced back to the original two patents for the property in 1775, when Absalom Wells obtained 650 acres. It is believed that he built the "old mansion" on Buffalo(e) Creek which still appeared in Deed Book 15 in 1842. The mansion was identified as an inn for travelers along the creek; from a ledger found by William Nicholls when a section of the old house was removed. The ledger recorded how guests traded furs for their lodging and meals.

In 1794, Absalom Wells sold 450 acres of land to Colonel James Marshel, a man active in the Revolutionary War and regional military activities. These events included the Indian sieges of Ft. Henry in Wheeling, when he was sheriff from 1784-1789, and the Whiskey Rebellion of 1794. In the early 1790s Colonel Marshel purchased large quantities of property in Wellsburg (then known as Charlestown), including several lots for buildings and wharfs. He served as a town trustee from 1791 until roughly 1815.

Colonel Marshel built the heavy stone dam and original mill across from the "old mansion" on the bank of Buffalo Creek in 1795. This mill was used for carding and manufacturing woolens. Blankets and fabrics were woven from the wool of the Merino and Saxony sheep at the finishing house on the property. The carding machines, spinning wheels and looms mentioned in Marshel's will inventory would have been in this building. Colonel Marshel was known as a man of means and enterprise and did a respectable business. He also owned the Wellsburg ferry which he purchased from Harry Prather in 1795.

At Colonel Marshel's death in 1829, he provided for his heirs and two slaves. The mill's name was changed to James Marshel (Jr.) and Bros. The mill reportedly was destroyed by fire around 1839 and rebuilt on the level of the dirt road (Wellsburg - Bethany Turnpike) with an engine house for power. The only remains of the original 1795 mill is the water wheel support made of cut stone. The foundation of the mill rebuilt after the fire is what still remains on the site. A site visit confirmed that the mill was sited next to the road and was of significant height to be even with the roadbed.

At the time of Colonel Marshel's death there was a sawmill, blacksmith shop, the old mansion, James Marshel's (Jr.) brick home (built in 1837), Samuel Marshel's brick home (razed in 1970s), and several other buildings including dwelling houses for the men or slaves. A map dated 1842 plots the site of the mill and is attached in the documentation. At this same time the property was turned over for debt satisfaction. The property was divided into smaller tracts and sold. The section for the house was noted as plat # 5, and is referred in the deed books as the "woolen factory property". It was reduced to eleven acres at this time and changed hands several times.

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William Briggs was awarded the property in 1864 following a lawsuit. He had been residing in the house and was probably operating the mill in the interim. The mill was then known as "Briggs and Bros." for 20 years until 1884. Following Brigg's death the property was sold to William T. Nicholls in 1887.

The Nicholls were a prominent family in Brooke County. William Nicholls and neighbor Jim Mathews were related by marriage (Callie, William's wife was half sister to Jim Mathews). Mathews lived in the neighboring house once belonging to Samuel Marshal. Nicholls and Mathews were partners in brick manufacturing and contracting. Nicholls' brother Robert, was a brick layer and likely was part of the firm. Men from the Brooke County area served as an apprentice under Will Nicholls, who was known locally as a pioneer in the brick industry in the late 1800s. Will Nicholls developed an improved brick firing furnace that he had patented. He also used silica in his brick making process. The firm manufactured the bricks used for the Wellsburg - Bethany Turnpike. It is likely that the business utilized the mill, engine house and outbuildings for brick production.

In 1894, the tax records show an improvement from the previous year of \$500 was made on the property. Nicholls granddaughter, Mary Lou Nicholls Chamberlain, reported that Will Nicholls built a glazed brick house around the earlier L-shaped house, creating the present square plan. It seems the family worked on a section at a time living in different parts of the large house. Nicholls completely redid the interior and avoided higher taxes on a new house. What is now the basement door may have been in the original house, with its peg construction. Only half of the basement was excavated with stone walls. While there is a crawl space under the later portion of the house. Each room on the second floor has a different type of wood molding and fireplace mantel - cherry, oak, walnut. The house was piped for gas from a nearby well, and a water reservoir was constructed on the hill behind the brickyard with water running to holding tanks on the third floor of the home. Gas and water were also piped to the Mathews home next door. Nicholls office for the brick business was on the third floor of the house, located in the tower room with a view of the brick yard.

Jim Mathews son is said to have absconded with a large sum of money causing a rift in the partnership. Will Nicholls and his family moved to Oklahoma in 1917 and built several other foundries. He also discovered five fields of silica used in his brick-making process. The Brooke County property passed to the Chew family.

The property has been subsequently divided again so that less than an acre surrounds the house. The mill and outbuildings were razed or left to deteriorate over time. Foundations are still present for the mill, dam and water wheel support along the banks of the creek. The location of the finishing house is visible in the open field next to the house.

The present house is the 1893 Second Empire design completed during the Nicholls ownership of the property. The home is richly decorated on

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the interior with wood moulding and trim details such as dentils and egg and dart designs. The architecture is exceptional and the exterior is symmetrical in design with the brick work demonstrating the extent of the Nicholls family trade. The brick fireplace flues are of note with the three round flues topped by a horizontal cap. While the one side porch still shows details from the Queen Anne period with turned posts and cutwork design. The front porch appears to be more Colonial Revival in design with Doric columns, pediment and bracketed eaves reflecting the eaves of the house. The low hip roof has the central Mansard tower, with pediment window and a slate roof. The house is undergoing restoration of the eaves and boxed gutters at this time.

The Nicholls house is a well designed Second Empire home rich with interior details. While architectural investigation may demonstrate that the house was built over time and on the foundation of an earlier home, it does now date mainly to the 1890s period. Associated with the property is the site of the woolen mill, wheel support and dam on Buffalo Creek dating from 1795 and 1839. The property presents an era of Brooke County history linking the use of the property to the industrial production of wool products and bricks.

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Nicholls Residence & Mill

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Page 2

Boundary Description

The boundary is described as Lots 26 and 27, as noted in the Brooke County Tax Assessor's Office, Wellsburg, WV.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries enclose the property historically associated with the Nicholls residence, and the former mill site.

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Nicholls Residence & Mill

Brooke County, WV

Section number PHOTO

Page 1

Name: Nicholls Residence and Woolen Mill Site
Address: State Route 67 Wellsburg- Bethany Pike
City: Wellsburg
County: Brooke County

Photographer: Katherine Jourdan

Date: May 5, 1997

Negatives: WV SHPO Office, Charleston

Photo 1 of 10: Front Facade, Northwest Elevation
Camera looking Southeast

Photo 2 of 10: Front Facade and Roadway
Camera looking Southeast

Photo 3 of 10: East Facade
Camera looking South

Photo 4 of 10: West Facade
Camera looking East

Photo 5 of 10: South Facade - Rear
Camera looking North

Photo 6 of 10: Well House - West Boundary
Camera looking Northwest

Photo 7 of 10: View of Mill Site
Remains of Mill foundation to right along roadway
Depression for mill wheel and raised support to left
along creek bank
Camera looking Northeast - upstream

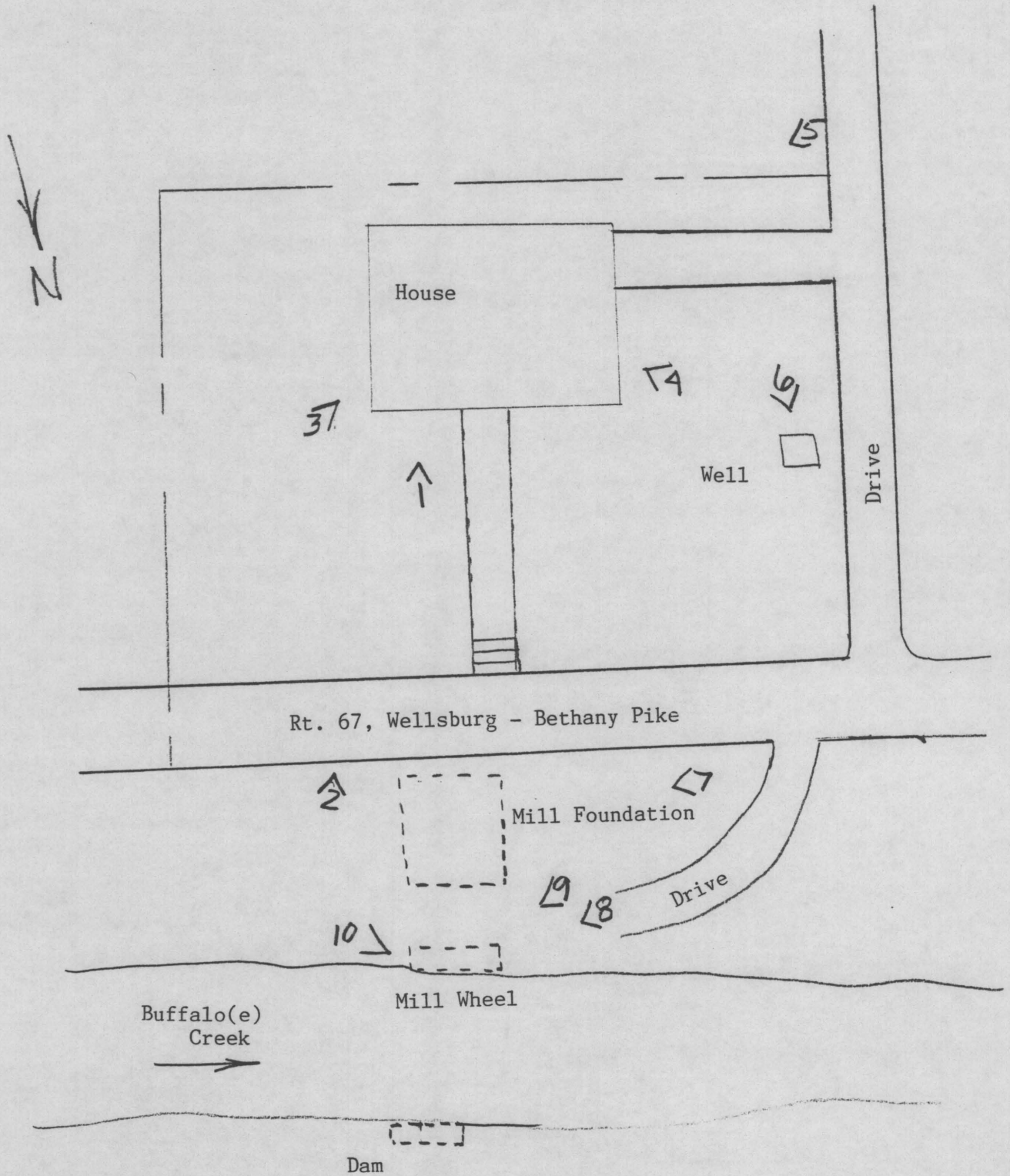
Photo 8 of 10: Buffalo Creek with mill support to right, and on
opposite bank (left) is remains of dam foundation
Camera looking Northeast - upstream

Photo 9 of 10: Raised stone bed for wheel support - West or downstream
side
Camera looking Northeast - upstream

Photo 10 of 10: Raised stone bed for wheel support - East or upstream
side
Camera looking Northwest - downstream

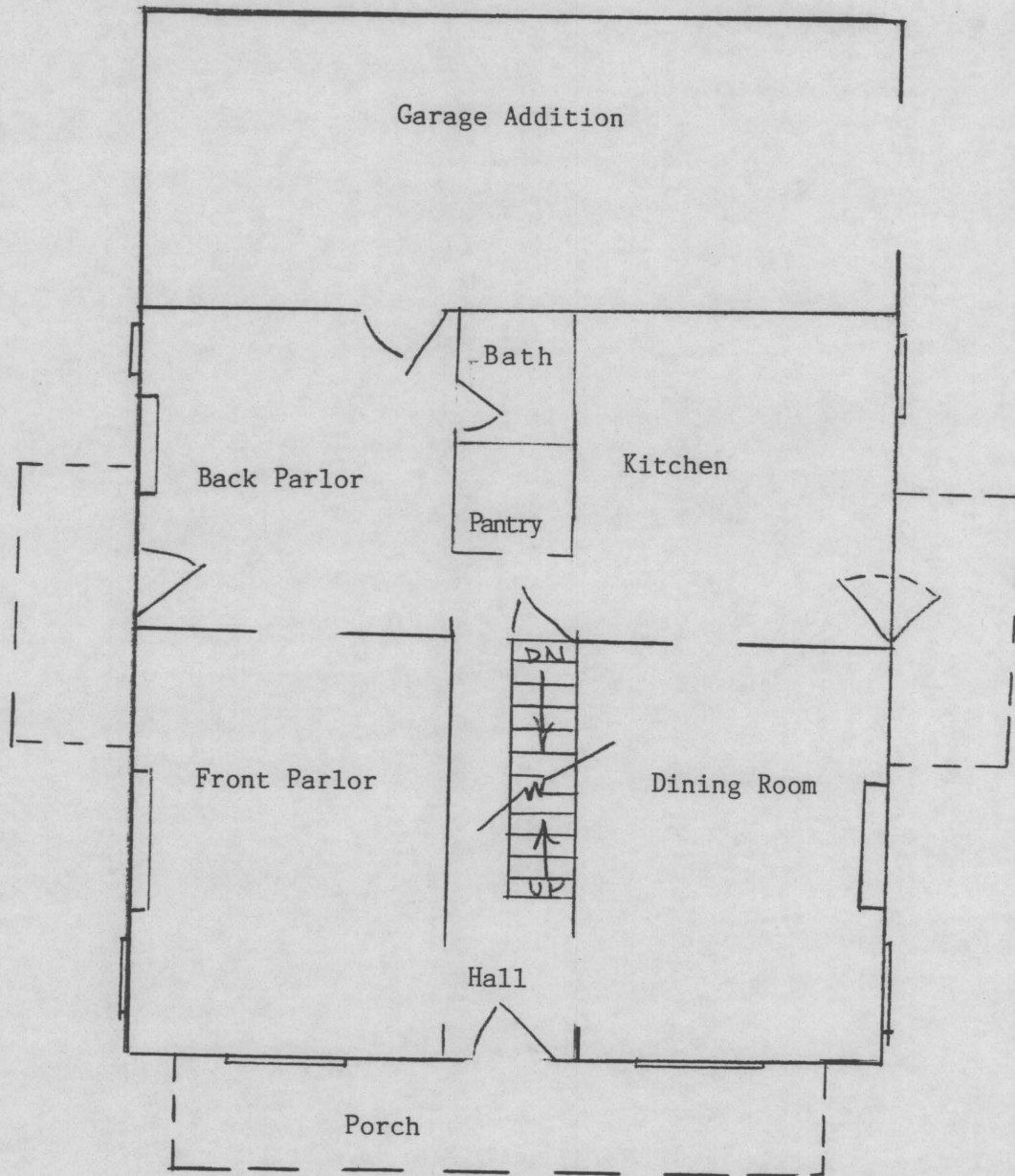
NICHOLLS RESIDENCE &
MILL SITE
Rt. 67, Wellsburg-Bethany
Pike
Wellsburg, WV
Brooke County

Site Plan and Photo Map



NICHOLLS RESIDENCE & MILL SITE
Rt. 67, Wellsburg-Bethany Pike
Wellsburg, WV
Brooke County

First Floor Plan

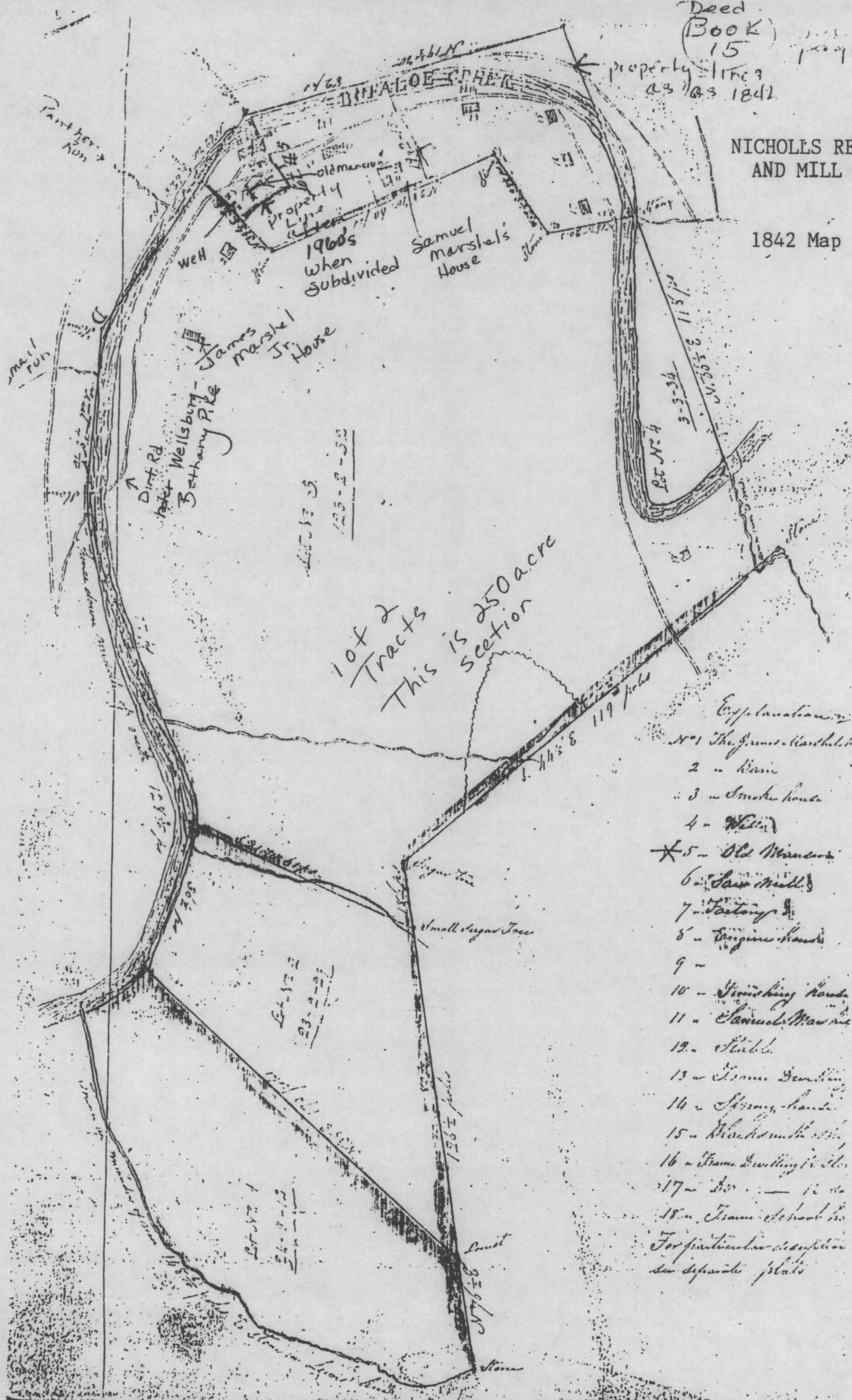


Deed (Book) 15 page

property lines as of 1842

NICHOLLS RESIDENCE AND MILL SITE

1842 Map



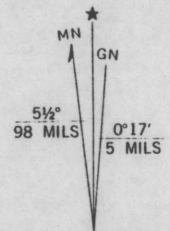
10 x 2 Tracts This is 250 acre section

- Explanation
- 1 - The frame Barn
 - 2 - Barn
 - 3 - Smoke house
 - 4 - Well
 - 5 - Old Warehouse
 - 6 - Saw Mill
 - 7 - Pasture
 - 8 - Virginia house
 - 9 -
 - 10 - Standing house
 - 11 - Samuel's Warehouse
 - 12 - Stable
 - 13 - Frame Building
 - 14 - Spring house
 - 15 - Kitchen with outhouse
 - 16 - Frame Building
 - 17 - Do - - - - -
 - 18 - Frame School
- For particular description see separate plots

NICHOLS RES. +
MILL SITE
17 533940
4456215
STUEBENVILLE
EAST QUAD

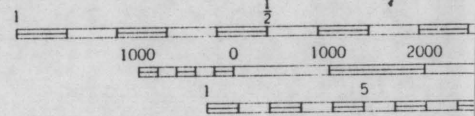
(TILTONSVILLE)
4864 II NW

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Revised in cooperation with State of Ohio agencies
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and USCE
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1954. Field checked 1958. Revised
from aerial photographs taken 1966. Field checked 1968
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grids based on West Virginia coordinate system, north zone,
Pennsylvania coordinate system, south zone and Ohio coordinate system,
north zone. 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 17, shown in blue
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked
The state boundary as shown represents the approximate position of the
low water line as determined from U.S. Corps of Engineers Ohio River
charts, surveyed 1913, and supplementary information
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



UTM GRID AND 1978 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

Areas bounded by dashed purple lines
and printed with disturbed surface pattern
represent reclaimed mining areas



CONTOUR
DOTTED LINES REP
NATIONAL GEODETIC

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH
FOR SALE BY U
DENVER, COLORADO 80
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC

Map photoinspect
No major culture

