

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Rockland
other names/site number Verdier Plantation; Schley Farm; Knode House

2. Location

street & number State Route 480 (Kearneysville Rd.)
city, town Shepherdstown
state West Virginia code WV county Jefferson code 037 zip code 25443

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private/public ownership and building/district/site/structure/object categories.

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: [Signature] Date: 12-15-89

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official: _____ Date: _____
State or Federal agency and bureau: _____

5. 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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic - single dwelling

3 secondary structures

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Other: regional Colonial

vernacular Victorian

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation limestone

walls limestone

brick

roof slate and tin

other log (2 dependencies)

wooden porches

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The older part of Rockland is a typical late 18th century country house of the area. It, with its Victorian addition, sits on a rocky knoll with a view of a nearby pond and meadow which are part of the property. James Verdier built the house sometime between 1771 when he bought the land and 1785 when he died. An angled brick Victorian addition was built in 1897.

The house has had many owners and is evident throughout by alterations of various periods. It was at one time converted into a 2 family house. It could be considered a good property to study for architectural history. The original 18th century stone house is built of local limestone with corner blocks arranged almost like quoins. The stones are not laid in any regular coursing probably because they are small and came from the ground nearby. It is 2 1/2 stories with chimneys at the gable ends. The chimney at the south side has 1812 carved into a stone near the top; probably a date of repair. The front facade is quite formal and regular with its 5 bays carried out down to the openings in the basement. The roof is of slate on the front and tin on the back; it was originally wood shingle. The front entrance is of uncertain age. The front porch replaced a Victorian porch which also replaced an earlier porch. The design seems to be early 19th century. A modern door is surrounded by side-lights above raised panels and a chair rail. On the returns in the masonry are also raised panels. Above the door is a 7-light transom window with raised panels above.

The original windows in the stone part of the house are late 18th century with dressed jack-arches and keystones. They have 9 over 6 panes except the 2 attic windows on the gable ends have 2 vertical rows of 3 panes and open out. All the windows have heavy frames probably to hold up the masonry as no lintels are in evidence. The first floor windows in the front have shutters.

The soffit and fascia in the front are perplexing. There is crown moulding above a bed mould. The fascia does not turn the corner to the side of the house. It meets on the corner at a simple verge board instead.

See continuation sheet

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The porch on the east side is not consistent. The panel effect by adding moulding between the posts appears to be recent but the brackets and other mouldings seem to be much older. The door on to the porch was once a 2-leaf door of full height. There is evidence in the facade that it was originally a 2 story porch with a door over the one on the first floor.

The back of the stone part of the house is very formal facade with jack arches above the windows and cornice work similar to that on the front.

The Victorian painted common-bond brick addition with limestone foundation and a slate roof once had a full length 2-story wood gallery with Victorian trim on the east side. It has a small cupola at the center of the roof ridge. The original windows are 2-over-2 with brick jack arches. There have been some alterations over the years on the galleries; the most recent about 1950.

Some of the original door openings on the galleries have been made into windows or bricked-up. At the same time a side entrance on the west side was added. An enclosure for a laundry room and kitchen was built onto the gallery about 1950.

At the rear of the brick addition, the north side, the posts are chamfered. Windows are centered on the brick wall; 2 on the first and second floors and 2 small attic windows.

On the west side of the addition is a Victorian 2 story porch at the junction of the older stone house and the addition. Each porch has fancy Victorian full-length windows.

The interior has several evidences of alterations; to accommodate one family to 2 families, and the change in styles over the years. The basement of the stone house has several doors of beaded board and batten with strap hinges. The door at the top of the stairs to the basement is a 2-panel door somewhat unexpected but appears to be of age to offer some clues to the original condition of the house.

Each floor of the stone section has the original 2 rooms on each side of the center staircase, also original. The staircase has a walnut handrail and simple square balusters. A newel post is at the first floor and each flight ends in a goose-neck. It has decorative brackets at the outside end of the risers. A circular plaster medallion is on the ceiling of the entrance hall.

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The most original of the rooms in the stone house are in the 2 attic rooms. They have their original random-width pine floors, window trim and some doors. The windows throughout the house have their original panelled window returns, some with raised panels, some not. The doors and mouldings are of mixed styles and periods. The second floor mouldings are probably original to the old part of the house. The splayed returns are similar to what was original. The floors have been replaced on the first and second floors with long-needle yellow pine. Most of the "up-dating" of mouldings, floors and doors probably took place during the building of the addition.

Fireplaces are in each of the 6 rooms and 2 in the basement but the original mantels are not present.

See sketch (a) for work in progress in the Victorian ell. It has its original typical Victorian-style staircase with square walnut newel posts and balusters and pine handrails.

At the rear of the main house are 3 dependencies. Two are of log construction; a spring house and a 2-story slave quarters or kitchen, probably built at the time of the stone house. The third is a brick smoke house of a later period. All have standing seam tin roofs. They need some repair and seem to have been in stable condition over the years.

A stone carriage block is at the junction of the driveway and the walk leading to the front entrance.

A stone wall is included as a contributing element in the nominated area because it possibly dates to the period of the house's construction.

A wooden foot bridge is a later, non-contributing structure.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Exploration/Settlement
Military
Architecture

Period of Significance

1771-1785
1775-1783
1771-1897

Significant Dates

1897

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Verdier, James

Architect/Builder

Verdier, James
(original part only)

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Rockland meets two criteria of significance. Under criterion B: Rockland was built during the last third of the 18th century by James Verdier, an early settler in Shepherdstown. Verdier was of royal Huguenot descent who came to Shepherdstown from Maryland and established a tannery along the town run. He soon owned and operated other tanyards in Martinsburg and Sharpsburg, Maryland while living in his "Plantation near Shepherdstown." (1)

Verdier, son of a wealthy French silk weaver, was a court page and married Lady Susanna Monei. They escaped persecution by fleeing to America with gold coins, shoe buckles and jewelry sewn into their clothing. His son Paul, one of 6 children, was being groomed at the time of Verdier's death to return to France and retrieve the family fortune. The trip was never made and later Paul with some of his brothers and sisters founded Verdiersville in Orange County, Virginia.

James Verdier not only was a leader in the settlement of Shepherdstown but he was a generous supporter of the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. His support was probably most significant to the successful "Bee-Line March" of the Company from Shepherdstown, a 600-mile march to headquarters in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 24 days. Certificates documenting Verdier's support are in the State Archives in Richmond, Virginia. (1)

Under criterion C: The earlier stone section of Rockland compares with the Stone House at Fruit Hill, considered to be one of the oldest in Jefferson County and built by Henry Cooksun; and the original stone part of Belle Vue owned by ancestors of Thomas Shepherd, the founder of Shepherdstown. All three were built during the last half of the 18th century by prominent Shepherdstown citizens with limestone quarried from the ground nearby. "Traveler's Rest," home of General Horatio Gates, and "Frato Rio," home of General Charles Lee, are county landmarks that also share the period and method of construction.

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The 1897 Victorian brick addition is representative of brick buildings in nearby Shepherdstown that were built as the result of the establishment of a brick yard near the turn of the century.

Rockland's architecture tells us about the 200-year development of Shepherdstown. Its early stone house of regional style is typical of those in the area built at the time by early settlers including the log dependencies which are so common in Shepherdstown's early development. The brick addition reflects the large growth in the commercial activity by its sophisticated Victorian style and use of commercial brick. Rockland is a unique property because most parts of the periods in Shepherdstown history are still evident: the early colonial, federal, and the booming Victorian.

The period of significance begins about 1771, the probable date of the stone house's construction, and ends in 1897, the year in which the major, handsome Victorian brick addition was constructed. These years provide reference to the settlement and development of the site as well as important evolutionary changes that occurred there until the last years of the 19th century.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Berkeley County Land Records Office, Martinsburg, W.Va.
Jefferson County Land Records Office, Charles Town, W.Va.
Architectural Inventory, Jefferson County Landmarks Commission, Charles Town, W.Va.
Bushong, Millard K., Historic Jefferson County, Carr Publishing Co., Inc., Boyce, Va. 1972. page 152.
Dandridge, Danske, Historic Shepherdstown, The Michie Co., Printers, Charlottesville, Va., 1910, reprinted: Speciality Binding & Printing Co., Shepherdstown, W.Va., 1985. page 72.
(1) Gardiner, Anna Henshaw, a great, great, great granddaughter of James Verdier, Rockland and James Verdier, Jefferson County Historical Society Magazine, Vol. XI, December 1945.
Maps: Jefferson County, Virginia by S. Howell Brown, 1852. Jefferson County Land Records Office.
Interviews: Capt. John E. Schley, Shepherdstown, W.Va., Heir of four generation family that owned Rockland. June, 1989.

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

Specify repository:

Jefferson County Landmarks Commission

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of property Approximately 2 acres

UTM References

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4	3	6	5	8	0	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property boundary begins along the road running 348' across the front of the property, 590' in a straight line toward the north, 192' in a straight line toward the east, then 369' south to the beginning (see red line on sketch map).

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes a rolling green knoll leading up to the main house, the 3 dependencies and part of the pond which is fed by the spring under the spring house. A stone wall is included within the boundary; a possible site where the limestone for the house was quarried. See Sketch (b)

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

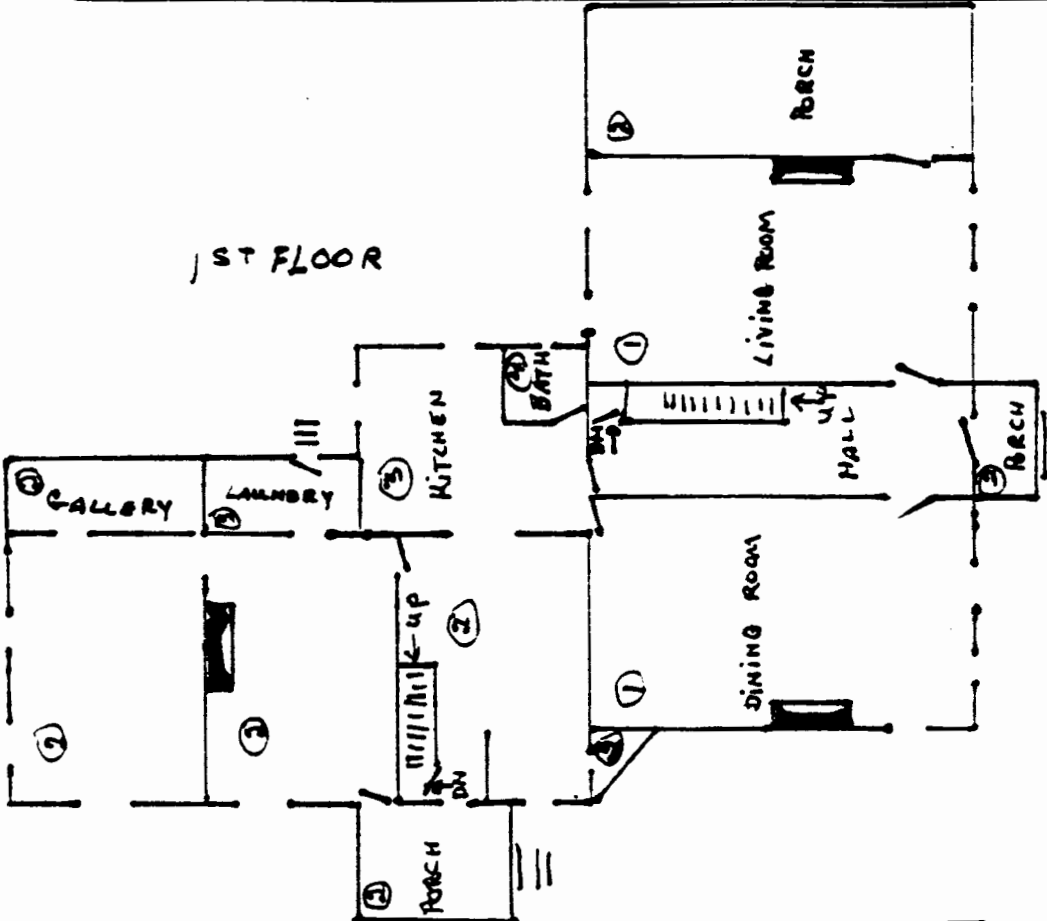
name/title Jean T. Crolius, Preservation Consultant
organization _____ date August 5, 1989
street & number P.O. Box 1644 telephone (304) 876-3614
city or town Shepherdstown state WV zip code 25443

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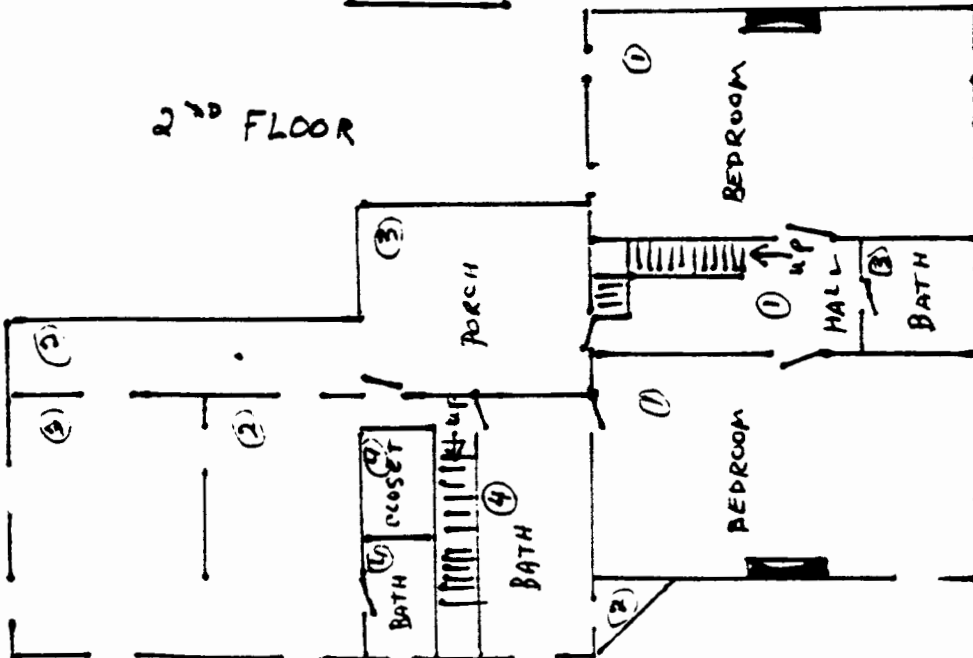
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SKETCH (a) Not to scale

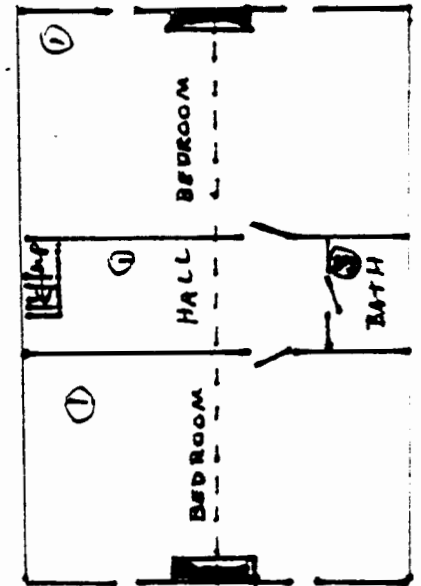
1ST FLOOR



2ND FLOOR



3RD FLOOR
(STONE HOUSE)



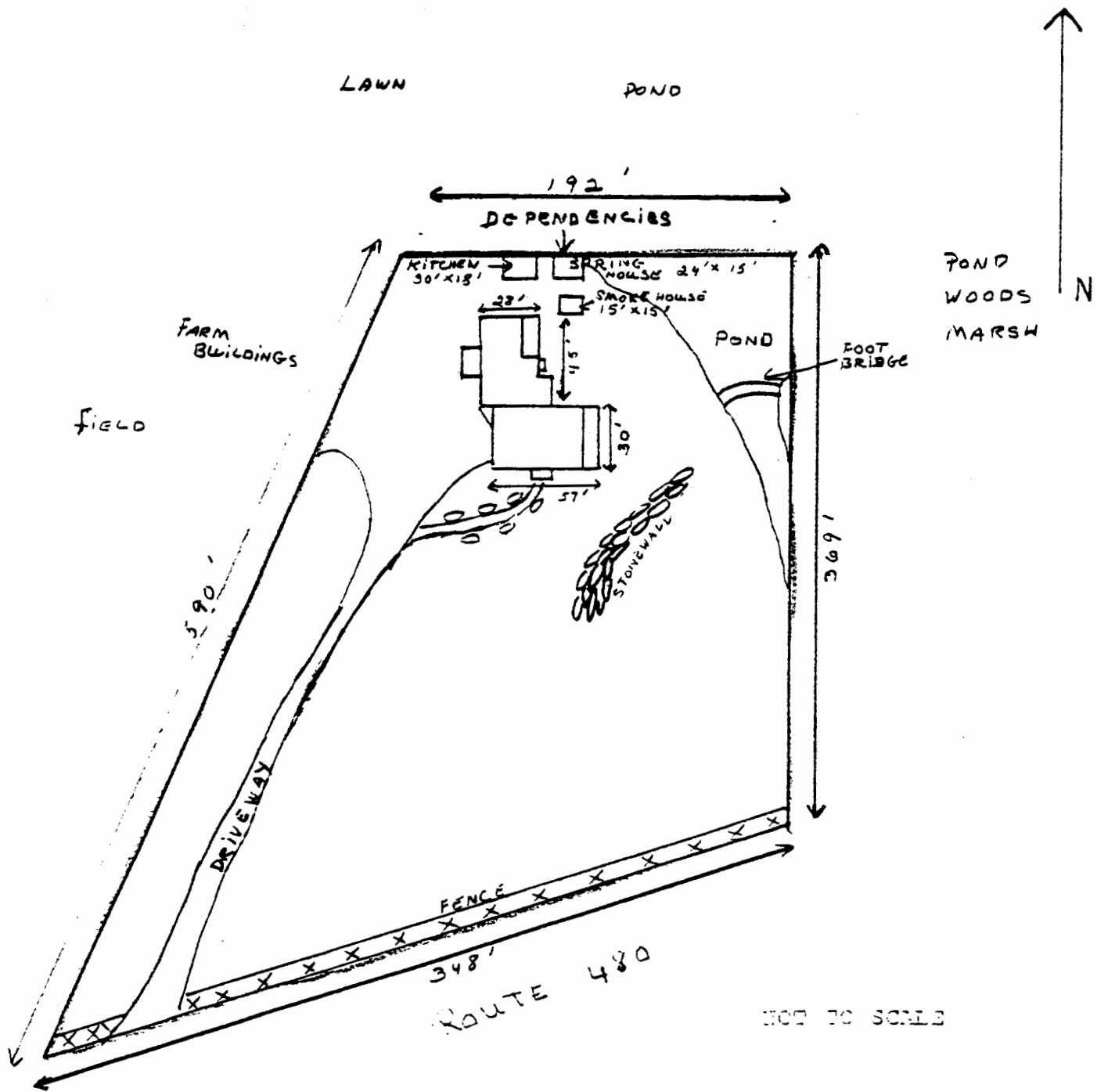
KEY

- 1 Original Stonehouse
- 2 1897 Addition
- 3 1950 ca.
- 4 1989 Alteration

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SKETCH (b)



UTM
ZONE 18
253/910 Easting
4365/800 Northing

UTM
ZONE 18
253/910 Easting
4365/800 Northing

330 000 FEET
(W. VA.)

