

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

"Tuscawilla"

AND/OR COMMON

Knight, Edward Dana, Farm

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

U.S. Route #219 South one-half mile

—NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Lewisburg

VICINITY OF

Second

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

West Virginia

54

Greenbrier

025

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mr. & Mrs. Edward Dana Knight, Jr.

STREET & NUMBER

U.S. Route #219 South

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Lewisburg

VICINITY OF

West Virginia

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Greenbrier County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Court and Randolph Streets

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Lewisburg

West Virginia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

EXCELLENT

_DETERIORATED

_UNALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE

_GOOD

_RUINS

ALTERED

_MOVED

DATE _____

_FAIR

_UNEXPOSED

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Tuscawilla stands on a knoll east of U.S. Route 219, 3/4 of a mile south of Lewisburg. It is an L-shaped house which has a 5-bay front facing west. The house, built in 1844 of hand-made brick laid in a common bond, has a plain but stately facade of both Federal and Neo-Classical design. A one-story portico with modified Doric columns is centered at the front elevation. The roof has a medium pitch and is pierced by two tall, interior chimneys at each of the gable ends. These chimneys have corbeled caps and each chimney serves fireplaces on two floors. The front windows are shuttered (and have been from the date of construction) and are one of only two decorative features the Rev. Robert Preston would allow. Windows on the ground floor are 9/6 double hung sash, and those above are 6/6. The openings at the gable ends are centered in the facade.

At the front and rear eaves of the roof a cornice was formed of heavy, wide moulding. This handsome woodwork is the other decoration that Mr. Preston allowed his contractor-architect to use. All the doors were put together with pegs and have box locks with brass knobs. The entrance door is almost four feet wide. That part of the original house which forms the ell is thought to have been a detached one-and-a-half story kitchen with quarters above and with a porch which joined the house at the hallway. A large fireplace at the rear (east) end of the kitchen has a very wide chimney and a small chimney is in the kitchen's west gable.

The floor plan of the house is simple; it consists of a central hall that divides the four lower and four upper rooms. The front door opens into a broad hall, which contains the stairway. To the left and right of the entrance, doorways open into the front rooms. Original doorways at the rear of the hall have been changed. All the wood trim used in the house is from the trees--walnut, maple, and cherry--on the property, except for the stairway.

The woodwork has always been white. The mantels are all much alike and are wide, thick pegged boards which attractively frame the fireplaces. The open stairway has two flights and one landing. It has strong newels, rails, and balusters of walnut. The stairs are appropriately plain but unpainted. The rooms are almost square, are quite large and feature random-width pine floor boards. Some limited paneling was added when changes were made to the house in 1873-86.

Changes and additions were made while Mrs. Caroline Boomer owned the property from 1873 until her death in 1886. The kitchen was joined to the house by closing in the nine-foot space which separated them. Edward W. Knight bought the farm in 1909 and at once planted gardens and an extensive orchard. The Knights made some changes and built several additions beginning in 1920. The partition between the sitting room and the dining room was removed. Three pairs of French doors, which have panes of frosted glass, were installed in the formal rooms. The old kitchen was renovated into a dining room and a new kitchen was built as an ell extending south from the original kitchen. Screened-in porches were built as wings at each end of the house. This may have occurred when the front veranda was removed to be replaced by the present portico. Also a terrace was built across the full width of the house. Notwithstanding all these changes and additions, only two wings and the present kitchen have made a visible change in this very handsome house. These changes and additions have done but

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TUSCAWILLA, LEWISBURG, GREENBRIER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

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little to damage the integrity of this home of one hundred thirty-four years. And as it is with most of the Greenbrier Valley's historic houses, this home is furnished with resplendent family antiques and collections from many places.

Other nearby items which are important parts of this home are: a cluster of dependencies just to the rear of the house, garages, storage buildings, a large guest house built in 1952, and at the east corner of the lawn a swimming pool with a two-room "retreat". "Tuscawilla" is a "working farm" of 315 acres which specializes in the raising and sale of registered pigs. East and northeast of the house are broad lawns, three farm houses, and clusters of barns and other outbuildings.

The whole countryside is in view from the house's hill-top site; the Muddy Creek Mountain to the west is in front and the historic White Sulphur Gap through the Greenbrier Mountain is only several miles to the east.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> ART | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | | |

SPECIFIC DATES

1844

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

John W. Dunn, Builder

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Tuscawilla is viewed as among the most significant houses of the Greenbrier Valley by local people who see them often. It is one of the houses built by John W. Dunn, a noted contractor-architect of the region. Though it is an unadorned farm house of transitional design, it is so well suited to its environment that it has an impressive beauty. A part of this environment is the outcome of careful planting and cultivation, over many years, by the two families that have lived in the home.

A Seminole Indian name, "Tuscawilla", was given this house by David R. Preston, who commissioned it in 1844. The name means "Two Lakes". Mr. Preston was a Presbyterian Minister who, while laboring in Florida, retired because of ill health. His wife, Jeanette Creigh, was a daughter of Thomas Creigh. Mr. Creigh came to Lewisburg from Ireland in 1796. He married Margaret Williams, a niece of Colonel John Stuart. Thomas Creigh was Lewisburg's first storekeeper and became owner of large tracts of land. When the Rev. David Preston retired he brought his family to Greenbrier County and bought a farm from his father-in-law, Thomas Creigh. It was upon this land in 1844 that this house was built for David and Jeanette and two young sons, Thomas and Walter. A third son, John A., was born in 1847.

Tragedy seemed to hover over this home. Mr. Preston died a few years after its construction. His three sons were caught up in the Civil War. Thomas was killed, Walter lost an arm, and only John came out of the strife unhurt. In 1866, Mrs. Preston was fatally burned while alone in the house. John A. Preston lived out his life in Lewisburg, a very useful and well known man. His home was the Johnson Reynold "Mansion". In 1873 Tuscawilla was sold to Mrs. Caroline Boomer. After her death in 1886 the farm was rented for some years. The property was bought by attorney Edward W. Knight of Charleston who renovated it and occupied the house part-time. Mr. Knight's sister, Miss Elizabeth, lived in the house many years and did much of the landscaping which gives the house its setting. Mr. and Mrs. Edward Dana Knight and their children, (third and fourth generations of the Knights) live there. This family carries on an extensive farm program on the 300 acres. Tamworth hogs and dairy cattle are raised and sold for propagation of the species.

Two outstanding features of this grand house are: the stalwart oaks and maples and graceful hemlocks that dot the lawn on all sides, and, the view of the valley between the Muddy Creek Mountain to the west and the Greenbrier Mountain to the east.

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"Tuscowilla", Lewisburg vicinity, Greenbrier County, West Virginia

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#8 SUMMATION OF SIGNIFICANCE "Tuscowilla" is a significant late Federal style brick farmhouse erected in 1844 by the noted builder and master craftsman, John Dunn, of Lewisburg. Reflecting outstanding symmetry, wall surfaces are smooth and filled with expansive windows. Though commissioned to suggest the simple tastes of its first owner, David R. Preston, the house is a sophisticated composition in which the formal qualities of window size, roof pitch, and chimney height combine to form a dimension of elegance.

Refined detail, in accordance with exterior symmetry and flat surfaces, includes the front elevation wall treatment in a Flemish bonding, louvered shutters, and a wide frieze beneath a plain cornice. White-painted woodwork of superb quality, the art of master builder Dunn, may be seen throughout the interior.

"Tuscowilla" stands on a knoll in the midst of a vast lawn dotted with giant oaks and conifers. Commanding one of the region's most spectacular views of the agriculturally rich Greenbrier Valley, "Tuscowilla" faces Greenbrier Mountain to the east and Muddy Creek Mountain to the west. The verdant landscape of Tuscowilla is credited in part to Edward W. Knight and his sister, Elizabeth, who undertook extensive plantings shortly after Mr. Knight purchased the property in 1909. Flanking the east-facing front elevation is a broad lawn planted with shade trees forming an irregular corridor that allows for an unobstructed view of Tuscowilla from the entrance drive.

"Tuscowilla" has long been the center of farm life. Its adjacent acreage has produced grain crops, fruit, and pasturage for dairy cattle. The old brick house is therefore a farmhouse as much as a rural mansion.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Cole, J. R. History of Greenbrier County, Lewisburg, W. Va. 1916.
- Dayton, Ruth Woods. Greenbrier Pioneers and Their Homes. West Virginia Publishing Co., Charleston, W. Va. 1942.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Seven Acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Lewisburg, W. Va.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 17 548410 4118171010

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated boundaries of "Tuscowilla" consist of tree-shaded lawns immediately surrounding the building, specifically the land fronting upon the building at its

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|------|--------|------|
| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Colonel C. E. Turley, Field Research Assistant

ORGANIZATION

West Virginia Department of Culture & History

DATE

January 10, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

The Cultural Center, Capitol Complex

TELEPHONE

304-348-0240

CITY OR TOWN

Charleston

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Clarence Morse 3/26/79

TITLE

DATE

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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northeast, southeast, southwest, and northwest elevations at a radial distance of approximately 200 feet. In a general context "Tuscawilla" is situated at the southwest end of a driveway, 3/10 of a mile in length, that begins at a point southwest of the intersection of U.S. Route 219 and Route 37/3 (Davis Stuart Road), Lewisburg-Fairlea vicinity, Greenbrier Co., W.Va.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

"Tuscowilla", Lewisburg vicinity, Greenbrier County, West Virginia

037

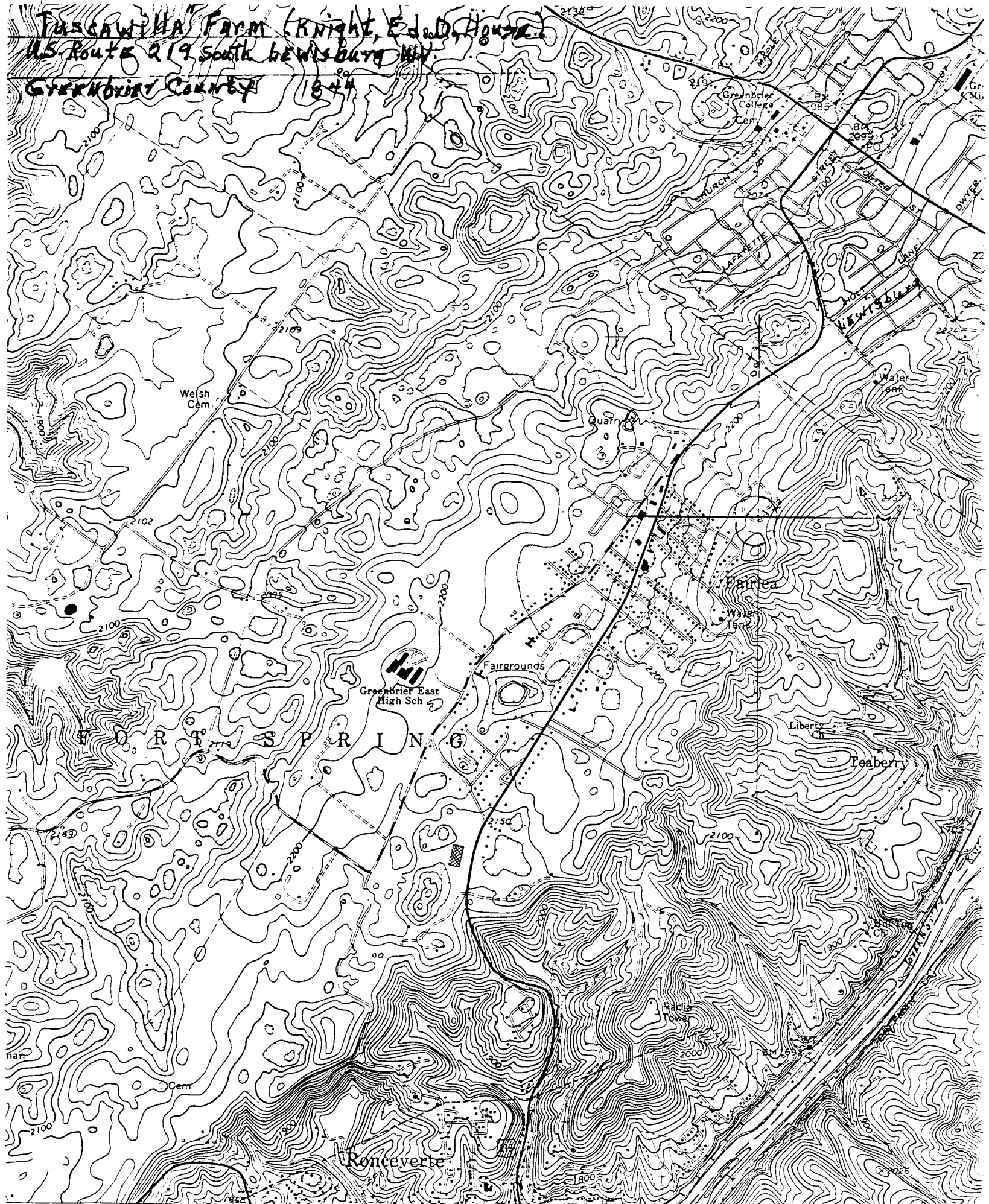
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 1, 7, 10 PAGE

#1 "Tuscowilla" is the historic and preferred name of the nominated property.

#7 & 10 "Tuscowilla" is a name synonymous with the house, grounds, and extended acreage comprising a modest agricultural complex. The description of the nominated property, however, centers upon the brick house and its immediate grounds. The nominated property includes only the house and its 3-acre setting. Outbuildings, dependencies, and related structures of the early farm period do not survive. Late replacement structures and new buildings, outside the nominated 200-foot radius (greenbelt) of the 1844 brick house, are not included in the "Tuscowilla" nomination but reflect upon the long-standing tradition of the residence as a farmhouse and focal point of a long-active agricultural complex.

Tasawilla Farm (Knight, E. D. House)
U.S. Route 219 South Lewisburg, W. Va.
Greenbrier County 1844



1545

1:250,000 FEET

ORGAN CAVE 4 MI.
PRINCETON 56 MI.

27°30'

1548

(RONCEVERTE
4959 11)

and published by the Geological Survey

UTM's = 17 | 548 440 | 4181 700

SCALE 1:250,000

