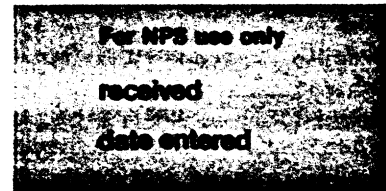


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 "Vancroft"

and/or common Mt. St. George Historic District

2. Location

street & number Brinker Road not for publication

city, town Wellsburg vicinity of ~~Congressional District~~

state West Virginia code 54 county Brooke code 009

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<u>N/A</u> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Home for Aged

4. Owner of Property

name The Knights of Saint George Home Association

street & number 709 Brighton Road

city, town Pittsburgh vicinity of state PA

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Brooke County Courthouse

street & number Main & Seventh Streets

city, town Wellsburg state WV

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Mt. St. George Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date Winter-Spring, 1985 federal state county local

depository for survey records Mt. St. George

city, town Wellsburg state WV

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		_____ N/A

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

Situated in a parklike setting on a high bench overlooking the city of Wellsburg and the Ohio River, Vancroft is almost the perfect picture of the country estate/weekend retreat of the wealthy at the end of the Gilded Age. Placed back from the edge of the bluff and completely surrounded by hills much taller than the bench on which it sits, everthing about this estate, except its gatehouse (now in private hands), is hidden from the eyes of a curious public.

The Vancroft estate was so designed as to create an increasing interest while leaving a sense of disdained mystery in the approaching guest. The visitor drives steadily uphill for almost a mile before rounding a broad curve and emerging suddenly on the park-like Front Farm. Several hundred yard later one first sees the dark mass of the manor house with its contrasting white colonnade. Continuing through well-kept grounds and past structures that are uniquely pleasing to the eye, the visitor sees only the front of the manor house or mansion when they are within the white pergola and confronted by the exquisite, asymmetrical detail of this unique Shingle-style structure. The indirectness of approach, the slow revelation of enticing details, and the preserving of view of the goal of the pilgrimage until the visitors are themselves confronted by it at the very last moment seems almost consciously reminiscent of the plan for the Sacred Way to Phidias' gold and ivory Athena in the Parthenon.

Alden and Harlow of Pittsburgh designed philanthropic institutions and country homes for Andrew Carnegie, the Mellons and other prominent families of Pittsburgh. In 1901 they drew the plans for Joseph B. Vandergrift, the heir of one of Pittsburgh's large steel fortunes. Even at its occupation it was probably unique in West Virginia resembling in style and magnitude the summer places and weekend retreats favored by America's eastern aristocracy, but usually found at Bar Harbor, Maine, or Newport, Rhode Island. Even the barn, hog houses, poultry houses, utility sheds and laborers' residences as well as the support dependencies of the manor house were carefully planned by Alden and Harlow and situated according to the aesthetic tastes of the high style of the late Queen Anne and Shingle Style periods.

The basic appearance of the mansion, the pergola, the structures and plantings are little changed 85 years later; they still testify to the rare aesthetic sensitivity to site and structure which typified this style. Even the untrained eye is aware of the wealth of individual detail and intended asymmetry which greet every movement of the eye while perceiving at the same time the strong cohesion and integration of each structure and all structures into the total setting.

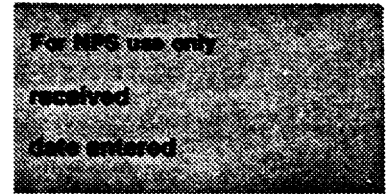
Many of the blueprints of the manor house and other structures still exist and are carefully stored at Vancroft. These include blueprints of all of the elevations of the manor house (but no floor plans), plus floor plans and elevations for many of the other structures. A rough floor plan of the first floor of the manor and a sketch of the entire district is attached to this form.

The present owners of Vancroft also possess an excellent set of early photographs of each of the principal rooms; most of the original furniture has been carefully preserved at the manor house.

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RESOURCES

#1. The beautiful Pergola is the first thing that attracts the visitor's eye and indicates the significance of the mansion. This semi-circular, double colonnade, painted white and in classic Tuscan style, is certainly the largest and most striking pergola in West Virginia. Measuring over 100 feet in diameter and joined to each wing of the mansion by graceful archways, it attracts the visitor's eye to the manor house, while giving the guests for whom the facilities were designed, the sense of a large enclosed forecourt set off from the farm with its industry and labor. The pergola is still intact, although weather and insects have caused considerable deterioration in recent years.

#2. The Manor House is a sprawling mansion in Shingle Style, typical of New England's fashionable "waterin places." The colors are brown and rusty rose -- earth tones. When combined with low roofs, rough-hewn stone turret and stone chimney, gives an effect very much related to the mansion's site. The shingles being flared at the base of the house adds to this effect.

The roofs are shingled with broad gables and flared eaves to incorporate the verandas and porticos. These prominent roof planes have limited ornamentation, but are punctuated by numerous dormers in different shapes, arranged in asymmetrical patterns. Included are several eyebrow dormers. The three-sided veranda is designed to be both an integral part of both the house and the pergola. The flared eaves, with no clear break in the roof, gives the effect of drawing the veranda into the privacy of the mansion, while the Tuscan colonnade binds it clearly to the court of the pergola.

The center front of the manor house is dominated by a broad entry gable with recessed balcony and porch. Only on this gable is there a great variety of shingle shapes. The importance of this entryway is emphasized by the attached octagonal turret dormer with domical roof. Centered in the recessed porch is a wide door.

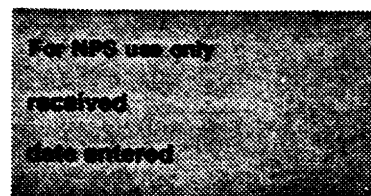
Each of the wings project forward toward the pergola and balance each other in pleasing asymmetrical ways. The banquet hall or West wing provides the only major exterior surface that is not covered by fish-scaled shingles. Here the wall and large exterior, medieval chimney are made of rough-surfaced, native course stone. The long west wall of this wing is accented and decorated by a white framed solarium. The north end of the bedroom or East wing has shingle siding but is dominated by a low circular turret at the northeast corner. This turret is also made of rough-surfaced, native course stone and capped by a candle-snuffer roof. The interior chimneys often have decorated brickwork and caps, while the exterior banquet hall chimney has sloped set-offs for weathering.

On entering the manor house, one comes into a large living hall with a grand fireplace. As was characteristic of Shingle Styled houses, the interiors are open, informal and asymmetrical in pleasing ways. In the Japanese Room and the other public rooms there is some emphasis on beamed ceilings and rich, dark paneling. Both the furnishings, most of which is still intact, and the decorations manifest a studied informality.

The condition of the manor house is very good. The only major changes have been the conversion of the two rear bedrooms to an office and conference room for the

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management of the Knights of St. George Home for the Aged and the conversion of the swimming pool into a beautiful and appropriate chapel. Neither modification has affected the exterior appearance or the internal lines of the manor house.

#3. The Club House or Retreat House is a stucco building and designed as a gaming place for Mr. Vandergrift and his friends. The septagonal portion provided a gallery and fighting pit for cock fights. Attached to that were a small dining room and offices. This facility has been transformed to a retreat house for religious and other groups without changing its essential lines.

The roof is shingled. The domical roof on the septagonal section is dominated by a cupola and is flared at the base. This roof is broken by seven gables having small windows to admit light to the observer's balcony. The roof on the dining room/office wing is hipped, as are each of the gables. Walls are stucco and painted ochre with white trim.

#4. The Spring House is one of the most attractive structures at Vancroft. Nearby is a large circular fountain. The spring house itself is a small square building with adjacent turret built of rough-hewn, native, course stone; the roofs are shingled. The low pyramidal roof of the spring house proper has wide overhangs, supported by a battery of white decorative brackets. The turret on the southeast corner contained a recessed circular stairway and has a candle-snuffer roof. The gradual upward slope of the rough-surfaced, native, stone retaining wall, coupled with the broad pyramidal roof of the spring house, culminating with the candle-snuffer roof of the circular turret, gives this facility the visual effect of rising out of the very slope and bedrock of the hillside on which it is located. This effect is accented by the adjacent circular fountain.

#5. The Race Track provided both oval and figure-eight race courses for Mr. Vandergrift, a well-known horseman, and his guests. The rough-surfaced, native, course stone gates are still in place and the track is still visible. The Knights of St. George Home for the Aged has converted this shaded glen into a tasteful cemetery for their deceased.

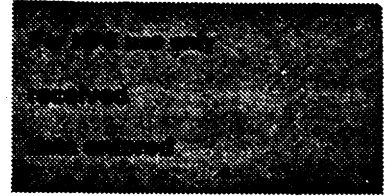
#6. The Grotto was built of fieldstone rubble shortly after the Knights of St. George took ownership of Vancroft in 1926. The slope of the stone walls, its situation within a shady glen and against a natural bank on the rolling hilltop, as well as the materials of which it is made, all demonstrate an unusual awareness of the aesthetic values of Shingle-Style architecture.

#7. The Farm Manager's House is a two-story white residence with clapboard siding. The front is dominated by a high-peaked gable. A large slant bay window dominates the south side and is topped by a five-sided hipped gable. The rear roof is a shed roof with flared eaves like the salt-box houses of New England which so influenced Shingle-Style architecture.

#8. The Farm Engineer's House is a two-story, stucco house painted and earthy burnt orange and trimmed in white. The shingle roofs are flared to integrate the veranda. On the southeast corner is a large circular turret with a candle-snuffer roof.

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#9. The Farm Laborers' Residence¹ is a simple square house with a pyramidal roof. The fishtail shingle siding is a dark green, going almost to the ground.

#10. The Farm Laborers' Residence² is a simple square house with a pyramidal roof. The fishtail, dark green shingle siding covers all sides to the ground.

#11. The Mill is now used as an implement storage shed and workshop. Its foundation is rough-surfaced, course stone. The singled, Jerkin-head roof with clipped gable repeats the lines of the roof and gables in the dining section of the Club House. The siding is dark green fishtail shingles, accented by banks of white trimmed double-hung windows.

#12. The Barn is a 2½-story structure over a high basement. The foundation walls are rough-surfaced, course stone and the siding is white board and batten. The silo, with candle-snuffer roof, gives this structure an appearance sympathetic to the architectural style of this country estate.

#13. The Apple House is a simple dark brick building with a hipped shingled roof. It conforms to the style of other buildings at Vancroft (cf., e.g., the roof of the dining room wing of the Club House).

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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 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 1901 **Builder/Architect**

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Designed in 1901 as the country estate and working farm of one of Pittsburgh's leading entrepreneurial heirs, the significance of Vancroft today is primarily architectural. Among the residential structures of West Virginia, it is the best preserved and most extensive statement of Shingle-Style architecture.

In many ways it may be considered the apex of the evolution to Shingle-Style architecture from the studied ornateness of the Queen Anne style. Although it would be typical of the fashionable "watering places" of New England, Vancroft is no mere copy. The arrangement of the manor house, the choice of the site, the pleasing arrangement of the plantings and roadways in a park-like setting, and the way each structure seems to fit or rise out of its particular terrain reflects aesthetic values which Frank Lloyd Wright would soon make conscious. The effect of both architecture and landscape at Vancroft is quiet and rational, integrated throughout and with the site. Thus in both its level of integration, the number of integrated structures and sites, the size of the district, and the architectural details (e.g., the pergola, the spring house) are unique to West Virginia.

The unusual publication of the architect's preliminary sketch of the manor house as the cover photo for the Pittsburgh Bulletin on 1 June 1901 is an indication that the architects, the owner and the discerning public recognized the architectural and aesthetic significance of the proposed estate. Located on the bluff above the Pleasant Avenue mansions, the country homes of commercial and industrial entrepreneurs of an earlier generation, Vancroft culminated effectively that local development. Each generation before had made their wealth from the commerce and industry of the Ohio Valley and had then built a country or suburban mansion on the bluff utilizing the aesthetic values of architectural styles of the period to affirm their own stations and utopias. The artistic country estate of Vancroft brought together the best of the Queen Anne and Classical revivals in a truly American creation fitted to its setting for telling the development of the Prairie style of American architecture. Vancroft, in its context, is simply higher on the bluff and more Elysian.

Vancroft was designed as a working farm with architecturally planned dairy barns, horse stalls, swine and poultry houses, shop and utility sheds. It is still farmed under the supervision of the Knights of St. George, a division of the William Penn Association, both of which are religious fraternal orders. Today the Knights of St. George operate a non-sectarian and non-profit home for the aged on the grounds. They have redeveloped the club house as a retreat house for overnight facilities for small groups to use in training sessions, conferences and spiritual live retreats. They also make bedrooms and dining services available to individuals who are on personal retreats.

The unique significance of Vancroft, which arises from its architectural style, aesthetic integrity, striking detail and good state of preservation is now being recognized as bus touring companies and others have contracted the rights to include Vancroft on regular tours of the tri-state area.

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 59 acres

Quadrangle name *Steubenville, Ohio East

Quadrangle scale 124,000

UMT References

A

Zone	Easting			Northing					

B

Zone	Easting			Northing					

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

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E

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F

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G

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H

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification

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 Dr. Hiram J. Lester, Consultant and Project Director

organization The Knights of St. George Home Assodate 25 September 1985

street & number The Hibernia telephone 304-829-7941

city or town Bethany state West Virginia 26032

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

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date March 7, 1986

For NPS use only

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

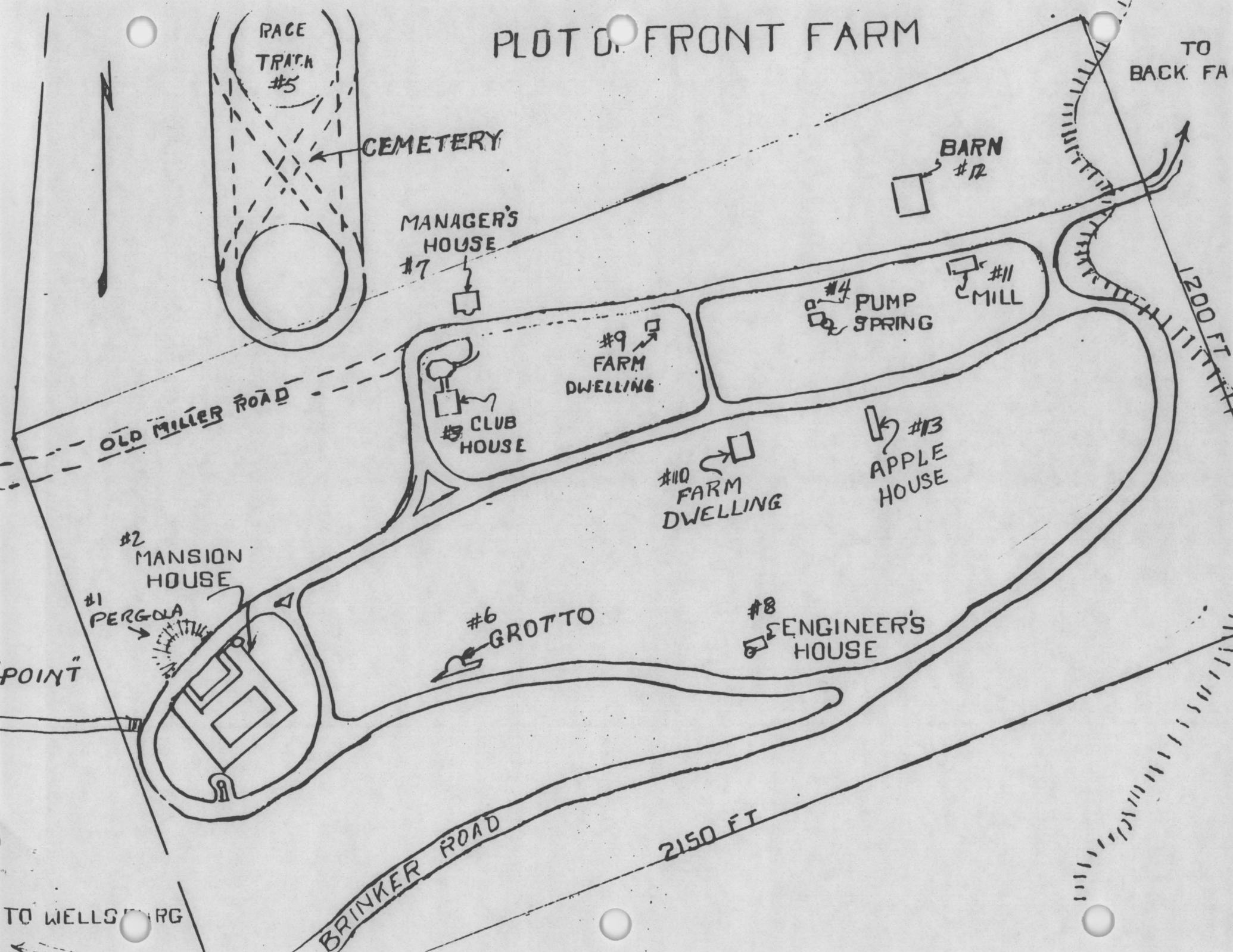
Keeper of the National Register

Affected

Chief of Registration

date

PLOT OF FRONT FARM



RACE TRACK #5

CEMETERY

MANAGER'S HOUSE #7

BARN #12

#4 PUMP SPRING
#11 MILL

#9 FARM DWELLING

#3 CLUB HOUSE

#10 FARM DWELLING

#13 APPLE HOUSE

#2 MANSION HOUSE

#1 PERGOLA

#6 GROTTO

#8 ENGINEER'S HOUSE

OLD MILLER ROAD

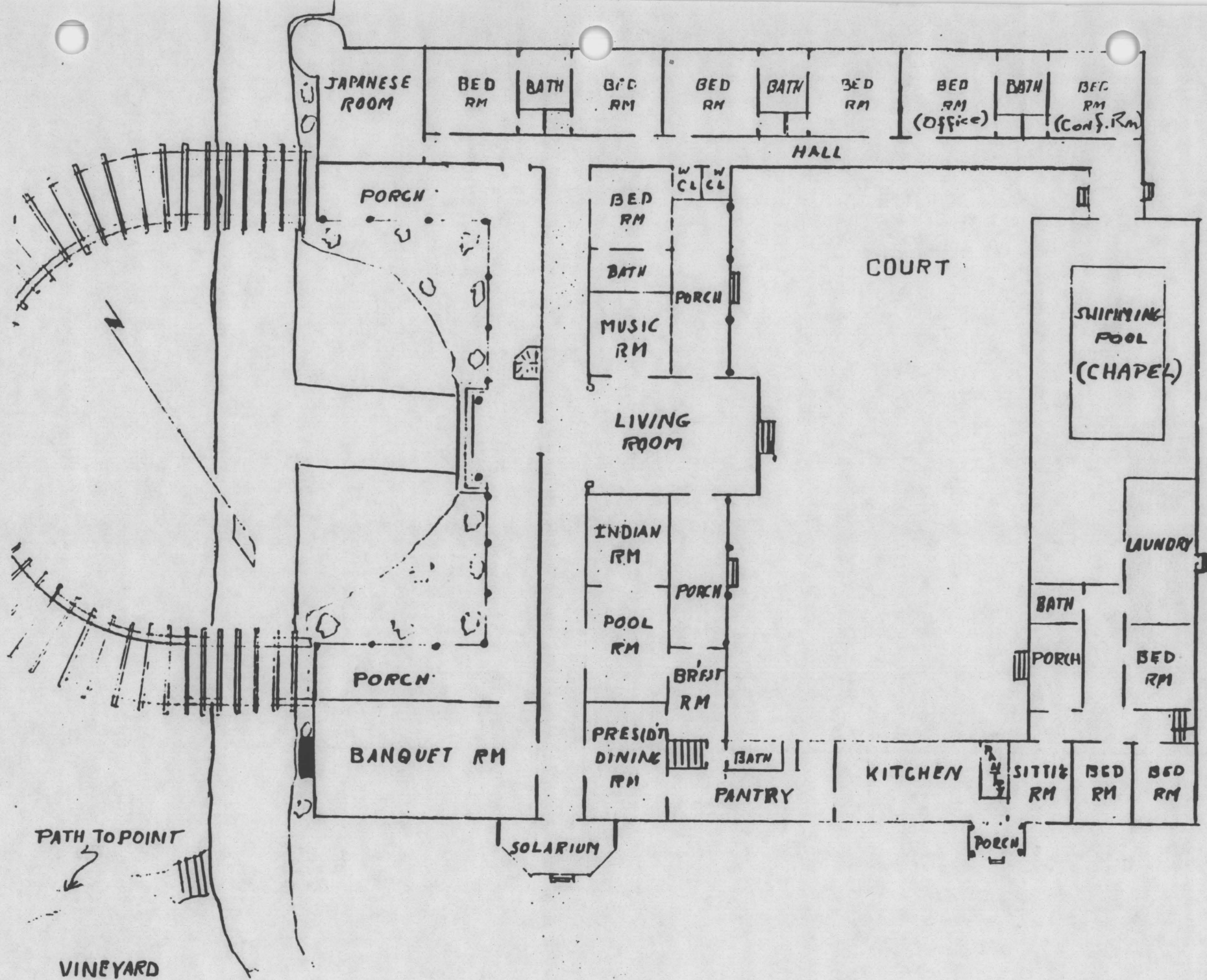
BRINKER ROAD

2150 FT

TO BACK FARM

1200 FT

TO WELLSBURG

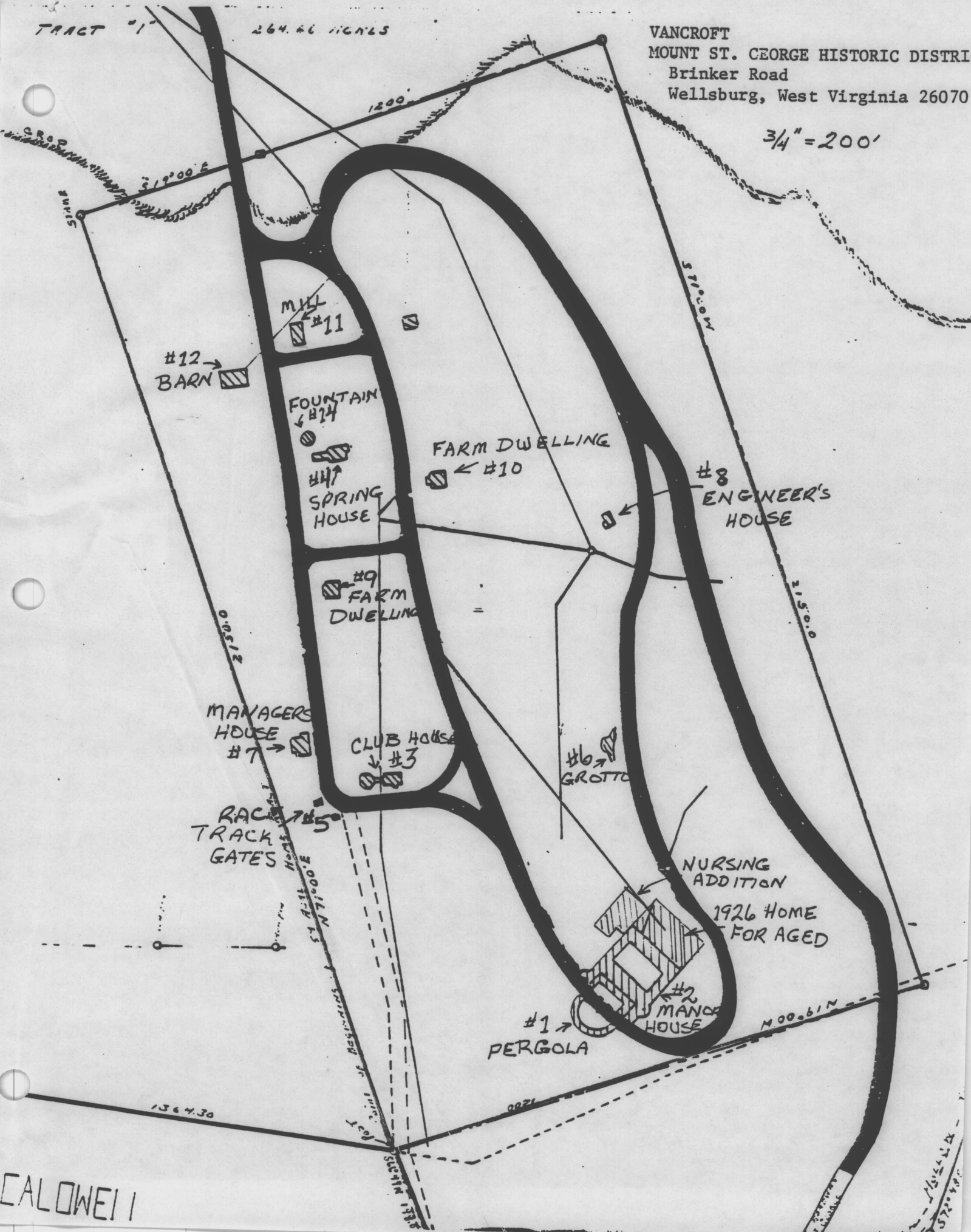


TRACT #1

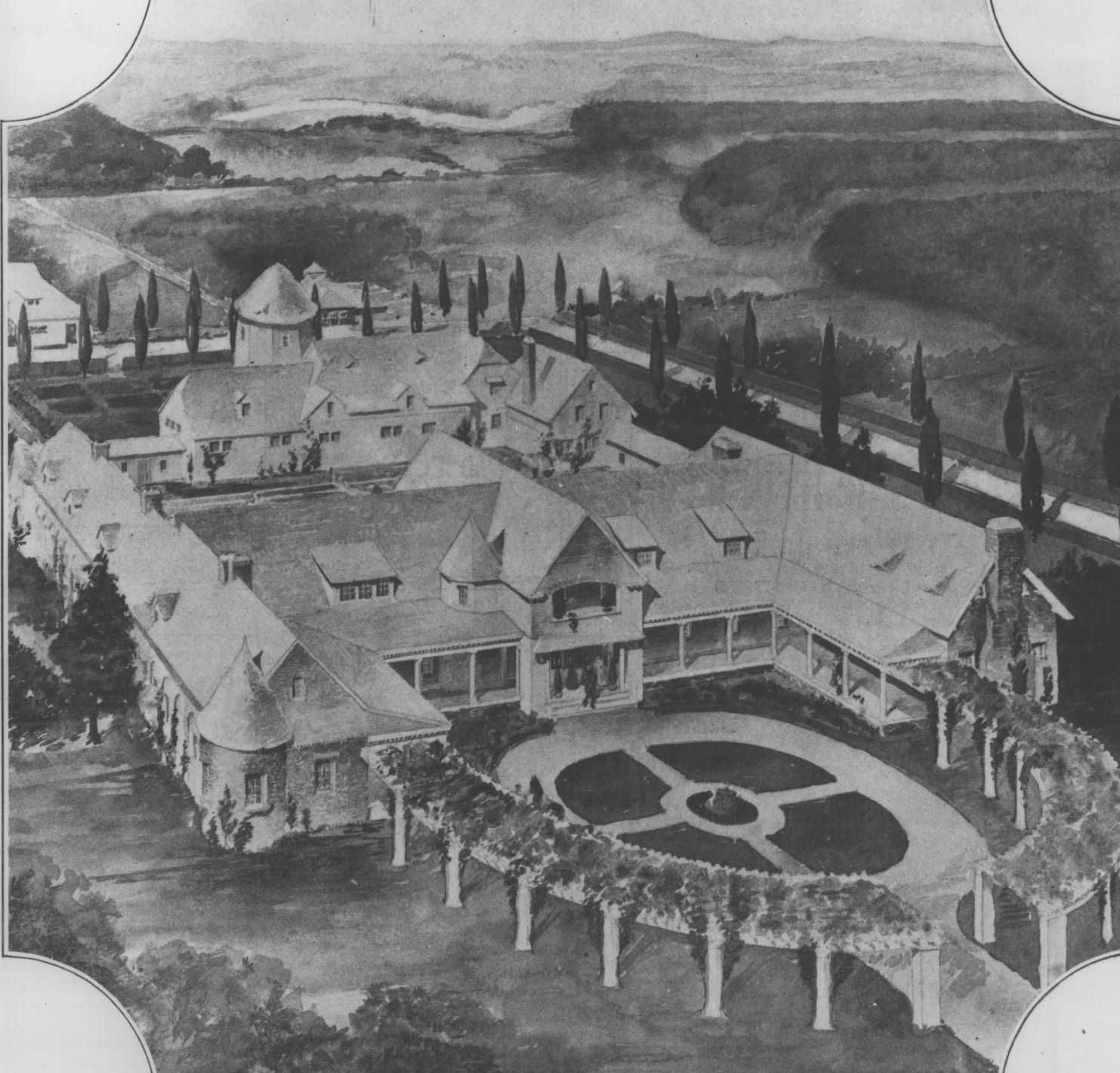
264.46 ACRES

VANCROFT
MOUNT ST. GEORGE HISTORIC DISTRICT
Brinker Road
Wellsburg, West Virginia 26070

3/4" = 200'



CALOWE I



MOUNT ST. GEORGE
 HISTORIC DISTRICT
 BRINKER ROAD
 WELLSBURG, BROOKE
 CO.,
 WEST VIRGINIA

UTM:

A. 17/533940/4459040

B. 17/534600/4459230

C. 17/534500/4459550

D. 17/533880/4459380

QUAD.

STUBENVILLE EAST
 W.VA. - PA. - OH.

7.5

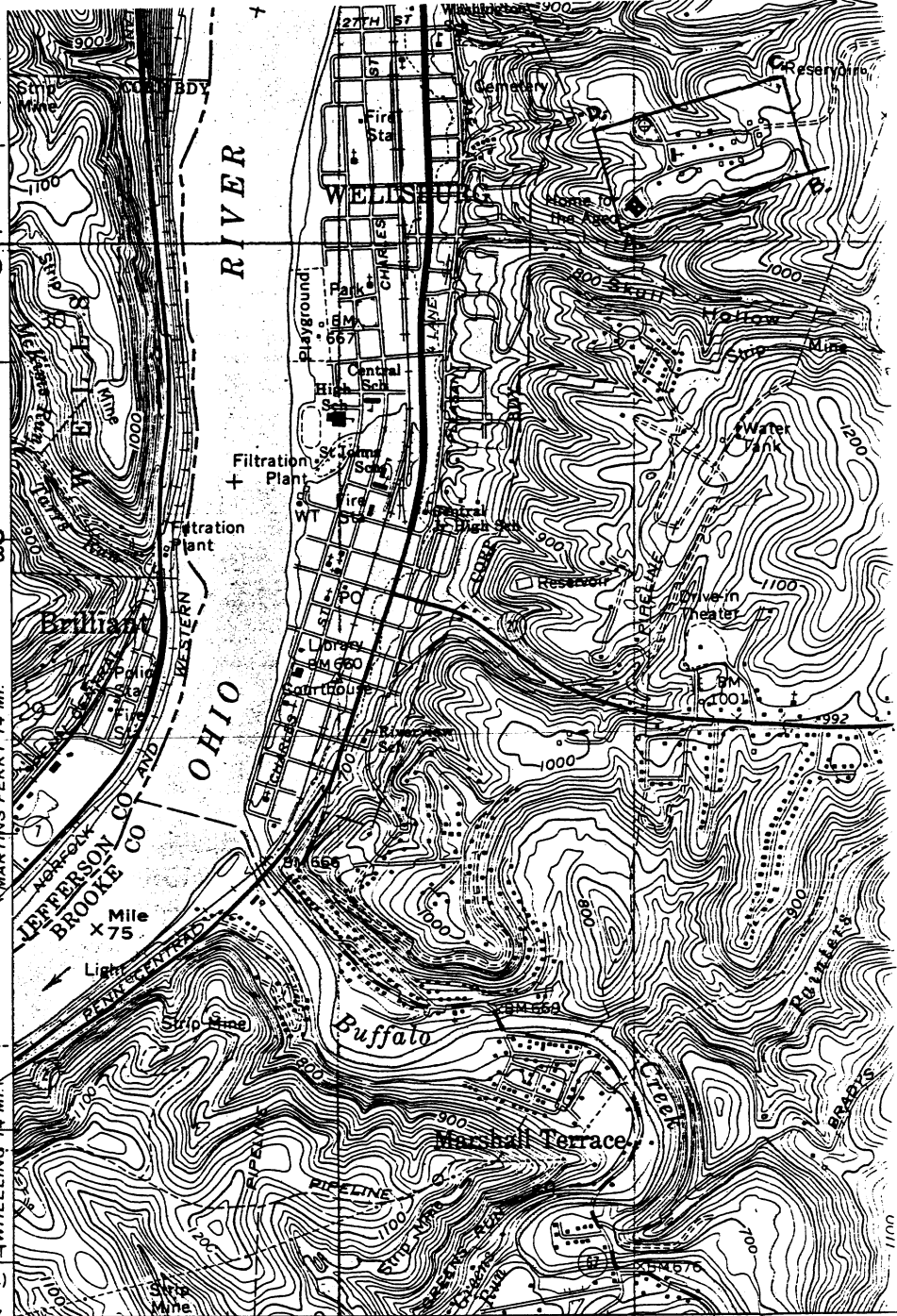
T. 2 N.
 T. 1 N.

640 000 FEET
 (W. VA.)

40° 15'

80° 37' 30"

(TILTONSVILLE)
 4864 11 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
 Ohio area lies within the Old Seven Ranges.

Land lines based on the Ohio River Base

MN
 4 1/2°
 80 MILLS

UTM GRID AND 1968
 DECLINATION AT CE