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Gettysburg

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FILE CODE:

HISTORICAL STATEMENT

HENRY SPANGLER FARM BUILDINGS

By

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August 31, 1956

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FROM:

TO:

Gettysburg National Military Park

Historical Statement Henry Spangler Farm Buildings

The Henry Spangler farm lies between the Emmitsburg Road (on the east) and Seminary Ridge on the west. It is bounded on the north mainly by the Codori farm, owned by the United States Government, and on the south by the Sherfy farm, owned by the Smyser Polkenroth estate. The farm, consisting of 130.84 acres, was purchased by the United States Government March 28, 1955. Spangler's Woods on Seminary Ridge, a 25-acre parcel which was part of the original Spangler farm, was purchased by the Government in 1899. The entire farm is closely associated with Pickett's Charge, as a continuous line of artillery extended from south to north over this land and Pickett's entire division of 4,800 men formed battle lines and awaited orders to attack in the low ground in the vicinity of the Spangler buildings.

General R. E. Lee had tried to turn on the afternoon of July 2 the left flank of the Union line in the Little Round Top - Peach Orchard area, over this land, and the right flank at Spangler's Spring. In the charge against the Union positions north of the Peach Orchard, the Confederate brigades commanded by Col. David Lang, and Brig. Gen. Cadmus Wilcox, (R. H. Anderson's division, A. P. Hill's Corps) charged from Seminary Ridge across the Spangler farm against the Union lines in the vicinity of the D. T. Klingel farm. (O.R. Vol. 27, Part I, 616-20) Failing to

make significant gains at either flank. Lee began to plan in midforenoon July 3 a final thrust against the Union center on Cemetery Ridge. Several batteries of Col. E. P. Alexander's battalion, notably the units commanded by Capt. T. C. Jordan, Capt. G. V. Boddy, Capt. L. M. Parker, Capt. T. S. Rhett, Capt. P. Woolfolk, Capt. O. H. Taylor; and the Washington (Louisiana) Battalion commanded by Major B. F. Eshelman consisting of the batteries of Capt. M. B. Miller, Capt. Joe Worcum, Capt. J. B. Richardson, Capt. C. W. Squires, were moved forward during the night of July 2 from Warfield Ridge (from which position they had shelled Union artillery at the Peach Orchard area during the afternoon of July 2), to an advance line extending northward from the Peach Orchard over the Sherfy and Spangler farms. (Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Vol. 27, Part I, 429-433, 433-39; J. B. Bachelder, Troop Position Map, 1876, July 2. GPO Library.) The four batteries of Major James Dearing's battalion (which reached the field on the morning of July 3), consisting of the batteries commanded by Capt. R. T. Stribling, Capt. E. C. Macon, Capt. W. H. Casle, and Capt. J. C. Blount, took position north, or to the left, of Eshelman's battalion, extending the artillery line over the Spangler and Godori farms. (O.R. Vol. 27, Part I, 387-91). The entire Confederate artillery line extended a mile further northward to the Seminary buildings.

As the Confederate army converged upon Gettysburg on July 1, Maj. Gen. George E. Pickett's division of Longstreet Corps, had remained at

Chambersburg to protect the Confederate trains and had been ordered to
Gottysburg on July 2. Arriving late in the day at Spangler's Woods,
the division moved forward near midday July 3 to the low ground at the
Spangler farm buildings where their position was screened from the view
of Union positions on Cemetery Ridge by the Brutsburg Road ridge.
Following the artillery duel between the Confederate and Union guns
lasting from one to three o'clock; Pickett's division, which was to form
the spearhead of Lee's attack with 15,000 men, first moved northeastward
into the open and then charged eastward toward the Union center on
Cemetery Ridge. Fifty minute later, after the failure at Bloody Angle,
the remnants of the Confederate charge drifted back to this same ground and
to the cover of Spangler's Woods beyond. The Confederates held their
line on Seminary Ridge until the evening of July 4 when Lee began a
withdrawal to the Fairfield Road which within a few days brought the
army to the Potomac River at Williamsport, Maryland, where it crossed
into Virginia on July 13.

The Spangler Buildings

The Spangler house is a frame brick and stone structure built about
1820, according to Miss Ella M. Spangler, 88 years old, who lived in the
house the greater part of her life and until it was sold to the U. S.
Government last year. The main part of the house is two stories in height

and an extension on the west side, tapered from the eaves of the main house to one-story in height. About 1880 this lean-to was raised to a two-story height, the comb of the roof now being on a level with that of the original house. We believe that the porch on the east side of the old house is not a part of the original house but was added sometime after the battle of Gettysburg.

It is reasonably certain that one outbuilding, the blacksmith shop located 20 yards west of the house, is of pre-war construction. A large frame summer kitchen adjoining the house and a small brick smoke-house 30 yards to the northwest were built about 1890. A long structure, used partly as a tool shed and garage, and partly as a chicken house, was also built at about the same date. The original barn was burned during the second day's battle. A barn built soon thereafter on the same foundations, according to Miss Spangler, was destroyed in 1932, when the present barn was likewise built upon the original foundations.

In the present plan of renovation and repair of the house, it is not intended to alter the exterior appearance. It is planned to rake and repoint the foundation, repair the front porch, replace water piping and electric wiring, install oil fired boiler, relocate partitions in second floor addition, clean and repaint interior and exterior of the house and summer kitchen, and install kitchen cabinet and sink.

The tenant of the Spangler farm land operates under a special use permit which requires him to maintain farm conditions as nearly as possible to the condition at the time of the battle.

Frederick Tilberg
August 31, 1956

The Henry Spangler house and summer kitchen as they appear from the east. The original part of the Spangler house is in the foreground; the raised two-story wing is at the rear.

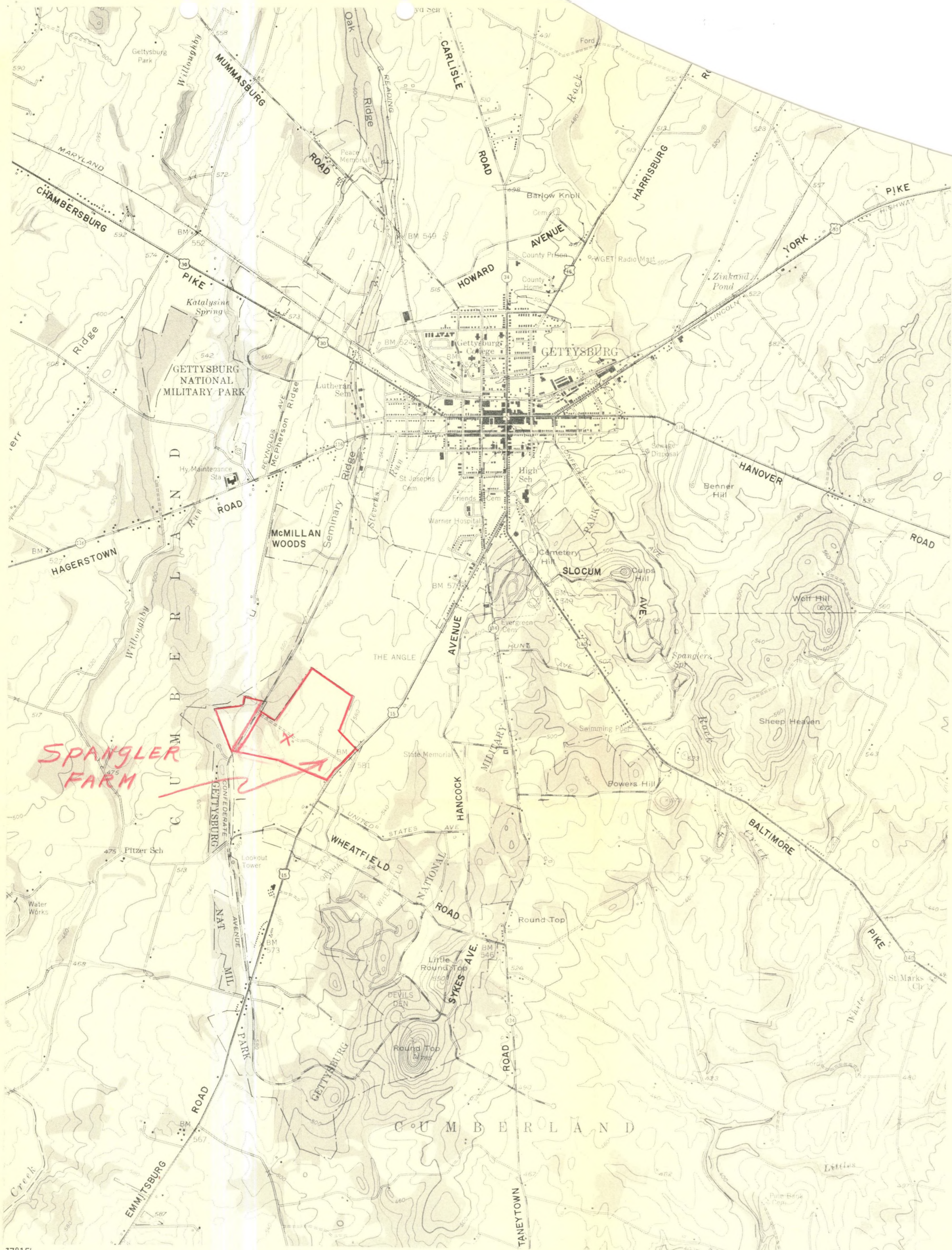
The Spangler house viewed from the northwest. The north end of the original two-story frame house appears at the left, and the lean-to (mainly of stone construction and later raised to two stories, the second story of brick), appears at the right. The shed at the extreme right is a post-war construction.



The Spangler blacksmith shop, with a lean-to, possibly the forge housing, at the rear end of the shop. A small, square brick smokehouse, probably of early post-war construction, is located 30 feet beyond the shop.

The Spangler farm building group, showing the house at the right, the barn at the left, and smaller outbuildings between the house and barn. The view is from the east.





77°15'

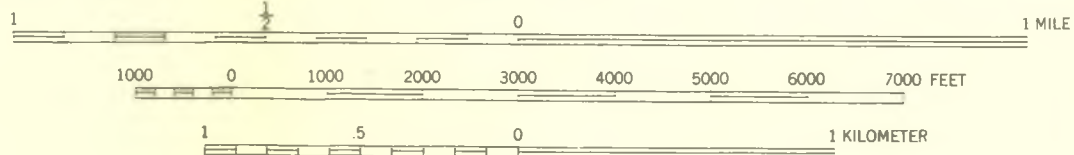
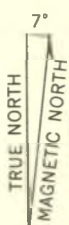
Mapped by the Army Map Service
Published for civil use by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography revised by plane-table surveys by the Geological Survey
Field check 1951

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Pennsylvania coordinate system,
south zone

GETTYSBURG NATIONAL MILITARY PARK PENNSYLVANIA

SCALE 1:24000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL