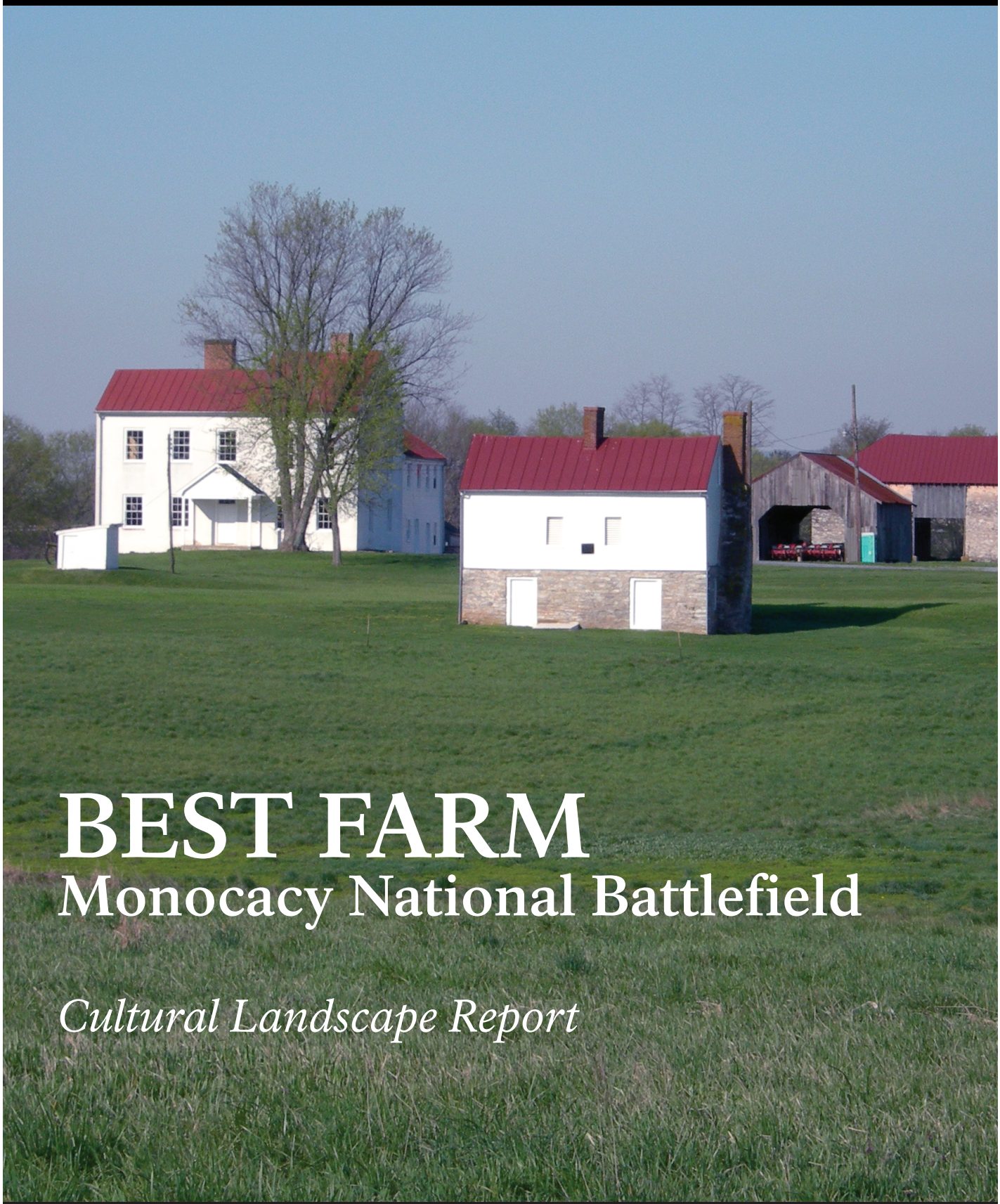
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Monocacy National Battlefield



BEST FARM
Monocacy National Battlefield

Cultural Landscape Report

Cultural Landscapes Program – National Capital Region

September 2005

BEST FARM
Monocacy National Battlefield

Cultural Landscape Report

Part 1: Site History and Exhisting Conditions

Part 2: Analysis and Treatment Recommendations

Part 3: Ethnographic Analysis of Main House and Stone Barn



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U.S. Department of the Interior
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Cultural Landscapes Program
Washington, D.C.



Cover Illustration: The main house, secondary house and corn crib, with part of stone barn on Best Farm. (Monocacy NB digital photo).

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INTRODUCTION



Management Summary

This cultural landscape report provides treatment recommendations for Best Farm, one of the properties of the Monocacy National Battlefield. The 273.69-acre Best Farm was acquired by the National Park Service in 1993 primarily from the Mathias family and other Trail descendants, whose ownership of the property began in 1835.

The Monocacy National Battlefield is located south of Frederick, Maryland. It is comprised of Best Farm and five other park properties, totaling 1,647 acres. The primary goal for the entire park is to interpret several events of the Civil War that took place on this landscape, particularly the July 9, 1864 Battle of Monocacy—the battle that saved Washington. The story of Maryland as a border state between the Union and the Confederacy during the Civil War is also part of the interpretive focus.

The battlefield properties form an essentially unchanged agricultural landscape of nearly three centuries duration. Transportation corridors that are still in existence developed with the early agriculture and industry of the area and lent it strategic importance during the Civil War. The Monocacy River, a state-designated scenic river, wends through the battlefield.

Five Civil War monuments are located on the battlefield. The three that are on Best Farm include the 14th New Jersey Monument, the monument placed by the United Daughters of the Confederacy, and the monument erected by the Maryland Civil War Centennial Commission.

Historical Summary

Amid the rolling topography of the eastern Piedmont, along the drainage basin of the Monocacy River in Frederick County, Maryland, a landscape of prosperous farms had become established by the late 18th century. This region became the center of Maryland's agriculture, part of the nation's first bread basket, and a hub of early transportation routes, crossed by major north-south and east-west roads and the first passenger railroad built in the United States. These qualities led to its becoming a center of activity during the Confederacy's three invasions of the north, in 1862, 1863, and 1864.

Best Farm is a remnant of an approximate 750-acre property purchased in the 1790s and named *L'Hermitage* by a family of French refugees from Saint-Domingue (Haiti). In 1847 it was divided into north and south portions. What became Best Farm is the south portion, less a hundred acres. The name of the farm comes from the family that farmed it as tenants for over five decades, beginning in the 1850s.

The Monocacy National Battlefield was established in 1934 as Monocacy National Military Park, a unit of the National Park Service, but no properties were acquired at that time. In 1973, the battlefield was designated a National Historic Landmark, and it was listed on the National

Register of Historic Places in 1975. It was not until 1976 that Congress authorized funds for the acquisition of land for the park. Farms began to be purchased in 1980 and the battlefield was officially dedicated in 1991, opening it to the public for the first time in the park's administrative history. As well as preserving the battlefield, the park protects an agrarian landscape little changed since the 1860s.

Scope of Work and Methodology

The park seeks guidance on how to preserve and interpret the historic landscape of Best Farm. Although purchased in 1993, it was not until 1999 that the farm's long-time tenants moved from the property. Since then, the park has repaired buildings, cleared debris and conducted an archeological identification and evaluation study of the farm.

It has been decided to relocate the park's primary visitor facilities from their present location at Gambrill Mill, which is prone to flooding, to an undisturbed area of the battlefield on Best Farm. Originally, the Best Farm dairy barn was to be adapted for the new visitor center, but further consideration led to the selection of another site at the northeast corner of the farm, where there are now no buildings. The new visitor center will allow for an expansion of exhibit space and a broadening of the interpretive program, and will impose fewer intrusions on the historic landscape of the Best farmstead.

Several studies of the park properties have been undertaken since 1999. These include a comprehensive cultural resources study of the park's properties, which is in the process of being completed; the archeological identification and evaluation study for Best Farm already mentioned; two historic structures reports; and a cultural landscape inventory of the entire park. The park is also in the process of completing a general management plan, which, among other things, clarifies the interpretive themes for the park properties.[1]

These sources and park document files have been used to assemble a description of the historical character of Best Farm.[2] The research process for this treatment document also included site visits and discussions with park staff. Sources pertaining to vernacular architecture, cultural geography, and agricultural history were consulted in preparation of the chapter on ethnographic traditions.



Fig. 1. Introduction: *Boundary and primary features of Best Farm. (Aerial photograph, c. 2001)*

Study Boundaries

Best Farm is the northernmost of the battlefield properties — the only one located north and west of the Monocacy River, which flanks it on two sides. (Other land at the north end of the park is protected under scenic easements.) The rest of the park lies south of the river. Route 355, the old Georgetown Pike, passes through the east side of Best Farm, and the entrance drive to the farm is from that road. Interstate 270 bounds the farm on the west side, forming a visual and physical barrier. (Fig. 1. Introduction) The farms of the battlefield are today closely hemmed in by expanding suburban housing and commercial development.

Summary of Findings

Best Farm is a well-preserved agrarian landscape. It contains buildings that date to the late 18th century and internal roads that appear to date at least to the time of the Civil War. Fields and yards documented on aerial photographs from the 1930s and 1950s had probably changed little since the time of the Civil War and have not been significantly altered since the time the aerials were made. Protected within the bend of the Monocacy River and defined on the west by I-270, the farm's boundaries are mostly intact on three sides. Because of its continuous agricultural use and the retention of the majority of its historic buildings, Best Farm possesses a high level of historical integrity.

The primary recommendation of this report is that an integrated circulation system be created that addresses visitor access. Buildings that date to before and soon after the Civil War will be retained. Other structures date from the mid-twentieth century and later, and they are to be removed. Since the farm's spatial arrangement is remarkably intact, efforts should be made to clarify and reinforce elements of it, such as the edges of fields, the dimensions of yards, and any road traces.

An ancillary chapter was prepared for this Cultural Landscape Report to analyze the ethnographic traditions that had a role in shaping the built environment of Best Farm. The outcome of this analysis reveals that a complex set of relationships between the Old World and the new conspired to create a landscape that is an anomaly for the region in which it is located. While unique for its time and place, a comparison with other buildings in North America suggests that similar forms emerged on the landscape in other regions settled by French-speaking peoples. Although no specific recommendations are offered by this chapter per se, an obvious suggestion is that empirical field investigations be initiated in the locales mentioned.

Endnotes, Introduction

[1] Paula S. Reed, *Cultural Resource Study: Monocacy National Battlefield*, 2004; Joy D. Beasley, ed., *Draft Archeological Overview and Assessment and Evaluation Study of the Best Farm* (NPS, National Capital Region, 2004); GWWO Inc./Architects, *L'Hermitage: The Best House: Historic Structures Report*, Final Draft (Denver: National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 2003); Architrave P.C., Architects, *Best Farm Secondary House Historic Structures Report*, Draft (National Park Service, National Capital Region, 2005); NPS, *Cultural Landscape Inventory: Monocacy National Battlefield*, 2000; and NPS, *General Management Plan: Monocacy National Battlefield*, 2004.

[2] Copies of documents from park files, previously assembled for the *Cultural Landscape Inventory*, were viewed at the Cultural Landscapes Program office. The historic structures report for the secondary house was not available during the preparation of this report.

Chapter 1: Site History



Using information gathered from other reports prepared for the park[1], this chapter will summarize the features of the landscape of Best Farm as they appeared in several periods of the property's history. These time frames correspond with the span of years associated with an owner or tenant and should not be interpreted as necessarily corresponding to broad historical trends. The periods are as follows:

1. Vincendière (1794 - 1827)
2. Brien (1827 - 1835)
3. McElfresh and Trail (1835 - 1924)
   Best (tenant: 1854 - c. 1910)
4. Trail and other descendants (1924 - 1993)
   Wiles (tenant: 1924 - 1993)
5. National Park Service (1993 - present)

For ease of review, each period is divided into sections with the headings: Historical Overview, Acreage and Boundaries, Spatial Organization, Structures, Circulation, and Agricultural Landscape.

Vincendière (1794 - 1827)

Historical Overview

On March 24, 1795, Daniel Dulany sold 457 acres of *The Resurvey on Locust Level* to nineteen-year-old Victoire Pauline Marie Gabrielle Vincendière[2] (also De La Vincendière or Delavincendière). Victoire Vincendière was the eldest unmarried daughter of a French Catholic family of planters who fled Saint-Domingue (now Haiti) after the slave uprising that began in 1791. Victoire, her mother, Magnan, and several other children settled near Frederick, and her father and other relatives in Charleston, South Carolina.[3] In 1798 Victoire purchased another 291 acres, part of a tract named *Arcadia*, from James Marshall.[4] *Arcadia* was situated south of *Locust Level*, bordering north and south sides of the Monocacy River.

Exactly when the Vincendières took up residence on these properties is not clear. Their place was referred to as *L'Hermitage* at least by December 23, 1794 when a fellow French refugee, Pierre Laberon, mentioned in the will he was writing that he was physically situated in a certain chamber on *L'Hermitage*.[5] This document has suggested to other researchers that the Vincendières may have already built a house on Arcadia before they bought the land in 1798.[6] James Marshall's friendship with the French refugees may explain why the Vincendières were living there prior to purchase.[7]

In spite of her youth, and the fact that both her parents were living, Victoire was listed on legal documents as owner of the family's properties and head-of-household. In 1800 the Vincendière household comprised 18 people and 90 slaves, making Victoire the second largest slaveholder in Frederick County.[8] In 1827 Victoire Vincendière sold *L'Hermitage* to John Brien and moved with

the remaining members of her family and a small number of slaves to the city of Frederick.

Acreage and Boundaries

Settlement along the Monocacy River had begun seventy years before the Vincendières arrived in Frederick County. During that time, the land that would eventually be assembled as *L'Hermitage* was part of a number of variously-shaped tracts. *Arcadia*, one of its parent tracts, was derived from an earlier tract called the *Henry*, patented to John Radford in 1724 for 385 acres. The *Henry* occupied land along the Monocacy River between Bush Creek and Ballenger Creek. It was leased and then purchased by Henry Ballenger in 1748. Ballenger was one of the early settlers in the area and built its first mill c. 1729 on Ballenger Creek. In 1751 he sold all the tracts that would become *Arcadia* to Richard Richardson. Richardson died in 1763 and the tracts were bought in a public sale by James Marshall in 1765. In 1768 Marshall had the acreage resurveyed into one tract containing 881 acres which he named *Arcadia* but did not patent until 1793.[9]

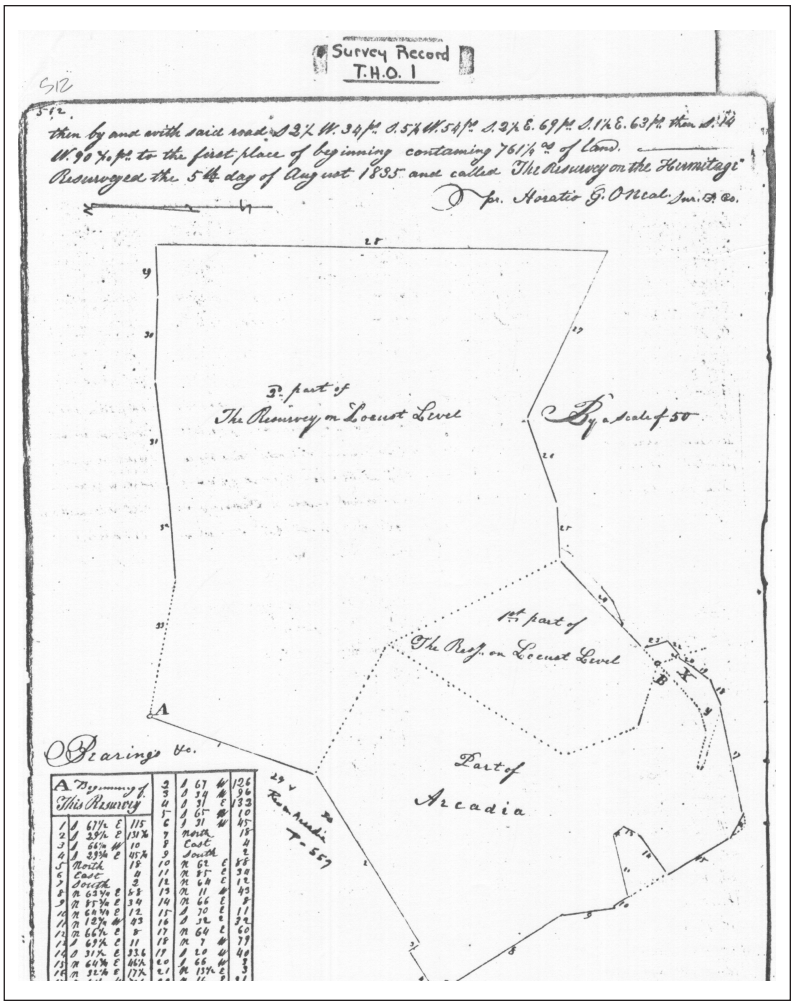


Fig. 1.1: *Plat and bearings of The Resurvey on the Hermitage commissioned by John McElfresh in 1835 for 761 1/4 acres, which combined land purchased by the Vincendières into one parcel. There were only a few slight changes between this and the property the Vincendières called L'Hermitage. (FC Land Records THO 1/434-37)*

The other parent property of *L'Hermitage* was *Locust Level*, a large holding of over 3,000 acres originally patented by Daniel Dulany (the elder) in 1740. Dulany, who had come to the Maryland colony as an indentured servant in 1703, was one of its wealthiest and most influential men. For a time he served as attorney general to the proprietary governor, Frederick Calvert (the sixth Lord Baltimore). He was also a speculator with extensive land holdings. Dulany's son, also Daniel, resurveyed *Locust Level* in 1756 under the name *The Resurvey on Locust Level* containing 3,900 acres.[10] *Locust Level* and its resurvey lay south and southeast of Frederick - then called Frederick Town - which had been laid out by the elder Dulany in 1745. The tract lay generally west and north of the Monocacy River.

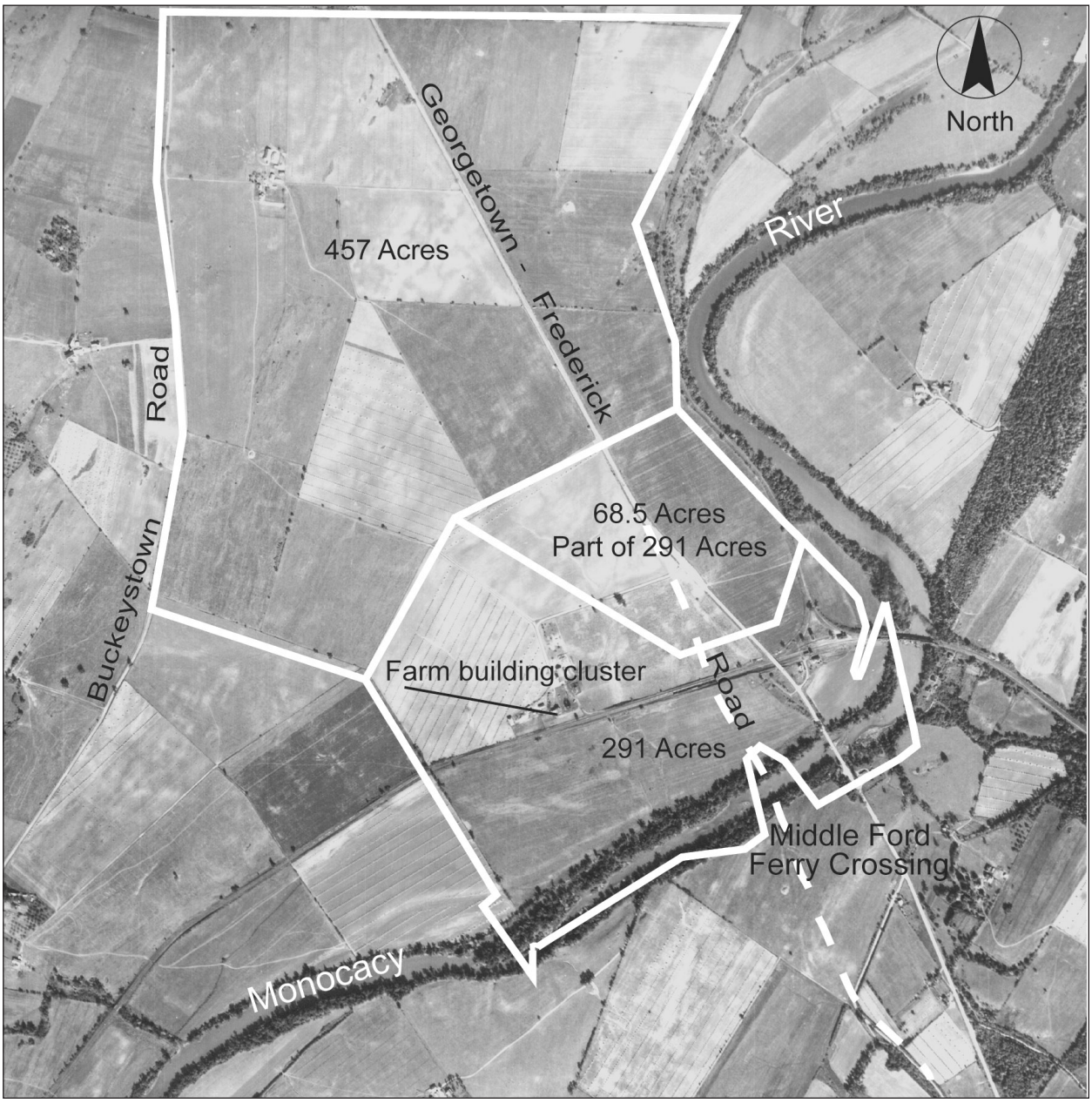


Fig. 1.2: The boundaries shown here represent the extent of L'Hermitage assembled by the Vincendières by 1798. This graphic takes the lines of the 1835 plat The Resurvey on the Hermitage and superimposes them onto the 1937 aerial to reveal the actual location of the surveyed property. Alignment of the ferry road on the north side of river is based on a drawing from this period (see fig. 1.5). Lines from the 1835 deed have been proportionally scaled to fit onto the aerial, and have not been "stretched" or otherwise manipulated. Acreage figures come from The Resurvey on the Hermitage (fig. 1.1), which combined 457 acres (part of Locust Level bought from Daniel Dulany in 1795) and 291acres (part of Arcadia bought from James Marshall in 1798) into one deed. The 291 acres from Marshall included 68.5 acres of Locust Level purchased from Dulany by Marshall in 1791. (Marshall purchased 86 acres from Dulany in two parcels [68.5 and 17.5 acres]. The metes and bounds for the 68.5 acre-parcel conform to the location shown.)

As mentioned, *L'Hermitage* was assembled by the Vincendières from two purchases: 457 acres of *The Resurvey on Locust Level* from Daniel Dulany and 291 acres from James Marshall, together totaling 748 acres. The 291 acres from Marshall were mostly *Arcadia* land but also contained some of *Locust Level*. Marshall had purchased 86 acres of *Locust Level* from Dulany in 1791 as two separate parcels - one, 68 1/2 acres, and the other 17 1/2 acres.[11] The Vincendières

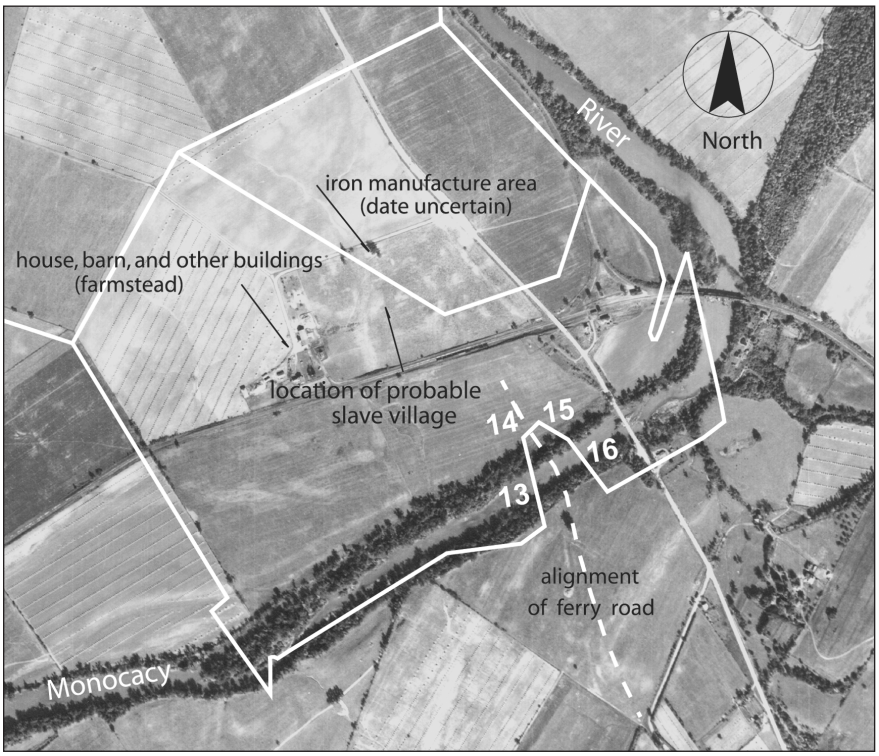


Fig. 1.3: Southern part of L'Hermitage in 1798 showing the ferry landing, the farmstead, the probable slave village, and a probable iron manufacture area. Numbers at the ferry landing are the numbers of the relevant boundary lines from the 1798 deed. See Appendix A for all boundary lines. (Base map is 1937 aerial.)

probably purchased only the 68 1/2-acre parcel of *Locust Level* from Marshall and not the full 86 acres, because in 1798 Victoire Vincendière was assessed for part of *Arcadia* with separate notations for 222 1/2 acres and 68 1/2 acres, both from James Marshall.[12]

The 68 1/2-acre piece can be discerned on the plat of *The Resurvey on the Hermitage* (1835), where it is marked "lst part of The Resy. on Locust Level" (fig. 1.1). A close estimation of what ground the 68 1/2 acres occupied can be made by overlaying the 1835 plat on an aerial photograph (fig. 1.2). The overlay also illustrates where the present farmyard complex is located in relation to the early property boundaries.

Interestingly, the southern boundary of *L'Hermitage* lay for much of its length on the south side of the Monocacy River (called east side in deeds), probably encompassing no more than ten acres of land there.[13] It followed the parent *Arcadia* tract's southern boundary line, except where it deviated to shape a ferry crossing (fig. 1.3).

The following excerpt from the 1798 deed from James Marshall to the Vincendières outlines the shape of the ferry crossing, situates the ferry road (called "main road") within the landing on the north side of the river, and gives the position of the river in relation to the landing (refer to fig. 1.3 to follow these lines):

> *. . . then leaving the outlines [of Arcadia] and running [13th line of the deed] North 11 degrees West 43 perches to a stone standing on the South West side of the main road and on the West side of the Monocacy River [what we call the north side] marked A*

No. 3 then [14th line of the deed] North 66 degrees East 8 perches to a stone on the North East side of the main road marked A No. 4 then [15th line of deed] South 73 degrees East 11 perches to a stone marked A No. 5 standing three quarters of a perch from a Walnut tree on the bank of the Monocacy marked with six notches then [16th line of deed] South 32 East 32 perches to intersect the 19th line of Arcadia . . . .[14]

Since a perch is about 16 1/2 feet, the sixteenth line of the deed, which extended south 32 perches from the north bank of the Monocacy, was longer than 500 feet, more than the width of the river. Thus the 16th line of the deeded property reached some distance onto the river's south bank.

Along with farmland, it seems that Marshall sold the Vincendières acreage within the river itself. This is confirmed in a later deed which states: ". . . about forty acres are included in the road and the Monocacy river. . . ."[15] Why a section of the river was considered part of a tract's acreage has not been fully explained. It may not have been unusual in the Monocacy area. In addition, it may be that the *Henry* tract, the original parent tract for the southern part of *L'Hermitage*, also straddled the river.[16] Recent research gives some explanation of why landowners might have surveyed portions of the river as part of their holdings.[17] The construction of fish dams was one reason; the control of fords another. Until bridges replaced fords and ferries sometime in the early 19th century, laying claim to crossing places meant one could run the ferry. But that doesn't explain why the Vincendières would have purchased river acreage, since James Marshall retained ownership of the ferry crossing. Before the idea of using the Monocacy River for transport was abandoned because of the river's low and erratic flow, the ability to control the river for navigation might have been another reason. To increase its navigability, a bill was introduced to the Maryland Assembly in 1765 addressing the removal of obstructions on the Monocacy River - fish dams in particular.[18] Thus, perhaps there was some advantage at this time to owning both sides of the river adjoining one's property, but whether the Vincendières utilized this advantage in any way is not known.

The boundary line of the 1798 purchase by the Vincendières from Marshall had other idiosyncrasies (fig. 1.3). One such was a narrow strip of land intruding into the east boundary.[19] Later documents indicate that this narrow parcel and the adjacent land belonged to William B. Crum et al. The intruding shape suggests a narrow feature - perhaps a road or a connection to some point on the river such as another fording site.[20]

Spatial Organization

The natural divide formed by the Monocacy River, the imposed lines of two transportation corridors, and mild topographic changes provided the initial imprint for the spatial organization of *L'Hermitage*. The main house and its cluster of farm buildings stood on the higher ground of an inland terrace, above a wide floodplain (figs 1.2 and 1.3). The main house faced the Georgetown-Frederick road from its perch above the gentle concave of the fields to the east of it, through which ran a small, probably ephemeral, stream.

Structures

Structures that are known to have existed during the Vincendière tenure on *L'Hermitage*, and that still stand, include the main house, the secondary house, the stone barn, and a detached kitchen behind the main house (fig. 1.4). These structures had a general east-west orientation. Other buildings, such as houses for a large number of slaves, privies, a well house, stables, sheds, and animal pens, undoubtedly also existed during this period.

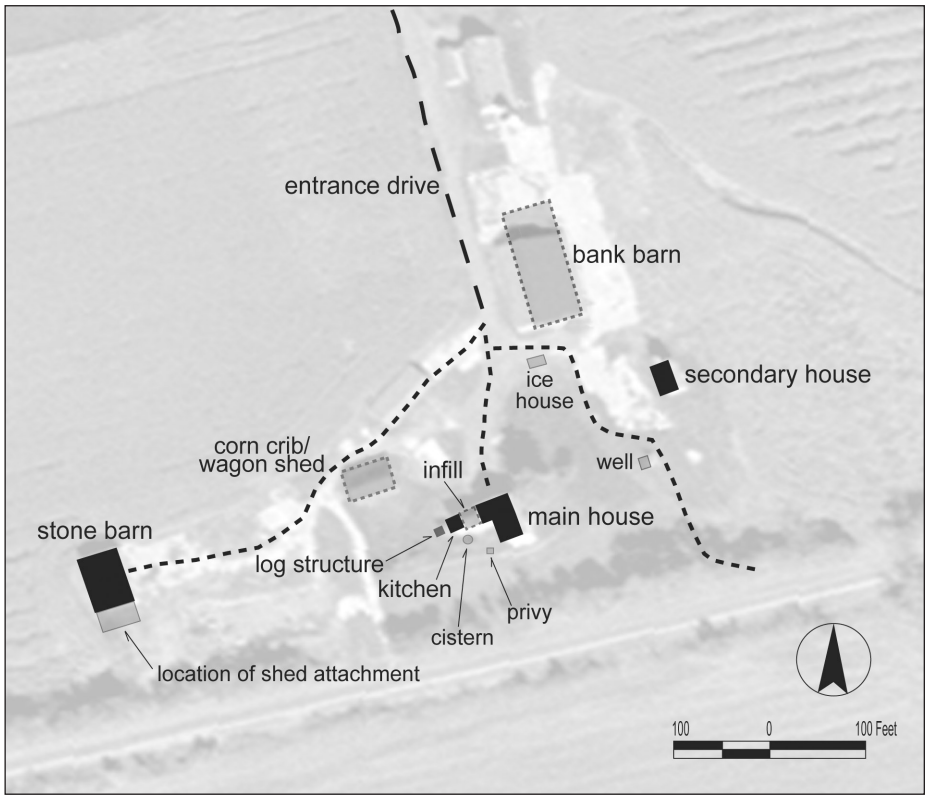


Fig. 1.4: Best Farm farmyard complex showing structures from several periods and their spatial relationships. The buildings shown in the dark tone (main house, kitchen, secondary house and stone barn) are from the earliest period. The log structure behind the house dates to the early 19th century, but its original location is uncertain. The privy, cistern, ice house and shed attachment to the stone barn, which have been archeologically identified, have different dates of origin, but all existed in the late 19th century. The bank barn, corn crib/wagon shed, and infill section of the house were added in the decades after the Civil War. Two other barns in the same location preceded the bank barn shown: one burned in the Battle of Monocacy and the other burned in 1878. This bank barn was destroyed in the 1990s. A pole barn stands in its place. A dairy barn, built in 1949, is located just north of the bank barn and can be faintly discerned on the aerial base map. The well is the current location of a well house (or pump house); another well house preceded it. It is not known what farm roads and paths existed during the early period; those shown are accurate to the early 20th century. (Base map is 2001 aerial.)

The main house, attributed to the Vincendières, was built in phases.[21] Originally the house was a two-story, one-room-deep structure, with one room on each floor, a hall staircase, and a hipped roof. This section has been assigned a date of c. 1794. A one and one-half story log kitchen was located about 30 feet west of the main house. The house was enlarged on the north side c. 1795-1800 with a two-story, two-room-deep addition, originally covered by a shed roof. In the 1820s, a gable roof was constructed over both sections, which necessitated renovations, particularly to the attic. The first two sections of the house were of local limestone, and the renovations of brick. All were covered with stucco.[22] (An extensive examination of ethnographic influence - particularly French influence - on the architecture of the main house is presented in Chapter 5 of this report.)

The so-called secondary house was thought previously to be the oldest extant structure on the site and to have been built in phases. However, recent architectural and historical research has called this into question.[23] It now appears that both the stone first story and the log second story were built at the same time, likely in the late 18th century, when the main house was built. The

first story faced east toward the Georgetown-Frederick road, and the second story, which probably had a porch, had its exterior doors on the west side of the building, facing toward the main house. The refinement of some of the interior woodwork in this otherwise rustic building has led one researcher to suggest that it may have been built to house other French refugees.[24]

The stone barn is believed to date to the 1790s and "may be one of the improvements reflected in the unusually large tax assessment for the 1798 tax year."[25] No archeological or architectural research has yet confirmed a date of construction for the barn. Three bays wide, it has tall central openings on its broad east and west sides, a hipped roof, and is constructed of local limestone. It was probably a threshing barn. It is "markedly different" than the bank or "Swisser" barns that are common in central and western Maryland.[26] (See discussion of stone barn's ethnographic antecedents in Chapter 5.)

Archeological evidence of four other historic structures has been uncovered.[27] These include a shed attachment to the stone barn, a cistern, a privy, and an ice house. The shed addition was found along the barn's south wall. It is thought to have been constructed sometime between 1815 and 1890 and to be no longer standing by the 1920s.[28] The privy, a wooden structure with a stone-lined subsection, may have been the Vincendières' privy or one that was built later, possibly on the site of an earlier privy. Its below-ground remains are located near the south corner of the original block of the house, and its orientation is slightly askew to the that of the other original structures. The third structure, an ice house, could date to the late-18th century or originate later, possibly in connection with the rise of dairy farming after 1860. Its archeological remains are located northwest of the secondary house and south of the modern pole barn. It was leveled sometime between 1952 and 1960.[29] The remains of the cistern were found near the southwest corner of the infill structure between the house and log kitchen. It probably dates to when the main house and kitchen were connected, sometime after 1860, since it would have collected water from the roof of that structure.[30]

The most recent archeological field work (fall 2004) examined the site of a probable slave village located above the drainage that divides the front fields, near the crest of the east slope (fig. 1.3).[31] Among the features uncovered was one that could have been part of an enclosure, such as a wall or fence. Remote sensing suggests numerous other potential structures and features in this location, but as of yet, no archeological feature has been confirmed as a slave dwelling. Historical reference to a possible slave village in this general area is found in the diary of Julian Niemcewicz, a Polish traveler in 1798. Niemcewicz forded the river while traveling to Frederick on the Georgetown-Frederick road and described seeing a "row of wooden houses and one stone house with upper stories painted white."[32] The stone house that this quote refers to is generally thought to be the secondary house. Given the large number of slaves the Vincendières were assessed for in 1800, this may not have been the only place on the farm where slaves were housed.

Finally, there is also evidence of a blacksmith or iron manufacture area, that could date to this early period, located along the entrance drive near the drainage. No study of it has yet been made, nor a time frame for its use determined. The only documentary evidence for a blacksmith

at *L'Hermitage* is a reference to it in claims made after the Civil War.[33] If the Vincendières were engaged in some kind of low-level iron manufacture, that might be one explanation for the large number of slaves.[34]

L'Hermitage probably included the 100 acres Daniel Dulany leased to George Beckwith in 1761, along with the buildings Beckwith leased. Beckwith still occupied this leasehold when the Vincendières bought the 457 acres from Dulany in 1795.[35] His 100 acres adjoined the road through Buckeystown and lay north of what came to be known as Best Farm. A house and barn had already been built in 1761, and Beckwith was required by his lease to plant 100 apple trees and build fences.[36]

Circulation

Most of *L'Hermitage* fell between the two main north-south roads, which merged just north of it. These were the road from the mouth of the Monocacy River (called the Buckeystown road, later State Route 85) and the road from Georgetown (or the Georgetown-Frederick road). (It later became the Georgetown Pike, also called the Washington or Urbana Pike, and much later was designated State Route 355.) The Buckeystown road formed the west boundary of the northern half of *L'Hermitage*, while the road from Georgetown passed through the east side of the property (see fig. 1.2). The road from Georgetown, which followed an Indian route, would have been used from earliest settlement. It was one of two roads for which the Maryland Assembly provided funds in 1774.[37]

In 1805 the State of Maryland chartered a turnpike to be constructed along the route of the Georgetown-Frederick road. Unlike earlier public roads, turnpikes were macadamized, a paving process that involved the layering of broken stones. The turnpike improvements did not occur all at once and may have taken decades.[38] A bridge across the Monocacy River was built as part of the turnpike, but probably not until the late 1820s or early 1830s.

The road from Georgetown crossed the Monocacy River at Middle Ford, which became a ferry landing by the mid-18th century.[39] After James Marshall bought the land, the ferry crossing was at least sometimes referred to as "Marshall's Ferry."[40] Marshall retained ownership of the ferry crossing when he sold part of *Arcadia* to the Vincendières in 1798. The ferry must have been an active site, for Marshall had a house (not his main house), a blacksmith and other buildings near it on the south side of the river.

The location of Middle Ford determined where the Georgetown-Frederick road crossed the L'Hermitage. The ford was about 400 feet west (downstream) of where the turnpike bridge would be built c. 1830. No remains of the original ferry road have been documented on Best Farm, but a recently discovered c. 1830 map illustrates the earlier ferry road in relation to the turnpike - more to the west of the turnpike than previously thought (fig. 1.5).[41]

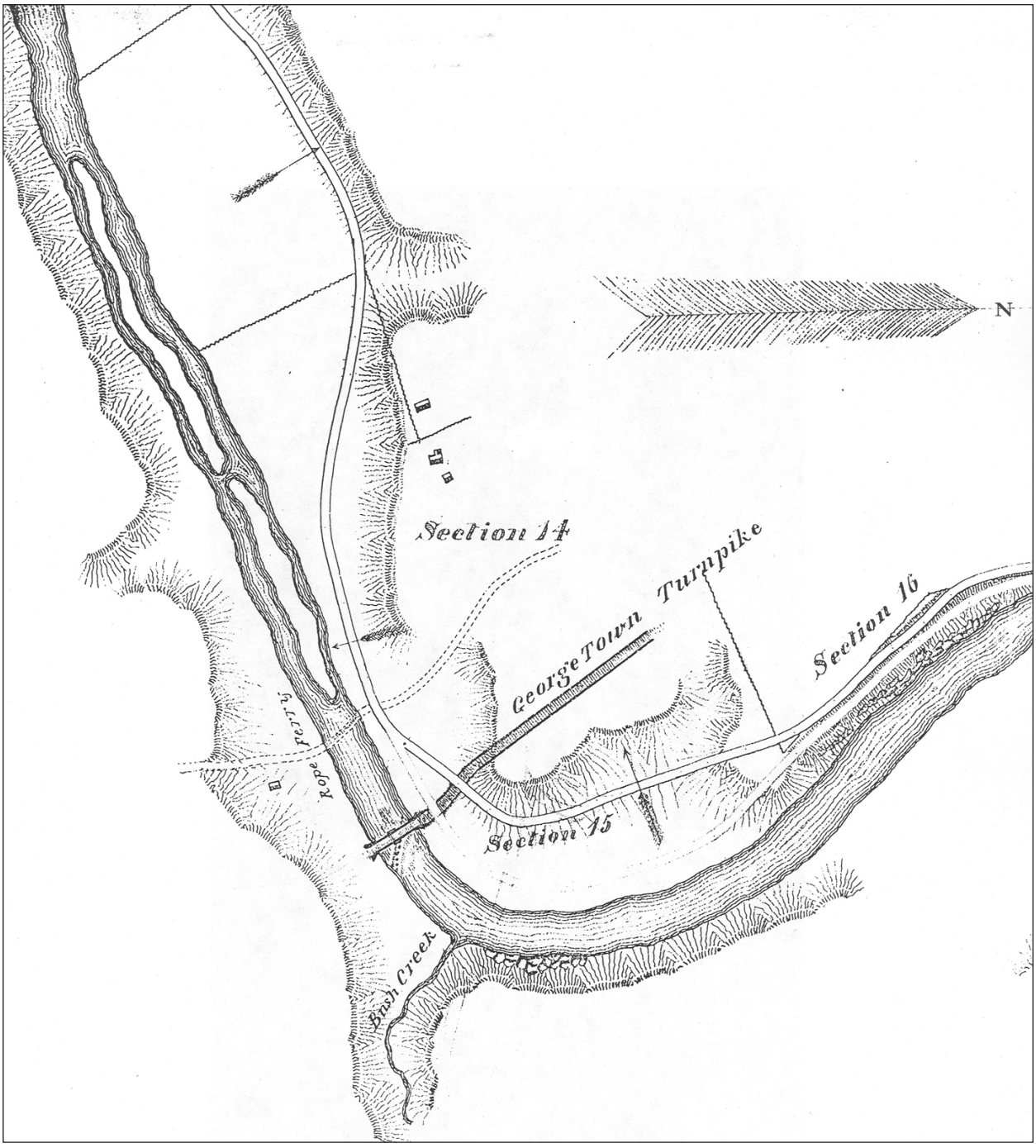


Fig. 1.5: Map of a proposed canal route (1830) shows location of Georgetown Turnpike in relation to ferry road (dashed double line west of pike). The ferry road appears to have passed between the shoulders of an inland terrace, probably following the drainage that divides the farm's front field. Image also shows several structures on L'Hermitage – almost certainly the main house, secondary house and stone barn – as well as fences, seen as zigzag lines behind the house and others running perpendicular to the river. (From P. Reed, "John Marshall History," Dec. 2003)

It seems plausible (and is presented speculatively here) that a private road leading directly to the complex of buildings at *L'Hermitage* might have diverged from the ferry road somewhere near the ferry landing. North of the main house, a farm road joined what later were the two halves of

L'Hermitage and connected to the Buckeystown road. (See fig. 1.10) It may have been an extension of a road from the ferry.[42] The entrance drive that exists today was probably in use during the Vincendières' occupancy. No date has been assigned it or to the site along the drive that appears to have been a blacksmith or iron manufacture area. The entrance drive would have been shorter then, as the ferry road alignment was several hundred feet west of today's Route 355.

Other roads might have crossed the property before and during the Vincendière's tenure. For instance, a road of some type may have followed the river. On its east side the property boundary was drawn around some linear feature that might have been a road. It seems possible, too, that there might have been some means of moving west from the ferry towards Ballenger's mill and the small community at the mouth of Ballenger Creek, or possibly, going in the opposite direction, a route from Ballenger's mill to the Baltimore Road (now old Route 40) by way of Middle Ford.[43]

Agricultural Landscape

The Vincendières brought at least 12 slaves with them from Saint-Domingue, but in the 1800 census, Victoire Vincendière reported 90 slaves. This large number suggests plantation-style agriculture. It is generally accepted that the Vincendières were farming small grains.[44] One piece of evidence regarding the Vincendières' use of the land is an advertisement that Victoire posted in the Frederick newspaper in 1816 offering 458 acres for sale. The land is described as situated "two miles from Frederick-Town, Maryland, on the George-town road, being part of her farm, which has been improved by clover and plaister of Paris." Victoire again tried to sell this property in 1819, this time stating that the land was "well adapted to clover and plaster, is entirely cleared, and in a good state of cultivation."[45] The reference to clover and plaster presumably meant that the Vincendières grew clover and spread plaster (lime) to improve the soil. The size of the property offered (458 acres) and the location (two miles from Frederick) suggest that this was the northern part of *L'Hermitage*, the part Victoire bought from Daniel Dulany in 1795. The advertisement makes no mention of the house and barn that George Beckwith had tenanted, or the fences and orchard he was required to add. The Vincendières did not sell the 458 acres at this time.

Frederick and Washington Counties were the nation's early wheat belt, and in all likelihood the Vincendières produced wheat, perhaps a predominance of it. The large stone barn is best understood as a wheat-threshing barn. There would have been other grains grown as well: corn as animal feed, and possibly rye, which was a common grain in a region with as many farmers of German descent as Frederick County had. An acre or so in potatoes was usual in the mid- to late-19th century, and may have been grown at this time as well. Orchards were required of tenants in the mid-18th century. One may have already existed on *L'Hermitage* or been planted by the Vincendières. In addition, every farm also needed to produce food for the family, its servants and slaves.

Fences were a landscape feature of earliest settlement. By 1632 in Virginia it was required by law that owners enclose their ground with fences or plant at their own peril. Later, it was the

animals that had to be enclosed and kept from wandering.[46] George Beckwith's lease from Daniel Dulaney in 1761 stated that he must enclose the premises "or such part thereof shall be cultivated with a strong fence. . . ."[47] Undoubtedly the Vincendières built fences on *L'Hermitage*, and there may have been fences before their arrival. At the very least, as suggested by the Beckwith lease, there would have been fences around the cultivated fields.

A landowner usually retained some woodland to be managed as a woodlot from which trees could be culled as needed for construction, fuel or fencing. When the Vincendières purchased the property, there was probably a woodlot at least the size of the woods shown on the 1864 Hotchkiss map.[48] (See fig. 1.11) That map depicts a small woods along the west side of the Georgetown Pike, north of the entrance drive. In 1860, some of these trees were "upward of two feet in diameter."[49] Any tree that large in 1860 would have existed during the Vincendière residence.

John Brien (1827 - 1835)

Historical Overview

The next owner of the property was John Brien. This was a brief span of years, during which the major change that occurred on *L'Hermitage* was the construction of the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad, the first passenger line in the country, which crossed the farm along the edge of an inland terrace not far from the farm building cluster. It is likely that the turnpike improvements to the Georgetown-Frederick road, including the construction of the bridge over the Monocacy River, were completed at the same time (fig. 1.6).

Acreage and Boundaries

On June 14, 1827, Victoire Vincendière sold *L'Hermitage* to John Brien. From then on it was likely referred to as the Hermitage. The deed describes the farm as comprised of the two tracts: the 457 acres which had been acquired from Dulany and the 291 acres bought from John Marshall.[50] Brien was an iron master and substantial landowner in Frederick and Washington counties. He was also the son-in-law of Col. John McPherson, a leader in Maryland's early iron industry, who owned the former Marshall property directly south of the river and the rest of the *Arcadia* tract west of the Hermitage. Brien apparently never took up residence on the Hermitage during what was a brief ownership; the property was probably occupied by tenants during these years. After the Vincendières left the Hermitage and moved to Frederick, no future owner seems to have resided on the property.[51]

Brien's purchase of the Hermitage may have had something to do with the fact that it lay within the intended route of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, which had been authorized by the state in 1826. However, it is not clear what compensation he received for the right-of-way, because he and the railroad company could not reach an agreement on payment, and the land was acquired via a condemnation. The land within the right-of-way amounted to a little more than 14 acres,

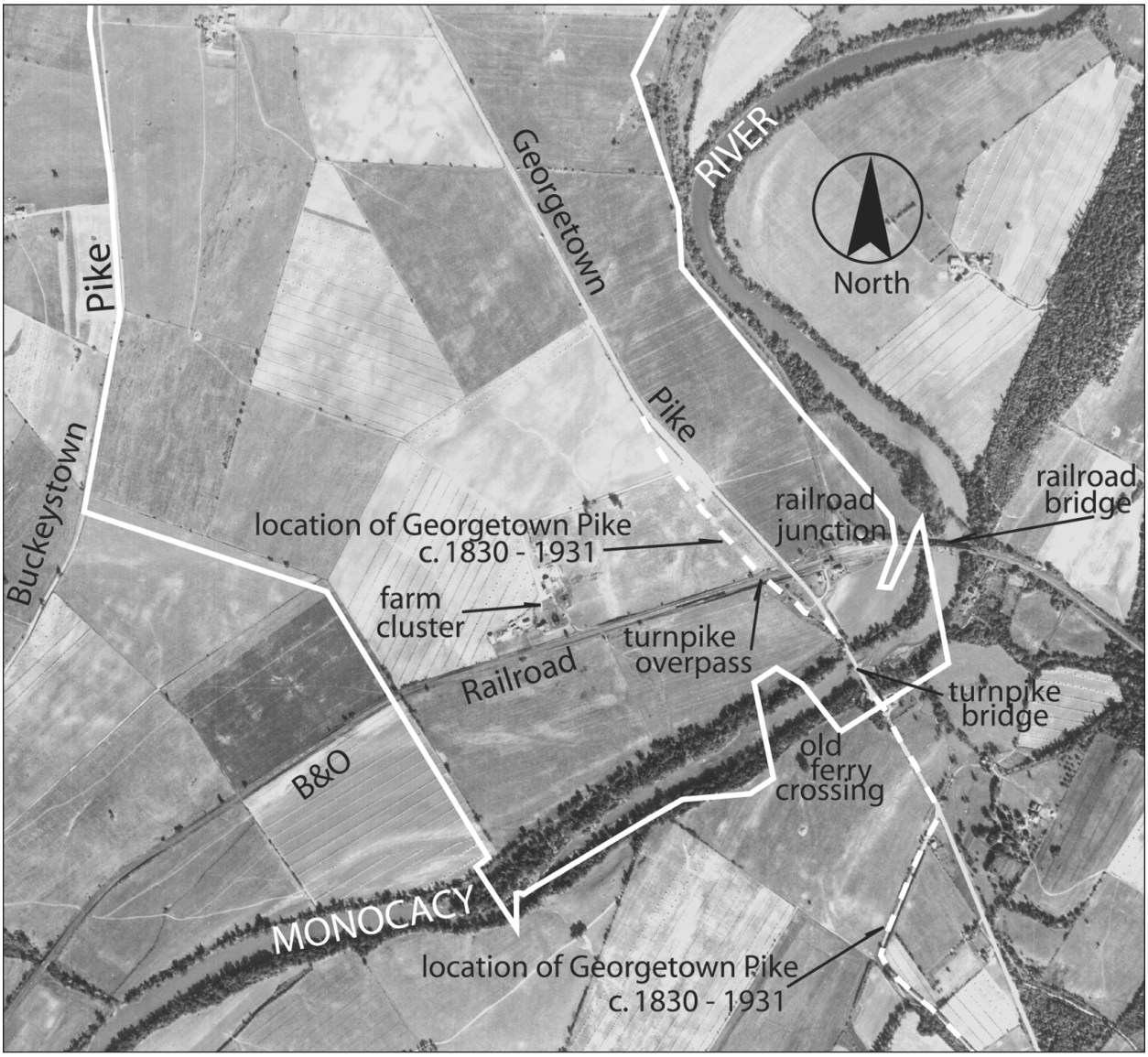


***Fig. 1.6:** This figure shows the new transportation features in the vicinity of Best Farm that were in place sometime in the 1830s. These include the turnpike bridge over the river the turnpike overpass at the railroad cut, the B&O Railroad main line with its river bridge, and the railroad junction from which a spur line ran north to Frederick. The dashed line shows the location of the Georgetown Turnpike until upgrades changed parts of the alignment c. 1931. (Base map is 1937 aerial.)*

distributed along the railroad's two lines - the main stem, which passed east to west across the Hermitage, and the lateral or Frederick stem, which ran north-south near the river on the east side of the property - and at the junction (called Monocacy or Frederick Junction), where the two stems met.[52]

John Brien died sometime in the early 1830s and his estate was placed in equity court to settle his debts. John McPherson, Jr., his brother-in-law, was appointed trustee, and on January 29, 1835 he sold The Hermitage, containing 748 acres, to John H. McElfresh.

Spatial Organization

The introduction of the railroad profoundly changed the spatial organization of the Hermitage. It effectively divided the lower fields and river from the inland river terrace where the farm cluster was located, allowing passage between the two parts only at certain locations. The railroad also introduced a new node of activity - the junction.

Structures

Buildings from the earlier period - the main house with its new roof and other renovations, the secondary house, and the stone barn - still stood. Other buildings from the Vincendière tenure, such as the privy (or privies), a well house, sheds and animal pens, would all probably still have been standing and in use. If the ice house was in existence during the earlier period, it was still standing. Some of the slave houses probably continued in use. It is likely there still were some slaves, but fewer than the Vincendières had. If the blacksmith or iron manufacture area at the drainage along the entrance drive had been in use in the earlier period, it probably was still in operation.

By the end of this period, abutments and stone piers for two bridges over the river had been constructed on the Hermitage. The railroad bridge, a timber structure designed by Lewis Wernwag, located at the bend of the river, was constructed in 1831.[53] The turnpike's river bridge - a wooden covered bridge - and the turnpike overpass of the railroad were probably constructed at the same time. The railroad itself qualifies as a structure almost more than it does as circulation in the immediate vicinity of the farm. The alternating berms and cuts that created a level bed for the tracks are considerable structural features on the land. Besides the stone abutments of the railroad bridge, there was a high embankment that carried the rail bed across the floodplain to the junction. The junction was located on the higher ground of the river terrace, which is closer to the river at the bend than it is downstream. Eventually, the junction itself would contain many structures. In two locations west of the turnpike, stone-lined culverts were constructed under the railroad berm to allow water to drain from the northern fields.

Circulation

Since the ferry was probably no longer needed after the turnpike bridge was completed, and because the bridge was built some 400 feet to the east (upstream) of the ferry landing, the existing road was shifted to meet the bridge, and thus the old road to the ferry was abandoned. This is described as "the old road now shut up" in the deed from John McPherson, Jr. to John McElfresh, which was the next ownership transfer.[54] Apparently, the closed road was not mentioned in the earlier deed between Victoire Vincendière and John Brien, so it is presumed that the road was closed sometime between 1827 and 1835. The siting of the bridge introduced some significant changes to the alignment of the Georgetown road on both sides of the river. On the south side, the road now made two rather sharp bends. North of the river, it veered northwest immediately after the bridge and then resumed a more northerly course. It was formerly thought that when the road veered west it joined the old alignment from the ferry, but the recently uncovered map of the ferry road (fig. 1.5) suggests that the half-mile section of the

turnpike at the southern end of the Hermitage was a new alignment, not the old ferry road.[55] This second alignment is not the one that exists today either, as the road was again realigned in the early 1930s. Thus, three alignments of the Georgetown-Frederick road can be described, each a little east of the previous. (See fig. 1.10) The turnpike roadway crossed the lower Hermitage fields on the higher ground of an embankment that met the bridge abutment.

Construction of the railroad and bridges, and the establishment of a new alignment for the turnpike would have affected the farm's internal drives. If the conjectured drive to the Hermitage farm complex from the ferry road existed, the railroad now cut across it and barred passage. As mentioned in the Vencendière ownership period, the entrance drive to the farm that exists today probably dates to the earliest owners, but as yet no archeological study confirms this. The L-shaped entrance drive, presumed to have existed then, would have been lengthened a bit by the shift from the old ferry road alignment to the new alignment of the Georgetown Pike.

Agricultural Landscape

During these years, the tenants of the Hermitage probably produced much the same combination of grains and crops grown when the Vincendières owned and resided on the land, and the woodlot reported in the 1860s undoubtedly existed at this time.

FENCES

The construction of the railroad introduced many thousands of feet of additional fencing along the two sides of the tracks on both stems.[56] Such fencing is documented in the Civil War damage claims, and probably existed since the railroad's inception. The rail line passed close to the main residence and brought noise, dirt and vibrations to these residential and work areas.

The canal plan (fig. 1.5) shows two fences within the farmyard complex on the Hermitage: one running between the house and stone barn and another, at a right angle to the first, south of the stone barn. Other fences shown include one along the north boundary, east of the turnpike, and some dividing floodplain fields to the west.

McElfresh and Trail ownership (1835 - c. 1924)

Historical Overview

John McPherson Jr., acting as trustee for John Brien, sold the Hermitage in 1835 to John McElfresh. McElfresh died in 1841 and the southern part of the Hermitage was eventually inherited by his daughter, Ariana, and her husband, Charles E. Trail. This long period of almost 90 years (1835-1924) includes the 56 years that the Best family farmed what was by then called South Hermitage. The property took the name Best Farm from this family who resided here during the Civil War.

The known tenant history of these years is as follows: Thomas B. Murray, for one or two years, followed by other tenants (1836 - 1854); David Best followed by his son, John T. Best (c. 1854 - c. 1910);[57] and other tenants (c. 1910 - c. 1924).

Beginning around 1840, Frederick County began to lose its economic prominence as Maryland's major producer of wheat and flour, as wheat production moved west. The focus of farm production shifted to supplying the rapidly growing urban population of Baltimore, 40 miles to the east.[58] Still, the years leading up to the Civil War were a period of sustained prosperity and growth for the farmers and mill operators of Frederick County.

CIVIL WAR

Events of the Civil War played out in this part of Maryland over three successive summers, culminating in the Battle of Monocacy in 1864. The railroad's river crossing and junction were so important that the area was protected by Union troops at various times over the course of the war. The city of Frederick, a Union supply base, also needed protecting. In the winter of 1862-63, Union soldiers of the 14th New Jersey Regiment encamped along Bush Creek, on the opposite side of the river from the Hermitage. The establishment of the camp, called Camp Hooker, entailed not only the erection of numerous buildings but the construction of earth works on the high ground north of the railroad and east of the river, including a gun battery, rifle pits, and a powder magazine.[59]

All three Confederate advances into Union territory had the same area of central Maryland, the Cumberland Valley, and south central Pennsylvania as their target. Besides its strategic location, early in the war, Robert E. Lee believed there was support for the Confederacy in central Maryland which he hoped to rally.[60]

The first of the Confederate incursions occurred in the days leading up to the Battle of Antietam in September 1862, when Lee's army passed through the Monocacy area, damaging the railroad bridge.[61] Lee's main army camped on Best Farm, and he set up headquarters in a wooded area on the farm, a spot that later came to be known as "Best Grove." Union troops, advancing toward the Confederates, occupied campsites that Lee's army had just vacated. It was on the Best Farm that a Union soldier found the famous "Lost Order 191," outlining Lee's strategy for the invasion of Maryland.

Again in June 1863, Lee's army crossed the Potomac River into Maryland. His primary goal was the capture of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, the state capital and an important railroad hub. He also hoped to capture fresh supplies for his hungry army. Lee was also hoping to win European support for the Confederate cause. This incursion culminated with the battle at Gettysburg. For three days prior to the battle, Union General Winfield Scott used the Thomas Farm, across the Monocacy River and south of the Best Farm, as his headquarters.

THE BATTLE OF MONOCACY

In July 1864, Confederate General Jubal Early's forces moved north of the Potomac with plans to attack Washington. They hoped "to relieve pressure on Robert E. Lee's beleaguered Army of Northern Virginia at Richmond," to liberate thousands of Confederate prisoners confined at Point Lookout, Maryland, and to undermine Lincoln's chances for re-election.[62] Union defenders were positioned to protect three bridges across the Monocacy River: the Georgetown Pike bridge and the B&O Railroad bridge, both on Best Farm, and the Jug Bridge, to the north, carrying the National Road from Baltimore. In the Battle of Monocacy that ensued, the outnumbered Union troops were routed, but Early's progress toward the Capital was delayed enough to allow Union forces to assemble there to defend it.[63] The biggest clash of the Battle of Monocacy was fought on the neighboring Thomas and Worthington Farms, but a great deal of skirmishing and artillery-firing took place on Best Farm, and the farm's bank barn was destroyed in the battle.[64] Later that summer, General-in-Chief Ulysses S. Grant met with his generals at the Thomas House to plan the Shenandoah Valley campaign.

Commemoration of the Battle of Monocacy began in the late nineteenth century. Monocacy veterans formed a national association in 1889 and met in Frederick that year. Four monuments were placed on the battlefield between 1907 and 1915; two of these were located on Best Farm.

Acreage and Boundaries

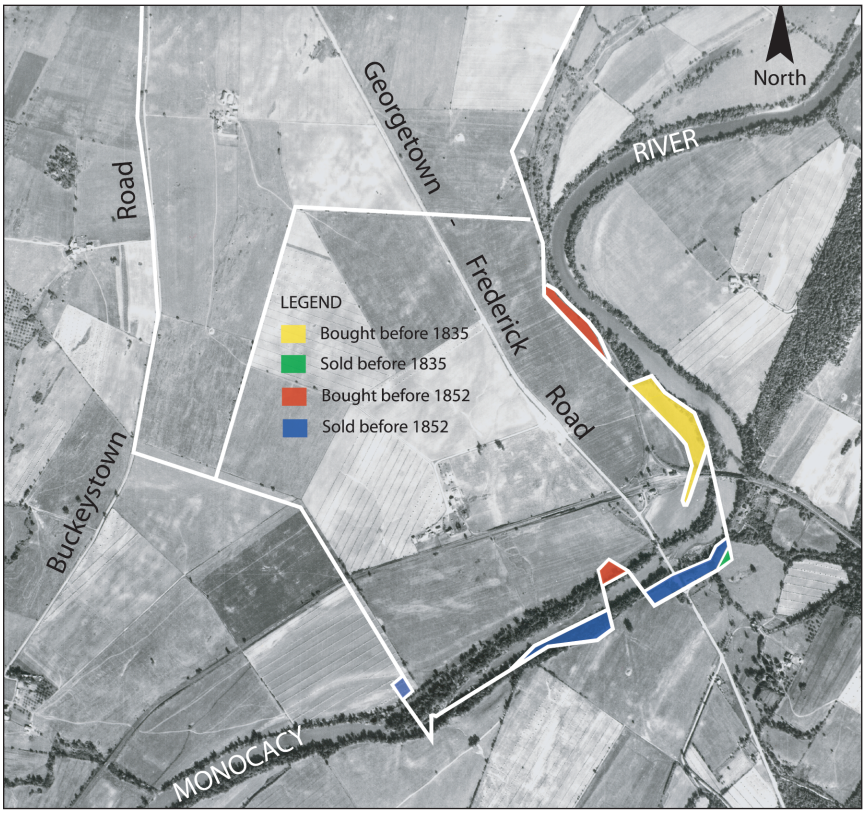


Fig. 1.7: The Hermitage in 1852, indicating small parcels bought and sold by that time. By the time of the 1835 resurvey, the Hermitage included the additional area shown in yellow and no longer included the tiny area in green. By 1852, the areas shown in blue had been sold and the areas in red purchased, as recorded in the Deed of Partition of that year. (Base map is 1937 aerial.)

In 1835, soon after he bought the property, John McElfresh had it resurveyed. This is when it was renamed *The Resurvey on the Hermitage*.[64] The new survey encompassed 761 1/4 acres. The 457 acres, purchased in 1795 from Daniel Dulany, were revised to 467 acres. The 291 acres, purchased from James Marshall in 1798, became 287 3/4 acres. The resurvey included two small pieces along the east boundary near the river: one, called *Kempe Diamond*, shaped like a diamond, contained 1 and 1/5 acres, and the other, described as "surplus," contained 5 and 1/20 acres (fig. 1.7; also see fig. 1.1).

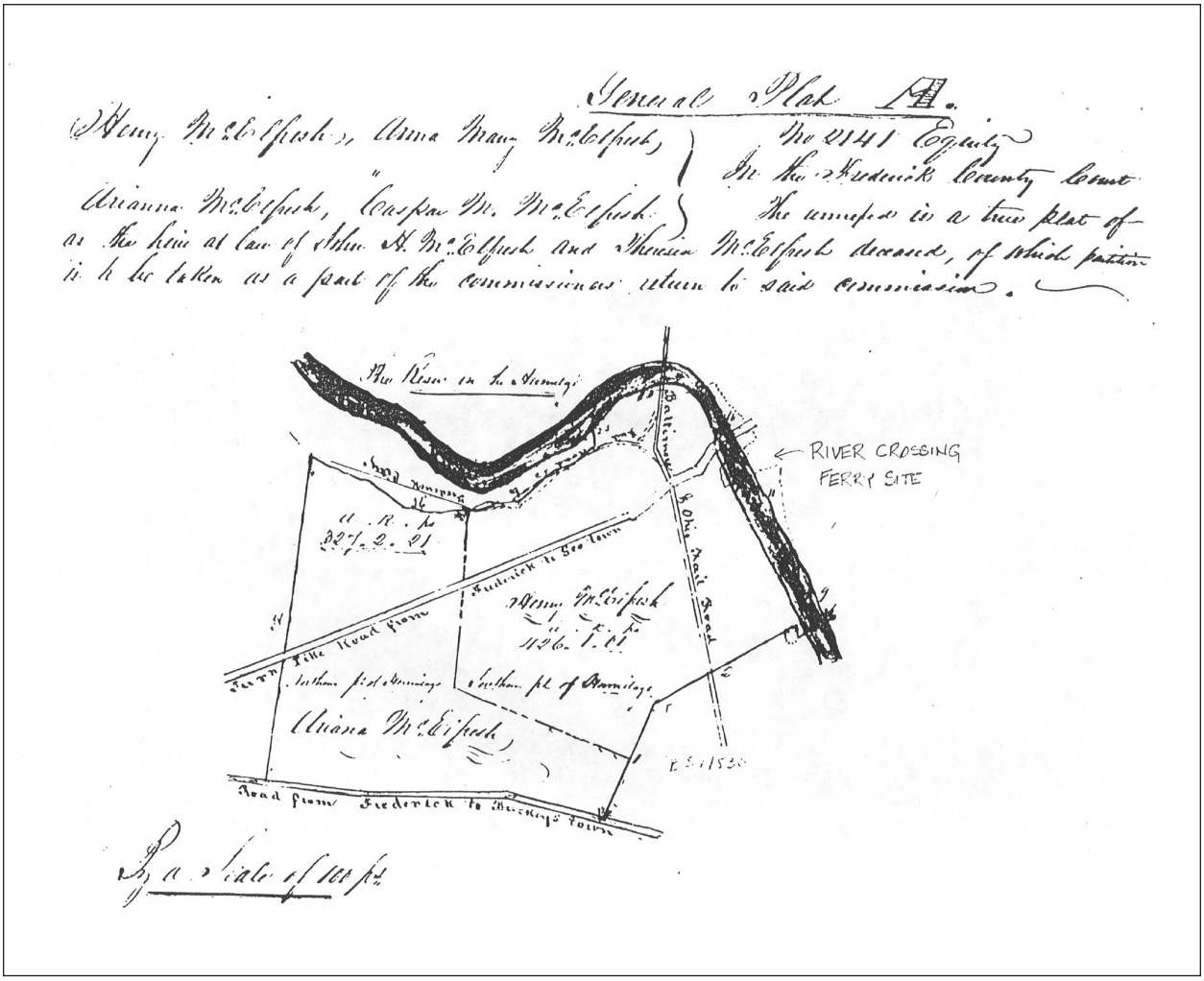


Fig. 1.8: General Plat A (1847) showing division of L'Hermitage into north and south portions after the death of John McElfresh. (Turn figure sideways to get gist of the division and see next figure for another graphic representation.) Dashed lines south of river show the boundary there as it was configured in 1835 in The Resurvey on the Hermitage. Before he died in 1841, McElfresh sold about eight acres on the south side of the river to John McPherson, Jr., and retained only a small toehold on the south bank. (Frederick County Land Records WBT 2/210-211, from P. Reed, Cultural Resources Study: Monocacy National Battlefield, 1999 updated 2001.)

The five-acre parcel is one that has been described previously as a narrow shape intruding into the property boundary. Both new parcels can be seen on the 1835 plat. In a handful of transactions between 1798 and 1852, small parcels of land along the river were bought or sold, changing the boundary lines slightly. (Appendix A compares metes and bounds as recorded in the deeds of 1798 and 1835 and the 1852 partition.) It does not appear that the railroad right-of-way land was subtracted from the farm's acreage at this time.

Like John Brien, John McElfresh may never have lived on the Hermitage. In 1836 and maybe in 1837, it was leased to Thomas B. Murray. McElfresh was listed as a resident of Frederick City in the 1840 census.[66] He died in 1841 and the land was divided into two parts, each half to be shared by a daughter and a son, as shown in General Plat A from 1847 (fig. 1.8).[67] The plat shows the southern half of the Hermitage containing 426 1/4 acres and the northern half 327 1/4 acres - together 753 3/4 acres - slightly less than the 761 1/4 acres in 1835.

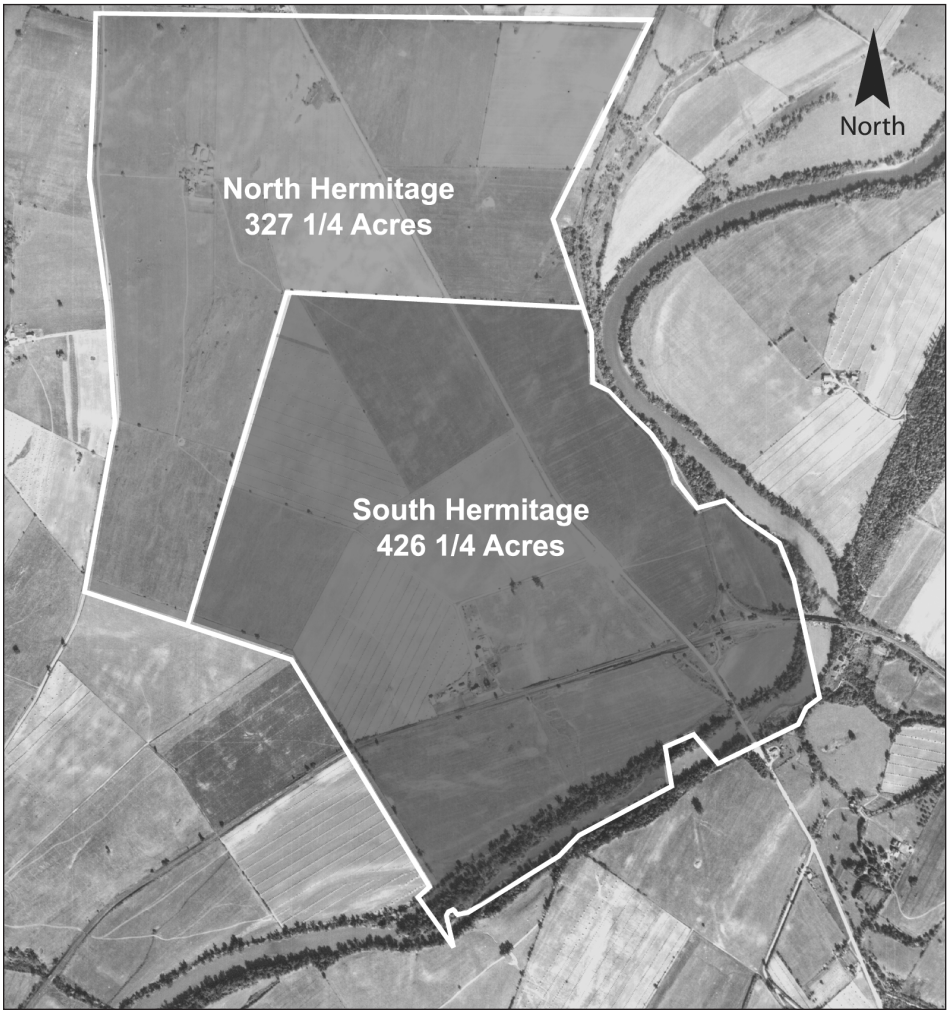


Fig. 1.9: North and South Hermitage as configured in the 1852 Deed of Partition. This figure shows the same division lines as in the foregoing figure (the 1847 General Plat A), but the 1852 deed was a new one drawn up at the death of John McElfresh's sons and the full transfer of the property to his daughters. South Hermitage is the part of the property that became Best Farm. (Base map is 1937 aerial.)

The two sons of John McElfresh died soon after, and each sister inherited half of the farm, documented in a deed of partition dated December 17, 1852.[68] Ariana McElfresh Trail and her husband, Charles E. Trail, received the southern half. Her sister, Mary Anna Kunkel, and her husband, Jacob M. Kunkel, were allotted the northern half. The property was now called North Hermitage and South Hermitage (fig. 1.9). From this point on, this report will address only South Hermitage, the half of the farm inherited by Ariana and Charles Trail and rented by David Best at the time of the Civil War.

Various small changes since the 1835 resurvey are detailed in the 1852 deed of partition (see fig. 1.7). One acre at the southwest corner had been sold to Griffin Taylor, who owned some of what had been John Marshall's land on the south side of the river. A half-acre (specifically two roods and 27 square perches) at the north end of the ferry landing on the north side of the river had been acquired from John McPherson, Jr. Another 1 1/4 acres along the east side of the property was purchased from Stephen B. Crum. When these small pieces are added and subtracted, it is calculated that the property was 8 1/4 acres smaller at this time than in 1835, which may be the approximate amount of land on the south side of the river that McElfresh sold to McPherson between 1835 and 1841.[69] Although the 1847 plat depicts the southern boundary still

encompassing land on the south side of the river, this may not be correct as the boundary line should now have coincided more closely with the south riverbank.[70]

The 1852 deed also locates the turnpike bridge among the metes and bounds, mentioning that the 15th boundary line ended "near the south abutment of the Bridge across the Monocacy river on the road from Frederick City to Georgetown . . . ." The property boundary remained on the south bank of the river for another 500 feet or so past the bridge, and then crossed the river "falling under the Baltimore and Ohio Rail Road Bridge." From there it continued on the west side of the river, eventually veering inland from the riverbank.

Fifty years later, in 1909, after the death of Charles E. Trail, his children arranged for the division of South Hermitage among themselves. The majority of the property came into the hands of Charles B. Trail in return for $25,800 paid to his siblings. It is in this deed that there is the reference to some of the farm's acreage being in the river and "road" (probably railroad), as follows:

> *about four hundred twenty five acres of which about forty acres are included in road and the Monocacy river, leaving three hundred and eighty five acres more or less of arable land.*[71]

Of the 425 acres, 84 were to be transferred to another sibling, Anna McElfresh Harding, of Frankford, Pennsylvania, who gave her brothers and sisters $7,200 in exchange for the "North east field on the West side of the Pike adjoining the North Hermitage farm."[72] (See fig. 1.16) A confirmatory deed for this transaction describes the northern boundary of the 84-acre field as running along the dividing line between North and South Hermitage.[73] Reduced by 84 acres, South Hermitage was now about 342 acres in size. Of this, it should be remembered, about 40 acres were located in the river and tied up in the railroad right-of-way and junction. Another one-half acre (0.426 acres) was trimmed from South Hermitage at the junction and sold to the B&O Railroad in 1908.[74]

Shortly after the turn of the 20th century, the Best family appears to have moved from South Hermitage. In the census of 1900, John T. Best is listed as a "capitalist" and his son, John T. Jr., is a farmer. In 1910, the younger John T. Best owned his own property. The transition at South Hermitage from the Bests to other tenants coincided with the transfer of the farm from Charles E. Trail to his son, Charles B. Trail.[75]

Spatial Organization

The divisions the railroad had introduced into the farm's landscape became a part of the fabric of life and work during this long period (1835-1924). Passage between the lower fields and the rest of the farm was funneled across the tracks at certain openings, in particular one just east of the main house. The activities of the junction created a new focal point where none had existed before. When the Hermitage was divided into north and south parts in 1847, the core of the farm, which contained the main and secondary houses occupied by the Vincendières, became South Hermitage. A farmstead likely existed on North Hermitage, as well. One can be seen later on the 1937 (fig. 1.10) and 1952 aerial photographs. This second farmstead may have

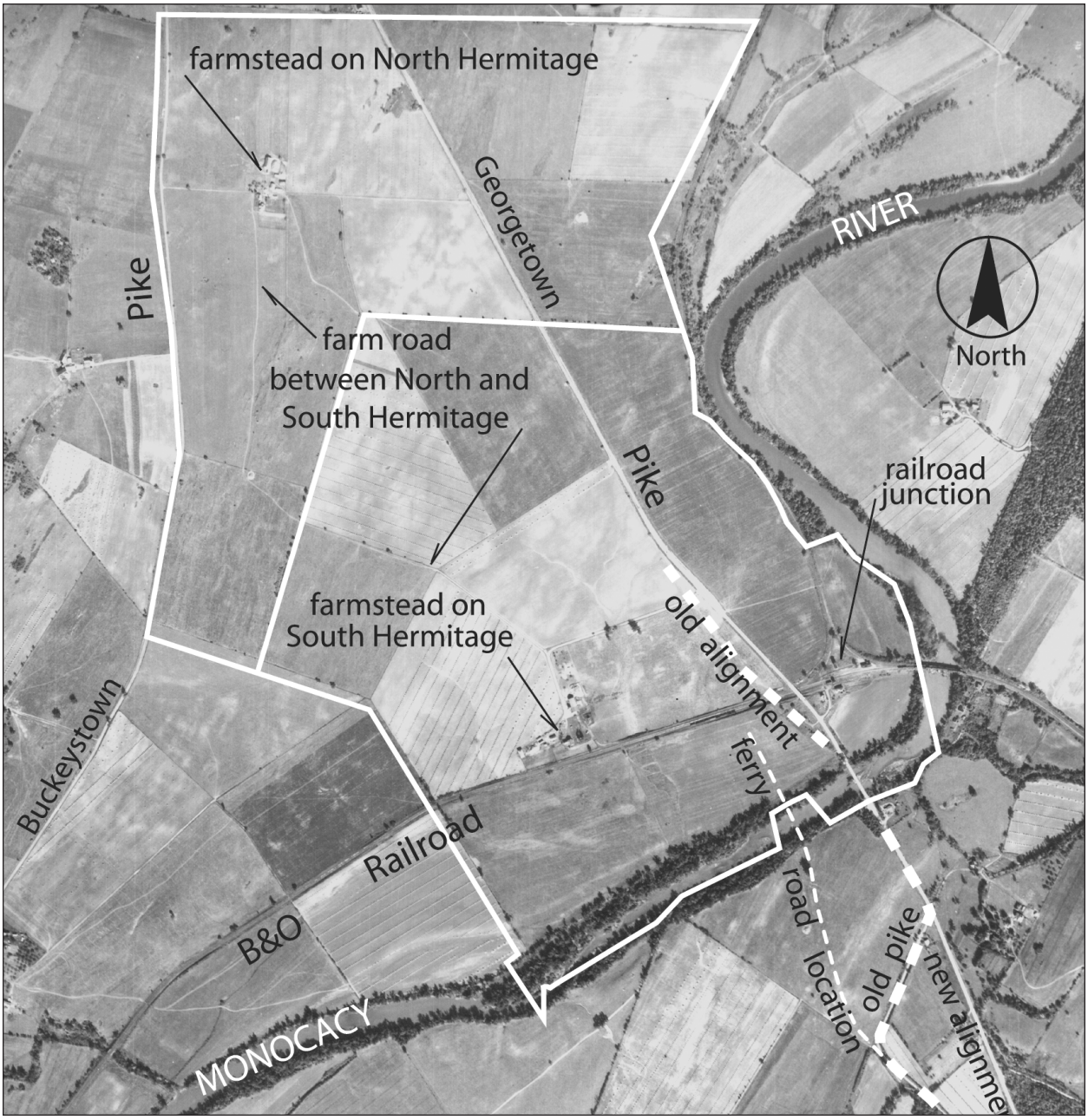


Fig. 1.10: This figure illustrates several circulation features, in particular the farm road between North and South Hermitage. Also shown are the old ferry road and its relation to the turnpike's early and later alignments. (Base map is 1937 aerial.)

originated as the one George Beckwith leased from Daniel Dulany in the 18th century. Passage between North and South Hermitage probably remained open. In fact, Ariana and Charles Trail may have operated both North and South Hermitage, given the notation "C.E. Truit" (a misspelling or mistaken transcription of "Trail") in the location of North Hermitage on the Hotchkiss map of the Battle of Monocacy (fig. 1.11).[76] The 1937 aerial shows a lane - likely in existence since the Vincendières' time - connecting the two farmsteads. The lane also would have allowed access from Best Farm to the Buckeystown Pike (fig. 1.10). The field patterns instituted in the earlier period did not necessarily change with the farm's division.

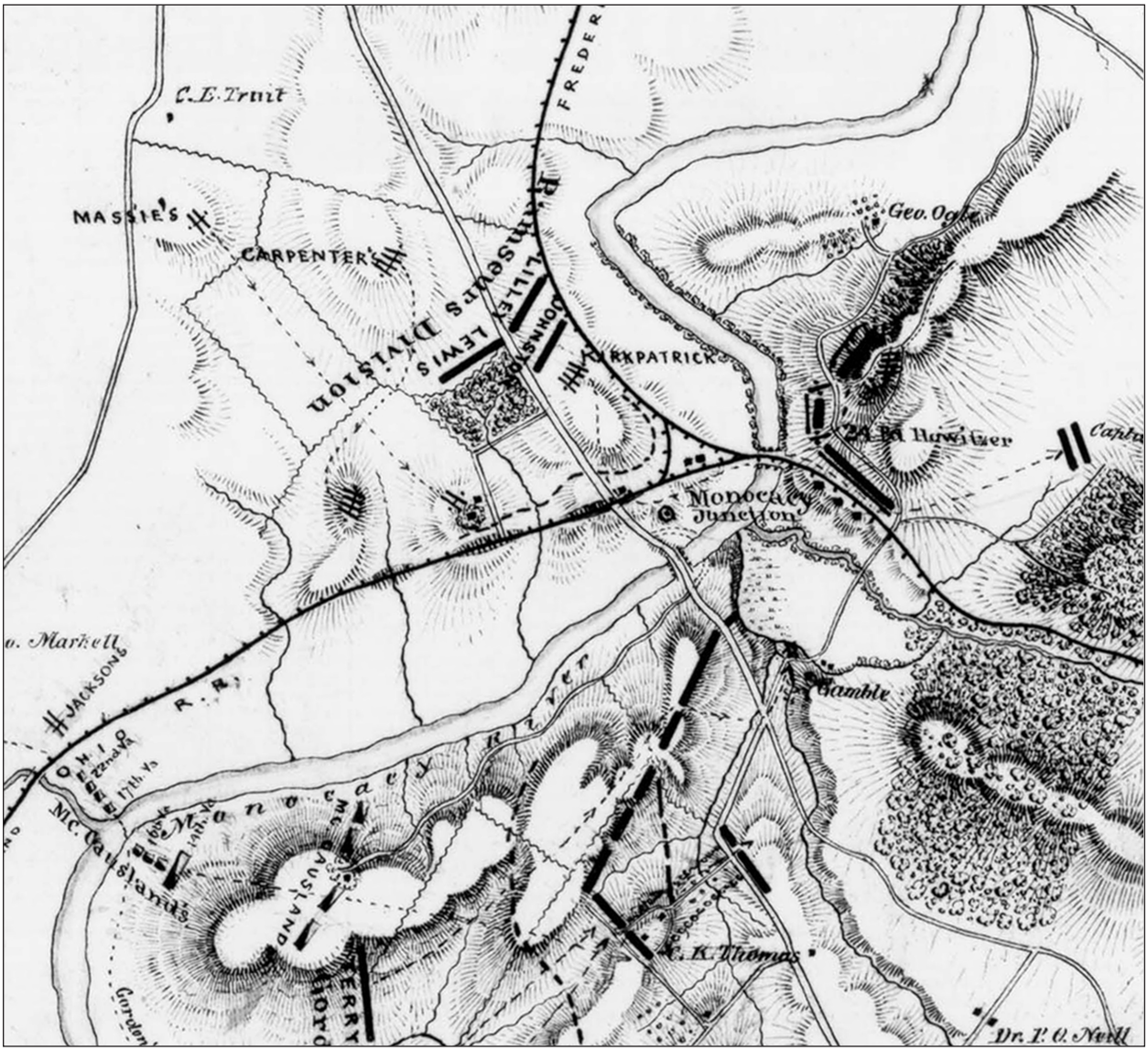


Fig. 1.11: Central section of "Sketch of the Battle of Monocacy, Frederick Co., MD, Saturday, July 9th, 1864," by Jedediah Hotchkiss, showing troop positions, landmarks, and naming landowners. Best Farm is located within the bend in the river. Image shows the farm's entrance drive (north of the railroad), the woodlot — later refered to as "Best Grove" — adjacent to it, and various fencelines. Near the top of the image, to the left, is the name "C.E. Truit," a misspelling of the name Trail, positioned where the North Hermitage farmstead would have been located. (Plate LXXXIII in Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Also Monocacy NB files)

Structures

FARM BUILDINGS

Around the time of the Civil War, the open space between the main house and the detached log kitchen was filled in with a two-story frame addition, and a second story was added over the kitchen.[77] (Refer to fig. 1.4 for locations of structures.) Archeological remains of a brick and mortar cistern are located at the southwest corner of the infill section of the main house. The cistern was probably constructed when the main house was modified, since its source of water would seem to have been the roof of the infill addition.[78] The privy continued to stand near the

corner of the original block of the house. It probably was used until indoor plumbing was installed on the farm in the 1950s.[79]

The four-room secondary house probably continued to be lived in, at least during part of this period. It may have housed slaves up until the Civil War; after that, hired hands may have lived there. The Bests were listed in the 1850 Slave Census with seven slaves and in 1860 with six.[80]

A second barn was built sometime before the Civil War, perhaps by Charles and Ariana Trail. It likely was a forebay barn (also called a Pennsylvania bank barn or "Swisser" barn), typical of many built in Frederick County at this time. Its existence is known because it was destroyed in the Battle of Monocacy. It was replaced shortly after the war by another barn for which Charles Trail was assessed in 1869.[81] This barn seems not to have lasted very long; it burned down in 1878.[82] Another barn was built sometime after that. This last barn was a wooden structure with a stone foundation. It continued in use until 1992 or 1993. It is believed that the post-war barn and its replacement were built where the original bank barn had stood, slightly northeast of the secondary house. Construction of the original bank barn may have been connected with the agricultural changes then beginning in Frederick County, transforming it from a wheat-growing to a dairying region. It is also an indication of the farm's prosperity. A stone fence, enclosing the barnyard may or may not have been part of the first bank barn. (See fig. 1.18 for location of bank barn and stone wall.) The stone barn - the French-influenced one - at the westernmost edge of the farm building complex, continued to be used during these years, perhaps to store grain. The shed addition to it would have remained in use, too, until sometime near the end of the 19th century.[83]

Since there is yet no confirmation that the archeological features found near the crest of a rise in the front fields are those of a slave dwelling, reference can only be to a "probable" slave village. Archeology does confirm that the remains in this location are domestic debris. Whether there were other slave dwellings somewhere else on the property is another question.

Another building from this period is a small log structure, which is today located behind the kitchen (this may or may not be its original location). It was most recently used as a smoke-house. The timber frame corn crib/wagon shed, northwest of the main house, also dates to this time, probably sometime in the later 19th century. No construction dates for either of these structures have been confirmed.[84]

The transition to dairy farming - which may have begun before the Civil War, but took hold in the years after the war - brought about the construction of new types of farm building and the adaptation of others. A structure to hold silage (green feed for dairy cows) would have been necessary. The first such structures were trenches.[85] Later, tall cylindrical silos came into use. One may have existed toward the end of this period as a circular shape that could be a silo can seen on the 1937 aerial photo on the west side of the bank barn, near the drive. Other structures related to dairy farming such as a loafing shed, a milking parlor, and a milk house for storing milk could have existed. On the other hand, some of these functions may have taken place within the bank barn, and additional structures may have been unnecessary. It is very possible

that the ice house was constructed in connection with increased dairy production (it was located near the bank barn). Various animal pens and poultry houses probably came and went during these years. In 1937, there were three or four small buildings located between the corn crib and stone barn that probably housed small farm animals or poultry.[86] Such structures probably stood in this area in the 19th century, as well.

The only historical reference to a blacksmith on the property comes from David Best's Civil War damage claim.[87] Best stated that the United States Army, on the heels of Robert E. Lee's army in September 1862, used his blacksmith shop and tools. Whether the mound of earth on the south side of the entrance drive, thought to have been an iron manufacture area, was where David Best did his blacksmithing is not known (fig. 1.5).

RAILROAD, JUNCTION, AND BRIDGES

In the 1850s the railroad company replaced the wooden railroad bridge over the Monocacy River with a cast iron one, built on the original abutments and piers. Its center span was destroyed by Confederate troops in September 1862, during the Maryland, or Antietam, campaign, but the bridge was soon repaired. Two years later, in the Battle of Monocacy, the bridge was again damaged. The railroad company repaired it within weeks of the battle.[88] The turnpike bridge (the wooden covered bridge) was destroyed by Union troops in 1864, during the Battle of Monocacy and a new one was built by 1867.[89] Presumably this was the flat-topped, iron truss bridge that can be seen in a photograph from 1893 (see fig. 1.23).[90]

Until 1873, all trains from the west heading to Baltimore or Washington passed through Monocacy Junction.[91] There were a number of buildings within the Y-shaped junction where the track split northeast and west. These included a frame two-story station house, with the railroad and telegraph offices on the first floor and living quarters for the station agent and his family on the second floor. There also were coal bins, sand houses, platforms, water stations, and sidings.[92] Telegraph poles with their suspended wires ran along the tracks.

As a result of the damage to the railroad bridge in 1862, the railroad company authorized the construction of two blockhouses to protect the junction in 1863. One was located on Best Farm, south of the railroad tracks, near the turnpike bridge. The other was sited east of the river and north of the tracks. Both blockhouses were burned during the Battle of Monocacy. Following the battle, Confederate troops burned the station house and other buildings at the junction.[93] A new station house and other structures were constructed after the war.[94]

During the first decades of the 20th century, the railroad junction remained relatively unchanged from its post-Civil War appearance. The c. 1870 station house remained, perhaps also serving as a residence for railroad employees. Various auxiliary structures, such as water towers, still clustered along the tracks. A house at the foot of the access road from the turnpike, which can be seen in the 1937 aerial photograph, probably was built by this time.

COMMEMORATIVE FEATURES

In 1907 the State of New Jersey erected the first commemoration of the Battle of Monocacy in honor of the 14th New Jersey Regiment. (See fig. 2.8, next chapter) The granite figure of a New Jersey infantryman atop a tall pillar was placed on a quarter-acre plot (180 by 120 feet) purchased from Charles E. Trail, on the west side of the turnpike, south of the railroad cut. A low stone post and iron pipe fence enclosed it. Veterans from other states followed New Jersey's example. In 1908, the State of Pennsylvania erected a monument along the turnpike on the south side of the river. The third monument, a rectangular-shaped boulder with a bronze plaque, was erected by the United Daughters of the Confederacy in 1914 along the turnpike at the north end of Best Farm. (See fig. 2.9, next chapter) A post and chain fence with a gate defined the perimeter of the small plot.[95] The fourth and last monument of this period was erected by the state of Vermont in 1915, also along the turnpike on the south side of the river.

Circulation

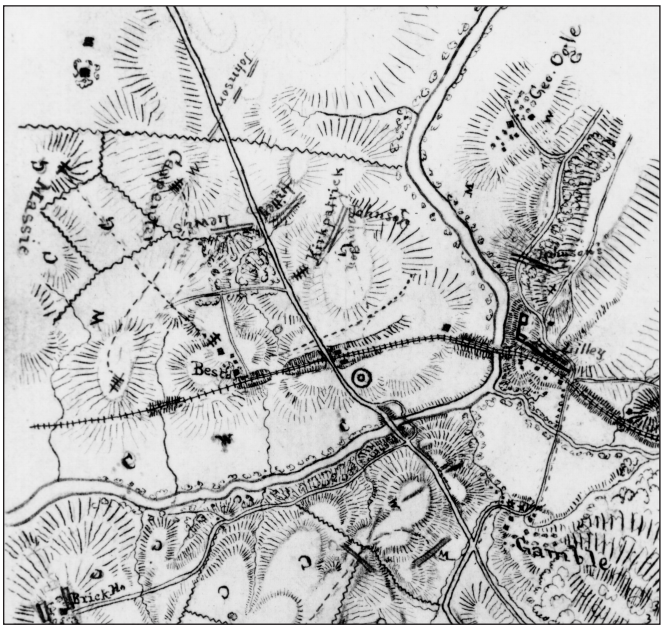


Fig. 1.12: Preliminary or field version of Hotchkiss's "Sketch of the Battle of Monocacy" (fig. 1.11). This version shows what crops were growing in the fields. For instance, in the floodplain fields north of the river (middle left of image), the letters "C" and "W" show where corn and wheat were grown. (Monocacy NB files)

Internal circulation on the farm adjusted to the changes brought about by the construction of the railroad. Little may have changed after that, even after the Hermitage was divided into north and south parts. A farm road from the floodplain fields to the farmstead area is recorded on a B&O Railroad right-of-way and track map in 1918.[96] It probably was the one that had been used since the railroad was first built. It appears to cross the tracks where one crosses today - about 300 feet east of the house. On the north side of the tracks, as seen on the 1918 right-of-way map, the farm road turned west to flank the railroad for about 100 feet, and then turned northwest. This farm road may have been part of an older route from the ferry or may have evolved only after the advent of the railroad.

A short road leading from the east side of the turnpike south of the railroad overpass can be seen on both versions of the Hotchkiss map (fig. 1.11 and 1.12).[97] It curves south toward the river. The maps show a similar short road from the turnpike on the south side of the river, curving north to a point opposite the first road. These roads may have accessed a ford, possibly used by local traffic, bypassing the bridge (and perhaps the payment of a toll). The 1918 drawing of the railroad right-of-way shows a short road leaving the turnpike at the railroad overpass like the one described above, but instead of curving toward the river, it curves north to the junction.

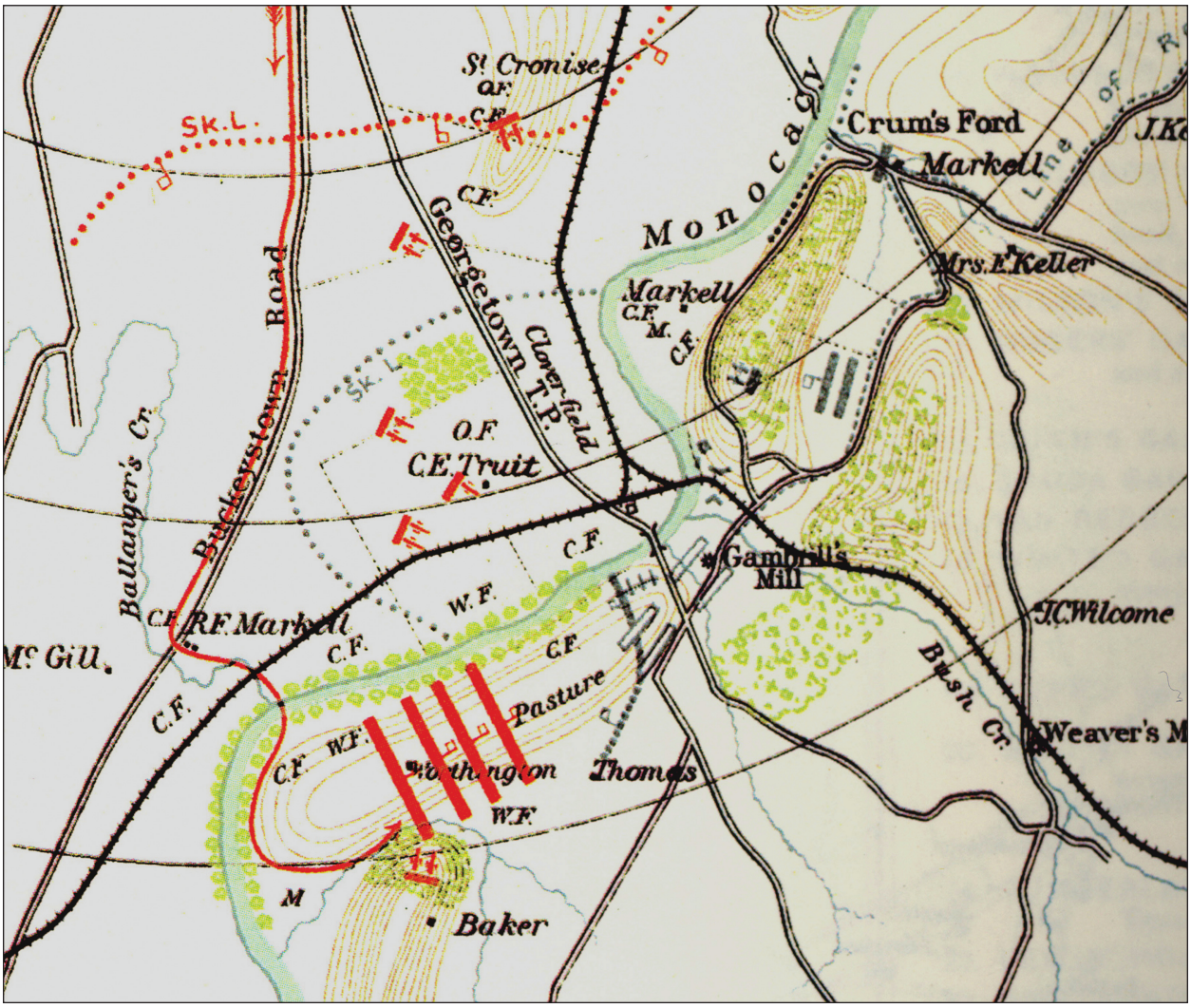


Fig. 1.13: Detail from Chs. von Lindenberg's map of the Battle of Monocacy. The Best Farm can be located by the name "C.E. Truit" (for C.E. Trail), between the roads marked "Georgetown T.P." and "Buckeystown Road." Crops are noted in abbreviated form, i.e., "C.F." for corn field, "W.F." for wheat field and "O.F." for oat field. The field between the Georgetown pike and the Frederick spur line is marked "cloverfield," and may be the place where the famous Lost Order #191 of Robert E. Lee was found. (Plate XCIV in Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies)

Agricultural Landscape

The farms in the Monocacy area exemplify the change from wheat to dairy farming that occurred in Frederick County in the mid- to late-19th century. John Best, who may have been the first in the area to make the transition, probably converted his operation to dairy farming just after the Civil War.[98] These changes were aided in part by new improvements in grain storage and the maintenance of feed supplies, such as the development of silos and refrigeration techniques.[99] Though new farm machinery was developed, animals were still used on many farms for plowing and harvesting.[100]

The Bests farmed South Hermitage during a period when detailed agricultural censuses were taken for each farmer (1850 through 1880), thus there are production figures for these years that

are not available at a later time. In 1860 David Best farmed 375 acres and produced wheat, straw, oats, rye, corn, potatoes, wool, butter, and clover seed.[101] He maintained 50 acres of unimproved land, and produced cordwood. By 1870, John Best was farming 425 improved acres and produced wheat, corn, oats, wool, potatoes, butter, milk, orchard products, hay, and clover seed. He sold 10,000 gallons of milk and 800 pounds of butter.[102] Compared to other Monocacy farms, Best owned many more milk cows and produced more milk and butter. By 1880, John Best's operations focused on sheep rearing as well as dairy production. He was the most successful of all the Monocacy farmers in 1880.[103] In 1880 John Best "tilled" 425 acres and also maintained 100 acres of meadow.[104] Since meadow is not tilled land (and he wouldn't be reporting the same land twice), it seems that Best rented more than just South Hermitage, perhaps a portion of North Hermitage.

Both the field version of the Hotchkiss map (fig. 1.12) and a map by Charles von Lindenberg (fig. 1.13) note the crops grown, their location, and the locations of some fences.[105] On the von Lindenberg map the fields east and west of the house on South Hermitage are marked "O.F." (oat field). The field on the east side of the turnpike on von Lindenberg's map is marked as "cloverfield" (perhaps alluding to the place where, according to one writer, Robert E. Lee's famous "Lost Order" was found).[106] On the Hotchkiss map it is marked with a "G" (the meaning of which is unclear). The floodplain fields west of the turnpike are shown by von Lindenberg divided into wheat and corn with a fence running between two fields. Hotchkiss's sketch is in agreement about wheat and corn, but doesn't show the fence. The woodlot, located north of the entrance drive, is shown on both maps. An interpretive map prepared for NPS appears to consolidate information from various sources and shows wheat growing north and west of the woodlot and oats east and west of the house.[107]

By 1900 dairy farming was the mainstay of Frederick County farms. Wheat and barley continued to be grown, but mostly as a winter cover crop or for straw, and corn was grown as animal feed. There is not a lot of specific information about the farming on Best Farm after the 1880 census, but once begun, dairy farming continued.

ORCHARD

None of the Civil War maps show an orchard on the Best Farm, though orchards are shown on other farms. However, David Best reported orchard products in the agricultural census of 1860, and in 1870 his son, John Best, reported an orchard valued at $100. In 1880, when the census called for greater itemization, John Best reported 170 apple trees and 125 peach trees.[108]

WOODLOT

Perhaps not all the 50 unimproved acres that David Best reported in the 1860 agricultural census were woods (woodlot), but most of them probably were. By September 6, 1862, Robert E. Lee's army of about 40,000 were camped south of Frederick, spread out between the Monocacy River and Buckeystown Road. Lee and two of his generals, James Longstreet and Thomas J. Jackson, set up headquarters near each other within the woods on Best Farm or in this vicinity.[110] The

Confederate Army remained here for three days, marching out on the morning of September 10, after being split into two parts - Jackson's wing to Harpers Ferry, Virginia, and Longstreet's to Hagerstown, Maryland. The Union Army, under George B. McClellan, set up camp in the same general area a day or two later.

The Civil War damage claims of Charles E. Trail and John Best mention certain species of trees within the woodlot.[111] They state that Union troops took oak and hickory cordwood and cut down white oak trees for fuel and possibly building material. Because no unimproved land was reported in the 1870 agricultural census by the Bests, it has been suggested that the woods no longer existed at this point - that they were cut down as land for pasture became more important.[112] (For discussion of Best Grove and the use of the terms "grove" and "woodlot," see Appendix B.)

FENCES

The clearest description of the fencing that existed on the Hermitage Farm at the time of the Civil War is found in the Trail and Best war damage claims. They describe post and rail fences that were six rails high. According to the claimants, the fences were used by troops for fuel, most of it taken by General McClellan's army in September 1862. (Only damage by Union forces was reimbursed.) Fences were rebuilt the following spring, but taken again that summer. Trail referred to these as "outside fences," presumably meaning they lined property boundaries. The number of panels of fencing that were claimed was arrived at by counting the post holes. According to John Best, only about 20 fence panels on the east side of the Georgetown Pike were left. He stated that he had rebuilt "about 3000 panels of fencing since the war," which was "most of the fence taken." Trail stated that fences ran along the pike, the railroad, both sides of the turnpike bridge (called the Georgetown bridge), and along the Monocacy River east and west of the turnpike bridge. John Best estimated that fencing ran for about a mile along each side of the pike and along the Monocacy River for a mile or more. The double line of fencing along the B&O Railroad main stem ran for "about 3/4 of a mile or more." Along the Frederick Branch of the railroad, there were fences for "at least a mile in all." Gates were also appropriated by the troops. According to Trail, they were "about ten feet in length made of pine lumber & painted." As for interior fencing, John Best remembered only "one short string of worm" fencing which still existed at the time of his testimony.[113]

Stone walls replaced the fences along both sides of the turnpike and along at least one side of the railroad's main stem sometime after the war.[114] They are found today on Best Farm in intermittent stretches along the main railroad line, and probably never were continuous. Conversion to stone walls may not have occurred right after the war, since John Best had rebuilt about 3,000 panels of fence "since the war." A c. 1900 photograph (fig. 1.14) shows stone walls along the turnpike as it passes through the Hermitage Farm.[115] The photograph also shows poles (one probably for telephone lines, the other electric) in close intervals along both sides of the pike.

The B&O Railroad's 1918 plan documents a "rail fence" along the north side of the tracks for several hundred feet where the farm road from the floodplain fields crossed the tracks (the fence



Fig. 1.14: Georgetown Turnpike c. 1900 with stone walls, telephone poles and overhead wires. The Catoctin Mountains can be faintly seen in the distance. Stone walls were removed when turnpike alignment was shifted east by early 1930s. (Albert Kern photograph, Monocacy NB photo files)

appears to be located on the north side of this farm road). It seems likely there would have been a gate somewhere along here, too, to prevent farm animals from wandering across the tracks.

Continued Trail Family Ownership

(WILES TENANCY - C. 1924 - 1993)

Historical Overview

The year 1924 is generally given for when the Wiles family took up the lease on South Hermitage or Best Farm, as it came to be known, beginning three generations of tenancy on the farm.[116] The Wiles continued to lease the farm even after it was purchased in 1993 by the National Park Service, occupying the property until July 1999. Although they no longer live on Best Farm, the family still cultivates the land under the terms of an agricultural lease.

Farming began a slow decline in Frederick County toward the middle of the 20th century. After World War II, suburban growth in the county exploded, and the area around the city of Frederick became a bedroom community for Washington and Baltimore. The construction of Maryland Route 240 (later I-270) in the 1950s fueled this change. The highway cut through the Monocacy Battlefield. With its construction, the Georgetown Pike, which had been renamed Maryland Route 355 by 1937, ceased to serve as the primary road between Washington, D.C. and Frederick, Maryland.[117] In spite of the radical change brought on by suburban growth, Frederick County still had the highest dairy production in the state, and the historic agricultural character



Fig. 1.15: Station house and other buildings at Monocacy Junction (the Y-junction on Best Farm) c. 1900, looking east from the Georgetown Turnpike. The stone wall in foreground defined the edge of the turnpike. Turnpike at this time was west of its current location. Realigned c. 1930, it probably now lies along the ridge in the near distance. (Maryland State Archives photo, undated, Monocacy NB photo files)

remained visible through the end of this period.[118]

Attention to the Civil War monuments at Monocacy waned by the 1920s, but interest in battlefields of the war in general increased. A Congressional proposal in 1928 called for protection of the site as a park, and in 1934 legislation creating the Monocacy National Military Park was enacted, though no properties were acquired until 1980.

The lines of transportation that crossed in the Monocacy area continued to be important regional routes into the 20th century. The railroad remained essential in the delivery of goods to markets and upgraded its lines for larger engines around 1930. Improvement of public roads came about with the introduction and increased utilization of the automobile. In the 1920s, the county began to improve the Georgetown Pike, changing its alignment in places and paving it with cement concrete.[119] Between the early 1960s and the mid-80s, through a series of mergers and name changes, the B&O Railroad gradually became a larger transportation company and the name of the railroad was changed to CSX.

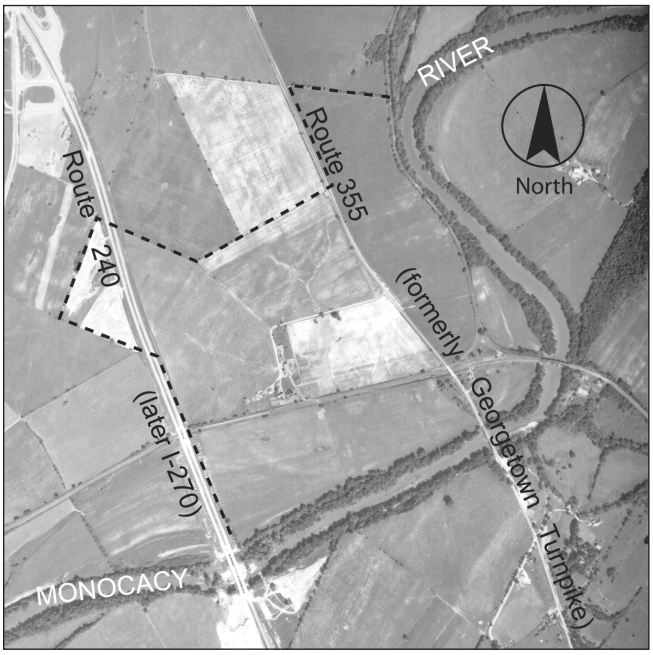


Fig. 1.16: The construction of Route 240 (later I-270) in the early 1950s severed a triangular piece from the westernmost field on Best Farm, but otherwise the highway remained outside the farm's boundary. The farm's northern boundary bends around a five-sided field which is the 84 acres that went to a McElfresh family member in 1909. The 20 acres at the northeast corner sold in the 1970s are still included in this depiction. (1952 aerial, Monocacy NB and CLP photo files.)

Acreage and Boundaries

There were two changes in the property boundaries during these years. The first came in 1951 with the construction of Route 240 (I-270) along the west side of the farm, and the second was the sale sometime in the 1970s of about 20 acres at the northeast corner of the farm, east of Route 355.

Route 240 cut through a square field of approximately 30 acres in the northwest corner of the farm, absorbing about five or ten acres of the farm for the roadway and leaving another 13 acres isolated on the west side of the highway (fig. 1.16). The new highway had a more deleterious effect on parts of the battlefield south of the river. In 1979 when Route 240 was being converted to an interstate, a survey of the farm by Sutcliffe & Associates for the State of

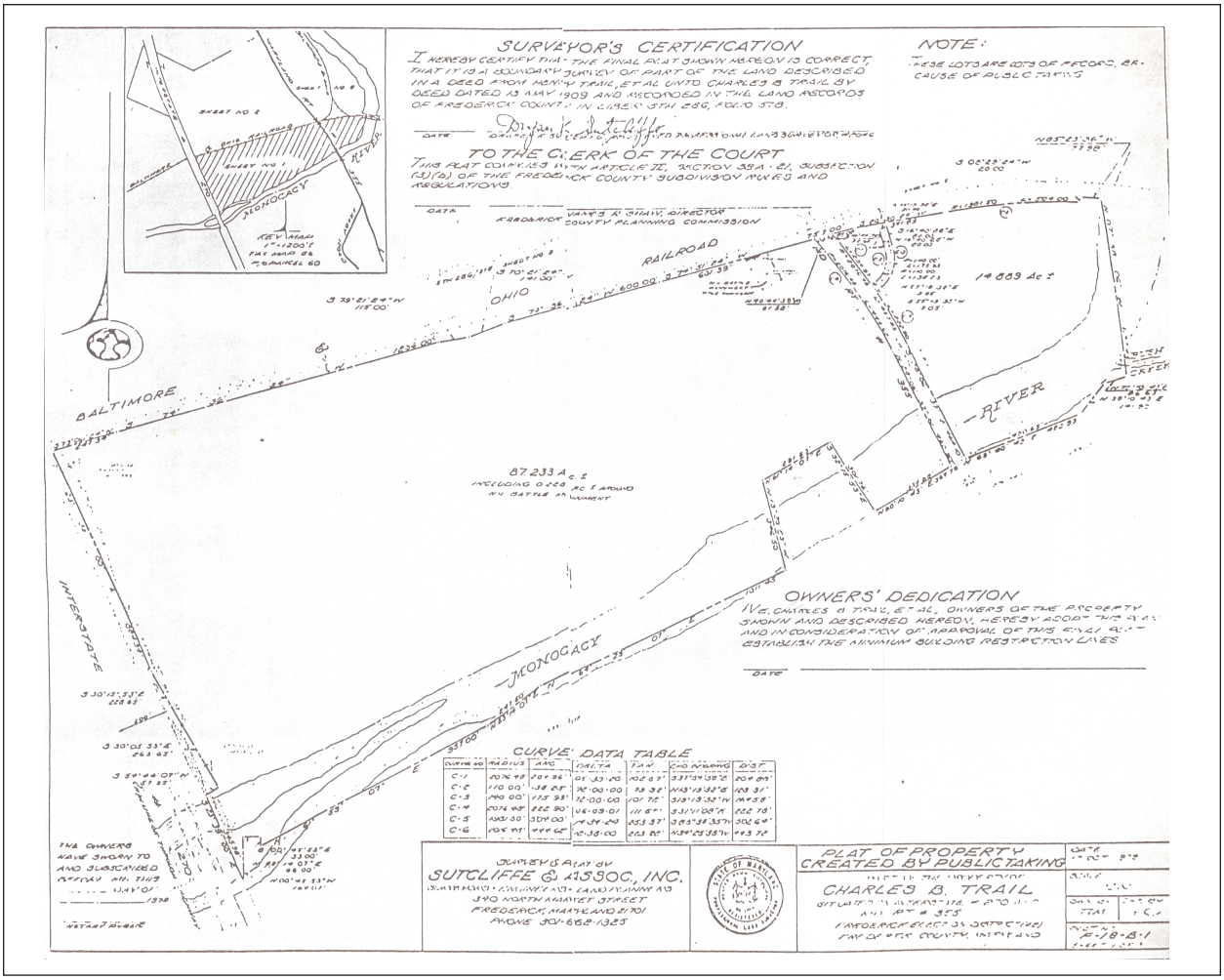


Fig. 1.17: Sutcliffe survey of 1979 was initiated by the State of Maryland when Route 240 was being converted into Interstate 270. All sections of Best Farm were surveyed. The section shown here illustrates how the south property line at this time still ran along the south side of the river, with a notch where the ferry crossing had been. (Monocacy NB tract files)

Maryland measured it as 294.141 acres.[120] The difference between the 342 acres of the 1909 deed and this 1979 survey is 48 acres. About 15 of these were tied up in railroad right-of-way. Five or ten were absorbed by Route 240. The remaining 20-or-so acres were probably the size of a parcel sold from the northeast corner of the farm.[121] Still included was acreage in the river. The Sutcliffe survey plat shows the southern boundary of Best Farm lying along the south bank of the Monocacy River (fig. 1.17). The difference between the size of the farm today (274 acres) and in 1979 (294.141 acres) appears to be the approximately 20 acres in the river that were figured into the acreage of the earliest tracts.[122]

Spatial Organization

The argument can be made that conditions in 1937 had not changed dramatically from 1864. Use of motorized farm machinery was only in the beginning stages, and fields, fencelines, yards, and drives reflected the farming practices of the earlier period. According to a study by the National Park Service after the battlefield became a National Military Park, "the general character and appearance of the battle area seems to have changed little during the last 74 years."[123] It is only in 1937, with the first aerial photography of the site, that there is any detailed representation of the arrangement of structures, spaces and circulation within the farm core.

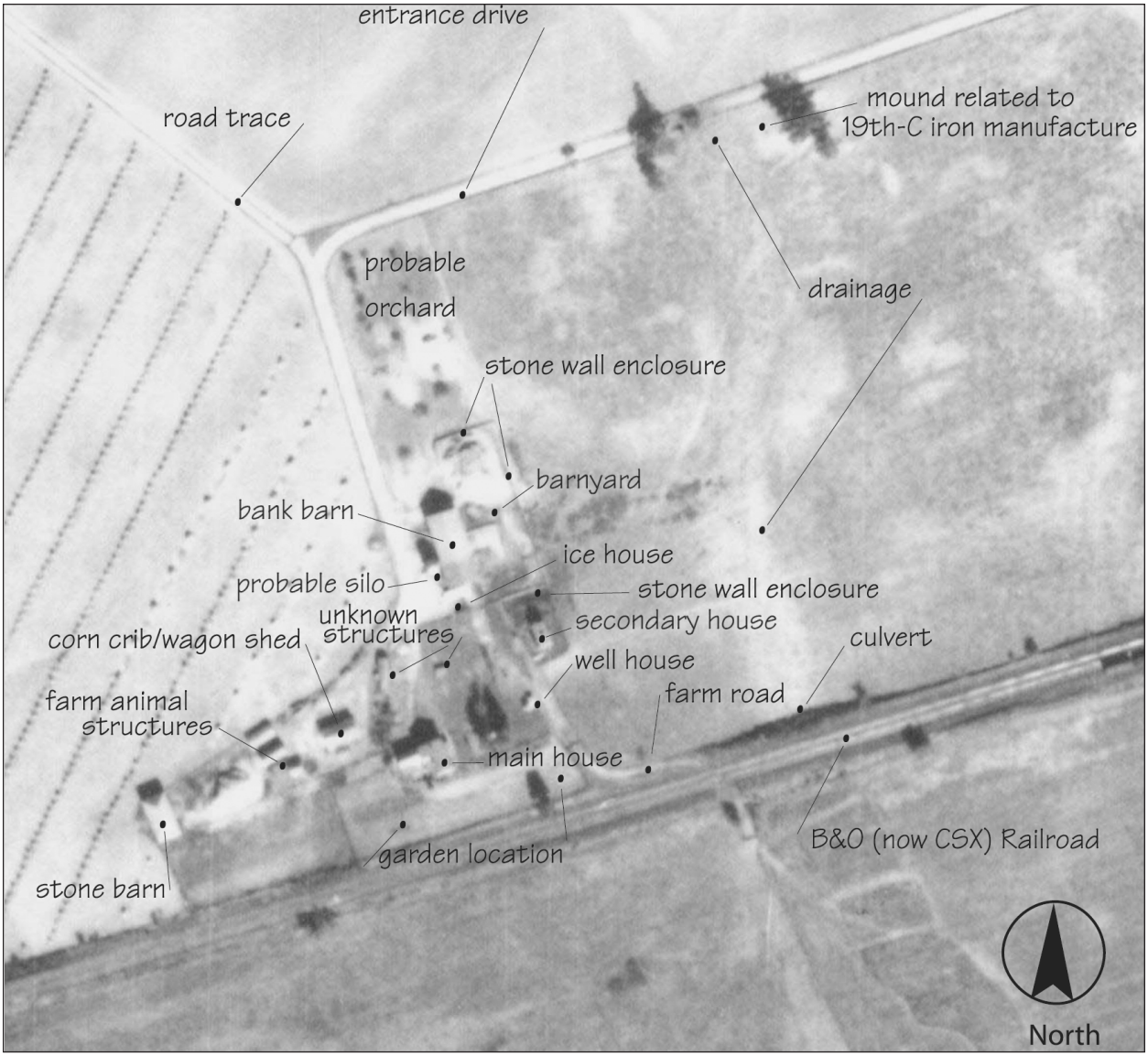


Fig. 1.18: Aerial photo from 1937 shows farmyard complex.

The only previous maps of the whole property are the more generalized Hotchkiss and von Lindenberg maps which show the farm's L-shaped drive, field divisions, crops (von Lindenberg and the field version of Hotchkiss), woodlot, and two structures, but not much else.

FARM CORE

In this discussion, the term "farm core" is used to mean both the farmstead and the fields that immediately surround it, bounded by Route 355 on the east, I-270 on the west, and the railroad on the south. "Farmyard complex" (or simply "farmstead") refers to the farm buildings and their spaces that extend like two arms hinged at the main house, but does not include the surrounding fields.

Most clearly seen in the 1937 aerial (fig. 1.18), the entry drive, with its distinct bend, is the primary element giving definition to the farm core (also refer to Map 1 in Introduction). Where the drive bends, another farm road can be seen angling to the northwest, forming the boundary between two fields and leading to the old North Hermitage property and the Buckeystown Pike.

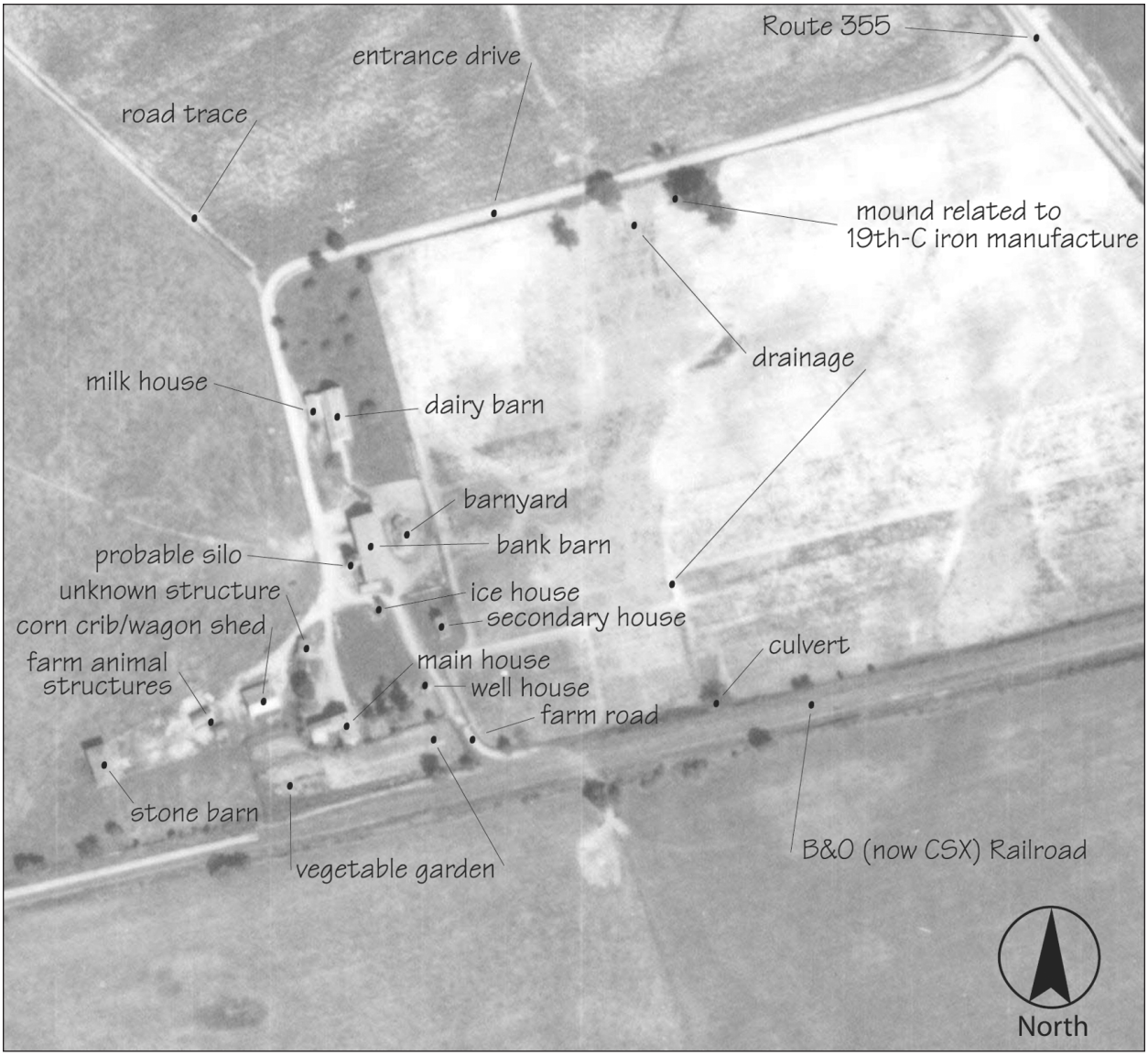


***Fig. 1.19:** Aerial photo from 1952 of farmyard complex. Various differences since the 1937 aerial (fig. 1.18) can be seen: the dairy barn and milk house have been built and the size of the bank barn's yard has been reduced. There is one less farm animal structure and one of the unknown structures is gone. What probably was a silo is still in the same location in front of the bank barn as in 1937, and not adjacent to the dairy barn as it is today.*

Together, the L-shaped entry drive and the farm road to North Hermitage divide the core of the farm into three fields of approximately equal size: the field east of the house, the field north of the entry drive, and the field west and northwest of the farmstead. Attached on the northwest is a square field, later bisected by Route 240 (I-270). After the intrusion of the highway in 1952, the remnant of the square field east of Route 240 was incorporated into the adjacent field. (See fig. 1.16)

The 1937 aerial shows the two arms of the farmyard complex. (See Map 1, chap. 2) One arm runs generally north-south and the other east-west. Within each is a sequence of yards. The north-south arm lies along the east side of the drive, between the point at which the drive bends and the house, and the east-west arm extends from the house to the stone barn. Arranged along the drive from north to south in 1937 are what appear to be an old orchard, the bank barn and its yard, and the secondary house with its own outlined space. On the east side of these spaces, there appears to have been a fence separating the plowed front field from these yard areas.

A stone wall enclosing the barnyard was still intact in 1937. By 1952, the north side of the farmyard enclosure was gone and the barnyard was smaller, probably as a result of the construction of the dairy barn (fig. 1.19).

Along the east-west arm of the farmstead, as seen in both the 1937 and 1952 aerials, are the main house, the corn crib/wagon shed, an assortment of small structures, and the stone barn. Two large yards - probably fenced - lie between the main house and stone barn. The railroad flanks the southern edge of these yards. One of the yards is thought to have been the vegetable garden.

The aerials suggest that the large floodplain area west of Route 355 continued as two or more fields through the mid-20th century, much as seen on the Hotchkiss map.

Structures

FARM BUILDINGS

All of the major structures that have been described remained standing. A portico was built over the front door of the house by 1937, and a small enclosed porch was added on its north side, by the kitchen, sometime after 1980. There is no information regarding the use of the secondary house at this time. The stone barn may have been used to shelter cows. Cow paths can be seen on various aerials; a path from the west field leads to the bank barn in the 1952 aerial (fig. 1.19), and in a 1980 oblique aerial (fig. 1.20), a path in the same field leads to the stone barn.[124]



Fig. 1.20: Enlarged and cropped section of oblique aerial photo (fig. 1.27), showing the bank barn in 1980; it is the dark building to left of frame. To the right of the bank barn is the main house, the equipment shed, the corn crib, an unidentified building, and the stone barn to the right of the image. The dairy barn is hidden behind trees at the left of the image. Farm road in foreground is road trace that used to lead to North Hermitage. Dark spots toward center of image are cows. (Monocacy NB photo files)

The bank barn remained standing until 1992 or 1993. (The photo shown as fig. 1.20 provides a rare glimpse of the 19th century bank barn.) As revealed in the 1937 and 1952 aerial photos (figs 1.18 and 1.19), there appears to have been a silo located between the drive and the bank barn at that time. This silo was no longer standing in 1980 (fig. 1.20), and may have been gone for some time. The aerials also show a narrow structure attached to the southwest corner of the bank barn - perhaps related to dairy operations. Around 1949,[125] the Wiles family constructed a concrete-block dairy barn and milk house north of the bank barn on the site of what is thought to have been a small orchard. The barnyard enclosure connected to the bank barn seems to have been shortened when the dairy barn was built. Its north wall may have been torn down at this time, and perhaps its east wall as well.

The corn crib/wagon shed continued in use through this period. A shed attachment was built onto it sometime between 1937 and 1952. An equipment shed for vehicles, located near the end of the entrance drive and north of the house, was built sometime between 1952 and 1980. The privy on the south side of the house probably was still in use until about 1950, when indoor plumbing was installed.[126] The tenants also constructed a new well house or pump house around 1950. It stands near the edge of the front yard, alongside the farm lane that connects the upper part of the farm with the floodplain fields. This structure superseded a somewhat larger structure, probably also a well house, seen in the 1937 aerial. The ice house near the bank barn, whose date of origination is still uncertain, is reported to have been demolished sometime before 1960.[127] The 1937 aerial reveals a small structure between the ice house and the well house, possibly the log building that in recent years was used as a smokehouse and that now is located behind the main house. It might have been a smoke house at this time too.

Two long structures and one smaller square structure, which could be hog pens and chicken coops, can be seen on the 1937 aerial (fig. 1.18), located between the corn crib and stone barn. In the same aerial, one can make out another long structure in the yard north of the house and northeast of the corn crib. The 1952 aerial (fig. 1.19) shows all but one of these small structures still standing. Two of them - between the corn crib and stone barn - can be seen on the 1980 aerial (fig. 1.20). Sometime after 1980, the Wiles excavated a large trench silo southeast of the stone barn.[128] Another trench silo may have been located at the east end of the equipment shed.

The c. 1878 bank barn blew down in a windstorm in 1992 or 1993. After that, the Wiles family erected an aluminum pole barn in the same location. The pole barn is wider but not as long as the bank barn. The south wall of the barnyard enclosure may still have been standing in 1993 and dismantled only after the bank barn blew down. A 1997 photo shows an open-sided, tin-roofed loafing shed located between the dairy and pole barns.[129] This structure was probably built after the bank barn came down and was itself gone by 1999.

A pair of stone piers (or pillars) marked the entry to the farm during these years, apparently built by the mid-20th century.[130] The northern one of the pair was destroyed sometime before 1993.

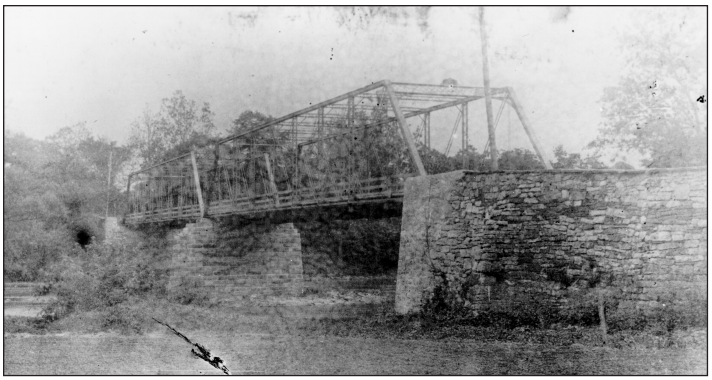




Fig. 1.21: Turnpike bridge in 1893. Notice the flat-topped trusses. Compare this with bridge seen in 1980 photo (fig. 1.23). (Albert Davis photograph, Monocacy NB photo files)

Fig. 1.22: Railroad bridge c. 1893. The bridge was repaired immediately after the war. The superstructure shown here was probably added after that. See photo of bridge from 1930 (fig. 1.24) (Albert Davis photograph, Monocacy NB photo files)

ROADS, RAILROAD AND JUNCTION

Although upgrades to the Georgetown Turnpkike were begun in the 1920s, upgrades in the vicinity of the Best Farm probably did not take place until c. 1931.[131] The railroad also upgraded its lines for larger engines at this time.[132] This work shifted the turnpike alignment slightly to the east. (See figs 1.6 and 1.10) A higher embankment was built where the road crossed the floodplain and a new, higher overpass crossed the railroad (see fig. 1.25). An 1893 photograph (fig. 1.21) shows the turnpike bridge with flat-topped iron trusses, probably Baltimore trusses, but a 1980 photo (fig. 1.23) shows trusses with curved or bowstring trusses.[133] (Also compare the railroad bridge of 1893 [fig. 1.22] with its appearance in 1930 [fig. 1.24]).

In 1937 most of the buildings at the junction, rebuilt after the Civil War, were still standing. These included the station house, two (possibly three) water towers, two structures immediately alongside the tracks on the south side, and another one that appears to be a house south of the tracks. A short road from the east side of the turnpike, like the one seen on the 1918 drawing of the B&O right-of-way, led to this house and the junction. Railroad employees continued to live at the junction for some part of the early 20th century.[134] A water treatment facility, with a large concrete underground tank, was added in 1928-29. By 1952, the station house and other structures at the junction were gone, though two water towers and the house at the bottom of the access road were still standing. That house was still standing in 1980.[135]

Construction of Route 240 in 1952 created a major barrier along the west side of the farm. After its construction, views and movement west were obstructed. Before that, views from the main house (or at least from the stone barn) may have taken in the bend in the river, southwest of the farm, and the line of trees along Ballenger Creek.



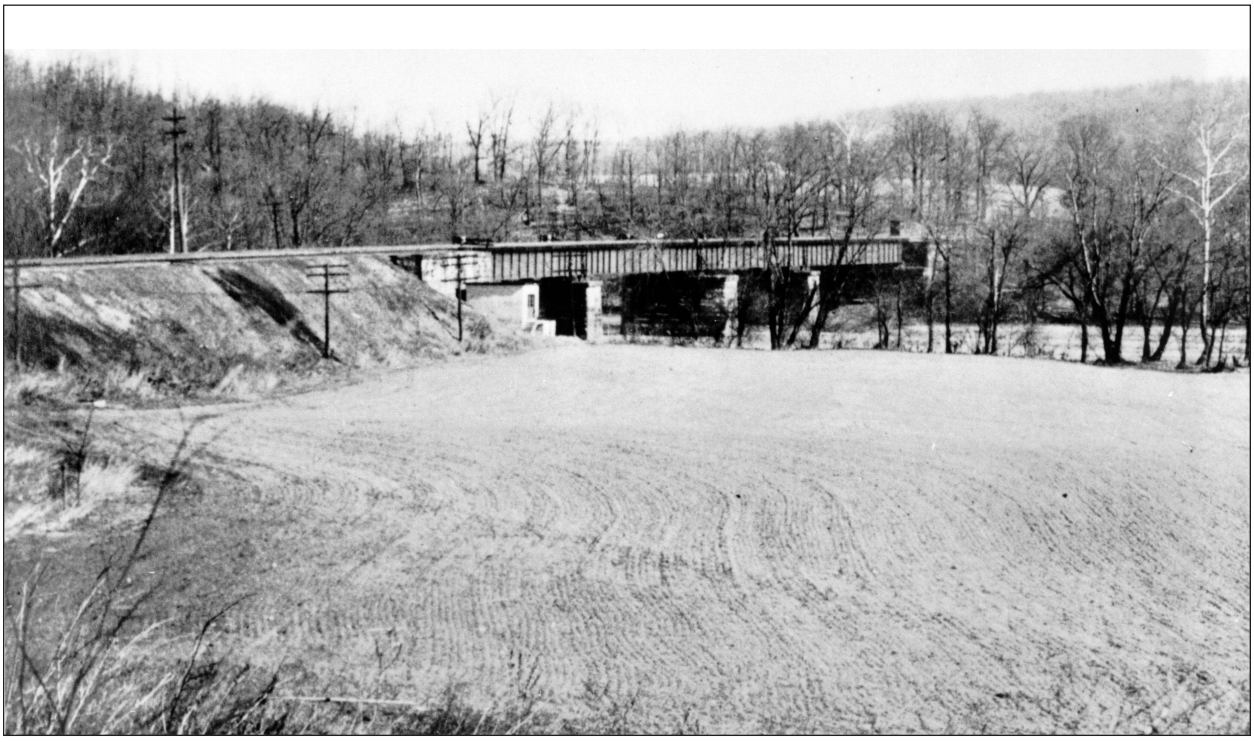


Fig. 1.23: Aerial from low-flying plane c. 1980 shows Route 355, railroad, and related bridges. The Route 355 bridge trusses here are rounded, not flat-topped as in 1893 (fig. 1.21). The New Jersey monument can be seen in front of where the road crosses over the railroad, and the Y-shaped railroad junction is located diagonally across the road from the monument. The Monocacy River, which forms a boundary around this part of Best Farm, can be seen in the middle distance. (Monocacy NB photo files)

Fig. 1.24: Railroad bridge in 1930. At this time the bridge had no trestle. Though the truss work and other parts of the bridge's superstructure were replaced at different times, the original stone piers and abutments remain standing in 1930 and today. The floodplain field in foreground is on Best Farm, a small field bounded by the river, the railroad berm, and Route 355. The junction (not seen) is on higher ground at about the same elevation as the railroad berm and a little to the left of the picture frame. (Maryland State Archives photo, Monocacy NB photo files)



Fig. 1.25: CSX Railroad (formerly B&O) where it passes under Route 355, looking west. The car to the left of image is located at the foot of the short access road from the east side of Route 355. Location of Monocacy Junction is behind viewer, to right. (LCS photo, 1990, Monocacy NB photo files)

COMMEMORATIVE FEATURES

The shift in the alignment of Route 355 and the creation of a steep embankment in the vicinity of the New Jersey monument, both in conjunction with the turnpike's upgrade c. 1930, eventually led to neglect of the monument.[136] By 1980, the area around the monument, including the former turnpike alignment, had become overgrown and virtually inaccessible to park visitors. To facilitate visitation, the Park Service cleared the old roadway and constructed a parking lot adjacent to it and a wooden staircase from the parking lot to the monument. Lawn grass and ornamentals were planted. By the early 1990s, the public had more direct access to the monument.[137]

In 1964, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the battle, the fifth and most recent monument was placed on the battlefield. Called the "Maryland Monument" or the "Centennial Monument," it was erected by the Maryland Civil War Centennial Commission (see fig. 2.9, next chapter). It is located at the north end of Best Farm, adjacent to the United Daughters of the Confederacy monument.

Circulation

Improvement of public roads came about with increased automobile travel. In the 1920s, the county began improving the Georgetown Pike, changing its alignment in places and paving it with cement concrete.[138] (This has been described above under structures: roads.) The pike no

longer jogged to the west upon reaching the north side of the Monocacy River, a dogleg that had been part of the alignment since the bridge was built c. 1830. Instead, an earthen ramp now continued straight from the bridge carrying the road at a higher elevation above the floodplain field and over the railroad tracks on a new bridge. (The footings of the older overpass can still be seen north of the New Jersey monument.) North of the railroad cut, the road no longer followed the natural grade of the land, as it had previously, but cut into the slope, creating sharper embankments on uphill and downhill sides (see fig. 2.24, next chapter). The shift in alignment necessitated the removal of the stone walls that were built sometime after the Civil War and framed either side of the turnpike. The entrance drive into the Best Farm was also lengthened slightly. The new and old turnpike alignments merged somewhere near the north end of Best Farm.

When vegetation began to close up the old turnpike alignment in front of the New Jersey monument, visitors to it used the access road that decended to the railroad cut on the east side of Route 355.[139] A path began to be worn to the monument from under Route 355 and up the railroad embankment on the other side of the overpass.[140]

Construction of Route 240 (I-270) severed the old farm road connection between Best Farm and North Hermitage. A section of this farm road on Best Farm continued to form the boundary between the north and west fields, and farm vehicles continued to use that short section of it.[141]

The farm lane from the floodplain fields to the upper terrace continued in use throughout this period. The trace of this road as originally aligned - part of it noticeably sunken - can be seen today flanking the railroad and then turning in the direction of the barn. Its right-angle turn was probably determined by the location of the plowed front field whose edge it traced. In recent years, the angled turn was abandoned (maybe after plowing stopped in that area) and the road now crosses the yard diagonally for part of the way. (See Map 2, chap. 2)

The fields east of Route 355 appear in the aerials much as they are today. A farm road bisected the large field in 1937, leading to the river, but by 1952 it stopped short of the river. That farm road apparently was abandoned by 1980. The farm's tenants reinstated it as far as the tracks sometime in the 1990s.

CIRCULATION WITHIN THE YARDS

A pathway ran between the yard of the bank barn and the south door of the dairy barn. The 1937 aerial (fig. 1.18) shows what appear to be paths within the yard of the secondary house. That yard appears smaller and more defined in 1937 than in 1952 (fig. 1.19), when it seems to have expanded to the west with no definition between it and the drive from the lower fields.

A driveway that ran from the end of the entrance drive to the main house, seen on the 1937 aerial, gradually became wider during these years, probably due to greater use of motor vehicles. The drive to the stone barn is difficult to discern on the aerials; it probably passed through and

around the corn crib, as it does today, and then between the various sheds and animal pens that were located west of the corn crib.

Agricultural Landscape and Farmyard Vegetation

The Wiles family operated Best Farm as a dairy farm until 1993 when the National Park Service acquired the property.[142] Crops grown included corn and smaller grains for feed and hay. Some fields must have been maintained as pasture. By the 1930s, a large canning industry had developed near Frederick, and the Wiles may have supplied sweet corn, peas, tomatoes, lima and snap beans used in this industry from their vegetable garden.[143] Oral tradition has it that there was a large vegetable garden on the south side of the house in the 1960s or 70s.[144] Such a garden probably existed in that location for a longer period of time, as a vegetable garden was always a necessity and this is a good location for one. The 1937 aerial (fig. 1.18) shows a neatly-defined rectangular area where the vegetable garden could have been. Recent field survey corroborates the likelihood of a garden here.

In 1937 and 1952, a small number of trees dotted the yard around the house in slightly different locations than found today. There is indication of a small orchard in 1937, located at the bend in the farm drive, north of the bank barn. There were probably fewer than 50 trees in that location, not the 170 apple trees and 125 peach trees reported by John Best in 1880.[145] If this was an orchard, it had not been recently planted, as there already were gaps in the pattern. By 1950, the dairy barn had been built on the site of the presumed orchard, leaving a small number of trees.[146]



Fig. 1.26: Entrance drive to Best Farm, 1997. Metal post-and-wire fencing of the type seen here, lining the south side of drive, may have been used in various locations on the farm throughout the 20th century. All fencing of this kind has now been removed. (LCS photo, Monocacy NB photo files)



Fig. 1.27: View of the Best Farm complex from the north, 1980. (Same image as fig. 1.20, but wider view) Area below inked line is a section of the 84-acre field that was part of Best Farm until 1909. At time of this photo the area was being graded for the office park that occupies the site today. (Monocacy NB photo files)

FENCES

Post and wire fencing (posts were wood or metal) became the main type used in the Monocacy area in the 20th century, and in some cases the wire was electrified. Such fencing could be found on the farm until recently (fig. 1.26).

Various lines seen on the 1937 and 1952 aerials (figs 1.18 and 1.19) are interpreted to be fencelines (figs 1.20). A short north/south line divides the large rectangular area between the house, stone barn, and railroad tracks into two spaces. One of these spaces (the one closest to the house) is thought to have been the vegetable garden. Another line, running from the stone barn to the house separated these spaces from another space where, based on the structures located there, poultry and small farm animals may have been kept. In 1937 there was a second line running parallel to this one that shaped a long, narrow space, the purpose of which not known.

The 1937 and 1952 aerials also suggest that a fence might have enclosed the yard around the secondary house. Perhaps a fence followed the edge of the farm road from the lower fields, which flanked the west edge of this yard. The aerial suggests another fence running parallel to this

one, on the west side of farm road, separating the road from the presumed vegetable garden. There is the suggestion of a gate across the road. A fence also seems to have run along the north edge of the garden, dividing it from the yard in front of the main house. In the 1952 aerial, four large trees grew along the north edge of the garden, in the vicinity of the front yard and along the south side of the house. The trees probably had seeded in along the fence.

The fieldstone walls that lined the turnpike after the Civil War were removed when the road's alignment was shifted c. 1930. Sometime during this period, guard rails were introduced along Route 355 for a couple of hundred feet north and south of the railroad overpass.[147] The stone walls along the railroad continued in place. As already mentioned, the stone wall that enclosed the barnyard east of the bank barn was demolished in stages beginning c. 1950 and a pair of stone piers were built at the entrance to the property by 1950.

OTHER FEATURES

A trench silo was dug southeast of the stone barn sometime after 1980.[148] Another trench silo may have been located east of the equipment shed. In the years between 1980 and 1993, sections of the yards surrounding the main house and farm structures were roughly paved with asphalt and concrete.

The land immediately north of Best Farm was cleared and prepared for development in 1980. This adjacent land had been an 84-acre part of South Hermitage until 1909. By 1980, a scrim of trees, some already large, grew along the boundary between Best Farm and this field (fig. 1.27).[149]

NPS Ownership

(WILES TENANCY AND NPS AGRICULTURAL LEASING — 1993 TO PRESENT)

Historical Overview

The National Park Service purchased the Best Farm in 1993 and continued to lease it to the Wiles family until July 1999, when the family moved from the property. The Wiles still farm the land under the provisions of an agricultural lease, but no longer maintain a dairy operation here.

Acreage and Boundaries

The difference between the 274 acres now calculated for the Best Farm and the 294 surveyed in 1979 may be acreage in the river that was still encompassed within the property boundaries as recently as 1979.[150]

Structures

The park began repairing and stabilizing the farm buildings within a few years of purchasing the farm. New roofs of standing seam sheet metal were constructed on the main house (1998), secondary house, stone barn and corn crib. The shed addition on the north side of the corn crib was removed in 2001 and other parts of the structure were stabilized. The well house was re-sided and re-roofed. To protect the secondary house site from damage from the cows, the park installed a post and wire fence around its yard. That fence has now been removed. When the Wiles family moved their household from the Best Farm, they dismantled many of the less substantial outbuildings, including a pigpen, chicken coops, the loafing shed, and various other sheds.

Circulation

The main change in the circulation between this and the previous period has been the removal of over 1,400 tons of concrete that covered parts of the farm roads and yards in 2001. Prior to removal, all paved areas were mapped as part of an archeological study that was undertaken between 2001 and 2003. The short road that crosses the field east of Route 355 (which at one time probably crossed the railroad to reach the river) may have been reintroduced by the agricultural leaseholders at about this time (c. 2000).

Agricultural Landscape

The greatest change to the agricultural landscape during this last period is the cessation of dairy farming – there are now no cows or pastures. The land is managed under agricultural lease. All fields are now devoted to a small number of crops that are raised for cover, such as hay, and for animal feed. The feed is transported to other farms. By 1980, urbanization was pressing close on the north. Views today in that direction take in an industrial park and a lumber yard.

FENCES

When they moved from the farm, the Wiles took down nearly all the metal post-and-wire fencing that enclosed a number of fields. Since livestock would no longer be kept at the farm, the fences were probably not needed. The National Park Service subsequently installed wood post-and-six-rail fences along Route 355 and a metal gate to secure the entry drive (see fig. 2.12, next chapter).[151]

Endnotes, Chapter 1: Site History

[1] In particular, Beasley et al., *Archeological Overview and Assessment and Evaluation Study of the Best Farm*, draft 2004; NPS, *Cultural Landscape Inventory: Monocacy National Battlefield*, 2000; Reed, Cultural Resource Study: Monocacy National Battlefield, Draft Dec. 2003; and GWWO Inc./Architects, *L'Hermitage: Historic Structures Report*, Final Draft 2003. All cited in Introduction.

[2] Frederick County Land Records WR 13/394.

[3] For further information about the Vincendières see Reed Nov. 1999, Aug. 2001, and draft Dec. 2003; Beasley, draft 2004; and Sara Rivers, "Contextualizing the Hermitage: A Maryland Plantation with French Caribbean Ties" (NPS, National Capital Region, 2002).

[4] Frederick County Land Records WR 17/194. April 27, 1798.

[5] Beasley, 4.9.

[6] Paula S. Reed, *Monocacy National Battlefield (Additional Information)*, Registration Form, National Register of Historic Places, 2002, 8,10.

[7] Reed, "James Marshall History," part of *Cultural Resource Study: Monocacy National Battlefield*, draft Dec. 2003, 11-12.

[8] 1880 U.S. Census. In NPS, *Cultural Landscape Inventory*, 2000, 2a.12.

[9] Reed, "John Marshall History," draft Dec. 2003, 1-2, 8; Grace L. Tracey and John P. Dern, *Pioneers of Old Monocacy: the Early Settlement of Frederick County, Maryland* 1721-1743, (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1987), 80.

[10] Reed 1999, updated 2001, 57. Copies of these plats can be seen in Beasley draft 2004.

[11] Frederick County Land Records WR 10/124-125. In Beasley: Appendix IV.

[12] 1798 Assessment, FC Commissioners of the Tax. In Reed, *Cultural Resource Study*, 1999 updated 2001, 59. In addition, the 17 1/2-acre parcel as described in the deed, is a long, narrow piece, with only three boundary lines that do not resemble any lines seen in the 1798 Marshall-Vincendière deed.

[13] The Monocacy River is a south-flowing stream that primarily divides land into east and west sides. However, the bends of the river create north and south sides as well. That is the case at the Monocacy Battlefield; the river flows along the east and south sides of the Best Farm.

[14] Frederick County Land Records WR 17/194.

[15] Frederick County Land Records STH 286/518, June 12, 1909 to Charles B. Trail. In Monocacy NB tract files. The B&O railroad right-of-way encompassed about 15 acres, leaving about 20 or 25 acres within the river.

[16] This is suggested by superimposing the plat of the *Henry* and that of the adjoining *Mill Lott* onto a topographic map.

[17] Reed, "James Marshall History," 2003, 7.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Boundary lines 19 through 22.

[20] However, this was not the Crum's Ford seen on Civil War maps (McComb 1861 and Hotchkiss 1864) which was about a mile to the north.

[21] See GWWO, 2003, 4-9 for overview of construction periods.

[22]Reed, *Monocacy National Battlefield (Additional Information)*, 2002, 7, 3-4 (main house) and 7, 5 (stone barn).

[23] Architrave P.C., Architects, *Best Farm Secondary House Historic Structures Report* (Monocacy National Battlefield, National Park Service, draft 2005).

[24] Reed, *Monocacy National Battlefield (Additional Information)*, 2002, 8, 11.

[25] Reed, *Cultural Resource Study*, 1999, updated 2001, 70. In Beasley, 3.13.

[26] Beasley, 3.14.

[27] Ibid; Beasley communication 1/22/04. (Drawings showing the footprint of these features can be seen in Beasley report.)

[28] K. Wiles testimony,. Recounted in Beasley communication 1/22/04.

[29] Beasley communication 1/22/04.

[30] Beasley, 3.14.

[31] Ibid, 3.9.

[32] Account quoted in Beasley, 3.8.

[33] National Archives RG 92, B-1828. In Reed 1999, updated 2001, 53.

[34] Beasley communication 1/22/04.

[35] Beasley, 4.7.

[36] Frederick County Land Records G/64. Transcribed in Beasley draft 2004: Appendix III.

[37] T.H.S. Boyd, *The History of Montgomery County, Maryland: From its Earliest Settlement in 1650 to 1879*, (Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co., 1968 [1879]), 75. (The other was River Road, now in Montgomery County, which was then a part of Frederick County.)

[38] William J. Grove, *The History of Carrollton Manor, Frederick County, Maryland*, (Frederick, MD: Marken & Bielfeld, 1928), 69-70. In NPS 2000, 2a.10. According to Grove, the macadamizing of the Georgetown Pike occurred by 1848.

[39] In March 1749, Henry Ballenger contracted with the Maryland Court to keep a ferry over the Middle Ford, according to G. Tracey and J. Dern, *Pioneers of Old Monocacy*, 1987, excerpted on website: http://www.rootsweb.com/~quakers/monocacy.htm. This was a different Middle Ford, located "where State Route 28 now crosses the river," according to Tracey and Dern, which places it close to the mouth of the Monocacy River. In her most recent report (2005), Reed notes that the name "Middle Ford" was associated with the one on the Thomas Farm by the mid-18th century. The old fording place near Ballenger Creek would have been in use from early days too. In the mid-19thcentury, the ford by Ballenger Creek was called the McKinney-Worthington Ford. It never become a ferry crossing.

[40] Reed "James Marshall History," draft Dec. 2003, 9.

[41] Ibid (no page number). This map is a plan for a canal that was being considered at the same time that plans for a railroad were in progress. No canal was built.

[42] The road between North and South Hermitage can be seen on the 1937 aerial photograph. A cluster of buildings on North Hermitage, in the same place as seen on the 1937 aerial, is marked "C.E. Trail" on the 1864 Hotchkiss map. This cluster may have begun as George Beckwith's leasehold.

[43] Ballenger had patented a long, narrow, 50-acre tract (*Ballenger's Endeavor*) flanking the north side of the river between Ballenger Creek and Bush Creek. Discussed in Reed draft, Dec. 2003.

[44] Beasley, 3.8; Beasley communication 10/08/04.

[45] *Frederick-Town Herald* 1816b, 3 and 1819, 3. In Sara Rivers 2002, 39.

[46] Lewis Cecil Gray, *History of Agriculture in the Southern United States to 1860*. 2 vols., Washington, DC: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1933, 145.

[47] Frederick County Land Records G/64-65, June 18, 1761. In Beasley draft 2004: Appendix III.

[48] Jedediah Hotchkiss, "Sketch of the Battle of Monocacy, Frederick Co., MD, Saturday, July 9th, 1864." Monocacy NB map files. It should be noted that there is both a rough sketch by Hotchkiss for the Battle of Monocacy, which show such details as crops, and a more finished drawing that does not show the same details.

[49] Transcription of Charles E. Trail war claim testimony, Sept. 19, 1876. Monocacy NB files.

[50] Reed 1999, updated 2001, 60.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Frederick County Land Records JS 37/48-50, Oct 29, 1831. Monocacy NB tract files.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Frederick County Land Records JS 49/146, Jan 29, 1835. In Reed, *Cultural Resource Study*, draft 1999, updated 2001, 60.

[55] Canal map c. 1830. In Reed, "James Marshall History," draft Dec. 2003.

[56] Trail war claims testimony, Sept. 29, 1876, and John Best's, Sept. 26, 1875. Monocacy NB files.

[57] The beginning date for David Best's tenancy is given as 1854 or 1855 by his son, John T. Best, in his war claims testimony in 1875.

[58] Reed 1999, updated 2001, 31-32.

[59] NPS 2000, 2a, 23.

[60] Reed 2002, 8, 2-4.

[61] B. Franklin Cooling, *Monocacy: The Battle that Saved Washington* (Shippensburg: White Mane Publishing, 1997), 31. In NPS 2000, 2a, 25.

[62] Reed 2002, 8, 2.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Beasley, 3.18.

[65] Frederick County Land Records THO 1/434-37. Monocacy NB tract files.

[66] Reed 1999, updated 2001, 61.

[67] Beasley, 3.17; Reed 1999, updated 2001: "Historic Maps."

[68] Frederick County Land Records ES1/530-533. Monocacy NB tract files. (The 1852 deed of partition gives detailed metes and bounds but provides no plat.)

[69] Ibid. (1835 to 1841 are the years when McElfresh owned the property. He died in 1841.)

[70] The metes and bounds given in the 1852 deed of partition are similar to those enumerated on a later survey (Sutcliffe and Assoc., 1979, in park files), which places the southern boundary in 1852 near the south bank of the river.

[71] Frederick County Land Records STH/286:518, June 12, 1909 to Charles B. Trail. Monocacy NB tract files.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Frederick County Land Records HWB/306:233-35, September 13, 1913. Monocacy NBP tract files. The document includes a plat of the 84 acres.

[74] Frederick County Land Records STH/282:229-231. Monocacy NB tract files.

[75] Reed 1999, update 2001, 63.

[76] Hotchkiss map 1864. By the deed of partition between the two McElfresh sisters, this land would have been Mary Anna Kunkel's and not that of Ariana McElfresh Trail and her husband, Charles E. Trail.

[77] Two reports: GWWO 2003, 8 and Reed, National Register nomination 2002, 7.4 seem to differ on when this happened.

[78] Beasley, 3.22.

[79] K. Wiles as related to Beasley, 2002.

[80] Reed, 63.

[81] Reed 1999, 70. In Beasley, 3.21.

[82] John Englebrecht diary from current (2005) research for park by Paula Reed.

[83] Kenny Wiles as communicated to Beasley. In Beasley, 3.23.

[84] Reed 1999, updated 2001, 70. In Beasley, 3.22.

[85] NPS 2000, 2a.25.

[86] Aerial photo 1937.

[87] National Archives RG 92, B-1828. In Reed 1999, updated 2001, 53.

[88] Cooling, *Monocacy: The Battle that Saved Washington*, 1997, 3; Edwin C. Bearss, "Documentation Troop Movement Maps: Battle of Monocacy," (Unpublished) 1978, 94. Both in NPS 2000, 2a-25-28.

[89] Cooling 1997, 31 and Bearss 1978, 96. In NPS 2000, 2a.25 and 2a.28.

[90] Davis photos 1893. Monocacy NB historic photos files.

[91] T.J.C. Williams and Folger McKinsey, *History of Frederick County, Md*. (Westminster, MD: Family Line Pubs, 1994 [1910], 235. In NPS 2000, 2a.19.

[92] Bearss 1978, 106. In NPS 2000, 2a.19.

[93] Ibid, 94.

[94] NPS 2000, 2.25; Glenn H. Worthington, *Fighting for Time: The Battle of Monocacy*, (Bond Street Press, printed by arrangement with Beidel Printing House, Inc. and White Mane Publishing Company, Inc. Shippensburg, PA, 1932, 64) and Cooling, 1997, 224-225. Both in NPS 2000, 2a.28.

[95] Worthington 1932, 222-223. In NPS 2000, 2b.2.

[96] B&O "Right-of-Way and Track Map," June 30, 1918. Monocacy NB tract files.

[97] J. Hotchkiss, "No. 15 Sketch of the Battle of Monocacy" *Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, George B. Davis et al., eds (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1985 [Arno Press & Crown Publishers, 1978]). Plate LXXXIII.

[98] Reed 1999, updated 2001, 62.

[99] NPS 2000, 2a.24.

[100] W. S. Hamill, *The Agricultural Industry of Maryland*, (Baltimore: Maryland Development Bureau of the Baltimore Association of Commerce, 1934), 39; Farm Security Administration Photos 1940, National Archives. Referenced in NPS 2000, 2b.1.

[101] US Agricultural Census 1870. In Beasley, 3.23.

[102] National Archives, Civil War Damage Claims, RG 92, and U.S. Agricultural Census 1850-1880. In Reed 1999, updated 2001, 62-63; NPS 2000, 2.13.

[103] U.S. Agricultural Census 1860, 1870 and 1880. In NPS 2000, 2a.25, 29 and 30.

[104] Reed 1999, updated 2001, 62.

[105] Ch's. F. von Lindenberg, "Map of the Battle-field about Frederick City and the Monocacy River, Md.," July 9, 1864, Accompanying report of Maj. Gen Lewis Wallace, U.S. Army, *Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, George B. Davis et al., eds. (Washington DC: GPO 1891-1895), Plate XCIV.

[106] Although it is often stated that Lee's Special Order of September 9, 1862, outlining the disposition of his army, was found several days later in Best Grove, recent research gives the location as a clover field on Best Farm, adjacent to the railroad tracks. Wilbur D. Jones, "Who Lost the Lost Order? Stonewall Jackson, His Courier, and Special Orders No. 191." [www.geocities.com/pentagon/barracks/3627/loser.html], 10 of 17. (4/04/05)

[107] Map showing troop movements is included in a NPS brochure c. 1980 of Monocacy Battlefield.

[108] Reed 1999, updated 2001: 62-63.

[109] Jones, "Who Lost the Lost Order?" 9 of 17. In this article, Jones says that Lee, Longstreet and Jackson established headquarters "near each other around Best's Grove on the Truit [sic] farm." He cites the following sources: Ezra A. Carmen draft undated memoir, Box 1, Ezra Ayers Carmen Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress; J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Western Maryland,* Vol. 1 (Philadelphia, 1882), 229; Douglas draft undated memoir, chapters 15-17, Paper 15, Antietam National Battlefield Library; Diary of Jedediah Hotchkiss, Jedediah Hotchkiss Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress; and *The Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1891-1895), Plates XCIV and LXXXIII.

[110] Another source for Best Grove as the camp site is William J. Grove, *History of Carrollton Manor*, 1928, 238. In NPS 2000, 2a.25.

[111] Typed transcripts of Best and Trail testimony concerning war damage. John Best's testimony is dated September 26, 1875 and Charles Trail's is September 29, 1876. Monocacy NB files.

[112] Reed 1999, updated 2001, 62.

[113] War damage testimony of John Best (1875?) and Charles Trail (1876). Monocacy NB files.

[114] Park staff describe an advertisement – now misplaced and date unknown – for a stone mason to build fences.

[115] Kern photograph, c. 1900. In NPS 2000, 2b.8. Monocacy NB photo files.

[116] List of Classified Structures photo 1997. In NPS 2000, 2b.4.

[117] NPS 2000, 2b.9.

[118] Beasley, 2.7.

[119] NPS 2000, 2b.1.

[120] Sutcliffe & Assoc. for the State of Maryland, Oct 17, 1979. Monocacy Tract Files. The sections of the farm, called "property of Charles B. Trail," are recorded on this plat as follows: the small portion of the northwest field isolated west of the interstate measured 13.56 acres; the major portion of the farm, which is the area north of the railroad and west of Route 355, is measured as 121.145 acres (including 0.003 acres for the Daughters of the Confederacy Monument); the field that lies between Route 355 and the rail trunk line to Frederick is surveyed at 45.995 acres; the small parcel north of the main rail line and east of the trunk line accounts for 11.317 acres; the land between the junction and the river is 14.889 acres; and the large floodplain field west of the turnpike and south of the railroad main line is 87.233 acres (including 0.228 acres allocated for the New Jersey Monument). Added together, these sections of the farm equal 294.141 acres.

[121] No deed for the sale of this field has been reviewed in this research. By the time of the 1980 oblique aerial, construction for the office park was underway in the fields north of Best Farm.

[122] The only document that specifically states that some acreage is taken up in the river is the deed transaction FC Land Records STH/286:518, dated June 12, 1909.

[123] Harry T. Thompson, "A Report on the Monocacy Battlefield," 1937, 1. In NPS 2000, 2b.8.

[124] Oblique aerial photo "Best Farm" 1980. Monocacy NB photo files.

[125] K. Wiles communication. In Beasley, 3.23.

[126] Aerial photo 1937, 1952; oblique aerial photo "Best Farm" 1980.

[127] Beasley communication 1/22/04.

[128] K. Wiles communication. In Beasley, 3.23; Aerial photos 1937 and 1952 and oblique aerial "Best Farm" 1980. The 1980 aerial shows the bank barn painted red like the bank barn on the Thomas property. The trench silo was not yet constructed in 1980.

[129] List of Classified Structures photo, Roll #11, Photo #19. Monocacy NB photo files.

[130] Kenny Wiles as related to Joy Beasley and by Beasley to Judith Earley, March 31, 2005.

[131] The road bridge over the railroad tracks was completed in October 1931 and the former crossing vacated by the B&O Railroad Co. in June 1932. "Right-of-Way and Track Map," Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, 1918. The plan contains notations of actions of later dates.

[132] NPS 2000, 2b.1.

[133] Davis photos 1893; oblique aerial photo "New Jersey Monument" 1980. Monocacy NB photo files.

[134] NPS 2000, 2b.6.

[135] Aerial photos 1932, 1957 and oblique aerials from 1980 are referenced throughout this section.

[136] *Times Herald*, undated. In NPS 2000, 2b.2.

[137] Oblique aerial photo "NJ Monument" 1980; NPS 2000, 2b.14.

[138] NPS 2000, 2b.1.

[139] Aerial photo 1937.

[140] Oblique aerial photo "NJ Monument" 1980. Monocacy NB photo files.

[141] Oblique aerial photo "Best Farm" 1980. Monocacy NB photo files.

[142] NPS 2000, 2:33, 43. In Beasley, 3.23.

[143] Hamill 1934, 39. In NPS 2000, 2b.1.

[144] Recounted by Wiles children to CLI team (Temkin and Earley), summer 2000.

[145] U.S. Agricultural Census 1880.

[146] Aerial photos 1937 and 1952.

[147] Oblique aerial photo "New Jersey Monument" 1980 shows guard rails. Monocracy NB photo files.

[148] Oblique aerial photo "Best Farm" 1980.

[149] Ibid.

[150] Sutcliffe & Assoc., 1979.

[151] NPS 2000, 2b.14.

Chapter 2: Existing Conditions



The existing conditions at Best Farm have been briefly discussed in the last section of the previous chapter, but will be described more completely here. This chapter records the findings of field survey in 2003 and 2004 and compares those findings with what can be discerned on a small number of historic maps and the earliest aerial photographs.[1] Maps prepared for the 2003 archeological and identification study, showing the locations of structures that no longer exist, are other graphic representations that have been useful to the present study.[2] The discussion that follows is divided into the following subsections: Buildings and Structures, Small Scale Features, Vegetation, Spatial Organization, Circulation and Viewshed. (Refer to Maps 1 and 2, at end of this chapter, for location of features discussed.)



***Fig. 2.1:** Portion of main house and stone barn. Depressed trace (old alignment) of farm road from lower fields can be seen curving to the north in foreground. In mid-distance, behind the house, are a handful of fruit trees and a mulberry tree. Vehicles can be faintly made out on the I-270 railroad overpass in distance. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*

Buildings and Structures[3]

Eighteenth-Century Structures

Four buildings remain from the Vincendière period: the main house, sometimes called the manor house; the small stone-and-log dwelling, called the secondary house; a log kitchen, now attached to the main house but originally freestanding; and the imposing stone barn.

MAIN HOUSE

The main house is a large, L-shaped structure which has had numerous additions over the last two centuries. It stands on a slight north-south ridge facing east, toward Route 355. Different portions are built in stone, brick, log, or frame. The stone and brick sections have been covered with stucco, applied when first constructed; the log and frame sections are covered with different types of wood sidings, lapped or German.[4] The five-bay façade has a central entrance. The three bays to the left, or south, including the entrance bay, formed the original structure that dates from the 1790s; the two bays to the right were added c. 1795 to 1800. Differences in fenestration reflect the different dates of these two sections. Extensive renovation of the north addition and the construction of a gable-end roof over both sections occurred in the 1820s. The current porch dates to the 20th century, probably before 1937.[5] The new standing-seam metal roof on the front block of the house dates from 1998. The roof on the ell has not been replaced. A one-story log kitchen behind the original house was connected to the house by a two-story frame infill after the Civil War. A second story of frame was built above the log kitchen at the same time.[6] (The house or portions of it can be seen in figs 2.1, 2.3, and 2.21-23, 2.27 and 2.28. Chapter Five of this report presents an analysis of ethnographic antecedents for the original sections of this house.)

SECONDARY HOUSE



***Fig. 2.2:** Secondary house with aluminum pole barn, barnyard area, and corner of dairy barn, looking northwest. Foreground area used to be part of plowed front field, but now is mowed grass. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*

The so-called "secondary house," formerly thought to be the earliest structure at Best Farm, and sometimes described as a "settlement house," is now considered a contemporary of the main house (c. 1790). Its second story, of log construction – different from the first, which is of coursed limestone – is no longer thought to have been built decades after the first.[7] Facing east towards the turnpike, the first floor appears to be built on a hall and parlor plan. It measures 18 x 36 feet, and has a cellar beneath the south, or parlor, room. An exterior stone chimney rises on the north gable end, and an interior chimney is found at the division between the two rooms. Two doors in the east façade lead into each of the two rooms.[8] In addition to an indoor staircase, there appears to have been access to the second story from outside, probably via a stair and porch, long since gone. These were located on the west side of the building. There is indication of two doors at the second story, located at either end of the west elevation. These bracket two central windows.[9] The east elevation has two windows that are similarly placed on the second story. Other windows include one in the north gable's first floor, one on each level of the south gable, and one at each end of the attic. (Figs 2.2, 2.14, 2.24, 2.27 and 2.28)



***Fig. 2.3:** Yard behind main house, with house and corn crib in middle and left, and trench silo to right of picture. Secondary house is slightly downhill from main house and can be seen behind the corn crib. Line of trees on right marks the railroad right-of-way. A vegetable garden was probably located in level area between the railroad and house. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*

LOG OUTBUILDING

Behind the house stands a one-story log outbuilding, most recently used as a smokehouse. It has a gable roof and is sheathed in vertical siding. This structure underwent emergency stabilization in 2003. There is no confirmed date for the construction of this building, and this may not be its original location. (Figs 2.3 and 2.5)

STONE BARN

The stone barn is an exceptional structure, entirely unlike other barns in the region, which tend to be bank barns (also called "forebay" or "Swisser" barns). These typically have a ramp or bank at the rear with a forebay in front – a second story cantilevered above the first. The Best Farm stone barn has no bank or forebay (there is a minor earthen ramp to the rear). The rectangular, hipped-roof structure is constructed of narrow coursed limestone laid in mortar. Its broad east and west elevations have wide central openings that extend the entire height of the wall. Today the upper portions of these are filled with vertical board siding; it is not known how they were treated originally. A segmentally-arched window in the north elevation was formerly a door, but has now been partially enclosed. There are no openings in the south elevation. The east elevation has "two vertical vent slits."[10] The hipped roof is a 1998 replacement-in-kind of a deteriorated roof which may have dated from after the Civil War. It is possible that both replicated the form of the original roof.[11] (Figs 2.1, 2.7, 2.19, 2.27 and 2.28)

The original purpose of the barn is not known, though it is presumed it was used primarily for crop storage. In recent years it sheltered cattle. Recent archeological investigations have





***Fig. 2.4 (left):** Corn crib/wagon shed. Stone barn can be seen behind. Trees to left mark the railroad right-of-way and those to right mark the farm's boundary along I-270. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2003)* ***Fig. 2.5 (right):** Corner of main house with small outbuilding and corn crib, both re-sided with vertical boards. The small outbuilding, most recently used as a smokehouse, is likely of 19th-century origin. Beneath the sheathing is a log structure. The line in the turf in the foreground is the north edge of the former vegetable garden. Young fruit trees are part of a line of about eight trees. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*

uncovered the remains of a shed addition to the south elevation, which was probably constructed sometime between 1815 and 1890 and dismantled by 1920.[12] (A more detailed discussion of antecedents for the stone barn and its probable original use are found in Chapter 5.)

Nineteenth-Century Structures

Nineteenth-century structures on the farm include the frame drive-through corn crib (also used as a wagon shed), situated between the house and the stone barn. The corn crib has a timber frame on limestone foundation piers. It is sheathed with vertical board siding, spaced to allow for air circulation. Gable ends orient east and west, and open to allow a wagon to be driven into the structure and out the other side. A structure common on Maryland farms, the corn crib probably dates to the mid- or late-19th century.[13] The corn crib was stabilized in 2001. (Figs 2.4 and 2.5)

Nineteenth-century structures outside the farm core include the original abutments and piers for both the railroad and turnpike river bridges, which date to the 1830s. The bridges themselves are replacements.



***Fig. 2.6:** Pole barn with dairy barn and silo in background, looking north. Drive bends to the east at tree in distance. Section of drive in foreground leads to house, which is behind photographer. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2003)*

Twentieth-Century Structures

Other outbuildings on the Best Farm date to the 20th century. These include a gambrel-roofed, concrete-block dairy barn with milk house and silo, also of concrete block (c. 1949). South of the dairy barn is a pole barn, built after a frame bank barn was destroyed by a windstorm in 1992 or 1993. (Figs 2.2 and 2.6) The pole barn stands in the same location as the destroyed bank barn, which itself replaced

two earlier barns (probably also bank barns). The first barn burned as the result of cannon fire during the battle of 1864 and a fire in 1878 consumed its replacement.

The pole barn is wider and not as long as the bank barn it replaced, and has a poured concrete floor, rather than the stone foundation and probable earthen floor of the previous structure. For a brief span of years, perhaps between 1993 and 1997, what appears to have been a loafing shed (an open-sided structure for cows) was located between the dairy barn and pole barn (fig. 1.27, previous chapter).[14]



***Fig. 2.7:** Stone barn with trench silo southeast of it. Trees in distance mark I-270 and a road sign can be seen to right of frame. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*

Another structure is the vehicle or equipment shed, located at the end of the entrance drive north of the house. A structure, variously called the well house or pump house (it houses a pump) is located in the yard in front of the main house (fig. 2.26). It sits on a slight grass-covered mound, in the same location as a well that that possibly dates to the 18th century.[15] A trench silo – an earthen structure with an asphalt floor – was dug about 20 years ago (fig. 2.7). It measures about 100 by 20 feet and is less than 10 feet deep at the end opposite its opening. Soil excavated from the trench surrounds it, accounting for a good part of its depth. Grass grows on the outside slopes. The trench silo is now filled with wood and metal debris collected from around the farm.

Archeology

In addition to the shed attachment to the stone barn, archeological investigations in 2002-2003 found evidence of three other structures dating to the 18th and 19th centuries. These include a cistern, a privy, and an ice house (fig. 1.4, previous chapter). Best Farm also contains the archeological site of a probable slave village investigated by remote sensing and excavation in 2004 (fig. 1.3, previous chapter). Features, potential structures, and a large deposit of domestic materials dating to the late-18th and early-19th centuries were identified. The types and time spans of the artifacts are consistent with the period when slaves were occupants of the farm. The farm also contains prehistoric archeological sites, which are located in the floodplain. All archeological resources are currently covered and unmarked.

Railroad Junction

The Y-junction, which still exists, is shaped by the meeting of the lateral railroad stem to Frederick with the main CSX (formerly B&O) tracks. The lateral line turns north, while the main line crosses the farm in an east-west direction. No buildings any longer exist at the

junction. A feature of apparent recent origin is a concrete platform that crosses the lateral stem of the railroad a little north of the junction.

Terrain Changes

Numerous manipulations of terrain are found throughout the property. Some, such as the railroad cuts and berms and the Route 355 and I-270 embankments, were intentional restructurings of the ground plain and are readily apparent. Others, such as the mound associated with 19th-century iron-making (fig. 2.11), slight changes in elevation along the edges of a plowed field or garden (figs 2.21 and 22, and 2.25 and 26), or the sunken trace of a former farm road (fig. 2.1), are the by product of an activity or use. There is also some manipulation of the terrain on which the stone barn is located, but this is quite faint. It consists of the gentle shaping of naturally high ground to form the terrace on which the barn is sited, and the creation of an earthen ramp, only slightly higher than the surrounding grade, leading to the barn's western entrance. These terrain manipulations are old. The barn terrace dates to 200 years ago; the mound associated with iron manufacture has been there possibly since before the Civil War; and the railroad cuts and berms date to 1830. The Route 355 embankments reflect two periods of construction. An older embanked alignment is visible between the river and the railroad cut, especially where it passes immediately east of the New Jersey monument. The later (1930s) embankment, which is the present one, is a more pronounced feature, visible both north and south of the railroad cut (fig. 2.24). Interstate 270 occupies a prominent embankment along much of the western boundary of Best Farm (figs 2.19 and 2.20). (See also terrain changes associated with fields and plowing discussed under Spatial Organization later in chapter.)



Fig. 2.8: Monument to the 14th New Jersey Volunteer Regiment, looking across floodplain fields to river. (LCS photo, 1990, Monocacy NB photo files)

Small-Scale Features

Commemorative Features

Three monuments commemorating the Battle of Monocacy are located on the west side of Route 355 on small parcels of Best Farm land purchased from the owners. (See Map 1 for locations.) The monument to the 14th New Jersey Regiment, a granite figure of a New Jersey infantryman atop an obelisk, was erected in 1907. In 1914 the United Daughters of the Confederacy erected a rough-hewn, rectangular stone with a bronze plaque to commemorate the Confederate forces that were engaged here. The most recent monument to be added to the battlefield is one called the "Maryland" or "Centennial Monument," erected in 1964 by the state of Maryland. It is a rough granite block with the dates "1864 – 1964" engraved on the front and a bronze plaque in the shape of an open book affixed to the upper, angled surface. The New Jersey monument is located just south of where Route 355 passes over the railroad, and the two other monuments stand side by side at the north end of the farm (figs 2.8-10). All three are on the west side of the road.





Fig. 2.9 (left): *Monument erected by United Daughters of the Confederacy in 1914, looking west. The monument occupies a small parcel of land on the west side of Route 355, at the north end of the farm. (LCS photo, 2004)*

Fig. 2.10 (right): *Monument erected by Maryland Civil War Centennial Commission in 1964 commemorating the Battle of Monocacy. It stands next to the Confederate (UDC) monument and shares the same concrete pad. (LCS photo, 1990)*



Fig. 2.11: *Farm entrance drive from Route 355. Slippery elm tree in middle distance marks where drainage passes under drive. To the east of the drainage (near the top of the shadow in this image) is a mound believed to be remains of iron manufacturing in the 19th century. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*



***Fig. 2.12:** Post-and-six-rail fence along Route 355, constructed by NPS c. 2000, is similar to type of fence that would have lined the turnpike at time of Civil War. View is to northeast. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*

Fencing

Several fences and the remains of others are found on the farm today. Other non-historic fences that until recently edged some fields have been removed. An existing fence is the new post-and-six-rail fence built by NPS in 2000 (figs 2.12 and 2.28). It follows the west side of Route 355, from north of the railroad overpass to the north boundary of the farm, and is similar to the Civil War-era fences in this location that were described in the war damage claims of John Best and Charles Trail. Near the overpass, the fence is set at the bottom of the embankment and is not visible from the road. Metal guard rails are positioned at the top of the slope, along the road. Another existing fence is one constructed of stone posts and iron pipe, which edges the New Jersey monument's quarter-acre plot. There used to be a post-and-chain fence with a gate at the Confederate monument, but this one no longer exists.[16] A chain link fence follows the western property edge, along I-270. It is somewhat hidden where it is positioned at the base of the highway embankment and more visible where the field and road approach the same grade. Other chain link fences line the northern property boundary on both sides of Route 355.

The historic locations of some fences on Best Farm are known from Civil War-era maps, though the maps are very sketchy at this level of detail. One ran diagonally between a northern and a western field (Hotchkiss map) and one divided the floodplain fields west of the turnpike (von Lindenberg map) (figs 1.11-13, previous chapter). The 1830 drawing of a proposed canal shows fences behind the main house, probably dividing yards, and other fences that appear to delineate some of the property boundaries (fig. 1.5, previous chapter). John Best's war damage testimony mentions only one internal fence but many boundary fences that edged the Georgetown Pike and railroad, and even ran along the riverbank. Presuming that field patterns largely persisted, the 1937 and 1952 aerials reveal the location of field edges (and probably fences) that might be in the same places they were c. 1860. (The 1937 aerial is the base map for many of the figures in the last chapter and the 1952 aerial can be seen as fig. 1.19).

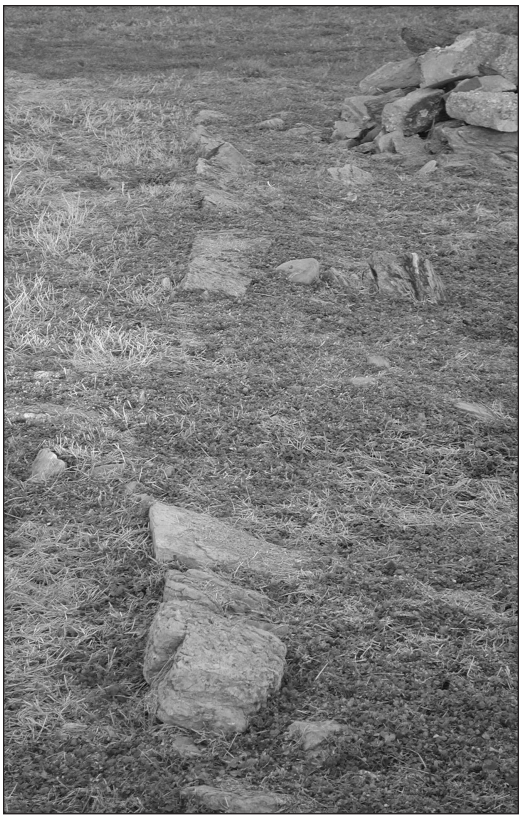




Fig. 2.13 (left): *Line of stones marks south wall of an enclosure – probably a barnyard connected to the former bank barn. Pile of stones at top right of picture have been gathered from the immediate area and are probably the remains of either the bank barn foundation or the barnyard enclosure. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*

Fig. 2.14 (above): *East side of secondary house with part of the barnyard, no longer fenced, in foreground. Pile of stones is the same as seen in previous picture. The stone wall (remains of which are shown in previous image) formed a boundary between the barnyard and yard of secondary house. Dark tree silhouetted to left of picture is the walnut tree that marks the location of the farm road from the lower fields. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*

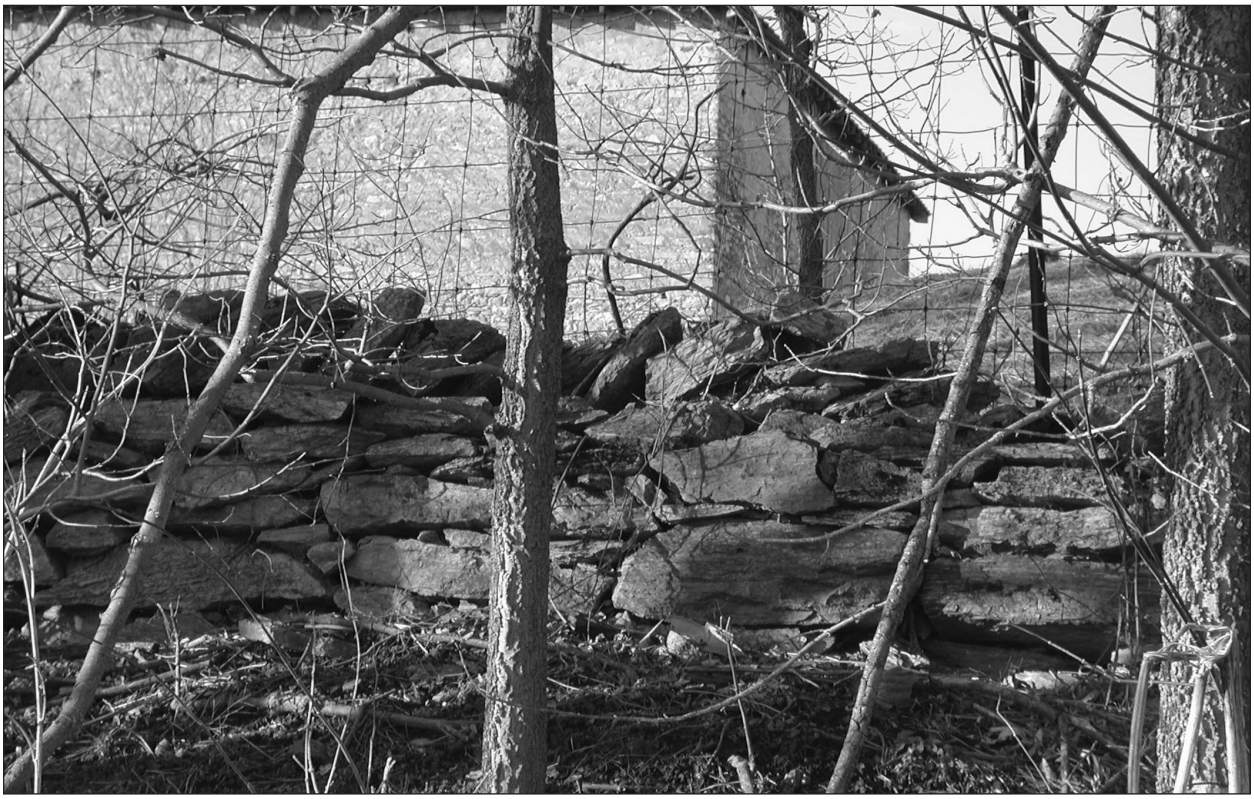


Fig. 2.15: *Large flat field stones with at least one cut face in section of stone wall along railroad right-of-way. Top course of stones was set at a diagonal. Woven wire with six-inch mesh is strung between metal posts along the same fenceline. The stone barn rises in background. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*



***Fig. 2.16:** Section of stone wall with flatter, tightly-fitted stones, and some remaining portion of the top course of slanting stones. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*

The most important historic fences found on the farm today are the dry-laid stone walls (or stone fences) found along the north side of the railroad right-of-way between Route 355 and I-270. The walls are discontinuous and probably never formed an unbroken line. They are three to four feet high and exhibit a variety of workmanship, possibly the result of the varying character of the rock gathered in the immediate vicinity, the difference in technique employed by individual builders, or related to the particular location along the right-of-way. Some of the walls are free-standing, while others appear to be retaining walls, built at the base of the railroad embankment. (figs 2.15 and 2.16)

Remnants of other stone walls are found in two locations on the farm. These walls were leveled, practically to the ground, at some time in the past, leaving only foundation stones. One such remnant is located on the west side of Route 355, near the Confederate and Maryland monuments. It is about a hundred feet long and is all that remains of the stone walls that lined both sides of the Georgetown Pike in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The other remnant wall is located southeast of the pole barn (see fig. 2.13) and was probably part of a barnyard enclosure for the bank barn, which was blown down in 1992 or 1993. In 1937, as seen on the aerial, the barnyard enclosure appears to have had walls on north, east and south sides. By the time of the 1952 aerial, after the dairy barn was built, the enclosure had lost its north end. It is not known when the east and south walls of the enclosure were leveled. It is possible they were still standing in 1992 or 1993, and were cleared by the farm's tenants in connection with the raising of the pole barn. (See figs 1.18 and 1.19, previous chapter.)



***Fig. 2.17:** Wooden posts of uncertain date, some with wire still attached, mark sections of fenceline along railroad. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*

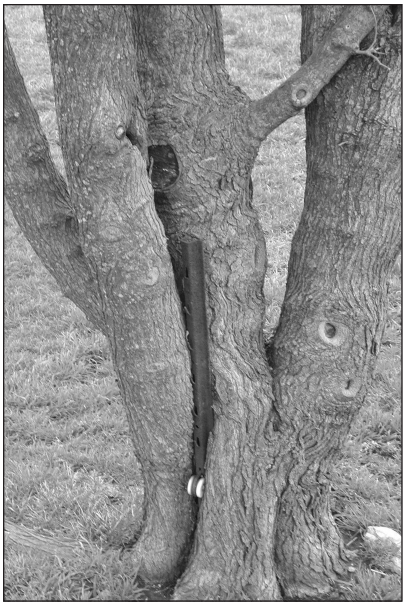


***Fig. 2.18:** Mulberry tree along north edge of former vegetable garden has grown around a metal fence post with a ceramic spool, usually indicative of electrical fencing. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*

Wood and metal fence remnants of undetermined age are found in various locations around the farm, primarily along the north side of the railroad's main line (fig. 2.17). Among these are timber posts that are four or five-feet-high and approximately ten inches in diameter. Barbed wire is still strung between some posts. In one location there is woven wire with six-inch mesh, a type of wire fencing usually used to keep animals in or out of an area. Mixed in with the stone walls and timber posts, there are also metal posts – some with woven and barbed wire still attached. White ceramic spools are attached to some of the metal posts, indicating that some fences had electric wire. Part of this fenceline formed the southern boundary of a roughly-rectangular space south of the house and stone barn that appears to have been enclosed by fences and subdivided by a north-south running fence. The division to the east probably was the vegetable garden and the one on the west may have been a yard for poultry and small penned animals, or possibly another vegetable garden. (See figs 1.18 and 1.19, previous chapter) A mulberry tree in the rear yard of the house, which has grown around an iron post, may have marked an edge or corner of the vegetable garden (fig. 2.18).

Attached to the northeast corner of the stone barn is a tall wooden post with a ceramic spool nailed to it. It is what remains of a fence that ran along the south side of the large west field. In 1937, the field produced wheat or hay, but by 1952, and still in 1980, cows were pastured there. The fenceline can be faintly traced on the 1937 aerial, extending from the barn, along the south and east sides of this field. There is no fence in this location today.

In 1937 and 1952, the large floodplain field west of Route 355 appears to still have been divided into two fields (as shown in Hotchkiss's 1864 field sketch, fig. 1.12, previous chapter). A fence may or may not have marked the division at this time. Today that area is not divided by a fence, but typically two crops – usually corn and soybeans – are grown there.

When the farm's tenants moved their household from the property c. 1999, they removed a number of fences that enclosed various fields. One was the metal post-and-wire-mesh fence that lined the south side of the entry drive, running from Route 355 probably as far as the dairy barn.[17] Though some of the fences removed were in historic locations, the fence materials (mostly metal) were of more recent provenance. It should be noted, however, that metal fencing came into general use soon after the Civil War.

Sometime after 1993, in order to keep the cows away from the secondary house, the park installed a new post-and-wire fence around the edges of a yard traditionally associated with the secondary house, at least as seen on the 1937 aerial. A similar fence enclosed the barnyard just north of the secondary house yard. These fences have since been removed, and only a few posts (and the remains of the stone wall) mark the location of the barnyard.

Culverts

Two historic stone culverts tunnel through the railroad berm and drain the fields north of the railroad; one is located east of the house, at the largest drainage, and the other is at the drainage west of the stone barn. Silt, eroded from the fields, has built up around the culvert entry points, but both culverts appear to be functioning. There is also a non-historic galvanized metal pipe and stone culvert at the low place along the entry road, which likely replaced some older type of culvert.

Miscellaneous Small-Scale Features

The park placed two waysides explaining the battle adjacent to the two Civil War monuments at the north end of the property. The monuments and waysides all sit on a single concrete pad. To facilitate visitation to the New Jersey monument, which had been left stranded by the realignment of Route 355, an access road and parking lot were constructed. The access road diverges from the west side of the highway and runs for a couple of hundred feet, parallel to the highway, along the trace of the old turnpike. The parking lot is adjacent to the monument, but on slightly higher ground, and a short flight of wooden steps was constructed to connect the two grades.

Timber poles carrying electrical and telephone wire line both sides of Route 355 and run along one side of the railroad. Several poles are positioned along the farm's entrance drive, and another four are located near the house, pole barn, and equipment shed (figs 2.6, 2.11-12).

A water spigot on a short wooden post is located along the south edge of the former barnyard, in line with the remnant stone wall. Stones that probably come from the demolished barnyard enclosure or the bank barn foundation are piled nearby (figs 2.13 and 2.14). Additional spigots might be located in other locations within the farm core.

None of these miscellaneous features are historic. The stones in the pile probably belonged to an historic feature – the barn or the barnyard enclosure. The spigot may relate to the historic location of a spring, but is not itself historic.

Vegetation

Best Farm is characterized by large open fields bordered by trees and other vegetation which grow along property boundaries, transportation corridors, and the bank of the Monocacy River. The vegetation is thickest along the river and does not uniformly line all corridors. It is found on the east side of Route 355, but is mostly absent on the west side of the road, leaving the farmyard complex open to view from the road. No internal fencerows or lines of trees, other than those lining the CSX tracks, are found on the farm.

Singular Trees

One large and one small silver maple tree (*Acer saccharinum*) grow in the yard in front of the house (figs 2.3 and 2.23), and a walnut tree (*Juglans nigra*) is located close to where the farm road crosses the railroad tracks (fig. 2.14), near trees that line the railroad right-of-way, but separate from them. There are also a half-dozen fruit trees and a mulberry tree (*Morus sp.*) behind the house. The entrance drive lacks trees except in two locations: a slippery elm (*Ulmus rubra*) is found at the low point (fig. 2.10), where a natural drainage channel crosses the drive, and two hackberries (*Celtis occidentalis* – also called *C. laevigata*) stand at the bend in the drive near the dairy barn (fig. 2.6). Two hornbeams (*Carpinus caroliniana*) grew opposite the elm until damaged in windstorms in 2003 and removed. The same storms also damaged one of the hackberries, shearing off some of its limbs.

It is difficult to estimate the ages of these trees. The trees in front of the house and those located where the front drainage and entrance drive intersect existed in 1937. Those in front of the house are not exactly in the same locations as seen on the aerial of that date, although the large one may have existed as a very young tree then. In 1997, the stump of another large tree stood near the front porch of the house, but has since been removed (by grinding) so there is no trace of it.[18] Trees at the bend in the drive and in the location of the walnut tree can be seen on the 1952 aerial.



***Fig. 2.19:** Looking across west field to I-270 overpass of railroad from inside stone barn. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*

Another very large tree can be seen on the 1952 aerial between the corn crib and the kitchen entrance to the house. Four or five trees, large enough to be seen on the 1952 aerial, grew along what was probably the north edge of the vegetable garden, which undoubtedly was fenced. One of these was the tree stump located near the cellar door until recently (fig. 2.22).

Fruit Trees

The six or eight fruit trees located behind the house are peaches, cherries, and possibly plums (figs 2.3 and 2.21). A couple of these might be 30 years old, but most appear to have been planted in the last 20 years. At least one is dead. No trees can be seen in this location on the 1937 or 1952 aerials; either they were not there at that time or were too small to be seen on an aerial. In 1937 there were several lines of what appear to be small trees north of the bank barn at the bend in the entrance drive (later the site of the dairy barn). This may have been a small orchard. If it was an orchard, it was old in 1937, because there were gaps within the pattern of equally spaced trees. When the dairy barn was built, c. 1949, more of the trees disappeared as can be seen on the 1952 aerial. None of them remain today.



***Fig. 2.20:** Looking northwest across west field and drainage to I-270 from near the stone barn. Southern part of field has been mowed, but northern part, which is often planted in corn, has been recently plowed. A line of trees edges the field. Highway sign announces rest stop. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*

Vegetable Garden

As recounted by the former farm tenants, in the 1960s there was a large vegetable garden in the area south of the house, adjacent to the railroad tracks.[19] It is very likely that there was a garden in this location for a much longer time. Vegetable gardens were a necessity of life on farms until sometime in the 20th century. Generally, they were located as near the house as possible for ease of harvesting. When this one ceased to be planted is uncertain. As mentioned in the section on fences, two rectangular enclosed spaces were located south of the house in 1937 and 1952. The eastern rectangle was probably the vegetable garden.

Today, the space where the garden is believed to have been located can be read by an approximate foot-high change in elevation along its northern edge, where there is a distinct line created by the meeting of the slightly lower grade of the garden area and the grade of the adjacent yard (figs. 2.5, 2.21-22). This topographical change runs almost the full length of the garden, from a point east of the house, along its south elevation, past the row of fruit trees (which would have been outside the garden area), to a point near the mulberry tree, where, in the past, a fence separated the eastern enclosure from the western one. The slight change in elevation was probably created by leveling the garden and then reinforced by plowing. Today, a few metal posts and bits of wire fencing, found in places that correspond with the edges of the rectangle seen in the aerials, are evidence that this area was enclosed.



Fig. 2.21: *Vegetable garden was located between house and railroad tracks within level area on the right side of image. Northern edge of the garden is marked by a slight change of grade – probably the result of plowing. Fruit trees grow in a line outside former garden area and lilac shrubs are found along back wall of house. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004*



Fig. 2.22: *Stump of tree (now removed) located along edge of former vegetable garden south of house. The 1952 aerial suggests that a number of trees grew along this edge of the garden, probably sprouting in the fenceline. The terrain change between the leveled ground of the garden and the grade mean the house is area is clearly visible in this photo. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*



***Fig. 2.23:** Main house with silver maple trees in front. Shed attachment on right side of house is modern porch entrance to kitchen. Corn crib is on right of picture with stone barn behind it. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*

Ornamental Plantings and Ground Covers

Ornamental plantings found around the house and yard probably were planted by the farm's tenants. Though we have no ages for these plantings, some of them could be half a century-old or more, and may have succeeded other similar types of plantings. None are particularly well-pruned or maintained. Near the front door of the house there are irises and a wisteria vine (*Wisteria sp.*) pruned as a shrub. Grape hyacinths (*Muscari sp.*) grow thinly along the front foundation of the house. On the south side of the house, where the ell forms a corner with the main block, there are a number of lilacs (*Syringa vulgaris*). Near the lilacs, and extending mostly in a single line to the west, are the fruit trees mentioned above. At the end of the line of fruit trees is a healthy mulberry tree and a bridal wreath spirea (*Spiraea prunifolia*). Daylilies (*Hemerocallis sp.*) are found near the cellar entrance on the south side of the house and on the north side. Two hibiscus shrubs (*Hibiscus syriacus*) stand along the drive near the pole barn, and irises are planted at the base of the single stone pier at the entrance to the farm. A 1997 photo of the façade of the main house shows a vine growing on wire mesh attached to either side of the porch.[20]

A fairly smooth lawn surrounds the house on all sides today. It extends from the front of the house about 200 feet east, covering the gentle slope of the front yard, and runs north to where the entrance drive ends near the pole barn. The lawn covers the ground under the silver maples in front of the house and carpets the south yard, where the vegetable garden probably was. Behind the house, it covers the somewhat uneven ground where the fruit trees are planted. The ground vegetation becomes rougher around the corn crib and between the crib and the stone barn, where it is comprised of taller grass and herbaceous forbs. Until recently, thousands of square feet of concrete covered some of the ground between the corn crib, trench silo and stone



***Fig. 2.24:** South corner of secondary house with front (or east) field stretching to Route 355. Route 355 is elevated above the field on an embankment that carries the road across the railroad, which is set in a cut. Footings of the old crossing, on grade with the field, are located this side of the present road. Behind the secondary house the land slopes to an ephemeral stream that drains a large part of the front field. Behind that, near the top of the rise, is where archeologists recently investigated a domestic site probably associated with slave dwellings. The line of trees to right marks railroad right-of-way. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*

barn. More concrete was spread near the pole and dairy barns. Park staff have overseen the removal of these materials.

Park staff planted grass and ornamental herbaceous plants at the New Jersey monument in the late 1980s or early 1990s, after clearing a thicket of vegetation.

Vegetation along Transportation Corridors and Property Boundaries

A comparison of the 1937 and 1952 aerials with a recent aerial (c. 2001) reveals a gradual increase in the number and size of trees and other vegetation along corridors and boundaries over the last 60 years. In 1937, there were very few trees on either side of Route 355, no trees along the northern property boundary and only a few in 1952, and a few scattered trees along the western property boundary (before Route 240). Vegetation along either side of the railroad was much more dispersed than today. A buffer of trees began to grow along Route 240 (later I-270) soon after the road was completed. The trees along this corridor are thickest where the road crosses the floodplain field south of the railroad tracks. Along the river bank is a band of trees that is not significantly wider now than in 1937. On the north edge of the property, the narrow buffer of trees that separates the farm fields from the office park was already well established by 1980 when construction of the office park began.[21] A thick growth of trees covers the embankments on either side of Route 355, between the bridge over the Monocacy River and the railroad cut. They are thickest on the west side of the road, south of the New Jersey monument, where they fill in the old route of the Georgetown Pike. On the east side of Route 355, trees cover the road embankment and extend along part of the railroad's south side, where, in 1937, buildings associ-



***Fig. 2.25:** Former edge of plowed front field has left imprint on ground – a slight topographical change that reads as a line across yard in front of main house. The line continues past the well house. Old alignment of farm road from lower fields was likely positioned on the upper side of this edge. Trees line the north edge of the railroad right-of-way. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*

ated with the railroad junction stood. North of the railroad cut, trees are found only along the east side of Route 355. The approximate 14 acres of the farm that lie west of the I-270 corridor have grown up in large pine trees and appear to be succeeding into hardwoods. (Figs 2.3, 2.11-12, 2.19, 2.21, 2.25 and 2.29)

Survey of the trees and other vegetation on the farm in 2003 revealed hackberries to be the major tree species present along corridors and boundaries other than the river. It is among the largest trees in these locations, distinguished by its arching branches and fine texture. Along the railroad tracks, there are also locusts (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), mulberries, a few silver maples, and some ashes (*Fraxinus sp.*) or box elders (*Acer negundo*). Ailanthus (*A. altissima*), a non-native invasive tree, is present along the tracks, and in a few locations it has proliferated. Only one small red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) is found along the tracks between Route 355 and I-270. Many of the above-named species line the east side of I-270, the farm's west boundary. There are also elms (either *Ulmus americana* or *U. rubra*), black cherries (*Prunus serotina*), perhaps some hornbeams, a few catalpas (*C. bignonoides*), a mimosa (*Albizia julibrissin*), and probably others that were not identified. Where the interstate is about on grade with the northwestern field, and the ground probably very dry, the buffer is thin and there is a stand of ailanthus. Along the north property boundary, hackberries predominate. Some of these are particularly large and may be the trees seen on the 1937 aerial. There are also a few mimosas and staghorn sumacs (*Rhus typhina*). Closer to Route 355, along the same boundary, there is a large stand of ailanthus. The trees that line Route 355 – occurring only on the east side of it – have not been fully identified in field survey. Most are deciduous. Among them there are probably some elms and hackberries. Nearer the floodplain, sycamores (*Platanus occidentalis*) are also present along the road. Several red cedars stand out along this corridor. One is rather prominently positioned across the road from the entrance to Best Farm. None of the trees along Route 355

are very old. There were practically no trees seen along the road on the 1952 aerial. Vines and understory plants grow along all of the corridors, rampantly in some locations.

Spatial Organization

Field Patterns

The field patterns of Best Farm bear a remarkable similarity to those of the early 20th century and probably to those of the 19th century. The railroad, with its east-west orientation, and Route 355, running north-south, create the primary divisions within the farm. The major section of the farm – its core – lies west of Route 355 and north of the railroad. The complex of farm buildings and what has the appearance of four fields, but is more accurately counted as three, are located there. South of the railroad and west of Route 355, a single field occupies the wide floodplain. East of Route 355, a large field lies between the road and the Frederick spur line. Two small fields are located at the bend in the river, divided from each other by the railroad (one northeast of the junction and the other south of it). Sometime before 1937 the field east of 355 was reduced by about 20 acres at its north end.

The division of the fields in the farm core is very pronounced on the 1937 aerial. The photo shows how the Best Farm entrance drive, with its right-angled bend, and the farm road that ran to North Hermitage divided the core of the farm into three fields of approximately equal size. An additional field, square in shape, adjoined the north end of the western field. (See fig 1. Introduction and figs 1.10 and 1.18) Today the shape of the western field is different. When the square field was divided by the interstate, its eastern half was absorbed into the adjacent field and the historic field boundary between them dissolved. On the west side of I-270, isolated from the rest of the farm, is the other half of the square field that has grown up in woods, as previously mentioned.

The field north of the entrance drive has particular historical significance. It is where Jed Hotchkiss's 1864 "Sketch of the Battle of Monocacy" shows a patch of woods, which has come to be known as "Best Grove." It is where Confederate generals had their headquarters for a few days in September 1862, before moving west across South Mountain to Antietam. These woods appear to have been cut down shortly after the Civil War, possibly to expand pasture land.

Until 1908, Best Farm contained one other field, an 84-acre square piece situated north of today's boundary, on the west side of Route 355. The land being cleared for an office park, seen in a photo from 1980 (see fig. 1.26), is that 84 acres. The office park also absorbed a majority of North Hermitage.

Yards

The shape of the yard that surrounds the house today is similar, but not exactly the same, as that seen in the early aerials (see figs 1.18 and 1.19). The space on the north side of the house has dwindled – an informal parking area adjacent to the house in 1952 is now a small asphalt parking



***Fig. 2.26**: Newly repainted well house sits atop small earthen mound. Shadowed line in foreground denotes former edge of plowed field. Farm road from lower fields used to pass this side of well house, presumably above the edge of plowing. The farm road now passes behind the well house. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*

pad, and the drive to the corn crib and equipment shed has encroached on the north yard. The lawn area in front of the house extends a bit farther to the east today, because plowing stops short of where it used to end. The edge of plowing now lines up with the eastern edge of the yard surrounding the secondary house, rather than extending nearly to the well house. The yards associated with the secondary house, the pole barn, and the dairy barn line up along the entrance drive after it bends. Their eastern boundary runs parallel with the drive, except at the north end where it follows a natural drainage swale. As in the past, the east line of this area is the edge between plowed and unplowed ground, but in the past the edge was also defined by a fence. The only elements that give definition to the space around the secondary house today are the remnant stone wall of the former barnyard to the north of the house and the naturally low-growing vegetation that distinguishes much of this part of the yard.

Like other farms, the yards that surround the house and farm buildings of Best Farm have a simple and practical layout, determined by patterns of use over time. Now, with features gone and less use, the pattern has grown indistinct. In 1937 and 1952, when there were more outbuildings within the farmstead, the pattern of yards and paths was more cleanly delineated. By 1952, greater wear could be seen in the yard north of the house (by that time more motor vehicles were probably being driven up to the house). During the 1980s and 1990s, the indiscriminate paving of concrete and asphalt in areas of high use within the farmyard disturbed the neatness

of the pattern and erased the distinction between yard and drive seen in the earlier aerials.[22] Since 2001, the park has removed nearly all the concrete – over 1,400 tons of it. One place where the concrete has been allowed to remain is in front of the stone barn where there is a rectangular concrete pad. Without the fences, the bank barn, and the barnyard, and without the activities that until recently characterized the areas around the farm buildings, the spatial definition of the yard areas is more vague today than it was in the past.

Circulation

Circulation within the Farm Core

ENTRANCE DRIVE

An L-shaped entrance drive forms the major circulation pattern of the farm. The drive is in its historic location, and its surface – primarily compacted earth with fine gravel – is probably not very different from its historic appearance. Historically, it would probably have been spread with some fine stone material, sand, cinders, ash, or anything of that nature that was available. The drive to the corn crib and stone barn, where large areas of concrete paving were recently removed, is currently compacted earth with some gravel. It is infrequently used, at least as it nears the stone barn. A lightly-graveled drive runs from the end of the entrance drive near the pole barn to the north side of the house, where there is the small asphalt parking area.

FARM ROAD

The farm road from the lower fields was shifted sometime after 1952 to follow a more direct route from the point where it crossed the railroad tracks to where the bank barn then stood. (To follow this description, refer to Map 2, this chapter. Also see figs 1.4, 1.18 and 1.19, last chapter.) In the past, when the road entered the farm core, it turned west to run parallel with the railroad for a short distance (readable on the ground today as a swale-like depression), then made an almost right-angled turn to the north, heading for the bank barn. The location of the farm road was probably dictated by the corner of the front plowed field which it skirted. After turning in the direction of the bank barn, the old road alignment formed an edge between the plowed field (on the east) and what is thought to be the former vegetable garden (on the west). Past the garden – whose northern edge is marked by another terrain change – the old road formed the boundary between the front yard and the field. Today there is a grade change along this line. What was the plowed field is six inches to 18 inches lower than the garden and front yard. The road was probably positioned on the upper side of this "step" (thus not right in the plowed field). It may have been fenced on both sides as it passed between garden and field. There may even have been a gate across the road in this location (see the 1937 and 1952 aerials, presented as figs 1.18 and 1.19, last chapter). The road continued past (east of) the well house, then angled slightly to the northwest but quickly adjusted in the direction of the bank barn. From there, farm vehicles might have entered the barn, gone into the barnyard, or turned west to meet the farm's entrance drive and the branch of the entrance drive that went to the corn crib

or stone barn. Moving in that last direction, the road probably passed between the bank barn and the ice house.

The walnut tree near the railroad tracks is a useful marker for the old and current alignments of this farm road. The tree, which can be detected on the 1952 aerial, is positioned north and east of the old alignment. Today the farm road crosses the yard diagonally without the angled turn. The walnut tree is west in this alignment, which crosses what used to be part of the plowed front field. The location of the current route is not very pronounced, marked only by faint wear in the lawn. Moving in the opposite direction, into the lower fields, there does not seem to be any one route traveled; vehicles may go in several directions and have left no clearly delineated route.

ROAD TRACE

A small section remains of the road which once ran from the South Hermitage (Best Farm) farmstead to North Hermitage and the Buckeystown Pike (marked on Map 2 as a road trace). It divides the northern and western fields of Best Farm and is maintained by farming activities in those fields.

DRIVEWAY

In 1937, a narrow driveway led to the kitchen entrance of the house from the end of the entrance drive near the bank barn. The 1937 aerial also shows what was probably a rather amorphous path leading to the front door. In the 1952 aerial, these circulation features were decidedly more pronounced, suggesting greater or different use of the driveway, perhaps by motor vehicles, and perhaps more frequent entry through the front door. (See figs 1.18 and 1.19) Today, the entrance drive still extends in the direction of the kitchen, but it now arrives at a small asphalt parking pad and there is no path to the front door.

DRIVE TO STONE BARN

The drive to the stone barn is not very clear on either the 1937 or 1952 aerials. It seems to go around and through the corn crib and pass between various small structures that are no longer extant as it proceeds to the stone barn. This drive is not very clear today either, and seems to be infrequently used.

FOOT PATH

In 1937, a foot path led to the secondary house from the farm road, running parallel with what might have been a fence on the west side of the building. Fences may also have separated the secondary house from the plowed field and the barnyard, shaping a distinct yard around that house. Today there is no one, clear footpath to the secondary house, nor is the yard very distinct.

Roads Outside the Farm Core

A farm road crosses the field east of Route 355, roughly following an east-west course as far as the rail line. It is similar to a road that existed in 1937 and 1952, but which ceased to be used sometime after that. Apparently it was reinstated by the former tenants, who still hold the agri-

cultural lease. In 1937, this road turned northeast at the railroad tracks and ran to the riverbank. This second leg no longer exists.

Two roads exit from Route 355 south of the rail line. One leaves from the west side and leads to the New Jersey monument, following for a short distance the trace of the old Georgetown Pike. The other turns off from the east side of Route 355 and descends the embankment to the south side of the railroad junction. Approved vehicles can proceed along the railroad right-of-way for a short distance. The trace of the Georgetown Pike is historic, and the road on the east side of Route 355 is mostly in its historic location, although it is hard to be sure because the alignment of Route 355 has changed. North of the railroad cut, the old alignment of the Georgetown Pike is located west of Route 355, at the base of the embankment. It reads clearly on the 1937 aerial, but today is less discernable, blending into the contours of the front field. Its location can be projected in relation to the still-visible footings of the old bridge that carried the pike over the railroad.

Transportation Corridors

Interstate 270 has become an ever more traveled route of commercial and commuter traffic. If it is widened, as has been talked about, the park properties will be greatly affected. Route 355, the old Georgetown Pike, remains a two-lane road, which generally carries local traffic. In comparison to I-270, it is a country road, yet cars pass along it in a fairly continual stream. Several times a day, trains cross the Best Farm along the CSX tracks, passing south of the Best farmhouse. The MARC train, a light-rail commuter train from Baltimore, diverges from the main line at the junction to follow the stem north to Frederick. The commuter line opened in 2002 and trains run during the morning and evening commute.



***Fig. 2.27**: View of the Best farmstead from the Centennial Monument, near the north edge of the farm. NPS wayside is partly visible behind the monument. (NCR/LCP digital photo, 2004)*





***Fig. 2.28**: Farmyard cluster seen from opposite side of Route 355, near where a new visitor center will be built. Entrance drive to farm is visible, passing between front and north fields. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*

***Fig. 2.29**: View south from visitor center site to Sugarloaf Mountain in distance. Line of trees borders east side of Route 355. (NCR/CLP digital photos, 2004)*

Adjacent Land and Viewshed

The farm complex and several of its fields are upland sites from which there are many views into the distance. To the north and west, urbanization has crept close to the park. Not only is I-270 clearly visible from Best Farm, but a large highway sign, announcing restaurants at the next exit north, can be seen from the pole barn. A line of trees along the northern boundary shields some views of the office park to the north.

The new visitor center will be built on the highest part of the farm, at its northeast corner. From that location there are good views to the Catoctin Mountains to the west and northwest and Sugarloaf Mountain to the southwest. Views east and south, in the direction of the Monocacy River, are somewhat more restricted by the ring of low, wooded hills on the opposite side of the river. There is one long view to the southeast through the slight gorge of Bush Creek. From the visitor center site, one can see another important Civil War-era structure, Worthington House, on a hillside across the river to the southwest. (Figs 2.27-29)

Endnotes, Chapter 2: Existing Conditions

[1] The aerials of 1937 and 1952 can be compared with the 1864 Hotchkiss "Sketch of the Battle of Monocacy," which shows the farm's field patterns, its entrance drive, and the woodlot (Best Grove) in broad but recognizable form. The Hotchkiss map is less useful for analysis of finer-grain landscape details.

[2] Beasley et al., *Archeological Overview and Assessment and Evaluation Study of the Best Farm*, draft 2004.

[3] In addition to the archeological study referenced above, the discussion of buildings relies on several reports to which the reader has already been referred: Reed, *Cultural Resource Study: Monocacy National Battlefield*, Nov. 1999, Aug. 2001 and draft Dec. 2003; Reed, *Monocacy National Battlefield (Additional Information)*, Registration Form, National Register of Historic Places, 2002; GWWO Inc., *L'Hermitage: Historic Structures Report*, final draft 2003; and Rivers, "Contextualizing the Hermitage," 2002.

[4] Reed 2002, 7, 5.

[5] The porch is distinguishable on the 1937 aerial photograph.

[6] Reed 2002, 7, 3; GWWO, 4-8.

[7] Architrave P.C., Architects, *Best Farm Secondary House Historic Structures Report*, Monocacy National Battlefield, draft 2005. Earlier theory that smaller house preceded the main house appears in Reed, 1999, 67 and 2003, 8, 11.

[8] Reed 2002, 7, 4.

[9] Ibid, 7, 5.

[10] Reed 2002, 7, 5.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Beasley communication 1/22/04.

[13] Reed 2002, 7, 5.

[14] List of Classified Structures photo, 1997. Monocacy NBP photo files.

[15] Beasley communication 1/22/04.

[16] NPS 2000, 2b.2. (One account was told to CLI team M. Temkin and J. Earley by the Wiles children in 1999. They recounted an incident their father told them about a train that careened off the tracks and landed in the garden.)

[17] List of Classified Structures photo, 1997. Monocacy NBP photo files.

[18] List of Classified Structures photo "Main house," 1997. Monocacy NBP photo archives.

[19] NPS 2000, 3a, 15.

[20] List of Classified Structures photo "Main house," 1997. Monocacy NBP photo archives.

[21] Oblique aerial photo "Best Farm," 1980. Monocacy NBP photo archives.

[22] The hard-surfaced areas were surveyed and graphed by the archeology group and a map of the areas included in the draft 2004 "Archeological Overview and Assessment and Evaluation Study of the Best Farm."



BEST FARM

MONOCACY NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE -- NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

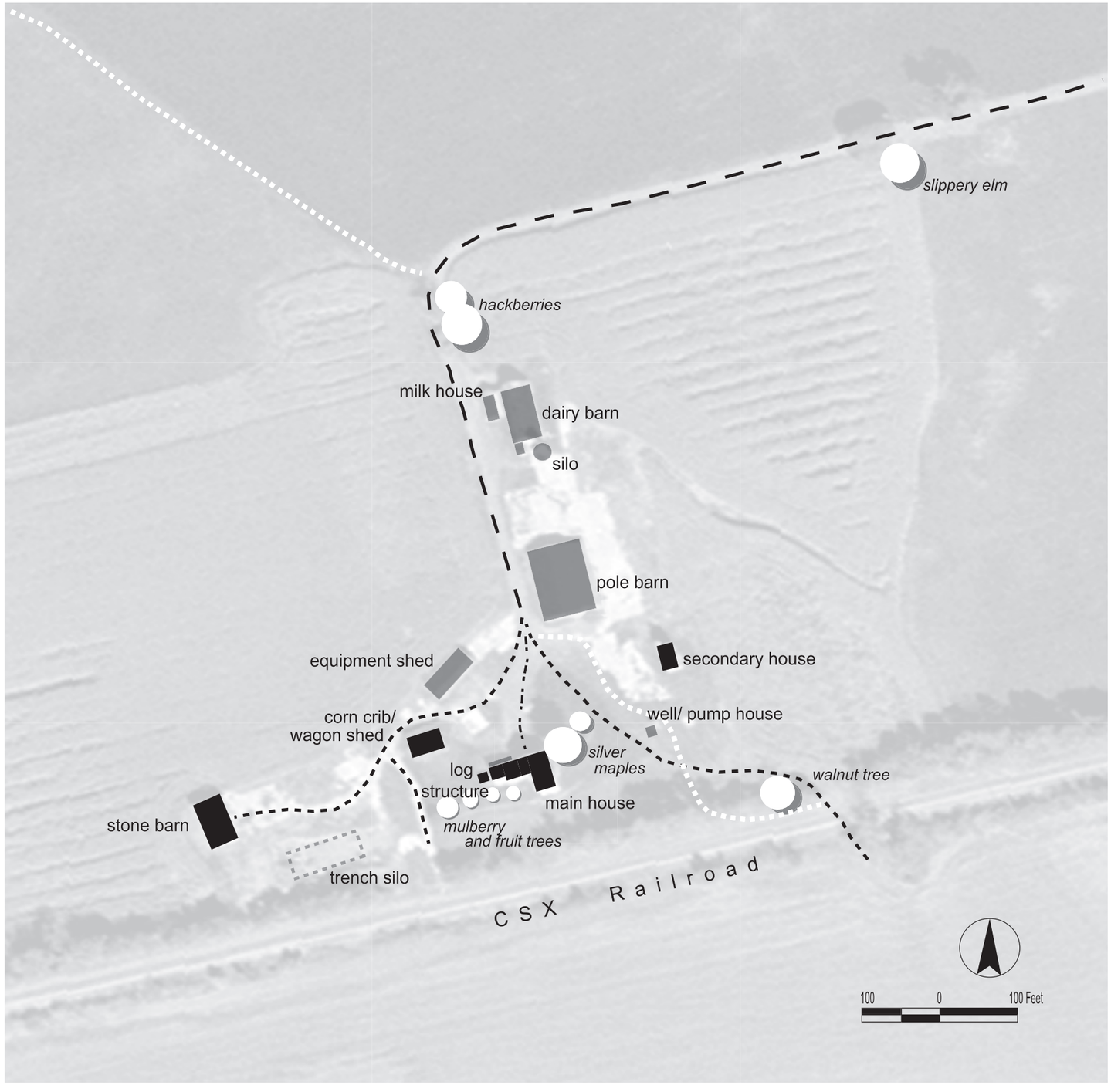
LEGEND

- Best Farm boundary
- Civil War monuments

Overall Site Boundary and Key Features

Map uses 2001 aerial photograph as background
Prepared by: Judith Earley, Grace Zhang
National Capital Region
Cultural Landscapes Program
2007

Map 1 of 3



BEST FARM

MONOCACY NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE -- NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

LEGEND

- Contributing structures
- Non-contributing structures
- Entrance drive
- Farm road
- Driveway
- Road trace

Farmyard Complex
Existing Conditions

Map uses 2001 aerial photograph as background
Prepared by: Judith Earley, Grace Zhang
National Capital Region
Cultural Landscapes Program
2007

Map 2 of 3

Chapter 3: Analysis and Evaluation



The analysis section compares findings from the site history with existing conditions in order to identify which extant landscape features have historical significance. These features are then evaluated for integrity within the context of the landscape as a whole. This process is the groundwork for establishing the period (or periods) of significance, which is a framework against which all changes in the landscape can be compared. It is an important step for developing appropriate and relevant treatment strategies.

Areas of Significance

Criterion A

The Monocacy National Battlefield preserves an important piece of Civil War history. The location of Monocacy Junction and the railroad and highway bridges over the Monocacy River gave the location strategic importance. Both Union and Confederate troops passed through the area in 1862, 1863, and engaged in battle here in 1864. In September 1862, Confederate and Union armies camped on and around Best Farm, with Confederate headquarters located within the Best Grove. In the winter of 1862 and extending into 1863, Union soldiers from the 14th New Jersey Regiment set up camp on the east side of the Monocacy River, across from Best Farm. The Confederate advance on Washington D.C. in July 1864 was delayed 24 hours by fighting that occurred on Best Farm and other nearby farms. Although the Battle of Monocacy was a Union loss, the casualties suffered by the Confederates, their exhaustion, and the extra day for Union forces to assemble crippled the Southerners' attack on the capital city.

The properties that make up the battlefield also have significance as part of a broad history of settlement and development of this part of Maryland.[1] The Monocacy area was populated by a culturally diverse group of people, some of whom were important in the early economic and political development of the state. The French-Caribbean association with Best Farm's early history is one aspect of this diversity. Various early industries, such as flour milling and distilling, and the several transportation corridors that made the area a crossroads are other historical influences that impart significance to this landscape.

Though it is not specifically stated in the National Register nomination, agriculture is another area of significance that applies to Best Farm as well as other properties of the Monocacy battlefield. The superior limestone soils of the Monocacy area contributed to its importance as part of the nation's first bread basket. Its prominence in wheat-production declined in the early 19th century, but Frederick County (and the Monocacy farms) continued to supply grain and flour regionally. After the Civil War, Frederick County began to convert to dairy farming. The growth of nearby cities in the 20th century created an increased demand for dairy products from Frederick and other nearby counties. Frederick County is still part of one of the most agriculturally-productive (non-irrigated) regions of the United States and remains the state's top dairying county.[2] Significance under this context may be statewide or regional rather than national. Work is needed to better define this context as it applies to the battlefield properties.

Criterion C

Best Farm also contains a distinctive collection of 18th and 19th century architecture. Several of the farm's main buildings are described in the National Register update as comprising "a rare, if not unique example of French and French West Indian-influenced architecture in Maryland."[3]

Criterion D

There are significant prehistoric and historic archeological sites on the Best Farm. Recent investigations studied a probable slave village. Other structures and features that have recently been recorded include the stone barn shed, a privy, an icehouse, a cistern, a large kitchen midden, and a possible blacksmith/iron manufacture area. There is also extensive evidence of short-term Civil War-era encampments on the property. All of these structures, features, and activity areas have the potential for shedding new light on land use and occupation of the site throughout its history.

Evaluation of Integrity

The National Register of Historic Places recognizes seven qualities that, combined, define the integrity of a given site. These qualities are location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The following is an evaluation of Best Farm's integrity as viewed in relation to these qualities.

Location

Best Farm is an agricultural landscape that has been farmed since the mid-18th century. The Monocacy area's fertile soils were the basis of its early prominence in wheat production, and the nearby streams invited industry, particularly flour milling. Its transportation corridors linked it with the port cities of Baltimore and Georgetown. Several of these converged at the city of Frederick two miles north. It was these features that gave Best Farm and the rest of the battlefield strategic importance during the Civil War.

Best Farm remains in its historic location, set in the bend of the Monocacy River and crossed by Route 355 (the historic Georgetown Pike) and the CSX (formerly B&O) Railroad. It retains its historic boundaries except to the north. The construction of I-270 intruded on this bucolic landscape, but the most damaging effects of that road are found south of the river, where the highway runs through the battlefield.

Design

The arrangement of buildings at Best Farm and the array of fields, shaped by topography and the linear features of road and railroad, reflect the original layout of the farm. The farm's buildings are vernacular in expression, although the main house also exhibits stylistic elements. The spare use of ornamental plants in the yard, the distribution of a small number of shade

trees, and the inclusion of fruit trees are vernacular elements typical of farms and consistent with the property's historic character.

There is a core of three buildings (the main and secondary houses and the stone barn) that have existed since the late-18th century. Others added in the 19th century included a succession of two barns – the second lasted until the 1990s and was a bank barn. The one that preceded it also may have been a bank barn. Other buildings, in particular the dairy barn, were added in the 20th century. The loss of the bank barn (through natural causes) and its replacement with an aluminum pole barn diminished some of the integrity of the property.

A pattern of fields, farm roads, and yard spaces imposed an overall structure on the farm landscape. Some of that definition was lost in the last quarter century when concrete (now removed) was poured and spread on farm drives and in various yard areas. Today's farm is probably a greener place than it has been in many years. The current appearance of spaces around the farm buildings (mowed grass without defined edges), the array of mowed or cultivated fields, and an entrance drive in its historic location, comprise an arrangement of features that retains a good deal of integrity.

Setting

Best Farm sits in a bend of the Monocacy River. Views to the east and south, toward the river, take in low wooded hills on the opposite banks. From the highest ground on the farm, at the northeast corner where the visitor center is to be located, there are wide views of the Monocacy Valley and the mountains to the west. Nearer the core of the farm, the interstate highway (I-270) is a persistent reminder of the increasing urbanization of the surrounding areas. The setting's integrity will be further compromised if that highway is ever widened.

Although not part of the farm property, the railroad (main line and stem line), the junction, Route 355, and the river bridges, piers and abutments, all contribute to the historical significance of the site. The Monocacy River, too, a state scenic river, contributes greatly to the historical scene.

Materials

The farm retains a majority of its historic buildings, which have been little altered conveying a high degree of material integrity, particularly evident in the stone barn, the main house, and the secondary house. The three Civil War memorials retain their historic materials and locations. At the southeast corner of the property, the stone abutments of the two bridges also preserve historic materials. The stone fences (or walls) found along the rail line were built from stone that may have been gathered on the farm and add to the character of the place.

Trees in the vicinity of the farmhouse and along the entrance drive have existed for much of this century, though not necessarily the same trees. Along some corridors and boundary lines, trees

and other vegetation have sprung up in the past 50 years where there was little vegetation before. Though these lines of trees are new elements to the landscape, they do not impinge on important historic features and have other benefits, such as the provision of shade, buffer, and habitat.

Workmanship

Workmanship is most evident in the contributing structures: the main and secondary houses, stone barn, corn crib, and the abutments to the turnpike and railroad bridges. It is found in the Civil War monuments and in the small scale features, particularly the stone walls along the railroad right-of-way.

There is also the workmanship of agriculture and its effect on the appearance of the land. At the time of the Civil War, the seasonal activities of plowing and harvesting and the rotation of crops created a patchwork of fields. Soon after the war, with a shift to the raising of farm animals, some fields were converted to permanent pasture. The harvesting methods used in different historical periods gave the landscape a distinctive appearance. For instance, the gathering of grain into sheaves and shocks produced a pattern on the landscape in 1937 that may have been little changed from that of the 19th century, but is not achievable today.[4] The farm is now managed under an agricultural lease; corn, soybeans and hay are cropped in most fields, and the seasonal changes of growth and harvest are still evident.

Feeling

The open fields of the farm, the yards and buildings within the farmstead, the rail line with trains passing through, the truss bridge of Route 355, and the original stone piers and abutments of both river bridges all put the stamp of a different time on Best Farm and differentiate it from the surrounding urbanizing landscape. By remaining an agricultural landscape amidst this change, Best Farm conveys a very keen sense of the past.

Association

Best Farm's uncluttered landscape, which is open to view from many vantages within the farm, allows association with the significant events of the past. Agriculture has played a key role in preserving an array of features that are very much unchanged.

Summary

Overall, Best Farm has a high degree of integrity. Three of the important buildings within the cluster of its farmstead date to the late-18th century. The absence of the bank barn lessens integrity. The farm's field patterns, the location of farm roads, and the remaining spatial definition within the farmyards, all date at least to the early 20th century and probably much earlier. Many of the farm's boundaries are original tract lines dating to first settlement in the 18th century. The farm has been approximately the same size for a hundred years.

Period of Significance

An updated nomination of the Monocacy Battlefield Park has been prepared. A previous nomination update (2002) defined the overall period of significance for the battlefield as 1750 to 1964. As stated in a letter to the Keeper of the Register at that time, the 1964 date was to apply only to the Maryland Centennial Monument, which was erected in 1964.[5] The new nomination (2005) adjusts the beginning date for the period of significance earlier to 1724 and keeps the 1964 concluding date. It will explicitly state within the body of the text that the 1964 concluding date only applies to the Maryland Centennial Monument.

Such a long period of significance, with an end date that applies only to one structure, does not afford much clarity in determining which features of a site contribute to significance. Other factors help resolve the issue. The "area of significance" is one such. For the Best Farm, there are two areas of significance – the Civil War and the earlier settlement period. The memorializing of the battlefield and the erection of monuments constitutes a third layer of significance, but for the Best Farm, the memorializing efforts only apply to the monuments.

Properties that embody certain characteristics related to their use can be significant for those features. Thus, other of the Monocacy Battlefield properties have significance that derives from a specific use, such as dairying, which continued into the 20th century. This is not the case for Best Farm. It has not been assigned significance for its use. This decision is related to the interpretive focus that has been chosen by park management for Best Farm, which is its role in the Civil War and as representative of the earlier settlement of the area. Within the Civil War context, the years of the war do not impose a cut off date for significance, for there are some later 19th-century structures that have been selected as contributing to historic significance. Thus, as a working hypothesis, based on the interpretive focus for the property, a period of significance can be defined for Best Farm that begins with settlement (1724) and ends in the late 19th century.

Contributing Features

Structures

- main house
- secondary house
- stone barn (including slight earthen ramp on west side)
- corn crib/wagon shed
- log structure (most recently used as a smoke house)
- abutments and piers of two river bridges (railroad and Route 355)

Small Scale Features

- three Civil War monuments: New Jersey, Confederate and Maryland Centennial
- all standing and remnant stone walls
- two stone culverts
- footings of overpass where old Georgetown Pike crossed over railroad

Vegetation

- trees in front yard
- trees at drainage along entrance road

Spatial Organization

- fields and fencelines
- yards
- vegetable garden site (especially the changes in elevation that define some edges)
- barnyard east of pole barn

Circulation

- entrance drive
- trace of road in front of main house (earthen marks in terrain)
- diagonal farm road between northern and western fields
- trace of Georgetown Pike near New Jersey monument
- location of Middle Ford

Archeological sites

- prehistoric sites in floodplain
- probable slave village
- ice house
- cistern
- privy
- shed attachment to stone barn
- short-term Civil War encampment sites (fields north and south of entrance drive and also in field on east side of Route 355)
- mound along entrance drive (iron manufacture area)

Endnotes, Chapter 3: Analysis and Evaluation

[1] Paula S. Reed, *Monocacy National Battlefield (Additional Information)*, Nomination Form, National Register of Historic Places, 2002, 8, 34-35. Since the most recent version of the nomination was not finalized at the time this was report was written, the discussion references the 2002 version.

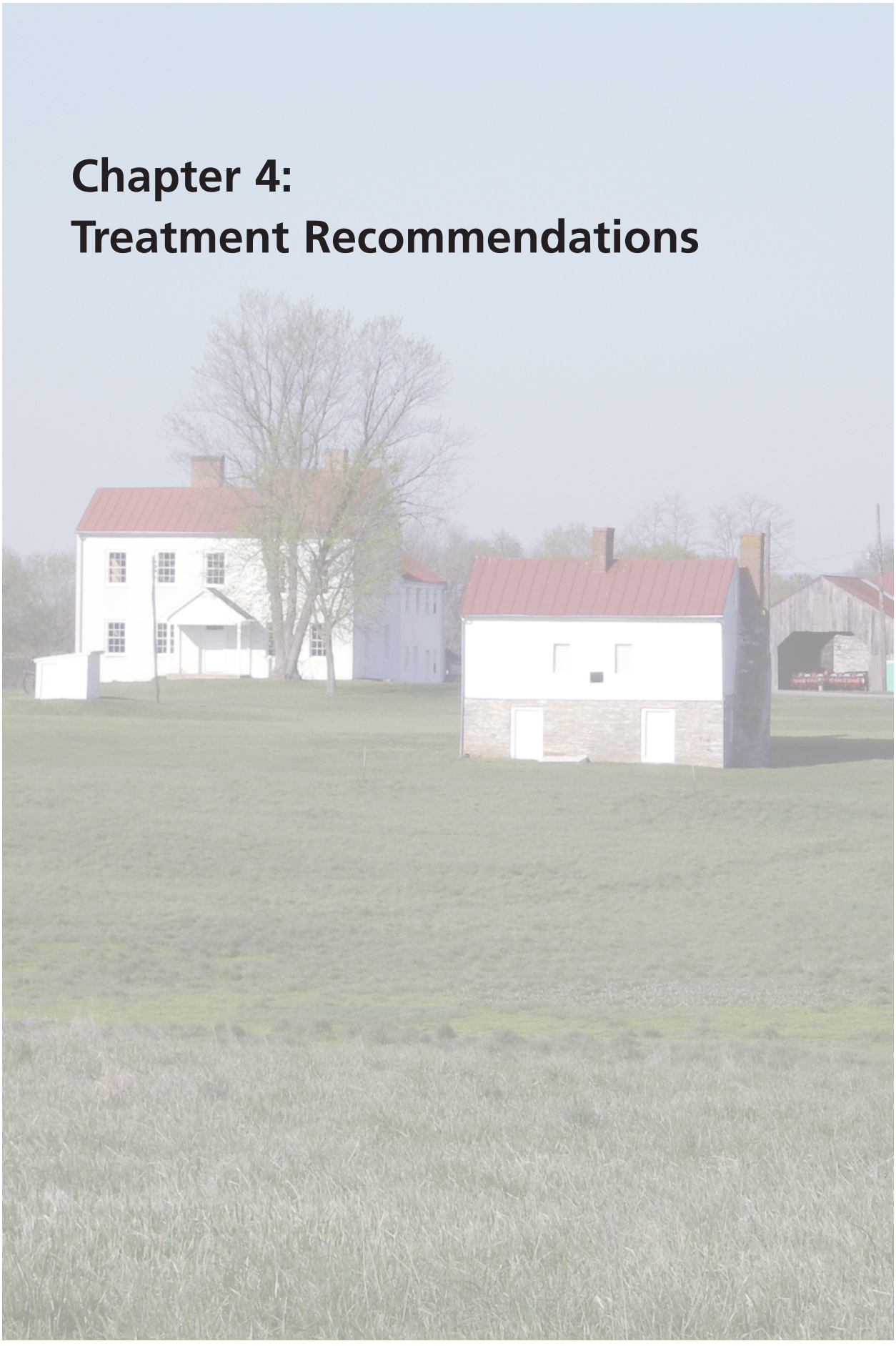
[2] It is still among the top 100 counties producing milk nationwide according to the 2002 Census of Agriculture, County Profile, US Department of Agriculture, Maryland Agricultural Statistics Service.

[3] Reed, 2002, 8, 34-35.

[4] US Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, Aerial Photographs of Frederick County, MD, 1937. National Archives.

[5] Terry Carlstrom, Director, National Capital Region, to Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places, 4/21/2003.

Chapter 4:
Treatment Recommendations



Treatment recommendations should be based on what is known about the historic period. The Best Farm's period of significance, for guidance purposes, must be thought of as ending in the late-19th century, as stated in the last chapter. This date falls short of the one document that sheds light on the more fine-grained texture of landscape features of the Best Farm, which is an aerial photograph from 1937. It is only from this aerial (and a subsequent one in 1952) that reasoned speculation about the location of certain landscape features on Best Farm, particularly the vegetable garden, can be made. And it is on the basis of these aerials that some of the recommendations in this chapter are based. This is justified by the likelihood that because so little else had changed – i.e., the farm entrance drive and field demarcations were in the same locations on the aerial as last depicted on Civil War maps – that the locations of other features suggested by the aerials, such as a vegetable garden, yard divisions, and a farm road, were also approximately what they were in the 19th century. Thus, traces of features that are found today, and that correspond with markings on the 1937 aerial, likely represent features that existed within the period of significance.

Proposed Preservation Strategy

Because the use of the Best Farm has changed from that of a family-run farm to an historic site that will be interpreted for its Civil War associations and early history, the overarching preservation strategy is one of rehabilitation, which allows for the introduction of new uses and their accompanying features. However, within that major strategy, preservation, through stabilization and repair, and restoration, through the removal of incompatible features, are preservation methods that will also be used. (Refer to treatment plan, Map 3, at end of this chapter.)

Treatment Recommendations

Circulation

The primary new use of Best Farm is visitation, which will require a circulation system that will accommodate and direct visitors. The existing entrance drive should be used by visitors to access the farm. A parking lot for about a dozen cars and accommodation for bus parking is needed.

ROUTE

There are three main areas to visit on Best Farm – the farmyard complex (or farmstead), the New Jersey monument, and the two monuments at the north end of the farm. The monuments will be reached, as they are presently, from Route 355. Thus, this document will address only the circulation within the farmstead.

Paths will lead to destinations around the farmstead. The primary path should meet ADA requirements for accessibility; it should be routed over essentially level ground and have a

smooth surface. The parking lot will be sited where the trench silo is now located, west of the main house and southeast of the stone barn. A short path should extend from the parking lot and connect with the pedestrian path, which will lead west to the stone barn and east to the secondary house, passing along the north side of the main house. A second path will move over land that in some places is too sloping to meet ADA requirements. It will diverge from the main path just east of the parking lot and pass through the yard south of the house (where the outline of the area that once was a vegetable garden will be marked). It will traverse for a short distance the old alignment of the road to the lower fields, connect to the main path near the secondary house, proceed around the east and north sides of that house, and connect back to the entrance drive. In addition to the defined path system, visitors can also make their way across open ground to see the various buildings from different angles.

The current alignment of the farm road to the lower fields should be retained for use by farm vehicles, and the two road traces (the old alignment to the lower fields and the diagonal one north of the farmstead) should be preserved.

Paths should have a width of four or five feet, and the entrance drive should keep its present width of about ten feet.

MATERIALS

New trails should be constructed simply, of materials that will not be visually intrusive. For that part of the path system which will be ADA accessible, a material that will provide a smooth, level, and stable walking surface should be used. Soil stabilizing formulations are available commercially. Other formulations that may not be commercial include components such as fine gravel, sand, stone dust, and clay. Lime might also be a constituent. Limestone, so typical of soils in the Monocacy area, could be the basis of a formulation. The second path, which will not be ADA accessible, may need surfacing in places, but for much of its length it can simply be mown grass.

ENTRANCE DRIVE

The entrance drive should remain very much as is. The road does not need to be widened to accommodate two-way traffic, since there is ample visibility along it. The park should continue to resurface it as needed with a layer of crushed stone. An extension of the entrance drive should be routed north of the corn crib to the parking lot. This alignment should be placed to allow for more yard space on the north side of the main house.

DRIVEWAY TO HOUSE

Because it is an historic feature that dates at least to the early 20th century, the short driveway that extends from the end of the entrance drive to the house should be retained in some form. Use of it by park personnel may be enough activity to keep the route slightly worn and thus readable.

PARKING

The existing trench silo should be filled and graded and a parking lot for about a dozen cars constructed there. The aim should not be to create an artificially flat surface, but one that fits into the surrounding grade as much as possible. The parking lot should be surfaced in the lightest way possible, perhaps with fine gravel. It might be edged by a slight earthen berm on the downhill side, to keep the gravel from washing down the slope.

There should be space for one or two buses to park alongside and parallel to the entrance drive, opposite where the pole and dairy barns now stand. Rather than creating a loop turnaround, buses can make three-point turns across the driveway and into the area on the east side of the drive, which should be partially smoothed and lightly graveled or otherwise stabilized for this purpose. The parking and turnaround spaces should be placed on-grade as much as possible in order to remain very modest features within the landscape, as they may be visible from the new visitor center.

ROAD TRACES

The two road traces within and near the farmstead have somewhat different markings. The one from the lower fields (distinct from the farm road alignment presently used) has a swale-like definition along one stretch and a slight terracing in another. No grading should disturb these earthen markings. The diagonal road that runs northwest from the entrance drive, between the north and west fields, has little physical evidence other than the fact that farm vehicles are still driven here and rolls of hay are sometimes lined up along it. A division between the north and west fields should always be maintained in order to preserve the location of this road trace.

The trace of the old Georgetown Pike in the vicinity of the New Jersey monument is also readable as terrain changes which should be preserved.

Structures

The contributing structures: main house, secondary house, stone barn, corn crib, and small log building should all be preserved. The non-contributing buildings: the dairy barn with its milk house and silo, the pole barn, and the equipment shed should be removed. The well house, which marks the location of a well and houses a pump, is a new non-contributing structure that the park intends to retain for current use.

Until a decade ago, a bank barn stood where the pole barn is now located. This is also where a barn stood at the time of the Civil War. It is suggested that the pre- and post Civil War bank barns be interpreted. The preponderance of information is for the c. 1878 barn. Its footprint could be marked in a way that makes it clear that the marking is not an historic remnant. For instance, its corners and openings could be indicated by heavy, upright wooden posts, or the earthen entrance ramp could be reshaped and preserved. This is also a good location for a wayside or interpretive boards

Archeological resources

Consideration should be given to the interpretation of the archeological resources, particularly the probable slave village, and possibly some of the small farm structures that have been identified, such as the ice house, privy, cistern and shed attachment to the stone barn. Interpretation could be presented in a brochure or on a wayside that provides a bird's eye view of the farm and explains some of its earliest history.

Yard and garden spaces around the house

The park should remove the asphalt parking pad on the north side of the house and the gravel drive that leads to it. A driveway in this location dates at least to the 1930s. Park management does not wish to encourage use of this alignment and, therefore, it should be removed. Once the equipment shed, which is just northeast of the corn crib, has been removed, the yard on the north side of the house should be extended north to replicate the yard space seen in the 1937 aerial.

Park management should consider ways of interpreting the spaces surrounding the house, particularly the vegetable garden. It is suggested that the garden area be enclosed with a simple fence, perhaps wooden posts and wire mesh, typical of the early 20th century. Although this fencing would not be accurate to the Civil War years, which are the primary interpretive focus, there are remnants of this type of fence from a later period in this area, and thus it has historic validity. It has not been verified where the garden was at the time of the Civil War or how it was fenced, thus it is really the garden of a later date that would be the one interpreted. The secondary path should pass through the garden enclosure, which should have openings at east and west ends. There could be other openings into it as well.

Other Yards

Spaces around all the farm structures are open and undefined at present. Consideration should be given to recreating some of the definition and enclosure that used to characterize these areas. The creation of an enclosure where the vegetable garden was – described above – is one example. Another area where a fence might be installed is the southern edge of the west field, extending from the northeast corner of the stone barn to where the equipment shed stands today. At one time, a fence in this location divided a pasture where dairy cows were corralled from the farmyard where poultry and small farm animals probably ranged. Extant remnants of fences and the 1937 and 1952 aerials are evidence of where fences were located.

About 15 or 20 years ago, concrete was spread in different places around the farmstead. Most of it has now been removed, leaving the ground rough and gouged in places. These areas should be smoothed and seeded with grass.

Fields

All fields on Best Farm are defined by boundaries related to circulation and natural features such as the entrance drive, Route 355, the railroad corridor, and the river. These features and

the fields they enclose have not changed a great deal in the years since the Civil War. In a few locations, small adjustments to the field edges would better reflect the historic layout. One such is the west edge of the front field, just south of the secondary house. Plowing used to continue slightly more to the west in that spot. If feasible, this earlier pattern might be reinstated, as it would give better definition to the yard around the secondary house. Another example is the area where the dairy barn now stands. In the past, the edge of plowing used to meet the entrance drive at a right angle, defining a rectangular space. It now follows a diagonal line creating a triangular shape (see figs 1.18 and 1.19, chap. 1). The rectangular shape should be reinstated. This will provide space for the planting of a small orchard at the north end of the farmyard.

It is recommended that agricultural leasing of the property be continued in order to maintain the fields as open agricultural land as they are now.

Vegetation

FARMYARD

As a 200-year-old working farm, Best Farm has not had extensive ornamental planting. A lawn surrounds the house. Fairly frequent mowing keeps the lawn smooth and fairly short, but not manicured. Around the secondary house is a spreading, low-growing herb mixed with grass. This yard is also mowed. Toward the rear of the main house, lawn grass gives way to rougher grasses and herbaceous plants, and is less frequently mowed. In 1937, and until the last decade or two, there were a number of small structures between the corn crib and stone barn (probably chicken coops and animal pens). The ground surface here would have been worn earth with whatever vegetation survived.

It is recommended that the lawns north, south and east of the house be maintained (the lawn area to the north should be extended a bit). The area west of the house, beginning near the corn crib and extending beyond the stone barn, should remain in rough grass as it is today. Lawn is also a good treatment for the former vegetable garden area, where the suggestion of a fence around its perimeter will help define the space

Trees found in the yards around the house, whether planted, self-seeded, or selectively retained over time, were desired elements of the landscape, providing shade to the farm's inhabitants. The large and small silver maple trees that stand in front of the house and the single walnut in the southeast corner of the yard should be retained and new trees planted when these begin to die. In 1937, a large tree of unknown type, possibly another silver maple, stood in the north yard, between the corn crib and the house. Consideration should be given to planting another tree in this location. Trees do not need to be replaced in kind (although they can be and that might be the easiest way of preserving the existing vegetative character). Those planted should be locally-native, deciduous trees, with a growth habit similar to the ones here now. When necessary to plant a replacement for the walnut tree, another walnut should probably be planted, as walnut trees would have had a special significance as farms, prized for their nuts as well as their shade.

Near the house are simple plantings consisting of a small number of fruit trees, a mulberry tree (probably self-seeded), shrubs, such as lilac, spirea, and wisteria (maintained as a shrub), and perennials and bulbs, including daylilies, iris and grape hyacinth. There are also two hibiscus shrubs near the pole barn that is to be removed and irises at the base of the stone pillar at the farm entrance. The age of these plants is undetermined: the fruit trees are different ages, the oldest of which might be 30 years; the shrubs could be twice as old or older. Unless there is some well articulated need to remove any of these plantings, it is recommended that they be maintained and replaced with similar kinds of plants, arranged in the same sparse manner, when they die. Disease monitoring, fertilizing, and the pruning of deadwood should be part of their upkeep, but no other horticultural practices like edging or mulching should be introduced.

A small orchard dating to the early part of the 20th century may have been located along the entrance road at the bend. When the dairy barn is removed, an orchard could be planted here, but only as an interpretive device, since little is known about the composition of the early-20th-century orchard.

VEGETATION ALONG ROADS AND BOUNDARIES

Most of the boundaries of Best Farm are defined by lines of predominantly native volunteer trees, thickest along the Monocacy River on east and south sides of the farm. These perimeters and the lines of trees along the roads and railroad should be allowed to continue to grow. No trees growing along Route 355 seem to interfere with views from the site where the visitor center will be built. Thinning can be done where views are obstructed. The species composition should be monitored and unwanted trees culled. To reduce noise and for visual screening, trees could be planted in some areas along the I-270 boundary, especially where the invasive ailanthus has gotten a small foothold. Appropriate species for dry areas where the ailanthus grows are those that self-generate in the same vicinity: black cherry, locust, sumac and hackberry are some possibilities.

The new visitor center at the northeast end of the farm has its own planting plan. No recommendations address it in this report.

A few volunteer trees grow along the entrance drive – a slippery elm at the drainage and hackberries where the drive bends. These trees should be retained and replanted when they die. Until recently, two hornbeams also grew at the drainage, on the opposite side of the drive from the elm. It is recommended that another couple of trees be planted there; the slippery elm or hornbeam would be a good selection.

BEST GROVE

Because of its potential for significant archeological remains, and its position midway in the viewshed between the new visitor center and the Best farmyard, the woodlot that came to be known as Best Grove should not be replanted. Though a feature of some significance during the Civil War, it was apparently no longer in existence within a decade after the war. The grove

should be interpreted in some manner. For example, a wayside exhibit of the Civil War map of Jed Hotchkiss, which shows the location of the grove, could be created and positioned at a point within the farmyard where there is a good view out across the front and north fields, toward where the grove was located.

Fencing

The stone walls along the north side of the railroad are the most intact historic fences, presumably dating to sometime after the Civil War, although there is no document that confirms a date of construction. Where these walls are threatened by the accumulation of debris or vegetative growth, gentle measures of stabilizing them may be undertaken. A line of stones between the pole barn and secondary house is the remains of what presumably was the south wall of a barnyard attached to the former bank barn. Scattered stones extending north from this line define the barnyard's east side. Stone wall remnants, such as these and another more prominent line of stones along the west side of Route 355 near the Confederate and Maryland monuments, should be preserved and interpreted. The park should also consider preserving other fence remnants where possible, such as the heavy, four-foot-high posts that occur along the railroad right-of-way.

The park has installed post and rail fences along the edge of Route 355. Such fencing is historically correct for the years up to and including the Civil War. The exact date when such fences last stood here is not known.[1] By 1900 (and possibly as early as the 1870s) the fences had been replaced by stone walls. The stone walls were also removed, probably for road realignment c. 1930, and the fencing then installed along the road edge likely was post-and-wire or wire mesh. The post and six-rail fence never existed at the same time as the stone pillar (at one time a pair of pillars) at the farm entrance, except now as a recreated element. A date for the construction of the stone pillar has not been found. It should be retained.

Commemorative Features

The monuments commemorating the Civil War should be preserved in accordance with current preservation maintenance procedures. Care should be taken to preserve the trace of the Georgetown Pike that runs along the east side of the New Jersey monument site.

Other Features

The two stone culverts under the railroad berm are probably contemporary to the construction of the railroad and should be preserved.

If possible, electrical and telephone wires, now strung between poles along the entrance drive and near the farmstead, should be put underground to eliminate the intrusion of wires and poles on the largely bucolic scene. Archeological monitoring would be needed, if this were done.

Park management intends to interpret Middle Ford from the Thomas Farm on the opposite side of the river, where there are remnants of associated features. Since there is no trace of the ford on the Best Farm, and because the location is often wet and inaccessible, there is no recommendation to interpret it on this side of the river. This is also true for the railroad bridge, which can be viewed best from the southwest side of the river, near Bush Creek. The Route 355 bridge can be viewed from near the New Jersey monument and in driving over it. There is no safe way of allowing visitors near the railroad junction. Its location can probably be seen from the new visitor center.

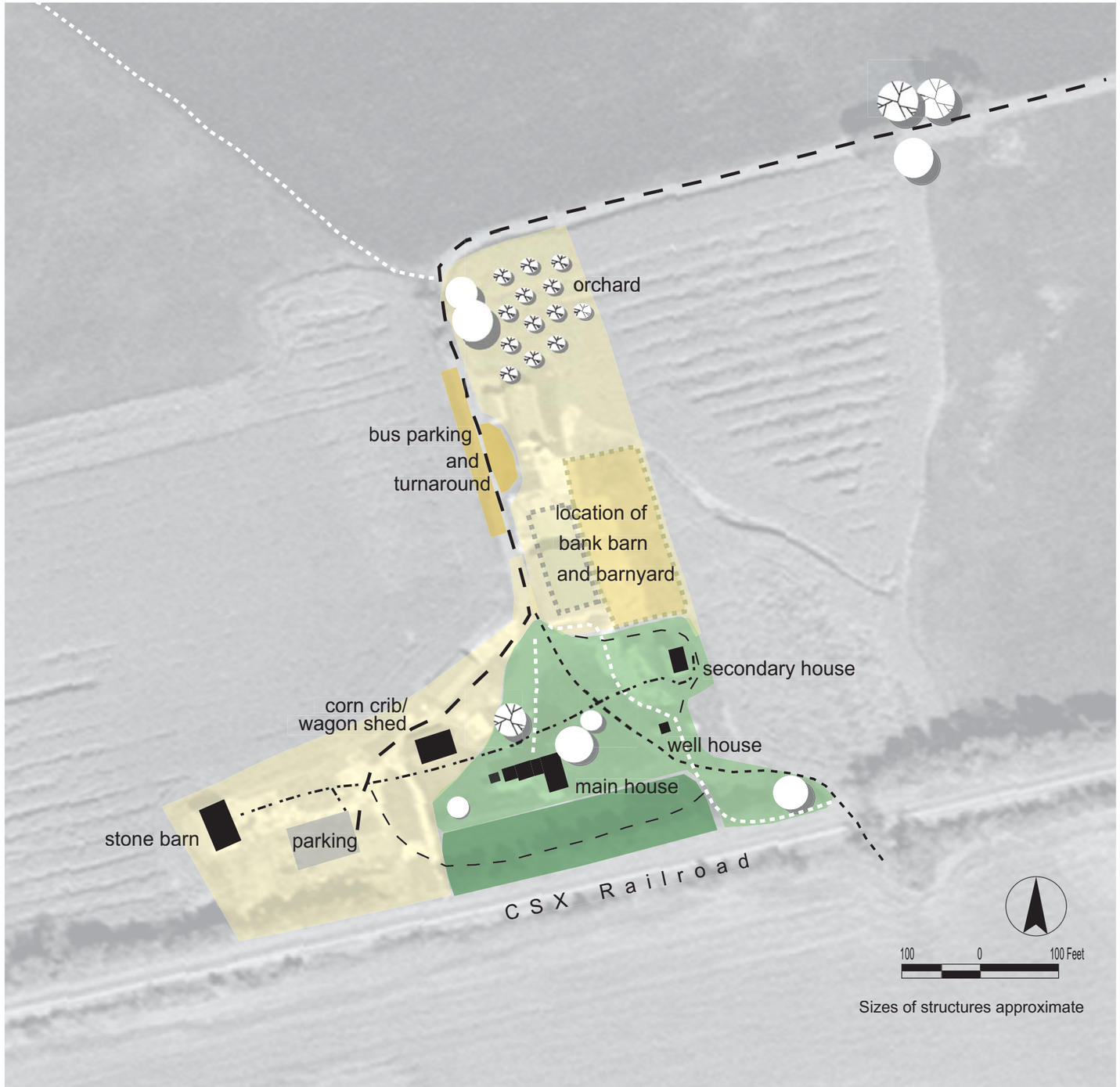
Visitor Center

The treatments outlined above have concentrated on the farmstead at Best Farm. Consideration was given during the preparation of this report to other ways of accessing the several Civil War monuments, but it was decided that the current arrangement is satisfactory for the time being. The construction of a new visitor center at the north end of the farm, on the opposite side of Route 355 from the farmstead, may bring with it other issues that have not been anticipated. Some way of slowing or stopping traffic at the entrances to the visitor center and Best Farm may need to be considered in the future.

This concludes the treatment section. Chapter Five, which follows, is additional research, undertaken at the park's request, which attempts to answer questions about what cultural influences came to bear on the forms of two of the original farm structures: the main house and the stone barn.

Endnotes, Chapter 4
Treatment Recommendations

[1] In John Best's war damage testimony of John Best (September 26, 1875), he states that he had built about 3,000 panels of fencing "since the war." Monocacy NB files.



Sizes of structures approximate

BEST FARM

MONOCACY NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE -- NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

LEGEND

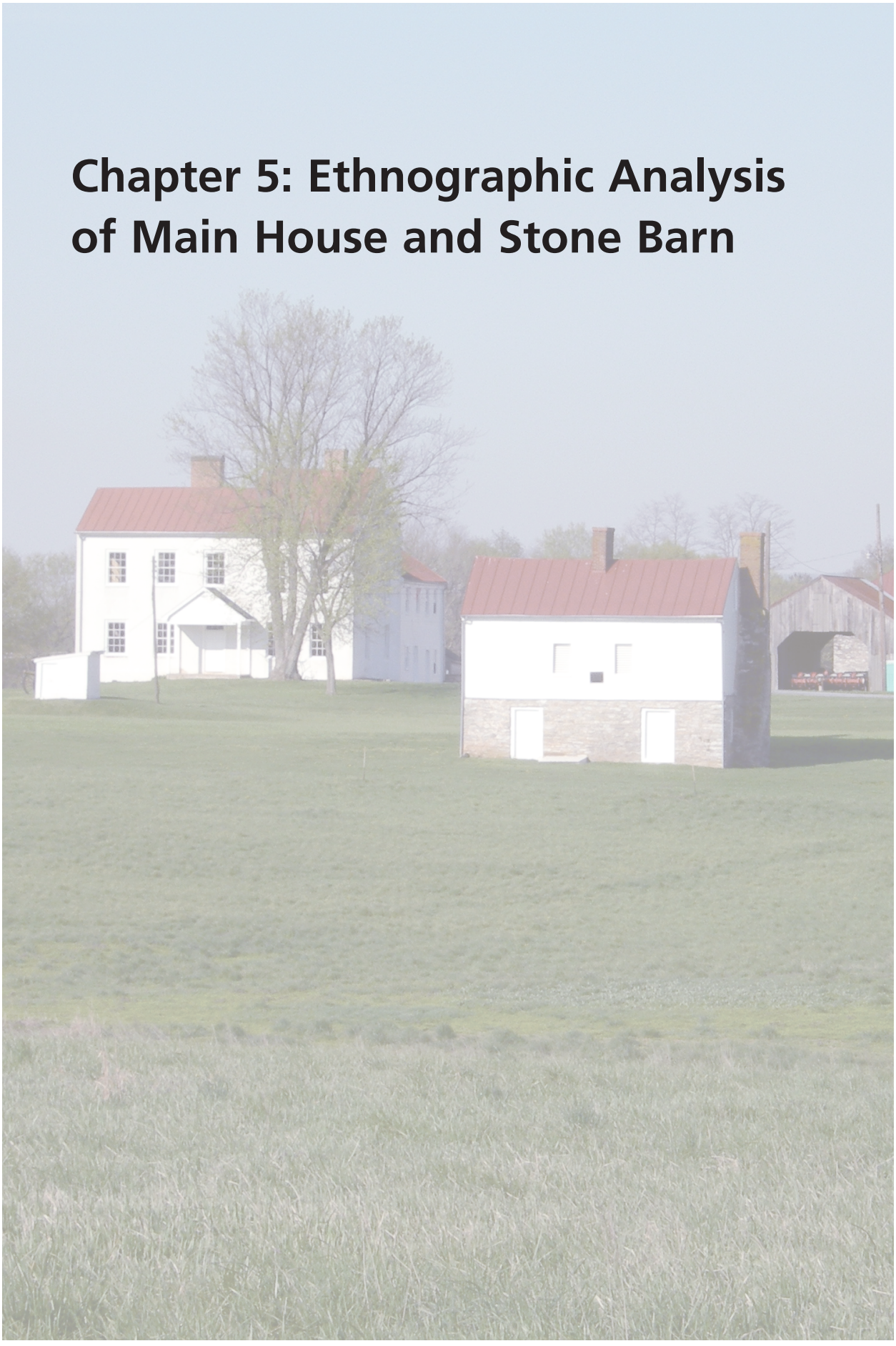
- Entrance drive preserved and extended to parking lot
- ADA accessible path established
- Path (not ADA accessible) established
- Road trace preserved
- Farm road retained
- Existing tree preserved
- Tree planted
- Bus parking and turnaround established
- Grass - closely mown
- Vegetable garden location interpreted
- Rough grass - mowed infrequently
- Bank barn site interpreted
- Barnyard site interpreted/ remnant stones preserved

Farmyard Complex Treatment Plan

Map uses 2001 aerial photograph as background
Prepared by: Judith Earley, Grace Zhang
National Capital Region
Cultural Landscapes Program
2007

Map 3 of 3

Chapter 5: Ethnographic Analysis of Main House and Stone Barn



Summary of Findings

The extant buildings on the Best Farm that are attributed to the Vincendières present a unique architectural statement on Frederick County's cultural landscape. Indeed, it can be argued that this eighteenth-century ensemble is unique not only in Maryland, but also throughout the greater Mid-Atlantic region. Previous research has suggested that the buildings represent a melding of French, Caribbean, and local traditions,[1] although it describes the need for additional inquiry.[2] Therefore, the research presented in this Cultural Landscape Report will attempt to assign more definitive ethnic antecedents for the main house and stone barn on the Best Farm, and compare them with similar buildings found in North America in order to establish a cultural and geographical context.

A variety of antecedents are possible for both the main house and stone barn, given the migratory nature of the Vincendières and the complexities involved in sorting out vernacular building traditions in a heterogeneous region such as Frederick County, Maryland. French-influenced vernacular architecture is particularly difficult to analyze because of the complex nature of French settlement patterns in the New World and their connectivity (fig. 5.1). Although the ultimate origin of the house and barn is presumably France, vernacular traditions are often tempered and modified as immigrants came in contact with other ethnic groups and encountered a variety of climates and building materials. In fact, one scholar has insisted that many students of vernacular architecture rely too heavily on antecedents found in the Old World rather than recognizing a mixture of traditions that is uniquely American.[3] Thus, while European origins were explored in earnest for this report, care was taken to locate similar buildings in the New World with which to compare the extant eighteenth-century buildings on Best Farm.

Upon examination of as many different resources as time permitted, it appears that the Best House does not represent a pure transmission of French vernacular architecture to Maryland, but instead is an amalgamation of various architectural elements that reflect the disparate experiences the Vincendières had in France, the West Indies, and in Maryland. Thus, the findings of this report essentially confirm the initial hypothesis set forth in previous research documents that the house represents a blend of the three culture areas aforementioned.[4] However, additional research seems to indicate that the form and features present in the Best House were not confined to the Caribbean, but were also transmitted to buildings in a variety of French settlements in the New World, albeit with modifications in response to variable climatic conditions and available building materials. The fact that similar forms may exist elsewhere in North America does not diminish the unique qualities that the Best House possesses, as it remains an anomaly for the region in which it is located. While French-derived buildings in other parts of North America are generally located among similar structures throughout a particular French settlement area, the Best House survives independently.[5] In essence, the Best House displays features more commonly found on French houses located in subtropical climates, though it is located in the humid continental climate of Maryland.

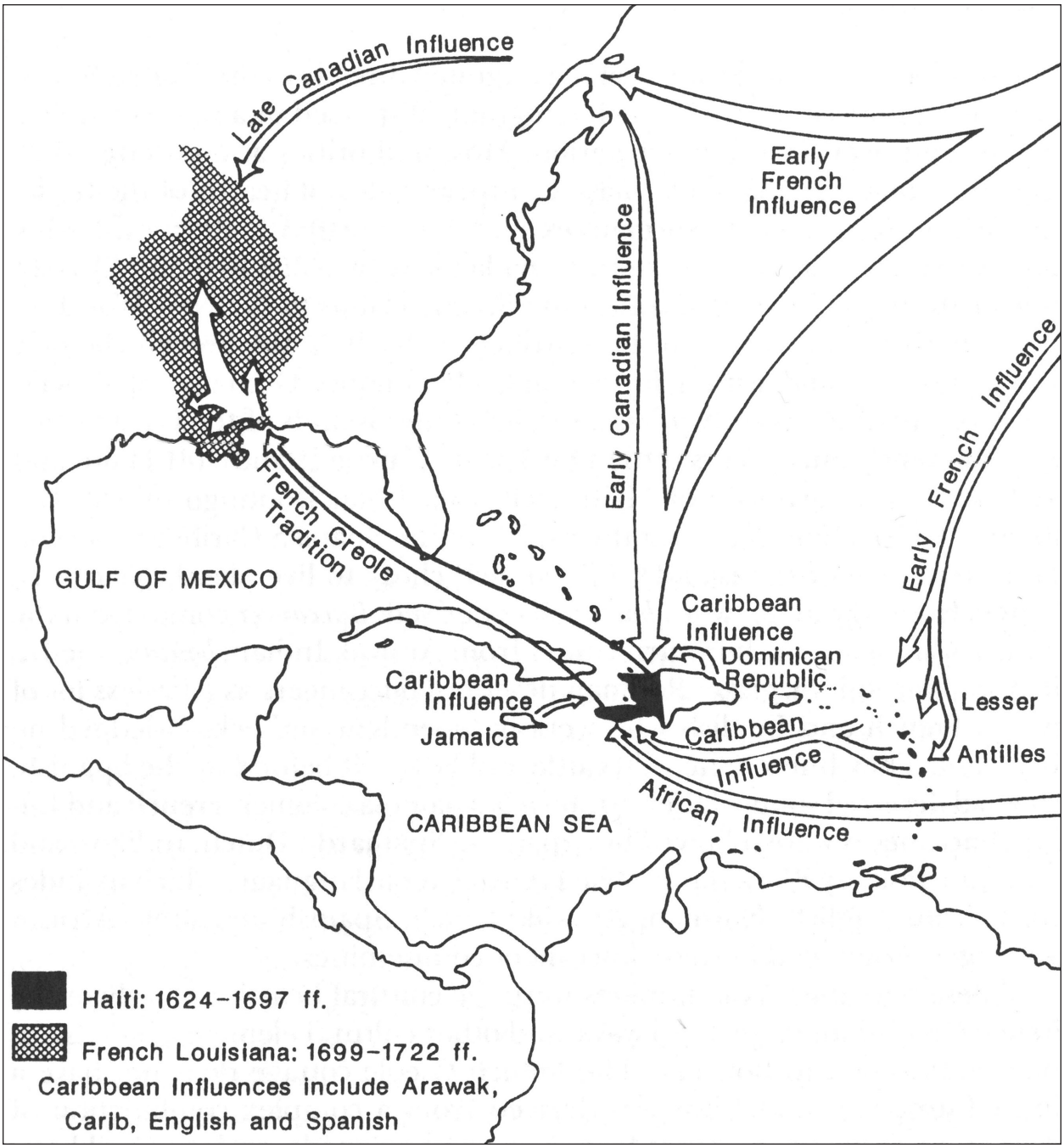


Fig. 5.1: ***Map showing complexity of French settlement patterns in the New World. Not included in the map are the various French Huguenot settlements along the Eastern Seaboard. Because of the connectivity of the regions shown here, French colonial architecture contained a mixture of new and Old World elements, and a multitude of ethnic vernacular building traditions.***

Reprinted from Philippe Oszuscik, "French Creoles on the Gulf Coast," in To Build in a New Land: Ethnic Landscapes in North America, ed. Allen G. Noble (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 138.

Whereas the floor plan of the Best House does not appear to consist of an unadulterated Gallic vernacular form, the barn on the other hand may represent a more readily distinguishable European prototype. While previous research postulated that the barn appeared to be a product of French architectural traditions because of its hipped roof, stone construction, and location on level land,[6] this report tried to confirm that hypothesis by finding specific antecedents in France. Although research conducted for this report found evidence to support a French origin, sources indicate that this barn form was not confined to France but was also widely employed in England, where it has been in use since the Middle Ages.[7] In fact, this barn form was known throughout Europe, as it was used in Germany, Scandinavia, etc.[8] It was transmitted to New France and New England, respectively,[9] but was also carried to New York,[10] Pennsylvania,[11] New Jersey, and the Delmarva Peninsula.[12] However, what makes the Best Barn unique for its type is its immense size, configuration of its door openings, and employment of stone construction in conjunction with a hipped roof. In essence, while other barns exist in America that display the same basic form, they are overwhelmingly constructed of frame, and where stone barns exist, very few have hipped roofs. Thus, not only is the Best Barn unique for the geographic region in which it is located, it may well be unique in America.





Fig. 5.2 (left): *Front (east) elevation of the Best House, showing tall, narrow profile and original three-bay façade, later enlarged to five-bay. Photograph by Kay Fanning, August 2003.*

Fig. 5.3 (right): *Rear (west) elevation of Best House, clearly showing various building campaigns and character-defining features such as chimney placement. Photograph by Judith Earley, December 2003.*

Antecedents of Main House

Dating from circa 1794 with a circa 1795-1800 addition and subsequent alterations dating from the 1820s and 1860s, the main house is attributed to the Vincendières. The house is arranged in an ell shape, connecting with a previously detached kitchen. The circa 1794 original section of the house consists of a stuccoed fieldstone structure that is single-pile in depth with a side-passage plan and chimney oriented sideways on the rear eave wall. This section originally had a hipped roof,[13] and combined with the features previously described, presented a distinct form that is probably unique in the Mid-Atlantic region. The 1795-1800 addition is likewise of fieldstone construction and consists of two rooms, although the rooms are separated by a central chimney. This addition is placed at a ninety-degree angle to the original section of the house, and had a shed roof before both sections of the house were unified under a gable roof in the 1820s, giving the house

a symmetrical five-bay façade. Finally, these two sections were connected with the detached kitchen in the 1860s by means of a two-story frame addition[14] (figs 5.2 and 5.3).

While previous research has provided excellent documentation and architectural descriptions concerning the various building campaigns associated with the main house, specific ethnic origins of its floor plan and features have not yet been definitively assigned. Several possible theories concerning the development of the Best House floor plan will be explored in this section, though the report requires the discussion to be brief. Nevertheless, the research conducted for this report unveiled some patterns that suggest the overall form and plan of the Best House may not be an isolated phenomenon and may represent the diffusion of certain building practices from France to various colonial settlements in the New World. Although the primary focus will be on the original section (south wing) of the Best House, since ethnicity can often be determined by the examination of first period floor plans, the northern section of the main block will briefly be analyzed as well, since it was added soon after the construction of the main block. Ultimately, the goal of this report was to identify source areas for the architectural features present, a task made difficult not only because of the Vincendières transmigration, but also because of the limited number of similar buildings in North America that share the same form and features as the Best House. In addition, the effort to assign a definitive French ethnicity for certain stylistic elements was hampered by the absence of an extensive genealogy on the Vincendières, which would assist in locating the region of France from whence they emigrated since France's vernacular architecture varies tremendously from region to region.[15]

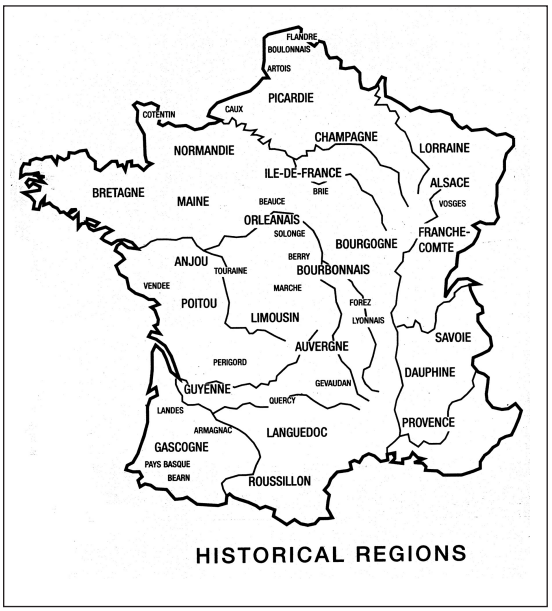


Fig. 5.4: Map showing traditional regions of France and proximity of Provence to Savoie, where Le Hameau des Vincendières is located. *Reprinted from Elsie Burch Donald, The French Farmhouse (New York: Abbeville Press, 1995).*

Despite the lack of a direct genealogical link to a specific province of France, some features found on the Best House are known throughout France instead of being confined to a certain region. One such feature is the hipped roof, which originally existed on the Best House before it was replaced by a gabled roof.[16] Hipped roofs are known in France as croupe roofs, and represent an older construction technique than gable roofs. Whereas hipped roofs were designed to carry the load of thatching or tile, gable roofs could handle heavier slate roofing, representing an improvement in walling methods during the Middle Ages.[17] The sharp pitch of hipped roofs is a product of the days when roofs were thatched, as thatched roofs that were not steeply pitched were subject to leakage.[18] Hipped roofs are seen on buildings located in various French settlements in the New World, including French Canada,[19] Louisiana,[20] the West Indies,[21] and the Lowcountry of South Carolina.[22] Another feature that has a widespread distribution throughout France is the use of stone construction.[23] This building material was particularly favored in Provence, where the only buildings not built of stone were those of the lower

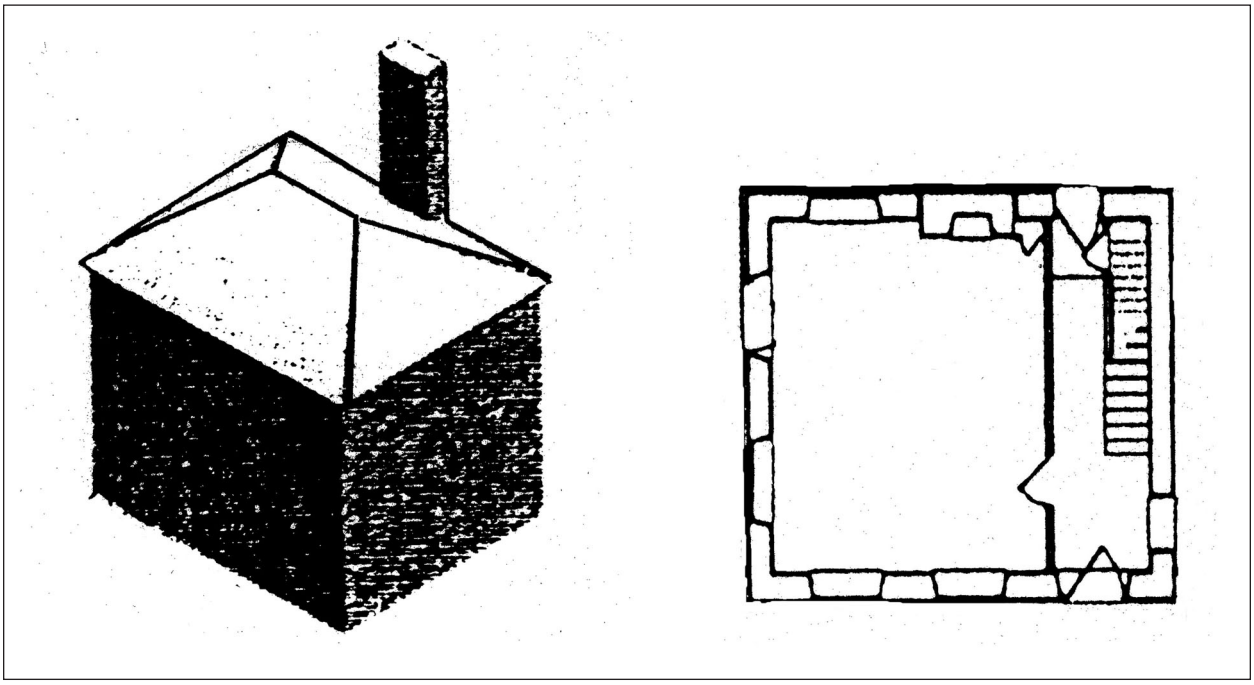


***Fig. 5.5:** Conjectural drawing showing the original main block of the Best House (now the south wing) and its associated floor plan. Adapted from GWWO, Inc./Architects, L'Hermitage, The Best House: Historic Structures Report, Final Draft (Denver: National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 2003), 4-5.*

classes.[24] It deserves mention that Provence is not far from Savoie, where the *Le Hameau des Vincendières* is located[25] (fig. 5.4). As was previously mentioned, a more extensive genealogy will have to be conducted to determine if this is the region the Vincendières emigrated from. Although stone construction is seen throughout France, its use is limited in the French settlements in the New World. In Louisiana and South Carolina, climatic conditions and availability of building materials dictated the use of wood, although stone buildings of French origin do exist in French Canada,[26] New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

The use of a hipped roof and stone construction by themselves do not provide conclusive evidence that the Best Farmhouse is of French origin, since these features were also employed by settlers from other European nations. However, when evaluated together with the floor plan and overall form of the Best House, a more convincing argument for a Gallic ethnicity can be made. The original floor plan of the main block of the house (south wing) was only two rooms wide and one room deep. Together with its two-story height and original hipped roof, the form of the Best Farmhouse presented a unique architectural statement (fig. 5.5). Although precise antecedents were not found for this arrangement in France, it resembles some multi-cell houses in Brittany known as *manoir* class houses, which were built for and occupied by the landowner.[27] In addition, several houses in Provence display characteristics that are seen in the Best House, notably the tall, linear form, chimney placed sideways on the eave wall rather than the gable wall, and the side-passage plan. Known as *bastides*, these houses were inhabited by members of the upper class[28] (fig. 5.6). Of the five basic farmhouse floor plans that have been included in a comprehensive study of Gallic vernacular architecture, the Best House most closely subscribes to the *salle haute* plan, which was a type occupied by wealthy rural tradesman

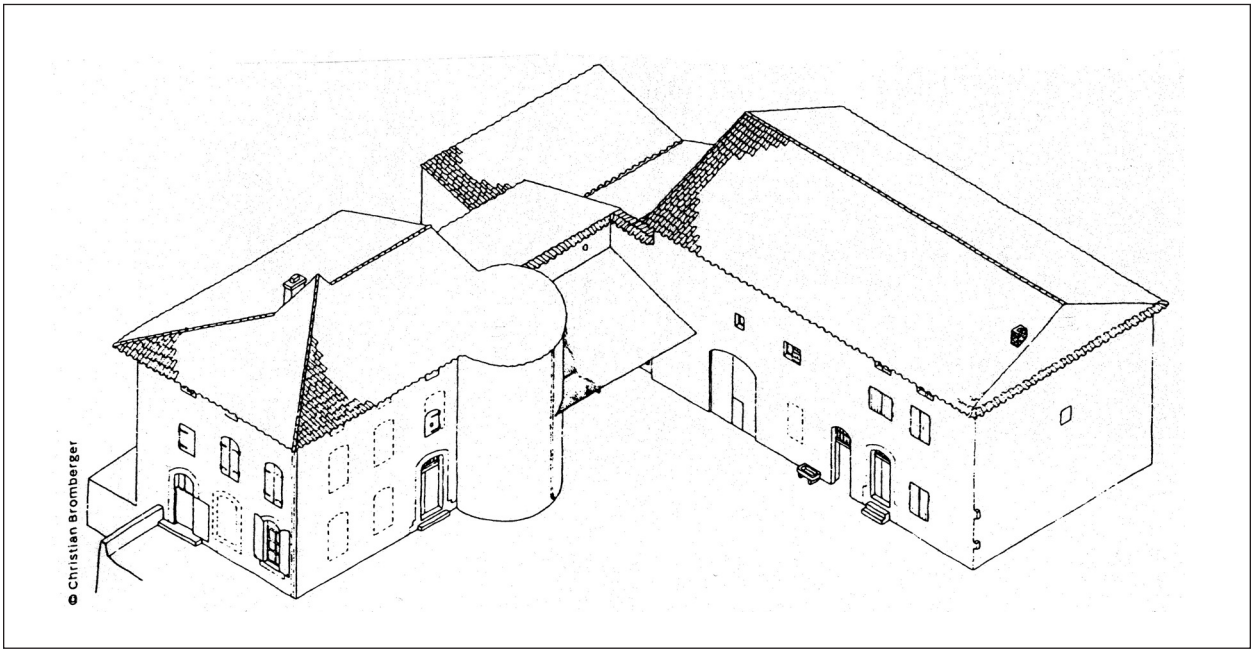


***Fig. 5.6:** Schematic of bastide house from Provence, showing two-story height, side-passage plan, and partially hipped roof with chimney oriented sideways. To the right is the attached barn, not commonly seen in vernacular buildings in the United States except for a few specific regions. Reprinted from Paul Oliver, ed., Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 1347.*

and craftsman, as well as by village leaders[29] (fig. 5.7). Two-stories in height and single-pile in depth, the plan could have served as a model for the Best House plan, though some notable differences do exist, especially the use of an external staircase.[30]

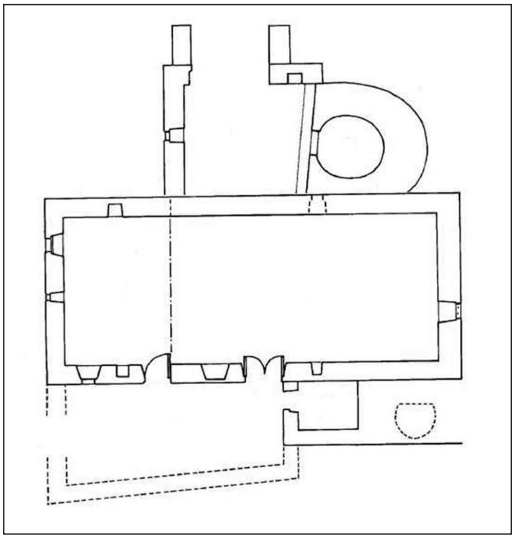


***Fig. 5.7:** Floor plan of French two-room salle haute dwelling. Its staircase is located on the exterior rather than the interior of the building. Reprinted from Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches sur l'Architecture Vernaculaire, L'Architecture Vernaculaire (http://www.pierreseche.com/FranceEnglish.html).*

Because the form of the Best House does not appear to have an exact prototype in France, it can be inferred that it is like many other Franco-American houses that contain a mixture of forms and features. Indeed, houses built by French immigrants in the United States show a closer morphology to the Best House, suggesting adaptations to the North American scene. One scholar has noted that quite a number of French colonial houses do not display a pure French form when compared with English houses that more closely mimic established forms known in England.[31] While analysis of extant French buildings with which to compare the Best House is limited, since examples of French architecture are not as numerous in North America when compared to houses of British origin, they do exist in several pockets, including the Gulf Coast, the Mississippi Valley, as well as French Canada and adjacent Maine. While French houses in these locales have justifiably received the most attention, this report also examined the oft-forgotten settlements and built

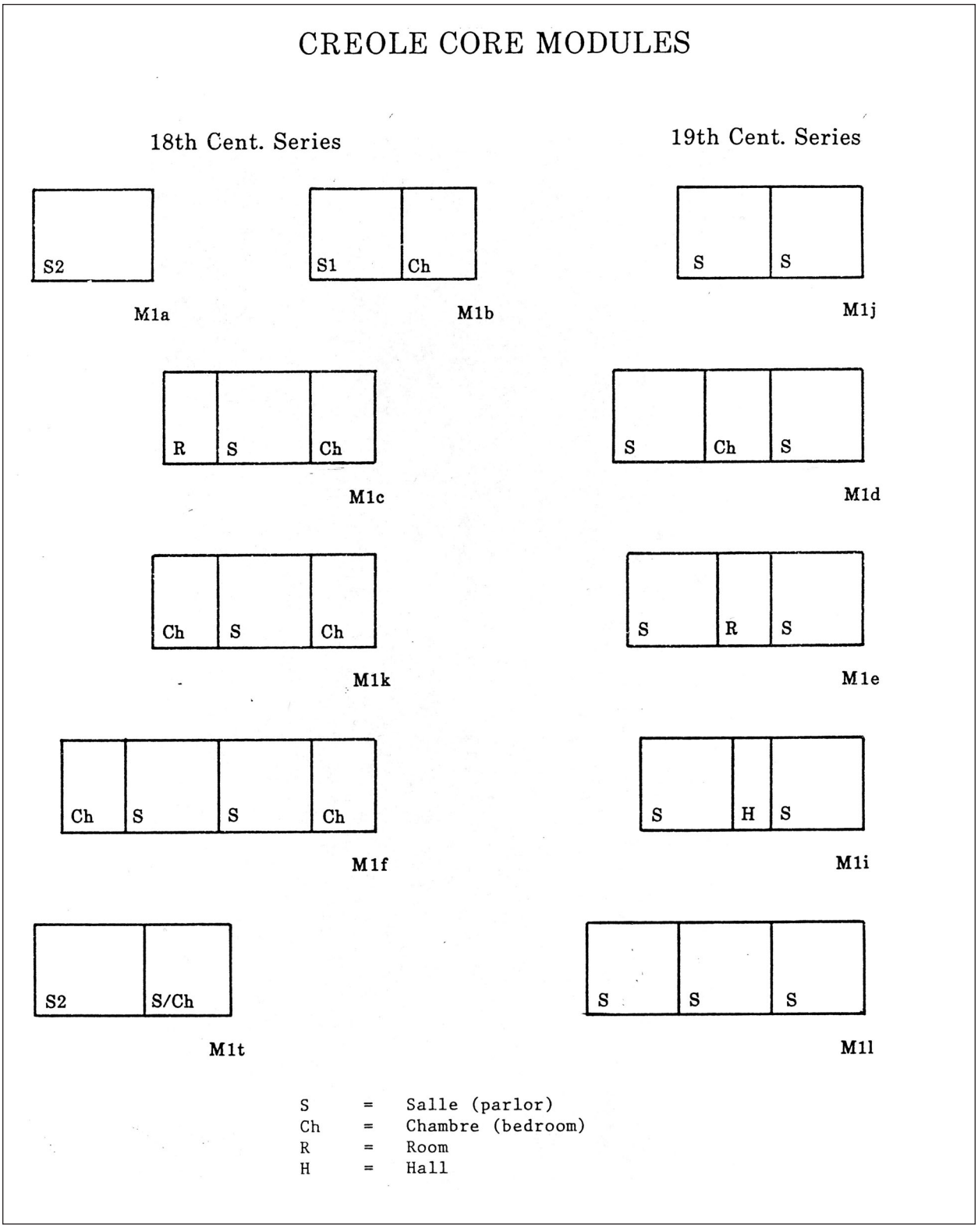


***Fig. 5.8:** Salle-et-chambre plans from French Creole dwellings in Louisiana, showing core configurations and subsequent expansions in a linear fashion. Reprinted from Jay Edwards, Louisiana's French Creole Architecture, c. 1732 - c. 1911 Multiple Property Nomination, National Register of Historic Places, 1991.*

environment of the French Huguenots. Although Huguenot settlers often blended into the dominant culture around them, given that they often settled alongside of Protestants from other ethnic backgrounds, their ethnicity is still Gallic and therefore deserving of examination. Substantial numbers of French Huguenots settled in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and South Carolina, among other locales. Some of these settlements also included a number of French-speaking Walloons from southern Belgium, although they are often mistakenly identified as Dutch.[32] A number of Walloons also settled in Wisconsin in the mid-nineteenth century.[33]

While a cursory examination of elevations of French-built houses in the aforementioned settlements reveals a wide variety of forms and materials, a more detailed analysis of the floor plans reveals patterns that do not appear to be haphazard. One of the plans frequently encountered is a two-room plan known as the *salle-et-chambre*. Translated to "hall and chamber," its arrangement is similar to the British hall and parlor plan. The asymmetrical, two-room salle-et-chambre plan can be traced to medieval times, and may have originated in Normandy.[34] For whatever reason, this plan was left out of the Gallic architecture classification system previously discussed. However, the two-room house is simply an enlargement of the single cell house (fig. 5.8), the most basic of all vernacular forms[35] and a type that is listed as one of the five basic Gallic floor plans.[36] The salle-et-chambre plan can be found in various French settlements including French Canada, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, South Carolina, Louisiana, and the West Indies. It is possible that this plan rather than the *salle haute* served as the Gallic antecedent for the Best House, since they share a similar morphology. The Vincendières may have brought the salle-et-chambre plan from France or encountered it in the West Indies, since it is particularly prevalent there.[37] Nevertheless, the arrangement of salle-et-chambre plans varies somewhat from region to region, and even within regions. In many cases, salle-et-chambre houses have a central chimney and two front doors, although in other cases there is only one front door and the chimneys are placed at the gable ends. Generally, the French had a preference for interior chimneys and thus placed their chimneys on the eave wall(s) rather than the gable wall(s), which is the case for the Best House. The location of the staircase in such houses also varies, with exterior staircases appearing frequently on Cajun-built houses in Louisiana.[38]

Probably the closest North American parallels to the Best House can be found in the South Carolina Lowcountry, an area settled early on by French Huguenots. It deserves mention that during the eighteenth century, approximately forty-five percent of the European population of the Lowcountry may have been comprised of French Huguenots, primarily from Provence.[39] As was previously discussed, some of the houses in France that are closest in appearance to the Best House can be found in Provence. Again, there is a village bearing the name of Vincendières in a French province not far from Provence, and this southeastern part of France may be the source area for many of the architectural features found in the Best House. Indeed, the French Huguenot houses that were built in the Lowcountry by immigrants from Provence are very similar to the Best House—they are two stories in height with hipped roofs, single-pile in depth, and have their chimneys located on the eave rather than the gable walls, where they are oriented

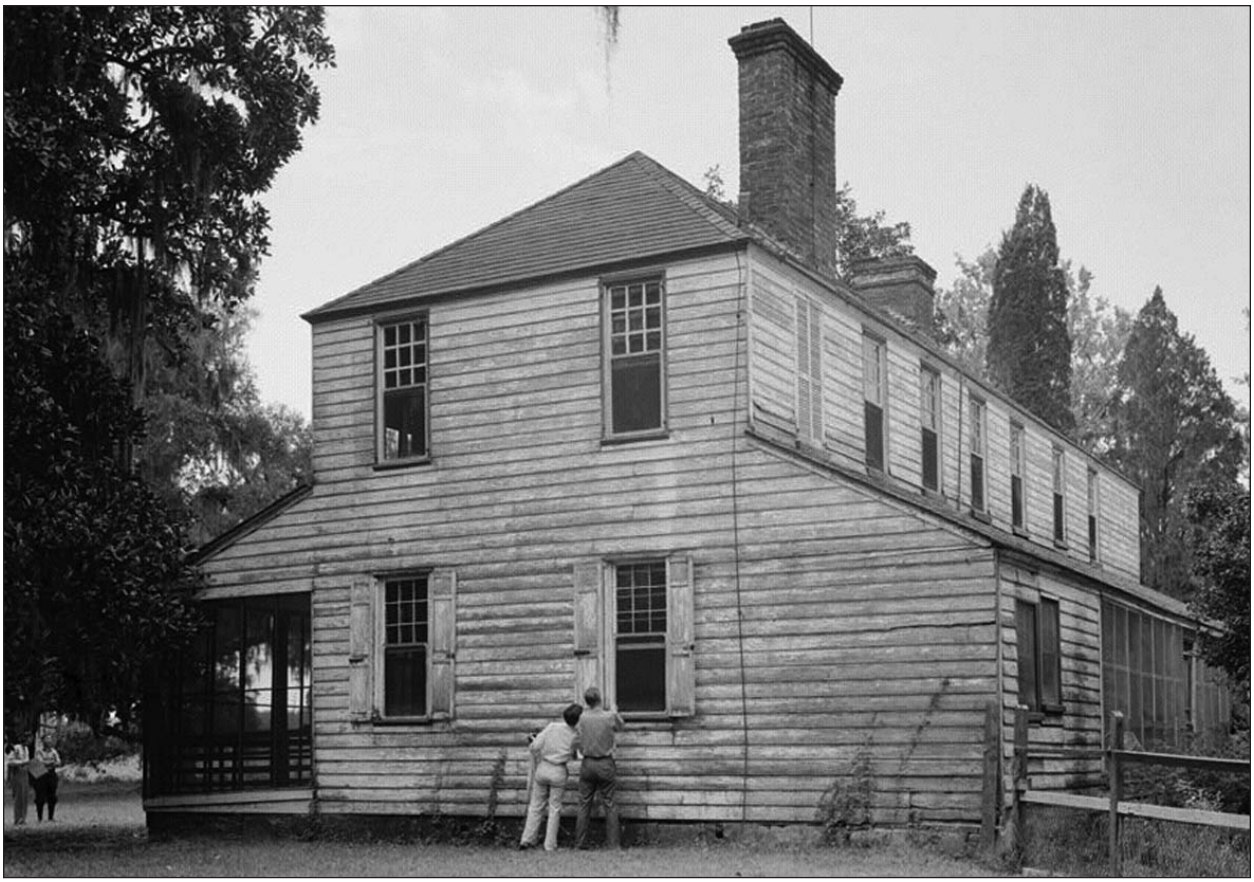


***Fig. 5.9:** Photograph of Middleburg Plantation, Berkeley County, South Carolina. Note the hipped roof, tall and narrow profile, and chimney placed sideways on rear eave wall. Reprinted from Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Historic American Buildings Survey Collection (http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/hhhtml/).*

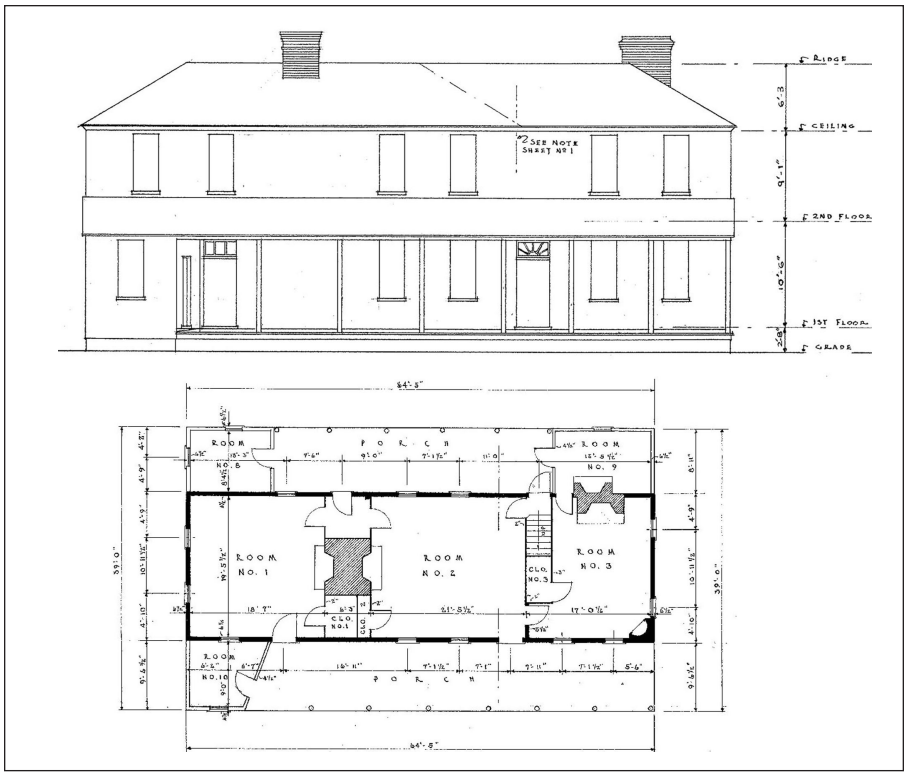


***Fig. 5.10**: Elevation and plan of Middleburg Plantation. Its original two-room salle-et-chambre arrangement (Rooms No. 1 and 2) has been enlarged in a linear fashion with Room No. 3; both sections have hipped roofs The three-bay, side-passage configuration of Room No. 3 is somewhat similar to the original section of the Best House. Like many early dwellings in the South Carolina Lowcountry, Middleburg was constructed by a French Huguenot. Reprinted from Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Historic American Buildings Survey Collection (http://lcweb2.loc.gov /ammem/hhhtml/).*

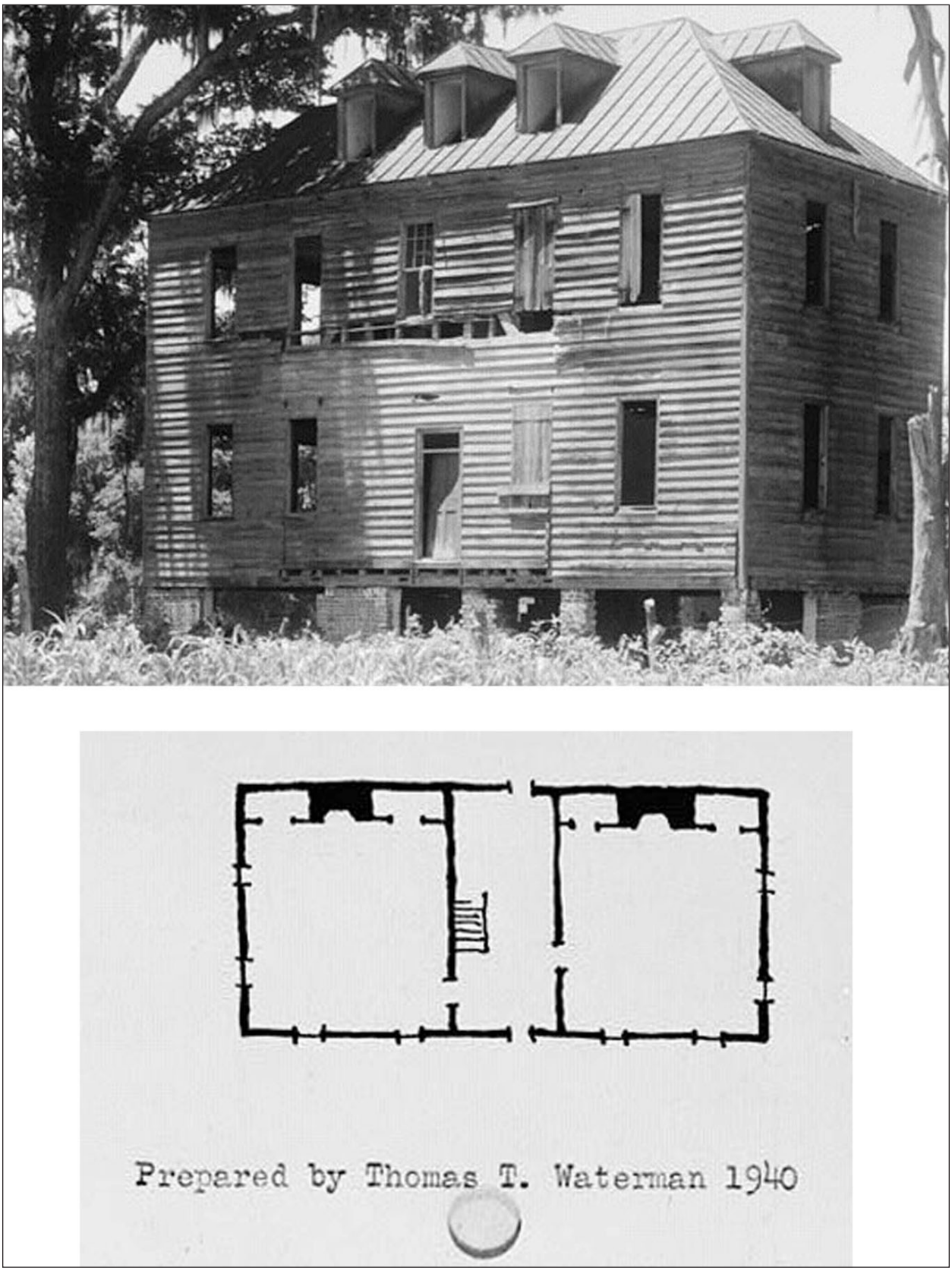


***Fig. 5.11**: Façade and plan of Indianfield Plantation, Berkeley County, South Carolina. The house may have had a floor plan similar to the original section of the Best House--single-pile with a side-passage stair hall--as evidenced by the seam on the wall of the facade. Its hipped roof with chimneys placed on the rear eave wall and its tall, narrow form likewise share many similarities with the Best House.* *Reprinted from Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Historic American Buildings Survey Collection (http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/hhhtml/).*



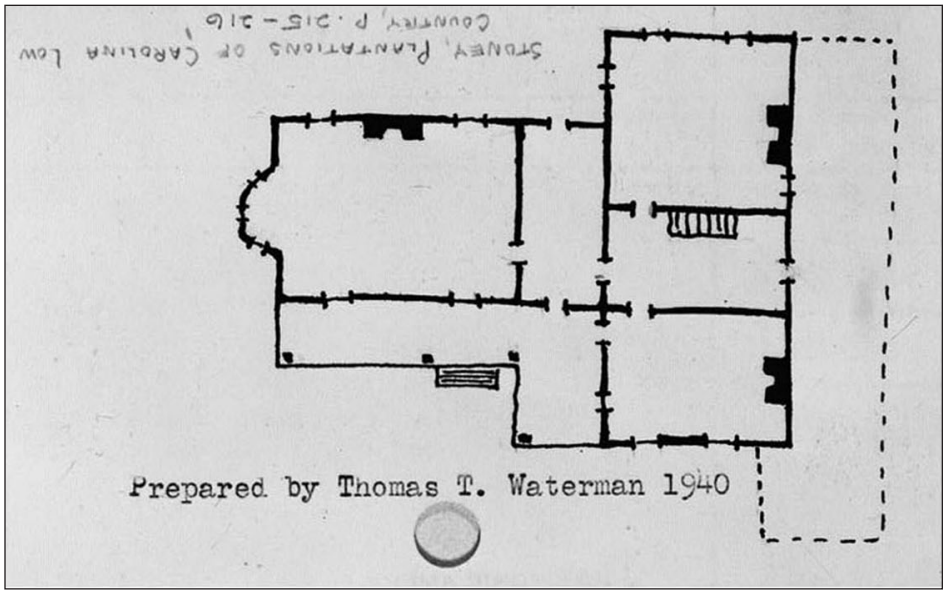


***Fig. 5.12**: View of Whitehall Plantation, Berkeley County, South Carolina. Two single-pile sections were joined at a right angle to give the house its T-shaped appearance; one section had a side-passage plan similar to the original section of the Best House, and the other section had a central-passage. Both sections have their chimneys located on the rear eave walls. While many Charleston single houses had hipped roofs, this example contains a gabled roof.* *Reprinted from Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Historic American Buildings Survey Collection (http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/hhhtml/).*

sideways. In addition, many of these buildings are stuccoed and have tall ceilings and large stair halls. This tall, linear form, seen in both urban and rural settings, is known locally as the "Charleston single house"[40] (figs 5.9-5.12). The Charleston single house existed in two-room salle-et-chambre arrangements, although it was more commonly seen in three or more room configurations, which represented an expansion to the two-room core. This single-pile plan with tall ceilings and large window openings was well suited to the severe climate, as it facilitated air circulation.[41] It should be noted that several Vincendières family members lived in Charleston,[42] which was one of the most important destinations in America for refugees fleeing the slave uprisings in Saint-Domingue.[43] A form similar to the Charleston single house can likewise be found in the West Indies, which shares the subtropical climate found in the Lowcountry, and was also settled by people of French ethnicity, including the Vincendières.[44] A large number of Huguenots were found in the West Indies,[45] where many lived before migrating to South Carolina.[46] In the Caribbean, these linear houses are known as *en-filade* plans, where rooms open into and through one another without the benefit of corridors. The use of large windows and high ceilings helped to ameliorate hot and humid conditions.[47]

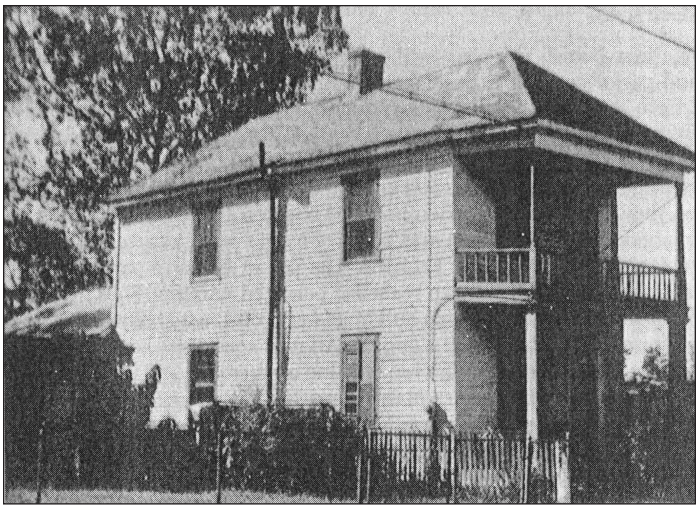
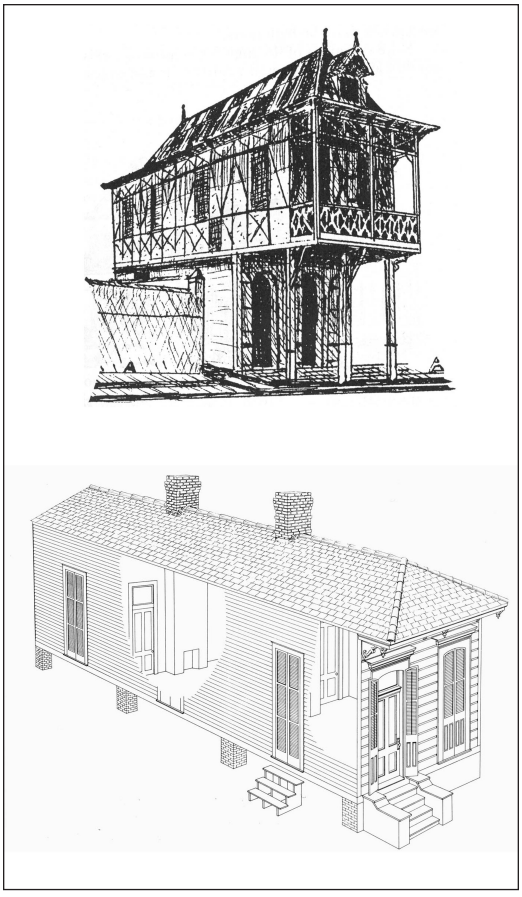


***Fig. 5.13 (left):** French Creole townhouse located in Mobile, Alabama. Its hipped roof and tall, narrow profile with single-pile plan are similar to the Charleston single house. Reprinted from Philippe Oszuscik, "African-Americans in the American South," in To Build in a New Land: Ethnic Landscapes in North America, ed. Allen G. Noble (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 169.*



***Figs 5.14 and 5.15 (right):** The "high house," seen above in an example from Port-au-Prince, Haiti, was a two-story version of the "Shotgun House," seen below in New Orleans. Both house forms originated in the West Indies and diffused to the Gulf Coast of the United States. Reprinted from Oszuscik, "African-Americans in the American South," 167; John Michael Vlach, "Afro-Americans," in America's Architectural Roots: Ethnic Groups that Built America, ed. Dell Upton (Washington, DC: The Preservation Press, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1986), 47.*

Other similar houses exist in areas of French settlement in the subtropics. One house type is known as a "French Creole townhouse," which also owes its origins to the West Indies[48] (fig. 5.13). Like the Charleston single house, it possesses a hipped roof, along with a tall and narrow form. Often confused with the French Creole townhouse is a house type known as the *maison haute* or "high house" (fig. 5.14). Likewise originating in Haiti, the plan of the high house is

more linear that the French Creole townhouse and is essentially a two-story version of the *maison basse* or "low house." The low house is known in this country as a "shotgun" house, which was so named because its linear form with doors aligned end to end could theoretically permit a bullet to pass all the way through the house[49] (fig. 5.15). Its origin is credited to freed slaves from the West Indies.[50] Although it shares some similar features to the houses aforementioned, its one-story height and gable-end entrance[51] preclude it from serving as a direct antecedent of the Best House. However, a shotgun house with a two-story rear section aptly named the "Camelback" house[52] does bears some resemblance to the Best House (fig. 5.16).

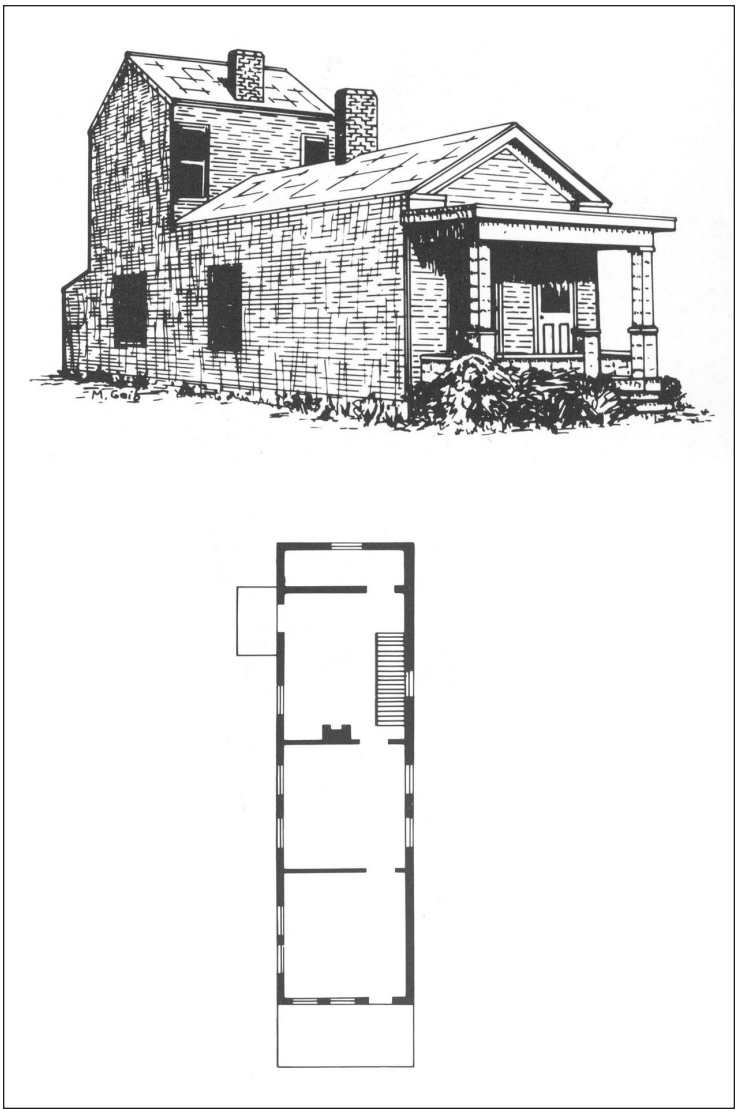
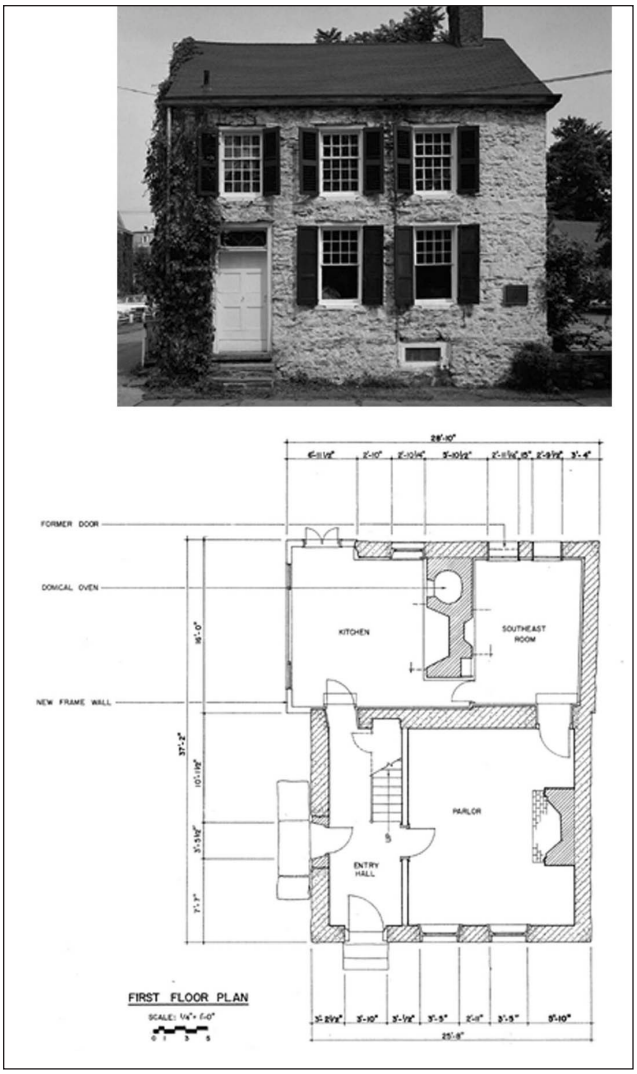


***Fig. 5.16:** Typical "Camelback" house and plan found in New Orleans. Though these illustrations do not correspond to the same building, their single-pile plan and linear arrangement with chimney on the rear eave wall of the main block shares some similarities with the Charleston single house as well as the Best House. Reprinted from Allen G. Noble, Wood, Brick, and Stone: The North American Settlement Landscape, Vol. I: Houses (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1984), 98-99.*

Although the overall form and features of the Best House is similar to the French houses found in subtropical climates, there are notable differences in their respective floor plans. Many of the subtropical houses contain three or more rooms, whose linear arrangement facilitated air circulation.[53] The two-room plans (salle-et-chambre) that do exist have entrances that open directly into the first-floor living spaces, which received direct heat from the fireplaces.[54] In contrast, the front entrance of the Best House opens into a stair hall, a feature that the French may have adopted in America,[55] probably from the English. In essence, the Best House functioned as a closed plan house since the front entrance was into the stair hall rather than a heated living space,[56] an observation corroborated by GWWO, Inc./Architects in their Historic Structures Report on the Best House.[57] Several French-built, closed plan, two-room houses are found in the Hudson Valley of New York, which is a region that saw substantial interaction between Continental groups and those of the British Isles, particularly the English with their Georgian ideals. More will be said about this later. Like the Best House, several of these New York houses are of stone construction with single-pile



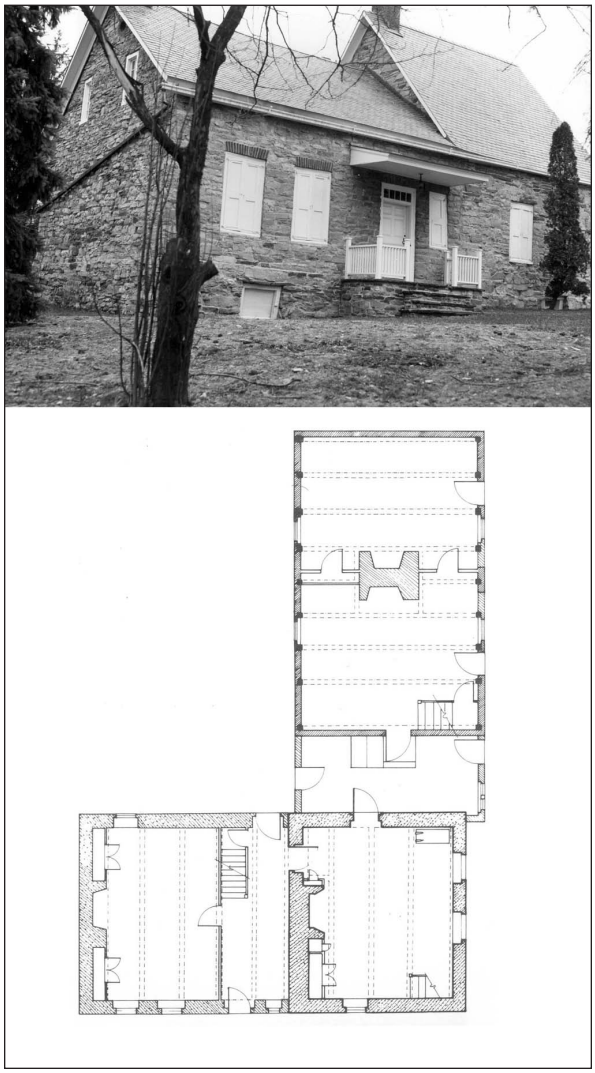


***Fig. 5.17 (left)**: Photograph and plan of Vandenburgh-Hasbrouck House, Ulster County, New York. Its single-pile, side-passage plan with center-chimney kitchen addition is clearly visible. The Hasbroucks were a prominent French Huguenot family in New York State.* *Reprinted from Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Historic American Buildings Survey Collection (http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/hhhtml/).*

***Fig. 5.18 (right)**: Photograph and plan of Bronck House, Greene County, New York. Although the house now consists of a center-passage dwelling with a center-chimney rear addition, the earliest section of the house (bottom right) was a simple single-cell dwelling that was subsequently enlarged with a single-pile, side-passage addition.* *Photograph reprinted from Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Historic American Buildings Survey Collection (http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/hhhtml/); Drawing reprinted from Dell Upton, "Dutch," in America's Architectural Roots: Ethnic Groups that Built America, ed. Dell Upton, 48-53 (Washington, DC: The Preservation Press, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1986), 52.*

plans divided into a stair hall and adjoining room (figs 5.17 and 5.18). Interestingly, many of these houses were constructed by French Huguenots. However, many of the New York Huguenots emigrated from northern France near Belgium rather than Provence. A Huguenot-built house with a floor plan similar to the New York houses also exists in Delaware (fig. 5.19). The differences in geographic origin of these Huguenots in France may explain the differences in floor plans despite similarities in their external appearance. Another explanation could be an adjustment in building techniques due to different climatic conditions in each of the North American locales, an open plan being more desirable in subtropical conditions and a closed plan being more effective in areas that have more severe winters.

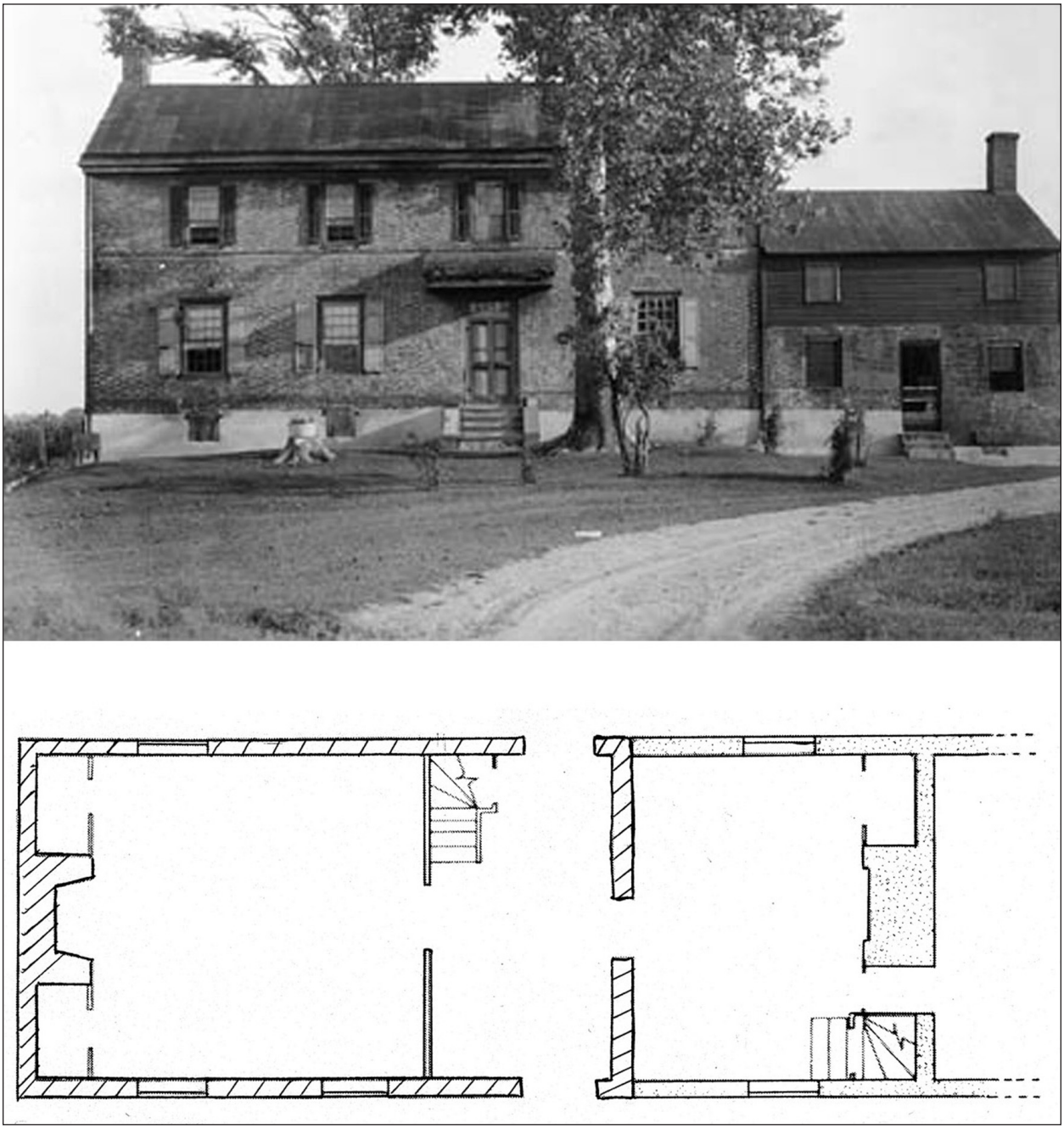
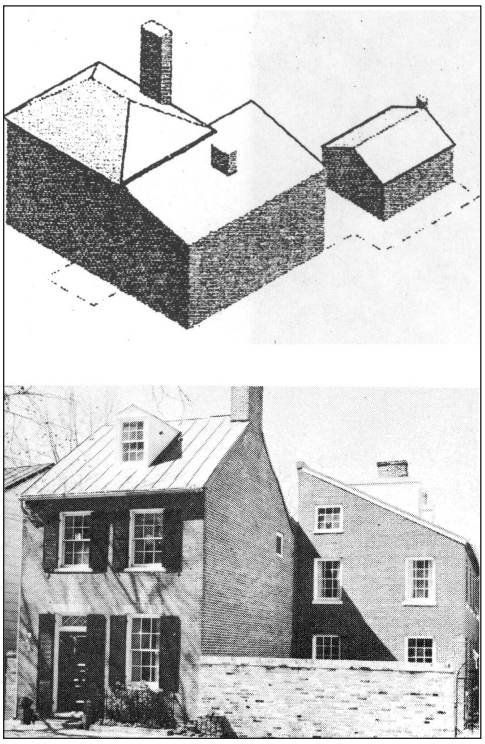


***Fig. 5.19:** Constructed by a French Huguenot in New Castle County, Delaware, the Elias Naudain House originally had a single-pile, side-passage configuration (delineated by the hatch marks) that subsequently was expanded with a one-room addition, thereby mimicking the more common British "I-House" form. Adapted from Bernard L. Herman, Architecture and Rural Life in Central Delaware, 1700-1900 (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1987), 30.*

Of further interest concerning the New York houses is that several possess additions with central chimneys, which is the case with the Best House. These additions usually function as kitchens and/or parlors, and this may have been the case with the Best House's north addition. An addition of this type would have been necessary in a two-room salle-et-chambre house where the stair hall is located in the space that the parlor normally occupies. The original exterior form of the Best House's north addition deserves brief mention, since its side-facing shed roof was a feature seen on other houses in the Mid-Atlantic. Known as a flounder roof for



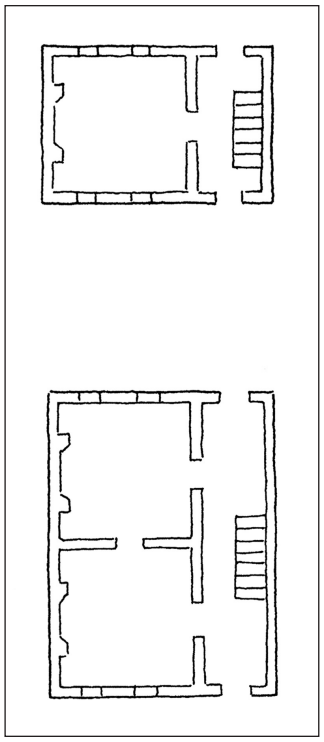


Fig. 5.20 (left): ***Above: View of Best House, showing conjectured appearance of shed roof addition. Below: House in Alexandria, Virginia, with a semi-detached shed roof dwelling known locally as a "flounder house." This form existed in urban and rural locations in both stand-alone structures and additions.*** *Rendering reprinted from GWWO, 6; Photograph reprinted from Ethelyn Cox, Historic Alexandria, Virginia, Street by Street: A Survey of Existing Early Buildings (Alexandria: Historic Alexandria Foundation, 1976), 48.*

Fig. 5.21 (right): ***"Two-thirds" Georgian plans, in both single-pile, and double-pile versions.*** *Reprinted from Henry Glassie, Vernacular Architecture (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 127.*

its lack of windows on one side of the building where it existed as a stand-alone structure, the flounder roof also was frequently employed as an addition[58] (fig. 5.20). This may have been another British feature[59] that the French and other Continental European groups borrowed in America. While center-chimney additions exist in some French Huguenot houses in New York, additions on these houses were more frequently arranged in a linear fashion[60] rather than at a right angle, which is the case with the Best House. This orientation suggests the intent of the Vincendières to achieve a more symmetrical Georgian appearance, as the house assumed a five-bay form with a center passage when the north addition was added. Likewise, many French-speaking builders in New York and New Jersey abandoned the even-bay façade of the two-room plan in favor of a symmetrical three or five-bay façade.[61]

Perhaps symmetry was originally intended with the main block of the Best House but was delayed because of economic reasons, resulting in the main block consisting of a "two-thirds" Georgian appearance with a side stair hall (fig. 5.21). In other words, the form of the Best House may have more to do with financial and popular culture considerations than ethnic or climatic ones. The two-thirds Georgian form was widely used in the Mid-Atlantic in the late eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century by people who could not afford to build full Georgian renditions.[62] Although the two-thirds form more frequently had a double-pile rather than a single-pile arrangment, single-pile versions very similar to the Best House do exist, particularly in Piedmont Virginia,[63] which was settled heavily by English migrating inland from the Tidewater region. Indeed, the Georgian form is considered an English contribution to American architecture,[64] and may represent the Vincendières desire to have a house fitting of a successful American plantation, albeit one that retained some aspects of traditional French architecture. Whatever the owner's original intent concerning the main block of the Best

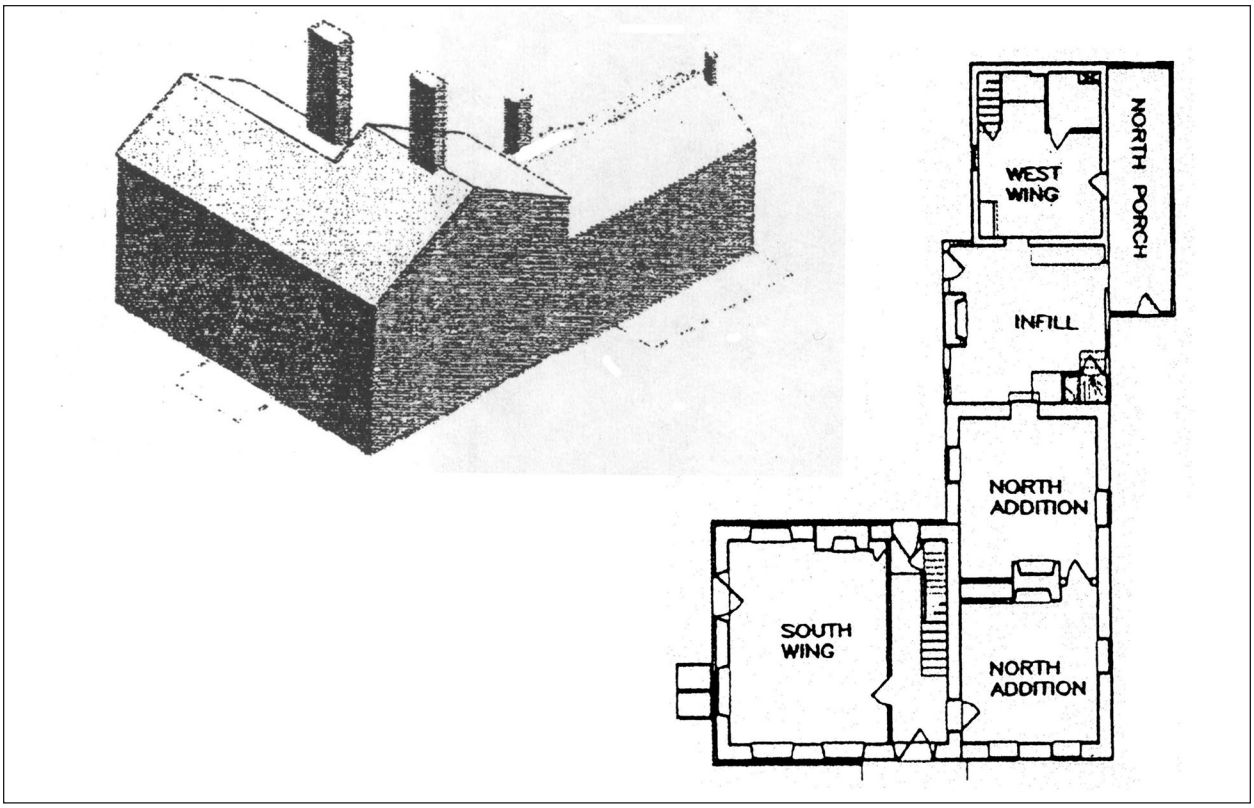


***Fig. 5.22:** Final configuration of the Best House. Its five-bay façade with central stair hall gave the house a symmetrical Georgian appearance.* Reprinted from GWWO, 4; 8.

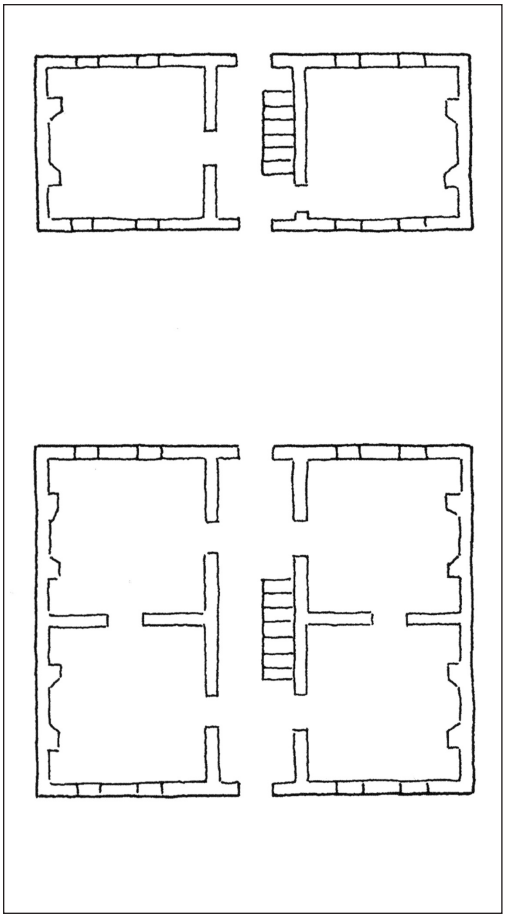


***Fig. 5.23:** Georgian floor plans. The "I-house" version is single-pile in depth, while the full Georgian plan is double-pile.* Reprinted from Glassie, Vernacular Architecture, 127.

House, it eventually achieved a full Georgian appearance when the shed/flounder roof on the north addition was changed to a gable roof and unified with the roof on the main block (south wing), which was likewise changed to a gable roof[65] (fig. 5.22). Technically, the house did not constitute a full Georgian floor plan, because it was single-pile rather than double-pile in depth. Instead, it took on the "I-house" form, so called because its plan resembled the letter I.[66] This plan actually preceded the (full) Georgian house type, and consisted of a single-pile house with central stair hall and five-bay façade (fig. 5.23). The I-house form probably developed from the hall and parlor plan, which lacked the center passage.[67] Like the two-thirds and full Georgian plans, the I-house was in use throughout the Mid-Atlantic during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries[68] and is credited with English origins.[69]

In conclusion, it can be conjectured that the Best House does not represent a direct transmission of Gallic architecture to Maryland. Although it does retain certain French characteristics, others are no longer visible because of subsequent alterations. Like many American houses, particularly Franco-American vernacular ones, it is an amalgamation of many different building traditions and responses to climatic conditions. In external appearance, it most closely resembles the tall, linear houses with hipped roofs that are found in the West Indies, South Carolina, and along the Gulf Coast — French houses that were modified to fit a subtropical climate. However, in plan, the Best House most closely resembles the salle-et-chambre houses indigenous to France and carried to various French settlements throughout the New World. Specifically, it closely resembles the closed plan, two-room Huguenot houses in New York, which have been modified with a stair hall in lieu of the parlor. In essence, it may be argued that French houses were adapted to fit the unique climate and culture in each locale, hence the wide diversity in houses found throughout French settlements. But perhaps the Best House is not a response to vernacular traditions as much as it is a response to popular culture trends, as represented by the Georgian appearance of the façade. Whatever the factors for the development of the Best House, its form is unique for the geographic region in which it is located. While it may be part of a larger trend of French-built two-room houses constructed in the United States, it likely one of only a handful that are single-pile in depth with a side-passage stair hall.

Antecedents of Stone Barn

Like the main house on the Best Farm, the extant stone barn presents a unique architectural statement on the cultural landscape, and is an anomaly for the region in which it is located. Its distinctive hipped roof, stone construction, rectangular shape with tall opposing front and rear doors on the eave walls, and location on level ground stands in contrast to the majority of barns in the region that are derivatives of the banked Pennsylvania forebay barn, which diffused to Piedmont Maryland from southeastern Pennsylvania and has antecedents in Switzerland[70] (figs 5.24 and 5.25). The architectural elements that make the Best Barn distinctive have been dis-





***Fig. 5.24 (left):** View of Best Barn from the southwest, showing stone construction, hipped roof, tall entryway, and narrow ventilation slits.* Photograph by Kay Fanning, August 2003.

***Fig. 5.25 (right):** Pennsylvania forebay barn located in Baltimore County, Maryland. Its two-story arrangement banked into a hillside with a gabled roof and cantilevered forebay stands in sharp contrast to the Best Barn. While the Best Barn was likely used for the storage and threshing of small grains, Pennsylvania forebay barns were multi-purpose structures designed to accommodate livestock on the first floor and feed storage on the second floor.* Reprinted from Jeffrey C. Everett, "'At the Foot of the Mountain': The Threatened Agricultural Landscape of the Northern Piedmont" (M. A. thesis, University of Delaware, 1999), 76.

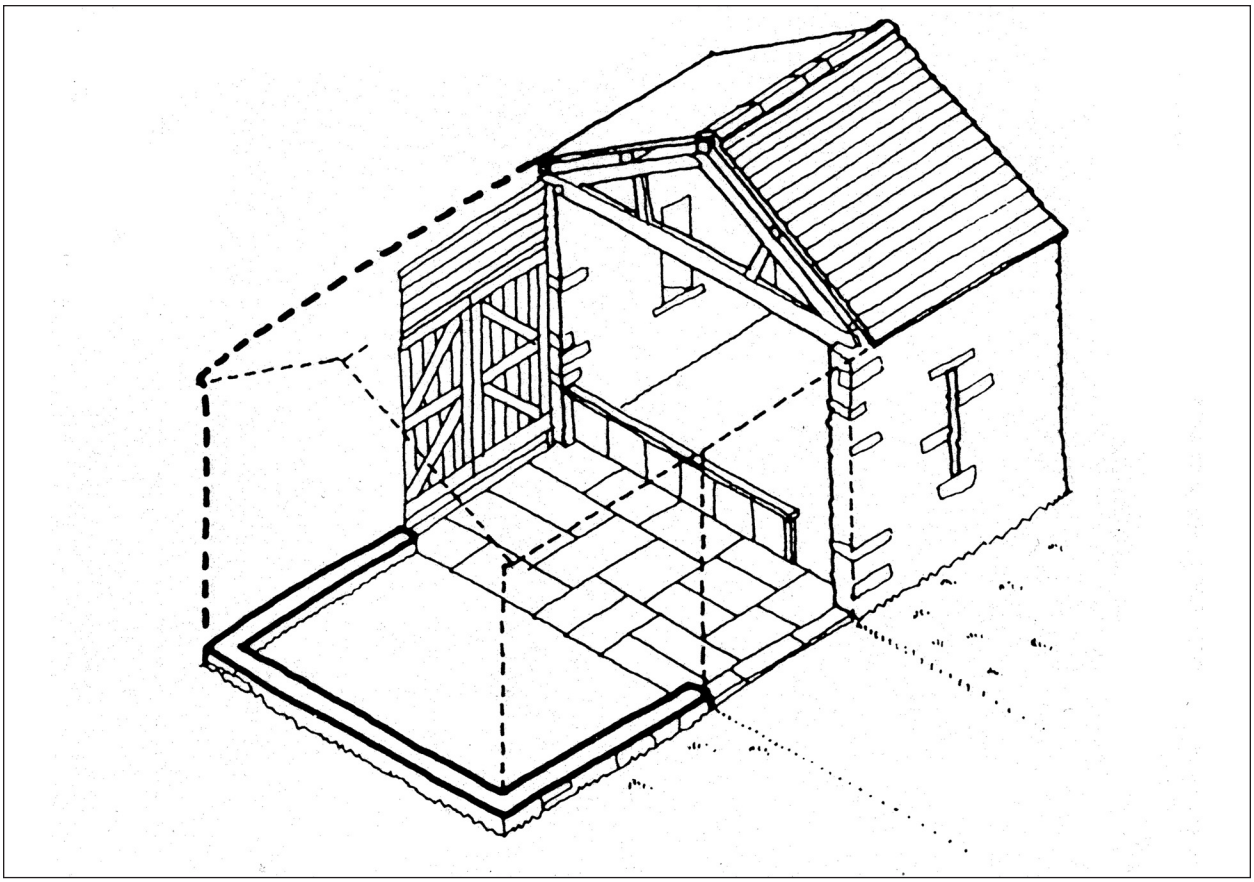


***Fig. 5.26:** Isometric view of threshing barn in England, showing division into three bays. Such barns were also common in France and several other European countries. Reprinted from R. W. Brunskill, Illustrated Handbook of Vernacular Architecture (London: Faber and Faber, 1971), 151.*

cussed in previous research, where it was surmised that the barn was of a French origin.[71] However, a more detailed investigation into its antecedents has not been provided to date, and therefore, the purpose of this report will be to attempt to substantiate the claims for a French ethnicity.

Although tracing the antecedents of the Best Barn was as difficult a process as that undertaken for the main house because of the lack of similar buildings in North America to compare it with, research uncovered for this report seems to point to a definitive European origin. Archeology will be needed to ultimately determine the nature of the interior arrangement of the barn since partitions and flooring no longer exist, but its overall form and function appears to be that of a three-bay barn known in this country as an "English" or "Yankee" barn.[72] This barn type was usually divided into three equal bays, which alternately were used for the storage of grain, the threshing of grain, and the storage of threshed grain (fig. 5.26). Typically, the middle bay contained the threshing floor, and each side bay served as storage for the respective stages of grain processing. Although this barn form has existed in the British Isles since the Middle Ages,[73] the term "English" barn is a misnomer, since it was a barn form also employed in various countries throughout Continental Europe.[74] Similarly, the term "Yankee" barn is inappropriate, since the barn is seen in North America in English settlement areas other than New England, including

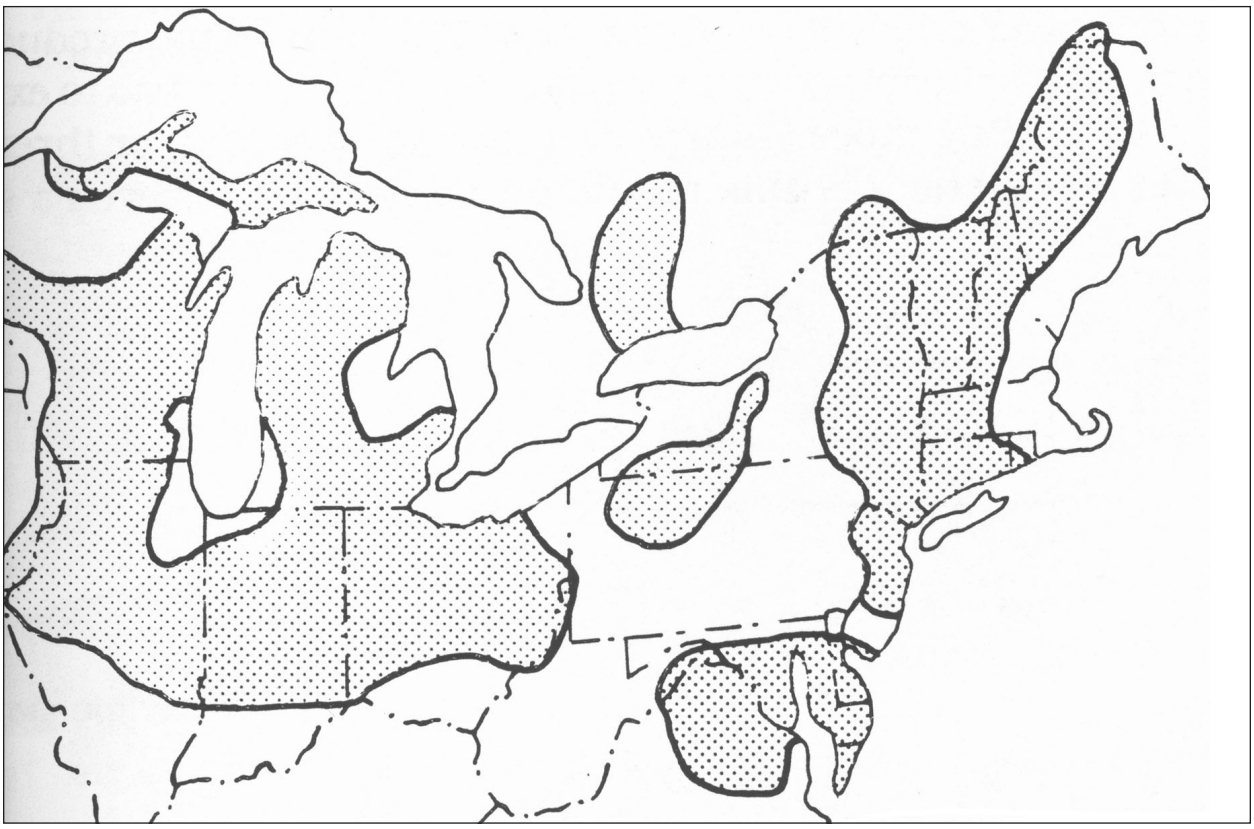
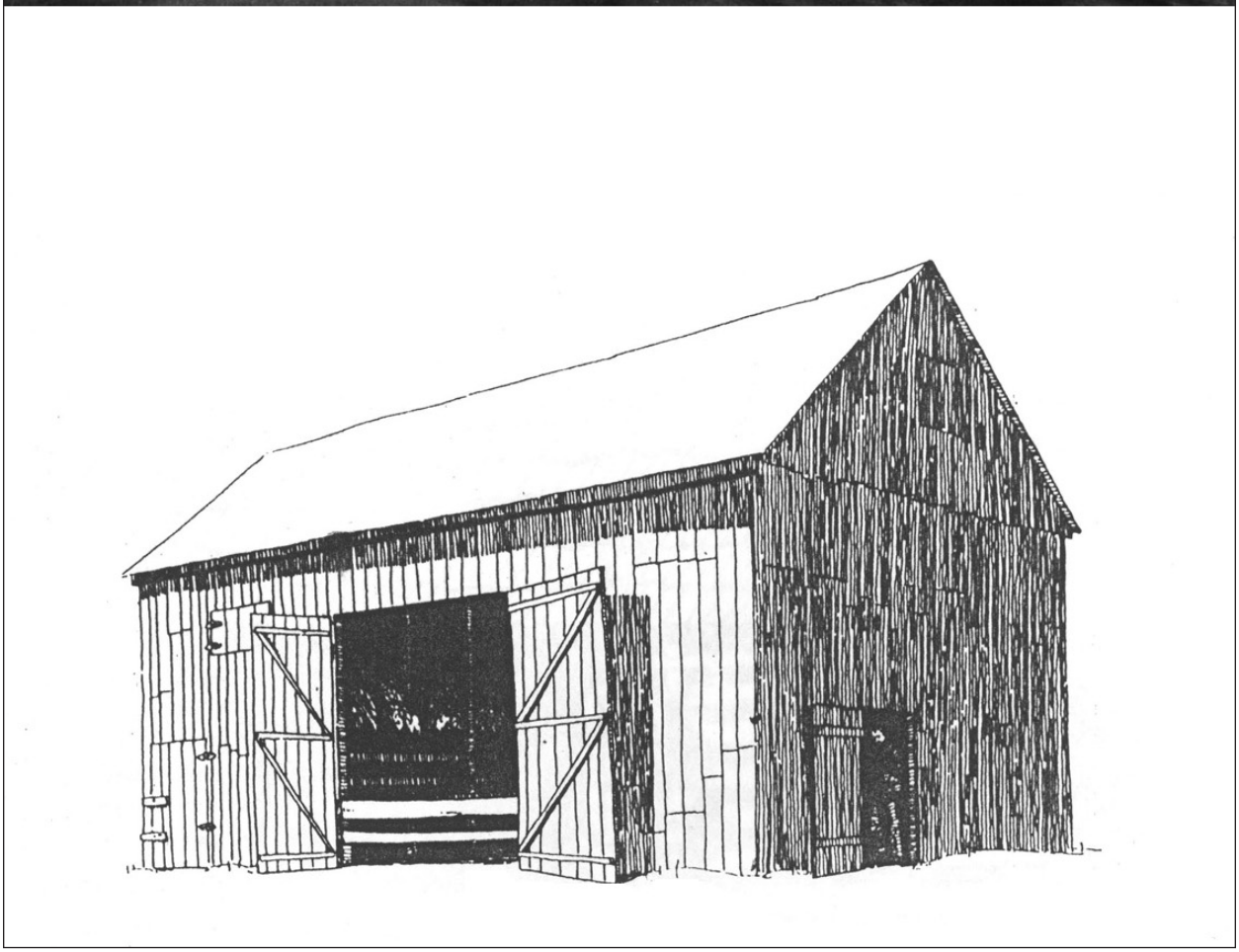


Fig. 5.27: Generalized distribution of three-bay threshing barns found in the eastern United States, as represented by the shaded areas. Absent from the map are the French-built threshing barns found in northeastern Maine along the St. John River. *Reprinted from Allen G. Noble and Richard K. Cleek, "Sorting out the Nomenclature of English Barns," Material Culture: Journal of the Pioneer America Society 26 No. 1 (Spring 1994), 51.*

the Middle Colonies and the Chesapeake[75] (fig. 5.27). Furthermore, the barn was not limited to use by English immigrants, as it was also carried to Canada by the French.[76] This specific discussion will occur later in this section of the report, as several barns in Québec serve as the closest parallels to the Best Barn. Their transmission from France to North America offers the most conclusive evidence of a French origin for the Best Barn.

The three-bay barn form is synonymous with the processing of grain, so much so that this barn type is sometimes referred to by scholars as a "three-bay threshing barn." Actually, the term is repetitive, since three-bay barns were originally used only for threshing.[77] The threshing process was necessary to loosen the grain from the stalk. Hand-flail threshing required adequate light as well as space, thus, a threshing barn would need enough clearance to work the flail. In addition, ventilation would have to be controlled in order to blow the chafe from the stalk.[78] Several features of the Best Barn seem to indicate its original use for threshing. Not only is the interior of the Best Barn rather commodious, its tall opposing front and rear entryways allow the interior to be permeated with both air and light; the presence of a rear as well as a front opening assisted in the winnowing process by increasing ventilation[79] (fig. 5.28). Aside from ventilation purposes, entryways on threshing barns had to be equally tall on each elevation to allow the loading and unloading of carts, which could be driven through the building rather than backed out.[80] It is probable that the Best Barn originally had some sort of paired doors covering both the front and





***Figs 5.28 and 5.29**: Above: View of Best Barn showing opposing front and rear entryways. Bottom: Threshing barn in Albemarle County, Virginia, showing hinged doors that may have been the type that existed on the Best Barn at one time.* *Photograph by Judith Earley, December 2003; Drawing by Henry Glassie, reprinted from Henry Glassie, "The Old Barns of Appalachia," Mountain Life & Work 40 No. 2 (Summer 1965), 30.*

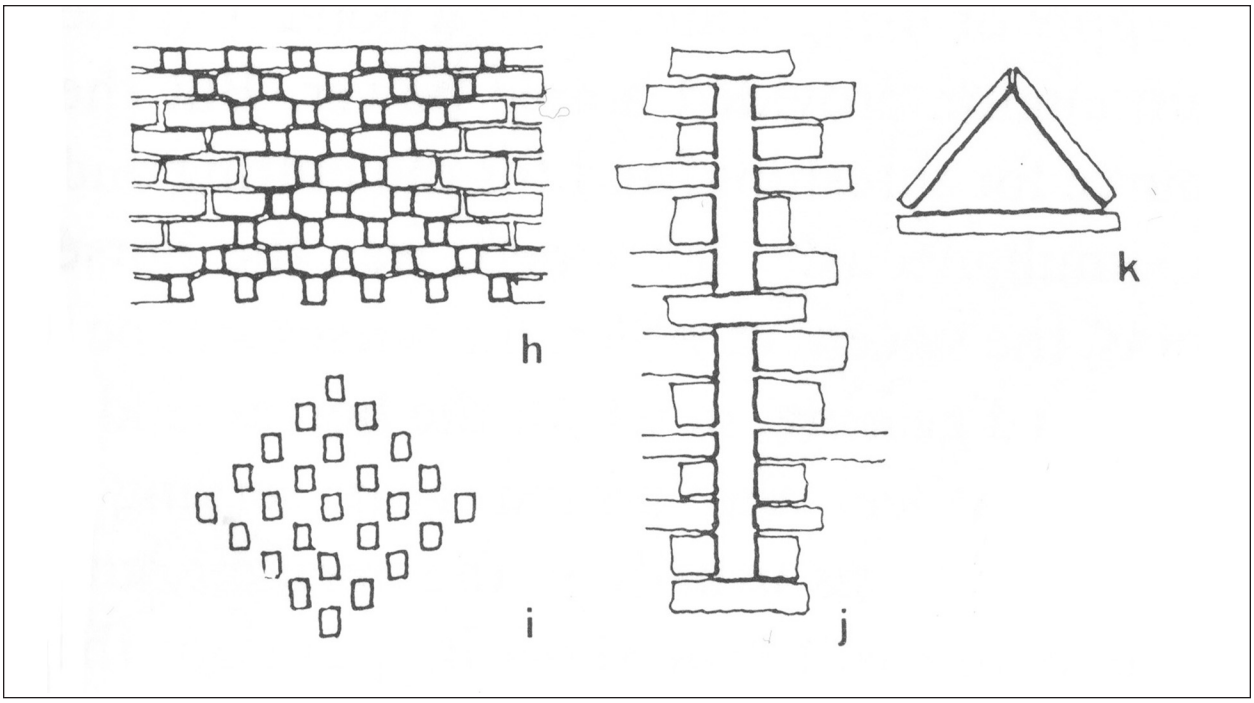


***Fig. 5.30:** Various ventilator patterns found on threshing barns in England. H and I are found on brick barns, while J and K are found on stone barns; J is the type found on the Best Barn.* *Reprinted from Brunskill, Illustrated Handbook of Vernacular Architecture, 151.*

rear entryways to the barn, which may have been attached with hinges and opened outwardly (fig. 5.29). Although it has since been filled in, the north elevation of the Best Barn originally contained a smaller door that could only be accessed by persons rather than machinery. This door may have served as a separate entryway into the granary. Aside from the various door openings, ventilation on stone threshing barns in Europe was generally limited, albeit narrow ventilation slits piercing the walls[81] (fig. 5.30), which can be seen on both the east and west elevations of the Best Barn.

Sometime in its evolution, the Best Barn began to be used for purposes other than grain processing and storage. The barn's interior partitions and flooring were eventually removed in order to shelter livestock, farm machinery, or both. Furthermore, archeological investigations uncovered evidence of a structure that was previously attached to the south elevation of the barn[82] (fig. 5.31). This structure may have sheltered animals, as constructing additions off the gable end(s) of a three-bay barn was a simple way of enlarging it to accommodate an increasing specialization in livestock production[84] (figs 5.32 and 5.33). The Best Farm probably resembled many farms in the Mid-Atlantic that gradually shifted to livestock production when wheat began to decline in importance due to competition from the Midwest. As a result of agricultural diversification, larger barns were needed to house multiple functions.[85] In America, barns began serving as multi-functional buildings as early as 1800, with haylofts eventually being constructed in three-bay barns to separate the feed from the livestock stabled below. However, in Lowland Europe, animals were never kept in a threshing barn, lest they feed on the grain being stored there.[86] Instead, different types of animals were kept in separate structures, each with a prescribed name; pigs were kept in a sty, horses in a stable, and cows in a byre.[87]

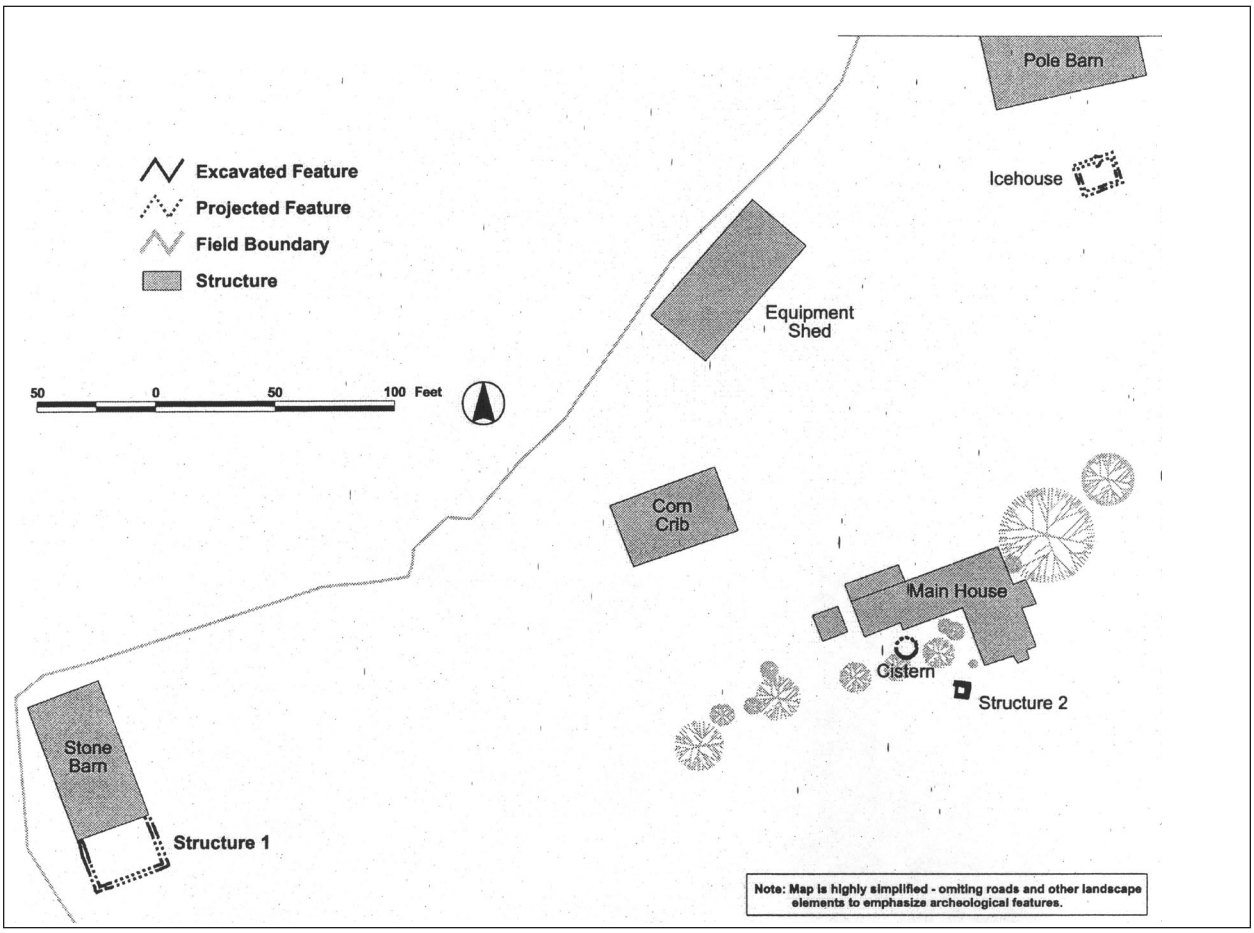


***Fig. 5.31**: Diagram of structures uncovered during archeological investigations at the Best Farm. Structure 1 may have been an addition to the Best Barn intended to shelter livestock.* *Reprinted from Joy Beasley, ed., Draft Archeological Identification and Evaluation Study of The Best Farm (Washington, DC: U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Capital Region, Regional Archeology Program, 2003), 3.15.*

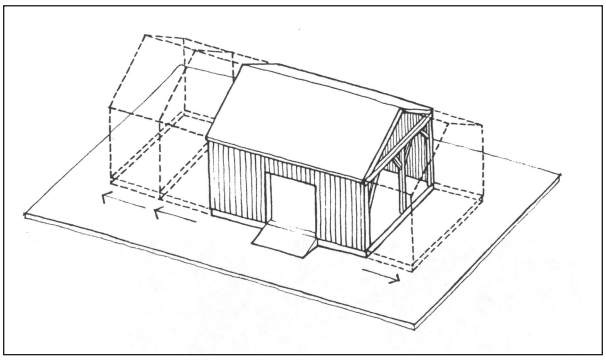




***Fig. 5.32 (left)**: The most practical way to construct additions to a threshing barn was off the gable ends, as demonstrated by this schematic of barn in New England. Attempting to expand a threshing barn off the eave walls would interfere with the basic functions of this type of barn.* *Reprinted from Reprinted from Thomas C. Hubka, Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn: The Connected Farm Buildings of New England (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1984), 59.*

***Fig. 5.33 (right)**: Three-bay threshing barn in Madison County, Virginia, showing additions off each gable end--one for equipment storage and one for livestock.* *Reprinted from Jeffrey C. Everett, "'At the Foot of the Mountain': The Threatened Agricultural Landscape of the Northern Piedmont" (M. A. thesis, University of Delaware, 1999), 85.*

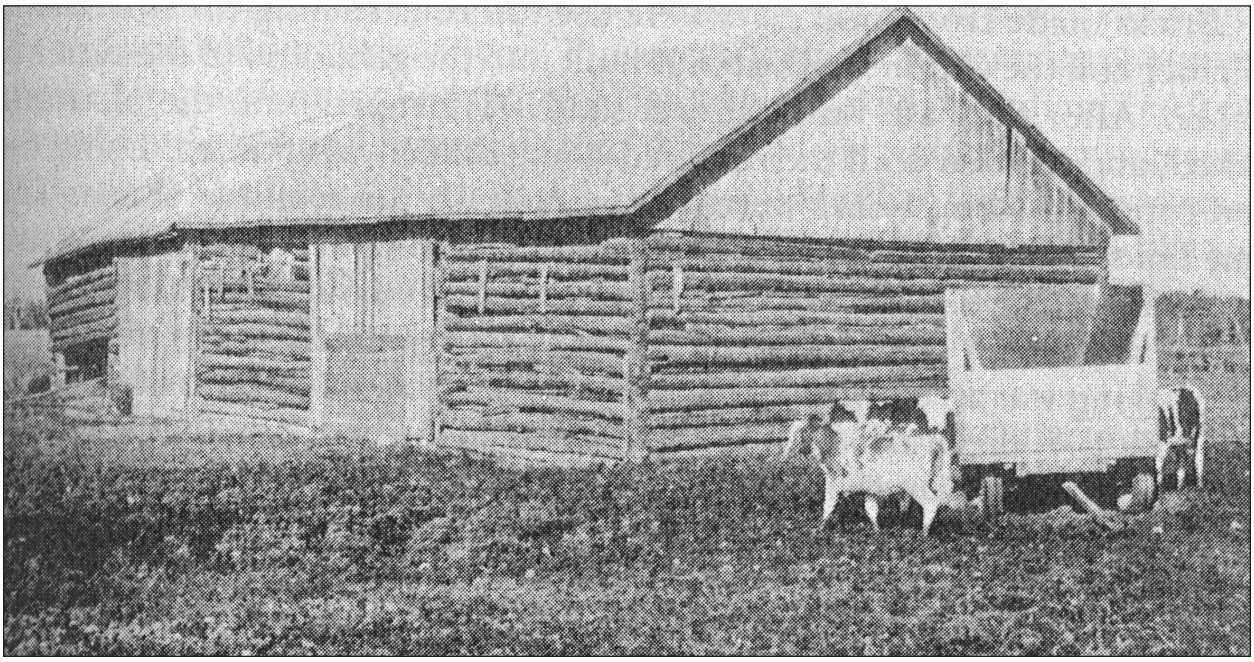


Fig. 5.34: ***Walloon-built three-bay barn located in the Door Peninsula of Wisconsin. Although it is a later example than many of the barns discussed and is of log construction, its builders are French-speaking and its form remains the same. Notice tall entry doors and gable-end addition for sheltering cattle.*** *Reprinted from William G. Laatsch, and Charles F. Calkins, "Belgians in Wisconsin," in To Build in a New Land: Ethnic Landscapes in North America, ed. Allen G. Noble (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 201.*

While it is probable that the original form of the Best Barn can be classified as a three-bay threshing barn derived from European prototypes, it is more difficult to establish a definitive French origin, since this barn form was known in different parts of Europe and brought to different portions of North America by settlers belonging to various ethnic groups. However, by examining specific diagnostic features on the Best Barn and comparing them with similar features found on barns known to have been built by ethnic French, it is may be possible to assign a definitive French origin. In essence, while three-bay barns can be seen along the eastern seaboard from Virginia to Maine — an area heavily settled by people from the British Isles — few employ both hipped roofs and stone construction. Although such barns exist in Britain,[88] for whatever reasons they were not transmitted to America. Wood was the preferred choice of English settlers when building the three-bay barn in America,[89] probably because it was a cheap and abundant material, particularly in the coastal areas of early English settlement. Gable roofs were likely preferred because of the increased loft space that it offered in comparison to hipped roofs.[90] While hipped roofs were one of many roof types employed on barns in Britain[91] they are found frequently on buildings all over France.[92] More importantly, hipped roofs are seen frequently on buildings throughout French settlements in North America.[93]

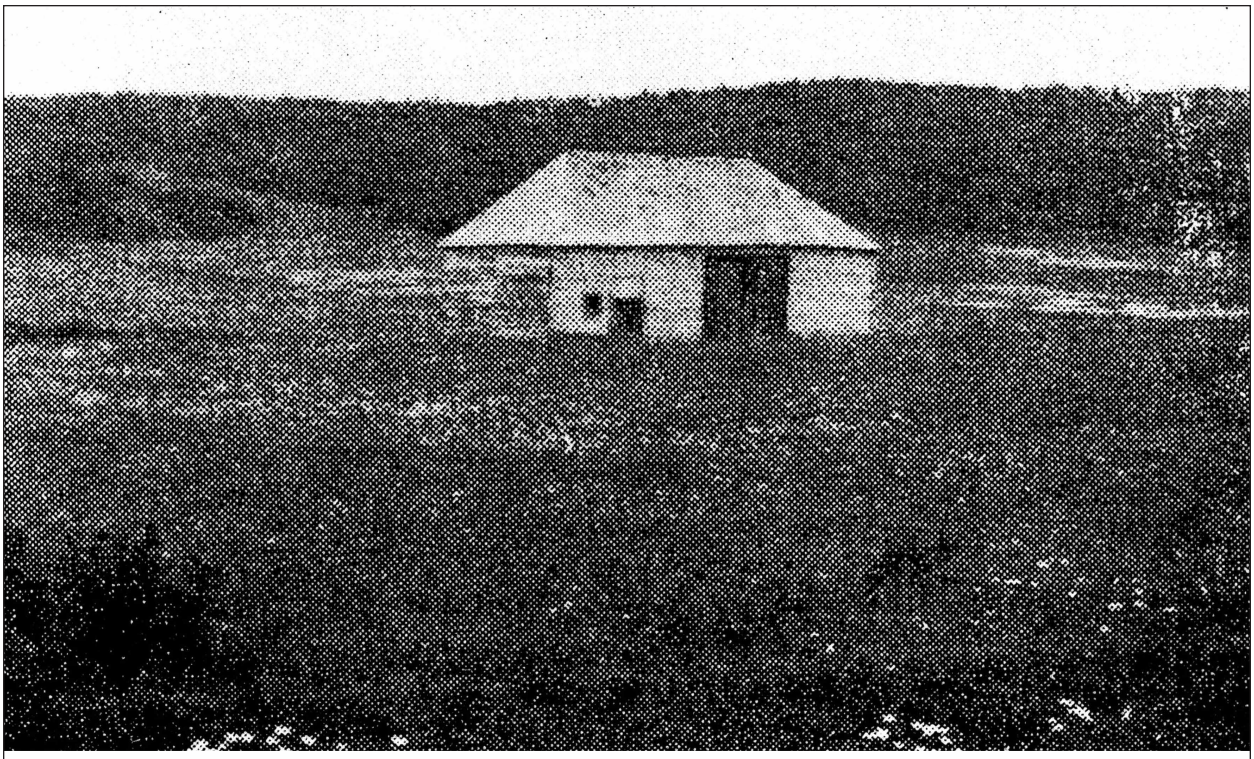
What lends the strongest evidence for a French origin for the Best Barn is the documentation of three-bay barns in areas of French settlement in the United States and Canada. One three-bay barn in Missouri is credited to a French builder, although its original exterior form has been partially masked with subsequent additions.[94] A number of three-bay threshing barns built by French-speaking Walloons from Belgium survive in the Door Peninsula of Wisconsin, though they date from the later half of the nineteenth century[95] (fig. 5.34). A handful of three-bay barns

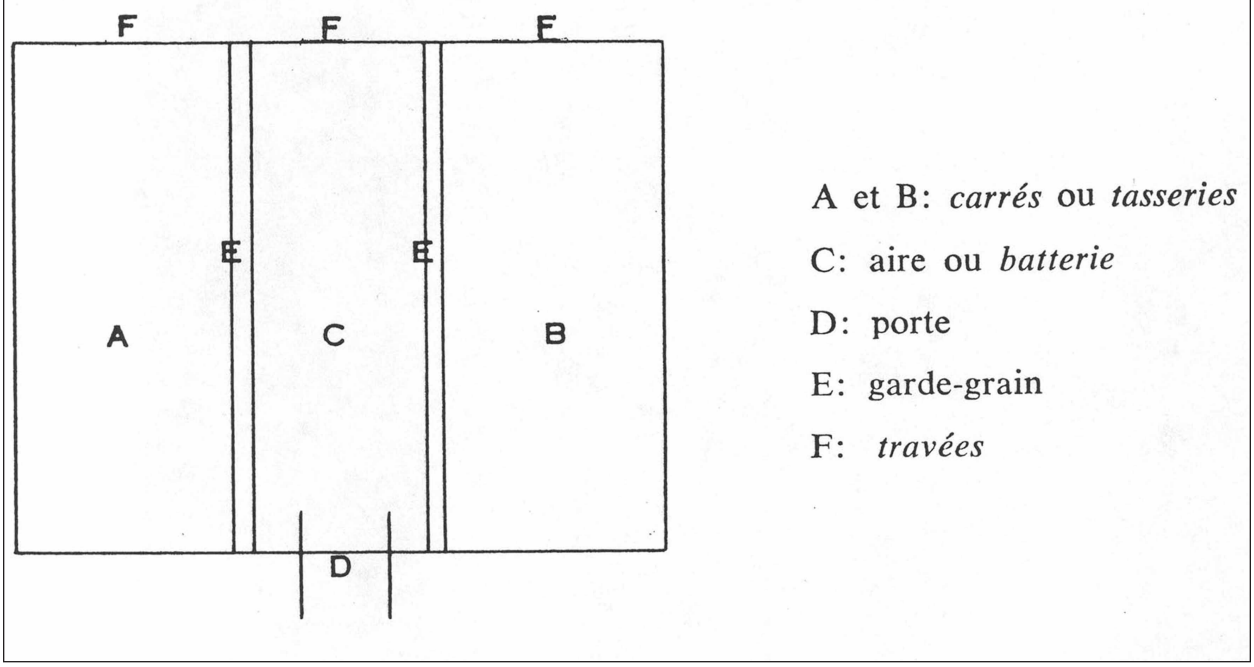


***Fig. 5.35:** Threshing barn with shed additions built by Acadians near the St. John River in Aroostook County, Maine. French-built three-bay barns in northern Maine generally have gabled roofs, which make them virtually indistinguishable from three-bay barns built by their English neighbors. Reprinted from La Societe Historique-Heritage Vivant, Village Acadien (http://www.themainelink.com/acadianvillage/).*

built by Acadians exist in the St. John River Valley of northern Maine, although they resemble the three-bay barns of their English neighbors because of their frame construction and gable roofs[96] (fig. 5.35). The closest parallels, however, are seen in the Province of Québec, Canada (figs 5.36 and 5.37). Several barns built there by French immigrants and their descendents employ hipped roofs, and some are of stone construction. Like the Best Barn, a number of these barns also employ gable-end additions for sheltering livestock.[97] French Canadian barns were heavily influenced by the French provinces of Brittany, Normandy, and Picardie,[98] which are all located along the Atlantic. Again, a more extensive genealogy on the Vincendières family will have to be prepared, since the Village of Vincendières located for this report was situated far away from the Atlantic in the Province of Savoie. As previously mentioned, a similar form for the Best House was found just south of Savoie in Provence, which is adjacent to the Mediterranean. Thus, additional research needs to be conducted to determine if and why the house and barn on the Best Farm appear to be derived from different regions of France. Specifically, there needs to be a study concerning the geographic distribution of threshing barns in France, as they are probably not confined solely to the Atlantic provinces and could have been employed in the Mediterranean as well.

In essence, it can be surmised that the three-bay barn on the Best Farm was a European form brought to Frederick County directly from France rather than the West Indies, where a much different agricultural system was in place.[99] Its construction date in the 1790s for use as a threshing barn was consistent with its location in one of America's premier wheat-producing areas at that time. Its eventual expansion through the addition of a gable-end addition was typical of other three-bay barns in the United States and Canada, which were modified in response to changes in agricultural practices. While several similar barn types exist in North America that corroborate the assignment of a French ethnicity, particularly in Québec, the Best Barn stands as a unique survivor in a region dominated by Germanic barn types.





***Figs 5.36 and 5.37**: The barns that are most similar in form and function to the Best Barn are found in Québec, Canada. Here, more hipped roof examples are found, as this example from the Gaspé Peninsula illustrates. Note the small door, which likely provided access to the granary. A similar door existed on the Best Barn's gable end until it was filled in. While not associated with this particular barn, the floor plan is typical of barns in Québec, and clearly shows the tripartite arrangement common to threshing barns.* *Reprinted from Robert-Lionel Séguin, Les granges du Québec du XVIIe au XIXe siècles (Ottawa: Ministère du Nord Canadien et des Resources Nationales, 1963), 57; 11.*

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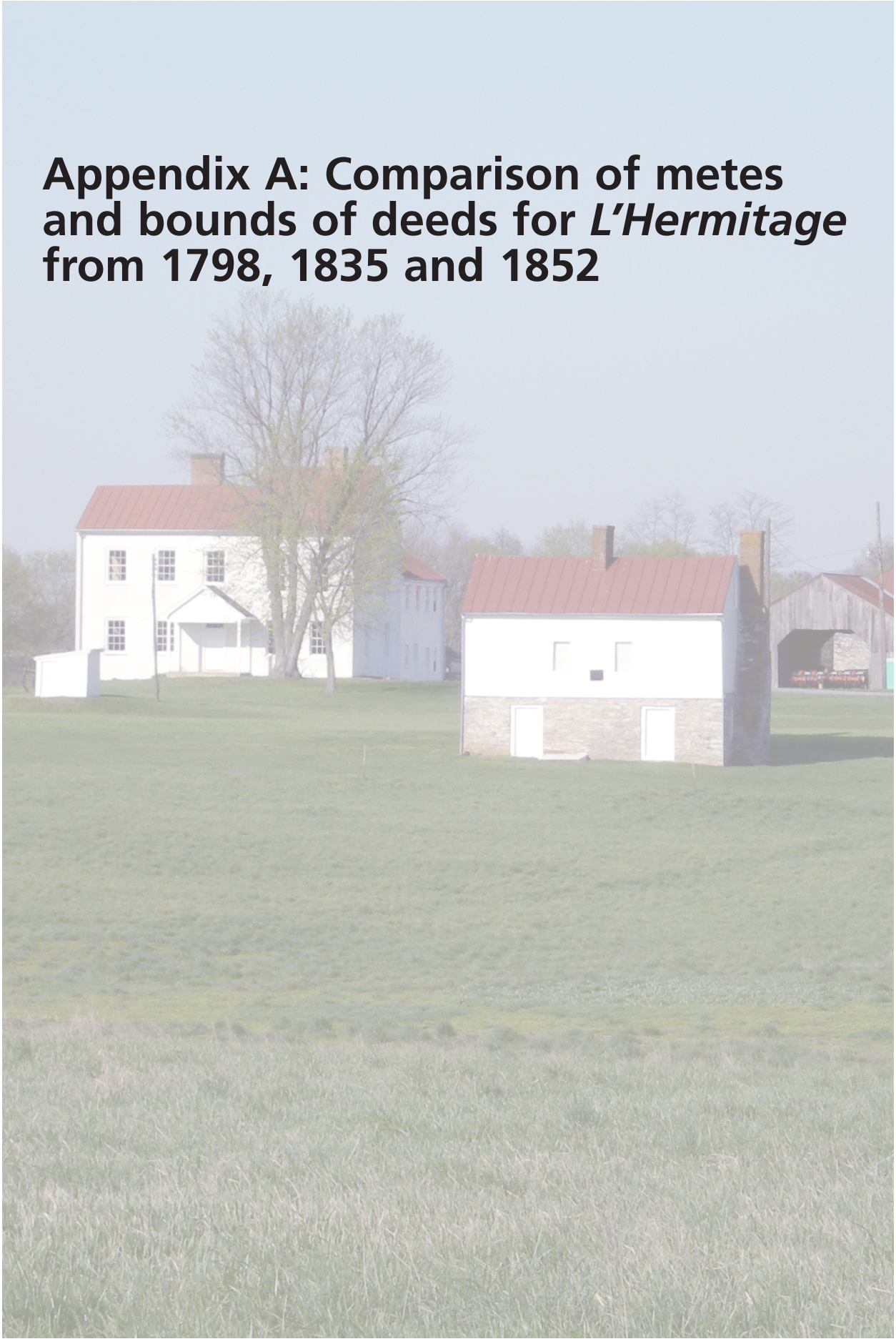
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Appendix A: Comparison of metes and bounds of deeds for *L'Hermitage* from 1798, 1835 and 1852



Comparison of Metes and Bounds of Deeds for L'Hermitage from 1798, 1835 and 1852

MARSHALL TO VINCENDIÈRE FC Land Records WR 17/194 August 19, 1798			THE RESURVEY ON THE HERMITAGE FC Land Records THO 1/434-437 August 5, 1835			DIVISION OF NORTH & SOUTH HERMITAGE FC Land Records ES 1/530-532 December 17, 1852		
1.	N 42 W	92 ps*						
2.	S 67 W	126 ps						
3.	S 34 W	96 ps						
			1.	S 67 1/2 E	115 ps	1.	S 67 1/2 E	56 ps
4.	S 31 E	132 ps	2.	S 29 1/2 E	131 3/10 ps	2.	S 29 1/2 E	131 3/4 ps
						3.	S 29 1/5 E	16 1/2 ps
5.	S 65 W	10 ps	3.	S 66 1/4 W	10 ps	4.	S 55 1/2 W	10 ps
6.	S 31 E	50 ps	4.	S 29 3/4 E	45 1/2 ps	5.	S 29 3/4 E	27 1/2 ps
7.	North	18 ps	5.	North	18 ps	6.	North	18 ps
8.	East	4 ps	6.	East	4 ps	7.	East	4 ps
9.	South	2 ps	7.	South	2 ps	8.	South	2 ps
10.	N 62 E	88 ps	8.	N 62 3/4 E	88 ps	9.	N 62 3/4 E	58 ps
11.	N 85 E	34 ps	9.	N 85 3/4 E	34 ps	10.	N 54 E	15 ps
12.	N 64 E	12 ps	10.	N 64 3/4 E	12 ps	11.	N 65 3/4 E	61 7/10 ps
13.	N 11 W	43 ps	11.	N 12 3/4 W	43 ps	12.	N 12 3/4 W	21 ps
14.	N 66 E	8 ps	12.	N 66 1/2 E	8 ps	13.	N 62 E	17 65/100 ps
15.	S 73 E	11 ps	13.	S 69 1/2 E	11 ps			
16.	S 32 E	32 ps	14.	S 31 1/2 E	33.6 ps	14.	S 31 1/2 E	?
						15.	N 60 E	21 ps
						16.	N 69 1/2 E	30 1/4 ps
						17.	N 38 E	8 6/10 ps
						18.	N 75	(xerox unreadable)
17.	N 64 E	60 ps	15.	N 64 3/4 E	46 1/2 ps			
			16.	N 32 1/4 E	17 1/2 ps			
18.	N 7 W	75 ps	17.	N 8 1/2 W	72 6/10 ps	19.	N 8 1/2 W	62 6/10 ps
19.	S 20 W	40 ps						
20.	S 66 W	3 ps						
21.	N 13 1/2 E	3 ps						
22.	N 16 E	21 ps						
23.	N 8 W	14 ps						
24.	N 35 W	12 ps						
25.	N 43 W	18 ps						
26.	By straight line to Beg.		18.	N 19 W	20 ps	20.	N 19 W	20 ps
	291 acres		19.	N 49 W	14 ps	21.	N 49 W	14 ps
			20.	N 56 W	11 ps	22.	N 56 W	11 ps
			21.	N 76 1/2 E	1.8 ps	23.	N 76 1/2 E	1 1/2 ps
			22.	N 39 W	14 ps	24.	N 39 W	14 ps

MARSHALL TO VINCENDIÈRE FC Land Records WR 17/194 August 19, 1798	THE RESURVEY ON THE HERMITAGE FC Land Records THO 1/434-437 August 5, 1835	DIVISION OF NORTH & SOUTH HERMITAGE FC Land Records ES 1/530-532 December 17, 1852
	23. S 80 W 26 ps	25. S 80 W 16 ps
	24. N 41 1/2 W 80 ps	26. N 41 1/2 W 18 ps
	25. N 1 1/2 E 36 ps	
		27. N 27 1/4 W 10 ps
		28. N 34 W 10 ps
		29. N 42 1/4 W 36 ps
		30. N 35 3/4 W 11 ps
		31. N 1 1/2 E 29 9/10 ps
		31. N 1 1/2 E 29 9/10 ps
	26. N 16 1/2 W 60 ps	32. N 16 1/2 W 16 ps
	27. N 28 1/2 E 120 1/2 ps	
	28. N 85 W 300 1/2 ps	33. N 83 3/4 W 165 3/10 ps
	29. S 2 1/2 W 34 ps	
	30. S 5 1/4 W 54 ps	
	31. S 2 1/2 E 69 ps	
	32. S 1 1/2 E 63 ps	
	33. S 14 W 90.2 ps	
	to first place of beginning	34. S 19 1/2 W 179 6/10 ps
	761 1/2 acres	to place of beginning
		426 acres, 1 rood and 1 perch

**** ps is the shortened form for perches, which was a common unit of land measurement into the 19th century. One perch equals 16.5 feet.***

Note on reading this table:

The survey lines of the three deeds are presented sequentially down each column. The tabular numbers with a decimal points that begin each cell of a column stand for the survey line, i.e., survey line 1, line 2, line 3, etc. A typical entry within a cell contains, first, the angle of the survey line and, second, the length of the line in perches. Across the page, cells show boundary lines that match up in two or three of the deeds. Where the boundary lines do not match, cells are skipped. The additional or missing boundary lines of the different deeds indicate where pieces of land were bought or sold, which resulted in adding more survey lines or subtracting them. Fig. 1.7 shows some of the differences between deeds in a more pictorial form.

As the headings indicate, the first column of the table gives the boundary lines that enclosed the 291 acres of Arcadia. The second column lists the lines for the entire L'Hermitage at 761 1/2 acres, and the third column lists those of South Hermitage, at 426 acres, after the property was divided. Lines 13, 14, 15 and 16 of the 1798 deed (left column) outline the ferry landing as shown in fig. 1.3.

Appendix B: Best Grove



Best Grove

An attempt has been made for this report to define the feature that has come to be known as the "Best Grove." Long absent from the landscape – the trees seem to have been cut by 1870[1] – Best Grove nevertheless continued to be referenced in histories because Robert E. Lee had his headquarters there for a couple of days in September 1862, when his army camped on and around the Best Farm. It is likely that the term used for describing these woods varied with the narrator or writer. "Best Grove" is the term in current circulation, but in the war claims made by John T. Best, whose father rented the farm at the time of the war, and Charles E. Trail, the farm's owner, the place is called a "woods" as evidenced in the following excerpts:

> *[claimant] . . . recollects the taking of some 30 cords of cut and ranked wood, which he saw partly hauled to troops on the farm and partly carried away by them – that it was all taken – used for cooking by the troops – that there were several large trees, running from a cord and a half to two cords each, cut in the* <u>*woods*</u> [emphasis added]. . . . (John T. Best, Sept. 26, 1875)

> *[claimant testifies] . . . that the cord wood was oak and hickory cut and corded in the* <u>*woods*</u> [emphasis added] – *does not know how the quantity was arrived at, but the appraiser examined Mr. Best very clearly at the time, and arrived at the amount of same to their satisfaction – that the trees were fine white oak shade trees upward of two feet in diameter . . . .* (Charles E. Trail, Sept. 29, 1876)[2]

Another reference is found in a regional history from the early part of the 20th century, where the Confederate encampment is placed "in Best woods as it was then known."[3]

The terms "woods" or "grove" may have been used somewhat interchangeably in the 19th century, or more likely, certain kinds of woods might be called a grove. Although no historic reference for Best Farm using the term "grove" has been found, the word appears in an account about another Civil War battle in Maryland. Antietam Battlefield's West Woods were described in letters from Dr. William Child to his wife as a "large *grove* of noble oaks and walnut" [emphasis added].[4] In another letter Child says: "The forest trees are all large and hardwood. There is but little if any pine. You might *drive a wagon among the trees anywhere*" [emphasis again added].[5] In a history written soon after the war similar wording is used. The woods at Antietam are described as "a noble grove of perfect trees, free from underbrush."[6] As a point of comparison, another woods that figured in battle accounts not very far from here – the woods at Brawner Farm in Manassas, Virginia – do not appear ever to have been called a grove.

Antietam's West Woods, Manassas's Brawner Woods and Monocacy's Best Grove were all woodlots, land set aside to provide wood for building, for fences, and for fuel. They were generally not planted, certainly not in the early settlement period, and particularly on the east coast, where land easily reverted to woodland if left vacant long enough. Rather, they were probably original forest kept and managed. The character of woodlots would have varied greatly from farm to farm or region to region, depending on such factors as location, endemic woodland

species, age of the trees, and the percent of trees culled on an annual basis. Trees were cut as individuals, not clearcut, which could result in an open woodland. In addition, in the diversified farming that was commonplace in western Maryland in this period, a family's farm animals might graze in the woods. Grazing would eliminate some of the smaller trees and shrubs and contribute, along with the harvesting of trees, to an open understory. Such a woodland or woodlot might be viewed as a grove.

But what is a grove? The dictionary describes it as "a smaller group of trees than a forest often without underwood and planted or growing naturally as if arranged by art: a wood of small extent."[7] In addition to a grove's look and size, the term had other connotations. As suggested by the words "as if arranged by art" in the definition given above, the term grove, as opposed to woods or woodlot, implies something picturesque. What it alludes to is the British countryside as it began to be shaped in the 17th century, influenced by artists and poets and a romantic appreciation for classical ruins that travelers to Italy encountered and began to recreate in England. Groves were part of the design vocabulary that began to be employed in shaping English estates. And in England, groves were often created by a new plantation of trees. The planting of trees for aesthetic purposes had certainly been practiced in the United States long before the Civil War. But at Monocacy, where the vast majority of the land was productive agricultural fields with little break, the idea of the English landscape was far removed, especially for a tenanted farm.

Thus, the woods at Best Farm would have been a woodlot shaped by practical rather than aesthetic intent. The species mentioned in the war claims – white oak and hickory – were part of a mix that might have included other oaks, walnut, beech, ash, dogwoods and other hardwoods. In 1850 and 1860 there were 50 acres of "unimproved" land (a term that almost always meant woodland or woodlot) at Best Farm, as reported in the agricultural censuses of those years. No unimproved land was reported in the 1870 census for the farm, and the figure for "improved" land increased by 50 acres, suggesting the woods had been cut down.

Endnotes, Appendix B: Discussion of Best Grove

[1] Based on 1870 U.S. Agricultural Census.

[2] Transcript of testimony of C.E. Trail, Sept. 29, 1876, and John Best, Sept. 26, 1875, Monocacy NB files.

[3] William Jarboe Grove, *History of Carrollton Manor: Frederick County, MD*. (Frederick: Marken & Bielfeld, 1928), 240.

[4] Dr. William Child, Oct. 4, 1862, in M. Joseph, *Historic Woodlot Restoration Plan: Antietam West Woods*, 1994, 8.

[5] October 22, 1862, in Joseph 1994, 9.

[6] Francis Walker, *History of the Second Corps in the Army of the Potomac*, 1886, 103, in Joseph 1994, 7.

[7] *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*, (Springfield, Mass: G. & C. Merriam Co. 1965).

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