WALKER
~~WALTER~~ FARMSTEAD

HABS No. PA-6086

West side of U.S. Route 522 at intersection
with T-373,.3 mile south of Shirleysburg
borought line
Shirleysburg vicinity
Huntingdon County
Pennsylvania

HABS
PA
31-SHIR.V
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
Northeast Region
Philadelphia Support Office
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, P.A. 19106

HABS
PA
31-SHIR.V,
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

WALKER FARMSTEAD HABS No. PA-6086

Location: West side of U.S. Route 522 at intersection with T-373, .3 mile south of Shirleysburg borough line, Shirleysburg vicinity, Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania

USGS Butler Knob, Pennsylvania Quadrangle
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:
18.4463560.255620

Present Owner and Occupant: Dean E. and Donna J. Varner
R.R. #1, Box 25
Shirleysburg, Pennsylvania 17260

Present Use: House is single family residence; small barn houses cattle; other buildings used for general storage

Significance: Located in rural Shirley Township, Huntingdon County, the Walker Farmstead is an outstanding example of an intact late nineteenth century agricultural complex, consisting of a house, two barns, a drive-in corn crib, a summer kitchen, and a smokehouse. These structures retain exceptional architectural and visual integrity with few modern alterations and no intrusions. They provide important information concerning historic rural land-use patterns and vernacular building techniques in this part of south-central Pennsylvania. The farmstead contributes to an intact rural historic landscape which also includes the East Broad Top Railroad and the borough of Shirleysburg.

PART I - HISTORICAL INFORMATION

As one of the first parts of Huntingdon County to be settled, Shirley Township has a long and colorful history. By 1753, George Croghan had established a trading post at "Aughwick", on the present site of Shirleysburg. As Indian hostility intensified, Croghan's crude stockade--strengthened by the proprietary government and named Fort Shirley--served as one of a chain of forts protecting the frontier. Although Fort Shirley was never attacked, it did serve as the staging area for Colonel John Armstrong's military expeditions of 1756 and 1763. Although Croghan apparently did not live at Fort Shirley after 1756, he continued to claim the land, and a tract of 424 acres called "Oldtown" was surveyed for him in 1762. It was not until the close of the Revolutionary War, when the threat of Indian attack had been eliminated permanently, that settlers began to move into the Aughwick Creek valley in significant numbers.

Throughout the nineteenth century, Shirley Township remained an area of scattered farms with little industrial development. The only commercial center was the village of Shirleysburg, which supported several taverns and stores, a pottery, a distillery, and a tannery, as well as several blacksmiths, tailors, wheelwrights, and other craftsmen. Shirleysburg experienced its greatest period of growth between 1830 and 1850, and was incorporated as a borough in 1837. By 1847, it had between thirty and forty houses and a population of 275. Two private academies, the Shirleysburg Female Seminary and the Aughwick Collegiate School for Boys, were established in the early 1850s, but both closed within a decade. The County Almshouse was built just south of town in 1850-1852. After 1850, the construction of railroads encouraged the rapid growth of the nearby industrial centers of Orbisonia and Mount Union at the expense of Shirleysburg, which lay midway between these towns.

By mid-century, most of the Aughwick Creek valley had been cleared of its forest cover, and farms had been established at regular intervals along the main roads. The local economy was based on subsistence agriculture. Although a fairly extensive network of roads had been developed, the condition of even the principal roads was abysmal for much of the year, making large-scale commercial agriculture impossible. Some agricultural produce was taken north to the Pennsylvania Main Line Canal at Mount Union, but most was grown for local consumption. Market access for farmers improved somewhat in 1862, when a private company undertook improvements to the primary road through the valley (present-day U.S. Route 522). Even more important was the construction of the East Broad Top Railroad, a narrow gauge line that served the Broad Top coal fields of southern Huntingdon and northern Bedford and Fulton Counties. Eleven miles of the line from Mount Union to Orbisonia were open by 1873, and the entire 30-mile route was completed the following year. By 1881, the E.B.T. was carrying over 143,000 tons of coal, 19,000 tons of pig iron, and 25,000 tons of iron ore north to Mount Union, where its freight was transferred to the Pennsylvania Railroad. Yard facilities were located at Rockhill and Mount Union, and Shirleysburg had a passenger and freight depot.

By 1880, Shirleysburg's population had stablized at about 300. It continued to be an important commercial center for the surrounding countryside, with four stores, two or three groceries, two taverns, two potteries, a grist mill, and a steam tannery. With improved transportation facilities, local farmers had begun to participate more fully in the regional market economy. One result was a general shift from grain production to dairying. Railroads reduced the delivery time to market for dairy products and opened new markets at the same time that local farmers were being squeezed by large-scale midwestern grain producers, so over the next few decades, many farmers turned increasingly to dairying, producing crops of hay and corn for cattle feed. The trend away from subsistence agriculture, together with the need to house larger numbers of livestock and store their winter feed, led to changes in the size and type of agricultural buildings that were required. Farmsteads dating to the last quarter of the nineteenth century can be expected to reflect the changes that were occurring throughout the region during this transitional period.

In the twentieth century, the automobile brought increased mobility and accelerated the decline of rural commercial centers such as Shirleysburg. The borough's population fell from 296 in 1880 to 256 in 1910 to 200 in 1920. A significant decline in coal consumption after World War II meant less demand for Broad Top coal, and led to the end of freight traffic on the East Broad Top Railroad in 1956. Since 1960, railfan excusion trains have run over the five miles of track between Orbisonia and Shirleysburg on a seasonal basis. With little twentieth century development, the appearance of Shirleysburg has changed very little since 1875. Although the local area has retained its rural, agricultural character, increasingly, its residents have turned away from farming and are employed elsewhere.

The property known as the Walker Farmstead originally was part of a tract conveyed to Robert Coleman by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in an 1810 patent; an adjacent farm to the north and the County Home Cemetery across the highway also were included in this large tract. The property subsequently passed to David Milliken (1814), John Cooper (1815), Alexander Dysart (1826), and Samuel Carothers (1838). In 1864, the 182-acre property was sold to Aaron L. Ricketts, who subdivided it and sold 20 acres along U.S. Route 522 to William A. Fraker, a Shirleysburg merchant; this 20-acre parcel included the land on which the structures comprising the Walker Farmstead now stand.

After Fraker's death, the property passed to his children, and in 1883 their guardian sold the 20-acre parcel (then containing an orchard) to Winfield A. Walker, who probably built the house and other buildings soon afterward. Walker later acquired an additional 26 acres of land to the south of the farmstead. Unfortunately, no 1890 census data is available, but the 1900 census indicates that the Walker household currently included Winfield (49 years old) and his wife Margaret (50 years), three of their childred (Zeola, 14 years; John, 11 years; and Hayes, 5 years), and boarder Newton McGill (a 24 year old African-American), who may have been a farmhand. The 1910 census reveals that the Walkers were the parents of ten children, only four of whom were still living. Members of the household in 1910 included Winfield and Margaret; son Hayes; son-in-law Ross Campbell (27 years), described as a "farm helper"; daughter Zeola; and grandson

John (2 months). Winfield Walker died in 1919, and the 1920 census reveals that the household consisted only of Margaret (69 years), daughter Zeola (34 years), son Hayes (25 years), and grandson Finney Campbell (7 years). The 1920 census lists Margaret Walker as "farmer" and Hayes Walker as "overseer, general farm".

This small family-operated farm was typical of those in the Aughwick Creek valley during this period. It was relatively self-sufficient, producing a variety of meat, fruit, and vegetables for the family's own consumption. Contemporary photographs and maps reveal that it contained vegetable gardens, an orchard, and a hog pen, all of which were important to domestic subsistence. At the same time, there was a separate cattle barn, and there is evidence that the main barn was enlarged, probably to create additional space for hay storage necessitated by a larger cattle herd. Thus, the Walker Farmstead reflects the regional changes in agriculture that were occurring during this period.

Following Margaret Walker's death in 1923, the property was partitioned, and the homestead tract and another parcel of 172 acres were conveyed to Hayes Walker in 1927. The deed noted that the homestead property then contained a frame house, frame bank barn, and other outbuildings. Physical evidence suggests that various alterations were made to the house at about that time.

When Hayes Walker died in 1956, his widow, Mabel C. Walker, conveyed the property to herself and second husband Wiley C. Dobbins in 1960. Following Wiley's death, Mrs. Dobbins continued to occupy the farmstead until 1991; although the house continued to be well-maintained during this period, she leased her fields to local farmers, and the farm buildings gradually fell into disrepair. In 1991, she sold the property to its current owners, Dean E. and Donna J. Varner. Although the smaller barn still houses cattle, the Varners do not actively cultivate the fields.

## PART II - DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Located in rural Shirley Township, Huntingdon County, the Walker Farmstead is an outstanding example of a late nineteenth century agricultural complex, consisting of a house, two barns, a drive-in corn crib, a summer kitchen, and a smokehouse. Unlike most nearby complexes dating to the same period, these structures retain exceptional architectural and visual integrity with few modern alterations and no intrusions. They provide important information concerning historic rural land-use patterns and vernacular building techniques in this part of south-central Pennsylvania. The farmstead contributes to a rural historic landscape which also includes the East Broad Top Railroad and the borough of Shirleysburg.

The Walker Farmstead is located on the west side of U.S. Route 522, .3 mile south of the Shirleysburg borough line. The road now known as Route 522 has been the principal route through the Aughwick Creek valley since the initial settlement of the region. Originally laid out in 1774, the road was improved by the Mount Union, Shirleysburg and Orbisonia Road Company in 1862, and was improved again in 1925. The Walker Farmstead is situated on the lower

footslopes of Sandy Ridge, overlooking the broad floodplain of Aughwick Creek and the main line of the East Broad Top Railroad, which passes .4 mile west of the farmstead. Open fields are found to the north, south, and west. The farmstead currently includes 46 acres of land.

The farmstead is immediately adjacent to the highway, with access provided by a lane just north of the house. A row of large spruce trees and a hedge of arbor vitae stands between the house and the road, effectively blocking the view from that direction. Smaller spruce, arbor vitae, and black walnut trees screen the house from the north and south. All of the structures presently standing on the site appear to be original and have retained their original arrangement, with the exception of the drive-in corn crib. An early twentieth century photograph shows a structure resembling the drive-in corn crib adjacent to the road, just east of the two barns; highway design plans dating to 1925 identify it as a wagon shed. It probably was moved its present site during the 1925 highway widening project. A smaller corncrib was removed about 1991. A hog house and stable formerly were located across the road, but are no longer extant.

The arrangement of buildings at the Walker Farmstead clearly illustrates the dualilized activity areas typical of nineteenth century farmsteads. Characteristically, there are two distinct centers of activity: one centered around the house, and the other around the barn. The domestic activity area includes the house, summer kitchen, smokehouse, and well, all arranged around a small courtyard adjacent to the house's rear ell. Gardens behind and beside the house also were important components of the domestic activity area. Originally, the privy would have been another important domestic outbuilding, although the installation of indoor plumbing made this structure functionally obsolete. All areas of the domestic farmstead are connected by a network of walkways, originally paved with brick and stone, but now mainly concrete. The principal agricultural activity area is physically separated from the domestic complex, 150' to the south and downslope. An early twentieth century photograph shows that the intervening space was filled with fruit trees and a vegetable garden, resulting in a clear demarcation between the two activity areas. Within the agricultural complex, the two barns, as well as the drive-in corn crib (prior to its relocation) and the former hog house and stable, are all adjacent both to the road and to a small stream which would have provided fresh water to animals as well as carrying off waste. Folklorist Henry Glassie has noted that, in Pennsylvania, the typical location for a drive-in corn crib is to one side of the barn's ramp, and the Walker Farmstead is no exception.

The buildings in both the domestic and agricultural complexes are carefully arranged for maximum efficiency. The domestic outbuildings and the well are convenient to the kitchen door and to each other. The gardens and orchard also would have been close at hand. The main access to the cellar is directly off the kitchen porch, so that freshly-harvested fruit and vegetables easily could be carried to the cellar for storage or processing. The smokehouse is located so as to be convenient to both the kitchen and the barns. The upstairs gallery on the south side of the ell provides a panoramic view of both building complexes as well as the farmstead's associated fields. Within the agricultural complex, the two barns (and the drive-in corn crib, in its original location), are within a few feet of each other, facilitating access among them. All three buildings had doors

opening onto the road. Both barns also opened on what would have been a fenced barnyard to the west.

Except for the summer kitchen, every building is oriented with its ridge line parallel to the road and parallel to that of every other structure. As far as the house is concerned, this arrangement ensures that its most impressive elevation--the facade--can be seen to best advantage, and also provides an eastern exposure for the front of the house, away from the prevailing winds; it is significant that the house has no windows on its west side, and is well-protected from cold northerly winds by the row of evergreens between the house and the lane. The main domestic activity area adjacent to the summer kitchen and well is in a sheltered position and receives both morning and afternoon sun--clearly a benefit. Although Glassie has noted that, in farms displaying a linear arrangement, the front of the barn (the stable side, not the bank side) generally faced the same direction as the front of the house, this is not the case with the bank barn at the Walker Farmstead; the Walker barn's orientation probably was a concession to the topography, since it was much easier to place the banked entrance on the uphill side of the structure, and in this case, the road is on that side.

Farmhouse

The Walker Farmhouse is described in detail in HABS PA-6086-A.

Large Barn

The larger of the farmstead's two barns is located approximately 120' south of the house, adjacent to U.S. Route 522. It is a single-level, three-gable, timber frame barn, apparently original to the farmstead, though physical evidence (alterations to the foundation, framing connections, and removal of siding) clearly indicates that the full-height rear extension is a later addition; as noted above, extensions frequently were added to Pennsylvania barns as increased mechanization and larger cattle herds created a need for more space to store hay and house livestock. A pre-1925 photograph of the barn reveals that the extension had been added by that time. The barn has a banked entrance on the uphill (east) side, but lacks a forebay on the opposite side.

The original section measures 44' 0" x 30' 6", and is 17' high from sill to eaves. It is three bays wide, with a stable and hay loft on either side of an elevated central threshing floor. Although technically containing only one level, the stable unit in each end is 1-3' lower than the central threshing floor for sanitary reasons. A partially-enclosed hay loft or mow is located in each end unit, 9' above the stable floor and 6' above the threshing floor. Built-in ladders provide access to the mows. The rear extension to the barn measures 30' x 18' and contains a wagon bay at ground level and a hay mow above, at approximately the same level as the other mows.

The principal framing members are hewn 8" x 8" oak timbers, with pinned mortise-and-tenon joints and braced with sawn 4" x 4" beams. The barn utilizes "post-to-purlin" bents, with the

inner posts extended from the floor to the mid-point of the roof, supporting full-length purlins across which the rafters are laid. Tie beams extend only from post to post, rather than spanning the entire width of the barn. Diagonals and cross-beams provide additional support. In the Walker barn, only the end bents include an upper tie beam. According to Robert Ensminger, a leading authority on Pennsylvania barn construction, this framing system became popular in the latter half of the nineteenth century as a direct result of the use of the hay track and fork. By eliminating queen-posts and struts from the interior bents, the post-to-purlin bent permitted the free movement of the hay fork through the full-length of the barn. The relatively late date of this barn also is reflected in the method of its tie beam connections; the tie beams are connected to the end posts by mortising them into the inner side of the post below the roof plate, rather than using the traditional tie beam-over-plate-and-post method. Although it resulted in some loss of strength, this innovation, together with the use of H-bents, made prefabrication of bents possible, greatly simplifying and expediting the barn erection process.

The barn has a rough-cut limestone foundation and a gable roof of galvanized metal nailed to lath. The rafters are butted at the roof peak, with no ridge pole. The stable and wagon bay floors are dirt, while the mows and threshing floor feature variable-width planking supported by 8" hewn log joists. The walls are clad with vertical boards, formerly painted white, attached to the frame with cut nails. Gaps between the boards enhance ventilation, which was critical in a structure utilized primarily for hay storage. In addition, louvered ventilators are located at mow-level in the east and north sides. Access to the threshing floor is through double batten doors on the east (highway) side, off a banked ramp. There is a small Dutch door into each stable on the east side of the barn, which along with the careful construction of the stables and their location near the wagon bay, suggests that horses rather than cattle were housed in this barn. Ensminger points out that horses were considered to be more valuable than cattle, and greater care was taken in constructing and maintaining their stables. When the south stable bay was converted for equipment storage, a portion of the west wall and foundation were removed to provide access. Access to the sloping wagon bay in the extension is by a large opening in the south wall.

Small Barn

The smaller barn stands 15' south of the large barn and slightly farther from the highway. It is one level in height and square in shape, measuring 30' on each side. It has a foundation of rubble stone and poured concrete, and a gable roof of galvanized metal nailed to lath. The exterior walls are clad with 10-12" vertical boards attached to the framing with wire nails. The south gable end features faded "Mail Pouch Tobacco" advertising. Both an early twentieth century photograph and highway plans dating to 1925 indicate that a round wooden-stave silo formerly stood adjacent to the south end of the barn.

The structure has a three-bay plan, with a 9'-wide (east) and 12'-wide (west) stable to either side of a 9'-wide central aisle or "feeding alley". Each stable is 7' high, with a hay mow above. Both sides of the feeding alley feature 2'-wide cribbed bins for feeding livestock, which are loaded

from the mows above. Originally, access to the feeding alley was by a small door in the north gable end, but the barn has deteriorated to such an extent that much of this gable end is now completely open. There formerly were three small batten doors at loft-level in the same end, used for loading hay and providing ventilation. Primary access to the east stable bay is by a 12'-wide by 7'-high opening in the east wall. The west stable bay is accessed by two smaller openings in the south gable end and west wall.

This barn employs a different framing system than the larger barn. As shown in the attached sketch diagram, it utilizes simple "H-bents", where the posts rise only to slightly below the height of the square, and canted queen-posts, reinforced with angled struts, support the purlins under the rafters. In each bent, a single tie beam spans the entire width of the barn, supporting the queen-posts, and is mortised into the posts just below the roof plate. The tie beams are supported by interior posts and heavy diagonal framing. The principal timbers (sill, posts, tie beams, queen-posts, and purlins) used in this structure are sawn 6" x 8" oak beams, with sawn 4" x 4" bracing. The rafters are butted together at the peak with no ridge pole. A metal track running the length of the barn formerly supported a mechanized hay fork. The stable and aisle floors are dirt, while the mow floors consist of solid planking supported by 6" x 8" oak joists on 40" centers. The mow extends the entire width of the barn, and is accessed by a built-in ladder at the south end.

In contrast to the large barn, which was designed primarily for storage of equipment and harvested crops (although it did contain two horse stables), the small barn was built specifically to house cattle and other livestock. Although seriously deteriorated, it still continues to fulfill this function.

Drive-in Corn Crib

The drive-in corn crib stands approximately 110' southwest of the summer kitchen and 131' west of the large barn. An early twentieth century photograph suggests that it was moved there from its original site adjacent to the barns and the road, probably when the highway was widened in 1925.

The structure measures 18' 6" wide by 24' 4" long, with a single crib on the east side. The frame is elevated 12" above grade, and is supported by six poured concrete piers, three on each side. The height from the top of the piers to the eaves is 9'10". The structure has a diagonally braced and pinned post-and-beam frame, with 6" x 6" corner posts, 6" x 6" sills, and 4" x 4" diagonal braces. All of the principal framing members are hewn. The exterior walls are clad with random width vertical boards attached to the frame with wire nails. The roof is framed with 2" x 4" rafters on 24" centers, notched and butted against the ridgepole. There is no loft. The roof is covered with galvanized metal nailed to lath. Rafters are exposed at the eaves, with no fascia board.

The shed portion of the structure is 15' wide and open at the south gable end. The north end is enclosed, with access through double 5' 4" x 10' 0" batten doors mounted on strap hinges. A surviving metal track above the opening reveals that there used to be sliding doors in the north

gable end. The crib is 3' 4" wide at the bottom and 4' wide at the top, and has a wooden floor. Access is by a 3' 4" x 6' 8" batten door in the south end and two interior 21" x 36" mow doors located 6' above the bottom of the crib. The interior crib wall is constructed of widely-spaced 5" horizontal boards attached with wire nails to ten 2" x 4" studs on 24" centers.

Overall, the structure is in fair condition, but the roof and exterior walls are seriously deteriorated. It is currently utilized for general storage.

Summer Kitchen

This one-and-one-half-story, gable-front, timber-framed structure stands 5' southwest of the house's rear ell, about 20' from the kitchen door. It measures 14' 2" wide and 16' 3" deep, with the entrance located at the left side of the east gable end, facing the house's kitchen door, the smokehouse, and the well. Height to the eaves is 12'. The structure stands on a mortared rubble fieldstone foundation, 12" thick; partial collapse of the foundation has caused the entire structure to lean badly. Built into a slight embankment, the top of the foundation walls are at grade in the east gable end (facade) of the building, but rise 33" above grade in the west end (rear). The foundation encloses a shallow crawlspace.

Except for the 4" x 8" sill, all principal framing members consist of sawn 2" x 4" or 2" x 6" stock, doubled on the north and south sides to support the second-story floor joists. There are no corner posts, but only light verticals which permit the sides to be nailed together. This type of construction is fairly common locally for small outbuildings, and even for cheaply-made houses. All framing members are nailed together with cut nails. Exterior wall cladding consists of random width vertical boards with joints covered by 3" battens. Traces of paint under the eaves indicate that the building was painted white at one time. Flooring is 3/4" tongue-and-groove pine stock, 3 1/2" and 4 1/2" wide, attached with cut nails to 2" x 6" joists on 24" centers.

The gable roof is supported by 2" x 4" sawn rafters on 24" centers, butted together and nailed at the peak with no ridge pole. The rafters are reinforced with 2" x 4" and 2" x 6" braces near the peak, secured by cut nails. Outside, the rafters are exposed under the eaves, with the ends protected by a plain 3" fascia board. The roof is galvanized metal nailed to lath.

The building's plan features a single room on each floor, with an enclosed stairwell in the southwest corner. Within the stairwell, which is enclosed with a vertical board wall, five steps lead to a small landing, and three from the landing to the second floor. Stairs are 35" wide, with 8" wide treads and 8 1/2" high risers. In the first-story, the door to the stairwell is 27" wide and 80" high, and is constructed of 3 1/2" wide boards with two horizontal braces of the same width nailed to the inside. It is secured with a thumb latch. Walls and ceilings are unfinished with exposed framing. Vestiges of pink paint survive in the first-story.

The entrance door is 36" wide and 75" high, and is constructed of 3" vertical boards with two 4 1/2" wide horizontal braces. The butt hinges are modern replacements, but the door features an original cast-iron box lock. A small vertical batten door measuring 24" wide and 37" high, located in the west gable end, has been blocked. The first-story windows measure 28" wide by 47" high and feature two-over-two light, double-hung sash; with one window in the east gable end and one in each long side. The latter two have been covered with boards. Two small two-light fixed windows, measuring 29" wide and 24" high, are found in the upper story facade. The doors and windows all feature plain, unmitred 2 5/8" wood moldings with 1" x 2" projecting crowns, and the windows have plain wood sills.

The interior space is presently being used for general storage. There is no evidence to suggest the nature of the first story's historic use. The second-story formerly contained a stove, but the metal flue pipe which penetrates the roof peak at the west gable end apparently did not extend to the first-story, and there is no chimney or fireplace. Archaeological testing around the structure did not yield artifacts that typically would be associated with food preparation and storage. Nevertheless, the building's location adjacent to the house's kitchen door, the well, and the smokehouse, together with its characteristic size and appearance, strongly suggest that the building originally functioned as a summer kitchen, although it may later have been converted to another purpose (such as a wash-house or shop).

Smokehouse

The smokehouse stands 18' south of the house's rear ell and 20' southeast of the summer kitchen. The gable-front, timber-frame structure measures 6'7" wide by 8'7" deep and is 8'7" from ground level to roof peak and 7' from ground level to eaves. The foundation consists of a single course of unmortared bricks laid on the surface of the ground, with round posts at the corners. The structure lacks corner posts, and the framing consists of light vertical and horizontal members to which 12" vertical boards are nailed. All framing is sawn stock. The walls are clad with beveled tongue-and-groove siding painted white, with 1" x 4" and 1" x 3" vertical corner boards applied on top of the siding. A 2" x 4" smokehole is centered in each gable.

The gable roof is constructed of galvanized metal nailed to sheathing of 12" boards. The rafters are doubled 2" x 4"s, butted together and nailed at the roof peak, with plain soffit and fascia outside. Flooring consists of 12-15" wide planks nailed to 2" x 6" joists.

The entrance opens onto a concrete walk leading to the house, the summer kitchen, and the well. The door is 33" wide by 72" high, constructed of three wide (two are 11 1/2", one is 10") vertical boards with two horizontal braces dovetailed into them. It hangs on 8" strap hinges, and is secured with a cast-iron thumb latch. The opening is surrounded by an unmitred 3" wide molding with a 3/4" x 1 1/2" projecting crown above the door.

Smokehouses normally were designed and constructed to be as airtight as possible in order to facilitate the smoking process. The Walker smokehouse is typical in this regard, with its double walls, closely-fitted tongue-and-groove siding, and small but massive door. The small smokeholes high in the gables provided the draft that was required to maintain a proper fire and keep smoke moving through the structure. The numerous wrought-iron hooks protruding from the framing members would have been used to hang meat during the smoking process.

The interior of the Walker smokehouse is almost completely blackened, confirming its intensive historic use and testifying to the importance of this small structure within the farmstead complex. Although it is currently used only as a tool shed, the smokehouse is in good physical condition.

## PART III - SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural Drawings:

No architectural drawings are known to exist.

B. Historic Views:

A thorough search at the Huntingdon County Historical Society, the Huntingdon County Public Library, and the State Archives failed to locate any historic views of the Walker Farmstead. The property owner provided one historic photograph, described below. Examination of the files at the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, District 9-0, office in Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania, produced a set of circa 1925 highway design plans showing the farmstead; this mapping also is described below:

1. Photograph dating to circa 1900-1925, photographer unknown: An original 3" x 5" black and white print of this photograph is in the possession of Mr. Dean Varner, the property owner. Unfortunately, it was not possible to copy the photograph in an appropriate format for inclusion as part of this documentation package. The photograph obviously was taken prior to the 1925 highway widening project which resulted in the relocation of the drive-in corn crib. Although the farm buildings still look fairly new, the mature appearance of the property suggests that the photo substantially postdates the farmstead's circa 1883 construction.

2. Highway design plans dated March 5, 1925: This mapping was produced in connection with a 1925 highway widening project. It shows the general arrangement of farmstead structures as they existed at that time. Since it provides little information not shown on the attached site plan, the map is not included as part of this documentation. The original document is on file at the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, District 9-0, office in Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania.

C. Interviews:

1. Dean and Donna Varner: interviews at the site, March 1996. Mr. and Mrs. Varner acquired the property in 1991 and provided information concerning recent alterations, but they had no knowledge of the farmstead's prior history.

   No other individuals could be found who are knowledgeable about the history of the property. Longtime owner Mrs. Mabel Walker Dobbins, who lived in the house for much of this century, is recently deceased.

D. Bibliography:

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E. Likely sources not yet investigated:

None known.

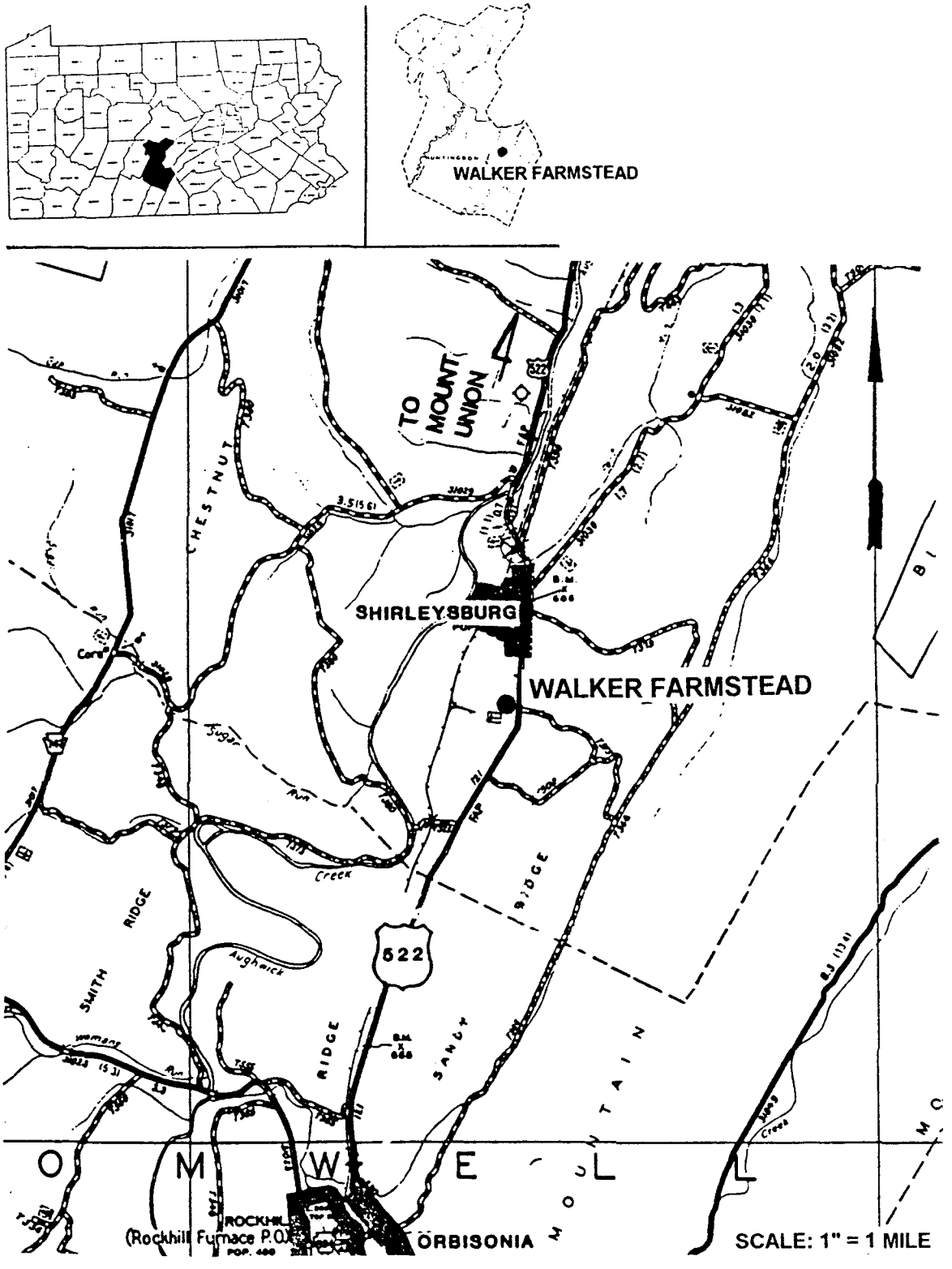
F. Supplemental material:

None.

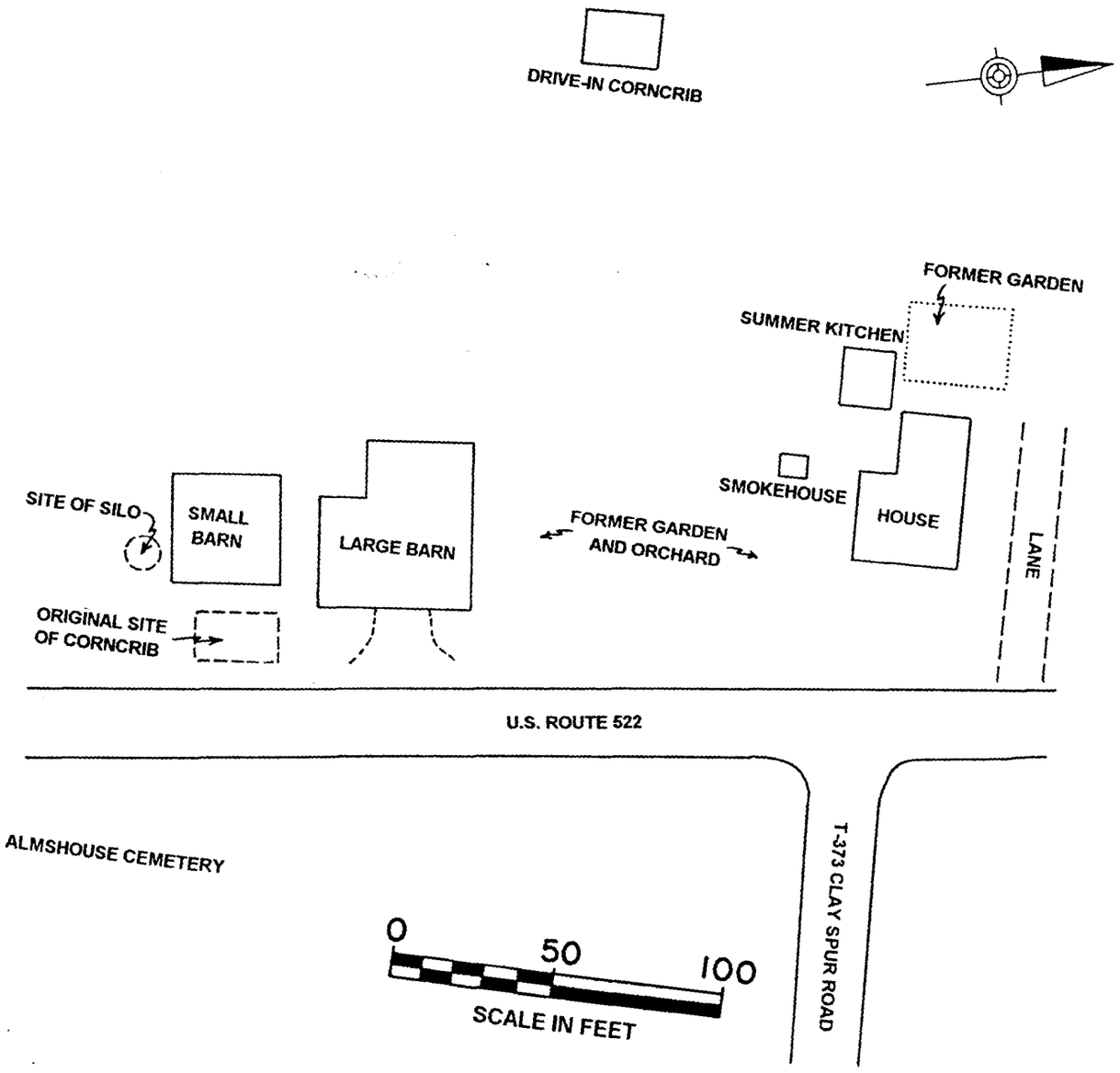
## PART IV - PROJECT INFORMATION

The Federal Highway Administration and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation propose to widen U.S. Route 522 between the boroughs of Shirleysburg and Orbisonia. The project will require acquisition of a small amount of right-of-way from the Walker Farmstead property, necessitating the demolition of the house and barns. Documentation of the historic property to HABS standards was determined to be an appropriate mitigation strategy.

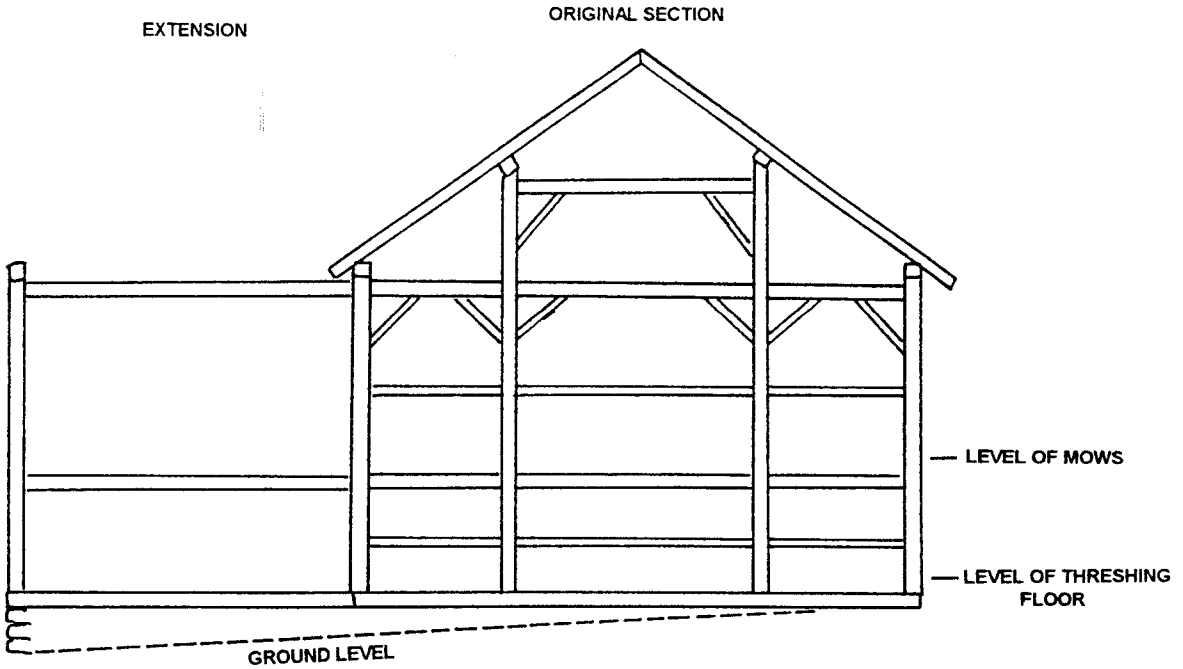
Prepared by: Scott D. Heberling
Title: Historian
Affiliation: Heberling Associates, Inc.
Date: April 1996




LOCATION MAP

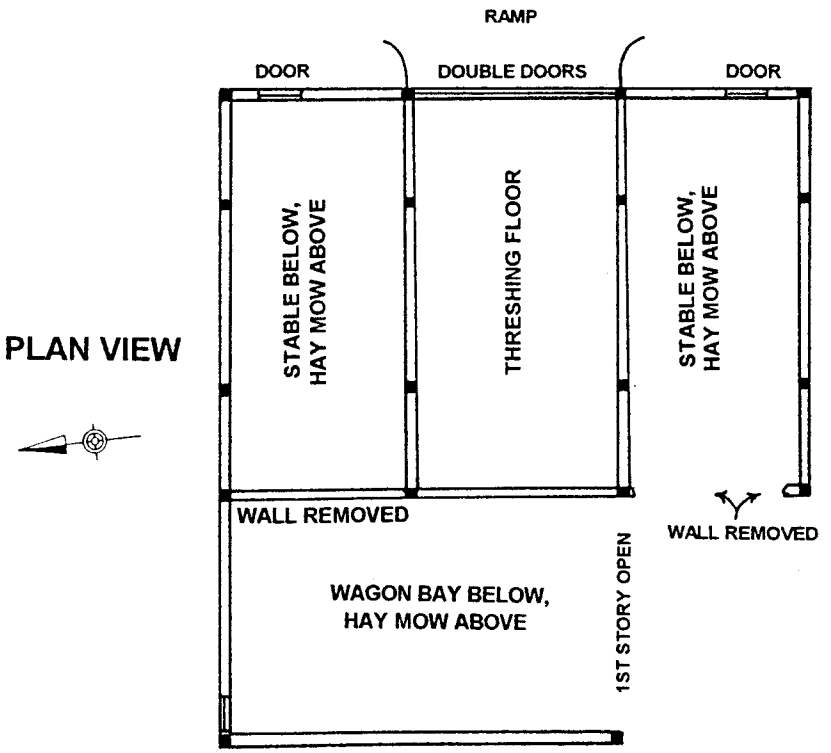



WALKER FARMSTEAD
SITE PLAN

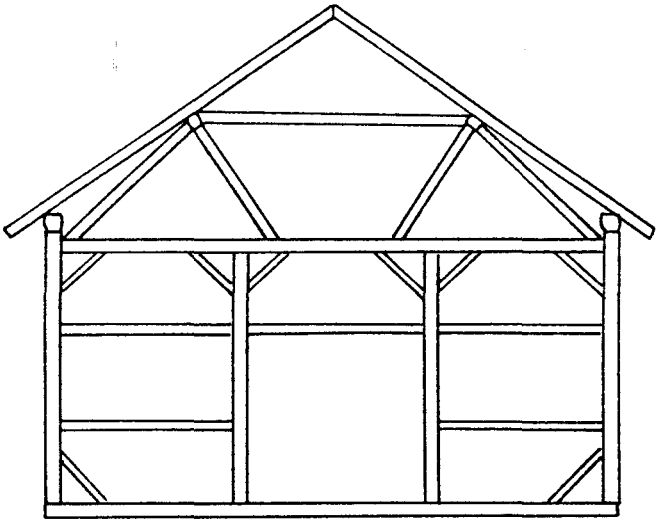



PRINCIPAL TIMBERS ARE 8" X 8"; BRACES ARE 4" X 4"

**FRAMING SYSTEM (NORTH END BENT)**




**WALKER FARMSTEAD, LARGE BARN**

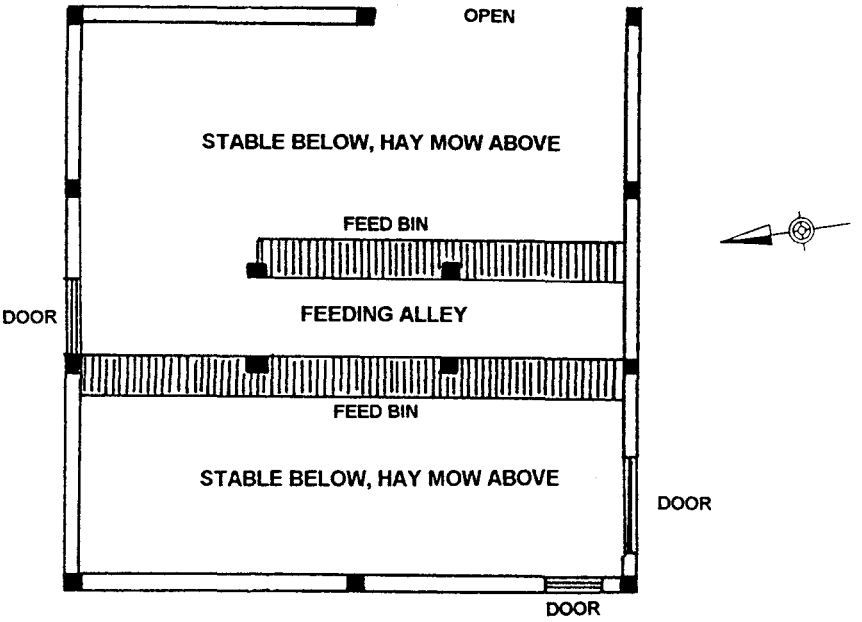


PRINCIPAL TIMBERS ARE 6" X 8"; BRACES ARE 4" X 4"

## FRAMING SYSTEM (SOUTH END BENT)

SCALE: 1" = 10'

## PLAN VIEW




## WALKER FARMSTEAD, SMALL BARN