

JOHN BLY HOUSE  
East side of County Road 857  
just north of intersection with Quarry Run Road  
Cheat Neck vicinity  
Monongalia County  
West Virginia

HABS No. WV-299

HABS  
WVA  
31-CHTRK, 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, PA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

JOHN BLY HOUSE

HABS  
WVA  
31-2HTNK.Y  
1-

HABS No. WV-299

Location: East side of County Road 857, just north of intersection with  
Quarry Run Road, Cheat Neck vicinity,  
Monongalia County, West Virginia

USGS Lake Lynn, PA-WV Quadrangle  
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:  
17.590120.4392350

Present Owner: Doris L. Fieldhouse Estate

Present Occupant: Joe and Tammy Fieldhouse

Present Use: Dwelling

Significance: Constructed in the mid-nineteenth century, the John Bly House functioned as a stagecoach stop on the Morgantown and Uniontown Turnpike, a major link between Uniontown, in Fayette County, Pennsylvania, and Morgantown, West Virginia, and the predecessor to C.R. 857. The house also served as a physician's home, a post office and a grocery store during the ironworks boom in the region.

## PART I: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

### A. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

1. **Historical Development:** Note: Since the John Bly House is not located within the boundaries of a city or town, the building location is being identified with the nearest town—"Cheat Neck"—with the word "vicinity" after the name. However, the township name "Union District" is often used as a local standard for the address, and for this reason often appears as the location in many reference materials. According to the 1993 *Historic Structures Inventory and Determination of Eligibility Report*, Volume 1 of the Mon/Fayette Transportation Project:

Before the official demarcation of the border between Pennsylvania and Maryland was established by extension of the Mason and Dixon Line in 1784, the territory that now encompasses northeastern West Virginia and southwestern Pennsylvania was claimed by both Virginia and Pennsylvania. During the first three quarters of the eighteenth century, Virginia claimed the vast lands between the Alleghenies and the Ohio River as part of Augusta County. In 1776 the county was reorganized and the northern half, known as the District of West Augusta, was divided into three counties: Monongalia, Ohio and Yohogania (Core 1974:431-432). This territory gradually grew through annexations over the next several years and by 1780, Monongalia County, Virginia, encompassed the entire northern half of what is now West Virginia.

In an early effort to establish local government, the plantation of Theophilus Phillips, located on Georges Creek in present-day Fayette County, was chosen as the first seat of Monongalia County courts. Contrasted with the largely scattered development in the mountainous terrain to the south, the more extensive settlement of northern Monongalia County precipitated the selection of Phillip's plantation as county seat. With the ratification of the Mason-Dixon Line by Virginia, Pennsylvania and Maryland in 1784, the northern portion of Monongalia County fell within the boundaries of Pennsylvania and thus it became necessary to relocate the county seat. Court and county business was carried out at the home of Colonel John Evans until the first county courthouse was built ca. 1785 in the newly incorporated city of Morgantown. . . .

Examination of land patent records for Monongalia County (as it stood until 1783) reveals that most of the prime property along valuable waterways was claimed prior to the start of the Revolutionary War. In Union District, settlers chose tracts along the Cheat River, Ruble's Run, and Morgan's Run (Core 1974). . . .

Settlers who intended to remain in the region concentrated on first clearing the land they purchased. The first agricultural and industrial products of the region, developed for domestic use, gradually evolved into commercial ventures when a particular area became established as a population center and the need for intensive milling, sawing or tanning arose. . . .

Another industry that developed in the late eighteenth century involved the manufacture of iron. The abundance of natural resources in Western Pennsylvania and West Virginia contributed to the tremendous growth of iron, and later steel, manufacturing throughout the nineteenth century and established the Monongahela Valley as a leader in this industry.

The first iron furnace constructed west of the Allegheny Mountains was built on Redstone Creek near Uniontown in Springhill Township, Fayette County, ca. 1789.  
. . .

The largest ironworks in the valley was established near the Cheat River in Monongalia County in 1808. Known as alternately as Jackson's Iron Works, Cheat Iron Works or Laurel Run Iron Works, the furnace complex evolved in a larger ironmaking community that included several smaller furnaces, a nail factory, rolling mills, a foundry, blacksmith shops, and employed as many as 1200 men during its peak of operation in the mid-nineteenth century (Schmoyer 1974:71). The economic depression that enveloped the United States in the mid-nineteenth century caused the close of many of these early iron furnaces throughout ... Monongalia [C]ount[y].

Other types of manufacturing began around the beginning of the nineteenth century in response to extensive settlement of the Monongahela Valley. Glass factories and coal mines were established to accommodate the needs of the early settlers and eventually more industries developed into prosperous businesses across the valley.

By 1800, the total population of Monongalia County was 8,540 with 163 slaves.... Showing a dramatic increase by 1810, Monongalia County included 12,793 people, including 351 slaves. . . .

In terms of population growth, by 1810 ... Union District had entered a situation of near stasis that would persist almost to the close of the nineteenth century. In the early nineteenth century, with the landscape thoroughly settled for the purposes of charcoal ironmaking and dispersed, extensive farming, the project area became a place that new settlers from Europe or the eastern United State passed by. The great majority of the maturing children in local families presumably opted to migrate to

more desirable agricultural areas in the Old Northwest, or later, to growing industrial cities such as Pittsburgh. Census returns indicate that the ethnic character of the population remained predominately English, Scotch-Irish and German through most of the century. . . .

The local iron industry formed the preeminent element in the. . . area's economy for most of the decades 1810-1860, although it declined toward the end of the period, finally crashing to a near total halt in the late 1850s. The technology of the ore-smelting, cast iron-producing furnace, the wrought iron-refining forge, and the rolling mill continued essentially what it had been during the preceding period, despite improvements or attempted improvements, such as the use of coke and hot-blast. Hence the ironmaking "plantation" or village of 1850 looked much the same as that of 1790.

Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century the main concentration of ironmaking and milling activity in the. . . area centered along the Cheat River. In 1820 the U.S. Census of Manufactures noted the existence in that vicinity of three ironworking concerns, one consisting of a furnace alone, another including a forge as well as a furnace, and a third composed of a forge, a rolling mill and a nail factory.

Thirty years later the census returns for manufactures showed that the Cheat Valley remained the heart of industry in the. . . area, with three furnaces, a forge, a nail factory, and an "iron, copper and sheet works." . . .

The manufacturing census for 1860 described a much different landscape, especially for Monongalia County; all that county's ironworks had ceased operations as none appeared on the census. . . . A number of factors, such as the discovery of richer ore deposits in the Lake Superior region, the application of steam power to the iron-making process, and less than ideal transportation networks, may have contributed to the decline of the local iron industry. Oliphant used both steam- and water-powered technologies at his Fairchance operations which possibly enabled him to compete more successfully. A depression following the Panic of 1857 also contributed to the downfall of the Cheat Ironworks.

First mentioned in historical records dating to 1794, the Morgantown-Uniontown Turnpike stands as one physical vestige of the development the ironworking communities that once dotted the Cheat Neck area. Joining Morgantown, West Virginia, and Uniontown, Pennsylvania, the Turnpike also connected the area with two other major east-west roads, the National Road, completed in 1820 between western Maryland and Pittsburgh, and the Northwest Turnpike linking western

Maryland with Clarksburg, West Virginia and the Ohio River. Used primarily as a stage and mail route during the early nineteenth century, the Turnpike became more vital to development in Union District during the mid-1800s as the Cheat River industries grew and prospered. By 1840 the Cheat Neck ironworks supported several large villages and post offices were established to serve the workers and their families. In addition to serving the iron-industry related villages, the Turnpike also provided an outlet for the distribution of agricultural goods to local communities. The . . . area was home to the kinds of relatively small scale industrial concerns which provided necessary services for farmers and others, and refined agricultural products. . . . The Eastern District of Monongalia County, an area much larger than the current Union District and that included Morgantown, had six gristmills, six sawmills, four tanneries, three shoemakers' shops, two saddlers' shops, two hatters' shops, a cabinetmaker's shop, a chairmaker's shop and a pottery, as well as a linseed oil factory, a paper mill and a marble quarry. . . .

Service industries and shops, most directly aligned with the agricultural economy, naturally continued as an essential aspect of local economic life...Union District reported three gristmills, one sawmill, three blacksmiths shops and two shoemakers' shops. However, by the beginning of the twentieth century, a slow decline in agriculture had manifest itself. Although only two-thirds of the acreage consisted of improved land, in 1900 Monongalia County's 2,259 farms composed nearly 95 percent of the county's 229,120 acres. Ten years later, only 71 percent of the county's surface was actively farmed. By 1920, a little over 50 percent of the county's land contained agricultural establishments. In 1940, Monongalia contained only 1,479 farms.

2. **Trends in American History:** Continuing in the 1993 *Historic Structures Inventory and Determination of Eligibility Report, Volume 1* of the Mon/Fayette Transportation Project:

The first white contact with the Monongahela Valley came through European explorers and traders who ventured into the region during the 1730s. The French entered the region from the north down the valleys of the Allegheny, while the English traveled through Pennsylvania by way of the Juniata [River], as well as across the mountains from Virginia and Maryland (Nelson 1900:136). Most of these explorers found their way west by following . . . Indian paths through the dense forests that characterized much of the landscape in the eighteenth century. The majority of the European traders and explorers did not travel west expressly to settle permanently in one specific place. Rather, in their pursuit of trade with various Indian tribes, these nomadic businessmen came to the area to trade their wares, and

eventually they moved on, following their clients to outposts beyond the Monongahela Valley. As explorers and contacts, these first pioneers performed a valuable service in that they opened up trails for later settlers to follow and prepared the native peoples for the eventual arrival of permanent European settlers (Core 1974:130-131).

With the possibility of a profitable market across the Allegheny Mountains, several trading and speculating companies were organized by the middle of the eighteenth century. These companies were comprised mainly of East Coast businessmen who invested money and supplies, and adventurers who preferred to explore the territory and establish permanent posts. Although written accounts place the lands granted to these associations nearer present-day Pittsburgh, the records of their explorations and the fact that organized groups supported the opening up of western lands reveal important insights into the development of the Monongahela Valley. . . .

Independent of the organized companies, a few groups of settlers located in the Monongahela Valley by the early 1750s. Most historians agree that these early pioneers included Wendell Brown and his sons, Manus, Adam and Thomas in 1751, and two years later, William Stewart, a trader named Dunlap and Hugh Crawford. Other original settlers included traders who remained in the area to engage in agricultural pursuits and members of the military who either stayed behind at the conclusion of a battle or returned after completing their service in another area. The ethnic background of these settlers was predominantly English and Scotch-Irish, however, Germans, French, Welsh, Scotch and Irish were also represented in successive waves of immigrants to the west. . . .

Though widespread exploitation of the natural resources abundant in the region did not occur until the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the early settlers were most certainly aware of the coal and iron deposits that lay just beneath the surface of the land. The location of settlements near water sources, necessary for agricultural as well as drinking purposes, enabled the development of tanneries, mills and forges to occur during the next era without requiring movement from established property.

What few settlers the trading and speculating companies managed to entice to the Monongahela Valley, and those independent pioneers who took advantage of the vast, available lands in the region during these early years, were challenged by native populations. . . .the advent of the French and Indian War in 1754 drove many families out of the region. Though the victory of the French and their allies forced the early English pioneers from the area and resulted in the destruction of established

settlements, the advance of troops westward induced some development as military roads were built and camps and forts were constructed in the region (Core 1974:138-139). This progress was tempered, however, by a temporary reduction of trade in the area between 1755 and 1758 due to more frequent and intense battles among the English, the French and the Indians. . . .

Within its larger territory of 1780, Monongalia County, West Virginia [sic], contained the majority of the forts along the western frontier; even the county's present boundaries encompassed a great number of these military outposts, perhaps the most of any county in the country (Core 1974:343). Though the necessity of these forts indicated the dangers inherent in pioneer settlement, early strategists, such as Pennsylvania Lieutenant Governor Dinwiddie and George Washington, viewed the building of such fortifications as a way to both entice settlers away from the Atlantic coast and help protect the colonies' western frontier. In their minds, the "Ohio Valley [was] the key to the possession of North America" (Core 1974:334). . . .

. . . . Various historical accounts place the number of settlers in the region in 1768 between 500 and 700 (Nelson 1900:137; Veech 1858-1892:98-99). The abundance of game, the fertility of the land, the fine springs and water-courses, and the easy access of Braddock's Road all contributed to the lure of the Monongahela Valley and established nearly the whole of white settlement there in what is now southwestern Pennsylvania:

The documentary history of 1765, '66, '67, and indeed all of that decade, speaks of no other settlements in Western Pennsylvania, or the West generally, than those within or immediately bordering upon the Monongahela, upon Cheat, upon the Yough, the Turkey Foot, and Redstone, the first and last being the most prominent, and the last the most extensive, covering all the interior settlements about Uniontown. Georges Creek settlers were referred to Cheat, those about Gist's to the Yough, while turkey Foot took in all the mountain districts (Veech 1858-1892:85). . . .

Though early pioneer attempts at establishing settlements west of the Allegheny Mountains were plagued by resistance from native peoples, traders and governmental interference, the tenacity of these first settlers resulted in the opening of the western frontier. The resolution of territorial disputes between Pennsylvania, Virginia and Maryland served to divide the region into distinct areas with separate though similar identities. The period of intensive settlement that took place during the last decades of the eighteenth century was characterized by the rapid distribution of valuable

lands, the development of key agricultural areas and the establishment of early industries which would later shape the identity of the Monongahela Valley.

[During the Settlement Era (ca. 1770 to ca. 1810), land grants in the area were increasing at substantial rates.] Prior to the government-sanctioned opening of the western frontier with the establishment of Land Offices in 1769, the early pioneers, known sometimes as "squatters," claimed their land solely by occupation. This method was generally acknowledged by later settlers and applications to the Land Office reflected a respect for these previously claimed tracts of land (Ellis 1882:64). Through the next decade land grants were distributed in great volume. Between 1769 and 1776, settlers submitted approximately 25 applications for land patents in Union District, Monongalia county (Core 1974:163-232). Illustrative of the quickening settlement occurring in the region during the late eighteenth century, 22 applications were submitted for land grants in Monongalia County in 1777 (Core 1976:16). By ca. 1780, most of the valuable parcels in the region were patented to individual settlers.

The rapid pace at which the area developed is evident in this statistic from Veech's mid-nineteenth century account of the "Monongahela Country," a region encompassing southwestern Pennsylvania, northern West Virginia, and most likely parts of the Ohio Valley as well: in 1768, the area boasted 150 families, or approximately 700 persons; in 1790, the population had burgeoned to 12,995 free whites and 282 slaves (Veech 1858-1892:98-99). . . .

Ferries crossing the larger water bodies were established almost immediately upon intensive settlement of the . . . area. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, eleven ferries operated in Monongalia County (Schmoyer 1974:58). Established in 1785, the county's first ferry traversed the Cheat River at Ice's Ferry. This location is currently spanned by the Cheat River Bridge. Clelland's Ferry, organized in 1792, crossed the Cheat River north of Ice's Ferry (Schmoyer 1974:59).

River travel developed into an important means of transportation during this period. Local agricultural produce, most notably rye and other grains in the form of whiskey and flour, were shipped to the south and west by ways of the Monongahela River to the Ohio and the Mississippi Rivers. For a short time, the heavily-timbered Monongahela Valley also served as a center of ship-building for both ocean-bound and interior river vessels (Basalik et al 1992:167). . . .

The system of mixed farming for subsistence followed by farmers of the . . . area in 1850 combined cultivation of wheat and Indian corn (the latter probably in large part

for animal feed), raising of livestock, and tending of small orchards, home gardens, potato fields and flax patches. Home manufacturing, perhaps largely of clothing given the ubiquity of sheep flocks and flax patches, was an integral element of local agricultural life. Oat cultivation (for feed), dairying, maple sugaring and sheep raising for wool were also elements in this mixed farming system throughout the project area, but the census figures indicate that these were the commodities which many farmers of 1850 chose to produce in quantities adequate for commerce. . . .

The creation of the State of West Virginia and its municipalities in 1863 remains one of the most apparent effects of the Civil War on the . . . area. The reorganization of Monongalia County into townships, redesignated "districts" in 1873, was one aspect of the predominantly Unionist county's joining its neighbors in breaking away from Confederate Virginia. Union Township, created in 1863, first appeared as a census district in 1870 with a population of 1,619. Redesignated Union District in 1873, the district's population stood at 1,749 persons in 1880. . . .

Following the peak of coal and coke production during World War I, the great Mon Valley entered a period of relative instability and transition exacerbated by the Depression of the 1930s. Even a short spurt of industrial activity precipitated by the Second World War, however, could not reverse the iron and steel industry's dwindling reliance and use of Connellsville coke. The demise of the coal and coke industries in the project area severely limited the area's economic health and development during the mid-twentieth century (Basalik et al. 1992). . . .

Over the past five decades, the Monongahela Valley experienced a significant reduction in population due in large part to the decline of the industries that had precipitated the dramatic growth of . . . Monongalia County during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The modern era has been characterized by the exit of several industries from the area, a return to general subsistence agriculture, as well as a shift to dairy farming, the expansion of transportation networks, and the development of suburbs.

The region regressed into a less industrialized economy as the businesses which had formed company towns and contributed large, sprawling factory complexes to the landscape began to either move out of the area or shut down operations entirely. The coal and coke industry had peaked by the end of World War II, and as an energy source, was supplanted by petroleum products which provided more energy with greater efficiency. Increased mechanization made the process of extracting coal easier and faster, but resulted in a sharp reduction in required manpower (Basalik, et

al. 1992:63). . . . strip mining began to flourish in Monongalia County, and continues to be a leading industry in the county.

Although the subdivision of land that occurred throughout the twentieth century contributed greatly to the rise of suburbanization in the region, it was the advent of the automobile era that fueled the development of these areas. First trolley lines and then cars allowed workers to commute to their jobs and eventually residential locations became separated from urban areas. Commercial centers typically remained "downtown" until strip shopping centers and malls began to blur the distinction between town and country during the 1970s and 1980s.

In addition to the rise of the automobile as an important form of personal transportation, use of the extensive rail lines and river networks developed over the past two centuries continued at a steady pace. Passenger service on regional railroads, as well as across the country as a whole, declined in the early 1960s, but demand for the transport of goods by way of rail remained steady. Local products, such as iron, steel, coal and coke, were shipped out of the valley via the region's rivers at a fairly high volume. The widespread industry decline in the second half of the twentieth century, however, caused a similar decline in the use of regional rivers for transportation (Basalik, et al., 1992:188).

Currently, the Monongahela Valley appears to be in a state of stagnation. Beyond the creation of recreational amenities, including golf courses and aquatic sports facilities, along Cheat Lake little economic development has occurred within the project area since the decline of intensive industry and agriculture began in the mid-twentieth century. Prospects for similar large-scale economic boosters that spurred the rapid development of the region during its boom periods seem unlikely in the near future. Due to this lack of modernization and stalled development, some of the physical resources which convey the history of the area will likely remain as reminders of the valley's beginnings.

## **B. SPECIFIC HISTORY OF THE SITE:**

- Initial Planning and Development:** According to the "West Virginia Historic Property Form" for the John Bly House in Volume II of the *Historic Structures Inventory and Determination of Eligibility Report* for the Mon/Fayette Transportation Project:

According to deed transfers, John Bly acquired a three acre parcel of land from the extensive landholdings of George and Elizabeth Baker in 1844. An 1856 map of the area illustrates a building at the location in that year (Lake 1856)...The current

owner, Doris Fieldhouse, states that a stable that serviced turnpike travelers once stood opposite the Bly House on the north side of the creek. In addition, C. R. 857 formerly curved eastward following the southern portion of the current driveway before turning northward and returning to its present right-of-way.

2. **Changes in Plan and Site:** Taken from tax information, it appears that the original portion of the house was constructed before 1852. Although the specific dates are unknown, the dwelling has undergone several additions and alterations:

Kitchen, on the northeast end, added ca. 1880-1900.

Porch on northwest end enclosed to become the foyer was added ca. 1975 (according to the daughter of former owner who performed the alterations.

Modern kitchen constructed on south elevation was added ca. 1975 (according to the daughter of the former owner who performed the alterations.)

Outbuildings were added to the farmstead as follows:

- Polebarn—ca. 1920
- Cinderblock shed—ca. 1930
- Corrugated tin shed—ca. 1940
- Pre-fabricated shed—ca. 1990

3. **Individuals Associated With The Site:**

John Bly—John Bly is listed in the 1850 census as a "waggoner" in Union District with a wife and seven children (U.S. Census Bureau 1850). The 1852 and 1853 Civil List for Monongalia County also lists John Bly as constable (Wiley 1883: 671).

Nathaniel Triplett—By 1886 a map of the county identified the house belonging to a Dr. N. H. Triplett (Lathrop 1886). Nathaniel Hoffman Triplett was born in 1822 in Allegheny County, Maryland. He married Levarah G. Baker and was the only "Eclectic physician" in Monongalia County (Wiley 1883:684). The *Historic Structures Report* continues:

The 1850 census describes Triplett as a "nail cutter," an appropriate occupation for someone living close to a number of ironworks. Ten years later, Triplett had become a "physician." Interestingly, the 1870 census listed Triplett as "dry goods merchant." The 1880 and 1900 censuses again described Triplett as a doctor. Triplett also served as post master for the Laurel Iron Works community between 1865 and 1885.

Upon his death, Nathaniel Triplett was buried at the Norris-Baker cemetery (HABS No. WV-298-E).

4. **Historical Events or Developments Associated With the Site:** the Historic Property Form in Volume II of the *Historic Structures Inventory and Determination of Eligibility Report* for the Mon/Fayette Transportation Project continues:

Local tradition states that the John Bly House functioned as a stagecoach stop on the Morgantown and Uniontown Turnpike, the predecessor to C.R. 857, as well as a physician's home, a post office and a grocery store. A major link between Uniontown, in Fayette County, Pennsylvania, and Morgantown, further southeast in Monongalia County, the turnpike first functioned as a postal route beginning in 1794. By 1834, the route became a stage road, running two-and four-horse coaches between the two cities tri-weekly. Eventually, the turnpike served the numerous charcoal iron communities that dotted the Cheat Neck area and southern Fayette County throughout the mid-1800s. Nineteenth century maps illustrate Anna Furnace on the Cheat River near the turnpike, in addition to Laurel Ironworks a short distance north of the Bly House along the turnpike, and Woodgrove Furnace near the intersection of the turnpike with Morgans Run (Lathrop 1886). Although much of the ironwork's products were floated down the Cheat River to Monongahela River ports and points further downstream, the turnpike played an important role in the development of the Cheat Neck area, providing a major route for the transport of goods and people. Bly sold the property in 1857 to Nathaniel Triplett.

In 1888 John Baker sold an unknown amount of acreage to Levarah Triplett (Deed Book 24:366). In 1910 Levarah Triplett sold her homestead to David Bowers for \$1.00 provided that she could live in her home until her death. The deed was to be held by George Baker until Levarah Triplett's death (Deed Book 110:427). Five years later Bowers sold the property to Charles Stafford for \$1,500 dollars. This land included two tracts totaling about five acres except for half an acre sold to Charles Batty by Levarah Triplett. Charles Stafford only kept the property for five years when he sold all but the half acre that possesses the dwelling house and other buildings that had been previously sold to Charles Batty, to Harry L. Halls who held it for one year when he sold five acres and the Triplett homestead (Deed Book 160:111; Deed Book 180:362).

In 1922 the Bakers sold the real estate parcel along with the dwelling house for 1,800 dollars payable in 200 dollar annual installments to Lloyd Fowler (Deed Book 186:26). The property passed again in 1925 when Lloyd Fowler sold it to E.F. Read for 3,000 dollars with the agreement that "the grantees shall keep the said dwelling house

and the outbuildings on said parcel of land constantly insured in at least the sum of 1,000 dollars (Deed Book 205:323).

The homestead was sold in 1946 to the Cheat Neck Sportsmen's Association for one dollar. This included the five acre tract and the N.H. Triplett Homestead" (Deed Book 379:443). It appears that sometime later the land was sold to a Madge Malcolm. This is evident by a deed book entry dated 16 December 1970 that sold the property to Richard S. And Nancy Chapman Cavallero for ten dollars (Deed Book 704:51).

## **PART II. DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION**

### **A. PHYSICAL CHARACTER OF THE SITE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT**

#### **1. Physical Description of the Site: the *Historic Structures Inventory and Determination of Eligibility Report* for the Mon/Fayette Transportation Project reports that:**

The John Bly House stands on a 1.77 acre tract of land encompassing a stable/garage and a small pond. Set back approximately 20 yards from C. R. 857, the Bly House sits on a relatively flat parcel of land bordered on the east by ground sloping steeply downward from east to west. A small tributary of Coles Run passes northeast of the Bly House supplying water to the property's pond before draining westward, passing under C. R. 857 through a culvert and joining Coles Run. A stone retaining wall and flagstone walkway separate the house from the dirt and gravel drive and parking area immediately to the west. A short stone wall also holds back the hill slope directly south of the house.

#### **2. Surrounding Environment: The surrounding environment of the property is heavily wooded with steep slopes up the mountain. The immediate area is rural with dwellings dating from the mid-nineteenth century to the present located along C. R. 857. The Norris Farm (HABS WV-298) is located immediately to the north of the Bly House.**

### **B. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE DWELLING**

#### **1. According to the Original Plan: The original section of the house dates to approximately the mid-nineteenth century. The cut-stone foundation supports two-story stone walls that are two bays wide and three bays deep. Stone exterior chimneys are located at both the west and east elevations. The ridge of the asphalt-covered gable roof lies parallel to C.R. 857.**

2. **Changes Over Time:**

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| ca. 1880-1900 | Kitchen (now the laundry room) added to the northeast end (according to physical evidence).  |
| ca. 1975      | Porch on northwest end enclosed to become the foyer was added (according to the daughter of former owner who performed the alterations). |
| ca. 1975      | Modern kitchen constructed on south elevation (according to the daughter of the former owner who performed the alterations.)             |
| ca. 1920      | Polebarn constructed (according to physical evidence)  |
| ca. 1930      | Cinderblock shed (according to physical evidence)  |
| ca. 1940      | Corrugated tin shed  |
| ca. 1990      | Pre-fabricated shed placed on property (according to physical evidence)  |

3. **Current Features and Appearance:** The dwelling's appearance has greatly been altered since its original construction. The original section of the house has retained its stone walls and chimneys. However, the window panes have since been replaced. A set of concrete steps lead down to a wooden door on the east elevation that leads into the basement. The earliest addition, the kitchen added to the northeast of the house, ca. 1880-1900, is a two-story addition with a stone foundation and stone walls. A steeply sloped, front-gabled roof covered with asphalt shingles covers this addition. A double, six-light fixed window pierces the first story addition while a single, one-over-one, double-hung sash pierces the second.

The addition located on the northwest end of the building was once a porch that was enclosed ca. 1975. It is one story with a flat roof. Four concrete steps with a wrought iron railing lead to a paneled-aluminum door flanked on either side with side lights. A 12-pane bow window pierces the wall to the west of the door.

The modern kitchen located at the south end of the house is a one-story, shed addition. The frame walls are clad in composite board siding and stone. The frame walls support an asphalt-covered shed roof. The east wall is pierced by a small sliding window and a glass shop door that leads to a flat-roofed covered concrete patio. The south elevation is pierced

by a large sliding window and an eight-light fixed bay window. The east elevation is pierced by a nine-light fixed window whose panes have been boarded in and by a wood door that has been sealed shut. Neither the window or the door is evident on the inside.

The basement is presently used as storage space. Access to this area was not possible during documentation. The foyer of the first floor is entered from the north (main) entrance. It has stone walls and an opening on the south wall that once served as a window for the north elevation. The floor is covered in blue carpet. Through the doorway on the south wall is the living room that encompasses the entire first floor of the original section. A concrete-cast stone fireplace with a marble mantel is located on the west wall. Polished ceramic tiles cover the floor directly in front of the fireplace. The fireplace on the east wall has since been covered. The walls are covered with faux-wood paneling except on the south wall that once served as the exterior wall of the original portion. This wall is constructed of stone. The ceiling is plastered yet wooden beams remain visible. This staircase leading to the second floor starts along the east wall and turns along the south wall. The door that opens to the stairs that lead into the basement is found along the west end of the stairs.

The laundry room is located at the northeast corner. A folding door leads into this small room. An opening that once served as an exterior window is located on the south wall of the laundry room. The modern kitchen is located through a doorway on the south end of the house. The walls are covered with mixture of faux-brick paneling, stone, tile, and cherry cabinets. The ceiling has been dropped and has set-in fluorescent lights. The flooring is made of linoleum. A combination of sliding windows and fixed pane bay windows pierce the walls. A glass shop door leads out of the east wall onto a concrete patio.

Upon entry on the second floor is a small hallway that is carpeted. The walls have been papered. The bathroom is immediately to the east. It has a one-over-one, double-hung sash window piercing the south wall. The master bedroom occupies most of the west half of the floor. It has two one-over-one, double-hung sash windows piercing the north wall. The floor is covered with linoleum. The walls are decorated with wallpaper and faux-wood paneling. A wood-paneled door leads back into the hallway. A smaller bedroom is located on the east end of the house. A one-over-one, double-hung sash window pierces the east elevation. The ceiling is arched with exposed wood beams. A small closet is located on the south end of the room. A wood-paneled door that once lead to the master bedroom is located on the east wall of the room. Off of the north wall is a large walk-in storage area.

The outbuildings that are associated with the Bly House today include three small sheds and a pole barn. The pole barn, ca. 1920, is located southeast of the house. It measures approximately 24' by 36' feet. Logs and frame walls support a flat roof. Two six-light windows pierce the west wall. The north wall is completely open. Two openings pierce the

south wall. Railings measuring approximately 4 feet high are found off of the south walls and in the center. The earliest of the sheds is located directly to the south of the pole barn. It measures approximately 18' 6" by 10'4" and is constructed of cinderblock walls that support a flat roof. A corrugated tin shed with a round arched roof is located to the west of the pole barn. A pre-fabricated shed is located to the north of the house approximately 30 feet from C.R. 857.

### **PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

**A. ORIGINAL ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS:** None located.

**B. GENERAL DEPOSITORIES:**

West Virginia University Libraries, Morgantown, West Virginia  
Wise Library  
West Virginia Regional History Collection  
West Virginia State Archives, Charleston, West Virginia  
Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania  
Mid-Atlantic Regional Office of the National Archives, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**C. EARLY VIEWS:** None located

**D. INTERVIEWS:** Caroline Fieldhouse Stoker, daughter of previous owner and trustee of Doris Fieldhouse Estate. John Bly House, April 2000.

**E. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**1. Primary and Unpublished Sources**

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Moreland, James R. *The Early Cheat Mountain Iron Works*. Morgantown: printed privately, 1940.

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---. *Census of Population, 1810*. Manuscripts on microfilm, National Archives, Washington, DC, 1810.

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*Census of Population, 1900*. Manuscripts on microfilm, National Archives, Washington, DC, 1900.

United States Geological Survey. *15' Series Quadrangle for Morgantown, West Virginia*. Washington, DC: United States Geological Survey, 1903.

United States Geological Survey. *15' Series Quadrangle for Morgantown, West Virginia*. Washington, DC: United States Geological Survey, 1931.

United States Geological Survey. *7.5' Series Quadrangle for Lake Lynn, PA-DEL*. Washington, DC: United States Geological Survey, 1960 (Photorevised 1976).

Veech, James. *The Monongahela of Old*. Pittsburgh: printed privately, 1858-1892.

## **2. Secondary and Published Sources**

### **a. Periodicals**

None located.

### **b. Books**

Core, Earl L. *The Monongalia Story: A Bicentennial History*. 5 volumes. Parsons, WV: 1985 McClain Printing Company, 1974-1985.

Ellis, Franklin. *History of Fayette County, Pennsylvania*. Philadelphia: L. H. Everts & Co, 1882.

Nelson, S. B. *Biographical Dictionary and Historical Reference Book of Fayette County, Pennsylvania*. Uniontown: S. B. Nelson, 1900.

Schmoyer, Jerry H. *The Historical, Cultural and Archaeological Resources of Monongalia County, West Virginia*. Morgantown: West Virginia University, 1974.

VanVoorhis, John S. *The Old and New Monongahela*. Pittsburgh: Nicholson, Pointer, and Bender, 1893.

## **F. LIKELY SOURCES NOT YET INVESTIGATED:**

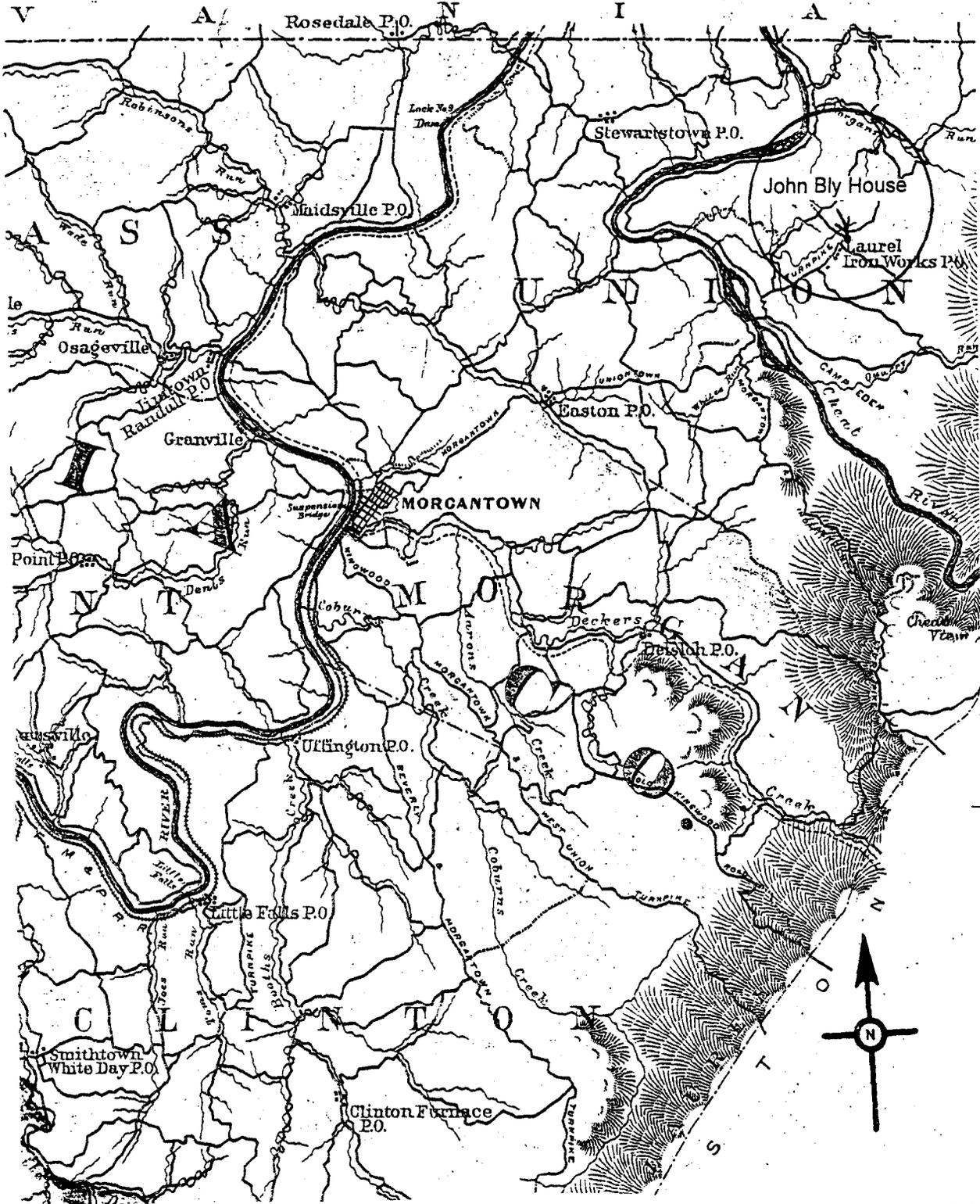
Interviews with previous owners  
Genealogical societies

**PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION**

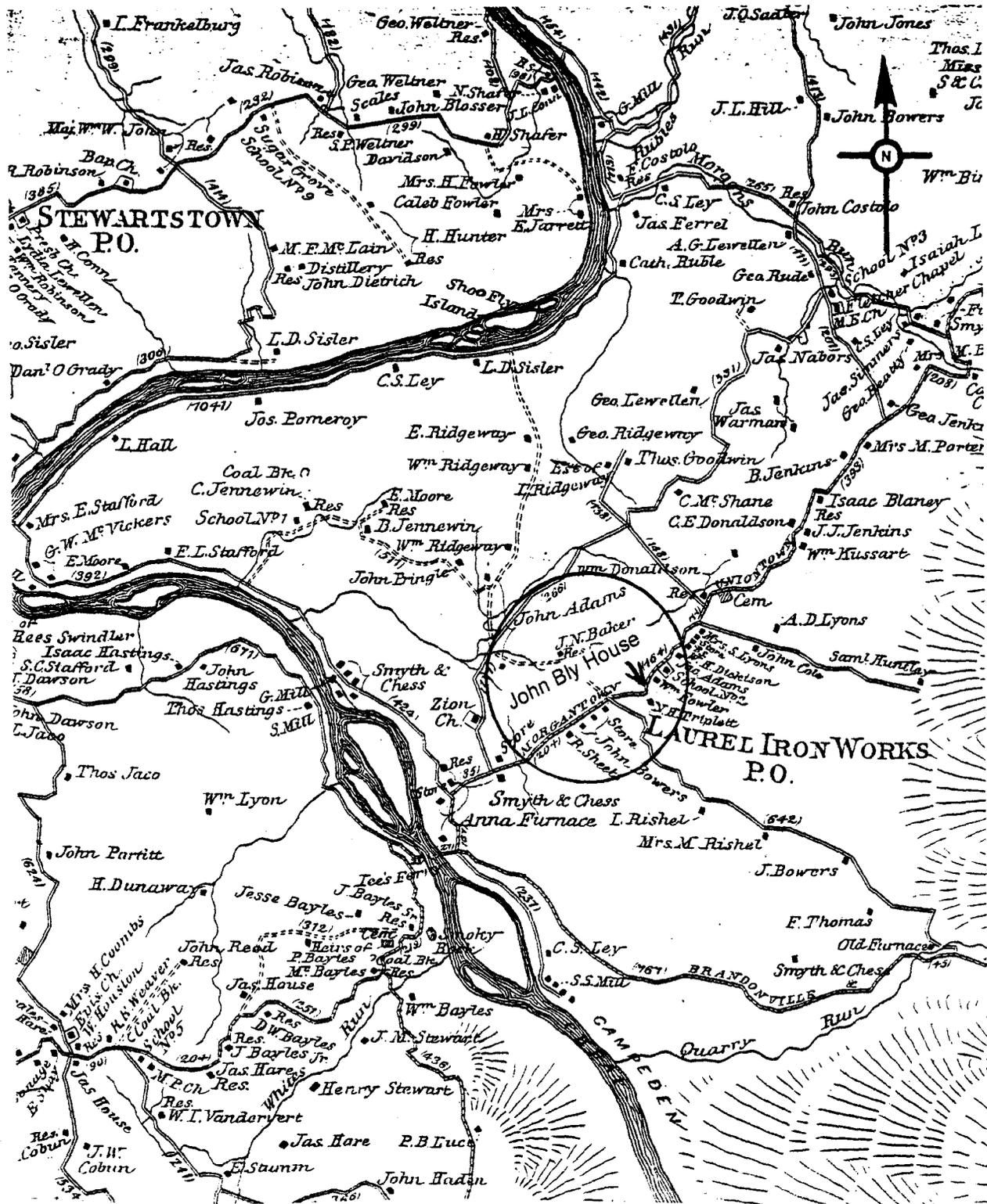
This recordation satisfies the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) Regarding Implementation of the I-68 to SR 6119 Mon/Fayette Transportation Project Monongalia County, West Virginia and Fayette County, Pennsylvania," dated April 22, 1994.

Preliminary engineering plans indicate that while the landscapes of these properties will be affected, no buildings on the properties will be physically altered or removed.

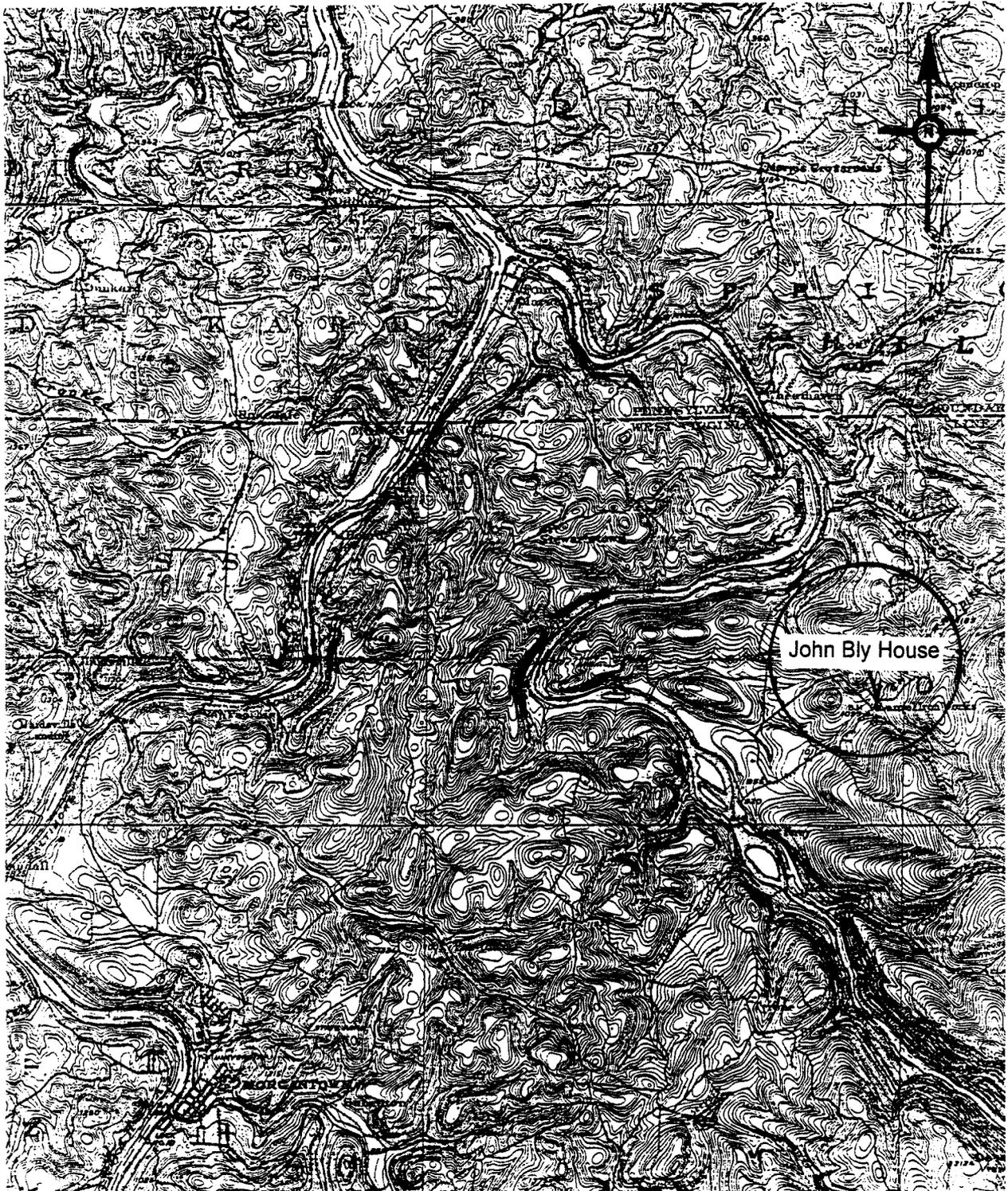
**Prepared By:** Margaret Bishop Parker  
Gail Lin Walls  
Robert Shelley  
**Title:** Senior Architectural Historian  
Architectural Historian  
Photographer  
**Affiliation:** KCI Technologies, Inc.  
5001 Louise Dr., Suite 201  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055  
**Date:** May 2000



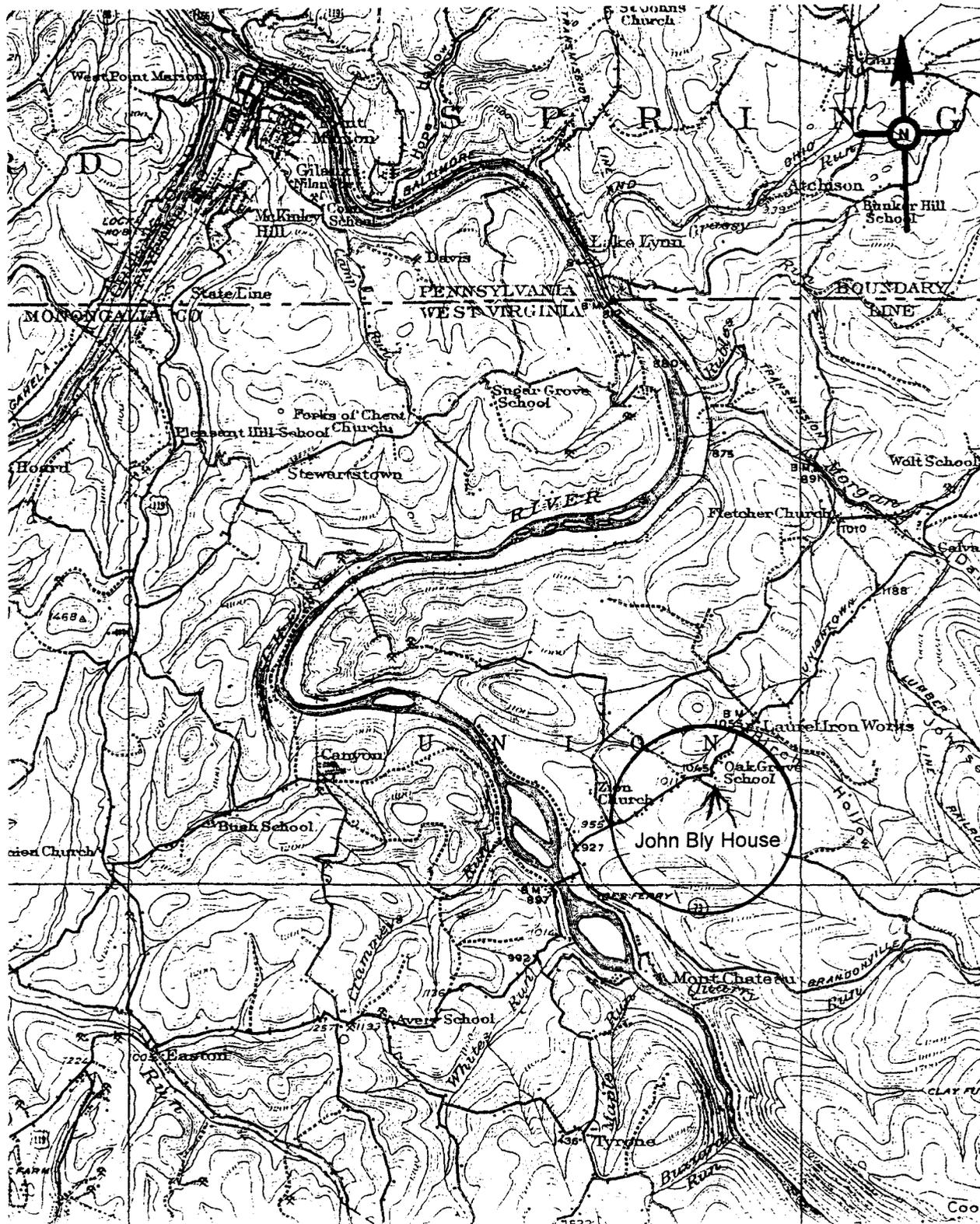
From: *Atlas of Marion and Monongalia Counties, West Virginia*. From Actual Surveys by J. M. Lathrop, H. C. Penny, and W.R. Proctor. Philadelphia: D. J. Lake & Co., 1856.



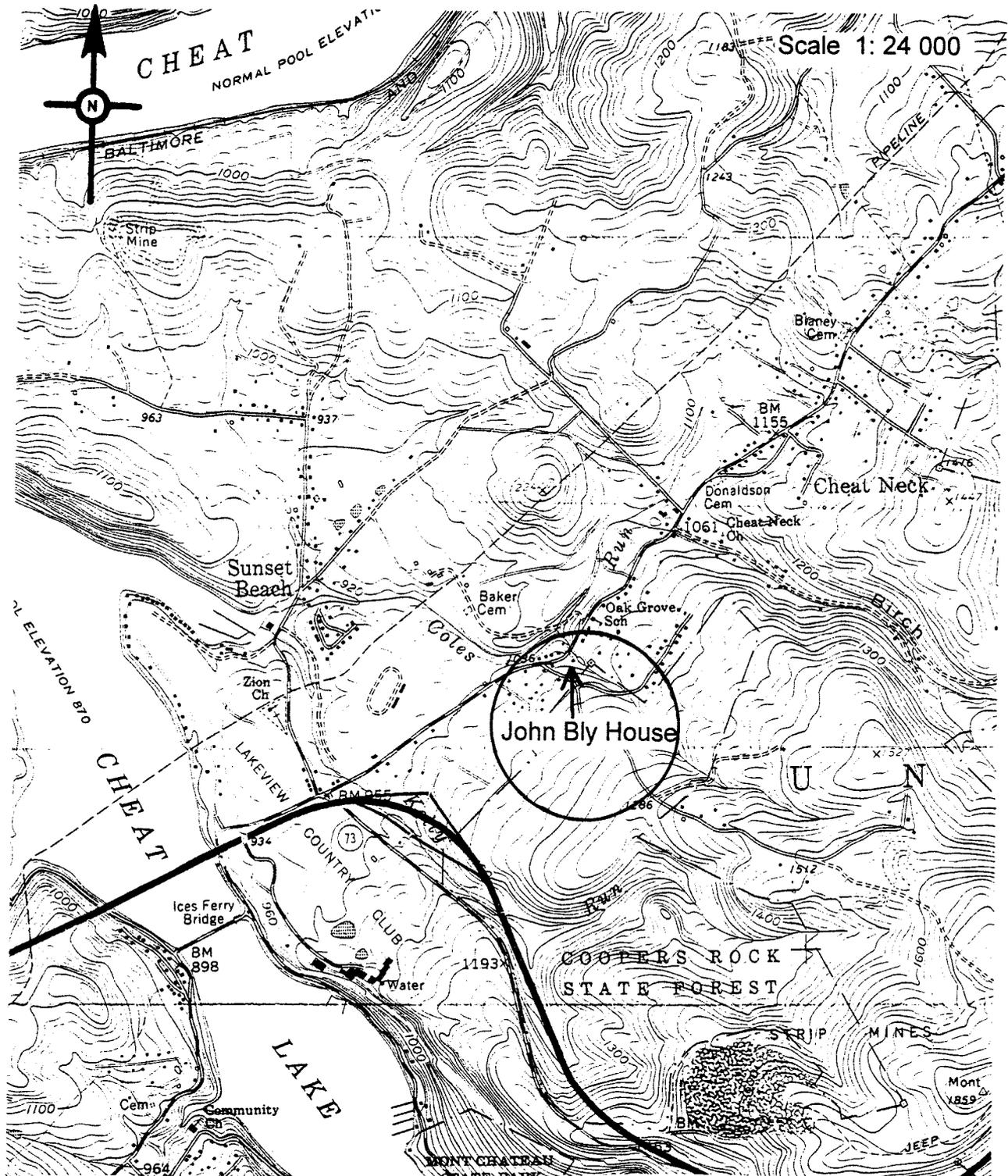
From: *Atlas of Marion and Monongalia Counties, West Virginia*. From Actual Surveys by J. M. Lathrop, H. C. Penny, and W.R. Proctor. Philadelphia: D.J. Lake & Co., 1886.



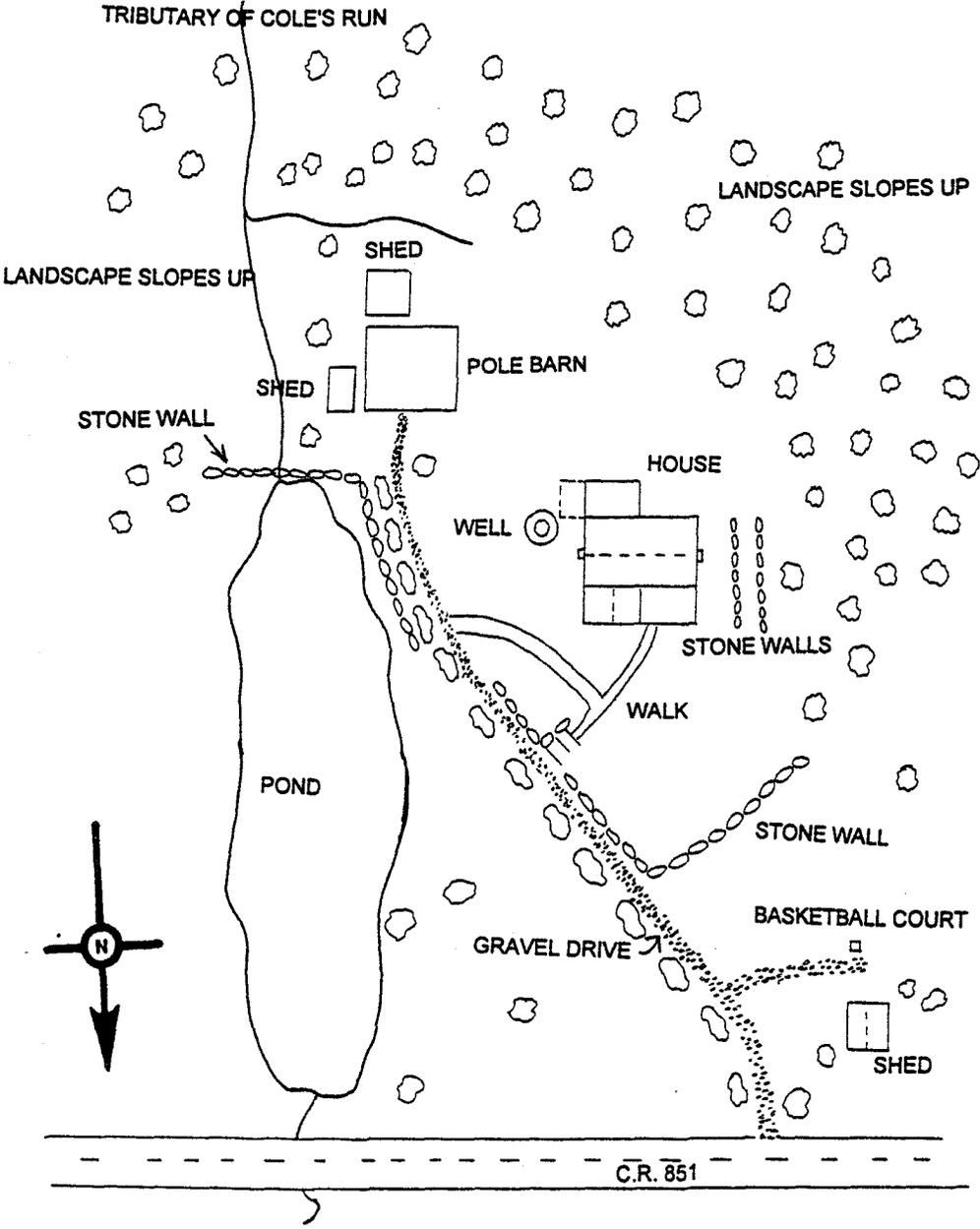
From: United States Geological Survey. *15' Series Quadrangle for Morgantown, West Virginia*. Washington, DC: United States Geological Survey, 1903.



From: United States Geological Survey. 15' Series Quadrangle for Morgantown, West Virginia. Washington, DC: United States Geological Survey, 1931.

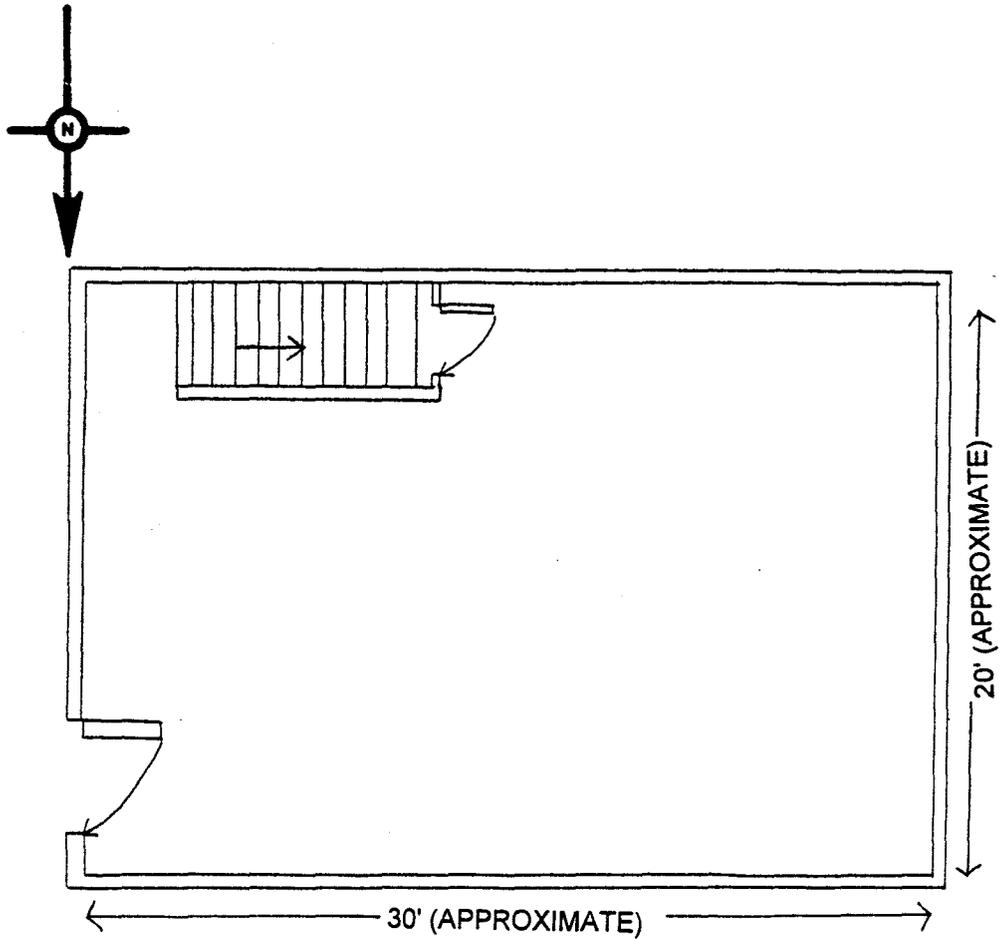


From: United States Geological Survey. 7.5' Series Quadrangle for Lake Lynn, PA-WV.  
Washington, D.C.: United States Geological Survey, 1960 (photorevised 1976).



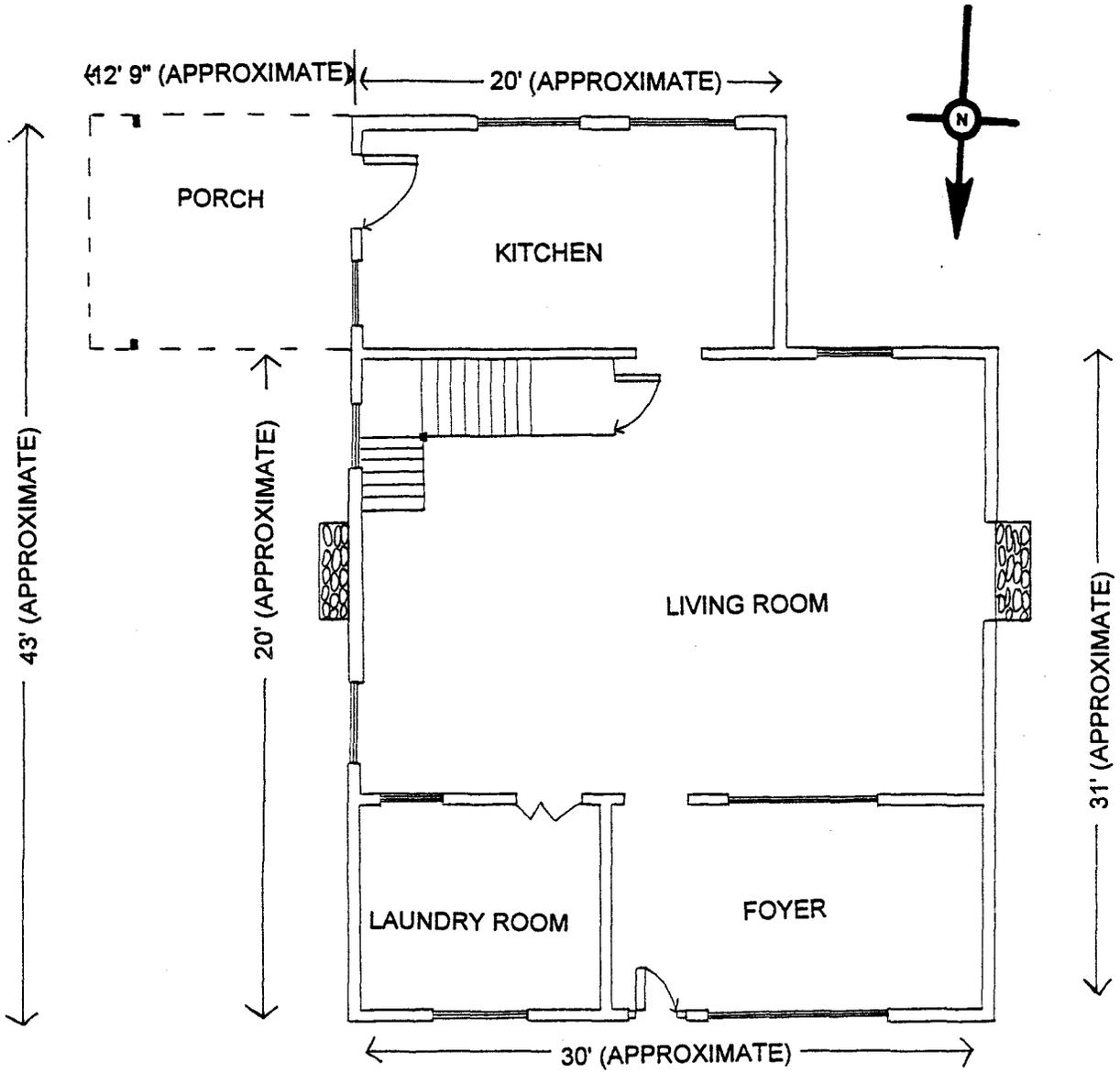
SITE PLAN OF BLY HOUSE

DRAWING PREPARED BY KCI TECHNOLOGIES, INC., MAY 2000



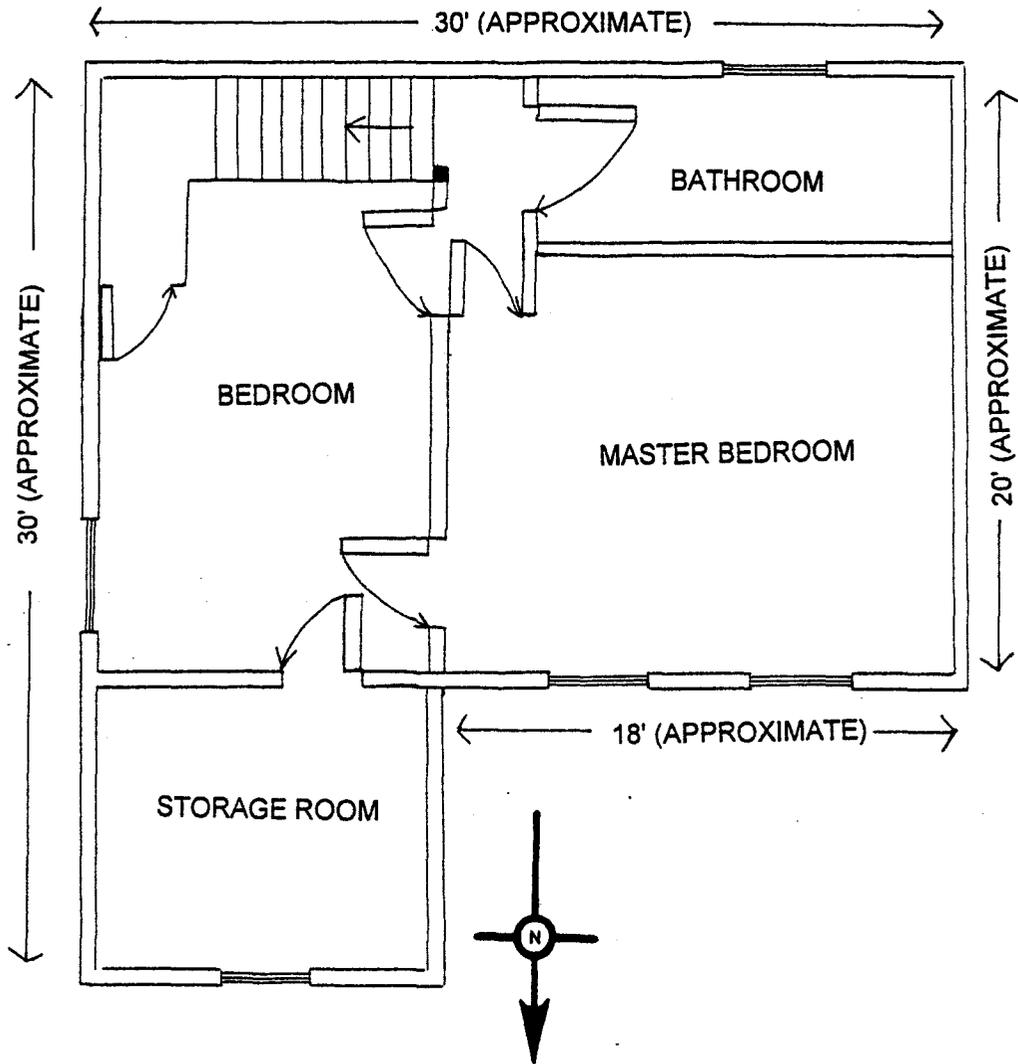
HOUSE—BASEMENT

DRAWING PREPARED BY KCI TECHNOLOGIES, INC., MAY 2000



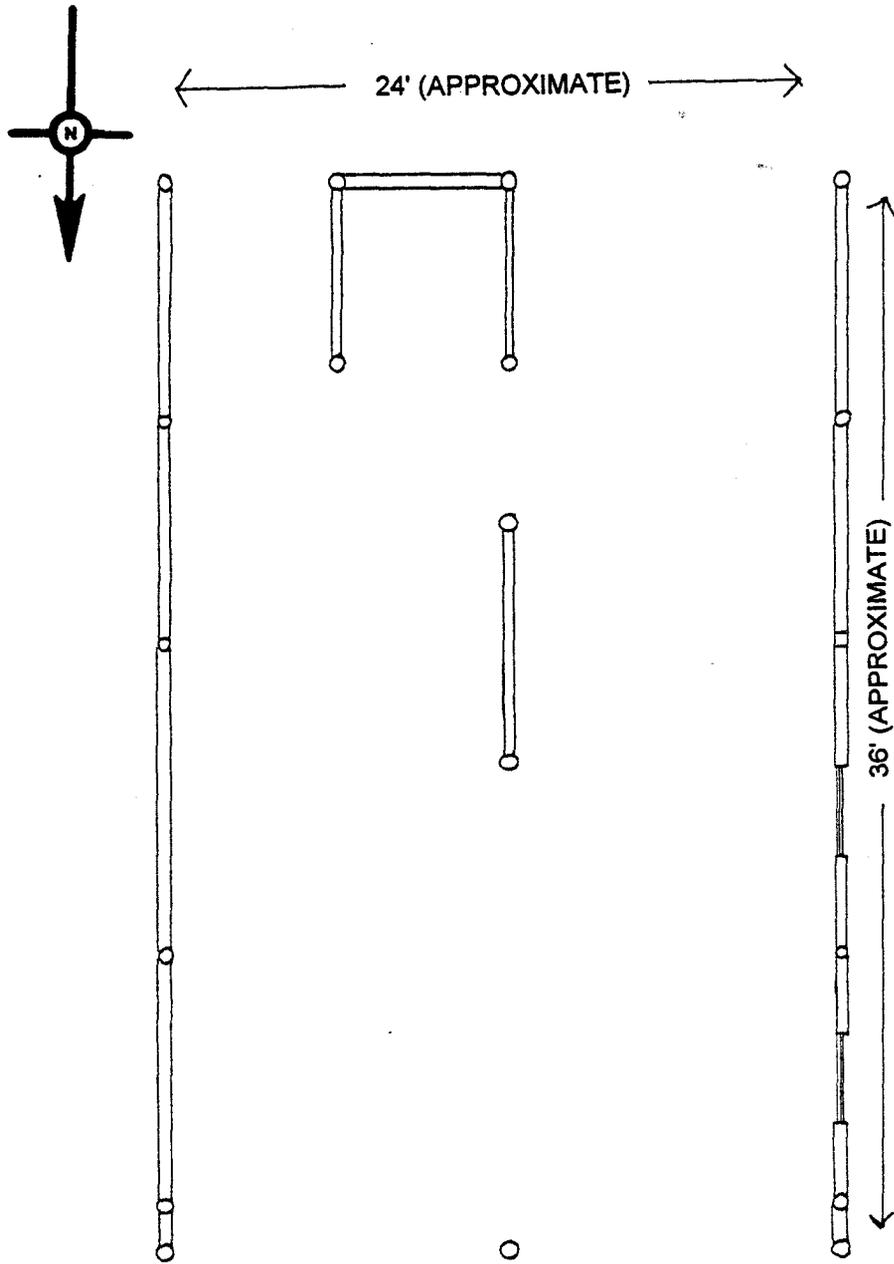
HOUSE—FIRST FLOOR

DRAWING PREPARED BY KCI TECHNOLOGIES, INC., MAY 2000



HOUSE—SECOND FLOOR

DRAWING PREPARED BY KCI TECHNOLOGIES, INC., MAY 2000



POLE BARN