

THOMAS AIKEY HOUSE  
Route 604, approx. 200 feet east of  
Jay Street Bridge  
Lockport Vicinity  
Clinton County  
Pennsylvania

HABS NO. PA-5540

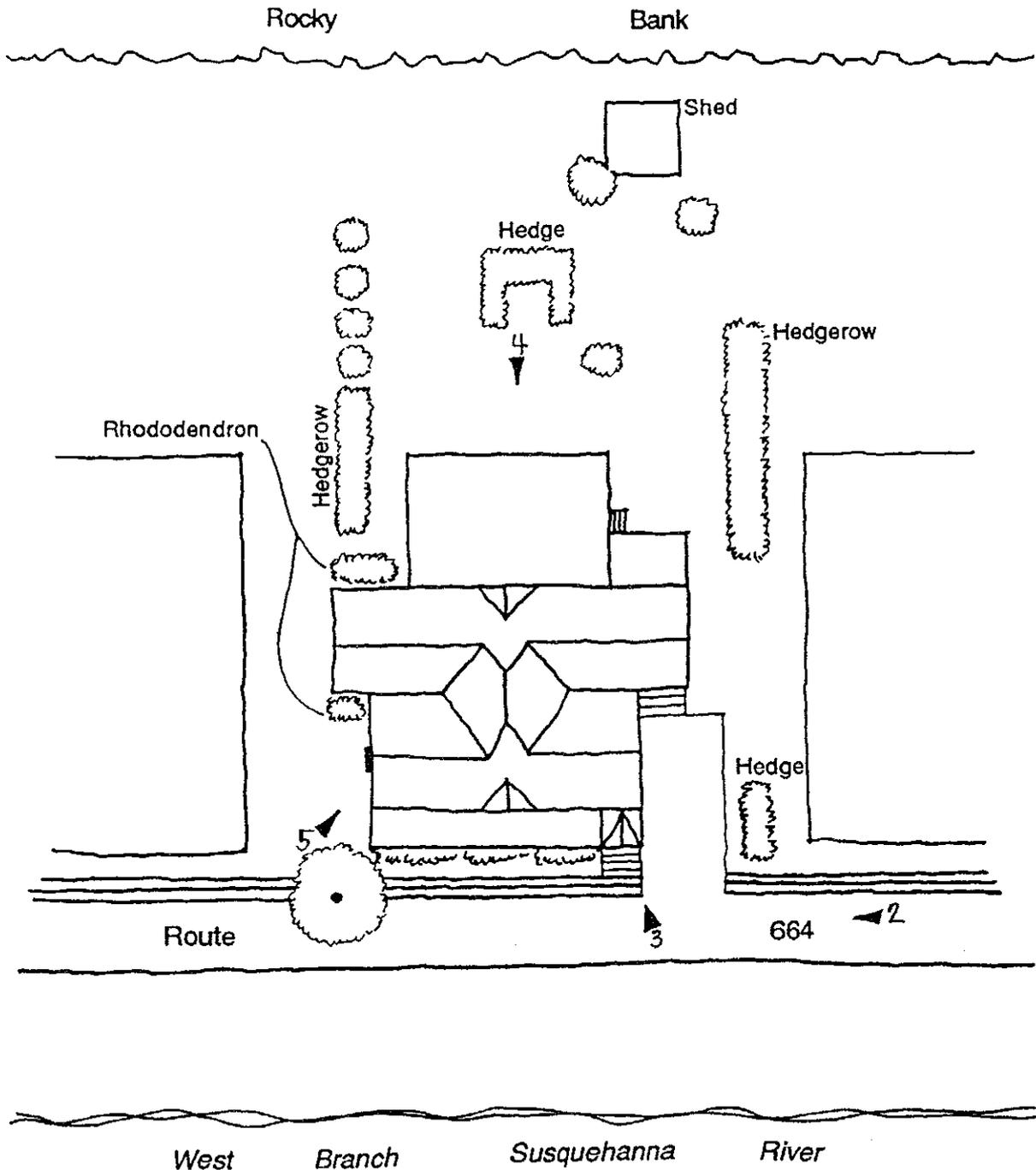
HABS  
PA  
18-LOKPTV,  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Mid-Atlantic Region  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19108

KEY TO PHOTOGRAPHS  
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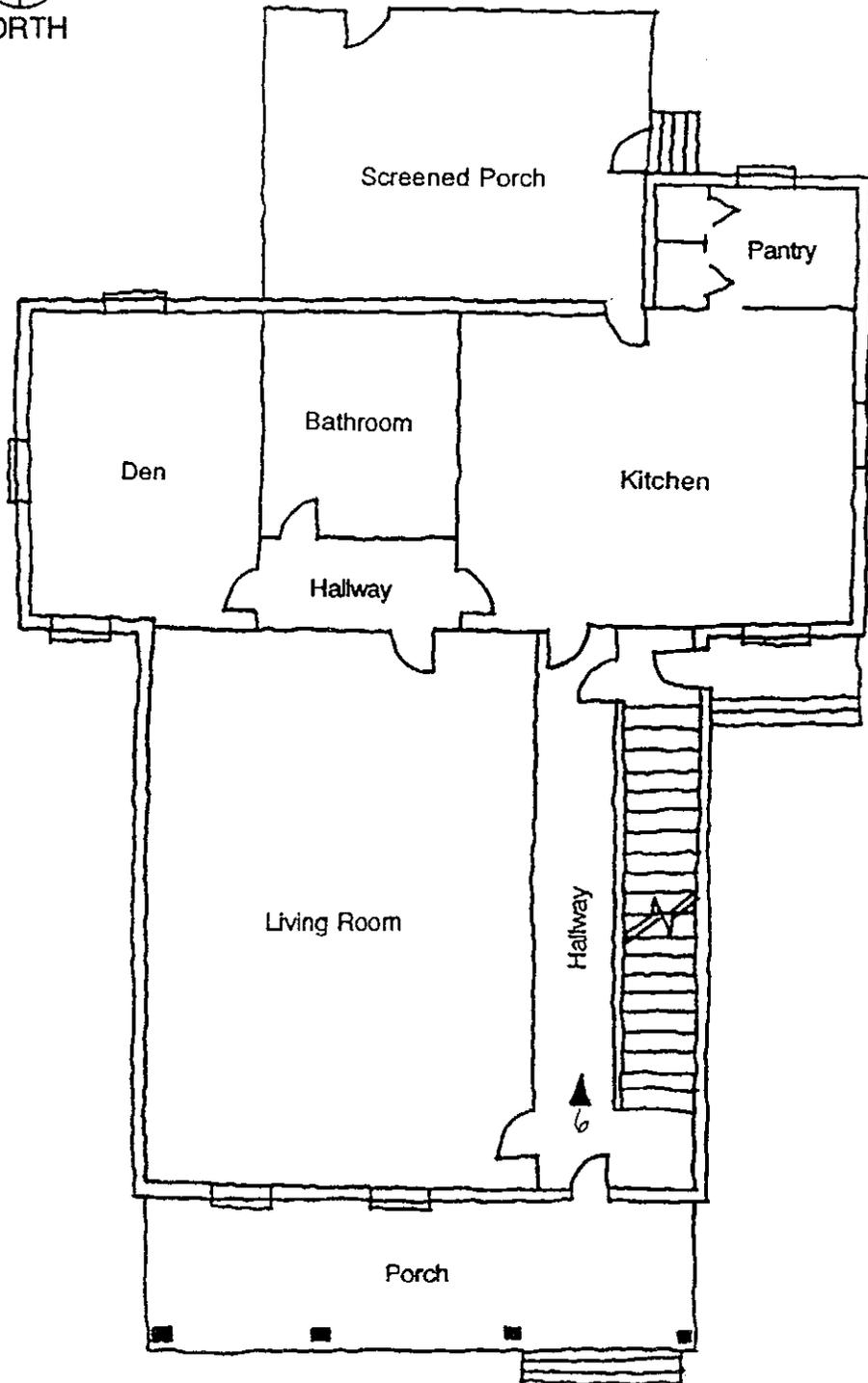


Site Plan  
(Not to Scale)



Date Drawn: 1992  
Prepared By: Jill Cremer

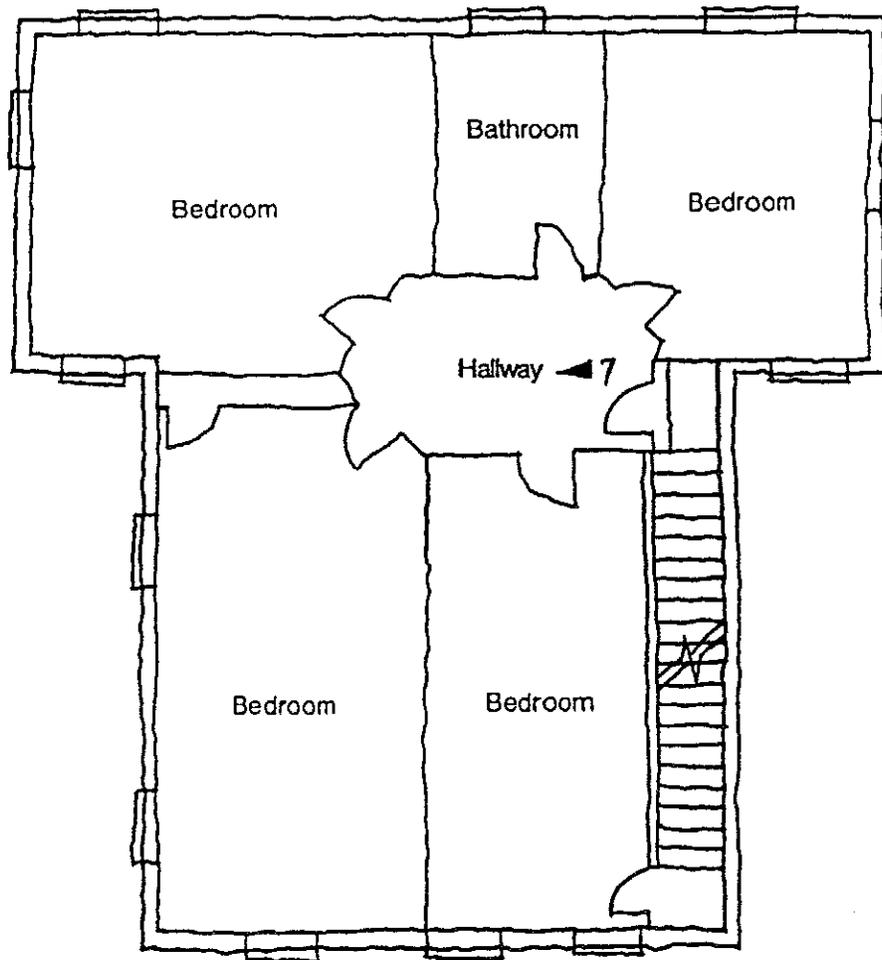
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First Floor Plan  
(Not to Scale)

Date Drawn: 1992  
Prepared By: Jill Cremer

KEY TO PHOTOGRAPHS  
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Second Floor Plan  
(Not to Scale)

Date Drawn: 1992  
Prepared By: Jill Cremer

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18-LOKPT.V,  
10-

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

THOMAS AIKEY HOUSE

HABS No. PA-5540

Location: Route 664, approximately 900 feet east of the Jay Street Bridge, Lower Lockport, ~~Lock Haven~~ vicinity, Clinton County, Pennsylvania.

USGS Lock Haven Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator  
Coordinates: 18.295370.4556980

Significance: The Thomas Aikey House, constructed in 1888, is significant as a representative example of nineteenth-century canal-era housing of Lower Lockport. As a collection, the canal-era houses of Lower Lockport exhibit simple design and minimal ornamental detailing. They also share similar two-story, side-gabled massing and a uniform setback from the road. A historic photograph taken circa 1900 indicates that the Thomas Aikey House was simple in ornamentation and similar to other canal-era houses of Lower Lockport. A decorative Folk Victorian front porch added in the early twentieth century gives the Thomas Aikey House a more high style character than other historic houses in the area. Despite later alterations, the Thomas Aikey House retains its architectural integrity.

Lower Lockport's development followed a local pattern of early nineteenth-century agricultural land use yielding to residential subdivision in the wake of the development of the West Branch of the Pennsylvania Canal in 1834 (see HAER No. PA-188). Lock No. 34 of the canal system was sited in Lower Lockport in 1834 and the canal remained in operation until 1889, at which time it was rendered useless by a damaging flood. The canal served as a major transportation route in the pre-railroad era. In conjunction with the canal, the lumber industry also played a major role in the development of Lower Lockport and was central to its economy. Lower Lockport served as the head market for the lumber rafting trade on the West Branch. Many of the extant dwellings in Lower Lockport housed merchants and skilled professionals--blacksmiths and carpenters--dependent upon the lumber trade. Other residents included relatively prosperous boatmen and laborers who worked on the canal. Thomas Aikey, one of the first owners of the house, was a laborer at the Queen's Run Brick Mill, an industry which prospered in the late nineteenth century in Upper Lockport.

Description: The Thomas Aikey House is a 2 1/2-story, three-bay, frame house exhibiting Folk Victorian stylistic elements. A five-bay rear section is appended perpendicular to the front three-bay section, giving the building a T-shape. The front section exhibits a stone foundation while the rear section foundation has been stuccoed and painted. The roof of the house is unique; it contains parallel side gables joined by a hip-on-gable ridge. The roof is sheathed with composition shingles throughout. The building's Folk Victorian stylistic elements are exhibited in its front porch detailing. The full front porch exhibits chamfered posts, a squared post balustrade, flat decorative brackets, and decorative woodworking in the pedimented gable over the entrance bay. A transom is present above the front door located in the eastern bay. Exterior details include two-over-two double-hung sash windows with simple wooden surrounds and lintels, a centered

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cross gable on the front facade containing a pointed arch vent, turned gable ends on the rear section of the house, narrow clapboard siding, and wide fascia board and soffits throughout. Both sections of the house exhibit the same windows and wooden siding.

A shed addition and large screened porch with shed roof are attached to the rear of the house and sit on a concrete block foundation. A concrete block stove chimney is located on the western facade of the front section of the house. Interior features include a staircase with a turned spindle balustrade and decorative newel post. Door and window surrounds are simple, and historic doors are single-leaf and wood panelled. Some door surrounds on the first story exhibit bulls-eye corner blocks.

Alterations made by the present owners since 1954 include the addition of a screened rear porch, which once was a smaller shed porch, and the removal of the original outkitchen. Plaster walls in the living room have been replaced by drywall. Other alterations include lowered ceilings with the installation of ceiling tiles and the removal of coal flues.

Former outbuildings included one chicken coop and one shed as well as the aforementioned outkitchen. The present metal shed was constructed in 1973. At the time the house was used as a duplex, tenants planted vegetable gardens on either side of the walk that divides the rear yard into two spaces.

History:

According to land records, the Thomas Aikey House was constructed c. 1890. The present-day property, owned by Albert and Margaret Poremsky, was originally part of a larger parcel of 17,205 square feet, which also included the present lot to the west of the house. There is no evidence that this parcel of land contained any kind of structure until 1890. The Poremsky lot, together with other lots to the west, were owned by farmer Nathaniel Hanna until his death in about 1873. The lots then passed to his son, John S. Hanna, a lumber inspector who in turn conveyed the 17,205 square-foot parcel to Lena M. Probst in 1888. Lena was the wife of Alexander Probst, a locally important carpenter and contractor who constructed several houses in Lower Lockport.

It appears that Probst built a house on the present-day Poremsky property soon after 1888. The Probsts then sold the house and the surrounding 6,480 square feet to Queen's Run Brick Works laborer, Thomas Aikey, in 1890. The deed to Aikey notes that the lot contained a two-story frame dwelling and outbuildings. According to a circa 1900 historic photograph of the Thomas Aikey House, the building contained only the three-bay front section with a door in the eastern bay of the front facade and exhibited unpainted wood, no front porch, and a cross gable on the front facade. No additions are apparent, and the house contains tall, narrow windows, with a transom above the front door.

Thomas Aikey died between 1929 and 1931, and the property passed to his son Ernest, a brickworks laborer. In 1939, he sold the house and lot to Helen and Fred Waltz, a papermaker. The present owners of the property believe the Waltzs converted the house into a two-family dwelling soon after

purchasing it and rented it during their entire period of ownership. During this time, each floor contained a separate residence. The Poremskys rented the property from the Waltzs from 1952 to 1954, at which time they purchased it and reconverted it to a one-family dwelling.

Documentation of the Thomas Aikey House was undertaken during October and November of 1991. This documentation serves as a mitigative measure for the treatment of this historic property, as it would be affected by a proposed Lock Haven flood protection project under the direction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District. The Thomas Aikey House is slated for removal to accommodate an induced flooding zone. The house will be marketed for sale in an attempt to have it moved. If the house cannot be sold, it will be marketed for architectural salvage. The last recourse for the house is demolition.

Sources:

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*Flood Protection Project, Clinton County, Pennsylvania.* Prepared for the Baltimore District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers by Vendel Enviro-Industrial Consultants, 1989.

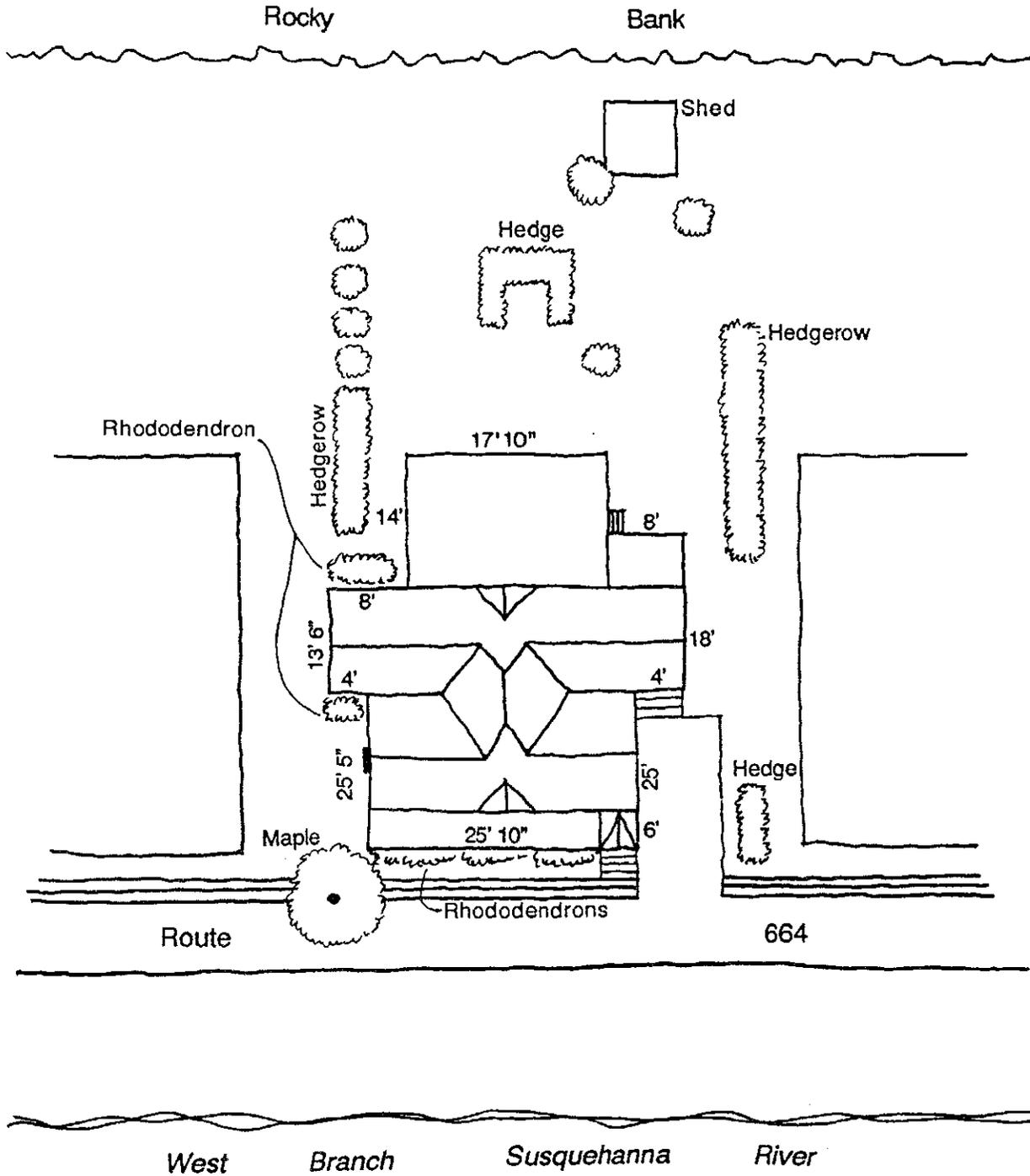
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Historians: Martin B. Abbot and Susan C. Nabors  
Kise Franks & Straw  
Fall 1991



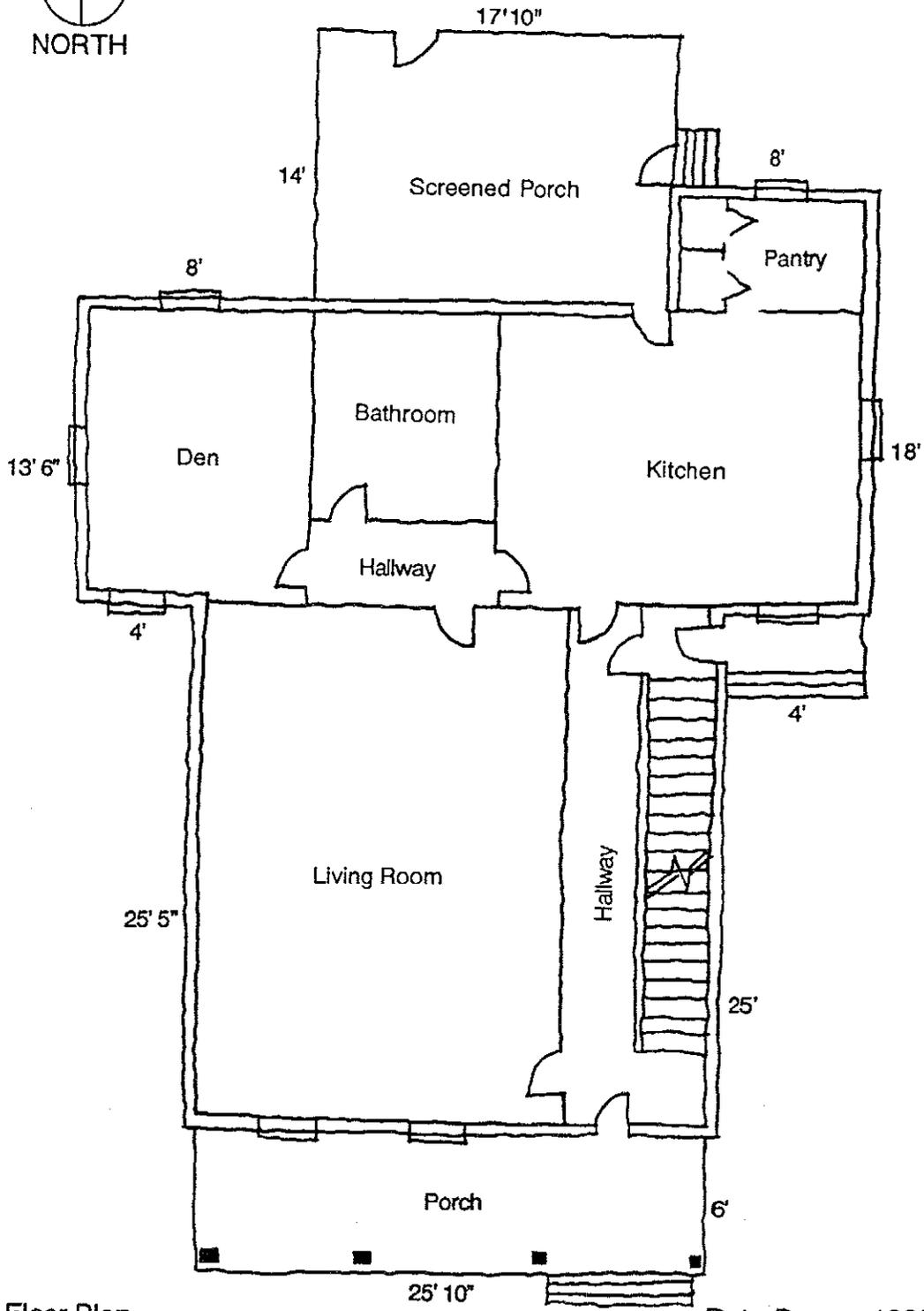
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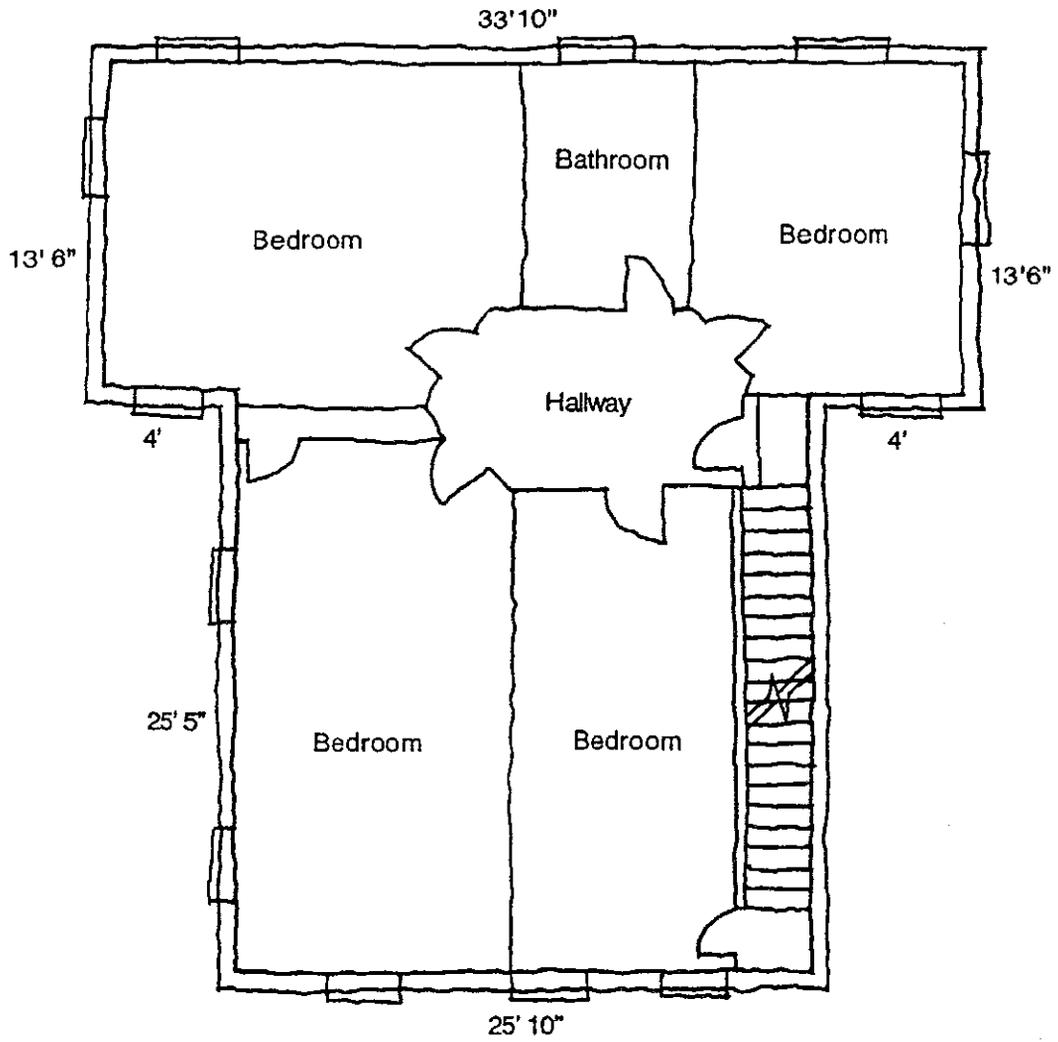
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First Floor Plan  
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Second Floor Plan  
(Not to Scale)

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