

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

LISTED ON:	
VLR	06/17/2010]
NRHP	08/16/2010

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Maple Front Farm
other names/site number Locust Front Farm, W. K. Clemmer Farm DHR ID# 007-5050

2. Location

street & number 439 Cale Spring Road N/A not for publication
city or town Middlebrook vicinity
state Virginia code VA county Augusta code 015 zip code 24459

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

M. Carter
Signature of certifying official

July 8, 2010
Date

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- other (explain:)
- determined eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
6	1	buildings
0	0	sites
2	0	structures
0	0	objects
0	0	buildings
8	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single dwelling, secondary structure

AGRICULTURE: Agricultural outbuilding, storage

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

OTHER: site rental

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

STONE: Limestone; BRICK;

foundation: CONCRETE; WOOD

walls: WOOD: Weatherboard

roof: METAL: Aluminum

other: BRICK: Chimney

WOOD: Porches

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

See Continuation Sheet

Narrative Description

See Continuation Sheet

8. Statement of Significance

See Continuation Sheet

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

circa 1900

Significant Dates

circa 1900

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown, owner of the property at the time

buildings were built was John L. Clemmer

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance is circa 1900 which represents the construction date of the house and the related outbuildings.

Criteria Consideratons (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

See Continuation Sheet

Narrative Statement of Significance (provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance)

See Continuation Sheet

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

See Continuation Sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: Homeowner

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately 7 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 17 654308 4213840
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The boundary of the property is identified as Augusta County parcel 072-11.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundary includes the farmhouse, work yard, garden plot, access drive, and extant outbuildings historically associated with Maple Front Farm. The site of the preceding farmhouse on the property is also included. The original farm holdings have been subdivided and this parcel is the only portion that remains in the ownership of the descendants of the Clemmer family who have owned the farm since the mid-nineteenth century.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Beth Scripps, Research Historian

organization Frazier Associates

date March 10, 2010

street & number 213 N. Augusta Street

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location. A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

See Continuation Sheets

Index of Figures:

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Maple Front Farm
Augusta County, Virginia

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SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Maple Front Farm is located on State Route 603 (Cale Springs Road), approximately one mile from its intersection with State Route 252. It is located south of the rural village of Middlebrook, a Virginia Landmarks Register and National Register Historic District (VDHR File Number 007-0236). Built ca. 1900, the house is a typical example of a Late Victorian three-bay frame I-house. The house retains many of its original features including its two-over-two, double-hung-sash wood windows, louvered shutters, German siding, turned and sawn woodwork accents, and shingled gable ends and central front gables.

The seven-acre property contains seven contributing secondary resources in addition to the house. A white picket fence defines the domestic precinct of the farm. The washhouse, meat house, and wood house, located to the rear of the house, are connected by concrete pathways and define the domestic work yard. An acetylene gas-generating structure and farm bell tower are located immediately outside of the perimeter of the work yard. The garage is located behind the wood house and adjacent to the farm access road that runs the depth of the property perpendicular to Route 603 and to the south of the house. At the rear of the property, a granary and a non-contributing shed complete the outbuildings. The site of an earlier house on the property is located to the south of the access road. It appears that all outbuildings were built in the early twentieth century, near the time of the construction of the main house.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Setting

Once the center of a working farm of approximately 185 acres, the Maple Front Farm complex retains its rural setting. The house and its accompanying outbuildings are well situated in a relatively flat depression amid rolling pastureland and face the rural Route 603 (Cale Springs Road). The house, front and side yard, and those outbuildings associated with household chores form a precinct enclosed by a white picket fence. The arrangement of the work yard outbuildings follows a courtyard plan. The garage, granary, and site of the barn (in ruins and not included in the nominated parcel, separate ownership) follow a more linear plan and are arranged for access to the farm road. A post and wire fence encloses this portion of the parcel.

House – Exterior

Maple Front Farm is a typical three-bay, two-story, side-gabled, Late Victorian frame farmhouse of approximately 3,000 square feet. It is rectangular in plan and evolved from a simple I-house design that measured approximately thirty-five feet by seventeen feet. An integral two-story rear ell (thirty feet deep by fourteen feet wide) is attached to the main block in the central bay of the east wall. A one-story early addition is located to the north (twenty-three by fifteen feet) of the ell. A partially enclosed two-story gallery porch is located on the south elevation of the ell and extends the full depth of this wing. There are three brick

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chimneys--two interior (one in each gable end) and one exterior on the outside wall of the one-story rear addition.

The foundation of the house is random rubble native limestone except for the two-story south porch that is set on brick piers above ground with uncoursed limestone beneath. The exterior walls of the house are clad in German siding that appears to be original and has been well maintained with few signs of repair. A deep cornice that retains a majority of its original applied brackets wraps the house. A shingled central gable with decorative sawn millwork accents the middle bay of the façade. Both the central gable and each end gable are accented with fishscale shingles and bargeboards with scroll-sawn cutouts and pendants. The side-gabled roof is clad in standing-seam metal that is painted green and has lightning rods at its apex. The gable roof of the rear ell is aligned with the central gable on the façade. Hipped roofs shelter the front porch and the one-story portion of the rear ell.

A one-story front porch extends almost the full-width of the façade. Spindlework details include turned balusters and posts and scroll-sawn spandrels and brackets. The floor is constructed of tongue-and-groove boards and the ceiling of beaded boards. A wooden screen door has decorative scroll-sawn and spindlework accents that complement the other exterior decorative elements.

The four-panel, single-leaf front door is contained within a projecting bay which may have been a modification during the original construction. It is surrounded by sidelights and a transom and flanked by angled panels containing additional glazed areas. Windows are typically two-over-two, double-hung wood sash, are original to the period of construction, and typically retain their original glazing. Reeded lintels and stiles frame the window openings and louvered shutters are hinged to the interior of these frames.

A four-bay, two-story side porch is contained within the rear ell. Both end bays on the first floor and one on the second floor have been enclosed over time to provide bathrooms and storage space. The porch elements include square columns and scroll-sawn balusters. The first floor has been screened.

The rear porch faces the domestic work yard and is contained under the hipped roof of the one-story portion of the rear ell. It is devoid of the details seen on the other, more public porches, and is linked to the work yard outbuildings by concrete steps and connecting pathways. The double French doors between the kitchen and the porch are a later replacement.

Interior

The main block of the house was constructed according to a rectangular plan with a center hall and two rooms on each floor. An integral two-story, two-room ell is located to the rear of the main block. A one-story addition north of the ell completes the plan.

House – Basement

The basement under the main block has a dirt floor to which gravel has been added. Some of the original shelving and other storage items remain. The basement floor of the rear ell is poured concrete and features a

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raised area to which is mounted a cream separator. The basement is accessible from the domestic work yard and from the interior stair in the ell.

House – First Floor

The original plan of the main block has been retained. The north room is still used as a parlor and although the fireplace has been closed awaiting rehabilitation, the original Eastlake-style mantel is still in place. The furniture in the room is also original to the house. The north room opens into the one-story addition, currently used as a dining room.

The south room was converted to a first-floor bedroom and an adjoining bathroom was created by the enclosure of one of the south gallery porch bays. The entry to this room from the front hall has been closed and the entry from the ell retained.

A significant and highly detailed stair follows the north wall of the hall to the second floor. The square walnut newel post is an eclectic combination of carved classical and Victorian motifs, some repeated from the parlor mantel, and capped by a turned finial and ball. The wainscoting along the south wall of the stair features recessed panels accented by faux painting to repeat the walnut color of the newel. The risers are grain painted in alternating patterns to resemble more highly figured wood and are also accented by walnut colored trim. The balusters are slender and restrained in their turnings.

The center hall terminates at the rear ell. A second, fully enclosed stair is located between the two rooms in this wing, on the north wall shared with the one-story addition. The stair provides access to the basement as well as the second floor. The wall between the former dining room and kitchen has been removed, retaining the framed opening. This area currently functions as a family room/kitchen. The pantry is located in the southeast corner of the ell and may have been an early modification created by enclosing a bay of the gallery porch.

House – Second Floor

The main stairs lead from the front hall to two bedrooms located in the main block of the house. The north bedroom retains period wallpaper, trim and paint from the early- to mid-twentieth century as well as its original furniture. The finishes in the south bedroom have been updated.

The rear addition originally contained two bedrooms. The bedroom closest to the main block of the house has been converted into a bathroom to serve the two front bedrooms, and closet space, and preserves the entrance to the porch. The rear stair is located between this space and the remaining bedroom at the back of the house over the kitchen. It has an adjoining bathroom, located above the kitchen pantry, which was created from the third enclosure of the gallery porch.

House – Interior Details

The interior of the house exhibits a number of unique decorative finishes and elements. Chief among these is the decorative painting found throughout the main block of the house. This decorative scheme is unified by its use of contrasting paint colors, meant to disguise the pine as either oak, walnut, or more highly figured exotic

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woods. The darker color is used to cap the baseboard, for the window sash, the rails and stiles of the doors, and the trim and rail on the stairs. The lighter color is used for the baseboard, door and window casings, stair risers, and door and wainscot panels.

The decorative paint scheme is, perhaps, most striking when the front door is viewed from the center hall. The four-panel front door is surrounded by a transom and sidelights with an additional fixed three-light panel angled back into the original wall plane on each side. Each of the glazed areas is surrounded by the darker-colored trim.

Outbuildings

The outbuildings all appear to have been constructed in the early-twentieth century, most likely at the same time as the house.

Washhouse (contributing building)

The washhouse is placed at a right angle to the rear of the ell. It is a two-story, three-bay rectangular building. The exterior is clad in German siding and a standing-seam metal gable roof shelters the washhouse. An exterior stone and brick chimney is located on the eastern end gable wall. The entrance is located in the bay closest to the house (west). The ground level is one room with a concrete floor, a large fireplace, and plaster walls. A small staircase on the west wall leads to a loft area above. The first floor presently serves as an office. The large fireplace dominates this first-floor space. The upper level contains a bedroom with a small bathroom located in the southwest corner. The original two-over-two windows have been replaced in kind.

Gas House (contributing structure)

The gas generating structure is located behind the washhouse, immediately outside of the fence line, in the north pasture. It is constructed of parged limestone and brick with wooden elements. The end-gable roof is clad in corrugated metal and there is a door in the south gable end facing the house.

Windmill/Bell Tower (contributing structure)

The original farm windmill appears to date from the turn of the century. It was converted to its present use as a farm bell tower by the mid-1920s, most likely at the time of the construction of the adjacent gas house.

Meat House (contributing building)

Directly behind the house and to the south of the washhouse, stands the meat house. It is of frame construction. This end-gable structure is clad in German siding and has a standing-seam metal roof. The entry is centrally located in the west-end gable facing the rear of the house. The interior is unfinished, has wood floors, and is open to the rafters.

Wood House (contributing building)

The end-gable wood house stands to the south of the meat house. It is clad in weatherboard to the west (front) and vertical board on the remaining sides with narrow gaps between the boards for ventilation. This structure rests on a concrete foundation and has an unfinished interior.

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Garage (contributing building)

The garage, originally a carriage house, is located behind the wood house and near the access road. It is square in plan and has a hipped, standing-seam metal roof, concrete foundation/floor, and is clad in weatherboard. Narrow vertical tongue-and-groove boards form double doors still mounted on their original swing mechanism. The interior is unfinished.

Granary (contributing building)

The granary is located at the end of the garden plot that extends from the rear of the domestic yard outbuildings. It is on axis with the house and is in close proximity to the access road. A low sloping end-gable, standing-seam metal roof characterizes this structure. A two-story central section is flanked on the north and south sides by one-story throughway sections that function as farm equipment storage. The structure is clad in horizontal weatherboards on the east and west gable ends and vertical boards on the north and south. Oversized vertical-board double doors with a small access door dominate the gable ends. The granary has no foundation, the wood sills are rotting, and moisture has begun to damage the wall cladding.

Shed (non-contributing building)

The shed was originally used as the farm's hog building. The present owners moved it because of zoning restrictions when the surrounding farmland was sold. Aligned with the granary, it is the only outbuilding solely oriented to the field. The shed is clad in vertical boards, has an end-gable, standing-seam metal roof, and rests on a new concrete foundation. Windows have been added on the north and south sides as well as in the gable ends.

The ruin of the farm's main barn is located on an adjacent property with a different owner.

Together, the complex of outbuildings, all painted white with green roofs, provides a rare opportunity to interpret the day-to-day operations, not only of the farm, but also of the entire household.

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SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Maple Front Farm, built ca. 1900, is an excellent example of a rural Augusta County farmstead. The approximately 7-acre parcel includes all extant domestic and agricultural buildings that were associated with the original 185 acres amassed by the ancestors of the current owner. Maple Front Farm is representative of the general patterns of small-scale diversified farming in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries by the descendants of the first European settlers in the Shenandoah Valley. The property meets National Register Criterion C for its architectural significance. Locally significant, the house is an original decorative late-Victorian I-house with interior decorative painting, which may be the work of documented itinerant local painter Green Berry Jones. While few Augusta County I-houses are listed on the Virginia or National Registers, Maple Front Farm is a remarkably well-preserved typical farmstead. It is set apart from other examples by its large and representative arrangement of outbuildings, especially the cluster of domestic yard buildings that represent the work patterns of rural women and men in the early twentieth century. Its significance is further strengthened by the presence of its light generating plant and by its surviving decorative interior painting. The integrity of the exterior and interior of the house and the related outbuildings has been maintained for over 100 years. The period of significance is circa 1900 representing the construction date of the main house and the related outbuildings.

History of the Middlebrook Area

The Middlebrook area is located in the southern portion of the Beverley Manor District of Augusta County, which extends from the Middle River at Verona south to the Rockbridge County line. The area was a 1736 land grant from Governor William Gooch to William Beverley of Tidewater Virginia.¹ While not represented on the 1775 Fry and Jefferson "Map of the Most Inhabited Parts of Virginia," State Route 252, along which the town of Middlebrook is located, does appear on a map commissioned by James Madison in 1807.² Early farms in this area averaged 300 acres, were well dispersed, and usually mixed grain and livestock farming.³ Most farmers followed the European practice of fencing the area around the residence and garden and leaving the fields open for common grazing of livestock.⁴ The original fencing pattern of the front, side, and domestic yards at Maple Front is representative of this tradition.

Rising flour prices in the 1760s resulted in a market for grain and, therefore, the rise of commercial grain production and the growth of small towns to which local farmers could bring grain to be milled and transported to regional commerce centers. This establishment of regional trade ended the earlier era of self-sufficiency for many farmers. This evolution contributed to the establishment of the village of Middlebrook in 1799 with a tavern and mail stop, and soon dwellings and other businesses.⁵ The village continued to grow and by the late-nineteenth century the village could supply most needs of farmers either through ready-made items or the work of local craftsmen. The village was noted as a "hive of industry" by the *Staunton Spectator* in 1884 and in 1937 was characterized as "a bustling town" by a visitor.⁶

Route 603, on which Maple Front Farm is located, connects Middlebrook to Summerdean, a small village with a post office established in 1857. This route provided a connection to the Staunton-Lexington Turnpike for residents and a number of businesses that included a tannery, mills, blacksmiths' shops and a wagon shop by the 1880s.⁷

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Clemmer Family

The Clemmer family originally came to the United States from Switzerland in the mid-eighteenth century. By the early nineteenth century, the second and third generations were living in Virginia, in either Augusta or Rockbridge counties.

William Kinser Clemmer was born in Augusta County in June of 1818, married Nancy Jane Miller in 1842 and, among their ten children, they became the parents of John Letcher Clemmer in 1859. John Letcher would, after the death of his father, buy out his surviving siblings to gain sole ownership of the farm by 1890.

The land that would become Maple Front Farm was amassed by William Kinser Clemmer beginning in 1854 with the purchase of 153 acres from Jacob and Elizabeth Shuey. He purchased an additional adjoining 32 acres from George and Mary Cochran in 1877. An early family photograph shows a single-pile, two-story, log house with an exterior brick chimney and surrounded by a picket fence. It is believed that this is the original house on the property. It was dismantled in the early twentieth century when Maple Front was built.

Other Middlebrook area farms in the Clemmer family include Silverbrook, home of William K. Clemmer's mother and father; and Sugar Loaf Farm (VDHR#007-0032), inherited by William's sister and her husband Jacob Bowman.

Agriculture

Typical of many Augusta County farms of the period, Maple Front was involved in diversified agriculture. The one hundred and eighty-five acre farm included an apple orchard, fields of various grains including corn and wheat, and grazing land for both beef and dairy cattle. Family records include a 1917 publication of the Augusta County Fruit Growers' Association listing the farm of John L. Clemmer and its output of over 130 barrels of apples of varieties including York Imperial, Ben Davis, Winesap, Delicious and Grimes Golden.⁸ The family archives also include trophies won at the Middlebrook Fair for the farm's cattle and records of farm-produced milk being sold to the Staunton Creamery. Family photographs show fields planted in corn and wheat.

Architecture: I-House

The single-pile, central passage house typically referred to as an I-house "first appears in Augusta County in the early decades of the nineteenth century."⁹ The house style remained popular in Augusta County into the early twentieth century. By the late nineteenth century, frame examples became more prevalent and rear ells were often constructed as part of the original design.¹⁰

Maple Front follows the pre-Civil war tradition of a three-bay façade with a gable roof and chimneys in the end walls although county tax records indicate that the house was not built until after the turn of the 20th century.

Exterior elements that reflect the post-Civil War construction date include the highly decorated end and central gables, the front porch decorated with both sawn and turned woodwork, and front door surrounded by sidelights and a transom,¹¹ which appears to be an early modification.

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In plan, Maple Front reflects the post-Civil War necessity of the completion of many of the farm chores by the family, rather than non-family labor. This evolution allowed many of the chores formerly relegated to outside areas to be brought into the house, especially the kitchen, porches, and basement.

At Maple Front Farm, the rear ell housed the dining room and kitchen, with both a side and back porch to provide additional work and congregating space.¹² The stairs to the basement are also located in this area and again provided access to additional workspace within the house. The dirt-floored area of the basement under the front of the house includes a screened-in room that provided a cool, pest-free drying and storage area for foodstuffs. Original drying racks, shelves and barrels were found in this area and have either been preserved or rebuilt. The basement area under the kitchen has a poured concrete floor and contains access to the work yard. A cream separator has been permanently mounted to the floor in this area of the basement.

Architecture: Interior Painting

The popular tradition of interior decorative painting in Augusta County is associated with the German settlers to the region.¹³ These early examples often included bright colors and unusual designs. By the mid-twentieth century many homeowners found "the colored woodwork in their house so unappealing that they had it repainted, quite often in white."¹⁴ This practice makes it difficult to determine the extent of the local decorative painting tradition. It does appear, however, that Middlebrook has a high level of decorative painting compared to other areas of the county.

The decorative painting at Maple Front was characterized by Ann McCleary¹⁵ as a great survival of the painting tradition in the area. Its imitation wood-graining "is perhaps the most common type of interior painting surviving in the County" and was noted in the late 1970s/early 1980s as one of thirty-five examples remaining in the county.¹⁶ While no attribution can be made, it is in the style of Green Berry Jones and the house is located in an area he was known to have worked during the period between 1892 and 1904. The two attributed examples of his work, the A. J. Miller House (VDHR # 007-638) and the William Rimel House (VDHR # 007-1106), both have grain painting similar to that found at Maple Front.¹⁷

Architecture: Outbuildings and Fences

In Augusta County, as elsewhere throughout the state, from the eighteenth through early-twentieth centuries, outbuildings were a necessary part of both farm and village life. On farms such as Maple Front, the outbuildings can be divided into two spheres--domestic yard and agricultural.

Maple Front retains a large complement of outbuildings. The agricultural buildings include the granary and a shed and are located near the rear of the property. These frame outbuildings are seen on many farms in the area. A garden plot occupies the area between the agricultural and domestic outbuildings and is fenced off from the pasture.

It is the well-preserved complex of domestic outbuildings at Maple Front arm that set it apart from other turn-of-the-century farm complexes in the area. As the domestic roles changed over the past century so did the ways in which they accomplished both house and farm chores. The arrangement of this farm's washhouse, meat house, and wood house, and their enclosure within the precinct of the house, common at the beginning of the twentieth century, is one of the most threatened resources in the county.¹⁸ The tasks once accomplished in

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these separate structures have been brought into the house over time and these rear yards have often been cleared for other purposes.

In addition to its domestic and agricultural outbuildings, Maple Front Farm also retains an example of an early rural electrical system. Located just outside of the fenced precinct of the domestic yard is one of four examples of an acetylene gas plant known to exist in the county when a survey was conducted in the late twentieth century.¹⁹ That such a system was installed at Maple Front Farm acknowledges that rural electrification did not reach this area of the county until the mid-1930s and that the Clemmer family was able to afford the initial investment of approximately \$500.²⁰ The Union Carbide containers and fixtures are in storage on the property.

According to an early-twentieth-century advertisement, acetylene gas light was suitable for any private or public purpose, the light it provided prevented eye strain, it was safe to breathe, and that "cooking with acetylene is ideal as the gas gives a very hot flame free from soot."²¹ These generating plants were most popular between the 1880s and 1920s.

The windmill turned bell tower adjacent to the gas house was a vital part of life on the farm. The current owner's father (b. 1918) recalls that from as early as the mid-1920s "it was used to call hands to meals and alert the community to dangers."²² Also rare in its survival is the original pattern of fencing at Maple Front Farm. Historic images of the farm show a white picket fence enclosing the front yard, side yard, and domestic yard of the house. This fence remains today in its original location and the original materials have been repaired or replaced as needed over time. A secondary fence encloses the garden area behind the domestic yard. The fencing serves as a division between spheres of activity on the farm and follows a common pattern as seen in the illustrations in the *Historical Atlas of Augusta County*.²³ By the late twentieth century, most of these fences had been torn down and seldom "enclose yards in the complete manner that they would have in the nineteenth century."²⁴

Note:

The Augusta County survey work of Ann McCleary, former Architectural Historian for the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, has been a valuable aid in the preparation of this nomination and for placing the farm, house and outbuildings in their local historical context.

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ENDNOTES

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3. Ibid., page 12.
4. Ibid., page 13.
5. Ibid, page 16.
6. Ibid., page 22.
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8. Augusta County Fruit Grower's Association, untitled pamphlet listing names and addresses of the members of the association, giving numbers of trees of different varieties. Staunton, Virginia, 1917.
9. McCleary, Ann. "Historic Resources in Augusta County," Appendices and Study Unit, October 1983 (Typewritten). In collection of Augusta County Historical Society, Staunton, Virginia, page 71.
10. Ibid., page 19.
11. Ibid., page 83.
12. Ibid., page 76.
13. Ibid., page 227.
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15. Telephone conversation with Ann McCleary, March 2010.
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17. McCleary, Ann. "Preach A Little, Paint A Little, Drink A Little: The Work of Itinerant Painter Green Berry Jones." Augusta County Historical Society Bulletin, Vol. 22, No. 2, Staunton, Virginia: Augusta County Historical Society, Fall 1986, page 32.
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19. Ibid., page 302
20. Ibid., page 269
21. Undated advertisement for Acetylene Appliance Manufacturing Company, 306 First Street, Oakland, California from internet search, December 2010.
22. Email correspondence with John R. Miller, March 2010.
23. Hotchkiss, Jed. *Historical Atlas of Augusta County, Virginia*: Chicago: Waterman, Watkins and Co., 1885, multiple pages
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Valley Conservation Council, "The Middlebrook-Brownsburg Corridor: A Survey of Natural Resources." Staunton, Virginia: Valley Conservation Council, 1997.

INTERVIEWS and CORRESPONDENCE

Site Visit and Interview with Maggie and John R. Miller, 2 October 2009.

Email correspondence and telephone conversations with John R. Miller, October 2009-March 2010.

Email correspondence and telephone conversation with Ann McCleary, December 2009-March 2010.

HISTORIC IMAGES

Miller family photos: undated images including an early view of the current farm, outbuildings and planted fields, family gathered in front of previous farm house on the property, details of property including image of outbuildings and concrete walk, house with picket fence, and front porch with screen door.

Undated advertisement for Acetylene Appliance Manufacturing Company, 306 First Street, Oakland, California from internet search, December 2010.

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All photos are common to:

Name of Property: Maple Front Farm
County: Augusta County, **Virginia**
Photographer: Beth Scripps
Date Photographed: October 2, 2009
All Images Stored at: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia

PHOTO: 1 of 13

FILE: VA_Augusta County_Maple Front Farm _0001

VIEW: Looking southeast from the pasture to the house and outbuildings

PHOTO: 2 of 13

FILE: VA_Augusta County_Maple Front Farm _0002

VIEW: Looking northeast from the intersection of Cale Spring Road and the Maple Front farm road

PHOTO: 3 of 13

FILE: VA_Augusta County_Maple Front Farm _0003

VIEW: West (front) elevation looking east

PHOTO: 4 of 13

FILE: VA_Augusta County_Maple Front Farm _0004

VIEW: North elevation looking south

PHOTO: 5 of 13

FILE: VA_Augusta County_Maple Front Farm _0005

VIEW: South elevation looking northwest

PHOTO: 6 of 13

FILE: VA_Augusta County_Maple Front Farm _0006

VIEW: East elevation (rear) looking west

PHOTO: 7 of 13

FILE: VA_Augusta County_Maple Front Farm _0007

VIEW: Context of outbuildings looking southeast from pasture to the north of the house at Cale Springs Road

PHOTO: 8 of 13

FILE: VA_Augusta County_Maple Front Farm _0008

VIEW: Domestic yard outbuildings looking northeast from farm road. Washhouse is at rear, meat house in middle, and wood shed in front

PHOTO: 9 of 13

FILE: VA_Augusta County_Maple Front Farm _0009

VIEW: Agricultural outbuildings, the shed (left) and granary (right), looking southeast across garden plot from pasture to north

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PHOTO: 10 of 13

FILE: VA_Augusta County_Maple Front Farm _0010

VIEW: Interior decorative painting at front door, looking west

PHOTO: 11 of 13

FILE: VA_Augusta County_Maple Front Farm _0011

VIEW: Northwest first floor front parlor with original family furnishings, looking northeast

PHOTO: 12 of 13

FILE: VA_Augusta County_Maple Front Farm _0012

VIEW: Early family furnishings and finishes in northwest bedroom on second floor, looking northeast

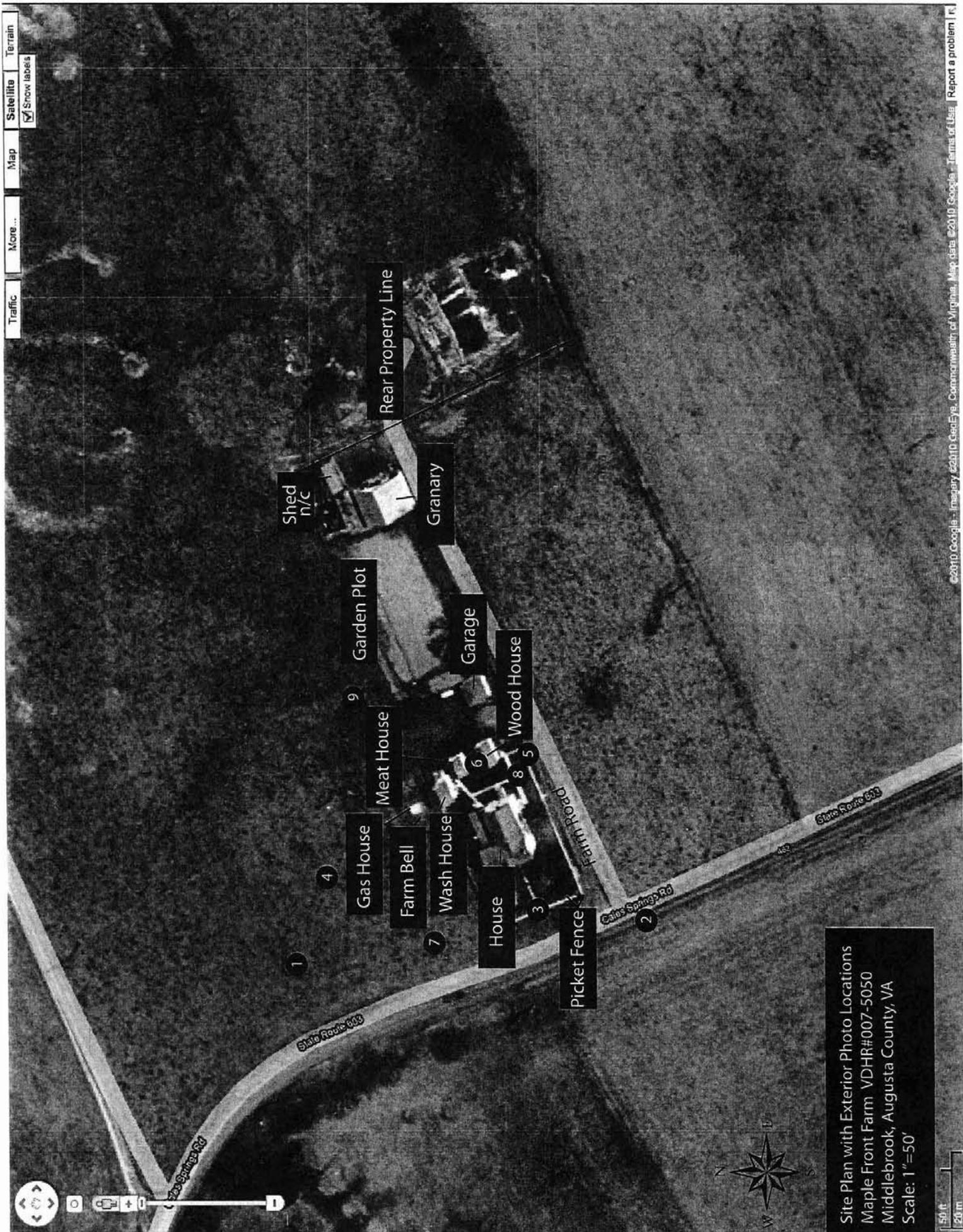
PHOTO: 13 of 13

FILE: VA_Augusta County_Maple Front Farm _0013

VIEW: Cream separator in basement under rear ell, looking east

Additional Documentation

Maple Front Farm, site Plan with Exterior Photo Locations (photos 1-9).



Traffic More ... Map Satellite Snow labels Terrain

Shed n/c
Rear Property Line
Granary
Garage
Wood House
House
Wash House
Farm Bell
Gas House
Meat House
Garden Plot
Picket Fence
Cains Springs Rd
State Route 603
452

1
2
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Site Plan with Exterior Photo Locations
Maple Front Farm VDR#007-5050
Middlebrook, Augusta County, VA
Scale: 1"=50'



Maple Front Farm
 Augusta Co. VA
 DHR FILE NO. 001-5050
 UTM S
 17/654308/4213240
 NAD 1927
 GREENVILLE, VA QUAD