

VLR-8/21/90 NRHP-1/11/91

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Snake Creek Farm Historic District

other names/site number DHR File No. 17-08

2. Location

street & number West side Snake Creek Road (VA Route 670), 2/10's mile not for publication N/A

city, town Hillsville s. of intersection of VA Rts 674 & 670 vicinity

state Virginia code VA county Carroll code 035 zip code 24343

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private public-local public-State public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s) district site structure object

Number of Resources within Property

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows for buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total.

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official Director, VA Dept. of Historic Resources

Date 30 Nov 1990

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet. determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet. determined not eligible for the National Register. removed from the National Register. other, (explain):

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single dwelling

DOMESTIC: Secondary structure

EDUCATION: School

FUNERARY: Cemetery

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS

FUNERARY: Cemetery

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Double-pile center-passage

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: limestone

walls WOOD: weatherboard

roof METAL: tin

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

### Summary Description

Snake Creek Farm is located in a narrow valley along Snake Creek in northern Carroll County, north of the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The Blue Ridge Parkway is located three miles to the south. The property consists of the main house, a two-and-one-half-story, double-pile, center-passage-plan frame dwelling, as well as a frame springhouse and meathouse north of the house, and a frame two-room schoolhouse located two-tenths of a mile south of the house on land originally donated to the local school district by the Martin family, owners of Snake Creek Farm. A large family cemetery is situated south of the house.

### Narrative Description

The house at Snake Creek Farm faces east toward Snake Creek. It is a two-story double-pile center-passage plan dwelling with "Georgian plan" chimney placement. That is, the chimneys are placed between the two rooms on each side of the passage. The frame house has a clipped gable roof with broad central cross gables on the east and west elevations. All four gables are given similar treatment, being sheathed with metal shingles. The roof has decorative metal cresting. The windows have two-over-two double-hung sash, except for a projecting central bay of two stories, containing the principal entry. These windows have one-over-one double-hung sash, except for the central window on the second floor, which has an ornamental divided-light upper sash. The house is sided with weatherboard over diagonal sheathing. The corner boards have small capitals. A diagonal tongue-and-groove frieze runs below the cornice, which is returned in the gables and supported by sawn brackets.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance  
1907-1915

Significant Dates  
N/A

Cultural Affiliation  
N/A

Significant Person  
N/A

Architect/Builder  
Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Statement of Significance

Snake Creek Farm is significant under criteria C as a farm group illustrating the traditional domestic architecture of the region and local educational practices and building design. The house is unusual in the generally remote and sparsely settled area of Carroll County near the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains. One other house of similar form stands not far outside Hillsville, but no other houses resembling the form were found in a limited exploration. The house is certainly a rarity in the southwest Virginia region at large, particularly in its unusual finished third floor rooms, allowed by the deep gabled roof and the wide cross gables on the front and rear. The design used probably represents the period of the initial arrival in the county of the Georgian-plan form, and the use of board sheathing on the interior is traditionally associated with a local shortage of plaster.

Historical Background

Thomas C. Quesenberry settled in the Snake Creek area in the early nineteenth century. His daughter Penelope (1832-1859) married Captain Giles Martin (1830-1907). The Quesenberry house stood near the site of the house built by Giles Martin's son James F. Martin (1870-1939) soon after 1910, and Penelope Q. Martin is buried in the adjacent family cemetery.<sup>1</sup> James Martin, a farmer, was married twice, first to Martha Dalton and, after her death, to Nettie Largen. Each wife lived in the house and was active in the community. After her husband's death in 1939 "Miss Nettie" farmed the land, kept dairy cattle, carried the mail, and taught at Snake Creek School, which Martin had built on a tract near the farm prior to 1907.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

- Alderman, John P., 1850 Census: Annotated: Carroll County, Virginia. Published by the editor, no date, p. 40.
- Carroll County Deed Book 33, Page 22.
- Green, Irene Martin (daughter of Nettie Largen Martin). Letter to Elizabeth Prince. November, 1987.
- Jackson, Alma Utt. Martin Family History. Laurel Fork, Virginia: published by the author, 1984, p. 526.
- Martin Account Book. Early 20th century copy in possession of Elizabeth Prince.
- Willis, Ninevah. "A Lady of Beauty and Wisdom: Nettie Largen Martin, 1890-1983. Mountain Laurel. November, 1984, p. 9.

See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository:

Virginia Dept. of Historic Resources  
221 Governor Street, Richmond, VA 23219

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 9.5 acres

UTM References

A 1, 7 5, 3, 1, 4, 5, 0 4, 0, 6, 3, 0, 6, 0  
 Zone Easting Northing

C         

B           
 Zone Easting Northing

D         

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the southeast intersection of county roads 670 and 674 proceed approximately 2000' southeast along the southern right-of-way of county road 670, then proceed SW approximately 400', thence NW approximately 2000' to the southern right-of-way of county road 674, thence proceed north to the point of beginning.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the main house and associated contributing resources.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Gibson Worsham, Principal  
 organization Gibson Worsham, Architect date March 31, 1990  
 street & number Yellow Sulphur Springs, Route 2 telephone (703) 552-4730  
 city or town Christiansburg state Virginia zip code 24073

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National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
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Hillsville, VA

The interior is characterized by a modified double-pile plan with two rooms on each side of a central passage. The west end of the passage contains an apparently original enclosed room. The rooms on the south side of the passage are not connected. They are served by a brick stove flue, although the east room was equipped with a Colonial Revival mantel, that no longer survives, which imitated the appearance of a fireplace in that room. The rooms to the north of the passage share a large brick chimney, and are equipped with Colonial Revival mantels with colonettes and mirrored overmantels. The second floor is reached by a closed stringer stair with turned balusters and paneled newel posts. The second floor has a floor plan similar to the first floor, while the third floor, with a similar stair and large center passage, has finished rooms, one on each side, in the gable ends. The entire house is sheathed inside with tongue-and-groove boards. Door and window trim is molded and embellished with bull's eye corner blocks and base blocks.

The first floor of the house is sheltered on the east and north by an ornate porch, which once also extended along the south. The hip-roofed porch projects out around the entry bay and features paired round columns with incised necking at the railing and frieze levels, a spindle frieze with continuous turned spindles, and a pediment at the center of the principal facade. The original wooden floor has been replaced with concrete, although the original brick piers remain embedded in the concrete. The west end of the north porch was enclosed during or soon after its construction. An added shed stands at the west end of the north porch. A now vanished one-story shed addition stood along the center of the west elevation of the house.

The meathouse, located at the northwest corner of the house near the kitchen, is a rectangular frame gabled structure with a door in the east gabled front and a window in the west wall. The east gable is embellished with wood fish-scale shingles. The springhouse, located to the northeast of the main dwelling is a small gabled frame building. Both outbuildings have standing-seam metal roofs.

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The schoolhouse is located 2/10's of a mile south of the house also on the west side of Snake Creek Road. The one-story weatherboarded frame building features two-over-two sash windows, a hipped standing seam metal roof, and inset porches at the front (east) corners. The two-room interior is sheathed with beaded narrow tongue-and-groove boards.

The family cemetery, located south of the house, contains graves with simple carved headstones dating from the early to mid-19th-century. The main dwelling is surrounded by a fenced and landscaped lawn planted with maple, hemlock, and arbor vitae trees.

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Deed research shows that James F. Martin bought 178 acres on Snake Creek in April, 1910 from J.W. Johnson<sup>2</sup> and presumably built the house soon after, although his daughter says the construction of the house occupied five years<sup>3</sup>. James and Nettie Martin's daughter stated that all the trim for the house was brought by horse and wagon up Fancy Gap Mountain, from Mount Airy, North Carolina, and that it was the first house in the area to have indoor plumbing and electricity.

The extremely well-preserved house demonstrates the readiness with which a prosperous farmer could introduce new plan variations to his enlarged spacial requirements and the retention of traditional features. In addition, the builder's use of modern and less labor-intensive materials such as metal shingles for a wall surface, and his manipulation of the roofscape of what would otherwise have been a much more conventional house, indicate his resourcefulness. Many houses built in the region in the late nineteenth century and after are equipped with flues for heating with stoves exclusively. Martin's inclusion of a pair of fireplaces in 1910 suggests a desire to maintain a traditional kind of heating in the modern context, further underlining what might be recognized as an ambivalent embrace of popular architectural norms.

The schoolhouse elucidates local education practices and the kinds of forms chosen by local builders for schools during the early twentieth century. The frame two-room schoolhouse south of the house was built at the direction of James Martin in 1907. Martin recorded in his account book that he spent \$25 for work on the schoolhouse<sup>4</sup>, and a further \$24.67 for paint, benches and a desk. It was not until 1916 that he deeded the property to the Laurel Fork School District with a provision that the property would revert to him if the school was closed<sup>5</sup>. His second wife, Nettie Largen Martin (1890-1983) taught at the school from soon after her husband's death in 1939 to 1955. (Mrs. Martin lived at Snake Creek Farm until the mid-1970s) The school property returned to her ownership when it closed in the 1950s.

The Snake Creek School was built as part of the expansion of public education as first mandated by the post-Civil War "Underwood Constitution" of Virginia, which created a uniform system of public schools and replaced a haphazard and largely ineffective public educational program. Each county was divided into school

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districts. The trustees of each district were responsible for acquiring, building and maintaining buildings until well into the twentieth century. The school was used for the ungraded education of the children who resided in the neighborhood.

The buildings, including the school, will soon undergo careful rehabilitation and restoration for use as a bed and breakfast inn. The current owner plans to use the Rehabilitation Tax Credit program to help fund the restoration.

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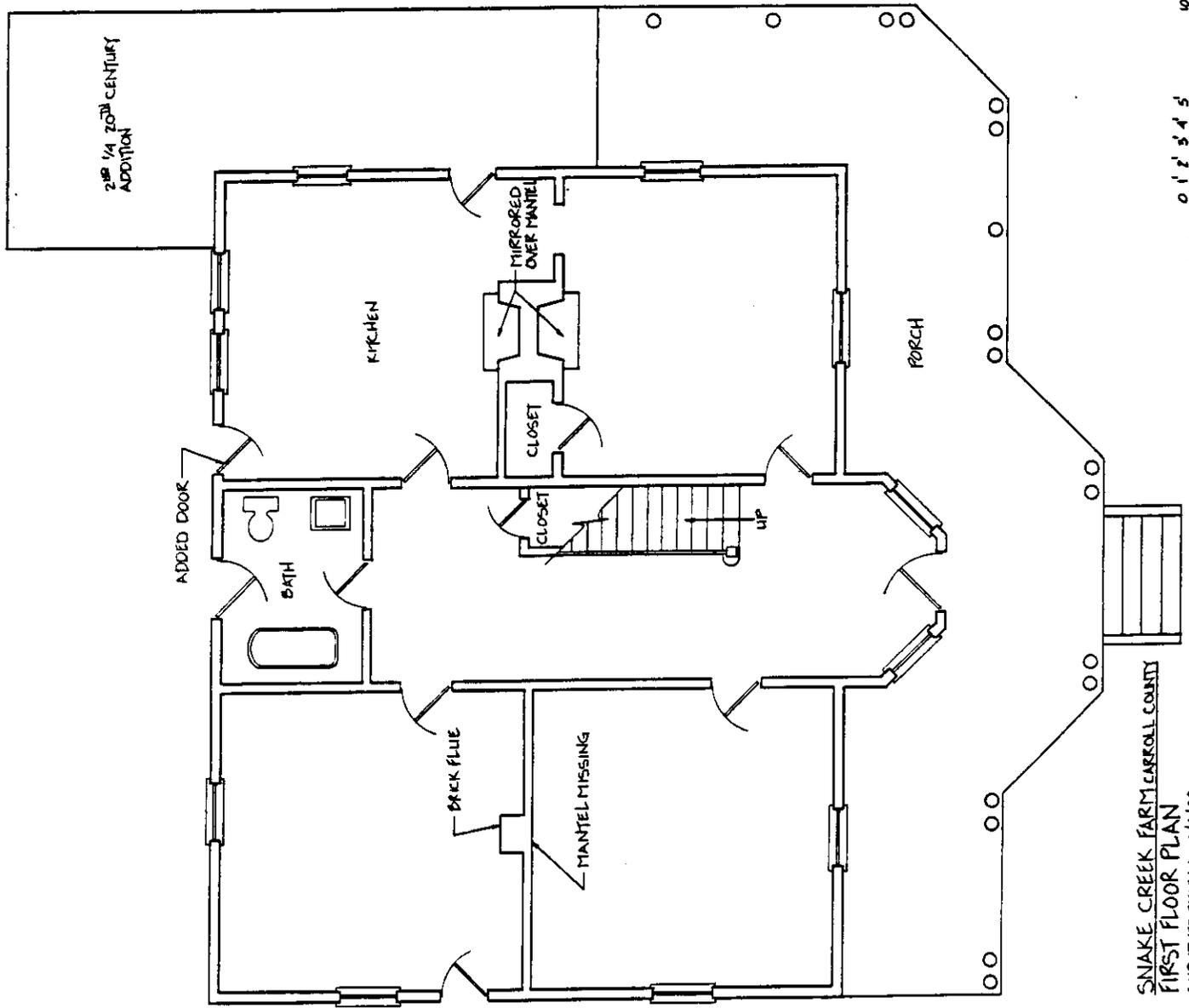
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Hillsville, VA

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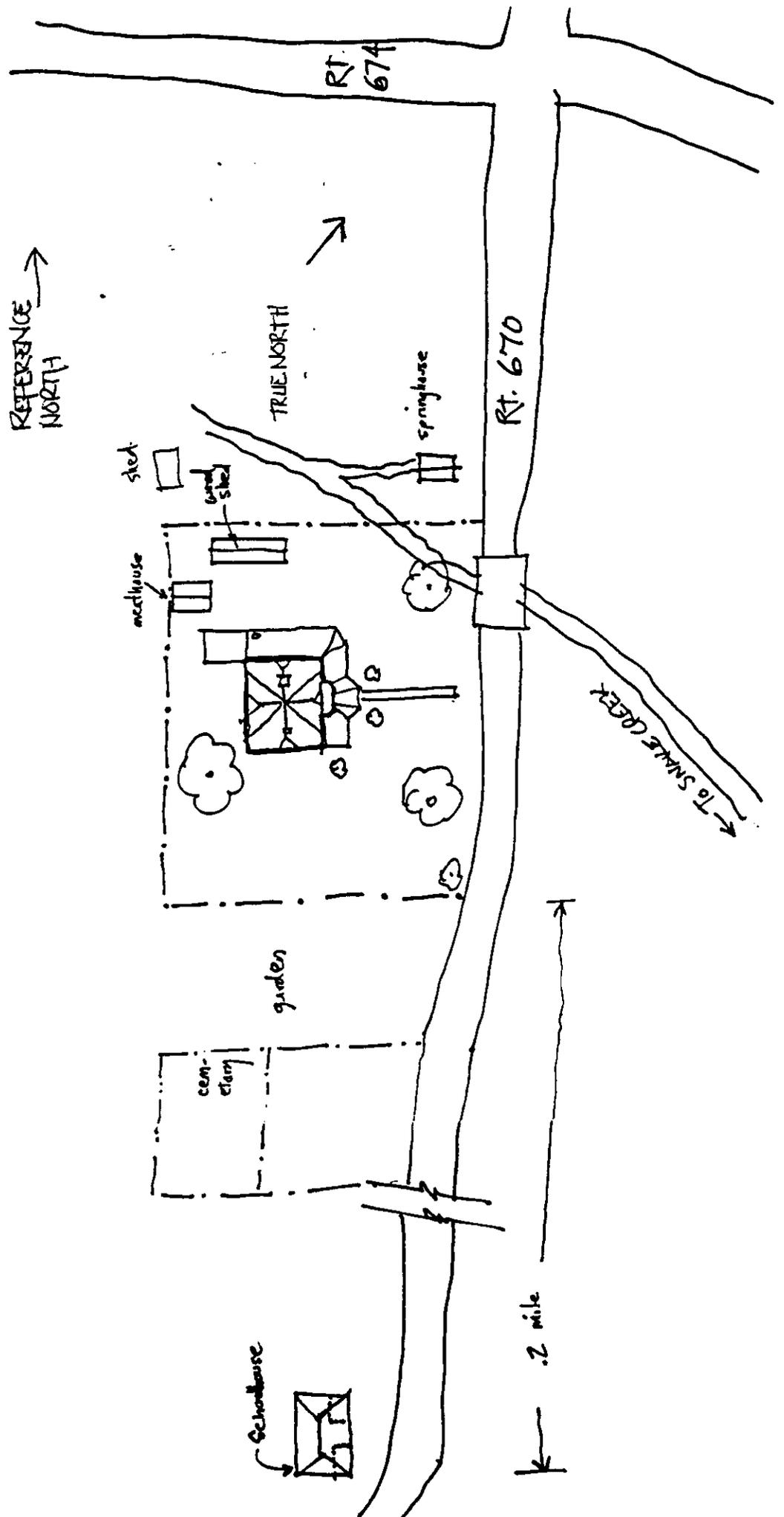
Endnotes

1. Alderman, John P., 1850 Census: Annotated: Carroll County, Virginia. Published by the editor, no date, p. 40.
2. Carroll County Deed Book 33, p. 22.
3. Green, Irene Martin (daughter of Nettie Largen Martin). Letter to Elizabeth Prince. November 1987.
4. Jackson, Alma Utt. Martin Family History. Laurel Fork, Virginia: published by the author, 1984, p. 526.
5. Carroll County Deed Book 42, p. 99.



SNAKE CREEK FARM CARROLL COUNTY  
 FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
 SURVEYED BY: G.W. 4/1/06

Snake Creek Farm  
Carroll Co, VA  
Site Plan  
not to scale



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PHOTOGRAPH LISTING

The following information is the same for all the photographs:

Name of property: Snake Creek Farm  
Location: Carroll County, Virginia  
Credit: Gibson Worsham  
Date: November 1988  
Negative filed: Virginia State Library, Richmond, VA  
File number: Department of Historic Resources 17-08

Photograph 1  
View of north and east façades from the northeast  
Negative number: 10700  
Photo 1 of 11

Photograph 2  
View of southeast corner of house from the east  
Negative number: 10700  
Photo 2 of 11

Photograph 3  
View of main house, camera facing southeast  
Negative number: 10700  
Photo 3 of 11

Photograph 4  
View (detail) of bay window on east façade from the east  
Negative number: 10700  
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Photograph 5  
View of outbuildings from the south (L to R: shed, springhouse,  
shed, meathouse)  
Negative number: 10700  
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Photograph 6

View of east (front) façade of meathouse from the east

Negative number: 10700

Photo 6 of 11

Photograph 7

View of central passage from the east

Negative number: 10700

Photo 7 of 11

Photograph 8

View of interior of dining room (northeast room) from the east

Negative number: 10700

Photo 8 of 11

Photograph 9

View of southwest room on second floor from the southwest

Negative number: 10700

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Photograph 10

View of the south wall of the schoolhouse from the south

Negative number: 10700

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Photograph 11

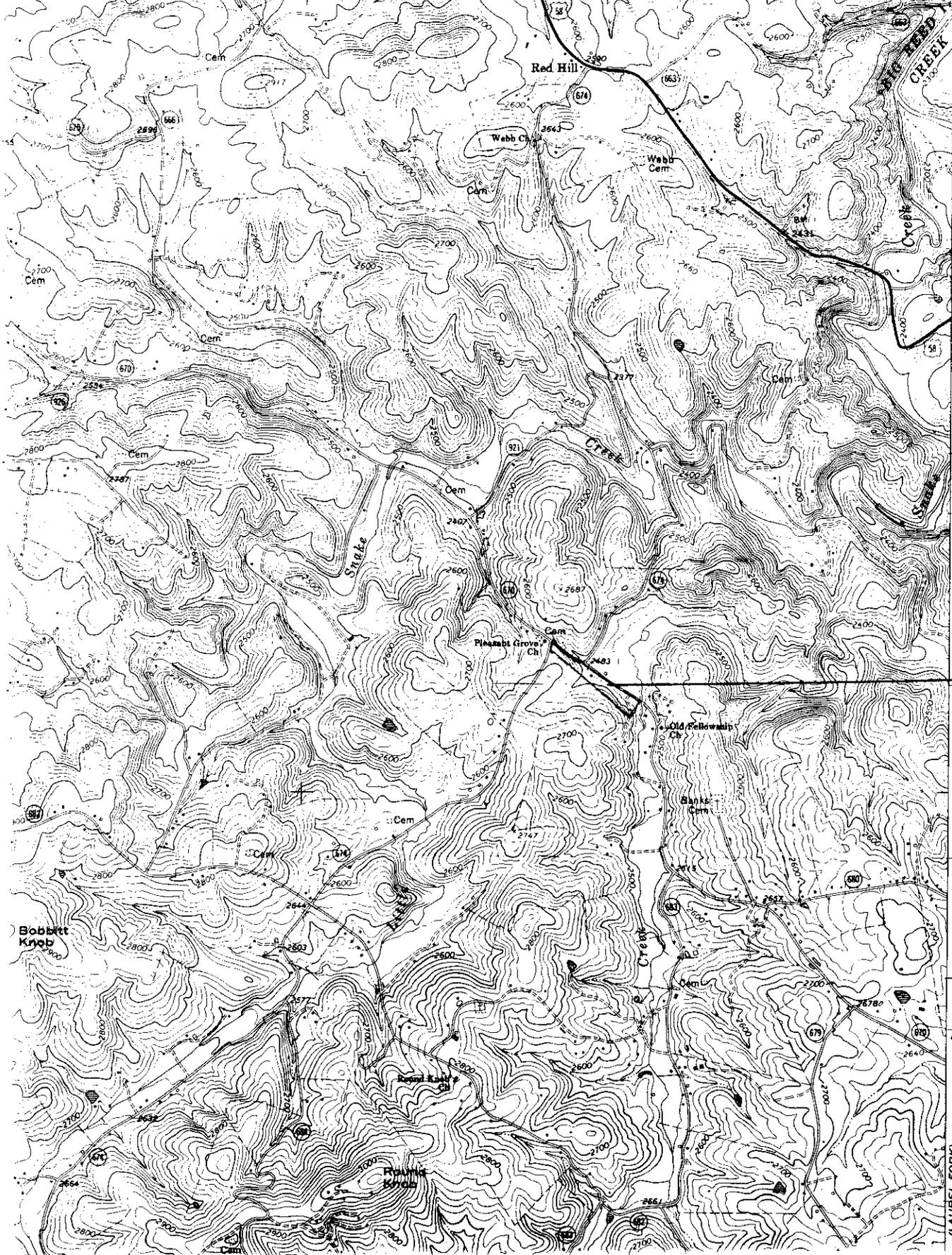
View of the north wall of the schoolhouse from the north

Negative number: 10700

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4857 1 SE  
(DUBSPUR)

529 40' 530 HILLSVILLE (U.S. 52) 6 MI. GALAX 19 MI. 1 370 000 FEET 532 533 80° 37' 30" 36° 45'



LAUREL FORK 7 MI. BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY 15 MI. 4065 150 000 FEET 4064 4063 UTM 17/531430/406306 42'30" 4062 4061 LAUREL FORK 4857 11 NE