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one-bay sides, but each gable has two small, four-light attic windows, thought to replace similar originals, flanking the interior chimney mass. The basement door is an old or original vertical-board door.

The gable roof is in standing-seam metal. The original covering is not known. There are no dormer windows. At the end walls are high, brick interior chimneys with stepped-out courses at the top. There are plain eaves boards in the gables.

The rear (southeast) facade, partly covered by the rear ell, has the first floor at grade on the south corner, with one window on each of the first and second floors, matching the ones on the front. Toward the center is a slightly smaller window at the stair landing, with 2/2-light, double-hung wood sash. All three have three-course jack-arch lintels and plain wood sills, plus modern 1/1-light aluminum storm sash.

The one-and-a-half-story two-room brick rear ell, with a partially exposed basement on the northeast side, is traditionally thought to have been built at the same time as the main block, a common pattern in the Shenandoah Valley, although the rear ell was sometimes built later. Here, the physical evidence is not conclusive. There is a fireplace in the rear room, which was probably the kitchen. The ell has an old, open, one-story porch on the southwest side, as well as porches, mostly enclosed, on all three sides. On the southwest side are two six-panel doors, one to each room, with no transoms, and a single-double-hung 2/2-light window. There may have been another window, now covered over. In the half-attic above are two small horizontally sliding two-light sash.

On the northeast side of the ell there were two windows on the first floor, and on the attic floor, two small, two-light, wood sliding-sash windows, matching those on the opposite side. Only one first-floor window survives on the exterior. It is a 2/2-light double-hung wood sash, with a two-course jack arch and plain wood sill, plus a modern aluminum 1/1-light storm window. There is a low basement door on this wall and one basement window, now closed in. This window has a three-course jack arch. The presumed second window on the first floor is now an opening to a modern enclosed porch, which also has a new doorway cut through between the windows to the new porch.

The ell has a tall interior chimney at the southeast end, with stepped-out courses at the top and a modern arched tin covering. The gable roof is low and covered in standing-seam sheet metal. There are plain eaves boards at the rear and plain closed eaves at the sides, without cornice or gutters.

The wraparound porch is in several sections. On the southwest side, it is original to the ell, covering a former door leading directly to the front hall and the two ell doors. In 1961, part of this porch, up against the main block, was enclosed to form a bathroom and was clapboarded in vinyl. It has one window with modern 1/1-light double-hung wood sash. The former rear door from the hall in the main block now leads to this bath. The original three-bay porch, which ran the entire length of the brick ell, now consists of the bath and two open bays.

The porch was extended one bay to the rear ca. 1940, then across the rear of the brick ell. It was enclosed with vinyl

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siding in 1989. There are a door to the porch and two double 1/1-light windows and one triple 1/1-light window across the back. Inside are a new bath and passage. The one-bay-deep porch addition, ca. 1994, continues for three bays along the northeast side, including a single window, a three-sided oriel or bay window, and on the return a triple window. All contain 1/1-light double-hung sash, except a single, fixed light in the bay projection. The original porch roof is continued around the new, added enclosed porch, with a matching slope in standing-seam sheet metal. There are a gutter, downspouts, and a pipe snow guard.

The construction date of the raised front porch is uncertain, possibly as late as 1900. It is three bays wide by one bay deep, with chamfered posts supporting a hipped roof and a pedimented central portion. The covering is standing-seam sheet metal above a molded cornice. There is a plain baluster railing and wood steps to the ground. The exterior is covered in lattice work below the floor to the ground, with an entry hatch on the left side. The porch terminates over the center of basement windows on both sides. The original porch or stoop was narrower, as seen in the joist holes under the present porch.

Interior

The front, or I-house, portion has a central stair hall with one room on each side on both stories. These original spaces are little changed from their construction, and are marked by extraordinarily fine painted polychrome finishes on the woodwork. Although the precise date of the work is unknown, it certainly dates between 1834 and the end of the Civil War, and it is perhaps the finest of its type surviving in Shenandoah County.<sup>2</sup>

The stair hall, 9'-3" x 20'-3", is centered on the front door, an original, 6-panel door with raised panels, and a four-light rectangular transom and molded surround. There is a fine iron box lock with a brass lever knob on top (a Dutch elbow lock) and a large iron key, which appears to be original. Such locks are found on several other doors in the house.

To the left and right are doors to the other two rooms, each a six-panel, raised-panel door. One door has an original brass-lever Dutch-elbow lock knob. The rear door has two vertical panels and may not be original. It was the rear

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<sup>2</sup>Other examples include the James W. Smoot House (VDHR 85-484) and the Armentrout House (VDHR #34), near Moore's Store. The latter has "smoked" finishes said to have been produced with tallow candles. The multicolored painted woodwork of the mid-nineteenth-century Jacob Bowman House (VDHR #85-207) near Bowman's Crossing in southern Shenandoah County, lacks the faux finishes seen in the Munch House on its multi-colored painted woodwork. The extensive trompe-l'oeil decoration at Vesper Hall (VDHR #85-073), near Strasburg, attributed to William F. Rupp, who emigrated from Germany in 1854, is considerably more sophisticated, as is that at Green Hope (VDHR #85-124), also believed to be by Rupp. (See Shenandoah County Historic Resources Survey Report, 1995, pp. 88-89.)

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entrance and now opens to a modern bathroom. A simple, molded chair rail and a baseboard extend around the hall on the otherwise plain plaster walls. The floors here and throughout the house are original tongue-and-groove heart-pine boards, 4" to 5-1/2" wide.

At the right rear wall of the hall, the main staircase rises to a landing, and continues with a final flight to the second floor on the left wall. The stairs have a simple, square and turned newel post, with a round knob on top and plain rectangular balusters with molded handrail. The open-string stairs have scrolls on the stair edges, and the field below the stairs has flat panels and a four-panel door, making a closet under the stairs. There are no interior basement stairs in the front section. The landing continues the railing, but the hand rail rises in a straight angled line to compensate for the absence of ramping at each flight.

The woodwork is finished with unusually fine and complete color finishes executed in a traditional Germanic manner that remain in good condition. The doors are marbled, with diagonal coal-black slashes, perhaps made with a rolled rag, on the rails and stiles. The panels are green on the rise of the raised panels, yellow-ochre in the panel fields, and cream on the molding. The chair rail and door frames are yellow-ochre, and the baseboard matches the door rails and stiles. The stairs are treated in the same manner as the door rail and stiles, with yellow-ochre balusters, scrolls, and panel fields.

The room to the right of the hall (13'-4" x 20'-3") has two windows on the front wall and one on the rear wall. The windows are cased and have molded surrounds. On the side wall is a fireplace with fireback and mantel. It is flanked by glass-door cupboards, each with two 15-panel glazed doors. There are a baseboard and chair rail but no cornice. This room is wallpapered in a ca. 1900 paper with a vertical stripe and landscape designs. The color finishes on the woodwork are most elaborate and are glazed with shellac. On the mantel there is yellow-ochre on the shelf and cornice, plus dark green, purplish-red, and cream and coal-black spongework over cream on the pilasters. The balance of the woodwork is yellow-ochre. The interior face of the cupboard glazing is covered with a translucent lace pattern, not original. There are plaster walls and ceilings. Although the design of each fireplace mantel and surround in the house is different, all are of wood and all are in a bold, vernacular Federal style with pilasters, friezes, and molded mantel shelves.

The room to the left of the hall (13'-4" x 20'-3") has similar woodwork--fireplace and mantel with pilasters, frieze and cornice and shelf; a double-door cupboard at left, divided into upper and bottom sections; and a two-door closet with three-panel leaves at the right. The room has a baseboard and chair rail, two front windows, board floors, and plaster walls and ceiling. A door to the rear opens to the rear ell. This room was painted white about 40 years ago, covering the probably original decorative paint finishes.

On the second floor of the front I-house portion, the stair hall is in the center, with a lower landing window at the rear and a front window. Stairs rise to the attic. There is a plain, chamfered, square newel post with a rounded top. The stairs are closed off at the top of the front run with a recently installed old board door from the attic. The stairs and hall

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floors have wall-to-wall modern carpeting. The finish is as the first floor.

The room to the right of the stair hall has a fireplace and mantel flanked by two double-door closets, three raised panels to each leaf, and three windows (two on the front wall and one on the rear). There are baseboard, chair rail, and window and door surrounds. The walls and ceiling are plaster. The floor is covered in wall-to-wall carpet except for the brick hearth. The fireplace is filled in, and there is a modern propane heater. The mantel has pilasters, three-panel frieze, and shelf. It is finished in a wine red and cream, with blue accents in the frieze and cornice. The closet doors are framed in the wine red of the mantel, and the doors are painted green on the rails and stiles, blue on the rise of the raised panels, and a cream on the panels.

The room to the left of the hall is similar, with two windows on the front wall. There are a fireplace and mantel, with the fireplace closed in and a modern coal-burning stove on the brick hearth. Flanking the fireplace are two closets, each with double, three-panel doors. There are a baseboard, chair rail, and window and door surrounds. The walls and ceiling are plaster. On the floor is a ca.1940s "Quaker rug" (a printed linoleum-like floorcloth) in a floral pattern on a dark-green background; it is in fine condition. The exposed floor area around the floorcloth is painted dark green to complement the floorcloth. The mantelpiece has fluted pilasters, a paneled frieze, and molded cornice and shelf. The mantel is painted green, with a frieze of tan, with worn panels sponged in coal black on cream. The woodwork is in the same greenish-gray and the closet doors are sponged, dabbed, and streaked in the bold, crude diagonals of the room doors, coal black over a cream background. The center of the panels is sponged in a crude shield form, and otherwise streaked.

Rear Ell

The brick ell is in two rooms on the first floor, one behind the other, both opening to the original porch at right, and the further room also opening to the modern addition at left. The first room was probably a dining room, the rear a kitchen, as it is now. The ell opens from the left-hand front room, and the pattern of windows and doors is discussed in the "Exterior" section of this document. The first, or dining, room has a baseboard and chair rail and door surround similar to the front. There are plaster walls and ceilings and modern striped wallpaper. The wall between the rooms has a wall-mounted propane heater. The floor is carpeted wall to wall. There is a board closet in the far left corner.

The rear room (kitchen) has a large cooking fireplace, with simple, molded mantel shelf and brick hearth. The floor is in modern resilient sheet flooring. Walls and ceiling are plaster, and there are modern counters, cabinets, and appliances. The original porch door is covered by cabinets and counter. There is an enclosed staircase to the basement and attic.

The low attic is divided into two rooms, plainly finished with sliding sash windows, as noted elsewhere.

Basement

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There is a full basement under the house, partly at grade, with brick walls and foundation. It is comprised of three rooms, two in the main block of the house and one in the ell.

The large room on the right side of the I-house basement has windows only on the front. A large summer beam, 8-1/2" x 8", extends side to side through a brick partition to the left wall and runs the full width of the house. Joists, 4" x 8", run from front to back over the beam. There is one 4-1/2" x 8" post at the center of the beam, probably inserted later. The floor is dirt. There is a brick partition between the two front basement rooms, with a vertical-board door with old lock and handle, and an old beaded frame and sill, probably original.

The left corner basement room has a front window and vertical-board exterior door in a wood frame, probably original, on the northeast side. The room has an old or original wide-board (10"-12") floor, laid on sleepers, and a fireplace, now closed in. The ceiling features exposed joists and the continuation of the side-to-side summer beam. To the rear is a door in a brick wall to the rear room under the ell. There is a modern, flush-panel exterior door, and a stair to the kitchen. The floor is dirt, and the ceiling has exposed joists (4-1/2" x 8"). The walls are brick. To the rear is the old concrete cistern, with a door cut through, now used for storage.

Outbuildings

The present bank barn was built in 1929, with a northwest ell, constructed the same year,<sup>3</sup> that leaves an open passage at grade between the two sections. It is located at State Road 758, at the bottom of the knoll that the house sits on. It is frame with a heavy timber frame, two stories at grade, and the upper level is accessed at the first rise of the hill. A set of stairs leads to the grade-level animal space and milking room. The large ell is frame, with heavy timber frame, and a low-slope shed room. It is completely open inside, without a second-floor level. The foundations are concrete. A pump shed has been added onto the southwest side of the original portion of the barn. The upper level is accessed by a large sliding board door from the earth ramp outside.

The original barn, 1833, survived until a 1972 storm, when it collapsed and was removed. It was located farther southeast of the house and barn, also off SR 758. Although its location is shown on the 1994 USGS map, there are no visible remains of the barn today.

The remaining outbuildings are on the knoll behind the house and are served, along with the house, by a curving

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<sup>3</sup>The new barn was built by Lorenzo Ritenour and his two sons, Frank and Silas, during the winter of 1929-1930. Both components of the barn were built at the same time. The strange construction and the extra door may be the result of a last-minute decision by Cyril Munch to add the shed when the barn was nearly finished. (Interview, James Trott with Frank Ritenour, September 4, 2001. Mr. Ritenour was 88 years old at the time.)

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gravel drive from the parking and service areas around the knoll and down to SR 758.

There is a small, frame tool shed (early twentieth-century), with clapboard walls and a low gable roof over a low upper half-story, reached by stairs at the rear. There are a door on the front gable end and one window each in the front and rear gables.

The modern, frame, gambrel-roofed, one-and-a-half-story two-car garage (1989) has rolling doors, each with four small windows at the top. On the right side is a side door and two windows. The garage is sided in vinyl clapboards. Inside, the left car space remains, with a stair at the rear. The right side has been subdivided into a photo lab and work space in three rooms, accessed from the right corner door.

To the left side of the garage is a two-bay equipment or vehicle shed, with a corn crib between the bays. The structure is frame, with vertical-board siding, and there is a low gable roof. The corn crib is accessed by a vertical-board door in the northwest side. The floors in the equipment bays are dirt; the corncrib has board floors. There are concrete pier foundations, and the right side wall is concrete against the cemetery knoll.

Along the drive to SR 758 is a small, frame livestock shed (early twentieth-century). It has a concrete foundation, clapboard walls, a steep shed roof, and a vertical-board door.

Ridenour Family Cemetery

The Ridenour family cemetery is on the peak of the knoll, between the equipment shed and the garage, and is 12-1/2 feet higher than the graveled work and parking area around the service buildings. There are only a few small traces of shale stone markers, severely weathered and only partly legible, and the cemetery is surrounded by trees and shrub growth. (The Munch Family Cemetery is located off the nominated property, farther south along SR 758 on a higher knoll, as shown on the USGS map.) The cemetery is described by Duane L. Borden in *Tombstone Inscriptions: Woodstock and Fort Valley Vicinities, Shenandoah County, Virginia* (Ozark, MO: Yates Publishing Co., 1983, p. 133) as containing four graves, including that of John Adam Ridenour. At the time the book was written, the letters "AR" (presumably Adam Ridenour) could be read on one of the remaining stones.

























