



PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) 081-0077

1. General Property Information

Property name: Firebaugh-Armentrout Farm (formerly aka. Windy Glen)

Property address: 3413 Maury River Rd (Rt. 39)

Lexington vicinity

Zip code: 24450

Name of the Independent City or County where the property is located: Rockbridge County

Category of Property (choose only one of the following):

Building x Site Structure Object

2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: 208

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban Suburban Town Village Hamlet Rural x

Briefly describe the property's overall setting, including any notable landscape features:

The 208-acre farm is located on the west side of Maury River Rd (Rt. 39) in a rural area about 8 miles north of Lexington and is characterized by its rolling land with significant karst topography features, and approximately 3/4 of a mile of frontage on the Maury River. The land is mostly devoted to cattle farming, but has not been well maintained under the former owner.

The house faces east-southeast toward the road and is set back 200 feet from the road. Among the notable secondary resources, less than 200 feet south of the house, along a branch called Mouse Run, is a springhouse; 130 feet southwest of the house is the livestock barn; 250 feet west-northwest is the hay barn; between the two barns is a granary/corncrib; and 80 and 110 feet northwest are poultry houses, all wood-frame buildings.

3. Architectural Description

Architectural Style(s): No discernable style

If the property was designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here: _____

If the builder is known, please list here: _____

Date of construction (can be approximate): c. 1860 (house); c. 1900- c. 1940 (secondary resources)

Inventory of Resources

1. House (single dwelling)
2. Springhouse
3. Pump house
4. Livestock barn
5. Wood shed
6. Granary
7. Two-story shed
8. Hay barn
9. Workshop
10. Poultry houses (2)
11. Tractor shed
12. Vehicle shed

Narrative Description (select resources)

House

The two-story V-notched hewn-log house takes the form of a dogtrot house, comprised of two separate log pens with an enclosed space between them that serves a center passage with staircase. There is ample physical evidence that both pens were built around the same time as part of a single cohesive design. The house has a continuous coursed limestone foundation; a standing-seam-metal side-gable roof with no break in the roof structure; a pair of coursed limestone exterior end chimneys with brick stacks; a balanced three-bay facade; centered first-and second-story front doorways with sidelights; and a two-story front portico with Victorian detail. The portico rests on limestone piers, has a second-floor balustraded deck, and is topped with a gable roof with decorative scroll-sawn bargeboards. The two-story weatherboarded rear ell appears to include another log pen at the rear connected by a frame hyphen. The ell has no extant chimney other than a central interior brick flue.

The house interior has vernacular finishes including numerous hand-made paneled doors of identical or similar design with multiple peaked or faceted moldings comparable to those of the Duff Mansion House (052-5122, NR 2019) in Lee County, Virginia, estimated to have been erected c. 1860. Many of the Firebaugh-Armentrout farmhouse doors have five panels, rim locks and brown mineral knobs, and are hung on cast-iron butt hinges inscribed by the manufacturer in cursive font: T&C Clarks Best Broad. The staircase spandrel is finished with the same faceted moldings. On the second floor, the moldings are similarly faceted but not peaked, rather they are flattened before coming to a peak. The individual strokes of scrub-planing (by hand) are conspicuous on much of the woodwork. The mantels are of the plain Greek Revival variety; the more refined mantel in the first- floor south room having wide fluting on the pilasters.

Spring/Spring House

The springhouse is a one-story shed-roofed frame building constructed c. 1930s on a poured concrete foundation. It has a concrete floor and both interior and exterior water troughs. Inside is an antique mechanical cream separator.

Granary/Corncrib

The granary/corncrib, likely built c. 1920, is a one-story gable-roofed frame structure with a drive-through tractor bay in the center flanked by a weatherboarded section containing three grain bins on the north side, and a vertically and horizontally slatted section on the west side. The front and rear walls above the drive-through are clad with normal size vertical boards.

Barn

The livestock barn, probably built c. 1900, is located on a low area near Mouse Run, west of the springhouse. It is a two-story weatherboarded timber-frame structure built on a course stone foundation, with a gable roof incorporating a hooded opening at the top. Just below the roof eaves, along the side walls are latticed vents. The lower level interior is occupied mainly by livestock stalls. Much of the building's framing is mortised and pegged and virtually all of the timbers are circular sawn.

4. Property's History and Significance

The Firebaugh-Armentrout Farm property (referred to as Windy Glen in 1957 and 1969 surveys) included the log house built for John Firebaugh in 1860 and several historic ancillary buildings, both domestic and agricultural (see site plan) most built during the early to mid twentieth century. The farm is recommended eligible at the local level of significance under Criterion C in the area of Architecture/Craftsmanship. The property's significance is based on the high quality of the traditional dogtrot log house construction using at-hand materials worked on-site; its truly exceptional state of preservation; and the rarity of such a well-preserved collection of resources including the log house, domestic outbuildings, and agricultural buildings, the setting, and overall physical context. Photographs from as early as the late nineteenth century, including at least one by the noted Lexington-based photographer Michael Miley, depict virtually no differentiation between the appearance of the house (including the portico) then and now; which is remarkable given the highly distinctive early Victorian-era vernacular ornamentation rendered in wood. The scroll-sawn bargeboards on the porch and house gable ends may have been inspired by the ornate Gothics-style designs by architects A. J. Downing and A. J. Davis found in Lexington by the 1850s.

Historical Background

According to the WPA Virginia Historical Inventory report (1936), the property's "first owner of record was Jonathan Beard, who built [a] house about the year 1775, and lived there until August 30, 1817, when he deeded it to John Firebaugh, Deed Book K page 549."

The 1860 construction date of the extant log farmhouse is largely confirmed by the 1861 land tax assessment for Rockbridge County (within the district of assessor John A. Shaw). The entry for John Firebaugh's 250-acre tract includes the note: "\$500 added for buildings 1861". The total assessment for buildings on the parcel was \$750, which reflects the commonly low valuations afforded to log houses as opposed to stone, brick, or even frame houses of the period, which tended to garner higher valuations.

About one-half mile to the north, on the same (east) side of the Maury River as the farm, was the nineteenth-century community of Cedar Grove. Founded at the confluence of the Maury River and Cedar Grove Creek and the junction of routes 39 and 252, Cedar Grove is said to have been the busiest place in the county by the 1810s, because it was the furthest point up the Maury River from which barges, or Batteaux, could be floated down to Lynchburg and Richmond via the Maury and James rivers during period of higher waters. Iron ore was processed and pig iron produced at Cedar Grove furnaces, and a Cedar Grove Mills post office was established in 1832, with William Witherow as the first post master. The name suggest that a grist mill had already been established there. After the Civil War, as the economy suffered and charcoal-burning iron furnaces were being replaced by coal burning furnaces, the community entered a steep decline and the post office closed in 1873; although another post office in the same location (named Flumen – a Latin name pertaining to the confluence of creek and river) opened in 1891 and closed in 1907. Although no longer an organized community, the name Cedar Grove still appears on USGS maps. ["History of Rockbridge Baths, Goshen Pass and Cedar Grove" (address of Col. W. Cole Davis before the Rockbridge Historical Society, July 31, 1944 at Rockbridge Baths). Withrow scrapbooks, W&L University Special Collections.]

The farm property was later transferred to George S. Armentrout, the deed recorded on October 13, 1867. F. B. Armentrout was the owner in 1936, at the time of the WPA survey. The most recent owners (until 2022) were the Umbergers. A full ownership summary based on 2022 deed research appears below. Notably, it appears that according to the deeds, John Firebaugh did not own the property in 1860-61; yet the land tax assessment for 1861 is entered as if he still owned it. While a discrepancy obviously exists between the deed books and land tax books, the tax assessment still stands as the accepted recordation.

Ownership Summary

Larry Spurgeon (2022)

July 15, 1742: Benjamin Borden to John Buchanan, 634 acres, on the east side of the North River, a tract called “Fair Mountain Doal?”, Orange County Deed Book 8, p. 36.

March 14, 1757: John and Margaret Buchanan to Robert Allison, 83 acres, part of the 634 acres deeded to John Buchanan by Benjamin Borden, lying on the east side of the James River, bordering Jacob Anderson’s land. Augusta County Deed Book 7, p. 471.

August 18, 1757: John and Margaret Buchanan to William Young, 100 acres, part of the 634 acres deeded to John Buchanan by Benjamin Borden, on the east side of the James River, bordering Jacob Anderson. Augusta County Deed Book 7, p. 473.

August 19, 1757: John and Margaret Buchanan to Jacob Anderson, 232 acres, part of the 634 acres deeded to John Buchanan by Benjamin Borden, on the east side of the James River, bordering William Young and Robert Allison. Augusta County Deed Book 7, p. 480.

August 13, 1772: Jacob and Esther Anderson to William Walker, 232 acres, part of the 634 acres deeded to John Buchanan by Benjamin Borden, on the east side of the north branch of the James River, bordering William Young and Robert Allison. Augusta County Deed Book 18, p. 322.

February 4, 1813: Will of William Walker (died in 1815), leaving his plantation, containing 332 acres along the North River, equally to his sons William Walker and **George Walker**. William was to receive “my dwelling house and that side of the plantation join. Deckers tract purchased by said son William. **My son George to have the side of said plantation next the North River**, the division line to be made paying respect to quantity and quality...” Will Book 4, pp. 168-70.

August 31, 1818: George and Elizabeth Walker to Martin Baylor, 212 acres. The two tracts owned by the Bayers, the Firebaughs, and George Armintrout were 100 acres and 109 acres, and this parcel was 212 acres, but seems to be basically the same land. Deed Book L, pp. 283-85.

April 1, 1839: Adam and Elizabeth Shuey, David and Lydia Baylor, and Barbara Baylor, the widow of Martin Baylor, to John Firebaugh. Martin Baylor died in 1829, and he lived in Augusta County. David Baylor was his son and Elizabeth Shuey his daughter. **Two tracts, 100 acres and 109 acres.** The deed states that Martin Baylor bought the land from “_____ Walker,” and that it bordered land owned by Robert Anderson. Deed Book X, pp. 132-34.

May 29, 1842: John Firebaugh to Benjamin F. Firebaugh, two tracts, 100 acres and 109 acres. The deed states that John Firebaugh purchased the land from Adam and Elizabeth Shuey. Deed Book Z, pp. 30-31.

October 13, 1867: Benjamin F. Firebaugh to George Armintrout, two tracts, 100 acres and 109 acres. It states that John Firebaugh deeded the land to Benjamin Firebaugh. Deed Book K, pp. 384-85.

23 Acres

February 10, 1845: Samuel Clarke, trustee of Borden representatives, to Robert B. Anderson, 23 acres, Deed Book DD, pp. 386-87. This parcel is likely the small wedge on the Borden map, next to the Borden grants to Jacob Anderson (232 acres in 1757) and Robert Allison (200 acres in 1771).

h. Property Ownership (Check as many categories as apply):

Private: Public\Local Public\State Public\Federal

Current Legal Owner(s) of the Property (If the property has more than one owner, please list each below or on an additional sheet.)

name/title: Sally M. and Laurence A. Mann

organization: _____

street & number: 550 Three Graces Drive

city or town: Lexington state: VA zip code: 24450

e-mail: mann@manning.com telephone: (540) 463-6111

Legal Owner's Signature: _____

Date: Jan 3, 2023

Laurence A. Mann Date: 1/3/2023

**** Signature required for processing all applications. ****

In the event of corporate ownership you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person: n/a

Daytime Telephone: _____

Applicant Information (Individual completing form if other than legal owner of property)

name/title: Mike Pulice, architectural historian

organization: DHR Western Regional Office

street & number: _____

city or town: Salem state: _____ zip code: _____

e-mail: michael.pulice@dhr.virginia.gov telephone: 540-387-5443

h. Notification

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for DHR to confer with or notify local officials of proposed listings of properties within their jurisdiction. In the following space, please provide the contact information for the **County Administrator**

name/title: Spencer Suter, Administrator

locality: Rockbridge County

Rockbridge County Administrative Office Building

150 South Main Street

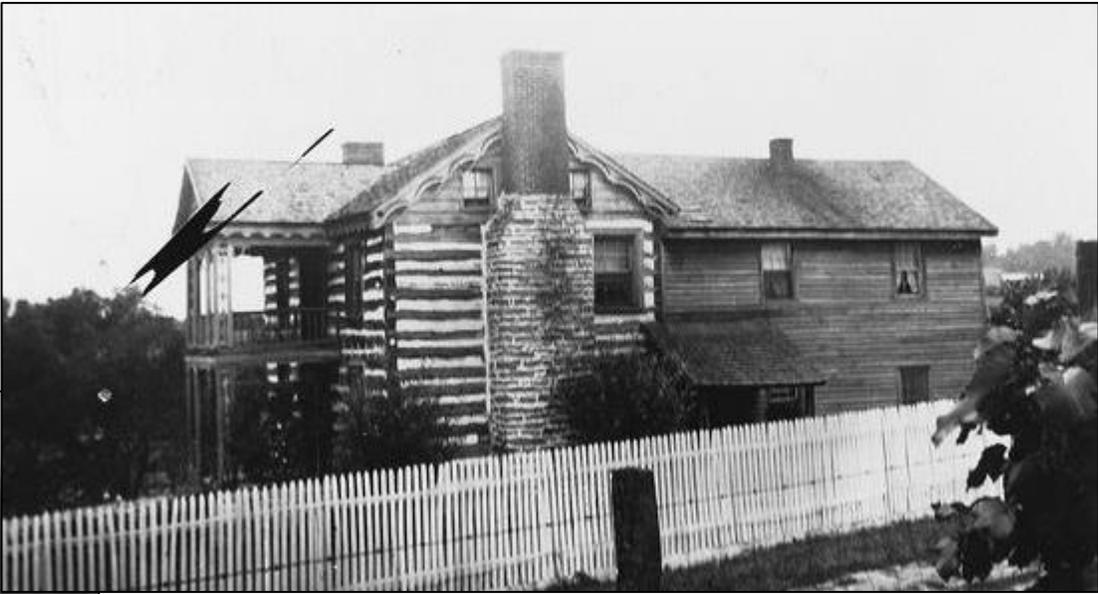
2nd Floor

Lexington, VA 24450

(540) 463-1460

ssuter@rockbridgecountyva.gov

Late 19th C.



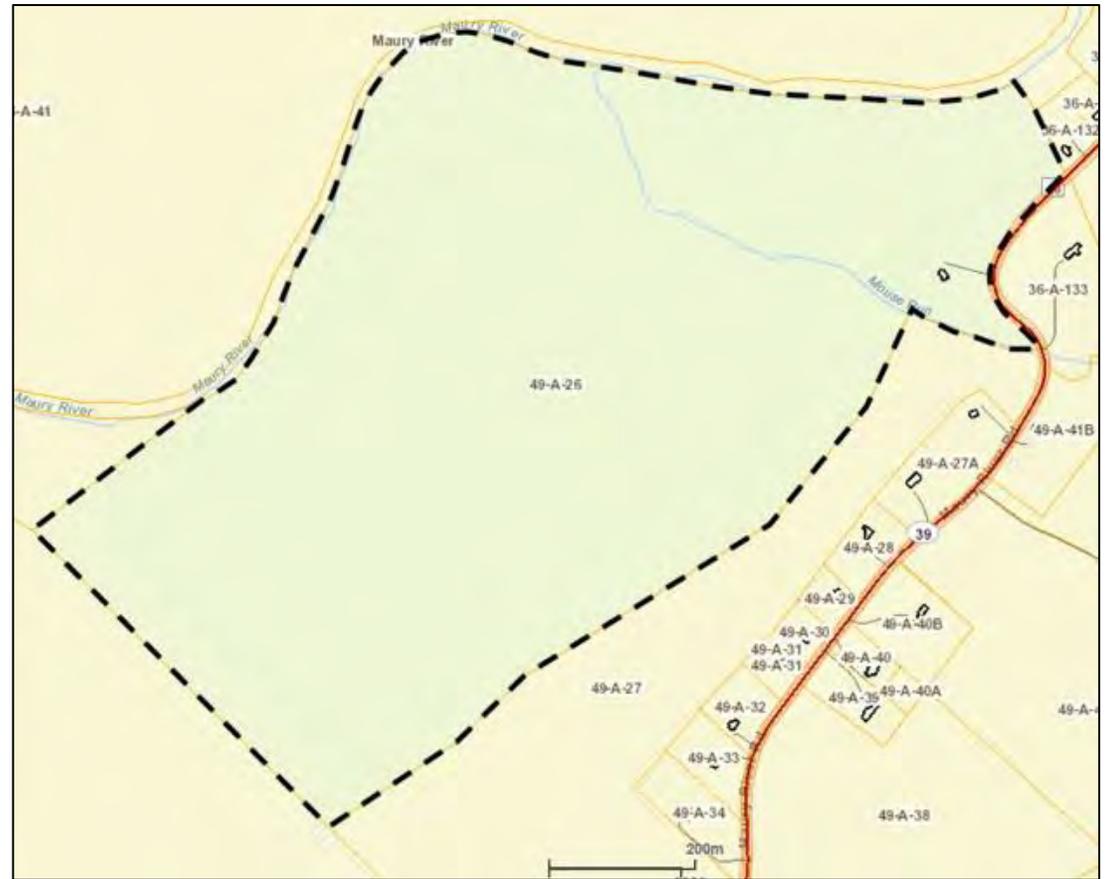
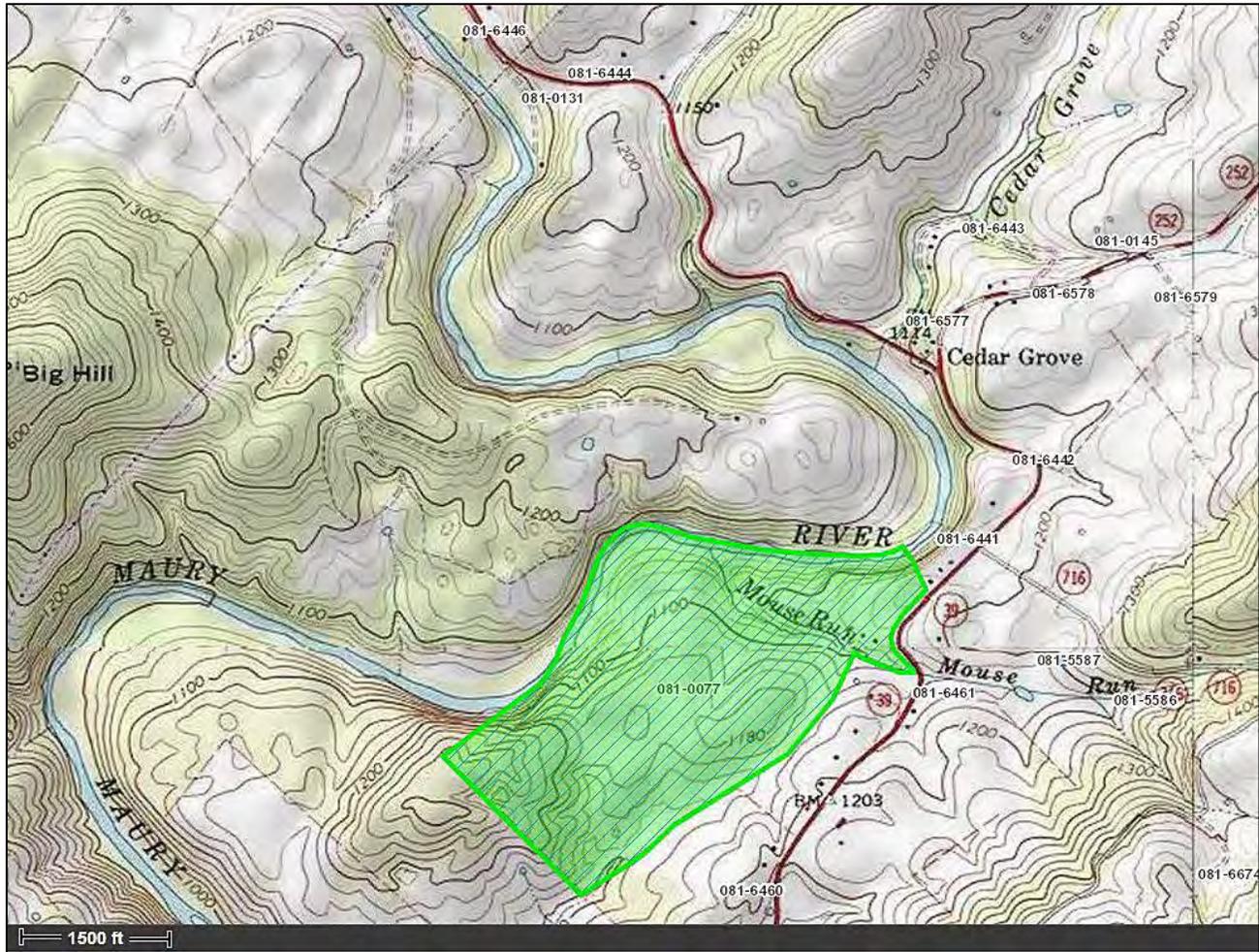
WPA, 1936



Michael Miley, Late 19th or early 20th century

Calder Loth, 1969





Windy Glen, Rockbridge County – DHR 081-0077
Sept. 2022 M. Pulice

Vehicle shed

Work shop

Poultry houses (2)

Hay barn

Tractor shed

Two-story shed

Granary

Wood shed

House

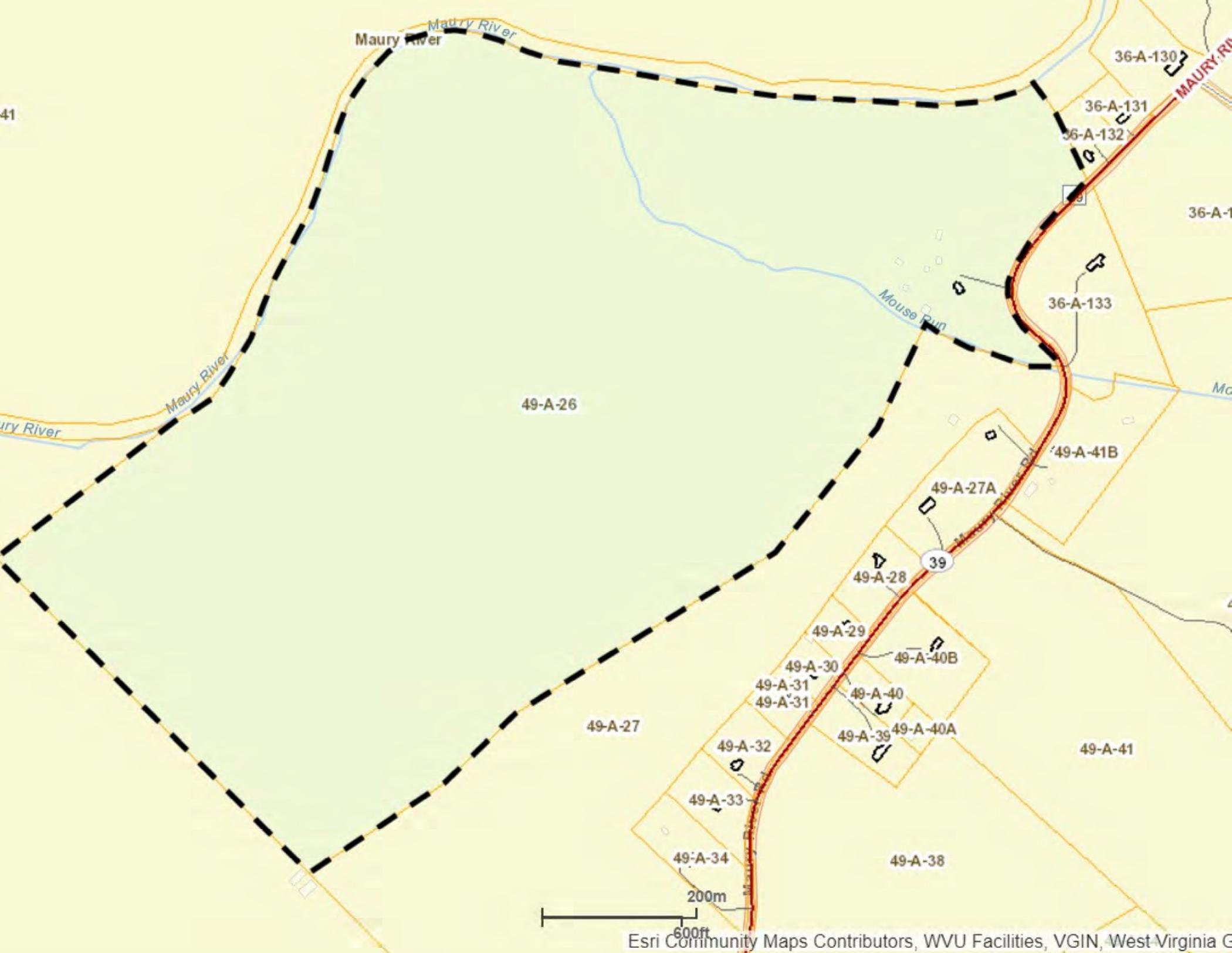
Livestock barn

Water pump

Springhouse

62.5 ft







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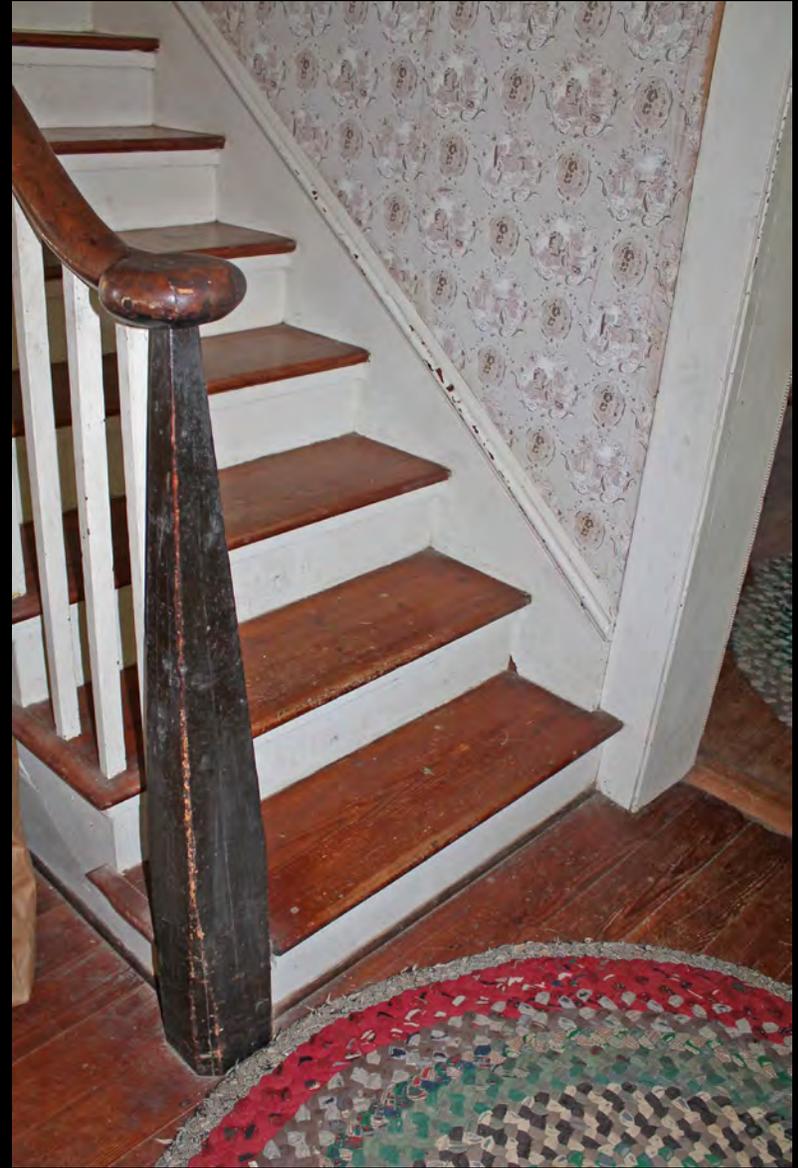
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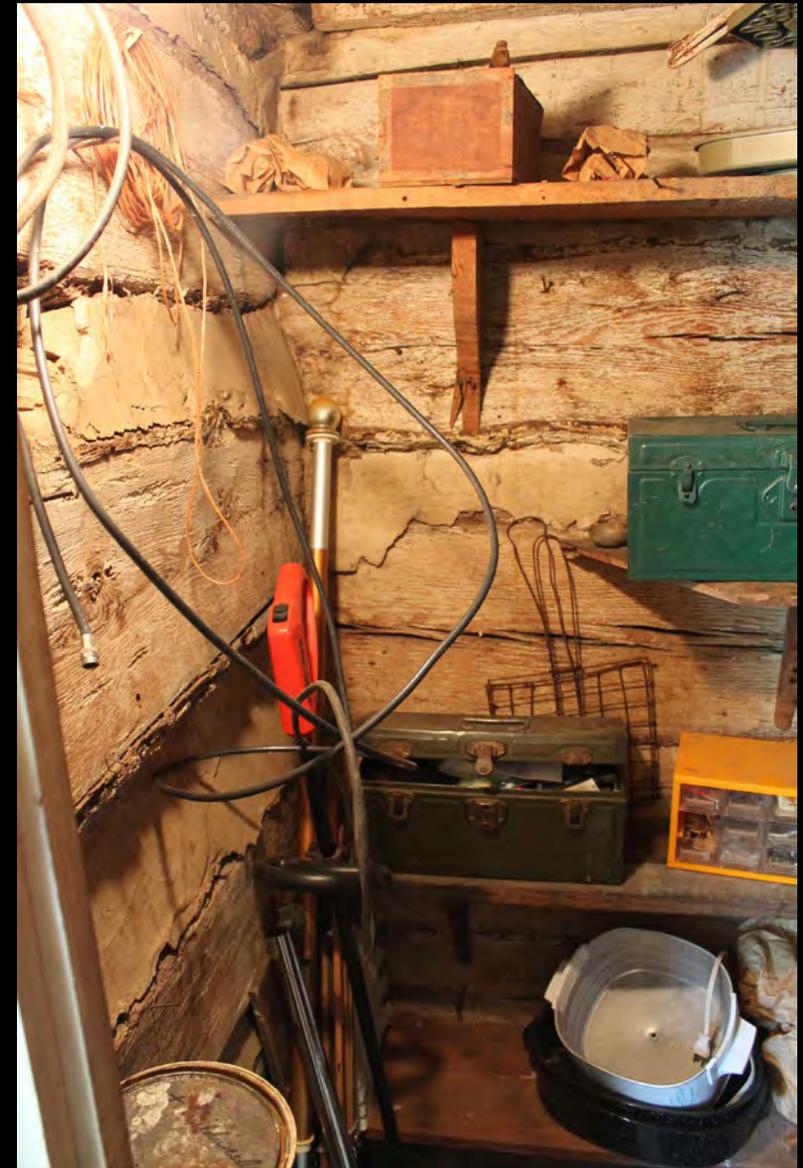
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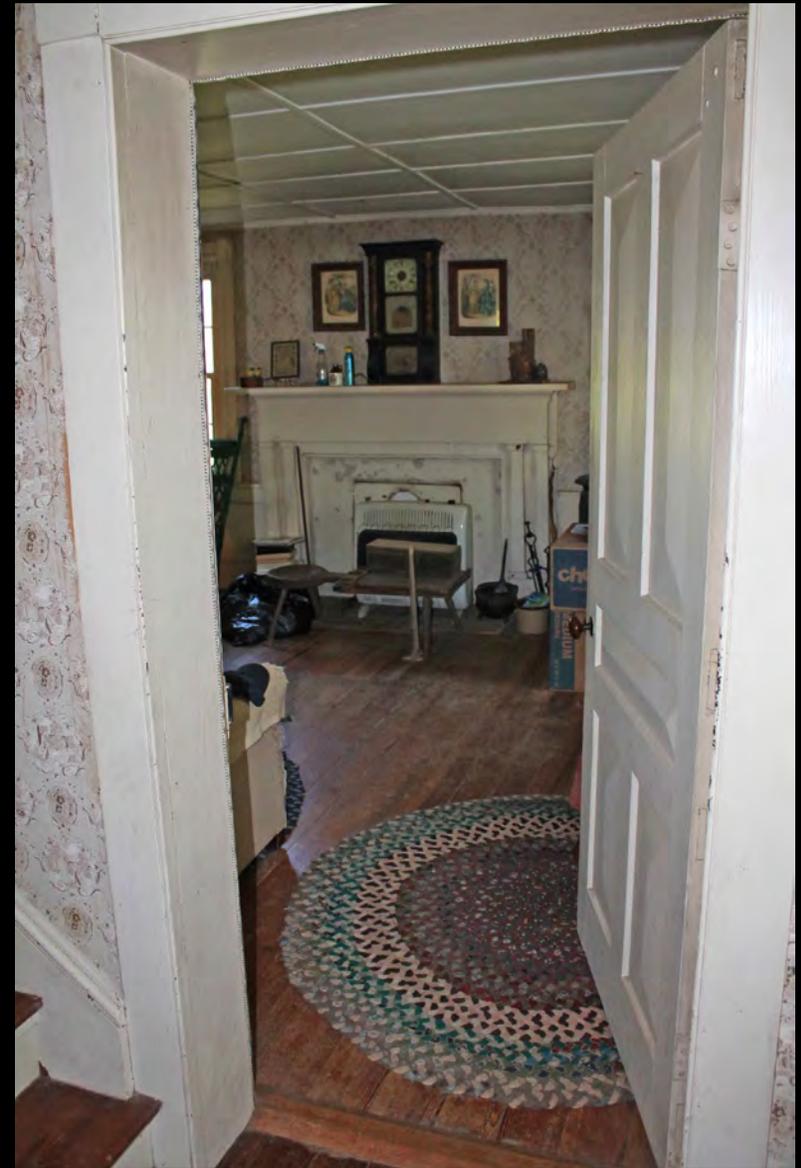
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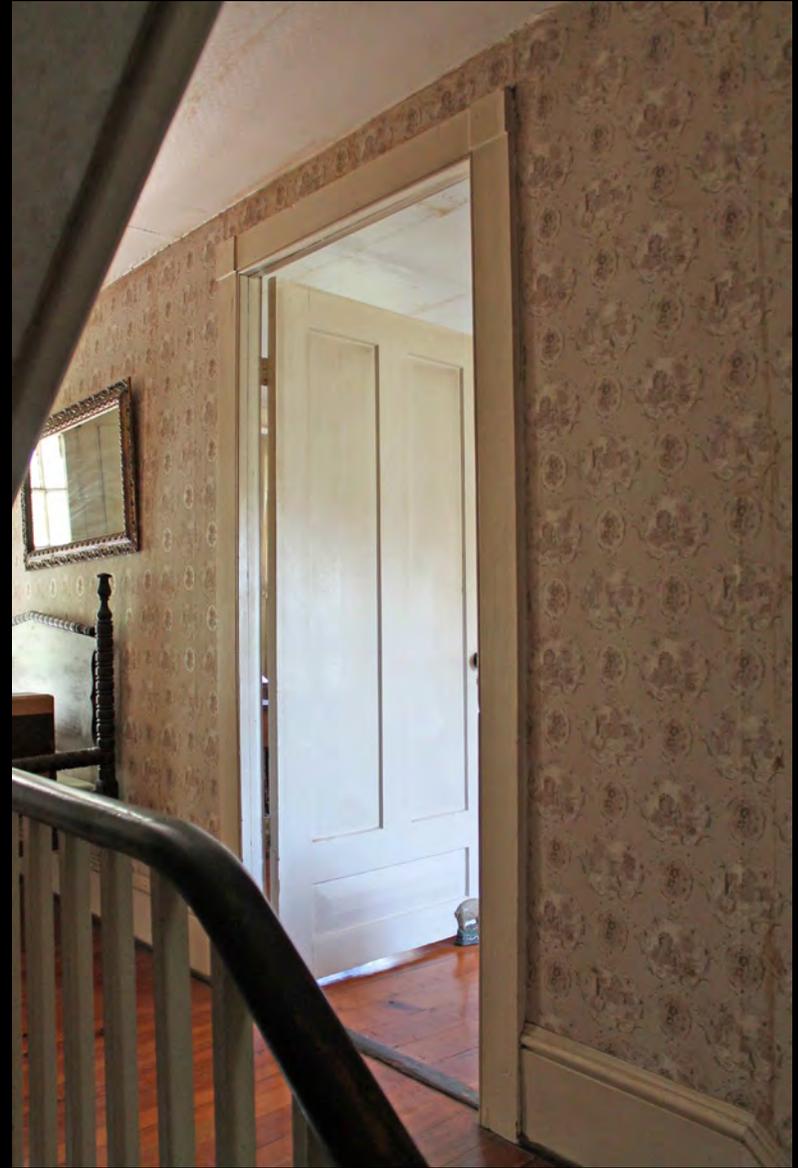
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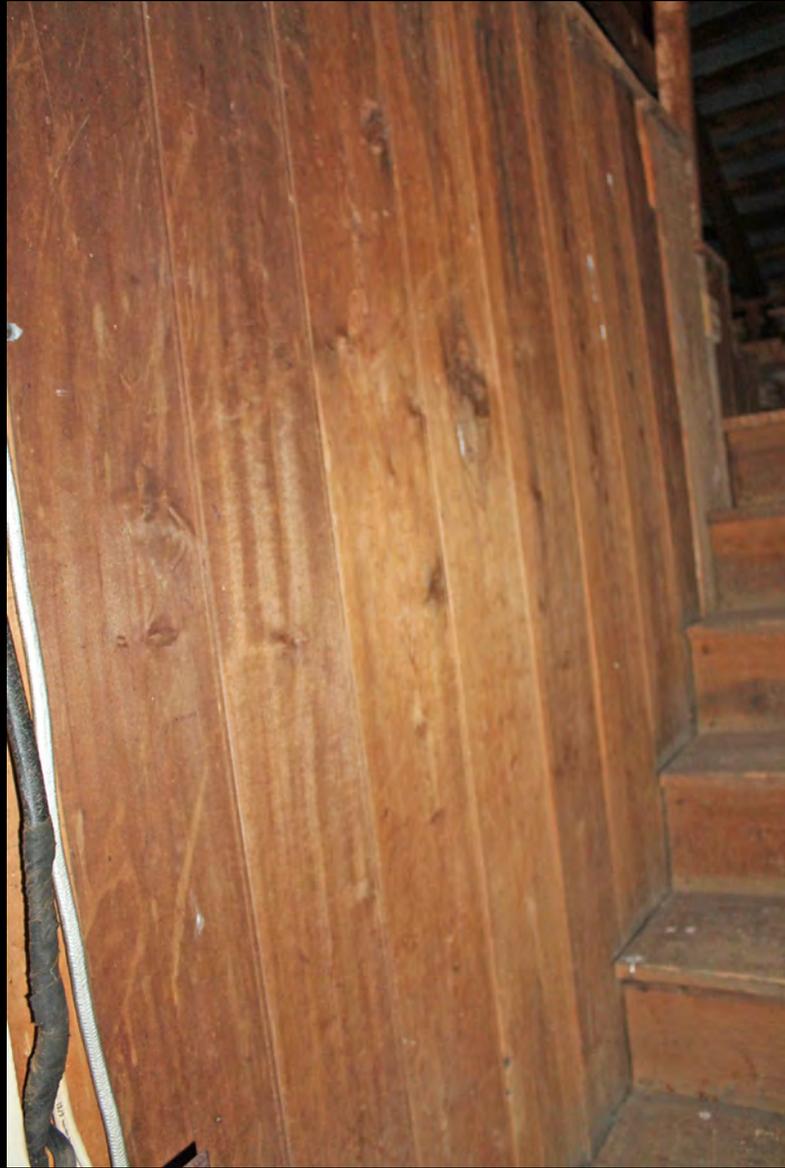
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