

Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report

**Improvement of Secondary Road 1389 – East Dick's Creek Road
Jackson County, North Carolina
State Project No. 6.962139**

North Carolina Department of Transportation
Report Prepared by Nancy Van Dolsen

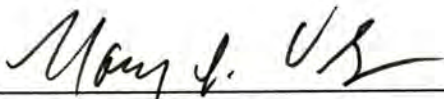
July 1999

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June 1999



Principal Investigator
Historic Architectural Resources Section
North Carolina Department of Transportation

7.14.99

Date



Barbara Church, Supervisor
Historic Architectural Resources Section
North Carolina Department of Transportation

July 9, 1999

Date

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has plans to improve Secondary Road #1389, East Dick’s Creek Road in Jackson County from the intersection with S.R. 1388 approximately 9,900 feet to the end of the state road system. The project consists of grading, widening, drainage, and paving. The maximum extent of disturbance would be 22.5 feet each side of the centerline of the road.

The area of potential effect (APE) for historic architectural resources was delineated by a NCDOT staff architectural historian and reviewed in the field. The APE boundary is shown on the attached map.

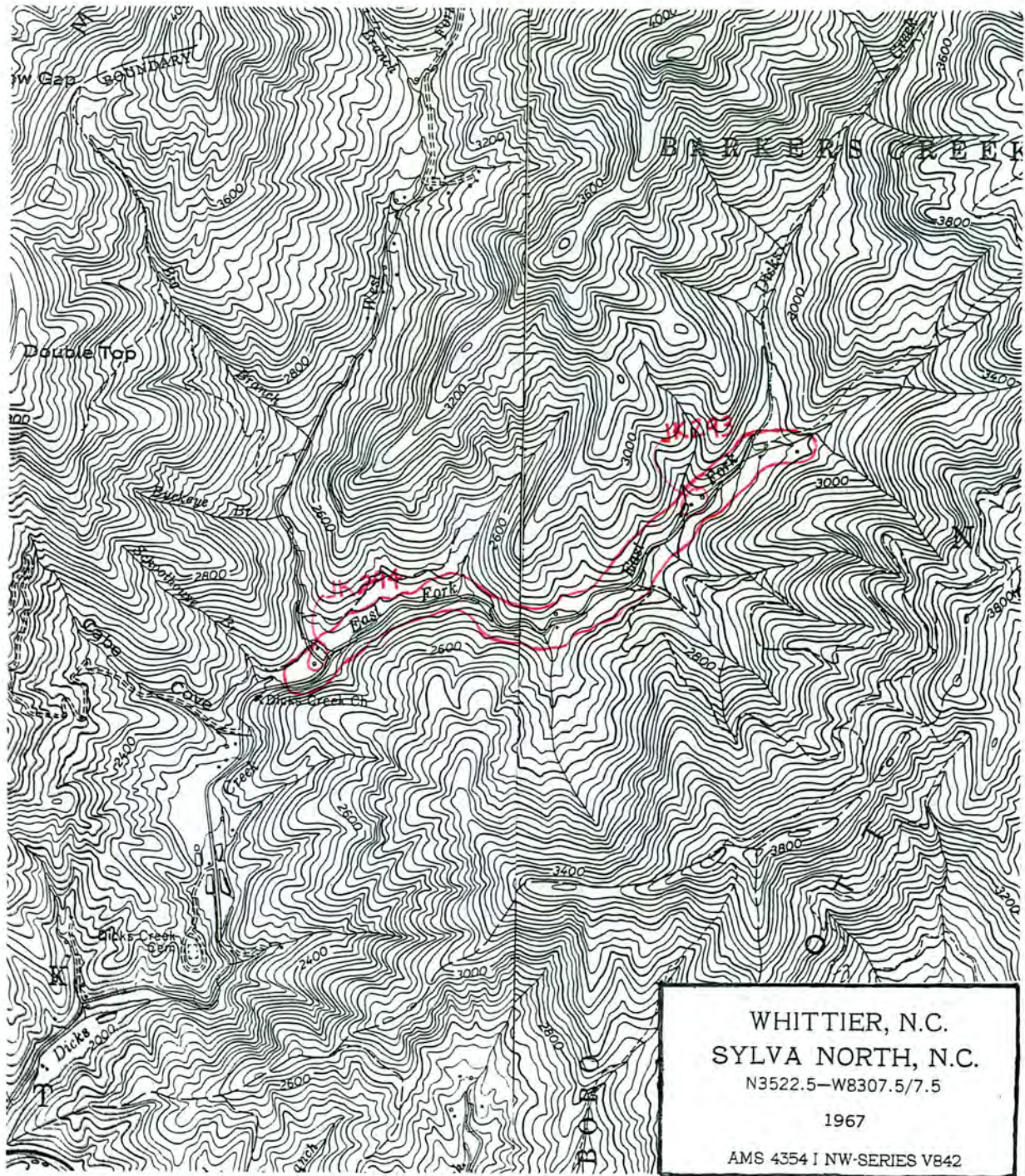
PURPOSE OF SURVEY AND REPORT

NCDOT completed a survey and compiled this report in order to identify historic architectural resources located within the APE as part of the environmental studies performed by NCDOT and documented by a Categorical Exclusion (CE). This report is prepared as a technical appendix to the CE and as part of the documentation of compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended. Section 106 of the NHPA requires that if a federally funded, licensed, or permitted project has an effect on a property listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation be given an opportunity to comment. This report is on file at NCDOT and available for review by the public.

METHODOLOGY

NCDOT conducted the survey and prepared this report in accordance with the provisions of FHWA Technical Advisory T6640.8A (Guidance for Preparing and Processing Environmental and Section 4(f) Documents); the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological and Historic Preservation (48 FR 44716); 36 CFR Part 800; 36 CFR Part 60; and Survey Procedures and Report Guidelines for Historic Architectural Resources by NCDOT. This survey and report meet the guidelines of NCDOT and the National Park Service.

NCDOT completed an intensive survey with the following goals: (1) to determine the APE, defined as the geographic area or areas within which a project may cause changes in the character or use of historic properties, if any such properties exist; (2) to identify all significant resources within the APE; and (3) to evaluate these resource according to the National Register of Historic Places criteria.



**Area of Potential Effect
 Improvement of SR 1389**

The survey methodology consisted of a field survey and background research on the project area. A NCDOT staff architectural historian conducted a field survey in January 1999 and June 1999, by car and on foot. All structures over 50 years of age in the APE were photographed and keyed to an area map.

Background research was conducted at the Division of Archives and History and the North Carolina State Library in Raleigh, and the Jackson County Recorder of Deeds Office in Sylva.

SUMMARY FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY

The project is located along SR 1389, East Dick's Creek Road, in western Jackson County. The road follows the eastern fork of Dick's Creek. Two post-1950 residences are located along the road, as well as two historic properties. None of these properties are on Forest Service land, but are adjacent to the proposed road improvement. In their letter dated December 23, 1998, the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office identified one historic property (JK 293) within the area of potential effect (APE) that may be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The second historic property within the APE is a ca. 1915 house with four outbuildings (JK 294). No properties listed on either the National Register or the State Study List are located within the APE for the subject property. Criterion Consideration G, for properties that have achieved significance within the last fifty years, states that properties less than fifty years of age may be listed on the National Register only if they are of exceptional importance or if they are integral parts of districts eligible for the National Register. There are no properties in the APE that qualify for the National Register under Criterion Consideration G.

Properties Listed on the National Register or North Carolina State Study List:

None

Properties Evaluated and Considered Eligible for the National Register:

Stiles House (JK 293), page 6
Turpin House (JK 294), page 17

Properties Evaluated and Considered Not Eligible for the National Register:

None.

HISTORIC CONTEXTS AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Jackson County, located at the convergence of the Blue Ridge, Great Smokey, and Balsam Mountains in western North Carolina, was formed in 1851 from Haywood and Macon counties. Named for Andrew Jackson, the county covers 499 square miles. The land that comprises Jackson County was once part of the Cherokee Indian Lands that were acquired by the United States after a Native American treaty of cession in 1819. Although the area was not officially available for European settlement until after the treaty of 1819, local historians believe that Europeans were living in the area as early as the 1790s.

Prior to the late nineteenth century, most residents in western Jackson County were small-scale farmers and artisans. In 1860, Jackson County had 709 farm families living on an average size farm of 122 acres. Most of these farms were primarily subsistence operations with most farmers growing crops and raising livestock for the consumption of their own families.¹ Agriculture remained an important part of Jackson County's economy through World War II, but the number of farmers has declined steadily from 1900 to the present.²

The Western North Carolina Railroad, first chartered in 1855, was completed through Jackson County in 1890.³ With the completion of the railroad, large-scale timbering and mining began in the county and the region.⁴ Along with major lumbering companies that moved into the area from out-of-state, many smaller lumber firms also operated in the county. A Jackson County man, Holmes Bryson of Dillsboro, started a small-scale lumber operation in 1917 on Dick's Creek. Bryson started cutting the Rees tract on the creek, and transported logs to the sawmill and the railroad by a flume.⁵ A sawmill stood along Dick's Creek Road during the first half of the twentieth century.⁶

The railroad was pivotal in the rise in the development of mining and timber companies that extract the raw materials from the area for sale outside of western North Carolina. But within the county, roads were needed for local transportation. An 1844 map of the county showed only two roads: the road to the Balsam to Cowee gaps, and the road to Waynesville to Charleston via Soco. Dick's Creek Road became an official county road in 1892.⁷

¹ John L. Bell, "Economic Activities" in Max R. Williams, ed. *The History of Jackson County* (Sylva, NC: Jackson County Historical Association, 1987) 147.

² Bell in Williams, 149.

³ Hugh Talmage Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome, *The History of a Southern State: North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1973) 516.

⁴ Michael Ann Williams, "Pride and Prejudice: The Appalachian Boxed House in Southwestern North Carolina," *Winterthur Portfolio* 25:4, 224.

⁵ Bell in Williams, 160.

⁶ In a deed for the Sules property (JK 293), a reference is made to "sawmill place." Jackson County Deed Book 160:483.

⁷ Bell in Williams, 194.

In addition to providing jobs off the farm, the lumber industry also introduced readily available, milled, unfinished planks. These unfinished planks could be purchased inexpensively and some Jackson County residents used these planks to construct boxed-frame houses and outbuildings. Boxed houses, also known as vertical plank houses, are constructed of planks nailed to the sill and plate without any studs.⁸ These boxed houses were usually built by the owner with the help of neighbors and family.⁹

Boxed houses allowed families to continue the tradition of cooperative building. Many of the boxed houses also maintained traditional forms in plan and scale. As Michael Ann Williams has noted, although the early twentieth century was a time "when builders of rural frame houses were breaking away from the confines of tradition in their plans" the builders of boxed houses were more conservative in their choice of plans.

By 1934, six houses were located on the road east of the branching of Dick's Creek, two that still stand, one of which is a boxed house.¹⁰ Both properties were originally farms and the buildings on both properties date to the first quarter of the twentieth century. Although one of the families chose to use the more expensive method of frame construction and to build a house with a more modern exterior, both families elected to erect buildings with traditional plans. The boxed house (JK 293) originally featured a single-pen form (with a rear-shed room) that was soon enlarged to a hall-parlor plan. The frame house (JK 294) enclosed a traditional hall-parlor plan with rear shed rooms. The adaptation of the exterior bungalow form with the a more traditional interior plan occurred not only in rural Jackson County, but in other parts of the country as well.¹¹ Although the building materials of the two houses differed, the way the families lived in the two houses was similar. Both houses exhibit the retention of traditional ways that were a part of everyday life in the area.

⁸ The most comprehensive work on boxed houses in western North Carolina is Michael Ann Williams article in *Winterthur Portfolio* cited above. Williams also discusses the boxed house in her book *Homeplace* (Atlanta: University of Georgia Press, 1991). Charles Martin in *Hollybush: Folk Building and Social Change in an Appalachian Community* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press: 1984) addresses the construction and meaning of the boxed house in Knott County, Kentucky.

⁹ Williams, 226.

¹⁰ United States Geological Survey, Cowee, North Carolina and South Carolina, Quadrangle Map, February 1907, revised 1934.

¹¹ For example see Susan Mulchahey Chase's work on the rural bungalow in Sussex County, Delaware. As in the Turpin House, farmers in lower Delaware constructed houses that appear on the exterior to resemble bungalows, but have a hall-parlor plan inside. Susan Mulchahey Chase, "Rural Adaptations of Suburban Bungalows," in Elizabeth Collins Cromley and Carter L. Hudgins, ed., *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, V* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1995) 179-189.

PROPERTY INVENTORY AND EVALUATIONS

STILES HOUSE (JK 293)

Location: SR 1389 (west side), 1.5 miles north of SR 1388, Dick's Creek

Setting: The Stiles House sits on a steeply sloped 7.4 acre tract, that is bounded on the west by a small unnamed tributary of East Dick's Creek. The land is cleared around the house and crib; the remainder of the tract is secondary timber growth. A dry-laid stone retaining wall is located behind (northeast) of the house. A grape vine trellis consisting of three locust posts and wire stands on top of the retaining wall.

Description

House: The Stiles House was constructed over a period of time, reaching its present appearance during the mid-twentieth-century. The initial phase was a one-and-a-half story, gable-roofed, boxed-frame, single-pen building with a rear-shed room and a shed roof porch on the façade. The main block of the house roughly measures 14 feet by 18.5 feet, with an 8.5 foot rear shed room and a front porch with a depth of 5.25 feet. The two-bay building has battens on the exterior covering the juncture of the planks on the façade and west elevation; no battens are found on the east elevation. Exterior and interior doors are five-panel doors with ceramic knobs. The house has hewn sills that rest on a dry-laid stone foundation. The sawn joists are notched and lapped over the sill. An exterior, single shoulder, dry-laid stone chimney, approximately 6 feet wide and 2.5 feet deep, is centered on the east gable end. The rear shed room now serves as a kitchen and is sheathed on the interior walls and ceiling with horizontal, tongue-and-groove beaded boards.

Shortly after the construction of the original structure, a boxed-frame addition (14 feet by 14 feet) was built onto the west gable end of the main block. This section had a front porch, and possibly a rear porch or a rear shed room. The addition has a stone foundation with a clay mortar. A small board-and-batten door on the west gable end provides access to a cold cellar located under this section of the house. Beneath the floor of the house, joists (roughly measuring 4 inches by 6 inches) were laid directly on the ground, with planks nailed to the joists in a U-shape to form a platform for any root crops or canned goods that would be stored in the cellar.

Sometime during the second quarter of the twentieth century, a one-and-a-half-story ell was built onto the rear portion of the second-period addition. This ell was removed, and a shed roof addition projecting four-feet from the gable-end of the second-period addition was built. The addition stands

on wood piers. This shed-roof addition was built for a bathroom and is sheathed on the interior with tongue-and-groove horizontal beaded boards. The interior door leading from the kitchen to the bath addition is a three-board batten door.

Crib: The log crib, measuring 12 feet 2 inches by 14 feet 2 inches, stands northeast of the house. The logs are hewn flat on the interior and left in the round on the exterior. Boards are nailed on the interior to cover the interstices between the logs. The corner notching is half dove-tailed. The rafters are saplings left untrimmed. A board and batten door is located on the center of the west gable end. The crib stands directly on the earth, except at the east end where some stones were placed under the bottom log to make the building level. The crib has no floor. The building is in poor condition.

Background Information: The Stiles House, constructed ca. 1910, sits on a 7.4-acre tract that was created from land purchased by M.M. Stiles from John N. and Julia L. Macomb in 1902 and from A.E. and Ella Elder in 1920.¹² Since the early twentieth century, the property has remained in the Stiles family.¹³ It is likely that M.M. Stiles built the house and log crib on the property. During the first half of the twentieth century, the property was a small farm. The land is presently not farmed.

According to an historic resource survey of the county conducted in 1989, the Stiles House is significant as one of the best examples of a well-preserved boxed house in Jackson County. Boxed houses, also known as vertical plank houses, are constructed of planks nailed to the sill and plate without any studs, and were built by the families who lived there with the help of their neighbors and community. The Stiles House, like many other plank houses, features a conservative plan and form.¹⁴ Originally a single-pen house (possibly with a rear shed) and later a hall-parlor house, the dwelling has a plan that dates to first-period settlement by the British, and which continued to be constructed in rural areas into the twentieth century.

Evaluation: For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, the Stiles House is considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for architecture as a well-preserved example of a boxed house in Jackson County.

The Stiles House is not eligible under Criterion A because it is not associated with a specific historical event or the broad patterns of our history. Although the Stiles House is indicative of the impact of the introduction of sawed lumber into the region, there is no evidence to suggest that the property made any special

¹² Cited in Jackson County Deed Book 160:483.

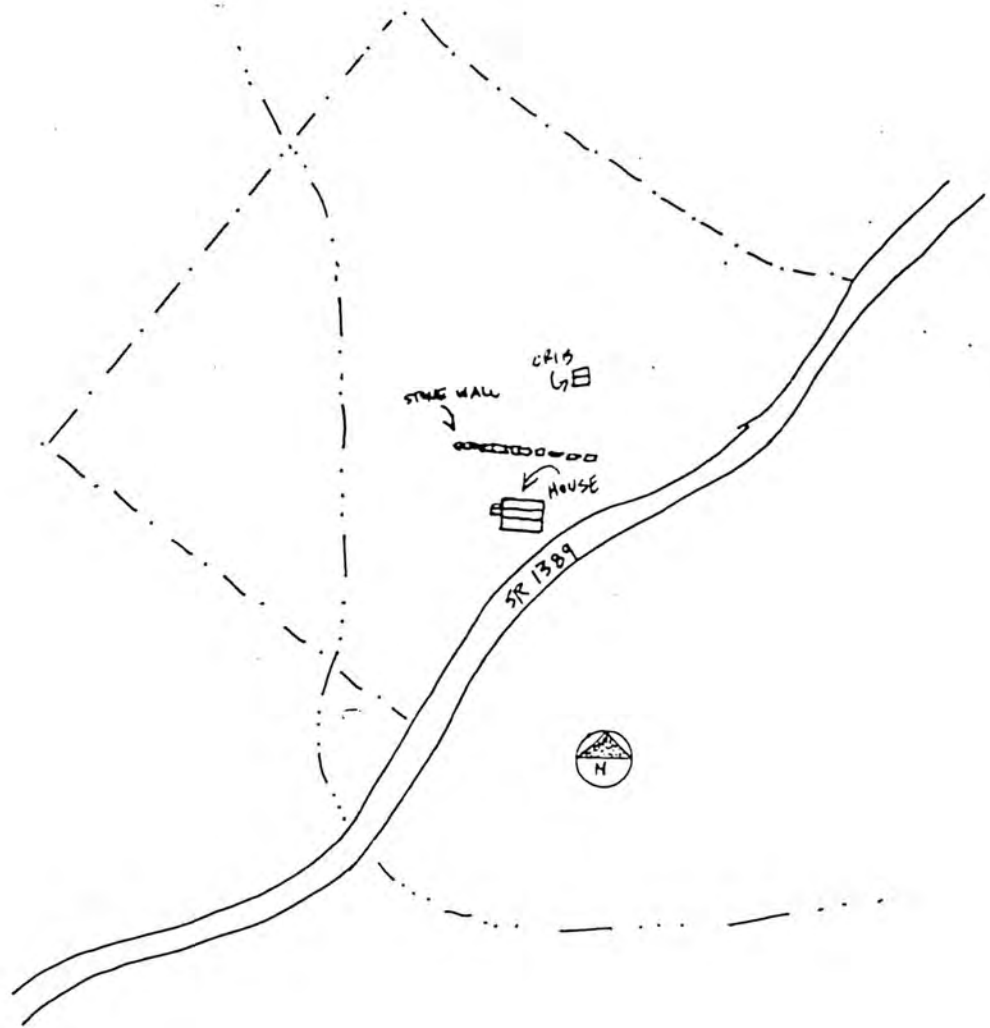
¹³ Jackson County Deed Books 162:99; 200:27; 666:409; 799:585.

¹⁴ Williams, *Winterthur Portfolio*, 226.

contribution to the development of a new architectural form within the community. The property is not eligible under Criterion B since it is not associated with any individuals of national, state, or local historical significance. In addition, the property is not likely to yield information unique to this building that that would be important to the history of building technology and, as such, is not eligible for the National Register under Criterion D.

The Stiles House is a well-preserved example of a vernacular building technology, the boxed-frame, significant in the history of the region. The boxed-frame utilized milled lumber that became available when the opening of the railroad enabled the timber of the area to be shipped for commercial profit. In addition, the house exhibits a conservative plan that illustrates the retention of traditional ways of life expressed in a new form of technology. The Stiles House embodies the distinctive characteristics of this building type and retains a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

Boundaries: The historic boundary includes the present tax parcel that contains 7.4 acres. The boundary encompasses the historic house and all associated historic outbuildings.

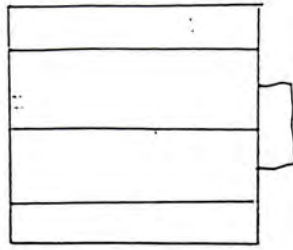


Key

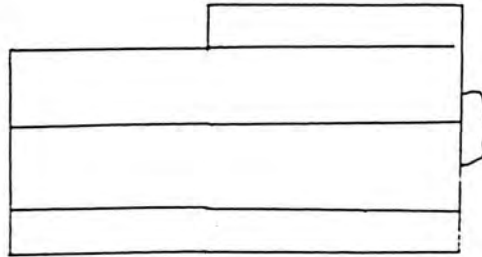
- - - : historic property boundary

-...- : creek

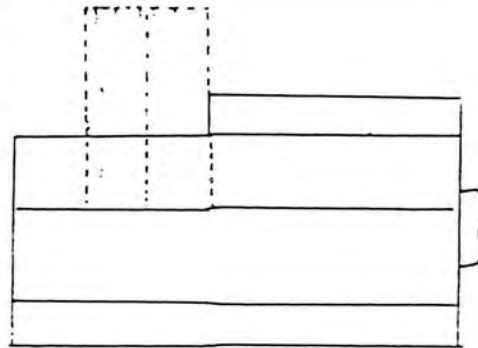
Stiles House (JK 293)
 Site Plan
 Scale: 1 inch = 200 feet



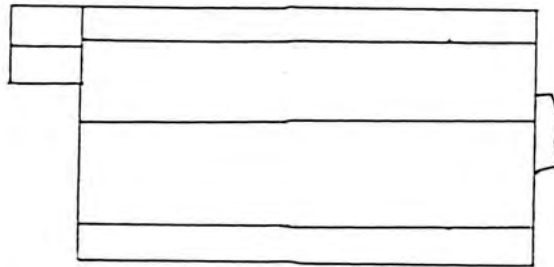
PERIOD I
ca. 1905-1915



PERIOD II
ca. 1915-25

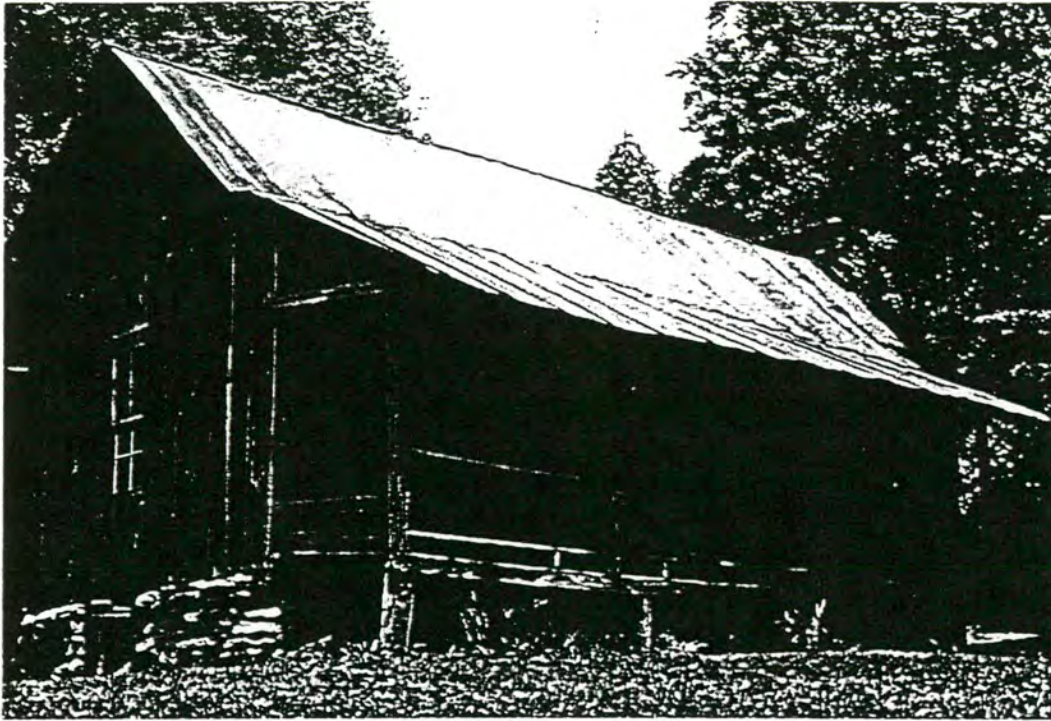


PERIOD III
ca. 1925-1950

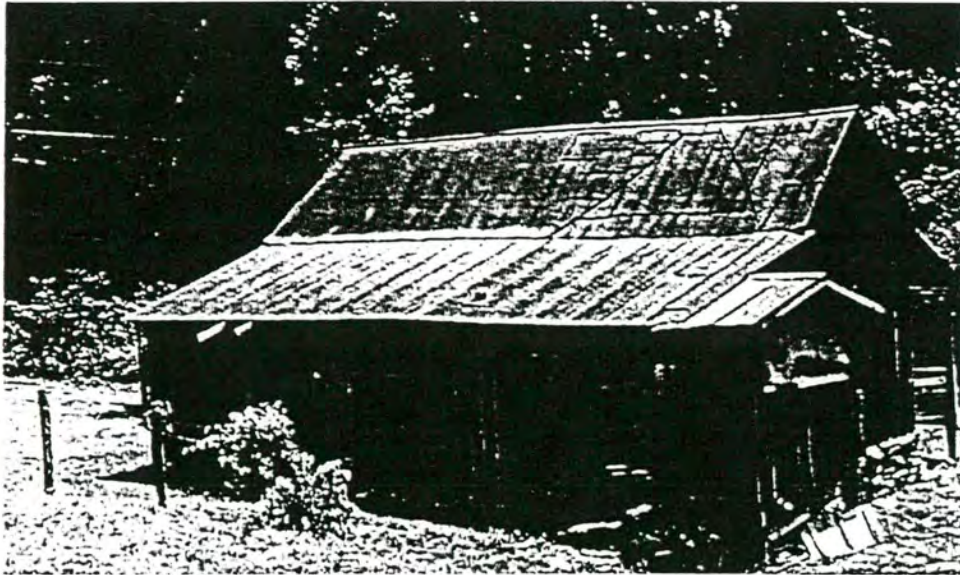


PERIOD IV
ca. 1950 - PRESENT

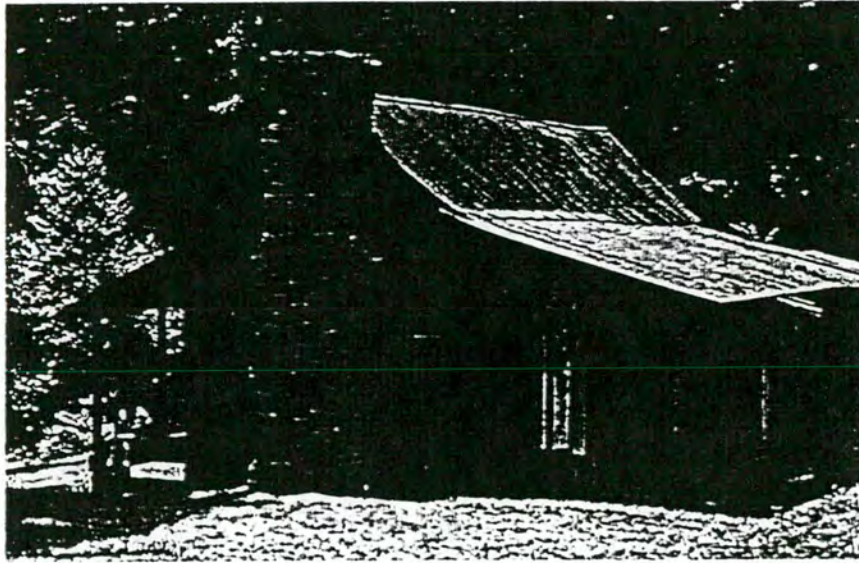
Stiles House (JK 293)
Progression of Building Plan
not-to-scale



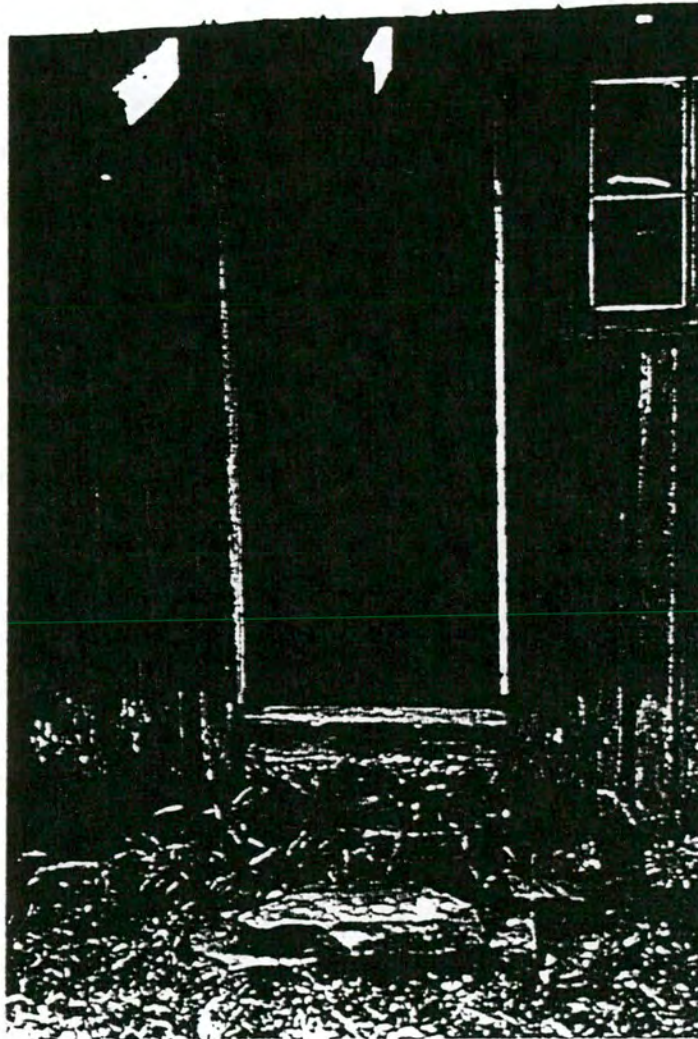
Photograph 1: View of the Stiles House, facing northeast



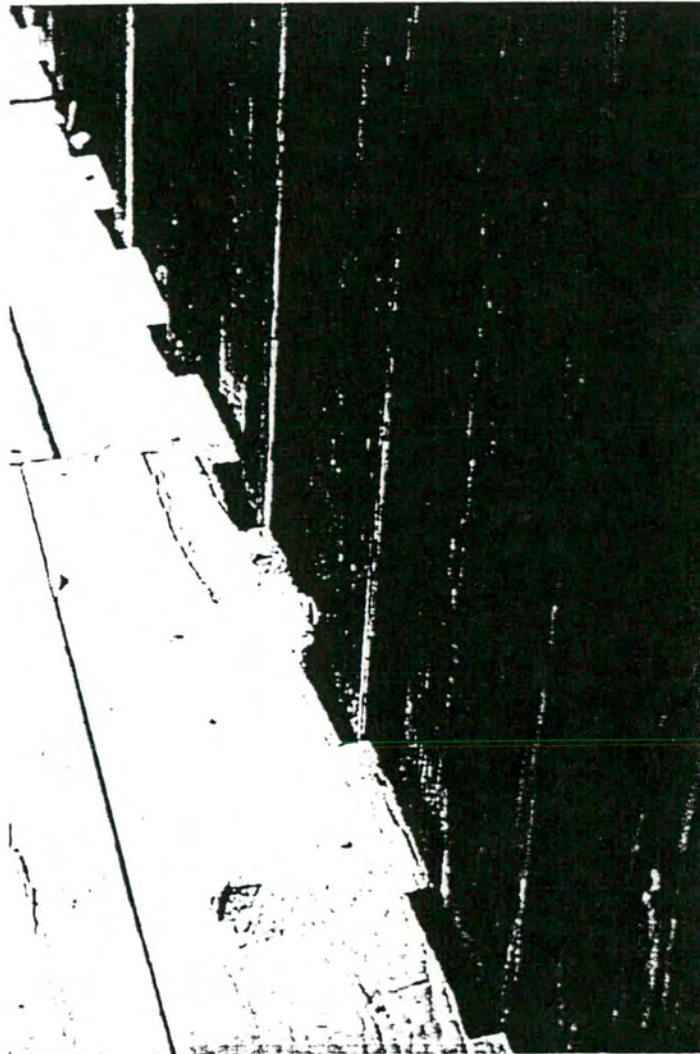
Photograph 2: View of the Stiles House, facing southeast



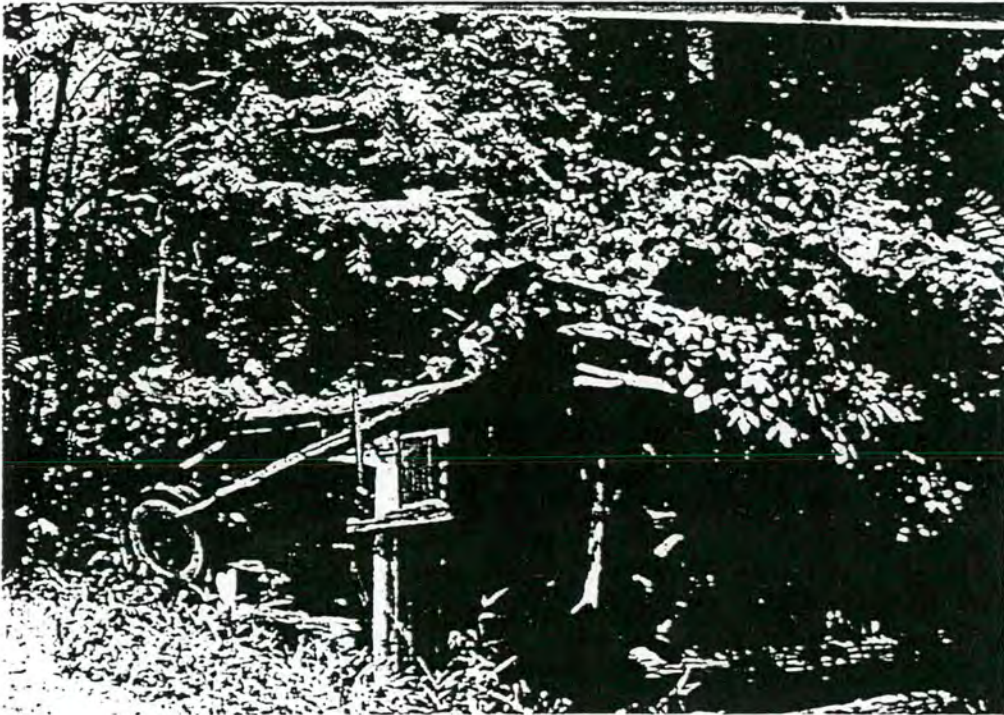
Photograph 3: View of the Stiles House, facing southwest



Photograph 4: Detail of rear elevation, Stiles House, facing south



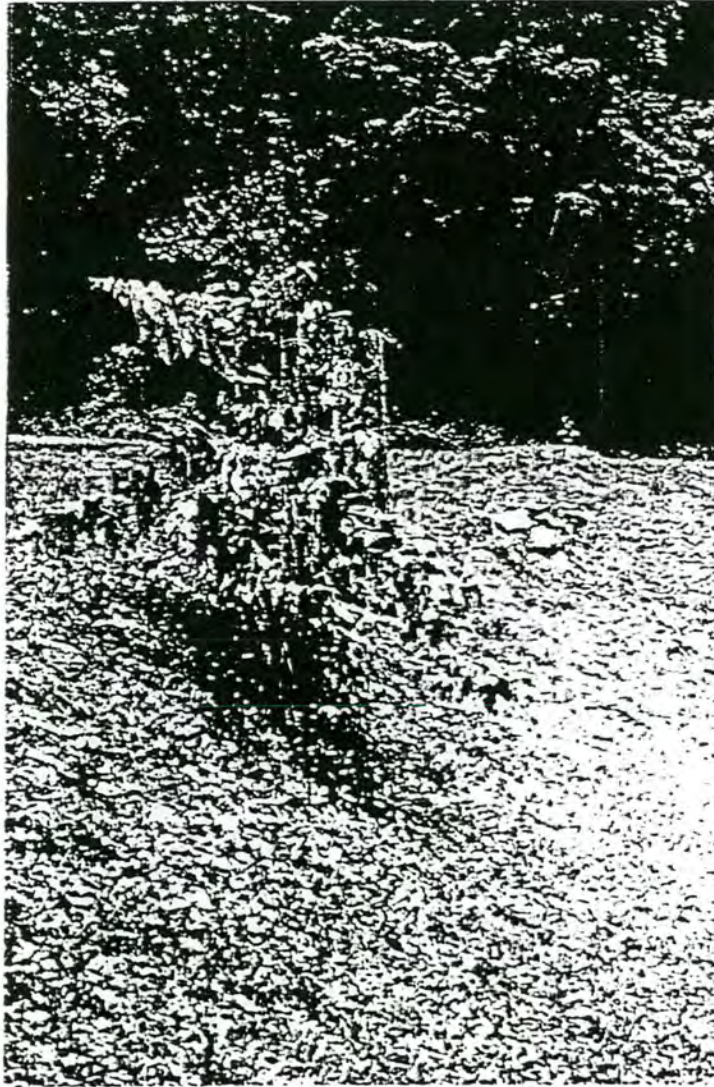
Photograph 5: Detail of the juncture between the front porch and house, Stiles House, facing southwest



Photograph 6: View of the crib, Stiles House, facing northwest



Photograph 7: Detail of corner notching, crib, Stiles House, facing southeast



Photograph 8: View of stone wall and grape vine trellis, facing northeast

TURPIN FARM (JK 294)

Location: SR 1388 at SR 1389 (north side) of Dick's Creek

Setting: The Turpin Farm is a 10.1-acre tract, that is divided by SR 1388, with the house and domestic outbuildings located on the west side of the road, and the barn on the east side. The farm sits on the north side of Dick's Creek. The house faces west. The land slopes from east to west, and is primarily in pasture. The pastures are fenced-in with barbed wire and locust posts.

Description

House: The Turpin House is a one-and-a-half story, side-gable, three-bay, frame house with a recessed porch across the façade. The porch features Tuscan columns on top of a board balustrade. A shed roof dormer with exposed rafters is centered on the façade. The roof is covered with a pressed tin roof mimicking wood shingles and has exposed rafter ends. The house has a fieldstone foundation. The house is weatherboarded and retains its two-over-two double hung sash windows. Paired windows flank the primary entrance of the façade. A new concrete block chimney was built onto the south and north gable ends. The interior of the house features a hall-parlor plan with rear shed rooms.

A one-story, gable-roof, frame addition was constructed onto the north gable end and has a cement block foundation. The windows in the addition contain three-over-one double-hung sash.

A frame shed roof addition standing on a brick foundation connects the house to a one-story stone dairy standing at the rear of the house.

Dairy: To the rear of the house stands a one-story, gable-front, stone dairy building. The building has flush-board gables and a boarded-up window on the west gable end. The dairy has a box cornice and a wood board plate.

Domestic Outbuilding: A multi-purpose frame outbuilding stands northeast of the house. The gable-front building stands on stone piers around the perimeter; the summer beam is supported on stumps. The joists are planks, laid on their wide end, rather than timbers. The building is weatherboarded and has louvered gable ends.

Shed: A three-bay frame open-front shed was constructed during the late twentieth century to house automobiles and farm equipment. The building is located north of the house.

Barn: The barn stands across the road from the house, down slope. The roof and walls of the gambrel-roof frame building is covered in 5V agricultural metal siding. Open sheds are on the north and south eave walls of the building. A paired board and batten door is located on the east end of the barn, facing the house.

Background Information: The Turpin Farm is part of a 308-acre tract of land that the Turpin family acquired as four separate parcels during the mid-nineteenth century.¹⁵ James and Meta Turpin who acquired the Turpin tract in 1914 most likely constructed the Turpin House.¹⁶ Jarvis and Ina Turpin subdivided the property sometime after 1962.

Evaluation: For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, the Turpin Farm is considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for architecture as a well-preserved example of an early twentieth-century house with a bungalow form in Jackson County. According to an historic resource survey of the county conducted in 1989, the Turpin House is significant for its bungalow form and classical details “neither of which are frequently expressed in rural Jackson County.”¹⁷

The Turpin Farm is not eligible under Criterion A because it is not associated with a specific historical event or the broad patterns of our history. Although the Turpin Farm is indicative of the impact of the introduction of building forms of early twentieth-century popular culture to the region, there is no evidence to suggest that the property made any special contribution to the development of a new architectural form within the community. The property is not eligible under Criterion B since it is not associated with any individuals of national, state, or local historical significance. In addition, the property is not likely to yield information unique to this building that that would be important to the history of building technology and, as such, is not eligible for the National Register under Criterion D.

The Turpin House is a well-preserved example of the interaction between popular culture and traditional culture as expressed in its bungalow exterior and its traditional hall-parlor plan with rear shed rooms on the interior. The retention of the traditional plan with the more up-to-date exterior expresses, as Susan Mulchahey Chase noted about similar houses in rural Delaware, “the not uncommon effort to mediate popular ideas and traditional values. The bungalows provide important testimony of an attempt to bridge the gulf between the safety and comfort of the familiar and the conventional and the risk and anxiety of

¹⁵ Jackson County Deed Book 257:87.

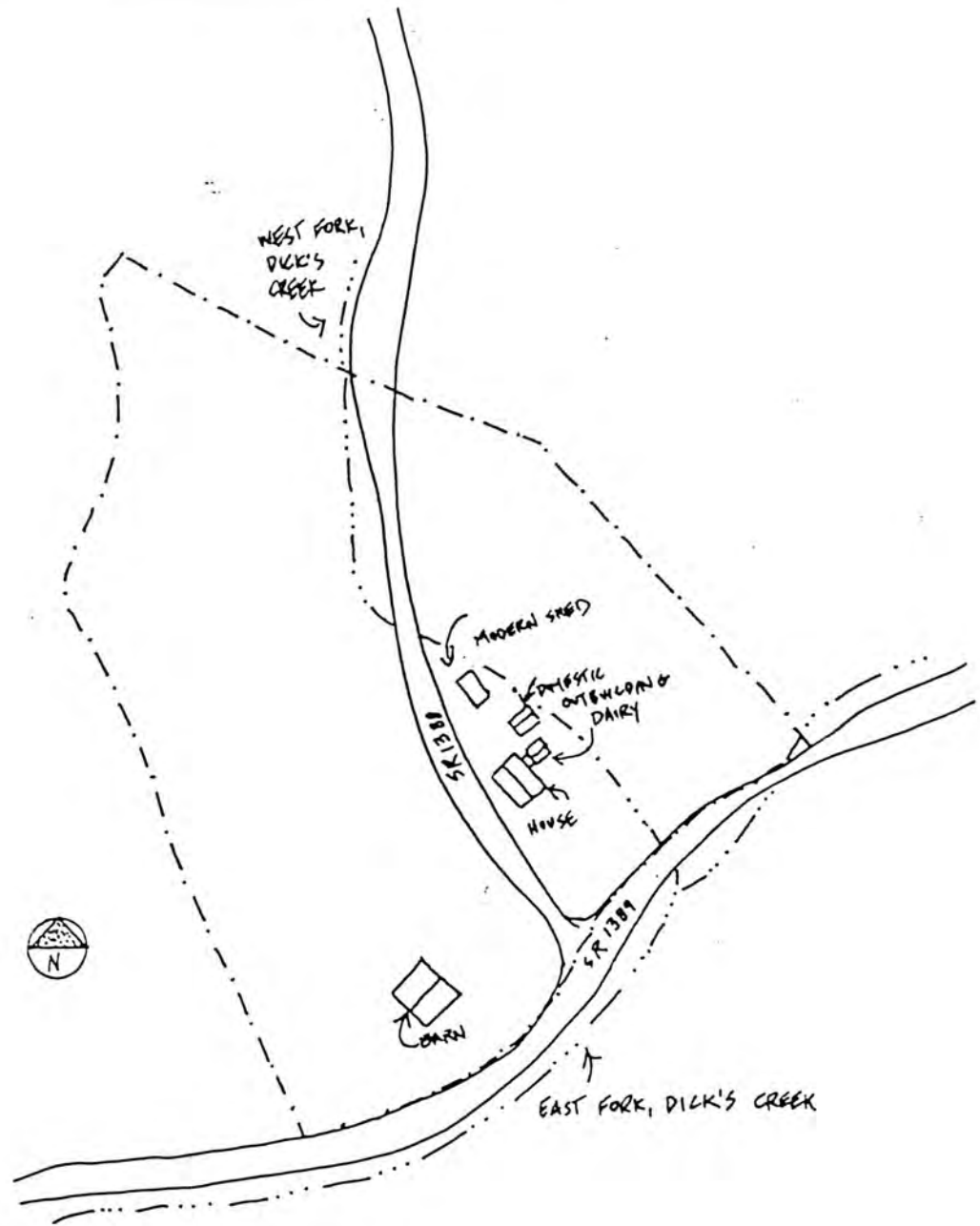
¹⁶ Jackson County Deed Book 63:448.

¹⁷ Jackson County 294, Jackson County Historic Resource Survey, 1989. State Historic Preservation Office, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, NC. Jennifer Martin of the State Historic Preservation Office confirmed that both the bungalow form and the classical detailing found on the Turpin House were not common in Jackson County. Telephone interview, 7 July 1999.

innovation and change.”¹⁸ The Turpin House expresses this tension between the innovative and traditions, and retains a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

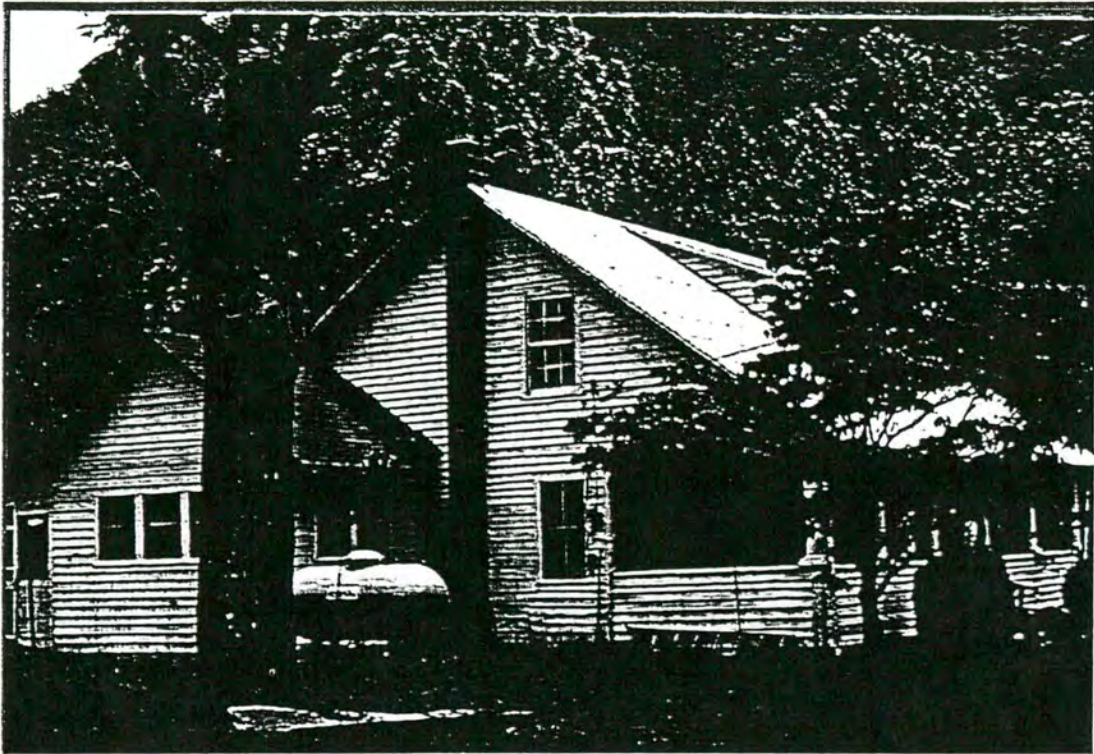
Boundaries: The historic boundary includes the present tax parcel that contains 10.1 acres. The boundary encompasses the historic house and all associated historic outbuildings.

¹⁸ Chase, 187.



Key
 - - - : historic property boundary
 - - - - : creek

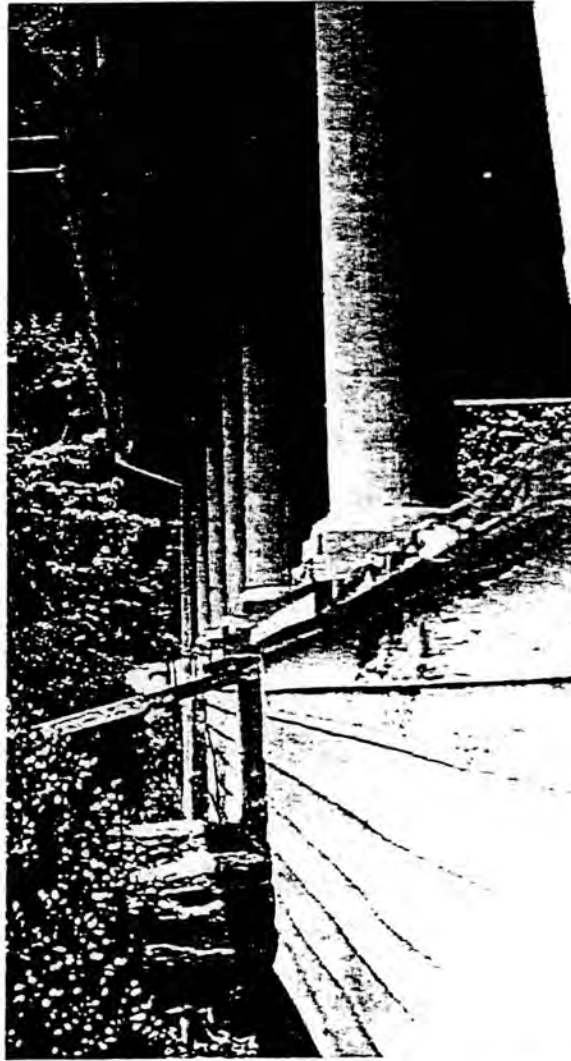
Turpin Farm (JK 294)
Site Plan
Scale: 1 inch = 200 feet



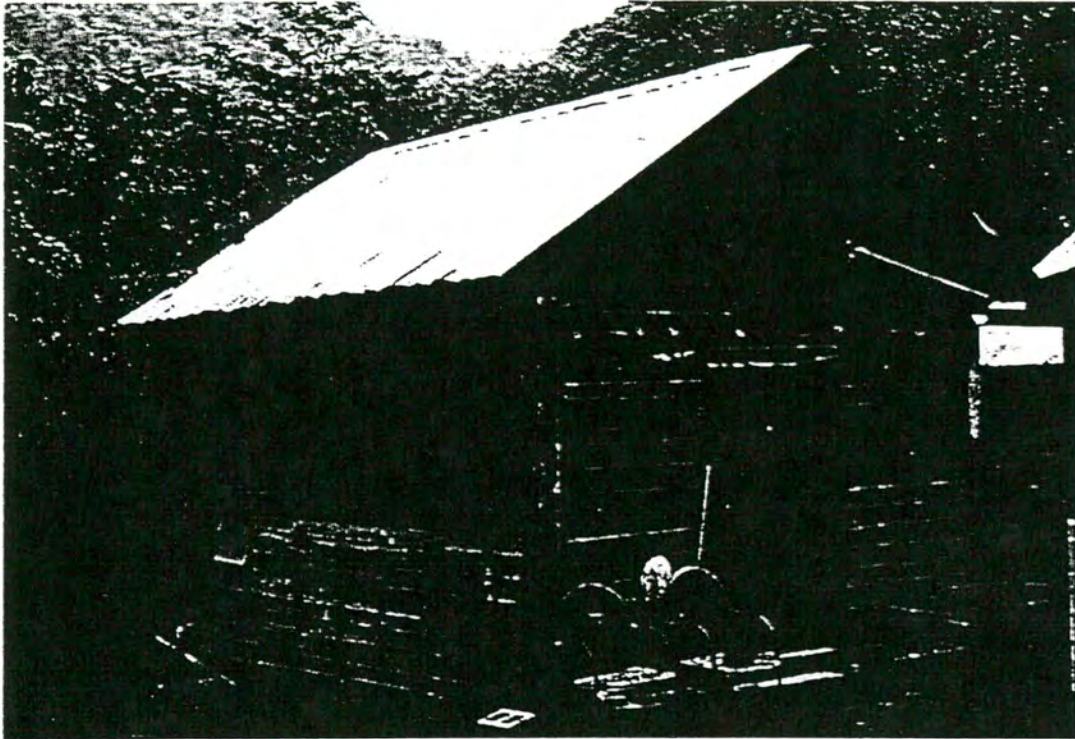
Photograph 1: View of the Turpin House, facing northeast



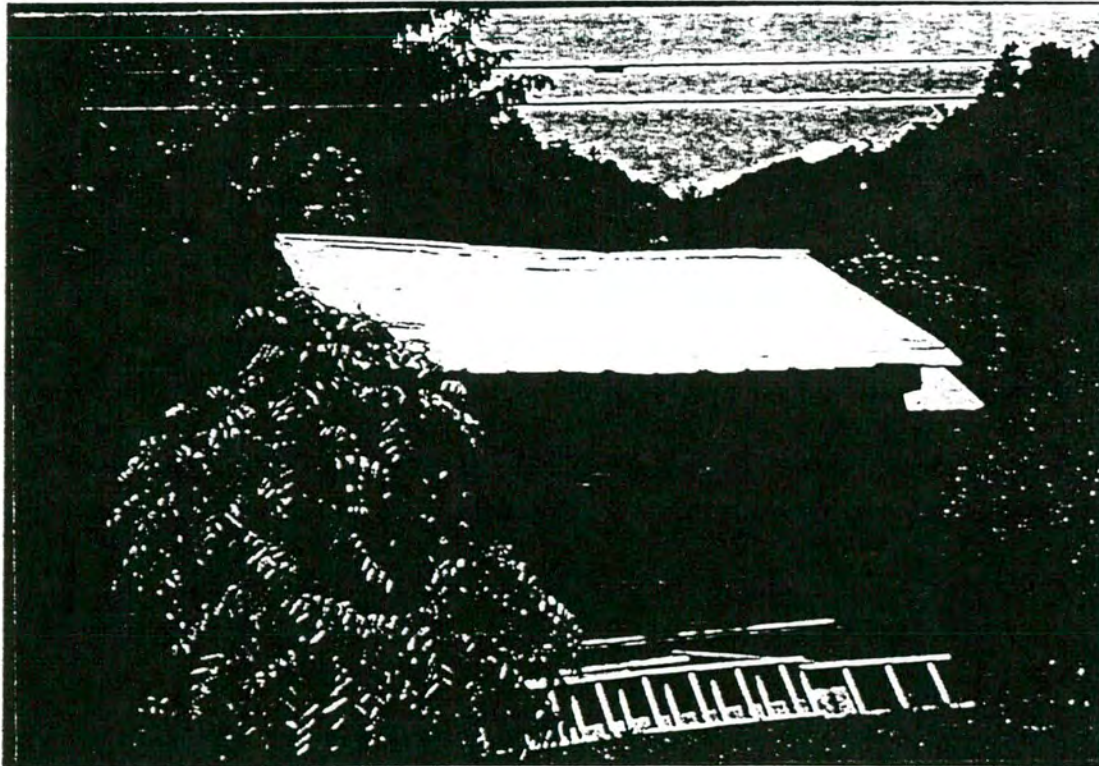
Photograph 2: View of the Turpin House, facing southeast



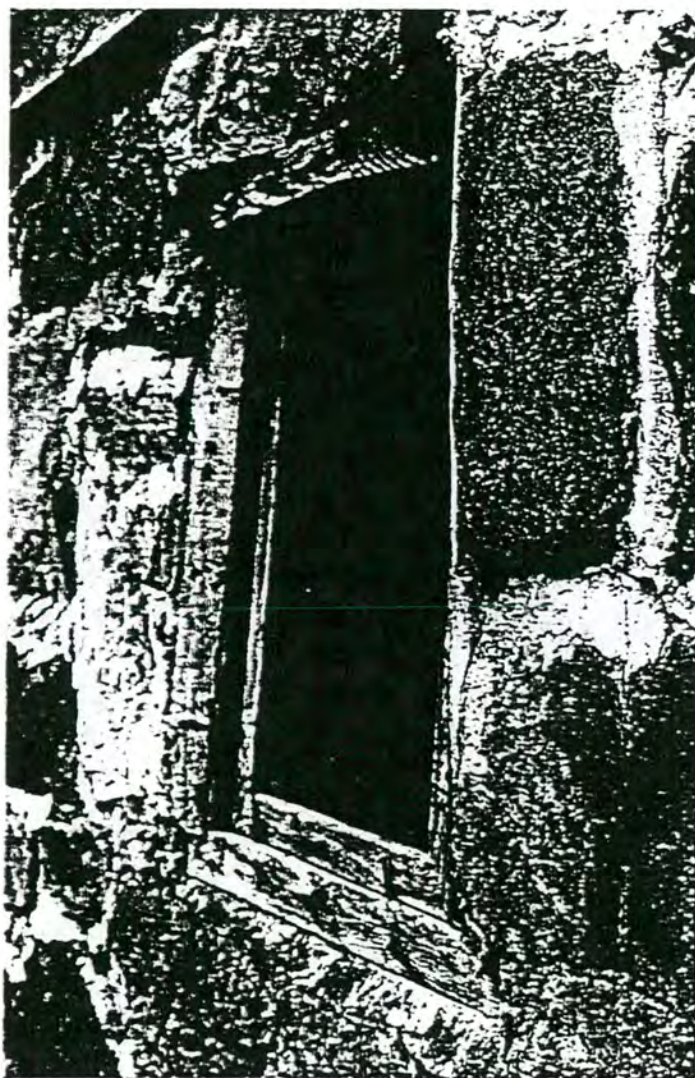
Photograph 3: Detail of the porch of the Turpin House, facing northwest



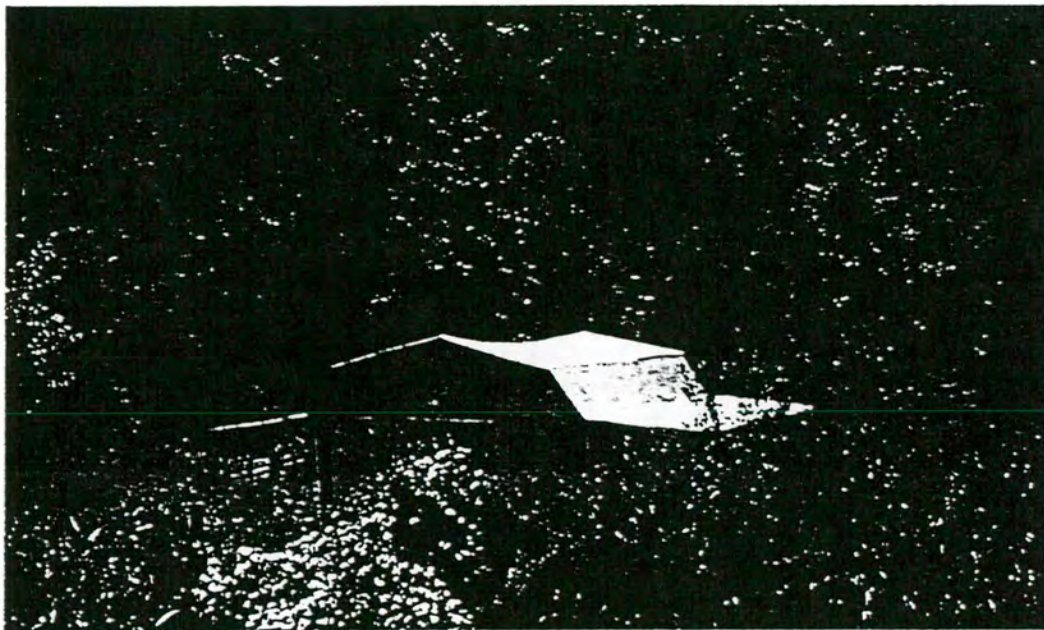
Photograph 4: View of the domestic outbuilding, Turpin Farm, facing northeast



Photograph 5: View of the dairy, Turpin Farm, facing northwest



Photograph 6: Detail of the dairy, Turpin Farm, facing northeast



Photograph 7: View of the barn, Turpin Farm, facing southwest

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