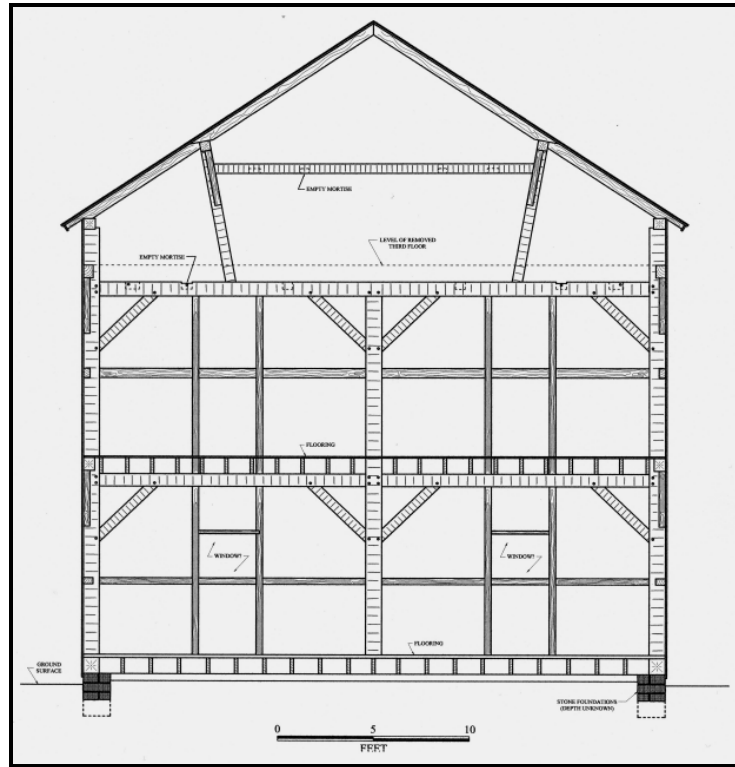


***ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY SHORT REPORT:  
PHASE I ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY AND NATIONAL REGISTER OF  
HISTORIC PLACES ASSESSMENT OF THE BELT FARM SITE (11JY578),  
RURAL JERSEY COUNTY, ILLINOIS***



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Prepared for  
The Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
Springfield, Illinois

June 2008

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY SHORT REPORT

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency  
Old State Capitol, Springfield, Illinois

Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_Accepted

\_\_\_\_\_Rejected

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### **Locational Information and Survey Conditions**

**County:** Jersey

**Quadrangle:** Nutwood, Illinois (1985)

**Project Type/Title:** Phase I archaeological survey and National Register of Historic Places assessment of the Belt Farm Site (11Jy578).

**Responsible Federal/State Agencies:** Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)

**Legal Location:**

SW1/4, NE/14, SW1/4, the SE1/4, NE/14, SW1/4, and NW1/4, SE1/4, SW1/4  
Section 2  
Township 7 North, Range 13 West of 3<sup>rd</sup> P..M.  
Jersey County  
Illinois

**UTM:** 4,327,966m North  
725,072m East

**Project Description:** The project consisted of a Phase I archaeological survey and National Register of Historic Places assessment of the Belt Farm Site (11JY578), which was initiated by the proposed construction of a hunter parking lot and future demolition of the existing buildings at the site. The property presently sits vacant, and the buildings pose a long-term maintenance and safety problem for IDNR. As such, it has been proposed that the buildings be demolished. The field investigation primarily involved an architectural assessment of the three older buildings at the site: a residence and two barns. Shovel testing also was conducted in the area impacted by the proposed hunter parking lot.

**Topography:** The Belt Farm Site is located within the boundaries of Copperhead Hollow State Wildlife Area, a satellite of Pere Marquette State Park. The site lies at the mouth of Barn Hollow, at the bluffbase framing the northern edge of the Otter Creek Valley. The hillsides bordering Barn Hollow are steep and heavily dissected, as is characteristic of this section of Jersey County. An unnamed, intermittent stream follows through the hollow, crossing the eastern edge of the Belt Farm Site. Several springs also issue forth around the mouth of the hollow; an especially vigorous one is located approximately 21 meters due east of larger of the two barns at the site. The Otter Creek Valley is approximately one-half mile wide in the vicinity of the Belt Farm Site and is extensively farmed. The more level lands in valley are devoted primarily to row crop production, while gentler hillsides and the floors of the hollows are used for grazing.

**Soils:** Fayette-Rozetta-Stronghurst soil association

**Drainage:** Unnamed intermittent stream, Otter Creek, Illinois River, Mississippi River

**Land Use/Ground Cover:** Grass, weeds

**Survey Limitations:** The field investigations at the Belt Farm Site primarily were concerned with the recordation of standing structures more than 50 years old. The survey for a subsurface archaeological component at the site was confined exclusively to the area to be impacted by the construction of the proposed parking lot. This area represents the front yard of the existing residence and only a small portion of the overall site. The front yard was covered with weeds and grass and had a very low surface visibility, which necessitated shovel testing.

### **Archaeological and Historical Information**

#### *Geographical and Historical Setting*

Pere Marquette State Park is situated in western Jersey County overlooking the juncture of the Illinois and Mississippi rivers. Rosedale and western Quarry townships lie in a driftless area that apparently was not glaciated during the Pleistocene period. Much of the terrain in the park is dissected by steep, narrow ridges that are divided by ravines up to 90 meters deep. These ridges were covered by a thick mantle of wind-blown loess during the Wisconsin Age. Since that time, loess has been gradually eroded down-slope, exposing limestone formations at many points and forming a terrace along the bluff facing the Illinois River Valley (Clifton 1990:138). The floodplain, with its numerous back water ponds and marshes, varies between 1 mile to 1 1/2 miles in width. Major water courses in the area include Otter and Coon creeks, which are respectively located in northern and central Rosedale Township.

At the time of European-American settlement, most of Rosedale Township was covered by an oak/hickory forest. The few openings in the forest were found on the river bottom, where occasional stretches of prairie were located (United States General Land Office Plat 1833: vol.19, p.52). While much of this timber growth would eventually be cleared away, Rosedale Township was depicted as being predominantly covered by forest as late as 1872 (Andreas, Lyter and Company 1872:82).

The first documented European-American settlement in what now is Jersey County, occurred in the fall of 1815, when Daniel Allen, his three sons, and Paul and James Harriford settled in Section 13 in current Jersey Township. These men remained at this location for only one year before moving on to some other location. Within a year of their departure, however, other settlers began to arrive and spread throughout the county (Continental Historical Company 1885:72). Settlement was gradual, but relatively slow, until the early 1830s. At that time, there was an influx of immigrants to the county, many of whom became established along the prairie-timber border in present-day English, Otter

Creek, and Mississippi townships. Settlement was particularly heavy in Otter Creek Prairie and Lofton's Prairie. The vast majority of the early settlers in Jersey County were southerners who had emigrated from such states as Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky (Clifton 1990:156).

Settlers heading to Jersey County generally came by way of the American Bottom, particularly the Madison County region. During the 1830s, a road ran north from Madison County and passed through the Lofton Prairie and Otter Creek Prairie settlements, before continuing north to Carrolton, the county seat of Greene County. This road was the southern leg of a longer road corridor that ran parallel to the Illinois River via Naples, Peoria, and Chicago (cf. Burr 1834). Much of the initial settlement of the lower Illinois River Valley occurred along this corridor, and Jersey County had far more immigrants passing through it, between 1820 and 1840, than were actually settling there. During this period, settlers were particularly drawn to the "Sangamon Country" to the north, and by 1840, the population density in portions of Morgan, Cass, and Sangamon counties was significantly higher than it was in Jersey County (Howard 1972:156; Leonard 1989:14). Jersey County, itself, wasn't separated from Greene County and officially organized until February 1839. At that time, Jerseyville was selected as the county seat.

In 1832, a new road was completed that ran south from Carrolton. This road was probably an improved version of the older trail, and it followed, for most of its length, the route of its predecessor. Instead of turning east, towards Madison County, however, the new road ran straight south, to the town of Grafton which was situated at the juncture of the Illinois and Mississippi rivers.

Grafton's selection as the southern terminus of the road was largely the doing of James Mason. Mason had ties to certain business interests in St. Louis that were fearful of nearby Alton developing as a trade rival. Mason hoped to weaken Alton's position by establishing Grafton as the major point of trade in what was then Greene County. The new road naturally directed southbound products to Grafton, where they were then ferried across the Mississippi and transported overland to St. Louis, twenty miles away; products heading north from St. Louis followed the same route. As a result, Alton was bypassed and denied any of the potential benefits from this trade (Hamilton 1919:89-90).

By the time this road was completed in 1832, Mason had purchased the site where Grafton was to be located and had started operating a store there. In 1833, he obtained a license for operating a ferry service across the Mississippi River. That same year, Mason, Silas Hamilton, and a number of other businessmen incorporated what was called the Grafton Manufacturing Company. The stated purpose of this company was to erect grist, woolen, and cotton mills at Grafton, and to conduct a general mercantile, manufacturing, and shipping business from that point. Mason and Hamilton both died in 1834, however, and their company died with them (Hamilton 1919:90).

Nonetheless, Grafton did survive, and the town was formally platted by James Mason's brother, Paris, in 1836 (Edwards 1993). Grafton residents, like those throughout the



region, experienced economic hardship in the years following the Panic of 1837, but the fortunes of the town steadily improved. By 1840, Grafton had become the principle trading point in Jersey County, and its prosperity was to grow as the amount of water-borne commerce carried on the Illinois and Mississippi rivers increased during the nineteenth century. The town's location made it an ideal hub for the trade being conducted between the two rivers --a role that assumed greater significance following the completion of the Illinois and Michigan Canal in 1848 (Edwards 1993).

By 1860, a number of local industries had been established in Grafton. Boat manufacturing had begun there in the late 1830s and, over the course of the century, the industry was to expand and produce vessels ranging from dredge boats and barges to fishing skiffs. Several grist mills had been built; one of these, run by William Allen, produced flour that was shipped as far away as Boston, Massachusetts. A significant limestone industry had also developed in Grafton by that time. The limestone in the bluffs behind the town was discovered to be extremely durable and well suited for building purposes, and during the 1850s it began to be quarried commercially. Once the rock was extracted, it was cut, and the finished blocks placed on barges for shipment. Grafton limestone saw heavy use in St. Louis, where it was used in the construction of such projects as the Old Cathedral and the Eads Bridge. In 1867, there were five quarries operating at Grafton, employing a total of 2,000 men (Edwards 1992:8,11).

Another shipping point in Jersey County was the town of Elsah, located four miles downstream from Grafton. A post-office was established at Elsah in 1852, and in 1861 a grain dealer from St. Louis constructed a warehouse and grain elevator there. The town was incorporated in 1872. Six years later, a flouring mill was built, adjacent to the warehouse and grain elevator (Continental Historical Company 1885:272).

The most important upland town in the county was Jerseyville. Founded in 1834, Jerseyville was platted around a hickory grove in the north-central part of the township. The town's initial growth was slow on account of it lying well east of the Grafton and Carrollton Road. Sometime after 1835, however, a major road was built between Carrollton and Alton that passed through Jerseyville (Burr 1834; Leonard 1989:7). This improvement no doubt proved an economic boom and was probably an influential factor in Jerseyville being selected as the county seat in 1839.

Smaller communities were located throughout the county. Two of the more significant ones were Fieldon, in Richwoods Township, and Otterville, in Otter Creek Township. While neither Fieldon nor Otterville were particularly large, they prospered from a local trade. In 1872, both towns had a number of stores, a blacksmith shop, and a grist mill in operation (Andreas, Lyter and Company 1872:7). The Belt Farm Site lies approximately three miles southwest of Fieldon, and its history is connected to some degree to that of the town, as will be discussed in more detail below.

Agricultural production in Jersey County during the nineteenth century included wheat, corn, oats, and some rye. Wheat and corn were the primary cash crops (Andreas, Lyter and Company 1872:5). For most of the century, Jersey County farmers had to export

their grain by steamboat, due to the relatively late improvement of land transportation networks there. As late as 1853, Jersey County had neither any plank roads, nor railroads—an absence Rev. L. Grosvenor claimed had caused Jersey County to be "crowded into a corner" by those neighboring counties that did have such improvements (Hamilton 1919:387-388). The Chicago and Alton Railroad was laid through the southeast corner of Jersey County in 1854, but it passed through such a small segment of the county that it had a minimal effect on transportation there (Hamilton 1919:357).

Railroad development in Jersey County occurred on a more significant level in the years following the Civil War. In 1865, the Alton and Jacksonville Railroad was extended from White Hall, in Greene County, through Jerseyville. Beyond Jerseyville, the railroad passed through Delhi and on into Madison County, where it joined up with the old Chicago and Alton Railroad at Godfrey. Trains began operating on the track during the spring of 1866 (Hamilton 1919:407). By 1885, two more railroads had been laid through Jersey County. One of these was the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad which passed through Ruyle Township in the northeast corner of the county. The other railroad was the St. Louis, Jerseyville, and Springfield Branch of the Wabash Railroad; it entered the county from the northeast, ran through Jerseyville, and then headed south toward Elsah, where it ran along the Mississippi River to Grafton (Continental Historical Company 1885:56).

The railroads had a dramatic impact on the older transportation routes in the county. The stagecoach line between Jerseyville and Alton, for instance, was discontinued in 1866 after the Jacksonville and Alton Railroad began operating. There was also a reduction in river commerce. Elevators, grist mills, lumber yards, coal yards, and cattle yards were built along railroad right-of-ways, and farmers in eastern and central Jersey County found the rail lines more accessible than the river landings (Hamilton 1919:407-408). Waterborne commerce continued into the twentieth century, but it fell far below pre-Civil War levels and could not match the amount of commerce conducted by rail.

The railroad also encouraged the growth of a number of towns. The towns of East Newbern, Delhi, Dow, and Kemper were all founded along rail lines. Jerseyville, which had two lines passing through it, received an economic boost, and between 1870 and 1919, its population grew from 3,000 to 5,000. A less positive effect was that certain local industries suddenly found themselves facing greater competition now that products from all over the state could be easily shipped by rail to Jersey County. Local grist mills, for instance, found it difficult to compete with larger milling interests, and as a result, none survived into the early twentieth century (Hamilton 1919:408).

Railroad development had less of an effect in western Jersey County. No rail line passed through this area, and the rugged, timbered terrain found there distinctly separated it from the eastern and central parts of the county. Farming was more difficult in western Jersey County, and the farmers there had to support themselves through a mixture of agriculture, horticulture, and raising livestock. Level land along streams and on hilltops was cleared for the planting of crops, while orchards were planted on hillsides (Clifton 1990:15). Orchards were common along hillsides, and the region became noted for the fine fruit

grown there (Hamilton 1919:474). There were fewer roads in this part of the county, and the ones that did exist generally meandered their way along ridge-tops or through hollows, offering little cross communication between them. As no rail line passed nearby, commerce was conducted by steamboat well into the twentieth century. Steamboat landings were located at the mouths of Otter and Coon creeks, and agricultural products were regularly shipped from those points (Hamilton 1919:474).

Rosedale Township, in particular, was noted for its ruggedness and rural isolation. The first recorded settlement in the township was made by William LaRue, who built a cabin in Section 8 sometime during 1818. In 1836, Joseph Hawkins platted out the town of Tenneriffe (in Section 4) along the banks of Otter Creek. Three stores were established in Tenneriffe in the years that followed. By 1840, however, none of the stores were still in business and the town site was eventually turned over to agricultural use (Continental Historical Company 1885:399). Later in the century, business interests in the township became centralized around Rosedale and Nutwood. While neither of these towns were ever incorporated, they were both significant in terms of their respective locations.

Rosedale was located in Section 16 in Good Hollow. Two roads from the uplands intersected at the upper end of the hollow, and a common road then passed through the hollow and met up with the bluff-base road. Jones' Ferry, located on the Illinois River, lay only a mile or so to the west and any traffic heading to the ferry had to pass through Rosedale. The original date of settlement at the town site is not known, but in 1870 James Sinclair established a post-office and store there; a short time after that, a blacksmith shop was opened (Continental Historical Company 1885:398,400). At some point, a school-house also was built at the upper end of the hollow.

Nutwood lay to the north of Rosedale, in Section 4, on a terrace above Otter Creek. A road running parallel to Otter Creek joined up with the bluff-base road just south of the town, and a road from Fieldon passed right through it. A steamboat landing and warehouse were located on Otter Creek Island, a mile and half west of Nutwood. During the nineteenth century, the town was known as "Pittsburg," and, at that time, consisted of little more than a cluster of buildings (Andreas, Lyter and Company 1872:82; Ogle 1893:74). The town may have experienced some growth early in the twentieth century, however, because it officially was platted sometime prior to 1916 (Ogle 1916:17). The Belt Farm Site is located approximately two miles east of Nutwood and lies athwart an old road that formerly connected the community to the central Jersey County via the Otter Creek Valley.

Lacking railroads and any towns of significant size, Rosedale Township had rather modest industrial development during the nineteenth century. The industries that did develop made use of the resources most readily available in the township: timber and limestone. Lumber production in the township began in 1833, when James Brice constructed a sawmill along Otter Creek in Section 11 (Continental Historical Company 1885:399). The industry expanded in the years that followed, and in 1850, the Federal Census listed "lumberman" as one of the most common occupations for adult males in Rosedale Township (Clifton 1990:156). Two decades later, while much of the timber

had been cleared off the bottoms and along streams, the majority of the township was still depicted as being wooded (Andreas, Lyter and Company 1872:82). The Otter Creek Valley, in particular, witnessed intensive logging activity during the middle nineteenth century. In 1885, H. D. Preble was reported to be operating a steam powered saw mill in the township that was capable of sawing 6,000 feet of white-oak lumber daily; three men were employed in this operation (Continental Historical Company 1885:398). That same year [1885], however, it was noted that the acreage devoted to agriculture in Rosedale Township had surpassed that covered by timber. Although the significance of lumbering was to drop, it played a major role in the economic endeavors of the local population for many years to come (Continental Historical Company 1885:396).

Less is known of the limestone industry in the township. An 1872 atlas, however, depicts at least three quarries along the bluff line facing the Illinois River; two of these quarries are in Section 21, while the other is in Section 28 (Andreas, Lyter and Company 1872:72). Although none of these quarries were operated on the same scale as those at Grafton, the rock extracted from them would have seen use locally. A large rock quarry presently is operation only one mile northeast of the Belt Farm Site, in Section 1 of Rosedale Township.

In 1932, large areas of the county were purchased by the State of Illinois and developed for recreational and conservation purposes as Pere Marquette State Park. The park currently comprises about 8,000 acres.

#### *Site-Specific History*

The Belt Farm Site straddles the NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> and SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of Section 2 in Township 7 North, Range 13 West (Rosedale Township). These two 40-acre tracts started out under separate private owners but later were joined under common ownership.

The SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of Section 2 was purchased from the United States by Henry Ontos on November 13, 1832, who paid the standard government purchase price of \$1.25 per acre—or \$50—for the property. On March 30, 1833, Ontos sold the tract to James Brice for the same amount of money (Jersey County Deed Record [Greene] C:194). Brice's purchase of SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of Section 2 coincided with his acquisition of the NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of Section 11, which he had purchased from the government the previous month (February 13). Brice also acquired W<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>, NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of Section 11 at some point. The three tracts in question adjoined one another and were aligned to an S-shaped loop of Otter Creek. Government Land Office (GLO) records note Brice as a resident of Madison County when he bought the NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of Section 11, but he apparently moved to Jersey County shortly afterward. The 1885 county history states that Brice<sup>1</sup> constructed a sawmill "on the banks of Otter creek, on Section 11, on land now belonging to Henry Belt" in 1833 (Continental Historical Company 1885:399). One presumes he would have erected on his own land—i.e. either the NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> or the W<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>, NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of Section 11. County Commissioner Records reference an 1834 survey of a road "commencing at Brice's Mill via Barnett's Mill via McDaniel's to Alton & Carrolton Road" (Jersey

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<sup>1</sup> The county history misspells is name as "Bryce."

County Index to Road Records “A” [1832-1878], No. 7). This description fits an early east-west road which followed the northern edge of the Otter Creek Valley and passed through the Belt Farm Site. Brice’s Mill is referenced once again in the County Commissioner Records, in respect to an 1844 petition to “alter the road from Brice’s Mill to the Stone School House” (Jersey County Commissioners Record A:268). Brice’s name also became attached to a ford across Otter Creek immediately south of SE $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 2 (in the N $\frac{1}{2}$ , NW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 11), which is mentioned in later road surveys (Jersey County Commissioners Record, Road Record C:38, 68).

James Brice retained ownership of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 2 for a little over two years before selling it and four other tracts of land in the area to Mathew Darr for \$3,000 on June 20, 1835. The additional tracts were the W $\frac{1}{2}$ , NW $\frac{1}{4}$  and the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , NW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 11 and the E $\frac{1}{2}$ , NE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 21 in Township 7 North, Range 13 West (Rosedale), as well as the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ , SE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 21 in Township 8 North, Range 13 West (Richwoods). Combined, these various properties contained about 280 acres (Jersey County Deed Record [Greene] C:201). While this acreage was not unsubstantial, the sale price (\$3,000) was fairly high for the period and no doubt reflects the presence of the sawmill, if not other improvements. Brice later moved to Missouri where he erected another mill. By 1885, his Jersey County mill was long “gone, as well as all traces of its having been there (Continental Historical Company 1885:399).

The NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 2 was purchased from the United States by Pollard Kirkland on May 7, 1835. A native of Pennsylvania, Kirkland was a merchant who set up a store on the present site of Fieldon the same year he purchased the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 2. Kirkland’s store was the first business established in Fieldon, which would be platted out formally in 1837. He reportedly “carried a small stock of groceries at first, but afterward added a general stock.” Kirkland remained in Fieldon until around the start of the Mexican War (1846), at which time he sold his business and moved to Texas (Continental Historical Company 1885:388). Although destined to remain in the area for another decade, Kirkland owned the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 2 for only a few months before selling the tract to Mathew Darr on August 15, 1835 for \$50 (Jersey County Deed Record A:349).

It was through Mathew Darr that the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW $\frac{1}{4}$  and SE $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 2 first came under common ownership. Darr was an early settler of Jersey County, having arrived in 1822. He initially settled in Section 14 of Richwoods Township but soon moved to the Illinois River bottom (east of McFain’s Lake) for a period, before finally purchasing land in English Township in 1824, where he remained permanently. An 1885 biography of Darr states that “by industry and good management, he accumulated considerable property” (Continental Historical Company 1885:368). We have no documentary evidence of Darr having ever occupied the Belt Farm Site. On June 5, 1838, Mathew Darr he sold the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW $\frac{1}{4}$  and SE $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 2 and the W $\frac{1}{2}$ , NW $\frac{1}{4}$  and NE  $\frac{1}{4}$ , NW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 11 to Allen Barnett of Louisville, Kentucky for \$2,000 (Jersey County Deed Record [Greene] C:201). These tracts, which together contained about 200 acres, straddled both sides of Otter Creek where Brice’s Ford was located. As in the earlier

transaction between Brice and Darr, the sale price suggests that the property was improved to some extent.

In contrast to the previous owners, Allen Barnett was not a local resident. Much of what we know of his personal history comes from an obituary issued following his death on September 19, 1879. This obituary was first published in the *Daily Ledger Standard* of New Albany, Indiana and reprinted by a Jerseyville newspaper in October 1, 1879. It states that Barnett began his career in the hardware business in Louisville and later invented “some improvement in stoves” from which he “realized quite a handsome sum of money.” He subsequently sold his business in Louisville and relocated to a farm on the outskirts of Charlestown, Clark County, Indiana (opposite Louisville). Barnett invested heavily in real estate, buying substantial acreage in his home county as well as in Illinois and Iowa. His obituary observes that, “Many years ago he invested very largely in what was called the wild lands in Illinois, out of which he realized very large profits. At one time he owned nearly one entire county and large tracts in other portions of the state” (Jersey County Historical Society, Barnett Family Vertical File). Jersey County was one of those areas in Illinois where Barnett purchased property on an extensive scale. Tax records for 1847 list Allen Barnett as owning 4,013.9 acres of land in Jersey County, spread between five different townships. He owned 1,715.56 acres in Township 7 North, Range 13 West alone; these lands were concentrated in the northern end of the township, following the course of Otter Creek (Jersey County Tax Record 1847).

The preface added to Barnett’s obituary by the Jerseyville newspaper when it was reprinted states that, “The deceased formerly resided here [Jersey County] and will be remembered by many of our citizens who read this with melancholy interest.” Exactly when—and for how long—Barnett lived in Jersey County is not known. His earliest Public Domain acquisitions in the county occurred in the 1830s, and Government Land Office records pertaining to these sales consistently note him as a resident of Louisville, or just Kentucky (Illinois State Archives). As noted above, he was living in Louisville when he purchased the property associated with the Belt Farm Site in 1838, and census records establish that he had relocated to Clark County, Indiana by 1840 (USBC 1840:295-6).<sup>2</sup> Supervision of his Jersey County lands may have been placed to some extent in the hands of Thomas Barnett, a suspected brother. Thomas Barnett did reside in Jersey County for an extended period and, like Allen, made substantial Public Domain purchases there during the 1830s. Between 1833 and 1837, Thomas Barnett acquired 560 acres from the federal government, 280 acres of which was located in Sections 1 and 12 of Rosedale Township. He also was involved in the milling industry there, as recounted in an 1885 county history:

About the year 1840, Thomas Barnett started a grist mill on the north side of Otter Creek, on Section 1 [Rosedale Township]. It stood a little over a mile down the creek from McDaniels’ mill, on land which now belongs to Henry Schaff. It was a stone mill when built, but had not been long constructed ere it was washed away by a rise in the creek. He then put up a frame mill. The mill had two run of buhrs, and did considerable grinding

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<sup>2</sup> The 1840 census classifies Allen Barnett’s occupation under “Manufacturers and Trades.”

being a very good mill for that day. The mill has gone to decay, and no trace of it now remains. The millstones were afterwards used at Demphey's distillery at Grafton (Continental Publishing Company 1885:398).

Thomas Barnett's grist mill was located on the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 1, a tract he had purchased from the United States in 1833 (Illinois State Archives). Writing in 1916, Bob Baltimore claimed that, "When Jersey and Green Co. were one, people from beyond Macoupin Creek brought their corn and wheat to this mill" (Baltimore 1916). Barnett's mill was a prominent local landmark and is mentioned often in early road records. It was located at the intersection of two important local roads: one of these—previously mentioned in regard to Brice's Mill—ran from the Illinois River up the length of the Otter Creek Valley and eventually connected with the important Alton to Carrollton Road (present-day U. S. Route 67) near Jerseyville; the other ran south of Fieldon, crossed Otter Creek at Barnett's Mill, and eventually entered the Illinois River Valley at Rosedale on Coon Creek.

A cursory examination of several deed records on file at the Jersey County Recorder's Office gives the impression that Thomas Barnett found himself in financial difficulty by the middle 1840s and may have turned to Allen for support (Jersey County Deed Record B:289, C:612). The extent of Thomas and Allen Barnett's business relationship is not fully understood. What is known is that by 1847 the land on which Barnett's Mill was located was being taxed in Allen's name rather than Thomas's. The 160 acres in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 2 were given an assessed value of \$480, or \$3 per acre, which appears to have been the base value of rural land in Jersey County this year (Jersey County Tax Record 1847). Thomas Barnett is not listed in the 1850 census for Jersey County, which suggests that he had departed from the scene by that date.

Barnett's Mill apparently was still standing as late as 1870—though perhaps not in operation—as it is illustrated and labeled on a county road map produced that year. The 1872 county atlas may also depict the mill but does not specifically name it (Jersey County Road Book A; Andreas, Lyter and Company 1872). Even though the 1885 county history suggests that the mill had vanished completely by that date, Bob Baltimore in 1916 asserted that "old mill timbers may be seen there in a good state of preservation" (Baltimore 1916).

It is worth noting that several of Allen Barnett's children ultimately settled in Jersey County even though he himself chose to remain in Indiana. His eldest son, Dr. Allen A. Barnett, moved to a farm east of Jerseyville (owned by the father) in 1862 and later relocated to the county seat. A graduate of Miami University (1847) and the University of Louisville's Medical School (1853), Dr. Barnett practiced medicine in Jersey County for over a half a century before dying in 1917. A younger brother name Clarence also moved to the county, as did his sister Mrs. C. T. Edee (Jersey County Historical Society, Barnett Family Vertical File).

Allen Barnett was destined to retain ownership of the land associated with the Belt Farm Site for some twenty-five years (1838-1863). We do not know what the property was used for during this lengthy period, but there is a strong possibility of it having been exposed to lumbering activity. During the middle nineteenth century, lumbering represented a major local industry in the Otter Creek Valley. According to Bob Baltimore, "There were large wood yards scattered along both banks of Otter Creek at the 'Low Banks' now known as Red Onion beanery, Tenneriffe, and Log Shoals." One individual involved in harvesting wood in the valley was John Maloy, who lived about mid-way between the Belt Farm Site and present-day Nutwood. Baltimore describes Maloy as a "large wood boat owner, some of his boats had a capacity of 600 cords." As timber became scarce on his own property, Maloy reportedly began harvesting it from the extensive lands Allen Barnett owned in the valley. This was done without Barnett's permission, and once Maloy's actions were exposed, he was forced to pay the market price for the timber plus 10% (Baltimore 1916).

On December 15, 1863, Allen Barnett sold the entire SW¼ of Section 2 (which would include the Belt Farm Site) and the NE¼, NW¼ of Section 11 of Rosedale Township to Horatio N. Belt, Sr. for \$1,050. That same day, in a separate transaction, Barnett sold the W½, NE¼ of Section 11 to Belt for \$750 (Jersey County Deed Record AA:117-178). Belt was a resident of the nearby town of Fieldon, and it was he who reportedly informed Allen Barnett of John Maloy's illegal lumbering activities (Baltimore 1916). It is unclear whether this done prior to, or following, Belt's purchase of aforementioned lands.

Horatio N. Belt had arrived in Jersey County in the fall of 1832, a date early enough for him to be considered one of the county's "old settlers" during his own lifetime. His path to Jersey County was by no means direct. Born in Maryland on November 1, 1796, Horatio Belt moved to Virginia at the age of 3. As a young teenager, he enlisted in the Army at beginning of the War of 1812 and served for the duration of the conflict. Following the conclusion of the war, Belt settled in eastern Tennessee and married Spicie Drake. The couple subsequently moved on to Alabama, where they remained until departing for Illinois in 1819. Once in Illinois, the Belts moved in rapid succession from Kaskaskia to Vandalia before finally settling in St. Clair County in the fall of 1819. There Horatio was reunited with his parents, who had immigrated that same year. Spicie Belt died in 1820, and in 1821 Horatio married for a second time, to Mary J. West. He spent 1830-1832 working in St. Louis as a carpenter, learning a trade he would put to good use later on. In the fall of 1832, Horatio and Mary Belt moved their family to Jersey County and settled in English Township (Township 7 North, Range 12 West). Horatio is said to have constructed the first storehouse in Jerseyville, for the firm of Lott and Daily (Jersey County Historical Society, Belt Family Vertical File). The 1850 census of Jersey County reports Horatio N. Belt as a 53-year-old farmer owning \$2,500 worth of real estate and residing in English Township (Township 8 North, Range 12 West) (USBC 1850:138).

Around 1854, Horatio N. Belt moved his family to the town of Fieldon. In conjuncture with this move, three of his sons—John H., Vinton W., and James H. Belt—organized "Belt Brothers and Company" and constructed the Eugenie Mills in Fieldon. Although



primarily a flouring facility, the Eugenie Mills had a sawmill attached to it originally as well. The main building measured 24'x62' and stood three stories tall. A younger brother named Horatio N., Jr. later joined the company after he came of age (Continental Historical Company 1885:391-2). The extent of the father's involvement in Belt Brothers and Company is unclear, though it is reasonable to suppose he provided some financial backing initially. In the 1860 census, the senior Horatio is reported as a justice of the peace, a capacity in which he reportedly served for many years. He died at his home in Fieldon on January 8, 1870. The 1872 *Atlas of Jersey County* describes Horatio N. Belt, Sr. as having been a "man of industry and energy" and a successful businessman (USBC 1860:8; Andres, Lyter, and Company 1872).

Prior to his death, Horatio N. Belt had sold an undivided half interest in several tracts of land surrounding the Belt Farm Site to his son James H. This sale occurred on February 24, 1868 and included half interest in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  and the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ , NW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 2 and the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , NW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 11 in Rosedale Township, as well as full interest in a 2-acre tract described in metes and bounds in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 26 in Richwoods Township. James purchased these tracts, which comprised about 242 acres total, for \$1,500 (Jersey County Deed Record 30:403).

In September 1870, James H. Belt submitted a petition to the Jersey County Board of Commissioners requesting the surveying a new county road running between south-central Rosedale Township and Fieldon. At least thirty-five individuals had attached their names to this petition. The summary of the petition that was incorporated into the County Commissioner Records is worth quoting in full:

Thursday Sept. 9<sup>th</sup> [1869]

On this day came James H. Belt and presented his Petition for a County Road beginning at the South West Corner of Section No. Twenty five (25) Township Seven (7), Range Thirteen (13) thence on an old traveled Road through the farm of August Blaisner and on said old traveled road continuing the route on the Ridge until intersecting the Road leading from Thos. K. Phipps to Coon Creek. Thence on Said Old Way to or near the land of T. K. Phipps. Thence on the best route to the Brice ford of Otter Creek. *Thence crossing the Farm of H. N. Belt & Sons so as to leave the Dwelling House and Stable on the right hand or East side of the road.* Thence on the old traveled way until it intersects the old Original Road as first laid out in 1850 running from Fieldon to Pittsburg, thence on the said old route to Fieldon at the West End of \_\_\_\_\_ Street" (County Commissioners Record C:38; italics by authors).

Several points of interest are presented here relating to the Belt Farm Site. To begin with the petition mentions a farm owned by the Belts on the north side of Otter Creek. Moreover, it references a "Dwelling House and Stable" present on this farm, located east of the proposed road. Although distance between the road and house and stable is not indicated, the fact that the buildings were used as landmarks suggests that they were

fairly close to the road. The petition also suggests that the proposed road actually was not completely new as such, but rather was to interconnect and improve upon a series of preexisting “old traveled” roads, hereafter to be maintained by the county. On the Belt Farm, the new route was to follow segments of two such “old traveled” roads: one running east-west between the Illinois River and Barnett’s Mill, and the other running north-south via Brice’s Ford. James Brice’s sawmill was long gone by this date, but his name was still attached to the ford. South of Otter Creek, the road was to follow the summit of Meadow Branch Ridge for much of its remaining distance. The road certainly would have improved access to the Belt Farm; James Belt perhaps also viewed it as a mechanism for drawing business from central and southern Rosedale Township into Fieldon.

The survey for the new road (which was 40’ wide) was approved by the County Commissioners on January 10, 1870. The survey notes and a map for the road are incorporated into the County Commissioners Record, but they do not specifically reference or illustrate any buildings on the Belt Farm, in contrast to the petition of the previous year (County Commissioners Record C:68-69) (see Figure 7). Larger maps illustrating the new route are included in a separate road plat book. The plat book is arranged by township, so the road in question is split between two pages (one for Richwoods and the other for Rosedale). The Richwoods plat labels the road “No. 3 Fieldon to Burn’s Mill” (see Figure 8). The reference to Burn’s Mill is intriguing, as we could find no information on this landmark in the county histories or other sources. Although the location of Burns’ Mill has not been determined, it must have been situated somewhere along this road. The road survey is continued on the Rosedale plat, where it is designated as “No. 2 From Grafton to Fieldon.” Unfortunately, this plat fails to illustrate the dwelling and stable on the Belt Farm referred to in 1869 petition, even though it does depict Barnett’s Mill and the Phipp’s House on the next road east. What is clear from this plat, however, is the road would have passed along the west side of the Belt Farm Site (see Figures 9 and 10).

Another source illustrating conditions at the Belt Farm Site during this period is the 1872 *Atlas of Jersey County*. The atlas indicates that Belt Brothers and Company owned more than 500 acres of land in Sections 2 and 11 of Rosedale Township at this point in time. The majority of this acreage is depicted by the atlas as being cleared of timber, including all of that lying within the Otter Creek Valley as well in the base of the much narrower Barn Hollow. Only the steeper hillsides and ridgetops on the farm are illustrated as wooded. This source illustrates two residences on the Belt property, one of which is located at the mouth of Barn Hollow (immediately east of the creek running through the hollow), where the large feeder barn at the Belt Farm Site stands today. The other residence is situated a short distance east, beyond the mouth of the hollow. Both dwellings lie on the north side of the road between the Illinois River and Barnett’s Mill. Interestingly, no buildings are depicted in closer proximity to the Fieldon-Grafton Road, as the 1869 petition by James H. Belt might suggest they were, or where the existing residence at the Belt Farm Site stands. A third residence is illustrated farther up Barn Hollow, on land owned by J. Erwin (Andreas, Lyter and Company 1872) (see Figures 11 and 12).

None of the partners in Belt Brothers and Company are known to have resided on their farm along Otter Creek. Instead, they seem to have lived at other locations in Richwoods and English Townships between their father's initial purchase of the property in 1863 and the eventual departure of some members from the county in the 1880s. In 1870, for instance, James H. Belt and Horatio N. Belt were both residing in Fieldon. James was then age 36 and serving as Sheriff of Jersey County. His real estate holdings at this time were valued at \$23,000, while his personal property was worth \$5,000. His brother Horatio, who was then age 29, was employed as a miller (presumably at the Eugenie Mills). Horatio is reported in the census as owning \$18,000 worth of real estate and \$5,000 worth of personal property (USBC 1870a:28; 1870b:14, 17). Both men were quite well-to-do for the period. An 1880 newspaper article described James H. Belt as "one of Jersey county's wealthiest farmers" (Jersey County Historical Society, Belt Family Vertical File).

The Belt Farm is suspected to have been occupied by an unidentified tenant farmer(s) during this period. The 1870 census of Rosedale Township lists a string of seven households occupied by tenant farmers believed to be located on the north side of the Otter Creek Valley in proximity to the farm. These households precede those of William Butts, a small landowner who owned and resided upon the NE¼, SE¼ of Section 2, one-half mile east of the Belt Farm Site (USBC 1870c:17-18).

The business interests of Belt brothers were varied and changed over time. In 1871, James H. and Horatio N. Belt invested in a general store in Fieldon run by C. S. Olney, who had married their sister Virginia in 1868. Their involvement with C. S. Olney and Company was short term, for in May 1874 Olney bought out his brother-in-laws' interest in the store and became the sole proprietor. In 1873, Belt Brothers and Company sold their Eugenie Mills to C. C. Buzby, who afterwards expanded the facility and updated its machinery. John H. Belt, however, soon became involved with a second flouring mill in Fieldon, constructed and operated by the Union Milling Company. Belt was one of the original partners in the company, and after the Union Mill was completed he leased it from the company for one year and then ran it on his own account for another year. He was succeeded other leasees but later returned to operate the mill for a time in partnership with William H. H. West. His son, Lloyd T. Belt, took over management of the Union Mill in November 1881, in association with W. R. Powel (Continental Historical Company 1885:392).

In 1881, James H. and Horatio N. Belt relocated to Bunker Hill in Macoupin County and established a "general banking business" under the old title of Belt Brothers and Company. In 1887, Horatio moved to Spokane, Washington. Two years later he later he sold his interest in the bank to James. The latter then brought his son, James H. Belt, Jr., into the business. The Belts eventually organized a private bank in Collinsville (Madison County), Illinois in partnership with James I. Dillard. The elder James H. Belt served as president of the bank and continued in this role after the business was reorganized as the First National Bank of Collinsville in 1902. He was forced to resign as president due to health reasons, however, soon after the reorganization took place. James H. Belt died in

February 1906 (Jersey County Historical Society, Belt Family Vertical File). He still owned the land associated with the Belt Farm Site at the time of his death.

An 1893 plat of Rosedale Township indicates that James H. Belt then owned approximately 600 acres of land in Section 2. The only part of the Section 2 under separate ownership at this time was the 40-acres in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , SE $\frac{1}{4}$ . The plat also designates Belt as the owner of an additional 125.50 acres of land in the north half of Section 11 (all lying north of Otter Creek) and several hundred acres more in Section 3. This source illustrates three residences on Belt's land in Section 2. Two of these are located at and east of the mouth of Barn Hollow and correspond very closely to the dwellings depicted by the 1872 atlas. The third residence is situated about one-quarter mile up (north) Barn Hollow; its location matches the house shown in 1872 on J. Erwin's land, which Belt had since acquired. By this date, a 1.25-mile section of the road surveyed through the Belt Farm in 1869—running south from the old road to Barnett's Mill up to Meadow Branch Ridge, via Brice's Ford—apparently had been abandoned, as it is not illustrated on the plat (Hammond Publishing Company 1893; see Figure 13).

Tax records from 1905 indicate that 185 of the 600-plus acres owned by James H. Belt in Section 2 of Rosedale Township were improved, while the remaining 415 acres were unimproved (and presumably timbered). The improved acreage had an assessed value of \$5,550, while the unimproved land was assessed at \$1,660 (Jersey County Assessor's Book 1905).<sup>3</sup>

The Belt Farm Site remained attached to James H. Belt's estate for over a decade following his death in 1906. A 1916 plat of Rosedale Township shows that the Belt landholdings in Sections 2, 3, and 11 remained unchanged since 1893. However, this source does depict significant changes to the residences on the property. Of the three dwellings depicted on Belt's land in 1893, only one remained in 1916; this was the house located midway up Barn Hollow. The two residences shown around the mouth of the hollow on earlier maps apparently had been destroyed or removed by this date. Two other homes—not previously illustrated—are shown on the west side of the stream running through hollows. These lie on opposite sides of the old road to Barnett's Mill. The location of the dwelling on the south side of the road closely corresponds to that of the existing residence at the Belt Farm Site. A fourth residence is depicted on Belt's land in the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , NW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 2; this was located on the east side of Copperhead Hollow, the next drainage west of Barn Hollow (Ogle 1916; see Figure 14).

On May 14, 1917, the trustee of James H. Belt's estate sold the deceased's extensive landholdings in Sections 2, 3, and 11 to his daughter Enola B. Francis for \$26,100. The deed notes Enola Francis as a resident of Decatur (Macon County), Illinois. All the acreage formerly associated with Belt Brothers and Company's farm was included in this sale. (Jersey County Deed Record 120:341). These same lands eventually passed to Enola Francis' daughter Helen, who was married to a career army officer named Claire E.

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<sup>3</sup> Aside from a lone tax book from 1847 (on file in the County Recorder's Office), tax records for Jersey County apparently are not available prior to the early twentieth century, and even then they are not comprehensive until the middle of the century.

Hutchin. In 1920, the Helen and Claire Hutchin were living in Chicago, but by 1930 they had transferred to Vancouver Barracks in Clark County, Washington (USBC 1920:3A-3B; 1930:2A).

Conditions at the Belt Farm Site at mid-century are illustrated on an aerial photograph taken in 1941. This image shows the existing residence at the site, as well as the two barns present. In addition, it illustrates two other large, gable-roofed structures located midway between the barns, on the north side of the east-west roadway passing through the site, which are no longer present. Smaller, less distinct outbuildings may also be shown. An additional feature of note illustrated on the photograph is an apparent remnant of the Fieldon to Grafton Road, running immediately west of the residence (see Figures 15 and 16).

The Belt Farm Site remained in the hands of Helen Francis Hutchin until 1948. On September 29 of that year she and her husband sold their lands in Sections 2, 3, and 11 of Rosedale Township to Charles L. and Norine E. Helton for the nominal sum of \$1. By this date, the Hutchins were residing in St. Petersburg, Florida. The Heltons, by contrast, were residents of Jersey County (Jersey County Deed Record 301:178). It is of interest that taxes due on the property in 1947 were assessed in Charles Helton's name, even though he had not yet purchased the property (Jersey County Assessor's Book 1947).

Chain-of-title research on the Belt Farm Site was not pursued past 1948. However, plat books were examined in order to determine a basic outline of the later ownership history of the property. A 1958 plat book indicates that Charles B. Helton owned 520 acres in Section 2 of Rosedale Township (including the Belt Farm Site), as well as additional lands in Sections 3 and 11 (Derr Map Studio 1958:27). Subsequent plat books establish that Helton owned these lands through at least 1973. The Heltons apparently rented the Belt Farm to other parties for part of their long period of ownership. Dick Niemeyer, current site superintendent at Pere Marquette State Park, resided at the farm for a time in his youth (Dick Niemeyer, pers. Comm., April 2008). Scott Isringhausen, another IDNR employee at Pere Marquette, states that his grandparents resided there as well for a time (Scott Isringhausen, pers. comm., 1 April 2008).

By 2004, the lands previously owned by Helton had passed to Richard Goetten, et al. (Rockford Map Publishers 1969, 1973, 2004). In 2007, the IDNR acquired several hundred acres of land in Sections 2, 3, and 11 from Richard Goetten, et al. These lands were then organized as Copperhead Hollow State Wildlife Area, a satellite site of Pere Marquette State Park.

**Regional Archaeologist Contacted:** No regional archaeologist was contacted. However, Dick Niemeyer, site superintendent at Pere Marquette State Park, was interviewed regarding the history of the Belt Farm Site.

**Investigation Techniques:** The field investigation component of the project involved three main components: 1) a Phase I archaeological survey in the area to be impacted by the

proposed parking lot; 2) the recordation of the two barns and residence at the site; and 3) documentary research on the history of the property.

The archaeological survey was conducted in the front yard of the residence, where the proposed 20-car parking lot is to be located. Two transects of shovel tests were excavated. These were aligned between the existing driveway (on the south) and a field edge (on the north). Transects and associated shovel tests were placed 15m apart. A total of eight shovel tests were excavated. Tests on the north end of the west transect hit gravel below the ground surface, which may be associated with the road surveyed in 1869 and later abandoned. Moving towards the south and east, the topsoil deepened considerably. Tests were excavated to a depth of approximately 50-60cm without breaking into the subsoil. No cultural material was recovered. The shovel testing suggests that no significant subsurface archaeological resources are located within that area of the proposed parking lot. No further work is recommended for the parking lot component of this project.

The recordation of the house and two barns at the site included the preparation of scaled line drawings and the taking of digital photographs for the buildings. Both plan and sectional plans were prepared for the barn. Particular attention was paid to identifying change-through-time in the buildings.

The documentary research component of the project focused on establishing the ownership history of the site, backgrounds of its owners, and a general historical context for the county. Chain-of-Title and tax record research was conducted at the Jersey County Annex Building, through the County Recorder and the County Clerks' offices. Additional documentary research was done at the Jerseyville Public Library, the Jersey County Historical Society, and the Illinois State Library. A web-based search of pertinent census records also was conducted through [www.Ancestry.com](http://www.Ancestry.com).

**Time Expended:** 37 man-hours (in field)

**Sites/Features Found:** The locations of buildings, structures, and other cultural features documented during the field survey are identified on the site plan attached as Figure 18. Buildings greater than 50 years of age are described below.

House: The house at the site is located on the southwest corner of the farmstead and sits a comfortable distance south of the main road passing through the property. This setback is of some interest, given that it creates a large front yard and a considerable degree of separation between the house and nearest barn. The residence is a two-story, L-shaped, frame structure with a cross-gabled roof, measuring 36'-4" (north/south) by 32'-4" (east/west) at its greatest extents. A small, open-sided, gable-roofed entrance porch with is located off-center on the north gable-end wall. This porch has been rebuilt in recent years. A second porch stretches partway across the rear (south) side of the dwelling, flanking a kitchen on the interior; this too is open-sided and appears to have served as a work porch historically. A single-story, frame bathroom addition (measuring 7'-10"x11'-10" on the exterior) abuts the west end of the rear porch. It and the porch share a

common shed roof. Although not confirmed in the field, the rear porch potentially extended the full width of the house originally, and the addition was built out within it. The exterior walls of the house have been covered with modern vinyl siding, which may overlay horizontal weatherboard. The foundations beneath the original house consist of irregular-coursed limestone (presumably procured locally). The bathroom addition, by contrast, rests on concrete-block foundations.

First floor of the original house has a simple, regular three-room plan, consisting of a living room on the north, a dining room on the southwest, and a kitchen on the southeast. The front entrance opens into the living room, which measures 13'-7"x19'-6" and has a stairway leading to the upper floor on its east side. The dining room is quite large (measuring 13'-6"x19'-6") and has a built-in cabinet along its east wall. This cabinet can be accessed from the adjoining kitchen as well. An interesting aspect to the cabinet is the presence of a pass-through window, by means of which food and dishes could be passed between the two rooms. A doorway in the south wall of the dining room opens into the bathroom addition. This opening potentially served as a window or exterior entrance prior to the construction of the addition, and a second such opening may once have been present farther east on this wall (aligned to windows on the second floor). The addition is equipped with a full bath, and also a laundry closet present. The kitchen occupies the eastern wing of the first floor. It has an exterior entrance in its south wall, through which the rear porch can be accessed. The original ceiling height on the first floor is 8'-9".

The upper floor of the house has four bedrooms, arranged around a central hallway. The two bedrooms on the west side of the house have built-in closets, while the other two rooms are equipped with simple, wall-mounted clothes racks. Whereas the first floor has witnessed various modifications through the years (i.e. drop ceilings, wall furring), the upstairs rooms retain excellent integrity. The ceiling height on the second floor is 7'-10".

The house has a small cellar located beneath the kitchen. The cellar is accessed by means of a trapdoor on the rear porch. The cellar measures 13'-1"x10'-6" and has two window openings (on the north and west). The ceiling height is 6'-5". The floor is paved in concrete. The examination of the cellar found evidence of the chamber having been exposed to a fire at some point in time. This evidence included a charred nailer found in the bulkhead wall at the base of the stairway and extensive reddening of the limestone walls (caused by exposure to severe heat).

In terms of construction materials, the house is framed with nominal-sized yellow pine/fir lumber that is surfaced planed on all sides and is attached with wire-drawn nails. This lumber apparently was obtained from the Pollack Lumber Company in Jerseyville, as evidenced by stenciling seen on some pieces. Interior trim is flat yellow pine/fir trim; that on the second floor is varnished, and this likely was the case with the first floor trim originally as well. Second floor rooms have two-paneled, machine-made doors, which are varnished and hung with half-surface butt hinges. Broadly speaking, these materials are indicative of a circa 1915-1940 date of construction.

The earliest wiring observed in the house was older-style Romex (as opposed to knob-and-tube). This suggests that the dwelling was not supplied with electricity until the 1940s, if not slightly later. The heating stoves originally used to heat the house eventually were replaced with two floor furnaces, placed in the living and dining rooms. These furnaces burned LP gas. These stoves were manufactured by the Empire Stove Company of Belleville, Illinois.<sup>4</sup> The upstairs bedrooms appear to have had no direct source of heat in the modern era, unless perhaps electric space heaters were used.

There are several features in the yard surrounding the house. A concrete-lined cistern, for instance, is located off the southeast corner of the dwelling, in line with the rear porch. It has a 6' diameter and is about 9' deep. A curved concrete sidewalk runs from the cistern to another sidewalk extending south off the rear porch. The latter sidewalk is raised well above grade and has what may be two generations of concrete caps at its south end. These caps potentially cover another cistern (or well?), but this could not be confirmed (due to the caps). For more information on the house, see the attached floor plans and photographs (Figures 19 through 40).

**Timber-Frame Barn:** This barn is located on the northwest corner of the site and sits on a level bench on the lower slopes of the ridge bordering the west side of Barn Hollow. It faces south, overlooking the road and house beyond. The barn is a front-gabled, timber-frame structure measuring 40'-4" (north/south) by 30'-4" (east/west). The height from the sill plate to ridge is approximately 34', which is rather tall compared to similar sized barns. The south elevation has two door openings with Dutch-style doors on the lower level located in the center of the wall and towards the southwest corner. The latter of these has been blocked off on the interior by a pen. There also is a high grain door towards the east end of the elevation. Two other exterior doorways are present higher up on the gable-end wall. These access the upper level of the barn and are stacked above one another; the uppermost one is a mow door with an associated hay bonnet. The north elevation has three doorways on the lower level, the center and western of which mirror those on the south; the third doorway is located on the northeast corner. Two stacked mow doors are present on the upper level. The east elevation of the barn has three window openings, all measuring 2'-8" and having a single six-light sash. An 8"-diameter hole has been cut in the siding adjacent to the center of these windows. This likely is a flue hole associated with a stovepipe. The west elevation also has three window openings present, but these are narrower than those on the east, being only 2'-4" wide, and have been boarded up (see Figures 41 through 43).

The interior of the first floor of the barn largely is open and divided up amongst stalls and pens. A low partition roughly divides this level into east and west halves. A single rank of stalls is present on the east half of the dividing wall, while two ranks of stalls separated by a runway are present to the west side of it. Each of these stalls has one corner framed out with spaced planking set an angle to main stall partition. Two separate pens are located in the southwest corner of the barn. The pens and stalls were designed to be able to easily broken down and reassembled as needed. In some instances, the partitions were just connected with bailing wire. A series of cleats were nailed to the floor to serve as a

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<sup>4</sup> The serial number on these stoves began with a pre-printed "57" which may suggest that they date from 1957.



guide for reassembling the partitions; 2"x4" boards nailed to the walls serve the same purpose.

The only portion of the lower level that is fully enclosed is the southeast corner, which is framed out as a granary. The granary measures 8'-1"x10'-10" on the interior and has its floor and interior walls lined with corrugated steel panels (as a precaution against vermin). It was filled through the grain door on its south side, which was previously noted in the exterior description. An interior personnel door is present on the west side of the granary. Roughly two-thirds of the lower level has heavy 2"x6" flooring present. In the remaining third of the level, the flooring and joists have been replaced by a concrete pad. This pad extends over much of the east half of the building but stops short of the granary (see Figures 44 through 47).

The character of the stall partitions suggests that the lower level of the barn may have last been used for farrowing hogs. The angled partitions mentioned would have provided a sheltered corner for piglets seeking to avoid being rolled over or stepped on by the sows. The lower planks on these partitions are set high enough for young pigs to fit underneath. The two pens on the south end of the barn could have been used for confinements. This is not to say that other livestock may have been kept in the building at an earlier date.

The upper floor of the barn is completely open and was last used as a hay loft (see Figure 48). Two large mow doors are present on the south end. One of these is located at floor level, while the other is set higher, in association with the hay bonnet. A comparable set of mow doors are present in the north gable-end wall, but are placed slightly off center. A hay track runs down the ridgeline of the roof. The rope used to lift and move the hay fork along the track passes through a frame chase on the north gable-end wall and continues down to the lower level. A board located adjacent to the chase is inscribed with initials "E. C." and the number "14," which may refer to the year 1914. A ladder also is present along the north gable-end wall. Hay from the loft could be tossed down the lower level through a chute in the center of the floor. This chute presently is the only interior point of access between the two floors.

Two posts are present in the middle of the hay loft, each being centered below the upper girt of the interior bents. These posts are of interest due to the fact that they have neatly chamfered corners—something not typically seen in a hay loft. They also appear to be unnecessary, from a structural standpoint, considering that one of them has dropped free of the girt it presumably was intended to support.

The barn frame is made up of four structural bents whose principal framing members (i.e. sill, posts, girts, plates) are hand-hewn oak and are connected with mortise-and-tenon joints. Secondary framing members (rails, studs, diagonal arch braces) are circular-sawn, unsurfaced white pine but also are joined with mortise and tenon. The posts measure 10"x10" and rest on a sill plate of comparable size. There are two levels of girts or beams running between the posts, both of which measuring 8"x9-1/2". The lower girt carries the floor joists for the hay loft, which are 2"x10" circular-sawn white pine. The upper beam presently supports a pair of canted queen posts, which in turn support purlins.

The queen posts are hand-hewn oak, as is the tie beam running between them. The horizontal rails and studs running between the posts measure 4"x6". The rafters are 2"x6". The floor joists on the lower level are 2"x10", circular-sawn oak (in contrast to the pine joists carrying the hay loft). The barn rests on a perimeter foundation built of local limestone. Figures 49 through 52 illustrate the character of the framing the barn.

There is considerable evidence of the barn frame actually having been dismantled and reassembled. This evidence includes multiple empty mortises and the presence of machine-cut nails at points where there currently is no framing present. Significantly, broken-off machine-cut nails were found on the top surface of the upper and lower beams with centering corresponding to that of floor joists (16"-18"). The existing floor joists for the loft, however, are attached with wire nails. There presently are no joists on the upper beam, yet the presence of nails on the upper surface of this beam certainly suggests that floor boards were once present here—an impression strengthened by the discovery of nails on the adjoining girts running between the bents. Indeed, the latter girts would be unnecessary to the frame unless there was a third floor present originally, since there is tie beam/rafter plate a short distance above them. The girts in question would have been level with the floor joists and provided a surface to which to nail the outer edges of the flooring (thus explaining the nails found here). The roof structure also appears to have been reconfigured, based on the presence of multiple empty mortises on the top surface of the upper beam, as well as on tie beams connecting the queen posts. Another indicator of the building have been reassembled is the misplacement of some of the studs in the hay loft. The studs were inserted upside down in some instances, and the rails flanking them had to be toe-nailed in place, instead of being inserted into mortises as originally intended. Another intriguing element identified on the barn frame is the presence of empty mortises on several posts on the first floor, which have been patched over with planking attached with machine-cut nails; this suggests that the frame was remodeled to some extent even before it dismantled and moved. The various evidence outlined here raises a number of questions about the barn, including the date of its construction, original use, and date of it suspected reassembly—issues that will be addressed in the comments section.

Feeder Barn: This barn is located at the northeast corner of the site and lies on the east side of the unnamed stream flowing through Barn Hollow. The barn is a large, front-gabled, frame structure that is aligned northeast-by-southwest (in line with the hollow and creek) and measures 96'-4" (north/south) by 44'-6" (east/west). The ridgeline of the principal roof is off-center, being aligned over the eastern two-thirds of the barn. An extended shed roof covers the western third of the building. Large vehicle doors, measuring 14' wide are present on the opposing gable-end walls, centered on the ridgeline. These doorways are nearly as tall as they are wide and rise above the level of the hay loft on the interior. Mow doors with an associated hay bonnet are located above the vehicle doors in question. Paired livestock doors located on the west end of the gable end walls. The eastern elevation is devoid of openings, aside from a livestock door located in the approximate center of the wall. A similar doorway was located on the west elevation but has been closed off (see Figures 41).

On its interior, the barn is divided into two main sections. The eastern-two thirds presently consists of an open drive, measuring approximately 26' wide. It has a dirt floor and is open to the rafters, except on its far northern end where a hay loft is present. The loft is supported by a row of three posts in the center of the drive. A hay track runs the length of this section of the barn. The western third of the barn has a paved runway with a gutter on its lower level and a full-length hay loft above. Low door/window openings are present on the west side of the loft.

The framing system used for the feeder barn represents an amalgamation of vernacular techniques and materials and modern lightweight construction. Most of the lumber used in its construction is locally procured oak, but it is attached with wire nails and bolts (in contrast to the mortise-and-tenon joints utilized on the timber-frame barn). The main posts used to frame the walls are actually in the round, with bark still on. These posts are joined to one another by 2"x6", circular-sawn, oak rails (or nailers) nailed to the outer face of the posts. Diagonal bracing is present on the upper part of the posts in the eastern two-thirds of the barn. The rafters are 2"x6" oak. The principal roof is supported by 2"x6" braces laid between the wall posts and rafters. The lightweight character of this bracing stands in marked contrast to the heavy, hand-hewn purlins and queen posts that carry the roof in the timber-frame barn and yet accomplish the same purpose over a wider area. The extended shed roof over the western third of the barn is supported by a light 2"x4" purlin braced with 2"x4"s extending off the interior posts. A number of steel tie rods run between the upper ends of the posts in the eastern part of the barn, further stiffening the frame. The barn rests on poured concrete foundations. A sectional view illustrating the framing in the feeder barn is provided in Figure 63.

Structural evidence suggests that the feeder barn was constructed during the early twentieth century (circa 1910-1930) and experienced two major remodeling episodes. As originally constructed, the eastern two-thirds of the barn was open from floor to ceiling and likely was devoted to hay storage—serving as a “hay room”—while the western third of the structure had fourteen to fifteen box stalls arranged along a runway running the full-length of the barn. Box stalls generally are not associated with dairy cattle—dairy operations usually require milking stanchions. Additionally, the large-scale dairy interpretation seems unlikely given the farm's remote location and distance from a market where dairy products would be in demand. Instead, these box stalls are suspected to have been associated with the care of feeder cattle (calves, sick stock, and bulls) or for draft horses. It would not have been unusual for a large working farm of this kind to have as many as fourteen working horses.

The first major remodeling of the barn involved the expansion of the hay over the east side of the barn. This was accomplished by laying a new set of oak posts along side the original ones, bolting them together, and then setting an 8"x8" oak plate (cut with a chain saw) on top the posts across which the loft joists were laid. The central span of the new loft was supported by a separate row of posts (with plate) running down the center of the drive. These posts and the others were set on concrete piers. The new loft terminated about 14' short of the south end of the barn in order to provide a sheltered loading area for the hay track. The area beneath the new loft possibly was used as a loafing or feed

area for livestock (cattle or hogs?). Around the same time, a new concrete floor poured in the western third of the barn. The concrete floor was level within the box stalls but was sloped on its west side in order to direct effluent into a gutter. The second episode of remodeling in the feeder barn involved in the removal of most of the hay loft in the main part of the barn, leaving only the north end in place. This may have been done to facilitate the storage of machinery in the barn. The box stalls on the west side of the barn also were removed, and this area may have then been used as a general loafing area for livestock. Photographs and floor plans of the feeder barn have been attached as Figures 53 through 63.

Spring: An active spring is located approximately 23m east of the feeder barn, at the base of the bluff defining the eastern edge of Barn Hollow. This spring was flowing vigorously at the time of the field investigation, being fed by heavy spring rains. A cylindrical, concrete-lined cistern is located immediately downslope from the spring. The cistern has a neck that protrudes above grade by which its interior can be accessed. There is no obvious running between the cistern and spring; this presents the possibility that a temporary pipe was laid between the two when the water level got low. The cistern is suspected to have been a water source for the livestock kept in the adjacent barn and it likely is contemporary with the latter (see Figure 66).

Other Outbuildings: In addition to the buildings and structures already described, there are several modern agricultural outbuildings at the site. One of these is a large front-gable machine shed, located midway between the two barns. This is a post-in-ground structure with steel siding (see Figure 65). Two round, steel grain bins lie a short distance west of the timber-frame barn.

**Cultural Material:** No cultural material was observed on the ground surface or in the shovel testing conducted.

**Collection Technique:** No cultural material was collected.

**Curated at:** Notes and drawings are curated at Fever River Research, Springfield.

**Area Surveyed (acres and square meters):** Approximately 0.45 acres (19,753 square meters)

## **RESULTS OF INVESTIGATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ☐ Phase I archaeological reconnaissance has located no archaeological material [in this portion of the site]; project clearance is recommended.
- ☐ Phase I archaeological reconnaissance has located archaeological materials; site(s) does(do) not meet requirements for National Register eligibility; project clearance is recommended.
- ☒ Phase I archaeological reconnaissance has located archaeological materials; site(s) may meet requirements for National Register eligibility; further testing is recommended.

- ☐ Phase II archaeological investigation has indicated that site(s) does(do) not meet requirements for National Register eligibility; project clearance is recommended.
- ☐ Phase II archaeological investigation has indicated that site(s) meet requirements for National Register eligibility; formal report is pending and a determination of eligibility is recommended.

**Comments:**

As with all historical properties assessed within the context of cultural resources management, the value of the Belt Farm Site ultimately is determined by its eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Eligibility to the National Register is based on four broad criteria that are defined by the National Park Service and used to guide the evaluation process. These criteria state that

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and

A) that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or

B) that are associated with the lives of persons significant to our past; or

C) that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose component may lack individual distinction; or

D) that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history (36CFR60.4 Criteria for Evaluation).

Although located in what is now a remote location, the Belt Farm Site lies along an old transportation/commercial corridor that figured prominently in the early settlement history of western Jersey County. The Otter Creek Valley was a natural conduit connecting the uplands to the Illinois River, and a road was developed through it a very early date. The western end of the valley also was a scene of considerable rural industry prior to the Civil War. Two early grist mills were located within a mile of the Belt Farm Site, with one of them—Brice's Mill—being less than a quarter mile away. There also was extensive lumbering activity in the valley at this time. Even so, we have no firm documentary evidence of the site being occupied prior to the 1860s, when Horatio Belt and his sons began developing a large farm on Sections 2, 3, and 11 of Rosedale Township. Owners of a flouring mill in nearby Fieldon, the Belts do not appear to have lived on their farm; instead, they apparently turned over day-to-day management of the

property to tenants—a pattern that would persist under later owners. The 1869 road petition filed by James H. Belt specifically mentions a house and stable in an area that seems to correspond to the Belt Farm Site. The 1872 county atlas, however, does not show any house at the site. The 1893 atlas is the earliest to illustrate a residence close to the boundaries of the site, and this is located farther east than the existing residence. By 1916, there apparently were two dwellings at the site—one whose location matches the existing residence and other on the opposite (north) side of the road from it.

The existing residence at the Belt Farm Site dates from the early twentieth century. The style of the interior trim and character of framing materials suggests a circa 1915-1940 date of construction. It probably was constructed during the period the property was owned by Enola B. Francis, who acquired it from her grandfather's estate in 1917. The Francis family is not known to have ever resided at the farm, and hence it likely served as a tenant residence. The house apparently was constructed on stone foundations belonging to a previous generation home which apparently was destroyed by fire (burned). It is possible that this earlier home is the one referenced in the 1869 road petition. However, it is odd that no residence is illustrated at this location prior to 1916. This presents a number of possibilities: 1) a house was present here in 1869 but was destroyed before the 1872 atlas was produced; 2) a house was erected after 1893, burned, and was rebuilt by the Francis family; or 3) the 1872 and 1893 atlases do not accurately illustrate conditions at the site and a house actually was present here during that period and later burned. When one considers that the timber-frame barn at the site also rests on stone foundations, the second of these scenarios may very well be correct (see discussion below). The existing house has seen some modifications but has good integrity overall. Nonetheless, it is not considered individually significant, however.

The feeder barn at the site is believed to date to circa 1910-1930 and hence is roughly contemporary with the house. It potentially was constructed during the pre-World War I-era period of agricultural prosperity. The structure is an example of what Radford (1909:255) describes as a "plank frame barn." Advantages posed by this method of construction included cheaper cost, expanded hay storage, and the elimination of unnecessary timbers that might impede the operation of the hay fork track. The use of in-the-round oak posts for the walls is the innovation of a vernacular builder seeking to take advantage of the timber rich setting in which the barn is located. The size of the barn provides some indication of the level of agricultural activity on this large working farm during the first half of the twentieth century. The barn belies the significance of the cattle ranching and/or feeding business in this area during the early twentieth century years.

The timber-frame barn at the site in many ways raises more questions than provides answers. As touched on earlier, the core frame of the barn is quite old and appears to have been dismantled and reassembled at the current location circa 1900 (based on the use of wire nails in its reassembly). Considered alone, the heavy hand-hewn oak posts and girts put together with mortise and tenon joinery could very well date to the earliest days of Euro-American settlement in the Otter Creek Valley. However, the fact that the secondary framing members are circular-sawn white pine makes it unlikely that the frame pre-dates 1850—assuming these members are original, as they appear to be. Regardless,

the core frame easily dates to the middle nineteenth century, and this is also supported by the use of machine cut nails to secure the original joists and flooring. Yet we have it sitting at a farmstead which documentary sources suggest may not have been established until sometime after 1893, and there is strong evidence for it having been disassembled and put back together. But where did come from? And what was its original use?

There are a number of aspects to this barn that suggest that the original function of this structure was not as a barn—that it probably served a different purpose originally. To begin with, there is evidence that it had three floor levels (that a third floor was present in the current loft), which is not typical of a barn. The use of sawn 4"x6" studs in between the main posts also is unusual for a barn. Typically, a barn just has horizontal rails between the posts, and these serve as nailers for the vertical plank (board and batten) siding. Studs are more common when horizontal siding is applied. The stud arrangement in the barn was somewhat mixed up when the building was reassembled, but it appears as though at least seven of the ten wall panels (defined by the main posts) had studs, including all of those on the front and rear elevations and most of those on the east. This presents the possibility of several elevations as potentially having been covered with horizontal siding. Of course, the studs might also have been intended simply for framing out window and door openings. Two potential window openings were identified on the east side of the hay loft. These are odd in that they are located only 1'-10" off the floor and quite short (2'-2"). Additionally, although somewhat inconclusive, the framing suggests that the large first floor and second floor levels were open spaces, unobstructed by interior posts.

We do know that a house and stable were located in close proximity to the Belt Farm Site (if not actually on it) in 1869. The timber-frame structure is really too large for a stable, and the form of the building is not consistent with that of a stable (particularly the three story character of the building). Three floors would be appropriate for a large house. Yet, there is a distinct lack of evidence for original interior partitions within the building, and these certainly would have been present if it was used as a dwelling. Indeed, as noted above, the framing suggests that the lower two floors largely were open. One must also wonder why the building would be dismantled if it was in fact the house referenced in the 1869 road petition, since it was not at all uncommon to move buildings of this size whole during this period.

Another possibility is that the barn frame originally was associated with a mill or large warehouse. Several things suggest this possible use including the heavy timber framing, the open floor plan, and three floor levels. The mixed use of siding also would fit this scenario, with weatherboard being present on the front "public" elevation and vertical plank siding elsewhere (perhaps enclosing interior grain bins?). Our understanding of the original floor plan on the lower level is very limited, but the location of several removed posts presents the possibility of two areas having been framed out here: one being located in the northeast corner and a larger area extending along the west side (from the northwest corner). The areas referred to could have served as grain bins. The truss system supporting the existing roof also bears evidence of having been reworked. Assuming the truss timbers are original, it is possible that they originally supported a roof

with a distinctly different profile—perhaps even a gambrel roof. Gambrel roofs were common features on early mills. Height—and/or verticality—was a prime characteristic of early mills, as the miller utilized gravity to assist with the flow of commodities through the milling process. Unprocessed grain entered at the top, flowed down through the mill, and exited the building at the lower level as milled grain (flour or corn meal). Figures 69 and 70 illustrate several examples of middle-to-late nineteenth century mill buildings in Jersey County.

Milling is a theme that runs through the early ownership history of the site, beginning with James Brice and his nearby grist mill on Otter Creek, continuing with Allen Barnett and his mill one-mile east, and finally with the Belts, who built the Eugenie Mill in Fieldon. Although it is tempting to speculate that the barn frame could have been salvaged from Brice's Mill, the 1885 county history indicates that no trace of the mill remained at that time, which predates the reassembly of the our frame. Another possible source for the frame is the elusive Burn's Mill, which apparently was located somewhere along the Fieldon-to-Grafton Road. Documentary sources are silent as to whether or not the Belts had a mill or warehouse anywhere on their farm along Otter Creek. Considering that they already owned a mill in Fieldon, they probably wouldn't have invested in a similar facility located only a few miles away. However, it is plausible that they would have had a need for a warehouse somewhere on their farm, where the grain harvested by their various tenant farmers could be stored until shipped by wagon to be milled in Fieldon. Such a building also could have stored neighboring farmers grain ultimately destined for the Belt's mill—thus serving a type of way station. This is all conjectural of course, but it would help explain the incentive James H. Belt had in petitioning the County Commissioners for a new road through his farm. A warehouse of this kind would not necessarily have been illustrated (or at least specifically identified) on county atlases.

We may never know the original use of the timber frame or where it may have originally been located. What is more clear, though, is that this timber frame structure was dismantled and apparently moved and reassembled at its existing location sometime between 1893 and 1916—most likely during the earlier part of this period (circa 1900)—for use as a barn. As initially reconstructed, the barn functioned as a traditional gable-front, multi-purpose horse barn. A dwelling may have been constructed at the site at the same time, built on stone foundations like the barn. Later on, the large feeder barn was constructed (on poured concrete foundations), and the existing residence was built after its predecessor was destroyed by fire. As a group, the three historic buildings at the Belt Farm Site are illustrative of a large farmstead in rugged western Jersey County during the first half of the twentieth century. Unfortunately, they represent only perhaps half of the buildings present there at mid-century, based on the 1941 aerial photograph. Although the feeder barn and house generally have good integrity, they have witnessed some alterations within the last fifty years (seen the removal of the loft and stalls in the feeder barn; and the addition of vinyl siding, windows, and bathroom wing on the house), and are not individually distinctive. They are not considered eligible to the National Register under Criteria C (architecture). The timber-frame barn, on the other hand, is a distinctive structure and has provided relevant data regarding timber-frame construction techniques



in this region. It is considered eligible under Criteria C and D (archaeology). This timber frame barn, although it has potentially been moved, was modified and adapted to its current location as part of the late nineteenth century farmstead. As such, even though this structure has been moved, it still retains significance in its current location with regard to its use as a horse barn. Although eligible for the National Register, this structure has been sufficiently documented to mitigate the adverse affect of demolition, should the IDNR choose to demolition the barn.

The shovel test survey found no archaeological remains in the area to be impacted by the construction of the proposed hunters' parking lot. A subsurface archaeological component potentially is present in the rear yard of the house and around that area of the timber frame barn—neither area of which was assessed for subsurface resources. All three of the historic buildings have been recorded in detail and require no further work. Project clearance is recommended for the proposed undertaking. Nonetheless, it is strongly recommended that the timber frame barn be stabilized (roof repaired) and not demolished.

**Surveyors:** F. Mansberger, C. Stratton

**Survey Date:** April 1, May 16 and 30, 2008

**Report Completed By:** C. Stratton and F. Mansberger  
Fever River Research  
P. O. Box 5234  
Springfield, IL 62705

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1840 Population Schedule for Clark County, Indiana

1850 Population Schedule for Township 8 North, Range 12 West, Jersey County, Illinois.

1860 Population Schedule for Richwoods Precinct, Jersey County, Illinois.

1870a Population Schedule for Township 8 North, Range 12 West, Jersey County, Illinois.

1870b Population Schedule for Township 8 North, Range 13 West, Jersey County, Illinois.

1870c Population Schedule for Township 7 North, Range 13 West, Jersey County, Illinois.

1900 Population Schedule for Bunker Hill Township, Macoupin County, Illinois.

1920 Population Schedule for Enumeration District 1447, Chicago, Illinois.

1930 Population Schedule for Vancouver Barracks, Clark County, Washington.

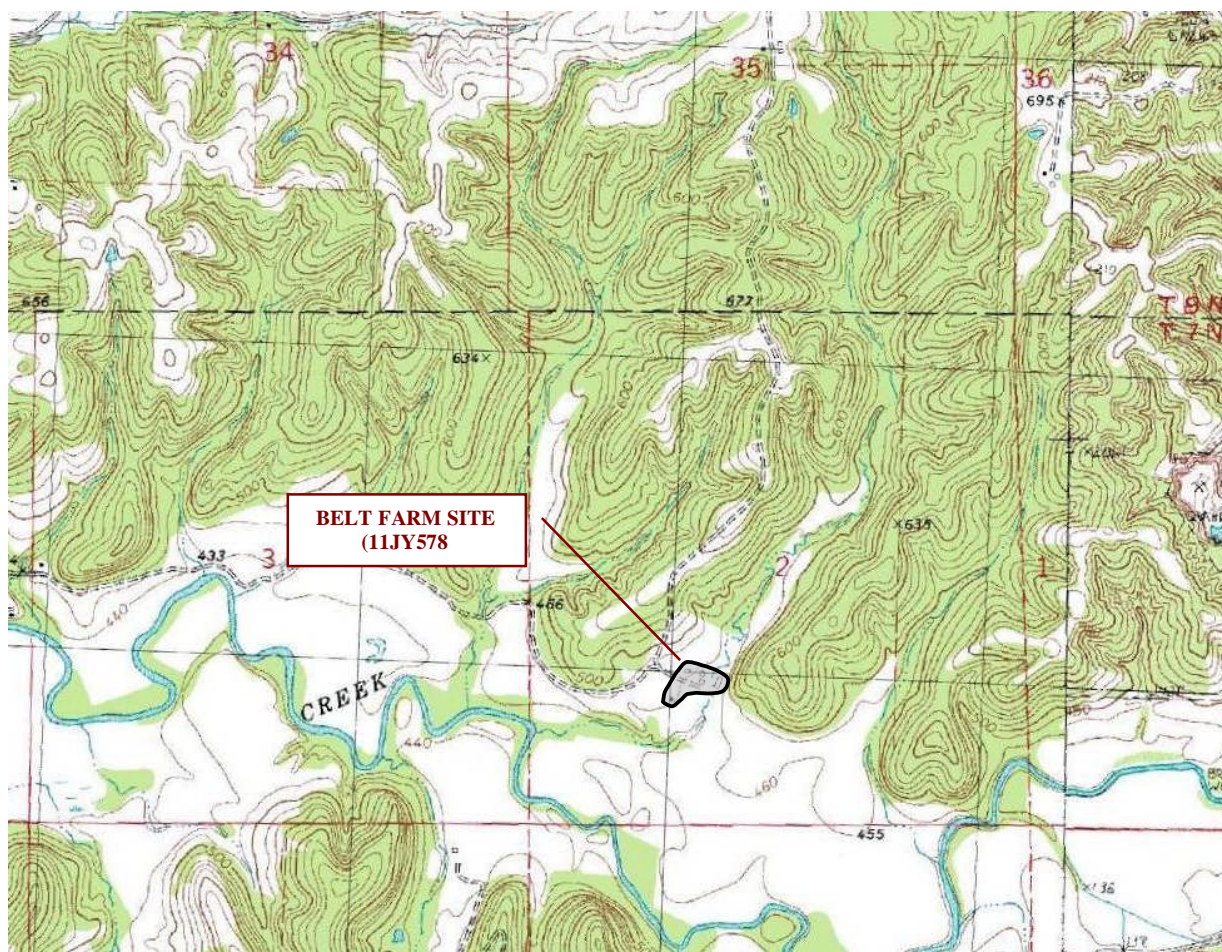
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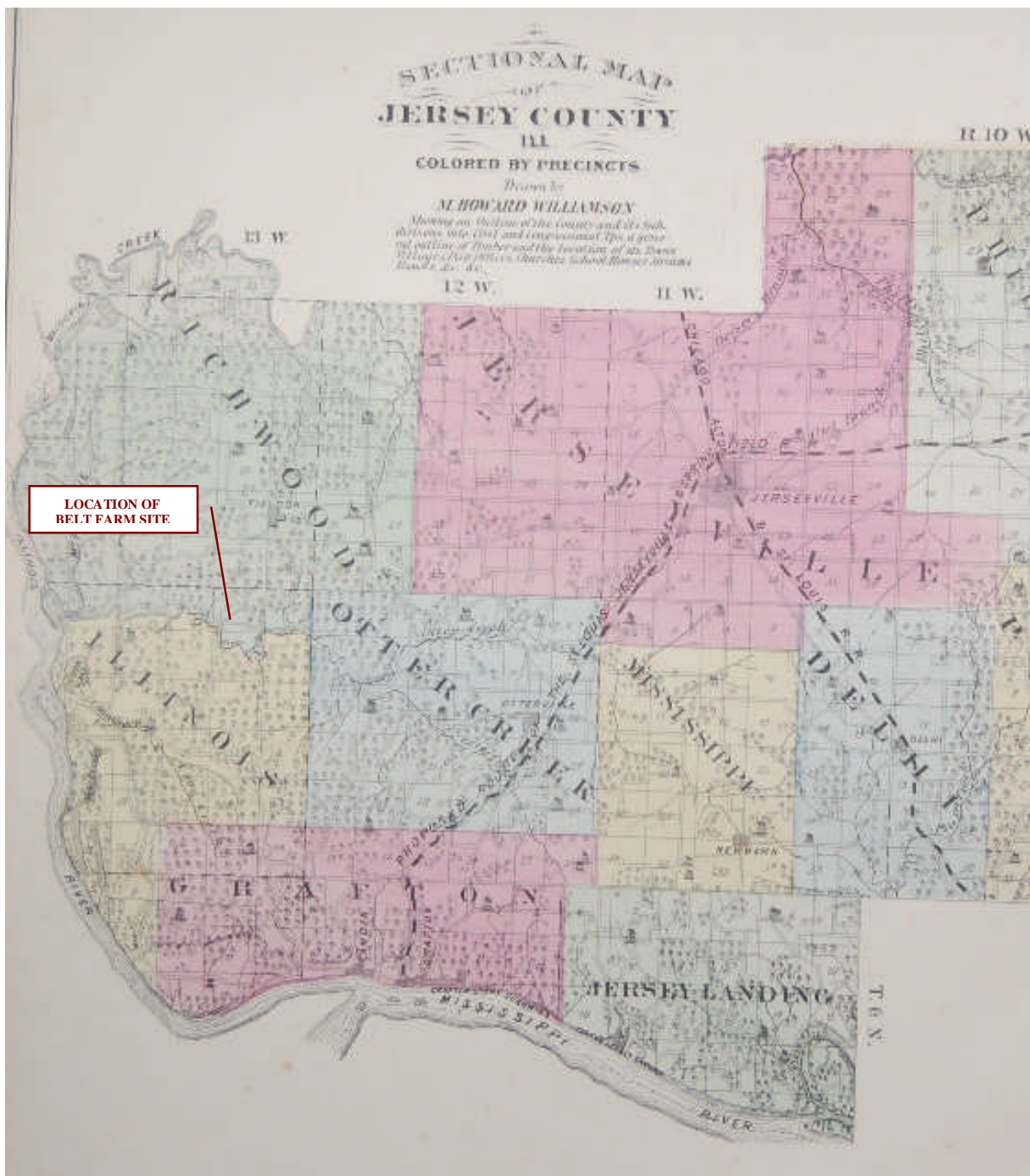
1833 Plat of Township 7 North, Range 13 West of the Third Principal Meridian. Record Group 953.012, Illinois State Archives, Springfield.

1862 Plat of Township 7 North, Range 13 West of the Third Principal Meridian. Record Group 953.012, Illinois State Archives, Springfield.



**Figure 1. United States Geological Survey (USGS) topographic map showing the location and limits of the Belt Farm Site (USGS Nutwood, IL Quadrangle 1985).**



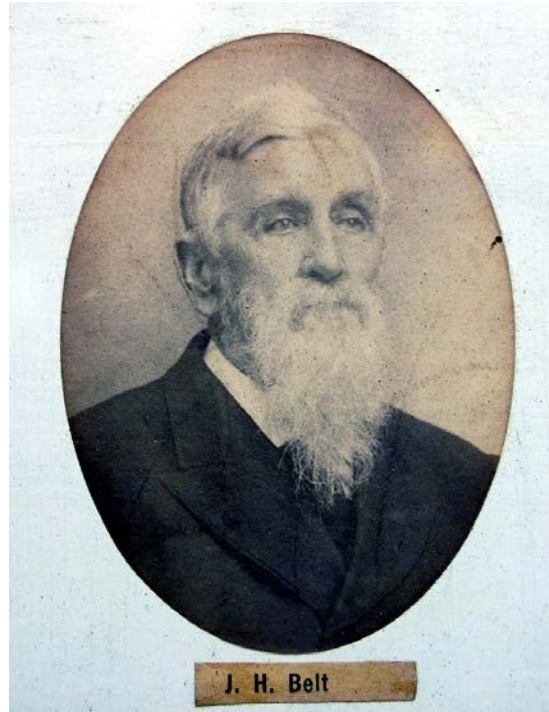


**Figure 2. Western Jersey County in 1872. Waterways played an important role in the settlement and subsequent development of this region, which was bordered on the west by the Illinois River and on the south by the Mississippi. It also was crossed by important tributary streams of the Mississippi: Macoupin, Otter, and Coon Creeks. The location of the Belt Farm Site is indicated (Andreas, Lyter and Company 1872).**



Figure 3. United States General Land Office plats of Township 7 North, Range 13 West (Rosedale Township), showing the location of the Belt Farm Site (circled in red). The plat at LEFT was produced in 1833, while that at RIGHT is a redrawing done in 1862. No cultural features are illustrated at—or near—the site (USGLO 19:52, 46:30).



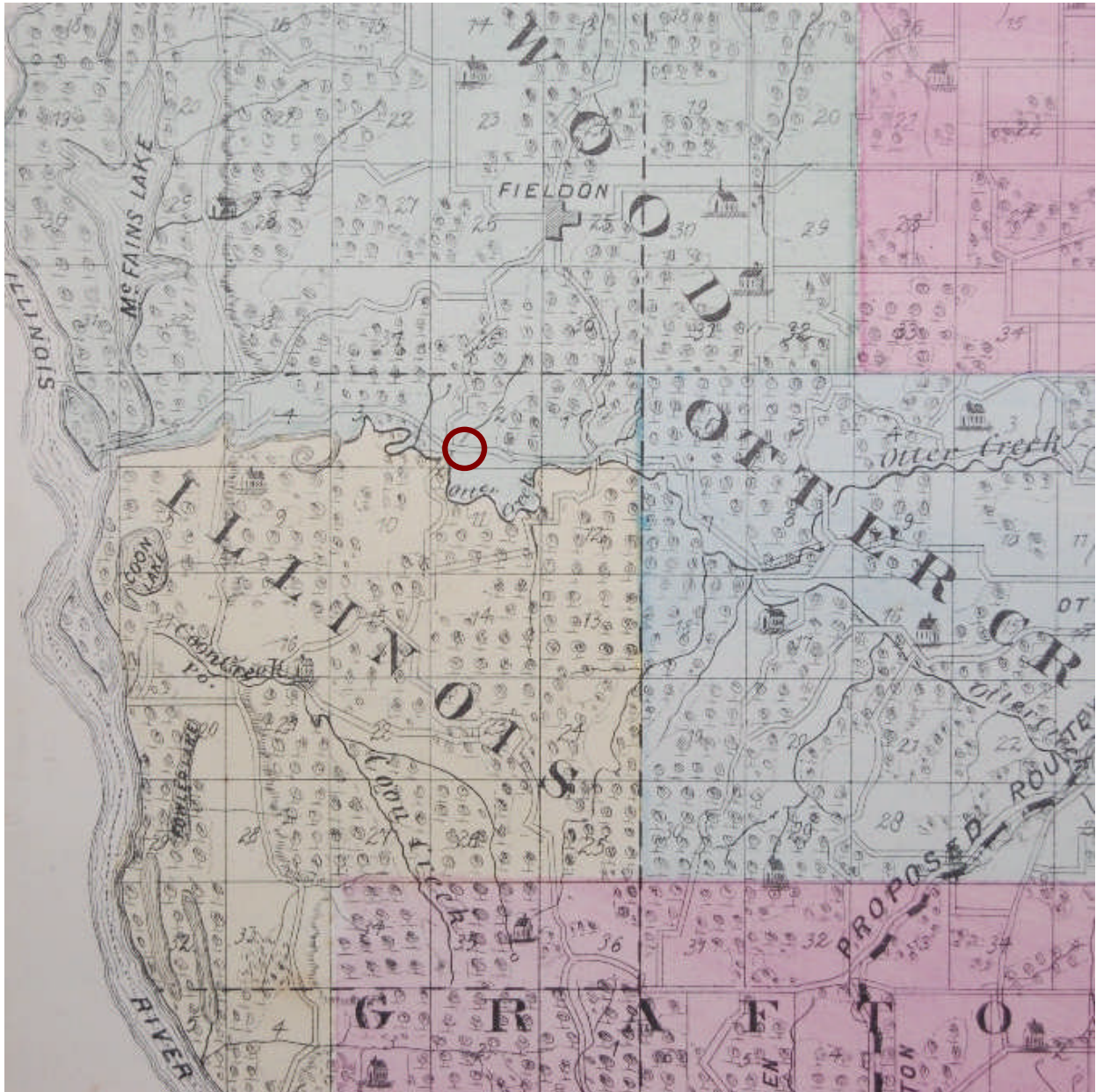


**Figure 4. Members of the Belt family. The elder Horatio Belt, pictured at upper left, purchased the land associated with the Belt Farm Site in 1863. He and his sons played a prominent role in the commercial life of Fieldon from the middle 1850s into the early 1880s. Three of the Belt sons are pictured here. It is unclear whether the J. H. Belt shown is James H. or John H. (Photographs from framed *Pioneers Who Settled Jersey County Prior to 1840*, Jersey County Administrative Building, Jerseyville, Illinois).**





**Figure 5. Photograph of the general store in Fieldon, taken around 1870. Although not a large community, Fieldon represented an important service center for residents of Richwoods and Rosedale Townships during the nineteenth century. The mill operated by Belt Brothers and Company was one of the most important businesses in Fielden at mid century (Photograph courtesy of Jersey County Historical Society).**



**Figure 6. Detail of an 1872 map of Jersey County, showing the location of the Belt Farm Site (circled in red). At this date, the site was located within Richwoods precinct, whose southern border was formed by Otter Creek. Jersey County later followed a division based on Congressional townships, which placed the site within Rosedale Township. Note the Belt Farm site's proximity to the town of Fieldon and its location at the juncture of two roads—one running between Fieldon and Coon Creek (later Rosedale) Post Office and the other following the course of Otter Creek.**





Figure 7. Survey map for the road that was petition for by James H. Belt and others in 1869 and approved in 1870. This map was incorporated into the County Commissioners Record (C:70). The location of the Belt Farm Site is circled in red.

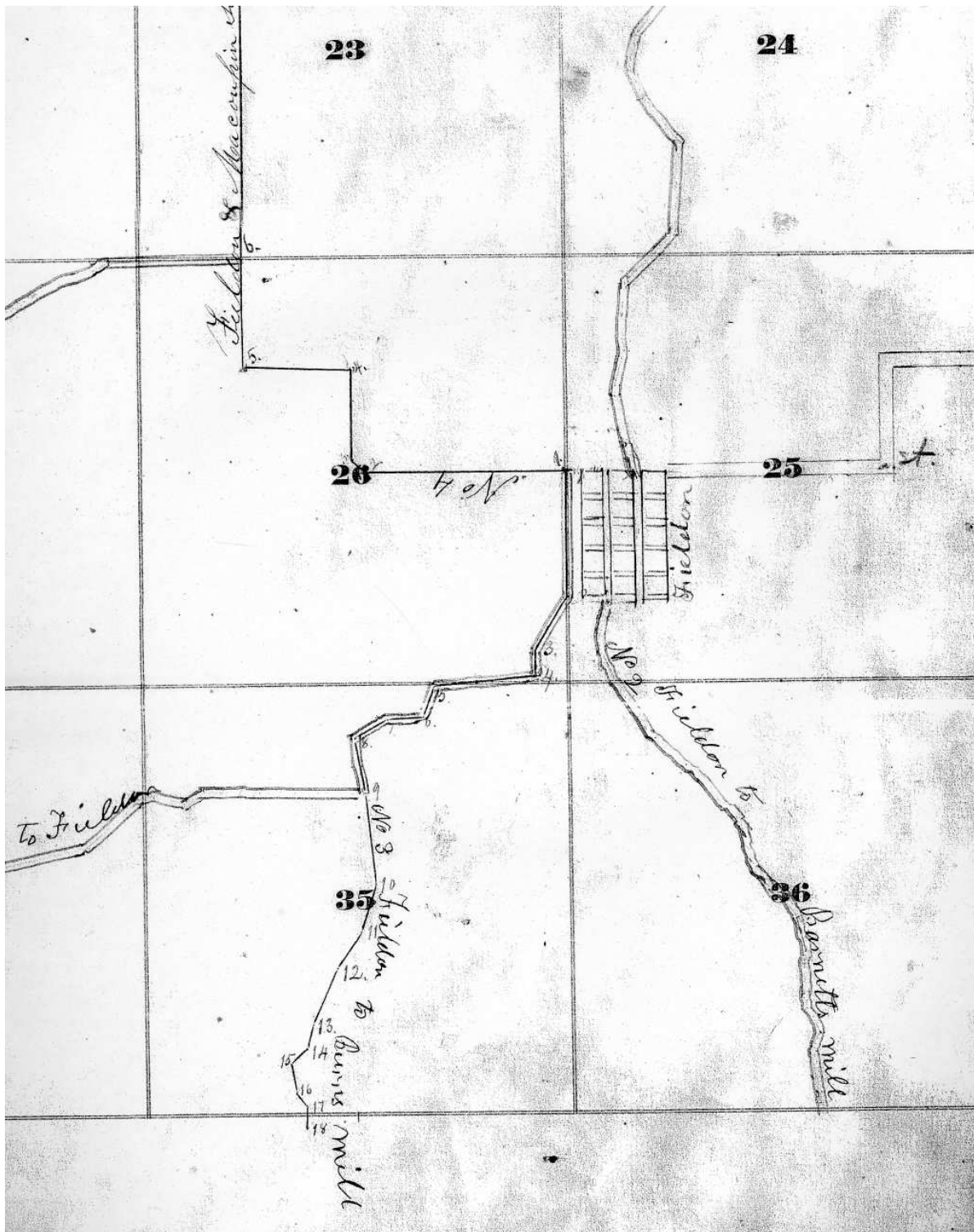


Figure 8. Detail of “Road Book A” showing the course of the road illustrated on the previous figure through southern Richwoods Township. It is referenced as Road No. 3 “Fieldon To Burn’s Mill”. This route corresponds to present-day Belt Road. Also of note is a parallel road “No. 2 Fieldon to Barnett’s Mill” (Jersey County Road Book A).

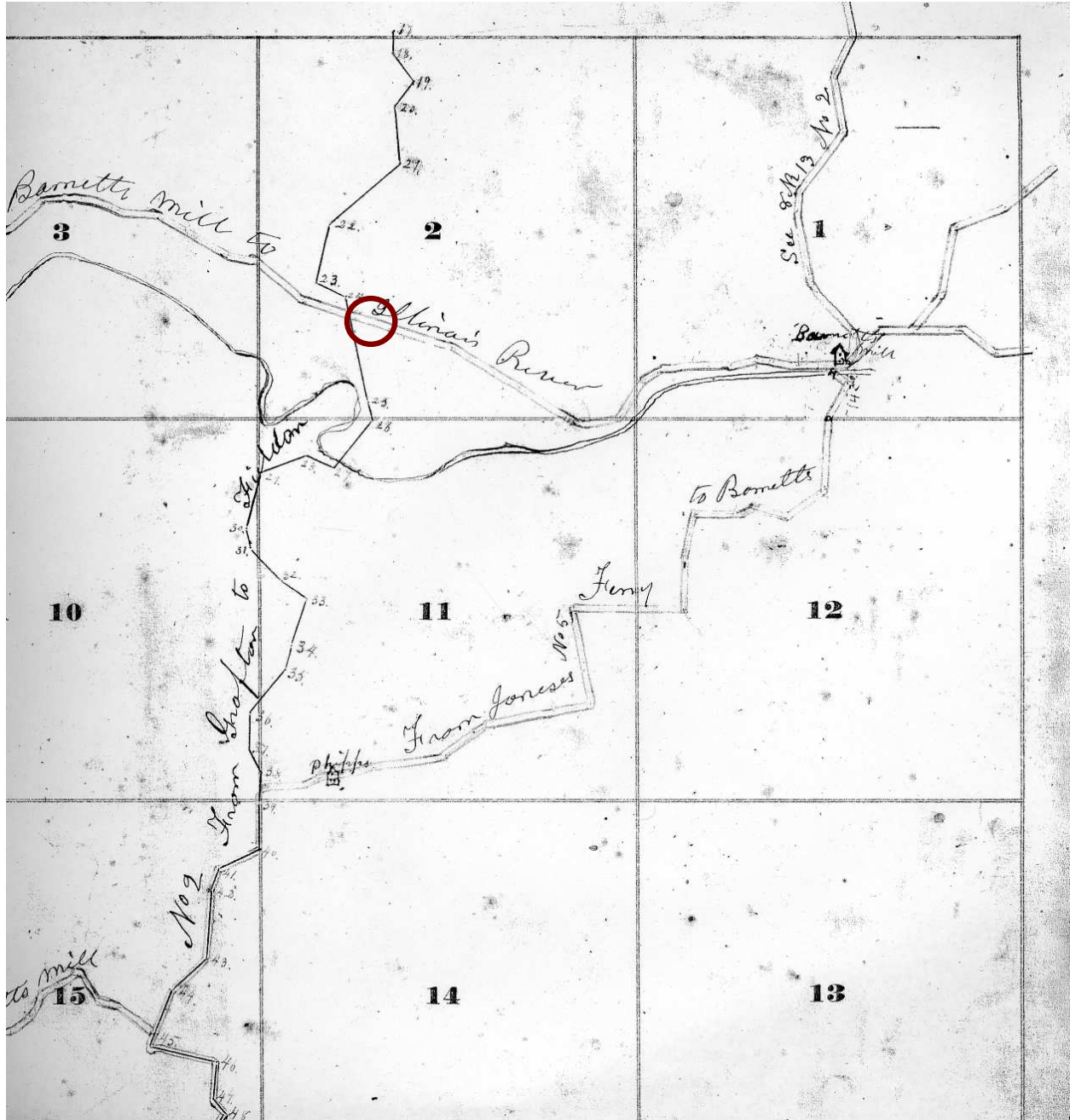
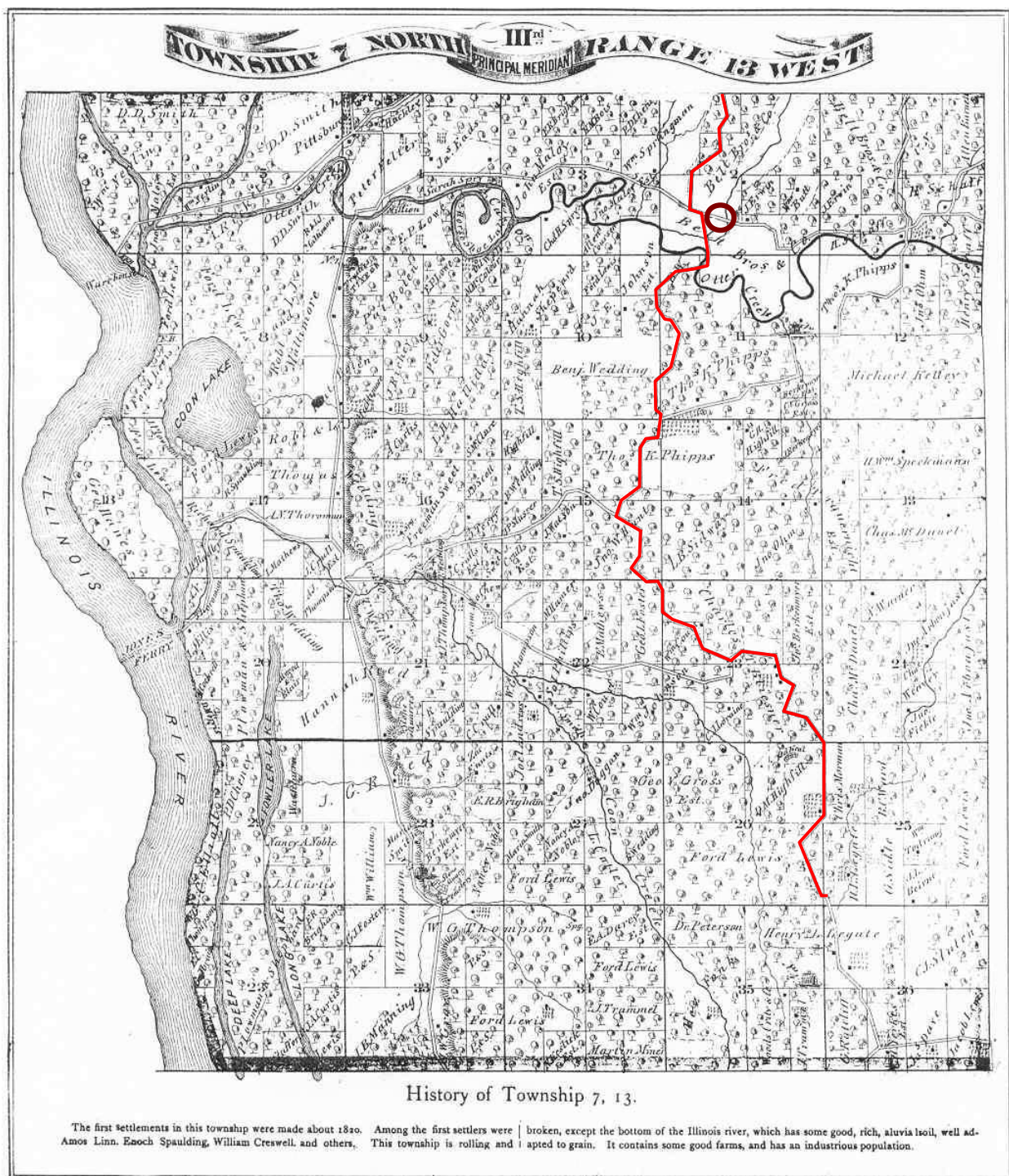
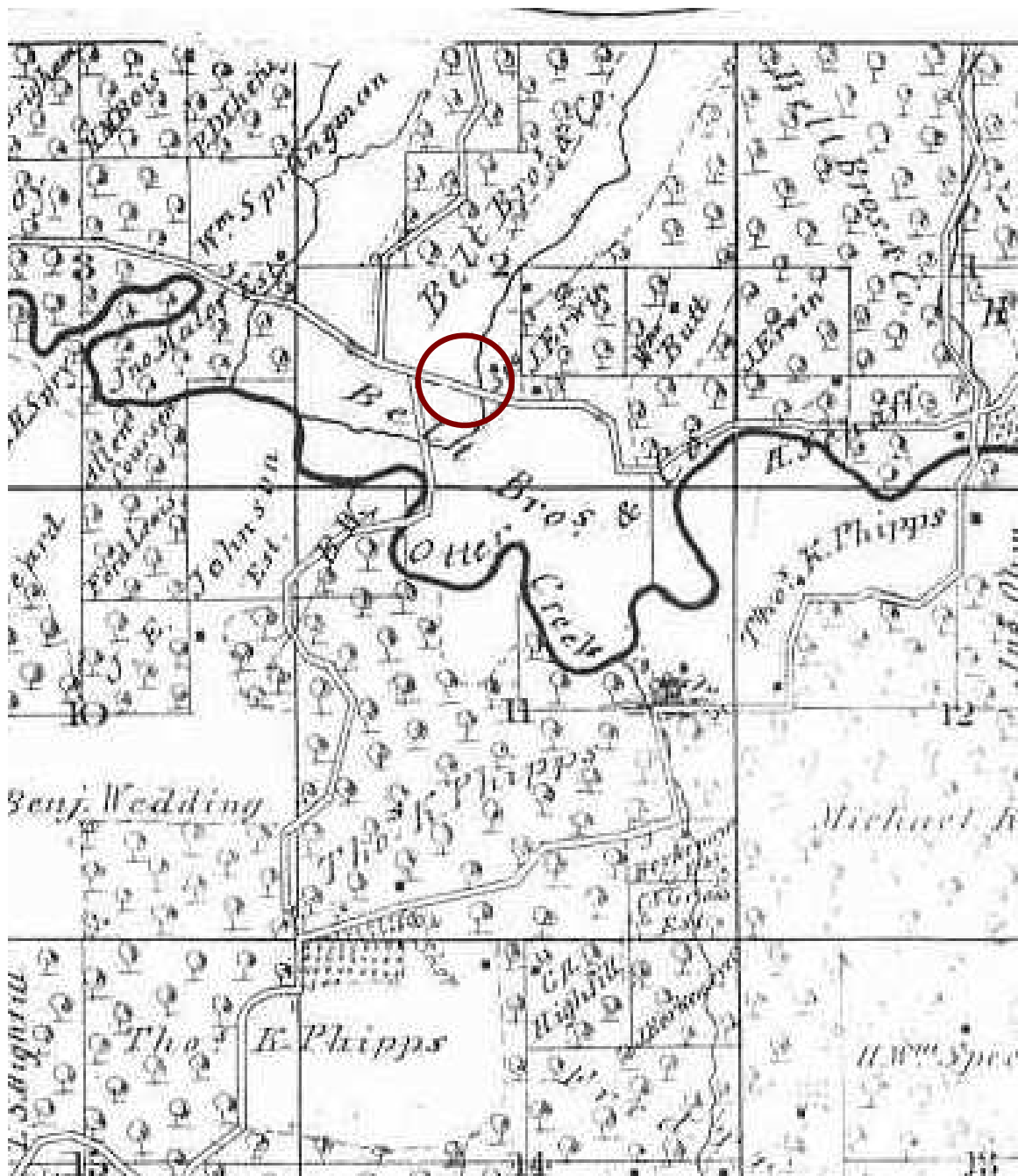


Figure 9. Detail of a plat of roads in Rosedale Township in the 1870s. The road surveyed in 1869 for James H. Belt and others in 1869 is labeled as “No. 2 From Grafton to Fieldon.” This source notes the presence of Barnett’s Mill and the Phipps residence along the road to the east but fails to indicate the presence of house and stable mentioned on the Belt Farm in the county commissioners records (Jersey County Road Book A).

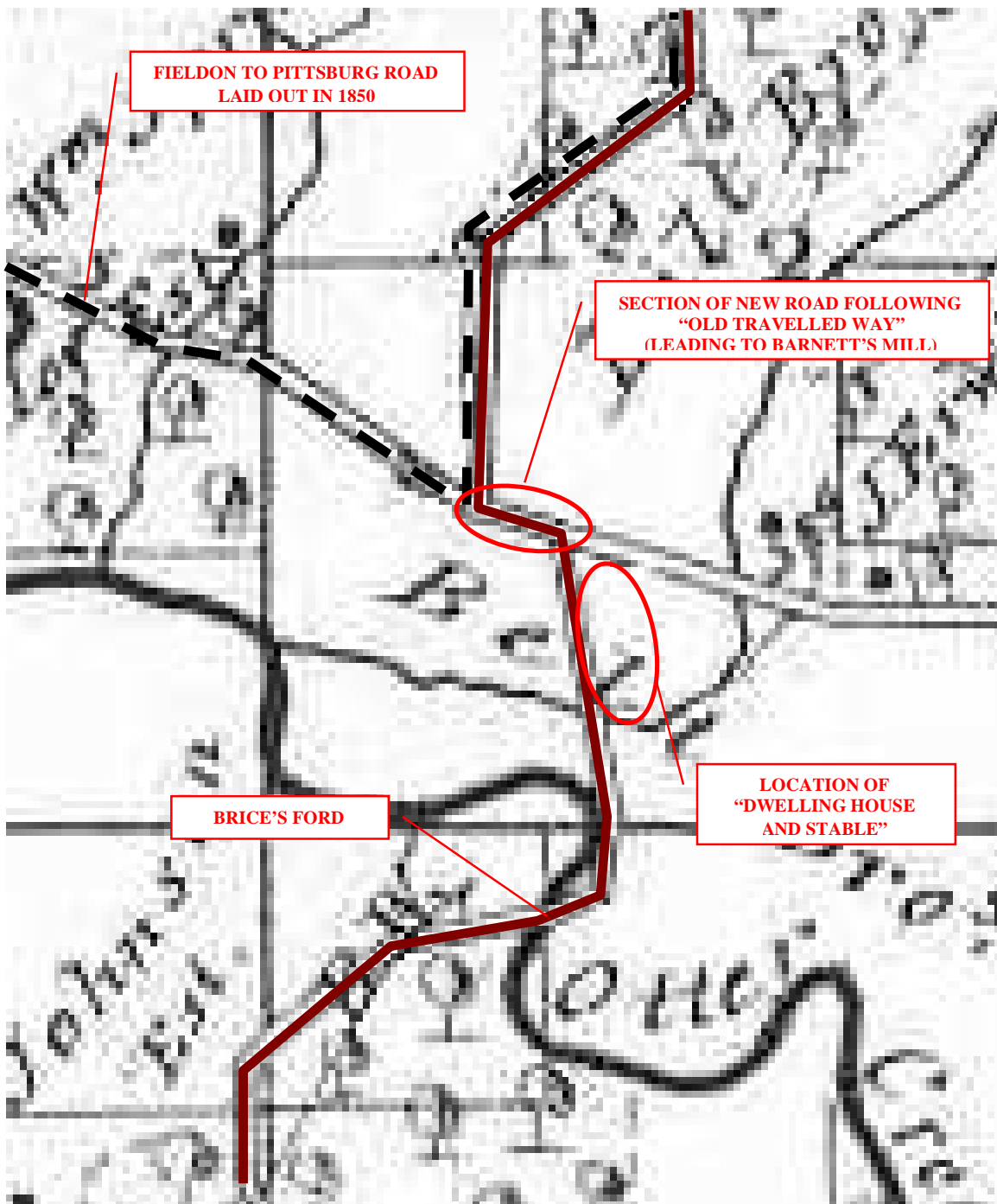




**Figure 10. Overlay of the new road surveyed through the Belt Farm Site in 1869 on an 1872 plat map of Rosedale Township (Andreas, Lyter and Company 1872).**



**Figure 11. Detail of the previous map, showing the location of the Belt Farm Site. At this date, the property associated with the site was owned by Belt Brothers and Company, who owned considerable acreage along Otter Creek and Barn Hollow (lying within Sections 2 and 11). This map does not illustrate any buildings on the site but does show a residence a short distance to the east, lying on the eastern side of Barn Hollow (Andreas, Lyter and Company 1872).**



**Figure 12. Interpretation of the description provided for the road surveyed through the Belt Farm Site in 1869, as outlined in the original petition to the County Commissioners and laid over the 1872 map of Rosedale Township.**



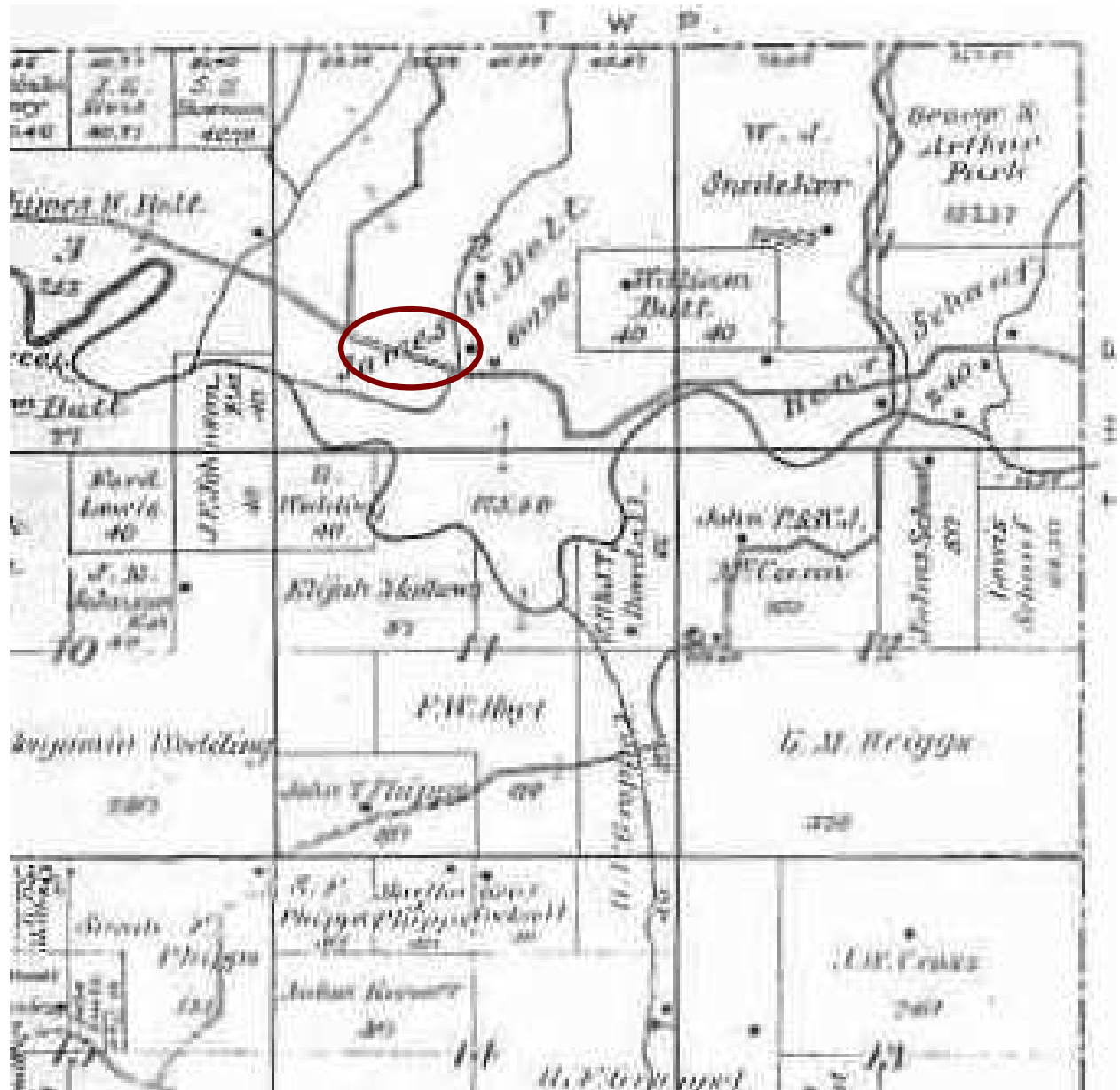


Figure 13. Detail of an 1893 map of Rosedale Township, showing the location of the Belt Site. By this date, the property associated with the Belt Site was owned by James H. Belt. This map suggests that a residence potentially was present on the east end of the site (east of the stream) at this time but not at the location of the existing dwelling at the site (Hammond Publishing Company 1893)

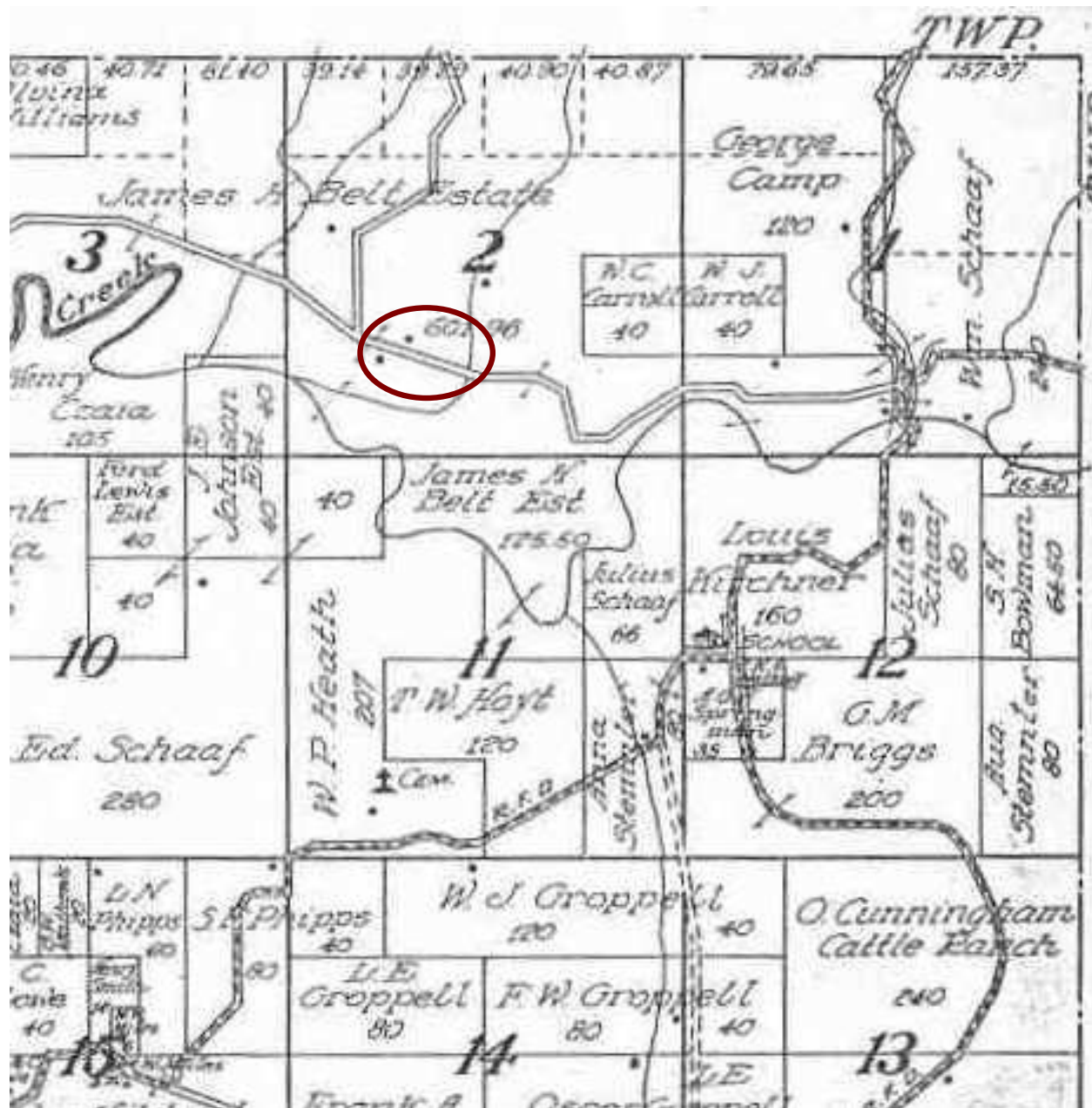
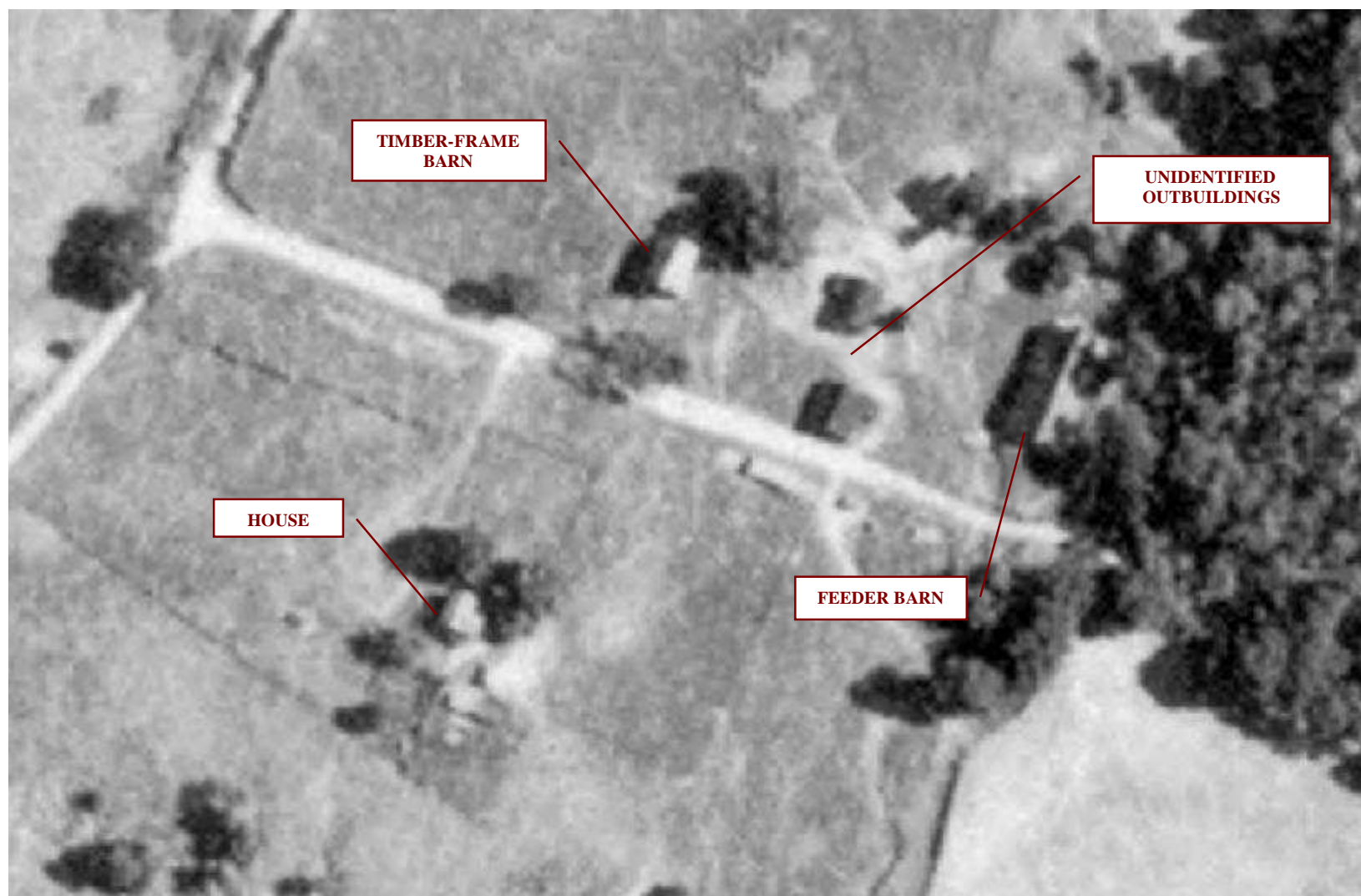


Figure 14. Detail of a 1916 plat map of Rosedale Township, showing the location of the Belt Site. This is the first of the published maps to illustrate a residence matching the location of the existing dwelling at the site. Interestingly, a second residence is illustrated on the north side of the road running through the site. The property was part of the James H. Belt Estate at this period (Ogle 1916).



**Figure 15.** Detail of a 1941 aerial photograph showing the Otto Creek valley in the vicinity of the Belt Site (circled). This image illustrates the intensive agricultural production carried out in the valley during this period. Level land was devoted to row crop production, while hillsides and narrow hollows were used as pasture for the grazing of livestock. More rugged uplands remained heavily timbered (USDA 1941:1B-107).





**Figure 16. Detail of the previous figure, showing conditions at the Belt Site in 1941. The residence and two barns currently present at the site are illustrated, as are two non-extant outbuildings (USDA 1B-107).**



**Figure 17. Modern aerial photograph showing existing conditions at the Belt Site (Google 2008).**

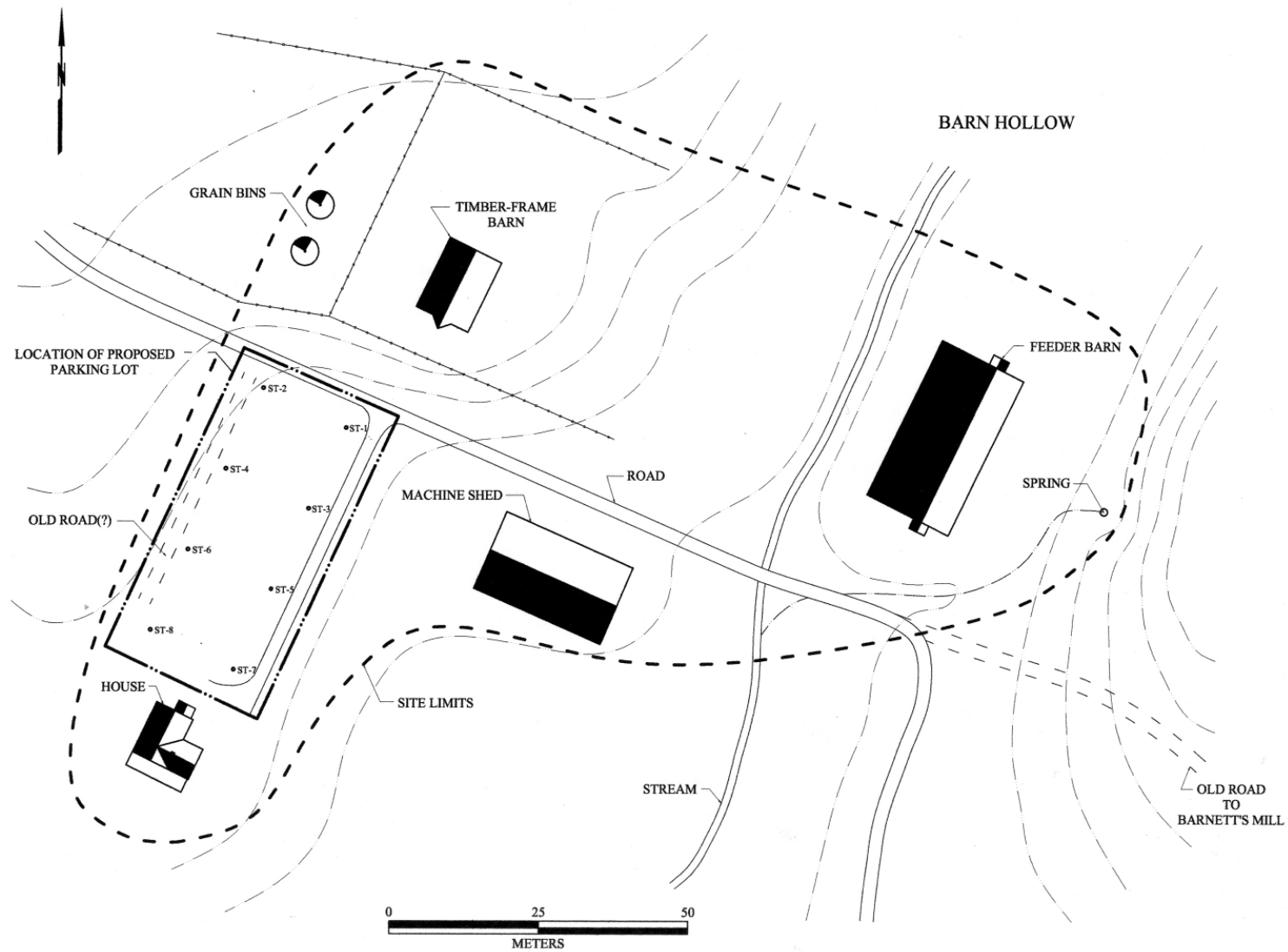


Figure 18. Site Map illustrating existing conditions at the Belt Farm Site. Shovel test locations are also illustrated (FRR 2008).





**Figure 19. View of the front, or north, elevation of the residence at the Belt Site. This two-story, L-shaped, frame house appears to date to circa 1915-1940.**





**Figure 20. Exterior view of the residence, looking southwest and showing the north and east elevations.**



**Figure 21. Exterior view of the residence, looking northwest and showing the east and south (rear) elevations. The single-story, shed-roofed extension at the west end of the porch is a later bathroom addition. The raised concrete pads shown in the foreground are associated with a cistern and a potential well (or cistern).**





**Figure 22.** Exterior view of the house, looking southeast and showing the west and north (front) elevations.



**Figure 23.** Interior view of the living room in the house, showing the south end of the room, where the stairway to the second-floor is located. The balustrade for the stairway has been removed.



**Figure 24. View of the west end of the living room in the house.**



**Figure 25. The house was heated with two floor furnaces, one of which was located in the living room (shown above) and the other in the dining room.**





**Figure 26. View of the wall thermostat on the east side of the living room. The feature has a sleek, “modern” design and was installed in the early part of the Post-World War II Era. It was during this period of prosperity that the original heating stoves in the house were abandoned in favor of the floor furnaces previously referenced.**



**Figure 27. View of the dining room in the house, looking east towards the kitchen. A built-in cabinet is present in the common wall between the dining room and kitchen. A chimney is located along this same wall (note the stove vent to the left of the cabinet). The floor grate shown is associated with the second furnace.**



**Figure 28. View of the east side of the kitchen.**



**Figure 29. View of the built-in cabinet on the west side of the kitchen. The upper part of the cabinet is accessible from both the kitchen and dining room.**



**Figure 30.** Detail of the built-in cabinet, showing the work counter and associated pass-through window to the dining room. The interior of the upper part of the cabinet is lined with varnished wainscoting.



**Figure 31.** View of the southeast bedroom on the second floor of the house. This room is representative of the other three bedrooms on the floor, in terms of flooring, trim, and door character. Note the clothes rack in the corner.





**Figure 32. (LEFT) View of the second-floor hallway in the house looking west. Note character of two-panel doors. (RIGHT) The interior doors are hung with half-surface, butt hinges with a brass finish.**



**Figure 33.** View of the small cellar located beneath the kitchen on the southeast corner of the house. The stone-walled cellar is accessed via the exterior bulkhead stairway shown above. The walls exhibit evidence of fire damage, which presents the possibility of the existing house being second-generation and being built upon the same foundations as an earlier dwelling.



**Figure 34.** View of the north side of the cellar.





**Figure 35. View of the floor framing in the house, as viewed from the cellar. The lumber used in the construction of the house is nominal-sized, fully-surfaced yellow-pine or fir.**



**Figure 36. The lumber used in the construction of the house was purchased from the Pollock Lumber Company in Jerseyville, Illinois. The stenciling shown above is stamped on the backside of one of the steps leading to the second floor.**

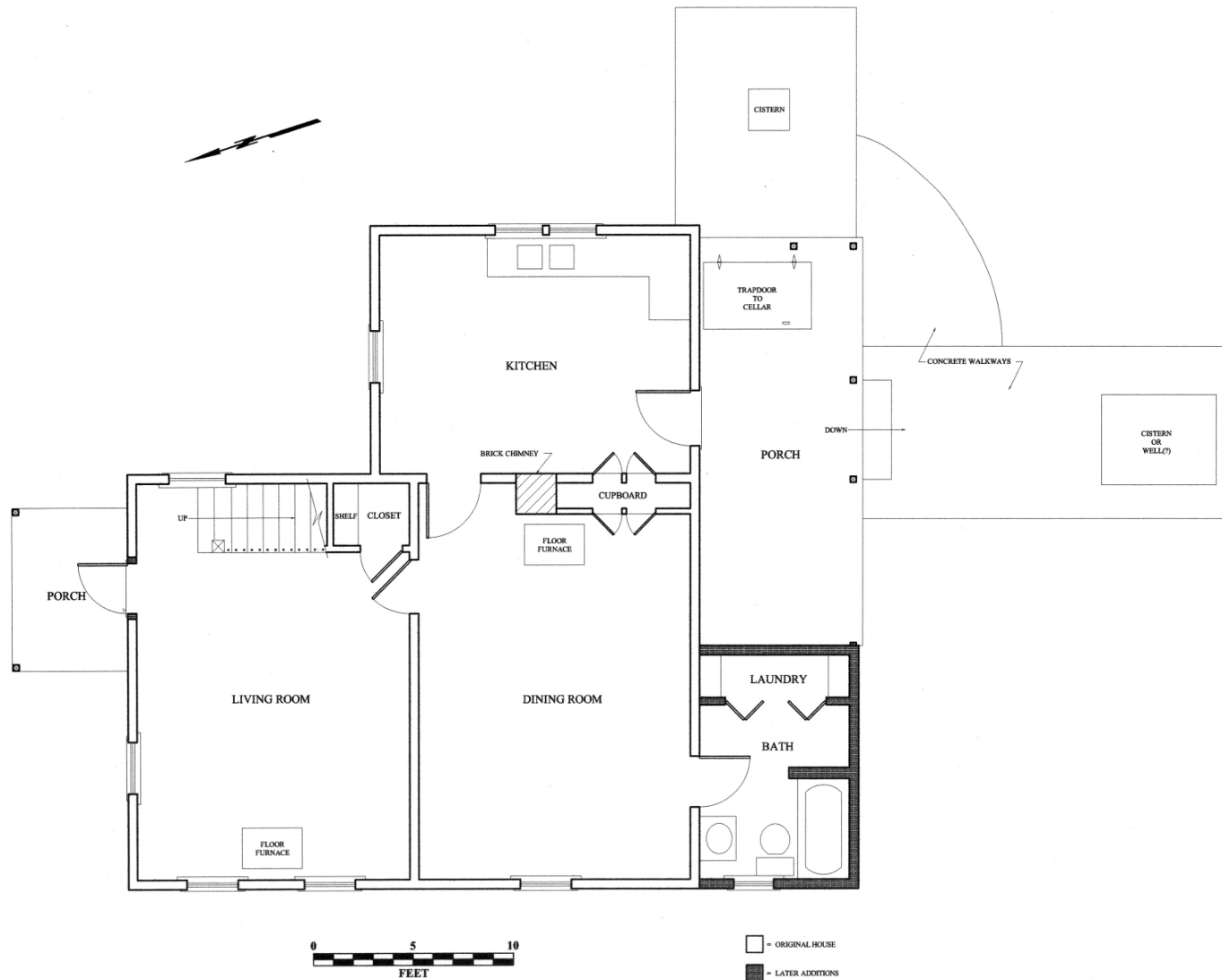


Figure 37. First floor plan of the house at the Belt Farm Site, showing existing conditions.

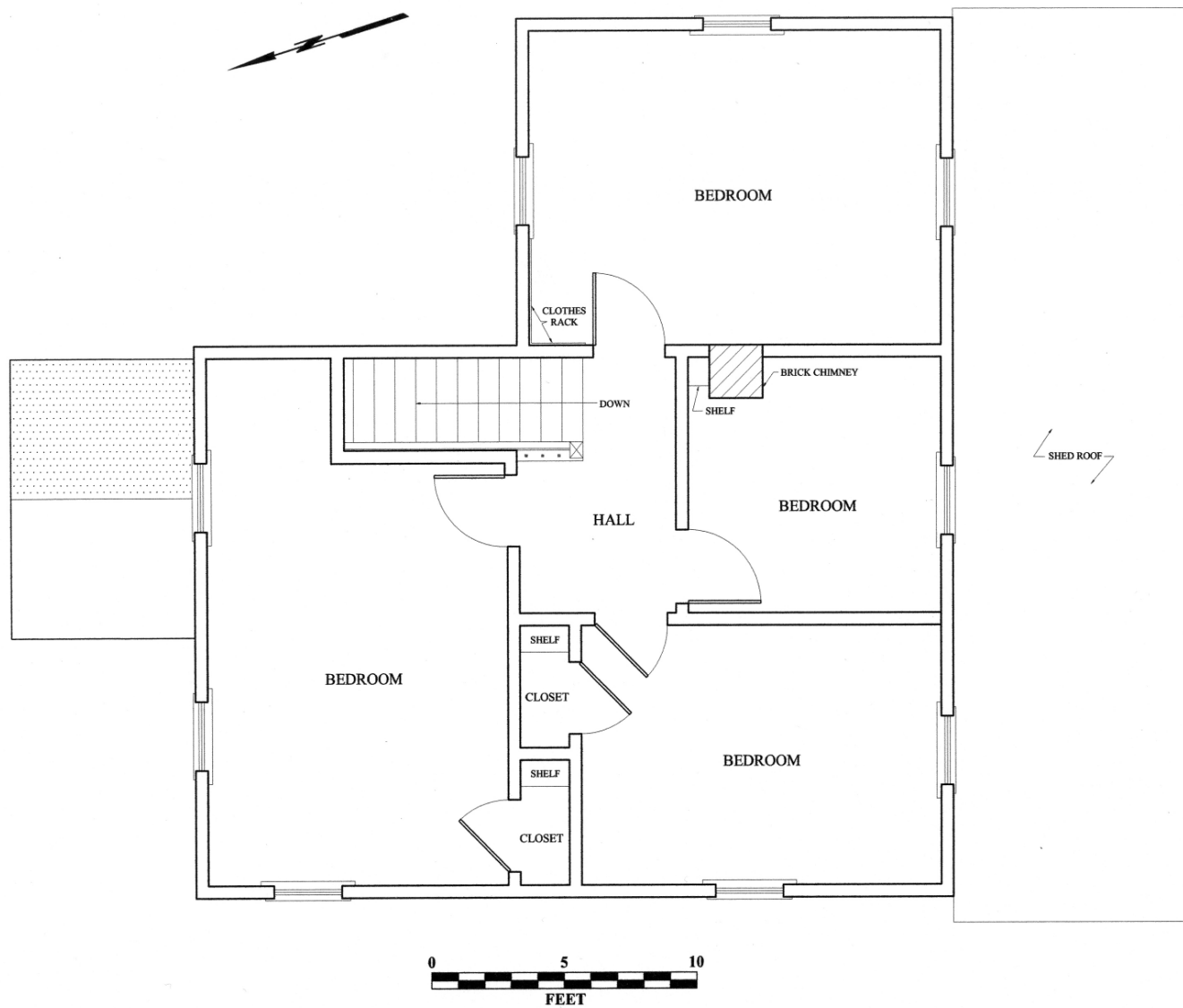


Figure 38. Second floor plan of the house, showing existing conditions.

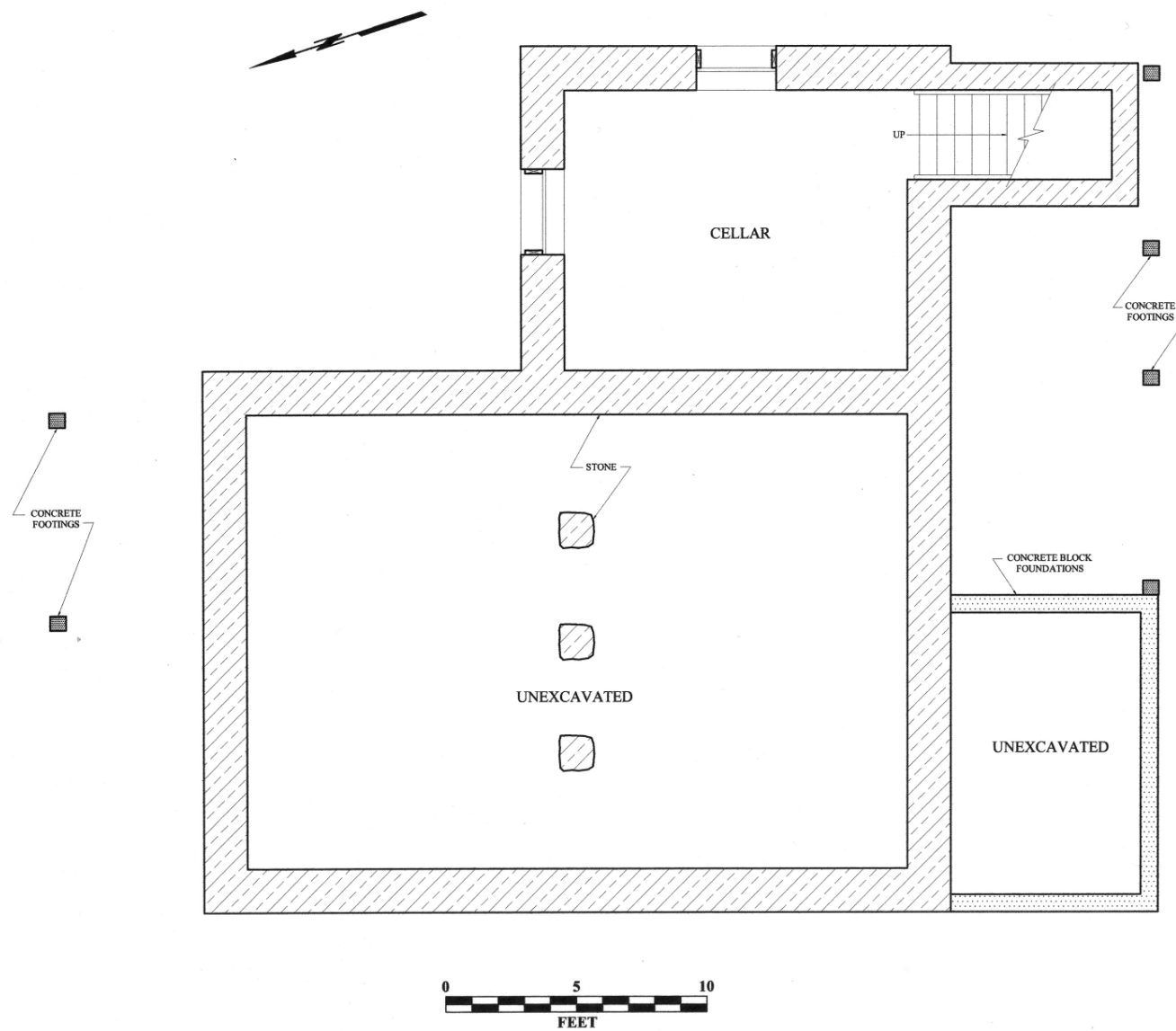


Figure 39. Foundation plan of the house, showing existing conditions.



**Figure 40. View looking down the concrete-lined cistern located on the east side of the house. The cistern is approximately 6' wide and 9' deep.**





**Figure 41. View of the timber-frame barn at the Belt Site, looking northwest and showing the east and south elevations. Two modern grain bins appear in the background.**

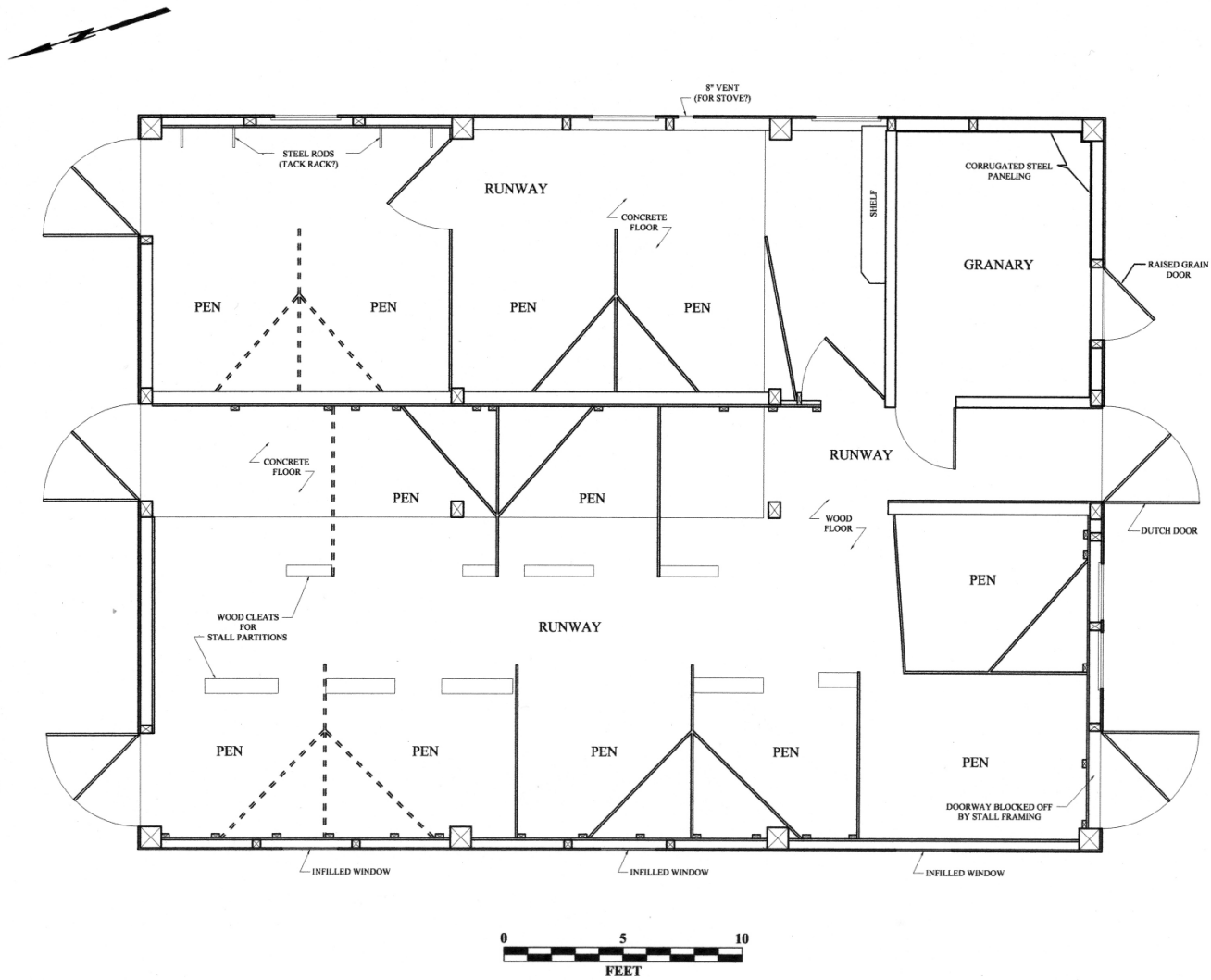


**Figure 42. View of the timber-frame barn, looking northeast. The south (or front) and west elevations are shown.**



**Figure 43. Views the south (Left) and north (RIGHT) gable-end walls of the timber-frame barn. A hay bonnet is present on the south.**





**Figure 44. First floor plan of the timber-frame barn at the Belt Farm Site, showing existing conditions.**





**Figure 45. Interior view of the first floor of the timber-frame barn, looking north from the south end of the barn. This level of the barn mostly is partitioned up amongst stalls.**



**Figure 46. View of the west side of the timber-frame barn, showing the stall partitions present here. The height and arrangement of the stall partitions, suggests that the barn was last used to raise hogs.**



**Figure 47. Two views of the framing of the timber frame barn.**





**Figure 48. Views of the granary located in the southeast corner of the timber-frame barn. The image at LEFT shows the exterior of the granary, looking southeast. An interior view is shown at RIGHT. The interior walls of the granary are covered with corrugated steel panels.**





**Figure 49. Views of the upper level of the barn, looking northeast (LEFT) and southwest (RIGHT). This level is completely open, aside from the two posts that support the upper girts in the central bents on which the canted queen posts are set. The upper level of the barn was last used as a hay loft. An examination of the framing indicates that a third floor was once present in the building but has been removed. The joists for this removed third floor would have rested on the upper girts shown here.**



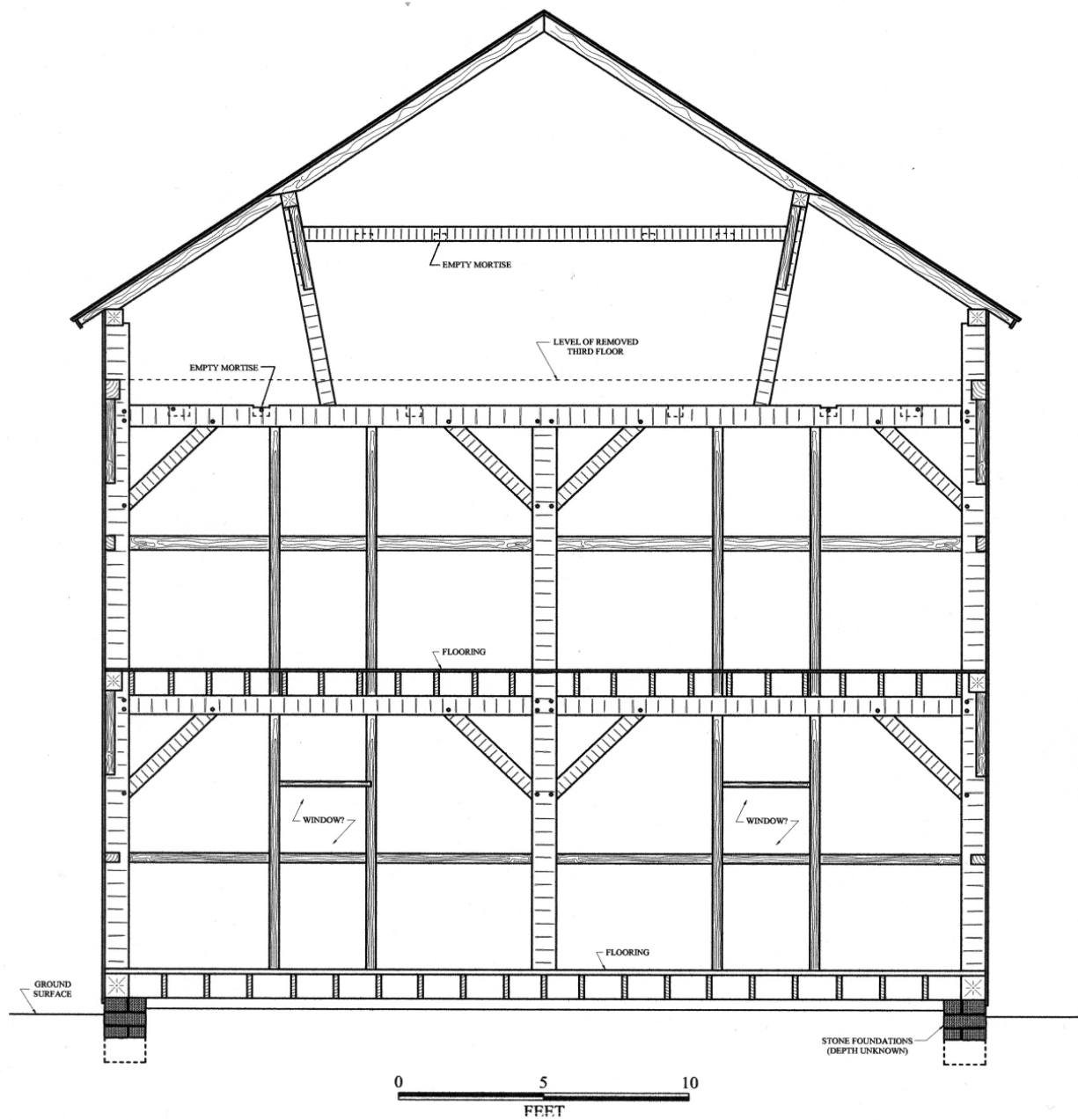


**Figure 50. Detail views of the junction between the post and upper girt of one of central bents in the barn, illustrating character of framing and mortise-and-tenon construction. The sills, posts, girts, and rafter plate are hand-hewn oak, while the rails (or nailers) are circular-sawn white pine.**

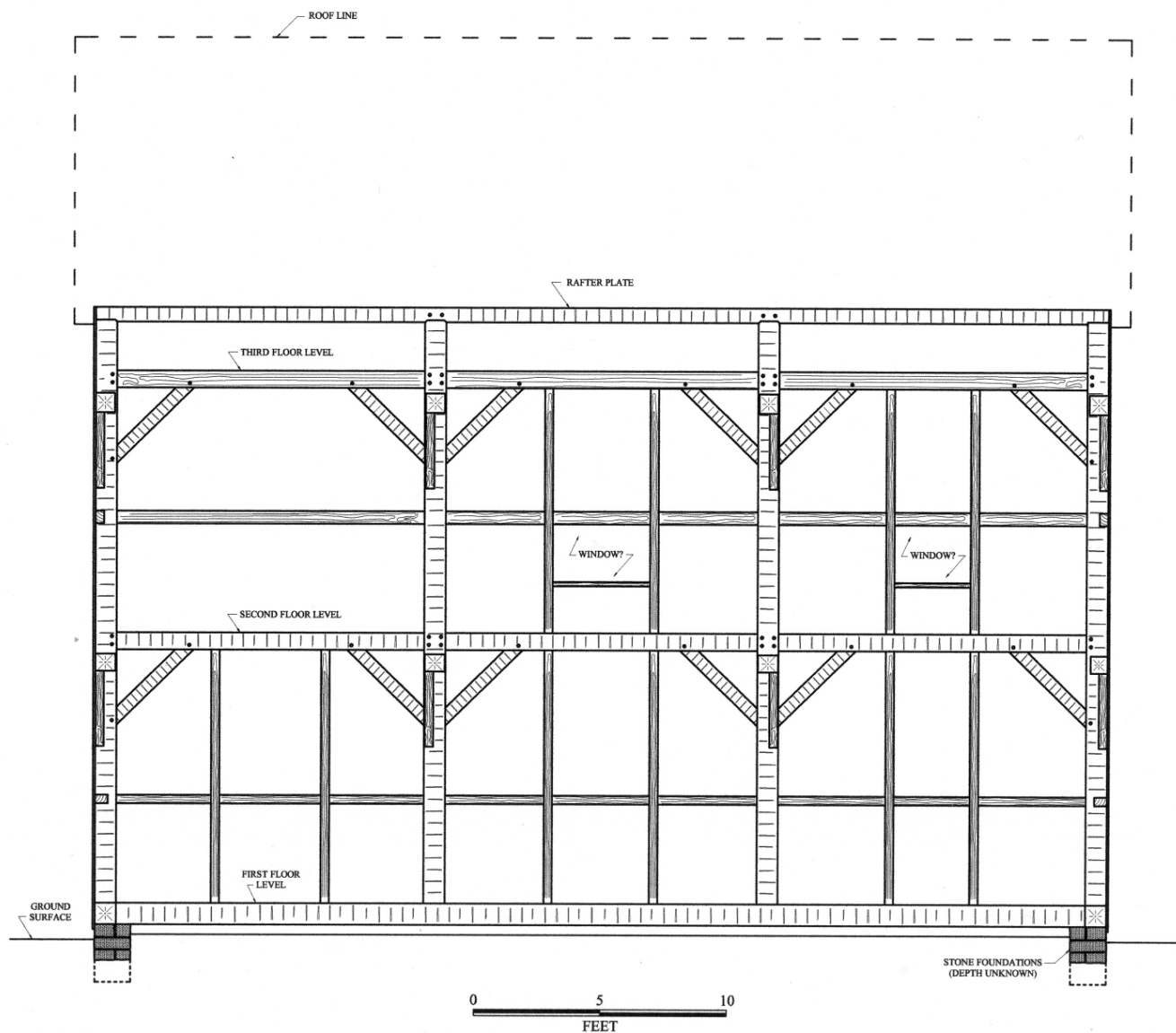




**Figure 51. Details of the framing in the northwest (LEFT) and southwest (RIGHT) corners of the upper level of the barn. The timber frame remains in excellent condition, except on the southwest corner, where some damage has occurred due to roofing having blown off.**



**Figure 52. Sectional view of the timber-frame barn, looking through the north gable-end wall. This illustration depicts the suspected as-built conditions of the walls. The character of the original roof framing is less clear and existing conditions are shown.**



**Figure 53. Longitudinal view of the timber-frame barn, looking east and showing suspected as-built conditions.**





**Figure 54.** View of the south elevation of the feeder barn at the Belt Farm Site. This structure is located at the mouth of Barn Hollow (perhaps named after this very barn?). Note the wide vehicle door on right and hay bonnet above.



**Figure 55.** View of feeder barn, looking northwest and showing the south and east elevations.





**Figure 56.** View of the feeder barn, looking southwest and showing the east and north elevations. The north elevation essentially mirrors that on the south, featuring a wide vehicle door and hay bonnet.



**Figure 57.** View of the feeder barn, looking southeast and showing the north and west elevations.





**Figure 58.** Detail of the hay bonnet on the north side of the feeder barn. Also note the vertical board-and-batten siding.



**Figure 59.** Interior views of the feeder barn, looking south (LEFT) and northwest (RIGHT). The barn was designed to accommodate a large amount of hay, as evidenced by its tall roof and hay bonnets on its gable-end walls. The eastern two-third of the barn was devoted to hay storage originally, while the western third was partitioned up into livestock stalls. Note the diagonal bracing supporting the roof.





**Figure 60.** The construction of the feeder barn represents an amalgamation of modern “light” barn construction and vernacular techniques. Locally procured, in-the-round oak posts are used, but these are integrated into the barn structure with industrial methods—bolts and nails—as opposed to traditional mortise and tenon, as illustrated by the two images above. The expansion of the hay loft was accomplished by bolting a second oak post to the original ones and setting a sill plate on top of it. The sill plate for the loft on the east side of the barn appears to have been cut with a chain saw.

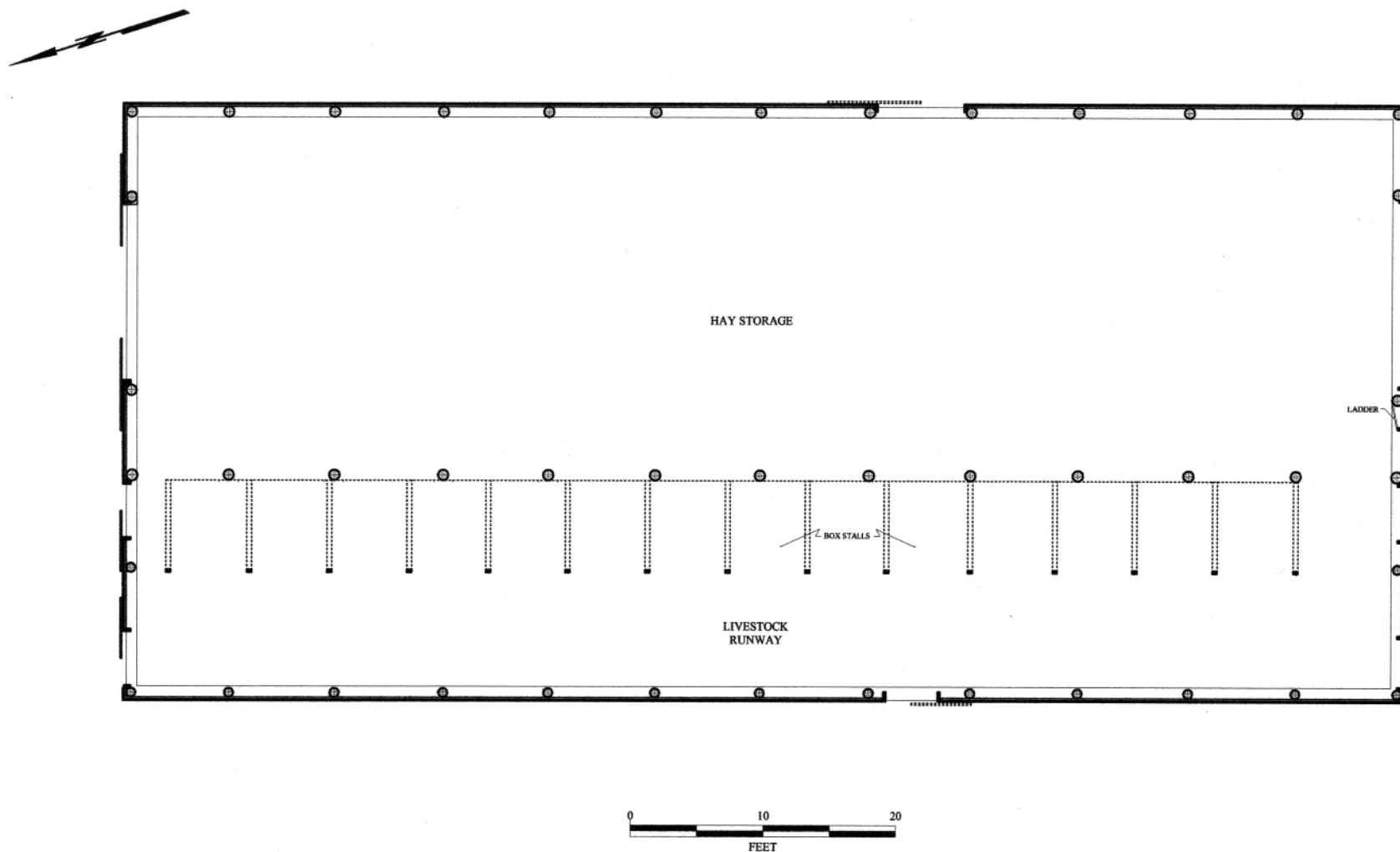


Figure 61. Ground floor plan of the large feeder barn at the Belt Farm Site, showing as-built conditions. At this date, the eastern two-thirds of the barn was open to the rafters and is suspected to have been devoted to hay storage. The western third of the barn had box stalls—likely for horses on this large working farm.



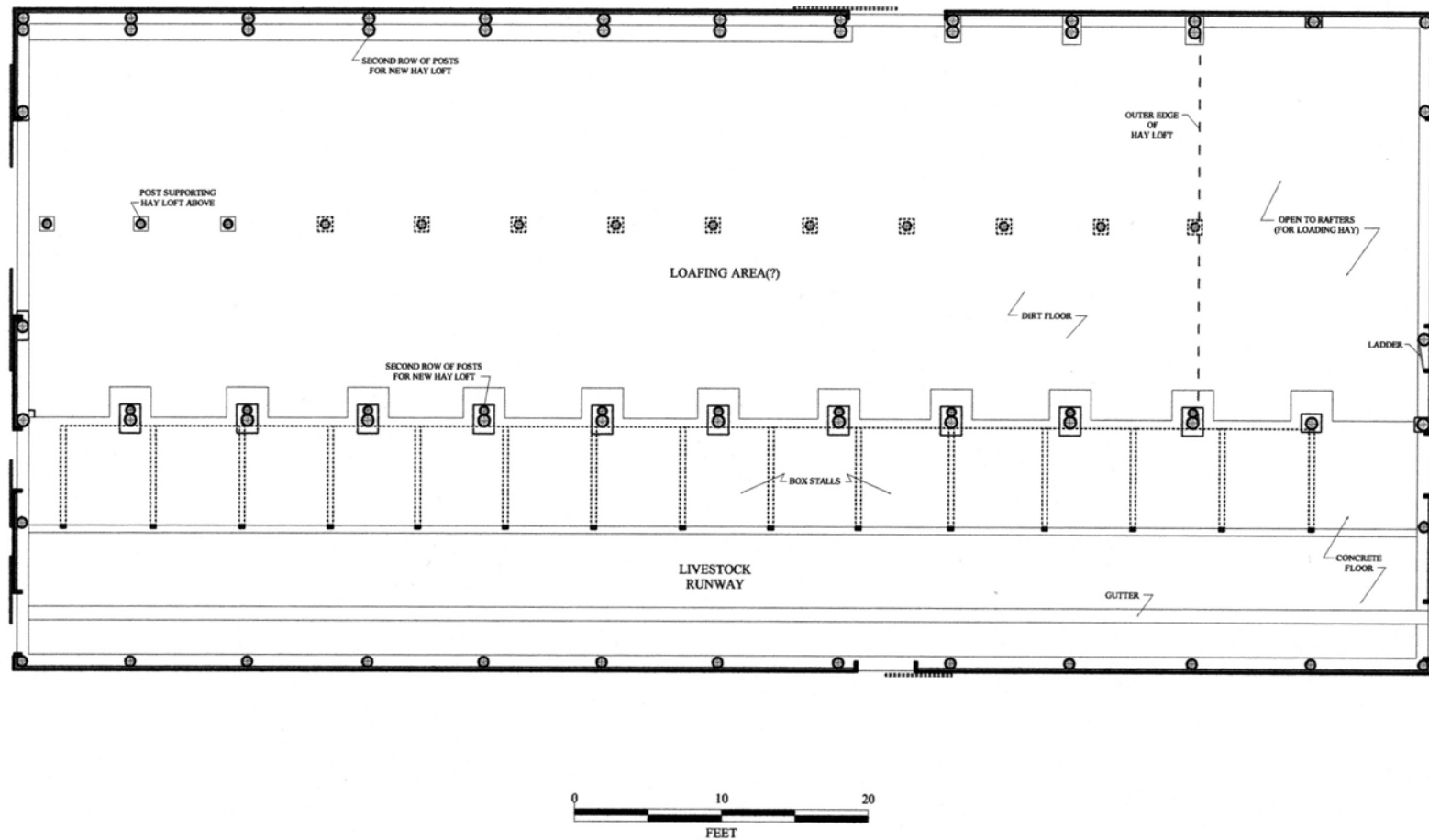
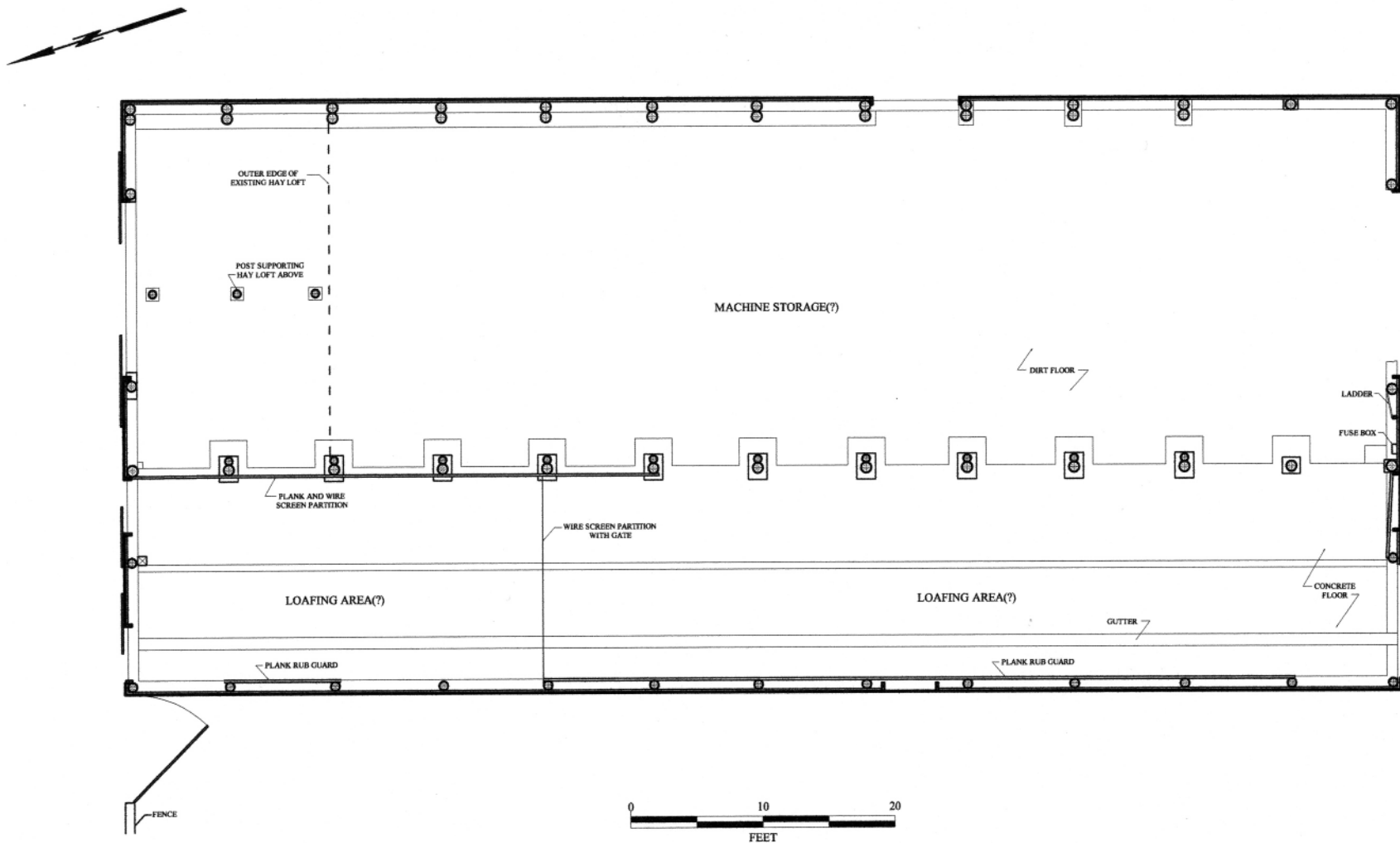
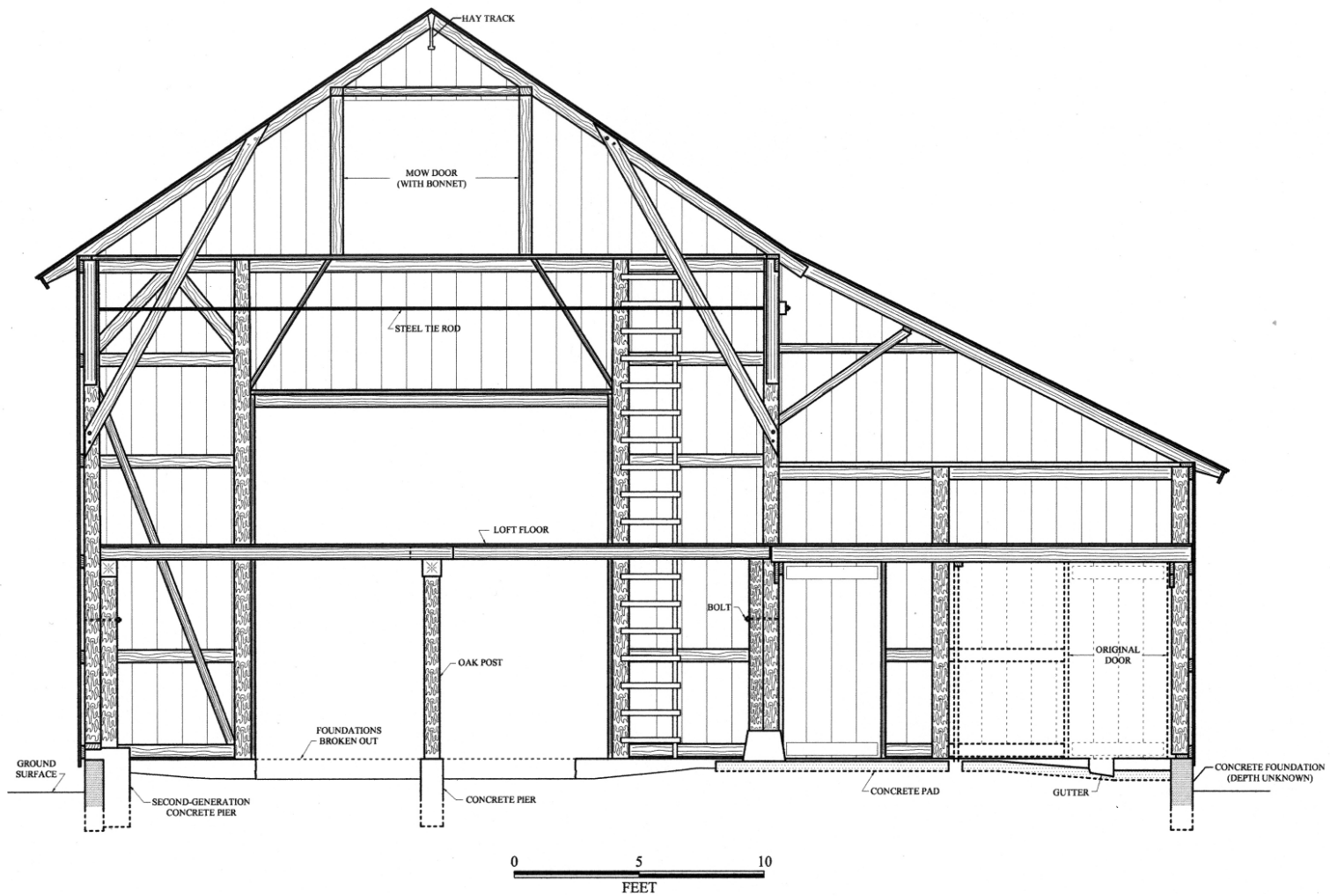


Figure 62. Floor plan of the feeder barn, showing conditions in the middle twentieth century, following the addition of the hay loft over the eastern two-thirds of the building. The area beneath the new hay loft may have been used as a loafing area for livestock and/or for machine storage. This illustration also shows the concrete floor that was added around the box stalls in the western third of the barn.



**Figure 63. Ground floor plan of the feeder barn, showing existing conditions. Most of the loft on the eastern two-thirds of the barn has been removed.**



**Figure 64. Sectional view of the feeder barn, showing the framing in the south gable-end wall. This illustration shows the hay loft that was added within the eastern two-thirds after the initial construction. Much of this second-generation loft has been removed, but it is shown here for clarity.**



**Figure 65.** A livestock chute and confinement pen are located immediately northwest of the feeder barn. The narrow width of the chute suggests that the pen was used for hogs, as opposed to cattle [Floyd, do you agree?].



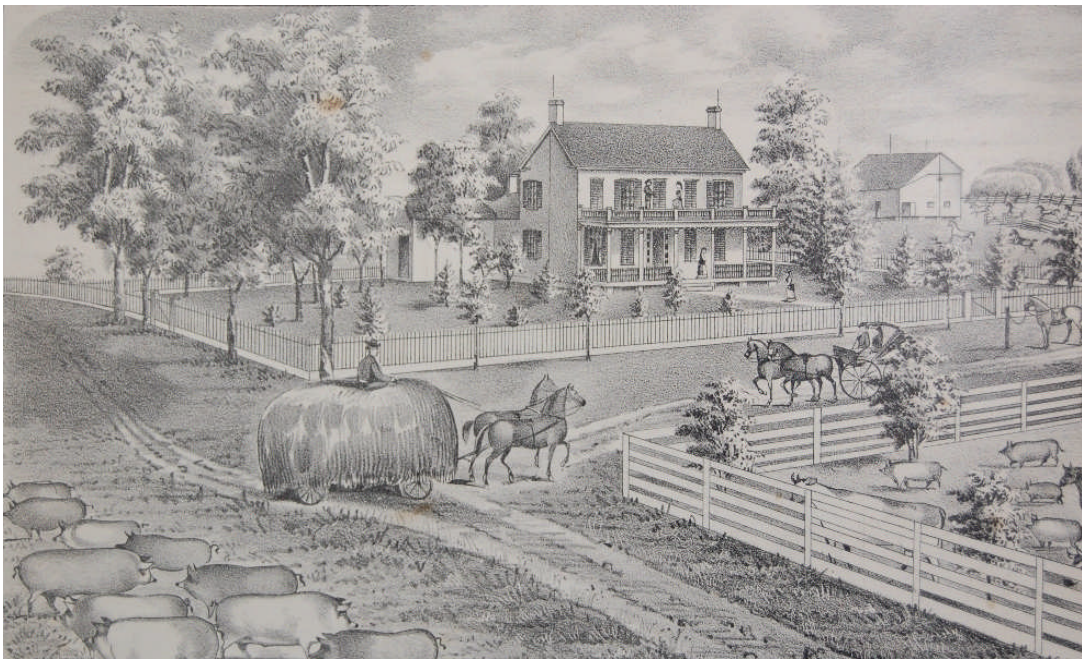
**Figure 66.** View of the modern machine shed at the Belt Farm Site, looking west. This building is located midway between the residence and feeder barn at the site. The gravel driveway shown follows the early road down the Otter Creek Valley leading to/from Barnett's Mill (located one mile east).



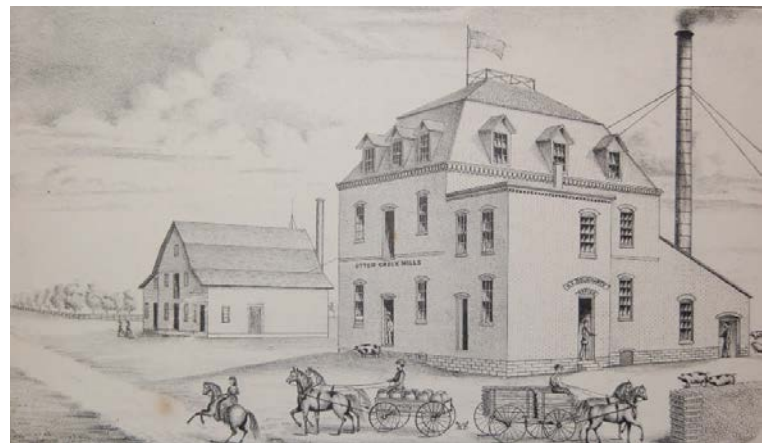
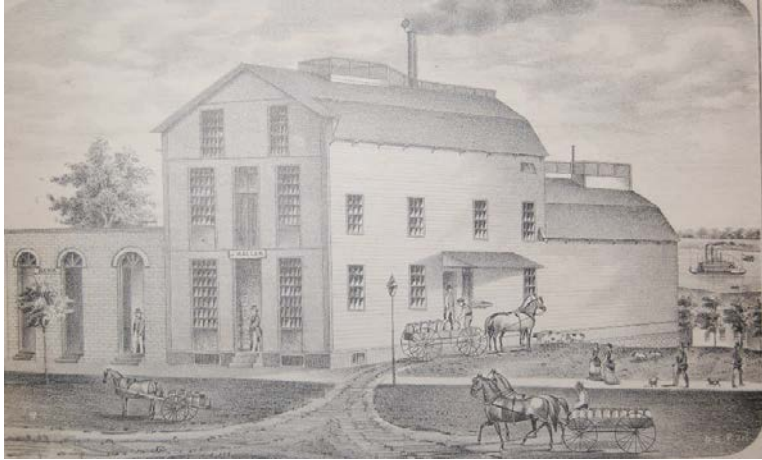


**Figure 67. Two views of the active spring located due east of the feeder barn. A concrete-lined cistern (marked with arrow at RIGHT) is located adjacent to the spring. The cistern presumably was used as a water source for the livestock housed in the feeder barn.**



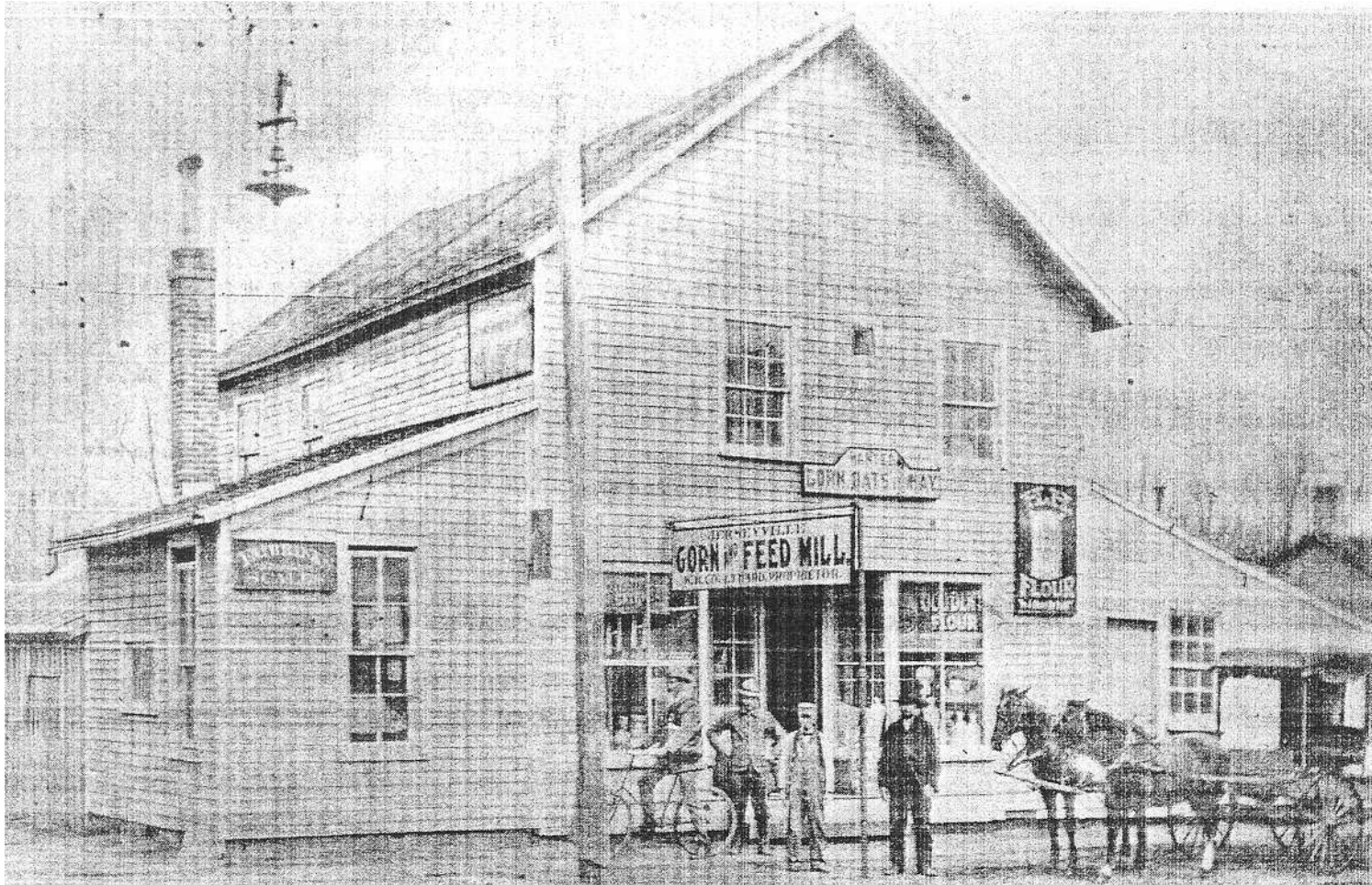


**Figure 68.** Faced with rolling and occasionally rugged terrain, many Jersey County farmers focused their energies on large-scale livestock production during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The cutting and putting up of hay was an essential component to this production, as illustrated by the figures above from the early 1870s (Andreas, Lyter and Company 1872). The feeder barn at the Belt Farm Site also was designed with massive hay storage in mind.



**Figure 69. Mills in Jersey County, as illustrated in the 1872 county atlas. All of the buildings shown have three floors, like the timber-frame barn at the Belt Farm Site. Although it difficult to say with certainty, the framing members in the barn suggests that the building may have had a non-gable roof, as is the case with the three mills pictured here—specifically a gambrel roof.**





**Figure 70. View of the Jerseyville Corn and Mill Company in 1915. This building reportedly was constructed circa 1860 and first housed the machine shop associated with the Jerseyville Agricultural Works. When this image was taken, the Jerseyville Corn and Mill Company was owned and operated by W. H. Coulthard, who was the last to grind corn meal with rock burrs at the facility. In 1921, the business was purchased by Clarence Updike, who operated it as the Updike Milling Company (*Jerseyville Democrat News* 1 October 1959). The tall, front-gabled character of this structure is similar to the timber-frame barn documented at the Belt Farm Site (Photograph courtesy of the Jersey County Historical Society).**





**Figure 71. Photograph of the Updike Milling Company building (formerly the Jerseyville Corn and Mill Company) during the course of its dismantlement in 1959. This image illustrates the upper story framing on the building. Note the diagonal bracing flanking the corner and center posts (*Jerseyville Democrat News* 1 October 1959).**

# ILLINOIS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE RECORDING FORM

County: Jersey  
Field Number:  
Quadrangle (7.5'): Nutwood

Site Name: Belt Farm Site  
Date Recorded: 2008.06.25

Revisit: N  
State Site No.: 11JY578

## LEGAL DESCRIPTION (to quarter quarter quarter)

Align: SE 1/4s: SW NE SW SE NE SW NW SE SW  
Align: 1/4s:  
Align: 1/4s:  
Align: 1/4s:

Section: 2 Township: 7 N Range: 13 W  
Section: Township: Range:  
Section: Township: Range:  
Section: Township: Range:

UTM Coordinates (by ISM): UTM Zone: 15 UTM North: 4,327,966

UTM East: 715,072

Ownership: Public

## ENVIRONMENT

Topography: Bluffbase  
Nearest Water Supply: Intermittent  
Soil Association: Fayette—Rozetta—Stronghurst

Elevation (in meters): 140  
Drainage: Lower Illinois

Description: The site is located at the base of the bluffs bordering the northern edge of the Otter Creek Valley, at the mouth of Barn Hollow.

## SURVEY

Project Name: Belt Farm Survey  
Ground Cover (List up to 3): Grass Weeds Brush  
Survey Methods (List up to 2): Pedestrian Shovel Test  
Site Type (List up to 2): Habitation

Site Area (square meters): 19,753  
Visibility (%): 10  
Standing Structures: Y

## SITE CONDITION

Extent of Damage: Moderate  
Main Cause of Damage: Vandalism

## MATERIAL OBSERVED

Number of Prehistoric Artifacts (count or estimate): 0  
Prehistoric Diagnostic Artifacts: 0  
Prehistoric Surface Features: N

Number of Historic Artifacts (count or estimate): 0  
Historic Diagnostic Artifacts: Y (House and Barns)  
Historic Surface Features: Y

Description: A residence, two barns, a machine shed, and two grain bins now stand at the site. Several cisterns also were documented. A number of agricultural outbuildings once present have been destroyed. No artifacts were collected.

## TEMPORAL AFFILIATION (check all that apply)

Prehistoric Unknown:  
Paleoindian:  
Archaic:  
Early Archaic:  
Middle Archaic:

Late Archaic:  
Woodland:  
Early Woodland:  
Middle Woodland:  
Late Woodland:

Mississippian:  
Upper Mississippian:  
Protohistoric:  
Historic Native American:  
Historic (generic):

Colonial (1673-1780):  
Pioneer (1781-1840):  
Frontier (1841-1870):  
Early Industrial (1871-1900):  
Urban Industrial (1901-1945): Y  
Post-War (1946-present): Y

Description: Documentary evidence and the physical examination of the standing structures suggests that the farmstead was developed circa 1900. It remained occupied until very recently. An earlier subsurface component may be present but has not been confirmed.

Surveyor: F. Mansberger, C. Stratton  
Site Report by: C. Stratton  
IHPA Log No.:

Institution: FRR  
Institution: FRR

Survey Date: 04/01/2008  
Date: 05/20/2005  
IHPA First Sur. Doc. No.:

Curation Facility: FRR

Compliance Status: NRHP Listing: N