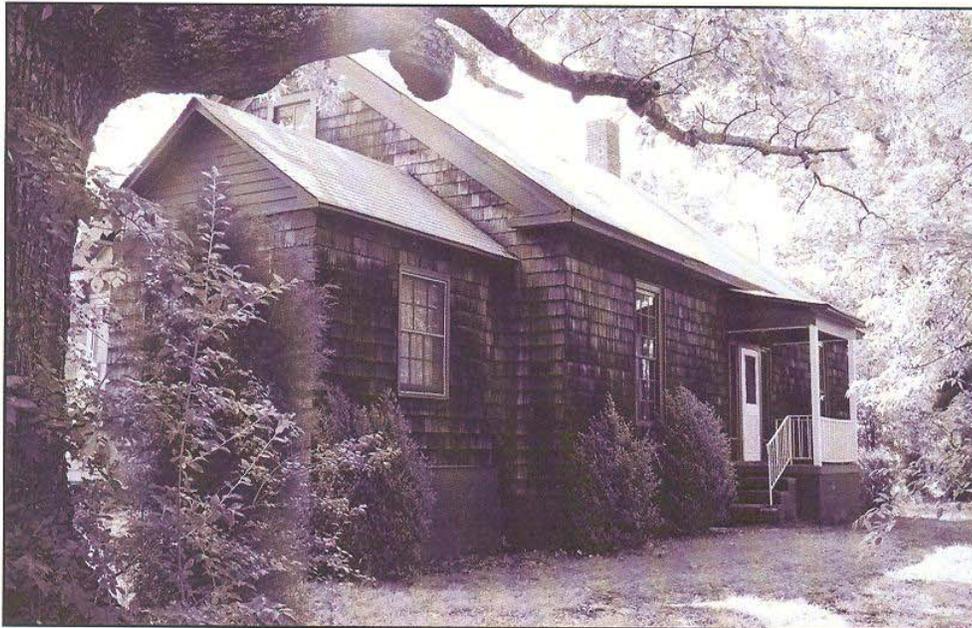


Historical and Photographic
Documentation
of the
Benson-Kendrick House



2480 Bells Ferry Road
Cobb County, Georgia

Brockington

Cultural Resources Consulting

Atlanta
Savannah

Charleston
Jacksonville

2006

**BENSON-KENDRICK HOUSE
2480 BELLS FERRY ROAD
COBB COUNTY, GEORGIA**

LOCATION:

The Benson-Kendrick house is located at 2480 Bells Ferry Road, Cobb County, Georgia; USGS 7.5 minute Kennesaw Quadrangle; Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 726438E 3765897N Zone 16.

PRESENT OWNER AND OCCUPANT:

Thomas Group Communities

PRESENT USE:

Vacant

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Benson-Kendrick House was constructed ca. 1850, and has undergone a possible move and a number of alterations since its original construction.

REPORT PREPARED BY:

Erin Kane

DATE:

July 2006

BENSON -KENDRICK HOUSE, CIRCA 1850

ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Benson-Kendrick House is located at 2480 Bells Ferry Road (Figure 1). The one and a half story central hall house rests on a continuous concrete block foundation (Figures 2-5). The symmetrical facade consists of a glazed and paneled door, which is flanked by multi-light sidelights, and one nine-over-nine double hung sash window on either side of the central door. The porch covers the entry only and consists of a poured concrete slab resting on a continuous concrete block foundation, covered by a shed roof porch supported by simple square posts. The porch railings and balusters are constructed of two-by-four wooden boards, and the stair railing is a simple wrought iron design. Windows on the main block facade are nine-over-nine double hung sash. Other windows on the house include two-over-two double hung sash, and six-over-six double hung sash. The exterior is covered with modern wood shingles. The side gable roof features boxed eaves, is covered with composite shingles, and has two interior brick chimneys on the ridgeline. Projecting additions to the house include a sun room on the north elevation, and a kitchen and enclosed porch addition on the east elevation.

Landscaping on the property is casual, with mature hardwoods and shrubs. A portion of a stacked fieldstone wall is located on the bank to the south of the house, separating the yard from a driveway (Figure 6). Due to dense vegetation encroaching approximately 10 to 15 feet from the north, south and east elevations, our exterior photographic opportunities were limited.

The interior of the house has a symmetrical floorplan, excluding the projecting additions (Figure 7). The house has a double pile plan that consists of a center hall with two adjoining rooms on each side. The center hall contains stairs which lead to the finished attic. The two adjoining rooms flanking the hall share a centrally located fireplace.

It appears the house has undergone several additions and alterations since its original construction, which can be grouped into three different phases: original construction, turn of the twentieth century modernization, and mid-twentieth century modernization. At the time of original construction, circa 1850, the house was likely built as a vernacular center hall house. An addition to the rear of the original single pile center hall house appears to have been made sometime around the turn of the twentieth century, which included raising the roofline to more smoothly incorporate the addition into the main house and to create an upper half-story. This alteration is most evident on the south side of the house. The original house had nine-over-nine double hung sash windows, while two-over-two double hung sash windows were used on the addition and in the gable of the raised roofline. The wall thickness (approximately nine inches) between the front and rear rooms is also indicative of this type of addition. A sun room addition on the north side and a kitchen addition on the east side appear to have been constructed in the mid-twentieth century.

At the time of recordation, demolition work had already proceeded on the interior of the house. However, demolition allowed limited investigation of construction techniques and materials that had been previously hidden since the house has been modernized over a number of years. At one time, interior finishes included plaster affixed to wood lath. The plaster appears to have been covered by pine paneling in the mid-twentieth century. Original brick fireplace surrounds were covered with an outer layer of brick with modern cement mortar, possibly to raise the hearth height. It appears heart pine flooring was also added throughout the house during a remodeling project, probably either during the turn of the century addition, or the mid-twentieth century modernization.

According to Mr. David Kendrick, son of the most recent owner, the Kendrick family removed mantles just prior to recordation. Mr. Kendrick stated that these mantles matched the pine paneling of the house, and were thus not original to the house. Mr. Kendrick further stated that the pine paneling found throughout the house was added in the mid-twentieth century. The house contains a number of doors that are either original to the house or were possibly added at the turn of the century. The four-panel doors range from two feet to over three feet in width and also vary in height. The entry door appears to date to around the turn of the century. Mr. Kendrick also revealed that the wood shingle siding was added to the house approximately twenty years ago.

Research performed at the Georgia Historic Preservation Division revealed that the Benson-Kendrick House was recorded in the 1978 Cobb County Historic Resources Survey as Resource CO-203, though no assessment of its significance was given. In addition, the house was included in the Cobb County Historic Sites Inventory printed in *Architecture, Archaeology, and Landscapes: Resources for Historic Preservation in Unincorporated Cobb County, Georgia* (Roth 1988, 208). The Cobb County Historic Preservation Commission gave each inventoried resource a letter grade that "reflects the relative estimated value of each structure and building to the county" (Roth 1988: 187). The Benson-Kendrick House received a grade of "C" which indicates "The structure contributes to the architectural and historical legacy of Cobb County, but more information is needed about its specific history" (Roth 1988: 187). In addition, the explanation states that "given sufficient information 'C' sites may become 'B' sites and then 'A' sites. 'B' sites appear to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, and 'A' sites are listed in the National Register.

PROPERTY HISTORY

The Benson-Kendrick House is located in District 16, Section 2, Land Lot 642 of Cobb County. Additional acreage most recently associated with the house contains land located in lots 641, 655, and 656 (Figure 10). Deed research performed at the Office of the Superior Court Clerk in Cobb County revealed the current property has undergone a number of ownership changes since the land was distributed in the 1832 Georgia Land Lottery. Unfortunately, many Cobb County records were destroyed by fire in 1874, and property records prior to that time are incomplete.

In the 1832 Georgia Land Lottery, Land Lot 642 in the Sixteenth District, Section 2, was drawn by Ann Densler, a widow from Chatham County. It is unknown whether Mrs. Densler actually claimed the lot and moved to Cobb County. It is likely the land came into the possession of a speculator and was sold either as a single lot or an assemblage of lots. At one time the property was a portion of an estate containing several hundred acres owned by the Roberts family. A 1859 deed from Thomas J. Roberts to Wiley Roberts conveys land in lots 142, 655, 713, 657, 641, 586, 639, and 640 "with a reserve of five acres from the two last named lots for the use of the mill pond" for a total of 335 acres (Cobb County Deed Book [CCDB] 80: 385). Lot 642 was not specifically mentioned in the exchange, but lots 641 and 655 are adjacent, and have been associated with the property for a number of years. The earliest mention of Land Lot 642 is in a mortgage between Wiley Roberts and J.J. Northcutt and Son in the dated February 4, 1879. On the \$94.75 note, Roberts offers Land Lots 639 to 642, 657, 656, 655, 654, 713, and 714 as a guarantee of payment (CCDB10: 370). The next record found regarding the property is in 1902. Three deed records indicate the division of land located in lots 639, 640, 642, 655, 656, 657, 713 and 714 between Mrs. Katie E. (Roberts) Glover, George H. Roberts, and Oswell Roberts (CCDB CC: 50-52). According to census records, Katie, George, and Oswell were the children of Harriett and Wiley Roberts.

Members of the Roberts family were among the early settlers in Cobb County (Temple 1989: 74). Wiley Roberts settled in Cobb County around 1835 and married Rhoda Stanley. Their children were Benson, George, Willis, John, Thomas, Eliza, and Wiley. Willis and Thomas moved to Texas shortly before the Civil War, and Wiley likely bought Thomas' property at the time he departed for Texas.

In 1904, Mrs. Katie E. (Roberts) Glover sold the land in lots 639, 640, 642, 655, 657, 713, and 714 to J.D. Benson (CCDB FF: 357). In the 1904 deed, Mrs. Glover is named as the sole heir to George and Oswell Roberts who are deceased by this time. In 1919, J.D. Benson sold a portion of the land in Lots 655 and 656 (CCDB 64: page 398). At the same time, Benson Brothers and Company sold land in lot 658 (CCDB 64: page 399). Benson Brothers and Company was a firm consisting of J.D. Benson, J.A. Benson, and W.L. Benson. John Donald (J.D.) and Molly Brantley Benson had four sons and three daughters, two of which were John Augustus (J.A. or "Gus") and William Luther (W.L.). Benson Brothers Merchantile Company operated on the Marietta Square from 1908 to 1933. To satisfy a debt of \$5,924.14 principal, \$6,398.05 interest, and additional administrative fees, a January 1936 entry names the Estate of J.D. Benson as the debtor to First National Bank of Marietta (FNBM) and awards to FNBM 119 acres located in lots 641, 642, 654, 655, 656 (CCDB 120: 260). In April of the same year, W.L. Benson paid \$2500 and guaranteed the payment of taxes on the same property (CCDB 119: 544). At the same time he also took out a loan in the amount of \$1000 against the property "for the purpose of securing the balance of the purchase price of the above described property" (CCDB 120: 331-332).

In 1939, W.L. Benson Jr. sold to Mrs. T.B Chandler land in lots 654 (40 acres), 655 (40 acres), 641 (ten acres from west corner), and the south half of lot 642, except one acre on the

north side of the lot and west of Bells Ferry Road (CCDB 133: 31). Mrs. Chandler was the former Frances Benson, daughter of Jesse and W.L. Benson, and was the sister of W.L. Benson, Jr. The property changed hands a number of times over the next fifteen years, but remained in approximately the same configuration with acreage in lots 641, 642, 655, and 656. Mrs. Chandler sold the property to W.P. Addison in January 1948 (CCDB 194: 416). Approximately two weeks later, Addison sold the property to Miles Motes (CCDB 194: 428). Motes sold the property to Bascom Burrell in 1949 (CCDB 212: Folio 159). Burrell sold the property to Arnold M. Guest in 1951 (CCDB 233: 406). Guest sold the property to Edwad S. Kendrick in May 1955 (CCDB 311: 79; Plat Book 9, 135). Kendrick owned the property until it was sold to Thomas Group Communities in 2006.

The Benson-Kendrick House was probably originally constructed as a vernacular center hall house during the mid-nineteenth century. According to the Mr. David Kendrick, the house was reportedly constructed circa 1850 near the site of the Kirkpatrick Mill, which was located northeast of the present location of the Benson-Kendrick House on Noonday Creek. It is possible the original portion of the house dates to this time, judging by the extant nine-over-nine windows on both the facade and south elevation of the house.

Mr. Kendrick also stated that the house had reportedly been moved to the current location, though he did not know the date of the move. It is possible the Benson-Kendrick House was moved from near the Kirkpatrick Mill location, but we found no conclusive evidence indicating this during our investigation. According to a Civil War map produced during the Atlanta Campaign of 1864, a house associated with the Roberts family is at or near the current location of the Benson-Kendrick House (Engineer's Office, Cavalry Corps. 1864) (Figure 8). Another Civil War map depicting the Atlanta Campaign, but prepared after the war (Davis, et. al. 1891-1895: 159, Plate 59) (Figure 9), does not show a house at the present location of the Benson-Kendrick House. However, there are two structures located near the location of the Kirkpatrick Mill, one of which appears to be vacant. The owner of the other house is not identified, but the house may be associated with the mill and the Kirkpatrick family. Only one structure is marked at the Kirkpatrick Mill site on the 1864 map. Deed research indicates the property was at one time owned by the Roberts family, so it is possible that the house was actually constructed at the current location and occupied by the Roberts family.

Figures 11 and 12 are two photographs found behind a mantle as it was being removed from the house by the Kendrick family. The identities of the persons in the photographs are unknown, but the photographs appear to date to the early twentieth century. Mr. Kendrick asked that the photographs be donated to the Cobb County Historical Society.

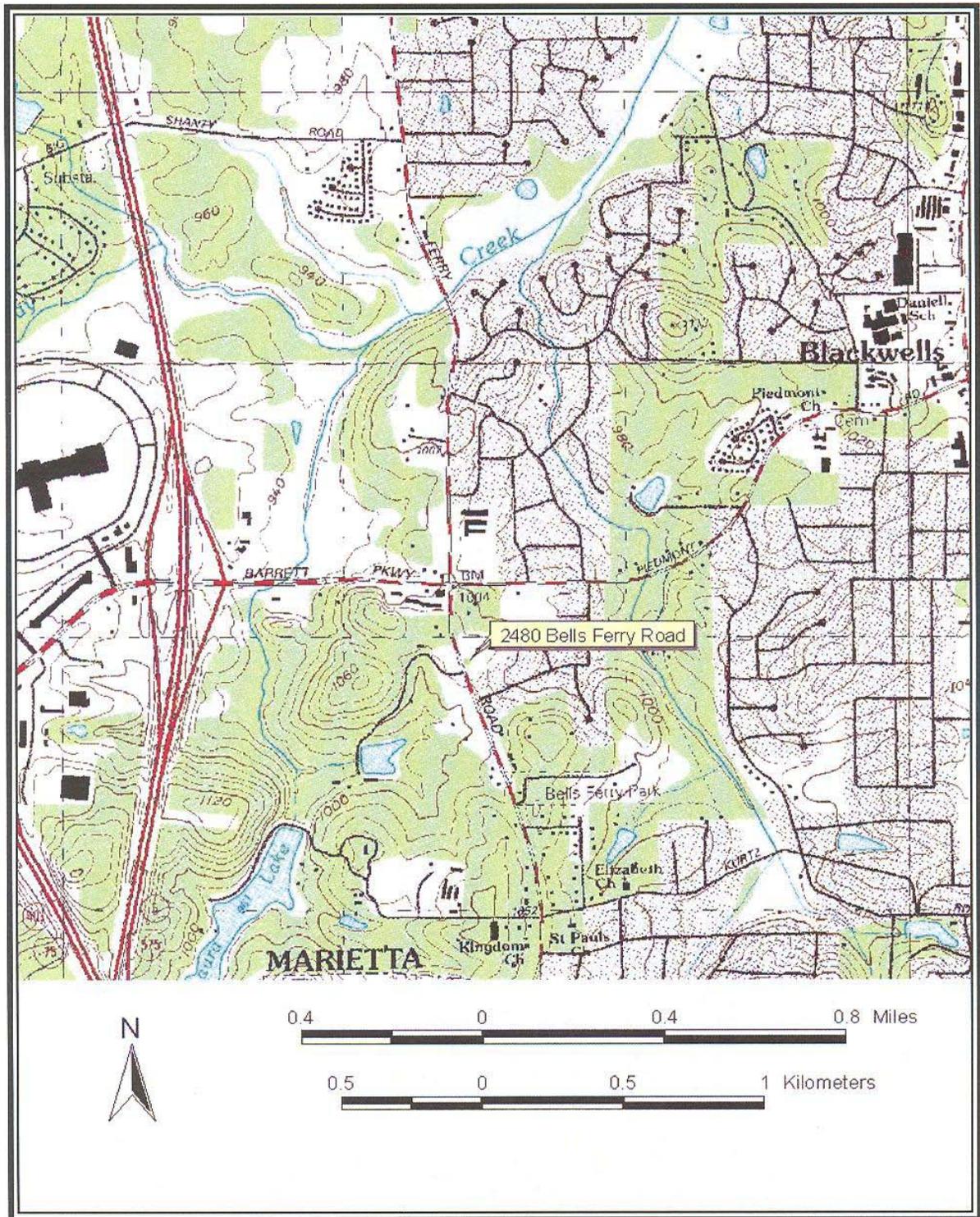


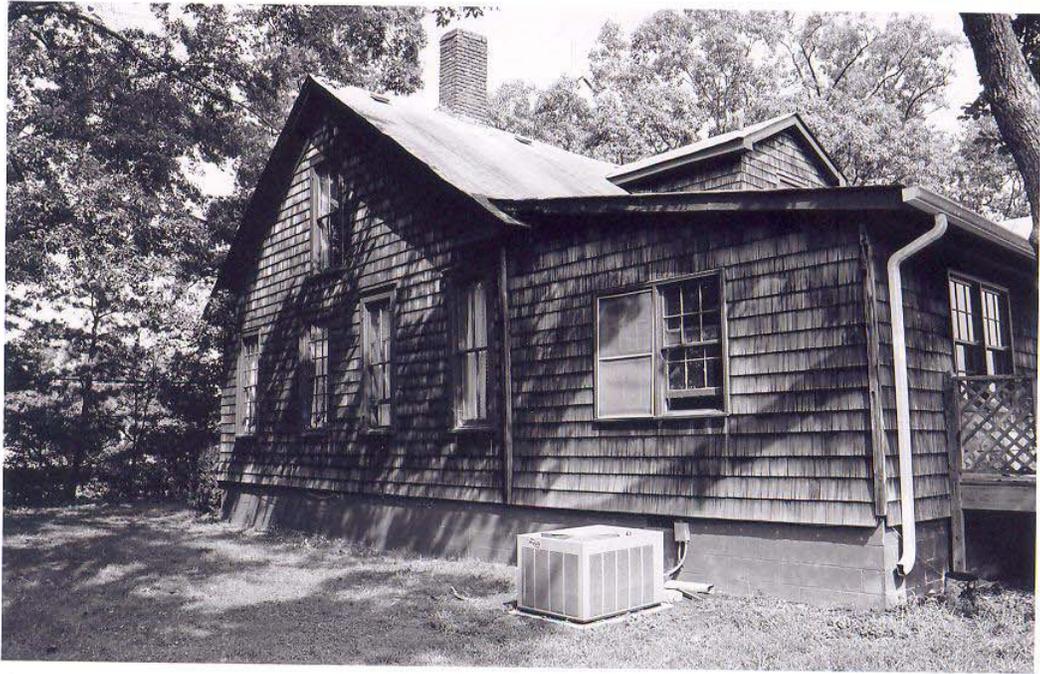
Figure 1. Location of Benson-Kendrick House, 2480 Bells Ferry Road (USGS 7.5 minute Kennesaw, Georgia Quadrangle).







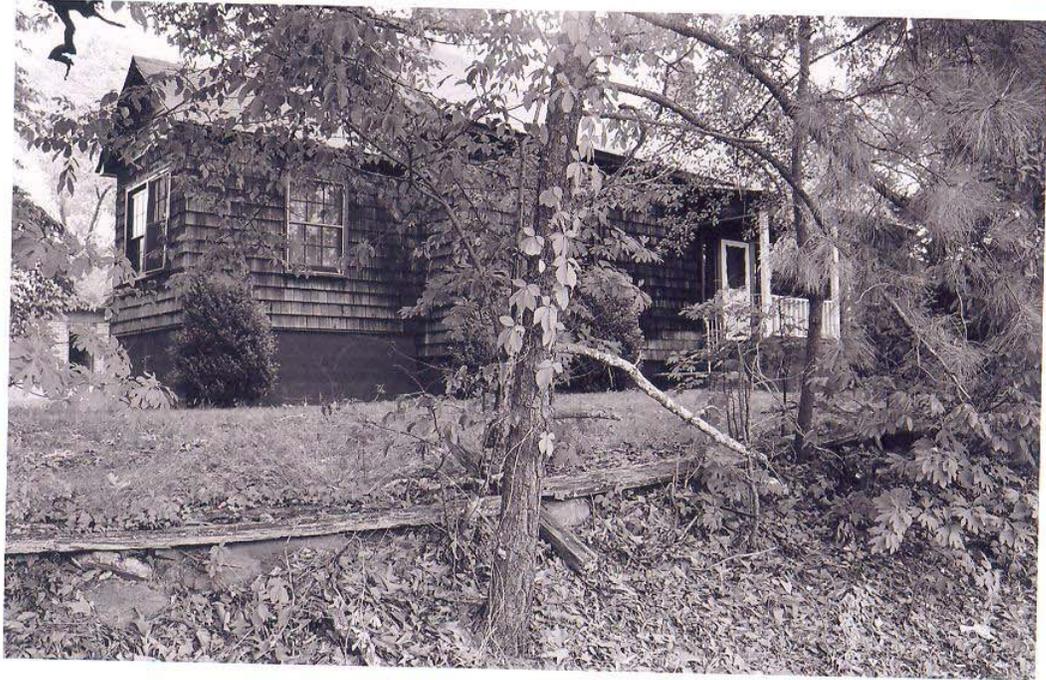




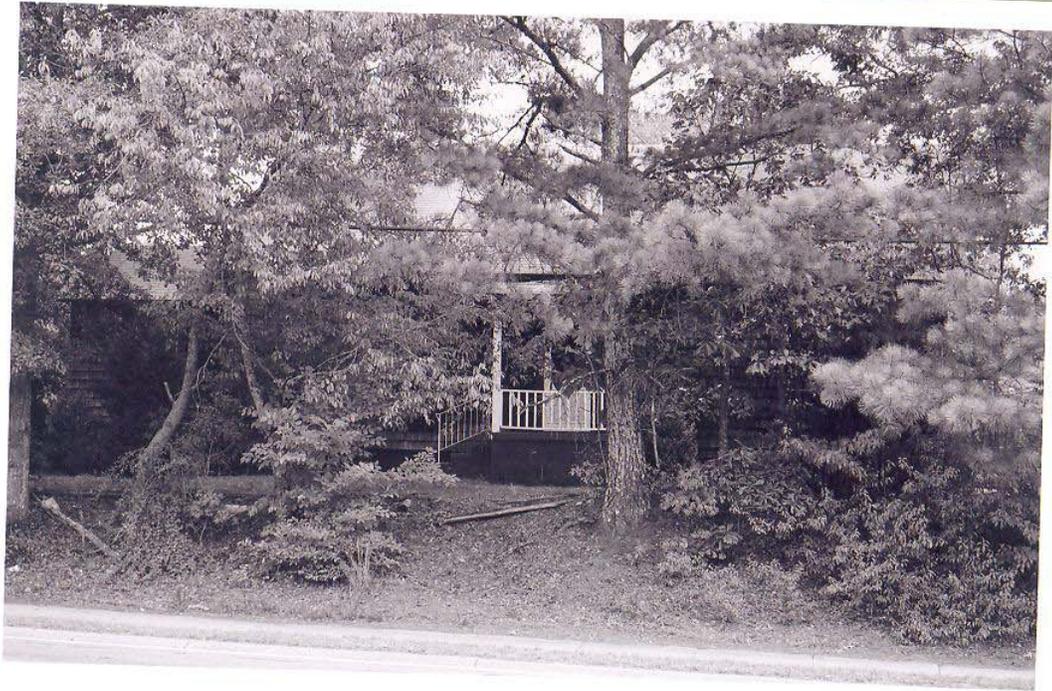






















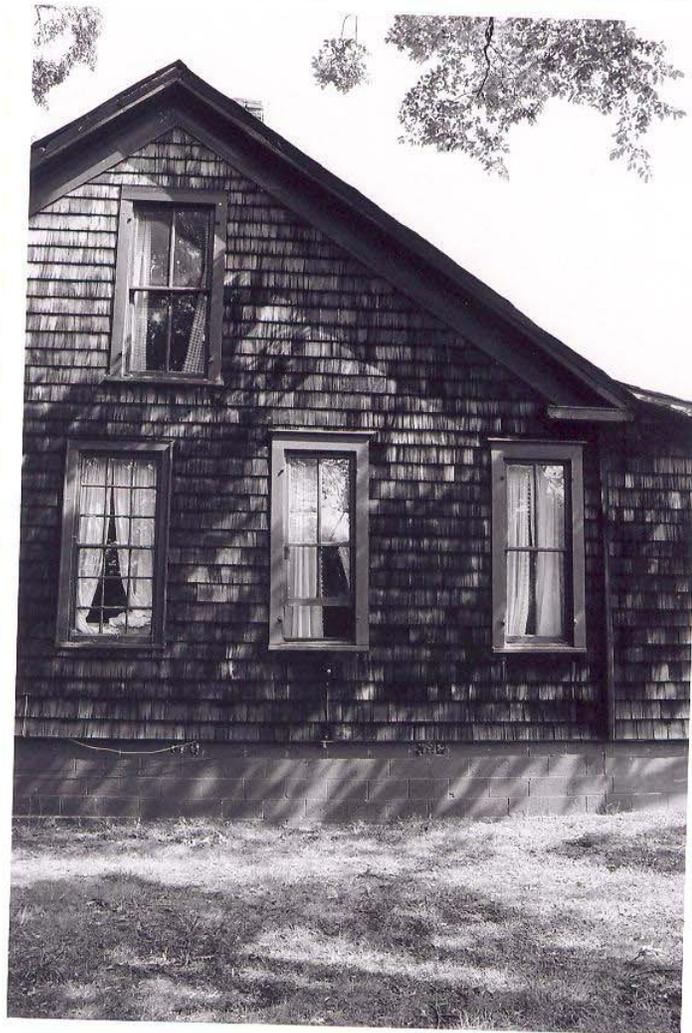














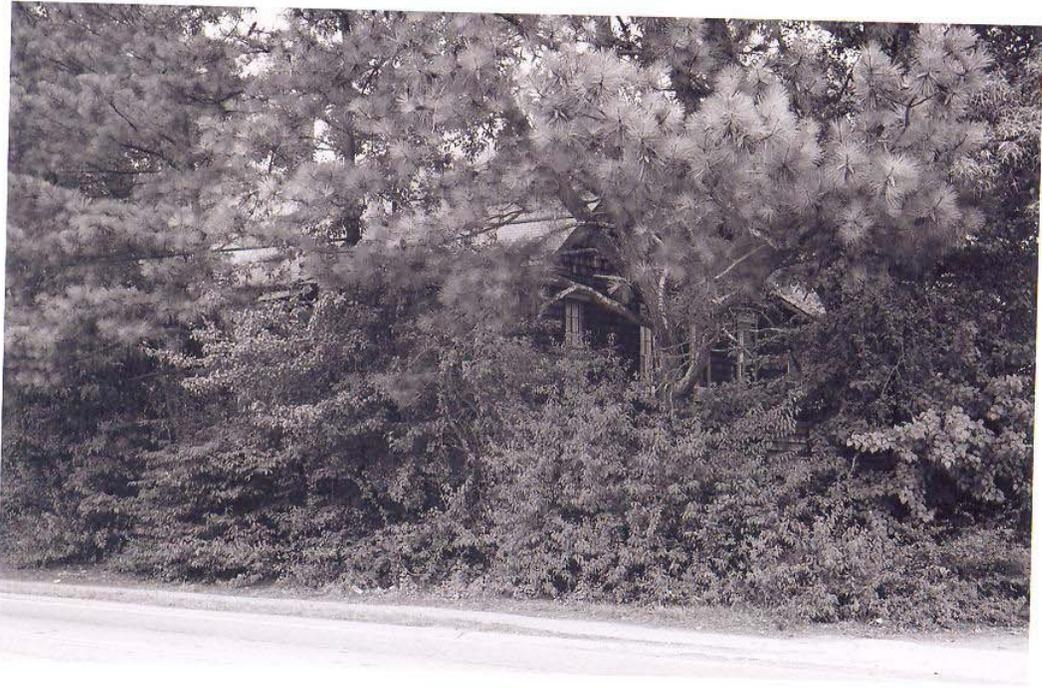


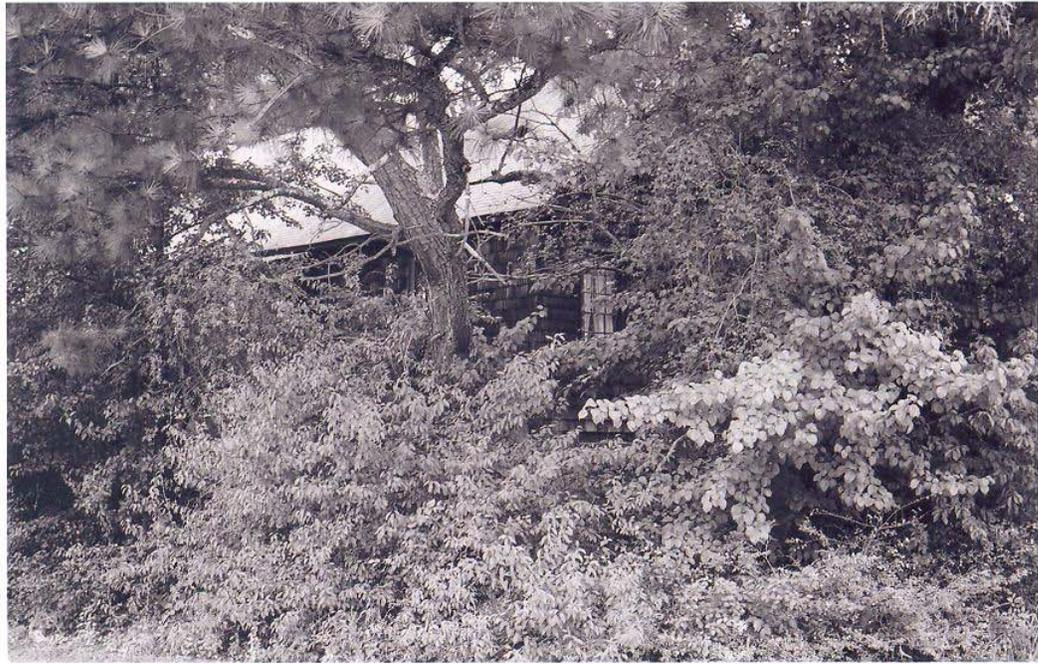




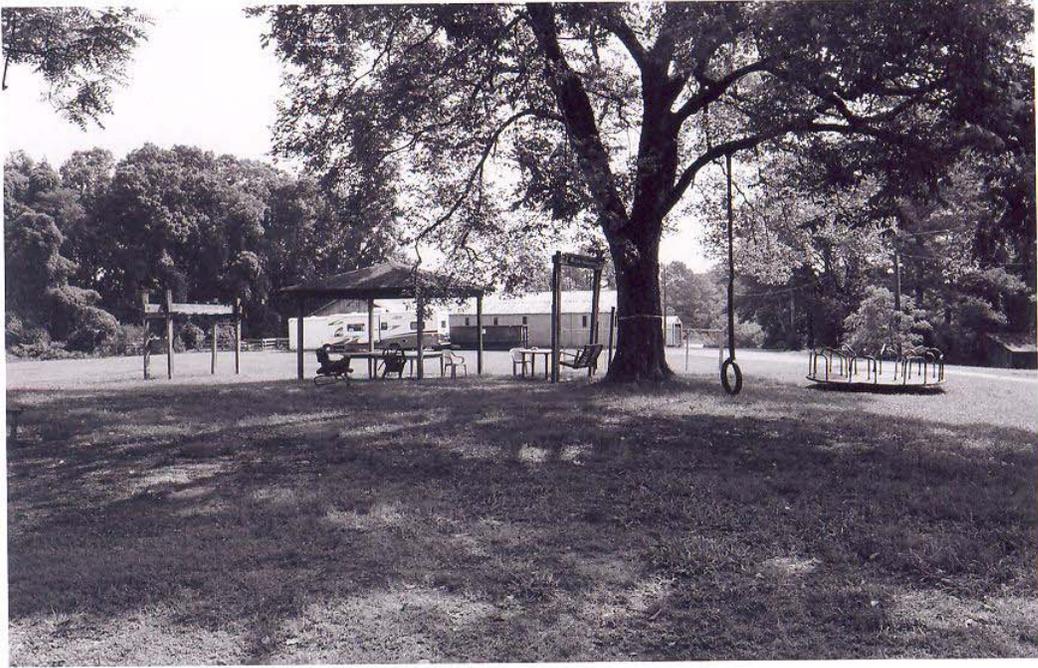


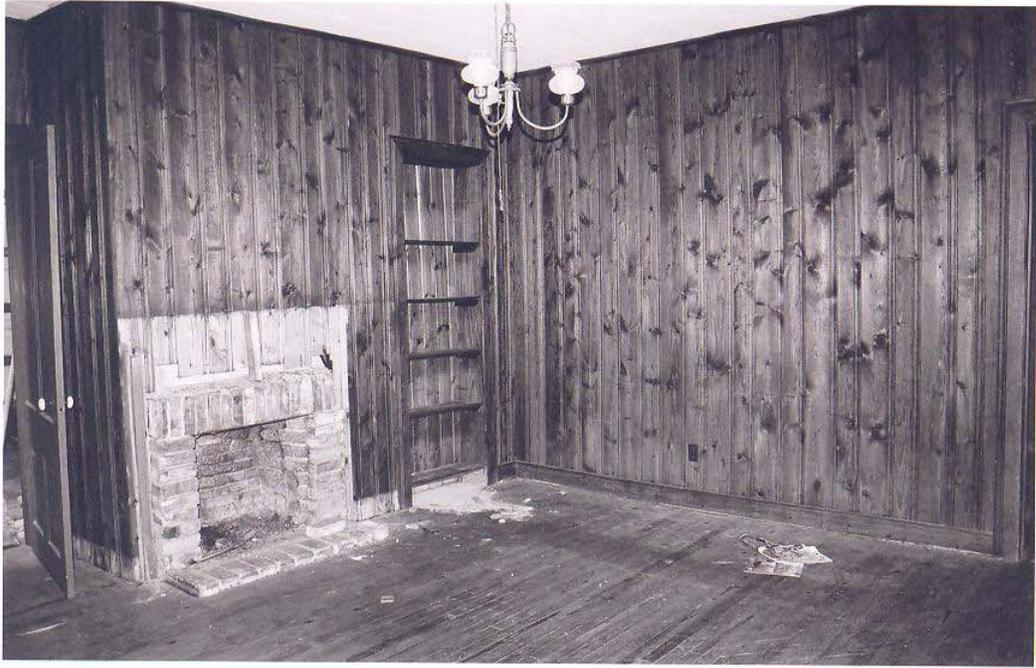












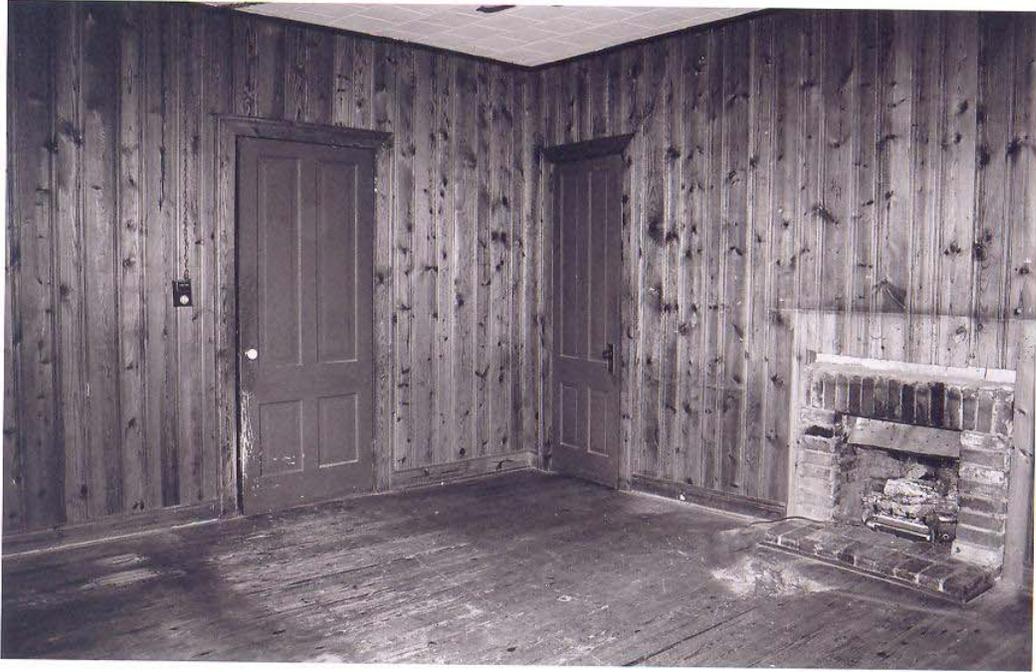








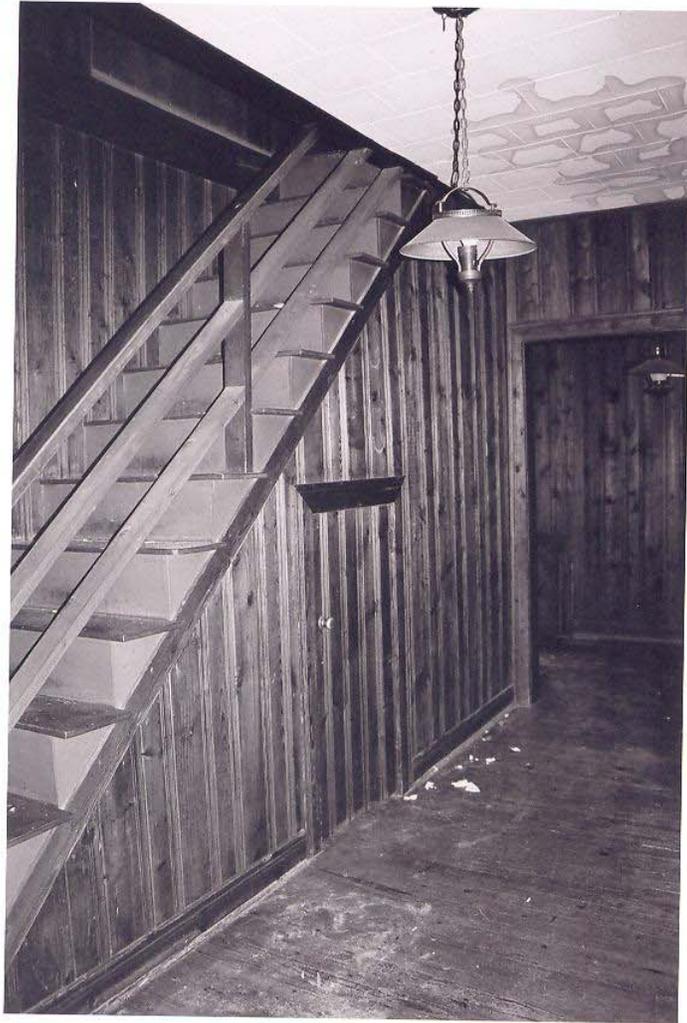


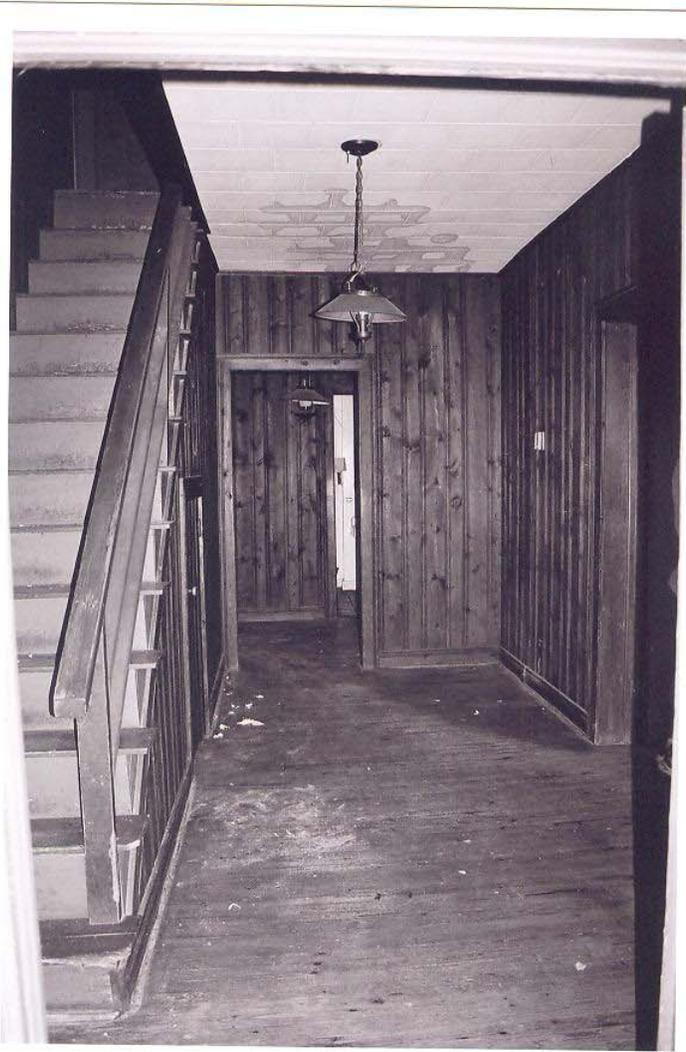


















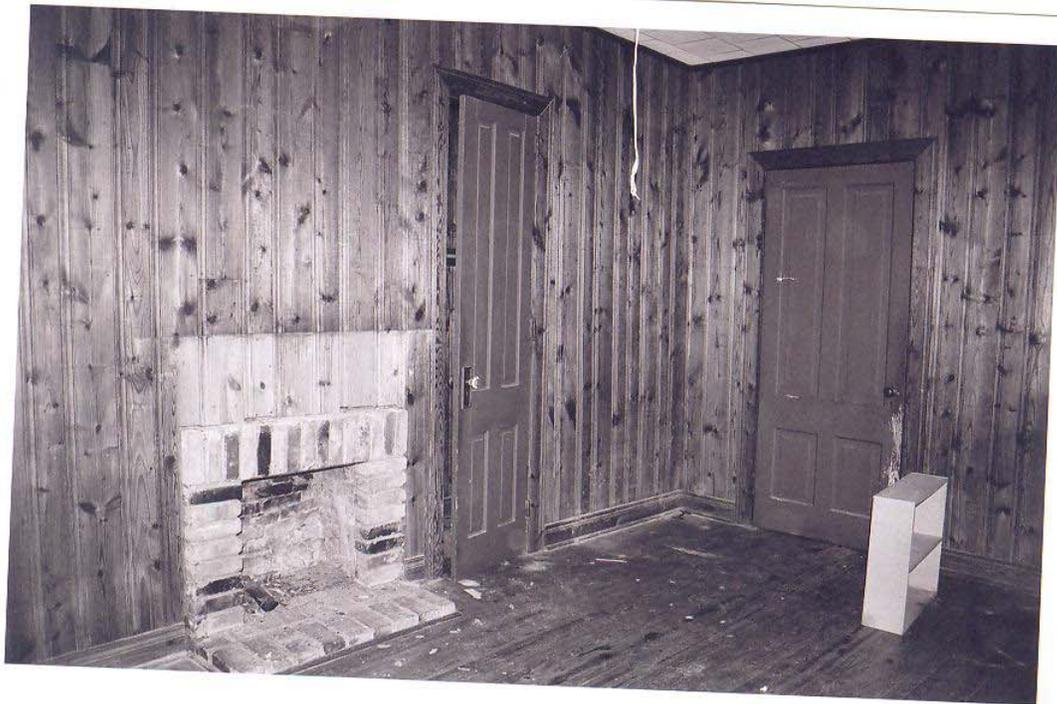








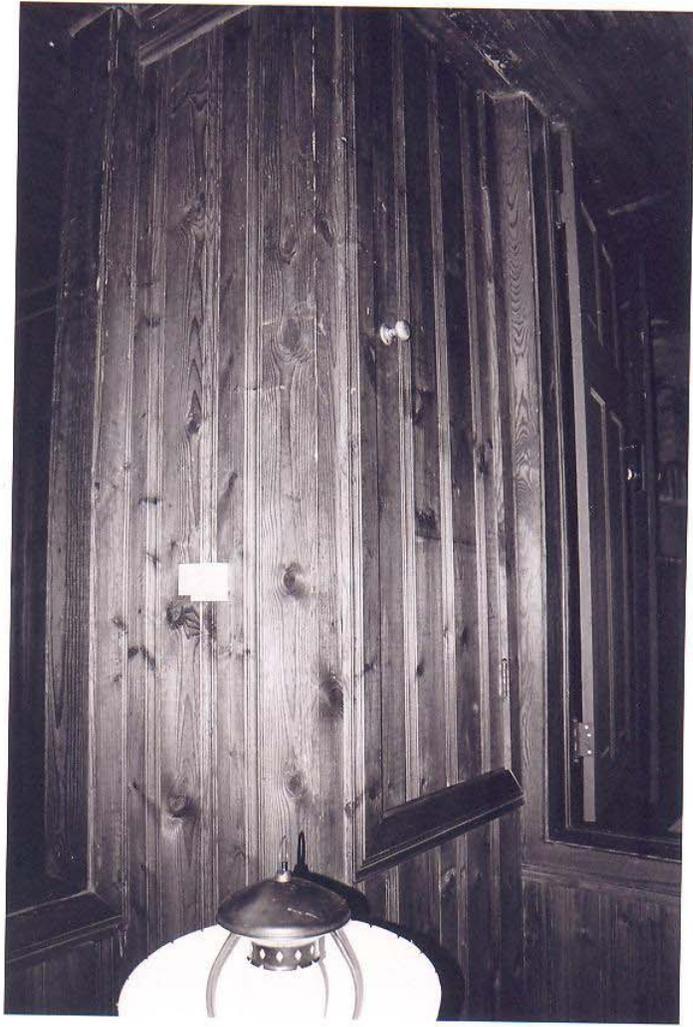




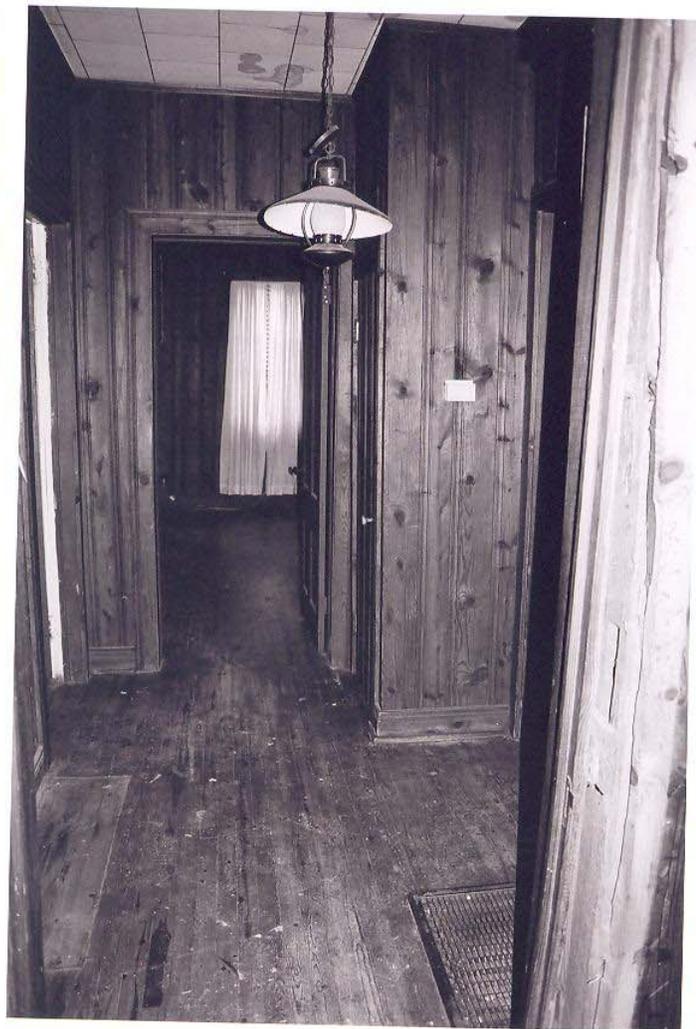




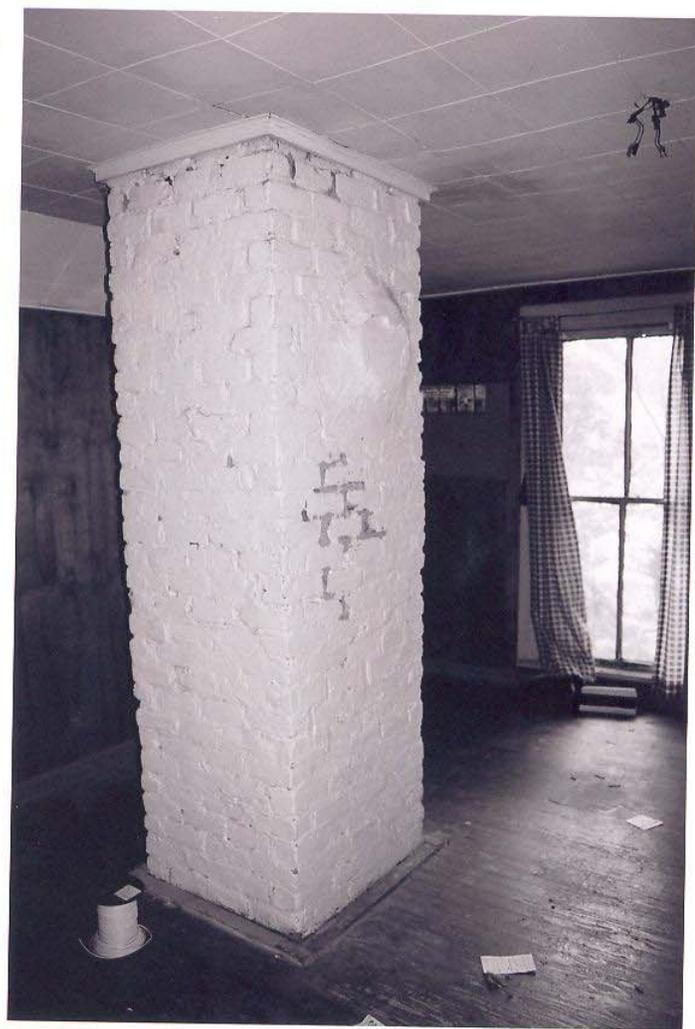


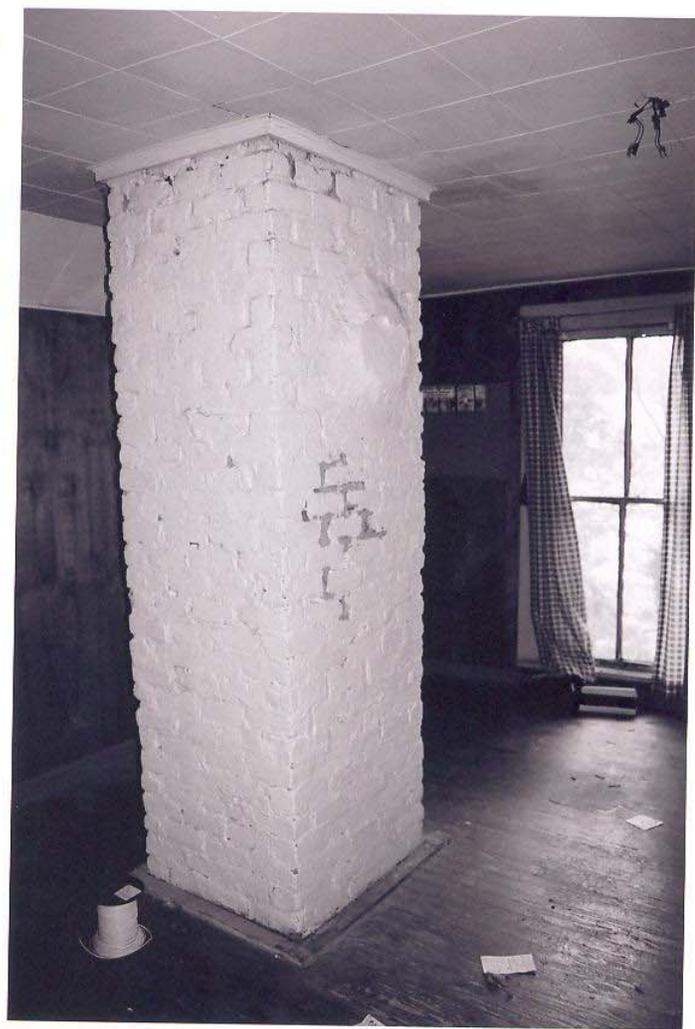


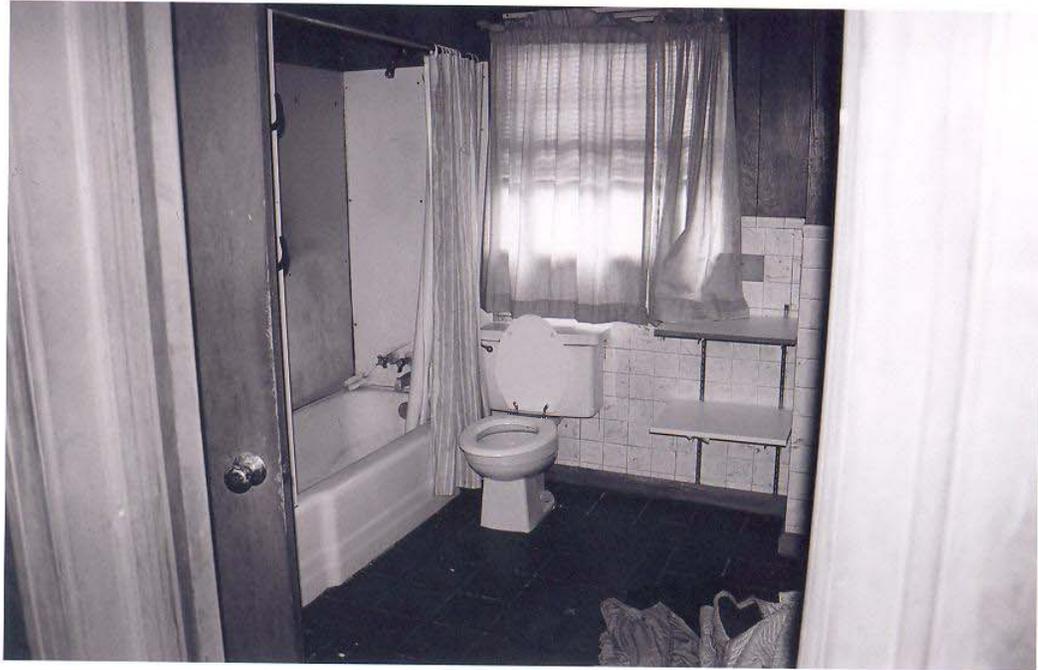




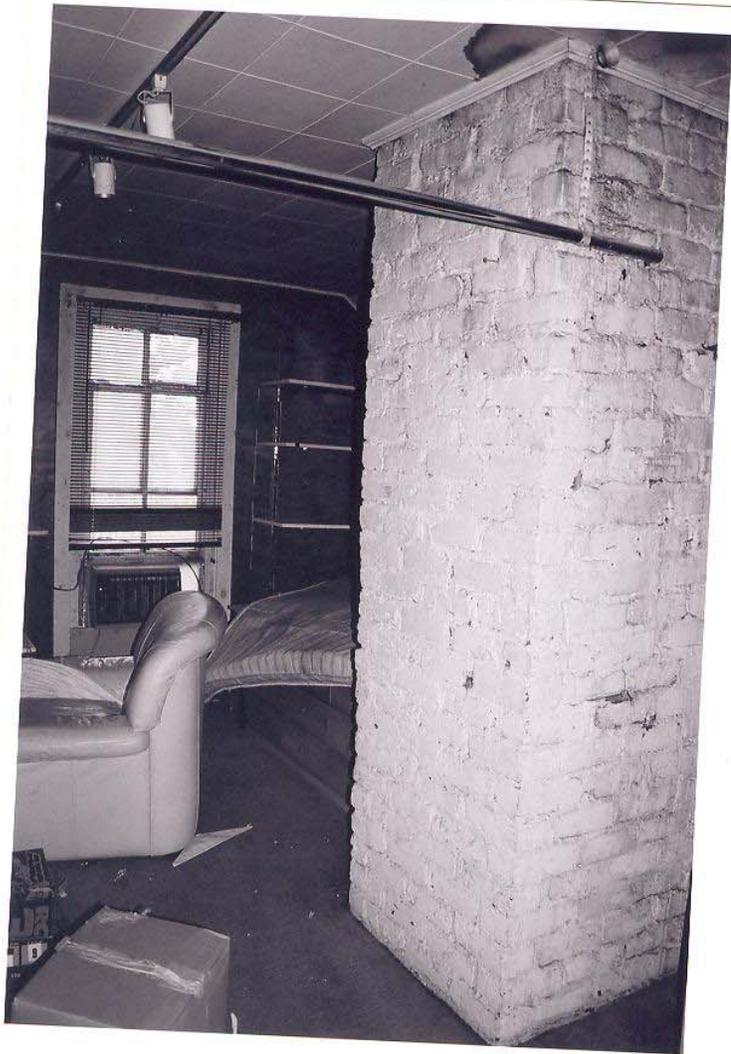












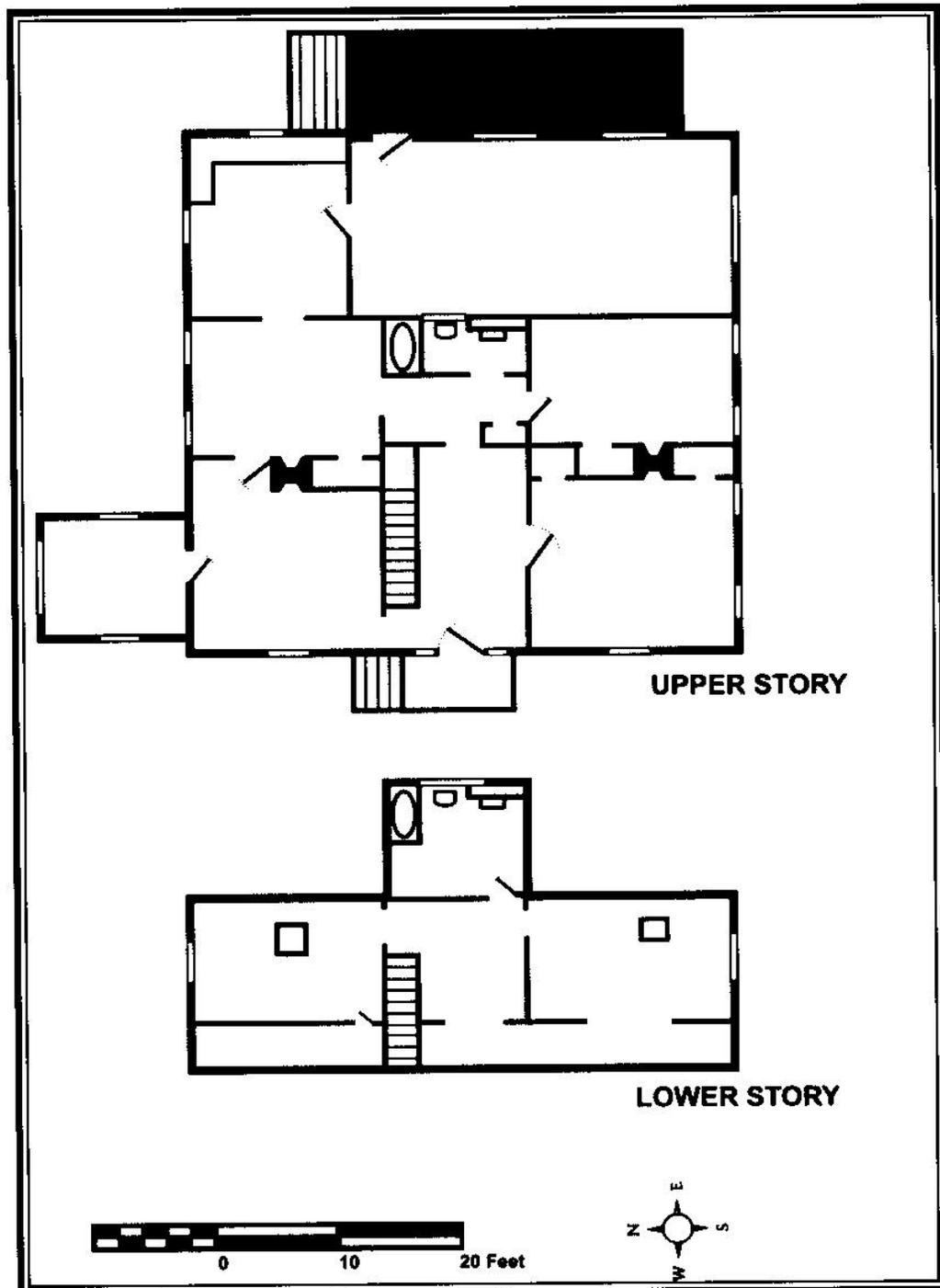


Figure 7. Floor plan of the Benson-Kendrick House.

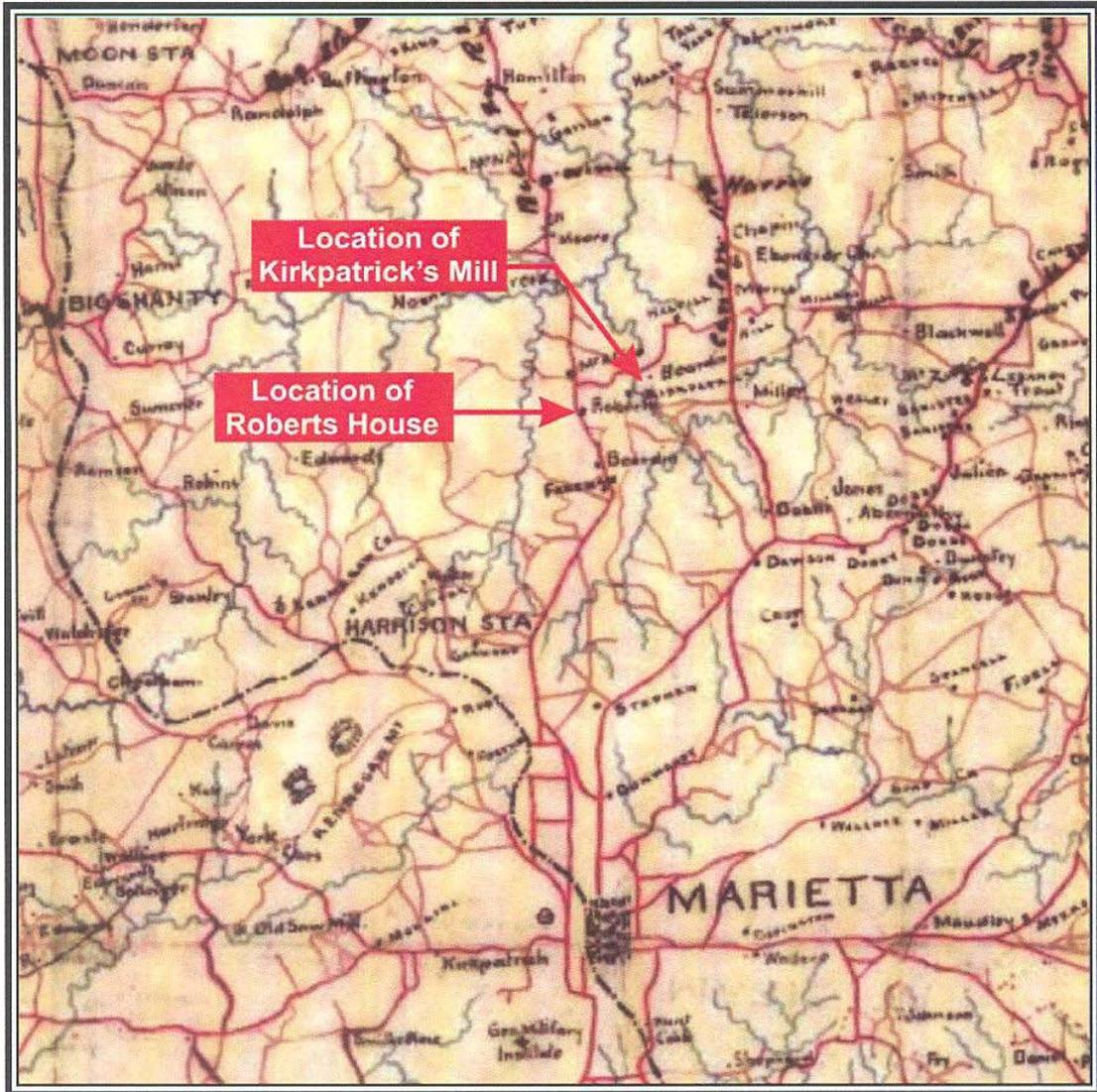


Figure 8. Civil War map showing vicinity of Benson-Kendrick House and location of Roberts House (Engineer's Office 1864).

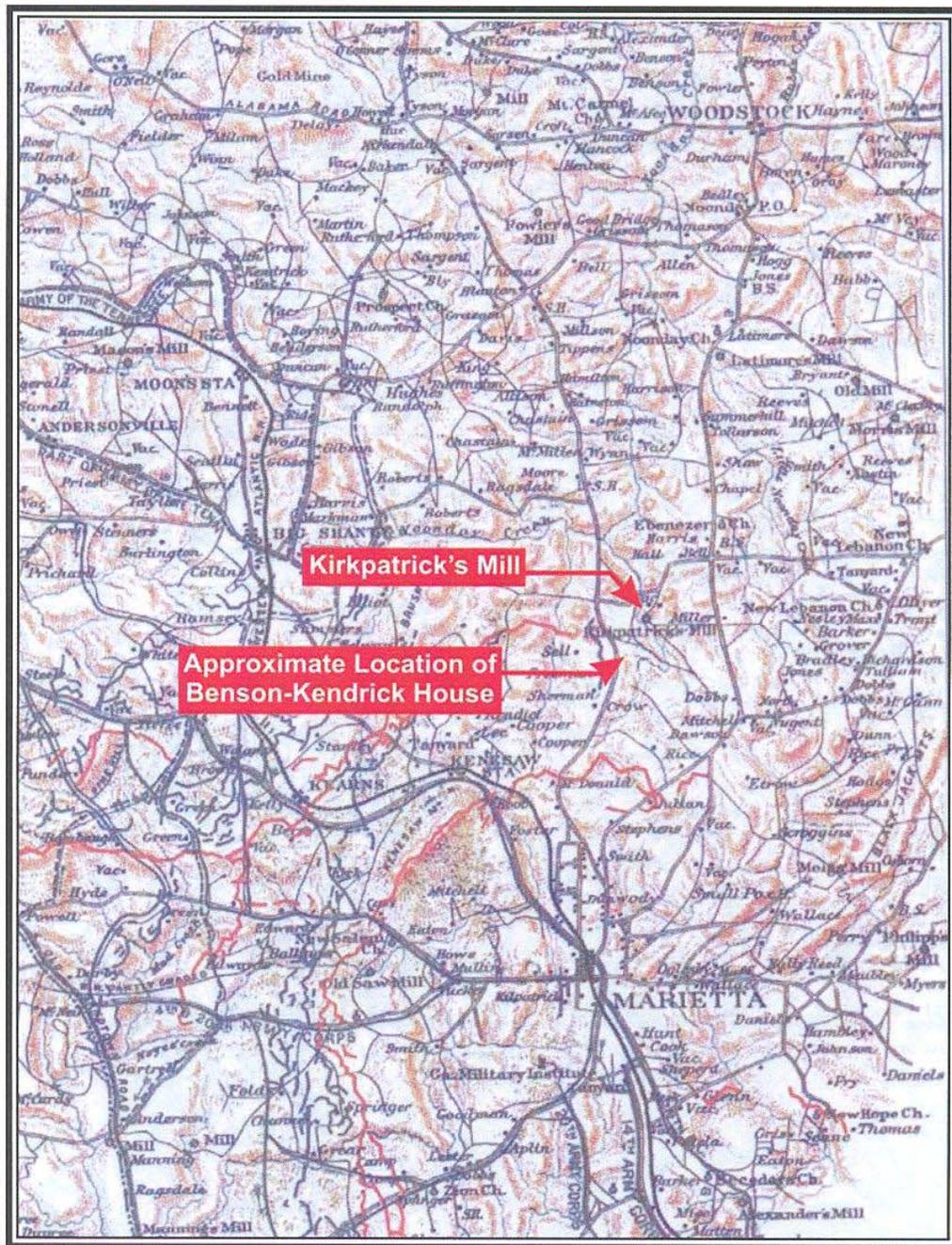


Figure 9. Civil War map showing vicinity of Benson-Kendrick House (Davis, et. al. 1891-1895: 159, Plate 59).

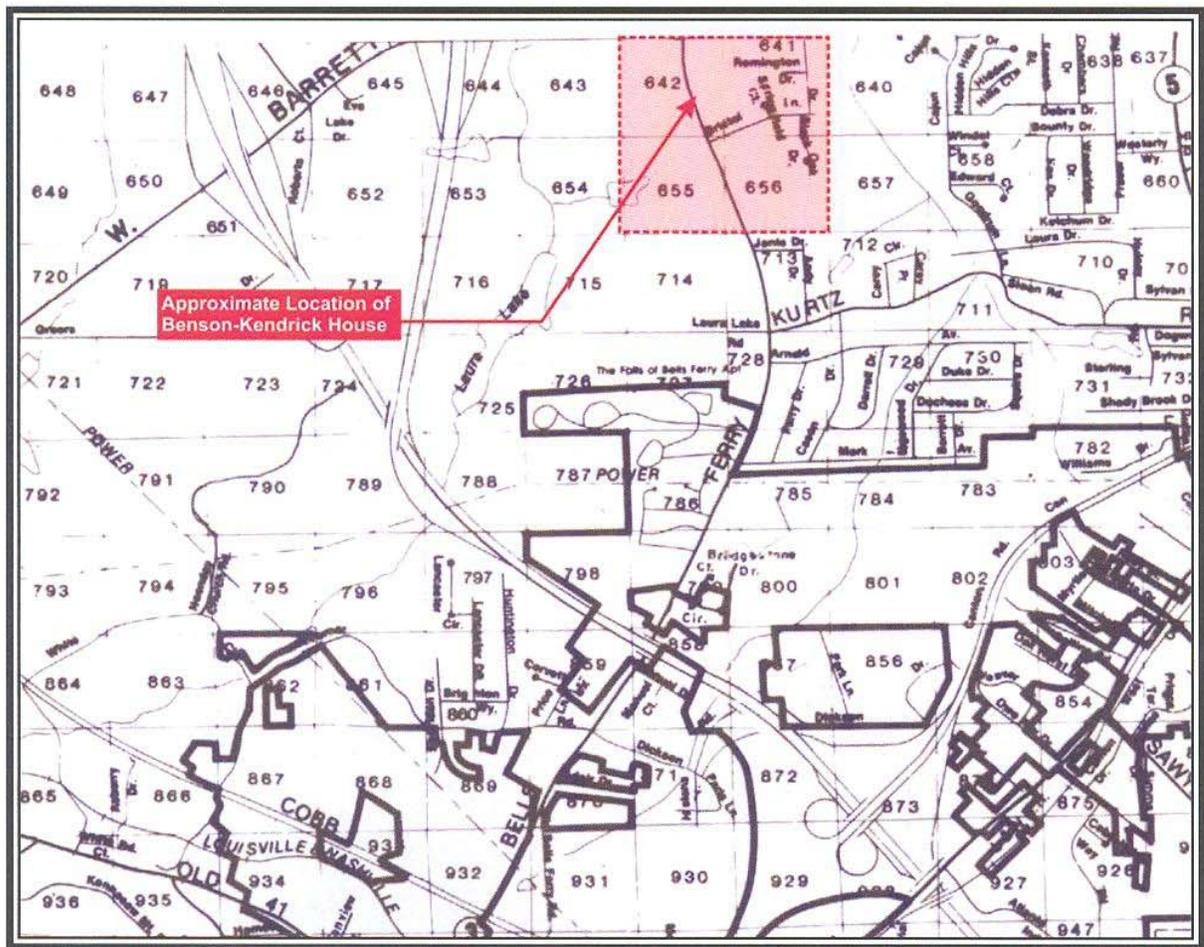


Figure 10. Map showing approximate location of Benson-Kendrick House and location of Land Lots 641, 642, 655, and 656 (Roth 1988: 198).



Figure 11. Unidentified early twentieth century photograph found behind mantle of Benson-Kendrick House.



Figure 12. Unidentified early twentieth century photograph found behind mantle of Benson-Kendrick House.

