

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 93001358 Date Listed: 12/2/93

Byrnside--Beirne--Johnson House Monroe WV
Property Name: County: State:

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

jm *Pattie S. Christian*
Signature of the Keeper

Dec. 2, 1993
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

The "address restriction" box on the nomination form was checked in error and should be deleted from the data base. In addition, there was a discrepancy with the period of significance (1759-1900). The earliest portion of the resource was constructed in 1770. The date 1759 refers to an earlier cabin that is no longer extant. The correct period of significance is 1770-1900. The date 1869 should be added to significant dates to reflect the change of ownership to the third prominent individual listed as significant on the nomination form. The nomination is officially amended to include this information.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

1358

RECEIVED

OCT 28 1993

NATIONAL REGISTER

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House

other names/site number Willowbrook

2. Location

street & number County Road #13 not for publication

city or town Union vicinity

state West Virginia code WV county Monroe code 063 zip code 24983

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

William G. Loman 10/21/93
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Patterson & Christman 12/2/93

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 2 | 0 | buildings |
| | | sites |
| | | structures |
| | | objects |
| 2 | 0 | Total |

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Defense: Fortified House

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Mid 19th Century: Gothic Revival

Other: Double Log House With Dog Trot

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Wood

roof Metal, Standing-Seam Tin

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Exploration/Settlement

Architecture

Period of Significance

1759-1900

Significant Dates

1770

1855

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

see continuation sheet

Cultural Affiliation

None

Architect/Builder

Not Known

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Monroe County Historical Society

10. Geographical DataAcreage of Property Approximately 8 acres**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

| | | | |
|---|------|-------------|-------------|
| 1 | 17 5 | 4 0 7 4 0 4 | 1 5 8 5 5 0 |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 2 | | | |

| | | | |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| 3 | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 4 | | | |

 See continuation sheet**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared Byname/title Dr. Ronald Ripley, Chairmanorganization Monroe County Historical Landmark Commission date June 30, 1993street & number P. O. Box 193 telephone (304) 772-5539city or town Union state WV zip code 24983**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.**Photographs**Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Samuel Morgan Clark and Margaret Clarkstreet & number Route 6, Box 2 telephone (304) 772-5236city or town Union state WV zip code 24983**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
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Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House, Monroe County, WV

Narrative Description

Standing high and proud on the edge of a bluff, overlooking a ravine in which flows Byrnside Branch of Indian Creek on its way to join New River, is the Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House. The Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House is also called Willowbrook, so named after the native willows growing on the banks of Byrnside Branch. In the ravine south of the house are portions of the old Union to Christiansburg Turnpike with its cut stone bridge abutments that spanned Byrnside Branch. The foundation of the old Byrnside Mill is quite visible. The foundations of the mill system and the turnpike which have not been evaluated are not included in the resource count. (See Photo #1 for the cut-stone-bridge abutments)

The Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House is a large two-and-one-half-story-five-bay-front with a two-story-rear-wing house. (See Photo #2) It rests upon a native cut limestone foundation. Beautiful large native cut limestone chimneys are centered on the gable ends. The south exposure or front features a two-story-gable-end porch built about 1900. (See Photos #3 and 4) The gable end of the porch is shingled and the porch posts are turned in the Victorian Style. Both stories of the porch are lined with a turned balustrade. The original porch was a one-story-portico and balcony with cutwork and small quatrefoil applied decorations. (See Historic Photo A) It would seem that the use of the trefoil and quatrefoil decorative elements plus cutwork would indicate that the owner (Christopher Beirne) had in mind a subdued Gothic Stylistic Design for the house. The house is covered with board and batten siding. (See Photo #5) The board and batten siding is embellished with a decorative belt of rounded arch inserts between each batten board at the juncture of the first and second stories and the juncture of the second story and gable ends and also the eaves of the gable ends. (See Photo #5) The roof is standing seam tin replacing the original wood shakes. The house is painted white. The windows are two over two double-hung sash with louvered shutters which are painted green. The gable ends exhibit a prominent partial return of the cornice featured on the front exposure. (See Photo #5) The shingles of the gable end of the porch are of two types: squared and scalloped. Two rows of one type alternate with two rows of the other type. The shingles at the interior border are flared outward.

The east exposure of the first story of the rear wing is extended to cover a large well and the sides are covered with lattice. It provides a large, airy summer room or enclosed porch. An open one-story porch is featured on the west exposure of the rear wing. The north end of this porch is enclosed as a pantry for the kitchen.

The plan of the house is essentially in the shape of a T. The first story consists of a large central hall with an interrupted staircase to the second floor. The staircase exhibits a native cherry railing and turned spindles. (see Photo #10) Pine floors are found in each room. To the right of the hall is a formal parlor and to the left is an informal parlor. Through a rear door, with over-lights and three-quarter-length

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Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House

Monroe County, WV

Narrative Description

side-lights, the front hall opens into a semi-enclosed rear hall. The front entrance door of the main hall is also framed with three-quarter-length-side-lights and an overlight. (see Photo #8) Small rooms, an extension from the log sections, are to the right and left of the rear hall. These rooms are also reached from the two parlors and the depth of the door surrounds indicate the large logs used in the front section. (see Photo #9) A large dining room and kitchen comprise the rear wing of the first story. A brick chimney divides the kitchen and dining room. Four very large bedrooms, plus bathrooms, comprise the second story. The roof section of both of the log structures can be approached from the front second story bedrooms and is easily viewed. It is quite easily seen that the east structure is much earlier and more primitively constructed. It corresponds to buildings built in the area in the 1770's and the west structure is more nearly like log structures built in the early nineteenth century. Large simple Greek Revival Mantles serve each room. (see Photo #6) Acetylene lighting was installed at the turn of the century and the fixtures still remain. Water closets or bathrooms were installed also at the turn of the century and these fixtures still remain. The house is furnished with area antique furniture and is in the style of the pre-Civil War years to the turn of the century. It is as if frozen in time at about 1870.

Just below the brow of the hillside in front of the house is a spring that undoubtedly was the reason for the placement of the pioneer log fort.

To the rear of the house is a smoke-house. The smoke-house sits upon a stone foundation and is covered by clapboard and has a standing-seam tin roof. The yard of the house is enclosed with a plain board fence painted white. Very large catalpa and maple trees surround the house outside the yard. Vines such as grape, ivy and wisteria cover portions of the chimneys, sides of the house and porch.

The Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House is maintained in good condition and repairs and maintenance are ongoing.

The Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House is easily seen from the Willow Bend Road (County Road 13) and is a significant example of Monroe County's settlement period house construction.

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Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House

Monroe County, WV

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House, also called Willowbrook, is situated in central Monroe County and south-east West Virginia. It is located alongside county road 13 (the Willow Bend Road) and the old Union to Christiansburg Turnpike. It lies immediately south of Union, the County Seat of Monroe County.

The Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House is an evolved house covering just over 222 years of transformation. It is the largest house covered with board and batten siding in Monroe County (only six examples are known: 5 dwelling houses and 1 church). Like many of the larger houses in Monroe County, it consists of log structures of varying ages that were combined into stylish large houses in the mid to late nineteenth century. Mid 19th century Monroe County had grown and prospered and the influx of resort visitors had brought in a feeling and need for stylish homes. The subdued Gothic Revival with board and batten siding seemed to be a favorite style during the mid 1850's. Within the walls of the Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House is a pioneer log fort built by six families in 1770. This house has witnessed all of the history of Monroe and Greenbrier Counties. This area was a part of Botetourt County, Virginia until 1777 when it became Greenbrier County and 1799 when it became Monroe County.

James Byrnside came to this spot about 1759 and built a cabin and established a "corn right". His son, John, was born here (by his own statement) April 15, 1763. There is a family tradition that James Byrnside, while working in his corn patch and taking a rest, fell asleep and dreamed his cabin was on fire and waking to find the dream correct, fled to his former home on the Jackson River near present Covington, VA. At all events his home was marked for destruction in the Pontiac War of 1763. It was in June of that year at the Great Levels in what is now Greenbrier County and only a mere twenty miles away there occurred a massacre of the Muddy Creek Mountain and Clendenin Settlements. Only a very few escaped the Shawnee Indian Attack. It is said that James Byrnside fled without hat, shoes or gun. He found to his astonishment his horse tied to a sappling and untying the horse made his escape. Byrnside remained at the Jackson River Settlement about six years and succeeded in forming a colony of six families to locate in what is now Monroe County, WV about the year 1769-70. The families were as follows: James and John Byrnside, Edward Keenan as well as his father, Patrick Keenan and his mother, Elinor, Samuel Black (a brother-in-law to Edward Keenan), John Blanton (also a brother-in-law), a Mc Mullin and a Flather. The six families came to James Byrnside's former settlement and they first built a log fort (a blockhouse or 2 story fortified house). They then separated and made their claims in this area. James Byrnside who resided at the fort is said to have found his hat, shoes and gun in his old corn patch. These six families had to seek safety in this fort many times and were there in 1773 when Donnally Fort, in what is now Greenbrier County, was attacked. John Blanton, who built his log house in 1770 and is part of Wyndridge just east of Union, Samuel

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Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House

Monroe County, WV

Narrative Statement of Significance

Black whose house is still standing just north of Union and Flather soon left this settlement and moved farther west as this country was becoming too populous. McMullin also did not remain very long and went to what is now Smyth County in south-west Virginia. The only ones of the six to remain were the Byrnsides and the Keenans. Keenan resided about two miles east of the fort and established one of the first stores in the area. Edward Keenan was the first converted Methodist west of the Allegheny Mountains and was instrumental in building Rehoboth Church in 1786. He gave a part of his land for the construction of this church. The men who constructed the Rehoboth Church were: Edward Keenan, Samuel Clark, John Blanton and John Wiseman. Honaker, the blacksmith, made the nails used in building Rehoboth Church and there always was a Honaker the blacksmith in the area for over 150 years. Rehoboth Church still stands as a museum 2 miles east of Union. The Byrnside family was instrumental with others in the founding of another settlement-period church, the Good Hope Meeting House. This, along with Rehoboth, helped establish Christian worship west of the Allegheny Mountains.

James Byrnside was an alert land prospector, active in business, and his name often occurs in the record books of Augusta County, VA and Greenbrier County, VA (now WV). His later years appear to have been clouded in reverses. He died at Union in 1812. John Byrnside lived on the large plantation immediately south of Union which was deeded him by his father. He became deputy surveyor in 1785 and was the first surveyor of Monroe County. For his time, he was a very wealthy citizen, his estate including seven slaves and personalty to the amount of \$5,037.19. John Byrnside died in 1816. James, his son, inherited the plantation and fort building and it is probably he who enlarged the house. He added another log house the same size as the log fort building to the west making it a double log house. (A scheme worked out by early builders because of their lack of equipment to hoist the great logs beyond a certain height. Desiring an especially large house, they solved their construction problems by putting up two identical houses in line and side by side, leaving an open space of several feet between the two called the "dog trot". The roof was usually extended over it, though the sides were left open. Then, if desired, the space could be easily closed later). This has been done in the Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House though the buildings are of different ages. The "dog trot" contains the large central hall. In the early days, it is said that large wagons of wood were driven through the "dog trot" and unloaded on both sides for the large fireplaces within both log buildings. (The whole effect is unique, with the two long ends of log and the few feet of weather-boarding in the center). This description enclosed in brackets is from Ruth Woods Dayton's Greenbrier Pioneers and Their Homes, page 161.

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Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House

Monroe County, WV

Narrative Statement of Significance

The old Union to Christiansburg Turnpike that lies alongside was important to the area. It was an important business connection as well as a means of bringing tourist to the area to visit the springs resorts such as Salt Sulphur Springs and Sweet Springs. The establishment of a railway depot at Christiansburg provided much interchange; financial, tourist and otherwise, between Union and Christiansburg.

In 1855 Christopher Beirne bought the Byrnside Plantation and House and it is he who reworked the house to the appearance we see today. Christopher Beirne was a member of the wealthy and prominent Beirne Family centered at Walnut Grove just to the north of Union. The Beirne Family came to the Union Area before 1800 and became wealthy as merchants. They expanded their holdings nationwide and practically controlled the sugar market in the United States before the Civil War.

One of the first companies to go to the front during the Civil War was the Monroe Sharpshooters, who were attached to the 16th VA Infantry, of the brigade that was first commanded by General McCausland and afterward by Col. Thomas Smith and constituted a part of the division under Breckenridge. When the Sharpshooters left Union, they were presented, by the ladies of that town, with a silk flag. Beirne Chapman made the presentation address in a speech of inspiring eloquence. Christopher Beirne was the Captain of the Monroe (sometimes called Beirne's) Sharpshooters. Christopher Beirne, a bachelor, was a very sharp businessman and owned parts of many businesses in the town of Union. From 1846 to 1853 he represented Monroe County in the VA Assembly in Richmond. In the early 1850's he formed a company along with John Echols, Allen Caperton and Oliver Beirne for the purchase and operation of the Old Sweet Springs Resort Hotel located in Monroe County. Many improvements were accomplished during their ownership. Oliver Beirne finally bought out the other partners. Christopher Beirne, after the Civil War, left the Union Area and moved to Saint Louis.

A few houses in the 1850's were covered with board and batten-style siding. The Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House that Christopher Beirne reworked is the largest of this style in Monroe County. Board and batten was a very short-lived style in Monroe County and was in fashion here only from 1854-60 and any examples can be dated to this narrow period. The most common type of vertical siding used in Victorian-Era homes is board and batten. Sheets of vertical wood boards are nailed to the house studs and the joints where the sheets meet are covered with battens which are narrow strips of vertical molding about one-half to one inch. Board and batten work is rhythmical and capable of casting shadows and it is often tactile as well because it is made from rough cut boards. Board and batten is often combined with fancy cut work and can present a very elegant appearance.

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Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House

Monroe County, WV

Narrative Statement of Significance

In 1869, Caleb Lon Johnson purchased the full plantation and house from Christopher Beirne. Robert Johnson was an early settler in the Johnson Cross Roads Area of Monroe County and the ancestor of Caleb Lon Johnson. The present owners are Margaret and Morgan Clark, sister and brother and grandchildren of Caleb Lon Johnson. Their father, Sam Clark is descended from the early pioneer Samuel Clark who settled near Union in 1783 and helped to build Rehoboth Church. He was a veteran of the Revolution, later an officer in the militia and carried a somewhat prominent part in the public affairs of Monroe County. The Johnson Family were very interested in education and for sometime conducted a school in their home for their children and young ladies from Union. (See Historical Photo A) Caleb E. Johnson (another Caleb of the same family) was one of the principal shareholders of West Virginia Female Seminary established in Union in 1872. The property had been Union College established in 1860 and Union Academy established in 1820. Caleb E. Johnson became sole owner in 1876 and renamed the school the Johnson Female College. This school attracted boarders from all parts of the United States and provided a fine education in all areas. The Johnsons were all well educated and became some of the area's finest teachers. Some in turn, helped to establish other private schools. The present owner, Margaret Clark, is a retired teacher and Morgan Clark operates the property as a farm operation as it has always been.

The interior of the Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House is an important indicator of the life style of a prominent affluent farmer class in Monroe County in the late nineteenth century. Several of the more important pieces of antique furniture were crafted by a Johnson family member whose occupation was that of cabinet maker.

The Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House is significant in that it is a good example of early building methods and styles. It represents patterns of culture during two and one quarter centuries in the trans-Alleghany Region of what is now Monroe County, WV. It is significant in that it represents the settlement of this area and the house as it looks today is a rare style of architecture in Monroe County.

The Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House Property qualifies under criterion A in that the establishment of a fort allowed the growth of a new settlement in what is now Monroe County in the later eighteenth century. The pioneer families that built the fort also established churches, towns, schools, roads and business enterprises locally as well as nationally. It qualifies under criterion B with its association with James and John Byrnside, Christopher Beirne, and Caleb Lon Johnson; men whose influence was felt throughout the whole region. It qualifies under Criterion C in that it is a good example of a double-log house with its associated stone construction and it demonstrates early building methods. The board and batten siding is a somewhat rare architectural style in Monroe County.

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Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House

Monroe County, WV

Narrative Statement of Significance

The venerable pioneer site on which the Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House sits has witnessed all of the history of the local area and much of the history of the state and nation.

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**National Register of Historic Places
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Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House

Monroe County, WV

Significant Persons

Byrnside, James

Beirne, Christopher

Johnson, Caleb Lon

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Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House

Monroe County, WV

Major Bibliographical References

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Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House

Monroe County, WV

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property consists of about eight acres. It is in the shape of an elongated rectangle with the Willow Bend Road (County Road 13) as the west boundary. (See sketch map with boundary marked in red.)

Boundary Justification

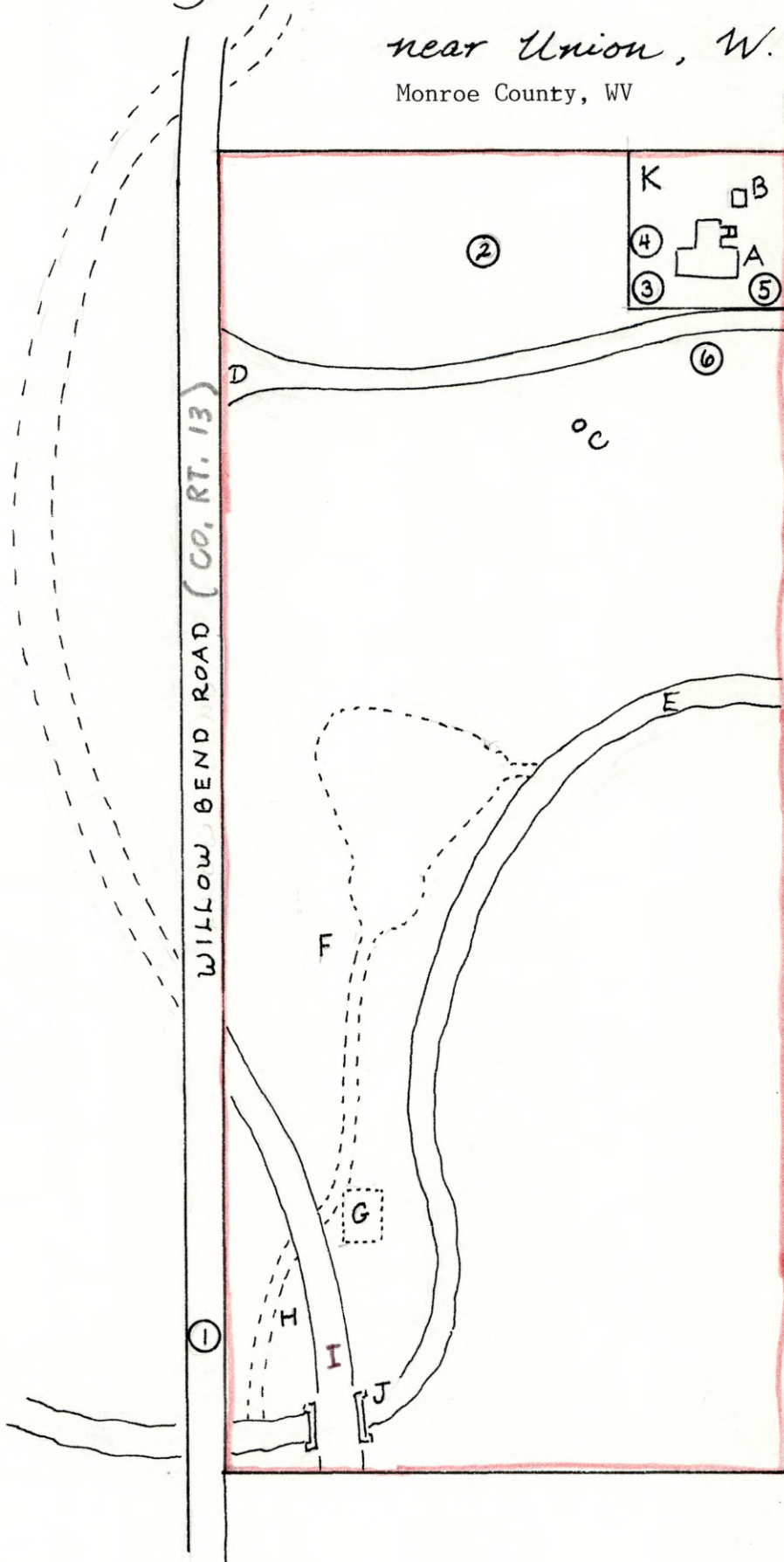
The nominated boundary of approximately eight acres provides the historical setting for the Byrnside-Beirne-Johnson House. It includes sections of the old Union to Christiansburg Turnpike and the cut stone bridge abutments of this turnpike. It includes sections of Byrnside Branch and its associated willow grove. It includes the entrance drive to the house and out building in the yard plus the old spring just south west of the house. The foundation of the old Byrnside Mill with its mill race and spillway is also included. The reason for the selection of an eight-acre tract is to include resources that possess direct historical association with the settlement-period house. The significance of these visible, associated resources has not yet been determined by evaluation under Criterion D.

UTM: 17/540740/4158550

SKETCH MAP of
WILLOWBROOK

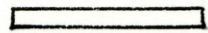
The Byrnside ~ Beirne ~ Johnson House
near Union, W. Va.

Monroe County, WV



① - ⑥ Photo Spots

- A. HOUSE
- B. SMOKE HOUSE
- C. SPRING
- D. ENTRANCE DRIVE
- E. BYRNSIDE BRANCH
- F. MILL RACE & POND
- G. BYRNSIDE MILL FOUNDATION
- H. SPILLWAY
- I. TURNPIKE - UNION TO CHRISTIANSBURG
- J. BRIDGE ABUTMENTS
- K. YARD



one inch = 200 feet