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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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Mount Pleasant Beech Church & Beech Cemetery
Other names/site number: Blue River A.M.E. Church, Mt. Pleasant Beech Church, Old Beech Church, Mount Pleasant A.M.E. Church
Indiana Historic Sites & Structures Survey Number 139-100-10009
Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: East side of County Road 725 West between County Roads 1000 North and 1100 North
City or town: Carthage State: Indiana County: Rush
Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national X statewide X local
Applicable National Register Criteria:
X A ___ B ___ C ___ D

	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PRESERVATION SERVICES	7.19.2018
Signature of certifying official/Title:		Date
<u>Indiana DNR-Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology</u>		
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government		

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In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: _____ **Date:** _____

Title : _____ **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)


 Signature of the Keeper

9-4-2018

Date of Action

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

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Structure

Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION / Religious Facility

EDUCATION / School

FUNERARY / Cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION / Religious Facility

FUNERARY / Cemetery

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-19th CENTURY / Greek Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE / Granite

CONCRETE

walls: WOOD / Weatherboard

roof: ASPHALT

other: _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Mount Pleasant Beech Church & Beech Cemetery are the last extant community landmarks of the Beech Settlement, a rural African American farming community settled in the 1820s and occupied through the early twentieth century. Both are sited on separate rectangular parcels donated out of larger farm tracts by early community landowners. The Beech Church, c.1865, is a single-room, gable-front wood-frame building with weatherboard siding and details reflecting a vernacular adaptation of the Greek Revival style. The Beech Cemetery is typical of rural Indiana cemeteries established in the early-to-mid-nineteenth century, with burials arranged in rows and a wide range of stone grave markers in various styles popular between the 1830s and the 1900s. The Beech Church has served as the site of an annual homecoming reunion for descendants of the Beech Settlement every August since 1914.

Narrative Description

Beech Church

The Mount Pleasant Beech Church is located within a parallelogram-shaped parcel of land located approximately 620 feet east of Rush County Road 725 West. The church sits just east of the center of this parcel, facing west. (Photos 1, 3, 8, 9) A modern wood-frame shed is located south of the church near the south boundary of the parcel. (Photo 11) Two wood-frame outhouses are located at the east end of the property, one for men near the northeast corner and one for women near the southeast corner. (Photo 10) These three outbuildings are non-contributing. A mid-to-late twentieth century well pavilion located between the west façade of the church and the west boundary of the parcel was demolished in 2015. The well itself was capped several years ago after agricultural contamination rendered the water unsafe for human consumption.

The Mount Pleasant Beech Church is a one-story, gable-front wood-frame building with weatherboard siding and vernacular details reflecting the influence of the Greek Revival style. (Photos 1-7) The church appears to date to c.1865 (see page 17 for full discussion). The building measures 40'-0" in length from east to west and 30'-4" wide from north to south. The building's wooden structure originally rested on a series of granite boulders, with four along the longer north and south elevations and one at the center of the shorter east and west elevations. Portions of the spaces between these boulders were infilled with concrete block sometime between 1986 and 2015.

The building's wooden sills are clad in a simple skirt board. A simple wooden frieze and cornice run along the north and south elevations, with cornice returns at the east and west gable ends. Narrow pilasters trim the building's four corners. All exterior trim is composed of flat 1x wooden components, with no routed moldings. Historic photographs indicate that the cornice was originally capped by an angled molding, apparently removed during repairs in the 1960s. The roof is fitted with skip-sheathing of irregularly-shaped sawn boards. This treatment indicates that the roof was intended to be clad in wood shingles, a very common roofing material in mid-nineteenth century Indiana. Plywood and oriented strand board were placed over the top of the skip-sheathing when later asphalt shingle roofing was installed. Photographs from 1925 and 1936 show a small chimney at the center of the roof, likely associated with a heating stove in the center of the building. The stove and chimney were removed sometime before 1986.

The gable-front west façade features a central double entrance door topped by a single transom. (Photo 2) This configuration is visible in the earliest known historic photograph of the building, published in 1925. The present doors are modern flush-panel replacement doors and the transom is currently boarded over. Oral tradition among Beech Settlement descendants states that the church's door was originally on the east elevation but that light from the morning sun bothered the minister, leading to the door's relocation to the west elevation. Physical evidence in the wood

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weatherboard siding suggests that the west façade may have once two single entrance doors located to either side of the present double door. From the 1780s through the 1840s, many American Methodist congregations designed their churches with separate entrances and separate seating areas for men and women.¹ These two single entrance doors would appear to align with the two aisles formed by the church's original wood pews. Physical evidence in the wood weatherboard siding of the east elevation suggests that this elevation formerly contained a central entrance door similar in size to that now on the west façade, as noted in the oral tradition. This entrance appears to have been removed prior to 1925, likely sometime before the abandonment of regular services in 1914.

The north and south elevations are identical, being divided into three bays, each containing a window opening. (Photos 3, 4, 5, 7) The east elevation is divided into three bays with window openings centered in the outer two bays. (Photo 6) The windows are trimmed by simple frames with a square profile and a flat wooden cap molding to divert rainwater from the head of the window. The double-hung sash appear to have originally been made as 2/2 divided-lite windows, although several have been modified into a 1/1 configuration. Each window is fitted with a single large plywood shutter with 1x wood bracing in a Z-shaped configuration at the interior face. These shutters appear to have been installed sometime between 1936 and 1972, likely after World War II. Because the church is used only once a year, these shutters have served as an important security feature, protecting the windows from vandalism and storm damage.

The interior of the Beech Church is one large, rectangular room. (Photos 12-14) Two large trusses within the attic span between the north and south walls, allowing an open first-floor space without columns. (Photo 17)) Modern wood posts have been added below the center of each truss, apparently installed during a prior attempt to stabilize the roof structure.

The walls and ceiling of the church interior are believed to have originally been clad in lath and plaster, although it is possible that tongue-and-groove boards may have been used in some areas. An interior remodeling, believed to have taken place in the 1960s, included the installation of new composite board cladding on the walls and ceiling. Examination of the upper side of the ceiling indicates that historic ceiling materials were removed and replaced with a series of furring strips to which the new composite board was mounted. It is unclear whether the original wall material was also removed or whether the composite board was laminated over the top of it. The wall and ceiling board is attached with wire nails with exposed heads and the joints remain exposed. The attic hatch, located in the northeast corner of the room, is composed of tongue-and-groove bead board. The walls are painted white, while the ceiling is sealed or stained with a brown finish. It is possible that this finish was intended to evoke a stained tongue-and-groove bead-board ceiling. The interior of the building is fitted with tongue-and-groove wood flooring running east-west. Some floorboards around the entrance have been replaced.

¹ Men and older boys used the left door and sat in the left half of the church, while women and children used the right door and were seated in the right half. John Fletcher Hurst, *The History of Methodism*, Vol. II (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1902) 493; Russell E. Richey, Kenneth E. Rowe, Jean Miller Schmidt, *American Methodism: A Compact History* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010) 34.

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The interior of the Beech Church contains wall-mounted trim consisting of 1x wood components forming door and window casings and baseboard. The door and window casings are outlined by narrow ogee moldings, while the baseboard is topped by quarter-round. These components were surface-nailed with wire nails with exposed heads, matching the treatment of the composite board wall and ceiling finishes. All of this woodwork appears to have been installed or reinstalled during the past interior remodeling, believed to have taken place in the 1960s. The perimeter ogee and quarter-round moldings appear to be modern additions from this remodeling. The woodwork is painted white to match the walls.

A semicircular raised platform or dais is centered on the east wall. The flooring of the platform is of lower quality than that of the main floor, exhibiting numerous knots, but retains a clear finish. It is surrounded by a low railing with turned balusters and newel posts with ball finials. (Photo 15) Two openings divide the railing into three sections, with a step outside each opening. The platform's perimeter and the exterior of the box steps are clad in tongue-and-groove bead-board. This woodwork features a reddish-brown stain and a clear finish. The stylistic details of the platform railing suggest that these components were installed sometime between the 1870s and the 1890s.

The Beech Church presently contains many historic furnishings. It is unclear whether all of these were associated with the church prior to the cessation of regular services in 1914 or whether these were accumulated over subsequent years. The church presently contains 34 pews. Of these 31 are of matching design, composed of wide boards with simple angles and trimmed with a varnished cap molding. (Photo 16) This design may suggest an early date, the local legacy of Quaker simplicity, or a simple form that was easy and affordable to construct. These pews are said to be original to the church. They may be original to the existing building, may have come from the church's prior building, or may have come from another early church or meeting house in the area. The pews fit neatly into the interior in three sections, forming two aisles. Two of the pews appear to be of mid-to-late nineteenth century date, with curved armrests and center back braces. One pew, placed on the platform, features an open back topped by a narrow slat. The raised platform contains a paneled wood pulpit that appears to date from the late nineteenth century. A square table with turned wooden legs and a drawer is located in front of the raised platform. This table is a typical form popular throughout much of the nineteenth century. An upright piano is located in the southeast corner of the room. This piano features a mahogany finish and appears to date from the first quarter of the twentieth century. A round drop-leaf table with turned legs is located at the rear of the center section of pews. This table reflects a typical design popular during the second half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Other miscellaneous furnishings include metal folding chairs of several designs and a modern wooden cross.

Beech Cemetery

The Beech Cemetery consists of a rectangular parcel of land roughly 450 feet north of Rush County Road 1000 North, extending approximately 370 feet north-south and 188 feet east-west, containing one and one-half (1.5) acres. The cemetery was originally accessed from a dirt road along its eastern boundary. A twentieth century wire fence surrounds most of the cemetery parcel, with the exception of a strip 70 to 80 feet wide across the southern end. The southern strip contains no known grave markers and has been used for cattle grazing for many years. The south half of the cemetery is relatively flat and contains few trees, while the north half contains a large hill and many large trees. Oral tradition states that a church building once stood in the southeast part of the cemetery grounds. A non-invasive archaeological survey of the site may help determine the number of total graves and whether evidence of a past building exists on the site.

The cemetery is laid out in a grid pattern typical of rural Indiana cemeteries of the first half of the nineteenth century. Graves are oriented east-west in rows running north-south. (Photos 18-27) There appear to have been seven or eight rows, although erosion and shifting ground in the hilly northern half of the cemetery seem to have offset the alignment of some graves. A total of 59 burials are known from stones read by Lawrence B. Carter during the early-1950s and by Benjamin L. Ross in 2015. A table of known burials based on these readings is appended to the end of Section 7. At present, 26 carved grave markers are present within the cemetery. In addition, many broken fragments of carved markers and uncarved stones are visible. Most of the grave markers currently visible are located in the hilly northern part of the cemetery. A family plot for the family of Walker Jeffries (c.1805 – 1881) is located along the western side of the flat, southern part of the cemetery.

The grave markers found in the Beech Cemetery are similar in style, materials, and execution to those found in the cemeteries of white communities of the same period in Indiana and may have been fabricated by the same stonecutters. The earliest stone observed to date appears to be the c.1838 headstone of Lavinia Roberts, with the inscription crudely carved into a block of hard sandstone. (Photo 30) The execution of this marker suggests that it was produced in the community rather than by a professional stonecutter. Grave markers of the 1850s and 1860s are primarily rectangular limestone slabs with carefully-carved inscriptions in a range of typefaces typical of the period. (Photos 31-33, 35) High-style carved moldings, calligraphic flourishes, and bas relief motifs, including doves and hands pointing to heaven, began to appear on stones during this period. Grave markers of the 1870s and 1880s are more varied in style, with many small obelisks and pedestal tomb-style monuments, larger carved slabs with semicircular tops, and thicker, shorter slabs with semicircular or pedimented tops. (Photos 27-29) The largest monument in the cemetery is the c.1881 headstone of Walker Jeffries, which serves as a larger marker for the surrounding Jeffries family plot. (Photo 27) The government-issue headstone of Civil War veteran James H. Keemer documents his service in Company E., 14th Regiment, United States Colored Infantry, between 1865 and 1866.² (Photo 34)

² Born c.1819 in Northampton, North Carolina, Keemer was a farmer in Washington Township, Marion County, Indiana, as of June 1863. He was a day laborer living in Carthage as of the 1880 census. Keemer's death date is unknown.

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The cemetery is bordered by new-growth deciduous fencerow trees and is carpeted with mowed grass. (Photos 18-23, 25-26) The cemetery contains several deciduous trees of varying ages, including a large sycamore (*platanus occidentalis*) that likely dates from the period of significance. Evergreen trees in the north part of the cemetery may be descendants of earlier plantings. Two mullein (*verbascum thapsus*) plants were observed growing in front of the c.1877 headstone of Mary F. Newsom in 2015.

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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.)

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE / Black

RELIGION

Period of Significance

1838 – 1966

Significant Dates

1840

c.1865

Significant Person (last name, first name)

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Black Freedman

Architect/Builder (last name, first name)

Unknown

Period of Significance (justification)

The Mount Pleasant Beech Church congregation built its first log church on the property in 1838 and the earliest identified burial in the Beech Cemetery dates from c.1838. The Beech Church remained a significant religious and community institution and landmark within the Beech Settlement into the 1910s. The latest identified burial in the Beech Cemetery dates from 1907. Since 1914, descendants of the settlers of the Beech Settlement have returned to the Beech Church for a reunion each August. Through this annual gathering, the Beech Church and Beech Cemetery have remained significant landmarks critical for maintaining the continuing cultural identity of the Beech Settlement's descendants.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

The Mount Pleasant Beech Church and Beech Cemetery are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria Considerations A and D, being a religious property and a cemetery that derive their primary significance from historical importance to the story of

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African Americans in Indiana during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These resources are the last remaining community landmarks of the Beech Settlement and offer a unique connection to Indiana's African American heritage. The resources are significant for their period of active use by the residents of the Beech Settlement between the 1830s and the 1910s and as the site of a reunion every August since 1914, an event that has helped the descendants of the Beech Settlement maintain the identity of their ancestral community generations after most families left the Carthage area. As one of the last surviving sites associated with a rural African American community in Indiana, the Beech Church and Beech Cemetery offer a unique connection to a critical aspect of the state's history and a dimension of the Hoosier experience distinct from that of Euro-Americans during the same period.

The Beech Church is also significant in the area of religious history, as it was the site of the establishment of the Indiana Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1840. This marked a significant phase of the growth of the denomination as Americans moved westward during the nineteenth century. As the first A.M.E. Church in Indiana, the Beech Church served as a parent and precedent for numerous other congregations that would be formed throughout the state over the following decades. In addition to its religious significance, the A.M.E. Church was a key organization in the promotion of education for African Americans, creating educational opportunities when state law and white hostility prohibited the children of black taxpayers from attending Indiana's public schools. For these reasons, the Beech Church provides a connection to local, state, and national history for the descendants of the Beech Settlement and for all Hoosiers.

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Mount Pleasant Beech Church and Beech Cemetery are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, being outstanding resources associated with the ethnic heritage of an African American farming community in Indiana between the 1830s and the 1910s. The Mount Pleasant Beech Church is significant in the area of religious history, being the site of the organization of the Indiana Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church in 1840. The establishment of the A.M.E. Church in Indiana would influence generations of African American Hoosiers through numerous congregations formed out of this conference. Since 1914, the Beech Church has hosted an annual homecoming reunion for descendants of the Beech Settlement. This event that has helped the descendants of the Beech Settlement maintain the identity of their ancestral community generations after most families left the Carthage area. As one of the last surviving sites associated with a rural African American community in Indiana, the Beech Church and Beech Cemetery offer a unique connection to a critical aspect of the state's history and a dimension of the Hoosier experience distinct from that of Euro-Americans during the same period.

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Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Mount Pleasant Beech Church and Beech Cemetery are the last remaining public landmarks of the Beech Settlement and are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, demonstrating and state-level significance in the areas of Ethnic Heritage / Black and Religion.

Ethnic Heritage / Black

The Mount Pleasant Beech Church and Beech Cemetery are significant sites associated with the heritage of African Americans and multiracial people in Indiana during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These resources provide a tangible connection to the experiences of African American Hoosiers, whose stories have often been overlooked or suppressed by the Euro-American majority. The Mount Pleasant Beech Church and Beech Cemetery are a testament to the work and perseverance of free black settlers who came to Indiana during the 1820s and 1830s, many from slave states like North Carolina. These resources document the existence and achievements of the Beech Settlement community within the larger context of Indiana history. The Beech settlers came to a state that was openly hostile to non-whites. Indiana's new constitution of 1851 banned negroes and mulattos from entering or settling in the state and excluded them from suffrage.³ The Beech Church and Beech Cemetery remain as landmarks to the perseverance of the Beech Settlement through several generations in spite of institutional racism at the state level. Writing in 1957, Emma Lou Thornbrough noted that while whites strove to reinforce legal and social racial barriers, "the Negroes themselves were demonstrating the fallacy of the popular belief by the progress they were making in spite of the obstacles thrown in their way."⁴

The Beech Cemetery is critical to the understanding of the history of the residents and descendants of the Beech Settlement. While the family histories of European American settlers in Indiana are comparatively well documented through many period sources, the stories of African American and multiracial Hoosiers are often poorly documented. Research into a handful of individuals buried in the Beech Cemetery has revealed stories that offer insight into the experience of African Americans in Indiana during the nineteenth century and reinforces the connection between the Beech Settlement and other areas, notably Indianapolis, during the nineteenth century. As with many cemeteries of this period, the Beech Cemetery is believed to contain many grave markers that have fallen and sunken into the ground.⁵ Future survey of the site may uncover these hidden markers, revealing a more complete picture of the Beech Settlement during the period of significance and offering key clues to the wider experience of African American Hoosiers.

³ *Constitution of the State of Indiana* (New Albany, Indiana: Kent & Norman, 1851) 20.

⁴ Emma Lou Thornbrough, *The Negro in Indiana: A Study of a Minority* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1957) vii.

⁵ The current property owners report that sunken grave markers have periodically surfaced over the years since the removal of the garbage dump and overgrowth.

Religion

The Mount Pleasant Beech Church is significant in the area of religious history, as it was among the first congregations in Indiana to associate with the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church and was the site of the establishment of the Indiana Conference of the A.M.E. Church in October 1840.⁶ Founded in 1816 as the first independent black denomination in the United States, the A.M.E. Church provided a national network connecting individual black communities across the country. The Beech Church congregation joined the A.M.E. Church in the late-1830s, likely through the influence of the influential circuit-rider William Paul Quinn (1788 – 1873). Quinn, said to have been born in Calcutta, India, to Egyptian and Spanish parents, met missionaries from the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), converted to Christianity, and went to England before coming to the United States in 1808. He became an A.M.E. missionary to Indiana and Ohio in 1836, settling at Richmond, Indiana. Quinn planted at least 47 A.M.E. churches throughout the region, including those at Richmond, Dublin, Newport (now Fountain City), and Cambridge City, Indiana. In 1844, Quinn was elected as a bishop of the A.M.E. Church at its Annual Conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He served as Senior Bishop from 1849 until his death in 1873.⁷ As one of the first A.M.E. Churches in Indiana, the Beech Church served as a parent and precedent for numerous other congregations that would be formed throughout the state over the following decades. The Beech Church hosted the Annual Conference of the A.M.E. Church in August 1841.⁸

The organization of the Indiana Conference of the A.M.E. Church in 1840 marked a significant phase of the growth of the denomination as Americans moved westward during the nineteenth century. As initially established, the conference included vast territories west and southwest of the Mississippi River. By 1846, it was one of six Annual Conferences in the United States and Canada.⁹ In addition to its religious significance, the A.M.E. Church was a key organization in the promotion of education for African Americans, creating educational opportunities when state law and white hostility prohibited the children of black taxpayers from attending Indiana's public schools.¹⁰ For these reasons, the Beech Church provides a connection to local, state, and national history for the descendants of the Beech Settlement and for all Hoosiers.

⁶ Bethel A.M.E. Church at Richmond was organized in 1836 by William Paul Quinn and Allen Chapel A.M.E. Church at Terre Haute was organized in 1837. Thomas J. Reed, Bethel A.M.E. Church, Richmond, Indiana, National Register nomination, 1974, n.pag; Audrey Acton Graham, Allen Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church, Terre Haute, Indiana, National Register nomination, 1975, 8-1.

⁷ *In Memoriam: Funeral Services in Respect to the Memory of Rev. William Paul Quinn* (Toledo: Warren Chapel, 1873); Paul Fuller, *Black Methodists in America: A Success Story of a Model Minority* (Baltimore: Publish America, 2012) n.pag.

⁸ "African Conference," *Knightstown Courier*, August 28, 1841, reprinted in *Indiana American* (Brookville, Indiana), September 3, 1841, 2.

⁹ Charles Spencer Smith, *A History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (Philadelphia: Book Concern of the A.M.E. Church, 1922) 16, 19.

¹⁰ Thornbrough, 151.

Developmental History/Additional historic context information

Beech Settlement

The Beech Settlement was one of at least 30 black farm communities established in Indiana between 1820 and 1850. Located mostly in central and southern Indiana, these communities were often established in proximity to settlements of the Religious Society of Friends, commonly known as the Quakers.¹¹ American Quakers began to oppose slavery in the eighteenth century, petitioning Congress for the abolition of slavery in 1790. During the first half of the nineteenth century, many Quakers became active as abolitionists, many helping enslaved people escape through the network now known as the Underground Railroad. During the early-nineteenth century, Quakers left slave states like North Carolina en masse, separating themselves from the slave-based economy of the South while seeking new lives on the western frontier. The racial views of Quakers in this period were varied, with many opposing slavery while retaining prejudice against free blacks.¹²

Ripley Township in northwest Rush County was settled by Quakers from North Carolina in the early-1820s. Walnut Ridge Monthly Meeting, a local congregational unit, was established in 1826. In 1834, John Clark and Henry Henley laid out the town of Carthage roughly two-and-one-half miles to the east of Walnut Ridge's meetinghouse. A separate Friends Meeting at Carthage was established in 1839. The Shelbyville & Knightstown Railroad opened in 1850, connecting Carthage and the surrounding farmland to the Madison & Indianapolis Railroad at Edinburgh.¹³ This rail line connected the region with Indianapolis (although it was closer via the National Road) and with the Ohio River port of Madison and the Wabash & Erie Canal port of Lafayette. Carthage was second only to Rushville in size and commercial activity during the nineteenth century and remains Rush County's second-largest town.

The Beech Settlement was established in the late-1820s, when members of the Roberts family, free African Americans from Northampton County, North Carolina, settled in the area.¹⁴ The 1830 census documents 14 black households containing 91 individuals in Rush County.¹⁵ By 1834, 18 black landowners held 1,563 acres in Ripley Township. This increased to 24 landowners with 1,804 acres by 1837.¹⁶ By 1850, 27 black landowners held 2,144 acres in Ripley Township.¹⁷ Black landownership peaked in 1870 with 34 owners holding 2,496 acres. This decreased gradually during the 1870s and more rapidly during the 1880s and 1890s. By

¹¹ Indiana Historical Bureau, "Being Black in Indiana," accessed February 11, 2016, <http://www.in.gov/history/2548.htm>

¹² Vincent, 34.

¹³ "Opening of the Railroad to Knightstown," *Indiana American* (Brookville, Indiana), November 8, 1850, 2.

¹⁴ Vincent, 32.

¹⁵ Georgia Cravey, "Early Black Settlements: Rush County," Indiana Historical Society, last updated June 23, 2014, <http://www.indianahistory.org/our-collections/reference/early-black-settlements/rush-county>

¹⁶ Vincent, 36.

¹⁷ Vincent, 61.

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1900, 18 black landowners held 866 acres of land in Ripley Township, meaning that more than 65 percent of black-owned land from 1870 had been transferred to white ownership.¹⁸

The Beech Settlement and the Beech Church have been known by a variety of names. Many mid-nineteenth century references refer to both by the name “Blue River,” referencing the Big Blue River located one mile to the southeast.¹⁹ The *Indianapolis Recorder* began to refer to the “Old Beech church” at Blue River in 1911.²⁰ Newspaper references to the site as “Mount Pleasant” begin in the 1930s, and as the “Mount Pleasant Beech Church” from the 1940s to the present.²¹

The Beech Settlement’s location among communities of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) suggests that it may have been connected with the Underground Railroad. Twentieth century histories describe Quaker communities near the Beech Settlement as active “stations” on the Underground Railroad. A summary of a report told by Arah McDaniel Watkins (born 1844) in 1934 states that the home of Elisha White near Carthage served as a station on the Underground Railroad.²² A recent historical work states that Bishop William Paul Quinn, with assistance from Bishop Morris Brown, “helped the members of the Mount Pleasant Beech Creek African Methodist Episcopal Church in Carthage, Indiana, to open a safehouse.”²³ This work cites a 1916 encyclopedia of the A.M.E. Church that contains no mention of this incident in the biographical sketch of Bishop Quinn.²⁴ Stephen Vincent, who has studied the history of the Beech Settlement, notes that, while assessing the accuracy of Underground Railroad stories is problematic, “in the case of the Beech, blacks as well as whites seemingly were involved in aiding slaves on their way northward.”²⁵ Articles published in 1945 and 1958 state that Baptist churches at Madison, New Albany, Charlestown, and Blue River (an early name for the Beech Settlement) served as Underground Railroad stations.²⁶ Stephen Vincent notes that, while few escaped slaves settled in the Beech community, involvement with the Underground Railroad and other antislavery activism “served to challenge stereotypes about African Americans’ docility and lack of courage... [showing] bot their disdain for slavery and their concern for fellow blacks.”²⁷

¹⁸ Vincent, 119.

¹⁹ Vincent, 37.

²⁰ *The Indianapolis Recorder*, July 8, 1911, 3; *Ibid*, July 15, 1911, 3.

²¹ “Basket Meeting at Mt. Pleasant,” *The Indianapolis Recorder*, August 22, 1936, 9; *Ibid*, August 15, 1936, 15; “Annual Basket Meet Held at Carthage,” *The Indianapolis Recorder*, August 21, 1943.

²² *1834 -1934 Carthage Centennial* booklet (Carthage, Indiana: 1934).

²³ Mary Ellen Snodgrass, *The Underground Railroad: An Encyclopedia of People, Places, and Operations*, Vol. II, (New York: Routledge, 2015) 438.

²⁴ Richard R. Wright, Jr., ed., *Centennial Encyclopedia of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (Philadelphia: Book Concern of the A.M.E. Church, 1916) 280-281.

²⁵ Vincent 65.

²⁶ “Two Churches Served Negro People of State,” *Indianapolis Recorder*, July 7, 1945, 1; “Baptists Had Early Start Here, Local Church Organized in 1846,” *Indianapolis Recorder*, February 8, 1958, 5.

²⁷ Vincent 65-66.

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Beech Church

The farmland surrounding the Beech Church site was owned by John Winburn from at least 1840 to 1856. The Winburn family was among the early settlers of the Beech Settlement who came from Northampton County, North Carolina.²⁸ By 1867, the property had passed to the heirs of J. C. Davis. In 1879, the property was owned by C. Cox and contained the residence of Mrs. D. Davis.²⁹ In 1908, the land was owned by O. S. Hill. A 1919 map shows the Beech Church parcel as part of the farmland of Henry Morris, to the south.

The Mount Pleasant Beech Church congregation was established in July 1832. The founding agreement of the congregation survives and reads as follows:

We the Coulored people of this Neighbourhood being desirous to unite and build a Meeting House to the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church and we think on the Land of James Roberts near the large spring to be a sortable [sic] and convenient place to build one[.] Therefore we the under signers do bind ourselves to pay the sims [sic] next to our names in gitting lumber for the building or otherwise in Cash. July the 18th 1832[.]³⁰

The Beech Church congregation built a log church on the site in 1838.³¹ It is unclear whether this was a more primitive and temporary log building or whether it was a permanent hewn-log structure covered in clapboards. Confusion between these two types of log buildings is common in later historical works and is reinforced by the popular mythology of the log cabin.³²

Various newspaper articles and historical accounts list dates of construction for the present Beech Church building ranging from c.1840 to 1860 to 1865.³³ The church's corner boards, cornice returns, and simple frieze are typical vernacular Greek Revival elements seen throughout Indiana during the 1840s and 1860s. Somewhat more high-style Greek Revival expression was often achieved through the use of wide corner boards, particularly from the mid-1840s through the mid-1850s. Narrow corner boards and narrower friezes were still seen during this period but may sometimes be seen as an indication of a late-1830s to early-1840s or late-1850s to mid-1870s date for vernacular Greek Revival buildings in Indiana. Cornice returns were common from the mid-1840s through the early-1860s but had generally disappeared from new buildings by the early-1870s unless they were incorporated into a bracketed Italianate cornice.

²⁸ Vincent, 14-15.

²⁹ Mrs. D. Davis appears to be Delilah Davis (born c.1829 in North Carolina, died January 25, 1900, in Indianapolis), a widow listed as a resident of Ripley Township on the 1870 and 1880 censuses. Delilah Davis' funeral was held at the Beech on February 3, 1900. Mrs. Martha Weaver and Miss Kate Watkins of Greenfield attended. "Greenfield Bits," *The Recorder* (Indianapolis, Indiana), February 3, 1900, 2. C. Cox appears to be Cyrus B. Cox, a white resident of Ripley Township.

³⁰ Photocopy of Founding agreement, [Mount Pleasant] Methodist Church, 18 July 1832, Roberts Settlement Collection, Indiana State Library, Indianapolis, Indiana, quoted in O'Bryan 1-2.

³¹ "Church History Told at Family Reunion," *Rushville Republican* (Rushville, Indiana), September 2, 1976, 3.

³² Warren E. Roberts, *Log Buildings of Southern Indiana* (Bloomington, Indiana: Trickster Press, 1984), 52.

³³ Lawrence B. Carter, "Many Happy Times for Years," unidentified news clipping, August 24, 1951; Ann O'Bryan, "Mt. Pleasant Library: Reading among African Americans in 19th Century Rush County, Indiana," Indiana University, 2005, accessed December 2, 2015, <https://scholarworks.iupui.edu/handle/1805/403>, 11.

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These stylistic elements suggest that the Beech Church likely dates from sometime between c.1845 and c.1870. The shape and proportions of the building's two-over-two double-hung wood sash windows is consistent with the latter part of this period, suggesting that a construction date of c.1865 may be most plausible. It is possible that the building contains portions of an earlier timber-frame church dating to the 1840s or 1850s, with a substantial remodeling in the 1860s.

Oral tradition states that the building formerly had a door centered in the east wall. Patches in the wood siding on this elevation suggest that a door comparable in size to the present west door was once located between the windows of the east wall. Historic photographs show patches to the siding of the west façade that appear to indicate a pair of single doors to either side of the present double entrance door. The locations of these doors appear to align with the two aisles formed by the historic pews inside the church. The two-door configuration was common for many Protestant churches in Indiana during the mid-nineteenth century. From the 1780s through the mid-nineteenth century, many Methodist congregations designed their churches with separate entrances and separate seating areas for men and women. Men and older boys used the left door and sat in the left half of the church, while women and children used the right door and were seated in the right half.³⁴ Physical evidence suggests that the Beech Church may have originally been designed to follow this configuration, with modifications to provide a central double door made before 1925.

The Indiana Conference of the A.M.E. Church was organized at the Beech Church on October 2, 1840, by Bishop Morris Brown (1770 – 1849), with N. J. Wilkerson serving as secretary.”³⁵ The Annual Conference of the A.M.E. Church met at the Beech in August 1841. The *Knightstown Courier* reported that 30 to 40 ministers from all parts of the United States were in attendance, forming “an orderly, well dressed, intelligent looking body of men.” The article continued:

They commenced a camp meeting yesterday at the camp ground a short distance from the church, and about 1000 colored persons are said to be on the spot already. Conference was held at the same place about this time last year, and we heard several sermons preached by their ministers, some of whom displayed not a little intelligence, and a thorough acquaintance with the Bible. Surely, no one can but wish well to any scheme which has for its object the moral and religious improvement of our colored population.³⁶

The Indiana Annual Conference of the A.M.E. Church was instrumental in the establishment of A.M.E. congregations in southern and western cities, including St. James A.M.E. Church (1848) at New Orleans, Louisiana, and a church (1851) at Sacramento, California. Attempts to establish and A.M.E. seminary within the Indiana Conference's territory were precluded by institutional

³⁴ John Fletcher Hurst, *The History of Methodism*, Vol. II (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1902) 493; Russell E. Richey, Kenneth E. Rowe, Jean Miller Schmidt, *American Methodism: A Compact History* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010) 34.

³⁵ Richard R. Wright, Jr., ed., *Centennial Encyclopedia of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (Philadelphia: Book Concern of the A.M.E. Church, 1916) 9.

³⁶ “African Conference,” *Knightstown Courier*, August 28, 1841, reprinted in *Indiana American* (Brookville, Indiana), September 3, 1841, 2.

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racism of the state government of Indiana and other states and territories.³⁷ In 1852, the Indiana Annual Conference reported that Hanover College near the prosperous Ohio River port of Madison in Jefferson County, would provide free education for three African American youths from Indiana.³⁸

The Mount Pleasant Beech Church housed a school during the mid-nineteenth century, with members of the Beech community and neighboring Quakers serving as teachers.³⁹ Education was important to the Beech community. With the exception of the Jeffries and Roberts families, most of the first generation adult Beech residents were illiterate, but these families appear to have sent all their children to school in the community, resulting in a high literacy rate among subsequent generations.⁴⁰

The Mount Pleasant Library was chartered in 1842 by 60 residents of the Beech community and the surrounding area, including six white residents of Carthage. James D. Roberts, who owned the land on which the church was built, was the first librarian. Circulation records from 1842 to 1869 survive and the collection may have been kept at the Beech Church prior to its relocation to the Union School in 1867.⁴¹ Research by Ann O'Bryan indicates that many of the library's subscribers were the same or closely related to members of the Beech Church congregation, suggesting "that the same families who were interested in organizing a church congregation were also interested in literacy and education." O'Bryan notes that "many of the descendants of these families have been prominent in education, the A.M.E. Church, politics, and medicine."⁴²

Reports in the *Indianapolis Recorder* between June and August 1901 document regular Sunday gatherings at the Beech.⁴³ Newspaper reports indicate that ministers from other communities around Central Indiana led services at the Beech between 1901 and 1903. Rev. George W. Shelton of Knightstown held a ten day meeting at the Beech in August 1901. A Carthage correspondent of the *Indianapolis Recorder* noted "Rev. Shelton is quite a favorite among the people of both races. Rev's. Tate and Charlton are assisting in the meeting and attracting considerable attention."⁴⁴ Rev. Thomas A. Edwards of Franklin, Indiana, preached at the Beech in December 1902 and April 1903.⁴⁵

³⁷ Charles Spencer Smith, *A History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (Philadelphia: Book Concern of the A.M.E. Church, 1922) 20, 23.

³⁸ Charles Spencer Smith, *A History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (Philadelphia: Book Concern of the A.M.E. Church, 1922) 26.

³⁹ Thornbrough, 171.

⁴⁰ O'Bryan 11.

⁴¹ Wright Jeffries kept the remaining library books and records, which were donated to the Indiana Historical Society in 1954 by his nephew's daughter, Mary Jeffries Strong. Mount Pleasant Library, (Rush County, Ind.), Records, 1842-1869, Minutes Book, Indiana Historical Society Library, 1-3.

⁴² Ann O'Bryan, "Mt. Pleasant Library: Reading among African Americans in 19th Century Rush County, Indiana," Indiana University, 2005, accessed December 2, 2015, <https://scholarworks.iupui.edu/handle/1805/403>, 5.

⁴³ *The Recorder* (Indianapolis, Indiana), June 22, 1901, 1; *The Recorder* (Indianapolis, Indiana), June 29, 1901, 5; *The Recorder* (Indianapolis, Indiana), July 13, 1901, 1.

⁴⁴ *The Recorder* (Indianapolis, Indiana), August 10, 1901, 5. Rev. Shelton moved from Spiceland to Knightstown in April 1901 and left Knightstown for Indianapolis in September 1901. Census records and city directories suggest

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Regular services at the Beech Church ceased in 1914 and the property became the site of an annual homecoming reunion for descendants of the Beech Settlement.⁴⁶ Local tradition states that the church must be used for religious meetings at least once per year to prevent the property from reverting back to the grantor. The earliest reference to this story found to date was published in 1921.⁴⁷

Newspaper articles list Rev. Myra E. Burney McCullough as pastor in charge of basket and quarterly meetings at the Beech Church in 1911, 1912, 1915, and 1916. Myra E. Burney (c.1868 – 1933) was born in Dublin, Indiana, on the National Road about 22 miles east of the Beech settlement. Her parents, John Henderson Burney and Elizabeth Burney, were both natives of North Carolina. She was working as a missionary for the A.M.E. Church as of 1902 and was active as an evangelist and member of various committees from 1905 through the late-1920s. She married William Henry McCullough of Carthage in 1906.⁴⁸ The McCulloughs lived in the town of Carthage through at least 1930.⁴⁹ The 1916 homecoming basket and quarterly meeting running from August 27 to September 3, celebrated the 77th anniversary of the organization of the Indiana Conference of the A.M.E. Church, the fourth anniversary of the A.M.E. Church at Carthage, and the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the denomination, also coinciding with the centennial of Indiana statehood.⁵⁰

A surviving flyer for the 1925 annual homecoming and basket meeting gives an idea of the scope of the early years of the event. It notes that the event would begin Monday, August 24th, closing on Sunday, August 30th. Bible study meetings would occur each morning at 9:30 and evangelistic services would be held at 7:30 each evening. The Closing Sunday events included a prayer meeting at 5:00 AM; Sunday School with Prof. J. M. Benson at 9:00 AM; preaching at 10:30 AM, 2:30 PM, and 7:30 PM; and congregational singing and music. The flyer invites attendees to “Come and tent on the old Beech Camping Ground. Tenting space free. A new well

that he worked a day job as a carpenter. “Knightstown Notes,” *The Recorder* (Indianapolis, Indiana), April 13, 1901, 5; “Knightstown Notes,” *Ibid*, September 7, 1901, 5.

⁴⁵ *The Recorder* (Indianapolis, Indiana), December 27, 1902, 3; *Ibid*, April 25, 1903, 3.

⁴⁶ “Church History Told at Family Reunion,” *Rushville Republican* (Rushville, Indiana), September 2, 1976, 3.

⁴⁷ A. L. Gary and E. B. Thomas, *Centennial History of Rush County, Indiana*, Vol. I (Indianapolis: Historical Publishing Company, 1921) 453.

⁴⁸ “Annual Session of the Indiana Annual A.M.E. Conference,” *The Recorder* (Indianapolis, Indiana), October 4, 1902, 1; “Greensburg,” *Ibid*, December 23, 1905, 3; “Greensburg,” *Ibid*, December 30, 1905, 3; “Appointments,” *The Recorder* (Indianapolis, Indiana), September 21, 1907, 1; “Rushville,” *The Indianapolis Recorder*, September 25, 1909, 3; “Terre Haute,” *The Indianapolis Recorder*, February 12, 1910, 3; “Additional Local News,” *The Indianapolis Recorder*, October 3, 1914, 2; “Tri-State Association,” *The Indianapolis Recorder*, August 22, 1914, 1; “Centennial State Conventions,” *The Indianapolis Recorder*, June 17, 1916, 7; “Shelbyville News,” *The Indianapolis Recorder*, June 24, 1916, 8; “Woman’s Mite Missionary Society Convened in Kokomo,” *The Indianapolis Recorder*, July 9, 1927, 3; “Evangelist Dies,” *The Indianapolis Recorder*, February 4, 1933, 3.

⁴⁹ Census records indicate that they were living on East Street in 1910, on Henley Street in 1920, and on an unspecified street in Carthage in 1930.

⁵⁰ “Homecoming Celebrated,” *The Indianapolis Recorder*, September 9, 1916, 6.

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of water. Refreshments on the ground.”⁵¹ The homecoming appears to have been a multi-day event through 1926, closing on the last Sunday in August or the first Sunday in September. The 1927 homecoming appears to have been the first to last for only one day. This event included a special focus on the history of the Beech Settlement, with “short talks by old settlers” and a historical program by Prof. Bob Roberts and Mrs. M. A. McCurdy.⁵²

Speakers and organizers of the annual homecoming at the Beech Church have included:

- 1924 last performance of the Beech Church’s Old Home Quartet (Alvin Garner, Ula Watkins, Charles Watkins, and Levi Weaver), active since at least 1884⁵³
- 1926 Rev. Dr. P. Q. Wallace, P.E.; Dr. Pope of Bethel A.M.E. Church, Indianapolis; other events at Carthage A.M.E. Church in Carthage⁵⁴
- 1927 Dr. J. P. Q. Wallace, Jackson’s Quintet, historical program by Bob Roberts and Mrs. M. A. McCurdy; Watkins Quartet; Rev. S. L. Greenfield
- 1931 Rev. R. L. Pope of Bethel A.M.E. Church, Indianapolis⁵⁵
- 1936 Rev. Plummer Jacobs, assistant pastor of Mt. Paran Baptist Church, Indianapolis; Rev. R. Summer/Sufmner of Anderson; Rt. Rev. J. A. Gregg, A.M., D.D., LL. D., bishop; Rev. J. P. Q. Wallace, D.D., P.E.; and Rev. William A. Bivens; choir from Anderson⁵⁶
- 1938 Rev. H. A. Perry of Allen Chapel, Anderson, Indiana
- 1939 Presiding Elder Dr. J. P. Q. Wallace; C. S. Spivey, dean of Wilberforce College; Rev. John A. Gregg, A.M., D.D., L.L.D., Bishop; Rev. W. M. Bivens⁵⁷
- 1943 Rev. Horace Greer⁵⁸
- 1948 Rev. Ford Gibson, Rev. Dollison⁵⁹
- 1963 Rev. W. Howard Weaver, Rev. Arnold⁶⁰
- 1964 Rev. Emmitt Dickson; Rev. W. H. Weaver of Indianapolis; Shiloh Baptist Church Choir of Richmond⁶¹
- 1966 Rev. W. H. Weaver of Indianapolis, Rev. David E. Barnes of Columbus, The Columbus singers⁶²
- 1970 Rev. William H. Weaver, music by Chapelaires of Allen Chapel A.M.E. Church, Indianapolis⁶³
- 1971 Rev. William Howard Weaver of Allen Chapel A.M.E. Church, Indianapolis and principal of Indianapolis School No. 33; choir from Bethel A.M.E. Church of Marion⁶⁴

⁵¹ “Annual Home Coming and Basket Meeting,” flyer, 1925.

⁵² “Old Beach [sic] Home Coming,” flyer, 1927

⁵³ “Church History Told at Family Reunion,” *Rushville Republican* (Rushville, Indiana), September 2, 1976, 3.

⁵⁴ “Look Who’s Here – The Good Old Home Coming at Mt. Pleasant Church,” flyer, 1926.

⁵⁵ *The Indianapolis Recorder*, August 29, 1931, 7.

⁵⁶ *The Indianapolis Recorder*, August 8, 1936, 6; *The Indianapolis Recorder*, August 22, 1936, 9

⁵⁷ *The Indianapolis Recorder*, August 26, 1939, 8.

⁵⁸ *The Indianapolis Recorder*, August 21, 1943.

⁵⁹ “Home Coming!”, flyer, 1948

⁶⁰ *The Indianapolis Recorder*, August 24, 1963, 7; “Carthage Folks Have Guests,” *The Indianapolis Recorder*, August 31, 1963, 16.

⁶¹ “Mt. Pleasant Beech Church to Celebrate 132nd Anniversary,” *The Indianapolis Recorder*, August 22, 1964, 3.

⁶² *The Indianapolis Recorder*, August 27, 1966, 7.

⁶³ “‘Homecoming’ at Carthage scheduled for Sun., Aug. 30,” *The Indianapolis Recorder*, August 15, 1970, 4.

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- 1973 Rev. William Howard Weaver ⁶⁵
1979 Rev. Peter T. Fletcher of Rushville, Indiana
1986 Dr. Henderson Davis, national A.M.E. historiographer; A.M.E. Men's Choir and Rev. Larry Bell of Richmond, Indiana ⁶⁶
1993 Presiding Elder Robert Kirck of South District and Presiding Elder Leonard N. Williams of North District ⁶⁷
1996 Dr. Henderson Davis, retired historiographer of the A.M.E. Church; Indiana Lay Male Chorus; choir from St. Paul A.M.E. Church ⁶⁸
1998 Dr. H. S. Davis; Rev. Leonard N. Williams ⁶⁹

Beech Cemetery

The cemetery was originally accessed from a dirt road along its eastern boundary. This road connected present-day Rush County Roads 1000 North and 1100 North and seems to have formed the eastern edge of the core of the Beech Settlement. The road is visible on maps from 1867 and 1879, but appears to have been abandoned by 1908. Just north of the cemetery, the road crossed a stream leading from a spring east of the Beech Church to Three Mile Creek (also known as Goose Creek) to the east. Oral tradition states that the road was abandoned after a bridge across this stream was repeatedly blown up by white neighbors hostile to the Beech Settlement.⁷⁰

Lawrence Belmont Carter (1905 – 1992), a native of Carthage, gathered information about the Beech Settlement with the intention of writing a history of the community. Writing in 1951, Carter notes that “not far distant from this place [the Beech Church] is the Beech cemetery, where rest the remains of many of the pioneers of this settlement.”⁷¹ Carter's notes indicate that he visited the cemetery August 31, 1951, June 16, 1952, November 10, 1953, November 28, 1959.⁷²

The farmland surrounding the Beech Cemetery was owned by the family of James D. Roberts (died 1849) from at least 1840 to 1856 and by J. D. Hill as of 1867. The property was owned by Quaker farmer Henry Morris (born 1842) and his wife, Mary E. Morris, from at least 1879 to 1919. As of 1951, the Henry Morris farm was owned by J. E. Bennet. Oral tradition states that the Morris farm was later acquired by a white family who was hostile to the descendants of the Beech settlement. They used the cemetery as a garbage dump and are said to have used the

⁶⁴ “Mt. Pleasant Beech to have annual Homecoming,” *The Indianapolis Recorder*, August 21, 1971, 7.

⁶⁵ “Homecoming Mt. Pleasant Beech Church,” *Rushville Republican* (Rushville, Indiana), August 22, 1973, 14.

⁶⁶ “Mount Pleasant Beech Church homecoming to be held Sunday,” *The Indianapolis Recorder*, August 30, 1986, 4.

⁶⁷ “Old Beech Church homecoming and reunion,” *The Indianapolis Recorder*, August 26, 1993, C5.

⁶⁸ James V. Gilbert, Sr., “Indiana Conference Laity begins fall activities,” *The Indianapolis Recorder*, September 21, 1996, C1.

⁶⁹ “Old Beech Church Homecoming Mt. Pleasant AME Church,” *The Indianapolis Recorder*, August 21, 1998, B3.

⁷⁰ A quarter-mile remnant of this road survives as a private gravel drive off of Rush County Road 1100 North.

⁷¹ Lawrence B. Carter, “Many Happy Times for Years,” unidentified news clipping, August 24, 1951.

⁷² Scans provided by Donna Hannon.

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headstones as shooting targets. It is said that Lawrence Carter was refused access to the Beech Cemetery by these owners and that he was only able to access the cemetery in company with the sheriff. The present owners, J. D. and Donna Hannon, have worked to remove garbage and overgrowth from the cemetery, discovering the Curtis and Jefferies family markers near the southeast end of the cemetery. As they continued to clear out the area, they found that the fence extended to the north and discovered more markers up the hill. After the garbage and brush had been cleared, grave markers began to surface, some of which were not recorded during Lawrence Carter's 1950s surveys. The Hannon's have recorded the names and locations of all known burials and have carefully maintained the cemetery for several years.

Research into a handful of persons buried in the Beech Cemetery suggests the type of information that the cemetery is likely to yield. These stories further our understanding of the experience of the Beech Settlement and its residents and provide context for the under-documented stories of African American Hoosiers during the nineteenth century. Two cases are listed below, with individuals buried in the Beech Cemetery shown in **bold**:

- **Umphrey Bobson** (c.1777 – 1853) purchased a 40-acre tract of land in Section 13 of Ripley Township, Rush County, at the Indianapolis land office on April 9, 1835.⁷³ This farmland was at the south end of the Beech Settlement, approximately one mile southwest of the Beech Church. Bobson and his wife, Lacy, had at least five children: Lavina Bobson Jones (born c.1828), Charles H. Bobson (1832 – 1922), Nancy Bobson (born c.1835), **Maria Bobson** (1839 – 1853), and James Bobson (born c.1841). Bobson sold his Ripley Township land and relocated to Brandywine Township in neighboring Hancock County sometime before 1850.

Bobson married Louisa Magruder on October 25, 1847, in Marion County, Indiana. Their daughter Martha A. Bobson was born about 1848. Louisa and Martha were living in the household of Thomas Magruder at Indianapolis as of the 1850 census. Magruder, born c.1747 to c.1755 in Maryland, had lived in Indianapolis for many years and was likely Louisa's father or grandfather. Known as "Old Uncle Tom" among white residents of Indianapolis, Magruder was a friend of minister and abolitionist Henry Ward Beecher during Beecher's residence in Indianapolis (1839 – 1847).⁷⁴ At the time of Magruder's death in 1857, the *Indianapolis Journal* reported that he was the inspiration for the title character in Harriet Beecher Stowe's best-selling novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852).⁷⁵ Louisa seems to have died in the early-1850s.

⁷³ This parcel was located on the east side of Rush County Road 800 West one quarter mile south of Rush County Road 1000 North. By 1856, this land was owned by M. Benford. Bobson's first name is spelled "Umphrey" on his tombstone and that of his daughter in the Beech Cemetery; other records use the more conventional spelling of "Humphrey."

⁷⁴ For further discussion of the use of "Uncle" and "Aunt" by whites as prefixes for the names of elderly blacks, see James W. Loewen, *Sundown Towns: A Hidden Dimension of American Racism* (New York: The New Press, 2005), 288.

⁷⁵ "Death of the Original Uncle Tom," *Putnam Republican Banner* (Greencastle, Indiana), March 11, 1857; "Uncle Tom's Cabin," *The Republican* (Plymouth, Indiana), May 21, 1857.

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Umpfrey Bobson married Delilah Campbell on October 19, 1853, in Marion County. His daughter, Maria, died five days later and was buried in the Beech Cemetery. Umpfrey Bobson died December 4, 1853, and was buried in the Beech Cemetery next to his daughter. (Photo 24) Additional members of the Bobson family may be buried in the Beech Cemetery.

- The government-issue headstone of Civil War veteran **James H. Keemer** documents his service in Company E., 14th Regiment, United States Colored Infantry, between 1865 and 1866.⁷⁶ (Photo 34) Born c.1819 in Northampton County, North Carolina, Keemer was farming in Washington Township, Marion County, Indiana, as of 1863. He enlisted in the Union Army at Indianapolis on March 11, 1865, and was discharged March 10, 1866, at Chattanooga, Tennessee, at the expiration of his term of service. Military records tell us that 46-year-old Keemer was 5'-9" tall with blue eyes and black hair. Keemer seems to have returned to Indianapolis following the war but was working as a day laborer in Carthage as of the 1880 census. Documents alternately list Keemer's race as "black," "colored," or "mulatto" (multiracial). His death date is unknown.

Keemer's son, James H. Keemer, Jr., (born c.1850) worked as a day laborer in Knightstown and was active in his church and fraternal lodges, with frequent mention in the society news columns of the *Indianapolis Recorder*, Indiana's most prominent African American newspaper, during the 1890s and 1900s. His son, Edgar Burnett Keemer (born 1879), studied at Indiana University and the Indiana Medical College before graduating from the University of Michigan in 1906, later serving as head of the pharmacy department at Howard University.

Another son of the elder James H. Keemer, William "Billy" Keemer (c.1849 – 1875), was a carpenter who worked with builder George Wiltsie of Carthage.⁷⁷ In June 1875, William Keemer was accused of raping a white woman, Jerusha E. Vaughn, the pregnant wife of William Vaughn, a farmer in Blue River Township, Hancock County. Documents suggest that William Keemer knocked at the door of the Vaughn house to see if he might get something to eat and that, upon seeing a black man, Jerusha Vaughn began screaming, causing Keemer to run away. Vaughn alleged that Keemer had attacked her, sparking a mob of white farmers to pursue him. Keemer was arrested and taken to the Rush County Jail at Rushville before being moved to the Hancock County Jail at Greenfield. An armed mob stormed the jail, took William Keemer to the Hancock County Fairgrounds, and lynched him inside the Floral Hall before a crowd of about 150 people.⁷⁸ Newspaper reports indicate that William Keemer was believed to be innocent

⁷⁶ Born c.1819 in Northampton, Virginia, Keemer was a farmer in Washington Township, Marion County, Indiana, as of June 1863. City directories list him as a laborer at Indianapolis between 1867 and 1869.

⁷⁷ George Wiltsie was the father of Charles S. Wiltsie (born 1860), later prosecuting attorney of Marion County.

⁷⁸ Vincent lists Mrs. Vaughn's name as "Lucetta," but all other records indicate that her name was Jerusha E. Vaughn. Vincent 125-126; J. H. Binford, *History of Hancock County, Indiana* (Greenfield, Indiana: King & Binford, 1882) 168-170; "A Rape and a Rope: Dreadful Doom of William Keemer," *Indiana State Sentinel* (Indianapolis, Indiana), July 1, 1875, 7.

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within a few days of the lynching, Vaughn indicating that her assailant was another person entirely.⁷⁹ In 1898, the *Indianapolis News* published an article on the lynching of William Keemer and his brother's ongoing search for the leaders of the lynch mob. This article reported that a year or two after the lynching, Vaughn "said that Keemer had offered her no insult, and had not even attempted to enter the house. In her frenzy of fright she had made a charge that cost an innocent man his life."⁸⁰ The murder of William Keemer provides a clear connection between the Beech Settlement and the hostility and terrorism that confronted African American Hoosiers throughout the nineteenth century and with increasing frequency into the Jim Crow period.⁸¹

These two examples suggest the local, regional, and national connections of the Beech Settlement's residents that may be revealed by further research on the individuals buried in the Beech Cemetery.

⁷⁹ "City News," *Indianapolis News*, July 7, 1875, 3.

⁸⁰ W. H. Blodgett, "Lynched an Innocent Man: Story of a Greenfield Mob over Twenty Years Ago," *Indianapolis News*, January 1, 1898, 10.

⁸¹ For more context on lynching in the North, particularly related to allegations or fears of interracial rape, see James W. Loewen, *Sundown Towns: A Hidden Dimension of American Racism* (New York: The New Press, 2005), 175-176, 181, 197.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Mount Pleasant Beech Church & Beech Cemetery

Rush County, Indiana

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Mount Pleasant Beech Church & Beech Cemetery

Rush County, Indiana

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-

Mount Pleasant Beech Church & Beech Cemetery

Rush County, Indiana

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 139-100-10009

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.5

Use the UTM system

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

Church:

1. Zone: 16 Easting: 621720 Northing: 4402219

Cemetery:

2. Zone: 16 Easting: 622181 Northing: 4401790

3. Zone: Easting: Northing:

4. Zone: Easting: Northing:

Mount Pleasant Beech Church & Beech Cemetery

Rush County, Indiana

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Beech Church property:

Beginning at a point 625 feet east of the center line of Rush County Road 725 West and 1,348 feet north of its intersection with the center line of Rush County Road 1000 North, the boundary extends 165 feet north, thence 201 feet north-northeast, thence 165 feet, south thence 201 feet west-southwest to the point of beginning. This site contains one (1) acre.

Beech Cemetery property:

Beginning at a point 456 feet north of the center line of Rush County Road 1000 North 70 feet west of its intersection with Goose Road, the boundary extends 371.5 feet north, thence 188.5 feet west, thence 371.5 feet south, thence 188.5 feet east to the point of beginning. This site contains one and one-half (1.5) acres.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

These boundaries encompass the entirety of the sites donated for the use of the Mount Pleasant Beech Church and for the Beech Cemetery. Both sites are small areas of larger farm properties that were donated for the use of the Beech Settlement community. The two properties are not contiguous but are functionally related community properties near the center of the Beech Settlement.

The distance between the southeast corner of the Beech Church property and the northwest corner of the Beech Cemetery property is 1,452 feet.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Benjamin L. Ross, Architectural Graduate & Historic Preservation Specialist

organization: RATIO Architects, Inc.

street & number: 101 S. Pennsylvania Street

city or town: Indianapolis state: Indiana zip code: 46204

e-mail: BRoss@RATIOdesign.com

telephone: 317-633-4040

date: July 2016

Mount Pleasant Beech Church & Beech Cemetery

Rush County, Indiana

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Mount Pleasant Beech Church & Beech Cemetery

City or Vicinity: Carthage

County: Rush State: Indiana

Photographer: Benjamin L. Ross

Date Photographed: October 29, 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 35. View of Beech Church and site, facing northeast
- 2 of 35. West façade of Beech Church, facing east
- 3 of 35. North elevation and west façade of Beech Church, facing southeast
- 4 of 35. North elevation of Beech Church, facing south
- 5 of 35. East and north elevations of Beech Church, facing southwest
- 6 of 35. East elevation of Beech Church, facing southwest
- 7 of 35. South elevation of Beech Church, facing north

Mount Pleasant Beech Church & Beech Cemetery

Rush County, Indiana

- 8 of 35. North part of Beech Church site looking toward Rush County Road 725 West, facing west
- 9 of 35. South part of Beech Church site showing gravel drive to Rush County Road 725 West, facing southwest
- 10 of 35. Outhouse at northwest corner of Beech Church site and context of agricultural fields, facing east
- 11 of 35. South part of Beech Church site showing outbuilding and outhouse, facing east
- 12 of 35. Interior of Beech Church, facing east
- 13 of 35. Interior of Beech Church showing dais, facing southeast
- 14 of 35. Interior of Beech Church, facing west
- 15 of 35. Interior of Beech Church showing detail of dais railing, facing east
- 16 of 35. Interior of Beech Church showing detail of pews, facing south
- 17 of 35. Attic of Beech Church showing roof framing, facing southeast
- 18 of 35. View of Beech Cemetery with Jefferies family plot at left, facing north
- 19 of 35. View of Beech Cemetery with fencerow and former dirt road in distance, facing east
- 20 of 35. View of Beech Cemetery, facing north
- 21 of 35. View of Beech Cemetery from top of hill, facing south
- 22 of 35. View of Beech Cemetery partway up hill, facing south
- 23 of 35. View of Beech Church with fencerow and former dirt road at left and Morris farmstead in distance, facing south
- 24 of 35. Detail of Beech Cemetery showing headstones of Maria Bobson (c.1839 – 1853) and Umphrey Bobson (c.1777 – 1853), with unworked stones, facing southeast
- 25 of 35. View of Beech Cemetery with fencerow and former dirt road in left background and current cattle grazing area at right, facing southeast
- 26 of 35. Overview of Beech Cemetery from southeast corner of site, facing northwest
- 27 of 35. Detail of Beech Cemetery showing Jefferies family plot, facing south
- 28 of 35. Detail of Beech Cemetery showing headstones of Mary E. Jefferies (1854 – 1860) and Walker Jefferies (c.1805 – 1881), facing east
- 29 of 35. Detail of Beech Cemetery showing headstone of Amanda Curtis (1836 – 1882) with cattle grazing area and Morris farmstead beyond, facing south
- 30 of 35. Detail of Beech Cemetery showing fragment of headstone of Lavinia Roberts (1838), facing west
- 31 of 35. Detail of Beech Cemetery showing headstone of Benjamin Trotter (c.1799 – 1869), facing east
- 32 of 35. Detail of Beech Cemetery showing headstone of Mary J. Tuttle (1832 – 1860), facing east
- 33 of 35. Detail of Beech Cemetery showing headstone of Turner Nusom (died 1860), facing east
- 34 of 35. Detail of Beech Cemetery showing headstones of Dayton McDuffey (1844 – 1886) and James H. Keemer (born c.1819), facing northeast
- 35 of 35. Detail of Beech Cemetery showing headstone of Mary F. Newsom (1841 – 1877), facing east

Mount Pleasant Beech Church & Beech Cemetery

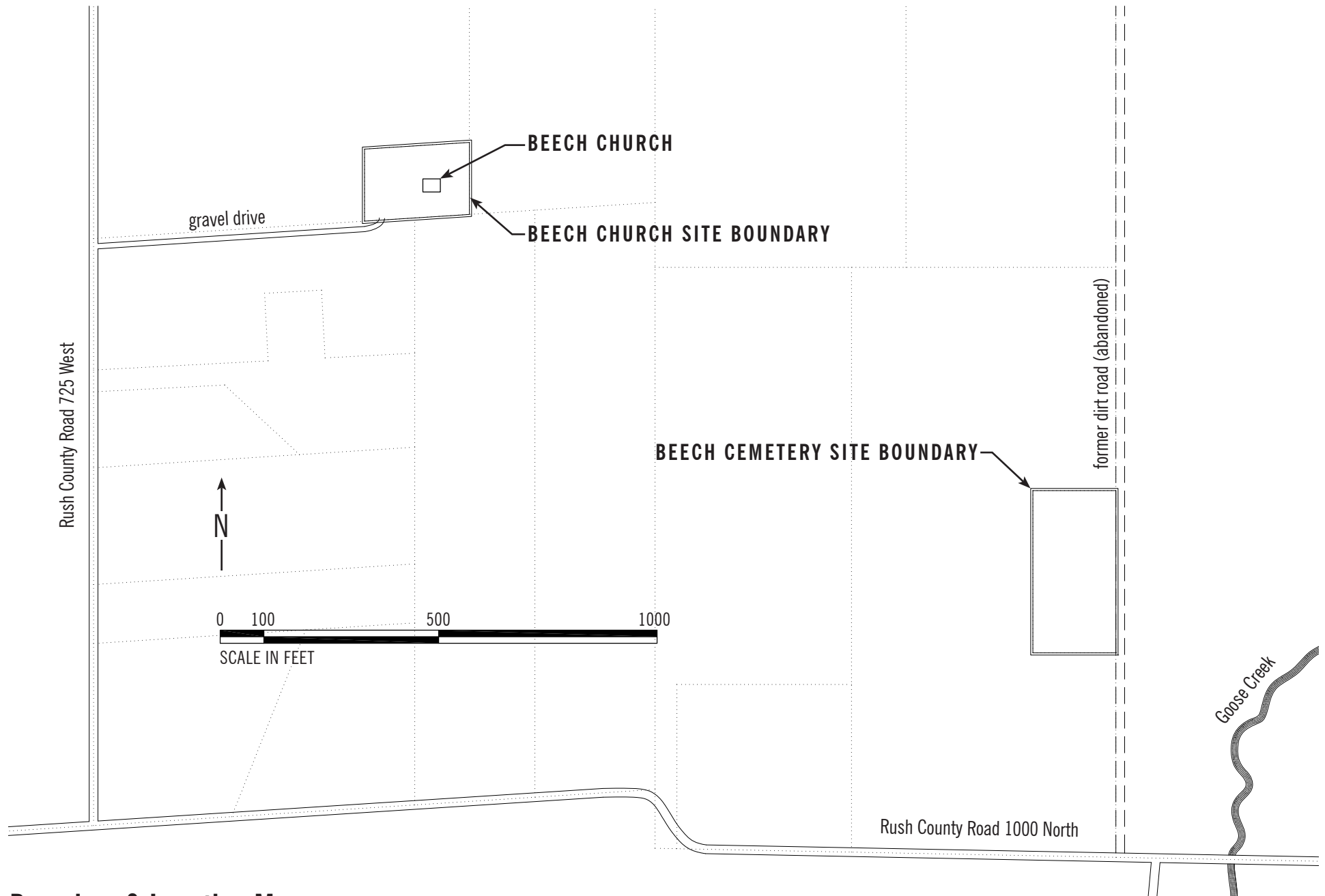
Rush County, Indiana

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

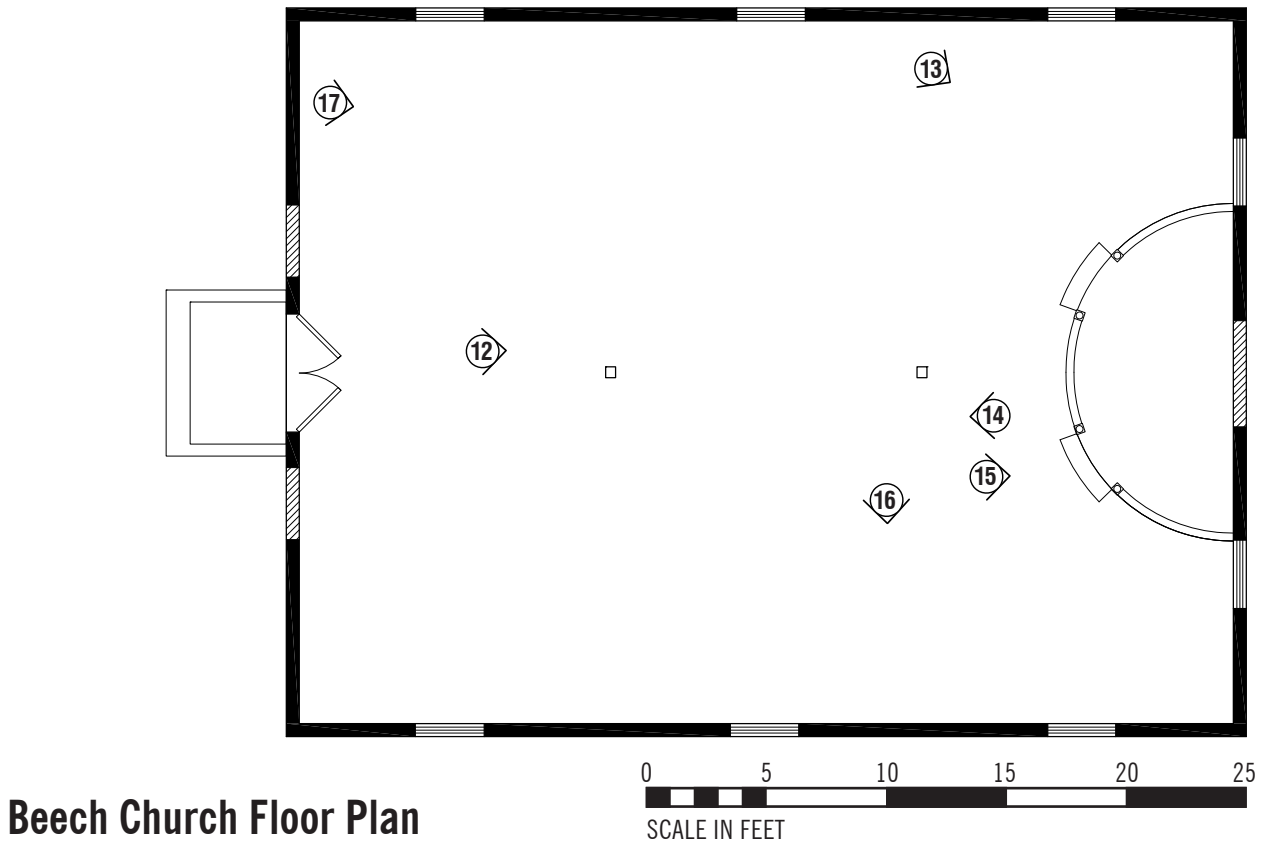
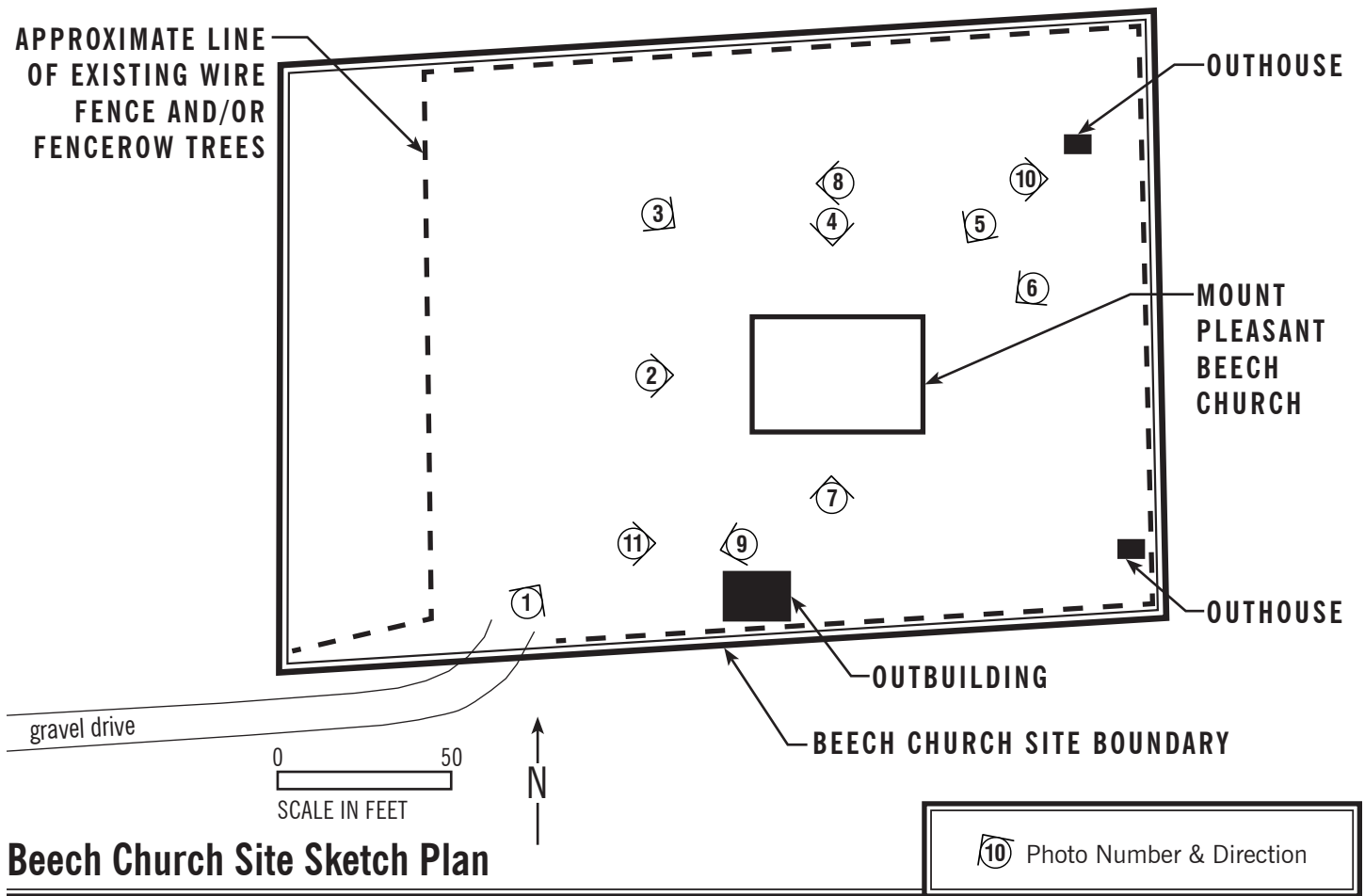
Beech Cemetery Burials						
Compiled from list of stones read by Lawrence B. Carter during the early-1950s and by Benjamin L. Ross in 2015						
Surname	Given Names	Born	Died	Age	Inscriptions / Notes	Extant
Bobson	Maria	[c.1839]	October 24, 1853	14y	daughter of Umphry & Lacy Bobson	Yes
Bobson	Umphry	[c.1777]	Dec. 4, 1853	76y [?]	husband of _____ Bobson	Yes
Brooks	Delitha	[1797]	November 30, 1872	75y 4m 26d	wife of R. Brooks	Yes
Brooks	Hiram					
Brooks	Lafayette	[1840]	February 11, 1857	17y 1m 11d	son of R. & D. Brooks	Yes
Brooks	Willie					
Curtis	Amanda	[1836]	February 8, 1882	46y 25d		Yes
Curtis	Henry					Yes
Curtis	Sarah A.	[1832]	March 29, 1859	26y 6m 26d	Gone to inhabit fairer climes, where streams of bliss, fresh issue from the throne	
Freeman	Sarah E.	[1857]	June 14, 1878	21y 4m 13d	daughter of Jordan M.C. & Mason Freeman	
Gilchrist	William H.	[1838]	April 12, 1882	43y 7m 18d		
Gilchrist	Dessie M.	[1868]	May 26, 1882	13y 6m 13d	daughter of William C. & C. Gilchrist, her stone is just north of her father's	
[worn away]	Harris	[1850]	April 22, 1851	1y 22d	[broken and badly worn]	Yes
Hill	Adaline	[c.1816]	1841	25y	wife of Joseph Hill	maybe
Hill	Calvin					
Hill	Charlie					
Hill	Edith					
Hill	William H.					
Hill		[c.1833]	July 1, 1855	22y	wife of Joseph Hill	Yes
Hunt	Henry					
Hunt	Nelson	[c.1839]	May 3, 1865	16y	son of I. & J. Hunt	
Hunt	Peter		September 20, 1907		(L.C.: "see note this date")	
Jefferies	Argena	[1848]	May 1, 1867	19y 5m 1d	daughter of W. & A. Jefferies	Yes
Jefferies	Elizabeth	[1828]	September 8, 1842	14y 29d	daughter of M. & M. Jefferies	Yes
Jefferies	Genara		November 16, 1859		daughter of W. & A. Jefferies	
Jefferies	Joel	[March 20, 1869]	March 29, 1869	9d	son of W. & A. Jefferies	
Jefferies	Joseph	[1847]	October 27, 1856	9y 4m 7d	son of M. & M. Jefferies	Yes
Jefferies	Lizzie	[1855]	January 11, 1871	15y 2m 29d	daughter of W. & A. Jefferies	Yes
Jefferies	Luzana	[1847]	August 2, 1866	19y 7m 6d	daughter of W. & A. Jefferies	Yes
Jefferies	Lyman					
Jefferies	Mary E.	[1854]	December 5, 1860	6y 12d	daughter of M. & M. Jefferies	Yes
Jefferies	Walker	[c.1805]	March 10, 1881	about 76y	(large stone next to small stone)	Yes
Jones	David					
Keemer	James H.				Co. E. 14 U.S. C.I. [military headstone]	Yes
Lensey/Linsey	Carey	[c.1804]	February 11, 1857	about 53 y		
McDuffey	Dayton	[1844]	October 1, 1886	42y 6m 24d		Yes
Mason	Grandmother				(Brooks)	
Melder	Georgeann					
Merriweather	Anna J.	February 28, 1876	April 28, 1890		daughter of P. & E. Merriweather	Yes
Merriweather	George		March 1883		son of P. & E. Merriweather	
Merriweather	Leroy	April 10, 1890	April 14, 1890		son of P. & E. Merriweather	
Newsom	Lonzo					
Newsom	Martha	[c.1799]	December 5, 1877	78y		
Newsom	Mary F.	[1841]	September 8, 1877	36y 7m 18d	wife of Goodin Newsom	Yes
Nusom	Turner		March 1 or 4, 1860		husband of Martha Nusom	Yes
[Newsom]						
Roberts	Anthony					
Roberts	James A.				Carter notes "(Black John)"	
Roberts	Lavinia		February 28, 1838		Crude hand-carved stone, may say "DC 188 "	
Simmons	Noah	[1841]	June 9, 1872	30y 8m 24d		Yes
Smith	Edmon G.	[1844]	August 14, 1871	27y 7m 19d	son of C. & G. E. "Jemima" Smith, brother to Newton Smith. Edmon and Martin died while working in a well, due to gases.	Yes
Smith	Martin V.	[1854]	August 14, 1871	17y 7m 16d	son of C. & G. E. "Jemima" Smith, brother to Newton Smith. Edmon and Martin died while working in a well, due to gases.	Yes
Tuttle	Mary J.	[February 1832]	March 15, 1860	28y 2m 24d	wife of J. Tuttle. Includes "Knightstown," possibly a stonemason's mark	Yes
Tuttle	General	[c.1791]	March 14, 1879	about 88y		Yes
Trotter	Benjamin	[c.1799]	November 5, 1869	about 70y		Yes
Watkins	Daniel	[c.1802]	June 11, 1852	50y	consort of Frances Watkins	
Watkins	Francis	1804	[c.1893-1894]	89y 7m 8d	wife of Daniel Watkins	
Watkins	Martha Ann (Roberts)				(Roberts)	
Watkins	Meredith					
Winslow	David		April 17, 1880	about 78y		Yes

Mount Pleasant Beech Church & Beech Cemetery, Carthage, Rush County, Indiana, 2016

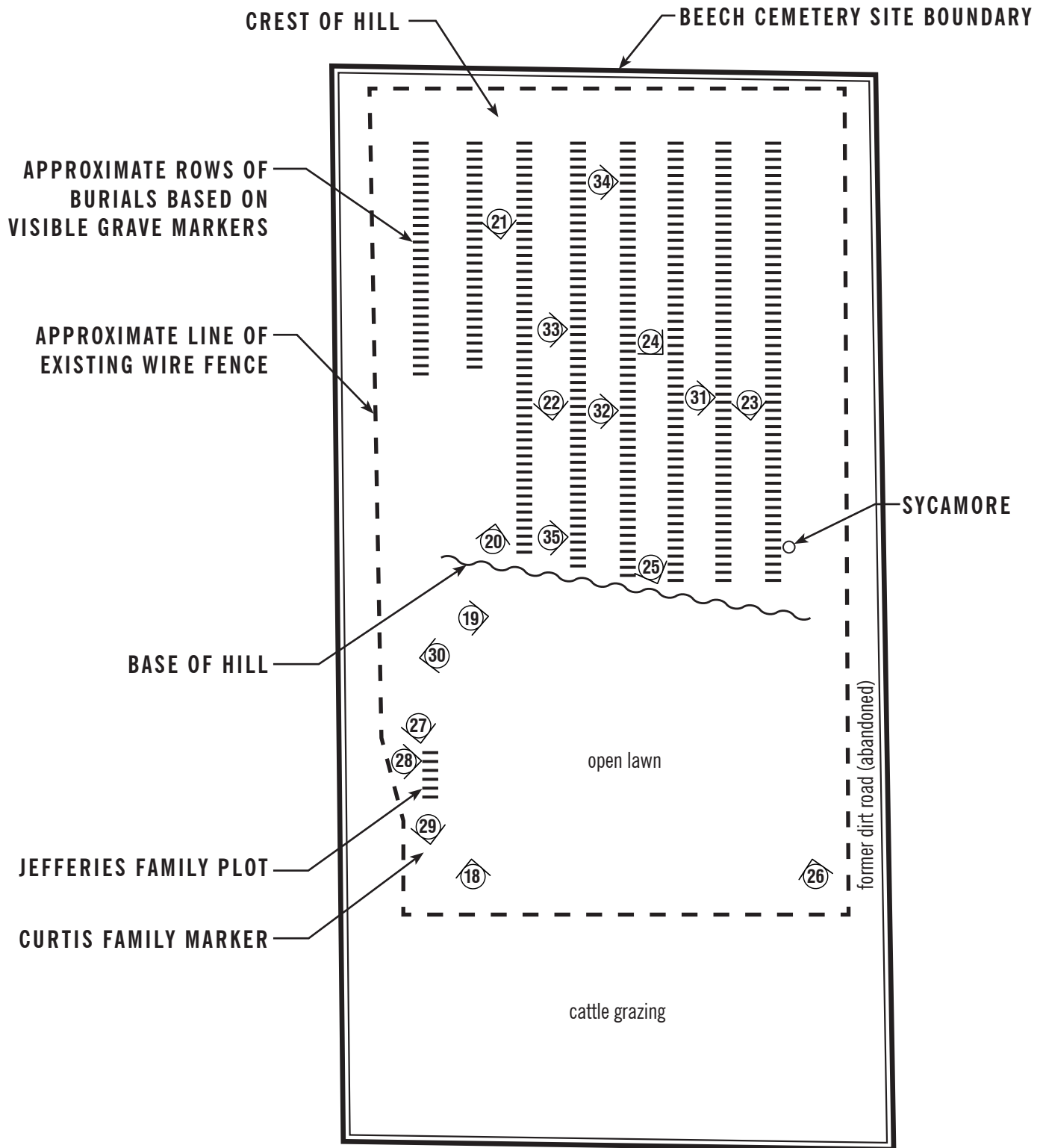


Boundary & Location Map

Mount Pleasant Beech Church & Beech Cemetery, Carthage, Rush County, Indiana, 2016



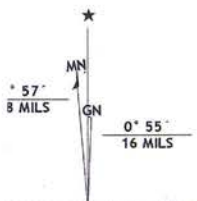
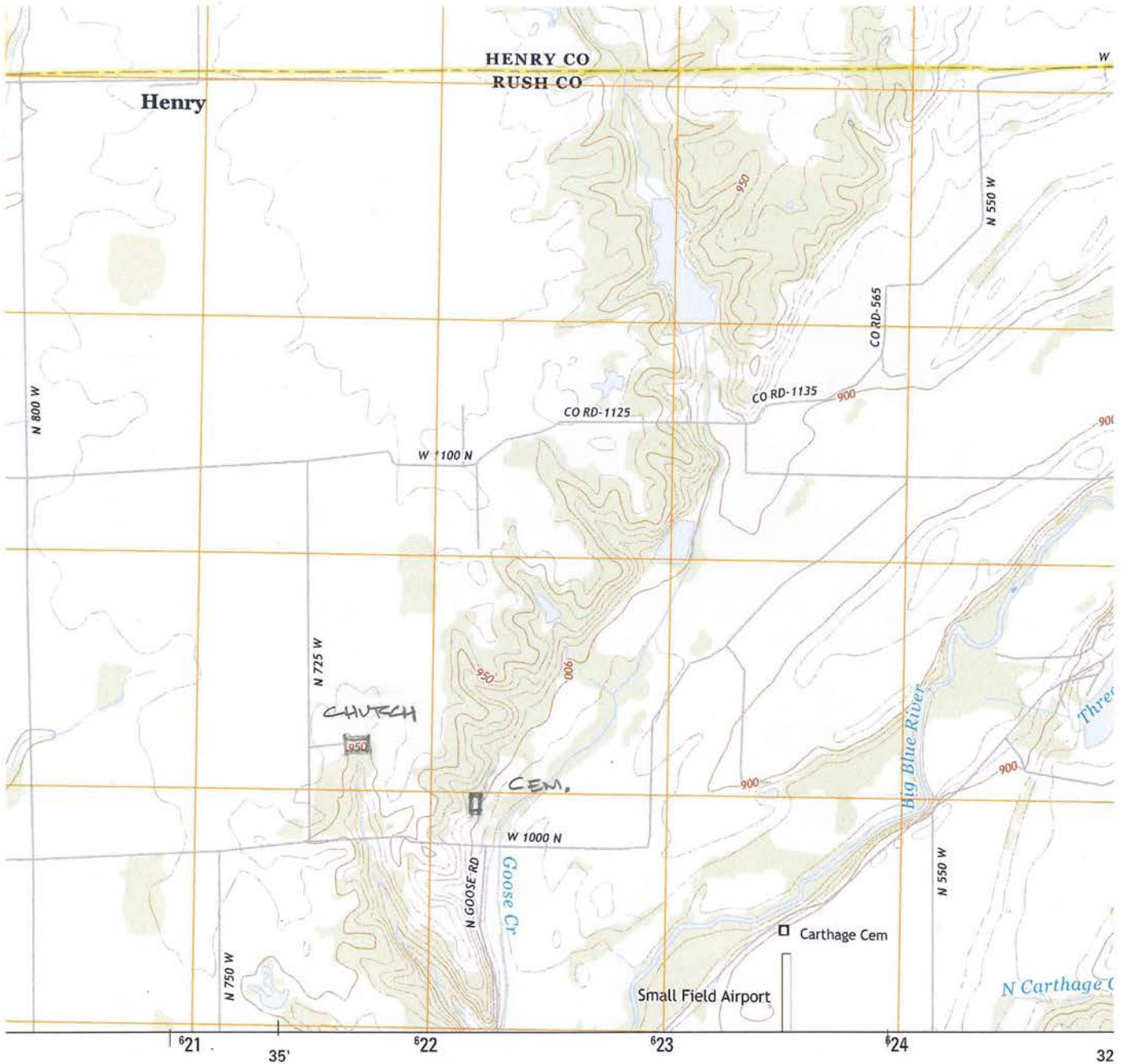
Mount Pleasant Beech Church & Beech Cemetery, Carthage, Rush County, Indiana, 2016



Beech Cemetery Sketch Plan

10 Photo Number & Direction

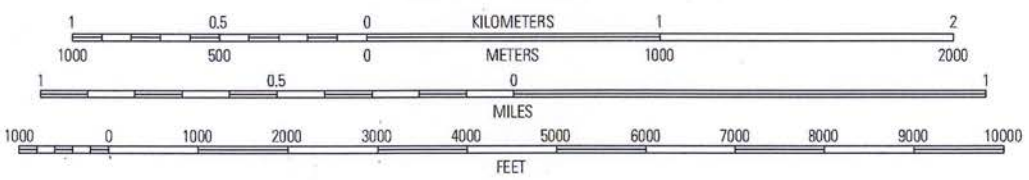
Mount Pleasant Beech Church & Beech Cemetery, Carthage, Rush County, Indiana, 2016



ID AND 2013 MAGNETIC NORTH
NATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

U.S. National Grid
100,000-m Square ID

SCALE 1:24 000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NORTH AMERICAN VERTICAL DATUM OF 1988

USGS Map: Knightstown Quadrangle, Indiana - Rush Co., 7.5-minute series

NAD 83 UTM S
CHURCH - 16 621720 4402219
CEMETERY - 16 622181 4401790

R I P L E Y

12

Goose

725W

CHURCH

Beech Grove
Ch

KNIGHTSTOWN
QUAD
(1981)

Rush

INDIANA

BEECH
CEMETERY

963

1000N

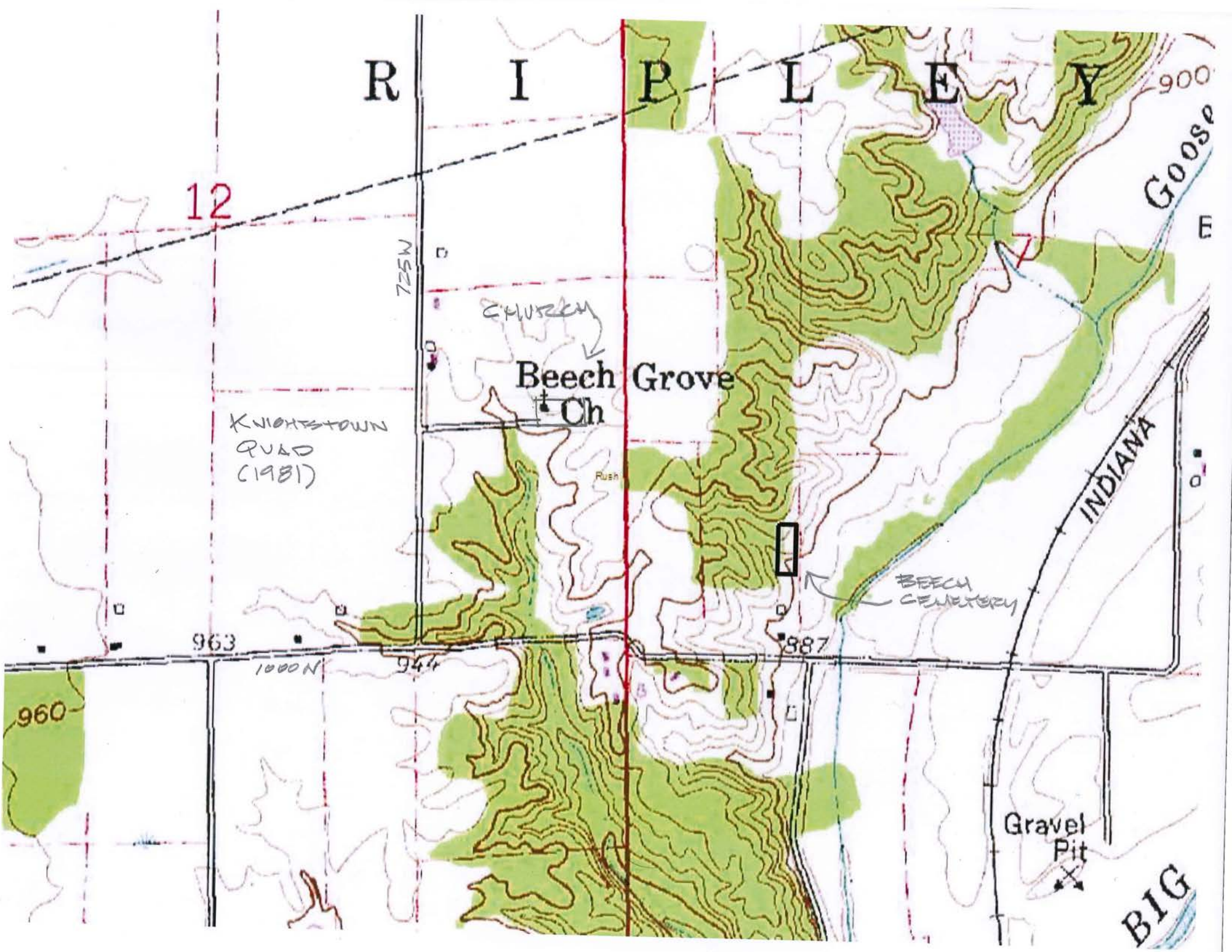
944

887

960

Gravel
Pit

BIG





The following signs are
intended to be placed in
the area of the building
to provide information
to the public. The signs
are to be placed in the
area of the building
to provide information
to the public.



BEECH CHURCH

Historical Record
THREE COLORED PEOPLE FROM NORTH CAROLINA
SETTLED HERE IN 1826. ON JUNE 18TH 1827 BY
A RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY A VOTE OF THE CHURCH
MEMBERS THEY CHOSE THE A.M.E. CHURCH AS THEIR
RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION.
ON OCTOBER 2ND 1848 THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE
OF THE A.M.E. CHURCH WAS ORGANIZED HERE.



















































WILLIAM
DODGE
M. 21.
JULY 18
DIED
DODGE
1850
AGED
6 1/2
12 1/2

WALTER JEFFERSON
DIED
MAY 10 1866
AGED
ABOUT 70

AMANDA CURTIS

DIED

FEB. 8, 1882:

AGED

46 Y. & 25 D.

1872
1873
LAVATTIA
ROBERTS
D



ELMWOOD THURSDAY
DIED
NOV. 5, 1869
ABOUT 70 YEARS

WIFE OF
J. TUTTLE
DIED
MAY 15, 1906
AGED
28y's 2mo 12d
KNIGHT & SONS



THE
MUSEUM
OF
THE
STATE
OF
MISSISSIPPI
DIED
MAY 18 1861





GOODIN

1877

1977

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 7/24/2018 Date of Pending List: 8/16/2018 Date of 16th Day: 8/31/2018 Date of 45th Day: 9/7/2018 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept Return Reject 9/4/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/
Criteria

Reviewer Jim Gabbert Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



Division of Historic Preservation & Archaeology • 402 W. Washington Street, W274 • Indianapolis, IN 46204-2739
Phone 317-232-1646 • Fax 317-232-0693 • dhpa@dnr.IN.gov • www.IN.gov/dnr/historic



July 19, 2018

Ms. Joy Beasley
Keeper of the National Register
National Register of Historic Places
Mail Stop 7228
1849 C St, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240



Re: Mount Pleasant Beech Church & Cemetery, Rush County, Indiana

Dear Ms. Beasley,

Enclosed is a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Mount Pleasant Beech Church & Cemetery, Rush County, Indiana. The Indiana Historic Preservation Review Board reviewed the application and voted to recommend its approval to the National Register of Historic Places.

The enclosed disc contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Mount Pleasant Beech Church & Cemetery, Rush County, Indiana to the National Register of Historic Places.

Please address any questions you or your staff may have about this nomination to my National Register staff members, Paul Diebold or Holly Tate.

Sincerely,

Cameron F. Clark
State Historic Preservation Officer

CFC:PCD:pcd

enclosure: nomination package