

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 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. 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 Dinsmore, James, House (Boundary Increase)  
other names/site number BE-13, BE-1223

## 2. Location

street & number 5655 Burlington Pike  n/a not for publication  
city or town Burlington  x vicinity  
state Kentucky code KY county Boone 015 zip code 41005

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.)

David L. Morgan Signature of certifying official, **David L. Morgan, SHPO** Date 10-6-05

### Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office

State or 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 commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

## 4. National Park Service Certification

- I, hereby certify that this 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): \_\_\_\_\_

Edson R. Beall Signature of Keeper Date of Action 11-25-05

James Dinsmore House (Boundary Increase)  
Boone County, KY

### 5. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

#### Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- x 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
1	0	sites
2	0	structures
0	2	objects
5	2	Total

#### Name of related multiple property listing

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

Historic and Architectural Resources of the County of Boone, Kentucky, 1789-1950.

#### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

13

### 6. Function or Use

#### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

agriculture/subsistence: processing  
agriculture/subsistence: storage  
agriculture/subsistence: animal facility  
agriculture/subsistence: field  
industry/processing/extraction:  
manufacturing facility  
domestic: single dwelling

#### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

recreation and culture: museum

### 7. Description

#### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Mid-19<sup>th</sup> century: Greek Revival

#### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation	limestone
roof	wood
walls	wood
other	wood

#### 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** x 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 a 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.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture

### Period of Significance

1839 – c. 1948

### Significant Dates

1842

1916

c. 1948

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

n/a

### Cultural Affiliation

n/a

### Architect/Builder

Brady, John (builder)

## 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.
- x 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  
# \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary location of additional data

- x State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository:  
Kentucky Heritage Council

James Dinsmore House (Boundary Increase)

Boone County, KY

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## 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property** 54 acres Lawrenceburg, IN, quadrangle

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing
1 16/	3
2	4
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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.)

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Margaret Warminski, Historic Preservation Consultant

organization Boone County Historic Preservation Review Board Date July 17, 2005

street & number 340 East Second Street telephone 859-581-2883

city or town Newport state KY zip code 41071-1702

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## Additional Documentation

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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)

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## Property Owner

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

name Dinsmore Homestead Foundation

street & number P.O. Box 453 telephone 859-586-6117

city or town Burlington state KY zip code 41005

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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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Boone County, Kentucky

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**10. Geographic Data**

**UTM Coordinates**

All points Zone 16

	Easting	Northing		Easting	Northing
Rising Sun Quad	5 689 700	4318 490	Lawrenceburg Quad	1 689 340	4319 540
	6 689 580	4318 340		2 689 600	4319 590
	7 689 230	4318 440		3 689 550	4319 140
	8 689 000	4318 630		4 689 660	4319 000
	9 689 420	4318 830		11 689 100	4318 840
	10 689 240	4318 790			

**Boundary description.** The Dinsmore House is located in western Boone County, Kentucky. The listed property and the property proposed for the boundary expansion include 50.94 acres, which extends along both sides of Burlington Pike (Kentucky Route 18). It includes parcels 018.00-00-014.01 and 018.00-00-014.04 in their entirety.

North of Burlington Pike, this boundary excludes a wooded nature preserve that surrounds the property on the north, east and west. South of Burlington Pike, it excludes a surrounding county park. The southwestern boundary jogs around a small parking lot that is part of this park. Please refer to map with boundary line drawn.

**Boundary justification.** This boundary includes all the acreage and buildings that were historically associated with the Dinsmore House. It includes sufficient land to enclose the house and outbuildings while excluding surrounding property now under different ownership.

The expanded boundary includes acreage along the south side of the road that is visually and historically consistent with the original nominated area. It includes buildings and sites that were an important part of the farming activities of the Dinsmore property during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. These include the farm manager's house; the tobacco barn, which was used to store one of the farm's major cash crops; the ruins of a barn used to house sheep, which were raised on the farm in large numbers; the site, now overgrown, of a rope walk that once operated on the property in the 1800s; and a corncrib and shed. Their inclusion will provide a more complete picture of the activities of a large, mixed farm of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> through early-20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The buildings in the expanded boundary are architecturally consistent with those in the original boundary. They are similar in form, scale, materials and methods of construction, using limestone or concrete foundations, weatherboard or weathered vertical siding, and tin roofs. They are well preserved, with little or no exterior alteration. All the buildings in the expanded boundary contribute to the property's significance.

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### 7. Statement of Description

**Summary.** This nomination proposes an increase in the boundary for the Dinsmore House (BE-13), listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. The National Register boundary currently includes only property on the north side of Burlington Pike (Kentucky Route 18). This consists of 22 acres of land, including the 1842 main house and 12 support resources. This proposed expansion would include the entire 54 acres presently associated with the property, which functions as a living history museum, with five additional contributing resources, as well as two small non-contributing resources placed in the originally-listed area since 1979. The area proposed for new listing (a separate site, BE-1223) lies south of KY 18, and is visually and historically related to the area north of the road, with buildings that are consistent in terms of use, scale and materials.

The Dinsmore farm is located in rural western Boone County, 6-1/2 miles west of Burlington, the county seat. It extends along the north and south sides of Burlington Pike (Kentucky Route 18), a two-lane rural road. The farm was established in 1839 and developed continuously through the early-20<sup>th</sup>-century. The farmhouse and outbuildings have construction dates from 1840s-1930s, have seen very little alteration since construction, and maintain a high degree of integrity. They are variously in good to poor condition. The buildings are surrounded by former farm fields that have reverted to woodland or mowed lawns. Surrounding the farmstead are woodlands and a passive recreation area.

The following resources, all located on the north side of KY 18, are included in the original National Register boundary:

1. **Main house.** The Dinsmore farm residence is a Greek Revival-style frame dwelling built in 1842. It is a two-story house on a rectangular center-passage plan with weatherboard siding and wood-shake roof. The symmetrical main facade faces south. It contains five regularly-spaced bays with a central doorway. The end bays are paired, with the middle bay centered over the entrance. The west elevation is blind. The foundation is regularly coursed, mortared, cut limestone ashlar. It is pierced by small, rectangular windows placed in line with the facade bays. The moderately pitched, side-gabled roof is covered with wood shingles. The house is of post-and-beam construction. The house was constructed by builder John Brady; construction was supervised by John Dinsmore, brother of James Dinsmore. A frame portico shelters the main entrance. It features paired, square columns and a roofline balustrade. Adjoining the east elevation is a lower, two-story wing added in 1916. The rear of the main block is covered by a shed-roofed gallery carried by square posts. The house features double-hung wood sashes with 6/6 panes, with louvered wood blinds. The trabeated front entrance contains an unglazed, five-panel wood door. It is framed by a rectangular transom and half-length sidelights above blind

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- panels. Tall brick chimneys, topped by corbeled courses, stand in the gable ends, rising from the roof surface. The house faces a broad lawn extending to the road. In front of the house is a small, informal garden of antique roses, planted by the original owners.
2. **Chicken house 1:** This is a rectangular frame structure sheathed in vertical wood siding, under a hipped roof covered with asphalt shingles.
  3. **Chicken house 2:** Similar in design to Chicken House 1; covered in narrow vertical wood siding.
  4. **Roseberry House:** Built c. 1890-1900 as a hog slaughtering shed, this is a one-story structure of rectangular footprint. The foundation has been rebuilt in concrete. The walls are covered with clapboards and vertical wood siding. A three-bay porch extends across the main (south) facade. Three chimneys rise from the side-gabled roof and three chimneys. The Roseberry House is presently in fair condition and is not in use.
  5. **Smokehouse:** Built in the 1840s, this is a rectangular single-pen log structure, built of logs joined with V-notching.
  6. **Garage:** This is a front-gabled frame structure covered with vertical siding and covered by an asphalt shingle roof. It was built c. 1916-1918 to house the family's first car.
  7. **Privy:** Fiberglass port-o-let, installed late-20<sup>th</sup> century. (New non-contributing Structure).
  8. **Privy:** Fiberglass port-o-let, installed late-20<sup>th</sup> century. (New non-contributing Structure).
  9. **Cook cabin:** Located behind the main house, this rectangular, single-pen log structure was on the property when the Dinsmores bought it in 1839. The building rests on a mortared rubblestone foundation. The logs, joined with V-notching, retain traces of whitewash; some of the logs are beginning to decay. The west elevation, which faces the house, contains a batten door and a small, 6/6 window. A stout stone chimney anchors the north wall. A side-gabled, corrugated metal roof covers the structure. The cook house was used as a kitchen until 1916, when the kitchen addition to the house was constructed.
  10. **Equipment shed:** Built early-20<sup>th</sup> century, this front-gabled, weatherboarded structure rests on a concrete foundation with a tin roof. The lean-to appears to be an early addition.
  11. **Privy:** This frame privy was built c. 1930 to replace an earlier structure on the same site that collapsed. It contains four holes: two for adults and two for children. It features a concrete foundation, weatherboard siding and a tin roof.
  12. **Carriage house/icehouse:** Built c. 1840-1850, this is a one-story structure of timber-frame construction. It is built into a hill slope and rests on a drylaid fieldstone foundation. The walls are covered in weatherboard and vertical metal siding. The front facade contains double batten doors. The front-gabled roof is covered in corrugated metal. Built into the lower level of the carriage house is an icehouse with rear access from the hillside.
  13. **Wine house:** Built in 1870, this is narrow, one-story frame edifice built into a steep hill slope, with the foundation exposed at the rear. The upper portion of the foundation is composed of

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coursed limestone ashlar, the lower portion of fieldstone. Board-and-batten and weatherboard siding cover the walls. The roof is gabled.

14. **Cemetery:** On top of a hill is the family cemetery, which is surrounded by a drylaid fieldstone wall. It contains approximately forty family burials dating from the 1840s to the mid-20th century, as well as the graves of slaves.
15. **Horse barn:** Located on the wooded hillside north of the house, this is a front-gabled, rectangular structure of timber-frame construction. It rests on fieldstone piers and is covered in vertical wood siding.

The currently-listed area contains four historic landscape features that were not counted:

- a. **Stone carriage step.** Rectangular slab of cut sandstone set behind main house
- b. **Stone carriage step.** Rectangular slab of cut sandstone, set behind main driveway
- c. **Low stone wall:** Low fieldstone wall located beside cook cabin
- d. **Stone walkway.** A flagstone walk leads from the cook cabin to the main house. It was used by servants to carry food from the cabin to the house in all kinds of weather.

The following resources, located on the south side of Burlington Pike, were not included in the original National Register boundary.

16. **Brady House** (farm manager's house: BE-1223): This house was built c. 1920-1930 as a residence for the homestead's farm manager. It is a one-story, wood-frame bungalow of simple design. It features a forward-facing gable roof and an attached, gabled porch. The house is presently vacant, in fair condition, and has a small parking lot nearby.
17. **Foundation of sheep barn:** The foundation of the former sheep barn, which was constructed at an unknown date in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, can still be seen on the south side of the property. Remnants of the limestone piers and concrete footers remain in place.
18. **Shed:** Front-gabled shed of utilitarian design, clad in corrugated metal siding. It appears to date from the mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century.
19. **Granary:** South of the barn stands a circular metal granary with conical roof. It appears to date from the early-to-mid-20th century.
20. **Tobacco barn:** Built in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the tobacco barn is a rectangular timber-frame structure under a side-gabled roof of moderate pitch that is covered with raised-seam metal. The walls are covered with weathered vertical siding. A hipped-roof shed, added at an unknown date, wraps around the south and west sides of the barn. The barn rests on piers of stacked fieldstone. It is currently used for storage.



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Dinsmore House Inventory					
Number	Name	Type	Materials	Date	Evaluation
1	Dinsmore House: BE-15	Building	Timber frame	1842	C
2	Chicken house 1	Structure	Wood frame	Early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	C
3	Chicken house 2	Structure	Wood frame	Early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	C
4	Roseberry House	Building	Wood frame	c. 1890-1900	C
5	Smokehouse	Structure	Log	mid-19 <sup>th</sup> c.	C
6	Garage	Building	Wood frame	1916-1918	C
7	Privy	Object	Fiberglas	Late 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	NC
8	Privy	Object	Fiberglas	Late 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	NC
9	Cook cabin (kitchen)	Building	Log	early 19 <sup>th</sup> c.	C
10	Equipment shed	Structure	Wood frame	mid-20th c.	C
11	Privy	Object	Wood frame	c. 1930	C
12	Carriage house/icehouse	Building	Timber frame	c. 1840-1850	C
13	Wine house	Building	?	c. 1870	C
14	Cemetery	Site	n/a	c. 1840	C
15	Horse barn	Building	Timber frame	19 <sup>th</sup> c.	C
16	Brady House (farm manager house): BE-1223	Building	Wood frame	c. 1920-1930	C
17	Foundation of sheep barn	Ruin	n/a	19 <sup>th</sup> c.	C
18	Shed	Structure	Metal	Mid-20 <sup>th</sup> c.	C
19	Granary	Structure	Metal	Mid-20th c.	C
20	Tobacco barn	Building	Timber frame	Early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	C

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## 8. Statement of Significance

**Summary.** This nomination proposes a boundary increase for the Dinsmore House (BE-13), which was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. This proposed expansion area (a separate site, BE-1223) takes in land and buildings on the south side of KY 18, aka Burlington Pike, that have been part of the farm since its establishment in 1839, but were excluded from the 1979 boundary. All resources in the area proposed for expansion contribute to the Dinsmore farmstead's significance. The inclusion of these properties, which include a c. 1920-1930 farm manager's house, an early 20<sup>th</sup> century tobacco barn, and the foundations of a 19<sup>th</sup>-century sheep barn, will provide a more complete picture of the Dinsmore farming operations of the late-19<sup>th</sup> through mid-20th centuries.

The Dinsmore House meets Criterion A and is significant in the Area of Agriculture. It is an example of a large progressive diversified Boone County farm of the mid-19th through the early-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It has been evaluated in the context of "Agriculture in Boone County, c. 1789 to c. 1950." The Dinsmore House is unusual among the county's large farms in that it combined the field crops and livestock production common to farms of comparable size in the county, with a strong emphasis on specialty crops, particularly in its first three decades of operation. It is the only known farm in the county where wine grapes were raised in the mid-19th century—an era when the Ohio Valley ranked as one of the nation's leading wine producers. The Dinsmores also raised osier willows in an era when the raising and shipping of basket willows was an important part of the economy of western Boone County river towns. When these specialty crops proved to be largely unprofitable, the farm switched to more market oriented products, which it maintained into the mid-20th century.

The Dinsmore House retains an exceptional group of well-preserved agricultural outbuildings related to the main activities on the farm. The farm is unique in the county in that it presents a picture of a farmstead that was developed continuously from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> through the early-20<sup>th</sup> centuries, yet free of noncontributing modern farm structures. Because farming activities at the Homestead declined rapidly after 1920 and ceased altogether in the late 1940s, there was no need to add new buildings. Through the Dinsmore family's long tenure, and their careful stewardship of the property, most of the outbuildings were preserved even though they had outlived their farming utility. The house's period of significance extends from 1839, when the farm was established, to c. 1948, when farming operations finally ceased.

### **Historic Context: Agriculture in Boone County, c. 1789 to c. 1950**

**Overview.** Agriculture was the foundation of Boone County's economy from the days of settlement through the mid-20th century and remains important today. Little is yet known about the farming

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practices of the settlement era in northern Kentucky. Settlers were likely subsistence farmers who produced for home consumption, raising livestock and growing corn; they may also have supplemented their income by logging.

In the early-19<sup>th</sup> century, a surplus economy developed. With improvements in river, rail and highway transportation offering farmers ready access to markets, Boone County farming gained a new market orientation. Perishable produce and dairy products were shipped to Cincinnati and Covington, and hay sold to area stables. Grains such as flour and corn were converted into more durable products such as flour and whiskey to be shipped greater distances. Cattle and hogs were driven to the river and shipped by ferry or steamboat to market or slaughter; they were also sold at auctions. Census data indicate that during the 19th century the county's land values ranked close to the statewide average, comparable with other Outer Bluegrass counties in Kentucky, such as Clark and Montgomery, and yet generally higher than those of other rural river counties with comparable soils and topography, such as Gallatin or Pendleton.

Boone County, like much of Kentucky, has a tradition of small, family-run farms (see Farm Size table below). As the county's population began to increase steadily after 1920, farm size dropped accordingly, while the total number of farmsteads rose. Larger farms included outside help, which may at various times have included slaves, laborers or tenants. With slavery ending in 1865, tenant farming increased gradually during the late-19th and early-20th centuries. In the early-20th century the need for farm labor began to diminish as tractors came into use.

As is typical of the state, Boone County agriculture historically was diversified. Many farms included row crops, a variety of livestock, a dairy herd and a tobacco patch (See "Specialty Crops" below). The dominance of corn, tobacco and hay in the county during the late 19th century is attested by the 1883 *Kentucky State Gazetteer and Business Directory*, which reported that the town of Union shipped hogs, corn, hay, tobacco and poultry (Gazetteer, 1883).

The county's varied physiographic regions lent themselves to different farming practices: mixed farming in the gently rolling land to the east, stock raising and small-scale tobacco cultivation in the rugged Eden Shale hills to the south, and intensive truck farming in the rich soils and mild microclimate of the Ohio River bottomlands.

Chicken raising on a small scale was very popular throughout the county during the mid-20th century but declined after World War II, possibly due to the rise of corporate egg farms which rendered small operations less profitable. Sheep raising was also widespread, especially on the steep hillsides of southern Boone County, but also declined by the mid-20th century; local tradition says losses from

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dogs made it unprofitable. Farmers raised vegetables and fruit in the rich Ohio River bottomlands of northern Boone County, which enjoyed some protection from frost due to their proximity to the Ohio River (See "Orchard fruit."). By the mid-20th century, rising labor costs and the growth of agribusiness resulted in increased dependency on major cash crops: predominantly tobacco, corn, soybeans, and dairy and beef cattle.

During the mid-19th century, Boone County outranked all other northern Kentucky river counties, even counties with comparable soils and topography, in total acreage under cultivation, improved land in farms, and number of farms.

Improved acres of land, in farms			
County	1850 <sup>1</sup>	1860 <sup>2</sup>	1870 <sup>3</sup> (cultivated acres)
Boone	92,910	94,210	105,527
Campbell	27,009	42,203	44,227
Gallatin	25,576	38,181	45,266
Grant	40,554	---	---
Kenton	45,616	41,454	66,742

**Agricultural practices.**

Farm size. Boone County's average farm size fluctuated during the late-19th and early-20th centuries as the county's population increased or decreased. In 1880—the first year recorded by the agricultural census—the average farm size was 121 acres, close to the Kentucky average of 129 acres (*Tenth Census*). The largest number of farms fell in the 50-99 acre (301) and 100-499 acre (549) categories. Few occupied either end of the scale: farms under 3 acres (0), and over 1,000 acres (1) (*ibid.*).

By 1890, the average had dropped to 99 acres, as compared to a statewide average of 119 (*Eleventh Census*). In 1900, an era when total farms were increasing in the county and average farm size was dropping steadily, the county's average farm was 93.4 acres according to the census of agriculture; the state average was 93.7. The Dinsmore Farm was one of only 137 of the county's 1,598 farms that fell within the 175-159 acre range. By 1910 the county's population had dipped by 2,000, and the number of farms had dropped slightly, to 1,540; accordingly, the average farm acreage increased slightly, to

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<sup>1</sup> J.D.B. DeBow, *The Seventh Census of the United States: 1850, 1853.*

<sup>2</sup> Joseph C.G. Kennedy, *Agriculture of the United States in 1860, 1864.*

<sup>3</sup> Francis A. Walker, *The Statistics of the Wealth and Industry of the United States, 1872.*

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94.6 (*Thirteenth Census*). In 1920, with the county's population on the increase, the total number of farms jumped to 1,831 and average farm size dropped to 82.6 acres—the lowest value recorded by the agricultural census to date (*Fourteenth Census*). Only 153 of the 1,831 farms in the county fell within the 175-259 acre range in 1920 (*ibid.*).

Farm characteristics. Small farms (less than 50 acres) in Boone County were characterized by dependence on cash crops such as tobacco, corn or hay, with livestock raised primarily for home consumption. These small farms typically consisted of a multipurpose stock barn, a corncrib, and several domestic outbuildings. Due to the consolidation of smaller farmsteads into larger holdings, relatively few small farmsteads have survived intact; this provides a skewed picture of the county's agricultural history. Good examples, with intact clusters of outbuildings, include the Sam Delph Farm (BE-87; NR, 1988) and the Clements Farm (BE-1034). The tight scale of these farmsteads, with a cluster of outbuildings in close proximity to a modest farmhouse, strongly evokes small-scale farming on the steep uplands of western Boone County during the second half of the 19th century.

Middling farms (50 to 200 acres) derived their income both from cash crops and livestock production. Larger farmsteads include more specialized outbuildings, with one or more stock barns, a tobacco barn, one or two corncribs, a milk house and a silo. The Sidney Gaines Farm (BE-63), with a stock barn beside the house and a tobacco barn short distance down the road, represents a middling farm of the late-19<sup>th</sup> century. The Robert Grant Farm (BE-1158) and the McGlasson Farm (BE-782) are good examples from the early-20<sup>th</sup> century.

Larger farms, such as the Dinsmore's, which included over two hundred acres, often featured livestock production on a large scale as well as extensive row or specialty crops. Many specialized in growing imported, blooded stock with prized bloodlines. These farms often include a second stock barn, one or two tobacco barns, several corncribs, two or more silos, several specialized outbuildings, and one or more tenant houses.

**Specialty crops in Boone County: a statistical overview.**

Tobacco. Boone County was a major tobacco producer from the mid-19th to the late-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Settlers from the Carolinas and Virginia were accustomed to tobacco-growing, and the county's major soil types are well suited to cultivation of leaf. In addition, in the days before rail transportation, the Ohio River facilitated the shipment of the heavy, cumbersome tobacco hogsheads; thus the river counties from Mason east to Trimble were all large producers of tobacco (Axton).

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The 1883 *Atlas of Boone, Kenton and Campbell Counties* lists numerous local tobacco dealers and merchants. It also indicates tobacco processing facilities across the county, such as those of Daniel Bedinger near Richwood and Thomas Kennedy in Hamilton (Lake).

Agricultural census data indicate that tobacco consistently led the "special crops" category, which also included potatoes, vegetables, cane and syrup. According to the 1850 census, 298,152 pounds of tobacco were produced--a total that doubled in 1860, to 569,649 pounds. The post-Civil War years saw an enormous increase in tobacco-growing: by 1890 production had reached 3,769 acres and 3,590,735 pounds. In 1910 tobacco was far and above the most productive "special crop"; while others in the category ranged from 46 to 995 acres, tobacco topped the list at 3,304 acres and 3,537,996 pounds. In 1920 tobacco dominated the category of "miscellaneous crops" (which replaced the "special crops" category), totaling 4,293 acres and 3,737,237 pounds. The large numbers of tobacco barns and stripping sheds still in place on Boone County farms, including to the Dinsmore House, attest to the crop's dominant role in the agricultural economy until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Pounds of tobacco produced (statistics for surrounding Ohio River counties included for comparative purposes):

<b>Pounds of tobacco produced</b>			
<b>County</b>	<b>1850<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>1860<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>1870<sup>6</sup></b>
Boone	298,152	569,649	279,740
Campbell	23,108	40,520	76,568
Gallatin	198,095	511,555	157,050
Kenton	125,440	384,485	360,983

Orchard fruit. As mentioned earlier, truck farming flourished in the fertile bottomlands of Boone County's North Bend Bottoms, sometimes called the "fruit belt," beginning in the early 20th century. The vegetables, fruit and berries grown on these farmsteads found a ready market in Covington and Cincinnati. Parlor Grove Farm (BE-111) on River Road (Kentucky 8) west of Taylorsport offers a unique window into this agricultural specialty during the early to mid-20th century. In 1903 the property, formerly a resort, was purchased by farmer Charles O. Hempfling. He leveled the "giant beech trees" that shaded the property and planted the land in "early vegetables" and orchards (Conrad). He eventually became, in the words of the *Recorder*, "the most widely known and biggest producer of

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<sup>4</sup> DeBow.  
<sup>5</sup> Kennedy.  
<sup>6</sup> Walker.

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apples in this section of Kentucky" (Historical Edition). The orchard was further described as "one of the most productive...in this section of the country" (ibid.).

Hempfling became known for his Big Red apples, which he "marketed by the thousands of bushels through brokers handling fancy eating fruit. (ibid.). He is also credited with introducing Red Delicious apples to the state. In addition to fruit growing, Hempfling and his son Liston Hempfling also maintained a small Holstein herd, averaging 20 head (ibid.). Parlor Grove Farm was determined eligible for National Register listing by the Keeper of the National Register in 2004.

Several farms along River Road continued to raise homegrown vegetables and fruit, which they sold directly to the public, until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. At present, only the Hempfling Farm (BE-016) retains a significant grouping of historic outbuildings. Still present on the farm are a 1926 timber-frame tobacco barn with monitor roof, a concrete block milkhouse and a 1912 timber frame dairy barn, along with a silo and a slat corncrib. Six barrels of cider are noted in the 1871 household inventory of the Dinsmore House, indicating that apples were raised on the farm during the 1860s (Dinsmore inventory).

Value of orchard products produced			
County	1850 <sup>7</sup>	1860 <sup>8</sup>	1870 <sup>9</sup>
Boone	\$12,894	\$14,496	\$10,336
Campbell	\$1,192	\$5,163	\$30,374
Gallatin	\$1,135	\$139	\$370
Kenton	\$8,883	\$12,700	\$37,510

Willows. Basketmaking, using riverbank willows, was a cottage industry in the western Boone County river towns of Belleview and Petersburg during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Little research on this specialized industry has been done to date; the activities of the Dinsmores are the best-documented so far.

When James Dinsmore settled in Boone County in 1839, he did so in part with the intention of raising willows for basket-making, among other crops. He opened a basket factory on the Belleview riverfront, which remained in operation until 1872. The Dinsmores raised osier willows on their farm

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<sup>7</sup> De Bow.

<sup>8</sup> Kennedy.

<sup>9</sup> Walker.

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and also purchased them from neighbors. The 1879 edition of the *Kentucky State Gazetteer and Business Directory* indicates that a basket factory was in operation in Belleview. Four willow dealers and a basket maker did business in Petersburg as of 1865 (Hodgman), and the 1879 edition notes that the town shipped “whiskey, live stock, grain and willows” (Gazetteer, 1879).

The Dinsmore basket factory was never profitable, and it was closed by Julia Dinsmore when she assumed control of the farm in 1872.

Wine. Little research has been done to date in the history of viticulture in Boone County. The nearby county of Campbell, however, offers a glimpse into the wine industry in northern Kentucky in the mid-19th century.

During the 1870s, Campbell County led the state in the production of wine and vegetables. This was largely due to the activities of the German settlements in the Four Mile Valley, which concentrated on viticulture and truck farming (Gordon). “With its immigrant German population and close proximity to the Cincinnati market, Campbell County developed an economy quite different from the remainder of the state” (ibid.). Most hillside farms were small, and intensively farmed. By 1850 Campbell County was the state’s largest producer of wine, much of which was produced in the Four Mile area.

Building on the achievements of Cincinnati’s Nicholas Longworth, the Ohio Valley had by mid-century emerged as the nation’s premier wine-producing region. In 1860, Kentucky was the third largest producer behind Ohio and California, and Campbell County accounted for two-fifths of the state’s total output. Campbell and the three southwestern Ohio counties of Hamilton, Clermont, and Brown accounted for one-third of the nation’s entire wine output in 1860. (ibid.)

After an incurable blight attacked vineyards in the 1860s and 1870s, enterprising Campbell County farmers switched to a wide variety of root crops, vegetable and orchard projects, much of which was sold in the Cincinnati market (ibid.). The rapid decline of the wine industry in northern Kentucky in the 1870s is attested by census data. In 1860, 5,508 gallons of wine were produced in Boone County and 74,529 in Campbell. By 1870, these totals had dropped to 207 for Boone and 3,443 for Campbell. By 1880, wine was no longer included as a category in the agricultural census.

It is not clear from household records exactly when the Dinsmores ceased raising wine grapes. The wine house was constructed in 1870, and eight barrels of wine, of unknown vintage, were included in the household inventory conducted after James Dinsmore’s death (Inventory).



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Gallons of wine produced			
County	1850 <sup>10</sup>	1860 <sup>11</sup>	1870 <sup>12</sup>
Boone	221	5,508	207
Campbell	2,471	74,529	3,443
Gallatin	30	2,762	---
Kenton	968	13,427	13,598

By 1880, wine production in Kentucky was no longer enumerated by the agricultural census (DeBow).

**Farming activities at the Dinsmore House.**

Farm acreage. Boone County tax records and U.S. Federal census data for the period 1840 to 1920 record the development of the farmstead and its change over time. The earliest available tax record for the property, in 1841, lists 264 acres valued at \$2,640 (1840 Boone County tax records). The family owned no slaves at the time (1840 census).

By 1850, the farm had more than doubled in size, to 650 acres valued at \$6,500. The family now owned 11 slaves, included four older than 16 (1850 census, 1850 tax records). The farm reached its maximum size before the Civil War: the 1860 tax duplicate lists 870 acres valued at \$18,400 (1860 tax records). By 1870, James Dinsmore's real property, including the farm, was valued at \$19,000 (1870 census). The farm acreage dropped precipitously after the war. As of 1871, it included 371 acres, valued at \$5,563 (1871 tax records). The farm acreage remained constant until 1920: the last year available for which tax records are available.

Crops and livestock. As of 1871, census records indicate the farm included three horses and two cows (1870 census). James Dinsmore's 1871 household inventory indicates that the farm included 34 sheep and 43 goats at the time of his death. The inventory also included eight barrels of wine and six barrels of cider. It noted that the farm carried a mortgage, with three notes due (Dinsmore household inventory).

Under Julia Dinsmore's tenure, beginning in 1872, the homestead's productivity, and its land value, gradually increased as she pursued a greater market orientation for the farm. By 1872, for example, its value had increased to \$9,200 (1872 tax records). Tax records for that year indicated that the farm had three horses and ten cows. Julia Dinsmore also raised sheep, during this period, which are not

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<sup>10</sup> DeBow.

<sup>11</sup> Kennedy.

<sup>12</sup> Walker.

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enumerated in the census records for the homestead. It is not clear whether or not sheep were raised under James Dinsmore's tenure, because they are not included in the farm's tax assessments.

By 1880, the farm's livestock included five horses, 16 cows and 42 hogs. Row crops included 2,400 pounds of tobacco, 40 tons of hay, 1,200 bushels of corn and 147 bushels of wheat (1880 tax records).

The Dinsmore farm acreage was valued at \$10,000 in 1890. Horses, sheep, and cows were valued at \$680. Field crops included 3,000 pounds of tobacco, 21 acres of wheat and two acres of corn. The property also included 10 acres of meadows and 15 acres of woodland (1890 tax records).

By 1899, as the nation emerged from a mid-decade recession, the Dinsmore acreage was valued at \$10,940. Stock included four horses valued at \$125, 34 hogs at \$170, 11 cows at \$250. Row crops included 3? (illegible) pounds of tobacco and 59 tons of hay. Three acres were planted in tobacco, 18 in corn and 25 in wheat. Meadowland included 40 acres (1899 tax records).

By the 1940s, the Dinsmore farm was in serious decline. An undated, hand-drawn map of the farmstead, produced in the 1940s, noted the condition of fences on the property. Most were rated as either "fair" or "needs work." The map shows the Brady House, the "new" tobacco barn, and the sheep barn, which has since been reduced to a ruin. It also noted that the main house was vacant.

**Large farms in Boone County.** Several good examples of large farms, few of which are still used for agriculture, were identified through a comprehensive survey of the county, conducted from 1993 to 1996. Because farms are dynamic systems whose nature is change, no farm represents one temporal period. Instead, they typically include a series of buildings built over several decades, as activities changed and buildings were expanded or replaced. A "good" example of a large farm would be defined as one that retains a group of intact outbuildings related to the activities conducted during the farm's period of significance, surrounded by a rural landscape, with a minimum of intrusive new structures.

The 200-acre Blankenkaker-Riley Farm (BE-396) near Union, listed in the National Register in 2000, is one of the county's best-preserved and best-documented farm complexes. For most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the farm's primary activities were dairying and the raising of corn and tobacco. Like the Dinsmore House, the Blankenkaker-Riley Farm benefited from preservation-minded owners who maintained and documented the historic farm structures. These include a mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century timber frame stock barn, an early-20<sup>th</sup>-century dairy barn, and a tenant house. Smaller structures include a corncrib, buggy house, milkhouse, and combination smokehouse/cellar. The main house is a 1913 Colonial Revival residence with log ell.

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Prior to its demolition in 1996, the Harper-Rucker Farm (BE-117) near Hebron was one of the county's most intact large farms of the early-through-mid-20th centuries. Like the Blankenbeker-Riley Farm, its economy was based on corn, tobacco and dairying. It included two large, 19th-century stock barns, a mid-20th-century gambrel-roofed dairy barn, two milk houses, several silos and corncribs, and a tenant house.

Several good examples of large farms of the 19<sup>th</sup>- through mid-20th centuries can be found in western Boone County, which remains largely rural despite encroaching suburbanization. One of the finest, the Benjamin Gaines Farm (BE-75) near Idlewild, was honored with National Register listing in 1989. The Gaines Farm presents an unusually complete picture of 19<sup>th</sup>-century large-scale farming, including many specialized small structures such as turkey houses that have disappeared from other farms of comparable size.

While some of its smaller outbuildings have been lost, the Reverend James A. Kirtley Farm (BE-67) near Petersburg retains two large, 19th-century stock barns and a mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century gambrel dairy barn, along with a drive-through corncrib. These sizable outbuildings suggest the scale of the farming activities that once took place there. Because the main house has been extensively altered, the survey did not recommend the Kirtley Farm for National Register listing.

The Schwenke Farm (BE-672) in East Bend Bottoms, which envelops the mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century Harris Farm (BE-314), retains an impressive collection of mid-19<sup>th</sup>- through mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century outbuildings. These include an icehouse, side-drive and three-bay corncribs, a 19th-century stock/dairy barn, an early-20<sup>th</sup>-century dairy barn, a mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century tobacco barn, and a chicken house. The integrity of this still-active farmstead, however, has been diminished by the loss of the Harris main house, as well as the addition of two modern residences and several large, modern farm structures such as corn dryers and grain bins.

**Historical Development of the Dinsmore Property.** The Dinsmore farm was established by James Dinsmore and his uncle, Silas Dinsmoor (who continued to use the original spelling of the family name). James Dinsmore was a Louisiana sugar planter, and his uncle was a Scottish Presbyterian of New Hampshire. Disenchanted with sugar farming and suffering from health problems in the sultry Southern climate, James relocated to Kentucky, in part to be near his beloved uncle. In 1839 the Dinsmores purchased 700 acres of land between the Ohio River and Middle Creek in Boone County's Belleview Precinct. Their house was completed in 1842.

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James Dinsmore originally purchased the land to grow grapes and manufacture wine, for which the ground was well suited. Disease, however, destroyed the wine industry in the Ohio Valley in the 1860s. Although the land was not well suited for general agriculture, James improvised and carried on various specialized activities. He planted a variety of willows used by basket makers and opened a basket factory in the town of Belleview to supply the Ohio River trade. Timothy hay was grown for the Cincinnati livery stable market. Hams were later produced in volume. The Dinsmores also planted orchards and raised sheep.

James and Martha Dinsmore had three daughters, Isabella, Julia and Susan. Isabella married and had two daughters, Martha (Patty) and Sarah (Sally). Susan died at age 15 in a boating accident. Following the deaths of Silas and James, the farm passed to Julia in 1872. "Miss Julia," one of Boone County's most famous women, successfully managed the large farm for 54 years until her death at age 93. She traveled the world and raised her two nieces on her own. She was also a published poet who kept a detailed journal of her life on the farm. Farming diminished after her death and virtually ceased after 1948.

One of Julia Dinsmore's nieces—no doubt inspired by her aunt's example—became Arizona's first congresswoman. Isabella Selmes Greenway (1886-1953) served in the Seventy-Fourth Congress from 1933 to 1937 and also served on the Democratic National Committee. She was a homesteader, cattle rancher and entrepreneur who owned an airline and founded a resort hotel in Tucson. She is buried in the family cemetery.

The Dinsmore House remained in the hands of the family and their relatives over the course of five generations, from 1839 to 1988. From 1926 to 1988, however, it was managed from afar by a series of housekeepers and tenants who oversaw the day-to-day work. Through the Dinsmore family's long tenure, the house and its furnishings, the many outbuildings, and the extensive grounds were carefully preserved.

In 1988 the home and approximately 30 acres were purchased by the Dinsmore House Foundation and opened as a living history museum. The buildings have been preserved by the Foundation, and their rural setting, adjoining Middle Creek county park and Dinsmore Woods Nature Preserve, remains unspoiled.

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**Additional Documentation**

**Photograph Key**

Name of property: Dinsmore House (same for all photographs)

Location: 5655 Burlington Pike, Burlington, Boone County, Kentucky (same for all photographs)

Photographer: Margaret Warminski (same for all photographs)

Date taken: January 2005 (same for all photographs)

Location of negatives: Boone County Planning Commission, Burlington, Kentucky (same for all photographs)

View: Façade (south elevation) of Dinsmore House (#1), with 1916 addition at right. House is part of original nominated area. Looking northwest.

Photo 1

View: View of Roseberry House (#4), log smokehouse (#5) and garage (#6). All three are part of original nominated area. Looking northeast.

Photo 2

View: View of Dinsmore family cemetery (#14) and surrounding stone wall. Cemetery is part of original nominated area. Looking southeast.

Photo 3

View: General view of expanded boundary area on south side of road. Looking east toward tobacco barn (#20), granary (#19) and shed (#18).

Photo 4

View: View of front (west) elevation and shed addition of tobacco barn (#20). Looking east.

Photo 5

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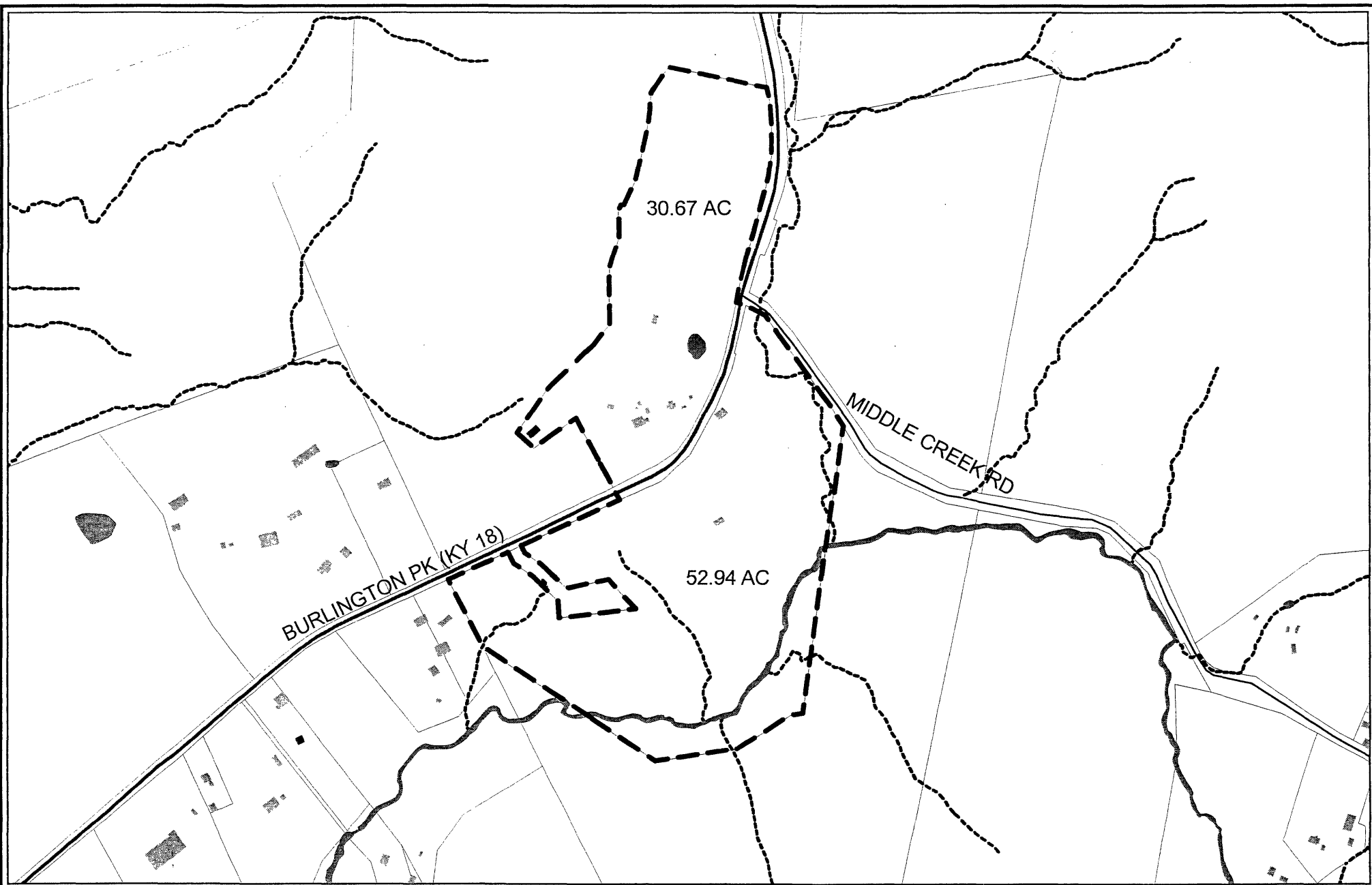
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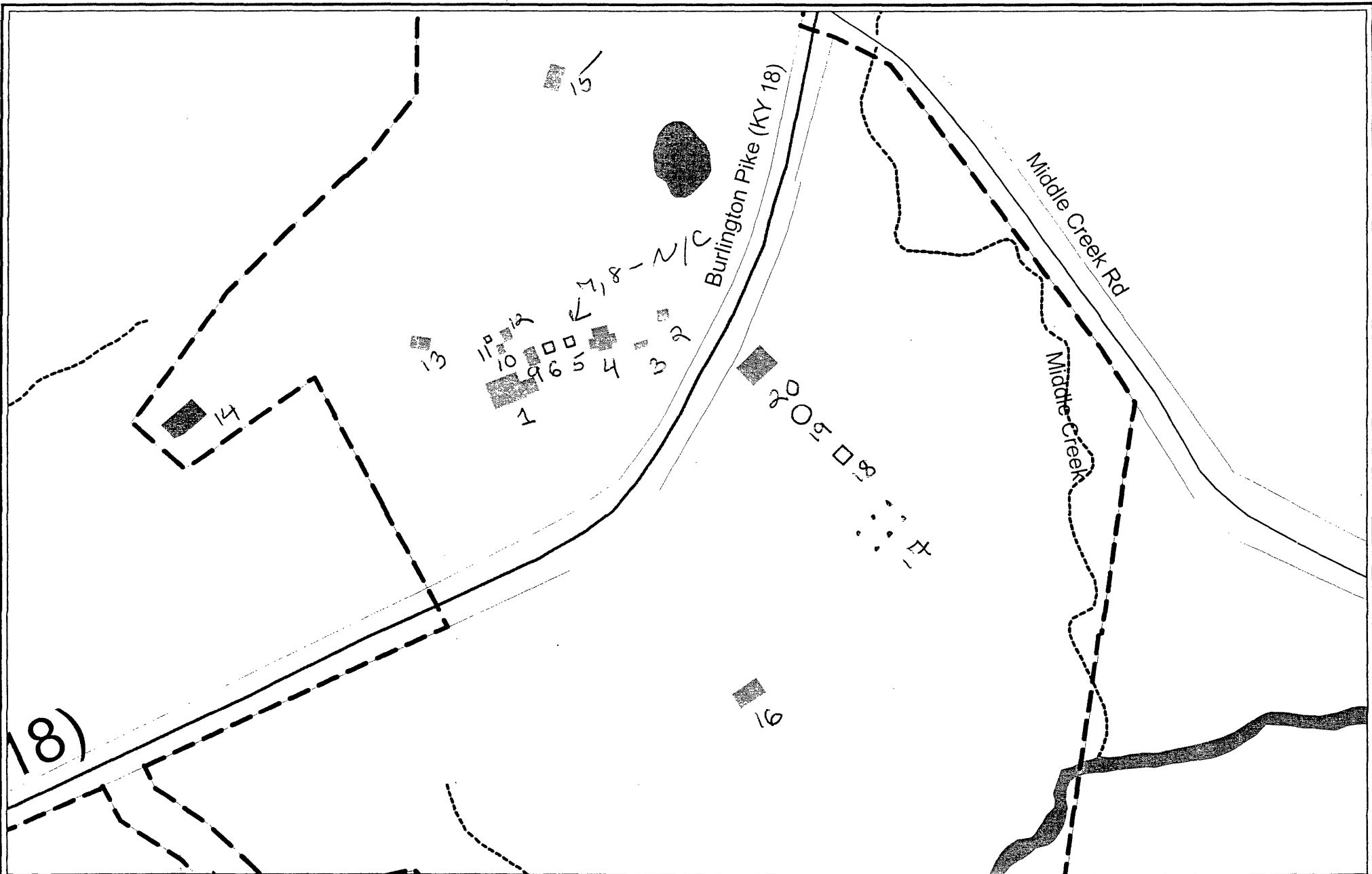
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5655 Burlington Pike, Boone County, KY  
Parcels 018.00-00-014.01 & 018.00-00-014.04



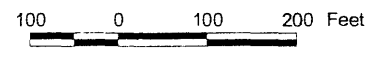
Produced by the  
Boone County Planning Commission  
March 2, 2005







Dinsmore House (Be-13 & Be-1223)  
 5655 Burlington Pike, Boone County, KY  
 Parcels 018.00-00-014.01 & 018.00-00-014.04



Produced by the  
 Boone County Planning Commission  
 March 2, 2005

