

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received MAR 13 1987

date entered APR 9 1987

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic SCEARCE HOUSE

and or common Peacham

2. Location

street & number McCracken Pike (north side; 3 1/2 miles N.W. of Versailles) not for publication

city, town Versailles vicinity of

state Kentucky code 021 county Woodford code 239

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Richard and Elizabeth Pratt

street & number Route #1, Box 263

city, town Versailles vicinity of state Kentucky

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Woodford County Courthouse

street & number Main Street

city, town Versailles state Kentucky

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title KY Historic Resources Inventory (WD-159) has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date June 1986 federal state county local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Council

city, town Frankfort state Kentucky

7. Description

Condition
 excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one
 unaltered
 altered

Check one
 original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Scarce House is a one and one-half story, eight bay (originally seven) brick house situated in the gently rolling terrain of the Inner Bluegrass Region in central Woodford County, Kentucky. It is located approximately three and one-half miles northwest of the county seat, Versailles, on the northeast side of McCracken Pike. The house faces southeastward and sits on a rise between two water sources (Glenn's creek and an intermittent stream draining into it) at the end of a long gravel drive that was formerly a farm road (see USGS map). Part of a 610-acre farmstead when it was constructed ca. 1829, the Scarce House's immediate setting remains rural and largely intact. Much of the original acreage has been sold in recent years, however; some of it is now devoted to row crops, with the majority in pasture to serve Kentucky's thoroughbred horse industry.

The original portion of the Scarce House, constructed ca. 1829, consists of a one and one-half story central section of five bays flanked at each end by wings of one bay and one story (photo #1). The wings are not as deep as the central section of the house and are placed along its gable ends so as to be recessed from both the front and rear elevations (photos #1, 2 & 3). Also of original construction is a two-bay service ell of one and one-half stories that is located at the western end of the rear of the house. A shed-roofed porch, supported by four chamfered posts and with simple balustrade, is situated at the back of the house along the ell's eastern wall. Located behind the ell is a one-bay, one-story unit of brick which represents an early (ca. 1840) addition to the original (photos #4 & 5). All original walls are laid in Flemish bond and retain approximately 95 percent of the original tooled mortar. The bond of the ell addition is five-course common. The foundation is coursed, mortared, worked limestone, and projects slightly beyond the brick walls to form a water-table. The dwelling contains six interior gable-end chimneys; they are located at each end of the central section of the main block, at the outer end of each wing, and the northern end walls of the ell and its addition. The roof is gable.

Two recent (since 1978) additions have been made to the building: both are frame, covered in beaded weatherboard and house modern bathrooms. One of these additions is placed laterally along side the eastern wing and relates to it in size, height and in being recessed as the wing does to the central section of the house (photos #2 & 3). The other addition is situated behind the western wing (photos #5 & 6). Both rest on limestone foundations similar to those of the original portions of the house. Both were built during the dwelling's restoration by its current owners and were consciously designed to harmonize with the existing structure without copying original fabric.

The primary entrance, located in the original central bay of the southeastern facade, has a door of graduated panels, six-pane sidelights with elliptical tracery and a semi-circular fanlight (photo #7). The entire entry is framed with a carved surround and bull's eye corner blocks, while the fanlight is set in a rectangular frame bearing carved fans at its upper corners. The door itself is a replacement; the original may have been a dual-leaf door of graduated panels matching the present opposing door which opens onto the rear porch (photo #8). Secondary entrances to the Scarce House are located at its rear: one door breaks into the eastern wing, one into the ell, while another opens into the early addition to the ell. This portion of the ell was originally not directly accessible from the other portions of the house; the only entrance to it was this door off the porch.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates ca. 1829 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Scarce House, constructed ca. 1829 and located in rural Woodford County, Kentucky, is significant under Criterion C as an intact example of one type of dwelling built for wealthy landowners during the early nineteenth century in Kentucky's Inner Bluegrass Region. Its central passage plan, Flemish bond brickwork and classical ornament are the distinctive characteristics which convey this significance. Although the dwelling has undergone some change over time in the form of additions and restoration, these were planned to maintain the building's integrity. The Scarce House, therefore, retains integrity of location, feeling, and association and a large amount of integrity of setting, design and materials with a lesser degree of integrity of workmanship.

Woodford County and the Inner Bluegrass Region of Kentucky contains some of the richest farmland west of the Appalachian Mountains. For this reason, the area was the earliest explored and settled in the state, and was the destination for ambitious settlers and those of substantial means. Many of these people desired to reproduce the life of "gentleman farmer" that they had known or aspired to while growing up in the east. After a short period as the "western frontier," Kentucky began to show signs of the prosperity enabled by its rich farmland. Lexington, located in Fayette County in the heart of the region, soon became known as "the Athens of the West." Versailles, located twelve miles west of Lexington and three and a half miles southeast of the Scarce House, was established in 1782. Many early Kentuckians built dwellings that were symbols of their prosperity.

As a result, Kentucky's Inner Bluegrass Region contains the most architecturally ambitious dwellings in the state. Because the economy has remained primarily agricultural, these buildings have survived in large numbers. An intensive survey of the southern half of Woodford County conducted in 1980 identified 155 historic buildings. One hundred-eleven of these were built before 1850. Eighty-four of these pre-1850 houses are masonry (54 brick; 30 stone). Forty-seven of Woodford County's documented buildings are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, while another 35 are pending listing or have been evaluated as eligible.

Of the one hundred-eleven dwellings built in Woodford County prior to 1850, approximately 25 are a story and a half in height. Of these, seven are similar to the Scarce House in having single pile, central passage plans. The remainder have other plans, including two-room, hall/parlor, and double-pile central passage. These story and a half dwellings were built between 1810 and 1840 and have either Federal or Greek Revival style ornament. The Scarce House is notable among this type in having the unusual combination of both lateral wings and an original rear service ell. The Edward M. Blackburn House (listed Dec. 5, 1985), located near Midway in Woodford County is very similar to the Scarce House and has both wings and an ell, but the ell is two stories in height.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Woodford County Deed Books (M, V, 5, 7, 22, 30, 35, 38, 40, and 98).

William E. Railey, History of Woodford County (Versailles, Kentucky: Woodford Improvement League, 1938).

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1.5

Quadrangle name Tyrone, KY

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6	6	9	5	1	2	0	4	2	1	8	2	6	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D

Zone			Easting					Northing						

E

Zone			Easting					Northing						

F

Zone			Easting					Northing						

G

Zone			Easting					Northing						

H

Zone			Easting					Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Attached Continuation Sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Julie Riesenweber, National Register Coordinator

organization Kentucky Heritage Council date Jan. 23, 1987

street & number 12th Fl., Capital Plaza Tower telephone 502/564-7005

city or town Frankfort state Kentucky

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature David L. Meyer

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 3-10-87

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 4-9-87

for Alvora Byers
Keeper of the National Register

date

Attest:

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
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A pedimented porch covers the central three bays of the five-bay portion of the main block. Supported by four tapering, bulging columns typical of contemporary porches in the region, the pediment of the porch is ornamented with a frieze of recessed panels below the tympanum which is pierced with a Palladian window. Ghost outlines against the brick front wall of the building behind the outer columns suggest that two more columns were once present. Carved surrounds with bull's eye corner blocks like those at the front door outline both the Palladian window and those of the five-bay central portion of the main block (photo #9). While all windows of the main block are six-over-six sash having splayed jack arches and wooden sills, those of the lateral wings have simpler molded surrounds. The windows of the ell are nine-over-six. Small lights pierce the gable ends of the central portion of the main block and the northern walls of the ell and its additions, while the cellar is ventilated with grates having horizontal bars. The openings for these ventilators are spanned with splayed jack arches. The windows of the brick addition behind the ell appear to be enlarged replacements of the originals. They are topped with straight jack arches. A molded box cornice ornaments the eaves of the house; it is cut so as to appear "mitred" from the building's corners. One pendant drop remains at such a corner; it is located at the northwest corner of the western wing (photos 5 & 6).

The plan of the Scearce House's main block is single pile, central passage, with the rooms of each wing opening from the adjoining room on either side of the central passage. The rooms of the central portion of this block measure $17\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide by 17 feet deep, while the passage is 11 feet wide by 17 deep. Ceilings are 12 feet high, and as mentioned above, the rooms of the wings are smaller than those of the central portion of the main block; each of these measures 15 feet square. The stair in the central passage is a full turn dogleg type, its newel and balusters turned, with the balusters defining the landing having pendant drops (photo #10). The string has applied carved scrollwork, while a wainscott of fielded panelling occupies the area under the string. All rooms in the main block have carved window and door surrounds with bull's eye corner blocks similar to that on the exterior; also present in these rooms is a chair rail. Cupboards are built into the area beside the chimney jambs in places where doors were not necessary (photo #11). The original mantles, simply carved in a classical way with moldings and engaged pilasters, remain in place in nearly all rooms. The mantles of the wings are more formal than the others.

The original portion of the ell contains one room with woodwork and a mantel similar to those in the wings. An enclosed winder stair occupies the southeastern corner of the room, against the rear wall of the main block, and rises to a room that is not accessible from other portions of the second floor. As mentioned above, the early brick addition located behind the ell did not originally communicate directly with the original section of the ell; it was reached via a door leading from the porch. This room, which has a floor level lower than that of the remainder of the house, now contains a modern kitchen and little of the original interior remains.

The Scearce House, as described, is the result of a careful restoration of the building, accomplished by its present owners with professional advice and help after they purchased the property in 1978. No structural changes were made to the dwelling by them except for the sympathetic addition of the two frame rooms mentioned above. The portico was rebuilt,

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following the pattern of the original and using original parts where possible. Two of the present columns and some moldings are reproductions made from the originals. The chimneys were dismantled to the roofline and rebuilt to match the old using the original bricks. A similar approach was taken with the restoration of the interior. Prior to the present owner's work on the building, alterations were made to the brick ell addition. While the precise time and nature of these changes is unclear, they may have involved enclosing a small section of the rear porch adjacent to the addition and reorienting the roofline here, as these elements of the building's present appearance do not fit the mid-nineteenth century design vocabulary. Overall, however, the Scearce House has undergone very few changes since its initial construction.

The nominated area of approximately 1.5 acres includes one contributing building. Within the boundaries are the sites of several domestic outbuildings; a smokehouse and possible slavequarters, demolished prior to 1978, and a root cellar, which was removed by the present owners of the property. Since the information potential of these sites is minimal, they must be considered non-contributing.

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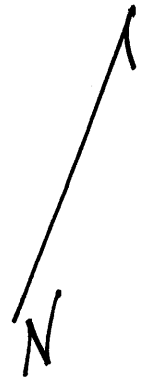
The Scearce House is believed to have been built ca. 1829 for Henry (Harry) Scearce. It is not known when the Scearce family emigrated to Kentucky from North Carolina, but John Scearce, Henry's father, appears in Woodford County's 1810 census as the head of a family of nine. The county's deed records indicate that during 1829 Henry Scearce assembled 610 acres north of Glenn's Creek in purchases from John Williams, William Williams and Cyrus McCracken. During Scearce's lifetime, his "plantation" supported 12 children and 19 slaves. After his death in 1852, the property was sold to Dr. Theophilus Steele, the first of ten subsequent owners. Prominent among these were the Civil War hero and legislator Captain John Andrew Steele; Colonel E. H. Taylor, founder of Old Taylor distilleries and noteworthy agriculturalist; and Judge Edward C. O'Rear. The present owners purchased a property much reduced in acreage in 1978.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

The boundary for the nominated area is a rectangle 275 feet in length and 240 feet in width. Beginning at point at the north corner of the present yard where an old fenceline intersects with a modern post and rail fence (see site plan enclosed), 275 feet southeastward along the fence; 240 feet southwestward; 275 feet northwestward; and 240 feet northeastward along old fenceline to point of origin. The boundary is equivalent to the present yard—an old fencerow forms the rear perimeter—and excludes row cropfields and pasture that abut the mowed yard. The boundaries have been drawn to encompass the house and to incorporate what would have been the domestic area during its period of significance.

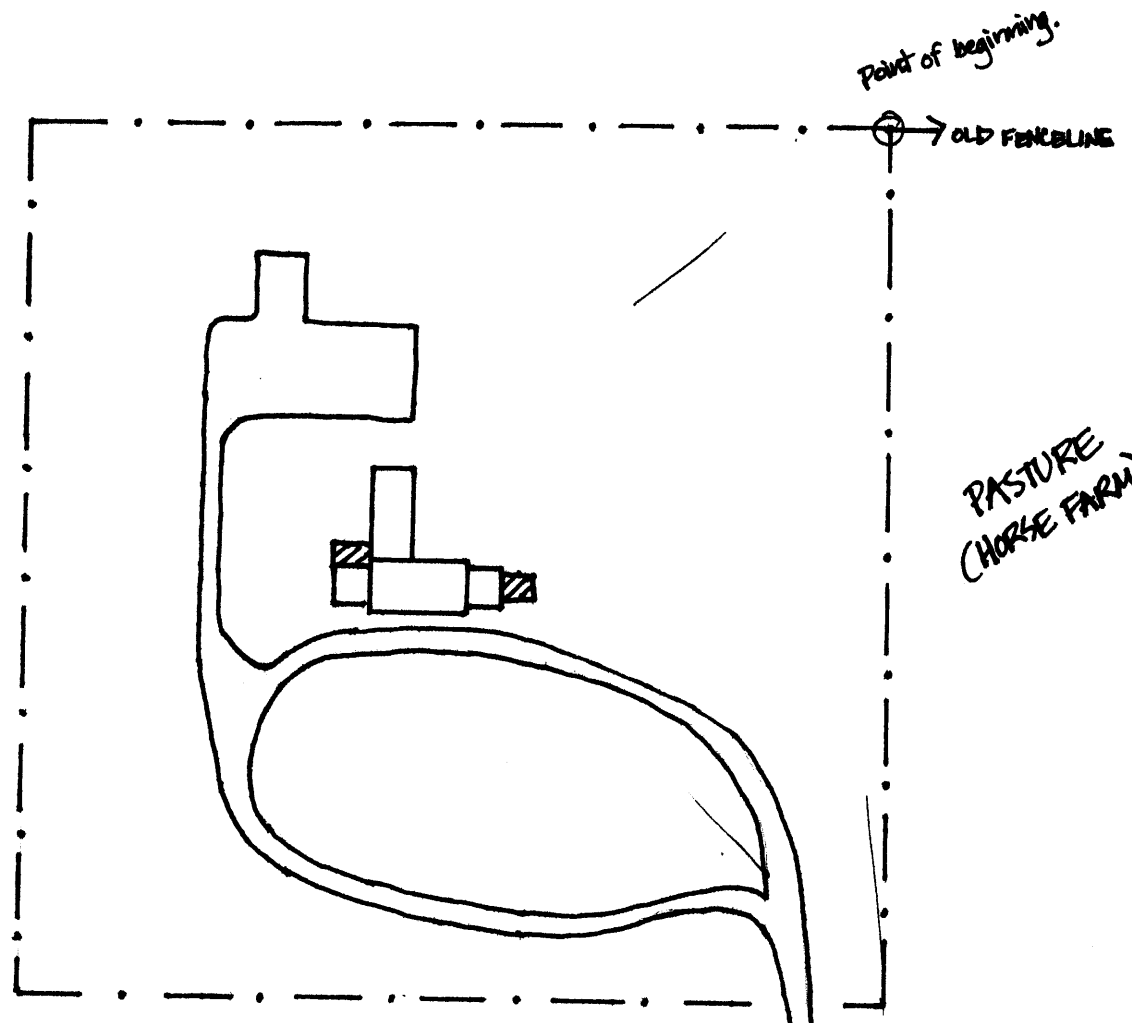
THE SCARCE HOUSE
SITE PLAN AND BOUNDARY MAP



PASTURE

PASTURE

PASTURE
(HORSE FARM)



Point of beginning.

OLD FENCELINE

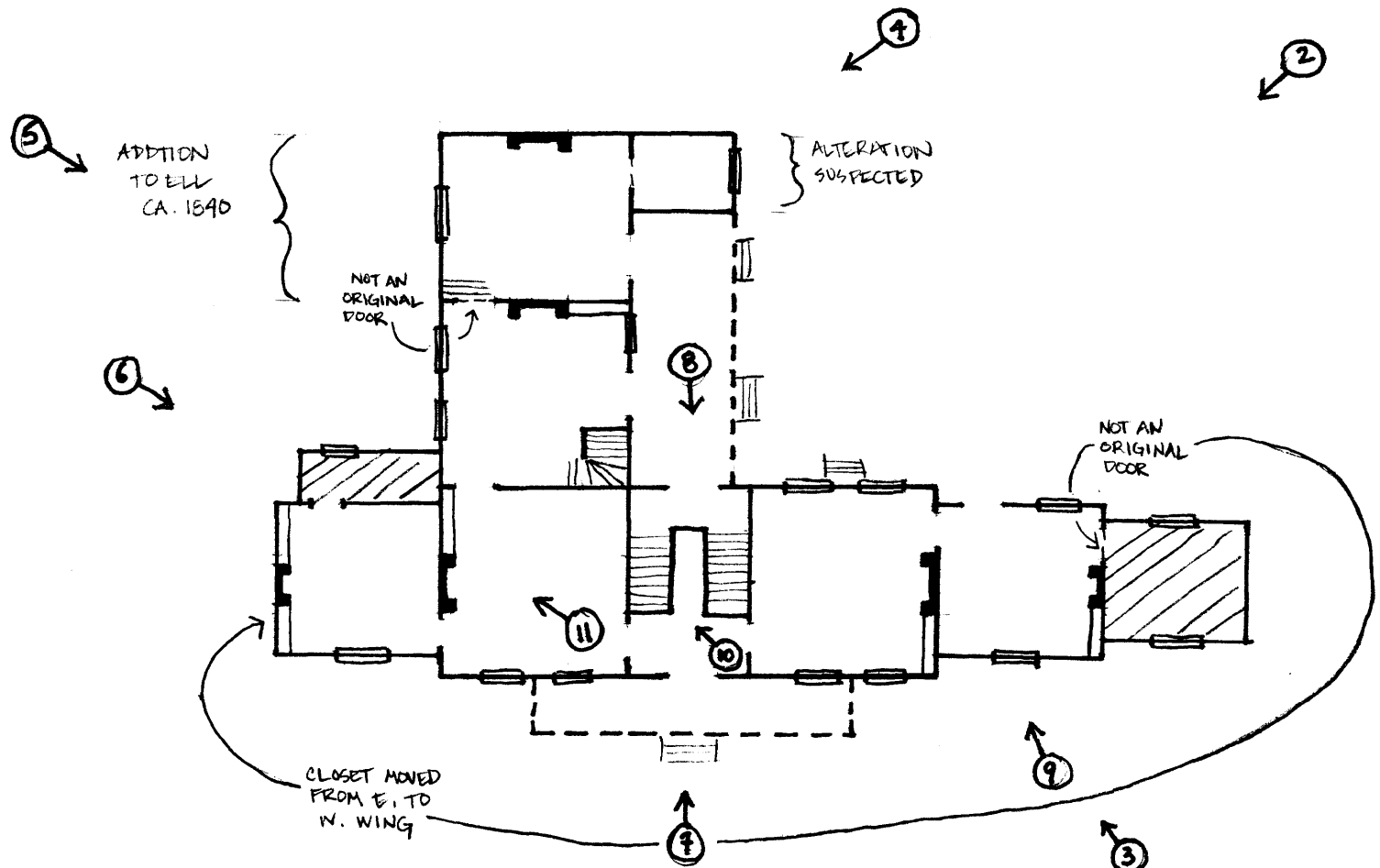
ROW CROPS


GRAVEL DRIVE (OLD FARM ROAD)
1/2 MI. TO MCCREARY PIKE

--- BOUNDARY

NOT TO SCALE

THE SCEARCE HOUSE FIRST FLOOR PLAN & PHOTOGRAPHIC KEY



 FRAME CONSTRUCTION

NO SCALE