

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: <u>88001447</u>	Date Listed: <u>9/9/88</u>	
<u>Gibbs, Nicholas House</u>	<u>Knox</u>	<u>TN</u>
Property Name	County	State

N/A
Multiple Name

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


Signature of the Keeper

9/9/88
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

This property is a collection of buildings and a site, and therefore should be classified as a historic district.

Discussed and concurred in by Tennessee SHPO on September 9, 1988.

DISTRIBUTION:
National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

AUG 3 1988

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Gibbs, Nicholas, House
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Emory Road N/A not for publication
city, town Knoxville N/A vicinity
state Tennessee code TN county Knox code TN093 zip code 37914

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. 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. See continuation sheet.

Herbert L. Hoyer 7/26/88
Signature of certifying official Date
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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:)

Amy Seitzel 9/9/88

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single dwelling

DOMESTIC: Secondary structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Single pen log

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Limestonewalls LogBoard and Battenroof ASPHALT shingleother Wooden porch

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Nicholas Gibbs homeplace consists of a single pen log house, an outhouse with standing seam metal roof and log smokehouse which stand on a site containing a running spring, numerous "Kentucky coffee trees," a recent split-rail fence addition. The circa 1793 house is located on Emory Road in Northeast Knox County, at the headwaters of Beaver Creek. The property on which the house and resources stand was part of a land grant made to Nicholas Gibbs in honor of his service in the Revolutionary War at the battle of Kings Mountain in North Carolina. Together with subsequent land purchases, Nicholas Gibbs was reported to have held as many as 1,200 acres of land at one time. The current landholding numbers 4.75 acres.

Of all the original buildings, only the house remains. The property remained in the family from 1792 through 1971 and was again purchased by descendants of Nicholas Gibbs, who refer to themselves as the Nicholas Gibbs Historical Society, in 1986. Scattered throughout the 4.75 acres are several coffee trees to grow on the property. The trees were originally planted by John Gibbs as a memorial to his dead brother, Nicholas, Jr., who was killed in the battle of Horseshoe Bend in 1814. The trees were brought from his brother's belongings. Seedlings continue to sprout on the property from generations of the trees, which can only be found in that area.

Although through the years various changes have been made to the house, it retains many original features, as well as its architectural and historical integrity. The second story of the original portion of the log house (with the exception of cosmetic changes, such as wallpapering), remains as it did in 1793. The original building consisted of one large room downstairs with two rooms on the second story. The original flooring remains under the present pine flooring (installed during a renovation in 1959) on the first level and steps to the second story. The fireplace was rebuilt (also in 1959) utilizing most of the original brick. The original pine mantel remains.

Additions were added to the rear and east end of the house circa 1850. These included a pantry, kitchen, bedroom, and two porches. Additions were weatherboarded. During the renovation of 1959, all additions were removed and replaced by new additions which include a kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, and utility room. The front of the kitchen (east end) addition contains logs from the original barn. Side and rear exterior walls are of board and

 See continuation sheet

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batten finish. A gable roofed front porch was also added to the original portion of the house, with two benches on the front porch constructed from the stable doors of the barn. It should be noted that the 1959 additions relate in size, placement, and design to those of the 1850 additions.

The two-story pine log building has chestnut log sills and is joined with half-dovetail notching, built from woods found on the surrounding property. Clapboards comprise the gable ends. The building consists of three bays. Original six-over-three double hung pegged windows occur on the first story of the main portion of the house, six light windows on the second-story. The east end (or kitchen) one-story addition has a six-over-six double hung window. One brick end chimney (rebuilt in 1959) is contained on the east end of the original portion of the house. Asphalt shingles cover the gable roof. The Victorian era screen door fronts a pegged batten or vertical board entry. A gable-roofed porch, added during the 1959 renovation, extends approximately 3/4 of the length of the original facade and is supported by unadorned squared wooden porch posts. Exterior chinking has been replaced with Portland cement, a later addition which the present owners wish to remove and replace with appropriate materials. Attached to the rear of the main portion and east end addition of the house is a one-story portion containing a bedroom, bathroom, and utility room. These board and batten additions, with shed roof of asphalt roll, have a limestone foundation.

The interior of the house retains much of its original integrity and features examples of late 18th century primitive carpentry. Exposed beams form the sills for the second story in the original portion of the house, with edges trimmed by mitered, beaded trim. The original pine mantel, which is quite plain and has a projecting mantle shelf, remains in the living room. The hearth and fireplace were rebuilt utilizing existing brick. Interior walls are of beaded wide pine vertical board. Ceilings are of pine planks and plaster. There are two pine steps leading to the kitchen addition which have risers of approximately six inches. A narrow and enclosed staircase is located toward the northwest portion of the first floor, providing the only access to two upstairs bedrooms. Hand-split vertical and horizontal planks act as wainscoting in the enclosed staircase area, with the area above the chair railing now wallpapered or, in the case of the east wall, continuing with pine vertical planks. A pegged vertical plank door remains to close off the staircased area. The ceilings of the upstairs bedrooms slope to a point of approximately four and one-half feet under the eaves of each room.

Until 1959, the house was not wired for electricity, nor were bathrooms available until that time. Although this renovation created alterations to

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both the interior and exterior, the basic plan and historical integrity of the house have been preserved. Both the exterior and interior of the building retain their integrity of feeling and association and have a strong visual character.

There are two non-contributing resources and one contributing site on the property. Non-contributing outbuildings include a one-story log smokehouse with limestone foundation and standing seam metal gable roof. The oak handhewn logs of the smokehouse are joined with full dovetail notching. The structure has been rebuilt within the last five years and has no chinking. The second non-contributing outbuilding is a wooden outhouse of an unknown date with a standing seam roof. Archaeological testing has shown that the remaining 4.75 acres of the Nicholas Gibbs House has the potential to yield valuable information on the early German-American homesite.

It is the intent of the Nicholas Gibbs Historical Society to preserve the house, outbuildings, and site as a museum. All proceeds that have been received have gone towards the purchase and upkeep of these buildings and the grounds, as will continued donations.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
ARCHAEOLOGY

Period of Significance

ca. 1793-1817

Significant Dates

ca. 1793

Cultural Affiliation

German-American

Significant Person

Gibbs, Nicholas

Architect/Builder

Gibbs, Nicholas

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Nicholas Gibbs House is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A, B, C and D for its association with early settlement patterns in the Northeast portion of what is now known as Knox County; for its historical association with its builder and occupant -- a pioneer, elder, politician, and veteran; for its architectural significance -- a rare example of an intact, two-story log building with beaded interior paneling and half-dovetail notching; and for its historic archaeological potential.

The Nicholas Gibbs House is primarily significant due to the fact that it was the only homeplace of its namesake, a French and Indian and Revolutionary (King's Mountain Battle) wars veteran. In addition, Gibbs was active in church and civic affairs. He was one of the first elders in Miller's Lutheran Church, the oldest Lutheran church in this area of Tennessee.

Johann Nickel Gibs, born in 1733, came from Germany to land in Philadelphia on the ship "Phoenix" on October 1, 1754. Named after his father, who came from the village of Grumbach in the Palatinate, Germany, his name was later anglicized to Nicholas Gibbs.

In 1757, Nicholas Gibbs joined and served in the French and Indian War for three years in the company of Captain John Nicholas Weatherholt of Northampton County, Pennsylvania. After serving in the war, Nicholas Gibbs moved to Orange County, North Carolina where he married sometime around 1764. Twice, he served as tax collector for Orange County, in 1778 and, again, in 1782. After selling his property in North Carolina in 1791, he came to the present area of East Tennessee with two other families of German descent, the John Sharps (Scharp) and Boston Graves (Graff). These families initially settled at Sharp's Station (or the fort on the Clinch River). This site is now within the area of the Big Ridge State Park.

In March of 1792, four years before Tennessee attained statehood, Nicholas Gibbs bought 450 acres of land in Hawkins County (that portion now known as

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 4.75 acres

UTM References

A

1	6	2	4	5	9	6	0	4	0	0	0	7	2	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries as drawn include the house, outbuildings, archaeological site, fields, split-rail fence and spring that have historically been a part of the homestead and that maintain the historic integrity.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Chris Wood, Planner
organization Knoxville/Knox Co. Metro. Planning Commission date April 5, 1988
street & number 400 Main Avenue telephone 615-521-2500
city or town Knoxville state Tennessee zip code 37902

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Knox County). Subsequent land purchases increased his holdings to almost 1,200 acres, which became the forerunner of the "Gibbs Community," an enclave of German descendants who settled in an area north of Beaver Ridge and Grassy Valley in the northeast portion of Knox County. The primary settlements, at that time were concentrated around forts and appeared along the banks of the Holston and French Broad rivers above present day Knoxville, because of the frequent Indian attacks and mountain barriers. Such settlements as Flat Creek, Beaver Ridge, Hinds Valley, Bull Run, Grassy Valley, and those in the forks of the French Broad and Holston rivers probably originated around the same time, due, in part, to several land grants being awarded to Revolutionary War soldiers. Additionally, a portion of the Old Emory Road, on which the Nicholas Gibbs homeplace is situated, was an important trail to the west.

On April 25, 1796, as assignee, Nicholas Gibbs was given a grant of 100 acres on Beaver Dam Creek for services in the Continental Line. It was circa 1793 that he built the two-story hewed log house on Emory Road, in an area still subject to numerous Indian attacks. The house and part of the farm were continuously owned by succeeding members of the Gibbs family for nearly 180 years. It was in 1986 that the Nicholas Gibbs Historical Society purchased the house and surrounding 4.75 acres to preserve the homeplace and present it to the community as an educational tool for present and future generations.

On April 25, 1796, the first Knox County Court under the new state constitution was convened. Nicholas Gibbs was commissioned as one of the justices of the peace by Governor William Blount. Both elementary and high schools serving the area bear the Gibbs family name. Nicholas Gibbs died in 1817 and is buried on a hill some 50 yards north of the Gibbs' homeplace.

Nicholas Gibbs was associated with this property from 1792 until his death in 1817. The log house serves as the only extant property with which Mr. Gibbs was associated, as well as the boyhood home of his four sons. In addition to his contributions to his country, Gibbs also made several contributions to the community as one of the initial justices of the peace for the county when the first county court convened and as an organizer of the Lonas Chapel and subsequent Miller's Lutheran Church. Also, he is partially responsible for the church's acceptance into the North Carolina Synod in 1811, as the first Lutheran congregation in the eastern portion of the State of Tennessee. Descendants of Nicholas Gibbs were also active in civic affairs. His eldest son, John, was also a justice of the peace for Knox, as well as for Anderson, County. In addition, he served in the Tennessee Legislature. Other sons include Jacob, George Washington, and

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Nicholas, Jr., who fought in the War of 1812, two of them attaining the rank of Captain. Son Nicholas, Jr. was killed while serving with General Andrew Jackson in the Battle of Horseshoe Bend in 1814; one son became a lawyer and, after moving to West Tennessee, served as Chancellor of the Western District and founded the town of Union City by his donation of the land. Other distinguished descendants include William Gibbs McAdoo, Secretary of the Treasury and Chairman of the Federal Reserve System during President Woodrow Wilson's administration. McAdoo married President Wilson's daughter, designed a tunnel under the Hudson River, and ran unsuccessfully for president on numerous occasions.

Architecturally, the two-story log house with half-dovetailed notching, despite changes and additions made over the years, remains an excellent and rare example of an intact log dwelling which reflects late 18th century East Tennessee craftsmanship. Few other log buildings of this period have been identified and none appear as intact and unaltered. Additions, replaced chinking, siding, and remodeling have occurred with respect to both the interior and exterior portions of other log buildings. Throughout its history, the house has been an excellent example of early East Tennessee architecture and settlement which serves as a reminder to passersby of pioneer settlement in Tennessee. Though frontage of the homesite on Emory Road appears somewhat rural, the building and its setting have experienced encroachment from a subdivision which adjoins the property on the northeast. Still, the Nicholas Gibbs homestead and its associated structures provide an excellent opportunity to preserve and educate the public as to a late 18th century pioneer farmplace.

The Nicholas Gibbs House is also significant for the demonstrated archaeological potential to yield valuable information on early settlement in East Tennessee by German-Americans. Limited excavations by Dr. Charles Faulkner with the University of Tennessee, have already provided important information on this 1793 settlement site. The Nicholas Gibbs site has produced important information about the use of lead-glazed redware by German-Americans. The percentage (37%) was much higher than the amount recovered from five Anglo-American sites in Knox County. The Gibbs site is significant as one of the few domestic sites remaining in Tennessee from this early frontier period. In addition the site is significant for its ethnic associations with German-American settlers in an area where Anglo-American, especially Scots-Irish, settlers were the prevailing ethnic group. Although artifact recovery has occurred on the site, the potential for further information still exists and further research is planned to determine the differences in the material culture of German-American and Anglo-American settlements.

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Gibbs, Nicholas Historical Society. Nicholas Gibbs and His Descendants, 1733-1977. Knoxville: Nicholas Gibbs Historical Society, William Henderson Thomas Section, 1978.

Gibbs, Nicholas Historical Society. "The Gibbs Magazine," Vol. 1, Number 1, June 1973.

Faulkner, Charles H. "The Gibbs House: Excavation of a Late Eighteenth Century German-American Farmstead in Knox County, Tennessee." unpublished manuscript, Symposium on Ohio Valley Urban and Historic Archaeology. April 4, 1988.

Hicks, Nannie Lee. Historic Treasure Spots of Knox County, Tennessee. Knoxville: The Simon Harris Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, 1964.

Interviews with Gordon Nelson, member of Nicholas Gibbs Historical Society, August 1986 and August 1987.

Interviews with Virginia Nelson, descendant, August 1986 and October 1987.

Interviews with Leonard Wolfenbarger, President of Nicholas Gibbs Historical Society, August 1986 and March 1987.

Neal, Suzanne Foree. "Pioneer Homestead Preserved for Posterity," The Knoxville-News Sentinel, Wednesday, May 28, 1986.

Rothrock, Mary U., ed. The French Broad-Holston Country: A History of Knox County, Tennessee. Knoxville: East Tennessee Historical Society, 1946.

Unpublished manuscript. "Ancestry of Nicholas Gibbs." A compilation of records, undated. Available through Gordon Nelson, 3520 Bluff Point Drive, Knoxville, Tennessee 37920.

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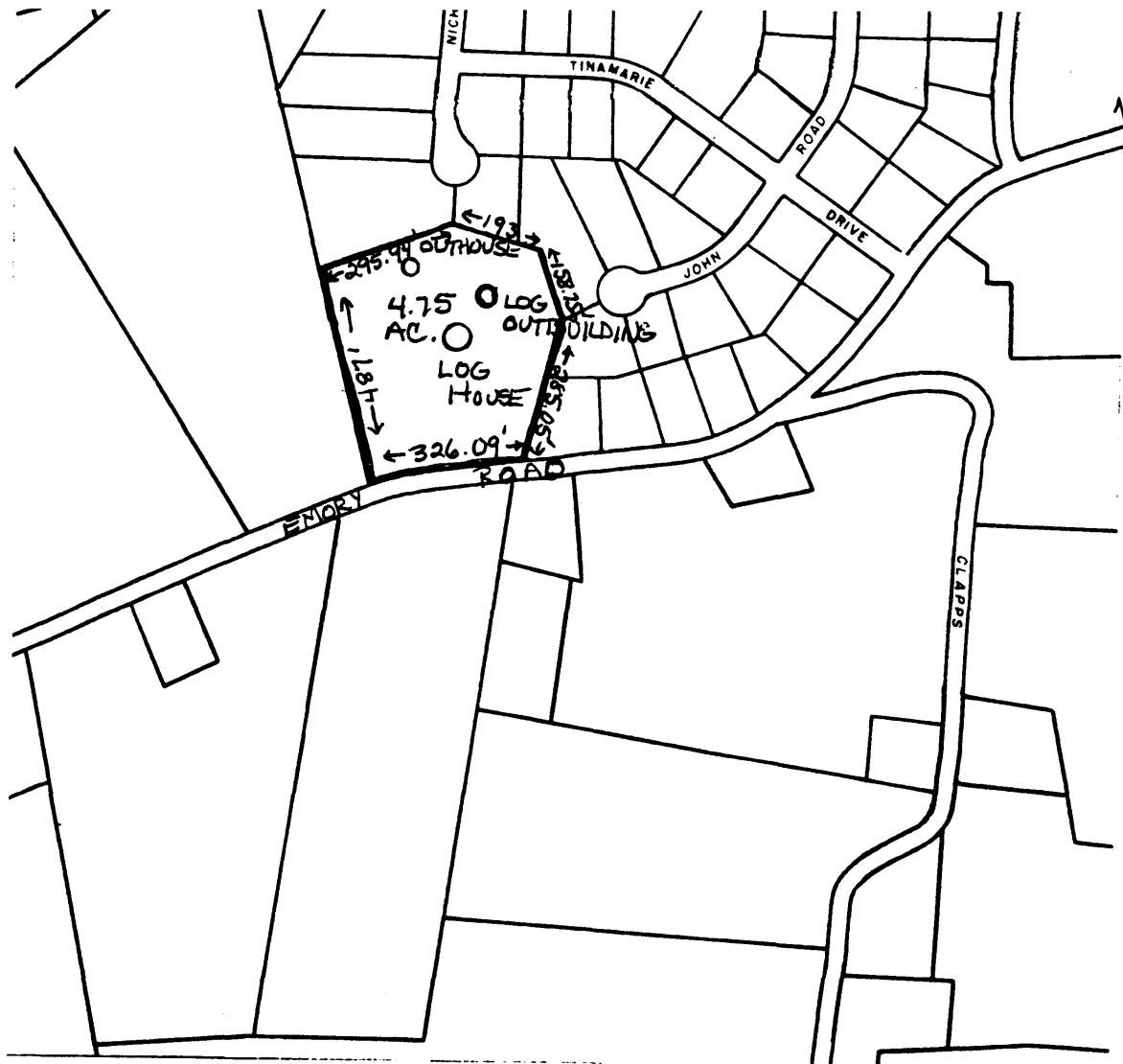
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning on an iron pin on the northernmost right-of-way line of Emory Road and in the center of Beaver Creek; thence with the said right-of-way line of Emory Road, north 82 deg. 42 min. east, for a chord distance of 326.09 feet to an iron pin on the northernmost right-of-way line of Emory Road, said iron pin being 1,250 feet, more or less, from the center line of Clapps Chapel Road; thence with the line of property now or formerly belonging to L. B. Knight, north 17 deg. 11 min. east, 285.05 feet to an iron pin; thence north 14 deg. 10 min. west, 158.75 feet to an iron pin; thence north 68 deg. 01 min. west, 193.00 feet to an iron post; thence south 77 deg. 41 min. west, 295.94 feet to an iron pin; thence south 11 deg. 46 min. east, 487 feet to the iron pin at the point of beginning, and containing 4.75 acres, more or less, and all of which is shown on a map as prepared by A. B. Thompson & Associates, Engineers and Surveyors, Drawing No. 332-1-B-1, dated July 22, 1971, to which map reference is made.

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Gibbs, Nicholas, House
Emory Road
Knoxville, Knox County, Tennessee



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Gibbs, Nicholas, House

Emory Road

Knoxville, Knox County, Tennessee

Photo by: Chris Wood

Date: October 1987

Neg.: Tennessee Historical Commission
Nashville, Tennessee

South Elevation, looking north

#1 of 14

Southwest Elevation, looking northeast

#2 of 14

Northwest Elevation, looking southeast

#3 of 14

North Elevation, looking south

#4 of 14

Northeast Elevation, looking southwest

#5 of 14

Pine Mantel

#6 of 14

Exposed Beams

#7 of 14

Pegged Vertical Board Door

#8 of 14

Pegged Pine Vertical Board Door

#9 of 14

Wide Pine Pegged "Dutch" Door

#10 of 14

Enclosed Staircase with Handsplit Pine Planks

and Pegged Pine Vertical Board Door

#11 of 14

Looking North

#12 of 14

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Photographs 2

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Smokehouse, looking north
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Outhouse, looking northeast
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