

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

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **SEP 19 1986**
date entered **OCT 16 1986**

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

1. Name

historic REED-DOSSEY HOUSE

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Upper Main Cross and Jefferson Streets not for publication

city, town Brownsville vicinity of

state Kentucky code 021 county Edmonson code 061

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

4. Owner of Property

name Bryan and Karen LeSieur (Mr. & Mrs. Bryan LeSieur)

street & number Post Office Box 57

city, town Brownsville vicinity of state Kentucky

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Edmonson County Courthouse, Office of the County Clerk

street & number Main Street

city, town Brownsville state Kentucky

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title KY Historic Resources Inventory (#ED-B-1) has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date March, 1979; November, 1985 federal state county local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Council

city, town Frankfort state Kentucky

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Prominently sited on the shelf of a ridge, facing northeastward and overlooking the town of Brownsville, Kentucky, is the Reed-Dossey House, a two-story, eight-bay dwelling constructed of frame (see map 1, photo 1). Brownsville is located in central Edmonson County, and, with a population of approximately 500, is both the largest town in the county and the county seat. Edmonson County lies within the western coalfields area of the Pennyrile Cultural Landscape Region and is characterized by a ridge and valley topography of limestone geological formations which give rise to the cave systems of Edmonson and neighboring Hart Counties. The westernmost boundary of Mammoth Cave National Park is about a mile from Brownsville, while the park encompasses roughly one-third of the county's area.

Although parts of Edmonson County were settled early in the nineteenth century, due to their accessibility via the Green and Nolin Rivers, much of its historic building stock was lost in the creation of Nolin River Lake and Mammoth Cave National Park. Brownsville contains no buildings of any integrity earlier than the late nineteenth century. Two properties within Edmonson County are individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The William Ford House (listed 11/28/80) is an example of the Vernacular Greek Revival of the area, and, located near the Warren-Edmonson County line, has closer affinities with contemporary dwellings of the former county than with those in the hillier portions of Edmonson. Mole Hill Farm (listed 5/28/78) contains both prehistoric archaeological and architectural components, the latter being a small brick house built ca. 1820. Also listed (10/10/79) are two objects, the locomotive "Hercules" and Coach #2. Both are located at Mammoth Cave National Park. Pending listing as part of the Early Stone Buildings of Kentucky thematic nomination (Part II) is the Mattias Willis General Store. Edmonson County also contains three properties that the Kentucky Heritage Council has evaluated as having National Register potential. These are the saltpeter mining vats and the consumptive huts at Mammoth Cave, and the Dripping Springs Baptist Church.

The Reed-Dossey House, a balloon-framed and weatherboarded dwelling constructed ca. 1890, has a T-shaped mass that combines a common form, the two-story T-plan, with an integral lateral wing of one story (see schematic plan; photo 1). While the two-story portion has only three bays on the front (northeastern) facade, the one-story section has five, giving the entire front facade a length of eight bays. Extending backward (toward the southwest) from the front facade is the stem of the T-shape forming the building's mass. This extension creates a depth of four bays on the two-story portion of the house, while the single-story wing remains two bays deep. The third bay of the front facade is semi-hexagonal and projecting, as is the fourth bay of the southeastern side (see photos 1, 2, and 3). A long single-story, flat-roofed porch shelters all but the first bay of the front facade, its outline following that of the projecting third bay. A porch similar in detail, but having a semi-hipped roof, extends across the recessed first three bays of the southeastern side (see photos 3 and 4). There was at one time another porch, presumably similar to the others, behind the single-story wing at its southwestern wall, but this was enclosed and extended during an early twentieth-century remodeling. At the same time a small frame room was added at the rear northwest wall of the southwestern extension of the two-story section of the house, and the well, located behind the single-story wing, was also enclosed, creating a "well room" (photo 5). The foundation of the building is coursed mortared limestone and is graduated: it thickens toward the front (northeast) to compensate for the gentle slope of the ridge shelf on which the house is situated. The roof of the structure is gable, with a cross-gable at the semi-hexagonal entrance bay of the front facade. The roof is covered with standing-seam tin. Two interior chimney stacks serve the dwelling's two-story portion; one of these is located inside the building, between the two front rooms, while the other is along the rear (southwestern) wall. A stove flue is present between the two rooms of the single-story wing, and a more recent flue serves a stove heating the enclosed rear 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. 1890

Builder/Architect

Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Reed-Dossey House is significant under Criterion C as an unusually large and intact example of vernacular late Victorian architecture in a small town in western Kentucky. Both the exterior and interior of the house remain essentially unchanged. The exterior retains many of its original decorative details, most notably the millwork, which survives in excellent condition, and the few additions that have been made to the house are confined to the rear and do not affect its visual impact. The interior retains woodwork with the original finishes, including several grained doors. Further, the house is remarkable in that it survives in such intact condition in Brownsville, where very few historic buildings remain, and even fewer retain any integrity. The house is the most ostentacious and the only dwelling of its type in Brownsville.

Although it is not known precisely when the house was built, the property on which it stands was purchased by J. P. Reed in 1892 and sold by him to a member of the Dossey family in 1910. All deeds for the property from 1910 refer to the "house that J. P. Reed built." Reed was an entrepreneur, and reputedly connected with the steamboat traffic on the Green River. Local tradition states that Reed intended the dwelling to be a hotel or boarding house. He apparently never lived there.

The Dossey family, however, who owned the house until recent years, did operate a boarding house there. One well-known boarder was Miss Tandie McIntyre who was a local schoolteacher and for whom the Brownsville Elementary school is named. The Dossey family maintained the house until the present owners purchased it.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Edmonson County Court Records.

Private papers of the Dossey family and Miss Tandie McIntyre in the possession of Mr. & Mrs. Bryan LeSieur.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one acre (.28)

Quadrangle name Brownsville

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6	5	6	4	8	0	0	4	1	1	6	3	4	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 Continuation Sheet

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

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Julie Riesenweber, Senior Historian

organization Kentucky Heritage Council date June 2, 1986

street & number 12th Floor, 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. Morgan*

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER date September 12, 1986

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 10-16-86

for *Shelley Byers*
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
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Reed-Dossey House

Continuation sheet Brownsville, Edmonson Co., KY Item number 7 Page 2

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The Reed-Dossey House has four entrances on its front facade; the primary entrance is located at the projecting semi-hexagonal third bay and leads directly into the westernmost front room of the dwelling's two-story portion. The opening is elongated and narrow, having a simple unmolded wooden surround that terminates in a pointed arch above a single-pane transom (photo 6). The door itself is divided into two sections, with a large pane of glass forming the upper portion, and a lower portion containing three panels: a horizontal above two verticals. There is also a screen door at this entrance which is divided into sections that parallel those of the inner door. The only ornament on the screen door is a row of narrow spindle turnings occupying an area over the inner door's horizontal panel. An entrance identical to this one, with inner and screen doors, is located in the second bay of the same facade. This doorway leads into the easternmost room of the two-story section of the building. Two more entrances also pierce this facade. These are located in the fifth and eighth bays and each leads to one of the rooms in the single-story wing. Because the dwelling is sited at the junction of two roads (see site plan), the southeastern (side) elevation is also a presentation facade and a secondary entrance to the house is located in the third bay (see photo 3). While the inner door of this entrance is identical to those of the front, having the same surround and transom, the outer door is not. Instead of being screened it is glazed, having eight panes arranged two-by-two in its upper two-thirds. While this entrance leads to a passage, another identical door, having both inner and outer glazed doors, leads from the porch directly into the easternmost room of the two-story portion of the house. The windows throughout the original sections of the dwelling are similar to the doorways in ornamentation. All are long and narrow, with those of the first story being more elongated than those of the second. All have simple wooden surrounds that terminate in pointed arches and all have one-over-one sash.

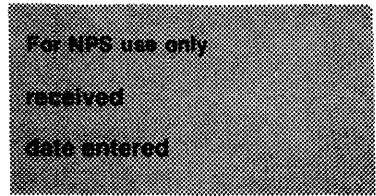
The ornamentation of the Reed-Dossey House is within a late Victorian vocabulary and consists of millwork and shingles. Both the long porch of the northeastern facade and the shorter one at the southeast are decorated with millwork. The porch supports are slender turned posts. Between these posts is a balustrade of turnings. The supports terminate in brackets at the porch eaves, and merge with a narrower balustrade of turnings. Below the upper balustrade and between each post is a row of saw-tooth dentils (see photos 2, 3, and 7). More millwork is present at the roof's eaves where the roof gable extends beyond the side faces of the semi-hexagonal bays. There is also millwork at the gable point on the front faces of these bays, while the area above the second-story windows is covered with fish-scale shingles (see photo 7). Each shingled area on the projecting semi-hexagonal bays has a circular pierced wooden insert, as do the comparable areas of the northwestern gables on both the two-story and one-story portions of the house.

The exterior of the Reed-Dossey House remains virtually unaltered. The only apparent loss of original fabric is the minor loss of the two screen doors from the entrances off the southeastern porch. A renovation of ca. 1925 enclosed the rear porch and extended it southwestward by approximately three feet (see schematic plan). At the same time, the well was enclosed with a frame "well room" which adjoined the enclosed rear porch, and a small frame room was added at the rear northwest side of the dwelling's two-story section. Since these additions are confined to the back of the house, they do not significantly affect its integrity.

The interior of the house is likewise largely intact. The plan of the dwelling's two-story portion is assymmetrical: two rooms are located side-by-side along the front, with a passage behind the westernmost room and another room behind that. The single-story wing contains two rooms

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Reed-Dossey House

Continuation sheet Brownsville, Edmonson Co., KY

Item number

7

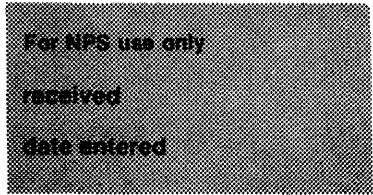
Page 3

located side-by-side that align with the front rooms of the two-story section. The ornamental woodwork on the interior contains both Victorian and Arts and Crafts elements. The door and window surrounds are Victorian, having narrow reeded horizontals and verticals with bull's eye corner blocks. The wood is stained dark. The stair and mantles may represent more stylish interior fittings or may be early replacements of the originals. The stair is located in the passage and has a boxed newel, turned balusters, and applied scroll carving on the string (see photos 8 and 9). The wood is poplar stained dark. The coal-burning fireplaces have oak surrounds with mirrored overmantles (see photo 10). Several of the doors upstairs are grained to resemble oak. Changes to the interior have been the updating of the kitchen during the late 1920s or early 1930s and the creation of a bathroom off the enclosed backporch.

The nomination of less than one acre includes a dry-laid stone springhouse that is built into the hillside behind the house. Several other outbuildings associated with the dwelling remain in the vicinity, but the boundaries were drawn to exclude them because of their poor condition and more recent vintage.

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Reed-Dossey House

Continuation sheet Brownsville, Edmonson Co., KY Item number 10 Page 2

Beginning at a point against the steep hillside that is behind the house and midway between the house and a garage, eighty feet northeastward to a stone retaining wall; one hundred and fifty feet northwestward along the retaining wall to a point midway between the house and a smokehouse; eighty feet southwestward to the hillside; one hundred and fifty feet along the base of the hill to the point of origin.

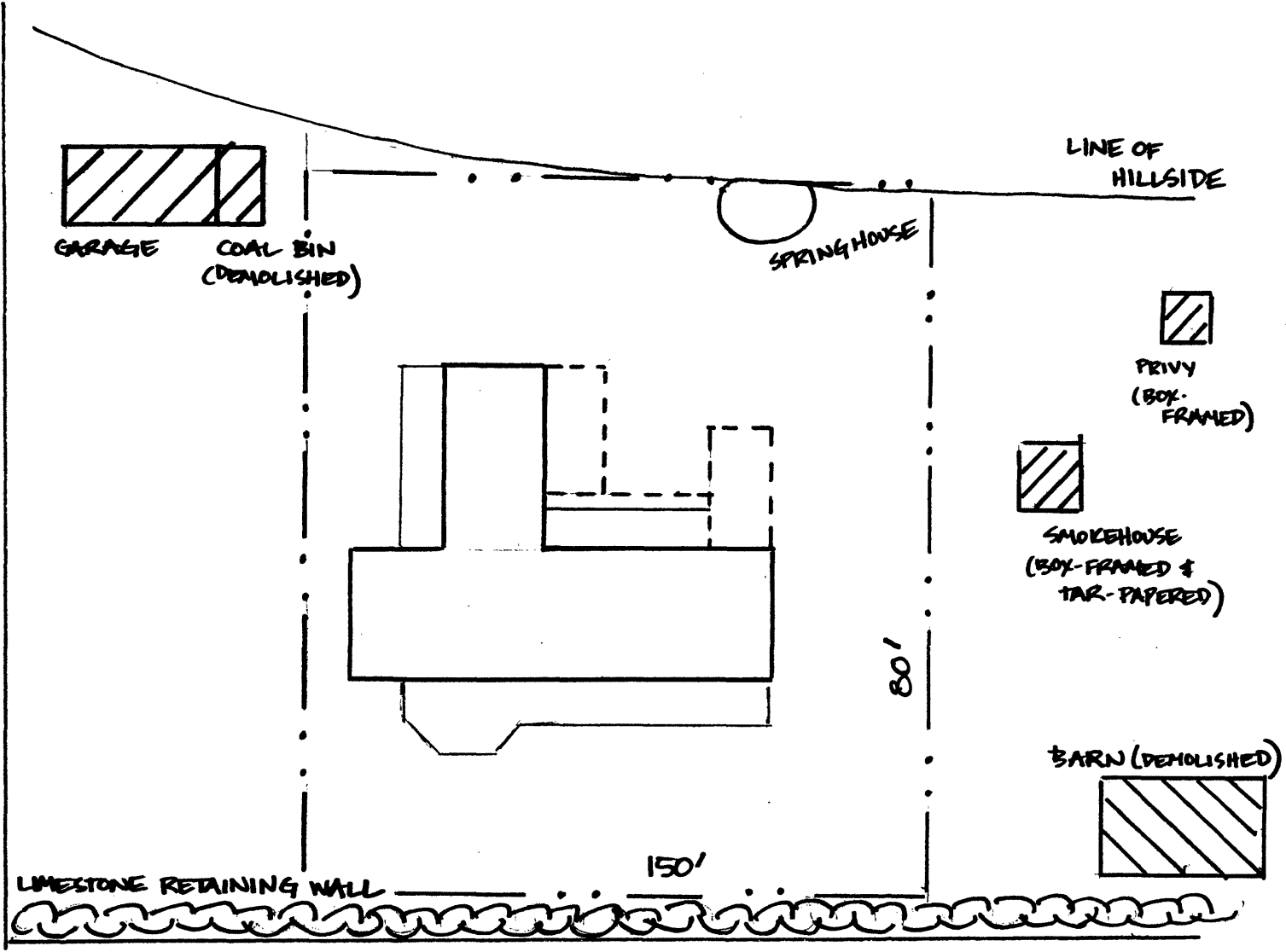
The boundaries are drawn to incorporate the dwelling and springhouse but do exclude outbuildings in the vicinity that have less integrity and are of more recent vintage.

REED-DOSSEY HOUSE BROWNSVILLE, EDMONSON CO., KY.

SITE PLAN (NOT TO SCALE)



MAIN CROSS ST. (PAVED)



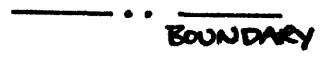
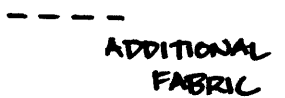
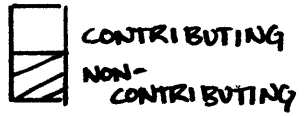
LIMESTONE RETAINING WALL

150'

80'

LINE OF HILLSIDE

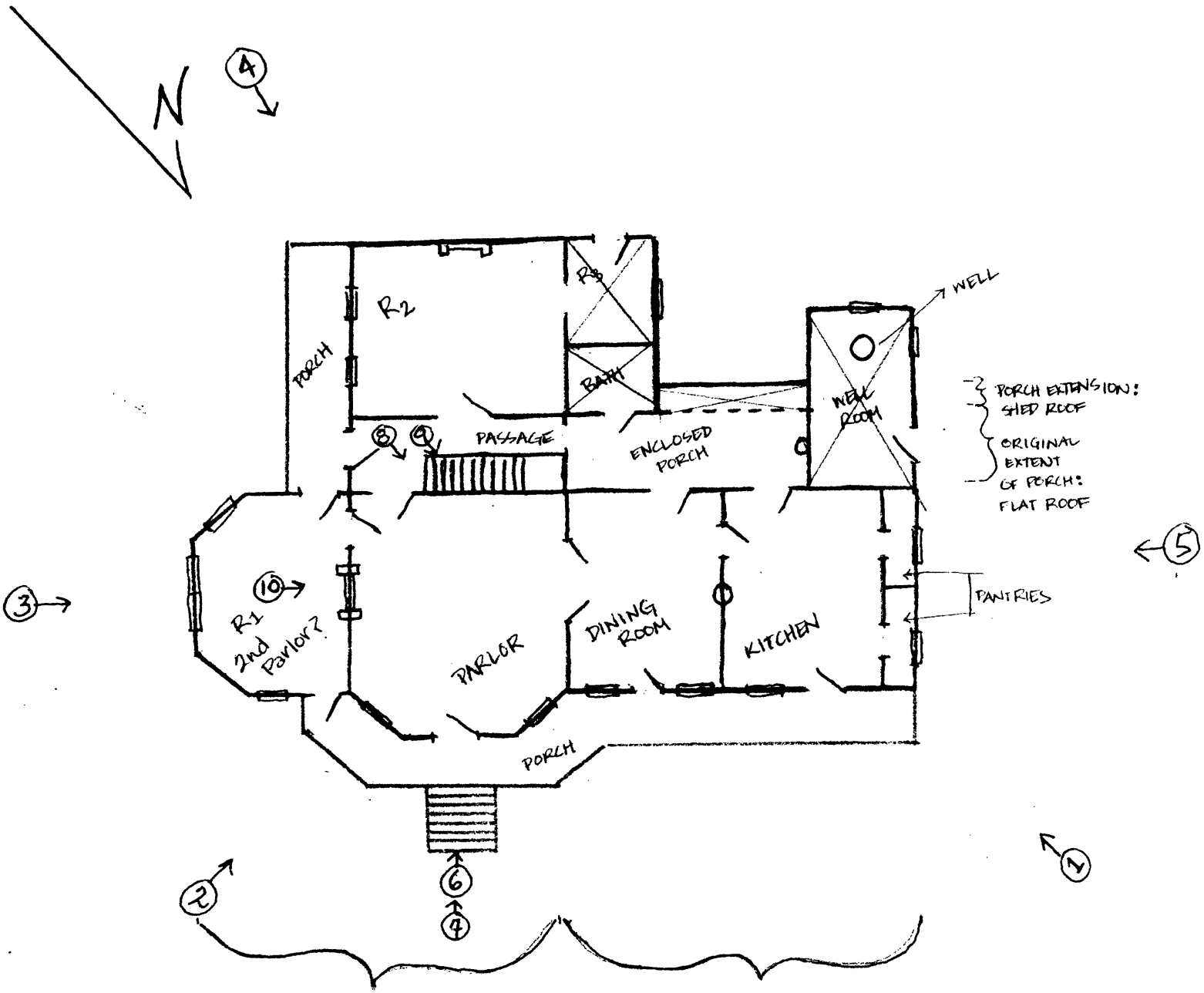
JEFFERSON ST. (DIRT)



REED-DOSSEY HOUSE BROWNSVILLE, EDMONSON CO., KY

SCHEMATIC PLAN AND PHOTOGRAPHIC KEY

(NOT TO SCALE)



2 STORIES

1 STORY

○ → PHOTOGRAPHS

ROOMS "X"ED INDICATE ADDITIONAL FABRIC