

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Kentucky
COUNTY: Woodford
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE MAY 6 1975

1. NAME

COMMON:
Big Spring Church

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Same

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
121 Rose Hill

CITY OR TOWN:
Versailles

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
6

STATE: **Kentucky** CODE: **021** COUNTY: **Woodford** CODE: **239**

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) Vacant

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Woodford County Historical Society, Inc.

STREET AND NUMBER:
232 Montgomery Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: **Versailles** STATE: **Kentucky** CODE: **021**

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Woodford County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Versailles** STATE: **Kentucky** CODE: **021**

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky

DATE OF SURVEY: **1971** Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Kentucky Heritage Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
401 Wapping Street

CITY OR TOWN: **Frankfort** STATE: **Kentucky** CODE: **021**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: _____
COUNTY: _____
ENTRY NUMBER: **MAY 6 1975**
DATE: _____
FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Big Spring Church is located a block west of the main north-south axis of the town, Washington Street, at the head of a ravine in which the Spring (after which the church was named) is located. It was on a far corner of the same block which contained the Public Square and Courthouse. (See maps of 1794 and 1877) Rose Street, which the structure faces, continues up a short hill to the west and becomes an attractive residential neighborhood of large mid- and late Victorian houses; to the south are intrusive parking lots and commercial structures, although farther east across Washington Street are several blocks of still older structures, some of them contemporary with the church building.

In a report entitled, "A Tidewater Colonial Building in Versailles," presented to the Woodford County Historical Society in 1969, Clay Lancaster gave his opinion of the architectural history and sources of the building: "The 150-year-old Baptist Meeting House on Rose Hill in Versailles belongs to the category of such fine 18th-century buildings in Virginia as Pohick Church (where Washington worshiped) in Fairfax County, the brick public buildings and residences of Williamsburg, and great plantation houses along the James River. The Kentucky church relates to these pre-Revolutionary monuments of the Old Dominion in style, straightforward design, good sense of scale and proportion, simplicity of details, sound construction, and excellence of craftsmanship.

"The Baptist Meeting House measures approximately 47 x 32 feet and is five-bayed on the longer sides and three-bayed on the ends. Originally it had four equisized doorways with transoms, two on the south front and one each on the east and north. The south and east walls were considered the principal facades, as here the bricks are laid in Flemish bond and wedge-shaped voussoirs are set above the doors and windows, the other two walls having common-bond brickwork that continues horizontally over the openings. Window glass is 10 by 12 inches, with 9-over-6-paned sashes on the main level and 6-over-6-paned sashes above. All windows were shuttered. The building was covered by a hipped roof with a continuous horizontal cornice all around.

"The plan of the meeting house was typical of its kind, consisting of a single rectangular auditorium with upper gallery 11 1/2 feet deep around the south, east, and north sides. The stairs to the balcony were in the northeast corner, and there was no window on the lower level behind the stairway in the north wall. The pulpit was centered

(continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

4. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1819;1830;1854

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | losophy | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | itarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Big Spring Church, originally a Baptist meeting house, is important not only because of its early construction, but also because of its association with a significant movement in church history in Kentucky. Campbellism was to result in the establishment of a new Protestant denomination, the Disciples of Christ, or Christian Church.

Big Spring Church was constructed in 1819 in the town of Versailles, founded in 1792 to serve as a county seat as well as a center of trade. Located in an area just west of Lexington, Kentucky, Versailles remained the only incorporated town in Woodford County from 1792 to 1835.

By 1792 and the founding of Versailles, there were already many Baptists in the State, although the first Baptist church was not constructed until 1781. After 1792, however, particularly as a result of heavy migration from Virginia, numerous other Baptist churches were built.

The Big Spring Church was organized in 1813 and was primarily the work of Jacob Creath, Sr., a minister then at nearby Clear Creek, and his nephew Jacob Creath, Jr. Jacob Creath, Sr. (1777-1854), originally from Nova Scotia, moved with his family to Virginia at an early age. He was ordained a Baptist minister in 1798 and moved to Lexington five years later when he was offered the pastorship of the Town Fork Church. During the next few years, before coming to Versailles, Creath was affiliated with various other churches in the same general area.

Although not well educated, Creath was a gifted speaker. It is said Henry Clay thought him the finest natural orator he had ever heard. He possessed great persuasive powers and in one year during the Great Revival period of 1827-1830 he was credited with converting 1400 people.

(continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Armstrong, O. K. and Armstrong, Marjorie M. The Indomitable Baptists. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1967, pp. 161-162.

Berry, Mattie L. A Sketch of the Christian Church at Versailles, Kentucky. Versailles: Woodford Sun Co., 1930, p. 5-14.

(continued)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		38° 03' 06"	84° 43' 54"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1/2 acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

16/699010
4212 770
60

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: William Foley GM:WEL

ORGANIZATION: Woodford County Historical Society DATE: 11/1/73

STREET AND NUMBER: 232 Montgomery Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Versailles STATE: Kentucky CODE: 021

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: Eldred W. Melton

Title: State Liaison Officer

Date: 1-29-75

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

[Signature]
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 5/6/75

ATTEST:

[Signature]
Keeper of The National Register

Date: 5.2.75

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Big Spring Church

7. Description (continued)

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on the [long] west side, facing the east doorway; and directly behind the pulpit, instead of two-tiered fenestration as elsewhere, a single 15-paned window was placed halfway between the two levels. The old Methodist-Episcopal Meeting House (1822--now razed) on Church Street in Lexington had this same device, though the pulpit was at the short end and the balcony, therefore, stretched across the long sides and connected at the far end.

"Built to last, the walls of the church on Rose Hill are three bricks thick. Some of the roof timbers are 8 inches across and 12 inches deep. The building has survived two major vicissitudes, the first when it changed hands and served as a meeting place for the Disciples of Christ about 1830, and the second when it became a residence after 1854. The first may have been responsible for the cavernous entrance once centered on the south front, which would have entailed the closing up of the two original doorways in this wall, and the insertion of the former middle window from the front in place of the east doorway.

"Mid-century renovation was more drastic, desecrating the building by adding the ugly, steep gable with ridiculous brackets, entrance with side lights, triple window above, and enlarging and making use of new frames in the windows of the street facade. Three windows were filled in on the east flank and four on the west, including the intermediary one over the pulpit. A new opening was cut on this side, and three windows were obliterated and a new door opened on the back. Refined exterior window sills with nosing were replaced by crude rectangular slabs at this time. The interior was [cut] into a stairhall and rooms, and chimneys for fireplaces were run up through the roof.

"In spite of the alterations enumerated, the old Baptist Meeting House retains its sturdy form and the essence of its pleasing lines. That which has been added has little to do with the construction of the building and could be taken away without damage, and the original features that are gone could be replaced without guesswork. These are both fortunate factors."

The structure has been restored to its presumed original form according to Mr. Lancaster's close analysis and direction since 1969. The exterior restoration was completed in 1974 with work still in progress on the interior.

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Big Spring Church

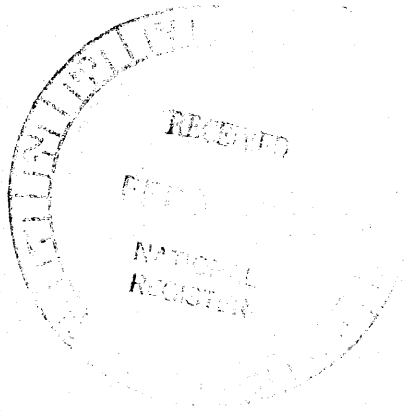
Page 3

7. Description (continued)

The Victorian south gable (with its retardataire stripped Palladian window) and Italianate brackets have been removed, returning the roof to its original hipped form (with new sheathing).

The entrance openings have been returned to their original proportions, and the former middle front window replaced. New window frames have been installed and new sash, copied from two original sashes found in the building. New door frames have been copied from existing ones; new doors and other details are based on Kentucky designs of the period. Reconstruction of the pulpit, balcony, and inside stairs is based on physical evidence (see photo taken during restoration). Sills have not been replaced.

As Lancaster points out, the overall design of the structure as he reconstructs its original form was directly indebted to Virginia Georgian prototypes. The restoration itself is a model of ingenuity and good taste.



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8. Significance (continued)

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Creath's talents were put to use in the organization of the Big Spring congregation. The church grew rapidly in numbers and by 1819 its members could afford to build the meeting house which now stands at 121 Rose Hill.

During the 1820s Creath and his congregation became adherents of the ideas and principles then being espoused by former Presbyterian minister, Alexander Campbell (1787-1866). Campbell advocated a return to a more primitive Christianity, eliminating societies and groups within the congregation which, he thought, would ultimately result in uniting all Christendom. He believed the individual church was the highest and only ecclesiastical organization recognized in the New Testament and it had no need of associations or conferences. Objections to missions, Bible and tract societies, church constitutions, theological schools and an educational ministry concluded in his separation from existing denominations and the founding of a new church, called the Disciples of Christ or Christian Church. His followers were most commonly known as Campbellites.

In the early 19th century Campbell drew most of his support from the ranks of the Baptist Church. During the period 1829-1832 the storm broke and a good many members permanently severed ties with their former churches. Although the Baptists were not severely affected by the schism, it was still "the greatest secession from the Baptist ranks ever known in their history in Kentucky." (Collins, p. 419)

Creath and his congregation were among those who joined the Campbellites and in 1830 were cast out from the Baptist Elkhorn Association. The Versailles church then became the independent Disciples of Christ Church. At this time physical changes were made in the form of the church, in accordance with Campbell's views.

Also of interest is the fact that at one time the church had on its roll a number of blacks, slaves who attended services with their masters. They sat in the gallery which they reached by a stairway coming down to the pavement. After the Civil War, the Negroes withdrew and built churches of their own.

The structure became a residence after 1854 when a new church building was constructed. 120 years later an exemplary restoration has returned the structure as closely as possible to its original form.

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(Number all entries)

Big Spring Church

9. Major Bibliographical References (continued) Page 2

Bokes, H. Lew. Biographical Sketches of Gospel Preachers. Nashville: Gospel Advocate Co., 1932, pp. 33-36.

Collins, Richard. History of Kentucky, Vol I. Louisville: John P. Morton & Co., 1924 (reprint of original 1874 edition), pp. 458, 419, 424, 426, 428.

Lancaster, Clay. "A Tidewater Colonial Building in Versailles," 1969.

Masters, Frank M. A History of Baptists in Kentucky. Middletown, Kentucky: Kentucky Baptist Historical Society, 1953, pp. 10, 11, 24, 41, 42, 46, 211, 226.

Spencer, J. H. A History of Kentucky Baptists, Vol I. Cincinnati: J. R. Baumes, 1885, pp. 582.

Taylor, John. A History of Ten Baptist Churches. Frankfort: J. H. Holeman, 1823, pp. 128-133.

The Woodford Sun. December 13, 1973, p. 7.

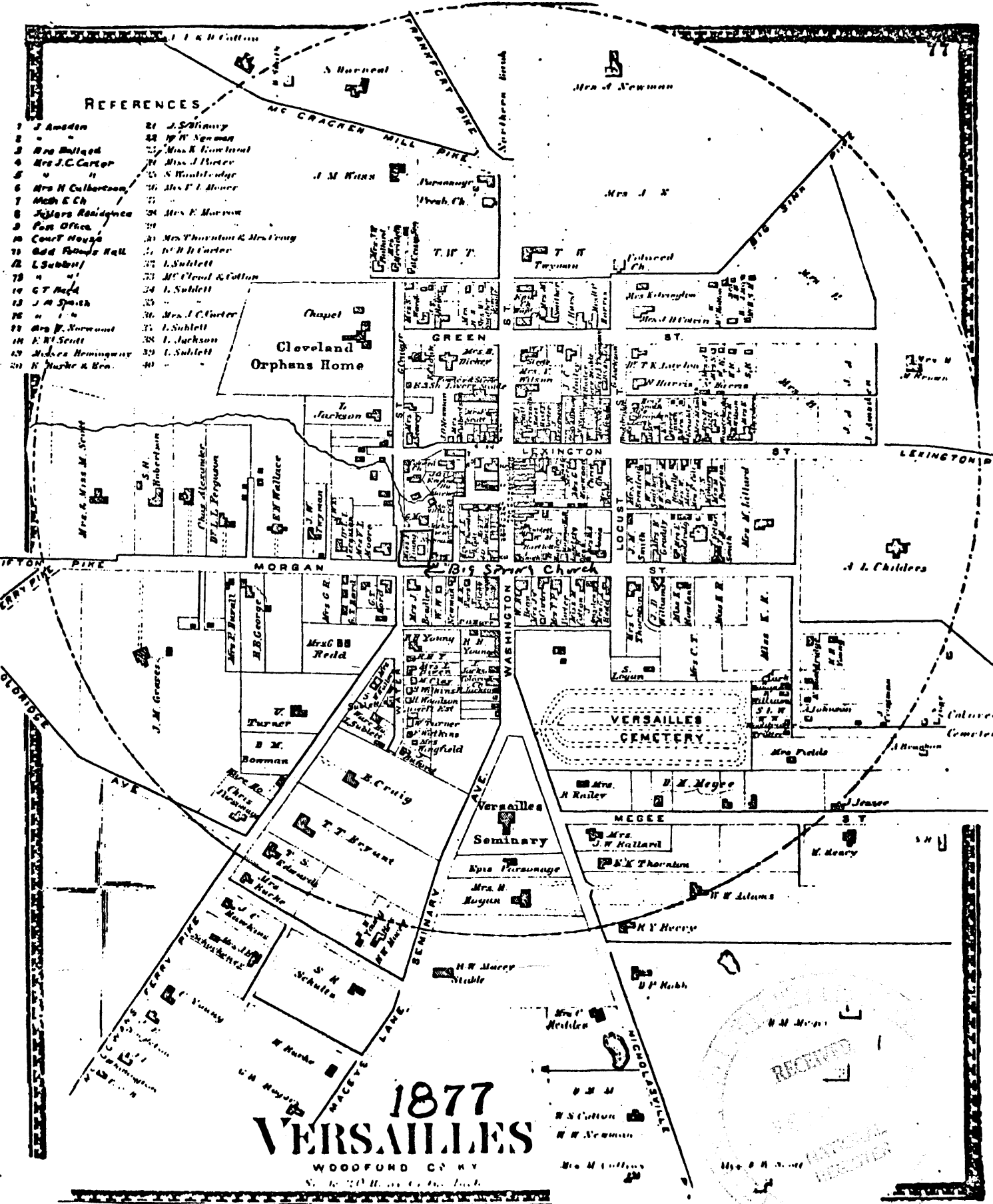
Woodford County Deed Book 4, pp. 66-67.

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NATIONAL
REGISTER

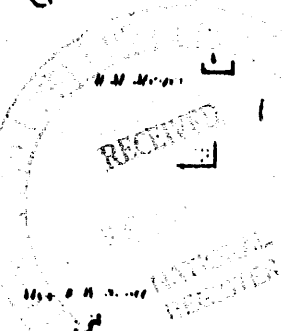
Atlas of Woodford County, Kentucky

REFERENCES

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 J. Amodeo | 21 J. Salinger |
| 2 Bro. Mallog | 22 W. N. Newman |
| 3 Mrs. J. C. Carter | 23 Mrs. K. K. Newman |
| 4 " " " | 24 Mrs. J. Porter |
| 5 " " " | 25 S. Knudsen |
| 6 Mrs. H. Culbertson | 26 Mrs. F. L. Abner |
| 7 Math. E. Ch. | 27 Mrs. F. Morrison |
| 8 J. W. R. R. R. | 28 Mrs. Thornton & Mrs. Long |
| 9 Post Office | 29 W. H. H. Carter |
| 10 Court House | 30 L. Sublett |
| 11 Odd Fellows Hall | 31 M. Cloud & Cotton |
| 12 L. Sublett | 32 L. Sublett |
| 13 " " " | 33 " " " |
| 14 " " " | 34 Mrs. J. C. Carter |
| 15 " " " | 35 L. Sublett |
| 16 " " " | 36 L. Jackson |
| 17 " " " | 37 " " " |
| 18 " " " | 38 " " " |
| 19 " " " | 39 " " " |
| 20 " " " | 40 " " " |



1877
VERSAILLES
 WOODFORD CO KY
 S. W. 20 H. on C. & O. R. R.



VERSAILLES, KENTUCKY

WOODFORD CO. COURT — MARCH — 1794 — DEED BOOK "B", B-351

E

87	88	95	96	103	104	119	120
85	86	93	94	101	102	117	118
83	84	91	92	99	100	115	116
81	82	89	90	97	98	113	114

Locust St No 5

79	80	21	22	23	24	111	112
77	78	11	12	13	14	109	110
75	76	10	123	121	15	107	108
73	74	9			16	105	106

Green St.

Cross St.

Morgan St.

Washington St. No. 1

71	72	8	124	Public Square	1	25	26
69	70	7			2	27	28
67	68	6	5		3	29	30
65	66	20	19	18	Big Spring Church 1819	31	32

No. 3

No. 4

No. 2

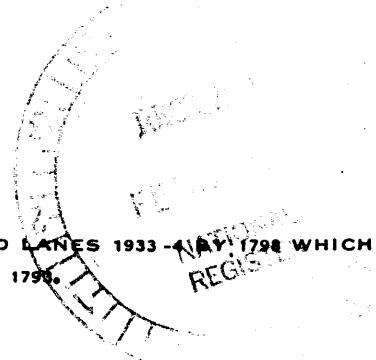
Water St. No. 6

57	58	49	50	41	42	33	34
59	60	51	52	43	44	35	36
61	62	53	54	45	46	37	38
63	64	55	56	47	48	39	40

W

THE STREETS ARE 66 F. WIDE & THE ALLEYS ARE 16²
 THE PUBLIC SQUARE CONTAINS BEING 295 FT. SQUARE
 THE HALF ACRE LOTS ARE 208 - 8 BY 104 - 4

43,560 SQ. FT. 15 ONE ACRE LOTS. THE WHOLE PLATT BOTH STREETS AND LANES 1933 - 1941 1798 WHICH MAKE 80 ACRES. THIS IS CONTENTS OF THE TOWN AT PRESENT MAY 18 1798.



CITY OF VERSAILLES

WATER STREET (unimproved)

N 3°00'E
111.1'

S 87°00'E
85.1'

S 4°09'W
111.1'

To City Park

4.1'

2-STORY
BRICK

ALLEY

N 87°00'W

18.7'

82.9'

3.6'

7.5' Concrete Sidewalk

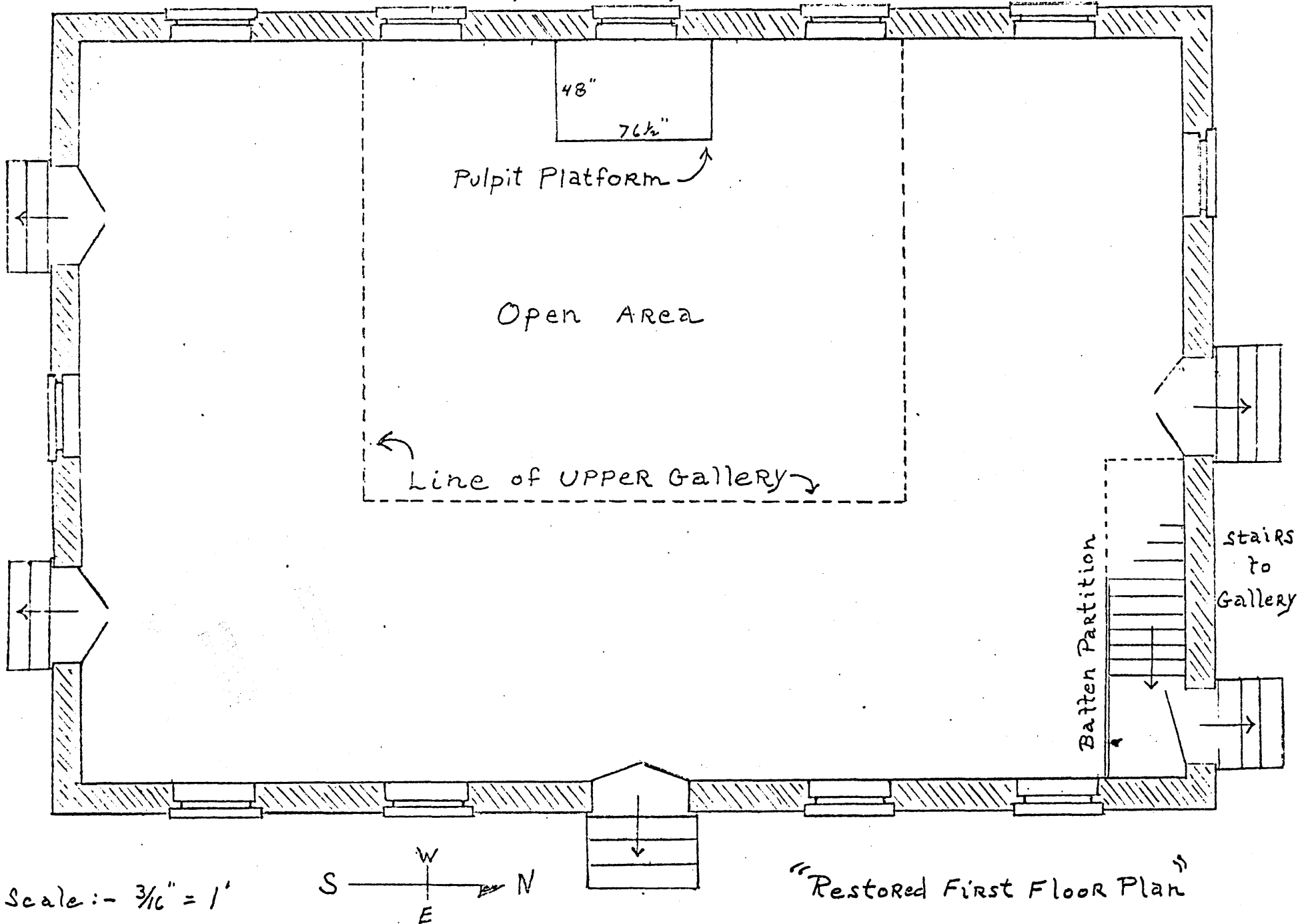
ROSE HILL STREET

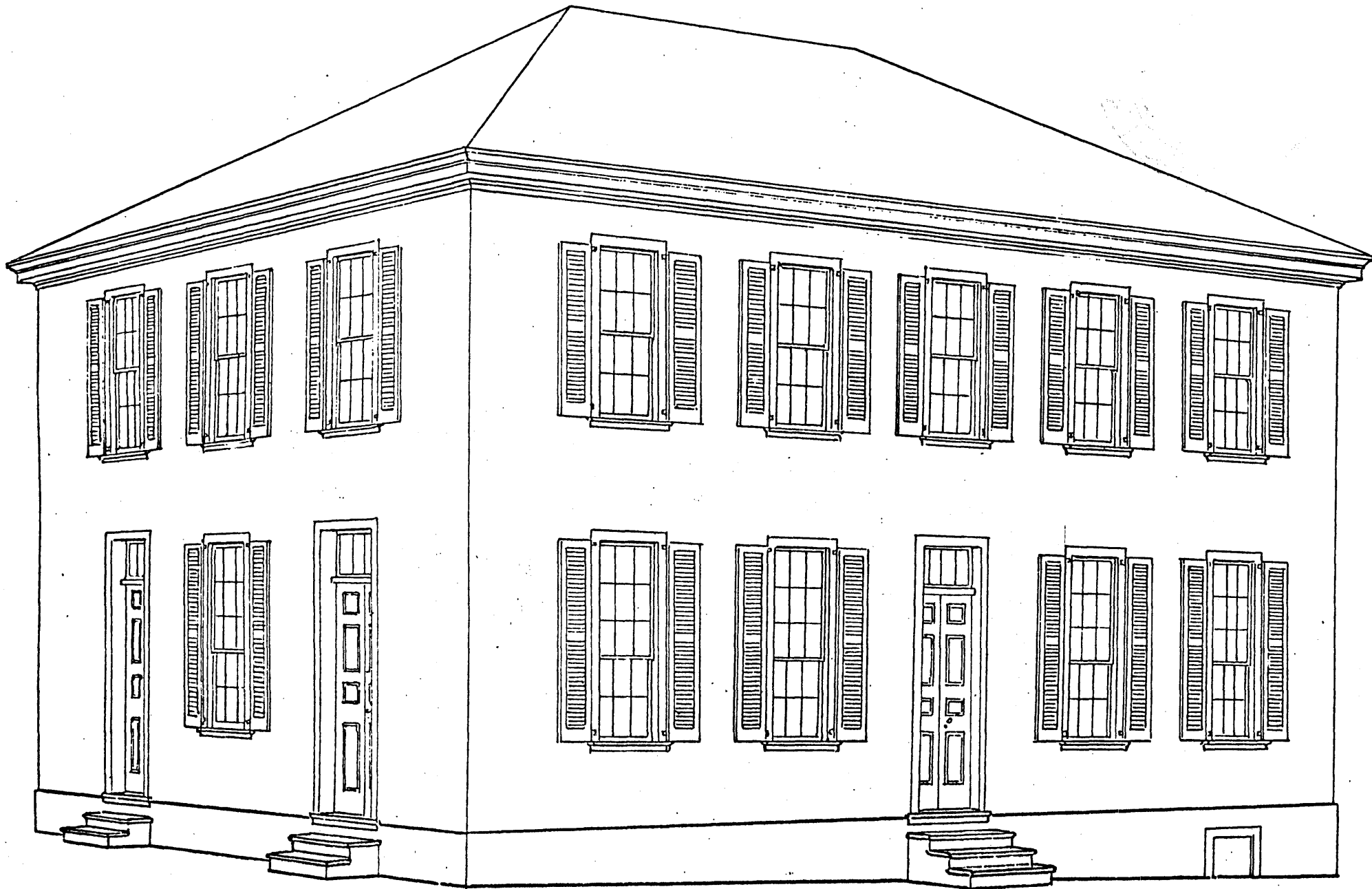


ROGERS PROPERTY
Surveyed Dec. 1969
By Wm. F. Hippe
Scale 1" = 20'

Baptist Meeting House - Versailles, Ky. Ca. 1819
Clay Lancaster - 14 May 1970

Intermediary window →





Old Baptist Meeting House - - When Restoration Completed

As drawn by Clay Lancaster, August 1969.