

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name VanMetre, John, House

other names/site number M-16

2. Location

street & number 177 Elsie Drive not for publication N/A

city or town Kearneysville vicinity

state West Virginia code WV county Berkeley code 003 zip code 25430

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

Susan M. Pierce, DSHPO 12/9/03
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

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 official/Title _____ 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 A. Beall Signature of the Keeper 2/11/04 Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously-listed resources in the count)

private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC/single dwelling
DOMESTIC/secondary structure
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural outbuilding

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC/single dwelling
DOMESTIC/secondary structure
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural outbuilding

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)
EARLY REPUBLIC/Federal

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)
foundation STONE/limestone
walls BRICK; WOOD/log; WOOD/vertical board
roof METAL; ASPHALT
other SYNTHETICS/vinyl

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

Refer to 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** 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1780, c.1800, 1913, c.1920

Significant Dates

1780; c. 1800; 1913; c.1920

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

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

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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.
- 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:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Berkeley County Historic Landmarks Commission

VanMetre, John, House
Name of Property

Berkeley County, WV
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 10 acres

U. S. G. S. Quad map: Martinsburg, WV

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>18</u>	<u>247160</u>	<u>4366860</u>	3		
2				4		

N/A See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(See Continuation Sheet)

Boundary Justification

(See Continuation Sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David L. Taylor, Principal

organization Taylor & Taylor Associates, Inc. date February, 2003

street & number 9 Walnut Street telephone 814-849-4900

city or town Brookville state PA zip code 15825

Additional Documentation

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)

Property Owner

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

name Stephen Workings and Maurine Harrigan

street & number 177 Elsie Drive telephone 304-263-8894

city or town Kearneysville state WV zip code 25430

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

VanMetre, John, House
Berkeley County, WV

Section Number 7 Page 1

7. Description

The John VanMetre House (Resource No. 1; Berkeley County Survey Site No. M-16; Photos 1-11) is a 2½-story L-shaped gable-roofed residence of both log and brick construction which was initially constructed c. 1780 and was enlarged c. 1800 with the addition of a log ell to the original brick section. The nominated property contains five contributing resources and one non-contributing property. In addition to the house, contributing resources include a log smoke house (Resource No. 2), a substantial central-aisle timber frame barn (Resource No. 3), and two modest wood sheds (Resource Nos. 4 and 5). The property's single non-contributing resource is a c. 1980 garage (Resource No. 6). The VanMetre House is located in the Opequon District of rural Berkeley County, approximately three miles southeast of the county seat of Martinsburg, in West Virginia's eastern panhandle. The John VanMetre House and its contributing dependencies retain integrity in all of its qualities: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The original house which farmer John VanMetre built about 1780 is a three-bay Federal-style I-house of Flemish bond brick construction, presently painted white (Photo 1). The house rests on a foundation of coursed rubble limestone and is oriented to the south. The three-bay facade of the original house incorporates a centered entrance with a transom sash and a modestly-detailed pedimented portico of wood (Photo 1). The portico is centered over the doorway and is supported by attenuated octagonal wood posts and corresponding semi-octagonal pilasters. The gable ends of this section have interior gable-end brick chimneys with fixed six-light sash flanking the chimneys at attic level.

Extending northward from the main house is a two-story gable-roofed addition of log and frame construction, erected c. 1800 and after. Eventually clad in weatherboard (Fig. 2), this wing is presently clad in vinyl siding; the weatherboard is extant beneath the newer siding. The ell incorporates a double-gallery porch on the east elevation and a one-story hipped-roof porch on the west elevation. The west porch replaced a portico similar to that which has been retained on the facade (Fig. 1); it is supported by Tuscan columns and exhibits a solid wood balustrade. A brick chimney penetrates the roofline near the center of the addition.

All fenestration on the VanMetre House is flat-topped, six-over-six lights; the windows on the brick section have jack arch lintels and originally had exterior operable shutters (Fig. 1). The intersecting roof system of the VanMetre House is sheathed in standing-seam metal.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

VanMetre, John, House
Berkeley County, WV

Section Number 7 Page 2

The interior of the VanMetre House is organized around a two-over-two-room central-passage single-pile plan for the brick main house; the log and wood frame addition has two rooms on each story. In the central hall of the brick section, a straight-run open-string stair with a turned newel and modest balusters (Photo 6) accesses the second story. Fireplaces are in most rooms, with classically-derived wood mantles (Photo 7). The walls containing the fireplace and mantle in the diningroom (Photo 7) and in the larger upstairs bedroom (Photo 10) are fully paneled with a built-in cupboard integrated into the paneled wall of the diningroom. The corresponding wall in the bedroom has a vertical board door opening to a steep boxed stair leading to the unfinished attic. Much of log surfaces of the ell are exposed (Photos 8, 9).

Scattered around the cultural landscape of the nominated VanMetre property are several dependencies. The largest of these is a 1913 central-aisle timber frame barn (Photo 15); a historic photo (Fig. 3) indicates that several other agricultural buildings once existed in close proximity to the barn. None of the larger historic dependencies are extant. Adjacent to the barn is a shed-roofed crib of wood with vertical wood sides, of indeterminate use and age (Photo 15). Southwest of the house is a chicken coop (Photo 14) with a shed roof and board-and-batten exterior finishes. Immediately north of the house is a two-car modern garage, built outside the period of significance of the property.

Summarizing, the following properties are included within the nominated 10-acre tract; the numbers refer to the sketch map which accompanies the nomination:

1. John VanMetre House, residential

Description: 2½-story Federal-style I-house of brick construction, with laterally-oriented gable roof, three-bay facade, centered entrance, and pedimented portico on facade; a 2-story log and frame addition is set at right angles to the main house, including a double-gallery porch on the north elevation

Date: c. 1780 (main house); c. 1800 (addition)

1 contributing building

2. Smokehouse, residential, secondary structure

Description: single-story log smokehouse with gable-end orientation and an extended overhanging gable roof of standing-seam metal; set on stone piers and exterior surfaces clad in vertical boards

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

VanMetre, John, House
Berkeley County, WV

Section Number 7 Page 3

Date: c.1800

1 contributing building

3. Barn, agricultural outbuilding

Description: central-aisle barn of timber frame construction, one story in height with large hay loft and shed-roofed lateral wings; carved on a wall is the date July 5, 1913, suggesting a community barn-raising on that day.

Date: 1913

1 contributing building

4. Shed, agricultural outbuilding

Description: modest single-story wood shed of two bays with a door with multi-light window

Date: c. 1920

1 contributing building

5. Chicken Coop, agricultural outbuilding

Description: 1-story chicken house with vertical board siding

Date: c. 1920

1 contributing building

6. Garage, residential dependency

Description: 1-story two-bay garage of modern construction, built outside the period of significance of the nominated property

Date: 1980

1 non-contributing building

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

VanMetre, John, House
Berkeley County, WV

Section Number 8 Page 4

8. Significance

The John VanMetre House (Berkeley County Historic Site Survey No. M-16) meets National Register Criterion C for *architecture*, as a locally-distinctive example of a Federal-style I-house which grew in size with the addition of an ell of log and wood construction. The period of significance for the property is 1780, for farmer John VanMetre's construction of the main house; c.1800, for the construction of the smokehouse; 1913, for construction of the barn; and c. 1920, for the construction of the shed and chicken coop.

The house was erected c. 1780 by Johannes (anglicized to "John") VanMetre (1735-1818), a slave-owning farmer, and became the seat of his c. 250-acre farm. Little is known of VanMetre, except that he and his sister, Joanna, inherited 238 acres from their grandfather, also John VanMeter. The younger Vanmetre acquired his sister's interest in the property and about 1780 built the nominated property. Recorded under the name, Hance Vanmetre, he commanded a company of Berkeley County militia during the American Revolution.¹ He occupied the nominated property until his death in 1818. His will, written in 1816, provided

to my male children this contains my present dwelling Plantation and to be considered a home in common for all my children until my youngest son attains the age of twenty-one years. My dwelling plantation is bequeathed to my sons Ezra, John, and Thornton, daughters Eliza, Josina, and Maria VanMetre. The land east of bridge to my female children, daughter Nancy Albutris \$1,200 and Catherine VanMetre \$30.00, Negro Hanna to be amancipated [sic] when son Thornton is 15 yrs., young slaves to be amancipated [sic] when 28 years old.²

In 1833, VanMetre's son Thornton, by then living in Ross County, Ohio, sold the property to Joseph Burns and John Burns, Jr. who retained ownership until the mid-1840s. The longest ownership of the property was that of the Miller family which began in 1848, when Samuel Miller (1787-1882), a Marylander who had moved to Berkeley County early in life,³ purchased the farm. Samuel Miller farmed the property for nearly thirty-five years until his death in 1882, when at the age of

¹"John Vanmetre House," *The Berkeley Journal* 1998, 106-107.

²Excerpt from Will of John VanMetre, taken from MS of research notes on the property compiled by Don C. Wood and part of the collection of the Berkeley County Historical Society, Martinsburg, West Virginia.

³*The Statesman*, Martinsburg, April 13, 1882. [Samuel Miller Obituary]

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

VanMetre, John, House
Berkeley County, WV

Section Number 8 Page 5

ninety-five he was the oldest citizen of Berkeley County. The property was conveyed first to Samuel Miller's son Jacob and later to Jacob's son, William Henry Harrison Miller (1841-1930), who farmed the property for most of his active life. Following W. H. H. Miller's death, the farm was inherited by his son O. C. Miller (c. 1872-1947) in 1931. The property remained in the Miller family until 1952 when it was purchased by Harry S. Grant, by which time the farm had grown to 340 acres. The property has been subdivided for residential development and the nominated tract has been retained with its historic dependencies.

With reference to National Register Criterion C, John VanMetre built his dwelling in the form of an I-house, and the property is significant as a well-preserved example of this most popular of all of the traditional house forms from the South into the Midwest and Northeast. A universally two-over-two-room house type, the I-house was christened by cultural geographer Fred Kniffen in a 1935 study of Louisiana folk house types. Kniffen so named these houses because the builders of most of the homes in his study area came from Indiana, Iowa, and Illinois. He expanded his discussion of this leading folk house type in his 1965 article, "Folk Housing: Key to Diffusion." He recognized these houses as representing the dominate traditional house type found throughout the South and the Midwest.

The "I" house was first recognized in Indiana in 1930 as constituting a link with the Middle Atlantic Source area. It was recognized again in the middle thirties in Louisiana in the form of a house introduced . . . in the late nineteenth century by settlers from Kentucky, Illinois, and Michigan . . . these qualities all "I" houses unfailingly had in common: gables to the sides, at least two rooms in length, one room deep, and two full stories in height . . . Of all old folk types, the "I" house is by far the most widely distributed, notably as a rural dwelling.⁴

As rural areas were settled and agricultural lands cleared, a new agrarian middle class was born and "the 'I' house remained the symbol of economic attainment and . . . its only requisites, one-room depth and two full stories could be in any medium."⁵ The medium chosen by John VanMetre for his "symbol of economic attainment" was brick, laid in the decorative Flemish bond with alternating headers and stretchers. And while the three- and five-bay central-passage plan was often employed for Federal- and Greek Revival-style domestic design, the Federal-style VanMetre house is first and

⁴Kniffen, "Folk Housing," p.553-555.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 562-563.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

VanMetre, John, House
Berkeley County, WV

Section Number 8 Page 6

foremost an I-house, and its significance as described by Kniffen lies in its position as one of the “humbler buildings [which] by reason of their adherence to type and numerical superiority are far more important as markers of basic cultural processes than are the uniquely designed individual structures.”⁶

The Criterion C significance of the VanMetre House is vested in its position as a locally-distinctive example of a modestly-detailed Federal-style I-house, erected by a Berkeley County farmer at the time of the American Revolution. This particular Berkeley County example incorporates Flemish bond brickwork on the facade and jack arched brick lintels, which are somewhat more decorative than the plain stone lintels which often appear on such properties. Like many I-houses in Berkeley County and elsewhere, the VanMetre House includes a log and frame ell extending perpendicular to the main body of the house. Despite the cladding of the wood ell in vinyl siding, the original materials are extant beneath and the property retains a generally high degree of integrity.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 552.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**VanMetre, John, House
Berkeley County, WV**

Section Number 9 Page 7

9. Major Bibliographical References

BIBLIOGRAPHY

“John Vanmetre House,” *The Berkeley Journal*, 1998. Martinsburg: Berkeley County Historical Society, 1998.

Kniffen, Fred. “Folk Housing: Key to Diffusion,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 55 (December, 1965).

Land Records, Berkeley County, West Virginia.

The Statesman, Martinsburg, April 13, 1882. [Samuel Miller Obituary]

Wood, Don C., comp. MS of research notes on the VanMetre House, in the collection of the Berkeley County Historical Society, Martinsburg, West Virginia.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**VanMetre, John, House
Berkeley County, WV**

Section Number 10 Page 8

10. Geographical Data

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Containing that tract described in Berkeley County Deed Book 603, Page 372-373, containing a total of 10 acres.

JUSTIFICATION

The boundary of this nomination consists only of that area currently associated with the John VanMetre House, including the main house, a contributing smokehouse, barn and two sheds, and one non-contributing garage.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

VanMetre, John, House
Berkeley County, WV

Section Number Photo Log Page 10

PHOTOGRAPH LOG

All Photographs:

VanMetre, John, House

Berkeley County, West Virginia

Photographer: David L. Taylor

Date: 2002

Negatives filed at: West Virginia SHPO
Charleston, West Virginia

1. Facade, looking north, showing overall character including pedimented portico over the main entry, fenestration roof, etc.
2. West elevation, looking east, showing gable end of the main house and the ell which extends northward, chimney, fenestration, side porch, etc.
3. Northeast perspective, looking southwest, showing angle of the ell at the rear, double-gallery porch, roof, chimneys etc., along with smoke house located immediately east of the main house
4. Eastern elevation, view west, detail, showing double gallery porch, standing-seam metal roof, chimney, etc.
5. Facade, detail, view northwest, showing portico and its associated trim, main door, fenestration, etc.
6. Facade, detail, view northwest, showing one of the historic multi-light sash which characterize the house, along with its jack-arch lintel
7. Interior, showing beaded board door, hinges, escutcheons, etc, looking south
8. Interior, central hall, showing stair, newel, balustrade, etc.
9. Interior, diningroom, detail, showing Classical Revival-style fireplace mantle, built-in cupboards, etc.
10. First story, detail of log section looking east
11. Second story, log section, looking northwest, showing bedroom and typical finishes
12. Second story bedroom, showing finishes doors, trim, etc.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

VanMetre, John, House
Berkeley County, WV

Section Number Photo Log Page 10

13. Second story bedroom, view looking south
14. Smokehouse located immediately east of main house, looking north from second story
15. New garage (non-contributing), looking northeast
16. View across open land immediately associated with the property, showing c.1920 shed
17. View across property northeast, showing chicken coop and large 1913 central-aisle barn.
18. View of nominated property, looking west.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**VanMetre, John, House
Berkeley County, WV**

Section Number Illustrations Page 11

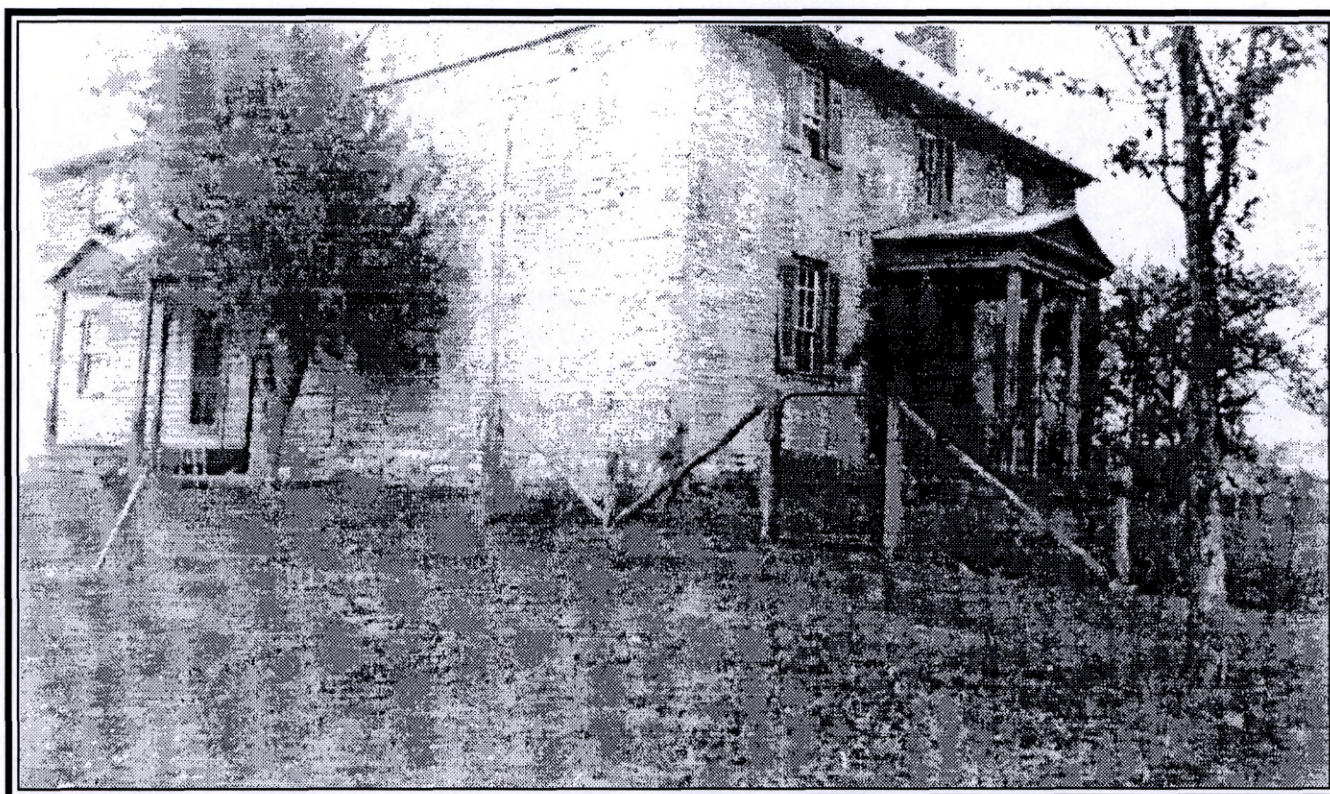


Fig. 1 This view of the VanMetre House shows the portico which has been retained on the facade as well as the matching portico on the side which was replaced by a hipped-roofed porch. Also shown are the exterior operable shutters on the facade.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**VanMetre, John, House
Berkeley County, WV**

Section Number Illustrations Page 12

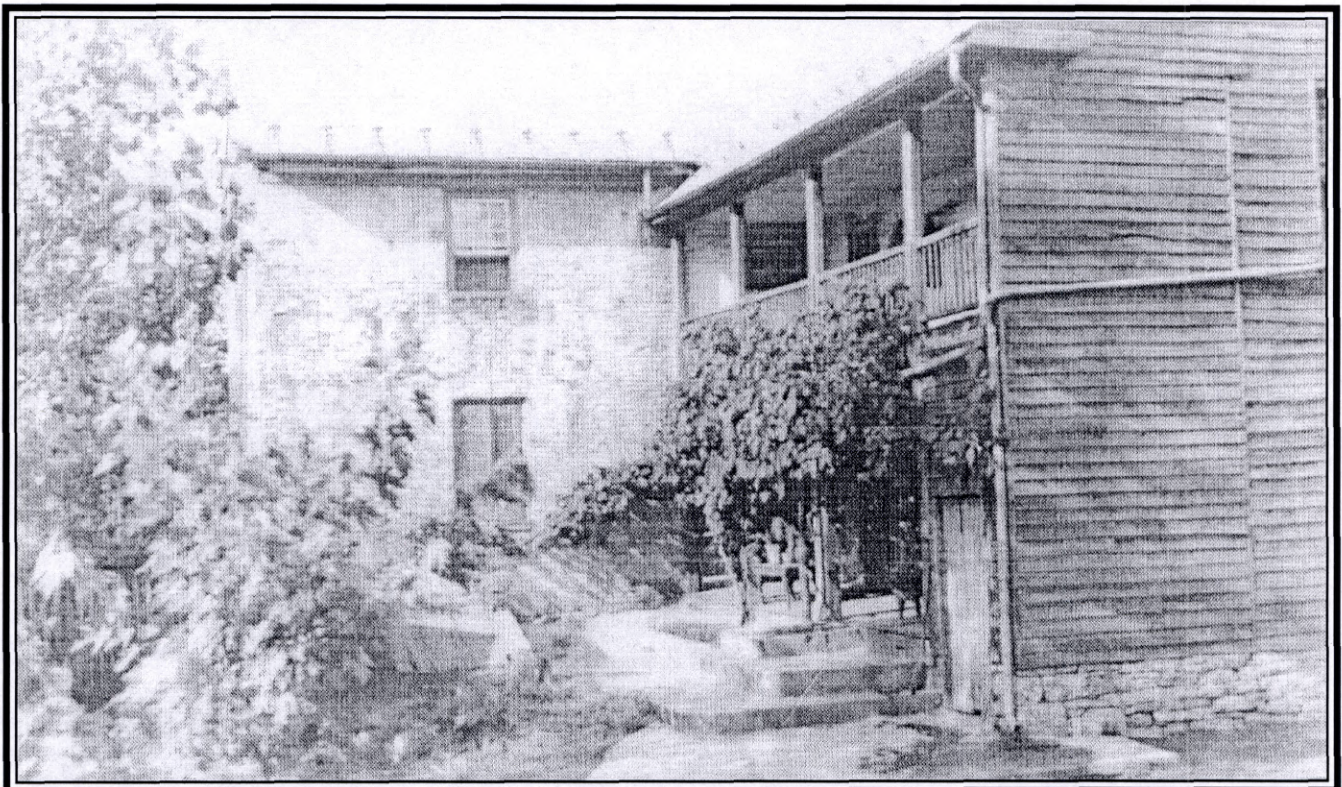


Fig. 2 This historic view of the rear portions of the VanMetre House shows the weatherboard-clad addition which was appended to the original brick I-house.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**VanMetre, John, House
Berkeley County, WV**

Section Number Illustrations Page 13

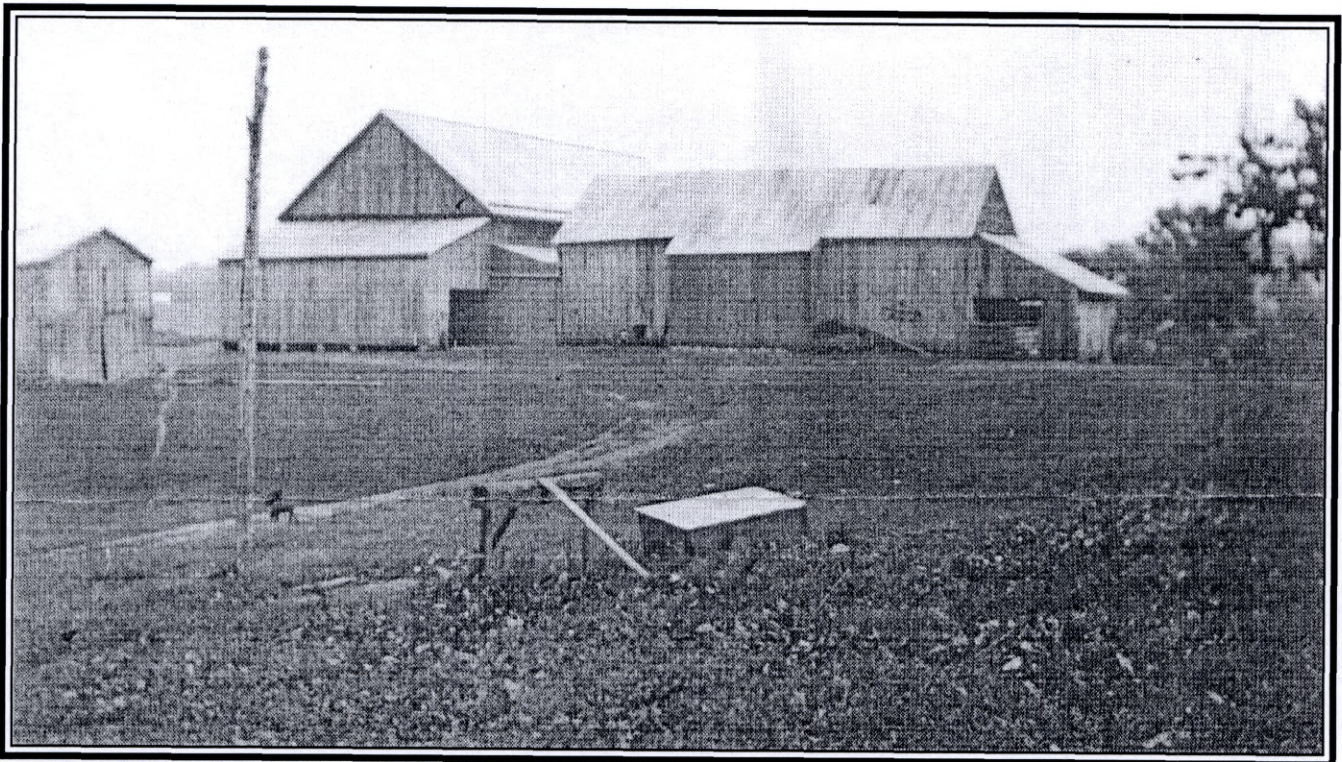


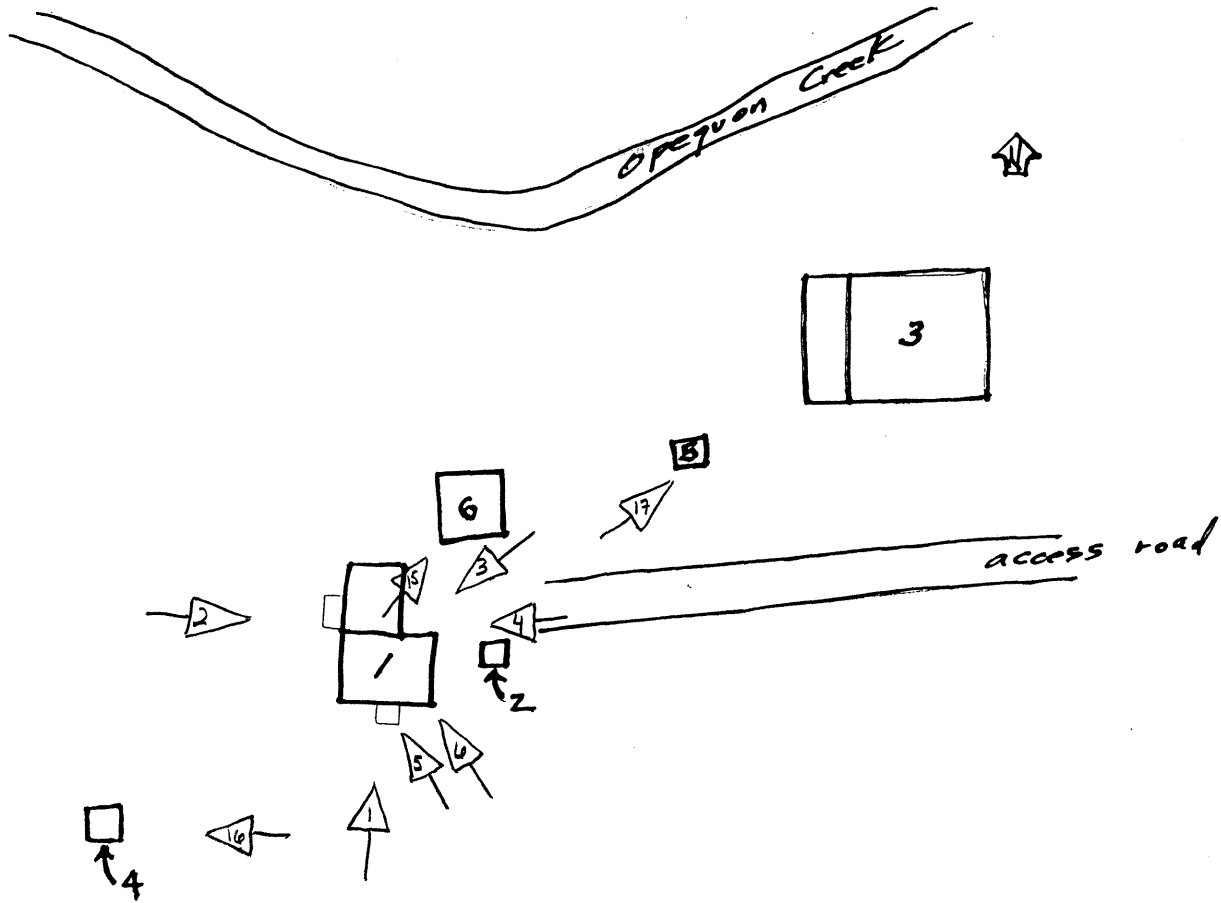
Fig. 3 This historic view looks from the house to the northwest toward the largest of the agricultural outbuildings associated with the property. Only the largest barn is extant.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

VanMetre, John, House
Berkeley County, WV

Section Number Page



Sketch Map
Numbers refer to inventory in Sec 1.
△ = photo vantage points

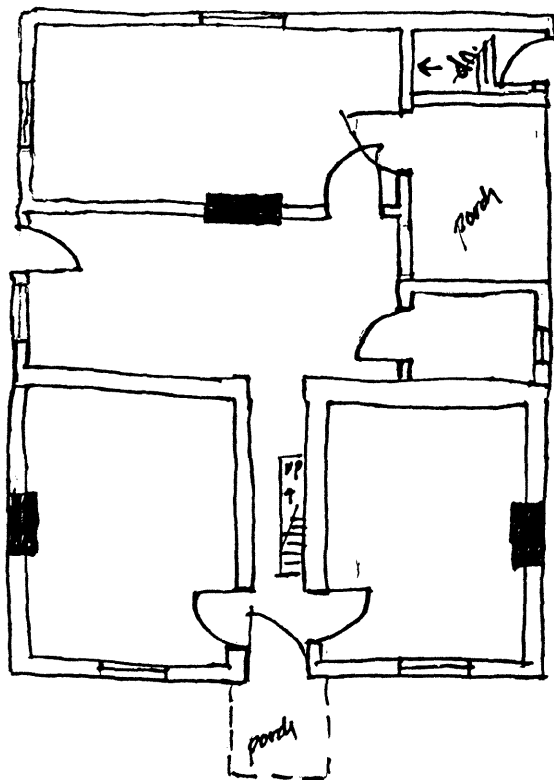
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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

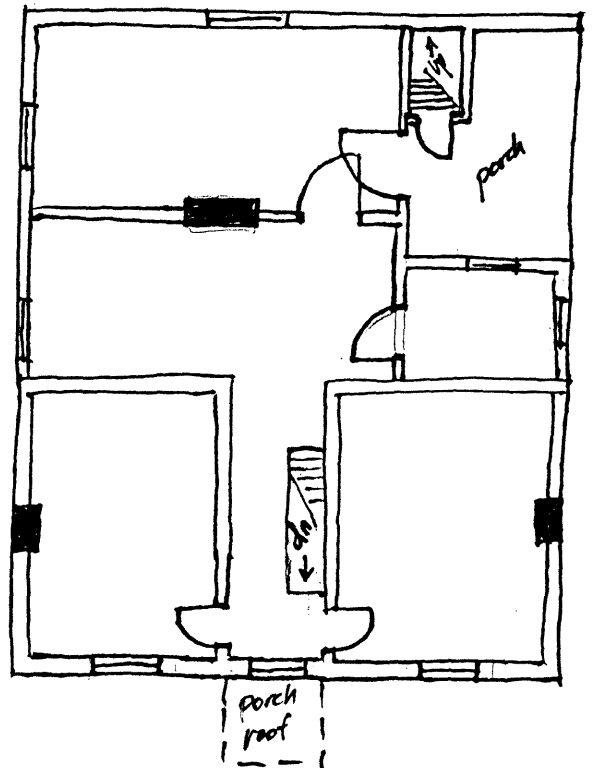
**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**VanMetre, John, House
Berkeley County, WV**

Section Number Page



First story



Second story



Not to scale