

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

SEP 2 1988

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 Penn Place

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Penn Bridge Road

N/A not for publication

city, town Trion

vicinity

state Georgia

code GA

county Chattooga

code GA055

zip code 30753

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
2	buildings
7	sites
	structures
	objects
9	0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

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

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.

Signature of certifying official *Elizabeth A. Lyon* Elizabeth A. Lyon

Date 8/29/88

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Georgia Department of Natural Resources
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:)

Alvons Byer

Entered in the
National Register

9/29/88

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwellingAGRICULTURE/agricultural outbuildingAGRICULTURE/animal facility

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

other: plantation plain

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brickwalls wood/weatherboard

roof woodother

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Penn Place is a historic farmstead. The main house sits on a slight knoll facing southwest overlooking a pasture and the Chattooga River which flows on the east side. The remaining outbuildings include six which are grouped around the main house and two (the mule barn and corn crib) which lie across Penn Bridge Road.

The main house at Penn Place is a plantation plain style, two-over-two frame house with hand-hewn sills, joists and studs. There is a single chimney, constructed of hand-made brick, at either end of the main block of the house. There is a one-story shed porch across the front. A second porch runs from the kitchen entrance to the side entrance. There are three double-door entrances framed by transoms and sidelights. On the east side is a bay window in the original farm office. All windows are six over six panes framed by functional shutters. The present front steps and underpinnings were constructed in 1973 using bricks taken from another family home.

There is very little exterior ornamentation at Penn Place. The house is functional, having been built in a solid manner without any frills.

The plan of the original part of the house is that of a central hall with a room on either side of each of the two floors. These rooms are 18 feet square. There is a hall stairway leading to the second floor. Beyond the parlor, the room on the left as one enters the front door, is a rear stairway and entryway, and beyond that a wing added in 1875 which houses, on the first floor, the dining room and kitchen and originally a back porch. Beyond the original bedroom (now the library) on the right of the front entrance was added a farm office in 1875 (the room with the bay window) now a bedroom. Beyond that, in 1973, the owners added a modern sunroom, removing the original side porch in the process.

The second floor originally had only the two rooms as mentioned. They continue to be used as bedrooms. In 1875 a third bedroom was added above the kitchen, and in 1973 some of the rear stairway area was made into a bath, with another bath being added to the master bedroom (one of the two original bedrooms).

The floors are heart pine with natural finish, and the painted walls are horizontal pine boards. Moldings, crown moldings, door facings, doors and baseboards are original and have been recently repainted in their original colors. All the original wooden mantels remain and are mostly plain. All the doors are original pine. There are seven working fireplaces in the house.

See continuation sheet

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 N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

architecture
agriculture

Period of Significance

1850-1938

Significant Dates

1851

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

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

Statement of Significance

Penn Place is significant in both architecture and agriculture. It is significant in architecture because it represents the continuous building and use of a family-owned farm, and especially its main house, from the original settlement in the 1850s through the historic period and into the present. All changes and updates to this original basic plantation house, designed in the Plantation Plain style, were done by the family, about once a generation, including the present one. It is significant that few concessions were made to prevailing, new, architectural styles, leaving the house today looking much as it did in the 1850s. It is also significant architecturally for the eight surviving outbuildings which indicate the building types, styles, workmanship, and adaptation necessary for such buildings to survive. It is significant in agriculture because the eight remaining historic outbuildings and the known locations of others give evidence to the property's use as a family-owned farm. These outbuildings show the need to build housing for both livestock and chickens, for the servants and to process and store the products from the farm.

Criteria Justification

This property meets National Register Criteria A, "associated with...the broad patterns of our history," because it is a historic, family-owned farm that has remained in the ownership of the same founding family from its creation in the 1850s through the historic period up to the present. There are few farms that remain in the same family over a century and a half as this one has, while still retaining their historic main house, eight historic outbuildings, and a large amount of the original acreage. This house and farm thus represents one of the basic fundamentals of the American Dream, that of the early settler seeking a better future by moving westward, to the then-frontier. The Penn family moved from an older, more settled and thus more stable area of eastern Georgia to the newly-opened-for-settlement, former Cherokee Indian lands, of northwest Georgia. While this migration was short when compared to longer treks west, it was still one to the frontier. Upon this new farm the Penns were able to settle and make a future for themselves and to remain, without any further need to move again.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Goodley, Richard M. "Penn Place." Historic Property Information Form, October 16, 1981, with supplemental information supplied by Robert S. Baker, Jr., County Historian, July 31, 1986. On file at the Historic Preservation Section, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- 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 approximately 275 acres

UTM References

A

1	6	6	5	5	2	9	0	3	8	2	1	3	6	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

C

1	6	6	5	5	6	6	0	3	8	1	9	6	6	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B

1	6	6	5	6	2	8	0	3	8	2	1	2	5	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

D

1	6	6	5	4	8	2	0	3	8	1	9	7	0	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

N/A See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is bounded on the east by the west bank of the Chattooga River; on the south by the southern boundary of Land Lot 119; on the west by the west boundary of Land Lot 119 and a SW to NE diagonal boundary line; and on the north, the northern boundary of Land Lot 118 and then a zig-zag line to a point on the west bank of the Chattooga River. It is marked on the enclosed tax map/aerial photograph.

N/A See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property consists of the remaining historic acreage associated with the property today. It has been attached to the "homeplace" since the mid-19th century and is still owned by the Penn family in the person of the current owner.

N/A See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., Historian

organization Historic Preservation Section date August 24, 1988

street & number Department of Natural Resources telephone 404/656-2840

city or town 205 Butler Street, SE Suite 1462 state Georgia zip code 30334
Atlanta,

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The interior of the house historically had very little ornamentation, and remains so today. Duplicate carpenter locks and brass keepers have been added to replace the original ones which had become unusable. The railings and newel posts on both stairways are original. There are original closets in several of the rooms. There is also a built-in kitchen cabinet.

The building growth of the house can be seen most readily in the building joists and workmanship. The original 1850s portion of the house features hand-hewn sills, joists, and studs that are beveled and pegged, with the joints fitting perfectly. The 1875 addition included sawn material prepared at a nearby saw mill as well as cut nails.

While the original fireplaces were used to heat each room, more recently the fireplaces in the upstairs bedrooms were modified to accommodate coal grates and coal was used for heat. Today the house is heated and cooled by gas. There were three wells near the house, the location of one is marked today by the extant well house. Also remaining in the yard as one of the outbuildings is the old carbide gas generator house, c. 1900. The building houses the old carbide gas generator which was used for lighting until electricity came in the 1930s.

The house is located on a gently sloping hill. While it slopes to the east toward the Chattooga River, to the south it slopes to a 200 acre pasture. There is a front drive, or buggy loop, with a wall which borders the driveway. The yard includes old, massive oaks, cedars, maples, and mulberry trees. There are several brick walkways connecting the house and some of the various outbuildings as well as surrounding the house.

There are eight remaining outbuildings on the property while in the historic period there were sixteen plus approximately twenty tenant houses. The remaining outbuildings consist of the smokehouse, chicken house/dovecote, carbide gas generator house, house servants' house, shed garage, well house, (around the main house) and a mule barn and corn crib across Penn Bridge Road from the main house. The smokehouse is a two-story, wooden structure made of hand-hewn logs, beveled in the same fashion as the original house. It is situated about twenty feet outside the kitchen door. The logs are chinked with a mixture of cement and soil and there are ground level shelves within the building. It has a cedar shingle roof.

The shed garage, built around 1938, is a simple wooden shed-type building with a tin roof. It was built to store farm equipment. Behind the smokehouse is the octagonal well house with chestnut posts and a cedar shingle roof. The chicken house/dovecote was built around 1875. It is of heart-pine clapboard with a cedar shingle roof. Behind the chicken house/dovecote is a triplex residence built for house servants. It has pine board and batten walls and a tin roof.

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It is believed to have been built around 1885 to house the servants who worked in the main house.

To the southeast of the main house is the previously mentioned carbide gas generator house housing the remains of the generator. The building is of concrete with a tabby finish. Across Penn Bridge Road is the mule barn. It is a wooden structure built around 1900. Near it is a corn crib, also built around 1900. It is wood frame with slat walls, railed floor, and a tin roof. It has a central hall through which a wagon could pass to unload corn.

The archaeological potential of the nominated property is only suggested by the area's dense Indian heritage including the nearby location of the Cherokee Indian village of "Island Town". Indian artifacts are a common find along the part of the property bordering the Chattooga River. The property was also the site of a Civil War engagement at Penn's Ford when 30,000 Union troops crossed the Chattooga River on part of this property.

Penn Place is currently in good condition due to the 1973 restoration and continued inhabitation by the same family. It remains in a very rural setting.

Changes to the property have been minimal, many coming from the continued use of the house by the same family for over one hundred and thirty years. Changes or additions were brought about in 1875 when several rooms were added and a kitchen made part of the house with the addition of an ell. The 1973 restoration brought only a few changes including the addition of the sunroom and the removal of the side porch. A bath was added on the first floor adjoining the farm office to make it serviceable as a guest bedroom. Other systems were upgraded at that time. The front steps, underpinnings, and walkways were all repaired or replaced at that time. All of these changes made the house more serviceable to the family while keeping the outward appearance virtually the same.

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Penn Place also meets National Register Criteria C because it "embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period,...". The main house, whose main block was constructed in the early 1850s, with its major historical enlargement coming in the 1870s by the same family, embodies the simple, but functional, characteristics of the plantation plain style of architecture prevalent in the antebellum South, and especially in Georgia. The Plantation Plain style main house includes a two-room, central-hall type plan, with a functional, unadorned stairway, hand-planed interior boards, a front porch, and original exterior finish. The outbuildings reflect building patterns over a longer course of time on this farm, but show the distinctly functional building needs for the well house, dovecote, house servants' house, and animal barns, to name a few. With much of the original material, floor plan, location on the property at a high point, and juxtaposition of the outbuildings around the main house, the entire complex remains as a good example of the many, once-prevalent 19th-century self-contained American farmsteads.

Historical Narrative/Context Statement

Penn Place rests in northwest Georgia in what was Cherokee Indian territory, a separate nation, until treaties in the early 1830s forced the Indians to move westward. Part of Penn Place includes part of the Cherokee Indian village site of "Island Town", with artifacts being found along the Chattooga River. While Georgia assumed control of the Indian lands and proceeded to distribute it to white settlers in the Land and Gold Lotteries of 1832, it was not until the infamous Trail of Tears in 1837-1838 that the Indians were finally removed from all areas. While originally in Walker County, the site fell into Chattooga County when it was created in 1838.

While the nominated property was the home of James Penn (1816-1858), it was his father, William Penn (1785-1870), and brother John, who were the first members of the family to come to this area from eastern Georgia near the Savannah River. William and John purchased land from those who won it in the land lottery and built houses several miles west of Penn Place near the present-day town of Trion.

On December 1, 1849, William Penn purchased four lots (of 160 acres each) along the Chattooga River, including the lot upon which the future Penn Place would be built. It is not known for certain whether the elder Penn built the nominated house in anticipation of his son James' arrival in the area, or waited for his son to build his own house. James was still living in Elbert County, Georgia when the Census of 1850 was taken, but purchased the property from his father on July 25, 1850. It could be presumed from this transaction that James arrived to live permanently in the area shortly afterwards. He built or occupied this house and was farming here when he died in 1858. The property was inherited

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by his son, William Ham Penn (1839-1920), the great-grandfather of the present owner.

On this 2700-acre farm James Penn, and later his son William Ham Penn raised cotton and corn and had slaves working for them in 1860.

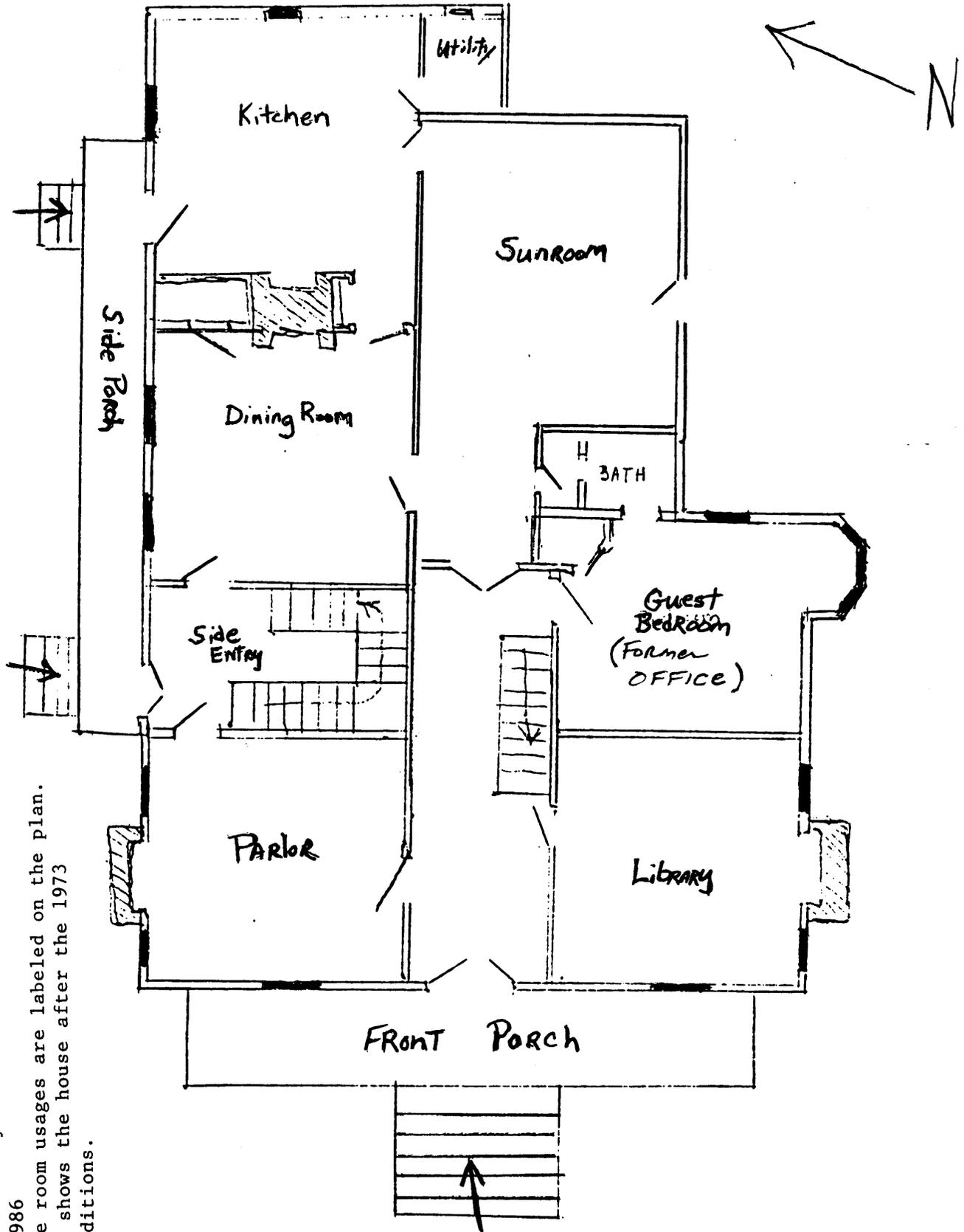
During the Civil War (1861-1865), Union troops arrived in the area as part of the long campaign leading to the Battle of Atlanta in the summer of 1864. At Penn's Ford, on the Chattooga River, just east of the house, 30,000 Union troops crossed the river in October 1864 in pursuit of Confederate General Hood.

After the Civil War, William H. Penn changed his farm's labor system to tenant farming or share cropping to make the farm profitable again. This was the same change undertaken at all former plantations. Cotton and corn remained the primary crops and this method of farming continued until just prior to World War II, when tractors replaced mules and the more costly farm machinery and insecticides made cotton farming unprofitable in this area.

The Penn family were very involved in the activities of Chattooga County. The community of Pennville was named for them, as was Pennville School. William Ham Penn served as one of the County Commissioners, on the County Board of Roads and Revenue, and was affiliated with two local banks in Summerville.

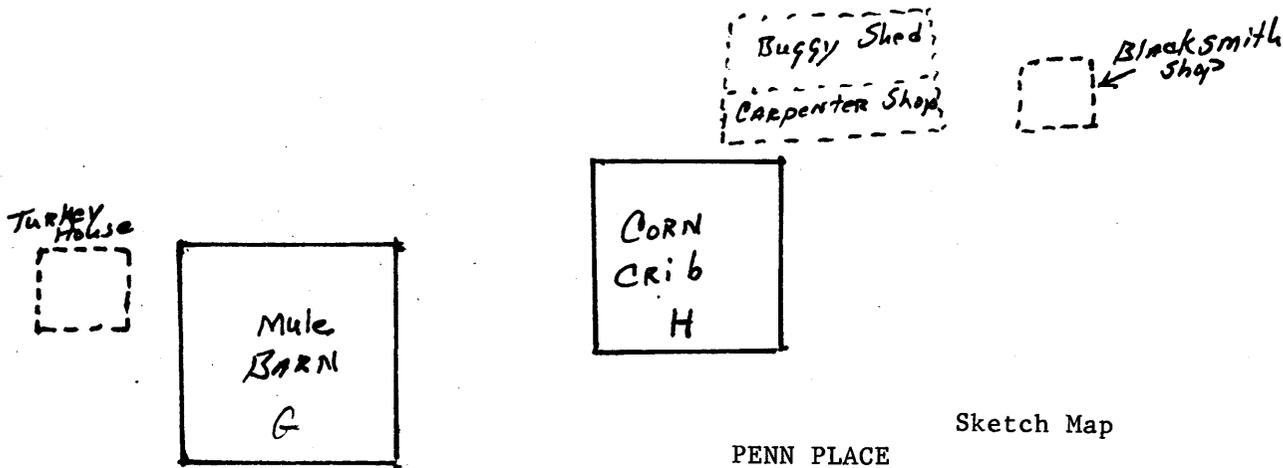
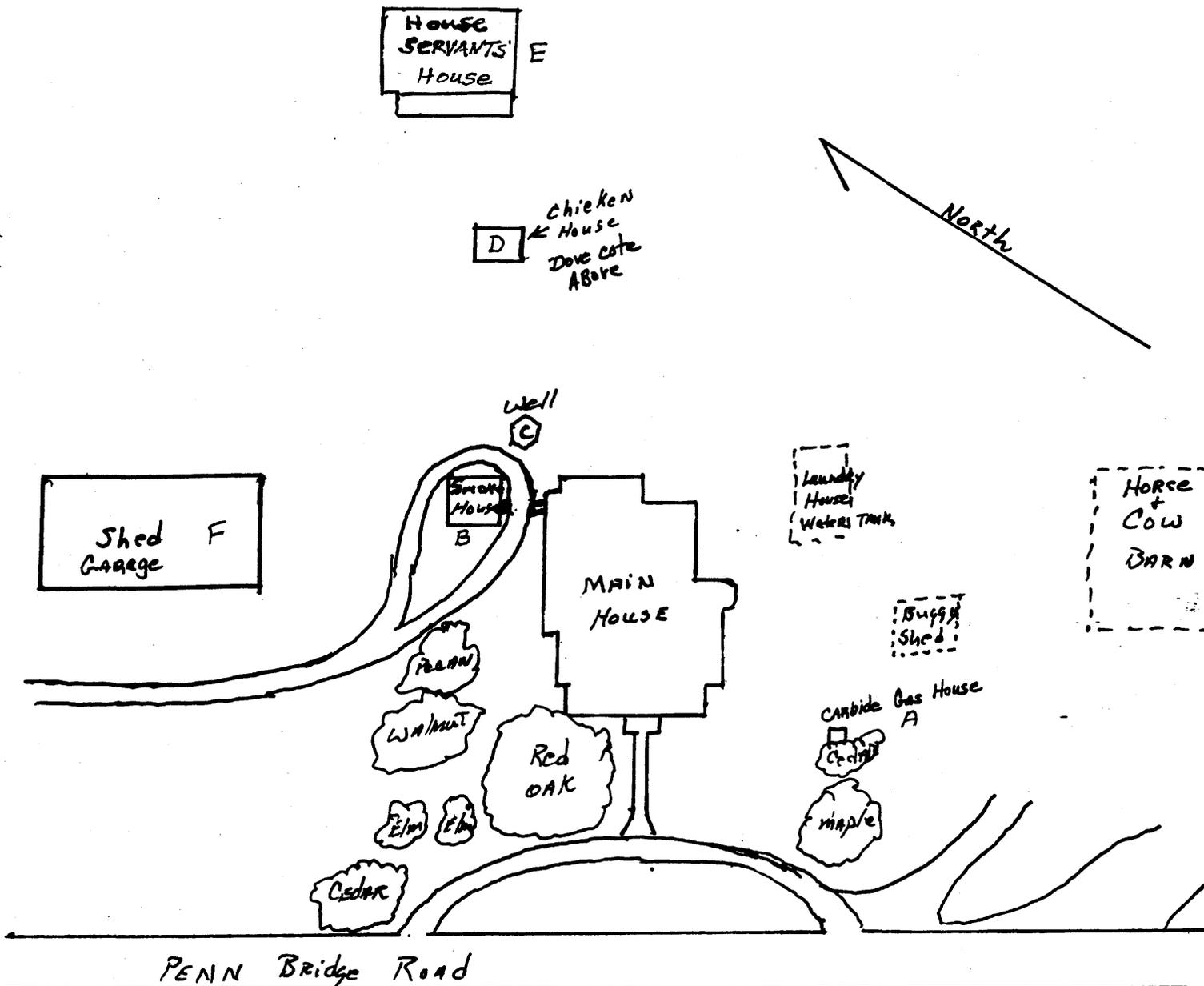
William Ham Penn married in 1875 to Martha Ann Hill and they had three daughters. After William Ham Penn died in 1920, the house and grounds were inherited by his daughter Ellen Wilson Penn, wife of Dr. O. A. Selman. After her marriage, she lived in town. As time passed, the size of the farm was cut down and sold off, and at the time of her death in 1958, Penn Place consisted of 275 acres which included the main house and outbuildings, the core of the original farm. Mrs. Selman had planned for Penn Place to be inherited by her eldest son, William Penn Selman, Sr., but he pre-deceased her, and thus it went to her estate at her death. When the Penn and Selman estates were divided in 1972, William Penn Selman, Jr. and his wife Pat, received Penn Place. The following year they had the house restored and have lived there ever since. Their children are the 5th generation to live at Penn Place.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN
AFTER 1973 RENOVATION



Floor Plan

PENN PLACE
Trion vicinity, Chattooga County, Georgia
Scale: not to scale
Source: Drawn by Mrs. W.P. Selman
Date: 1986
Key: The room usages are labeled on the plan.
It shows the house after the 1973
additions.



Sketch Map

PENN PLACE

Trion vicinity, Chattooga County, Georgia

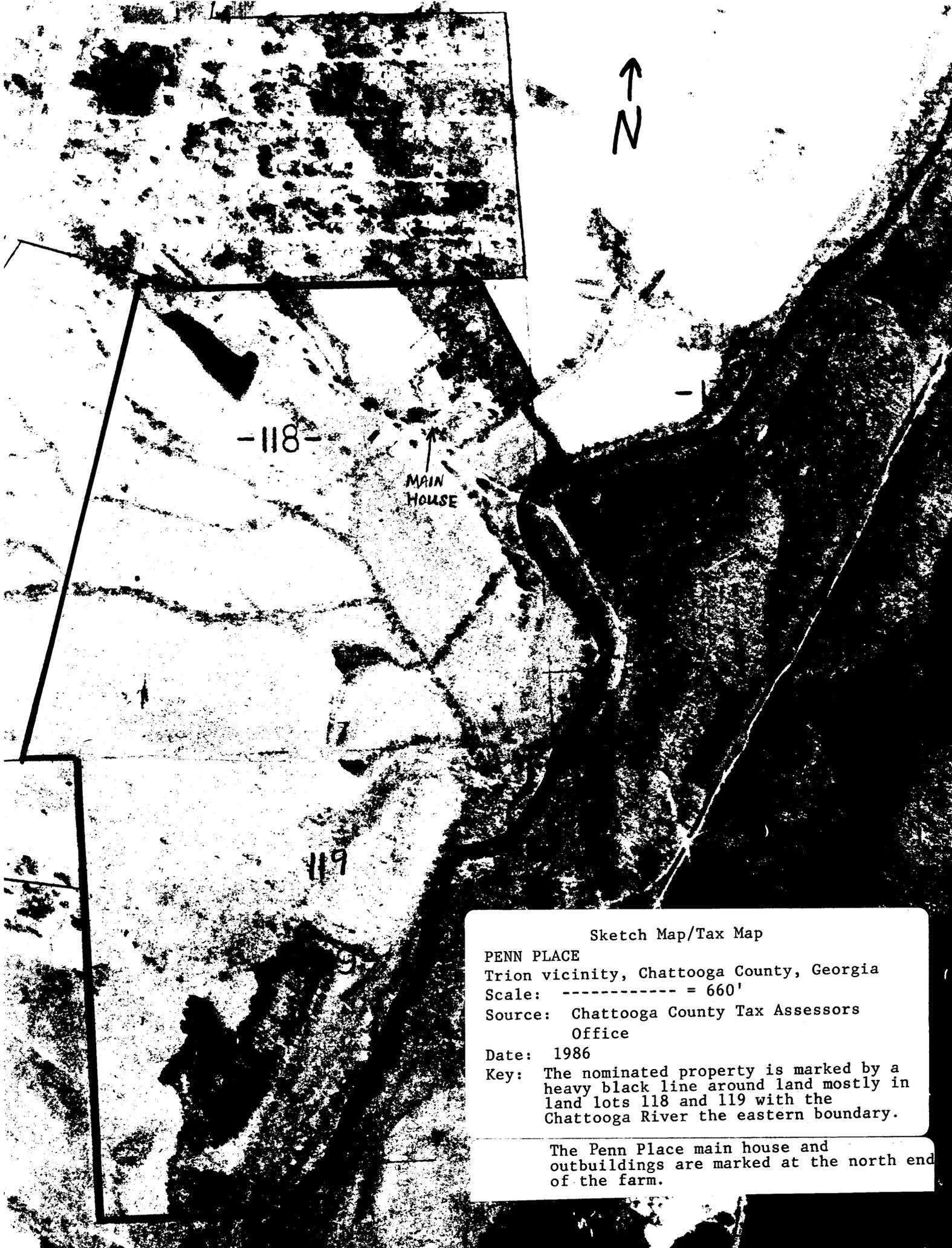
Scale: not to scale

Source: Drawn by Mrs. W.P. Selman

Date: 1986

Key: The main house and outbuildings are labeled on the map. The outbuildings are listed from A - H.

Non-existent outbuildings are shown with a dotted line.



-118-

↑
MAIN HOUSE

119

Sketch Map/Tax Map

PENN PLACE
 Trion vicinity, Chattooga County, Georgia
 Scale: ----- = 660'
 Source: Chattooga County Tax Assessors
 Office
 Date: 1986
 Key: The nominated property is marked by a
 heavy black line around land mostly in
 land lots 118 and 119 with the
 Chattooga River the eastern boundary.

The Penn Place main house and
 outbuildings are marked at the north end
 of the farm.