

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Star Barn Complex

other names/site number Motter, John, Barn and Outbuildings; Walnut Hill

2. Location

street & number Nissley Drive at State Route 283 N/A not for publication

city or town Lower Swatara Township N/A vicinity

state Pennsylvania code PA county Dauphin code 043 zip code 17057

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Brent D. Glass June 20, 2000
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Brent D. Glass, Exe' Dir PA Historical & Museum Commission
State of 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 the 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): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Star Barn Complex
Name of Property

Dauphin County, PA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 4 | 2 | buildings |
| 0 | 0 | sites |
| 2 | 0 | structures |
| 0 | 0 | objects |
| 6 | 2 | 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)

AGRICULTURE/ animal facility
AGRICULTURE/ agricultural outbuilding
AGRICULTURE/ storage

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Gothic Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE
walls WOOD
roof METAL
other ASPHALT

Narrative Description

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

Star Barn Complex
Name of Property

Dauphin County, PA
County and State

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.

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 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.

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1872-1950

Significant Dates

1872

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Reichert, Daniel

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Historic York, Inc.

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Dauphin County, PA**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION**

The Star Barn Complex is the outbuilding complex of a former farm constructed in 1872, located in Lower Swatara Township, Dauphin County, Pennsylvania. The nominated parcel contains approximately three acres of land and includes six contributing resources: large barn, pig barn, carriage house, chicken coop, grain silo, and milk house and two non-contributing resources: two attached equipment sheds. The complex is located along Nissley Drive where State Route 283 interrupts the road. The east elevation of the barn fronts Nissley Drive and its rear north elevation is adjacent to the southerly right-of-way of State Route 283. The barn and its parcel are adjacent to the associated farmhouse and several suburban-housing tracts. The farmhouse, surmised on a separate legal parcel located east of the complex, is not included in the National Register nomination due to several alterations affecting its integrity. The main barn, locally known as the Star Barn, is an 1872 Gothic Revival five-bay frame barn. The barn has numerous decorative features including prominent star-shaped ventilators centered within each gable end and cross-gable. Its immense cupola, centered above the cross-gable roof, is square with two pointed-arch ventilators within recessed panels with an octagonal spire above. A stone and wood fence encloses the barnyard immediately south of the barn with both the barn and a smaller pig barn along its perimeter. There are several smaller frame outbuildings, also constructed in 1872, scattered around the property including a pig barn, carriage house, and chicken coop. These outbuildings mimic the Gothic Revival detailing of the main barn but on a smaller scale. They each have trefoil wooden brackets, star-shaped ventilators and cupolas with octagonal spires. Also present on the property are more utilitarian styled outbuildings including a concrete block milk house, concrete silo and two frame equipment sheds. The Star Barn Complex is similar to the typical Pennsylvania-German family farm in design, building type, and function. The former farmstead retains its architectural integrity as the majority of features, both exterior and interior, are intact. The barn and its historic outbuildings are in sound condition; however, the 1872 buildings are threatened by ongoing deterioration and encroaching development.

The Star Barn Complex stands on a level polygonal lot at the northerly end of Nissley Drive in Lower Swatara Township to the southeast of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. It is situated along the southerly right-of-way of State Route 283 approximately one mile to the east of Interstate Route 83. Spring Garden Drive accesses the property from the south via Nissley Drive. State Route 283 interrupts Nissley Drive, which therefore dead-ends immediately to the west of the barn. To the east of the barn complex is the associated farmhouse, now located on a separate parcel. Once the farmhouse to the Star Barn Complex, it was constructed in the early nineteenth century. After several alterations, including a modern c. 1985 two-story rear ell, the building bears little resemblance to an early farmhouse. These alterations have affected its overall integrity. To the south of the farmhouse and to the southeast of the barn is a residential subdivision known as Woodbridge. The subdivision contains modern single-family houses and duplexes. The houses are

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designed in several Modern styles and are situated on high-density lots along the curvilinear Woodridge Drive. A similar housing development is located on the south side of Spring Garden Drive, across an open field from the Star Barn Complex. The East Shore Community Church, a modern building of no style constructed in 1999, is located to the west of the property on the remaining acreage of the former farm.

The layout of the Star Barn Complex includes the secondary outbuildings clustered around the main barn divided by the historic thoroughfare of Nissley Drive. The main barn, pig barn and barnyard are west of Nissley Drive and the domestic outbuildings on its east side, i.e. the carriage house, and chicken coop, oriented toward the associated farmhouse. The large frame barn is the focal point of the complex. Immediately south of the main barn is the barnyard. The barn forms the north barricade of the barnyard with wood and stone fences enclosing the remaining sides. The stone portion of the fence stretches across the south end of the yard from Nissley Drive to a contributing pig barn. The wood fence extends west from the southwest corner of the pig barn approximately forty feet before turning to the north to meet the equipment sheds. A second wood fence extends south from the southeast corner of the main barn to the stone fence. Immediately outside the boundaries of the barnyard, to the south, is a shallow pond. The pond, constructed in 1986 is part of an underground stream draining into the Susquehanna River.

The barn, locally known as the Star Barn, is a large frame bank barn constructed on a stone foundation. The two-story building is roughly 67'-6" wide by 105'-6" long and is by far the most prominent building of the farm. The 1872 Gothic Revival five-bay barn has a centered cross gable and square cupola rising above the gabled roof. The barn is an open-forebay standard Pennsylvania barn, oriented with its forebay and principal elevation to the south. The barn's upper floor extends seven feet beyond the forebay wall, supported by hardwood beams. At either end of the south elevation, the stone wall rises to entire height of the forebay with larger stone quoins laid at the corners. The open forebay is partially enclosed with a four-foot high stone wall laid with rectangular cut grey fieldstone. Brick pavers line the floor of the forebay. Above the stone wall rests a wood nailer that supports a ventilator wall. The ventilator wall is constructed of staggered vertical four-inch wood posts evenly spaced to allow both air and light into the ground floor of the barn. A four-foot portion of the ventilator wall is enclosed by concrete block, a later alteration. There are seven openings spaced unevenly across the forebay, three to accommodate cattle or machinery and four passenger openings. The wider openings are arranged between the first and second bays, off-centered in the third bay, and between the fourth and fifth bay. The passenger openings have X-pattern batten Dutch doors. These are located in the first and fifth bay and the remaining two, paired between the second and third. The Dutch doors have long strap hinges with heart-shaped tapered ends. Two of the wider openings are covered with sliding vertical batten doors hung off a metal track. A wooden four-rail gate barricades the third opening. Additionally, there are three six-over-six double hung wood windows along the forebay.

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The upper portion of the south elevation of the barn is constructed of wood siding covering a heavy timber frame. Five sliding X-patterned batten doors with pointed-arch ventilators above are evenly spaced along the second level of the barn's south elevation. These ventilators are openings with louvers partially enclosing them. A larger ventilator in the shape of a star is centered in the cross gable. Triangular wooden brackets support both the roof and its cross gable. A clover-shaped trefoil is scroll cut in the center of each bracket. The expansive roof is covered with deteriorated standing seam metal. An immense cupola with an octagonal spire, rising thirty-six feet above the roof ridge of the barn, is located at the intersection of the main roof and the cross gable. The wooden cupola is square with two pointed-arch ventilators within a recessed panel on each of its elevations. Scroll-cut brackets support the pyramidal hipped roof. A metal cap in the shape of a fleur-de-lis tops the octagonal spire.

The east elevation of the barn fronts Nissley Drive. The raised stone basement is seen along the entire length of the elevation. The stone is laid in coursed rubble fashion with larger stone quoins laid at the corners. At the ground floor level, there are three window openings and an X-pattern batten Dutch door, each with an arched stone lintel above. The windows are currently covered with plywood. The upper portion of the barn on its east elevation is constructed of wood siding covering a heavy timber frame. Four tall pointed-arch ventilators or louvered windows are evenly spaced along the second level of the barn. The pointed-arch ventilators are centered above the first floor's door and two of the window openings. The fourth ventilator is slightly to the left of the last window to accommodate the extending forebay. At the northeast corner is an X-patterned batten door leading off from the threshing room floor without a landing or steps on the exterior. Triangular arched wooden brackets with the identical clover-shaped trefoil scrollwork also support the gable end of the barn as on the south elevation. Centered within the gable is a large star-shaped ventilator of comparable size to that located on the south elevation. Two large plywood sheets cover the bottom portion of the star ventilator. The arched ventilator to the north of the star is also covered with plywood. There is damage of the wood clapboards of the east elevation and especially to the louvers of the ventilators, currently under the plywood sheets.

The north elevation of the barn sits on a raised stone basement with an earth ramp sloped to meet the main level of the barn. The ramp is constructed over the stone vaulted cellar adjacent to the barn. The basement, exposed to either side of the bank, is also coursed rubble stone construction. There are two stone arched window openings within the basement on either side of the bank. These openings are currently covered with plywood boards from the interior, however the arched wooden window jamb is still evident. The north elevation is divided into seven bays. There are three pairs of rear ramp doors measuring 14'-6" in height, leading to the threshing floor. The current doors are replicas of the originals and were constructed in 1997. The original long strap hinges with tapered heart-shaped ends were reused. On either side of the threshing doors are two six-over-six wood windows with 7'-6" tall pointed-arch ventilators above. The cross gable has larger

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ventilator in the shape of a star in its center with two pointed-arch ventilators to either side of the star. Triangular arched wooden brackets support both the roof and its cross gable. A clover-shaped trefoil is scroll cut in the center of each bracket.

The west elevation of the Star Barn is partially concealed by two non-contributing equipment sheds. The sheds obscure the raised stone basement of the barn; however, the sheds are separate buildings and are not internally connected to the main barn. The stone of the Star Barn's west elevation is also laid in coursed rubble fashion with larger stone quoins laid at the corners. There are four window openings on the ground floor level that are concealed by the equipment sheds. Seen above the roof of the sheds are four pointed-arch ventilators on the main floor of the barn. Centered within the gable is a large star-shaped ventilator of comparable size of that located on the other elevations. Unlike the other three elevations, there are no wooden brackets along the gable. The fascia and soffit boards are identical in construction and size as on the other elevations with a similar molding profile. The absence of brackets from the west elevation is attributed to its orientation away from the historic main thoroughfare, Nissley Drive.

The ground floor interior of the barn was altered in the early twentieth century to accommodate dairy cattle. There are six concrete troughs running almost the entire width of the barn, leaving a walkway along the north elevation. There are sixteen wooden support posts spaced the length the walkway. The remaining posts on the ground floor were replaced with steel columns. There is a small wooden cupboard in the southwest corner of the stone wall. Two large cupboards are located on the opposite wall. Also located on the east wall are large pins driven into the masonry. In the northeast corner of the barn is iron and wood panel partitioning the stables from the rear walkway. The floor joists of the main floor are chamfered. The entire first floor is whitewashed from floor to ceiling. A pull-down wooden stair is located in the northwest corner of the barn. Located to the north of walkway is a vaulted cellar. The cellar is accessed from the barn by two arched openings along the rear walkway. The stone cellar also has two additional arched doors on both its east and west ends. The first floor of the barn is divided into five separate stalls, separated with den walls of beaded pine boards. Two haymows are located in each gable end of the barn. Each of the mows has a hole that opens to the ground floor in the forebay. Holes in the floor are located at the side of each of the granary. The granaries are located in northeast and northwest corners of the barn. The upper portion of the barn is constructed in heavy timber framing. From the interior of the first floor, the original shingle roof can be seen.

The c. 1872 contributing pig barn is a small two-story frame structure located in the corner of the barnyard, south of the main barn building. This barn mimics the Gothic Revival detailing of the main barn but is smaller in size. The structure measures 18'-2" x 40'-3". The building is oriented with its gable end running north to south with a centered cross gable. The stone wall along the south edge of the barnyard is integrated with the pig-barn's stone basement. On the north and

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south gable ends are two door openings located slightly off-center on the first floor. Centered above on the upper level is the door or window opening. These four openings have been covered with plywood. As on the main barn, there are triangular arched wooden brackets under the wide eaves. A clover-shaped trefoil is scroll cut in the center of each bracket. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. A cupola with an octagonal spire is located at the intersection of the main roof and the cross gable. The square wooden cupola has a pointed-arch ventilator within a recessed panel on each of its elevations. Scroll-cut brackets support the pyramidal hipped roof and a metal cap in the shape of a fleur-de-lis tops its octagonal spire. The east elevation of the building is completely covered with plywood protecting the doors and other openings. There is a star shaped ventilator centered in the cross gable and wooden brackets with a clover-shaped trefoil design lining the eaves. Three window openings are evenly spaced along the west elevation. There is a star shaped ventilator centered in the cross gable. The wooden brackets, typical on the other elevations are absent on the west elevation of the pig barn. The second floor is a loft, used primarily for storage.

Located across Nissley Drive due east from the main barn is a contributing carriage house. The wood frame structure measures 26'-4" x 60'-5" and is a miniature version of the main barn. The c. 1872 Gothic Revival building is oriented with its gable end running north to south with a centered cross gable. On the north and south gable ends, the first floor has openings encompassing the entire first floor. There is evidence on these frames of door hinges, indicating that the openings once contained double doors on both elevations. The upper floor has two six-over-six double hung windows on either side of an X-patterned batten door. Centered above the door in the gable is a star shaped ventilator. Beneath the wide eaves are triangular arched wooden brackets. A clover-shaped trefoil is scroll cut in the center of each bracket. The roof is covered by corrugated sheet metal. Several pieces of the metal are missing on the southwest corner of the roof. A cupola with an octagonal spire is located at the intersection of the main roof and the cross gable. The wooden cupola is square with a pointed arch ventilator within a recessed panel on each of its elevations. Scroll-cut brackets support the pyramidal hipped roof. A metal cap in the shape of a fleur-de-lis tops the octagonal spire. The east and west ends of the building incorporate corn cribs that extend the full length of the building and the siding at the lower level is spaced to provide ventilation for the cribs. Four six-over-six double hung wood windows are evenly spaced along the upper floors. There is a star shaped ventilator centered in each of the cross gables. On the west elevation, wooden brackets with a clover-shaped trefoil design line the eaves. These brackets are absent on the east elevation of the carriage house.

The interior width of the carriage house allowed a wagon or carriage to be pulled inside and stored. There is no floor or foundation underneath the center of the building. Its interior east and west walls comprise corncribs running the entire length of the building. The horizontal framing of the cribs are spaced evenly apart to provide the needed ventilation for the cribs. Several of the boards are broken or missing. There are hand-lettered names, presumably of farm employees

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located on the west interior wall of the carriage house reading "1890/ TOM. HUBLEY/ J. MULLOY/ W. GRIMWOOD" as well as some other illegible names. A set of winder stairs is located in the southeast corner of the carriage house leading to the second floor. The second floor was used primarily for storage and has significant water damage as a result of the leaking roof.

A c. 1872 chicken coop is situated behind the associated farmhouse. The contributing frame structure with an asphalt shingle roof is a one-and-a-half story building patterned after the other outbuildings of the complex. Roughly 18'-5" x 24'-3", the gable building has a center cross gable and a central cupola. The south elevation is three bays wide accommodating two window openings and a door opening. A third window opening is centered within the center gable. These window openings are covered with plywood sheets, as is the door. A patterned vergeboard of individual scroll cut wood pendants line all of the gable peaks of the building. The octagonal cupola has pointed-arch panels on each of its sides with a multi-gable metal roof. A patterned vergeboard identical to that on the main roof of the chicken house lines the bottom of the cupola roof.

To the east of the barnyard and main barn is a one-story contributing milk house. The milk house was constructed in the early twentieth century of masonry block. The utilitarian building of no style has a gable roof running north to south. The building has a wood batten door and a metal fixed window on its south elevation. Its east elevation, closest to Nissley Drive, has a sliding door hanging from a metal track. There is a second metal fixed window to the south of the door. Oriented off the northeast corner of the barn is a contributing large cast cement silo. The silo was constructed in the early twentieth century when the farm's use was converted to dairy production. Extending off the west elevation of the barn are two non-contributing one-story frame equipment sheds. These pole-buildings are covered with vertical wood siding and constructed after the Star Barn Complex's period of significance. One has a gable roof with the second's shed roof sloping off the south elevation. The sheds are deteriorated with much of their siding missing.

The Star Barn Complex and its historic outbuildings are in sound condition; however, the buildings are threatened by ongoing deterioration and encroaching development. The farmstead retains architectural integrity since the majority of features, both exterior and interior, are intact. There have been minor alterations to the building over the years, including the installation of electrical wiring, but these have not obscured its original form and style. The change in farming production also brought several changes to the farm. The lower level of the barn was dramatically altered to accommodate cattle. Additionally, a cement block milk house was constructed just east of the barn. Two cast cement silos were constructed to the northeast of the main barn, only one of which is extant. However as a result of raising only one specialized farm product, many of the secondary buildings were no longer used for animal housing. The other outbuildings were used then for equipment storage. This neglect eventually caused severe decay to the small frame buildings, as they were no longer integral components of the working twentieth-century farm.

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NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Star Barn Complex is historically important in the areas of: agriculture under Criterion A for its association with both the horse and dairy industry in Dauphin County; and architecture under Criterion C as a locally significant example of Gothic Revival farm architecture in Dauphin County. The Barn was a showplace for John Motter's successful horse breeding operation in the late nineteenth century but later became a lucrative twentieth century dairy farm. The Star Barn Complex is an example of Gothic Revival agricultural buildings in South Central Pennsylvania. The Complex's period of significance begins in 1872, when the Gothic Revival barn and outbuildings were constructed for Motter's horse farm. Its period of significance continues through the 1920s as the farm became a working dairy farm to 1950, the fifty-year guideline for significance in the National Register Program.

History of the Property:

The Star Barn Complex's farm has a unique history prior to the construction of the Barn and other farm buildings. Colonel James Crouch, a Revolutionary War soldier, purchased the farm from Benjamin Brown in 1778 and owned it until his death in 1794. Upon his death the farm known as Walnut Hill was willed to Crouch's son, Edward (Runk, 174). Walnut Hill is the earliest known name of the farm so named for a reference of a walnut tree that served as boundary marker of the property. Edward Crouch, also a veteran of the Revolutionary War, served as a member of House of Representatives from 1804 to 1806. He was appointed an associate judge of Dauphin County in 1813 but resigned upon his election to the thirteenth United States Congress (Egle, 477). The 1799 Tax lists for the State of Pennsylvania, Dauphin County lists a one-story wooden house for Edward Crouch. After Crouch's death on February 2, 1827, his only daughter, Mary and her husband, Benjamin Jordan succeeded to the estate of Walnut Hill. Jordan represented the Dauphin district in the Pennsylvania State Senate from 1846-1860. Jordan died at Walnut Hill on May 24, 1861 (Egle, 510). The farm remained in the Jordan family until 1872. John Motter purchased the 164-acre farm known as Walnut Hill at auction for \$19,310.34.

John Motter was born in Lebanon County in 1822. His father, Philip Motter (Matter) ran a hotel in Palmyra for many years. John Motter was much of a self-made man, beginning work as a saddler in Palmyra. In 1840, he moved to Harrisburg and began raising horses. He became a large shipper of stock to the western states. For many years, his sale stables were headquarters for dealers in fine horses and his upright business methods and principles gained him a large patronage. During the Civil War, Motter furnished the United States army with thousands of mounts as well as mules for a baggage train service (Egle, 43). After the war, Central Pennsylvania agriculture experienced a tremendous growth. Grain production on Pennsylvania farms rose as grain prices soared. The number of horses needed on farms doubled; a need that Motter could aptly

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accommodate. Following the trend of other gentleman farmers, he diversified his interest in horses to include several other types of animal husbandry as well as many types of crops. Motter focused his interest in agricultural production, buying and upgrading farms. With each farm John Motter purchased, he transformed the farm into a model of late nineteenth century progressive farming soon after he acquired it. At the time that he purchased the Walnut Hill farm, it consisted of 164 acres with a stone farmhouse and a bank barn. Motter hired Daniel Reichert, a mortician as well as a master carpenter, to transform the farm. The barn existing at the time of Motter's purchase was not retained. Reichert designed and constructed the main barn, chicken coop, carriage house/corncrib, pig barn, and a rear ell addition to the farmhouse. In addition to remodeling the farmhouse, he also built a summer kitchen, a wood frame structure with four gables located to the rear of the farmhouse. It contained an stylized belfry with pointed-arches, centrally located on the roof. The summer kitchen was badly damaged by a 1980s fire and subsequently demolished. The Star Barn Complex is the last known surviving barn constructed by Reichert. The Hetrick Funeral Parlor in Progress, Dauphin County, Pennsylvania was built by Reichert as his mortuary practice. The large brick Colonial Revival building with a gambrel roof has several vinyl-clad additions to its north and west elevations. Daniel Reichert died in 1911.

Motter's new barn and all of the outbuildings were constructed in the Gothic Revival style. Each of the buildings had characteristics of that style including cross gables, pointed-arch ventilators, trefoil brackets, and spired cupolas. The early nineteenth century stone house located on the property at the time of Motter's purchase was greatly remodeled to also include many of the trappings of the Victorian era. Although, the house was extensively remodeled, Motter never lived at the farm. Franklin Wolf and his family, the manager of the farm lived in the farmhouse (The Middletown Daily Journal, 3 September 1896). Motter had a winter residence on Front Street in Harrisburg and lived on his Spring Garden Farm in the summer. This Spring Garden Farm was adjacent to Walnut Hill. On his 185-acre farm Motter constructed a stone farmhouse with fancy gingerbread trim, a large barn and other necessary outbuildings. The farmhouse and its stone fence and entrance gates are located at 1260 Lumber Street, Lower Swatara Township, Dauphin County. With so few elements remaining from Motter's farming empire, it is hard to ascertain if the Star Barn Complex, his Walnut Hill Farm, was the headquarters of his farming operations.

By the time of his death in 1901, John Motter owned seven highly productive farms through Dauphin and Lebanon Counties. The estate was then settled upon his wife, Annie, and later his oldest daughter, Elizabeth Motter Fletcher. The farm eventually passed into the Nissley Family in 1925. The farm, no longer known as Walnut Hill was converted to dairy farming. The change to dairy production brought several changes to the farm. The lower level of the barn was dramatically altered to accommodate cattle. Additionally, a cement block milk house was constructed just east of the barn. Two cast cement silos were constructed, one extant to the east of the rear ramp of the main barn, the second, now demolished, was located to the west of the rear ramp. The dairy cows

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needed additional food, which could be stored within the silos. The installation of electrical wiring and minor repairs and alterations were also completed. However, with the process of raising a specialized farm product, many of the secondary buildings were no longer used for animals. The outbuildings were used primarily for storage of equipment. This neglect eventually caused severe decay to the small frame buildings, as they were no longer integral components of the working twentieth-century farm. In 1940, ownership of the farm passed to Aaron J. Hoffer. Four generations of the Hoffer Family continued working the land until the death of Landis M. Hoffer in January of 1980. The farm property included in the Landis M. Hoffer estate was subdivided in February of 1986. The Derry Park Corporation then purchased the Star Barn and over thirty-seven acres of the farm.

The construction of State Route 283 in 1970 not only divided the farm in half but also dramatically increased the visibility of the Star Barn and its interesting architectural features. More and more citizens began to recognize the significance of the barn with its proximity to the heavily traveled road. In fact the barn became an icon within the local art community with its star-decorated gables appearing in many photographs and paintings. This notoriety called attention to its decreasing condition and its vacancy. Several citizen groups banded together to formulate plans for acquiring the barn and its eventual stabilization. The Friends of the Star Barn was one such citizen group involved in the Star Barn's future. The organization formed in 1991 and eventually partnered with the Central Pennsylvania Conservancy. These two groups negotiated an option agreement with the Derry Park Corporation and its partners, Ereno Lewis, Sr., Ereno Lewis, Jr. and Franklin Brown. The farmhouse and the majority of the farm east of Nissley Drive became part of one parcel. The barn, carriage house, pig barn, milk house, silo, and equipment sheds were subdivided to a separate parcel in 1994. The group formulated plans to convert the Star Barn into an agricultural/environmental education center. In 1993, the Friends of the Star Barn and the Central Pennsylvania Conservancy launched the "Save the Star Barn" campaign in hopes of raising enough capital to exercise the option on the property, at the cost of \$20,000 an acre. Unfortunately given the massive scope of the project, success was limited but permitted emergency weatherization repairs to be made to the main barn and the pig barn. The property was not purchased.

Preservation Pennsylvania, a statewide preservation advocacy and support organization, became involved with the property in 1998. Threatened by possible demolition, the barn and its outbuildings were placed under a purchase agreement with Preservation Pennsylvania. The organization's goal was to market the property to a sympathetic buyer, offering to sell the property at cost. Unable to locate a suitable buyer after almost a year, Preservation Pennsylvania partnered with the Millport Conservancy to purchase the Star Barn in November of 1999. The organization is currently formulating plans for the future preservation of the landmark.

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Architectural History:

The Star Barn Complex was constructed during an era of great agricultural prosperity in Central Pennsylvania. John Motter was firmly entrenched in this growth. His business ventures had afforded him the opportunity to build architectural monuments to his success. The Gothic Revival style became quite fashionable in the United States after Andrew Jackson Downing published a pattern book in the 1850s. The styles depicted in his *Architecture of Country Houses* included houses that were compatible to the rural natural landscape (McAlester, 200). The popularity of Gothic Revival styled buildings declined until resurgence in the late 1860s and the 1870s. Cummings and Miller's *Victorian Architectural Details: Two Pattern Books* printed in 1868 helped to stimulate the details of the Gothic Revival buildings. The popularity of pattern books ensured those who followed the stated design a way to elevate their status and emulate success. Although, Central Pennsylvania saw many homes constructed with Gothic Revival styled elements, few barns and practical buildings were as elaborately decorated. Their sheer size and function did not allow them to include battlements and elaborate traceries. However, smaller details could be easily integrated into barn designs. The Star Barn Complex uses unique elements of the design including pointed arch ventilators, brackets, cross gable roof and prominent cupolas. The use of these architectural elements certainly makes a statement of the rising importance of agriculture as a business in Central Pennsylvania.

Motter's success in his horse trade also had an effect on the design of the barn. After 1860, the horse market in Pennsylvania improved (Fletcher, 269). The horse became the beast of burden on many farms because of their ability to haul produce to market faster than oxen. Between 1850-1890 the number of horses on Pennsylvania farms doubled from 350,000 to 618,000. Heavy demands for horses during the Civil War sent prices into an inflationary spiral. By 1910, horses were the most valuable livestock in Pennsylvania, appraised at \$68,055,000 as compared with \$47,229,000 for all varieties of cattle. Motter's knowledge of the horse trade and his close proximity to Harrisburg, a major point for the collection and distribution of commissary supplies to the Union Forces, earned him a fortune supplying mounts to the cavalry. His barn reflects his wealth and his success in the horse trade. The first floor stables had a slightly higher ceiling height, chamfered floor joists and ventilator posts as well as the arched windows and Dutch doors, indicating that this was meant to be an exhibition area. Additionally, the curved iron door and wood paneling separating the stable area from the rear walkway is a remaining fragment of the beautiful showplace.

As part of the design of the barn and the outbuildings, Motter commissioned Daniel Reichert to use large star-shaped ventilators in all of the gable ends and cross gables. It is this star design that has given the barn its notoriety throughout South Central Pennsylvania. The concept with decorating barn structures throughout Southeastern and South Central Pennsylvania is not unique.

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German immigrants who settled this area, expressed their love of stylized art into their functional items. Their quilts, birth certificates, furniture and barns use vibrant colors in design. Hex signs, or round, multi-colored medallions spaced evenly across the forebay of a barn, became popular in the area shortly after 1830. A hex sign often depicted stylized flowers, birds or stars. Lehigh, Bucks, Berks, and Montgomery Counties have a higher concentration of these decorated barns. There are very few decorated barns in Lancaster, Lebanon, Dauphin, York, Adams, Snyder and Northumberland Counties. This could be attributed to the larger population of plain-sect people of the Mennonite and Amish faiths in those communities. There is no concrete explanation of the meaning and significance of hex signs. Local tradition embraced the use of the decorations as a way to prevent the devil from entering the barn and causing ill to the livestock. However, the use of traditional hex signs appears to be for the sake of decoration only with little purpose other than perhaps ethnic identity of the Pennsylvania Germans. The star decoration of the Star Barn does serve an important function other than decoration. The stars are made of wood louvers that provided additional light and important air circulation for the drying of hay and other grains.

From an outward appearance, Motter's farm seems to possess little relation to a Pennsylvania German farmstead. Those farms and outbuildings are purely functional in form without architectural styling. In actuality, the Star Barn Complex is similar to the typical Pennsylvania-German family farm in design, building type, and function. Beyond the size of the actual barn, its interior layout, design, and use are similar to other barns in the area. The lower level was used for stabling animals and the upper floors for threshing and grain storage. The use of secondary outbuildings housing both other farm animals and farming activities are quite common throughout the area

As significant as the Star Barn Complex's Gothic Revival architectural style is, the existence of any elements of high style architecture on the agricultural buildings is more so. It was common through the nineteenth century that Pennsylvania German farmers had much more spacious and imposing barns than the houses in which they lived. Their philosophy was that buildings contributing to income rather than to living comfort should be considered first (Fletcher, 485). However that ideal did not directly correspond to architectural ornamentation. The changing tide of commercial farming in Pennsylvania over self-sufficient enterprises changed the size and scope of the typical barn in the area. Barns were enlarged to increase both storage and stabling capacity as the farm became more successful. The basic form of the Pennsylvania barn was not altered only its size. The length of the barn was increased, adding more stable room in the ground level and more threshing floors and hay mows above (Ensminger, 108). These larger barns made quite a conspicuous footprint on the landscape. The next obvious evolution of the barn as a statement of farm success was architectural styling. The Star Barn Complex certainly displays the success of John Motter and is noteworthy. Its immense size alone is a rarity in the area. Its unusual height allowed for an extra loft inside, where hay and grain could be stored. Also, the barn's Gothic

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Revival styling reflected an air of affluence and success. The Gothic Revival style shown prominently on the barn in part makes the complex significant; but the existence of the high-styled smaller outbuildings makes the complex unique. More often, these secondary buildings were constructed poorly without thought to appearance or longevity.

Historic Significance/ Agriculture:

The farming industry dramatically changed in South Central Pennsylvania after the Civil War. Prior to the conflict, farmers were considered to be little more than self-sufficient, growing and producing only enough food stuffs to feed their families with a little left over to be sold. But the western expansion movement brought on by the railroads gave the Pennsylvania farmer an opportunity for great fortune in new markets. The demand for farm products increased and prices skyrocketed (Havens, 112). However, there were several obstacles impeding a farmer from immediate success. The Civil War left a terrible labor shortage for the farmers with the mass destruction of human life and many remaining laborers left the farm for more profitable work in factories. The farmer in Pennsylvania needed guidance to attract laborers and combat other concerns. Through education, farmers were able to expand production and increase the value of their products. Organizations like the Grange and Farmer's Alliance allowed farmers to exchange technical experience and ideas with their more successful peers (Buck, 298). Agricultural societies promoted not only the education of farmers but advanced their social well being, political causes, and economic comfort. One way agricultural reformers saw to attract or retain farmers was the construction of new and elaborate buildings. By constructing new farms or rebuilding existing farms utilizing more modern agrarian practices, the farming industry became more efficient and more importantly, more productive.

John Motter transformed his Walnut Hill Farm into a model of late nineteenth century progressive farming soon after he acquired it. The majority of the now extant farm outbuildings can be attributed to Motter himself. The layout of the farm was designed for efficiency and economy. Those outbuildings that were oriented around daily family life were built closest to the farmhouse. The remaining buildings, primarily for agricultural purposes were oriented around the barn, i.e., corncrib, pigpen, and wagon shed. Even the location and orientation of the barn was chosen for the same reason. Most of the livestock and grain shipping would occur from the barn; thus its site was adjacent to main road, in this case, Nissley Drive. Its forebay was oriented to the south for two reasons. First, modern farm practices dictated that barnyard with a south orientation for optimum efficiency (Glass, 104). Not only does this orientation allow the forebay and barnyard to receive the maximum amount of sunshine throughout the day, but also allowed Motter and his laborers to extend their workday from early morning to late evening. During the winter months, the southerly exposed barnyard was not as cold or damp allowing snow to melt faster for better access year

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round. The orientation of the house to the barn is common among farm layouts. It was common for the forebay to be visible from the house for safety and protection of the livestock.

A group of secondary buildings evolved in farming to serve additional purposes and their placement around the farm is consistent among other local farms. Historically, these secondary buildings were devised only to provide basic shelter for animals with perhaps some additional storage space. However, late nineteenth century farmers began improving these buildings as well to increase production. Chicken coops were constructed with additional windows to admit needed sunlight and ventilation. Its interior arrangement was such that each hen had a nesting box and space for feeding and watering. The pig barn and its odor and flies are often oriented as far as possible from the farmhouse (Noble, 117). Additionally, pig barns were located off the barnyard so the animals could root through the manure, hastening its rotting. Increasing demands for pork in city markets led to better management in pork production (Long, 30). The animals were given as much dry space, light and ventilation as possible. The interior arrangements were generally simple, with an access aisle along one long side of the building to allow for easy feeding. Individual pens accommodating one or two animals took the remaining portions of the building.

The cast grain silo located on the Star Barn Complex is another example of the typical dairy farm outbuilding of Pennsylvania. This type of structure was one of the most identifiable features on a dairy farm. These tall tower silos allow the storage of precious fresh grains, like field corn that kept dairy cattle fed and producing milk. Silos were first introduced to the American landscape in the early 1880s (Noble, 71). The addition of silos onto the dairy farm offered several advantages. First, higher quantities of corn could be stored and fed to the cattle at a higher profit margin than stocking hay and other grains. Second, dairy cattle fed with corn produced milk year round even during the winter months. The dairy industry soon became a profitable enterprise and the Star Barn Complex was easily adapted as a dairy farm with the addition of these two buildings. The milk house dates from 1910 when sanitary standards by state and municipal authorities forced improvements in dairy production standards. These milk houses were located as close as possible to the barn or even attached to it. The building is small with only enough room to house a cooling container, washing facilities, and storage space for the milk cans (Noble, 116).

The Star Barn Complex is located in a region of great agriculture prosperity. Changes in farming methods and increases of mechanization within the industry made it possible to operate several farms at one time. Several men in Central Pennsylvania amassed multiple farms that produced great amounts of livestock and crops. Their farms were noted worldwide for their organization, cleanliness, and modernization. Perhaps the most noteworthy of these men was Colonel James Young. Young and Motter were contemporaries and their farms are designed in very much the same fashion. Young owned eleven of the finest farms in the Middletown area. Other locals held his farms in high esteem often calling Young's farms the "Pride of Dauphin

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County." Visitors came from all around the world to inspect his farms including "Presidents of the United States, Governors of States, and distinguished professional men in almost every walk of life and titled nobility in Europe" (Kelker, 607). Upon his death in 1895, Young's estate was valued from \$800,000 to \$1,250,000. Balance of the estate included 1,800 acres of land, containing a dozen or so of barns with a floor area over 48,000 square feet (The Middletown Daily Journal, 9 May 1897). Historic line drawings in the Historic of the Counties of Dauphin and Lebanon published in 1883, depicted two of Young's eleven farms, Locust Grove in Londonderry Township, Dauphin County and Keystone Farm in Middletown, Dauphin County are quite similar to the design of the Star Barn Complex. Both of these farms have stylistic trappings of the Gothic Revival style with tall spires perched on cupolas, pointed-arch ventilators, and stylized smaller outbuildings.

Unfortunately, very little remains architecturally of Young's farming success. Many of his farms no longer exist in their agricultural form. They have become airport runways, pickle plants, college campuses, and an Air Force Base. Only two structures associated with James Young, a brick farmhouse and a frame summer kitchen from his Rosedale Farm, still exist on Rosedale Avenue in Middletown. Likewise, very little remains of Motter's success. Motter's summer residence, Spring Garden Farm is still extant. It is located at 1260 Lumber Street, Lower Swatara Township and was declared eligible to the National Register of Historic Places in 1986.

Perhaps the most comparable barn to the Star Barn in the area is part of the Fort Hunter Historic District. The Fort Hunter Historic District in Susquehanna Township, Dauphin County, was listed to the National Register of Historic Places in August 1979. The District is seen as a continuous settlement on the banks of the Susquehanna River and Fishing Creek. The circa 1876 large frame barn was constructed across the road from its associated mansion house. Daniel Dick Boas who purchased the farm in 1870 built the barn. This large frame barn measures 68'-2" in width and 120'-4" in length also quite a sizable and comparable to the John Motter's 67'-6" by 105'-6" barn. Its gable roof is also ornately decorated with bargeboards, finials, and hexagonal cupola. It also has louvered windows as the Star Barn. The two barns are perhaps the finest examples of high style barns in Pennsylvania.

Summary:

The Star Barn Complex on Nissley Drive in Lower Swatara Township, Dauphin County is a fine example of a late nineteenth century Gothic Revival farmstead. The barn, surrounding outbuildings and design reflect the changing ideals in agriculture. Its architecture is indicative of the region's agricultural prosperity and its impact on the economy during this period. Although the barn and its outbuildings have had some minor alterations over time most are reversible and do not detract from the overall integrity of the complex. In addition, it may be the most stylish and decorated group of farm outbuildings remaining in the region.

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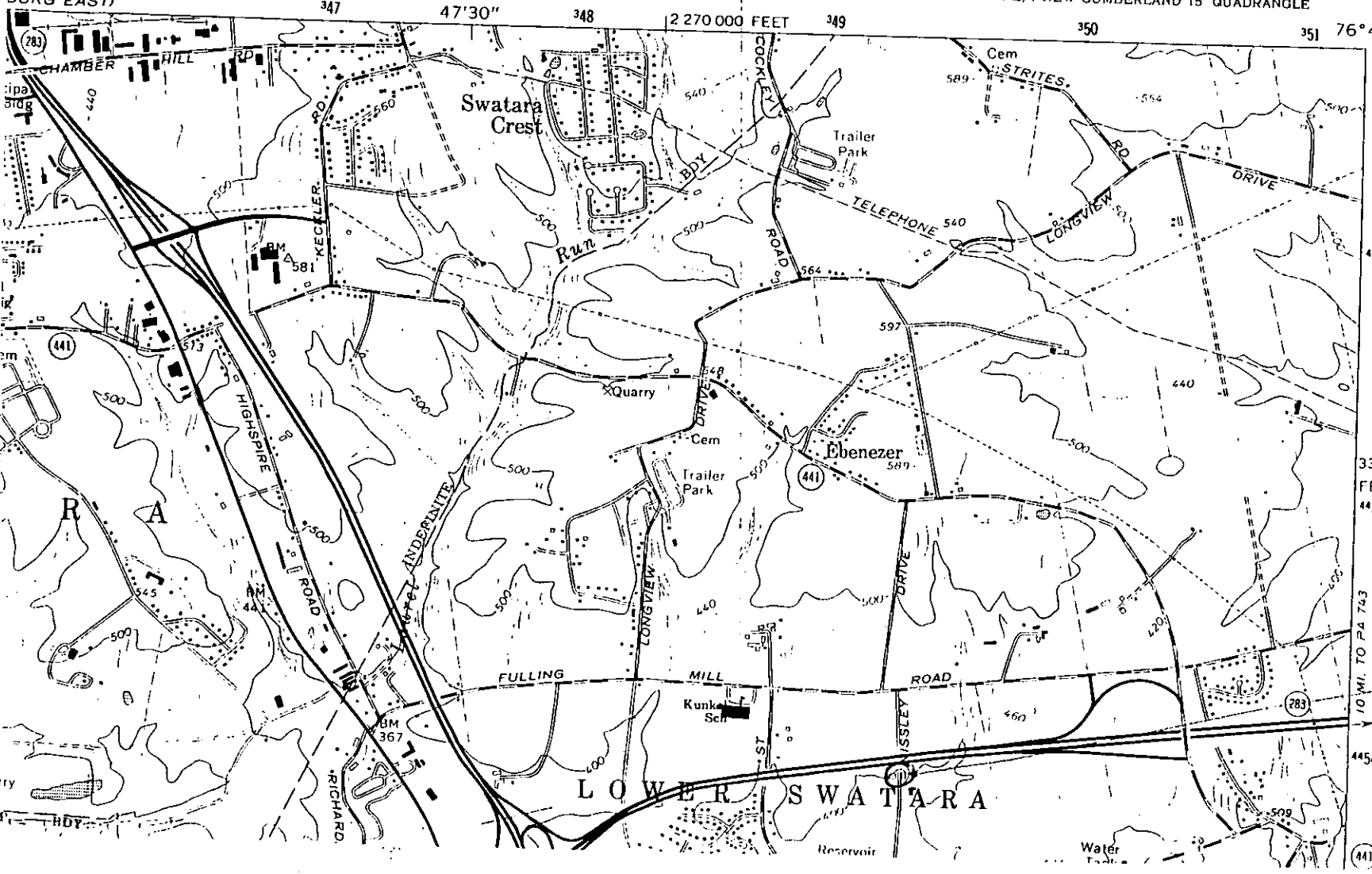
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the nominated property includes a portion of Lot No. D22 shown in the Preliminary/Final Subdivision Plat of Lot D for the Landis M. Hoffer Estate as prepared by Hartman & Associates, Inc. recorded in the Dauphin County Plan Book J, Vol. 5, page 43. The boundaries are delineated on the attached site plan, drawn at a scale of 1"=100'.

DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA
 ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES
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 4 IV SE
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STEELTON QUADRANGLE
 PENNSYLVANIA
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
 NE/4 NEW CUMBERLAND 15' QUADRANGLE

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 (HERSHEY)

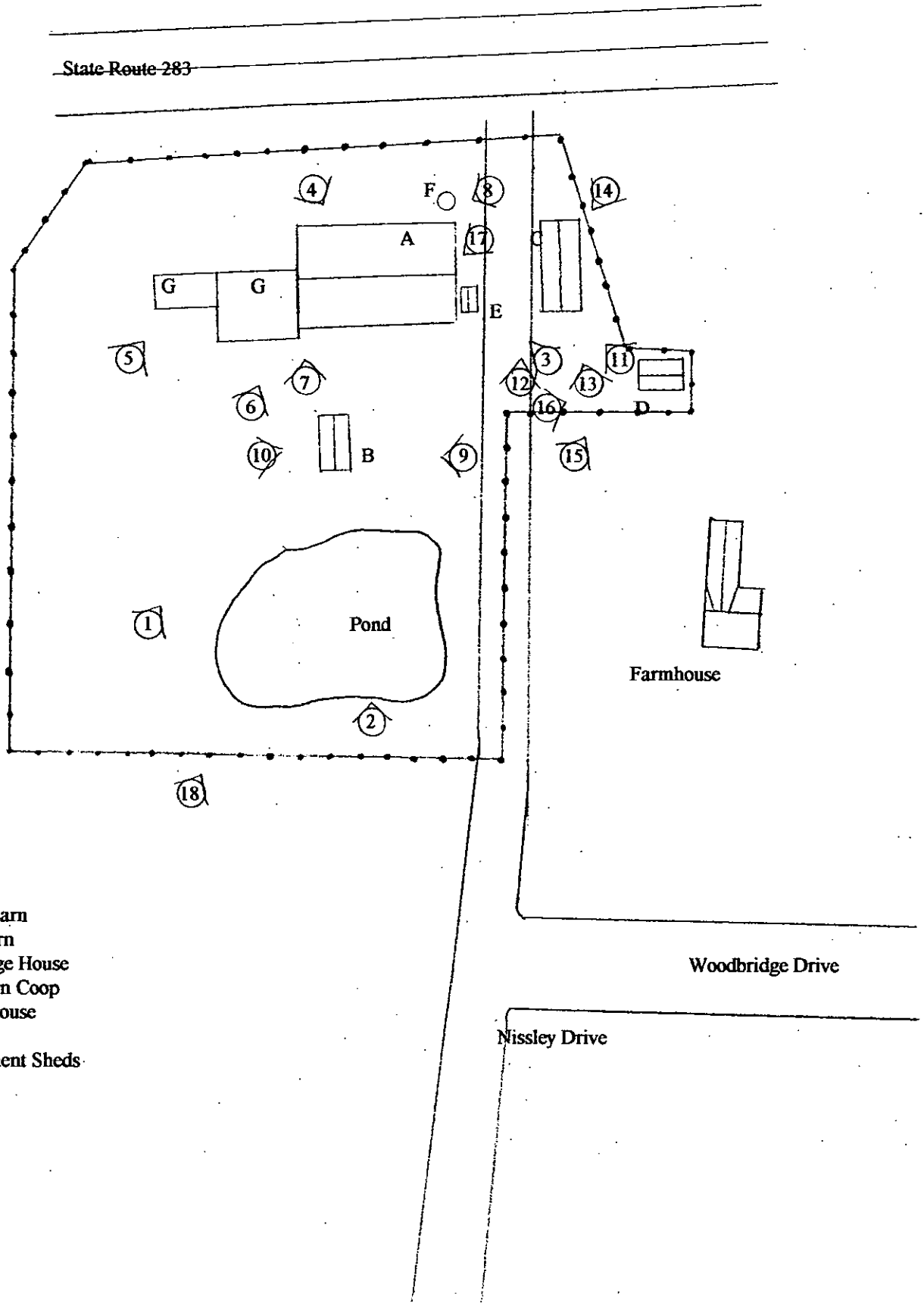


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STAR BARN COMPLEX
 Motter, John
 Dauphin County
 Steelton Quad
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Star Barn Complex
Dauphin County, PA
Scale: 1" = approx. 100'
Site Plan



- KEY:
- A: Main Barn
 - B: Pig Barn
 - C: Carriage House
 - D: Chicken Coop
 - E: Milk House
 - F: Silo
 - G: Equipment Sheds