

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

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

1. Name

historic The Widow Donaldson Place

and or common N/A

2. Location

street & number 177 Bear Valley Road

N/A not for publication

city, town Peters Township N/A vicinity of

state PA 17224 code 42 county Franklin code 55

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Nicholas N. and Glen Ann Sabetto

street & number 221 Bear Valley Road

city, town Fort Loudon N/A vicinity of state PA

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Clark of Courts Office, Franklin County Courthouse

street & number 157 Lincoln East

city, town Chambersburg state PA 17201

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date N/A federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Widow Donaldson Place is located on the west side of Bear Valley Road, about 1,000 feet north of "Old" U.S. Route 30 and about one half mile from the village of Fort Loudon. The immediate setting consists of pasture fields sloping gently west to the west branch of the Conococheague Creek. The nominated property consists of one acre of land and includes two contributing buildings, a c. 1775 home and an adjacent late eighteenth or nineteenth century stone summer kitchen. Both the house and summer kitchen have good integrity, retaining major architectural features.

The house is a two-story gable roofed 24' x 20' log building. Logs are connected in dove-tail fashion with cathedral type notches. A standing seam tin roof covers the main body of the house as well as a two-story porch at the front of the building. A massive, rubble sandstone chimney ascends the exterior north gable end and rises slightly above the roof ridge. One 6/6 window lights the first floor of the north wall immediately to the west side of the chimney. On the east (front) elevation, the two-story porch spans the facade. The porch features squared log beams and posts, a simple second floor squared-timber railing, a plank second floor, and a flagstone first floor. Two doors, each with six lights, pierce the first floor on the front. A similar door flanked to the south by two 6/6 windows open the second floor on the front facade. On the south gable end a centrally located 6/6 window pierces the first floor, and a 1/1 gable window opens the attic. On the west (rear) elevation, two symmetrically arranged 6/6 windows punctuate each story. All windows and doors have plain wood frames. The logs and their chinking composed of a mortar compound are exposed on all sides, except in the gables which are covered with cedar shakes. The house rests on a stone foundation with a dirt floor basement beneath the southern half of the house. The basement is entered by paired wooden doors placed in the stone floor of the porch.

The interior retains most of the major original features. On the first floor the original kitchen area with large rubble limestone hearth occupies the north half of the plan. This kitchen area opens into a parlor in the southeast quadrant. A small modern kitchen is located in the southwest quadrant. Tongue in groove wainscoting beneath wallboard comprise the first floor walls. A narrow, winding staircase in the northeast corner of the house ascends to the second floor and attic. A stair landing occupies the northeast quadrant of the second floor plan, with two bedrooms in the southern half and a small bathroom in the northwest quadrant. The walls are surfaced with wallboard on the second floor. Each room on this floor is entered through a door of plain vertical boards. The original squared timber posts and ceiling beams are exposed on both floors. Random width, pegged oak boards form the flooring. Beaded molding frames the windows and doors throughout the interior.

The house has experienced a number of changes in the nineteenth century and during rehabilitation in 1986. Based on nails, molding and condition of wood, it is estimated that in the mid-1800s a fire destroyed the roof, blackening the rafters and damaging part of the second floor interior. Apparently a tin roof was installed after the fire. Three feet of the second-story floor on the east side was also replaced at this time. A two-story front porch was also added after the fire, as evidenced by the porch roof beams which show no signs of fire. The original sash were replaced and the windows and doors slightly enlarged. Also added was weatherboard siding, which was in turn covered by asbestos siding during the 1920s.

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The Widow Donaldson Place, Peters Twp., Franklin County

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In recent years the house reached a state of severe deterioration. For example, chinking had deteriorated and the porch had rotted; first floor floorboards had badly warped. In 1986 the current owners undertook rehabilitation being careful to preserve as much of the original fabric as possible, and to replace deteriorated materials with duplicates or like kind. Original materials in place include all logs, chimney, fireplace, foundation, most interior doors, interior floors in the second floor and attic, all ceiling beams and rafters, and stairwells to the second floor and attic. The exterior siding was removed to again expose the logs, and chinking was replaced with a mortar compound similar in appearance and texture to the original siding on the gables was replaced with cedar shakes. The foundation hearth and chimney were repointed. Rotted window frames were rebuilt with duplicate materials. The old tin roof was replaced with a similar tin roof. The porch was rebuilt using the same material (oak) and the same construction techniques (notched and pegged boards). On the interior, lath and plaster which was falling off the walls were removed, the walls were studded, and insulation and wallboard added. The warped first floor floorboards were also replaced with similar, pegged oak boards. Front doors were replaced, and modern kitchen and bathroom facilities installed.

The summer kitchen is located fifteen feet from the southwest corner of the house. It is a sandstone, 15' x 20' building with a large fireplace chimney on the west wall, a door centered on the north wall, and a window on the south wall. It is covered with a standing seam tin gable roof. There is also an attic doorway on the east gable, with evidenced of a stairway to this door. This building has experienced few changes. The metal roof was added about fifty years ago, and concrete reinforcement added around the doorway in an attempt to halt the gradual collapse of mortar and stone work.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates c.1775 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Widow Donaldson Place is a rare surviving example in south central Pennsylvania of an important type of architecture, the log building. There are only a handful of log buildings known to stand in Franklin County and neighboring Adams and Fulton Counties. The Widow Donaldson Place is one of the best preserved and largest log buildings among this handful.

There is only one other log house and three log churches or schools known in Franklin County, and only a total of seven log houses known in Adams and Fulton Counties.¹ The Widow Donaldson Place is one of the finest examples among the total of twelve in the three counties. For example, the Widow Donaldson Place compares quite favorably with the two-story, c. 1830 John Brown House at 225 E. King Street, Chambersburg, Franklin County (listed on the National Register in 1970). This house features a three bay by two bay log core which, like the Donaldson Place, has experienced a number of changes, including the addition of a corrugated metal roof, a rear two-story ell, and a one-story shed roof section. The Widow Donaldson Place also compares favorably in terms of integrity with the c. 1760 McConnell House at 114 Lincoln Way West in McConnellsburg, Fulton County (listed on the National Register in 1975). The McConnell House is a four-bay, two and one half story house with 19th century additions to the rear. Prior to being listed in the National Register, it had been altered by removal of its front porch and replacement of the majority of flooring on the second floor as well as replacement of chinking and addition of new roofing material (asbestos shingles). The Widow Donaldson Place is a better preserved example of log construction than is the Miller's House at Burnt Cabins Grist Mill in Dublin Township, Fulton County. (The Grist Mill, Miller's House and outbuildings were listed on the National Register in 1980). The Miller's House (date unknown) is a 2½ story, clapboard covered building with a tin roof, a twentieth century first floor porch that wraps around the front and one end, and a rear attached carport and shed. Another Dublin Township log house sits along the west side of Route 522 about three-fourths of a mile north of Exit 13 (Ft. Littleton) of the Pennsylvania Turnpike. Like the Donaldson House this example has an exterior gable end chimney as a prominent feature. However the house is covered with nineteenth century wood siding and has had a new section added off one corner of the house. Other log buildings in the three counties, such as the c. 1775 one-story John Bourns House on E. Main Street in Waynesboro, Franklin County, may be well preserved but are considerably smaller than the Widow Donaldson Place.

The Widow Donaldson Place was constructed c. 1775. The 1798 Direct Tax list shows a two-story log home of current dimensions (24' x 20') and number of windows (10). Deed transfers in 1779, when James Cowan bought the property from Hugh and William Donaldson, on through the

1. These figures are taken from surveys funded by the Bureau for Historic Preservation Survey and Planning grants, and from information submitted by private citizens.

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early 1800's show little change in the value of the property. This indicates that the house which was in place in 1798 was probably built no later than 1779. The home has been locally known as the Widow Donaldson Place after a long time resident of the area who was the mother of Hugh and William Donaldson. The Widow Donaldson Place was occupied continuously as a farm house from the late eighteenth century until 1970. It remained vacant from 1970 to 1986 when the present owners acquired the property, rehabilitated the house, and began using it as a rental property.

1 These figures are taken from surveys funded by the Bureau for Historic Preservation Survey and Planning grants, and from information submitted by private citizens.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Foreman, Harry E., Fort Loudon Sidelights, 1970, Chambersburg, PA 17201, The Kerr Printing Company; Survey Docket, Books 2 and 3, Franklin County Courthouse, Chambersburg, PA 17120; Thiede, Arthur, American Log Homes, 1986, Emmaus, PA, Rodale Press; 1798 Direct Tax, U.S. Archives; Interview, Etta Sollenberger, March 11, 1987

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1 acre

Quadrangle name McConnellsburg

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

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Verbal boundary description and justification Beginning at a point on the northwest side of L.R. 28091 (Bear Valley Rd) 1000' north of old U.S. Rt. 30, 80 feet, north, 73°00' west to a post, then north 17°00' east, 280 feet to a post, then south 73°00' east, 180 feet to the northwest side of L.R. 28901, then returning south 38°00' west, 160 feet to the beginning point

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries(see continuation sheet)

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Nicholas N. Sabetto/William Sisson

organization N/A/PHMC

date October 1987

street & number 221 Bear Valley Road/Penn Museum

telephone 717-369-4647/717-783-8946

city or town Fort Loudon/Harrisburg

state PA

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Brent D. Glass

title Brent D. Glass, State Historic Preservation Officer

date

9/16/87

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Foreman, Harry E., Fort Loudon Sidelights, 1970, Chambersburg, PA 17201, The Kerr Printing Company; Survey Docket, Books 2 and 3, Franklin County Courthouse, Chambersburg, PA 17120; Thiede, Arthur, American Log Homes, 1986, Emmaus, PA, Rodale Press; 1798 Direct Tax, U.S. Archives; Interview, Etta Sollenberger, March 11, 1987

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Quadrangle name McConnellsburg

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	8	2	5	2	4	8	0	4	4	2	1	9	4	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

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State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title _____ date _____

For NPS use only

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

date _____

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date _____

Chief of Registration

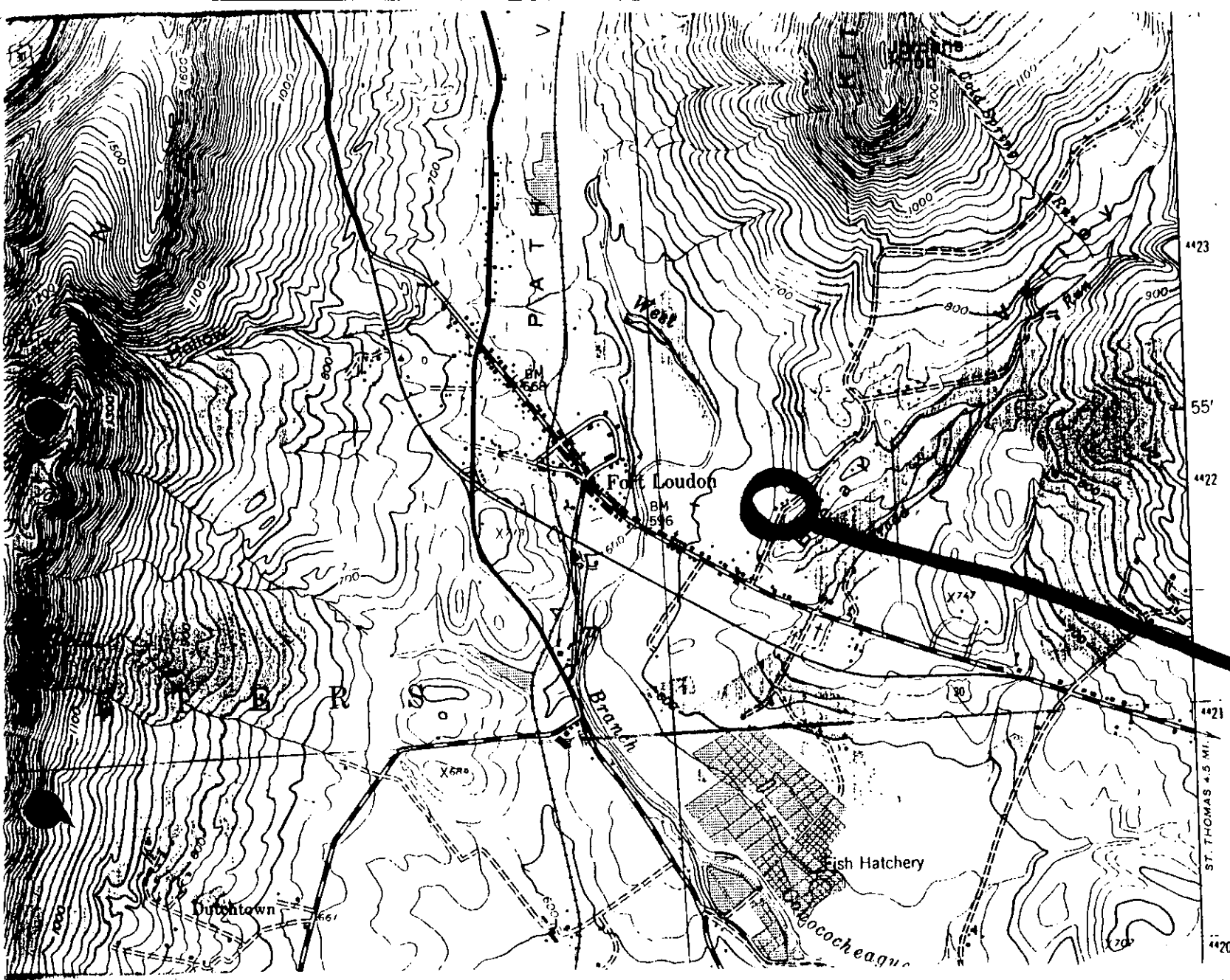
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National Park Service**

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Widow McDonaldson Place

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The nominated property includes the two contributing buildings and immediately adjacent land. It excludes a road to the west, a non-contributing 1930s barn immediately to the north, and vacant land to the west and south.



Widow Donaldson Place
 Franklin County
 McConnellsbury Quad Zone 18
 E252480 N4421940

Widow Donaldson
 House
 #089633
 owned by
 Nicholas N. +
 Glen Ann Sabetto
 221 Bear Valley Rd
 #1... PA 17006