

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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 Ridgewood Farm
other names/site number Dick, Jacob Farm

2. Location

street & number Route 724 not for publication N/A
city, town Sevfert (Cumru Township) vicinity N/A
state PA code PA county Berks code 011 zip code 19508

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>8</u>	<u>3</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>13</u>	<u>9</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		<u>9</u> objects
			<u>9</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
Farms in Berks County, PA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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.

Brent D. Glass, PA, Historical & Museum Commission

Signature of certifying official [Signature] Date 3/12/92

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:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling
Agriculture: animal facility
Domestic: secondary structure
Agriculture: agricultural outbuildings

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling
Agriculture: animal facility
Domestic: secondary structure
Agriculture: agricultural outbuildings

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Federal

Other: Pennsylvania Bank Barn

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone
walls stone, wood
roof tin, asphalt
other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Ridgewood Farm is located on Route 724 just east of its intersection with Route 176 in Cumru Township. Its name, "Ridgewood", was historically associated with a nearby section of the Schuylkill Canal and the Schuylkill River, which forms the northern boundary of the tract. A small stream called Dick's Run flows through the farm in a northeasterly direction and empties into the Schuylkill at its northeastern corner. The property includes 136 acres which lie on both sides of Route 724. Much of its land is tillable and used for raising grain, hay, produce and specialty plants. About half of the farm consists of level river-bottom land located between the Schuylkill River and Route 724. This is excellent cropland of the Athol soil series, well-drained and easily tilled. The other half of the farm, located south of route 724, is composed of Neshaminy silt loam, a fertile soil on moderately sloping land consisting of about 20 acres of cropland and the rest in woods, meadow and wetland. Numerous transportation facilities cross the farm, including two railroad lines, the Schuylkill canal, Route 724 and a small portion of Ridgeway Road. Although it is close to major transportation routes and industrial sites, this is a working farm that specializes in breeding Yorkshire swine. The farm operates a small roadside market to sell its produce and flowers.

In addition to the farmstead site and woodland, the farm is laid out into ten different fields. Six of these fields are located on the 65 acres north of Route 724, the prime crop and livestock areas. The smaller fields close to the farm buildings are used for the farm-market crops and pasture. The main market crops are vegetables, pumpkins and chrysanthemums. The pumpkins and chrysanthemums are near the road where they present a lovely fall display. These are sold on the premises at a roadside stand. Corn and soybeans are planted in the big field, while other grain crops are grown on the fields across the tracks and highway. A tractor lane extends from the barn to the north, and runs east and west along the woods bordering the canal. South of Route 724, a tractor lane extends from Ridgeway Road to the three separate fields. Much of this land is woodland and wetlands meadow.

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Ridgewood Farm

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The most remarkable feature of this property is an exceptional group of farm buildings of the 1810 period. These include a house, barn, vaulted storage building and summer kitchen, all built of red sandstone. The house was a showplace of Federal style architecture when it was first built, and it retains remarkable integrity. The barn is a rare example of a "triple decker", with rear access at two levels. The resource count contains 13 contributing and nine non-contributing buildings and structures in the farmstead complex, as follows.

Description of contributing buildings and structures:

1. House: Built in two sections. Original core was 1.5 story red sandstone cabin. Three bays wide and two bays deep. Basement shows original foundation walls with support for walk-in kitchen fireplace at north end. Attic shows evidence of original roof line. House was raised one story and extended to the rear after main wing was built. Wrap-around porch on north and east sides. Gable roof covered with asphalt shingles, has chimney at north end and front and rear dormers. This portion of the house has modern interior which lacks original features.

Main wing built 1811, datestone SD-JD, with red sandstone walls and large cut quoins. South gable end facing road is four bays wide, while front facade, facing east is three bays. All windows have keystone lintels and 9/6 sash. Pedimented Federal doorway into wide side-hall at north end. Interior with high style Federal design features virtually unchanged, as this portion of the house has not been modernized and is unoccupied. Roof is tin with front and rear dormers and brick chimney centered above interior fireplaces and chimney stack extending from basement. See floor plan sketches for further details.
2. Summer kitchen/butcher house: Red sandstone with quoins, 1.5 story, chimney at north gable end, one bay on each side, 6/6 sash, door on south gable end toward house, size approximately 15' x 18'.
3. Vaulted produce storage building: Red sandstone, 1.5 story, datestone 1810. Clay tile roof over building and shed addition. Original building measures 13' by 13', addition extends 12' at east side. Lower level of building has large vaulted room with entrance door on west end. Upper level storage attic has doorway in north gable and slit ventilator at south gable. This building has no windows.

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4. Ground cellar: Stone entrance door at ground level, stairs descend to vaulted cold storage chamber with door on south side to additional vaulted storage room set at right angle to stairs.
5. Stone wall: Retaining wall lining lane in front of house of cut sandstone, similar to canal lock-stones.
6. Barn: Red sandstone walls, metal roof, louvered window ventilators, gable end datestone 1809. Large barn with dimensions of approximately 38' x 86'. Banked with standard closed forebay design, facing east. West elevation has two ramps, one to upper level threshing floors and other to an intermediate level storage area, an excellent example of a "triple decker" barn, an uncommon type in Berks County. Barn has attached storage sheds on north end. Ground floor stable area converted to pig farrowing pens that accommodate 135 breeding sows. Upper levels intact with threshing floors on two levels and hay mows and grain storage bins. Stone barnyard wall remains at south end only..
7. Milk house: Frame with asphalt shingle gable roof, south side of barn. Built c. 1940.
8. Wagon shed: 1.5 story, frame, corncribs at side, measuring 16' x 32'. Built 1920s. Added two bay attached equipment storage shed on east side.
9. Tool Shed/Workshop: Frame with asbestos shingle siding, built 1930s. Two car garage added.
10. Storage shed: Frame building, 10' x 12' with vertical board siding and tin roof. Built c. 1930s.
11. Silo: Concrete. At western edge of barn ramp. Built 1930s.
12. Two railroad bridges. Sandstone; one having brick vaulted arch. 1874.

Description of noncontributing buildings and structures:

1. Privy: frame with shed roof on concrete foundation. Located east of milk house near end of barnyard wall. Rebuilt c. 1940s.
2. Grain silos: modern cylindrical metal structures (3)
3. Pig sties: modern one story metal structures with shed roofs, each with its own fenced pig run. (3)

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4. Storage shed: Small frame building on raised cement blocks.
5. Roadside market stand: frame shed-roofed building, open on south side, located along Route 724 east of driveway entrance. Has shelves and tables for produce.

Other structures located on the property include the portion of the canal and tow-path that cross the northern edge of the farm. This canal opened in 1824 and was closed in 1932. There are also two railroad lines that transect the southern portion of the farm, and two railroad bridges that cross Dick's Run. The railroad dates from 1874 when it was built by the Wilmington and Reading Company from Reading to Birdsboro (and on to Wilmington). It connected with Philadelphia and Reading lines, across the river. A station called "Naomi" was located near Ridgewood Farm. Today one of the tracks is used by Conrail, while the other has been abandoned and sold to the Schuylkill River Greenway Association to be used as a hiking and biking trail. Both rail lines have sandstone bridges over Dick's Run, the trail bridge having a brick vaulted arch. Since the canal and railroad are a portion of larger resources and are not related to the agricultural context under which this farm is nominated, only the two railroad bridges have been included in the resource count.

Archeological resources are also present on the farm. The Pennsylvania Archeological Sites Survey has identified three Native American sites in the vicinity of this property including one large multicomponent site which could include burials. However, not enough information is available to claim archeological significance. Reference was made to this property in D. B. Brunner's The Indians of Berks County, published in Reading in 1897. He cites the Dick Farm as being "one of the most renowned places for Indian relics", a statement which also he also applied to this whole section on both sides of the Schuylkill River.

This farm has undergone relatively minor changes to its significant buildings since it was owned by the Dick family. Landscape features that have changed include the removal of fence-rows to accommodate modern farming equipment, which is the norm in working farms. New agricultural buildings have been constructed, such as metal grain silos and metal pig shelters, but these do not disturb the integrity of the early farm structures. The visual appearance of the farmstead is dominated by its historic buildings. Its land area and agricultural land use have stayed the same. Although the farm is a rented property, and shows neglect of exterior repairs and maintenance of unused buildings, the interior integrity of the farmhouse is rather incredible, an unexpected treasure in the architectural heritage of Berks County.

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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture
Architecture

Period of Significance

1809-1940

Significant Dates

1809
1810
1811

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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

This farm is eligible for the National Register in the areas of significance of agriculture and architecture, under Criteria A and C. It is a good example of a fashionable farm built during the 1790-1839 period of agricultural prosperity in Berks County. Its land use and its principal buildings reflect the period when it first became the property of Jacob Dick, owner from 1806 to 1858. During his tenure, Dick developed the property as a general crop and livestock farm. Shortly after acquiring the farm, he launched an ambitious building program. He completed the barn in 1809, the tile-roofed storage building in 1810, the house in 1811, and the summer kitchen/butcher house about the same time. He built his house in the Federal style with a side hall plan, attaching it to an earlier dwelling, which was retained as the kitchen wing. His barn also incorporated an innovative design with its double ramp access enabling more efficient loading of hay mows and grain bins. The two domestic outbuildings and the handsome red sandstone wall lining the driveway completed the picture of an elegant country estate along the River Road, one of the old roads to Philadelphia. This stylish farm was closely associated with the Dick family from 1806 to 1947, five generations of family ownership. Today, its landscape and field patterns represent the changes in farming practices that took place during the period of modernization, 1920 to 1945, the later period of Dick family ownership.

The Dick family in Berks County descended from a German settler, Jacob Dick, who came to America in the mid 1700s and participated in the Revolutionary War. His son Jacob, born in Reading in 1783, married Susan Lutz in 1806, and at that time settled on this farm along the Schuylkill River in Cumru Township. He farmed the 136 acre farm continuously until 1858 when he retired, dying the following year. His son Nicholas continued farming until c.1870, when Nicholas' son Henry took over the farm, which he operated until 1885 when he retired. Henry Dick was interested in marketing his produce, and was co-owner of the

See continuation sheet

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Ridgewood Farm

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Farmers' Market House Company. He married Mary A. Kissinger, daughter of Washington S. Kissinger who was the founder and builder of the Farmers' Market House, the largest and most complete market of its period in the city of Reading.

After 1885 the farm was owned by Marcus Dick, followed by his widow, Esther, and in 1915 by Charles Dick. Like his parents and grandparents, Charles Dick was associated with the farm market business. The present owners said that Dick used to dump produce from the market on a site up on the hill where a lot of iris and other flowers bloom now. In 1947 the farm was sold by the Dick estate to Henry Davidow, who sold it at auction in 1950, when it was purchased by Joseph Herbein, whose father lived here alone when he first obtained the farm. They raised beef cattle here, and later a Guernsey dairy herd. This operation was discontinued when the premium for butterfat milk dropped. Herbein lives on another farm, in Exeter Township. After his father passed away he rented Ridgewood Farm to tenant-farmers, including his son-in-law, David Glass, who currently farms and occupies the premises.

Ridgewood Farm is unique in its location along the Schuylkill River close to the city of Reading. To date, its farm use and many farm landscape elements have been preserved. The fact that diversified field and market crops are grown here has retained its plan of separate fields, rather than planting the whole farm in one or two crops. The meadow, woods and hilly fields on the south side of Route 724 retain the earlier small field and fence-row design. However, the farm's location in an industrialized area poses a threat for its continued farm use. It is sited near a power plant, landfill, manufacturing complex and major highway intersection. An adjacent property owner is interested in acquiring the land for industrial purposes. There is a very good chance that the owner will negotiate a sale.

An impending sale, now or in the future, represents a threat to this historic property. This farm is among the best examples of a historic period farmstead found in the 1991 Berks County survey. It represents the Federal elegance of c.1810 in its fine period architecture. The house is almost unbelievable in its architectural integrity. How could such a building, occupied all these years, have been spared the normal renovations that most modern families demand? A possible reason is that it was occupied by the Dick family before the advent of modern plumbing, and thereafter was owned by the estate for an extended period, and after that was rented to farmers, rather than being the residence of its owner. To renovate the main wing would have been a daunting job, not economically feasible, while the smaller wing was a

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lot less expensive to modernize and was adequate for a tenant farmer. The barn is equally unusual in its two-level ramp, in fact it is the only one of its kind observed in the county. The two domestic outbuildings of the same period and the walled entrance give a matching quality to the four 1810 buildings, all built of the same type of stone, with similar skillful workmanship and aesthetic composition. The farm represents the region south of the Schuylkill River, where red sandstone is the common building material and Welsh and Englishmen were the original settlers. This is not considered a prime farming region in the county and it is likely non-farm uses will continue to take over many of the remaining farms in the region.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Berks County Conservancy Agricultural Survey and Multiple Property Nomination, 1991
Brunner, D. B. The Indians of Berks County, Reading: Eagle Book Print, 1897.
Herbein, Joseph, owner. Interview 1991.
Montgomery, Morton L. Historical and Biographical Annals of Berks County, Pennsylvania. 1909, p. 744.
Meiser, George M. IX & Arthur D. Graeff Echoes of Scholla Illustrated, Kutztown: Kutztown Publishing Company, 1976, p. 14.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Berks County Conservancy

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property 136 acres

UTM References

A	1,8	4,2,4	2,6,0	4,4	6,1	2,2,0
	Zone	Easting		Northing		
C	1,8	4,2,3	2,5,0	4,4	6,0	1,0,0

B	1,8	4,2,3	8,5,0	4,4	6,0	0,0,0
	Zone	Easting		Northing		
D	1,8	4,2,3	6,5,0	4,4	6,1	5,0,0

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	<u>Phoebe Hopkins, Administrative Director</u>	date	<u>June 1991</u>
organization	<u>Berks County Conservancy</u>	telephone	<u>(215) 372-4992</u>
street & number	<u>960 Old Mill Road</u>	state	<u>PA</u>
city or town	<u>Wyomissing</u>	zip code	<u>19610</u>

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Ridgewood Farm

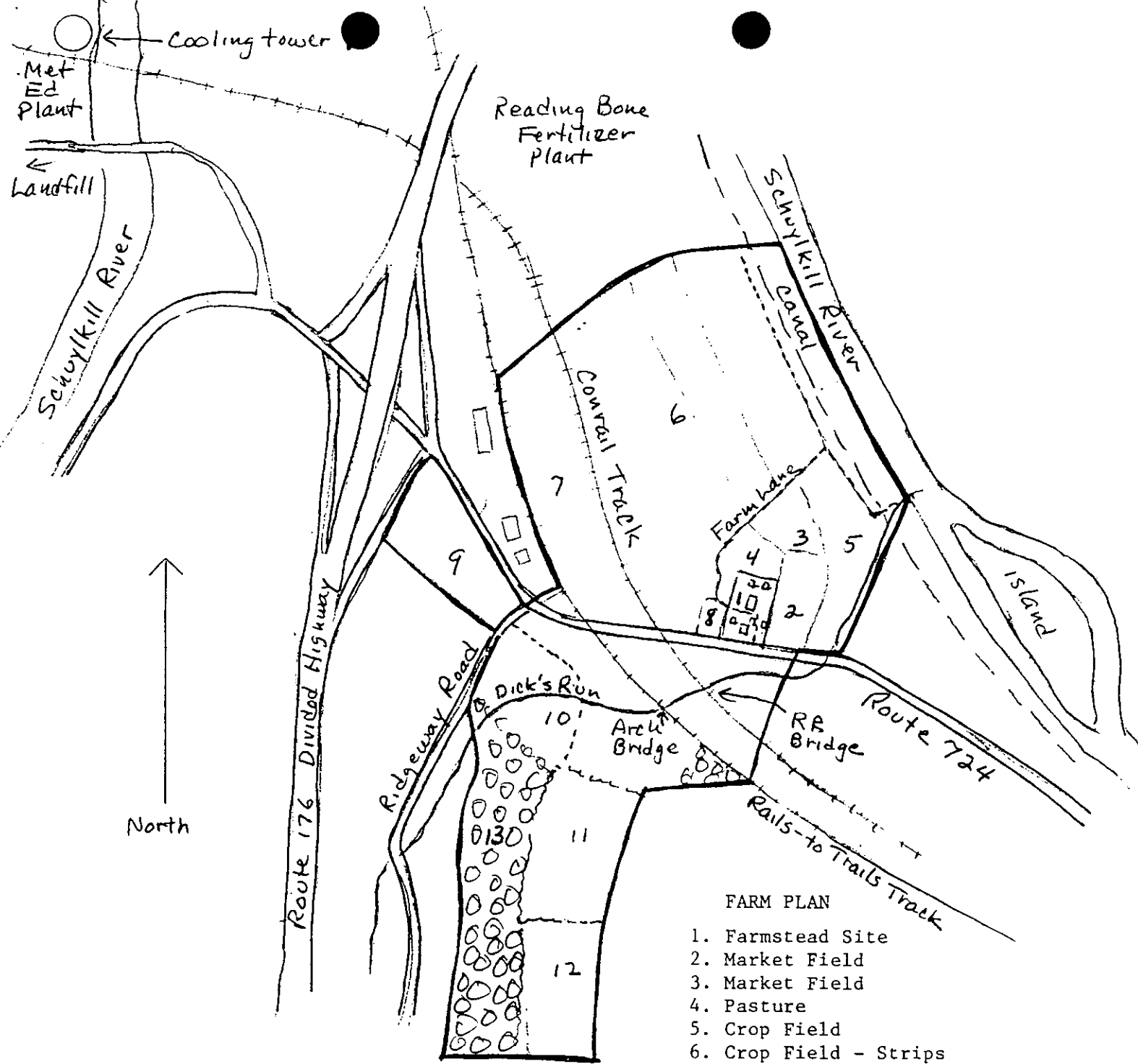
Section number 10 Page 1

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the nominated property is the same as the present boundary of the farm. The boundary description is recorded in Berks County Deed Book Volume 1109, page 59.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property has retained its boundary throughout the period of significance. The land has continued its agricultural use, including the presence of a farm woodlot on hilly, non-tillable land.



North ↑

RIDGEWOOD FARM
 CUMRU TOWNSHIP
 BERKS COUNTY, PA

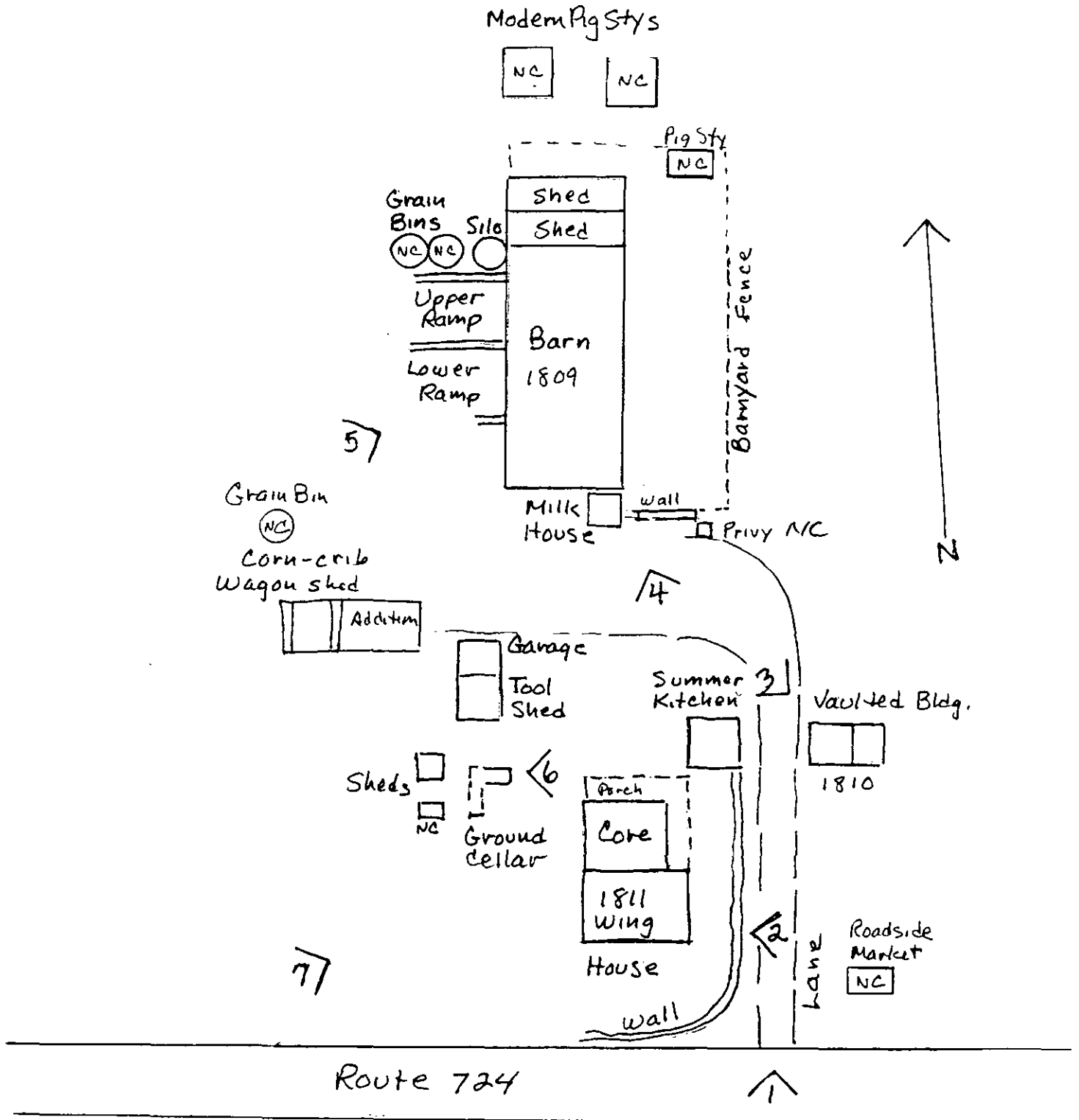
- FARM PLAN
1. Farmstead Site
 2. Market Field
 3. Market Field
 4. Pasture
 5. Crop Field
 6. Crop Field - Strips
 7. Crop Field
 8. Vegetable Field
 9. Crop Field
 10. Meadow-wetlands
 11. Crop Field
 12. Crop Field
 13. Woods

SKETCH PLAN
 NOT TO SCALE

Ridgewood Farm Berks County, Pa.

Farmstead Plan and Photo Views

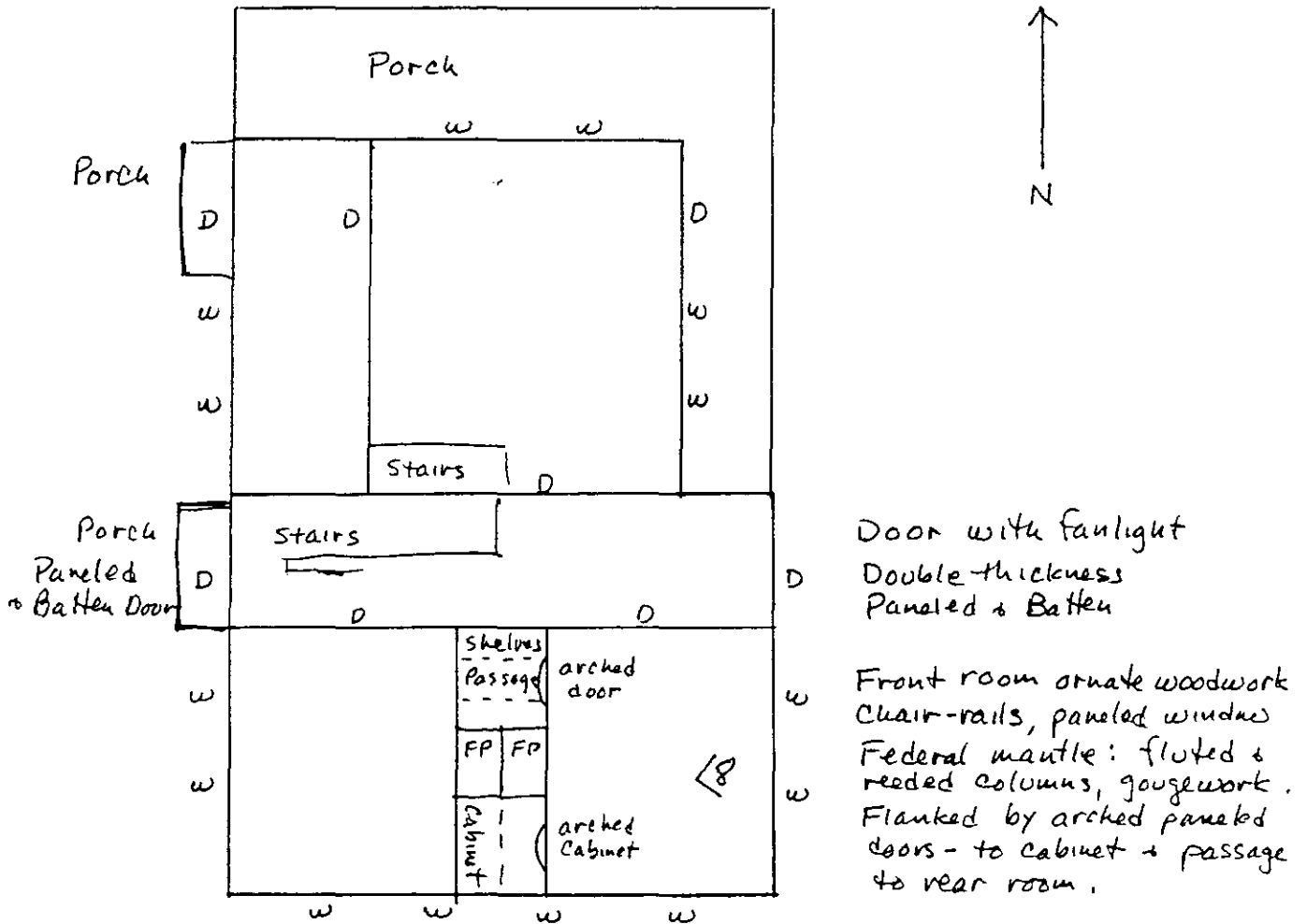
Not To Scale



> Photo View

NC = Non Contributing

Ridgewood Farm, Berks County, PA

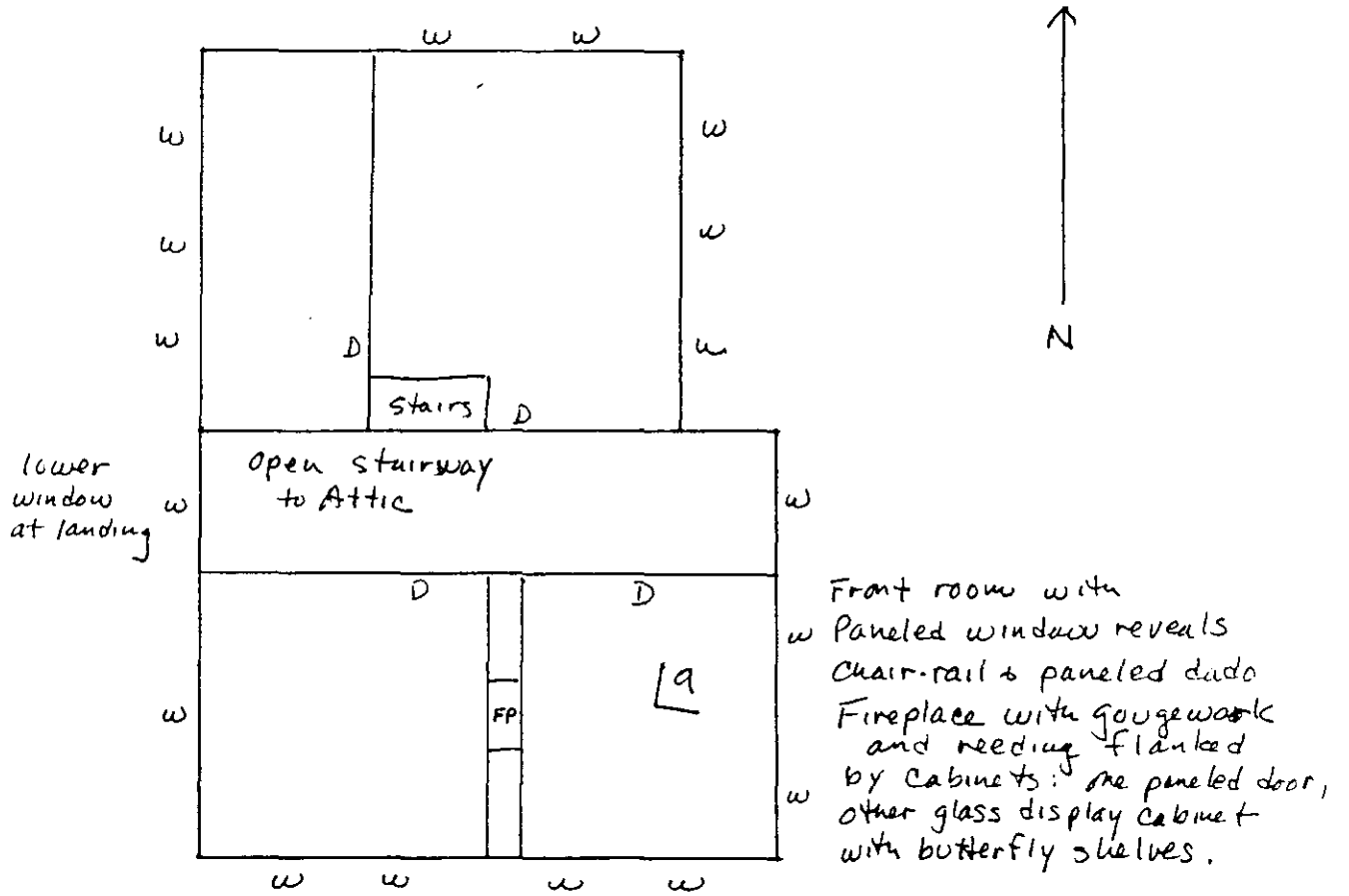


Door with fanlight
Double thickness
Paneled + Batten

Front room ornate woodwork
Chair-rails, paneled windows
Federal mantle: fluted & reeded columns, gougework.
Flanked by arched paneled doors - to cabinet + passage to rear room.

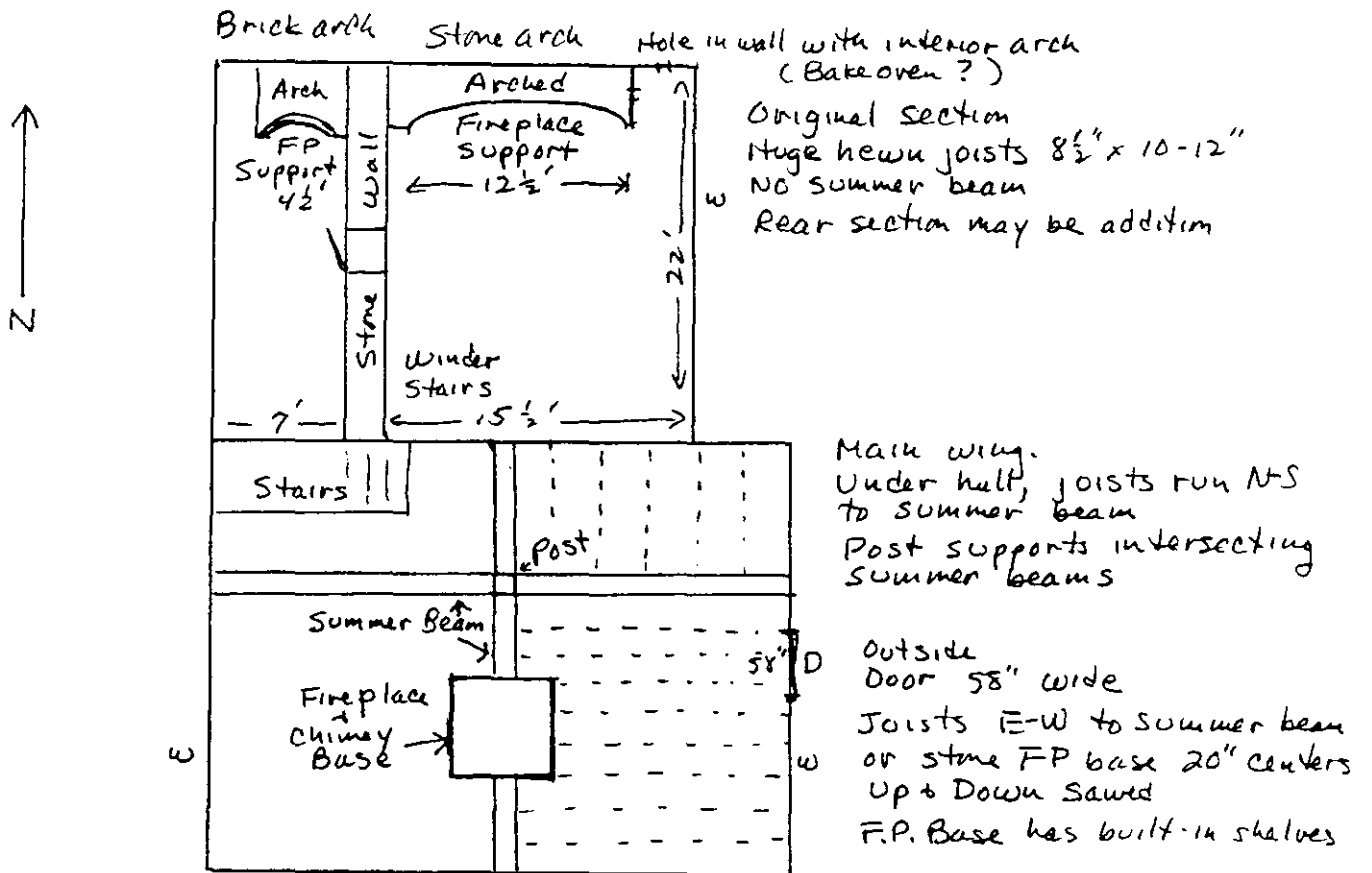
First Floor Plan + Photo View

Ridgewood Farm Berks County, PA

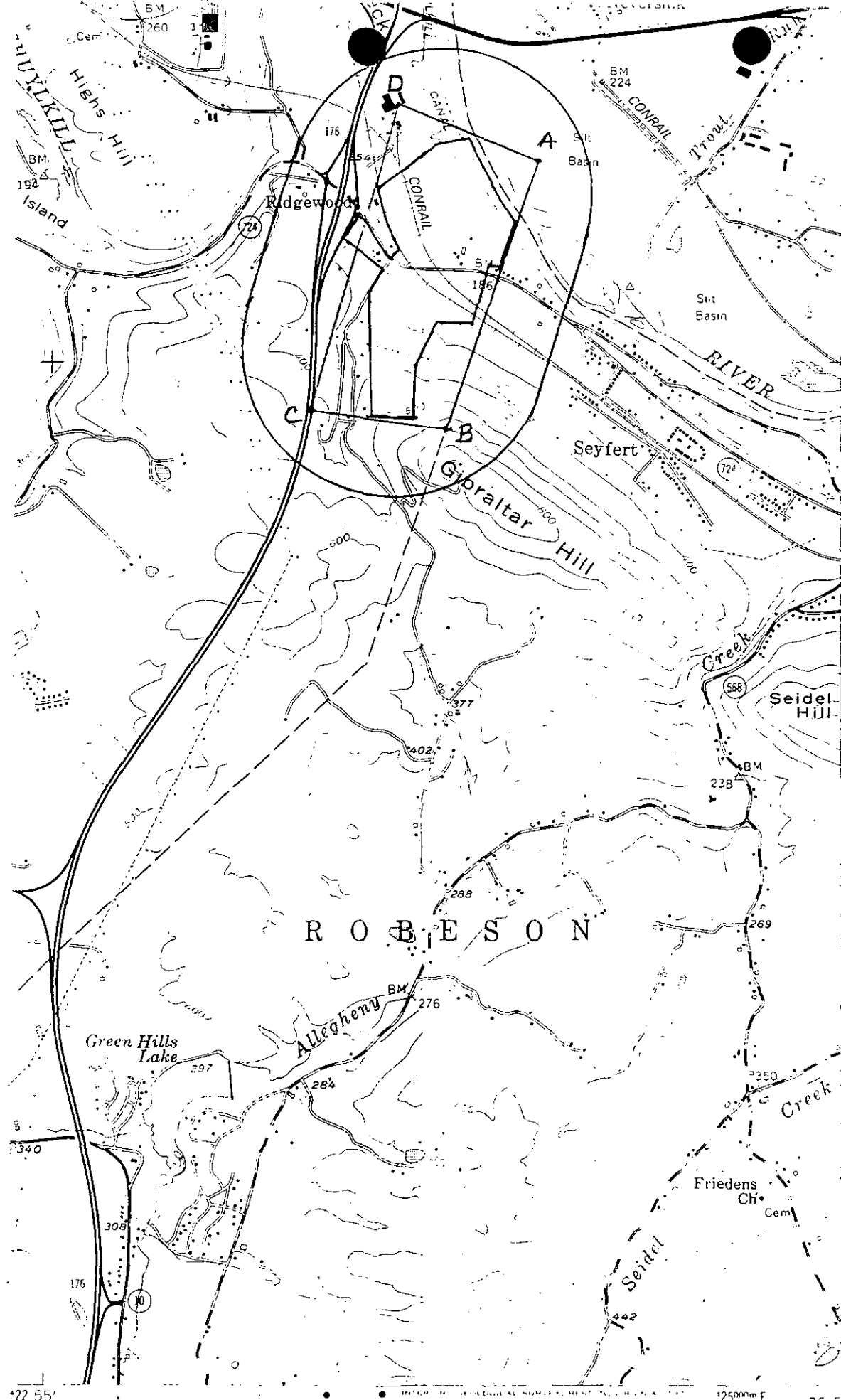


Second Floor Plan and Photo View

Ridge wood Farm, Berks County, PA



Basement Plan



Ridgewood Farm
 Berks County
 Reading Quad
 Zone 18

- A 424260 4461220
- B 423850 4460000
- C 423250 4460100
- D 423650 4461500

PAULUS FORV...
 PHILADELPHIA...

17'30"
 4460
 4459
 4458
 4457
 4456000m N.

22 55' 24 125000m E 40 15' 75 52'30"

MILE

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

(ELEVATION)