



ALABAMA REGISTER OF LANDMARKS & HERITAGE NOMINATION FORM

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY - DATE ADDED: _____

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Brierfield Coal + Iron Company Superintendent's House
and/or Common Name: _____

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: _____
City: Brierfield
State: Alabama County: Bibb Zip: -
Is the property located within the city limits? Yes No
USGS Quad Map: _____ Township/Section/Range: _____

3. CLASSIFICATION

Category: Building(s) District Structure Site Object
Ownership: Public Private Both
Status: Occupied Unoccupied Work in progress
Public Acquisition: In process Being considered
Accessible: No Yes: restricted Yes: unrestricted

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

Name: _____ Telephone: _____
Street & Number: 13728 Montevallo Road
City or Town: Brierfield State: AL Zip: 35035 3950
Email: _____

5. FLOOR PLAN & SITE PLAN

Attach sketched floor plan. If the property includes more than one building, submit a site plan showing the locations, dates of construction, and uses of the buildings.

See attached

6. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Construction Date:	C. 1882	Source:	Documentary research + physical evidence
Alteration Date:	C. 1897 / 2010	Source:	
Architect:		Builder:	Herman Pfaff - 1897 alterations pres. of Southern Mineral Land Company
Physical Condition: (Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor)	excellent	Remaining Historic Fabric: (High, Medium, Low)	medium
No. of stories:	one	No. of front bays:	
Historic use of property:	residence		
Current use of property:	office space		
Architectural Style:	n/a	Building Form:	rectangular / irregular
Main roof configuration:	side gable	Roof finish material:	composition shingle
Exterior wall materials:	weatherboard		
Porch type:	integral	Foundation material:	
Window type and materials:	4/4		
Describe alterations:	moved to present site in 2010		
Number and type of all outbuildings:	none		
Total number of man-made structures on the property:	one		
Exterior Architectural Description:			
<p>one story wood frame residence with side gable roof of composition shingles. 4/4 wood frame double hung windows. Multiple entry doors. New ramp added on rear for ADA access.</p>			
Description of Setting:			
<p>located within the Brierfield Historic Ironworks park.</p>			

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Criteria (check all that apply and explain below). See Instructions for more information.

Criterion A: Associated with historical events and activities relating to the property that are important to the history of the community, state, or nation.

Criterion B: Person or group with whom the property is associated is important to the history of the community, state, or nation.

Criterion C: Type, period, or method of construction represents architectural features that are significant in the development of the community, state, or nation.

Criterion D: Property has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in Alabama's history or prehistory (archaeological component).

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (check all that apply and explain below)

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input type="checkbox"/> social history |
| <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> funerary art | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

For each area of significance checked above, explain why this property is important. Use additional sheets as necessary.

see attached

8. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Use attached sheets as necessary

9. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of nominated property: ± 1 acre

Attach a map showing the location of the property.

10. FORM PREPARED BY

Name: <u>Lee Anne Wofford</u>	Date: <u>Dec. 13, 2010</u>
Organization: <u>AHC</u>	Telephone: <u>334.230.2659</u>
Street & Number: <u>468 S. Perry St.</u>	State: <u>AL</u> Zip: <u>36130-0900</u>
City or Town: <u>Montgomery, AL 36130</u>	
Email: <u>LWofford@preseneala.org</u>	

11. PHOTOGRAPHS:

Images are essential to the review process. They can be 4x6 color prints or digital images on a CD/DVD. All photographs will become the property of the AHC and will not be returned.

12. REMINDER:

Along with this completed application, include attachments for Items 5, 9 and 11 and send them to:

Alabama Historical Commission
Attn: Lee Anne Wofford
468 S. Perry Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-0900

Brierfield Coal and Iron Company Superintendent's House
Brierfield, Bibb County, Alabama
Historic Structures Report



September 2009



SCHNEIDER
Historic Preservation, LLC
www.shphistoric.com

Brierfield Coal and Iron Company Superintendent's House

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Prepared for the Alabama Historic Ironworks Commission

Acknowledgements

Special thanks are extended to Martin Everse for the excellent historical research he provided and for tracking down the historic photos used in this report; thanks to Mike Mahan for everything; and thanks to Eugene Jones, Jr., for granting permission to use photos from the Pfaff Family Collection.

*David B. Schneider
September 2009*

Brierfield Coal and Iron Company Superintendent's House

Significance and Historical Narrative

Significance

Documentary research and physical evidence indicate that the subject house was constructed circa 1882 as the Superintendent's House for the Brierfield Coal and Iron Company. The first occupant is thought to have been Thomas Jefferson Peter, part owner and president of the company. It is one of the only two surviving frame buildings from what at one time was an industrial complex encompassing an ironworks, a rolling mill, a nail mill, a coal washer, and as many as 140 workers' dwellings. The house was later expanded, possibly circa 1897, during its occupancy by Herman Pfaff, president of the Southern Mineral Land Company.

Narrative History (Adapted from notes provided by Martin Everse)

The Bibb County Iron Company was created in February 1862 and entered into a contract on April 24, 1862 with the Confederate States of America "for making and delivering certain iron and erecting a rolling mill."¹ The C.S.A purchased control of the company on September 9, 1863 and the mill was completed shortly thereafter.²

The Alabama Manual and Statistical Register for 1869 contains "The following account of the Iron Works of Alabama, first published in the Mobile Times, in 1866, [and] was contributed by a gentleman who had been prominent among the engineers of the United



The Superintendent's House, circa 1900-1910, Photo courtesy of Eugene Jones, Jr.

States Army" that describes development that was then standing near the rolling mill and shops: "around these are clustered offices, storehouses, spacious stables, and about thirty good frame dwellings, plastered and white-washed, and looking very cheerful."³

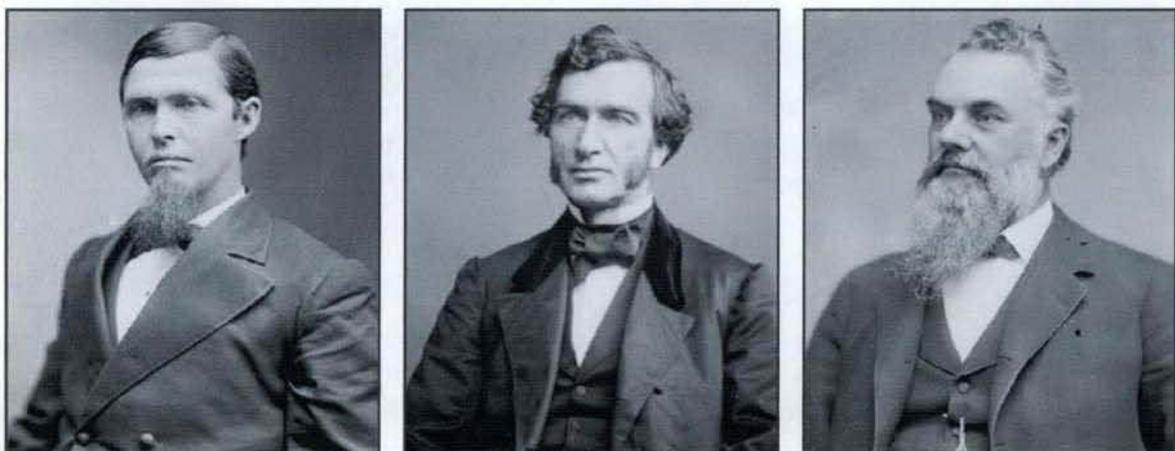
A "Memorandum Statement as to Character and Extent of the Property of the Brierfield Iron Works," published circa 1869, states that: "Within the last two or three weeks of the war the works, or such portions of them as were combustible, were burned by the cavalry column of Gen. Wilson, moving from North Alabama upon Selma - the workmen's houses, stables, & c., being spared however. . ."

The report provides the following inventory of the buildings near the rolling mill:

BUILDINGS. - Two officers' dwelling house, (\$9,000) 6 to 8 rooms each, with out-buildings; 21 houses for workmen, (\$14,700) 1 with 5 rooms, 3 with four and the rest with 2 rooms, with kitchens & c., nearly all plastered and quite comfortable.⁴

It is possible that a portion of the Superintendent's House was constructed during this original phase. However, no structural evidence has been located within the existing building to suggest that any of the surviving house was built at that time. A set of photographs taken circa 1900-1910 suggest that a portion of a former extension of the house to the north might pre-date the existing portion and be a remnant from this earlier period.⁵ The extensions were removed circa 1930 and no other documentation has been located to date the construction of the now lost portions of the house.

After the war, Josiah Gorgas operated the works until 1869 and then leased them to Thomas Stanley Alvis. Alvis went bankrupt in 1873. In 1881, one of the original owners, C. C. Huckabee, purchased the rolling mill and began renovations. On May 4, 1882, the Brierfield Coal and Iron Company was incorporated and it purchased the property from Huckabee on March 8.⁶ Major stockholders in the Brierfield Coal and Iron Company included Thomas Jefferson Peter and U.S. Senators Preston B. Plumb (1837-1891) of Kansas, Justin Smith Morrill (1810-1898) of Vermont, and James G. Fair (1831-1894) of California.⁷



Left to Right: U.S. Senators Preston B. Plumb of Kansas, Justin Smith Morrill of Vermont, and James G. Fair of California, major stockholders in the Brierfield Coal and Iron Company. Photos by Matthew Brady or Levin Handy (Morrill photo attributed to Brady) from the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Brady-Handy Photograph Collection via Wikimedia Commons.



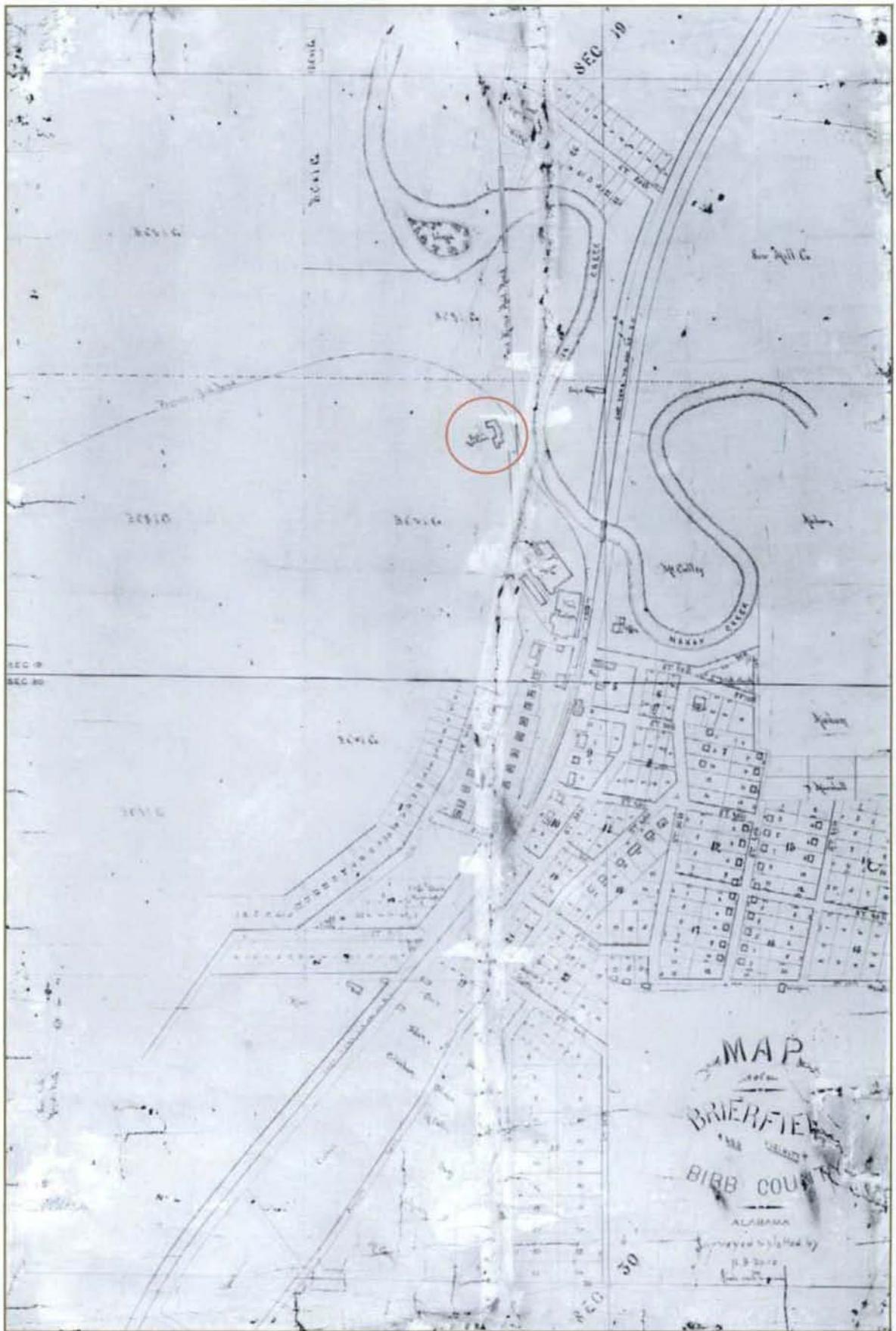
Thomas Jefferson Peter (1835-1896) from Ethel Armes History of Coal and Iron in Alabama, page 65.

Peter had been a successful railroad contractor and mine operator in Kansas and was introduced to Brierfield by Senators Plumb and Morgan. After the acquisition of the Brierfield facilities, Peter was named President and General Manager of the company. Born in Baltimore on January 7, 1835, Peter began work as a railroad engineer at the age of 16. He held a number of engineering positions prior to starting a railroad construction business in 1863. He built and became the general manager of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad, resigning from the company in 1873 to pursue mining opportunities in Kansas and Colorado.⁸ The 1880 federal census records him as a 45-year old "Capitalist" living in St. Louis, Missouri with his wife Esther, their children Edward, Jessamine, George, and Beulah, and three servants.

The Brierfield Coal and Iron Company acquired the iron furnace about February 1883.⁹ This was a period of major improvement and construction, during which time many new buildings were built. According to the Bibb Blade of 18 January 1883: "Besides the work on these large buildings [rolling mill and nailery] and this vast amount of machinery, the company have already erected about 130 or 140 new buildings - tenement houses - and have about 30 others now under contract, and 10 or 12 to let out."



This page and next: "Map of Brierfield and Vicinity, Bibb County, Alabama," surveyed and platted by N.B. Dare, 1886.



Brierfield Coal and Iron Company Superintendent's House

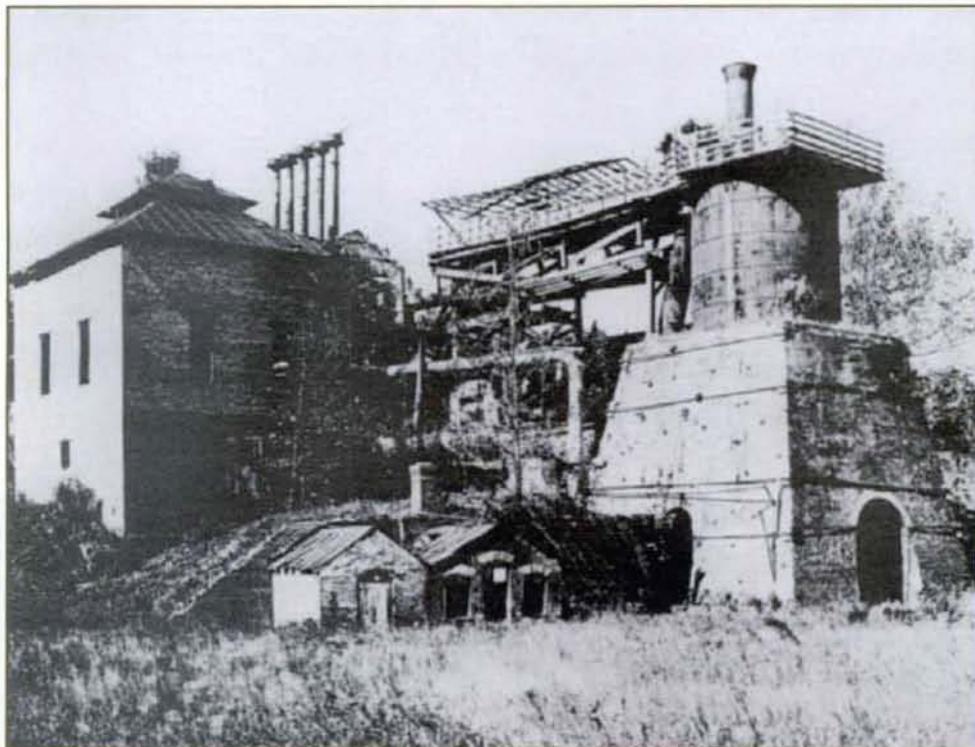
According to Ethel Armes in The Story of Coal and Iron in Alabama:

Major Peter's first step was the consolidation of his various properties. A railroad line was then built from Brierfield to the furnaces. Reconstruction work commenced, and a million dollars, it was said, was put into improvements. The furnace and rolling mills were remodeled, a large nail factory built, and coke ovens and a coal washer constructed.¹⁰

It is likely that the superintendent's house was constructed at this time and it is depicted on the 1886 "Map of Brierfield and Vicinity" by N. B. Dare as the "Supt's Residence." The footprint shown on the map corresponds to the circa 1900-1910 photographs and depicts only the northern portion of the present house and the now removed northern extensions. The present southern portion of the house was added after the 1886 map was completed.

In 1884, the American Iron and Steel Association published a Directory to the Blast Furnaces, Rolling Mills, Steel Works, Forges, and Bloomaries in Every State and Territory. The book included the following description of the Brierfield facilities:

Bibb Furnace, Brierfield Iron and Coal Company, Brierfield. Furnace at Bibb Furnace, Bibb county. One stack, 50 x 101, built in 1864 to use charcoal, and rebuilt in 1881; closed top; cold blast; ore, brown hematite, mined in the immediate vicinity; annual capacity, 4,600 net tons. The furnace is at present being remodeled to use coke. See Rolling Mills,... Brierfield Rolling Mill, Brierfield Coal and Iron Company, Brierfield, Bibb county. Built in 1863, rebuilt in 1882-3, and put in operation in August, 1883; 1 double and 12



*Brierfield Ironworks from Ethel Armes
History of Coal and Iron in Alabama, page 208.*

Brierfield Coal and Iron Company Superintendent's House

single puddling furnaces, 5 heating furnaces, 3 18-inch trains of rolls, and 72 nail machines; product, nails; annual capacity, 125,000 kegs. The works also contain a 9-inch merchant train of rolls, but it has never been used. T. J. Peter, President; John G. Murray, Secretary and Auditor ; M. A. Williams, Superintendent. See Furnaces.¹¹

Unable to find sufficient skilled labor to operate its facilities, the company began recruiting heavily in Pennsylvania and other states. Within a short time, more than 500 workers were employed.¹² The Bibb Blade of April 7, 1887, announced that:

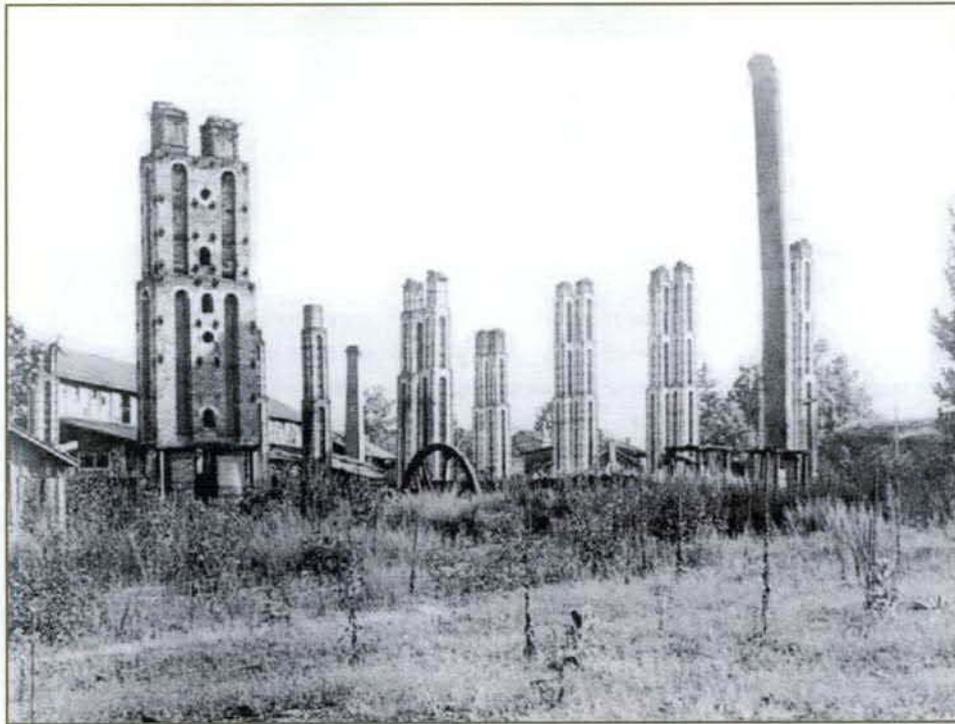
Last week a special car was pulled into Brierfield and remained there several days. It bore no less personages than Senator Plumb of Kansas, Senator Morrill of Vermont and Mr. Sprague, who are large stockholders in the Brierfield Coal and Iron Company. They remained in consultation with Maj. Peter, the President of the Company for several days.

According to a February 28, 1898 deposition before the Shelby County Chancery Court by Marie L. E. German, Executrix of the estate of Joseph Verchot vs. Alabama Iron & Steel Company et al:

My name is E. H. Fitch. I reside in Selma, Ala. I was in the employment of the Alabama Iron and Steel Co. from the 1st of Jan. 1893 to the 1st of June 1894. From the time of my employment I was check clerk until the 1st of March 1893 from that time I was book keeper until about the 15th of June 1894. . . . I suppose that T. J. Peter had control of all the land and property of the Alabama Iron Co. I never heard of any one else having such control. The Alabama Iron & Steel Co. own the land in form, a triangle, lying between the railroad leading from the rolling mill to the furnace as far as the residence of T. J. Peter on one side and the creek leading from the clubhouse to the rolling mill on the other side and the railroad leading from T. J. Peter's house to the club house forms the third side. E. T. Peter [T. J. Peter's son] was Secretary and Treasurer of the Alabama Iron & Steel Co. as appeared on the letter heads, and his name also appeared on the rolls as such.

I do not think he was recognized as Secretary and Treasurer, his duty was Superintendent at the furnace, though he attended to all the other business when Mr. T. J. Peter was away. I mean Superintendent of the furnace, that he was Superintendent for the Alabama Iron & Steel Co. T. J. Peter was not absent often, he was away four or five times while I was there, and stayed a week or ten days at a time. E. T. Peter lived with T. J. Peter at Brierfield until either the fall of 1893 or the spring of 1894 when he moved to his farm.¹³

The company began producing nails and was initially very successful. However, within a year or so, steel cut nails appeared on the market and their superiority resulted in a substantial drop in the price of the company's iron cut nails. The nailery and the rolling mill ceased operations by 1887. Sen. Plumb filed a lawsuit in the U.S. Circuit Court on August 3, 1887 asking the court to assess the liability of the company's stockholders for unpaid stock subscriptions. The case later ended up in the U.S. Supreme Court when a number of unsecured creditors appealed the Circuit Court's decision and sought to have the company's assets sold to pay their claims. While the Supreme Court ruled in November 1893 that these plaintiffs had no standing and dismissed their claim, the decision provides the following summary of the company's situation at this time:



*Brierfield Ironworks from Ethel Armes
History of Coal and Iron in Alabama, page 208.*

The facts in this case are as follows: the Brierfield Coal and Iron Company was incorporated under the laws of Alabama May 4, 1882. On September 1, 1882, a conveyance was made by the company to Preston B. Plumb, as trustee, to secure an issue of \$500,000 in bonds. On July 25, 1887, the trustee, Plumb, requested a further conveyance and assurance, pursuant to a covenant in the deed of September, 1882, which further conveyance was executed by the company on July 29, 1887. On August 1, he demanded the surrender of all the company's property to him, as trustee. This was done, and he placed John G. Murray in charge, to control and manage it. On August 3, he filed a bill in the Circuit Court of the United States for the middle district of Alabama against the company, joining as defendants certain stockholders, bondholders, and creditors, though not the plaintiffs in the present suit. That bill set out the organization of the corporation, the stockholders, with the amounts of stock subscribed, and the amounts paid upon such stock, and alleged that the subscribers were liable for the unpaid subscriptions, but that the assistance of the court was necessary for the assessment of such sums.

The bill further averred that up to that time, the chief industry of the company had been the manufacturing of cut nails from iron; that, owing to overproduction in the country, this business had become unprofitable to the company, and that it was desired to change the industry from the manufacture of nails to the production of pig iron, and that it had purchased property with a view to carrying on that industry; that it did not have money enough to successfully carry it on. The bill also alleged that the trustee had taken possession, as authorized by the deed of trust; that he could not carry

on the business of the company without obtaining money on the credit of the property, and prayed the direction of the court as to whether he should be permitted to borrow such money and issue certificates of indebtedness therefore. It asked that all creditors of the corporation and claimants against the estate be permitted to make themselves parties and have their claims adjudicated; that a full administration be had of the estate, and, if need be, a foreclosure and sale. Subsequently, Plumb resigned as trustee and W. L. Chambers was substituted in his place. Proceedings were had in that case which resulted, on July 8, 1889, in a decree for the foreclosure of the trust deed and a sale of the property.¹⁴

An 1892 prospectus for the Alabama Iron and Steel Company of Brierfield Alabama stated that: "The company owns at Brierfield a rolling mill of 40 tons per day capacity, a nail mill of 600 kegs per day capacity, a foundry, a pattern shop, a machine shop fitted to do all the company's work, an office building, a store building, a coal washer, 72 coke ovens, and about 100 tenements for the company's workmen, which latter rent at from five to ten dollars a month each."¹⁵ A hand drawn 1893 map recorded T. J. Peter as the occupant of the Superintendent's House.¹⁶

After the foreclosure, the company was reorganized as the Alabama Iron and Steel Company. The furnace was converted from a coke furnace to a charcoal furnace and began producing pig iron. According to E.T. Peter's deposition in the case of Oscar Whitfield et. al. v. Alabama Iron and Steel Company et. al. before the Shelby County Chancery Court in 1901: "After the organization of the Alabama Iron and Steel Company we did not run the nailery any more. It is not a fact that the nailery was worn out and it would not have paid us to repair it - it was just as good as it ever was, as far as the machinery was concerned, but it is a fact that about that time the steel nail superceded the iron nail and it would not have paid to start the nailery up. The steel nail is made by the same process and machinery, but there was no steel in this country. I am not speaking of a wire nail, but a steel cut nail."



Ruins of the Brierfield Furnace, Historic American Engineering Record, 1993.

Unfortunately, the nationwide financial panic of 1890 forced the company back into receivership in 1894. Peter was appointed receiver but was unable to reorganize the company again. He "finally succumbed to the terrible strain that he had gone through in endeavoring to make this pioneer movement a success" and died on October 16, 1896.¹⁷

A reorganization committee for the Alabama Iron and Steel Company was formed and all of the property was transferred to the Southern Mineral Land Company about 1897. Herman Pfaff was hire as a caretaker by the company and was later named its president. He and his family moved into the Superintendent's House.

According to a Pfaff family history, Herman Pfaff was the oldest son of Rudolph Harry and Katherine Widely Pfaff and was born on May 31, 1847 in Germany. His family relocated to Pittsburgh about 1855 and by the age of ten Herman took employment in a cigar factory to help support his family. Prior to entering the Union Army during the Civil War, Pfaff operated a successful hat business. He married Margaret Schnabel in 1868 and worked in the dry goods business in Philadelphia until the early 1870s when the family moved south. His father had purchased a farm in Lawrence County, Alabama, and when he was unable to make his mortgage payments after a storm destroyed his crops, Herman Pfaff purchased the farm. The family relocated again about 1886 to Ashtabula, Ohio where Herman became a salesman for Goodyear Rubber Company. They moved back to the Alabama farm in 1889 after Pfaff's doctor advised him to moved to a warmer climate. The Pfaffs moved to Brierfield in 1897. Maggie Pfaff died on June 13, 1907 and was buried in Brierfield Cemetery.

Herman Pfaff, age 62, is listed in the 1910 census living in Brierfield with his daughter Annie and his occupation is recorded as being the agent of the "Land Co. of Brierfied." In 1913, their son Harry moved to Brierfield where he became the station agent at Brierfield for the Southern Railway. Herman Pfaff later relocated to Birmingham where he died on November 15, 1934.¹⁸



*Herman Pfaff on the porch of the Superintendent's House, circa 1900-1910,
Photo courtesy of Eugene Jones, Jr.*



Herman & Maggie Pfaff, circa 1910, Photo courtesy of Eugene Jones, Jr.

According to the Montevallo Advertiser, of September 15, 1917: "Mrs. Harry Pfaff died at her home at Brierfield Wednesday, after a very short illness, due, it is supposed from blood poisoning. She is survived by her husband and three children. Mr. Pfaff is depot agent for the Southern, and is also superintendent of the Brierfield Land Company, which concern has charge of about 30,000 acres of land."

A letter from A.H. Plumb to Preston Plumb, dated July 31, 1929, provides additional information about Pfaff and his association with the Southern Mineral Land Company:

I note your inquiry in reference to salaries paid by the Southern Mineral Land Company. Mr. Herman Pfaff, President of the Company receives as his sole compensation, the farm rents collected during the year. These amounted to \$185.45 for the past year. While he is not active he takes a lively interest in the Company's affairs, and his suggestions are helpful. Mr. Pfaff was first employed by the Reorganization Committee of the Alabama Iron & Steel Company [c.1897], as care taker of the property, and when the Southern Mineral Land Company was organized, he was elected President and has held that position ever since. His compensation at first was \$25 per month, in cash, and it was understood that when a sale was made he was to receive, as additional compensation, the equivalent of what 50 shares of preferred stock would receive. As you know, it was the expectation, at that time, that we would speedily sell the property. In 1913, however, Mr. Pfaff asked that on account of his meager monthly compensation, which at that time was \$75 per month, the 50 shares of preferred stock be issued to him, so as to protect his daughter in case of his death; this was done. After that Mr. Pfaff's cash salary was increased from time to time until he was receiving \$150 a month at a time he had a stroke, in 1921, following an all day negotiation with parties desiring a lease on the Montevallo seam west of Dogwood. While he recovered in a few weeks the doctor forbade his taking active part in negotiations thereafter, so his compensation was changed to 1 share of common stock per month, and the farm rents received by the Company



Harry (left) and Annie (right) Pfaff, circa 1900-1910, Photo courtesy of Eugene Jones, Jr.

during the year. This was continued until the common stock in the Treasury was exhausted; since that time he has received the farm rents only.¹⁹

The Southern Mineral Land Company sold the house and accompanying ten acres to C. T. "Tom" Hughes for \$500 on December 10, 1925.²⁰ Hughes had operated a gristmill at Brierfield before this time. C. Thomas Hughes is listed in the 1930 census living in the house with his daughter Linnie and son-in-law George Beatty. Hughes was seventy-one years old at the time and listed his occupation as a farmer. Linnie (age 39) is listed as a retail merchant operating a general store and George (age 41) as a railroad construction foreman. Hughes died in 1939 and was buried in the Brierfield Cemetery. There is no record of Hughes transferring the house and property to his daughter, Linnie Hughes Beatty, but she and her husband George Beatty granted the Alabama Power Company a right-of-way across the Superintendent's House property on January 30, 1937.²¹ The Beatty's sold the house and property to W. S. Raines in 1951.²² Raines was the father of Howell Raines, a Pulitzer Prize winning author and former executive editor of the New York Times. Raines began repairing the house but never completed the work. The Times carried W. S. Raines' obituary on October 7, 2002:

W. S. RAINES; BUSINESSMAN, 95

W. S. Raines, a retired businessman and investor in real estate in Alabama and Florida, died yesterday at his home in Birmingham. He was 95.

The son of Hiram Howell and Mary Jane Raines, Wattie Simeon Raines was born on the family farm in the hills near Curry, Ala., on Sept. 21, 1907. As a teenager, he met Bertha Walker at church, and the two were married in 1929, when they were 22. He was a carpenter and house builder before he moved to Birmingham.



Left to right: Unidentified, Annie Pfaff, Adelaide Mahan, circa 1900-1910, Photo courtesy of Eugene Jones, Jr.

There, in 1937, he and two of his brothers founded the Raines Brothers Store Fixture Company. In retirement he lived for more than 20 years in Panama City Beach, Fla.

He is survived by his wife of 72 years, Bertha Walker Raines; a daughter, Mary Jo Raines Dean of Mountain Brook, Ala.; two sons, Jerry W., of Birmingham, and Howell, of New York City, who is executive editor of The New York Times; seven grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandson.

In 1958, Raines and his wife, Bertha W. Raines, sold the property to Archie and Hazel Walls and Sterling and Minnie Walls for \$1,200 down and mortgage of \$4,600.²³ According to the Walls family, the house was in its present configuration by that time.²⁴ The Walls paid off the mortgage on the house by selling the right-of-way through their property to a lime quarry in 1963.²⁵ Blasting from the ChemLime quarry caused the collapse of the rock walls below the porch some time after that.²⁶

Sterling Walls sold the property to Chemical Lime Co. on August 25, 2006.

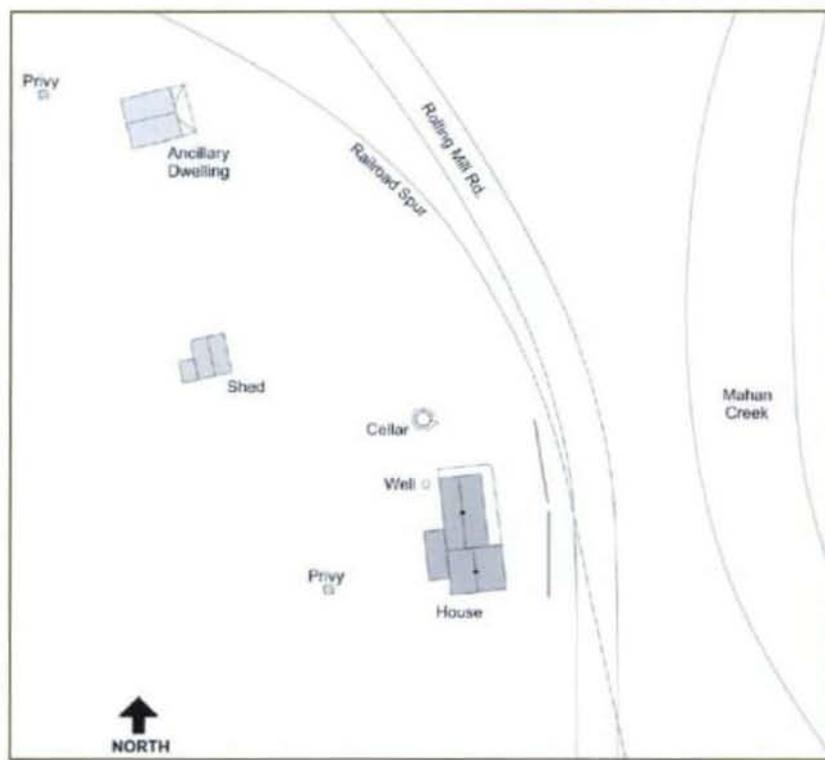
Notes: _____

- ¹ Bibb County Judge of Probate, Deed Book I, page 471.
- ² Deed Book I, pages 498-501.
- ³ Joseph Hodgson, The Alabama Manual and Statistical Register for 1869 (Montgomery, n.p., 1869), p. 106.
- ⁴ "Memorandum Statement as to Character and Extent of the Property of the Brierfield Iron Works, [circa 1869]," Brierfield Iron Works Collection, W. Stanley Hoole Special Collections Library, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa.
- ⁵ Photos from the Pfaff Family Collection courtesy of Eugene Jones, Jr. The photographer was Herman Pfaff's daughter Anna Pfaff who lived in the Superintendent's House and was a friend of noted Alabama artist Adelaide Mahan who lived nearby. Anna Pfaff's photos were included in Ethel Armes' The Story of Coal and Iron in Alabama (see pages 5 & 7).
- ⁶ United States Supreme Court, *Hollins v. Brierfield Coal & Iron Co.*, 150 U.S. 371 (1893); Deed Book S, pp. 326-32.
- ⁷ Ethel Armes, The Story of Coal and Iron in Alabama (Leeds, AL: Beechwood Books, 1987), p. 325.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 324-328.
- ⁹ Deed Book S, pp. 160-161
- ¹⁰ Armes, p. 325; Armes describes two men with similar names who has quite different histories. On page 138, she discusses Major Thomas Peters who was born in North Carolina and raised in middle Tennessee. A former officer in the army of the Confederacy, Peters is credited with bringing Enoch Ensley to Birmingham in 1886. On pages 325-326, Armes discusses the background of Thomas Jefferson Peter, born in Baltimore who at the time of the outbreak of the Civil War was serving as the city civil engineer in Cincinnati, Ohio and by 1863 was building railroads. Her reference to "Major Peter" on page 325 appears to confuse the two men, although an article in the The Bibb Blade dated April 7, 1887 also refers to Peter as a Major.
- ¹¹ Directory to the Blast Furnaces, Rolling Mills, Steel Works, Forges, and Bloomaries in Every State and Territory, prepared by the American Iron and Steel Association, Corrected to September 1, 1884 (Philadelphia, PA: American Iron and Steel Association, 1884), pp. 44 & 130.
- ¹² Armes, p. 327.
- ¹³ Deposition of E. H. Fitch, 28 February 1898, Marie L. E. German as Executrix of Joseph Verchot vs. Alabama Iron & Steel Company et al, Shelby County Chancery Court papers in loose papers file, Old Shelby County Courthouse and Museum, Columbiana, Alabama.
- ¹⁴ U.S. Supreme Court, *Hollins v. Brierfield Coal & Iron Co.*, 150 U.S. 371 (1893).
- ¹⁵ Alabama Iron and Steel Company of Brierfield Alabama, Prospectus, 1892, in possession of Martin Everse, Birmingham, Alabama.
- ¹⁶ Deposition of E. H. Fitch, 28 February 1898.
- ¹⁷ Armes, p. 327; death date from: deposition of E. T. Peter, 28 February 1898, Marie L. E. German as Executrix of Joseph Verchot vs. Alabama Iron & Steel Company et al. Shelby County Chancery Court papers in loose papers file, Old Shelby County Courthouse and Museum, Columbiana, Alabama.
- ¹⁸ Virginia Pfaff Jones, The Pfaff Family, handwritten manuscript, original in possession of Eugene E. Jones, Jr., Birmingham, Alabama.
- ¹⁹ A. H. Plumb to Preston Plumb, 31 July 1929, Plumb Family Papers, Lyon County Historical Museum, Emporia, Kansas.
- ²⁰ Deed Book 31, pages 224-225.
- ²¹ Deed Book 34, page 446.
- ²² Bibb County Deed Book 55, pages 79-81.
- ²³ Bibb County Deed Book 66, pages 480-481.
- ²⁴ Telephone interview with Sterling Walls, Bessemer, Alabama, former owner of the house, 23 April 2009.
- ²⁵ Bibb County Mortgage Record Real Estate Book 102, page 337.
- ²⁶ Telephone interview with Sterling Walls, Bessemer, Alabama.

Description and Physical Evolution

The Brierfield Iron & Coal Company Superintendent's House is a one-story frame dwelling located along the west side of Rolling Mill Road, approximately 0.2 miles west of Alabama Highway 139 in Brierfield, Bibb County, Alabama. The house faces east and is sited on a gently sloping hillside that is higher than the finished floor level to the rear of the house and lower to its front. A stone retaining wall forms a narrow sloping terrace in the front yard. The yard then continues to slope gently below the retaining wall to the road level. A railroad spur parallels the road from the south and then crosses it at a diagonal just north of the house. Other structures on the site include a small frame privy to its west (mid 20th century), an open well just behind the northern end of the house, a stuccoed brick cellar immediately to the north of the house, and a ruinous shed (mid 20th century), an ancillary dwelling (circa 1925), and another privy at the north end of the site. The site retains several mature trees.

The house has a rectangular six-by-two bay core (circa 1882) that faces east with a side gable corrugated metal roof and a central brick chimney. A two-by-two bay rectangular addition to the south (circa 1897) is slightly wider than the core and projects slightly forward. The addition also has a side gable corrugated metal roof with a central brick chimney. An off-center rear shed extension straddles the intersection of the core and the addition. A one-story shed porch with a corrugated metal roof extends across the façade of the core and wraps the full length of the south elevation. The front porch depth is similar to that of the offset between the façades of the core and the addition. The front porch retains two turned posts at its central bay with simple replacement square wood posts to the north and along the north side. An anterior rubble rock retaining wall extends around the porch



Siteplan Sketch (Not to Scale)

The east façade of the core has entrances at its second and fifth bays flanked in the remaining bays by single wood 4/4 double hung sash windows. The northern door has a four-panel configuration and the southern door has a single upper light over three horizontal lower panels. Similar windows are set within each bay of the east façade of the addition. A similar four-panel door is set within the exposed portion of the north elevation of the addition within the front porch. Historic photos indicate that the windows are original to the house but that the doors are 20th century replacements, the originals having had four lights over two vertical panels.

The north elevation of the core has a single entrance at its center bay flanked to the west by a single wood 6/6 double hung sash window. The door matches the one shown in the historic photos. The rear shed extension obscures the southern bays of the rear elevation of the core. A single entrance is centered between the extension and the north corner of the house and has a modern 15-light wood door. A small portion of the rear elevation of the core is exposed to the south of the extension and has a single wood 12/12 double hung sash window. Two 4/4 windows, narrower than those at the façade, are evenly spaced at the rear elevation of the extension. The southern window is set within a former door opening that retains its surround with blocking and siding filling the space between the window sill and the sill of the door opening. Seams in the siding below the northern door indicate that its opening has been altered as well but the nature of the alteration could not be determined by the visible evidence. A similar window at the south elevation of the extension also appears to be part of the enclosure of an earlier entrance. There is a single entrance with a single light over horizontal panel door at the south elevation of the extension.



Floorplan (To Scale, Reduction Scale Not Determined)

Brierfield Coal and Iron Company Superintendent's House

The exterior of the house is clad with wood weatherboards. Siding at the core is attached with cut iron nails while siding at the addition is attached with wire nails. Siding is smooth sawn except at the north elevation where the siding appears to be a modern replacement.

The house is supported by brick piers with a brick cellar below the east side of the addition. The cellar has a single entrance with a horizontal board door at its south elevation. Two short windows placed high on the east elevation of the cellar are now covered with wood. The interior of the cellar was not accessible but could be photographed and appears to be whitewashed. The flooring could not be determined. Floor framing consists of circular sawn floor joists and beams. Diagonal cross bracing is found between the joists at the addition only.

The interior plan of the house consists of: two roughly equal sized rooms at the north (Room #101) and south (Room #102) ends of the core separated by a central chimney and closets; a larger room at the east side of the addition (Room #103) with a slightly narrower room to its west (Room #104), also separated by a central chimney and closets; and two rooms at the rear extension, the southern room (Room #106) being larger than the northern room (Room #105). The northern room at the core was used recently as a kitchen and the northern room at the extension as a bathroom.

Rooms within the core are finished with tongue and groove board ceilings and walls and have wood flooring. Carpet and modern wood finishes have been applied over the flooring in Room #102. A heavy wall paper has also been applied to the walls in Room #102 below the height of the window heads. The ceiling heights vary slightly, being 10'7" at the northern room (Room #101) and 11'0" at the southern room (Room #102). The finished floor level at Room #102 is also slightly lower than that of the adjoining rooms. The fireplace at the kitchen (Room #101) retains its original opening and a simple historic wood mantelpiece. The fireplace at Room #102 has been modified with a modern brick insert but retains the outer pilasters of a historic mantelpiece. Window and door surrounds and baseboards are simple.

Ceilings and walls at the addition are finished with sheetrock over sawn wood lathe. The east room (Room #103) has a modern mantelpiece matching the design of the mantelpiece in the kitchen and an exposed wood floor. A cased opening into Room #102 has been partially blocked down with wood. The west room at the addition (Room #104) is similar but has carpet and its mantelpiece has been removed.

Rooms within the rear extension are finished with tongue and groove board ceilings and walls and have wood flooring. Modern vinyl floor covering has been installed in the northern room (Room #105).

Interior partitions are typically 5-1/2" thick except at the wall between the south room of the extension and the addition that is more than a foot wide.

Structural Evolution

The core of the house appears to have been the southern wing of a house depicted on an 1886 map of Brierfield. At that time, the house consisted of a central core flanked to either side by wings with recessed porches. A crossing rear wing extended from the north end of the north wing and a parallel extension was located along the rear of the south wing projecting one bay beyond its south elevation. The front of the 1886 construction is clearly shown on circa 1900-1910 photographs from the Pfaff Family Collection, as is the present southern addition. The photos show a central corner board and differentiation in the siding indicating that the core of the 1886 construction was built in two sections.

It is possible that the alterations to the window openings at the rear extension and the additional wall thickness between the extension and the addition are vestiges of the former rear extension shown on the 1886 map. The removal of selected finishes in these areas might yield physical evidence and clues to the evolution of these areas.

The northern portions of the 1886 house appear to have been removed circa 1930, during the property's ownership by C. T. Hughes. The north elevation was then clad with wood siding and the front porch was extended across its full width. The design of the rubble stone retaining wall at the porch is consistent with the period from circa 1920 to 1940. It also appears that the ancillary dwelling and shed were added circa 1930.

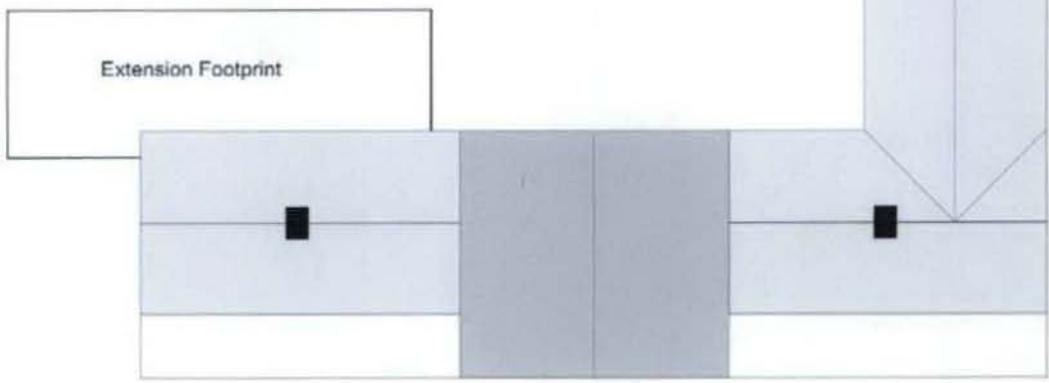
Alterations since circa 1930 have been limited to the application of some modern interior finishes and kitchen and bathroom fixtures.



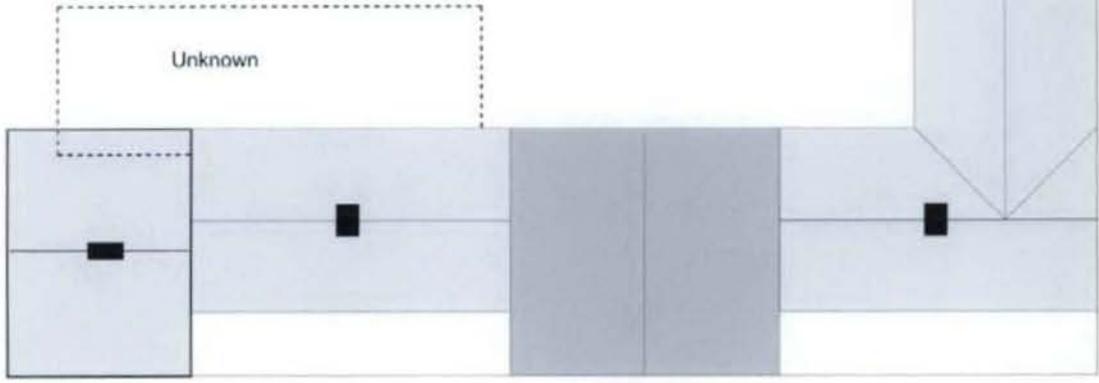
1886 Map of Brierfield (Right), Pfaff Family Photo circa 1900-1910 (Below)



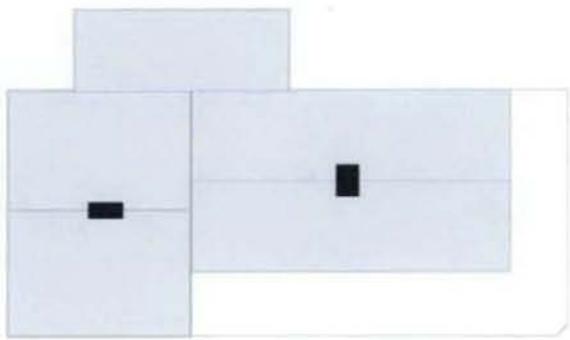
ca. 1882 - ca. 1897



ca. 1897 - ca. 1930



ca. 1930 to present



Reconstructed Evolution



Historic View, circa 1900-1910, Photo courtesy of Eugene Jones, Jr.



Historic View, circa 1900-1910, Photo courtesy of Eugene Jones, Jr.

Brierfield Coal and Iron Company Superintendent's House



Historic View, circa 1900-1910, Photo courtesy of Eugene Jones, Jr.



*Historic View, circa 1900-1910, Photo courtesy of Eugene Jones, Jr.
Note the historic 4/4 windows, 4-light over 2 panel door, porch railing, and
evidence of a decorative paint scheme.*

Photo Key, Photos #1 - #12

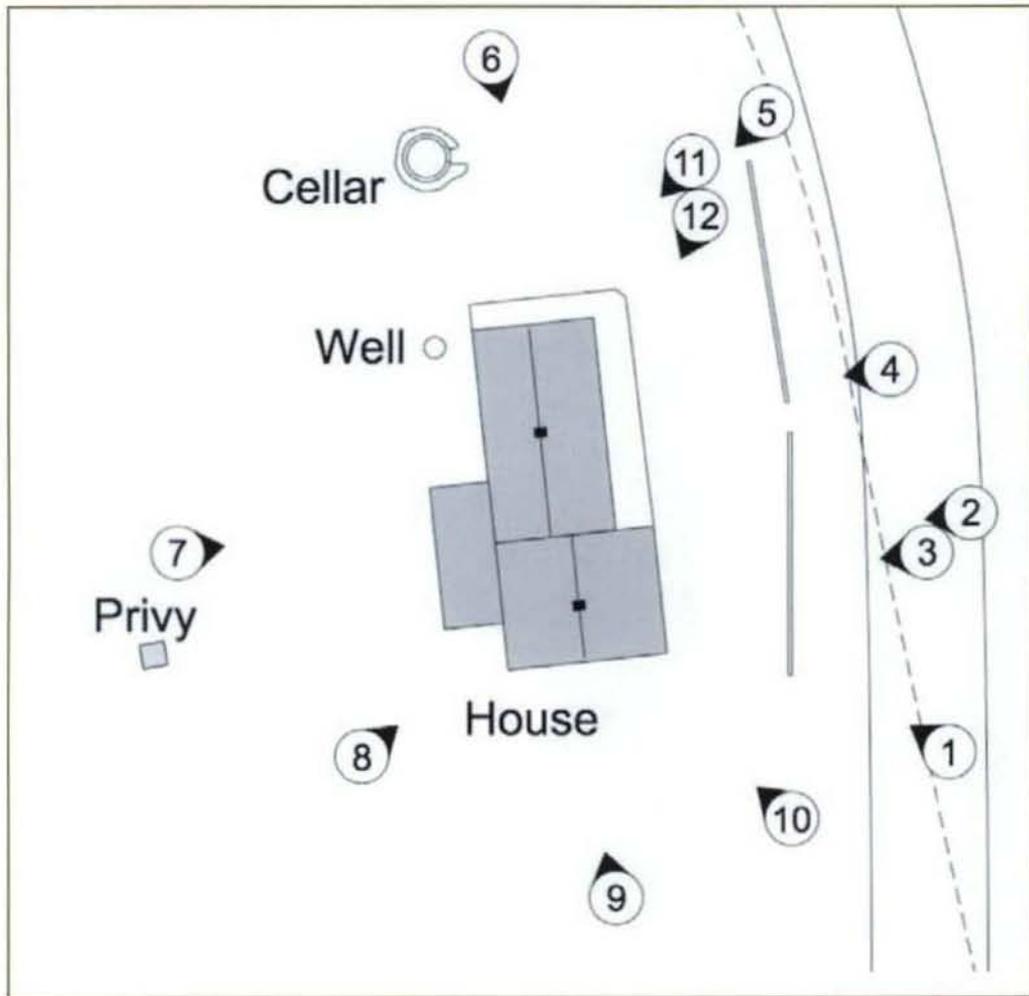




Photo #1. House, View #1, East Facade (Right) and South (Left) Elevation, Camera Facing Northwest



Photo #2. House, View #2, East Facade, South End, Camera Facing West



Photo #3. House, View #3, East Facade, South End, Camera Facing West



Photo #4. House, View #4, East Facade, North End, Camera Facing West



Photo #5. House, View #5, East Façade (Left) and North Elevation (Right), Camera Facing Southwest



Photo #6. House, View #6, North Elevation, Camera Facing South



Photo #7. House, View #7, West Elevation, Camera Facing East



Photo #8. House, View #8, West Elevation, Detail of Shed Extension, Camera Facing Northeast



Photo #9. House, View #9, South Elevation, Camera Facing North



Photo #10. House, View #10, South Elevation (Left) and East Facade (Right), Camera Facing Northwest

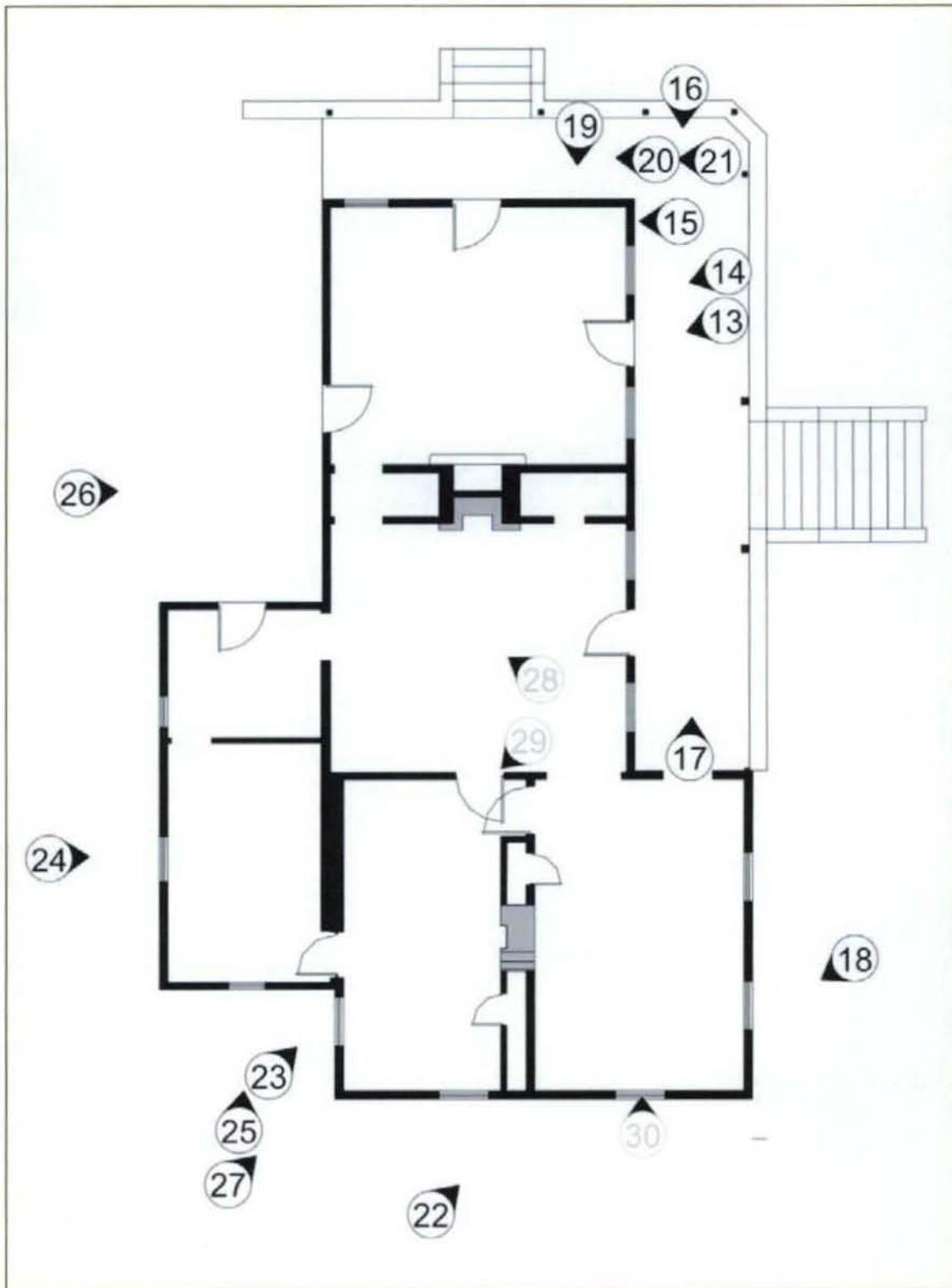


Photo #11. House, View #11, South Elevation (Left) and East Facade (Right), Camera Facing Northwest



Photo #12. House, View #12, East Facade (Left) and North Elevation (Right), Camera Facing Southwest

Photo Key, Photos #13 - #30



Brierfield Coal and Iron Company Superintendent's House



Photo #13. House, View #13, East Façade,
Detail of Entrance, Camera Facing West

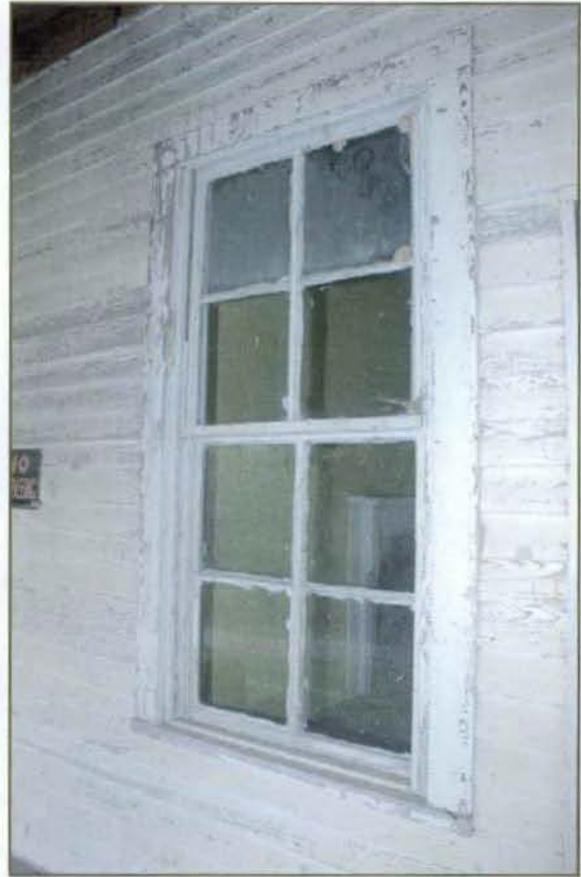


Photo #14. House, View #14, East Façade,
Detail of Window, Camera Facing West



Photo #15. House, View #15, East Façade, Detail of Siding, Camera Facing
West



Photo #16. House, View #16, East Façade,
Detail of Porch, Camera Facing South



Photo #17. House, View #17, East Façade,
Detail of Porch, Camera Facing North



Photo #18. House, View #18, East Façade,
Detail of Window at Addition, Camera Facing
West

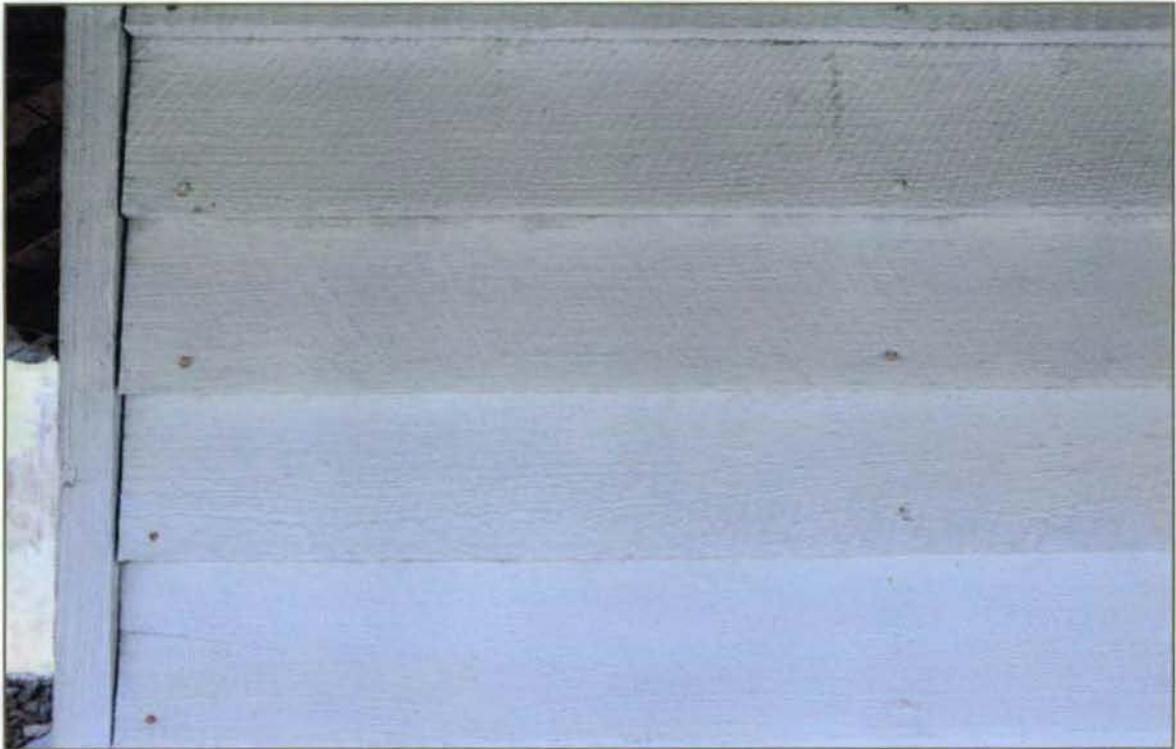


Photo #19 House, View #19, North Elevation, Detail of Siding, Camera Facing South



Photo #20 House, View #20, North Elevation, Detail of Porch, Camera Facing East



Photo #21 House, View #21, North Elevation, Detail of Porch, Camera Facing East



Photo #22 House, View #22, South Elevation,
Detail of Window, Camera Facing Northeast



Photo #23 House, View #23, West Elevation,
Detail of Window at South Bat, Camera Facing
Northeast

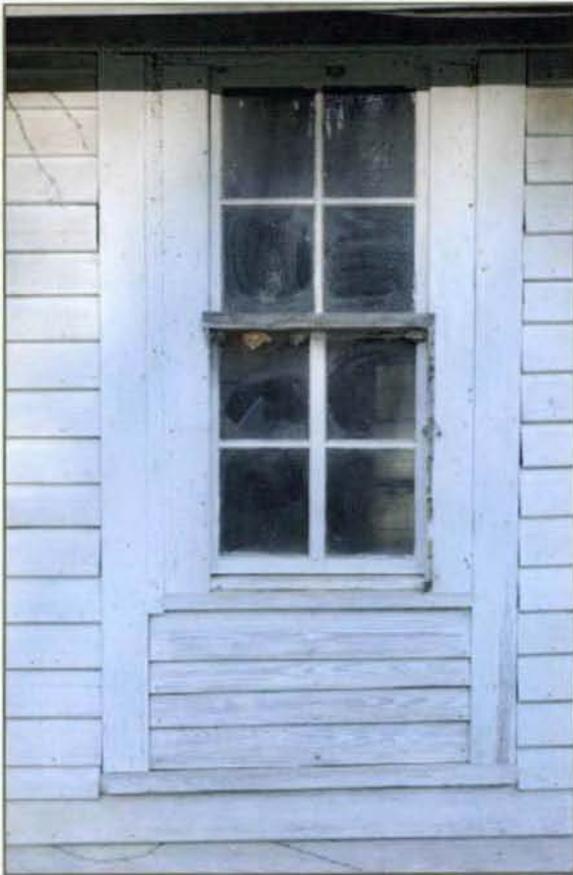


Photo #24 House, View #24, West Elevation, Detail of Window at Rear Extension, Camera Facing West; note the former entrance opening with infill



Photo #25 House, View #25, South Elevation, Detail of Window at Rear Extension, Camera Facing West; note the former entrance opening with infill.



Photo #26 House, View #26, West Elevation, Detail of Siding, Camera Facing East; note the joint lines in the siding



Photo #27 House, View #27, Detail of Brick Piers, Southwest Corner, Camera Facing Northeast



Photo #28 House, View #28, Detail of Floor Framing at Core, Camera Facing Northwest



Photo #29 House, View #29, Detail of Floor Framing at Addition, Camera Facing Southwest



Photo #30. House, View #30, View of Basement, Camera Facing North

Photo Key, Photos #31 - #50

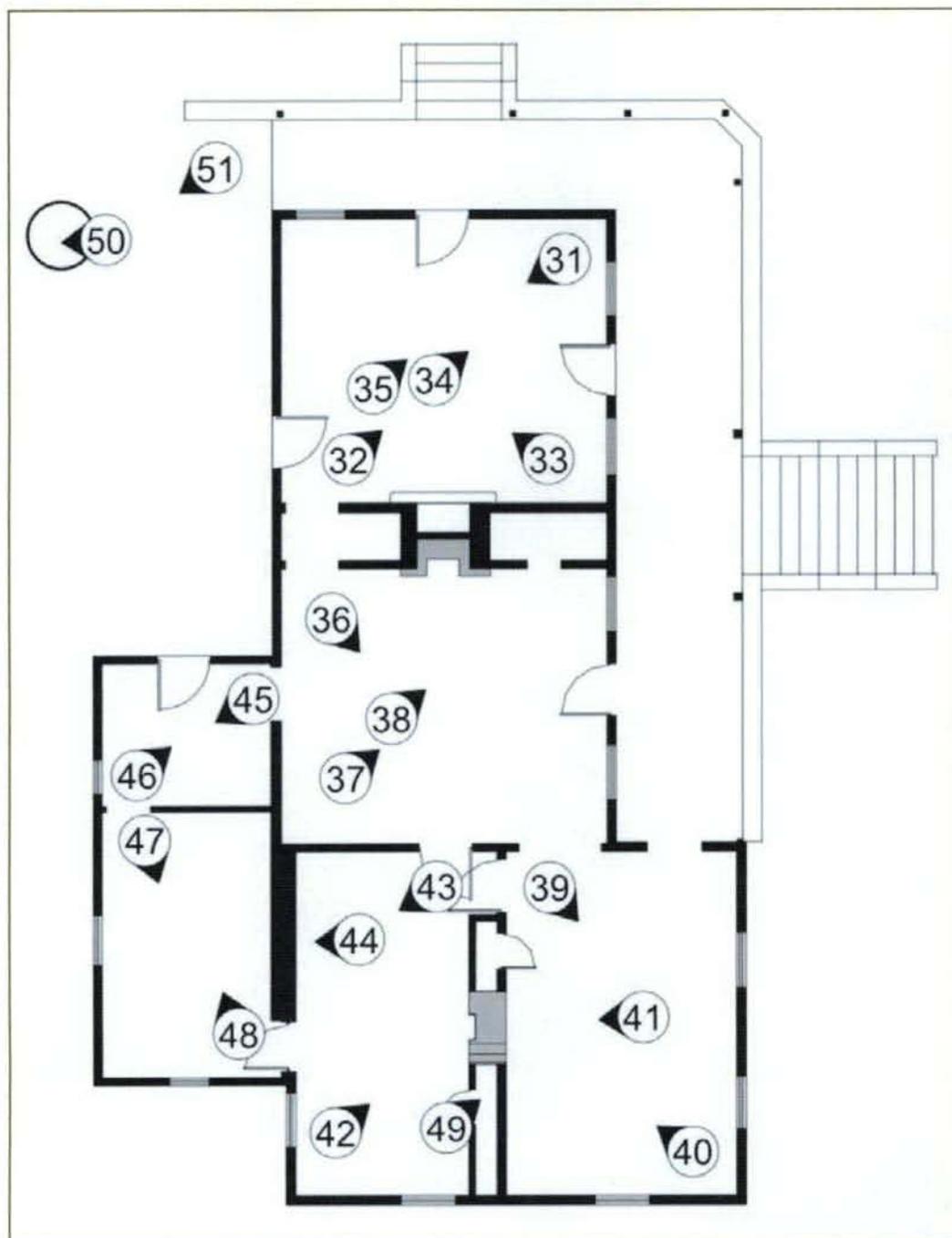




Photo #31. House, View #31, Interior, Room #101, Camera Facing Southwest



Photo #32. House, View #32 Interior, Room #101, Camera Facing Northeast



Photo #33. House, View #33, Interior, Room #101, Camera Facing Northwest



Photo #34. House, View #34, Interior, Room #101, Detail of Ceiling



Photo #35. House, View #35, Interior, Room #101, Detail of Floor



Photo #36. House, View #36, Interior, Room #102, Camera Facing Northeast



Photo #37. House, View #37, Interior, Room #102, Camera Facing Southeast



Photo #38. House, View #38, Interior, Room #102, Detail of Ceiling



Photo #39. House, View #39, Interior, Room #103, Camera Facing Southeast



Photo #40. House, View #40, Interior, Room #103, Camera Facing Northwest



Photo #41. House, View #41, Interior, Room #103, Detail of Mantelpiece



Photo #42. House, View #42, Interior, Room #104, Camera Facing Northeast



Photo #43. House, View #43, Interior, Room #104, Camera Facing Southwest



Photo #44. House, View #44, Interior, Room #104, Detail of Wall



Photo #45. House, View #45, Interior, Room #105, Camera Facing Southwest



Photo #46. House, View #46, Interior, Room #105, Camera Facing Northeast



Photo #47. House, View #45, Interior, Room #106, Camera Facing South



Photo #48. House, View #48, Interior, Room #106, Camera Facing Northwest



Photo #49. House, View #49, Interior, Room #104, Detail of Closet



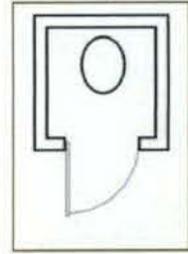
Photo #50. House, View #50, Well, Interior



Photo #51. House, View #51, Well, Exterior

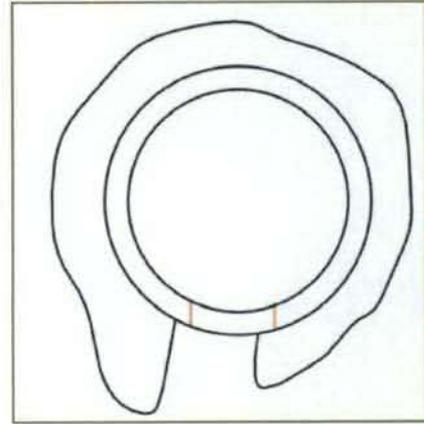
Privy (mid-20th century)

The privy is a rectangular frame structure measuring roughly 4'2" square with a corrugated metal shed roof. The privy is set upon a concrete slab above a concrete block tank. A metal pipe through the slab is capped with a toilet seat. The privy has board exterior siding and an entrance is centered at its east elevation with a vertical board door.



Ground Cellar

The ground cellar is a round stuccoed brick structure located to the north of the house that is largely below grade and has conical walls. The top of the cellar is flat and open with metal bars protruding through its cap that appear to have formerly supported a roof or cover. The opening measures approximately 8' wide. There is a rectangular door opening at the east end.



Shed (mid-20th century)

Rectangular frame shed measuring 16'9" by 20'1" with a gable corrugated metal roof. The building has a small shed extension to the west, is clad with vertical board siding, and is in near ruinous condition.

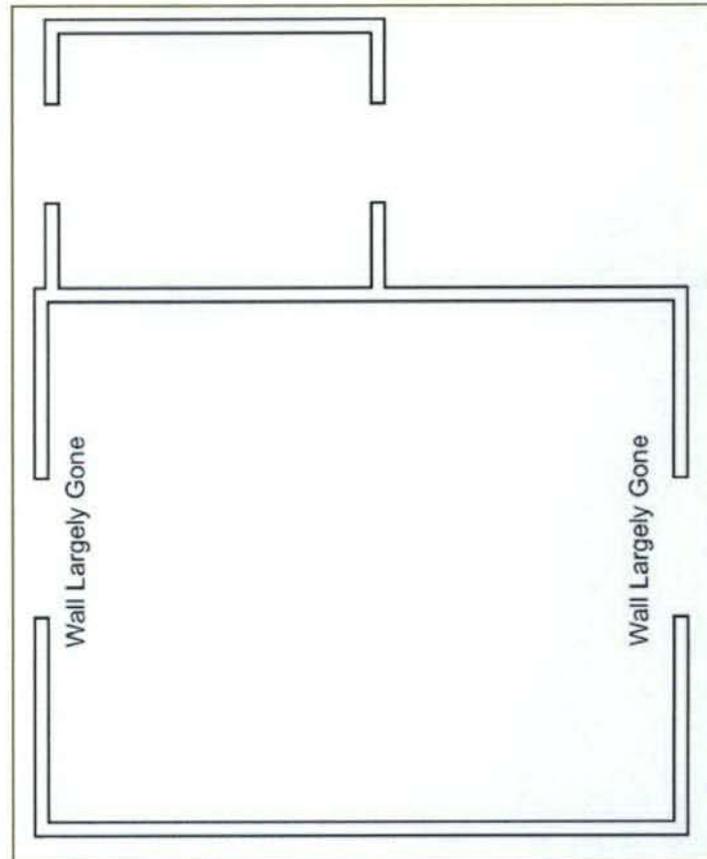
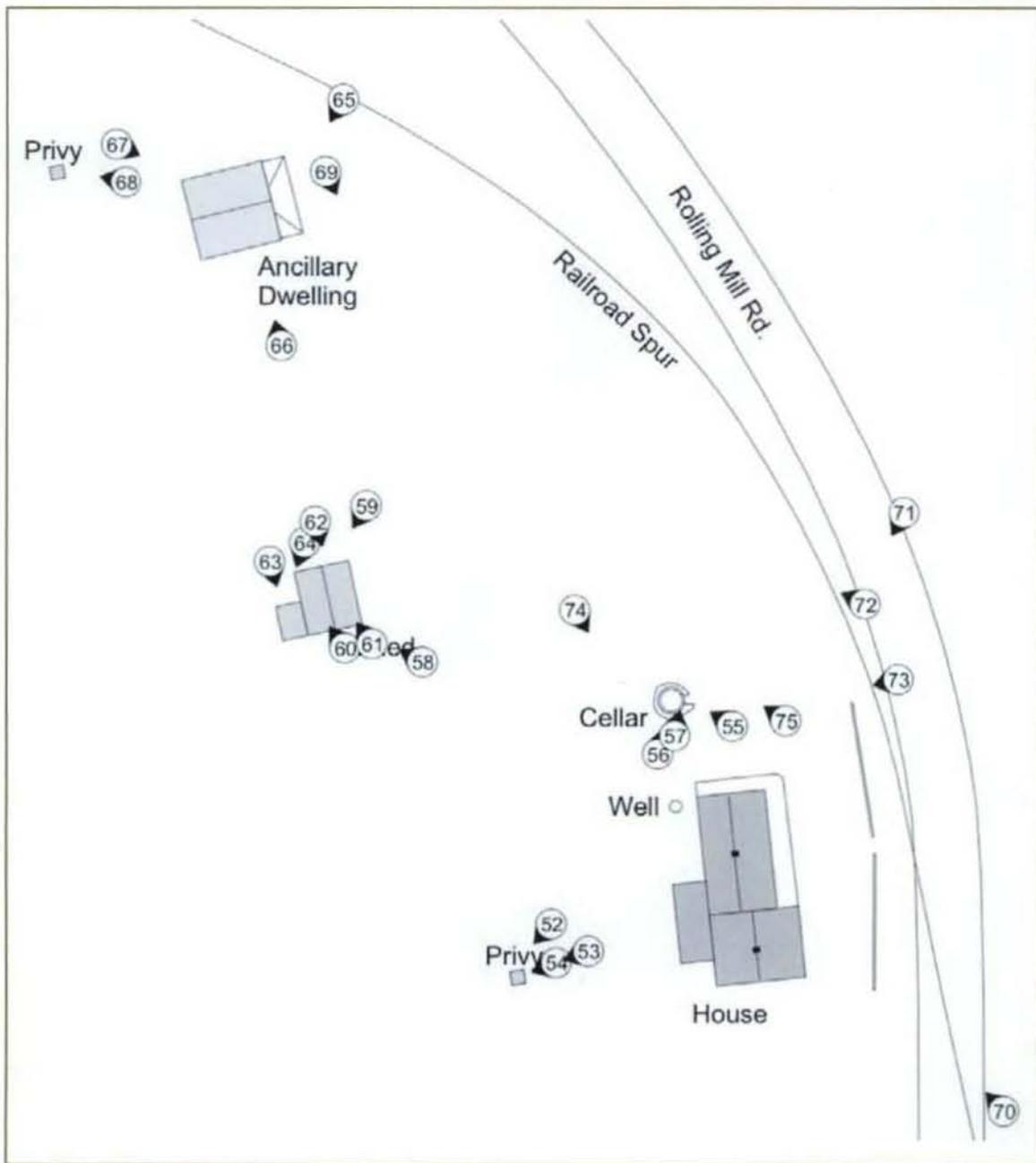


Photo Key, Photos #52 - #75



Brierfield Coal and Iron Company Superintendent's House

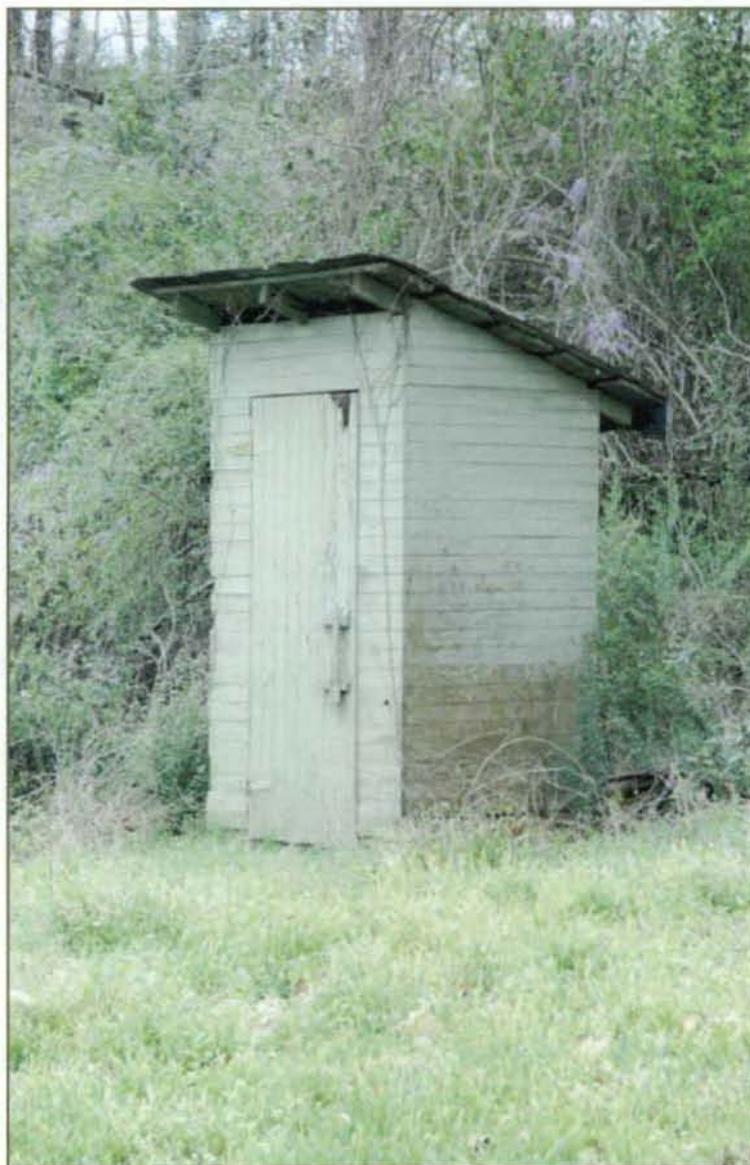


Photo #52. Privy, View #1, East (Left) and North (Right) Elevations, Camera Facing Southwest.



Photo #53. Privy, View #2, Interior, Camera Facing West.



Privy, View #54, Interior, Camera Facing West



Photo #55. Cellar, View #1, Camera Facing Northwest



Photo #56 Cellar, View #2, Camera Facing North



Photo #57. Cellar, View #2, Detail, Camera Facing North



Photo #58. Shed, View #1, South (Left) and East (Right) Elevations, Camera Facing Northwest



Photo #59. Shed, View #2, East (Left) and North (Right) Elevations, Camera Facing Southwest



Photo #60. Shed, View #3, Interior, Camera Facing Northwest



Photo #61. Shed, View #3, Interior, Camera Facing Northwest



Photo #62. Shed, View #5, Interior, Camera Facing South



Photo #63. Shed, View #6, Shed at West Elevation, Camera Facing South



Photo #64. Shed, View #7, Detail of Stone Pier (Possible remnant of an old mill stone?)

Ancillary Dwelling (circa 1930) and Privy

The ancillary dwelling rectangular one-story frame dwelling with a front-facing gable V-crimped metal roof with exposed rafter ends and one interior brick chimney. The house faces east and has a full façade hipped porch with replacement posts and modern plywood apron wall. The off-center entrance at the façade is flanked to either side by single wood 6/6 double hung sash windows. Secondary off-center entrances are located at the south and west elevations and single and double 6/6 windows are set within the remaining bays. The house is clad with wood novelty siding and is supported by brick piers. A frame privy is located to the west of the house and has a shed roof with wood novelty siding. Both the house and the privy are in deteriorated condition.

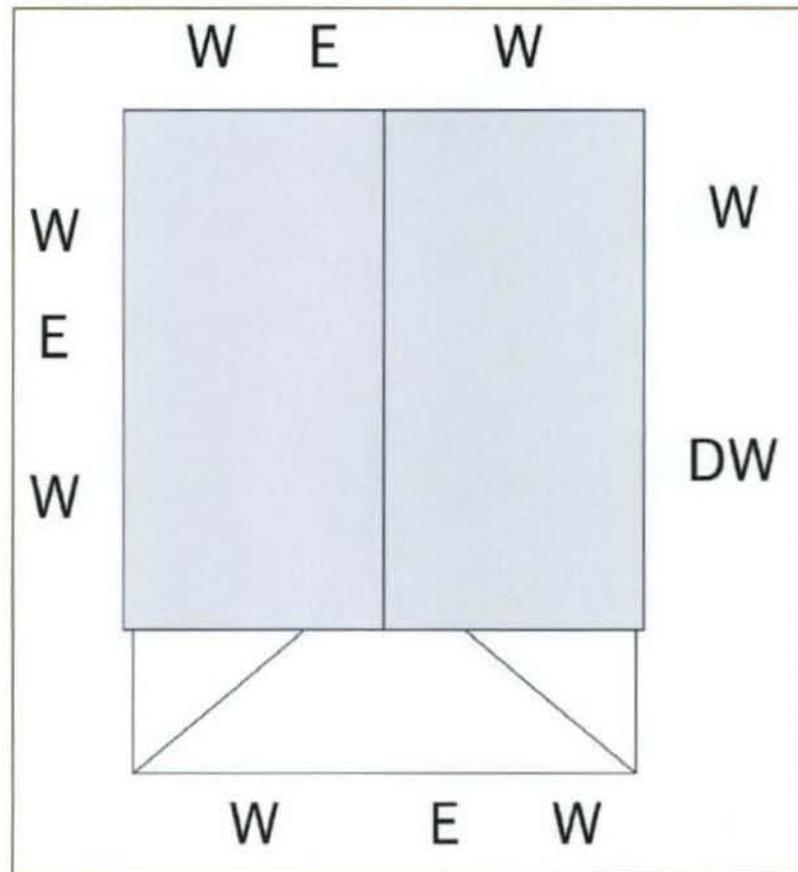




Photo #65. Ancillary Dwelling, View #1, East (Left) and North (Right) Elevations, Camera Facing Southwest



Photo #66. Ancillary Dwelling, View #2, South Elevation, Camera Facing North



Photo #67. Ancillary Dwelling, View #3, North (Left) and West (Right) Elevations, Camera Facing Southeast



Photo #68. Ancillary Dwelling, View #4, Privy, Camera Facing Northwest



Photo #69. Ancillary Dwelling, View #5, View Facing South to Superintendent's House

U.S.G.S. Topo Map

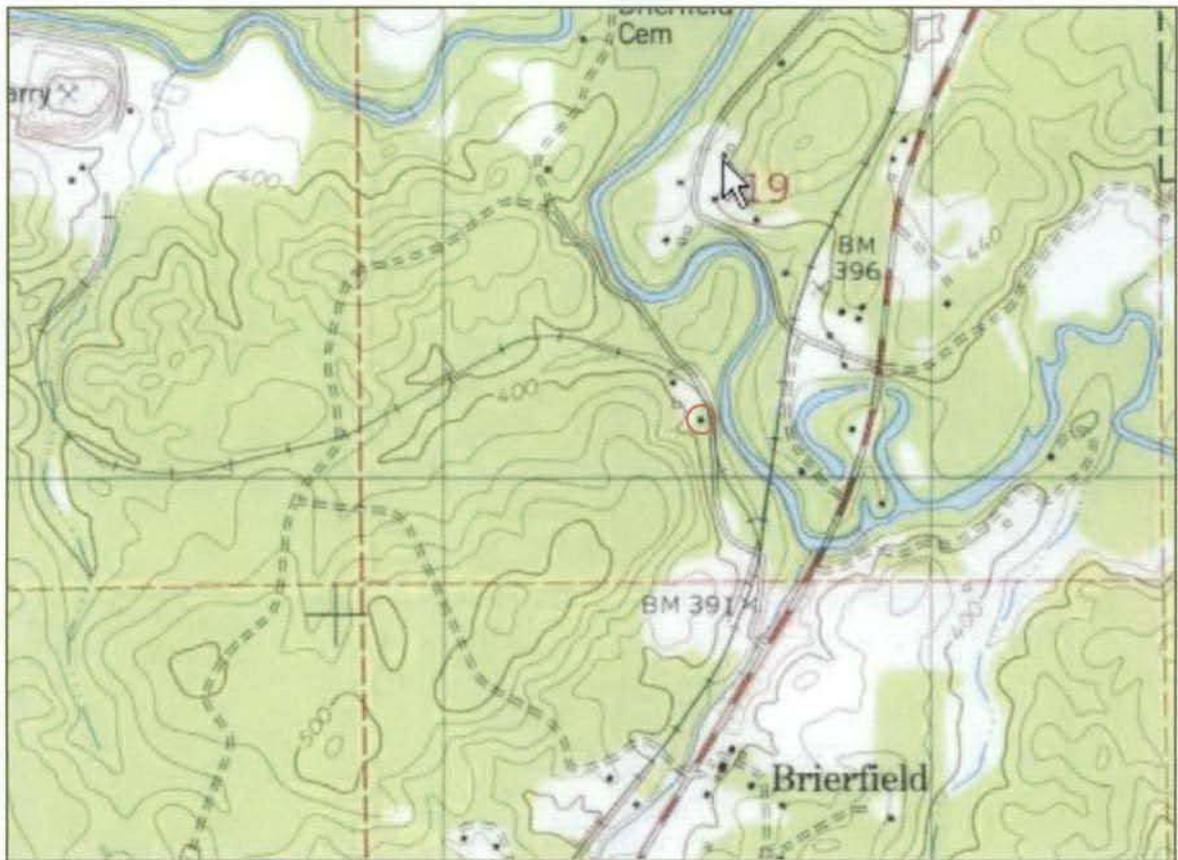




Photo #70. Site, View #1, Camera Facing Northwest from Across Rolling Mill Road



Photo #71. Site, View #2, Camera Facing Southwest from Rolling Mill Road



Photo #72. Site, View #3, Camera Facing West from Rolling Mill Road



Photo #73. Site, View #4, Camera Facing Northwest from Rolling Mill Road



Photo #74. Site, View #5, Camera Facing Southwest from Center of Site



Photo #75. Site, View #6, Camera Facing Northwest from Within the Site



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