United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name The Bell House

other names/site number MC-327

2. Location

street & number 7310 Columbia Road NA not for publication

city or town Edmonton NA vicinity

state Kentucky code KY county Metcalfe code 085 zip code 42129

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this _X_ 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 _X__ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide _X__local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___A ___B _X__C ___D

Signature of certifying official/Title **Craig A. Potts/ SHPO** Date

Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

The Bell House
Name of Property

Metcalfe County, Kentucky
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

x	private
	public - Local
	public - State
	public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

x	building(s)
	district
	site
	structure
	object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	5	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	5	**Total**

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic/Single Dwelling
Domestic/Secondary Structure

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic/Single Dwelling
Domestic/Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Free Classic

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Brick, piers
walls: Frame
roof: Metal
other:

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

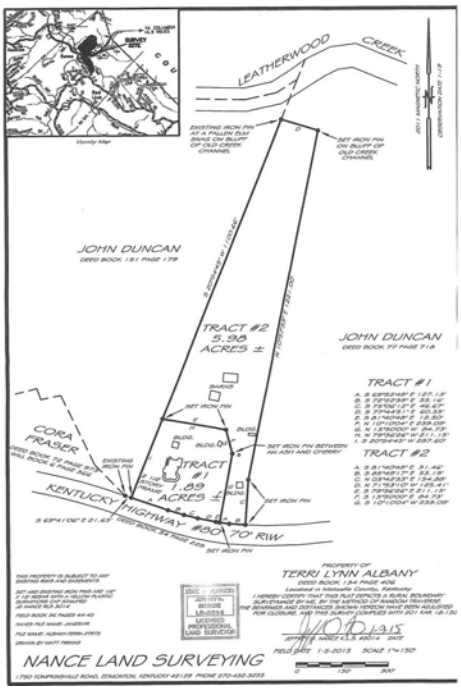
The Bell House (MC-327) is located at 7310 Columbia Road in rural Metcalfe County, Kentucky, in the former crossroads community of Red Lick. The Bell House is approximately seven miles northeast of Edmonton, the county seat of Metcalfe County. The nominated area consists of the entire legal parcel, a 1.89- acre parcel with one contributing resource and five noncontributing resources, including the two-story frame wash house, a chicken house, a storage shed, garage, and pump house.

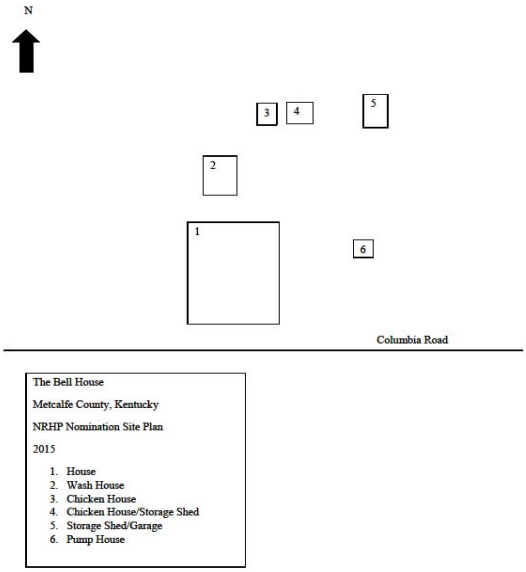
Character of the Bell House's setting and property changes over time

A rural property, the Bell House is located on the eastern edge of Metcalfe County less than a mile from the Adair County line. Metcalfe County, part of the eastern Pennyrile Region of Kentucky, was formed from a portion of several southcentral counties in 1860. Compared to some neighboring counties, Metcalfe County was historically fairly isolated. There are no navigable waterways, and the railroad never came to the county. The setting of the Bell House remains, for the most part, as it was during the POS, with the exception of scattered modern residential development.

Leatherwood Creek, which runs into the Little Barren River (located about 600 yards northwest of the house), is north of the farm. The house faces south. The outbuildings, with the exception of the pump house, are located to the rear (north) of the dwelling. The pump house is located on the east side of the dwelling.

The house sits on the north side of Highway 80, about 50 yards from the road (Photograph 1). The domestic yard, on all sides of the house, contains a number of deciduous and evergreen trees, as well as some flowering shrubs, including forsythia. The layout of the domestic yard of the Bell House follows established 19th century patterns in Kentucky, with domestic outbuildings clustered in a linear fashion at the rear of the house. The barn lot and agricultural fields (not included with this nomination) are located further behind the line of outbuildings, traditionally separated by a fence. The fence is now gone, but the line of trees remains.





Construction of the House

The Bell House was constructed between 1907 and 1909 for Curtis A. Bell and his wife Cora. Bell, a native of Adair County, was a merchant and farmer. His wife was the daughter of a locally prominent merchant, farmer, and lumber dealer, J.H. Kinnaird, and Kinnaird financed the building of the house.

Both he and his son-in-law traveled frequently, but it seems that perhaps Kinnaird formed the relationship with the architect Albert Killian of Owensboro, Kentucky, who designed the house. A definitive connection between the family and Killian has not yet been established, but a treasure trove of artifacts have been maintained, including the contract for the building of the house, and all of the original drawings and blueprints.

Most of the framing lumber for the house came from the Kinnaird land, or from the lumber yard operated by J.H. Kinnaird. The finish elements, including trim, doors, windows, and the like, were purchased (perhaps in Louisville).The family moved into their new home shortly before Christmas 1909.

South (front) side

South (front) and East sides

Description of the Exterior

The two-and-one-half story frame house, clad in one by six wood clapboards, and vertical wood siding, rests on a continuous brick foundation. It has corner boards and foundation skirt board. The distinctive two-story tower on the east side of the façade is clad in beadboard. The gable on hip metal shingle roof (original) is pierced by three internal brick chimneys. The roof shingles are Cortright metal shingles, manufactured by the Cortright Metal roofing company of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The house has a wide cornice band and box gutters.

Though full of movement, the Bell House nonetheless presents a symmetry of shapes and angles, with the polygonal two-story bay at the west side of the façade (which contains the entryway) balanced by the round two-story tower at the façade's east side. In the combination of form and details, the Bell House merges the lingering influence of the Queen Anne style with the newly developing Classical style.

The façade is seven bays wide, with a window/door/window/window/window/window/window fenestration pattern. The windows one the first floor façade are long and elongated, a hold-over from the popularization of

the Italianate style, which persisted in Kentucky until around 1920. They contain one-over-one double-hung wood sash with aluminum storm windows. The entryway features a half-glass, half-panel door with a single light transom (Photograph 2).

The front porch wraps around three sides of the house, supported by paired and single Tuscan columns. The porch floor is poured concrete, and it has its original beadboard ceiling. A secondary entry is located on the west side of the façade, leading into the room behind the entrance hall. A pedimented gable on the porch marks the entryway, and as the porch extends to the east around the tower, it curves, echoing the round shape of the tower. Both the gable and the frieze of the porch feature dentils.

The gable on the porch is repeated in the pedimented gable of the attic on the façade, above the two-story polygonal entrance bay. This gable contains one of the house's many original stained glass windows. This example is set into a classically-inspired pedimented surround. Lingering touches of the Queen Anne are found in the east and west facing cut-away bays on the second story of the polygonal bay, which feature delicate scroll work and drop finials.

The lively roofline continues to the east of the pedimented attic gable, with an almost-exotic looking dormer with flared sides, a concave pyramidal roof, and a finial. It has a vaguely Chinoiserie air. It contains another stained glass window, this one with the diamond shapes set into a square grid. Below it, in the center of the façade on the second story, is another square stained glass window that lights the second-story staircase landing (Photograph 7).

The conical-roofed tower (topped with yet another exotic, unfurled finial) completes the roofline of the façade of the Bell House. The rhythmic repetition of shapes and angles, however, continues to the side elevations (Photograph 3).

Centered on the east elevation is another two-story polygonal bay topped with a large, front gable attic dormer (Photograph 4). The dormer has cornice returns and a Palladian window with stained glass. Two more stained glass windows are located in the center of the two-story bay, at both the first and second stories. The first story stained glass window has a segmental arch, while the second story is rectangular. On the north and south sides of the bay are full-size sash windows; the second story windows have the cut-away bay detail like those on the façade, with scroll-work and drop finials.

North (back) and east side

North and west side

A shed roof side porch runs from the end of the polygonal bay on the north side of the east elevation. A portion of this porch was enclosed in the 1930s to create a bathroom, but all of the original openings were left intact and simply covered over. The bathroom has been removed and the porch is being restored to its original size and appearance (Photograph 5).

The rear (north) elevation of the Bell House has two symmetrically placed windows on the first and second stories, and a two-light attic light. A front gable frame structure, located on the west side of the rear elevation, covers the entrance to the full basement (Photograph 6).

The west elevation of the house was originally virtually identical to the east elevation, with the same two-story polygonal bay centered on the elevation and attic dormer (Photograph 6). Colored glass windows detail the center of the bay. To the north of the polygonal bay, there was originally (on the blueprint) a small side porch, slightly smaller than the porch on the west elevation. It is unclear whether the porch was built as depicted on the blueprints and later lengthened, or if it was built to span the wall from the polygonal bay to the rear corner, just like its counterpart on the west elevation.

West side

What is known is that the east side porch was extended outward (in depth, to the east) in the 1930s, and screened in; the tenants would have their main meal of the day, dinner, at noon, on this enlarged side porch. In the 1960s, the kitchen was moved into the enlarged porch. This room has now been gutted, the screened-in porch of the 1930s is being restored.

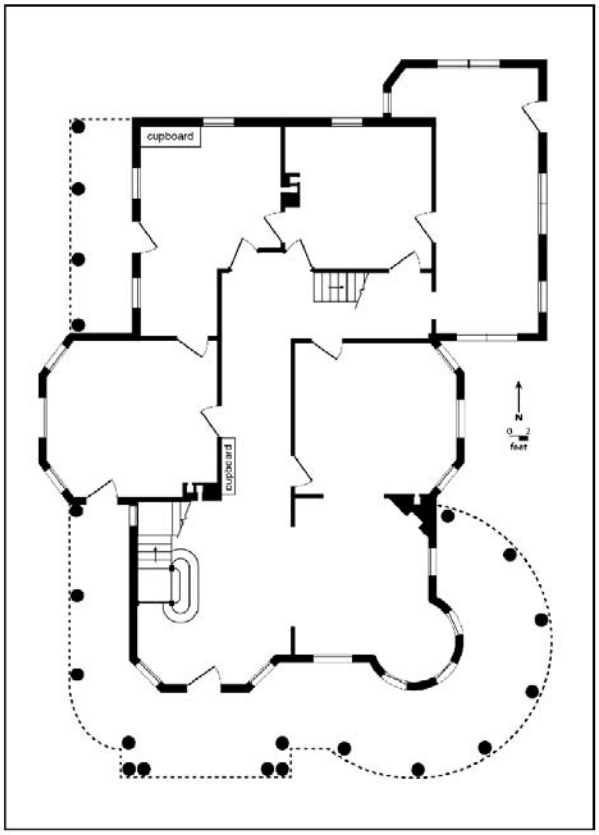
Above the porch on the second story a one-bay projection, located at the landing of the back staircase, that contains another bathroom. The house was plumbed in the 1930s.

Description of the Interior

The Bell House, while possessing an exuberant and asymmetrical exterior, is at the root of its plan a side passage dwelling, with the entry door leading into a stair hall, and rooms to the right and behind the entry stair hall (or "reception hall" as it is labeled on the original plan). The original hardwood floors, woodwork, doors, and windows are all in still in the house. The doors are five-panel doors with one-light transoms and original

hardware. The window and door surrounds are all fluted, with bulls eye blocks in the corners. Most of the plaster walls have been wallpapered.

The entrance to the house was designed to impress – a richly carved staircase, with inset panels, turned balusters and heavy newell posts immediately in front of the door. The U-shaped staircase has three steps leading up to an initial landing, then a run of six steps to another landing, and then a final run up to the second story (Photographs 8-9).



The Bell House
Metcalfe County, Kentucky
Plan of first floor.
2015

The staircase as built deviates from the plans in that it is completely open, while the plans call for a wall at the top, so that the second floor hall could be used as a bed chamber. With only three children, however, it appears that Curtis and Cora Bell made the decision for the room to be open and used as a landing and second story hall.

The newel posts of the main staircase are described in the architect specifications as "7 x 7 carved 3 sides and richly veneered with quartered oak burl veneering, similar to the one in Hutting's catalogue, page 139, #1154" and handwritten to the side, "Chicago, Ill." According to the specifications prepared by Kilian, the reception hall and parlor were "to be finished in quartered oak" with wainscoting up to a chair rail in the reception hall.

A mantle with an over-mirror is located to the right of the staircase in the reception hall, and underneath the staircase, a small, square stained glass window.

The parlor is separated from the reception hall by a screen with two Tuscan columns on a knee wall accented with rectangular inset panels (Photographs 10-11). The screen also features egg and dart detailing. The parlor, housed in the tower room, has five windows, a corner mantle with over-mirror (and wood burning stove) and is separated from the dining room by pocket doors.

The dining room, located in the east elevation polygonal bay, has a segmental arched stained glass window on the central wall of that bay. A small half-sized mantle, built by Curtis Bell, is located on the south wall of the dining room (Photograph 14). A transverse hall is located behind (north) of the dining room, with a staircase leading to the second story and attic. This set of stairs, less elaborate than the those in the reception hall, nonetheless have turned balusters and a newel post with bulls eye detailing (Photograph 12). A straight run leads to a landing, off of which a bathroom is located, and then a turn leads to the second story hall. There are five bedrooms on the second floor, and a full attic above. Stained glass windows are located in the front (tower) bedroom (Photograph 13), and the middle two bedrooms on the second floor.

The room located on the west side of the house, behind the reception hall, was used as a bedroom by Curtis and Cora Bell, and has its own door onto the front porch. Two rooms are located at the rear of the house; the western room leads onto the side porch and was the original kitchen. The kitchen was later moved to the room to its east, and then finally into the expanded porch on the east side of the house.

Indoor plumbing was added before 1940; the house had a gravity-flow water system prior to that date. The Bell House was one of the first houses in Metcalfe County to be wired for electricity; prior to being wired, the house was lit by carbide lights. The original carbide lights were discovered stored in the attic; the lights are being restored and rewired for use in the house once again.

Description of the Wash House (Noncontributing)

The wash house (#2 on site plan) is a frame, two-story building on a poured concrete foundation. It dates from the construction of the house. The building is clad in weatherboards and has a gable metal roof originally pierced by a flue at the north end of the ridge (the roof has been placed in that location). The east elevation is two bays wide on the first story, with a door/window fenestration pattern. There is only one window on the second story. Windows are two-over-two double-hung sash, while the door is a five-panel door like those in the house.

The interior consists of one room on each level, the walls clad in horizontal wood sheathing. The joists are exposed, and a stair is located against the south wall. The wash house is constructed with 2 x 4 rafters, 2 x 4 studs, 2 x 6 joists, with an open stairway and a 1 x 4 loft floor. It was wired for electricity in 1941 and assessed for insurance purposes at $100.

Description of the Chicken House (Noncontributing)

The box frame, front gable chicken house (#3 on site plan) has a metal roof and is clad in vertical board boxing on the walls, and horizontal clapboards in the gable. It rests on wooden piers. A low, shed roof projection, clad in vertical boards and corrugated metal, is located on the south elevation. The entry to the chicken house is on the north elevation. It has a loft and a side shed addition. There is some possibility (based on the 1941 insurance

assessment and historic photographs) that this structure was originally the smokehouse, and was relocated within the domestic yard and repurposed.

Description of the Chicken House/Storage Shed (Noncontributing)

The cantilevered front gable building (#4 on site plan) to the east of the chicken house has been utilized for different purposes, including as a poultry house, secondary wash house, and storage shed. The box frame building sits on wooden piers and is clad in vertical board boxing. The façade (south elevation) is two bays wide, with a door/window fenestration pattern. The window sash is gone, but it was likely two-over-two double-hung sash like the main wash house. The door is a Z-brace batten door. The building has a metal gable roof. The chicken house was assessed at $25 in 1941.

Description of the Storage Shed/Garage (Noncontributing)

The frame, front gable garage (#5 on site plan) is the last outbuilding in the tidy line on the north side of the Bell House. Described as a storage shed on the 1941 insurance assessment, it rests on a stone foundation, and is clad in vertical board boxing. The façade (south elevation) has double hinged doors. This building was valued at $25 in 1941.

Description of Pump House (Noncontributing)

The concrete block pump house (#6 on site plan) is a low-pitched structure located to the south of the other outbuildings and east of the house.

Changes to the Bell House since the Period of Significance

The changes observed in the Bell House since its construction are typical to rural properties in central Kentucky. The most typical change is the enclosure and/or expansion of porches. In this case, a portion of the rear porch on the west elevation was partially enclosed to create a small bathroom.

The shed roof porch on the east side of the house was enclosed and the footprint extended to the east and north, sometimes in the 1940s. At that time, a concrete pony wall was added on three sides. The kitchen relocated to this space around 1963-1964.

Interior changes include the modernization of the kitchen, the addition of indoor plumbing for bathrooms and change in room function. Otherwise, the interior is remarkably intact.

The Bell House
Name of Property

Metcalfe County, Kentucky
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [ ] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [x] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- [ ] A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- [ ] B removed from its original location.
- [ ] C a birthplace or grave.
- [ ] D a cemetery.
- [ ] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- [ ] F a commemorative property.
- [ ] G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Period of Significance
1907-1909

Significant Dates
1907-1909

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

NA

Cultural Affiliation
NA

Architect/Builder
Killian, Albert (architect)

Period of Significance:
The Period of Significance is the two years it took to construct the Bell House.

Criteria Considerations: NA

Statement of Significance

Summary Paragraph

The Bell House (MC-327) meets National Register Criterion C, embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type and period of architecture, the Free Classic style-type, as well as the late-Victorian era, in rural Kentucky. The house's architectural design is evaluated within the context "Architecture in Metcalfe County, Kentucky, 1880-1910." Uncharacteristic of the local context, the house was designed by a professional architect. The house presents an application of popular national styles to vernacular building forms in a predominantly rural county. The Kinnaird and Bell families engaged the services of two architectural firms – one in Owensboro, Kentucky, and one in Knoxville, Tennessee – to draw up plans for the dwelling. They ultimately chose the drawings and plans prepared by Albert Killlian, a German immigrant living in Owensboro. Killian's body of work at the time of his death in 1932 was wide and varied. Constructed over a period of two years (1907-1909), the house itself embodies the vernacular traditions persistent in Kentucky, where popular national styles remained relevant for years after they passed out of favor in more urban areas. But at the same time, the attention to detail, and the high style of finishes in the house set it apart from all other houses built in the same time period in the local architectural arena. The Bell House is significant locally as a rural architect-designed dwelling in the Free Classic style.

Historic Context: Architecture in Metcalfe County, Kentucky, 1890-1910

Research Design

According to the files of the Kentucky Heritage Council, the Bell House entered into the Kentucky Heritage Council Mainframe Database in 1989. The entry, however, states that the resource is "on map – no survey." Therefore, no previous survey form for the property exists.

In 1984, the Green County Historical Society conducted a county wide survey of Metcalfe County. According to the Kentucky Heritage Council, there are 327 historic resources recorded in the county, and 19 sites in the county seat of Edmonton.

There are three NRHP-listed resources and one district, Sulphur Well. The Stockton-Ray House (NRIS 92000289), listed in 1992, has an architectural context that predates the Bell House's Period of Significance by several decades. The Metcalfe County Courthouse (NRIS 00000271), listed in 2000, was nominated under Criterion A, with a limited context focusing on Edmonton, as is the nomination for the Metcalfe County Jail (NRIS 04000791).

In order to evaluate the Bell House, a context was developed looking at domestic architecture in Metcalfe County between 1880 and 1910, and the influences of the architects involved in its creation. A review of the survey files and a windshield survey of the county did not locate any other Free Classic dwellings similar to the Bell House. Additionally, the Bell House represents one of the few well-documented examples of the domestic work of the architect Albert Killian, since his original blueprints and specifications for the house still exist and were used to develop this nomination.

Historical Development of Metcalfe County, Kentucky

Metcalfe County is bordered on the north by Hart and Green Counties, on the east and southeast by Adair and Cumberland Counties, on the south by Monroe County, and on the west by Barren County. The county covers 296 square miles and is watered by both Little Barren River and its tributaries and Marrowbone Creek and its tributaries. The northwestern part of the county is mainly a karst topography, rife with sinkholes, but the remainder of the county is generally a "well-dissected, rolling to hilly, upland plateau."[1]

The county was named for the Commonwealth's 10th governor, Thomas Metcalfe, and its creation illustrates the political squabbling inherent in 19th century Kentucky politics. Securing routes for proposed rail lines across Kentucky was big business, both for railroad operators and for state and local officials. Initial plans for the Louisville and Nashville Railroad in southcentral Kentucky in the 1850s routed the line though Bardstown, Glasgow, and Scottsville "to avoid competing with river traffic at Bowling Green" and because the topography meant construction would be easier.[2]

A tax on the counties through which the proposed line would run inflamed some Kentucky politicians; subsequently, the tax proposal was defeated. Piqued, James Guthrie of the Louisville and Nashville Road decided to build the tracks through Elizabethtown, Munfordville, and Bowling Green. Another proposed tax to pay for construction of a spur line also met defeat from precincts in eastern Barren County. The removal of these precincts from the county appeared a logical next step, and state representative John W. Ritter of Barren County championed the passage of the bill creating Metcalfe County in 1859.[3] The new county boasted 7,745 residents in 1860.

Following Kentucky tradition, the county seat was selected from the approximate geographic center of the new county, in a town established by Edmund Rogers in 1818. Edmonton's initial growth as the new county's seat of government met with some difficulty due to the Civil War and the burning of the Courthouse. The rebuilt courthouse, and all of the records, also met its demise by fire in 1868. [4]

Rogers, the founder of the eventual county seat, was a prominent local citizen, and one of the first Euro-American settlers in the area. A Virginia-born land surveyor and first cousin to General George Rogers Clark, Rogers purportedly settled in what is now Edmonton around 1800. A slaveholder, Rogers owned thousands of acres of land.[5] In this, he was markedly different from most other residents of the area at the time.

Rogers died in 1843, before the political wrangling that resulted in the new county of Metcalfe, but the precincts that had proved so troublesome for Glasgow city officials were not conducive to the establishment of extraordinarily large and productive farms, unlike the portion of the county that was not carved out. The pattern for the area that would become Metcalfe County tended to be smaller farms, most under 100 acres, with diversified operations of crops and livestock, mostly intended for subsistence.

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[1] Preston McGrain and James C. Currens. *Topography of Kentucky*. (Lexington: Kentucky Geological Survey, 1978), 56.
[2] Kay Harbison and Joan Edwards, eds. *Metcalfe County: Our History in Pictures*. (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Company, 1991), 5.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid, 8.

In the 1860 United States Agricultural Census, the first one to record Metcalfe County, there were 708 farms, valued at $902,722. Total acreage in farmland was almost evenly divided between improved and unimproved, which was fairly common in the Pennyrile Region. Many farms only had small amounts of cleared land suitable for cultivation, especially in the southeastern part of the county.

The Agricultural Census of 1870 saw an increase in the total number of farms in the county, to 833, but they remained fairly small. Only 70 people were employed in manufacturing that year; farming continued to be the mainstay locally.[6]

Population growth was slow. There were only 7,934 citizens enumerated by the 1870 Census, a number that would increase to 9,423 in the 1880 Census, and 9,871 in the 1890 Census. But there was a radical jump in he size of farms between 1870 and 1880, likely due to land being cleared for timber. In the 1870 Agricultural census, only 127 farms were between 100 and 499 acres, while the next census recorded 602 farm within that category. With the money earned from selling the timber, farmers could buy more land, increase their holdings, and expand their agricultural base.

The end of the 19th century saw even more farms in the county, as land was cleared and land broken off into smaller holdings – there were 1,500 farms recorded in Metcalfe County in 1890. The average farm size was 113 acres, but smaller farms were rapidly being put together to form larger operations.

Although agriculture dominated the economy, with "each passing decade after the Civil War residents would increasingly praise the goal of a more commercialized and industrialized commonwealth."[7] One of the paths for industrial growth appeared to be in the state's timber stands. These aspirations were felt in rural Metcalfe County, where wooded land beckoned to not only subsistence farmers who occasionally cut trees to procure cash or pay bills, but to those entrepreneurs able to buy large stands of timber and sell it commercially.

In 1901, the county was described as "well-timbered, oak and beech preponderating; there are ash, hickory and other hard woods and also some poplar."[8] Land with decent stands of timber sold for six dollars an acre. Farming centered around the production of corn, wheat, oats and tobacco.

The road network in Metcalfe County was, in 1911, still rudimentary, and the majority of roads were still dirt. Automobiles were a rarity, and most people still lived on a farm. The population of Metcalfe County hit 10,000 in 1910 and has never risen above that number, though the figure has dipped below 9,000 several times.

As a whole, the Pennyrile region continued to have more farms than the rest of Kentucky – in 1920, 84 percent of the state was in farms, while farmland constituted 87 percent of the Pennyrile region.[9]

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[6] Historical Census Browser. Retrieved August 2015, from the University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu/.

[7] Lowell H. Harrison and James C. Klotter. *A New History of Kentucky*. (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 300.

[8] Judge J.W. Kinnaird. "Metcalfe County," in *The Fourteenth Biennial Report Bureau of Agriculture* (Frankfort: Kentucky Department of Agriculture, Labor and Statistics, 1901), 228.

[9] Charles E. Martin. *The Pennyrile Cultural Landscape*. (Context on file at the Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort, 1988.), 42.

The 1940 United States Census reveals several interesting facts about Metcalfe County households. Only 12 percent of houses had electricity, and an even smaller number- five percent – of homes had mechanical refrigeration in the house. While over 1,200 households reported having a radio, only 30 homes had running water in 1940.

Lumber, some manufacturing, and agriculture form the basis of the county's economy today.

The Kinnaird and Bell Families

The Bell House was the home of Curtis A. Bell, referred to as a "prominent merchant of Red Lick," in the *Adair County News* in 1908.[10] Though the nominated property was built for Curtis and Cora Bell, it would not have been possible without the financial support of Cora's father, James H. Kinnaird.

James H. Kinnaird, almost always referred to as "J.H." in newspaper accounts of the day, came from a large and well-connected Metcalfe County family. Throughout his lifetime, he farmed, operated several saw mills (and dealt in lumber sales), and occasionally ran a dry goods store.

J.H. Kinnaird was recorded in the Flat Rock precinct in the 1870 and 1880 census, which is roughly southwest of the community of Red Lick, about a mile and a half from the nominated property. The distance from Red Lick was nominal, it seems, since Kinnaird was postmaster there and also ran a store.

The crossroads community of Red Lick received a post office in 1876; it was in operation until 1935. In the 1880s, Red Lick was described as "a recently established post office in Metcalfe County, 12 ½ miles from Edmonton, the county seat, and 25 miles from Glasgow, the nearest RR approach. Three churches and a public school are here. Mail, semi-weekly. J. H. Kinnard, postmaster."[11]A store (MC-29) across the road was moved to the site in the 1920s, and the house added onto the side. Curtis Bell ran the store, and then his daughter Zora did until 1946.

In the 1900 census, Kinnaird is listed as a merchant, with two house servants and one daughter (Cora) still at home. He is recorded in the Edmonton Magisterial District Number 1, and owned a farm outright so was also on the farm schedule. This implies that the Kinnaird family was perhaps living in the county seat of Metcalfe County at the time, as Red Lick was located in the rural East Fork precinct.

Despite there being no rail service in the county, or a serviceable (and dependable) road network, Kinnaird traveled frequently, most often to Louisville. In 1906, the Adair County News reported that "Mr. J.H. Kinnaird, the well-known business man of Red Lick, stopped over for night last Saturday with Mr. and Mrs. C.S. Bell, of our city, while on his return from Louisville where he sold a large amount of tobacco at a satisfactory price."[12]

J.H. Kinnaird, merchant and farmer, became a lumber dealer during the peak of the timber boom. In 1909 over a "billion board feet of lumber was sold" in the Commonwealth.[13] The flush years continued until 1920 when a system unconcerned with replanting or cutting selectively began to run out of supply.

[10] *The Adair County News*, Columbia, Kentucky. August 12, 1908.
[11] *Kentucky State Gazetteer and Business Directory*, volume 4, 1883-84. (Detroit: R. L .Polk and Company and A. C. Danser)
[12] *The Adair County News*, Columbia, Kentucky. Wednesday, August 15, 1906, page 8.
[13] Ibid, 301.

Kinnaird, already accustomed to trekking hogsheads to Louisville for sale, opened a lumber yard, and supplied many lumber companies of the Bluegrass with timber. E.R. Spottswood and Son, Inc. of Lexington, Kentucky, contracted with Kinnaird in 1912 for several hundred thousand feet of oak, poplar, ash, and walnut lumber, housed at Kinnaird's lumber yard at Red Lick, at prices ranging from $65 to $14 per thousand.

Given the lack of rail transport, Kinnaird agreed to haul the lumber to Greensburg (Green County) for transport to Lexington. This standard transaction, however, became a quagmire and went to court when Kinnaird objected to the lumber inspection of some of the boards. In the proceedings from the eventual lawsuit, Spottswood and Son, Inc., highlighted the virtual isolation of Metcalfe County. "It is a long ways out there through the country to your lumber, and having employed someone at Greensburg to look after it and having rented a yard there to receive it, any little friction or additional expense will well nigh eat up the profit on it," the company stated, after Kinnard failed to deliver a load of lumber as specified.[14]

Bell, a native of Adair County, married Icie (short for Icyphenia) Cora Kinnaird, a "Metcalfe County beauty"[15] in 1904. The couple lived in Columbia for a few years before moving to Red Lick. On the 1910 Census, Curtis Bell was 31 years old, and listed as a salesman of dry goods. His wife, Cora, was also 31 years old, and the couple had three daughters, Mary Orleana, Zora Edna, and Kizzie James. In 1940, Curtis Bell was listed in the citizen as "bank president." This was the Peoples Bank of Edmonton, and the Kinnaird and Bell families were long involved in the bank administration.

The Kinnaird/Bell lands were vast; the immense amount of acreage, around 4,000, continued into the middle of the 20th century. The supply of raw land enabled the family to live well, and engage profitably in both farming and the lumber industry. During the twentieth century the farm produced large amounts of burley tobacco and corn, along with some small grains. Livestock production focused mainly on hogs.

An insurance assessment of the farm, conducted in 1941 following the death of Curtis Bell, is a good indicator of the family's socioeconomic status. It appears that some members of the Bell family owned land along Columbia Road adjacent to the Kinnaird lands, as the insurance assessment includes land in both Metcalfe and Adair counties, and one farm is referenced as the "R.L. Bell" farm.

The insurance assessment recorded a dozen houses on the farm, each with their own complex of domestic and agricultural outbuildings. The assessment recorded the materials and condition of each building, noting the number of rooms and whether wiring was present.

The nominated property, with 12 rooms and two bathrooms in 1941, was assessed at $6,500, while the second dwelling, a mid-19th century I-house, was assessed at $3,000. The total insurance assessment of the buildings on the farm came to $19,625.00, a princely sum for rural Metcalfe County in 1941.

[14] *The Southwestern Reporter, Comprising all the Current Decisions of the Supreme and Appellate Courts of Arkansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee, and Texas*, Volume 195 (St. Paul: West Publishing, 1917), 905.
[15] *The Interior Journal*, Stanford, Kentucky. August 30, 1898.

House Plans and Characteristics of Dwellings in Metcalfe County, 1880-1910

The characteristics of the dwellings built in rural Metcalfe County during the period 1880 to 1910 is based on an examination of Kentucky Historic Resources Inventory forms and the scant NRHP work conducted in the county, as well as conversation with members of the Bell/Kinnaird family, who still own the property. The Bell House is, according to local convention, the "only towered house in the county."

A brief overview of architecture and conversation prior to 1880 lays the groundwork for understanding the local architectural landscape. The timber of Metcalfe County, however, while time-consuming to clear for farming purposes, fueled the construction of houses in the 19th century. Metcalfe County, at the time of its 1984 survey, contained 187 log buildings. Hart County was the next highest in the southern Pennyrile Region with 156 log buildings.

The earliest houses were often unhewn log buildings, usually one story in height with puncheon floors and gable roofs. The simplest dwellings were single pens, but other common plans included hall-parlor, dogtrot and saddlebag plans. Log construction continued throughout the 19th century, and as most were clad in weatherboards immediately or soon after construction, they can appear undistinguishable from frame houses. Log buildings continued to be built in the first decade of the 20th century, though frame houses also began to be constructed in great numbers.

New plans and the availability of milled lumber led to the most prevalent house form in Metcalfe County from 1850 onwards, the I-house. As was often the case, inspiration filtered down from Virginia. The Georgian plan, which was introduced in middle Virginia around 1760, did not mean an abrupt departure from the old traditional plans. The lack of demand for the double pile house gave rise to an innovation that took the front half of the Georgian plan as its model. The central hall I-house type was born, "the most common type from the old Tidewater, across the Southern Mountains, out through the Bluegrass and into the lower Midwest."[16] The plan or the form of a dwelling is an important indicator in how its occupant functioned socially and how his dwelling needed to function spatially.

The introduction of the central hall not only gave rise to a new housing type, but also was an evolution in the idea of space. Spaces "are powerful entities to the people who build and occupy them, and for that reason changes in spaces are sensitive indicators of changes in their occupants' attitudes."[17] The central passage affected accessibility, visibility and rearranged the domestic spatial hierarchy. Hall-parlor houses had few social buffers, and the activity of the household was open to all, an arrangement that fostered inclusion, which was not always welcome.

The central passage, single pile I-house, mostly always in frame, is common across Metcalfe County. Balloon framing allowed standard rectangular and square forms to be modified. T-plans and cross-plan houses became common, as did the addition of porches and decorative elements on a common house forms. The T-plan is a variation on the I-house – one of the rooms located along the central hall was moved forward, resulting in an irregular facade. This allowed the rooms in the ell to be accessed by the central passage.

[16] Henry Glassie. *Folk Housing in Middle Virginia: A Structural Analysis of Historic Artifacts.* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1975), 89.

[17] Dell Upton. "The Origins of Chesapeake Architecture," in *Three Centuries of Maryland Architecture: A Selection of Presentations Made at the 11th Annual Conference of the Maryland Historic Trust* (1982), 50.

The popular romantic styles of the mid-to-late 19th century, including the Italianate and Gothic Revival, flourished with the advent of balloon framing, as did later influential styles such as the Queen Anne. In addition to simplifying the construction process and making the dissemination of new floor plans easier, frame houses allowed for application of ornament in new and popular styles.

Modeled after Italian villas, the Italianate style begins to show up in Kentucky around the 1840s, and its influence extends until the turn of the 20th century. Characteristics of the Italianate style include an emphasis on verticality: tall and narrow windows, use of brackets at cornice lines and hood molds, low-pitched or flat roofs with box gutters, and double entry doors.

Queen Anne, one of the later style subsets of the Victorian period, ranged in popularity nationally from 1880 to 1910. Its emphasis on shape and decorative detailing, often with machine-made stylistic elements such as brackets, window hoods, spindlework, and textured shingles, all of which were applied to plain exteriors, made it particularly appealing to the expanding middle class. The Queen Anne style was popularized through pattern books, but especially by the expanding railroad network, "making pre-cut architectural details conveniently available through much of the nation."[18]

The Free Classic style is a transitional style between the Queen Anne and the revival styles, including Colonial Revival and Neoclassical. Many Free Classical dwellings have a form and massing similar to that of an American Foursquare, but with the addition of two-story polygonal bays, towers and other decorative details that are clearly Victorian. Details such as block modillions, dentils, Palladian windows and classical columns are common on Free Classic dwellings.

The majority of the frame dwellings (and most are frame, not masonry) in the Kentucky Heritage Council Survey files built between 1870 and 1910 fall in the last quarter of the 19th century. Because of the dearth of documented dwellings dated to the first decade of the 20th century, the decision was made to include the last quarter of the 19th century given the longevity of some architectural style and building forms. Of the surveyed sites documented in Metcalfe County, none are comparable in style or form to the Bell House. It was beyond the scope of this nomination to conduct a county-wide survey to determine if any extant historic dwellings resemble the Bell House.

In 1890, there were 1,867 dwellings enumerated in the census in Metcalfe County. According to the survey files, the majority of the larger homes were frame I-houses or T-plans. The following dwellings illustrate the common building practice in the area; none of the survey forms examined for Metcalfe County documented a dwelling similar to the Bell House. This is a representative sampling of documented resources in the county during the time period.

MC-271 (Sulphur Well quadrangle): Built between 1875 and 1900, this is a conventional two-story, three bay central passage frame house (single pile). It has rounded Italianate-style windows (light division unknown) and a central entry way with sidelights and a transom.

[18] McAlester, 268.

MC-271

MC-259

MC-13

MC-259 (Edmonton quadrangle): Built between1877 and 1900. A two-story, five bay wide central passage, single pile frame dwelling. Conventional in form, with brick gable end chimneys, and a shed roof porch with turned and chamfered supports. The façade windows are arched, two-over-two double-hung sash. The house has an Italianate influence.

MC-13 (Sulphur Well quadrangle): This frame, two-story T-plan was built around 1900. It had a tin shingled roof laid in a diamond pattern, transoms over the door, and a bay window with fishscale shingles, and cut-away details at the windows.

MC-14 (Sulphur Well quadrangle): Built around 1880, and described as "High Victorian," this two-story central passage, single pile frame dwelling has canted bays at either end of the façade and a an "oval double portico with Victorian "decorative trim." There is, apparently, colored glass in the front door, an element shared by the Bell House.

MC-179 (Summer Shade quadrangle): This two-story frame T-plan dates to 1875 to 1900. It has typical Queen Anne ornamentation on a traditional form.

MC-180 (Summer Shade quadrangle): This one-and-one half story frame dwelling, described on the original survey form as "eccentric" was built between 1875 and 1900. It had many late-Victorian details, including sawtooth imbrication, brackets, and turned and chamfered supports. It does not appear to be extant.

MC-14

MC-179

MC-180

MC-157 (Summer Shade quadrangle): This interesting cruciform-shaped house has a canted central section and two-story curved porch with typical spindlework popular in the late-19th and early-20th centuries.

MC-135 (Summer Shade quadrangle): This frame, two-story dwelling, built between 1875 and 1900, has a side-passage plan, but virtually no architectural ornamentation.

MC-80 (Dubre quadrangle): This one-and-one-half story frame dwelling has a Cumberland style plan, with a window/door/door/window fenestration pattern on the façade. It dates to between 1901 and 1926.

MC-157

MC-135

MC-80

All of these homes, save one, utilize the familiar central-passage plan, either in an I-house form or T-plan form. The one side-passage dwelling (MC-135) is devoid of any stylistic elements. The Bell House, then, employed both a form and a symphony of architectural treatments unlike any other house of the time period in Metcalfe County.

The Bell family, themselves products of an agrarian, rural society, used the construction of their house to show their familiarity with what may be perceived as a more urban form (the side passage), along with a seldom used style (the Free Classic), as well as illustrate their social standing and wealth in the community. The I-house was certainly a known entity – the original Kinnaird/Bell dwelling on the farm was a mid-19th century I-house, a frame, two-story, five bay wide dwelling with a two-story portico. It burned in 1949. The other houses, most relegated to tenant use by the time of the 1941 insurance assessment – were one-story central-passage and hall/parlor dwellings.

A look at the professionals that influenced the Bell House design reveals inspiration from Knoxville, Tennessee, and Owensboro, Kentucky.

Albert Killian, Architect

The Kinnaird and Bell families engaged the services of two architects to develop plans for this house. They ultimately chose the drawings and plans prepared by Albert Killlian, a German immigrant living in Owensboro.

Killian, born in 1841 in Baden, Germany, immigrated to America in 1848. Economic conditions and religious persecution by the Prussian government encouraged many Germans to immigrate to America between 1840 and 1860. Total migration to the United States increased from 23,322 people in 1830 to 369,980 in 1850.[19]

Killian's parents settled in Spencer County, Indiana, on the Ohio River, across from Daviess County, Kentucky. A growing population of German and Swiss immigrants in Southwestern Indiana led to the establishment of St. Meinrad Abbey in 1854 by two Swiss Priests. In 1857, St. Meinrad's College was founded, and Albert Killian attended. It is not known what degree he received, but a later incarnation of the college sought to "impart a solid classical and scientific education, based on strictly Catholic principles." [20]

In the 1860 United States Census for Rockport, Spencer County, Indiana, Killian is listed as an apprentice carpenter. He married Catherine Wagner in 1866, and in 1870, still living in Spencer County, Indiana, Killian, was the head of his own household and listed as a cabinet maker.[21] In the 1880 cenus, Killian was listed as working at a planing mill, and still lived in Rockport, Indiana.

As with many architects of the period, Killian was not classically trained, but rather learned the trade from the ground up – as a carpenter and woodworker, and perhaps even as an engineer. When he died in 1932, his obituary stated that he "was a teacher of mathematics for some time" at St. Meinrad College.

Sometime between 1890 and 1894, Killian moved across the river to Owensboro. An undated postcard advertising his services includes a montage of six of his buildings on one side, and on the other, a statement reading "On the opposite side you will find a few of the modern buildings that I have designed. I will make special drawings in each case subject to your approval if a description of the character of the building you want will be furnished. I will give all the information that you may ask for."[22]

Killian's work in Kentucky and Indiana extended not only into the Queen Anne hybrid known as Free Classic, but into modest bungalows, commercial buildings, hospitals, churches, libraries, a power plant, and multiple schools. He designed the Carnegie Free Public Library (now the Fine Arts Museum, DAOB-41, listed in the Owensboro MRA, 1986) in Owensboro, a "fine example of Beaux-Arts architecture."[23] Additionally, Killian designed the Owensboro City Hall (no longer extant), the Electric Light Plan (later known as Owensboro Municipal Utilities, no longer extant) and numerous other public buildings in Kentucky and Indiana.

But it is his domestic designs from the last decade of the 19th century and first decade of the 20th that are prevalent in this situation, and particularly in his home city of Owensboro. In 1895, the *Owensboro Tribune* noted that the "handsome house" of Mr. Killian, on St. Ann Street, was nearing completion. Although it is not

[19] George Yater, *Two Hundred Years at the Falls of the Ohio: A History of Louisville and Jefferson County*. (Louisville: The Heritage Corporation, 1979), 65.

[20] Richard G. Boone. *A History of Education in Indiana*. (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1892), 426.

[21] United States Census Returns, Spencer County, Kentucky, and Spencer County, Indiana,; Index to Marriage Record 1850-1920 Inclusive Vol, WPA Original Record located in County Clerk Book 5, page 272. Ancestry.com. Indiana, Marriage collection, 1800-1941 (database on-line). Provo, UTL Ancestry.com Operations, Inc. 2005.

[22] Terry Blake and David Edds Jr. *Owensboro* (Chicago: Arcadia Publishing, 2007), 110.

[23] Carnegie Free Public Library, DAOB-41, National Register of Historic Places nomination.

known definitively that Killian designed his own residence, it seems likely. According to city directories, and Killian's obituary, he lived at 519 St. Ann Street in downtown Owensboro.[24]

The dwelling at 519 St. Ann Street is a two-and-one-half story frame side-passage T-plan dwelling on a stone foundation. While the dwelling does not possess the liveliness of movement of the Bell House, it does combine elements of the late-Victorian with the emerging trend of Classically-inspired national styles, including a three-part window in a shingled attic gable.

The dwelling next door (521 St. Ann Street) to Killian's house, however, is especially eye-catching and bears a definite resemblance to the Bell House. The heavy, Craftsman-era wraparound porch detracts slightly from the original design of the house, but the composition of the roofline is readily visible. The roofline features a front gable, small attic dormer, and a conical roofed tower. A historic photograph makes the similarities to the Bell House that much more apparent – pediment facing porch with a curve around the tower, Palladian windows, elaborate finials on the roof of the tower and a two-story polygonal bay on the side elevation – if Killian didn't design this house, he certainly took note of its distinctive features. And in doing so, he called upon that inspiration several years later when a new job transpired in rural Metcalfe County, Kentucky.

George Barber, Architect

Although Owensboro was far removed from Red Lick, Kentucky, in the first decade of the 20th century, mail service linked urban and rural across America. In the files of the Bell family descendants, who are restoring the Bell House, is a hand-colored drawing on yellowed paper. At first glance, it looks like it might be part of the documents associated with the 1941 insurance assessment, or perhaps a draft drawing of the house by Killian.

It is neither. It is a drawing of a different house, similar to the Bell House, but much smaller in scale, with a bathroom on the first floor, and no porch on the west elevation. Other slight differences include the placement of hearths and chimneys and staircase configuration. At the bottom right corner of the plan is written "Barber & Kluttz, Architects, Knoxville, Tennessee." Handwritten on the opposite corner is "Residence for C.A. Bell, Red Lick, KY."

George Barber, born in Illinois in 1854, and raised on a farm in Kansas, was a carpenter and taught himself the tools of the architecture trade by studying construction and design books. One of those books was a catalog of house-plans produced by the Connecticut firm of George and Charles Palliser.[25] Barber's education by book and catalog laid the groundwork for him becoming "one of the most successful architects in the United States, largely through a mail order blueprint business driven by published architectural catalogues and a monthly magazine."[26]

[24] None of the houses on this block of St. Ann have been surveyed, nor are they included in any district.

[25] James C.Maxwell and Shirley Massey. "George Barber Architecture in Knoxville, Tennessee." *Old House Journal*, February 2010. Accessed on line at http://www.oldhouseonline.com/george-barbers-knoxville-houses/

[26] M. Ruth Little, "George F. Barber, 1845-1945"," in *North Carolina Architects and Builders, A Biographical Dictionary*, 2009. Copyright & Digital Scholarship Center, North Carolina State University Libraries, Raleigh, NC. Accessed online at http://ncarchitects.lib.ncsu.edu/people/P000234

He moved to Knoxville, Tennessee, in 1888, and in 1890, published *The Cottage Souvenir No. 2, A Repository of Artistic Cottage Architecture and Miscellaneous Designs,* which garnered him national attention. There are 59 designs in this book, with a construction cost range of $500 to $8,000. Barber encouraged his prospective clients to not only negotiate revisions to the plans with their builders, but to contact him as well, stating in an update to *The Cottage Souvenir 2* in 1891, "Write to us concerning any changes wanted in plans and keep writing till you get just what you want. Don't be afraid of writing too often. We are not easily offended. "[27]

Barber's early designs, in the late 19th-century, skewed primarily toward the Queen Anne style. He developed more Free Classic elements by the turn of the century, and began producing Colonial Revival designs as that style grew in popularity nationally. Characteristics of his designs include "shaped wood shingles; novelty wood siding placed horizontally, vertically, or diagonally; prominent brick chimneys and foundations; a plethora of lathe-turned and sawn wooden brackets, and other ornament. Multiple gables, conical-roofed corner turrets, towers and oriels, hexagonal end porches, and sprawling verandas."[28]

In addition to the mail-order plans that could be tinkered with on site, Barber offered custom design through "extensive correspondence."[29] He worked with local developers across the south; in 1892 J.C. White, a Knoxville developer, partnered with Barber. Three years later, Thomas A. Kluttz of Georgia replaced White. By the turn of the 20th century, Barber had developed his mail-order business into an empire with 30 draftsman and 20 secretaries, handling plans and clients across America and abroad, including China, Europe, South Africa, and Japan.[30]

At some point, Barber published *Homes and Barns for Villages and Farms, A Collection of Artistic Homes and Barns of Low Cost.*[31] There doesn't appear to be much different from his earlier designs – a cacophony of gables, in all shapes and sizes, chimneys, shingles and "gingerbread" pepper each house plan. The scale is somewhat compressed, perhaps in deference to the low cost of the title.

Barber's specifications in the opening pages of 1891 edition of *The Cottage Souvenir 2* includes the following: "Owing to a wide diversity of styles and prices, the following articles were not included in our estimates, as a house can be completed without them: Heating apparatus, range, hearth, mantels and grates; plumbing, other than that given in the description of each plan; draining or cementing of a cellar; finished rooms in attic; papering of walls; plaster cornice or center pieces."[32]

The Bell House, as it is shown in Barber's undated plan, and as built, does not appear in this book or in the 1891 expanded version of *The Cottage Souvenir 2*. That does not mean, of course, that Barber's crew did not produce an identical design, given the sheer number of designs produced. It seems likely, though, from the

[27] George Franklin Barber. *The Cottage Souvenir 2: Containing One Hundred and Twenty Original Designs in Cottage and Detail Architecture.* (Knoxville, TN:S.B. Newman and Company, Steam Book and Job Printers, 1891), 9.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Little.
[30] Ibid.
[31] George F. Barber. *Homes and Barns for Villages and Farms, A Collection of Artistic Homes and Barns of Low Cost*. Published by American Homes Publishing Company, Bean, Waters and Gaut Pruinters. C.M. McClung Historical Collection, Knox County Public Library. Accessed online at http://cmdc.knoxlib.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/p15136coll3/id/1283/rec/18

[32] Barber, *The Cottage Souvenir 2: Containing One Hundred and Twenty Original Designs in Cottage and Detail Architecture,* 10.

hand-drawn plan, that the Bells contacted him after seeing a design they liked in one of his publications, and requested changes. Although no "extensive correspondence" has yet been located in the family archives, it does appear that some form of correspondence took place.

Barbers clients encompassed the "rising middle class—bankers, professionals, and farmers— as well as wealthy industrialists, all attracted by his philosophy of furnishing house designs targeted for modern American tastes and American standards of comfort."[33] Curtis Bell and his family, then, fit neatly into a socioeconomic group in America seeking a new domestic form for a new age.

Why then, did the Bell family contract with Albert Killian? The chronology of house design is speculative, but based on the evidence at hand Curtis and Cora Bell first considered the prolific architect from Knoxville. His plan includes a tower, a curving porch, and six rooms on the first floor. As stated earlier, the dimensions of the rear two rooms and the hallways are smaller than what Killian specified and was built. But the Barber plan contains a first floor bathroom, which the Bells could have easily afforded – in the same general location as the bathroom that was ultimately installed in a portion of the west side porch. Killian's plan does not include bathrooms.

Perhaps the vernacular, rural landscape of which both the Kinnaird and Bell families were a product influenced their preferences for what was, in rural Kentucky at that time, a luxury item. Indoor plumbing in 1941 was only in 30 homes in the county – including a bathroom in a house in 1907 might have seemed like a waste of space.

Also, although Barber's designs did gradually include more classical elements, his range does not seem to have been quite as diverse as Killian. Some of his designs from the late-19th century are almost mind-numbingly elaborate, with spindlework, which national architects railed against as lacking a cohesive identity or "consistent theory of design."[34]Barber spoke to the culture of the day, however, as he discussed his houses being "arranged with special care for *convenience* and *economy* of floor plans, with *pleasing exterior* design."[35]

Killian was producing Craftsman style homes, Gothic Revival churches, and Neoclassical schools by 1907, when construction on the Bell House began. It seems that although Curtis Bell may have chosen to tweak the interior in a reflection of a rural environment, the exterior of his house was as up-to-date and stylish as any 1907 house to be found in downtown Owensboro.

Evaluation of the Significance of the Bell House within its Architectural Context

The Bell House is locally significant as an architect-designed Free Classic dwelling that conveys that status of its occupants in a relatively isolated and rural location where the traditional domestic form remained the same from the mid-19th century until the 1920s. Even with the changing of a new century, most builders in Metcalfe County continued to operate under an old language of form and style. The Queen Anne style hardly made an

[33] Ibid.

[34] Clifford Edward Clark, Jr. The American Family Homes, 1800-1960. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press,1986), 143.

[35] Barber, *The Cottage Souvenir 2: Containing One Hundred and Twenty Original Designs in Cottage and Detail Architecture* 8.

impression on the local built environment, and the Free Classic even less so. The Bell House could have been placed down in middle-class suburb in any of Kentucky's cities and not been out of place.

The rural nature of America was shifting in 1900. The Progressive Era, which gained steam after the 1893 depression, would challenge notions about race, labor, suffrage – and architecture. National reforms of the Progressive movement emphasized cleanliness, hygiene, space, and the importance of a home. An expanding consumer culture stressed the new experiences of the modern age, the role of women in the home, and ptinr publications – like Barber's and other national magazines like the *Ladies Homes Journal*, thrived.

Only a decade earlier, the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition and its White City ushered in the Neoclassical style and the City Beautiful Movement. Closer to home was the 1897 Tennessee Centennial and International Exposition in Nashville. The construction of a full-scale model of the Parthenon expressed the growing interest in classical styles of architecture, and patriotism and civic pride formed the main themes of the event. A movement away from the overly ornate styles of the Victorian period was gaining ground, not only among builders and designers, writers and advocates, but was also filtering down to the general public.

In 1900, progress seemed not only necessary but inevitable. Not long married, with two young children when the planning for the house began, Curtis and Cora shook off the traditional housing forms, exemplified by the mid-19th century house on the farm, and embraced a new (and for the location, daring) style and form. They could have chosen to live – and enlarge or renovate – any of the numerous houses on the farm. But they chose to make their own statement, one that seems to capture some of the giddiness of a new century.

Although rural life in Kentucky during the first decade of the 20th century may have seemed immune to some of the changes seem in urban areas – increased use of the automobile, improved access to education, the rise in leisure time and recreational activities – the Bell family's social standing enabled them access to ideas and innovations far beyond Red Lick, Kentucky. And their financial situation allowed them to build a large, 12-room house with all of the elaborations found on urban houses.

At a time when the I-house, T-plan, and Cumberland House were the mainstay of the rural landscape in Metcalfe County, traditional forms accented with popular stylistic elements like shingles, brackets, or spindelwork, Curtis and Cora Bell were poring over architectural catalogs. The architectural context of Metcalfe County was not the context in which the Bells' future house was conceived. Through the work of George Barber, they joined other "enterprising and intelligent people of the day" seeking a home expressing the "true principles of grace and beauty."[36]

For whatever reason, the plan supplied by Barber was not chosen, and Albert Killian of Owensboro was employed to design the Bell House. His design, barely modified by the builders, bears strong resemblance to Killian's own neighborhood, and the house next door to his own residence. The Bell House is an architecturally significant house in Metcalfe County, and in its combination of Queen Anne forms with Classical elements, physically express the dichotomy between a rural landscape in a rapidly changing and modernizing America.

[36] Barber, *The Cottage Souvenir 2: Containing One Hundred and Twenty Original Designs in Cottage and Detail Architecture*, 6.

Evaluation of the Integrity of the Architectural Significance of the Bell House

A house in Metcalfe County evaluated to be a good example of a particular style or of continued architectural development will be eligible for the National Register if it retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. All seven integrity factors of the Bell House are discussed here.

The Bell House retains a high level of integrity of *location*. The dwelling has not been relocated and it retains its general relationship with the road. The sense of a crossroads community is maintained by the presence of the former store (MC-29) across Columbia Road from the Bell House and several agricultural buildings.

The Bell House retains a medium level of integrity of *setting*. Although some outbuildings have been lost, this nomination focuses on the domestic yard, which within the proposed boundary is incredibly intact. The sense of separation between the domestic sphere and the agricultural fields is intact and visible on the landscape. The local surroundings remain rural and agricultural.

The house retains its integrity of *design, workmanship* and *materials.* Changes since 1910 to the dwelling's original materials, floor plan, shape and form are minimal. The Free Classic combination of Queen Anne and Colonial Revival elements is clearly visible and in excellent condition. The tower, finials, pedimented gables, denticulation and classical columns convey the dual nature of the Free Classical style. All of the main elements are original – windows, doors, and ornamentation. The enclosure of porches do not detract from the purity of Killian's design, but are compatible design elements; additionally, the west porch has now been opened up and is being restored to its original design, and the same is intended for the porch on the east elevation. The Bell House is an eye-catching local landmark along the Columbia Road.

The Bell House retains a high level of integrity of *feeling* and *association*. The integrity of design, materials and workmanship, as discussed above, provide the feeling of the well-to-farmer/merchant/banker who had the house constructed. The extraordinarily-intact house is a statement about what was considered to be a fashionable and well-executed in a larger urban context in Kentucky at the time. The Bell House is clearly still associated with the Free Classic style as interpreted in Kentucky during the first decade of the 20th century.

The historic Bell House and its proposed boundary are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as a well-preserved, significant example of an architect-designed Free Classic farmhouse in Metcalfe County, Kentucky.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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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 # _____
____recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

____State Historic Preservation Office
____Other State agency
____Federal agency
____Local government
____University
____Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): MC-327

10. Geographical Data

The Bell House
Name of Property

Metcalfe County, Kentucky
County and State

Acreage of Property 1.89 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References
Edmonton quad
Coordinate calculated from ArcGIS Explorer
Coordinate according to NAD 27: Zone 16; Easting 632067.94; Northing 4095482.56

Coordinate according to NAD 83:

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	632064.72	4095685.71	3			
2				4			

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Beginning on an elm tree near the bank of Leatherwood Creek, in the original line of the Samuel Taylor patent; thence S 86 112 E 7 poles to a stone with two sycamores and wild cherry pointers onthe bank of the old channel of said creek in F.P. Kinnaird's line; thence with his line S 1 3/4 W 74poles to a sycamore; thence S 5 112 E about 9 rods to the Leatherwood Road; thence west with said road to a stone near a shop in the line of the original Samuel Taylor patent near a line of J.H. Kinnaird's homestead; thence north with a line of the said Taylor patent about 75 poles to the beginning containing 10 acres, more or less, including the new residence recently built on said land.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
The property proposed for inclusion on the National Register by the current nomination includes the 1.89 acre parcel associated with the Bell House. This nominated property retains the historic dwelling and domestic outbuildings constructed by Curtis and Cora Bell. The proposed boundaries provide an appropriate setting for understanding the significance of the design and construction of this house within its historic context in Metcalfe County. The boundary includes the domestic yard and maintains the historic setting in which the contributing features were constructed.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Janie-Rice Brother, Senior Architectural Historian
organization Kentucky Archaeological Survey date October 2015
street & number 1020A Export Street telephone
city or town Lexington state KY zip code 40506
e-mail

The Bell House
Name of Property

Metcalfe County, Kentucky
County and State

Photographs:

PHOTOGRAPHY LOG

Same for all photos::
Property Name: **Bell House, MC-327**
Location: **Metcafe County, KY**
Photographer: **Janie-Rice Brother**
Date photo taken: **2015**
Location of digital file: **CD at Kentucky Heritage Council (SHPO)**

Photo Identification

1. Bell House, façade (south elevation) as seen from Columbia Road, facing north.
2. Bell House, façade (south elevation), as seen from front yard, facing north.
3. Bell House, façade (south elevation) and east elevation, facing northwest.
4. Bell House, west elevation, facing east.
5. Bell House, north and west elevations, facing southeast. Wash house is at left in photograph.
6. Bell House, east and north elevations, facing southwest. Wash house is at right in photograph.
7. Bell House, detail of facade (south elevation) roof and attic level, facing north.
8. Bell House, interior of reception hall and detail of main staircase, first floor, facing northwest.
9. Bell House, interior of reception hall and detail of main staircase, first floor, facing west.
10. Bell House, interior of parlor, showing screen, first floor, facing southeast.
11. Bell House, detail of screen between reception hall and parlor, facing east.
12. Bell House, detail of back staircase, first floor, facing northeast.
13. Bell House, upstairs chamber (tower room), second floor, facing southeast.
14. Bell House, dining room showing pocket doors, looking into parlor, first floor, facing southeast.

Property Owner:

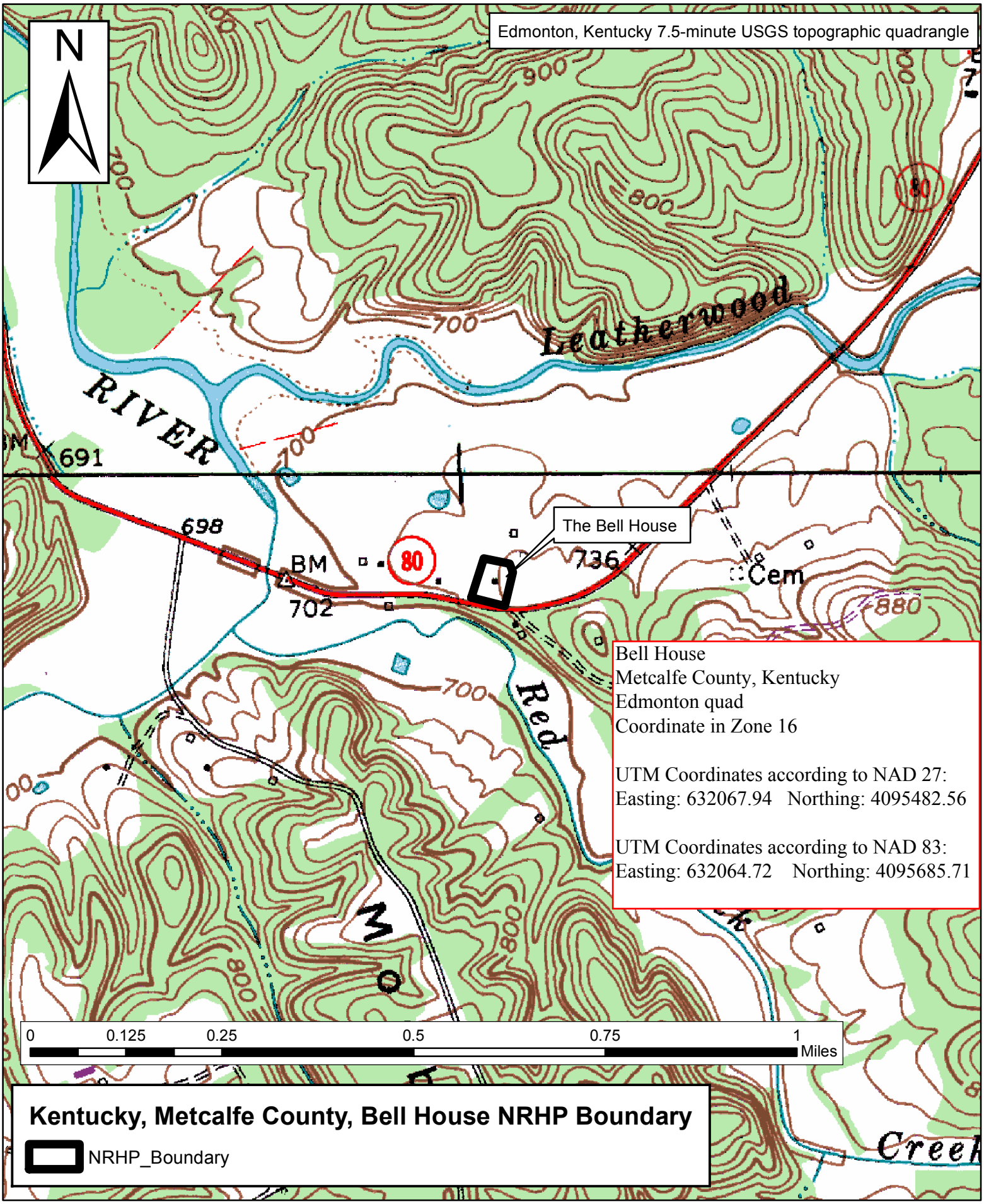
(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Red Lick PM, LLC

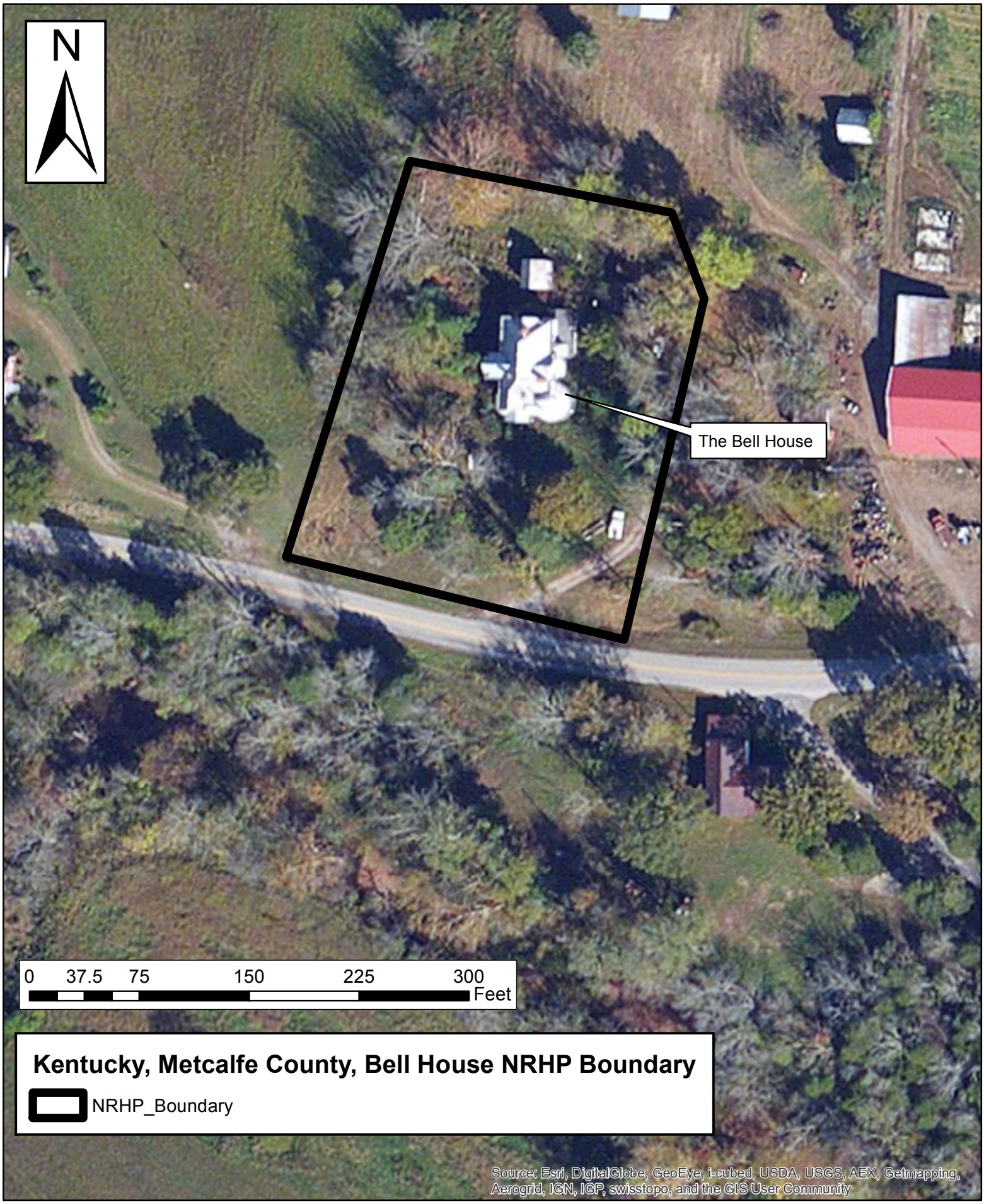
street & number 304 South Winter Street telephone

city or town Midway state KY zip code 40347

NAD 1983
-85.515822 36.998056 Decimal Degrees (center point of dwelling)



NAD 1983
-85.515822 36.998056 Decimal Degrees (center point of dwelling)



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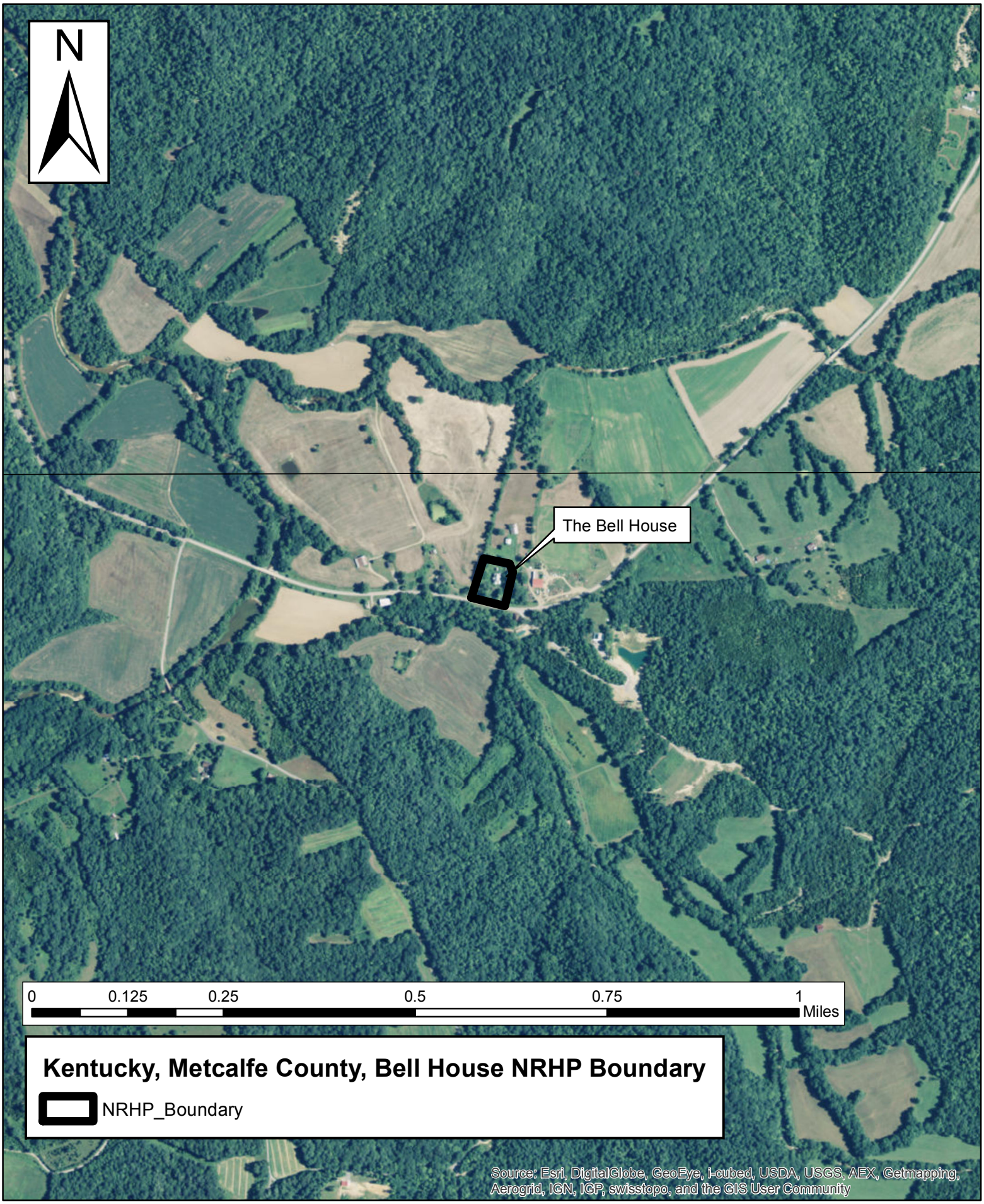

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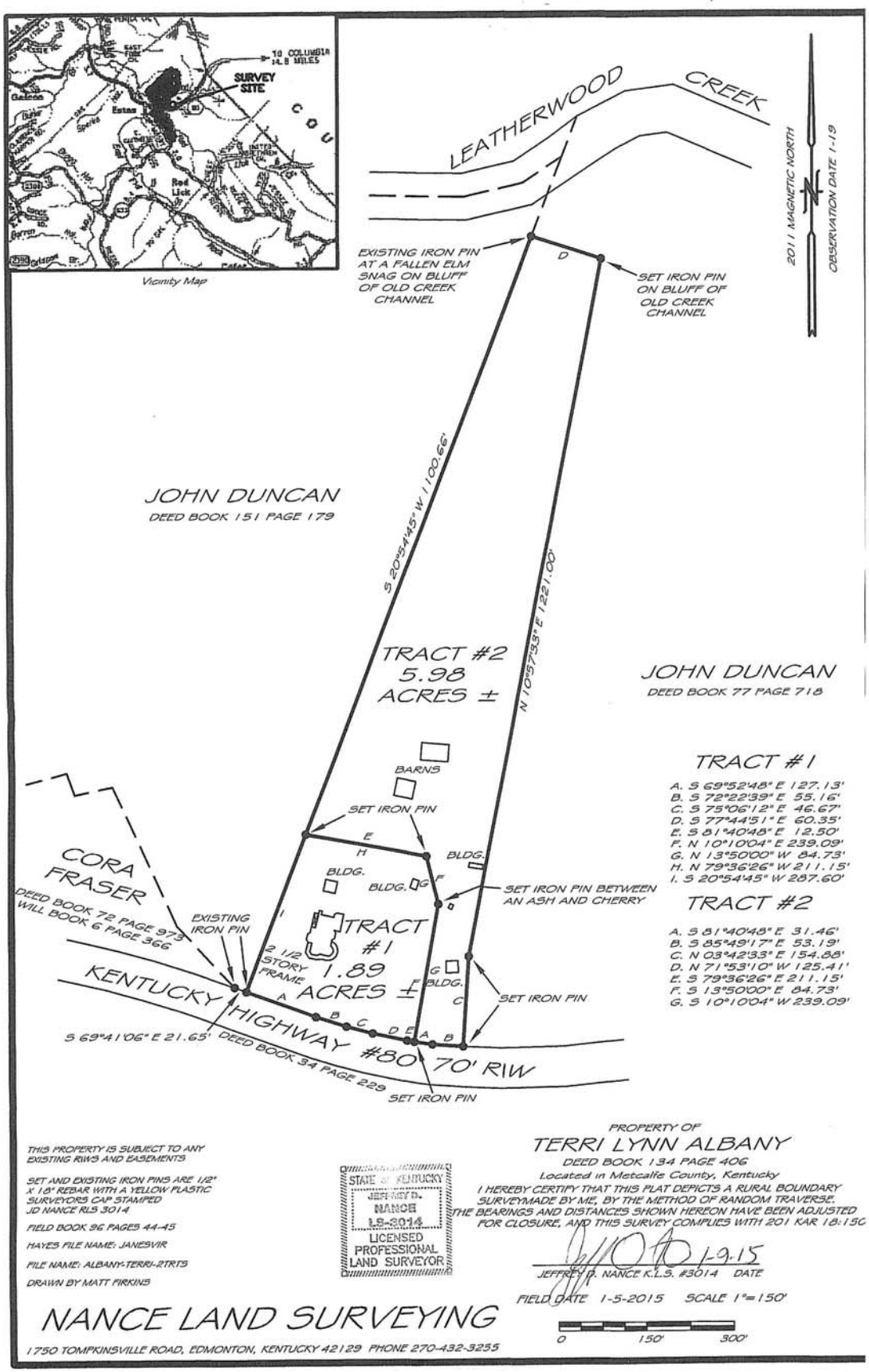
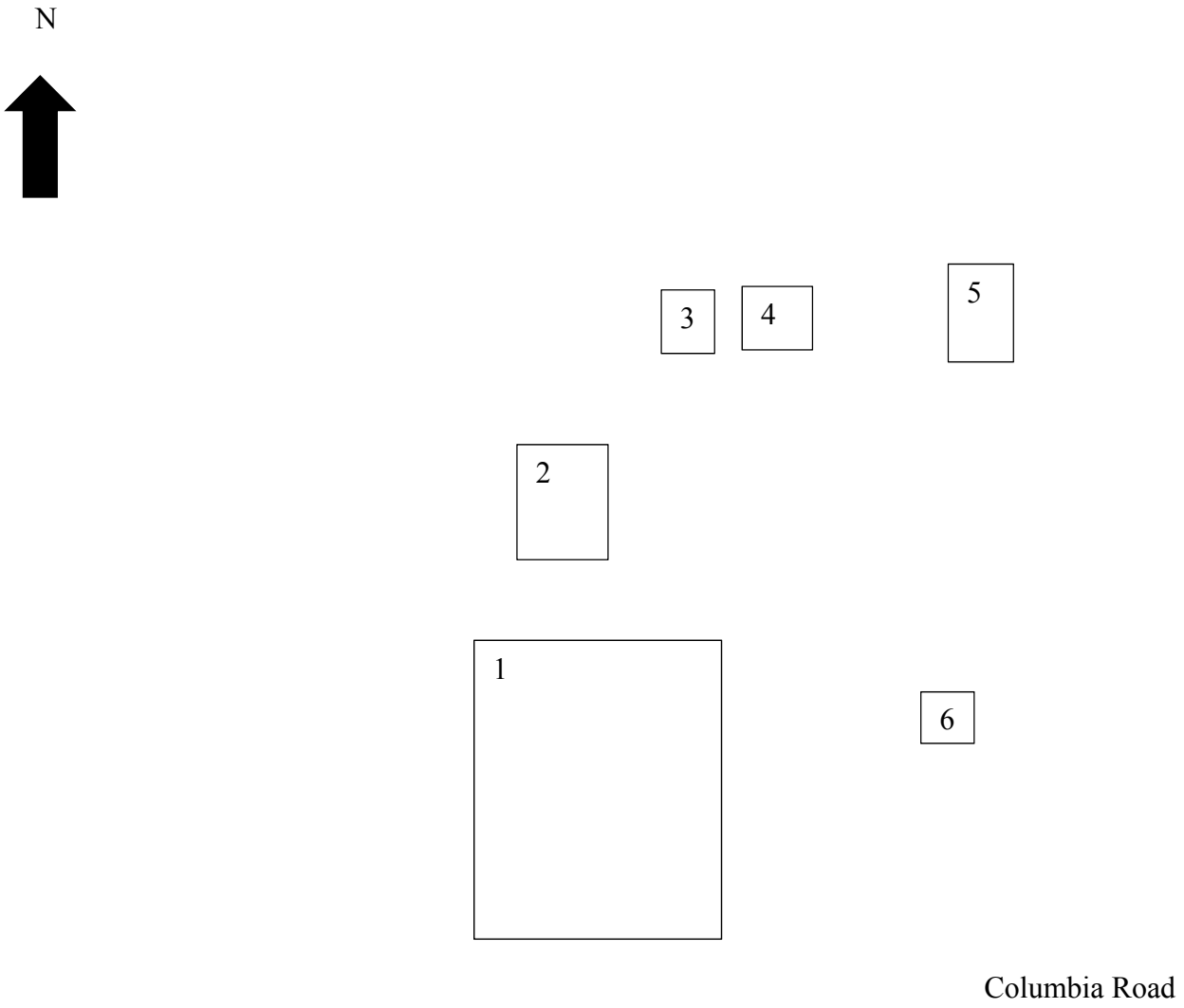


The Bell House

Metcalfe County, Kentucky

NRHP Nomination Surveyor's Plat showing 1.89-acre PVA Parcel

2015



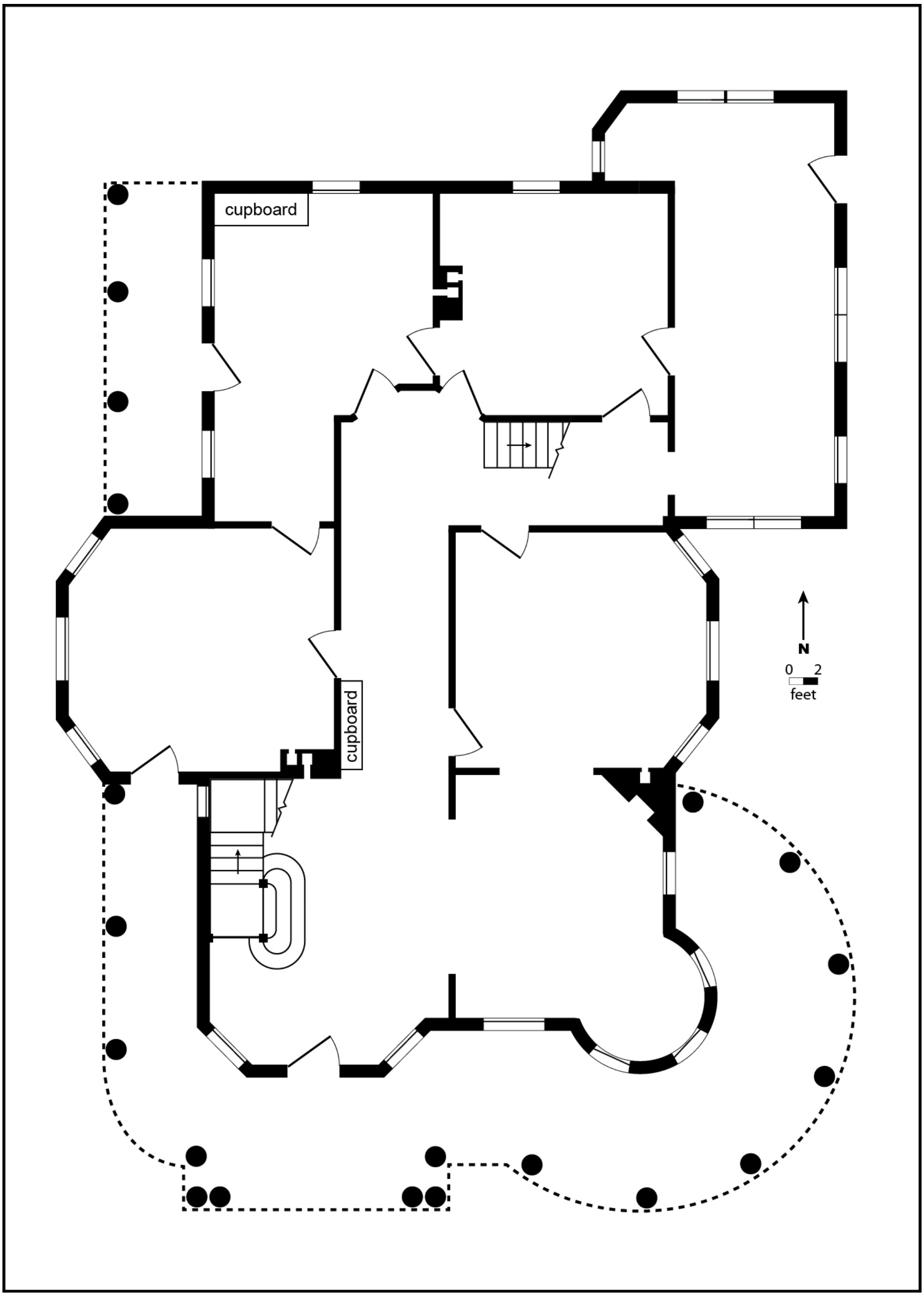
The Bell House

Metcalfe County, Kentucky

NRHP Nomination Site Plan

2015

1. House
2. Wash House
3. Chicken House
4. Chicken House/Storage Shed
5. Storage Shed/Garage
6. Pump House

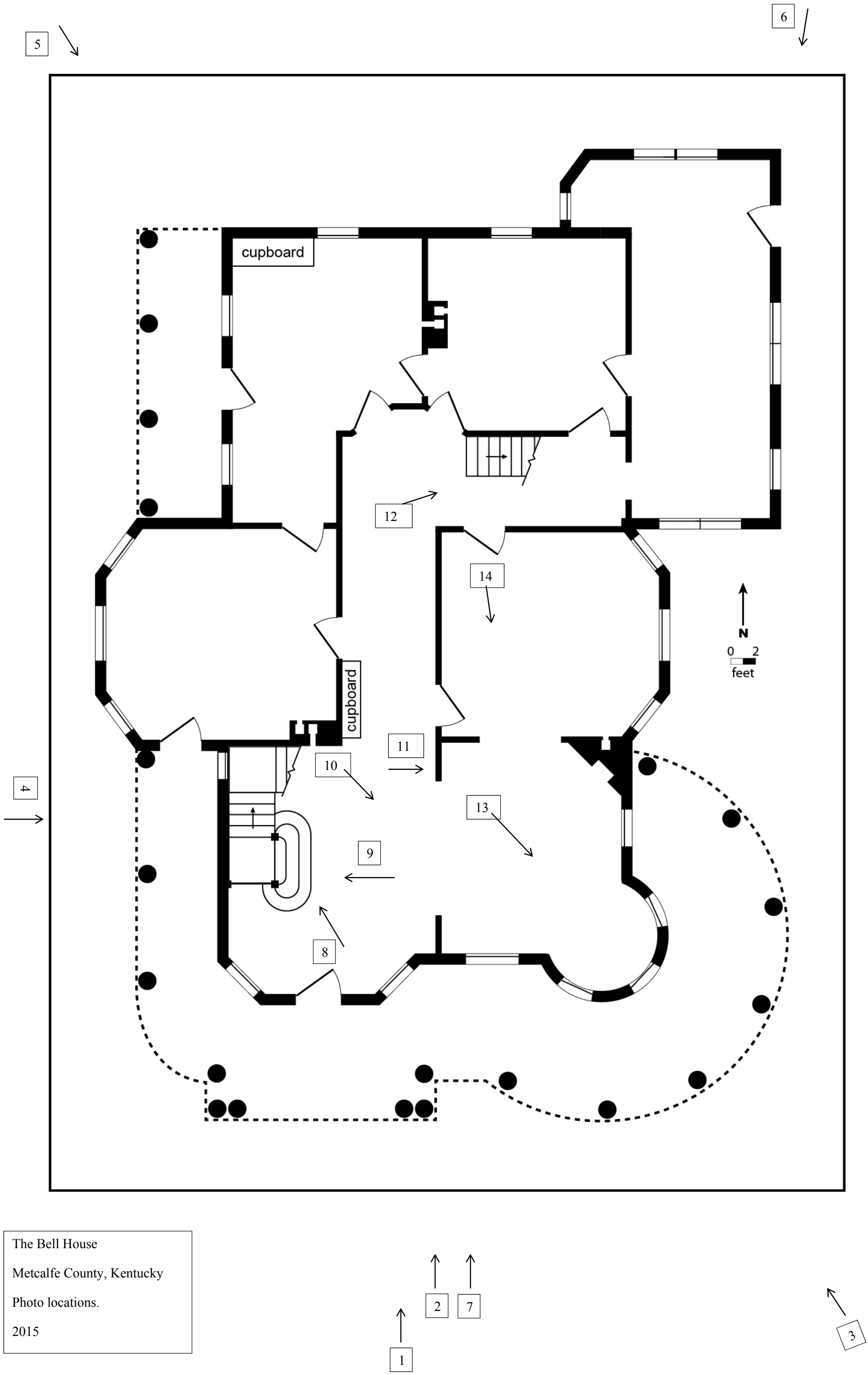


The Bell House

Metcalfe County, Kentucky

Plan of first floor.

2015



The Bell House

Metcalfe County, Kentucky

Photo locations.

2015