



Figure 343: *WS 23, Hamilton Farm. “View of the farm looking north from the south bank of Cartwright Creek,” (photograph by Julie Riesenweber, Hamilton Farm National Register Nomination, 1989).*

The Farm Property Type

In this report we have discussed mostly resource types at a very individual level such as house, barn, church, or cellar. These individual resources come together in various combinations and arrangements on larger landscapes that we call “property types.” Property types identified in the survey area include places such as cross-roads communities, industrial areas, religious communities, and school campuses. The most common property type observed was the farm. The farm as a property type encompasses many of resources we have discussed in this report, including the house and domestic and agricultural outbuildings. It is a landscape divided into various areas – the domestic yard, the agricultural yard, the fields, and often forests. Delineating or crossing this landscape we will often find roads, streams, hedges, and fences. The region’s farms will be researched in greater depth in National Register nominations, but a few initial observations are offered here.

Farms that have been in existence for very long periods of time will often have elements reflecting several different periods of history. One of the best examples of this in the survey area is Hamilton Farm or Parker’s Landing, listed on the National Register in 1989 (Figure 343). Here the core of the house is log from the early nineteenth century, later expanded several times through to the mid twentieth century. Hamilton Farm has resources from various periods

including a domestic yard with a cellar, back house (a multi-purpose domestic outbuilding), and a slave house; and an agricultural area with a carriage house, stock barn, sheep barn, hay barn, corn crib, and a wonderful series of rock fences defining fields and paddocks beyond. A comparable site documented in the current survey effort is found at WS 720 (Figure 344 - Figure 346). There are fewer outbuildings here than at Hamilton farm, but WS 720 is anchored by a fine early center-chimney double pen house, possibly log, and has a set of barns in an agricultural area as well (Figure 346). What is perhaps most remarkable about WS 720, which it shares with the Hamilton farm, are the rock fences that crisscross the property, defining the domestic, agricultural, and field areas (Figure 345). In these two examples, we can see how the elements together make up a farm that has a particular feeling of time and place and a depth of history.



Figure 344: *WS 720. Center chimney double pen House with board and batten siding, early-mid nineteenth century, Manton vicinity. Extensive stone fencing separates domestic and agricultural spaces. See also Figure 345 and Figure 346.*

Farms that began later in the nineteenth century or in the early twentieth often lack rock fences, but are divided in comparable ways to early farms, although they tend to have more outbuildings and larger spaces. For example, one of the sites featured in some depth in this report is WS 476, chosen more or less at random from among several farms that have a good compliment of outbuildings and other resources. We can see at WS 476 how these various resources are

arranged in an agricultural landscape roughly divided into domestic and agricultural areas (Figure 3). The house (Figure 2) sits near the road, separated from a small garage (Figure 224) by the driveway. To the side and back of the house are outbuildings associated with domestic work, food storage and preparation in particular, including the cellar (Figure 191), the meathouse (Figure 209), the well with its pump (Figure 231), and the brooder house (Figure 4). At some greater distance from the house, on the opposite side of the driveway and behind the garage, is another cluster of resources of mixed domestic and agricultural use: the privy (Figure 185), a workshed (Figure 216), a granary (Figure 310), and a stable (Figure 265). Behind this cluster of buildings around the house, removed some distance toward the back on the property is a group of agricultural buildings, the tobacco barn (Figure 286), a multi-purpose barn (Figure 260), and a poultry house (Figure 292). Beyond are agricultural fields. We can see this landscape arranged in a continuum, ranging from domestic to agricultural, from home to work, and from the female to the male realm.



Figure 345: *WS 720, Stone Fencing surrounding house. See also Figure 344 and Figure 346.*

Early farms often have little resemblance to their original configuration, having evolved in a later period. With the end of slavery, the growth of automobiles and farm machinery, and changes in agricultural production, such evolution was inevitable. At WS 85 (Figure 347), for example, we see no evidence of rock fences, and all the agricultural outbuildings date to an early twentieth century period that concentrated on dairy, tobacco, and other commodities. The house, however, has a log portion dating back to the early nineteenth century, with the front main portion of the house built in frame by the mid nineteenth century. Farms such as these reflect changing historic forces over a long period of time.



Figure 346: *WS 720 View from the House toward the Agricultural Yard and Outbuildings beyond. See also Figure 344 and Figure 345.*

The information collected in this survey provides us with an opportunity to study farms and learn more of the history of Marion and Washington Counties and of Kentucky in general. It is at this level of property type that we really begin to understand the historic significance of a farm. The organization of a farm landscape varies over time, economic levels, and types of farming, and we can use the survey data to study these changes in more depth, and to compare farms to one another. The picture that emerges helps us understand just what farm types exist within the region, which is the first step to evaluating their significance historically.



Figure 347: *WS 85, James Grigsby farm, Mooresville vicinity. The oldest part of the house is an early nineteenth century log section located in the ell behind the frame front section seen here. The gambrel roof barn left center is a banked dairy barn with a milking parlor and milk room on the ground level and hay storage above. Other outbuildings include a tobacco/multi-purpose barn, corn crib, smokehouse, machine shed, and garage.*



Figure 348: *MN 669, multi-purpose barn, early twentieth century, Gravel Switch. The stone-faced concrete block building in the background is MN 668, the United Methodist Church.*

For example, many Kentucky's small towns have a significant agricultural presence within their borders. The placement of barns on urban lots (Figure 348) is one noted practice, where crops harvested from surrounding fields could be stored convenient to markets and transportation. The barn alone in town does not constitute a farm, but we do sometimes find small farmsteads in

towns (Figure 349). In many small towns, such as Bradfordsville or Willisburg, deep lots face the main thoroughfare with a house near the front and long fields behind. These “urban farms” often have the domestic and agricultural yards compressed tightly together to maximize the field space. Convenient to markets and transportation routes, these smaller farms may have been more heavily invested in crops such as tomatoes, orchard crops, and vegetables than their more rural counterparts, and may have an increasing role to play with the recent growth of interest in local production and farmer’s markets.



Figure 349: MN 937, farm, late nineteenth, early twentieth century, Bradfordsville. This picture is taken from the back of the lot: the house faces East Main Street.



Figure 350: WS 747: Simple Pleasures Vineyard.

Conclusion

The Rural Heritage Development Initiative Survey of Marion and Washington Counties provides a foundation for understanding historic resources in the region. Determining just what is “historic” requires us to make judgments about what things are worth preserving. Since these are value judgments, they will be somewhat subjective, but survey helps us to make more them objective, since we then have comparative data. Survey helps us to understand both what typical and what is unusual, and to pinpoint the outstanding examples of either. With good survey data, we can compare a resource to others of similar type and see it in a larger context. Not everything that we document is “historic” in the sense of being eligible for the National Register, but everything we document is “historic” in the sense that can provide us with contextual knowledge about the history of the region.

Most of the things we have discussed in this report are the everyday buildings and structures of a rural landscape: houses, barns, outbuildings, cemeteries, churches, and schools. Much of this landscape is familiar to us, and thus easily taken for granted. But as these familiar landmarks vanish, something is lost, and those that remain become more valuable as tangible reminders of our history. The loss of a single barn may have little impact, but the loss of hundreds of barns transforms a whole landscape.

Survey preserves the memory of historic resources, but it also does more. It raises awareness, helping to foster greater interest in efforts to preserve the resources that so define our state. Survey is the first step in preservation, a foundation for further efforts. The next critical tool in historic preservation is the National Register. Some nominations are already planned as a follow up to this project, utilizing funds from a second round of Preserve America grant money, administered by the Heritage Council and Preservation Kentucky. It is strongly recommended that further National Register nominations be completed for the region, with the cooperation of the owners of historic properties. Properties listed on the National Register then become candidates for preservation incentives, and protected to a certain degree from federally funded projects that might adversely impact them, such as highway projects.

Preservation tools that may follow on the heels of National Register nominations include tax credits, easements, public education, purchase of development rights, and economic development

strategies, and all of these should be pursued. Another tool is regulations promulgated through local planning and zoning, probably the tool most people think of in relation to historic sites, and not always fondly. It's often assumed that National Register listing alone puts such restrictions in place, which it does not. Regulation in the form of historic landmarking of individual sites and the creation of zoned historic districts occurs at the local government level, and most typically in urban rather than rural areas. Jefferson County is alone among Kentucky Counties in landmarking rural properties, and this process does not have a strong chance of implementation in rural Marion and Washington Counties. Attempting to enact such regulations would possibly even be counterproductive in these areas. Among the greatest threats to the rural landscape of the region are development and the challenges faced by family farms in a changing economy. Planning for sustainable development through local planning offices can help with the former. The RHDI is a piece in the puzzle of the latter.

Historic Preservation is not just a goal of the RHDI, but also a strategy to help preserve a way of life. As farmers diversify into new crops such as vegetables for local farmer's markets and grapes for wineries (Figure 350), their historic farm buildings are in danger of becoming obsolete. But such buildings also have great potential for reuse, and if listed on the National Register, are eligible candidates for the use of both State and Federal tax credits as income-producing properties. A barn may become a tasting room for a winery; a tenant house might be used as an office, a farmhouse can serve as a Bed and Breakfast, or a whole historic farm may become a showplace for agricultural tourism.