National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory

2008



School House Ridge North
Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

Table of Contents

Inventory Unit Summary & Site Plan

Concurrence Status

Geographic Information and Location Map

Management Information

National Register Information

Chronology & Physical History

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Condition

Treatment

Bibliography & Supplemental Information

Inventory Unit Summary & Site Plan

Inventory Summary

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory Overview:

CLI General Information:

Purpose and Goals of the CLI

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI), a comprehensive inventory of all cultural landscapes in the national park system, is one of the most ambitious initiatives of the National Park Service (NPS) Park Cultural Landscapes Program. The CLI is an evaluated inventory of all landscapes having historical significance that are listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or are otherwise managed as cultural resources through a public planning process and in which the NPS has or plans to acquire any legal interest. The CLI identifies and documents each landscape's location, size, physical development, condition, landscape characteristics, character-defining features, as well as other valuable information useful to park management. Cultural landscapes become approved CLIs when concurrence with the findings is obtained from the park superintendent and all required data fields are entered into a national database. In addition, for landscapes that are not currently listed on the National Register and/or do not have adequate documentation, concurrence is required from the State Historic Preservation Officer or the Keeper of the National Register.

The CLI, like the List of Classified Structures, assists the NPS in its efforts to fulfill the identification and management requirements associated with Section 110(a) of the National Historic Preservation Act, National Park Service Management Policies (2006), and Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management. Since launching the CLI nationwide, the NPS, in response to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), is required to report information that respond to NPS strategic plan accomplishments. Two GPRA goals are associated with the CLI: bringing certified cultural landscapes into good condition (Goal 1a7) and increasing the number of CLI records that have complete, accurate, and reliable information (Goal 1b2B).

Scope of the CLI

The information contained within the CLI is gathered from existing secondary sources found in park libraries and archives and at NPS regional offices and centers, as well as through on-site reconnaissance of the existing landscape. The baseline information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape, placing it in context of the site's overall significance. Documentation and analysis of the existing landscape identifies character-defining characteristics and features, and allows for an evaluation of the landscape's overall integrity and an assessment of the landscape's overall condition. The CLI also provides an illustrative site plan that indicates major features within the inventory unit. Unlike cultural landscape reports, the CLI does not provide management recommendations or

treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape.

Inventory Unit Description:

The School House Ridge North property measures about 304 acres and is located approximately two miles west of Harpers Ferry and five miles northeast of Charles Town, in Jefferson County, West Virginia. To the south it is partially bordered by U.S. Route 340, while to the east it runs along Route 27, or Bakerton Road. It was acquired by the National Park Service in 2004 through a partnership with the Trust for Public Land and the Civil War Preservation Trust, and is primarily composed of farmland. It represents a portion of the property added to Harpers Ferry National Historical Park in 2004 with approval from Congress, which expanded the total area of the Park from 2,505 to 3,645 acres. Harpers Ferry National Monument was established in 1944, and in 1963 was re-designated as Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.

School House Ridge North is divided into three tracts. Tract 102-34 (70.74 acres) encompasses the Ott Farm, and was acquired by the National Park Service from Blanche and Elmer Ott in 2005. Tract 102-31 (56 acres) comprises a portion of the old Prospect Hill Farm once owned by the Moler family. It borders Route 27 and was acquired from the Civil War Preservation Trust in 2003. Tract 102-33 (176.32 acres) includes the old Jellystone Campground. Formal administrative jurisdiction of this parcel is still in the process of being conveyed to the National Park Service from the Civil War Preservation Trust.

The properties contained within the School House Ridge North site were previously known as the Moler, Rau, Fritts and Ott Farms, while a wooded area in the northwest corner is the former site of a Jellystone Campground. Part of the landscape comprises the western half of the former Prospect Hill Farm, owned by the Moler family in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The property is significant for its involvement in military history (1861-1865), specifically the role it played during the Battle of Harpers Ferry. This confrontation, which transpired between September 13 and 15, 1862, resulted in the largest surrender of federal troops recorded for the entire Civil War.

School House Ridge North is also significant for its agricultural history (1780-1868), which is indicative of the agrarian landscape established by many early European settlers. Much of School House Ridge North today still consists of cleared and regularly used farmland, as it did in the past. Trees and a limited understory line the edges of wide open fields, breaking up the broad, rolling vistas. A large patch of woods in the northwestern corner of the property is concentrated around the old Jellystone Campground and Harpers Ferry Caverns area. In the southeastern corner, a small clump of trees separates the Ott Farmhouse and Barn from the surrounding farmland, and also conceals the old Moler Barn foundations and family cemetery. Thus the site has two primary landscapes, characterized as woodland and farmland.

Although its date of construction excludes it from contributing to the cultural landscape of School House Ridge North, the Fritts barn is an important and unique structure whose architectural style is regionally significant. As the first James Way barn to be constructed in West Virginia, this building will be reevaluated in the future as an important architectural resource.

Site Plan

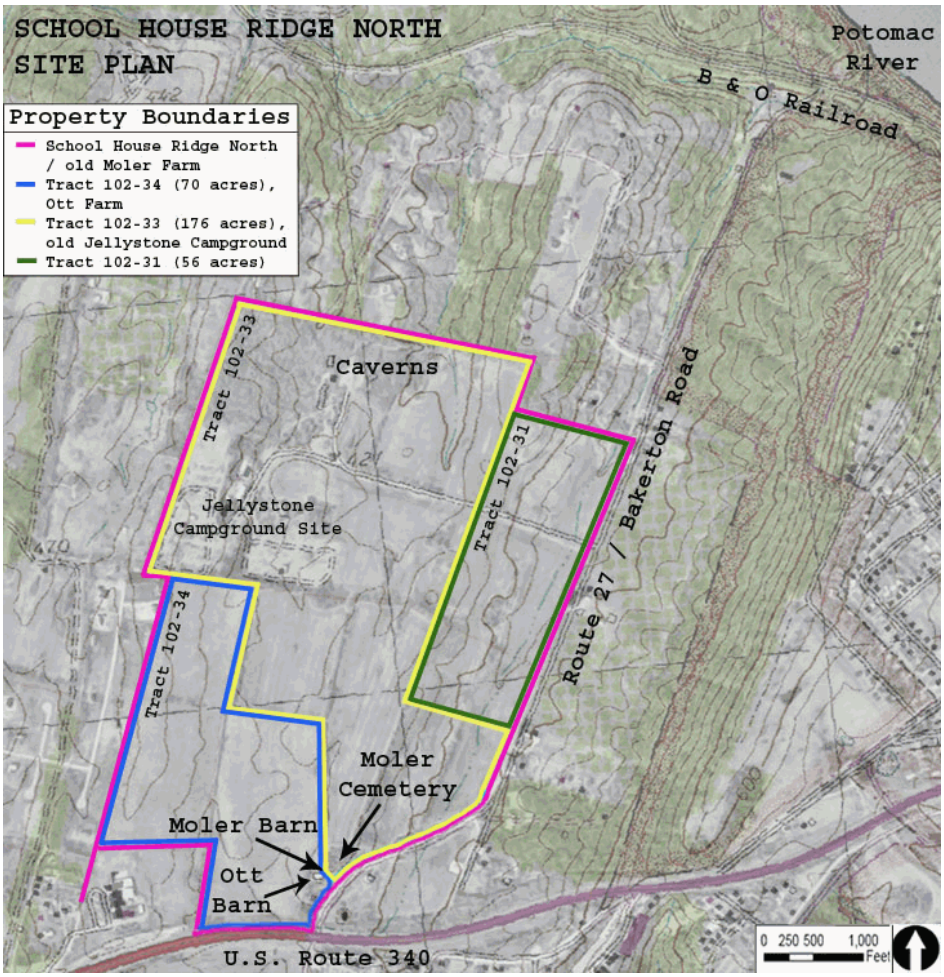


Figure 1. Site Plan for School House Ridge North, showing property boundaries and major features. The background is an aerial photograph from the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park (HAFE) archives (2000) and a USGS topographic map (1980s).

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name:	School House Ridge North
Property Level:	Landscape
CLI Identification Number:	975428
Parent Landscape:	975428

Park Information

Park Name and Alpha Code:	Harpers Ferry National Historical Park -HAFE
Park Organization Code:	3850
Park Administrative Unit:	Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

CLI Hierarchy Description

School House Ridge North, alternatively known as Furnace Hill or a portion of School House Hill, was identified as a landscape significant to Harpers Ferry National Historical Park in 1989. Today this park stands as a unique testament to American history and spans multiple periods of historic significance, interpreting both urban and rural landscapes through the use of private and public resources. Together with the other landscapes in and around Harpers Ferry, School House Ridge North contributes to the overall significance of the park, primarily with respect to its role during the Civil War.

The School House Ridge North cultural landscape is identified by Jefferson County, West Virginia Tax Map Number 9, Parcels 36 and 37.1, and Map Number 6, Parcels 7, 7.2 and 7.3. It currently consists of 126.74 acres, with an additional 176.32 acres administered by the Civil War Preservation Trust which is due to be transferred to National Park Service ownership in the near future. Once this occurs, the total land area of the site will measure some 304 acres, together comprising the northern portion of what is known as School House Ridge, a feature stretching north to south about 2 ½ miles west of Harpers Ferry and split in two halves by U.S. Route 340. To the north, this ridge terminates around the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, while to the south it extends all the way to Millville and the banks of the Shenandoah River.

Concurrence Status

Inventory Status: Complete

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

This CLI represents a continuation of the documentation of the landscapes at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park (HAFE). Both primary and secondary sources were consulted, and resources from inside as well as outside of the National Park Service were utilized. Archival research was conducted at the Berkeley County Historical Society, the Jefferson County Courthouse, the National Archives and Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. Several interviews were also conducted with relevant authorities on the property. In-depth site investigations were conducted by the National Capital Region Cultural Landscape Program (CLP) for the Analysis and Evaluation section.

The report was completed over the course of 2008 by National Capital Region's Emily Donaldson, Landscape Historian. The following Harpers Ferry National Historical Park staff provided valuable insight during the inventory process: Dennis Frye, Chief of Interpretation; Steve Lowe, Landscape Architect; Bill Hebb, Natural Resource Manager; Nancy Hatcher, Librarian; Richard Raymond, Museum Curator; and Andrew Lee, Archaeologist. Key support was also provided by the staff of the National Capital Region, including Darwina Neal, Chief of Cultural Resource Preservation Services; Maureen Joseph, Historical Landscape Architect; Chris Stevens and Martha Temkin, CLI Coordinators; Joe Cook, Realty Specialist; and David Lowe, Historian. Lastly, special thanks is owed to the following interview correspondents: Charlie and Jeffrey Moler, John E. Ott, Nancy Hockensmith, and Annette van Hilst.

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence: Yes

Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence: 08/20/2008

National Register Concurrence: Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination

Date of Concurrence Determination: 08/28/2008

National Register Concurrence Narrative:

The State Historic Preservation Officer for West Virginia concurred with the findings of the School House Ridge North Cultural Landscape Inventory on August 28, 2008, in accordance with Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act. It should be noted that the "National Register Eligibility Concurrence Date" refers to this Section 110 Concurrence and not the date of listing on the National Register.

Concurrence Graphic Information:

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
National Capital Region
1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20242

August 15, 2008

Memorandum

To: Cultural Landscapes Inventory Coordinator, National Capital Regi

From: Deputy Acting State Historic Preservation Officer, West Virginia

Subject: Statement of Concurrence, School House Ridge North Cultural Landscapes Inventory

I, Susan Pierce, West Virginia Deputy Acting State Historic Preservation Officer, concur with the findings of the School House Ridge North CLI as submitted on August 15, 2008.

Susan M Pierce

Susan Pierce
West Virginia
Acting State Historic Preservation Officer

8/28/08
Date



Letter of concurrence from the West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office, dated August 28, 2008.

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
National Capital Region
1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20242

June 26, 2008

Memorandum:

To: Regional Historical Landscape Architect, National Capital Region

From: Superintendent, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

Subject: Statement of Concurrence, School House Ridge North Cultural Landscape Inventor

Gayleen M. Boyd, Acting
I, ~~Donald Campbell~~, Superintendent of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, concur with the finding of the Cultural Landscape Inventory for School House Ridge North including the following specific components:

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: Must Be Preserved and Maintained

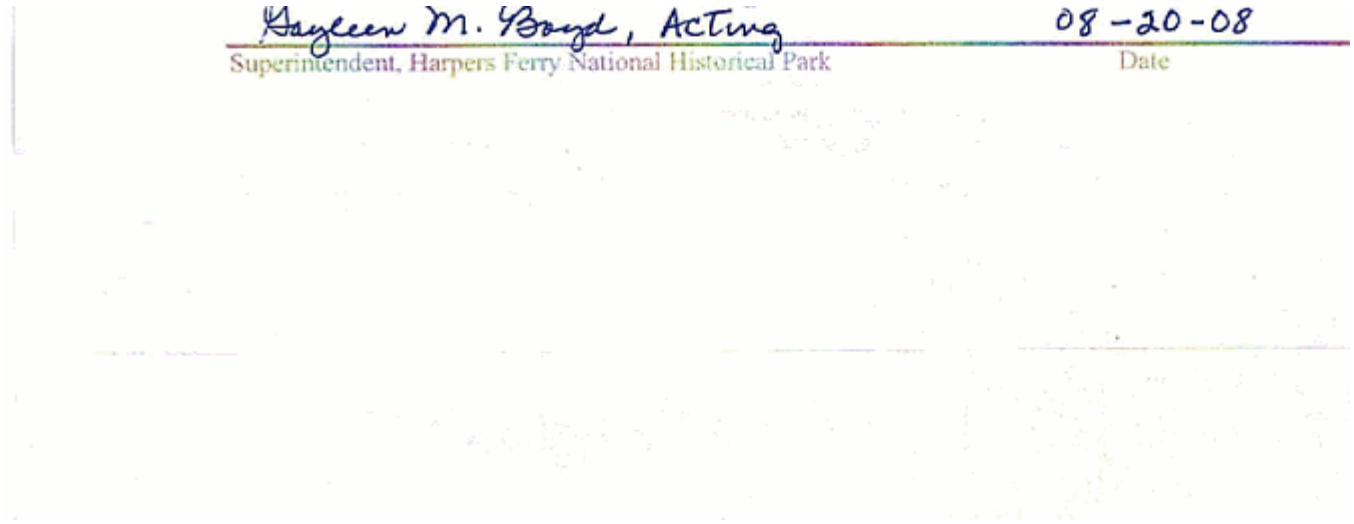
CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Fair

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deteriorat by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved a can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required t maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natur and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, th cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character defining elements, will cause the inventor unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaini historical and natural values.

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory for School House Ridge North is hereby approved and accepted.



Concurrence letter from Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, dated August 20, 2008.

Geographic Information & Location Map

Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

School House Ridge North encompasses Jefferson County, West Virginia Tax Map Number 9, Parcels 36 and 37.1, and Map Number 6, Parcels 7, 7.2 and 7.3. It consists of roughly 300 acres, as shown on the map provided.

State and County:

State: WV

County: Jefferson County

Size (Acres): 304.00

Boundary UTMS:

Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Point
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	18
UTM Easting:	855,378
UTM Northing:	14,295,196
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Point
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	18
UTM Easting:	857,717
UTM Northing:	14,294,544
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Point
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	18
UTM Easting:	857,553
UTM Northing:	14,294,175
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Point
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	18
UTM Easting:	858,393
UTM Northing:	14,293,854
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000

Type of Point:	Point
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	18
UTM Easting:	857,191
UTM Northing:	14,291,406
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Point
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	18
UTM Easting:	855,532
UTM Northing:	14,290,258
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Point
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	18
UTM Easting:	854,639
UTM Northing:	14,290,330
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
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Datum:	NAD 83
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UTM Easting:	854,758
UTM Northing:	14,290,929
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Point
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	18

UTM Easting:	853,581
UTM Northing:	14,290,179
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
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Datum:	NAD 83
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UTM Easting:	854,503
UTM Northing:	14,293,139

Location Map:

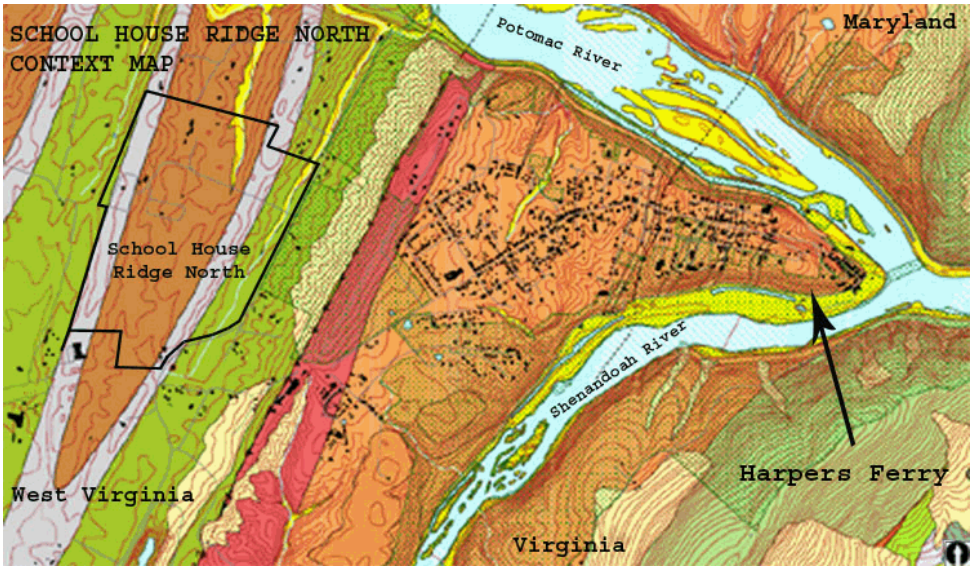


Figure 2. Location Map showing School House Ridge North and Harpers Ferry, using an annotated geological map from the USGS website, 2008, <http://ngmdb.usgs.gov> (2000).

Management Unit: HAFE

Tract Numbers: The Land Tract Numbers for School House Ridge North are 102-34, 102-33 and 102-31.

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Must be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 08/20/2008

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

School House Ridge North is due to be included in the National Register Nomination for the School House Ridge Battlefield as the location of the Union's final surrender to Major General Jackson during the Battle of Harpers Ferry, on the morning of September 15, 1862. The Management Category Date records the day this CLI was approved by the HAFE Superintendent.

Agreements, Legal Interest, and Access

Management Agreement:

Type of Agreement: Special Use Permit

Management Agreement Explanatory Narrative:

This Long Term Special Use Permit began on 6/16/2008 and ends 6/16/2013. It allows Ward Zigler of Zigler, Inc. to use 48 acres of School House Ridge North for cropland and hayfields, and is part of the National Park Service's program to maintain the historic agrarian landscape of this Civil War battlefield.

NPS Legal Interest:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Explanatory Narrative:

The National Park Service acquired School House Ridge North in three parts. Tract 102-31, or 56 acres, was acquired fee simple from the Civil War Preservation Trust in 2003 (Jefferson County Deed Book 974, Page 434). Tract 102-34, or 70.74 acres, was acquired fee simple from the estate of Blanche E. Ott and Elmer Ott for $2,475,900 in 2005 (Jefferson County Deed Book 1016, Page 675). Tract 102-33, or 176.32 acres, was acquired by the Civil War Preservation Trust in 2002. Its full administration is still in the process of being transferred to the National Park Service (Jefferson County Deed Book 961, Page 219).

Public Access:

Type of Access: No Access Currently

Explanatory Narrative:

At present, there is limited access to the 56-acre tract (Tract 102-31) of School House Ridge North. A visitor parking lot and vault toilet have been constructed here, but "No Trespassing" signs remain posted along State Route 27. Access to the site is pending the full transfer of administrative control over the middle parcel of the site from the Civil War Preservation Trust to the National Park Service.

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? Yes

Adjacent Lands Description:

School House Ridge North is today surrounded by privately owned land, with the exception of a parcel across Route 27. This land, or Tract 102-28, is known as the Bolivar Heights/School House Ridge Skirmish Site, and contributes to the historic significance of School House Ridge North. The western slopes of Bolivar Heights once composed the other half of the historic Moler property known as Prospect Hill Farm, and also served as the ridge on which the Union forces faced off against the Confederates to the west, during the Battle of Harpers Ferry (see Figure 1).

Just to the south of this tract is a privately owned portion of the west side of Bolivar Heights. This tract is partly wooded and borders U.S. Route 340. During the Civil War, it was owned by William Strider and had two structures on it. Considering the frequent views of this area from both School House Ridge North and Bolivar Heights, it would be prudent to secure conservation easements on this parcel in order to safeguard it against commercial, residential or industrial development. If fee simple acquisition funds become available, appropriating the property should be evaluated either in conjunction with, or in place of, easement acquisition.

A similar course of action should be strongly considered for the small, wooded tract of land in the northeast corner of School House Ridge. Like the open farmland it borders to the south and west, military action probably took place here in September of 1862, during the Battle of Harpers Ferry. The home of Daniel Moler, one of the historic School House Ridge North farmers, is also located on this tract and was inhabited by Moler during the Civil War.

One final consideration is the land on the southeast corner of the property, located between the old alignment of Route 27 and its current route toward the intersection with U.S. 340. Here stands an old brick farmhouse which belonged to the Fritts family during the twentieth century. In the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this structure functioned in conjunction with an old horse barn that once stood on the foundations of the Moler Barn. This house is now a privately owned property located across Route 27 from the privately owned Ott family home, just outside the boundaries of School House Ridge North. Securing a conservation easement on the parcel where it stands is also worth considering, due to its location in the middle of School House Ridge and close proximity to the Civil War skirmish site.

Preservation of this historic landscape becomes an ever more pressing issue as the region is drawn into the fold of the Washington-Baltimore metropolitan area. Developers have increasingly focused on this area as a prime spot for subdivisions, as evidenced by the housing developments to the north and west of School House Ridge North. Close attention should be paid to any disruptions of historic views and vistas caused by these constructions and the continuing development of the region.



Figure 3. View of School House Ridge North from Bolivar Heights, looking west (CLP, June 2008). Note the rolling landscape and thick woods of the heights. The NPS recently cleared this vista to provide the historic views to School House Ridge.

National Register Information

Significance Criteria: A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history

Criteria Considerations: D -- A cemetery

Period of Significance:

Time Period: AD 1861 - 1865

Historic Context Theme: Shaping the Political Landscape

Subtheme: The Civil War

Facet: Battles In The North And South

Time Period: AD 1784 - 1868

Historic Context Theme: Developing the American Economy

Subtheme: Agriculture

Facet: Animal Husbandry (Cattle, Horses, Sheep, Hogs, Poultry)

Other Facet: Large-Scale Commercial Agriculture (Crops)

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category: Military

Area of Significance Subcategory: None

Area of Significance Category: Agriculture

Area of Significance Subcategory: None

Statement of Significance:

Since the existing National Register nominations for Harpers Ferry National Historical Park do not address the history and extant landscape features at School House Ridge North, it is recommended that an updated nomination be prepared (see National Register Information section of this report). Application of the National Register for Historic Places Criteria for Evaluation to the cultural landscape at School House Ridge North reveals that it is significant under Criterion A in the area of military

history, due to its role in the Battle of Harpers Ferry in September of 1862, which constituted the largest surrender of Union forces during the entire Civil War. Notwithstanding the division of School House Ridge North into several parcels of land since then, this site has been spared from the growing residential and commercial development of the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan region, unlike many of the other historic farms in the area. As a result, this parcel retains a high degree of integrity as a rural landscape, and is also significant under Criterion A for its association with the agricultural development of the Shenandoah Valley between 1784 and 1868.

Chronology & Physical History

Cultural Landscape Type and Use

Cultural Landscape Type: Historic Site
Vernacular

Current and Historic Use/Function:

Primary Historic Function: Agricultural Field

Primary Current Use: Agricultural Field

Other Use/Function	Other Type of Use or Function
Battle Site	Historic
Agricultural Field	Both Current And Historic
Cemetery	Historic
Agricultural Outbuilding	Both Current And Historic
Livestock	Historic
Recreation/Culture-Other	Historic
Automobile	Both Current And Historic
Scenic Landscape-Other	Current
Parking Area	Current

Current and Historic Names:

Name	Type of Name
School House Ridge North	Current
School House Ridge	Both Current And Historic
School House Hill	Historic
Furnace Hill	Historic

Ethnographic Study Conducted: No Survey Conducted

Chronology:

Year	Event	Annotation
11000 - 8000 BC	Inhabited	Mid-Atlantic region is initially inhabited by early Paleoindians.
1200 - 500 BC	Inhabited	Earliest Potomac Valley pottery deposits to date are discovered in Harpers Ferry.
AD 1550 - 1575	Colonized	The Native Americans of Algonquian linguistic stock living in the lower Shenandoah Valley become inundated and dominated by the Susquehannocks.
AD 1600 - 1700	Exploited	Throughout this century, the Shenandoah Valley is used to hunt deer and elk by the Tuscaroras and Shawnees, who erect temporary villages of bark huts, and as a war zone by the Delaware and Catawba tribes.
AD 1669	Explored	First European to visit the Shenandoah Valley, Jon Lederer, explores the area for Governor Sir William Berkeley.
AD 1733	Settled	Peter Stephens is the first settler to live at Harpers Ferry.
AD 1734	Settled	Israel Friend settles land two miles west of Harpers Ferry and begins mining ore near the future location of the Keeptryst Furnace.
AD 1744	Purchased/Sold	Treaty over the Shenandoah Valley is signed between settlers and the Iroquois, transferring the land to Virginians in exchange for compensation.
AD 1745	Purchased/Sold	Lord Fairfax confirmed as the owner of land in Shenandoah Valley, including Jefferson County area.

AD 1747	Purchased/Sold	Robert Harper buys the future property and ferry business of Harpers Ferry from Peter Stephens.
AD 1748	Destroyed	First recorded flood at Harpers Ferry apparently drives Robert Harper from his cabin on the riverbank.
AD 1751	Settled	Robert Harper obtains a patent from Lord Fairfax for 125 acres at future location of Harpers Ferry.
AD 1753	Destroyed	In another giant flood of Harpers Ferry, pumpkins are seen washing down the river from nearby Indian villages.
AD 1754	Purchased/Sold	Lord Fairfax awards a land grant of 400 acres to Joseph McCamish, on the northwest corner of present-day School House Ridge North.
AD 1755	Purchased/Sold	Lord Fairfax awards a land grant of 400 acres to Thomas Maybury, in the northeast corner of present-day School House Ridge North and both sides of the current Bakerton Road.
AD 1756	Purchased/Sold	Lord Fairfax awards a land grant of 407 acres to Thomas Goldsberry, to the north and south of present-day U.S. 340
AD 1762	Purchased/Sold	Lord Fairfax awards a land grant in the vicinity of Bakerton, north of School House Ridge North, to George Adam Mohler (or Moler).
	Purchased/Sold	Lord Fairfax awards a land grant of 113 acres to Humphrey Keyes, in the southeast corner of present-day School House Ridge North and just north of the current U.S. 340.
AD 1763	Established	The town later known as Harpers Ferry is given the name of "Shenandoah Falls of Mr. Harper's Ferry" by the Virginia General Assembly.
	Purchased/Sold	John Ballendine sells 100 acres in the vicinity of the Ott Farm on School House Ridge North to John Semple.
AD 1766	Purchased/Sold	Joseph McCamish sells 400 acres in the vicinity of School House Ridge North to John Semple.
AD 1784	Purchased/Sold	Lord Fairfax awards a land grant of 297 acres to George Adam Moler.

AD 1799	Built	Construction begins on Harpers Ferry Armory, the nation`s second federal armory.
AD 1801	Established	Jefferson County is formed from Berkeley County.
AD 1805	Altered	Harpers Ferry is described as a post office and fifteen houses.
AD 1807	Memorialized	John Moler, Sr. dies and is entombed under a stone in the Moler family cemetery.
AD 1810	Altered	The town of Harpers Ferry now includes a tavern, library, and several stores and has a population of around seven hundred people.
AD 1824	Built	First bridge is built over the Potomac River by the Wager family, heirs to Robert Harper.
AD 1825	Established	The town of Bolivar is recognized by the Virginia Assembly, with a population of 270.
AD 1828	Built	Construction commences on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal.
AD 1831	Paved	The Charles Town Turnpike is graded and paved with macadam.
AD 1833	Developed	Chesapeake and Ohio Canal opens up in Jefferson County.
AD 1836	Developed	Baltimore and Ohio Railroad opens up in Jefferson County.
AD 1837	Built	Baltimore and Ohio Railroad opens its own bridge across the Potomac River, causing the old Wager family bridge to close two years later.
AD 1846	Purchased/Sold	Having acquired it at an unknown date from his father John, Daniel Moler sells 28 acres of land near the Old Furnace to Lydia Strider. Eighteen of these acres were cleared.

AD 1847	Built	The Harpers Ferry & Shenandoah Manufacturing Company constructs a cotton factory on Virginius Island, the first of a series of factories established there.
AD 1848	Developed	By this year the United States government has constructed four school houses on the public lands around Harpers Ferry.
AD 1850	Altered	Harpers Ferry is documented as having 40 businesses in operation, up from only seven in 1825, and Virginius Island alone boasts a population of 182.
AD 1851	Established	The town of Harpers Ferry is incorporated.
AD 1852	Destroyed	The worst recorded flood since European settlement hits Harpers Ferry and causes severe damage to waterpower dams on both the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers.
AD 1859	Altered	Virginius Island hosts a cotton factory, flour mill, sawmill, machine shop, iron foundry, blacksmith shop and carriage factory.
	Military Operation	John Brown raids the Harpers Ferry armory in an effort to trigger a slave uprising.
AD 1860	Developed	The towns of Harpers Ferry and Bolivar reach a population of 3,000 inhabitants.
	Established	Abraham Lincoln is elected president.
AD 1861	Established	Lincoln calls for troops to defend against the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter, prompting the State of Virginia to secede from the Union. The U.S. Army withdraws from Harpers Ferry after setting fire to the Arsenal and destroying some 15,000 arms.
	Military Operation	Confederate Lieutenant Colonel Turner Ashby defends Harpers Ferry`s wheat reserves against an attack of Union troops under Colonel John W. Geary.
AD 1862	Planned	West Virginia first proposes statehood separate from the Old Dominion state of Virginia, in June. The new state includes 50 counties, to which Berkeley and Jefferson Counties are added later.

	Military Operation	In September Maj. General Thomas J. “Stonewall” Jackson’s force of 28,000 rout the Federals defending Harpers Ferry under Colonel Dixon S. Miles. It results in the largest capture of U.S. troops throughout the whole war, totaling 12,419 men and occurring in the vicinity of School House Ridge North.
AD 1863	Established	State of West Virginia is officially established on June 20, becoming the 35th state of the Union.
AD 1864	Destroyed	General Sheridan sweeps through the Shenandoah Valley, wreaking enormous ruin on local agriculture.
AD 1865	Military Operation	Colonel John Singleton Mosby’s Partisan Rangers attack the pro-Union Loudoun Rangers of Loudoun County at Keyes’ Switch, or what is now known as Millville.
	Military Operation	The Civil War ends with a Union victory.
	Established	The towns of Harpers Ferry and Bolivar are consolidated into a single governing body.
AD 1867	Established	The Storer Normal School opens its doors for the first time, welcoming students of all races, sexes and religions.
AD 1868	Purchased/Sold	Daniel Moler seeks foreclosure on his land and auctions off his private property on School House Ridge North, or Prospect Hill Farm, which comprised 266 acres.
	Purchased/Sold	Samuel Howell Brown acquires the old Moler farmland on School House Ridge North, totaling 266 acres.
AD 1869	Purchased/Sold	The United States government auctions off most of its land in Harpers Ferry to private owners, after decades of dominating Lower Town.
	Altered	The Storer Normal School expands and is renamed Storer College.
AD 1870	Memorialized	Captain John Moler dies and is entombed beneath a stone in the Moler family cemetery.
	Destroyed	The rapidly rising waters of a Harpers Ferry flood trap Virginius Island residents in their homes and claim 42 lives.

AD 1871	Established	The State of Virginia launches a lawsuit against West Virginia for the recovery of Jefferson and Berkeley Counties, but fails.
AD 1872	Established	The Corporation of Harpers Ferry is once again established as an independent town.
AD 1876	Purchased/Sold	Rudolph Rau acquires Prospect Hill Farm, totaling 266 acres, from Samuel Howell Brown.
AD 1877	Destroyed	The Shenandoah Canal to the south of Harpers Ferry is forced to close and Congress awards abatements on flood-damaged properties.
AD 1880	Built	The 20-acre Island Park opens along the B& O Railroad, on an island in the Potomac River north of Harpers Ferry.
AD 1882	Explored	E.H. Dick discovers the Harpers Ferry Caverns on land owned by Rudolph Rau.
AD 1883	Altered	Rau`s Cave Company is incorporated and launches plans to convert the Harpers Ferry Caverns into a summer resort.
AD 1884	Memorialized	Daniel Moler, Esq. dies and is entombed beneath a stone in the Moler family cemetery.
AD 1889	Developed	The Shenandoah Pulp Company begins operating out of Harpers Ferry.
	Destroyed	Another record-setting flood in Harpers Ferry drives the Child & McCreight flour mill out of business.
AD 1896	Purchased/Sold	Amelia Rau, widow of Rudolph Rau, sells the 170-acre Prospect Hill Farm comprising the farmland to the west of Bakerton Road.
AD 1901	Purchased/Sold	Amelia Rau conveys the northern portion of Tract 102-31 (Parcel 7.3) to Cassandra C. Dittmeyer.
	Developed	The Standard Lime and Stone Company opens its Millville quarry on School House Ridge South, to the south of Route 340.

AD 1903	Altered	Improvements are made to the Charles Town Turnpike, while some of the tollhouses along this route are sold.
AD 1910	Memorialized	Civil War veterans erect a Confederate Veterans Monument on School House Ridge, along Route 27 south of U.S. 340.
AD 1921	Altered	Additional improvements are made to the Charles Town Turnpike, including the insertion of fill near the Allstadt Tollgate.
AD 1922	Purchased/Sold	The A.D. Goetz Company conveys the southern portion of Tract 102-31 (or the northeast corner of Parcel 37.1) to John E. Fritts.
AD 1924	Destroyed	C & O Canal closes after severe damages are inflicted by a giant flood.
AD 1926	Built	John E. Fritts constructs the county's most modern dairy barn, the first James Way barn in West Virginia and the Eastern Panhandle.
	Destroyed	A severe hail storm destroys wheat, corn and apple harvests in and around Bolivar.
	Purchased/Sold	John E. Fritts purchases Tract 102-34, measuring roughly 190 acres.
AD 1928	Altered	The Charles Town Turnpike is paved with macadam and oiled.
	Maintained	The towns of Harpers Ferry and Bolivar vote against the proposal to become a single municipality.
AD 1933	Altered	The Standard Lime and Stone Company expands, adding a rock wool plant to its Millville quarry.
AD 1935	Established	Harpers Ferry is recognized as a National Historic Landmark under the Historic Sites Act of 1935.
AD 1936	Destroyed	Record high flood hits Harpers Ferry, reaching a height of 36.5 feet.

AD 1943	Purchased/Sold	Blanche E. Ott and Elmer Ott convey the northeastern portion of Tract 102-34, Parcel 37.1 and the sourthern portion of Tract 102-31 to Robert E. Fritts.
AD 1944	Established	President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorizes the recognition of Harpers Ferry as a National Historic Monument, on June 30.
AD 1947	Purchased/Sold	Cassandra C. Dittmeyer conveys the northern portion of Tract 102-31 (Parcel 7.3) to Ernest and Virginia Hockensmith.
AD 1950	Purchased/Sold	Ernest and Virginia Hockensmith convey the northern portion of Tract 102-31 (Parcel 7.3) to J. Swagler and Mabel Henkle.
AD 1963	Established	President John F. Kennedy signs legislation to create Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.
AD 1967	Land Transfer	Elizabeth and Paul Love will the northern portion of Tract 102-31 (Parcel 7.3) to Clara Long.
AD 1969	Established	Jellystone Campground, Ltd. is founded.
	Purchased/Sold	Robert E. Fritts conveys Parcels 7 and 7.2 to Harpers Ferry Caverns, Inc.
	Purchased/Sold	H.B. and Clara Long convey the northern portion of Tract 102-31 (Parcel 7.3) to Harpers Ferry Caverns, Inc.
AD 1973	Built	Construction begins on a Yogi Bear`s Jellystone Camp Resort on 70 acres in Harpers Ferry, on School House Ridge North.
AD 1974	Established	The Harpers Ferry Jellystone Camp Resort officially opens for business.
AD 1976	Purchased/Sold	Harpers Ferry Caverns, Inc. sells Parcels 7 and 7.2 (91.68 acres) and the northern portion of Tract 102-31 (Parcel 7.3) to Dixie D. Kilham.
AD 1978	Neglected	The Harpers Ferry Jellystone Camp Resort on School House Ridge North is closed down due to financial difficulties and a Civil Action lawsuit. The associated portable property is sold on site.

AD 1979	Established	Harpers Ferry becomes a Historic District.
AD 1980	Purchased/Sold	Robert W. Fritts and Dorothy Z. Fritts convey Parcel 37.1, including the northeastern corner of Parcel 37.1 which forms a portion of Tract 102-31, to Dixie D. Kilham.
AD 1989	Purchased/Sold	Thermo Electric Company, Inc. conveys the southern portion of Tract 102-31 (66.81 acres) to Dixie D. Kilham.
AD 2002	Land Transfer	Dixie D. Kilham wills Tract 102-33 to the Civil War Preservation Trust.
AD 2003	Land Transfer	Civil War Preservation Trust transfers Tract 102-31 (56 acres) to the National Park Service.
AD 2004	Expanded	In accordance with Public Law 108-307, the acreage owned by the National Park Service at School House Ridge North is included in the boundary expansion for Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.
AD 2005	Established	National Park Service acquires 70 acres of the Ott Farm, a crucial and central piece of the School House Ridge North property.
AD 2007	Established	The site of Jackson`s 1862 siege of Harpers Ferry makes the Civil War Preservation Trust`s list of the nation`s ten most endangered Civil War battlefields.

Physical History:

11,000 BC to 1763 AD

PREHISTORY AND EARLY HISTORIC PERIOD

Prehistory

School House Ridge North is located in the Harpers Ferry District of Jefferson County, West Virginia (Figures 1 and 2). Initial habitation of this area is believed to have taken place between 11,000 and 8,000 BC. Groups called Paleoindians originally lived in the Shenandoah Valley as territorial semi-nomadic hunters and gatherers. Organized into bands, their seasonal base camps had sites devoted to hunting, butchering, fishing and quarrying. In the 10,000 years that followed, these patterns of habitation and use gradually altered to fit the changing local climate and environment. Temperatures in the area warmed and precipitation increased, causing the replacement of grasslands by thick forests that harbored small animals, moose, and deer, rather than the larger game animals of earlier periods (Gilbert 1983:125). These forests consisted of white oak (Quercus alba), red oak (Quercus rubra), hickory (Carya ovata), poplar (Populus sp.), ash (Fraxinus sp.), and black walnut (Juglans nigra) (Bushong 1941:3).

The earliest pottery to be recovered in the Potomac Valley dates to 1200-500 BC, and was found at Harpers Ferry. In addition to ceramic vessels, stone artifacts, fire-cracked rock features and three postholes were uncovered in Lower Town, indicating concentrated prehistoric use of this area (Gilbert 1983:125). The strategic confluence of the great Shenandoah and Potomac rivers has proved an enduring attraction ever since. During the early historic period, American Indians belonging to the Algonquian linguistic group migrated here and formed fortified villages that came in contact, and sometimes conflict, with neighboring tribes from the Iroquoian linguistic stock (Potter 1993:126). Then, sometime between 1550 and 1575, the Susquehannocks came to the lower Susquehanna Valley and soon became the region's dominant ethnic group (Potter 1993:174-5).

The tribes who lived in this area in the sixteenth century did not build permanent villages. Instead they used the region as a highway and a place for raiding and exchange. As a result, at the time of European contact around 1600, the Shenandoah Valley lacked any firmly established indigenous settlements, and had not supported any settled inhabitants for nearly 100 years (Mitchell 1972:466; Potter 1993). Instead, the area continued to be used as a hunting ground and trade throughway by local tribes. The Five Nations Iroquois League also used the valley as a route to attack the Catawbas and Cherokees to the south (Jennings 1984:278, 354). Indeed, the word "Potomac" is derived from the Algonquian word for trading place, or where something is bought. It originated in the river's estuary, where early white men traded with indigenous inhabitants for new and foreign goods. During the seventeenth century the region served as a conflict zone for the Delaware and Catawba tribes. The Tuscarora and Shawnee tribes meanwhile erected temporary villages of bark huts here, and continued to hunt deer and elk (Gilbert 1983:125).

European Arrival

The first European to visit the Shenandoah Valley was Jon Lederer, an explorer commissioned by Governor Sir William Berkeley to investigate the area in three expeditions between 1669 and 1670. Several decades passed before the first map of the upper Potomac area was created by Swiss visitor Francis Louis Michel, in 1701 (Bushong 1941:10). In 1649 Charles II of England had set aside this entire tract of land, known as the Northern Neck Proprietary and comprising more than five million acres, for two Culpeper family members in honor of faithful services rendered to the crown (Brown 1965:26-35). It passed into the sole ownership of Lord Culpeper in 1688, and was eventually transferred to his grandson Thomas, the sixth Lord Fairfax, who claimed the estate in 1736 and was officially confirmed as the owner in 1745 (Gilbert 1983:59; Brown 1965:80-100).

Soon Lord Fairfax was traveling to Virginia to survey his new land, establish his rights over it, and better deal with land acquisitions in the area. By the 1730s, growing numbers of European settlers were flocking to the Shenandoah Valley (Hofstra 1985:42-3; Cunz 1948:48-59). Local population growth was meanwhile exerting increasing pressure on use of the area as a highway for Indian travel, a matter which had sparked disputes between white settlers and Native Americans since 1722. A treaty over the Shenandoah Valley was finally signed in Lancaster, Pennsylvania in 1744, by which the Iroquois deeded the land to Virginians in exchange for compensation. The Great Warriors Path that used to run through this area was gradually relocated to a less populated area to the west (Jennings 1984:354-62).

Meanwhile, many settlers rolled south along the course of another old Indian trail, the Monocacy Path, as they followed the Great Philadelphia Wagon Road into the Shenandoah Valley from Pennsylvania. Putting the contentious and expensive land prospects of Pennsylvania behind them, they sought the relatively free and peaceful properties further south. Virginia's Lieutenant Governor even offered incentives, hoping to have the settlers create a buffer between the settlements east of the Blue Ridge and the French and Indians to the west (Hofstra 1985:42-3; Hofstra 1986:34-5; Cunz 1948:48-59).

Settlers in Harpers Ferry

Among the newcomers to the area was a squatter who came to live at the confluence of the two rivers to trap, trade and operate a small ferry service. Peter Stephens settled at the so-called "point" in 1733 and built himself a log cabin known as The Hole, likely due to the fact that it stood at the lowest elevation in the state of West Virginia (Gilbert 1983:16, 59; Town of Harpers Ferry, 2008). A visitor named Robert Harper bought Stephens' ferry equipment, corn patch, and cabin in 1747 (Gilbert 1983:16, 59). The following year this land and all other tracts belonging to Fairfax were surveyed by County surveyor James Genn and his companions, including a youthful George Washington (Bushong 1941:17). As a result, Harper was compelled in 1751 to obtain a patent from Fairfax. This initial allotment included 125 acres of what was deemed "waste and ungranted land" at the junction of the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers (Gilbert 1983:16, 59).

Soon afterwards the colonies became embroiled in the French and Indian War, which lasted

from 1754 to 1763. For the first time, this conflict divided Native American alliances strictly along colonial lines, pitting the French against the British in a long familiar rivalry. It concluded by strengthening the British base of power throughout North America, at the cost of severe debt. Indeed, this financial position contributed heavily to Great Britain's strict taxation of the colonies in subsequent years. Meanwhile, by the end of the war, Native Americans had abandoned most of the region surrounding Harpers Ferry in favor of land further removed from settlers' reach, beyond the Alleghenies (Gilbert 1983:125).

In recognition of the community growing up in this unique spot, the Virginia General Assembly passed an act to establish the town of "Shenandoah Falls of Mr. Harper's Ferry" in 1763. Enterprising Europeans found the Harpers Ferry area rich in iron ore, and with dense woods that proved ideal for making charcoal. In 1734 a Quaker named Israel Friend had settled a large piece of land about two miles west of Harpers Ferry, becoming the first to mine iron ore in the area (Bushong 1941:82-3). A few decades later the same resources caught the eye of John Semple, a Scottish merchant who built the Keep Triste Furnace at the north end of School House Ridge in 1763 (Bushong 1941:82-3).

As it entered the second half of the eighteenth century, the Shenandoah Valley stood on the brink of dramatic social, political and environmental change, heralded by the advent of the new town. Up to this point, permanent occupation of the area had been limited and characterized by the fortified villages and temporary hunting settlements of Native American tribes, later replaced by the homes of a few enterprising European settlers. It can be deduced that during this time the vast wilderness and rolling hills of the area remained relatively unchanged from the way they had appeared for centuries, or since the replacement of the region's grasslands by forest. Yet just as this spot had drawn the earliest Native American traders to the river banks for exchange, so the confluence of the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers soon became a destination for a new wave of settlers.

1764 to 1859

SETTLEMENT AND EARLY NATIONAL PERIOD

Settlement of Harpers Ferry

In the second half of the eighteenth century Lord Fairfax struck a series of deals with capitalizing settlers in the Shenandoah Valley. Robert Harper officially obtained the right to operate a ferry service across the Potomac River to Maryland in 1751, and the following year acquired an additional 92 acres from Fairfax. As the ferry business thrived, Harper went on to build a house, flour mill and a sawmill along the Shenandoah River (Gilbert 1983:16, 59). Near School House Ridge North additional grants were awarded to: Joseph McCamish in 1754, for a tract of 400 acres; Thomas Maybury in 1755, for a tract of 400 acres; and Humphrey Keys in 1762, for a tract of 113 acres (Figure 4). Among these were George Adam Moler, who came to America from Scotland with his Swiss-born father, Ludwig Mohler, on August 29, 1730, and moved to Virginia from Lancaster, Pennsylvania in 1758. In 1784 he received a land grant from Lord Fairfax for 297 acres of land just north of the School House Ridge North study boundary, and thus began the legacy of Molers in the Harpers Ferry area (Berkeley County

Deed Book 6, Page 303). Due to the misspelling of his name, Mohler, on this land grant from Lord Fairfax, the family name thereafter became Moler. George was soon farming on his new land, probably rotating corn, oats or barley, wheat, clover and grass in a pattern known as "the cropping system," originally developed in southeastern Pennsylvania (Fletcher 1950:129-30).

In 1772 this portion of Frederick County became part of the new Berkeley County, likely named after Virginia Governor and British Baron Norborne Berkeley (www.polsci.wvu.edu/Berkeley/berhistory.html). The relatively high population of Scotch-Irish immigrants, or so-called Ulster Scots, who settled here helped to introduce the practice of droving livestock, brought from their Celtic homeland (McDonald and McWhiney 1975:156). Soon what had been a subsistence economy was one of specialized agricultural commodities, as the old Native American path along the Shenandoah Valley became a popular avenue for driving cattle and sheep north to Baltimore, Philadelphia and other cities (Mitchell 1972:478; Wilhelm 1967:333). Virginia quickly grew into one of the leaders in improving cattle breeds, while the Valley itself was known to be one of the state's best regions for cattle breeding (Gray 1933:840-7; Mitchell 1972:478).

With time, the high profits in livestock were supplemented by the cultivation of various crops, one of which was tobacco (Gray 1933:881). However, in contrast to other areas of Virginia, the fields of the Shenandoah Valley were characterized by the crop rotation and manuring practices of the Pennsylvania settlers. This allowed for better nourished, balanced soils capable of producing more than their counterparts in the rest of the state (Craven 1926:85-6). Farms in this area also used primarily free labor to cultivate small and diverse plots of land, unlike other areas of Virginia (Craven 1926:158).

Encouraged by the abundance of their land and a frustration with Britain's high taxes and colonial control, the settlers living in the original thirteen colonies launched the Revolutionary War for independence in 1776, and won in 1781. George Adam Moler, Jr., served in the Continental Army at the age of 17 and survived the war to return home. His father, George Adam Moler, made his own contribution to the struggle for independence by supplying wheat to the army from Virginia during the Revolution (Charlie Moler, May 2008; Moler 1954:15).

Development of Harpers Ferry

Investigating the resources of Harpers Ferry in 1783, Thomas Jefferson remarked that the spot boasted "one of the most stupendous scenes in nature" (Jefferson 1954 [1789]:45). The town also continued to capture the attention of the new nation's president, George Washington. In the years before the Revolutionary War, Washington envisioned a great highway of commerce leading west to this spot, from the newly anointed capital city (Town of Harpers Ferry, 2008). Thus, when tensions rose after the war between France, Britain and the United States and Congress passed legislation in 1794 to establish armories, he advocated heavily for the town as a prime location for a new armory. By 1799 work had begun at Harpers Ferry on the nation's second federal armory (Shackel 1996:29). A year after Jefferson County, Virginia was formed from Berkeley County in 1801, the armory was producing muskets and rifles at its full capacity (Gilbert 1983:10, 44). With the help of a commission from Thomas Jefferson, Harpers Ferry

was even honored with the task of outfitting Lewis and Clark for their famous expedition, in 1803. The town provided the explorers with everything from tomahawks to rifles, and even a collapsible iron canoe (Brown 1968:30).

Though it went on to face myriad difficulties over the course of the 19th century, the Harpers Ferry Armory can take partial credit for the initial development of this small river junction town (Gilbert 1983:10, 44). In 1805 an observer described Harpers Ferry as merely a post office and about fifteen houses (Joseph Scott 1805). Only five years later, it boasted a tavern, library, several stores and a population of roughly seven hundred people (Noffsinger 1958:20). Horses grazed along the Shenandoah River, and homes clustered at the base of the town hill. By 1830, Lower Town had a population of 1,734 (Gilbert et al. 1993:3-28).

Outside of town, agriculture flourished and wheat became the most important agricultural product, overtaking tobacco as the region's dominant crop (Koons 2000:3). Rye and corn were also popular, while dairy farming and cattle breeding continued (National Park Service 2001). On School House Ridge North in 1793, Jacob Moler lived with two of his brothers, one slave, and five horses (Berkeley County Tax Records 1793:26). By 1810 African slaves comprised a full thirty percent of the newly formed Jefferson County, a figure which remained relatively stable through the Civil War (United States Census Bureau 1810). At the top of the hill outside Harpers Ferry, the town of Bolivar reached a population of 270 in 1825, and was officially recognized by the Virginia Assembly (Gilbert 1983:40).

As the geographic spread of resources grew, so the eager thirst of burgeoning capitalism encouraged transportation development in the area (Everhart 1952:22). In 1824 the Wager family, who were heirs to Robert Harper's property upon his death in 1782, ushered in a new age of connectivity with their construction of the first bridge over the Potomac River. They collected tolls from travelers until the bridge was torn down in 1839, following the construction of a new bridge by the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, in 1837 (Gilbert 1983:142). Trailing the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal by only a few years, the railroads linked Harpers Ferry with important cities throughout the Mid-Atlantic region (Bushong 1941:82-4). These new transportation opportunities in turn spurned local enterprises. By 1850 forty businesses were operating in Lower Town, and a year later Harpers Ferry was incorporated. In 1859 Virginius Island, strategically located in the middle of the rushing Shenandoah River, was home to a flour mill, sawmill, machine shop, iron foundry, blacksmith shop and carriage factory, and its population numbered more than 182 (Gilbert 1983:64, 85; Shackel 1996:39). Nearby, in the U.S. Rifle Works, John H. Hall developed the "uniformity principle" of interchangeable manufacture, which became the foundation for America's factory system (Gilbert et al. 1993:3-26; Gilbert 1983:64, 85). By 1860, Bolivar and Harpers Ferry had reached a hefty 3,000 inhabitants (Bushong 1941:17).

The Molers on School House Ridge North

The quiet hillside enclave of School House Ridge remained largely isolated from the bustling industrial influence of Bolivar and Harpers Ferry, thanks partly to the prominent geographical barrier of Bolivar Heights (Gilbert 1983:113). Farms along the ridge maintained their

connection to the rest of the county mainly through the north-south Old Furnace Road, also known as Flowing Spring Run or Bakerton Road, which linked the Charles Town Turnpike to Potomac Street. A grist mill located at the north end of Old Furnace Road, near where the Keep Triste Furnace stood, meant that grains could be easily processed and sent on to market at minimal transportation cost (National Park Service 2001). The east-west Charles Town Turnpike, or so-called Smithfield Road, was graded and paved with macadam in 1831 following the establishment of the Charles Town and Smithfield Turnpike Company. Combined with the new bridge across the Potomac River, this road helped to facilitate transport between Lower Town and the outlying farmland (Virginia Free Press [VFP] Vol. XXIII, No. 51, 1831; Gilbert et al. 1993:3-27). Later that year the construction of a tollhouse was proposed for the north side of the intersection with Bakerton Road (VFP Vol. XXIV, No. 39, 1831). The structure appears on maps of the area from the mid-nineteenth century, and was sometimes called the Allstadt Tollhouse or Tollgate, after the large Allstadt farm to the south. The building can be seen depicted in a drawing by James E. Taylor, as it appeared in 1864 (Figure 5).

Also shown in this drawing is the old Moler farmhouse, which stood to the west and was associated with a barn (not shown) just to the north. This house was originally known as "The Cottage," later the Poplar Cottage. Standing roughly where the Ott house is located today, the structure had more than one floor and a room, presumably a retreat perched high on a top floor, which was known as "The Crow's Nest" (Moler 1954:20). Born to George Adam Moler and his wife Eve in 1764, John Moler, III may have lived here with his brother Jacob during the latter years of the eighteenth century (Berkeley County Tax Records 1791, Book A, Page 48; Ibid. 1792, Page 28). In 1798 he acquired the property, totaling 164 acres, from Jacob and his wife Jane, who had originally inherited it from William Hall (Berkeley County Deed Book 15, Page 485). Though Jacob died in 1804 the families appear to have remained close, as his son, Jacob, eventually married John's daughter Ann (Moler 1954:20).

John and his family grew wheat and likely kept horses, in addition to other crops and livestock. He and his wife, Sarah Griffith, had at least ten children between 1791 and 1808. Judging from the existing evidence, almost all of them survived infancy. John died in 1807, at the age of 51. He was the first to be buried in the Moler Cemetery on School House Ridge North, which stood only about a hundred yards north of the Moler Barn (Moler 1954:20). His death was said to have been caused by a wheat beard that stuck stubbornly in his throat. A similar mishap was recounted of a Reading, Pennsylvania farmer in 1900:

"A beard of wheat has brought Sylvanus Augstadt, of Berks County, close to death's door. Mr. Augstadt is a well developed man, twenty-one years of age. While he was cutting wheat some time ago a wheat beard blew into his mouth and lodged in his throat. He failed to dislodge it, but continued at work, not thinking there was any danger. Finally his jaws became completely locked, his face and neck were much swollen, and his entire appearance changed. He suffered great pain, could take no food, except in liquid form, and his death was expected. A physician operated on his throat to-day and succeeded in removing the beard of wheat. He may recover" (New York Times, November 1, 1900).

This story gives an account of how John Moler, III may have died, less than 200 miles away

and a century before. Sarah outlived her husband and passed away in 1830, at the age of 63. She was buried near her husband in the family cemetery. Their two sons, John and Daniel, continued to farm here, likely cultivating such crops as wheat, rye and corn (Figure 6). While John's land ran along the north side of the Charles Town Turnpike, Daniel's 277-acre property was known as Prospect Hill Farm and was bisected by Old Furnace Road (Figure 7; National Park Service 2001).

John Moler, IV, also known as John G. Moler or "Captain" John, was born in 1791 and fought in the War of 1812. Commissioned as a Lieutenant on September 18, 1812, he commanded a Virginia Militia Detachment of Infantry from the 55th Regiment (Moler 1954:21). Presumably well-spoken, he later delivered a speech at a meeting for the war's survivors in Charles Town (VFP Vol. 47, No. 50, 1854). Indeed, Captain John appears to have been an upstanding citizen. He hosted meetings for the Methodist Episcopal Church at the family homestead, along the Charles Town Turnpike (VFP Vol. 47, No. 31, 1854). For a time he worked as the Sheriff of Jefferson County, and as a Justice of the Peace between 1843 and 1844 (Commonwealth of Virginia 1843). He also served in the Virginia General Assembly, and was the commissioner of the Presidential Election for Bolivar, in 1852. He was later elected President of the Valley Bank of Charles Town in 1858, President of the convention to nominate Jefferson County's candidates for the next House of Delegates in 1859, and in 1860 served as a magistrate for the local district court (VFP Vol. 51, No. 32, 1858; The Spirit of Jefferson Farmer's Advocate [SOJ] Vol. IX, No. 15, 1852; VFP Vol. 52, No. 16, 1859; Shepherdstown Register [SR], May 29, 1858; SR, June 2, 1860).

At home, John was a farmer and a family man. In 1830 he headed a household of five, including himself, his wife Hannah, and three daughters, in addition to ten slaves of various ages and sexes (United States Census Bureau, 1830). He married four times, first to Rachel Brown (d. 1829), then Hannah Brown (d. 1831), and third to Ruth Howell (d. 1836). His last wife was Mary E. Straith, who, according to the local paper, died of breast cancer in 1857 (Moler 1954:21; SOJ Vol. XLX, No. 42, 1934).

By 1850, at age 59, John's real estate was valued at $16,370 and he was supporting a family of eight, in addition to nine slaves. His daughter Ann was living with her parents on the farm, along with the daughter of her elder sister Emily Griffith and Samuel J. Taylor (United States Department of State, 1853). Emily may also have lived with her parents during the 1840s, since her infant daughter, Ann Reynolds Taylor, was buried in the family cemetery in 1843.

Like his father before him, John Moler lived in, or may have leased out, the Cottage along the Charles Town Turnpike. In the years before and during the Civil War, this structure was known as the Poplar Cottage and the farm itself was called The Poplars, perhaps due to the presence of an abundance of tulip poplars (Liriodendron tulipifera) in the vicinity (John E. Ott, Interview, May 12, 2008; see Figure 6).

John's younger brother, Daniel Moler, Esq., was a lawyer who appears to have held strong political views. As both a Whig and a member of Harpers Ferry's Tippecanoe Club, Daniel helped the campaign of General William Henry Harrison for President of the United States in

1841 (VFP Vol. 33, No. 36, 1840). A few years later he was noted in the local paper as being opposed to the administration and nomination of Martin Van Buren for President (VFP Vol. 29, No. 4, 1836).

Daniel was married three times and lost his first wife, Cornelia Moore, in 1848, when she was only 28. His second wife, Elizabeth Anderson, died in 1856, and the following year he wed Mary Jane Anderson. By 1860 the 58-year-old farmer had real estate valued at $15,125 and personal property with an estimated worth of $5,200. In addition to himself, Daniel's household that year included his wife, Mary Jane, and five daughters and four sons, as well as 13 slaves covering a broad range of age and sex (United States Census Bureau 1860). Two of his sons fought against each other in the Civil War, one in the Southern Army and the other in the Northern Army (Moler 1954:22). After the war, Daniel filed a lengthy war claim to protest the damages wrought on his property by Union troops during the conflict. He lived on into his eighties, and died in the spring of 1884 (VFP Vol. 50, No.10, 1857; SOJ Vol. XIX, No. 18, 1884).

Daniel lived in a house along the west side of Bakerton Road, which at this time was a dirt road also known as Flowing Spring Run (Taylor 1989 [1864]:46). The old farm house still stands today, just outside the northern boundary of School House Ridge North. According to Daniel, this building sat within a few hundred yards of the home of his brother, Robert Moler (Moler 1867). The latter was probably being leased from Daniel at the time, since Robert's home could be the structure depicted on Daniel's property to the east of the road in 1864 (see Figure 7). The presence of other Molers in the area is not a surprise, given their family history in Jefferson County. In the words of James E. Taylor: "the Molers were multitudinous in this section, as I discovered, who bobbed up serenely on hillside and in hollow the township o'er" (Taylor 1989 [1864]:211). During the nineteenth century, the family cemetery on School House Ridge North became the final resting place for many of those living in the vicinity. Buried here are not only John, III, his wife Sarah, and John, IV, but all four of the latter's wives, one of his brothers, and several of his children. Daniel Moler's two wives and two of his children also lie there.

Both John and Daniel Moler grew a range of crops, and probably raised more than one type of livestock. During the war Daniel kept several horses, cows and hogs in addition to cultivating hay, straw, wheat, over a thousand bushels of corn and more than a hundred bushels of potatoes on his roughly 264-acre farm (Moler 1871). In 1850 wheat was the most heavily produced crop in Jefferson County, while swine were the most numerous livestock type, having surpassed cattle after 1830. Butter and cheese were manufactured for home consumption and bartering. Some sheep were also kept for their wool, since high tariffs had curbed imports after the 1820s (Fletcher 1950:182-96). A full sixty percent of the county's total land area was used for farming, and only twelve percent of its African American population was free (United States Department of State 1853).

By 1838 there was a clear disconnect between farmlands and the burgeoning town of Harpers Ferry to the east. Farmers outside of town spoke of having to face the challenges of "living in the country," which meant dealing with constant inconveniences and the risk of severe loss due

to limited resources. They also complained of the regular trespass of hunters on their lands (VFP Vol. 31, No. 33, 1838). A possible downturn in the fortune or profits of 1843 may have caused Daniel Moler to put up "a superior kiln of fresh burnt lime for sale" (VFP Vol. 36, No. 8, 1843). That year he also advertised a stone house on his property for rent to a small family (VFP Vol. 36, No. 11, 1843). In 1846 he sold 28 acres near the Old Furnace, or "a small tract of land," 18 acres of which were cleared, to Lydia Strider (VFP Vol. 39, No. 17, 1846). This tract was just north of the current School House Ridge North property and appears to have been fairly open, with the exception of some woodlots dominated by chestnut trees (Castanea dentata). The appearance of the landscape around this time is further hinted by Daniel's description of his 275-acre Prospect Hill Farm, which he tried to sell soon afterwards:

"…of which a large proportion is first quality "red land" with 60 acres of timber, considerable quantity of beautiful Chestnut; farm divided into 10 fields; seven have access to running water, also, several natural ponds, very fine – More than one half of the fencing is of chestnut – entire fencing in good condition. Improvements consist of two new, neat and comfortable dwelling houses; barn with stabling, etc., underneath, and Corn House, also new – with all other necessary outbuildings in good repair. Water – a very fine and never-failing spring of excellent water within a few steps of the house. Location – within 1 ½ miles of Harpers Ferry and Bolivar, ¼ of a mile of Keeptryst Furnace, where there is a Merchant Mill, Saw and Plaster Mill, and two Ware Houses to receive grain and produce to be shipped by Chesapeake and Ohio Canal to the District markets" (SOJ Vol. XV, No. 39, 1858).

The farm was further lauded as part of the "best produce market in the valley…where everything that could be raised would command the highest cash prices!" (SOJ Vol. XV, No. 39, 1858). The division of the property into ten separate fields, which is only slightly less than the arrangement of today, indicates not only an extensive fencing system but the small size of the pieces of land manageable to farmers at the time. After the war Moler estimated that his land contained over 70,000 fence rails during the conflict, a number which implies a wealth of available resources to build and maintain considerable fencing before the war began. A friend also attested that Moler's land was "well timbered and fenced at the beginning of the war" and that "Mr. Moler usually kept on hand large quantities of hay, straw, oats, corn, etc.," thus confirming the farmer's fairly comfortable situation at the time (Court of Claims, Washington, DC 1868). Kept in good condition with the help of both family and slaves, the landscape was likely characterized by well tended fence lines, agricultural fields, pastures and a few woodlots.

The Moler children may have attended class at the little school house on the ridge, which was visible across the open fields to the southwest of the Moler Farm. In 1852 this building stood on School House Ridge just south of the Charles Town Turnpike, slightly southwest of where the C.W. Shipley Elementary School stands today (see Figure 6). This school house was probably the same building for which School House Ridge, and nearby School House Hill, were named. It may also have been one of the first four school houses built near Harpers Ferry by 1848, constructed by the United States government. Schools in and around the town were slow to develop, due to a lack of local support in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Most laborers involved in armory work or on local farms saw education as a job for the family rather than an outsider, while the children of wealthier homes were regularly sent away to

boarding school (Shackel 1996:164-5).

John Brown on School House Ridge

The great wealth of the Shenandoah Valley was duly reflected in the number of slaves living there. By 1860 Jefferson County boasted one of the highest slave populations in the region, though to be fair it was also one of the largest counties soon to be included in the new state of West Virginia. In fact, its relative density of slaves to large-scale agriculture remained lower than much of the land to the east of the Blue Ridge Mountains (UVA website, 2005). Nonetheless, this statistic suggests one reason why John Brown thought the Harpers Ferry Armory a particularly attractive location for his raid, in 1859.

Just to the south of School House Ridge North, on the other side of the Charles Town Turnpike, lived the Molers' neighbor and fellow farmer, John Hall Allstadt. His farm was comparable in size to the Moler properties but specialized in livestock, instead of grains. During the 1850s, Allstadt raised large numbers of horses, sheep, milk cows, beef cattle, and swine, while probably cultivating small amounts of wheat, hay, and corn. He maintained the property with the help of his family and 13 slaves (Fletcher 1950:183). In view of the similarities between this farm and the Moler properties across the road, it was perhaps simple luck that John Brown chose to knock on Allstadt's front door instead of John Moler's, on the night of October 16. Some factors which may have contributed to the choice were the Molers' slightly smaller property size, apparent Union sympathy as indicated by Daniel Moler's war claims, and relatively less prominent political status in the area. Nonetheless, both John and Daniel were slave owners, and likely counted themselves as lucky on that fateful autumn evening.

Brown and his eighteen fellow raiders set out with the intention of taking several prominent citizens as prisoners, drafting their slaves as recruits and then heading into Harpers Ferry to break into the United States Armory. After a stop at the nearby house of Colonel Lewis Washington, the great-grandnephew of George Washington, to take him hostage, they paused again at the Allstadt Farm. As one of the larger farms in the area, this property likely drew Brown's particular interest. He and his raiders hastily took both John Hall Allstadt and his son, John Thomas Allstadt, prisoner (Bushong 1941:114-16). Now strengthened by the addition of two slaves, Brown led his 21 followers into Harpers Ferry to seize the B&O Railroad bridge, but soon found himself confronted by the Charles Town militia. Within twenty-four hours he and his remaining men were cornered in the Armory's fire engine and guard house, beseiged by ninety United States Marines under the command of Colonel Robert E. Lee (Gilbert et al. 1993:3-49). Washington and both Allstadts were held in the Armory's fire engine house until freed the next morning, when Brown was forced to surrender (Bushong 1941:114-16).

Though he had meant to use the Armory stores to arm a slave uprising that would sweep the nation, in the end Brown's passionate aims proved lacking in crucial elements of calculation and strategic planning. His mission a material failure, Brown was tried and executed within the year. Yet his actions soon sparked a far greater movement, inspired by the same spirit and destined to change the nation forever (Gilbert 1983:38).

End of an Era

The years between 1764 and 1859 saw a transformation of the Shenandoah Valley. Large expanses of farmland were cleared and cultivated with wheat and other crops, while farmhouses and their associated buildings sprang up in small clusters across the newly open, growing vistas of the region. Along the river to the west of Harpers Ferry and up on Maryland Heights, settlers established the area's first limestone quarries, creating giant gaps in what had once been unbroken wilderness. Cattle droving and other types of animal husbandry further contributed to the deforestation, as inhabitants took full advantage of improved rail transport. At the same time, freshly dug canals improved the area's natural water resources by overcoming the challenging rapids of the Potomac, even as roads and bridges began linking the once isolated river junction with the rest of Virginia and Maryland. For the first time the majestic river views commanded by the heights over Harpers Ferry were marked by a dam and two bridges, and the valley echoed with the incessant whistle and rumble of countless trains. By 1859 the Charles Town Pike was a firmly established, busy toll road connecting Harpers Ferry and Charles Town. As for the town itself, it bustled with industry, agriculture, commercialism and modern transport, where once a meagre settlement had stood.

To the west of Bolivar Heights, the turnpike intersected with a dirt road then known as Old Furnace Road, later called Bakerton Road and West Virginia Secondary Route 27. Further west, School House Ridge North remained relatively rural and was marked by lines of wooden fencing and open farming fields with small stands of trees. In this agrarian landscape, only a few isolated clusters of structures were present. Due in part to the escalating activities of nearby Bolivar and Harpers Ferry, these groupings appeared most often in the vicinity of local roads, waterways and relatively flat land. Similarly, in Lower Town the construction of homes and factories was constrained to the level areas along the water, which increased the local population's vulnerability to severe floods in succeeding years. Still closer at hand, however, were years of civil conflict whose battles found a sinister convenience in the local wealth of resources and open farmland.

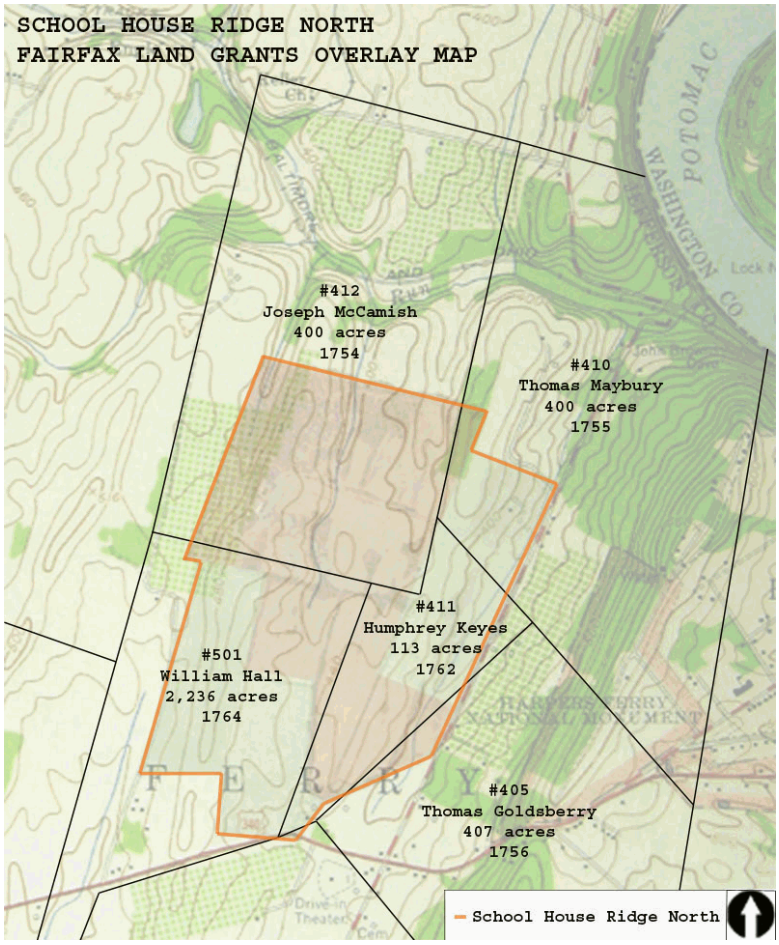


Figure 4. Map showing Lord Fairfax Land Grants from the 1750s and 1760s (Berkeley County Historical Society archives), overlaid onto a USGS topographic map from 1955.



Figure 5. Sketch of Charles Town Turnpike at crossroads with Bakerton Road, looking west in 1864 (Taylor 1989[1864]:45). Note the tollhouse in the foreground, with what is probably the old Moler home known as Poplar Cottage visible in the distance.

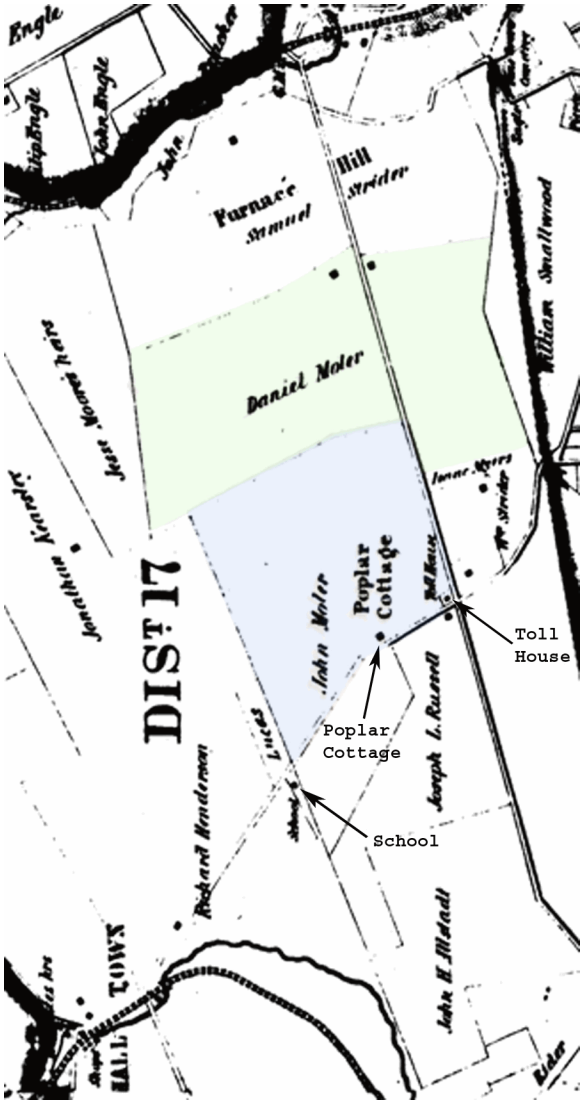


Figure 6. The Moler properties and surrounding land, in an annotated 1852 map by Samuel H. Brown (HAFE archives). Note the school, Poplar Cottage and tollhouse.

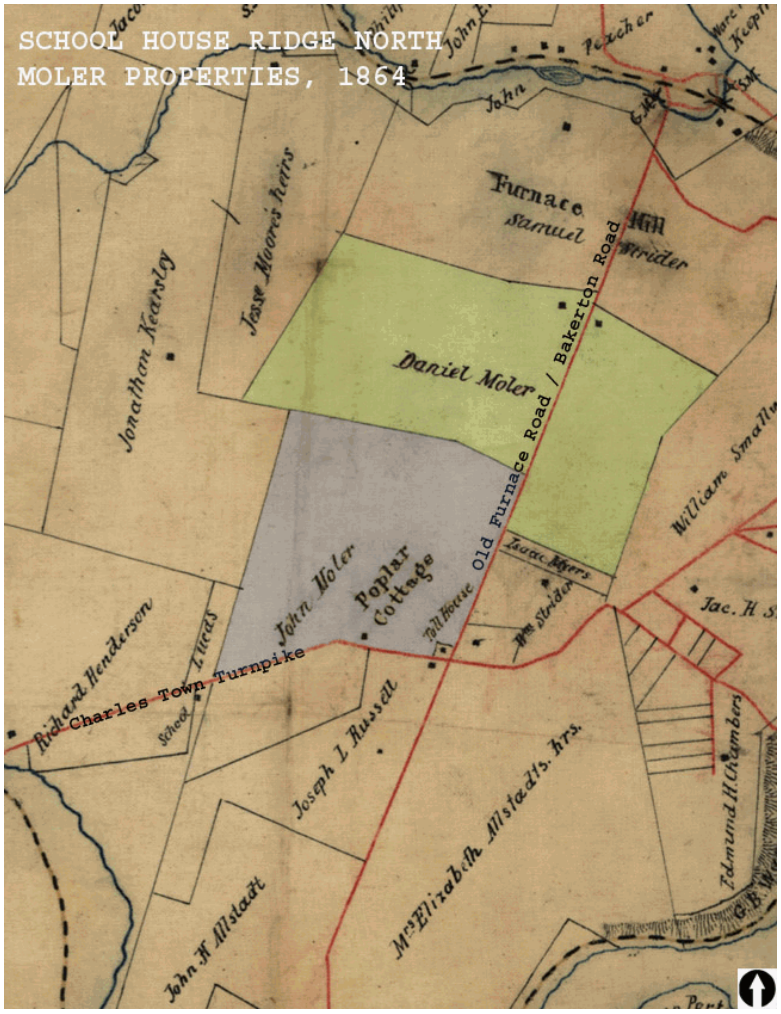


Figure 7. Moler properties as shown in an annotated 1864 map by Samuel H. Brown (HAFE archives). Note the location of the Allstadt Farm to the south.

1860 to 1865

CIVIL WAR PERIOD

Battling For West Virginia

The deep ideological divides touched upon by John Brown's raid in 1859 came to full fruition only a year later. With the election of Abraham Lincoln as President of the United States, the states of the Deep South made a firm and irreversible move. Anticipating the abolition of slavery by the new administration, they withdrew from the Union. Stuck straddling the line between the two sides, Virginia remained undecided on the issue of secession until April 1861, when Lincoln called for troops to defend against the Confederacy's attack on Fort Sumter (Dabney 1971:290-4). The state voted to withdraw from the Union, and almost immediately

afterward several companies of Virginia militia surged toward Harpers Ferry, headed for the Armory and its valuable military resources.

Warned of their advance just in time, Lieutenant Roger Jones of the U.S. Army managed to set fire to the Arsenal before making a hasty retreat north. His last desperate effort succeeded in destroying some 15,000 arms, though most of the Armory's machinery was saved from the fire by townspeople who refused to watch their livelihood disappear behind the flames. In the end their efforts were in vain, however. Upon their arrival, Confederate forces found Harpers Ferry entirely defenseless and wasted little time in shipping all useful machinery from the Armory south to Richmond and Fayettesville, for use in making Rebel arms (Gilbert 1983:36; Shackel 1996:43-4). Tensions in the town ran high as the local newspaper proclaimed the injustice of the deception and ruin wrought by the "northern vandals" (Noffsinger 1958:45-6; Snell 1960:5). Situated in such close proximity to Maryland and central Virginia, Harpers Ferry found itself in a difficult position, plagued by the persistence of loyal sentiments toward both sides. In October of that year, residents of western Virginia held their own independent vote to become the Union state of West Virginia. It would be another two years before this vision was formally realized, following considerable passion, discussion and dispute (Bushong 1941:190-200).

At first the two counties of Jefferson and Berkeley were excluded from the new state, and the evidence suggests that most of the area's residents would in fact have preferred to remain a part of Virginia. However, it was impossible to ignore the strategic location of these counties along the two major rivers, the C&O Canal and the B&O Railroad. As a result, the Federal government took extra pains to ensure that both were voted into West Virginia, thus securing Union use of these valuable resources. Still, the contentious nature of this border area continued to complicate the strategies of both sides, throughout the Civil War. Bitter and prolonged struggles were driven as much by the geographical location of Jefferson and Berkeley counties on the northern edge of slaveholding territories, as by their convenient positioning along transportation routes (Bushong 1941:190-200). Throughout the war, Jefferson County was ensnared in an almost continuous series of military engagements, swinging painfully from North to South and back again. The town of Harpers Ferry, and by association the surrounding farmland, switched sides eight times over the course of the conflict's four-year duration (McMillion 2005).

Local farm, factory and mill owners found themselves in a difficult position as control over their property oscillated between Confederate occupation, Union occupation and an unoccupied state. For example, Abraham Herr was a Harpers Ferry mill and slave owner who supported Union troops when they arrived in 1861. With the return of Confederate control only weeks later, Herr's own partner was forced to set half his mill on fire, in a Rebel retaliation for wheat Herr had donated to the Union army (Barry 1903:131-4; Johnson and Barker 1993). On June 14, 1861, Confederate forces burned the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad bridge on their way out of town, delivering a solid blow to local transportation and supply. For the first time since the railroad's construction, the eerie echo of trains whistling over the river faltered, and the war's darkest days began. In the years that followed, this bridge was destroyed and rebuilt an exhausting nine times before peace was restored to Harpers Ferry (Gilbert 1983:42). Its loss

meant that transport in and out of the town became relegated entirely to local roads. Colonel David H. Strother wrote in the spring of 1862 about a "gang of men, women and children loaded with various bundles" crowding the road out of Harpers Ferry on the Maryland side as they fled Jefferson County (Strother 1862:114). Thus the ongoing shuffle for control over Harpers Ferry transformed the town into a nearly deserted "no-man's land," drained of its inhabitants even as the surrounding farmlands were robbed of their crops and woodlands (Marmion 1959).

Soldiers on School House Ridge North

Throughout the Civil War, defense of Harpers Ferry depended heavily upon military command of the surrounding hillsides. Important among these was Bolivar Heights, whose slopes were the main point of land access to the town (Figure 8). Consequently, attacks on the town customarily came from School House Ridge, and the scrambling feet of men and horses were familiar to the woods and fields of this particular area. One such instance was in May of 1862, when General Rufus B. Saxton positioned most of his forces in a line along Bolivar Heights, to span the entire peninsula and stand in wait for Stonewall Jackson's expected advance from Charles Town (Figure 9). In the subsequent face off, Union artillery shelled the woods of School House Ridge upon the first sign of Confederate forces, and great clouds of dust rose along the Charles Town Turnpike and across the hills to north and south (Snell 1960:67-73). Further evidence of the impact made by military activities on Bolivar Heights can be found in the writings of James E. Taylor, from 1864: "we enter the barren waste of Bolivar Heights which at its west terminus reaches the dignity of a ridge, a wind-swept deserted moorland" (Taylor 1989 [1864]:45).

The appearance of the land to the west of this bald outcropping can further be gleaned from the journal writings of the artist David Hunter Strother. Observing a small skirmish in May of 1862, Strother mentioned faulty shot tumbling into the fields. This confirms the presence of both farmland and woods, and implies the concentration of the latter on the ridges between valleys of more open land. Taylor also described this area as "a medley of wood belts and neglected farm lands" (Taylor 1989 [1864]:247). The fairly linear woodlots that existed before the war were meanwhile likely trampled or cut down over the course of the conflict, particularly in the spring and fall of 1862. In May Jackson's entire force of 21,000 men swarmed the hills opposite the Federal position on Bolivar Heights for several days, settling in to camp on School House Ridge. Some skirmishing likely took place there, or in the valley just below, as Federal forces withdrew to Bolivar Heights after receiving a peppering from the Confederate artillery (Snell 1960:67-77). Another description of the encounter is offered by Strother's depiction of the Federal position, as seen from Camp Hill in Bolivar:

"Small woods on Old Furnace Ridge [or School House Ridge] seemed deserted except by a troop of cavalry and some loose infantry…[who were] in force on the opposite ridge towards Halltown and about 1500 yards distant…Riding to the top [of Camp Hill] I found some stragglers covered by bushed [sic.] obscuring the enemy. As soon as I appeared on the crest [the Confederates] commenced loading their guns and ranging them. I saw their artillery on either side of the turnpike road and several hundred infantry lying along a fence in the edge of

the wood which crowned the hill" (Strother 1862:118-9).

Strother's account confirms the presence of woods on the crest of School House Ridge North, as well as what was probably wooden fencing related to the use of this land for farming. These fences were probably lined with trees that may have included Osage orange (Maclura pomifera) and hackberry (Celtis occidentalis), some of which survive along other old fence lines of School House Ridge North today. An 1864 Taylor illustration confirms the presence of these landscape characteristics at the crossroads of the Charles Town Turnpike and Bakerton Road (see Figure 5). Otherwise, the tree cover here probably resembled the crest and western slopes of nearby Bolivar Heights during the war, featuring forests of pine (Dacrydium sp.), a variety of oaks and a heavy undergrowth of shrubs. Considerable amounts of chestnut and chestnut oak (Quercus prinus) were also likely present, since these accounted for most of the tree growth on nearby Maryland Heights (Frye 1987:59). In further support of this theory, the majority of the fencing used on Daniel Moler's farm was made from oak, indicating not only the local abundance of this species, but also its close proximity to the property (Court of Claims, Washington, DC 1871:4).

The far side, or western slope, of School House Ridge North was the more sheltered half of the property and was probably cleared during the war and used as a camping area for the forces attacking Harpers Ferry. It was utilized in this way during the May skirmishes, and again during the Battle of Harpers Ferry, only a few months later. That spring Jackson's forces withdrew from these slopes to Winchester, however, when they found themselves suddenly vulnerable to Federal troops advancing from Charles Town to the west (Snell 1960:79, 94).

Battle of Harpers Ferry

The military positions set up by Union forces to defend Harpers Ferry in May provided valuable information for Jackson's second attack on the town later that year. One of the Civil War's most impressive power turnovers took place during the Battle of Harpers Ferry, in September of 1862. Earlier that month the Army of Northern Virginia launched the first Confederate invasion of the North, advancing on Maryland under the command of General Robert E. Lee. A key component of Lee's attack plan was to draw the 16,000 Federal troops garrisoned at Harpers Ferry and Martinsburg out from their stations to aid with defenses to the north, thus leaving the vital supply and communication lines of the Shenandoah Valley open to Confederate seizure. However, following his invasion of Frederick, Maryland, it became evident that this strategy had failed. Forced to improvise under pressure, Lee decided to divide his forces into four parts under Special Orders 191. Three of these, or almost 23,000 men in all, would advance on Harpers Ferry in separate columns to vanquish the Union garrison located there. Meanwhile, Lee would march north to Boonsboro with the remaining troops, who would be joined by those from Harpers Ferry a few days later (Frye 2008; Frye 1987).

Although the original date set for this reunion was September 12, it quickly became clear that Lee's tired and under-supplied forces were going to need more time to accomplish their difficult task. Under the direction of Major General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson, the three offensives finally began taking shape as each column assumed its position, on September 13.

Watched closely by Federal scouts, Brigadier General John G. Walker moved to establish himself on Loudoun Heights, Major General Lafayette McLaws on Maryland Heights, and Jackson himself along the length of School-House Hill, also known as School House Ridge. Walker found Loudoun Heights unoccupied and fairly easy to occupy. In contrast, McLaws was obligated to struggle through a grueling mile of fighting across brutal terrain, and gained his position only after he had driven 4,600 Union defenders off Maryland Heights. At the same time, Jackson advanced across Maryland and captured Martinsburg before approaching Harpers Ferry, thus completing a searing march of 51 miles in less than three days.

As he carefully moved to take out each critical point of defense around Harpers Ferry, Major General Jackson's superior expertise in the region became a serious menace to the already battle-worn town. It was by this time a shadow of its former self, with a wartime population of a mere 100 and most of its buildings turned into hospitals, barracks or stables. The ruins of the once bustling Armory were an enduring reminder of the ravages and scale of the conflict. Yet the value of Harpers Ferry's role as a supply base for operations in the Shenandoah Valley, as well as the protection it could offer to the C&O Canal and B&O Railroad, were assets General Lee and his army could not ignore (Frye 2008). With Jackson's occupation of School House Ridge on September 13, his column of 14,000 men effectively closed the hatch on Harpers Ferry, surrounding the town's Federal garrison with a formidable ring of Confederate troops (Frye 2008).

Trapped Union forces, under the command of Colonel Dixon Miles, braced themselves for the attack. Miles had been urged by those above him to defend Harpers Ferry for as long and as valiantly as possible, and he had begun preparations by dividing his forces into brigades and carefully familiarizing himself with the surrounding terrain. Two large infantry brigades were posted on Bolivar Heights, which became his central command post. A total of 7,000 men and two batteries were positioned here to defend against the longest line of Confederate attack, which would advance across the open fields of School House Ridge to the west (Frye 1987:16, 21).

The next day, after a tense and watchful morning on September 14, afternoon arrived and the Confederate artillery opened fire on Federal forces, raining shot down on the garrison in a deafening concert from the surrounding hilltops (Figure 10). On School House Ridge North, artillery under the command of General D.R. Jones targeted the extreme left end of Federal defenses. Accordingly, the Union skirmish line was established to the north and south of the Charles Town Turnpike, along what was then known as Furnace Hill or Old Furnace Road, and what is now Bakerton Road, or State Route 27. Batteries under the command of Jones and Lawton attacked Bolivar Heights from the top of School House Ridge, 1,000 yards west of this main Union skirmish line (Frye 1987:23). The constant chatter of firing continued through the evening and began to wear away at the Federal troops, but still the defenses held.

With the collapse of Federal defenses on Maryland Heights, Colonel Miles knew that he had lost a pivotal location for maintaining control over the town. Quickly, he moved to take action. On the night of September 14, he sent out a call for help by way of 1,500 fleeing cavalry commanded by Colonel Benjamin F. "Grimes" Davis. Shielded by the darkness of a moonless

night, the horsemen managed to escape the closing net of Jackson's advance just in time, traveling 50 miles in just 12 hours. At almost the same moment and to the north, Union General McClellan was acting upon a fortuitously discovered copy of Lee's Special Orders 191 by sending forces south to rescue Harpers Ferry from its impending capture. His move to help Colonel Miles proved too late, however, as Rebel forces were already closing the noose (Frye 1987:47).

Under the cloak of darkness that same night, Jackson ordered the light infantry division of Major General A.P. Hill to use School House Ridge as a cover to sneak around the Union left and onto the high ground overlooking their position on the Shenandoah River. After lugging five batteries up the river's steep slopes, Hill's forces occupied an advantageous bluff on the Chambers' Farm and stood a mere 1,000 yards from the enemy's exposed left flank. Early on the morning of September 15, Hill began to feel the confidence of victory creeping up on him (Frye 2008).

As the fog lifted shortly after dawn, Confederate forces all along School House Ridge opened fire on Bolivar Heights (National Park Service 2001). Hill's batteries simultaneously opened fire under the command of Lieutenant Colonel R. Lindsay Walker, along with the artilleries lined up on Loudoun Heights. At the same time that Hill advanced upon the Federal left from the southwest, infantry led by Brigadier General Jubal Early attacked from the edge of a wood on the east face of School House Ridge North (National Park Service 2001). Some impression of how the open, rolling landscape may have appeared in this environment can be gleaned from a remark made by a gunner in the Rockbridge Artillery that morning. The soldier noted that "the great circle of artillery" formed by Jackson's relentless artillery fired "to a common center, while the clouds of smoke, rolling up from the tops of the various mountains, and the thunder of the guns reverberating among them, gave the idea of so many volcanoes" (Robertson 1997).

Completely surrounded by a force twice their size and fresh out of long range artillery ammunition, the Union troops at Harpers Ferry found themselves "helpless as rats in a cage" (Frye 1987:51). Just before 8 a.m., their commanders voted unanimously for surrender. Moments later, the Federal commander Colonel Miles was mortally wounded by a stray Confederate shell, issued late from a Rebel battery still unaware of the surrender due to the thick cloud cover over the valley. The arrangements of the surrender were therefore made by Miles' second in command, Brigadier General Julius White. With pressure escalating and forces descending on the Antietam, Maryland area to the north, both sides were in some ways likely relieved to conclude the ordeal at Harpers Ferry (Frye 2008; Frye 1987:51; Gilbert 1983:113; National Park Service 2001).

Jackson's offensive at Harpers Ferry marked the largest capture of Union troops in the war, amounting to a total of 12,419 men. It remained the biggest American military capture until World War II (Frye 2008; McMillion 2005). School House Ridge in particular was instrumental in the attack, since it was a key geographical component in the strategic Confederate advance on Harpers Ferry. It was here that Jackson chose to position 14,000 of his 28,000 men, the largest number involved in any West Virginia battle. From the ridge they commanded a clear, critical view of the Union defenses at Bolivar Heights, and blocked the only land route leading

to and from Harpers Ferry. Furthermore, the Rebels' tremendous strategic advantage complemented their superior combat experience, compared to the young and untried Union forces. Together these components contributed substantially to the demise of Harpers Ferry (Frye 1990:78-80; Frye 1987:54).

The Confederate victory at the Battle of Harpers Ferry resulted in the seizure of 13,000 arms and 47 pieces of artillery from the Federal garrison. Jackson's force then moved quickly north to Sharpsburg, where it fought to a stalemate in the bloodiest single day of the Civil War, before retreating back into Virginia. Harpers Ferry was meanwhile returned to Union control on September 20th, only five days after its surrender to Jackson (Frye 1990:78-80; Frye 2005; Trust for Public Land 2008; Shackel 1996:45).

After the Battle

Recovery began when the Union army came back into Harpers Ferry on September 20th, even as extra precautions were taken to prevent any repeats of the humiliating loss suffered the week before (Shackel 1996:45). Only weeks after the battle, on October 1 and 2, President Lincoln himself visited the town to review the troops camped on Bolivar Heights and survey the fortifications there (Gilbert et al. 1993:3-54). West Virginia became the 35th state of the Union the following year, even as the abundant agricultural productivity of the region along its southern border gave the Shenandoah Valley a new nickname, the "breadbasket of the Confederacy." Particularly toward the end of the war, this perception of Valley prosperity served to encourage the severity of the destruction brought upon the area by the Union Army of the Shenandoah. Beginning in April of 1864, barns, fields, livestock and some homes were systematically ruined by Federal troops under the command of General Philip Sheridan, who had received orders to turn "all the Valley south of the Baltimore and Ohio [into] a desert." By the end of his campaign, Sheridan and his troops had by his own estimation burned 2,000 barns and 120 flour mills, confiscated or destroyed 874 barrels of flour and 460,072 bushels of wheat, and torn up 947 miles of train tracks (Gilbert 1983:98).

As for the lands around Harpers Ferry, the situation was worsened by the fact that these damages came upon the heels of the three years of devastation already wrought by hungry, demanding Civil War soldiers. In July of 1861, Daniel Moler was sick and living with a friend, John S. Keephart, when he watched a Union Captain and his men haul away four tons of hay during a skirmish. His brother Robert "frequently made application for payment, cash being promised at the time of the taking of the property, but without success" (Fullerton 1871). This proved to be only the beginning. While occupying Bolivar Heights between September and October of 1862, Union troops removed from Daniel Moler's land an estimated 70,000 oak fence rails and 1,640 cords of timber. As stated in Daniel's war claim: "The proof before us shows that at one time a train of ten wagons came and hauled off the rails to the Camp. A force of 15,000 men under General Sumner were encamped nearby and in [September and October, 1862] all the fence rails of his farm were taken by the Army." In Moler's own words, "[I] saw the Government teams hauling my wood daily for weeks." He went on to recount how "some of the rails were taken from my house where I had them piled to secure them, some of them were taken from the woods, and all the fencing I had on the farm was taken and

hauled to camp for hospitals, camp fires, and every other way for fuel" (Moler 1871). A witness in support of his account further added the following:

"According to the orders received from the U. States Quartermasters stationed at [Harpers Ferry and Bolivar Heights], details from the Army were in the habit, daily, of cutting down the timber on this tract, and hauling it to the several camps for the use of the Army, and continued to do so, until all the standing timber on the tract was removed" (Court of Claims, Washington, DC 1867).

The fence rails and timber were reportedly extracted from 41 acres of woodland on the property, which apparently was entirely deforested by the Army in 1862. The use and abuse of the local landscape in this way betrays not only the deplorable state of transportation at the time, but also the entitlement felt by Union troops camping below the Mason-Dixon line.

Thus by the time General Sheridan visited the area in 1864, Harpers Ferry and its vicinity were already suffering heavy losses. By Moler's calculation General Wright's Division, under Sheridan's command, removed 1,050 bushels of corn, 150 bushels of potatoes and six hogs from his farm and fields. Moler also lost a total of four tons of hay, twenty tons of straw, and four horses during the war (Moler 1871). In this way, a tract of land which had begun the war as peaceful farmland spotted with a few leafy woodlots was reduced to a yawning, forlorn expanse of stumps and ruined crops. Moving east from the countryside toward Harpers Ferry in 1864, James E. Taylor described the changing landscape in these words:

"The peaceful landscape a few hours gone, was beginning to assume a warlike aspect. In the distance could be seen cavalry moving through the fields, while below me are regiments laboring to the hilltop to take their assigned positions and prepare for the expected shock of battle, while further away in the fields, and grassy bottoms along Flowing Spring Run, extra cordons of pickets were being placed" (Taylor 1989 [1864]:247).

Taylor's depiction of the scarred, trampled fields drives home what the war must have been like, in the experience of the two Moler farms. On the whole, the Civil War had a substantial impact on the landscape of the United States, and conflict-ridden border areas like Harpers Ferry were among the most devastated. Although the commerce on School House Ridge North continued to focus on agriculture and managed to recover fairly quickly after the war, the massive destruction wrought throughout the region left an indelible mark on those who lived there. Over the course of four years, the ability of Harpers Ferry to support itself had been severely compromised. Out in the country farmers either fled or sat hostage, helpless to defend their lands from pillage and ruin. Most of all, the area suffered from the constant uncertainty of battles balanced on the brink between North and South. Although in the end West Virginia was confirmed as a Union territory, for much of the war this label mattered little, as Harpers Ferry and the surrounding farmland were transformed into a perilous wasteland.

During the Civil War, the landscape around Harpers Ferry appears to have been covered at least in part by woodlands. For example, School House Hill, or what is now the portion of School House Ridge located to the north of U.S. 340, was described as "woods" through which

General Jubal Early and his division advanced toward Bolivar Heights during the Battle of Harpers Ferry (National Park Service 2001). The more open farming fields of the Moler farms, cradled in the downward sloping lands on the edge of these woods, became a no man's land during those three days in September. Facing off over the road leading north from the Charles Town Turnpike, then known as Flowing Spring Run or Old Furnace Road, the artillery fire from either side echoed across these fields on September 14.

For weeks at a time during the war, military activities disrupted the normally peaceful farming families outside Harpers Ferry, preventing them from using, and in many cases occupying, their own land. James E. Taylor describes the acres of farmland in this area as "smeared with sagebrush and ironweeds, while a general air of neglect prevailed," indicating an alternate state of care for the usually well-tended landscape (Taylor 1989 [1864]:211). Still, the clusters of structures and more general spatial layout of School House Ridge North appear to have remained unchanged during the war. Despite the area's transformation into a worn battle ground, both the Poplar Cottage and the associated Moler Barn survived the Civil War. During the war, however, John Moler may have lived elsewhere and leased the cottage, as Taylor referred to this structure as "Eichelburger's Residence" in 1864 (Taylor 1989 [1864]:45). On the whole, the land on School House Ridge North had by war's end become a very different landscape than what existed there in 1860. After sustaining various abuses throughout the conflict, the farmlands of the two Moler farms were probably overgrown with weeds and almost entirely devoid of trees by the time peace was declared.



Figure 8. Map from 1863 showing the general topography of School House Ridge North at the time (Weyss 1863).



Figure 9. View of Civil War tents on Camp Hill looking west toward Bolivar Heights, in 1862 (HAFE archives). Note the lack of woodlands.



Figure 10. Annotated military map showing the position of troops for the Battle of Harpers Ferry in September of 1862 (Davis et al. 1983: Plate 29).

1866 to 1944

RECONSTRUCTION AND INDUSTRIAL PERIOD

Recovery of Harpers Ferry

After the Civil War, the Shenandoah Valley was better situated to recover than much of the rest of the South. Despite the widespread destruction wrought by Sheridan's troops, the natural abundance of the Valley proved vital in the struggle to regain some measure of prosperity. With a diversified economy and less of an established reliance on slave labor for production, residents of this area rebounded far more quickly than those of other former slaveholding states. Most farms in the area were relatively self-sufficient, and fully equipped to produce milk, butter and eggs in addition to various grains, livestock and fruit. Cattle farming for beef returned as the predominant industry, even as local agriculture became increasingly specialized and fruit production began to replace grain operations (Baker 1927:315-8). A decline in the Valley's wheat production was partially due to the black stem rust disease, which swept the area in a scourge that began during the Civil War (Sharrer 2000:69-71). Soon the Shenandoah Valley became one of the most important fruit-growing regions in the eastern United States, along with the nearby valleys of Hagerstown and Cumberland. As the value of livestock

steadily declined across the second half of the nineteenth century due to competition with the cheap beef cattle, sheep and swine production costs of the Midwest, this versatility allowed the farmers of West Virginia to survive (Fletcher 1955:157-66).

Another important piece of recovery and reconstruction for West Virginia was the task of resolving the question of territory. Particularly with regard to the location of Jefferson and Berkeley counties, issues touched off before the Civil War lingered. In 1871 a lawsuit brought against West Virginia by the state of Virginia for recovery of these counties made it all the way to the Supreme Court, but in the end they both remained in West Virginia (Bushong 1941:190-200). The two towns of Bolivar and Harpers Ferry were also united as a single governing body after the war. Yet this arrangement became almost immediate cause for disagreement, and quickly proved a mistake. Following petitioning, the Circuit Court separated the towns once more and established the Corporation of Harpers Ferry in 1872.

Even with the gain of this small victory, Harpers Ferry itself would never fully recover from the devastating effects of the war. With its pre-war economic momentum deflated, the town's reconstruction efforts lacked the necessary spirit and drive to reclaim the success it had once enjoyed (www.westvirginiawv.us). Yet taking on a new tone and direction was in some ways beneficial to the town. Some of the redistributed government land in Harpers Ferry was donated for the establishment of an African-American college, one of the first of its kind in the country. Opened in 1867 with the mission of educating former slaves, it was renamed Storer College in 1869 and welcomed all students regardless of race, sex, or religion (Gilbert 1983:100; National Park Service 2006:114).

Meanwhile, Harpers Ferry began to rally behind hopes of a brighter future. The region's mineral resources became the new interest, as limestone quarrying took off in the 1880s and the young state of West Virginia was swept up into the industrial activity of the age. As early as 1883, a portion of land to the south of U.S. Route 340 and owned by the Hoke Brothers was being used for the quarrying of limestone. Here, in 1901, the Baltimore-based Standard Lime and Stone Company opened its Millville quarry on a portion of the Allstadt Farm, employing a work force of some 636 employees.

The surge in both local production and population helped to rekindle some shadow of the town's former glory in the last years of the nineteenth century. However, the development of Harpers Ferry was once again spurned, this time at the hands of natural forces. Ever since its settlement, the area had been prone to intermittent flooding. In 1748 Robert Harper was driven from his cabin by a flood, and in 1753 pumpkins washed down the river from the nearby Indian villages upstream (Gilbert 1983:30). The destruction wrought by these events only escalated with time as the town developed, and only worsened as the population resumed growth in the aftermath of the Civil War. In 1870 the river's rapid rise trapped Virginius Island residents in their homes and claimed 42 lives, devastating the island's new industrial development. The Shenandoah Canal to the south of Harpers Ferry was forced to close by another flood in 1877, which further hindered local growth. The extent of these disasters was so severe that it drove Congress to award abatements for the flood-damaged property it had successfully sold less than a decade before (Shackel 1996:49-50). The destruction continued when the Child &

McCreight flour mill was permanently shut down by a record-setting flood in 1889. Portions of local bridges were swept away that year and again in 1924, when a similar flood drove the C&O Canal out of business. In 1936 the all-time record crest of high water at Harpers Ferry was set at 36 ½ feet. This flood left much of Lower Town in ruins, and swept away the Bollman and Shenandoah bridges for good. Gradually, the population of Lower Town declined as the businesses up the hill in Bolivar drew the population away from the water-logged lands down by the river (Gilbert et al. 1993:3-117-9).

The unpredictable roller coaster of destruction and recovery unfolding along the riverbanks had little effect on the farmers outside of town. Although an overall economic slump set in during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, those living in the countryside still plodded along with the quiet progress of agriculture in a productive natural environment. In 1870 the farm production of Jefferson County ranked among the top four counties of West Virginia. Sheep and swine were the most numerous livestock kept by local farmers, while wheat enjoyed the greatest popularity among the county's agricultural products, followed by Indian corn. Some Jefferson County farmers also began to plant orchards, which accounted for two percent of the total farm profits that year. Agriculture remained the most practiced activity, however, as farm acreage still accounted for 68 percent of the county's total land area (United States Department of Agriculture 1872).

Moler Lands

Among the ravaged lands outside of Harpers Ferry, some farmers sought a change in lifestyle after the war. Now in his sixties, and perhaps finding himself tired in the aftermath of the conflict, Daniel Moler put up his Prospect Hill Farm for sale in 1866. It was advertised as 266 acres of limestone land, located 2 ½ miles from Harpers Ferry and ½ mile from the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. At the time the property included a dwelling, barn, corn house, granary, blacksmith's shop and ice house, a complex shown as a single building on the Samuel H. Brown map from 1864 (VFP Vol. 1, No. 35, 1866; see Figure 7). This cluster of structures was located just outside the northern boundary of the School House Ridge North study boundary.

Apparently unable to make a sale, but still suffering heavily due to the hardships of the post-war period, Daniel Moler moved to sell much of his personal property in 1867. A public auction held at his house included the sale of horses, cows, a carriage, wagons, a wheat drill and fan, plows and harrows, beds, tables, and chairs (SOJ Vol. 20, No. 13, 1867). A year later Moler sought foreclosure on his land in order to secure a debt he owed to his brother, Captain John Moler. The property foreclosed upon formed the northern half of School House Ridge North, while the southern portion of the current property remained under the ownership of Captain John Moler. John Moler, IV died in 1871, at the age of 80. He was buried in the Moler Cemetery on School House Ridge North, and was one of the last people laid to rest there.

That same year Samuel Howell Brown, the county surveyor and local map maker, acquired Daniel Moler's land on School House Ridge North. Already the owner of other lands nearby, Brown likely farmed here until 1876, when he sold the 266-acre property for 7,000 dollars to Rudolph Rau (VFP Vol. 65, No. 24, 1876). Rau also owned land south of the Charles Town

Turnpike, which he had advertised in 1870 as a 190-acre farm located one and a half miles from Harpers Ferry. In the paper it was called "limestone land" containing a house, barn and associated buildings, in addition to about 600 apple, pear and peach trees and a grape vineyard. At the time the farm was apparently divided into seven fields by fencing, which conveys some idea of the landscape's appearance just south of the turnpike (VFP Vol. 60, No. 15, 1870). That year Rau also put up some of his personal property for sale, including farm equipment, a wine press and a cider mill. As suggested by these items, he was likely involved in experimental market fruit cultivation, which had grown in popularity among farmers in the eastern areas of West Virginia (National Park Service 2001).

For over fifteen years, Rudolph Rau operated the former Moler property known as Prospect Hill Farm, which spanned Bakerton Road and included School House Ridge North (Figure 11). In addition to farming, he soon found room for commercial ventures in nearby Bolivar and Harpers Ferry. At some point he also acquired the property to the south, which had formerly been owned by John Moler.

Tourism in Harpers Ferry

The steady escalation of national wealth in the final decades of the nineteenth century encouraged participation in leisure pastimes such as travel, recreation and tourism, while visits to historic sites in particular were encouraged by the centennial celebration of American independence (O'Connell 2003:81; Shackel 1996:52-3). It was around this time that the preservation movement was born, and with it an early recognition of the fundamental role played by the tangible past in generating cultural identity (Rainey 1983).

Harpers Ferry became a popular feature in this new American landscape, even as the permanent local population dropped, and the town began attracting attention as both a historic site and a tourist destination (Shackel 1996:50). The nearby battlefields, old United States Armory and John Brown's Fort increasingly appealed to travelers' curiosity, and the town drew unprecedented numbers of day and weekend visitors in the 1880s and 1890s. Sites like these became fundamental to the newly reunited nation as it began to mature and identify itself as a country with certain values, hopes and associated images (Moyer et al. 2004:43). When John Brown's Fort was relocated to the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, an obelisk and several commemorative plaques were erected to mark its original location beneath the realigned Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. Thus "the enlightenment of travelers concerning the fighting that took place in the capture of Harpers Ferry by the Confederate Army in September 1862" was the first thing to welcome visitors as they crossed the Potomac and entered the town (Shackel 1996:54; Gilbert et al. 1993:3-93).

Before long Harpers Ferry was bustling with development projects associated directly with tourism, including several hotels and boardinghouses, restaurants, a brewery and a series of small shops along the streets of the commerical district. Aided by its convenient location along the B&O Railroad and the C&O Canal, by 1880 the town's newest feature was Island Park, a 20-acre amusement complex built by the B&O Railroad. Situated in the Potomac River just a mile or so north of School House Ridge North, this park would one day be compared with

Coney Island, and was at its height alive with saloons, tin pan music, gambling and cancan dancers (Shackel 1996:52-4; Wentzell 1957). In August of 1901 the local newspaper reported that Harpers Ferry was "crowded with summer boarders," a crowd which continued to swell through 1909 (VFP Vol 90, No. 48, 1901; Shackel 1996:57). Although it stood for the most part on the perimeter of these activities, School House Ridge North received its own small share of attention from a survey tour of Harpers Ferry by Civil War veterans. To honor the historic battlefield, in 1910 this group erected a Confederate Veterans Monument along the Charles Town Turnpike just west of School House Ridge North (Steve Lowe, March 10, 2008).

The Caverns of School House Ridge North

Another attraction that brought visitors to School House Ridge North during this period was the caverns. Although it is unknown when these caves were originally discovered, Rudolph Rau's son-in-law, E.H. Dick, discovered them "again" in 1882, on what was then the property of his wife's father. At first proclaimed more grand and impressive than the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky or Virginia's Luray Caverns, the caverns became the subject of development plans almost immediately. It was even put out in the local paper that "some Washington parties" might build summer cottages there (VFP Vol. 71, No. 51, 1882; VFP Vol. 72, No. 3, 1882; Dennis Frye, August 2008).

The caverns and surrounding 24 acres became the basis for Rau's Cave Company, which was incorporated in 1883 and aimed to convert "the new subterranean wonder at Bolivar Heights" into a regular summer resort (SOJ Vol. XVIII, No. 9, 1883; SOJ Vol. XVIII, No. 43, 1883; SOJ Vol. XVIII, No. 6, 1883). In subsequent years progress on the new resort was slow, however, due to frequent flooding. As men worked to tunnel and level, the project quickly began to absorb its 15,000 dollars in prescribed funds (SOJ Vol. XVIII, No. 31, 1883). Nonetheless, the company superintendant E.H. Dick remained optimistic. In 1884 he looked forward to opening the resort the following year, complete with hotel pavilions to rival those at Luray Caverns and a main entrance only 1,500 feet from the tracks of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad (SOJ Vol. XIX, No. 8, 1884). The local newspaper noted that, during the 1883 season alone, the B&O carried 100,000 people to nearby Island Park. Rau's Cave Company hoped to attract at least half this number each season, with its "charming locality…for picnic and excursion parties" (SOJ Vol. XIX, No. 8, 1884).

These dreams were never realized, however, as the company's lofty plans presumably waned, along with its finances, in the subsequent years. Following the death of Rudolph Rau in April of 1896, his widow, Amelia Rau, put up the now 170-acre Prospect Hill Farm for sale (VFP Vol. 85, April 1896; VFP Vol. 86, No. 2, 1896; John E. Ott, Interview, May 12, 2008). In 1897 the 92-acre Vineyard Farm, land under fruit cultivation and located to the east of Bakerton Road, was transferred to Rau's children. Around the same time, this property had a modest two-story dwelling on it. This may have been the same structure lived in by Robert Moler during the Civil War.

In 1902 the Rau estate on Bolivar Heights was proclaimed bankrupt by the District Court of Northern West Virginia. The land specifically mentioned in this notice was the now 85-acre

vineyard on the west side of Bolivar Heights, which Rudolph Rau had bought from Samuel Howell Brown back in 1876 (SOJ Vol. XXXVII, No. 16, 1902). This parcel was sold to Thomas Rutherford in 1904, and in later years became known as the Hillside Fruit Farm (National Park Service 2001). Although Rau's tourist ambitions for his property had long since come to an end, a dirt road leading out to the caverns on School House Ridge North still remained in 1916 (Figure 12).

Throughout the region, the rapid growth of tourism in Harpers Ferry made a considerable impact on local infrastructure. Alterations were ordered for the Charles Town Turnpike in 1903, the same year certain properties along the road, including tollhouses, were sold (SOJ Vol. XXXVIII, No. 39, 1903). Modifications and improvements continued in 1921, when work on the road near Allstadt's Tollgate resumed and some fill was "made" there (SOJ Vol. XXXVII, No. 3, 1921). A plot of nine and a half acres at the crossroads was meanwhile put up for sale, and advertised as "improved by a brick dwelling and outbuildings" (SOJ Vol. XXXVI, No. 41, 1920). This post Civil War building still stands today, just outside of the School House Ridge North boundaries in the southeast corner of the property. Further development of the turnpike was planned in 1928, as the town prepared for "macadamizing and oiling" the county road from the Shepherdstown District Line to Allstadt's Tollgate (SOJ Vol. XLIV, No. 46, 1928). Construction of a new track for the B&O Railroad was even considered for placement between Millville and the Old Furnace on the north end of Bakerton Road, but in the end this plan was rejected (SOJ Vol. XLV, No. 47, 1929).

However, the rural landscape surrounding these activities remained largely unchanged from earlier decades, with the exception of becoming less wooded. In 1900, 91 percent of Jefferson County's total land area was developed into farms, a number which remained relatively stable throughout the first half of the twentieth century (United States Census Bureau 1900). Agrarian activities were further promoted by the continuing deforestation of lands in the area. At its opening in 1889, the Harpers Ferry pulp mill was expected to employ fifty men and boast a capacity of 200,000 pounds of wood at once, relying on poplar and spruce for production. According to the local paper, that year alone it sent fifteen men into the forests near Harpers Ferry to cut poplar. In later years the mill offered six dollars a cord for the same wood, bought by the carload (SOJ Vol. XXIV, No. 3, 1889; SOJ Vol. XXIII, No. 40, 1888; SOJ Vol. XLII, No. 2, 1907). Natural events also took a toll on the farmlands outside of Harpers Ferry. A severe hail storm in 1926 reportedly caused massive damage to corn and wheat crops in the vicinity of Bolivar, as well as local apple orchards (SOJ Vol. XLII, No. 22, 1926).

The Fritts Farm

Since the death of Rudolph Rau at the end of the nineteenth century, the tracts of School House Ridge North had changed hands several times. Tract 102-31, which was the portion of Prospect Hill Farm that ran along the west side of Bakerton Road, had passed from his widow, Amelia Rau, to Cassandra Dittmeyer, and then to the A.D. Goetz Company before being purchased by John E. Fritts in 1922. Fritts went on to purchase the 190 acres later known as the Ott Farm in 1926, from an unknown seller. By 1927 a baseball diamond stood just west of the old tollgate location. At the time, the athletic field was drawing enough traffic to be

reported in the newspaper, perhaps in part because the same stretch of road was apparently prone to accidents (SOJ Vol. XLIII, No. 21, 1927).

The new owner of the southern portion of School House Ridge North, later the Ott Farm, was both enterprising and industrious. In 1930 one of the local papers reported that Fritts, owner of the old Rau Farm, had completed "the most modern dairy barn in Jefferson County." The new complex featured several modern amenities, including concrete floors, drainage channels, a basement and individual drinking troughs for 34 cows (SOJ Vol. XLV, No. 51, 1930; John E. Ott, Interview, May 12, 2008). Described in later years, the Fritts Barn (also sometimes known as the Ott Barn) was the first James Way barn in the Eastern Panhandle and West Virginia, and was built in 1926 (John E. Ott, Interview, May 12, 2008). Pioneered by a man named James, this new type of barn was innovative in its approach to sanitation and animal control. It was characterized by metal stalls and troughs designed for individual cows, and cement floors geared specifically towards effective drainage (James Manufacturing Co. 1917:115-130). The barn on School House Ridge North operated under both Fritts and Ott as a dairy farm with an attached chicken coop (Holmes 2005:23; URS Group 2005:3.1). It stood on the western edge of "The Maples," or the Fritts Farm building complex located to the west of Bakerton Road and north of the Charles Town Turnpike (SOJ Vol. XLV, No. 35, 1929). Other structures of this complex followed the site pattern of earlier buildings on the property, with a horse barn constructed on the foundations of what was likely the old Moler Barn, and a frame farmhouse that may have been the original Moler home once known as the Poplar Cottage. As early as 1916, the brick structure that currently stands along U.S. Route 340 and just east of Bakerton Road was also present (Figure 12).

A dedicated farmer, Fritts kept horses, hogs and sheep in addition to cattle, setting them to pasture on the steeper sections of land where he was unable to grow corn or wheat (SOJ Vol. XLIV, No. 17, 1928; John E. Ott, Interview, May 12, 2008). Also a talented entrepreneur, he headed a crew of roughly 20 employees and contracted out trucks to transport coal from Romney to the local towns and schools. He also rented out mowing, threshing and baling services to neighboring farmers. Fritts served a period as the county commissioner, and was still in office upon his death in 1943 (John E. Ott, Interview, May 12, 2008).

Establishment of Harpers Ferry Historic Site

Although tourism declined in the 1920s, the recognition it brought to the Harpers Ferry area led to the town's identification as a potential national historic site, under the Historic Sites Act of 1935 (Moyer et al. 2004:62). Subsequent years of hard work by local residents and organizations, as well as repeated bills, finally brought about Harpers Ferry's authorization as a National Historic Monument by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on June 30, 1944 (National Park Service 2006). This federal legislation proved just the beginning of a long and laborious process. In desperate need of salvage after decades of neglect and abuse, the town's many historic structures at last became the focus of restoration and repair (Moyer et al. 2004:64).

The late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century witnessed the initial rush of tourism in the Shenandoah Valley, and in particular the unique town of Harpers Ferry. Though it would be

some years before they were given full protection, historic sites at least gained some recognition during this period. The installation of a monument to the Civil War on School House Ridge North was one important step in this process. In the rocky aftermath of the war, farmers on School House Ridge North gradually returned to their seasonal tilling of the battle-torn soil, doing their part in bringing the South's wounded economy back to life. As construction projects and tourism restored the town, Harpers Ferry basked for a time in its privileged location along national highway and railroad lines, though full recovery was in many ways denied by the regularity of severe floods.

Outside town the appearance of the agrarian pastures and croplands of School House Ridge North remained relatively constant, with the exception of only a few constructions such as the Fritts dairy barn. Corn and wheat cultivation continued, though it was later supplemented by dairy farming. Throughout the farmlands of the Shenandoah Valley, orchards were another primary feature of the landscape. Gazing east across the pastures and grain fields of School House Ridge North, one of these could easily be seen across Bakerton Road. To the south of U.S. Route 340, the new industrial settlement of Millville meanwhile flourished in association with the quarries of the Standard Lime and Stone Company.

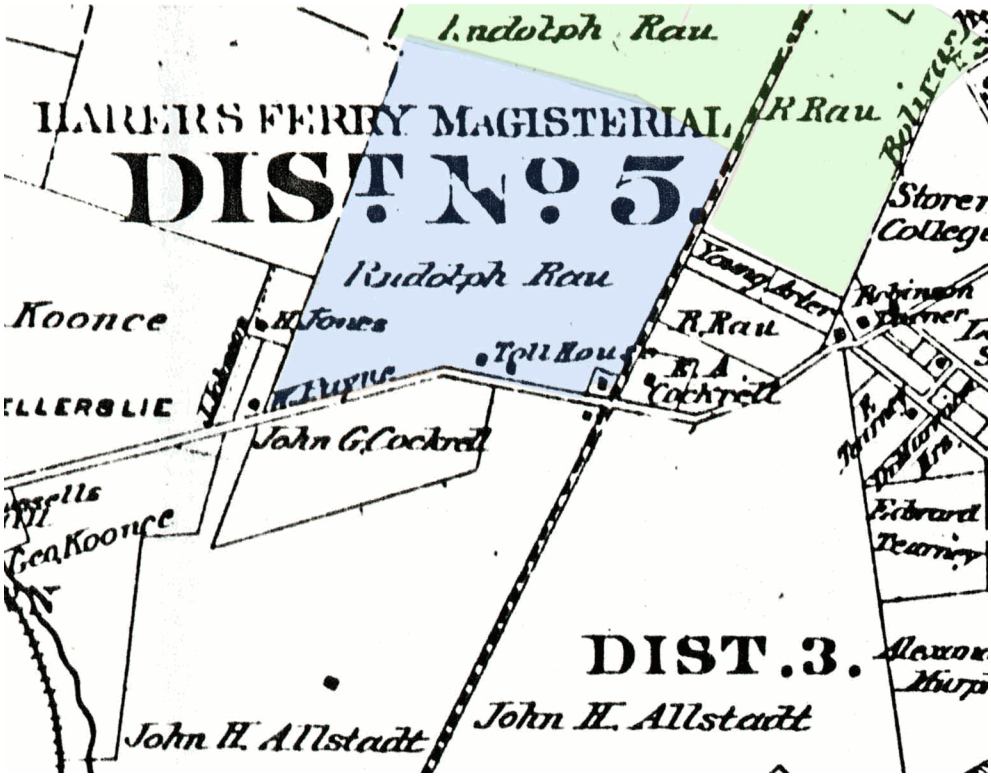


Figure 11. The old Moler properties, then owned by Rudolph Rau, shown shaded in an 1883 map by Samuel H. Brown (HAFE archives).

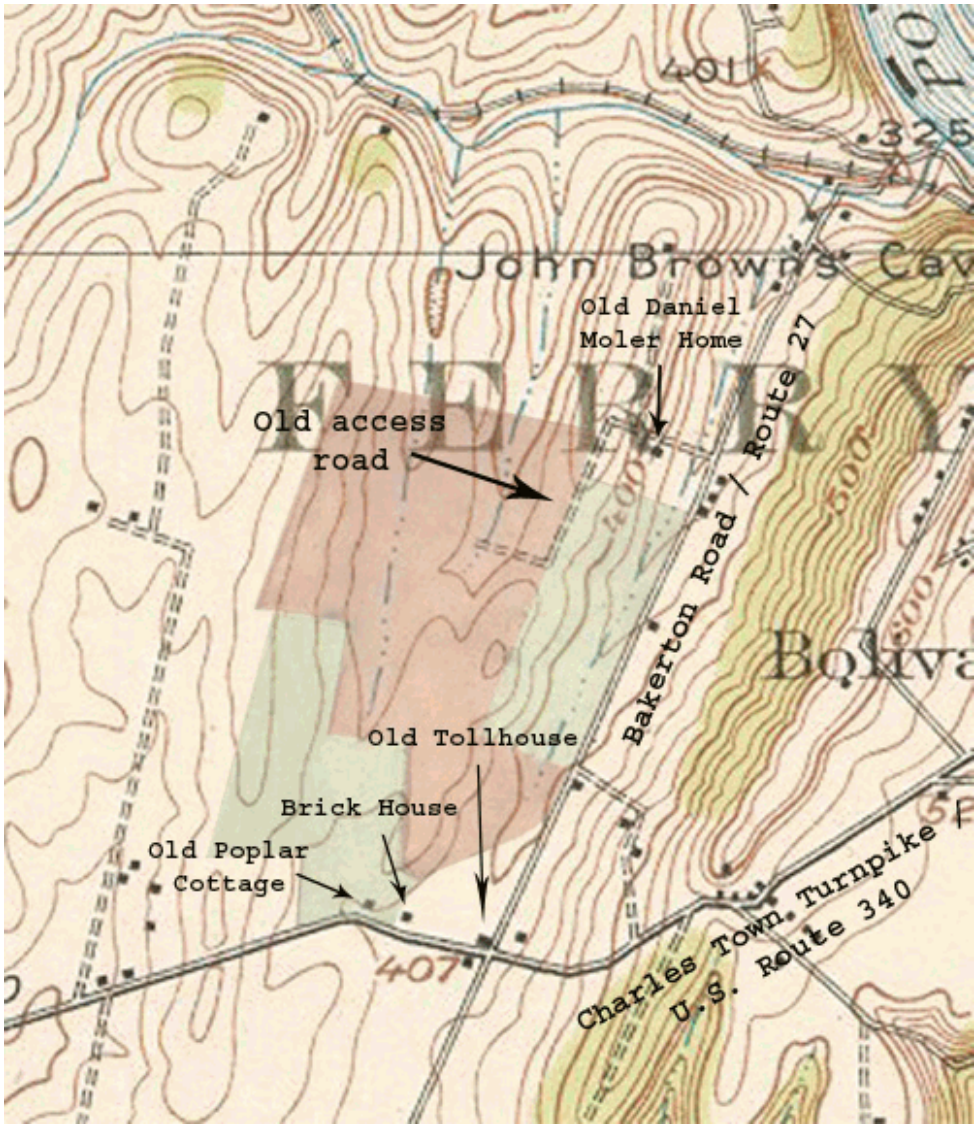


Figure 12. An annotated USGS topographic map of School House Ridge North in 1916, with the current property area shaded by tract (HAFE archives). Note the seasonal streams and the location of the old access road leading into the property from Route 27.

1945 to 2008

NATIONAL PARK PERIOD

Harpers Ferry as a Park

With the recognition of Harpers Ferry as a National Monument in 1944, the town's future seemed finally to be secured. In 1945 the park was authorized to include roughly 1,383 acres. Local preservation advocate Henry Temple McDonald had meanwhile already begun working

towards the town's designation as a National Monument (Moyer et al. 2004:67). Continued flooding soon necessitated modifications to U.S. Route 340, however, and further alterations in 1947 and 1949 were accompanied by the installation of a more permanent, flood-resistant bridge over the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers. Occurring almost simultaneously with the recognition of Harpers Ferry as a national resource, these developments exerted a powerful, negative influence on the town's growth. The new road was realigned to cross the river upstream and to the south, effectively bypassing the town and rerouting attention and activity away from its commercial center (Shackel 1996:57). Thus, just at the moment when automobiles were nationally celebrated as America's most popular mode of transport, the primary point of entry to Harpers Ferry became the railroad. Local businesses continued to fold and many residents moved up the hill to Bolivar, which had managed to retain its valuable location along the highway.

Even as the economic independence and prosperity of Harpers Ferry became a thing of the past, however, its historic significance was growing. After years of hard work, the National Park Service finally completed its first property acquisition for Harpers Ferry National Monument in 1953 (Moyer et al. 2004:77). In the subsequent years, the town was entirely remade by the National Park Service. Buildings were demolished or restored, and the first frameworks for historic interpretation began taking shape (Moyer et al. 2004:129). A crucial turning point came in the 1960s, when the creation and development of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park triggered a full-scale local movement. In 1963, legislation signed by President John F. Kennedy changed the town's designation from a National Monument to a National Historical Park, boosting it to greater prominence in the National Park system, as well as the nation. By 1979 it was designated as a Historic District, and visitors were flocking to learn local history along its quaint little streets.

The Ott Farm

At School House Ridge North, what was then known as the Fritts Farm was a well-maintained farm on the southern slopes of the ridge, judging from an aerial photograph from the early 1950s (Figure 13). Following the death of John Fritts in 1943, the eastern portion of the Fritts Farm passed to his son Robert Fritts, while the portion known as Tract 102-34 and part of Parcel 37.1 became the property of his daughter, Blanche E. Ott, and her husband Elmer A. Ott (Jefferson County Deed Book 158, Page 410). The north- running axis made by the current rerouted path of Bakerton Road where it leaves U.S. Route 340 divided the two tracts. This same route also once served as the driveway to the old John Moler Farm. Based on this division Blanche owned the family dairy barn, while her brother owned a log horse barn built on the foundations of the old Moler Barn and set into the hillside just east of the Fritts Barn. John E. Ott, one of Blanche's children, remembers milking the cows before school in the 1940s. He also recalls a large number of maples (Acer sp.) growing on the property for much of the century, only one of which remains today, in the front yard of the house. The presence of so many of these trees on the property during Fritts' ownership helps to explain its name at the time, "The Maples" (John E. Ott, Interview, May 12, 2008).

During the 1940s the Blanche Ott property continued to function as a dairy farm, providing milk

to a prison located nearby. However, over time the task of meeting the increasingly rigid regulations for milk preparation and delivery became too expensive to continue, and Elmer A. Ott converted the dairy barn to accomodate beef farming. Other nearby farms were also leased and operated as part of his new enterprise (Holmes 2005:23; URS Group 2005:3.1). Robert Fritts inherited the strip of land running along the west side of Bakerton Road and also farmed, but allowed more woodland growth to occur on his land than did his sister (John E. Ott, Interview, May 12, 2008).

The horse barn built on the Moler Barn foundations and used by John, and later Robert, Fritts burned down in 1946, leaving behind only limestone and cement remnants (John E. Ott, Interview, May 12, 2008). An additional Robert Fritts barn stands nearby, just outside the southeastern boundaries of School House Ridge North across Bakerton Road (Jeffrey Moler, April 2, 2008). This Quonset-hut style structure was built and used by Robert Fritts (John E. Ott, Interview, May 12, 2008). In later years Blanche sold the small parcel in the southwest corner of the farm, on which the Shipley School was later constructed. The Ott home of today was built in 1965 by Blanche E. Ott and her husband, and stands on the foundations of an old frame house that may have been the original Moler homestead, also known as the Poplar Cottage (John E. Ott, Interview, May 12, 2008). During the late twentieth century a 500 gallon underground storage tank made of steel was installed underground, at the end of the Ott Farm driveway between the house and the Fritts Barn. It was used to store gasoline for fueling the various vehicles and other machinery of the farm (URS Group 2005:4.1; John E. Ott, Interview, May 12, 2008).

Jellystone Campground

In 1969 a new enterprise known as Harpers Ferry Caverns, Incorporated acquired the tract of land on the northwestern edge of the Ott Farm, or what is known as Parcel 7. In 1973 development of a Yogi Bear's Jellystone Camp Resort began on almost 70 acres of land around the site of the caves (Steve Lowe, March 10, 2008). Plans for the new campground included a 50 by 60 foot swimming pool, a miniature golf course, picnicking area, horseshoe pits and general recreation areas. Its ultimate goal was to host a full 245 camp sites for visitors and their vehicles (SOJ Vol. 109, No. 46, 1973). Some hint of the campground's magnitude can be gleaned from the National Park Service's 1976 General Plan for the C&O Canal, located just across the river. In this report, proposals for the establishment of campgrounds on the Maryland side of the river were said to

"hinge upon the impact made by the Jellystone campground on the opposite shore in West Virginia. If the density of river and towpath use is substantially increased as a result of the proposed 10,000 person capacity of Jellystone, it might be unwise to encourage more visitation through the implementation of the Four Locks proposal" (Parsons 1976:67).

Crucial to the development of the new campground was Harpers Ferry Caverns, Inc., which planned to operate the campground as a franchise of Yogi Bear's Jellystone Parks (SOJ Vol. 110, No. 7, 1974). Jellystone was founded in the name of family fun in 1969, and immediately became a wildly popular destination. Among other things, it featured a statue of the famous

Yogi Bear character, traditionally constructed out of chicken wire and plaster, that has lured visitors off American highways for decades. By 1971 an impressive ten Jellystone Park franchises were in operation from Florida to California, as America became increasingly enamored of this new automobile-accessible, user-friendly version of the outdoors (www.campjellystone.com/history.html). As Harpers Ferry, Inc. saw it, the peaceful farming fields of School House Ridge North, located only half a mile from U.S. 340, were an ideal spot for a campground of this kind. By 1971 a road and a rectangular building already stood in the same location as the current access road and cavern entrance building. According to a local paper in 1973, "the development on the Caverns grounds is being constructed so that people of the Metropolitan area and also tourists traveling into and through Jefferson County, will have an area to spend a relaxing week-end, or even for renting for the entire Summer" (SOJ Vol. 109, No. 46, 1973). A year later, the Jellystone resort officially opened. During its heyday the campground provided food services and merchandise, and welcomed various members of the local community for weekend camping trips (SOJ Vol. 111, No. 45, 1975; SOJ Vol. 112, No. 25, 1976). By 1978 the complex boasted a lodge and a bath house, in addition to over 300 campsites, two pools, tennis courts and a miniature golf course (Delta Environmental Consultants 2002:10).

Prosperity proved painfully short-lived for this outpost of Yogi Bear, however. In the summer of 1978, Harpers Ferry Caverns, Inc. was forced by a Civil Action lawsuit to auction off its property on School House Ridge North. The suit was brought by Jellystone Campground, Ltd., who claimed that Harpers Ferry Caverns, Inc. had failed to pay for royalties and goods delivered to the campground since its opening (Jefferson County Circuit Court, 1978). An advertisement for a "Sheriff's Sale" placed repeatedly in the local paper that year announced the auction of a wide range of items, including a 1975 Ford pickup truck, 200 picnic tables, a mobile home, four coin-operated washers and dryers, metal display shelves, two hair dryers, a Kelvinator ice cream cooler, Taylor ice cream machine, popcorn machine, typewriter, and two cash registers (SOJ Vol. 114, No. 29, 1978).

After its closure, the structures associated with the Jellystone Campground were among the only remaining buildings on School House Ridge North (Harpers Ferry National Historical Park archives). Only one of these buildings has since been destroyed. An aerial photograph from 1977 shows this structure standing just west of Bakerton Road, implying its possible use as a welcome center for the campground (Figure 14). In later years the giant Yogi Bear statue that once greeted visitors to the campground became the object of a prank by local Jefferson High School students, as recounted in 1988:

"Then there was the time that Yogi Bear (a large model of him from Jellystone Park) appeared one morning at the end of the school, near the auditorium. Park employees came to return Yogi to his natural surroundings, but, somehow, Yogi had the mistaken idea that Jefferson was his home for he appeared for days following that in his usual spot" (SOJ Vol. 123, No. 14, 1988).

Following his various adventures, Yogi Bear eventually made his way back to the Jellystone Campground. However, he no longer appears where he did historically, mounted high on a metal stand along the entrance road leading to the Jellystone Lodge.

As for other alterations to the landscape during the late twentieth century, the 1977 photo (see Figure 14) also reveals extensive scarring of the ground running north to south along the west side of Bakerton Road, where dirt was removed to be used for fill in modifications to U.S. Route 340 to the south. In addition, some grading activities may have taken place here in conjunction with the agriculture of the 1950s and 1960s, as old piles of timber found near Bakerton Road led researchers to suggest in 2002 (ECS, Ltd. 2002:3).

The National Park Service on School House Ridge North

In 1976 Dixie D. Kilham, owner of the local Hilltop Hotel, acquired Tract 102-33 from Harpers Ferry Caverns, Inc., which was by that time already struggling financially. Four years later the adjoining parcel, known as Tract 102-31, was sold to him by Robert and Dorothy Fritts (Jefferson County Deed Book 961, Page 219; Jefferson County Deed Book 974, Page 426; Moyer et al. 2004:273). In view of escalating local development and the growth of the Washington metropolitan area, it is likely that Kilham may have hoped to develop these properties for profit.

Recognizing the danger to the area's historic character just in time, the National Park Service launched its initiative to expand the boundaries of the historic district in the 1980s. As previously noted by Moyer et al., "the continual threat of visual impairment to the historical scene by towers and developments lent urgency to expanding the park boundaries" during these years (Moyer et al. 2004:298). In 1987 the government took action, and Congress authorized a boundary study that identified 1,700 acres of adjacent lands which were "deemed necessary to preserve in order to maintain the integrity of the existing park" (Moyer et al. 2004:298). Driven by strong resident mobilization and support, the National Park Service began working toward this goal despite opposition from some local figures, including School House Ridge North landowner Dixie Kilham. Facing off against the Civil War Preservation Trust and other conservation groups in 1990, Kilham and his supporters ultimately lost. This served as just one example of the importance of the Civil War Preservation Trust and others in facilitating park land acquisitions and thereby forestalling, or even preventing, development (Moyer et al. 2004:299-301).

During the 1990s the area of woods and other vegetation on School House Ridge North increased slightly, due to the abandonment of the Jellystone Campgrounds area (URS Group 2007:4.2). The entrance to the caverns themselves, which was previously enclosed, collapsed at some point between the 1980s and 2000. Today the caves and internal viewing staircase are exposed in a gaping hole that measures roughly sixty feet deep (Delta Environmental Consultants 2002:11). The surrounding land currently includes a total of eight structures, all of which were once associated with the Jellystone Campgrounds and are mostly slab-on-grade cinderblock or log construction (URS Group 2007:4.2, 7.1). Following Kilham's death in 1998, the Jellystone Campground portion of School House Ridge North, or Tract 102-33, was sold to the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT) in 2002 (Jefferson County Deed Book 961, Page 219; Jefferson County Deed Book 974, Page 426; Moyer et al. 2004:273). Its ownership and management are still in the process of being transferred to the National Park Service.

Meanwhile, beef farming continued on the Ott property to the south up until the death of Elmer Ott, in 2002. Since then the Ott family has used and maintained the complex and its surroundings as a kind of get-away or hunting camp. This property, known as Tract 102-31, was transferred from CWPT to the National Park Service in 2003 (Jefferson County Deed Book 974, Page 434). The buildings of this complex remain privately owned and used, with the exception of the Fritts Barn.

The National Park Service currently leases the agricultural fields of this parcel and the rest of School House Ridge North through a Long Term Special Use Permit to Ward Zigler, who normally grows corn, wheat, hay or soy depending on the year (URS Group 2007:4.1; Bill Hebb, April 23, 2008; Harpers Ferry National Historical Park archives). These farming fields are composed of rectangular plots with limited tree cover and a few rusted, partially-collapsed barbed wire fences running through them. In some spots the old field divisions crossing this and the neighboring two parcels of School House Ridge North are still lined by Osage orange and hackberry trees, as they probably were during the Civil War (Figure 15). Zigler apparently grew hay on the Ott Farm in 2005, soy in 2007, and cultivated wheat on School House Ridge North in 2008 (URS Group 2005:3.1). Today Jefferson County remains one of the top agricultural regions in the state of West Virginia, with local farmers rotating regularly between corn, wheat and soy crops.

Along U.S. Route 340, the house where Robert Fritts lived still stands, a brick structure just north of the road and to the east of the rerouted Bakerton Road. This is probably a surviving structure from the Civil War, the same described by James E. Taylor as “Eichelberger’s brick dwelling facing us from the north side of the pike” in 1864 (Taylor 1989 [1864]:46). The Fritts Barn also stands intact, just north of Bakerton Road. North of this structure is a row of electrical lines that stretch all the way from a power station off the property on Route 27 west, to just north of the C.W. Shipley Elementary School (Figure 16a). Views looking north from the southern edge of the farm fields are partially impaired by this modern addition.

Nearby, only the limestone foundations of the old Moler Barn remain, standing northeast of the Fritts Barn (Figure 16b). The foundations are extensive, reflecting the modifications made during the structure’s many years of use and building upon the original eighteenth- or early nineteenth-century barn built by the Molers. In the southeast corner of the property are the Moler family cemetery and some discarded, rusty farm machinery, including a couple of hay balers and an old truck (URS Group 2007:4.2). The cemetery is now cared for by two Moler descendants (Figure 17a). Many of the burials are arranged with two stones, a large one at the head and smaller one at the foot. Due to some previous neglect, the cemetery has sustained damages over the years and a few of the gravestones have been partially buried, broken, knocked over or appear to have been moved. However, those of John Moler, III, John Moler, IV and some of their wives and children still stand intact.

In 2005 the National Park Service acted in conjunction with the Trust for Public Land to buy 70 acres of the Ott Farm from the Ott family. This portion of School House Ridge North, located just north of U.S. Route 340 and west of Bakerton Road, is central to the site both

geographically and in terms of its historic significance. It was an important acquisition for the National Park Service, which continues to work toward its goal of obtaining roughly 600 acres of historically significant lands on School House Ridge.

The park's move toward preserving this cultural landscape has become ever more necessary as the region is increasingly vulnerable to modern settlement, and commuters from the expanding Washington-Baltimore metropolitan area begin to grow in number. Despite its rural atmosphere, the population density of Jefferson County in the late 1990s was relatively high, at 201 persons per square mile. The average for the State of West Virginia is only 75 persons per square mile. In 1999, a full forty percent of Jefferson County's total work force was employed outside of West Virginia, indicating the growing importance of this area to the Washington, DC metropolitan region (Thorne Consultants, Inc. 2001:15). Thanks to their quiet, pastoral feel the lands around Harpers Ferry have proven attractive not only to primary home owners, but also to buyers looking for second homes and retirees. In recent years, developers from east of the Blue Ridge have begun to focus their attention on the Lower Shenandoah Valley, resulting in the conversion of large tracts of former farmlands into subdivided housing settlements (National Park Service, 2005). Developments of this kind have already established themselves to the west and north of School House Ridge North, while the Murphy Farm to the south was threatened with a 188-home residential complex and 130-foot water tower (Hallowed Ground 2002:9). In 2006, public outrage erupted when a local developer was discovered excavating for water and sewer pipe lines on National Park Service lands along the south portion of School House Ridge, without permission (Civil War Preservation Trust 2006:3). Land on this ridge has been bought up by a developer who plans to build 42 houses along its length, stretching from U.S. 340 south to the banks of the Shenandoah River.

Thus "the personal economic gain of land development investments and the desire for modern conveniences erode the larger concern that local communities neglect the relevance of the past, missing their responsibility to enable future generations to learn from the past" (Moyer and Shackel 2008:125-6). In view of these realities, in 2007 the Civil War Preservation Trust placed the School House Ridge North site of Jackson's 1862 siege of Harpers Ferry on its list of the nation's ten most endangered Civil War battlefields (ABC News 2007).

Since acquiring the entire School House Ridge North property in 2005, the National Park Service has made several alterations in order to aid with interpretation of the cultural landscape. A single cannon model, facing east, has been placed at the top of the ridge just north of U.S. Route 340, along the western edge of the property. In the summer of 2006, three lines of Virginia worm fence were also constructed with the help of the Student Conservation Association. One of these stands along the west side of Bakerton Road, while the other two run along old fence lines stretching north from the Ott Farm (see Cover Image). Several paths leading through the farming fields were also mowed and fertilized for visitors' use in the spring of 2006 and 2007 (Figure 17b). Four waysides, were installed close to the westward fenceline and along the path on the east side of School House Ridge to help the public interpret the significant Civil War history of these fields (Figure 19a; also visible in Cover Image). A State Historical Marker stands along the west side of Bakerton Road, across the street from an older one describing the Union skirmish line that ran roughly along the road's north-south axis.

Additional preparations for visitor access took place in the spring of 2008, when the park erected a small comfort station and parking lot to the north of the Jellystone Campground access road, just east of Bakerton Road (Figure 19b). The National Park Service has also undertaken some tree removal in order to preserve the agrarian nature of the landscape. Other efforts to interpret the property have been incorporated into the approved School House Ridge Education program, which will involve the use of artifacts, military reproductions and the landscape itself to familiarize school children with Civil War history and the Battle of Harpers Ferry. The agricultural lease agreement will meanwhile continue to provide for the annual rotation of corn, soybeans, wheat and hay with the approval of the National Park Service.



Figure 13. Annotated aerial photograph of School House Ridge North from 1952, with an outline of the current property area (NCR GIS files). Note the farm lanes leading north and west from the Fritts Farm.



Figure 14. Annotated aerial photograph showing School House Ridge North as it appeared in 1977 (NCR GIS files). Note the scarred landscape west of Route 27, and the size of the Jellystone Campground complex.



Figure 15. Trunk of an historic osage orange tree in one of the fence lines running east to west on School House Ridge North, looking north (CLP, May 2008).



Figure 16. (a) Electrical lines and hay bales on School House Ridge North looking northwest (CLP, May 2008); (b) Limestone foundations of the Moler Barn, looking north (CLP, November 2007).



Figure 17. (a) View looking northeast across School House Ridge North, showing the fertilized path in the grass for public use; (b) Moler Cemetery, looking southeast with the wall remnants at right (CLP, May 2008).



Figure 18. (a) View of School House Ridge North looking southeast, with Virginia worm fence and interpretive wayside (CLP, May 2008); (b) Comfort station and gate off of Route 27, looking northwest (CLP, April 2008).

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

INTRODUCTION

This section provides an evaluation of the physical integrity of the cultural landscape at School House Ridge North by comparing the landscape characteristics and features present during the Civil War period of significance (1861-1865) and agricultural period (1780-1868) landscapes, with current conditions. Landscape characteristics are the tangible and intangible aspects of a cultural landscape which express its historic character and integrity, and which allow visitors to understand the history of a site. Each characteristic or feature is classified as either a contributing or non-contributing element of the site's overall historic significance.

Landscape characteristics are classified as contributing if they were present during the property's period of significance, and non-contributing if they were not present during that period. Non-contributing features may in some cases be considered "compatible," if they are determined to fit within the physical context of the historic period and match the character of contributing elements in a way that is sensitive to the construction techniques, organizational methods, or design strategies of the historic period. Features designated as "incompatible" are those that are not harmonious with the quality of the cultural landscape, and whose existence can lessen the historic character of the property.

This section also includes an evaluation of the property's integrity in accordance with National Register criteria. As defined by the National Register, historic integrity is the authenticity of a property's identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the site's historic period. The National Register recognizes seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Several or all of these aspects must be present for a site to retain historic integrity. To be listed on the National Register, a property must not only be shown to have significance under one of the four criteria, but also should be demonstrated to retain integrity to the period of significance.

In the case of School House Ridge North, due to the strong links between this landscape and the surrounding properties, it was necessary to evaluate these characteristics on a broader basis, taking into account the rest of School House Ridge, Bolivar Heights and Harpers Ferry.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

Landscape Characteristics and Features

Contributing landscape characteristics identified for School House Ridge North are spatial organization, land use, circulation, topography, vegetation, views and vistas, structures, small scale features, and natural systems.

Continuing land use on School House Ridge North includes a National Park Service agricultural lease,

which maintains the agrarian character of the battlefield landscape as it appeared during the period of significance. Even the type of cultivation has remained relatively constant, as corn and wheat are still grown on the property today (Figure 19).

Natural systems on School House Ridge North also contribute to the historic significance of the cultural landscape. Flowing Spring is a water course described during the Civil War as running just west and parallel to Bakerton Road, where a seasonal stream still flows today. Although the sinkholes that would one day become the Harpers Ferry Caverns probably existed during the period of significance, they were not discovered until the late nineteenth century, when they were joined to create a larger cave and tourist attraction. Meanwhile, runoff still flows from School House Ridge into the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers, as it has for centuries.

The vegetation on School House Ridge North today is characterized mainly by agricultural crops, and has changed little since the period of significance. During the Civil War, the Molers planted mostly wheat, corn, and hay, as farmers in the area continue to do, and wooden fence lines were shadowed by rows of trees that in some cases survive today. Specifically, hackberry and several remarkable osage orange trees still mark the old fence lines leading west from, and parallel to, Bakerton Road. Patches of woods also recall historic woodlots, whose existence during the Civil War was recounted by historic observers. Around the farm buildings on the south edge of the property, both maples and poplars have been noted over the years. The latter appears to have been most prevalent during the period of significance.

Views from School House Ridge North and various smaller outcroppings to the east have also remained relatively unchanged since the Civil War. The cluster of Ott Farm buildings on the southeast corner still appears in roughly the same location as the old Moler Farm, while the open fields continue to provide a clear vista all the way to Bolivar Heights. The integrity of these views is lessened only somewhat by the slightly increased number of field divisions since the period of significance, as well as the greater density of woodlands visible on Bolivar Heights. The lines of trees marking the field divisions of today in some cases also block the clear views artillery would have had, looking east from near the crest of School House Ridge. However, it is important to note that none of these impacts on the views and vistas of the site are permanent or irreversible.

For the most part, School House Ridge North has retained its rolling, open topography and appears as it would have during the period of significance. The broad, stretching slopes of the ridge, marked by an unpredictable series of dips and hidden pockets, were fundamental to the military use of this area during the Civil War. The varied landscape aided both sides in protecting troops as well as elevating artillery lines above the valleys below, in particular the one that follows Bakerton Road. The one notable area where the topography has changed somewhat since the nineteenth century is the strip of land just west of Bakerton Road, in the northeastern corner of the property. Here an unknown quantity of dirt was removed in the late 1970s in order to provide fill for the construction of U.S. 340 to the south. The full extent of the disturbance wrought on the landscape by these activities remains undefined. However, a 1977 aerial photograph provides a fairly accurate illustration of where they took place (see Figure 14). Judging from historical United States Geological Survey maps, this

relatively small area has always been characterized by gently rolling, varied terrain descending toward Bakerton Road (see Figure 12). The overall character and feeling of the topography has therefore remained unchanged, and this portion of the ridge still remains similar in appearance to the undisturbed areas around it.

There are few small-scale features on School House Ridge North, most of which are concentrated in either the Jellystone Campground or Ott Farm areas. The Moler Cemetery on the edge of the Ott Farm complex was present during the period of significance, though the stone wall which once surrounded it is now gone. In addition, the three reconstructed Virginia worm fences on the property are compatible with the historic landscape, and stand in places where historic fences would have been along Bakerton Road and field divisions. Although they are non-contributing elements due to their recent construction, these fences are useful as interpretive features that help to recreate the setting of the Battle of Harpers Ferry.

The Moler Barn foundations are the only structural features that remain from the historic period of significance. Originally built by the Molers sometime in the late eighteenth or nineteenth century, this building was expanded and used throughout the 1800s and into the twentieth century. However, the structure that last stood upon the foundations burned down in 1946. Further investigation and research on this building is necessary to evaluate its origins and development more precisely. An additional structure which should be preserved is the Fritts Barn, which stands southwest of the Moler Barn and is in deteriorated condition. This building represents the first James Way barn built in West Virginia, and was constructed in 1926 to support dairy operations.

School House Ridge North retains the majority of its historic circulation patterns, with the exception of the rerouted section of Bakerton Road and a small, abandoned farm lane which leads north into the fields from the Ott Farm. A property division still remains along the old route of Bakerton Road, but little evidence of the old farm road can be seen. On the south side of the property, U.S. 340, or the Charles Town Turnpike, follows a route similar to the one it followed during the Civil War. Today's Bakerton Road also traces the path of what was described by James E. Taylor in 1864 as a dirt road called Flowing Spring Run.

The spatial organization of School House Ridge North closely resembles the layout that existed during the second half of the nineteenth century. A cluster of farm buildings remains along U.S. Route 340, and farm field boundaries are still marked by lines of trees and twentieth-century wire fencing. For the most part, the east and south borders of these fields also remain the same, as delineated by Bakerton Road, or State Route 27, and U.S. 340, also known as the Charles Town Turnpike. The one exception to this rule is the rerouting of Bakerton Road near the intersection with U.S. 340, which took place in the late 1970s.

The Seven Aspects of Integrity

1. Location - The boundaries of the roughly 300 acres which comprise the cultural landscape of School House Ridge North are partially defined using historic survey lines that can be traced to

nineteenth century maps of the area. The property roughly encompasses lands owned by John and Daniel Moler to the west of Bakerton Road in the 1860s, with the exception of small portions that have been extracted in three of the corners. These include the plot in the southwest corner, where C. W. Shipley Elementary School stands; the southeast corner where Route 27 deviates from its historic trace by swerving to the west before meeting up with U.S. Route 340; and the northeast corner where a small tract was separated from the whole and is now privately owned. The rest of the Moler Farm was situated directly across the road from Bolivar Heights and to the east of Bakerton Road, or what later became known as Route 27.

2. Feeling - Speaking of the historic feeling at School House Ridge North is difficult, as little remains of the actual physical features which were present during the nineteenth century. Although some of the field divisions appear to be in the same location as during the period of significance, some smaller fields were also probably created, as metal and wire became more available for building fences in the area.

Nonetheless, the pastoral atmosphere of the landscape remains strong and relatively free from modern intrusions, an impression further enhanced by the view of farmland across Bakerton Road to the east. It is unlikely that this historic effect was heavily impacted by the removal of fill from the property in the late 1970s, since it retained its rolling agrarian terrain and only a small percentage of the total area was utilized for the project. Although the fields of today are probably more wooded than they were in the nineteenth century, the patterns of vegetation remain similar, featuring patches of woods concentrated near the peaks of ridges. It takes little effort to imagine this landscape as one of the Civil War period. The reconstructed Virginia worm fences, which stretch along Bakerton Road and along the fields to the west, help to encourage this perspective even though their style lacks historical integrity. The historic fencing probably consisted of worm fence, post and rail fence, or a combination of stack stone and wood fencing, most of which was constructed from locust wood. Thus the open, agrarian character of this landscape retains a high level of integrity to the period of significance.

3. Setting – Landscapes are living, evolving entities that require examination as a continuum, rather than the embodiment of a particular time period. Most of School House Ridge North has been continuously farmed since around 1780. The main circulation routes along the edges of the property have remained largely the same, with the present-day U.S. 340 following the route of the old Charles Town Turnpike, and Route 27 running largely along the same trace as the Old Furnace, Flowing Spring, or Bakerton Road. The landscape remains largely undeveloped and untouched by evidence of modernity, with the exception of the Jellystone Campground area in the northwestern corner and the electrical line just north of the Fritts Barn. However these could be relocated underground, while the remnants of the campground are not permanent, and could be removed. The Ott Farm complex of today was constructed over the first half of the twentieth century, but stands in roughly the same location as the old John Moler farm complex which was present during the historic period of significance. Proof of this continuity can be found in the old limestone foundations of the Moler Barn, which still stand only a few feet away from today's Ott Barn.

In 2006 and 2007, the National Park Service installed three sections of historic Virginia worm fence

made from locust wood along the west side of Route 27. Two additional sections of worm fencing were constructed, both along historic fence lines in the heart of the School House Ridge North battlefield to enhance the interpretive value of the viewshed as seen from the top of Bolivar Heights. Similar lines of locust fencing may have existed on the property during the nineteenth century, since this was the most prominent fence type and material for that period. Unfortunately, none of the original fencing from the Civil War era remains on School House Ridge North today. However, some of the osage orange and hackberry trees which grew along the historic fences still exist. Thanks to the overall integrity of this setting, interpretation of the 1862 Battle of Harpers Ferry is still feasible.

4. Association - The property's association with historic agricultural activities is clearly evident in the continued use of the land for farming purposes. Thanks to recent land preservation efforts involving both federal and non-federal partners, the landscape around the park has largely been protected from developers, unlike the properties to the east, west and south. School House Ridge North thus retains the same rural character that it has possessed for centuries. Meanwhile, its role as a military zone throughout the Civil War is evidenced by historic maps and other documents, further confirming its association with the period of significance.

5. Design - Although there were probably several buildings on School House Ridge North at the time of the Battle of Harpers Ferry, only the old limestone foundations of the Moler Barn remain, on the south edge of the landscape. The old Moler Cemetery is also extant, located in the southeastern corner of the parcel on Bakerton Road and about 150 yards north of U.S. Route 340. The continued concentration of structures in this portion of the property is an important surviving element of the original design.

The landscape of School House Ridge North was probably less divided during the period of significance than it is today. Due to the limited availability of materials and labor during the nineteenth century and before, fewer fences were constructed and farming fields were generally larger. As metal and wire became more available, fences were increasingly easy to construct and a growing number of partitions appeared within farming tracts. This effect was complemented by the simultaneous advance of technology and a rise in productivity per acre of land (Steve Lowe, March 10, 2008). However, in the case of School House Ridge North, the difference between the number of fields during the Civil War versus today is relatively small. In 1858 the Prospect Hill Farm of Daniel Moler, which consisted of 275 acres spanning Bakerton Road, was divided into ten fields. If the Jellystone Campground were to be partitioned into similarly sized fields today, the 304-acre School House Ridge North property would include around eighteen fields. Whereas each field measured an average of 28 acres on Daniel Moler's farm in 1858, the current average for much of the same land is around seventeen acres. Still, much as they did historically, fence lines today stretch along the edges of open fields, shaded by trees and small shrubs. The western edge of the property aligns roughly with School House Ridge, as it did during the Civil War, and several of the old lines of division between farming fields are still evident as rows of trees. The general design of these separations thus appears to have stayed relatively stable across the centuries.

6. Materials - Few of the materials used to shape the cultural landscape of School House Ridge North

during the Civil War remain. Some of the osage orange and hackberry trees that originally marked the fence lines between farm fields still survive. Meanwhile, a number of stones still stand or lie in the Moler Cemetery in the southeast corner of the property, bearing dates ranging from 1807 to 1907. The limestone foundations of the Moler Barn can be found nearby, and the rich soil of this area continues to yield bountiful harvests, year after year. Some archaeological resources might still be found beneath the surface here, but their degree of integrity would be somewhat compromised by the extensive, long-term farming of the land.

7. Workmanship - Surviving evidence of Civil War period workmanship on School House Ridge North can be found in the Moler Cemetery gravestones, as well as the limestone foundations of the Moler Barn.

CONCLUSIONS

This CLI finds that School House Ridge North retains integrity for its two periods of significance, 1861-1865 and 1784-1868. Since then the landscape has been altered slightly, resulting in the loss of vegetative features and structures, but also the addition of woodlands and a few fence lines. Some small changes in the topography have also occurred. Even with these alterations, however, the property still represents the historic battlefield landscape and the continued use of the region for agricultural purposes.

Landscape Characteristic:

Land Use

Historic Conditions

The earliest human inhabitants of School House Ridge North probably used the land for transport, hunting, foraging and warfare. Some temporary habitation may also have taken place in the vicinity. Ever since the late eighteenth century, however, it has been almost continuously used for agricultural activities. In 1784, George Adam Moler acquired a land grant for a tract to the north of School House Ridge North from Lord Fairfax, and likely began using his new property for small-scale subsistence activities. His descendants probably continued in the same vein throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, and at some point acquired the full acreage of what is today School House Ridge North. In 1860 Daniel Moler's Prospect Hill Farm was 266 acres, or roughly the same size as the average for Jefferson County that year, which was 237 acres. According to census records, crop and livestock farming took on increasing importance in Jefferson County over the course of late nineteenth century. The amount of agricultural land grew each decade between 1850 and 1880, a progression which helped the area to ride out the Civil War with no significant damage done to regional productivity (University of Virginia Library 2007). Crops grown by the Molers included corn, wheat, and hay. They also kept hogs, horses, sheep and cattle.

In the late nineteenth century, School House Ridge North was used for recreational purposes that were largely confined to the northwest corner of the property, or the area around Harpers Ferry Caverns. As a naturally occurring feature, the caves could have been used or visited

before the late 1800s. However, they were visited most heavily from the late nineteenth century through the 1970s, during which time two attempts were made to transform them into a major tourist attraction. The first of these was in conjunction with the early use of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad for tourist purposes, while the second accompanied the establishment of a Jellystone Campground. Both failed due to financial strain.

Existing Conditions

Today School House Ridge continues to be used for agricultural purposes, including the cultivation of wheat and hay, through a National Park Service Special Use Permit with a local farmer. The old caverns complex also remains, but is highly deteriorated. On the whole, however, the property retains the same agrarian character it possessed during the Civil War, thanks to its continued integrity of agricultural land use.

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

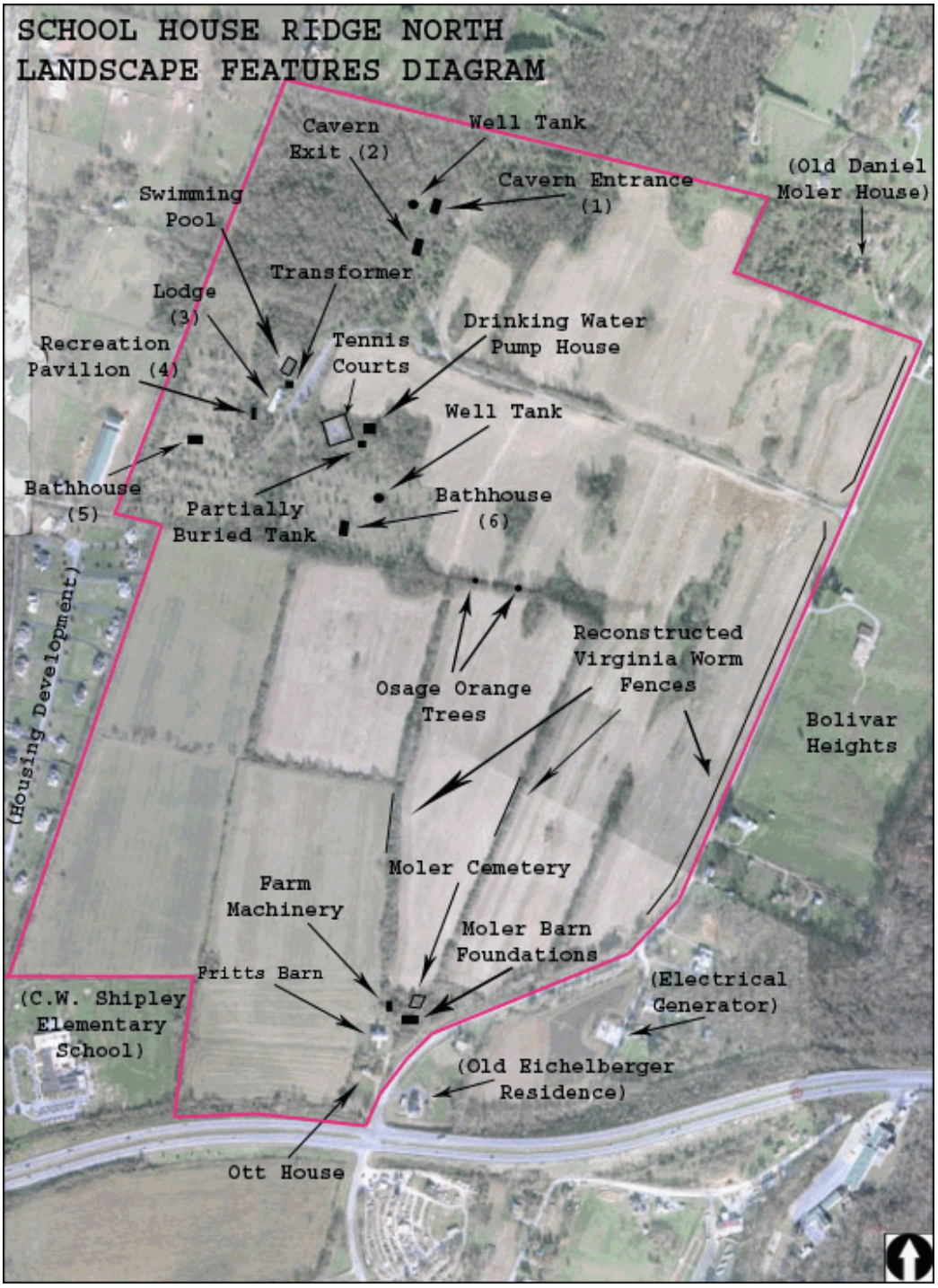


Figure 19. Diagram showing the primary features of School House Ridge North, using an aerial photograph from 2005 (HAFE archives).

Natural Systems and Features

Historic Conditions

School House Ridge North has natural systems and features similar in type and character to those which can be seen in other more eastern parts of the Valley and Ridge Physiographic Province. The Shenandoah Valley is well known for its rich limestone soil and temperate climate, both of which contribute to its fertility. Its deep, well-drained soils receive ample precipitation and have proven ideal for cultivating a variety of crops and trees over the centuries, in addition to being well suited for dairy activities (Murphy and Murphy 1952:29-30).

With the arrival of Europeans in the late eighteenth century, the area around School House Ridge North began to be cleared of its woodlands and converted to crop and pasture land. The settlers recognized the gentle, fertile rolling hills of this region as an excellent place for agriculture, while School House Ridge North proved to be a convenient shield for troops during the Civil War. Up in the northwestern corner of the property, a sink hole probably existed during the historic period of significance, though it did not become a feature of interest until the late nineteenth century.

Existing Conditions

Today the natural systems and features of School House Ridge North remain relatively unchanged, with watercourses and ridges left intact and the ridge still facing off against Bolivar Heights to the east. A seasonal Elk Run tributary still flows north along the west side of Bakerton Road, as runoff from the hills continues to empty into the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers. Though in poor condition, Harpers Ferry Caverns also remain. Thus, the natural systems and features of School House Ridge North retain a high level of integrity.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Elk Run tributary

Feature Identification Number: 129364

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Harpers Ferry Caverns

Feature Identification Number: 129368

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Vegetation

Historic Conditions

The lands of School House Ridge North were probably heavily wooded prior to the arrival of Europeans in the late seventeenth century. Forests at this time consisted of primarily chestnut (Castanea dentata) in addition to white oak (Quercus alba), red oak (Quercus rubra), hickory (Carya ovata), black walnut (Juglans nigra), ash (Fraxinus sp.), black locust (Robinia pseudoacacia), and maple (Acer sp.). With the development of agriculture in the area, farming

fields came to replace these woodlands and dominate the landscape. Early farmers retained some woodlots for fuel and construction materials, however. A 1798 description of School House Ridge North boundaries mentions white oak, black oak (Quercus velutina), and locust (Berkeley County Deed Book 15, Page 485). During a period of neglect when the Civil War raged, agricultural fields in this area were overgrown with sagebrush (Artemisia sp.) and ironweed (Vernonia sp.). Some so-called poplar, or what was probably tulip poplar (Liriodendron tulipifera), and maple were also present around the Moler farmstead, along U.S. 340.

The war claim of Daniel Moler illustrates how the devastation caused by Civil War regiments took a heavy toll on these tracts. A reported 41 acres of woodland on his property was, according to Moler, entirely deforested by the Union Army in 1862. The subsequent industrialization of the Harpers Ferry area, including the construction of the Shenandoah Pulp Company, further depleted the local woodlands.

In the years following the Civil War, both the nation and West Virginia underwent important changes that altered cultural landscapes across the board. Although the population of Jefferson County gradually resumed its pre-conflict size, the new technologies of industrialization resulted in enormous increases to the efficiency of local farming. According the the United States Census Bureau, roughly sixty percent of the county was developed into farms in 1850. By 1900 this number had risen to approximately ninety percent.

Though many of the woodlands on School House Ridge North and its surroundings thus disappeared, the vegetation along the fences of the farm fields survived, including osage orange and hackberry. Use of trees along these boundaries was common among farmers of the nineteenth century, as both labor and materials were scarce. Indeed, some of the trees present on School House Ridge North may have been planted before the Civil War. Farmers of this era also maintained woodlots as a fundamental component of their land. Patches of woods were a valuable source of natural resources for farms, supplying such necessary items as fuel and building materials.

Existing Conditions

Today, the rich density of the woodlands on some parts of School House Ridge serve as testament to the environment's unfailing productivity. Situated halfway between the northern and southern forests along the east coast, West Virginia boasts a rich diversity of woodland plants, including white and red oak, hickory, black walnut, black locust, and hackberry (Celtis occidentalis) (Murphy and Murphy 1952:29-30). More specifically, the western 150 feet of the School House Ridge North property is heavily wooded while most of the higher elevations, including the area along Route 27, consist of open, rolling hillsides (see Figure 19; Thorne Consultants, Inc, 2001:17). Several invasives grow around the Jellystone Campground and along the fence rows, threatening to encroach upon the fields. These include tree-of-heaven (Ailanthus altissima) and Russian olive (Elaeagnus angustifolia), among others.

Some specimens of aged osage orange (Maclura pomifera) and hackberry still mark the historic fence lines, one of which runs east to west between the two old Moler tracts (see Figure 19). Although it is difficult to say where the historic woodlots were located, the spotted nature of the currently existing woodlands on the property is similar to what would have been present during the historic period of significance. Even the large clump of vegetation which surrounds the old Jellystone Campground could appear much as did the 41 acres of woodland mentioned by Daniel Moler in his 1867 war claim, although they may not be in exactly the same location on the tract. The farmland is meanwhile still cultivated with the same crops that grew there during the Civil War, such as hay, corn, and wheat.

Thus, vegetation on School House Ridge North has changed little since the historic period of significance, and the site retains a high level of integrity with respect to this aspect of the landscape.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Hackberry trees

Feature Identification Number: 130065

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Woodlots

Feature Identification Number: 129372

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Osage orange trees

Feature Identification Number: 130077

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Agricultural fields

Feature Identification Number: 129374

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Woodlots

Feature Identification Number: 130073

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Russian olive

Feature Identification Number: 130069

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Views and Vistas

Historic Conditions

Since European settlement and the distribution of land grants by Lord Fairfax in the second half of the eighteenth century, the views and vistas of School House Ridge have featured an open, agrarian landscape marked occasionally by woodlots and lines of fencing. In particular, the view looking east to Bolivar Heights was crucial during the Civil War, as it provided access to the enemy forces gathered there. In 1864 Bolivar Heights was described by James E. Taylor as a "barren waste" (Taylor 1989:45). While looking off to the west by the intersection of present-day Route 27 and U.S. 340, he wrote:

"Rested and cooled off, we take to the Pike which we pursue west, up a 1,000-yard grade. At the summit we pause to look backward, opposite Eichelberger's brick dwelling facing us from the north side of the pike. Across the middle ground was Bolivar Height's dark comb stretching like an ugly frown from river to river, while the Blue Ridge beyond loomed majestically with rugged aspect softened by a dreamy haze" (Taylor 1989:46).

This image of an open, hilly landscape, dotted here and there with a farmstead, was probably what could be seen in other directions as well. Vistas in these directions would likely have featured additional farmland, with the partially wooded Furnace Hill rising to the north and the sizeable Allstadt Farm to the south. After around 1850, the school house from which the ridge gained its name might also have been visible, perched on the ridge just south of the Charles Town Turnpike (see Figures 6 and 7).

Existing Conditions

Views of School House Ridge North remain much as they have since European settlement, featuring broad, rolling farmland broken by occasional lines or copses of trees (see Figure 3). A small cluster of buildings still stands in the southeastern corner of the property, in roughly the same spot where the old Moler Barn, house and associated buildings stood. These structures are sheltered by the surrounding trees much as the historic structures were, though the woods are probably more dense now than they were then. However, some tree cover was common around homes and can be seen in the vicinity of the Eichelberger residence drawn by James E. Taylor in 1864 (see Figure 5; Taylor 1989:45).

School House Ridge stretches along the west edge of the property, and from certain points looking west and south from near the southern edge, the C.W. Shipley Elementary School can be seen standing in a partially wooded area just north of U.S. 340 (Figure 20a). Looking east from these areas, the Fritts Barn stands out near the road. The highway nearby can be both seen and heard, in certain locations (Figure 20b). From this point looking north, the line of modern electrical poles also interrupts the view of the farm fields (see Figure 16a). Once on the other side of the electrical lines, the few scattered trees of the farm fields can be seen giving way to thick woodland, with the historic home of Daniel Moler visible just north of the property boundary near Route 27. There may be slightly more fence lines and trees in this vista

than there would have been historically, due to an increase in the number of fields since the Civil War. This greater number of trees may also block the views artillery men may have had facing east from School House Ridge during the Battle of Harpers Ferry. However, several of the fence rows remain in their historic locations and provide sight lines similar to what would have existed during the conflict.

Looking east from the tops of School House Ridge and several of the smaller humps to the east, the view includes the open fields of the back side of Bolivar Heights, with the skirmish line from the Battle of Harpers Ferry clearly marked by Route 27. The woodlands at the peak of Bolivar Heights are today more substantial than they were during the nineteenth century, according to James E. Taylor's 1864 description. Thus the stark image of a naked ridge stretching between the two rivers, described so well by Taylor, is softened somewhat today by the trees covering it. However, other documents mention woods on the crests of some of the hills in this area, and the sight line cut by the National Park Service down through Bolivar Heights provides some idea of what could have been seen during the Civil War. To the west, the Blue Ridge remains visible in the hazy distance.

In general the vistas of this area retain their rural, agrarian character. With the help of the waysides along Route 27, visitors can easily visualize the landscape's Civil War past. Consequently, School House Ridge North retains a high level of integrity with respect to views and vistas.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: View east of Bolivar Heights

Feature Identification Number: 129376

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: View west of School House Ridge

Feature Identification Number: 129378

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 20. (a) View of the Fritts Barn from School House Ridge, looking southeast; (b) Looking south toward U.S. 340 with the C.W. Shipley Elementary School at right and barely visible electrical lines (CLP, May 2008).

Topography

Historic Conditions

The topographic characteristics of School House Ridge North are fairly typical of the eastern part of the Valley and Ridge Physiographic Province, and are comprised primarily of gently rolling terrain bordered by flat-topped, linear mountain ridges which are occasionally broken by wind gaps. These breaks were originally created by streams of water which flowed, and in some cases still flow, into the Shenandoah River (Thornbury 1965:102-9). The earliest maps of School House Ridge North show a valley running along Bakerton Road and rising up to the ridge on the west side and Bolivar Heights to the east. School House Ridge, which runs along the western edge of the tract, stood out as a distinctive feature along the road between Halltown and Bolivar, and was repeatedly used during the Civil War as a place to conceal companies of men and artillery for attacking Harpers Ferry. The distinctive, highly varied topography of this area was used to full advantage during the Battle of Harpers Ferry, not only for shelter but to provide an elevated position for advancing troops. The same slopes have long been used for cultivation as well.

Existing Conditions

Today the rolling lower slopes of School House Ridge still form a narrow swale which parallels the paved Route 27. About a quarter mile to the west, the ridge runs along the edge of the property, at times hidden behind the varied, bumpy terrain to the east.

The only documented evidence of major change to this landscape was the removal of soil from the northeastern corner of School House Ridge North in the 1970s, to be used for fill in the construction of U.S. 340. The precise extent to which the topography of the property was affected by this event remains unknown, but the amount of land used for this project appears to be relatively small in relation to the total area of the historic site (Figure 21). In general, the topography throughout the property remains similar to that which existed during the historic period of significance, judging from maps, aerial photographs and historic accounts. Here and elsewhere along the ridge, rolls and dips running roughly north to south descend to the seasonal Flowing Spring and Route 27 (Figure 22a). Consequently, the topography of School House Ridge North retains a moderate level of integrity.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: School House Ridge

Feature Identification Number: 129380

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

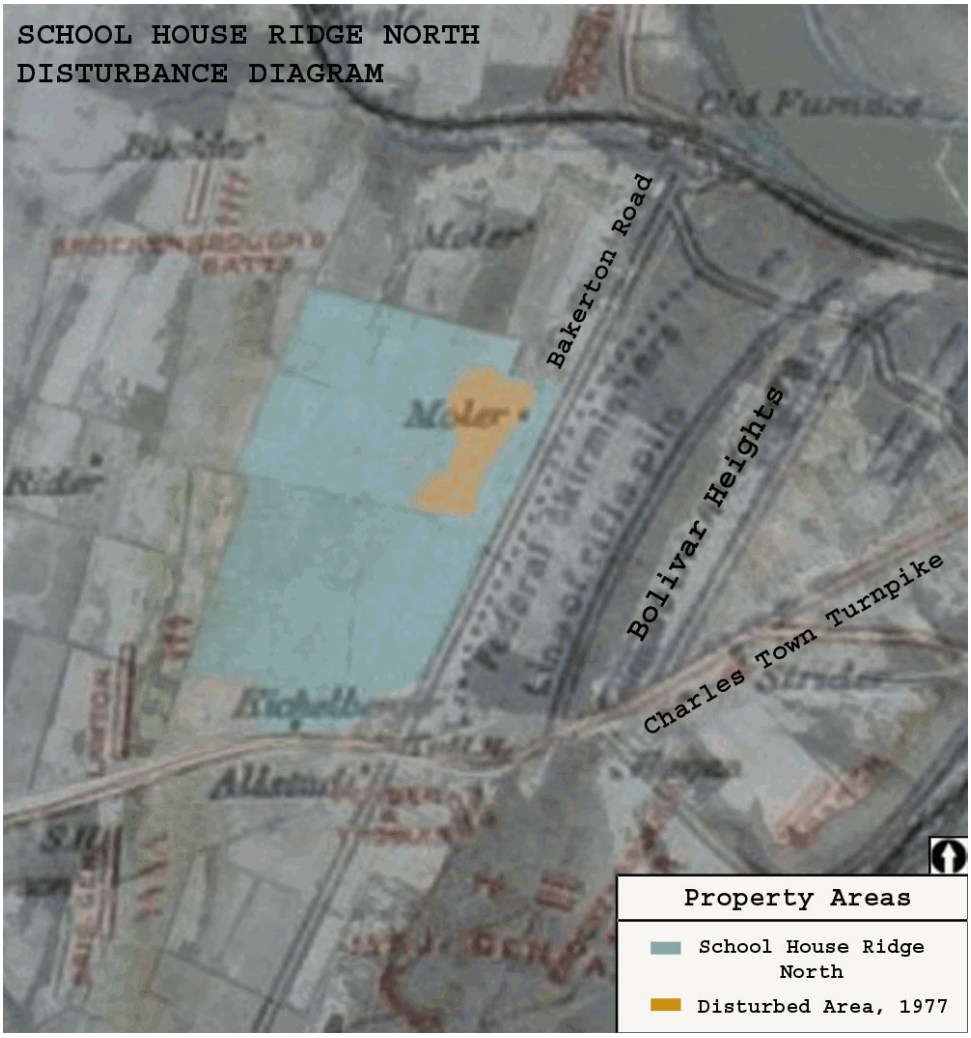


Figure 21. An annotated Civil War military map (Davis et al. 1983: Plate 29) overlaid on a 1977 aerial photograph (HAFE archives) illustrates the area disturbed by the removal of fill from School House Ridge North in 1977.



Figure 22. (a) Access road leading west to Jellystone Campground from Route 27, showing area where soil removal took place in the 1970s (CLP, April 2008); (b) Looking northwest toward Bolivar Heights from School House Ridge North (CLP, May 2008).

Small Scale Features

MOLER CEMETERY

Historic Conditions

The cemetery located on School House Ridge North borders the present-day Bakerton Road, in the southeastern corner of the property, and was present during the Civil War. In it can be found the remains of some of those who once lived on the Moler farm, including both John Moler, Sr., and Captain John Moler. The former was the first person to be buried there, in 1807, while the last burial in the graveyard took place in 1907. Throughout the nineteenth century it stood within roughly a hundred yards of the Moler Barn, and was once surrounded by a stone wall. This cemetery should not be confused with the other Moler cemetery found near Shepherdstown to the north, which contains remains from earlier generations and other branches of the family.

Existing Conditions

Today the Moler Cemetery is cared for by two Moler descendants. Due to varying levels of neglect over the years, it has sustained some damages and a few of the gravestones have

either fallen over or appear to have been moved. The stone wall which once surrounded it is still evident, but deteriorated and heavily overgrown with vegetation. One edge is partially replaced by a section of rusted wire fencing. Many of the gravestones are still standing, however, and these include several that are associated with the historic period of significance. Consequently, the Moler Cemetery retains a moderate level of integrity with respect to the small-scale features of School House Ridge North.

FENCES

Historic Conditions

A number of modern fences on School House Ridge mark the boundaries for some of the earliest land transactions in the area. Historically, fences not only identified borders with adjacent properties and subdivided farm fields, but they also enclosed livestock such as cows and pigs. According to English Common Law, farmers were responsible for their own livestock if it escaped and damaged neighboring properties. Thus, they felt compelled to build the necessary fencing to contain their animals. In contrast, American farmers and landowners were expected to fence in their own property if they wanted to protect it, as cattle were allowed to roam at will (Hart 1998:170-1).

The earliest American fences were usually constructed from stones and brush that had been cleared from the fields. In subsequent years, the first permanent fences were built from locally harvested wood and constructed in a zig-zag pattern known as the worm, snake, Virginia rail, or Virginia worm fence. When early farmers soon found that the top rail of these fences could be easily knocked out of place, they added a top rail secured by two posts driven into the ground (Hart 1998:171-2). The new style of fencing was known as stake-and-rider, and was regularly used to contain larger livestock such as horses and cows, while the old-style Virginia worm fences were best suited for smaller animals like sheep and pigs. In some parts of the country these two types were eventually replaced by post-and-rail fencing, which required less timber for construction, could easily be weeded and did not monopolize as much land area as the worm-style fences.

The preferred material for building wooden fences of all kinds was originally chestnut, due to its durability and resistance to bugs. Locust was often used to construct the posts for the same reasons. With the onslaught of the Chestnut Blight of the early twentieth century, however, locust and oak were increasingly used for fencing (Long 1961:33-4). Woven wire fencing was first developed in the 1850s. It required less materials for construction, called for less maintenance and had greater longevity than wooden fencing. Although it slowly grew in popularity over the second half of the nineteenth century, it was not widely used until the 1890s. Barbed wire was introduced in 1874, but did not come into general use until decades later. Over the years, farmers found that wire fencing offered a less expensive solution to an old problem, and could be easily moved or repaired (Mather and Hart 1954:202-210; Jackson 1996:63).

An 1864 drawing by James E. Taylor depicts a post-and-rail fence with four rails bordering the Charles Town Turnpike along the edge of the School House Ridge North property (see Figure 5). However, both stake-and-rider and Virginia worm fences were widely employed in West Virginia during the nineteenth century, particularly for the internal division of fields. In comparison to the more sturdily anchored post-and-rail fencing often used along property boundaries with public roads and lands, the worm style fencing could more easily be relocated, and so was a favorite for marking the internal division of fields (Long 1961:33).

Although many historians and cultural geographers believe post and rail fencing to have been the preferred fence type along roadways, historic mapping and photo documentation attest that Virginia worm fences were often present along roadways in this region. Thus although the Taylor drawing indicates the existence of a post and rail fence heading west along the macadamized Charles Town Turnpike during the Civil War, it is difficult to say what type of fencing may have run beside the dirt route of Bakerton Road, leading north from that point. However, according to a report by the United States Department of Agriculture, a full 85 percent of West Virginia's fencing was Virginia worm fence in 1871. Some fences in the area had "but seven to nine rails to the panel" (U.S. Department of Agriculture 1872:504).

Whatever the case, judging from the war claim of Daniel Moler School House Ridge North most likely had little to no fencing on it for most of the Civil War, or after 1862. According to this document, more than 70,000 wooden fence rails were removed from the property between September and October of 1862, taken either from extant fences or from places of storage on the farm.

Existing Conditions

Today several stretches of reconstructed Virginia worm fence can be found on School House Ridge North (Figure 22b; see Figures 18 and 19). The strong sense of battlefield history which the National Park Service has been able to convey with the installation of Virginia worm fences throughout the country helped to justify their construction along Route 27 and several of the field divisions of School House Ridge North in 2006 (Moyer, Wallace and Shackel 2004:273). One of these lengths of fence falls within the historically significant view of Bolivar Heights, as seen from School House Ridge. The location of a similar fence there during the Civil War is unlikely, considering the fact that few stretches of fencing remained after October 1862. Nonetheless, a fence may still have stood there during the Battle of Harpers Ferry, since this conflict took place just after removal of the fence rails began. Although the Virginia worm fences are therefore found to be non-contributing features in the current landscape, they are still compatible in depicting the historic setting for School House Ridge North.

In other parts of the property, rusted wire fencing can be seen along the lines of trees, while some of the oldest field divisions are marked with historic osage orange and hackberry trees (see Figure 15). Thus, the fencing of School House Ridge North retains a moderate level of

integrity with respect to small-scale features.

HARPERS FERRY CAVERNS

The caverns on School House Ridge North were first publicly noted upon their discovery by E.H. Dick in 1882. Almost immediately they became a focus of tourist activity and recreation, and for a time their development into a popular tourist resort along the B&O Railroad was highly anticipated. Although these plans eventually collapsed, the caves went on to draw hundreds of visitors in later years. Private visits in the early twentieth century were probably operated by the Rau family, but in the 1970s the caverns became the central element of the new Jellystone Campground on School House Ridge North. Rustic entrance and exit structures were built for welcoming and marketing merchandise for tourists, and an elaborate cart track was built leading down into the caverns, to facilitate visitor access. When financial difficulties forced the campground to close in 1978, both the caverns and surrounding complex were abandoned.

Today the Harpers Ferry Caverns are surrounded by the scattered, severely deteriorated ruins of the old Jellystone Campground buildings (Figures 23a and 23b). Little if any evidence remains to recount the nineteenth-century tourist use of the caves. The reinforced concrete entrance is already partially disintegrated, and judging from the bowing steel rod that supports its two walls, is in danger of total collapse. Since the presence of the Harpers Ferry Caverns during the historic period of significance cannot be confirmed, this feature is considered non-contributing.

JELLYSTONE CAMPGROUND

The Jellystone Campground on School House Ridge North enjoyed a short stint of success between 1974 and 1978. It boasted all the conveniences of a modern, luxury campground, including two pools, a miniature golf course, tennis courts, bathhouses and electricity hookups for over 300 campsites.

Today the old campgrounds are overgrown and the structures are characterized by collapsed roofs, broken windows and serious decay. The Olympic-sized swimming pool is still open and hazardous, while the tennis court is severely deteriorated. The small-scale features of Jellystone Campground were not present during the historic period of significance, and are therefore considered a non-contributing feature of the landscape.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Moler Cemetery

Feature Identification Number: 129394

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Osage orange and hackberry tree lines

Feature Identification Number: 129388

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: NPS reconstructed fencing

Feature Identification Number: 129390

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Wire fencing

Feature Identification Number: 129392

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Harpers Ferry Caverns

Feature Identification Number: 129396

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Campsite hookups

Feature Identification Number: 129398

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Campground tennis court

Feature Identification Number: 129400

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Campground pool

Feature Identification Number: 129402

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 23. (a) Harpers Ferry Caverns exit building, or Building 2, looking southwest; (b) Harpers Ferry Caverns entrance building, or Building 1, looking north (CLP, January 2008).

Buildings and Structures

OTT FARM

Historic Conditions

Ever since the last decades of the nineteenth century, a small cluster of farm buildings has stood in the southeast corner of School House Ridge North. At first these consisted of the Moler house, barn and possibly other structures, but by 1833 there was also a tollhouse that stood at the crossroads of Bakerton Road and the Charles Town Turnpike.

The exact construction date of the Moler Barn building is unknown, but judging from its apparent age and materials it probably incorporates the original structure built by the Molers sometime in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. Since then additions have been made, as evidenced by a concrete section present on one side. Still, the enormous size of the limestone structure confirms its significance to the historic owners. The barn probably survived the Civil War and, during its early use, was associated with the John Moler Farm and served various purposes related to wheat, corn and hay storage as well as housing several types of livestock. The old tollhouse and two houses stood nearby, in 1916. One of these structures probably represents the original Moler home, or Poplar Cottage, before it was torn

down (Figure 12). The other building is the large brick home that still stands along U.S. Route 340 and east of Bakerton Road, just outside of the School House Ridge North study boundary. During the twentieth century, the Moler Barn was used by the Fritts family to store hay. It burned down around 1946, and today only the limestone foundations remain.

A few additional farming structures were added to the property by the Fritts and Ott families, including the Fritts Barn. Constructed by John E. Fritts in 1926, this building was the first James Way barn built in West Virginia. Initially used by the Fritts and Ott families as a dairy barn, it later housed cattle and remained in use until 2002.

Existing Conditions

Today the remaining structures located near the southeastern edge of School House Ridge are part of the old Ott farm, and are privately owned with the exception of the Fritts and Moler barns. The limestone foundations of the Moler Barn are located between the Fritts Barn and the Moler Cemetery, largely intact but heavily overgrown (see Figure 17a).

Meanwhile, the Fritts Barn stands nearby. As it was described in 2005:

"The roof cover is tin and has vent in the ridge-line. The silo is reminiscent of a Unadilla ribbed silo and is a wood stave type. There is a lower level constructed of concrete block. There was no access to this level. The interior of the barn is configured for milking. It has head stalls, feed troughs and a solid concrete main floor. The upper level is clapboard over wood frame and is configured for hay storage. The barn has steel gutters and down spouts. The structure appears sound" (Holmes 2005:33).

As the first James Way barn in West Virginia and one of a dwindling number of similar structures, this building is a valuable resource, despite the fact that it does not contribute to the cultural landscape of School House Ridge North. Its unique architectural style is regionally significant and will be reevaluated for inclusion on the List of Classified Structures. Consequently, the Fritts Barn retains a moderate level of integrity with respect to the buildings and structures of School House Ridge North.

JELLYSTONE CAMPGROUND

The old Jellystone Campground Lodge and Caverns complex was built beginning in 1971, and functioned as a campground and resort until it went bankrupt in 1978. During its short period of operation, the site contained facilities for visiting the caverns, two pools and a bath house, tennis courts, a miniature golf course, a lodge and more than 300 campsites. The structures were mostly of slab-on-grade cinder block or log construction, and were built in clusters in the northwest corner of School House Ridge North.

Since its closure in the 1970s, the Jellystone Campground has been abandoned and unused save

by a few dog walkers, and occasionally some local high school students seeking mischief. The associated structures of the complex are highly deteriorated and unsafe. In their current ruinous condition, the buildings are beyond any feasible rehabilitation (Thorne Consultants, Inc. 2001:14). Several wells and a partially buried storage tank were once used to supply the campsite with drinking water. Discarded pieces of scrap metal, lumber and tires were observed in the vicinity of the cavern buildings (URS Group 2007:4.2, 7.1). Most of the original structures remain in some form, however, and all eight of them have been numbered to aid with identification (see Figure 19). None of these buildings were present during the period of historic significance, and so they are considered non-contributing features of the landscape.

Building #1, Cavern Entrance
This is the cavern entrance building, constructed of wood and in very poor condition. It is located just north of the caverns.

Building #2, Cavern Exit
This is the cavern exit building, also constructed of wood, with partially collapsed walls and a severely deteriorated staircase leading down into the caverns. It is located just south of the caverns.

Building #3, Lodge
This building is constructed of wood, and the roof of one of its northern rooms has collapsed. It is located off the main driveway into the old campground, near the western perimeter of the School House Ridge North property.

Building #4, Pole Building
This building, once used for storing recreational equipment, is located southwest of the lodge.

Building #5, Bathhouse
This building was used by guests as a bathhouse. It is constructed of cement block walls with cement floors, and is located to the south of the lodge, on the edge of the western parking hookup area.

Building #6, Bathhouse
This building was used by guests as a bathhouse. It is also constructed of cement block walls with cement floors, and is located to the southeast of the lodge, on the edge of the eastern parking hookup area.

Building #7, Pool Pump House
This pump house once served the old swimming pool and is constructed of wood. It is located just north of the lodge.

Building #8, Pump House
This pump house once provided the entire campground with drinking water, and is constructed out of cement blocks. It is located almost directly east of the lodge, close to the eastern parking hookup area (URS Group 2007:5-1).

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Moler Barn

Feature Identification Number: 129404

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Fritts Barn

Feature Identification Number: 129406

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Jellystone Campground structures

Feature Identification Number: 129408

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Circulation

Historic Conditions

Circulation patterns on School House Ridge North have long been an important piece of the landscape history, contributing substantially to the development and use of the land over the years. For over two hundred years the two main roads on the property, namely Route 27, or Bakerton Road, and U.S. 340, or the Charles Town Turnpike, have remained almost exactly the same despite various name changes.

What is today known as U.S. Route 340 follows roughly the same alignment as one of the earliest roads in the Shenandoah Valley, which passed through a gap originally carved by the waters of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers. This route was first worn by many of the area' s earliest European settlers, as they moved down from Pennsylvania and into the lush promised lands of the Shenandoah Valley (National Park Service 2005:78). The Smithfield, Charlestown and Harpers Ferry Turnpike Company developed the road into a turnpike in 1830, and had macadamized it by 1833. Toll houses sprang up along its length, including one at the crossroads with Bakerton Road. This structure stood just to the east of the present School House Ridge North property boundary.

During the Civil War, Bakerton Road was described by James E. Taylor as Flowing Spring Run, and led north from the Charles Town Turnpike, paved with dirt. Over the course of the nineteenth century, it served as the vital link connecting the Moler farms to the grist mill to the north, which stood near the Potomac River as well as the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. Also probably present around this time was a dirt driveway leading north from the turnpike to the John Moler Farm, which was located in roughly the same spot occupied by the current, rerouted Bakerton Road.

Otherwise, School House Ridge North contained a few small, dirt farming lanes from the

beginning of the nineteenth century onwards, some of which are still visible in an aerial photograph from 1952 (see Figure 13). A dirt road leading to the Harpers Ferry Caverns from Bakerton Road was established sometime in the 1880s, in association with the development plans for the caves. This road is shown paved in dirt in a 1916 topographic map of the property, and appears to have originally been a continuation of the driveway to the old Daniel Moler home (see Figure 12). By 1952 it had been relocated south to provide a direct route to the caves, and can just barely be seen in the upper right edge of Figure 13. In the 1970s a branch was added to this road, as part of the Jellystone Campground complex (see Figure 14).

Existing Conditions

School House Ridge North retains most of the circulation patterns present during the historic period of significance, with the exception of the old Moler Farm driveway, which now forms a portion of the rerouted section of Bakerton Road. A small, abandoned farm lane also leads north into the fields from the Fritts Barn and Ott Farm, marked by a wide depression and bordered by a restored Virginia worm fence.

Branching west from Route 27, the old dirt and gravel access drive to the Jellystone Campground remains the only road that leads onto the property. It is in poor condition, and blocked with a gate to discourage trespassing. Lined with trees, the access road runs about a quarter mile slightly uphill and over mostly level terrain, straight back into a more wooded area on the west side of the farm fields where the old Jellystone Campground lodge is located. About a quarter of a mile west on the drive, a partially washed-away macadam road forks off to the north and leads to a deteriorated parking lot next to the Harpers Ferry Caverns. No trespassing signs are posted along the length of the property abutting Route 27.

Meanwhile, Bakerton Road continues to follow its old route north along the entire eastern edge of School House Ridge, bordered on the east side by Bolivar Heights. On the south side of the property, U.S. 340 still cuts a path remarkably similar to the one followed by the Charles Town Turnpike during the Civil War (Figure 24). Thus, the circulation patterns of School House Ridge retain a moderate level of integrity.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Charles Town Turnpike / U.S. 340

Feature Identification Number: 129412

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Bakerton Road / Route 27

Feature Identification Number: 129410

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Farm road remnant north of Fritts Barn

Feature Identification Number: 130083

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Jellystone Campground access road

Feature Identification Number: 129414

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 24. Overlay using a 1988 aerial photograph behind an annotated 1864 Samuel H. Brown map, with the historic Charles Town Turnpike and Bakerton Road shown in red and the Moler properties outlined in black (HAFE archives).

Spatial Organization

Historic Conditions

The Moler Barn foundations represent the only existing structure on School House Ridge North that was present during the historic period. During the Civil War a small cluster of farm buildings stood here, in the southeast corner of the property along the Charles Town Turnpike. These included not only the barn, but also the Poplar Cottage, which was probably surrounded

by several tulip poplar trees, as implied by the name "Poplar." Lines of wooden fencing edged the rolling farm fields and woodlots to the north, which were bounded by Old Furnace Road to the east and the turnpike to the south.

Existing Conditions

Today, the spatial organization of School House Ridge North remains largely the same as it was during the historic period of significance. The limestone foundations of the Moler Barn still exist near the site where the old Moler farmstead once stood, and close to the current Ott house and Fritts Barn. These structures are still surrounded by trees, although the woods of this portion of the property are more dense today than they were historically. To the north, rows of trees remain along the old fence lines dividing the farm fields and woodlots. The property is also still bordered by Route 27 to the east and U.S. 340 to the south, with the exception of the rerouted section of Bakerton Road at the intersection of these two roads. Another addition in recent years was a line of electrical poles, which cuts across the fields near U.S. 340, running east to west from a power station to just north of the C.W. Shipley Elementary School. Nonetheless, the rolling slopes and varied planes of the property remain essentially as they were during the Civil War. Thus, School House Ridge North retains a moderate level of integrity with respect to the spatial organization of the landscape.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Cluster of farm buildings on U.S. 340

Feature Identification Number: 130081

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Condition

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Fair

Assessment Date: 08/20/2008

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

This determination takes into account both the landscape and the buildings situated thereon. Worthy of note is the fact that the partially deteriorated condition of the landscape was inherited by the National Park Service, and constitutes a situation developed over the past several decades. The National Park Service has yet to assume administrative jurisdiction over the entire property, since Tract 102-33 still remains under the control of the Civil War Preservation Trust. Transfer of this property was authorized in 2004, when it became a part of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, but it has not yet been conveyed to the National Park Service. It is recommended that improving the condition of the landscape for public use become a priority, once the National Park Service assumes full ownership. To raise the condition of the property to "good," the park should complete the following:

1. Vegetation Control and Clearance: (a) Save the Moler Barn and Cemetery from further damage due to the overgrowth of vegetation; and (b) Clear away existing vegetation to reveal the Moler Barn and Cemetery for full documentation.

2. Documentation: Contract HABS/HAER/HALS to document the Moler Barn and Cemetery, as well as the Fritts Barn and surrounding landscape.

3. Archaeology: Investigate further the underground resources of the battlefield, as well as the Moler Barn and vicinity.

4. Stabilization and Interpretation: Stabilize both the Moler Barn and Cemetery, and establish a framework for their interpretation.

5. Rehabilitation and Renovation: Repair and reuse the Fritts Barn (now known as the Ott Barn) and surrounding landscape.

While the park works to improve the condition of the cultural landscape at School House Ridge North, it should also remove the non-historic ruins of deteriorated structures, for both safety and aesthetic reasons. The buildings belonging to the Jellystone Campground complex in particular, which are hazardous and not historically significant, should be removed from the site before public access is allowed.

The Assessment Date refers to the date that the park superintendent concurred with this Condition Assessment.

Impacts

Type of Impact:	Structural Deterioration
External or Internal:	Internal
Impact Description:	Already in poor condition before their acquisition by the park, the structures belonging to the old Jellystone Campground continue to deteriorate in the northwest corner of the property. Both the Moler Cemetery and Moler Barn foundations are being overgrown and probably damaged by the surrounding vegetation.
Type of Impact:	Pollution
External or Internal:	Both Internal and External
Impact Description:	Several locations on the property, especially the areas surrounding the structures of the old Jellystone Campground, are littered with rubbish. This includes household trash and building debris, as well as some old machinery and a truck in the woods near the Ott Barn. The presence of these materials severely limits the use of the landscape for public recreation.
Type of Impact:	Vegetation/Invasive Plants
External or Internal:	Internal
Impact Description:	Invasive plants, especially tree-of-heaven, Russian olive, and others are present on the property. These species are driving out native species that were probably present during the historic period.
Type of Impact:	Adjacent Lands
External or Internal:	External
Impact Description:	Additional development of privately-owned parcels to the north of School House Ridge North for use as residential or commercial complexes could threaten the integrity of park resources.
Type of Impact:	Operations On Site
External or Internal:	Internal
Impact Description:	Installation of restroom facilities and a parking area just west of Route 27 in early 2008 was timely, in anticipation of the opening of trails on the property. The structure is a sustainable alternative to portable toilets, has the appearance of being made out of wood, and is easily accessible from the main road. One

concern, however, is its close proximity to the seasonal stream, or Elk Run tributary, which is situated a few yards to the west. Depending on the development and interpretation of the School House Ridge North property, the structure's placement in the battlefield viewshed may prove to be a concern.

Treatment

Treatment

Approved Treatment: Undetermined

Approved Treatment Document: Other Document

Document Date: 10/19/2007

Approved Treatment Document Explanatory Narrative:
The park currently has one stabilization project in PMIS that would work to improve the condition of the cultural landscape at School House Ridge North.

Approved Treatment Completed: No

Approved Treatment Costs

Landscape Treatment Cost: 388,850.00

Cost Date: 10/19/2007

Level of Estimate: C - Similar Facilities

Cost Estimator: Park/FMSS

Landscape Approved Treatment Cost Explanatory Description:

The stabilization project described in PMIS is:

PMIS 128329 – HAFE PLC-SCA FY08 #3 Clear North School House Ridge ACW Battlefield for Public Interpretation - $25,000. This project involves vegetation clearance and structure demolition, as well as the removal of existing fences and other non-historic features along School House Ridge North, Bakerton Road, the Union Skirmish Line, the north side of U.S. Route 340 and on Bolivar Heights. Additional actions such as staging and protections, trail repairs, excavation, artifact salvage and debris removal will also be undertaken.

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Supplemental Information

Title: School House Ridge North: Chain of Title

Description: TAX MAP 9, PARCEL 36 (Tract 102-34, Ott Farm)

2005 – Tract 102-34, or 70.74 acres of the estate of Blanche E. and Elmer Ott, is acquired fee simple by the National Park Service, for $2,475,900. Jefferson County Deed Book 1016, Page 675.

1980 – Robert W. Fritts and Dorothy Z. Fritts convey Parcel 37.1 (then 73.83 acres, including the southern portion of Tract 102-31, or the northeastern corner of Parcel 37.1) to Dixie D. Kilham. Jefferson County Deed Book 473, Page 265.

1943 – Blanche E. Ott and Elmer Ott convey the northeastern portion of Tract 102-34, formerly a part of Prospect Hill Farm (and including the southern portion of Tract 102-33, or Parcel 37.1), to Robert E. Fritts, fee simple. Jefferson County Deed Book 158, Page 410.

1926 – John E. Fritts purchases Tract 102-34, then 190 acres.

TAX MAP 9, PARCEL 7.3 (Tract 102-31 or P102-01, Prospect Hill Farm)

2003 – Civil War Preservation Trust conveys Tract 102-31 (56 acres) to the National Park Service. Jefferson County Deed Book 974, Page 434.

2002 – Dixie D. Kilham wills Tract 102-31, formerly a part of Prospect Hill Farm, to the Civil War Preservation Trust. Jefferson County Deed Book 974, Page 426.

1989 – Thermo Electric Company, Incorporated conveys the southern portion of Tract 102-31 (then estimated at 66.81 acres) to Dixie D. Kilham. Jefferson County Deed Book 631, Page 288.

1980 – Robert W. and Dorothy Z. Fritts convey the southern portion of Tract 102-31 (northeast corner of Parcel 37.1) to Dixie D. Kilham. Jefferson County Deed Book 473, Page 265.

1976 – Harpers Ferry Caverns, Inc. convey same to Dixie D. Kilham. Jefferson County Deed Book 414, Page 368.

1969 – H.B. and Clara Long convey same to Harpers Ferry Caverns, Inc. Jefferson County Deed Book 302, Page 422.

1967 – Elizabeth and Paul Love convey same to H.B. and Clara Long by Last Will

and Testament. Jefferson County Deed Book 287, Page 422.

1950 – Ernest and Virginia Hockensmith convey same to J. Swagler and Mabel Henkle. Jefferson County Deed Book 180, Page 508.

1947 – Cassandra C. Dittmeyer conveys the northern portion of Tract 102-31 (Parcel 7.3) to Ernest and Virginia Hockensmith. Jefferson County Deed Book 167, Page 413.

1943 – Robert W. Fritts, Blanche and Elmer Ott, and Isabell and Abner Hockensmith convey same to Robert E. Fritts. Jefferson County Deed Book 158, Page 410.

1922 – The A.D. Goetz Company conveys the southern portion of Tract 102-31 (northeast corner of Parcel 37.1) to John E. Fritts. Jefferson County Deed Book 121, Page 393.

1901 – Amelia Rau conveys the northern portion of Tract 102-31 (Parcel 7.3) to Cassandra C. Dittmeyer. Jefferson County Deed Book 90, Page 196.

1868 – Daniel Moler seeks foreclosure on Prospect Hill Farm (266 acres) and auctions off his property on School House Ridge North. This includes the northern half of Parcel 7.3 and Tract 102-31, and excludes the portion of this tract included in Parcel 37.1. Virginia Free Press Vol. 1, No. 35, April 19, 1866.

TAX MAP 9, PARCEL 37.1 and TAX MAP 9, PARCELS 7 AND 7.2 (Tract 102-33, Jellystone Campground)

2002 – Dixie D. Kilham wills Tract 102-33, formerly a part of Prospect Hill Farm, to the Civil War Preservation Trust. Jefferson County Deed Book 961, Page 219.

1976 – Harpers Ferry Caverns, Incorporated conveys Parcels 7 and 7.2 (91.68 acres) to Dixie D. Kilham. Jefferson County Deed Book 414, Page 368.

1969 – Harpers Ferry Caverns, Incorporated acquires Parcel 7 from the Fritts family. The Spirit of Jefferson Farmer's Advocate Vol. 111, No. 45, 1975.

1943 – Blanche E. Ott and Elmer Ott convey most of Parcel 37.1, formerly a part of Prospect Hill Farm, to Robert E. Fritts, fee simple. Jefferson County Deed Book 158, Page 410.

1896 – Amelia Rau, widow of Rudolph Rau, sells the 170-acre Prospect Hill Farm, or the Rau property located to the west of Bakerton Road. Virginia Free Press, September 23, 1896.

1876 – Samuel Howell Brown sells Prospect Hill Farm (266 acres) to Rudolph Rau for $7,000. Virginia Free Press, February 5, 1876.

1868 – Daniel Moler seeks foreclosure on Prospect Hill Farm (266 acres) and auctions off his property on School House Ridge North. Virginia Free Press Vol. 1, No. 35, April 19, 1866.

EARLY HISTORY OF SCHOOL HOUSE RIDGE NORTH ACREAGE

1798 – John Moler purchases what is now Tract 102-34 and part of Tract 102-33, or what amounts to 164 acres, from Jacob and Jane Molar (or Moler) for $1200. This land is part of the original 2,236 acre land grant awarded to William Hall by Lord Fairfax in 1764. Berkeley County Deed Book 15, Page 485.

1784 – Lord Fairfax awards a land grant of 297 acres to George Adam Moler, for a tract of land located to the north of School House Ridge North. Berkeley County Deed Book 6, Page 303.

1764 – Lord Fairfax awards a land grant of 2,236 acres to William Hall, to the north and south of present-day U.S. 340. Northern Neck Proprietary Grant Book M-311, No. 501 Berkeley County Cadastral Index.

1762 – Lord Fairfax awards a land grant of 113 acres to Humphrey Keyes, in the southeast corner of present-day School House Ridge North and just north of the current U.S. 340. Northern Neck Proprietary Grant Book M-53, No. 411 Berkeley County Cadastral Index.

1762 – Lord Fairfax awards a land grant in the vicinity of present-day Bakerton, north of School House Ridge North, to George Adam Mohler (or Moler).

1756 – Lord Fairfax awards a land grant of 407 acres to Thomas Goldsberry, to the north and south of present-day U.S. 340. Northern Neck Proprietary Grant Book H-733, No. 405 Berkeley County Cadastral Index.

1755 – Lord Fairfax awards a land grant of 400 acres to Thomas Maybury, in the northeast corner of present-day School House Ridge North and both sides of the current Bakerton Road. Northern Neck Proprietary Grant Book H-601, No. 410 Berkeley County Cadastral Index.

1754 – Lord Fairfax awards a land grant of 400 acres to Joseph McCamish, on the northwest corner of present-day School House Ridge North. Northern Neck Proprietary Grant Book H-585, No. 412 Berkeley County Cadastral Index.

1736 – Thomas, sixth Lord Fairfax claims the Northern Neck Proprietary as sole

owner.

1649 – Charles II transfers the Northern Neck Proprietary, or more than five million acres of land including School House Ridge North, to the Culpeper family.

1624 – The Virginia Company transfers ownership of Jefferson County, West Virginia, then a portion of Frederick County, Virginia, to the British Crown. Accessed June 17, 2008 at the Frederick County, Virginia website: www.co.frederick.va.us/history.htm.

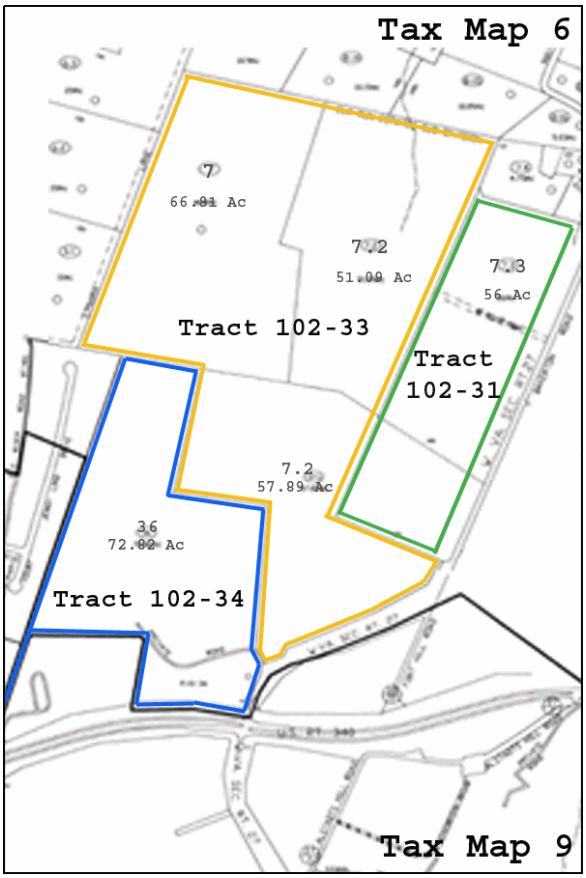


Figure 25. Tax map of School House Ridge North, including parcel and tract numbers (Jefferson County Assessor).