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Olmsted Center
for Landscape Preservation

A Farmer in his Native Town:

Cultural Landscape Report for the Martin Van Buren Farmland



A Farmer in his Native Town:

Cultural Landscape Report for the Martin Van Buren Farmland

Volume I:

History

Existing Conditions

Analysis

Treatment Implications

By Llerena Searle

National Park Service, Boston, Massachusetts 2004

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Cover Photo: Black hay barn and cornfield, c. 1930. (Photo CLR -408, MVB NHS).

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FOREWORD

Visitors to the Martin Van Buren National Historic Site are often captivated by the unique architectural features, the historic furnishings, and recounts of history associated with Martin Van Buren's home. But that is only part of the story. Behind the house, just beyond thick clumps of trees along the park's western boundary, is prime farmland that was once part of Van Buren's estate, land that has been continuously farmed since his ownership. In 1839 President Martin Van Buren purchased this farmland in his home town of Kinderhook, New York and named it "Lindenwald." After his reelection defeat in 1840 he did as many other presidents did before him, he became a statesmen farmer. From then on, Lindenwald grew to be a main focus of his life. To him farming was the occupation of "honest and virtuous" men. While here he studied, corresponded, engaged in some politics, and entertained friends and dignitaries. But what seemed most important to Van Buren during this time was overseeing his working farm. It is obvious that he thoroughly enjoyed his new occupation described as "farmer" in the 1850 census and that he was proud of his agrarian accomplishments:

"My farming operations for the present [have] been very successful & I am fast getting my farm in good order. My hay crop, to the surprise of those who could not or would not believe that I could turn my mind to the subject, larger than a single one of my neighbors,...among them some of the best farmers in the country."

Martin Van Buren to Andrew Jackson, 8 September 1843, Martin Van Buren Papers

This Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) has researched the historical development of the farm, documenting the existing conditions and analyzing its significance and integrity. Although the agricultural practices employed here today differ from those of the mid nineteenth century, this CLR establishes that overall the original Van Buren farmland retains its integrity because most of the agricultural land once owned by Martin Van Buren remains open and under cultivation. Additionally, this farmland retains its beauty, rural feeling, and association with Van Buren's home of 21 years as well as its unspoiled setting on the original terraces overlooking Kinderhook Creek and the Catskill Mountains.

The report provides documented evidence of numerous features and characteristics on the present farmland that can be traced to the Van Buren period. This and other recent planning efforts indicate that the boundary of park may not adequately protect nationally significant resources and values. In response the National Park Service (NPS) conducted a boundary study to evaluate the adequacy of the Site's current boundary and to develop alternative boundary configurations that would better protect the site's cultural, natural and scenic resources.

This Cultural Landscape Report is one of many studies now in progress to pave the way for a General Management Plan (GMP) in the near future. Documentation and analysis of the farmland is critical as it will be a major focus of the GMP effort. The CLR will provide the baseline documentation and analysis necessary to make the planning and management decisions contained within the new GMP, the purpose of which will be to ensure that the park has a clearly defined direction for resource preservation and visitor use. The plan will consider the park in its full ecological, scenic, and cultural context and as part of the surrounding region.

Visitors who come here experience only a portion of the uniqueness of Van Buren's Lindenwald. Although the original farm was 226 acres today there is access to only 38 acres. Resources contributing to the significance of the National Historic Site exist on lands outside the boundary, diminishing their protection and interpretation. Additionally, the conservation easements Congress established to preserve the Site's key agricultural views no longer offer adequate protection, given contemporary conditions. Presently the National Historic Site consists of a prominent mansion on a relatively small tract of land which can result in a narrow focus on the house and its contents. Consequently, although agrarian ideals formed a central theme of Van Buren's political philosophy, the agricultural components of his Lindenwald are neither protected nor available for interpretation. With the realization that the charm and significance of Lindenwald would be more complete in its accurate cultural landscape context the NPS is working with interested parties to explore ways of achieving this. If the NPS and its partners make progress the result will be better protection of nationally significant resources and a more complete and meaningful experience for visitors.

It is with great pleasure that I recognize and thank the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation of the National Park Service's Northeast Region for funding overseeing the management and writing of *A Farmer in his Native Town: Cultural Landscape Report for the Martin Van Buren Farmland.* The staff here is particularly thankful to the author, Llerena Searle, whose disciplined research and clear writing has produced a document that demonstrates her high standards of excellence. I would also like to thank the park staff here who participated in this study and Margie Coffin Brown of the Olmsted Center for her fabulous effort in managing this project.

Daniel J. Dattilio
Superintendent
Martin Van Buren National Historic Site

January 2004

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At Lindenwald, Superintendent Daniel Dattilio and former Superintendent Steven Beatty supported this effort, making available the resources of the park and the institutional knowledge of park staff. Patricia West and Karen Leffingwell helped navigate the historical resources at the park. Patricia West also provided invaluable assistance with various historical and editorial details. Judy Harris dated several of the historic photographs, and shared information on Native American history of the region. Mike Delaney and Jim McKay contributed to discussions on treatment implications and Shirley W. Dunn, an expert on Mohican history, kindly reviewed the first section of the site history.

At the Olmsted Center, Horticulturalist Heidi Cope provided expertise on historic orchards and reviewed a draft of this Cultural Landscape Report and provided excellent editorial comments. Historical Landscape Architects Deborah Dietrich-Smith, Lisa Nowak, and Laurie Matthews also provided valuable input. Paul Weinbaum, Lead Historian for the Boston Support Office, provided insight into preservation processes that strengthened the report's analysis and discussion of significance.

Jeanne deProsse Akers and William deProsse, Jr. were vital to reconstructing the early twentieth century at Lindenwald. Their recollections of their time at Lindenwald, the layout of the farm, and its history helped fill numerous informational gaps in the site history. They also walked the property sharing memories, graciously sent drawings, answered questionaires, and responded to many inquiries.

Ray Meyer, who was such an important figure in the farm's twentieth century history, passed away on July 11, 2002 at the age of 82. Earlier in the year, he granted Margaret and I an interview and shared his memories of the farm. It was clear from our conversation that he remained very fond of the property and was proud to have farmed there for more than fifty years.

Jean-Paul Cortens and Jody Bolluyt of Roxbury Farm explained their agricultural practices, ideology, and provided a history of their current activities on the property. Daniel Luciano, of the Open Space Institute gave me an overview of the property's recent history, as well as planning, environmental, and conservation issues at the site.

Hellen McLallen, of the Columbia County Historical Society, located documents and pointed to information located in other collections. I would also like to thank the librarians at the New York State Library and Archives, the Massachusetts Horticultural Society Library, and Harvard's Lamont Library who helped gather sources for the site history.

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Situated in the Hudson River Valley, and still surrounded by productive farmland, the Martin Van Buren National Historic Site commemorates the life and work of the eighth president of the United States. After serving one term between 1837 and 1841, Van Buren moved back to his native Kinderhook where he remained active in politics, while also devoting a substantial amount of his energy to the operation of a 220-acre farm, with crops, extensive orchards, ornamental plantings, a formal garden, fishponds, and outbuildings. Named for the linden trees that once graced the estate, Lindenwald was Van Buren's country seat from 1839 until his death in 1862.

The purpose of this cultural landscape report (CLR) is to trace the physical history of Van Buren's farmland and evaluate the significance and integrity of the landscape. This information will provide a basis for the development of a management program for the farmland and inform the development of a General Management Plan for the site, now underway. This report builds upon the 1995 *Cultural Landscape Report for Martin Van Buren National Historic Site*, written about the main house and Lindenwald house lot. Unlike the earlier CLR, this report focuses on the largely-undocumented agricultural land which surrounds the house lot and formed the bulk of Van Buren's property. This agricultural property is not currently owned by the National Park Service, nor is it within the current park boundaries. However, negotiations are underway with the various landowners of Van Buren's original agricultural property with the aim of protecting this land from future development. This CLR serves as an important resource for the park as it develops strategies for including this agricultural land in the park's interpretive and management agenda. The agricultural property is a vital part of the setting and story of Van Buren's Lindenwald.

To inform decisions about how to best protect Martin Van Buren's farmland, several studies are in progress. A "Boundary Study Environmental Assessment" was completed in 2003; a historic resource study is underway and will be completed in 2004; and an archaeological assessment of the site is also underway. A special history study of Martin Van Buren's farming activities was completed in spring 2002 by Historian Reeve Huston and was used as a resource for this report.

Historical Overview

The agricultural property at Lindenwald is significant through its association with Martin Van Buren, eighth President of the United States. Prior to his ownership, Native Americans likely used the land and Dutch traders settled in the area. The property has been continually farmed since the seventeenth century, when the Van Alstynes established their homestead. The land was purchased by Peter Van Ness, a prominent Kinderhook Judge in the late eighteenth century, and passed to his son William after his death in 1804. The Van Nesses built the Lindenwald mansion and maintained the property as a country estate.

By the time Van Buren purchased the property in 1839, it had fallen to ruin. Van Buren expanded the estate and transformed it into a successful working farm, with orchards, ponds, a large garden, and extensive lands under cultivation. The agricultural landscape of Van Buren's estate was a concrete expression of Van Buren's political ideals, his Jeffersonian conception of the national importance of agriculture, and his personal goals. The property has been continually farmed since Van Buren's ownership, such that today, the

Lindenwald agricultural property provides a unique opportunity to explore the development of farming in the United States. More specifically, the property illustrates Martin Van Buren's farming practices, interests, and intentions.

Study Boundaries and Landscape Terminology

Martin Van Buren's 220-acre farm, Lindenwald, is located in the fertile Hudson River Valley in the town of Kinderhook in Columbia County, New York. Columbia County lies on the east side of the Hudson River, about 100 miles north of New York City, and extends eastward to the Massachusetts state line. Lindenwald is located in the northeastern portion of the county, several miles east of the Hudson River between the villages of Kinderhook and Stuyvesant Falls (Figure 1).

Kinderhook Creek, a tributary of the Hudson River, forms the northwestern boundary of the property, and the Old Post Road and New York Route 9H form its southeastern boundary. Roughly half of Van Buren's farm lies in the floodplain of Kinderhook Creek, which has formed the site's "lower terrace," a descriptive term used throughout this report. A steep escarpment, partially wooded, bisects the property on a northeast-southwest axis parallel to the road and the creek. The rest of the site east of this escarpment sits at a higher elevation, level with the road, and is referred to in the report as the "upper terrace." Most of the farm's structures have been built on this upper terrace, and the mansion is set in the northeastern portion of the property, near the road (Figures 2, 3).

Throughout the site history, the first Post Road, the Old Post Road, which is still evident, and New York Route 9H are described as they relate to the property, its access, and its structures. The first Post Road was located in the lower terrace, and is described in this report as the lower Post Road. In the late 1700s, the Post Road was moved to the upper terrace. Shortly after this, it became know as Old Post Road, because the road on the other side of Kinderhook Creek, between the Village and Hudson (the current Route New York Route 9) was designated the Post Road. A portion of the Old Post Road is still present both in front of the mansion and extending north of it. In 1937, the current main road, New York Route 9H was added. Throughout the report this wider, paved road is referred to as NY Route 9H.

Historically, Lindenwald was an irregularly shaped farm, formed from the amalgamation of several different parcels. Today its ownership is fragmented. The National Park Service owns 20.3 acres around Van Buren's mansion, as well as approximately eighteen acres in scenic easements. The rest of Van Buren's farm has been separated into smaller parcels. Most of this land is still in agricultural use; a small portion (forty-three acres) has been developed as housing.

Methodology and Scope

The CLR consists of four sections: (1) a site history, (2) documentation of existing conditions, (3) analysis of the landscape's historic significance and integrity, and (4) a preliminary discussion of treatment implications and issues. The site history is divided into sections according to the major periods of the site's ownership. Research for the site history was carried out between January and May, 2002. In writing the site history, considerable use was made of the 1995 *Cultural Landscape Report*, the 1981 *Historic Grounds Report*, and the 1981 *Historic Resource Study*, yet none of these documents focuses directly on Lindenwald's agricultural landscape.

For this report, exhaustive research was carried out for the period of significance, Van Buren's ownership of Lindenwald, 1839–1862. Census records, deeds, Van Buren's correspondence and accounts, and nineteenth-century descriptions of the property provide good documentation of the farmland and Van Buren's farming practices. Other periods, however, were only investigated in a limited to thorough manner, partly because little evidence has survived of agricultural and landscape-related practices for these other periods. Where specific information was lacking about the site itself, the site history includes discussion of agricultural practices and trends in the vicinity of the site to provide contextual understanding. Aerial photographs and interviews with former owners greatly augmented the investigation of changes made to the site in the twentieth century. Sources for the site history are located in footnotes and in the bibliography; a list of repositories consulted appears at the end of the report.

The existing condition section describes with narrative and photographs the appearance of extant landscape features at the site in May of 2002. The analysis section examines the significance of the site to determine whether the agricultural lands contribute to the property's eligibility on the National Register of Historic Places, and it provides an analysis of the integrity of the landscape in light of its significance. A summary describes the historical site features that contribute to the character of the landscape. The treatment section describes treatment implications for each of the four possible treatment options: preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, and reconstruction. After the NPS completes a General Management Plan, a CLR Volume 2 for the agricultural property will propose treatment recommendations in more detail. A list of topics for further research is provided.

Summary of Findings

Research for this CLR yielded a 1948 image of the property, which is extremely useful as it predates some of the major changes made in the twentieth century by farmer Dudley Ray Meyer, Jr. (Figure 4). While it postdates Martin Van Buren's ownership by eighty-six years, the aerial image shows the former location of barns, ponds, orchards and ditches, as described in the report.

The report also presents information gathered from former residents Ray Meyer, Jr., William deProsse, Jr., and Jeanne deProsse Akers. Their detailed recollections of the property provided a means for determining the locations and character of lost landscape features, many of which dated to the Van Buren era. In addition, their accounts of agricultural practices and activities on the property enabled the CLR to document the considerable changes wrought on the farm landscape in the twentieth century.

Other primary documentary research revealed details about the nature of Van Buren's farming practices, the scale of agricultural operations at Lindenwald, and the range of crops and livestock produced at the farm. This research also sheds light on Van Buren's attitude towards farming and his goals for the property.

The findings in this report expand upon the understanding of the agricultural property developed in earlier documents, particularly Uschold and Curry's 1995 *Cultural Landscape Report for Martin Van Buren National Historic Site*, which focused primarily on the Lindenwald mansion and houselot. Since the 1995 report, changes in ownership and agricultural practice have also occurred at the farm. As part of this CLR, interviews with the current leasees documented the organic farming methods now employed on the Lindenwald farmland. These practices are more in-keeping with Van Buren's farming practices than the practices during the interim period.

This report finds that the Van Buren agricultural property retains its historic integrity, particularly with regards to its location, setting, feeling, and association with Van Buren. The property has been continuously farmed since Van Buren's ownership, and this agricultural viability communicates something of Van Buren's activities at Lindenwald and his ambitions for the property. While some of the individual landscape features have been lost over the past one hundred and fifty years, several remain: sections of the farm roads and treelines; Van Buren's upper and lower fish ponds; his mansion, south gatehouse, and farm cottage; the foundations of his red hillside barn, farm office, and north gatehouse; the Van Ness monument; and views over the fields to the distant Catskills. This report asserts that the property is significant because of its association with Van Buren, the eighth President of the Unites States. Van Buren's farm is inseparable from the house and vital to understanding Van Buren's post-presidential years and his agricultural activities at Lindenwald.

Based on the Site History, Existing Conditions, and Analysis, the research team was able to discuss treatment implications in meetings with park staff and to identify issues that a future treatment plan will need to address. Some of these issues include: minimizing the visual impact of utilities and other modern structures; providing future farmers with access to the agricultural fields; locating park facilities on the site; addressing drainage issues on the lower terrace; and reconstructing missing features such as barns, orchards, the garden, and hedgerows. In general, compromises will need to be made between restoring historic character and sustaining viable agricultural production on the property.

The research and findings of this report will support the "Boundary Study Environmental Assessment" and upcoming General Management Plan for the park. Further investigation of treatment implications for the landscape will subsequently follow completion of the GMP.

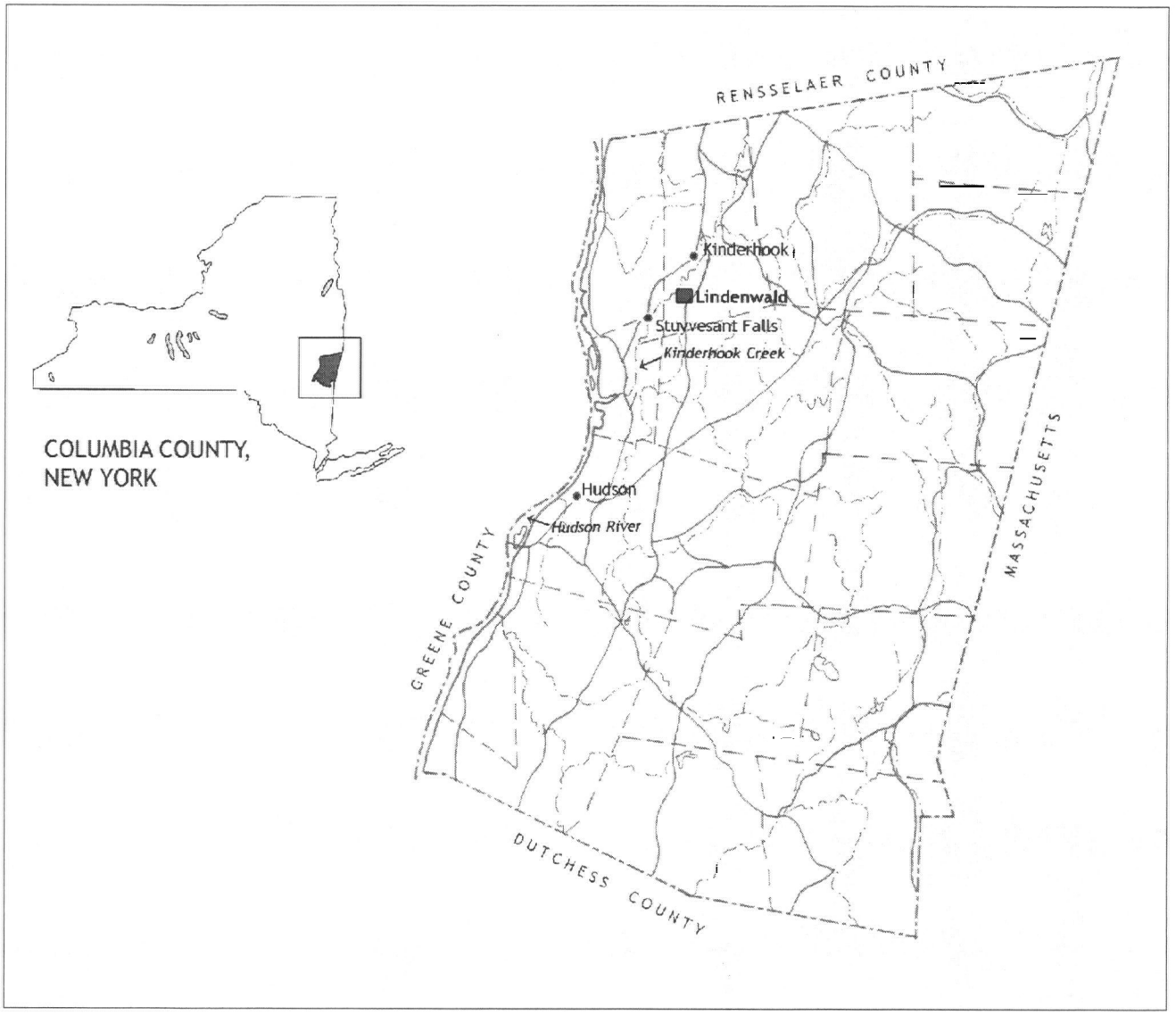


Figure 1: Map of Columbia County, New York, showing location of Lindenwald. OCLP, 2002.

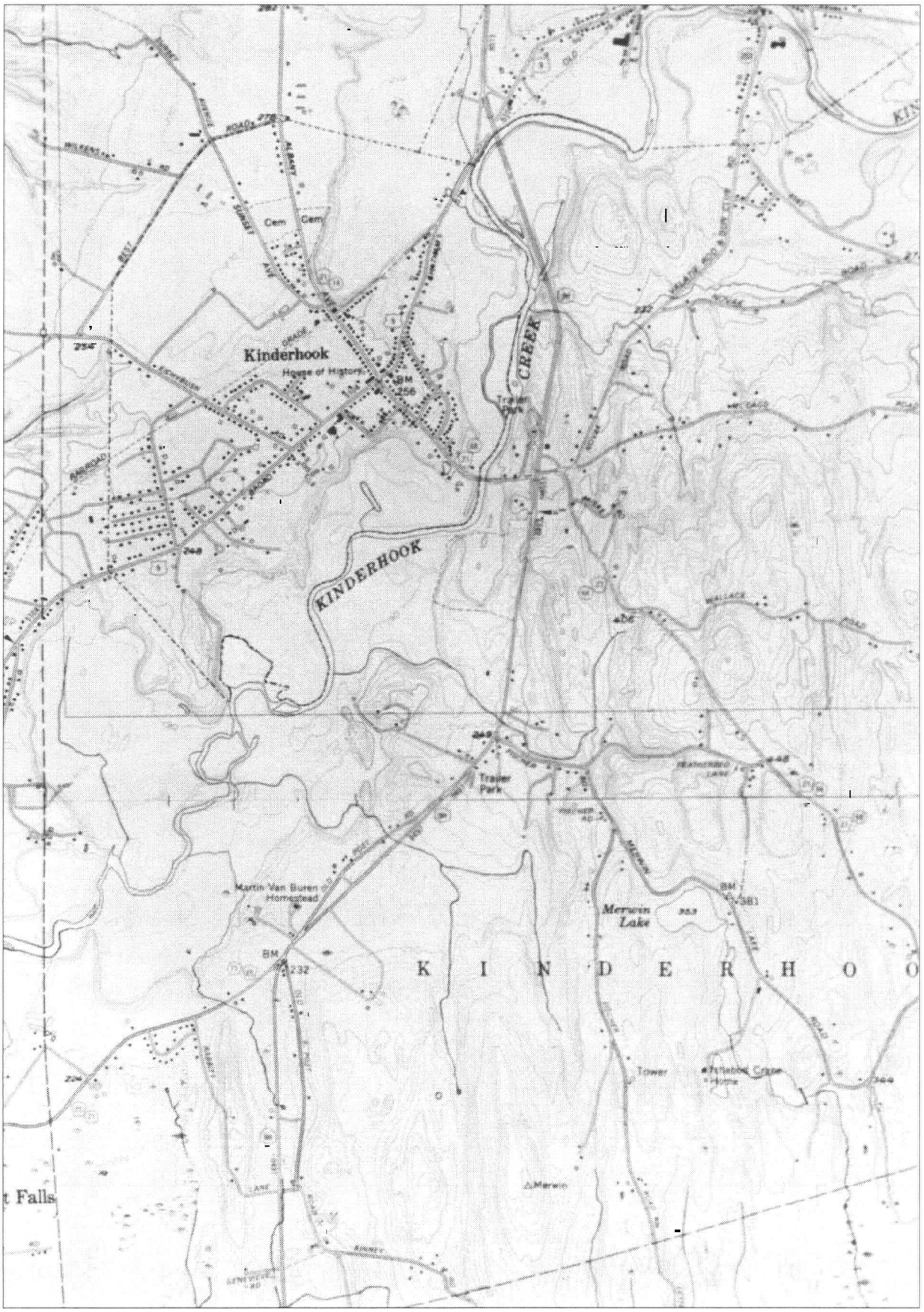


Figure 2: Topographic map of Stottville and Kinderhook Quadrangles, 1976 USGS, Washington, D.C.

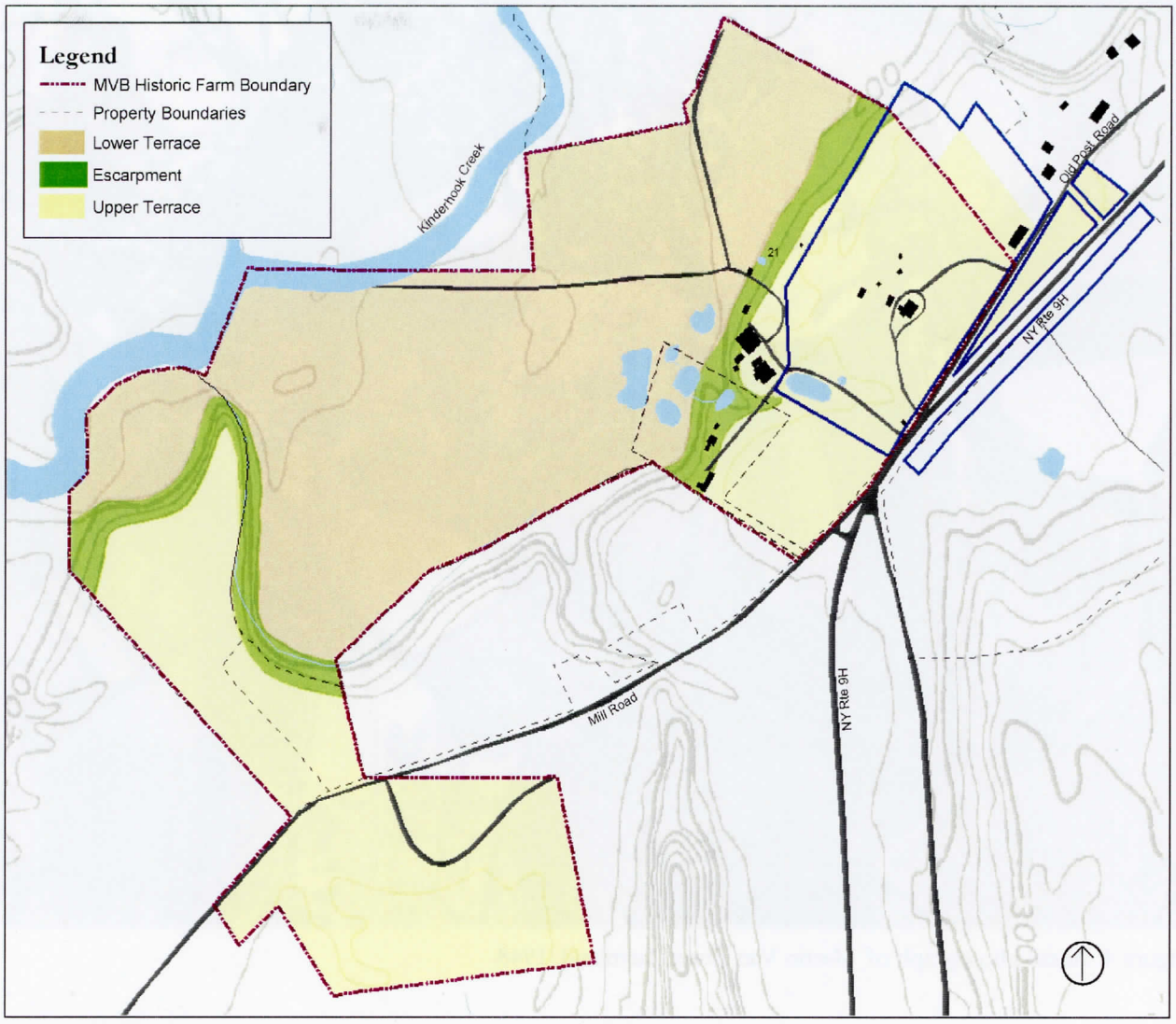


Figure 3: Map of study boundaries and landscape terminology. OCLP, 2003.



Figure 4: Aerial photograph of Martin Van Buren farmland, 1948.

CHAPTER II. SITE HISTORY

PREHISTORY AND EARLY SETTLEMENT TO 1780

Before European settlement, present-day Kinderhook was inhabited by the Mohicans, an Algonquian-speaking people who referred to themselves as from "Mahhaakunnuk, [which] according to original signifying is great waters . . . which are constantly in motion, either flowing or ebbing."[1] Sometimes allied with neighboring nations, the Mohicans were often at war with the Iroquois. They lived in small villages of longhouses and depended on agriculture for most of their food, supplemented by fishing, hunting, and gathering wild foods in season.[2]

When Henry Hudson undertook the first documented European trip up the river that was later named after him, he landed south of present-day Kinderhook near the mouth of Kinderhook Creek. There he reported seeing Mohican houses and agriculture:

> . . . a house well constructed of oak bark, and [arched] in shape, with the appearance of having a vaulted ceiling. It contained a great quantity of maize, and beans of the last year's growth, and there lay near the house for the purpose of drying enough to load three ships, besides what was growing in the fields. . . . The land is the finest for cultivation that I ever in my life set foot upon, and it also abounds in trees of every description.[3]

Hudson also described seeing "vines and grapes, pumpkins and other fruits" and receiving gifts of tobacco.[4]

The Mohicans were friendly to Hudson and his crew and eager to exchange gifts with them. Dutch traders soon returned to the area. Trade altered the Mohican way of life and destabilized the region. Caught in the shifting alliances and animosities between the Dutch, the French, and various Native peoples, the Mohicans were at war off and on throughout the seventeenth century. They were defeated by the Mohawks in 1628 and after that time often fought alongside the Mohawks and the Dutch. An influx of diseases brought by the Europeans -- typhus, measles, influenza, smallpox, and others -- decimated Mohican and other Native populations. By the end of the smallpox epidemic of 1690, there were fewer than eight hundred Mohicans, or about ten percent of their pre-European population.[5]

While Europeans were required by law to pay the Mohicans for land purchases, some purchases were

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[1] Hendrick Aupaumut, "Extract from an Indian History" *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, 1st Series, vol. 9 (1804), 99-102. Four archaeological sites have been found within a ten-mile radius of Lindenwald, and there are several concentrations of prehistoric cultural debris in the vicinity of Lindenwald or on the farm itself; see William A. Stokinger, *Historic Ground Report: Lindenwald, Martin Van Buren National Historic Site, Kinderhook, New York* (National Park Service, 1981) 1:31-38.

[2] Shirley W. Dunn, *The Mohican World*, (Fleischmanns, New York: Purple Mountain Press, 1994).

[3] Johannes de Laet, quoted in Roland Van Zandt, *Chronicles of the Hudson: Three Centuries of Travelers' Accounts*, (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1971), 18. For a corrected translation, see Dunn, 30.

[4] Van Zandt, 18; Paul Wilstach, *Hudson River Landings* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1933), 41.

[5] Lee Sultzman, "Mahican History," At First Nations Issues of Consequence [electronic document], last updated July 3, 1997 [visited May, 2002], http://www.dickshovel.com/Mahican.html.

coerced, and the Native Americans were forced off their lands. In the 1700s, many Mohicans left the Hudson River Valley, retreating to the Taconic Hills and the Housatonic River Valley of New England. Others scattered to central New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Indiana. One group of Mohicans settled in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, where they formed a village. The group left in 1784 and began a series of removals to the west. Some descendents presently live in Wisconsin.

In the first half of the seventeenth century, the Hudson Valley became a Dutch colony, and the area became known as New Netherland. After Hudson's 1609 Dutch-sponsored expedition, small groups of Dutch began a lucrative trade in furs. Dutch merchants established a fort at modern-day Albany in 1624 and a trading post at Manhattan after 1626. The Dutch West India Company had political control and authority over trade in New Netherland. The Company made an effort to expand beyond trade and attract Dutch settlers with their 1629 Charter of Privileges and Exemptions, which established the conditions for patroonships. Members of the Dutch West India Company could be granted a charter for land purchased along the river, provided that they enticed fifty colonists to settle on their property (Figure 5).[6]

Although only one patroon survived the late seventeenth century, "most of the Eastern bank of the Hudson [River] south of Albany passed into the hands of large landowners."[7] When the British took control of New Netherlands in 1664, some British governors made large vast grants, enabling the formation of large manors. The Van Rensselaers owned more than one million acres in the vicinity of Albany. This patroon, Rensselaerswyck, made the transition from Dutch to British rule, and became a manor in 1685. The Livingstons, granted a manor in 1686, owned land further south of Kinderhook.[8]

The land between Rensselaerswyck and the Livingston Manor attracted European settlers who wanted to be free from the restrictions of the manor lord. Thus, scattered settlements began in the vicinity of present-day Kinderhook. The land around what would later become Lindenwald became part of an official grant when it was included in the Powell Patent of 1664.[9] The petitioners for the Powell Patent explained that they "can no longer make their living in this village [Beverwyck, Albany] and are obliged to settle with their families in the county to gain their bread with God's help and honorably."[10] Patents, unlike manors, were "granted to a group of unrelated individuals and there was no lordship title conferred"; those granted a patent also generally avoided tenancy for simple ownership.[11]

In 1686, the English Royal Governor Thomas Dongan gave a charter to the town of Kinderhook and thirty-one men were listed as landowners on the original grant. These original families retained considerable power in the town throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, despite influxes of newcomers. Between 1720 and 1765, the population in Kinderhook increased six-fold, while the landowning population only doubled. Since only landowners could vote, this imbalance of power created a friction between landowners and tenants that continued through the eighteenth century and occasionally flared up. Tenant

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[6] Edward A. Collier, *A History of Old Kinderhook* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1914), 1; Wilstach, 46, 50.

[7] David Maldwyn Ellis, *Landlords and Farmers in the Hudson-Mohawk Region, 1790-1850* (New York: Octagon Books, 1967), 8; see also Sung Bok Kim, *Landlord and Tenant in Colonial New York*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978).

[8] David Steven Cohen, *The Dutch American Farm* (New York: New York University Press, 1992), 74.

[9] Stokinger, 40; Ruth Piwonka, *Historic Resources in the Town of Kinderhook, Columbia County, New York: A Reconnaissance Survey* (n.p., 1989), 18.

[10] Collier, 76.

[11] Cohen, 74.

revolts occurred in 1755, 1766, and the 1790s. This friction later stunted population growth and economic development in Columbia County.[12]

Around 1670, part of the Powell Patent was sold to Jan Martense Van Alstyne and his wife Derckje and incorporated into their 3,000 acre holdings, lands which extended on both sides of Kinderhook Creek in the vicinity of what would become Lindenwald. In 1682, Jan and Derckje Van Alstyne gave 698 acres of their land on the east side of Kinderhook Creek to their son Lambert. The Van Alstynes were ancestors of Martin Van Buren and Lambert Jan Van Alstyne was his great-grandfather. Upon Lambert Jan Van Alstyne's death in 1713, his property was divided among his children, and his son Thomas inherited most of the land on the eastern bank of the creek. Thomas Van Alstyne gave this land to his son, also named Lambert Van Alstyne, before the family sold it in the late eighteenth century.[13]

Thomas Van Alstyne's house appears on the 1762 Voorman map of Kinderhook (Figure 6). Later maps and descriptions place the house on the lower terrace of the property, near the creek, and the Voorman map shows a road running between the house and the creek. This was the Post Road, also called the King's Highway, and will be referred to in this report as the lower Post Road. It "extended from New York City to Albany and lay inland, paralleling the Hudson River," and its route was fixed in 1719 when the "New York Colonial Assembly ordered construction of a bridge over Kinderhook Creek" in Kinderhook Village.[14]

There is no documentation as to the composition of the farm, farming practices, or the structures that may have existed on the Van Alstyne property, apart from their house. A general discussion of husbandry and farming practice in New Netherlands and the Kinderhook area, however, can provide some insight into what the Van Alstyne farm may have been like.

Agricultural Context

While Lambert Van Alstyne and his heirs owned close to 700 acres of land, slightly more than the average homestead along Kinderhook Creek's alluvial flats, they may have only developed between 80 and 120 acres of it, as was common.[15] From the beginning in colonial North America, farmers abandoned the intensive agricultural methods they knew from Europe and farmed extensively instead, continually clearing new land as they needed it. As described by a twentieth century historian,

> A man could clear from one to two or three acres a year, working part-time and using some of the felled timber for fuel. . . No colonial or early national husbandman expected to live long enough to make one perfectly cleared farm. It seemed better to clear several fields slowly and poorly and to continually open new land for crops than to labor ceaselessly on one or two lots until they reached the tilth standards of Europe. [16]

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[12] Piwonka, 19-24.

[13] Stokinger 40; Van Alstyne, "Notes on the Van Buren Property," Files Relating to the Martin Van Buren Site 'Lindenwald', New York State Archives, Albany, New York.

[14] Piwonka, 34.

[15] Piwonka, 22.

[16] John R. Stilgoe, *Common Landscape of America, 1580 to 1845* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 181.

A Dutch settler in 1650 explained that in the New Netherlands, "trees are usually felled from the stump, cut up and burned in the field."[17] Rye or wheat might be sowed among the stumps, and the following year, hills of corn would be planted in a grid with pumpkins grown between the hills.[18]

By the eighteenth century, winter wheat had become one of the main crops of the region. Farmers also cultivated corn, rye, oats, barley, peas, and pumpkins, as well as new crops like potatoes, which were transported to the "constant and ready market" of New York City. The land around Kinderhook was considered good agricultural land at the time, and the area was known for its wheat and fine farm apples.[19]

In general, colonial husbandry in New York was poor. An abundance of land and a tight labor supply promoted wasteful land use practices. Writing about northern New Jersey farming in the 1790s, William Strickland explained that a field was planted "as long as it will produce anything. It is then laid bye as they call it, and nature immediately covers it with a thick mat of White Clover, and all manner of weeds; and a fresh piece of land is sought out, is cleared, and treated in the same manner."[20] Europeans especially criticized this form of husbandry. One critic was horrified by the condition of agriculture in New York in the mid eighteenth century: "The rural management in most parts of this province [New York] is miserable: seduced by the fertility of the soil on first settling, the farmers think only of exhausting it as soon as possible, without attending to their own interest in a future day."[21] Crop rotation and other means of preserving soil fertility were not practiced.

Summary Description

The land that eventually became Martin Van Buren's Lindenwald was part of the fertile Hudson River Valley populated by the Mohicans in the years before Dutch settlement along the river. Located between two large manors, the land became part of the Powell Patent in 1664 and part of the Van Alstyne family's extensive holdings six years later. The farm was centered along the lower Post Road, which ran close to Kinderhook Creek. The area was at least partially cleared and cultivated by the late seventeenth century, and was in agricultural production through the eighteenth century as the land was passed from generation to generation within the family. These early European settlers practiced mixed husbandry, growing crops such as corn, wheat, pumpkins, rye, and garden vegetables, and raising a variety of farm animals. It was a rough agricultural landscape, wasteful of land. The farm was probably cleared slowly over the years. Once fields became exhausted they were left fallow and new fields were carved from the woodlands.

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[17] Cornelis Van Tienhoven, quoted in Stilgoe, 173.

[18] Cohen, 116.

[19] Cohen, 115-117; *American Husbandry* (London, 1775), reprinted in Wayne D. Rasmussen, ed. *Agriculture in the United States: A Documentary History* (New York: Random House, 1975), 206-7.

[20] Cohen, 116.

[21] *American Husbandry*, 215-216.



Figure 5: Early Dutch map of the Northeast by Jan Jansson entitled *Belgii Novi, Angliae Novae, et Partis Virginiae Novissima Delineatio*, and printed in Holland, 1651. (From Alex Krieger and David Cobb eds., *Mapping Boston*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999, 89).

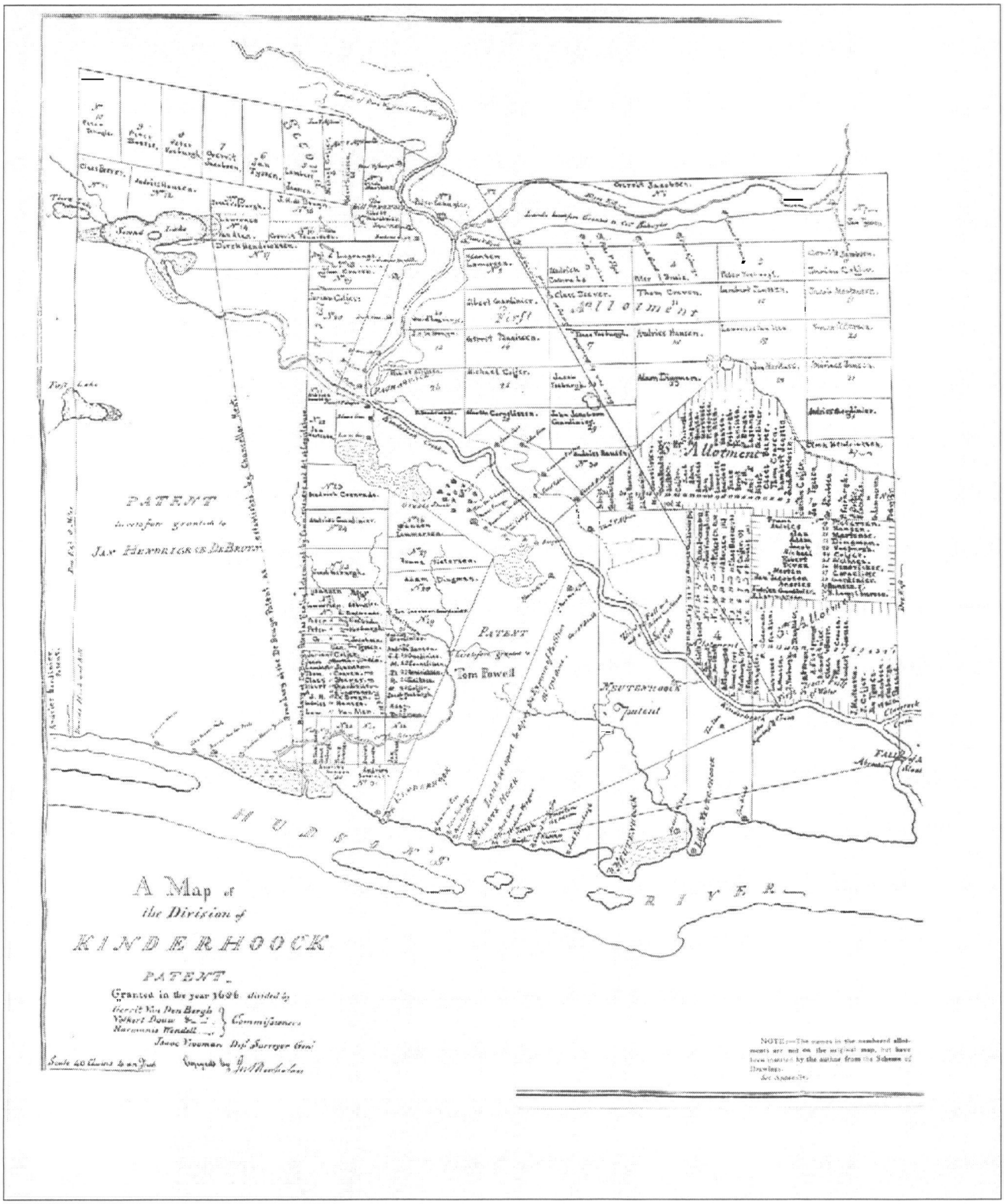


Figure 6: Map by Isaac Voorman, redrawn by John Van Alan, *Map of Kinderhook*, n.d. [1762].(Photocopy on file, at Martin Van Buren NHS.)

VAN NESS AND PAULDING OWNERSHIPS, 1780-1839

Peter Van Ness acquired 260 acres from William and Lambert Van Alstyne sometime before 1787, when the deed was recorded.[22] This property included a stone house down on the flats, farmland along Kinderhook Creek, and some land on the eastern side of the Old Post Road, which during this period was relocated to the upper terrace. Peter Van Ness was a local Revolutionary War commander who had gained political advancement after the war, serving as a Senator, Justice of the Peace, and Chief Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in the last two decades of the eighteenth century. His household included his wife, Elbertje Hogeboom, five children, and according to the 1790 census, ten servants, including some slaves. Van Ness named the Van Alstyne property Kleinrood, and around 1797 he built a new brick house on the upper terrace, facing the recently constructed Old Post Road, into which he moved from the old stone house on the lower terrace. Van Ness's house and much of this land would later become the Martin Van Buren property. [23]

Judge Peter Van Ness died in 1804, leaving his estate divided between his three sons, Cornelius, John, and William. Cornelius received the farm on the east side of the Old Post Road, while John and William each received 130 acres of the Kleinrood property to the west of the road. John inherited the "stone house in which I formerly resided," the lot adjacent to it and bordering Kinderhook Creek, and a forty-nine acre lot along the road. His brother William inherited the new house and two large lots to the west. A survey drawn in 1805 illustrates the division of Kleinrood (Figure 7).[24]

John Van Ness settled in Washington, DC, perhaps leaving the oversight of his Kinderhook property to his brother William.[25] Between 1810 and 1834 John Van Ness sold much of his property to the Dingman family, who owned land immediately north of Kleinrood. The extent or date of the sale is unknown, but later deeds indicate that John Van Ness's holdings became the property of the Dingmans.[26]

William Van Ness retreated to Kleinrood after 1804, when his career as a lawyer and politician were in trouble because of involvement with the Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton duel. He demonstrated a fair amount of interest in the estate, planting a garden and breeding livestock there. By 1810, his political fortunes had reversed, and Van Ness moved his family to New York City to practice law and involve himself in politics. He continued to use Kleinrood as a country residence.[27]

In 1824 William Van Ness was forced to sell Kleinrood as partial repayment for a debt. Van Ness's friend William Paulding, Jr. bought the property at a court auction for $8,500. Paulding may have intended to hold the property for Van Ness, but Van Ness died in 1826, and Paulding kept the property. Paulding was the Mayor of New York for two terms during the 1820s, had an expensive home in New York City, and was

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[22] Stokinger, 43.

[23] John D. R. Platt, *Historic Resource Study: Lindenwald, Martin Van Buren National Historic Site, New York*, ed. Harlan D. Unrau (Denver, Colorado: National Park Service, 1982), 9-15.

[24] Platt, 15-17.

[25] Platt, 19.

[26] David L. Uschold and George W. Curry, *Cultural Landscape Report for Martin Van Buren National Historic Site: Site History, Existing Conditions, and Analysis* (Boston: National Park Service, 1995), 191 note 26; Platt claims that John Van Ness sold his land to his brother William, citing a deed dated October 25, 1805. This seems unlikely, unless William then sold the land to the Dingmans, and later deeds confused the brothers. See Platt, 37.

[27] Platt, 44.

busy constructing a country residence in Tarrytown, New York.[28] Although he had a survey made of Kleinrood and purchased a small addition to the estate, it is doubtful that Paulding ever lived there. There is no extant record of his management of the property, but Paulding probably leased it to local farmers. By the time Van Buren bought Kleinrood from Paulding in 1839, the estate was in decline: "it was very much out of order: the land, having been rented for 20 years, and having been under cultivation for a period of 160 years. Several of the buildings had become poor, the fences were old and were rotting down, and bushes and grass of wild growth had taken possession of much of the farm."[29]

Agricultural Context

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Kinderhook farmers continued the mixed husbandry of the previous centuries, with wheat as an increasingly important crop. Wasteful agricultural practices also continued well into the 1800s. One observer attributed conservative husbandry to the traditionalism of the Dutch, finding Kinderhook inhabited in 1797 by "Dutchmen or Dutch descendants who were disinterested in changing their customs for new ones and who cultivated and labored as they had done for a hundred and more years." Writing in 1813, Horatio Gates Spafford commented that Kinderhook's land was good, but its resources scarce: the "soil of this town [Kinderhook] is good in general, though various in quality and richness . . . There are few better Townships for agriculture, though much of its soil appears exhausted, and timber is very scarce, owing to bad management."[30]

A few progressive groups and newly formed agricultural societies, like the New York Society for the Promotion of Agriculture, Arts, and Manufactures, incorporated in 1792, began to advocate new agricultural techniques. These organizations had little effect on the practices of the average farmer, who was more concerned with the decline in the prices of farm products than he was with increasing his yields. But through the early decades of the 1800s, such societies did help to popularize the use of gypsum as a soil amendment, as well as to disseminate information about new tools, such as the cast-iron plow, and livestock breeds, such as Merino sheep and English cattle (Figure 8).[31]

Layout and Circulation

In the late 1700s, the lower Post Road that had been located between the Van Alstyne house and the Creek was moved to higher ground further east, such that it ran along the upper terrace of the property. Major changes were again made to the road between 1789 and 1808, and after this period it ran west of Kinderhook Creek altogether between Hudson and Kinderhook Village (approximately the route of modern NY Route 9). Thus, the Post Road on which Peter Van Ness sited his house in 1797 was from about 1792 referred to as the Old Post Road.[32]

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[28] Platt, 46, 48-51; Uschold and Curry, 17.

[29] Isaac Hill, "A Day in the Country: Visit to Lindenwald," reprinted in Albert Lowther Demaree, *The American Agricultural Press, 1819-1860* (Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1974), 290-292.

[30] Quoted in Piwonka, 40.

[31] Stilgoe, 186; Percy W. Bidwell and John I. Falconer *History of Agriculture in the Northern United States, 1620-1860* (Washington: Carnegie Institute, 1925), 186, 191-2; Ulysses Prentiss Hedrick *A History of Agriculture in the State of New York* (Albany, New York: J. P. Lyon Company, 1933), 113.

[32] Piwonka, 34.

The 1805 map of Kleinrood depicts a curving entry drive planted with trees leading from the Old Post Road to the main brick house. It is impossible to distinguish whether the other lines on the map indicate merely boundary lines, or roads as well. According to the Paulding survey, there was a road behind the houselot: "... as the fence now stands to a chesnut [sic] stake at the road below the spring & 51 Links south of a large Black Oak tree on edge of Bank." This document also mentions "Dingmans road to Low Land," which may have cut across the southwest corner of the main houselot.[33] Perhaps this road led to the old stone house, as presumably some road on the property linked the stone house and outbuildings to the main house and the Old Post Road.

Farm Help and Housing

Peter Van Ness had a moderately large household, including servants and slaves. He likely used slaves for farm help, and he may have also hired laborers. Peter Van Ness rented out some of the farms on his property: the land to the east of Post Road was "in the tenure and occupation of Andrew Lovejoy," and John Pin lived in "the small place ... in the fork of the roads leading from Kinderhook to Claverack and from Kinderhook to Van Alstyne's mills" in 1804 when the Judge died.[34] Peter's son William had an overseer on the property, and some of the farmland may have been leased during the later years of Van Ness ownership.[35] Paulding probably leased out the farm through most of his tenure.

Livestock and Farm Buildings

The farm was worked with oxen under Peter Van Ness. William Van Ness was a horse enthusiast, and he bred horses at Kleinrood. He also ordered workhorses for the property in 1806.[36] William Van Ness made reference to "oxen, a fine breeding mare, cows, and young cattle" at Kleinrood in his correspondence in 1819.[37] Poultry, swine, and other common farm animals may also have been kept at the farm for Van Ness household consumption.

William Van Ness raised Merino sheep at Kleinrood, a highly speculative and profitable business. Spanish Merino sheep, coveted for the high quality of their wool, were difficult to import before the Napoleonic invasion of Spain caused government export restrictions to break down. The first Merino flocks were brought to the United States in 1802 by David Humphreys and Robert Livingston, and by 1810 Jefferson's embargo on wool imports and the development of homegrown woolen factories combined to create a high demand for fine grade Merino wool. In 1810, while common wool sold for forty cents a pound, pure-bred Merino wool was valued at two dollars a pound. Speculation grew with the craze for Merino wool, and pure-bred animals sold for a premium.[38] Slightly "in advance of the general vogue," Van Ness corresponded with the Livingstons and had his first ram by 1809. He made clear that his interest was in breeding stock, and he was selling three-quarter blooded Merinos in mid-1810. "From all indications Van

[33] "Field Notes of General William Paulding's Farm in Kinderhook as Surveyed 29th September 1834," Columbia County Historical Society.
[34] Peter Van Ness, "Last Will and Testament" quoted in Stokinger, 47.
[35] Platt, 40.
[36] Platt, 38.
[37] Platt, 42.
[38] Bidwell and Falconer, 217-218.

Ness built up his flocks, and continued in this field even after his return to the law."[39] In 1816 when Jefferson's embargo ended, the wool market crashed and the craze for Merinos subsided. By October of that year, fine wool was only valued at sixty-eight cents per pound, and many farmers "ruthlessly sacrificed their stock" after the collapse. There is no record whether William Van Ness gave up sheep raising entirely, but he probably scaled back on Merino sheep after the market's fall (Figure 9).[40]

William Van Ness must have had structures to support his flocks of sheep and stables for his horses. Although the 1805 survey depicts eight structures at Kleinrood, only a few of these can be identified. The stone house, presumably built by the Van Alstynes on the lower terrace, is shown with two outbuildings, possibly a barn and privy. If there was a barn near the stone house, it may have remained the center of agricultural activity, crop and livestock storage after Peter Van Ness moved to the new house on the upper terrace.

Peter Van Ness's new brick house is shown on the 1805 map with two sizeable buildings symmetrically behind it. The northernmost of these two auxiliary buildings may be the "carriage house" mentioned in Van Ness correspondence, presumably the same as the carriage barn that existed on the site in later periods. The Van Ness family used this building for storing horse-related equipment: in it were "sulkies, cutters for wintertime use, and brass-decorated harness."[41] Whether there were also separate stables is unknown. A small, eleven-foot square building (later called the 'farm office') located south of the house is thought to date from this period and may be the second auxiliary structure shown behind the house on the map. The survey also depicts two small, un-identified structures to the north of the main house.

Sheep sheds, hay barracks, barns, areas for crop storage, corn cribs, a cider press, dairy, root cellar, or other farm structures may well have existed on the property during the Van Ness and Paulding ownerships, but no record of them remains. Hay barracks consisted of four posts, covered by a pyramidal roof that could be raised or lowered depending on the amount of hay stored in the barrack. They could be constructed quickly and could be used for storing any grain (Figure 10). Hay barracks were common structures in eighteenth-century New York, especially in the Dutch areas along the Hudson River. It is quite possible that the Van Nesses had one of these structures on their property.[42]

Crops

Direct information regarding agricultural activities at Kleinrood during the Van Ness and Paulding ownerships is lacking. During the Van Ness era, some crops were certainly cultivated, yet given William Van Ness's interest in animal husbandry, the majority of the farm was probably devoted to hay and pasture. The farm was rented during the Paulding ownership, and may have been cultivated with a mix of crops common for the area and time, including wheat, rye, corn, and potatoes.

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[39] Platt, 39-41.

[40] Bidwell and Falconer, 219.

[41] Platt, 39.

[42] A traveler commented in 1748: "the land on both sides of the river was chiefly low, and more carefully cultivated as we came nearer to Albany. Here we could see everywhere the type of haystacks with moveable roofs which I have described before." Peter Kalm quoted in Cohen, 82-3. Cohen also describes a hay barrack constructed in Hudson in 1788, as well as elsewhere in New York and New Jersey.

Garden and Orchards

William Van Ness hired a gardener, Richard Finck, in 1806 and ordered "seeds and shrubs" from New York City. William Van Ness's interest in gardening marks the first documentation of a garden on the site, though presumably earlier tenants also had gardens for vegetables and herbs. Historians have suggested that the Van Ness garden was also ornamental. Martin Van Buren claimed to have built his garden on the ruins of the Van Ness garden, so William Van Ness's garden would have been located southwest of the house. No documentation of garden structures exists.[43] Peter Van Ness makes a reference to his orchard in his will, locating it somewhere south of the main house:

> I hereby order and direct that the lot of Ground lying to the north of the new brick house as far as the division fence between me and Casparus Dingman, and also the lot of Ground including the Orchard to the south of the said house as far as the first fence as it runs at the foot of the hill shall be part of that one half of the above named farm, which I have devised to my sons John and William.[44]

An observer in 1841 noted that when Van Buren bought the property there were "decayed fruit trees to be replaced," corroborating the presence of an orchard and suggesting that Van Buren's south orchard may have been in the vicinity of the Van Ness orchard.[45]

Fences and Hedgerows

Fences marked the property boundaries of the Van Ness estate. A fence ran along the north boundary of the property, between Kleinrood and the lands of Casparus Dingman; along the southwest boundary with the lands of Goes; and through the center of Kleinrood, along the division between the land owned by John Van Ness and William Van Ness. Paulding's deed to Martin Van Buren at the end of this period also mentions "a Cedar post set by the fence below the spring in the land leading to the old stone house" -- and Paulding's survey of his lands done in 1834 refers to a fence running at the foot of the hill, marking the boundary between the main houselot and John Van Ness (later Dingman's) land. There may well have been more fences on the farm than these references from deeds indicate. There is no documentation of what kinds of fence the Van Nesses used.[46]

Woodlots

Paulding's survey locates a woodlot in the southwest corner of John Van Ness's "Lot No. 3" as designated on the 1805 map.[47] This would place the woodlot along the slope between the two terraces on the

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[43] Platt, 37; Stokinger, 48.

[44] Peter Van Ness, "Last Will and Testament," quoted in Stokinger, 47.

[45] *New York Commercial Advertiser*, November 1841, quoted in Stokinger, 61-2.

[46] Peter Van Ness, "Last Will and Testament," quoted in Stokinger, 47; "Field Notes of General William Paulding's Farm in Kinderhook as Surveyed 29th September 1834," Columbia County Historical Society; William and Maria Paulding to Martin Van Buren (Deed), 1 April 1839, Columbia County Historical Society.

[47] "Field Notes of General William Paulding's Farm in Kinderhook as Surveyed 29th September 1834," Columbia County

property, an area perhaps too steep and too wet to farm. John Van Ness later sold this parcel along the road to Dingman, so it is likely that there were additional woodlots (perhaps contiguous to the one named in the deed) elsewhere on the property, from which Peter Van Ness felled wood for fuel and building.

Summary Description

When Judge Peter Van Ness built his Federal-style brick house on the Old Post Road, with its curving, tree-lined drive, he distinguished his farm from those of his neighbors as a prominent gentleman's estate. His son William, fond of breeding racehorses and fancy Merino sheep, perpetuated agricultural practices of the elite. Much of the farm was probably in pasture and hay, though presumably the family also cultivated crops typical for the area for their own consumption. South of the house there was an orchard and to the southwest was a garden "upon which vast sums were . . expended."[48] After 1824, the estate fell into decline under the ownership of Paulding, who did not reside at Kleinrood, and may instead have leased the fields to neighboring farmers or a tenant. By the end of the period, the garden was a corn field, the orchards had "decayed", and the "meadow lands [were] overgrown with dwarf adders."[49]

Historical Society.

[48] Martin Van Buren to Levi Woodbury, 24 July 1841, quoted in Platt, 61-2.

[49] Martin Van Buren to Levi Woodbury, 24 July 1841, quoted in Platt, 61-2; *New York Commercial Advertiser*, November 1841, quoted in Stokinger, 61-2.

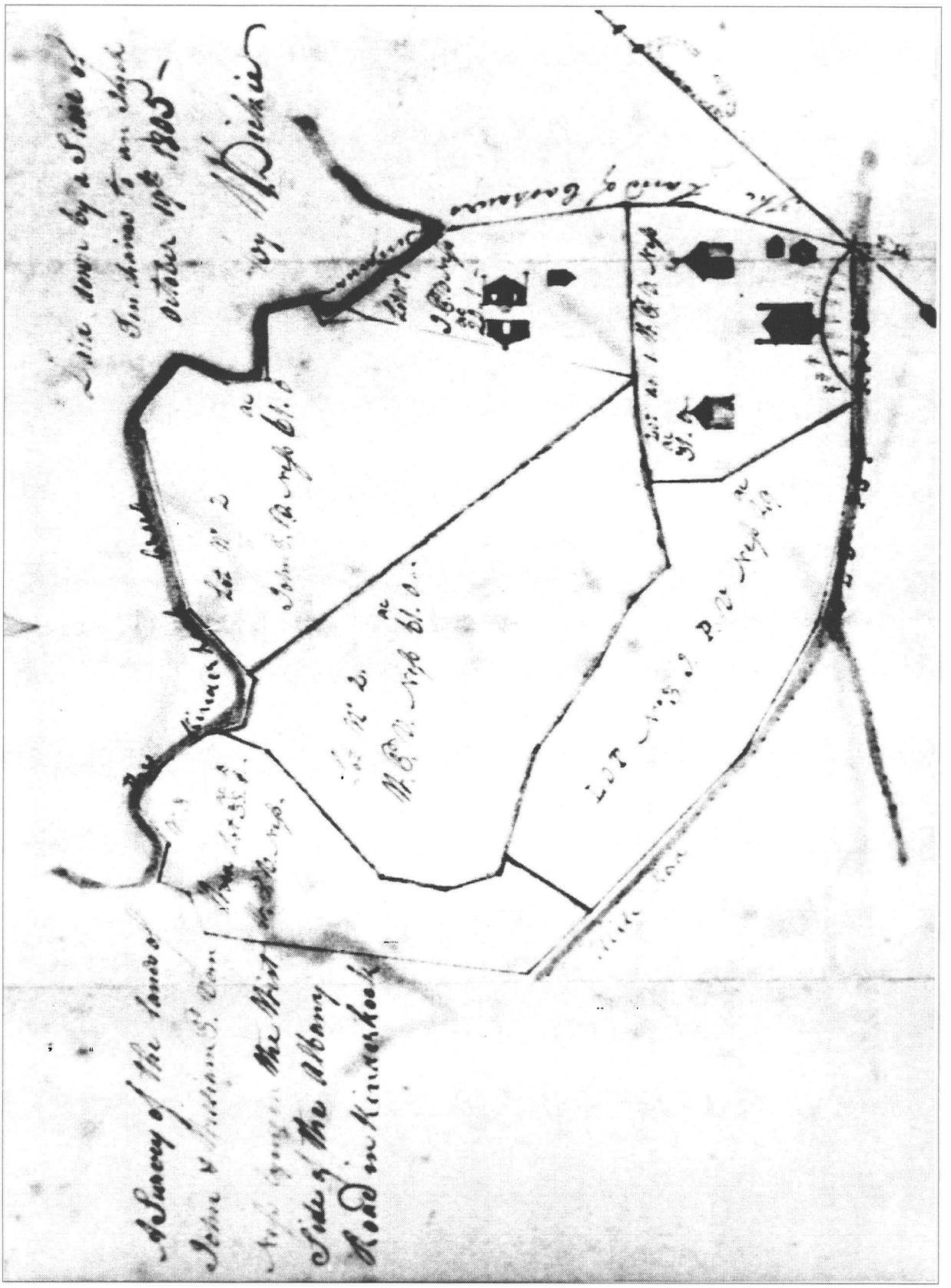
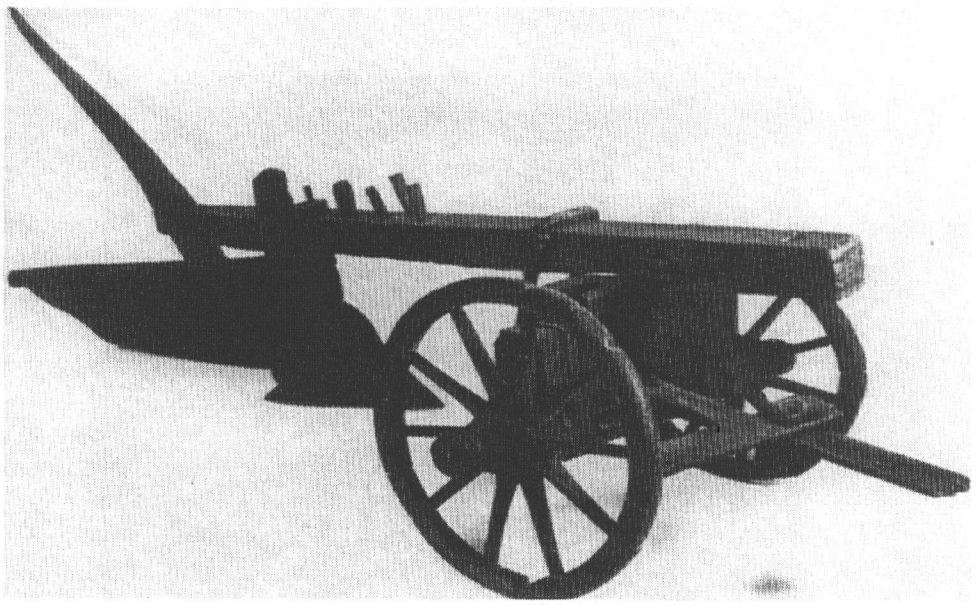
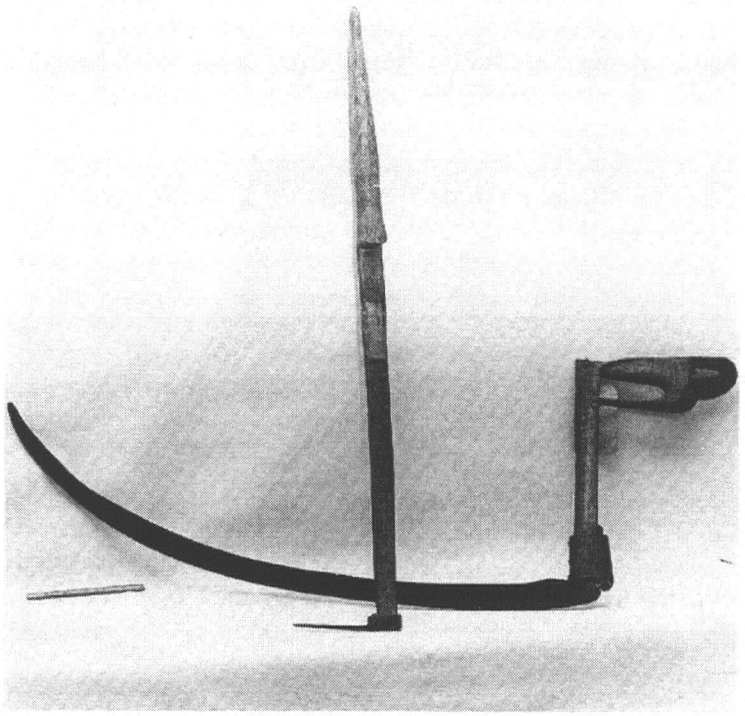


Figure 7: *A Survey of the lands of John and William P. Van Ness lying on the West Side of the Albany Road in Kinderhook.* 19 October, 1805. (Photographic reproduction on file, MVB NHS).



A Dutch plow, Mohawk Valley, New York, circa 1750. New York State Historical Association, Cooperstown.



A sith and mathook, Schoharie Valley, circa 1775–1850. Schoharie County Historical Society.

Figure 8: Eighteenth century Dutch tools from New York. (From Cohen, David Steven. *The Dutch American Farm*. New York: New York University Press, 1992.)

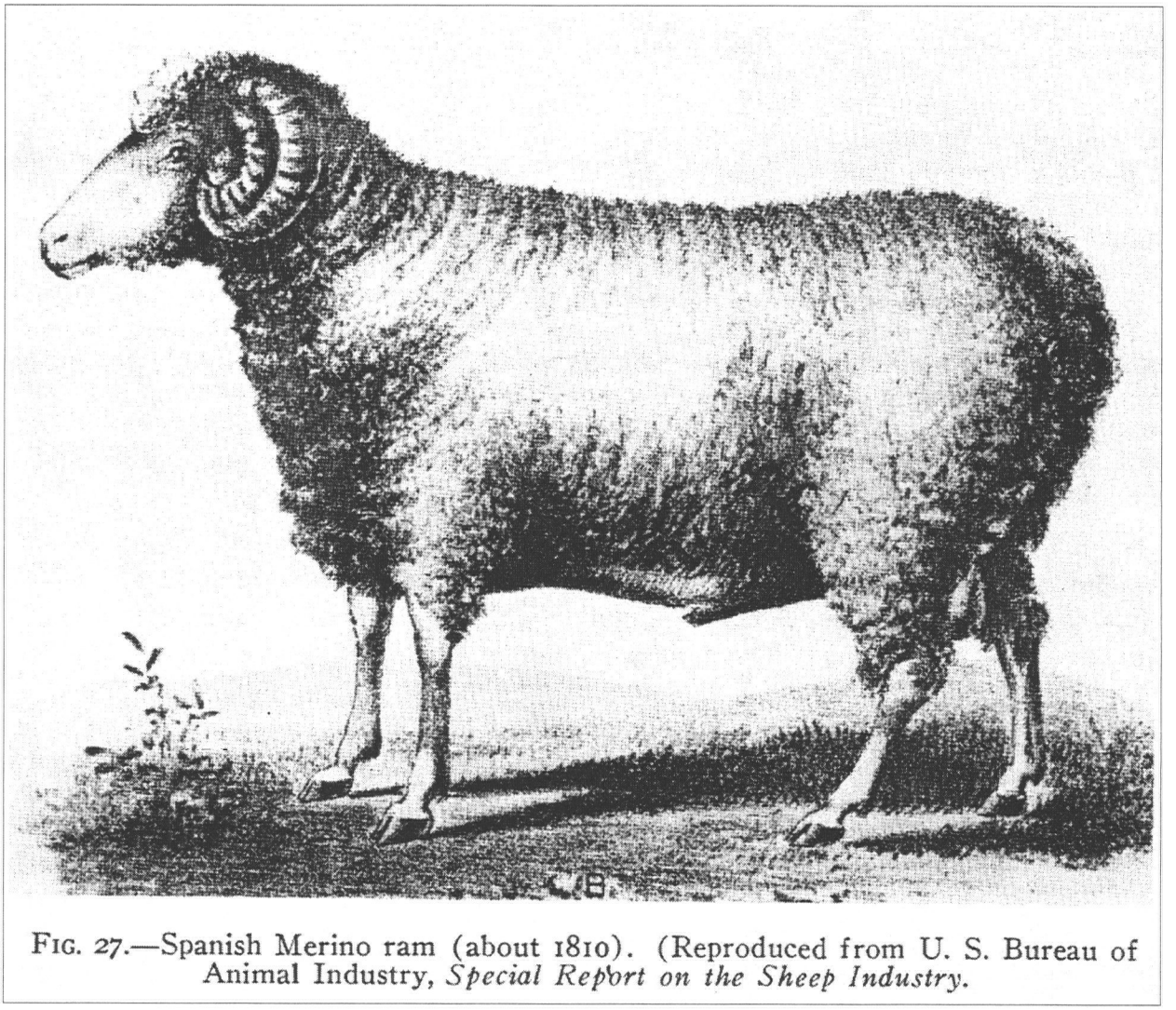


FIG. 27.—Spanish Merino ram (about 1810). (Reproduced from U. S. Bureau of Animal Industry, *Special Report on the Sheep Industry.*

Figure 9: Spanish Merino ram. (From Bidwell, Percy Wells, and John I. Falconer. *History of Agriculture in the Northern United States, 1620-1860.* Washington: Carnegie Institute, 1925.)

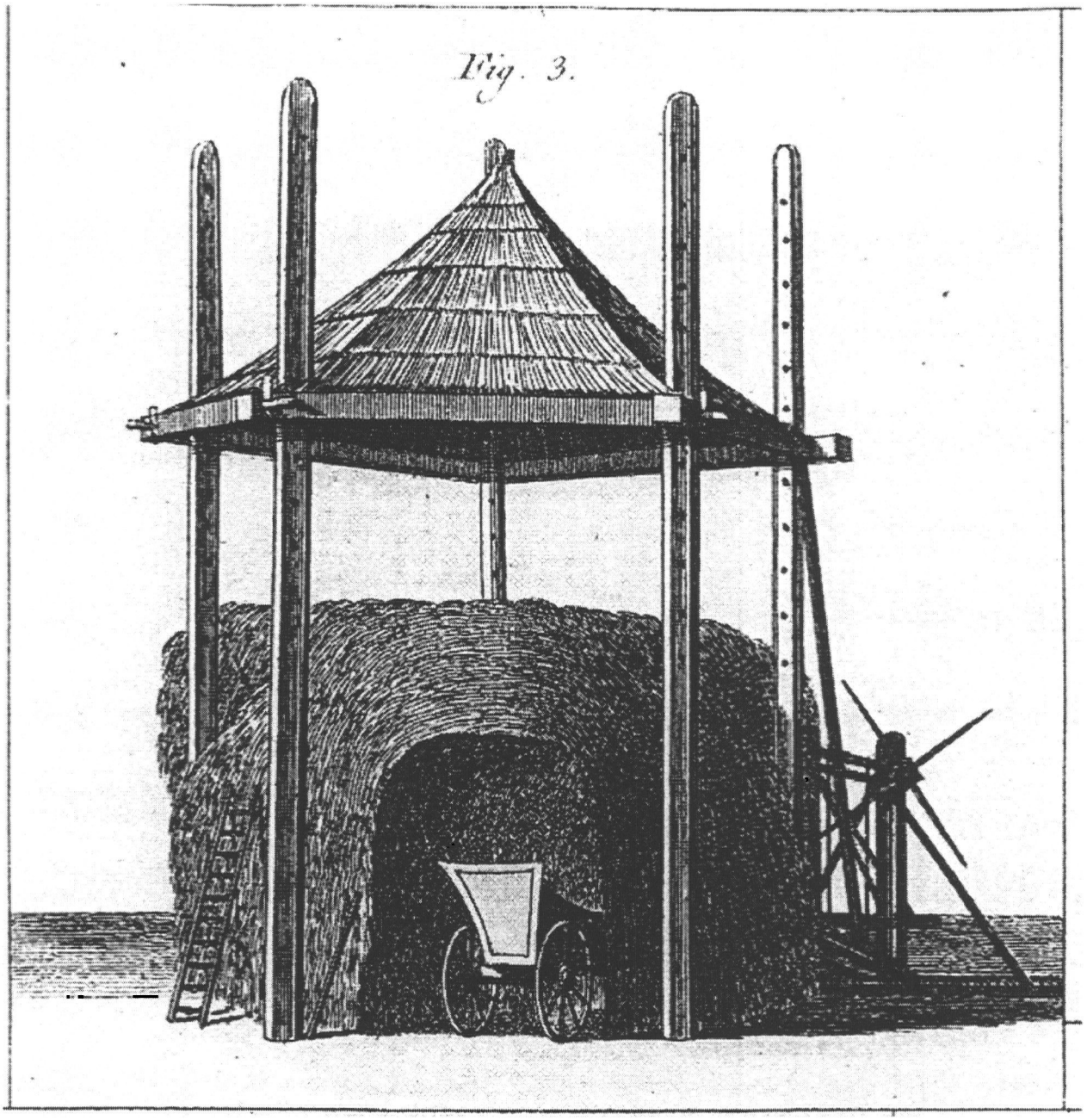


Figure 10: Dutch hay barrack and hay wagon, c. 1810. (From Cohen, David Steven. *The Dutch American Farm.* New York: New York University Press, 1992.)

MARTIN VAN BUREN OWNERSHIP, 1839-1862

Martin Van Buren was born in 1782 and raised in the village of Kinderhook, where his parents farmed and operated a tavern. Characterized as a discreet, guarded man with common sense and diplomacy, Van Buren's political accomplishments began in 1801 when he was a delegate to the Republican Party caucus in New York. Embracing Jeffersonian principles, Van Buren later became a state senator, state attorney general, and governor. In 1821 he entered the U.S. Senate as a Democrat, where he helped define the Democratic Party and managed Andrew Jackson's 1828 presidential campaign. After serving as Secretary of State under Jackson between 1829 and 1831 and Vice-President between 1833 and 1837, Van Buren became President of the United States in 1837. As president, Van Buren carried on Jacksonian policies and opposed the extension of slavery and annexation of Texas. Faced with the worst financial panic and economic depression in the country's short history, Van Buren and his political party were overwhelmingly defeated by the Whigs in the 1840 election.

Van Buren married Hannah Hoes (1783-1819) in 1807, who died twelve years later, leaving Van Buren with four sons, Abraham (1807-73); John (1810-66); Martin, Jr. (1812-55); Smith Thompson Van Buren (1817-76).[50] Two of his sons, Abraham and Martin, Jr. served as personal secretaries to their father while he was president. In 1838, Abraham married Angelica Singleton, who served as the official White House hostess during Van Buren's last two years as president. While still in office, Martin Van Buren purchased the Kleinrood estate in Kinderhook from Paulding in April of 1839 and renamed it Lindenwald. At the end of his term, Van Buren, his sons, and Angelica moved to Lindenwald. Shortly thereafter,John married Elizabeth Vanderpoel in June of 1841 and Smith married Ellen James in 1842. With the arrival of many grandchildren, visits from many guests, and resident domestic help, Lindenwald was busy household.

Van Buren was still involved in politics through the 1840s, making an unsuccessful bid for the Democratic nomination in 1844 and then running for president on the Free Soil ticket in 1848. As one historian has commented, "life at Lindenwald was not a retirement but an interlude as he renewed his spirits and sharpened the edge that had been dulled in the White House."[51] As a result of his continued involvement in politics, Van Buren entertained often at Lindenwald and dispensed advice from his estate. With its fine orchards, sweep of meadows, and fancy garden, Lindenwald was a gracious backdrop for the hospitality Van Buren extended to such contemporary figures as Thomas H. Benton, Frank Blair, The Earl of Carlisle, Henry Clay, Washington Irving, General Winfield Scott, Charles Sumner, David Wilmot, Silas Wright, and others.[52] Van Buren's improvements to the estate enabled him to feed his guests well and provide genteel rural entertainments like fishing parties and horseback riding.

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[50] A fifth child, Winfield Scott Van Buren (1813), was lost at birth.

[51] Donald B. Cole, *Martin Van Buren and the American Political System* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), 384. Apparently by the 1848 presidential race, Van Buren was becoming less interested in politics than gardening. He sent his son John to do most of the campaigning, "while the candidate stayed home tending his garden." Cole, 417.

[52] A. C. Flick, "Report on the Martin Van Buren Mansion at Kinderhook, New York," 6 November 1929, Files Relating to the Martin Van Buren Site 'Lindenwald', New York State Archives, Albany, New York.

Van Buren's Farming Aspirations

In many respects Martin Van Buren's decision to retreat to an agricultural estate in Kinderhook after his electoral defeat was not surprising. Van Buren had lived in the area for most of his life. When he moved to Washington at age forty-six to become President Jackson's Secretary of State, Van Buren had never lived outside of the region between Hudson and Albany for any extended period of time. As for the decision to take up farming, Van Buren was following an established precedent: "His seven [presidential] predecessors had adopted the lifestyle of country gentlemen after returning to private life . . . There was no realistic precedent for any other course of action."[53] Other politicians, Van Buren's colleagues and peers, also took up life on country estates in their later years, including Governor Wright of New York, Van Buren's Secretary of the Navy James K. Paulding, Governor Hill of New Hampshire, and Francis P. Blair, Van Buren's former advisor. Van Buren also corresponded with many of these men about their agricultural endeavors, trading advice, seeds, and cuttings.

Franklin Ellis, who compiled his *History of Columbia County* sixteen years after Van Buren's death, expresses the nature of President Van Buren's rural lifestyle well in his description of Lindenwald: "It was a home where a refined American gentleman might entertain the cultured and the great of all lands without removing himself from the presence of his peers, = the common citizen."[54] At Lindenwald, Van Buren was at once an elder statesman, leading a genteel life on his country estate, and a farmer, engaged in agrarian pursuits side by side with his "common" peers in rural Kinderhook.

Being engaged in common agrarian pursuits had positive connotations in Van Buren's day. Agriculture was mythologized as a noble, patriotic occupation. Agricultural reformer Jesse Buel, for example, extolled the virtues of farming, not only as "the principal source of our wealth" but more importantly as "the parent of physical and moral health to the state" and a means to "perpetuate the republican habits & good order of society."[55] Farmers played a central role in the Jacksonian rhetoric that Van Buren supported and helped to shape. Jackson called agriculture "the first and foremost occupation of man" and classed farmers along with planters, mechanics, and laborers as the "bone and sinew of the country." Unlike politicians, speculators, and industrialists, farmers relied on their own hard work for success. They were free of the taint of corruption, and in appealing to them, Jackson appealed to the "ideal of a chaste republican order, resisting the seductions of risk and novelty, greed and extravagance, rapid motion and complex dealings."[56]

This agrarian rhetoric is present in Van Buren's own writing, and in his ideas about farming as an antidote to politics, which he expressed in a letter to Gorham Worth:

> Since I left you last Spring I have been from my farm only three or four days upon a visit to Smith. I would not again trust my nerves to so near an approach to one of the

[53] National Park Service Boston Support Office,"Boundary Study Environmental Assessment: Martin Van Buren Historic Site, Kinderhook, New York" (National Park Service, 2003), 16.

[54] Franklin Ellis, *History of Columbia County, New York* (Philadelphia: Everts & Ensign, 1878), 231.

[55] Harry J. Carmen, ed., *Jesse Buel, Agricultural Reformer: Selections from his Writings* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1947), 14-15.

[56] Marvin Meyers, *The Jacksonian Persuasion: Politics and Belief* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1960), 12, 21.

> seats of political & Bank corruptions. Why don't you decide upon becoming an honest & virtuous man & plant yourself in my neighbourhood upon a good farm[?][57]

Van Buren proudly claimed of his ancestors, who had been in the Kinderhook area since the mid-seventeenth century, "They were all farmers, cultivating the soil themselves for a livelihood, holding respectable positions in society and sustaining throughout unblemished characters."[58] The link between occupation and character is strong in these statements and reflects Van Buren's own conviction of the morality of an agrarian life. By returning to his boyhood town and his humble roots as a Dutch farmer, Van Buren was reclaiming this moral, agrarian past. As a farmer for the last twenty-one years of his life, Van Buren created a foil for his career as a politician, an occupation that was ironically suspect in the Jacksonian rhetoric that Van Buren himself helped to create.

Lindenwald was not just a rhetorical demonstration ground for agrarian ideals. Van Buren was actively involved in farming on his estate and he seemed genuinely to enjoy it: "His garden and Farm constitute his chief amusement and occupation when at home; and the ex-President is much interested in all agricultural improvements."[59] Van Buren made major improvements to his estate, fashioning a highly successful agricultural venture from the overgrown meadows and decaying orchards left by previous owners. He also became keenly interested in the newest agricultural methods, which were changing considerably as a result of reform efforts and advances in agricultural technology.

Unlike other proponents of agricultural reform, who felt it was a civic duty to improve common agricultural practices, Van Buren seemed most interested in agricultural improvements as a means of improving the yields of his own crops and establishing himself as an uncommonly successful farmer.[60] Paulding expressed a common view of the role of the gentleman farmer as a man of civic virtue when he wrote to Van Buren:

> It gives me great satisfaction to find You continue to lay out money on Your Farm, as it does not much matter whether it Yields You and return, or not. The great pleasure is in Spending it, independently of any sordid calculations of gain, which are utterly unworthy a Gentleman Farmer, whose first duty is to make experiments for the benefit of the rising generation.[61]

Yet Paulding's own assessment of Van Buren the farmer reveals that Van Buren was a shrewd businessman, interested in agriculture not merely as altruistic experimentation. Paulding described Van Buren to Andrew Jackson:

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[57] Martin Van Buren to Gorham A. Worth, 9 April 1849, Martin Van Buren Papers, Library of Congress.

[58] Martin Van Buren, *The Autobiography of Martin Van Buren*, ed. John C. Fitzpatrick (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), 10.

[59] Sarah Mytton Maury, *The Statesmen of America in 1846* (London: Longman, Brown, Green & Longmans, 1847), 119.

[60] Thornton argues that for Boston elites in the early nineteenth century, "experimental farming was not just a private act but also a civic responsibility, for by the end of the war, agriculture, and specifically the allegedly backward state of agriculture in New England, had acquired political and social ramifications that a responsible elite could not ignore." Tamara Plakins Thornton, *Cultivating Gentlemen: The Meaning of Country Life Among the Boston Elite, 1785-1860* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 108.

[61] James Kirke Paulding to Martin Van Buren, 6 August 1847, in Ralph M. Aderman, ed., *The Letters of James Kirke Paulding* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1962), 464-65.

> The same practical good sense, the same sober, consistent, and judicious adaptation of means to ends, which has carried him [Van Buren] successfully through every stage of his political life, is discoverable in his system of Farming. His calculations are all judicious, his anticipations always well founded, *and his improvements never fail to quit cost, at least.*[62]

Van Buren was a prudent farmer, whose agricultural improvements yielded results and, to some degree, profit.[63]

In addition, Van Buren's agricultural activities and his interest in trying new techniques and technologies enabled him to distinguish himself, giving him additional prestige. Van Buren often boasted about farming successes in his correspondence with other gentleman farmers and friends, routinely comparing his crops to those of his neighbors. Characteristically, he wrote to Andrew Jackson in 1843:

> My farming operations for the present [have] been very successful & I am fast getting my farm in good order. My hay crop is, to the surprise of those who could not or would not believe that I could turn my mind to the subject, larger than a single one of my neighbors, . . . among them some of the best farmers in the county.[64]

The boasting that marks Van Buren's correspondence reveals another aspect of his agricultural endeavors. As the son of a tavern owner and as a young lawyer, he was indebted to other powerful local politicians such as the Van Nesses, whose position he usurped through purchasing (and renovating) their estate. Van Buren's return to Kinderhook marked the triumphant return of a native son. As a contemporary wrote, "What a striking contrast did his [Van Buren's] present elevated position present to that of his youth! In this his native village, he had held the humble office of fence-viewer in early life; and he was then administering the government of the most powerful nation on earth!"[65] Van Buren had an obligation to maintain an agricultural estate above the status of his "common" agrarian neighbors, an estate in-keeping with the tastes of a refined American gentleman and the former U.S. President.

An Englishwoman who visited Van Buren at Lindenwald in 1846 claimed that the estate was fit for British gentry. She wrote, "the comforts and elegancies of his residence exactly resemble those we find in the country house of an English gentleman of fortune who lives upon his estate."[66] Van Buren cultivated gentility in the form of the many varieties of fruits in his garden, the exotic flowers in his greenhouse, and the progressive agricultural reforms he adopted, all of which set him apart from his old-fashioned neighbors.

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[62] James Paulding to Andrew Jackson, 4 October 1843, in Aderman, 352-55 (added emphasis).

[63] The comparative value of Van Buren's profits with respect to other farms in the region merits further investigation. In the draft historic resource study "A Return to His Native Town: Martin Van Buren's Life at Lindenwald, 1839-1962," author Leo Richards asserts that Van Buren barely broke even, citing figures in Huston; and correspondence with Paulding in Ralph M. Aderman, ed. *The Letters of James Kirke Paulding* (Madison, 1962) 352-55, 464-5, and passim; Adam W. Sweeting, *Reading Houses and Building Books: Andrew Jackson Downing and the Architecture of Popular Antebellum Literature, 1835-1855* (Hanover, NH, 1996) 144-7; and Martin Bruegel, *Farm, Shop, Landing: The Rise of a Market Society in the Hudson Valley* (Durham, N. C., 2002), 167 on the returns of other farmers.

[64] Martin Van Buren to Andrew Jackson, 8 September 1843, Martin Van Buren Papers.

[65] William Raymond, *Biographical Sketches of the Distinguished Men of Columbia County* (Albany: Weed, Parson, and Company 1851).

[66] Maury, 119.

Agricultural Context

Van Buren's tenure at Lindenwald coincided with a period of rapid change in American agriculture. As agricultural historian P. W. Bidwell explained, the "great and far-reaching" changes wrought during the mid-nineteenth century resulted from "two great new forces, the home market and Western competition."[67] A third factor, low crop yields resulting from years of poor husbandry, also contributed to the agricultural changes underway in the mid-nineteenth century.

The development of the steamboat at the start of the nineteenth century, the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, and the rapid development of the railroads between 1840 and 1860 effected radical agricultural change as improved transportation enabled Mid-western produce to reach eastern markets cheaply and quickly. New York and New England farmers were unable to compete, and wheat, pork, cattle, and wool producers, especially, suffered the effects of Western competition.

Soil depletion and pest infestations exacerbated the pressures of Western competition, especially for crops such as wheat, which had been a mainstay of Hudson Valley agriculture. Wheat yields had been steadily declining throughout the beginning of the nineteenth century. In the Hudson Valley, fields which produced twelve to thirteen bushels per acre in 1813 only produced eight or nine bushels by 1845, while areas in western New York were still able to reap nineteen or more bushels per acre.[68] In the 1830s the wheat midge attacked New York wheat fields and its devastation lasted well into the 1850s. Between 1849 and 1859, wheat production in New York state fell by nearly 4,500,000 bushels. The wheat midge and soil depletion from years of poor husbandry crippled New York's wheat-based agricultural economy.

While traditional crops were becoming less profitable, urban markets in the Northeast grew tremendously during this period, creating new opportunities for farmers. The population in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states doubled between 1820 and 1869, with most of the population growth concentrated in cities and large towns.[69] A rise in prices for farm products during this period positioned farmers to raise more diverse crops for market. Many farmers produced hay, oats, market vegetables, dairy, and fruit products which they could sell to urban consumers. Thus, between 1840 and 1860, New York saw a marked transition from subsistence to market surplus farming with an emphasis on perishable goods.[70]

These changes were evident in the agricultural economy of Kinderhook, New York. According to the U.S. Census, spring wheat production fell from 99,730 bushels in 1850 to none in 1875.[71] At the county level, oats and hay -- both crops that could be sold to urbanites for their horses -- increased in production over the same period. Kinderhook farmers also responded to changing circumstances by finding a new niche in fruit production. Apple growing rose from 7,876 bushels in 1850 to 36,970 bushels in 1875, with pears, peaches, cherries, and grapes not far behind.[72] Van Buren was innovative at Lindenwald, and his estate boasted extensive orchards well before they were popular. Van Buren grew little wheat, and he concentrated his

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[67] Louis Bernhard Schmidt and Earle Dudley Ross, eds., *Readings in the Economic History of American Agriculture* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1925), 235.

[68] Bidwell and Falconer, 333-35; Ellis, *Landlords and Farmers*, 187.

[69] Willard W. Cochrane, *The Development of American Agriculture: A Historical Analysis* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1979), 73.

[70] Donald H. Parkerson, *The Agricultural Transition in New York State: Markets and Migration in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1995).

[71] Piwonka 42.

[72] Piwonka 42-3; Ellis, *History of Columbia County*, 137-139.

production on hay, oats, and potatoes as well as growing rye, corn for market, and other crops for his own household's use.

Competition, crop failures, and urban markets sparked agricultural reform. Agricultural societies formed in the late 1790s to disseminate information on agricultural improvements, such as the use of gypsum and the adoption of improved livestock breeds. These early societies mostly attracted non-farming members. After Elkanah Watson, the originator of the Agricultural Fair in the United States, founded the Berkshire Agricultural Society in 1810, agricultural reform became more popular among farmers. Numerous Agricultural Societies formed between 1815 and 1840, fashioning themselves on Watson's model.[73] In addition, agricultural periodicals began circulation in the 1830s. Magazines like *The Cultivator* (1834 to 1865), *The New England Farmer* (1822 to 1846), and *The Farmer's Monthly Visitor* (1839 to 1849), to name just a few, provided a forum for reformers and farmers to exchange advice, explain experimental farming practices, and discuss the issues of the day.

Jesse Buel was one of the most prominent and prolific men of the agricultural reform movement. An editor and farmer, he founded *The Cultivator* and wrote *The Farmer's Companion; or, Essays on the Principles and Practice of American Husbandry*, eleven editions of which were published in the years after 1839. The basis of the "principles of the new husbandry" espoused by Jesse Buel and other reformers was that farmers need to make continued investments in soil quality in order to reap good results. "Continued cropping will ultimately render it [the soil] barren and unproductive, unless we return to it some equivalent for what we carry off." The new husbandry centered on the following six practices for nurturing soil fertility: manuring, draining, good tillage, alternating crops, promoting root culture, and substituting fallow crops for naked fallows.[74]

Van Buren was not a prominent member of the agricultural reform movement, but his correspondence and activities on the farm reveal that he was interested in agricultural improvements. Buel's principles informed Van Buren's own practices at Lindenwald, and the estate was showcased as a model of reform in an article by Isaac Hill which appeared in the *Cultivator* in August of 1844. Van Buren reportedly commented that the *Cultivator* "was the best farm journal he read," implying that he read the *Cultivator* regularly and other agricultural periodicals as well. In his correspondence with other gentleman farmers, Van Buren received recommendations for various books on agriculture, including Liebig's *Agricultural Chemistry*, a seminal work in the developing science of agriculture. In Van Buren's own library was a general reference, the *Farmer's Encyclopedia* (Figure 11). As a local dignitary and agriculturalist, he was present at local agricultural fairs. The *Cultivator* noted that Van Buren attended the plowing match at the 1843 New York State Agricultural Fair as well as Governor Wright's address at the 1847 Exhibition. The New York State Agricultural Society also invited Van Buren to be one of its delegates to the Industrial Exhibition in London in May of 1851, an honor which Van Buren declined.[75]

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[73] Bidwell and Falconer, 187.

[74] Carmen, xxxiii, 276, 326.

[75] Donald B Marti, *To Improve the Soil and the Mind: Agricultural Societies, Journals, and Schools in the Northeastern States, 1791-1865* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1979), 142; Bidwell and Falconer, 319; Martin Van Buren to Henry D. Gilpin, 21 April 1843, Martin Van Buren Papers; Stokinger 179; *Cultivator* quoted in Demaree, 216; B. P. Johnson to Martin Van Buren, 22 January 1851 and Martin Van Buren to B. P. Johnson (draft), both in Martin Van Buren Papers.

Farming at Lindenwald

The 137-acre Kleinrood estate was that portion of the Van Ness property willed by Peter Van Ness to his son William in 1804, including the main house but not the old stone house or any lands to the east of the Old Post Road (Figure 12). Van Buren may have set his sights on Kleinrood earlier in his presidency. An account published in 1837 noted that east and south of the town of Stuyvesant are "several points particularly desirable for country seats, a few of which . . . as having been selected by eminent individuals, who are making active preparations to erect mansions at their earliest convenience: to wit, President Van Buren, Attorney General Butler, Judge Vanderpool, and others."[76]

Van Buren visited his new estate in the summer of 1839 and by fall had begun to make improvements to its neglected grounds. Van Buren hired John R. Harder to live at the property and oversee farming there in 1839. Harder harvested potatoes, oats, apples, buckwheat, and hay in the fall of 1839, and planted timothy and clover (grasses for hay), buckwheat, and potatoes, the following year.[77] Early in 1840 he bought agricultural supplies – seed and fertilizer, and in the spring of 1840, Van Buren hired Thomas Mullikin to construct the pond, plant rye, fence the rye field, and work on a hothouse. Van Buren again reported having good, early crops in the spring of 1841, even before he had begun his residency at Lindenwald.[78]

Van Buren moved to Lindenwald in the summer of 1841, after losing his bid for reelection. Once on the property, Van Buren continued his improvements. He wrote, "I have been extremely busy all summer in getting my place in order and have mainly succeeded. The carpenters are however yet on the grounds making s[t]ables, wood houses, &c. Barring the pressure upon my purse, th[e] occupation has been pleasant enough & any body that sees it says that I have made one of the finest places in the State."[79]

The following year, in 1842, Van Buren boasted, "I find my farm in excellent condition, crops . . . promising. I hope to sell enough of it to pay the workmen in the garden and on the farm which is my ultimatum."[80] Although he had a surplus of hay, oats, and potatoes that year, he still did not break even, noting in his accounts that he paid $200 in "Wages on farm & garden over & above what farm garden & orchard pay."[81]

Through the early 1840s, Van Buren expanded his farm, first acquiring a 28-acre parcel from Lambert Dingman, James Dingman, his wife, and Maria Dingman in the summer of 1843. "I have been so fortunate as to purchase a very valuable addition to my place, being the land between the orchard & the Creek, which you saw, & which I did not ever hope to obtain."[82] This L-shaped parcel lay to the north of both the houselot and the lower fields. Later that year he purchased another 12.15 acres on the southern edge of his houselot from the same Dingman family. With these purchases, Van Buren reclaimed some of Peter Van Ness's land sold to the Dingmans earlier in the century. In 1845, Van Buren expanded his holdings to their

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[76] *Letters about the Hudson River and Its Vicinity Written in 1835-1837* (New York: Freeman Hunt, 1837), 220.

[77] James A. Harder, Sr. to George D. Berndt, 9 September 1982, Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library; "Kinderhook Feb 6th 1840, Produce sold from the Farm," Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library.

[78] Stokinger 59; Accounts, 16 April 1840, Van Buren Papers, Columbia County Historical Society; Platt, 56, 61-2.

[79] Martin Van Buren to Andrew Jackson, 30 July 1841, Martin Van Buren Papers.

[80] Martin Van Buren to Andrew Jackson, 30 July 1842, Martin Van Buren Papers.

[81] Martin Van Buren to Joel R. Poinsett, 1 October 1842, in Reeve Huston, "The 'Little Magician After the Show: Martin Van Buren, Country Gentleman and Progressive Farmer, 1841-1863," National Park Service Special Study, May 2002, 30; "Probable Expenses from 1st May [18]42 to 1st Jan. [18]43," Martin Van Buren Papers.

[82] Martin Van Buren to Joel R. Poinsett, 25 June 1843, quoted in Platt 55.

full extent of 220 acres by purchasing 43 acres from Peter Hoes and Lawrence Van Buren (his brother) on the east side of Mill Road (Figure 13).[83]

Although he reported "finishing off" his improvements on the farm in 1844 -- including draining fields and constructing several barns and a cottage -- Van Buren was still hard at work in 1846. "If I were to tell you half the improvements I have made since you were here & am still engaged upon it would make you stare. Paulding says I am stark mad & will soon be Bankrupt."[84] And in 1847, he wrote to Gouverneur Kemble that he was still making major financial investments in the farm, mentioning his extensive "engagements last fall in making improvements & their repetition upon a still larger Scale this season."[85]

In 1849, taking stock of the successful farm he had built, Van Buren decided to secure its future by promising to leave the estate to his son Smith Van Buren and allowing Smith to make changes to the house while he was still alive:

> We are to undergo a great Revolution here. Desirous of making more effective provision than old Peter [Van Ness] did for keeping Lindenwald in my family (...to secure good treatment to my plants & trees, for which, being the result of my own labours, I feel a strong attachment) I have undertaken to select its future owner while I am in full life & health. I have therefore assured Smith that if he and his Wife will come and live with me, & make Kinderhook their permanent Residence, he shall have Lindenwald at my death, & to amuse myself with the changes which he would be sure to make when I was no more I have from them agreed that he may go to work now as far only as it relates to the buildings.[86]

Van Buren appears quite possessive of the estate, especially its grounds, and it is interesting to note that he allows Smith to alter the house only. The President and his son were heavily involved in renovating the house over the following two years. Despite the inconvenience of the construction work, Van Buren did not rent a house in the village of Kinderhook as he had planned, but rather stayed on at Lindenwald to oversee agricultural activities.[87] This spurt of construction was the last major improvement project that Van Buren undertook at the estate. The decade of the 1850s was comparatively calm, and Van Buren focused on agricultural production.

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[83] Lambert, James, Jane Ann, and Maria Dingman to Martin Van Buren (Deed), 25 July 1843; Lambert, James, Jane Ann, and Maria Dingman to Martin Van Buren (Deed), 7 September 1844; Peter and Maria Hoes and Lawrence and Harriet Van Buren to Martin Van Buren (Deed), 1845; all in Columbia County Historical Society.

[84] Martin Van Buren to James S. Wadsworth, 8 June 1844, quoted in Platt 67; Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 18 November 1846, quoted in Platt 70.

[85] Martin Van Buren to Gouverneur Kemble, 2 June 1847, Martin Van Buren Papers.

[86] Martin Van Buren to G. A. Worth, 9 April 1849, Martin Van Buren Papers.

[87] Platt, 80.

Layout and Circulation

By the 1850s when Van Buren had finished his improvements, the farm comprised approximately 220 acres of land between the Old Post Road, Mill Road, and Kinderhook Creek. The main house, oriented towards the Old Post Road, was approached by a formal, curving drive lined with locusts. Most of the barns, outbuildings, and agricultural support structures were located behind the house on the upper terrace of the estate, while the lower terrace closer to the creek was primarily agricultural fields and pasture (Figure 14).

Two main farm roads linked the house to the rest of the property. One, to the north of the main house, led past Van Buren's extensive orchards and the carriage barn. It may have continued to the lower terrace, to the area where the Van Alstyne stone house had stood. To the south of the main house, a farm road led west past Van Buren's garden, greenhouse, and his small south orchard. This road provided access to the farm cottage where Van Buren's farm foreman lived and the red hillside barn and barnyard, all located west of the south orchard on the edge of the escarpment that divided the property. The farm road continued down the escarpment to the lower fields and straight west to the edge of Kinderhook Creek, passing Van Buren's hay barn in the fields. Another road ran parallel to the Old Post Road, connecting the two main farm roads and leading to the carriage barn. Such a road appears on the undated (c. 1841) sketch map of the property. Also on that map, and listed in early deeds, is a road running diagonally across the southwest corner of the houselot and along the base of the escarpment behind the main house. This was likely the remnants of the lower Post Road, which Van Buren may have incorporated into his farm road system.[88]

The fields formed the majority of the acreage on the farm, as Van Buren kept the bulk of the estate in crops or hay (Table 1). Van Buren reported 191 acres in crops, hay, and pasture in 1848, with equal acreage in crops (rye, corn, oats, potatoes) and hay.[89] While this total acreage of crops seems high considering all of the other structures and the orchards on the estate, it underscores that Van Buren used the land efficiently. Although wood was a scarce commodity needed for fences and heating, Van Buren must not have left many acres wooded, perhaps only the steep escarpment at the center of the property and areas too wet to plow. Van Buren had a herd of about one hundred sheep through most of the 1850s, as well as cows, pigs, poultry, and horses. These animals would have grazed on the twenty to thirty acres that Van Buren set aside for pasture.

[88]William deProsse, Jr., who lived at Lindenwald in the 1930s, remembers traces of a very old road running past the red hillside barn on the lower terrace (William deProsse, Jr. letter to the author, 26 April, 2002). It is unclear whether this road was used during Van Buren's tenure, or was already a road trace then.

[89] Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 22 June 1848, Blair Family Papers, Washington, DC: Library of Congress, Microfilm, Mss 19,713.

Table 1: Land Use at Lindenwald, 1848 and 1854

	1848[90]	1854[91]
Acres in crops	82	70
Acres hay	85	65*
Acres pasture	24	30
Acres fallow	**	15

*1855

**not mentioned

Farm Help and Housing

Van Buren did not himself plow fields, rake hay, or build fences, relying on farm help (Table 2).[92] He may have taken a keen interest in his garden and orchards, but even there he had a gardener to help him. Van Buren hired a John Harder to run the farm in its early years (1839-1841).[93] In the 1840s, Van Buren adopted a system whereby he paid a farm foreman for his work. The farm foreman through most of the 1840s was a man by the name of Cooney, whose son also helped on the farm.[94] Cooney and later foreman were paid a wage for their work. Van Buren switched to a system whereby the farm was leased to a tenant farming on shares by 1855. In this later period, the tenant received half of the proceeds of the farm, possibly in return for providing his own tools, equipment, and draft animals.[95]

Share farming was an old custom in New York, "providing relatively small holders with a supplemental income by renting unused lots to landless neighbors or family members."[96] During the 1840s, this relatively democratic form of tenancy was exploited by wealthy landowners interested in turning their lands to cash crop production, primarily hops and dairy. This wealthy class of men made large-scale capital investments required for the transition to market production and left their leaseholders to produce the hops or butter they

[90] Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 22 June 1848, Blair Family Papers.

[91] 1855 New York State Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, New York, entry for Jeremiah Hess.

[92] As there is nothing in Van Buren's correspondence to indicate whether or not he got his hands dirty, this point is debatable (see Huston, 7). There is one oblique reference, when Van Buren's friend Paulding ridicules him for his propensity for talking rather than working. Paulding writes, "I have been hard at work for the last two or three weeks, destroying dry leaves, brush & every earthly incumbrance with fire and Hatchet, not merely walking about, saying a great deal and doing nothing -- like a certain friend of mine -- but blistering my hands, and perspiring most gloriously. I am none of Your idle Lookers-on but an industrious pains taking operative" (James K. Paulding to Martin Van Buren, 9 May 1846, in Aderman, 434).

[93] It is not clear what kind of agreement Harden had with Van Buren. An undated draft share agreement that has survived in Van Buren's papers indicates that he may have hired a farmer to work the land on shares. There is no evidence that the Mr. Marquatte named in the agreement actually worked at Lindenwald, and it is doubtful that he did, given that Harder was at Lindenwald when other scholars have assumed Mr. Marquatte was in charge. See "Draft share agreement", n.d. [1841], Martin Van Buren Papers, transcript on file at Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library; James A. Harder, Sr. to George D. Berndt, 9 September 1982, Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library; Huston 21-23.

[94] John Ward Cooney, "My Recollections of Ex-president Martin Van Buren and his Friends," *Historical Society of Southern California Annual Publication*, n.d., 28-33. Martin Van Buren to Paulding, n.d. [spring 1847], in Aderman 458-59.

[95] Huston, 22-3.

[96] Summerhill, 130.

required to make a financial success of their farm properties. Leaseholders found this system more demanding and exploitative than life-leases or the more traditional share cropping arrangements.[97] Unlike these landowners, Van Buren did not push his tenants to grow unusual, capital-intensive crops like hops; rather, he stayed with tried and true crops like hay, potatoes, and apples. Van Buren's keen interest in and apparent control over his farm, the scale of his activities, and his daily presence at Lindenwald distinguished him from both the old-fashioned share cropping arrangement and the landlord farming typical in the hop-growing regions of the state.[98]

The foreman, and later the tenant, lived in a cottage which Van Buren constructed in 1844: "I have built me what I call a beautiful cottage (for my foreman) on the brow of the Hill."[99] The cottage, still extant, is located on the escarpment between the terraces, to the west of the main house, behind Van Buren's garden. It was a small cottage, one and one half stories high, and the farm tenant living there would have had easy access to the agricultural fields further west and the red hillside barn and barnyard.

Van Buren hired additional laborers for the property, including his gardener, a coachman, and others who worked in the fields under the tenant or foreman. These laborers lived either in the main house with the Van Buren family, as did twenty-three year old Allen Ham in 1850, or with the tenant/foreman in the farm cottage, like Aron Vanderpool, aged twenty-four, in 1855 or Lawrence Wyerkeen, aged nineteen, and Andrew Krum, aged sixty-seven, in 1860.[100] The 1849 house renovations created more housing for farm help. Van Buren and his son Smith Van Buren had two small gatehouses constructed in the same style as the house and located at either end of a curving entry drive. "They were small, one and one half story board and batten buildings with a wood-shingle, gable roof, field stone foundation, and full basement."[101] A dormer on the north gatehouse made it the larger of the two. Both of these structures were sometimes used to house farm laborers. For example, James Stephenson, Van Buren's coachman, his wife Mary, and later their children, lived either in one of these gatehouses or on a neighboring property from 1850 to 1860. Van Buren may also have let his workers board with a neighbor, such as Anthony Scalin, a gardener from Holland, who lived across the Old Post Road with the Everts in 1860.[102]

Van Buren hired domestic help, primarily women from Ireland, throughout his tenure. Some of these women, along with the wives and daughters of the farm foreman or tenant, may have helped in the fields, especially with harvesting and threshing grain. Tasks relating to poultry and dairying – collecting eggs, feeding and slaughtering poultry, or making butter and cheese – were also probably the responsibility of the

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[97] Summerhill, 130-32.

[98] An undated draft share agreement that has survived in Van Buren's papers indicates the kind of share agreement Van Buren may have had, though the terms of the agreement are not completely consistent with accounts of transactions between Van Buren and later tenants. There is no evidence that the Mr. Marquatte named in the agreement actually worked at Lindenwald, and it is doubtful that he did, given that Harder was at Lindenwald when other scholars have assumed Mr. Marquatte was in charge. The draft agreement stipulates that Mr. Marquatte was "to do all the work on the farm in a workman like manner," though "the whole farm to be worked [under] the action of MVB." Van Buren supplied housing for Mr. Marquatte and his family, farming supplies, and equipment in return for two-thirds of the farm products. Mr. Marquatte supplied one third of grain and potatoes for seed, and he received one third of the farm's products in return, as well as milk, butter, wood, and apples for his family's use. See "Draft share agreement", n.d. [1841], Martin Van Buren Papers, transcript on file at Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library; James A. Harder, Sr. to George D. Berndt, 9 September 1982, Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library; Huston 21-23.

[99] Martin Van Buren to James S. Wadsworth, 8 June 1844, in Platt 67.

[100] 1850 U.S. Population Census; 1855 New York State Population Census; 1860 U.S. Population Census.

[101] Uschold and Curry, 41.

[102] 1860 U.S. Population Census.

women on the farm. In addition, Van Buren hired seasonal help when undertaking large improvements on the estate. For example, he mentions, "my Painters Carpenters Masons & Ditchers of each of which class of worthies I have a small host & will house for a month or two more."[103]

Table 2: Farm Labor Documented at Lindenwald[104]

Year	Name	Title/Job	Age	Origin	Family at Lindenwald	Residence
1839 - 1841	John R. Harder	Farm foreman	30 - 32	New York	William, son	
April 1840	Thomas Mullikan	Laborer			John, son	
1841-1851	Patrick J. Cooney	Farm foreman				
1843	= Schenck	Gardener				
1845	?	Gardener		France		
1850	Abraham Kearn	Farm foreman	38	New York	Elizabeth, wife; two daughters; Cornelia Meickle, possibly a servant	Next door (farm cottage?)
1850	Allen Ham	Farmer	23	New York		With MVB at main house
1850 - 186-?	James Stephenson	Laborer, later Coachman	28 - 38	Ireland	Mary, wife; later son and daughter	Next door (n. gatehouse?)
1855	Jeremiah Hess	Farm tenant	51	Columbia, NY	Margaret, wife; seven daughters; William Miller, son-in law, aged 23	Farm cottage
1855	Aron Vanderpool	Laborer	24	Columbia, NY		Farm cottage
1855	Peter Huyck	Gardener	34	Germany	Christina, wife; daughter	Next door (a gatehouse?)
1860 - 1864	Isaac Collins	Farm tenant	33 - 37	New York	Julia, wife; daughter; Laura, sister-in-law	Farm cottage
1860	Andrew Krum	Farmer	67	New York		Farm cottage
1860	Lawrence Wyerkeen	Laborer	19	Ireland		Farm cottage
1860	Anthony Scalin	Gardener	42	Holland		Boarding with Jacob Everts, neighbor
1860	Abram Broadhead	Laborer	25	New York	Hester, wife; Elizabeth, mother-in-law	Next door (s. gatehouse?)

[103] Martin Van Buren to Gorham A. Worth, 23 May 1847, Martin Van Buren Papers.

[104] Sources: 1850 U.S. Population Census; 1855 New York State Population Census; 1860 U.S. Population Census; Accounts, 16 April 1840, Van Buren Papers, Columbia County Historical Society; John Ward Cooney, 28-33; James A. Harder, Sr. to George D. Berndt, 9 September 1982, Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library; Reeve Huston, "The 'Little Magician After the Show: Martin Van Buren, Country Gentleman and Progressive Farmer, 1841-1863," National Park Service Special Study, May 2002.

Ponds, Drainage, and Earthworks

Fish Ponds

Among Van Buren's many farm improvements in the early 1840s were several earthworks projects, including two ponds. In 1840, Thomas Mullikin spent five and one half days working "at the pond" at Lindenwald, presumably building the dam for the upper fish pond.[105] The two ponds built early in Van Buren's tenancy were described in an article by Isaac Hill:

> Among the objects which give beauty and interest to the grounds are two artificial ponds in the garden. They were easily made by constructing dams across a little brook originating from springs on the premises. Soon after they were made, (three years ago), some fish were put into them, and they are now so well stocked, with trout, pickerel and perch, that Mr. Van Buren assures us they will afford an abundant supply for his table.[106]

The upper pond was located at the southern end of the houselot, in or near the garden. It had a stone dam at one end with a wooden sluiceway, and it fed a lower pond located further down the ravine towards the lower terrace.[107] Both ponds were stocked with fish, and Van Buren liked to boast of "breakfasts upon fish taken from a Pond made by myself from Springs."[108] Fishing was a gentlemanly pastime and one which Van Buren enjoyed, as evidenced by frequent references to it in his own correspondence. John Ward Cooney, who as a boy at Lindenwald was responsible for catching Van Buren's bait, recalled that "Mr. Van Buren seemed to find his chief recreation in fishing and outdoor tramps across the country." When Van Buren entertained, he also took his guests on fishing parties, though undoubtedly sometimes further afield than his own ponds.[109]

Ditches

A correspondent for the *New York Commercial Advertiser* summarized Van Buren's improvements late in 1841 and reported that one project was yet ongoing: "the process of making into good meadows the moist lands covered with useless bushes, is going on with great activity."[110] Presumably some of the fields close to the river in the southwestern portion of the farm were fairly wet, as several streams are shown in this area on the 1841 sketch map of the estate (see Figure 13). Not only was Van Buren clearing the "moist lands" but the process of turning them into "good meadows" required that he drain the land and seed it with hay. The whole process was explained as an example of profitable and progressive agriculture in the *Cultivator*:

> Perhaps the most important improvements which have taken place on the farm, have been made on a tract of *bog land*, thirteen acres of which have been thoroughly

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[105] Accounts, 16 April 1840, Van Buren Papers, Columbia County Historical Society.
[106] Demaree, 291.
[107] Uschold and Curry, 168, 178. The second, lower pond is still evident in the ravine below the upper pond. However, it appears to be partially filled.
[108] Martin Van Buren to Levi Woodbury, 24 July 1841, in Platt 61-2.
[109] John Ward Cooney, "My Recollections of Ex-president Martin Van Buren and his Friends," *Historical Society of Southern California Annual Publication*, n.d., 28-33; James K. Paulding to Martin Van Buren, 25 February 1844, in Aderman, 361-63.
[110] *New York Commerical Advertiser*, November 1841, quoted in Stokinger, 61-2.

> reclaimed, and are covered with luxuriant crops of grass or oats. Three years ago, this lands was almost worthless. It was first drained by ditches. The stumps, bushes, &tc. were then cut out and burned, and the ashes spread on the land. It was afterwards sown to grass = using a mixture of timothy and red-top seed = three pecks to the acre. The whole cost of reclaiming was thirty-eight dollars per acre, and the land will now pay the interest of a hundred to a hundred and fifty dollars per acre. In this Mr. Van Buren has set a good example, which we hope will be followed by other farmers in the neighborhood who have lands similarly situated.[111]

Apparently, this initial drainage process did not completely solve the problem of wet fields. By 1847, Van Buren was again working on a drainage project since he employed "Ditchers" on the property that summer. In August, he boasted of having made "a thousand miles of Ditches, by the aid of an Old Englishman and four Paddies, at the cost of 500 Dollars." (Clearly "a thousand miles" is an exaggeration, as Van Buren's correspondent, Paulding points out).[112] Van Buren may have expanded an existing series of ditches in 1847, but he also probably added new ditches to the land he had purchased in 1843 from the Dingmans. Van Buren drained the wet area between the red barn and the black haybarn by running tile underdrains through the 28-acre Dingman parcel to Kinderhook Creek.[113]

The exact location of Van Buren's other drains and ditches is not known, but an aerial photograph of the farm taken in 1948 reveals the possible presence of underground structures forming two or three courses across one of the lower fields. In addition, an open ditch is clearly visible in the woodland fringe on the southern end of the same field, and it drains into the creek (Figure 15). This ditch was possibly altered ten years after Van Buren's death and redug in the twentieth century, but its general location may date from Van Buren's tenure.

Livestock and Farm Buildings

Van Buren admits in a letter to Erasus Corning that he has never been that interested in raising livestock. He writes, "You will recollect that I informed you that my Farmer propensities do not lie in the cattle lines, & was therefore indisposed to branch expensively into outlays of that character."[114] In the same letter, he asks Corning about purchasing "fair blooded cows" for his farm:

> Will you have the goodness to let me know for what price you can obtain for me one or two fair blooded cows, for milk . . . I have . . . a very fine Durham short hair bull, and think I ought to give him better employment than my yard affords, if I can do it upon reasonable terms.[115]

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[111] Demaree, 291 (original emphasis).

[112] Martin Van Buren to Worth, 23 May 1847 and 3 June 1847, Martin Van Buren Papers; Paulding to Martin Van Buren, 6 August 1847, in Aderman, 464-65.

[113] William deProsse, Jr., who lived on the farm in the 1930s and 1940s, recounted that when new ditches were dug near the red barn in the late 1940s, "His [Van Buren's] clay pipes were still in the ground but had become clogged by the time we were there." William deProsse, Jr., letter to the author, 26 April, 2002.

[114] Martin Van Buren to Erasus Corning, 26 April 1843, xerox on file at Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library.

[115] Martin Van Buren to Erasus Corning, 26 April 1843, xerox on file at Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library.

Imported livestock, like Van Buren's "very fine Durham short hair bull" had been popularized by the agricultural reform societies and were de rigeur for a farmer of Van Buren's status. In addition to the dairy cattle, Van Buren maintained seven horses at the farm throughout his tenure, some drafthorses and some for riding. For plowing, hauling, and other heavy farm tasks, he kept a pair of oxen. Sheep, goats, chickens, ducks, guinea hens, geese, and swine rounded out the stock on the farm (Table 2).[116]

Poultry and milk cows were potential money-makers for Van Buren. In his early years at Lindenwald, however, Van Buren was not self-sufficient, and his poultry and milk stock only served to supplement household consumption. He estimated that he spent $125 on butter, $40 on poultry, and $400 on groceries in 1842.[117] By the end of his tenure, there was some surplus, and Van Buren reported selling a little more than fifty dollars worth in poultry and eggs in 1855. By 1860, the farm was producing 910 pounds of butter annually, and Van Buren gave the "butter milk cream beef & pork furnished me" from his land a value of $313 in 1861.[118]

Serious dairy and wool production seems not to have been Van Buren's taste, however. In the mid-1850s, Van Buren and his tenant increased the milk cow herd from 8 to 12 cows and the number of sheep from 103 to 125. Butter and wool production per animal also increased dramatically during this period. Historian Reeve Huston links this focus on livestock to the decline in crop yields for hay, potatoes, rye, and oats evident in the 1855 census, and he postulates that this may have precipitated the hiring of a new farm tenant. By the 1860 census, balance on the farm had returned: crop yields were higher than in 1850, the milk herd was near its former count, and the number of sheep had been reduced to 39.[119]

Table 3: Livestock at Lindenwald, 1840 – 1860

	Sheep	Oxen	Horses	Milk cows	Other cattle	Swine	Poultry	Butter (lbs.)	Eggs ($)	Value of Slaughter ($)	Sources
1850	103	4	7	8	2	17		250			1850 U.S. Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, NY, entry for Martin Van Buren.
1855	125	2	7	12	6	19	•	1200	25		1855 New York State Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, New York, entry for Jeremiah Hess.
1860	39	2	7	9	4	14		910		105	1860 U.S. Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, NY, entry for Isaac Collins.

[116] An 1863 account records the following livestock on the farm: "8 cows, 3 yearlings, one 2 year old goat, 2 pair cattle, 33 sheep, 1 sow and pigs, 1 old hog, 4 shoats, 35 fowls, 2 turkeys, 7 gees, and 4 ducks." Isaac Collins, "Account of Stock on Lindenwald, May 13th 1863," transcribed by W. N. Jackson, on file at Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library; see also 1850 U.S. Agricultural Census; 1855 New York State Agricultural Census; 1860 U.S. Agricultural Census; Stokinger 72.

[117] "Probable Expenses from 1st May [18]42 to 1st Jan. [18]43," Martin Van Buren Papers.

[118] 1855 New York State Agricultural Census; 1860 U.S. Agricultural Census; "Farm for 1861," n.d., Martin Van Buren Papers.

[119] Huston, 13.

Associated Structures

Unfortunately, as another historian has noted, "The particulars for sheltering all of these animals are presently lacking."[120] Prior to the renovations on the house that began in 1849, there were stables, either attached to the house or behind it: "[H]e [Smith Van Buren] & his wife have been to New York to consult the great architectural oracle [Mr. Upjohn] ... radical changes will become necessary = such as taking down the present stable wings & erecting towers in there places, the addition of Dormant [*sic*] windows & god know else what..."[121] These were perhaps the same stables that Van Buren had constructed when he first came to Lindenwald in 1841: "I have been extremely busy all summer in getting my place in order and have mainly succeeded. The carpenters are however yet on the grounds making s[t]ables, wood houses, &c."[122]

Also on the main houselot, were "the carriage-house & stables, green house, lodges & other outbuildings."[123] The carriage house from the Van Ness period continued to be used throughout Van Buren's tenure, and perhaps Van Buren stabled his horses in this barn after 1849. This building was located north of the mansion, alongside the north orchard, and it appears on the 1841 sketch map of the property. One of the "other outbuildings" could have been the woodshed first documented after Van Buren's ownership of Lindenwald, during the Wagoner period. The building may have dated from the Van Buren or Van Ness period. It was later described as a "one and one-half story wood frame building approximately thirty-five feet by twenty-five feet."[124] This building lacked a foundation and may have been either rotated or moved.[125] It may be the other structure that appears northwest of the house on the 1841 sketch map of the property (see Figure 13).

In 1849 Van Buren had a barn constructed on the property, the red hillside barn on the slope behind the farm cottage. He alludes to the construction of this barn in a letter when he writes, "Our weather is extremely fine but I have not yet started the plough which in your climate [ ] tardy. But here it is not. My last years crop showed a necessity for more Barn Room & my men are helping to get out the Timber. In a day or two the Plough will move."[126] In the 1930s, this approximately fifty foot by seventy-five-foot barn had grain storage on the upper level with stalls for livestock below as well as a large, fenced barnyard to the southwest.[127] Given its proximity to the farm tenant's cottage, the red hillside barn would have made a convenient livestock barn during Van Buren's tenure as well. There was a "sheep-house" located on the property, because it was mentioned in the minutes of the proceedings of the executors of Van Buren's will in 1862.[128] There is also passing reference to a "poultry yard" in correspondence from 1841.[129] While it is possible that both of these structures were located near the red barn, there is no documentation as to their location on the farm.

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[120] Stokinger, 72.
[121] Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 4 March 1849, Blair Family Papers.
[122] Martin Van Buren to Andrew Jackson, 30 July 1841, Martin Van Buren Papers.
[123] "Minutes", 4 August 1862, Estate Record Book, Martin Van Buren Papers.
[124] Uschold and Curry, 64.
[125] William deProsse, Jr., Sketch map of Lindenwald and notes, n.d., photocopy on file, Martin Van Buren National Historic Site.
[126] Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 9 April 1849, Blair Family Papers.
[127] William deProsse, Jr., Sketch map of Lindenwald and notes, n.d., photocopy on file, Martin Van Buren National Historic Site; Uschold and Curry, Appendix F, figures 7, 8; William deProsse Jr., letter to the author, 26 April 2002.
[128] "Minutes", 9 August 1862, Estate Record Book, Martin Van Buren Papers.
[129] Platt, 60.

One of Van Buren's barns was constructed exclusively for crop storage. Van Buren built the black hay barn, as it was called, in the spring 1844. As described by Clementine deProsse in the late 1930s, it was "about fifty feet by sixty feet, with an extension, very high and of heavy timber construction . . . for hay and grain storage and full wagon-load storage, has part stone basement. Exterior covered with mill-run, (moulded and concave) tongued and grooved vertical pine boarding (rare)." With its high roof, gable entrance, and center aisle wide enough to accommodate a wagon, this was a classic Dutch-American barn. Though Van Buren seems to have adapted the design for grain storage, it had been "calculated for storing 150 tons of hay after being pressed." Hay mows occupied the two, smaller side aisles where typically cows would have had stalls, and a small extension to the main structure housed the hay press. This press enabled Van Buren to package his hay for market and store it more compactly.[130] The black hay barn stood in the lower fields, near the creek, about two-thirds of the distance between the house and the western-most edge of the property.

A large, working farm like Lindenwald would surely have had other landscape features related to livestock care and crop production: troughs and animal feeding areas, midden piles, a wood pile, corn crib, outdoor storage for tools, or an area for slaughtering animals.

Pasture

In addition to the hay and grain that his livestock consumed in the winter, Van Buren probably turned his animals out on his crops after harvest to feed on the stubble remaining in the fields, as was common practice. In one instance, he let his stock graze on an unharvested crop, his winter wheat: "I have the best field of it [wheat] in the County & am obliged to turn my stock on it to prevent its being smothered by the snow when it comes."[131] His livestock may also have grazed in his orchard. In addition, Van Buren planted fields specifically for pasturage, including the "24 [acres] in fine clover for pasture" that he mentions in 1848 and the 30 acres he kept in pasture in 1854.[132] The location of these pastures is unknown.

Crops

Crops and hay accounted for the majority of the land at Lindenwald and were the major focus of Van Buren's agricultural endeavors (Table 4). Two fields were visible from the Old Post Road, but most of the crops were grown on the lower terrace of the farm. Van Buren cultivated some crops for household consumption at Lindenwald and some for the market.

Hay

Van Buren used the lowland meadows near Kinderhook Creek that he had drained, ditched, and improved primarily for growing hay, one of his largest and most profitable crops. As the *Cultivator* correspondent reported, this land was sown in timothy and red-top after it had been reclaimed from wetlands. Timothy (*Phleum pratense*) is an English grass that was introduced early in the Colonial period and adopted as farmers turned to sowing grass instead of relying on meadows for hay. Timothy was favored for

[130] Martin Van Buren to James S. Wadsworth, 8 June 1844, quoted in Platt 67; Stokinger, 121; for descriptions of Dutch Barn type see Cohen 86-90 and Allen G. Noble and Richard K. Cleek, *The Old Barn Book* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1997), 107-8; Demaree, 291.

[131] Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 16 November 1850, Blair Family Papers.

[132] Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 22 June 1848, Blair Family Papers; 1855 New York State Agricultural Census.

Table 4: Crops at Lindenwald, 1840 - 1861[133]

	Potatoes	Hay	Rye	Corn	Oats	Grapes	Wheat	Buckwheat	Peas	Beans	Beets	Hops	Melons	Cabbage
1839	•	•			•			•						
1840	•	•	•					•						
1841	•			•					•	•	•			
1842	•	•	•	•	•	•								
1843		•				•								
1844	•	•				•							•	•
1845	•		•											
1846	•				•									
1848	•	•	•	•	•	•								
1850	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•		•		
1851							•							
1855	•	•	•	•	•		•							
1860	•	•	•	•	•			•						
1861	•	•		•										

[133] This chart depicts the crops that have been documented in various sources for each year. Therefore it is not a complete listing of all the crops grown at Lindenwald during a particular year. Years not listed in the chart are years for which there is no documentation.

Key for sources by year:

1839 "Kinderhook Feb 6th 1840, Produce sold from the Farm," Martin Van Buren NHS Library.

1840 "Kinderhook Feb 6th 1840, Produce sold from the Farm," Martin Van Buren NHS Library; Accounts, 16 April 1840, Van Buren Papers, Columbia County Historical Society.

1841 Martin Van Buren to Levi Woodbury, 24 July 1841, quoted in Platt 61-2.

1842 Martin Van Buren to Joel R. Poinsett, 1 October 1842, quoted in Huston 30; Martin Van Buren to John M. Niles, 16 April 1843, quoted in Platt 68; "Probable Expenses from 1st May [18]42 to 1st Jan. [18]43," Martin Van Buren Papers; Martin Van Buren to Benjamin F. Butler, 15 November 1842, Martin Van Buren Papers.

1843 Martin Van Buren to Andrew Jackson, 8 September 1843, Martin Van Buren Papers; Martin Van Buren to John M. Niles, 16 April 1843, quoted in Platt 68.

1844 Isaac Hill quoted in Demaree, 291.

1845 Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 19 April 1845, Blair Family Papers; John P. Sheldon to Martin Van Buren, 30 October 1845, Martin Van Buren Papers.

1846 Martin Van Buren to Gorham A. Worth, 22 October 1846, Martin Van Buren Papers; Martin Van Buren to James K. Paulding, n.d. [spring 1846], in Aderman, 429-30.

1848 Martin Van Buren to Gouverneur Kemble, 13 April 1848, quoted in Stokinger, 71; Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 22 April 1848, quoted in Platt 69; Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 22 June 1848, quoted in Platt 71.

1850 Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 16 November 1850, Blair Family Papers; 1850 U.S. Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, New York, entry for Martin Van Buren.

1851 Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 15 July 1851, Blair Family Papers.

1855 1855 New York State Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, New York, entry for Jeremiah Hess.

1860 1860 U.S. Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, New York, entry for Isaac Collins.

1861 "Farm for 1861," n.d., Martin Van Buren Papers.

horses -- Van Buren's market -- because it lacked the dust and chaff that caused "heaves," a disease like emphysema in horses. Red-top (*Agrostis vulgaris*) was often paired with Timothy, since the two grasses were harvested at the same time. In addition red-top was well-adapted to "reclaimed swamps and other moist grounds, in which it almost every where springs up and flourishes spontaneously."[134]

Van Buren's correspondent Gilpin corroborates that Lindenwald's lower terrace was mainly devoted to hayfields early in the 1840s. "I hope you do not intend to change your plan of keep[ing] your farm principally in a meadow —the sweep of meadow down to the creek bordered by the woods, and the hills beyond, is so beautiful that I would not, if I were you, put either fences or corn fields in the range."[135]

Van Buren's placement of his grasslands was in keeping with contemporary agricultural thought. Reformers like Jesse Buel counseled farmers to grow hay in lands unsuited to tillage crops:

> There are some soils so natural to grass as to yield an undiminished product for many years, almost without labor or expense. There are others, on the banks of streams which periodically overflow, which it is prudent to keep in grass, lest the soil should be worn away by the rapid flow of waters. Besides, fertility is kept up upon these last by the annual deposit of enriching materials.[136]

Certainly, flooding was a periodic hazard to the farmers along the creek and could do considerable damage.[137]

New York was the largest producer of hay in 1839, and hay was a staple crop throughout the northeast as farmers turned away from wheat and towards the growing markets of New York and other major cities, where horses were in constant need of fodder. Hay was a major crop grown at Lindenwald, and Van Buren grew considerably more of it than he needed on the farm. As one contemporary wrote in 1844, "Mr. Van Buren keeps but little stock, a considerable object being the sale of hay, which a large portion of the farm is well calculated to produce."[138]

Van Buren bought timothy and clover seeds for the farm in 1840, even before he was in residence there, along with plaster of Paris, a common top-dressing for hay fields. By 1843 he was boasting of his hay: "My hay crop is, to the surprise of those who could not or would not believe that I could turn my mind to the subject, larger than a single one of my neighbors, ... among them some of the best farmers in the county."[139]

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[134] Demaree, 291; Stilgoe, 182-83; Paul C. Johnson, *Farm Inventions in the Making of America* (Des Moines, Iowa: Wallace-Homestead Book Company, 1976), 97; Carmen, 496.

[135] Henry D. Gilpin to Martin Van Buren, 21 April 1843, Martin Van Buren Papers.

[136] Carmen, 473.

[137] In 1854, for example, the local newspaper reported flooding along Kinderhook Creek: "the lowlands are entirely covered . . . The damage caused by [*sic*] farmers owning land along its banks is no doubt considerable, judging from the fencing stuff which continually passes down the current, not to speak of the injury sustained by the tearing away of the banks, and the deposits of gravel and sand upon the heretofore rich meadows." *Kinderhook Rough Notes*, Thursday May 4, 1854.

[138] Bidwell and Falconer, 368; Demaree, 291.

[139] Platt, 56; Bidwell and Falconer, 368; Martin Van Buren to Andrew Jackson, 8 September 1843, Martin Van Buren Papers.

In 1848 Van Buren had more than eighty-five acres in "fine timothy" and "clover for cutting," surpassing the acreage he had in all other crops combined.[140] While he seems to have had a bad year for hay in 1850, later census reports and accounts indicate that the farm continued to produce large amounts of hay through the early 1860s. Given the price Van Buren lists for hay in an 1861 account, fifteen dollars per ton, this crop accounted for a large proportion of the farm's income.[141]

In the first couple of years of his tenure, it is possible that Van Buren stored hay in the carriage barn or in a hay barrack.[142] To better accommodate his hay crop, Van Buren constructed a "large Hay Barn in the Meadows" in the summer of 1844. Its location here further substantiates that Van Buren's hay grew mainly on these lower fields near the creek. One would not have built such a big barn so far from the other barns, houses, and livestock unless its location made it convenient to the men harvesting the hay. After cutting the hay, tedding it (fluffing it with rakes to expose it to air and sun), letting it dry, and raking it into rows, Van Buren's men would have loaded the hay into wagons and driven it into the barn through large, double doors on its north gable end. They pressed the hay in the press west of the barn entrance, and stored it in the barn until it was sold. One receipt from the sale of some of Van Buren's hay exists, indicating that he sold it to a middleman in Kinderhook. Given Kinderhook's location on the Hudson, Van Buren's hay was probably shipped to Albany, Troy, or even New York City (Figure 16).

Potatoes

Van Buren grew potatoes at Lindenwald from the very beginning. It was one of the only crops mentioned by name in the share agreement he made with Marquatte, and he boasted of having a good, early crop in 1841.[143] Although Van Buren cultivated potatoes fairly continuously through his time at Lindenwald, the 1840s were a difficult time for potato farmers due to a blight that affected the Northeast.[144] In its first year, 1843, the "potato-rot" caused a thirty percent loss of crop in New York and Pennsylvania, prime potato-growing states. Between 1839 and 1849 potato productivity in New York and New England dropped by nearly fifty percent. However, the potato blight had a positive effect on potato prices. A report from Oneida County, New York explained, "While the average [production] has diminished more than one-half, the price per bushel has more than doubled, thus furnishing a greater return for a much less quantity of heavy cartage."[145] For a farmer like Van Buren who could successfully grow potatoes, they were a very profitable crop.

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[140] Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 22 June 1848, Blair Family Papers.

[141] In 1860, Lindenwald produced 115 tons of hay, which if valued at the 1861 price of $15 per ton, would yield $1725.00. Of course the profit from hay would have been lower once one accounted for hay used on the farm, and it is not clear if this price accounts for transport costs, which may have been substantial. Nevertheless, total sales from farm products in 1861 were $1792.49. Therefore sales of hay must have accounted for a substantial proportion of the farm's profits. "Farm for 1861," n.d., Martin Van Buren Papers; 1860 U.S. Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, New York, entry for Isaac Collins.

[142] Hay barracks could be quickly built to store extra hay, and they were still being used in the 1840s, as Van Buren's friend James K. Paulding revealed in a letter: "We got in our Hay, all Safe, and had such an amazing crop, that I was obliged to build a Barrack, after filling the Barn." (James K. Paulding to Martin Van Buren, 21 July 1847, in Aderman, 463).

[143] Martin Van Buren to Levi Woodbury, 24 July 1841, quoted in Platt, 61-2.

[144] There is a record or mention of potatoes growing on the farm for each of the following years: 1841, 1842, 1844, 1845, 1846, 1848, 1850, 1852, 1855, 1860, 1861.

[145] Bidwell and Falconer, 374-77.

Van Buren grew Carter potatoes, a variety he obtained from the Shakers and which he claimed were "preferred in the New York market uniformly by a shilling or two a bushel."[146] Van Buren was proud to ship his potatoes to friends to use as seed potatoes on their own farms.[147] On one, he accompanied the seed potatoes with explicit instructions for planting them, probably reflecting his own practices at Lindenwald:

> You must be sure & not plant before *the full of the Moon* which will be about the 13h. of May. You must cut the potatoes into two pieces each and put only two pieces in a Hill -- positively no more. This [twenty bushels] will plant four acres & if your *small farm* will not allow you that much give the seed to your neighbors rather than encumber the ground with them. If you want reasons, a very unreasonable requirement, know that the Carters have treble the number of eyes that all other kinds have and that you can therefore scarcely put too little seed in the ground. The consequence of an excess being that your potatoes are smaller & not as good.[148]

The 1845 season provided a large enough crop such that in addition to whatever Van Buren saved for his own seed, he still had three barrels extra the following spring to ship to his friend Blair. In the spring of 1846, Van Buren planted seventeen acres in potatoes, as he explained to Paulding: "I was wrong in saying that I would plant 200 Bushels of potatoes, not then having been sufficiently enlightened in regard to the quantity of seed that should only be used but the number of acres is the same viz *17 - Seventeen*[.]"[149] Despite a large planting, by October of 1846, Van Buren was concerned about having enough to meet his obligations, and he refused to send Governor Worth any of his precious crop:

> I cannot I am sorry to say it send you the Potatoes but I can do as well by telling you where to get them. I engaged to let my grocer [ ] Geery Walker Street and Broadway have five hundred Bushels & as I have been offered 20 [ ] more than I get from them I am anxious to comply with my engagements. The 'early' rain raised our expectations high but a sad disappointment in respect to the 'latter' has lowered them amazingly. Having 8 Irish mouths to fill [ ] to lay up & connections to supply I shall not be able to do more than keep my word with the Geerys. Send for them there & if you are a Judge in such matters and one wise enough to prefer the middling size & know how to boil them you will say you never tasted better.[150]

This quote gives a rare glimpse of the stresses of farming and also reveals that Van Buren was eager to capitalize on the good price he was able to get for his potatoes on the market. It reveals that he had a grocer in Albany or New York City with whom he did a regular and sizeable business. However, Lindenwald was not purely a commercial, market-oriented enterprise. Potatoes also figured into the household economy as a basic foodstuff, and it appears that regardless of the market, Van Buren needed potatoes to feed his domestic staff (the "8 Irish mouths" refers to Van Buren's domestic staff, for Van Buren lists Irish women as members of his household on his 1850s census returns).

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[146] Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 13 and 27 March 1846, Blair Family Papers.
[147] see for example, Martin Van Buren to Gouverneur Kemble, 19 April 1845, Martin Van Buren Papers and Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 11 Dec. 1852, Blair Family Papers.
[148] Martin Van Buren to James K. Paulding, n.d. [spring 1846], in Aderman, 429-30, original emphasis.
[149] Martin Van Buren to James K. Paulding, n.d. [spring 1846], in Aderman, 429-30, original emphasis.
[150] Martin Van Buren to Gorham A. Worth, 22 October 1846, Martin Van Buren Papers.

Van Buren grew more than five hundred bushels in 1846 and seven hundred bushels in 1860, though according to the census records, these were a large crop for him. He generally harvested about two hundred bushels a year. Although it is difficult to determine what kind of yields Van Buren produced and therefore how many acres he had in cultivation, Van Buren wrote that he had four acres of potatoes in 1848. In the years after 1848, he had perhaps somewhere between four and seventeen acres in potato cultivation at any one time. He may have grown his potatoes on the lower fields, alongside the hay: "His hay and potatoes were grown for the most part on land reclaimed from a large tract of bog."[151]

Oats

Oats were a mainstay of Columbia County agriculture in the mid 1800s. In 1840, the 1,107,702 bushels of oats harvested in the county equaled more than twice the output of all other grains combined.[152] Oats were also a staple crop at Lindenwald, more important than rye, buckwheat, or wheat, but grown in about equal proportion to corn and potatoes. By 1842, Van Buren reported having a surplus of oats. He boasted to Paulding in the spring of 1846, "I have sowed *ninety bushels* of oats = Think of that & weep."[153] Oats were sown very early in the spring, and they could have been grown any number of places on the farm: "The character of the soil upon which oats are sown is of less importance probably than with any other crop." At two to three bushels sown per acre, Van Buren would have had thirty-six acres in oats in 1846. The acreage Van Buren devoted to oats fluctuated over the years, with a high at an estimated sixty-seven acres of oats in 1850. Since Van Buren only cultivated twelve acres of hay that year, it seems he substituted oats for hay in 1850. Like hay, oats was a cash crop, sold mainly for horse feed.[154]

Corn

Corn was a labor intensive crop. "The problem of adequately caring for the growing crop was the major consideration limiting the acreage planted." Over the course of the summer, the widely spaced hills of corn required four separate hoeings, or about six days of labor per acre. Corn also competed for farmers' time during the hay harvest.[155] Despite the effort involved, Van Buren, like most other farmers, grew corn throughout his tenure at Lindenwald, producing average yields. Van Buren had twenty acres of corn in 1848, as much as thirty-five acres in 1850, and considerably less (ten or less) in the following years.[156] The corn Van Buren grew at Lindenwald would have been primarily field corn, for meal or animal feed, not the sweet corn grown on the property in the twentieth century.

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[151] 1850 U.S. Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, New York, entry for Martin Van Buren; 1855 New York State Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, New York, entry for Jeremiah Hess; 1860 U.S. Manuscript Agricultural Census, entry for Isaac Collins; Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 22 June 1848, Blair Family Papers; Edward Townsend Booth, *Country Life in America as Lived by Ten Presidents of the United States* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947), 133.

[152] Ellis, *History of Columbia County*, 137.

[153] Martin Van Buren to James K. Paulding, n.d. [spring 1846], in Aderman, 429-30, original emphasis.

[154] George E. Morrow and Thomas F. Hunt, *Soils and Crops of the Farm* (Chicago: Howard & Wilson Publishing Co., 1895), 176-178; Entry for Martin Van Buren, 1850 U.S. Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, New York; Entry for Jeremiah Hess, 1855 New York State Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, New York.

[155] Clarence H. Danhof, *Change in Agriculture: the Northern United States, 1820-1870* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), 202, 214.

[156] Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 22 June 1848, Blair Family Papers; 1850 U.S. Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, New York, entry for Martin Van Buren; 1855 New York State Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, New York, entry for Jeremiah Hess; 1860 U.S. Manuscript Agricultural Census, entry for Isaac Collins.

Rye

Along with hay, rye was one of the first crops grown at Lindenwald. The rye field was one of Thomas Mullikin's projects at Lindenwald in 1840, and rye fields northeast and behind the house are the only two crop fields identified on the early sketch map of the estate. In the Mid-Atlantic states rye was a substitute for wheat, planted in small fields with poor soils where wheat had failed. It was more than a fall-back crop, however, in neighboring Rensselaer County, New York, one of the largest rye-producing areas of the country: "Large quantities of rye are cultivated in this county, for the Baltimore market, where it is mostly distilled. It is one of the most profitable crops we raise."[157]

Rye could also be planted as a winter crop, then harvested in the spring "furnishing green food [for livestock] until clover is large enough to cut." It made especially good fodder for milk cows, ensuring that the milk be "acceptable to the taste" where it was to be delivered to city markets.[158] When the spring crop was cut -- or it could be turned over to provide green manure -- the land could then be ploughed and used for a summer crop such as corn.[159]

Rye would have made a good first crop, during the years that Van Buren worked to restore the farm's neglected soils. Van Buren's continued cultivation of rye reflects its value as a market crop, as well as its versatility on the farm. Van Buren may have sold his rye to distilleries, but he may also have used it to provide grain for his household or the market. Van Buren recorded "21 bushels sown of rye in 1845," which suggests that between ten and forteen acres were planted. The amount of rye grown at the farm fluctuated, reaching thirty acres in 1848 and perhaps more in 1860. In the mid-1840s Van Buren planted his orchard in the north field shown in rye on the 1841 sketch map of the estate. There is no evidence to indicate where Van Buren located his rye fields after that date.[160]

Intermittent Crops

In addition to the staple crops -- hay, potatoes, oats, corn, and rye -- which formed the backbone of cultivation at Lindenwald, Van Buren also grew hops, buckwheat, and wheat intermittently. In 1850 Van Buren experimented with hops, harvesting ten pounds at Lindenwald that year as recorded in the 1850 census.[161] Hops was a highly profitable but speculative crop that made a "meteroric rise" in New York in the 1850s. Its price was volatile, and it was difficult to cultivate. "Hops required the utmost skill and delicate handling to produce a quality product."[162] Hops seeds were planted in hills, often with potatoes and corn between them, and trained up twenty foot poles, making for dramatic visual impact. The crop had to be harvested carefully, dried in a kiln, treated with sulfur, and then baled before it could be sent to market. Although Van Buren probably avoided the costs of building a kiln by sending his hops elsewhere for drying, start-up costs for hops were quite high, making hops the exclusive purvey of wealthy landowners.[163] Hops take three years to reach maturity, so Van Buren started the hops plants in 1847. However, with a yield of

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[157] Accounts, 16 April 1840, Van Buren Papers, Columbia County Historical Society; Bidwell and Falconer, 354.
[158] Morrow and Hunt, 187.
[159] William Crozier and Peter Henderson, *How the Farm Pays* (New York: Peter Henderson and Co., 1884), 81.
[160] John P. Sheldon to Martin Van Buren, 30 October 1845, Martin Van Buren Papers; Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 22 June 1848, Blair Family Papers; 1860 U.S. Manuscript Agricultural Census, entry for Isaac Collins.
[161] 1850 U.S. Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, New York, entry for Martin Van Buren.
[162] Thomas Summerhill, "Farming on Shares: Landlords, Tenants, and the Rise of the Hop and Dairy Economies in Central New York," *New York History* 76 (April 1995), 134.
[163] Summerhill, 133-5.

only ten pounds, he must have had only a few plants, well under an acre, and could have grown them in his garden or a corner of another field. Apparently, the hops experiment did not meet Van Buren's expectations, and he stopped growing them soon after 1850, for there is no mention of hops in later census reports or correspondence.

Van Buren also grew buckwheat intermittently, beginning with his first few seasons at Lindenwald. John Harder, his foreman, sold 74 bushels of buckwheat in 1839, and planted it again in 1840. Buckwheat is not documented on the estate again until 1850 and 1860, though Van Buren may have grown it in intervening years.[164] Given the yields Van Buren reported, he had at most seven acres of buckwheat in 1850 and as much as seventeen acres in 1860.[165] It is difficult to determine where Van Buren would have planted his buckwheat or for what purpose, since buckwheat is such a versatile crop. Though used primarily for human consumption, buckwheat could also be grown as a cover crop, for green manure, or for chicken and hog feed. It could be planted in a variety of soils including poor ones, and it could follow oats or rye in a rotation. Since buckwheat was usually sown in June or July, it could be planted after a winter grain crop had been harvested or as a replacement if an earlier crop had failed.[166]

Despite declaring "we sow no wheat here" in 1848, Van Buren grew this crop in 1850, 1851, 1855, and possibly intervening years.[167] Van Buren grew a commercially developed wheat, Pure-Soules.[168] In the fall of 1850 he sowed some winter wheat (after the census records were taken in August of that year). He may have gotten his crop in late, because he worried about the snow killing his crop, "the best field of it [wheat] in the County."[169] The following year, Van Buren switched to spring wheat, a crop which was usually of lesser quality (and prices) than winter wheat. He sowed thirty bushels, or approximately fifteen to twenty acres worth, harvested the crop in July, and converted the proceeds into "five hundred dollars worth of choice wine, as the most agreeable way of preserving a fresh recollection of the crop."[170] In 1855 Lindenwald produced a very small quantity of wheat, only thirty-six bushels on fourteen acres of land. Since this yield was well under the New York average for 1855 of 7.3 bushels per acre, and since Van Buren reported the same acreage for rye and oats, it is possible that he sowed a winter crop of wheat and rye, harvested them in the spring, then planted oats in the same field for the summer season.[171]

Crop Rotation, Harvesting, and Seasonal Variability

Unlike a large, late-twentieth century farm, intensely planted with one or two crops, Van Buren consistently grew a great number of main crops at Lindenwald, as well as many vegetables and fruits in his

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[164] "Kinderhook Feb 6th 1840, Produce sold from the Farm," Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library; 1850 U.S. Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, New York, entry for Martin Van Buren; 1860 U.S. Manuscript Agricultural Census, entry for Isaac Collins; there is also a very cryptic reference to Buckwheat scrawled on a letter Van Buren received, John P. Sheldon to Martin Van Buren, 30 October 1845, Martin Van Buren Papers.

[165] These figures were calculated using a conservative estimate of 8.1 bushels per acre. See Parkerson, 91.

[166] Morrow and Hunt, 283; Crozier and Henderson 83-4; J.H. Walden, *Soil Culture* (New York: Robert Sears, 1858), 90.

[167] Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 22 June 1848, Blair Family Papers; 1850 U.S. Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, New York, entry for Martin Van Buren; Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 15 July 1851, Blair Family Papers; 1855 New York State Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, New York, entry for Jeremiah Hess.

[168] Huston, 13.

[169] Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 16 November 1850, Blair Family Papers.

[170] Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 15 July 1851, Blair Family Papers; for how many bushels of wheat were commonly sown per acre, see Crozier and Henderson, 69.

[171] 1855 New York State Agricultural Census; Parkerson, 91.

garden and orchards. In any one year, there were probably four to six major crops plus hay growing in Van Buren's fields. This variety was important as insurance against crop failure. "Farmers chose to raise a variety of crops because they knew that a new blight might strike at any moment. . . . If the wheat crop failed, the corn in the adjacent field fed its planters; if the corn failed the rye might thrive."[172] In addition to the variety of crops grown, the practice of rotating crops and the various methods used to harvest them would have given Lindenwald's fields visual diversity seasonally and from year to year.

Crop rotation was an important tenant of the agricultural reform movement. Farmers had been exhausting their soil by planting nutrient-loving crops like corn in the same fields year after year, and agricultural reformers tried to shake them of this habit. Similarly, reformers encouraged farmers not to leave their fields in a "naked fallow," barren of crops between plantings. Instead, they urged farmers to plant clover and other nitrogen-fixing crops to reinvigorate the soil. These practices affected the appearance of mid-nineteenth-century farms: "Crop rotation practices meant that no crop would find a permanent location; the farm's alternations of oats, winter rye, corn and grass, with at times intervals of fallow for pasture, ensured that precise field uses would change significantly every year."[173]

No documents describe the exact crop rotations Van Buren adopted, but fragmentary evidence, as well as Van Buren's stated interest in agricultural improvements, point to practices like crop rotation being adopted at Lindenwald. Van Buren grew the same staple crops -- hay, corn, oats, rye, and potatoes -- in each year the census was taken (1850, 1855, and 1860), and wheat and buckwheat in two of the three years. But, fluctuating acreages of various crops on the farm over time indicate that he moved them from field to field and expanded and contracted production of certain crops. Some of the crops that Van Buren planted at Lindenwald, including wheat and rye, were winter crops, and Van Buren mentioned "fall ploughing" in his correspondence.[174] Common three-year rotations such as corn or buckwheat-oats-wheat or rye-grass-grass could have been followed at Lindenwald.[175]

Lindenwald's fields would have changed appearance with the cycles of planting and harvesting. Van Buren probably did his spring ploughing in April, with planting following the last frost.[176] During the summer, while some crops were growing tall, the hay would have been cut, dried in the field, and taken to the barn. In the fall, most of the grains on the farm, as well as corn, would have been cut and set into shocks at harvest time, turning the farm's fields into a grid of upright bundles.[177] When the stalks had dried, they would have been brought to the barn for threshing (and for corn, husking). Stubble was probably left in some fields for pasturage, while others were ploughed and planted with a winter crop (Figure 17).

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[172] Stilgoe, 204.

[173] Larkin, Jack. "The Weir Farm: Working Agriculture and the Vision of Rural New England: 1860-1940," printed in "Cultural Landscape Report for the Weir Farm National Historic Site: Analysis and Treatment," Boston: National Park Service, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, September 1997, 28.

[174] Martin Van Buren to Benjamin F. Butler, 15 November 1842, Martin Van Buren Papers.

[175] Danhof, 272.

[176] Martin Van Buren to Gorham A. Worth, 9 April 1849, Martin Van Buren Papers.

[177] From Van Buren's correspondence, it is unclear whether he let his corn dry in shocks: "I last evening got in my Corn Stalks in advance of the rain, which is the last thing to be gathered. A few days clear weather now to finish my fall ploughing, and the snow may come." Martin Van Buren to Benjamin F. Butler, 15 November 1842, Martin Van Buren Papers; see also Bidwell and Falconer, 342.

Fertilizers and Manure

When Van Buren demonstrated his dedication to farming to Andrew Jackson, he did so by proclaiming his preference for manure over politics:

> You can have no idea of the interest I take in farming or of the satisfaction I derive from it. The Whigs would hardly believe that a much larger portion of my time is taken up with devising ways & means to multiply the quantity & improve the quality of manure than in forming political plans or any other such matter.[178]

With such a statement, Van Buren was also proving his interest in contemporary agricultural reforms. In addition to under-drains, crop rotation, and fallow crops, manure was a cornerstone of a reformed agriculture. "Farmers should hence regard manure as a part of their capital -- as money -- which requires but to be properly employed to return them compound interest. They should husband it as they would their cents, or shillings."[179]

Unlike previous generations of farmers, who often treated manure as a waste product, Van Buren demanded that all manure be conserved for farm use. He wrote in his draft-share agreement with Mr. Marquatte, "All the manure is to be used on the farm except what is required for the garden of VB & except what is required for the garden of Marquatte."[180] In 1842 Van Buren and his gardener Mr. Schenck experimented with a new process for composting straw to make manure, although they had little success.[181] Van Buren also used other fertilizers -- plaster of Paris, leached ashes, green manure, and lime.[182]

In addition, Van Buren dug muck on his property to blend with manure and use as fertilizer. Muck ~ decaying wetland vegetation and mud -- was generally dug out in the winter and "piled up in narrow ridges to that it can be partly dried and 'sweetened' in summer." It was then mixed with manure and spread on fields.[183] Van Buren and Paulding corresponded on the subject of Van Buren's "muck beds," in which his farm help were digging in February of 1847.[184] Presumably Van Buren dug muck from the wetlands near Kinderhook Creek.

Agricultural Implements

In 1843 Van Buren set himself apart from his neighbors by adopting a new agricultural technique. "I have put a subsoil plough in operation to the amusement of some of my neighbors, one of whom said he would not put a thing of the kind in his land upon any terms. I promise myself however the best results, &

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[178] Martin Van Buren to Andrew Jackson, 5 January 1843, Martin Van Buren Papers.
[179] Carmen, 327.
[180] "Draft share agreement", n.d. [1841], Martin Van Buren Papers, transcript on file at Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library.
[181] Martin Van Buren to Andrew Jackson, 19 October 1842, Martin Van Buren Papers; Martin Van Buren to J. R. Poinsett, 13 December 1842, Martin Van Buren Papers.
[182] Platt, 56; Demaree, 291; Huston, 16.
[183] Crozier and Henderson, 29.
[184] James K. Paulding to Martin Van Buren, 5 and 25 February 1847; Martin Van Buren to Paulding, n.d. [spring 1847], all in Aderman 449-59.

have no doubt of their becoming popular, even in this land of dutch obstinacy, and regular habits."[185] Subsoil plows were highly recommended for breaking up clayey soils and "restor[ing] to the upper surface much of the fertilizing matter which has been rendered useless by filtration."[186] The subsoil plow does not turn a furrow, but "runs through the sub-soil like a mole," stirring the soil twelve to eighteen inches below the depth of a regular plow.[187] Agricultural experts promised that the subsoil plow would increase fertility and yields (Figure 18).

Whether Van Buren found such claims warranted and continued to use the plow in later years there is no record. But his optimistic adoption of this new technique demonstrates his interest in agricultural technology. The rapid development of agricultural technologies for improving husbandry and saving labor that has marked modern agricultural history began in the mid-nineteenth century. During the years that Van Buren was farming, McCormick's and Hussey's reapers replaced the scythe and cradle for the harvesting of grain. Inventors developed corn planters and improved cultivators; and the Geddes improved harrow became popular in New York (Figures 19, 20).[188]

In addition to the subsoil plow, Van Buren had a hay press in his black hay barn. This was a novel item in the 1850s, as they were not widely seen until after the 1880s. There is no other documentation as to which agricultural implements Van Buren employed, but he reported $600 worth of agricultural equipment in his 1855 census returns, a considerable sum. Van Buren probably used a cast-iron plow, invented in 1825, widely adopted by 1840, and far superior to the old wooden-moldboard plow. Given the amount of hay produced on the farm, he may have invested in any number of horse-driven hay rakes (Figure 21). He may have used a broadcast seeder to make seeding his fields faster and more even, or perhaps a "one-horse cultivator" – a mechanized hoeing device helpful for cultivating corn.[189]

Garden and Orchards

Garden

When Van Buren purchased the property, he found the garden in ruins: "The garden upon which vast sums were in former times expended, was, when I bought the place (two years ago) a corn field with only here and there a poor tree."[190] He wasted no time in rebuilding and enlarging the garden plot west of the house, beginning with efforts to secure a gardener to ". . . revive and prepare the old Van Ness plot" in the fall of 1839.[191] Van Buren's garden may have extended from the farm office all the way to the upper fish pond.[192] In 1839 Van Buren was already making inquiries about fence materials and costs for his garden:

[185] Martin Van Buren to Erasus Corning, 26 April 1843, xerox on file at Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library.
[186] Carmen, 226.
[187] George E. Waring, Jr., *The Elements of Agriculture* (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1854), 232; 1855 New York State Agricultural Census; Bidwell and Falconer, 282; Larkin, 21.
[188] Bidwell and Falconer, 300-4.
[189] C. H. Wendel, *Encyclopedia of American Farm Implements and Antiques* (Iola, Wisconsin: Karause Publications, 1997), 186;
[190] Martin Van Buren to Levi Woodbury, 24 July 1841, quoted in Platt, 61-2.
[191] Martin Van Buren to Levi Woodbury, 1 September 1839, quoted in Platt, 55.
[192] Uschold and Curry, 96.

> I want him also to ascertain from Col Smith's . . . what the expense was of his brick wall on the North side of his Garden = viz how much a foot or a yard & what its thickness & height. Also whether a fence of equal height made of thick perpendicular slabs well clapboarded so as to be perfectly airtight, would not answer the same purpose = it would, according to the estimate furnished me, be one third Cheaper.[193]

The resulting wall, whether stone or wood, may also have stood at the north end of his garden. Perhaps it is the "long wall for espaliers and for the protection of fruit trees" mentioned in an 1841 description of the estate.[194]

Martin Van Buren was intensely interested in the horticultural experiments of his garden. The gardener was the first person he hired to work on the farm, and in his share agreement with Mr. Marquatte, he stipulated that the "garden & Fruit on the place" was not part of the latter's farming duties, but was to be left under Van Buren's own jurisdiction.[195]

By 1844 the garden was flourishing, planted with fruits and vegetables. "The garden and pleasure-grounds have been enlarged and newly laid out = hot-houses have been erected = and a large number of fruit and ornamental trees, shrubbery, &tc. have been planted . . . In the garden we noticed fine samples of all the fruits of the season, and some of the finest melons we have ever seen, (so early in the year) in this latitude."[196] Van Buren also grew cabbages and onions. Other crops grown in small quantities on the farm = beets, beans, peas, and turnips = were likely grown within the garden, along with other household vegetables, herbs, and fruits.[197] Garden flowers included snapdragons, Canterbury bells, petunias, and pink and yellow sweet peas.[198]

Van Buren never listed a value for his garden produce in the census returns. The size of his mainstay crops (hay, for example) and the amount they would have garnered in the marketplace when compared with the total amount of farm products sold in a year, would indicate that he did not sell his garden produce, keeping it for domestic use instead. If the garden did not produce considerable cash income, it contributed to the household self-sufficiency, as well as to Van Buren's prestige as a gentleman and horticulturist.

Van Buren displayed his wealth and horticultural skill with a greenhouse constructed at Lindenwald in 1841 in which he grew exotic plants, flowers and fruit.[199] A young law clerk who visited Van Buren in 1846 remarked upon it to a friend:

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[193] Martin Van Buren to Levi Woodbury, 1 September 1839, quoted in Platt, 55.

[194] *New York Commerical Advertiser*, November 1841, quoted in Stokinger, 61-2.

[195] "Draft share agreement", n.d. [1841], Martin Van Buren Papers, transcript on file at Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library.

[196] Demaree, 290.

[197] *New York Commerical Advertiser*, November 1841, in Stokinger, 61-2; Martin Van Buren to Levi Woodbury, 24 July 1841, quoted in Platt, 61-2; Cooney, 28-33. Sarah Mynton Maury mentions that there were red currants in the garden, and most descriptions of it include fruit and fruit trees; Maury, 116.

[198] Uschold and Curry, 43.

[199] Accounts, 16 April 1840, Van Buren Papers, Columbia County Historical Society.
Other historians have concluded that there were two garden structures because the written descriptions of the property are ambiguous. Isaac Hill's description of Lindenwald, for example, makes reference to hothouses on the property, and he also mentions a greenhouse, while others refer to only one structure. Van Buren discusses a greenhouse and a hothouse in one letter (16 April 1843 letter to John M. Niles). However these two terms were used

> He has a capital garden, & conservatory, and a couple of artificial ponds, very neat to the eye, & well stocked with fish. But I was especially pleased with the conservatory of plants & flowers, which are watched over by an old Frenchman, who has long been in his employ. You cannot think of a line that delights the eye, a fragrance that refreshes & purifies the soul, that were not displaying their colors or exhaling their perfumes within that green house.[200]

Along with flowers, grapes flourished in the greenhouse. As one visitor reported, "The greenhouse contains a collections of exotic fruits and plants, among which were some fine grapes just ripening."[201] In 1843 Van Buren wrote to John Niles for advice about his grapes:

> I am about planting an additional number of grape cuttings & will be happy to receive the fruits of your experience upon the subject generally with such instructions as [may be] . . . suggested. I planted in the hot House only foreign vines I had had last year the finest grapes I ever tasted. The vines do not look quite so promising this year . . . Those I propose to plant none will be Isabellas & [undeciph.] & they will be placed in the open air. My green House has not [been] well attended during the winter but I have now a first rate Gardner [*sic*].[202]

Five years later Van Buren had Kemble send him some grape cuttings to start at Lindenwald, and Kemble replied, "Muscatel, black hamburg, the L'Pilers etc are rooted and will do well with a soil laced with bones & animal manure . . . should you think about laying out a new house, I will send or bring you a book which contains many valuable hints on the culture of grapes."[203]

Isabella grapes are a hardy, North American variety; the others are foreign varieties that must be cultivated in a greenhouse. By writing that he will not plant Isabellas, Van Buren sets himself apart as a man with expensive, foreign taste. Black Hamburgs are table grapes, "the best of all foreign grapes for cultivation under glass."[204] Van Buren may have sold them with his other produce or used them for his own table. Muscatel (White Frontignan or White Muscat) produce "syrupy desert wine . . . a favorite of Jefferson's, popular in the colonies," and also favored by Downing (Figures 22, 23).[205]

The cultivation of grapes gave Van Buren a chance to demonstrate his horticultural skill, for "An experimental vineyard was acknowledged as a difficult, expensive, and labor-intensive investment; the success of future experiments hinged on a grower's rigorous adherence to stringent rules of site and soil selection,

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interchangeably in the mid-nineteenth century, so it is difficult to understand whether Van Buren was referring to two structures or merely using different words to describe the same structure. The "Minutes" in Van Buren's estate book make reference to one structure only -- a greenhouse. It is possible that there was more than one glassed in structure for growing plants, or that Van Buen also constructed what today would be called cold frames or 'hot-beds' -- low, glass-covered structures for protecting early plants.

[200] William B Hesseltine and Larry Gara, "A Visit to Kinderhook" *New York History* 34 (April 1954), 177-182.

[201] Demaree, 290.

[202] Martin Van Buren to John M. Niles, 16 April 1843, quoted in Platt 68.

[203] Martin Van Buren to Gouverneur Kemble, 13 April 1848, quoted in Stokinger, 71.

[204] Walden, 222.

[205] Peter J. Hatch, *The Fruit and Fruit Tress of Monticello* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998), 155.

planting, pruning and training, and the use of manures."[206] The same was true for growing grapes "under glass," for as one expert explained, "the hot-house grape is the consummation of the gardener's skill."[207] Grape growing was uncommon in Columbia county at the time. Census records show that only thirty-four gallons of wine were made in the county in 1840.[208] Like his fine garden and exotic plants, growing grapes enabled Van Buren to distinguish himself from his local farming neighbors.

Orchards

In addition to the fruit planted in the garden, the 1841 sketch map of Lindenwald shows two orchards, a north orchard just west of the rye field north of the house, and symmetrically placed, a south orchard west of the garden and south of the house. The July 1843 deed between Van Buren and the Dingmans corroborates the location of the north orchard. The property boundary for this parcel begins at a cherry tree, known from the 1839 deed to lie at the northeast corner of Van Buren's estate, and "runs along the line of the orchard lot of said Martin Van Buren."[209]

Van Buren's friend Gilpin mentions the south orchard in a letter, "I shall plot with Mrs. Van Buren to effect my scheme of the summers lease on the brow of the hill, looking over the meadow which you promised but relinquished for the more *solid* improvements; that and the walk round to it through the orchard I shall claim as my suggestions."[210] The "summers lease on the brow of the hill" was the farm cottage itself, which Gilpin mentioned could be reached by walking through an orchard. In addition, after Van Buren's death, his executors make reference to "the portion of the Orchard in which the farm house stands," locating an orchard around the farm cottage.[211]

By 1846, Van Buren had planted extensive orchards at Lindenwald. When he wrote to Paulding about them, Paulding replied, "I fancy you made a mistake, about your apple and Pear trees, and wrote thousands instead of hundreds." But Van Buren insisted, "I do not mean *hundreds* but *thousands* when I speak of my trees. One thousand Pears & 2000 Apples are already in the ground & 8000 apples on their way from Wayne County."[212] The thousands of trees Van Buren planted would have expanded the orchards beyond their boundaries on the 1841 map of the property. The north orchard extended east onto the rye field next to the house and west into the land bought from Dingman in 1843.[213]

In June of 1848, Van Buren boasted about his farm and crops to Francis Blair, adding "I say nothing of my garden & nursery & orchards, but [what] will you say to 15500 young apple trees & 200 young pear trees for sale[?]"[214] This suggests that for a time at least, Van Buren not only grew apples but also propagated fruit trees on a fairly large scale. Several correspondents refer to Van Buren's fruit trees and corroborate the idea that Van Buren operated a fruit nursery on the estate. In 1849 a William H. Haywood, Jr. wrote to Van Buren

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[206] Hatch, 145.
[207] Hedrick, *Manual of Grape-Growing*, 192.
[208] Ellis, *History of Columbia County*, 137.
[209] Lambert, James, Jane Ann, and Maria Dingman to Martin Van Buren (Deed), 25 July 1843, Columbia County Historical Society.
[210] Henry D. Gilpin to Martin Van Buren, 28 March 1849, Martin Van Buren Papers, original emphasis.
[211] "Minutes", 4 August 1862, Estate Record Book, Martin Van Buren Papers.
[212] James K. Paulding to Martin Van Buren, 2 May 18466, in Aderman, 431; Martin Van Buren to James K. Paulding, n.d. [spring 1846], in Aderman, 429-30, original emphasis.
[213] Uschold and Curry, 199 note 81.
[214] Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 22 June 1848, Blair Family Papers.

from Raleigh North Carolina, explaining that he had received "a lot of Fruit-Trees Pears and Plumbs" from the ex-President several years previous and requesting the Van Buren send along some more cuttings.[215] There is no documentation to indicate where such a nursery would have been located on the farm or whether it was a permanent feature.

Van Buren wrote in 1842 that he earned enough from the sale of apples to pay his farm foreman for a year.[216] By the mid to late 1850s, Van Buren was producing sizeable quantities of apples on the estate, selling close to $200.00 in orchard products and sometimes more in a year. Scribbled accounts from 1861 indicate that he had sold $187.77 in apples and had an addition 150 barrels (or $375.00 worth) still on hand in March.[217] Later farm accounts indicate that the farm also produced cider, though inconsistently and in small amounts, ($17.50 worth in the 1850s and $50.00 worth in 1861). Like hay, potatoes, and oats, apples were a staple crop that could be marketed in Albany and New York City.

Van Buren's focus on apple production was rare for his time. Although fruit growing later became the major agricultural activity of late-nineteenth-century Kinderhook, in the 1840s, the commercialization of the industry was just beginning. The first commercial orchards in the United States were located in Long Island and the Hudson Valley, and they capitalized on explosion of American apple varieties that had taken place earlier in the century.[218] These commercial orchards differed from earlier farmyard orchards, which grew from broadcast-sown seeds and pomace spread on fields, contained a variety of apples, and received little care. Apples from such orchards were used for livestock feed and cider production.[219]

In the early commercial orchards, farmers planted grids of grafted trees. Trees were grafted close to the ground and spaced regularly in a grid pattern with a range of spacing from twenty to thirty-five feet. Trees were allowed to grow wide, without pruned canopies, and trunks were long, five or more feet in height.[220] Van Buren's orchards would have looked like this, and they would have been considerably different from older, non-commercial, farmyard orchards on nearby properties.

Although early commercial fruit growers lavished more attention on their orchards than did farmers of earlier generations, strict land use separations were not enforced in the mid-nineteenth century. Van Buren may have planted crops between the orchard trees, as was common for the time: "Eighteenth and nineteenth-century farmers typically cultivated rows between trees in orchards, plowing for weed control and/or planting cover crops such as clover, beans, peas, and other legumes, as well as any number of other grain and vegetable crops."[221] Or Van Buren may have pastured cattle in his orchard, which would have limbed up the trees, producing a 'browse-line' above which the cattle could not reach.[222]

The commercial thrust of Van Buren's orchards is supported by an archeological find in 2002 near the north gatehouse. A fruit coin, dated 1863, was a currency used by tradesmen during the Civil War because of

[215] William H. Haywood to Martin Van Buren, 11 March 1849, Martin Van Buren Papers.
[216] Martin Van Buren to Joel R. Poinsett, 1 Oct 1842, quoted in Huston 30.
[217] "Farm for 1861," Martin Van Buren Papers.
[218] Susan Dolan, "A Fruitful Legacy: the Historic Context of Fruit Trees and Orchards in the National Park System," Draft report, (Seattle, Washington: National Park Service, Columbia Cascades Support Office, March 2001).
[219] Heidi Cope, "Orchard Management Plan for Morristown NHP: Wick Farm Orchard," Draft report, (Boston: National Park Service, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, April 2002), 3-5.
[220] Cope, 14.
[221] Cope, 3.
[222] Stilgoe, 200-1.

the scarcity of government coins. The coin bore an explicit promise of redemption from, in this case, "Benjamin & Herrick Fruit Dealers at 427 Broadway in Albany." Such coins were prohibited after 1864 (Figure 24).[223]

Given his connections to urban markets and his interest in horticulture, it is probable that Van Buren grew some of the more popular, commercially-grown apple varieties of the time, for example Newtown Pippin and Esopus Spitzenburg, which were among the first apples sold in New York City, or Baldwins, the "most widely grown apple variety in the northeastern United States between 1852 and late 1920s."[224] Van Buren also planted his orchards with pears, some of which were imported from Germany. According to one visitor to the property, "I saw a great variety of young pear trees, ordered from Hamburgh eight weeks before, and now in the ground, healthy and flourishing; they were of those fine kinds lately introduced by the improvers of the pear, who are making it the most delicious of all table fruits, and a table fruit of all seasons."[225] Van Buren may have also planted the Seckel pears on the hillside behind the farm cottage documented in later periods. Seckel pears are an American variety, developed near Philadelphia in the seventeenth century (Figure 25).[226]

Fences and Hedgerows

Beyond the information gathered about crops and crop location, there is little information about field size and layout at Lindenwald. Fields were smaller in the nineteenth century than they are today, and they varied in size. Some boundaries between fields, especially where they overlap property boundaries for the estate, have remained since the nineteenth century, (for example, the boundary between the two northern fields on the lower terrace, or the boundary marked by the lower farm road). However, most of the internal divisions between fields have been eradicated and are therefore difficult to document.[227]

Besides the garden fence described above, there is also very little information regarding the location and design of the fences at Lindenwald. Fences likely enclosed the orchards and barnyard as well as the garden. Van Buren also enclosed his fields with fencing. Thomas Mullikin, who worked on the estate in 1840, spent three days doing "work on the fence, rying ground," and in 1844 Isaac Hill reported that "several of the fields have been enclosed with new fence."[228] Whether these last fields were the rye fields close to the house or the meadows near the creek is unknown, but those meadows were not fenced one year earlier. Gilpin advised Van Buren in 1843 that "the sweep of meadow down to the creek bordered by the woods, and the hills beyond, is so beautiful that I would not, if I were you, put either fences or corn fields in the range."[229]

Fences also marked the property boundaries, as noted in deeds for Van Buren's land: a fence separated Van Buren's houselot and orchard from Dingman's land to the northeast and another ran along the northern edge of the parcel Van Buren bought from the Dingmans in July 1843. The 1839 deed with Paulding

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[223] R.S. Yeoman, *A Guidebook of United States Coins, 53rd Edition* (St. Martins Press, 2000) 296.
[224] Cope, 14.
[225] *New York Commercial Advertiser*, November 1841, quoted in Stokinger, 61-2.
[226] Hatch, 103.
[227] The 1948 aerial photograph shows some field boundaries before they were torn down, although some hedgrows have already been removed by 1948. This photograph depicts the farm one hundred years after Van Buren's tenure, and it is very possible that the Wagoners and other owners shifted field boundaries in the intervening years.
[228] Accounts, 16 April 1840, Van Buren Papers, Columbia County Historical Society; Demaree, 291.
[229] Henry D. Gilpin to Martin Van Buren, 21 April 1843, Martin Van Buren Papers.

describes the boundaries of parcel not containing the mansion as "Beginning at the Cedar post set by the fence below the Spring in the lane leading to the old stone house." The fence referred to here may have been on the Dingmans' property, perhaps along the road to the old stone house, or it is possible that this fence followed the line of the "road to the low Lands," which ran west to Kinderhook Creek and is described in the July 1843 deed between Van Buren and Dingman. If the cedar post was part of the fence (which is not clear from the wording) then the fence was likely a post and rail fence of some kind (Figure 26).[230]

Beyond this cryptic reference to a cedar post, there is little information regarding the design of the fences Van Buren used. A survey of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1871 found "a predominance of worm-fence" in New York and a high percentage of stone walls in use in Columbia County.[231] Drawings of Columbia County farms in the Ellis's 1878 *History of Columbia County* depict a variety of fence types on each farm: post and rail, especially near houses and farmyards; stone walls topped with rail; and worm fencing. Van Buren may have used all three types of fence.

Hedges were not in widespread use in New York in the late-nineteenth century, though some agricultural improvement societies promoted their use in the 1830s and 1840s as a solution to the problem of wood scarcity.[232] It is highly suggestive that Van Buren received some osage orange seeds from Blair in 1848, as osage orange was becoming popular as a hedge tree at this time.[233] Downing writes, "Almost any of our native thorns in the woods make good hedges, and the farmer may gather the seeds and raise them himself. South of the latitude of New York city, the best hedge-plant is the Osage Orange (*Maclura aurantiaca*)."[234] Van Buren may not have had any success growing osage orange so far north, and there is no documentation as to the location of such a hedge.[235] He may also have had to combine other fencing materials with his osage orange hedge in order to make it impervious to small animals: "In some parts of the United States the osage orange is much grown as the hedge plant, but thought it is a rapid grower and shoots up erect, it is so open below that is worthless as a fence against sheep and pigs, and even small cattle, unless it is wired or railed near the ground."[236] Other hedge plants with which Van Buren may have experimented include buckthorn, hawthorn, willow, or black locust.

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[230] William Paulding to Martin Van Buren, 1 April 1839 (Deed); Lambert, James, Jane Ann, and Maria Dingman to Martin Van Buren (Deed), 25 July 1843, both at Columbia County Historical Society.

[231] U.S. Department of Agriculture, "Statistics of Fences in the United States," *Annual Report*, 1871, reprinted in Wayne D. Rasmussen, ed. Agriculture in the United States: A Documentary History (New York: Random House, 1975), 1391-2.
This type of fence was easy to build but wasteful of land and timber and was therefore a common early fence along the eastern seaboard. Worm fence was built later than rail fence in New York and New Jersey, where Dutch immigrants were late to adopt American building techniques. The following is a 1749 description of worm (also called zigzag or Virginia) fence: "I here saw a kind of fence which we had not seen before, but which was used all along the Hudson where there was a quantity of woods. It can be called a timber fence, for it consisted of long, thick logs and was about for [*sic*] feet high. It was made by placing the long logs at right angles to and upon short ones and fitting them together by having suitable crescent-shaped hollows in the short logs (in the manner of building log cabins). Such a fence is possible only where there is plenty of trees." Cohen, 80.

[232] "Sometimes whole woodlots could not produce enough rails to correctly rebuild a farm's fences, and men mortgaged their property to raise money for fence rails purchased from more fortunate neighbors." Stilgoe, 199.

[233] Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 22 April 1848, quoted in Platt 69.

[234] Andrew Jackson Downing, *Victorian Cottage Residences* (1842; reprint New York: Dover Publications, 1981), 86.

[235] William deProsse, Jr. and his sister, Jeanne deProsse Akers, who lived on the property in the 1930s and 40s, do not recall any osage orange on the property (site visit and interview, September 2002).

[236] John Scott, *Farm Roads, Fences, and Gates* (London: Crosby, Lockwood, and Co., 1883), 68.

Woodlots

Van Buren, his family, and their farm help would have consumed considerable amounts of wood, both for fuel and the building of fences, barns, and other structures. However there is no information about the size and location of any woodlots Van Buren had. A common size for woodlots in the 1850s was fifteen acres, though this varied by region and farmer.[237] Van Buren may have kept the wet lands that ran through the southwestern portion of his property forested, as well as the steep slope between the upper and lower terrace. On his census returns Van Buren reports owning 200 acres of improved land and 20 to 25 acres of unimproved land. Woodland parcels may be among the unimproved sections of his farm. Kinderhook Creek was also "bordered by the woods," though it is not clear whether this area was managed as a woodlot.[238]

Summary Description

Van Buren purchased Lindenwald in 1839 and moved to the estate in 1841 after he failed to win reelection. Over the next four years he purchased more land, increasing the acreage of the farm to approximately 220 acres (see Figure 14). Van Buren made many improvements to the grounds at Lindenwald which distinguished it as a gentleman's estate. He dammed the springs creating two ponds which he stocked with fish; he planted extensive orchards with fruit trees he purchased locally and abroad; and he cultivated a large garden, with a greenhouse, grapes, and other fruit. These improvements occurred primarily on the upper terrace of the farm, close to and visible from the house and the Old Post Road. Behind the Lindenwald mansion Van Buren constructed the barns, sheds, and auxiliary farm buildings. Van Buren had some livestock -- sheep, fowl, milk cows, hogs, and horses -- and he probably had a large barnyard near the red hillside barn, well out of view from the house. From the house, the upper crop fields were visible with the scenic Catskill Mountains in the distance: "Lindenwald . . . commands a very agreeable landscape view, the most prominent features of which are the Catskill mountains, whose elevated summits are often veiled by the shadowy cloud."[239]

Van Buren's agricultural endeavors focused on crop production, primarily grains (hay, oats, rye) and potatoes. He maintained a few fields along the Old Post Road, but most of his crops were grown on the fertile land of the lower terrace, along Kinderhook Creek. In general, the agricultural land would have "embodied the farmer's love of well-chosen variety," with a relatively large number of crops continually shifted from field to field through the years.[240] Fields were small and varied in size. Some were fenced, as were the property boundaries of the estate. Van Buren may have used several of the common fence types of the day, but there is little documentation of the field boundaries or fence types on the estate.

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[237] Stilgoe, 198.
[238] Martin Van Buren to Henry D. Gilpin, 21 April 1843, Martin Van Buren Papers.
[239] From Isaac Hill's *Cultivator,* Demaree, 290.
[240] Stilgoe, 205.

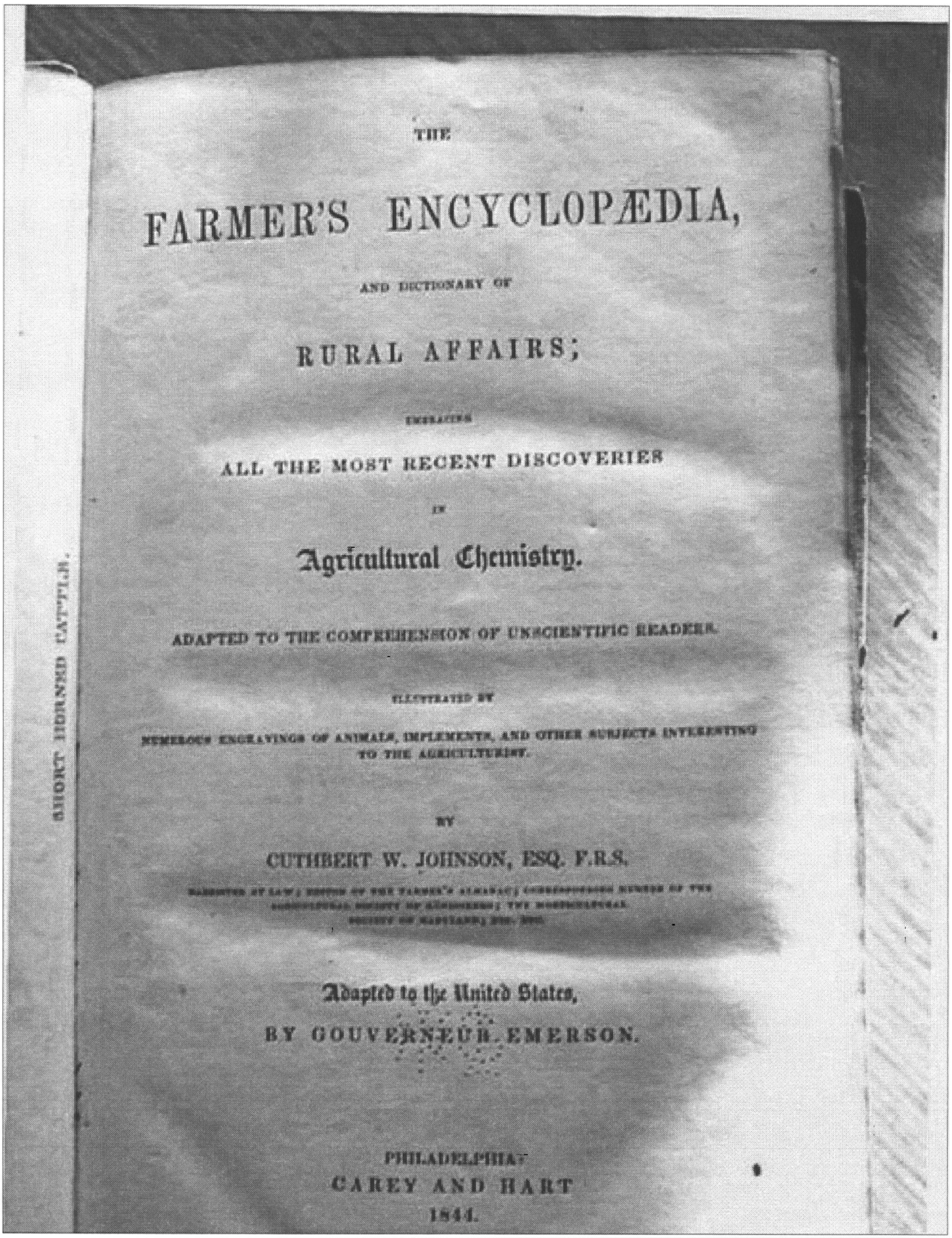


Figure 11: Title page from *The Farmer's Encyclopedia*.

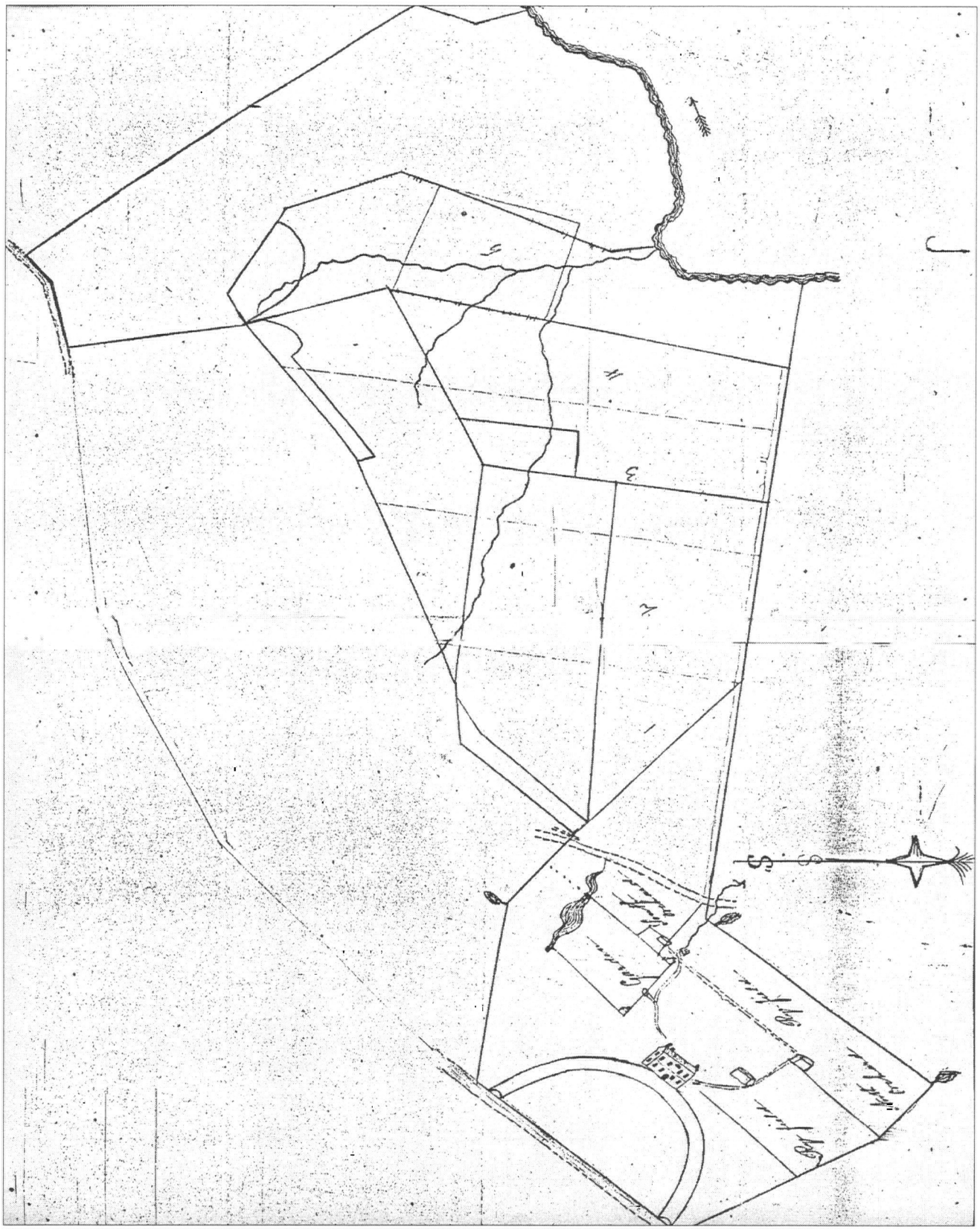


Figure 12: *Lindenwald: House and Grounds with Fields*, undated, is the only surviving map of Lindenwald from Van Buren's tenure. It is referred to as the "1841 Sketch map" in Uschold and Curry, and probably dates from early in Van Buren's ownership. (Van Buren Papers, Pennsylvania State University; photocopy on file, MVB NHS).

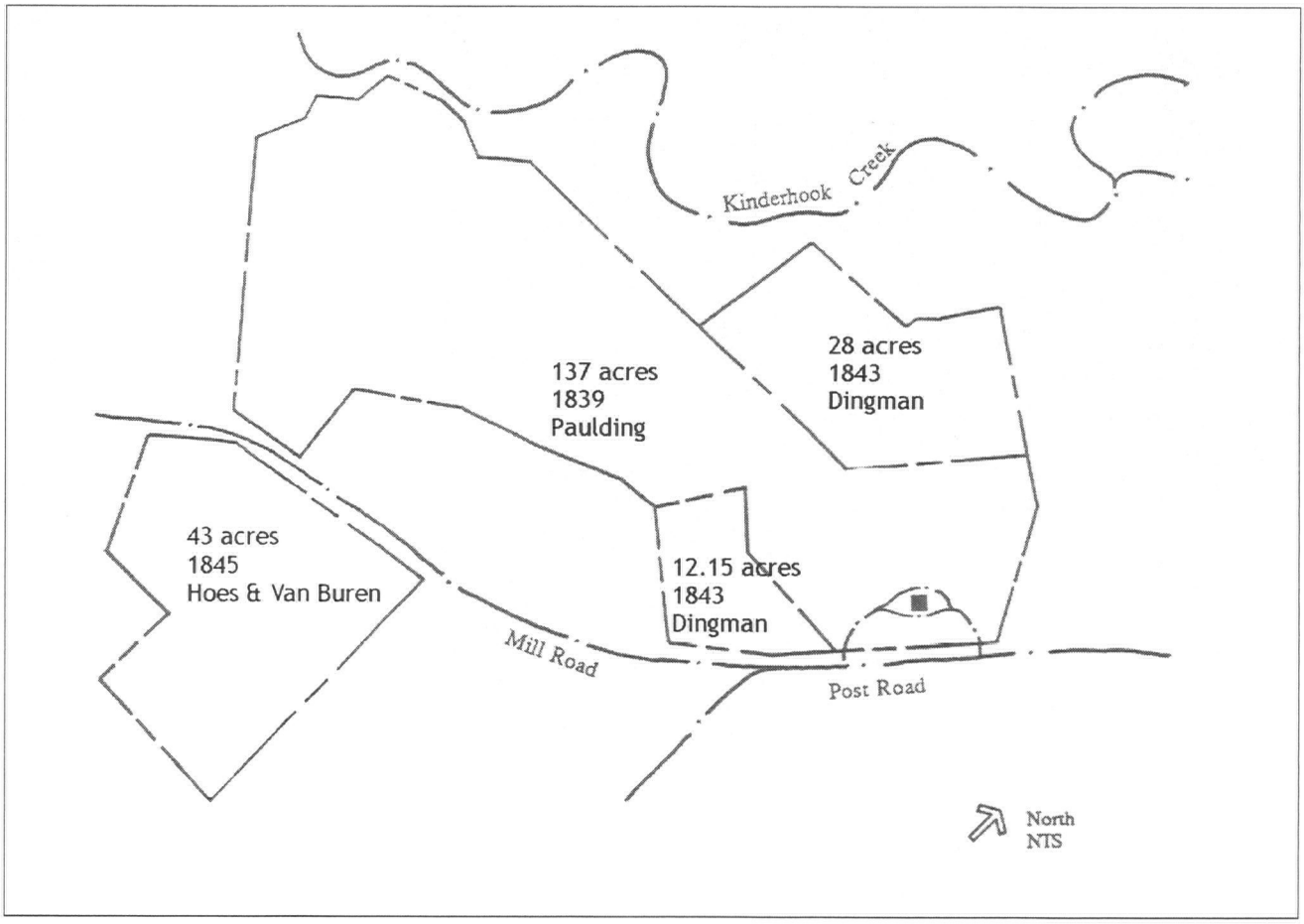


Figure 13: Martin Van Buren's land purchases, 1839 to 1845. After drawing by David Uschold, figure 6, *Cultural Landscape Report for Martin Van Buren Historic Site.*

Feature Key:

1. Lindenwald Mansion
2. North Gatehouse
3. South Gatehouse
4. Carriage Barn
5. Woodshed
6. Farm Office
7. Greenhouse
8. Garage
9. Farm Cottage
10. Red Hillside Barn
11. Old Stone House
12. Black Hay Barn
13. Van Ness Monument

1850 Period Plan

Figure 14

Cultural Landscape Report
Martin Van Buren
National Historic Site
Kinderhook, NY

Produced by
National Park Service
Olmsted Center for
Landscape Preservation

Map Sources:

"Site Plan," Fraser Consulting Engineers, 2003.

Aerial photograph of Kinderhook, NY, 1948.

Aerial photograph of Kinderhook, NY, 2001.

"Cultural Landscape Report for Martin Van Buren National Historic Site," Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, 1995.

Notes:

Plan drawn using ArcMap GIS 8.3, by L. Hegarty, NPS.

Legend:

- Historic Farm Boundary
- Woodland
- Orchard
- Cultivated Fields
- Water

Not to Scale



Figure 15: 1948 aerial photograph annotated by author to indicate possible ditch locations.

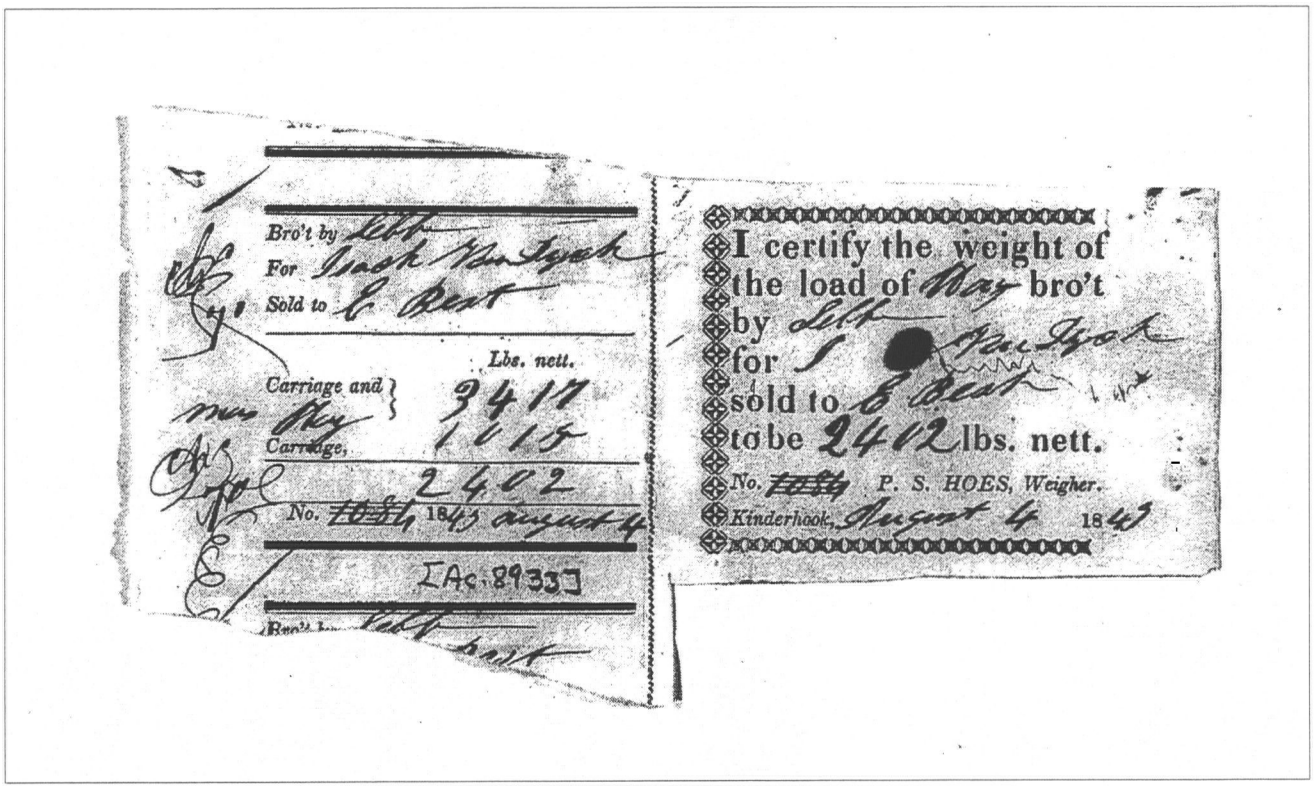


Figure 16: This ticket was found among Martin Van Buren's correspondence and dates from 1849. An Isack Van Syck delivered and sold the hay. It is possible that this man worked for Van Buren, who lists an 'I. Van Slyck' in his employ in 1842 ("Funds and Disbursements for 1842", Martin Van Buren Papers). On this August day, Van Buren sold a little over one ton of hay to E. Best, presumably a middleman in Kinderhook, who then would have transported the hay perhaps to Albany, New York City, or Troy.



Figure 17: Harvesting corn. Although these photographs were not taken at Lindenwald, they demonstrate common nineteenth century corn harvesting practices, including the building of corn shocks in the field. (From Burkett, Charles William. *Farm Crops.* New York: Orange Judd Company, 1913.)

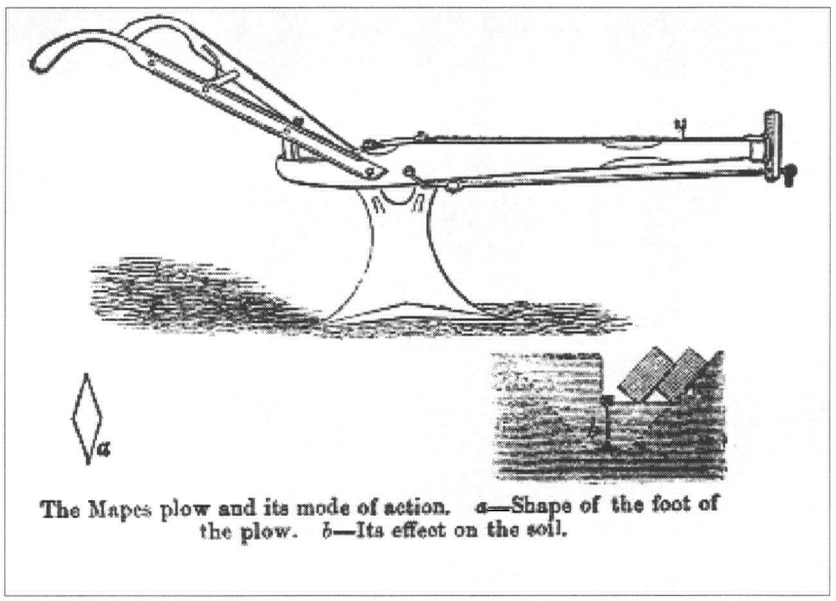


Figure 18: The Mapes subsoil plow. (From Waring, George E. Jr., *The Elements of Agriculture: A Book for Young Farmers, with Questions Prepared for the Use of Schools.* New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1854.)

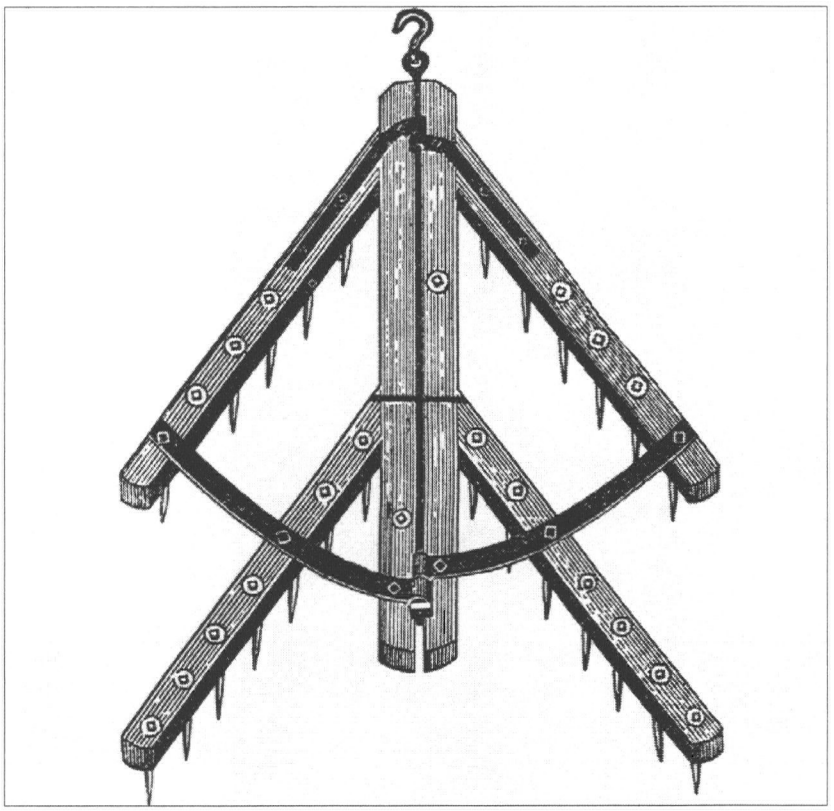


Figure 19: The Geddes improved harrow. (From Bidwell, Percy Wells, and John I. Falconer. *History of Agriculture in the Northern United States, 1620-1860.* Washington: Carnegie Institute, 1925.)

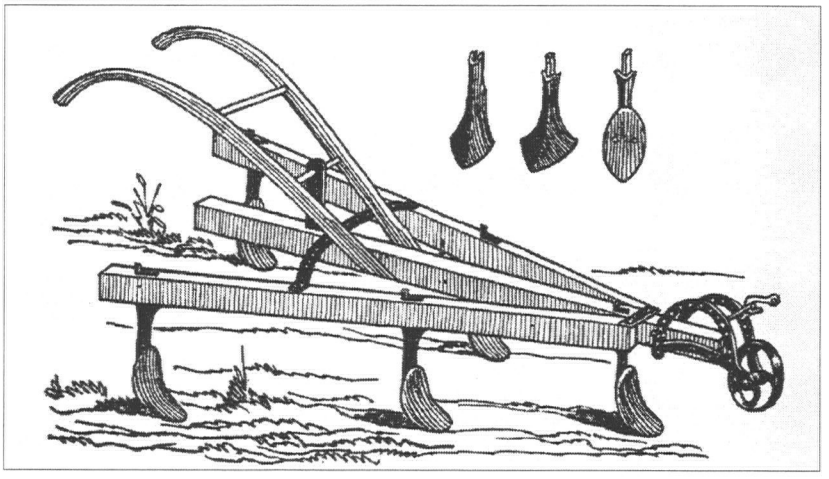


Figure 20: A cultivator. (From Bidwell, Percy Wells, and John I. Falconer. *History of Agriculture in the Northern United States, 1620-1860.* Washington: Carnegie Institute, 1925.)



Figure 21: Advertisement for Hollingworth's sulky hay rake, which was patented in 1865. Van Buren may have had his men rake hay by hand, or they may have used a similar, if earlier, horse-pulled hay rake. (From Johnson, Paul C. *Farm Inventions in the Making of America: a Pictorial History of Farm Machinery Featuring Engravings from Old Farm Magazines and Books.* Des Moines, Iowa: Wallace-Homestead Book Company, 1976.)



Figure 22: Muscat Blanc, one of the European grapes Van Buren cultivated. (Printed in Hatch, Peter J. *The Fruit and Fruit Tress of Monticello.* Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998.)

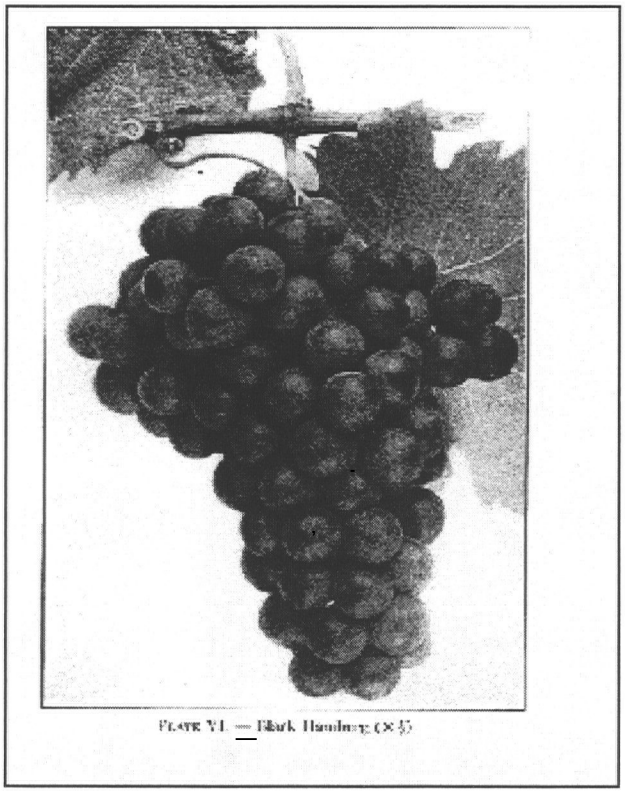


Figure 23: Black Hamburg, another of the imported grapes Van Buren cultivated. (Printed in Hedrick, Ulysses Prentiss. *Manual of American Grape-Growing.* New York: The Macmillan Company, 1919.)



Figure 24: Image of a fruit coin dated 1863 similar to coin found near the north gatehouse in 2002 (From *A Guidebook of United States Coins*, 53rd Edition, 296.)

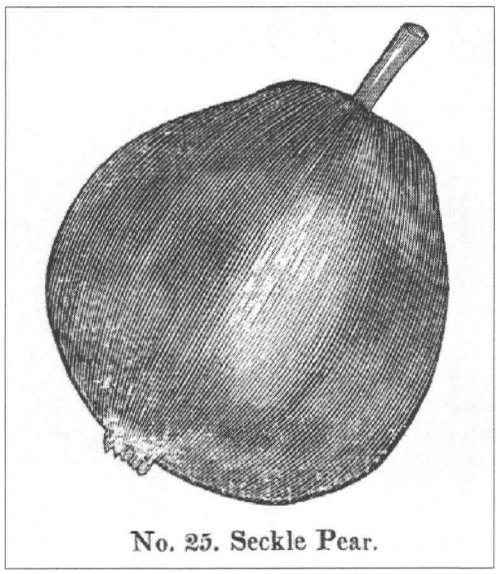


Figure 25: Engraving of a Seckel pear, from Coxe's View. (From Hatch, Peter J. *The Fruit and Fruit Tress of Monticello.* Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998, 102.)

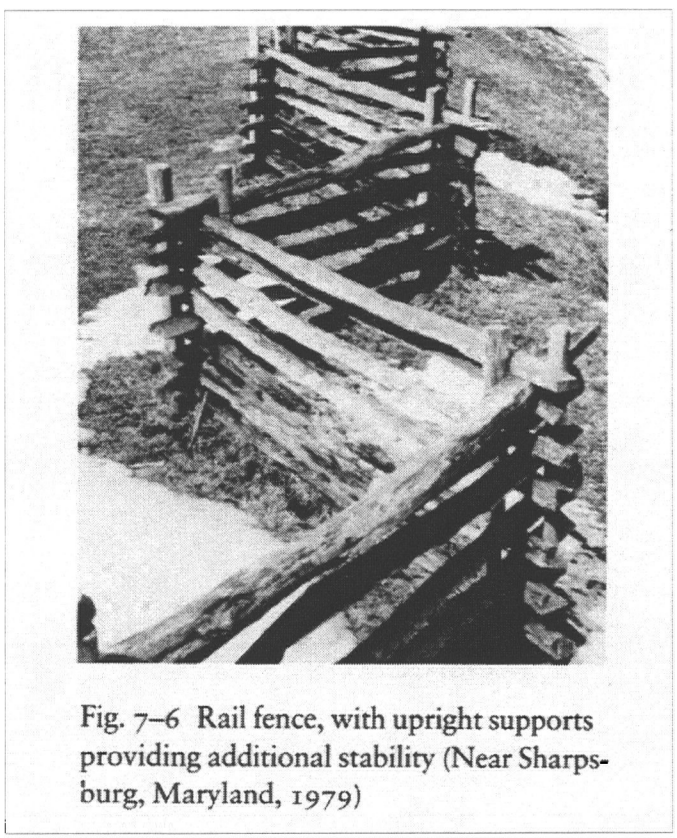


Figure 26: Virginia rail fence. (From Noble, Allen G. *Wood, Brick, and Stone: The North American Settlement Landscape*, Vol. 2, *Barns and Farm Structures.* Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984.)

VAN BUREN HEIRS AND WAGONER OWNERSHIP, 1862-1917

Interim Ownerships, 1862-1873

Van Buren's wish – that his family keep Lindenwald after his death and maintain the property – did not come to pass. Van Buren's will stipulated that the estate be divided between his three surviving sons. Abraham, John, and Smith Van Buren administered Lindenwald for the nine months following their father's death. Minutes of a meeting among the heirs indicate that Smith was authorized to make a few minor repairs to the farm and that Isaac Collins, Van Buren's foreman, was to continue overseeing agricultural activities.[241] Otherwise, there is no indication of any changes to the farm property immediately following Van Buren's death.

In May of 1863, John Van Buren purchased Lindenwald from his brothers, and he moved there with his daughter Anna.[242] However, by September of that year John Van Buren realized that despite the farm's success, the estate was too large a burden and too far from his law practice in New York:

> Thanks to a good farmer [Collins, his father's overseer], I am promised fair crops and, thanks to the war, they should command fair prices; but I find I have upon my hands an establishment very much beyond the strength of Anna and myself and so distant from my office as to cut me off from my profession. I shall be obliged, therefore, to change my arrangement.[243]

By April of the following year, John Van Buren had sold Lindenwald to Leonard Jerome, a wealthy stockbroker. The sale must have been sudden, for Van Buren had just arranged a one-year lease with Isaac Collins ten days previously, on April 1, 1864. Jerome's extravagant lifestyle included a property in Newport and newly-built mansion in Madison Square, New York City. It is unlikely that he spent much time at Lindenwald, and there is no record of him visiting the property. Isaac Collins remained in charge of the farm for the first year of the Jerome ownership, so the farm probably remained relatively unchanged in the first year at least.[244]

Jerome lost his fortune suddenly in 1867 and sold Lindenwald to Kinderhook native George Wilder on January 23, 1867 in an attempt to liquidate his assets (Platt 108, deed). Wilder owned the property until November 7, 1873, when he sold it to John Van Buren and James Van Alstyne (both distant relatives of Martin Van Buren). Van Buren and Van Alstyne sold Lindenwald five months later to the Wagoners, a local farming family.[245]

When the Wagoners purchased Lindenwald in 1874, ten years of absentee landlords and short tenures probably contributed to some decline on the property. Franklin Ellis described the farm's in 1878, writing, "For some time Lindenwald remained the property of the President's family, but it was finally sold, and is now used, in a much neglected condition as ordinary farm property."[246] However, it is unlikely that major

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[241] "Minutes," Estate Record Book, Martin Van Buren Papers.
[242] Platt, 104.
[243] John Van Buren to Samuel J. Tilden, 4 September '63, quoted in Platt 106.
[244] Platt 106-8; Stokinger 89-90; John Van Buren to Leonard Jerome (Deed), 11 April 1864, Columbia County Historical Society.
[245] Platt 108; George Wilder to John Van Buren and James Van Alstyne (Deed), 7 November 1873, Columbia County Historical Society.
[246] Ellis, *History of Columbia County*, 230.

changes took place as most of the Van Buren era buildings continued into the Wagoner period. Jerome may have leased the farmland to a local farmer, while Wilder, Van Buren, and Van Alstyne may have farmed the property themselves. Lack of documentation makes this period difficult to interpret.

Wagoner Ownership, 1874-1917

The Wagoners were a local family who by 1858 had purchased the land surrounding Lindenwald. Erastus Wagoner and his brother Sylvester lived just north of Lindenwald on the Post Road, and Sylvester may have also owned the property just south of it, as suggested by Beers' 1858 map (Figure 27). Van Buren and Van Alstyne sold "the greater part of the premises known as 'Lindenwald'" to Sylvester, Erastus, and his sons, Adam and Freeman Wagoner. This sale divided Lindenwald, as Van Buren and Van Alstyne retained more than thirty acres in the southernmost portion of the property and the Wagoners purchased approximately 185 acres.[247]

Adam and Freeman Wagoner, brothers aged twenty-nine and twenty-three respectively in 1874, lived on the property for the next forty-three years.[248] Adam Wagoner married and resided at Lindenwald, moving in with his father just north of Lindenwald only after he sold the property in 1917.[249] Only Adam and Freeman are named on the deed of sale in 1917, and by this time, Adam had become the executor of his brother's property.[250]

As part of the Wagoner family's five-hundred-acre holdings in the area, Lindenwald continued as a working farm through this period. Yet characterizing the estate's appearance or the Wagoners' agricultural practices is difficult due to lack of documentation. Photographs, mainly of the front lawn and the mansion house, show a tidy, well-kept Lindenwald (Figures 28, 29). A county history describes the Wagoners as hardworking, "thrifty" farmers, yet images of Adam and Libby Wagoner and descriptions of the family by descendents portray them as members of an aspiring bourgeoisie (Figure 30).[251]

Agricultural Context

During the forty-three years that the Wagoners farmed at Lindenwald, farmers in the United States saw both depression and prosperity. The Wagoners bought Lindenwald during an era of agricultural hardship. After the Civil War, prices for farm goods fell "irregularly but persistently" until the depression of 1896, and many farmers were unable to meet their land and other payments with their declining incomes. By the end of the 1890s, the market had bottomed out, and the period between the turn of the century and World War I was one of agricultural prosperity. Farm prices rose steadily and in relation to non-farm commodities.[252]

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[247] When this land division took place is debatable. According to Uschold and Curry, the division took place when the land was sold by the Wagoners to Birney, not when the Wagoners initially purchased it. Uschold and Curry, 78. See also Adam and Freeman Wagoner to Bascom H. Birney (Deed), 15 November 1917, Columbia County Historical Society; E. Wagoner et al., (Bond of Indemnity), 20 April, 1874, Columbia County Historical Society; Platt, 109.

[248] Stokinger, 94.

[249] Collier, 511.

[250] At the time of the sale, Freeman Wagoner had been declared an "incompetent person" by the courts, and Adam Wagoner was appointed "the Committee of the person and the estate of Freeman E. Wagoner," authorized to sell his property for him. Adam and Freeman Wagoner to Bascom H. Birney (Deed), 15 November 1917, Columbia County Historical Society.

[251] Collier, 378; Patricia West, conversation with author, 23 July, 2002.

[252] Cochrane, 93-100.

In Columbia County, farmers during this period focused more and more on fruit production. Farmers continued the mixed, "general agriculture" of hay, corn, rye, oats, and potatoes from the nineteenth into the twentieth century, but production fell for all of these crops through the period, and by the time the Wagoners sold the property in 1917, fruit had usurped other crops in importance. Writing in 1922, historian Edith Van Wagoner summarizes this change in Columbia County agriculture:

> Fifty years ago Columbia County was one of the largest potato producing counties in the state. The land is now largely given over to the fruit industry. Fruit raising has developed to a large extent in the western part [of Columbia County], along the entire length of the county and extending about eight miles back from the Hudson. This industry has increased very rapidly during recent years, especially in the town of Kinderhook. In growing apples, Columbia far outranks the other counties of the state.[253]

Apparently, Kinderhook grew such an abundance of fruit that ship and rail companies sent special trucks into the town to collect fruit and deliver it directly to New York City markets, which could be reached in less than twenty-four hours.[254]

Drainage

The Birney-Wagoner deed describes a ditch on the western border of the property, along the property line between Adam and Freeman Wagoner's land and the thirty-three-acre parcel that Van Alstyne and Van Buren may have retained: ". . . thence on the south bank or side of said ditch as it winds and turns til it intersects with the Kinderhook Creek."[255] This ditch is clearly visible on the extreme left on the 1948 air photo (see Figure 15). Given the ditch's location and the amount of draining Van Buren did in these lower fields, it is possible that the ditch described in the deed actually dates to the Van Buren period. The same deed also makes reference to a small, 1.17 acre parcel that Wilder had "purchased for the purpose of straightening a ditch" in 1872.[256] It is unclear where this parcel and ditch are located on the property.

Livestock and Farm Buildings

Hazel Wagoner Whitbeck, Adam and Freeman's niece, recalls that the Wagoners raised cattle.[257] Presumably they also maintained poultry for their own consumption needs, as well as horses for the farm work (Figure 31). There is no evidence that major changes were made to the main house, farm cottage, red barn, black hay barn, carriage barn, the farm office, and the two gate houses, all of which remained on the site from the Van Buren period through the Wagoner ownership.[258] Several of these structures were photographed for the first time during the Wagoner period (Figures 32 to 36). Any change in the usage of these buildings is undocumented, and given the paucity of information concerning livestock, farm help, and agricultural activities on the farm, there is little that can be inferred about how the Wagoners used the

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[253] Edith Van Wagner, *Agricultural Manual of New York State, Arranged by Counties*, State of New York Department of Farms and Markets, Division of Agriculture Bulletin 133 (Albany, 1922), 219.

[254] Van Wagoner, 219.

[255] Adam and Freeman Wagoner to Bascom H. Birney (Deed), 15 November 1917, Columbia County Historical Society.

[256] Ibid.

[257] Hazel Wagoner Whitbeck, interview by W. M. Jackson, 20 September 1977, on file at Martin Van Buren National Historic Site.

[258] Uschold and Curry, 61.

structures on the property.

A small, five-foot square, wood-frame well house is first documented on the property during this period, as is the wood shed behind the main house and the Wagoner garage (see Figures 31, 33). The Wagoner garage was a "wood-frame, one and a half story building approximately forty feet by forty feet" located just to the north of the wood shed.[259] The greenhouse had disappeared by the Wagoner ownership, though it is unclear whether it was removed by the Wagoners or earlier owners in the 1860s.

Crops

Whitbeck remembered that her uncles grew corn and hay.[260] Whether they also grew some of the other crops common for the area -- oats, potatoes, rye, or buckwheat -- is unclear. An indirect reference to "grounds that extend in fertile meadow lands to the bank of the creek" might be interpreted to mean that the Wagoners grew hay in the lower fields as Van Buren had.[261] A photograph of the Black Hay Barn in winter with either hay or pasture in the foreground corroborates this interpretation. Columbia County farmers cultivated considerably more acres of hay than any other crop in 1910 and 1918, and it seems fair to assume that Lindenwald would have been similarly hay-intensive.[262] Aside from the orchards and woodland, most of Lindenwald was probably open grassland, in either hay, grain crops, or pasturage. A photograph of the carriage barn illustrates that the field directly behind the house on the upper terrace, was not cropped, but left as hay or pasturage (Figure 36). This open field extended southwest to include the area east of the farm cottage and red barn.

A smaller proportion of the farm would have been planted with crops such as corn, potatoes, and market vegetables, which have a visual character distinct from pasture or grain crops. Whereas Van Buren prohibited "ground ... to be ploughed or pasture in the House lot," the Wagoners seemed not to have such qualms, as one photograph shows corn growing on the front lawn, along Post Road very near the house (Figure 37).[263] This could reflect particularly intensive farming practices throughout the site, or merely an utilitarian approach to the property.

Garden and Orchards

The Wagoners maintained a garden in approximately the same location as did Van Buren. The garden was enclosed by a picket fence that extended southwest and northeast from the farm office building which formed the garden's western corner. Some of the fruit trees Van Buren planted may have remained in the garden, but the contents, layout, and size of the garden remain undocumented during this period.

Given the importance of fruit as a local farm product, Adam and Freeman Wagoner may have taken advantage of Van Buren's orchards, maintaining them and harvesting and selling their fruit. Both the north and south orchards are documented in later periods, and photographs from the Wagoner period corroborate

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[259] Uschold and Curry, 64-5.

[260] Hazel Wagoner Whitbeck, interview.

[261] *Columbia County at the End of the Century*, (Hudson, New York: Record Printing and Publishing Co. 1900), 440.

[262] Columbia County farmers had more than four times as many acres in hay than in the next largest crop, oats, in 1910) Van Wagoner census data, 229-31.

[263] "Draft share agreement", n.d. [1841], Martin Van Buren Papers, transcript on file at Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library.

their locations on the farm (Figure 38, see also Figures 28, 29, 36). Unfortunately, there is no record as to whether the Wagoners made any additions or changes to the orchards.[264]

Fences and Hedgerows

Around the turn of the century, the Wagoners had a post and wire fence along the Old Post Road in front of the house (Figure 39). In a photograph of the road leading to the carriage barn, a less formal post and wire fence is barely visible (Figure 40). By the 1870s, barbed wire was in common use in the United States, and the Wagoners may have used this cheap fence material on the farm.

In addition, the Van Ness monument was fenced. It was described during the period as "a fenced-in monument of modest proportions, covered with moss and lichen."[265] A plain picket fence surrounded the garden, and photographs show that board fence enclosed portions of the north orchard (see Figure 38).

Summary Description

During the first ten years after Van Buren's death, the property had five different owners, several of whom lived elsewhere. Van Buren's prosperous farm fell into decline, and doubtless needed repair by the time the Wagoner brothers purchased the property in 1874. They farmed it for the next forty-three years. Although there are photographs of the house and barns during this period, there is little documentation of the farming landscape, nor of the details of the Wagoner brothers' farm enterprise. We can only assume that they continued with the mixture of crops typical for the county and perhaps used Van Buren's extensive orchards to their benefit as Kinderhook rose to prominence as a fruit-producing town.

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[264] There were changes in orchard maintenance practices by the turn of the century. If the Wagoners had planted new fruit trees, they may have used a low-branching pruning style popular at the turn of the century, or planted their trees in a quincunx pattern. In the 1880s, orchardists began treating apple diseases with chemicals recommended by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Paris green, a compound of copper and arsenic, was effective against the codlin moth, canker worm, and other insects; Bourdeau Mixture, hydrated copper sulfate, was a fungicide used to treat apple scab. There is no evidence to indicate whether or not the Wagoners used these common chemicals on their fruit trees. Cope, 23-5; Dolan, 46-7.

[265] *Columbia County at the End of the Century*, 440.

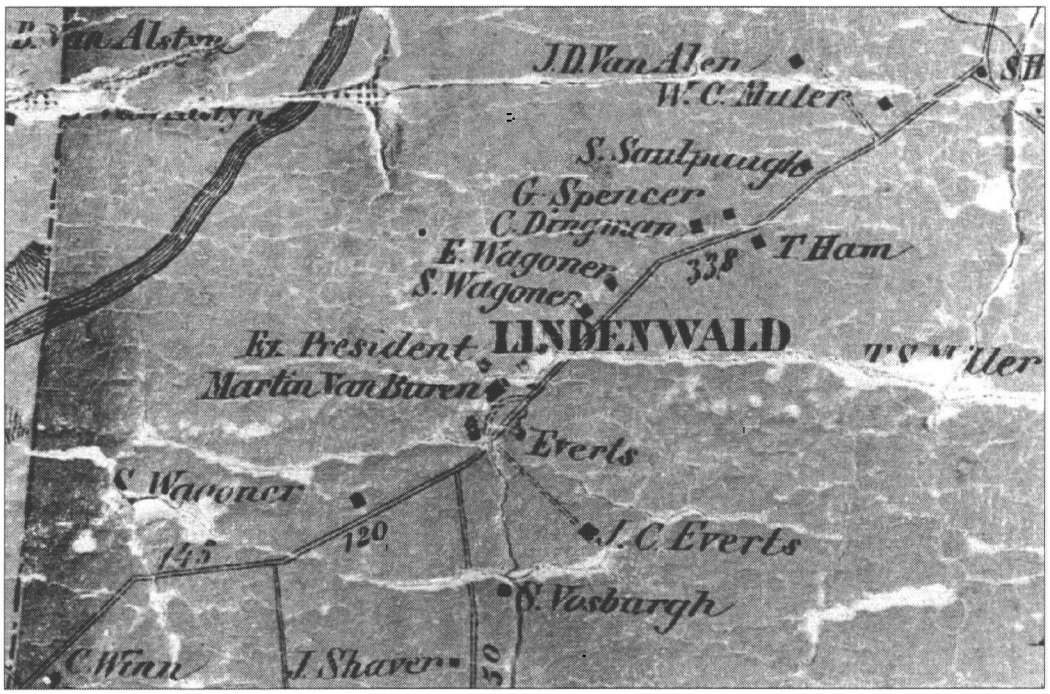


Figure 27: Map showing Lindenwald from S. N. Beers and D. L. Lake, *Map of Columbia County* (Philadelphia: E. A. Balch, 1858). The Wagoners own land to the north and south Martin Van Buren.



Figure 28: View to north from front of Lindenwald mansion, c. 1900. The pear orchard is clearly visible through the trees on the front lawn. (Photo # CLR-311.5, MVB NHS).

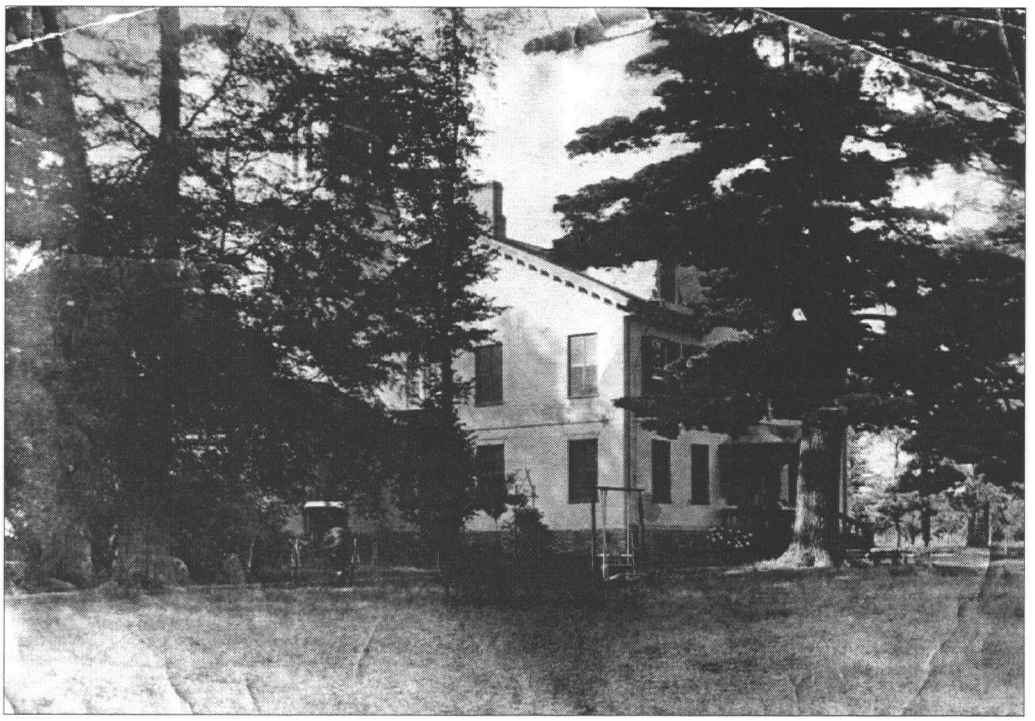


Figure 29: Front of Lindenwald mansion, from the south, c. 1913. Pear orchard portion of north orchard is visible on the right. (MVB NHS).



Figure 30: Adam and Libby Van Alstyne Wagoner. (MVB NHS).



Figure 31. View facing west of Clementine Birney with horse and chickens. She is standing in front of the laundry building to the left (removed c. 1940 by the deProsses and replaced with a garden) and the woodshed in the right background. Two trunks of enormouswhite pines and a lilac bush are behind her, c. 1920. (MVB NHS)



Figure 32: Farm cottage and red barn, viewed from the east, c. 1900. (Photo # CLR-002, MVB NHS).



Figure 33: Woodshed, c. 1900. (Photo # CLR-004, MVB NHS).

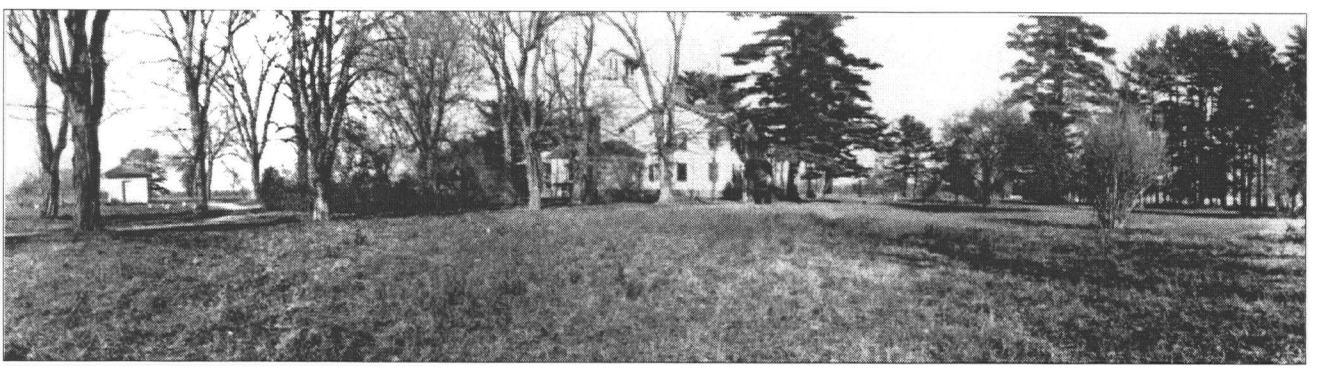


Figure 34: Panoramic view of front drive, farm office, Lindenwald mansion, and front lawn, c. 1900. (Photo # CLR-301.5, MVB NHS).



Figure 35: Men chopping wood behind the Lindenwald mansion, c. 1900. (MVB NHS)



Figure 36: Carriage barn taken from the southeast looking northwest, no date. Portions of the north orchard and its rail fence are visible to the left of the barn. (Photo # CLR-001, MVB NHS)

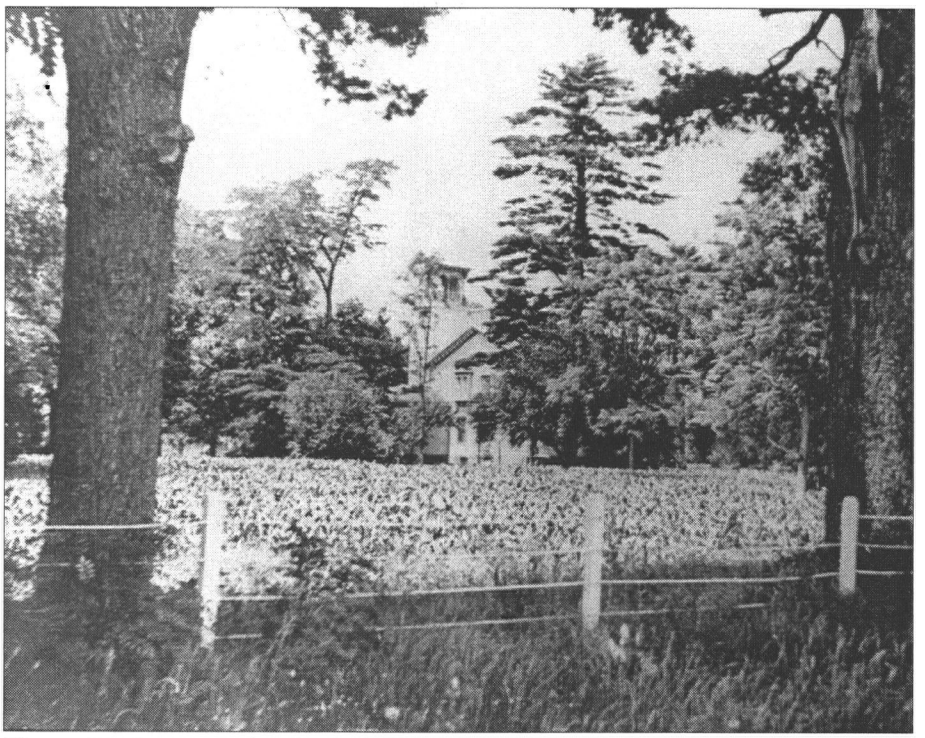


Figure 37: Corn growing in the front lawn during Wagoner ownership, south of the Lindenwald mansion, c. 1905. Note post and wire fence along the road. (Photo # CLR-303, MVB NHS).



Figure 38: Front lawn and Lindenwald mansion, 1913. Possible fruit trees are visible on the far right of the image, and a portion of the garden fence is visible on the extreme left. (Photo #CLR-304, on file MVB NHS; original glass slide at NYS Archives, Pl. 82, Neg. #10643, NYS Education Dept., Visual Instruction Div., lantern slide col.).

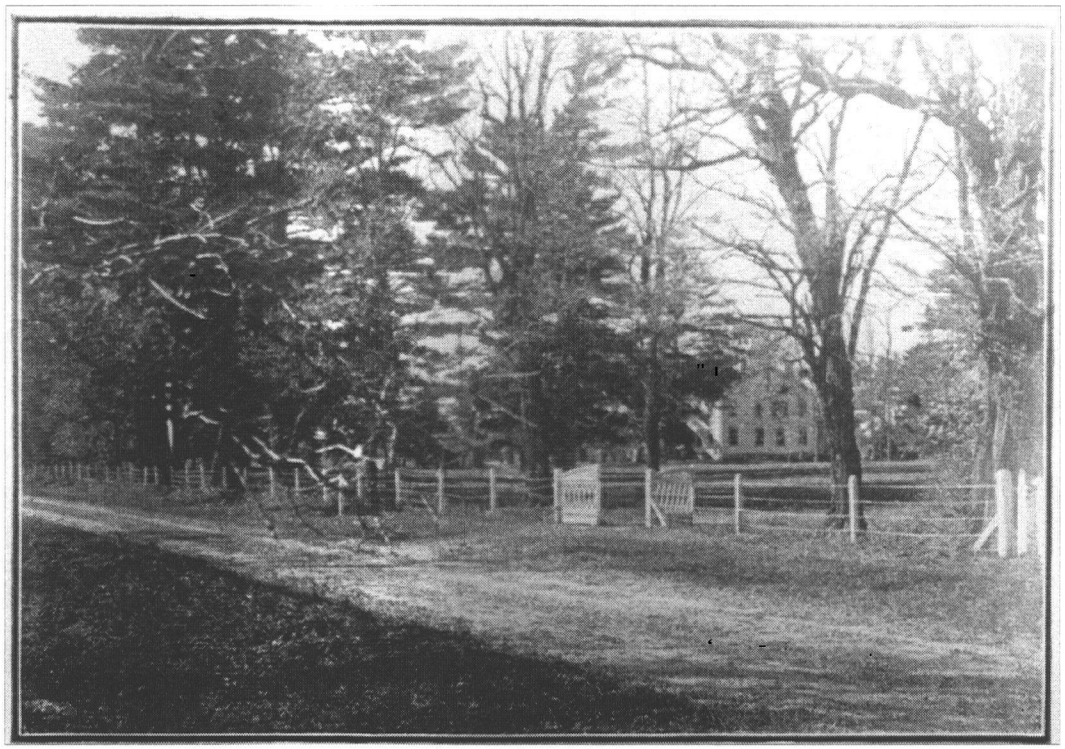


Figure 39: Lindenwald from the Old Post Road, c. 1900, showing well-maintained post and wire fence with wooden gate at the north drive entrance. (published in *Columbia County at the End of the Century*, p. 448, and negative #79-922, MVB NHS).



Figure 40: Farm road and carriage barn with post and wire fence, c. 1900. (MVB NHS).

BIRNEY AND DEPROSSE OWNERSHIPS, 1917-1946

In the autumn of 1917, Dr. Bascom H. Birney, of Yonkers, New York, purchased Lindenwald from Adam Wagoner, initially as an investment: "the Birney family was visiting some old friends, the Shepherds, who lived two doors north of Lindenwald, heard it was for sale, went to look at it for fun, bought it as an investment, but fell in love with it and kept it."[266] Birney and his family spent vacations at Lindenwald for the next two years, then moved there permanently in 1919.[267] The family lived and farmed at Lindenwald until 1925, though the property changed hands within the family in 1922, when Birney's daughter Marion acquired the property and again in about 1930, when Marion transferred the property to her sister Clementine Birney deProsse.

In 1925, Birney remarried and moved to Florida, and his two daughters also moved away from Lindenwald. While they were away from the property, the Schneck family lived in the farm cottage, worked the farm, and cared for the property on their behalf. In 1930, Clementine and her husband William deProsse returned to Lindenwald with their children Jeanne and William Jr., and they farmed the property for the next sixteen years. The deProsses embraced farm life and all of its challenges, growing crops for market as well as for their own use, while also enjoying ownership of the grand furnished mansion of a former president. In 1946, they sold most of the agricultural land to a local farmer, Dudley Ray Meyer, Jr., who farmed the property with his brother Ed. The deProsses continued to live in the main house until 1957, when they sold the house and 12.8 acres to Kenneth and Nancy Campbell.[268]

Agricultural Context

The Birneys and deProsses owned Lindenwald during an economically difficult period. Farm prices fell dramatically after World War I, and by the time the Great Depression began in 1929, American farmers had already endured ten years of economic hardship. During the 1930s, farm production remained almost constant while gross farm incomes fell approximately forty percent.[269] Farmers were unable to invest in tools or infrastructure, so the rapid advances in agricultural technology and methods that marked the end of the nineteenth century came to a standstill, and farm buildings declined as maintenance was deferred. High unemployment levels in urban areas kept people on the farm despite the meager existence possible there. In the 1930s there was "a large, redundant, or underemployed labor force in the farm sector which did not appear unemployed because the individuals involved shared the forced leisure and the low returns from farming."[270]

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[266] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993, Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library.

[267] "Clementine Birney deProsse," *The Van Buren Chronicles*, Friends of Lindenwald, October 1989, Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library.

[268] Clementine deProsse to Dudley Ray Meyer, Jr. (Deed), 28 March 1946, Columbia County Historical Society; Clementine deProsse et al. to Kenneth Campbell (Deed), 31 May 1957, Columbia County Historical Society; "Clementine Birney deProsse," *The Van Buren Chronicles*, Friends of Lindenwald, October 1989; Uschold and Curry, 77.

[269] Cochrane, 101.

[270] Cochrane, 122-4.

Layout and Circulation

In the 1930s New York Route 9H was added, leaving a wedge-shaped piece of land between the Old Post Road and the new highway. The old and new roads merged at the south entrance to the Lindenwald front drive. Prior to the construction of Route 9H, most carriages and vehicles passed by the north gatehouse, as this was the end of the drive closer to Kinderhook. The deProsses had their mailbox at the north end of the drive. After the construction of Route 9H, and the creation of the wedged shaped parcel of land in front of the property, most vehicles entered by the south gatehouse. The new highway was paved in 1937, and power lines were soon added along the road.[271] There is no documentation of any changes to roads within the Lindenwald property, so the roads shown on the annotated 1948 airphoto may have existed in the Wagoner period or earlier (Figures 41, 42). The deProsses recall that once behind the mansion, cars parked in the garage. A road extended from the vicinity of the garage, through the area of the current lumber shed, back to the carriage barn. The carriage barn was used for farm equipment, with a nearby chicken coop to the west of the barn. There was also a large chicken pen just south of the coop, out in the field toward the well.[272]

During the 1930s and 40s traces of the Old Post Road along the lower terrace were still evident, extending southwest near the red barn and north along the western edge of the hay field and along the bank of the creek (Figures 43, 44). Sections through wet areas were of corduroy construction, consisting of logs laid across the road for an elevated tread .[273]

Farm Help and Housing

The Schnecks lived in the farm cottage during Birney's ownership of the property. Starting in 1930, Clementine and Bill deProsse lived in the farm cottage during the winter because it was easier to heat than the main house. Friends of theirs lived in the cottage between about 1935 and 1939. The main house was home to various members of the deProsses' extended family as well as foster children. In the 1940s, they used the main house for different institutional and commercial uses, including a convalescent home, teahouse, and restaurant.[274]

Both Birney and the deProsses let farm help live in the gate houses. William deProsse, Jr. recalled, "we generally had a family living in the north gate house, with the adult male helping out on the farm, I guess for free rent because we never had any money" (see Figure 42).[275] The south gate house was vacant from 1935 until 1947, after which Jeanne deProsse Akers and her husband Ned Akers moved there.

Ponds and Drainage

Van Buren's upper and lower ponds were evident during this period. The upper pond was described in

[271] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.
[272] William deProsse, Jr. and Jeanne deProsse Akers, site visit and interview, 20 September, 2002 and correspondence 7 October 2002.
[273]William deProsse, Jr. and Jeanne deProsse Akers, site visit and interview, 20 September, 2002.
[274] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.
[275] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.

1938 as "24,000 sq. feet, fed by natural springs, has stone retaining wall and Picturesque ravine, all surrounded by trees."[276] The pond was located southwest of the south gatehouse: "The head of the pond actually came to just about the east/west oriented fence line which went back just west of the south gate house . . . that was where the underground stream that emanated from the hill across 9-H finally surfaced."[277] The upper pond had trees around it, "including chestnuts." From the upper pond, water ran through a dam and into a ravine and a little brook, then into the lower pond.[278]

Livestock and Farm Buildings

William deProsse, Jr. remembers, "there were some animals, most important was a team of Percherons (like Clydesdales), my mother's black pony Gwyn, and some cows."[279] In addition, there were eight to ten heifers, two milk cows, twenty sheep and one ram, pigs, and chickens.[280] The deProsses sold meat and wool, and they consumed the milk and some of the meat from their livestock.

The cows and horses on the farm were housed in the red barn, where hay and machinery was also stored. Wagons could drive into the center bay of the red barn, and a hay fork had been installed sometime before this period to move hay into the hay mows. During the depression, the deProsses occasionally also put their farm structures to use earning extra income. The red barn served as rehearsal space for a troop of actors for a couple of years before World War II.[281] The red barn was still in good condition during the 1930s and 1940s: "It [the red barn] was in good shape, roof was good, paint was still visible, and the barn was 'solid.'"[282]

The ground floor of the red barn opened into the large barnyard that surrounded the barn (see Figures 43, 44). The barnyard was enclosed on the west and south by a row of sheds that had housed sheep, pigs, and chickens in the past. The barnyard was fenced, most probably with wire, and there were three gates, two to the north and one to the south. A set of stone stairs just south of the red barn led down to the barnyard from a path to the farm cottage. An underground pipe led from a nearby spring to the barnyard, feeding a water trough to the south of the red barn.[283]

To the north of the barnyard complex, along the farm road, there was a fifteen by twenty-foot concrete slab floor that may have once been part of a sheep shearing shed or a cider press. Up the slope, between the farm cottage and the red barn, there was a corn crib (Figure 45). It consisted of two cribs separated by an aisle, and the door faced west, towards the red barn.[284] A shed for storing farm implements was located just to the north of the red barn. In the 1930s there was also a small "two wagon" barn to the south of the farm

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[276] Stokinger, 108.
[277] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.
[278] About half of the lower pond is now gone due to extensive dumping of fill and road construction debris in the area. The ravine and little brook are also filled, creating almost level ground then a steep embankment down to the lower pond. A portion of this area spans the property line for the Van Alan parcel. William deProsse, Jr. and Jeanne deProsse Akers, site visit and interview, 20 September, 2002.
[279] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.
[280] Jeanne Akers, letter to the author, May 22, 2002.
[281] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.
[282] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993; Uschold and Curry, Appendix F, figures 7,8.
[283] William deProsse Jr., letter to the author, 26 April 2002; Jeanne Akers, letter to the author, 22 May 2002.
[284] William deProsse Jr., letter to the author, 26 April 2002; William deProsse, Jr., Sketch map of Lindenwald and notes, n.d., photocopy on file, Martin Van Buren National Historic Site.

cottage, reached by a "driveway down the middle [of the orchard]."[285] These three structures predated the Birney and deProsse ownerships.[286] At the top of the slope, just south of the farm cottage was a woodshed. Beyond there was a stand of lilacs, an outhouse, and a path down the steep slope through the pear orchard.[287]

The carriage barn on the upper terrace had a "wagon room, tool and grain-storage, hay loft, horse stalls, box stall, wagon houses." The building was used for farm equipment and pigs were kept in a pen on the east side of the building and chickens on the west side of the building.[288] A nearby well supplied water for horses. The soil around the structure was poor and the trees were stunted.[289] The black hay barn, down on the lower terrace, was generally used for storing hay, which was kept loose in the mows.[290] However, in the early 1930s, the deProsses rigged up a temporary sale of the black hay barn to moonshiners:

> . . . in they came with all their distilling equipment and big hoses going down to the creek. They operated there night and day for a couple of years I think. Over one winter, I'm sure . . . I can remember lying in bed on winter nights during that time listening to their big old trucks grinding up the hill by the little house carrying loads of finished product, and gearing down with loads of sugar and raw materials going down to the still.[291]

The moonshiners may have added a well in one corner of the black hay barn.

Both the carriage barn and the black hay barn were in poor condition during this period. The buildings "had not been painted in a very long time, the wood was going bad, the barns were 'rickety' instead of solid, and both roofs were in bad shape. We put strips of tar paper over the shingles in many places to stop leaks."[292] Photographs from the period corroborate this assessment. A photograph of the black hay barn, possibly taken during the Wagoner period, captures chinks of light showing through the barn's siding, which was possibly part of its original construction to allow for air circulation (Figure 46). The carriage barn also looks quite dilapidated in photographs from this time: its siding in poor shape, its roof bare of shingles in patches, and its sliding doors filled with holes. Sleds, lumber, and old machinery parts are visible outside the barn (Figure 47). Due to its poor condition, the carriage barn was burned down in 1947 by Ray Meyer to square off the field for tilling.[293]

Birney connected the woodshed and Wagoner garage to form a sprawling service complex directly behind the main house. As described by Clementine deProsse, "In rear of [the] residence, all connected, [was a] large wood shed, ice storage, wagon house, tool storage, chicken house and the old plastered and finished outhouse."[294] There were two outhouses, a two-hole structure near the laundry, which was described by

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[285] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.

[286] William deProsse, Jr. and Jeanne deProsse Akers, site visit and interview, 20 September, 2002.

[287] "From the farm cottage, first was the woodshed, then on the east was a little path to the outhouse and a long row of lilacs. Behind it, the path continued down the steep slope through the pear orchard. It seems a lot more level now, perhaps Ray Meyer added some fill or regarded the area." William deProsse, Jr. and Jeanne deProsse Akers, site visit and interview, 20 September, 2002.

[288] Stokinger, 108; William deProsse, Jr. and Jeanne deProsse Akers, site visit and interview, 20 September, 2002.

[289] William deProsse, Jr. and Jeanne deProsse Akers, site visit and interview, 20 September, 2002.

[290] William deProsse Jr., letter to the author, 26 April 2002.

[291] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.

[292] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993; William deProsse, Jr. and Jeanne deProsse Akers, site visit and interview, 20 September, 2002.

[293] Uschold and Curry, 85.

[294] Stokinger, 108.

Clementine, and four-hole that was located behind the woodshed.[295] There was also a pig pen in this complex (Figures 48 - 50).[296] The farm office appears in good condition in a photograph from this period, and the deProsses used it briefly as a smoke house as well as for storing gasoline for the tractor (Figure 51).[297]

Crops

There is very little documentation of Birney's agricultural practices or those of the farm caretakers, the Schnecks. When the deProsses were at Lindenwald, however, it is clear that making a living on the farm during the Depression was difficult. The family tried numerous crop and livestock schemes in order to make a profit:

> We were always desperate to make a buck there.... One year we grew cauliflower, took it to the farmer's market in Albany, sat there all day and dumped it in the river on the way home. Another year a flood wiped out all the crops west of the red barn. Another year we raised sheep and a pack of dogs got into them and they all had to be destroyed. Another year we raised chickens and our own dogs got into them and killed most of them. Part of one year the 1917 Fordson tractor broke down, and I can remember my mother pulling the harrows through the field with a Model A coupe they had, with my father running alongside to tell her which way to turn. They were not lucky farmers, to say the least.[298]

Despite these hardships, the deProsse family enjoyed life on the farm and entertained many guests in their stately home. Clementine deProsse took in children from the orphanage in nearby Hudson, and "at various times, Clementine worked as a seamstress, cook, governess and nurse."[299] The children had a playhouse on the northwest side of the house and a pony and cart for rides around the farm.

The deProsses did some truck farming on the lower fields beyond the black hay barn, growing melons, potatoes, cabbages, and corn. Vegetables and other household foodstuffs were grown in the family's large garden, yet the family was not always able to remain self-sufficient. Twice they rented their fields to other farmers. The neighbors leased the south field along the road to grow cantaloupes in the late 1930s, and Ray and Ed Meyer leased most of the agricultural land in the mid 1940s.[300]

Corn was grown on the lower terrace and possibly on the upper terrace, as indicated by several photographs. Figure 52 shows corn growing in the field between the red barn and the hay barn. Corn is possibly visible beyond the orchards by the main house in a 1920s photograph of young friend of the Birney family and another photograph of the house (Figures 53, 54). Jeanne Akers recalls that corn was not grown near the house in the late 1940s. Ned Akers, Jeanne deProsse's husband, cultivated corn elsewhere.[301]

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[295] William deProsse, Jr. and Jeanne deProsse Akers, site visit and interview, 20 September, 2002.
[296] Jeanne Akers, letter to the author, 22 May 2002.
[297] Uschold and Curry, 86-7; Jeanne Akers, letter to the author, 22 May 2002.
[298] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.
[299] "Clementine Birney deProsse," *The Van Buren Chronicles*, Friends of Lindenwald, October 1989.
[300] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.
[301] Seymour McGee, interview by W. M. Jackson, 22 May 1977, on file at Martin Van Buren National Historic Site; William deProsse, Jr. and Jeanne deProsse Akers, site visit and interview, 20 September, 2002.

A description of the property from the late 1920s described the property as ". . . nearly 200 acres of good land. There is about twenty acres of wood land and the balance is mostly tillable and now in hay."[302] Hay was grown in the field directly behind the house, near the black hay barn, and sometimes on the northernmost lower field.[303]

The only photograph from the site showing agricultural work in progress dates from this period. Figure 55 is a haying scene, from sometime after 1917. In it, the 1917 Fordson tractor is pulling a wagon laden with hay. Two men stand on the wagon, hay forks in hand, and the wagon pulls an attached hay loader. These loaders, used from the 1880s until balers became widespread in the 1950s, lifted the hay to the wagon on a series of rakes and bars, driven by belts attached to the axle of the loader (Figure 56). Behind the loader, another farm hand drives a hay rake. As Birney only had one tractor, horses were still used on the farm for some tasks. While the Fordson is a relatively new innovation, the wagon, hay loader, and rake are inventions of the last quarter of the nineteenth century.[304]

Garden and Orchards

During the deProsse ownership, the house was surrounded by several mature white pines and masses of frangrant mock orange shrubs. Two white pines behind the mansion at the corner of the woodshed are visible in Figures 31 and 48. Two other large pines were located by a well house north of the back corner of the house. Additional large white pines stood to the north between the mansion and carriage barn and some are still standing. Other trees in this vicinity were cut for firewood. There was also a grove of mock orange shrubs (*Philadephus coronarius*) to the north of the mansion, along the road to the carriage barn. In this vicinity was the deProsse children's playhouse. Beyond the playhouse was a dump area, which was used a lot when the mansion was used as a convalescent home.[305]

The garden extended west and south of the farm office building. It was approximately 300 by 150 feet, with pasture on the south side of the garden, between it and the Van Buren's upper fish pond. The garden was surrounded on three sides by fencing, with picket fence on the north and east and wire fence on the south. The west side was open and bordered the south orchard. The garden contained pear trees planted along the fences, grapes, vegetables, and a row of elm trees.[306]

The deProsses planted peach trees in the front field along the road south of the main house.[307] In addition, the large north orchard extended west of the main house past the carriage barn and down the slope

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[302] [A. C. Flick] "Lindenwald," n.d., Files Relating to the Martin Van Buren Site 'Lindenwald', New York State Archives, Albany, New York.

[303] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.

[304] William deProsse, Jr. listed the farm implements his father and grandfather had, noting that some of it was modern: "the tractor, 2 bottom plow, disc harrow, spike tooth harrow, spring tooth harrow, a mower . . . , a side delivery (tedder) rake. . . " The deProsses also had old fashioned equipment "that was pulled by a team, such as cultivators, single bottom plows, mowers, etc." William deProsse, Jr., letter to the author, 26 April 2002; Percy W. Blandford, *Old Farm Tools and Machinery: An Illustrated History*, (Fort Lauderdale, Florida: gale Research Company, 1976), 140; Wendel, 183.

[305] Several of the white pines and mock orange shrubs are still evident. The dump site is also still evident. William deProsse, Jr. and Jeanne deProsse Akers, site visit and interview, 20 September, 2002.

[306] Uschold and Curry, 96.

[307] William deProsse Jr., letter to the author, 26 April 2002.

to the lower terrace. This orchard was mainly apples, but widely spaced pear trees occupied its front portion, and the deProsses planted beans between the rows of pears. These pears probably dated from Van Buren's tenure, as they were quite old by the 1930s: "The pear trees were very old, no longer bearing fruit, and dying, which may be significant. Don't know what kind of pears, because I don't ever remember seeing one."[308] A curving road cut through the western portion of the north orchard connecting the carriage barn to the hayfield on the lower terrace.

The south orchard, containing only twelve to fifteen rows of apple trees, was located between the garden and the farm cottage. William deProsse, Jr. recalls, "The south orchard went from about 50 feet west of the garden (to allow for machinery turn-around), and between the farm road and the fence line north of the pond, to about 100 feet east of the little house [farm cottage]." A driveway cut through this orchard and led to the "two wagon" garage. In addition, about fifty to seventy-five Seckel pear trees grew along the steep slope to the south of the farm cottage. These were perhaps a little younger than the pears in the north orchard: "they were getting old, but we'd always get a few each year."[309]

The orchards were neither particularly productive nor well-maintained during the 1930s. William deProsse, Jr. remembers,

> Dr. Birney [his grandfather] had a spray rig [which was stored in the carriage barn] pulled by the Fordson and powered by a one-lung chugger that was kept in the barn . . . and which was used for spraying those two orchards. I think my father made a few half-hearted attempts to maintain them, but the trees were getting pretty old. I remember my grandfather got enough off them each year to make a little money selling them to Risedorph's Bottling Co. in Kinderhook to make cider.[310]

Birney most likely sprayed the orchards with either Bordeaux Mix or lead arsenate, two chemicals commonly applied to orchards before World War II.[311]

Fences and Hedgerows

There were six fields on the property in the 1930s, and these fields are visible on the 1948 aerial photograph (see Figure 41):

> The fields south of the big house, which bordered on the road to Stuyvesant Falls; the field just behind the big house, which included the Van Ness graves; the field behind (west of) that, which was also north of the bid red barn; the triangular field south of the swamp down on the flats; the fields south of the black barn; and the fields west of the black barn, the west side of which bordered on the creek.[312]

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[308] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.

[309] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993. In 2002, the deProsses amended their previous recollection, recalling about 200 pear trees on the steep slope, extending from fence-line to fence-line. William deProsse, Jr. and Jeanne deProsse Akers, site visit and interview, 20 September, 2002.

[310] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993. Amended with location of spray rig by William deProsse, Jr. and Jeanne deProsse Akers, site visit and interview, 20 September, 2002.

[311] Cope, 18.

[312] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.

William deProsse recalled that there was "a big pasture west and northwest of the big red barn . . . That's where the swamp was" as well as a pasture between the garden and the upper fish pond.[313] He estimated that most of the fields were between ten and twenty acres.

There were fences around the barnyard at the red barn, along some of the farm roads, and between the fields. Hedgerows, "trees or large bushes mostly" separated the fields, and were composed of elms, maples, and cherry. Tangled in the vegetation of the hedgerows were old fences, both wire mesh and barbed wire.[314] As William deProsse remembers, "The . . . fencing between fields was mostly barbed wire, with some squared wire, in bad condition. I don't know of any wooden fencing. There were many hedgerows, mostly of brush that had built up around the fencing." [315]

Woodlot

Although there were furnaces in the main house, the deProsses heated partially with wood: "Of course, we used the fireplaces a lot. There was a lot of wood cutting every winter for next winter's wood."[316] The deProsses called the parcel across NY Route 9H from the rest of the farm "the woodlot," but they did not actually harvest wood there. Wood was cut all over the farm with much harvested east of the carriage barn.[317] Locust wood made especially good firewood, and "most of it [locust wood] came from the driveway, but there was a good stand of locusts on the fence line between the carriage barn and the pear orchard."[318]

Summary Description

There is little information regarding Birney's farming practices, though he cared enough about the upkeep of the farm to buy new farm equipment and to ensure that caretakers worked it after he left in 1925. Through the deProsse period of ownership, many features from the Van Buren period were still evident including the buildings, circulation system, the upper and lower ponds, orchards and traces of the gardens. The deProsses struggled through the Depression on the farm, making few investments in the farm's infrastructure, yet actively using the existing buildings including the black hay barn, red hillside barn, and carriage barn. The deProsses cultivated crops and raised livestock that they could use themselves or sell. Most of the orchards, almost a hundred years old, were no longer productive, and the family sporadically maintained them. The house and outbuildings were adapted for several institutional, non-farm uses to supplement their income.

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[313] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993; Uschold, 96; Jeanne Akers, letter to the author, 22 May 2002.

[314] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993; D. R. Meyer, Jr., interview by L. Searle and M. C. Brown, 6 May 2002, Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library.

[315] William deProsse Jr., letter to the author, 26 April 2002.

[316] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.

[317] William de Prosse, correspondence, 7 October 2002.

[318] William deProsse Jr., letter to the author, 26 April 2002; Jeanne Akers, letter to the author, 22 May 2002.

Feature Key:

1. Lindenwald Mansion
2. North Gatehouse
3. South Gatehouse
4. Carriage Barn
5. Woodshed
6. Farm Office
7. Greenhouse
8. Garage
9. Farm Cottage
10. Red Hillside Barn
11. Old Stone House
12. Black Hay Barn
13. Van Ness Monument



deProsse Land Use 1940s

Figure 41

Cultural Landscape Report
Martin Van Buren
National Historic Site
Kinderhook, NY

Produced by
National Park Service
Olmsted Center for
Landscape Preservation

Notes:
Aerial photograph of Lindenwald and environs, 1948, with reflections from William deProsse, Jr. and Jeanne Akers done in the 1990s. These reflections portray the property's appearance prior to Meyer's alterations. This photograph was taken two years after Meyer had purchased the agricultural land at Lindenwald and generally conveys the layout of the property during the deProsse era. However, by the time of the photograph, Meyer had already made some changes to the property, most noticeably, removing most of the orchards and the black hay barn. He may have also begun removing the hedgerows and treelines that defined the different fields on the farm. The annotations indicate the property's appearance prior to Meyer's alterations.
(8 July 1948 - NY-A-9 55, MVB NHS).

Legend:

- Pasture
- Garden
- Wetland
- Orchard

Plan created using ArcMap GIS 8.3, by L. Hegarty, NPS.



Figure 42: North gate house shortly before it was dismantled, c. 1945. (Photo # CLR-415, MVB NHS).

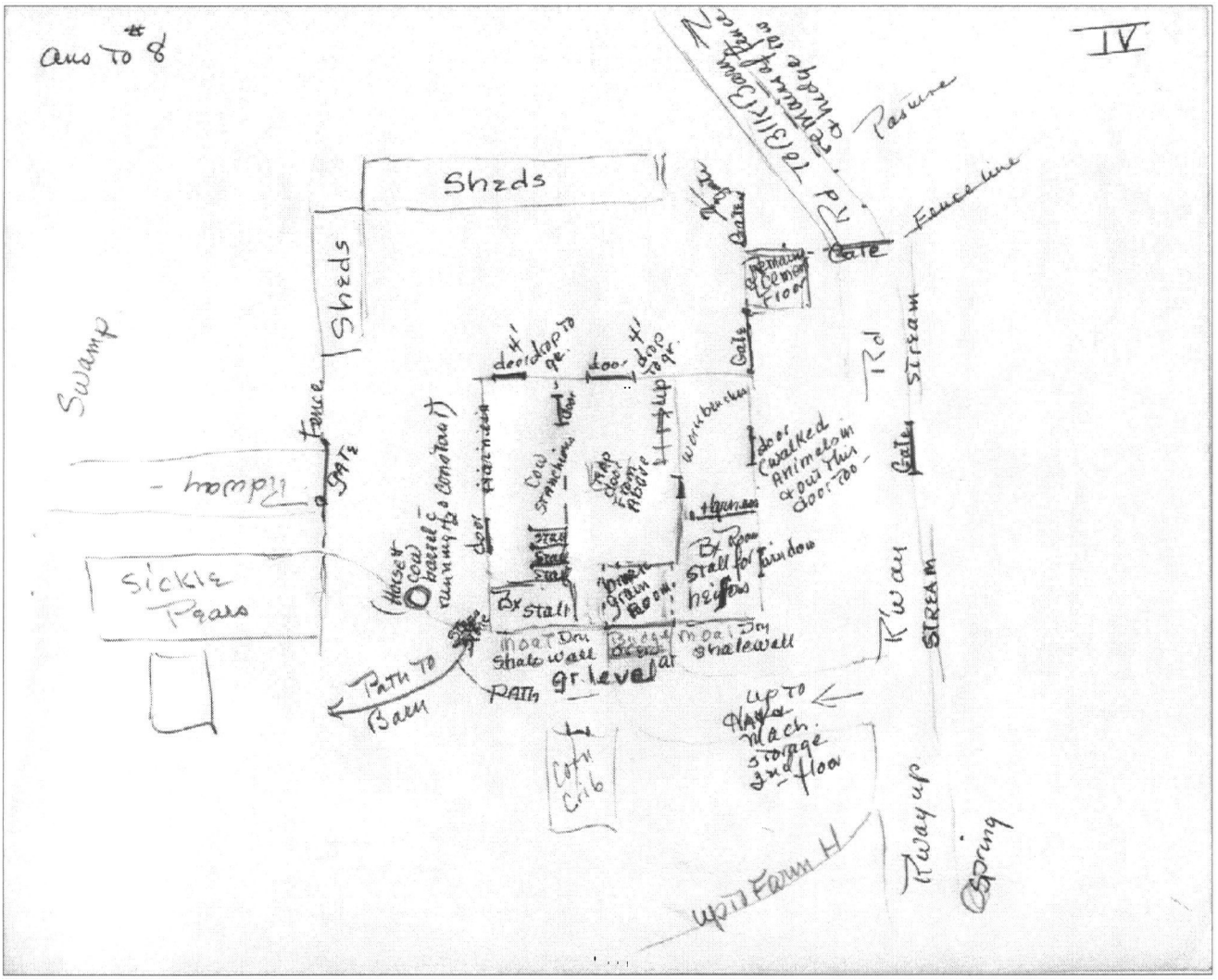


Figure 43: Jeanne deProsse Akers's drawing of the red hillside barn and barnyard. (Original on file, MVB NHS).

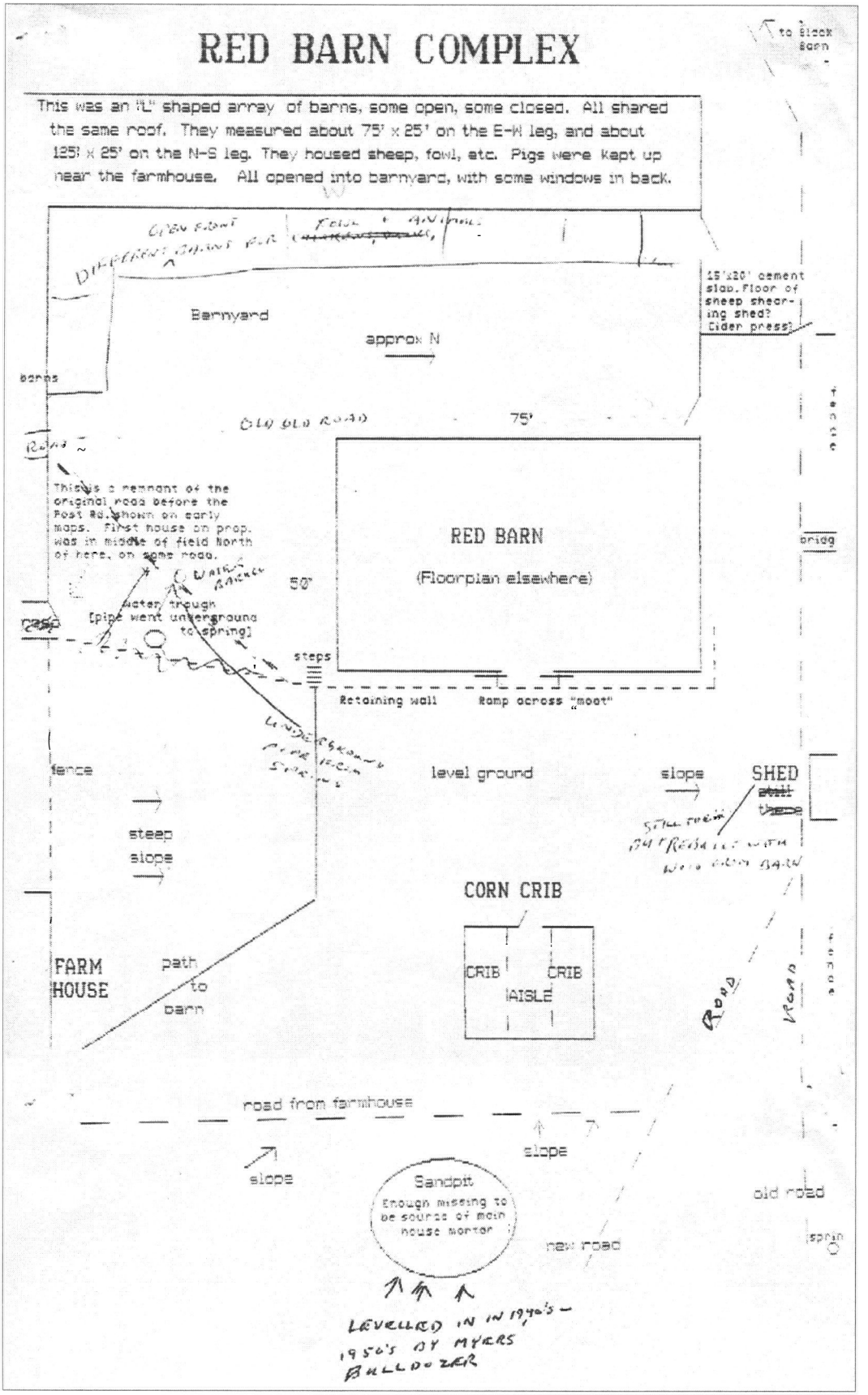


Figure 44: William deProsse, Jr.'s drawing of the red hillside barn and barnyard. (MVB NHS).

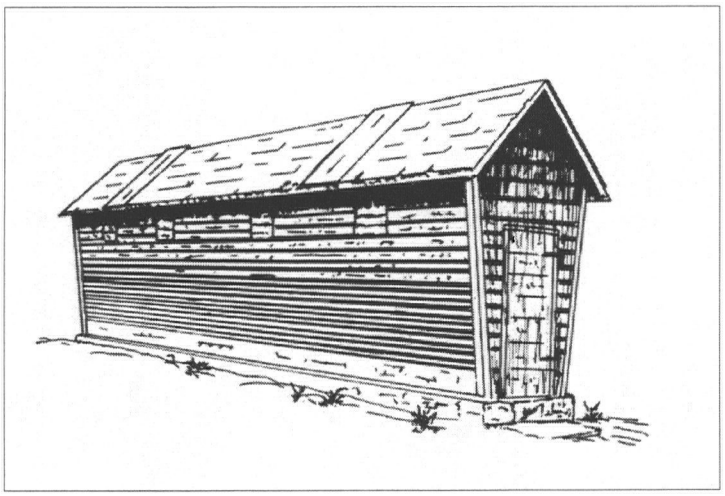


Figure 45: Sketch of a corn crib. The deProsses recall a wider and larger corn crib than this sketch. (from Noble, Allen G. *Wood, Brick, and Stone: The North American Settlement Landscape*, Vol. 2, *Barns and Farm Structures*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984.)



Figure 46: Black hay barn, c. 1940. The farm road is visible on the right side of the photograph. (Photo # CLR-471, MVB NHS).



Figure 47: Carriage barn in c. 1940, which was burned down by the next landowner Dudley Ray Meyer, Jr. in 1947. (Photo # CLR-403, MVB NHS).

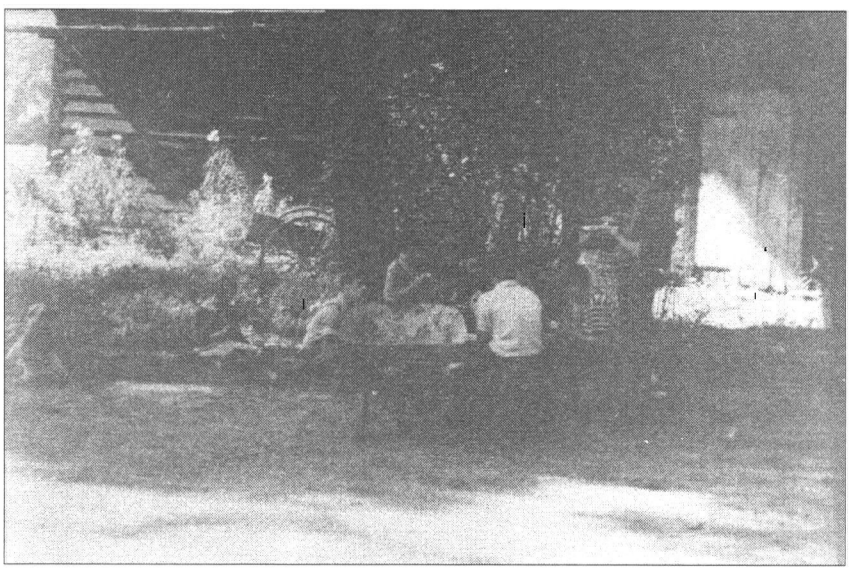


Figure 48: The deProsse children with their cousins under the double white pine trees. The laundry building that once stood to the left is replaced with a flower garden and the woodshed is visible in the background, c. 1940. (Photo # CLR-416, MVB NHS).



Figure 49: The deProsse children (Jeanne and William, Jr. at left) and two foster children (right, on horse) with woodshed in background, c. 1940. (Photo # CLR-411, MVB NHS).



Figure 50: Rear of the Lindenwald mansion and woodshed, with laundry lines, circa 1917-1946. The rear wheel of the Fordson tractor is just visible on the far right of the photograph. (Photo on file, MVB NHS).

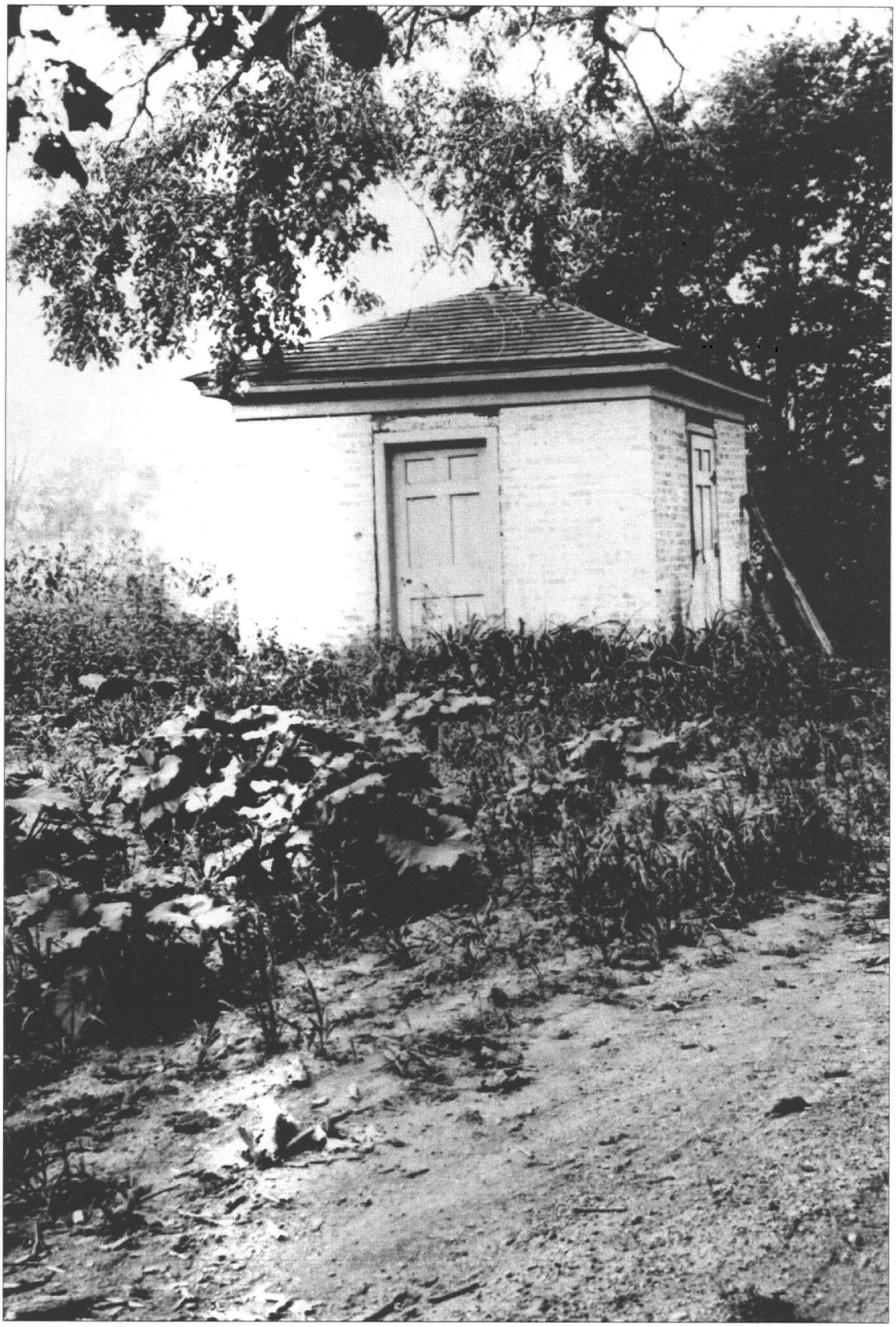


Figure 51: Farm office, viewed from the south entry drive, 1936. Rhubarb or burdock is growing in front of the farm office, and corn is growing in a field to the south. (Photo # CLR-401, MVB NHS).

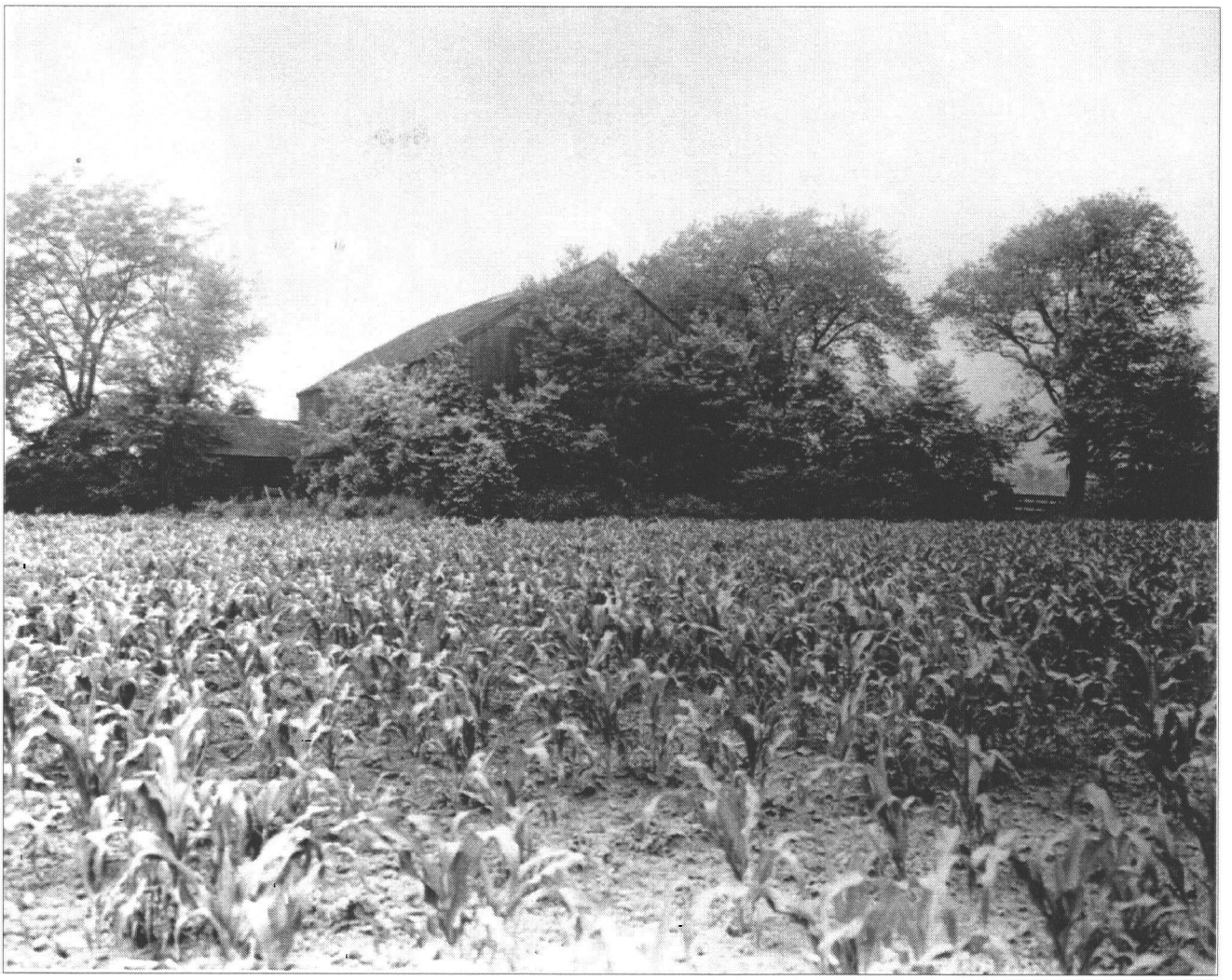


Figure 52: View north of the black hay barn and cornfield, c. 1930. A board and rail gate leads to the farm road, which runs in front of the hay barn. Kinderhook Creek is further north. (Photo CLR-408, MVB NHS).



Figure 53: Friend of the Birney-family on a bench, with the pear orchard in the distance, c. 1940. (deProsse collection, MVB NHS).



Figure 54: Lindenwald mansion, with a pear orchard visible to the north, c. 1920. (MVB NHS)



Figure 55: Haying near Kinderhook Creek with Dr. Birney, his daughter Marian, and possibly one of the Schnek children on the Fordson tractor, circa 1917 to 1922. (deProsse collection, MVB NHS).

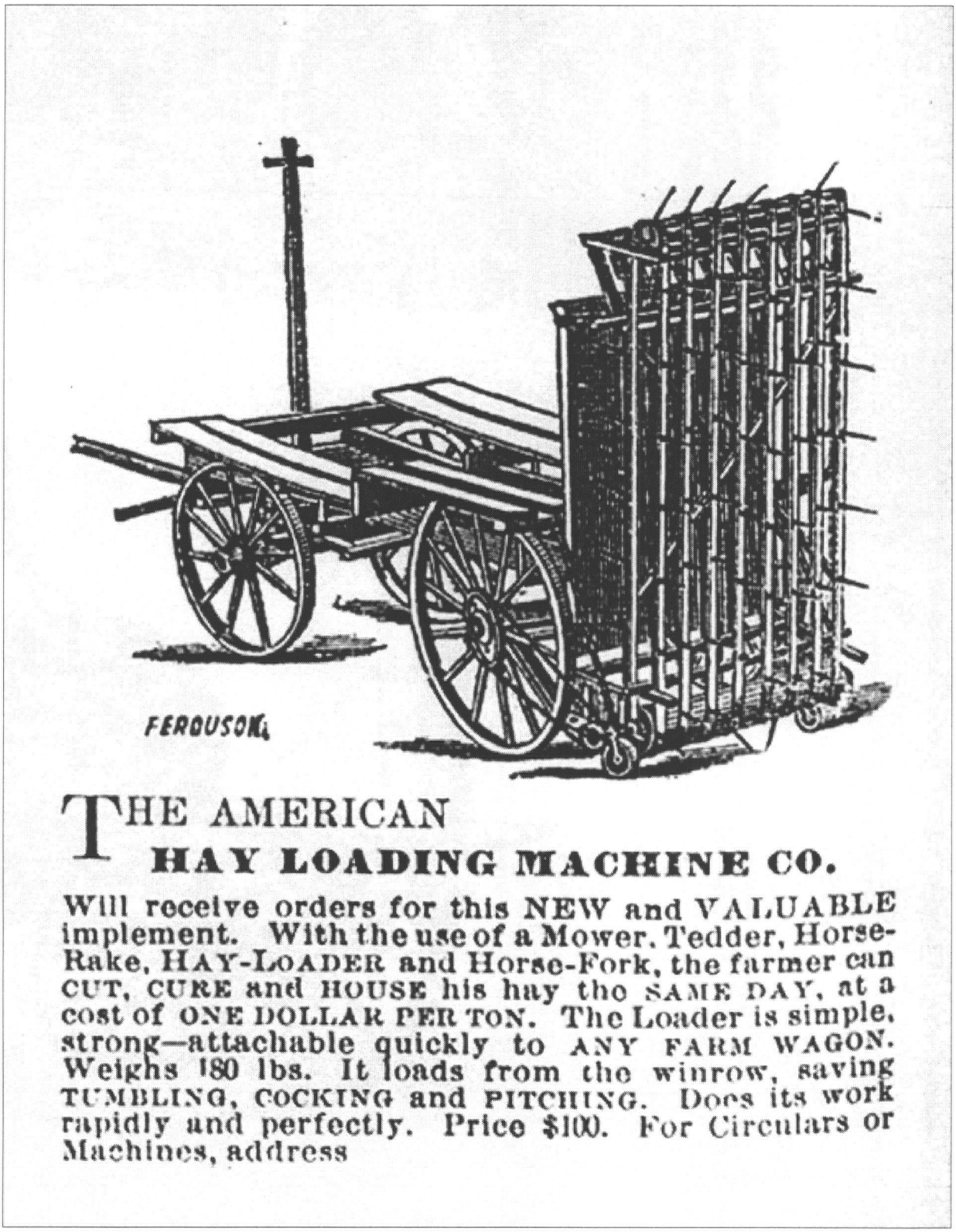


Figure 56: Hay loader, similar to the one used at Lindenwald in Figure 55. (From Johnson, Paul C. *Farm Inventions in the Making of America: a Pictorial History of Farm Machinery Featuring Engravings from Old Farm Magazines and Books.* Des Moines, Iowa: Wallace-Homestead Book Company, 1976.)

MEYER, DEPROSSE, CAMPBELL, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, and OPEN SPACE INSTITUTE OWNERSHIPS, 1946-2002

Dudley Ray Meyer, Jr., then living in Niverville, Kinderhook, rented farmland from the deProsses for a year or two before buying the bulk of the agricultural land, 166 acres, in March of 1946.[319] The deProsses retained 12.8 acres immediately surrounding the main house, as well as just over 6 acres of the woodlot across Mill Road.

The deProsses did not have the financial ability or inclination to make large-scale capital improvements to the farm. Meyer, however, was in a position to do this. Farming had changed significantly in the postwar period, and Meyer began to modernize the farm almost immediately upon purchasing the land:

> For the next year or two after the sale, he [Meyer] was tearing out the two orchards he owned, cutting out hedgerows, burning barns and outbuildings (couldn't burn the red barn = too close to the little house = tore it down) and putting in new drainage pipes from the swamp to the creek. He ended up clearing land to the point where it is today, a wise move for him; but it sure wreaked havoc on the outbuildings and the topography as we knew it.[320]

Meyer built new farm structures on the upper terrace, added a new farm road, and changed the layout of the fields.

Ray Meyer and his brother Ed farmed the Lindenwald agricultural property intensively over the next fifty-three years; they farmed together at first, then Ed and his son farmed the property, then Ray again took control. The Meyers owned three other agricultural properties and rented land as well. At the height of their farming activities, the Meyer brothers had a total of 1,500 acres in sweet corn.[321]

The deProsses continued to live sporadically at the Lindenwald mansion for the next eleven years. In the late 1940s they ran a convalescent home in the main house which "got to be thirty-five beds and did well."[322] Between 1952 and 1955, the deProsses moved out, leaving the house vacant: "In 1952 I went off to the Korean War, Ned [Akers] came back from the Korean War and Jeanne went off with him, and mother closed the place and moved to Los Angeles to manage a church home for children there."[323] Clementine and Bill deProsse Jr. returned in 1955. They sold the main house and 12.8 acre lot to Kenneth and Nancy Campbell, from Putnam County, New York in 1957.[324]

Campbell lived on the property and operated an antique dealership from a shop that he constructed near the south gate house. He also sold antiques from the gatehouse, main house and the garage behind the house. Campbell sold some of the Van Buren era furnishings from the house and also sold furnishings that

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[319] Clementine deProsse to Dudley Ray Meyer, Jr. (Deed), 28 March 1946, Columbia County Historical Society; William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.

[320] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.

[321] D. R. Meyer, Jr., interview by L. Searle and M. C. Brown, 6 May 2002, Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library.

[322] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993 indicated there were 25 beds. His sister, Jeanne deProsse Akers recalled 35 beds, site visit and interview, 20 September 2002.

[323] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.

[324] Clementine deProsse et al. to Kenneth Campbell (Deed), 31 May 1957, Columbia County Historical Society.

he claimed were Van Buren furnishings and allowed the grounds to become overgrown.[325]

In 1973 the National Park Foundation purchased the house and its 12.8-acre lot from Campbell. The following year, the National Park Foundation gave the land to the National Park Service, and Martin Van Buren National Historic Site was established by an Act of Congress on October 26, 1974. Campbell continued his antique business on the property through this period. The National Park Service attempted to find a suitable property to relocate Campbell and his business but was unsuccessful and renovated the south gatehouse for his use as a residence. The National Park Service cleaned the grounds, stabilized some structures, restored the main house, and constructed buildings and rented trailers to house park staff offices and storage. The park was open to the public in 1977 but did not have its grand opening until restoration of the main house was completed in 1987. Campbell relocated his business but resided on the property into the 1980s, when he was hospitalized.[326] By the 1990s the park encompassed 38.6 acres, with 20.3 acres held in fee by the National Park Service and 18.3 acres protected through conservation easements (Figure 57).

In the late 1990s, Meyer separated a flag-shaped parcel of land south of the farm complex from the rest of the property and transferred it to his grandson and his wife, Kevin and Therisa Van Alan. In early 2000, Meyer sold the 126-acre parcel between the Lindenwald mansion and Kinderhook Creek, the bulk of Van Buren's original farmland, to the Beaverkill Conservancy, Inc., the "land acquisition affiliate" of the Open Space Institute, a non-profit, environmental protection and land conservation organization.[327] Immediately upon purchasing the property, the Open Space Institute leased the farmland to Roxbury Farm, a local Community Supported Agricultural operation.[328] Roxbury Farm is a twelve-year-old farm owned by Jean-Paul Cortens, who also has a lifetime lease on an additional 140 acres north of Lindenwald on NY Route 9H. Roxbury Farm supplies organic vegetables to more than six hundred families in Columbia County, Albany, Westchester County, and Manhattan, NY.

Agricultural Context

In the late 1960s, Columbia County was primarily rural, with half of its area in farmland. There were seven hundred commercial farms in the county, and nearly half of those were dairy farms. The county also produced potatoes, sweet corn, and fruit: "In 1964, over 100 fruit farms harvested almost 50 million pounds of apples and a significant amount of pears, grapes, and cherries."[329] Kinderhook was the leading agricultural township in the county.

Since the 1960s, Columbia County has remained a leading agricultural county in New York, despite a significant loss of farmland. Farmland acreage in Columbia County decreased by thirty percent between 1964 and 1981, with another twenty-seven percent decrease between 1982 and 1992.[330] The percentage of farmers in New York also plummeted during the late twentieth century. By 1985, "Commercial farming employ[ed]

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[325] William deProsse, Jr. and Jeanne deProsse Akers, site visit and interview, 20 September 2002; Uschold and Curry, 78-9; and correspondence with Richard Lusardi, former park superintendent, 30 January 2004.
[326] Uschold and Curry, 109, correspondence with Richard Lusardi, former park superintendent, 30 January 2004.
[327] Joe Martens, "Open Space Institute 20th Anniversary Report" (New York: Open Space Institute, n.d.)
[328] There are actually two leases, both of them held by Roxbury Farm for 10 years: one for the farm cottage and the other for the agricultural land and farm structures. Daniel Luciano, Open Space Institute, Telephone conversation with author, 24 April 2002.
[329] "Master Plan: Lindenwald National Historic Site, New York," (National Park Service, 18 February 1970), 3-4.
[330] "Boundary Study and Environmental Assessment: Martin Van Buren Historic Site," 21.

less than one percent of the state's labor force."[331] Mechanization, the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and the development of hybrid seeds enabled farmers to substitute capital for labor, to cultivate larger tracts of land, and to increase production dramatically. At the same time, the demand for residential and commercial development induced many farmers to sell their land.

In 1850, it took seventy-five to ninety hours of labor to produce a hundred bushels of corn. In 1975, it only took three and a half hours to produce the same amount, using modern equipment such as a tractor-driven plow, tandem disk harrow, herbicides, and a combine for harvesting.[332] Meyer recalls that he could plant all of the lower fields at Lindenwald with field corn in a day; he could raise the crop without any help, and harvest it alone with machinery in a couple of days.[333]

Layout and Circulation

Meyer ploughed under the road on the north side of the garden, and between 1948 and 1959, he constructed a new access road to the agricultural portion of the property, separate from the front driveway to the Lindenwald mansion (Figure 58). This new farm road intersected the Old Post Road south of the south gate house and continued past the upper fish pond to the farm cottage and the other farm buildings. This section of the new road was paved sometime after 1978 (Figures 59 and 60). Spurs from the new farm access road to the farm cottage and led west past the farm complex. Meyer moved the section of the farm road that ran down the slope to the lower terrace approximately sixty feet to the south. At the base of the slope, the road connected with the existing farm road that continued east through the fields to the bank of Kinderhook Creek.[334] In 2000, NPS installed a parking lot in the land between the Old Post Road and NY Route 9H, and rehabilitated the front driveway.[335]

Drainage, Irrigation, and Earthworks

Continuing Van Buren's battle against wet cropland, Meyer drained the wet pasture area below the escarpment and the red barn. This area contained intermittent pools and appeared wet in the 1948 aerial photograph, but by 1959, Meyer had incorporated the area into his crop fields (see Figure 58). Meyer hired Ned Akers who was skilled with the use of dynamite (Jeanne deProsse Akers's husband) to "blow a ditch across the southeast end of the swamp, at the bottom of the hill behind the farmhouse and further south. This was to collect the water from 2 or 3 streams that were coming down the hill. . . . Ray then put in drainage pipes from the ditch across the swampy pasture to the creek. That allowed the land to become arable again." In the process of putting in the new drainage pipes, Meyer and Akers uncovered some of Martin Van Buren's drainage structures: "His [Van Buren's] clay pipes were still in the ground but had become clogged."[336] Aerial photographs from the late 1960s and later reveal that despite Meyer's efforts, wet spots persisted in several of these fields (see Figure 60). By 1994, Meyer had dug ponds in almost the exact

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[331] B. F. Stanton "Evolution and Change in New York Agriculture," Cornell Agricultural Economics Staff Paper, No. 85-1, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, January 1985), 14.

[332] *History of American Agriculture, 1776-1990.* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, 1993).

[333] D. R. Meyer, Jr., interview.

[334] D. R. Meyer, Jr., interview.

[335] David Uschold, conversation with author, May 2002.

[336] William deProsse, Jr., letter to the author, 26 April 2002.

place of the original swamp and pools on the lower fields (Figure 61).

Meyer connected the ponds via culverts to the drainage ditch, which he had cleared and widened. This ditch ran along the border between the northeastern-most field on the property and the field to the west of it. Meyer also added fill to the farm road to raise it above the level of the fields, and he added culverts under it in several places. These changes to the drainage of this portion of the farm have caused the spring behind the small shed to the north of the farm road to flood, creating a small pond in the hillside which Meyer enlarged.[337] In addition, Meyer installed six-inch plastic piping in the ground in several places so that he could irrigate his fields in the summer with water from Kinderhook Creek. Some of this piping remained on the site after it was no longer used, for example where it runs along the boundary between the two lower terrace fields to the north of the farm road.[338]

Sometime between 1959 and 1967, Meyer cleared away some of the woodlands at the base of the escarpment adjacent to the lower fields, and dug a ditch three quarters of the way around these fields, draining them into Kinderhook Creek (see Figures 58 and 59). These fields also continue to appear wet in places on later aerial photographs.

Van Buren's lower fishpond was partially filled during Meyer's tenure as the ravine between the upper and lower pond became a dumping area for Meyer's construction projects. Meyer altered the shape of the upper pond when he constructed a farm road from Route 9H near the south gatehouse to the farm cottage. The new farm access road disturbed the drainage of the upper terrace such that small pond was created opposite the upper fish pond, to the north of the new access road. Meyer subsequently enlarged the upper fishpond and used it for irrigation.[339] Closer to the farm cottage, Meyer filled in a large sandpit, which the deProsses recalled to the northeast of the farm cottage. Also in this area Meyer altered the road bed down the escarpment, moving the upper end further south.[340]

Aerial photographs reveal that Kinderhook Creek steadily eroded Meyer's farmland through his ownership. Gradually, between 1965 and 1994, the creek cut off a large section of the property, making an island out of the triangular piece of land which had previously jutted out into the water (compare aerial views in figures 41, 59 - 61). In effect, Meyer lost roughly six acres of farmland to the creek over the course of forty-five years. In the late 1990s, in order to combat this erosion, Meyer placed slabs of concrete along the bank of the creek. Many of the pieces contained rebar and other rusted metal parts, as they were apparently reused from a bridge that was dismantled in nearby Valatie. The concrete was not laid to create a retaining wall, but was crudely dumped along the bank, along with truck loads of shale.[341]

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[337] Examination of the pond today reveals that Meyer did enlarge it with a backhoe, though the spring and the pool or pond by it could date from the Wagoner period or earlier. The Wagoner-Birney deed mentions "a walled spring" on the slope, roughly in line with Van Buren's mansion and in the location of this pond.

[338] D. R. Meyer, Jr., interview.

[339] D. R. Meyer, Jr., interview.

[340] William deProsse, Jr. and Jeanne deProsse Akers, site visit and interview, 20 September 2002

[341] D. R. Meyer, Jr., interview; Ecosystems Strategies, Inc., "Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, Dudley Ray Meyer Propery," (Poughkeepsie, New York: October 15, 1999), 10.

Farm Buildings

Van Buren's barns did not survive this period. Meyer had no livestock and grew little if any hay, so he had no need for the livestock and hay storage structures Van Buren and others had built on the property. Meyer burned down the carriage barn to the northwest of the mansion in 1947 and the black hay barn on the lower fields by the summer of 1948. He dumped the stones from the black hay barn foundation along the bank of the creek. Also in the late 1940s, he dismantled the red hillside barn but left behind the foundation stones. He disassembled the associated barnyard, sheep barn, and the corn crib that had been located near the farm cottage.[342] Meyer reused some of the timbers from the red hillside barn to repair a simple shed that had been in placed during the deProsse period along the road down the embankment.[343] After Campbell removed the farm office building and the woodshed, pig pen, and tool shed behind the house early in his tenure, none of Van Buren's barns remained.[344] Meyer did not require housing for farm help as he relied on migrant workers to pick sweet corn during the short harvest period.[345]

Meyer made major renovations to the farm cottage soon after purchasing the farm from the deProsses:

> The little house was vacant from about 1940 until 1946. Ray and Ed Meyers [*sic*] bought the farm and Ray completely rebuilt the little house, installed electricity and plumbing (for the first time), and moved his family in. When he moved out some years later, a progression of kin, tenents and Bill Tomaszewski (during Bill's failed attempt to buy the property from the Meyer brothers) lived there.[346]

Meyer built a number of structures on the property, creating a new complex of farm buildings between the farm cottage and the upper pond along the new farm access road. By 1959, he had built a board and batten barn and a concrete-block building adjacent to it. Meyer stored potatoes in the large barn, which eventually had to be replaced because moisture from the potatoes caused it to rot. The Meyers used the series of sheds along the side of this barn for storing and packing sweet corn (Figures 62, 63). These sheds were incorporated in the an addition to the board and batten barn, which later served as a candle shop and is now the office of the Roxbury Farms staff.[347]

A small wooden garage, now with a concrete floor and metal roof, may be the wagon garage/tractor shed that William deProsse, Jr. remembered on the property, now modified.[348] Meyer moved this building sometime during his tenure, though it is not exactly clear from where. Meyer explained, "That's the only original building -- that, the house, and as you go down the hill, the shed on the right. The corn crib I took down, the red barn fell down, and the old hay barn, we burned up and incorporated it right into the fields."[349]

During the 1960s Meyer added an "open-fronted metal and wood barn," and around 1975 he built three greenhouses (one forty-foot-long and two sixty-foot-long) side by side in the northern corner of the farm complex. Meyer also built two fifteen-foot tall metal silos south of the concrete-block building sometime

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[342] D. R. Meyer, Jr., interview.
[343] William deProsse, Jr. and Jeanne deProsse Akers, site visit and interview, 20 September 2002
[344] Uschold and Curry, 86-7.
[345] D. R. Meyer, Jr., interview.
[346] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.
[347] D. R. Meyer, Jr., interview.
[348] Ecosystems Strategies, Inc., "Phase I Environmental Site Assessment," 19.
[349] D. R. Meyer, Jr., interview.

between 1969 and 1994. Meyer raised vegetables and stored farm equipment, crops, and chemicals in the farm buildings he constructed. He also ran a farm market and retail produce stand at the property in the middle to late 1980s.[350]

In addition to supporting farm activities on the property, Meyer put his farm structures to many uses over the years, as he engaged in various entrepreneurial businesses or rented out the buildings to others. Meyer ran an auto body shop and a swimming pool distributorship from the property in the early 1960s, and he stored building materials there in the 1960s and 1970s. He also rented space to the National Park Service once they purchased Lindenwald, stored and repaired buses for Hunter Motor Coach in the 1980s, and let the space to an auction company from 1993 to 1999.[351]

After beginning to lease the property, Roxbury Farm used the board and batten barn with "candle shop" as a farm office and produce packing space. It also used the greenhouses for washing and packing produce. The farm stored agricultural machinery in the pole barn and the small wooden garage, and it leased out half of the concrete-block building.[352] The silos, quite dilapidated, were unused.

Meyer built a ranch house on the southern part of his property on the upper terrace in 1985, near the large silo he had built late in 1984 and near the migrant farm worker housing he had constructed much earlier in his tenure. The latter was one building with four, small apartment units.[353]

On the Lindenwald houselot, the north gate house was sold to neighbors and dismantled in the 1950s, who "neatly removed every stick and used the lumber to add to their house."[354] Campbell tore down the woodshed and build a cinder block garage where it had stood. He dismantled the farm office sometime during his ownership and also constructed an antique shop near the south gate house.[355]

After the National Park Service bought the houselot, they restored the south gate house and the main house. The Birney garage, left to deteriorate by Campbell, collapsed and was eventually removed from the site (Figures 64, 65). The Park renovated the Campbell garage for use as a maintenance shed, removed Campbell's antique shop in 1981, and built a pole barn for curatorial storage behind the main house in 1983 and 1984.[356] A lumber storage shed in the north woods that dates to the Campbell period was retained by the park service.[357] A series of mobile homes were placed behind the main house to provide park office space. The park removed these obtrusive mobile homes in 2000 and placed modular units in the field north of the property to form the park offices and visitor center.

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[350] Ecosystems Strategies, Inc., "Phase I Environmental Site Assessment," 10.
[351] Ecosystems Strategies, Inc., "Phase I Environmental Site Assessment," 10.
[352] Jean-Paul Cortens and Jody Bolluyt, interview with L. Searle and M. C. Brown, 18 January, 2002.
[353] Ecosystems Strategies, Inc., "Phase I Environmental Site Assessment," 10; Steven Beatty, conversation with author, 23 July 2002.
[354] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.
[355] Uschold and Curry, 86.
[356] Uschold and Curry, 117.
[357] William deProsse, Jr. and Jeanne deProsse Akers, site visit and interview, 20 September 2002.

Crops

Meyer never kept any livestock on the farm. Instead, he grew corn and potatoes on the property. Both crops were planted in rows three feet apart.[358] In the early years of his ownership, Meyer planted sweet corn behind the main house: "we let Ray plant corn right up to the butternut trees in back of the big house, because we had no use for the land and with his full knowledge we raided the corn fields regularly in season."[359] Meyer also planted the lower terrace right up to the edge of the slope.[360] Meyer also experimented with market vegetables. The 1975 permit for building greenhouses on the property indicated that they were for "cabbage plants, pepper plants, tomato plants, squash, cucumbers, melons, etc."[361] A 1978 aerial view of the farm reveals garden crops = probably squash = planted in the fields behind the main house and irrigated with water from the upper fish pond (Figure 66). In 1999, at the very end of his tenure, Meyer had potatoes in all of his fields, except for one section of corn in the southernmost of the lower terrace fields.[362]

Meyer and his brother primarily grew white potatoes, though they also grew Yukon Gold potatoes in later years. In the last five years he farmed the property, Meyer grew field corn rather than sweet corn because it was easier to plant and harvest.[363]

Meyer claimed that he always produced very high yields on the farm. During the sweet corn harvest, he could ship out ten trailer truck loads of corn a day, primarily to local markets, Albany, and Troy. The farm also produced between sixty and eighty thousand bushels of potatoes in a year.[364]

Like other farmers of the time, Meyer took advantage of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides to increase the yields on the fields he cultivated. Soil sampling conducted in 1999 revealed that DDT had been used pervasively on the property. Atrazine, a chemical herbicide, was being applied in 1999, and a spill of Chlordane was also detected on the property.[365]

Cortens of Roxbury Farm managed the Van Buren farmland according to organic and biodynamic principles, eschewing modern agricultural chemicals in favor of techniques, which he claims foster biodiversity and biofertility. Such techniques include the planting of cover crops such as Japanese millet, sorghum sudan grass, rye, and hairy vetch; crop rotation; soil conservation measures; and the application of biodynamic preparations, composts, and manures.[366]

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[358] D. R. Meyer, Jr., interview.

[359] William deProsse, Jr. to David Uschold, 6 September 1993.

[360] The deProsses recall that both they and subsequently Meyer cultivated and planted on the lower terrace right up along the edge of the escarpment. The deProsses observed that there is now a wider area that is not cultivated. William deProsse, Jr. and Jeanne deProsse Akers, site visit and interview, 20 September 2002.

[361] Ecosystems Strategies, Inc., "Phase I Environmental Site Assessment," 10.

[362] Ecosystems Strategies, Inc., "Summary Report of Environmental Services Preformed on the Dudley Ray Meyer Property," (Poughkeepsie, New York: Jan 7, 2000), Appendix A Maps.

[363] D. R. Meyer, Jr., interview.

[364] D. R. Meyer, Jr., interview.

[365] For the results of the soil testing, see Ecosystems Strategies, Inc., "Summary Report of Environmental Services." Meyer stored the following chemicals on the property in 1999, any of which he may have used on his crops: Atrazine, WEX Multi-purpose Wetting Agent, Griffex 4L Herbicide, Chlordane, Furadan, Lannate, Agrico Corn Mix No. 2, Parathion, Calcium Chelate Solution, Vydate, Diazinon, Methodyxhlor, Thiodan, and Bravo 720 Agricultural Fungicide. Ecosystems Strategies, Inc., "Phase I Environmental Site Assessment," 25.

[366] "Roxbury Farm" At www.roxburyfarm.com [electronic document], Kinderhook, New York, [visited 20 May 2002].

Although Roxbury Farm produced an extremely wide variety of vegetables and herbs, at the 126-acre property near Lindenwald, Cortens only grew potatoes and peas on the upper field north of the farm complex buildings as of 2001. While Cortens waited for the herbicides to leach out of the soil, he subleased the lower terrace fields to a dairy farmer who grew corn and sorghum sudan grass there. In 2002, Cortens planted clover, but he commented that in the future, he plans to cultivate vegetables on the property.[367]

Garden and Orchards

The outline of the deProsse garden appears on the 1948 aerial photograph of the property (see Figure 41). Although the photograph was taken in the summer, the garden has not been planted and some of the trees documented in the garden during the deProsse period have been removed. The garden was only partially on Meyer's land, but the deProsses let him plow the garden under and incorporate it into a larger crop field. The deProsses cultivated a small vegetable patch near the woodshed during the 1950s.[368]

The orchards were not well maintained through much of the previous twenty-five years, and most were overgrown with scrub vegetation. Meyer explained, "The orchards were grown up to bushes. There was a straggler apple tree around, but you wouldn't call it an orchard."[369] Any apple and pear trees that remained would have been one hundred years old by the beginning of this period. Meyer cut down the orchards on his property almost immediately upon taking ownership, turning most of this land to crop production. By 1948, the south orchard and the rows of Seckel pears behind the farm cottage had been removed, as had the back section of the north orchard, remnants of which appear on the 1948 aerial photograph. The deProsses left the pear trees in the front of the north orchard standing, and this orchard reverted to woodland over the next fifty years (Figure 67).

Fences and Hedgerows

The three to fifteen acre fields on the property in the late 1940s were inefficient to farm in the postwar era, when large equipment came into use and farming methods were developed that took advantage of economies of scale. When Meyer bought the farmland in 1946, the land was also fairly overgrown. He worked to clear brush, trees, and hedges from the property throughout his tenure, and he constructed a few, large fields from the numerous, small fields on the property.[370] By 1959, Meyer had reclaimed the pasture land on the lower terrace for crop growing and had merged it with the irregularly-shaped field along the creek. He combined all of the land south and west of there into one large field. By 1967, all of the land at the lowest elevation was one field, bisected by a farm road, and sometimes planted in two crops. By this time, Meyer had also combined the former garden area and the other fields directly behind the main house into one field.[371]

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[367] Jean-Paul Cortens and Jody Bolluyt, interview with L. Searle and M. C. Brown, 18 January, 2002.
[368] Uschold and Curry, 96.
[369] D. R. Meyer, Jr., interview.
[370] Jeanne Akers commented: "Yes, there were lots of hedges that grew thicker and wider as the years went along covering old fence lines around fields and in some cases gobbling up the fields!" Jeanne Akers, letter to the author, 22 May 2002.
[371] D. R. Meyer, Jr., interview.

Summary Description

Under separate ownership from the main house, Lindenwald's agricultural lands underwent drastic changes during the second half of the twentieth century. Meyer, adopting twentieth-century farming methods, transformed the nineteenth-century farm by consolidating fields, dismantling old barns, adding a new farm road, and removing the orchards and garden. He adopted new agricultural methods and devoted most of the farm's acreage to potatoes and corn. Like the deProsses before him, Meyer diversified his means of producing money from the farm, using his newly constructed agricultural buildings for a series of small business endeavors and experimenting with market gardening. Using heavy equipment, Meyer ditched the wetlands, created a number of new ponds and ditches in the lower fields, and attempted to stabilize the creek bank. In the early years of the twenty-first century, Roxbury Farm, an organic, community supported agricultural enterprise, farmed the property. A more detailed description of the present appearance of the property follows in the next chapter on existing conditions.

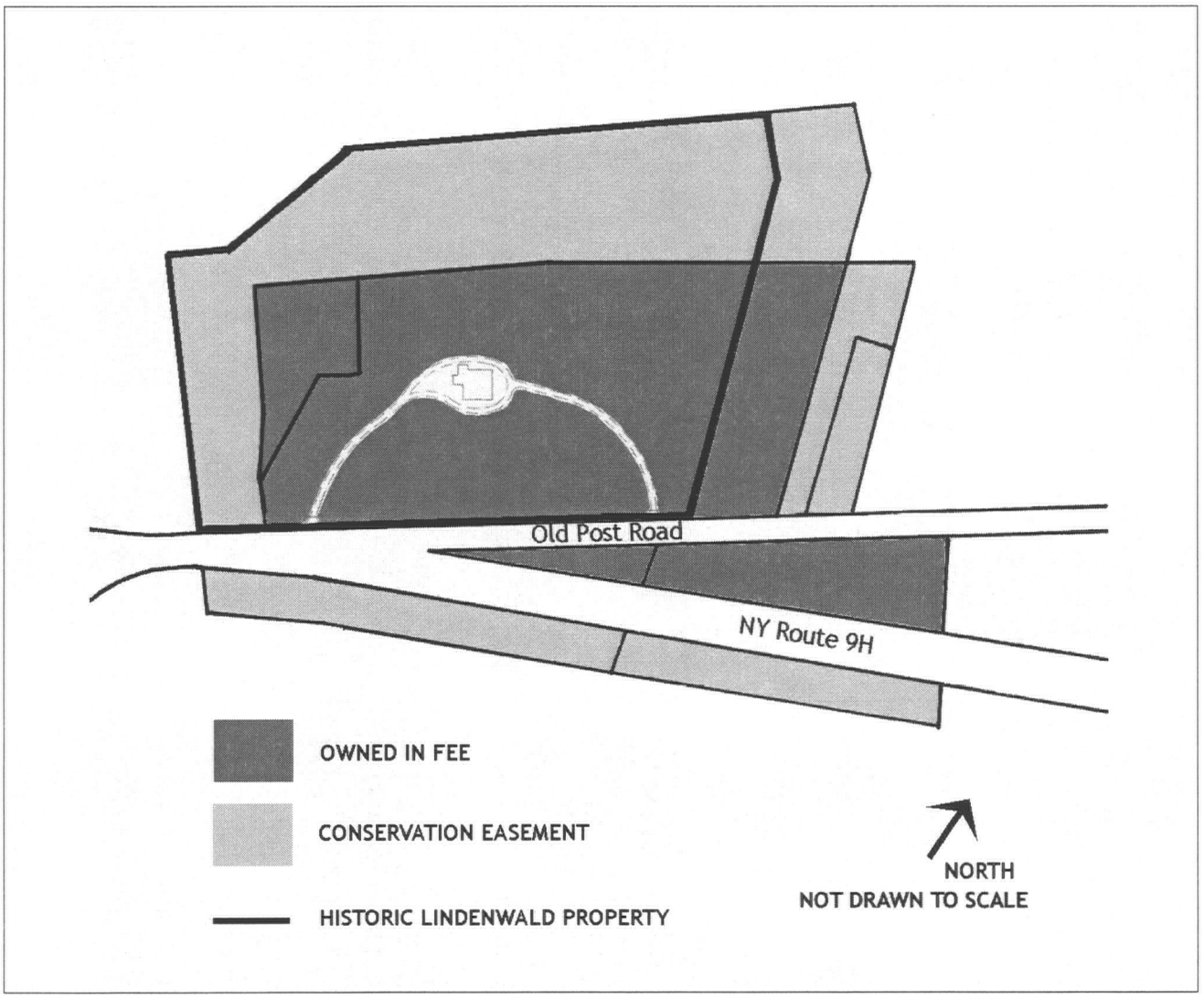


Figure 57: Diagram of NPS property boundaries and easements.



Figure 58: Aerial photograph of Lindenwald, 1959 (7 September 1959 - EFB-2V-137, MVB NHS).



Figure 59: Aerial photograph of Lindenwald, 1967 (13 May 1967 - EFB-2HH-112, MVB NHS).



Figure 60: Oblique aerial photograph of Lindenwald, 1978. The farm road, upper fish pond, and several of Meyer's agricultural buildings are visible on the left side of the photograph. The north fields have been planted with corn and potatoes. (MVB NHS).



Figure 61: Aerial photograph of Lindenwald, 1994 (20 April 1994 - NAPP-8006-146EC, MVB NHS).

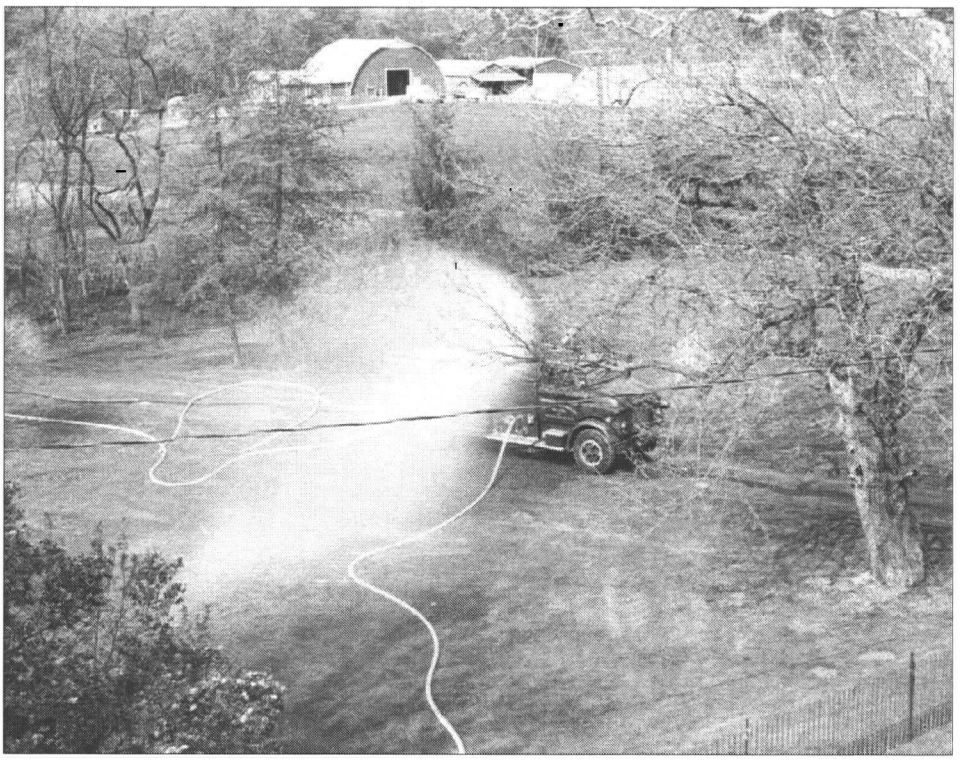


Figure 62: Mock fire drill, Lindenwald, 1978. Meyer's farm complex is in the background, with the board and batten barn most clearly visible. (MVB NHS).



Figure 63: Mock fire drill, Lindenwald, 1978. View up the farm access road, with the board and batten barn and attached sheds on the left. This barn was later replaced, and the sheds were enlarged to make the "candle shop." (MVB NHS).

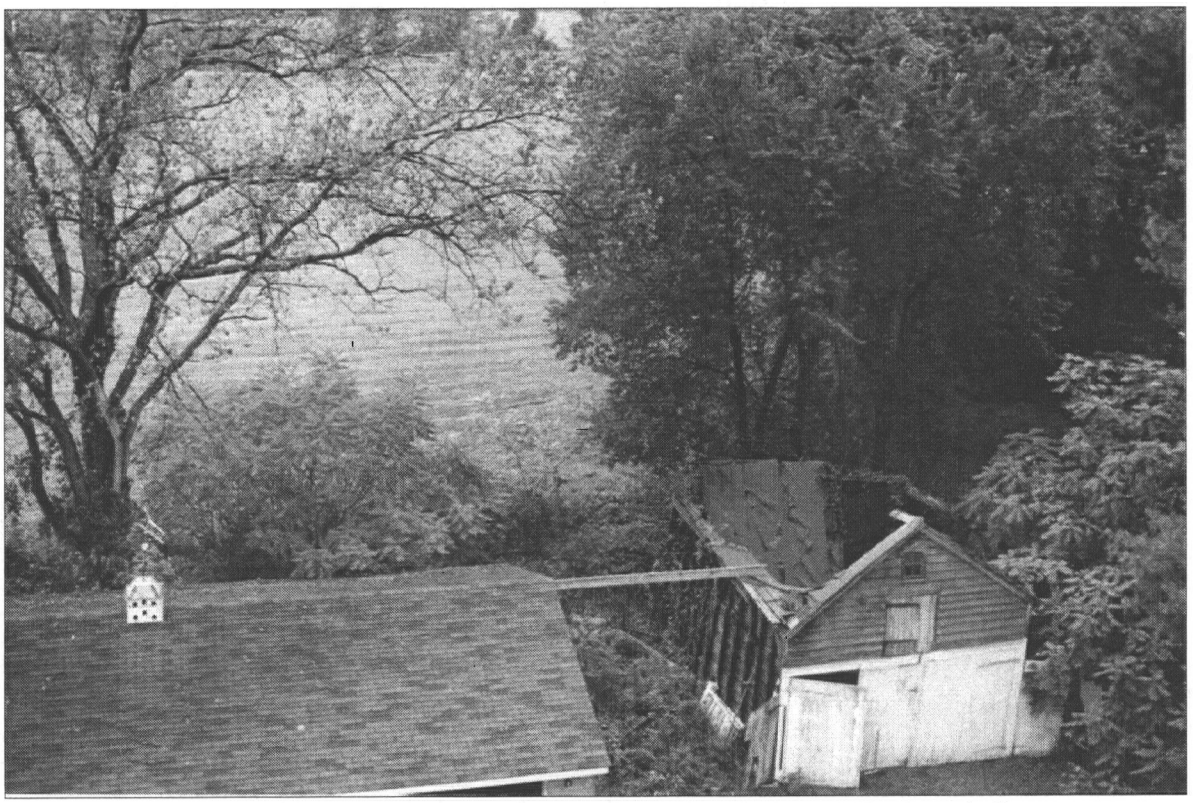


Figure 64: Garage on right built by Dr. Birney, partially collapsed, circa 1969. Campbells garage on left later used as NPS maintenance building. A portion of the upper terrace agricultural field under cultivation by Meyer is visible behind the two buildings. (Photo CLR - 429, MVB NHS).



Figure 65: Birney garage, collapsed, 1977. Campbell's garage has been converted into a maintenance garage for the National Park Service. (MVB NHS).



Figure 66: Aerial photograph of Lindenwald from the southwest, 1978. Squash and market vegetables are being grown right up to the back of the garage. Irrigation piping runs up to these fields, presumably from Kinderhook Creek. (Frederick collection #79-528, MVB NHS).

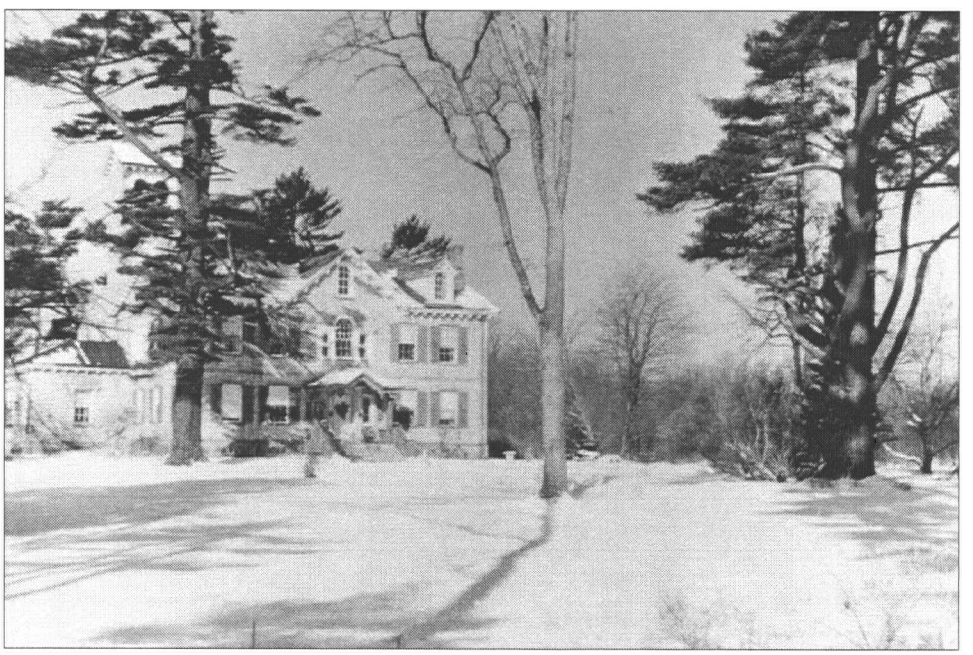


Figure 67: Lindenwald mansion, c. 1946. The north orchard is no longer visible because it has been overgrown with scrub vegetation. (MVB NHS).

CHAPTER III. EXISTING CONDITIONS (2002)

This section provides a detailed description and photographs of landscape characteristics and extant features on the Lindenwald agricultural land, focusing on the 126-acre parcel west of the mansion, as documented between December 2001 and May 2002. More detailed discussion of feature elements and character are provided in Chapter IV, Analysis of Significance and Integrity.

Topography, Spatial Organization, and Land Use

Lindenwald is located in the Hudson River Valley, south of Albany in the town of Kinderhook, Columbia County, New York, between Kinderhook Creek, a tributary of the Hudson River, and NY Route 9H. The landscape surrounding Lindenwald is primarily farmland, with scattered tracts of residential development. The village of Kinderhook, the residential and commercial center of the town, is located approximately 1.5 miles north of Lindenwald.

Roughly half of Van Buren's farm lies in the floodplain of Kinderhook Creek, which has formed the site's lower terrace at an elevation of 180 feet. A steep escarpment, partially wooded, bisects the property on a northeast-southwest axis parallel to the road and the creek. The rest of the site, east of this escarpment, sits at a higher elevation, approximately 230 feet, and is level with the road. All of the farm's structures are currently located on this upper terrace (Figure 68).

The Lindenwald mansion forms the core of the property. It faces the road and is oriented northeast-southwest. To the north of the Lindenwald mansion lies the National Park Service visitor center, offices, and parking. To the west of the Lindenwald mansion lies a complex of farm buildings: barns, silos, greenhouses, sheds, and a farm cottage. Agricultural land extends from behind the mansion down to the lower terrace and Kinderhook Creek.

The mansion and surrounding 20.3 acres is a National Historic Site operated by the National Park Service, while the rest of the property is leased from the Open Space Institute by two farms (Figure 69). The agricultural property is divided into five fields. Two are on the upper terrace: the field along the road and a 7.5-acre field directly behind the house. Three fields comprise the lower terrace: a triangular 13-acre field at northeastern edge of the property; the large 48.6-acre field south of the farm road; and the 16-acre field between these two. Roads, wetlands, woodlands, and agricultural buildings make up the rest of the acreage on the property.

Circulation

There is no access to the farmland from the circular driveway of the Lindenwald mansion. Instead, a paved one lane road connects the farm complex and fields to NY Route 9H (Figure 70). The road intersects NY Route 9H south of the gate house and continues to the north of the upper fish pond, after which it forks, one spur leading to the Van Alan property, the other to the farm complex and the farm cottage. The road runs past the candle shop, barn, and greenhouses, before turning northeast and joining the unpaved farm

road running down the slope between the terraces and out into the lower fields. In the lower fields, the road runs east to the bank of Kinderhook Creek (Figure 71). A short spur of the road leads to the triangular field to the north, and a spur to the south gives access to the man-made ponds and mounds of earth.

A section of the Old Post Road runs in front of the Lindenwald mansion. A parking lot for park visitors and employees has been added in the triangular piece of land between the Old Post Road and NY Route 9H. North of the mansion, two paths cut across the north woods: one runs northwest from the circular driveway, and another, running northeast, intersects this path and leads through the woods to the National Park Service parcel to the north of the houselot (Figure 72).

Water Features

Kinderhook Creek flows along the northwestern portion of the farm. Its southern bank along the boundary of the farm is steep and lined with pieces of shale and large concrete slabs added by Ray Meyer to prevent bank erosion (Figure 73). There are two wetland areas on the lower terrace associated with the creek: one along the westernmost edge of the farm, and another between northeastern-most field and the creek, outside of the property boundaries. In several places, erosion from the farm has carved gullies into the bank of the creek (Figure 74).

A deep ditch, most likely dug with a backhoe, drains the southernmost field on the property into Kinderhook Creek. It extends up from the creek, along the western edge of the field, and then curves to the east. Another ditch, ten to fifteen feet wide in places, connects the wetland along the northern boundary of the property to wet areas closer to the escarpment (Figure 75). This ditch marks the boundary between the two fields to the north of the farm road on the lower terrace and is connected by culverts to a pond and spring located in the slope also to the north of the farm road.

Nearby, to the south of the road, several irregular, man-made ponds have been cut. These are not visible from the upper terrace, but are conspicuous from the lower agricultural fields (Figure 76). Rough earthworks and berms separate the ponds, though the western-most earth piles are outside the study area. The ponds are connected by culverts and rivulets to the drainage ditch. Irrigation pipes have also been laid at several places in the lower fields.

On the upper terrace, an approximately twenty-three thousand square foot pond lies along the south side of the entrance road to the farm complex (Figure 77). This "upper pond" is irregularly oblong and oriented roughly east-west. A much smaller pond, created by the road's interruption of the drainage of a small spring, lies to the north of the farm access road. A narrow wetland extends from these ponds towards NY Route 9H. At the western end of the upper pond is a dam and culvert. Here the water flows underground to the lower pond down in the ravine. The brook between the two ponds has been filled, and extensive dumping around the banks of the lower pond suggests that it is now substantially smaller that it was during the Van Buren period.

Buildings and Structures

The farm complex is the structural core of the working agricultural landscape. It consists of numerous buildings and sheds, all constructed in the last fifty years. A board and batten barn with several additions, used currently as an office and for washing and packing produce, is the first building west of the pond (Figure 78). It is followed by a concrete-block building used as a garage and machine shop; two unused silos (one of which is just a foundation); a small wood and metal garage; an open-fronted storage barn for equipment; and three greenhouses, two of which are still in use (Figures 79 and 80). The buildings form a horseshoe around a paved area used as outdoor work space. A one and a half story farm cottage lies to the north of these farm buildings, on the edge of the slope (Figure 81).

Foundation stones on the slope behind the farm cottage reveal the former location of the red barn. The area is currently covered with brambles and scrub vegetation (Figure 82). A small, open-fronted storage shed sits opposite the red barn site to the north of the farm road (Figure 83). Although covered with asphalt shingles, this shed is considerably old. There are no other extant structures in the lower fields, though there may be remnants of the old stone house foundation in the northernmost, triangular field. On top of the escarpment above the triangular field and directly behind the main house, sits the Van Ness monument, the headstone for the grave of Peter Van Ness and his wife (Figure 84).

The restored Lindenwald mansion sits on the upper terrace, facing the road. The south gate house, formerly one of a pair, marks the entrance to the curved front drive to the main house. The foundations of the north gate house and the farm office are both extant and are marked by NPS signs (Figure 85).

Behind the Lindenwald mansion is a maintenance garage and further to the northwest is a pole barn used for curatorial storage by the NPS. Two metal chemical storage sheds are located near these NPS buildings (Figure 86). Another maintenance shed and a lumber storage shed lie in the southern portion of the north woods, accessible by the two aforementioned paths (Figure 87). To the north of the houselot, the NPS has placed two, connected mobile homes which serve as the park offices and visitor center (Figure 88).

Vegetation

In 2001, roughly 100 acres of the farm were under cultivation, with peas and potatoes in the upper field behind the house and corn and sorghum sudan grass in the fields on the lower terrace.[372] In early 2002, rows covered with plastic sheeting were laid in the southern half of the 7.5-acre field behind the Lindenwald mansion, awaiting planting (Figure 89).

A woodland swath cuts through the site, running southwest from the farm cottage along the slope and curving west then north to meet Kinderhook Creek at the southern extent of the property (Figure 90). This is a maturing forest, with maple (*Acer spp.*), ash (*Fraxinus spp.*), poplar (*Populus spp.*), willow (*Salix spp.*), and some white pine (*Pinus strobus*).

The other major woodland area on the property is located in the northwest corner of the houselot (Figures 91 and 92). Black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), locust (*Robinia spp.*), ash, and young white pine have grown

[372] Jean-Paul Cortens and Jody Bolluyt, interview with L. Searle and M. C. Brown, 18 January, 2002.

up between the north half of the front entry drive and the property boundary. Occasional logs and stumps of pear (*Pyrus spp.*) can be found in this north woodlot as well. To the north of this wooded area and directly behind the NPS offices, is a small nursery of cherry and locust trees.

Wetland plants -- willow, skunk cabbage (*Lysichiton spp.*), and grasses -- are located along on the west side of the triangular, 13-acre field; near the spring between the south gatehouse and the upper ponds; and in the vicinity of some of the other ponds on the site. Purple loosestrife is growing around the man-made ponds in the southern portion of the lower terrace. A young scrub woodland is beginning to grow along the banks of Kinderhook Creek, including elm (*Ulmus spp.*), poplar, ailanthus (*Ailanthus spp.*), and grasses.

There are only remnants of hedgerows on the property. Several clumps of black cherry and multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*), mark the north boundary of the property, but they do not form a continuous treeline (Figure 93). Between the 13-acre triangular field and the field to the southwest of it on the lower terrace, young blackberry (*Rubus spp.*), maple, ash, skunk cabbage, and sumac (*Rhus typhina*) grow along the ditch that forms the field boundary.

There is a small stand of poplars along the escarpment behind the Lindenwald mansion. Just to the south, several unkempt yews (*Taxus spp.*) partially surround the Van Ness monument. Evergreens have been planted in the vicinity of the farm building complex: blue spruce (*Picea pungens*) in front of the farm cottage; a row of firs (*Abies spp.*) across the farm road to the north of the farm cottage; and between the upper terrace pond and the "candle shop"/farm office barn as well as along the farm access road (Figure 94). Evergreen shrub foundation plantings surround the NPS maintenance garage and pole barn.

Views and Small-scale Features

In general the Lindenwald mansion is well-screened with vegetation, preventing clear views to the north and south. From behind the Lindenwald mansion, parts of the upper terrace fields and the agricultural buildings can be seen, though this view is blocked by the NPS maintenance garage, pole barn, and other structures (Figure 95). The road-side field and the agricultural buildings are visible from NY Route 9H, but otherwise, the agricultural nature of the property is not clear from the road. The lower fields are obscured by the escarpment and the vegetation along it. There are, however, clear views of the farmland and the Catskills from the northern end of the field behind the house (Figure 96). From the lower fields, the berms from Meyers ponds and the eroding slope of the Van Alstyne property, are clearly visible (Figures 97 and 98). From the agricultural building complex, it is possible to see all the way across the upper terrace fields, though the electricity poles and the NPS satellite dish mar this view (see Figures 89 and 92).

The small-scale features on the site are mainly utilitarian, as befits a working agricultural landscape. A wooden guard rail runs along both sides of the farm access road where it passes the two ponds on the upper terrace (see Figure 70). Overhead electrical lines cross the property, connecting the Lindenwald mansion and the farm buildings to the main lines that run along NY Route 9H. One electricity pole is located to the south of the farm access road, not far from NY Route 9H; another is located in the southern portion of the field that lies behind the mansion (see Figures 92 and 95). Two poles are located on the houselot parcel. NPS visitor signs are located primarily in the vicinity of the Lindenwald mansion, the visitor parking area, and the front drive. One old fence post at the northern corner of the north woodlot is all that remains of fencing on the property (Figure 99).

There are several areas littered with debris on the site. Tanks, old farm equipment, lumber, crates, and other debris are located in and near the complex of farm buildings. A small dump containing metal, electronics, and wood is located on the hillside behind the Van Ness monument (Figure 100). In addition, a metal wagon loaded with plastic piping and overgrown with brambles sits alongside the drainage ditch that runs the length of the western border of the 13-acre triangular field on the lower terrace (Figure 101). Much of the debris is concealed by vegetation, thereby allowing for many open views of the agricultural land (see Figure 96). An analysis of which landscape characteristics and extant features contribute to the historical significance of the property is described in the next chapter.

Feature Key:

1. Lindenwald Mansion
2. NPS Maintenance Garage
3. NPS Pole Barn
4. NPS Metal Chemical Storage Shed
5. NPS Lumber Storage Shed
6. NPS Maintenance Shed
7. NPS Visitor Center and Headquarters
8. South Gatehouse
9. Privately-owned Farm Complex
10. Farm Cottage
11. Shed
12. Foundation of the North Gatehouse
13. Foundation of the Red Hillside Barn
14. Approximate Site of the Farm Office
15. Approximate Site of the Wagoner Woodshed
16. Approximate Site of the deProsse Playhouse
17. Approximate Site of the Carriage Barn
18. Approximate Site of the Greenhouse
19. Approximate Site of the Hothouse
20. Approximate Site of the Old Stone House
21. Approximate Site of the Black Hay Barn
22. Van Ness Monument

Existing Conditions Map

Figure 68

Cultural Landscape Report
Martin Van Buren
National Historic Site
Kinderhook, NY

Produced by
National Park Service
Olmsted Center for
Landscape Preservation

Map Sources:

"Site Plan," Fraser Consulting Engineers, 2003.

Aerial photograph of Kinderhook, NY, 1948.

Aerial photograph of Kinderhook, NY, 2001.

"Cultural Landscape Report for Martin Van Buren National Historic Site," Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, 1995.

Field survey completed by OCLP December, 2003.

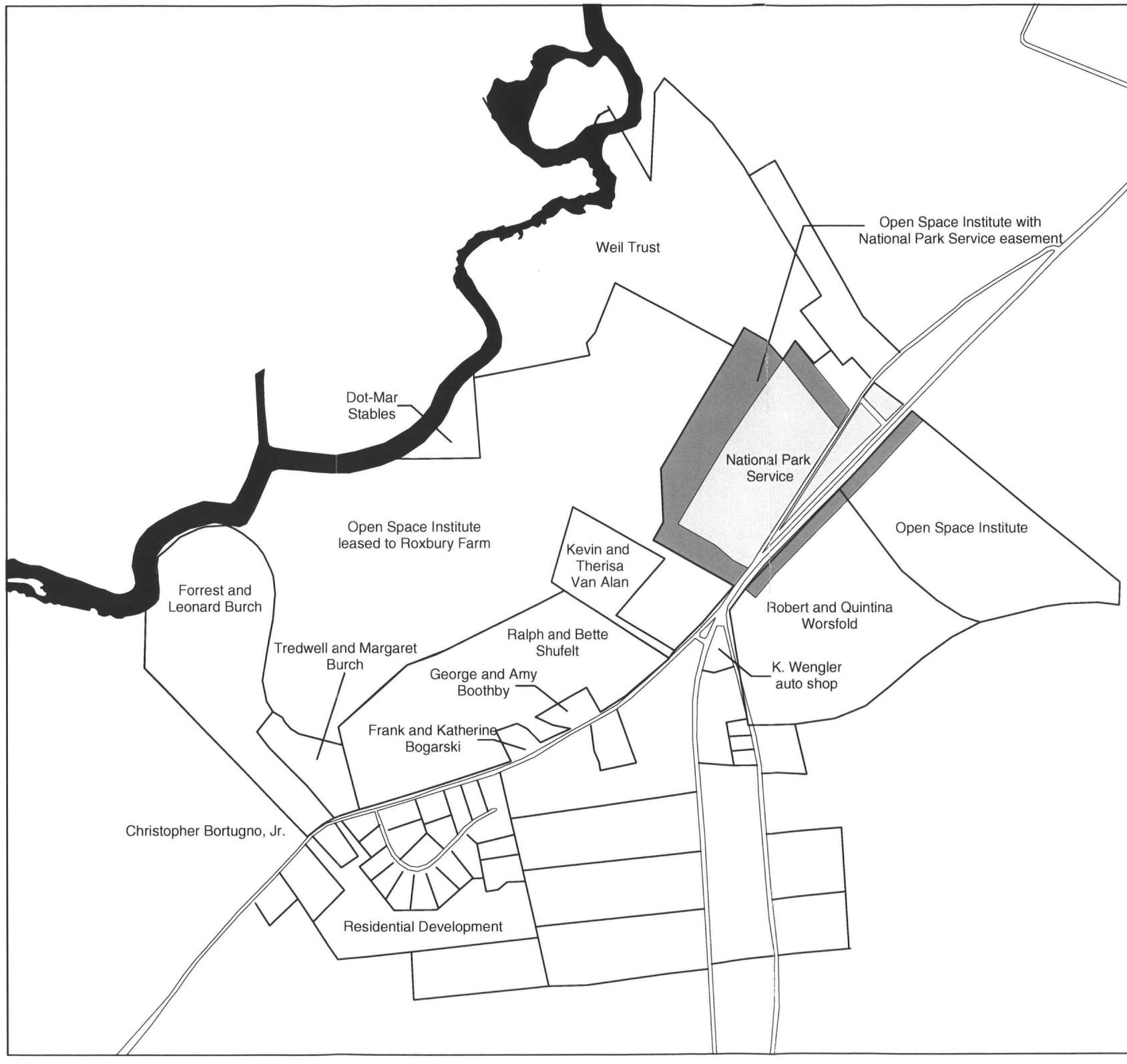
Notes:

Plan drawn using ArcMap GIS 8.3, by L. Hegarty, NPS.

Legend:

- Historic Farm Boundary
- NPS Boundary
- Parcel Boundaries
- Ditch
- Woodland
- NPS Ownership
- NPS Existing Easements
- NPS Proposed Easements
- Archeological Sensitive Area
- Archeological Ruins
- Archeological Sites
- Water

Not to Scale



Cultural Landscape Report
Martin Van Buren
National Historic Site
Kinderhook, NY

Produced by
National Park Service
Olmsted Center for
Landscape Preservation

Notes:
Map is showing existing property boundaries of Martin Van Buren National Historic Site and surrounding land. The National Park Service currently holds 20.3 acres of property in fee and an additional 18.3 acres of property in conservation easements.

Legend:
- NPS Ownership
- NPS Easements
- Major Roads
- Kinderhook Creek

Plan drawn using ArcMap GIS 8.3, by L. Hegarty, NPS.

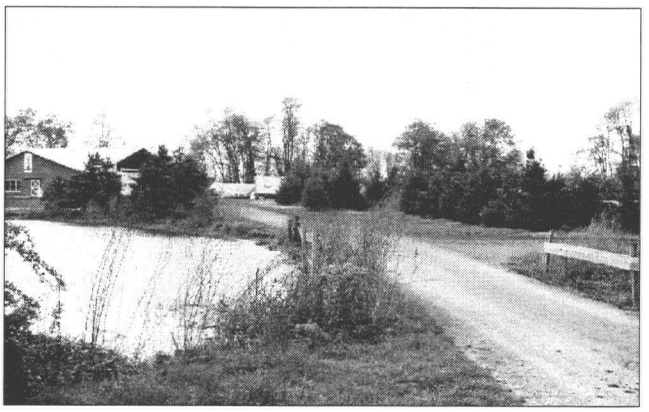


Figure 70: View west of evergreen screen between Van Buren Mansion and farm complex along farm road.

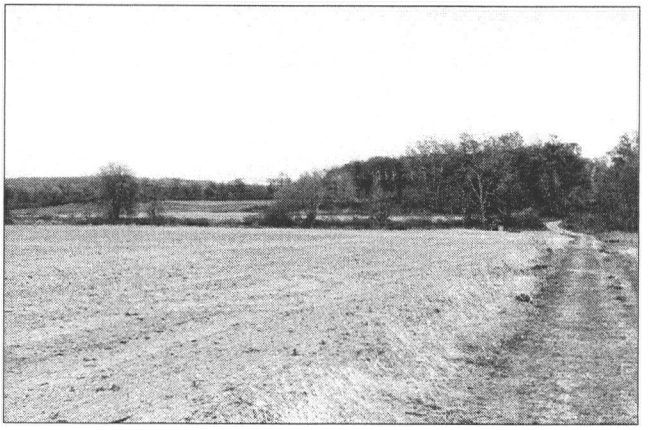


Figure 71: View northeast across lower terrace with upper terrace in distance.



Figure 72: Path through the north woods.

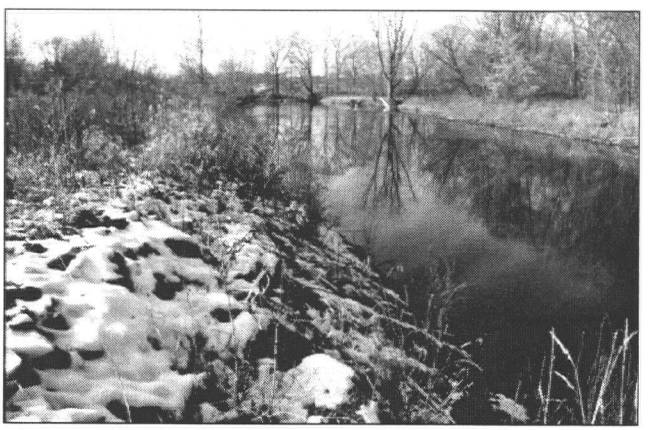


Figure 73: View west of Kinderhook Creek with shale and concrete slabs lining the southern bank.



Figure 74: Eroded six-foot deep gully between lower terrace field and southern bank of Kinderhook Creek.

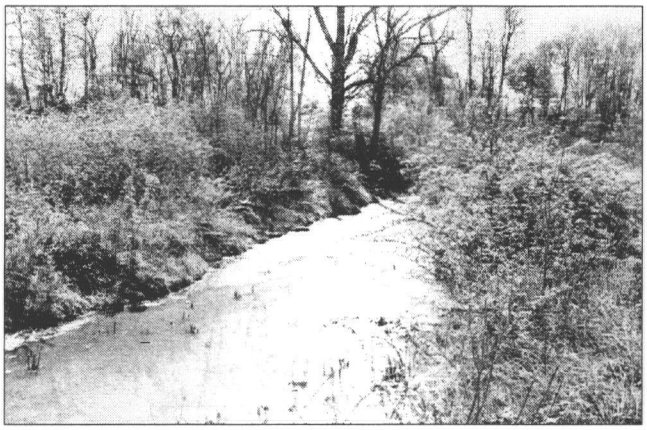


Figure 75: Ten to fifteen-foot wide drainage ditch between the escarpment and Kinderhook Creek.



Figure 78: View west of farm buildings, including board-and-batten barn, concrete-block building, a shed and greenhouse. The road to Van Alstyne's property is in the left foreground.



Figure 76: View west across lower pond dug by Meyer. A truck in the background is spreading fertilizer on the lower terrace fields.



Figure 79: View southeast behind concrete-block building of garage, silo, and silo foundation.



Figure 77: View looking west of upper pond along the road to the farm complex.

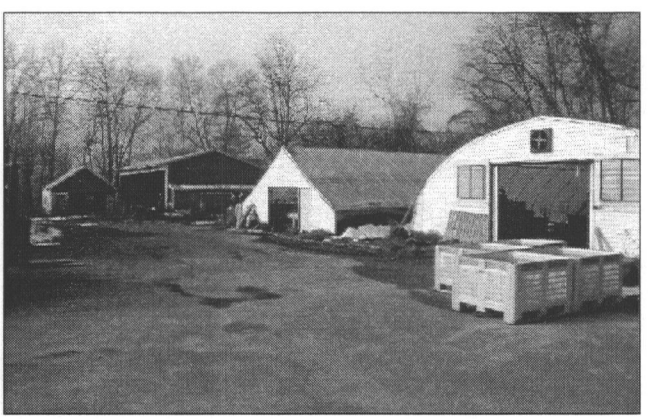


Figure 80: View south of small garage, open-fronted storage barn, and two of the three greenhouses.

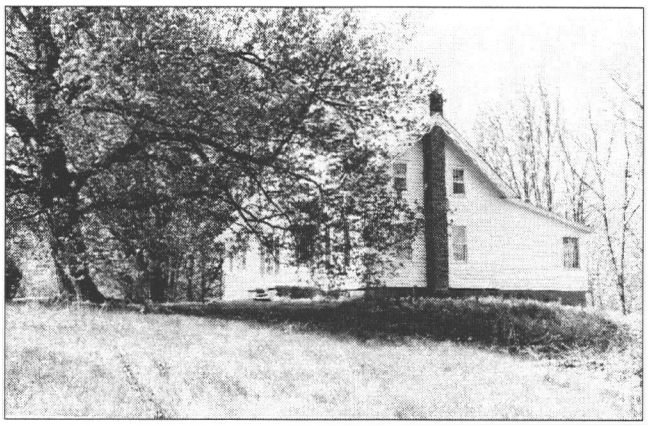


Figure 81: View south of the farm cottage.



Figure 84: View west of Van Ness Monument and overgrown yews.



Figure 82: View southeast of former red barn site, now only foundation stones and scrub vegetation, with farm cottage in the background.



Figure 85: View east of the north gatehouse site, Old Post Road section and NPS parking lot.

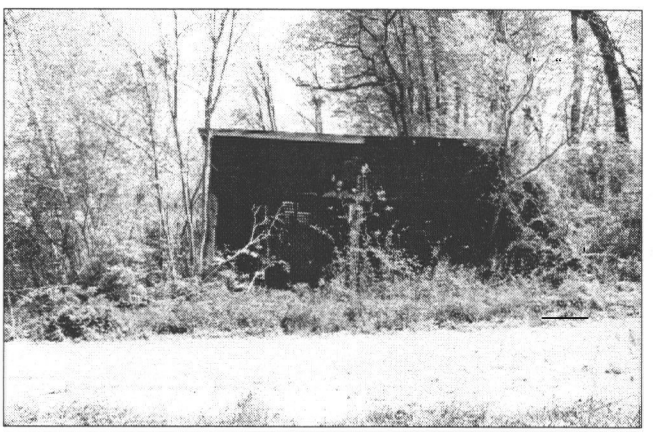


Figure 83: Open-fronted storage shed on the north side of the road between the upper and lower terrace.

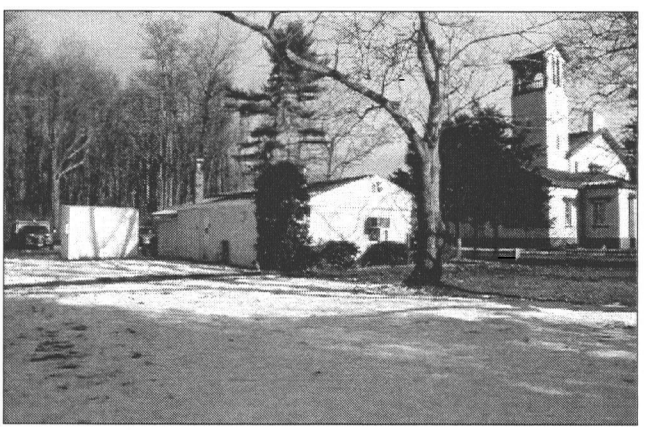


Figure 86: Maintenance building and chemical storage shed behind mansion.

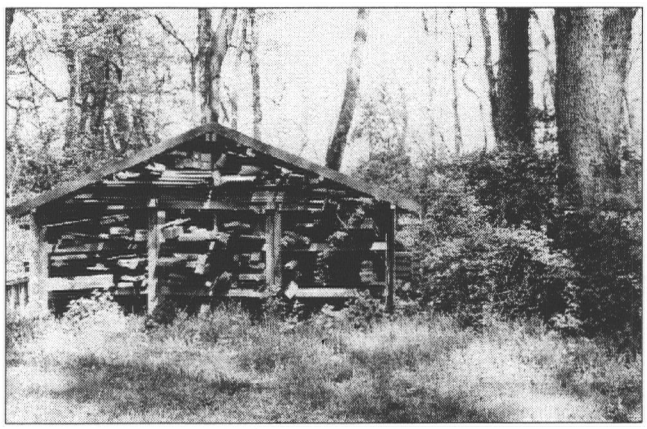


Figure 87: Lumber storage building in the north woods.

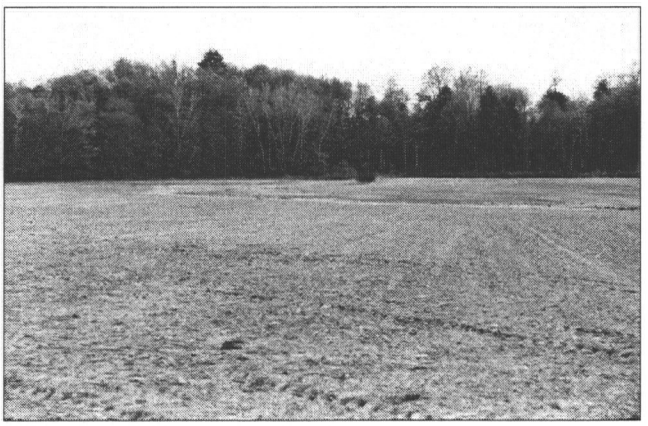


Figure 90: Woodlands along the southern extent of the lower terrace.

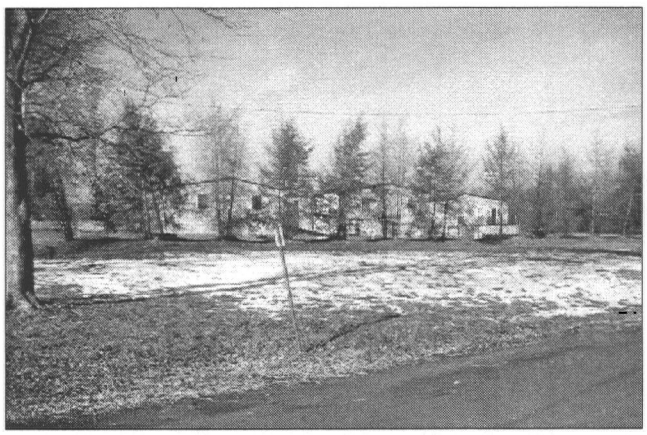


Figure 88: Mobile homes that serve as park offices and visitor center on the north side of the property.

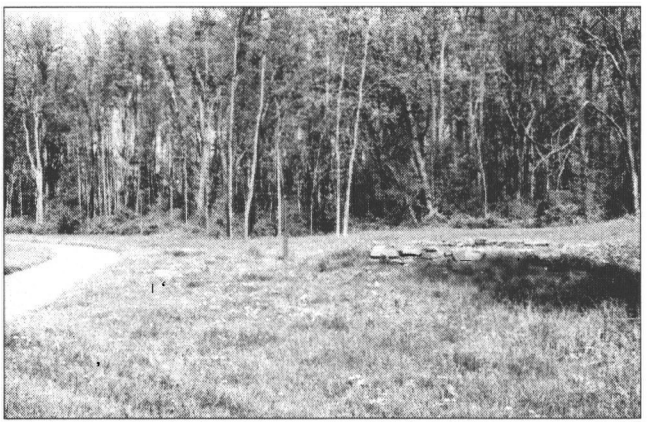


Figure 91: View west of the former pear ochard, which is now the north woods.

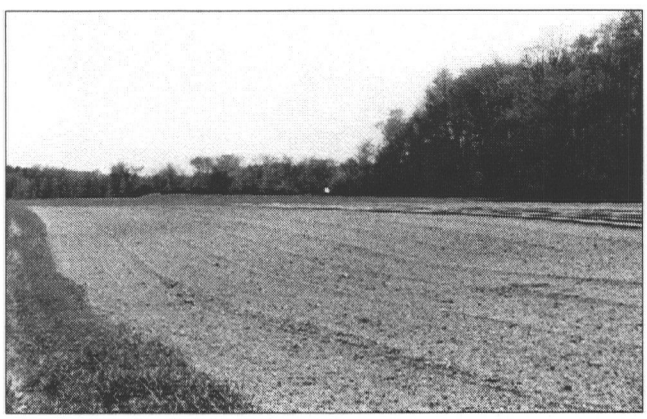


Figure 89: View north of upper terrace field under cultivation with rows of plastic sheeting. NPS satellite dish visible in distance.

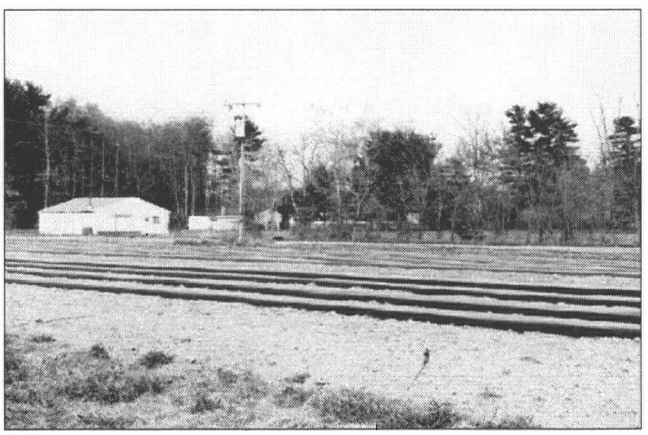


Figure 92: View northeast of the north woods, a utility pole in the upper terrace field, and park service buildings with the mansion in the background.

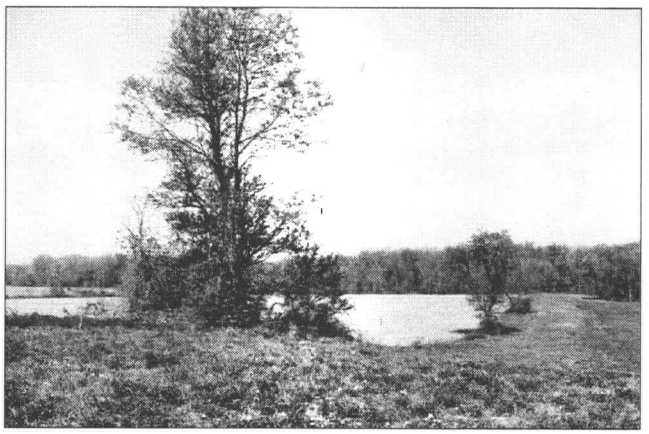


Figure 93: View west of clumps of trees and shrubs along the north boundary.

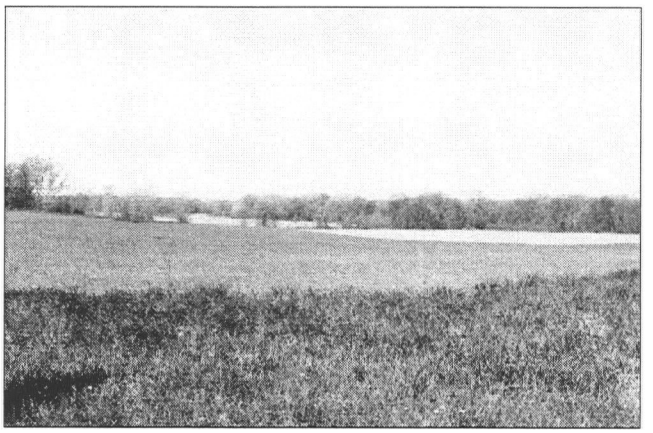


Figure 96: View west across upper and lower terraces from northern boundary.

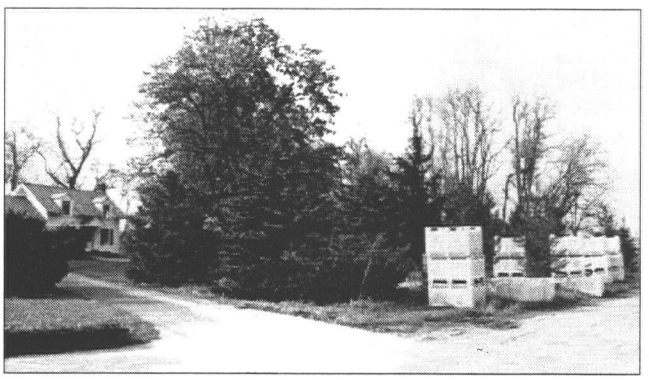


Figure 94: Evergreen trees in front of the farm cottage.

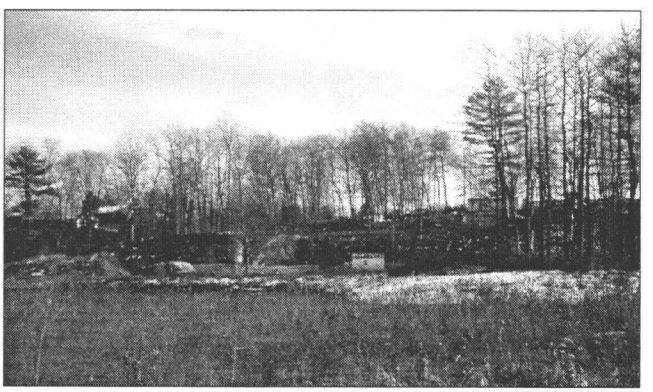


Figure 97: View southeast of eroding slope on property adjacent to site.

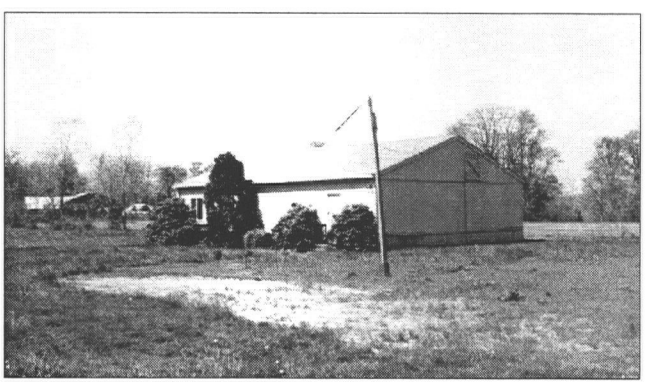


Figure 95: View from behind the mansion of the upper terrace obstructed by NPS building.



Figure 98: View south of berms from Meyer's dug ponds on property adjacent to site.



Figure 99: Old fence post along north boundary.



Figure 100: Debris on slope between upper and lower terrace near Van Ness Monument.

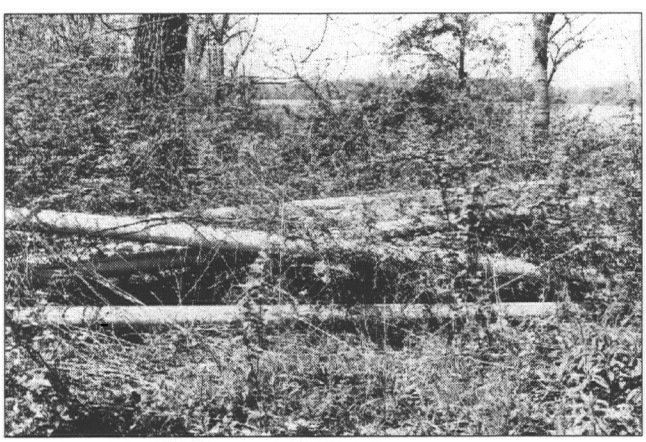


Figure 101: Old irrigation pipes stacked on the edge of the thirteen-acre field on the lower terrace.

CHAPTER IV. ANALYSIS OF SIGNIFICANCE AND INTEGRITY

This chapter provides an analysis of the historical significance of Martin Van Buren's farm property and an evaluation of the integrity of the physical character of the landscape. The analysis reviews the associated documentation and relevant criteria developed by the National Register of Historic Places, which lists properties significant to our country's history and prehistory. The evaluation portion of the chapter examines the physical integrity of the extant landscape characteristics with respect to the site's historical appearance and materials. Landscape characteristics and features are identified that contribute or detract from the site's historical significance. A similar discussion of significance, which concentrates on the mansion grounds, is contained in the *Cultural Landscape Report for Martin Van Buren National Historic Site.*[373]

NATIONAL REGISTER STATUS AND AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The National Register of Historic Places Program determines an historic property's significance in American history through a process of identification and evaluation. Historic significance may be present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling or association and which meet at least one of the following National Register criteria:

A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history; or
B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity who's components may lack individual distinction; or
D. That has yielded or may be likely to yield information in prehistory or history.

Lindenwald was designated a National Historic Landmark on 4 July 1961 and a National Historic Site in 1975, at which time the 12.8-acre site was also automatically listed on the National Register. Five years later, on February 8, 1980, the necessary Historic Register documentation was completed. Lindenwald is considered significant in the area of Politics/Government under Criterion B for its association with Martin Van Buren, eighth president of the United States. It is also significant in the area of architecture under Criterion C, as an example of Italianate architecture design and renovation by the prominent architect Richard Upjohn. The period of significance identified in the nomination is 1800-1899, with the specific dates of 1797 and 1849. These were chosen because the Lindenwald mansion was built in 1797 and renovated extensively in 1849.[374] The likelihood of extensive archeological resources associated with the Van Buren period, including the farm office, barn, north gatehouse, and other former farm structures and features may merit listing under Criterion D, but have not been fully investigated.

The boundaries of the National Register listing are concurrent with the 12.8-acre Lindenwald mansion

[373] Uschold and Curry, 155-85.
[374] "National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form for Lindenwald, Martin Van Buren National Historic Site," 8 February 1980.

lot purchased by the National Park Foundation in 1973, thus excluding most of Van Buren's 220-acre property. The National Register documentation makes little reference to the site as a whole or the landscape features of the property, focusing instead on the house and potential archaeological sites. The entire property, as a working farm and country estate, was important to Van Buren, and he was actively involved in shaping the larger farm landscape from his acquisition of the property in 1839 until his death in 1862. Accordingly, the National Register documentation should be amended to include those pieces of Van Buren's original farmland that are purchased by the park or included within its boundaries in the future.

List of Classified Structures

The List of Classified Structures (LCS) is a computerized inventory of structures within the National Park System that are on or potentially eligible for listing on the National Register. LCS documentation for the Martin Van Buren National Historic Site, carried out in 1995, surveyed only the core of the Lindenwald property currently owned by NPS. The following structures are included on LCS: the main house (Lindenwald), the north gatehouse foundation, the south gatehouse, and the "Albany Post Road" mile marker that was moved to the southeast corner of the site. The farm office foundation and other potential archeological resources related to the farm were not included in the LCS because they are considered archeological sites, located below ground level.[375] For clarification, two of the structures included in LCS would be classified differently by the National Register. The north gate house foundation would be described as an archeological site and the Albany Post Road mile marker would be described as an object. Landscape characteristics and features are not included in the LCS documentation as they will be addressed separately in the NPS Cultural Landscape Inventory.

Period of Landscape Significance

The period of significance for the whole of the Lindenwald estate is from 1839 to 1862 (rather than 1800-1899 as stated on the National Register form), the years of Van Buren's residence and ownership of the property. This period reflects Van Buren's acquisition of the property, his expansion of the estate up until 1845, and his operations until his death in 1862, when the farm passed to his sons, who subsequently sold the property in 1864. The years 1797 and 1849 highlight the year Peter Van Ness constructed the original mansion and the year the prominent ecclesiastical archtitect, Richard UpJohn, added significant Italianate features to the structure.

Summary of Themes and Contexts for the Landscape

Criterion B: Association with Persons

The 220-acre agricultural property (now under several different ownerships) is significant because it was the estate of Martin Van Buren, the eighth president of the United States, who served from 1837 to 1841. Van Buren played a pivotal role in constructing the Democratic Party and shaping party politics in the

[375] Robert D. Kuhn to Marie Rust, 14 February 1995, and [no author] to Bernadette Castro, 2 July 1996, LCS and Regional Historian files, NPS.

United States. Van Buren was a prominent lawyer in New York and U.S. Senator from 1812 to 1820. He served as the Attorney General of the State of New York and briefly as its governor before being appointed as Secretary of State under President Andrew Jackson in 1829. He was later Jackson's Vice President and then elected as President of the United States.

Van Buren purchased Lindenwald during his Presidential term and lived there until his death in 1862. During the twenty-three years that he owned Lindenwald, from 1839 to 1862, he transformed a declining 137-acre property into a productive working farm and estate. By the end of his tenure, Van Buren had expanded his operations to cover approximately 220 acres, with orchards, ponds, a large garden, greenhouse, and extensive lands under agricultural cultivation. Van Buren's progressive approach to farming and his interest in new technologies was as evident on the farm as it was in the house, for he adopted new farm tools, new crop varieties, and new methods of agriculture before other farmers in the area. By applying these approaches, Van Buren sought better methods for improving soil conservation and fertility, improving yield, and bringing his goods to market. Van Buren also cultivated extensive orchards well before Kinderhook became known for its apples. Van Buren's personal involvement in shaping of the estate, the delight he took in his agricultural experiments, and the importance of the farm to him personally are clearly evident in his correspondence.

After his presidency, Van Buren continued his involvement in politics from Lindenwald, entertaining prominent politicians and colleagues at the estate. Van Buren made bids for the 1844 Democratic Party presidential nomination and the 1848 presidential election while living at Lindenwald and running the farm. Van Buren's agricultural property is significant as a concrete expression of Van Buren's political ideals, his Jeffersonian conception of the national importance of agriculture, and his personal goals.

Criterion C: Distinctive Post-Colonial Architecture with Italianate Modifications

When the main house was built in 1797 by Peter Van Ness, it was a distinctive post-colonial structure set back from the road, and framed by a semi-circular drive and a full range of secondary buildings. Upon purchasing the estate, Martin Van Buren carried out numerous alterations and improvements including internal plumbing and a heating system. In 1849, Van Buren's son Smith Thompson hired noted architect Richard Upjohn to enlarge the structure. The crowning dramatic Italianate tower greatly altered the appearance of the estate and enhanced the occupant's ability to view the surrounding landscape.

Criterion D: Potential Historic or Prehistoric Archeological Resource

The farmland may contain remnants of Native American or early Dutch settlement. The property has building fragments that are associated with the Martin Van Buren period, but many other features have been altered by nearly a century and a half of subsequent agricultural use and changes by several subsequent landowners. Fragments of historic features that were extant during the Martin Van Buren period and were evident up until the mid-twentieth century, including road traces, building foundations, orchards and ditches, require further archeological field investigation and additional research. An archeological study will be carried out as a separate project. As will be described in greater detail in the next sections of this chapter, the loss of many built features in the landscape underscores the need for this investigation.

EVALUATION OF LANDSCAPE INTEGRITY

Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its historic identity or the extent to which a property evokes its appearance during a particular historic period, usually the period of significance. The National Register identifies seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.[376] Retention of these qualities is essential for a property to convey its significance, though all seven qualities of integrity need not be present to convey a sense of past time and place.

Overall, Martin Van Buren's farmland retains its integrity, primarily because most of the agricultural land once owned by Martin Van Buren remains open and under cultivation. The site retains its location, feeling, and association with Van Buren, and its splendid setting on the original terraces overlooking Kinderhook Creek. The site also retains integrity as a working, agricultural landscape. The only portion of Van Buren's farmland that has been developed is the lot across Mill Road, which is now a residential area. Fortunately, this parcel is not contiguous with the rest of the property, and most of Van Buren's farm remains intact, continually farmed since Van Buren's tenure. Ongoing agricultural activities provide the setting for interpreting the importance of agriculture to Van Buren, his vision of Lindenwald, and the history of agriculture on the site.

At a more detailed scale of evaluation, Lindenwald has lost some aspects of its integrity as a mid-nineteenth century gentleman's farm. Agriculture today is significantly different than it was one hundred and fifty years ago, and thus certain features of the agricultural landscape have changed. New farm structures, some built with concrete block and metal roofing, have replaced Van Buren's wood and stone barns, forming a new, modern farm complex separate from the main house. Fields have been combined and fencing and hedges have been removed. During the mid and late 1900s, the orchards were removed, and fewer crops were grown more intensively, using modern machinery, and chemical fertilizers and pesticides. These twentieth-century farm practices diminished the integrity of design, materials, and workmanship.

Yet, it is interesting to note that the agricultural methods employed by the most recent tenants of the property, Roxbury Farm, are closer to those of Van Buren than those of previous owners. Roxbury Farm's commitment to reforming conventional agricultural techniques through organic and biodynamic practices mirrors Van Buren's interest in the agricultural reform movement of his time. By eschewing chemical fertilizers and pesticides, growing a variety of crops in small quantities, and taking care to foster biodiversity, organic farmers can produce landscapes much more in-keeping with the agricultural landscapes of the nineteenth century than do many conventional farmers who specialize in the large-scale commercial production of one or two crops. In this respect, decisions regarding agricultural practices on the Van Buren historic property are critical, as will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter on treatment of the landscape. Table 4 summarizes the aspects of integrity still evident for the Van Buren agricultural property.

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[376] Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the historic event occurred. Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure and style of a property. Setting is the physical environment of a historic property. Materials are the physical elements of a particular period, which include plant materials, paving and other landscape features. Workmanship includes the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular period. Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period. Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

Table 5: Summary of Landscape Integrity for the Martin Van Buren Farmland

Aspects of Integrity	Period of Significance: Van Buren Tenure, 1839-1862
Overall	Yes
Location	Yes, location unchanged
Design	No, configuration of the main house, some farm roads, and the extent of open fields remain, but garden, orchards, hedgerows, barns, and other features have been lost
Setting	Yes, the surrounding landscape retains a predominantly farming/rural character with the exception of a housing development on a small discontiguous parcel
Materials	No, vegetation has changed in composition; original wooden farm structures have been removed though foundations remain; and part of farm road has been paved
Workmanship	No, agricultural and building practices have changed significantly since the period of significance
Feeling	Yes, the farm is still a working, agricultural landscape
Association	Yes, retains association with President Martin Van Buren

EVALUATION OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

This section provides an evaluation of of the physical characteristics of the landscape in order to identify those which contribute or do not contribute to the historical significance and integrity of the property. Landscape characteristics are the tangible evidence of the natural processes and cultural activities that shaped the site. The evaluation includes a brief description of the historic and existing condition, as well as a determination regarding the contribution of each characteristic or feature to the significance of the historic landscape as a whole. Characteristics or features defined as contributing are those that were present during the Van Buren period (1839 – 1862) or are replacements of historic features. Landscape characterisitics addressed include topography, spatial organization, land use, circulation, constructed water features, buildings and structures, vegetation, views, and small-scale features, and archeological sites. A table at the end of the chapter summarizes the findings.

Topography, Spatial Organization, and Land Use

Topography describes the configuration of landforms and features, such as slope, elevation, and solar aspect. Spatial organization refers to the three-dimensional organization of physical forms and visual associations in the landscape. Land use describes the major human forces that shape and organize the landscape.

Seventeenth-century Dutch settlers found the flat, naturally terraced land along Kinderhook Creek to be prime agricultural land, and the Lindenwald property has been continuously farmed since that period. The lower terrace by the creek occasionally flooded, leaving behind nutrient rich sediment for growing abundant crops, except for areas that were too wet to be drained by ditches. During the Van Ness period the primary residence was moved from the lower to the higher, drier, upper terrace as was the Post Road, a functional move that also allowed for greater appreciation of the site's southwest solar aspect and distant views of the Catskills. It was this combination of aesthetics and productivity that drew Van Buren to acquire the property. The combination of terraces, slopes and the southwest aspect contributes to the historical significance of the property as the setting in which the former president resided and developed his working farm.

Beginning with the Van Ness period, through the Van Buren period, and until just after World War II, the spatial organization of site features centered around a formal house facing the road. Farm structures lay behind the house, such as the carriage barn, and in a cluster near the slope, including the red barn and farm cottage, with fields arrayed along the flat terraces above the creek. Today, most farm buildings have been removed, and the center of farm activity has shifted, but remains concentrated around the twentieth century sheds and greenhouses. Field patterns have changed, but the overall layout remains similar to how it was during the Van Buren period. The spatial organization of the site contributes to its historical character.

The Lindenwald mansion and immediate grounds have been used in a variety of ways over the years: as a stately residence, farmhouse, restaurant, convalescent home, antique dealership, and now, a national historic site. However, the agricultural portion of Van Buren's property has been used consistently as farmland since the seventeenth century. Although specific crops and field patterns have changed since the Van Buren period, agricultural use has continued and contributes to the historical character of the property.

Circulation

Circulation includes the corridors and applied materials that facilitate movement through the landscape. Prior to the Van Buren period, the lower Post Road ran through the lower terrace, allowing Dutch farmers to establish farms, using both this primitive road and the creek for transportation. By Van Buren's period of ownership, the road was relocated east to its present location along the upper terrace and in front of the mansion. Shortly after this relocation, the Post Road was renamed the Old Post Road because the road on the other side of Kinderhook Creek, between the village and Hudson was designated the Post Road (the current NY Route 9). When NY Route 9H was built in the 1930s along much of the roadbed of the Old Post Road, a trace of the Old Post Road was preserved in front of and running north from the Van Buren property. This road trace contributes to the historical circulation features on the property. Between the historic road trace and NY Route 9H, the NPS constructed a visitor parking lot in the 1990s and removed a previously constructed parking lot southwest of the main house. The parking lot and its paved surface detracts from the historic setting.

In about 1800 the formal semicircular driveway defined the primary access to the property. This road is extant and contributes to the historic landscape setting. By Van Buren's period of ownership, two farm roads extended west from the house down to the fields. One road traveled along the north side of the property by the carriage barn, then west across the upper terrace and down past the former stone house on the lower terrace. The second road began behind the mansion, extending west across the upper terrace, then over the escarpment about sixty feet to the north of the present road down the escarpment, and further west along the present lower terrace road to Kinderhook Creek. The remaining section of historic farm road still evident across the lower terrace contributes to the historic landscape setting. Further archeological investigation, combined with study of aerial photographs and maps, is needed to locate other historic road segments. Similarly, according to the 1841 sketch map and property deeds, a road ran parallel to the Old Post Road behind the main house to the carriage house. This road is no longer extant and further field study is needed.

During the Meyer period, some sections of the historic farm roads were abandoned. The sections in the upper terrace became part of the cultivated field area. A new access road was added just beyond the south gatehouse that connected to the new farm buildings. This paved road detracts from the historical appearance of the property as well as the historical unity of the main house and farm portions of the site.

Constructed Water Features

Constructed water features are the built features and elements that use water for aesthetic or utilitarian functions in a landscape. On the historic Van Buren property, the natural hydrological systems of surface and subsurface water have been manipulated with constructed water features for both aesthetic and utilitarian functions, including ponds and drainage ditches. As reflected in the topography of the land, water flows across the site from east to west, draining into the Kinderhook Creek. Springs on the site were mentioned in early deeds, while Van Buren wrote of reclaiming fields for agriculture by adding ditches. He also constructed two ponds by constructing dams. Remnants of these ditches and the altered but existing ponds contribute to the historic character of the property. Extensive ditching during the Meyer period of ownership has obscured the historic ditches. Meyer drained the lowland near the base of the escarpment below the red barn, cleared out and expanded existing ditches, and added more ditches and ponds. Prior to

these changes in the Meyer period, descriptions of ditches in the Wagoner property deed and their presence on the 1948 aerial photograph offer a possible configuration of the ditches that remained from Van Buren's tenure, though archeological field investigation is needed.

Meyer also expanded the upper pond and altered its configuration with the new farm access road from near the south gatehouse to the farm complex and farm cottage. The lower pond has been altered by extensive dumping of fill and debris. Despite these twentieth-century alterations, the upper and lower ponds contribute to the historical character of the site. Another little pond in the escarpment, to the north of the shed, farm road, and red barn site and just southwest of the Van Ness marker, requires further field investigation to determine whether it dates to the Van Buren period. The other lower ponds further to the southwest in the lower terrace, with their man-made appearance and rough earthen berms around them, detract from the historic setting. The road to the lower fields contains several pipe culverts that were most likely added in the twentieth century.

Buildings and Structures

Buildings are constructed primarily for sheltering any form of human activity, such as houses, barns, and stables. Structures are constructed for functional purposes other than sheltering human activity in the landscape, such as silos and dams. In the eighteenth century, the Van Alsynes built a stone house on the lower terrace, as well as several outbuildings. The core of the property was moved to the upper terrace when Van Ness built the Lindenwald mansion there later in the century. Additional farm buildings and structures were added in the nineteenth century, as Van Buren expanded the property and intensified agricultural production.

Many of the buildings and outbuildings that would have been on the estate during Van Buren's tenure are no longer extant, and the loss of these historic buildings detracts from the park's ability to convey nineteenth-century agricultural character. The demolished buildings include the old stone house, the black hay barn in the lower fields, the red barn on the hillside behind the farm cottage, the north gatehouse, the farm office and greenhouse near the garden, the carriage barn, and the woodshed and stables behind the main house. Smaller structures that have not been documented but may well have existed on the property include a sheep shed, chicken coops, pig house, corn crib, hay mows or hay barracks, cider press, and other farm outbuildings.

The south gatehouse remains and contributes to the historic character of the property. The foundation of the north gatehouse and the farm office remain and are categorized as archeological sites. The farm cottage has been considerably altered since Van Buren built it. However, as a landscape feature, its massing, scale, and location remain consistent enough with its historic appearance to contribute to the character of the landscape. A small wood shed on the farm road and a garage in the cluster of new farm buildings may both date from the Van Buren period, though further investigation is needed.

Numerous structures were built on the property during the second half of the twentieth century. Meyer's barn, "candle shop," greenhouses, silos, concrete-block building, and storage sheds form a contemporary cluster of agricultural structures to the south of the main house and houselot. These structures do not contribute to the historic character of the site, but they are actively used, and help to convey the continuity of agricultural use to park visitors.

The National Park Service has also built or modified several buildings on the site. The pole barn, maintenance garage, and chemical storage sheds are located behind the main house, but are visible from the agricultural fields on the upper terrace. These structures, as well as two sheds in the north woods and the National Park Service offices and visitor center, are not in-keeping with historic character.

Vegetation

Vegetation includes the trees, shrubs, vines, herbaceous plants, crops, and plant communities, such as those found in gardens, fields, orchards, and woodland areas. The Van Buren property was originally wooded, then cleared in phases for agriculture. Although it is difficult to determine the extent of woodlots during the Van Ness, Van Buren, and Wagoner periods, it is likely that the steep slope between terraces and the marshy areas along the creek were left wooded. The tree and understory species may have changed through time due to storm damage, natural succession as well as cutting. Despite clearing by Meyer in the early 1960s, there is probably more woodland today on the escarpment than in the nineteenth century. This woodland contributes to the historic vegetation of the property.

Prior to Van Buren's period, orchards may have existed that were not carefully planted, with no attention to variety, and the fruit was most likely used for cider. Van Buren planted extensive orchards in the northern portion of the property, from the front drive and carriage house, extending west down the hill to the beginning of the lower terrace and north to the Dingman property. Van Buren also planted a smaller south orchard in front of the farm cottage, and a grove of Seckel pear trees on the slope behind the farm cottage. Van Buren sold both the fruit and young trees. Today the orchards are gone. A portion of the north orchard has grown up to a wooded area of predominantly cherry, ash and locust trees. This woodland does not contribute to the historic vegetation of the property.

A formal garden was once located south of the main house. The area now consists of mixed young evergreen trees and shrubs that do not contribute to the historical character of the property. Similarly, evegreen trees surrounding the upper pond, the twentieth-century farm buildings, and the farm cottage do not contribute to the historical setting.

Most of the agricultural fields once cultivated by Van Buren remain in production, with changes in crops, varieties, planting methods, and field configurations. Cultivated areas were likely divided by hedgerows or fenceline vegetation during the period of significance. Today there are no proper hedgerows on the property. Vegetation between two of the lower fields contributes to the historical character of the property, though these plants are young, and are probably different species than historic field boundary vegetation.

Views

Views are the broad prospect created by a range of vision in the landscape, which are naturally occurring or deliberately contrived. At the Van Buren site, distant views are largely a result of the broad expanse of lawns surrounding the home in combination with the cultivated fields beyond. Views are framed or partially obscured by vegetation on slopes and around building clusters. The house as viewed from the Old Post Road, looking west, was framed by evenly spaced shade trees along the drive, clusters of large evergreens,

and ornamental shrubs. From the Post Road, historic views to the south, north, and across the road to the east were of fields in cultivation, as they are mostly remain to the present. These expansive views across the lawn and the surrounding agricultural fields contribute greatly to the historic setting and feeling of the property. One exception is the NPS visitor parking lot and temporary visitor center, which do not contribute to the historic setting.

During the Van Buren period, views from the house to the south, west, and north, included the fenced formal garden, crop fields, farm structures, orchards, and the distant Catskills. Today, views to the south have changed, due to the loss of the formal garden, the growth of a wooded area, the addition of many young evergreen trees, and the cluster of twentieth-century farm buildings. Views to the west of fields in cultivation and the distant Catskills have remained relatively unchanged. The upper terrace remains very visible whereas the vegetated slopes screen views to the lower terrace. The views as well as the screen contribute to the historical setting.

Views to the north changed beginning in the late nineteenth century, when many of the orchard trees declined. By the mid-twentieth century, the eastern half of the orchard reverted to woodland and the western half became a field for crop production. While the woods do not contribute to the historical viewshed, they do, however, screen the National Park Service temporary structures, which also do not contribute to the historical setting.

Small-scale Features

Small-scale elements provide detail and diversity for both functional needs and aesthetic concerns in the landscape, including fences, signs, and monuments. In the past, the property included extensive fences. There is no record of the exact locations or designs of the fences during the Van Buren period, though he most certainly fenced some fields, his garden, the barnyard, and perhaps the orchards with wooden fencing. Woven, twisted, and barbed wire fences were constructed during the Wagoner and later periods and used along the Old Post Road, as well as in the fields. These fences were removed by Meyer in the twentieth century when he altered the field configurations at the farm. Meyer built a short wooden guardrail along the farm access where it passes the upper pond.

Today, the small-scale features at the site are relatively new and do not contribute to the property's historic character. Powerlines and poles were constructed in the 1940s when the farm was connected to electricity, and today two poles with overhead wires are located on the upper terrace fields. A satellite dish installed by NPS at the northwestern corner of the north woodlot is visible from the fields behind the Lindenwald mansion. Both of these features detract from the agricultural and historical character of the property. NPS signs located mainly around the offices, parking area, and in the vicinity of the main house, are also new additions to the property.

Old equipment, supplies, lumber, and other debris have accumulated around the cluster of farm buildings. While this material does not contribute to the historic character of the property, much of it is not visible from the fields or the main house and some is the result of ongoing agricultural activity. Debris on the hillside behind the Van Ness monument, however, is an eyesore and a potential environmental hazard. The only small-scale feature that contributes to the historical setting is the Van Ness monument, located upper terrace field west of the mansion, which was installed in 1847 during Van Buren's tenure.

Archeological Sites

Archeological sites are the ruins, traces, or deposited artifacts in the landscape, evidenced by the presence of either surface or subsurface features. Examples of features associated with archeological resources include road traces, structural ruins, irrigation system ruins, and reforested fields or orchards. The former Van Buren farmland contains extensive archeological sites that merit further investigation. The farm road system developed by Van Buren connected the carriage barn, red barn, black hay barn, and numerous outbuildings, and was made up of both pre-existing roads and roads that he added. During the 1940s and 1950s, many of these road sections were abandoned when Ray Meyer combined agricultural fields to maximize production. Archeological investigation is needed to located the former roads. Similarly, the lower pond and a network of drainage ditches were installed by Van Buren and later altered by Meyer. Archeological investigation is needed to determine the original configuration of the upper and lower ponds and locate remnants of ditch and drain features.

Numerous structures from the Van Buren period are no longer extant. Some can be located by foundation remains, including the north gatehouse, farm office, and red barn. Other important buildings are more difficult to locate and require study of early aerial photographs and archeological investigation including the carriage barn, black hay barn, and stone house site.

Van Buren planted extensive orchards of apple and pear trees. After his death, many of the trees persisted on the property but were seldom maintained. Some were removed by Ray Meyer in the 1940s and 1950s while others were overgrown first by brush then trees, most notably in what is now the wooded area north of the mansion. Some pear trunks are still evident. Archeological and horticultural investigation is needed to locate the former orchard grid in areas where there has not been subsequent soil disturbance. A similar investigation is needed to locate fencerows that existed during the Van Buren period.

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

The table that follows summarizes the landscape characteristics and features that contribute or do not contribute to the historical character of the property, as it appeared during the Martin Van Buren period of ownership. This table incorporates features listed in the earlier cultural landscape report for the property.[377] In some cases features are listed under more than one heading.

Table 6: Summary of Landscape Characteristics and Features for Van Buren Farmland

Characteristic/Feature	Status	Comments
Topography[378]	Contributing	Largely unaltered, upper and lower terrace still evident.
Spatial Organization[379]	Contributing	The basic configuration of the house near the road, with farming structures and fields behind remains.
Land Use		
Sustainable agriculture	Contributing	Agricultural use since late 1600s. Agricultural practices during the Van Buren period focused on profitable, progressive farming, soil conservation, and fertility. Farming equipment and materials have changed over time.
Circulation		
Semicircular driveway in front of mansion[380]	Contributing	Constructed by Van Ness in about 1800.
Upper farm road from 9H to Meyer barn to red barn site[381]	Non-contributing	Constructed by Meyer in the early 1950s.
Lower farm road from red barn site to black hay barn site to Kinderhook Creek	Contributing	May pre-date Martin Van Buren period.
Old Post Road on Upper Terrace in front of MVB property	Contributing	Early 18th c. road; moved from lower to upper terrace before 1805.
Original Post Road along edge of Lower Terrace	See Archeological Sites	
Northern farm road from front semicircular drive, to former carriage barn and stone house[382]	See Archeological Sites	
Southern farm road from mansion	See Archeological	

[377] Uschold and Curry, 157-182.
[378] Ibid., 158-59.
[379] Ibid., 159-60.
[380] Ibid., 175.
[381] Ibid., 175.
[382] Ibid., 175.
[383] Ibid., 175.

to former red barn[383]	Sites	
Old Post Road marker[384]	Non-contributing	Located near south gatehouse, possibly installed in 1930s, others extant along NY Route 9H.
NPS Parking lot	Non-contributing	NPS constructed in 1996.
Universal access parking[385]	Non-contributing	Added by NPS.
Trails in north woods[386]	Non-contributing	The trails do not date to period of significance.
Pedestrian path in front garden[387]	Contributing	An important element in the front garden.
Asphalt paths and brick and stone edging near main house[388]	Non-contributing	Asphalt paths added by NPS, origin of the brick and stone edging is unknown.
Constructed Water Features		
Upper pond[389]	Contributing	Constructed by Van Buren in 1840; enlarged by Meyer in 1950s and used for irrigation.
Lower pond[390]	Contributing	Constructed by Van Buren in 1840, partially filled with debris dumped between upper pond and behind Meyer farm building complex and from Van Alan parcel.
Lower ponds below farm cottage (Meyer ponds)[391]	Non-contributing	Formerly wetland areas that were excavated by Meyer between 1967 and 1994.
Little pond in slope north of farm road (small pond at spring)[392]	Non-contributing	Possibly predates Meyer, enlarged by Meyer 1946-1999.
Kinderhook Creek bank treatment	Non-contributing	Bank has eroded throughout 20th c.; concrete and shale dumped by Meyer 1990s.
Ditch traces	See Archeological Sites	Traces of ditches constructed by Van Buren, archeological study required to locate.
Existing ditches	Non-contributing	Constructed by Meyer between 1959 and 1967, though possibly in the location of Wagoner or Van Buren period ditches.
Buildings and Structures		
Mansion (main house)[393]	Contributing	Restored to 1850s appearance.
NPS maintenance garage[394]	Non-contributing	Built by Campbell 1960s; renovated by NPS 1978.
NPS pole barn[395]	Non-contributing	Built by NPS 1983-4.
NPS metal chemical storage shed[396]	Non-contributing	Built by NPS in 1990s.
NPS lumber storage shed	Non-contributing	Built by NPS in 1990s.

[384] Ibid., 181.
[385] Ibid., 177.
[386] Ibid., 177.
[387] Ibid., 176.
[388] Ibid., 177, 181.
[389] Ibid., 178.
[390] Ibid., 178.
[391] Ibid., 179.
[392] Ibid., 178.
[393] Ibid., 162.
[394] Ibid., 166.
[395] Ibid., 167.
[396] Ibid., 182.

NPS maintenance shed in north woods	Non-contributing	Built by NPS in 1990s.
NPS visitor center & park headquarters	Non-contributing	Temporary structures added in the 1990s
South gatehouse[397]	Contributing	Built by Van Buren 1849.
Farm complex structures (barn, concrete-block bldg., storage barn, greenhouses, silos)[398]	Non-contributing	Built by Meyer between 1948 and mid-1980s.
Small garage in farm complex	Possibly contributing	May be the garage for farm cottage, built by Van Buren, moved to present location and altered considerably by Meyer. Further study required.
Farm cottage[399]	Contributing	Van Buren built in 1844; Meyer renovated 1946.
Shed on farm road	Possibly contributing	Pre-dates Birney-deProsse ownership.
North gatehouse foundation[400]	Contributing	Built by Van Buren 1849; dismantled under deProsse ownership, early 1950s, foundation still evident
Red hillside barn foundation[401]	Contributing	Built by Van Buren 1849; dismantled 1948, foundation still evident.
Farm office site[402]	See Archeological Sites	Probably built by Van Ness; dismantled by Campbell circa 1960
Wagoner Woodshed site	Non-contributing	Built by Wagoner, no longer exists
deProsse playhouse site	Non-contributing	Built by the deProsses, no longer exists
Carriage barn site[403]	See Archeological Sites	Structure no longer exists. Removed in 1947. Archeological resources likely remain.
Greenhouse and hothouse sites[404]	No longer exists	From Van Buren period, location unknown, there are no likely remains due to subsequent cultivation of the area.
Old stone house site[405]	See Archeological Sites	Archeological resources likely remain.
Black hay barn site[406]	See Archeological Sites	Site visible on 1948 air photo.
Stables and Birney wood house by mansion[407]	No longer exists	Location and layout undocumented.
Van Ness Monument	See Small-scale Features	

397 Ibid., 165.
398 Ibid., 167.
399 Ibid., 164.
400 Ibid., 165-66.
401 Ibid., 165.
402 Ibid., 162.
403 Ibid., 162.
404 Ibid., 163.
405 Ibid., 163.
406 Ibid., 164.
407 Ibid., 164.

Vegetation		
Crops and agricultural fields[408]	Contributing	Crops and crop production contribute to the historic character or the property, particularly the diversity of crops grown during the Van Buren period.
Black locust allee along semicircular entry drive[409]	Contributing	Present in Van Buren period. Replanted in 2002.
Front lawn[410]	Contributing	Overall open character with scattered trees during Van Buren period.
Front garden[411]	Contributing	Only trees have been replaced.
Front pine border and grove[412]	Contributing	Historic trees are declining and there are many additional trees.
Garden[413]	No longer exists	Present during Van Buren period.
North and South Orchards	No longer exist, see Archeological Sites	Present during Van Buren period, still evident during deProsse period, archeological study needed to locate spacing.
Orchard on escarpment	No longer exist, see Archeological Sites	Present during Van Buren period, still evident during deProsse period, archeological study needed to locate spacing.
North woods[414]	Non-contributing	Van Buren's north orchard located here until 1940s; woodland has grown up since.
South woods[415]	Non-contributing	Served as pasture during Van Buren period.
Fruit tree nursery[416]	No longer exists	Present during Van Buren period, location uncertain.
Wooded escarpment	Contributing	Probable change in species and extent over time, difficult to document, likely wider now than in historic period.
Spruce and Fir near farm complex	Non-contributing	Planted by Meyer between 1978 and 1993.
Field boundary vegetation	Non-contributing	Treelines removed by Meyer in 1940s and 1950s. Current vegetation is young, does not form continuous treeline.
Yews at Van Ness monument	Non-contributing	Planted by Boy Scouts during Meyer ownership.
Poplars along escarpment	Non-contributing	Planted during Meyer ownership.

[408] Ibid., 171.
[409] Ibid., 168-9.
[410] Ibid., 169.
[411] Ibid., 169.
[412] Ibid., 170.
[413] Ibid., 170.
[414] Ibid., 171-2.
[415] Ibid., 172.
[416] Ibid., 171.

Views		
View to Catskills from mansion and upper terrace[417]	Contributing	Present during Van Buren period.
View to farmland from mansion[418]	Contributing	Present during Van Buren period.
Partial view to mansion from Post Road[419]	Contributing	Present during Van Buren period
Partial view to Post Road from mansion[420]	Contributing	Present during Van Buren period
View from NY Route 9H to mansion[421]	Non-contributing	9H not present during Van Buren period.
View from mansion to 9H[422]	Non-contributing	9H not present during Van Buren period.
View to surrounding farm land	Contributing	Present during Van Buren period.
Small-Scale Features		
Van Ness grave/monument[423]	Contributing	Grave dates to 1804; monument installed 1847.
Urn near main house[424]	Contributing	The displayed urn is an accurate reproduction. The original is in storage.
Debris around farm cluster	Non-contributing	Accumulated since the 1950s.
Old Post Road marker[425]	Non-contributing	Located near south gatehouse, possibly installed in 1930s, others extant along NY Route 9H.
Powerlines and poles[426]	Non-contributing	Installed late 1940s.
Garden wall[427]	No longer exists	Described during Van Buren period.
Guard rails along farm road	Non-contributing	Meyer added between 1978 and 1993.
Fencerows	See Archeological Sites	
Benches near main house[428]	Contributing	Contemporary reproductions contribute to the setting in front of the house.
Mounting platform[429]	No longer exists	Used by Van Buren to mount his horse.
Satellite dish	Non-contributing	Installed by NPS 2001 at corner of field and north orchard.
NPS flagpole and signs[430]	Non-contributing	Installed by NPS to interpret the history of the property and direct visitors.

[417] Ibid., 173.
[418] Ibid., 172.
[419] Ibid., 172.
[420] Ibid., 174.
[421] Ibid., 174.
[422] Ibid., 174.
[423] Ibid., 179.
[424] Ibid., 180-81.
[425] Ibid., 181.
[426] Ibid., 167-68.
[427] Ibid., 180.
[428] Ibid., 180.
[429] Ibid., 180.
[430] Ibid., 182.

Archeological Sites		
Original Post Road along edge of Lower Terrace	Contributing if located	Present during Van Buren period and still evident during deProsse period, archeological study required to locate.
Northern farm road from front semicircular drive, to former carriage barn and stone house[431]	Contributing if located	Present during Van Buren period, abandoned during Meyer period, archeological study required to locate.
Southern farm road from mansion to former red barn[432]	Contributing if located	Present during Van Buren Period, abandoned during Meyer period, archeological study required to locate.
Ditch traces	Contributing if located	Traces of ditches constructed by Van Buren, archeological study required to locate.
Farm office site	Contributing if located	Probably built by Van Ness; dismantled by Campbell circa 1957-1973, archeological study required to locate.
Carriage barn site	Contributing if located	Built by Van Ness, used by Van Buren, burned by Meyer in 1947, archeological study required to locate.
Stone house site	Contributing if located	Built during Van Alstyne, date of removal unknown, archeological study required to locate.
Black hay barn site	Contributing if located	Built by Van Buren 1844; burned 1948, archeological study required to locate.
Orchards = north, south and on escarpment	Contributing if located	Planted by Van Buren, removed by subsequent owners, some stumps still evident, archeological study required to locate.
Fencerows[433]	Contributing if located	Installed by Van Buren, removed by subsequent owners. Only remnants of the Dingman fence remain along the northern boundary, archeological study required to locate.

[431] Ibid., 175.
[432] Ibid., 175.
[433] Ibid., 179.

CHAPTER V. TREATMENT IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this section is to suggest preliminary preservation issues that will facilitate preservation planning and contribute to a coherent development vision that both reinforces and enriches the park's mission. Further research and an exploration of treatment alternatives are required. As a preliminary, treatment alternatives are discussed below and several treatment issues have also been outlined.

TREATMENT ALTERNATIVES

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties identifies four approaches to the treatment of historic properties: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. *Preservation* focuses on the maintenance and repair of existing historic materials and retention of a property's form as it has evolved over time. *Rehabilitation* acknowledges the need to meet continuing or changing uses through alterations or new additions while retaining the property's historic character. *Restoration* is undertaken to depict a property at a particular time in its history, while removing evidence of other periods. *Reconstruction* recreates vanished or non-surviving portions of a property for historic purposes.

Preservation

Since preservation focuses on the maintenance and repair of existing historic materials, this treatment involves the least intervention. It would perpetuate the current management practices and retain the property's form as it has evolved over time, including non-historic and non-contributing agricultural practices, plantings, and structures. Keeping Lindenwald actively farmed with modern techniques would serve to preserve the site's agricultural setting and land use but would not otherwise further historical interpretations of the site. Retention of the cluster of twentieth-century farm buildings would detract from the historic setting and the buildings themselves have been determined to be safety hazards. Unless preservation also included an expansion of the park boundaries or easements, it would not prevent against development on properties adjacent to Lindenwald.

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation acknowledges the need to meet continuing or changing uses through alterations or new additions while retaining those portions or features that are important to defining its significance. It is intended to allow for the introduction of a compatible new use or new construction. This treatment alternative would enable the park to continue having the land farmed using contemporary techniques. Twentieth-century farm structures that have been determined unsafe could be removed and replaced with more suitable structures, possibly located on the historic structures that are more in character with the historic setting of the Van Buren estate. With further investigation, the new structures could possibly be reconstructed farm buildings using photographs and oral histories. The new buildings could provide storage and support structures for NPS operations and possibly for farmers.

Hedgerows could be added to farm fields that enhance contemporary organic farming operations.

Orchards could be added that are both in character with the historic setting, but which require low-input spray program and are semi-dwarf rather than full-sized trees. Alternatively, a non-productive orchard, such as small-fruiting crabapples or non-productive apple or pear varieties, could be planted to reduce the likelihood of the orchard acting as a harbor for pests in a region heavily invested in commercial production.

Restoration

Restoration is undertaken to depict a property at a particular time in its history, while removing evidence of other periods. This approach would require depiction of the site at a certain date or period of time, most likely the end of the period of significance, circa 1862. This approach has been adopted for the historic core now maintained by NPS.

To apply a restoration approach to a larger portion of the former Lindenwald property would require reversing the many modifications made to the farmland over the last 150 years. Restoration would require removing the twentieth-century farming buildings, such as the cluster of farm buildings constructed by Meyer, as well as park service buildings like the pole barn storage structure and the maintenance garage. In addition, twentieth-century drainage structures, road patterns, and plantings, as well as small-scale features like utility poles and debris piles would need to be removed. Many historic features are missing which are critical to the property's identity as a gentleman's estate. For some features, such as the orchards, historic photographs and remnant stumps could be used to restore the plantings. However, the exact boundaries of the orchard would be difficult to determine. Other features, such as the garden and Van Buren's greenhouse and hothouse, could not be restored due to lack of information and would more appropriately interpreted with signs in the vicinity of these features. Each of the missing historic structures would need to be carefully evaluated to determine whether there was enough photographic and oral history documentation to restore or reconstruct the structure, or whether interpretive signs would be most appropriate.

Restoration of agricultural crops and field patterns and use of nineteenth-century equipment and livestock is neither economically viable, nor in keeping with Van Buren's progressive approach to farming. In this respect, a rehabilitation approach to farming best supports Van Buren's beliefs in agricultural reform, including use of manures, crop rotation, and soil conservation.

Clearly there are many issues that need to be considered in the selection of a treatment approach. One scenario would be to develop different treatment zones, where the current historic core continues a restoration approach but the surrounding farmland pursues rehabilitation.

Reconstruction

Reconstruction recreates vanished or non-surviving portions of a property for historic purposes. Some of the major character-defining elements of Van Buren's Lindenwald are no longer extant, and this treatment approach would allow their reconstruction. However, this is a costly and complicated treatment alternative. Some of the features destroyed since the Van Buren era have been well documented in photographs and through interviews with former residents. For example, it may be possible to reconstruct the north gatehouse, the red hillside barn, the black hay barn, the carriage barn, the farm roads, the orchards, and the garden, though not all of these historic structures would necessarily need to be rebuilt. It would be almost

impossible to reconstruct some of the auxiliary structures about which there is little or no documentation, such as fences, the barnyard, pig pens, chicken coops, stables, greenhouses, and corn cribs.

Reconstruction should also consider the needs of future farmer-tenants. For example, reconstructing the black hay barn in the middle of the lower agricultural fields might be less acceptable than rebuilding the red barn on the hill, as the latter does not occupy arable land. Reconstructing the field patterns, which are not well documented prior to the Birney-deProsse ownership, may prove difficult, especially because contemporary farming techniques require large fields. Full reconstruction of mid-nineteenth-century farm landscape might require cultivating old crops varieties using nineteenth-century agricultural techniques, which may not be realistic or in keeping with the goals of the park.

TREATMENT GOALS AND ISSUES

When considering the alternative treatments discussed above, several goals and issues are common to all or several of the alternatives. These goals and issues will need to be addressed in more depth as part of a comprehensive planning process. Several key goals and issues that pertain to the historic landscape are listed below.

- Encourage agricultural use of the land. Prevent future development of the Van Buren farmland that damages the property's historic character.

  Active agricultural use perpetuates the character of the Lindenwald farmland. However, it is important that the soils remain viable and protected with use of cover crops, organic fertilizers, and minimal spraying of herbicides and pesticides. At the same time the fields and orchards should appear well maintained in order to preserve the setting of a presidential estate. Hedgerows may improve organic farming practices and were present on the property during the Van Buren period, though their exact location is unknown. New hedgerows should not detract from other historic values, such as views to the surrounding farmland and the distant Catskill Mountains.

- Make provisions for active farming of the land by discussing with farmers what kinds of facilities they need for access to the farmland, greenhouses, the storage of equipment on the site, irrigation, produce packing and storage, as well as what techniques and activities will be allowed.

  Associated facilities should contribute to the historic setting and should be kept tidy. The possibility of reconstructing historic structures and/or compatible structures that do not detract from the Lindenwald setting should be investigated.

- Incorporate the agricultural landscape into interpretation at the park. Visual linkages, if not visitor access, to the agricultural landscape should be created and maintained. Ensure farm operations are safely separated from visitor circulation.

  The use of interpretive waysides that do not detract from historic views, interpretive walks, and the historic circulation system should be further investigated. Separation of circulation systems for active agricultural operations and visitors should be considered for convenience and safety.

- Explore landscape management issues in the development of a treatment plan, so that if landscape features are restored and reconstructed, they will be properly maintained.

  During Van Buren's period, there was extensive farm help to maintain the structures, livestock, fencing, crops, orchards, and gardens. With minimal maintenance staff, the park will need to consider the maintenance requirements of any additional land, structures, roads, orchards, or gardens. Some maintenance tasks may be the responsibility of farmers who cultivate the farmland.

TOPICS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- Conduct a more complete survey of the agricultural press for mention of Van Buren, Lindenwald, and agricultural activities in Kinderhook.

- Search the Pennsylvania State microfilm collection of Martin Van Buren papers. This is more complete than the Library of Congress collection used for this report, and additional letters and accounts may shed more light on Van Buren's agricultural activities.

- Compare Martin Van Buren's farm with those of his neighbors, using the 1850, 1855, and 1860 United States and New York State Agricultural Census returns. Determine whether the mix of crops and livestock Van Buren raised was typical of the county or town, and seek out other local agricultural trends. Examine the profitability of his operations with other farmers in the region.

- Compare Martin Van Buren's farm with those of other gentleman farmers, men like Isaac Hill, Silas Wright, James K. Paulding, and others who had been political colleagues of Van Buren. Many of these men's agricultural endeavors were highlighted in articles in agricultural magazines or referred to in their own correspondence. Examine whether their practices were intended for profit, show, or experimentation.

- Gather more information about the Wagoner period at Lindenwald. One potential source of information is late nineteenth-century census returns for Kinderhook. Another is the Farm Cadet Reports from the New York State Education Department, housed at the New York State Archives, Albany. Children sent to work on upstate New York farms during the labor shortages of World War I were required to write reports about their farm experiences. These reports are organized according to school district. It is possible that there are some for the Kinderhook area, or for Lindenwald itself.

- Search for additional Columbia County maps dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that include the study area and would help to locate the stone house and lower Post Road.

- Conduct archaeological studies to locate agricultural ditches, former hedgerows, farm roads, the extent of the garden, footprints for the red barn, black hay barn, carriage house, and stone house, as well as other landscape features lost since the Van Buren era.

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APPENDIX A. CHRONOLOGY

Prehistory and Early Settlement, 1609 - 1780

1609	Henry Hudson made the first documented European trip up the Hudson river.
1628	Mahican subjugation by Mohawks; many Mahicans move east to Conn. River Valley/Berkshires, though some return to area, esp. around modern Valatie (Piwonka 17-18; F. Ellis) (Mahicans are Algonkian-speaking, also knows as Machinac - Stokinger 35).
1628	First patroonship plan from the Dutch West India Company set out rules for land ownership, trade, etc.
1664	New Netherlands passed into English control. European settlement in Kinderhook area began.
1664	Thomas Powell Patent granted.
1667 or 1671	Jan Martense Van Alstyne and wife Derckje purchased 3,000 acres, some from Powell Patent, some from Native Americans.
1682	Van Alstyne grants 698 acres of his land on east side of creek to son Lambert Jan Van Alstyne. Lambert or his son Thomas constructed a stone house there.
1686	English Royal Governor Thomas Dongan granted charter for town of Kinderhook.
1686	Martin Cornelisse Van Buren listed as landowner in Kinderhook (Piwonka 26); son Pieter, his son Martin, and his son Abraham became freeholding farmers in Kinderhook.
1713	Lambert Van Alstyne died. Most of his property east of Kinderhook Creek inherited by son Thomas Lambert Van Alstyne.
1719	Route of the Post Road or King's Highway through Kinderhook established.
1760s	Thomas Van Alstyne died, property inherited by son, Lambert Thomas Van Alstyne.
1782	Martin Van Buren born to Abraham Van Buren and Maria Hoes Van Alen.
Van Ness and Paulding Ownerships, 1780 - 1839	
1780 - 1787	Judge Peter Van Ness acquired land from the Van Alstynes as part of a 260-acre estate.
1797	Van Ness constructed the main house and possibly the farm office and the carriage barn. He renamed property Kleinrood.
Late 1700s	Post Road re-located from lower to upper terrace of the estate.
1804	Peter Van Ness died. His son William inherited 137 acres of the property and the house. Son John Van Ness inherited remaining land (123 acres) and Van Alstyne stone house. Son Cornelius inherited land on east side of Post Road.
1804 - 1824	William Van Ness made improvements to the grounds, raised horses and Merino sheep.
1809 - 1834	John Van Ness sold some of his property to the Dingman family.
c. 1810	William Van Ness returned to law practice. He spent considerable time in New York City and used Kleinrood as a country retreat.
1812 - 1820	Van Buren served in the New York State Senate.
1816	Merino wool market collapsed
1817 - 1825	Construction of the Erie Canal increased competition from the Mid-West. Wheat production declined in New York, as dairy, sheep, specialty crops became popular

1819	Jethro Wood invented cast iron plow with interchangeable parts.
1820-1869	Population in New England and Mid-Atlantic states doubled, mainly in cities and towns.
1821 - 1828	Van Buren represented New York in the United States Senate.
1824	William Paulding purchased 137 acres of Kleinrrod at a court auction.
1824 - 1839	Property fell into disrepair under Paulding ownership.
1826	William Van Ness died.
1829	Van Buren served briefly as Governor of New York before being appointed Secretary of State under Andrew Jackson.
1830s	Wheat midge and weevil devastated New York wheat crop.
1830s	Agricultural magazines began circulation.
1832	New York State Agricultural Society founded.
1833 - 1837	Van Buren served as Vice President of the United States.
1837 - 1841	Van Buren served as President of the United States.
Martin Van Buren Ownership, 1839 - 1862	
1839	Martin Van Buren purchased the 137-acre site from Paulding and initiated improvements to the grounds.
1840	Van Buren defeated in presidential election.
1841	Van Buren began residency at Lindenwald in July.
1843	Blight caused loss of thirty percent of the potato crop in New York and Pennsylvania.
1843	Van Buren purchased 28.23 acres from Dingman family in July and 12.15 acres from them in September.
1844	Van Buren lost Democratic party presidential nomination.
1844	Van Buren constructed the black hay barn and the farm cottage.
1845	Van Buren purchased 43.19 acres from Peter Hoes and Lawrence Van Buren, bringing total acreage at Lindenwald to 220.89.
1847	Van Ness monument installed by John Van Ness.
1848	Van Buren ran for president on a Free Soil Party ticket.
1849-50	Van Buren renovated the house, added gatehouses, and constructed the red hillside barn.
1851	Hudson River Railroad ran first New York to Greenbush train.
1853 - 1855	Van Buren took son Martin to Europe for cure.
1862	Martin Van Buren died, July 24, leaving Lindenwald to his three living sons.
Van Buren Heirs and Wagoner Ownerships, 1862 - 1917	
1863	John Van Buren purchased Lindenwald from his brothers.
1864	Leonard Jerome purchased Lindenwald from John Van Buren.
1867	George Wilder purchased Lindenwald from Jerome.
1873	John Van Buren (distant relative) and James Van Alstyne purchased Lindenwald from Wilder.
1874	Adam and Freeman Wagoner purchased 184 acres of the property, leaving approximately

	thirty acres with Van Buren and Van Alstyne.
Birney and deProsse Ownerships, 1917-1946	
1917	Dr. Bascom Birney purchased Lindenwald from the Wagoners.
1919	Dr. Birney and family moved to Lindenwald.
1922	Miriam Birney (Dr. Bascom's daughter) acquired the property.
1925 - 1930	Property cared for by Schneck family.
c. 1930	Clementine Birney deProsse (Miriam's sister) aquired Lindenwald, moved there with her husband and two children, and began to farm the property.
1937	The Association for the Preservation of Lindenwald had secured an option to buy Lindenwald for $30,000. They hoped to have the state purchase the property, but were unsuccessful in these attempts.
1937	Carriage barn torn down.
1944 - 1946	Ray Meyer rented some Lindenwald farmland.
Meyer, deProsse, Campbell, NPS, and OSI Ownerships, 1946-2002	
1946	166 acres sold to Ray Meyer, leaving the deProsses with 12.8 acres around the house and a 6-acre woodlot.
1946 - 1948	Meyer burned down the black hay barn and tore down the red barn. He cleared the orchards, plowed over the garden, removed fences and hedgerows, and dug ditches to drain wet fields.
Early 1950s	North gatehouse dismantled.
1957	Kenneth Campbell purchased 12.8 acres around the house.
1957 - 1973	Campbell dismantled the farm office.
1950s	Meyer constructed board and batten barn, a concrete-block building, and a new road connecting NY Route 9H to these farm structures.
1960s	Meyer added a metal and wood barn to the farm complex.
1973	National Park Foundation purchased 12.8 acre houselot.
c. 1975	Meyer constructed three greenhouses in the farm building complex. He later added two silos and a concrete-block barn.
1975	Houselot given to the National Park Service. Martin Van Buren National Historic Site established.
1977	Site opened to the public.
1984	Meyer constructed a ninety-foot high silo south of the farm complex.
1987	Grand opening. Restoration of the main house interior completed.
1980s - 1990s	Meyer dug ponds on lower terrace.
By 1990s	37 acres of Lindenwald land across Post Road developed as residential housing.
2000	Open Space Institute purchased farmland, leased it to Roxbury Farm.

APPENDIX B: CROPS PRODUCED AT LINDENWALD

Note: acreage figures written in italics were calculated by the author based on data from the 1855 Census, where available, or on approximate yields given in secondary sources.

Year	Crop	Acres	Amount	Notes	Source
1839	Apples		$165.28 sold		"Kinderhook Feb 6th 1840, Produce sold from the Farm," Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library
	Buckwheat		74 bushels sold		
	Cider		4 barrels sold		
	Hay		13 tons sold		
	Oats		795 bushels sold		
	Potatoes		262.5 bushels sold		
1840	Buckwheat		2.5 bushels bought for sowing		"Kinderhook Feb 6th 1840, Produce sold from the Farm," Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library
	Clover		.5 bushel bought for sowing		
	Potatoes		.5 bushel bought for sowing		
	Rye				Accounts, 16 April 1840, Van Buren Papers, Columbia County Historical Society
	Timothy (hay)		1 bushel bought for sowing		"Kinderhook Feb 6th 1840, Produce sold from the Farm," Martin Van Buren National Historic Site Library
1841	Beans				Martin Van Buren to Levi Woodbury, 24 July 1841, in Platt 61-2
	Beets				
	Cabbage				
	Corn				
	Pears			"a great variety of young pear trees, ordered from Hamburg eight weeks before . . . "	*New York Commercial Advertiser*, November 1841, quoted in Stokinger, 61-2

	Peas				Martin Van Buren to Levi Woodbury, 24 July 1841, in Platt 61-2
	Potatoes				
1842	Apples				Martin Van Buren to Joel R. Poinsett, 1 October 1842, quoted in Huston 30
	Corn				Martin Van Buren to Benjamin F. Butler, 15 November 1842, Martin Van Buren Papers
	Grapes			"only foreign vines" grown in the hothouse	Martin Van Buren to John M. Niles, 16 April 1843, quoted in Platt 68
	Hay			Yielded a surplus	Martin Van Buren to Joel R. Poinsett, 1 October 1842, quoted in Huston 30
	Oats			Yielded a surplus	
	Potatoes			Yielded a surplus	
	Rye				"Probable Expenses from 1st May [18]42 to 1st Jan. [18]43," Martin Van Buren Papers
1843	Grapes			Gown in the "open air"	Martin Van Buren to John M. Niles, 16 April 1843, quoted in Platt 68
	Hay				Martin Van Buren to Andrew Jackson, 8 September 1843, Martin Van Buren Papers
1844	"exotic fruits and plants"			Grown in the greenhouse	Isaac Hill, "A Day in the Country: Visit to Lindenwald," reprinted in Albert Lowther Demaree, *The American Agricultural Press, 1819-1860* (Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1974), 290-292
	"fruit and ornamental trees"			Grown in "the garden and pleasure-grounds"	
	Hay	13	Seeded "3 pecks to the acre"	"a mixture of timothy and red-top seed" grown in "fields reclaimed from a bog"	
	Grapes			Grown in the greenhouse	
	Melons			"some of the finest we have ever seen . . . in this latitude" Grown "in the garden"	
	Potatoes			"*Carters*, produced from the *ball* a few years ago by the Shakers"	

1845	Apples				Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 19 April 1845, Blair Family Papers
	Potatoes				
	Rye	*10.5 - 14*	21 bushels sown		John P. Sheldon to Martin Van Buren, 30 October 1845, Martin Van Buren Papers
1846	Oats	*36*	90 bushels sowed		Martin Van Buren to James K. Paulding, n.d. [spring 1846], in Aderman, 429-30
	Potatoes	17	>500 bushels	17 acres planted in potatoes and 500 bushels promised to grocer	Martin Van Buren to Gorham A. Worth, 22 October 1846, Martin Van Buren Papers; Martin Van Buren to James K. Paulding, n.d. [spring 1846], in Aderman, 429-30
1848	Apples		15,500 trees for sale		Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 22 April 1848, quoted in Platt 69
	Clover for pasture	24			Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 22 April 1848, quoted in Platt 69
	C[l?]over for cutting (hay)	"a few"			Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 22 April 1848, quoted in Platt 69
	Corn	20			Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 22 April 1848, quoted in Platt 69
	Grapes			Muscatel, Black Hamburg, L'Pilers = seedlings sent by Kemble	Martin Van Buren to Gouverneur Kemble, 13 April 1848, quoted in Stokinger, 71
	Oats	28			Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 22 April 1848, quoted in Platt 69
	Pears		200 trees for sale		
	Potatoes	4			
	Timothy (hay)	85			
	Rye	30			
1850	Buckwheat		60 bushels		1850 U.S. Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, New York, entry for Martin Van Buren
	Hay	*12*	12 tons		
	Hops		10 pounds		
	Indian corn	*35*	700 bushels		
	Irish potatoes	*50*	200 bushels		

	Oats	*67*	1200 bushels		
	Orchard products		$20		
	Peas + beans		1 bushel		
	Rye	*7+*	100 bushels		
	Wheat			var. Pure Soules Not on census return, so may have lost the crop	Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 16 November 1850, Blair Family Papers
1851	Wheat	*15*	30 bushels sown $500	Harvested in or before July	Martin Van Buren to Francis P. Blair, 15 July 1851, Blair Family Papers
1855	Apples		250 bushels		1855 New York State Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, New York, entry for Jeremiah Hess
	Corn	10	200 bushels		
	Hay	65	65 tons		
	Oats	14	250 bushels		
	Potatoes	6	25 bushels		
	Rye	14	200 bushels		
	Winter wheat	14	36 bushels		
185-?	Apples		$159.52 sold		"Produce Sold," n.d. [185-?], Martin Van Buren Papers, (DLC 14056)
	Cider		$17.50 sold		
1860	Buckwheat		140 bushels		1860 U.S. Manuscript Agricultural Census, Kinderhook, New York, entry for Isaac Collins
	Hay	*115*	115 tons		
	Indian corn	*6.25*	125 bushels		
	Irish potatoes	*175*	700 bushels		
	Oats	*21*	375 bushels		
	Orchard prod.		$200		
	Rye	*40*	550 bushels		
1861	Hay		8 tons / $120 for sale	"8 tons of hay in store to be sold for me __ as set off agt what has been fed to the __" (so $120 is not the total price)	"Farm for 1861," n.d., Martin Van Buren Papers

	Hay		30 tons / $450 for sale	"… in store & on hand to be sold at $15 [per ton]"	
	Corn & potatoes		$180 sold		
	Cider		$50 sold		
	Apples		150 barrels for sale		
	Apples		$187.77 sold		

Appendix C. Maps and Floor Plans

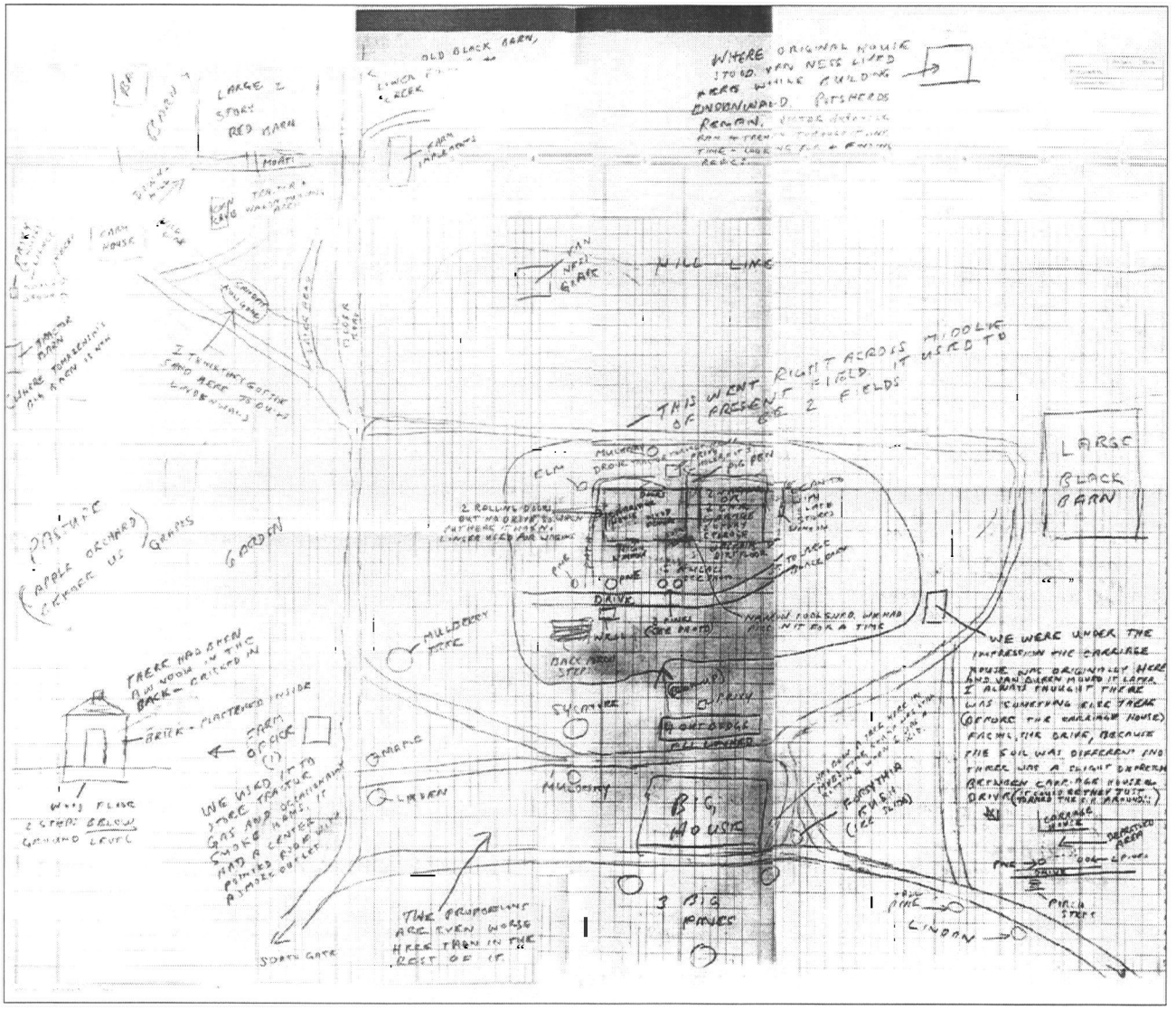


Figure 102: Entire farm layout. "Sketch map of Lindenwald," n.d., by William deProsse, Jr. (MVB NHS)

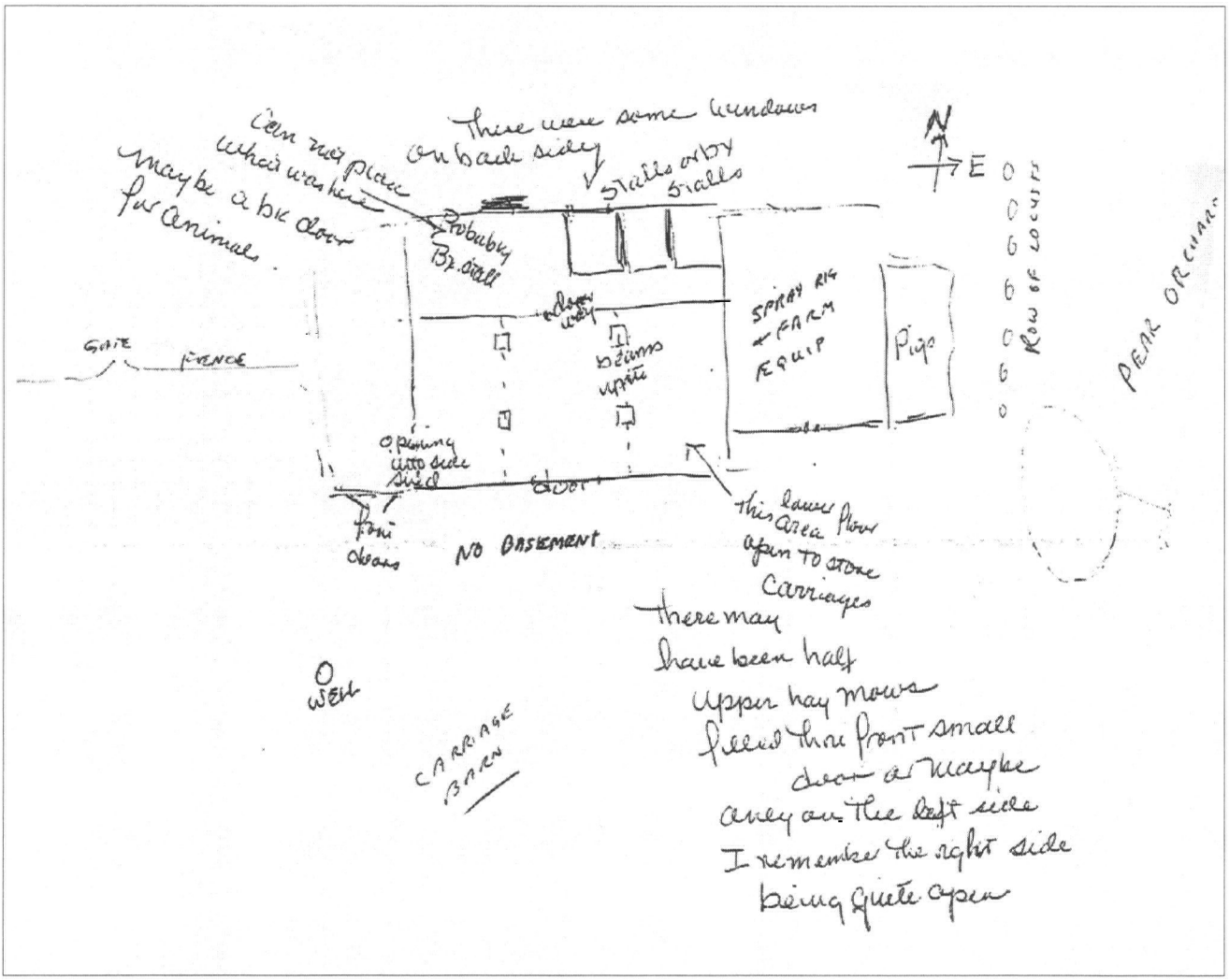


Figure 103: Carriage barn. Drawing by William deProsse, Jr. (MVB NHS)

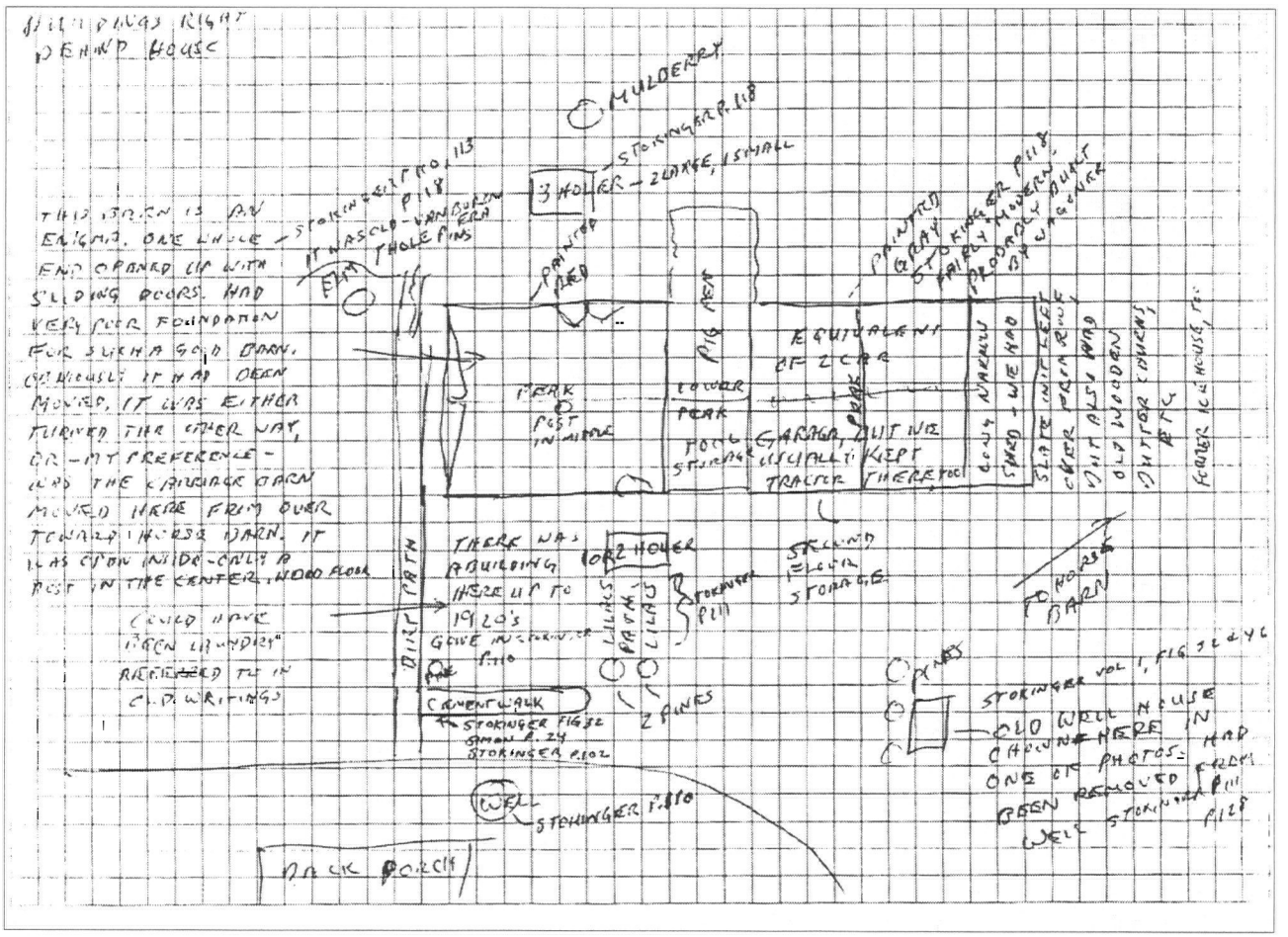


Figure 104: Garage and woodshed behind mansion. Drawing by William deProsse, Jr. (MVB NHS)

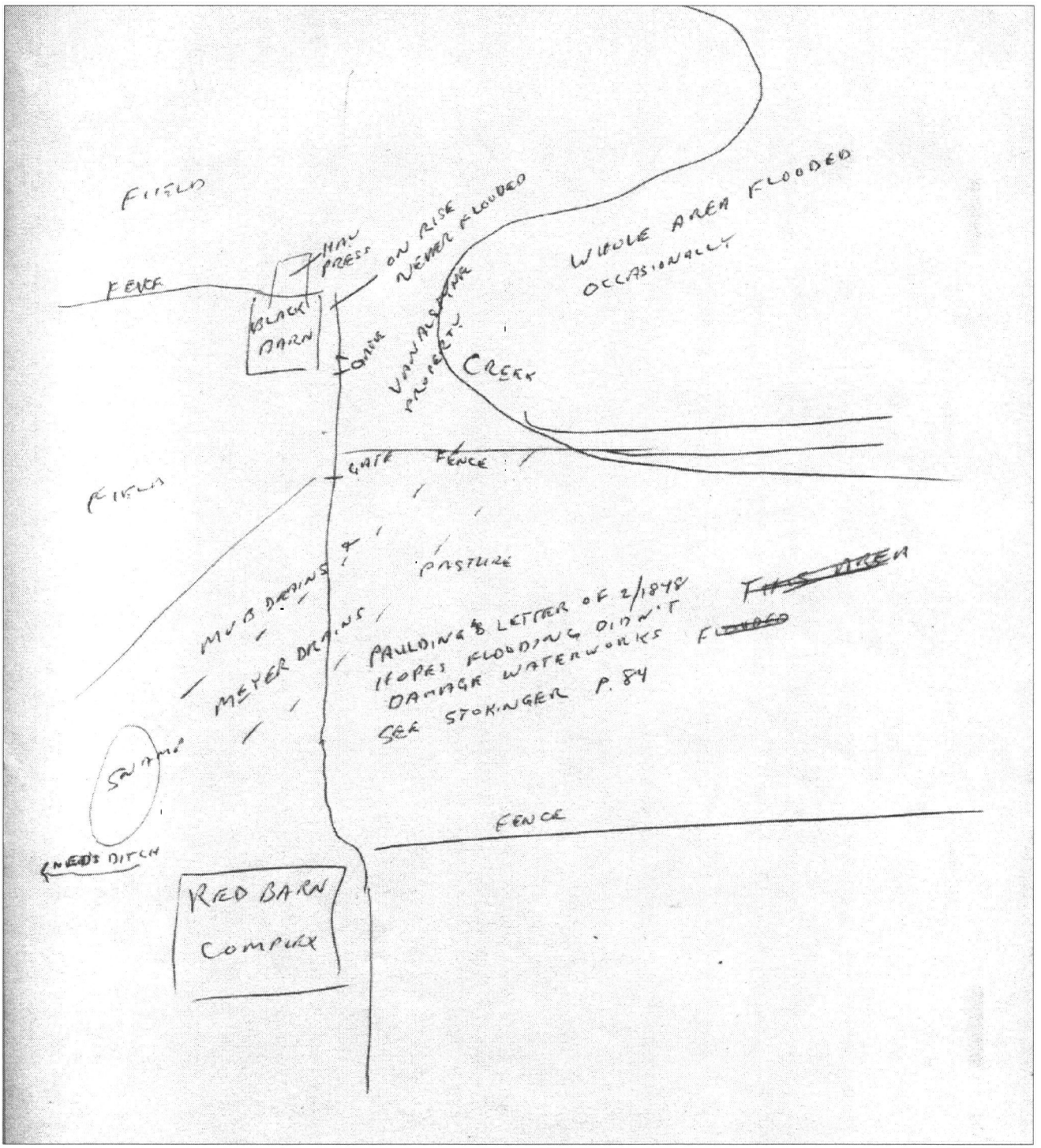


Figure 105: Lower terrace fields and red barn complex. Drawing by William deProsse, Jr. (MVB NHS)

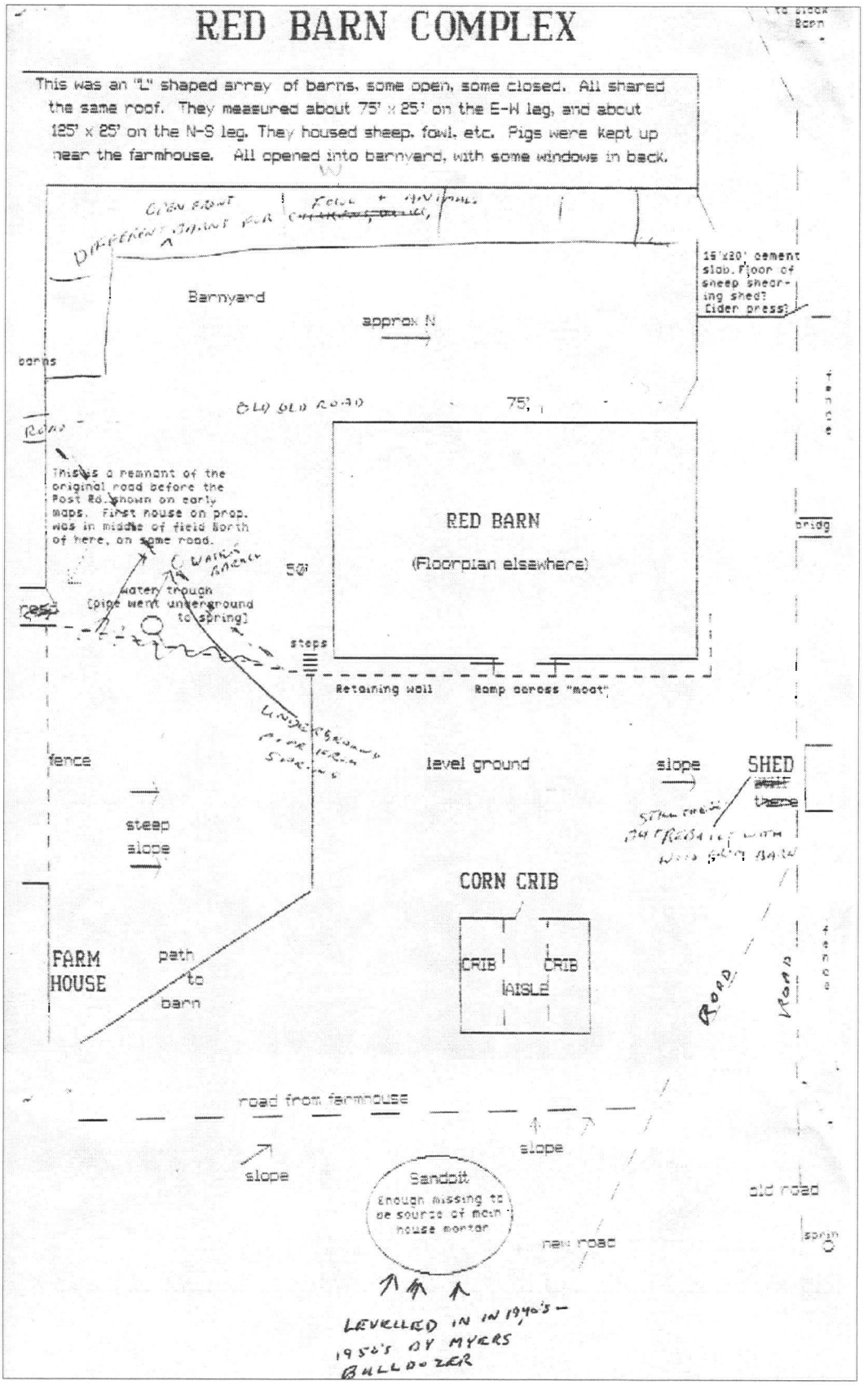


Figure 106: Red hillside barn and barnyard. Drawing by William deProsse, Jr. (MVB NHS)

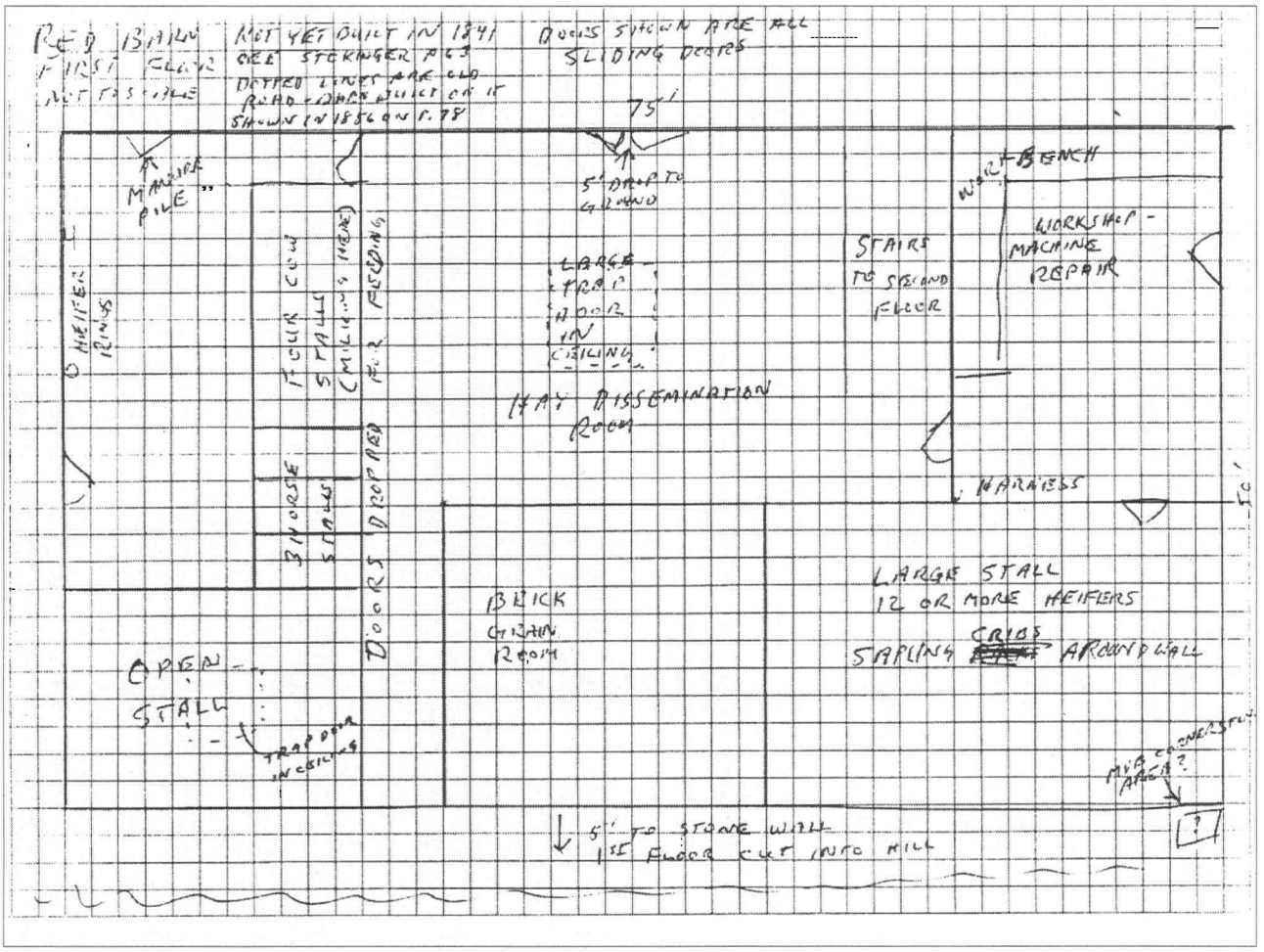


Figure 107: Red hillside barn, lower floor. Drawing by William deProsse, Jr. (MVB NHS)

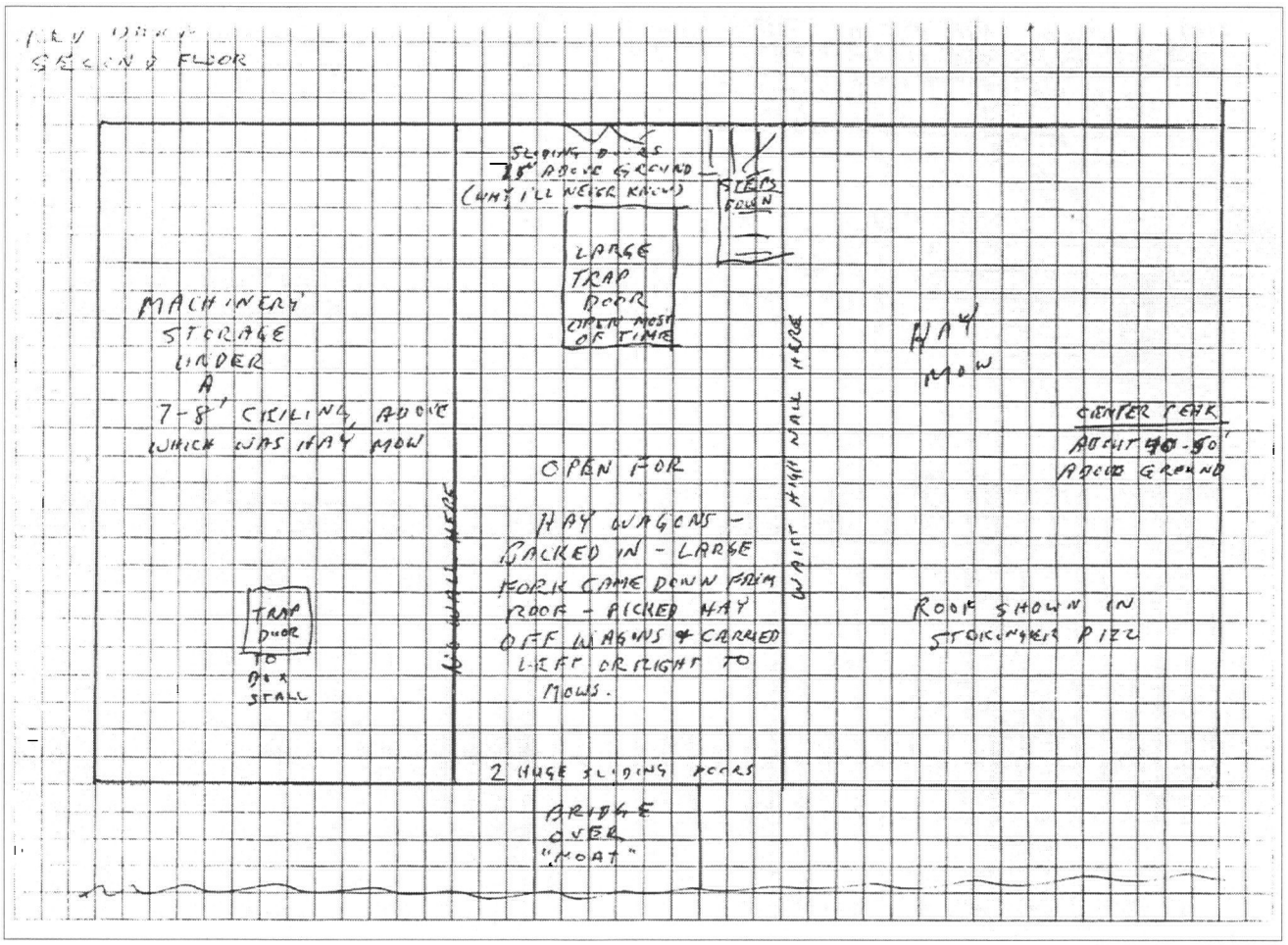


Figure 108: Red hillside barn, upper floor. Drawing by William deProsse, Jr. (MVB NHS)

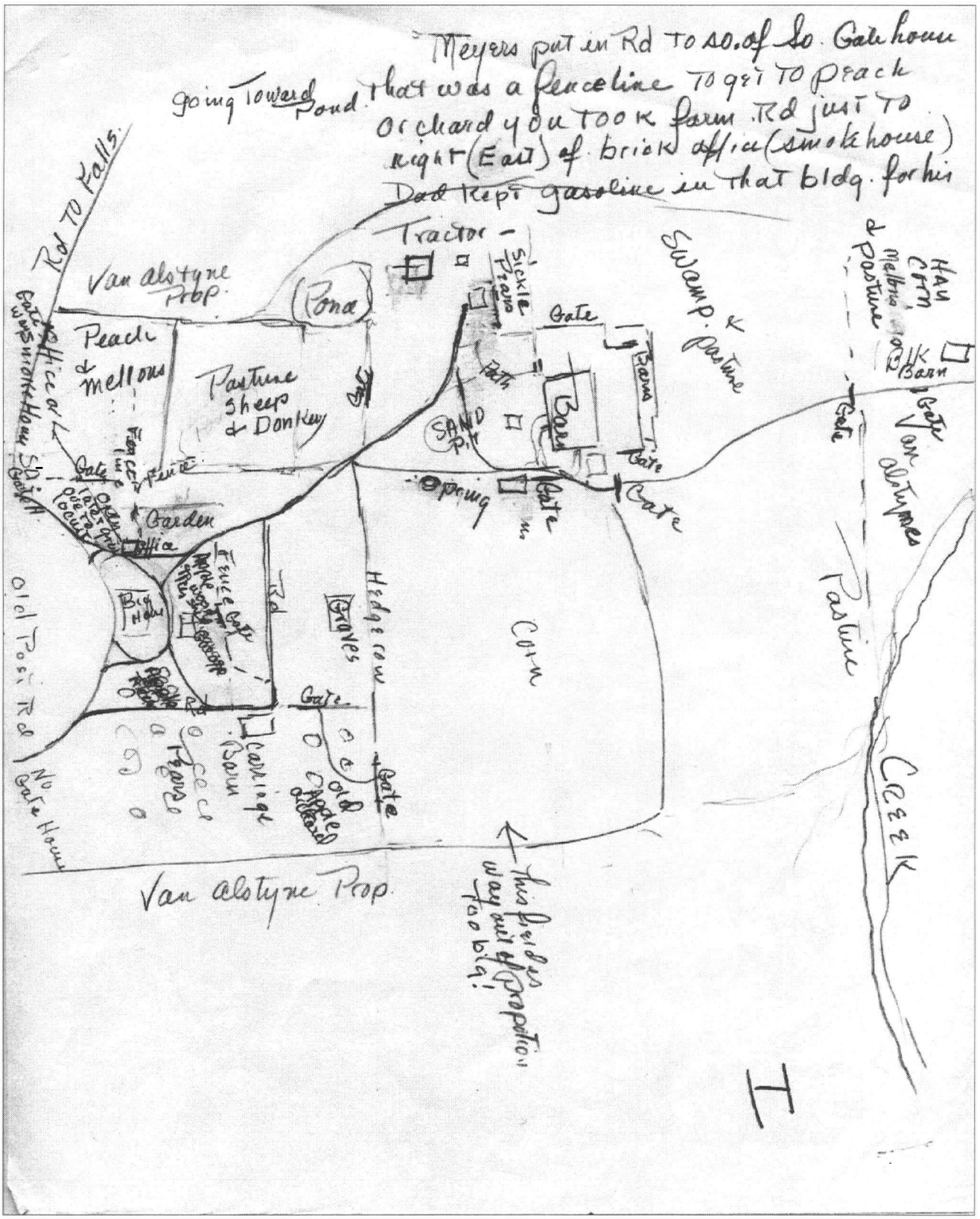


Figure 109: Entire farm layout with upper terrace details. Drawing by Jeanne deProsse Akers. (MVB NHS)



Figure 110: Layout of the southern portion of the upper and lower terrace, showing upper pond, farm cottage, seckel pear orchard, and red barn complex. Drawing by Jeanne deProsse Akers. (MVB NHS)

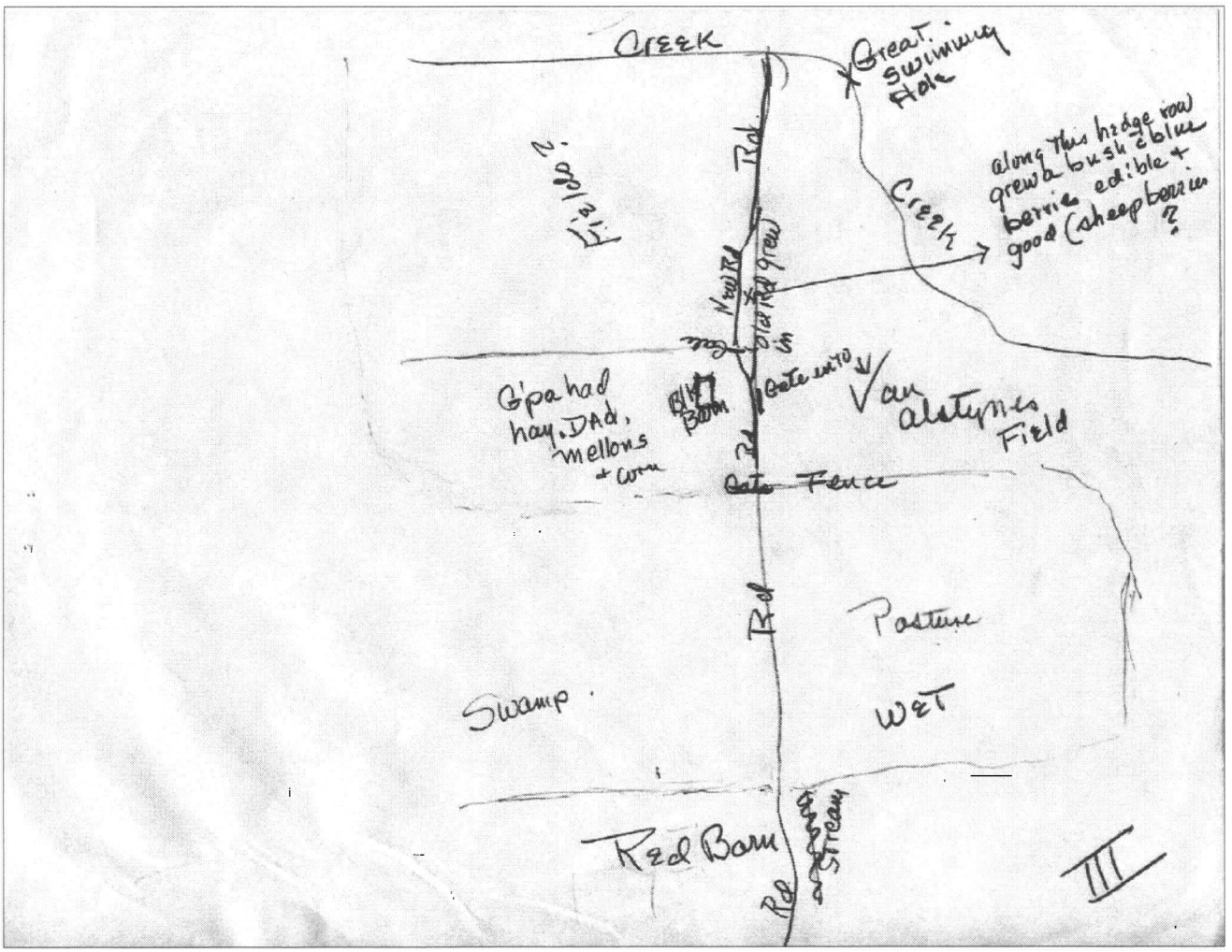


Figure 111: Lower terrace layout, showing location of black hay barn and lower farm road. Drawing by Jeanne deProsse Akers. (MVB NHS)

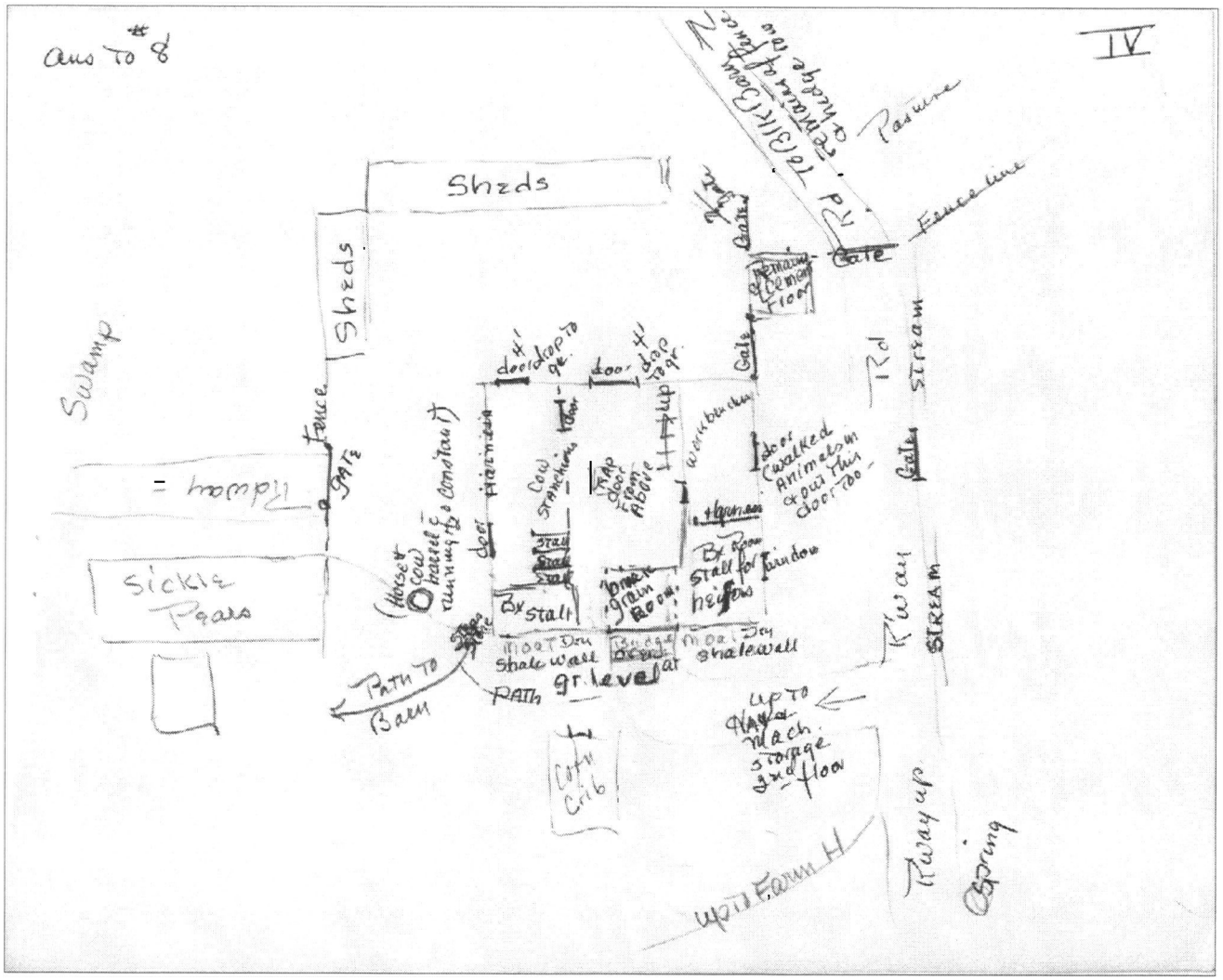


Figure 112: Red hillside barn, lower level, surrounding roads, sheds, and barnyard. Drawing by Jeanne deProsse Akers. (MVB NHS)

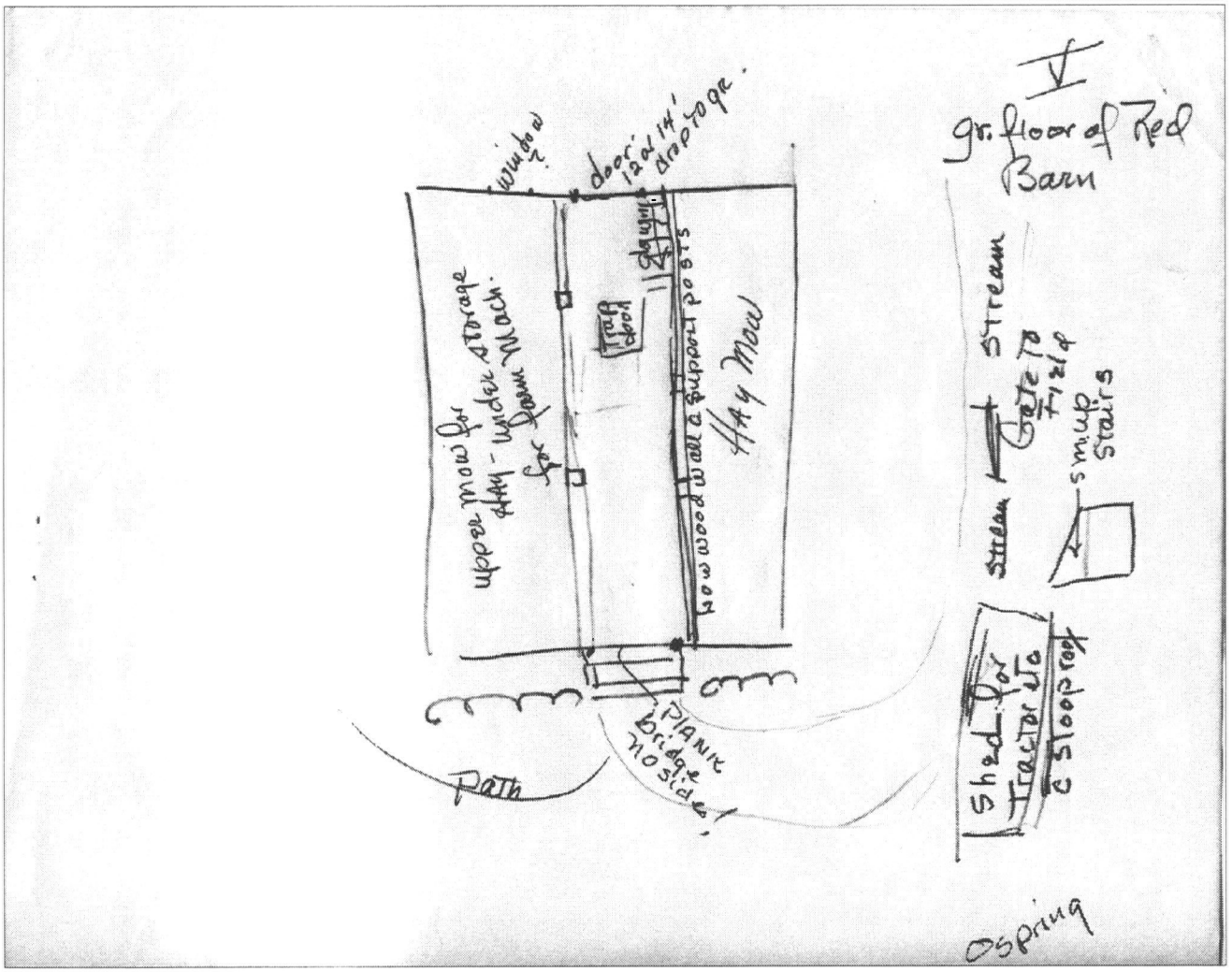
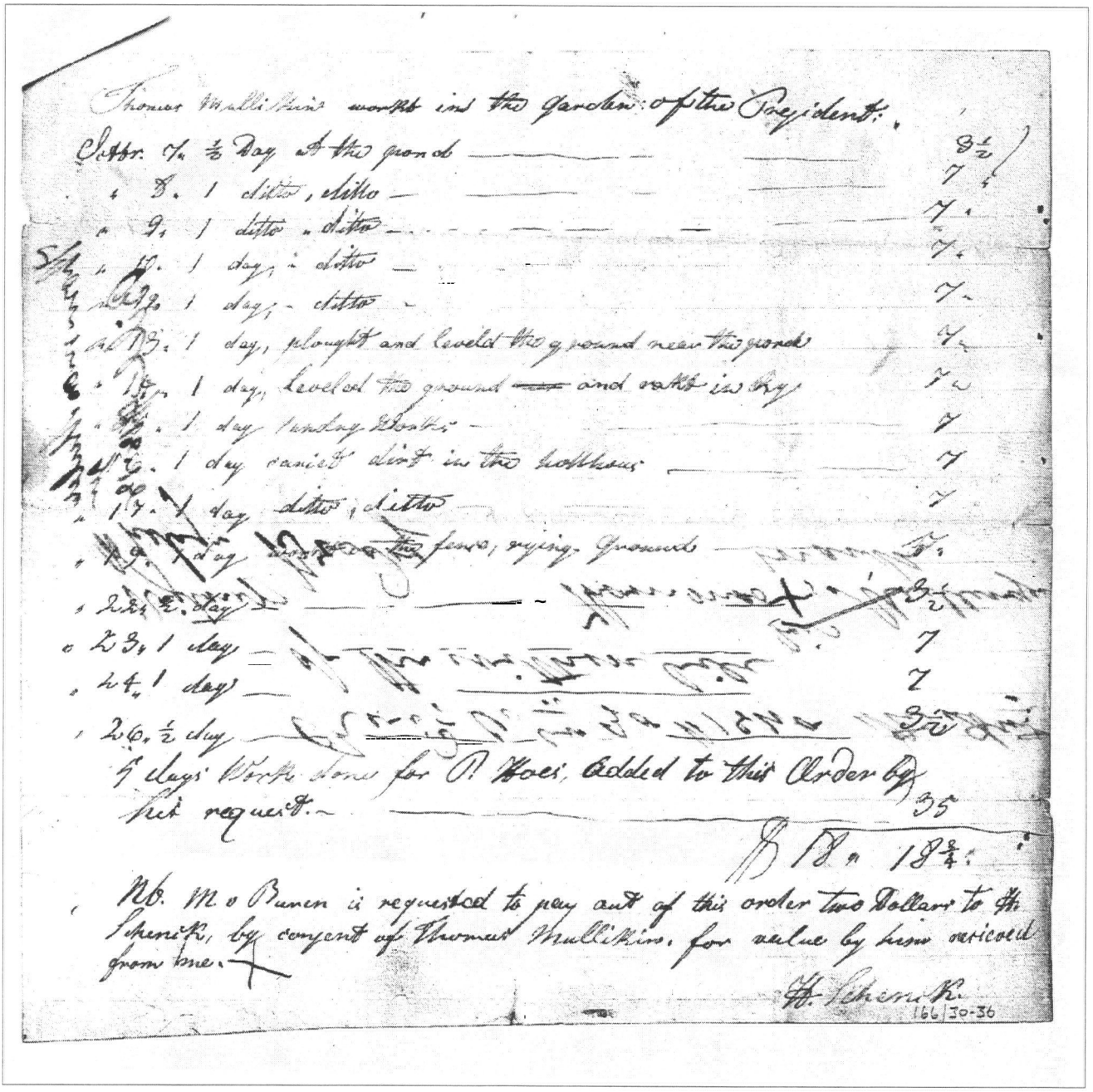


Figure 113: Red hillside barn upper level. Drawing by Jeanne deProsse Akers. (MVB NHS)

Appendix D: Selected Farm Records


Thomas Mullikin worked in the Garden of the President.

Oct. 7 ½ Day at the pond — 8½

8. 1 ditto, ditto — 7

9. 1 ditto, ditto — 7

10. 1 day, ditto — 7

12. 1 day, ditto — 7

13. 1 day, plowed and leveled the ground near the pond — 7

15. 1 day, Leveled the ground — and raked in Rye — 7

16. 1 day Tuesday Hoeing — 7

17. 1 day carried dirt in the hothouse — 7

18. 1 day ditto, ditto — 7

19. 1 day [illegible] fence, crying Ground — 7

21. ½ day — 3½

23. 1 day — 7

24. 1 day — 7

26. ½ day — 3½

5 days Work done for A. Hoes, added to this Order by his request. — 35

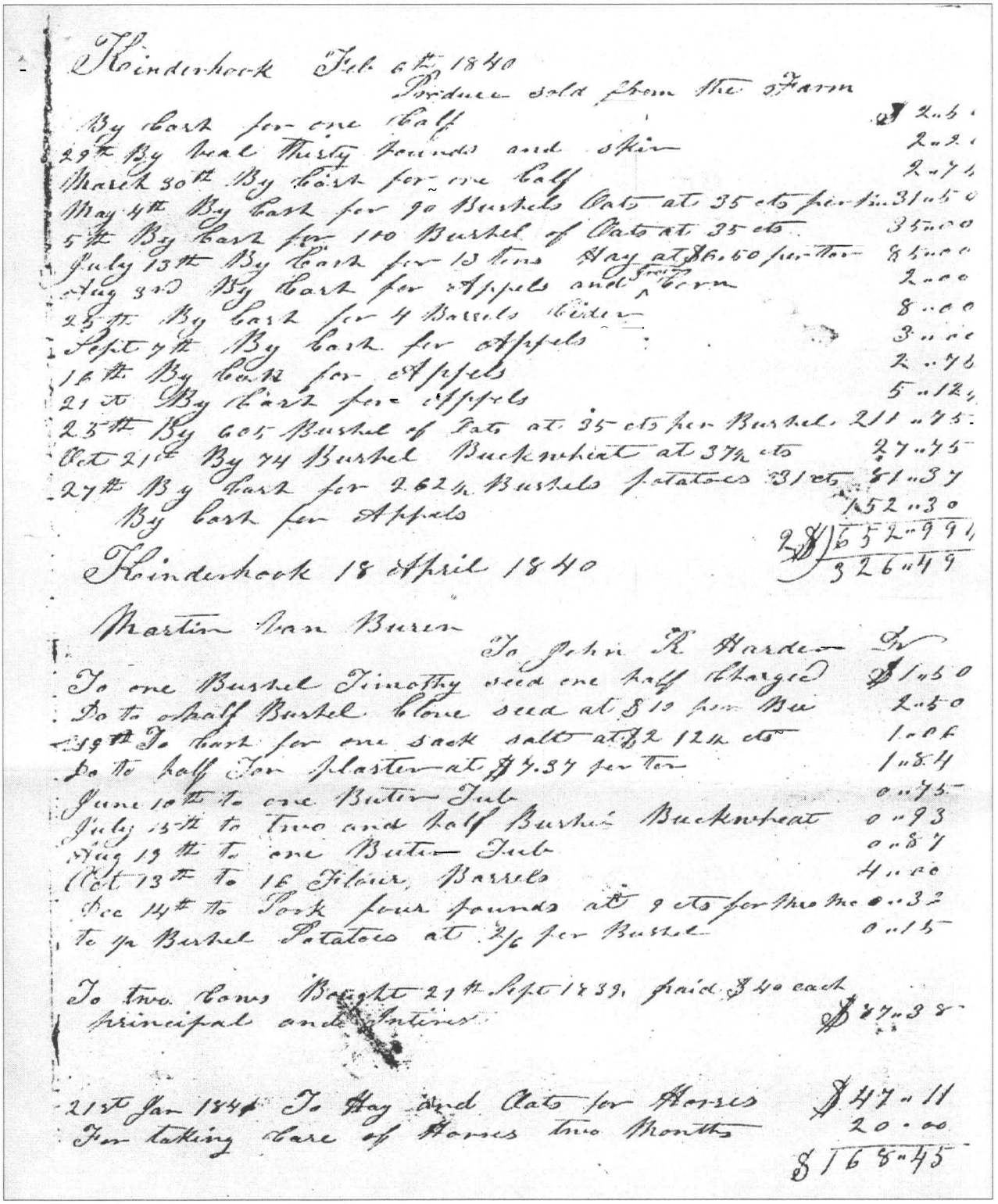
[illegible] 18, 184[illegible]

No. M. Buren is requested to pay out of this order two Dollars to H. Schenck, by consent of Thomas Mullikin, for value by him received from me.

H. Schenck

166/30-36

Figure 114: Thomas Mullikan's bill to Van Buren for work done at Lindenwald, including work "at the pond," raking in the rye, and at the hothouse. (Accounts, 16 April 1840, Van Buren Papers, Columbia County Historical Society).



Kinderhook Feb 6th 1840

Produce sold from the Farm

By Cash for one Calf $2.50
29th By Veal Thirty pounds and Skin 2.25
March 30th By Cash for one Calf 2.75
May 4th By Cash for 90 Bushels Oats at 35 cts per Bu. 31.50
5th By Cash for 100 Bushel of Oats at 35 cts 35.00
July 13th By Cash for 13 Tons Hay at $6.50 per Ton $84.00
Aug 3rd By Cash for Apples and Corn 2.00
25th By Cash for 4 Barrels Cider 8.00
Sept 7th By Cash for Apples 3.00
16th By Cash for Apples 2.75
21st By Cash for Apples 5.12½
23rd By 60½ Bushel of Oats at 35 cts per Bushel 21.17½
Oct 21st By 74 Bushel Buckwheat at 37½ cts 27.75
27th By Cash for 262½ Bushels potatoes 31 cts 81.37
By Cash for Apples 152.30
$652.99½
326.49

Kinderhook 18 April 1840

Martin Van Buren

To John R Harder Dr

To one Bushel Timothy seed one half Charged $1.50
To ½ Bushel Clover seed at $10 per Bu 2.50
To Cash for one Sack salt at $2 12½ cts 1.06
To ½ Ton Plaster at $4.37 per Ton 1.84
June 10th To one Butter Tub 0.75
July 13th To Two and half Bushels Buckwheat 0.93
Aug 19th To one Butter Tub 0.87
Oct 13th To 1E Flour Barrels 4.00
Dec 14th To Pork four pounds at 9 cts per lbs 0.32
To ½ Bushel Potatoes at 2/6 per Bushel 0.15

To two Cows Bought 29th Sept 1839, paid $40 each
principal and Interest $47.38

21st Jan 1840 To Hay and Oats for Horses $47.11
For taking care of Horses two Months 20.00
$168.45

Figure 115: This farm account from 6 February 1840 reveals that Lindenwald was agriculturally productive in the first season after Van Buren purchased the estate in 1839, before he moved there. Under the oversight of John R. Harder, the farm produced oats, hay, apples, buckwheat, and potatoes. This document also gives an indication of the schedule of production at Lindenwald. Harder sold livestock in the spring, and he harvested oats in May, hay in July, and apples and potatoes in the fall. In April 1849, Harder purchased timothy, clover, buckwheat, and potatoes for planting, as well as plaster for fertilizer. ("Kinderhook Feb 6th 1840, Produce sold from the Farm," xerox on file at MVB NHS).

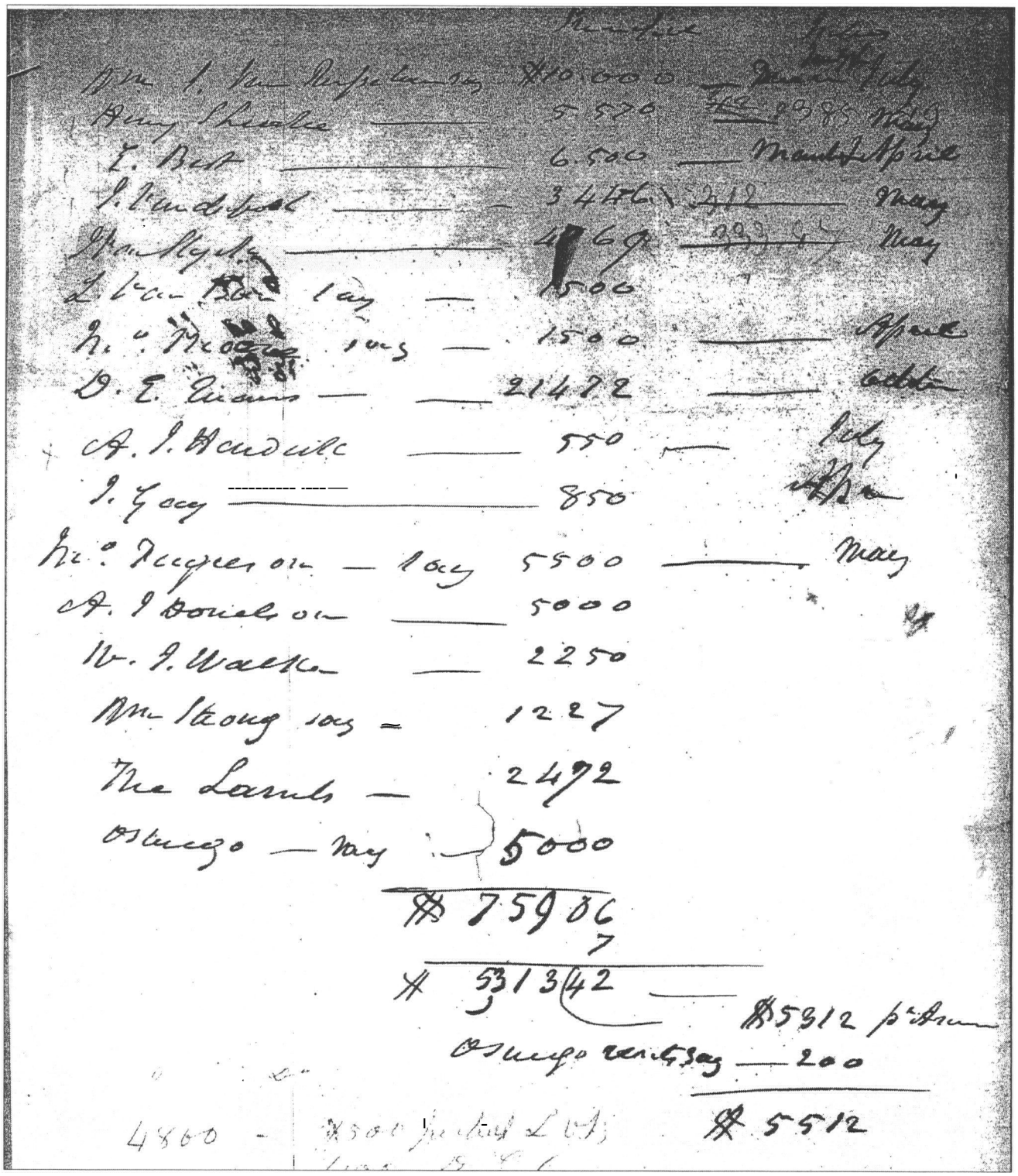


Figure 116: This account includes payments to a number of men, presumably laborers, for their work at the farm. It indicates that in addition to the tenants and laborers listed on the census forms,Van Buren hired numerous seasonal laborers to work on the farm. ("Expenses and Disbursements from the 1st April [18]45 Extraordinary," xerox on file at MVB NHS).

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
99 Warren Street
Brookline, Massachusetts 02445
617.566.1689
www.nps.gov/frla/oclp.htm