

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Pelster House-Barn; Pelster, Wilhelm, House-Barn

AND/OR COMMON

Pelster-Panhorst House-Barn

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

☒ VICINITY OF New Haven

#8 - Hon. Richard H. Ichord

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Missouri

29

Franklin

071

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

## OWNERSHIP

## STATUS

## PRESENT USE

☐ DISTRICT☐ PUBLIC☐ OCCUPIED☐ AGRICULTURE☐ MUSEUM☒ BUILDING(S)☒ PRIVATE☒ UNOCCUPIED☐ COMMERCIAL☐ PARK☐ STRUCTURE☐ BOTH☐ WORK IN PROGRESS☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ SITE**PUBLIC ACQUISITION****ACCESSIBLE**☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ RELIGIOUS☐ OBJECT☐ IN PROCESS☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ GOVERNMENT☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ BEING CONSIDERED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ NO☐ MILITARY☒ OTHER: not in use**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Harry E. and Jean Panhorst

STREET &amp; NUMBER

2840 West Clay

CITY, TOWN

St. Charles

VICINITY OF

STATE

Missouri 63301

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the County Recorder

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Franklin County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Union

STATE

Missouri 63084

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

1. Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE

1973

☒ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

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3. Fiedler, Alfred, and Helbig, Jochen. Das Bauernhaus in Sachsen. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1967.
4. Fitchen, John. The New World Dutch Barn: A Study of its Characteristics, Its Structural System and Its Probable Erectional Procedures. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1968.
5. History of Franklin, Jefferson, Washington, Crawford and Gasconade Counties, Missouri. Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1888.
6. Jans, Jan. Lanelijke bouwkunst in Oost-Nederland. Almelo, New Netherlands; M.J. Van Der Loeff, 1969.
7. Kiel, Herman Gottlieb. The Centennial Biographical Directory of Franklin County, Missouri. Washington, D.C.: By the author, 1925.
8. Linderer, Nanette. Information compiled for Historic American Buildings Survey, 1973.
9. New Haven Leader. March 10, 1966.
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11. Pelster, Alfred. Telephone conversation with Claire F. Blackwell. June 27, 1978.
12. Perrin, Richard W.E. Wisconsin Architecture. Washington, D.C.: Historic American Buildings Survey, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1965.
13. \_\_\_\_\_ The Architecture of Wisconsin. Madison, Wisconsin: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1967.
14. Pinney, William B. Correspondence with Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Office of Historic Preservation. May 23, 1974.
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16. Tishler, W.H. "The Site Arrangement of Rural Farmsteads," Bulletin (The Association for Preservation Technology) X, no. 1, 1978, pp. 63-78.

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- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| 2. Historic Sites in Franklin County, Missouri<br>1978<br>Franklin County Historical Society<br>Union, Missouri 63084            | local |
| 3. Missouri State Historical Survey<br>1978<br>Department of Natural Resources<br>P.O. Box 176<br>Jefferson City, Missouri 65102 | state |

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17. van Ravenswaay, Charles. The Arts and Architecture of the German Settlements in Missouri: A Survey of a Vanishing Culture. Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1977.
18. The Washington Citizen. August 21, 1908.
19. West, Trudy. The Timber-frame House in England. New York: Architectural Book Publishing Co., 1971.
20. Wrenn, Tony P. and Mulloy, Elizabeth D. America's Forgotten Architecture. Washington, D.C.: The National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1976.
21. Zippelius, Adelhart. Das Bauernhaus: Am unteren Deutschen Niederrhein. Wuppertal, Germany: Verlag A. Martini & Gruttenfien GmbH., 1957.

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Pelster House-Barn is located in the vicinity of New Haven, in rural Franklin County, Missouri. Designed to accomodate livestock and owners under one roof, it is a rectangular, weatherboarded building of half-timbered and masonry construction, banked into a slope and consisting of a complex arrangement of four interior levels. Its design and construction reflect medieval northern European building traditions and techniques as interpreted by German immigrants in Missouri ca. 1860-1864.

#### Details of Construction

Ground dimensions of the structure are approximately 60' in width by 53' in depth. It has a 24" thick foundation of roughly squared and coursed stone, which is fully visible on the west elevation and almost completely banked into the hillside on the east (primary) elevation. The binding mortar is spread heavily, covering irregularities and resulting in a remarkably even surface. Stone support piers of the foundation level are of similar construction and measure 18" in thickness. The stone is a combination of sandstone and limestone.

Resting on the stone foundation is a heavy, hand-hewn timber frame of typical German Fachwerk construction. White oak columns (8" square) bear on a heavy wooden sill. Intermediate beams brace the columns and form the framing of windows and doors, and diagonal timbers brace the end panels. 5" square columns form the second floor (third level) framing. Girts are notched into the top beam, and the rafters are pegged to a sill which rests on the girts. No ridge pole is used; rafters are notched and joined with pegs. Letters and Roman numerals used to mark the various sections for assembly are visible throughout. No nails are used in the construction; joints are mortised, tenoned and pegged. Most timbers are roughly squared, with the marks of the broad axe clearly visible. The rafters, however, were flattened on the upper face only. Nogging of rubble limestone and plaster fills the interstices between timbers of the framing of most of the exterior and interior walls of the second and third levels of the barn. However, nogging is not used within the house section, nor carried beyond the third level of the barn. Unpainted clapboards mask the framing on the exterior, though metal siding has been added on the west and north elevations.

A steeply pitched gable roof covers the structure, sloping down on the east elevation to shelter a porch with turned posts on the south end and an enclosed storage area on the north end. The center of that facade is marked by a gabled wagon entrance, measuring about 10' in height by 6' in width, which extends through the main roofline. The present turned porch posts were added sometime after 1917, replacing original chamfered posts and a latticework railing. The original wood-shingled roof is now covered with corrugated sheet metal, an alteration made prior to 1917. One stuccoed-brick chimney, contained within the fabric, extends through the roof ridge of the house section.

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Window treatment is varied and includes double-hung sash, casement and unglazed openings. Windows on the first floor (second level) of the house section are six-over-six light, double-hung sash, while those of the second floor (third level) are fixed six light openings.

A slight overhang, beginning just above the second floor windows of the house section, occurs on the south side. The overhang is supported by a beam which extends between the plates receiving the rafters. The ends of these plates are visible on the exterior.

House Section

The house section occupies the southern third of the building. On the first level is a cellar for storage of fruit and vegetables. The cellar is divided from the cattle stalls running the length of the west side of that level by a stone wall 18" in thickness. A flight of stairs leading down from the central hall of the barn on the second level, now removed, originally provided access to the central hall running north-south on the first level. A door on the south end of that corridor (at the foot of the original stairs) leads from the barn area to the fruit cellar.

The second level of the house section (first floor) consists of two rooms, each about 20' square, and a narrow room at the rear (west), probably used for cooking and weaving. The only exterior entrance to the house section is located on the east side, under the porch. Access from the central hall of the barn section is provided by doors on the southern wall of that hall. In addition, a door leads from a room behind the central hall to the cooking/weaving area.

Two rooms with low ceilings occupy the third level (second floor) of the house section. The rear of these two is reached via a staircase which runs up the south wall of the central hall of the barn. A doorway leads from the rear bedroom to the front one. From the narrow landing at the top of the staircase, one can gain access to the loft area over the southern two-thirds of the structure (fourth level).

The interior walls of the house section are covered with lath and plaster and painted. Floors throughout are tongue and groove plank. The ceiling of the first floor (second level) is beaded board, while the ceiling joists are left exposed on the second floor (third level). Doors on the first floor are four-panelled; those on the second floor are vertical, beaded board with crosswise battens. Vestiges of original painted decoration in the form of swirling lines remain on the upstairs doors and frames, a rare ornamental touch in an otherwise spartan dwelling.

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Barn Section

The first level of the barn section consists of stables and stalls for livestock and horses and grain and storage bins. An opening on the southwest end leads into a long, narrow stable. A manger runs along the interior length of the stable. Double doors centered on the northern side lead into a low, narrow, dimly lit corridor which provides access to stalls and bins on either side. Directly to the west of that entranceway is the main horse stall, with its own feeding trough. Directly to the east is another stall, perhaps for calves or cows with calves. Next to that stall is a hay chute with a sloping floor, followed by a storage area with a very low ceiling. An opening on the northeast end leads to the storage shed opposite the porch on the east facade. Construction of the shed is inferior to the rest of the barn, suggesting that it was added later. The initials G.P., perhaps referring to Gustav Pelster, son of the original builder, were found carved on a wooden work ledge along the east wall of the shed. Opposite the shed, under the house porch, is another storage area.

Major access to the second level of the barn is gained from the wagon entrance centered on the east side. A slightly inclined concrete ramp (not original) leads to the doorway. The double wagon doors are constructed of vertical, beaded boards, braced on the back with battens in a double Z pattern. These doors open directly onto a wide central hallway or Diele, which extends two levels in height. The floor is covered with wide, tongue and groove planks, fastened originally with pegs, though nails have since been added. Along the southern wall of that hall is the staircase leading to the bedrooms of the house. The staircase is flanked by doors leading into the first floor of the house. The stairway has low risers with very narrow treads and is enclosed with a balustrade with a molded handrail. A doorway on the rear (west) wall leads to a narrow room which is adjacent to the kitchen/weaving area of the house. Grain storage areas are located to the north of the hall, convenient to the central hall where threshing and winnowing activities took place. Two bins immediately on the north are enclosed on all sides and accessible by ladders. Behind these areas are two rooms used for grain storage. Limestone and plaster nogging is evident on all walls of both granaries. A hay loft, occupying the northern third of the building, corresponds approximately to the third level of the house section. It is accessible by a ladder fastened to the front end of the northern side of the hall. The final (fourth) level of the barn section consists of the crowning hayloft, which occupies the southern two-thirds of the building. This loft has two tiers, the highest tier only slightly elevated from the first and occupying a space equal to the southern third or house section of the structure. Double doors are located in the gable end of the north end, providing access to the general loft area.

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**ALTERATIONS**

Alterations made to the Pelster House-Barn have been minimal and have not affected the overall integrity of the structure. The most drastic alteration involved the restructuring of the north end of the roof in order to accommodate the addition of a hay track. This involved the installation of purlins and posts to support the weakened roof. Collar beams of the roof were sawn off and used to support the purlins. The hay track is suspended just below the ridge line of the roof. The hay loft doors in the north gable end may have been added at this time. In addition, it appears that part of the framing supporting a loft over the northern third of the structure at the fourth level was removed. Sawn off floor joists give an indication of this modification.

The porch on the front (east) side of the house section was originally supported by simple, chamfered posts and had a latticework railing. As the original posts are visible in a photograph dating ca. 1917, the present turned posts must have been added after that date.

The original wood shingles of the roof are covered with corrugated sheet metal, an addition made prior to 1917. Metal impressed with a brick pattern covers much of the west side; over this has been placed another layer of corrugated metal. Metal panels also cover much of the north side.

**SITE**

The Pelster House-Barn is located in the vicinity of New Haven, Franklin County, Missouri. Franklin County, along with Gasconade and Warren Counties, was an area of extensive German settlement during the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century. This heavy German settlement, coupled with the dramatic natural setting reminiscent of the fatherland, led to the nickname the "Missouri Rhineland." The Pelster House-Barn sits in the heart of this region, in a well-forested, hilly area. The structure is located so as to receive the best possible advantage from the site. Oriented to the east, it is banked into a hill which slopes from east to west. Both the cattle stalls and the front porch receive the benefits of the prevailing southwestern breeze. Originally several outbuildings, including a pigpen and style, and dogtrot type log cabin including corn crib, barn and shed were located on the property. The only remaining structure is a milkhouse, of more recent vintage than the house-barn, and therefore of secondary interest.

The nominated property includes the tract of land of approximately 38 acres which surrounds the Pelster House-Barn. As part of the original farmstead of Wilhelm Pelster, the land bears a fundamental relationship to the house-barn and is therefore



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significant to the overall historical integrity of the site.<sup>1</sup> Earmarked by the owners for inclusion in any future gift or sale of the Pelster House-Barn, the land provides an historically appropriate, agrarian setting for a structure of unique importance in respect to agriculture, architecture and history.

**CONDITION AND PRESENT STATUS**

Once a thriving farm facility, the Pelster House-Barn presently serves as little more than a storage area. The house section is occupied occasionally as a weekend residence, and the barn section provides storage for farm equipment. Although in good structural condition as a result of its masterful construction, it is rapidly falling into an advanced state of deterioration on account of neglect. The original weatherboarding has seriously deteriorated, and the interior of the house section is badly in need of restoration.

The present owners, Harry E. and Jean Panhorst, have little use for the structure themselves, but they are interested in its preservation. They have expressed the willingness to sell or donate the Pelster House-Barn and the surrounding acres to an organization interested in preservation and restoration of the structure. However, definite offers have been slow in forthcoming, though many experts have praised the structure on account of its unique importance as a representation of old world culture as interpreted by Germans in Missouri. Most recently, both the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Missouri State Parks System have expressed interest in the building and in its possible restoration and use as a farm museum. Although no concrete plans have been made, it is quite possible that the Pelster House-Barn and surrounding acreage may be acquired by the State of Missouri for inclusion in the roster of historic sites within the State Park System.

FOOTNOTES

1. The inherent relationship of farm structures to their surroundings has been stressed by William H. Tishler in "The Site Arrangement of Rural Farmsteads", Bulletin (The Association for Preservation Technology) X, no. 1, 1978, p. 73.

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

ca. 1860-1864

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Wilhelm Pelster

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Pelster House-Barn, New Haven vicinity, Franklin County, Missouri, is of major significance in the areas of architecture, agriculture, and the history of the German settlements in Missouri. The structure is a rare American example of a type with medieval northern European antecedents, namely the combination of house and barn in one unit. The Pelster House-Barn is one of two known remaining house-barns in the United States. Built around 1860-1864 by Wilhelm Pelster, a German immigrant, it is a well-preserved example of Fachwerk or German half-timbered framing. The construction of the house-barn, with a heavy frame of hand-hewn timbers, mortised, tenoned and pegged, and resting on a massive stone foundation, provides a direct link with the time-honored building traditions and techniques of the old world. The Pelster House-Barn is important in the history of agriculture, for it represents an efficiently designed farmstead designed in the European manner, but adapted to life in rural Missouri.

With the extensive depletion of forest reserves in central Europe toward the end of the Middle Ages, horizontal-log construction became impractical. Half-timbered construction, which required much less wood than log construction, came into fashion as the more economical method of building. Known in Germany as Fachwerkbau, half-timbering was common in Germany from medieval times until the nineteenth century, when it was introduced to Missouri during the successive phases of German immigration. Used exclusively by Germans in Missouri, Fachwerkbau was never assimilated into the mainstream of local building traditions and thus remains a distinguishing feature of German structures in Missouri.<sup>2</sup>

The Pelster House-Barn is a fine example of Fachwerk construction. Massive, white oak timbers, hewn to desired size and shape with a broad axe, form the framing. All joints are expertly mortised, tenoned and secured with oak pegs. Insulation for certain areas of the structure is provided by noggings of limestone and plaster laid between the framing members. In keeping with old world traditions, each section of the frame bears a chiseled Roman numeral, designating its place in the structure. Pieces were undoubtedly laid out on the ground and assembled. Then each section or bent was raised into place individually and temporarily braced, while the next bent was assembled on the ground.<sup>3</sup>

Although constructed basically in the Germanic tradition, the house-barn exhibits certain features which reflect an adaptation to the Missouri climate and way of life. For example, the practice of sheathing buildings with weatherboarding was uncommon in Germany, primarily due to the shortage of lumber there.<sup>4</sup> The practice was widespread

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in Missouri however, probably as a result of both the severity of the climate and the availability of timber. The Pelster House-Barn was obviously built with the intention of weatherboarding, for nogging was not used within the house section and not continued the full height of the barn section. In addition, the front porch of the house section, a feature not found on German examples, represents an adaptation of traditional design to suit local preference and climate.

One unusual feature of the house-barn, which is commonly seen in Germany but rarely found in German structures built in America, is the overhanging second story. This feature, occurring on the south facade just above the second story windows, is rare in Missouri, occurring on only one other known example, the Brun House in Westphalia.<sup>5</sup> This unusual feature has been explained as a method of providing additional support for interior loads by the extension of the plates.<sup>6</sup> However, it seems more likely that the overhang, a very slight one at that, was built to provide weather protection for the windows below. Yet another explanation is that it may represent a survival of a traditional feature without meaning or use.

The tradition of combining house and barn under one roof was also of medieval ancestry. As early as the 14th century in Holland and northern Germany, structures were built to shelter humans and livestock together, often without benefit of partitions between living and stabling areas. Known in Holland as the "los hoes" and in Germany as the "Hallenhaus," this fundamental type was longitudinally oriented, with the house section occupying one end and the barn section the other. Wagon doors on the gable end of the barn section led to a central threshing hall. This basic type, with regional variations and modifications over the years, was still being built in northern Europe in the nineteenth century.<sup>7</sup>

From time immemorial, Europeans have lived in close contact with their animals, and farmsteads still exist that combine under one roof barn, byre, and house. The Saxon house/farm in Europe is said to have been a survival of the ancient and typically Saxon house common to all Aryan peoples at an early stage in their development.<sup>8</sup>

In Switzerland and the southern Alpine region of Germany, house-barns assumed a different form. These structures were often banked into the slope of a hillside, with the ground level serving as a stable. While the rear wall of the stable was insulated by the hill, the front was oriented to receive maximum benefit from the sun and wind. The upper level contained the living quarters, storage areas, and threshing hall, which was reached via an inclined ramp. In some cases a hay loft was added on the third level.<sup>9</sup>

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The Pelster House-Barn has much in common with the latter type. It utilizes the slope of a hillside to advantage and is comprised of a complex arrangement of interior levels. However, the wide background of Missouri's German settlers and the widespread diffusion of similar building types throughout Germany makes it difficult to find a particular area of origin for the Pelster House-Barn.<sup>10</sup>

The decision of Wilhelm Pelster to erect a house-barn was a rather unusual one. Although common in Germany, the house-barn as a type rarely survived the transplanting of European culture in America.

The combination of barn and farmhouse in a single building never took root in America, but in Europe the combination was widely used as a practical solution to a number of problems. One structure is cheaper and easier to maintain than two or more, particularly where land is expensive and building costs are high. Also, the farmer saved many working hours by concentrating in one building all indoor farm work. There, too, he or his wife could easily keep their eye on their family, their possessions, and the farm work.<sup>11</sup>

Perhaps the availability of timber and the relative low cost of land in America made adherence to such frugal traditions unnecessary. Furthermore, social pressures may have been influential. Americans may well have looked down upon such "uncivilized" foreign customs as the combining of house and barn in one. Whatever the reasons, house-barns were rarely built in America. In the German settlements in Missouri and Wisconsin the tradition survived to a limited extent. This tradition is exemplified in the two known remaining examples, the Pelster House-Barn in Missouri and the Langholff House and Barn in Wisconsin.<sup>12</sup>

Charles van Ravenswaay has suggested an affinity of Missouri Fachwerk structures with Hannoverian or Hessian prototypes. He bases this conjecture on the similarities of construction, involving the use of heavy timbers, the rectangular panels formed between the framing members, and the use of long, diagonal braces.<sup>13</sup> A comparison between Missouri Fachwerk structures and those of Wisconsin reveal further similarities in construction. Heavy timbers of white oak formed the framing. Diagonal timbers braced the end panels, and intermediate posts framed windows and doors. Rafters were often flattened on one side only. Mortise and tenon joints with oak pegs were used throughout, and Roman numerals identified the position of various sections within the framing. These and other features link the construction methods of Wisconsin and Missouri examples.<sup>14</sup>

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The Pelster House-Barn and the Langholff House and Barn have in common many of these structural features. However, whereas the Missouri example was always weatherboarded, the Wisconsin example was left unsheathed, with angular patterns of the framing and contrasting nogging exposed. While limestone and plaster forms the underlying nogging of the Pelster House-Barn, the Langholff House and Barn has a combination of mud and straw over wood staves and brick. A further major difference in construction is evident in the Langholff structure, which features a central, vaulted brick smoking room or "schwarze Küche." This feature, common in Wisconsin structures, is not found in Missouri. The Pelster House-Barn<sup>15</sup> reflects a different tradition, utilizing wood stoves for cooking and heating.

The Wisconsin and Missouri house-barns are somewhat similar in respect to basic plan. As mentioned earlier, many northern European house-barns were longitudinally oriented. Both the Missouri and Wisconsin examples differ in having crosswise threshing halls, with wagon doors located on the long ends. Both examples consist of two levels in the living area, while hay lofts create additional levels over the basic barn areas.<sup>16</sup>

Despite certain similarities of construction and plan with the Wisconsin house-barn, the Pelster House-Barn stands as an important structure in its own right. The existence of the Langholff House and Barn, rather than diminishing the importance of the Missouri example, adds to the body of knowledge about this rare American translation of a common European type, the house-barn. Recognition of such vernacular structures has been slow in forthcoming. Their preservation is vital to the understanding and appreciation of our culture, which owes so much to the contributions of immigrant cultures.

Wilhelm Pelster

The Pelster family came to America around 1850 or earlier.<sup>17</sup> Although the specific reason for their departure is unknown, it may well have been spurred by the prevailing conditions of unrest and discontent in the turbulent Germany of the 1840's and 50's. Many of those who emigrated were small farmers, who sought a better fortune in the new world.<sup>18</sup>

Whatever the reasons for their departure, around 1850 Philip Frederick Pelster, his wife Mary, and his sons Rodolph and Wilhelm, arrived in Missouri, settling in Franklin County. In 1856, Wilhelm (William) Pelster, then 32 years of age,<sup>19</sup> purchased the plot of land where he would eventually build a house-barn in the tradition of the old world.<sup>20</sup> Initially he built a temporary dwelling where he lived until the completion of his house-barn. There is no written documentation to substantiate

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PELSTER HOUSE-BARN

CONTINUATION SHEET

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the date of construction of the house-barn, but according to local tradition, construction was begun before the Civil War, probably around 1860. As related by Alfred Pelster, a descendant of Wilhelm, construction was interrupted by a Confederate raid and finished after the war.<sup>21</sup>

Wilhelm Pelster lived in his house-barn until a few years before his death in 1908. Married three times, Pelster was survived by ten children.<sup>22</sup> The Pelster House-Barn and farm remained in the hands of the Pelster family until 1955, when it was sold to Maurice and Grace Barrett. The Barretts sold the property to Harry and Jean Panhorst, the present owners, in 1961.<sup>23</sup>

The survey of Missouri's historic sites is based on the selection of sites as they relate to theme studies outlined in "Missouri's State Historic Preservation Plan." Accordingly, the Pelster House-Barn is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as an example of the themes of "Agriculture," "Architecture," and "Society."

FOOTNOTES

1. The other known remaining example is the Langholff House and Barn, Watertown vicinity, Dodge County, Wisconsin. See: Richard W.E. Perrin, The Architecture of Wisconsin (Madison, Wisconsin: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1967), pp. 7, 10. Another example near Hermann has lost its original integrity through extensive alteration. See: Charles van Ravenswaay, The Arts and Architecture of the German Settlements in Missouri: A Survey of a Vanishing Culture (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1977), p. 267.
2. van Ravenswaay discusses the German Fachwerk tradition at length in The Arts and Architecture of the German Settlements in Missouri, pp. 145-177.
3. The custom of marking pieces for assembly with Roman numerals extends back into medieval times. See: Trudy West, The Timber-frame House in England (New York: Architectural Book Publishing Co., 1971), pp. 60-62. Information on numbering, assembling and raising of the bents as practiced in the new world is given in: John L. Rempel, Building With Wood (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), pp. 104, 109; John Fitch, The New World Dutch Barn: A Study of its Characteristics, Its Structural System and Its Probable Erectional Procedures (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1968), pp. 36-37.
4. van Ravenswaay, The Arts and Architecture of the German Settlements in Missouri, pp. 145-150.

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PELSTER HOUSE-BARN

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5. The Dr. Bernard Bruns House, a half-timbered structure in Westphalia, exhibits this overhang. The overall absence of this feature is documented by van Ravenswaay in The Arts and Architecture of the German Settlements in Missouri, p. 146.
6. Ibid.
7. For information on the early northern European examples of this type see: Eric Arthur and Dudley Witney, The Barn: A Vanishing Landmark in North America (Toronto: A & W Visual Library, 1972), pp. 37-41; Jan Jans, Landelijke bouwkunst in Oost-Nederland (Almelo, New Netherlands; M.J. Van Der Loeff, 1969); Adelhart Zippelius, Das Bauernhaus: Am unteren Deutschen Niederrhein (Wuppertal, Germany: Verlag A. Martini & Gruttfien GmbH., 1957), pp. 21-50.
8. Arthur and Witney, The Barn, p. 38.
9. van Ravenswaay, The Arts and Architecture of the German Settlements in Missouri, p. 267.
10. When interviewed by phone on June 27, 1978, Alfred Pelster had no knowledge of the regional background of the Pelster family. This information, combined with a regional study of house-barns and framing techniques in Germany, would be extremely helpful in pinpointing the origins of the Pelster House-Barn.
11. van Ravenswaay, The Arts and Architecture of the German Settlements in Missouri, p. 266.
12. Although house-barns were common in Holland, there is no remaining evidence that this tradition was continued in Dutch settlements in America. In New England a type of continuous architecture developed in which the house, barn and other farm facilities were interconnected. However, this type seems to have been an adaptation to the severity of the New England climate, rather than a survival of a European type. In this type the buildings were actually separate structures united by covered passageways, whereas the type exemplified by the Pelster House-Barn combines all farm facilities plus dwelling quarters under one roof.
13. van Ravenswaay, The Arts and Architecture of the German Settlements in Missouri, pp. 147-149.
14. Richard W.E. Perrin, Wisconsin Architecture (Washington, D.C.: Historic American Buildings Survey, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1965), pp. 16-17.

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PELSTER HOUSE-BARN

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15. Perrin, Wisconsin Architecture, p. 16
16. Most German house-barns seem to have had a longitudinal plan. Wagon doors were located on the gable end of the barn section, opening onto the threshing hall which also ran lengthwise. The crosswise orientation of the threshing hall seems to have been much less frequent. An example with a crosswise threshing hall or "Querdiele" and wagon entrance on the long side is pictured in Zippelius, Das Bauernhaus, p. 186, plate 57.
17. The Pelster family is listed in the 1850 census. See Elizabeth Prather Ellsberry, ed., 1850 Federal Census for Franklin County, Missouri (Chillicothe, Mo.: n.p., n.d.), p. 80.
18. van Ravenswaay, The Arts and Architecture of the German Settlements in Missouri, pp. 4-5.
19. Ellsberry, ed., 1850 Census, p. 80.
20. Nanette Linderer, Information compiled for Historic American Buildings Survey, 1973.
21. Alfred Pelster, a descendant of Wilhelm Pelster, presently lives in New Haven, Missouri. Born and raised in the Pelster House-Barn, he is the source of most of the information known about the Pelster family and the events surrounding the construction of the house-barn. Some of his interesting recollections are included by van Ravenswaay in The Arts and Architecture of the German Settlements in Missouri, pp. 283-284.
22. The Washington Citizen, August 21, 1908.
23. Linderer, Information compiled for Historic American Buildings Survey, 1973.



## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Arthur, Eric, and Witney, Dudley. The Barn: A Vanishing Landmark in North America. Toronto: A & W Visual Library, 1972.
2. Ellsberry, Elizabeth Prather, ed. 1850 Federal Census for Franklin County, Missouri. Chillicothe, Mo.: n.p., n.d.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approximately 38 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME "Gerald, Mo."

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 15 6511020 4261790

B 15 650790 4261440

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C 15 6510315 4261710

D 15 650580 4260050

E         

F         

G         

H         

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at UTM point 15/650355/4261710, the boundary of the nominated property runs along the southeast side of Buffalo Ridge Road in a northeasterly direction to the adjoining property line on the north (DePriest), at which point it turns abruptly

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Claire F. Blackwell, Architectural Historian

July 6, 1978

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Department of Nat. Resources, Office of Historic Preservation

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

P.O. Box 176

314/751-4096

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Jefferson City

Missouri 65102

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X

STATE   

LOCAL   

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE Director, Department of Natural Resources and  
State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST: KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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PELSTER HOUSE-BARN

CONTINUATION SHEET

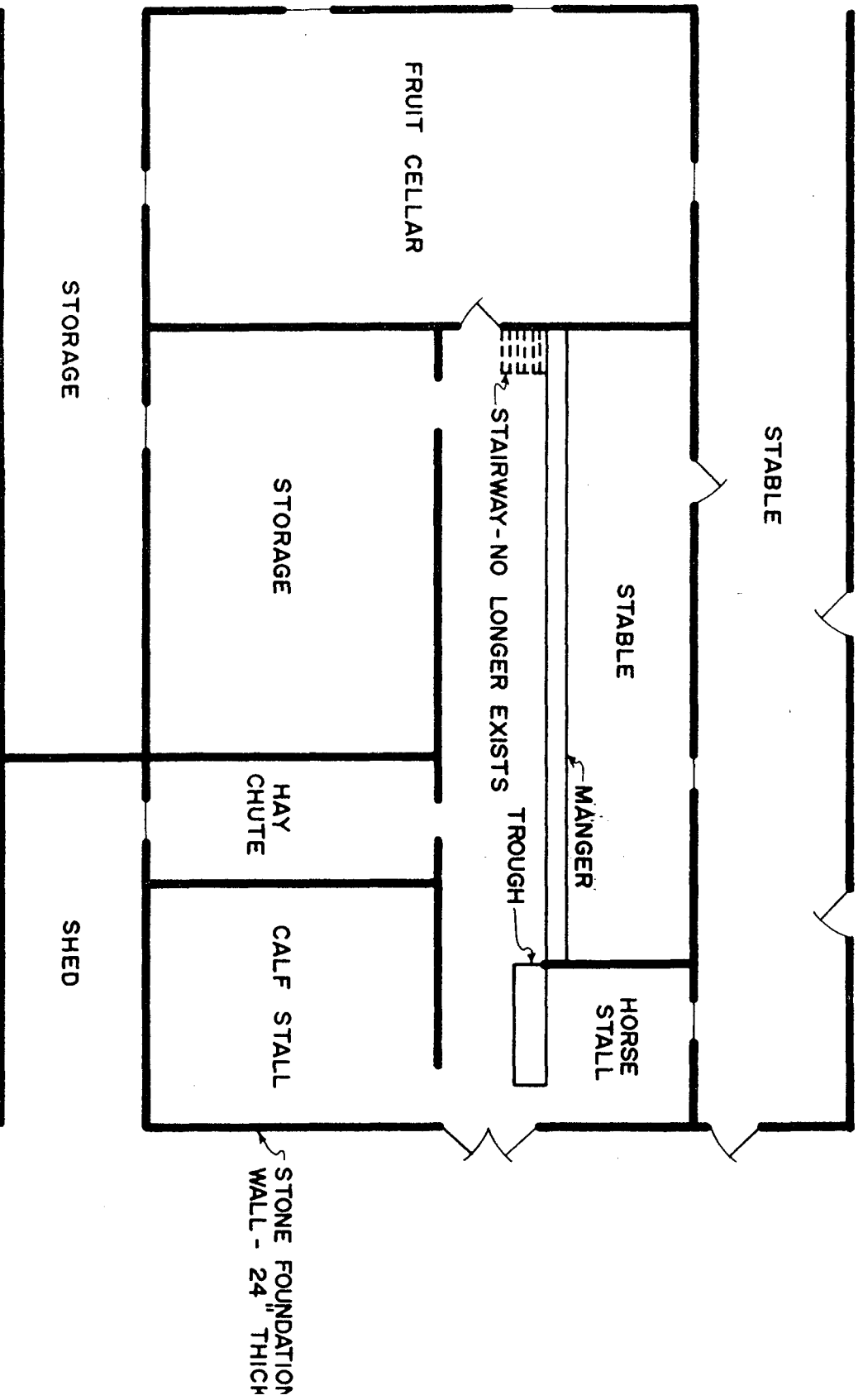
ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 1

eastward, running for approximately 400 meters along the aforementioned property line, until it reaches Cedar Fork Road; thence it runs along the southwestern side of Cedar Fork Road in a southeasterly direction to UTM point 15/651020/4261790, where it turns southwest at a 90° angle, running in a straight line to UTM point 15/650790/4261440, where it turns northwest at a 90° angle, continuing in a straight line until its intersection with the starting point.

PELSTER HOUSE-BARN  
NEW HAVEN VICINITY, MISSOURI  
FRANKLIN COUNTY



NOT TO SCALE

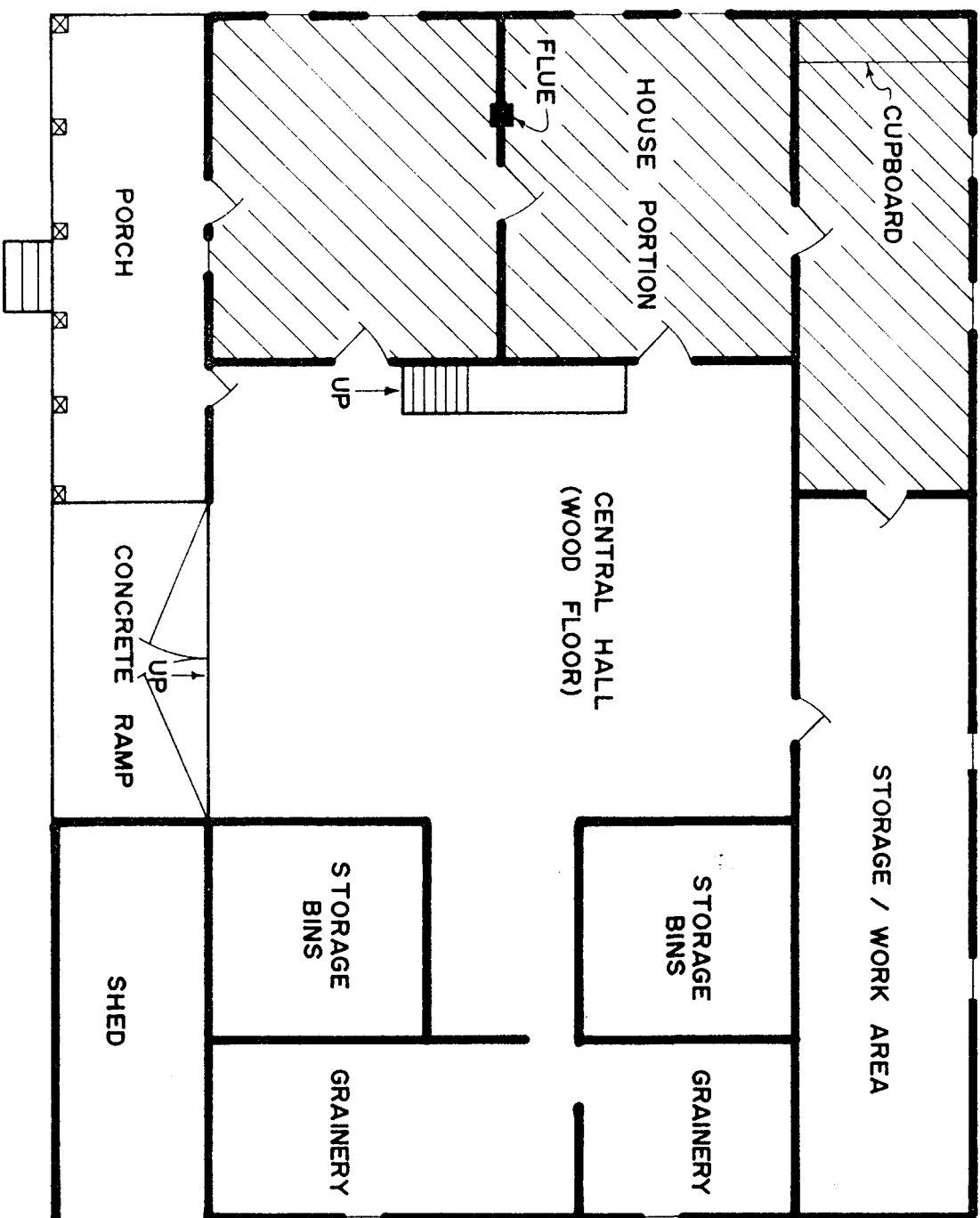


LEVEL ONE

PELSTER HOUSE-BARN  
NEW HAVEN VICINITY, MISSOURI  
FRANKLIN COUNTY



NOT TO SCALE

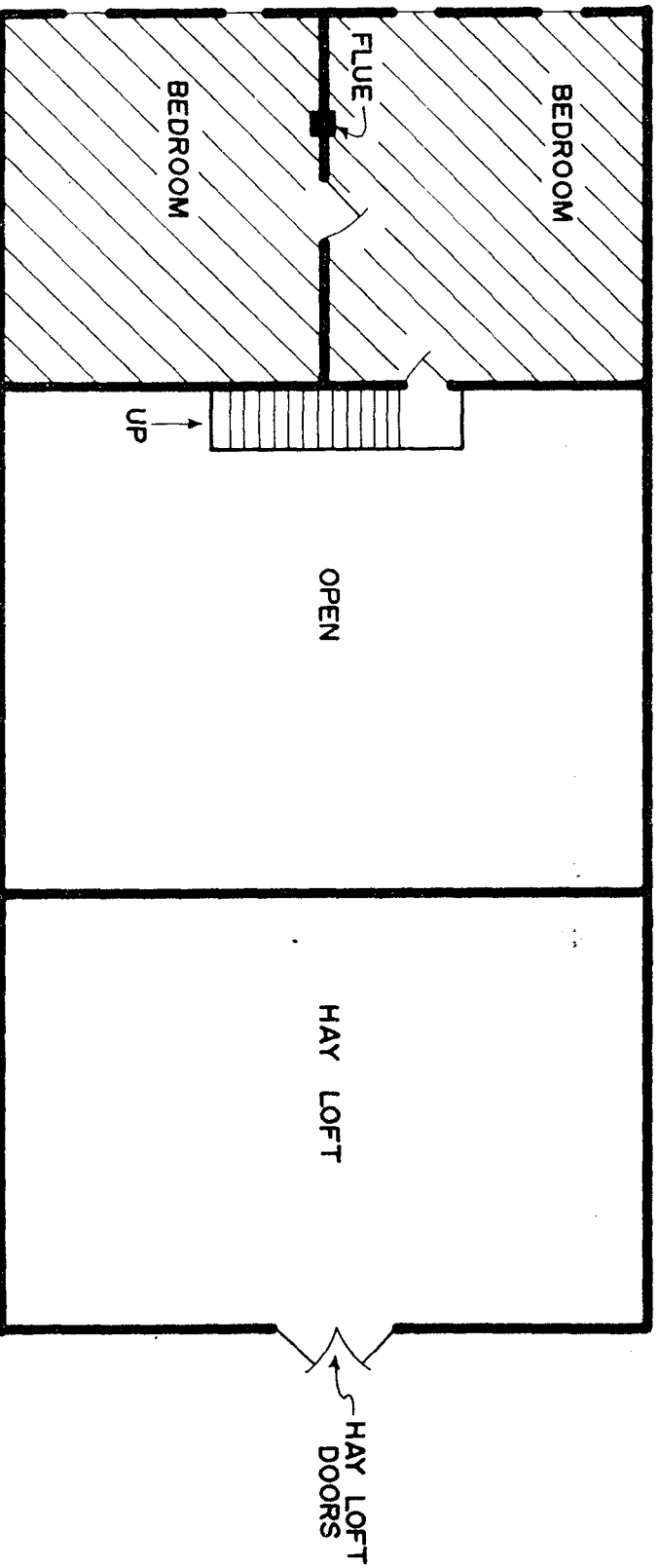


LEVEL TWO

PELSTER HOUSE-BARN  
NEW HAVEN VICINITY, MISSOURI  
FRANKLIN COUNTY



NOT TO SCALE

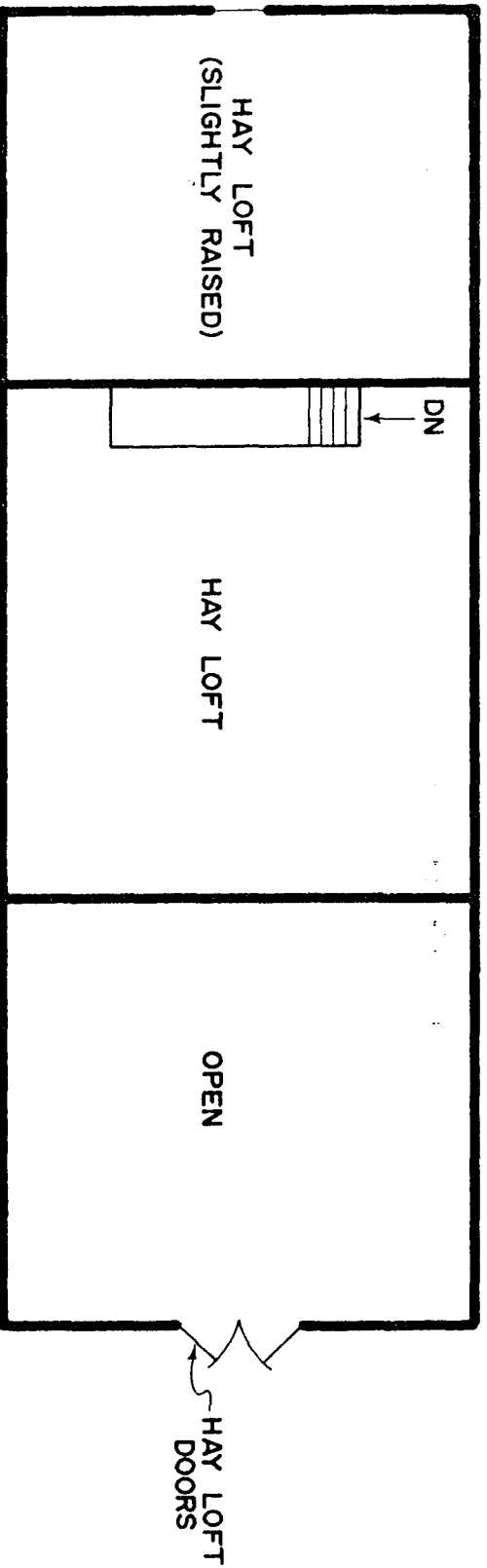


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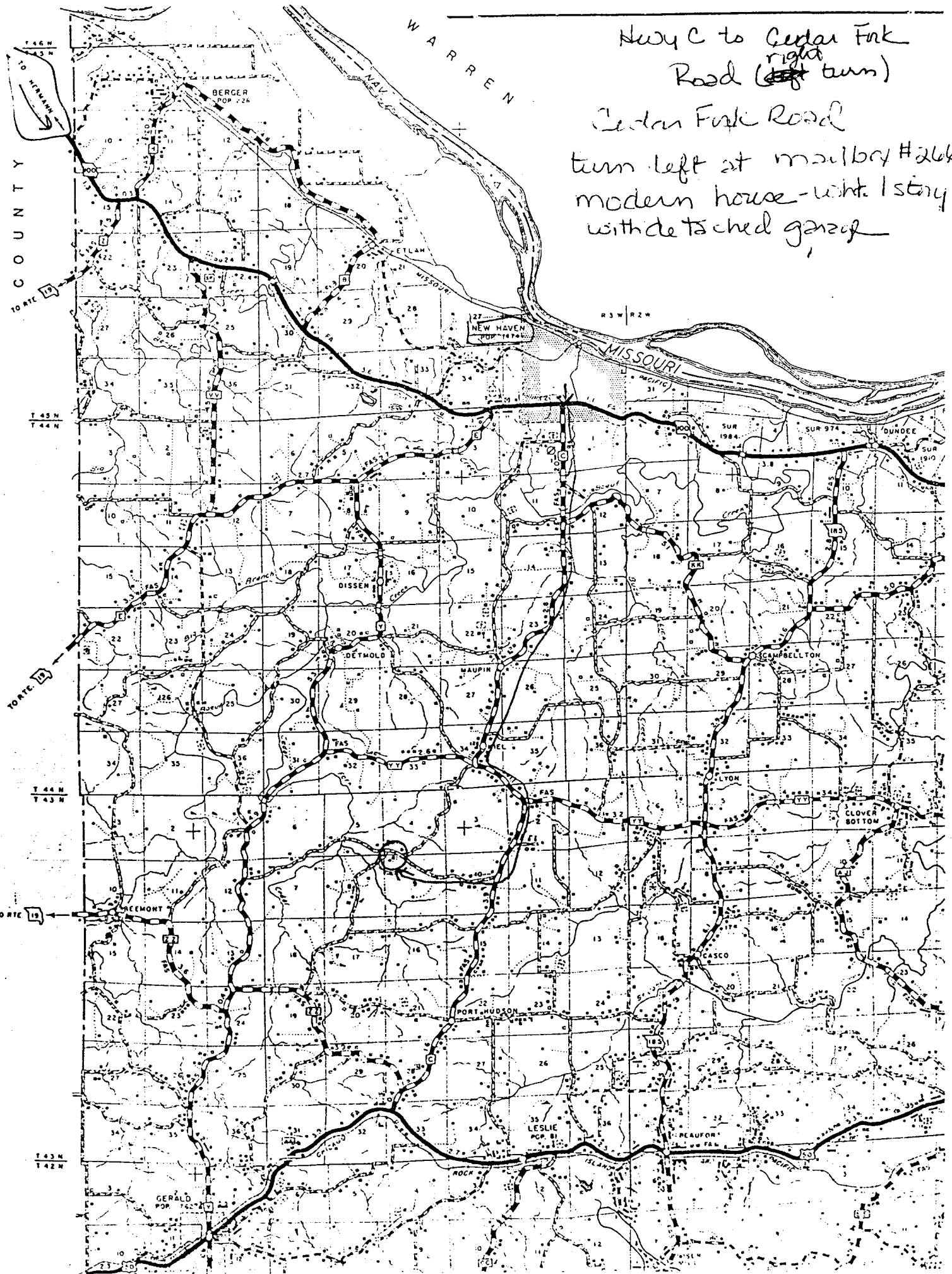
PELSTER HOUSE-BARN  
NEW HAVEN VICINITY, MISSOURI  
FRANKLIN COUNTY

NOT TO SCALE

Z



LEVEL FOUR

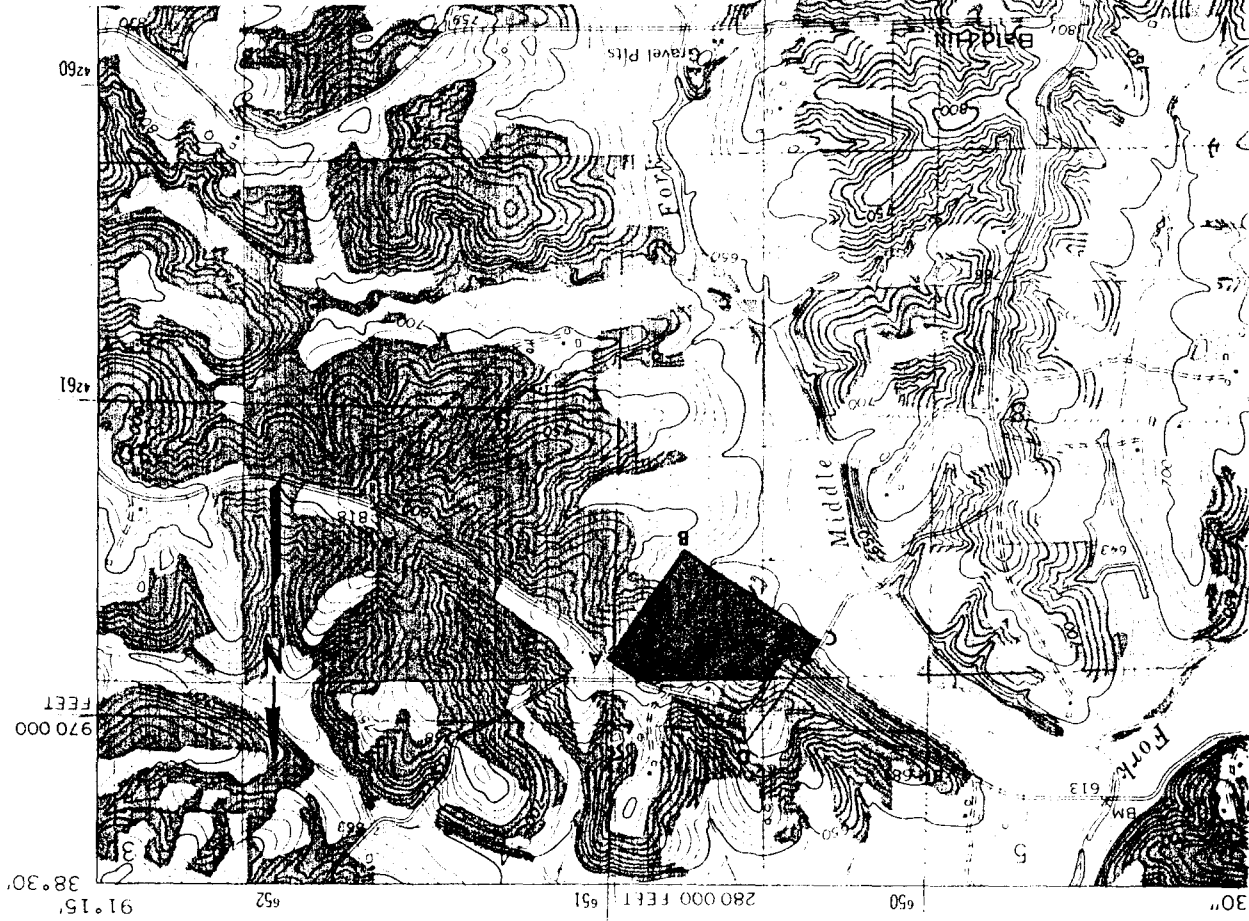


Highway C to Cedar Fork  
Road (~~left~~ <sup>right</sup> turn)

Cedar Fork Road  
turn left at mailbox #266  
modern house - w/ht. 1 story  
with detached garage

761 II  
(WASHINGTON 1:62,500)

GERALD QUADRANGLE  
MISSOURI  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)  
NE/4 GERALD 15 QUADRANGLE



PELSTER HOUSE-BARN  
U.S.G.S. 7.5' Quadrangle  
"Gerald, Mo." (1966)  
Scale: 1:24,000

UTM References:

- A: 15/651020/4261790
- B: 15/650790/4261440
- C: 15/650355/4261710
- D: 15/650580/4260050





#327

PELSTER HOUSE-BARN

COUNTY:

Franklin

LOCATION:

New Haven vicinity

OWNER:  
ADDRESS:

Harry E. and Jean Panhorst  
2840 West Clay  
St. Charles

DATE APPROVED BY A.C.:

July 14, 1978

DATE SENT TO D.C.:

August 9, 1978

DATE OF REC. IN D.C.:

August 17, 1978

DATE PLACED ON NATIONAL REGISTER:

December 5, 1978

DATE CERTIFICATE AWARDED  
(AND PRESENTOR):

*delivered to above  
7-24-79*

DATE FILE REVIEWED:

The Pelster House-Barn, New Haven vicinity, Franklin County, Missouri, is of major significance in the areas of architecture, agriculture, and the history of the German settlements in Missouri. The structure is a rare American example of a type with medieval northern European antecedents, namely the combination of house and barn in one unit. The Pelster House-Barn is one of two known remaining house-barns in the United States. Built around 1860-1864 by Wilhelm Pelster, a German immigrant, it is a well-preserved example of Fachwerk or German half-timbered framing. The construction of the house-barn, with a heavy frame of hand-hewn timbers, mortised, tenoned and pegged, and resting on a massive stone foundation, provides a direct link with the time-honored building traditions and techniques of the old world. The Pelster House-Barn is important in the history of agriculture, for it represents an efficiently designed farmstead designed in the European manner, but adapted to life in rural Missouri.

PELSTER HOUSE-BARN  
New Haven vicinity, Missouri  
Photographer: M.P. Holmes

#1

April 1973

Neg. Loc.: Department of Natural Resources,  
P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, Mo. 65102

View from northeast.



PELSTER HOUSE-BARN

#2

New Haven vicinity, Missouri

Photographer: Claire F. Blackwell

16 June 1978

Neg. Loc.: Department of Natural Resources,  
P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, Mo. 65102

View from east, showing front porch of house  
section and wagon entrance to central hall  
of barn.





PELSTER HOUSE-BARN

#3

New Haven vicinity, Missouri

Photographer: Claire F. Blackwell

16 June 1978

Neg. Loc.: Department of Natural Resources,  
P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, Mo. 65102

View from south, showing cattle entrance on  
left and slight overhang above second story  
windows.





#4

Pelster Home-Barn

Located in Franklin Co. in Port Hudson area. Photo loaned for copying by Ralph Gregory,  
Mark Twain Shrine administrator, Missouri State Park Board Nov. 1972

Photo was published in the New Haven Leader

10 Mar 1966



PELSTER HOUSE-BARN

#5

New Haven vicinity, Missouri

Photographer: Claire F. Blackwell

16 June 1978

Neg. Loc.: Department of Natural Resources,  
P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, Mo. 65102

Detail of south elevation, showing stone  
foundation and deteriorating weatherboarding.



PELSTER HOUSE-BARN

#6

New Haven vicinity, Missouri

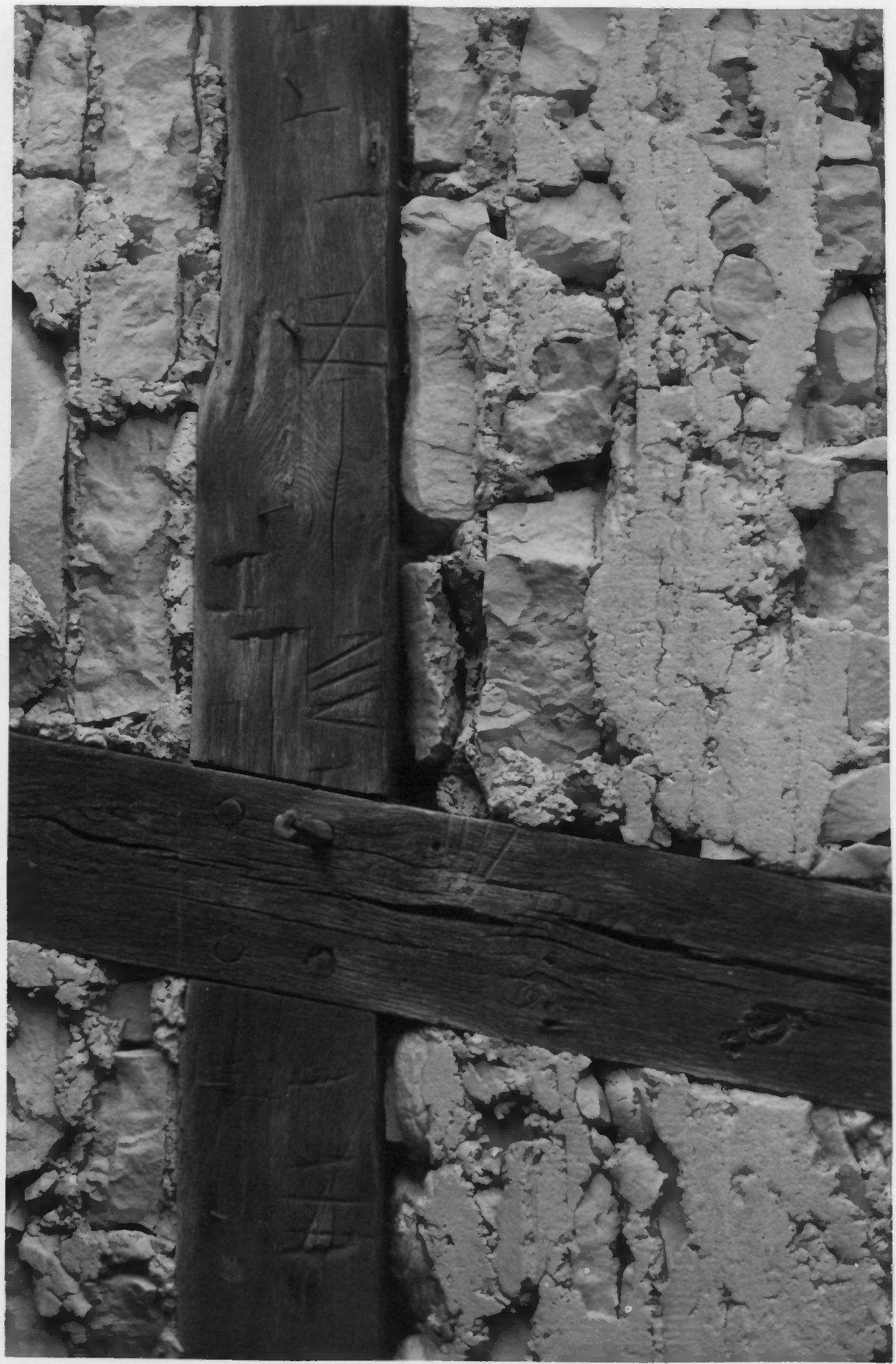
Photographer: Claire F. Blackwell

16 June 1978

Neg. Loc.: Department of Natural Resources,  
P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, Mo. 65102

Detail of west wall on shed/storage area on  
northern end of east side, showing joint with  
pegs, Roman numeral designations, and stone  
and plaster nogging.





PELSTER HOUSE-BARN

New Haven vicinity, Missouri

Photographer: M.P. Holmes

April 1973

#7

Neg. Loc.: Department of Natural Resources,  
P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, Mo. 65102

Detail of central hall of barn, showing  
stairway to second floor of house section on  
left and framing with stone and plaster  
nogging on rear wall.





PELSTER HOUSE-BARN #8

New Haven vicinity, Missouri  
Photographer: Claire F. Blackwell

16 June 1978

Neg. Loc.: Department of Natural Resources,  
P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, Mo. 65102

Third level (hayloft) of barn, detail of  
framing.



EXTRA  
PHOTOS









