

REF# DPCC0418

NR listed: 5/5/88

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Wolcott House
other names/site number French House

2. Location

street & number 56 E. Twinsburg Road N/A not for publication
city, town Northfield vicinity
state Ohio code OH county Summit code 153 zip code 44067

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official W. Ray Jure Date 3/16/88
STPD

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single family

DOMESTIC/institutional housing

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single family

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation sandstone

walls sandstone

roof asphalt

other wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Wolcott House, c. 1847, is an excellent example of a sandstone Greek Revival farmhouse in the Western Reserve of Ohio. Located in Northfield Center Township in Summit County, Wolcott House remains much as it did in the 1936 Historic American Buildings Survey drawings, retaining a high degree of integrity.

The T-plan house has a two story main block (north) with a full basement, and is topped with a hip roof. The south wing is one story with no basement, and is topped with a gable roof. All walls are of original sandstone ashlar, except for the east elevation of the south wing which is now wood lap siding.

The boldness and simplicity of exterior stone detailing gives a strong Greek Revival impression, although the main entrance, eave troughs, and window frames, all of stone, recall Roman profiles, a mix which is not unusual in the Western Reserve area, the five bay symmetrical facade is dominated by a massive door surround. Eleven inch stone piers separate the single paneled door from narrow, four-light sidelights. Two Tuscan type stone columns supporting a simple stone entablature, having only an architrave and cornice, frame the entrance. The smooth, circular 8' columns are 15" in diameter at the base, and 12" in diameter at the capital. Nine double-hung six-over-six windows are on the facade; original sash have been replaced. First floor facade windows have 7" wide stone surrounds with sandstone sills; other windows have only sills.

The entire facade is effectively framed with a projecting water table at the first floor, 5" wide projecting "corner post" stone bands at the east and west ends, and a 14" high architrave stone course directly under the cornice, projecting about one inch. A single stone course, approximately 11" high, is hollowed out on top to form a half-round eave trough. The face profile is cymatium on the corona. Two chimneys punctuate the roof: one at the center of the east end of the main block and one at the center of the west end. The cap stones have 5" high drip courses, then taper upward for 7". A tall, narrow rebuilt brick chimney on the rear wing suggests a large fireplace once existed in the south wall of the kitchen.

United States Department of the Interior
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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Wolcott House, Northfield, Summit Co., OH

Section number 7 Page 2

The exterior has had few changes in its 141 years. Two unadorned wooden porches were added to the east and west of the facade sometime after 1914. A bay window was added to the west side of the rear ell after 1955. When the current owners acquired the house in 1951, the east wall of the rear ell was constructed of wood. They extended the roofline to create an entrance shelter and extended part of the east wall 6 feet to form a garage in what was formerly a storage area. The extension is built of wood and has wood lap siding.

The interior retains a stone fireplace in the living room and Greek Revival trim and wood panels framing the windows in the parlor (now a bedroom--see photo #10). A large stone cooking fireplace with oven existed in the basement of the main block until c. 1951; the oven projected outside the building line, but below grade. The floor plans remain basically as it did when the property was purchased by the present owners. The first floor was altered to create a bedroom, two closets, and a bath from what was originally parlor space. The rear ell has a laundry, kitchen/dining space, and an entrance hall with closets in what was one large kitchen space; the configuration of the rear end storage area turned garage remains the same (See Appendices I-IV).

Overall, the house retains a high degree of integrity, reflecting the Greek Revival style and fine stone craftsmanship of the early/mid 19th century.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Architecture

Period of Significance
c. 1847

Significant Dates
c. 1847

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Wolcott House is significant as a rare example of a well-executed sandstone Greek Revival farmhouse remaining in the Western Reserve of Ohio. Of the more than 7,500 houses that have been entered in the Ohio Historic Inventory in the twelve counties of the Western Reserve, fewer than 45 are of sandstone ashlar construction. The house additionally exhibits refined Greek Revival design, particularly in its massive but elegant entrance.

When the Wolcott House was planned in the mid-1840s, there were few style choices for a design with any architectural pretensions. The Federal Adamesque style was over, and the Gothic Revival had not yet gained a foothold in Ohio, but the Greek Revival was at the height of its sway. The Wolcott House incorporates proportions and ornamental details which are clearly based on the standard Greek Revival usage of the day.

The Tuscan order was used, being the simplest and most economical, especially for a structure to be built of cut stone. The frontispiece contains the basic elements shown in plate 28 of Asher Benjamin's Practical House Carpenter (1830), a Front Door Case of a standard Greek Revival pattern, consisting of a door flanked by sidelights and surmounted by an entablature, but no transom. In this case, there are also two free-standing columns flanking the side lights. Benjamin's preferred arrangement, however, would have been a pair of columns in antis.

The height of the columns is within a fraction of an inch of the proportion of seven diameters (8 feet high to 13.6 inches average diameter) set forth in Benjamin's specifications for the Tuscan order. However, where the entablature of the standard Tuscan order has both an architrave and a plain frieze, separated by a narrow fillet, this entablature omits the fillet and has but one member for the architrave and frieze.

See continuation sheet

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Wolcott House, Northfield, Summit Co., OH

Section number 8 Page 2

The main cornice has a simple ogee curve, undoubtedly chosen because of its ease of execution in stone. The stone craftsmanship is representative of the period. The running courses of the facade appear to have a sawn face but not hand-tooled, although it is difficult to evaluate because of the weathering. The general level of craftsmanship may not be as excellent as that on the Hurst House (see below).

The proportions of the interior window frames and the angled reveals of their recessed casings are typical of Greek Revival practice. However, the pattern of the fluting of the window frame, consisting of alternating concave and rectangular grooves, does not appear in the same sources.

The practice of changing details and proportions in the classical styles in America was common even before the beginning of the 19th century, and one of the hallmarks of American Greek Revival practice was the free adaptation of classical elements. Therefore, the interpretation of classical Greek elements in the Wolcott House is completely consistent with the height of the Greek Revival in the 1840s.

Due to the lack of documentation, there has been much speculation as to the identity of the master builder and/or designer of the Wolcott House. Because of the proximity of a known master builder, Simeon Porter, in Hudson, and the variety of work that he produced, there has been a temptation to attribute both the Wolcott and Herrick Houses to him. However, since new research uncovers previously unknown builders all the time, and since the overwhelming evidence shows that virtually every settled community had its own builder, carpenter, or mason who was an integral part of the economic and social life of the community, there is little justification for this attribution.

In the nearly 5,000 square miles of the Western Reserve region of northeastern Ohio, ten houses of sandstone construction have been listed in the National Register, compared with 70 houses of brick and 101 houses of wood frame construction (not counting those located in historic districts). The building nearest to Northfield, the Jonathan Herrick House, was disassembled and moved from Twinsburg to an outdoor museum setting in 1981. The grandest is probably the Simon Perkins House in Akron, which has a full three stories and a full Tuscan portico. Others include the Judge Anderson House in Austintown, the Benjamin Hopkins building in Kent, the John Froelich House in Seven Hills, and the one-story John Honam House in Lakewood. The William E. Hurst House in Avon, Lorain County, was described in Talbot Hamlin's Greek Revival Architecture in America (1944) as a work of "uncommon dignity and strength" because of its simple, well-designed moldings and monumental entrance. This is the sandstone house that the Wolcott House most closely resembles, with its five-bay facade and center entrance. The Wolcott House was also one of 19 buildings in Summit County selected for recording by the Historic American Buildings Survey in the mid-1930s. Of these, four were stone structures -- the Herrick, Perkins, and "French" [Wolcott] Houses (see below), and the Bronson House in the Peninsula Village Historic District.

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Continuation Sheet

Wolcott House, Northfield, Summit Co., OH

Section number 8 Page 3

The Wolcott House has been known throughout living memory as the "French House." The first written use of the name appears to be in the HABS report of 1936, which was largely compiled from oral accounts. But the French family does not appear to have been associated with the house, although there are numerous Frenches in Northampton, the second township south of Northfield. However, the following reference suggests a source for the name: "Before the white man came there were many Indian villages along the [Cuyahoga] river, the most famous of which was Tawas, shown on the Evans map of 1755 . . . The Evans map also showed that a French trader was then located near the present village of Boston, his post being designated as "French House." (Karl Grismer, Akron and Summit County (Akron, 1952, p.557) The Village of Boston on the Cuyahoga is just 2-1/2 miles southwest of the Wolcott House. Therefore, the most likely explanation is that the name of the "French House" trading post somehow became associated with the Wolcott House, either in the 19th century, because it was probably located on Wolcott property in Boston Township, or in 1936 through the interpretation of the HABS researcher.

According to the HABS report in 1936, the house was well started in 1847 by a Mr. Williams, and then remained unfinished for several years. No source was given for this information. A member of the Wolcott family reputedly finished the house with the intention of making it an inn, which was not successful due to the construction of the "Washington Inn" at Northfield Center, a more important intersection at the township center. The Wolcotts operated a cheese factory on the property at the sandstone ledges to the southeast of the house. The ledges provided the stone for the house and spring water for cheesemaking, an important farm industry in the area at that time.

Three generations of Wolcotts lived in the house before Henry Bourne acquired it for the Goodrich House social settlement. Owner of the house from 1914 to 1951, the social settlement was founded by the First Presbyterian Church in Cleveland, commonly known as Old Stone Church. Named for the Rev. William Henry Goodrich, pastor of the church from 1858 until his death in 1874, Goodrich House erected its own building on East 6th Street and St. Clair Avenue in Cleveland in 1897. The settlement began as a means of improving neighborhood conditions and pride. It was one of the first to help separate juvenile offenders from adult criminals and founded the Cleveland Boys' Farm in Hudson, Ohio. Providing volunteer aid in legal problems led to the founding of the Legal Aid Society. The Society for the Blind began its operations there, and the Sunbeam School for Crippled Children originated in the settlement, as did the nationwide Golden Age Club.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Wolcott House, Northfield, Summit Co., OH

Section number 8 Page 4

The Wolcott House was used to house a unique nursery mothers' cooperative camping project for Goodrich House in Northfield. The house, described as being capable of conversion into "a substantial country mansion," underwent some interior alterations. The east and west porches were added, a water system was installed, and several subordinate buildings were built on the grounds. Nevertheless, the Wolcott House itself retains a remarkable degree of integrity, especially with regard to the Greek Revival architectural features described above.

In 1951, the Nied family acquired the buildings and land, and were confronted with the necessity of rehabilitating the house in order to raise a family, as well as insuring its preservation. A modern kitchen and bathrooms were installed and interior repairs started in 1955. At present, the house and much of the land is the base of a successful landscaping business. Twinsburg Road still has a very rural character, with large properties and houses located far apart, but due to the proximity of Akron, it is rapidly acquiring buildings of a suburban character.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Historic American Buildings Survey #0-252, project #265-6907

Bourne, Henry E., "The First Four Decades of Goodrich House," (located in library of Old Stone Church, Public Square, Cleveland, OH)

Hamlin, Talbot. Greek Revival Architecture in America. 1944.

Grismer, Karl. Akron and Summit County. Akron, 1952.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # 0-252
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 1.6 acres

UTM References

A	<u>1</u> <u>7</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>6</u> <u>9</u> <u>8</u> <u>3</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C			

B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Great Lot 30, Northfield Township (T5N-R11W)

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the 1.6 acre tract including the house and surrounding yard, which is part of a 45 acre tract (originally farm, now a landscape business). The 1.6 acre tract has historically been associated with the property and maintains historic integrity. The excluded acreage bears little or no resemblance to the early farm.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	<u>Charles Willits/retired architect</u>	date	<u>22 May 1987</u>
organization	<u>N/A</u>	telephone	<u>216/650-0197</u>
street & number	<u>91 North Oviatt Street</u>	state	<u>Ohio</u>
city or town	<u>Hudson</u>	zip code	<u>44236</u>

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- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 1.6 acres

UTM References

A

1	7
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4	5	7	0	1	0
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4	5	6	9	8	3	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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See continuation sheet

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See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Charles Willits/retired architect

organization N/A date 22 May 1987

street & number 91 North Oviatt Street telephone 216/650-0197

city or town Hudson state Ohio zip code 44236

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- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

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UTM References

A

1	7
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4	5	7	0	1	0
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4	5	6	9	8	3	0
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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

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See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Charles Willits/retired architect

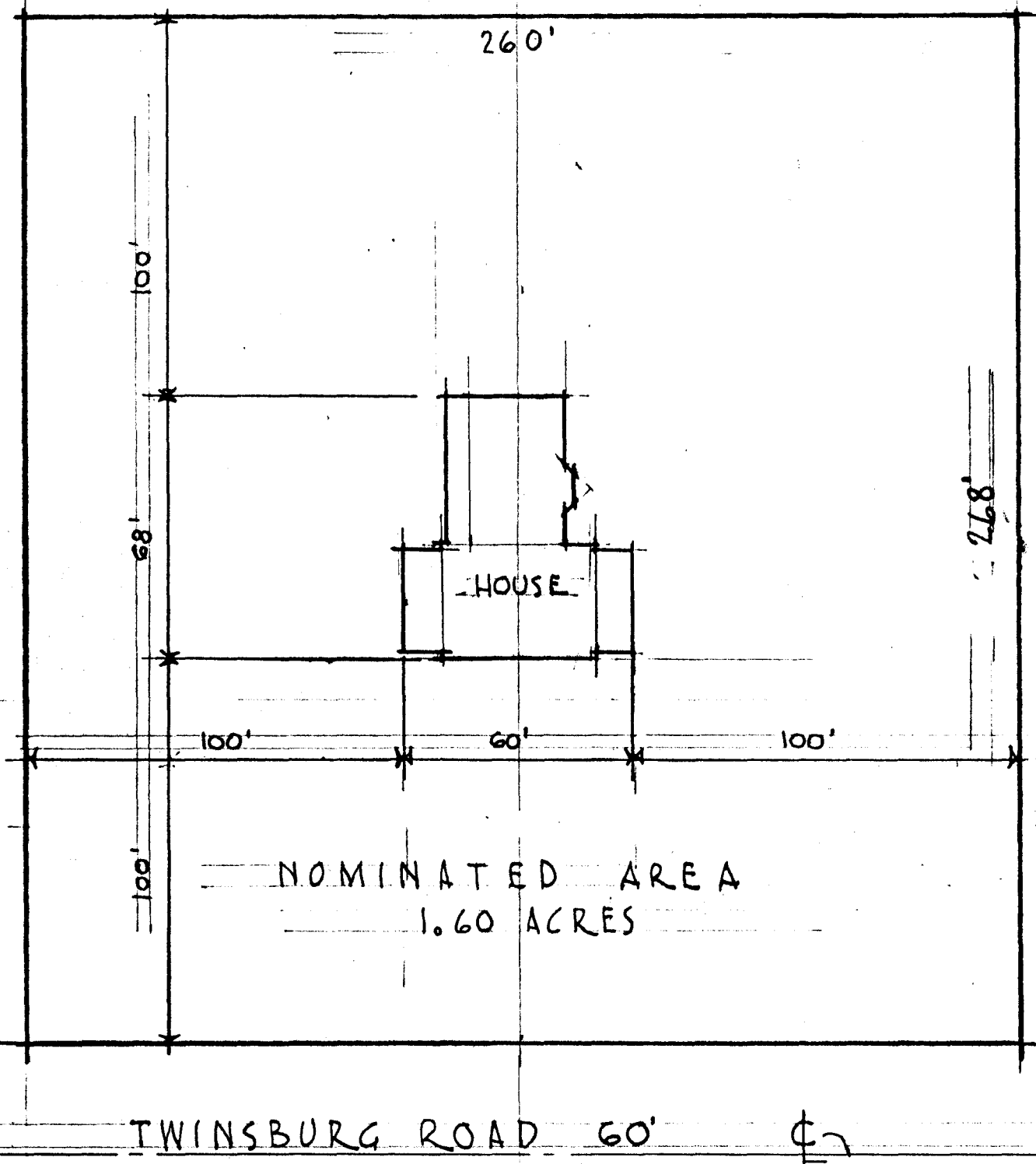
organization N/A date 22 May 1987

street & number 91 North Oviatt Street telephone 216/650-0197

city or town Hudson state Ohio zip code 44236

Wolcott House, 56 E. Twinsburg Road, Northfield vic., Summit Co., OH

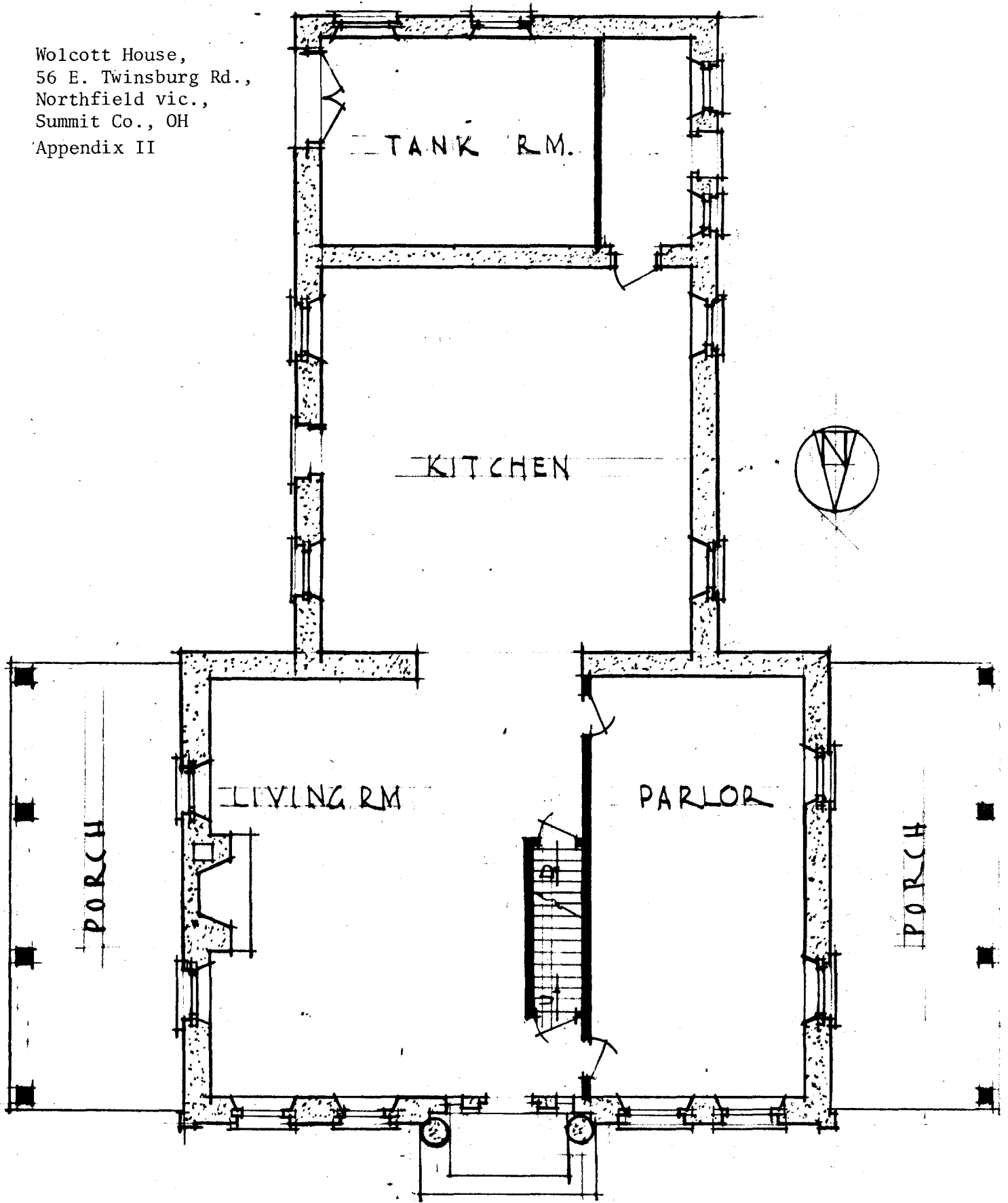
Appendix I



1" = 40'



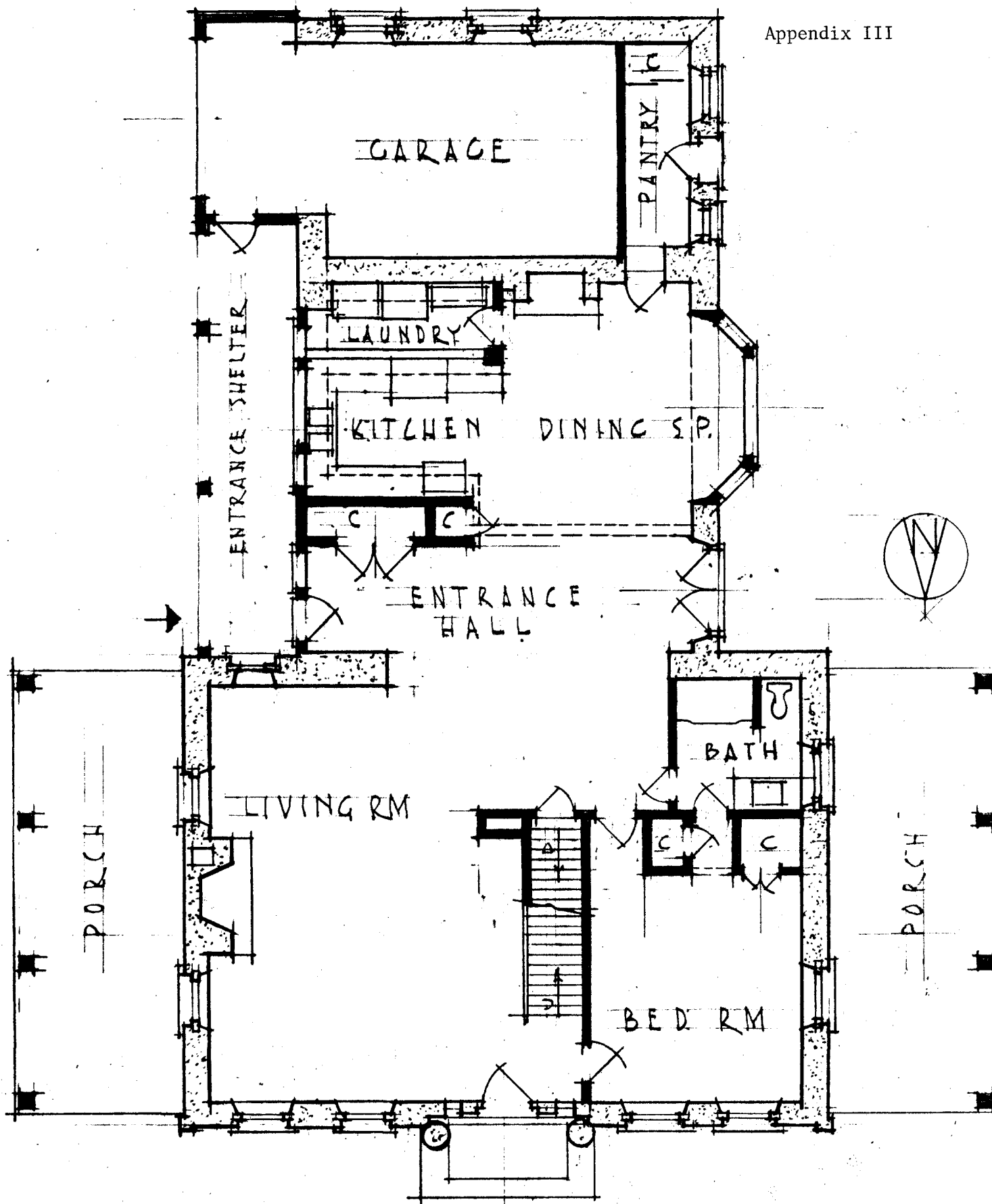
Wolcott House,
56 E. Twinsburg Rd.,
Northfield vic.,
Summit Co., OH
Appendix II



1951 FIRST FLOOR PLAN

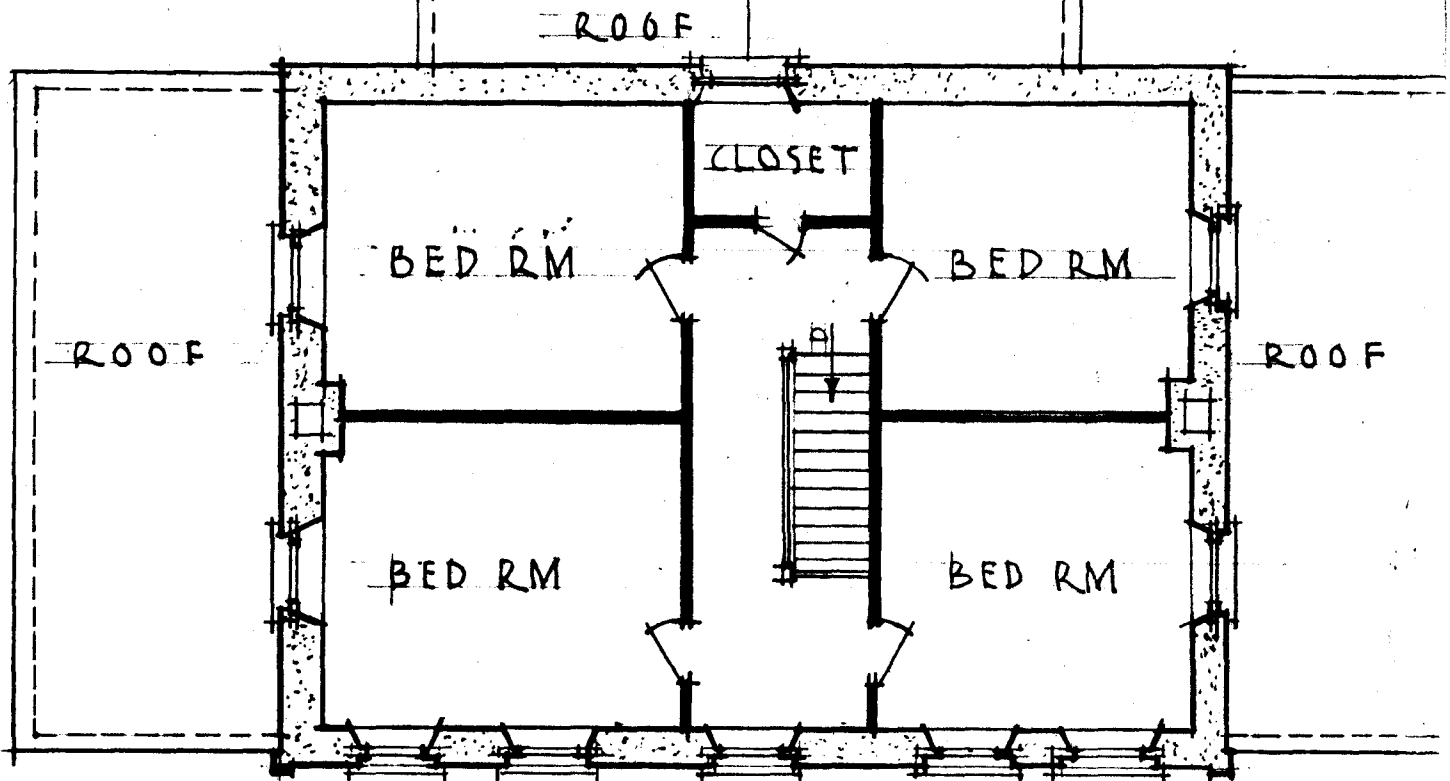
1/8" = 1'-0"

AS ACQUIRED BY H.T. & M.E. NIED



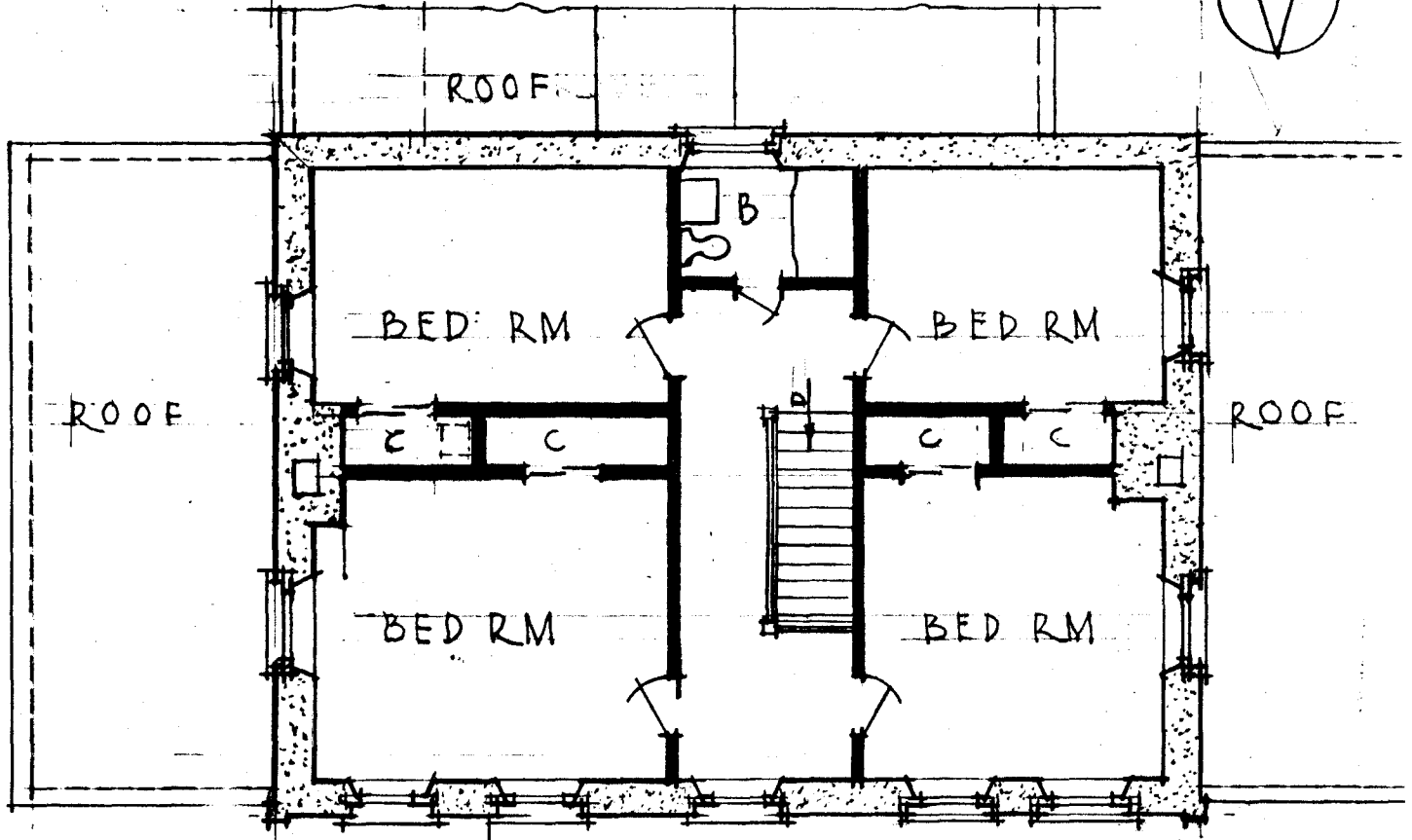
1987 FIRST FLOOR PLAN

1/8" = 1'-0"



1951 SECOND FLOOR PLAN

$1/8" = 1'-0"$
AS ACQUIRED BY H.T. & M.E. NIED



1987 SECOND FLOOR PLAN

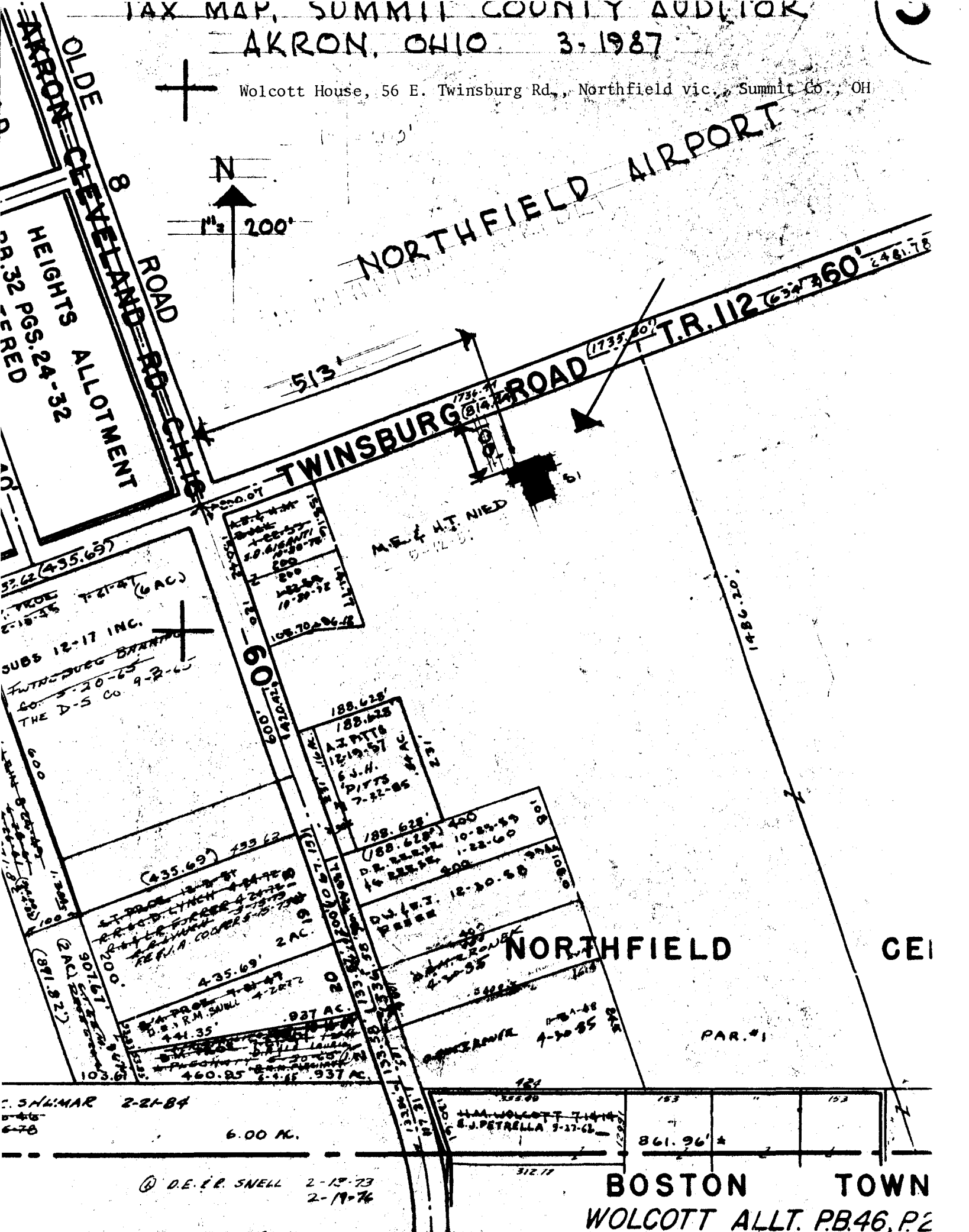
$1/8" = 1'-0"$

TAX MAP, SUMMIT COUNTY AUDITOR
AKRON, OHIO 3-1987

Wolcott House, 56 E. Twinsburg Rd., Northfield vic., Summit Co., OH



N
200'



NORTHFIELD AIRPORT

AKRON CLEVELAND ROAD
HEIGHTS ALLOTMENT
8
52.32 PGS. 24-32

TWINSBURG ROAD

T.R. 112 63° 36' 2461.78

M.E. & M.T. NIED

SUBS 12-17 INC.
THE D-S CO. 9-2-65

(435.69) 435.62

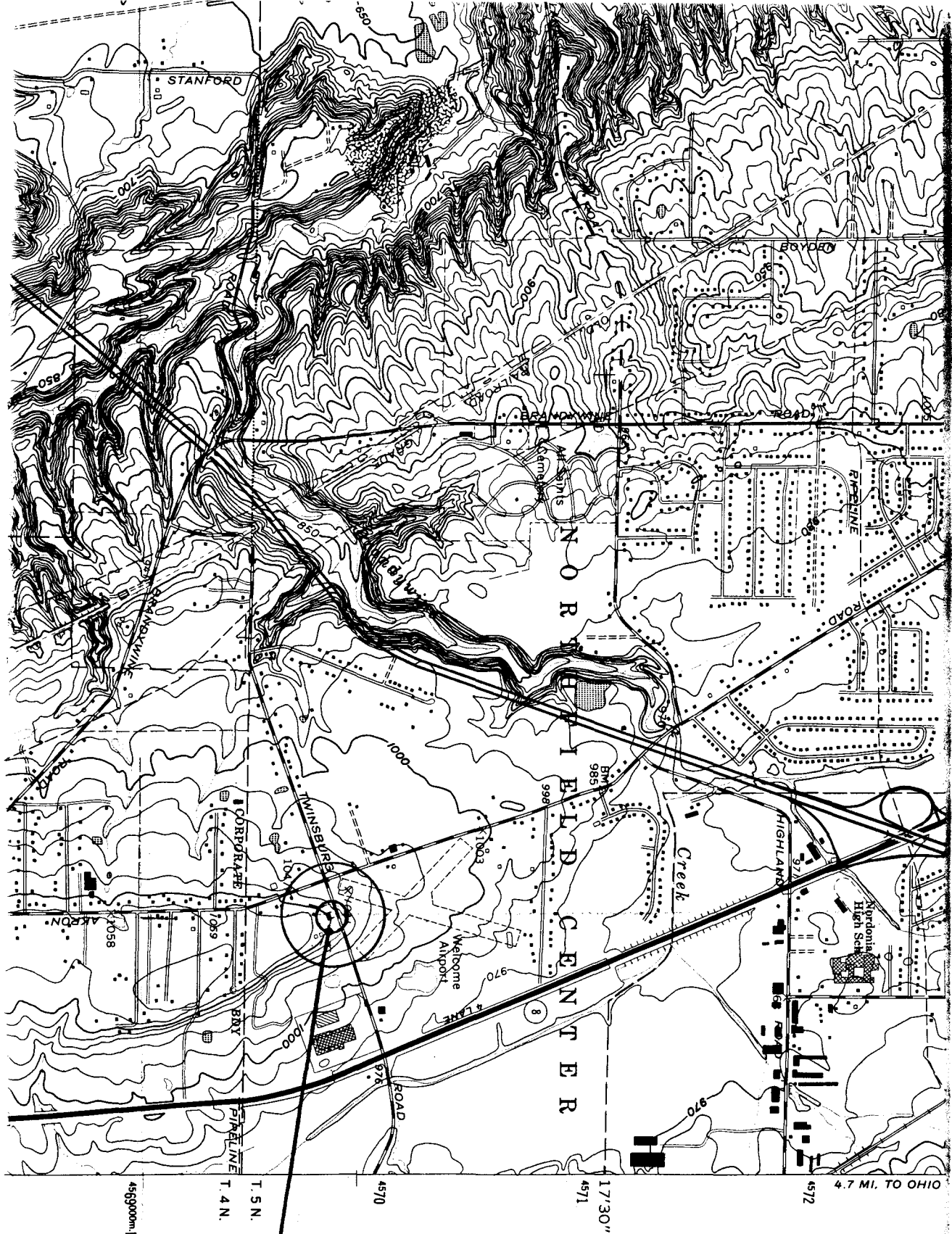
NORTHFIELD

CEI

WOLCOTT 7-14-14
E.J. PETRELLA 9-27-62

D.E. & P. SNELL 2-13-73
2-19-74

BOSTON TOWN
WOLCOTT ALLT. PB. 46, P. 2



Welcott House
 Northfield (vic.), Summit Co., OH
 zone 17
 457010 easting
 4569830 northing

Ohio Historic Preservation Office

1985 Velma Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43211
614/297-2470



**OHIO
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**
SINCE 1885

June 6, 1988

Mr. and Mrs. Michael E. Nied
56 East Twinsburg Road
Northfield, Ohio 44067

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Nied:

Re: Wolcott House, 56 East Twinsburg Road,
Summit County, Northfield vicinity, Ohio

We are pleased to inform you that the Wolcott House nomination has been entered into the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior (NR listed 05/05/88).

The nomination was made in connection with a state plan to identify and document prehistoric and historic places in Ohio which qualify for National Register status under provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended. All nominations are approved by the Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board.

Enclosed is information explaining the purposes and goals of the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

W. Ray Luce
State Historic Preservation Officer

WRL/BAP:en

Enclosure

x.c. Jeff Brown, Regional Coordinator
Northfield Center Twp. Trustees, Clerk
NEFCO
State Senator Roy L. Ray
State Representative Vernon F. Cook

Ohio Historic Preservation Office

National Register of Historic Places File Checklist

The following materials are contained in this file of the National Register form for:

Name: Wolcott House

County: Summit

Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form

Multiple Property Nomination form

Photograph(s)

Photograph(s) (copies)

USGS map(s)

USGS map(s) (copies)

Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)

Correspondence

Other negatives

