

RUDOLPH WIDMANN HOUSE
Water Street, approx. 600 feet west of
Route 18011
Lockport Vicinity
Clinton County
Pennsylvania

HABS NO. PA-5527

HABS
PA
18-LOKPT.V,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Mid-Atlantic Region
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

HABS
PA
18-LOKPT.V,
1-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

RUDOLPH WIDMANN HOUSE

HABS No. PA- 5527

Location: Water Street, approximately 600 feet west of Route 18011, ~~Upper~~
Lockport, ~~Lock Haven~~ Vicinity, Clinton County, Pennsylvania

USGS Lock Haven Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator
Coordinates: 18. 294580. 4557240

Present Owner
and Occupant: Edward H. Harris
R.D. #2, Box A13
Lock Haven, PA 17745

Present Use: Residence.

Significance: The late-nineteenth-century Rudolph Widmann House is significant for its association with the Widmann family. The Widmann family owned the Widmann Brewery between 1865 and 1926. The Widmann Brewery was a primary employer of Upper Lockport residents and, according to historic atlases, was one of only a few business establishments in Upper Lockport in the middle to late nineteenth century. According to Vento, brewery employees often lived in houses owned by the Widmann family. The extent of the Widmann property holdings is unknown. The construction of the Rudolph Widmann House occurred, according to a later owner, sometime in the 1880s. The house was purchased by Widmann in 1896.

The general development of Upper Lockport follows a local pattern of agricultural land use yielding to residential subdivision in the wake of the development of the West Branch of the Pennsylvania Canal, which existed from 1834 to 1889 (see HAER No. PA-188). Upper Lockport was subdivided circa 1860 by William White and termed "William White's Western Addition." White purchased the land from Joseph Hanna (see HABS No. PA- 5525). Surviving housing dating from the late nineteenth century share similar vernacular character and feature Folk Victorian stylistic elements. Stylistic elements evident on the Rudolph Widmann House include decorative spindlework on the wrap-around porch. Besides the brewery, the Upper Lockport area provided housing for laborers who worked at the Queen's Run Brickworks, especially after the demise of the canal in 1889.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: circa 1880s.
2. Architect: Not known.
3. Original and subsequent owners: Legal description from the most recent deed: Beginning at an iron pin on the East side of Water Street, a distance of eighty-two and 5/10th (82.5) feet South of the South line of lands now or late of George Rebstock; thence southerly along the East line of Water Street thirty-seven (37) feet to a stake on the North line of McGill's Alley; thence Easterly along the North line of McGill's Alley, one hundred fifty-one (151) feet to an iron pin on the West line of Mulberry Alley; thence Northerly along the West line of Mulberry Alley fifty (50) feet to an iron pin; thence Westerly along the South line of land, now or late of William P. Rickard, a distance of eighty-five (85) feet to an iron pin; thence Southerly, along the Richard land, twenty-five (25) feet to an iron pin; thence Westerly, through the center line of a two-story double-frame dwelling, sixty-six (66) feet to an iron pin on the East line of Water Street, the point and place of beginning, being part of Lot No. 29 in White's Addition to the said Village of Lockport.

References are to deeds filed at the Clinton County Recorder of Deeds, Lock Haven, Pennsylvania.

- 1881 Deed, September 17, 1881, recorded in Book 33, Page 743.
R.S. Barker, Sheriff (as property of William White) to Nehemiah Shaw.
- 1883 Deed, May 31, 1883, recorded in Book 35, Page 223.
Nehemiah Shaw to W.W. Barrows.
- 1896 Deed, April 9, 1896, recorded in Book 55, Page 328.
Elizabeth A. Barrows et al. to Rudolph Widmann.
- 1939 Deed, July 13, 1939, recorded in Book 131, Page 457.
Maude J. Widmann to Harry J. Widmann.
- 1944 Deed, June 27, 1944, recorded in Book 146, Page 520.
Lester F. Widmann, et al. to Melvin A. Widmann, et al.

(North Half of Parcel)

- 1947 Deed, January 25, 1947, recorded in Book 158, Page 47.
Melvin A. Widmann, et al. to George D. Walizer, et al.
- 1964 Deed, September 17, 1964, recorded in Book 212, Page 179.
Melissa C. Walizer to William P. Rickard, et ux.
- 1975 Deed, July 31, 1975, recorded in Book 252, Page 387.

William P. Rickard to Edward H. Harris.

(South Half)

1947 Deed, January 25, 1947, recorded in Book 158, Page 40.
Melvin A. Widmann, et al. to Hillery A. Probst, et al.

1975 Deed, July 31, 1975, recorded in Book 252, Page 391.
Helen D. Probst to Edward H. Harris.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Not known.
5. Original plans and construction: No plans were found of the original Rudolph Widmann House design. The house has undergone numerous alterations on the interior. The house was originally a single, four-bedroom dwelling that has been partitioned into a duplex. This conversion apparently occurred in the early twentieth century. Probably at the same time as the interior conversion, the rear kitchen section and back stairway were added. The west-side dwelling suffered a damaging fire in 1984 and has been rebuilt to the same dimensions.
6. Alterations and additions: The Rudolph Widmann House has had a number of alterations as a result of its conversion from a single dwelling to a duplex and as a result of the 1972 Flood. The most prominent exterior alterations included the addition of two rear kitchens (one per duplex) and a back stairway. On the interior, the conversion resulted in partitions and awkward spaces. The interior of both dwellings has been extensively remodeled with wood panelling as a result of flood damage. Other alterations include the relatively recent replacement of the porch flooring with concrete and the porch foundation with concrete block. Also, the west-side dwelling had a damaging fire in the mid-1980s and has been rebuilt.

B. Historical Context

On May 1, 1852, Joseph Hanna (see HABS No. PA-5525) sold to William White a parcel of land containing fourteen-plus acres. White proceeded to subdivide the land and sell off the lots. The result was the community of houses known as Upper Lockport. This development was termed as "White's Western Addition" on a local 1862 atlas, and approximately one-third of the approximately thirty lots were developed. Also found in the "Western Addition" at that time was a hotel, a brewery, and a schoolhouse. An 1869 atlas reveals a more developed Upper Lockport, consisting of approximately twenty residences, a hotel, a brewery, and a school. The proprietor of the brewery was Jacob Widmann, noted on the atlas as a "brewer of lager beer."

In 1881, the lot upon which the Rudolph Widmann House is presently located was sold at a Sheriff's sale, as the property of William White, to Nehemiah Shaw. The parcel consisted of a half-acre of land, a two-story frame house, and outbuildings. Both local atlases show the location of William White's house as being in the area of the present Rudolph Widmann House. However, it is unclear if the property that Shaw purchased contained White's personal house, or was one of White's undeveloped properties. Lester Widmann, a later resident of the house, estimated to the current owners that the building was built during the 1880s. This would indicate that either Nehemiah Shaw or W.W. Barrows, who purchased the property in 1883, removed the building that may have been

RUDOLPH WIDMANN HOUSE
HABS No. PA- 5527 (Page 4)

present in 1881 and built the current building. Shaw was one of the proprietors of Shaw, Blanchard & Co., a sawmill located in Lock Haven.

In 1896, Barrows sold the property to Rudolph Widmann for \$275. At that time, Widmann was the proprietor of the brewery located in Upper Lockport. Rudolph's relationship to Jacob Widmann, the proprietor of the brewery in 1869, is unclear. According to Linn, the brewery was first built in 1860 and was bought by Jacob Widmann and a partner in 1865. The brewery was damaged by fire in 1876 and was rebuilt that year by Rudolph Widmann. According to the 1909-10 Clinton County Directory, the business was known as "Widmann's Brewery, Brewers and Bottlers." The brewery stayed in the Widmann family until 1926.

The Rudolph Widmann House was owned by the Widmann family until 1947. Prior to that, probably in 1913 when the residence was passed to Rudolph's children, the house was divided into a duplex. According to the current owners, the Widmanns rented at least one, if not both, of the units for a number of years. In 1947, Melvin Widmann, Rudolph's grandson, subdivided the property and sold it off as two lots. True to the family's business acumen, the Widmann pharmacy chain was founded by one or more of Rudolph's children. The house again came under single ownership in 1975. The west-side duplex has since been rented. Additional information concerning tenants and their occupations can be found in Vento et al.: 1989.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Rudolph Widmann House is a three-bay, 2 1/2-story vernacular frame house. The house's most distinguishing feature is the Folk Victorian wrap-around porch that encompasses three sides (east, south, west) of the building. The house has undergone numerous alterations as a result of severe flood damage, a fire, and its conversion into a duplex.
2. Condition of fabric: Fair condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The front section of the Rudolph Widmann House measures approximately 35' across the front facade and approximately 30' along the side facades. The wrap-around porch measures approximately 5' wide. The rear section measures approximately 45' along the rear facade and approximately 16'4" along the side facades. The rear porch is approximately 5' wide.
2. Foundations: The wrap-around porch has a concrete block foundation, which encompasses three sides of the house. The only other foundation evident is at the rear kitchen section, where there is a rubblestone masonry foundation.
3. Walls: The exterior walls consist of clapboard siding, with decorative gable detailing under the front cross-gable, including ornamental patterns and bargeboard.
4. Structural systems, framing: Balloon frame construction, sheathed with clapboard siding.

5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: There are two porches on the Rudolph Widmann House: a wrap-around porch that encompasses the front and two side facades, and a rear porch that spans the entire width of the rear facade. The wrap-around porch has a concrete block foundation and a concrete floor, with a turned-post balustrade, and a shed roof. The turned porch supports have scroll-cut brackets and decorative spindlework. The rear shed porch, was which added to the original house, has wood plank flooring and a brick pier foundation. The porch's exposed ceiling is supported by four-by-four posts.
6. Chimneys: The Rudolph Widmann House has two exterior chimneys, one on the east facade and one on the west facade. Both are constructed of concrete block and covered with stucco.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: All of the exterior doorways have simple, unadorned surrounds. The door designs vary and are, for the most part, non-historic. The exception is a nine-light design on the east facade that appears to date from the early twentieth century. The majority of the others are single-leaf and have four lights and four panels.
 - b. Windows and shutters: The window surrounds, like the door surrounds, are simple and unadorned. The majority of the original two-over-two double-hung windows are still in place. There are two replacement one-over-one windows on the rear and side facades of the west-side duplex, probably as a result of the fire. In the central bay of the front facade, on the second floor, is a paired window with one-over-one sash.
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: The main section of the Rudolph Widmann House has intersecting gables with asphalt shingles. The front and rear porches have asphalt roll roofing.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: Simple wooden box cornice with a wide fascia and a slightly projecting eave.
 - c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: None.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: See accompanying sketch plans.
2. Stairways: The stairways in the Rudolph Widmann House are enclosed, without a balustrade, and panelled.
3. Flooring: Standard-width hardwood flooring.
4. Wall and ceiling finishes: In the west-side duplex, the walls are covered with wood panelling, and the ceilings are acoustical tile. This is also the case for some of the

rooms in the east-side duplex. However, the living and dining rooms in the east-side duplex retain plaster-over-lath walls and ceilings.

5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Throughout the building, the first floor has non-historic flush doors, and the second floor has original, solid, two-panel doors. The attic door, located in the west-side duplex, is a narrow, solid, one-panel door.
 - b. Windows: The majority of the original two-over-two double-hung windows are still in place. In the central bay of the front facade, on the second floor, is an original paired window with one-over-one sash. The window surrounds are simple and unadorned.
 6. Decorative features and trim: As a result of the alterations, there is little that could be considered decorative in the Rudolph Widmann House. The west-side duplex has non-historic panelling covering the majority of the walls. The east-side duplex has simple, non-historic trim along the baseboards and framing the entrance ways.
 7. Hardware: The second floor original doors have late-nineteenth-century knobs and locks.
 8. Mechanical Equipment:
 - a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: Non-historic elements.
 - b. Lighting: Non-historic elements.
 - c. Plumbing: Early-twentieth-century bathroom amenities, including faucet, tub, pipes, and fittings are located in the west-side dwelling.
 9. Original Furnishings: As a result of interior renovations and numerous changes in ownership, original furnishings are no longer extant.
- D. Site:
1. General setting and orientation: The Rudolph Widmann House faces south on the north bank of the West Branch of the Susquehanna River in Upper Lockport. It is surrounded by a residential neighborhood and is fronted by Water Street.
 2. Historic landscape design: The Widmann House's surrounding landscape has historically been a general residential landscape, consisting of front, side, and rear yards.
 3. Outbuildings: According to the current owner, three outbuildings were lost in the 1936 Flood: an outhouse, a pumping station for the brewery, and a coal shed.

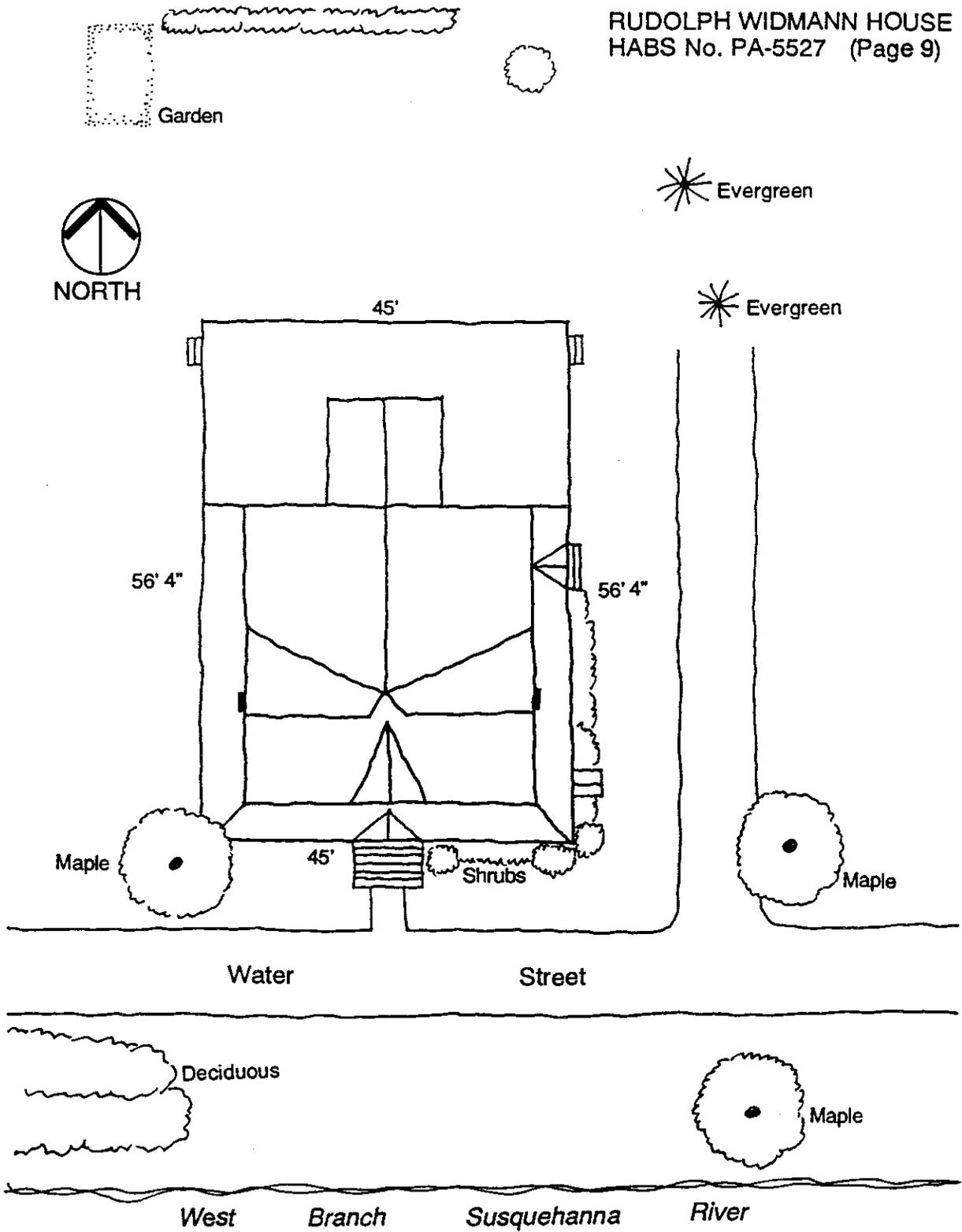
PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural drawings: None.

RUDOLPH WIDMANN HOUSE
HABS No. PA- 5527 (Page 8)

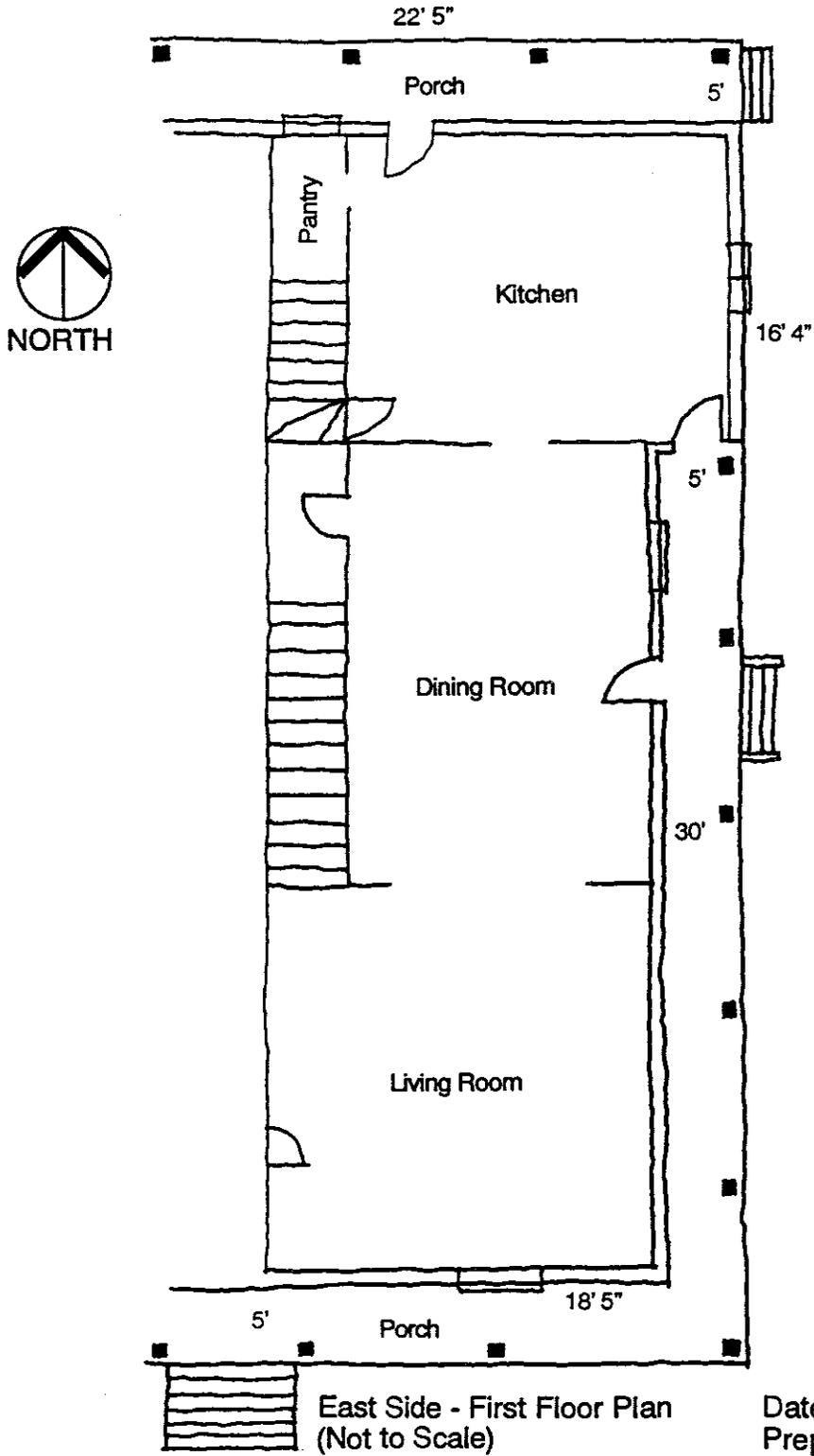
in a series of studies and that would be affected by the proposed Lock Haven flood protection project. The Rudolph Widmann House is slated for removal to accommodate an induced flooding zone. The house will be marketed for sale in an attempt to have it removed from the property. If the house cannot be sold, it will be marketed for architectural salvage. The last recourse for the house is demolition. Documentation was prepared for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, by the Historic Preservation Group of Kise Franks & Straw, Inc., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: M. Todd Cleveland, project manager; Susan C. Nabors, historian; Martin B. Abbot, historian; and Jill Cremer, graphics. Robert Tucher provided the documentary photographs.

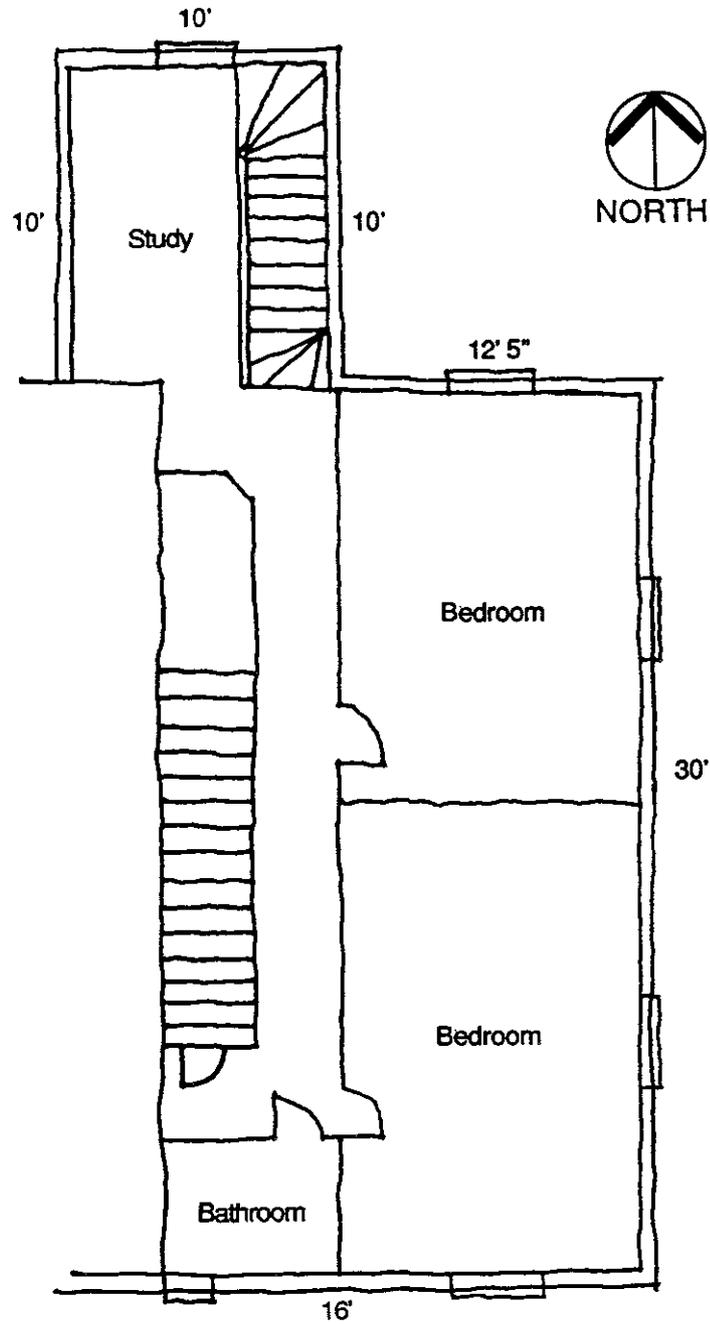
RUDOLPH WIDMANN HOUSE
HABS No. PA-5527 (Page 9)



Site Plan
(Not to Scale)

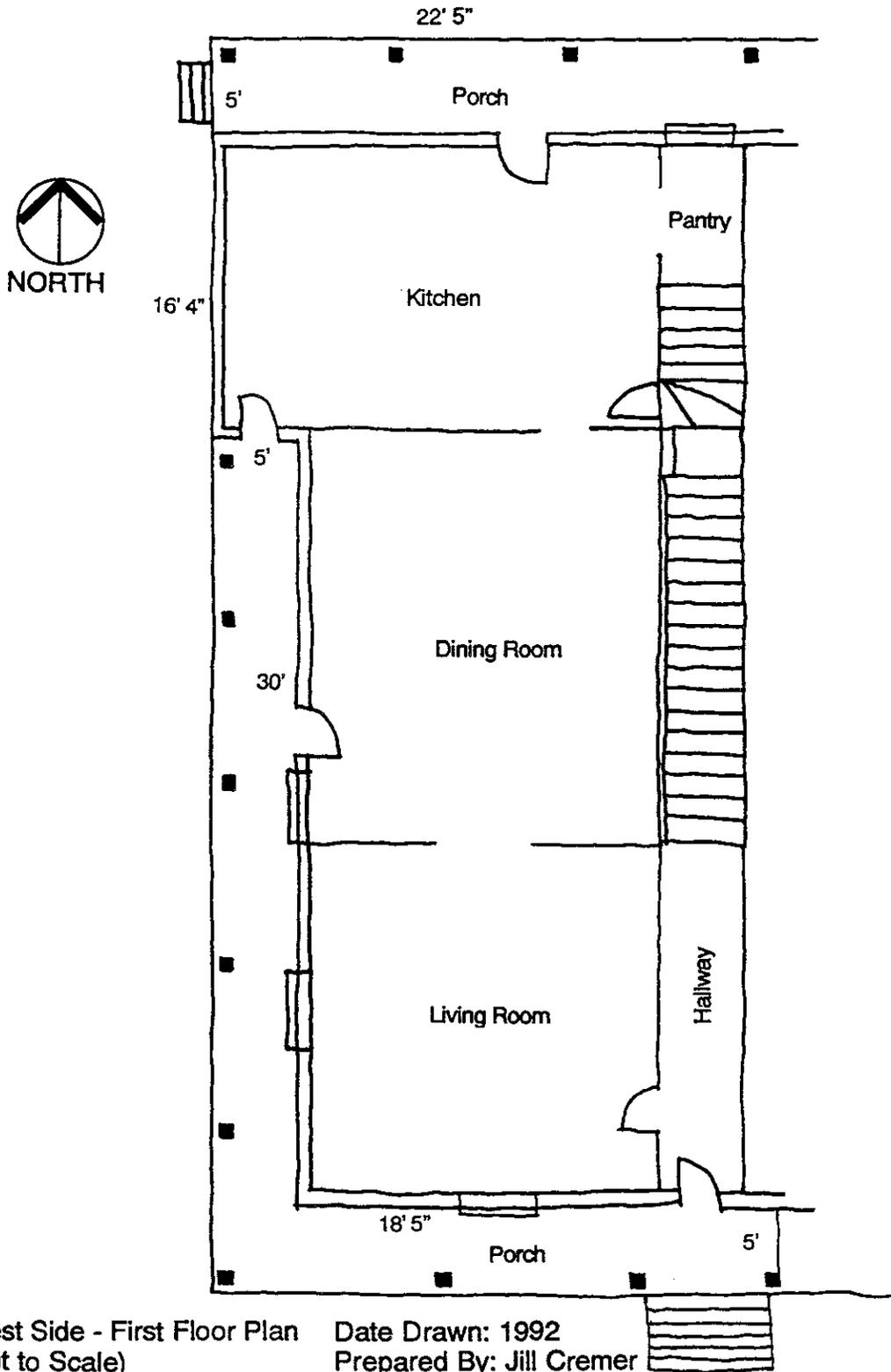
Date Drawn: 1992
Prepared By: Jill Cremer





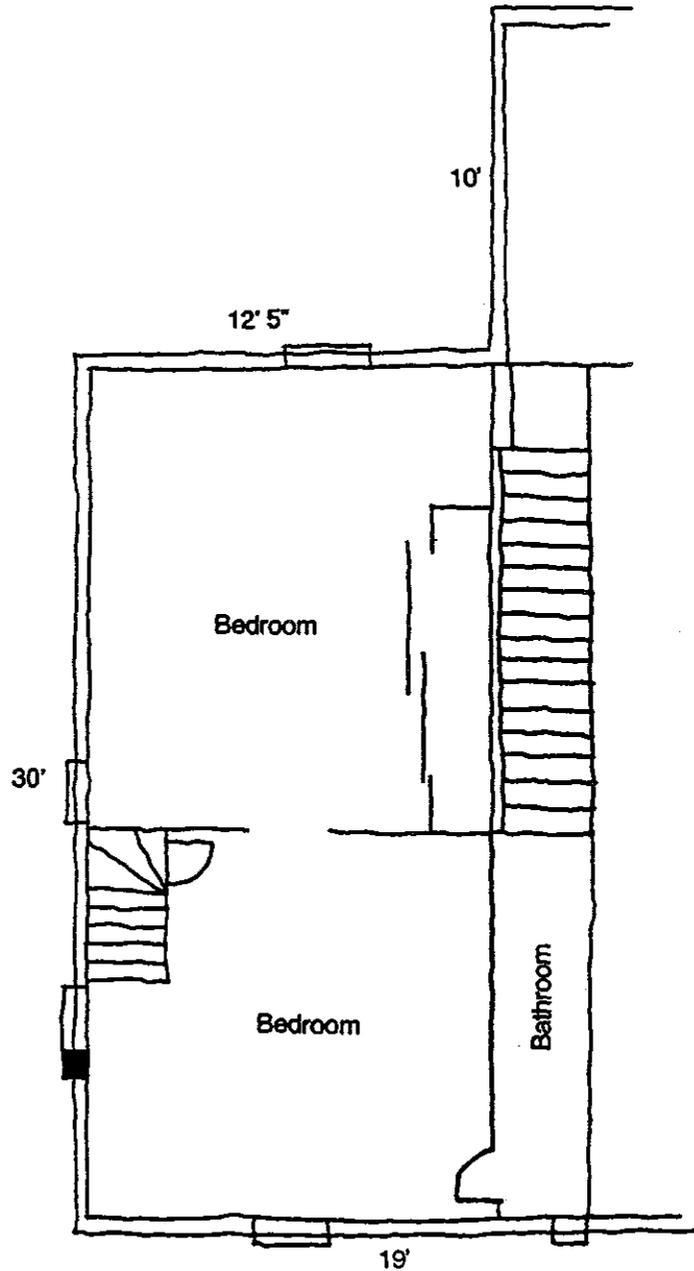
East Side - Second Floor Plan
(Not to Scale)

Date Drawn: 1992
Prepared By: Jill Cremer



West Side - First Floor Plan
(Not to Scale)

Date Drawn: 1992
Prepared By: Jill Cremer



West Side - Second Floor Plan
(Not to Scale)

Date Drawn: 1992
Prepared By: Jill Cremer