

HARVEY LAUBSCHER HOUSE
Route 664, approx. 1/3 miles east of
Jay Street Bridge
Lockport Vicinity
Clinton County
Pennsylvania

HABS NO. PA-5528

HABS
PA
18-LOKPT.V,
2-

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,
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HARVEY LAUBSCHER HOUSE

HABS No. PA- 5528

Location: Route 664, approximately 1/3 mile east of the Jay Street Bridge, Lower Lockport, ~~Lock Haven~~ Vicinity, Clinton County, Pennsylvania

USGS Lock Haven Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator
Coordinates: 18. 295630. 4556970

Present Owner
and Occupant: Harry and Evelyn Shoemaker
R.D. #2, Box 99
Lock Haven, PA 17745

Present Use: Residence.

Significance: The late-nineteenth-century Harvey Laubscher House is significant as an example of post-canal-era housing in Lower Lockport. As a collection, the canal-era houses of Lower Lockport exhibit simple design and minimal ornamental detailing. They also share similar two-story, side-gabled massing and a uniform setback from the road. The Harvey Laubscher House, built ten years after the demise of the canal, displays these characteristics, indicating a continued vernacular tradition in Lower Lockport after the canal era.

Lower Lockport's development followed a local pattern of early nineteenth-century agricultural land use yielding to residential subdivision in the wake of the development of the West Branch of the Pennsylvania Canal in 1834 (see HAER No. PA-188). Lock No. 34 (see HAER No. PA-188-A) of the canal system was sited in Lower Lockport in 1834 and the canal remained in operation until 1889, at which time it was rendered useless by a damaging flood. The canal served as a major transportation route in the pre-railroad era. In conjunction with the canal, the lumber industry also played a major role in the development of Lower Lockport and was central to its economy. Lower Lockport served as the head market for the lumber rafting trade on the West Branch. Many of the extant dwellings in Lower Lockport housed merchants and skilled professionals--blacksmiths and carpenters--dependent upon the lumber trade. Other residents included relatively prosperous boatmen and laborers who worked on the canal. Harvey Laubscher, the original owner of the house, and Daniel Mulcahy, the previous owner of the property, were both blacksmiths.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: 1898.
2. Architect: Not known.
3. Original and subsequent owners: Legal description from the most recent deed: Beginning at the corner of land formerly of William B. Hanna, now of W. C. Bowser, and land formerly of Daniel Mulcahy, later of Harvey S. Laubscher and wife, at the public road; thence Westwardly along said public road one hundred one (101) feet, six (6) inches to a post; thence Northwardly along land now or formerly of Bertha Giles to a post on the hillside at the intersection of line of lands formerly of William B. Hanna, later of W. C. Bowser; thence Eastwardly along the division line between said land of W. C. Bowser and land formerly of Harvey S. Laubscher and wife about one hundred one (101) feet, more or less, to the division line between land of W. C. Bowser and land formerly of Daniel Mulcahy, later of Harvey S. Laubscher and wife, running North and south; and thence along said division line Southwardly to the place of beginning. Containing about one-sixth (1/6) of an acre, more or less.

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

- 1861 Deed, April 1, 1861, recorded in Book P, Page 75.
Nathaniel Hanna to Thomas Brown.
 - 1872 Deed, April 15, 1872, recorded in Book X, Page 10.
Thomas Brown to Daniel Mulcahy.
 - 1898 Deed, March 31, 1898, recorded in Book 61, Page 90.
Daniel Mulcahy to Harvey S. Laubscher.
 - 1941 Deed, May 2, 1941, recorded in Book 139, Page 446.
Harvey S. Laubscher to Idessa Taylor.
 - 1941 Deed, May 3, 1941, recorded in Book 139, Page 448.
Idessa Taylor to Harvey S. and Eva M. Laubscher.
 - 1943 Deed, May 15, 1943, recorded in Book 124, Page 42.
Eva Laubscher to Florence M. Laubscher.
 - 1978 Deed, August 22, 1978, recorded in Book 267, Page 635.
Florence Baver (nee Laubscher) to Mary Aungst and Eunice M. Brickley.
 - 1978 Deed, October 24, 1978, recorded in Book 268, Page 787.
Eunice Brickley to Mary Aungst.
 - 1984 Deed, June 1, 1984, recorded in Book 288, Page 426.
Mary Aungst estate to Harry S. Shoemaker.
4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: According to the current owner, Harvey Laubscher and his brother, Charles, built the Laubscher House upon Harvey's purchase of the property in 1898. Later, in 1914, Charles purchased a house down the street from Harvey (see Schultze House, HABS No. PA- 5532).

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5. Original plans and construction: No original plans were located for the Harvey Laubscher House. The house has had minor interior and exterior alterations. The house consists of a central-hall plan with a flanking living room and dining room. The kitchen is contained in the rear section, with a small pantry attached to it on the west side. The upper floor is similar in plan, except for the pantry section. The house contains an attic and a basement, which is accessed by exterior bulkhead doors on the west facade.
6. Alterations and additions: According to the current owners, alterations performed since their purchase include the placement of an acoustical tile ceiling in the living room and a stucco ceiling in the dining room. Also, new roofs have been placed on the front and west-side porches and the rear patio porch was built. A fire damaged the rear pantry section and adjoining west-side porch, circa 1912. In the early twentieth century, the house was re-fitted with radiators, and the floor-to-floor pipes are in full view in many rooms. The rear wall of the house has tar-paper sheathing, and there are two modern metal ventilators located under the gable on the rear wall.

B. Historical Context:

According to the current owners, the Harvey Laubscher House was built in 1898, after the acquisition of the property by Harvey Laubscher from Daniel Mulcahy. Both Laubscher and Mulcahy were blacksmiths. The lot upon which the house is located was originally purchased from Nathaniel Hanna by Thomas Brown, in 1861. A building is present in the general location of the Harvey Laubscher House on the 1862 and 1869 local atlas. Daniel Mulcahy purchased a 1/2 acre lot from Brown in 1872 for \$1200 (see HABS No. PA-5538). Mulcahy's property was eventually subdivided into three lots. In 1898, Mulcahy sold part of his property to Laubscher for \$825, which included a two-story frame dwelling house, a blacksmith shop, and various outbuildings. Apparently, Laubscher removed the existing house and erected the present building. The property stayed in the Laubscher family for 80 years, until 1978. Until 1984, the Laubscher and Aungst properties, the adjacent lot west of the Harvey Laubscher House, comprised a single lot. More specific information about Laubscher and later tenants can be found in Vento et al.: 1989.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Harvey Laubscher House is a three-bay, two-and-a-half story, vernacular frame house. The house is distinguished by its Folk Victorian-style porch detailing. The house has a T-shaped plan, with a single-story wing, containing the pantry, located at the rear of the west facade.
2. Condition of fabric: Good condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The Harvey Laubscher House is a three-bay, two-and-a-half-story house with the front entrance located in the central bay. The single-story, front porch measures approximately 26'4" in length and is approximately 6' wide. The main block measures approximately 33'2" in length and is approximately 17'

wide. The rear section that, with the main block, comprises the "T" shape, measures approximately 15'9" by 13'. The single-story pantry attached to the rear section on the west side measures approximately 12'3" by 8'9". The rear, west-side porch measures approximately 12'3" by 4'3".

2. Foundations: Rubble-stone foundation.
3. Walls: The Harvey Laubscher House is sheathed with clapboard siding, except for the north, or rear, facade, which is covered with tar-paper.
4. Structural systems, framing: Balloon-frame construction.
5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: The Harvey Laubscher House has two porches and a rear non-historic patio. The front porch consists of four wooden posts and two half-posts with decorative scroll-cut brackets, a turned-post balustrade, and a shed roof with a central cross gable. The cross gable contains barge-board decoration. The rear west-side porch contains both a modern metal railing and a turned-post balustrade under a shed roof. The roof is supported by a single square wooden column, and the porch has a finished ceiling. The rear patio consists of two wooden posts and a concrete floor.
6. Chimneys: A corbelled brick chimney is located on the exterior of the east facade.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The original early-twentieth-century front door consists of a single pane over three panels. The door design includes bevelled corners and edges, grooving, and raised moulding. The doorway surround consists of a simple three-piece wooden surround.
 - b. Windows and shutters: The majority of the windows on the Harvey Laubscher House are one-over-one sash, double-hung windows. The window surrounds are simple four-piece wooden surrounds with slightly protruding sills and lintels. There are also two-over-two and four-over-four sash windows. On the front facade, the cross gable window contains a tripartite window with a one-over-one sash central window, flanked by multi-light windows.
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Intersecting gable roof with asphalt shingles.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: The cornice consists of small dentils located under the gables. Brackets are located under the overhanging eaves.
 - c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: None.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: See accompanying sketch plans.

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2. Stairways: The stairway, located in the central hall, consists of an elaborate balustrade of carved square posts, with decorative newel posts on the first and second floors.
3. Flooring: Standard-width hardwood flooring.
4. Wall and ceiling finishes: The Harvey Laubscher House contains original plaster walls and ceilings. In most places, the walls are covered with wallpaper. The original vertical-board wainscoting is intact in the kitchen. Throughout the house, the original, wide baseboards, which are intrinsic with the door surrounds, are intact.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The original doors on the interior of the Harvey Laubscher House consist of solid four and five panel designs. The original door surrounds consist of four-square cornerblocks and trim moulding, that join with the baseboards. The door surrounds on the interior of the bedrooms are much simpler, lacking cornerblocks and extensive trim. The attic and basement doors are original vertical-board doors.
 - b. Windows: The window surrounds, similar to the door surrounds, consist of four-square cornerblocks and applied moulding, with broad sills.
6. Decorative features and trim: The door and window surrounds, combined with the baseboards, provide decorative trimwork throughout the house. The original built-in cupboards in the pantry are extant.
7. Hardware: The original hardware is intact on a number of doors in the Harvey Laubscher House. This includes decorative knobs and escutcheons, porcelain handles, and locks.
8. Mechanical Equipment:
 - a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: Originally, the house was heated by stoves, as evidenced by the closed-off stove flues in the dining room and kitchen. In the early twentieth century, the house was re-fitted with a furnace and radiators.
 - b. Lighting: In the central hallway is an early-twentieth-century push-button switch. Throughout the rest of the house are non-historic lighting fixtures.
 - c. Plumbing: Historic plumbing fixtures can be found in the bathroom and include an early-twentieth-century clawfoot bathtub, toilet, and sink.
9. Original Furnishings: As a result of numerous changes in ownership, original furnishings are no longer extant.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house is aligned on a north-south axis with the front facade facing south, towards the north bank of the West Branch of the Susquehanna River. The north side of the house is only a few feet from a sharp incline of exposed bedrock. The bedrock is also east of the the house, where it tapers off to the roadside. West of the Harvey Laubscher House is an adjacent lot that contains the former blacksmith shop of Harvey Laubscher.
2. Historic landscape design: The house's surrounding landscape has historically been a general residential landscape, consisting of minor outbuildings and a side yard. The original owner, Harvey Laubscher, kept a blacksmith shop on the western portion of his property. However, the lot was subdivided in 1984 and the Shoemakers do not own the building.
3. Outbuildings: According to the current owners, the present garage and attached shed-roofed shop was built circa 1930. The single-story garage has a gable roof with asphalt shingles, vertical-board siding, and a one-over-one window on its west facade. On the south facade, the garage has a double set of vertical-board doors with hinges. The double doors on the shop are non-historic. Historically, a chicken coop and a bee-house were located on the east side of the garage, and was demolished circa 1940. Harvey Laubscher's blacksmith shop, located west of the house on a separate parcel, was built in the early 1900s and later converted to an apartment. Still later, in the 1930s, the building was converted into a gas station. It was not a gas station for very long, however, and up until recently it was used as an apartment.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural drawings: None.
- B. Historic views: None.
- C. Interviews: Mr. and Mrs. Harry Shoemaker, March, 1992.
- D. Bibliography;

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Clinton County Legal Records. Located at the Clinton County Courthouse, Lock Haven , PA.

Hannegan, Susan. *General History and Description of Clinton County, Preliminary Research Report, Clinton County Historic Sites Survey, 1985-86.* Harrisburg, PA: Bureau of Historic Preservation, 1986.

Hannegan, Susan. *Harvey S. Laubscher House.* Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey Form 035-WW-006. Harrisburg, PA: Bureau of Historic Preservation, June, 1986.

Vento, Frank J., Philip T. Fitzgibbons, Scott D. Heberling, and James Herbstritt. *Phase I Inventory Investigations of Potentially Significant Prehistoric and Historic Period Cultural Resources for the Lock Haven Flood Protection Project, Clinton County, Pennsylvania*. Prepared for the Baltimore District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers by Vendel Enviro-Industrial Consultants, 1989.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Directory of Lock Haven, Bellefonte, and the Philadelphia & Erie Railroad, 1874-1875. Altoona, PA: Thomas H. Greevy and William H. Renner, 1874.

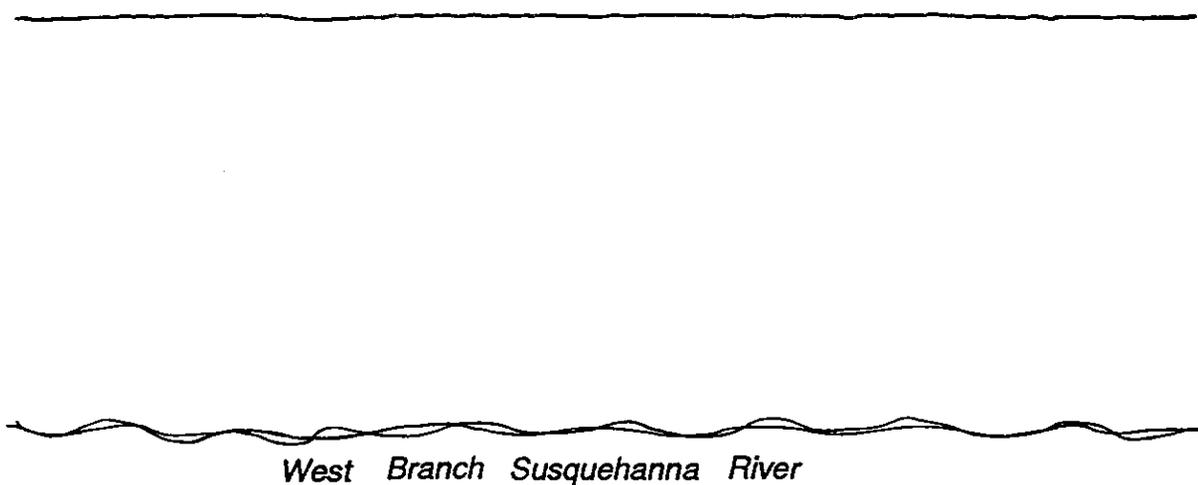
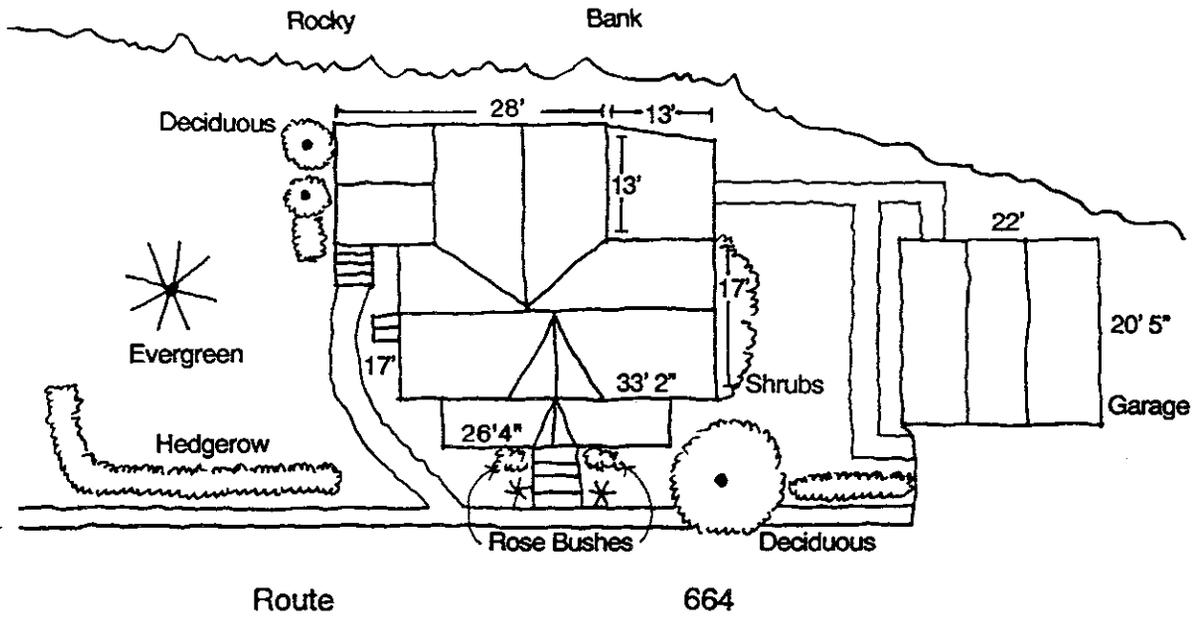
Linn, John Blair. *History of Centre and Clinton Counties*. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1883.

Richie and Stranahan. *Map of Lock Haven, Flemington, and Lockport*. Philadelphia: Richie and Stranahan, 1869.

Walling, H.F. *Map of Clinton County, PA*. New York: Way, Palmer, and Company, 1862.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

Documentation was undertaken in October and November 1991 in accordance with a Memorandum of Agreement between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, and the Lock Haven Area Flood Protection Authority. The documentation serves as a mitigative measure for the treatment of historic properties that were identified and evaluated in a series of studies and that would be affected by the proposed Lock Haven flood protection project. The Harvey Laubscher 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 by the Historic Preservation Group of Kise Franks & Straw, Inc.: M. Todd Cleveland, project manager; Susan C. Nabors, historian; Martin B. Abbot, historian; and Jill Cremer, graphics. Robert Tucher provided the documentary photographs.

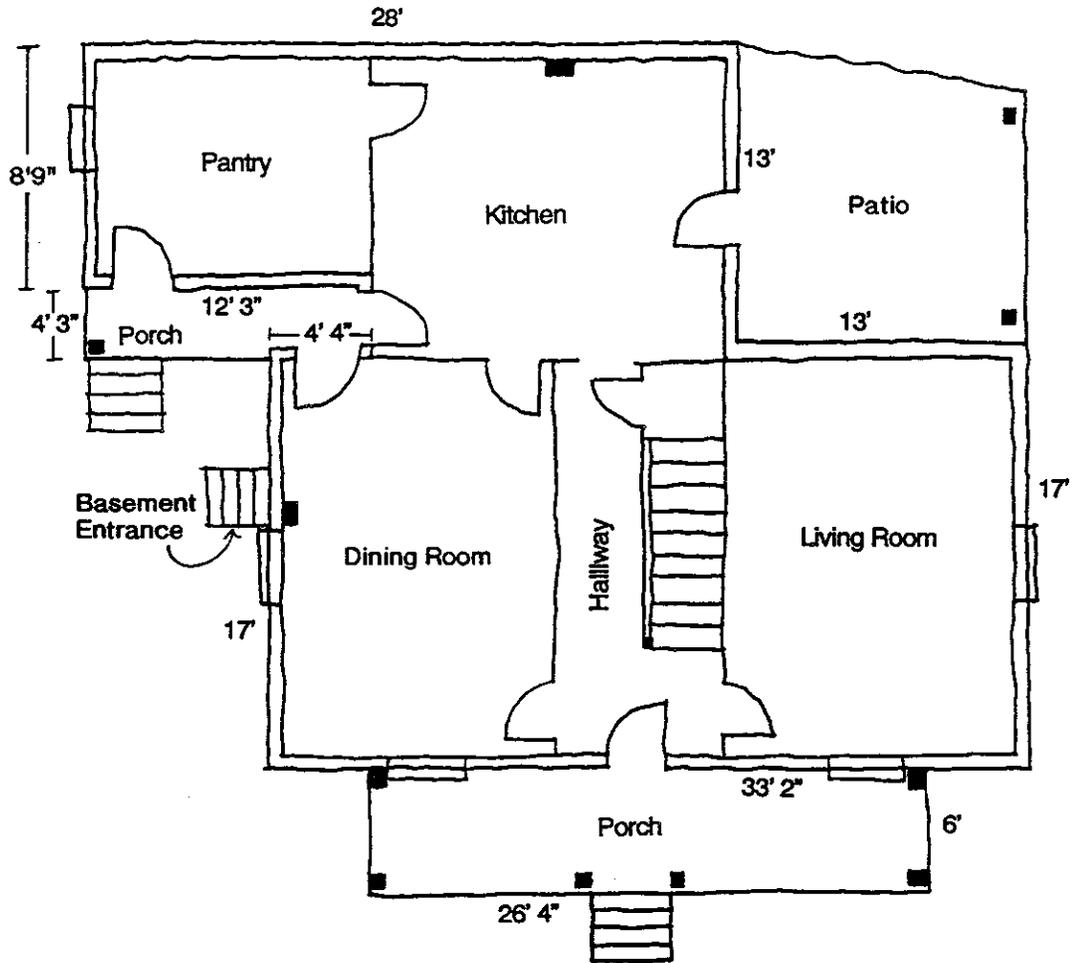


Site Plan
(Not to Scale)

Date Drawn: 1992
Prepared By: Jill Cremer

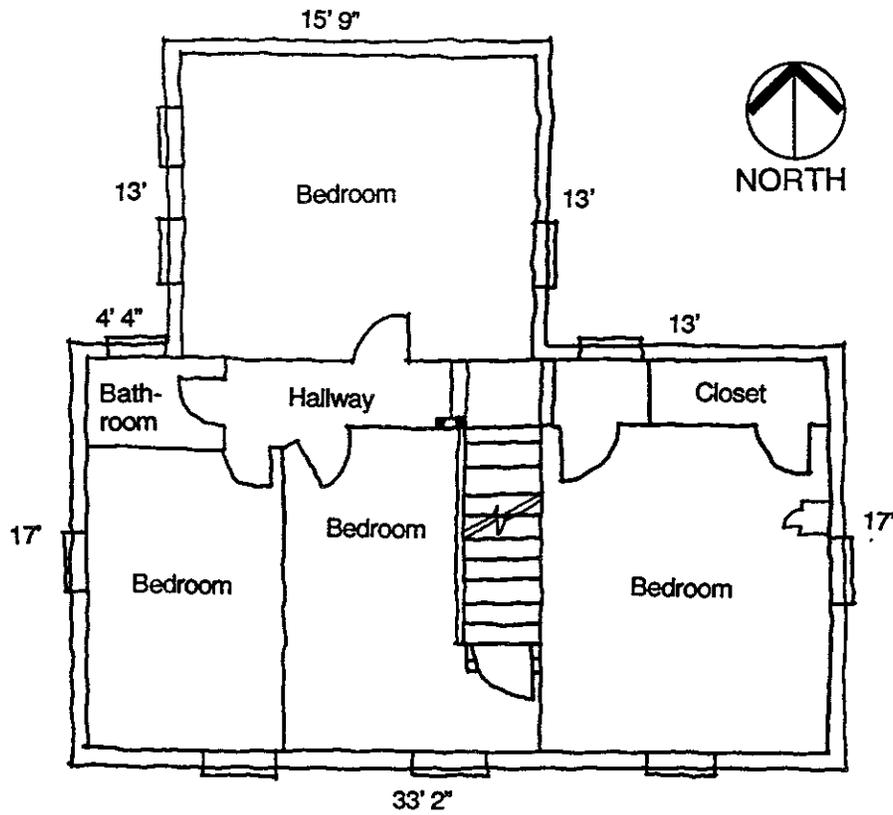


NORTH



First Floor Plan
(Not to Scale)

Date Drawn: 1992
Prepared By: Jill Cremer



Second Floor Plan
(Not to Scale)

Date Drawn: 1992
Prepared By: Jill Cremer