

ISAAC A. PACKER FARM, FARM HOUSE  
Legislative Route 18011, 2.4 miles  
northwest of Jay Street Bridge  
Lock Haven Vicinity  
Clinton County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5500-A

HABS  
PA  
18-LOKHAY  
SA-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
Northeast Field Area  
Chesapeake/Allegheny System Support Office  
National Park Service  
U.S. Custom House  
200 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

HABS  
PA  
18-LOKHA.V  
5A-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ISAAC A. PACKER FARM, Farm House HABS No. PA- 5500-A

**Location:** Legislative Route 18011, the Farrandsville Road, approximately 2.4 miles northwest of the Jay Street Bridge, Lock Haven Vicinity, Clinton County, Pennsylvania

USGS Lock Haven Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 18. 292770. 4559930

**Present Owner:** Richard Packer  
R.D. #2, Box 163  
Lock Haven, PA 17745

**Present Occupant:** James and Carol Hanna

**Present Use:** Residence.

**Significance:** The farm house, erected in 1885, is significant for its style, materials, and relationship with other buildings on the property. The distinctive farm house is a vernacular interpretation of the Victorian Gothic style, a rare style within the local architectural context. Also, the farm house was built of stone, an uncommon material among the frame and brick farm houses of Clinton County.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: 1885.
2. Architect: None.
3. Original and subsequent owners: Legal description from the most recent deed: Lot No. 1. Beginning at the lane on the Susquehanna River; thence North 71 degrees East thirty-four and three-tenths (34.3) perches; thence North 19 degrees West one (1) perch; thence North 71 degrees East five and six-tenths (5.6) perches; thence North 10 degrees West eleven and five-tenths (11.5) perches; thence North 61 degrees East forty-four (44) perches; thence North 8 degrees West ten (10) perches; thence North 54-1/2 degrees East forty-six and seven-tenths (46.7) perches to a sugar; thence North 33-1/2 degrees West ten and two-tenths (10.2) perches; thence North 50-1/4 degrees East fifty and four-tenths (50.4) perches; thence North 28 degrees West eighteen (18) perches; thence South 52 degrees West sixty-one and five-tenths (61.5) perches; thence North 54 degrees West sixty and two-tenths (60.2) perches; thence South 57 degrees West eleven and seven-tenths (11.7) perches to the said River; thence by the several courses of the Susquehanna River one hundred forty-four (144) perches to the place of beginning.

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

1865 Deed, May 31, 1865, recorded in Book O, Page 413.  
John Smith to Isaac A. Packer.

1899 Will, November 1, 1899, recorded in Book D, Page 326.  
Isaac A. Packer to Kinley D. Packer.

1935 Will, December 17, 1935, recorded in Book L, Page 211.  
Kinley D. Packer to Horace I. Packer.

1969 Deed, August 1, 1969, recorded in Book 227, Page 51.  
Horace I. Packer to Richard D. Packer.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: A datestone located in the north gable of the farm house reads as follows, "Erected by Isaac A. Packer, 1885, A. Lawrence, Builder". An entry in Isaac A. Packer's personal ledger identified A. Lawrence as Alan Lawrence, but no other information is available concerning the builder. The carpenter on the project, B. F. Tidlow, most likely was related to W. D. Tidlow and his sons, George and Clifford, who were prominent contractors in Lock Haven for many years. Some of the local suppliers Packer patronized included the Gossler Company (window frames), Brawn, Ely & Co. (lumber and shingles), J. S. Smith (roofing), Sterns (plaster), and Fred Cramer (flooring).
5. Original plans and construction: No original plans were located for the farm house.

6. **Alterations and additions:** Alterations performed on the farm house include the removal, as a result of the 1936 flood, of the original front porch. In 1976, a one-room den was added to the front facade in this location, with an adjoining wooden deck. A frame summer kitchen, built around the turn of the century, was attached to the rear of the house. Other alterations include the replacement of the slate roof with asphalt shingles, and the extensive renovation of the kitchen, including the removal of a secondary stairway. The summer kitchen was removed in the 1940s and a two-story wooden porch was added to the south elevation of the kitchen wing. Also, in the 1940s, the second floor area above the kitchen was made into an apartment.
- B. **Historical Context:** The farm house was erected in 1885 by Isaac A. Packer (1818-1899), a prominent local businessman. Packer's in-laws, the Smiths, had owned land in this area since 1806. In 1865, Packer traded his house in Lock Haven to John Smith, his brother-in-law, for a portion of the Smith farm. Prior to acquiring the farm, Packer's various ventures included working as a boatman in the lumber industry, establishing canal-related warehouse enterprises, and serving as a tax collector. Upon acquiring the farmland, Packer diverted his energy towards developing a successful farm. It is unclear where Packer and his family resided from 1865 to 1885. Most likely, it was at another residence on the property, possibly one that was acquired along with the land in 1865. The existing farm house has been used as a residence since 1885, and currently houses the fifth generation of Packers to reside on the property. The farm house was used in the fullest sense of the word during the proprietorships of Isaac and his son, Kinley, who both actively farmed the land. A summer kitchen, used to feed and sometimes bed seasonal help, was attached to the kitchen. This was removed in the 1940s after Kinley died, and the farm diminished in importance.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. **Architectural character:** The farm house is a 2 1/2-story, three-bay, L-shaped stone building designed in the Victorian Gothic style. The coursed ashlar masonry, quoined at the corners, is sandstone with hues of grey and purple. The L-shape is formed by a single pile I-house with a rear kitchen extension. The farm house displays the Victorian Gothic influence in its central cross gable at the cornice line, the use of contrasting brick in the arched window crowns and gables, the pointed windows in the gables, and the ornate bargeboard. The gable roof is of moderate pitch with non-historic asphalt roofing, and is enlivened by incised brackets.
2. **Condition of fabric:** Good condition.

### B. Description of Exterior:

1. **Overall dimensions:** The farm house is a 2 1/2-story, three-bay, L-shaped building with a basement. The two outer facades of the "L" are the front, or southwestern, facade, which measures approximately 40', and the side, or southeastern, facade, which measures approximately 46'. A one-story non-historic porch, located on the front facade, measures approximately 19' x 14', and its accompanying wooden deck measures approximately 18' x 14'. A one-story shed porch, located on the rear of the northwestern facade, measures approximately 21' x 7'. A two-story

porch, attached to the southeastern facade, measures approximately 18' by 8'.

2. Foundations: Stone foundation.
3. Walls: Coursed ashlar masonry walls with quoins, with contrasting brick walls under the gables.
4. Structural systems, framing: Balloon frame construction sheathed with stone and brick.
5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: The only original porch left on the farm house, after the removal of the front porch as a result of the 1936 flood, is a rear porch. This wooden shed porch has chamfered posts and knee braced brackets. In the 1940s, a two-story, open wooden porch was added to the south facade, on the kitchen wing. This porch has a shed roof and a second-floor balustrade. A non-historic wooden deck porch is located on the front facade.
6. Chimneys: There are two brick chimneys on the farm house: an exterior chimney located on the south facade, which was added in 1932; and an interior chimney located in the rear kitchen section.
7. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: The original front-facade double doors are intact and separate the main house from the den addition. The doorway surround, like the window surrounds, is a segmentally arched brick crown. The door design consists of six-panelled double doors, embellished with chamfered and grooved millwork and rosettes. The two upper lights are of ruby-tinted sandwich plate glass, etched with the initials "IAP". The decorative millwork of the doors is continued in the deep-panelled reveal. The central hall rear doorway consists of a single-leaf door with two upper lights.
  - b. Windows and shutters: The farm house's window openings consist of, with few exceptions, single, one-over-one double-hung original windows with segmentally-arched brick crowns and stone sills. A paired window is located in the central bay of the second floor of the front facade and is comprised of the original one-over-one double-hung sash with brick crowns. Located under the gable eaves are original pointed-arch, one-over-one windows.
8. Roof:
  - a. Shape, covering: The main section of the house has a gable roof with a gable dormer on the front facade. The rear kitchen section has a hip roof with a slight pitch. All porch roofs are shed roofs. The roofing material throughout the building is asphalt shingles.
  - b. Cornice, eaves: The cornice of the farm house consists of many decorative elements. The front elevation rises to a decorative gable composition featuring scalloped edging and engaged turned balusters, imbricated

shingles, and rosettes in the gable. The side facades have decorative bargeboards similar to the main elevation, although less complex in design. The rear kitchen section cornice consists of a box cornice with brackets.

- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: None.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Central-hall plan.
2. Stairways: Central-hall stairway features a turned balustrade, moulded stringer, and a square newel with a rounded cap and applied miniature balusters and jigsawn detail.
3. Flooring: Standard-width hardwood flooring.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The farm house's walls and ceilings are either plaster-and-lath or gypsum board, and the walls are covered with wallpaper.
5. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: Doorway surrounds consist of a beaded moulding surround. The door designs are solid-panel and single-leaf.
  - b. Windows: The windows in the living room are surrounded by grooved woodwork with bosses and covered by panelled and louvered shutters with Victorian hardware. Window aprons have beaded herringbone boards and rosettes.
6. Decorative features and trim: The living room (south parlor) displays unusual woodwork in the beaded herringbone pattern of the baseboards which have "X" details at the corner blocks. A focal point of the living room is the 1830s grey-veined, King of Prussia marble mantel with a pilastered surround, brought to the farm house from another property. Except for the grooved window surrounds in the master bedroom, the woodwork of the second floor is much simpler than the first floor.
7. Hardware: Original hardware, including knobs, locks, and escutcheons, survive on the front door and throughout the house.
8. Mechanical Equipment:
  - a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: Early-twentieth-century steam radiators are extant.
  - b. Lighting: The only historic light fixture noted in the survey is a turn-of-the-century hanging lamp located in the central hall. The lamp contains a single light suspended from a chain with a white glass shade.
  - c. Plumbing: No historic fixtures were noted during survey.

9. **Original Furnishings:** No original furnishings were noted during survey.

D. **Site:**

1. **General setting and orientation:** The farm house is situated on a rise in the river bottom and faces in a southwesterly direction towards the West Branch of the Susquehanna River, which forms the western edge of the property. In the nineteenth century, a road ran along the river and connected with the Farrandville Road at the Packer property. The farm house historically fronted on this road. Sometime in the early twentieth century, the river road was abandoned. Since then, the orientation of the farm house and principal entrance has changed to the rear of the house, accessible from the Farrandville Road. The house is surrounded by a yard of mature trees that includes, to the north, a screen of white pines, to the east, two spruces, and to the west, a large maple. The barn is located east of the farm house, along the Farrandville Road, as is the lime kiln, however, the kiln is across the road. The well is just west of the farm house. To the south is Packer farmland and east and northeast of the house is the Farrandville Road, which is at the bottom of Bear Mountain. To the north and northwest are other residential properties. The flatland tapers off between the mountains and the river north and northwest of the Packer property.
2. **Historic landscape design:** The surrounding landscape of the farm house is defined by the river. The house is situated in the floodplain of the river, and the property has traditionally been used for farming. Historically, the Packers grew wheat, oats, corn, and potatoes. They also raised chicken and swine. The historic landscape is that of an agricultural complex, including surrounding fields, and associated outbuildings.
3. **Outbuildings:** See Isaac A. Packer Farm, Barn (HABS No. PA-5500-B), Lime Kiln (HABS No. PA-5500-C), and Well (HABS No. PA-5500-D).

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

See Isaac A. Packer Farm (HABS No. PA-5500).

A. **Architectural drawings:**

Isaac A. Packer Farm, Farm House, First Floor Plan. Prepared 1992 by Jill Cremer. Original drawing located at Kise Franks & Straw, Inc., 219 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 19107.

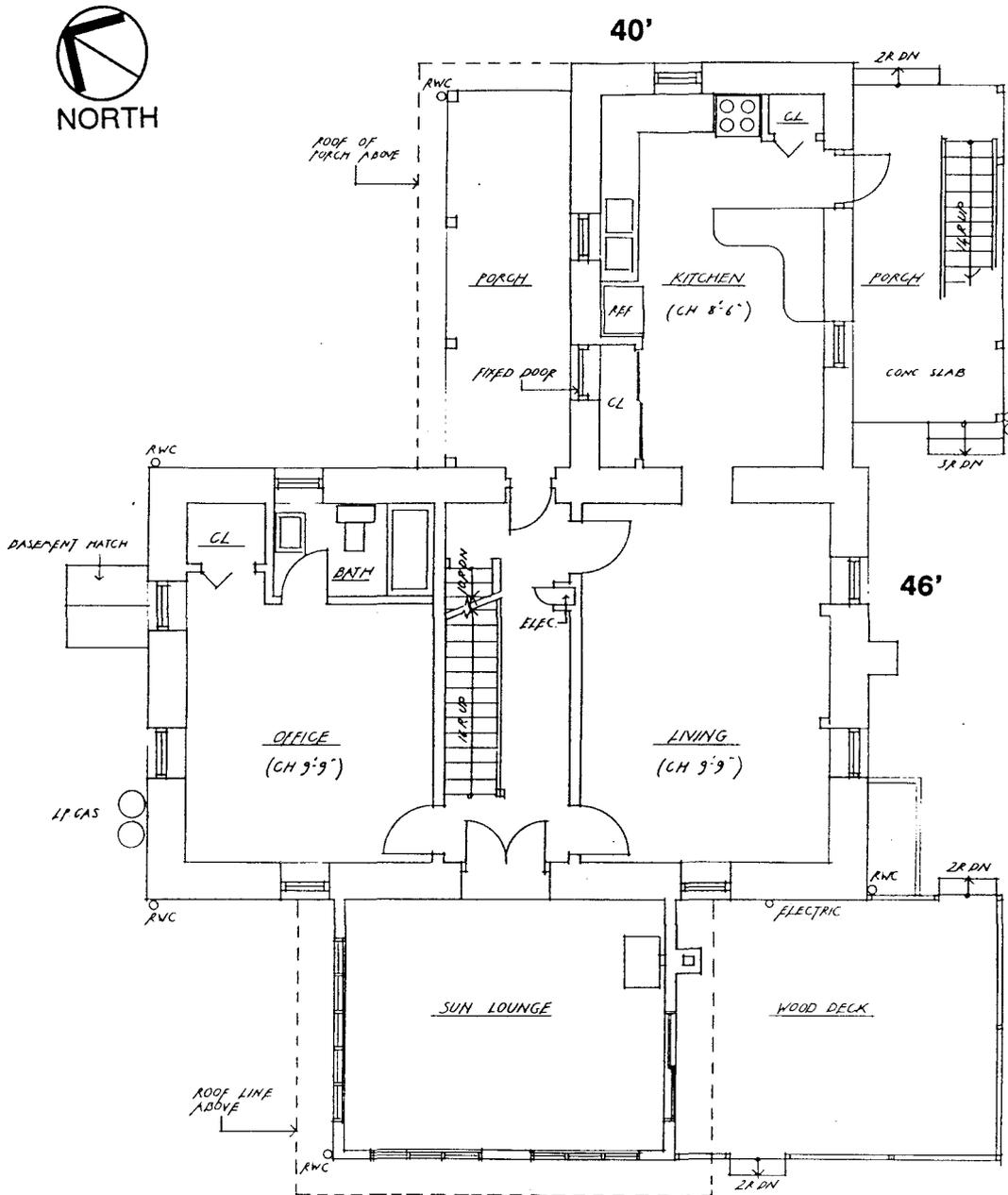
Isaac A. Packer Farm, Farm House, Second Floor Plan. Prepared 1992 by Jill Cremer. Original drawing located at Kise Franks & Straw, Inc., 219 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 19107.

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 farmhouse will be elevated as a flood protection measure. 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.

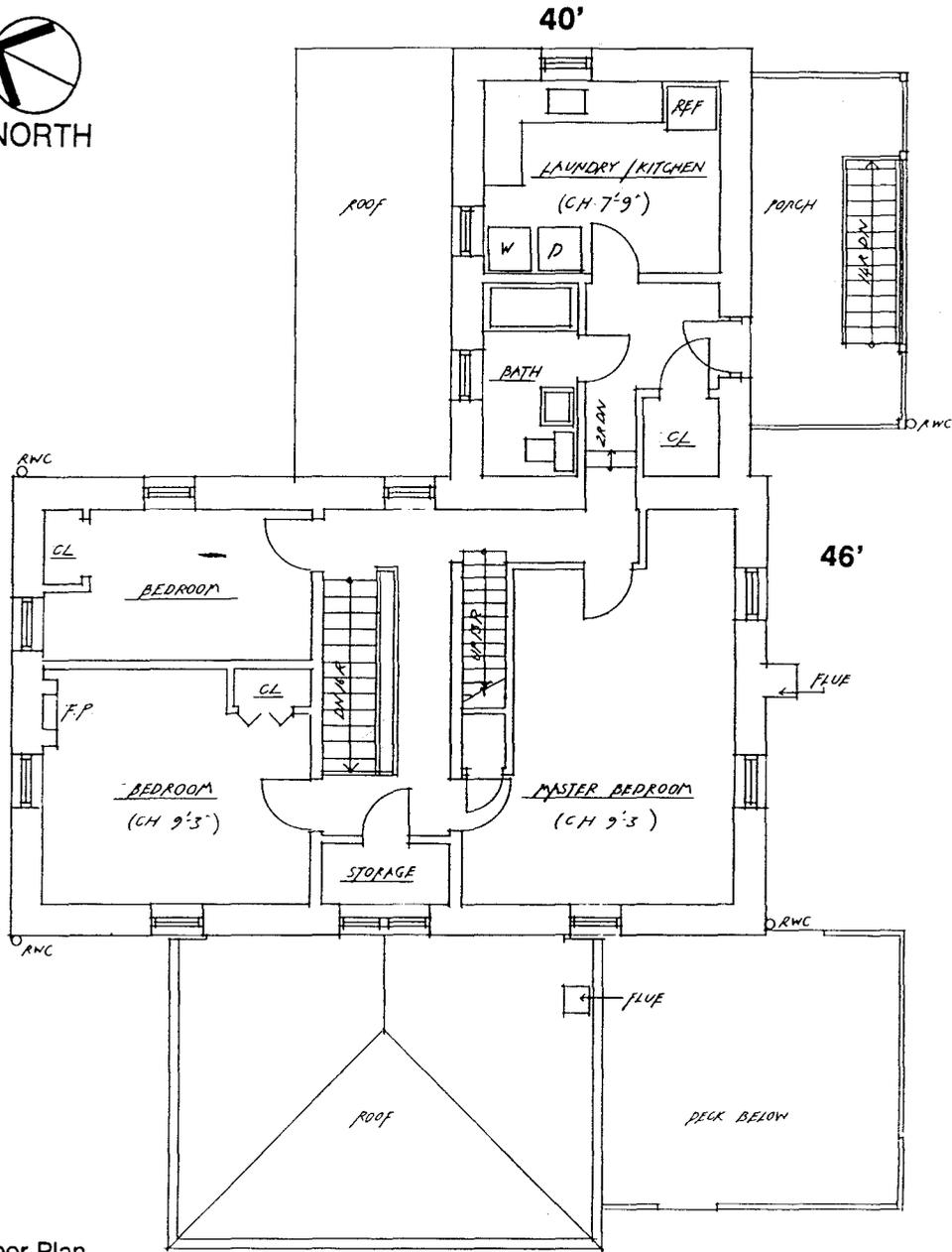
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First Floor Plan  
Not to Scale  
Prepared By: Jill Cremer

Source: Kise Franks & Straw, Inc. 219 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107.  
March 1990.

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Second Floor Plan  
Not to Scale  
Prepared By: Jill Cremer

Source: Kise Franks & Straw, Inc. 219 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107.  
March 1990.