

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

DRAFT

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name House at 120 Balcom Road

other names/site number Harrington House

name of related multiple property listing N/A

Location

street & number 120 Balcom Road not for publication

city or town Mount Vision vicinity

state New York code NY county Otsego code 077 zip code 13810

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:
 national statewide X local

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

 entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

 other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

POSTMEDIEVAL ENGLISH/New England

Colonial

EARLY REPUBLIC/Federal

foundation: stone

walls: wood

roof: asphalt

other:

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The house is located at 120 Balcom Road in the Town of New Lisbon (post office: Mount Vision), Otsego County, New York. The house occupies a small roughly one-acre parcel on the east side of an elbow formed by Balcom Road, where it turns north to ascend the west shoulder of a tributary valley of the West Branch of Otego Creek. The nominated property includes two-story, five-bay, side-gable, wood-frame house with an attached woodshed contemporary with the house, built ca. 1810, and a non-contributing garage built ca. 1970. The house faces south and occupies a level site on the first bench of land above the west branch of Otego Creek. The garage stands on slightly lower ground northeast of the house and is largely hidden from the road. The current parcel configuration represents the third subdivision of the house parcel from the surrounding farmland.

Narrative Description

Setting and Location

The house at 120 Balcom Road is located in the Town of New Lisbon in central Otsego County, New York. Much of county lies on the Allegheny Plateau, a sedimentary upland rising as much as 2,000' above sea level. It is bounded northerly by the Mohawk River Valley, easterly by the north-flowing Schoharie Creek in Schoharie County, and southerly by the Susquehanna River Valley. The plateau is carved into ridges and valleys trending southwest to northeast created by retreating glaciers. Small watercourses draining the ridges rise in narrow clefts that drop into creeks descending into the Susquehanna watershed. The west branch of Otego Creek originates in one such valley and flows southerly through the Town of Burlington to the north and thence south through the towns of New Lisbon, Laurens, and Oneonta to join the Susquehanna River. The main course of the West Branch is 500' east of the house at 120 Balcom Road. County Highway 14 drops into the valley on a steep eastern slope and is carried over the creek bridge where the route turns south to align with the creek. Balcom Road originates at the west end of the bridge alignment and quickly climbs fifty feet to where it turns north. The house stands on a level spot (approx. 1,400' above sea level) at the corner formed by the highway. The ridge enclosing the west side of the valley is cloaked in second-growth forest. South of the house, mainly open land spans the valley floor while forest encroaches from the ridgetops in a pattern characteristic of agricultural recession throughout the larger region.

House (one contributing building)

The mortise-and-tenon frame house rests on a roughly coursed, mortared stone foundation. The posts of the frame are not evenly spaced across the front and rear elevations. The second and third posts are spaced roughly seven feet apart on center and flank the entrance hall and chimney block. The west bay is about thirteen feet wide; the east bay is about two feet wider. The relatively steeply pitched roof is supported by sawn rafters. These run from the hewn top plate to the ridge without purlins and are joined at the peak by pegs. These joints comprise two tenons on one rafter end that flank a single tenon on the opposite rafter end. Sawn studs are generally regularly placed to form both exterior and interior walls. Except in the northwest corner of the first floor, plaster was troweled on split, or accordion, lath throughout both floors of the house and on the walls of the upper half-story of the woodshed. The house is clad in wood clapboards with narrow corner boards beaded

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at the outer edge. The cornice comprises a plain, fairly deep frieze with partial returns and substantial cavetto bed moldings. The two-bay woodshed is clad in similar wood clapboards with narrow, unbeaded corner boards; it has no frieze boards. The two south-facing openings with clipped corners spanning the façade of the woodshed are now closed with a variety of vertical wood board siding. This finish incorporates a door and one window with two-over-two wood sash. Both components appear salvaged much later than the construction period.

Exterior

The five-bay façade (south) appears symmetrical, but its spacing is slightly syncopated, reflecting the placement of the frame posts and the interior plan. The main entrance is nearly centered on the facade. It is capped by a ca. 1875 Italianate hood supported by scrolled braces, placed above a Federal-style, single-panel, wood door flanked by sidelights above fielded panels. The nine windows—two flanking each side of the entrance and five spanning the second story—have twelve-over-eight wood sash that replace earlier windows. The first-story openings on the end walls match those on the façade, but the second-story openings are narrower and fitted with nine-over-six wood sash. The rear wall fenestration plan is partially altered. While the east half of the rear wall retains windows opposite those in the façade; a non-historic (ca. 2000), one-story addition to the west half of the rear wall changed the fenestration there, and in the story above, one opening now has a recent non-historic “picture” window. The woodshed retains a single window with nine-over-six wood sash placed in the peak of the half-story on the east wall. All historic openings are cased with plain, narrow board trim capped by simple drip moldings.

Physical evidence indicates that when built, the first-floor plan was probably identical to that of the second floor. Each floor of the house retains two large rooms flanking a shallow front stair hall that backs onto the massive center chimney block. On both floors, these two rooms are entered from the stair hall and, when built, both extend slightly more than two-thirds of the depth of the house. (This created a plan that could be described as one-and-a-half-pile.) The second floor of the house features four small rooms spanning the rear third of the building, two entered from the east room and two entered from the west room. There were no doorways connecting the four rooms. The first-floor plan, which probably matched the upstairs one when built, was slightly altered ca. 1912 when a new kitchen was built in the rear third of the house.

The vertical posts of the mortise-and-tenon frame project into the rooms, marking the structural system used to build the house. Except for the northwest section of the first floor, floors are pine boards of roughly consistent width, ranging from eight inches to ten inches, with substantial thresholds in the doorways. Except for the southwest room, or parlor, on the first floor, windows and door casings were trimmed with narrow planed boards about four inches wide with butt-jointed corners and a simple bead on the inside edge. The baseboards, about six inches high, were of similarly plain design. Almost without exception, the house retains period four-panel wood doors with deep center rails and deep bottom rails. These are hung on period hinges. Many of the doors, especially upstairs, retain forged Norfolk latches. On the first floor, some of the latches are replaced by mortise locks with porcelain knobs. The window openings on the first floor are placed higher on the wall than on the second floor, giving the second-floor rooms a slightly more spacious feel than those on the first floor.

Interior

On the first floor, the main entrance opens onto a shallow hall (approximately 6' wide x 7' deep) with a winding stair composed entirely of triangular treads notched into a central post. This spans the back wall of the entrance

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hall in a space approximately 6' wide x 2'-6" deep and ascends to the second floor. Doors in the east and west walls enter generously sized rooms on either side of the stair hall, which is the only room with a chair rail in the house.

The nearly square east room (16' wide x 18' deep) on the first floor has two windows facing south and a third one near the southeast corner facing east. The historic plank door to the woodshed in the east wall is about a foot from the northeast corner of the room. An early floor-to-ceiling wood cupboard with shallow shelves and a wide door spans the north wall from the northeast corner of the room to the double-width opening to the pantry, an alteration made ca. 1912. The pantry spans the two eastern bays of the house and is fitted with ca. 1912 built-in cupboards at either end. Before the remodeling, the double-width opening was two doorways separated by a wide panel that opened into two small rooms. (The earlier configuration is retained on the second floor.)

The west wall of the southeast room retains a fireplace with a plain wood surround and shelf above. A wide board with a beaded lower edge rises above the firebox. The shelf above rests on a cavetto molding, and its leading edge features a simple ogee molding. The hearth is a single slab of local siltstone or shale; the sides of the relatively shallow firebox are lined with similar thick stone slabs. The fireback is brick. To the north of the fireplace a door composed of two vertical boards, apparently salvaged, covers the location of the brick bake oven, now partially demolished.¹ A second stone slab laid below the door to the old oven adjoins the hearthstone in front of the fireplace. To the south of the fireplace, a four-panel wood door like those in the hall opens to the cellar stair, which descends east to west to the basement.

The west room (13' wide x 16' deep) has two windows facing south and a third one facing west located about five feet from the front corner of the room. The casings feature delicate ogee backband moldings; these are the only windows in the house with this decorative finish. A fireplace with a tripartite Federal-style mantel and a deep shelf with a double ogee leading edge is located at the north end of the interior wall of the room. The firebox walls are single marble slabs as is the large hearthstone. The fireback is brick. The northern few inches of the mantel shelf were sawn off when the depth of the room was shortened ca. 1910 for a new kitchen spanning the west part of the rear of the house. This wall uses mill lath, where all other plaster in the house was troweled onto split, or accordion, lath. A narrow, non-historic door opens to the kitchen at the west end of the later wall.

The kitchen area (19' wide x 10' deep) is now an open room spanning the west half of the north wall of the house. The kitchen was remodeled, probably ca. 1985, with stock kitchen cabinets, and the floor was partially replaced with plywood covered in rolled goods. A lightly built, enclosed, shed-roof porch was added to the rear wall of the kitchen ca. 2000. These non-historic finishes were removed during the summer of 2023 due to contamination by feral cats. The kitchen retains a historic window in the west wall that aligns with the second floor opening above it in the westernmost of the four small rooms spanning the rear of the house.

A low railing with four delicate squared spindles, a simple top rail, and a squared cap on its newel post is let into the edge of the floor of the second-floor stair hall. On the far side of the stairs, a narrow (about fifteen inches wide) landing spans the back wall. This accesses the attic stair, which is reached through a narrow

¹ This was uncovered when non-historic cupboards were removed from the ca. 2000 kitchen located in the northwest corner of the first floor.

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(about 20" wide) single panel, battened wood door about eight inches above the landing floor, abutting the west corner of the landing.

Like in the first-floor entrance hall, four-panel wood doors open into the large front rooms on either side of the stair hall. The dimensions (16' wide x 18' deep) and fenestration plan of the second floor front room at the east end match those of the room below. A stone panel with a circle cut out for a stovepipe that opened to a flue in the center chimney is let into the interior wall above the placement of the hearth. A door at the north end of the interior wall opens to a space now used as a closet. A door in the east wall, directly above the one downstairs, accesses the upper half-story of the woodshed. On the north wall, paired doors divided by a wide panel open into the two rear rooms (the east one measures 8' wide x 8' deep; the western one is 10' wide by 8' deep) on that side of the house. Each room has a window with nine-over-six sash on the north wall. The larger of the two rear rooms was recently remodeled as a bathroom.

Like the southeastern upstairs room, the windows in the southwestern front room (14' wide x 18' deep) on the second floor are stacked above those in the room below. A similar stone panel with a circle cut out for a stovepipe is let into the interior wall above the hearth. On the north wall, paired doors divided by a wide panel open into the two rear rooms (the west one measures 8' wide x 8' deep; the eastern one is 10' wide by 8' deep) on that side of the house. The east rear chamber has a window adjoining the boxed post of the house frame on the north wall. The west rear chamber has a window in the gable wall but none in the rear wall.

The full-height cellar is roughly coursed mortared fieldstone. Some slabs are very large. It is ventilated by four narrow windows. A cellar entrance with an early plank door enters a fieldstone bulkhead located at the south end of the east wall, adjacent to the front wall of the woodshed. The heavily constructed, three-bay timber frame is visible from below. The joists have been recently augmented with dimensional lumber joined by steel brackets. The massive chimney foundation is composed of field stone with large slabs under both hearths; there is no evidence of a north-facing third hearth. This historic masonry is reinforced with mortared concrete blocks, likely added in the 1980s.

The attic is a single open, unfinished space. A steep, narrow stair ascends north from the narrow landing abutting the chimney block in the second-floor stair hall, bypassing the west side of the chimney block. Roofing boards are laid over the plain rafters. Each peak features a single window with nine-over-six sash. The floor is rough, random-width planks.

The attached one-and-a-half-story, two-bay woodshed (25' wide x 20' deep) has a mortise-and-tenon frame that rests on a low, slightly banked stone foundation about two feet lower than the main block foundation. The foundation appears less finely built than the one under the house block, but construction details of the frame section of the woodshed indicate it was built in a single phase with the house. Doors in the east wall of the southeast rooms on both the first and the second floors of the house access the woodshed from the main block. The first floor of the woodshed is dirt, and the interior walls are variously clad with horizontal planks nailed to the studs. An open wooden stair (a replacement) ascends to a hole cut in the floor to reach the upper level internally. Like the lower level, the second-floor compartment is a single, open space. It has plain board floors and walls finished with split lath and plaster. The roof structure with pole rafters and three-fingered joints at the peak matches the work and pitch of the main block roof. A window with nine-over-six, double-hung wood sash is in the east gable end above a work bench constructed of heavy wood boards and abutting that wall.

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Garage (one non-contributing building due to age), ca. 1970

The two-bay, wood-frame garage (approx. 15' x 30') has a poured concrete floor, a steel roof, and clapboard siding. The garage bay openings are placed in the west gable wall and closed with separate upward-sliding doors.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Period of Significance

ca. 1810 - ca. 1912

Significant Dates

ca. 1912

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The house at 120 Balcom Rd in the Town of New Lisbon, Otsego County, New York, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria C for architecture. The house embodies vernacular building characteristics brought by settlers from southern New England in the late 1700s and early 1800s, who developed farmsteads, water-powered mills, and commercial hamlets throughout the Allegheny Plateau region. This two-story, five-bay, side-gable house exemplifies a vernacular house type identified as the New England Large House, one subtype of house forms referred to as “New England Colonial.” The Large House form was used by some Otsego County builders for more than a quarter-century after independence was established in 1783. The form expands a single-pile two rooms-over-two rooms layout with a row of half-depth rooms spanning the rear of the house on both floors under the main roof. The house at 120 Balcom Road incorporates the massive center chimney common throughout rural New England from the seventeenth century into the late eighteenth century while its roughly symmetrical exterior displays the classicizing influence of late Georgian and early Federal design. Interior evidence in the house at 120 Balcom Road shows that its original plan retained the older, post-medieval, multi-use room, or “hall,” with a cooking hearth and beehive oven in one of its main rooms. The large one-and-a-half-story woodshed attached to the east gable wall of the house when it was built stored the prodigious amount of wood that fed two hearths on the first floor. The period of significance begins ca. 1810 with the construction of the house and ends ca. 1912 with the alterations to the kitchen and central chimney.

Narrative Statement of Significance

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Town of New Lisbon lies entirely within a large tract of land patented to George Croghan (ca. 1712–82), an Irish-born land speculator and crown agent in Indian Affairs during the colonial era. He traded in furs and lands over a large geographical range spanning the Ohio Valley and the colonies of New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. Through his dealings, he amassed thousands of acres both through royal letters of patent and direct purchase from native tribes.²

Among the lands Croghan acquired was a large tract encompassing the present Otsego County towns of Burlington, Otsego, and New Lisbon and parts of Exeter, Laurens, Pittsfield, and Springfield for which he and about forty partners were patented on 30 November 1769. Croghan bought out the partners in three groups, but to finance the purchases he mortgaged 40,000 acres to William Franklin—royal governor of New Jersey and son of Benjamin Franklin—and sold an additional 33,000 acres to Franklin outright in 1770. The Town of New

² George Croghan’s involvement in colonial affairs is exceedingly complex and was largely forgotten by the early 1800s. Nicholas B. Wainwright wrote an academic biography, *George Croghan: Wilderness Diplomat* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press) in 1959. Croghan’s role is being reassessed by more recent scholars. His role in Otsego County is most extensively examined by Alan Taylor in *The Divided Ground: Indians, Settlers, and the Northern Borderland of the American Revolution* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006) and *William Cooper’s Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).

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Lisbon encompasses 26,800 acres of Franklin's purchase.³ Franklin, a Loyalist, lost title to his lands during the war. When hostilities concluded in 1783, Franklin's lands had been acquired by various merchants and speculators, most of them from the western part of New Jersey, but also from Philadelphia and New York City.

In 1783, the new State of New York was thinly settled by Europeans, and few of those residents lived beyond the Hudson-Mohawk corridor. Like Croghan's holdings, much of present-day Otsego County had been patented or changed hands in the 1760s and 1770s. While there had been tiny settlements in the present Otsego County towns of Cherry Valley, Middlefield, Morris, New Lisbon, and Springfield, all were abandoned during the war. New owner-speculators rushed to survey and subdivide their vast properties into farm-sized parcels to attract New Englanders moving west in the 1780s and 1790s from that heavily cultivated region. The roughly six-mile square area that became the Town of New Lisbon in 1806 encompasses sections of the valleys of the West Branch of Otsego Creek in its eastern half and the Butternuts Creek in its western half. These valleys are divided by a north-south ridge (approx. 1,800' above sea level) generally codified as a straight line in surveys conducted by the various owner-speculators. The Butternuts valley had been partially settled by people ascending the Susquehanna River valley before the American Revolution. The Otsego Creek valley, while visited and described by Richard Smith in the 1760s, was mainly surveyed and then settled by New Englanders after Independence.

The house at 120 Balcom Road stands in the north half of Lot 4 in a 6,000-acre section of the West Branch valley called Bloomfield for Joseph Bloomfield, a prominent resident of New Jersey. In 1800, it was divided into 60 lots that were assigned evenly by lottery to Bloomfield, William Cooper (1754-1809) of Cooperstown, and Thomas Fisher, a wealthy Philadelphia Quaker.⁴ Cooper received Lot 4, and on 16 November 1801, Thomas Cummins (or Cummings; 1758-1846) was articulated for it. Cummins, like many identified early settlers in New Lisbon came from Connecticut, which may indicate a concerted effort to find buyers there by owners like Bloomfield and Cooper. Cummins agreed to pay 549 silver dollars and twenty-five cents ten years from the date of the article, with the interest due on that principal paid annually.⁵ Speculators in the post-Revolutionary era were often cash poor and required funds to pay the debts accrued in land acquisition. Articles provided some ready money and assumed a payoff.⁶

³ Hilda May Robison Watrous. *The Town of New Lisbon: The Beginnings 1768-1800*. (New York: State University College at Oneonta, 1980): 6.

⁴ *Book of Deeds XX/67*. (Cooperstown, N.Y.: Office of County Clerk) Bloomfield is probably the man who was the fourth governor of New Jersey and a lawyer in Burlington, NJ. He was the state's attorney general 1783-1792 and a trustee of Princeton College from 1793 until his death in 1823. He was born 1753 and served in the Revolutionary Army. He was a Democratic-Republican when elected to congress in 1817, where he served two terms. ("Joseph Bloomfield," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Bloomfield, retrieved 18 July 2023) Thomas Fisher was one of three brothers. The other two were Miers and Samuel. All were wealthy Philadelphia Quakers who partnered with William Cooper in the Hillington purchase in the Butternuts Valley. (Taylor, 113) Thomas Fisher joined Cooper in the Bloomfield Tract too. *n.b.* Subsequent deed references take the form ## (Book number)/## (page number).

⁵ Article of Agreement with Thomas Cummins, 1 November 1804. (Oneonta, N.Y.: Hartwick College, Paul F. Cooper, Jr., Archives, Control No. 8-553)

⁶ Pre-Revolutionary landholders in New York expected to derive an income from rents on long leases, often for one hundred years or for three lives. In his *Guide in the Wilderness* (Dublin, 1810), William Cooper touted the benefits of articles over leases because they led to land ownership.

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It was argued at the time that land ownership over tenancy would lead to stability.⁷ In reality, the financial requirements of an article often led to abandonment due to overwhelming debt and established a pattern of transiency throughout the region. Like many, Cummins moved west. Also, in common with many such, he moved with at least two of his brothers, leaving his father, who moved the family to Otsego County from Connecticut, and at least two married sisters behind.⁸ While we don't know the reason for Cummins' abandonment, the lack of a stable currency contributed to levels of indebtedness that were more easily fled than paid. This contributed to patchwork development that delayed for a generation or more the establishment of a steady electorate, good highways, productive farms, and sound buildings in central New York. These troubles exemplified at a local level the much larger economic and political troubles of the young republic.

Against this backdrop and within the larger, almost entirely agricultural context of the region, some entrepreneurs sought to establish and protect American industry from the continued influx of imported goods, especially British textiles. Shipping ginned southern cotton north to water-powered American spinneries rather than shipping it to England as a raw material was among these efforts. Those who speculated in industry viewed the well-watered valleys of the Allegheny Plateau as brimming with potential. In Otsego County, textile mill entrepreneurs were already active in the Oaks Creek Valley in the nearby mill hamlets of Toddsville and Index in the Town of Hartwick.⁹ This story is eclipsed by later romanticization of the homesteader over the budding industrialist promulgated by the 1880s and expanded in the twentieth century. Anecdotally, specific families traded in identifying mill seats, establishing water rights, and sometimes cutting ditches and other works necessary to developing a mill. Based on deeds recorded in Otsego County, it seems that all likely streams were subject to such speculation. Literally hundreds of instruments record this activity in careful detail.¹⁰ It appears that Levi Beebe, one of the partners who acquired Lot 4 by fee simple deed in 1806, was one such.¹¹

The purchase price Beebe and his partner Amasa Peters, both Hartwick residents, paid for Lot 4 was identical to Cummings' article, indicating he made no appreciable improvements. Its position straddling the West Branch adjacent to an area suitable for an impoundment below a drop of nearly forty feet, however, would have recommended the site as a potential mill seat. In a slightly earlier deed executed the same year for land alongside Otego Creek, Beebe identified as a farmer and merchant. Peters witnessed that deed, indicating that

⁷ William Cooper, *A Guide in the Wilderness* (Dublin: Gilbert and Hodges, 1810).

⁸ *United States Census for 1810*. Thomas and his brothers represent a common migratory pattern of the time whereby people moved farther west several times from the mid-1780s to ca. 1825. Most moved at short intervals of a few years, and numerous newspaper advertisements indicate that fleeing indebtedness commonly motivated departure, a sad truth largely obscured by historians compiling county histories in the 1870s and 1880s. Cummings was recorded in 1810 heading a large household with eight children in the Town of Pulteney in Steuben County.

⁹ Catherine Bohls, "Industrial order in Leatherstocking country: textile mills and mill workers in Otsego County, New York." Master's paper. [Cooperstown, N.Y.: Cooperstown Graduate Program], 1991. (Cooperstown, N.Y.: Fenimore Art Museum Research Library) examines the Union Cotton Spinning Mills. Jessie Ravage prepared an MPDF "Industrial Development in the Oaks Creek, Valley, Otsego County, New York," in 2006. The latter documents development of a broad range of water-powered mills The Fly Creek Historic District (06PR07082) is listed under this document.

¹⁰ The evidence of this activity in Otsego County is abundantly evident in deeds of the period. Individual citations are beyond the scope of this document.

¹¹ G/522. Beebe went on to record nearly forty deeds for potential mill seats and established mills, mostly on the main branch of Otego Creek and Oaks Creek, in his name and eventually for the Union Cotton Factory in Toddsville (Towns of Hartwick and Otsego on Oaks Creek). The Union Cotton mills were a well-financed venture operating large spinneries at several locations on Oaks Creek. These deeds are recorded in Otsego County, New York, continue into the 1820s.

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the men knew each other by then.¹² Beebe subsequently bought several similar properties as potential or already developed mill seats. Notably, the later transactions were all for much smaller parcels, which may show that Beebe soon learned that narrowing his purchases to the land and water right useful to a mill profited him better. Beebe went on to become an agent for the Union Cotton Mills, a large and well-capitalized spinning company that established multi-story stone mills on Oaks Creek and the Susquehanna River in the first two decades of the nineteenth century.¹³ Peters, on the other hand, recorded few deeds after that, and none appears to be related to waterpower. Peters' will, recorded in November 1820, however, noted that he held stock in a cotton spinners in Waterford, Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania.¹⁴ The circumstances suggest a partnership that dissolved early, leaving no discernible trace except for the choice of landform and the house at 120 Balcom Road.

The House at 120 Balcom Road

The large size and the care used in building the house at 120 Balcom Road might indicate it was conceived in conjunction with a planned mill, possibly as an overseer's house as no evidence suggests that either Amasa Peters or Levi Beebe ever resided in New Lisbon. The physical evidence of the center chimney block and beehive oven, the relatively steeply pitched roof, and the interior trim scheme date ca. 1810–20. Peters died in 1820; his daughter Abigail Morse sold the north half of Lot 4, where the house stands in 1828.

The house is an example of a New England Large House, a subtype of vernacular houses designated New England Colonial.¹⁵ The subtype developed in southern New England by the early eighteenth century, and people moving west into central New York in the post-colonial decades brought the Large House subtype with them. It differs from other New England Colonial subtypes, most notably the "saltbox," which placed a rear range of rooms and possibly an attic above in a lean-to under a lower shed, or single-face, roof projecting from the back wall of the main block. New England Large Houses are described as wood-frame, two-story, side-gable houses that combine room layouts and circulation patterns characteristic of late-Medieval dwellinghouses. They are cloaked in roughly symmetrical facades minimally trimmed with classically derived details drawn from pattern books of the construction period. Early examples in New England predate 1700; the subtype persisted into the first quarter of the nineteenth century in places like central New York. As such, the New England Large House represents a lengthy transition from late medieval houses to classically influenced Georgian and Federal plans and stylistic details.¹⁶

New England Large Houses were generally constructed in rural areas by people of middling wealth who hoped to establish a degree of economic competence. Most of them identified as farmers, like the great majority of New Lisbon residents. New England Large Houses embody a high degree of utilitarianism and a low level of

¹² H/366.

¹³ These were very large operations. The buildings stood until the early 1900s, when the stone was reused by the Clark family to build the Main Barn, Creamery, and Herder's cottage at Iroquois Farm, now parts of the Farmers' Museum, and Mary Imogene Bassett Hospital, both in Cooperstown. The General Store at the Farmers' Museum was the company store in Toddsville. Only the first story of the overseer's house at Oaksville remains *in situ*.

¹⁴ Will of Amasa Peters, March 1820, recorded 23 November 1820 (*Book F of Wills/58*), Surrogate, Otsego County. .

¹⁵ *Bulletin 16: Completing the National Register Registration Form* list of Architectural Classification lists New England Colonial as a "other stylistic terminology" under Postmedieval English.

¹⁶ Gerald L. Foster, *American Houses. A Field Guide to the Architecture of the Home*. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2004): 20. (<https://archive.org/details/americanhousesfi00fost/page/n3/mode/2up>; retrieved 9 October 2023)

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complexity. This made them structurally sound, but not elaborately detailed so a builder with basic skills could construct them. They could be later embellished as funds allowed. Further, the subtype mimicked the houses of economically competent people in the places left behind in New England. Even if simply designed and plainly built, and possibly faintly old-fashioned when completed in Otsego County, such houses represented hopes for economic success in a new place.¹⁷ In a reconnaissance-level survey of the town of New Lisbon completed in 2013, several additional two-story, five-bay houses that may also retain the characteristic floorplan of this type were identified.¹⁸ Most no longer feature a center chimney because after stoves for heating and cooking became common in the mid-1800s, owners often removed the massive center chimney block to gain space and alter the cramped staircase. It seems likely there were additional examples of the subtype in New Lisbon as the town has gradually depopulated since the mid-1800s. A few more examples are found in the Otsego Creek valley in the adjacent towns of Hartwick and Laurens.

The exterior of the house at 120 Balcom Road presents a rather plain, generally symmetrical appearance suggestive of high-style Georgian and Federal houses built in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in New England and New York. Measurements show that the builder aimed for the illusion of balance rather than perfect symmetry. The house retains partial returns embellished with a single ogee bed molding at the roofline and simple dripcaps and narrow sills on its windows. Double-hung sash—larger twelve-over-eight sash on the front façade and first-story sides and narrower nine-over-six sash otherwise—are generally evenly spaced. The fixed sidelights flanking the heavy single-panel wood door are both decorative and functional as they light the shallow entrance hall and staircase, which backs up onto the center chimney block. This stair hall differentiates the floorplan from a more modish Georgian or Federal-style house, which would have had a wide center hall extending the depth of the house offering an owner a chance to express good taste through an elegant staircase. Instead, the narrow stairs in this house take up as little space as possible in the overall floorplan.

The original floorplan with large rooms flanking the stairs and a row of four small, half-depth rooms on the rear wall of the house seems symmetrical, but measurements show that the eastern rooms are wider than the western ones on both floors. Unlike many New England Large houses, where the kitchen was in the rear of the house, the kitchen at 120 Balcom Road was in the large eastern room on the first floor. This room appears to have served as a “hall” in the medieval sense of being a multi-use room where people cooked, ate, and congregated. It retains a larger hearth than the parlor, or western room, and features a utilitarian mantel shelf above. Until ca. 1912, a brick beehive bake oven, possibly by then long disused, opened onto the northwest corner of the room. Its location is still marked by a large stone slab adjoining the northern edge of the hearth stone in front of the fireplace. A door in the east wall of the room opens to the substantial two-bay woodshed attached to that side of the house.

Brick may have been locally scarce when the house was built as it was only used for the bake oven, firebacks, and possibly the main flue and chimney above the basement. (Most of the main flue was recently replaced with

¹⁷ The exterior appearance of the subtype and the name New England Colonial are popular today among realtors and house designers to such a degree that *Old House Journal* offers plans for building one’s own “New England Colonial.” These designs are often take their exterior appearance from the New England Large House subtype and are offered as the embodiment of an Early American tradition.

¹⁸ Jessie A. Ravage, *Reconnaissance-Level Historic Resources Survey of Town of New Lisbon, Otsego County, New York* (Town of New Lisbon: 2013). Examples identified in 2013 include 225 Allen Rd, 122 Bundy Rd, 299 Card Rd, 1899 CR 11, 1313 CR 16, 269 Myers Hill Rd, 3927 NY 51, 4686 NY 51, 136 Texas Rd, 271 Texas Rd.

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concrete blocks, although the chimney above the ridgeline is brick.) The jambs, the sides of the fireboxes, and the hearthstones are dressed stone slabs as are the unusual thimbles in the upstairs rooms. The stone used in the parlor is marble; elsewhere, the stone appears to be locally quarried sedimentary stone. Massive slabs of local stone are also used in the chimney foundation. There is no evidence of a third fireplace facing north on the first floor; there were also no fireplaces upstairs.

The house appears to have been finished in a single phase. Except for the rear parlor wall moved to enlarge a space for the ca. 1912 kitchen, the lath and plaster is consistent throughout. The trim is plain with the single exception of the parlor trim scheme, which might date to the 1830s and indicate an update to this room. The decorative Federal-style trim scheme comprising narrow filleted back-banding on window casings and an ogeed mantel shelf with tripartite panels marks this room as the most formal space in the house, probably designated for visitors and special occasions.

The layout of the rear third of the first floor probably matched the upstairs floorplan, which retains four small rooms spanning the rear wall when the house was built. The first-floor plan was altered when the kitchen was moved to the rear part of the house ca. 1912 during the ownership of Charles K. and Ella May Harrington, soon after Clarissa Harrington, Charles' mother, died. The bake oven was partially demolished, and the wall dividing the parlor and the back rooms was moved forward to provide more space for an up-to-date kitchen. This reallocation of space reduced the parlor and resulted in cutting off the mantel shelf where the new wall abutted it. The wall dividing the two small rooms behind the earlier kitchen, or hall, in the east part of the house was removed and this space became an enlarged pantry with characteristic built-in cupboards that were emblems of a neat and modern kitchen at that time. This may simply have updated rooms already used for food storage and processing as their northern exposure would have suited them for this purpose. The rooms on the parlor side of the first floor might have been parlor bedchambers as they would have been warmer in winter than rooms upstairs. When stoves were installed later, the pipes passing through the unusual stone thimbles on the interior walls of the two large upstairs rooms would have radiated a modicum of warmth in these spaces.

The house retains much of the plainly designed decorative scheme and finishes dating to its construction. The fenestration plan features large windows with twelve-over-eight sash in the front façade as befitted its public face. These are matched on the sides of the house on the first floor in the large front rooms indicating the likelihood that people other than the residents might visit those rooms. Windows on the upstairs gable and rear walls have with narrower window openings fitted with nine-over-six sash. (Some on the rear wall were altered ca. 2000.) Although the present wood sash replace older ones, their configurations almost certainly reproduce those they replaced and still illustrate decisions about decorative hierarchy made in the construction period. Nearly all interior doors are matching four-panel ones with deep center rails. Those upstairs retain early or original Norfolk latches. The downstairs latches were replaced with white porcelain knobs and mortise locks, possibly when the kitchen remodeling occurred ca. 1912. The overall plainness suggests a combination of durability of materials and an economy of detail that could later be embellished with increased prosperity. The Federal details in the parlor, possibly undertaken in the 1830s, may exemplify a first step in that direction. The Italianate hood over the front door might be another such improvement.

From ca. 1912 until the 1990s, after the house was sold to David K. and Susanne Y. Taylor, the only perceptible changes to the house are paint and wallpaper. After that, the ca. 1912 kitchen was replaced with stock

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cupboards. The finishes and fixtures in the single bathroom, located in the second room from the east along the rear wall of the second floor, match the kitchen aesthetic. For a time in the early 2000s, a lightly built enclosed porch projected north from the kitchen, but that was razed in 2023. Overall, the house is an unusual survivor illustrating early vernacular architectural traditions in Otsego County that have often been altered or demolished. The four-generation Harrington ownership from 1889, when Aaron Harrington bought it, through the 1970s probably played a significant role in its preservation, possibly first through necessity, but later by choice or inertia.

The non-contributing automobile garage on the property was probably built by Leon Johnson. He owned a local service garage and married Elizabeth Harrington, great-granddaughter of Aaron Harrington, in 1967. She received the house and one-acre lot in the settlement of Ella May Harrington's estate. Ella May married Charles K. Harrington, Aaron's son and Elizabeth's father.¹⁹

¹⁹ Aaron Harrington purchased the farm that included the house on 29 March 1889 for \$2,000 from Andrew N. and Nancy M. Todd via 215/289 filed in the Otsego County Clerk's Office. Virginia Schoradt, the present town historian, provided details about Elizabeth and Leon. Interestingly, Elizabeth served as town historian for many years and taught school. She worked in district (a.k.a. one-room) schoolhouses until New Lisbon centralized in the 1960s. She then taught at Edmeston, one of the centralized districts that New Lisbon residents chose.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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(<https://web.archive.org/web/20100731091211/http://docs.unh.edu/NY/hrtw12ne.jpg>)

Watrous, Hilda May Robison. *The Town of New Lisbon: The beginnings 1768-1800*. [s.l.: s.n.], 1980.
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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 # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 23NR00122

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.91 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS 84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 42.636545 Longitude: -75.081103

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed map with scale.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The house at 120 Balcom Road occupies a one-acre lot bounded south and west by Balcom Road. North and east, the site is encircled by a wetland shaped by beavers that has greatly altered the agricultural context established in the nineteenth century.

The house has been transferred separately from the surrounding land in Lot 4 of the Bloomfield Tract three times in its history. During the mid-nineteenth century, the house lot was identified as a separate parcel in several deeds. The first division occurred in 1831, when a house lot of approximately 4 acres was reserved by grantor Rufus S. Peters. In 1837, Peters reduced the house lot to 1.25 acres when he sold the house to James Perkins. When the house lot was reunited with the surrounding land in 1854, it remained a separate entity within a larger deed until 1862, when it was bought by Wheeler Baily. Until 1969, the house was considered part of the larger parcel, when John Harrington divided the house with its present one-acre parcel (200' x 218') off in settlement of his mother's (Ella May Harrington, wife of Charles K. Harrington) estate following her death in 1965. John's sister, Elizabeth Harrington Johnson, lived in the house until her death in 1977, when her husband Leon Johnson inherited the property. Elizabeth's niece, Mary Crouthamel, received the house and lot when Leon's will was settled in 1981. She sold the house and lot to John Branson in 1983.

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The parcel retains the 1969 configuration drawn by John Harrington, which is very similar to the 1854 house lot description. In all three instances, the bend in Balcom Road has formed the south and west sides of the house lot. The property retains and enhances the view south down the valley of the West Branch of Otego Creek, surely the salient feature of the house site as it was conceived in the early nineteenth century.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jessie Ravage
organization Independent research and preservation consultant date December 2023
street & number 34 Delaware St telephone 607 435 3798
city or town Cooperstown state NY zip code 13326
e-mail jravage@stny.rr.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

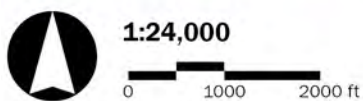
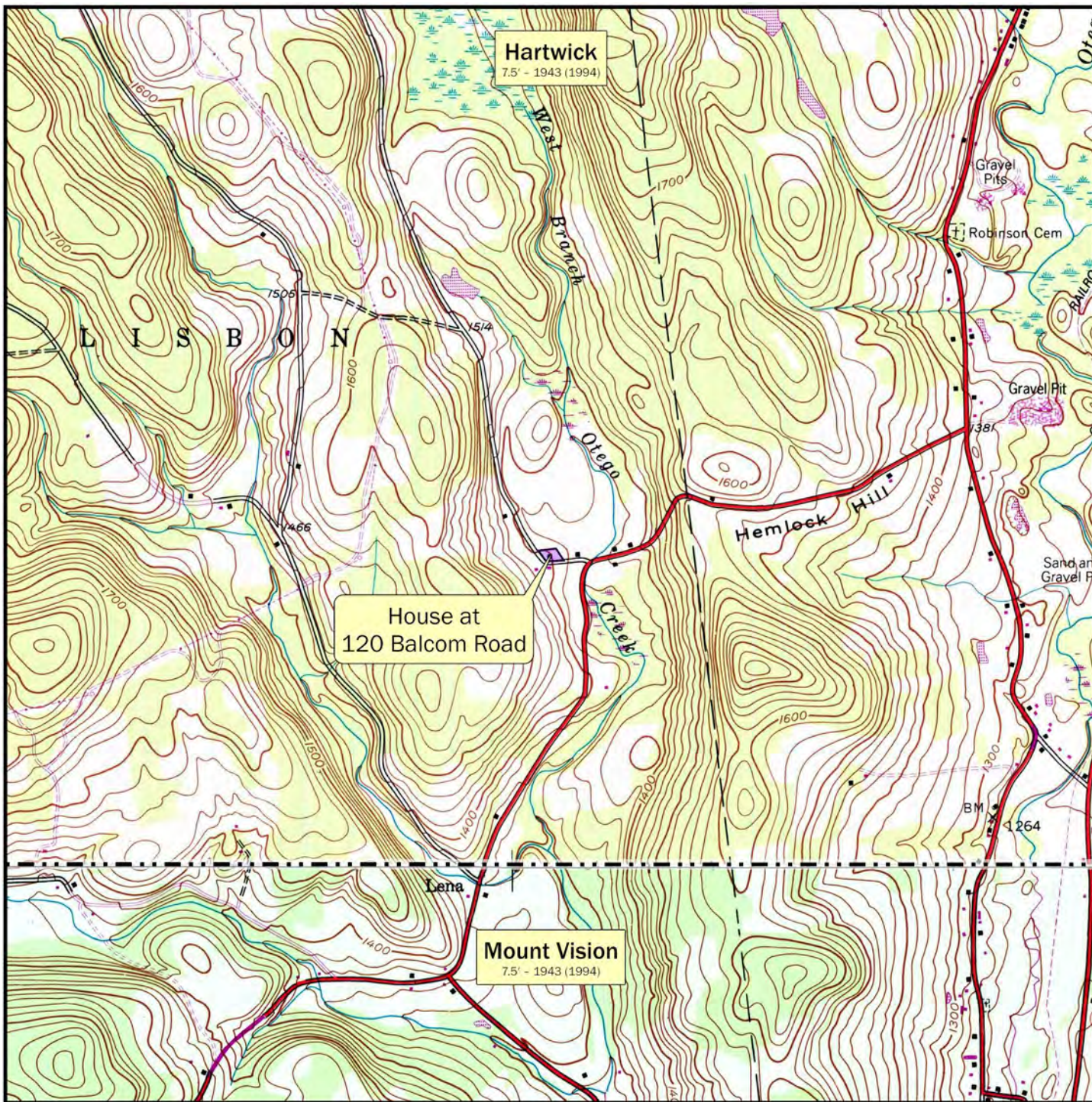
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.


- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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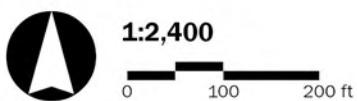



Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N

Mapped 01/24/2024 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO

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 Nomination Boundary (0.91 ac)



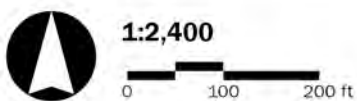
Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N

New York State Orthoimagery Year: 2022



Mapped 01/24/2024 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO

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Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N

 Nomination Boundary (0.91 ac)  Tax Parcels

Otsego County Parcel Year: 2021

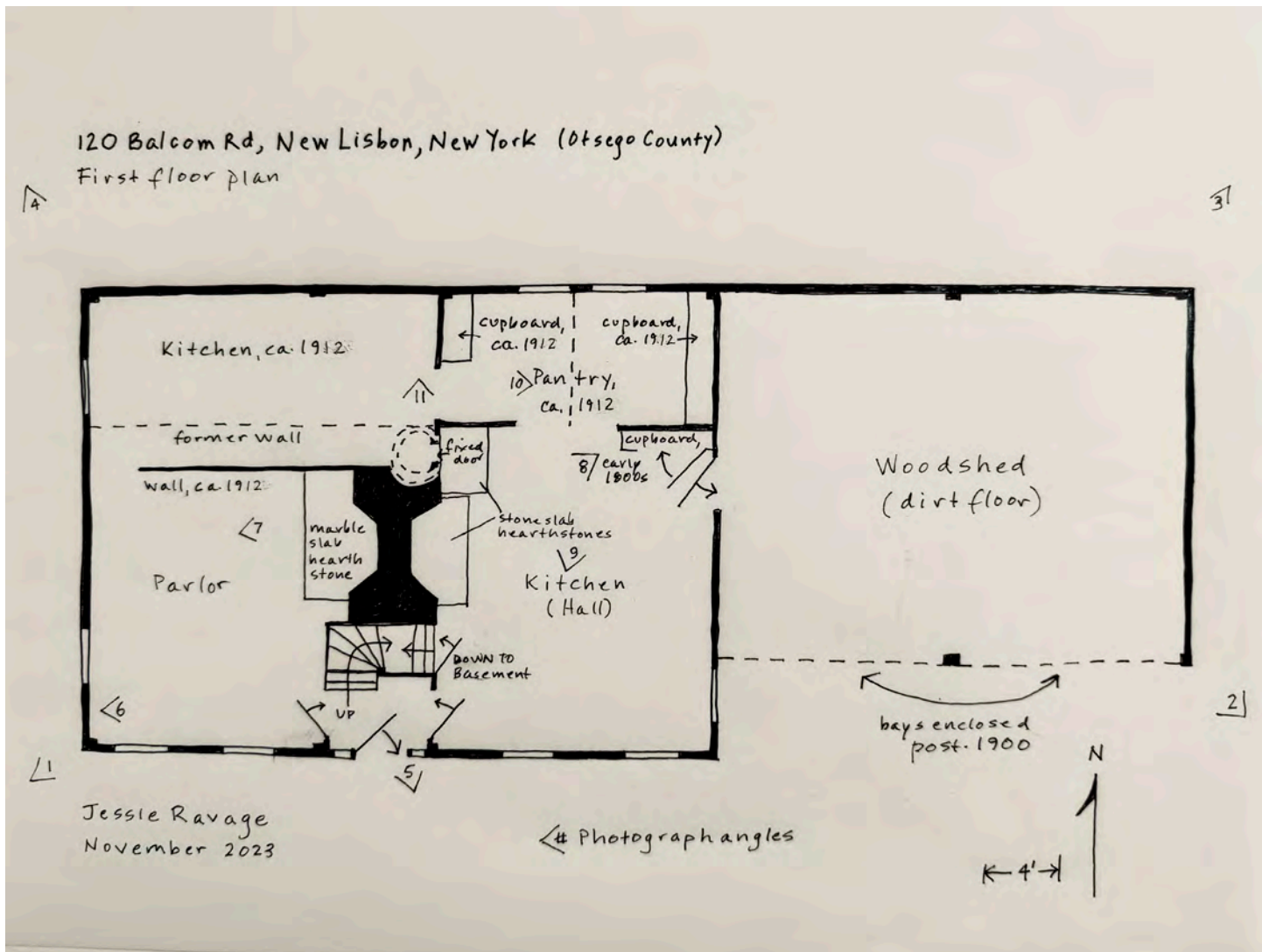


Mapped 01/24/2024 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO

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Name of Property

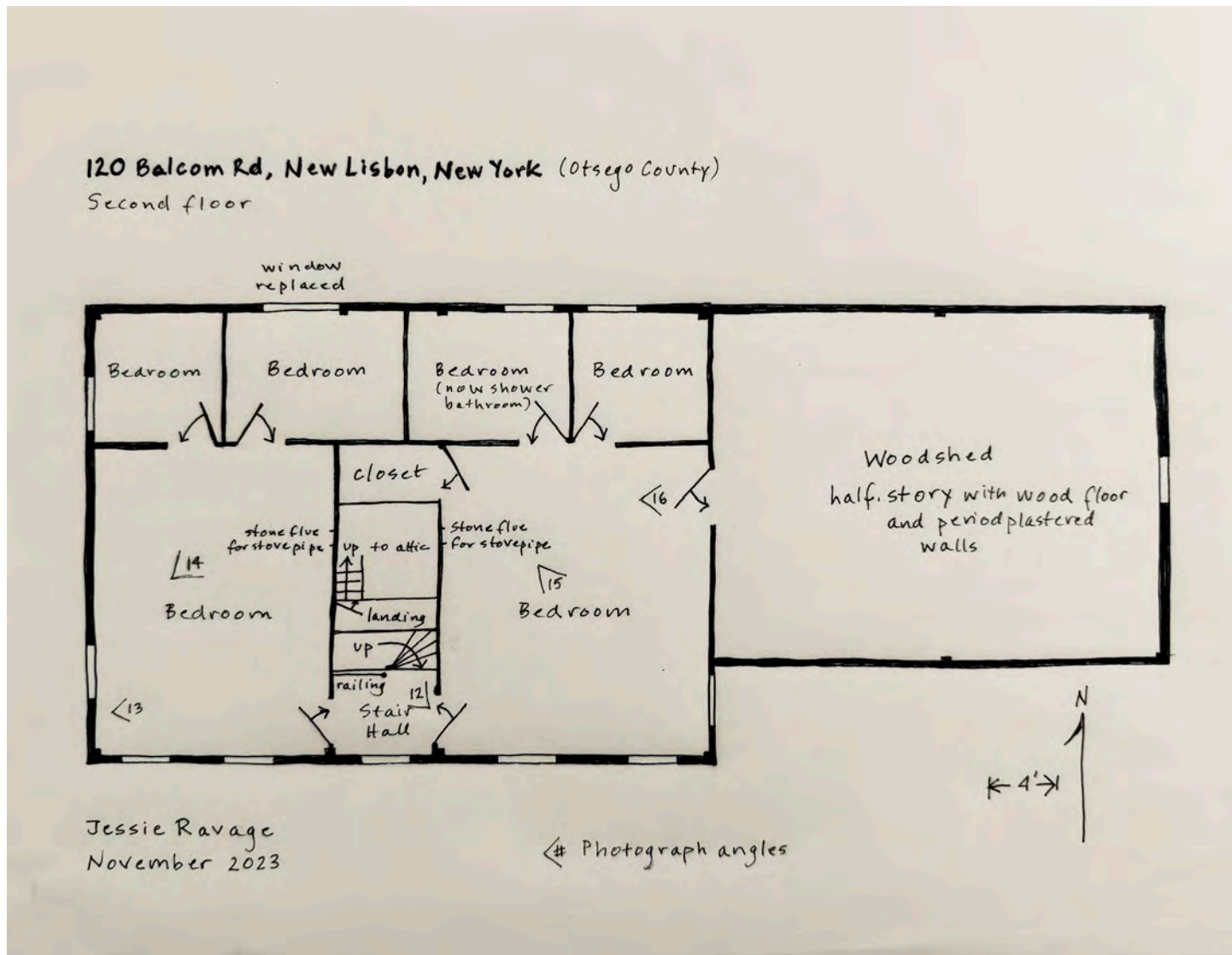


1st floor plan

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2nd floor plan

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Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: House at 120 Balcom Road

City or Vicinity: Mount Vision

County: Otsego State: New York

Photographer: Erin Czernecki and Jessie Ravage

Date Photographed: July 20 & 24, 2023

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

0001: Façade (south), looking north

0002: Façade (south) and east side, view looking northwest

0003: East end of woodshed and back (north) of house, view looking southwest

0004: Back (north) wall and west gable wall, view looking southeast

0005: Entrance hall and stairs viewed from center entrance, showing single-panel door

0006: First floor, view looking east from parlor through entrance hall to southeast room

0007: First floor, parlor (southwest room) fireplace showing marble hearth stone and firebox and Federal-style mantel with shelf cut by later wall

0008: First floor, southeast room showing cooking hearth flanked by cellar door on left, plank door covering location of beehive oven, and hearthstones in front of hearth and oven location

0009: First floor, southeast room, view looking northeast from center of room showing pantry in rear rooms (now combined), cupboard in northeast corner, and open door into ground level of woodshed

0010: First floor, view looking west from pantry in northeast corner to northeast corner of house

0011: First floor, remnants of brick beehive oven, view looking south

0012: Second floor, stair hall, showing railing and attic landing and door on far side of stairs

0013: Second floor, view looking west from southwest room through stair hall to southeast room

0014: Second floor, southwest room, view looking northeast from center of room showing trim design used for all back rooms opening from large front rooms and stone thimble in interior wall

0015: Second floor, southeast room, southeast corner showing change in window size from front façade to side wall

0016: Second floor, view through door in east wall of southeast room to second floor of woodshed

0017: Attic, view looking east from north side of chimney block showing rafter framing

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0018: Cellar, view looking west from south side of chimney block and stairs

0019: First floor, view from former paired entrances to rear rooms in east end towards ca. 1912 cupboards and kitchen in northwest corner

0020: First floor, ca. 1912 pantry cupboards on east wall of back room in northeast corner

Additional Property History

The information presented below was gathered from deeds filed in Otsego County, census records collected from 1800 through 1940, and grave records (FindaGrave.com) during research conducted to gain an understanding of the history of the house and property where it was built. The resulting dossier helps interpret the building and its context within the Town of New Lisbon and the larger region encompassing Otsego County and central New York.

Levi Beebe and Amasa Peters bought all of Lot 4 in the Bloomfield Tract in 1806 from George Bowne.²⁰ We don't know how Bowne acquired the lot after Cummings' abandoning his article. The Bowne family were New York City merchants and appear to have held land interests in central New York. No deed records Beebe transferring his share of Lot 4 to Peters, but it seems, based on a deed executed in March 1828, by Peters' daughter, Abigail Morse, that Beebe had. Abigail acted as one of her father's executors when she sold the north half of Lot 4 to Solomon I. Teller (1780–1862) and wife Polly (1786–1859) for \$450.²¹ Two years later, Solomon was censused heading a household of nine people in New Lisbon in 1830. There were three boys (one under 5, one 5–10, one 10–15), two men 20–30, one man 50–60, one female 15–20, one female 20–30, and one female 40–50.²² Based on later information, Solomon and Polly were the oldest male and female. Two of the boys were sons Tobias (1822–66) and Daniel (1826–1887). In 1855, these four people reported living in the Town of Tyrone, Steuben County for 23 years.²³ This dates the Tellers' departure from New Lisbon to 1832, which aligns well with subsequent deeds.

The Tellers sold the north half of Lot 4 to Rufus S. Peters, son of Amasa Peters and brother of Abigail Peters Morse, on 2 March 1831.²⁴ On the same day that Rufus sold the property to Horace Rose, also of Hartwick, for \$350, he reserved "out of the southwest corner four acres of land with the House commencing at the Hog Pen and running north far enough to contain the same; thence west to the Highway; thence south [along] the highway; thence east to the place of beginning."²⁵ Comparing this sale with the sale in 1828 suggests that when

²⁰ G/522.

²¹ NN/331. Solomon Teller sold a property in Hartwick in February 1828 for \$450. He might already have planned to buy the New Lisbon property. Dates for Solomon and Polly come from FindaGrave entries. Both are buried at Altay Baptist Church in the town of Tyrone, Schuyler County. (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/100623115/solomon-i-teller> and <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/100623139/polly-teller>)

²² "United States Census, 1830", database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XHP5-MMQ> : Thu Jul 20 18:49:32 UTC 2023), Entry for Solomon Teller, 1830.

²³ *New York State Census for 1855*, Town of Tyrone, Steuben County.

²⁴ UU/87.

²⁵ UU/88.

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the Tellers bought the property three years before, the house was built and valued at roughly \$100. Perhaps the 1831 reservation allowed the Tellers to remain in New Lisbon as they planned their move west.

On 4 August 1837, Rufus sold the house with 1.25 acres for the unusually low price of \$20 to James Perkins, a neighbor whose farm was located a bit farther north on Lot 11 in the Bloomfield tract.²⁶ A few months before Perkins had also bought the south half of Lot 9, directly adjoining the north half of Lot 9.²⁷ Three Perkins households—headed by James, d. 1844; James S., b. 1808; and John F., similar age to James S.—were censused in New Lisbon in 1840. It seems likely that James S., married to Sally, was James' (married to Polly/Mary) son, as James S. sold the larger surrounding acreage (± 58 acres) in the north half of Lot 4 to James and Charles Eaton on 1 December 1848 for \$532. The sale was subject to a \$500 agreement made by James, deceased, and Polly with the United States deposit fund.²⁸ These circumstances strongly suggest that James S. was James and Polly's son.

On 1 March 1854, James Eaton and Mary E., his wife, sold two parcels—the acreage they acquired from James S. Perkins in 1837 and the 1.25-acre house lot Perkins bought from Rufus Peters—to John Benjamin for \$1,800.²⁹ So far, no deed reveals how the Eatons acquired the house lot. Just a year later, Benjamin and wife Achsah sold the house and land to Wheeler Baily for \$1,900.³⁰ On 18 February 1856, Baily and wife Harriet sold the two-parcel property for the same price to Samuel Gardner.³¹ And, in 1860, Gardner and wife Susetta sold the property, again for the same price, to Cyrus Wellman.³²

The Wellmans were censused in New Lisbon in 1875 living in a house valued at \$1,000. Their neighbors are a good match for those mapped in 1868. Their farm was a general operation. It produced hay and oats; they kept some cows and sheep and horses. Its proceeds were \$300. The sale figure suggests that the house had changed little since it was built. The only obvious change dating to their tenure appears to be the Italianate hood over the front door. It seems likely they would also have, if it was not already done, installed a kitchen range and parlor stove, by then considered standard even in the poorest households. Both stoves were vented by pipes passing through the stone thimbles upstairs.

The Wellmans sold the property as a single 60-acre parcel with a water right acquired in 1885 to Helen T. Raynor of Brooklyn for \$3,000 in December 1887.³³ No details suggest why she bought the property. When she sold it a year and a half later at a considerable loss to Andrew N. Todd and wife Nancy for \$2,000, she was recorded still a resident of Brooklyn.³⁴

²⁶ 63/262.

²⁷ 59/258.

²⁸ 83/457. I can find no information on the deposit fund, which it appears was distributed to counties. The fund might have been opened in response to the banking crisis in 1837.

²⁹ 100/186.

³⁰ 104/326.

³¹ 107/424.

³² 117/213.

³³ 209/364.

³⁴ 209/364.

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During their short ownership, the Todds also may never have lived on the property. They sold it to Aaron Harrington for their purchase price on 29 March 1889.³⁵ This augmented Aaron's previous holdings, which appear to have been adjacent. These included the "southern quarter" of Lot 10 in Bloomfield bought from James K. Harrington in 1868 and 14 acres bought from Joseph C. Adams in 1874.³⁶

Aaron and Clarissa Harrington were living in the house on the lot bought from the Todds when Aaron died in April 1892. Their daughter Mary L. Weeks and her husband George A. sold Mary's share of the property to Clarissa and her son, Mary's brother, Charles K. Harrington, in November 1893.³⁷ Charles self-reported in the census as a farmer. The 1903 *New Century Atlas* records his residency in the house.³⁸

Clarissa lived with Charles K., his wife Ella May, whom he married ca. 1901, and their sons John K. (b. 1902) and Bruce (b. 1907) in the house on Balcom Road until she died in May 1908.³⁹ The layout of the house would have made it easy to divide up the space between the two generations as the eastern and western sections of the second floor are only accessed from the stair hall. This may have been the case downstairs too until after Clarissa's death. The alterations of the first-floor plan of the house probably occurred when Ella May became the primary housekeeper.

Charles and Ella May brought up five children in the house. In 1940, the eldest, John K. (1902–78), lived adjacent to his parents in the house near the creek valued at \$800. Charles and Ella's house was valued at \$1,000. Daughter Elizabeth, 26, lived at home as did her younger brother Kenneth.⁴⁰ Charles died in 1943, and Elizabeth lived with her mother until Ella May's death in 1965.⁴¹ In 1967, Elizabeth married Leon Johnson, and they lived in the house until both died. Her brother John K. Harrington settled Ella May's estate, and Elizabeth received the house and the one-acre parcel where it stands at the bend in Balcom Road in 1969.⁴² This was the third time in its history that the house was divided from a larger parcel in Lot 4, and the property retains that configuration. Elizabeth died in 1977; Leon died four years later.

Elizabeth's great-niece, John K. Harrington's granddaughter, Mary Crouthamel, inherited the house and its one-acre lot. She sold it to restoration carpenter John Branson in 1983, who planned to restore the house and live there. He ended up selling it instead in 1987 having made no changes.⁴³ David and Susanne Taylor, who bought the house in 1995 from realtors Christopher and Eloise Campbell, replaced part of the ca. 1912 kitchen with stock components, inserted a similarly stock shower bath into one of the small rooms upstairs in the east half of the house, and added a one-story enclosed porch to the rear of the building.⁴⁴ Branson does not

³⁵ 215/289.

³⁶ Deed for the parcel in Lot was recorded in *Book 149/220* soon after the purchase. The first mention of the Adams parcel is in the 1893 deed (228/116) settling Aaron Harrington's estate.

³⁷ 228/116–7.

³⁸ Thomas F. O'Connell, *New Century Atlas of Otsego County* (Philadelphia: Century Map Co., 1903): Plate 40.

³⁹ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/261702610/clarissa-harrington>. An obituary is appended to this entry.

⁴⁰ *United States Census for 1940*, Otsego County, Town of New Lisbon, HH 75 and 76.

⁴¹ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/46360158/charles-k-harrington>; <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/259879820/elizabeth-johnson>.

⁴² 606/932.

⁴³ Interview with John Branson by telephone, 4 January 2024.

⁴⁴ 779/239.

DRAFT House at 120 Balcom Road

Name of Property

Otsego County, NY

County and State

remember whether there was any plumbing upstairs when he bought the house or if the kitchen might still have relied on a pump. The house lay vacant for about a decade before it was sold in 2023 to Sarah M. Fanion.

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