

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 15A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Sunnyside

other names/site number VDHR File No. 66-55

2. Location

street & number S side US 360, 1200' E of jet. w/SR 201 not for publication N/A
city or town Heathsville vicinity N/A
state Virginia code VA county Northumberland code 133 zip code 22473

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Julie Masnik 12/19/95
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

=====
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.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

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

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance ca. 1822-1883

Significant Dates 1822
1845
1883

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====
9. Major Bibliographical References
=====

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 3 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	370990	4197140	2		
3				4		

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Amy K. Cole/Helen Lee Fletcher
organization date April 1992/June 1995
street & number 1505 Woods Rd, #204/273 Broad Ave. telephone 540-667-9308
city or town Winston-Salem/Winchester state NC/VA zip code 27106/22602

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name/title William and Jane Henson
street & number P. O. Box 336 telephone 804-580-4383
city or town Heathsville state VA zip code 22473

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**Sunnyside
Northumberland County, Virginia**

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Sunnyside is a two-story, single-pile, central-passage-plan house, with a two-story kitchen addition and a two-story rear addition. The house faces north, fronting U.S. Route 360 within the Heathsville Historic District. Built in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, the structure is surrounded by woods to the south, a planted field to the east, and a house lot to the west. At an angle 45' from the south corners of the main house are two similar contributing one-story brick outbuildings, identified as a former smokehouse and dairy. In an easterly line from the main house lie a contributing guest house (formerly a kitchen), carriage house, corncrib, and barn, all built in the mid-nineteenth century. These contributing resources at Sunnyside were previously listed in National Register of Historic Places as part of the Heathsville Historic District.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The foundation of the main house is constructed of 5-course American-bond brickwork with small inset windows. The principal facade is laid in Flemish bond and the other three sides continue in American bond. The rear addition is clad in weatherboard. There are interior end chimneys in the original portion of the main house and in the kitchen addition. All of the chimneys are laid in stretcher bond with queen closers. A three-stepped brick cornice and a cornice return on the gable end detail the eaves line. The gable roof is of common rafter construction, does not have a ridgepole, and is covered with standing-seam metal.

The door on the principal facade features a rectangular transom with red-tinted glass panes. It has been altered to include a large central pane of glass in what was formerly a six-panel door. The door immediately opposite the front door is also six-panel and was once the rear door. An exterior bulkhead leading to the basement is attached to the rear (southern) wall of the house. It is composed partly of brick and partly of cinder block, and has two matched windows on the east and west walls and is covered with a gable roof. A half-glazed door on the west gable end of the house is the only other opening. The fenestration of the original house is symmetrical. The west addition has a two-ranked facade, which is not symmetrical through the building, with two windows on the front and one on the rear. The south addition, which now contains the rear exit, has two matched windows on the east and west elevations. All windows in the main house are six-over-six double-hung sash and all feature shutters, held against the wall with decorative metal stars.

A one-story, flat-roofed portico featuring paired Doric columns is centrally positioned on the principal facade. A decorative iron railing connects the two end columns to two wooden pilasters on the facade and a decoratively sawn, wooden balustrade extends around the roof of the portico. Uncovered wooden stoops extend from the rear addition and west kitchen addition.

An open-string staircase with a landing is attached to the west wall of the central passage of the original house. The wooden flooring throughout the original house and additions is

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Sunnyside
Northumberland County, Virginia

random-width pine, running from the front wall to back wall of the central passage and from side wall to side wall in the other rooms of the original house. The walls and ceiling in the original house are plastered and in the two additions one-eighth-inch paneling has been added. All door and window surrounds in the original house have similar molding profiles of half-rounds with corner blocks. In the kitchen wing the molding is of fillets and fascias, differing from the rest of the house, and in the rear addition rounded molding was added by the current owners. The name "Arabella" is delicately scratched in the north window of the kitchen. A chair rail is present in the living room and dining room areas. Crown molding, probably added more recently, can be found only in the living room. There are two built-in units on the first floor; a china closet in the dining room, framed in the same molding as the rest of the room, and a pantry in the kitchen.

The fireplace in the living room has a mantel with Tuscan columns flanking the firebox, a plain frieze, and a molded shelf. Unusual brickwork composed of angled bricks in a mousetooth pattern is present in the dining room fireplace. This mantel lacks columns.

The second floor has the same plan as the principal floor. All of the rooms, except for a bath, currently serve as bedrooms. A door on the landing opens to a room in the rear addition that is similar to the one beneath it, having two matched windows on the east and west walls, but having another window on the south wall, where the lower level has an exterior door. The upper hall's north wall has a six-panel door and a double-louvered storm door that opens onto the roof of the portico. The east room has a fireplace with a mantel. A modern bath with its own door to the hall has been built out from the north wall into the east room.

The west room is quite similar to the room directly beneath it, but its fireplace is lacking the mousetooth brickwork. The room above the kitchen addition is reached by a door in the west wall of this room. It has painted paneled walls and two built-in closets with two-panel doors that flank the fireplace.

Two similar brick outbuildings are equidistant (45') from the south corners of the back of the original main house. These structures have batten doors and feature decorative brickwork vents in a diamond shape. The west building is known as a smokehouse, and there are signs of that usage although the original roof has been replaced with asbestos shingles. The diamond-shaped vents are in the gable ends of this building. A window has been added in the south wall of the smokehouse by eliminating the open brickwork vent in that wall. The building to the east, known as a dairy, was once vented on all four walls but the vent in the east wall has been enlarged to accommodate a window. The dairy has an asbestos shingle roof. Both the smokehouse and the dairy appear to have been built at the same time as the main house, probably in 1845.

A two-story weatherboarded kitchen is 46' east of the main house, with the north wall almost on a straight line with the northeast corner of the main house. Between 1973 and 1977 a two-story weatherboard addition was added to the east side of the kitchen to make the space

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usable as a guest house. It provides a modern kitchen on the first floor and a bath on on the second floor. The second-floor addition also incorporates a small porch. Much of the original kitchen has been retained, including the interior fireplaces, floors, and beamed ceilings on both floors. The large first-floor fireplace has a metal rod for hanging pots. A narrow closed stairway leads to a room above.

To the east on a line with the southeast corner of the kitchen/guest house along a grass-covered track are a carriage house, corncrib, and barn. The carriage house, clad in weatherboard and featuring a metal-sheathed roof, has double swinging doors on the gable end and decorative vergeboards in a curvilinear pattern accenting the gable end ridge. The corncrib, set on brick piers, is clad in weatherboard and has doors on both gable ends. The barn sits on a stone foundation. There is a bulkhead entrance to the cellar on the south wall, as well as entrances on the north and south walls to the main storage area of the barn. Two shed additions are supported by hole-set posts. All of the outbuildings are currently used for storage. An 1841 inventory lists buggy and farm equipment consistent with these buildings and it is likely that they were all in place at the time of that inventory.

The property is approached by a circular drive and has a garden in a wagon-wheel pattern inside the circle. There are miscellaneous plantings over the property and the house lot is somewhat separated from the surrounding lots by windbreaks of trees.

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Sunnyside
Northumberland County, Virginia

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Sunnyside represents the successful mid-nineteenth-century farmstead of Virginia's Northern Neck. While its two-story I-house form and Federal-style characteristics are common features of other contemporary farmhouses in the area, Sunnyside is unusual because it is substantially unaltered. Both the exterior and interior retain original decorative embellishments. The facade with its stately columned porch and ironwork are as shown in an 1883 photograph reproduced in *Virginia's Northern Neck, A Pictorial History*. A variety of small outbuildings suited to mixed farming are comparable to those found on other moderately wealthy farms of the region, built in the same era, but rarely found together with such a high degree of integrity. Additions to the main house and kitchen show a natural and sympathetic evolution of the property. Sunnyside, with its combination of house and outbuildings recalls, in common form with uncommon integrity, a way of life prevalent in the Northern Neck prior to the Civil War when the area was one of the most prosperous farming communities in the Commonwealth.

Sunnyside is significant for its architecture under Criterion C. The period of significance extends from 1822 to 1883. A portion of the property was acquired by the Beets family in 1822 and there is physical evidence to suggest the kitchen was either part of the acquisition or was constructed soon thereafter. The main house addition is shown in a photograph dated 1883 and all the outbuildings were constructed prior to that year.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The exact date of construction of Sunnyside is in doubt because of ambiguous documentation. What is certain is that the Betts and Smith families had a long association with Sunnyside.¹ In 1841 Royston Betts attempted to change his will of 1834 which gave to his son John James Betts the farm purchased near Northumberland Courthouse bounds from Bridgar Haynie in 1822 and 1825.² However, Betts died before his new will had been witnessed or signed. The subsequent court settlement of the Royston Betts estate gave to John J. Betts the plantation on which his father was living at the time of his death.³ Local tradition dates the construction of Sunnyside to 1827, and there are stories of a corner-stone bearing that date. It has not been located by the present owners and it is more likely that John J. Betts constructed Sunnyside on the property in 1845 (value added for buildings, in the amount of \$1,500.00, appears in the county land tax records in 1846, where no building value appeared before that date on the parcels awarded to John J. Betts).⁴

The cultivation of grains in fertilized soils was revitalizing the agricultural life of the Northern Neck during this time and it is likely that Betts practiced mixed farming, cultivating crops such as corn and wheat.⁵ Betts died in 1861 and although Sunnyside was a prosperous farmstead, his investments in the interest-bearing bonds of the Confederate States, which had no value after the war, rendered his estate in severe debt and the property was sold in 1869 by court order.⁶

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Sunnyside
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The Betts family association with the property did not end in 1869 when Sunnyside was purchased by William Harding, owner of Springfield and prominent resident of Heathsville.⁷ Arabella Betts, the widow of John, was a niece of William Harding, and with her children, daughters Arabella and Virginia and son Arthur, she continued to live at Sunnyside until 1881, through the provisions of Harding's will. In 1881 Samuel Downing, and Virginia Betts Downing became Sunnyside's owners, following a chancery court suit.⁸ The west addition was added to the original house at an unknown date before 1883, when it is shown in a photograph dated that year. The name "Arabella" scratched into a pane of a kitchen window in the north wall of this addition can still be read. It may have been placed there as early as 1841 when Arabella's first husband, John J. Betts, inherited the property, or by their daughter, also named Arabella, who lived in the house until 1881.

In 1887, Virginia Downing, as the widow of Samuel Downing, sold the property to Estelle and Lloyd Smith.⁹ After serving in the Confederate Army as a youth, Smith moved to Heathsville and married Estelle Betts, Virginia Downing's first cousin. Smith served as the commonwealth's attorney for Northumberland County for more than twenty-five years, as well as becoming a leader in the Democratic party of Virginia. At his death in 1904, he was described as "an eminent citizen, a trusted public servant, and influential man of affairs."¹⁰ His widow and their five children continued to live on the farm until Estelle Smith's death in 1933. The property was willed to the Smith children and Sunnyside was occupied by one of the daughters, Genevieve, until her death in 1960. E. Hugh Smith, son of Estelle and Lloyd Smith, was a graduate of the University of Virginia law school and returned to Heathsville to practice law, eventually becoming a judge.¹¹ He built his house next to Sunnyside, and that portion of the property was subdivided and sold in 1964.¹² After this date the farm decreased in size to its present 3.01 acres and ownership changed five times. Modifications, such as the enclosure of the southern addition and the guest house addition, were made by various owners during the years from 1964 to 1979, when Sunnyside was bought by William and Jane Henson.¹³ Although the acreage is greatly reduced and Sunnyside is no longer a working farm, its architecture and surviving outbuildings continue to represent the values of the mid-nineteenth-century farmer and his way of life.

ENDNOTES

1. Northumberland County Land Tax Records of 1885; first use of the name Sunnyside.
2. Northumberland County Land Tax Records of 1822 and 1825.
3. Orders, Deeds, etc. 1789-1825, part 2, p. 546.
4. Northumberland County Land Tax Records.
5. James B. Gouger, "The Northern Neck of Virginia: A Tidewater Grain-Farming Region in the Antebellum South," *Studies in the Social Sciences* Volume XVI, (June 1977): 84.
6. Estate Book E: 488, 509.

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Northumberland County, Virginia**

7. DB E: 115.
8. DB G: 183.
9. DB P: 650.
10. *Northern Neck News* (Warsaw, Virginia), 23 December 1904.
11. *Northern Neck News* (Warsaw, Virginia), 15 June 1906.
12. DB 127:73.
13. DB 192: 402.

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Gouger, James B. "The Northern Neck of Virginia: A Tidewater Grain-Farming Region of the Antebellum South". *Studies in the Social Sciences* Volume XVI (June 1977): 73-90.

Jett, Carolyn H. *Heathsville, Yesterday and Today*. Heathsville, VA.: The Women's Club of Northumberland County, 1980. Revised Ed. 1989.

Northern Neck News. Warsaw, VA: 23 December 1904.

Northumberland County Deed Books, Northumberland County Courthouse, Heathsville, VA.

Northumberland County Estate Books, Northumberland County Courthouse, Heathsville, VA.

Northumberland County Land Tax Records, Northumberland County Courthouse, Heathsville, Va and Virginia State Library and Archives, Richmond, VA.

Northumberland County Will Books, Northumberland County Courthouse, Heathsville, VA.

Wilson, John C. *Virginia's Northern Neck, A Pictorial History*. Norfolk: The Donning Company, 1984.

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**Sunnyside
Northumberland County, Virginia**

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of Sunnyside coincides with Northumberland County Tax Parcel Numbers 24-(1)-119R and 24-(1)-119L, and can be described as follows:

"Beginning at a found concrete marker on the southern edge of the right of way for U. S. Route# 360 where the lot herein conveyed joins the land of Smith; thence South 86.50' East with the edge of said right of way a distance of 181.28 feet to a concrete marker; thence South 08.19'50" West, a distance of 675.71 feet to a concrete marker; thence North 86.50" West, a distance of 191.51 feet to a found concrete marker; thence North 06.18' East a distance of 287.0 feet to a found concrete marker; thence North 04.48'30" East, a distance of 36.75 feet to a cedar tree; thence North 11.59'50" East following a line of cedar trees a distance of 321.86 feet to a cedar tree and continuing on in the same course a distance of 32.0 feet to a found concrete marker, the point of beginning, and further bounded on the North by the right of way of U. S. Route 360; on the East and South by land now or formerly owned by Schools and on the West by the land of Smith.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the nominated area, encompassing three acres, include the farmhouse, outbuildings, and agricultural buildings historically associated with Sunnyside.

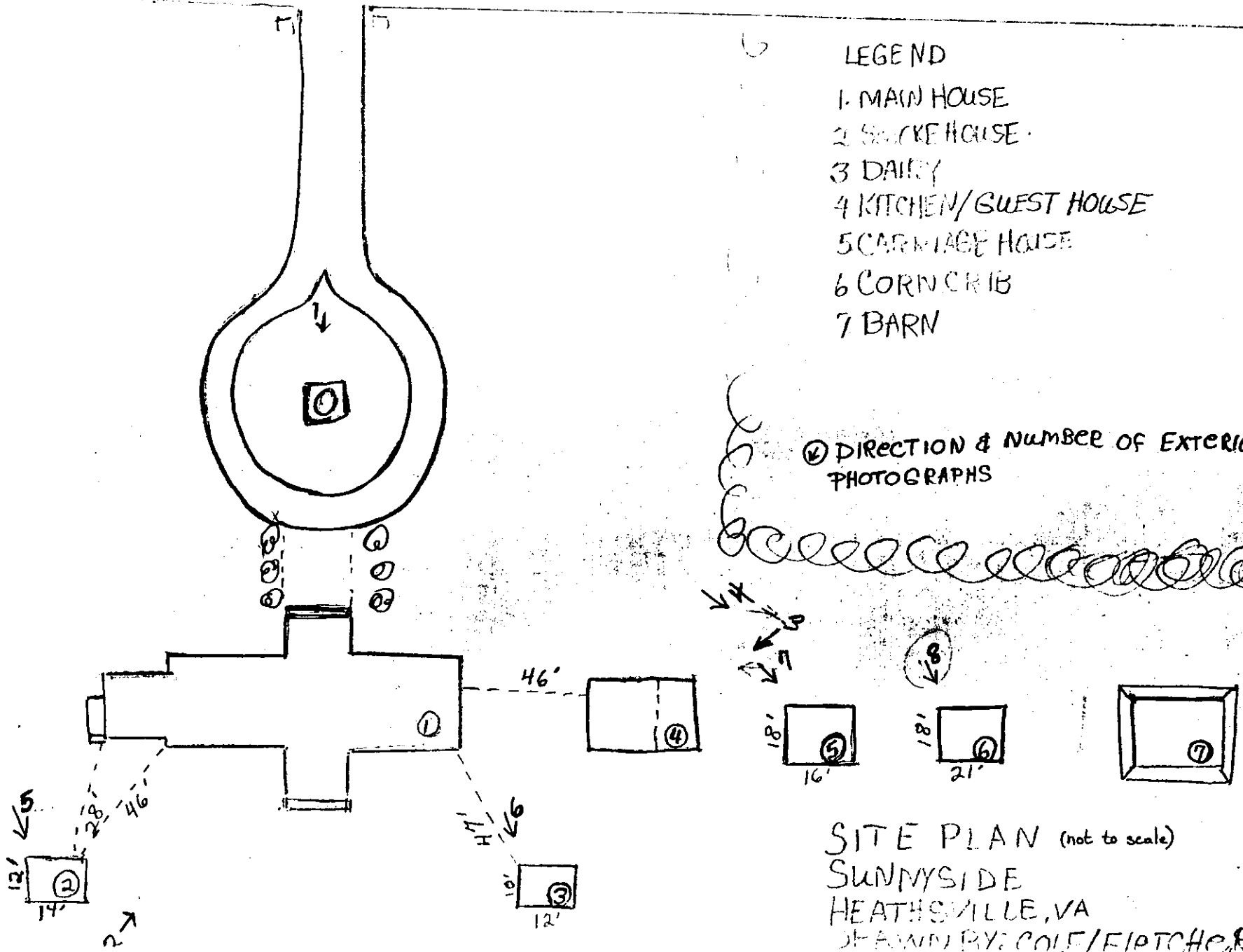
US ROUTE 360 EAST



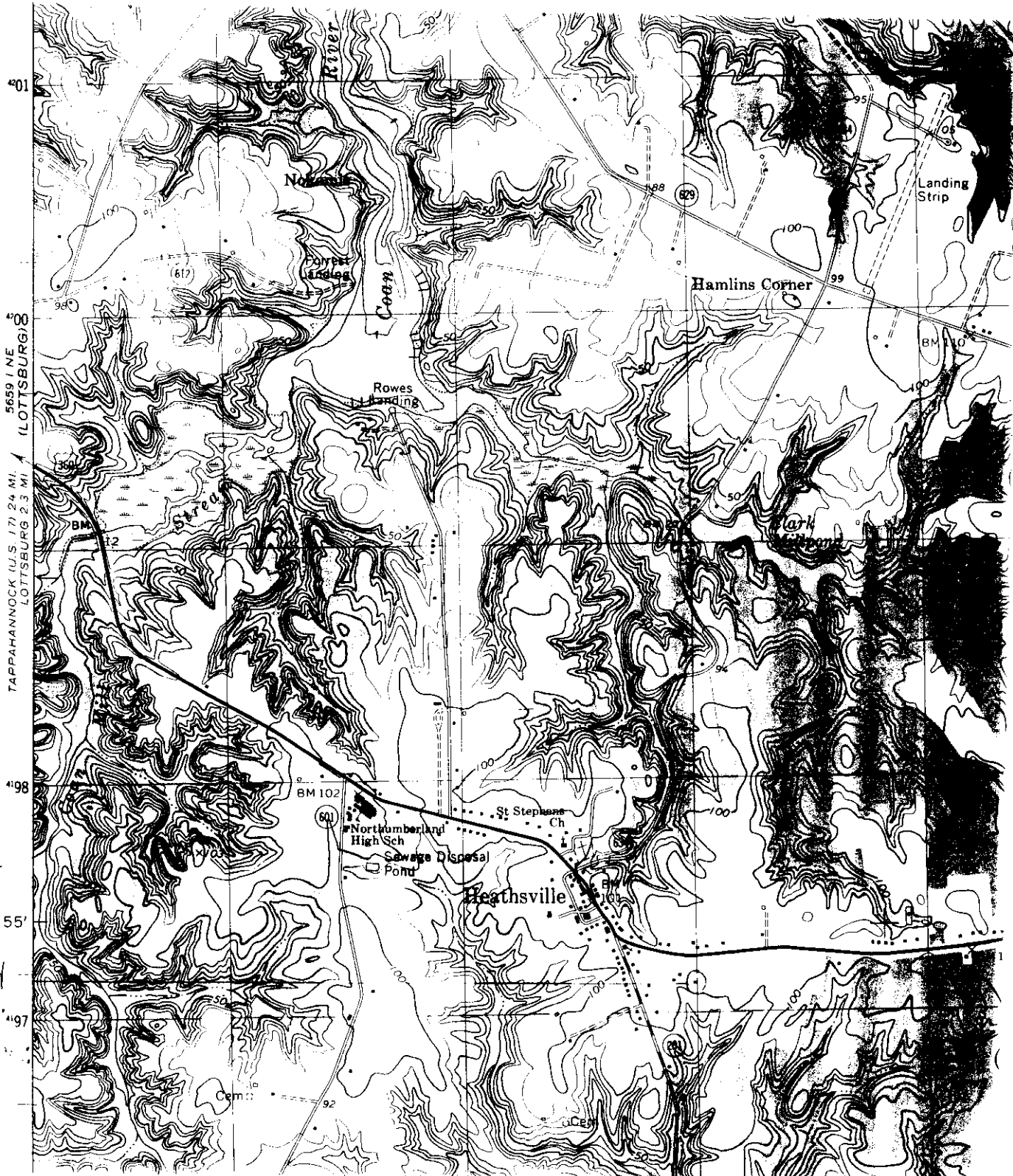
LEGEND

- 1. MAIN HOUSE
- 2. SMOKE HOUSE
- 3. DAIRY
- 4. KITCHEN/GUEST HOUSE
- 5. CARRIAGE HOUSE
- 6. CORNER CRIB
- 7. BARN

④ DIRECTION & NUMBER OF EXTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHS



SITE PLAN (not to scale)
 SUNNYSIDE
 HEATHSVILLE, VA
 DRAWN BY: COLE/FLETCHER



TAPPANNOCK (U.S. 17) 24 MI
 LOTTSBURG 2.3 MI
 5659 I NE (LOTTSBURG)

VDHR # 66-55
 Sunnyside
 Heathsville
 Northumberland
 Virginia Co.
 UTM Reference
 191370990/
 4197140