

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 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Walker Hill Farm

Other names/site number: R.A. Beckett House; Walston House

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 9939, 9925 and 9787 Hwy. 50

City or town: Dillsboro State: IN County: Dearborn

Not For Publication: ☐

Vicinity: ☒

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

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A X B X C D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Indiana DNR-Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology

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

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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

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private: ☒
- Public – Local ☐
- Public – State ☐
- Public – Federal ☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s) ☒
- District ☐
- Site ☐
- Structure ☐
- Object ☐

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

<u>Contributing</u> <u>8</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u> <u>1</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>13</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC single dwelling
AGRICULTURAL/SUBSISTENCE processing
AGRICULTURAL/SUBSISTENCE storage
AGRICULTURAL/SUBSISTENCE agricultural field
AGRICULTURAL/SUBSISTENCE animal facility
AGRICULTURAL/SUBSISTENCE agricultural outbuilding

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC single dwelling
AGRICULTURAL/SUBSISTENCE storage
AGRICULTURAL/SUBSISTENCE agricultural field
AGRICULTURAL/SUBSISTENCE agricultural outbuilding

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN Italianate_____

LATE VICTORIAN Queen Anne_____

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS Colonial Revival_____

OTHER L-plan_____

OTHER English barn_____

OTHER Cross-gable barn_____

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE limestone_____

walls: WOOD weatherboard_____

STUCCO_____

roof: METAL Steel_____

other: CONCRETE_____

BRICK_____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Walker Hill Farm (today 31.5 acres) fronts U.S. Route 50 and is three and a half miles east and six miles west of Aurora and the Ohio River in Dearborn County, Indiana. The farm sits on an upland ridge atop what is historically known as "Walker Hill." The farm's origins are associated with one of the earliest pioneer families of Indiana and Dearborn County. The land has been continuously farmed since c.1813. John Walker, who would later become the largest landowner in Indiana and an advocate of women's property rights in its Legislature, first acquired the site for farmland, having earlier arrived in 1796 with his parents as the township's first settlers. The property, which later won a premium for best cultivated farm in 1859, today contains thirteen contributing resources consisting of eight contributing buildings, four

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contributing structures, and one contributing site. The farm has one non-contributing building, an abandoned 1962 Ranch house that is outside the period of significance. The contributing buildings include the c.1865/1872 two-story L-plan house; c.1860 English barn; c.1870-1880 cross-gable barn, which houses a rare, Experiment Station design, interior square silo dated to September 1893; c.1860 drive-through crib; c.1930 pump house; two c.1930 milk houses, and a 1948 Cape Cod tenant house. The contributing structures include two stone cisterns, one dating to c.1860 and the other to c.1870, a c.1872 well-house, and a c.1930 cattle ramp. The contributing site consists of the remaining 31.5 acres with its natural and integral features of fence rows, sunken farm road, fields, wood copse, and farm pond. The fields retain their character from early farming, situated on both level and gently rolling upland at the township's highest elevation, but typical of early land division patterns with access by deepening swales to Laughery Valley and its desirable access to the Ohio River. Observation from the barns commands a view of the upper reaches of this valley. The core farmstead also retains its character from when the house, farm buildings and other mid-19th century structures were added by the Barker and Beckett families, c.1860-1893, as well as the early 20th century dairying structures added by the Conaway family, c.1922-1930. Its present size, layout and use are representative of the property's historic patterns and it has historic integrity. As a whole, the farm tells the story of important trends and also experimentation in both Indiana and local agriculture. The main house was listed as both the R.A. Beckett House and the Walston House and determined Contributing in the 1983 *Dearborn County Interim Report: Indiana Historic Sites and Structures*. The large collection of substantial agricultural buildings and structures were not fully documented at that time, and the tenant house was erroneously labeled as a school building.

Narrative Description

Walker Hill Farm is in a community historically known as Mount Tabor, one-quarter mile west of the Mount Tabor Church (c.1871), three and a half miles east of Dillsboro, six miles west of Aurora and the Ohio River, and one-quarter mile east of the second largest round barn in Indiana.¹ It is bounded on the north by U.S. Route 50 and on the west by a private road. The remaining 31.5 acres of the farm is entirely within the original 40-acre farmstead (c.1872) of the Beckett family, which itself is entirely within the original 160-acre farm site of the Walker family (c.1813). The farm was expanded to 280 acres by 1891 by the Becketts and except for acreage for neighboring homes and road frontage divided off in the 1950s, remained nearly that size until 1990. A developer then divided off tracts, including the farmstead. In 1992, the current owners' family, which already owned part of the 40-acre farmstead, acquired the remaining land

¹ The barn was erected c.1901 by Wymond Beckett, a prominent Indianapolis attorney and brother of Romuald Beckett.

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to reunite it. For purposes of this nomination, the boundaries include only the 31.5 acres which were entirely within the early 40-acre farmstead (c.1872).

The farm includes eight contributing buildings, four contributing structures, and one contributing site. The contributing buildings include the c.1865/1872 two-story L-plan house (photo 0001); c.1860 English barn (photo 0010); c.1870-1880 cross-gable barn (photo 0016), which houses a rare, Experiment Station design, interior square silo dated to September 1893 (photos 0022 and 0023); c.1860 drive-through crib (photo 0013); c.1930 pump house (photo 0017, foreground); two c.1930 milk houses (photo 0012, on right, and 0016, left building), and a 1948 Cape Cod tenant house (photo 0015). The contributing structures include two stone cisterns, one dating to c.1860 (photo 0012, center) and the other to c.1870 (photo 0017, center), a c.1872 well-house (photo 0001, on left behind house), and c.1930 cattle ramp (photo 0017, on right). The contributing site consists of the farm's intact natural and man-made elements including the rolling fields, pastures, fence rows, creek-stone driveway to the cross-gable barn, intact section of sunken farm road, mature ornamental Catalpa trees about the house, and large cattle/farm pond. Adding to the historic nature of the site is the placement of buildings and fence rows, which over time created functional land enclosures for the yard, barn yards, and related buildings. The spatial relationship of the yard area has remained substantially unchanged since addition of the milk houses c.1930. The non-contributing building is a 1962 single-story Ranch house built outside the period of significance. It is abandoned, and in an area removed and not visible from the contributing buildings. Despite some intrusion to the land and fence rows the farm retains its integrity.

SETTING

Washington Township consists of occasional farm fields and woods interspersed with residential development, becoming denser in recent decades, with a subdivision a quarter-mile northwest of Walker Hill Farm. The farm is situated on the township's highest elevation (historically known as "Walker Hill") on rolling upland, straddling the watershed between Laughery Creek and Hogan Creek. This boundary passes through the site along its highest contour. An original farm pond (depicted on the 1949 and 1955 aerials) at its east swale is head to a tributary of Hogan Creek and is listed as a "Fresh Water Emergent Wetland" on the National Wetlands Inventory. Rolling upland north tapers into hollows to Hogan Creek. Rolling upland south tapers into hollows to Laughery Creek. The farm fields are delineated by fence rows with wire and wood post fencing with a sunken farm road to the south beginning at the barn lots. Small pockets of woods are at the central west edge of the property, central east near the pond, and east of the built resources. The farm is bounded to the west by a narrow field and private road, to the east by woodland and two modern residences and pole barns, to the south by a modern residence and pole barns, and to the north by a modern residence and pole barn along the north side of U.S. Route 50.

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The houses and outbuildings are in the farm's northwest corner. Facing north, the contributing c.1865/1872 main house (photo 0001) sits on a knoll above Route 50, a road pre-dating 1859 (known as the Aurora & Laughery Turnpike) but expanded over the years to within 50 feet of the house.² Entering the main drive, it rises to the knoll and proceeds south to the contributing c.1860 English barn (sited E-W) (photo 0010) with a short west extension of the driveway to the house. Atop Walker Hill, the knoll is the township's highest elevation at 841 feet. Commonly planted for ornamentation and shade in the mid-19th century, a trio of mature Catalpa trees skirt the house and its contributing c.1872 well-house (still usable with its wood turnstile and iron crank) (photo 0001, on left behind house). South of the house along a sidewalk is the known site of an outhouse, no longer extant.

Southwest of the English barn is a contributing c.1860 stone cistern (photo 0012, center). Adjacent to that is a contributing c.1930 milk house (photo 0012, right). The remnants of a fence along the main drive mark an east boundary with the adjacent one-acre house lot for the 1948 tenant house (photo 0015), which was divided off in 1951. The drive continues south past the English barn and the contributing c.1860 drive-through crib (sited N-S) (photo 0013). The crib sits in a one-acre yard and hay field between the main house and contributing c.1870-1880 cross-gable barn (photo 0016). Between the crib and barn an earthen farm road runs east through a copse of black locust, crosses the watershed boundary, and descends a grassy knoll (past the non-contributing Ranch house) into the swale of the large farm pond.

Returning to the main drive, it continues south to the cross-gable barn. At ninety-five-by-ninety-two feet, the barn is sited along cardinal directions and surrounded north, west, and south by a corral. Adjacent to it is a second contributing c.1930 milk house (photo 0016, small building on left), a small contributing c.1930 pump house, a contributing c.1870 stone cistern, and a c.1930 cattle ramp (photo 0017, all 3 resources from right to left, respectively). To the east, a pasture and hay field begin, extending about one-quarter mile east and south to property lines enclosed by wire fencing (photo 0024). South of the cross-gable barn is a copse of woods, and beyond that another hay field and pasture into which the sunken road (visible on the 1955 aerial photograph) descends to a swale which then leads to Laughery Valley. Observation from either barn south commands a view of the upper reaches of this valley.

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

Contributing Building – House (Photo 0001)

The two-story frame, L-plan house was constructed c.1865/1872 on the property's highest elevation. As configured, the L-plan house has a two-story rear gabled wing and a one and a half story rear addition that is stepped down from the wing. Overall, with the wing and addition the house appears as having a T-plan configuration; however, it more closely resembles a modified L-plan footprint.³ Evidence indicates the north L section is a c.1872 addition to the original

² Part of the tract was taken as road frontage when the highway was expanded to four lanes in 1958.

³ Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings. *American Vernacular Buildings and Interiors, 1870-1960*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 2009, p. 144. Note: The 1982 survey data lists the house as T-plan but further examination of

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c.1865 house. Physical and documentary evidence suggests the rear stepped addition was built c.1865 as a tenant house by the Barkers and lived in by the newly married Becketts who were soon managing the farm. And that the north L section was added on by the Becketts c.1872 when they received farm ownership. A single story, shed-roof kitchen addition and small side porch are at the east elevation. The north porch with a concrete floor and brick pillars and the exterior brick chimney on the east elevation are c.1940 alterations. The vernacular construction of the house does not strongly exhibit a particular style, however, there are small elements reflecting the Italianate and Queen Anne styles.

Exterior

The foundation of the house is hewn eight-by-eight-inch sill beams resting on mortared, cut limestone. The exterior walls are sheathed with clapboard with a five-inch reveal and wood corner boards, and the roof is standing-seam metal with a section of original cedar shingles underneath. The original two-over-two, wood sash windows measure thirty-two-by-eighty-two inches and have louvered wood shutters. The window trim is three-inch-wide plain boards, and most windows have modern storm windows.

North elevation

The north elevation of the house is the primary façade and fronts U.S. Route 50. The c.1940 porch is ten feet by sixteen feet and has a poured concrete foundation and floor, a large brick column at each of the two outer corners, a wide boxed cornice and eaves, and a shed roof. A wood railing is a later addition. Beneath the porch the transomed doorway is thirty-two inches wide and has a nine-light Queen Anne style wood door with a galvanized aluminum storm door. A two-over-two window is east of the doorway. Two other windows are vertically in line above, evenly spaced under the second-floor eave. At the west, the north face of the intersecting-gable's N-S alignment projects north eight feet. A paired two-over-two window is at the first floor, and another is at the second floor. Except for the window under porch cover, all have projecting, boxed wood hoods. A louvered attic vent is in the gable wall above.

West elevation

The north two-thirds of this elevation is the main house and wing while the south third of the elevation is the one and a half story addition (original house) under a separate eave. From left to right the first floor of the main house and wing has a two-over-two window with a corresponding window at second floor height, and a tripartite projecting bay window at first floor height with a vertically aligned two-over-two window at second floor height. Pairs of brackets support the boxed roof of the bay window. The addition has one two-over-two window at first floor height and another vertically aligned at second floor height. The windows within the addition are shorter than those in the main house and wing. Between the second-floor windows of the main house and wing is a small, square single pane window lighting the second-floor stairway.

the house and its history, along with comparison to Gottfried and Jennings's book, leads to the presented conclusion that it is a modified L-plan.

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South elevation

The south elevation of the main house has a two-over-two window at first floor height offset to the right to accommodate the southeast porch roof. Another window at second floor height is more evenly spaced in the wall. The south elevation of the main house wing is slightly visible above the roof of the addition (original house). A louvered vent is in the gable. The only fenestration in the south elevation of the addition is a one-over-one wood window at the extreme southeast corner of the first floor. To the east is a replacement door centered in the south wall of the kitchen addition. Extending from the roof peak is the original interior brick chimney for connection to a cast iron stove. A small basement window is centered within the foundation.

East elevation

The east elevation of the two-story E-W aligned gable projects east sixteen feet from the rear wing and kitchen addition. The c.1940 exterior wire-cut brick chimney is centered on the elevation. The chimney measures sixty-two inches wide at its base and twenty-five inches above. To either side at first floor height is a single-pane square casement window.

At first floor level of the wing is a shed roof porch with a wood floor and turned posts. Between the porch and the south wall of the main house is a ground-level single bulk-head door ("root cellar" type) which accesses the cut stone steps to the basement. Beneath the porch is a two-over-two window to the right and a single-light, transomed wood door to the left that leads to the dining room. Each opening is vertically aligned with a two-over-two window at second floor height. A stone walkway along the east side of the house leads to the east end of the north porch. The south one-third of the east elevation is the addition. At first floor level, the kitchen addition (which has been recently repaired for water damage) projects seven feet east. A transomed, single light wood door in the north kitchen wall accesses the east porch. The "half-story" housed the servant quarters, with a two-over-two window centered under the eave and in line with the two-over-two kitchen addition window below.

House interior

First floor

The first floor is divided into five rooms: parlor, study, dining room, and kitchen (including projecting shed-roofed kitchen addition). All flooring is five-inch-wide oak, and the baseboards are nine-inch-tall plain boards. The window trim is plain boards with the bottom and sides measuring five-and-one-half-inches wide and the top measuring seven inches. The walls and ceilings are plastered.

The north entrance opens into the parlor. To the east of the doorway in the north wall is a window. Centered in the east wall is a brick fireplace hearth and c.1872 wood mantle (photo 0002). To either side of the fireplace is a square casement window. A window is in the south wall. West of the north doorway in an interior west wall, double French doors divide the study from the parlor (photo 0003). The study has a window in the west wall and paired two-over-two

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windows in the north wall. In the east wall is a four-foot-wide by two feet deep closet with a four-panel wood door.

South of the French doors to the study, a closed tread staircase leads from the parlor and dining room to the second floor (photo 0003). The corner of the supporting wall is curved, smooth plaster with a small section of curved wood paneling at the bottom three treads. The newel post and balusters are square. A closet under the staircase has a paneled wood door (photo 0004).

Immediately south of the parlor and second floor stairway is the dining room. The east wall has a window and door that leads to the east porch, and the west wall has a tripartite bay window. A cased opening in the south wall connects the dining room to the kitchen and its shed roof addition.

The kitchen (inclusive of its shed addition) is sixteen feet deep by twenty-three feet wide. The walls have wood wainscot of irregular width boards with a wide, plain board chair rail. To the east within the shed addition a door in the north wall leads to the porch, a window is in the east wall, and an exterior door is in the south wall. In the primary kitchen south wall is an enclosed chimney flue with a connection for a cast iron stove (photo 0005, this statement and rest of paragraph). In the west wall a doorway leads to a four-foot deep by eight-foot-wide pantry that extends under the stairway to the second floor. In the floor is an original bulk-head door accessing the basement. It was fixed shut and the stairway removed at an earlier date. To the north of this doorway is a thirty-two-inch-wide doorway to a closed tread stairway to the upstairs servant's quarters.

Second floor

The second floor is divided into five rooms: three bedrooms, a nursery (converted to a bathroom c.1922), and a servant's quarters with a stairway down to the original first-floor kitchen. The floors are six-inch wide painted boards. The baseboards, door, and window trim match that of the first floor. Each bedroom has a closet measuring four feet wide by two feet deep, each with a four-panel wood door.

The stairway from the parlor rises to a landing that begins along the west wall of the stair hall and wraps along the south wall (photo 0006). A single pane window is in the west wall of the stairwell. In the north wall of the landing a transomed doorway with a paneled wood door leads to a bedroom. A closet is in the southwest corner, a two-over-two wood window is in the west wall, and a paired window unit is in the north wall (photo 0008). At the northeast corner of the landing in the east wall, another transomed doorway leads to a second bedroom. Two two-over-two wood windows are in the south wall, two are in the north wall, and a closet is in the southeast corner (photo 0007). Along the south wall of the stair hall at the east end, a transomed doorway with a paneled wood door leads to the nursery. Two two-over-two wood windows are in the east wall. Further west along the south wall of the hallway another transomed doorway leads to the bathroom.

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The bathroom was created c.1922 and has a sink and toilet in the southwest corner, and a ceramic-finished cast iron tub under the two-over-two wood window in the west wall. Through the bathroom a door in the south wall, without a transom, leads down three steps into the servant's quarters. To the west of the steps is the top of the boxed stairway that leads to the kitchen below. A two-over-two wood window is in the west wall, and another is in the east wall. A closet is in the southwest corner (photo 0009).

Contributing Structure – Well House (Photo 0001, left side behind house)

Within a few feet southeast of the kitchen addition is the contributing c.1872 well house. The hipped-roof wood structure was modified c.1930 with concrete block at its lower base. It is still functional with a log turnstile and iron crank.

Contributing Building – English Barn (Photo 0010)

The English barn is east/southeast of the main house adjacent to the creek-stone driveway onto the property. It was constructed c.1860, is aligned E-W and measures thirty-six feet by twenty feet. The barn is timber frame construction on a mortared stone foundation. The north elevation has eight-to twelve-inch vertical painted board siding, and the south elevation siding is eight-inch tongue-and-groove vertical painted boards. The barn has a side gabled roof of 5-v sheet metal over original cedar shingles and a very small hay hood is at the east end. An original single-story shed roof addition is attached to the west elevation. The north elevation has a human-scale hinged door (with original hand-forged latch) at the northeast end, a small square window, a pair of large, hinged doors in the center, another small square window opening, another human-scale hinged door (with hand-forged latch) at the west end, and a pair of hinged doors in the addition. The west elevation is without fenestration. The south elevation has a pair of centered, hinged wood doors and a pair of sliding doors at loft height, a human-scale hinged door into the addition, and a small, square four-light window. The east elevation has a human-scaled hinged wood door, a small, square four-light window, and a pair of hinged doors in the gable under the hay hood. A two-story milking shed added to the south elevation c.1930, had to be removed in 2020. The addition's overall design revealed itself to be a poor one; its weight was causing the English barn to lean, and its flat roof persistently leaked, damaging itself and threatening the original barn. However, the concrete floor, concrete trough in the floor, and four of the eight Loudon tubular steel milking stanchions are extant, demonstrating the layout of the c.1930 addition.⁴

Inside the English barn, sill beams underlie the frame, and the wall posts stand on the sills, mortised with a short tenon. The barn has four bents with its gangway between stalls and mangers on the first floor (photo 0011). On the loft floor, the cross beam of each end bent has a center post with bracing. The two central cross beams each extend from wall post to wall post

⁴ Note: The interior layout of the milking shed was very similar to the c.1930 "interior barn renovation" in Figure 8 of Sally McMurry. "The Impact of Sanitation Reform on the Farm Landscape in U.S. Dairying, 1890-1950." *Buildings and Landscapes* 20:2 (Fall 2013), p. 29.

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without center posts, making a large open space. The addition has ten-by-ten-inch timber sills. A concrete floor was added to the shed's south end along with three Loudon wood-lined steel milking stanchions c.1922-1930.

Contributing Structure – Stone Cistern (Photo 0012, center between buildings)

The c.1860 stone cistern is immediately adjacent to the English barn at the southwest corner. It is approximately ten feet in diameter, is lined with large, flat creek rock, and has a partial stone covering. In the 1930s, iron plumbing was installed and connected to the adjacent milk house to comply with sanitation requirements for the dairying operation.

Contributing Building – Milk House (No.1) (Photo 0012, on right)

The first c.1930 milk house is adjacent to the c.1860 cistern to the south, which is south of the English barn. It is constructed of concrete block and has a front-gable roof sheathed with metal. The building is sited E-W and measures twelve feet, eight inches by ten feet, six inches. A doorway is in the east elevation and a four-light wood window is in each of the other three elevations. The interior has a poured concrete floor and iron plumbing connecting the building to the cistern.

Contributing Building – Drive-through Crib (Photo 0013)

South of the milk house and west of the creek-stone driveway onto the property is the c.1860 drive-through crib. It is constructed of hewn, mortise and tenon timbers resting on concrete and stone piers. It is sided with vertical boards of varying widths and is front-gabled to its N-S alignment with a corrugated metal roof. The crib's drive-through is nine feet wide, twenty-four feet long, and sixteen feet high at its peak. Under the same roof to either side of the drive-through, is a corn/grain storage room, each six feet wide and each accessed by a hinged wood door on the north elevation. Each room has twelve-inch-wide plank flooring over two by ten dimensional joists notched into the hewn sill beams. A shed roof addition was added to both the west and east elevations c.1930. Both additions are twelve feet wide and framed with small logs and two by six rafters. The west shed runs the crib's length with one opening at the north (photo 0014). The east shed runs half the crib's length with north and south openings.

Contributing Building – Milk House (No. 2) (Photo 0016, to left of barn)

South of the drive-through crib, west of the driveway, and immediately north of the cross-gable barn at the NE corner is a second c.1930 milk house. Constructed c.1930, it is sited N-S and measures eleven feet by twelve feet. It has a poured concrete floor, the walls are large hollow bricks, and there are decorative asphalt shingles in the gable ends. The front gable roof is metal sheathing over asphalt shingles. A doorway is in the south elevation and a six-light window is in both the west and north elevations. The milk house sits atop a cistern and includes an electric pump for drawing water.

Contributing Building – Cross-gable Barn (Photo 0016, to right of milk house)

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The c.1870-1880 cross-gable barn is in alignment south of the English barn and drive-through crib along the west side of the driveway onto the property. It is timber framed on a foundation of mortared stone, except for the two shed additions and the thirty-foot north extension which are on concrete blocks. All sections except the shed additions and north extension are professionally built with "square rule" timber and mortise and tenon joinery. A shed roof addition is attached to the west elevation of the E-W section. All siding is vertical boards, except for one north wall of the E-W section which is covered with metal. All of the S and N facets and most of the W facet of the roof are sheathed with the original cedar shingles, which are covered with 5-v sheet metal as is the rest of the roof. The cross shape is aligned E-W and N-S, with twenty-five-foot high, free-standing valley beams joining its two ridgelines. An uncommon design, it is one of only two known extant cross-gable, timber framed barns in Dearborn County.

Exterior

The north elevation of the N-S section has two six-light wood frame windows at first floor height, and two hinged, wood loft doors and a six-light wood window in the gable. The north elevation of the E-W section is sheathed with metal. The north elevation of the shed roof addition has two six-light wood frame windows. The west elevation of the N-S section has a large drive-through doorway to the north of the E-W section and two six-light wood frame windows. The west elevation of the shed roof addition has a doorway with sliding wood doors. The south elevation of the N-S section has two openings cut into the siding at first floor height and another opening in the gable. The south elevation of the E-W section has a central drive-through doorway with a sliding wood door and a wood frame window to either side of the doorway. The south elevation of the shed roof addition has a small doorway. The east elevation of the N-S section has a drive-through doorway with a pair of hinged wood doors and two six-light wood frame windows. The east elevation of the E-W section has two six-light wood frame windows and a drive-through doorway with a pair of hinged wood doors at its juncture with the N-S section.

Interior

East-West Section

Along the E-W alignment are five bents making four bays with four mows and a gangway (photo 0018). The threshing floor of the mows are wood planks over round six-to-eight-inch, fifteen-foot logs. The collar ties and center post were removed from one of the bents many years prior. The middle two bents have a thirty-six foot long, ten by ten collar tie connecting each twenty-foot-high wall post. They are supported in the middle by fifteen foot high, ten by ten-inch center posts. Lower nine by nine-inch connecting ties (aligned N-S) also connect a wall post to each center post. The eastern most bent of this alignment has one middle connecting tie (photo 0019). Its top collar tie was replaced with dimensional lumber when the interior silo was added in September 1893. Along each side, atop the wall posts are fifty foot long, eight by eight-inch eve

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plate beams,⁵ each a continuous hewn timber, tied into the anchor posts with mortise and tenon and trunnel and angle braces. Smaller girt beams below connect between anchor posts.⁶ The rafters are two by six-inch cedar timbers resting on the eve plate beam, with a second run of rafters extending to each wall of the side sheds. The long rafters without purlin beams, and free-standing valley beams, give the nave a wide, open appearance. Along this nave a late 19th century Loudon hay track runs from the west bent to the intersection of the valley beams. Here, open mortises in lower cross tie beams indicate that queen posts and upper cross ties (straining beams) likely were removed to accommodate this track addition.

North-South Section

Within the N-S alignment are six bents. The first bay north of the main E-W gangway was improved to accommodate dairying, likely c.1922-1930, to meet city creameries' inspection requirements (photo 0020). Divided by an aisle it has two stalls, each with a poured concrete floor with a trough in each floor, and each with six Loudon tubular steel milking stanchions and stalls. In the east stall's east wall are six-light wood frame windows and remnant whitewashing is visible on the walls and ceiling. Also extant is knob-and-tube wiring for lighting. To the north, the remaining two bays (thirty-six feet in total depth) match the height and width of the N-S alignment but are of a different quality timber frame construction atop a concrete block wall foundation. Above are three tiers of horizontal rafters (two by four-inch oak) for curing tobacco. The first bay is a gangway with a twelve-foot double-door opening in each of the west and east walls. Two six-light wood frame windows are in each of the east, west and north walls at first floor height. The north wall has two four by three foot airing doors and a six-light wood frame window in the gable.

The site's cross-gable barn houses a rare example of an interior square silo, an early transitional Experiment Station design (photos 0022 and 0023). It also holds a distinction of being one of the earliest silos (of any shape) built in Indiana, a state late in adopting the then-new silage technology. This rare square silo was constructed in September 1893 as an addition inside the barn's SE corner beginning at the junction of the two sections of the barn (photos 0019, on left, and 0021). Matching plans cited by Indiana's federally established Agricultural Experiment Station, the silo measures twenty-five by twenty-five feet and sixteen feet high and could accommodate seventy-five tons of silage. Its dimensional lumber studs (two by eight-inch oak), spaced eighteen inches apart, are shouldered atop preexisting hewn timber sills. The walls consist of a layer of tightly fit, 7/8-inch siding, tarpaper and another siding layer (for airtight sealing). The base is a sealed concrete floor. Outward bowing from silage weight is especially evident along the east wall. Stain patterns, from fermentation as well as spoilage at its corners, show areas of air intrusion and limits of proper ensilage. Stain patterns also are visible around

⁵ Note: After addition of the side sheds, these eve plate beams also acted as purlins supporting the two sets of rafters.

⁶ Note: The beams are hewn, while smaller braces are sawn, further indicating construction c.1860; "Barn detectives examine age-old question: How old is my barn?" www.farmanddairy.com/columns/barn-detectives-examine-age-old-question-how-old-is-my-barn/7251.html [Viewed 22 Feb 2023].

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nail heads securing the matched lumber siding. This square silo's use was eventually discontinued but its interior was repurposed and thus preserved. Eight studs and about three-fifths of the siding at its north end were removed to enlarge the opening to the gangway. A three-foot-high concrete trough was added to the center floor for a manger. Planks atop round log joists were added to form a loft. The silo otherwise retains the siding on its north, east, south, and west walls, extending sixteen feet in height. Though some siding was removed for use as the loft's flooring, much is extant and has been recovered. Six modern two by eight-inch studs with "let in" brace have been added on the north wall to maintain the silo's structural integrity and prevent excessive leaning from the weight of the barn's E-W alignment (fifty feet of this alignment is to the East of the silo).

Contributing Building – Pump House (Photo 0017, foreground on right)

The c.1930 pump house is adjacent to the cross-gable barn at the SE corner and is adjacent to the second stone cistern to the west. The front-gabled pump house is four-by-ten-feet. It has a half earthen/half concrete floor, vertical wood car siding, a hinged wood door on the east elevation, a four light wood window in the north and south elevations, and the roof is covered with sheet metal over original tar shingles.

Contributing Structure – Stone Cistern (Photo 0017, foreground in center)

The c.1870 stone cistern is adjacent to the cross-gable barn near the SE corner at the immediate southwest corner of the pump house. It is approximately twelve feet in diameter and is lined with large, flat creek rocks.

Contributing Structure – Cattle Ramp (Photo 0017, foreground on left)

The cattle ramp was constructed c.1930 of poured concrete. It is immediately adjacent to the southeast of the stone cistern.

Contributing Building – Tenant House (Photo 0015)

The tenant house is a one-and-a half-story, Cape Cod Colonial Revival style, American Small House constructed in 1948. It is on an acre lot east of the driveway that accesses the main house and farm resources, somewhat due east of the English barn and drive-through crib. The house is sited slightly NE-SW with the primary elevation facing north toward U.S. 50. It has its own driveway from the highway on the west side of the house.

Exterior

The side gabled house is stuccoed with aluminum siding in the gable ends and has an off-center brick chimney at the roof peak. An enclosed single-story breezeway connected at the southwest corner is sided with wide clapboard and connects to a side-gabled garage that is stuccoed with wide clapboard in the west gable end.

North elevation

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The centered doorway into the main house has a Colonial Revival-style wood surround. The door is wood with four lights and there is a period wood storm door. A two-over-two vinyl sash window is to either side of the doorway. The breezeway has a centered jalousie door, a two-over-two vinyl sash window to the east, and a paired, four-light metal casement window to the west. A six-light metal frame casement window is centered in the garage elevation.

West elevation

Two two-over-two vinyl sash windows are at first floor height of the main house, and another is centered in the gable. A very small two-over-two window is south of the larger gable window. A six-light metal frame casement window is centered in the gable of the garage addition.

South elevation

In the east third of the first floor of the main house are wood French doors off a concrete pad at grade. The wall surrounding the doors is stuccoed. To the west is a bay window with two-over-two vinyl sash windows on the east and west sides and a tripartite picture window in the center facing south. To the west is a two-over-two vinyl sash window. At second floor height above the bay window is a shed roof room extending from the main roof line. It is sided with aluminum. A doorway and a two-over-two window are recessed in the center creating a sizable balcony with a wood railing above the bay window. The second-floor addition extends on either side of the balcony and a two-over-two vinyl sash window is in each extension.

West of the main house is an open sided, shed roof extension of the breezeway at the southeast side of the garage. The wood posts rest on poured concrete at grade. A screened doorway enters the breezeway on this elevation and concrete steps lead to an exterior basement doorway. The double bay garage has a pair of four-light wood overhead doors.

East elevation

Two two-over-two vinyl sash windows are at first floor height of the main house and a two-part vinyl sliding window is in the gable end.

Interior, First floor

The north elevation doorway opens into a small foyer which accesses the living room to the left and a stairway to the second floor to the right. Within the living room there is a window in the north wall, two windows in the east wall, and a pair of French doors in the south wall. A brick fireplace and built-in shelving are at the west interior wall. From the south end of the living room, one enters the dining room which encompasses the bay window under the south elevation balcony. From the dining room moving north is a bedroom, bathroom, and the interior stairway accessing the basement. From the dining room moving west is a narrow kitchen which then connects to the breezeway connecting to the garage. The breezeway walls are covered in vertical heart pine boards.

Interior, Second floor

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From the north elevation foyer, the stairway to the second floor opens into a hallway that connects through to the south elevation balcony. Off the hallway is a bedroom to the east and another to the west, and a bathroom.

The second floor of the garage includes storage space and a playroom and is accessed by an open interior stairway.

Contributing Site (Photos 0024 and 0025)

The land and its natural and man-made farm features make up the contributing site. Aspects of the historic nature of the site include placement of the buildings and placement of the contributing fence rows, which over time created functional land enclosures for the house yard, barn yards, and related buildings (see Resource Map). The spatial relationship of the farmyard area (on Resource Map) has remained unchanged since construction of the milk houses c.1930. Overall, after construction of the tenant house in 1948 and the close of the period of significance, the only discernable changes to the property have been construction of the 1962 Ranch house and the growth of trees in certain areas.

The land consists of rolling hay fields, intact fence rows, woodland, and pastures. The original 40-acre Beckett tract (acquired from the Barker estate in 1872) was expanded to 280 acres around 1890 by Rom Beckett. The acreage was reduced to approximately 250 acres in the 1950s. The fields and pasture of the current 31.5 acres are within the original Beckett 40-acre tract and have remained unchanged since they were last farmed by Hazel Conaway Henry Walston beginning in the late 1920s. Comparison of the 1860 and 1875 Atlases as well as the 1937, 1949 and 1955 aerial maps with a current one (see attachments), indicates the basic public road circulation remains the same, as does the location of most fence rows for the various fields and pastures. While the amount of land used for pasturage versus crops shifted over time, the uses remained fairly consistent over time through to present day. An increase in tree growth along the fence rows and in the woodland areas in the east-central and west-central areas of the property are the most noticeable changes. In short, except for the small amount of acreage containing the 1962 Ranch house, at least since 1949 and most likely longer, the current 31.5 acre-farm has maintained the same basic structure.

NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE

Non-contributing Building – House (Photo 0025, far right)

Southeast of the tenant house and due east of the cross-gable barn, across the acreage before reaching the farm pond, is an abandoned 1962 single-story Ranch house. It is sited slightly NW-SE at an elevation below and not visible from the contributing resources. The house was constructed by the brother and sister-in-law of George Dennerline, who subdivided part of the farm in 1951, and is outside the period of significance.

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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.

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 grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery

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- ☐ 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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

INVENTION

Period of Significance

c.1860 - 1948

Significant Dates

1893

Significant Person (last name, first name)

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Beckett, Romuald A.

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder (last name, first name)

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Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins with the year the earliest buildings were constructed and ends with the year the tenant house was constructed. The significant date is the year the interior square, wood silo was constructed inside the cross-gable barn.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Walker Hill Farm is situated on 31.5 acres in Washington Township in Dearborn, County, Indiana. It consists of an intact and working group of buildings and structures that historically housed and served several Dearborn County families and supported the operation of a farm that at one time grew to 280 acres. After a small reduction of the farm by twelve acres in 1951, farming continued by Hazel (Conaway) (Henry) Walston until her death in 1987. The farm meets Criterion A under Agriculture for its association with nineteenth and twentieth century agriculture and the history of agriculture in Dearborn County, and for the presence in the cross-gable barn of a rare, Experiment Station design interior square silo. The land was farmed as early as c.1813 and was expanded over time while the core of the property has been farmed continuously to the present day. The twelve contributing resources represent the changes in agriculture in Indiana from the 1860s through the 1940s. Collectively, the property is one of the few remaining historic farms in Dearborn County that retains its historic setting and resources and is likely the only farm in the county, if not the state of Indiana, that retains an original square, interior wood silo. The farm meets Criterion B under Agriculture and Invention for its association with farmer and stockman, Romuald Beckett. In the 1890s, Mr. Beckett was a

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regionally known successful sheep farmer and breeder, champion wheat grower and Farmers' Institute officer. In 1893, he was one of the earliest adopters in the State of the then-new silage technology, building a silo according to Experiment Station plans, successfully experimenting in its use for sheep, and advocating for its use by other farmers through presentations at local Farmers' Institutes. The silo is the earliest known to be built in Dearborn County and is documented as one of the earliest silos of any type constructed in Indiana, a state which had fewer than fifty silos in 1892. The farm meets Criterion C under Architecture for its c.1865/1872 two-story L-plan house, c.1872 well-house, c.1860 English barn, c.1870-1880 Cross-gable barn, which houses a rare, Experiment Station design, interior square silo dated to September 1893, c.1860 drive-through crib, two stone cisterns, one dating to c.1860 and the other to c.1870, c.1930 pump house, two c.1930 milk houses, c.1930 cattle ramp, and a 1948 Cape Cod tenant house. The contributing resources along with the contributing site retain a good degree of integrity. The farm is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERION A

Walker Hill Farm meets Criterion A under Agriculture for its association with nineteenth and twentieth century agriculture and the history of agriculture in Dearborn County, and for the presence in the cross-gable barn of a rare, Experiment Station design interior square silo. The land was farmed as early as c.1813 and was expanded over time while the core of the property has been farmed continuously until present day. The twelve contributing resources represent the changes in agriculture in Indiana from the 1860s through the 1940s. The square silo represents an important advancement in agriculture through invention and the re-engineering of that invention over time based on experimentation and use. Collectively, the property is one of the few remaining historic farms in Dearborn County that retains its historic setting and large collection of contributing resources, and is likely the only farm in the county, if not the state of Indiana, that retains an original square, interior wood silo.

AGRICULTURE

At the time Indiana gained statehood in 1816, farming engaged ninety-five percent of the European-descended population.⁷ Over time, agricultural improvements allowed farmers to reap unprecedented prosperity by the 1850s. By 1860, Indiana was first in the nation in hog production and second in wheat harvests.⁸ Sheep also dominated the livestock markets, while the

⁷ Cynthia Brubaker. "Hinkle-Garton Farmstead, Monroe County, Indiana." National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 2007.

⁸ Danielle Bachant-Bell. "Breezy Point Farm Historic District, Monroe County, Indiana." National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 2019.

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primary crops included corn, rye, tobacco, potatoes, and orchard products. The dominance of farming during the mid-1800s also led to the creation of the State Board of Agriculture. The group held the first state fair in 1852 to promote farming and engender pride in the work of farmers.⁹ Counties began organizing their own fairs soon thereafter.

In the latter half of the 19th century, education in scientific methods was also introduced to overcome the persistent prejudice against “book farming,” contributing to the period’s agricultural revolution.¹⁰ With funds from the 1887 Hatch Act, Indiana established an agricultural Experiment Station at Purdue University, and the county “Farmers’ Institute” was established.¹¹ Both became vehicles for advocating new farming methods into the 1890s. By 1900, the dominant crops were corn, wheat, oats, clover, timothy, red top and alfalfa hay; in the early 1900s, beef and dairy cattle increased; and into the early 20th century dairying became more prevalent in the state.¹²

However, the end of the 19th-century saw a slow and eventual decline in the state’s agricultural base as ever-increasing farming improvements and production caused market saturation. Prices for crops, livestock and farmland fell dramatically by the 1890s and did not improve until the turn of the century. The 19-teens were high demand years for Indiana farm products. In making another comeback by the mid-20th century, agriculture in Indiana followed the nation-wide trend toward large farms of mono-crops.

Corn eventually dominated Indiana as an agricultural crop; by 1965, Indiana was third nationwide in corn production.¹³ During the early 1900s, soybeans were introduced into the state and by the 1950s and 1960s, corn and soybeans had become the primary sown crops in Indiana, often to the exclusion of all else on large corporate farms.¹⁴ Dominated by these high-yield enterprises and the rise of agri-business during the era, smaller family farms dwindled, with many who remained in farming having to seek additional employment off the farm. Others stopped farming altogether.

These trends have continued over the ensuing decades. By 1969, only six percent of the state’s population was actively engaged in agriculture.¹⁵ A resulting outcome was that many families have remained on a core portion of the family farm, generally out of a preference for the rural lifestyle, but have sold the remaining land for development. Barns and outbuildings have also been lost through development or lack of use and maintenance. Although traditional farming has experienced an increase in activity in recent years with the small organic farm movement, many agricultural resources--both land and buildings--have already been lost.

⁹ Indiana State Fairgrounds and Event Center. <https://ulib.iupui.edu/digitalcollections/ISFEC> [Viewed 26 Feb 2023.]

¹⁰ Clifton J. Phillips. “Indiana in Transition, 1880-1920.” *The History of Indiana*, Vol. IV. (Indiana Historical Society Press, Indianapolis, Ind., 1968), p. 140-141.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 143-144.

¹² *Ibid.* pp. 148, 150, 152-153.

¹³ Dave O. Thompson, Sr. and William L. Madigan. *One Hundred and Fifty Years of Indiana Agriculture*. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1969, p. 55.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 62.

¹⁵ Brubaker, “Hinkle-Garton Farmstead,” 11.

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The settlers of what would later become the Indiana Territory and Dearborn County arrived as early as 1796, at the close of the Northwest Indian War and before federal land sales began in 1801. The county seat was Lawrenceburg, a river town established in 1802. Settlers soon began raising corn, wheat, and swine in the bottoms of the Ohio River and adjoining creeks and in the wooded uplands. While the county also had those who sold surplus via the river trade to New Orleans markets, most early farmers focused on self-sufficiency.¹⁶ Over the ensuing decades farming in the county generally followed statewide trends.

In the 1950s, the agricultural climate in Dearborn County as elsewhere began to decline as farmers took second or part time jobs. Others who grew up on the family farm and then weathered the World War II era sought different lifestyles and opportunities away from farming following the war years. Although some remained on the family farm, the agricultural activities ended or were greatly diminished. The Census of Agriculture for 1945 shows 1,887 farms in Dearborn County with over 92% of its land in farms. By 1950 the number drops to 1,706 farms. By 1978 the number drops to 936; and by 1982 to 905, with just over 50% of county land in farms. More recent census numbers show 676 farms in 2002, then down to 561 in 2012, with only 29% of county land in farms. As a result of this trend, many farmed lands, barns, and outbuildings have been lost.¹⁷

Farming at Walker Hill Farm followed many of the state and local trends. The “excellent quality of the limestone water” available near the Ohio River in Dearborn County had made the area “a major distilling center since the early nineteenth century” which was “heavily dependent on locally grown ... corn and other grains.”¹⁸ John Walker, the site’s first purchaser, acquired the land in 1813 and utilized it to grow crops for his profitable whiskey distillery business in nearby Hartford, until transferring title of the land to his brothers, Henry and Benjamin, Jr., in 1821.¹⁹

¹⁶ *History of Dearborn & Ohio Counties, Indiana: From Their Earliest Settlement*. (F.E. Weakley & Co., Publishers, Chicago, Ill, 1885), pp.131-132, and Archibald Shaw, Editor. *History of Dearborn County: Her People, Industries and Institutions*. (Indianapolis, Ind.: B.F. Bowen & Co., 1915), p.129.

¹⁷ Allen G. Noble and Rudy R. Christian. “Historic Barns: the Barn, a Symbol of Ohio.” www.heartlandscience.org/historic-barns [Viewed 27 Feb 2023]. Excerpted: The great late 19th century barn structures “are rapidly decaying and disappearing.... As geographer Alvar Carlson noted almost a generation ago, the architecture of new farm buildings increasingly reflects ‘mere function and the range of items available from catalogs of implement and building dealers. Each barn’s disappearance represents the loss of a major form of the material landscape based upon ethnicity and individuality’. [T]hese ‘neo-barns’ as Carlson dubbed them, replaces individualistic timber frame structures with box-like, metal or plastic-clad, single level, metallic frame pole buildings” See also William Higgins, “These 10 classic, historic Indiana buildings are on borrowed time.” *Indianapolis Star*, 2 May 2018. Excerpted: “Old barns, those iconic symbols of rural Indiana, are falling down all over the state, and it’s possible they’ll soon be as rare as covered bridges.”

¹⁸ Phillips, “Indiana in Transition, 1880-1920,” 288.

¹⁹ “United States Bureau of Land Management Tract Books, 1800 - c.1955,” Database with images, *FamilySearch*, <https://familysearch.org>: 10 March 2023, Ohio, Vol. 14 (Cincinnati) [image 200 of 296] [Twp. 4, Range 2W, NW ¼ Sec. 9] Bureau of Land Improvement. Records Improvement, Bureau of Land Management, Washington D.C.; and Indiana, Dearborn County, 1820 U.S. Census of Manufactures, NARA microfilm publication M279, Roll 20, Washington, D.C., The National Archives, [Entry No. 14].

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By 1835, Zachariah Barker had acquired the land and all indications are that he began engaging in a diverse farming operation.²⁰ According to the 1850 Agricultural Census, Barker was raising wheat, Indian corn, oats, hay and Irish & sweet potatoes -- as well as husbanding 3 milk cows, 2 cattle, 12 pigs, 20 sheep, producing 80 pounds of wool and 200 pounds of butter -- consistent with early Indiana agriculture which centered on these crops and products.²¹ The hay, Irish potatoes and butter production are also representative of important local trends, as Dearborn County led in those areas according to the Statistics of Indiana, Census of 1850. Following creation of the Indiana State Board of Agriculture, Dearborn County also organized its Agricultural Society in April 1852.²² As an incentive for improving farms, the State and counties awarded cash premiums for raising top products and animals.²³ The Barkers received one such award for their farm as it was reported to have taken "the premium at the State fair, a few years ago, as the best cultivated farm in the State."²⁴

After 1850, a rapid increase in timothy grass and red clover production took place in Indiana. Between 1870 and 1880 the clover sowed in the state increased fourfold, red clover being adaptable and well-suited for crop rotation. Likewise, hay became the third most valuable Indiana field crop after corn and wheat.²⁵ In Dearborn County, upland farmers found "a good market for timothy hay was to be obtained down the Mississippi River" and "[t]he raising of timothy became, for several decades, the principal industry of the hill farmers" with roads to nearby Aurora and Lawrenceburg in fall and winter months "thronged with farmers' wagons hauling their bales to town, where it would be loaded into flatboats and taken south."²⁶ Reflecting this state and local trend, the 1850 Agricultural Census reports 55 tons of hay harvested at Walker Hill Farm. However, over the following decades the production of hay at the farm began to lessen. Limitations on trade to the south during the Civil War likely played a significant role. The 1870 Agricultural Census reports only 20 tons of hay harvested. And by the time Mr. Barker's estate was probated in 1872, the farm's hay yield was down to 14.9 tons, with 146 bushels of oats, 58 bushels of wheat, 400 bushels of corn, and 32 bushels of potatoes.²⁷ After long years of farming timothy hay it was found "the ground was losing its original fertility" and

²⁰ Deed Book C, Page 27, Recorder's Office, Dearborn County, Ind. According to the deed records, the site was owned by a Mr. Hume for seven years, who purchased it from Henry and Benj. Walker Jr. in 1828.

²¹ William Carroll Latta. "Outline of Indiana Agriculture." (Alpha lambda chapter of Epsilon Sigma Phi, publisher, Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind. 1938), pp. 44-51.

²² *History of Dearborn & Ohio Counties, Indiana*, 140.

²³ Emma Lou Thornbrough. "Indiana in the Civil War Era, 1850-1880." *The History of Indiana*, Vol 3. (Indiana Historical Society Press, Indianapolis, Ind., 1965), p. 396; see also Phillips, "Indiana in Transition, 1880-1920," 169.

²⁴ "Estate Sale Notice of Zachariah Barker." *The Journal Press*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 25 July 1872, p 3.; "Reports from the County Societies." *Report of the Indiana State Board of Agriculture, For the Year 1859*. (Bingham, Doughty & Co., Printers, Indpls., Ind. 1861), p. 26.

²⁵ Thornbrough, "Indiana in the Civil War Era, 1850-1880," 373 and 380; Latta, "Outline of Indiana Agriculture," 72 and 140-141; Phillips, "Indiana in Transition, 1880-1920," 152.

²⁶ *History of Dearborn County*, 431-32.

²⁷ "Estate of Zachariah Barker." Note: Barker's estate's probate records report use of timothy seed (\$10 & \$2 spent) and 30 lbs. clover seed (\$3.15 spent).

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alfalfa hay became more common statewide as it restored the soil's fertility.²⁸ Following this trend, the 1880 Agricultural Census reports a reduction to only 7 tons of timothy hay harvested from seven acres at Walker Hill Farm. The cultivation of clover hay was reported in 1894.²⁹ Today, approximately 46 tons of tall fescue, red clover, and timothy hay are harvested from the farm's fields each year.

During the 1850s, consistent with the state's "spectacular increase" in wheat production and its shift of corn to northern counties, Mr. Barker increased his wheat crop from 54 bushels recorded in the 1850 Agricultural Census to 450 bushels in 1860, while reducing corn from 700 to 300 bushels, respectively.³⁰ Indiana was also transitioning from predominantly grain to increased mixed husbandry.³¹ By 1860, Mr. Barker likewise had increased his cows and cattle from five to eight, pigs from twelve to eighteen, and sheep from twenty to twenty-six, including wool production. During this period the value of the 160-acre farm increased from \$5,700 in 1850 to \$8,000 by 1860.

By 1872 the original 40 acres surrounding today's core farmstead was acquired by Romuald and Rebecca Beckett. Mr. Barker had retired from farming and prior to his death in 1871, the Becketts had been living on and farming his 160 acres as tenants since c.1865.³² Such tenant farming was common in the mid-19th century. And the Beckett's tenancy, like elsewhere in Indiana, "followed the general pattern [of] being adapted primarily to high-priced rather than low-priced land."³³

As the Becketts continued to farm the property, they raised wheat, corn, potatoes and hay, and husbanded sheep as well as some cows and cattle. The demand for wool created by the Civil War period had caused a sharp increase in Indiana's sheep numbers during the 1860s. Reflecting this trend, Walker Hill Farm's sheep only increased from 20 to 26 between 1850 and 1860 but was up to 95 sheep by 1870. But wool production at the farm dropped from 60 pounds in 1860 to zero in 1870, showing Mr. Beckett's use of sheep for mutton instead, reflecting the sharp fall in wool prices after the war's end.³⁴

²⁸ *History of Dearborn County*, 431-32.

²⁹ "Washington Township." *The Journal Press*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 16 Aug 1894, p. 1.

³⁰ Thornbrough, "Indiana in the Civil War Era, 1850-1880," 371.

³¹ Latta, "Outline of Indiana Agriculture," 103.

³² Per the 1870 Agricultural Census, Mr. Beckett owned no land but farmed the same acreage that Mr. Barker farmed in the prior census. Mr. Barker on the other hand, was "retired" according to the 1870 Census (tending to only 4 acres) but owned \$20,000 worth of real estate. Also, Deed Book 31, pg. 99 indicates the L-plan house is on the same 40-acre tract which the Becketts purchased out of Mr. Barker's estate. When the Becketts acquired title, they paid \$3,600, a price indicating built improvements. See also *The Journal Press*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 25 Jul 1872, p 3. The article lists two tenant houses and sale of "one third of the hay, corn, oats, wheat &c.," evidencing a tenancy in that the estate could only sell a fraction of the land's crops, likely the leasing fee.

³³ Phillips, "Indiana in Transition, 1880-1920," 135-136; See also Thornbrough, "Indiana in the Civil War Era, 1850-1880," 368.

³⁴ Thornbrough, "Indiana in the Civil War Era, 1850-1880," 388.

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Into the late 1880s and early 1890s Indiana “ranked as a leading wheat growing State” and “in 1892 the Indiana wheat yield was exceeded only by Kansas and Minnesota.”³⁵ The crop held such importance that since its 1887 establishment Purdue’s Agricultural Experiment Station became chiefly concerned with wheat in its research.³⁶ Reflecting this important trend, Mr. Beckett was known as a “champion wheat raiser” at the farm.³⁷ After a lesser harvest of 140 bushels reported in the 1870 Agricultural Census, he harvested 800, 1,125, and then 1,161 bushels of wheat in the summers of 1879, 1884 and 1894, increasing his yield from 21 to 25 to 27 bushels per acre in those years respectively. His harvests well bettered Indiana’s average yield of 17.6 bushels per acre for 1890 to 1892.³⁸ This winter wheat variety was claimed to make a superior flour.³⁹ Potatoes were the only crop other than grains grown on large scale in Indiana; however, the main area of this “potato culture” eventually shifted from southern Indiana to the cooler northern counties.⁴⁰ Reflecting this pattern, the farm’s potato production, which was 60 bushels in 1850, and 20 to 40 bushels in 1870, dropped to zero by the 1880 Agricultural Census.

By 1883, the Becketts had expanded their farm south, adding 80 acres; then another 160 acres in 1891, making a 280-acre farm. During this period, Indiana, though not a leading sheep state, had noted successes, having the largest pure-bred sheep association in the world, and ranked among the top ten states in sheep per square mile for 60 years (up to 1935).⁴¹ Livestock breeding “played an increasingly important role in Indiana after the first large-scale importation of purebred animals” in the 1870s and 1880s.⁴² Purebred American Merino spread from 1850 to 1880, and Cotswold was introduced in 1872.⁴³ Though mutton was then “almost universally used in one form or another,” sheep raising was heavily affected nationwide by tariff revisions in 1892; herd values in 1895 became half of that of early 1893.⁴⁴ Sheep numbers were stable until 1910, then declined severely; and by 1920 sheep were found on only 14.7% of Indiana farms.⁴⁵ Following these trends Mr. Beckett increased his flocks from 95 sheep in 1870 to 55 sheep and 74 lambs in 1880, recovering his wool production to 380 pounds. By early 1892, Indiana had

³⁵ C.S. Plumb, “Preface.” *Bulletin of Purdue Univ. Agricultural Experiment Station*, No. 45, Vol. IV. (Purdue Univ. Publication, Lafayette, Ind. Aug. 1893), p. 47.

³⁶ Horace E. Stockbridge, “Introduction.” *Bulletin of the Agricultural Experiment Station of Indiana* 3, No. 26. (Purdue Univ. Publication, Lafayette, Ind. Jul. 1889), p. 3.

³⁷ *The Journal Press*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 16 Aug 1894, p. 1.

³⁸ Indiana, Dearborn County, 1880 U.S. census, Agricultural schedule, In-house microfilm, Lawrenceburg Public Library, Genealogy Office, Lawrenceburg, Ind., R. Beckett; Also, Washington Township. *Lawrenceburg Press*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 7 Aug 1884, p. 3, and *The Journal Press*, 16 Aug 1894, p. 1; See also, “Plumb,” Preface, 47.

³⁹ Phillips, “Indiana in Transition, 1880-1920,” 150.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 153.

⁴¹ Latta, “Outline of Indiana Agriculture,” 205, 208.

⁴² Phillips, “Indiana in Transition, 1880-1920,” 165, 166.

⁴³ Latta, “Outline of Indiana Agriculture,” 182-183, 371.

⁴⁴ “Report of the Agricultural Department of the United States.” *The Journal Press*, 9 May 1895, p. 2.

⁴⁵ Phillips, “Indiana in Transition, 1880-1920,” 162, 164.

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“one and a quarter million of sheep” and the Farmers’ Institutes advocated “more sheep.”⁴⁶ By that same year Walker Hill Farm was notable for sheep raising; Mr. Beckett was known to raise “high grade” Merino ewes and “thoroughbred” Cotswold rams.⁴⁷ And regionally he was renowned as “a careful and successful breeder and wool grower,” presenting papers on sheep at the Dearborn and Ripley County Farmers’ Institutes in 1892 and 1893.⁴⁸ After livestock prices fell in 1893, Mr. Beckett, in a paper on “The Outlook for Sheep,” advised farmers “to hold onto their flocks and to adapt their breeding to the changed conditions.”⁴⁹ Both of the farm’s barns retain mows, stalls, mangers and silo (discussed below) which were utilized for these sheep operations.

Another important agricultural event of this period occurred at Walker Hill Farm—the construction of one of Indiana’s first silos inside the c.1870/1880 cross-gable barn. As an agricultural revolution was taking hold during the 1880s, scientific education was beginning to overcome persistent prejudices against “book farming.”⁵⁰ Mr. Beckett was one of those who led the movement both locally and in Indiana. After he modified the cross-gable barn in 1893 to house one of Indiana’s first silos, he advocated for silo use by others. Well-documented historically, it is of an Experiment Station design, an extant example of an intermediate square type in the evolution of the American silo.

After Congress passed the 1887 Hatch Act, Indiana established its Experiment Station at Purdue University with the purpose to research and publish its discoveries in agriculture. In parallel, efforts to educate farmers on new techniques were also organized at the local level. For example, by 1889, Dearborn County hosted one of the fifty county “Farmers’ Institutes,” organized under Purdue’s responsibility.⁵¹ Initiated by Purdue Professor William Latta, these institutes “became an important medium of contact with the man on the land.”⁵² Through the Experiment Station, Purdue’s professor C.S. Plumb published a paper in June 1892 lamenting that Indiana then had less than 50 silos in the entire state and it was “very backward in adopting” the new technology, explaining its benefits, and citing plans for building silos, including in a barn corner.⁵³ After some intermediate events, Mr. Beckett built one according to Experiment

⁴⁶ “Drippings from Farmers’ Institutes.” *The Dearborn County Register*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 28 Jan 1892, p. 2, and “The Following Officers Were Elected by Farmers’ Association at Guilford.” *The Dearborn County Register*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 18 Feb 1892, p. 2.

⁴⁷ “Farmers’ Institute, Field Notes from the Meeting at Moores Hill.” *The Lawrenceburg Press*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 20 Dec 1893, p. 5.

⁴⁸ *The Dearborn County Register*, 28 Jan 1892, p. 2; *The Lawrenceburg Press*, 20 Dec 1893, p. 5.

⁴⁹ *The Lawrenceburg Press*, 20 Dec 1893, p. 5; also Phillips, “Indiana in Transition, 1880-1920,” 145.

⁵⁰ Phillips, “Indiana in Transition, 1880-1920,” 140-141.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 143-144.

⁵² Latta, “Outline of Indiana Agriculture,” 6.

⁵³ C.S. Plumb, “The Silo and Silage in Indiana.” *Bulletin of Purdue Univ. Agricultural Experiment Station*, No. 40, Vol. III. (Purdue Univ. Publication, Lafayette, Ind. 29 Jun 1892), pp. 65, 76. Note: In Indiana, silo construction was “at first rectangular in shape before shifting to what eventually became the almost universal cylindrical design, advanced most rapidly in the second decade of the twentieth century.”; also Phillips, “Indiana in Transition, 1880-1920,” 150-151.

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Station plans in September 1893. As vice-president at his county Farmer's Institute, Mr. Beckett documented his silo experiment with two presentations to local institutes ("Experience with Ensilage" and "Silos and Ensilage") over two seasons in 1893 and 1894. He thus became not only an early user but an advocate for local farmers to adopt this new farming technology, for example reporting: "He had built a silo, put up 75 tons of ensilage, would winter the usual number of sheep, fattening some and raising some early lambs. His intention is to pay more attention to mutton and lambs than to wool."⁵⁴ The silo's successful use for sheep was also somewhat foresighted in this regard. Professor Plumb had reported as late as 1895 that sheep had "been fed silage with much caution from its first introduction".⁵⁵ Mr. Beckett's silo was in the vanguard, Professor Latta even placing the silo's "introduction in Indiana" as the year 1897, four years after the silo at Walker Hill Farm.⁵⁶ Mr. Beckett's silo and his presentations also followed the important trend of "[t]he farmer's institutes . . . calling attention of the farmers to the use of the silo and the feeding of silage."⁵⁷

Also in the 1890s, the center of tobacco cultivation in Indiana "shifted . . . from the southwest to the southeast, particularly the white burley growing counties of Ohio, Switzerland, Dearborn, and Franklin."⁵⁸ Tobacco was "an important cash crop to many farmers in this group of southern counties between the Ohio and White Rivers," Dearborn County being in an area known for "dairy, hay and tobacco."⁵⁹ Reflecting this pattern of shifting focus, the census data available to 1880 shows no tobacco cultivated at Walker Hill Farm. However, the cross-gable barn's N-S alignment includes the addition of three tiers of tobacco rafters (two by four-inch oak timbers) for curing tobacco, an indication that tobacco cultivation was begun sometime after 1880.

Walker Hill Farm was sold to Ralph and Carrie (Cole) Conaway in 1922 and in keeping with the statewide farming trends at that time, they greatly expanded the dairying operations. As sheep stock declined, increased dairy farming took place in Indiana. After slow progress prior to 1890 dairy improved, especially in the early 20th century. And by 1924 the proportion of dairy cows to all cattle in the state increased to forty-nine percent.⁶⁰ One of the "important factors contributing to the advancement of dairying in the state" was "better housing, rearing, and management of dairy stock."⁶¹ Since about 1900, attention had been "directed toward the

⁵⁴ "Program of the Farmers Institute." *The Lawrenceburg Press*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 29 Nov 1893, p. 7; and *The Lawrenceburg Press*, 20 Dec 1893, p. 5; "Program of the Dearborn County Farmers' Institute." *The Dearborn County Register*, 6 Dec 1894, p. 4.

⁵⁵ C.S. Plumb. "Silos and Silage." *Farmer's Bulletin*, No. 32. U.S. Dept. of Agriculture. (Gov't Printing Office, Wash., D.C. 1895), p. 27.

⁵⁶ Latta, "Outline of Indiana Agriculture," 371.

⁵⁷ C.B. Harris, "Dairying In Indiana." *Forty-Second Annual Report of the Indiana State Board of Agriculture*, Vol. 34 1892-1893. (Wm. B. Burford Printing, Indpls, Ind. 1893), p. 89.

⁵⁸ Phillips, "Indiana in Transition, 1880-1920." 156.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 155; also Latta, "Outline of Indiana Agriculture," 141; and *History of Dearborn & Ohio Counties, Indiana*, 140; and *History of Dearborn County*, 69-70.

⁶⁰ Latta, "Outline of Indiana Agriculture," 236, 238-239.

⁶¹ Ibid, 238.

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improvement of dairy barns to secure economy of labor, the comfort of the dairy herd, and more sanitary conditions in general.”⁶² Beginning around 1906, inspections were required for all dairies which supplied city milk; and “requirements as to sanitation, health of the cows, and care of the milk [grew] increasingly strict” causing “dairy barns [to be] more sanitary and the dairy herds more healthy.”⁶³ In Dearborn County, from 1905 to 1915, several creameries were established, which encouraged dairying, and the attention of farmers “was drawn more and more to the value of good stock and of a kind that produces an abundance of rich milk” and “[b]utter-making is a source of income with many farmers, who find a ready market, at good prices, in the towns nearby.”⁶⁴ Additionally, the increased dairying in Indiana was tied to the rise of milk as a substitute for human breast milk in the early 20th century.⁶⁵ This trend, in turn, caused new infrastructure to develop throughout U.S. farms to funnel milk from farm to city.

By the mid-1930s most major milk markets required concrete stable floors to reduce bacterial contamination, easy to clean metal components such as stanchions and window frames, added windows for light, and whitewashing of interiors.⁶⁶ “Another barn addition was the milk house, a small, sanitary building to house freshly produced milk in cool environment, and running water to cleanse empty containers.”⁶⁷ All milk markets required these separate milk houses dedicated to cooling and readying milk for transport and where utensils could be cleaned and stored.⁶⁸ The Conaways sold to the Cincinnati milk market and put much effort into improvements for complying with such evolving sanitation requirements.⁶⁹ They added the milk houses and improved the barns by adding milking stables with Loudon steel stanchions, sealed concrete floors, windows, whitewashing, and electric lighting. A c.1930 two-story milking addition to the south side of the English barn had to be removed in 2020 due to structural problems affecting the older barn.⁷⁰ The concrete floor, trough and several of the metal milking stanchions are still extant, showing the layout of the original addition.

After the deaths of both Ralph and Carrie Conaway by 1930, their daughter, Hazel, and her husband, John Baron Henry, were living on and operating the farm. Hazel oversaw the farming operations and deviated little from what her parents had previously undertaken. The 1937 aerial shows cropland and the pasture, hay field, and wooded areas found today. After Hazel’s husband died in 1947, she sold all but the main house and 3 acres of the farm to George Dennerline in 1948. Soon thereafter he had the tenant house constructed to accommodate a tenant farmer, his wife’s cousin who was from Fulton County. But shortly after the cattle were

⁶² Ibid, 243.

⁶³ Ibid, 245.

⁶⁴ *History of Dearborn County*, 431-32.

⁶⁵ McMurry, “The Impact of Sanitation Reform on the Farm Landscape in U.S. Dairying, 1890-1950,” 22.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 22 and 24.

⁶⁷ “Dairying Changes Barn Form.” <http://www.heartlandscience.org/barns/barnsdairy> [Viewed 3 Mar 2023.]

⁶⁸ McMurry, “The Impact of Sanitation Reform on the Farm Landscape in U.S. Dairying, 1890-1950,” 22 and 24.

⁶⁹ Rhett Dennerline, Oral history of Walker Hill Farm. 2022-2023. Note: “The Conaways would have been on the milk route of my grandfather’s cousin Jess, who delivered for Kroger and Coors Brothers.”

⁷⁰ Note: The interior layout was nearly identical to Figure 8 as seen in McMurry’s article.

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brought in the cousin backed out. So, Mr. Dennerline quit his sales job in Indianapolis and moved his family into the tenant house to operate the farm.⁷¹

However, in 1951 after Hazel had remarried, she reacquired the farm minus the 1948 tenant house and 12 acres that Mr. Dennerline had subdivided off and farmed. Hazel and her second husband, Lawrence Walston, continued to reside in the main house and Hazel took up full farming operations as she had previously. The farm remained consistent with the Becketts' and Conaway's ownership, with the house, barns and fields remaining otherwise unchanged. Except for the tenant house built on the subdivided lot and an enlarged cattle/farm pond, the 1949 and 1955 aerials show the same uses as in 1937. Hazel's second husband died in 1975 but throughout this period she continued the same farming and pasturage until her death in 1987 at age 90. Today, the fields are used for hay and pasturage and the buildings and structures used to support farming operations.

The *1983 Dearborn County Interim Report: Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory* identifies a number of properties within the county associated with agriculture. Of the four hundred and twenty-six properties surveyed forty years ago only one hundred and thirty-four remain intact in some form, meaning the house, farm buildings, and at least some associated agricultural land retains integrity.⁷² Of these only eighty properties show evidence of farming activities. Unlike Walker Hill Farm, many of these properties are no longer working farms utilizing the historic agricultural buildings as evidenced by their severe decay and decline, subdivision of the built resources from the agricultural land, or full demolition and possible redevelopment of the property. While intensive farming practices have changed over time and the buildings at Walker Hill Farm are not all used in their traditional manner, they continue to be maintained and used to a certain degree for current farming on the property. Likewise, a large portion of the land historically associated with Walker Hill Farm and its original 40-acre Beckett tract has remained an intact part of the property, either as cropland, pasture, or woodland. Within Washington Township no other property was identified with the number of intact historic agricultural resources under active agricultural use as found at Walker Hill Farm.

Comparable agricultural resources within Dearborn County to Walker Hill Farm include: the Charles W. Luke/Marvin Luke Farm at 13176 Prosperity Road (029-036-65021) in Caesar Creek Township, which retains multiple farm buildings as part of 40 acres being actively farmed. However, the Queen Anne style T-plan house with c.1840 rear wing has been highly modified. Also in Caesar Creek Township, the F.W. Schotte Farm/Mueller Farm at 8115 Grelle Road (029-036-65015) retains 81 acres and a collection of farm buildings in good condition; however, the c.1890 house has been altered to the point that the property may no longer be viewed as contributing if re-surveyed. The Paul Watts Farm at 7797 Arlington Road (029-036-60038) in

⁷¹ Dennerline oral history.

⁷² Note: The entries for Dearborn County within the SHAARD database were taken from the hard copy, published version of the *1983 Dearborn County Interim Report: Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory*. However, the researcher identified discrepancies in some of the information between the published and online sources, primarily regarding agricultural associations of the resources.

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Clay Township has 39 acres and retains a good degree of integrity in its collection of built resources including a drystone fence; however, the house has been modified and a modern pole barn built between the house and old barn. The Dennerline Farm at 10349 Mt. Sinai Road (029-168-45003) in Hogan Township was listed as Notable in the 1982 *Dearborn County Interim Report*. It was found to have one of the least modified houses, which is a T-plan type, and retains 77 farmed acres with a good collection of outbuildings. The Nick Hartman Farm/Leo Fuchs Farm at 25492 Schantz Road (029-619-15048) in Jackson Township is retains 39 acres with minimal alteration to the house and older farm buildings. However, three pole barns and other modern structures have been added near the house and old barn. Also in Jackson Township, the C. Holtzberger Farm at 29668 Blue Creek Road (029-602-15006) retains the house and outbuildings on 37 acres; however, a modern pole barn and carport have been added near the house, which has also been modified. And the James Fay Farm at 11794 N. Dearborn Road (029-619-15066) has 55 acres and a good collection of outbuildings. However, 6.7 acres were subdivided off and an adjacent new house and modern pole barn were constructed in 2019. Current views of the historic house are limited and prevent an accurate assessment. Another Jackson Township farm, the M. Weigel Farm/John Landers Farm at 24518 Weisberg Road (029-619-15074) has just under 49 acres still associated with the period house, barns and other farm buildings, but the barns are in very poor condition and may soon be lost. The Murtaugh Farm at 26427 Sawmill Road (029-103-10030) in Kelso Township is listed as a Hoosier Homestead. Its 84 acres are actively farmed, and the barn and outbuildings are in good condition; however, the house is abandoned and may no longer be extant at any time. Also in Kelso Township, the farm at 6513 Hilltop Road (029-103-10004) retains 19.5 acres being farmed along with a good collection of farm buildings, as does the farm at 7773 Old Hickory Road (029-103-10010) which sits on 95 acres. However, the houses at both farms have been modified over the past 40 years. The Schuter Farm at 7213 Soap Hill Road (029-029-35070) in Manchester Township retains 146 acres with at least some being used for active farming and some barns and outbuildings repaired after a period of decline. However, the house has been modified and the main barn is in very poor condition and partly collapsed. Also in Manchester Township, the William Dills Farm at 17871 Possum Ridge Road (029-256-35025) retains 112 acres and many of the historic resources are still being used for farming; however, two modern pole barns have been added next to the older barns, and some of the land has been subdivided for construction of an adjacent modern home. The Hornbach Farm at 8234 York Ridge Road (029-256-20006) in York Township retains 20 acres and its older barns; however, two large modern pole barns have been attached to the main older barn, four additional pole barns have been constructed, and the house has been modified. While some of these farms may meet the National Register criteria, this analysis illustrates the intrinsic qualities that make Walker Hill Farm eligible.

Walker Hill Farm holds several distinctions that set it apart from other farms within Dearborn County. Unlike most if not all the other farms within the county, Walker Hill Farm has been extensively historically researched and documented so that its development and use over

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time, as well as its representation of important trends in Indiana agriculture, can be verified. The farm retains buildings and structures from c.1860 through 1948 with little to no modification other than was typical during farming use, including the main house which retains its original exterior siding and trim, original doors and windows with the exception of one of each, and many original interior elements such as flooring, doors, and trim. The fields, fence rows and farming patterns can also be documented to have remained consistent through time, with fence rows largely unchanged except for a south boundary reestablished in 1990, which matches the south c.1872 (40 acre) farmstead boundary.⁷³ The farm also holds the important distinction of retaining an early square, interior wood silo in the cross-gable barn. The silo was not only the first known silo in Dearborn County, it was also one of the earliest silos constructed statewide. And this interior square type, a type which was soon disfavored over the subsequent round silo, is now one of the few if not the only known example of its type remaining in Indiana.

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERION B

Walker Hill Farm meets Criterion B under Agriculture and Invention for its association with farmer and stockman, Romuald Beckett. In the 1890s, Mr. Beckett was a regionally known successful sheep farmer and breeder, champion wheat grower and Farmers' Institute officer. In 1893, he was one of the earliest adopters in the State of the then-new silage technology, building a silo according to Experiment Station plans, successfully experimenting in its use for sheep, and advocating for its use by other farmers through presentations at local Farmers' Institutes. His experimentation with the silo as new technology contributed to the re-engineering of the invention for more profitable and successful use by farmers in the ensuing years.

Romuald Beckett

Romuald "Rom" Beckett was born in December 1844 in Washington Township, Dearborn County, on a farm adjacent to the Walker Hill Farm property. Beckett married in 1865 at age 21. By the time of the 1870 U.S. Census, he and his wife and their young daughter were living on and running the farm of Zachariah Barker, the owner of Walker Hill Farm. Because it is known Mr. Barker had tenant houses and the 1870 census lists him as "retired" but still in possession of his 160-acre farm, and that his neighbor, Rom Beckett didn't own real estate but was shown as farming 160 acres, the evidence indicates that Beckett had taken over operation of the Barker farm as a tenant, likely in 1865. The Becketts then became owners of a 40-acre tract of Walker Hill Farm (in which the current 31.5-acre farm sits) following Barker's death in 1871.

Walker Hill Farm began to grow and prosper under Rom's oversight, while at the same time his farming proficiency and activity in local and state agricultural circles grew. He was known as "a prominent farmer in Dearborn County for many years."⁷⁴ His comments on corn

⁷³ Dennerline. "Since at least the late '60s through 2007 the property had cattle in the fields and pastures around the farmstead, and hay cut even through today. It has the same pastures and fields today, with several tons of hay cut each year, sometimes twice each season."

⁷⁴ "Death Claims R.A. Beckett." *The Bedford Daily Times*, Bedford, Ind. 8 Nov 1930, p. 1.

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planting and tending were published in *The Indiana Farmer*.⁷⁵ He won recognition for his wheat growing at a time when the crop dominated in Indiana, was recognized for his sheep breeding and wool production at a time when sheep were a top choice for livestock in the state, and served as vice president of the local Farmer's Institute, writing essays on sheep and silage, presenting talks on the subjects and advocating for increased sheep breeding that adapted to changing agricultural conditions.⁷⁶ All of this culminated in his greatest contribution to farming, both locally and statewide--construction of the first known silo in Dearborn County and one of the first in Indiana.

Early Silos in Indiana

Silage (the packed storage of chopped forage plants in an air-free enclosure) began development in France in the 1870s to solve the problem of storing feed into winter. Silos showed the potential for year-round farming operations such as dairying.⁷⁷ But they were thought by many an unproven novelty, and not until after 1900 did silos become fully accepted as part of the American farm. When one considers silos, one usually thinks round. But very early American silos were horizontal pits.⁷⁸ After Congress passed the 1887 Hatch Act to establish State Agricultural Experiment Stations, they began to experiment with more useful designs. As one commentator noted:

“From 1885 to 1890, there was a tremendous amount of research conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and [its] State Agriculture Experiment Stations. Silos and silage were considered a revolutionary idea in farming. The first silos used for research at the experiment stations were made of stone or brick [and] very expensive. [T]he building of silos with stone was gradually abandoned. The building of silos from lumber in the corner of the barn took [their] place.”⁷⁹

The construction of these interior square silos, however, was short-lived. Their shape allowed side bowing and air into corners. Farmers “began developing many variations of round silos [which] eliminated corners that promoted rot, enclosed more space using less material, and were structurally suited for the pressures of the heaving materials.”⁸⁰ After c.1891-1892, round

⁷⁵ R.A. Beckett, “Corn Culture,” *The Indiana Farmer*, 11 May 1895, at 8.

⁷⁶ “Dearborn County Farmers’ Institute.” *The Dearborn County Register*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 3 Dec 1891, p. 2; and *The Dearborn County Register*, 18 Feb 1892, p. 2; and *The Lawrenceburg Press*, 29 Nov 1893, p. 7; and *The Lawrenceburg Press*, 20 Dec 1893, p. 5; and *The Journal Press*, 16 Aug 1894, p. 1; and *The Dearborn County Register*, 6 Dec 1894, p. 4; and, *The Dearborn County Register*, 28 Jan 1892, p. 2.

⁷⁷ Nancy L. King, “The Legacy of the Disappearing Silo,” *Morning Ag Clips*. www.morningagclips.com (14 Sep 2020).

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ *History of the Silo*. International Silo Association. <https://silo.org/about-us/history/history-of-tower-silo/>, pg. 8 and 11 [Viewed 2 Apr 2023]. And N.S. Fish, “The History of the Silo in Wisconsin.” *The Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (Wisconsin Hist. Soc. Press, Dec 1924), p. 167.

⁸⁰ King, “The Legacy of the Disappearing Silo,” *supra*.

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silos “were practically the only kinds of wooden silos built in the country”.⁸¹ The potential structural weakness of square silos make an extant square silo relatively rare. They “burst or had a wide variety of problems causing many to be torn down and the lumber reused or simply abandoned or destroyed” leaving “only a small number of these early silo forms in existence today.”⁸²

In the late 1880s, Indiana’s Experiment Station at Purdue University began making known its discoveries in agriculture, both statewide and at the local level through Farmers’ Institutes. As an agricultural revolution took hold during the early 1890s, scientific education began to overcome persistent prejudices against such “book farming.”⁸³ However, in regard to the silo, Purdue University’s Professor C.S. Plumb reported in the June 1892 Bulletin that, “farmers of Indiana have thus far been very backward in adopting silage” and “no State in the great Central-West has fewer silos than Indiana.”⁸⁴ Professor Plumb’s survey totaled only 47 silos in Indiana as of June 1892.⁸⁵ At the time, many public reasons discouraged other Hoosiers from building silos, such as: “the cost of building the silo and the machinery connected with it, the number of hands and teams necessary in filling the silo, make it out of the reach of the common farmer.”⁸⁶ Even as late as 1891, locally disseminated research advocated *against* silos: “There is no good reason for believing that a pound of digestible matter in silage is any more valuable than a pound of digestible matter in a well cured fodder.”⁸⁷ As one modern commentator noted: “All kinds of arguments were used against the silo, which no doubt made silo building rather slow at first. Some of the reasons advanced against the feeding of ensilage were that the cows would lose their teeth, that it would eat out their stomachs, that it would cause trouble at calving time, that it would affect the quality of the milk.... So strong was the prejudice against the silo, that in some communities’ creameries refused to receive milk from farmers who fed their cows ensilage.”⁸⁸

Dearborn County’s First Silo

⁸¹ Fish, “The History of the Silo in Wisconsin,” 168 & note 1. See also Cynthia Falk, *Barns of New York: Rural Architecture of the Empire State* (Cornell Univ. Press 2012), p. 130; See also William L. Wright, *Modern Silage Methods*. (The Silver Mfg. Co., publisher, Salem, Oh., 11th Ed. 1917), p. 28.

⁸² Loran Berg, “The Farmers’ Tower: The Development of the Tower Silo.” *Historia*, Vol. 20, Eastern Illinois Univ. (2011), pp. 40-41. See also John A. Cross, *Ethnic Landscapes of America*. (Springer Int’l Pub. AG, Cham, Switzerland, 2017), p. 303; Richard Otto Wiegand, “Silos In Manitowoc County, Wisconsin.” *Occupational Monograph* 65, 1989 Series. Manitowoc County Historical Society. (Manitowoc, Wis. 1989), p. 5.

⁸³ Phillips, “Indiana in Transition, 1880-1920,” 140-141.

⁸⁴ Plumb, “The Silo and Silage in Indiana,” 65, 76.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 76.

⁸⁶ “Agricultural Hints, About Corn Fodder,” *The Jasper Weekly Courier*, Jasper, Ind. (11 Nov 1892), p. 7. One influential farmer in Indianapolis, Judge E.B. Martindale, stated in a State agricultural forum: “It does not pay to experiment with silos and ensilage . . . The whole thing is a theory.”; and E.S. Folsom, “Shorthorn Breeders: Effects of Ensilage and Beets as Winter Feed,” *Thirty-Eighth Annual Report of the Indiana State Board of Agriculture*, Vol. 30 1888-1889 (Wm. B. Burford Printing, Indpls, Ind. 1889), p. 331.

⁸⁷ “Ensilage Versus Field Curing,” *The Dearborn County Register*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 2 Apr 1891, p. 4.

⁸⁸ Fish, “The History of the Silo in Wisconsin,” 168.

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Despite the naysayers, Mr. Beckett was one of those who led the ensilage movement, both locally and in Indiana. Built in 1893 inside the cross-gable barn, Mr. Beckett's new 75-ton square design silo was of keen interest to the community. Local newspapers document his and Mrs. Beckett's trip to Chicago in August 1893 to visit her sister and to attend the World's Columbian Exhibition.⁸⁹ Exhibiting at the fair was Laura Davis Worley, of Ellettsville, Indiana, a renowned dairy producer, who headed Indiana's State Dairy Exhibit and was "the most important exhibitor" under *The Dairy and its Products* at the Exhibition.⁹⁰ Mrs. Worley also happened to be one of the farmers identified in Professor Plumb's then recent survey as utilizing one of Indiana's few early silos (a square type of nearly identical tonnage as Mr. Beckett's subsequent silo), and an early advocate of silo use in Indiana.⁹¹ Less than a month after the Beckett's trip to Chicago, the local paper announced Mr. Beckett was building a silo inside his barn.⁹² Silos were then still considered a new invention and their use was still considered experimental. Mr. Beckett, likely as a means to combat the 1893 collapse of livestock prices, embraced this technology as a potentially efficient way to feed and enlarge his flocks.

The extant silo shows that Mr. Beckett chose a design that matches plans cited by Indiana's Experiment Station as an addition to his barn's southeast corner. Measuring twenty-five by twenty-five feet and sixteen feet high, it uses dimensional lumber studs, shouldered atop preexisting hewn timber sills, with a layer of matched siding, tarpaper and another siding layer, over a finished concrete base. Published in the June 1889 *Bulletin of the Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station*, Vol. II, No. 3, "Silos and Ensilage," these plans were cited by the June 1892 *Bulletin of the Purdue University Agricultural Experiment Station*, Vol. III, No. 40, "The Silo and Silage in Indiana." Historically, Mr. Beckett's silo is an extant example of an intermediate square type in the evolution of the American silo.

By February 1894, the local paper reported that: "Rom Beckett's silo is a success. His stock eats ensilage with a relish."⁹³ As a vice-president at the county Farmer's Institute, Mr. Beckett also documented his silo experiment with two essays and presentations to local institutes – "Experience with Ensilage" and "Silos and Ensilage" – over two seasons in 1893 and 1894; for example, reporting: "He had built a silo, put up 75 tons of ensilage, would winter the usual number of sheep, fattening some and raising some early lambs. His intention is to pay more

⁸⁹ *Washington Township*, The Lawrenceburg Press, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 23 Aug 1893, p. 4.

⁹⁰ Rossiter Johnson, *A History of the World's Columbian Exposition Held in Chicago in 1893*, Vol. III. (D. Appleton and Co. 1898), p. 452; and Hanna Agnes McCulloch, "Worley House at Ellettsville Stands as Monument to Pioneering Family," *Indianapolis Star*, 5 Jun 1932, p. 30; and "Ellettsville Will Mark Centennial," *Indianapolis Star*, 12 Sept 1937, p. 4. Note: Mrs. Worley, from Nashville, Tenn., was a niece of Confederate president Jefferson Davis.

⁹¹ Plumb, "The Silo and Silage in Indiana," survey table; and Laura Davis Worley, "A Winter Dairy, Vol. XX," *The Breeder's Gazette*, No. 1-501. (J.H. Sanders Publishing Co., Chicago, Ill., 1 Jul 1891), p. 5. Note: Mrs. Worley's farm was liquidated by the early 20th century. Another silo owner on Prof. Plumb's survey was Mr. C.B. Harris who spoke at Mr. Beckett's local Farmer's Institute in February 1892 on his "idea of the value of ensilage."

⁹² "Washington Township," *The Lawrenceburg Press*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 13 Sept 1893, p. 4.

⁹³ "Washington Township," *The Journal Press*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 7 Feb 1894, p. 2.

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attention to mutton and lambs than to wool.”⁹⁴ His successful use of his new silo for sheep was also somewhat foresighted in this regard. Professor Plumb reported as late as 1895 that sheep had “been fed silage with much caution from its first introduction.”⁹⁵ Mr. Beckett thus was not only an early user but encouraged local farmers to adopt this new farming technology. He was one of those advocates of “[t]he farmer’s institutes . . . calling attention of the farmers to the use of the silo and the feeding of silage.”⁹⁶ Mr. Beckett was in the vanguard, as Professor Latta erroneously placed the silo’s “introduction in Indiana” as the year 1897, four years after the silo at Walker Hill Farm.⁹⁷ And just a dozen years after he’d built one of the first silos in Indiana, it was already being said in 1905 that: “The progress made in silo construction in the past few years is little short of marvelous.”⁹⁸ By then, the round silo had finally come into general use, and leaders such as the director of the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station were underscoring how those, like Mr. Beckett, who were early adopters of the square silo type were considered “the pioneer silo builders.”⁹⁹

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERION C

ARCHITECTURE

Walker Hill Farm meets Criterion C under Architecture for its mid to late-nineteenth century and early to mid-twentieth century houses and outbuildings. The locally significant agricultural outbuildings are an intact working collection representative of their era. The c.1865/1872 two-story L-plan house and 1948 Cape Cod tenant house combined with the agricultural buildings and structures represents one of the most intact and locally significant vernacular agricultural properties of its era in Dearborn County. The c.1865/1872 two-story L-plan house was listed as Contributing for its carpenter-builder style in the 1982 *Indiana Historic Site and Structures: Dearborn County Interim Report* but no other built resources on the farm were included with thorough descriptions.

Vernacular Gable Front-and-Wing Houses of the Midwest

Gabled-ell and two-story L-plan and T-plan houses constructed in midwestern states during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were a regional outgrowth of the rural gable-front-and-wing houses common in the Northeast. There, wings began to be added to the gable front houses commonly seen in urban areas. Shed-roofed porches would typically be placed within the L made by the right angles of the two wings.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴ *The Lawrenceburg Press*, 29 Nov 1893, p. 7, and 20 Dec 1893, p. 5; *The Dearborn County Register*, 6 Dec 1894, p. 4.

⁹⁵ Plumb, “Silos and Silage,” 27.

⁹⁶ Harris, “Dairying In Indiana,” 89.

⁹⁷ Latta, “Outline of Indiana Agriculture,” 371.

⁹⁸ Andrew M. Soule, “Silage and Silo Construction,” *Office of Experiment Stations, Farmers’ Institute Lecture*, No. 5, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture. (Wash., Gov’t Print. Office 1905), p. 5.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁰⁰ Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013, p. 138.

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With the coming of the railroads during the 1850s and 1860s, the rise of industrial lumber mills and more readily available lumber, and the advent of balloon framing, construction of single story gabled-ell and two-story L-plan and T-plan houses became common in the Midwestern states during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Some two-story examples have a stepped design, meaning the roof ridge of the wing is lower than the front gable. This step may have been the original design, or it may indicate addition of the gable front to an earlier hall-and-parlor house. However, most two-story L-plan and T-plan houses of the period were constructed as one unit with uniform ridge heights.

Designed and constructed by local carpenters, perhaps with input from the owner, the houses reflect the skill level and exposure to stylistic influences of the builders and their clients. The level of stylistic details applied to gabled-ell and L-plan and T-plan houses varies, with some having strong influences of the Greek Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne or even Craftsman styles or a combination of these styles. However, many of the houses display minor stylistic influences or none at all. Regionally, these vernacular houses are often referred to by various names—carpenter-builder, country cottage, western cottage, cheap cottage, and workingman's cottage.¹⁰¹

The 1983 *Dearborn County Interim Report* identified twelve L-plan or T-plan houses associated with agricultural resources; however, not all fit the gable-and-wing type.¹⁰² Notably, none of the houses are within Washington Township. Of those houses that truly exhibit the L-plan or T-plan type only three appear as minimally unmodified from the time of the 1982 survey. At the time of the survey, nine of them had some degree of Queen Anne and/or Italianate style ornamentation. However, in the forty years since the survey was completed most of the examples have been modified in some way, some to the extent that they would no longer be considered a contributing resource. The house at Walker Hill Farm compares most favorably with the house at the Murtaugh Farm at 26427 Sawmill Road (029-103-10030), in Kelso Township, and the house at the Dennerline Farm at 10349 Mt. Sinai Road (029-168-45003), in Hogan Township. Both are either L-plan or T-plan houses originally displaying Queen Anne and Italianate style details and have unaltered or minimally altered exteriors.

The L-plan house at Walker Hill Farm is a notable example of the type and its evolution. First constructed c.1865 as what was likely a front gable tenant house, the original house now at the rear became the stepped addition to the later added, c.1872 front L-plan. This created a T-plan or modified L-plan.¹⁰³ Constructed by local carpenters, the house has minimal influences of

¹⁰¹ Gottfried, *American Vernacular Buildings and Interiors, 1870-1960*, 141.

¹⁰² Note: A search of the SHAARD database under either the categories of Architectural Style, L Plan or T Plan, and Vernacular, L-plan cottage or T-plan, revealed no records within Dearborn County. The entry of L plan or T plan only appeared upon examination of each record. Likewise, the term Carpenter Builder is not a choice in the SHAARD list of styles although it appears on some of the individual records describing the houses. All resources accessed through the SHAARD database were cross examined with Google Maps and the county GIS system.

¹⁰³ Note: The 1982 survey data lists the house as T-plan but further examination of the house and its history, along with comparison to Gottfried and Jennings's book, *American Vernacular Buildings and Interiors, 1870-1960*, leads to the presented conclusion that it is a modified L-plan; Also, Dennerline Oral history, Additional physical evidence in the form of interior door rim locks has shown that construction of the first section of the house could date to

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the Italianate and Queen Anne styles.¹⁰⁴ Except for the 1940s porch and chimney alterations the house at Walker Hill Farm is otherwise unaltered and along with the house at the Murtaugh Farm (029-103-10030) are the only known, unaltered L-plan or T-plan houses in the county.

American Small Houses

The American Small House was developed in response to the housing shortage of the interwar years, the Great Depression, and World War II. The small size and simplicity of design—roof lines with little or no overhang, minimal variations in materials, and a lack of ornament—was well suited to construction under the FHA-insured loans and could be quickly built to accommodate the housing needs created by World War II. The principal subtypes included the gable-and-wing roof, the side gable roof commonly called Cape Cod, and hipped and front gable roofs. The houses are typically single or one-and-a-half-story, but occasionally two-story examples exist. Despite the goal of minimizing ornament, American Small Houses occasionally had stylistic applications of the Tudor or Colonial Revival.¹⁰⁵ Many neighborhoods in urban locations are dominated by variations of the type, however, plentiful examples of the American Small House can be found in rural settings.

Comparable examples within the whole of Dearborn County of the American Small House to the tenant house at Walker Hill Farm are currently difficult to determine. The forty-year age of the 1983 *Dearborn County Interim Report: Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory* means that at the time of the survey the American Small House was not documented due to their more recent age at the time. Thus, no examples of the American Small House appear within the survey. The only documented examples within Dearborn County are found within the Greendale Historic District (NR-2109; NR listed December 2019), a residential suburb in the town of Greendale. The district lists over one hundred and ninety houses identified as American Small House or its subtype Cape Cod. Twenty-two properties were specifically identified as Colonial Revival style Cape Cods. The tenant house at Walker Hill Farm compares most favorably with the houses in Greendale Historic District at 200 Cook Avenue, 229 Tebbbs Avenue, and 92 Billups Drive due to the presence of an attached garage through a breezeway. However, all three examples differ to the tenant house in their siding, presence of dormers, and either six-over-six or replacement windows. The tenant house at Walker Hill Farm also compares

between 1861 and 1863; Dennerline states, I attempted to match the rim lock on the first floor door to the stairway to the upper ½ floor, a lock made in Connecticut by Branford Lock Works with a “BLM” imprint. An Ohio lock salvage store, Village Salvage, which stocks thousands of vintage locks could not match it. However, based on the hole pattern and BLM imprint, Mr. Rick Lepley with the business estimated that the lock dates from 1861 or 1862. Here’s what he wrote: “Spent the morning going thru all rim lock crates. We have more than 80 BLW rim locks but nothing like this one with the hole in middle. This must be a very early lock, perhaps as early as 1861 or 1862 their first [BLW’s] years in business.” Dennerline states there had previously been several of these in the house.

¹⁰⁴ Note: Zachariah Barker, who owned the property prior to 1871, constructed two farmer tenant houses on the farm. Two of his sons were carpenters so it is likely they constructed the dwellings. Romuald Beckett and his wife, who married in 1865, were living on the farm as tenant farmers per the 1870 census. They became full owners of the farm in 1872. The porch may have originally had more stylistic influences that were removed in the 1940s.

¹⁰⁵ McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 587-589.

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to the house at 539 Hayes Street as the only Colonial Revival Cape Cod in the district specifically stated as having a stucco exterior. However, this example also differs in its presence of dormers, six-over-six windows, and open carport rather than an enclosed garage.

The American Small House at Walker Hill Farm constructed as a tenant house is a well-documented example of the then-farm-owner's home in northeastern Indianapolis, located at 3914 Drexel Ave. which itself had been built in 1941 based on plans published in a shelter magazine. Some differences include the tenant house's finish in white stucco rather than red brick, and the common alignment of the house and garage's rooflines rather than perpendicularly offset. The original house in Indianapolis also has two front dormer windows, a pent roof over the main elevation doorway, and the garage doors are part of the primary elevation. However, the second house at the farm displays an elaborately designed Colonial Revival surround around the main elevation doorway that the original house does not display.

Developmental History/Additional historic context information

EARLY HISTORY OF DEARBORN COUNTY

Dearborn County is situated along the Ohio River and is the southeastern-most county in Indiana. Named for Secretary of War Henry Dearborn, its land originally was within the "Gore" (or pie-shaped area) created by the Greenville Treaty of 1795 between the United States government and the confederacy of Native Americans at the end of the Northwest Indian War. The Indiana Territory was formed in 1800, and on March 7, 1803, Dearborn County was formed when the Gore was ceded from Ohio after Ohio became a state that year. The county's western boundary is the original "Indian boundary" of the 1795 treaty. Lawrenceburg, a river town established in 1802, was made the county seat.¹⁰⁶ The county is home to some of the earliest European American settled lands in Indiana. Their settlement began as early as 1793 around the Great Miami River at the county's southeastern corner and no later than 1796.¹⁰⁷ Given the danger from Native American attack, many of the few White settlers that came stayed only briefly and moved on. Those who stayed did so without land title for several years. Federal surveying did not begin until 1798, with the marking of the future state line between Ohio and Indiana, and was not completed until 1800, with the platting of all townships, sections and quarter-sections. Federal land sales then opened in Cincinnati in April 1801. Those who settled beforehand generally expected to save improvements they'd made by purchasing their settled tracts as soon as they could.¹⁰⁸ Dearborn County passed through the 1812 War with some raids on Euro-American settlers by Native Americans, and the Euro-American formed militia built blockhouses to protect the frontier. After the early pioneers, a steady immigration of European

¹⁰⁶ Albert T. Gridley, *Atlas of Dearborn County, Indiana*. (Wm. B. Burford, Printer, Indianapolis, Ind. 1899), pp. 3-4.

¹⁰⁷ *History of Dearborn & Ohio Counties, Indiana*, 96-98.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 100-101.

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settlers came into the county from the 1820s to 1870s. The county also became a center for glass, furniture, and casket factories, as well as distilleries.¹⁰⁹ By 1915, the distilling business was “one of the largest single enterprises” in the county, and “directly and indirectly [employed] thousands of people.”¹¹⁰

Dearborn County has good soil, fertile valleys, and rich uplands. The indigenous Bluegrass makes for fine pasture lands. While flatlands are found in its northwest, it is “a beautifully diversified region of hill and valley,” with the lower valleys about 350 feet below the ridges or hills. In the area of Walker Hill Farm in the southeast part of the county, the terrain is highly striated with alternating hills and hollows with streams flowing into the Ohio River. Since the early 19th century, the county’s two largest towns have been river towns. The earliest European American settlers usually established themselves near the Ohio River or larger tributary streams, such as Tanners, Wilson, North and South Hogan, or Laughery Creek, either in bottom lands or the nearby uplands. The contrasting bottom lands and uplands, or hills, resulted in a contemporaneous but differing farming culture, creating a local distinction between “bottom land” farms and “hill” farms, a distinction which persists today.¹¹¹

EARLY HISTORY OF WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP

Washington Township, approximately 14 square miles in size, is in the southeast part of the county. Originally part of Laughery Township (which was subdivided into two townships in 1852), it lies between South Hogan Creek to the north and Laughery Creek to the south, both of which flow into the Ohio River. The township’s central portion is on an upland ridge of land known as “one of the most productive parts of the county.”¹¹² The township had early schools and churches but has no platted towns. Its only historically named community is Mount Tabor, which is located on the central ridge. Today its location is marked by the c.1871 Methodist church and churchyard where the Barker and Beckett family members are buried. The major road through the township was laid out prior to 1859 as the Aurora & Laughery Turnpike. Today it is part of U.S. Route 50. Long before land ownership was possible, the good soil and creeks in the township attracted early settlers. “Land was entered in Washington Township very early in the history of the county” and the Walker, Lynn, and Conaway families settled in the 1790s, with the Walker family settling in the southern part of the township on Laughery Creek in 1796.¹¹³ In 1870, the township population was 510 people. Today its population is approximately 1,500.

John Walker and the Walker Family

Benjamin and Anna Walker, born and raised in Pennsylvania, first migrated to North Bend in Ohio with their three children in 1791, one of whom was their son, John, born in 1787.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 200; and 1983 Dearborn County Interim Report, xv, xvi.

¹¹⁰ *History of Dearborn County*, 966.

¹¹¹ Ibid, 63, 429, 68-71; and Gridley, *Atlas of Dearborn County, Indiana*. 3; *History of Dearborn & Ohio Counties, Indiana*, 58, 100-101, 140.

¹¹² *History of Dearborn County*, 221.

¹¹³ *History of Dearborn & Ohio Counties, Indiana*, 100, 469, 490-491; *History of Dearborn County*, 221-223.

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In 1796 the Walkers relocated to the north bank of Laughery Creek a few miles downriver and were the first White settlers in what would become Washington Township of Dearborn County, Indiana, in future Indiana Territory.¹¹⁴ Benjamin had served in the War of Independence and was a miller by trade, and later built the first mill in the county in 1802.¹¹⁵

John Walker became a captain in the Indiana Militia during the War of 1812, served as justice of the peace in the county in 1813, and was known as “one of the best hunters in the Indiana Territory, as good as an Indian, which was high praise.”¹¹⁶

At age 26, John Walker purchased the site of Walker Hill Farm which was one of his first land purchases.¹¹⁷ During Walker’s ownership from 1813 to 1821, he began his entrepreneurial life using the farm’s crops for his nearby whiskey distillery in nearby Hartford and river trade to New Orleans, going on to become the largest landowner in Indiana by 1836, and an early advocate of women’s property rights in the State Legislature.¹¹⁸

The important impact John Walker had on the history of Dearborn County and the state of Indiana were documented in three known sources. Between 1914 and 1924 a seventy-three-page manuscript entitled, “The Ancestors and Descendants of John Walker of LaPorte, Indiana: 1749-1914,” was written by Professor Charles M. Andrews of Yale University.¹¹⁹ A late 19th century biography of John Walker was also written by William Hacker for the July 20, 1885, edition of the Shelby County newspaper, *The Daily Republican*.¹²⁰ More recently, John Walker was profiled twice by Ron Hamilton, adjunct professor of history at Indiana University.¹²¹ Hamilton’s brief biography of Walker which first appeared in 1999 sums up Walker’s life and significance in Indiana history:

¹¹⁴ *History of Dearborn & Ohio Counties, Indiana*, 97, 423, 428, 469, 490, and 962; and *History of Dearborn County*, 221-222; D.J. Lake & B.N. Griffing, *Atlas of Dearborn County, Indiana*. (Lake, Griffing & Stevenson, Phil. 1875), p. 22.

¹¹⁵ *History of Dearborn & Ohio Counties, Indiana*, 423; and Charles Andrews, “The Ancestors and Descendants of John Walker of LaPorte, Indiana: 1749-1914,” manuscript [ca. 1907-1924] *Archives at Yale University*, Call Number: MS 38, Series III (copies at Lawrenceburg Public Library, Genealogy Office, Lawrenceburg, Ind.; Microfilm, Genealogy Division, Indiana State Library), p.32.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid*, 65.

¹¹⁷ “United States Bureau of Land Management Tract Books, 1800 - c.1955.”

¹¹⁸ *History of Dearborn & Ohio Counties, Indiana*, 476; Indiana, Dearborn County, 1820 U.S. Census, NARA microfilm publication M33_13, Washington, D.C., National Archives, *Ancestry.com*, 1820 *United States Federal Census* [database on-line] Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010; and Indiana, Dearborn County, 1820 U.S. Census of Manufactures, NARA microfilm publication M279, Roll 20, Washington, D.C., The National Archives, [Entry No. 14]; and “Obituary of Frances (Walker) Cummins,” *The Indianapolis News*, Indianapolis, Ind., 16 Jul 1895, p. 6; and Ron Hamilton, “John Walker: Transportation and Industrial Entrepreneur in Pioneer Indiana,” *Journal of the Indiana Academy of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 2, 1998, pp. 36, 41.

¹¹⁹ Andrews, “The Ancestors and Descendants of John Walker of LaPorte, Indiana: 1749-1914,” 56, 63, 64; and “Charles McLean Andres and Evangeline Walker Andrews.” <https://connecticuthistory.org/charles-mclean-andrews-and-evangeline-walker-andrews/>, 25 Nov 2019 [Viewed 27 Feb 2023].

¹²⁰ William Hacker, “Shelby County, Indiana Biographies, John Crawford Walker,” *The Daily Republican*, 20 Jul 1885, p. 2.

¹²¹ Hamilton, “John Walker: Transportation and Industrial Entrepreneur in Pioneer Indiana,” 36. Note: At the time this piece was written Hamilton was professor of history at Indiana University-Purdue University in Indianapolis.

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“Much is known about the energetic and versatile John Walker. He was a builder, contractor, land speculator, businessman, law enforcement pioneer and transportation entrepreneur. Walker was born in Westmoreland County, Pa., on June 2, 1787. He came to southeastern Indiana with his family in 1797 [1796] after his father became involved in trouble regarding the murder of an Indian. Before he died in 1844, Walker became the largest landowner in Indiana. He helped to establish four Indiana cities that became county seats, including Greensburg, Shelbyville, LaPorte and Valparaiso. He built part of Indiana's Michigan Road and, along with others, sponsored the first railroad line west of the Appalachian Mountains. He amassed a huge personal fortune during his short but very productive life. Walker grew to manhood helping his father, Benjamin, operate a saw and grist mill near the new and growing settlement of Hartford along Laughery Creek in what would become Dearborn County. He received a simple, pioneer education from his mother, Ann. On Dec. 20, 1812, John Walker married Frances Allen. He worked at enlarging his father's milling enterprise and expanded the business by trading the surplus in market towns on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. This became a very profitable business, and he accumulated the capital whereby he later engaged in land speculations.

“He attended the land sale at Brookville on Oct. 9, 1820, and purchased many acres of land in Decatur and Shelby counties. He donated part of his Decatur County lands for the county seat of Greensburg on June 12, 1822. During that same summer, he built a log cabin on the south bank of Blue River in central Shelby County and moved his family here. He dug a mill race and several times rebuilt, enlarged, and improved his business. Walker was one of Shelby County's first sheriffs, serving from 1826 until 1830. He was politically active, became a member of the Whig Party and served in the Indiana House of Representatives (1835-1836) and in the state Senate (1836-1839). While in office, he consistently pushed for progress in internal improvements. Thomas A. Hendricks, future vice president of the nation, grew up playing with John Walker's children, and a natural bond developed between the two families. . . . Walker and others cooperated in building the first railroad in Indiana and east of the Appalachians. . . . Walker helped to build the Michigan Road in the 1830s. He used lumber from his own mill to build bridges on parts of the road. He also purchased more than 10,000 acres of Hoosier land during this time and became the largest landowner in the state. Walker and other entrepreneurs founded and platted the towns of LaPorte and Valparaiso in northern Indiana. By 1838, his financial interests in LaPorte had grown to the point that he liquidated his Shelbyville assets, sold his milling business, and moved his family there. He spent his last years engaged in further land speculations, banking and promoting his dream of making LaPorte

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the site of a valuable railway connection. The future was to show that such a hope was not to be realized, however, as Chicago became the center and LaPorte was thrust aside. In 1843, Walker's robust health began to fail, and he gradually declined until his death on Aug. 1, 1844, at the age of 57."¹²²

Walker Hill Farm is the only known property within Dearborn County that can be associated with John Walker. Any other land or buildings owned by Walker during his time in the region would now be in Hartford in Ohio County, and examination of the community of Hartford indicates it is very unlikely that any buildings remain of John Walker's time period.

John's brothers, Henry and Benjamin, Jr., owned the Walker Hill Farm property from 1821 to 1828. Locally, Henry became closely identified with the town of Aurora after he sold the Walker Hill Farm land. In 1835, he advocated in the State Legislature for and obtained infrastructure improvements for Aurora; he served as school commissioner in 1837, and again from 1840 to 1843; he served for a number of years as postmaster of Aurora; and he was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Aurora in 1838.¹²³

The Zachariah Barker Family

The Barker family owned the Walker Hill Farm property from 1835 to 1872.¹²⁴ Zachariah "Zach" Barker was born in Kentucky on February 21, 1797, and his wife, Mary Brown, was born in Ohio in 1808. They married in Ohio on June 17, 1824, and had 12 children.¹²⁵ Prior to purchasing the farm, the Barkers lived in Lawrenceburg Township, where Mr. Barker worked as a blacksmith.¹²⁶

¹²² Ron Hamilton, "John Walker, the County's First Miller," *The Shelbyville News*, Shelbyville, Ind., 1999 (25 Mar 2008, updated) [text source: *Find a Grave*, database and images (www.findagrave.com/memorial/118306452/john-crawford-walker: accessed 10 April 2023), memorial page for John Crawford Walker Sr. (1 Jun 1787–1 Aug 1844), Find a Grave Memorial ID 118306452, citing Patton Cemetery, La Porte, La Porte County, Indiana].

Note: At the time of the 2008 update, Hamilton was professor of history at Indiana University East in Richmond.

¹²³ *History of Dearborn & Ohio Counties, Indiana*, 229, 306, 353, 490, and 962.

¹²⁴ Indiana, Dearborn County, Deed Record Book L, p. 154 and Book 31, pgs. 77 and 99, Recorder's Office of Dearborn County, Ind. Note: The farm was owned by a Mr. Hume who purchased it from Henry and Benj. Walker Jr. in 1828 and sold it to the Barkers.

¹²⁵ Indiana, Dearborn County, 1850 U.S. Census, NARA, Washington D.C.; Record Group Number: 29; Laughery, Dearborn, Ind.; Series: M432; Roll: 141, Page: 426b; *Ancestry.com, 1850 United States Federal Census* [database on-line], Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2009. And Indiana, Dearborn County, 1860 U.S. Census, NARA, Washington D.C.; Record Group Number: 29; Washington, Dearborn, Ind.; Series: M653; Roll: M653_252; Page: 517; *Ancestry.com, 1860 United States Federal Census* [database on-line], Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2009.; And "Lawrenceburg Items," *The Lawrenceburg Press*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 3 May 1877, p. 3; And Hamilton County, Ohio, Marriage Records, 1824, p. 302 (Ancestry.com. *Ohio, U.S., County Marriage Records, 1774-1993* [database on-line] Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2016), p. 302.

¹²⁶ Indiana, Dearborn County, 1830 U.S. Census, NARA, Washington D.C.; Record Group 29; Lawrenceburg, Dearborn, Indiana; Series: M19; Roll: 27, Page: 197; *Ancestry.com, 1830 United States Federal Census* [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. And Indiana, Dearborn County, 1840 U.S. Census, NARA, Washington D.C.; Record Group 29; Laughery, Dearborn, Ind.; Series: M704; Roll: 77; Page: 157; *Ancestry.com, 1840 United States Federal Census* [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010.

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The available documentation indicates that Barker became an industrious farmer with a farm income for 1864 of seven hundred, fifty-four dollars.¹²⁷ In the 1850s and 1860s he served as a member of committees established to present awards at the Dearborn County Agricultural Fair.¹²⁸ He and his family won their own award as reported upon his death, that his farm had taken “the premium at the State fair, a few years ago, as the best cultivated farm in the State.”¹²⁹

It is also the Barkers to whom the main house, the barns, and several other contributing resources can be attributed. By 1870, the Barkers had two tenant houses on their property, very likely built by one or both of their sons, Hiram and John, who were both carpenters. One of these tenant houses, along with the farm (then 160 acres), was being rented by one of the Barker’s neighbor’s sons, Romuald Beckett, who had married in 1865. Beckett would later purchase the house and 40 acres of the site in 1872.

Zach died on September 21, 1871, at age 74. The 1872 probate inventory of the Barker’s possessions provide another glimpse of the farm and its use. In addition to general household items, the list shows farming and house implements, including a combine mower & reaper, a horse-power wood saw, horse-power hay fork, cutting box, fanning mill, harrow, grass seed sower, shovels & fork, barrels & boxes, turning plow, single trees, cradle scythe, bond ax, press rope, log chains, loose hay sacks, bale hay sacks, wheat broom, buck saw, and washing machine.¹³⁰ Also related to farming are two bay horses, a wood sled, neck yoke, collar & bridle, check lines, strap hinges, and according to the estate sale notice, also for sale was one-third “of the Hay, Corn, Oats, Wheat, &c, that is being raised on the aforesaid farms the present year.”¹³¹ Not all items inventoried were sold at the probate sale. Some were purchased by family members, and Mary took a beef cow, beds, bedding, parlor chairs and bedroom carpet. But with many other household possessions such as pans, cooking stove, etc. sold, it is presumed that Mary moved into one of her children’s residences shortly afterward. Mary died in Owen County on December 30, 1882. Zach and Mary Barker are both buried in the cemetery at the nearby Mount Tabor church.¹³²

The Romuald Beckett Family

The Beckett family owned Walker Hill Farm from 1872 until 1922. Romuald (Rom) Beckett was born on December 15, 1844, and grew up on a farm neighboring the Barker family’s

¹²⁷ “Income Tax List,” *Union Press*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 24 Aug 1865, p. 2.

¹²⁸ “List of Premiums,” *Independent Press*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 16 Aug 1854, p. (committee, best sheep); and “List of Premiums,” *The Democratic Register*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 22 Jun 1855, p. 3 (committee, best pigs); and “List of Premiums,” *Independent Press*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 1 Aug 1855, p. 1 (committee, best pigs).

¹²⁹ *The Journal Press*, 25 July 1872, p 3. See also “Reports from the County Societies,” *Report of the Indiana State Board of Agriculture, For the Year 1859*. (Bingham, Doughty & Co., Printers, Indpls., Ind. 1861), p. 26.

¹³⁰ Estate of Zach Barker, Clerk’s Office, Dearborn County, Ind., 1871-1874, Complete Record 14/413; Inventory 1/401, 79; Final Settlement Report 8/531.

¹³¹ *The Journal Press*, 25 Jul 1872, p 3.

¹³² *Find a Grave*, database and images (www.findagrave.com/memorial/48040366/mary-barker; accessed 10 April 2023), memorial page for Mary Brown Barker (10 Aug 1808–30 Dec 1882), Find a Grave Memorial ID: 48040366, citing Mount Tabor Second Cemetery, Dearborn County, Indiana.

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farm. His father, Joseph (Joe) S. Beckett, was born in Yorkshire, England in 1816. After an early life in the mercantile business, he immigrated with his parents to the United States in 1841, initially to Cincinnati, then to Dearborn County shortly after. Joe married Mary Abbott in 1843 and the following year purchased the farm in Washington Township adjacent to the Barkers.¹³³

Rom Beckett married Rebecca Gullett in 1865 and by 1871 they were living on and farming the Barker farm as tenants. In time, Beckett became a regionally recognized farmer, breeder and advocate on farming methods. However, reflecting trends of the time in agriculture all but one of the Beckett's children left the farm between 1890 and 1917. In 1890, their daughter Ida married and moved to Urbana, Illinois.¹³⁴ In 1896, their son George became a physician, moving to Versailles, Indiana, then Indianapolis.¹³⁵ The following year their son Charles obtained a degree from Cornell University, then went on to teach at a Black college in New Orleans, at Cornell, and finally as a professor at Purdue University in the departments of Mathematics, Civil Engineering and Agriculture.¹³⁶ By 1917, the Beckett's son Joe had become a salesman and was living in Charlotte, North Carolina.¹³⁷ Only their youngest son, Herbert, stayed to farm. But he died in 1920 of pneumonia, unmarried at the young age of 34.¹³⁸ With no children to carry on its operations, the Becketts sold their farm in 1922 to Ralph and Carrie (Cole) Conaway.¹³⁹

Meanwhile, Rom's brother, Wymond, an Indianapolis attorney, continued to farm their father's farmstead adjacent to Rom's farm. In 1901, Wymond built the nearby "Beckett Round Barn" (c. 1901), then the largest round barn in Indiana, and today the only one extant in the county.¹⁴⁰

The Hazel Conaway Family

Ralph and Carrie Conaway owned Walker Hill Farm from 1922 to 1930. Their daughter and only child, Hazel, owned the property from 1930 to 1987. Ralph's father and grandfather, Hamilton and Robert, respectively, were early pioneers in Dearborn County, having arrived in 1798. Hamilton was known as a "highly esteemed pioneer of Dearborn County" and the

¹³³ *History of Dearborn & Ohio Counties, Indiana*, 626-627.

¹³⁴ "Washington Township," *The Lawrenceburg Press*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 29 May 1890, p. 8.

¹³⁵ "George T. Beckett, Arlington Doctor, Expires Suddenly," *Rushville Republican*, Rushville, Ind., 28 Sep 1940; "Death Claims R.A. Beckett," *The Bedford Daily Times*, Bedford, Ind., Nov. 8, 1930, p. 1.

¹³⁶ "Dillsboro," *The Journal Press*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 4 Nov 1897, p. 2; and "Washington Township," *The Journal Press*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 11 Aug 1898, p. 1; and "Proceedings of the Purdue Society of Civil Engineering." Issues 4-8. (1904); and "Organization Lists of the Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations in the U.S., Gov't Printing Office." (Dec. 1909), p. 23.

¹³⁷ Joseph Beckett, 1917-1918 Draft Registration card (Ancestry.com. *U.S., World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918* [database on-line] Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2005).

¹³⁸ Herbert S. Beckett, Death Certificate, Indiana Archives and Records Admin., Indianapolis, Ind., Death Certificates, 1920, roll 6 (Ancestry.com. *Indiana, U.S., Death Certificates, 1899-2017* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2015).

¹³⁹ Dearborn County Deed Book 80, 480.

¹⁴⁰ John Hanou, *A Round Indiana, Round Barns in the Hoosier State*. (West Lafayette: Purdue Univ. Press, 2nd Ed. 2020). p. 17 & 22. Note: Hanou states that Wymond Joe Beckett (1860-1944), was later "an influential attorney in Indianapolis" and "helped launch the Indiana round barn building craze that took place between 1900 and 1910."

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Conaways became "prominent citizens."¹⁴¹ Ralph served as a county commissioner for Dearborn County.¹⁴²

Prior to purchasing the Walker Hill Farm, Ralph and Carrie Conaway farmed 160 acres in the same township a few miles east. In 1921, in their 60s and wishing to retire, the Conaways sold their farm to move in with relatives in Indianapolis.¹⁴³ However, by August 1922, they had returned to Washington Township and purchased the Walker Hill Farm from the Becketts, who, then in their 70s, were selling the farm after the premature death of their youngest adult son.¹⁴⁴

The Conaways expanded the dairy operations. From c.1922 to 1930, in order to make improvements to comply with evolving sanitation requirements for city dairy markets, they added the milk houses and to the barns added milking stables with several Loudon steel stanchions, concrete floors, windows, whitewashing, and electric lighting. Except for these additions, the farm otherwise remained fairly consistent with the Becketts' ownership.

By 1930, both Ralph and Carrie Conaway had died. Ralph was killed by an automobile while walking from the house to a revival at the nearby Mt. Tabor Church in August 1929, and Carrie died before the following year.¹⁴⁵ By 1930, their adult daughter Hazel and her husband, John Baron Henry, had moved onto the farm. The 1937 aerial shows pastures for livestock and crop and hay fields and the same wooded areas as today.

In 1947 John Henry died prematurely at age 48. Retaining the c.1865/1872 house and 3 acres, Hazel sold the farm to George Dennerline in 1948. But by April 1951, after Dennerline subdivided off 12 acres, Hazel had remarried to Lawrence Walston and decided to reacquire the farm. During her second period of ownership, the farm remained substantially unchanged. Except for the tenant house built on Dennerline's subdivided lot, the 1949 and 1955 aerials show the same uses as in 1937. After Hazel's second husband died at age 73 in 1975, she continued the same farming and pasturage until her death in 1987 at age 90. It is noted that neither of Hazel's two husbands was a farmer -- Mr. Henry was a salesman, Mr. Walston was a heavy equipment operator. Hazel ran the farm. She was also active in politics, serving as a township trustee in the 1950s.

The Dennerline Family

George Dennerline, a native of the county who served in World War I and graduated from Indiana University, was living in Indianapolis with his wife and daughter at the time he purchased Walker Hill Farm from Hazel Conaway Henry Walston. Working as a salesman for Burroughs Adding Machine, Dennerline intended to have his wife's cousin of Fulton County

¹⁴¹ *History of Dearborn & Ohio Counties, Indiana*, 498-499, 675-676; and *History of Dearborn County*, 160-161, 431-32: Note: The Conaway family came from Virginia and settled on Laughery Creek in 1798. Mrs. Rachel Conaway came with four sons, James, John, Robert and Simon, and Robert and James settled on Laughery Creek.

¹⁴² "Prosperous Farmer Killed by Auto," *The Aurora Bulletin*, Aurora, Ind., 15 Aug 1929, p. 1.

¹⁴³ Grindley, *Atlas of Dearborn County, Indiana*, Washington Township Plat; and "Sells Fine Farm," *The Lawrenceburg Register*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 9 Jun 1921.

¹⁴⁴ "Dillsboro," *The Dearborn County Register*, Lawrenceburg, Ind., 17 Aug 1922, p. 3.

¹⁴⁵ *The Aurora Bulletin*, 15 Aug 1929, p. 1.

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farm as a tenant. In 1948, he hired his brother-in-law Fred Trennepohl to build a tenant house. The tenant house, with minor alterations, was built as a copy of the Dennerline home at 3914 Drexel Avenue in Indianapolis, which had been built in 1941 from plans published in a shelter magazine. The house on Drexel Avenue is extant. The primary differences between the two houses are the use stucco finish rather than brick at the Dearborn County farm, the presence of dormers, and the common alignment of its garage's ridgeline with the house. At the last minute, soon after the house was built and cattle were bought, the cousin unexpectedly backed out of the farming agreement. Dennerline quit his sales job and moved his family into the tenant house to operate the farm himself.

In 1992, the present owners' family (great-nephews of George Dennerline) acquired the Becketts' home site, reuniting the farm's house, barns and outbuildings with the remainder of the Beckett's c.1865/1872 40-acre farmstead.

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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: _____

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Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 029-168-55008

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 31.5 acres

Use the UTM system

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

1. Zone: 16	Easting: 672706	Northing: 4322025
2. Zone: 16	Easting: 673080	Northing: 4322024
3. Zone: 16	Easting: 673090	Northing: 4321618
4. Zone: 16	Easting : 672703	Northing: 4321615

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

Beginning at the NW corner of Parcel #15-11-09-200-024.003-023 and running east approximately 172.7 feet along the north boundary of said parcel (said north boundary being one in the same as the south boundary of the highway right-of-way,) then approximately 191.7 feet east across Parcel #15-11-09-200-025.000-023 in a line equal to the first listed parcel and along the south boundary of the highway right-of-way, then approximately 114.6 feet east across Parcel #15-11-09-200-026.000-023 in a line equal to the first listed parcel and along the south boundary of the highway right-of-way, then approximately 510.5 feet east across Parcel #15-11-09-200-027.000-023 in a line equal to the first listed parcel and along the south boundary of the highway right-of-way to the east boundary of the last listed parcel for a total of approximately 989.5 feet along the property's north boundary; then south approximately 131.3 feet along the east boundary of Parcel #15-11-09-200-027.000-023; then east approximately 147.9 feet along the northeast boundary of Parcel #15-11-09-200-027.000-023; then south approximately 1,074.51 feet along the east boundaries of Parcel

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#15-11-09-200-027.000-023 and Parcel #15-11-09-200-024.003-023 to the SE corner of the property; then west approximately 1,142 feet along the south boundary of Parcel #15-11-09-200-024.003-023 to the SW corner of the property; then north approximately 1,219 feet along the west boundary of Parcel #15-11-09-200-024.003-023 to the place of beginning. Also refer to boundary map.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries include the 31.5 acres of farmyard, pasture and fields which were entirely within the early 40-acre farmstead (c.1872) of Romuald Beckett. These acres constitute the core of the historic farmstead, retain their historic integrity, and convey the property's historic setting. Portions to the north and within the Highway 50 right-of-way, and that part to the west subdivided in 1990 for a neighboring residence, have been excluded due to loss of integrity. Refer to boundary map.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Danielle Bachant-Bell

organization: Lord and Bach Consulting

street & number: 605 EW Allen Street

city or town: Bloomington state: Indiana zip code: 47403

e-mail lordandbach@gmail.com

telephone: 812-360-6544

date: June 2, 2023

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

Walker Hill Farm
Name of Property

Dearborn County, Indiana
County and State

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

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Walker Hill Farm

City or Vicinity: Dillsboro

County: Dearborn State: Indiana

Photographer: Danielle Bachant-Bell

Date Photographed: 11 Nov 2022

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Main house exterior, north and east elevations at NE corner looking SW

1 of _25_.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Main house first floor interior, parlor, view of north and east walls looking NE

2 of _25_.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Main house first floor interior, parlor, view of north and west walls looking NW

3 of _25_.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Main house first floor interior, dining room, view of west wall bay window and stairway looking NW

4 of _25_.

Walker Hill Farm
Name of Property

Dearborn County, Indiana
County and State

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Main house first floor interior, kitchen, view of west and south walls looking west

5 of _25_.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Main house second floor interior, hallway, view of north and west walls looking west

6 of _25_.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Main house second floor interior, view of north and east walls of NE bedroom looking NE

7 of _25_.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Main house second floor interior, view of south and west walls of NW bedroom looking SW

8 of _25_.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Main house second floor interior, view of south and west walls of SW bedroom looking SW

9 of _25_.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: English barn exterior, north and east elevations at NE corner looking SW

10 of _25_.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: English barn interior, center aisle from N end looking S

11 of _25_.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: SW corner of English barn (left), cistern (center), north and west elevations of milk house at NW corner, looking SE

12 of _25_.

Walker Hill Farm

Name of Property

Dearborn County, Indiana

County and State

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Drive-through crib north and west elevations at NW corner looking SE

13 of _25__.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Drive-through crib interior, east wall of west shed addition from N end looking S/SE

14 of _25__.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Tenant house exterior, parts of north and west elevations at NW corner of house, looking SE

15 of _25__.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: On right: Cross-gable barn exterior; and on left: milk house; north and west elevations looking SE

16 of _25__.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Background: Cross-gable barn exterior, east and south elevations; Foreground: Cattle ramp (left), cistern (center), pump house (right), view of east and south elevations; looking N/NW

17 of _25__.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Cross-gable barn interior, east-west aisle from west end looking east

18 of _25__.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Cross-gable barn interior, at SE doorway at E elevation looking west

19 of _25__.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Cross-gable barn interior, at doorway of SE milking room in north-south section looking N/NW

20 of _25__.

Walker Hill Farm
Name of Property

Dearborn County, Indiana
County and State

Name of Property: Walker Hill Farm

City or Vicinity: Dillsboro

County: Dearborn State: Indiana

Photographer: Rhett Dennerline

Date Photographed: 4 Oct 2022

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Cross-gable barn interior, in east-west aisle, view of ground floor exterior wall of interior silo looking E/SE

21 of _25_.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Cross-gable barn interior, inside interior silo, view of ground floor west, north and east walls, looking N/NE

22 of _25_.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Cross-gable barn interior, inside interior silo, view of loft level west and south walls, looking S/SW

23 of _25_.

Name of Property: Walker Hill Farm

City or Vicinity: Dillsboro

County: Dearborn State: Indiana

Photographer: Danielle Bachant-Bell

Date Photographed: 11 Nov 2022

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: View of west section of farm fields, looking south from south of cross-gable barn

24 of _25_.

Walker Hill Farm
Name of Property

Dearborn County, Indiana
County and State

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: View of east section of farm fields looking NW toward cross-gable barn from SE corner of property

25 of _25__.

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Walker Hill Farm
Name of Property

Dearborn County, Indiana
County and State

Appendix A – Historic images of members of the Beckett and Conaway families

			
Romuald Beckett, c. 1893	Rebecca (Gullett) Beckett, c. 1893	Rebecca (Gullett) Beckett, c. 1865	George Beckett, c. 1890
			
Charles Beckett, 1907	Jos. S. Beckett, c. 1890	Ralph Conaway, c. 1900	Hazel Conaway, c. 1920

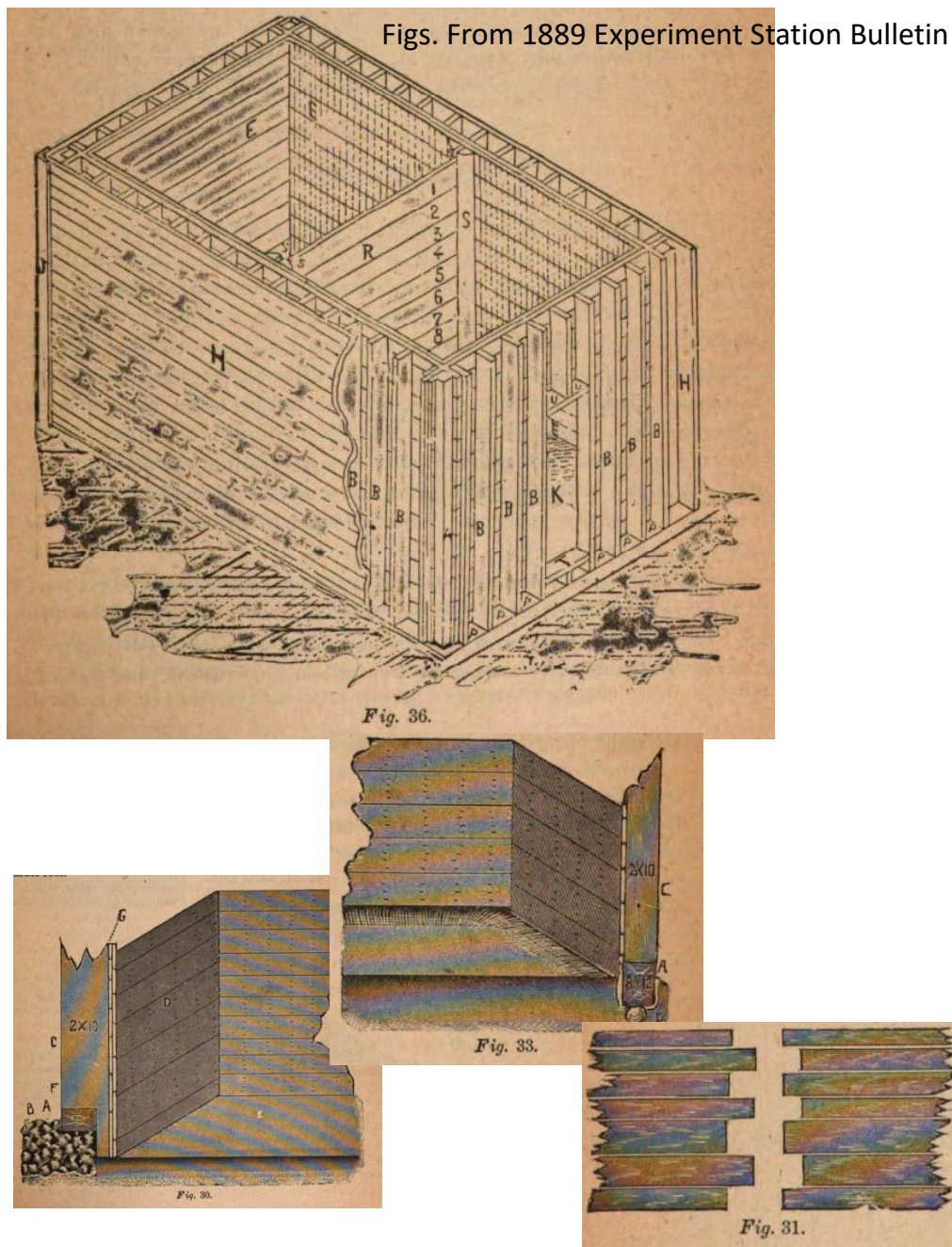
Walker Hill Farm
Name of Property

Dearborn County, Indiana
County and State

Appendix B – Figures 30, 31, 33 and 36 from: J. Fremont Hickman, *Silos and Ensilage*, Vol. II, No. 3, Second Series No. 10, Bulletin of the Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station (The Westbote Co., Columbus, Oh., Jun 1889).

Walker Hill Farm
Name of Property

Dearborn County, Indiana
County and State

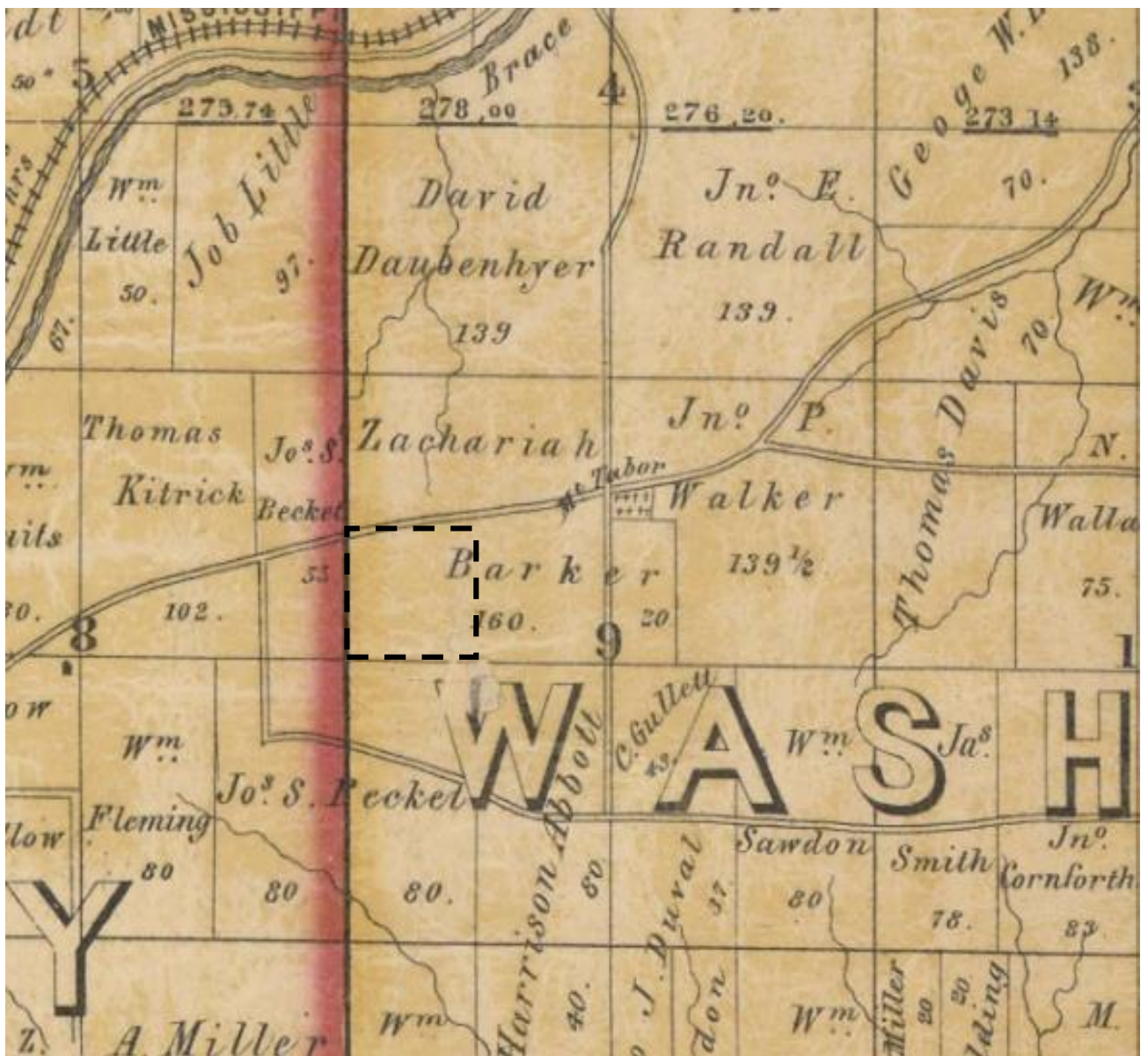


Appendix C – 3914 Drexel Avenue, Indianapolis, IN

Walker Hill Farm
Name of Property

Dearborn County, Indiana
County and State





Area of Walker Hill Farm, 1860. Beckett farm tract, c. 1872, depicted by dashed line in NW ¼, Section 9, Twp. 4, R2 West, Dearborn County.

Source: Excerpt from Thomas Pattison, *Map of Dearborn County, Indiana* (Th. Pattison, Civil engineer, Aurora, Ind., 1860), Library of Congress Geography and Map Division Washington, D.C., Digital Id <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4093d.la000142>.

This and all succeeding images are North at the top.

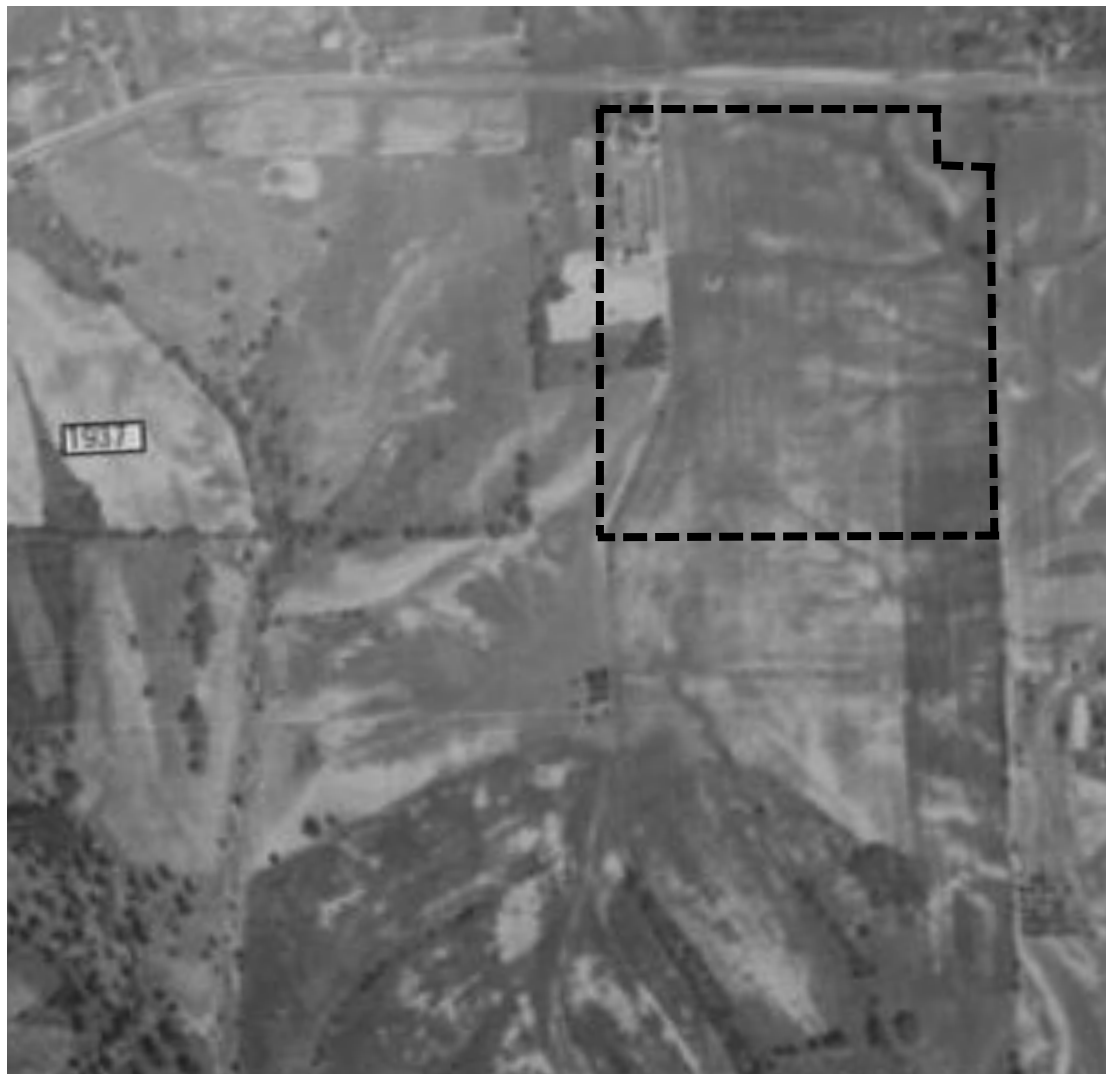


Area of Walker Hill Farm, 1875. Beckett farm tract, c. 1872, shown by "R.A. Beckett 40," in NW $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 9, Twp. 4, R2 West, Dearborn County.

Source: Excerpt from D.J. Lake & B.N. Griffing, *Atlas of Dearborn County, Indiana* (Lake, Griffing & Stevenson, Phil. 1875), Plats for Clay and Washington Townships.

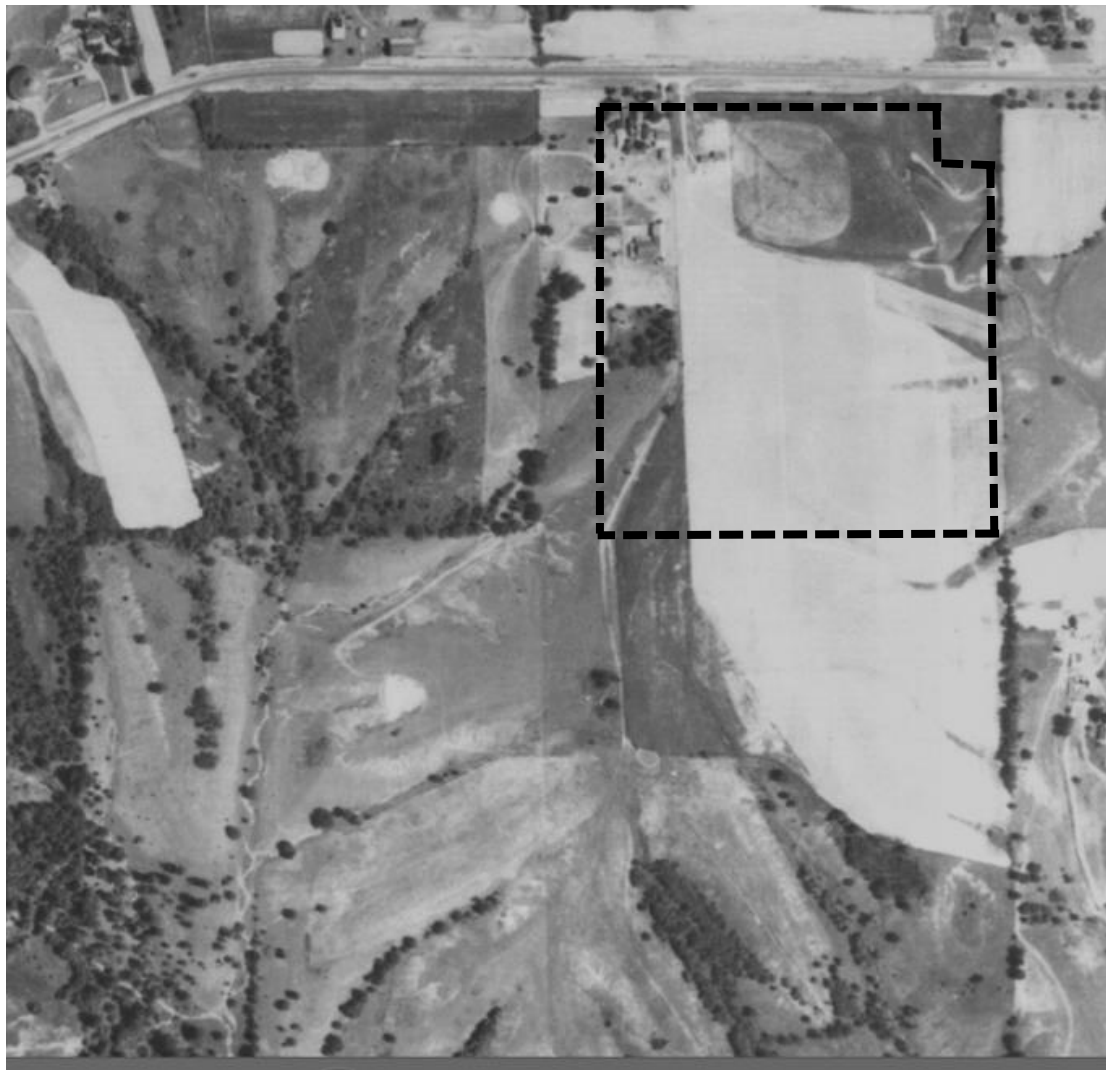
September 1937 Aerial, RN 18-1853, Mt. Tabor, Dearborn County, Indiana (Dearborn Co. Surveyor Office), excerpt.

Walker Hill Farm (with approximate Property/site boundary shown by black dashed line), NW 1/4 Section 9, Twp. 4, R2 West, 31.5 acres +/-.



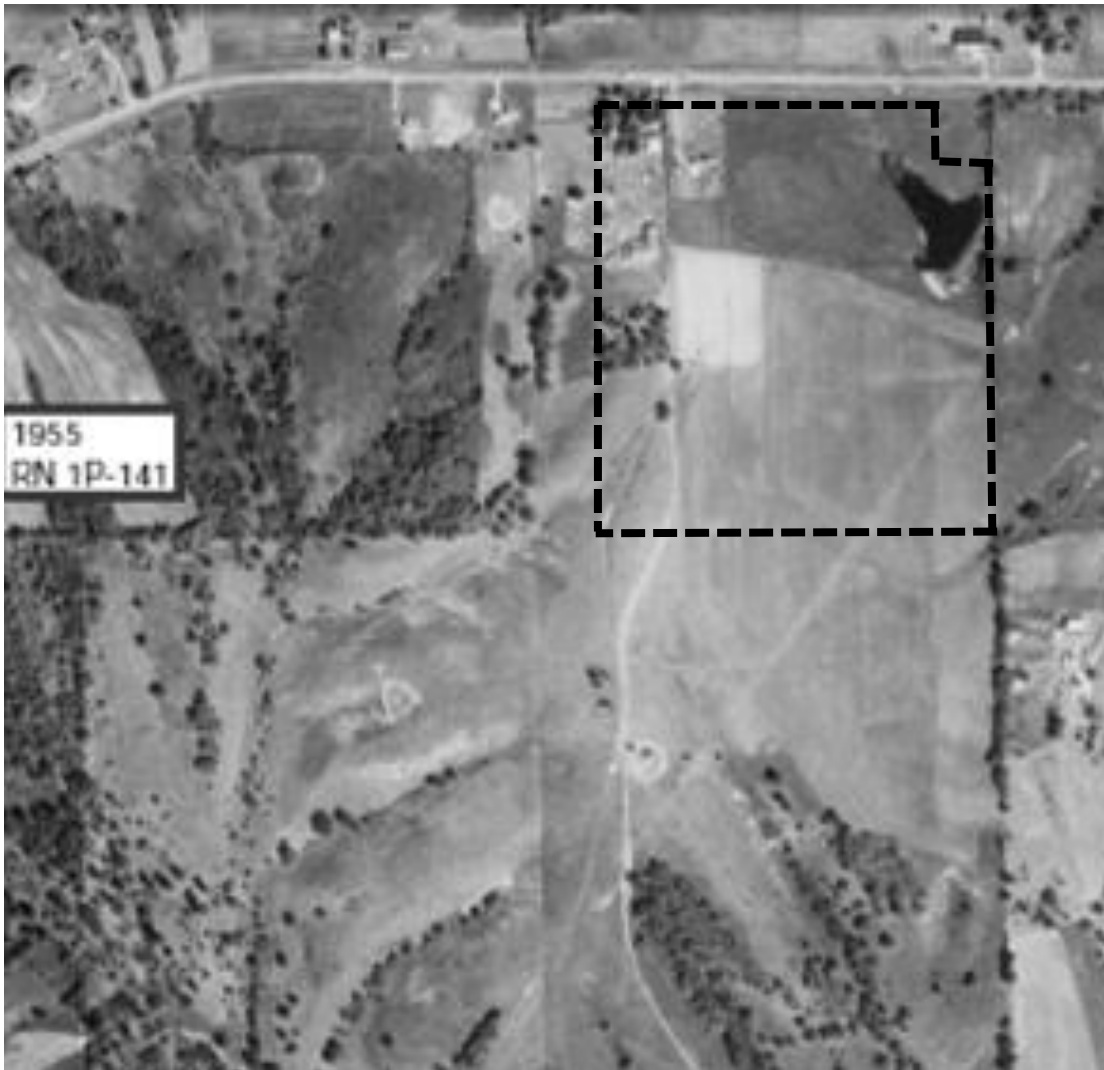
May 1949 Aerial, RN 2F-135, Mt. Tabor, Dearborn County, Indiana (Ind. Archives), excerpt.

Walker Hill Farm (with approximate Property/site boundary shown by black dashed line), NW 1/4 Section 9, Twp. 4, R2 West, 31.5 acres +/-.



May 1955 Aerial, RN 1P-141, Mt. Tabor, Dearborn County, Indiana (Ind. Archives), excerpt.

Walker Hill Farm (with approximate Property/site boundary shown by black dashed line), NW 1/4 Section 9, Twp. 4, R2 West, 31.5 acres +/-.



June 2022 Aerial, Mt. Tabor, Dearborn County, Indiana (Beacon Schneider Corp.), excerpt.

Walker Hill Farm (with approximate Property/site boundary shown by black dashed line), NW 1/4 Section 9, Twp. 4, R2 West, 31.5 acres +/-.



HIGHRIDGE RD

50

50

CHEROKEE LN


Walker Hill Farm,
Dearborn Co., IN
black line = NR
boundary

GORDON RD

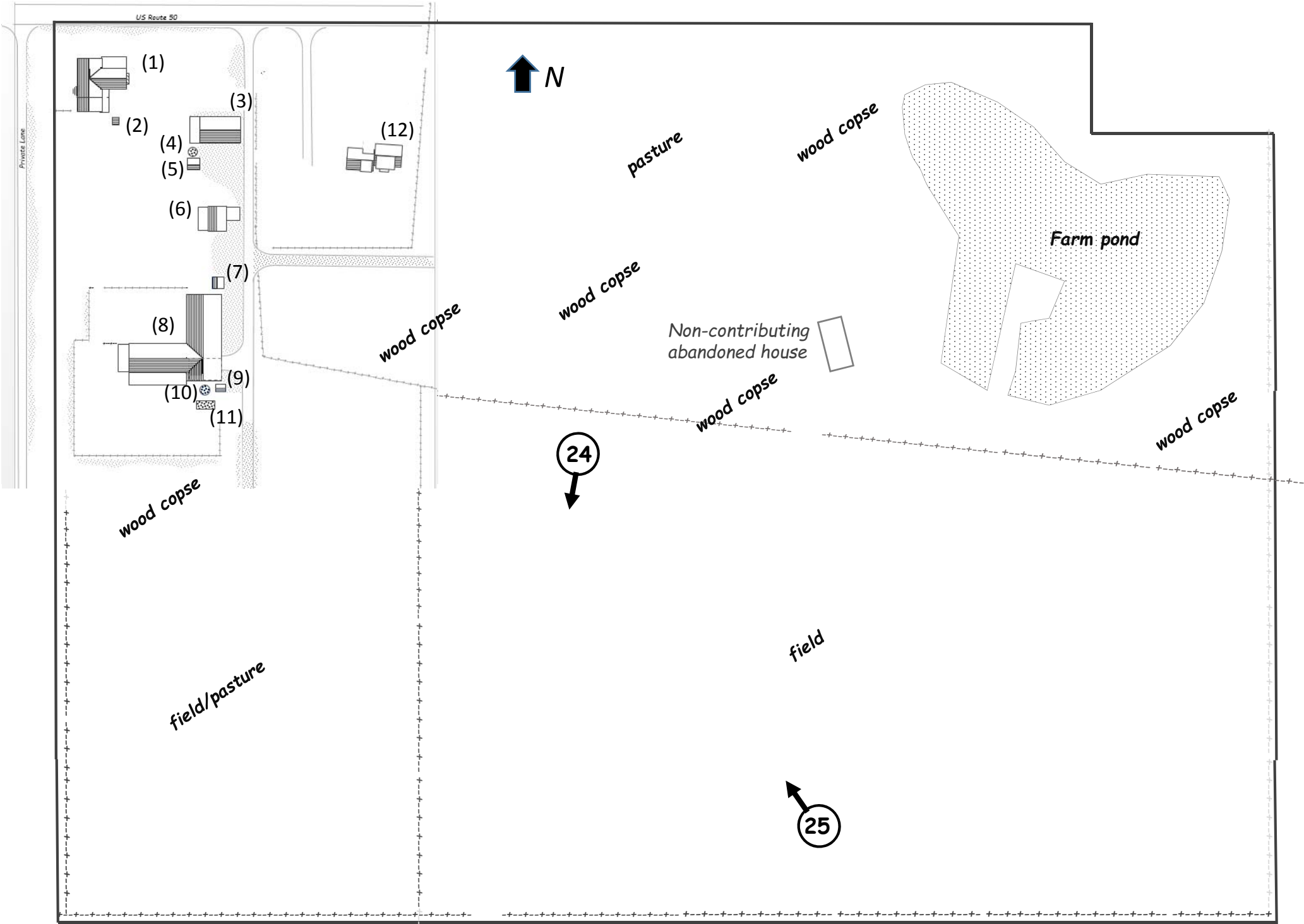
Walker Hill Farm, Resource Map
(overall site plan), Dillsboro,
Dearborn County, Indiana

Key: Contributing Resource
numbered, e.g. "(3)"
Fence rows +---+---+ or x-x-x

Site boundary _____

Photographs 

- (1) House
(2) Well House
- (3) English Barn
(4) Stone Cistern
(5) Milk house (No. 1)
- (6) Drive-through Crib
- (7) Milk house (No. 2)
(8) Cross-gable barn
(9) Pump house
(10) Stone Cistern
(11) Cattle Ramp
- (12) Tenant house

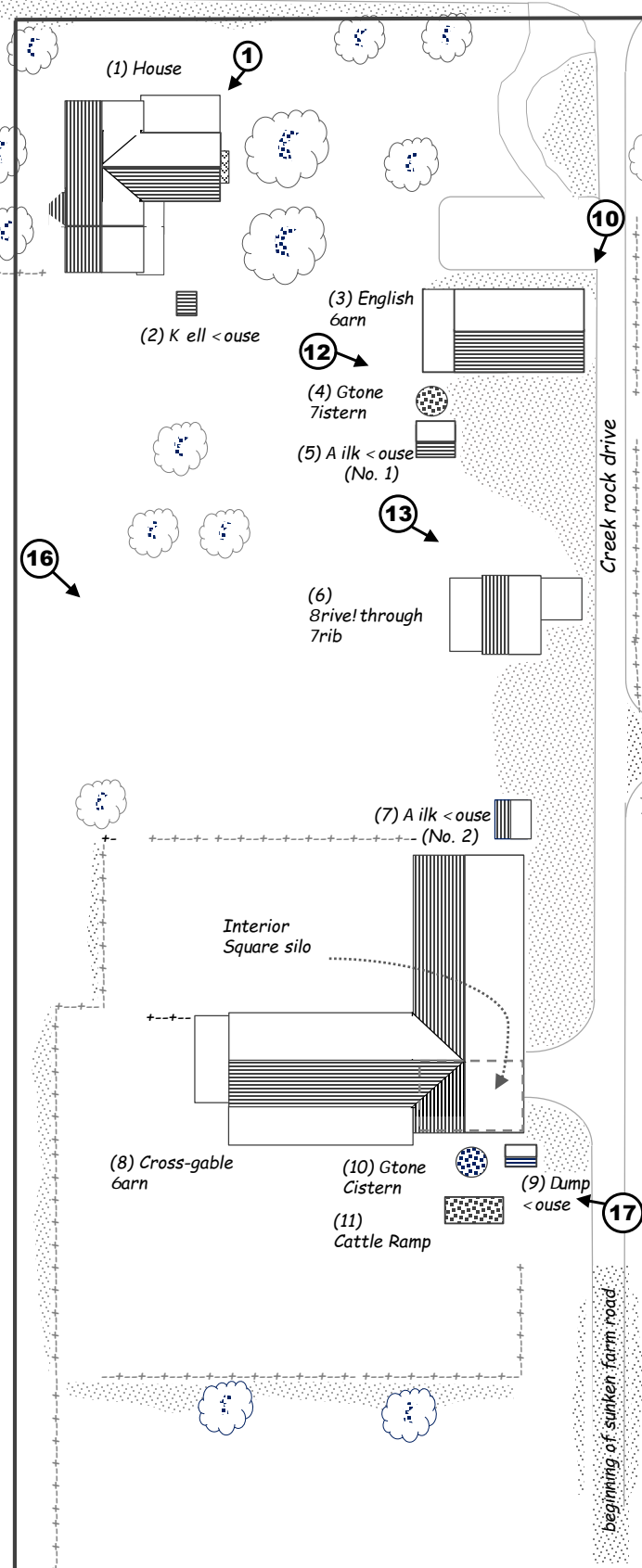


Walker Hill Farm,
 Resource Map (building/structure site plan)
 Dillsboro, Dearborn County, Indiana

key: Contributing Resource numbered, e.g. "(3)"
 Fence rows +--+--+ or x-x-x-x
 Site boundary _____
 Photographs ○→

Private Lane

US Route 50



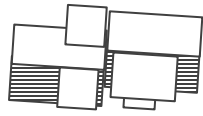
Creek rock drive

beginning of sunken farm road

earthen farm road





(15)

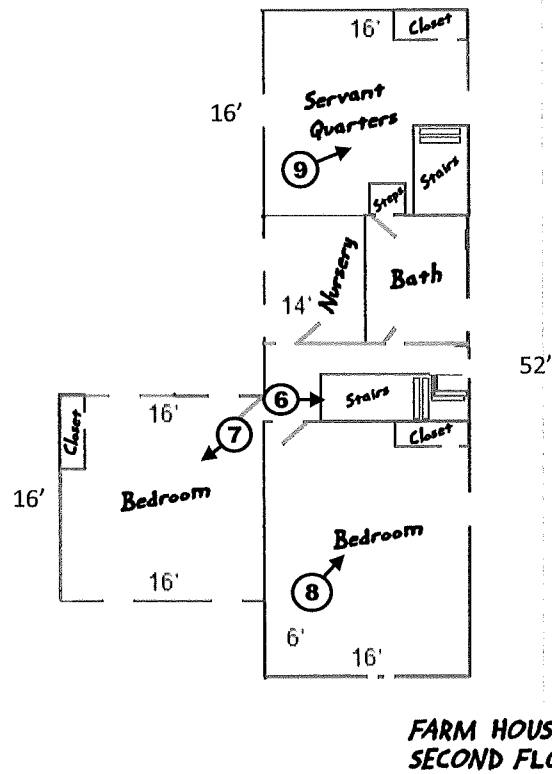
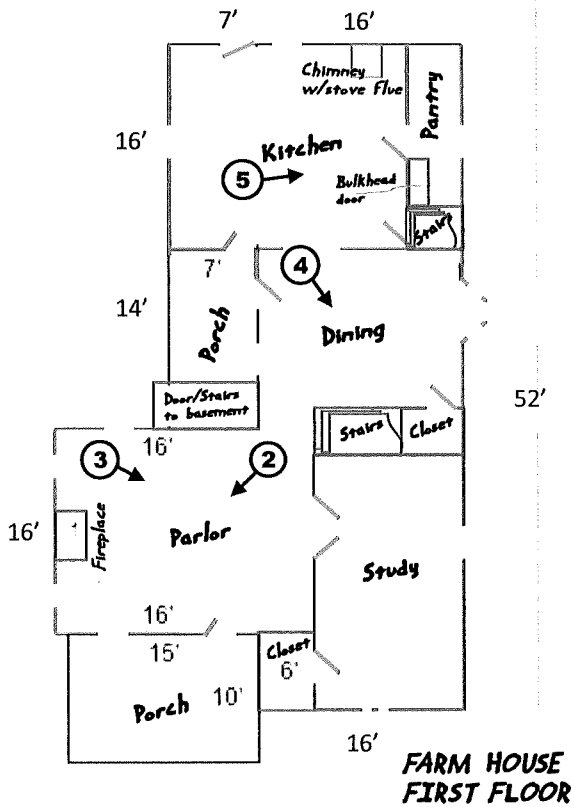


(12) Tenant House


(17)

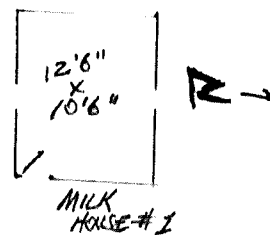
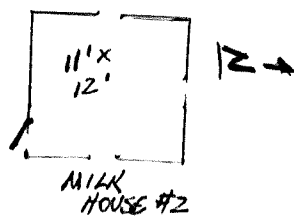
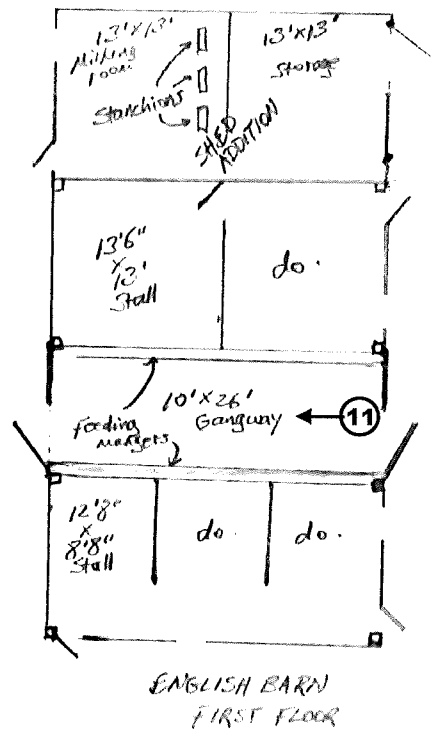
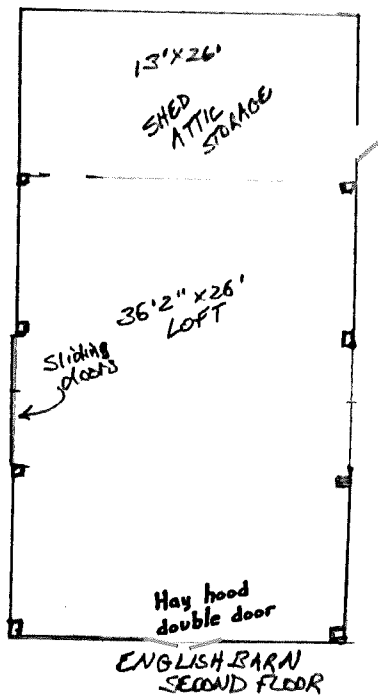
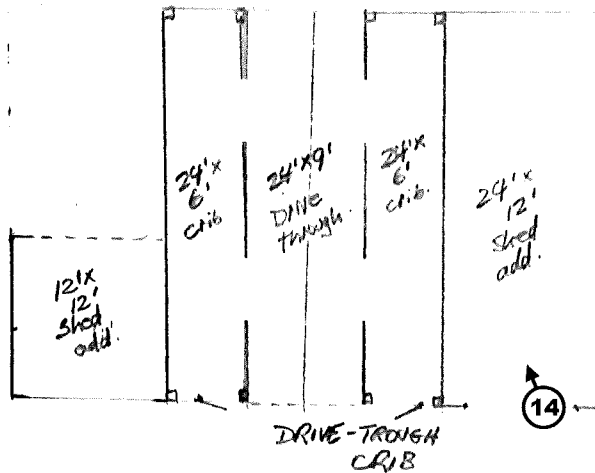
Walker Hill Farm
 Floor Plan, Main Farm House
 Dillsboro, Dearborn County, Indiana
 Photographs 

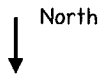
North




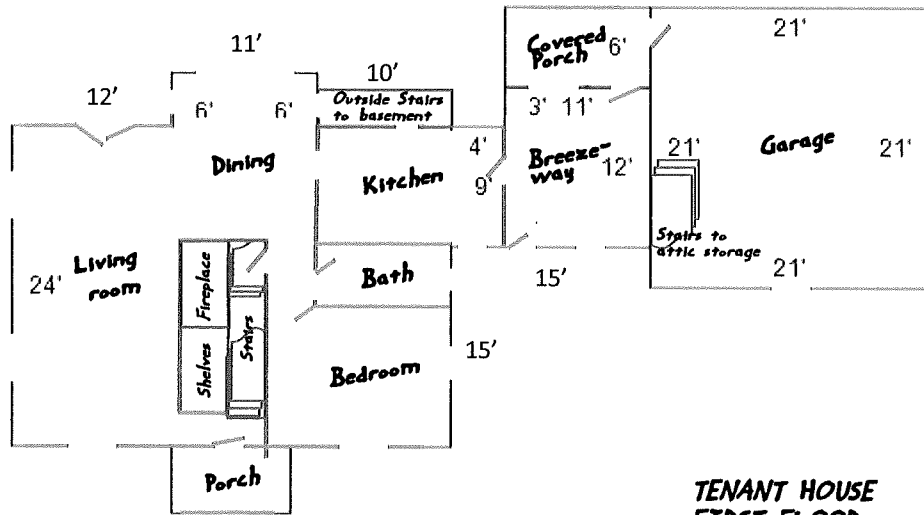
Walker Hill Farm
 Dillsboro, Dearborn County, Indiana
 Floor Plans: Drive-through Corn-crib,
 English Barn, Milk Houses

Photographs 

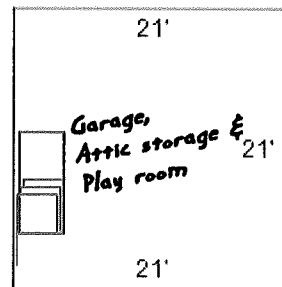
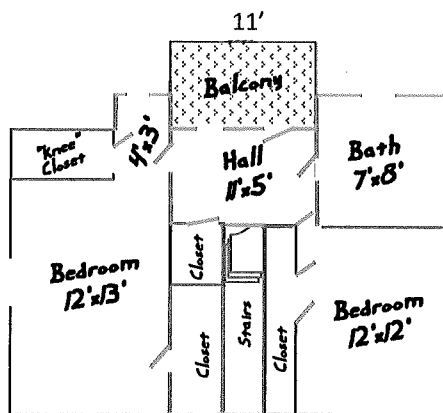




Walker Hill Farm
Dillsboro, Dearborn County, Indiana
Floor Plan, Tenant House

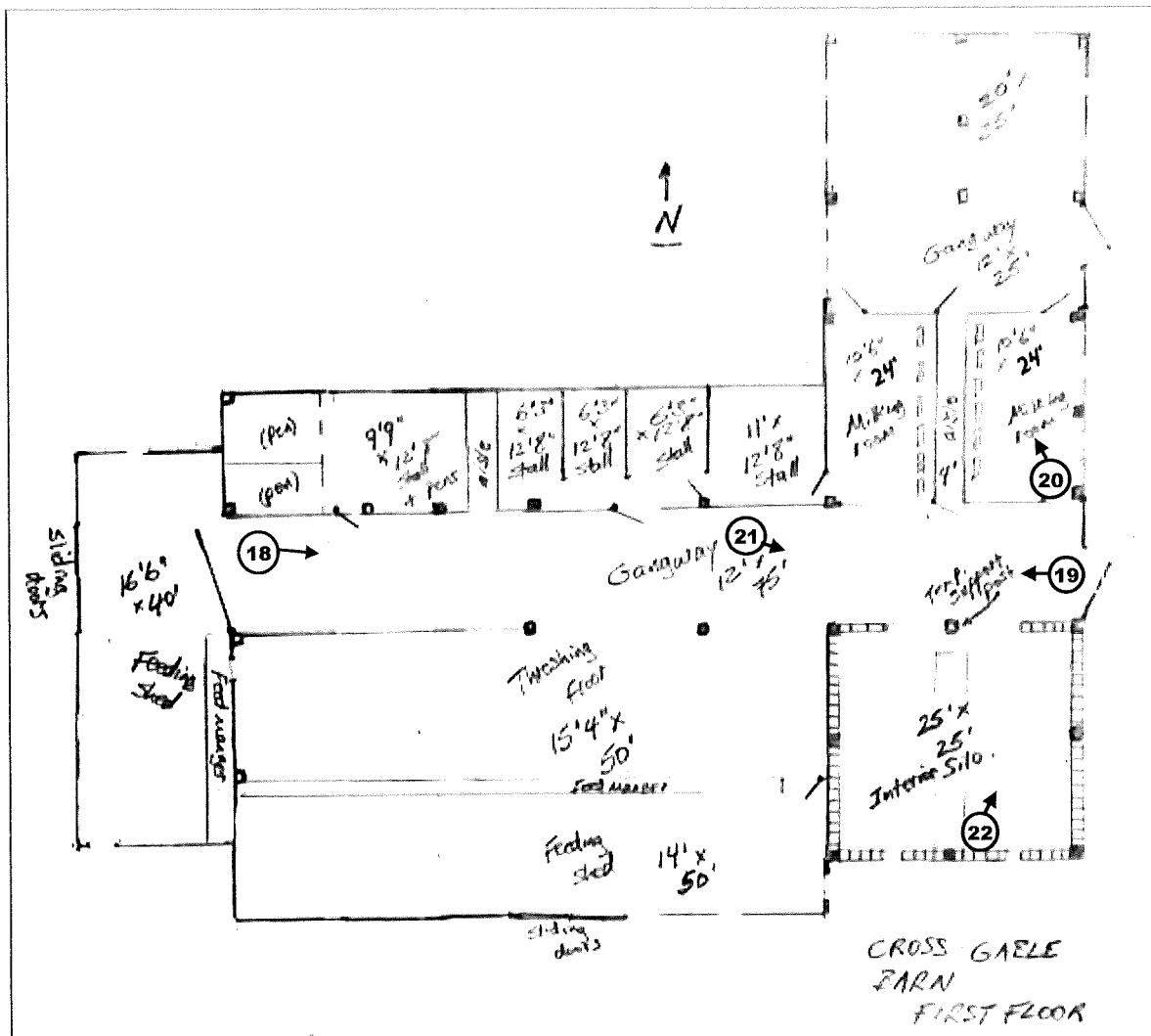


**TENANT HOUSE
FIRST FLOOR**

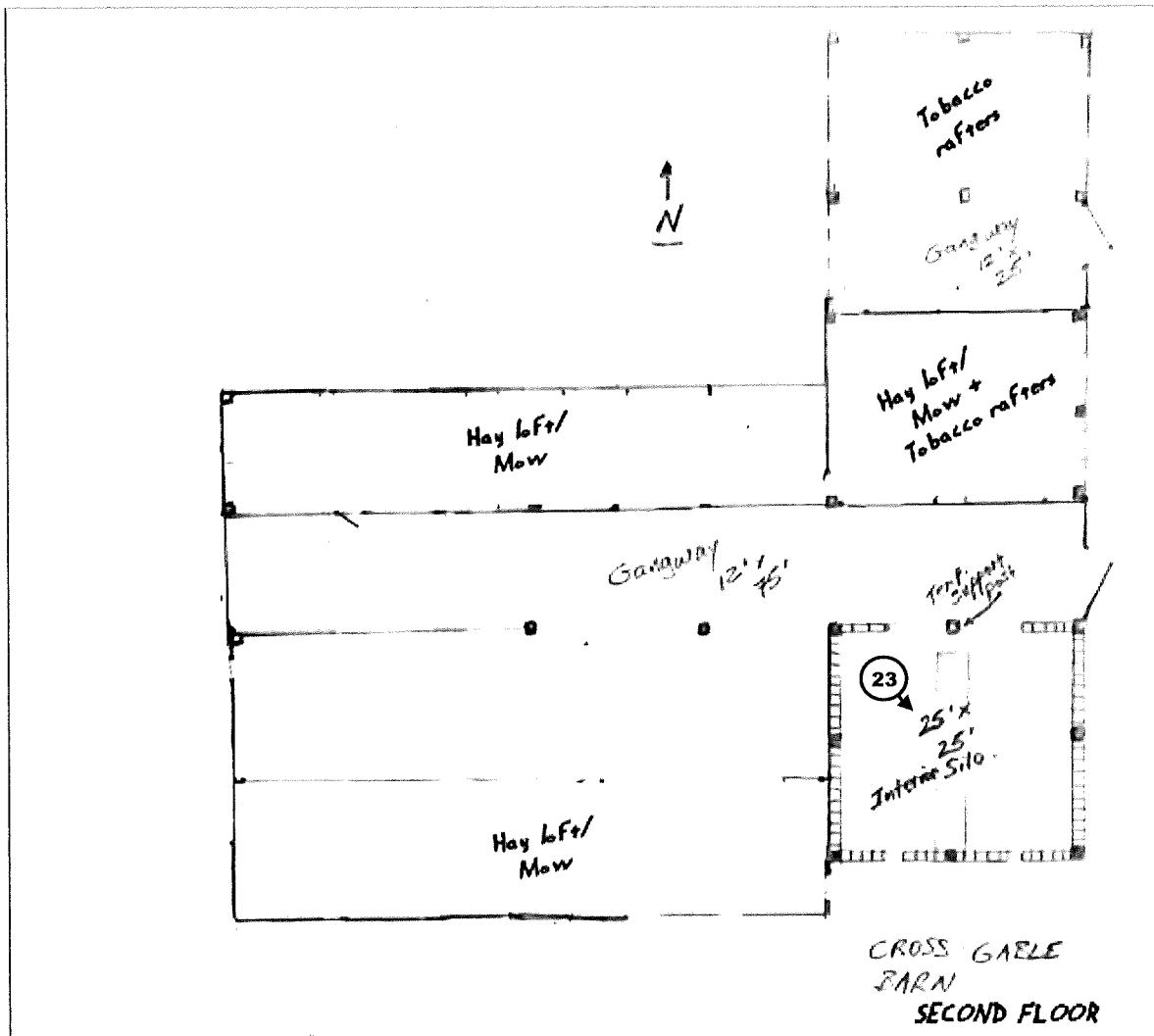


**TENANT HOUSE
SECOND FLOOR**

Walker Hill Farm
 Dillsboro, Dearborn County, Indiana
 Floor plan, Cross-gable Barn, First floor
 Key: Photographs ○ →



Walker Hill Farm
Dillsboro, Dearborn County, Indiana
Floor plan, Cross-gable Barn, Second Floor
Key: Photographs ○→





IN_DearbornCounty_WalkerHillFarm_0001



IN_DearbornCounty_WalkerHillFarm_0002



IN_DearbornCounty_WalkerHillFarm_0004



IN_DearbornCounty_WalkerHillFarm_0008



IN_DearbornCounty_WalkerHillFarm_0010



IN_DearbornCounty_WalkerHillFarm_0013



IN_DearbornCounty_WalkerHillFarm_0015



IN_DearbornCounty_WalkerHillFarm_0016



IN_DearbornCounty_WalkerHillFarm_0022



IN_DearbornCounty_WalkerHillFarm_0025