

Historic Resource Survey Form

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION
Bureau for Historic Preservation

Key # 203645

ER# _____

Name, Location and Ownership *(Items 1-6; see Instructions, page 4)*

HISTORIC NAME Mifflin House

CURRENT/Common NAME Hybla; Mifflin-Huber Farmstead

STREET ADDRESS 202 Cool Springs Road

ZIP 17815

LOCATION Wrightsville

MUNICIPALITY Hellam Township

COUNTY York

TAX PARCEL # 31000LL0070F

USGS QUAD Columbia West, PA (1997)

OWNERSHIP ☒ Private

☐ Public/Local

☐ Public/County

☐ Public/State

☐ Public/Federal

OWNER NAME/ADDRESS Robert N, Agnes M, Wayne H & Susan N Blessing, Gateway Dr., Wrightsville, PA 17368

CATEGORY OF PROPERTY ☒ Building ☐ Site ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ District

TOTAL NUMBER OF RESOURCES 10

Function *(Items 7-8; see Instructions, pages 4-6)*

Historic Function

Domestic

Agriculture/Subsistence

Domestic

Agriculture/Subsistence

Agriculture/Subsistence

Agriculture/Subsistence

Subcategory

Single dwelling

Animal Facility

Secondary Structure

Animal Facility

Animal Facility

Storage

Particular Type

Farmhouse

Barn/Stable

Privy; Cold Cellar

Pig/Sheep House (2)

Barn Complex

Machine Shed/Corn Crib

Current Function

Domestic

Domestic

Domestic

Vacant/Not in use

Vacant/Not in use

Vacant/Not in use

Domestic

Subcategory

Single dwelling

Secondary Structure

Secondary Structure

Secondary Structure

Particular Type

Farmhouse

Storage Building

Shed

Privy, Cold Cellar

Barn Complex; Machine Shed

Pig/Sheep House

Modern Well Shed & Pump House

Architectural/Property Information *(Items 9-14; see Instructions, pages 6-7)*

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION

Other: Georgian & PA German Vernacular

EXTERIOR MATERIALS and STRUCTURAL SYSTEM

Foundation

Stone

Walls

Stone

Roof

Asphalt

Other

Wood

Structural System

Masonry

WIDTH _____ (feet) or 4 (# bays)

DEPTH _____ (feet) or 2 (# rooms)

STORIES/HEIGHT 2½

Property Features (Items 15-17; see Instructions, pages 7-8)**Setting** Intact Federal period house with agricultural outbuildings on undeveloped industrial lots.**Ancillary Features** (Counted together as one resource)Farm LaneFenced Yard with Shade TreesFenced PasturesVistas of Wrightsville and the Susquehanna RiverCrop Fields**Acreage** 9.9 (round to nearest tenth)**Historical Information** (Items 18-21; see Instructions, page 8)**Year Construction Began** Farmhouse- c.1800, Barn Complex c. 1850s ☒ Circa **Year Completed** _____ ☐ Circa**Date of Major Additions, Alterations:** See Narrative ☐ Circa _____ ☐ Circa _____ ☐ Circa**Basis for Dating:** ☒ Documentary ☒ PhysicalExplain: Chain of Title; Census data; Family Histories; Form, massing, & fenestration**Cultural/Ethnic Affiliation(s)** None**Associated Individual(s):** Jonathan & Susanna (Wright) Mifflin, Samuel W. Mifflin; and Confederate Brigadier General John B. Gordon**Associated Event(s):** Underground Railroad; Gettysburg Campaign skirmish at Wrightsville, 6/28/1863**Architect(s)** N/A**Builder(s):** Unknown**Submission Information** (Items 22-23; see Instructions, page 8)**Previous Survey/Determinations** Yes- Key No 203645, J. Huber Farm, HYI 1986, / No Determination**Threats** ☐ None ☐ Neglect ☐ Public Development ☒ Private Development ☐ OtherExplain 1) on Preservation PA's Endangered List 2017 due to planned demolition for industrial development that requires revised subdivision plan and expected NPDES permit, possible 404 permit2) Demolition Permit denied by Hellam Township in April 2017, developer plans appeal**This submission is related to a** ☐ non-profit grant application ☐ business tax incentive☒ NHPA/PA History Code Project Review ☒ other: Statewide Endangered List**Preparer Information** (Items 24-30; see Instructions, page 9)**Name & Title:** Elizabeth L. Roman M.A., Historic Preservation Professional (Volunteer)**Date Prepared:** May 2017**Project Name:** Save the Mifflin House/Wright's Crossing Development**Organization/Company:** Preservation Pennsylvania**Mailing Address:** 257 North Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101**Phone:** (717) 234-2310 **Emails:** mcrawford@preservationpa.org; beckyroman@msn.com

National Register Evaluation *(Item 31; see Instructions, page 9)***(To be completed by Survey Director, Agency Consultant, or for Project Reviews ONLY.)**

- ☐ Not Eligible (due to ☐ lack of significance and/or ☐ lack of integrity)
- ☒ Eligible Area(s) of Significance: Underground Railroad; Civil War (Gettysburg Campaign)
- Criteria Considerations _____ Period of Significance: 1800 -1870
- ☐ Contributes to Potential or Eligible District: District Name _____

Bibliography *(Item 32; cite major references consulted. Attach additional page if needed. See Instructions, page 9.)*

See Attached Continuation Sheet

Additional Information

The following must be submitted with form. Check the appropriate box as each piece is completed and attach to form with paperclip.

- ☒ Narrative Sheets—Description/Integrity and History/Significance (See Instructions, pages 13-14)
- ☒ Current Photos (See Instructions, page 10)
- ☒ Photo List (See Instructions, page 11) See captions with photographs
- ☒ Site Map (sketch site map on 8.5x11 page; include North arrow, approximate scale; label all resources, street names, and geographic features; show exterior photo locations; See Instructions, page 11)
- ☒ Floor Plan (sketch main building plans on 8.5x11 page; include North arrow, scale bar or length/width dimensions; label rooms; show interior photo locations; See Instructions, page 11) Sketch provided
- ☒ USGS Map (submit original, photocopy, or download from TopoZone.com; See Instructions, page 12)

Send Completed Form and Additional Information to:

National Register Program
PA SHPO/PHMC
Keystone Bldg., 2nd Floor
400 North St.
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Physical Description and Integrity (Item 38)

Provide a current description of the overall setting, landscape, and resources of the property. See page 13 of the Instructions for detailed directions. Continue on additional sheets as needed. Suggested outline for organizing this section:

- Introduction [summarize the property, stating type(s) of resource(s) and function(s)]
- Setting [describe geographic location, streetscapes, natural/man-made landscape features, signage, etc.]
- Exterior materials, style, and features [describe the exterior of main buildings/resources]
- Interior materials, style, and features [describe the interior of main buildings/resources]
- Outbuildings/Landscape [describe briefly additional outbuildings/landscape features found on property, substitute Building Complex Form if preferred; See Instructions, page 18]
- Boundaries [explain how/why boundaries chosen, such as historic legal parcel, visual natural features such as tree lines, alley separating modern construction, etc.]
- Integrity [summarize changes to the property and assess how the changes impact its ability to convey significance]

The Mifflin House is located just northwest of Wrightsville Borough on undeveloped portions of the Wright's Crossing Light Industrial Development. It sits on a hill overlooking Wrightsville and the Susquehanna River to its east and southeast and the Kreutz Creek valley to its south. It is accessed via a gravel farm lane that extends north from Cool Creek Road into the property. The surrounding landscape contains farm fields to its south and east, meadow and forest along a small unnamed stream to its north, and the light industrial development to its west. The extant meadow and forest buffers the house from views of US Route 30, a divided highway to its north.

The Mifflin House is located on Lot 11 (Tax Parcel 70F), one of five adjoining undeveloped industrial lots in the Wright's Crossing development. Its 9.89-acre lot/parcel encompasses the buildings, fenced pasture, the north end of the farm lane, and a small portion of the active cropland. The lot is roughly trapezoidal in shape, with its northern and eastern boundaries formed by the right-of-way for Mifflin Drive, the road into the light industrial development which currently dead ends 400 feet west of this property. The lot's far southeastern corner extends into the municipal limits of Wrightsville Borough.

The Mifflin House is at the east end of a collection of farm buildings placed on an east-west axis that extends along the hilltop. The farm lane curves around the south end of the barn complex and splits to access the barn complex and a machine shed to the west, and house and smaller outbuildings to the east. The farm lane terminates at a concrete walk that heads east onto the west end of the front porch of the house. The house is surrounded by mature trees and mowed lawn, with fenced pasture to its north and west. Between the house and barn complex are two pig/sheep houses and privy north of the farm lane and a storage building, cold cellar, and modern well shed and pumphouse south of the farm lane. Each building will be described and dated below.

The *Mifflin House* is a 2½ story, side gable, stone dwelling built circa 1800 for newlyweds Jonathan and Susanna Wright Mifflin. It is dated by physical details including massing, plan, roof pitch, and interior trim, in combination with the November 1800 marriage date of its owners and its absence from the 1798 glass tax rolls. The dwelling is a combination of a Georgian massed plan and a PA German Vernacular plan. Georgian influences include the half-depth stair hall flanked by rooms in its north half, and intact interior moldings, cabinets and one fireplace surround. PA German influences include the four bay/two room wide south half, double attic, and entrances into all four elevations. The front façade originally faced north, as evidenced by the location of the hall in the floor plan. Original access to this property before construction of the Colombia-Wrightsville Bridge in 1811-1814 and subsequent improvement to

the York-Wrightsville Turnpike (now Lincoln Highway, PA Route 462), appears to have been from a lane that followed the stream north of the house west from the Susquehanna River. The asphalt shingled side-gable roof has a 50-degree pitch, plain rake, and boxed cornice lacking any overhang. Three brick chimneys rise above interior stacks, two on the east elevation and one on the west elevation. The rubble stonework of the house construction has quoins at the corners, and the use of narrower, smaller stones on the north elevation may indicate it was originally covered with stucco, a treatment common in the Philadelphia area where Jonathan Mifflin had lived until he married Columbia, Pennsylvania native Susanna Wright. The unsymmetrical north elevation has a central entrance door with two windows to its left and one to its right, and with only two windows on the second floor. The wall's stonework around this entrance door been re-laid to accommodate a narrower Victorian era door. The symmetrical south elevation is four bays wide with a full-width front porch and entrance door in the left-center bay. It has a full-width hip-roofed front porch supported by paired square posts on a concrete and stone deck. The dwelling retains its six-panel or half-sash wooden entrance doors, three with their original paneled reveals and heavy moulded interior surrounds. Historic photos and evidence in the stone walls indicates that a Victorian era hipped roof wooden porch wrapped around three sides of the dwelling.

Inside, the Mifflin House retains much of its original wide plank floors, paneled window reveals, plaster walls, molded trim, and paneled doors. The pegged window frames can be seen from inside the dwelling on both floors. The original dog-leg stair rises along the east side of the entrance hall, turning over the entrance door and again to the south to enter the second floor. It has tapered square newel post, square pickets, molded hand rail, double-curved riser side detailing, and paneled base which encloses a closet, all details typical of the late 18th to early 19th century. Molded chair rail that forms the base of the window openings is extant in the two parlors on the first floor and one bedroom on the second floor. The fireplace in the south parlor retains its Federal styled surround with reeded pilasters and projecting shaped mantel. The north parlor retains a built in full height cabinet with paneled doors and brass latches and hinges. The second-floor plan mimics that of the first floor, with the exception of the northeast corner. The southern half of that quadrant has been cut into a hall and modern bathroom around the original enclosed winder stairway to the attic. The lower attic, or garret, is finished with plaster walls, molded trim, and wide plank floors. A wooden picketed railing with gate surrounds the stair opening in the floor. A closet made of paneled wood is placed in the center of the room against one side of the stair opening. As it is mentioned in Jonathan Mifflin's 1840 estate inventory, it dates from prior to that date. A plank door centered in each knee wall enters crawl space storage under the exposed truss ends. A fixed wooden ladder stair lying over the winder stair opening accesses the upper attic. The joists visible here are pit sawn wooden timbers of varying sizes, with some appearing to be recycled. The roof trusses are pegged at the top and lack a ridge board/timber. Like the joists, they are made of pit sawn lumber of irregular sizes and appear original. Wide planks serve as purlins between the trusses. The cellar is cut into two rooms by a stone support wall running east-west across the middle of the building. The floor joists are pit sawn timbers of irregular sizes, larger than but similar to those exposed in the upper attic. The cellar is accessed through a former bulkhead entrance in the west elevation. Framing in the ceiling indicates the former presence of interior cellar stairs directly below the attic winder stair on the second floor.

Off the west side elevation of the house is a two-story, single pen, side-gable-roofed brick summer kitchen dating from the 1850s. It has a stone foundation but lacks a cellar. Four-panel wooden doors enter this addition from the north and south elevations. It retains its wooden exterior trim, 6/6 double-hung wooden windows, and louvered shutters. Inside, it has plank flooring and exposed brick walls painted or covered with modern paneling. A side window opening in the main house is exposed for

storage. A winder stair in the northeast corner accesses the second floor and the cellar beneath the main house. In 1863, it is described as a 'outbuilding' in owner Jacob Huber's estate inventory.

The *Barn Complex* is comprised of a 19th century Pennsylvania Barn with 20th century silos, rear addition, and milk house. The entire complex has modern metal siding and roofing installed in 2005 over the original materials. The original or main barn is a 2½ story, 4 bay, side-gable Pennsylvania Barn that dates from the 1850s. It is of timber frame construction on a stone and brick foundation. It is built into the south-facing slope, with its open ended forebay (now enclosed) along its south elevation. Extending off its southwest corner is a 1½ story gambrel-roofed cattle shed addition. It is of concrete block construction on a poured concrete foundation. The entire ground level between the two structures is one open room with poured concrete troughs and gated stanchions to house a large dairy operation. Steel multi-pane hinged windows set into the concrete walls light the interior of the cellar. A gable-roofed milk house also of block construction is appended to the east elevation of the cattle shed addition. Upstairs, the original timber bents, plank flooring, plank and beaded board sliding and hinged doors, and several interior partitions remain intact. Two large double hinged door opening on the north elevation are flanked by concrete stave silos with steel dome-shaped roofs, both of which can be accessed from the cellar. The cattle shed addition, milk house, forebay enclosure, concreting of the cellar level, and silos all date from one construction period after 1937 but before 1959, when the current owners acquired the property.

The *Machine Shed* is sited northwest of the barn facing south. It is a single pen, gable-roofed, frame structure built on a poured concrete foundation. It has built in corn cribs along each side elevation. It appears on the 1937 aerial photograph, and therefore should date from circa 1930.

In the fenced pasture located west of the house and north of the farm lane are two abandoned outbuildings: a frame, shed-roofed, portable *Pig/Sheep House*; and a frame gable-roofed *Privy* with beaded board entrance door facing east towards the house. The privy is encased by an overgrown thorny bush, and its foundation material could not be seen. At the southwest corner of this pasture along the farm lane is a second former pig/sheep house, now enclosed with siding and used as a *Shed*. All three buildings appear on the 1937 aerial, though the pig/sheep house is at a different location.

Southeast and in front of the house is the banked foundation of a former small barn/stable now used as a *Storage Building*. It has a modern nearly flat roof, entrance doors and siding. It sat vacant and in poor condition for many years until the most recent occupant fixed it up to house his outdoor recreational equipment. This building is visible as a barn in late 19th century Huber Family pictures of the property. Given its location at the original rear of the house, and the sagging condition of the foundation wall, it is assumed this is the foundation of the original barn on the property. To its west at the T in the farm lane is the 19th century *Root Cellar*. Built into the hill with earth brought in for cover, this barrel-vaulted, subterranean structure is constructed of stone with concrete parging. It has a single bulkhead style door on its south facing side, away from the farm lane. Between the storage building and cold cellar are a *Well Shed* and adjoining *Pump House*. These two modern structures constructed of concrete were recently installed to replace earlier ones at the same location.

Changes though time: Photographs of the Mifflin House dating from 1880s and 1890s (Anna M. L. Huber Photo Album) reveal a deep Victorian era wrapping porch with exposed rafters, chamfered support posts, sawn brackets, and wooden floor. The current door on the north elevation also appears. A one-story frame summer kitchen (no longer extant) extends west from the brick addition. Based on

their stylistic details, these changes to the property coincide with the 1870s change to part-time occupancy by the owner, the Huber Family, who lived in York and used this house as their country home (Merrill 1890). The small barn/stable whose foundation is used as a storage building today also appears in these photographs, as does the main barn, fencing, and farm lane. The shade trees around the front yard are extant, still large but not as large as today. In images facing east, Wrightsville and the Susquehanna River are visible in the background. Twentieth century materials found on the Mifflin House and Barn Complex date from the most recent occupants' desire to have a modern, livable home and working dairy and sheep farm. The changes to the Mifflin House over the past four decades are reversible and did not alter the 19th century form, massing, fenestration pattern, entrance and door locations, or interior plan.

The 1863 inventory for Jacob Huber notes a tenant house on the property. A building appears between the Mifflin House and the machine shed on the historic maps and aeriels (Lake 1860; Beach 1876; USGS 1908, 1943, 1972; USDA 1937 – 1971). This 2-story timber frame or log dwelling was demolished about 20 years ago according to recent occupant Donnie Blessing (Interview 2017). It may be the dwelling extant in 1798 (US Direct Tax).

The agricultural and pastoral landscape surrounding the Mifflin House remains largely intact, as revealed by a comparison of the landscape that appears on the 1937 and 1965 aerial photos with today's conditions. The pastures to the north and west of the house and south of the barn complex are enclosed with wire fencing, following routes that appear in 1937. Crop fields extend south, southeast and east of the building cluster, across the remainder of this lot/tax parcel and across the adjoining undeveloped lots. The lot to its north, between it and US Route 30, is undeveloped and covered with forest and meadow. These current conditions of the surrounding landscape leave views from the Mifflin House to the east, south and north unobstructed. It also leaves the Mifflin House and its hill top in its prominent location highly visible from Cool Springs Road and the Lincoln Highway (Route 462) to the south.

History and Significance (Item 39)

Provide an overview of the history of the property and its various resources. Do not substitute deeds, chapters from local history books, or newspaper articles. See page 14 of the Instructions for detailed directions. Continue on additional sheets as needed. Suggested outline for organizing this section:

- History [Summarize the evolution of the property from origin to present]
- Significance [Explain why the property is important]
- Context and Comparisons [Describe briefly similar properties in the area, and explain how this property compares]

Summary History and Context

The Mifflin House has been owned by three families since its construction circa 1800. Two generations of the Mifflin Family own and occupy the property from 1800 through 1846. Three generations of the Huber Family own the property from 1846 through 1956, occupying the Mifflin House/'Hybla' until circa 1900. Two generations of the Blessing Family have owned the property since 1956, with the son of the owner occupying the Mifflin House and accompanying farmland. Though all three families are large land owners during their time, each has a different and distinct use of the Mifflin House property.

The Mifflin Family

The Mifflin House was built circa 1800 for Susanna Wright and Jonathan Mifflin, who married in November of that year. Both were members of prominent Quaker (Society of Friends) families: Jonathan of the Mifflin Family who were amongst the first settlers of Philadelphia; and Susanna of the Wright Family that founded Columbia, Lancaster County and patented all the lands in the area of Wrightsville, York County (Land Records). Her grandfather John Wright owned the first ferry across the Susquehanna River at Columbia and also the tavern on the York County side (Prowell 1907). Susanna acquired several tracts of land from her father James' estate following his death in 1788, including the 108-acre tract on which the Mifflin House/'Hybla' is located. Her brother William acquired the tracts along the river which he sold for the founding of Wrightsville between 1811 and 1825 (Land Records; Prowell 1907). She remained in Columbia with her family until after her marriage, with the 1798 Direct Tax listing occupant John Newcomer on her 108 acres with 2-story frame house and barn.

Jonathan Mifflin was a widower with a young son when he met Susanna Wright. His family were merchants in Philadelphia, and owned the Fountain Green estate on the outskirts of the city. As a young man, he entered the Continental Army with the rank of Colonel serving under his distant relative General Thomas Mifflin. Between 1776 and 1778, he held the posts of, Assistant Quartermaster General, Paymaster of the 5th Pennsylvania Battalion, and Aide-de-Camp to Generals Mifflin and Washington. He served at Valley Forge, the Jerseys, Croton River, White Plains and Brandywine. Though many Quakers did not actively serve, his patriotism and ability to serve in non-combat function led him to enlist, as revealed through a review of his correspondence in his pension file. Following the war, Jonathan engaged in the East India Trade with his family's shipping and mercantile business, taking at least one trip to China in 1788. The business in heavy debt by the mid-1790s, Jonathan and his brother Joseph sold their stake and moved to western Lancaster County where there was an active Friends Meeting in Columbia. (Lloyd 2016)

The new couple appears to have moved into their new home in York County by 1801. They named their home 'Hybla' as evidenced in period letters between family members (Mifflin Family File; Harris 2017). The Hellam township taxes for that year list them as residents with 2 houses and 6 cows. Please

note that York County municipalities rarely taxed buildings during this period, so the records cannot be used to definitively date buildings including the Mifflin House. The couple was welcomed to Hellam Township, with Jonathan nominated and elected as Constable in 1804, a post which he had not sought out and which he declined (Lloyd 2016). The Mifflin House remained the couple's principal residence through her death in 1829 and his in 1840. They raised two sons in the house; Thomas Mifflin, born in 1796 to Jonathan and his second wife Frances, daughter of Revolutionary War General and Pennsylvania Governor Thomas Mifflin; and Samuel Wright Mifflin, born in 1805. They were active members of the Columbia Friends Meeting along with her extended family that resided on both sides of the Susquehanna River. Their "fine stone home named 'Hybla'" became an active and influential social hub of the community, as remembered by their grand-nephew John Houston Mifflin in the published Mifflin Family history (Merrill 1890).

As his wealth came from his family's businesses and properties owned in Philadelphia, Lancaster, Bucks, and Crawford Counties, Jonathan was often away from home until his retirement after his wife's death. He also began receiving a military pension in 1831 (Lloyd 2016). At his death in 1840, he may have been one of the wealthiest men in Hellam Township. The estate's inventory of his personal property reveals that he died with a house full of furniture, 12 pounds of silverware, two casks and 8 bottles of wine, 2 bottles of catsup (a luxury item at that time), and 400 pounds of [dried/cured] meat.

Samuel W. Mifflin inherited his parents Hellam Township property and the Mifflin House at this father's death in 1840. A railroad engineer, he made a career as one of few locating engineers during construction of the country's first railroad network. He located and oversaw construction of much of the Pennsylvania Railroad, beginning with the Columbia Railroad near his home outside Wrightsville (Bedini 1996). After his father's death, he settled into his boyhood home for several years, and it is here that he married Elizabeth Martin and that their first child was born (Lloyd 2016; Merrill 1890).

The Mifflins as Gentleman Farmers: Though the Mifflin House is at the center of an early 19th century farm, the Mifflins were members of the elite with limited if any training in agricultural practices. Neither Jonathon nor Samuel were farmers by training or occupation. The US Census for the years 1810 through 1840 note 1 to 3 additional occupants of the household, indicating the Mifflins had household servants. The fertile valley land that extended south of their house would have been planted by a tenant who lived nearby, possibly in the frame (log?) house extant in 1798. This is documented in a letter between John Houston Mifflin, Samuel W. Houston's second cousin, and J. H. Merrill, author of the Mifflin Family History. In this letter, dated 1888, John Houston Mifflin remembers that the extended family would summer at 'Hybla' [circa 1820s and 1830s], at which time there was a "plain farmer's family house 100 yards off" from the house (Merrill 1890 pg 69). This would place the Mifflin's tenant house at the site of the one demolished about 20 years ago. No additional records have been found mentioning tenants that allows a better understanding of the agricultural practices through the Mifflin Family's ownership and occupancy of the property.

The Mifflins' Role in the Underground Railroad: Mifflin House was an important station on this Underground route from York to Philadelphia. Members of the York and Columbia Friends Meetings were active in the Underground, assisting freedom seekers in their quest north from Maryland and points south, including the Wrights and Mifflins (Harris 2017). The Susquehanna River provided a natural barrier to migration by Freedom Seekers. The bridge at Wrightsville was the only crossing between Port Deposit in Maryland, to the south and Harrisburg to the north. Escaped slaves with the assistance of

local residents found safe passage over this bridge or across the river at night by boat (Smedley 1888; Roarbaugh 1953; Mingus 2016).

Several of Susanna Wright Mifflin's relatives living in the Wrightsville and Columbia area assisted freedom seekers and also hired free African Americans, including Jonathan's nephew and neighbor James E. Mifflin. In Columbia, Susanna's brothers William and James were known agents of the Underground Railroad and James' duplex house in Columbia has been designated a Network to Freedom Site by the National Park Service (<http://www.bankmuseum.org/affiliations.html>). Jonathan and Susanna Mifflin and later their son Samuel W. Mifflin were part of a greater community of residents who shared the belief that all should be treated equally and that slavery should be abolished. This belief was strong in the Quaker congregations of the Columbia and York, providing an interconnected group of landowners who could become the agents of along the path to freedom in the north. They were friends and often hired local free African Americans, including known Underground agent Robert Loney of Wrightsville (Roarbaugh 1953; Lloyd 2016; Harris 2017).

Samuel W. Mifflin's role as an active agent is better documented than that of his parents, as he was an early member of the abolitionist Free Soil Party in Pennsylvania (Merrill 1890). But his beliefs were formed by those of his parents during his upbringing at the Mifflin House. R. C. Smedley in his *History of the Underground Railroad* (1883) first wrote of the Underground Railroad routes and stations in the Wrightsville area. His accounts are again stated in George Prowell's 1907 *History of York County, Pennsylvania* and Roarbaugh's paper for a Gettysburg College class (1953). Multiple stories of assistance to freedom seekers at the Mifflin House are detailed though the accounts of his children, who were told these accounts during their upbringing. These accounts reveal that both generations of Mifflins were active 'agents' on the Underground in York County, and the number of freedom seekers they assisted. These accounts and others have most recently been detailed by historian Scott Mingus in his new book *The Ground Swallowed Them Up: Slavery and the Underground Railroad in York County, Pa.*, (2016; pp. 44-45, & 93-99). One narrative tells the story from Samuel W. Mifflin's childhood when a tall male was dressed in woman's clothing and carried across the bridge to Wrightsville by his aunt. A second memory is of Samuel and a cousin shooting and hiding wild game to provide food to a freedom seeker hiding in a cornfield near Columbia. Both are assumed to date from between 1815 and 1825. A third narrative tells a story [from the 1830s] when Samuel was visiting his father and he found the parlor occupied by thirteen freedom seekers. They were comprised of two families whom his brother [Thomas] found wandering and chose to shelter until safe passage north could be arranged. Due to stormy weather, the families stayed three days in the Mifflin House until the family could arrange for Robert Loney to take them across the river.

Along with Scott Mingus, Local Historian and York County History Center Librarian Emerita June Lloyd has also been researching the Mifflin Family of Hybla and their role in the early republic and in the Underground. Both are bloggers and periodic columnists on York County history for the *York Daily Record*. For additional details on the Mifflin's role in the Underground in York County, please find attached to this HSRF pieces written by these two, including an excerpt from Mingus' 2016 book.

The Huber Family

Samuel W. Mifflin's career took him away from York county by the mid-1850s (Bedini 1996), and he sold the family estate in 1846 to Jacob Huber. By that time, it encompassed two tracts, one of 180 acres with the Mifflin House and farm, and the second of 89+ acres of hilly woodland located to the north that

extended to the Susquehanna River (Deed 3-V/418). No chain to title was provided in this deed to allow for an understanding of how Susanna Wright Mifflin acquired these lands from her father or brothers. Given his occupation, it is assumed that Samuel drew up the meets and bounds and calculated the acreage of each property before the sale.

Hellam Township native Jacob Huber was a wealthy and prominent farmer raised on a farm near Kreutz Creek Reformed Church. He owned several other large farm properties in Hellam Township, including one he lived in and inherited at his father's death. The prominence of the Mifflins (Merrill 1890; Lloyd 2016; Harris 2017) and/or the house's placement on the landscape above Wrightsville may have both contributed to his desire to purchase the property. Though his family does eventually move into the Mifflin House, it does not appear that they have made the move by August 1850, based on his neighbors that year in the US Census compared to both 1840 and 1860. In the spring of 1860, Jacob Huber purchased the adjoining 262 acre Asa Loudon Farm, which extends from Wrightsville north across the road through Dark Hollow (Deed 4-G/436). This property sat between the two tracts he acquired from Samuel Mifflin in 1846, with this purchase creating a conglomerate 430+ acre farm with two farmsteads, woodlands, river access, and a quarry. Jacob lived out his later years and oversaw operations of his seven farms, two houses, and woodland lot from the Mifflin House between the mid-1850s and his death on September 10, 1864.

In 1864 at age 22, Jacob H. Huber takes over the management of his father's properties and farming operations. He shares ownership of these properties with his mother and sister, who has married York lumber dealer John H. Small. Between 1864 and his early death in 1876, Jacob H. successfully manages his family's numerous land holding and farms (Prowell 1907). His sister passes away in 1870, making Jacob H. the principal heir. He buys and remodels a home in York in 1867 (Land Records), where he marries Susan Lochman in 1869 and where their daughter Anna M. L. Huber is born in 1874 (Huber Family File and Cards). The couple lives principally in York, using his mother's home on the farm as their country/summer/weekend home (Anna M. L. Huber MS File). In January 1876, Jacob H. Huber dies unexpectedly at the young age of 34. The York County Orphan's Court orders sale of the house in York, but allows the estate to retain and manage the farms until Jacob H.'s accounts can be fully settled (Estate File).

After living with her parents for several years (1877 Directory; US Census 1880), widow Susan Huber buys her own home also on East Market Street in York in July 1880 (Deed 6-O/526). The Huber Family's wealth allows for her independence after Jacob H.'s death. They are relatively wealthy for farmers in Hellam Township, with Jacob Sr.'s estate worth over \$76,000 in 1864, his son Jacob H. worth over \$100,000 in 1878, and his wife Magdalena worth over \$175,000 at her death in 1888 (Huber Estate Files).

Administrators George Ebert (until 1888) and Jonathan Jessop managed Jacob H. Huber's real estate and farms until his daughter Anna M. L. Huber reached adulthood in 1892. Two of the seven farms were sold during the 1880s and 1890s, with four farms, a tract of woodland, and several lots in Wrightsville still owned by the estate in 1891 (Jacob H. Huber Estate File). During her teen years and early adulthood, Anna M. L. Huber spent weekends and summers at the Mifflin House. Her time at the property is documented in a photo album she kept of her adventures and now in the collection of the York County History Center. The many pictures taken of the property give a snapshot of the use and condition of the property during the late 19th century, and the life of York County's wealthy citizens and young women (Anna M. L. Huber MS File). The pictures are labelled with the name 'Hybla', indicating

the name given the “estate” by the Mifflins was known to and kept by the Huber Family. Anna M. L. Huber never marries, and uses her inherited and earned wealth to found the Visiting Nurse Association of York. During the first half of the 20th century, she is a major benefactor and fund raiser for public health in York County. She was an early believer in networking, and encouraged cooperation between industry, volunteer groups and agencies. (YDR 1998). Her mother Susan L. Huber never remarries and dies in 1930, leaving Anna the house in York. The Mifflin House remains the family’s ownership until 1959, when Anna sells it to the Blessing Family (Land Records). The occupants and farm tenants of the two adjoining farms could not be ascertained through hours of review and comparison of population censuses, agricultural censuses, and county directories.

The Hubers as Farm and Estate Managers: Like the Mifflins, the Huber Family was also landed gentry with extensive holdings in Hellam Township and elsewhere in York County. At Jacob Huber Sr.’s death, his estate inventory focused on the agricultural products of his seven farms. This listing gives a good snapshot of the general farming practices of his tenants, with a mix of crops that included wheat, corn, hay, oats, rye and tobacco on all the farms. This farming approach is typical for farms in Hellam Township during the period (McMurray 2014), as is the higher than county average for tenancy rates (US Agricultural Census 1850 & 1880). At Jacob H. Huber’s death, an inventory was never completed, just an appraisal of his real estate. Though tenants are mentioned in his estate file, the accounting records are limited to between 1876 and 1892. A comparison of the US Census for the years 1880 through 1940 could not identify the occupants of either the Loudon Farm or the Mifflin House farm. During the 1940s and 1950s, the Mifflin Farm had a farm tenant who remodeled and enlarged the barn for their dairy operation, and was in place when the Blessings acquired the property (Donnie Blessing interview 2017; USDA 1937 & 1957). Research to date has not yet identified this tenant.

Most interesting is the Huber Family women’s success in the male dominated field of real estate and agricultural property management. Following first Jacob and then Jacob H.’s death, three generations of Huber women were able to successfully maintain their agricultural real estate empire in Hellam Township, making enough money to support themselves and generously donate to many organizations in York well into the 20th century.

The Huber Farm’s Role in the Civil War Gettysburg Campaign: The Mifflin House or ‘Hybla’ ridge was the site of a Confederate gun battery during the Army of Northern Virginia’s skirmish with Union troops at Wrightsville on June 24 and 25, 1863 (Mingus 2011). Confederate Jubal Early’s division was crossing York County to reach the Columbia-Wrightsville Bridge in order to attack Harrisburg from the southeast. They were also in pursuit of Union troops under Colonel Jacob Frick, who were under orders to stop the Confederate advance and their crossing of the Susquehanna River. Frick’s troops reached Wrightsville on June 24, three days ahead of General John B. Gordon’s Confederate Brigade. Though both leaders noticed the high and commanding position of the “Hybla” hill, Frick took his cannon across the river to positions in Columbia. After his arrival the afternoon of June 28, Gordon ordered his artillery placed on shallow ridge at the front of the Strickler Farm that crossed the York-Wrightsville Turnpike (later the Lincoln Highway and PA Route 462). A skirmish with the Union troops placed around Wrightsville soon ensued. During this skirmish, Gordon moved Colonel William Tanner’s four cannon to the high point on the ridge of the Mifflin House or ‘Hybla’. Tanner sent one gun immediately to the hilltop. His gunners fired 40 rounds during the skirmish, though it is not known how many were from the Hybla position. Gordon’s brigade advanced and forced the Union troops across the river into Columbia. That night, Colonel Frick ordered the burning of the wooden covered bridge to stop the Confederate advance. The rebels were turned around, heading back to Gettysburg. (Mingus 2011)

It is not known if the Huber Family was present during the Wrightsville skirmish and later fire that spread into Wrightsville. Though townspeople were evacuated, most of the rural farm residents remained home or concentrated together in neighboring farms just outside of the active battle (Prowell 1909). Jacob Huber never filed a claim for damages (Mingus 2011), and none are visible on the property today.

The Blessing Family

In May 1959, Anna M. L. Huber sells the now combined Mifflin and Loudon farms to neighboring farmer Harry and Anna Blessing (Deed 47-X/357). This couple has farmed the property to the southwest for three decades, and purchase this 318-acre property for the additional crop land, houses, and large dairy barn complex on the Mifflin Farm. Their son Ronald Blessing and his family occupy the Mifflin House/'Hybla' and their son Wayne Blessing and his family occupy the Loudon House. The Blessing family jointly manages the farming operations, using the suitable buildings on each of their farms to house the equipment, supplies, and farm animals. Family members or hired help live in each of the houses on the joint properties. Their dairy herd is housed in the barn complex on the Mifflin Farm.

Harry Blessing dies in 1978 and his wife Anna dies in 1990. After her death, the four family farms encompassing are inherited by their two sons and two daughters. Though the sons continue to farm the properties, joined in their effort by Ronald's son Donnie, the siblings begin a plan to subdivide and sell off portions of the 493 acres, now at the US Route 30 and Cool Springs Road interchange near Wrightsville. The 318 acre Mifflin and Loudon farm in combination with part of the Blessing Farm was subdivided into the Wrights Crossing Industrial Park in 1990 (Recorded Plan). The park never fully develops, with 2/3 of its lots still vacant today. In 1983, Ronald and his wife build a new house at the north end of the property along Dark Hollow Road (Tax Record), leaving use of the Mifflin House/'Hybla' to their son Donnie and his wife Shelby. This couple lived in the house and managed the farm through the end of 2016. The dairy operation was closed circa 2007, after which the couple raised sheep on the remaining property (Donnie Blessing 2017). In January 2017, Donnie and Shelby Blessing received the equivalent of an eviction notice when they were given a roughly two months to move out before demolition of the house was planned by their family and the developer Kinsley Construction. Hellam Township denied the demolition permit in April 2017, and the developer plans to appeal the denial in court. The property is now largely vacant, with one of Donnie's relatives temporarily living in the house.

Significance / National Register Evaluation

The Mifflin House property is significant under the theme of African American quest for civil and political rights through its association with the Mifflins and their role in the Underground Railroad and for its association with the Gettysburg Campaign of the Civil War. Though it is a farmstead dating from the early 19th through mid-20th centuries, owned by two prominent families, the Mifflin House does not appear to be significant for its association with agriculture in York County, as its owners through the 1950s were not its active farmers, its cannot be determined as needed to understand its farming practices and success through time, and its tenant house is no longer extant (McMurray 2014). Nor is it significant for its association with Anna M. L. Huber, as it no longer retains the exterior appearance of her use of the house as a summer and weekend home, and other places in York City better reflect her

impact on the county's public health during the first half of the 20th century (Andrus & Shrimpton 2002).

The family of Jonathan and Susanna Wright Mifflin were one of many 19th century Quakers of Lancaster and York Counties who played important roles in the Underground Railroad along with prominent free African Americans. Over a period of at least thirty years, the Mifflin Family at 'Hybla' provided shelter, food and assistance to freedom seekers, as documented through family histories and Underground Railroad histories written from the 1890s through the present day. Though the narratives date these activities from circa 1815 through Samuel's sale of the property in 1846, freedom seekers may well have been assisted as early as 1801 when the family is known to have occupied the property. Property types considered under the Underground Railroad Theme Study (NHL 2000) include Stations on the Underground Railroad, or buildings, structures, or sites where fugitive were harbored and such use has been documented, like the Mifflin House/'Hybla'. The house including its surrounding landscape has integrity of location, setting, feeling and association, and retains essential physical features that make up its character as needed to convey its role as a stop or station on the Underground Railroad, including original plan with cellar and attic spaces, surrounding hilltop landscape, and foundation of period barn. Material changes have not detracted from its character or feeling of an early Federal period house of locally-prominent Quakers, and rooms identified in the historical narrative are extant today. Cosmetic and reversible changes, like those on the Mifflin House/'Hybla,' do not preclude this property from acting as a historic document on the history of the Underground Railroad (Wellman 2002). The prominence of the house and its original owners has remained in the public memory since its sale to the Huber Family, including the last occupants of the house who do not want to see it demolished. As such, the Mifflin House/'Hybla' is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A (events) an intact local example of a station or hiding place on the Underground Railroad. It may also be eligible under Criterion D (information) for the stories it could tell about the Underground Railroad in York County through remaining physical evidence in the house and on the property.

The hilltop, knoll or ridge on which the property is located is the documented site of Confederate artillery during the skirmish of Wrightsville in June 1863. It played a role in in changing the course of the rebel army, which led to the Battle of Gettysburg and Lee's retreat back into Virginia. The landscape along the hilltop surrounding the buildings has not changed since the time of the battle. Archaeological investigations could lead to more information about the Wrightsville Skirmish, including the number and nature of the guns placed on the hilltop. As such, the property is eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and D for its association with the Gettysburg Campaign.

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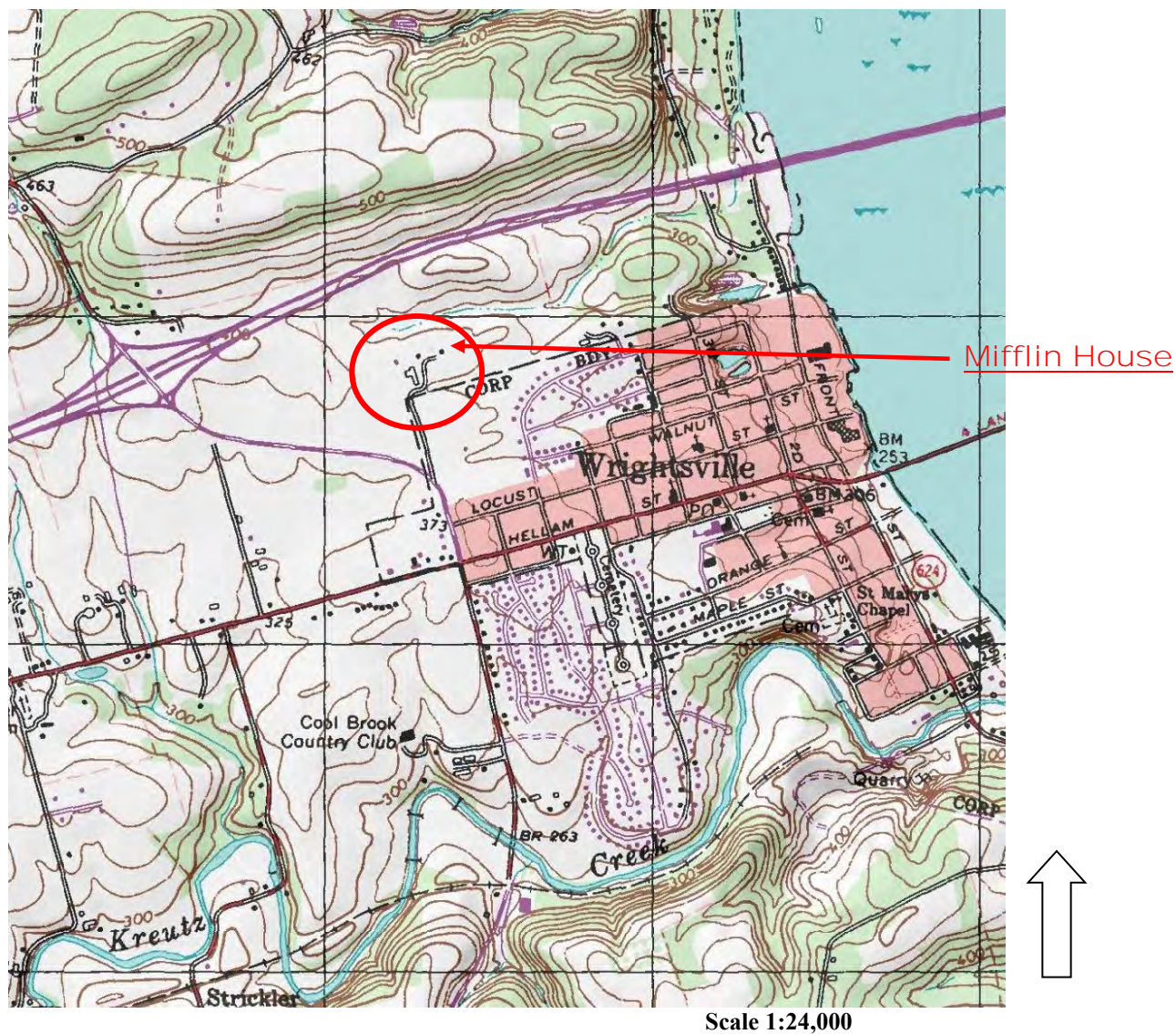
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Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



USGS Location Map

Columbia West, PA (1997), 7.5 minute USGS

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Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



2014 image Courtesy York County GIS

Site Plan – Tax Map

PA Historic Resources Survey Form

Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



2016 image Courtesy Google Earth

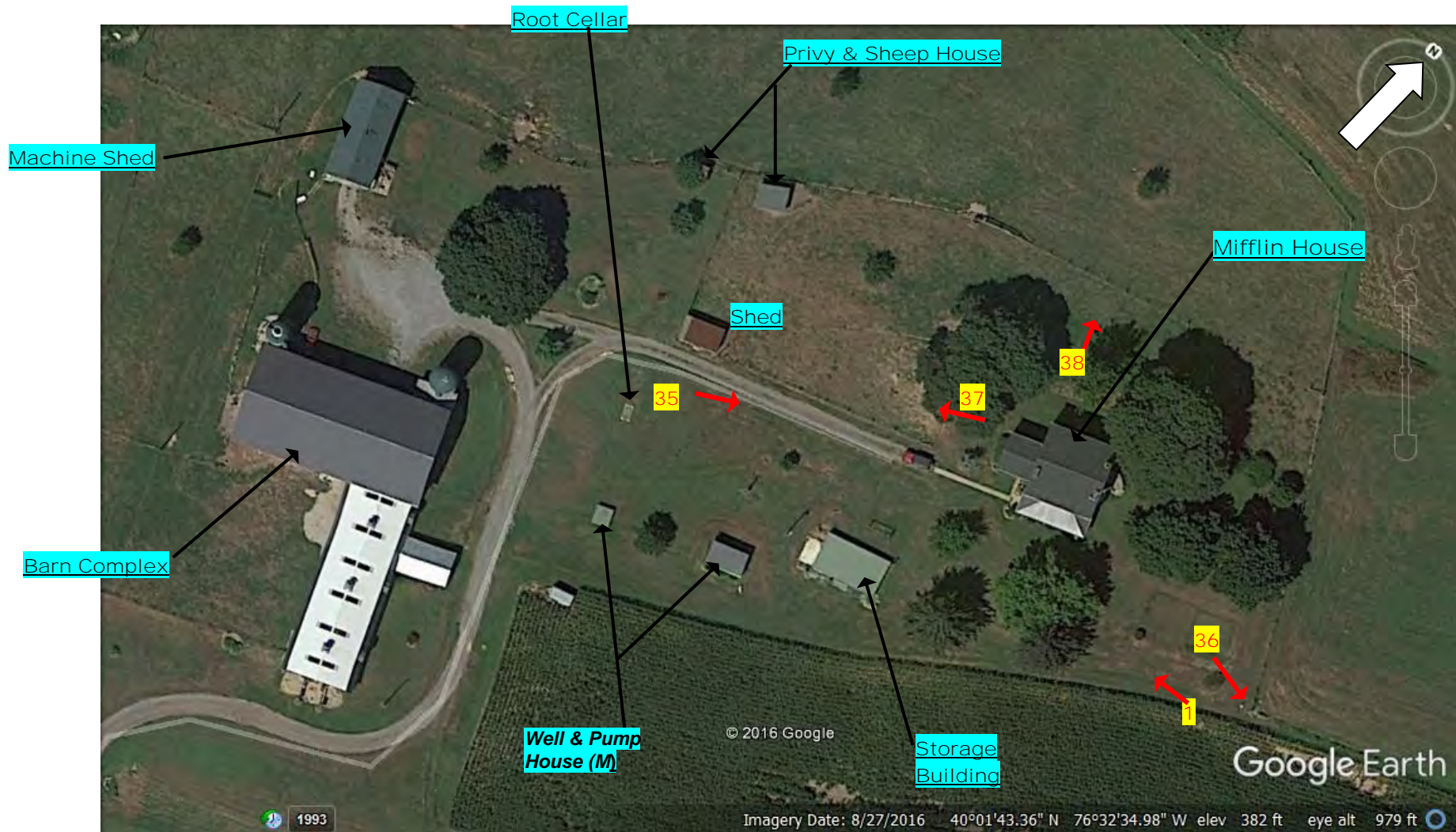
Site Plan - Overview

Photo Location

Tax Parcel Boundary

PA Historic Resources Survey Form

Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



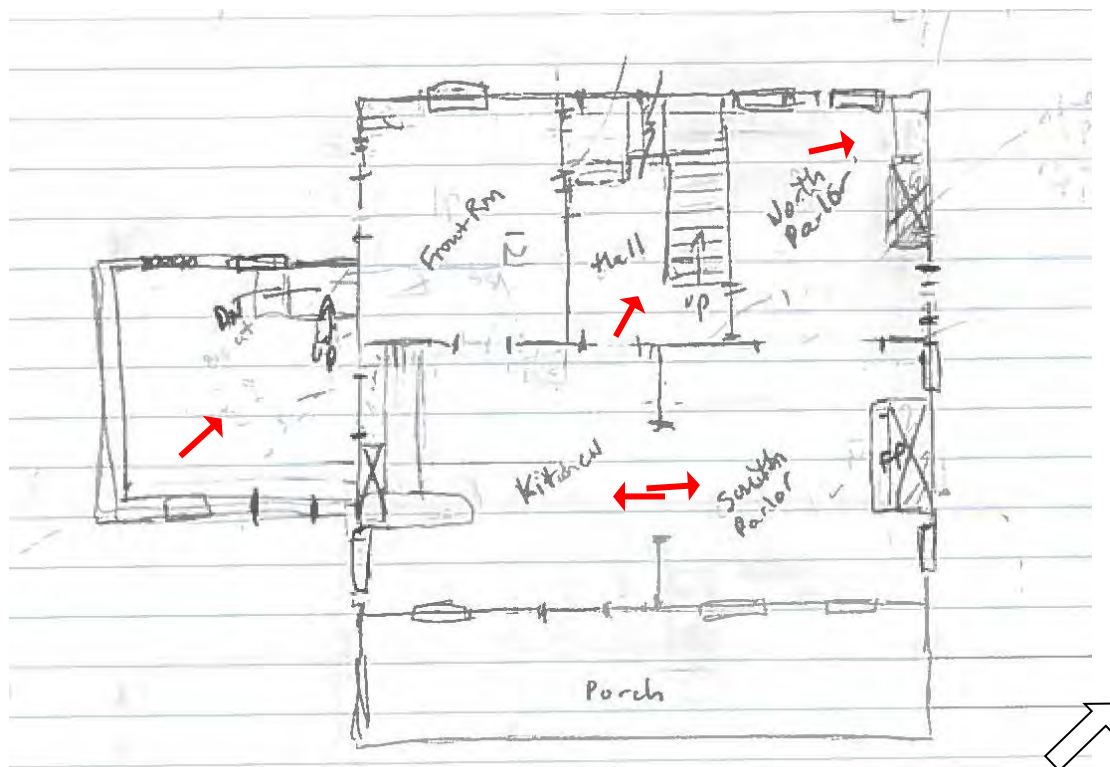
2016 Image Courtesy Google Earth

Site Plan – Detail of Buildings

Photo Location

PA Historic Resources Survey Form

Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Sketch Floor Plan - First Floor

(Not to Scale)

↖ Interior Photo Location (Typical)

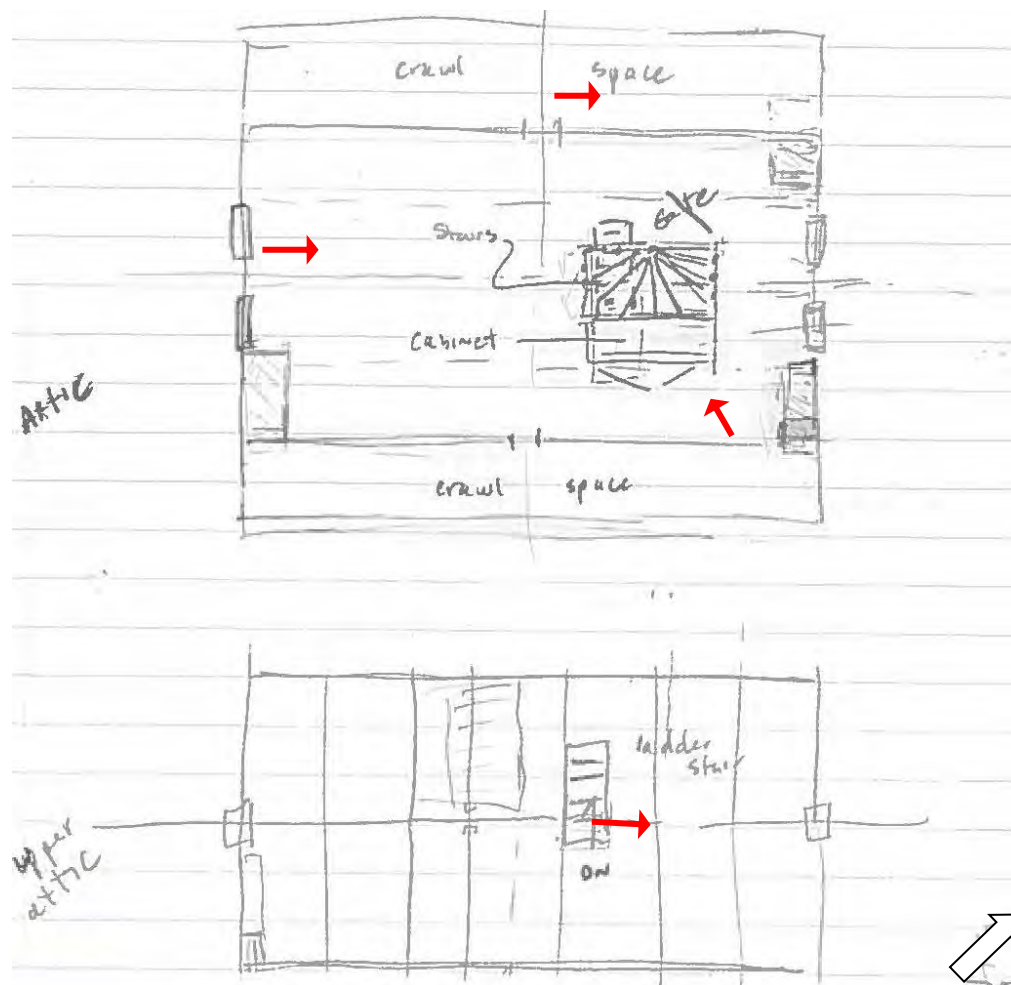


Sketch Floor Plan - Second Floor

(Not to Scale)

PA Historic Resources Survey Form

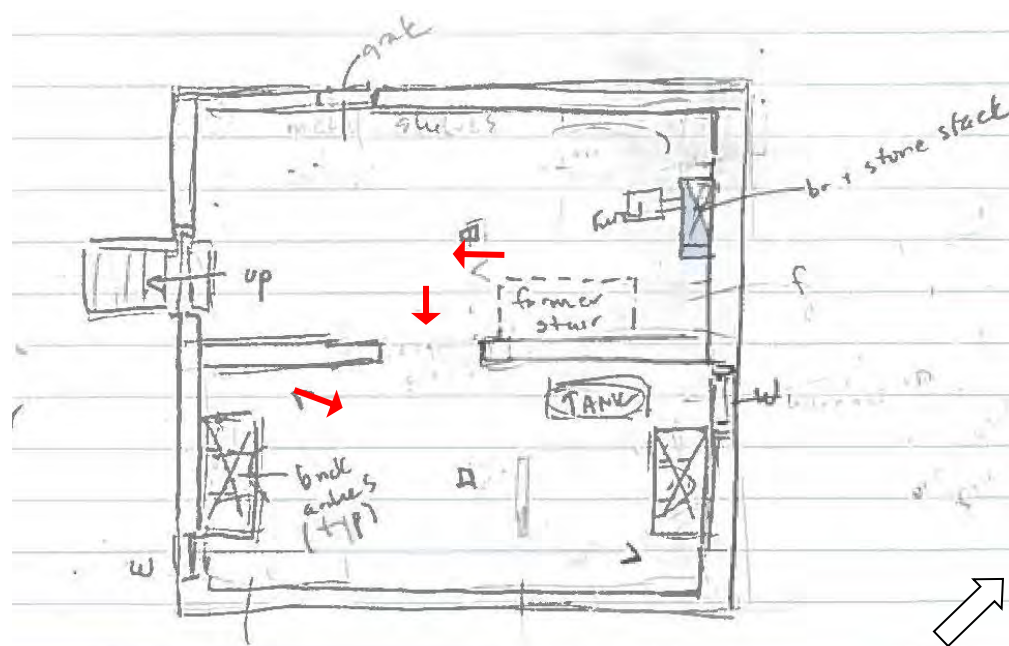
Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Sketch Floor Plan – Attics

(Not to Scale)

↖ Interior Photo Location (Typical)

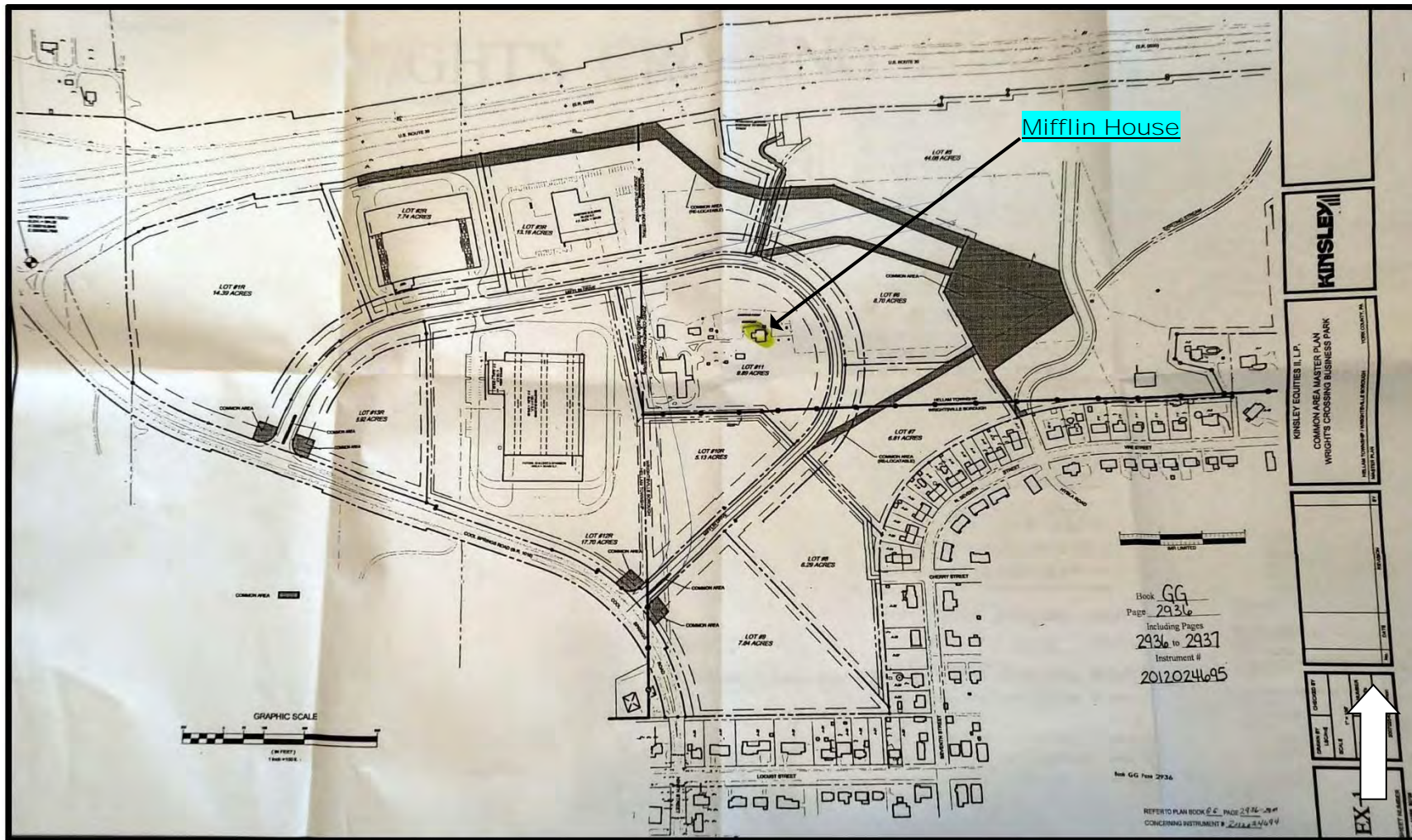


Sketch Floor Plan – Cellar

(Not to Scale)

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Wrights Crossing Land Development Plan, as Revised 2012, showing the Mifflin House

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Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Historic photograph of the Mifflin House showing the Victorian era porch and 1-story frame summer kitchen no longer extant. Circa 1880. (Anna M. L. Huber MS File). Image courtesy the York County History Center.

PA Historic Resources Survey Form

Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County

Photographs



Photo 1: Landscape View of the Mifflin House, view facing W from base of slope at edge of farm field. Note it's prominent siting on the hilltop.

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Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 2: Mifflin House, southwest and southeast (façade) elevations.

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Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 3: Mifflin House, southeast (façade) and northeast elevations.

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Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 4: Mifflin House, northwest (rear) and southwest elevations.

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Photo 5: Mifflin House, first floor, central Stair Hall, original entrance (northwest elevation) at rear of view.

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Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 6: Mifflin House, First Floor, South Parlor, view from the Kitchen.

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Photo 7: Mifflin House, First Floor, Kitchen, view from the South Parlor.

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Photo 8: Mifflin House, First Floor, built-in Cabinet in the North Parlor.

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Photo 9: Mifflin House, Second Floor, Stair Hall, view facing towards rear of house.

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Photo 10: Mifflin House, detail view of main Staircase.

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Photo 11: Mifflin House, Second Floor, SE Bedroom, view towards Central Hall.

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Photo 12: Mifflin House, Second Floor, SW Bedroom, view through doorway.

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Photo 13: Mifflin House, Second Floor, NE Bedroom, view through door into Central Hall. Stair rail at rear of view.

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Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 14: Mifflin House, Second Floor, view from Central Hall past Attic Stair (on right) into the Bathroom.

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Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 15: Mifflin House, Attic, view facing NE. Note railing around winder stair from second floor with ladder stair to upper attic, and door to crawl space at left of view.

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Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 16: Mifflin House, Attic, Cabinet at center of room against the winder stair opening.

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Photo 17: Mifflin House, Attic, Crawl Space behind knee wall.

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Photo 18: Mifflin House, Upper Attic, view facing NE from top of stair.

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Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 19: Mifflin House, Cellar, North Room, view across room towards stairs from Addition.

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Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 20: Mifflin House, Cellar, South Room, view across room facing E. Note arch supporting chimney stack, typical at each end of this room.

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Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 21: Mifflin House, Cellar, detail of door between the two rooms.

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Photo 22: Mifflin House, Addition, enclosed stair to second floor and cellar of main house.

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Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 23: Barn Complex, view facing SW from base of hill in front of the Mifflin House. Pump House at right foreground of view.

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Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 24: Barn Complex, Northwest and Southwest Elevations.

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Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 25: Barn Complex, Southwest and Southeast Elevations. view facing N from farm lane.

PA Historic Resources Survey Form

Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 26: Barn Complex, Ground Level (Cellar) of original Barn, view facing W.

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Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 27: Barn Complex, Ground Level of Addition, view facing down center aisle.

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Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 28: Barn Complex, original Barn, Upper Level. View facing E through framing. Note the gambrel tresses of the addition roof at rear right of view.

PA Historic Resources Survey Form

Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 29: Barn Complex, Upper Floor of Addition, view facing SE.

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Photo 30: Machine Shed/Corn Crib, Southeast and Northeast Elevations.

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Photo 31: Privy and Pig/Sheep House, view facing W.

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Photo 32: Storage Building (foundation of original barn), facing NE.

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Photo 33: Shed and Root Cellar, view facing N.

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Photo 34: Root Cellar, interior view facing S up the entrance.

PA Historic Resources Survey Form

Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 35: Landscape view facing NE up farm lane toward the Mifflin House. Note trees ringing the front and rear yards.

PA Historic Resources Survey Form

Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 36: Landscape view facing E towards Wrightsville from the front yard of the Mifflin House.

PA Historic Resources Survey Form

Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 37: Landscape view facing SW from the Mifflin House, across the west pasture towards the farm buildings

PA Historic Resources Survey Form

Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 38: Landscape view facing N from back yard of the Mifflin House, across the north pasture towards US Route 30.

PA Historic Resources Survey Form

Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 39: Landscape view of the Mifflin House and its farm buildings, facing S across the north pasture. Note prominent siting of house on hilltop.

PA Historic Resources Survey Form

Mifflin House (Key #203645), 202 Cool Springs Road, Hellam Township, York County



Photo 40: Landscape view Mifflin House property from south end of Farm Lane near Cool Springs Road, facing NNE.