History of Tomahawk Claim

Forward

For years visitors who have come to our home have told me that I had to document the history that I so easily rattle off when escorting people around our home. They were, of course, right that I was the individual who had to write this: I'm the owner; the granddaughter of the two who bought and restored the log cabin and designed the gardens; I've maintained the gardens for decades; and I've lived on the property longer than anyone in our family. I dodged the writing responsibility until the winter of 2011-12 when I began this project; we were wintering in Florida and I had no better way to spend my time, so I began to write. I had to leave several blanks because I didn't have all the precise dates and names. Over the spring, summer and fall, I was too busy in the gardens to work on it. When we returned to Florida in the fall of 2012, I brought all of my documentation of the family and my research to place our property on the National Register of Historic Places.

A few of my editors are critical of my use of the first person throughout the document. I knew of no other way to write it; the story is mine. The legacy is mine to embrace and protect.

Nancy Campbell Marshall

February, 2013

In 1928, John (Jack) Sherman Campbell, 47-year old founder and president of the Keystone Adjustment Company in Pittsburgh, received a request to assess the damage done by a fire in the Reissing mine one mile north of Cecil in Washington County, Pennsylvania. Knowing he was going to the country, he invited his wife, Martha McKinstrey Davis Campbell, age 40, to accompany him because he knew she always loved a walk outdoors. When they arrived, Jack went into the mine while Martha walked down the valley. Approximately a quarter mile south of the mine, she looked up the hill to the east and spied a log cabin in the middle of a cow pasture; she went to investigate.

This earliest photo of the cabin shows the solid logs, the missing chinking, and the absence of doors and windows.

The cabin was abandoned. Decades later their youngest son, Donald, wrote:

> The shingles on the cabin roof were partly missing and the chinking between the logs was mostly missing. The foundation under the bottom logs had disintegrated and the bottom log was on the ground. The floor in the cabin was rotten and unsafe. The fireplace was unusable and unsafe. If a fire had been started in that fireplace, the entire cabin would probably have burned down. However the logs were sound and in position. The ceiling, or floor in the attic, was okay and the rafters were sound and in place. The numbering on each rafter was still visible.

Despite the deterioration, Martha saw potential. She returned to the mine to await her husband.

When Jack completed his mine investigation, he and Martha headed to the log cabin. He was as intrigued as she was. They'd been searching for a summer home because their son Donald had asthma which their doctor thought would be eased by summers away from the smog of Pittsburgh. Up to this point, they'd been searching in the Ligonier area where Martha was born and raised and her parents still lived. A home there would have been two to three hours out of Pittsburgh. This log cabin, in contrast, was only a 45 minute drive

from their home in Brookline and equally convenient to John's office in downtown Pittsburgh. After confirming with neighbors that the spring on the hill had never been known to go dry, they made an offer to the current owner, Mary Clark, to buy 15 acres of the Clark's approximately 600 acre dairy farm. The Clarks accepted the offer; the transfer occurred on July 2, 1928.

John (Jack) Sherman Campbell

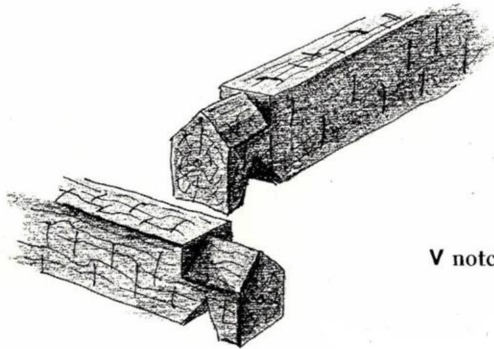
Martha McKinstrey Davis Campbell

In the time between the offer and the closing, the Campbells took a trip to Williamsburg, Virginia, to learn about log cabins. There they discovered several interesting facts. First, the floors of log cabins were made by taking apart the Conestoga wagon that the settlers had used to move west. Conestoga wagons[1] were made of random chestnut wagon boarding, a rare commodity in 1928 because a chestnut blight had wiped out the American chestnut in the early 1900s hence no chestnut was being milled in 1928. Jack Campbell searched locally until he found a supply of the boarding in the attic of a lumber mill in Carnegie. He purchased their entire stock and used it to make the floor of the cabin.

[1] The Conestoga wagon is a heavy, covered wagon that was used extensively during the late 18th century and the 19th century in the United States and Canada. It was large enough to transport loads up to 8 tons (7 metric tons), and was drawn by horses, mules or oxen. . . . It was named after the "Conestoga River" or "Conestoga Township" in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and thought to have been introduced by Mennonite German settlers.

In colonial times the Conestoga wagon was popular for migration southward through the Great Appalachian Valley along the Great Wagon Road. After the American Revolution it was used to open up commerce to Pittsburgh and Ohio.

Another intriguing fact they learned was that the finest log cabins were made by journeymen log cabin builders. These individuals traveled throughout newly settling areas offering their services. The contract normally required the homesteader to cut trees that the journeyman and homesteader identified. They chose trees as close as possible to the future home site because the weight of the logs made them very difficult to move; the stumps of many of the trees used in our cabin are under the floorboards. The builder would return on an agreed date, then he would plane the logs and notch the ends to fit them together at the corners. Our notches are called church steeple or V-notches, the finest type because they direct water away from the notch thus preventing corner rot. The quality of the notches explains why the cabin stood so long even though abandoned. The journeyman did not erect the home; that task was performed by the homesteader working together with neighbors who brought teams of horses and oxen. The house-raising task was dictated by the Roman numerals the journeyman had etched into the wood; the workers simply followed the numbers to assemble the house. We know ours was constructed that way because the Roman numeral etchings are clearly visible in the rafters in the attic.



Restoration

In July 1928, the reconstruction of the cabin began. The crew supervisor was Martha Campbell's brother-in-law, Ferguson White, assisted by a second brother-in-law, E. Vernon Roberts, both of whom were unemployed. The crewmen were the miners who had lost their livelihood because of the fire in the Reissing mine. The most notable of those miners were the members of the Kemp family whose descendants still live in the area.[2]

Restoring the cabin was not an arduous task. The original flagstone footer was in place and solid. All of the logs were in good shape. The original photos indicate that the shake roof was intact; I've never heard whether that was replaced that first summer. The major reconstruction tasks included replacing the chinking, replacing the floor and stripping the newspaper and whitewash from the walls and ceiling. The newspaper had provided insulation; the whitewash, illumination. Stains from the whitewash still mark the wood.

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[2] Two stories about the Kemps are worth repeating. The eldest son, Raymond Kemp, was in his teens at the time he helped with the reconstruction. First, Ray Kemp wanted to attend college but as a black man could not get a loan. He approached Campbell and asked him to co-sign a loan. Campbell agreed, allowing Kemp to attend college where he played football, eventually becoming a pro football player. Upon retirement, he became an athletic director whose most notable achievement was training Wilma Rudolph, the Olympic champion runner.

The second story involves the fact that our long-term tenants, the Ghelarduccis, had a vegetable stand at the end of our lane on Reissing Road. One day I was helping Tillie Ghelarducci when a car stopped and a large, well-dressed black man got out to buy vegetables. He asked if Jim Campbell still lived there. I said, "Yes, he's my father. Are you Ray Kemp?" He said, "Yes. How did you know?" I replied, "My dad always said that Ray Kemp had the broadest shoulders of any man he'd ever seen." Clearly, Kemp was touched.

Another task was to install windows and doors. Martha's father, Jim Davis, was particularly instrumental because he built the three doors that still enclose the cabin. A blacksmith, Davis handmade the strap hinges for all the doors as well as the square-headed nails that hold the floorboards in place. Davis and his wife, Elizabeth, were thrilled that their daughter was restoring a log structure; they drove from Ligonier nearly every weekend to help, often bringing stone gathered in the Laurel Highlands; that stone became the façade of the chimney and the walkways in the gardens which were built the following year.

Jim and Elizabeth Davis

To shore up the deteriorating chimney, Ferg White built a stone façade around the original brick chimney, replicating the style of chimneys commonly being constructed in the "weekend cottages" being built in Ligonier for the steel and business magnates of Pittsburgh. Reportedly, Gwanny or Gwan – the name Marda, the oldest grandchild, created for our grandmother – was the artistic force behind the construction. With all the stones laid out on the floor she'd look over the assortment and say, "Ferg, get that rock there . . yes, that one. I want you to put it there," pointing to a spot on the chimney. Ferg would pick it up and try to put it in place but often say, "Marty, it doesn't fit." Marty, in turn, would say, "Fe-e-erg" and he'd find a way to make it fit.

In addition to the log cabin, the structure as the Campbells found it included a kitchen as an ell off the north side of the cabin. No modification or renovation was done to that room; the two original built-in cupboards, one above the sink and the other, a three-corner cabinet diagonally across the room, are still in place. A large, coal-burning stove dominated the north wall; it was the primary oven and cook top until electricity came to the area in the mid-30s.

The Campbells did need to make some improvements to the house to make it a livable summer cottage. They added a bathroom and dressing room beyond the kitchen, and a screened sleeping porch above the kitchen where the whole family slept. That room has a particularly low ceiling. The Campbells had been told by a relative who was a trained architect that the roofline of the sleeping porch addition should not be higher than the roofline of the primary structure, the log cabin. They accepted his injunction, hence the low ceiling.

View from west showing sleeping loft and bath and dressing room.

The finished house also included a screened porch. I'd always thought that it was a new addition, however a careful reading of the Hastings' *Record* (the book, discussed later, that documents the early history of the property) suggests that at least a footprint for the porch already existed. Hastings wrote that an "addition was made in 1866,

the last mentioned enlargement became in later years the large rear porch, but when originally erected for his family, the area was enclosed by walls." (Hastings, *Record,* p.8).

All of this reconstruction work was completed by late Fall 1928. In the photo album in the cabin, one of the early photos was taken in the fall after all the leaves had fallen from the trees. It seems to be a photo of the newly completed restoration – the kind of picture that a proud new homeowner would take.

Newly refurbished cabin with windows a door and flagstone patio; the teen is probably Jim Campbell, the oldest son.

That winter, Ferg White, his wife, Mary and daughter Jane lived in the log cabin. Jack Campbell purchased a Sears and Roebuck house kit for them that would be delivered via rail car in the spring. Ferg then assembled that kit as a home for his family; thus both the log house and the Sears house are prefab structures. A floor plan for that home is appended to the National Register Nomination. Ferg, a talented craftsman, modified the plan; he added a basement, a chimney, and exchanged two of the large windows in the living room with the two smaller gable-end windows in the attic to conform to the style at the time of small windows flanking the chimney. He built a chicken coop behind the house and raised chickens and eggs for some of the finer restaurants in Pittsburgh.[3]

Sears House

[3] By 1944, Ferg's chicken and egg enterprise was so successful that, he and Mary were able to retire to Florida. Sadly, the families had very little contact after that. Before heading south, Ferg presented Jack Campbell with an invoice for his services, much to Jack's chagrin. Jack had supported Ferg in 1928 and had taken Mary and baby Jane into the Campbell home in Brookline while Ferg worked at the farm; Jack had bought the Sears house kit for the Whites and gave him the capital to start his business; and the Whites had lived there rent-free for 15 years. The Campbells thought that was more than adequate

Creating the Gardens[4]

Over the winter of 1928-29, Jack and Martha began their next major project: planning the gardens that remain today. The area to the southeast of the house was an eyesore; the ravine was a dump filled with cans, bottles, even an automobile car body. (In 2011 when I was weeding the hosta garden below the dam, I found the old clear-glass bottle that's on the mantel.) Beyond the ravine stood a grove of catalpa trees planted by Mr. Clark to be sold when mature as timbers for the Reissing mine. In their original land purchase of fifteen acres, the Campbells had bought roughly half of that stand of timber. But as they conceived their garden, the Campbells realized that the trees were a necessary backdrop to the scene, therefore in March 1929, they purchased the remainder of the catalpa stand along with other land totaling eight additional acres.

The dam and pond immediately after construction.

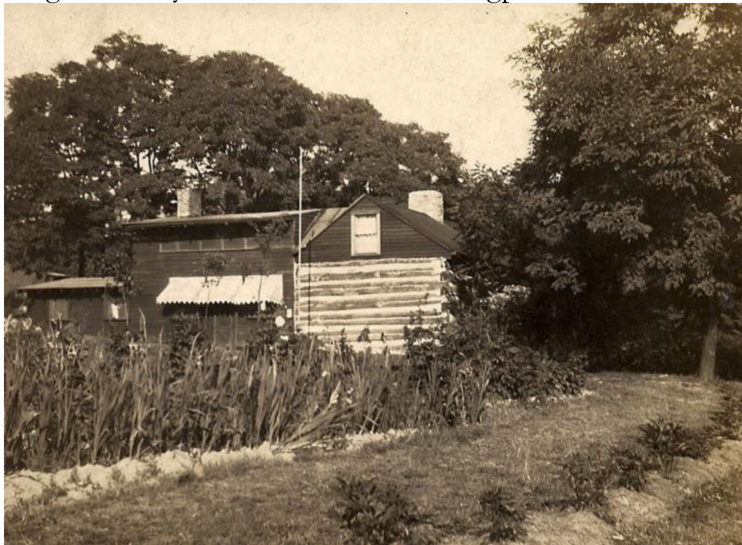
When Summer 1929 arrived, the previous summer's work crew gathered again to implement the Campbell's garden plans. Over the summer they: cleaned out the garbage in the area to become the pond; built the dam to form the pond; built the springhouse topped with the deck to overlook the pond; laid a stone path to the deck and two sets of stone steps, one from the house to the springhouse, the other beside the springhouse up to the deck. All that remains precisely as originally designed and executed which is why the gardens – the carefully crafted landscape, not the flower beds – qualified for the National Register. The crew also built the garage and workshop up the hill from the gardens.

payment for Ferg's services. A permanent rift between the families formed. To the Campbells' credit, they never told either of Martha's other two sisters what caused the rift, but everyone sensed its existence.

[4] When I say "garden", I do *not* mean flowerbeds although flower beds are embedded in the garden. I mean the *landscape* – the setting of the pond, the springhouse and the stone walkways – sometimes referred to as *hardscape*.

In the ensuing years, the Campbells planted daylilies along the near side of the pond, two weeping willow trees on the far side of pond, and a blue spruce on the near side of the pond. All three trees as well as the daylilies were gone by the sixties. Remaining plantings include the junipers (fondly called the bunny bushes because rabbits have always – even to this day – lived there) at the edge of the front lawn, the hemlocks below and beyond the pond as well as at the edge of catalpa forest, the tamarack tree below the dam, the horse chestnut trees above the deck, and the lilac bushes at the upper garage. Jim Davis brought two native American chestnuts which he found in the forests of the Laurel Highlands and planted next to the ravine nearest the catalpa grove; one of them died in the nineties; the other, though unhealthy, is still alive in 2013.

Although the pond setting was the most glorious of the gardens, Gwan and Granddad planted flowers throughout the property. In the wonderful hand-tinted photo of the cabin that's in the photo album, a line of flowers, probably geraniums, graced the steps down to the springhouse. A flagstone patio was built in the ell between the screened porch and the dressing room; a rock garden stretched up the hill from that patio. As a pre-teen when I came downstairs in the morning, Gwan would be sitting on the patio drinking her second cup of coffee; she'd call to me and set me working pulling the weeds she'd spotted while sipping her coffee. A 75-yard long row of pink peonies edged the lane from below Ferg and Mary White's house to the flagpole on the other side of the lane. A series of rose gardens surrounded that flagpole; working there with my father taught me my love of gardening. An iris row (much despised by Mama who had to weed it) edged the vegetable garden.



View of the west side and gardens from driveway.

In addition to the decorative gardens, the Campbells and Whites planted vegetable gardens, orchards and stands of pine trees. A large vegetable garden filled the space between the two houses. More vegetable gardens, particularly for corn to feed the chickens, were planted in the flood plain next to the creek that parallels Reissing Road. A mixed fruit orchard was planted at the highest point in the property, above the vegetable garden. Unfortunately, that orchard was so far removed from the houses that maintenance became burdensome. By the late thirties, the Campbells planted a second mixed fruit orchard just

beyond the workshop. They also planted pines on the steep hillsides on the northwest side of the property below and beyond Ferg and Mary White's house.

Refurbishing the Chinking and Furnishing the Cabin

Although the restoration of the cabin had been completed in the fall of 1928, the summer of 1929 proved to Martha that changes were needed. The Campbells had restored the cabin authentically including the application of chinking made of clay mixed with a binder such as straw or horsehair. During the Campbell's first summer in the cabin, Martha had to dust every day because the clay dust settled on everything. By the end of the summer, Martha was so frustrated with daily dusting that she insisted that the chinking be removed and replaced with concrete.[5] That task was undertaken in Summer 1930. (In his eighties, Don Campbell remembered the restoration process as taking years; since he was only eight or nine years old at the time, and the entire cabin was torn up in 1928 and again in 1930, that misperception is quite understandable.)

The furniture that Martha would have had to dust was gathered from relatives after the cabin was purchased. When they initially acquired the cabin, Jack and Martha didn't have extra furniture, so they asked relatives if they had any furniture to spare. A notable piece that came is the three-cornered cabinet in the corner of the cabin. One of Martha's aunts (or possibly great-aunts) said that in her basement she had an old cabinet that she used to story jelly jars; that cabinet, probably dating to the early 1800's, is built of solid walnut.

Many other pieces of furniture came from the family but I cannot verify which arrived in the earliest days and which arrived after my great-grandparents, Jim and Elizabeth Davis, died in the mid-30s. Davis family heirlooms include:

- The spinning wheel, a much-used tool of one of Gwanny's ancestors.
- The drop-leaf, gate leg table (currently in the kitchen), which served as a sewing table for the owner of the spinning wheel.
- The dough tray (or kneading table) for making bread; dough would be placed in the well of the table to rise, then returned to the tabletop to be kneaded.
- The white china in the top shelf of the three-cornered cabinet was the wedding china of the Davises; many other pieces in that cabinet came from them also.
- The 24-hour mantel clock.

Dough tray

[5] A recent visitor who is a professional restoration contractor, expressed his amazement that the concrete is in such good condition even now, eighty-three years later. He earns much of his livelihood by re-pointing the concrete in older homes in Shadyside, an elegant, older suburb of Pittsburgh.

Seth Thomas Mantel Clock

  - The Seth Thomas mantel clock has a wonderful history. Jim Davis, the blacksmith, went to an estate sale in Ligonier and paid $0.15 for the clock which had no works but was, in Davis's opinion, quite attractive. When the sale ended, Davis offered to buy the many cigar boxes full of odds and ends for 10 cents apiece; as a blacksmith he could melt many of the pieces and use the metal. Surveying the boxes, he discovered that one box contained the original wooden works of the clock. A clock repairman assembled the which in 2013 still keeps perfect time.
  - Note that inside the clock are written instructions (which a clock repairman assured us increases the value) that say, in part, if you take good care of the clock, it will provide years of service. The clock dates to 1810-25.
  - The Davises had four daughters: Jane, Martha (Gwanny), Mary and Alice. Both Jane and Mary believed that their parents had promised them the clock, a treasured family piece, as their inheritance. They fought intensely over the clock but had reached no resolution at the time that the Ligonier house was broken up. As a temporary solution, Jane and Mary agreed that Martha would hold the clock. The conflict was never resolved, therefore, Martha's family has the clock.
  - The next story is much more recent: 1983. I had begun dating Bill Marshall. Since he would be alone on New Year's Day and Mother and I had no plans, I asked if she would invite Bill to dinner; she agreed, although she didn't know we were dating. When she learned that he was an engineer, she asked if he could repair her clock. He agreed to try and brought the clock out to the dining room table, removed the front, and quickly saw that one of the ropes had come off its pulley. He put it back together; it worked perfectly and he immediately earned a treasured spot in Mother's heart.
- The barn lantern that hangs just inside the door leading from the living room/dining room into the cabin.

  - Great-grandfather Davis made the lantern. It's called a barn lantern because it could have been carried to the barn on the windiest of nights but the flame wouldn't be extinguished. The design of the cutwork prevents wind from blowing through because horizontal cuts are across from vertical cuts, leaving only a pinpoint of air to pass through. Also, the edges of the cuts face out making it very hard for straw to penetrate into the lamp. Thus, the lantern could be set down on the barn floor without a concern that a straw would penetrate and catch fire.
  - Note the cast iron snake curling around the iron bracket, both of which were made by the blacksmith, Davis.
- The bed and dresser belonged to the William Howard and Hannah Jane Covode (my paternal great-great grandparents) whose photos hang above the bed.

- The framed funeral wreath and the print beside it, *The Monarch of the Glen*
    - The funeral wreath dates to the 1885 death of Sadie Covode, Gwanny's great-aunt, who died at the age of 16 of rheumatic fever. The wreath, made of real roses and fern, was dipped in paraffin and preserved in the shadow box, a custom of the Victorian era. The text reads "In Memory of our DEAR SADIE". Initially, it hung in the home of William Howard and Hannah Jane Covode, whose photos hang over the bed. On their death, their oldest daughter, Elizabeth (my great-grandmother), took it; on her death, it came to the farm[6] along with everything else from the Ligonier house that no one else wanted. The photo beside the wreath entitled *The Monarch of the Glen* has a caption that reads "Presented to Sadie Covode from the M.E.S (Methodist Episcopal Sunday school)". Sadie earned the print for her faithful attendance in Sunday school. Sadie's autograph book from 1885 sits on the table under the window.

- The two guns hanging above the door to the outside; the longer gun has a name plate reading Goulcher; Goulchers supplied rifles to Americans in the Revolution.

    - I presume these guns belonged to William Howard Covode but do not know the exact provenance. In colonial times, settlers customarily hung their guns above the door so they would be easy to grab as they ran outside. Near the guns are two powder horns, one made of horn, the other of metal.
    - Frequently when I give tours of the cabin, I take down the long rifle to let my visitors feel how heavy it is and explain that riflemen rested the stock of the long rifle on a tree branch or a fence when they were hunting for game to feed their family. When those riflemen became soldiers in the American Revolution, they had to bring their rifles with them and, during battles, they used their rifles just as they had when they hunted game. Thus, in the battle of Lexington and Concord, our soldiers lay behind stone walls and shot at the British walking down the center of the road. The British considered our conduct unsoldierly, however, after feeling the weight of the gun, my tour guests understand that our soldiers were using them the only way they could possibly be used.

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[6] Although no farming has been done on the property for decades, we've always referred to the property as "the farm". No other term, particularly "estate", seems appropriate for a place where we work so hard.

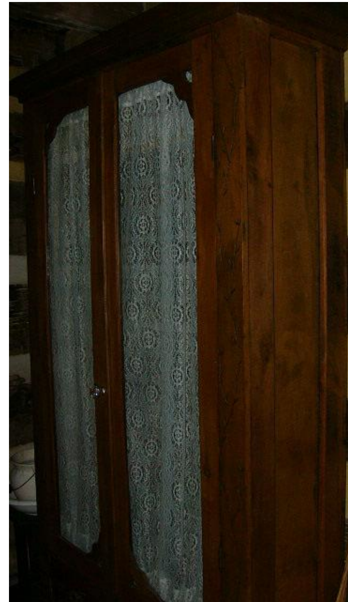
- One visitor reported that in early America, a man could be accused of murder if he used a long rifle with rifling in the barrel to kill another man. If, on the other hand, he used a gun like the shotgun on the wall, he could only be accused of manslaughter because killing was so unlikely using a gun without rifling.

- The three banks atop the desk.
    - In 1876, William Howard and Hannah Jane Covode went to the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia where they bought a bank that replicates Independence Hall. Fifty years later, their granddaughter, Alice Roberts (Gwanny's youngest sister) went to the Sesquicentennial Exposition and bought the bank that replicates the Liberty Bell. In 1976, Mama saw an ad in *Smithsonian Magazine* stating that someone had found the 100-year-old mold used to make the Independence Hall bank; they were recasting the bank from that original mold. Mama and Dad bought that new replica; if you study both banks closely, you'll see that the detail is not quite as crisp on the new bank.

Other interesting articles in the cabin which are not Davis family items:

- The grandfather clock has been handed down through the Campbell family to the eldest son since the early 1800's. This seven-day clock still works perfectly in 2013.
- The Siamese, brass topped table.
    - In 1936, Pittsburgh experienced one of its worst floods. The first floor of Kaufmanns department store was underwater. As an insurance adjuster, Jack Campbell was called in to assess the damage. One piece that was judged a total loss was the Siamese table (note the cracks in the dragon's head and the lost ear on one dragon). When Campbell returned the next day, he asked where the table was; they replied that it had been sent to the dump. Campbell went to the dump and retrieved it.

- The drop front desk given to my maternal grandfather, John Allen Douglass, M.D., in payment for medical services. His wife was noted for simply shoving papers inside and closing the desk top when guests arrived.
- The chifferobe in the bedroom area.
    - Mother and I found the chifferobe in an abandoned farm house in Settler's Cabin Park. Although virtually every other window in the building was shattered, the glass doors to the chifferobe were intact. With permission from Allegheny County Parks and Recreation and help from Dennis and Tillie (Ghelarducci) Uchal, we removed the cabinet which Mother refinished. The carving on the front is associated with an organization known as Goodfellows, a philanthropic organization in the 1800's.



- The blue and gold cocoa set in the corner given to us by a Mt. Lebanon friend who told us the set had survived the Johnstown flood of 1889.

A few items of interest are in other parts of the house.

- The washstand on the porch (living room/dining room) came from the Douglass family.
- The metal star hanging by the entrance to the cabin was made by Jim Davis.
- The French clock on the washstand in the living room/dining room.
    - My grandfather befriended a French immigrant who lost his job in the Great Depression and wanted to take the opportunity to visit his homeland. Before he left, he brought a marble clock to Campbell, asking him to hold it while he was away. The clock was his most valuable possession; he didn't want it stolen in his absence. The Frenchman never returned; Granddad always assumed that the clock was his way of repaying my grandfather for the financial support he had provided. This seven-day clock keeps perfect time in 2013.
- The three-cornered cabinet in the living room/dining room is a replica built by Ferg White of the walnut cabinet in the cabin.
- The rocking chair in the kitchen sat in the kitchen of Hannah Jane Covode, Gwan's maternal grandmother, in the 1870s and 1880s.

- The enamel-topped table in the center of the kitchen and the glass cabinet hanging on the wall when together formed a Hoosier cabinet. The caramel glass in the cabinet is slag glass made in the early 1990s using a formula lost on the death of the inventor.
- In 1912, Gwan and Granddad started their life together with the green-seated rocking chair.

Living at the Farm

The Campbells used the cabin as a summer home, moving from the Pittsburgh suburb of Brookline the day school ended, returning to Brookline the day school started. Their three teenaged sons, however, weren't as enthusiastic about the arrangement as their parents. Wanting to hang out with other teenagers, they chose to walk the three miles to McDonald where they quickly made friends with local boys. Those locals soon learned to reciprocate because the Campbells built a clay tennis court where they held regular matches. When the Campbell boys left home in the late 30s, the tennis court was abandoned. That court was at the bottom of the hill 100 yards below Ferg and Mary White's house. Even 70 years later, no trees have taken root in that densely packed clay soil.

Our dad playing tennis.

Another source of entertainment and exercise was the badminton court beyond the ravine and below the catalpa grove. Because it was much closer to the house, it remained in use until the early sixties when a flash flood washed rock and debris onto the court, ruining it. But for many years the senior and junior Campbell families spent wonderful evenings playing there. The entry to the court was across a bridge made by splitting a 15-foot long, 10-inch diameter, straight tree trunk and laying the two sections side-by-side

When the Campbell family first started summering at the farm, Betty Douglass who would become my mother, Mrs. James Campbell, was at the Chautauqua Girl's Club for the summer. Her friends back home wrote to her about a new, very handsome boy in town. When she got back to town, she sought him out. Their first date on November 15, 1930, was the McDonald High School Sadie Hawkins Day Dance to which Mother had invited him. At midnight, Dad turned 16. He had driven 20 miles from his home in Brookline to McDonald. As they walked to the dance, he asked if she had bought the tickets; she hadn't, although for him to have purchased the tickets would have involved a 40-mile roundtrip drive. Amazingly, her irresponsibility didn't deter him; they were married 10 years later.

The farm quickly became the very refuge that the Campbell's hoped to create. At that time in the mid-30s, the trees that now dominate the space between our front lawn and Reissing Road had just barely begun to sprout from the former cow pasture. Nothing obstructed the view across the valley. Jack became concerned was that he'd soon see other houses. To ensure his pristine view, he bought nineteen acres on the west side of Reissing Road. He bought all the land as far north and south as he could see from the front patio and up high enough on the other hill to control the two springs. (To this day in 2013, we

own that one-half mile stretch of steep hillside although we cannot see it because the trees on our side of the hill have grown so tall. I did not suggest including the opposite hillside as part of our historic property.)

Throughout the '30s, the farm was the gathering point for the Davis family. Virtually every weekend in nice weather Jim and Sarah Davis drove from Ligonier and all four Davis daughters, their husbands and children gathered at the farm for picnics, tennis, badminton or softball. In the 40s, all three Campbell boys served in the military. After the war, the middle son, Bob, headed for California and convinced his younger brother, Don, to join him.

When Granddad Campbell died on December 22, 1945, his wife inherited the farm. She kept ownership of the property until December 23, 1952 when she transferred title to her oldest son, my father, James Covode Campbell, M.D. (What a Christmas present!). Both of the other sons were living in California and readily accepted that Dad would inherit the farm and they would get cash upon their mother's death. The middle son, Bob, died in 1957; the youngest son, Don, died in Winston-Salem, North Carolina in Summer 2012.

J

James Covode Campbell, M.D.

Laura Elizabeth (Betty) Douglass Campbell

One of the biggest challenges arose in the late 40s when the spring that had provided water to the house was lost to a mine disaster. The spring water flooded the mine, destroying the mining equipment. Subsequently, finding water and setting up a pumping and storage system became the first task each spring. One year Daddy and our tenant, Leo Ghelarducci (whose family rented the White house from 1948 to 2008) laid pipe from a spring on the opposite hill to the bottom of the front lawn. A few years later, Leo identified the spring below the catalpa grove. Initially, the water was stored in 55-gallon drums at the edge of the pond. When that spring proved reliable, Leo built the 450-gallon reservoir and pump house that we continue to use.

Dad and Mom and their family – Marda Beth, James Covode, Jr., Joyce Douglass, and me, Nancy Ann – lived on the farm exactly as his parents had. The day school ended, we moved from our house in Mt. Lebanon; the day school started, we moved back. Marda, Jim and Nancy thrived; Joyce resented being away from her friends in Mt. Lebanon. Marda and I had close companions on the farm – Ernesta and Tillie Ghelarducci – but all six (seven when the youngest sister Janet Ghelarducci was old enough) of us played baseball, croquet and badminton in the evening throughout the summer. Jim and I shared a love of cherry picking – in fact of any work at the farm. Jim is the one who laid most of the brick (now much overgrown) that stretches from the house up to the upper garage. I'll always fondly recall the chinning bar he and Dad installed between the Linden and Locust trees outside the kitchen so that he could start getting into shape for his Boy Scout fitness merit badge; over that summer he lost his baby fat which he never regained.

Through the 40s, 50s and 60s, the farm was in a holding pattern. The orchards couldn't be maintained because Mom and Dad were so busy raising four children. The lawns were mowed and the rose garden was lovely, but Mother struggled to keep up with the perennial garden begun by her mother-in-law. The lower fields, no longer used for corn, were planted with pine provided by the Washington County Agricultural Extension Service. The saddest loss, however, was the pond. Every summer it dried up. Water seeped through the shale bottom and evaporated, leaving a mud hole that was so unsightly that we spent little time on that side of the house. We picnicked and played on the garden side of the house.

The Hastings Visit

One summer day in 1964, Mother and I were alone at the farm when a car drove up with California license plates. A woman got out, introduced herself, and with tears in her eyes said, "My grandfather was born here." The woman, Mrs. Wood, her husband and son had driven from California to do genealogical research for Mrs. Wood's father, Daniel Hastings, who traced his family back to Cecil Township. Mr. Hastings had drawn a map for his daughter to find the log house that he considered the family homestead. They were thrilled to find that the home was not only standing but lovingly restored and maintained. The Woods spent the afternoon visiting and photographing the cabin, then left with many thanks.

In November a package arrived from California containing a letter and a book in which Mr. Hastings had handwritten the history of the area, including information about the origin of the cabin. That book and letter are kept in the cabin; a typed version is appended to this record. The first pages of the book show a hand-drawn map of the original landholdings in Cecil and South Fayette. Hastings records that our cabin was built by David Stevenson (or Stephenson – the spellings are interchangeable throughout the book) in 1778 on property Stevenson warranted[7] under the name Woodbury. Stevenson sold the property to Thomas Short in 1785 before the patent[8] was issued under the "Right of Tomahawk Claim"[9], the legal provision to grant ownership to settlers without prior rights to the property. Thus Short, not Stevenson, received the patent for the property. Before we received the book, we had no idea when the cabin was built because the deed that my grandparents received in 1928 did not reference the court document that gave the Clarks ownership of the land. Without that reference, tracing the history of the cabin proved too difficult for my grandparents.

The book is a curiosity. The map at the beginning is unique. The Citizens Library in Washington, Penna., has a book entitled *The Horn Papers* that maps all of the original land holdings in Washington County. The Pennsylvania Room of the Carnegie Library in Pittsburgh, has a book entitled *Warrantee Atlas of Allegheny County* containing maps of the original land holdings in Allegheny County. The border between the two counties goes through David Stevenson's property therefore it is included in both maps. The map that Mr. Hastings drew is particularly noteworthy because it spans both of county maps. I presume that actual source of Hastings' map is a history buff in the Sprowl family because of the notes in the upper right corner of the map that mention the Sprowls who were neighbors to the immediate north of Stevenson's property and who intermarried with the Hastings. Descendants of the Sprowls still lived on that property when the Hastings family lived in our log cabin; they probably told the Hastings the history of our cabin for the Sprowl cabin was built the same year. The remainder of the book focuses on the Hastings family and the early days of Cecil Township including Indian attacks.

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[7] The warrant is request for a patent which, in the case of a request by Right of Tomahawk Claim (the law allowing squatters to take legal possession), must include statements by legitimate owners in the area that the requestor/squatter is an upstanding member of the community.

[8] A patent is issued by the government to the first owner of a public land; subsequent ownership is transferred through deeds.

[9] Mother chose to adopt the name "Tomahawk Claim" because she found it so fascinating; Woodbury, the original name, didn't appeal to her because it lacked panache.

Refurbishing the Pond and Gardens

On June 7, 1967, our brother, Lt. James Covode Campbell, Jr. died at age 22 in an auto accident just hours before he was to graduate from the U.S. Naval Academy. Dad and Mom decided to use the insurance money to create a memorial for him; they weighed several options before deciding that refurbishing the pond would be the perfect tribute because of Jim's love of the farm. Over the winter of 1967-68, they consulted with a member of the Washington County Agricultural Extension Service, who proposed dredging the pond, then applying gunnite, a sprayed version of concrete. In the summer of 1968, a local contractor performed the work. While they were dredging the pond to get to bedrock, the contractor lifted one large flat rock, studied it, and asked Mama if she'd like them to save it to place it beside the pond. She immediately embraced the idea. That's the rock on the edge of the far side of the pond. In addition to dredging and gunniting the pond, the contractor dug a sump in the ravine below the pond and buried a pipe from the sump up to the springhouse. The theory was that the water that constantly seeps out of the hillside would fill the sump, then the water in the sump could be pumped into the springhouse (with a sump pump!) to keep the pond full in dry weather. That system still works perfectly in 2013. In fact, we may still be using the original sump pump. The pond project was a heartwarming success and a lasting tribute to a life cut too short.

In 1970, Daddy had patients on whom he made regular house calls. They had beautiful daylilies which reminded him that his mother had daylilies planted beside the pond. He decided to revive the plantings and asked his patients how to go about it. They told him that the president of the Pittsburgh Iris and Daylily Society, Bob Smith, was a Cecil resident. Daddy contacted Smith and went to visit him at his home just off Miller's Run Road. Smith's collection of daylilies was breathtaking – far more impressive than Dad's patient's collection. Daddy was convinced that daylilies were the way to go, and invited Smith to see the newly refurbished pond. Smith came and agreed to both design the gardens and supply the daylilies. His design – three rows of daylilies, separated by a path, with three breaks

between the rows to have access to the pond – remains exactly the same today as he conceived it four decades ago. Smith provided all of the lilies on the cabin side of the pond; lilies on the other side came from a variety of sources, including a special memorial gift from Daddy's brother, Don. The hillside full of lilies came from the patients' gardens, new daylily friends, and people in Beaver, Pennsylvania, who were tearing out their daylily gardens. Although I've continually purchased new daylilies, I've kept the entire daylily garden design exactly as it was in 1972 when Daddy finalized it.

The 1975 Addition

The next change at the farm came in 1975 when Dad and Mama decided to remodel and winterize the house to retire there. They selected a local architect, Ed Schade, because he had won awards for the remodeling he did on his own century-old home. They gave him a few requirements:

- Do nothing to affect the integrity of the cabin.
- Leave the kitchen exactly as is.
- Tear down the deteriorating screened porch, but create a room that has the same feel.
- Include a bedroom on the main floor.

Schade perfectly met their requirements and added features particularly appropriate for additions to historic homes. For example, he offset the additions, bringing them out as little as one foot (the living room/dining room) and as much as three feet (the bathroom and bedroom wing) to draw a clear distinction between the old and the new. He used brick, not wood, for the addition to establish even more contrast to the historic part of the house. He lined the hallway and bedroom with windows, continuing the theme established by the living room/dining room.

Paul Descutner of McDonald won the contract to remodel the house. His first suggestion was to tear down the kitchen and replace it with something modern. Mother flatly rejected that. So Descutner went to work, first tearing down the screened porch and the old bathroom, dressing room and hallway. That work revealed that the joists supporting the kitchen were rotten at the base; Descutner called Mother to say he'd have to tear down the kitchen. Mother called Schade who went to the site, reviewed the situation, and told Descutner to double-joist by cutting away the rotten bottom and nailing new two-by-fours to the good section of the old joists. The whole kitchen had to be propped up on two-by-fours to accomplish that. While it was propped, they poured concrete throughout the kitchen and the addition. Next, Descutner put the four-by-eight beams in the living room/dining room, starting with the beam closest to the pond. The final beam, the one abutting the kitchen proved problematic: the kitchen was not perfectly square to the cabin, so the beam which started touching the kitchen wall was eight inches from the kitchen wall by the time it got to the hallway. Again, Descutner told Mother he needed to tear down the kitchen. Again, Schade went out. The solution was to build the new wall (the white oak wall) flush with the beam, allowing a hollow space to develop between the kitchen and living room/dining room walls. You can see this if you note the difference between the thickness of the wall at the doorway between the kitchen and the living room/dining room and the thickness when you're standing in the hallway leading to the stairs. The rest of the construction proceeded uneventfully, finishing in the Summer 1976.

In September, Joyce and Sam Maccarone were married on the front patio of the cabin. Two months later, our father was diagnosed with cancer, had surgery and began chemotherapy. Although they were initially hopeful about Dad's response to the chemotherapy, by late spring he returned to the hospital where the doctors discovered more, inoperable cancer. In June, he came home to the farm to die. Friends and family supported them in the final two months:

- A doctor, our uncle Jim Hughey
- And his wife, Aunt Peggy who undertook many housekeeping projects
- two nurses – Aunt Rachel and Aunt Mary Robb
- the entire congregation of the Mt. Lebanon Methodist Church
- and an abundance of friends who offered to do anything to help[10]

Mom stayed by Dad's side throughout the two months. When Daddy initially became ill, Mama thought that she couldn't keep the farm without him; as she cared for him over those eight months, she realized she could never leave it. The farm had been the vehicle for their meeting and the center of their lives for nearly five decades; to leave would be impossible. So in the final days, Daddy talked to Mama about the things she'd have to do, in particular,

[10] It was this abundance of support that prompted Mother to establish South Hills Family Hospice to ensure that other caretakers would have the same depth of support that she had.

buy a new riding lawn mower. By the time he died in bed at the farm on August 11, 1977, at the age of 62, they'd mapped out Mama's future.

At the time, I was in graduate school at the University of Maryland. I realized that Mama couldn't maintain the farm without help, so I decided to move back to Pittsburgh upon graduation. From 1979 until Mama's death on April 7, 1990 at the age of 75, I spent virtually every weekend at the farm – gardening in the spring, summer and fall and chopping firewood through the winter. Mother and I managed to keep the farm pretty much exactly as Daddy had left it.

We did encounter two problems: carpenter ants were eating a log below the window beside the front door. When my roommate from Washington, D.C. and her husband came to visit, he chiseled away the rotting wood and covered it with concrete. A few years later we noticed that a log on the other side of the front door was corroding. Lenny Kemp, a son of the Kemp who helped restore the cabin in 1928, was still alive and agreed to give us one of the logs from the log house on his property that had long-since collapsed. A friend and Leo Ghelarducci helped insert that replacement log. While working on that project, I was able to see under the floorboards of the cabin to see the tree stumps that underlie the entire structure.

On August 10, 1985, Bill and I got married in a ceremony on the front lawn. The two of us continued to spend weekends at the farm helping mom. When she was dying in 1990, I took a leave of absence from Westinghouse Electric to care for her in her home. She died, as had Dad, in her own bed in the bedroom overlooking the pond.

Upon Mama's death, the ownership of the farm was jointly shared by the three sisters – Marda, Joyce and me – under a trust set up by Mama. Joyce, the executrix of the trust, would happily have sold the farm; Marda and I couldn't. For several years, we kept the shared arrangement, but it was extremely difficult for Bill. We had all of the responsibility for the gardens and the upkeep of the house, but only shared authority. Three years into the arrangement, Marda proposed letting Bill and me buy them out.

The 1995 Addition

In December 1994, a year after we took ownership of the farm, Bill had an opportunity to take early retirement from Westinghouse Electric Corporation. We could only afford to take the opportunity if we sold our home in Penn Hills east of Pittsburgh and moved to the farm. I had three requirements before agreeing to move: a second bathroom; a garage attached to the house; and a dog. On December 23rd, we got Fritz, our first German Shepherd, a fabulous dog who adored Bill and me, but was quite leery of most

others, especially Marda and Bill's son, Mike. Throughout the spring, we worked on plans for the addition to the house, consulting with an award-winning architect who came up with a truly awful plan for an addition stretching toward the deck above the springhouse. We then consulted with a builder, Lutz Contracting, recommended by our cousin, Charles Hughey. Sitting at the dining room table, we drew rough sketches of what we wanted and those became the final plans. The only idea we got from the architect was the loop road in front of the kitchen.

Lutz built the floor, walls, and roof and installed the water lines for the addition which is entirely beside and behind my parent's addition; you can tell where the Lutzes punched through the outside walls to create doorways because the openings are 10-12 inches wide. Bill did the finishing work on the inside: the electrical wiring, interior framing, drywall, plumbing, cabinetry, painting and wallpapering. During the winter of 1996-97, he remodeled the upstairs, finally enclosing the screened sleeping porch. In the spring of 2001, we installed the new kitchen cabinetry and dishwasher.

Our addition included a two-car garage, a second bath, and additional storage.

Every addition – 1928, 1975, and 1995 – moved further back into the hillside. No addition ever affected the integrity of the log structure. I was particularly sensitive to that when I read the criticism by the Turnpike Commission: ". . . the large addition to the log house appears to compromise its design and feeling to the point that it would not be eligible." In my 2001 cover letter to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission I wrote:

> Finally, I want to address the Commission's primary criticism: the additions. From the time of the Campbell's addition in 1928, through the 1975 and 1995 additions, the family has continually respected the integrity of the log structure itself. Three sides of the log house are exposed; indeed, the logs on the fourth side are exposed in the porch area. The interior of the log house looks much as it would have in 1778, save the electric wires to supply current to table and floor lamps. Each addition has been built behind the previous, banking into the hill behind the house. No addition has ever had a higher roof line than the original cabin, forcing some rooms to have ceilings as low as six-and-one-half feet.

The National Register Nomination

In December, 2000, on my way home from a volunteer project, I stopped at the South Fayette High School where the Southern Beltway Project Management Team was holding a town meeting to reveal their latest plans for the Pennsylvania Turnpike expansion proposed to bisect the area, eventually connecting the Pittsburgh airport with Monroeville, PA. Bill and I had been following the project since we moved to the farm. Earlier in 2000, two young historians hired by the Commission had come to assess the significance of our log home; we never heard back from them. At the town meeting I saw a 50-70 foot long map with the proposed route for the project. As I studied the map, I realized that the route cut a diagonal swath from a midway point in the eastern border of our property through the catalpa forest. The design engineers proposed an exit ramp from the turnpike which would run along the far edge of the catalpa grove; they needed to appropriate more land to fill the ravine. As a result, we would lose most of the catalpa forest, gazing instead on a man-made mountain of rock filling the ravine. I was appalled.

I immediately went home and brought Bill back to see the latest design. We met with the project manager who informed us that the Turnpike Commission had determined that our log cabin had no historic significance and, at any rate, their design didn't affect the log cabin. I was sick. The prospect of gazing at a four-lane highway crushed me. The project manager gave me the name Doug Reynolds, the man at the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission who was dealing with the project and could explain why our home was rejected.

Immediately after Christmas I began my quest to determine what I could do to overturn the decision. My first step was to contact the Washington County Historical Society. My question: did they know of any log cabins in Cecil Township older than 1778 because I presumed that being the oldest would have some value. They answered by mentioning log cabins built in 1790 or 1785 in other townships in Washington County. They couldn't identify any as old as ours in either Cecil or, in fact, in all of Washington County. I then put phone calls in to historic societies in the other southwestern Pennsylvania counties to learn of their earliest log cabins. Only Westmoreland County could identify any older than ours. Suddenly I'd realized that ours is the oldest log cabin west of Westmoreland County. We'd known for thirty years how old our cabin was; we'd never known the significance of that date

My next move was to call Doug Reynolds. He informed me that the two young historians had recommended that our home be declared historic, but the Turnpike Commission had overruled them saying, "It's just another old log cabin; old log cabins are a dime a dozen." My assumption that being among the oldest in the area would be important was incorrect, at least in part because at some time someone else might be able to prove their log home is older. Being the oldest wouldn't save our cabin; we needed more.

Reynolds explained that the Pennsylvania History and Museum Commission applied the guidelines of the federal government in determining whether a property had historic significance; the criteria that would apply to our home would be *architectural significance*, not "who slept here" or how old. To get my property protected, I needed to provide "statements of significance" of the *architecture* of the cabin. In addition, I needed to be able to trace the ownership back to the time of construction in the 1700s, a daunting task given that my grandparent's deed had no backward ownership trace.

Earlier when I visited with the Washington County Historical Society, they recommended that I contact Terry Necciai, an architect who specialized in writing nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. I called him and he agreed to come to see us. When he arrived the first week of January, he stopped his car next to the cabin where I gave him an explanation of our family's history with the house. Then we walked toward the pond. No snow had fallen; the scene was a bleak winter day. Terry asked about the gardens. I told him that my grandparents had built them in 1929 and we'd maintained them ever since just as they'd been designed. His response: "I don't care about your old log cabin; I can save your gardens." I had no idea that gardens are "landscaped sites" eligible for historic protection. In addition, Terry thought that the White house, an original Sears prefab, should be included in the nomination. Finally, we had a path to put together a revised nomination that had a reasonable chance of success.

Tracing the Ownership

The fact that the gardens could save our property was wonderful news, but I was still determined to protect the cabin also. One requirement to qualify for the National Register is the ability to trace the ownership of the property. That was going to be difficult because my grandparents' deed did not have the citation that proved how the seller, Clark, had title to the property. So instead of working backwards in time – the common procedure to trace ownership – I had to start with the Stevenson information and move forward. All of the early information for deeds in Washington County is stored, not at the courthouse, but in the Washington County library, Citizens Library, on microfiche. We copied the paperwork for Stevenson as well as Thomas Short, the person who purchased the property from Stevenson even before the patent (original deed) was issued by the state.

The deeds include written descriptions of the boundaries of the property. In our case, those descriptions are handwritten with references to antiquated lengths and measures – rods and perches. To make matters more confusing, a perch is a measure of both length and area. On the internet we learned that rods and perches are interchangeable, both measuring 16.5 feet. The unpunctuated, hand-written description in Stevenson's patent reads:

> Beginning at a Linn [tree] on the banks of [Miller's Run] thence by lands of one Biggarts North eighty eight degrees West sixty five perches to an Ash North fifty seven degrees West fifty four perches to a White Oak North thirteen degrees West twenty one perches to an Ironwood thence by land of the Widow Roseberry North fifty two degrees West Sixty four perches to a Red Oak North West one hundred and thirty six perches to a White Oak thence by lands of Hugh Sprowls South fifty four degrees West one hundred and forty eight perches to a post thence by lands of the Heirs of David Andrews South forty degrees East three hundred and sixty four perches to a Willow on the Banks of the aforesaid Run thence down the same two hundred and forty three perches to the Place of Beginning.

Bill, the physicist-mathematician, was able to help me understand that "north eighty-eight degrees west" described the angle, i.e. direction, of the line and "sixty-five perches" described the length, then he reminded me how to use a protractor to draw the maps. With that help, I was able to draw the map of Stevenson's property, Woodbury, which Stevenson kept it for only a dozen years before selling to Thomas Short.

Short's deed begins quite differently than Stevenson's: "Beginning at a post adjoining land of David Andrews" but soon gets to the Linn tree on Biggart's line then duplicates the earlier survey. Thus, the deed proves that Short bought all of Stevenson's property. Short, however, began to sell off sections of the property. My challenge was to figure out which of the five purchasers bought the land that the cabin now sits on. To do that, I had to draw maps of all the sales using the handwritten descriptions in those two-century-old deeds. The results are in the white binder, *Research to Qualify this Log House for the National Register of Historic Places,* kept in the cabin. While diligently transcribing all of the survey descriptions, I began to recognize commonalities. The 1791 deed from Short to Cutbertson reads "beginning at a Linn tree on the banks of Millers Run thence north eighty-eight degrees west sixty-five perches to an ash". That's the southeast corner of the Stevenson/Short property. Miller bought the southwest corner in 1797, Logan the northwest in 1806, and David Given, the northeast in 1803.

But which was ours? Again the Hastings' book provided the key: the neighbor to our north, Sprowls, was cited in both Stevenson's and Given's deeds. At last I had the first three owners of our log house.

Along the way in this process, historians suggested that I confirm the original date of the house, i.e. validate the Hastings assertion. They proposed that one way to check was via the Window Tax, a levy imposed by the federal government in the 1790s to pay Revolutionary War debts. I didn't find Stevenson or Short as payees nor did I find any reference to taxes paid by the Sprowls or the Roseberrys, Stevenson's immediate neighbors. I was dismayed until a Pitt doctoral student speculated that all three homes were so old that they didn't have glazing – windows – a necessary condition for the tax. The original openings would have been covered with shutters or hides, but no glass. The earliest photos of the cabin offer no evidence of window panes or window frames. Another historian suggested that I check the property taxes paid to determine when the house was built; a jump would indicate construction. I spent hours looking at tax records from the 1780s and '90s, seeing no jumps. Then I checked the listings for the McConnell house which I knew was built in 1805. Their taxes remained steady throughout the middle of the decade. The explanation: taxes were not levied on homes; they were levied on acreage, livestock, and even slaves, but not buildings. The historians' suggestions to check the Hastings dates caused me to waste dozens of hours.

When I finally learned more about the process of claiming land, I realized that the very process of getting the original warrant and patent proved the age of the house. The Hastings' letter states that Stevenson took possession of the property through "Right of Tomahawk Claim." In the 1770s, the Pennsylvania legislature had established a procedure to allow settlers who otherwise had no legal authority to own the land to take legal possession of their property. The conditions were: they had to live on the land for at least five years; build a home on the property; and prove themselves to be worthy neighbors as attested by people in the area with rightful claim to their land (many settlers won grants of land by fighting in the French and Indian Wars or later conflicts). The papers submitted by Stevenson, including the warrant application, prove that in 1786 he sought ownership through Tomahawk Claim. His house must have been built at least five years before 1786.

But . . . back to the history trace. I confirmed that Short sold to Givens, then Givens sold his entire holding to William Langan in 1814. In April 1831, Langan sold his land to two parties, William Cavanaugh and John Roseberry. Again, I was back to drawing maps to figure out who bought the cabin. The name "Roseberry" should have registered as the name of Stevenson's neighbor to the northeast; in retrospect, I realize that Roseberry

was simply adding the Stevenson/Short/Given/Langan property to his in order to get access to the springs on our property. Unfortunately, the trail ended there; John Roseberry didn't sell any property.

So I was back to the Clark deed. The Campbells bought their land from Mary Clark. When her husband, James E. Clark, died intestate, she and her children jointly owned their 600-acre farm. In order to sell to Campbell, all the Clark children had to rescind their rights to the land which they did in deeds executed shortly before the Campbell purchase. At the Allegheny County Courthouse, I was able to find documentation that James had inherited the property from his father, Rudolph Clark. Rudolph had purchased land from Alexander Fitzpatrick and James McPeak. I copied both deeds but had no idea how to proceed until I carefully read the deed between Fitzpatrick and Clark and saw a name I recognized: Roseberry. After describing the boundaries, the deed reads:

> the above described pieces of land being the same that John Roseberry by his last will and testament gave and bequeathed to the said Alexander Fitzpatrick bearing the date the thirteenth day of March of A.D. one thousand eight hundred and forty one, and recorded in the registrars office in Allegheny County

At last after three months of painstaking research, I had the complete trace of ownership of the land:

- David Stevenson, 1786
- Thomas Short, 1789
- David Givens, 1803
- William Langan, 1814
- John Roseberry, 1831
- Alexander Fitzpatrick, 1841
- Rudolph Clark, 1858
- James Clark, ??? don't have Xeroxes of the documentation.
- Mary Clark, 1924
- John Sherman Campbell, 1928

Documenting the Architectural Significance

During my search, I carefully kept the names and phone numbers of every person mentioned by any other reference. One person mentioned by Terry Necciai was Jennifer Ford, a Ph.D. student at the University of Pittsburgh who was working on her doctorate in "vernacular housing" – the original houses in the colonial period. I called her and told her about my situation. We talked and she explained that she was very busy, but she could answer a few questions. She asked the size of the house; I responded 14 by 32. She said, "Yes, a saddlebag or double-pen plan." Then she asked: "What is the size of the longest log?" I said, "32 feet". She kept asking the size, and I kept repeating 32 feet. Most log cabins that are that long are made of logs 20 feet long, joining logs 12-14 feet long. When she heard that ours were single logs 32 feet long, she finally relented and said that she had to come to see it. She came later that week and toured the cabin. She told us that she had created a database of every house described in the Window Tax of the 1790s including the construction material and the size of the house. Based on that information, she determined

that only 1 of every 200 log cabins built in the colonial era were as large as our cabin. At last we had "architectural significance."

In addition to Jennifer Ford, I'd been told of Roland Cadle, a log home restorer who worked in Washington and Greene Counties. Tracking him was a challenge because he never returned my calls. Finally he answered and we talked. I described our cabin and he asked "How many courses of logs are in the attic?" I said "None." He repeated the question; I repeated my answer, but he refused to believe me. The only way for him to prove himself right and prove me wrong was to come to see our home. We agreed on a date. Two hours before he was to arrive, his associate called to beg off, insisting that they'd already seen our cabin. Somehow I managed to convince her that they should come and at last they arrived.

The fact that there are no logs above the ceiling (called kneeling logs) made our house quite rare; Cadle knew of only one other single-story log structure in Pennsylvania: a cobbler's shop in Bedford, Pennsylvania. In colonial times, seventy-five percent of log cabins were single story, but most were either modified by adding a second story or destroyed because they were too small. The fact that ours is a true one-story cabin makes it a rare example of a common phenomenon – another point of "architectural significance."

When Cadle arrived and stood in the doorway to the cabin, he commented, "Well, obviously your floor is not authentic." I was dismayed. I explained that the original floor had rotted but had been replaced in 1928 with authentic chestnut wagon boarding. But I asked how he knew immediately that it was not original. He replied, "All the nails. Look at those joints with six nails! That's an extravagant use of nails for colonial times. Nails were so highly valued that homesteaders would burn down a log cabin just to retrieve the nails." My great-grandfather, the Ligonier blacksmith, had forged the nails so there was no shortage in 1928; in fact, there are still jars of square-headed nails in the upper garage.

Cadle made a number of other observations:

- The height of the ceilings (8.5 feet) makes the building seem like more of a public than a private building, however there is no indication that it was ever anything but a private home.
- The brick chimney is old (although he cannot authenticate its originality).
- The hewn floor joists (viewed as exposed beams) are particularly narrow; they are a good early feature.
- The roof rafters are riven (hand split logs). This, again, is a feature suggesting early construction.
- The ridge board in the attic is uncommon, but not unknown.
- The attic floor (or ceiling of the main rooms) boards were cut at a water-powered vertical saw mill. He concluded that the mill was water-powered because of the evenness of the saw marks.
- Access to the attic was external, not internal as is usually the case. Cadle was aware of only two or three one-story domestic log dwellings without internal access to the attic.
- The overall design is not German (as Jennifer Ford had assumed because of the central fireplace) but rather a classic Irish tenant farmer design in which two families — the owner and the tenant — would share the house. I disagree with that conclusion because there are no interior markings on the logs or ceiling that would indicate any separation between the two sides of the cabin.

Cadle also commented on the stone façade of the chimney. The type and arrangement of the stones would have been impossible in the colonial times, particularly the stones whose longest side is vertically placed on the façade. That arrangement was only made possible by the introduction of Portland cement in the late 1800's. Prior to that, stone chimneys would have been constructed of flat stones resting horizontally on each other. That façade, however, was the popular style in the weekend "cottages" that the wealthy steel magnates were building near Ligonier in the 1920s. One of the ways that our home qualified for the National Register was that it was an early example of a log home restoration in Washington County. As such, a 1920-style chimney was not a disqualifying factor.

Finally, Cadle talked about the gable-end windows. As I noted earlier, the attic cannot be accessed from inside the cabin. In colonial times, the family would have slept in the attic, climbing a ladder on the outside to get to the attic. The large windows whose lower sills are at floor level made climbing in through the gable-end opening somewhat easier. Today, the attic is accessed through the guest bedroom above the kitchen.

The fact that the attic was the bedroom in colonial times led to a source of disagreement between Mama and me. In the ceiling in the center of the cabin is a "peep hole" covered with a block of wood. Mother said that if Indians came into the area, the family would go into the attic and hide until the Indians left. She claimed that from the peep hole you could see the entire room. That latter claim is factually incorrect. Moreover, I thought that hiding in the attic if Indians came would be the height of folly because Indians frequently burned settlers' homes. I, instead, contend that the peep hole would have been the children's "night light". Because their beds were made of straw, they couldn't safely take candles into their bedroom, but they could lift the block of wood off the peep hole and get a little light from the fire in the fireplace downstairs.

The Historic Landscape

As I noted earlier, Terry Necciai said to me: "I can save your gardens." The fact that he could appreciate the gardens even on that bleak midwinter day is a tribute to my grandparents' design. Even well into the project, Terry asked who the landscape architect was who designed the area. He questioned whether my grandparents had the artistry. Although I'd always believed they'd designed the landscape themselves, I asked the one remaining son, Don Campbell. He assured me that his parents had no help. When I asked how they came up with such an outstanding design, he responded, "Form follows function." The Campbells merely took advantage of the lay of the land to create a captivating garden.

In the National Register nomination, I stated that the catalpa forest is an integral part of the garden, forming a backdrop to the scene without which the entire setting would be compromised. The fact that my grandparents purchased the catalpa planting in March 1929, proves to me that as they planned the gardens over the winter of 1928-29, they realized the importance of that stand of trees in their garden design. Every person who hears me offer that defense of the woods concurs that the trees are an essential backdrop of the setting.

The two young women historians hired by the Turnpike Commission to evaluate our property had recommended that our home be declared historic. They drew a circle around the house that included the house and pond, probably about an acre in total. Had the Commission accepted their recommendation, I might never have pursued my research

because I had no idea that gardens were eligible for federal protection. The Commission's rejection of the historic nature of the house led us to call in Terry Necciai who showed us how protect not only our house, but our entire property so, in fact, the Commissions rejection became a blessing.

In the nomination, Terry argued that my grandparents' effort was a "back-to-nature" project. At a time when our country was becoming increasingly urbanized, my grandparents chose the opposite direction, restoring a log house, then planting orchards and flower and vegetable gardens. That argument allowed me to propose that all our land on the east side of Reissing Road be declared historic for that would encompass the log house, all of the gardens, the orchards and the Sears house, which itself was eligible for the nomination.

Qualifying Criteria

In the end, our property qualified for the National Register in a number of ways.

- The log house is architecturally significant:
  - its length (32 feet) places it among top one-half of one percent of colonial log homes
  - it is among the rare remaining examples of a single-story log house although one-story homes were the most common type in colonial times
  - the central fireplace is rarely found in any but saddlebag or double-pen structures
  - its age, being the oldest in Western Pennsylvania, was *not* a qualifying factor although the age did influence the first two factors (i.e. its length was rare in *colonial* time as was the fact that it had no kneeling log in the attic).
- The garden qualified as "ornamental horticulture."
- The Sears house qualified (although is wouldn't have been significant enough on its own to have qualified).
- The 1928 restoration, as part of the back-to-nature movement, qualified as a historic conservation factor.

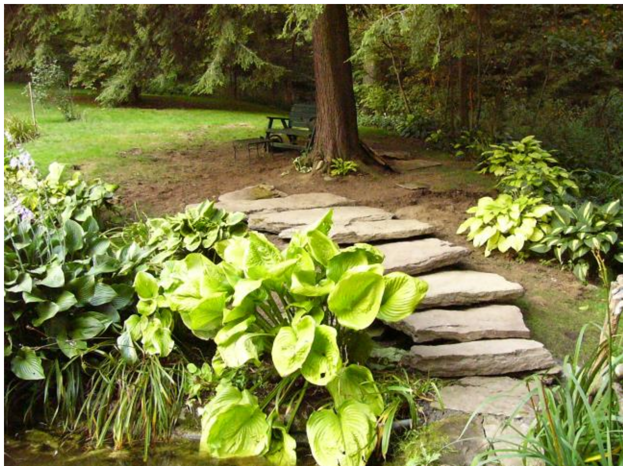
Bill, Ida Crist, a dear friend, Terry Necciai and I attended the meeting in Harrisburg when our nomination was evaluated. It was one of the proudest days of my life. The professor from Pitt opened the discussion by saying, "It's a delight to read a nomination that's this well researched and documented." Another board member commented, "It's good to see this kind of back-to-nature project getting protection." And the woman archeologist said, "Of all the nominations I've seen, I've never seen so many trees . . . and I loved it." Ours was the only nomination reviewed that day that did not require any clarifications or requests for modifications. Because Pennsylvania uses the federal government criteria to qualify a site for historic recognition in the state, our nomination automatically qualified for the National Register. The certificate attesting to that recognition hangs on the wall in the cabin.

But I can't say often enough: our gardens saved our home.

The Later Years

In the decade since our home qualified for and was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, we've undertaken a few noteworthy repairs. The first was a repair of the bridge, accomplished by Marda, Jennie (Marda's daughter), Yama (Jennie's husband), and me in the summer of 2005. The stone to the left of the central stone atop the dam had broken and was disintegrating. We lifted that stone as well as all the stones between it and the steps down to the lower (wooden) bridge. At that point, I took Yama down the ravine and pointed out a stone that I thought would perfectly fit in place of the crumbling one. My find was very heavy; Yama said he couldn't handle it. So we returned to the dam to consider our options. Marda and Jennie were carefully cleaning the surface. We continued to work for a while, when Yama disappeared down the ravine; he'd realized that we really, really needed that stone and he had to try to move it. As he tried to roll it end-over-end, it fell and split into three pieces, each big, but each small enough for Yama to carry. He brought all three pieces to the dam. Two of the pieces became the new foundation for the top stone of the walkway; the third and nicest piece became the new top stone of the walkway across the dam. All the stones were cemented into place.

The next major project in 2006 was the construction of the steps leading from the dam into the hosta garden. That project began because I needed to move three hosta that were being crowded out by their neighbors. As I contemplated a new site for them, I realized that the area under the hemlock tree would be perfect; I already had the ordinary green (Ventricosa) hosta growing well at the edge of the ravine. The first phase was to build the steps to have a convenient walkway up the grade. I remembered that the stones from the patio next to the porch had been piled next to the ravine above the badminton court. Jennie, Yama, and I headed up there one Sunday afternoon. One of the first stones we found was so large that the three of us couldn't handle it. I said to Yama: "Can you bring some of your classmates from Pitt to move these stones?" He enthusiastically agreed. The next weekend four or five friends joined him and, using our 4-wheel drive truck, they pulled seven huge stones from the ravine. Two weeks later they returned and built the steps which, huge though they are, curve gracefully up the hill. I frequently comment to gardening friends that I'm particularly pleased that these new steps blend perfectly with the 80-year-old setting.



A question remained: how did those huge stone get there next to the ravine? They weren't there naturally; they hadn't washed down the ravine. All of them had one long, straight edge. They were rather neatly piled there. But who would have done that? In Summer 2012, a gardener who was visiting heard all the stories, then, as we were walking down the steps beside the springhouse, said, "These look like the same kind of stone." Her comment dumbfounded me. Yes, they were exactly the same; one glance confirmed that. I'd always been told that my great-grandfather, Jim Davis, had brought the rock used for the walkways from Ligonier. It make perfect sense to me that he brought some rocks that, being too large, were not used, but instead were piled at the edge of the ravine, awaiting a role in the future. Seventy-five years after being dumped beside the ravine, their new role was discovered.

Yet another major project took place in 2006: refurbishing the logs on the west side of the cabin. Gwan and Granddad had planted trumpet vine on the west side of the cabin. In bloom, it was beautiful. Unfortunately, the roots of the vine ate into the logs. In the 50s, Daddy recognized the problem and pulled down the vine, but in the process actually pulled away some of the log, especially the ends near the kitchen. He did the only thing he could afford to do: cover the damaged ends with cement.

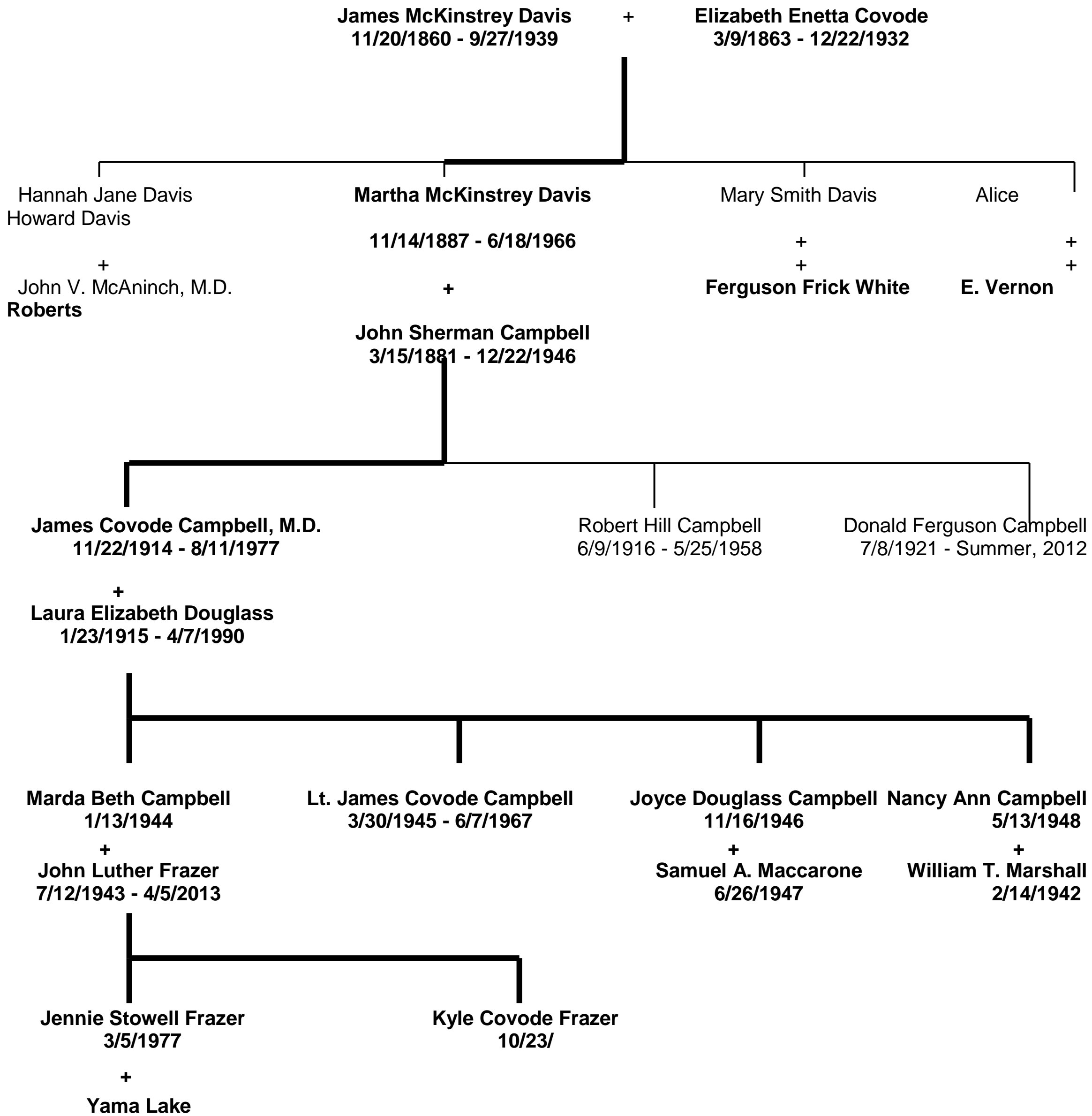
By 2006, Bill and I were ready to tackle the problem more seriously. Contacting Meadowcroft Village, the restored colonial village outside of Avella, Pennsylvania, we were given the name of a competent log-cabin restoration contractor, Jeff Gump. We actually contacted him several years earlier but he'd been too busy to undertake our project. Finally in 2006 he had time. First, he and his crew brought logs that he'd salvaged from buildings being torn down. Then he and his crew of two cut away the rotten part until they got to solid wood. They then cut "veneer" pieces from the salvaged logs and glued them to our logs. The patches are quite visible – which turns out to be the proper restoration technique: you don't hide the fix; you make perfectly obvious that a repair has been performed.

Bill and I confronted another problem in 2009: muskrats had burrowed into the hill on the far side of the pond. When the gunnite had been applied in 1970, it wasn't quite high enough on the edge of the hillside; water was able to lap over the top. That created a perfect entry point for muskrats which prefer an underwater entry to their burrows. Over several years, they undermined the hillside so much that it was

collapsing into the pond; I couldn't even work in the garden because the hill was so steep. We consulted with the Lutzes who proposed building a stone wall in the pond, essentially walling off the low edge of the gunnite. The area would then be filled with soil and replanted with daylilies. That's been a perfect solution to our muskrat challenge.

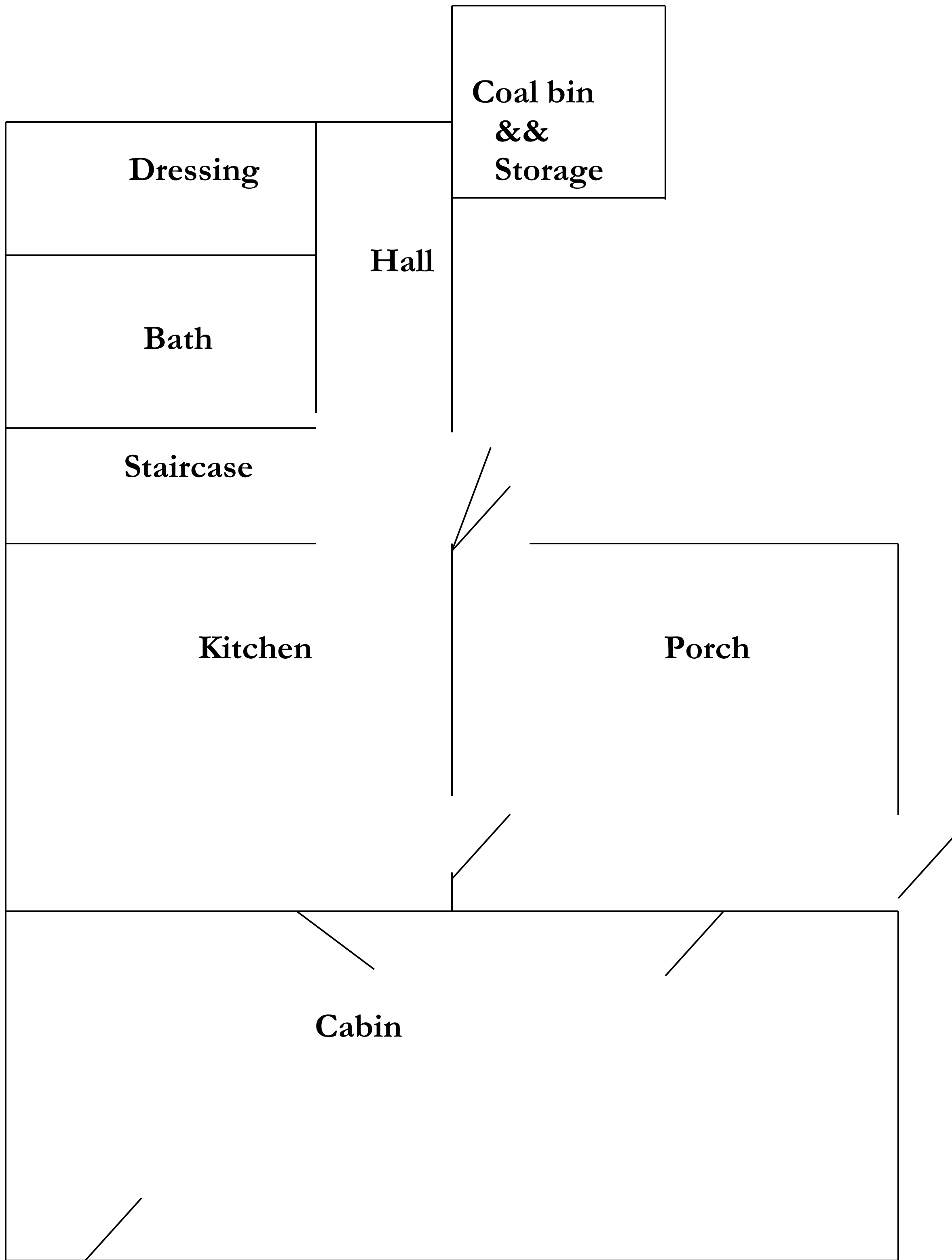
The final projects were several efforts to repair the railing. Originally, wooden railings lined both sides of the dam. In the early eighties, some of mother's church students accidentally broke the railing on the pond side. I quickly embraced the loss because I could easily take mowers and wheelbarrows across the dam. But around 2010, the remaining railing became dangerously unsteady. First, Bill's son Mike replaced the railing on the left side of the steps leading to the wooden bridge. Next, Bob Gass, husband of one of my dearest friends, Esther, helped me to shore up all the rest of the railing, including putting a single elm log across the entire length of that long span. With Bill's help, I added the cross braces on the two large sides. Then Kyle, Marda's son, came and fitted the X in the center section above the overflow. Although it's not exactly like my grandparent's dam and railing, it's precisely what works for me and is close enough to the original to make me feel I'm still honoring the two brilliant designers who created our captivating gardens.

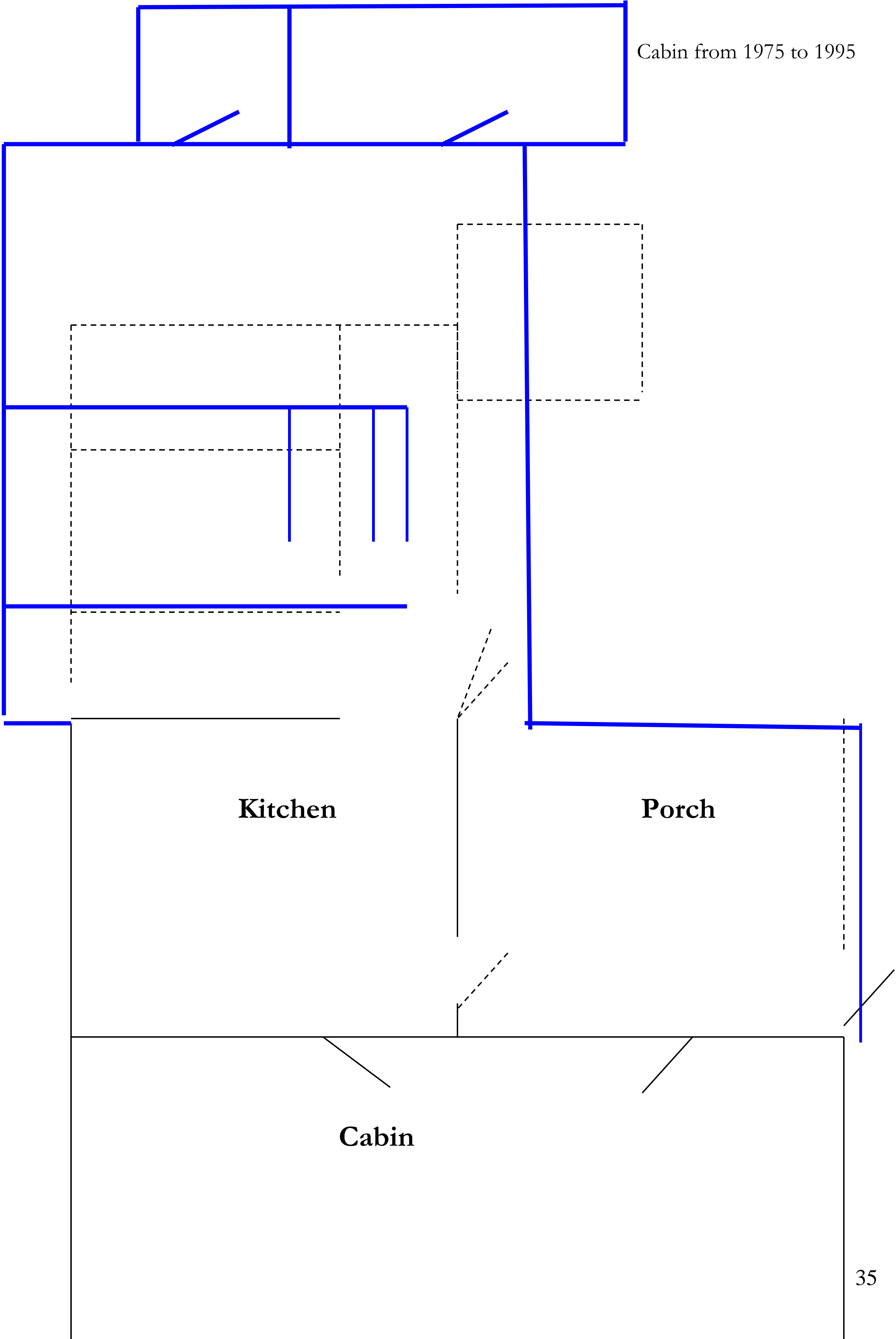
Family Tree of the Owners and Principal Contributors to Tomahawk Claim



Names if bold lettering played a role in restoring and maintaining this property.

Cabin from 1928 to 1976




Cabin from 1975 to 1995
Kitchen
Porch
Cabin