

## **The Gibson Farm**

**Prepared by Maura H. Overland and  
Christian W. Overland  
December 16, 1997**

## Foreword

For the past two years the City of Wixom has maintained the Gibson Farm, which includes out buildings and an Italianate Villa style farmhouse built in ca. 1872. In 1995 the City of Wixom purchased the Gibson Farm from the trusts of Mildred and Harold Gibson, grandchildren of the original owner. The City of Wixom is currently committed to preserving the Italianate Villa style of architecture represented by the house and restoring the interior to its late nineteenth century appearance in order to interpret the agricultural history of Wixom through the Gibson family's experiences.

Today when confronted with the task of preserving a historic structure and landscape a master plan should be used as a guide through the decision making process during restoration and rehabilitation. The historic structures report is a major planning tool and a master plan for preservation projects. A historic structures report consists of three major components: historical research, survey of existing fabric, and proposed architectural treatment of the structure. An architectural historian follows a disciplined approach in which investigative techniques are used to search documents and publications which may relate to past owners, the structure itself, and local building practices. When possible probate documents, property deeds, historic photographs, surveys, census records, maps and illustrations should be used to support a narrative of the structure's history. Too often in the past, preservation and restoration projects have been shaped by romantic notions of history or expedient compromises in repair work. Such unfortunate practices have destroyed the historic fabric of many structures.

Before implementing a proposed architectural treatment plan, the architectural historian's responsibility is to assemble all known documentary materials relating to the site and conduct a survey of existing fabric. These procedures, by setting forth the historical development of a building, establish a cultural significance and evaluate the condition of the historic structure. Once this has been accomplished, plans for restoration can be implemented without uncertainty in a logical sequential manner. This approach insures that the historic fabric of the structure will survive the restoration process. The National Park Service, Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) categories and techniques were used as guidelines to compile all historical and architectural information.

Before developing a historic structures report for the Gibson Farm, the Historic Preservation Committee for the City of Wixom defined the project as an interior restoration of the farmhouse to an 1870-1900 appearance. The committee also defined the project as a flexible cultural resource, rather than a period historic house with rooms staged as the Gibson's lived in them in the 1870s through the 1890s. As well, the committee defined the project as a restoration of the Gibson Farm, farmhouse, and outbuildings. In accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects, restoration is defined as the act or process of accurately recovering the form and details of a property and its setting as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of removal of later work or by replacement of missing work.

Accordingly, this report recommends using the early 1870s as the focal point of restoration for the Gibson Farm. The period evidence is the prevailing amount of historical fabric and artifacts from the 1870s, along with the compelling and inspiring stories of a rural family and a developing railroad town.

The Gibson Family Farm is both a platform for discussion and a gateway into Wixom's past. There are many stories of Wixom's past that can be told through the Gibson Farm and the Gibson family artifacts. Furthermore, this report is not intended to unearth all of the family and town stories, but rather to reveal a foundation from which the people of Wixom can build bridges to the past and to the future.

Christian W. Overland  
Maura H. Overland  
Ypsilanti, Michigan 1997

## Acknowledgments

The preparation of this historic structure report was made possible by the cooperative endeavors of many individuals. The initiative to develop this report was taken by the City of Wixom, most especially by the members of the Historic Preservation Committee including Mayor Michael McDonald, J. Michael Dornan, Pat Spencer, Frances Gibson, Amy Hodson, Jeri McDonald, and John Momberg. Doris Thompson and Ruth Sibley of the Wixom Historical Society assisted greatly in research efforts by allowing access to the Society's archives and collections. The comments of Terry Schaffer and Dr. Bill Kimbell of the Michigan Barn Preservation Network, as well as, Gregory McCaffrey in the City Engineer's Office and Jennifer Moore's efforts were greatly appreciated. John Sailor, City of Wixom, created architectural floor plans and Harley Faxon R.A., P.C. created the landscape site plan. Most importantly, we would like to thank Frances Gibson for providing us with a wealth of information on the Gibson family and farm.

## Introduction

Our houses and buildings we live in today are the most significant trails of our past. Every house has a story to tell of the great commitment each one of its inhabitants has had to support and define their culture. The doorways we walk through and the windows through which we observe our community are also documents that reveal the day-to-day lives of former inhabitants as well as their identity through the choices of decoration and use of the structure. The story of the Gibson Farm not only relates to Matthew and Mary Jane Gibson's family, but also of those who lived in their community.

Many artifacts relating to Wixom's history as a railroad center, agricultural, and now industrial area survive in the house and barn of the Gibson Farm. It is strongly recommended that all of the items inventoried in this report should be lightly cleaned, as prescribed in the appendices, carefully packed into boxes and then stored at an off-site facility while the restoration work is completed. All of these artifacts are extremely valuable for telling the story of Wixom, Michigan, as well as, the story of the Gibson Farm.

# Table of Contents

<u>GIBSON FARM IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION</u>	<u>7</u>
THE GIBSON FAMILY	7
HISTORICAL PERSONAGES ASSOCIATED WITH STRUCTURE	8
HISTORY OF WIXOM	10
PHYSICAL HISTORY	11
DATES OF ERECTION	11
ARCHITECT	11
ORIGINAL AND SUBSEQUENT OWNERS	12
BUILDER, CONTRACTOR, SUPPLIERS	12
PLANS AND CONSTRUCTION	13
HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS AND MAPS	22
<u>PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION</u>	<u>49</u>
GENERAL STATEMENT OF GIBSON FARM HOUSE	49
ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER	49
CONDITION OF BUILDING FABRIC	49
DESCRIPTION OF GIBSON HOUSE EXTERIOR (PRESENT)	51
SITE	52
GENERAL SETTING AND ORIENTATION	52
OUTBUILDINGS	53
HISTORICAL LANDSCAPE	56
INTERIOR ROOM-BY-ROOM DESCRIPTION	58
BASEMENT	58
FIRST FLOOR	59
SECOND FLOOR	67
<u>PART III. ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESTORING THE HOUSE.</u>	<u>72</u>
RESTORATION OBJECTIVES AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT	72
PRIORITIES OF RECOMMENDATIONS	72
EXTERIOR RESTORATION RECOMMENDATIONS	73
EXTERIOR PORCHES, FRETWORK AND ORNAMENT	73
ROOF	73
EXTERIOR PAINT RECOMMENDATIONS	74
ACCESSIBILITY RECOMMENDATIONS	75
ROOM-BY-ROOM DESCRIPTION OF RESTORATION RECOMMENDATIONS	75
BASEMENT	76
FIRST FLOOR	76

SECOND FLOOR	85
OUTBUILDINGS PHOTOGRAPHS	92
MOLDINGS	98
INTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHS	103
<b><u>PART IV. ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESTORING LANDSCAPE AND OUTBUILDINGS</u></b>	<b>106</b>
Restoration Historical Landscape and New Access	106
Horse Barn	107
Milk House	109
Reproduction General Barn	110
Garage	110
Outhouse	111
Windmill	111
Fences	111
<b><u>PART V. INVENTORY OF THE GIBSON FARM, 1997</u></b>	<b>117</b>
Inventory of the Barn	117
Inventory of Artifacts in the Gibson Farm House	122
Inventory of Existing Gibson Artifacts (Not Owned by the City of Wixom)	153
<b><u>PART VI. GLOSSARY OF TERMS</u></b>	<b>154</b>
<b><u>PART VII. FUNDING SOURCES</u></b>	<b>156</b>
<b><u>PART VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ENDNOTES</u></b>	<b>159</b>
<b><u>APPENDIX</u></b>	<b>168</b>

## Gibson Farm Identification Information

### Present Location:

49805 Pontiac Trail (southeast corner of Wixom Road and Pontiac Trail) Wixom, Oakland County, Michigan.

United States Geological Survey, Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates.<sup>1</sup>

Farm House:	Zone 17 - 291200 4710830
Cattle/General Barn (demolished):	Zone 17 - 291200 4710780
Horse Barn:	Zone 17 - 291230 4710800
Hay Barn: (demolished):	Zone 17 - 291240 4710760
Granary Barn: (demolished)	Zone 17 - 291180 4710760

### Present Occupant:

City of Wixom

### Present Use:

Currently being restored for the purpose of a historic farm/passive recreation area.

## Part I. Historical Information

### The Gibson Family

Matthew Erwin Gibson was the youngest of six children born to John and Jane Erwin Gibson in Londonberry, Ireland in 1817.<sup>2</sup> Orphaned, at the age of only 8 months when both his parents died of fever in 1818, Matthew was raised by his maternal aunt, Eliza Erwin. He and three of his brothers, James, Thomas and Joseph emigrated to America in 1830. The brothers went first to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to stay with their sister Mary who had come to America years earlier with her husband John Dallas. Matthew remained in Pennsylvania for many years working in a lime kiln in Chester County and saving his money. In 1853, Matthew and two of his brothers James and Joseph journeyed to Michigan to visit their aunt Annie Erwin McClland in Southfield. The brothers decided that same year to purchase a parcel of land in the northeast quadrant of Section 19 of Farmington Township. After a few years Matthew decided to venture out on his own, returning to the Southfield area to stay with his cousins, the James Erwin family. In 1861, Matthew purchased at public auction the 168 acre parcel of land in Wixom, Michigan which became the Gibson Farm.<sup>3</sup> That same year, Matthew Gibson married Mary Jane Morrison of Commerce, Michigan. According to the family history, the couple lived in a log cabin on the property located just to the south of the present house until 1872 when they built the farmhouse which stands on the property today.

Matthew and Mary Jane had four children Jennie, John, James and Nettie. All four children were born before 1872 which means they were all born while the family was still living in the log cabin on the property. Matthew Gibson erected the present two-story Italianate style farmhouse ca. 1872. According to the 1880 Federal Census, the Gibson's not only had four children, but they also had two farm laborers, George Riley and Thomas Shaw, boarding with them.<sup>4</sup> We also know that the family had "hired girls" to help with the housework (see woman sitting on grass in figure 2). This was typical of late nineteenth century households particularly for large acreage farms such as the Gibson property.

Matthew Gibson passed away in April of 1889 and his property was divided in thirds by his three surviving children<sup>5</sup>, Jennie, James and Nettie with his wife Mary Jane maintaining life rights to the house.<sup>6</sup> Mary Jane continued to live in the house until her death in 1899. The sisters both living away from the family farm, sold their thirds to their

brother James in 1899, making him the sole owner of the Gibson property.<sup>7</sup> James had married Alma Brown, a year earlier in 1898 and the couple took over operation of the family farm. James added a windmill and two silos to the property and he expanded the orchards and increased the dairy production of the farm. He worked the farm for many years until the early 1940s when rheumatism slowed him down. James died on February 13, 1943. James and Alma had two children Mildred Louise Gibson born in 1901 and Harold James Gibson born in 1909. Alma continued to operate the farm on her own after James' death with the assistance of her children and grandchildren in the summers. Alma passed away in 1955 and the house was used as a summer home by Mildred who was a school teacher in Royal Oak. The fields were rented to their neighbors the Crofts from the 1950s - 1970s.

Mildred retired from teaching in 1964 and decided to return to Wixom, Michigan and take up residence in her family home. Before moving in the house she had the first floor of the Gibson Farmhouse extensively remodeled in 1965. Mildred had almost all the old plaster removed to insulate the walls and she modernized the kitchen and heating system in the house.<sup>8</sup> Harold Gibson, who was living at the time in Farmington with his second wife, Frances Weeden, shared in the renovation expenses since they jointly owned the property. Mildred resided in the house on her own until 1982 when she required the services of a live-in companion because of her failing health. The second floor was renovated and a modern bathroom was installed in 1982. Katherine K. Slack became Mildred's live-in companion in 1983 and she remained with Mildred in the house until her death in 1994. Harold had passed away a year earlier in 1993 and the house with 3.31 acres of land was eventually sold by the trusts of both Harold and Mildred Gibson to the City of Wixom in 1995.<sup>9</sup> The property has been maintained for the past two years by the City of Wixom while plans for the site's restoration and use as a historic farm and passive park are developed.

### **Historical Personages Associated with Structure**

**Matthew Erwin Gibson (1817-1889)**<sup>10</sup> - The youngest of six children born in Londonberry, Ireland to John and Jane Erwin Gibson in 1817. Emigrated with his brothers to America about 1830, eventually settling in Wixom, Michigan. He purchased the Gibson Farm property in 1861 the same year he married Mary Jane Morrison Gibson. The couple had four children Jennie, John, James and Nettie. Matthew had erected the Gibson Farmhouse in 1871-1872 and worked as a farmer until his death in 1889.

**Mary Jane Morrison Gibson (1834 - 1899)** - Born in 1834 in Commerce, Michigan. Mary Jane married Matthew E. Gibson in 1861. Mary Jane helped farm the property and raised four children before her death in 1899.

**Mary Jane(Jennie) Gibson Carpenter (1862 - ?)** - Daughter of Matthew and Mary Jane Gibson. Born in 1862, married Fred Carpenter and lived on a farm located at the corner of Grand River & Wixom Road.

**John Gibson (1864-1881)** - Son of Matthew and Mary Jane Gibson, born in 1864 and died at the age of 17 in 1881.

**James Gibson (1866-1943)** - Son of Matthew and Mary Jane Gibson. Born in 1866, married in 1898 to Alma Brown Gibson. Took over operation of the family farm after his father's death in 1889 and farmed the property with his wife until his death in 1943.

**Nettie Gibson Carpenter (1870-?)** - Daughter of Matthew and Mary Jane Gibson. Born in 1870, married George Carpenter and lived only about 1 1/4 miles west of Wixom Road on Pontiac Trail.

**Alma Brown Gibson (1871-1955)** - Wife of James M. Gibson, born in 1871 and died at the age of 84 in 1955. Raised two children Mildred and Harold and continued to farm after her husband's death in 1943. Refused to install indoor plumbing in the house because she didn't want her house torn up!

**Mildred Louise Gibson (1901-1994)** - Daughter of James and Alma Gibson, born in 1901 and grew up in the Gibson Farm house. Mildred attended high school and then went on to the State Normal College (EMU) to get her teaching certificate which she received in 1921. Taught school in Algonac, Michigan for two years before transferring to Royal Oak High School in Royal Oak, Michigan, where she remained as a teacher for forty years. After retiring from teaching in 1964, Mildred returned to her hometown of Wixom, Michigan and took up residence at the Gibson House after extensively remodeling the first floor of the farmhouse. Mildred passed away April 8, 1994.

**Harold J. Gibson (1909-1993)** - Son of James and Alma Gibson, born in 1909 and also grew up in the Gibson Farm House. After graduating from Milford High School in 1925, Harold went on to get both a bachelor's and a master's degree in engineering from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Harold went on to live in Royal Oak and

Farmington Hills, Michigan. He retired from the Ethyl Corporation in 1976, after 46 years of service as a research engineer specializing in automotive engines. Harold J. Gibson passed away on May 10, 1993 and he is survived today by his second wife Frances Weeden Gibson and three children from his first marriage; Louise Gibson Garrison, James Dwight Gibson, and Arlene Gibson Snyder.

## History of Wixom

The Gibson Farm is located in Wixom, Michigan, a small city located in southeastern Michigan about 30 miles east of Detroit. The area was first settled by Lewis Norton in 1830. Norton was quickly followed by a second early pioneer, Alonzo Sibley who founded what was referred to as Sibley's Corners in 1832 (intersection of Wixom and West Maple Road). Alijah Wixom arrived in the area that same year and it was his son, Willard C. Wixom, who first platted the Village of Wixom in 1871. Wixom abandoned the older settlement of Sibley's Corners and platting the Village center at the junction of the Grand Trunk and Pere Marquette Railways.<sup>11</sup>

Located at two railroad crossroads, Wixom became a center for the storage and distribution of agricultural products, and Willard C. Wixom constructed a grain warehouse at the junction of the Grand Trunk and Flint & Pere Marquette Railroads in 1871 (**See Figure 8**). Wixom entered into a partnership that same year with Judson Sibley to run the grain warehouse and the partners stayed in business until the late 1890s.<sup>12</sup> The warehouse was eventually purchased by the Wixom Cooperative Company, founded in 1916 by Bert Holden and 21 other area men who each contributed \$100 to finance the business. A modern grain elevator was added to the North side of the building and the Co-op sold primarily seeds, grains and coal. later the sale of oil replaced coal. Additions to the building over the years included an office warehouse in 1928 and a service garage in 1933.<sup>13</sup> The building still stands today and is a wonderful monument to Wixom's agricultural history (**See Figure 11**).

James Gibson added large scale dairy farming and more orchards to his father's farm beginning in the 1890s.<sup>14</sup> He sold his raw dairy products to the Smith Cheese Factory located on the north side of Pontiac Trail just west of the intersection with Wixom Road.<sup>15</sup> Originally called the Eclipse Cheese Factory, the building was built sometime between 1872 and 1890.<sup>16</sup> The cheese factory was an important economic link for farmers who would rather concentrate on producing greater amounts of raw product rather than spending time

on processing which split the farmer's time and reduced the amount of product to sell (See Figure 12 & 13).

The factory's first owner, Dr. Bebee sold the building to Harmon and Maggie Smith in 1890. The Smith's operated the cheese factory until 1925. Their daughter Vaughn was a childhood friend of Mildred Gibson's and her recollections include spending a day with James Gibson tapping maple sugar trees and boiling sap.<sup>17</sup>

The Gibson's relied on the railroad to transport their crops to market as did many other Wixom farmers and businesses. Wixom might well have remained a small agricultural center if not for the construction of a new automotive assembly plant by the Ford Motor Company in 1957. At the time the plant opened it was the largest auto-manufacturing facility under one roof in North America. The Ford plant increased Wixom's tax base enough to allow it to incorporate as a City officially in 1958. The introduction of the Ford plant to the area brought with it an onslaught of industrial growth from smaller businesses and companies who help supply parts and machinery for the Ford Plant. This industrial development is fast encroaching upon the agricultural landscape of Wixom and it has begun to drastically alter the look of this former farming community.<sup>18</sup>

## **Physical History**

### **Dates of Erection**

The two story Italianate farmhouse was erected ca. 1872 by Matthew Erwin Gibson.

### **Architect**

The architect/builder has not been identified

### **Original and Subsequent Owners**

Ownership of the land on which the Gibson Farm now stands can be traced back to the original government land grants made to Lewis Norton, one of the areas first settlers in 1831. He was granted three separate tracts of land in 1831 totaling 277 acres in what is described

today as the northeast quarter of Section 6 of Novi Township in Oakland County Michigan. The property passed from Lewis Norton to his son James Norton in 1832. James Norton sold the 168 acre parcel of land that the Gibson Farm was originally constructed on to Warren Messinger in 1836, Mr. Messinger's widow sold the property to M. Burchard in 1853, M. Burchard then sold the property to M. Rundell in 1853, M. Rundell then sold the property to James Ogle in December of 1858.<sup>19</sup> The property, heavily mortgaged at this time to several people including Matthew Gibson, was foreclosed beginning in 1861. The Oakland County Circuit Court ordered the property sold at public auction and Matthew Gibson purchased the 168 acre parcel in 1861 by buying out the two outstanding mortgages on the property.<sup>20</sup> Matthew would later purchase the property again at public auction in 1864 for \$2,500, paying off a final mortgage left on the property.<sup>21</sup>

Matthew Gibson remained the owner of the property until his death in 1889. His probate was finalized in 1891 and the property was divided into thirds, by his three surviving children Mary Jane (Jennie), James and Nettie with his widow Mary Jane maintaining life rights to the house.<sup>22</sup> After Mary Jane passed away in 1899, her two daughters sold their thirds of the property to their brother James in 1899, who took sole ownership of the property.<sup>23</sup>

The property remained intact as an approximately 168 acre farm until after James Gibson's death in 1943, when the family began to sell off small sections of acreage beginning in the 1950s.<sup>24</sup> Eventually the 3.31 acre site that remained was sold to the City of Wixom by the trusts of Harold and Mildred Gibson, grandchildren of Matthew Gibson in 1995.<sup>25</sup>

### **Builder, Contractor, Suppliers**

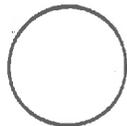
The original builder has not been identified, however, Matthew Erwin Gibson could have built the structure.

## Key for Measured Drawings - November 1997

# Key To Floor Plans :



Indicates Room Number

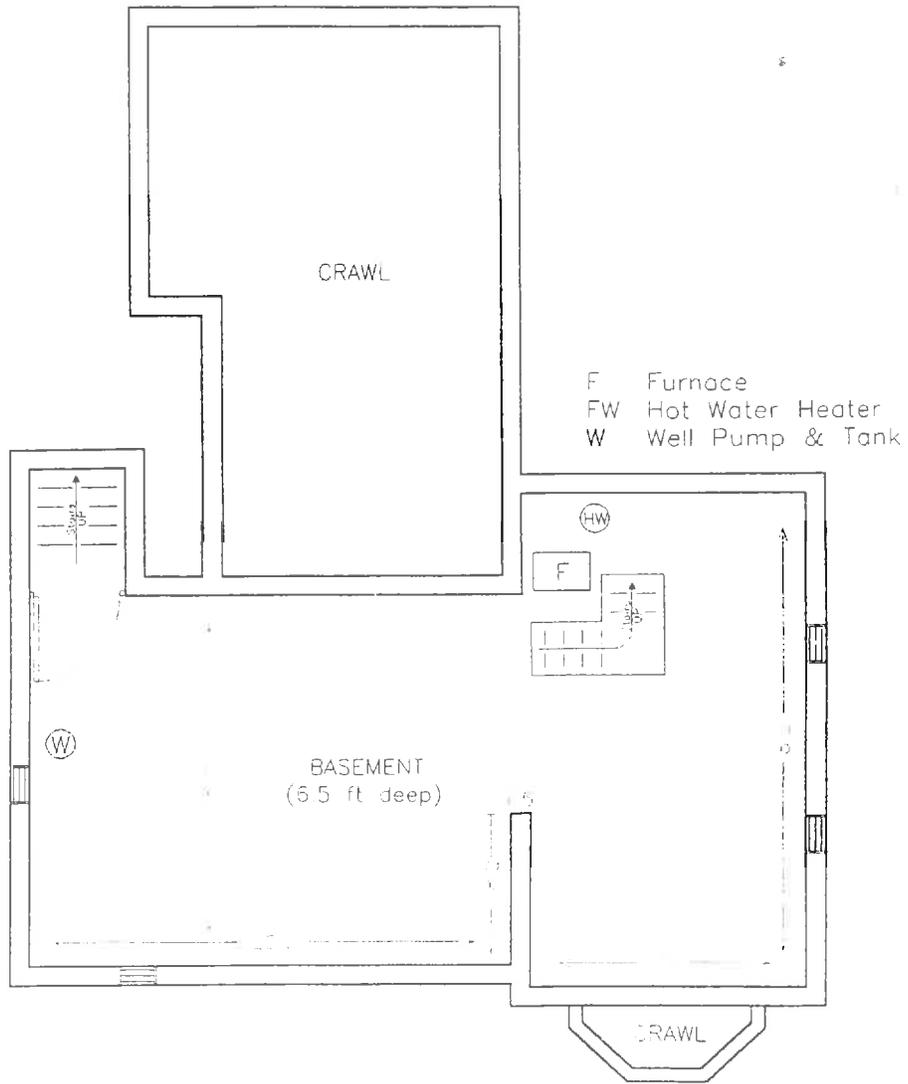


Indicates Door Number



Indicates Window Number

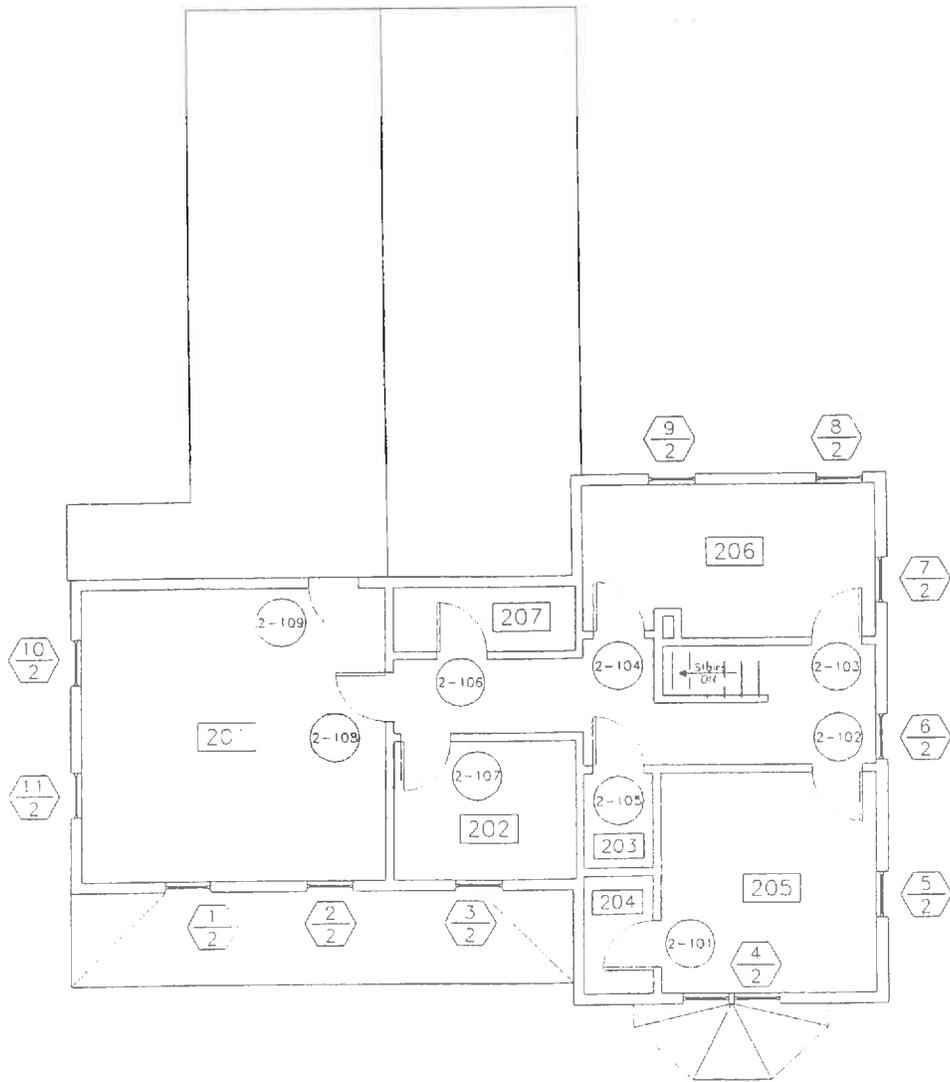
# Measured Drawing Floor Plans - Foundation - November 1997



FOUNDATION PLAN



# Measured Drawing Floor Plans - Second Floor - November 1997



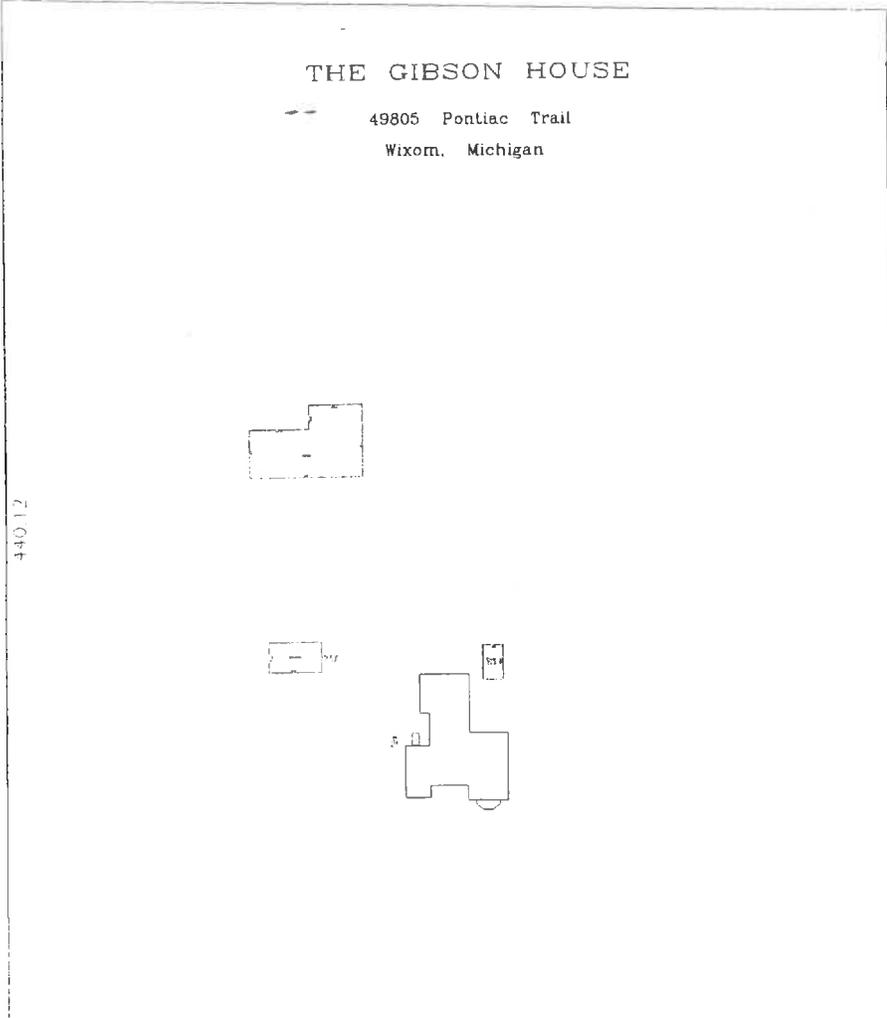
SECOND FLOOR PLAN

Measured Drawing Floor Plans - Site - November 1997

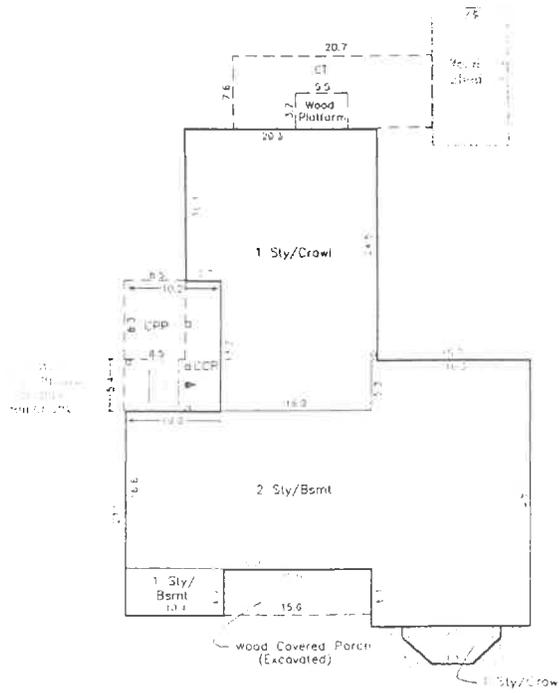
92 0

49805 PONTIAC TRAIL

22-06-200-014



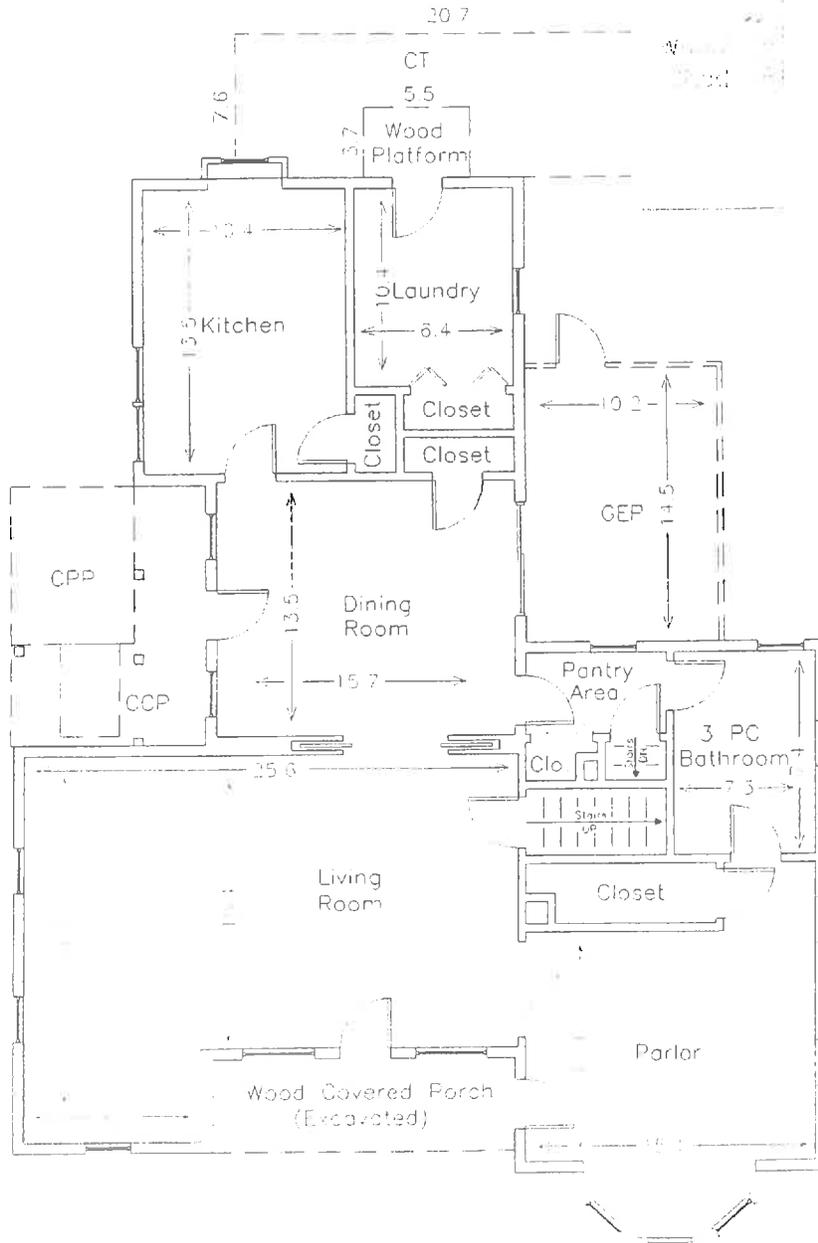
# Measured Drawing Floor Plans - Site Foundations - November 1997



Bldg Area	
2 Sty/Bsmt	888 sf
1 Sty/Bsmt	51
1 Sty/Bsmt	32
1 Sty/ Crawl	551
WCP/Exc	76 sf
CCP	85
CPP	52
CEP	163
CT	167
Garage	168 sf
Sty Bldg	168
Forn	168

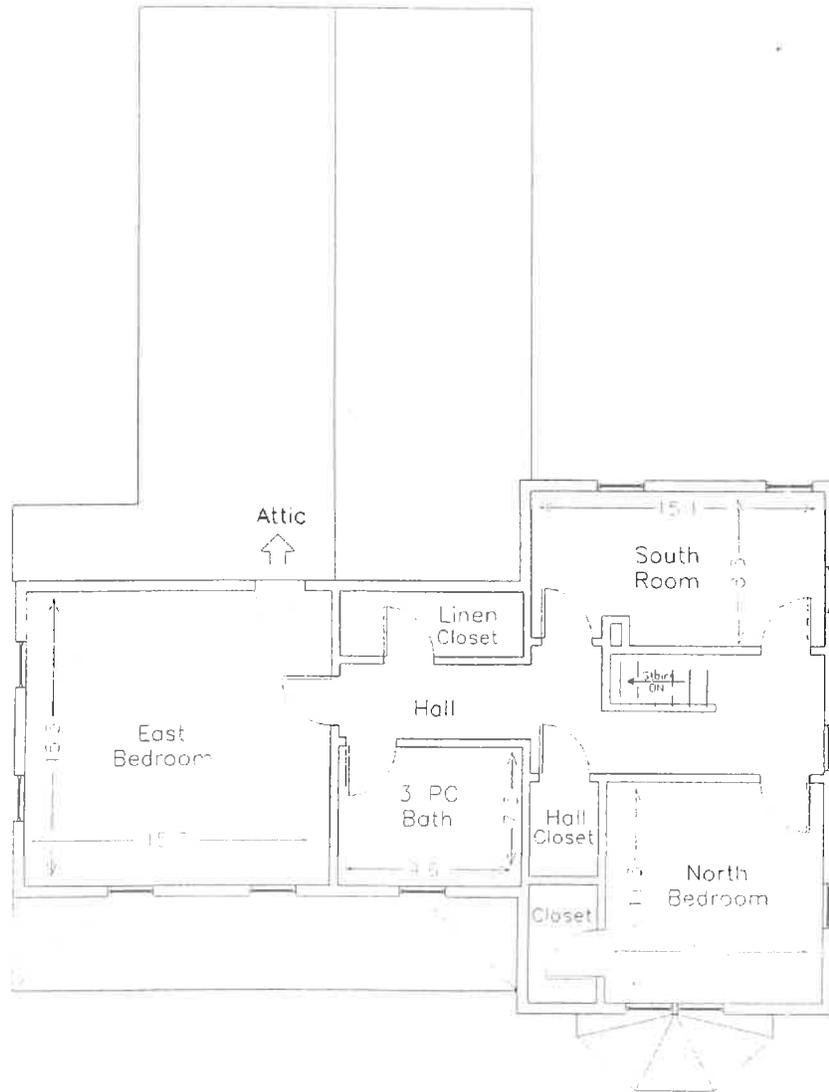
LIVING AREA	
1st	1,522 sf
2nd	888
TOTAL	2,410 sf

# Measured Drawing Floor Plans - Main Floor Description - November 1997



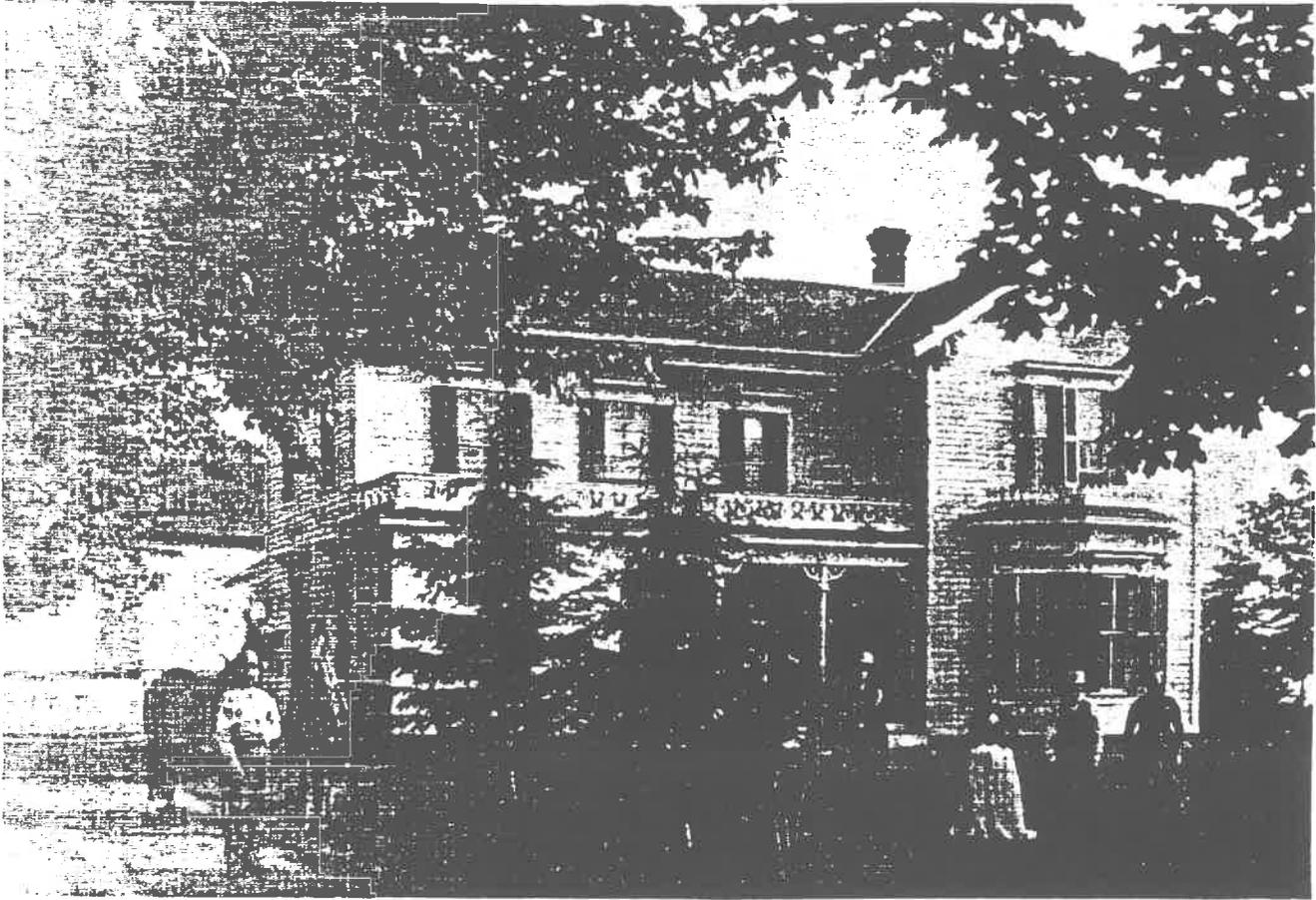
MAIN FLOOR PLAN

# Measured Drawing Floor Plans - Second Floor Description - November 1997



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

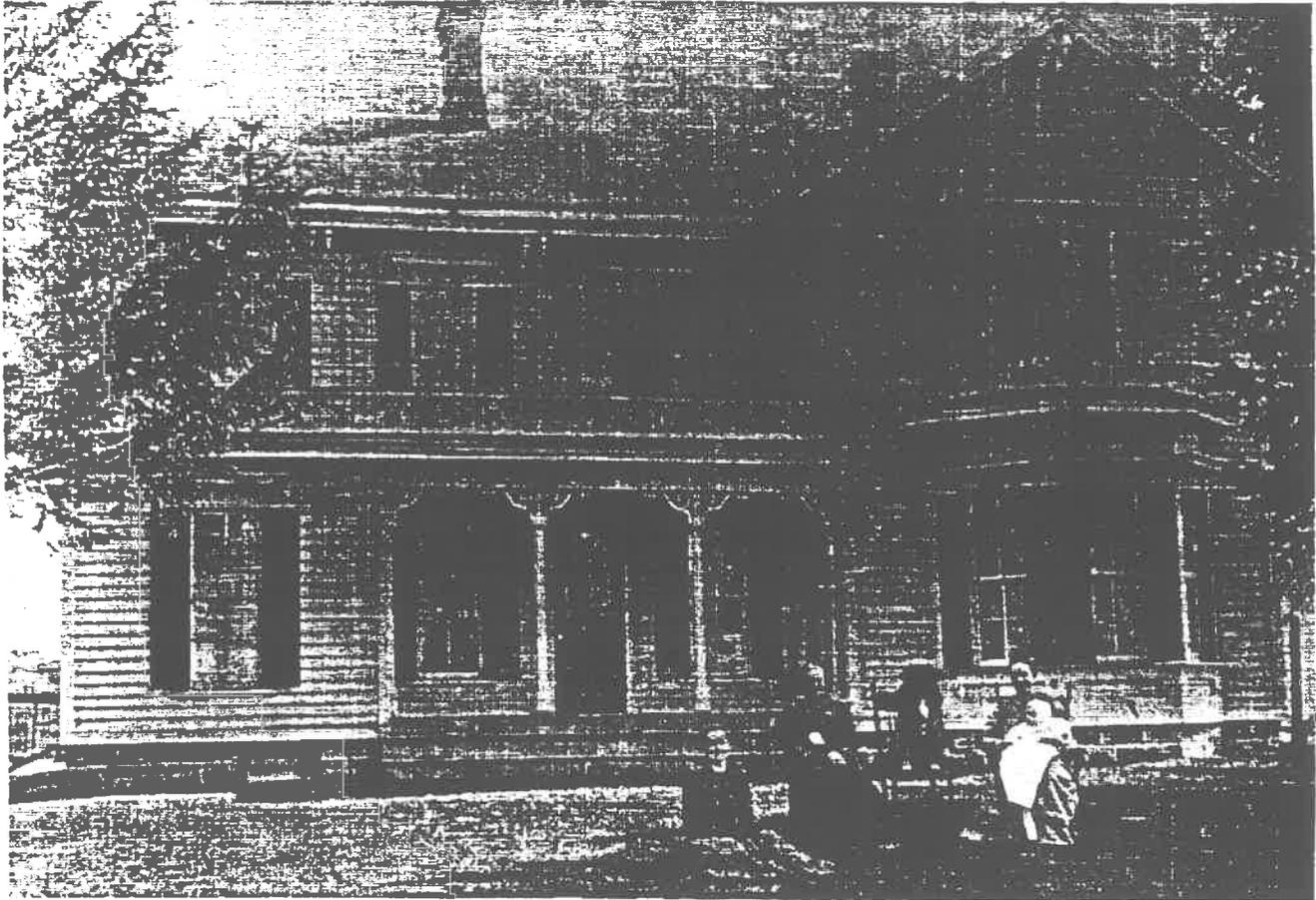
## Historical Photographs and Maps



**Figure 1 - Gibson Farm House, Pontiac Trail  
Circa 1885**

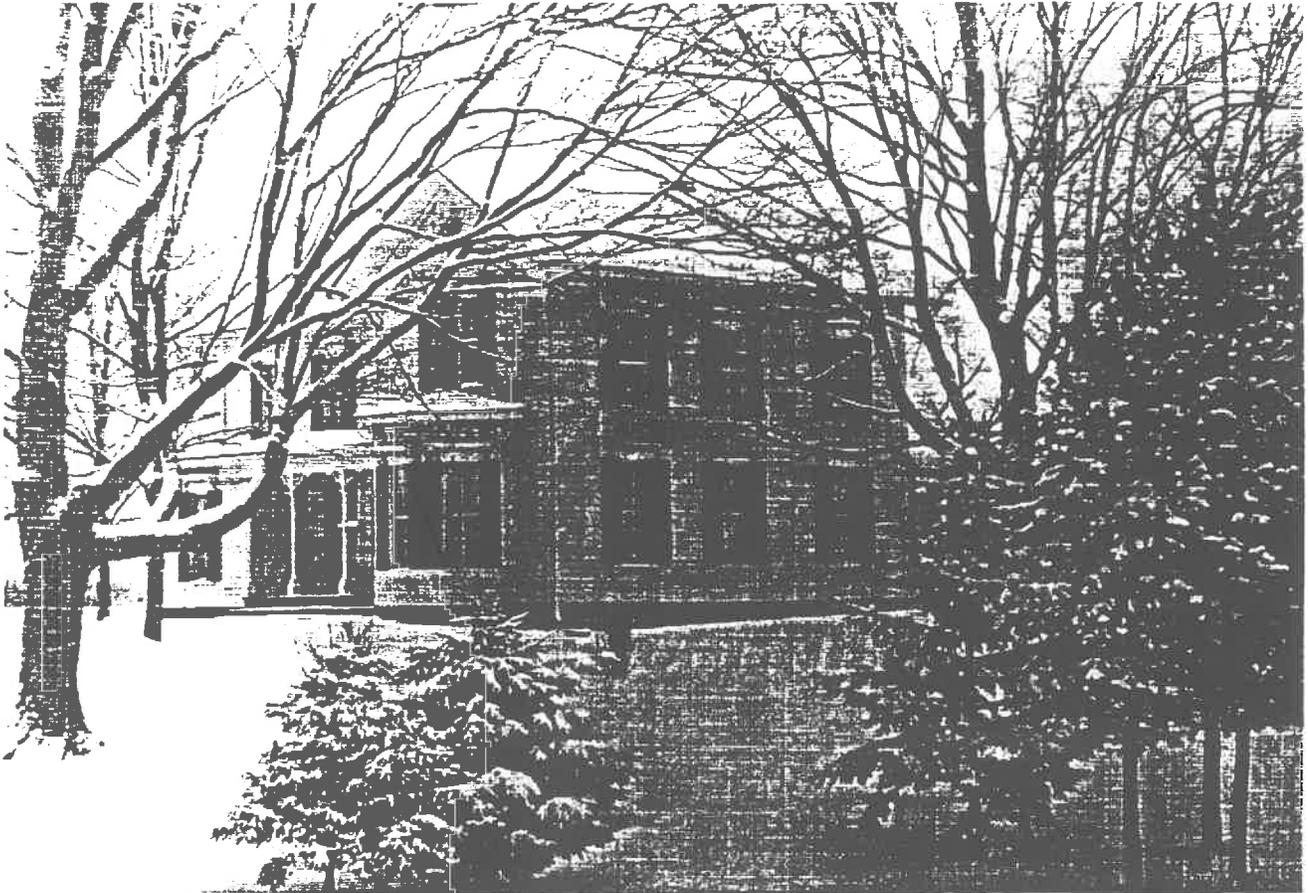
**Left to Right: hired man w/ horse, James M. Gibson, Nettie Dorcas  
Gibson, Matthew Gibson, Mary Jane Morrison Gibson**

*(Courtesy of Wixom Historical Society)*

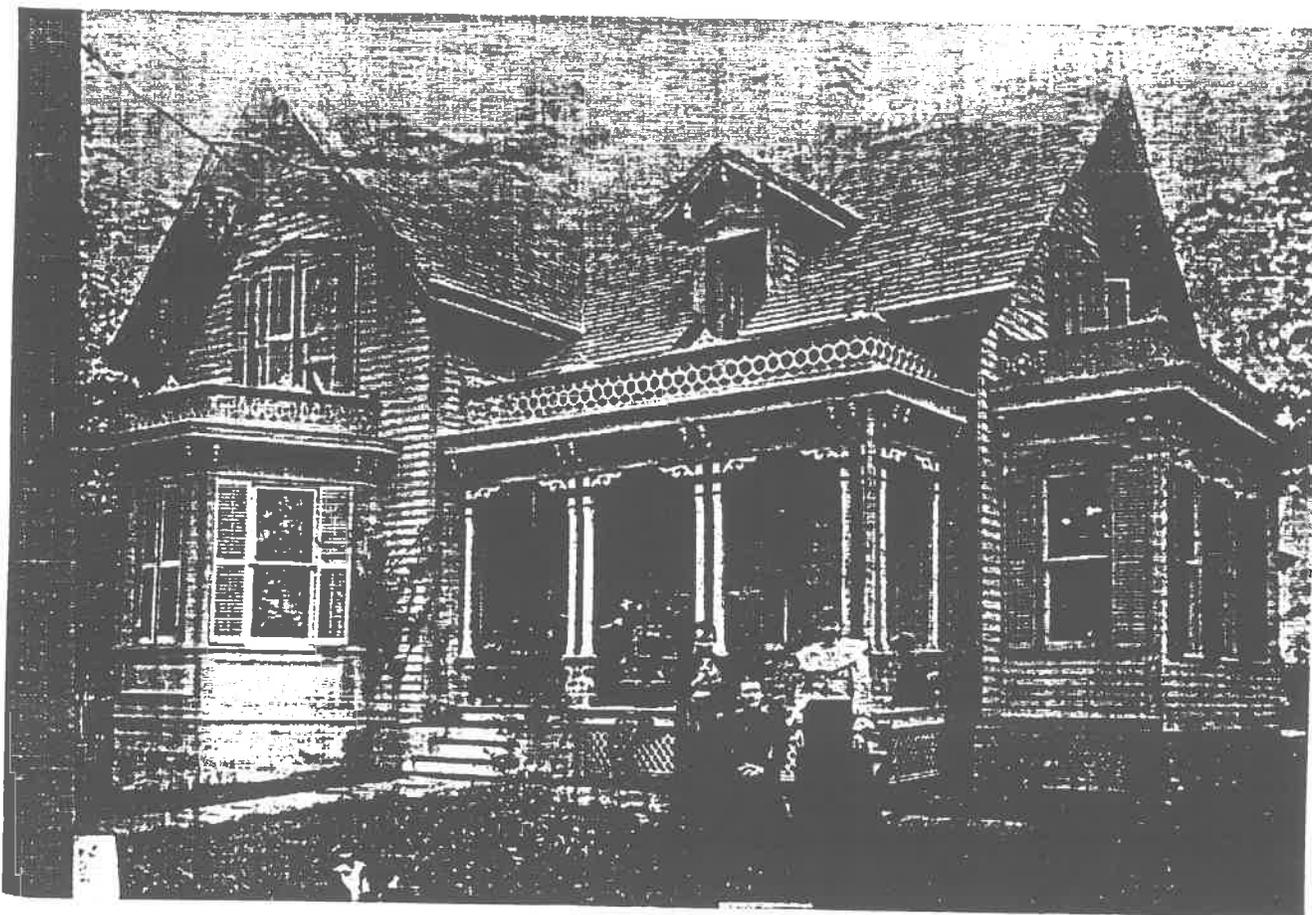


**Figure 2 - Gibson Farm House, Pontiac Trail  
Circa 1902**

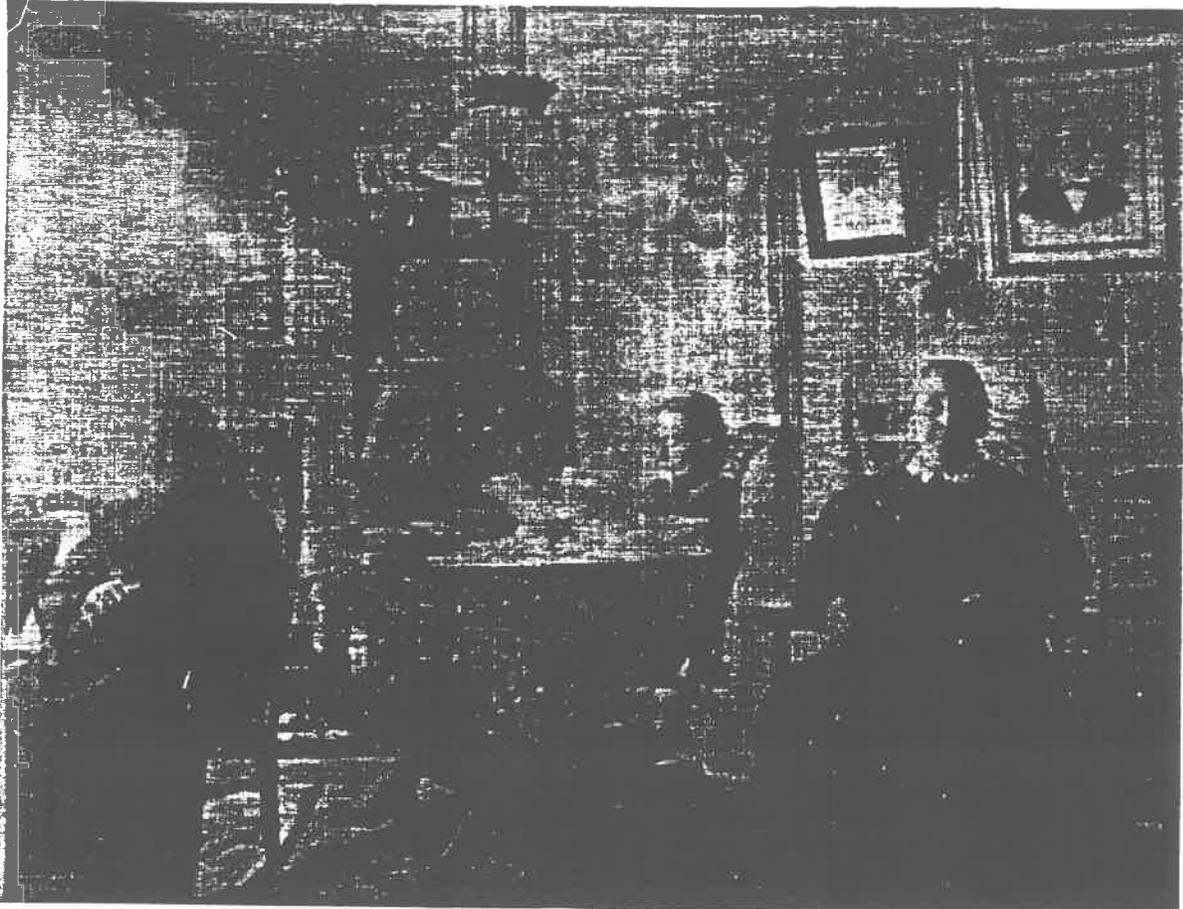
**Left to Right: hired girl, Alma's sister, family pet Colie, Alma Gibson  
holding Mildred Gibson**  
(Courtesy of Wixom Historical Society)



**Figure 3 - Gibson Farm House, Pontiac Trail**  
**ca. 1995**  
(Courtesy of Wixom Historical Society)



**Figure 4 - Willard Wixom Home**  
**ca. 1870s**  
(Courtesy of Wixom Historical Society)



**Figure 5 - Interior of Chambers Home**  
**Wixom, Michigan ca. 1880-1900**  
(Courtesy of Wixom Historical Society)

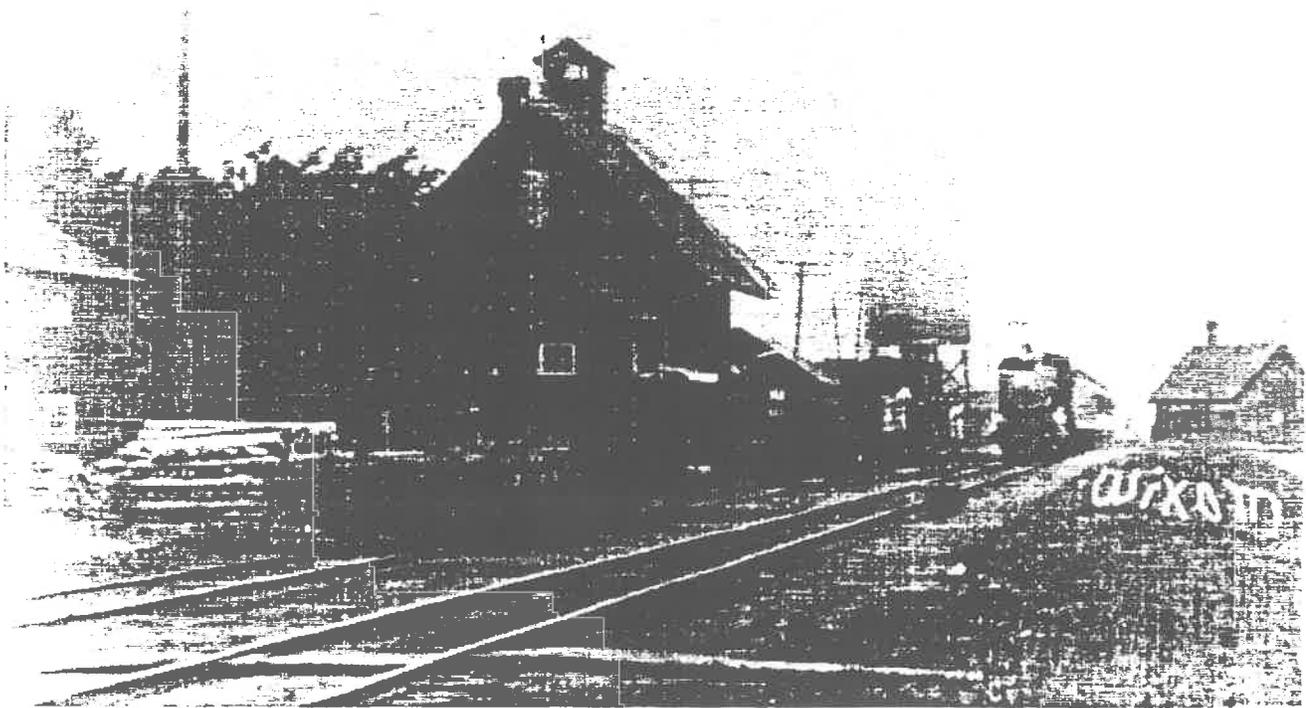


**Figure 6 - Wixom Inn**  
**ca. 1920s**  
(Courtesy of Wixom Historical Society)

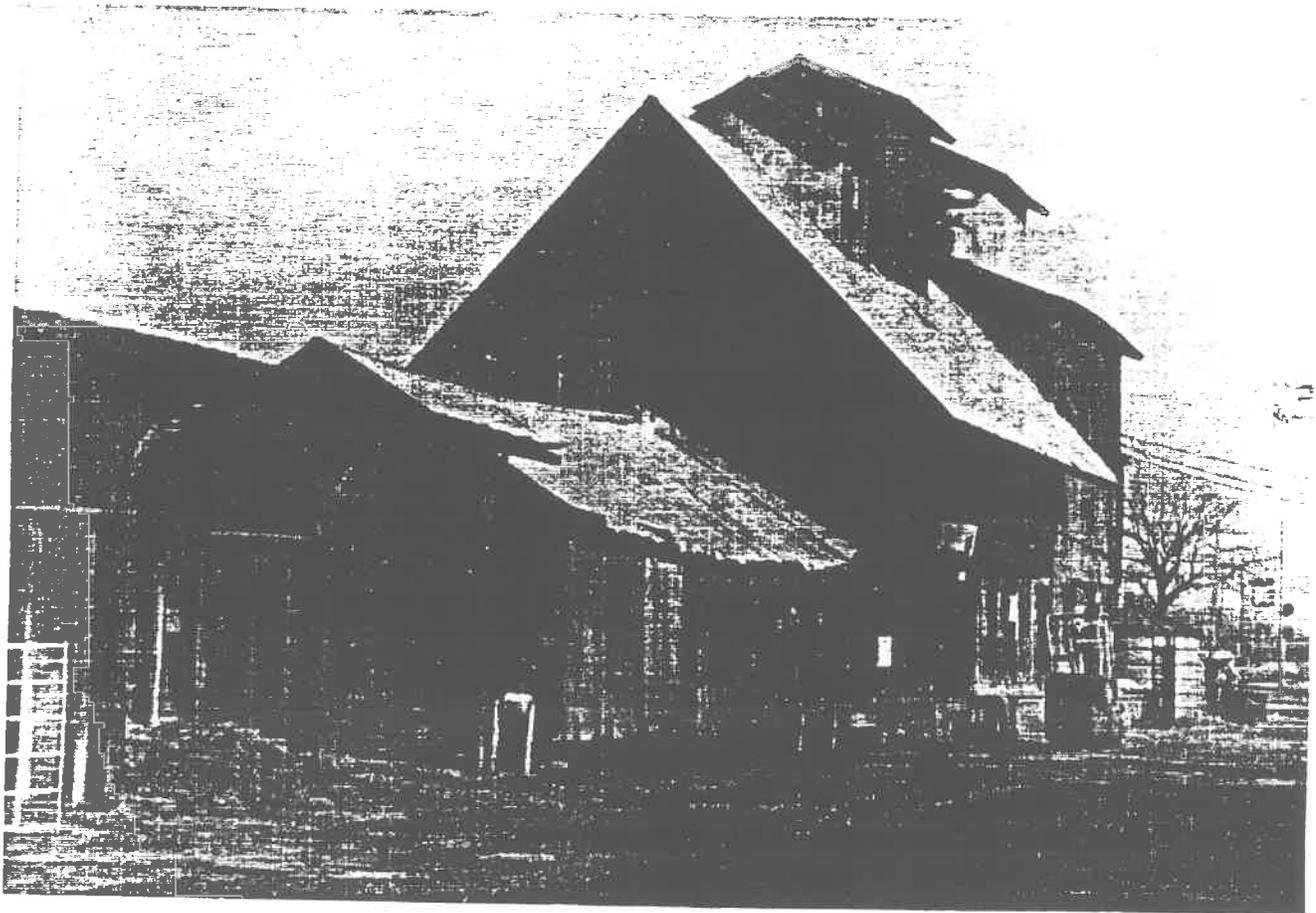


**Figure 7 - Pere Marquette Depot, Wixom, Michigan  
ca. 1880**

(Courtesy of Wixom Historical Society)

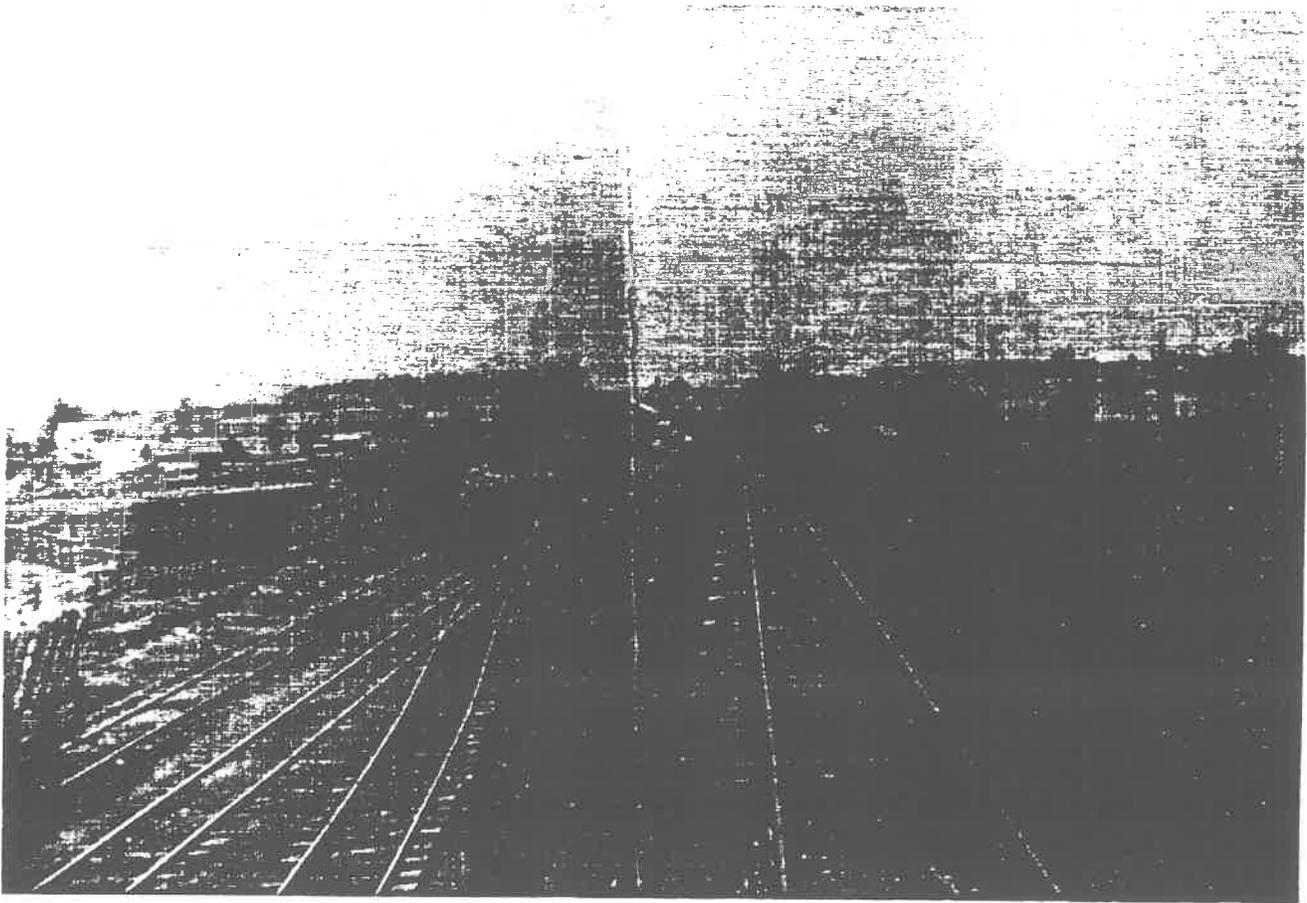


**Figure 8 - View of Wixom Warehouse w/ Telegraph Office.**  
**ca. 1880s**  
(Courtesy of Wixom Historical Society)

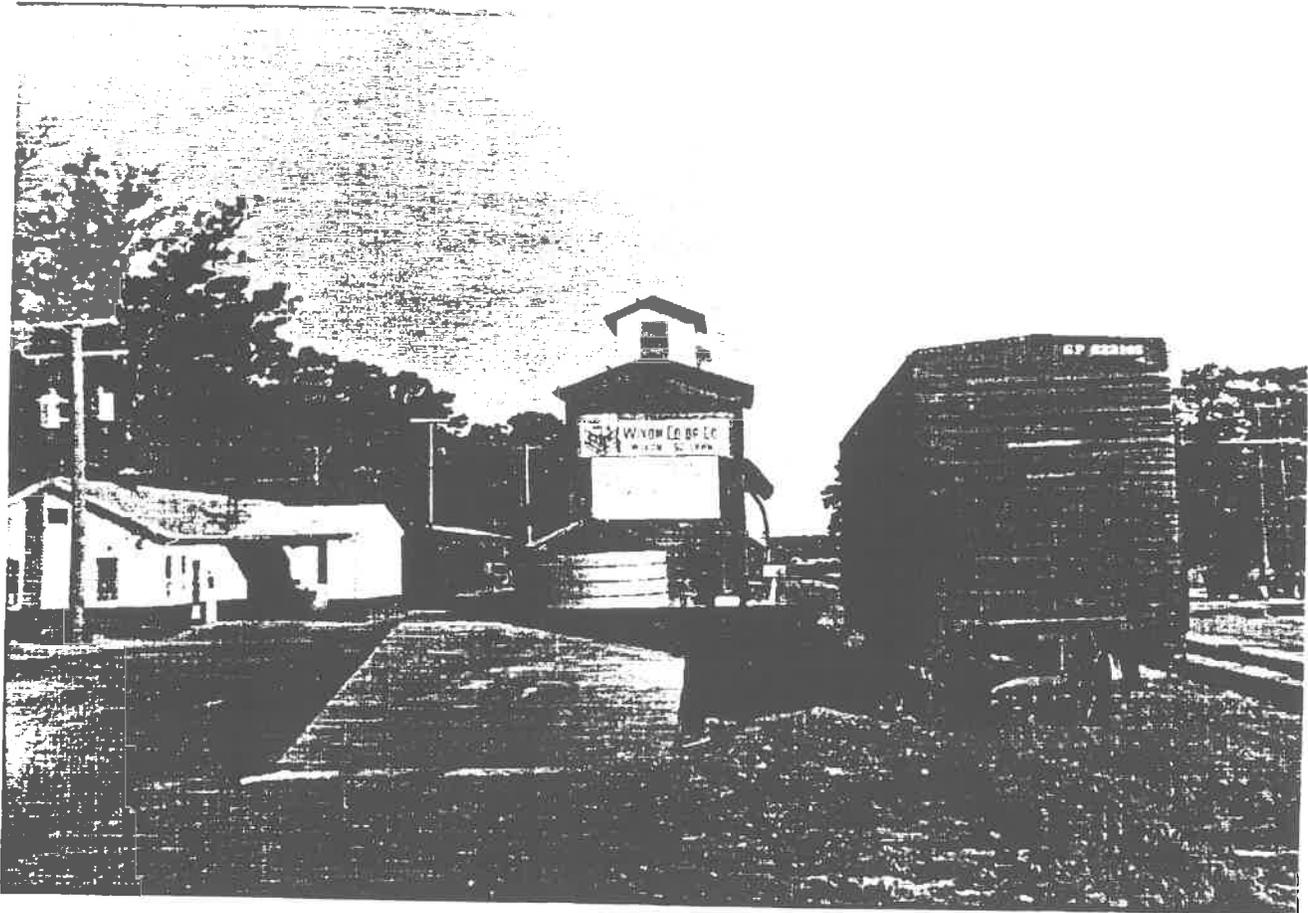


**Figure 9 - Rear view of Wixom Warehouse and Co-op  
ca. 1950**

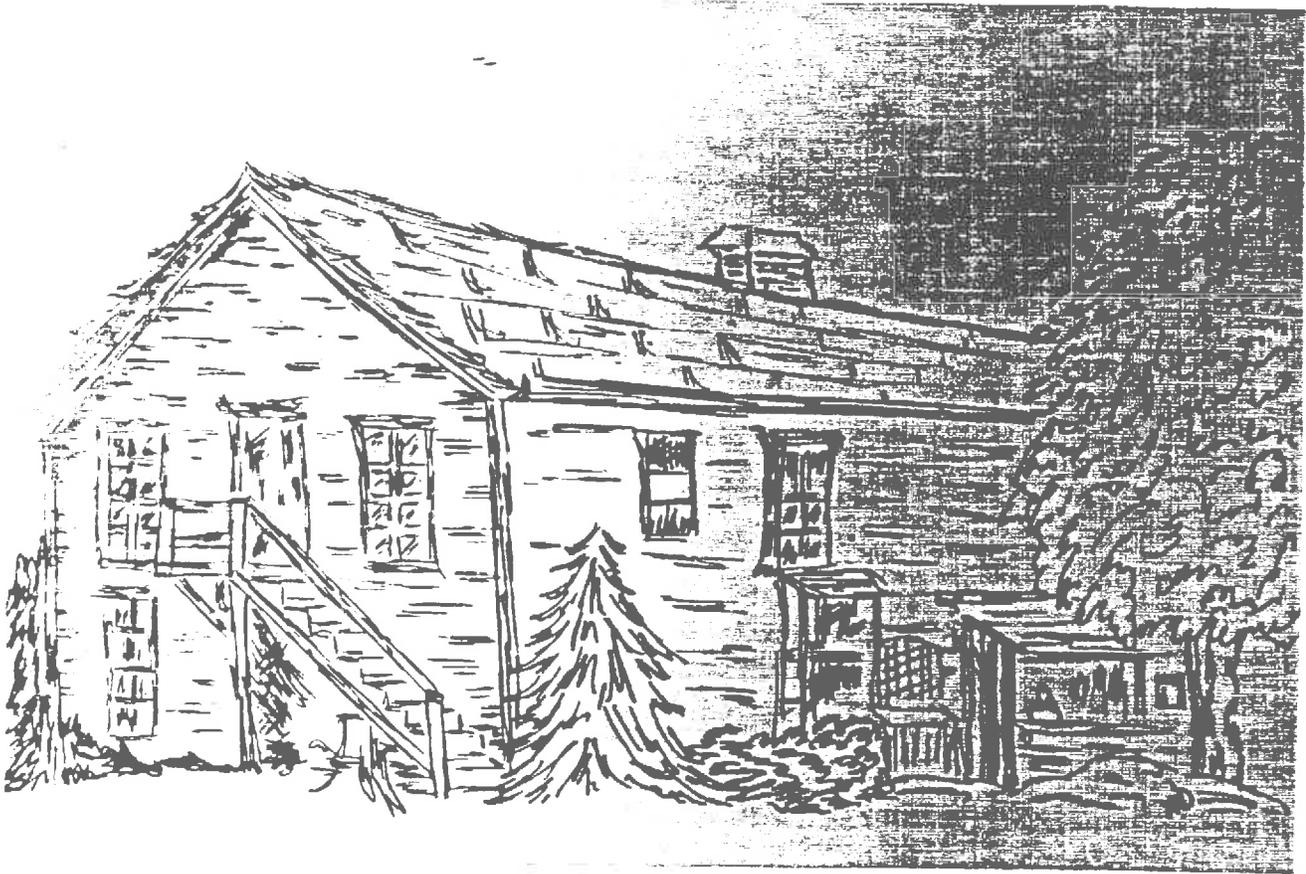
(Courtesy of Wixom Historical Society)



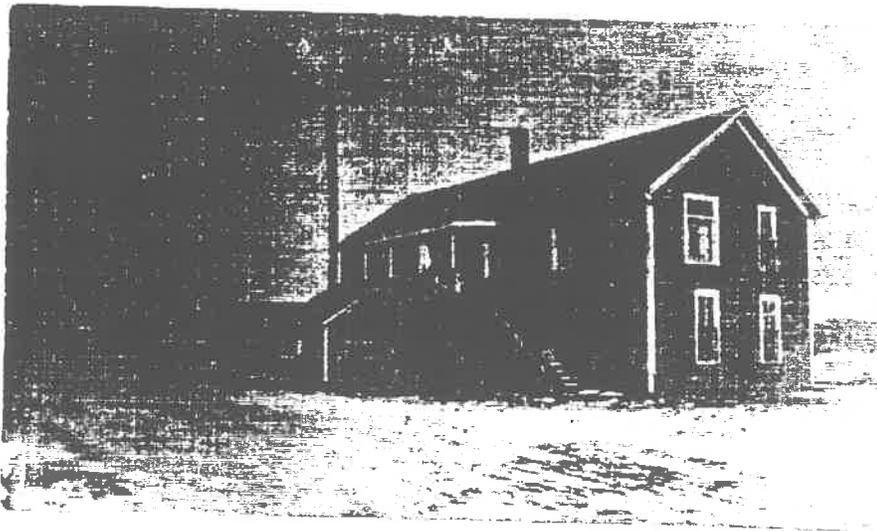
**Figure 10 - Panoramic View of Railroad line looking south  
of Wixom, Michigan  
date unknown**  
(Courtesy of Wixom Historical Society)



**Figure 11 - Wixom Co-op**  
**ca. 1980s**  
(Courtesy of Wixom Historical Society)



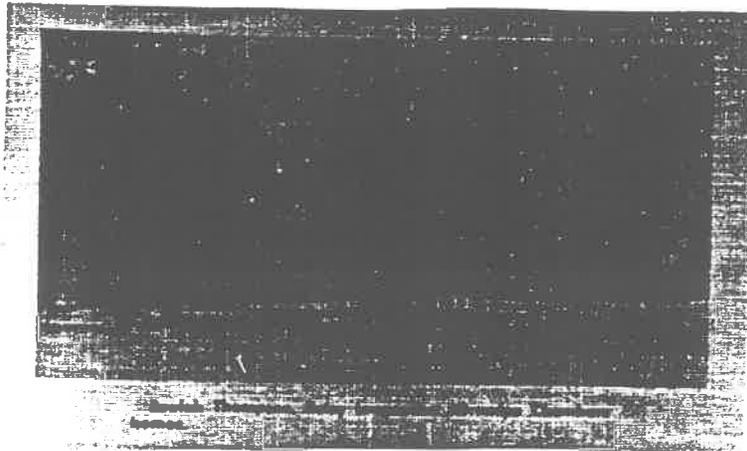
**Figure 12 - Sketch of Smith Cheese Factory, Pontiac Trail,  
Wixom, Michigan**  
(Courtesy of Wixom Historical Society)



**Figure 13 - Smith Cheese Factory**  
**ca. Early Twentieth Century**  
(Courtesy of Wixom Historical Society)



Aunt Betsy's house with Willard Bowen



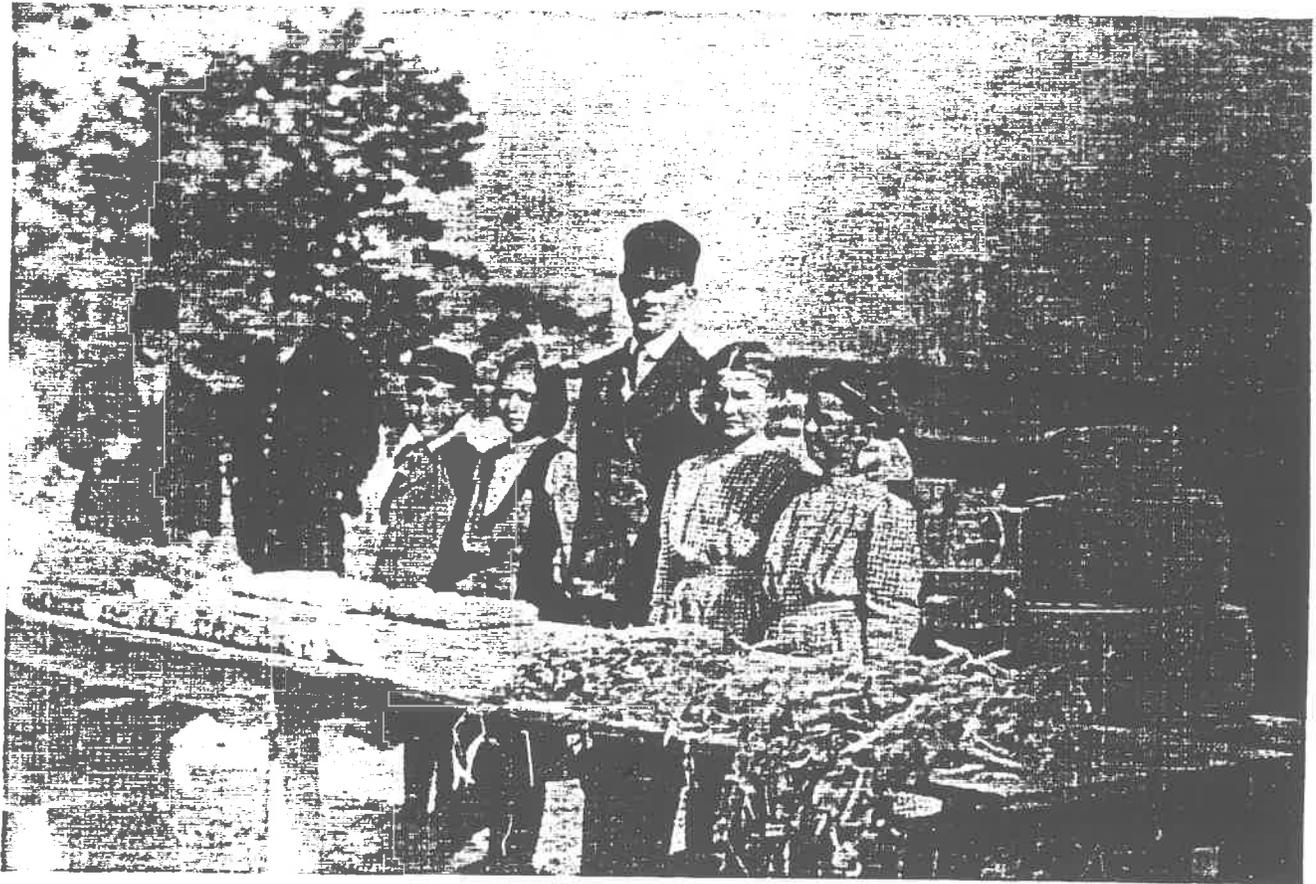
**Figure 14 - Chambers House and Longnecker House on  
Wainstock Road, Wixom, Michigan  
date unknown**

(Courtesy of Wixom Historical Society)



**Figure 15 - View of Unidentified Plowing Scene  
ca. 1930s**

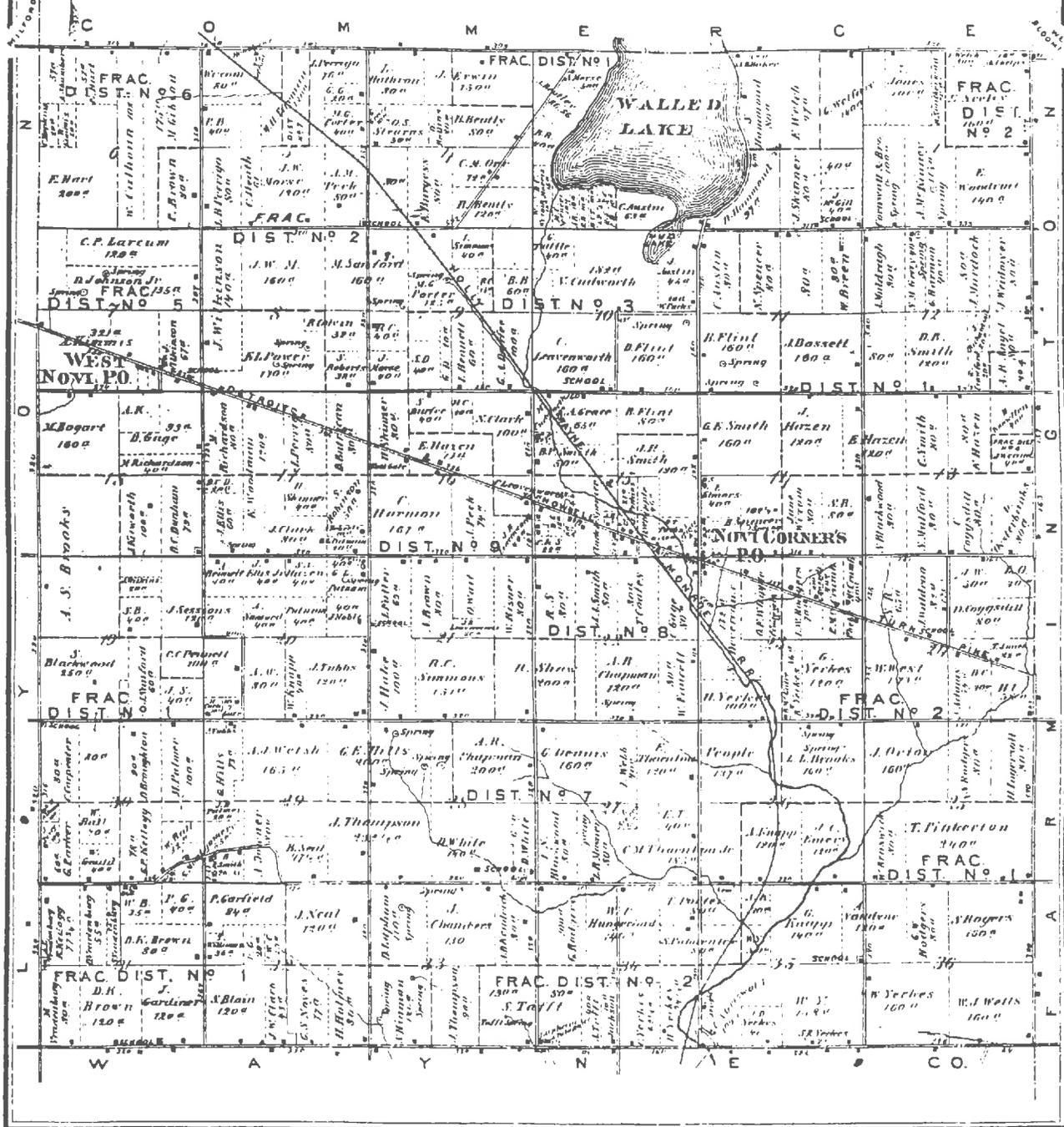
(Courtesy of Wixom Historical Society)



**Figure 16 - Wixom Fair**  
**ca. 1890s-1910**  
(Courtesy of Wixom Historical Society)

Township 1 North **NOVI** Range VII East

Scale 2 1/2 inches to the mile

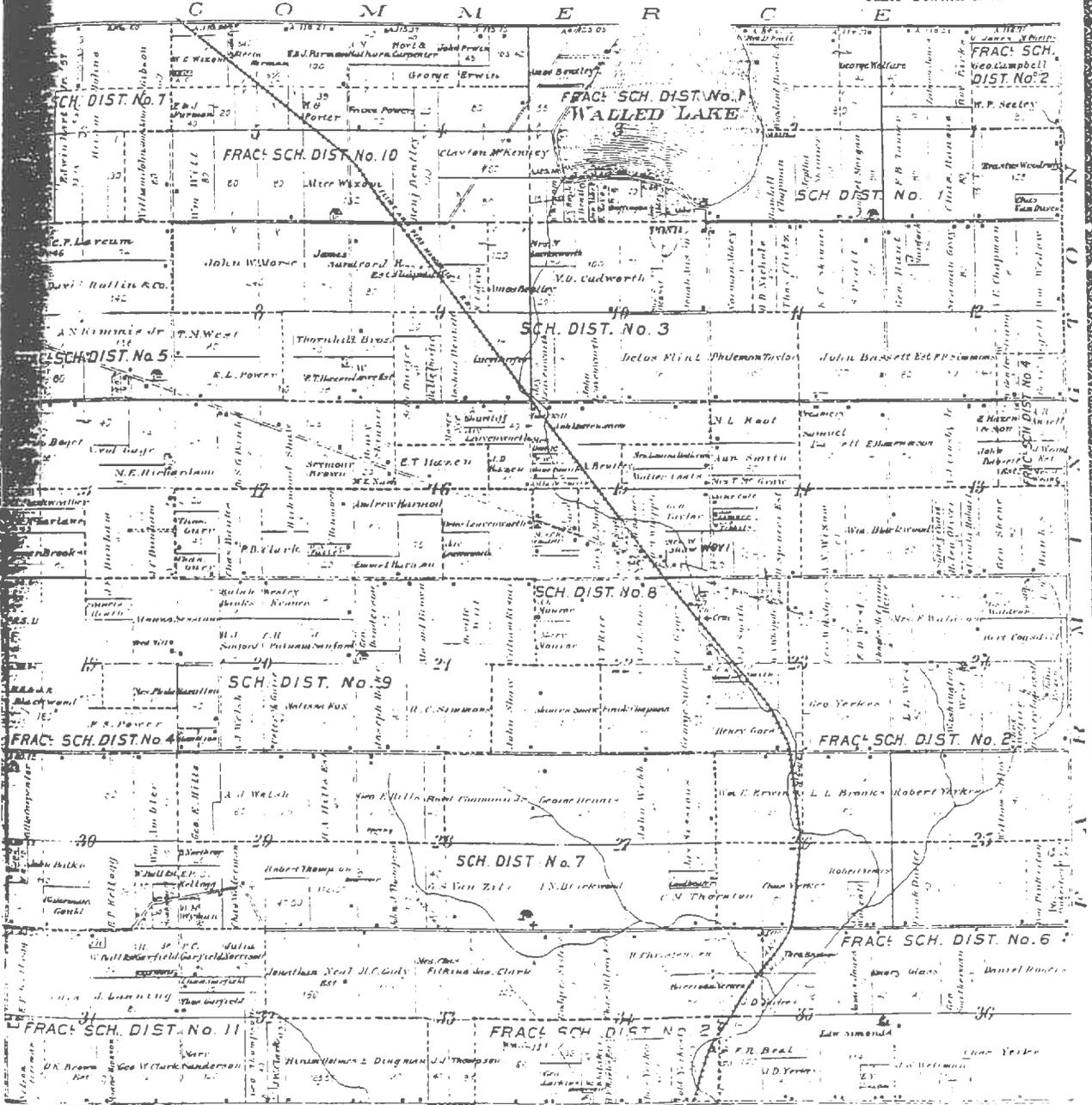


Map 1 - Novi Township Plat, F.W. Beers & Co., 1872

# MAP OF NOVI

Township 1 North Range 8 East

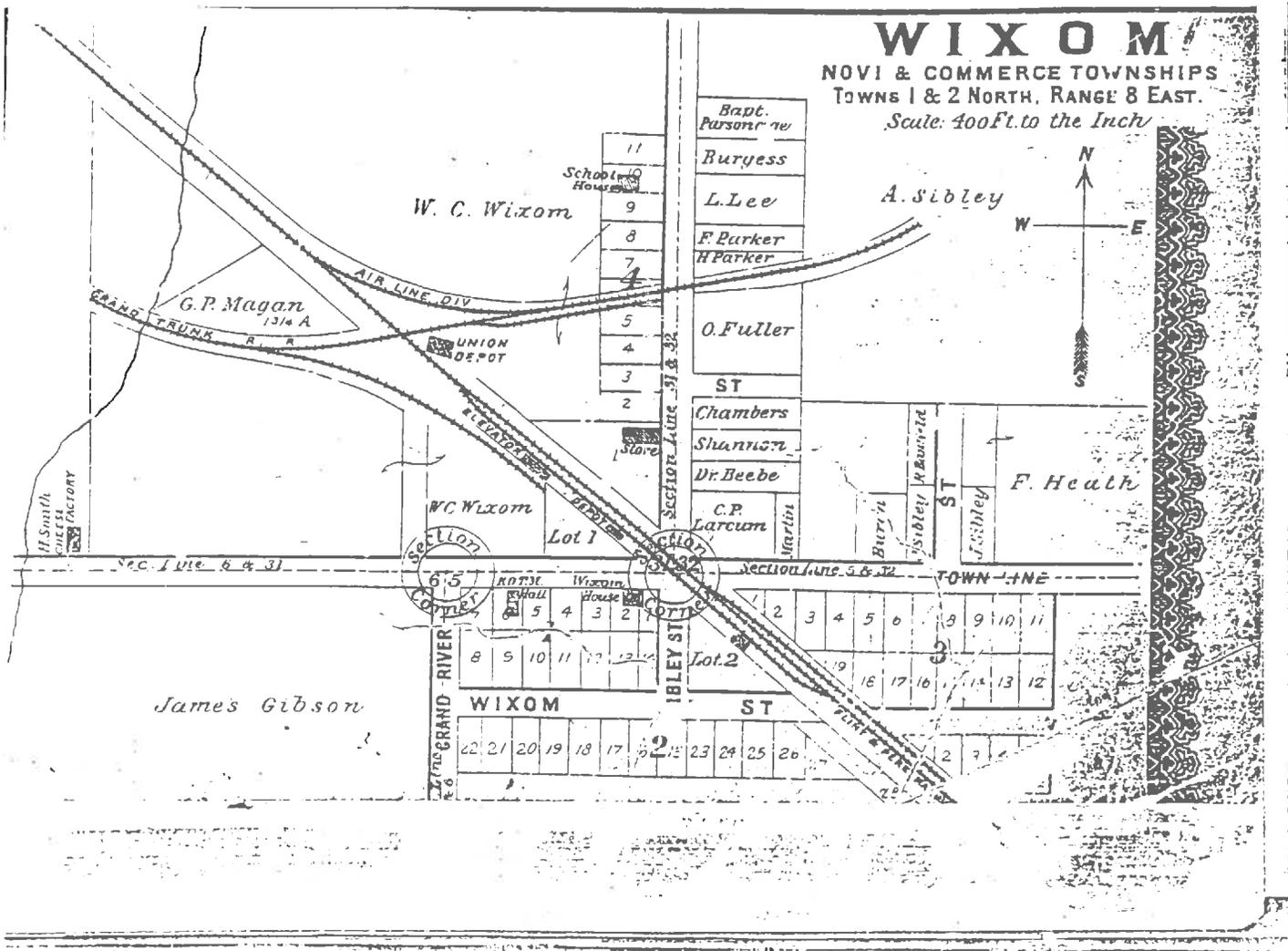
Scale 2 Inches to one Mile



Church      ————      Highways  
 School House      ————      Railroads  
 Residence      ————      Drains  
 Cemetery      ————      School District boundaries

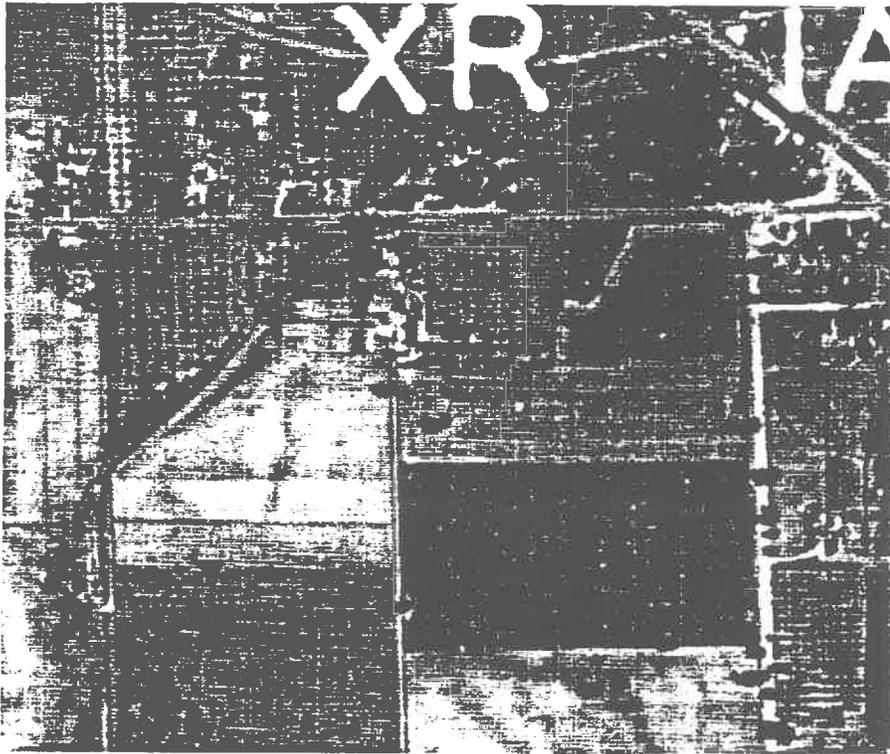
A with accompanying figures  
 denotes various according to  
 government survey.

Map 2 - Novi Township, The Kace Publishing Company, 1896



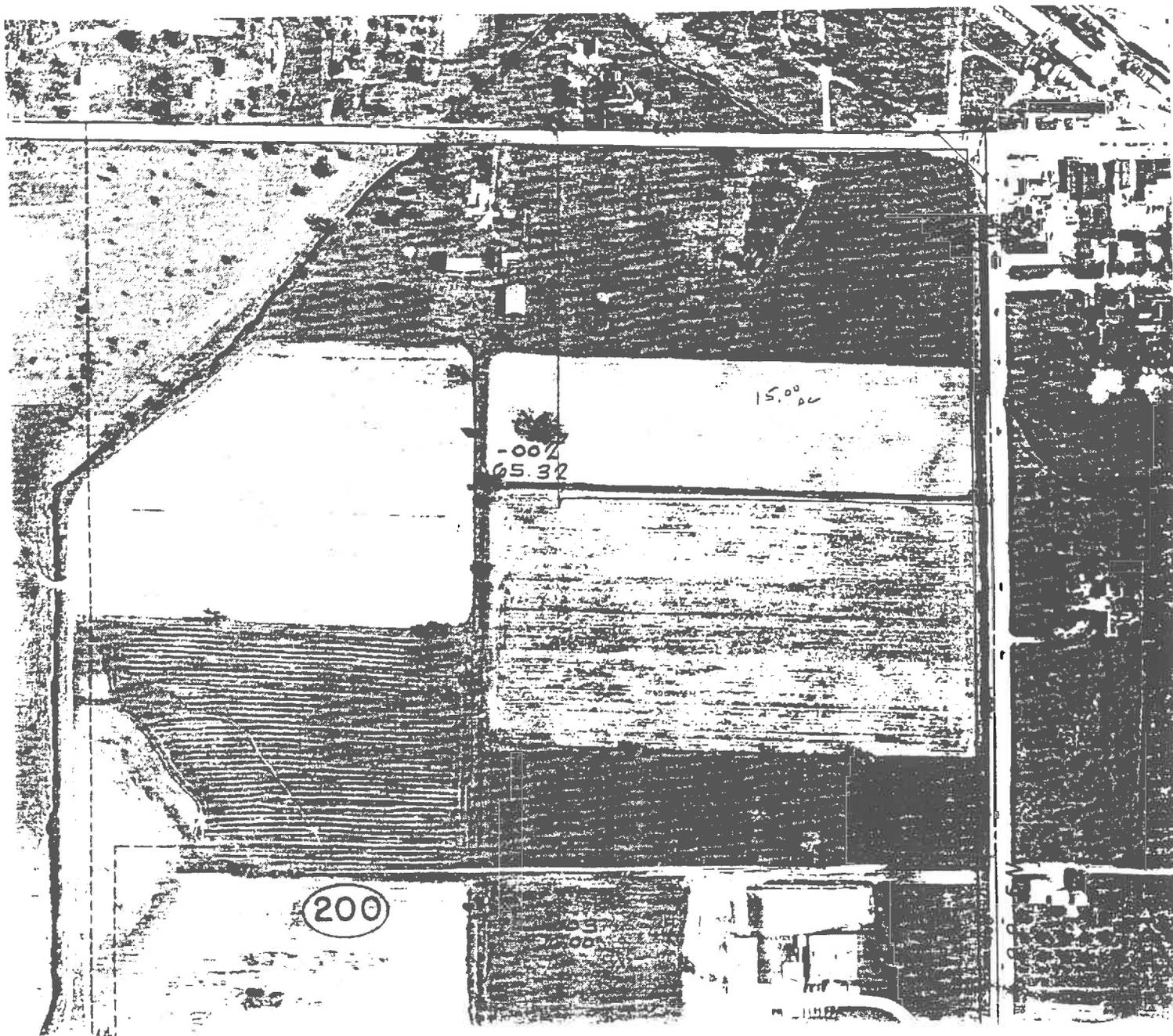
Map 3 - Wixom, The Kace Publishing Company, 1896





Map 5 - Aerial View of the Gibson Farm, July 17, 1940





Map 7 - Aerial View of Gibson Farm, 1978

# BOUNDARY SURVEY

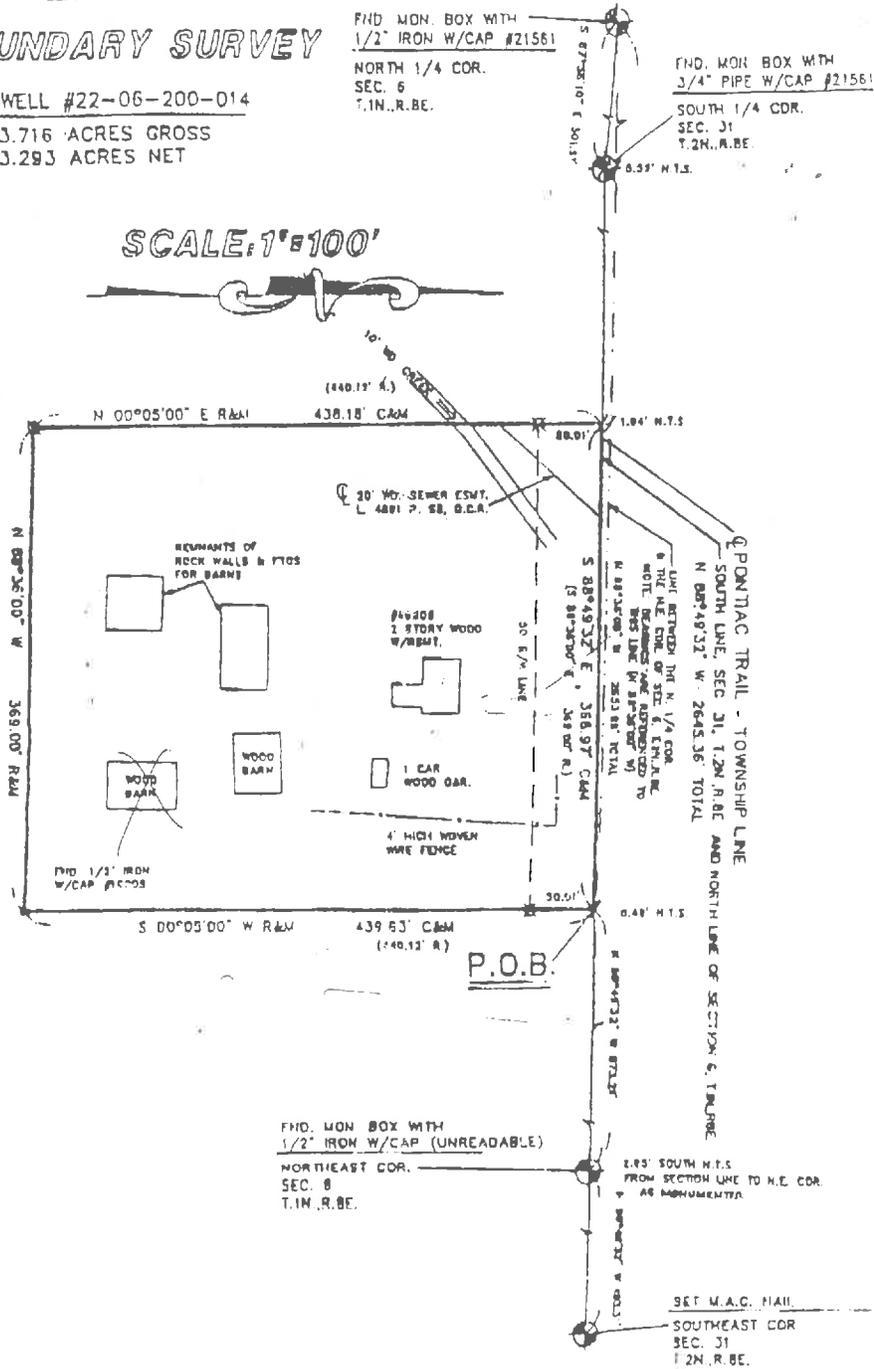
SIDWELL #22-06-200-014

3.716 ACRES GROSS  
3.293 ACRES NET

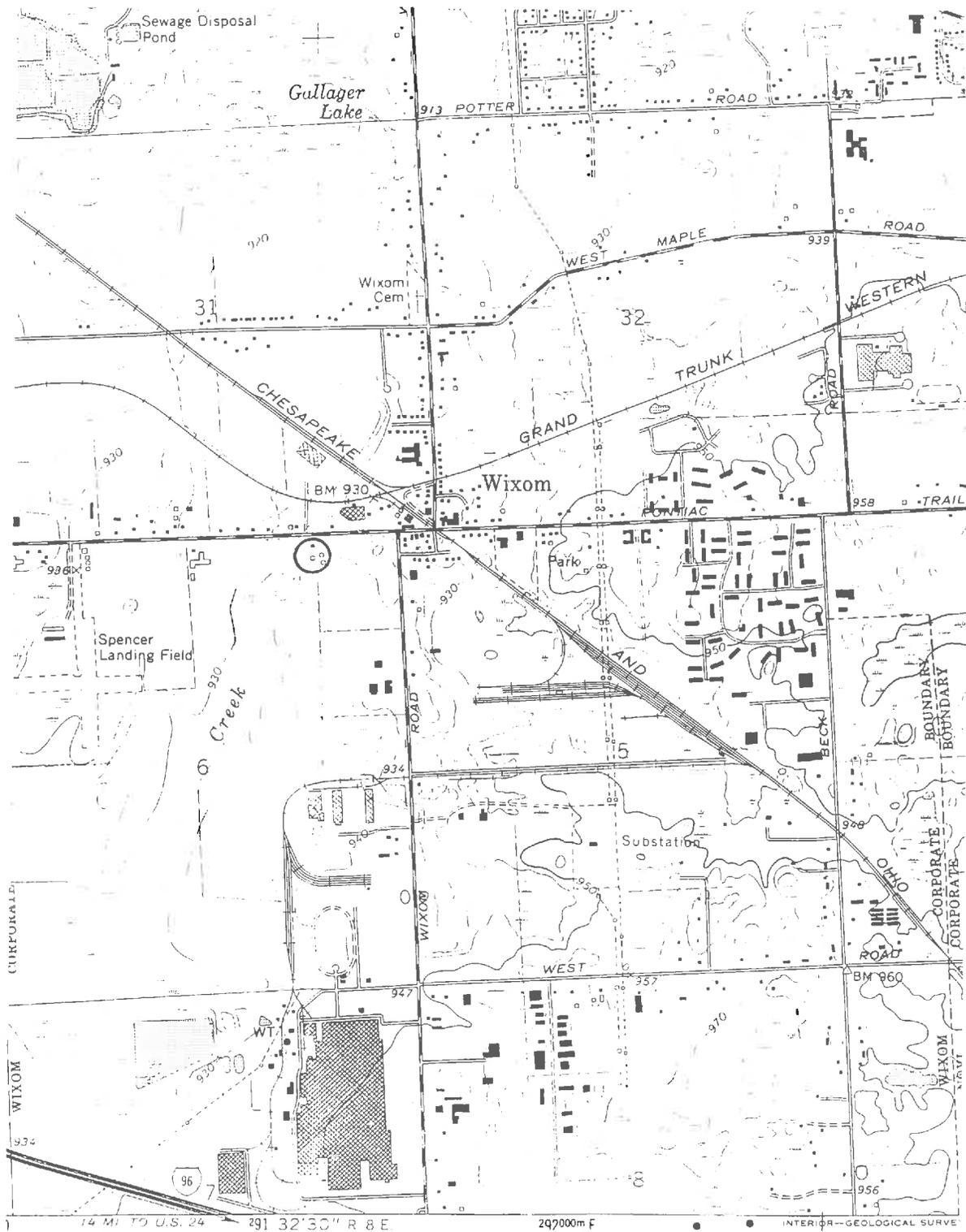
FND MON. BOX WITH  
1/2" IRON W/CAP #21561  
NORTH 1/4 COR.  
SEC. 6  
T.1N., R.8E.

FND. MON BOX WITH  
3/4" PIPE W/CAP #21561  
SOUTH 1/4 COR.  
SEC. 31  
T.2N., R.8E.

SCALE: 1"=100'



Map 8 - Boundary Survey, 1995



Map 9 - United States Geological Survey, Milford Quadrangle, 42083-E5-TF-024, 1969 (revised 1983).

## Part II. Architectural Information

### General Statement of Gibson Farm House

#### Architectural Character

The Gibson House is a two-story cross-gabled Italianate Villa structure. The Italianate style along with the Gothic Revival, began in England as part of the Picturesque movement. The first Italianate houses in the United States were built in the late 1830s and were popularized by Andrew Jackson Downing's pattern books *Cottage Residences* (1842) and *The Architecture of Country Houses* (1850). The design of the Gibson House is a classic example of an Americanized version of an informal Italian Villa. The key elements of the asymmetrical Italianate style include a cross-gabled form, the front gable with a one-story bay window and paired windows on the second story, bracketed windows, a single-story porch partial width, and bracketed cornices. The fretwork along the roof of the front porch and bay window was extremely popular in Wixom (See Figure 1,2,4, & 14). There was a local mill fabricating ornament, which could explain fretwork similarities between the Gibson, Chamber, and Longnecker homes.<sup>27</sup>

The structure includes a partial basement. The building has a side gable roof line that runs perpendicular to a front gable roof creating a "T" form. The side gable portion has an open inset porch on the front with a entrance door. The front gable has a three bay window on the first story with elaborate Italianate hood moldings. A single story ell, which is part of the first period of the structure (1870s), protrudes from the center rear of the side gable form. There are two shed porches, one open and the other enclosed, on the east and west sides respectively of the ell. The house has 3 1/4 inch wooden clapboards and a field stone/concrete foundation.

#### Condition of Building Fabric

Generally the structure is in fair physical condition and is currently being maintained by the City of Wixom. The building has not been occupied for over three years and it is developing signs of weather and pest intrusion. The entire roof is currently keeping the elements out. The rafters and joists are dry. However, in the ceiling crawl space of the ell there are no soffit boards enclosing the eaves and the rear vent has a broken screen. As a result there are squirrels living in the space

as well as many yellow jacket and wasp hives. In the rear of the front gable form there is a large hole in the second story part of the clapboard. Wasps and Yellow Jackets are nesting in that hole and the bedroom on the interior side of the wall. The immediate landscape is riddled with woodchuck and gopher tunnels and holes. There is a large woodchuck hole in the front foundation of the house. These pests must be eliminated in order to maintain the structure in a stable condition.

The basement is damp and exposed to the elements via the storm door area. Animals seem to live in that area and have begun to dig through the foundation. As well, the pump near the furnace does not seem to be working. The floor area has had as much as two inches of water near the furnace area after a rain. The basement structural timber beams have been cut through in order to open up the basement into two areas. To help with the support of the house three structural steel I-beams have been added with each beam being supported by four post jacks.

Unfortunately, the house underwent an intensive renovation during 1965 (see page 11 blueprint initialed by Bruce E. Duke (designer) and Mildred Gibson (client)). Two front rooms were eliminated to make one large room. During this renovation the joists for the front porch were changed and realigned with an I-beam and four new post jacks (as discussed previously) were added for support. A new interior staircase was built in the basement (no signs of an earlier one possibly the only entrance was from the outside cellar door). A baseboard circulating-hydronic system with a new boiler was also installed during this renovation. Most of the first floor and second floor plaster was removed while replacing with rock-lath plaster sheets. Three brick chimneys were entirely removed. The front brick chimney used to go through the east side of the current living area. The west back chimney, which was replaced with a vent chimney for the furnace and the kitchen chimney in the ell was totally removed.

A set of new windows replaced old windows in 1965 in the south and east walls of the kitchen. Also added was a walk through glass-sliding-door in the dining room that opened up to a renovated porch enclosure on the west side of the ell.

## **Description of Gibson House Exterior (Present)**

### **Over-all Dimensions**

The present over-all dimension of the structure site plan, including porches, is 42.3 feet wide by 56.8 feet deep.

## **Foundations**

The basement under front portion of the house has a poured concrete floor with a field stone (mostly granite) foundation. The foundation has been pargeted sporadically with Portland cement in various places suggesting leakage problems at one time. The ell has not been excavated and has a dirt floor as well as a field stone foundation (mostly granite) heavily parget with cement. Both porches have slab concrete foundations poured as floors.

## **Walls**

The walls are covered with 3 1/2" wooden clapboards. The corners of the structure are accented with vertical wood boards that suggest the presence of columns. A wide wooden frieze band connects the clapboards to the soffit. The frieze supported decorative brackets which are no longer attached, however, some of the brackets survive and can be found in the barn. See barn inventory #201.

## **Structural Systems, Framing**

The house was built using balloon framing technology in which the studs extend in one piece from the top of the foundation sill plate to the top plate; floor joists are nailed to the studs and are supported by ledger boards (horizontal boards).

## **Porches and Stoops**

The north and east verandahs were part of the original structure. The east verandah, with shed roof, was built with a wooden deck the same as the north verandah. However, during the 1965 renovation the wooden deck was removed and replaced with a concrete slab. The west porch was enclosed in 1965 with modern windows and a concrete slab for the floor. One chamfered post from the original west porch was used in the 1965 renovation as a part of the exterior door frame. The south wood plank stoop with side-rail rests on a concrete slab that extends to the milk house.

## **Chimneys**

There is only one chimney in the structure, located on the southeast side of the cross-gabled roof line. The chimney is made out of composite materials with a stainless steel flue. A steel alloy and aluminum chimney cap is attached and is of the same period of the chimney itself--post 1965.

## **Openings - Windows and Shutters**

Presently the front two-story section of the house has its original shutters, shutter hardware and hood moldings. The four-over-four light, an Italianate stylistic fenestration, windows are original as well. The entire window fenestration of the rear ell has been changed. A second story window casement in the rear gable wall of the ell has been fitted with wooden louvers for attic ventilation, post 1965.

## **Roof**

The roof is a cross-gabled roof with a medium pitch that is currently covered with asphalt shingles. Inside the attic there is nineteenth-century cedar-shake wood shingles at the joints of both roof lines. On the south side roof there are six aluminum roof vents, added during the 1965 renovation, which are attached in a horizontal line near the peak. A wood post which supports a metal rooster weather vane is mounted on the south gable apex of the ell. The post is a nineteenth-century adornment that was probably used for a lighting rod.

## **Site**

### **General Setting and Orientation**

The first large scale settlement occurred in Michigan after the territory was completely surveyed and platted in 1831. During the survey, which was begun by government surveyors in 1815, Michigan was divided into six-by-six mile plats of 36 square miles called townships, according the recommendations of Thomas Jefferson. Along these boundaries, Michigan's original road system was constructed. The current Pontiac Trail on the north side of the Gibson Farm, separates the townships of Novi and Commerce and is a boundary road as previously described. The typical lots granted or offered for sale by the territorial government of Michigan were quarter sections of 160 acres. Matthew Gibson purchased a 168 acre tract of land. The Territorial Government of Michigan sold the 160 acre parcels because it was a manageable size for a family to work and the quarter sections of property were bounded on two sides by roads. Both roads facilitated transportation of goods and produce. As well, some of these corner sections became crossroad towns, like Wixom, that connected with developing railroads.<sup>28</sup>

All of the surviving structures are *insitu* and the building site of the structures is in Novi Township, the northeast corner of section 6 of Oakland County Michigan.

Facing Pontiac Trail the site was one and a half miles north of the Detroit Howell Turnpike. The house was also positioned facing north, perpendicular to the road. This area plotted by Willard C. Wixom included 27 houses and 200 people in 1877. Matthew Gibson's house was about a 1/4 mile from the Wixom business center and the Holly Wayne & Monroe Railroad Depot which included a telegraph and express office. Included in the Wixom business area was a General Store and Post Office operated by A.W. Arms, a Foundry & Machine Shop operated by C.P. Larcom, wheat and plaster warehouse, jewelry store, cooper shop, blacksmith shop, lumberyard,<sup>29</sup> Steam Thresher Sales Co. operated by L.B. Parrigo, Glove and Mitten manufacturer operated by O.S. Stearns, and photographer L.A. Skinner.<sup>30</sup>

The farmhouse sits at the north end of what was a 168 acre family farm. The property was actively farmed by two successive generations of the Gibson family from 1861 until 1955. Over the years many outbuildings were added to the site including four barns, two silos, milk house, garage, hen house, outhouse and a windmill. A 35 acre woodlot was located at the very back of the site where new Lincoln automobiles are loaded onto C & O railroad cars today. The family began to slowly sell off small sections of acreage beginning in the 1950s until the house and remaining 3.31 acres were sold to the City of Wixom in 1995.

### **Outbuildings**

There were at one time four barns and two silos on the property. A horse barn, hay barn, cattle/general barn and a granary. According to the W.P.A. Rural Survey all the barns were constructed in 1872 except for the hay barn which was built in 1870. It makes sense that at least one barn on the site pre-dated the house because the family was living in a log cabin on the property from c. 1862-1872.<sup>31</sup>

Existing outbuildings include the milk house (date unknown), the garage 16x12 (1927), and horse barn 48x42x20 (1872).

#### **Milk House (existing) - 113 square feet**

Unknown date of construction. most likely dates to James Gibson's stewardship of the farm 1890-1943. The original stone foundation was repaired with modern concrete and a lean-to tool shed was added to the side when the house was remodeled in the 1960s (See Figure 17).

#### **Garage (existing) - 258 square feet**

The garage was built by Harold Gibson, grandson of Matthew Gibson in 1926 or 1927 when Harold was home on summer vacation from the University of Michigan. The artistic concrete blocks used in the

foundation of this building are typical of inexpensive/commercial structures built in the 1920s and 1930s. The modern metal garage door with opener was added by Mildred Gibson as part of the 1965 renovations of the farmhouse (See Figure 18).

### **Horse Barn (existing) - 1,140 square feet**

The existing two-story red board and batten barn, 48x42x20 (1872), was most likely constructed at the same time as the house ca. 1871. The use of smaller timbers and balloon framing indicates that this structure was most likely built after 1865 and the board and batten siding would indicate an 1860s or 1870s date. The barn has modern concrete footings over the original stone foundation and it is leaning badly to the left. The asphalt shingle roof is a modern replacement. Both Matthew Gibson and James Gibson's initials are painted in white in the loft area of the barn and James Gibson's name is inscribed on one of the sliding doors and inside the barn on the stairway wall. This barn was used as a pig pen in the 1940s and also housed a corn crib. The remainder of the space was most likely used to store carriages and farm equipment. The horse barn is a timber frame structure with a board and batten rough lumber exterior and a wood shingle roof. There are four four-over-four sash windows and one round gable window with four quartered lights. The barn in the north south gable portion was a carriage area that included a tack room and corn crib. Artifacts found in this area included James Gibson's racing sulky #30 and a sledge, #42, & #78, used for hauling wood from the wood lot at the southern end of the farm.<sup>32</sup> The stall area was used for horses then pigs in the 1940s (See Figure 19 a-d).<sup>33</sup>

Outbuildings and structures no longer standing include a hay barn (1870) demolished in 1996, granary/sheep barn (1872), demolished between 1958 and 1977 -stone foundation exists, general livestock barn (1872) demolished ca. 1979 -stone foundation with cement floor exists, two silos (probably 1890s-1910s) demolished after 1957 and before 1978, chicken coop (date unknown), two hole outhouse behind garage and a windmill (post 1880s).<sup>34</sup>

### **Hay Barn with Granary**

Timber frame construction with a gambrel roof and stone foundation. Possibly constructed in the 1850s by James Ogle or Warren Messinger (previous owners). Taken down in 1996 by the City of Wixom because of poor condition.

The hay barn, 50x30x30, was a timber frame structure, with wood board and batten siding. The barn had two large opposing doors opening to the middle portion of the barn. The interior space of the barn was

divided into three equal spaces. The southern third of the barn was a hay loft and the northern third had a granary. Both gable end spaces had second story hay lofts and the middle space was clear from floor to ceiling. The roof of the barn was wood shingles.<sup>35</sup>

#### **Granary/Sheep Barn (demolished)**

Remnants of original stone foundation are visible. The barn was most likely taken down or fell between 1940 - 1960.

The granary/sheep barn, 50x30x30, was a timber frame structure on a stone foundation with a rough lumber exterior and gabled wooden shingled roof. The barn was used for sheep and a grain storage.<sup>36</sup>

#### **General Livestock Barn - with adjoining silos (demolished)**

Remnants of the original stone foundation and circle foundations for the silos are visible. Damaged during a storm in the 1970s and taken down shortly after by Mildred Gibson because she feared damage to the house from blowing pieces.

The general livestock barn, 70x30x28, was a timber frame structure on a stone foundation with a rough lumber exterior and a gabled wooden shingled roof. There were two levels plus a loft. The first level had four windows to admit light. A concrete floor had been added sometime between 1890 and 1937. On the second floor horse and cow stalls were built in each gabled side.<sup>37</sup>

#### **Silos (demolished)**

Two silos, 30x12, wood structures with wooden stave siding were built in front of the north side of the General Livestock Barn after 1895.<sup>38</sup> They were dismantled before 1978. Concrete foundations were cited by the W.P.A. Rural Survey in 1937 and still exist today.<sup>39</sup>

#### **Chicken Coop (demolished)**

No pictures survive of the chicken coop, nor was it identified in the W.P.A. Rural Survey (See Map 6).

#### **Out House (demolished)**

The two hole outhouse was noted by James D. Gibson to have been 15 feet east of the garage.<sup>40</sup>

#### **Windmill (demolished)**

Metal windmill manufactured by Star Windmills, Flint & Wally Manufacturing Co., Kendallville, Indianapolis (see Barn Inventory, # 166). The windmill stood approximately 6-8 feet in diameter and 25-30 feet tall. The windmill, produced as a kit, was marketed as a

complete “do-it-yourself” water pumping system that included “No-Oil-Em” bearings.<sup>41</sup> According to Frances Gibson and her step-son James D. Gibson, the name J.M. Gibson was stenciled on the rudder. The windmill was connected to a generator that operated a pump which sent water to the cattle trough. The windmill was dismantled in the 1960s when Mildred remodeled the house.<sup>42</sup>

## Historical Landscape

### Farming History

In 1872, the farm consisted on average of 168 acres, approximately 35 acres of which was woodland. The family used the trees in this area to heat their house and also to make maple syrup from some of the sugarbush trees in the wood lot. The wood lot area was sold in 1956 to the C & O Railroad, so that the new automobiles produced at the Ford Plant could be easily loaded onto railroad cars for shipping.

Passing from Matthew Gibson to his son James in 1891 the farm stayed in the Gibson family until 1995 when the property was sold through the trusts of James’ son Harold and daughter Mildred to the city of Wixom. Although not actively farmed by the Gibson family since about 1950, the property retains much of its agricultural character. It is important to note that the Croft family rented the Gibson’s fields and farmed the land from the 1950s to the 1970s.

Family history combined with the information taken from the agricultural schedules of the 1870 and 1880 Federal Census tell us that the Gibson’s grew among other things hay, clover, wheat, oats, Indian corn, Irish potatoes and apples. In 1880 Matthew Gibson had 4 horses, 2 mulch cows, 60 sheep, 22 pigs and 50 chickens. He produced 175 pounds of butter and shorn 125 sheep fleeces weighing a total of 600 pounds of raw wool. This indicates that the Gibson’s were typical of farmers in Oakland County Michigan in the late nineteenth century. According to the agricultural statistics from the 1870, 1880 and 1900 Federal Censuses, sheep herding, as well as, apple and potato growing were very common in Oakland County. In particular, Oakland County produced the most pounds of wool of any other county in Michigan in 1880. The majority of the sheep raised in Oakland County at the time were Merino and this is most likely the breed that Matthew Gibson was raising.

James Gibson took over operation of the family farm after his father’s death in 1889. According to the information found in the 1937 W.P.A. Rural Survey, an aerial photograph from 1940 (**See Map 6**), and recollections from Mildred L. Gibson and James D. Gibson, we know that James shifted the emphasis from wheat and wool production to

dairying and sheep raising for meat. James also expanded the orchards on the property, and he continued to grow potatoes and corn. Both Matthew and James raised pigs and chickens. Under James's stewardship several outbuildings were added to the property including a windmill, two silos and a milk house. Only the milk house and the garage, built by his son Harold in 1926 or 1927, survive today. James passed away in 1943 and his wife continued to farm the property until her death in 1955.

## Interior Room-By-Room Description

### Basement

971 square feet

#### Room B1

The current basement stairway was not part of the original house. Originally the basement did not have an interior entrance nor an interior stairwell. In the early twentieth-century a stairway was added and updated in the 1965 renovation. Evidence that supports that there was not an interior stairwell includes; lack of space between any joists that is larger than 24" in width, current stairwell used to have joists passing through the area (see mortises in timber above the bottom of the stairwell and cut joists resting on steel I-beam behind stairwell), removal of stone foundation wall and door (#879)<sup>43</sup> which was replaced by a steel I-beam in 1965. Therefore, the side walls and the entire stairwell are part of the 1965 renovation. (See Figure 20)

#### Room B2

**Floor:** Poured concrete slab (1965)<sup>44</sup>

**Ceiling:** Exposed, combination timber frame joist system with machine sawn floor joists with pine flooring (ca. 1871). The joists 7 1/2" x 2" with tenons 4 1/2" on the top part of the ends are spaced 24" apart and mortised into 8" x 8" sills and girts. The joists have circular saw marks which indicate original first period construction (ca. 1871) and timbers have up-and-down saw marks. A steel I-beam runs east to west and is supported by four post jacks with 30"x30"x16" concrete footings (1965). Running parallel to the I-beam is an original 8" x 8" timber supported by three post jacks.<sup>45</sup> In 1965, joists were mortised into the north side of the timber to restructure support for the front porch on the first floor.

**Walls:** Fieldstone and mortar (ca. 1871). The walls have been repointed probably in the 1960s.

**Windows:** Two openings: (ca. 1871) wooden single sash, three lights each 7 3/4" x 11 1/2."

**Plumbing:** Copper piping for all water systems. Modern well pump (post 1965) is located in the southeast corner of the room.

**Lighting:** Two incandescent light bulb receptacles connected with 1960s Romex cable.

**Stairway:** Open stringer pine wood stairway in the south west side of room connects to B1's landing with five treads attached with wire nails (1965).<sup>46</sup> Another stairway at the southeast corner leads to the exterior of the house at door 1-119. The stairwell has an interior door

with 1860-1890 strap hinges (most likely the original door and matches door #879) and an exterior door (late twentieth-century).

### **Room B3**

**Floor:** Poured concrete slab (1965).<sup>47</sup>

**Ceiling:** Exposed, combination timber frame joist system with machine sawn floor joists with pine flooring (ca. 1871). The joists 7 1/2" x 2" with tenons 4 1/2" on the top part of the ends are spaced 24" apart and mortised into 8" x 8" sills and girts. The joists have circular saw marks which indicate original first period construction (ca. 1871). The timbers have up-and-down saw marks. A steel I-beam runs north to south and is supported by four jack posts with 30"x30"x16" concrete footings (1965).<sup>48</sup>

**Walls:** Fieldstone and mortar (ca. 1871). The southern wall has had some removal for a doorway and as a result an I-Beam was installed to support the center of the structure (1965).

**Windows:** Two openings: (ca. 1871) wooden single sash, three lights each 7 3/4" x 11 1/2." Note, south window has steel security bars attached (date unknown).

**Heating:** Wells-McLain furnace - modern water circulatory boiler system that supports baseboard heating.

**Plumbing:** Copper piping for all water systems. A hot water heater, water softener and a sump pump are located in the south side of the room (1960s).

**Lighting:** Two incandescent light bulb receptacles connected with 1960s Romex cable. Power, circuit breaker system, is located in the southeast side of room.

### **Room B4**

**Floor:** The area is unexcavated and thus has a dirt floor.

**Ceiling:** Unknown. Area is sealed off and with no access for evaluation. Examined from dining room and found a 4 1/2" pine floor under the tiled floor.

**Walls:** Fieldstone and mortar (ca. 1871 or earlier). Examined from the exterior.

## **First Floor**

**1,522 square feet**

**All rooms, doors, and windows have been identified with a unique number for easy reference (See pages 13 through 20).**

A note on moldings in the Gibson House. The interior of the house was designed following the classical Corinthian order (See Figure 21).

### **Parlor (Room 102)**

This style of parlor was generally designed as a private space for business or as an area for entertaining. The exterior door, 1-102, that connects the room to the porch allows access to this room and not to any other part of the house, if the owner wished such a use. The wide double door, 1-103, could be closed and a person or persons could visit a Gibson family member without interrupting the rest of the family. This type of private access became common in Gothic Revival and Italianate Revival architecture (1840-1880).

**Floor:** Beige carpeting with pad attached to plywood flooring with wire nails (1960s). Underneath the carpet and plywood rests an equal width (5 1/4") pine tongue-and-groove board floor connected to the joists with 3" cut nails (ca. 1871).

**Ceiling:** Sawn joists 14" apart support sawn lath and an original painted plaster ceiling (ca. 1871). Partially examined and found a green painted border with a beige/tan paint washed over the green. A combination of plaster rock-lath (1960s version of sheet rock) and steel mesh lath (1960s) attached with wire nails are covering the original plaster ceiling. A fire detector/alarm is mounted on the ceiling and a motion detector is mounted in the upper northwest corner of the room (1980-1997).

**Walls:** Exterior walls are comprised of rough lumber 2"x4" studs, (sawn lath and plaster (ca. 1871) was removed and replaced with plaster rock lath in the 1965 renovation. South interior wall of room which also defines north wall of room's closet is a sub wall plaster rock lath and 1 3/4" x 3 3/4" studs with wire nails created a closet in the 1965.<sup>49</sup> The original south wall of the room is the south wall of the closet (room 103) and comprised of rough lumber 2" x 4" studs, sawn lath, painted plaster (green- medium hue and beige). On top of the plaster is one set of wall paper and border (a marbled field with a geometric border using red, green, blue, yellow and silver), and plaster rock lath is attached over the wall paper with wire nails. (See Figure 30).

**Cornice:** Inside room 103 is a plaster cornice, painted green and then tan over the green, that extended throughout the entire room (ca. 1871).<sup>50</sup> There is a wood molding at the bottom of the cornice that was added after the plaster was painted a saturated bluish-teal (1870s) (See Figure 31).

**Baseboard:** All of the baseboard molding is painted an "antique white." over the original wood grain finish. Quarter-round base-shoe, 7" splash-board with a Grecian Ogee molded top (1870s) are found on the east, north, west, and the closet's south wall. Note the baseboard in the closet is painted green.<sup>51</sup> The base molding on the south wall inside the room is from the 1960s renovation.

**Doors:** 1-103 is a double door with both sections hinged twice (See **Figure 32**). Each section has five raised panels encased in rectangular rails and stiles which are connected by pegged mortise and tenon joints (1870s). The brass hardware is Anglo-Japanesque design and the doorknobs are made of a white ceramic. The architrave surrounding the door is a Grecian Ogee with bevel attached to a base and then a Grecian Ovolo (1870s). 1-104 is a five panel door as 1-105. An outside door, 1-102, at the northeast corner of the room is original with particle board covering the glass and sealed from the outside.<sup>52</sup> The door was used as a private access door from the front porch to the room.

**Windows:** There is a three-bay-window (4/1,5/1,6/1) on the north side of room. Each bay of the window has a double-hung sash with four lights in each sash. The bay window is a signature element of the Italianate architectural style. On the west side of the room there are two windows with double-hung sash with four lights in each sash. All the windows, window sills, and associated architrave moldings (See **Figure 23**) and dado paneling (underneath windows 4/1,5/1,6/1,7/1, and 8/1) are original to the first period of the house (1870s). Each light pane is 15 5/8" x 11 3/4." Each sash has pegged mortise and tenon joints with a 1 1/4" vertical rectilinear bead muntin and a 1 5/8" horizontal rectilinear bead muntin. As well, each sash has two spring loaded metal pin stops which hold the window open or closed. The louvered interior shutters are part of the 1965 renovation.<sup>53</sup>

**Heating:** Baseboard, water circulating system.

**Lighting:** None

### **Room: Living Room (Room 101)**

This room, renovated in 1965, used to be three rooms of which one was a hallway that connected doors 1-101 and 1-103 to the dining room through door 1-110. There were two doorways on the east side of the hall and a chimney separated both doorways. Most likely there was a wood burning heating stove in the hallway that serviced the hallway and dining room and another stove in one of the eastern two rooms. The chimney was removed in the 1965 renovation.<sup>54</sup> A mantle is attached on the west side of the room, however, its placement is not original as it would have been on the east side of the hall above the stove. All of the woodwork was originally wood grained, a decorative painting technique to make soft wood moldings look like exotic hardwood. Specifically, the type of wood graining done in the Gibson house was made to look like Butternut wood. Paint analysis shows evidence of wood graining on the original moldings in the room. A fabulous example of this wood graining decoration was found underneath the front door bell on the interior side of door 1-101.

**Floor:** Green carpeting with pad attached to plywood flooring with wire nails (1965). Underneath the carpet and plywood rests an equal width (5 1/4") pine tongue-and-groove board floor connected to the joists with 3" cut nails (ca. 1871).

**Ceiling:** Sawn joists 14" apart support sawn lath and possibly an original painted plaster ceiling (ca. 1871).

**Walls:** Exterior walls and interior walls are comprised of rough lumber 2" x 4" studs, sawn lath and plaster (ca. 1871) removed and replaced by plaster rock lath in the 1965 renovation.

**Cornice:** None

**Baseboard:** Baseboard molding is painted an "antique white." Quarter-round base-shoe, 7" splash-board with a Grecian Ogee molded top, painted with "antique white" covering the original wood grained finish (ca. 1871) is found on the east and west side of the front door #1-101 (note 3" cut nails from the 1870s). Molding on the east side of room (front alcove to door 1-110) is not original. Molding on the west side of pocket door and between doors 1-103 and 1-109 is original (note 3" cut nails from the 1870s).

**Doors:** The front door 1-101 is a classic Italianate exterior door (1870s) with its original etched glass window with an 1870s "Aesthetic Movement" design. The door painted white was originally stained fairly dark in the 1870s. All of the brass hardware is designed in the Anglo-Japanesque style (1870s). An original hand-crank brass doorbell (pat'd. 1860) is attached below the door's window. The screen door is not original to the 1870s period. Screen doors were not typical until the early part of the twentieth century. The architrave surrounding all doors in the room is a Grecian Ogee with bevel attached to a base and then a Grecian Ovolo (1870s). The two pocket doors 1-110, painted white, that separate the dining room and the living room have five raised panels encased in rectangular rails and stiles which are connected by pegged mortise and tenon joints (1870s). The brass hardware is of Anglo-Japanesque design. The third door 1-109, painted white, which connects room 101 to the second floor stairwell is also a five paneled door with rectangular rails and stiles which are connected by pegged mortise and tenon joints (1870s).

**Windows:** On the east side of the room windows 19/1, and 18/1 are double-hung sashes with four lights in each sash. In the north east pocket (alcove) of the room is a double-hung sash window 1/1 with four lights in each sash as well (1870s). Each light pane is 15 5/8" x 11 3/4." Each sash has pegged mortise and tenon joints with a 1 1/4" vertical rectilinear bead muntin and a 1 5/8" horizontal rectilinear bead muntin. As well, each sash has two spring loaded metal pin stops which hold the window open or closed. Windows on opposite sides of door 1-101 were installed after 1901. Double hung sash windows 2/1 and 3/1 are of the Queen Anne style with 14 1/2" x 39 1/2" and 47 3/4"

x 39 1/2" lights. Each sash has pegged mortise and tenon joints.<sup>55</sup> Associated architrave moldings, with the exception of windows 2/1 and 3/1 are original to the first period of the house (1870s). Architrave for windows 2/1 and 3/1 are a combination of original material and post 1901 material. The louvered interior shutters are part of the 1965 renovation.

**Heating:** Baseboard, water circulating system.

**Lighting:** None

### **Dining Room (Room 108)**

**Floor:** Green carpeting with pad attached to plywood flooring with wire nails (1965). Underneath the carpet and plywood rests an equal width (4 1/2") pine tongue-and-groove board floor connected to the joists with 3" cut nails (probably earlier than the rest of the house - 1870s).

**Ceiling:** Sawn joists 12" apart support sawn lath and an original plaster ceiling (1870) covered by plaster lath-rock. There are cornice profiles covered by the plaster rock-lath.

**Walls:** Exterior west wall is comprised of rough lumber 2"x4" studs and plaster rock lath (1965) which replaced sawn lath and plaster (ca. 1871). North and south interior walls as well as west exterior wall is comprised of rough lumber 2" x 4" studs, sawn lath, plaster underneath softwood wainscoting capped with a chair rail with a Grecian Ogee with bevel profile. Note there is no baseboard. All of the wood work is painted "antique white" which is covering the wood grain finish. On top of the plaster, above the wainscoting, is a late twentieth century wall paper with a English Revival design.

**Cornice:** None

**Baseboard:** None

**Doors:** Two pocket doors 1-110, painted "antiqued white" covering the original wood grained finish, that separate the dining room and the living room have five raised panels encased in rectangular rails and stiles which are connected by pegged mortise and tenon joints (1870s). The brass hardware is of Anglo-Japanesque design. Door 1-118 (1860s-1870s) attaches the room to the east porch and has a storm door on the exterior (twentieth century). Sliding glass door 1-111 and its architrave molding on the west side of the room was part of the 1965 renovation. The south closet raised panel door 1-113 (1870s) used to open to room 106 and part of 107 which was the original kitchen that extended from the east to west side of the structure. The current five panel door 1-117 leading to the kitchen (room 107) is original as well.

**Windows:** On the east side of the room, windows 17/1 and 16/1 are double-hung sash with four lights in each sash. Both the windows and associated architrave moldings are original to the first period of the house (1870s). Each light pane is 15 5/8" x 11 3/4." Each sash has

pegged mortise and tenon joints with a 1 1/4" vertical rectilinear bead muntin and a 1 5/8" horizontal rectilinear bead muntin. As well, each sash has two spring loaded metal pin stops which hold the window open or closed. The louvered interior shutters are part of the 1965 renovation.

**Heating:** Baseboard, water circulating system.

**Lighting:** One hanging electric light fixture in the middle of the room (not original) and one recessed electric light fixture above door 1-111.

### **Pantry Area (Room 105)**

**Floor:** Linoleum tile and plywood underlayment (1950s). Underneath the tile and plywood rests an equal width (4 1/2") pine tongue-and-groove board floor connected to the joists with 3" cut nails (1870s).

**Ceiling:** Sawn joists 14" apart support plaster rock-lath (1965).

**Walls:** Exterior south wall is comprised of rough lumber 2"x4" studs and plaster rock-lath (1965) which replaced sawn lath and plaster (ca. 1871). North interior walls and closet walls are also plaster rock-lath.

**Cornice:** None

**Baseboard:** None

**Doors:** There are two double-section louvered closet doors and one door 1-108 that separates the dining room from the pantry area, as well as, another door 1-107 that opens to the basement stairwell.

Doors 1-108 and 1-107 have five raised panels encased in rectangular rails and stiles which are connected by pegged mortise and tenon joints (1870s). The bathroom door 1-106 is a 1965 five paneled door without the pegged mortise and tenon joints.

**Windows:** On the south side of the room there is one window 11/1 with a double-hung sash with four lights in each sash (1870s). Each light pane is 15 5/8" x 11 3/4." Each sash has pegged mortise and tenon joints with a 1 1/4" vertical rectilinear bead muntin and a 1 5/8" horizontal rectilinear bead muntin. As well, each sash has two spring loaded metal pin stops which hold the window open or closed. The window and associated architrave moldings are original to the first period of the house (1870s).

**Heating:** Baseboard, water circulating system.

**Lighting:** One porcelain electric light fixture in the middle of the room (not original) and one recessed electric light fixture above door 1-107.

**Furniture:** A floor to ceiling built in pantry with Italianate design elements is fixed into the southeast corner of the room (1870s). The hardware on the pantry is all original.

### **Bathroom (Room 104)**

This room used to be a bedroom before the renovation in 1965.

**Floor:** Linoleum tile with green field and multi-colored abstract design is attached to a plywood underlayment (1950s). Underneath the tile

and plywood rests an equal width (5 1/4") pine tongue-and-groove board floor connected to the joists with 3" cut nails (1870s).

**Ceiling:** Sawn joists 14" apart support plaster rock-lath (1965).

**Walls:** Exterior west and south walls are comprised of rough lumber 2"x4" studs and plaster rock lath (1965) which replaced sawn lath and plaster (ca. 1871). North and east interior walls are plaster rock-lath. Yellow ceramic tile (1950s) creates a dado and a snowflake pattern wallpaper (1950s) creates the field. The tub and shower dado area has yellow tiles as well.

**Cornice:** None

**Baseboard:** linoleum

**Doors:** Doors 1-105 and 1-106 allow access to the room. Both doors have five raised panels encased in rectangular rails and stiles. Door 1-1-106 is a 1965 addition without the pegged mortise and tenon joints and door 1-105 is original with pegged mortise and tenon joints (1870s).

**Windows:** There is one window 10/1 on the south side and one window 9/1 on west side of the room. Both windows are double-hung sashes with four lights in each sash (1870s). Each light pane is 15 5/8" x 11 3/4." Each sash has pegged mortise and tenon joints with a 1 1/4" vertical rectilinear bead muntin and a 1 5/8" horizontal rectilinear bead muntin. As well, each sash has two spring loaded metal pin stops which hold the window open or closed. The windows' associated architrave moldings are original to when the bathroom was installed (1950s).

**Heating:** Baseboard, water circulating system.

**Lighting:** One porcelain electric light fixture in the middle of the room (not original) and one set of fluorescent electric light fixtures above the sink.

**Plumbing Fixtures:** One cast iron porcelain tub (1950s), one cast iron porcelain sink (1950s), one porcelain toilet (1950s) with wood seat (1970s). A set of metal 1970-1980s safety handles.

**Furniture:** A floor to ceiling linen closet built out of pine and plywood is fixed o the west wall (1950s).

### **Kitchen (Room 107)**

The kitchen was entirely renovated in the 1960s. The stove chimney was removed and the south wall was removed as well.

**Floor:** Linoleum tile on a plywood underlayment (1960s)

**Ceiling:** Sawn joists 12" apart support sawn lath and an original plaster ceiling (1870s) covered with plaster rock-lath (1965).

**Walls:** Exterior south and east wall are comprised of rough lumber 2"x4" studs and plaster rock-lath (1965) which replaced sawn lath and plaster (ca. 1871). North and west interior walls are plaster rock-lath.

**Cornice:** None

**Baseboard:** 1965

**Doors:** Door 1-117 separates the dining room and the kitchen room and door 1-116 separates the kitchen and the laundry room. Both doors have five raised panels encased in rectangular rails and stiles which are connected by pegged mortise and tenon joints (1870s). The brass hardware is of Anglo-Japanesque design.

**Windows:** Both the east and south side windows 14/1, 15/1 and 13/1 are part of the 1965 renovation. The east side double set, 14/1 and 15/1, of six-over-six sashes used to be a single four-over-four window. The south side, 13/1, six-over-six also replaced a four-over-four sash window.<sup>56</sup>

**Heating:** Baseboard, water circulating system.

**Lighting:** One porcelain electric light fixture in the middle of the room (not original) and one hanging electrified kerosene lamp. Note the electrified kerosene lamp was originally in the dining room.

**Fixtures:** One double sink, one refrigerator, one stove/range with hood fan.

**Furniture:** Wood kitchen cabinets are mounted on the southeast, south and southwest areas of the kitchen.

**Laundry (Room: 106)**

**Floor:** Linoleum tile on a plywood underlayment (1960s)

**Ceiling:** Sawn joists 12" apart support sawn lath and an original plaster ceiling (1860-1870).

**Walls:** Exterior south and west wall are comprised of rough lumber 2" x 4" studs and plaster rock lath (1960s) which replaced sawn lath and plaster (ca. 1871). North and west interior walls are plaster rock-lath.

**Cornice:** None

**Baseboard:** None

**Doors:** Wood exterior door 1-115 with window, that separates the laundry room from the exterior, is part of the 1965 renovation. A double four-section louvered door 1-114 encloses the closet on the north side of the room (1965).

**Windows:** The west double-hung sash, 12/1, with four-over-four lights is an original window (1870s). Each light pane is 15 5/8" x 11 3/4." Each sash has pegged mortise and tenon joints with a 1 1/4" vertical rectilinear bead muntin and a 1 5/8" horizontal rectilinear bead muntin. As well, each sash has two spring loaded metal pin stops which hold the window open or closed.

**Heating:** Baseboard, water circulating system.

**Lighting:** One porcelain electric light fixture in the middle of the room

**Fixtures:** One single portable sink, and one washer and one dryer.

**Furniture:** Wood kitchen cabinets are mounted above the washer and dryer (1965).

**Security System:** There are two security panels, one located at the south door and the other inside the closet. The security panel inside the closet is connected to a service.

## **Second Floor**

**888 square feet**

### **Room: Hall**

**Floor:** Green carpet covering 5 1/4" pine tongue-and-groove board floor, painted gray, connected to the joists with 3" cut nails (ca. 1871).

**Ceiling:** Sawn joists 14" apart support plaster rock-lath (1980s) attached with wire nails. A ceiling attic fan (ca. 1980) with metal louvers is attached in the ceiling and is in good working order. A smoke detector is mounted on the ceiling.

**Walls:** Exterior walls and interior walls are comprised of rough lumber 2"x4" studs, sawn lath and plaster (ca. 1871) removed and replaced by plaster rock lath in the 1965 renovation.

**Cornice:** None

**Baseboard:** 1965 ovolve molding. Evidence of cut nail holes in floor illustrate that there was baseboard molding pre-1880s.

**Doors:** All doors 2-102, 2-103, 2-104, 2-105, 2-106, 2-107, and 2-108 have five raised panels encased in rectangular rails and stiles which are connected by pegged mortise and tenon joints (1870s). The brass hardware is of Anglo-Japanesque design.

**Windows:** Window 6/2 is a double-hung sash with four-over-four lights on the west side of the room (1870s). Each light pane is 15 5/8" x 11 3/4." Each sash has pegged mortise and tenon joints with a 1 1/4" vertical rectilinear bead muntin and a 1 5/8" horizontal rectilinear bead muntin. As well, each sash has two spring loaded metal pin stops which hold the window open or closed. The window's associated architrave moldings are original to the first period of the house (1870s).

**Heating:** Baseboard, water circulating system is in the south side closet.

**Lighting:** Two incandescent porcelain receptacles are located at the west and east side of the hall.

### **Linen Closet (Room 203)**

**Floor:** Beige carpeting covering a 5 1/4" pine tongue-and-groove board floor, painted gray, connected to the joists with 3" cut nails (ca. 1871).

**Ceiling:** Sawn joists 14" apart support plaster rock-lath (1980s) attached with wire nails.

**Walls:** Interior walls are comprised of rough lumber 2"x4" studs, sawn lath and plaster (ca. 1871) removed and replaced by plaster rock lath in the 1960s renovation.

**Cornice:** None

**Baseboard:** None.

**Doors:** Door 2-105 has five raised panels encased in rectangular rails and stiles which are connected by pegged mortise and tenon joints (1870s). The closet is original (1870s)

**Windows:** None

**Heating:** Baseboard, water circulating system.

**Lighting:** One electric porcelain incandescent receptacle.

### **Hall Closet (Room 207)**

Outside of this area is also were a coal stove used to rest (1870s).

**Floor:** Green carpeting covering a 5 1/4" pine tongue-and-groove board floor, painted gray, connected to the joists with 3" cut nails (ca. 1871).

**Ceiling:** Sawn joists 14" apart support plaster rock-lath (1980s) attached with wire nails.

**Walls:** Exterior walls and interior walls are comprised of rough lumber 2"x4" studs and twentieth century 1 3/4" x 3 3/4" studs and plaster rock lath in the 1980s renovation.

**Cornice:** None

**Baseboard:** 1965 Ovolvo molding. Evidence of cut nail holes in floor illustrate that there was baseboard molding pre 1880s.

**Doors:** Door 2-106 has five raised panels encased in rectangular rails and stiles which are connected by pegged mortise and tenon joints (1870s).

**Windows:** None

**Heating:** Baseboard, water circulating system.

**Lighting:** One porcelain incandescent fixture mounted in ceiling.

### **Bedroom (Room 206)**

Originally two bedrooms, each with a door to the hallway, nail holes in the floor delineate a former wall that separated the rooms, as well as the cut out square which could have been a through way for a chimney.

**Floor** 5 1/4" pine tongue-and-groove board floor, painted gray, connected to the joists with 3" cut nails (ca. 1871).

**Ceiling:** Sawn joists 14" apart support plaster rock-lath (1980s) attached with wire nails.

**Walls:** Exterior walls and interior walls are comprised of rough lumber 2"x4" studs, sawn lath and plaster (ca. 1871) removed and replaced by plaster rock-lath in the 1980s renovation.

**Cornice:** None

**Baseboard:** 1965 Ovolvo molding. Evidence of cut nail holes in floor illustrate that there was baseboard molding pre 1880s.

**Doors:** Two doors, 2-103 and 2-104, each have five raised panels encased in rectangular rails and stiles which are connected by pegged mortise and tenon joints (1870s). The brass hardware is of Anglo-Japanesque design. A ceiling trap door is the only entrance to the attic (molding is post 1960s).

**Windows:** Windows 7/2, 8/2, and 9/2 are double-hung sash with four-over-four lights on the west side of the room (1870s). On the south side of the room windows 8/2 and 9/2 have double-hung sashes with four lights in each sash(1870s). Each light pane is 13 1/2" x 11 1/2." Each sash has pegged mortise and tenon joints with a 1 1/4" vertical rectilinear bead muntin and a 1 5/8" horizontal rectilinear bead muntin. As well, each sash has two spring loaded metal pin stops which hold the window open or closed. All windows and associated architrave moldings are original to the first period of the house (1870s).

**Heating:** Baseboard, water circulating system.

**Lighting:** Porcelain incandescent receptacle mounted in ceiling.

### **Bedroom (Room 205)**

**Floor:** Green carpeting covering a 3 1/2" pine tongue-and-groove board floor, painted gray, connected to the joists with 3" cut nails (ca. 1871).

**Ceiling:** Sawn joists 14" apart support plaster rock-lath (1965). attached with wire nails.

**Walls:** Exterior walls and interior walls are comprised of rough lumber 2"x4" studs, sawn lath and plaster (ca. 1871) removed and replaced by plaster rock-lath in a post 1965 renovation.

**Cornice:** None

**Baseboard:** None. Evidence of cut nail holes in floor illustrate that there was baseboard molding pre 1880s.

**Doors:** Doors, 2-102 and 2-101 have five raised panels encased in rectangular rails and stiles which are connected by pegged mortise and tenon joints (1870s). The brass hardware is of Anglo-Japanesque design. The closet 204 is original (1870s).

**Windows:** There are three double-hung sash, 5/2 and 4/2, with four-over-four lights in the room(1870s). On the north side of the room there are two paired windows, 4/2, and on the west side there is one window 5/2. Each light pane is 13 1/2" x 9 1/2." Each sash has pegged mortise and tenon joints with a 1 1/4" vertical rectilinear bead muntin and a 1 5/8" horizontal rectilinear bead muntin. As well, each sash has

two spring loaded metal pin stops which hold the window open or closed. All windows and associated architrave moldings are original to the first period of the house (1870s). The paired windows on the north side are a classic element of Italianate architecture when matched with a bay window on the first floor as they are.

**Heating:** Baseboard, water circulating system.

**Lighting:** Porcelain incandescent receptacle mounted in ceiling.

### **Room: Bathroom**

Bathroom was a bedroom and was renovated in 1982 for Katherine K. Slack, an aide for Mildred L. Gibson.

**Floor:** Vinyl linoleum floor (1982) covering a 3 1/2" pine tongue-and-groove board flooring, painted gray, connected to the joists with 3" cut nails (ca. 1871).

**Ceiling:** Sawn joists 14" apart support plaster rock-lath (1982). attached with wire nails.

**Walls:** Exterior walls and interior walls are comprised of rough lumber 2"x4" studs, sawn lath and plaster (ca. 1871) removed and replaced by plaster rock-lath and ceramic tile as a dado in the 1982 renovation.

**Cornice:** None

**Baseboard:** 1982 Ovolve molding.

**Doors:** One door, 2-107, with five raised panels encased in rectangular rails and stiles which are connected by pegged mortise and tenon joints (1870s).

**Windows:** There is one double-hung sash, 3/2, with four-over-four lights in the room(1870s). Each light pane is 15 5/8" x 11 3/4." Each sash has pegged mortise and tenon joints with a 1 1/4" vertical rectilinear bead muntin and a 1 5/8" horizontal rectilinear bead muntin. As well, each sash has two spring loaded metal pin stops which hold the window open or closed.

**Heating:** Baseboard, water circulating system.

**Lighting:** An electric globe hangs over the wash basin and vanity area (1982) and a recessed incandescent fixture is in the west part of the room.

**Plumbing Fixtures:** A cast iron porcelain tub (1982), porcelain toilet (1982), a particle board vanity with a composite wash basin (1982).

### **Bedroom (Room 201)**

**Floor:** Green carpeting covering a 3 1/2" pine tongue-and-groove board floor, painted gray, connected to the joists with 3" cut nails (ca. 1871).

**Ceiling:** Sawn joists 14" apart support plaster rock-lath (1980s). attached with wire nails.

**Walls:** Exterior walls and interior walls are comprised of rough lumber 2"x4" studs, sawn lath and plaster (ca. 1871) removed and replaced by plaster rock-lath in the 1980s renovation.

**Cornice:** None

**Baseboard:** 1980s Ovolve molding. Evidence of cut nail holes in floor illustrate that there was baseboard molding pre 1880s.

**Doors:** One door, 2-108, with five raised panels encased in rectangular rails and stiles which are connected by pegged mortise and tenon joints (1870s). There is a trap door, 2-109, to the rear ell of the house on the south wall.

**Windows:** There are four windows, double-hung sashes 1/2, 2/2, 11/2, and 10/2 with four-over-four lights in the room(1870s). On the north side of the room there are two windows and on the east side there are two windows. Each light pane is 15 5/8" x 11 3/4." Each sash has pegged mortise and tenon joints with a 1 1/4" vertical rectilinear bead muntin and a 1 5/8" horizontal rectilinear bead muntin. As well, each sash has two spring loaded metal pin stops which hold the window open or closed. All windows and associated architrave moldings are original to the first period of the house (1870s).

**Heating:** Baseboard, water circulating system.

**Lighting:** One center electric incandescent receptacle.

## **Part III. Analysis of Existing Conditions and Recommendations for Restoring the House.**

### **Restoration Objectives and Future Development**

The Gibson Farm House has survived with most of its 1870s balloon frame structure intact. Because of its architectural and historic significance, the continual preservation of the Gibson Farm House is of the highest importance for the government of the City of Wixom and its associated community. Future restoration, repair, and maintenance work must be carefully programmed and delineated so that the nineteenth-century historical fabric of the structure is preserved and maintained. Changes to the first period of the structure caused by incongruous twentieth-century modifications should be reversed as part of an on-going restoration program. A long range preventative maintenance and repair program will help insure that maximum results are achieved within the constraints of a budget. The interior and exterior will be restored as closely as possible to the 1870s per recommendation by the City of Wixom Preservation Committee to restore between 1870-1890.

### **Priorities of Recommendations**

- 1. Remove inventoried artifacts from the house and outbuildings and store in a stable and secure place off site.**
- 2. Stabilize (including roof, foundation, and support beams) and restore the barn.**
- 3. Restore house exterior including roof, porches, and ornamental fretwork.**
- 4. Restore interior first floor of the house.**
- 5. Install walkways, fences, picnic areas, toilet telephone and recreation area, and parking lots.**
- 6. Restore landscape: Plant Apple and Sugar Maple trees, community garden,**
- 7. Restore second floor of the house.**
- 8. Restore Milk House and Garage.**
- 9. Build a reproduction General/Cattle Barn, Outhouse, and Windmill.**

## Exterior Restoration Recommendations

### Exterior Porches, Fretwork and Ornament

**East and West Porches:** Remove west enclosed side porch and rebuild an 1870s porch (same architectural features as the front porch). The porch will include 1870s decorative detail and a period door that replaces the 1965 sliding glass door. A narrow porch with Eastlake decorative details similar to the front porch could be rebuilt. The porch on the East side of the house could be rebuilt as well or decorative details could simply be added to the existing porch.

**Front Porch:** Front porch and facade of the house should be returned to its earlier 1872 appearance.

**Cornice & Fretwork:** Replace cornice brackets on frieze. Replace the cornice brackets with cresting fret work ornament above the front porch and bay window as found in historic photographs of the exterior of the Gibson Farmhouse now in the collection of the Wixom Historical Society. Much of the original crest fretwork and cornice brackets are in the back of the barn.

### Roof

Remove entire asphalt roof and paper leaving only the roof deck exposed. Inspect roof decking and replace boards as necessary. Do not remove the roof decking if it is in good shape. Attach 30-pound felt paper to the roof decking. Lay a double thickness of cedar shingles for the first course at the bottom edge of the roof to cover all cracks. Then, lay a strip of tarpaper half the width of your shingle length under the upper half of each course. Ideally, leave exposed only a third of each shingle. Evidence of a shake roof (spilt riven quartered wood) is found in the attic where the cross gable is connected. As well, evidenced of a wood shake roof is found in historic photographs (**see figure 1 & 2**) of the exterior of the Gibson Farmhouse now in the collection of the Wixom Historical Society. Since the aesthetics of a shingle and shake roof are similar, we recommend wood shingles instead of the shakes, because of the expense involved in creating and maintaining a riven shake roof. To ensure proper period looking drainage attach half round copper gutters and down spouts.

## **Exterior Paint Recommendations**

We are suggesting a paint scheme for restoration which is based on the prevailing literature of the period, historical evidence found in the area of Wixom (see figure 4), and paint analysis on the exterior front porch fretwork. The surviving photographs date to 1890 or later when white with shutter green was a predominant painting scheme. However, in the 1870s polychromatic paint schemes for houses were typical. A mid-nineteenth century Italianate Revival house was rarely painted more than four colors. Andrew Jackson Downing, an interior and exterior decoration and pattern book author, suggested that houses be painted in colors found in nature to harmonize with their surroundings.<sup>57</sup>

### **Body**

The entire body of the house (clapboards) should be painted in the color buff (Sherwin Williams #SW2352).

### **Porches**

The risers of wooden steps are normally painted the trim color, while the treads carry the porch deck color down to the ground. The deck color for all porches is gray. The handrail and balusters of the steps follow the same rules applied to the porch: top and bottom rails, the trim color and the balusters in the body color. The ceilings of all the porches should be painted sky blue (Sherwin Williams #SW2408).

### **Trim**

The trim includes the porch members such as columns, cornice brackets. As well, the trim includes cornices, brackets, frieze, hood moldings, window and door frames, and bay window panels. The recommended trim color is medium drab or light olive (Sherwin Williams #SW2218).

### **Sash**

Again, most 1870s Italianate houses had the hood moldings, window and door frames (Trim) painted the same as the fret work, cornice and frieze band. The sash was definitely darker than the trim. It is recommended that the sash be painted a reddish brown (Sherwin Williams #SW2801).

### **Shutter**

The shutter's should be painted a shutter green. As well, any lattice work around the base or the basement window areas should be painted shutter green (Sherwin Williams #SW2809).

## **Accessibility Recommendations**

The east side porch is the best place to install an American with Disabilities Act (ADA) grade ramp. The ramp should be built to

decline towards the south end of the structure. See bibliography for further information.

## **Room-by-Room Description of Restoration Recommendations**

**Always document your work through photography. Photographs will give you an ongoing story of what you uncover and restore. As well, the project will be documented for future development and research needs.**

### **General Utilities:**

**HVAC System:** The circulating hot water heating baseboard system needs to be removed. The intrusive baseboard heating system is a 1965 addition and it covers the moldings in the rooms. As well, a circulating hot water system is not the ideal system for a historic house that does not have a caretaker. Moreover, the current system does not have air-conditioning nor humidity or air filtration control. It is recommended to install two forced air systems. Both high efficiency systems, one for the first floor and the other for the second floor, will support heating, cooling, humidity and air filtration. The first floor system should be installed in the current furnace area. The second floor system should be installed in the attic of the ell (access through door 2-109) and the air should be delivered through the main attic via space packs. The air compressors for both air-conditioning systems can be placed outside on the west side of the structure, in the attic of the ell, or on the roof.<sup>58</sup>

**Plumbing:** Most of the plumbing is in good condition except for the sump pump in the basement which needs to be unplugged, fixed or replaced. The hot water heater should be replaced with a 50 gallon (or plus) for the catering kitchen. As well, the water softener and sump pump should be replaced.

**Lighting:** Kerosene hanging lamps and wall bracket lamps for parlors, hallways, and libraries were manufactured for houses where gas and electricity was not available (see figure 35 & 36). The Gibson Farm did not have gas or electricity until the Rural Electrification Administration provided service after 1910. Most 1870s kerosene lamps consisted of brass and iron frames which supported the lamp mantle, such as #588 in the inventory. These lamps could easily be lifted out from their frames or hooks and carried to the kitchen for their routine cleaning.

**Security:** An inexpensive yet very practical and efficient security enhancement is installing spring operated canvas window shades. Wooden spring operated shades were very common in America in the late 1870s.<sup>59</sup>

## **Basement**

### **Room B1**

**Stairs:** Paint stair treads and walls.

### **Room B2, B3, B4**

**Floor:** Inspect the footings and concrete floor beneath the post jacks. Patch and repair as needed and paint with a heavy duty gray paint.

**Ceiling:** Check the area for old wires and pipes and remove unnecessary parts.

**Walls:** No work

**Lighting and Power:** Add more incandescent light receptacles and electrical wall plugs.

Door 1-119 and its jamb need to be tightened and reworked. Save door #879 and interpret as part of the original structure.

## **First floor**

### **Parlor (Room 102)**

The original plaster cornice and the expensive interior treatments, such as window paneling in the bay window fit the ideas that Andrew Jackson Downing was professing in that period. The front exterior of the house suggests that the first floor bay window room and the second floor paired window is like a tower on an Italian Villa and that there is something special about those rooms. The first floor room 102 and its elaborate interior realizes the idea of the suggestive exterior bay window/tower aesthetic.

Room 102 will be used for a "hands-on" seating room. Original Gibson family furniture found in the Wixom-Wire house, owned by the Wixom Historical Society, can be used as a model for a reproduction Eastlake Parlor Suite of furniture for public use (see figure 37).<sup>60</sup> The wall treatment recommendations are based on surviving historical fabric found primarily in the closet and south wall of room 103. Further analysis, from the removal of the plaster lath-rock may result in different findings. However, given the solid evidence uncovered, the following recommendations are submitted as the restoration plan.

Remove entire wall separating the closet room 103 from room 102. Be careful not to damage ceiling in the process.

**Floor:** Remove all carpeting, fairing strips, and plywood underlayment. Great care should be taken in removing the plywood underlayment to expose the original pine wood tongue and groove flooring.<sup>61</sup> Also note that the plywood is attached with clinching wire nails that may cause problems in damaging the pine wood floor during removal. The floor should be sanded then finished with a mahogany (reddish) stain and five coats of organic varnish which is historically appropriate (NEVER USE POLYURETHANES, BECAUSE THEY WILL BECOME CLOUDY AND WILL NOT WEAR AS WELL AS AN ORGANIC VARNISH). Although regarded as obsolete by new housing manufacturers, organic varnishes have a very viable finish that protects and beautifies a floor.

Reproduce the 1870s original ingrain red carpeting #196 (see figure 33) in a Wilton visitor grade carpet for the entire floor of room 102. The carpet should be woven in 36" wide strips hand sewn together and laid over modern carpet padding and tacked in place.<sup>62</sup>

**Ceiling:** Remove plaster rock-lath ceiling, in the closet area (and in the main room if plaster exists underneath) and examine for further stenciling decoration. Paint the ceiling in a light buff color with a light aesthetic stencil line that matches the bluish-teal color found under the wood cornice molding on the southeast corner of the closet. Note: removal of the ceiling plaster rock-lath will hopefully, show the former stencil pattern. In the 1870s ceilings were generally papered or stenciled and evidence in room 103 indicated a painted or stenciled aesthetic style ceiling decoration in a bluish-teal color.

**Walls:** Remove the shelf and plaster rock-lath in room 103 (south wall of room) very carefully to fully uncover marbled wall paper and border.

**USE EXTREME CAUTION: THIS IS THE ONLY ORIGINAL WALL, WITH ORIGINAL DECORATIVE ELEMENTS INTACT. IF THIS AREA IS DAMAGED OR LOST TO DEMOLITION SO WILL BE A SIGNIFICANT PART OF WIXOM'S HISTORY.**

To preserve the original wallpaper - photograph wallpaper and if possible cover the wall with a canvas before painting.

Paint the walls with an aesthetic bluish-teal paint coordinating with the ceiling and woodwork. Install a large frieze band below the cornice to create the tripartite wall division typical of the late nineteenth century home. Recommendation for frieze band is Bradbury &

Bradbury's Angle-Japanese Roomset, Eastlake Combination Ornament - Dove Blues Series or Eucalyptus Series.<sup>63</sup> Install a wooden picture rail molding, decorative grain painting which simulates butternut wood, beneath the frieze border on every wall of the room.<sup>64</sup>

**Cornice:** Replicate the surviving plaster cornice (found in the closet) all around the perimeter of the room. The plaster cornice would have been toned to the colors between the wall and the ceiling. Note: this is the only cornice in the house. The reason for its exclusivity is because of expense, as well as, such an elaborate cornice would probably not be used in the common rooms of a house by a family with the economic status such as the Gibson family's.

**Baseboard:** Refinish the woodwork including the baseboards, doors and door surrounds with butternut style wood grain decorative painting. **Do not strip wood-paint over existing finish. This will ensure that the historical finish will survive for future generations to uncover and study.**

**Doors:** Refinish double door with a butternut style wood grain decorative painting. **Do not strip wood-paint over existing finish. This will ensure that the historical finish will survive for future generations to uncover and study.** Remove particle board from interior and exterior of the side porch door and make it operational; refinish same as woodwork and double-door.

**Windows:** Remove the 1960 draperies and shutters; replace with spring operated roller blind covered with a canvas cloth or with wooden louvered blinds painted green.<sup>65</sup> Install reproduction cotton ecru lace panels. Hang lace on a single rod with drapery rings or wrapped over the pole with a self-valance lace panel. Curtains should not be gathered at the top with pinch pleats and they should be hung to barely touch the floor. The lace curtains are for an 1870s period look and the window shades are more for security purposes. Curtain panels should be hung on the bay windows, once carpet and wallpaper choices have been finalized. A simple lambrequin may also be added over the top of each window.

**Heating:** Remove base board heating system and install floor mount forced air vents.

**Lighting:** Currently the room is lit with electric lamps that plug into the wall sockets. Recommend adding a kerosene hanging lamp (see **figure 35**) and two kerosene wall bracket lamps (see **figure 36**) reproduction electrified fixtures in the room.<sup>66</sup> Note: a large metal screw hook should be inserted into the ceiling and the hanging lamp should be suspended from the open hook.

### Living Room (Room: 101)

The Historic Preservation Committee decided not to restore the other two bedrooms on the east side of this room that were lost when the dividing walls were torn down in 1965. The living room is going to be a flexible multi-purpose room where meetings, weddings, receptions and other functions will be held. The area in the north east corner near window 1/1 is perfect for a small exhibit on the Gibson Farm.

There is little decorative historical fabric in the room other than a few remnants of the butternut wood graining and ingrain carpeting found in the barn. The recommendations for interior wall treatments, especially paper and cornice elements, are educated guesses based on the decorative wood graining, the ingrain carpet, what was available in the 1870s, and an interior photograph of the Chambers Family Home (1880s). (see figure 5)

**Floor:** Remove all carpeting, fairing strips, and plywood underlayment. Great care should be taken in removing the plywood underlayment to expose the original pine wood tongue and groove flooring.<sup>67</sup> Also note that the plywood is attached with clinching wire nails that may cause problems in damaging the pine wood floor during removal. The floor should be sanded then finished with a mahogany (reddish) stain and five coats of varnish which is historically appropriate (NEVER USE POLYURETHANES).

Reproduce the 1870s original ingrain olive carpeting #194 in a Wilton visitor grade carpet, woven in 36 inch wide strips hand sewn together and laid over modern carpet padding and tacked in place (see figure 34).<sup>68</sup>

**Ceiling:** Currently covered with plaster rock-lath and should be finish with a flat plaster surface. Paint and pin-stripe stencil the ceiling to coordinate with the woodwork and frieze. In the 1870s ceilings were generally plaster over sawn lath and papered or stenciled.

**Walls:** Paper the walls with an aesthetic style paper coordinating with the ceiling and woodwork. Recommendations for the field paper choices include Bradbury & Bradbury Anglo-Japanese Roomset, Claire's Willow in the Aesthetic Green Series or Classic Revivals Ltd. Lim & Handtryck #26049. Install a frieze band below the cornice. Recommendations for a frieze band paper include; from the Bradbury & Bradbury Morris Tradition Roomset, either the Kelmscott Frieze or Acanthus Border used as a frieze.<sup>69</sup> Install a wooden picture rail molding, painted butternut wood grain, beneath the frieze border on every wall of the room. Install a wood burning stove between doors 1-109 and 1-103 underneath the mantle.<sup>70</sup>

**Cornice:** None. The room most likely did not have a cornice. Border paper with a picture rail, as previously suggested in the wall section.

was probably used to suggest a cornice. This decorative treatment was common from the 1860s through the 1880s.

**Baseboard:** Add reproduction baseboard woodwork throughout the room where needed, matching original woodwork on west side of door #1-110. Refinish the woodwork including the baseboards, doors, door surrounds, and window architrave. Refinish the woodwork including the baseboards, doors and door surrounds with a butternut style wood grain decorative painting. **Do not strip wood-paint over existing finish. This will ensure that the historical finish will survive for future generations to uncover and study.**

**Doors:** The interior side of front door, 1-101, needs to be painted with butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Remove all brass hardware and clean with brass cleaner (Brasso). Reattach Plexiglas protective cover, for etched glass, on both the interior and exterior sides of the door. Paint storm door to match exterior colors of house. The two pocket doors from the dining room area should be removed from their cases and then painted with a butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Be very careful when removing the doors. The first step is to remove the door surround and case woodwork which will allow greater access for removing the doors. All of the brass hardware should be removed and cleaned with Brasso then reattached. The third door should also be painted with a butternut style wood grain decorative painting. The brass should be cleaned as well.

**Windows:** Remove the 1960 draperies and shutters; replace with spring operated roller blind covered with a canvas cloth or with wooden louvered blinds painted green.<sup>71</sup> Install reproduction cotton ecru lace panels. Hang lace on a single rod with drapery rings or wrapped over the pole with a self-valance lace panel. Curtains should not be gathered at the top with pinch pleats and they should be hung to barely touch the floor. Lace curtains are for an 1870s period effect and the window shades are more for security purposes. A simple lambrequin may also be added over the top of each window.

**Heating:** Remove base board heating system and install floor mount forced air vents. A period cast iron stove, like the ones that heated the house in the 1870s, should be installed in the room underneath the mantle between door 1-109 and door 1-103.

**Lighting:** Currently the room is lit with electric lamps that plug into the wall sockets. Recommend adding two kerosene hanging lamps (see figure 35) and four kerosene wall bracket lamps (see figure 36) reproduction electrified fixtures in the room.<sup>72</sup> Note: a large metal screw hooks should be inserted into the ceiling and the hanging lamps should be suspended from the open hook.

### **Dining Room (Room: 108)**

The room will be used as a dining room. It is recommended that a dining room set, in the aesthetic Neo-Grec or Renaissance Revival style, be purchased for use by the public.

**Floor:** Remove all carpeting, fairing strips, and plywood underlayment. Great care should be taken in removing the plywood underlayment to expose the original pine wood tongue and groove flooring.<sup>73</sup> Also note that the plywood is attached with clinching wire nails that may cause problems in damaging the pine wood floor during removal. The floor should be sanded then finished with a mahogany (reddish) stain and five coats of varnish which is historically appropriate (NEVER USE POLYURETHANES).

The room will be used with bare wood floors and a reproduction Brussels or Wilton area rug (1870s). The carpet should not be wall-to-wall as the parlor and living room. Area rugs were easier to keep clean in an environment where food was being consumed.<sup>74</sup>

**Ceiling:** Remove the plaster rock-lath very carefully so as not to damage the original plaster underneath. The original plaster should be finished with a flat plaster surface. Paint and stencil the ceiling to coordinate with the woodwork and wallpaper. In the 1870s ceilings were generally plaster over sawn lath and papered or stenciled.

**Walls:** Paper the walls with Texarkana Floral Stripe wall paper which coordinates with the ceiling and paint woodwork with a butternut style wood grain decorative painting.<sup>75</sup> Install a large frieze band below the ceiling to create the tripartite wall division typical of the late nineteenth century home. Install a wooden picture rail molding beneath the frieze border on every wall of the room.

**Cornice:** None. The room most likely did not have a cornice. Border paper with a picture rail, as previously suggested in the wall section, was probably used to suggest a cornice. This decorative treatment was common from the 1860s through the 1880s.

**Baseboard:** Refinish the wainscoting woodwork including the new baseboards (see figure 22), doors, door surrounds, and window architrave with a butternut style wood grain decorative painting.

**Doors:** Remove sliding glass door (1965) and replace with a reproduction door the same as door 1-118. All four doors should be painted with butternut style wood grain decorative painting. The exterior sides to door's 1-118 and 1-111(new door) need to have all of the paint removed and it should be stained a deep mahogany (reddish) and then varnished. Remove all brass hardware and clean with brass cleaner (Brasso). Remove paint from all door surrounds and

architrave and paint with a butternut style wood grain decorative painting.

**Windows:** Remove the 1960s draperies; replace with spring operated roller blinds covered with a canvas cloth or with wooden louvered blinds painted green.<sup>76</sup> Install reproduction cotton ecru lace panels. Hang lace on a single rod with drapery rings or wrapped over the pole with a self-valance lace panel. Curtains should not be gathered at the top with pinch pleats and they should be hung to barely touch the floor. Lace curtains are for an 1870s period look and the window shades are more for security purposes. A simple lambrequin may also be added to the top of each window.

**Heating:** Remove base board heating system and install floor mount forced air vents.

**Lighting:** Currently the room is lit with an overhead electric lamp. The electrified kerosene lamp (#588) that is above the kitchen table needs to be moved to the dining room and replace the modern hanging lamp. Recommend also using two kerosene wall bracket lamps (**see figure 36**) reproduction electrified fixtures in the room.<sup>77</sup> Note: a large metal screw hook should be inserted into the ceiling and the hanging lamp should be suspended from the open hook.

### **Pantry (Room: 105)**

The pantry area should have a stanchion or glass door in doorway 1-108. This is a great area for visitors to view the pantry china cabinet with original Gibson family china, silver (#582), and tableware. As well, reproduction china can be stored in the bottom section of the pantry cabinet (see furniture section below). It is also recommended that the enough china be bought for special occasion catering.

**Floor:** Remove all tile and plywood underlayment. Great care should be taken in removing the plywood underlayment to expose the original pine wood tongue and groove flooring.<sup>78</sup> Also note that the plywood is attached with clinching wire nails that may cause problems in damaging the pine wood floor during removal. The floor should be sanded then finished with a mahogany (reddish) stain and five coats of varnish which is historically appropriate (NEVER USE POLYURETHANES).

Place Gibson Family area rugs #916 on the pantry floor.

**Ceiling:** The plaster rock-lath (1965) is not original and the finish should be a flat plaster surface. Paint and stencil the ceiling to coordinate with the woodwork and wallpaper. In the 1870s ceilings were generally plaster over sawn lath and papered or stenciled.

**Walls:** Paint the walls with a neutral color and stencil with a simple border.

**Cornice:** None. The room most likely did not have a cornice.

**Baseboard:** Refinish the woodwork with butternut style wood grain decorative painting, including the baseboards, doors, door surrounds and window architrave.

**Doors:** Replace the louvered closet doors (1965) with a reproduction raised paneled door such as door 1-108. Paint all doors with a butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Remove all brass hardware and clean with brass cleaner (Brasso). Paint all door surrounds and architrave with butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Note: door 1-106 will only be a facade because the bathroom interior will have a modern wall covering the door and architrave.

**Windows:** Remove the 1960 draperies; replace with spring operated roller blind covered with a canvas cloth or with wooden louvered blinds painted green.<sup>79</sup>

**Heating:** Remove base board heating system and install floor mount forced air vents out of the public view from the dining room.

**Lighting:** Recommend a kerosene wall bracket lamp (see figure 36) reproduction electrified fixture in the room.<sup>80</sup> Note: an incandescent pin-point exhibit light should be mounted above door 1-108 and pointed to the built-in pantry. **NEVER USE HALOGEN LIGHTS CLOSE TO ARTIFACTS - THEY WILL EVENTUALLY BURN AND FADE ARTIFACTS.**

**Furniture:** The built-in pantry cabinet should be refinished with butternut style wood grain decorative painting. The pantry should be used to store a new set of ironstone china dishes for catering or original collections of the Gibson's china.<sup>81</sup>

#### **Bathroom (Room: 104)**

The bathroom should be a modern rest room facility built to American Disabilities Act (ADA) Code - See ADA Appendix.

The interior of the room should be decided by the City of Wixom based on Wixom City standards and code of a unisex rest room facility.

Because of the current need to have a public rest room rather than a historic period bedroom (1870s) room 104 needs to be entirely gutted. Removal of all bathroom fixtures and linen cabinet is necessary to complete the renovation. If original moldings are removed then they should be identified using the standards of this report, tagged, and placed in the attic of the house for future use.

**Floor:** Remove all linoleum and replace with modern tile.

**Ceiling:** The plaster rock-lath (1965) is not original and the finish should be a flat plaster surface.

**Walls:** A false wall should be built adjacent to the east wall of the room covering door frame and door 1-106.

**Baseboard:** None

**Doors:** Paint door 1-105 with a butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Remove all brass hardware and clean with brass cleaner (Brasso). Paint all door surrounds and architrave with a butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Note: door 1-106 will be sealed over by a modern wall. The pantry side of the door should remain intact.

**Windows:** To be determined by the use of the bathroom.

**Heating:** Remove base board heating system and install floor mount forced air vents out of the public view from the dining room.

**Lighting:** The room should be lit with modern lights.

**Plumbing:** Install fixtures to code.

### **Kitchen (Room: 107)**

The kitchen area will be a modern food preparation and service area for catering. Room 107 should not be consciously restored to blend into the historical aesthetic of room house. However, windows 13/1, 14/1 and 15/1 should be replaced with reproduction windows to match the fenestration (16/1) of the rest of the house. All kitchen cabinets and appliance should be removed and industrial weight shelves, appliances, and work tables should be installed.

**Floor:** If there will not be a catering kitchen then, remove all tile and plywood underlayment. Great care should be taken in removing the plywood underlayment to expose the original pine wood tongue and groove flooring.<sup>82</sup> Also note that the plywood is attached with clinching wire nails that may cause problems in damaging the pine wood floor during removal. The floor should be a restaurant grade ceramic tile with a ceramic splashboard with appropriate floor drains. Use current catering kitchen codes.

**Ceiling:** The plaster rock-lath (1965) is not original and the finish should be a flat plaster surface. Paint the ceiling and walls to coordinate with the woodwork.

**Walls:** Catering kitchen code walls.

**Cornice:** None

**Baseboard:** Install ceramic splashboard with floor tile.

**Doors:** Paint all doors with butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Remove all brass hardware and clean with brass cleaner (Brasso). Paint all door surrounds and architrave with a butternut style wood grain decorative painting.

**Windows:** Remove the 1965 windows and replace with the four-over-four light windows that are exactly like window 16/1. Use spring

operated roller blind covered with a canvas cloth for window treatments.

**Heating:** Remove base board heating system and install floor mount forced air vents.

**Lighting:** The room should be well lit with modern overhead lighting.

### **Laundry (Room: 106)**

The laundry area will be the staging and storage area for catering. Removal of the cabinets, portable sink, washing machine and dryer will be necessary. Note the washer and dryer should be removed and installed in the basement for future needs.

**Floor:** The floor should be a restaurant grade ceramic tile with a ceramic splashboard with appropriate floor drains. Use current catering kitchen codes.

**Ceiling:** The plaster rock-lath (1965) is not original and the finish should be a flat plaster surface.

**Walls:** The walls should be finished to local codes for catering kitchens.

**Cornice:** None

**Baseboard:** Ceramic tile splashboard installed with ceramic floor.

**Doors:** Replace the louvered closet doors (1965) with a reproduction raised paneled doors such as door 1-117. Paint all doors with butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Remove all brass hardware and clean with brass cleaner (Brasso). Paint all door surrounds and architrave with butternut style wood grain decorative painting.

**Windows:** Install spring operated roller blind covered with a canvas.

**Heating:** Remove base board heating system and install floor mount forced air vents out of the public view from the dining room.

**Lighting:** The room should be lit with modern overhead lighting.

## **Second floor**

### **Room: Hall**

**Floor:** Remove all carpeting, fairing strips, and plywood underlayment. Great care should be taken in removing the plywood underlayment to expose the original pine wood tongue and groove flooring. Also note that the plywood is attached with clinching wire nails that may cause problems in damaging the pine wood floor during removal. The floor should be sanded then finished with a mahogany (reddish) stain and five coats of varnish which is historically appropriate (NEVER USE POLYURETHANES).

On the stairwell stairs place a carpet that is held down with brass carpet rods. An original ingrain stairwell carpet survives (#916) rolled

in a bag in the second floor storeroom/bedroom. This carpet should be reproduced either in a visitor-grade Wilton or in an actual Ingrain since the second floor of the house will not be a heavy traffic area. The same carpet should be used as a runner in the hallway.<sup>83</sup>

**Ceiling:** Covered with plaster rock-lath and finish with a flat plaster surface. Paint and stencil the ceiling to coordinate with the woodwork and wallpaper. In the 1870s ceilings were generally plaster over sawn lath and papered or stenciled.

**Walls:** Paint the walls in a neutral color chosen from the tertiary palette popular in the 1870-1890 period. Create a stenciled dado approximately 18" up from the floor and stencil a narrower frieze band below a very simple cornice. Consider also using a border paper such as the Italianate Border ITB-410 in Pompeian Color Series found in the Neo-Classical Roomset manufactured by Bradbury and Bradbury. Install a wooden picture rail molding beneath the frieze border on every wall of the room.

**Cornice:** None. The room most likely did not have a cornice. Border paper with a picture rail, as previously suggested in the wall section, was probably used to suggest a cornice. This decorative treatment was common from the 1860s through the 1880s.

**Baseboard:** Install new baseboard (see figure 22) and finish with butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Apply same wood graining technique to the other woodwork including the doors, door surrounds, and window architrave.

**Doors:** All doors need to be finished with butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Remove all brass hardware and clean with brass cleaner (Brasso).

**Windows:** Remove the modern draperies; replace with spring operated roller blind covered with a canvas cloth or with wooden louvered blinds painted green. Install reproduction cotton ecru lace panel. Hang lace on a single rod with drapery rings or wrapped over the pole with a self-valance lace panel.

**Heating:** Remove base board heating system in the closet and install ceiling mount forced air vents.

**Lighting:** Currently, the room is lit with overhead lighting. Recommend adding a kerosene hanging lamp (see figure 35) above stairwell and three kerosene wall bracket lamps (see figure 36) reproduction electrified fixtures.<sup>84</sup> Note: a large metal screw hook should be inserted into the ceiling and the hanging lamp should be suspended from the open hook.

#### **Closet (Room: 203)**

**Floor:** Remove all carpeting, fairing strips, and plywood underlayment. Great care should be taken in removing the plywood

underlayment to expose the original pine wood tongue and groove flooring. Also note that the plywood is attached with clinching wire nails that may cause problems in damaging the pine wood floor during removal. The floor should be sanded then finished with a mahogany (reddish) stain and five coats of varnish which is historically appropriate (NEVER USE POLYURETHANES).

**Ceiling:** Covered with plaster rock-lath and finish with a flat plaster surface. Paint the ceiling to coordinate with the woodwork. In the 1870s closet ceilings were generally plaster over sawn lath and painted.

**Walls:** Paint the walls in a neutral color.

**Cornice:** None. The room most likely did not have a cornice.

**Baseboard:** Install new baseboard (see figure 22) and finish with butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Apply same wood graining technique to the other woodwork including the doors, door surrounds, and window architrave.

**Doors:** Door 2-105 needs to be finished with butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Remove all brass hardware and clean with brass cleaner (Brasso). Remove paint from all door surrounds and architrave and finish with butternut style wood grain decorative painting.

**Windows:** None.

**Heating:** None

**Lighting:** Currently, the closet is lit with overhead lighting. Recommend keeping the same light fixture.

#### **Closet (Room: 207)**

**Floor:** Remove all carpeting, fairing strips, and plywood underlayment. Great care should be taken in removing the plywood underlayment to expose the original pine wood tongue and groove flooring. Also note that the plywood is attached with clinching wire nails that may cause problems in damaging the pine wood floor during removal. The floor should be sanded then finished with a mahogany (reddish) stain and five coats of varnish which is historically appropriate (NEVER USE POLYURETHANES).

**Ceiling:** Covered with plaster rock-lath and finish with a flat plaster surface. Paint the ceiling to coordinate with the woodwork. In the 1870s closet ceilings were generally plaster over sawn lath and painted.

**Walls:** Paint the walls in a neutral color.

**Cornice:** None. The room most likely did not have a cornice.

**Baseboard:** Install new baseboard (see figure 22) and finish with butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Apply same wood graining technique to the other woodwork including the doors and door surrounds.

**Doors:** Door 2-106 should be finished with butternut style wood grain decorative painting.

**Windows:** None.

**Heating:** This area should be used for a utility chase area where forced air heating vents and return cold air vents can pass through. The furnace will be in the attic of the back ell and the closet area is perfect for the duct work to go through the rear wall and up in the attic where the ducts then disperse to each second floor room.

**Lighting:** Currently, the room is lit with overhead lighting. Recommend keeping the same light fixture.

### **Bedroom (Room: 206)**

This room is being recommended for an office.

**Floor:** The floor should be sanded then finished with a mahogany (reddish) stain and five coats of varnish which is historically appropriate (NEVER USE POLYURETHANES).

**Ceiling:** Covered with plaster rock-lath and finish with a flat plaster surface. Paint the ceiling to coordinate with the woodwork. In the 1870s ceilings were generally plaster over sawn lath and painted or papered.

**Walls:** Paper the wall with Anglo-Japanese Blossom AJB-001 made by Carter & Co..<sup>85</sup> and Chrysanthemum Border CHB-004.<sup>86</sup> Install a wooden picture rail molding beneath the frieze border for the frieze paper on every wall of the room.

**Cornice:** None. The room most likely did not have a cornice. Border paper with a picture rail, as previously suggested in the wall section, was probably used to suggest a cornice. This decorative treatment was common from the 1860s through the 1880s.

**Baseboard:** Install new baseboard (see figure 22) and finish with butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Apply same wood graining technique to the other woodwork including the doors, door surrounds, and window architrave.

**Doors:** Both doors, 2-103 and 2-104, need to be finished with butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Remove all brass hardware and clean with brass cleaner (Brasso). Finish all door surrounds and architrave with butternut style wood grain decorative painting.

**Windows:** Window architraves 7/2, 8/2, and 9/2 need to be painted with butternut wood grain decorative finish. Install reproduction cotton ecru lace panels. Hang lace on a single rod with drapery rings or wrapped over the pole with a self-valance lace panel. Curtains should not be gathered at the top with pinch pleats and they should be hung to barely touch the floor. Lace curtains are for an 1870s period effect and the window shades are more for security purposes. A simple lambrequin may also be added to the top of each window.

**Heating:** Remove baseboard heating system and replace with ceiling mounted forced air vents.

**Lighting:** Currently, the room is lit with overhead lighting. Recommend adding two kerosene wall bracket lamps (see figure 36) reproduction electrified fixtures in the room.<sup>87</sup>

### **Bedroom (Room: 205)**

It is recommended that this room be used as a period bedroom installation either by acquiring one of the family bedroom sets or purchasing a similar nineteenth century set. Dresser #912 could be used in this room as well.

**Floor:** Remove all carpeting, fairing strips, and plywood underlayment. Great care should be taken in removing the plywood underlayment to expose the original pine wood tongue and groove flooring. Also note that the plywood is attached with clinching wire nails that may cause problems in damaging the pine wood floor during removal. The floor should be sanded then finished with a mahogany (reddish) stain and five coats of varnish which is historically appropriate (NEVER USE POLYURETHANES).

Recommend using the same olive Ingrain carpet as Room 101.

**Ceiling:** Covered with plaster rock-lath and finish with a flat plaster surface. Paper the ceiling to coordinate with the woodwork. In the 1870s ceilings were generally plaster over sawn lath and painted or papered.

**Walls:** Recommended choices include Grandmother Garfield Wall paper or Textured Mica TMW-001 with the Garfield Study Border GSB-001 manufactured by Carter & Company/Mt. Diablo Handprints, as well as, Classic Revivals Ltd.'s frieze and filler papers in the Poppy pattern.<sup>88</sup> Install a wooden picture rail molding beneath the frieze border on every wall of the room.

**Cornice:** None. The room most likely did not have a cornice. Border paper with a picture rail, as previously suggested in the wall section, was probably used to suggest a cornice. This decorative treatment was common from the 1860s through the 1880s.

**Baseboard:** Install new baseboard (see figure 22) and finish with butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Apply same wood graining technique to the other woodwork including the doors, door surrounds, and window architrave.

**Doors:** Doors 2-101 and 2-202 need to be finished with butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Remove all brass hardware and clean with brass cleaner (Brasso). All door surrounds and architrave need to be finished with butternut style wood grain decorative painting.

**Windows:** Both window architraves, 4/2 and 5/2, need to be finished with a butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Install reproduction cotton ecru lace panels. Hang lace on a single rod with drapery rings or wrapped over the pole with a self-valance lace panel. Curtains should not be gathered at the top with pinch pleats and they should be hung to barely touch the floor. Lace curtains are for an 1870s period look and the window shades are more for security purposes. A simple lambrequin may also be added to the top of each window.

**Heating:** Remove baseboard heating system and replace with ceiling mounted forced air vents.

**Lighting:** Currently, the room is lit with overhead lighting. Recommend adding two kerosene wall bracket lamps (see figure 36) reproduction electrified fixtures in the room.<sup>89</sup>

### **Bathroom (Room: 202)**

Not an exhibit area: The bathroom should be a modern rest room facility built to American Disabilities Act (ADA) Code - See ADA Appendix. The interior of the room should be decided by the City of Wixom based on Wixom City standards and code for a unisex rest room facility.

### **Bedroom (Room: 201)**

**Floor:** Remove all carpeting, fairing strips, and plywood underlayment. Great care should be taken in removing the plywood underlayment to expose the original pine wood tongue and groove flooring. Also note that the plywood is attached with clinching wire nails that may cause problems in damaging the pine wood floor during removal. The floor should be sanded then finished with a mahogany (reddish) stain and five coats of varnish which is historically appropriate (NEVER USE POLYURETHANES). Cover with a reproduction Brussels or a Wlton area rug.

**Ceiling:** Covered with plaster rock-lath and finish with a flat plaster surface. Paper the ceiling to coordinate with the woodwork. In the 1870s ceilings were generally plaster over sawn lath and painted or papered.

**Walls:** Recommended choices include Persis wallpaper, yellow, green, and fawn color by J.R. Burrows & Company or Classic Revival Ltd.'s Burrwood Filler in the St. James series.<sup>90</sup> Install a wooden picture rail molding beneath the frieze border on every wall of the room.

**Cornice:** None. The room most likely did not have a cornice. Border paper with a picture rail, as previously suggested in the wall section. was probably used to suggest a cornice. This decorative treatment was common from the 1860s through the 1880s.

**Baseboard:** Install new baseboard (see figure 22) and finish with butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Apply same wood graining technique to the other woodwork including the doors, door surrounds, and window architrave.

**Doors:** Doors 2-108 and 2-109 need to be finished with butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Remove all brass hardware and clean with brass cleaner (Brasso). All door surrounds and architrave need to be finished with butternut style wood grain decorative painting.

**Windows:** Window architraves 1/2, 2/2, 10/2, and 11/2 need to be finished with a butternut style wood grain decorative painting. Install reproduction cotton ecru lace panels. Hang lace on a single rod with drapery rings or wrapped over the pole with a self-valance lace panel. Curtains should not be gathered at the top with pinch pleats and they should be hung to barely touch the floor. Lace curtains are for an 1870s period look and the window shades are more for security purposes. A simple lambrequin may also be added to the top of each window.

**Heating:** Remove baseboard heating system and replace with ceiling mounted forced air vents.

**Lighting:** Currently, the room is lit with overhead lighting. Recommend adding three kerosene wall bracket lamps (see figure 36) reproduction electrified fixtures in the room.<sup>91</sup>

## Out Building Photographs

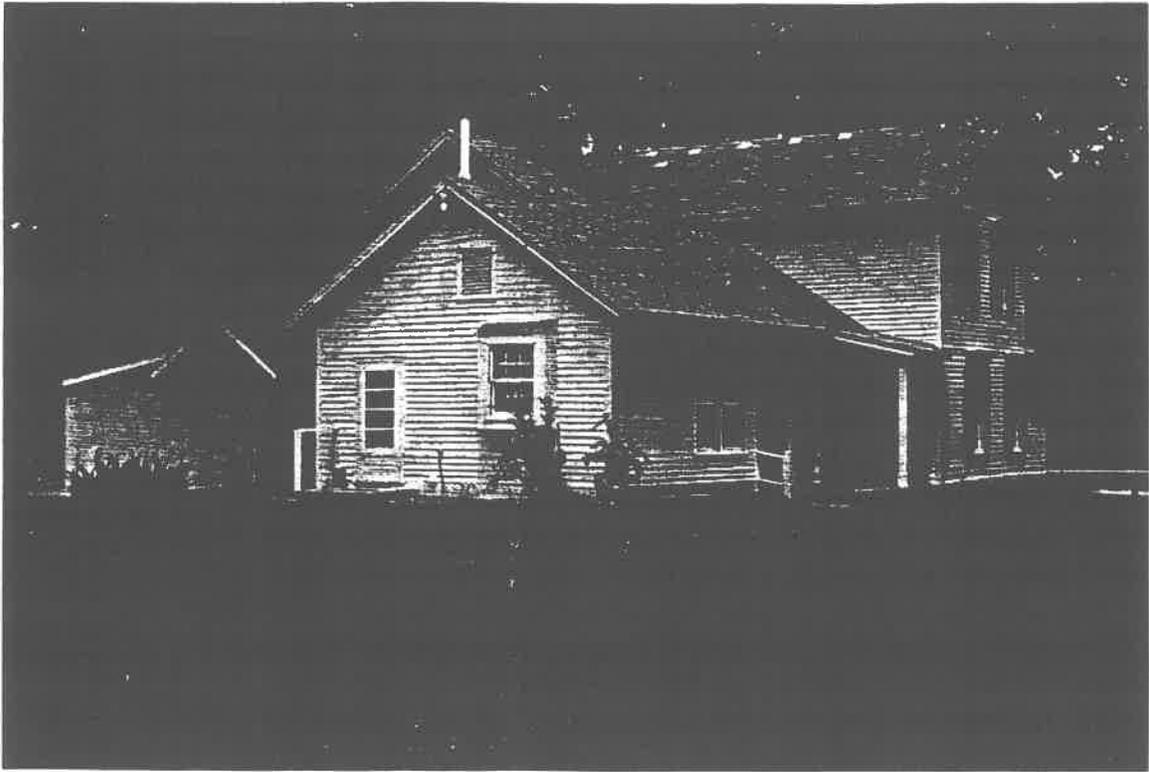
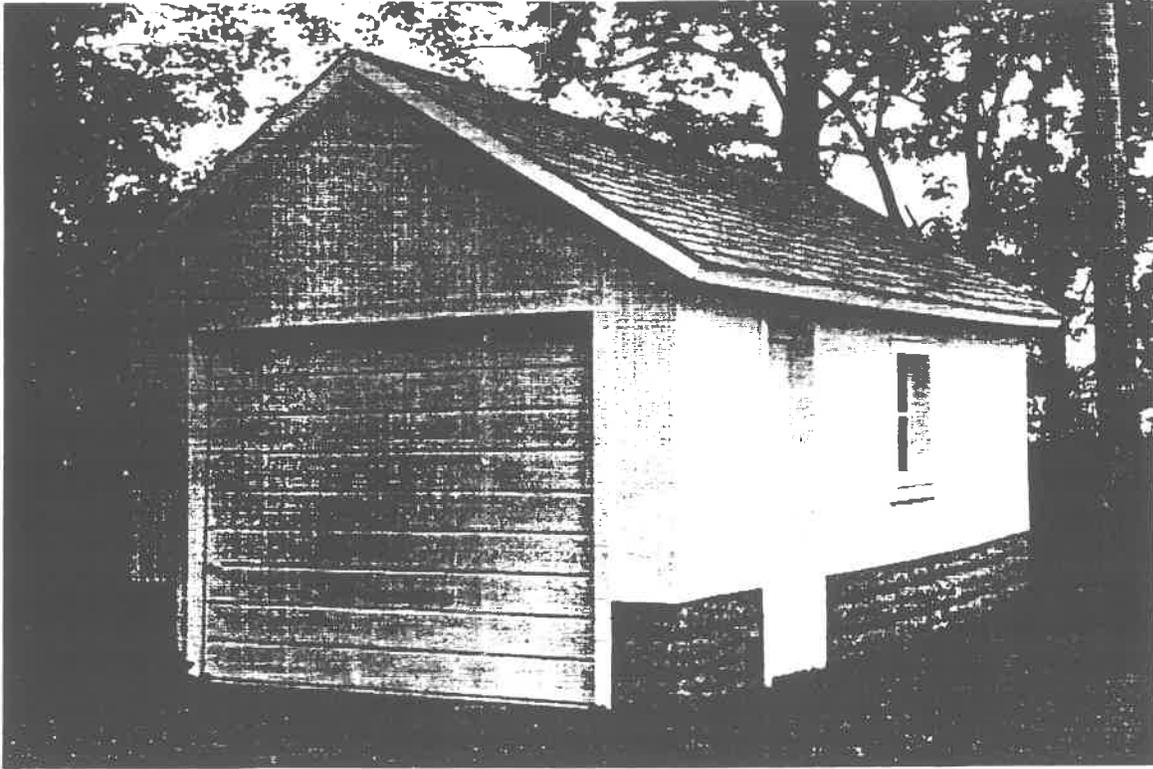
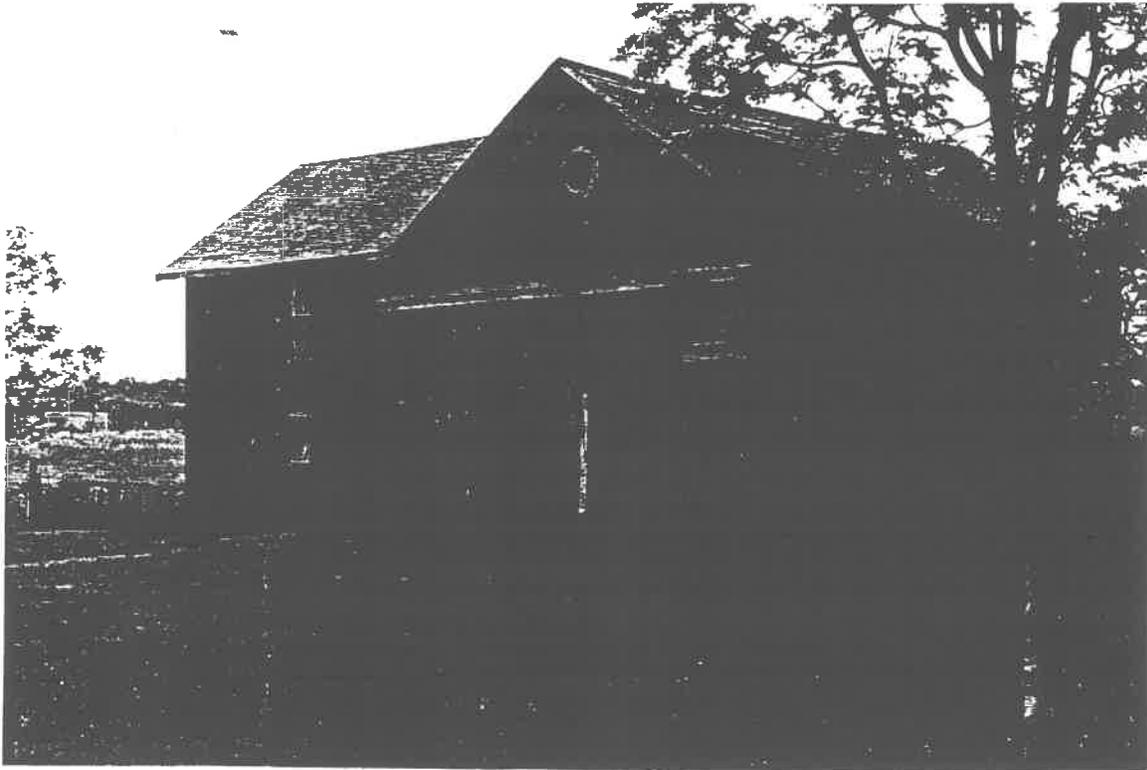


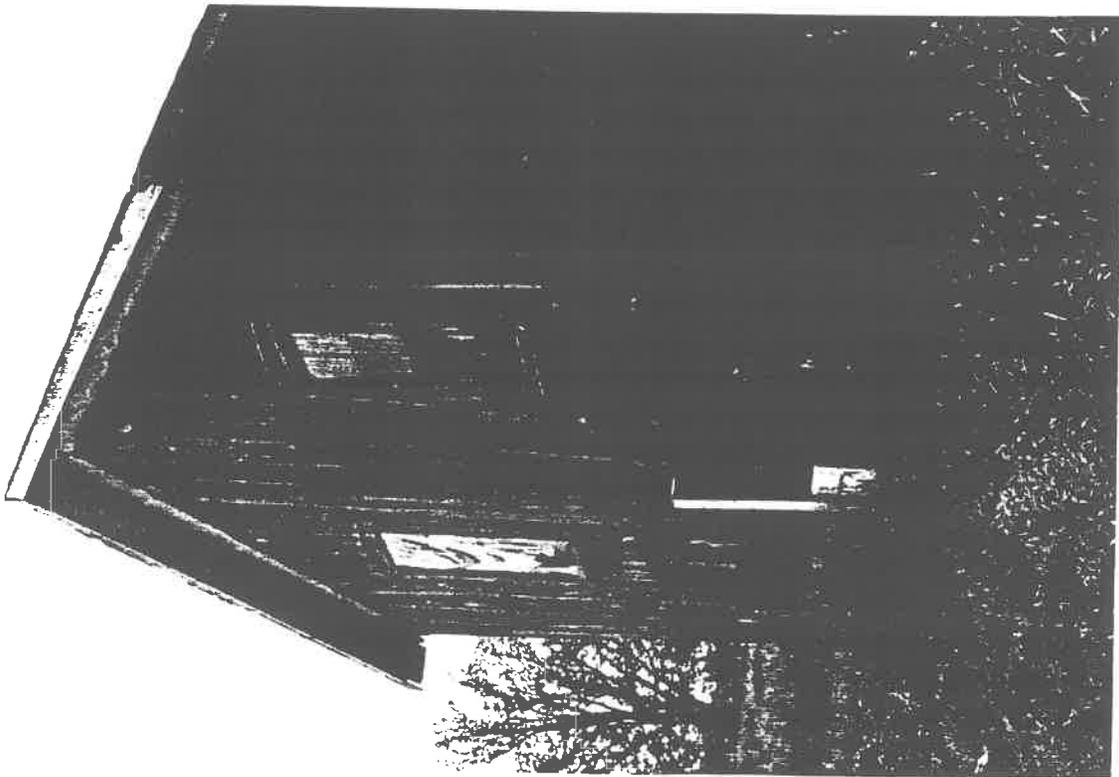
Figure 17 - Milk House, on right, 1997

Figure 18 - Garage, 1997

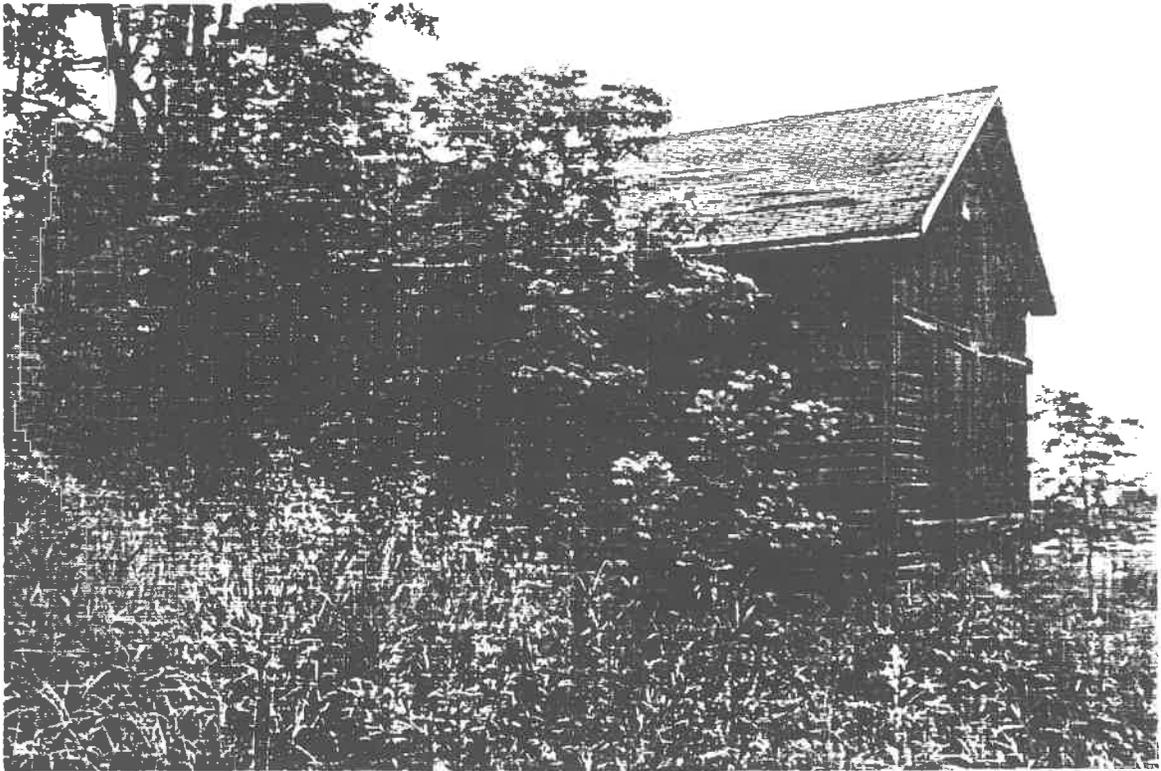




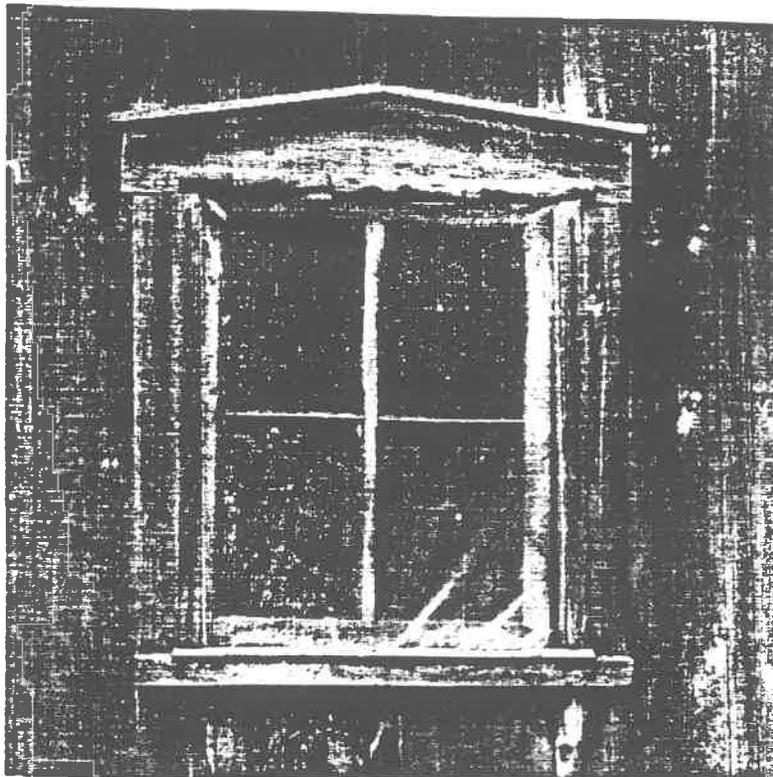
**Figure 19a - Horse Barn, North Wall, 1997**



**Figure 19b - Horse Barn, South Wall, 1997**



**Figure 19c - Horse Barn, West Wall, 1997**



**Figure 19d - Horse Barn, Window Detail, 1997**

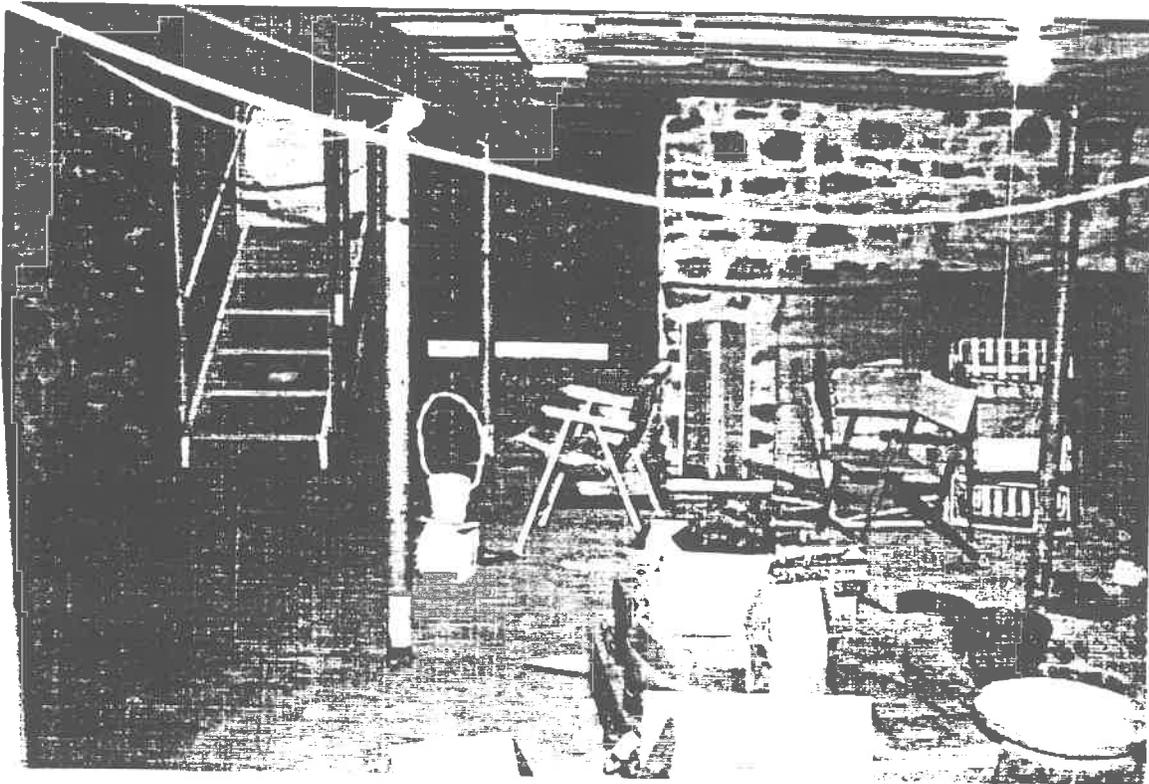


Figure 20 - Interior, Basement, West View

# Moldings

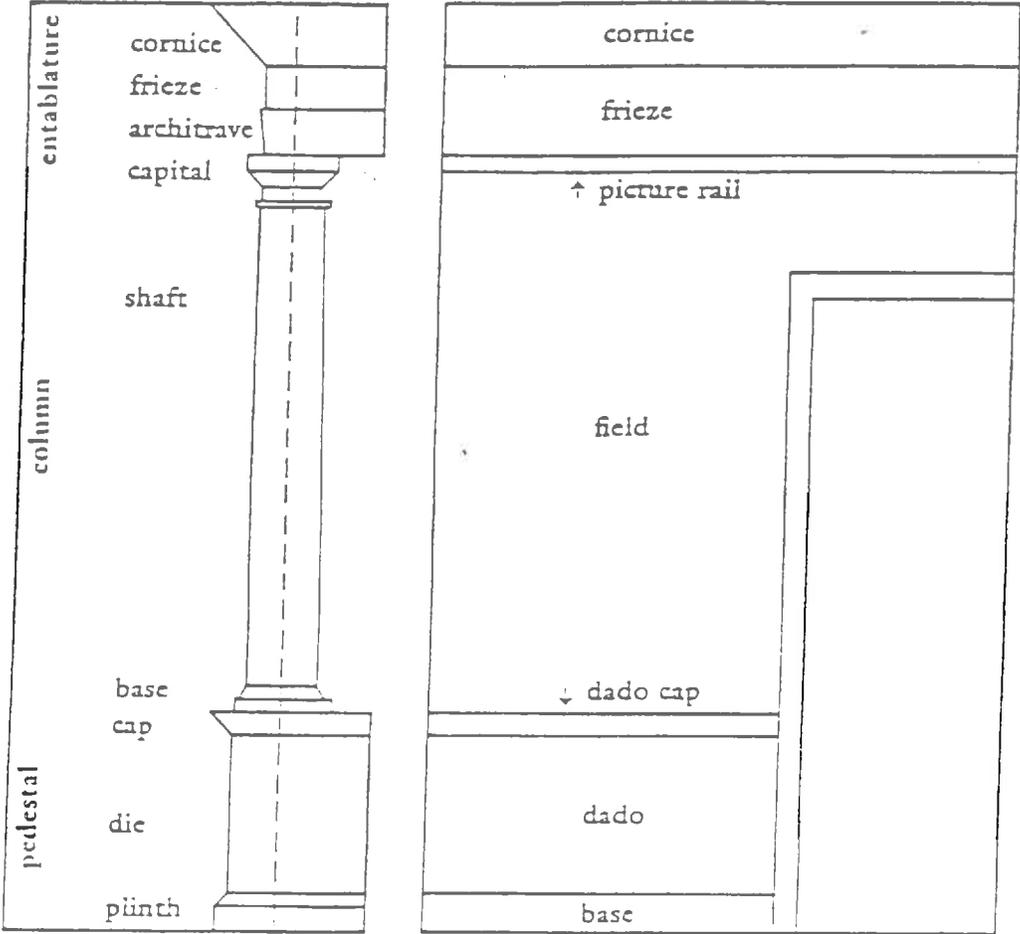
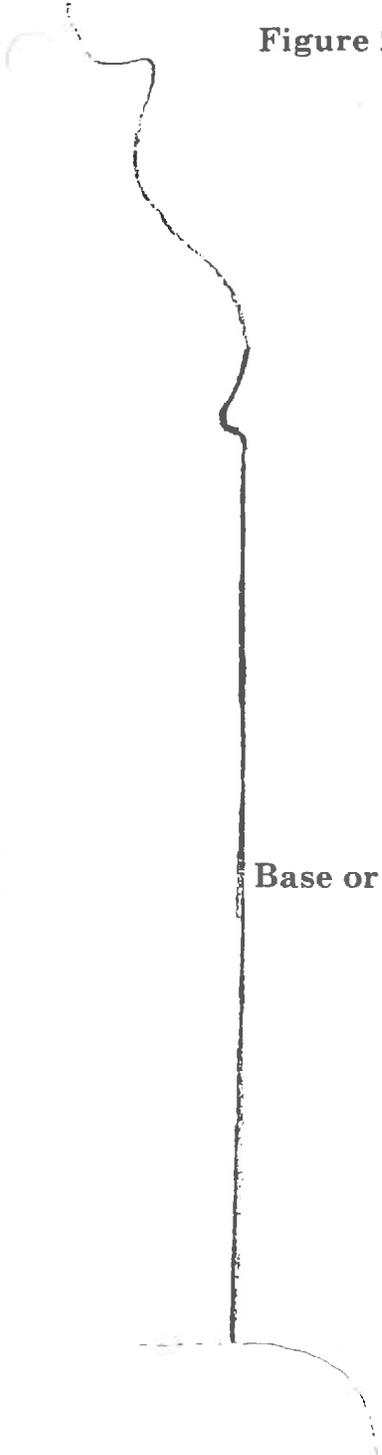


Figure 21 - Corresponding parts of an interior wall and a classical order

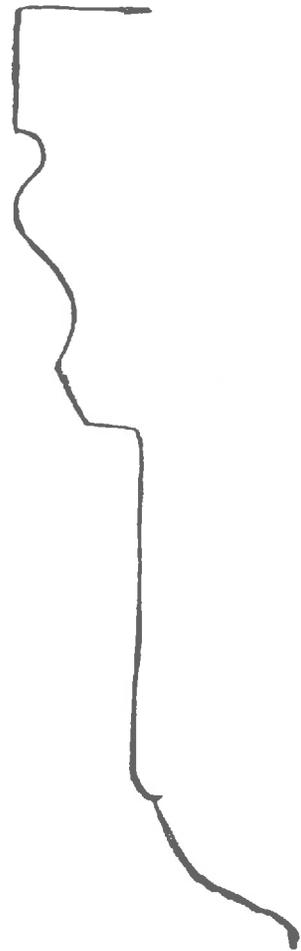
**Figure 22- Base molding**



**Base or Splashboard**

**Base-shoe**

**Figure 23 - Window & Door Architrave**



**Original Molding Profiles, Parlor, 1872**

Figure 24 - Window and Door Architrave

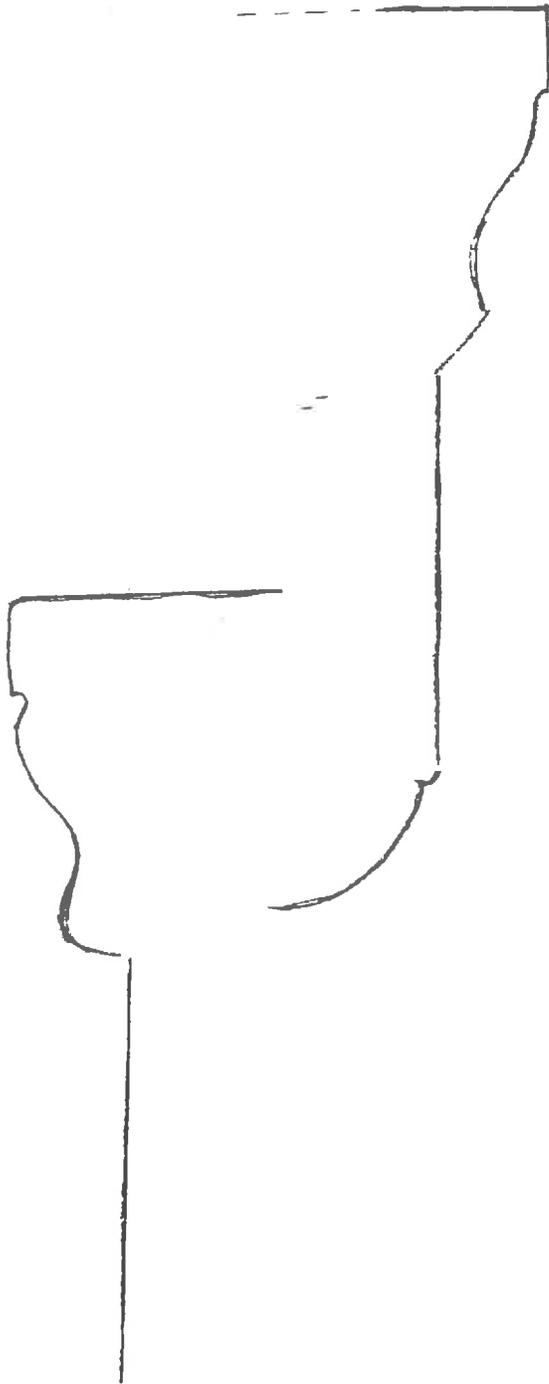


Figure 25 - Pocket Door Architrave

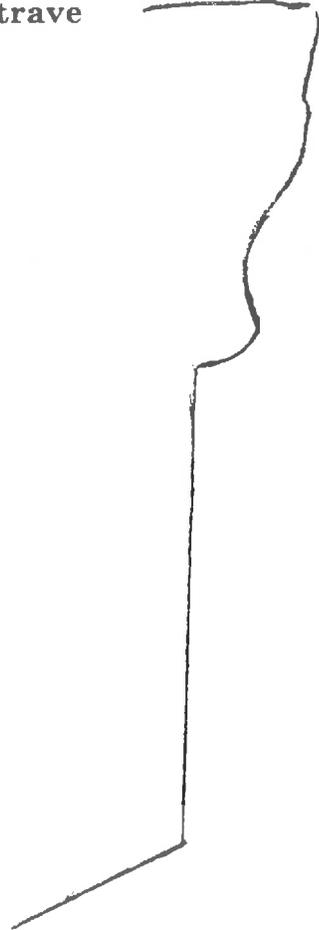
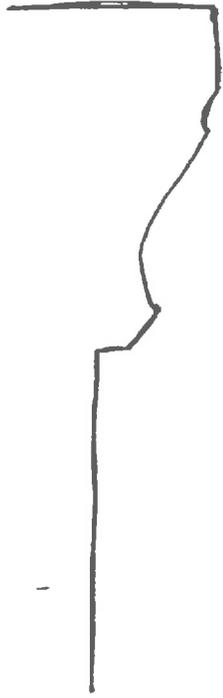


Figure 26 - Queen Anne Window Architrave

Original Molding Profiles, Living Room, 1872



**Figure 27 - Window and Door Architrave**



**Figure 28 - Chair/Dado Rail**

**Original Molding Profiles, Dining Room, 1872**

Interior Photographs

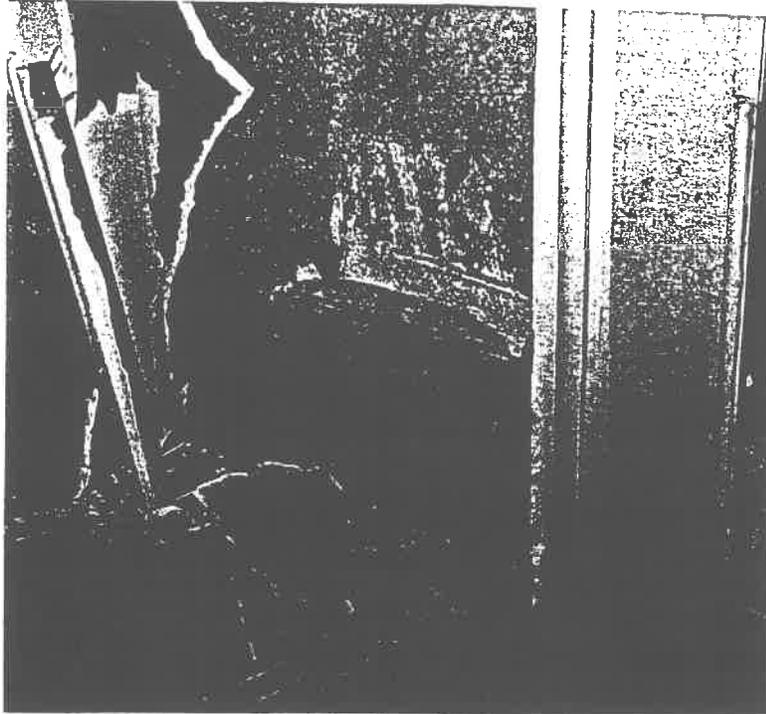


Figure 29 - Parlor Basemolding

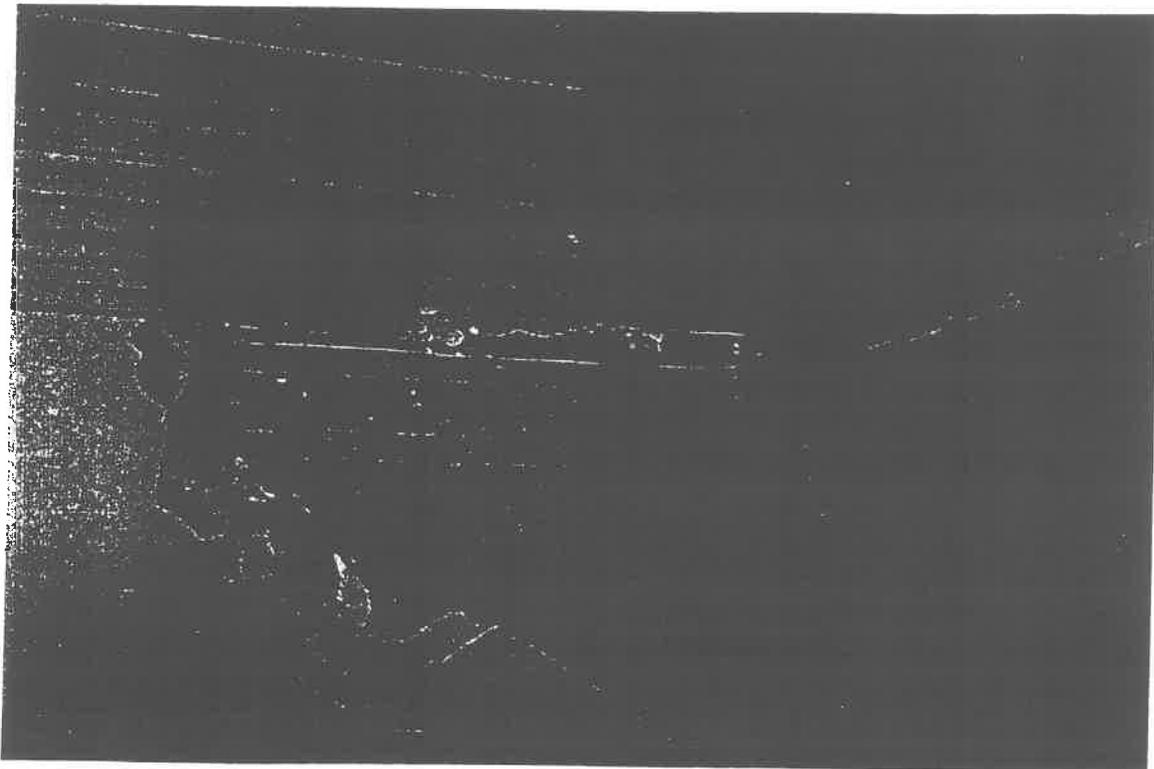
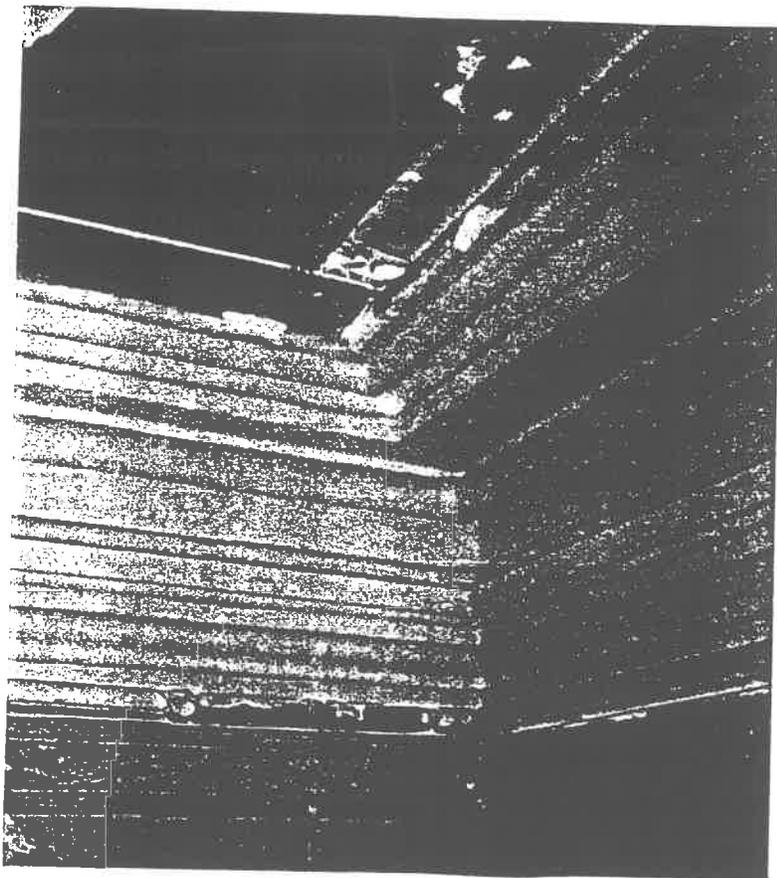
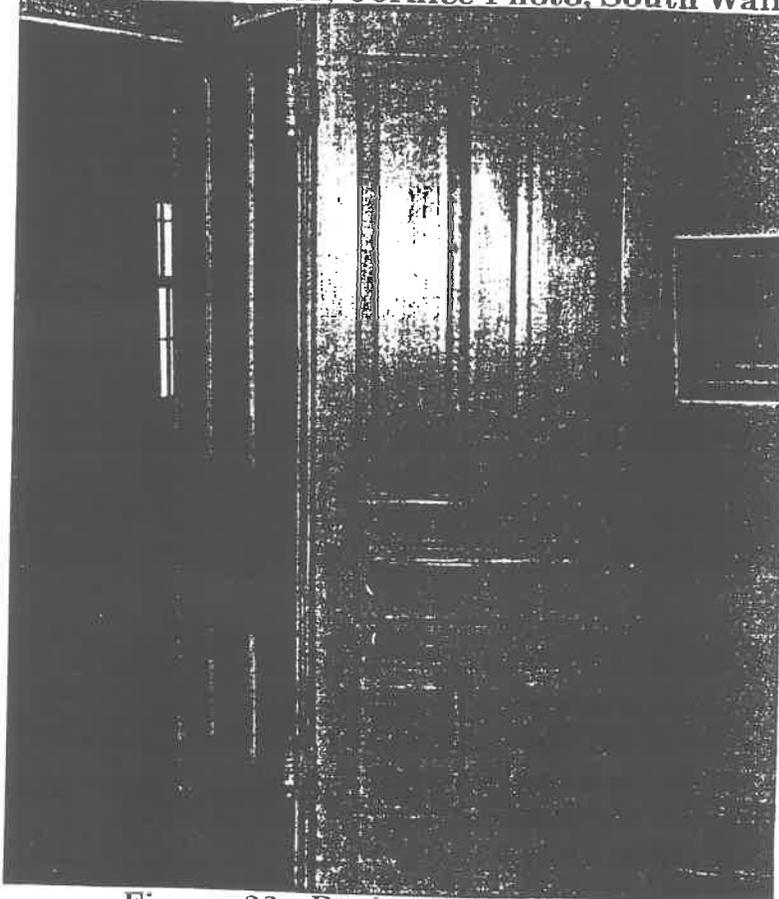


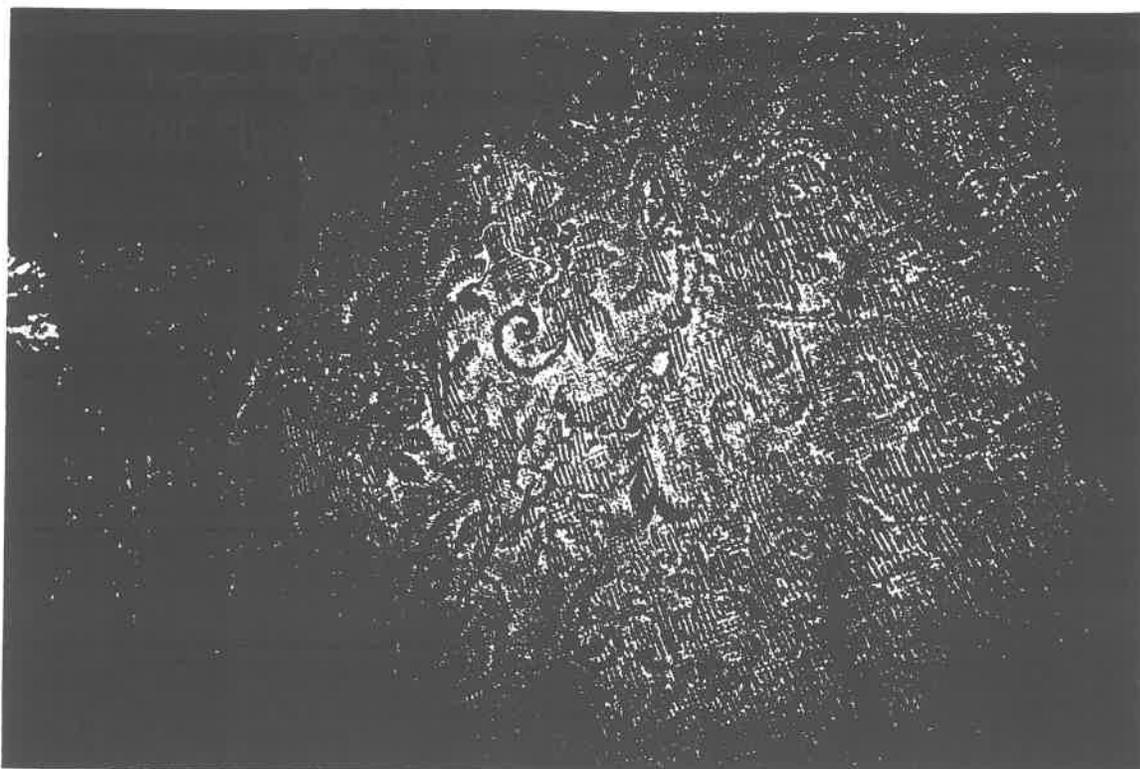
Figure 30 - Color photo of Parlor, South Wall



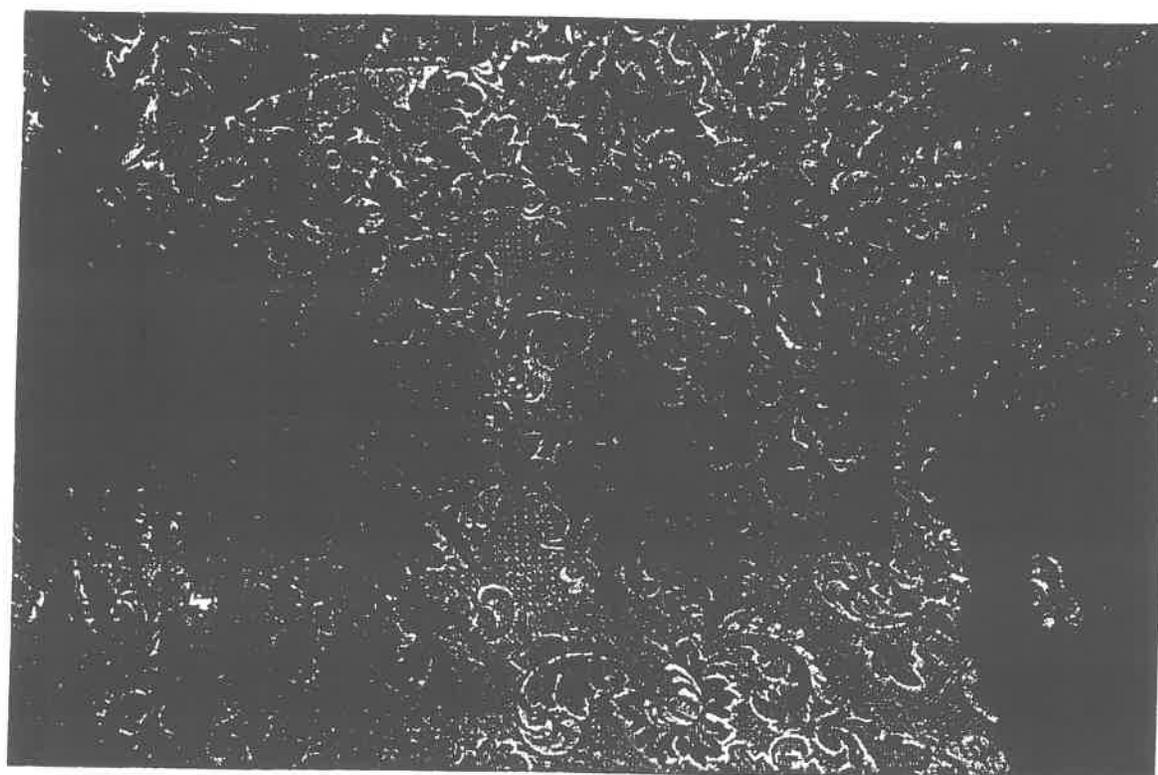
**Figure 31 - Parlor, Cornice Photo, South Wall**



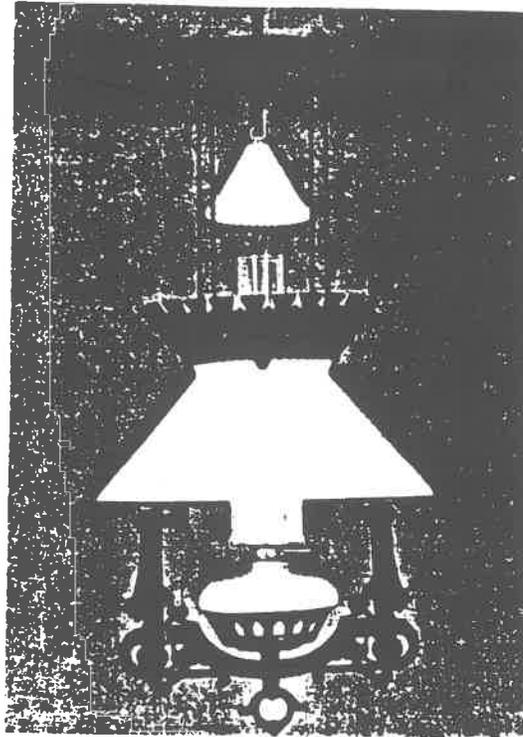
**Figure 32 - Parlor, Double-Door**



**Figure 33 - In-Grain, Red, Carpet**



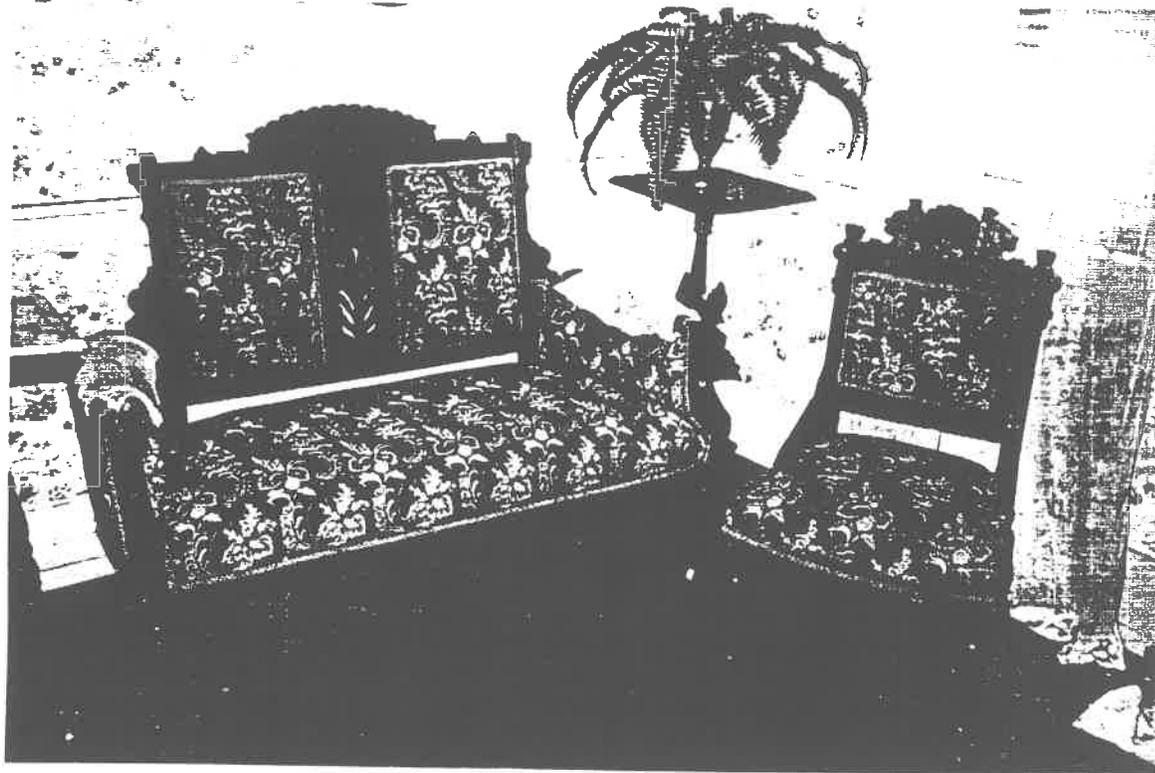
**Figure 34 - In-Grain, Olive, Carpet**



**Figure 35 - Hanging Lamp No. 69121, B and P Lamp Supply Co.**



**Figure 36 - Wall Bracket Lamp No. 73803, B and P Lamp Supply Co.**



**Figure 37 - Original Gibson Furniture, Settee and Side Chair,  
Eastlake Style, 1870s**

## Part IV. Analysis of Existing Conditions and Recommendations for Restoring Landscape and Outbuildings.

### Restoration Historical Landscape and New Access

The Gibson house property is located on the edge of an expanding industrial park. The southwest corner of Wixom Road and Pontiac Trail has already been sited for a gas station and if the City does not act quickly the property will soon be encroached upon from all sides by industrial development. In order to preserve the rural character of the of the property and the existing view-shed, we recommended that the City of Wixom pursue the purchase of up to six acres to the east of the property and two acres to the south, as approved by the Historic Preservation Committee. The acquisition of this land will allow the access to the property to be moved from the front driveway entrance off Pontiac Trail to the K-Tool drive off Wixom Road. We also recommend that the City pursue the possibility of an easement from Durr Corporation for shared use of their existing driveway entrance off Pontiac Trail on the west side of the Gibson property. Parking lots should be constructed connected to these new entrances as illustrated on the 1997 site plan (**Map 10**). The current driveway entrance off Pontiac Trail should be gated shut and only used for deliveries and special events. A farm gate (#41) survives in the barn and could possibly be used for this purpose. A better solution, however, might be to construct a modern wooden gate modeled after the rail and board fencing recommended for use on the property.

Using information gathered from the W.P.A. Rural Survey, the 1940 aerial photograph (**Map 5**), the site plan drawn by James D. Gibson (**Map 6**) and both Mildred and James D. Gibson's recollections (**Appendices**), we recommend that the City of Wixom restore the site to its late 1930 early 1940 appearance. Since the property will not be staffed we recommend the creation of a walking trail/ bike path through the property with historic markers located throughout the site interpreting important buildings, view-sheds, and landscape features. Signage from the parking lot should direct visitors to an orientation area located in either the existing barn, the reproduction barn or the garage on the property. The orientation area should contain signage that provides visitors with basic information on the history of Wixom, Michigan and the Gibson Farm, and has a large blown-up map of the site and a container or rack of some sort to hold walking tour

brochures. Marker information has been added to the recommendation descriptions in the sections following this introduction.

We recommend that fencing and walkways be added to the property as outlined on the 1997 site plan (**Map 10**). Crops representative of what the Gibson family once grew<sup>92</sup> should be planted in the areas designated as field space on the 1997 site plan (**Map 10**). Wheat and corn would be two good choices because of their height, the plants would aid in screening the surrounding industrial areas out. We recommend that a community garden maintained by a local garden club or 4-H group be planted on the south west side of the house, as indicated on James D. Gibson's drawing (**Map 6**) and recreated on the 1997 site plan (**Map 10**). According James D. Gibson's recollections (**see Appendices**), the family was growing potatoes, strawberries, parsnips, carrots, beets, green beans, rhubarb and sweet corn among other things in the vegetable garden in the 1940s.<sup>93</sup>

We recommend that a small number of apple trees (3 rows of 6 trees) be planted on the east side of the existing barn as drawn on the 1997 site plan. This is historically where one of the orchards on the property once stood. Winesaps, Greenings and Snow apples are three of the varieties James D. Gibson remembers being grown on the farm.<sup>94</sup> Again, a group such as 4-H or Future Farmers of America might be interested in maintaining a small orchard for the city. The apples from these trees could be used in cider pressing demonstrations during special events or made into baked-goods sold during a public event to help raise money to maintain the Gibson House property.

## Horse Barn

The horse barn should be restored to its 1872 appearance. A new wood shingle roof should be put on the building. Remove entire asphalt roof and paper leaving only the roof deck exposed. Inspect roof decking and replace boards as necessary. Do not remove the roof decking if it is in good shape. Attach 30-pound felt paper to the roof decking. Lay a double thickness of cedar shingles for the first course at the bottom edge of the roof to cover all cracks. Then, lay a strip of paper half the width of your shingle length under the upper half of each course. Ideally, leave exposed only a third of each shingle. Evidence of a shake roof (spilt riven quartered wood) is found in the attic of the house where the cross gable is connected. Since the aesthetics of a shingle and shake roof are similar, we recommend wood shingles instead of the shakes, because of the expense involved in

creating and maintaining a riven shake roof. See Michigan Barn Rehabilitation Contractors List in the Appendices.

The building should be straightened using wire ties and then raised up and a new foundation added to support the building. All the objects currently stored in the barn should be taken out during restoration and stored in safe dry spot off-site. Many of these items are important artifacts which document the history of the Gibson Farm. We would recommend that the majority of the items found in the barn be saved. Security is an issue that every historic site struggles with. If this building is going to be open to the public with no security personnel or staff then there is a risk that some items may be vandalized or stolen from the barn. The installation of security cameras and proximity alarms will help reduce the risk, however there is also a real concern for visitor safety, as well. Many of the older pieces of farm equipment have sharp metal parts and blades and moveable components that could injure a curious visitor.

If the City of Wixom and the Historic Preservation Committee feel that some of these items can be securely exhibited in the lower level of the barn then we recommend the following:

- Fan mill be professionally restored and placed back in the barn for display/demonstrations.
- Cornsheller also be professionally restored and placed back in the barn for demonstrations.
- Conserve several complete sets of horse tack and if they can be secured: place back in the barn tack room for display. Consider using plexi-glass to block the entrance into the tack room.
- Mount many of the old farm tools and equipment securely to the walls and identify with label text.
- Move several of the old apple crates, barrels, milk pans, and butter molds and paddles downstairs into the first floor of the barn to help interpret the processing of different types of crops grown on the farm.
- If possible, the cutter, the surrey, the racing sulky and the sledge should be restored and exhibited downstairs behind a roped-off area.

- The second floor should be closed to the public; possibly with the addition of a locked door at the bottom or top of the stairs and used as a storage area.
- To ensure the safety of the objects stored inside, this building, once restored, should be equipped with a security alarm and smoke detectors. A groundskeeper will need to unlock the building in the morning and lock it up at night.

**Marker Information** - Interpret the construction date of the building and its use as a pig pen on one side and a carriage and processing area on the other. Mention the corn crib and tack room visitors will see inside the barn. Note that it is the only surviving barn on the property and that at one time there were four barns.

## **Milk House**

Remove the 1960s lean-to garden shed addition, repair broken windows (**see figure 17**). Continue using the building for storage.

Remove entire asphalt roof and paper leaving only the roof deck exposed. Inspect roof decking and replace boards as necessary. Do not remove the roof decking if it is in good shape. Attach 30-pound felt paper to the roof decking. Lay a double thickness of cedar shingles for the first course at the bottom edge of the roof to cover all cracks. Then, lay a strip of tarpaper half the width of your shingle length under the upper half of each course. Ideally, leave exposed only a third of each shingle. Evidence of a shake roof (spilt riven quartered wood) is found in the barn, second floor, and could have been used on the Milk House. Since the aesthetics of a shingle and shake roof are similar, we recommend wood shingles instead of the shakes, because of the expense involved in creating and maintaining a rive shake roof. Paint the interior walls and ceiling as well as the exterior walls white.

**Marker Information** - Basic information on what milk houses were used for and where they were located. Discuss the history of dairy farming in Oakland County supplemented with specific information of the Gibson's dairy herd. A photograph of the Smith Cheese Factory, which used to be across the street, could be included on this sign with historical information on the cheese factory.

## Reproduction General Barn

Erect a reproduction barn using the footprint and remnants of the original structure or move an existing historic barn from another site to the property. The interior of this barn should be reproduced according to the City's needs for community programming and event space. Originally this barn had four horse stalls on one side of the upper level and 18-20 cow stalls on the other side of the upper level. The stalls could be built, however, this would drastically reduce the amount of interior space. Large-scale photographs mounted to the walls might be used instead to interpret the function of the original barn, leaving a large open space for programming and special events. The lower level could house modern rest room facilities or be used as a storage and/or display space.

**Marker Information** - Interpret the original barn structure and silos located in this area. Describe the use of the original barn as a two-level structure that housed four draft horses and 18-20 cows on the upper level and wagons and equipment below. The dirt ramp allowed hay wagons to drive right into the upper level for unloading. Interpret the shift from wheat and wool production in the 1870s and 1880s to larger dairy production beginning in the 1890s. The milk produced by these cows was the main source of cash for the Gibson family during the twentieth century (Matthew only had 4 cows in 1880). Mention that the Gibsons never had tractors or other engine-powered equipment. They relied on their four draft horses two of whom were named Topsy and Brownie (**see figure 15**).

## Garage

Replace modern metal garage door with two wooden garage doors. Shadow of the old hinges can still be seen in the existing wood door surround. Consider painting the same color scheme as the house. A Model T Ford should be bought and placed in the garage. Another use could be for storage or it could be fitted out with modern rest rooms or vending machines. Paint Buff color body with light olive trim.

**Marker Information-** Interpret the construction of the garage by Harold Gibson in the 1920s and discuss when the Gibson family first acquired an automobile. Tie in the history of the Wixom Ford Assembly plant and how cars affected the farmers way of life.

## Outhouse

Construct a reproduction balloon-frame wooden two-seater outhouse with a cedar shingle roof and locate behind the garage as indicated on the site plan drawn by James D. Gibson. Paint Buff color body with light olive trim.

**Marker Information** - Interpret the history of indoor plumbing in general and make note that an indoor bathroom was not installed in the Gibson house until after Alma Brown Gibson's death in 1955!

## Windmill

Construct a reproduction metal windmill, Star Windmills, Flint & Wally Manufacturing Co., Kendalville, Indianapolis (see Barn Inventory, # 166), fan should be approximately 6-8 feet in diameter and 25-30 feet tall with a rudder stenciled J. M. Gibson; locate in a recreated barnyard (See Map 6 by James D. Gibson).<sup>95</sup> The windmill should be connected to a pump that fills a cattle trough. The windmill is plotted on the 1997 site plan (**See Map 10**).

**Marker Information** - Interpret the history of windmills and explain their primary function to pump water (use a diagram to help explain). Provide information on the manufacturer of the Gibson's original windmill and on the reproduction company.

## Fences

According to the W.P.A. Rural Survey, James Gibson was using woven wire fencing with wooden posts in 1937. Some of the original woven wire fencing survives today in front of the house and along the former farm lane. While woven wire fences were available in the late 1870s so were post and rail fences. The installation of reproduction post and rail fencing is recommended. Still historically appropriate, this is a much more visible style of fencing and will prove to be a better choice because of the Committee's desire to develop the site as a passive city park. Square 4" x 4" rough cut oak posts (untreated) and 6" x 1" rectilinear rough cut oak rails should be used to construct a post and rail fence around the property as marked on the site plan. The posts should be about 9 feet apart and there should be four rail boards attached on the outside of the posts using square-cut nails.