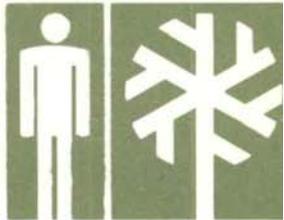


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historic resource study

september 1984

JAMES A. GARFIELD



NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE / OHIO

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HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY

JAMES A. GARFIELD NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE:

Prepared by

Ronald W. Johnson

DENVER SERVICE CENTER
BRANCH OF CULTURAL RESOURCES
NORTHEAST TEAM
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
DENVER, COLORADO



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PREFACE

This historic resource study has been prepared to satisfy the research needs as stated in the task directive approved by Midwest Regional Director James Dunning in June 1982 concerning James A. Garfield National Historic Site under Package No. 102. Data from this report will provide an information base which will be used to plan the preservation/restoration, interpretation, and future management of the cultural resources at this site:

The historic resource study focuses on the acquisition and development of the Dickey farm by James A. Garfield between 1876 and 1881. This study is not a biographical treatment of the slain president as other, recent studies clearly fill this need. It also includes information on the ownership and development of the structures and grounds at the farm prior to Garfield's ownership as far back as the original settlement of the Western Reserve. This historic resource study treats the post-Garfield years between 1881 and 1980, when Congress authorized establishment of the historic site. Varying emphasis has been placed on the physical history of the human occupation and the historic landscape of the property as well as on the architectural evolution of the main house and ancillary structures from the early 1830s to the present.

A number of persons have assisted in the preparation of this report. Special thanks go to Dr. Eric Cardinal, executive director of the Lake County Historical Society; librarian Carl Engle, and other members of the staff who guided me through the property, assisted with basic research, and made available the society's numerous files for research purposes. Dr. Ted Sande, executive director of the Western Reserve Historical Society; Siegfried Buerling, director of properties; chief archivist Kermit Pike; and archivist Dr. James Casey also assisted greatly with the research efforts. Dr. Harry J. Brown generously loaned a draft of volume four of the Garfield diary. Historical architect Ed Adelman provided gracious and helpful liaison with Cuyahoga National Recreation Area staff and management during the course of the project. Judy Cetina, Cuyahoga County Archives, and Arlene Peterson of Ohio State

Historical Society assisted. Local historian Edith McNally of Cleveland helped with certain research portions of the project with her usual dispatch and effectiveness. Andy Ketterson, chief of cultural resources, Midwest Regional Office and Dave Shonk, external affairs, offered several insightful tips on how to proceed with this project. Archivist Chuck Kelly of the Manuscripts Division of the Library of Congress aided with appropriate comments and advice during the busy days at that facility. Finally, I would like to thank Dick Wittpenn, chief, Branch of Planning, Mid-Atlantic/North Atlantic Team and Cal Cummings, chief, Branch of Cultural Resources, Midwest/Rocky Mountain Team, Denver Service Center for giving me the opportunity to work on this project. My thanks also go to Mrs. Beverly Ritchey for typing the manuscript.

CHRONOLOGY OF JAMES A. GARFIELD

- 1831--November 19, born in Orange Township, Cuyahoga County, Ohio.
- 1833--May, father dies leaving a widow and four children.
- 1848--worked as canal boat tow boy on the Ohio & Pennsylvania Canal for six weeks.
- 1849--March 6, entered Geauga Seminary in Chester, Ohio.
- 1851--August 23, entered Western Reserve Eclectic Institute in Hiram, Ohio.
- 1854--June 22, graduated from the Eclectic Institute. July 11, enrolled in Williams College for fall semester.
- 1856--June, campaigned for the Republicans and John C. Frémont. August 6, graduated with honors from Williams College.
- 1857--May 26, appointed "Chairman" of Eclectic Institute faculty.
- 1858--May, appointed president of the Eclectic Institute. November 11, married Lucretia Rudolph.
- 1859--October 11, wins election to state senate.
- 1861--April 12, Civil War starts. August, appointed colonel of 42nd Ohio Volunteer Infantry.
- 1862--January 10, fought in Battle of Middle Creek, Kentucky. March 19, promoted to rank of brigadier general. April 6-7, fought in Battle of Shiloh, Tennessee. October, elected to Congress.
- 1863--February, appointed chief of staff for General Rosecrans. June, organized successful Tullahoma campaign. September 18-20, Battle of Chickamauga, Georgia. Promoted to rank of major general. December 5, resigned from the Army. December 7, took seat in 38th Congress.
- 1865--June, accepted position on Hiram Board of Trustees.
- 1871--assumes leadership of the House Committee on Appropriations.
- 1873--January, Garfield named in Crédit Mobilier scandal.
- 1874--De Golyer paving company scandal.
- 1876--October, buys Dickey farm in Mentor, Ohio.
- 1877--remodels house in spring, moves family to Mentor. Garfield commutes between Washington and Mentor.

1880--Nominated U.S. senator in January. Spring, major renovation of house. June 8, wins GOP nomination for president. July-November, front porch campaign. November 2, wins presidency.

1881--March 4, inaugurated president. July 2, shot by Charles Guiteau in Washington. Lingers through hot summer. September 19, dies Elberon, New Jersey.

1885--Summer, Lawnfield remodeled, memorial addition built.

1890--Garfield Memorial, Lakeview Cemetery in Cleveland dedicated.

DICKEY/GARFIELD FARM BUILDING CHRONOLOGY

<u>Date</u>	<u>Dickey Farmhouse</u>	<u>Garfield Addition</u>	<u>Memorial Library</u>	<u>Tenant House (Converted to office & Library)</u>	<u>Carriage Barn/Gas Storage Building</u>	<u>Tenant Cottage (near carriage barn)</u>	<u>Well House/Windmill</u>	<u>New Barn/ in yard-- (Cupola)</u>	<u>Outbuildings (granary)</u>	<u>Ice House</u>	<u>Shed/ Engine House</u>	<u>Barn (North of Railroad)</u>	<u>Tenant House (Botten Tract)</u>
ca. 1832	Const.												
1830s-1870s				Const.					Const.				Const.
1877	Remodeled			Moved/ Remodeled					Moved to rear of farmhouse	Const.			
1878								Const.			Converted to Engine House		
1879													
1880		Const.											
Ca. 1882													
1885		Const.		Moved near Ice House	Gas Storage Building Const. (possibly)	Const.	Const.					Const.	Remodeled
1893					Carriage Barn Const.			Moved	Moved to extreme rear of property				
1900													
1930s							Windmill Removed						
1984	Extant	Extant	Extant	Extant	Extant	Extant	Stone portion extant	Highly likely extant/ at least portion	Some out-buildings removed at an unknown time. Part of chicken coop, granary extant	Removed at an unknown time	Removed at an unknown time	Removed at an unknown time	

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Ca. 1802. "Town of Mentor, or Township no. 10 in the 9th Range." From a photostatic copy (copy at Western Reserve Historical Society?). Shows ownership of land after Connecticut Land Company Drafts of 1802.
2. Ca. 1835. Detail of Mentor Township. From a photostatic copy (original at Geauga County Recorder's Office?). Maps shows parcels owned by estate of Warren Corning Jun. (d. 1834) in Bacon Lot and Tract No. 5 and 40 A. parcel in Tract No. 5 owned by James Dickey, in Com.
3. 1836. "Survey and subdivision of Tract No. 5 in Township No. 10 in the 9th Range." From Geauga County Court of Common Pleas, Records, v. 5, p. 57.
4. Ca. 1846-1848. Detail of Mentor Township. From Lake County Recorder's Office, Plat Book A Portfolio. P. 8. Area shows land owned by James Dickey, 40.75 A. in the Bacon Lot and 53.5 A. in Tract No. 5 (Harmon, Sheldon and W. King Lots).
5. Map, detail of Mentor Township. From "Map of Geauga and Lake Counties, Ohio," Philadelphia, 1857.
6. Map, Mentor Township. From Atlas of Lake and Geauga Counties, Ohio. D.J. Lake, Civil Engineer, Philadelphia, 1874, p. 30.
7. Portrait of J.P. Robison, from History of Cuyahoga County, Ohio. Crisfield Johnson, compiler. Cleveland, 1879, facing p. 206.
8. Lawnfield, exterior, west and south sides. Before remodeling done by James A. Garfield. Lake County Historical Society.
9. Lawnfield, exterior, south side (front elevation). Lake County Historical Society.
10. Lawnfield, exterior, south and east sides. Lake County Historical Society.
11. Lawnfield, exterior, south side (front elevation), 1880. From scrapbook of James R. Garfield. Lake County Historical Society.
12. Lawnfield, floor plan. "The Garfield Farm," from the New York Herald, September 26, 1881.
13. "Residence of the Hon. James A. Garfield, Mentor, Ohio." L.C. Corwine, delineator. Copyright secured (1880?).

14. Campaign Office, exterior, 1880, from scrapbook of James R. Garfield. Lake County Historical Society.
15. Lawnfield, exterior, west and south sides. James A. Garfield is standing at the gate. Photo by A. Austin, View Artist, Toledo, Ohio. Lake County Historical Society.
16. "Lawnfield, Mentor, Ohio. Home of General J.A. Garfield." Exterior, west and south sides. Photo by J.F. Ryder, Cleveland, Ohio. Lake County Historical Society.
17. Lane running north to private railroad (Lake Shore & Michigan Southern) stop at Lawnfield. Lake County Historical Society.
18. "Lawnfield. Mentor, Ohio. Home of General James A. Garfield." Photo by J.F. Ryder, Cleveland, Ohio. Campaign visitors at Lawnfield, 1880. Lake County Historical Society.
19. Portrait of James A. Garfield. Veeder Photo, 32 No. Pearl Street, Albany, New York. Lake County Historical Society.
20. Portrait of "Mrs. James A. Garfield." Photo by Mathew Brady Studio. Lake County Historical Society.
21. Joseph and Lide Rudolph on the front steps at Lawnfield. Lake County Historical Society.
22. Lawnfield, exterior, east side. Lake County Historical Society.
23. Lawnfield, interior, Memorial Library. Lake County Historical Society.
24. Lawnfield, interior, Memorial Library. Lake County Historical Society.
25. Lawnfield, tenant house. Lake County Historical Society.
26. Lawnfield, windmill. Lake County Historical Society.
27. Carriage house and windmill. Lake County Historical Society. ca. 1895.
28. Rudolph Stanley-Brown in the yard at Lawnfield, looking south. Background left, Lawnfield; background right, the barn. ca. 1892.
29. Garfield family on front porch at Lawnfield. L-R: James R., Abram, Lucretia R., Eliza Ballou Garfield, Irvin M., Harry A., and Mollie. Lake County Historical Society.
30. Garfield Homestead, ca. 1900 in Thomas A. Knight The Country Estates of Cleveland men. Cleveland, 1903.

31. Lawnfield, map of property, "The Garfield Farm," from the New York Herald, September 26, 1881.
32. Garfield Family, ca. 1890s. Lake County Historical Society.
33. Lucretia R. Garfield with her five children and their wives and husband. L-R: Irvin McD. and Susan, Joseph Stanley-Brown and Mollie, Abram and Ray (Sarah), Helen and James R., and Belle and Harry A. Lake County Historical Society.
34. Gate to the Garfield Farm, Mentor Avenue, opposite Stop 55 on the Cleveland, Painesville & Eastern Street Railway. Lake County Historical Society.
35. Hollycroft House built by James R. Garfield 1894. Razed 1965. Lake County Historical Society.
36. Map, Village of Mentor. From Atlas of Lake County, Ohio, by H. B. Stranahan and G. D. Corey, Cleveland, 1898, p. 109.
37. Map, Mentor Incorporated. From New Century Atlas, Lake County, Ohio. Alexander C. Stark, Civil Engineer, Philadelphia, 1915, p. 57.
38. Eastlawn. Warren Corning, Jr. built house in 1830. Harry A. and Belle Mason Garfield lived there early 20th century. House remains extant. Lake County Historical Society.
39. Lawnfield, exterior, west side. Photo by Howard Ruck, Mentor, Ohio, ca. 1940. Lake County Historical Society.
40. Lawnfield, exterior, north and east side. Lake County Historical Society.



INTRODUCTION

The James A. Garfield National Historic Site, authorized for inclusion in the National Park System by P.L. 96-607 on December 28, 1980, is at 1095 Mentor Avenue in Mentor, Lake County, Ohio, 15 miles northeast of downtown Cleveland. United States Highway 20 (Mentor Avenue) skirts the southern boundary of the 7.82-acre property. Currently the front portion of the historic site on Mentor Avenue totals 4.41 acres and is owned by the Western Reserve Historical Society while the National Park Service owns the rear 3.41-acre parcel. In conjunction with the National Park Service, the Western Reserve Historical Society operates the property as an historic site and museum, and interprets the facility to the public.

While the entire 7.82-acre property is popularly known as "Lawnfield," the name specifically applies to the main house which is also known locally as the Garfield House. For purposes of this study, the title "Lawnfield" will be used only after summer 1880 when news reporters began publicizing the name. Between 1876-1880 it will be called the Garfield or the Mentor farm and before Garfield's purchase the Dickey farm. Then too, this property was much larger and served as an operating farm long after Garfield's death in 1881. The property which remains intact contains the core area (house and outbuildings) of this 150-year-old farm -- the principal structures remain extant though modified in the intervening years. The remaining acreage has been sold, subdivided, and developed.

The Mentor property remained in Garfield family control from 1876 until 1936 which greatly enhanced the preservation of the core farm buildings. The Garfield children must be credited with preserving this important historic site as a memorial to their parents. In 1936 the house was donated to the Western Reserve Historical Society to be operated as an historic site open to the public. Congress designated Lawnfield as a National Historic Site in late 1980 to be administered by the National Park Service. Thus relatively few individuals have owned this property since the early 19th century.



CHAPTER ONE

THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE WESTERN RESERVE,
GEAUGA/LAKE COUNTIES AND MENTOR TOWNSHIP



Northern Ohio boasts a rich and colorful heritage. Prior to the arrival of the Europeans, the land south of Lake Erie served as a hunting ground for several Native American tribes --- Chippewas, Senecas and Cayugas from the East, and the Wyandottes, Ottawas and Shawnees from the West and South. The Eries had been forced from the region by the encroaching Iroquois Confederation of the Five Nations around the middle of the 17th century.

The first Europeans to "discover" the Great Lakes and the Mississippi and Ohio rivers were French traders and trappers, the coureurs de bois. They were among the earliest European visitors to northern Ohio. These "runners of the woods" traversed the lakes and forests in the Old Northwest (present day Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, and Wisconsin) in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. The first known European to view Lake Erie was Louis Joliet in 1669. Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle has been commonly acknowledged as the first white man to traverse the present state of Ohio. It has been inferred by some historians that La Salle, upon returning from the Illinois country in 1682-1683, passed through northern Ohio. There are no extant accounts describing any French settlement in the present-day Cleveland area in the 17th or early 18th centuries but by the mid-1700s the French had probably established a small trading post on the Cuyahoga River as well as another at the mouth of the Chagrin River in present-day Lake County. Disputes over trading rights as well as basic land claims led to large scale conflict in North America between the French and the British, who also sought to settle and exploit this area. The British triumphed in the resultant French and Indian War. In 1763 the French had to cede Canada and all lands east of the Mississippi River to their victorious enemy.

The French and British continued to trade with the Indians in the Old Northwest following the Treaty of 1763 until the American Revolution erupted in the mid-1770s. Then following the Revolutionary War, Great Britain transferred this region to the newly formed United States via the 1783 Treaty of Paris. As western settlement intensified, the Indians were gradually forced to relinquish their informal claims to the lakeshore region east of the Cuyahoga River. After 1783, the newly organized

Confederation government in Philadelphia sought to acquire the Indians' title to the lands northwest of the Ohio River. The ensuing Treaty of Fort McIntosh (January 21, 1785) stipulated that the local Delawares, Chippewas, Wyandots, and Ottawas had to cede their lands east of the Cuyahoga River as well as the strategic portage between that stream and the Tuscarawas River. The Treaty of Fort Harmar renewed and confirmed the previous agreement on January 9, 1789. Intermittent warfare between the Indians and the federal government's representatives continued through the early 1790s until General Anthony "Mad Anthony" Wayne routed the forest warriors at the Battle of Fallen Timbers on August 20, 1794. This defeat led to the Treaty of Greenville in August, 1795 which opened most of Ohio and a large strip of eastern Indiana to white settlement.¹

With the Native Americans eliminated from northern Ohio, westward moving settlers from more established areas along the eastern seaboard arrived in sizeable numbers. Agrarian and commercial development of the Western Reserve in northern Ohio began in earnest.

The Western Reserve

In the 1780s, Congress had asked the eastern seaboard colonies to relinquish long-standing claims to lands west of the Appalachian Mountains. Although Connecticut had complied with these congressional demands, it reserved a strip of land 120 miles long by 30 miles wide south of Lake Erie. Congress confirmed Connecticut's claim to the land on September 14, 1786. It was, and continues to be, known as the "Western Reserve."²

1. See The Lake County Historical Society, Here Is Lake County, Ohio (Cleveland, 1964), pp. 1-5, for an account of early northern Ohio. Also see, Harry F. Lupold, The Latch String Is Out: A Pioneer History of Lake County, Ohio (Mentor, 1974), pp. 2-14.

2. See Harlan Hatcher, The Western Reserve: The Story of New Connecticut in Ohio (Cleveland and New York, 1966), pp. 7-11 for an overview of the Western Reserve's early history.

During the late 1780s and early 1790s, Connecticut devised various schemes to dispose of the three-million-acre tract in what is now northern Ohio. Not until after the Indians had signed the Treaty of Greenville releasing their claims to that portion of the Western Reserve east of the Cuyahoga River, could a plan of subdividing and settling the land be undertaken with any degree of safety. A 35-member consortium negotiated the purchase on September 2, 1795, for 1.2-million dollars.³ The company mortgaged the land with Connecticut, and later the consortium augmented by 22 other persons formed the Connecticut Land Company.

The present-day city of Cleveland was platted and initially settled in 1796. That year, Moses Cleaveland, a Revolutionary war veteran, traveled to the Western Reserve with a group of surveyors hired by the Connecticut Land Company. By the end of 1797, the party had surveyed the land east of the Cuyahoga, dividing it into five-mile-square townships.⁴

Although settlement had increased in northern Ohio in the years after 1800, the War of 1812 practically terminated new arrivals to the Western Reserve. According to one early resident:

The War of 1812 put a stop to all further immigration to the Reserve, and some that were here left. It was a time of great alarm, especially after the surrender of Detroit by [Brig. Gen. William] Hull. There seemed nothing to prevent the British and Indians from coming down the lake, both by land and by water, pillaging, marauding and destroying everything on the southern shore. There was a call for all capable of bearing arms to congregate at Sandusky in order to take a stand against the expected invaders. Some started from the area and went as far as Sandusky. In the meantime General [William] Harrison . . .

3. Ibid., pp. 14-39. Also see Kenneth V. Lottich, New England Transplanted: A Study of the Development of Educational and Other Cultural Agencies in the Connecticut Western Reserve in Their National and Philosophical Setting (Dallas, 1964), pp. 38-42, for additional data on the establishment of the Western Reserve. Connecticut used the revenue from the sale of the western lands for the state school fund.

4. Hatcher, Western Reserve, pp. 14-39.

had pushed forward. . . and by good generalship succeeded in repulsing and scattering the Indians. . . . The Indians became discouraged, deserted, the British retired to safer quarters. There being no further danger in that quarter, our volunteers returned.⁵

Following the stalemate peace that concluded the War of 1812, settlement increased in the Western Reserve. Newcomers were attracted by frontier "boosterism" that promoted the region as a land of golden opportunity. Advertising was widely circulated throughout the East flaunting the merits of the Western Reserve. One ballad gushed:

Ye swains who are virtuous, healthy, and wise,
Who are possessed of activity and enterprise,
Who from truth and sobriety never will swerve,
Come emigrate with me to the Western Reserve.

Near the banks of proud Erie, my friends, we will go,
To lands that with milk and honey o'er flow;
Near the mouth of Grand River you will clearly observe
A beautiful country called "Western Reserve."⁶

Then too, hard times in New England prompted many residents to emigrate to Ohio. Known in New England as the year without a summer, 1816 saw many departures for the Western Reserve due to scarce food supplies and depressed economic conditions.

The Formation of Geauga and Lake Counties

Prior to 1800 there was no county level government in the Western Reserve, although General Arthur St. Clair had been named governor of the Northwest Territory which had been organized at Marietta on the Ohio

5. Christopher G. Crary, Pioneer and Personal Reminiscences (Marshalltown, Iowa, 1893), p. 7.

6. Quoted in Lupold, Latch String, p. 51.

River on July 15, 1788.⁷ Once the surveying parties had completed their tasks, the structure of county government in the Western Reserve evolved rapidly. In 1800 Governor St. Clair included the entire Western Reserve in one massive county; named it Trumbull to honor the chief executive of Connecticut; designated Warren the county seat; and appointed five judges to manage the new political entity. The county contained eight townships among them one named Painesville.

The Congress granted statehood to Ohio in 1803. Then on December 31, 1805, the state legislature created Geauga County, effective March 1, 1806, with Chardon as the county seat. The new entity included all of what now are Ashtabula, Cuyahoga (east of the river), Geauga, and Lake counties. Through the years local agitation demanded establishment of a county which more closely reflected demographics in the Painesville area. Finally, on March 6, 1840, local citizens received the authority to organize Lake County, an entity that comprised the townships of Kirtland, Concord, LeRoy, parts of Thompson, Madison, Perry, Painesville, Mentor, Willoughby, and other small areas. In 1840 Lake County had a population of 13,719 and Mentor Township counted 1,245 residents.⁸

In the 1840s, a contemporary observer described Lake County:

The surface is more rolling than level; the soil is good, and generally clayey loam, interspersed with ridges of sand and gravel. The principal crops are wheat, corn, oats, barley, buckwheat, hay and potatoes. Dairy products, beef cattle and wool are also among the staples. This county is peculiar for

7. The Confederation Congress enacted the Ordinance of 1787 on July 13. It provided a plan of government for the Northwest Territory by which an area could enter the national government on an equal footing with the older, more established states.

8. Lake County Historical Society, Here is Lake County, pp. 32-39, unnumbered census record at end of book. Ohio had 45,000 population in 1800. Twenty-five settlements in the Western Reserve totaled 1,300 inhabitants, and the population of Geauga County reached 2,917 in 1810.

the quality and quantity of its fruit, as apples, pears, peaches, plums, grapes, etc. Many thousands' dollars' worth are annually exported, and many of its inhabitants leave every spring, to engage in the business of grafting at the south and west. The situation of this country is very favorable to the preservation of its fruit from the early frosts, the warm lake winds often preventing its destruction, while that some twenty miles inland, is cut off. Bog iron ore is found in large quantities in Perry and Madison, and there are several furnaces in the county.

Mentor Township

The name Mentor Township surfaced prior to the actual lottery for the area in 1802. Apparently the name had appeared on a map published in Connecticut in the late 1790s, and it seems probable that early surveyors gave Mentor its classical name in 1796, although no direct evidence supports this contention. Early settlements appeared in Mentor Township before 1800 when Charles Parker had founded the "Marsh Settlement" near Lake Erie ca. 1797, and by the spring of 1800, the families of Parker, Jesse H. Phelps, Jared Ward, Moses Park, and Ebenezer Merry comprised the tiny community. The Mentor Marsh settlement expanded rapidly. Land values increased from less than five dollars an acre prior to 1810 to many times that sum a decade or so later. The pioneers improved their holdings by cutting down the small timber and girdling the larger trees. They planted wheat and corn among the stumps and hunted wild game for subsistence.¹⁰

Other newcomers arrived in Mentor Township in the early 1800s. They included John Miller, Jonathan B. Russell, Clark Parker, Warren Corning,

9. Henry Howe, Historical Collections of Ohio. . . . (Cincinnati, 1847), p. 278.

10. Harry F. Lupold, "Origin of Mentor Township," The Historical Society Quarterly, 17 (August, 1975), 325-327. Also see Lupold, Latch String, pp. 23-31 for data regarding the early history of Lake County and Mentor Township. For additional information about early pioneers, see Harvey Rice, Pioneers of the Western Reserve (Boston and New York, 1883), pp. 283-287.

and Benjamin and Daniel Hopkins, who acquired 500 acres of land on the lakeshore, an area then called "Hopkins Point." As new settlers arrived, many of the original pioneers emigrated elsewhere. For example, Charles Parker, Jared Ward, and Ebenezer Merry of the Marsh settlement eventually went to Milan, Ohio, a community about 50 miles southwest of Cleveland.¹¹ Although the early settlers left for new adventures, their names often remained on the land records throughout the 19th century.

Mentor Township was officially organized in 1815, while the village itself was not created until some 40 years later. At a meeting of the Geauga County commissioners on June 7, 1815, it was ordered that "all that part of Painesville which is included in the following boundaries, to wit, townships number nine and number ten in the ninth range, be incorporated and erected into a separate township, by the name of Mentor, and also that an election be held at the house of Warren Corning on the first day of the following July."¹² Of the eight townships in the future Lake County in 1820, Mentor stood sixth in population (460), with only Concord and LeRoy townships being smaller. By contrast, of the eight townships in Lake County in 1860, Mentor had risen to fourth (1,613) in population.¹³

In 1855 the Lake County commissioners acted on a petition signed by 50 qualified electors of Mentor Township asking that a certain tract of land be set aside as a separate village. This occurred on August 20 and on the following November 10, 1855, the citizens elected Mentor village officials. They included Nathan Corning, mayor; W.S. Kerr, recorder; Robert Murray, Samuel Hodges, George M. Dickey, Philandro Parmele, and Orrin Loomis, trustees.¹⁴

11. Lupold, "Origin of Mentor Township," 327.

12. History of Geauga and Lake Counties (Philadelphia, 1878), p. 250.

13. Lupold, Latch String, p. 128.

14. Lupold, "Origin of Mentor Township," 327.

Thus in the Mentor area the early settlers cleared and farmed the various parcels of land that one day would comprise the acreage bought by James A. Garfield. That acreage had an established local history prior to his coming to this area in autumn 1876.

CHAPTER TWO

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DICKEY FARM, 1796-1876



The written history of the Garfield farm began with the surveys conducted by the Connecticut Land Company in the Western Reserve in the late 18th century. John Milton Holley surveyed what later became Mentor Township (Township 10, Range 9) in October, 1796. The land was divided into sixteen tracts by the Connecticut Land Company for equalizing purposes to compensate members of the land company who drew parcels of smaller acreage or lesser value.¹ The company held a drawing for Mentor Township at Hartford, Connecticut, on December 21, 1802. Company members George Blake, Hezekiah Huntington, David Huntington, and Erastus Huntington received 1,757 acres in Tract No. 5 (Fig. 1 [hereafter photographs are cited as figures] depicts early property holdings in Mentor Township), the area which became the Garfield farm. Although this particular draft or drawing mentioned Ralph Bacon's lot as well as Jared Ward's property in the description, the total acreage for Tract 5 did not include the land already owned by these individuals.² Thus additional acreage adjacent to Tract 5 also figured prominently in the Garfield story.

Unfortunately the surviving land records do not reveal when Ward and Bacon initially acquired their land but the acreage totaled 180 in the Ward lot and 183 in Bacon's portion. Conceivably this division had occurred prior to the establishment of metes and bounds for Tract No. 5 on

1. Of all the townships surveyed, six of the best were set aside to be offered for sale to settlers. The proceeds of these sales were used by the company to pay the overhead the company incurred such as payment to surveyors and land agents who conducted the sales. According to an early journal, "After running out the company lands, Holley took his old line at the Chagrin river and ran it west between towns nine and ten to the lake. . . ." Quoted in Charles Whittlesey, Early History of Cleveland, Ohio (Cleveland, 1867), p. 222.

2. "Votes and Proceedings," in Connecticut Land Company Records (December 21, 1802), v. 2, p. 283, (microfilm) roll 1, Western Reserve Historical Society. This document notes that names which appear on later property rolls are already present in 1802: Huntington, Bacon and Ward. Bacon was one of the members of the 1796 survey party. For an illustration of the Tract 5 survey less the Bacon and Ward holdings, see "Map of the Town of Mentor, No. 10-9th Range," no date, Simon Perkins papers, MSS 242, Western Reserve Historical Society. Also see History of Crawford County and Ohio (Chicago, 1881), p. 559, for additional background on Ralph Bacon and his family.

December 21, 1802. However, the Geauga County records do reveal that Bacon officially received title to 183 acres for which he paid \$300 in 1811.³ The description recorded:

one hundred and eighty three acres of Land situated in said Mentor bounded as follows (viz) Beginning at a post on John Churches West line 40 Chs. South from the N. West Corner, Thence South 37 Chs. & 50 lks. to a post. Thence West 51 Chs. & 50 lks. to a butternut tree marked C.P. thence North 37 Chs. & 50 lks. to a post marked C.P.⁴ thence East 51 Chs. & 50 lks. to the place of beginning. . . .

While the northern part of the future Garfield farm was derived from Tract 5, the southern section evolved from a portion of the Bacon lot because tax recorders reiterated that citation throughout the latter years of the 19th century as they listed the late president's property.

The legal description of Tract No. 5 stated:

Tract No. 5 in Mentor. Begins at the N.W. corner of Tract No. 4 on the Town Line at a post marked 45. Thence N. on T. Line 103 ch. 86 lks to Elm tree marked 59 thence E. 173 ch. 40 lks to a post marked 95 thence S. on W. line of Tract No. 8 to the N. Line of Ralph Bacon's lot 66 ch. 61 lks to a post marked 58, thence W. 16 ch. 55 lks. thence South 5. ch. thence W. on Jared Wards N. Line 40 chs. thence S. on J. Ward's W Line 45 chs. to a post marked J.W. & No. 5 thence W. on the⁵N. line of Tracts 3 & 4 to the place of beginning 117 ch. 40 lks.

3. Western Reserve Surveys--Mentor, v. 2 #15 nd, Simon Perkins papers, Mss 3122, Western Reserve Historical Society. Minor confusion appears on this undated map with the name John Walworth appearing on the lot cited on other apparently contemporary maps as that belonging to Jared Ward. All other extant records point to the Ward tract at that location so the Walworth name might well have been an error committed by the person who recorded the data in the early 19th century. Notwithstanding the conflicting evidence, none of this affects any of the actual property that became part of the 1870s Garfield farm.

4. Deed, Trustees of the Connecticut Land Company to Ralph Bacon of Mentor in the County of Geauga and State of Ohio, Geauga County Deeds, v. 4, p. 310.

5. "Votes and Proceedings," v. 2 (December 21, 1802), p. 291, Connecticut Land Company Records (microfilm), roll 1, Western Reserve Historical Society.

The Corning Family

The early history of the area that later became Garfield's farm remains sketchy. Few of the county land records of the period that Mentor Township was part of Geauga County remain extant and many early land transactions were not recorded correctly or at all. Fortunately the record appears less confusing regarding the Corning and Dickey families who owned the property prior to the Garfield period.

The life of Warren Corning is indicative of many New England residents who migrated to the Western Reserve in the early 19th century. Corning was born at Beverly, Massachusetts, on November 21, 1771, and married Elizabeth Pettingill on November 12, 1795. In October, 1810, they became residents of Mentor Township after moving to the Western Reserve with a number of other Acworth, New Hampshire, inhabitants. Corning settled on what was locally known as the Ward farm (probably the Jared Ward property) in a "rude shanty some fifteen feet square, with oiled paper for window glass, and their surroundings were in wide contrast to their pleasant New Hampshire home they had so recently left."⁶ On December 16, 1811, he paid Ralph Bacon \$1,000 for a 193-acre parcel in Mentor Township (see chain of title).⁷ Drafted during the War of 1812, Corning hired a substitute to serve in his stead. Around 1813 or 1814 he raised a thousand bushels of corn which brought him some \$2,000. Corning also grew a quantity of wheat. Circa 1814 he built a two-story frame house which became the first of its kind in Mentor. During the succeeding years Corning acquired a flour mill in nearby Kirtland and constructed a log distillery building in Mentor Township in 1819 to convert rye and corn

6. History of Geauga and Lake Counties, p. 252. Limited data has been discovered concerning Ward's use of the property. The description of the rude cabin indicates small scale agrarian activity on the Ward lot prior to Corning's arrival.

7. Deed, Ralph Bacon to Warren Corning, Geauga County Deeds, v. 4, p. 331. Bacon had purchased this tract from the Connecticut Land Company in September for \$300. He made a \$700 profit. The person who wrote the deed probably entered the 10 acre mistake.

into whiskey. Around 1830 Corning divided his property among the children, then went to live with his son Nathan, who had added a wing to the house for the father's use.

The Cornings lived well into the mid-19th century. Elizabeth Corning died on July 8, 1845, and Warren passed away on March 12, 1852, in his 81st year. Their nine children included Warren, Jr. (b. April 11, 1798); Nathaniel (b. December 22, 1799); Mindwell (b. March 29, 1801); Ariel (b. September 13, 1802); Nathan (b. February 17, 1805); Lima (b. December 20, 1806); Solon (b. February 2, 1810); Rachel (b. July 17, 1814); and Harriet M. (b. May 8, 1817). It was the youngest daughter, Harriet M. Corning, who played a significant role in the development of the property that became the Garfield farm in 1876.⁸ The land records indicate that the Corning children owned a great deal of land in Mentor Township.

The Dickey Family

Harriet M. Corning, the 18-year-old daughter of Warren Corning, married James Dickey on June 5, 1835. Dickey had moved to the Western Reserve in the early 1830s from Walpole, New Hampshire, with his older brother George. James worked as a school teacher in the Mentor Center district; his future wife was one of his students. Dickey also served on the school board, labored to incorporate Mentor village, and spent several terms as a justice of the peace in Mentor Township.⁹ Their children were

8. History of Geauga and Lake Counties, pp. 252-253. For additional data regarding Elizabeth Corning, see Gertrude Van Rensselaer Wickham, ed., Memorial to the Pioneer Women of the Western Reserve I (July, 1896), p. 104. Also see Biographical History of Northeastern Ohio (Chicago, 1893), p. 369.

9. Wickham, Pioneer Women, I, p. 104; II, p. 977. "Corning & Dickey Questionnaire," Files, Lake County Historical Society. There is some confusion as to the wedding year: Wickham places it in 1833, while the "Questionnaire" states it occurred in 1835. Dickey still resided in Sullivan County, New Hampshire in 1830. Fifth Census of the United States, 1830, p. 231. Sullivan County, New Hampshire.

born on the farm: Helen S. on November 14, 1836; Wallace C. on October 3, 1841; and Edward J. on November 14, 1850.¹⁰

Dickey died unexpectedly at Walpole, New Hampshire, of a "bilious colic" on September 19, 1855, at age 47, leaving his widow Harriet to run the farm acquired in the 1840s. Her brother, Nathan Corning, was appointed administrator. The widow managed the farm, aided by her son Edward J., until she sold the property to Garfield in 1876. The legal affairs concerning Dickey's estate were not concluded until January, 1877.¹¹

The Dickey Farm

According to a ca. 1846-1848 Mentor Township plat map, James Dickey owned two parcels of land. A 40.5-acre lot was located in the old Bacon property, bisected by the Mentor Highway that ran on a southwesterly/northeasterly axis through the tract.¹² The deed contained the following description:

10. Edward received a common school education and attended Humiston's Collegiate Institute in Cleveland. Later he made a successful business career. See Harriet Taylor Upton, History of the Western Reserve, III (Chicago, 1910), pp. 1442-1443, 1714 for detailed biographical data on the Dickey children. They were successful, not the needy family that some observers in the 1970s and 1980s believe to have been the case.

11. Painesville Telegraph, October 10, 1855. James Dickey, Deceased, Estate. Administration Docket, v.A. p. 186. Also see original docket, v.C., Case No. 74. Lake County Records, Courthouse, Painesville, Ohio. The Painesville Telegraph reported that he was a resident of Mentor for 22 years, and boasted "He was known as a useful man. In matters of education, points of justice and public interests generally, his judgement was clear and unbiased, and his opinion eagerly sought by his townsmen."

12. The road that traversed the Dickey and later the Garfield property actually linked Cleveland with Buffalo, New York. As early as 1811, mail service had commenced between the two communities, generally along the path of what is now U.S. 20. In 1818, the horseback service was replaced by the stage coach transport. According to the Cleveland Gazette: "A mail stage has been established between this village and Painesville. It leaves Painesville at every Thursday at 4 o'clock p.m. and arrives at this place every Friday at 10:00 o'clock a.m. It leaves this

the following lands and tenements, in said petition mentioned and described and which said lands are bounded, described and known as follows to wit; a certain piece or parcel of land situate in Township Number Ten, in the Ninth Range of Townships [Mentor] Township . . . and is known as being part of the Bacon Lot in said Township number Ten and is bounded as follows to wit; Beginning at a stake at the North west corner of said lot, thence South 38 chains 23 links to a stake and stones in the centre of the road leading from Mentor to Kirtland, thence East along the South line of the Bacon Lot 12 chains and ten links to a stake, thence North 1° W. 14 chains 95 links the centre of the road leading from Painesville to Willoughby, thence South 170½° W. along the centre of said road two chains 17 links, thence N. 3½° W. 10 chains and 80 links to a stake, thence North 70½° E. two chains 67 links to a white ash tree, thence N. 1° W. 12 chains 85 links to a stake in the South West corner of the Simons lot (so called) thence S. 37¼° W. 11 chains and 16 links to the place of beginning, excepting and reserving therefrom one acre heretofore deeded to Warren Corning (and for a description of said one acre see Warren Cornings deed therefore) but containing exclusive of said reservation forty acres and 75/100 of an acre be the same more or less. . . . also fourteen acres of land lying North and adjoining the said piece of land above herein described. . . . 13

12. (Cont.) village the same day at 2 o'clock p.m. and arrives in Painesville every Saturday at 8 o'clock a.m. Persons traveling to Painesville will find it to their interest to go in the stage as traveling can be done with greater facility than by riding a single horse and the expense is not so great." Cleveland Gazette, August 11, 1818.

The son of an early settler later recalled: "Through Painesville ran the best highway leading west, and most of the land traffic came over this road The Mentor road--as said before--was a much traveled highway." Reuban H. Morely, "Recollections of My Father, George W. Morely," Painesville File, Lake County Historical Society. Hereafter cited as LCHS. The road was known as "Mentor Avenue" in the Atlas of Lake and Geauga Counties, Ohio (Philadelphia, 1874) and was known as the "Mentor Road" in the Map of Geauga and Lake Counties Ohio (Philadelphia, 1857).

Thus the Dickey farm was served by excellent lines of transportation and communication to the east and west very early in the history of the development of the Western Reserve.

13. Deed, Nathan Corning and Benjamin Blish administrators of the estate of Warren Corning Jun. deceased to James Dickey, Lake County deeds, v. B, p. 250. No price was mentioned in the deed. It may be noted that Dickey had entered into a contract (details unknown) with Warren Corning, Jr., who died prior to the completion of this transaction.

This acreage had been in the Corning family since 1811 but it was not until 1842 that Dickey became the owner of record. This is not to say that he did not have an interest in this property prior to the actual 1842 transfer. (See Fig. 2 for a survey of Corning acreage in Tract 5). It is highly likely that since his marriage to Warren Corning's youngest daughter in 1835, the Dickeys lived on the property. Apparently the property was given to Harriet and James when they married. The tax records indicate that the property contained one frame dwelling and that Dickey began paying the property taxes as early as 1839.¹⁴

Dickey also owned another parcel containing 53.6 acres directly north of the 40.5-acre tract. This piece of land consisted of three smaller lots that Dickey had purchased in 1846. These parcels located in the Harmon Lot running from west to east included: 15.13 acres from Orrin Harmon; 15.13 acres from Julius C. Sheldon (Sheldon Lot); and 23.35 acres from Orrin Harmon (known as the W. King lot). (See Figs. 3-4 for the actual locations of the four lots). Next Dickey bought an additional 23.35 acres from Orrin Harmon (A. King lot) on December 16, 1848. Thus he owned a total of 117.46 acres at the end of 1848. Three deeds describe the four parcels which Dickey bought in 1846 and 1848 for \$639:

14. Ibid. Geauga County Tax Records, 1835-1840. Land ownership, as well as marital bonds, linked the Cornings and the Dickeys in the 1830s and 1840s. Apparently Dickey had entered into a contract with the Cornings at some point in the 1830s for the 40.75 acre farm. The deed referred to "said lands and tenements," and excepted a one acre parcel which later became known as the Botten lot. The deed also mentioned another 14 acre tract "lying North and adjoining the said piece of land above herein described, and being a part of the South East division of Tract No. five in said Township Number Ten. . . ." Since Dickey received legal title to the property in 1842 (no monetary figure mentioned), he had obviously and successfully complied with whatever provisions were included in the unrecorded land contract.

It may also be recalled that Warren Corning had distributed his lands to the children in the 1830s. Perhaps Harriet had received the Bacon lot farm. Although many years later a Dickey son, W.C. Dickey asserted that James had purchased the property from Warren Corning, a fact which would substantiate the 1842 deed cited above. See The Willoughby Republican, June 29, 1921. Florence D. Rucker to A. O. Beamer, February 23, 1942, Lawnfield Files, LCHS.

in the Township of Mentor. . . being a part of Tract No five (5) and is bounded as follows to wit. North by the North line of said tract, south by the south line of said Tract, West by land apated & set off to Erastus Huntington, East by land apated & set off to Ashbel Kings heirs containing 38 48/100 acres of land besides 15 13/100 acres within these bounds now belonging to Julius C. Sheldon but which formerly belonged to Martin Sheldon in right of his wife which 15 13/100 acres is not intended to be herein & hereby sold & conveyed. . . .

in said Township of Mentor. . . being a part of tract No. five (5) and is bounded as follows to wit: North by the north line of said tract, West by land apated & set off to Orrin Harmon, and East by land apated & set off to Walter King containing 15 13/100 acres of land and for a more particular description of said land reference may be had to the record of the partition made of lands in said tract on petition of Martin Sheldon & others, this being land then apated & set off to said Martin Sheldon in right of his wife Loraine. . . .

in the Township of Mentor. . . and is known by being the East side of the Dickey lot in Tract No five & is bounded as follows to wit, south by the south line of said tract, North by the north line of said tract, west by land apated & set off to Walter King, and East by a tract on the East end of said tract No. 5 containing as per the partition survey thereof 117 84/100 acres and is also known by being the parcel of land apated & set off to Ashbel King juniors heirs containing by the partition survey 23 35/100 acres excepting & reserving out of & from said 23 35/100 acres one sixth part thereof in common & undivided it being the share & interest of, Wm. W. King one of the heirs of said Ashbel King junior. . . .¹⁵

Apparently the house and adjacent outbuildings were situated on the 40.75-acre Bacon lot. The earliest mention of a "dwelling house" on this land appeared in the 1835 Geauga County records bearing an assessed

15. Deed, Orrin Harmon to James Dickey, Lake County Deeds, v. E., p. 271. Deed, Julius Sheldon to James Dickey, Lake County Deeds, v. E., p. 272. Deed, Orrin Harmon to James Dickey, Lake County Deeds, v. F., p. 590. These various parcels can all be traced to December 28, 1802 Connecticut Land Company drafts which transferred 1757 acres to Ashbel King and others for \$13,333.33. Dickey paid \$639 for the various parcels, a figure indicating that there were no structures on the land. Also see ca. 1846-1848 Plat Map, in Plat Book A Portfolio, p. 8, Lake County Recorder's Office.

value of \$412, but these same records indicate that the value of the house was included in the total assessment for the property since at least 1832. Prior to 1832 the value of the 44-acre tract amounted to \$332. It jumped to \$1,032 in 1832 (the 1831 records are missing) remaining at that level until 1835 when the value of the "dwelling house" was separated from the overall value of the property--\$412 and \$791 which totaled \$1,203, a slightly higher assessment as compared to the early 1830s.¹⁶ Thus it is highly likely that the Cornings constructed the house ca. 1831-1832. It may be recalled that Harriet Corning had married James Dickey in 1835--a propitious occasion for the newlyweds to move to a farm of their own. Then too, the 1842 deed to Dickey referenced "said lands and tenements," a direct mention of living quarters on the property, but there was no reference to existing outbuildings.

The tax rates on the Dickey property changed during the 1840s. When first listed as one "dwelling house" in 1835, the assessed value totaled \$412, which it remained at until 1840 at \$350, then dropped to \$85 in 1841. It remained at \$85 until 1846, then jumped to \$1,166 in 1847, and by 1860 it had risen to \$1,740 with the notation, "board added \$20" which totaled \$1,760. (Fig. 5 shows the location of the Dickey farm). Finally in 1876 the local assessor valued the farmland at \$2,710, and the house at \$2,710.¹⁷

Although left a widow in 1855, Harriet Dickey continued to operate the farm. According to an 1874 Atlas of Lake and Geauga Counties, Ohio,

16. Geauga County Tax Records, 1830-1840. Unfortunately the 1831 tax records are missing. Once the new Lake County government assumed operations, the tax assessments changed dramatically. Harmon worked on the early survey crews in Mentor Township, and conducted survey work in what is now Lake County. Apparently those who surveyed this area also became property owners, probably acquiring the more productive lands. See "Map of Tract No. 5 in Town No. 10-Range No. 9 (Mentor)," in *Western Reserve Surveys--Mentor*, Orrin Harmon's Book of Maps or Plates, undated MSS Map 311, Western Reserve Historical Society.

17. Geauga/Lake County Tax Records, 1835-1876.

she owned 115.42 acres in two parcels.¹⁸ (Fig. 6 depicts the Dickey farm). The southern portion of 40.75 acres had appeared on the 1846 tax map and the northern one of 74.67 acres had been combined from four smaller parcels in the late 1840s. This map also depicted Lake Shore & Michigan Southern railroad right-of-way traversing the northern portion of the farm along a northeasterly/southwesterly axis roughly paralleling the road to the south.¹⁹

Harriet Dickey managed her Mentor farm until 1876. That year the 59-year-old widow sold the property to Congressman James A. Garfield, who for various reasons, desired a residence in northern Ohio. The record is extremely mute regarding the widow's management of the property in the 1860s and 1870s. And it is only by inference of subsequent observations in the local press and Garfield's own papers revealing that the farm appeared somewhat neglected and had deteriorated by the mid-1870s. Harriet M. Dickey continued to reside in the Mentor area until her death in 1889.²⁰

18. Atlas of Lake and Geauga Counties, Ohio, (Philadelphia, 1874), pp. 30-31. This map denotes a structure at the approximate location of the present Lawnfield property, but no ancillary buildings appear on the document. Exact acreage figures vary throughout the years. Road and railway rights of way and minor recording errors may account for these discrepancies, however, Mrs. Dickey owned about 117 acres.

19. The Cleveland, Painesville and Ashtabula line had been constructed in 1850-1851. The section from Cleveland to Painesville running through Mentor was completed and officially opened in late 1851. The Painesville Telegraph, November 19, 1851 contains an account of the dedication ceremonies. This line was popularly known as the "Lake Shore Road." The name probably applied to all the competing lines in this area, even before amalgamation into one railway in 1869. By the time of Garfield's candidacy for president in 1880, the local railroad was part of the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern system. Around the turn of the century, it became part of the New York Central railroad. See Alvin F. Harlow, The Road of the Century: The Story of the New York Central (New York, 1947), pp. 263-267, 279.

20. The Painesville Telegraph, March 28, 1889. When she sold the farm to Garfield she wanted all the proceeds instead of the traditional "widow's third" because she had apparently received a lesser share of her father's estate in the 1830s. Her grown children agreed to this condition. Wallace C. Dickey told his granddaughter, Mrs. Florence D. Rucker that Harriet M. would "never turn a beggar from the door and was always ready to help her neighbors and friends." Florence D. Rucker to A. O. Beamer, February 23, 1942, Lawnfield File, LCHS.

In conclusion, James Dickey, a newcomer to the Western Reserve, must be credited for assembling various parcels of land into one cohesive unit in the 1840s. As an entity the farm dates to that period, thus reflecting pioneer agrarian development in the Western Reserve.



CHAPTER THREE:

GENERAL GARFIELD BUYS THE FARM, 1876



Up to the year 1876 when northern Ohio Congressman James A. Garfield purchased a farm in the Western Reserve, he had led a successful life based on hard toil, frontier educational opportunities, rapid military promotion during the Civil War, and diligence in the political arena. This chapter leads off with a brief biographical sketch of this last of the log cabin presidents.

Garfield's Career to 1876

The 44-year-old James A. Garfield, who bought the Dickey farm in Mentor in 1876, could trace his ancestry to the English colonists who settled Massachusetts Bay in the 1630s. James' father Abram had married Eliza Ballou, a member of a Rhode Island family, in 1820, in Muskingum County, Ohio. Garfield moved his wife and two children to the Western Reserve in 1827, and later worked as a contractor on the Ohio & Erie Canal construction project. Shortly after his last child James was born on November 19, 1831, in a rude cabin in Orange Township (now Moreland Hills, a Cleveland suburb), Cuyahoga County, Abram Garfield died of a sudden "ague" in 1833. His proud widow Eliza raised three children in subsistence level circumstances in an era without benefit of life insurance or social security payments.¹

Despite this lowly economic station, young Garfield epitomized the American dream of advancement. To support himself as a young man Garfield worked as a farm laborer, carpenter, and tow boy on a canal. He later attended the Western Reserve Eclectic Institute (now Hiram

1. Recent Garfield biographies include: Allan Peskin, Garfield, (Kent, Ohio, 1978), and Margaret Leech and Harry J. Brown, The Garfield Orbit: The Life of President James A. Garfield (New York, 1978). Also see Eric J. Cardinal, "Garfield in the Eyes of His Biographers: Garfield by Allan Peskin, The Garfield Orbit, by Margaret Leech and Harry J. Brown," The Lake County Historical Quarterly, 20 (September, 1978), 1-4. The early years of Garfield's life and career are analyzed in Robert I. Cottom, Jr., "To Be Among the First: The Early Career of James A. Garfield, 1831-1866." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 1975).

College in Hiram, Ohio) founded by the Disciples of Christ, and worked his way through Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts, graduating with the class of 1856.² Following his college experiences, he returned to the Western Reserve Eclectic Institute as a lecturer, and at age 27 the institution named him its president. On November 11, 1858, he married Lucretia (Crete) Rudolph, daughter of one of the school's founders, a fellow student and at one time his pupil at the institute. In 1859 the ambitious Garfield, not yet 30 years old, was elected to the Ohio state senate as a Republican.

When the Civil War started in 1861, Garfield volunteered for the military by helping to raise troops. Garfield then assumed leadership of the 42nd Ohio Volunteer Infantry comprised of many former Western Reserve Eclectic Institute students. This civilian turned volunteer soldier became an avid student of warfare, often reading the standard military textbooks the evening before the ensuing day's training exercises. Garfield first saw field action with General Don Carlos Buell in Kentucky, commanding a brigade during the Big Sandy Valley campaign, confronting and besting Confederate General Humphrey Marshall, a West Point alumnus. Following this victory in a period when Union successes were sparse, the 31-year-old Garfield earned the rank of brigadier general of volunteers. Next he fought at Shiloh in April, 1862, and following a desk assignment in Washington, D.C., he joined General William S. Rosecrans' Army of the Cumberland in central Tennessee in early 1863. During the bloody Chickamauga campaign in September, 1863, Garfield won high praise for his role as Rosecrans' chief of staff attaining the rank of major general of volunteers.

President Abraham Lincoln had persuaded Garfield to run for Congress in 1862, viewing the young Ohio military chief as a potential asset in the wartime civilian government. Garfield waged a successful campaign

2. An early masters thesis contains an analysis of Garfield's thirst for education. See Martha M. Harper, "James Abram Garfield, Educator," (Unpublished masters thesis, Hiram College, 1927).

(rather his supporters in Ohio did in his behalf), and he assumed a seat in the House of Representatives in December, 1863. He had resigned from the army earlier that month.

Throughout his congressional career spanning nine terms, Garfield labored diligently to master whatever assignment he assumed at a particular time. His committee work ranged from military affairs to appropriations and ways and means as he mastered the complex subject of public finance. Then too, Garfield won reelection each time he entered a race despite periodic gerrymanders and the taint of several major political scandals in the mid-1870s, including the infamous *Crédit Mobilier* and De Golyer paving contract cases.

For most of his legislative career, Garfield enjoyed the prerogatives of membership in the majority party but as the 1870s passed the opposition Democrats made great strides in the House. The GOP assumed minority status following the 1870 and 1874 elections. During the 1870s Garfield and James G. Blaine of Maine became the two bright lights in the House, and when the New Englander was elected to the Senate in 1876, Garfield became the GOP candidate for Speaker and de facto leader of the minority party for the rest of his career.³

The Garfield who bought the Dickey farm in 1876 seemed multi-faceted and complex. Recent biographies by Margaret Leech and Harry Brown, and Allan Peskin interpret him as a complex, contradictory individual---an academic, a college instructor and administrator, who became an active politician. He was an erstwhile pacifist who became a Civil War general. By turns, Garfield served as a preacher, a teacher, a soldier, a legislator and politician, a lawyer, an economist, a gentleman farmer, and a U.S. president. When he bought the Mentor farm, he studied animal husbandry and literally became an "expert" in architectural drawing,

3. See Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, eds., Dictionary of American Biography IV (New York 1960), pp. 145-150, for a brief, useable overview of the Garfield story.

horticulture, and other pursuits. On the other hand, a recent biographer perceived Garfield as a lonely, insecure striver scarred by the loss of his father and embarrassed by an improvised childhood.⁴

Why Did Garfield Move to Mentor?

Seven-term congressman James A. Garfield had lived in a number of rented and purchased residences in Washington, D.C., and northern Ohio since his marriage in November, 1858. While commuting between Washington and the Western Reserve in the early 1870s, he thought more and more of having a summer residence to keep his family occupied productively and happily. Although the family generally spent the summer in Ohio, they seldom went there together because Garfield's business and political duties often took him to distant points. The family retained a house in Hiram until 1872, when it was sold to Burke Hinsdale, an old friend and president of the Western Reserve Eclectic Institute. For a few years Lucretia's family home in Hiram served as the Garfields' summer base, but they also spent time at Little Mountain, a summer recreational colony and private club established by affluent Cleveland businessmen near Painesville, astride the Geauga-Lake County line. In 1874 Garfield constructed a small cabin at the resort but for various undocumented personal reasons that approach proved unsatisfactory. The next summer, after having been forced to evacuate by an early closing at the resort, Garfield complained, "I hope never again to have my family dragged around as they have been this season."⁵

Finally in the fall of 1876 in the midst of another bid for reelection to the House of Representatives (which he won handily 20,012 to 11,349), Garfield actively searched for property in northern Ohio. He probably

4. Cottom, "To Be Among the First," pp. 369-384.

5. Harry J. Brown & Frederick D. Williams, eds., The Diary of James A. Garfield, III (August 27, 1875), (East Lansing, Michigan, 1973), p. 136. Hereafter cited as JAG Diary.

received assistance from a longtime friend, Dr. John Peter Robison, a 65-year-old Cleveland businessman with a medical background who owned a farm in Mentor Township. (See Fig. 7 for a portrait of Robison). More than likely Robison directed his fellow Disciples of Christ church member to the Dickey homestead in Mentor.⁶ Garfield negotiated with the Dickey family for several weeks in the autumn of 1876. Garfield wrote to Lucretia, "saw Wallace Dickey at Niles yesterday--and he told me that the family had concluded to accept my offer." He related that "Uncle Tom thinks a farm in Mentor would be cheap at \$120 an acre." Later in October Garfield reported that "Young Dickey came ready to close up the business in relation to the farm," and finally on November 1, 1876, "I made the payment and took the deed of our farm yesterday."⁷ (See Base Map 1).

Thus a variety of motives may have prompted Garfield to buy the Dickey farm in the centennial year of 1876. Obviously financial cost assumed significant proportions in this transaction. As he related in his diary in late September, "Spent most of the day in examining some farms which are for sale. Made the Widow Dickey an offer of \$115 per acre for her farm of 116 acres, and think it will result in a purchase. I must get a place where I can put my boys at work, and teach them farming. I think this farm will always be worth the price I offer, and probably more

6. "Sesquicentennial 1828-1978," The Mentor Christian Church Scrapbook (Mentor, Ohio, 1978), p. 32. Also see Dr. John Peter Robison papers in Garfield File B, Lake County Historical Society. Robison owned a meat packing business in Cleveland. He served on numerous boards of trustees, including Bethany and Hiram Colleges, and acted as layman pastor at the Mentor Disciples church for 16 years. He built the Bedford, Ohio congregation to over 500 members. He was one of the founders of the Ohio Christian Missionary Society, served as its president, and used his home as its headquarters for over 20 years. He was a founder and director at Lakeview Cemetery. Robison was born in 1811 and died in 1889.

7. James A. Garfield to Lucretia R. Garfield, October 5, 1876; October 6, 1876; October 30, 1876; November 1, 1876, in James A. Garfield papers, (microfilm), Series 3, reel 7.

by-and-by."⁸ He purchased the 117.74 acres for \$13,540. The legal description contained a great deal of information about the Dickey farm. The deed stated:

in the Town of Mentor. . . and known as the west part of the Bacon lot, and the west part of the Simmons or Corodell lot and bounded as follows: Beginning at a stone at the south west corner of the Bacon lot thence with the south line of said lot S $88\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ E 12 chains 18 links to a stake, thence N $1\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ E 14 chains 95 links to the center of Mentor Avenue, thence with said avenue S $72\frac{3}{4}^{\circ}$ W 2 chains 25 links to south west corner of the Aldrich farm, thence with the west line of said farm N 1° W 11 chains 3 links to a stake, thence N 80° E 2 chains $62\frac{1}{2}$ links to a stake, thence N $1\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ E 13 chains 26 links to the N line of the Bacon lot, thence N $\frac{3}{8}^{\circ}$ E 67 chains to the center of the ditch in the north line of the Simmons or Corodell lot, thence south the north line of said lot, and along the ditch N $86\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ W 11 chains 91 links to the west line of said lot and the east line of George Dickey's land, thence S $\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$ E 68 chains 28 links to a stake at the north west corner of the Bacon lot, thence with said line S 3° W 38 chains 23 links to the place of beginning containing One hundred and twenty acres and forty four hundredths ($120\frac{44}{100}$) acres of land be the same more or less but subject to all legal highways. Always excepting and reserving therefrom One $\frac{70}{100}$ acres of land conveyed to the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad for a right of way across the Simmons or Corodell lot. Also reserving one acre of land in the Bacon lot known as the Botten lot, which is bounded on the north by the center of Mentor Avenue, on the west by west line of the Bacon lot, on the east by a line parallel with the west line and on the south by a line far enough from the north line that it shall contain one acre, there being One hundred and seventeen $\frac{74}{100}$ acres of land conveyed by this deed, by the same more or less but subject to all legal highways. . . .

8. JAG Diary, III, (September 26, 1876), p. 357.

9. Deed, Harriet M. Dickey, Helen S. Pardee and Edward J. Dickey and Wallace C. Dickey and Florence B. Dickey to James A. Garfield, Lake County Deeds, v. 7, p. 176. Garfield paid \$115 an acre for a total of 117.74 acres. The farm actually contained 120.44 acres less 1.7 acres owned by the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad for a right-of-way plus one other acre still owned by Harriet Dickey almost directly across Mentor Road from the farmhouse, a parcel called the "Botten lot."

Garfield planned to move the family to Mentor, Ohio, in the spring of 1877. The family consisted of James., Lucretia., Harry A. (age 14); James R. (age 12), Mary nicknamed Mollie (age 10), Irvin McDowell (age 7), and Abram (age 5). Two other children had died earlier. The five surviving offspring would live well into the middle years of the 20th century. Garfield's 76 year old widowed mother Eliza also resided with the family in Mentor until her death in 1888.

In addition to the Dickey farm, Garfield bought a one-acre tract which Mrs. Dickey had acquired that autumn across the road from the farmhouse. Garfield paid \$115 in addition to assuming two notes of \$178 each for a total of \$471. Not much documentation is available to illuminate the history of this small parcel that the Corning estate had reserved in 1842. Apparently there was a small house on this property that may have been built in the mid-1840s according to the tax records. Then too, an 1858 deed referred to land and "appurtenances." Harriet M. Dickey had bought the one-acre at public auction for \$533, a price slightly higher than that received from Garfield a month later. The Dickey/Garfield deed described the property as follows:

in the Township of Mentor. . . and known as part of the Bacon lot (so called) and is bounded as follows: Beginning at a stake in the center of the road leading from Painesville to Cleveland in the west line of the Bacon lot aforesaid, thence south with the said line four chains and fifty links to a stake, thence north $69\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$ east two chains and forty four links to a stake, thence north four chains and fifty seven links to a stake in the center of the road, thence along the center of said road south $69\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$ west two chains and forty links to the place of beginning containing one acre of land, being the same land conveyed by C.D. Clark as administrator for the estate of Margaret Botten to said Harriet M. Dickey September 15, 1876. The same lot above described and hereby conveyed as above is included in the sale of the farm known as the James Dickey (decd.) farm to the said James A. Garfield and as a further consideration of the sale of and transfer of above described lot, the said James A. Garfield assumes the payment of two promisory notes given by the said Harriet M. Dickey to C.D. Clark administrator for the estate of Margaret Botten deceased, said notes being date September fifteenth A.D. 1876 for the amount of One hundred seventy seven $\frac{78}{100}$ dollars each, and payable in one year and two years from date respectively with interest payable annually said notes being secured by mortgage upon said premises. The

said Grantee agreeing to pay said notes and interest at maturity and deliver the same to said Grantor. . . .¹⁰

As Garfield biographers point out repeatedly, the politician was a cautious individual who valued economical business transactions. Despite the sanguine domestic thoughts he had transmitted to his wife in early October, "So, darling, you shall have a home and a cow," Garfield also told Lucretia that the family should stay in Washington until early April, 1877, thus to "delay the date when interest shall begin to run."¹¹ He also entertained private doubts about the purchase but concluded that the farm would have a positive effect on the family, "So, at last, I am to be a farmer again. As a financial investment, I do not think it very wise; but a means of securing a summer home, and teaching my boys to do farm work, I feel well about it."¹²

Of course, other less publicized and less lofty politically inspired reasons may have prompted the move to Mentor. The Democratic controlled state legislature had reapportioned Ohio's congressional districts and in so doing had rearranged Garfield's safe 19th district. Garfield, who at the time still listed his residence at Hiram, saw his home county of Portage separated from the staunchly GOP counties of Ashtabula, Geauga, Lake, and Trumbull and merged with Ashland, Star, and Wayne, all of which were strongly Democratic. Thus to avoid the opposition's gerrymander before the next election, Garfield sought refuge in Lake County still in

10. Deed, Harriet M. Dickey to James A. Garfield, Lake County Deeds, v. 7, p. 178. The origins of the one acre parcel extend back to the Connecticut Land Company transactions in the early 1800s. It may be recalled that the company sold a 183 acre parcel to Ralph Bacon, who in turn transferred it to Warren Corning in late 1811. Then in 1823 Corning sold $\frac{1}{2}$ acre to Lemon Brunson for \$100, which seemingly point to the fact the small parcel may have contained a structure to make the sale that valuable. The \$100 figure was a far higher amount than the average selling price for a parcel of land that size in the 1820s.

11. JAG to LRG, October 5, 1876, in JAG papers, (microfilm), Series 3, reel 7.

12. JAG Diary, III, (October 31, 1876), p. 373.

the safe GOP 19th district.¹³ Then too, situated on a main road easily accessible from Cleveland, the farm's location in Mentor was much easier to reach than the Hiram residence.

The Mentor Farm

Although the family did not go out to Ohio until spring 1877, Garfield took an active part in setting his imprint on the farm. His good friend Dr. Robison acted as a de facto overseer or steward that first winter. One of Garfield's correspondents recommended that Robison be given the task of managing the Mentor farm in the owner's absence. According to the writer:

The Doctor is fitted for that business. His special mission on earth is to see that his fellow man earns his bread by the sweat of his brow. His greatest delight would be to place himself once a month on some hillock of your farm and give the awful nod that will put dollars in your pocket and potatoes in your cellar. He is a first class bulldozer of laziness. If he says one spoonful milk in tea, there will not be two, unless he gets further off than Cleveland. By betting the Doctor to look after things, you would run but little risk of embarrassment or anxiety.¹⁴

Robison also acted as Garfield's personal representative in one additional land transaction in the early spring of 1877. Garfield purchased a 40-acre tract from George W. Dickey, Harriet's brother-in-law for \$3,895. During late March, Robison had negotiated with Dickey for the 40 acres offering \$85 an acre "hoping to do better than to pay \$100 an acre."¹⁵ The deed recorded the following data.

13. Peskin, Garfield, pp. 430-431. The farmhouse was less than a mile west of the Mentor railroad depot.

14. C.E. Henry to JAG, December 20, 1876 in James D. Norris and Arthur H. Shaffer, Politics and Patronage in the Gilded Age: The Correspondence of James A. Garfield and Charles E. Henry (Madison, 1970), p. 176.

15. John P. Robison to JAG, March 29, 1877, in JAG papers, (microfilm), Series 4, reel 37.

in the Township of Mentor. . . and known as being part of tract No. 5 in said Township & also as being in the Huntington lot (so called) and is bounded as follows: Beginning at a stake at the north east corner of land owned by Julia Alvord, thence N 1° E 3 chains, thence N 2° W. 71 chains and 35 links to a stake in the north line of said tract No. five being twenty nine chains and ninety three links from the north east corner of said tract, thence S 88° W 5 chains and forty and one half links to a stake, thence S 2° E 74 chains and 6 links to a stake in the center of a ditch in the north line of the old Corning farm, thence along said ditch N 62½° E 75 links, thence S 84° E 4 chains and 75 links to the place of beginning, containing forty acres of land. Excepting and reserving from the above described premises one & 5/100 acres sold by the said George M. Dickey to Judge Paige for the Cleveland, Painesville & Ashtabula R.R. Co., above described premises, being the same tract that was deeded by Samuel Hodges to Warren Corning Oct. 13th 1835, be the same more or less but subject to all legal highways. . . .¹⁶

Robison actually closed the deal with Dickey at \$100 an acre, viewing it as the "best I could do after exhausting my eloquence. . . ." ¹⁷ Reportedly the general bought the 40-acre Dickey lot because the "owner had a right of way, that was an annoyance." ¹⁸

Consequently Garfield owned a farm that contained 157.69 acres for which he paid almost \$18,000, a sizeable sum in 1876-1877. Acreage figures vary slightly due to easements, rights-of-way such as highways and railroad tracks, and reservations contained in the deeds. It was a long,

16. Deed, George M. Dickey & Syrena Dickey to James A. Garfield, Lake County Deeds, v. 7, p. 473.

17. Robison to JAG, April 9, 1877 in JAG papers, (microfilm) Series 4, reel 37. George M. Dickey died at his home in Mentor on June 18, 1880 at the age of 75 years. His house on the corner of Garfield Road and Ridge Road remains extant. The Painesville Telegraph, June 24, 1880 said that Dickey "held a prominent position in connection with the growth and improvement of the town. . . ."

18. Edmund Kirke, "My Personal Finances," The North American Review, CXLV (1887), 43. This important article is based on autobiographical notes furnished by Garfield to Kirke as source data for a biographical treatment.

narrow (north/south axis) farm that began south of Mentor Avenue crossed the railroad tracks and extended to the north on swampy, level, former lake bottom land.

Later a professional forester described the geographic characteristics of the farm. He related that:

The topography of the country around the Garfield farm is extremely simple, its most prominent feature being long, low, and broad sandy ridges paralleling the Lake Shore at a distance of 2 to 3 miles inland. Sometimes there are several of these ridges, one behind the other. Between them and the lake occurs level land composed of clay or sand, with occasional poorly-drained areas approaching the condition of swamps. There are not rock outcrops in the immediate neighborhood of the farm. Sometimes the soil of the ridges is quite stoney. Occasionally glacial boulders of granitic rock are found.

Like other farms in the neighborhood, the Garfield property was long and narrow (50 rods wide, a mile long), its greatest length extending in a north and south direction. The southern third, which is utilized for residences, farm buildings, grounds, gardens and orchards, lies upon the northern border of a low sandy ridge or table running parallel to Lake Erie. From the edge of this table, which may be 40 to 50 feet higher than the neighboring lowlands, the ground descends at first rapidly, then gradually, toward the north. At the railroad tracks it becomes practically level.

The ridge crossing the southern division of the farm is of sandy soil, occasional stony. Water lies from 12 to 15 feet below the top of the ground, save on the gentle northern slope, where it comes very near the surface in a gravelly soil underlying a deep, mucky accumulation. In fact, the land which slopes from the top of the ridge to the level fields is wetter than the lower areas, and possesses a much deeper surface layer of vegetable soil. Just north of the railroad tracks is a ditch which drains the ridge. This ditch keeps up a very even flow throughout the year indicating the extent in which the sandy ridges acts as a storage reservoir.

19. Wesley J. Gardner; "Recommendations For Forest Planting Upon the Garfield Farm ('Lawnfield') At Mentor, Lake County, Ohio, September 15, 16, 1904," in Lawnfield Folder, Lake County Historical Society. This low ground was to provide Garfield with a formidable problem to resolve.

The Washington politician had to spend a great deal of money for the farm in 1876. The deeds shed some light on the finances indicating a combination of cash and notes to be paid within a few years. Later Garfield himself explained to a potential biographer how he had financed the land purchases:

For both these places I gave my notes, secured by mortgage, paying five thousand dollars down on one, and one thousand on the other. In my first insurance case, where I was associated with Curtis, I was paid fifteen hundred dollars, and in the second case I got thirty-five hundred, just before I made the purchase on this larger tract--those two amounts made the five thousand payment. I have been paying for the place along in installments, according to the contract, which was that it should be paid for from time to time during five years. The mortgage still stands against it uncanceled, but as I have paid I have taken up the notes.²⁰

A recent Garfield biographer, Allan Peskin, notes that a "timely legal fee of \$5,000 helped somewhat, but for the rest Garfield was obliged to take on a heavy mortgage."²¹

The Garfield family spent the winter of 1876-1877 in Washington where the eight-term congressman took care of his legislative affairs. He and Lucretia journeyed out to Ohio for the first time since the purchase in late March, 1877. Since the general was such a nationally known politician, the local press took an avid interest in the old Dickey place. The Painesville Telegraph reported in March, 1877 that:

General Garfield's New Home--Lake County is hereafter to be the home of our honored representative Ge. Garfield. He has recently purchased a farm of 118 acres a little west of Mentor adjoining the residence of E.T.C. Aldrich. The farm is a good one and the situation very pleasant, but the buildings and grounds need renovation. A new dwelling house would be desirable if it could be had; but unfortunately the savings of our Congressman have not been as great as some persons have

20. Kirke, "My Personal Finances," 43.

21. Peskin, Garfield, p. 431. Peskin's interpretation of the \$5,000 seemingly stems from a settlement of that amount that Garfield received from a legal case that had lingered before being settled.

surmised; and hence the old house has to be fitted up and made to do service for the General's family residence, at least for a few years.²²

Another contemporary newspaper article painted a bleaker picture of the Garfield farm in Mentor. The Geneva Times reported:

The general found the premises, when he took possession some five weeks ago, sadly in need of a regular spring cleaning. Everything in rural language, was "run down." The buildings, aside from a sad state of dilapidation, were "fearfully and wonderfully" arranged. The shaky old barn stood amid heaps of rubbish close to the street, and in disagreeable proximity to the dwelling. The pig sty wafted its sweetness on the morning and evening air close to the windows of the parlor in the old family mansion-so close that the pranks of the playful pigs could be observed therefrom. Other buildings, venerable with age, stood around the domicile, the whole making a characteristic pioneer group.²³

Since the main farm house underwent two major renovations in the time the Garfield family owned it, not much that is readily apparent remains from the Dickey period. (A forthcoming Historic Structure Report undoubtedly will contain much architectural detail describing construction techniques as well as the evolution of the main house.) Standard sources indicate that the house was built in the early 1830s, as do the tax records, but no definite documentary evidence substantiates this purported construction period nor gives any of the construction history. That, of course, is not unusual. Few people kept records of so common an activity as house construction on the Western Reserve frontier in the 1830s. Then too, there would have been little reason for the Cornings and Dickeys to maintain such detailed information. A later, undated photograph gives some data concerning the farmhouse's external appearance. The nine-room, story-and-a-half structure, of post and beam construction, showed evidence of the Greek Revival style which

22. Painesville Telegraph, March 8, 1877.

23. The Geneva Times, May 24, 1877.

prevailed at the presumed time of construction. (See Fig. 8 for the only extant photograph of the Dickey/Garfield farm--no date but perhaps taken prior to Garfield's remodeling in the spring of 1877). The house had wide verge and frieze boards and cornice returns at the eaves, all characteristic of the Greek Revival. In essence, it was a modest farmhouse to which the Dickeys themselves had added a wing, perhaps as late as the 1850s. The half story upstairs had three rooms; an attic and two bedrooms which, with their sloping rooflines provided cramped quarters once the Garfield boys moved there in the spring of 1877.²⁴

24. Eric J. Cardinal, "Lawnfield: The Evolution of a House," *Lake County Historical Quarterly*, 23 (December, 1981), 1-6, contains a useful overall description of the farmhouse and its changes over time.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE GARFIELD FARM, 1876-1879



Although Garfield himself operated the Mentor farm a little more than four years, major changes occurred at the old Dickey place during the interval between autumn 1876 and the Front Porch campaign of 1880. When he could, Garfield personally tended to farm business but more often, his close associate Dr. John P. Robison acted as his agent in all matters regarding the farm including crop tilling, animal husbandry, labor relations, and construction projects. According to contemporary sources, the farm was apparently rundown demanding a fairly massive rehabilitation program. This the Washington politician was prepared to undertake with vigor with the aid of his Mentor-based friend.

The year 1877 witnessed frenetic activity culminating in numerous improvements on the Garfield farm. Even while the family still resided in Washington during the winter of 1876-1877, Dr. Robison took care of limited matters at the farm. An early project involved the construction of a 12 by 15 square foot icehouse behind a small tenant's dwelling to the rear of the farmhouse. Robison shipped ice from Willoughby some five miles away and packed the icehouse with sawdust to preserve the contents until the next summer. He advised Garfield that "We must make an artificial pond from which we can get ice thus it will be less expensive."¹ Although Robison attempted to install a hydraulic ram to pump water to the main house and some tile to drain a low lying pasture north of the ancient shoreline, the frozen ground thwarted these projects.²

1. Robison to JAG, December 21, 1876, in JAG papers (microfilm), Series 4, reel 5. Recalling her mother's memories, a Garfield granddaughter wrote about the icehouse, "Then there was the icehouse, filled each winter from nearby frozen ponds. The big chunks of ice were packed in sawdust to last throughout the long, hot summer. On these ponds before the cutting, the children used to skate when they were there at Christmas time." Ruth Stanley-Brown Feis, Mollie Garfield in the White House, (Chicago, New York and San Francisco, 1963), pp. 35-36.

2. Robison to JAG, December 26, 1876, in JAG papers (microfilm), Series 4, reel 5. The hydraulic ram proved to be a source of trial and tribulation to Garfield. No surviving photographs have been found of this contraption.

Initial Farm Work--Winter of 1876-1877

Robison signed on as the hiring agent for the farm's workers. At some unspecified point Garfield had employed a man named Bancroft to act as overseer but while the general remained in Washington Robison was asked to supervise the employees. The seeds of future negative management/employee relations occurred in January, 1877, when differences of opinion arose between Bancroft and Robison about the care of cattle on the Garfield farm. The irate doctor resolved the issue by asking his chief farmer, a man named Northcott, to bring the cattle to Garfield's barn.³

Robison hired other workmen. The physician reported to Garfield in late January that he had employed for \$4.00 a week a man who owned a team of horses, a wagon, plow, drag, and harrow. In addition to earning wages, the man and his wife lived in the tenant's house, probably the one located on the Botten tract across the road from the farmhouse. Then Robison contracted with one Barnes for \$100 to "move the barns back fifteen rods or less from the street. All of them--the large Barn, the long shed, the carriage, the corn houses and hog pen," Robison wrote, "as soon after 1st of March as convenient. I am to mark the places for them to be put, he to have them raised in proper positions. . . ." ⁴ Robison sought advice as to where to place the outbuildings, but since Garfield often delayed making a decision, it is little wonder that a final recommendation did not occur until he arrived at the farm in late March.

Prior to Garfield's late March visit, various projects occurred at the farm. Robison was to stake the ground for the barns that were to be moved from the front of the property. Although delayed earlier by the frozen

3. Ibid., January 12, 1877, reel 36.

4. Ibid., January 31, 1877, reel 36. The 15 rods amounted to about 250 feet, a sizeable distance from the road; actually, the barns were not moved that far back.

ground, work on building the hydraulic ram progressed to a point at which it would provide a "fine supply of water that is clear and beautiful."⁵ (Appendix A contains a contemporary drawing of the ram lot). Robison also related that the vacant house (probably the tenant's house) would need cleaning, papering, and painting, and a location for a new privy was considered. A neighbor who lived just east of the Garfield property, Edmund Tilson Cantine (E.T.C.) Aldrich, helped move Mrs. Dickey's possessions from the farm.

When the Garfields arrived at the Mentor farm in late March, the level of activity intensified. He recorded that

Crete and I drove to the farm, where we spent several hours in examining the house and making arrangements for putting it in order. We concluded to build a small addition to the rear so as to make a sufficiently large family room. Drove back to the brow of the hill with the two Doctors and discussed the drainage of the swamp and the arrangements for the hydraulic ram. . . . After dinner went again to the farm and made further studies of the₆ situation and determined to what point I would move the barns.

Also during this joint trip to Mentor, the Garfields began preparations to move to the farm. They took the train to Cleveland where they "spent the day in making purchases for the farm house. Crockery, furniture, carpets, etc."⁷ Since the house was not ready for their occupation, they stayed with the Robisons about a mile away. The local press noted their presence, "General and Mrs. Garfield were at their new home in Mentor last week to arrange some changes and improvements."⁸

5. Ibid., March 11, 1877, Series 3, reel 37. See Arthur Channing Downs, Jr., "The Introduction of the American Water Ram ca. 1843-1850," APT Bulletin VII (1975), 56-103 for an excellent treatment of the development of this unique water delivery technology.

6. JAG Diary, III, (March 20, 1877), p. 461.

7. Ibid., p. (March 21, 1877), 462.

8. Painesville Telegraph, March 29, 1877.

Before the entire family came out to Ohio in April, Dr. Robison reported to Garfield that the shingles had rotted on the main roof permitting water to leak into the house damaging the master bedroom. Workmen quickly installed new shingles, and Robison kept a fire going in a stove to dry the wet rooms. Other renovation included plastering, interior painting, and whitewashing as well as the installation of new carpets.⁹

The work proceeded rapidly between the March and April visits to the farm. By April 14, 1877, Garfield wrote that after "dinner Crete and I went with Dr. R. to our farm, and found the carpenters and painters at work putting the place in order. The barns have just been moved to the rear, the waterworks are nearly done, but the general state of chaos opens before us a fine field for work and contrivance. We commenced work, and put up a few beds on the second or roof story."¹⁰ A merchant came from nearby Willoughby to install new stoves and pipe, and a load of family furniture arrived from Hiram. The family spent their first night in the house on April 17, 1877, and Garfield commented on the toil, "I close the week quite lame with lifting and a good old fashioned feeling of physical weariness."¹¹

The family lived in what Lucretia G. Comer, one of Garfield's granddaughters, later described as:

a typical Ohio farmhouse--kitchen at the back of a recess porch, dining room, parlor facing the street, a small bedroom at the rear of the parlor and one cut out of a corner of the kitchen, with the rain barrel outside. The new family room was next to the woodshed, to the rear of the center of the house, and between it and the dining room was a somewhat spooky hall containing storage cupboards. The roof story had an attic and two bedrooms.¹²

9. Robison to JAG, April 6, 1877; April 20, 1877 in JAG papers, (microfilm), Series 4, reel 37.

10. JAG Diary, III, (April 14, 1877), p. 473.

11. Ibid., (April 21, 1877) p. 475.

12. Lucretia G. Comer, "Lawnfield," The Quarterly Review of the Michigan Alumnus, 57 (Spring, 1951), 258. Comer related that Aunt Patty (a nanny), Mollie (Mary Garfield), and Abe (Abram) occupied the room next to the warm attic over the kitchen and Harry, Jim, and Irv slept in the east room.

Besides remodeling the farmhouse, Garfield had a number of projects advancing simultaneously. He "resolved to get the old house in rear of the farm house and fix it up for a Library."¹³ Apparently this small 15-by 20-foot structure (probably used as a tenant's house at one time) was too close to the main house, and Garfield had it relocated to the northeast and had it remodeled for use as a library. (This building remains extant today.) Even though hired carpenters did most of the work on the library building, Garfield himself laid the flooring. He recorded, "I find the old pleasure which I felt 27 years ago, when I learned how to lay flooring."¹⁴ By April 28, Garfield paid off most of the carpentry crew except two men who still worked on the house and library. Feeling a high level of satisfaction with the progress since March, Garfield wrote in his diary, "we have now reached a point where every day's work tells in favor of order. Disorder seems to be the first step towards order. Chaos must precede Cosmos."¹⁵

Despite this sanguine note, one carpenter, "Father" Barnes, misjudged the length of the library porch which irritated Garfield when it cost more than a half day's work in remediating the mistake. Work proceeded on the library during May and early June. When he returned to the farm in midJune, the library was grained and nearly ready for occupation. Garfield personally selected the doors for the library book cases and added a new "set of shelves in my library, because I found a surplus of books." By July 21, he hung a lamp and moved into the library.¹⁶

13. JAG Diary, III, (April 18, 1877), p. 474.

14. Ibid., (April 26, 1877), p. 476. The building served as an office in the 1880 presidential campaign.

15. Ibid., (April 28, 1877), p. 477. Also see JAG papers, (microfilm) Series 14, reels 139-140 for copies of financial records for the Mentor farm. These documents reflect the costs of owning and upgrading a rural property in the late 1870s.

16. JAG Diary, III, (June 15, 1877; July 3, 21, 1877), pp. 494, 497.

While Garfield traveled in late May and early June, the carpenters started building a new horse barn. On June 13 the diary noted that the "frame. . . is up" and the rafters were in place two days later.¹⁷ Work progressed on the barn during June and July and apparently it was completed at some point during the summer of 1877.

Other projects kept the men busy in late July and early August. The workmen erected a hayrack, dug a privy pit, and hauled brick for the privy's foundation. They placed battens on the east side of the main barn as well as the hen house to improve their appearance. Masons paved the back porch of the mainhouse. Workers whitewashed the barns and fences, and moved stone from the orchard meadow to make a walkway near the cow barn door.¹⁸ The crew finished the hydraulic ram project, a mechanism to drain the low lying area north of the ancient shoreline and to provide water for the house. The ram box was some 1,600 feet north of the main house. Its 3/4-inch pipe transported soft spring water to a five-foot high, 37-gallon tank located at an undisclosed point in the house. The periodic balkiness of this water delivery system caused numerous problems for Garfield. For example, during the summer of 1877, the ram did not work properly--the water backed up instead of flowing forward. The innovative Garfield resolved the problem by digging up and relaying the pipe to allow waste water to escape from the tank to the barnyard. Garfield had the "west ditch extended 12 rods to Delle's line. . . ." which apparently produced sufficient water from

17. Ibid., (June 13, 15, 1877), pp. 490-491. The timber for this barn cost three cents a foot. Also see LRG to JAG, May 31, 1877, June 3, 1877, in JAG papers (microfilm), Series 3, reel 7. Bancroft did the grading for the new horse barn. Lucretia reported to Garfield on June 3, 1877 that the "carpenters are getting along well with the horse barn. The ground is graded for the foundation and Doctor has a man engaged to lay the foundation this week." Neighbor E.T.C. Aldrich attended a barn raising on June 12, 1877. E.T.C. Aldrich Diary, June 12, 1877, p. 127. Copy in possession of Louise Aldrich Windecker, Mentor, Ohio.

18. JAG Diary, III, (July 30, 1877; August 2-4, 6, 1877), pp. 502, 504-505.

another source.¹⁹ Near the ram the workmen had dug ditches and installed several hundred feet of drain tile to remove surplus water from this marshy area.

The Garfields also worked hard to enhance the appearance of the yard and grounds that surrounded the farmhouse. They had moved the cattle barn from its front yard site, reroofed it, and installed a new floor. Huge, smelly manure piles were removed to a more remote location. One workman, Harry, made a chicken coop inside a small woodshed which was removed to the orchard area to the rear of the property, and another man moved a picket fence to the west side of an old orchard. The work crew also erected a new fence along the west side of the lane which ran from the vicinity of the main house northward to the sloping hill, and a whitewashed fence was built along the north side of the highway.²⁰ Garfield also helped make a watering trough for the barn yard, and the workers "covered up the barn yard well near the front gate by putting a flat stone across it about four feet down, and earth above."²¹ The Garfields purchased fruit trees, evergreens, shrubs, and flowers to beautify the grounds. At one point they spent a day "laying out our

19. Robison to JAG, March 29, 1877, in JAG papers (microfilm), Series 4, reel 37. JAG Diary, III, (August 4, 1877) pp. 504-505.

20. See Fig. 8. The photograph purportedly taken of the Dickey farm as it appeared when Garfield bought it in 1876 may not be that definite. It depicts a clean, white board fence near the road. Garfield's diary mentions the construction of a fence along the highway in May, 1877. Secondly, existing newspaper articles (see above p. 41) and the diary allude to pig sties and a large barn near enough to the house to create an unpleasant nuisance. However the photograph shows a fairly large barn at the extreme left, some distance behind the house. What may be the library plus other outbuildings can be seen to the rear of the main house on the other side of the photo. Hence close examination of the photograph seemingly implies that it was taken after the spring of 1877, once Garfield had rehabilitated the place. Furthermore from all published sources, the Dickey farm was in a sad state of disrepair by the time Garfield bought it. Would the widow have had this photo taken and for what purpose?

21. JAG Diary, III, (May 17, 1877), p. 482.

grounds and locating trees."²² Finally, the "Old Englishman," one of the hired hands, covered the yard with sod to produce a nice lawn around the farmhouse.

Although Garfield did not spare any expense to improve the Mentor place, he watched and monitored the outgo carefully. On one occasion he wrote to Robison concerning some bids from local insurance agents. Garfield told the doctor that if he had not committed to one firm's initial offer, he could "save something by going to the other company."²³ Near the end of this frenetic burst of activity at the farm, Garfield characteristically commented about his mounting financial outpourings, "I am not a little disturbed at the rate of expense which seems necessary. But I hope to see the outgo reduced before long."²⁴ Apparently Garfield never lost sight of the impoverished, rural background that he had experienced in the rude frontier cabin less than 25 miles from the rapidly improving Mentor residence; he paid his bills but never failed to seek a sharp bargain for consumer products, farm equipment, or hired help.

The farm assumed an important role in Garfield's life and values. When in distant Washington, he often wrote to Lucretia about an overwhelming desire to be back in Ohio. In May, 1877, for example, he told her how "sweet and inviting the dear, new home beckens to me away among the green fields of Mentor."²⁵ To the present-day student, Garfield's

22. *Ibid.*, (May 1, 1877), p. 478. The Garfields bought much of their nursery stock from Storrs, Harrison and Company in Painesville. They got pear, peach, cherry, spruce, pine, birch and gooseberry bushes from the supplier. See JAG papers, April 30, 1877 (microfilm) Series 14, reel 139.

23. JAG to Robison, April 2, 1877, in John P. Robison papers, Library of Congress.

24. *JAG Diary*, III, (May 5, 1877), p. 479. Concern with financial matters surface as a constant theme in Garfield's affairs.

25. JAG to Lucretia, May 29, 1877, in JAG papers, (microfilm), Series 3, reel 7. While Garfield traveled, Lucretia kept him abreast of the activities on the farm, and what the children were up to as well. For

papers, correspondence, and diaries contain numerous examples of this longing to return to the farm at Mentor, and an almost reverential affection for its soothing qualities.

Agrarian Activity on the Mentor Property--1877

Garfield, assisted by Robison, began to rejuvenate the farm which seemingly had deteriorated during Harriet Dickey's final years of tenure. While the carpenters and other workmen renovated the farmhouse and other buildings, hired hands plowed and prepared various fields for the 1877 growing season. Bancroft and Butler ploughed a 14-acre lower field on the 40-acre parcel purchased from George Dickey, and Garfield mixed grass seed with the barley so that the field would revert to meadow the following year and lie fallow for a season. The men finished sowing, harrowing, and rolling the barley field by April 25, but the crew experienced some difficulty when a new broadcast sowing machine dropped too much seed in the ground. (This machine was returned to the vendor for a refund). Consequently the men completed the task by hand. Garfield, always willing to try a new agricultural technique, added 220 pounds of plaster to the acre in the south half of the field in which strong evidence of clay existed. Apparently the north half of the field remained soft because the wheels of the grain drill sank into the soil. A seven-acre wheat field was situated south of the main road. The men ploughed an eight-acre field on the "old farm, below the R.R., for oats"²⁶ and finished this task around May 30. Then they ploughed and planted an eight-acre cornfield "next to the woods on the old Dickey

25. (Cont.) example on June 6, 1877, she wrote: "Hal is milking, Jim is busy with the new mower which he and Harry have just brought from the Depot while Abe is trotting after him all wonder and admiration at the 'fast clipper.' Molly is practicing and I am sitting in the parlor with her. . . ." LRG to JAG, June 6, 1877, in JAG papers, (microfilm), Series 3, reel 7.

26. JAG Diary, III, (April 23-26, 1877), pp. 475-476.

farm"²⁷ and the workmen removed fence rails from the barn field to ready it for corn and potatoes. Garfield's diary mentions activity in five fields, four of which totaled 37 acres, although no acreage was listed for the "barn field." Additionally Bancroft plowed the "meadow on the hill behind the barn."²⁸

Once the hired hands ploughed and planted the various fields, they tilled, cultivated, and harvested bountiful crops later that summer. The Garfield diary contains numerous references to the agrarian adventures the gentleman farmer encountered. For example in mid-June he "declared war on dock, and have set two men at work in the orchard meadow to dig it out by the roots."²⁹ A month later an unexpected frost severely damaged the corn crop in the lower field, and the men used sheep shears to clip the damaged stalks to ascertain if they would regenerate. Haying and intensive crop cultivation occurred simultaneously in late July. Bancroft harvested the seven-acre wheat field on the south side of the Mentor highway. Despite these apparent diligent efforts, Garfield occasionally complained about the laborers' work habits. On July 10, Garfield lamented that "I find myself compelled daily to resist the slovenliness of my farm hands."³⁰

The farm produced a wide range of crops that first season. The diary references harvests of timothy seed, oats, turnips, potatoes, and barley,

27. Ibid., (May 11, 1877), p. 481.

28. Ibid., (May 9, 1877), p. 480. This field was apparently situated on the ancient shoreline north of the outbuildings.

29. Ibid., (May 15, 1877), p. 491. Dock is a deep rooted weed.

30. Ibid., (July 10, 1877), p. 494. Lucretia also took close note of the employees' work habits. She wrote to her husband on one occasion that Bancroft took advantage of his employer's absence. She was "thoroughly disgusted with a man with a family on the place. His wife is of no account in the world to use, and I'll warrant they will get a good support off the farm besides the wages." Lucretia to JAG, May 30, 1877, in JAG papers (microfilm), Series 3, reel 7. Apparently the Bancroft family lived in the small tenant's house across the road from the farmhouse.

a crop that produced 20 bushels. The men thrashed the wheat that produced 114 bushels which Garfield computed to average 17½ bushels per acre. A major threshing occurred on August 8 and by that evening the farmer had 375 bushels of oats from the seven-and-a-half acre field; 440 bushels of barley from the 13-acre parcel; and seven bushels of grass seed. The farm produced a bountiful array of crops in 1877.³¹

Also, the family raised a vegetable garden that summer. Garfield perceived the importance of employing the children in the garden to introduce them to outdoor toil, and as a method to build their character.

Early autumn 1877 saw preparations underway for the next growing season. Bancroft ploughed the barley field. James Barnes received \$45 for ploughing the Ram Lot and burning stumps and rubbish. He used a new "Champion Drill" to sow wheat on the field south of the highway, fertilizing it with 250 pounds of bone phosphate and 175 pounds of plaster per acre. The hands processed clover hay in the barn and prepared room for the haystacks from the lower field. In October the lane ditch was tilled, filled, and a sand-covered roadway laid. The men ploughed a half-acre of meadow and husked the corn, arranged for ploughing the Ram Lot, and planted 50 forest trees.³²

Farmer Garfield equipped the farm with the latest machinery and supplies. The equipment included a new machine for sowing grain broadcast, a double drag harrow with 72 steel teeth, and a "Peerless Mower and Reaper" for which Garfield paid \$75, and not the advertised price of \$175. Although he spared no expense in outfitting the farm, Garfield also monitored expenditures closely, often commenting when he drove a shrewd

31. JAG Diary, III, (July 16-18, 21, 1877; August 7-8, 1877), pp. 497, 505-506. The men built a support system for the straw stack.

32. The 12 acre field received one-and-a-half bushels of white wheat (Clawson) and six quarts of grass seed. Ibid., (September 6-7, 1877; October 9-10, 1877), pp. 513, 527-528. Robison to JAG, November 26, 1877; November 29, 1877, in JAG papers (microfilm), Series 4, reel 39.

bargain on a purchase. He gloated in his diary that "Dr. R. paid \$150 for a similar one, but a Buckeye."³³ Some of the machinery, unfortunately, did not work to his expectations. As mentioned above, the grain sowing apparatus failed and went back to the seller. To improve the quality of the soil and increase crop output, he purchased "one ton of Clifton Springs, N.Y. plaster for land, and had it hauled from Depot and stored in barn."³⁴

Garfield also improved the quantity and quality of the livestock. Whether he received any from the Dickey purchase remains unknown, but if he did there must not have been many animals on the farm. He bought a "pair of gray horses and harnesses of Mr. Charles Pelton for \$425. . . ."³⁵ In addition there must have been another team on the farm, because he noted on one occasion "both teams hauling." Dr. Robison entered the livestock picture when he bought a "mare (Kit) harness and buggy" for \$280, some \$20 less than the asking price. Then Garfield went to Willoughby to find a "milch cow." On May 5, 1877, he "bought a common milch cow (red and white) nine years old, of Mr. Ferry for \$50. Bought 2 Durham cows, and one Durham calf 6 months old of J.P. Robison for \$200." He wanted "milk enough for our own use this summer and for our winter butter, and I want to lay the foundation for a stock of good cattle by-and-by."³⁶ Garfield planned for the future by upgrading the quality of the farm's livestock inventory. Just before returning to Washington, he added two pigs to the growing number of animals at the farm. In July, he bought a brood mare and colt and

33. JAG Diary, III, (April 23, 1877; May 5, 1877), pp. 475-479.

34. Ibid. (April 18, 1877).

35. Ibid., (April 17, 1877), p. 474.

36. Ibid., (April 19, 21, 27, 1877; May 5, 12, 1877), pp. 474-482, 501. The red and white cow did not produce and was fattened for slaughter. Sometimes Garfield's "bargains" did not pan out well.

another Durham cow for \$230, and had three purebred heifer calves on the farm.³⁷

The itinerant farmer often expressed idealized feelings about owning, improving, and operating the Mentor farm as a place of retreat from Washington's political machinations, as well as providing inspiration and a positive role model for his children. All of this, however, did not occur single-handedly. In 1877 Bancroft, the chief farmer or tenant, was assisted periodically by Butler, Burroughs, Harry, "Young" Couchman, Rutland, Smith, Allen, Devereaux, "Cub," Kirtland, the "Old Englishman," and certain unnamed "fugitive farm labor." The carpenters, masons and repairmen included "Father" Barnes, Long, Moses Hughes, Delle, Barless, and Weed. The diary listed 19 employees for 1877 alone and numerous others appeared in succeeding years. During Garfield's tenure on the farm, the names changed frequently as itinerant workers came and went, each making a small contribution to the improvement of the Mentor farm.

Periodically Robison would remind his friend to pay the workmen. In late November, 1877, Robison wrote, "Your corn huskers are after their pay. I promised it will be right for me to pay them."³⁸ Garfield instructed Robison to pay the huskers and woodchoppers from the sale of the barley, but if the sale did not occur before the wages were to be paid, Garfield promised to forward a draft.³⁹

Garfield's continuing displeasure with Bancroft surfaced once more in November. He wanted to fire the tenant, and wrote in his diary,

37. *Ibid.* (May 21, 1877; July 28, 1877), pp. 482, 501. The livestock began to produce and by May, 1880 Garfield earned \$67.15 for the sale of 7,462 pounds of milk at 90¢ a hundred weight. See JAG papers, (microfilm) Series 14, reel 140.

38. Robison to JAG, November 29, 1877, in JAG papers (microfilm), Series 4, reel 39.

39. JAG to Robison, December 6, 1877, in Robison papers, LC.

"Bancroft had neglected many things on the farm. I feel greatly inclined to discharge him, if I can find a proper man to take his place."⁴⁰ He did not release the employee that year, but acted in 1878. Garfield recorded the final payments to the recalcitrant workman in a January, 1878, letter to Robison with a draft of \$300 to cover the \$277.56 due Bancroft. Then Garfield decided to let the tenant stay on at the farm until March, 1878, "if he behaves well," and under Robison's supervision.⁴¹

Robison took care of the farm while Garfield was absent. He reported on minute details such as the weather, how the livestock fared, what progress had been made regarding fall clean-up and plowing, and the possible sale of that season's products such as the barley crop. Besides frequently stopping by the Garfield farm, the Disciples of Christ minister shipped produce to his Washington-based friend, including such crops as potatoes, cabbage, beets, "a few turnips," squash, lard, pork, beef, and white corn meal. Robison acted as a steward for the Mentor farm, and as seen above managed land transactions, shipping, expediting projects, and labor relations as well as tending to the farm in general.

Although family members did not celebrate Christmas 1877 at the farm, they closed out the old year there. Winter had settled in but Garfield had contracted with a local railroad to cut 200 solid cords of wood to be piled by the track, an effort that would consume seven or eight acres of

40. JAG Diary, III, (November 3, 1877), p. 538. Bancroft must have provided a team of oxen because Garfield purchased a yoke of the beasts from Robison with the thought of releasing the tenant and hiring another man "at a smaller price without a team." Ibid, (November 8, 1877) p. 539.

41. JAG to Robison, January 16, 1878, in Robison papers. At this point Thomas Northcott was already on the farm's payroll. Also see JAG to Robison, January 29, 1878; February 2, 1878; February 15, 1878, in Robison papers. Another worker, Moses, boarded with Bancroft that year. Garfield told Robison that he would give Bancroft the following recommendation, "he is honest and a good worker."

forest.⁴² Men had to be hired and directed to accomplish this large task. While in Mentor, Garfield gave orders for the construction of new fences, a well, and other farm-related projects.

Life on the Garfield farm conformed closely to the cycles of nature tempered by the political responsibilities dictated by Washington. During the summer vacation seasons of 1878 and 1879, the Garfields did not return to the farm until mid-June due to that burden, but the agrarian activities were similar to that of 1877.

1878 Construction Projects at the Farm

One of the projects in 1878 involved the construction of a new barn. The crew raised the frame in June, but the workmen installed the siding boards incorrectly by the end of the month. Garfield ordered the boards removed, reversed, and painted instead of whitewashed. The carpenter Barnes received a contract to build a cupola five by eight feet and six feet high on the new barn. The workmen finished the barn around mid-July when James Doty received \$35 to paint the structure with two coats of white lead and oil.⁴³

Another task involved converting the harness room in the horse barn into a sleeping room for two hands, Moses and Myron. Then too, Garfield wanted to move the "long shed" to line it up along a north/south axis with the old barn. Before the men moved the shed, they had to remove a large pile of manure that obstructed the project.

42. JAG Diary, III, (December 31, 1877), p. 558. Garfield wrote to a friend that "I have a job to furnish 200 solid cords for the Railroad, to pay them for taking my railroad fences off my lands and it was important to get the hauling done while the snow lasts." JAG to Hinsdale, January 9, 1878, in James A. Garfield papers, MSS 3049, Box 3, Western Reserve Historical Society.

43. Harry J. Brown and Frederick D. Williams, "The Diary of James A. Garfield," IV (Unpublished manuscript), (June 26, 27, 29, 1878; July 1, 16, 1878), pp. 86, 88, 94.

A new well was dug on the tenant's property across the road. The men graded the southwest corner of the barnyard in an effort to make it a better drained area. In June carpenter Andrew Barless constructed a new front gate with a wider opening to permit entry of larger loads of grain or hay into the yard.⁴⁴

There were other minor building and reconstruction projects completed in 1878. Two sheds were built in the southwest and northwest corners of the barnyard. According to Garfield, Barnes "moved hog pen from its place in the old orchard to the new orchard, across the lane from the new cow barn. . . ." ⁴⁵ Part of this work involved converting an old building into an engine house for a machine to steam fodder and corn.

Limited repair work was done to the main house in 1878. The pipes that brought water to the kitchen were overhauled, and the workers repaired a joint that had been damaged by freezing. The Garfields discussed several minor changes in the house including placing two sinks in the new pantry, considered the possibility of extending the vestibule to the second floor, and settled on certain unspecified repairs to the east wing of the house.⁴⁶ Already in June, 1878, the family was considering further changes in their Mentor farmhouse.

Apparently the Garfields considered remodeling the farmhouse in 1878. In October, the owner "consulted with Mr. (Oscar L.) Loomis (carpenter) in reference to some enlargements and repairs of our house here. I greatly desire to improve it, but fear it will incur an expense beyond my

44. Ibid., (June 24, 28, 1878; November 16, 1878), pp. 85-87.

45. Ibid., (November 13, 18, 1878), p. 147.

46. JAG to Lucretia, June 12, 1878; June 13, 1878; June 15, 1878; June 16, 1878; Lucretia to JAG, June 17, 1878; July 23, 1878, in JAG papers, (microfilm), Series 3, reel 7. The Garfields exchanged a diagram of the proposed changes but it is not in the family papers. They briefly considered having a gas pipe in "our little room" but used a lamp instead.

means."⁴⁷ He continued to plan for the repairs to the house during the winter but expressed concern to be "near to the verge of my financial ability to meet expenditure, but I think it better to use rather than accumulate until the day for enjoyment is past, and so if I can, I shall make the little cottage better fitted to its sweet mistress and light."⁴⁸

James and Lucretia discussed their plans with Loomis on several occasions during November. Garfield realized that the "house is too small for our wants and ought to be enlarged, I am troubled about my ability to bear the expense of it now. I must take account of my means and see if I can carry the load."⁴⁹ They discussed the plans, did a cost estimate, and decided that the family purse could not afford the repairs that year. On November 14, Garfield recorded in his diary, "Have abandoned for the present my purpose to overhaul and enlarge farm house."⁵⁰ The ambitious project died in 1878 but the family would resurrect it in 1880.

Agrarian Activities on the Garfield Farm--1878

During the interval that Garfield owned the farm, he often commuted by overnight train between Washington and Mentor. On these brief trips, he wanted to monitor the workers' progress that he had read about in the frequent reports sent by Dr. Robison. For example, the low area north of the ancient shoreline known as the Ram Lot gave the workers a great deal of trouble. Robison related that the "Ram lot will be conquered by & by. The plowing done last fall was so badly done, I may plough it

47. "JAG Diary," IV, (October 19, 1878), p. 134.

48. Ibid., (October 25, 1878), p. 137.

49. Ibid., (November 5, 1878), p. 143.

50. Ibid., (November 14, 1878), p. 146.

again."⁵¹ Apparently the low lying area had to be spaded by hand and additional drain tile placed to remove surplus water. Robison took care of the land in Garfield's absence, and in fact, betrayed much concern about the slow progress in the Ram Lot. On one occasion he stated that the "Ram lot which is the anxious state of all my anxious feelings are yours."⁵² They finally got this area planted in late May.

During the late winter and early spring 1878, Robison reported on conditions at the farm, its livestock, early planting, damage from frost, and other news. He kept Garfield abreast of the labor situation, and once Bancroft completed his tenure in March and left, the situation markedly improved with Thomas Northcott serving as the chief farmer. Robison periodically entered into labor negotiations with farm workers. A Mr. Judd wanted to work for \$350 per annum with a house and garden but Garfield felt he could not pay more than \$300, with "the privilege of old timber for his fires."⁵³ Then one Couchman and his son offered to

51. Robison to JAG, April 25, 1878, in JAG papers, (microfilm), Series 4, reel 41. On April 29th, Robison sent a sketch of the current activity in the Ram Lot to his friend, see Appendix A. Periodically Robison sent words of encouragement to Garfield. Apparently the absent owner despaired regarding slow progress on the work at the farm, and Robison would remind him of all that had been accomplished in a year's time. Robison wrote: "You may think things move slow but if you remember the state of the fences but partially made where made at all, and the picking up on every quarter old broken rails. . . ." Robison to JAG, April 25, 1878, in JAG papers, (microfilm), Series 4, reel 41.

52. Robison to JAG, May 14, 1878, in Garfield papers, (microfilm), Series 4, reel 41. The hands laid 650 pieces of drain tile on the east side of the moist Ram Lot, much of it placed in old ditches. See the sketch Robison sent in Appendix A.

53. Ibid., January 23, 1878, in JAG papers, (microfilm), Series 4, reel 40. Garfield's farm manager, Thomas Northcott, kept detailed account books which illustrate the varied activities on the Mentor farm. For example, the account book for July, 1878, related that eight hired hands worked at the farm generally at a \$1.50 daily rate. Other transactions that month included purchase of oats from neighbor Dickey; charges for hauling milk; a \$3.50 horseshoeing bill at Painesville; one new scythe at 90¢ and payments of \$134.89 to Barnes for building a new barn. Account Books, 1878 in LRG papers, Box 93.

work for \$400 a year. Robison suggested that he would "bargain for \$360--then if he hesitates I should give him the \$400." Regarding Garfield's well known proclivity to procrastinate, the doctor stated, "You must say something by return of mail, as this is the time to act. The iron is hot, strike."⁵⁴ With the hiring accomplished the workforce was ready for the 1878 growing season.

The 1878 season resulted in a high level of crop production once the labor/management negotiations were resolved. The Ram Lot produced corn and hay and the men reaped oats from a field near the barns. July threshing produced 175 bushels of Clawson wheat from the south field, 145 bushels of red wheat from a six-acre field north of the railroad tracks, and 25 bushels of oats from another field. Three acres of buckwheat were plowed under for manure. Further threshing in August resulted in another 138 bushels of white wheat, making 331 bushels from the 12-acre field south of the road. A six-and-a-half-acre rye crop near the woods on the old George Dickey tract netted 163 bushels. Most of the wheat crop went to a Mr. Storm, proprietor of the Kirtland Millers, for 96¢ a bushel. In September the laborers were ploughing and planting the winter wheat crop for the next season.⁵⁵

In 1878 Garfield started to consider a new process for the treatment of animal fodder. He wanted to explore the possibility of chopping the course fodder (such as corn stalks and leaves) then cooking it by steam

54. Robison to JAG, January 30, 1878, in JAG papers, (microfilm), Series 4, reel 40. At this point the hands included Couchman, Jones, Bancroft, Northcott, Glazier, and Moses. Moses wanted \$20 a month wages. The hands cut wood, ice and kept the livestock fed.

55. "JAG Diary," IV, (June 26, 27, 1878; July 5, 20, 1878; August 12, 16, 17, 1878), pp. 86, 90, 95, 104-105. Garfield observed progress in the Ram Lot "where an interesting struggle is going forward between nature and civilization. The first is represented by ferns and wild grass, the second by hoe." He also saw the difference between an area allowed to go fallow for a season compared to one with wheat grown on it for three successive seasons. He wrote that the "land cannot be cheated. She will honor drafts only when and in proportion as deposits have been made."

and mixing this material with ground feed for the animals. Probably he sought the counsel of other farmers in the neighboring locale as well as reading the contemporary farm publications regarding this novel method to treat silage. As seen above, Garfield had the interior of an old farm building converted to an engine house for the fodder treatment equipment in November. By March of 1879 the machinery for cutting, grinding, and steaming feeds along with the power source were operating effectively. Garfield related that the process "saved me as much as one ton of hay to each head of stock. . . . Last year 25 acres of cornstalks were consumed by six less cattle than have been thus far kept through Winter on 18 acres of stalks and 3 or 4 stacks left."⁵⁶

The Farmer/Politician--1878

The contemporary media began to discover Garfield's Ohio retreat. For example a New York Herald reporter, Eugene V. Smalley, came out to Mentor, stayed with the family for a few days and later published his impressions of his host's bucolic lifestyle:

In the midst of these sylvan possessions General Garfield goes about in a broadbrimmed chip hat, with his pantaloons tucked in a pair of stout cowhide boots, giving directions to his hired men, and lending a hand at the haying and harvesting. None of his Washington friends, had they seen him yesterday driving a yoke of oxen in the broiling sun and emphasizing with a gad the stentorian shout of "Gee," "Haw," and "Whoa, Back!" without which no oxen seem able to do a proper amount of

56. Ibid., (October 9, 1878; November 14, 18, 22, 1878; December 10, 1878), pp. 129, 146, 147, 148, 196. Decreasing farm prices in the late 1870s may have prompted to make the farm more cost effective, and the new fodder steaming process became one method to effect savings. Dr. Robison gave his enthusiastic endorsement to the process: "steaming the food will make a great difference, 20 to 25 tons of hay is carrying your cattle through." Robison to JAG, December 19, 1878, in JAG papers, Series 4, reel 43. The location of the engine house has not been clearly identified. Perhaps archeological investigation would locate the foundations of this structure originally situated in an unspecified area of the barnyard.

work, would have suspected that the broad-shouldered, sun-burned farmer under the chip hat was the famous Republican chief, fresh from parliamentary victories on the floor of Congress.⁵⁷

The press enjoyed linking Garfield with his agrarian pursuits as well as the contemporary political scene. Another correspondent wrote about Garfield's interest in scientific farming, "He was desirous of learning by what means he could best increase the productiveness of his farm, the soil of which is of fair quality, but, like most others was somewhat deteriorated. We found the General quite intelligent in regard to the scientific principles of improved farming, and he is determined to be some-thing more than a routine farmer."⁵⁸

Besides the correspondents, pundits, and reporters who routinely visited the Mentor farm, Garfield himself used the residence as a base of political operations in northern Ohio. During the 1878 congressional elections he finished the reelection bid with a rousing two-hour speech at the Disciples of Christ church in Mentor. He later recorded in his diary that "We shall not be able to recover from the Democratic Gerrymander all the districts they have taken from us; but we shall recover some, and make

57. (New York) Herald, July 15, 1878. Smalley made several trips out to Mentor in the late 1870s. His visits received coverage in the local press. Painesville Telegraph, August 9, 1877, September 13, 1877. An A.G. Riddle stayed at the farm in July, 1878. Ibid., July 25, 1878. Garfield recorded in his diary impressions of the Smalley talks, "Sat on the porch and talked politics till half-past ten P.M. I gave him my ideas of the philosophy of the Greeley movement, and of the present reaction against it." JAG Diary, IV, (July 12, 1878), p. 92.

58. Painesville Telegraph, December 5, 1878. A great deal of interest surfaced in the 1870s to improve farm productivity through scientific farming. Agriculture had received a great deal of attention at the 1876 Centennial celebration and World's Fair at Philadelphia. Much of this material and displays can be viewed today at the Smithsonian museums in Washington, D.C.

good gains on the state ticket. This is my hope and belief."⁵⁹ Other political visitors came to the farm that year. A growing number of letters and telegrams arrived from distant points, each with a political request or favor needed. The expanding national political reputation and influence can be gleaned from the diaries, correspondence, and local newspaper accounts, and Garfield's recent political biographers such as Allan Peskin should be scanned for in-depth treatment of the public career of the Mentor farmer.

Garfield certainly reflected a love/hate relationship with politics and public life. Despite some misgivings each time he sought reelection, he ran and was successful. When in Washington he could not wait for a session to end to permit him to return to Ohio. On the other hand, he often faced the return to the capital with apprehension. On one occasion in early spring 1879, he wrote, "I can hardly endure the prospect the returning to Washington and losing the farm life which I have anticipated in the coming months."⁶⁰ As the 1870s wound to a close, Garfield's career was taking him higher and higher into national level politics and away from the intimate moments he experienced at the farm. While he may have had some misgivings about public life, the lure and glamor of power as he knew it piqued his ambition in that interval.

Construction Projects--1879

The Mentor farm witnessed several limited construction and improvement projects in 1879. Garfield bought plaster for "refitting the kitchen," on

59. "JAG Diary," IV, (October 7, 16, 1878), pp. 128, 132. Garfield had left the farm to make a July Fourth speech in Painesville. A paper reported that "his face showed that he had but just left farm in Mentor." Painesville Telegraph, July 11, 1878. The following spring a newsman related that the "distinguished Congressman had scarcely time to pull on his rubber boots and inspect the condition of well tilled farm ere your correspondent drew up to the gate of the yard leading to his country house. The operation of putting down some pipe for the watering of cattle, in which two men were engaged, at that time occupied the General's attention. . . ." Painesville Telegraph, March 20, 1879.

60. "JAG Diary," IV, (March 12, 1879), p. 197.

a May visit, and "directed opening of a new gate to the front, also the building of some new fences, and some changes in the water works."⁶¹ The men started building a root house for the storage of beets and other vegetables that November.

Of even greater impact on the household's improvement, the family began considering a new house during the summer of 1879. On August 21, Garfield recorded in his diary "discussing the site for our future farm home. If I can buy a portion of Mrs. Alvord's grove, I have determined to build there, and if I am able, will build next spring."⁶² Like the other construction projects on the main house, this new site for a new house never came to fruition, but the next spring work began in earnest to remodel the main house.

Agrarian Activities--1879

Garfield came out to Mentor during 1879 to get the summer's work underway. The summer apparently was very dry and occasional showers helped "revive the drooping vegetation,"⁶³ but the lack of sufficient rainfall severely damaged the crops. A fierce windstorm "threw down a great many trees, and destroyed some corn. It prostrated about 100 rods of my fences. . . ."⁶⁴ Garfield despaired over the dry weather, "The dry weather has made the farm look badly and I feel uncertain what its

61. Ibid., (May 3, 1879), p. 227. The hydraulic ram gave periodic problems. Earlier that spring, Robison had reported a valve malfunctioned which stopped water flow to the house, and resulted in some frozen pipes. Robison to JAG, March 3, 1879, in JAG papers, Series 4, reel 44.

62. "JAG Diary," IV, (August 21, 1879), p. 279. Julia Alvord lived to the west of the Garfields. James R. Garfield, a son, built a large house in "Alvord's Grove" in the 1890s. See below, p. 142.

63. Ibid., (May 29, 1879), p. 243.

64. Ibid., (July 11, 1879), p. 262. Also see Painesville Telegraph, July 17, 1879, for additional coverage.

real value is as an enduring farm until I have tried it during a rainy season."⁶⁵ In August, Garfield accompanied by his boys and a neighbor, George Rose, built a small dam to store water for irrigation purposes. This worked successfully on a pasture and Garfield speculated that all of the farm land below (north) the Ram Lot would be irrigated during future dry periods.

Although the diary contained much less coverage regarding the crops, their care and harvesting in 1879 (perhaps political duties absorbed the general's thoughts), he still tended to scientific improvements. During the previous years he had added various substances to improve the soil's productivity. In 1879 he used bone dust for the wheat, bought eight tons of ground limestone, and instructed the men to have 3/4 of a ton of limestone added to the acre. He related that "I have read of a recent experiment which shows the relative value of these and other fertilizers."⁶⁶ On one field recently seeded with winter wheat, he sowed 1,100 pounds of limestone to the acre, on another area 300 pounds of ground bone was placed in the soil. Always the scholar, Garfield wrote: "I long for time to study agricultural chemistry, and make experiment with soils and forces."⁶⁷

He attributed the success of the bountiful potato crop to a "recipe" a political confidant had given him. Garfield treated the soil with 15 bushels of ashes, five of lime and four of plaster to the acre, and harvested a fine crop of potatoes. The hands stored this crop until Dr. Robison sent some produce including apples and potatoes to Washington later that fall.⁶⁸

65. "JAG Diary," IV, (July 31, 1879), p. 270.

66. Ibid., (September 8, 1879), p. 290.

67. Ibid., (September 24, 1879), pp. 298-299.

68. Ibid., (October 20, 22, 1879), pp. 312-313. ". . . the work of digging potatoes," Garfield said, "which is something akin to mining for the precious metals. Each hill has a possible surprise, and you are curious to know what the soil and seed have produced." Each fall Dr. Robison would send some of the produce to Washington, this year a portion froze and spoiled on the journey.

Garfield continued to exploit the farm's woodlots and harvested ice from the ponds. In December, 1879, he contracted with the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroad to provide the firm 500 solid cords of wood. Already Robison had a crew of men headed by Northcott cutting the trees. Thus in two cutting seasons the farm produced more than 800 cords of wood used by the railroad for its locomotives. That winter the workmen cut between 700 and 800 tons of ice to be shared by Robison and Garfield.⁶⁹

Relations with the Railroad

It may be recalled that the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroad bisected the farm. The relationship was not altogether harmonious. Periodically some of Garfield's stock would get loose and stand on the tracks, and questions arose as to which party was responsible for the maintenance of fences along the right-of-way. In October, 1878, Garfield had researched the deeds given by the Dickey brothers to the company when they granted the right-of-way in the 1850s. From his interpretation of these documents, Garfield ascertained that the company was the responsible party.⁷⁰ Good fences would have been important to separate animals and workers from the busy rail line that crossed the property and since a sizeable portion of farm activity took place north of the line, it would have been extremely important to have good fences present. It is unknown if Garfield conveyed this information to the railroad.

69. Robison to JAG, November 28, 1879; December 1, 1879; December 9, 1879; Feb. 13, 1880; February 16, 1880; in JAG papers, Series 4, reel 48, 50. "JAG Diary," IV, (January 4, 1880), p. 345. In February, 1880 Robison informed Garfield that 100 cords of wood had been stacked near the railroad track for shipment.

70. "JAG Diary," IV, (October 18, 1879), p. 133. Robison to JAG, June 11, 1878, January 26, 1880 in JAG papers, Series 4, reels 41, 49. Apparently men, equipment and animals used a culvert 11 feet, 7 inches high to move from one side of the tracks to the other. Its height would have permitted movement of loaded hay or grain wagons to move freely on the north end of the farm.

As 1879 came to a close, Garfield's thoughts returned to the farm, notwithstanding his attention having been drawn more and more to extraneous worldly activities. Regretfully he wrote in late October, "I have not done much farm thinking this year, for which I feel reproachful regrets." A few weeks later, he related, "I am not satisfied with the condition of the farm. Though it has improved in some respects, I have not been able to give it the time I desired and must leave many things for the future."⁷¹ Despite these momentary melancholy observations, 1880 would see a great deal of change at the Mentor farm, the structures would be altered dramatically and so would Garfield's life.

71. "JAG Diary," IV, (October 27, 1879; November 10, 1879), pp. 317, 322. On other occasions he waxed enthusiastic about the ideal rural life, "How I wish I could rest a week in the sweet seclusion of this very perfect home life," Ibid., (October 5, 1879), p. 304.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE GARFIELD FARMHOUSE IS REMODELED, 1880



Although the Garfields had made several false starts concerning the remodeling of the Mentor farmhouse, they initiated the project in early 1880. Previous plans for building a new house were jettisoned probably due to financial reasons. By the end of January, 1880, Garfield had just about made up his mind to remodel, and in a letter to Robison stated, "I am half inclined to abandon the idea of purchasing the Dillie piece of wood, and instead making some repairs on the old house. I really need more room. How long do you think it would take with a good force of Cleveland workmen to overhaul it something as you did yours? Please give me your ideas on this subject."¹

Again Dr. Robison became intimately involved with another Garfield farm project. He told Garfield on February 2, "To do this thing up as I did ours will cost you say \$2,500. You can spend \$3,000 if you raise the second floor. . . . If you think of having it done let me know at once and when one or both of you will be here--that I may see Judd and have him out."² Robison urged his friend to act quickly, "There is not time to be lost. Every day is putting it off."³ The doctor also tried with an apparent lack of success to resurrect Garfield's earlier plans to construct a new house, and related that a mutual acquaintance "thought you ought to purchase this side of you and build in the Grove to make a House that would be a House for all time and that your House was not in shape to do as I did."⁴

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1. JAG to Robison, January 30, 1880, in Robison papers, LC.
 2. Robison to JAG, February 2, 1880, in JAG papers (microfilm), Series 4, reel 5. It may be recalled that Garfield had entertained some plans in 1878 to remodel the farmhouse, and in January of that year had contacted Robison concerning the qualifications of a Mr. William Judd, a carpenter and contractor from Cleveland. JAG to Robison, January 29, 1878; January 30, 1878, in Robison papers.
 3. Robison to JAG, February 2, 1880, in JAG papers (microfilm), Series 4, reel 5. Garfield also contacted other correspondents about "some repairs on the house. . . ." See JAG to C.E. Henry, February 4, 1880, in Norris and Shaffer, Politics and Patronage, p. 271.
 4. Robison to JAG, February 9, 1880, in JAG papers (microfilm), Series 4, reel 50. Apparently Garfield did not want to hear anymore about a new house because the doctor quickly explained on the 12th that "when I wrote you about Dr. Streator's sayings; of course was about a matter that he knew nothing in particular--only he seemed to want you to have a mansion worthy of being the admiration of all for all time."

The project advanced quickly. Garfield ordered that accurate measurements of the house be made as well as recording the position of the structural beams in order to make intelligent plans. He assumed that Judd could do much of the preliminary work in Cleveland to be transported to Mentor in a semi-finished condition, and Robison reported that the planing, mouldings, doors and windows could be prepared in the city. The workmen stored the furniture and crockery into the library in late February. Garfield met Judd on the 27th to complete "our plans for the repair of the house. He will have a draft made and sent to us for approval."⁵ Judd conferred with Dr. Robison on March 1 providing him with draft plans to forward to Washington for revisions and approval. The Garfields marked corrections and made suggestions on the plans in "pencil on the backside of Judd's plans" and other "notes in ink at different points . . . to fully explain themselves."⁶ One change involved a door leading from the kitchen to the hall, when Garfield recommended that it be moved to lead to the woodhouse. Garfield instructed his Mentor friend to "that end the present wall between the old kitchen and woodhouse must be where it is, until we reach the second story, then that wall comes out into line with the main north wall of the west wing."⁷ The Garfields thus reviewed the plans sent to them from Mentor and made a number of changes.

Although the planning moved rapidly forward in the early days of March, Garfield wanted to get Judd's final cost estimates. "I have not received Judd's estimate of the cost, which I want to see before final action. We

5. Ibid., February 12, 1880. "JAG Diary," IV, (February 27, 1880), p. 373. Unfortunately copies of these plans did not surface in any of the collections preserving the Garfield/ Robison correspondence.

6. Robison to JAG, March 2, 1880, in JAG papers (microfilm), Series 4, reel 5l. JAG to Robison, March 5, 6, 1880, in Robison papers.

7. Ibid., March 6, 1880. Robison supervised the work in Garfield's absence with instructions, "These plans must stand as above, unless otherwise ordered hereafter. If any part of them is impracticable, inform me soon and suggest changes." Quoted in James S. Brisbin, The Early Life and Public Career of James A. Garfield. . . . (Philadelphia, 1880), p. 316.

shall make considerable changes in the plan of the upper story and few other changes I think can be readily made without disturbing the general effect," Garfield wrote Robison on March 5.⁸ These modifications to the upper story involved raising the entire house with jackscrews to add to its height. As Robison reported on the 9th, "You are certain to have a very fine show according to the picture view, only one thing in my judgement would add to the view, to raise on the foundation 12 to 18 inches which if you decide, telegraph me at once. . . . so Judd can be informed before the other foundations are completed. . . ." ⁹

Actual work started in early March as the seven-man crew (six carpenters and one mason) built a new foundation under the dining room; work advanced on partitions, placing new casings in the studs and framing windows. By the 15th the doctor reported the foundations all laid, the two chimneys up to second floor and the "entire shell is up. . . ." ¹⁰

Apparently Robison had to remind Judd to keep the costs under control. The contractor quoted a preliminary estimate of \$3,000 for the entire project but the costs escalated to at least \$3,600. Initially Robison had saved \$500 on the lumber, buying it before the price rose on the two carloads needed for the project which ultimately included some outbuildings. Labor costs went up during the project because on one occasion Robison mentioned that the carpenters and joiners were "asking increase of wages." ¹¹

Robison reported almost daily on the house project. By the end of March, the rafters and roof were in place. The doctor told Garfield that

8. JAG to Robison, March 5, 1880, in Letters of JAG, File D, LCHS.

9. Robison to JAG, March 9, 1880, in JAG papers (microfilm), Series 4, reel 5I.

10. Ibid., March 4, 1880; March 15, 1880.

11. Ibid., March 15, 16, 22, 29, 1880. The skilled tradesmen in Mentor received \$1.75 a day but could command \$2.00 a day in Cleveland.

"I want roof pushed in this good weather to save the floors and protect the men when it rains so they can work right along and it costs no more to do it with many than with few."¹² The interior work such as mantels and doors would wait until the plastering was done. Other tasks included doors, the proposed sale of the old porch to a neighbor, storage of excess siding in the library, and work on gutter eave troughs. The work crew finished the garret with its large room in late March to hold "all the Post Masters and those with their friends."¹³

Garfield constantly sought counsel from Robison and Judd. On some occasions his suggestions were incorporated in the project, and others were rejected. For example on March 22, Garfield wrote, "On some accounts a door communicating from the parlor to the porch would be desirable, but I believe the parlor would look better on the inside and perhaps the house might outside by abandoning the door and rearranging the front windows in harmony. If you and Judd think best do this and leave out that door altogether."¹⁴ They rejected the suggestion. The correspondence clearly demonstrates that while the Garfields proposed certain recommendations, the owner always consulted with Robison and Judd as to their feasibility. Then too, the absentee owner asked Robison when the best time would be for him to journey to Ohio to inspect the progress, and the politician frequently thanked his Mentor friend for the project's timely progress, "We are gratified at the rapid progress you are making on the house. It illustrates the value of innundating things."¹⁵

Although Robison supervised the project in Garfield's absence, the congressman periodically traveled to Ohio. In early 1880, the local press

12. Ibid., March 22, 1880.

13. Ibid., March 28, 1880. The boys' bedrooms were later located in this area.

14. JAG to Robison, March 22, 1880, in Letters of JAG, File D, LCHS. Judd left the door out.

15. Ibid.

reported that the Washington legislator had made several "flying visits" to Mentor to "attend to important matters connected with building of his home." The Painesville Telegraph monitored the construction project. In mid-April, an article reported "General Garfield's home is building rapidly; and will be ready for plastering in about a week." The article also noted that the Garfields came home to "inspect their new house--the General expresses great satisfaction in the appearance of the same. . . ." ¹⁶ Generally the owner would stay two or three days to inspect the project and to confer with Judd and Robison.

Most of the work occurred in March and April but extended into May. The roof was in place by April 3. The "new floor in the kitchen is very beautiful," said Robison on the 19th, and the "garret and chambers ready." The men finished the brick work in Garfield's mother's room on April 24. Some minor difficulties occurred in late April when the "plaster crew got drunk and ran away." ¹⁷ The men finished the porch in early May, the glazier set the glass and installed the blinds, and the men painted the house with a third coat to be done in late fall.

Garfield periodically lauded Robison's efforts. As the project neared completion in late May, Garfield informed Robison, "Your every letter supprises me at the way in which you are pushing my affairs. I have no doubt you are waking the sleeping echoes of Mentor by the rapidity of our movements." ¹⁸ Since the family intended to travel to Mentor in mid-May, Garfield wanted to know when the kitchen would be habitable

16. Painesville Telegraph, January 1, 1880; March 4, 1880; April 15, 1880.

17. Robison to JAG, April 26, 1880; April 29, 1880, in JAG papers (microfilm), Series 4, reel 52. The kitchen had a wood skirting. The plasterers had prepared the lath by April 24th, but the actual treatment with plaster stretched into May. They placed a chinck coat as a base, then covered that with a heavy brown coat of plaster.

18. JAG to Robison, May 5, 1880, in Robison papers.

with a useable stove so that the hired "girl could work."¹⁹ Again Garfield praised the doctor, "You have pushed the work on marvelously. It is about the first instance I have ever known of a building being finished at the time set for its completion."²⁰ Also he reported to the Mentor-based construction supervisor that Lucretia is "delighted with your work and surprised at the rapidity with which you have accomplished it."²¹

As the major rehabilitation project neared its conclusion, the Garfields returned to Mentor. On May 11, 1880, Garfield noted, "We are both pleasantly surprised at its appearance. It is far more comely than we had expected and will really make a very beautiful farm cottage."²² The work such as painting continued through May. As late as the 26th, Garfield observed that the "house was full of carpenters and painters."²³ The family agreed to have the house roof treated with a fireproof paint. When Garfield left Mentor on political business in late May, Lucretia wrote that she had been advised to have the house painted white at a cost of approximately \$50. The roof would have a yellow ochre base, and she said the "house is lighter than I thought it would be, and a good tint for green blinds."²⁴

19. Ibid., May 8, 1880. New stove pipe was installed in the house.

20. Ibid., May 14, 1880.

21. Ibid., May 22, 1880.

22. "JAG Diary," IV, (May 11, 1880), p. 396.

23. Ibid., (May 26, 1880), p. 423. Lucretia to JAG, May 19, 1880, in JAG papers (microfilm), Series 3, reel 8. There was a cost savings in using the yellow ochre as a base coat.

24. The crew continued to work on a number of incidentals in late May. For example, Judd suggested clear plate glass for front door instead of opaque French plate. By the 21st the oak staircases were finished. Lucretia reported on "two pretty fireplaces." Judd continued working on the dining room mantle and cupboards. Then the plumbers did not install a bathtub and sink until mid-June, and two men used seven barrels of water lime to finish the cellar. See Lucretia to JAG, May 20, 1880; June 14, 1880, in JAG papers, (microfilm), Series 3, reel 8.

As for final costs, Lucretia reported on May 19, 1880, that the "doctor says the building will be kept within his estimate although that will not include all of the extras."²⁵ In a subsequent autobiographical statement, Garfield related, "Then I spent about four thousand on the house and grounds. This was an old house, only a story and a half high. I have lifted it up to two stories, and I have repaired the fences, and put the farm generally into good order."²⁶

The old farmhouse thus became a more comfortable home for the Garfields. The local press noted the improvements:

You enter the Reception Room of the Garfield House, Mentor, Ohio, from the piazza in front. It is a spacious, finely proportioned room with white walls and broad border in dark, rich colors. The floor is covered with heavy matting. In the center is a large rug of oriental design and smaller ones laid on the sides of the room. The walls are hung with fine engravings--the curtains match the border of the paper. The piano, easy chairs, books, etc., all contribute to make a charming room in which guests love to linger when they call to see General and Mrs. Garfield.²⁷

The renovation of the house was so extensive that many observers thought the building entirely new. (See Fig. 9 for a photograph of the remodeled house). One of the reporters in 1880 wrote that "General Garfield built a new and quite spacious home."²⁸ "On this farm General Garfield has built him a new house,"²⁹ commented another. In actuality,

25. Ibid., May 19, 1880.

26. Garfield in Kirke, "My Personal Finances," 43-44. Garfield estimates that he had \$10,000 equity in the Mentor farm, \$10,000 in the Washington house and \$5,000 in his personal library.

27. Painesville Telegraph, July 22, 1880. Since the GOP presidential campaign was headquartered at the house, it drew a great deal of publicity that year.

28. Benson J. Lossing, A Biography of James A. Garfield: Late President of the United States (New York, 1882), pp. 732-733.

29. James D. McCabe, Our Martyred President. . . . The Life and Public Services of General James A. Garfield. . . . (Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis, and Atlanta, 1881), p. 517.

the work crew had removed the roof at the eaves, raised the walls and more than doubled the size of the house, all without demolishing the original structure. For instance, the remodeled parlor attracted notice. It featured "a large old-fashioned fireplace and the greatest pains have evidently been taken to make this room a Mecca of comfort."³⁰

For present-day visitors who perceive the Garfield residence as a "mansion," it is instructive to review the observations of several persons who toured the property after the 1880 remodeling project. "Although costing far less than would be thought economical for a carriage house up the Hudson, it is by no means an ordinary or uninteresting structure,"³¹ remarked one. Another wrote that the house was "Plain and unpretentious," and that "it cannot be called grand in any sense of the word, but certainly deserves the name of a very pleasant country home. The architecture is composite, the Gothic sentiment prevailing."³² A third felt it could serve as a "convenient country house," and added, "It is generally of the Gothic style . . . but mingled with other styles so as to form what contractors term a 'mixture.'"³³ These visitors labeled the structure "Gothic," perhaps doing so to identify it with a known and accepted category. Actually the style was eclectic. While evidence of the Gothic influence is recognizable, particularly in the sawn trim at the steeply-pitched gables, the numerous dormers, the roof line, and broad front veranda represented various influences. The house is representative of countless structures that can be perhaps most accurately described with the fundamental term "Victorian."³⁴ (See Fig. 10 for a contemporary photograph of the remodeled house).

30. Brisbin, Early Life and Public Career of Garfield, p. 319.

31. Jonas M. Bundy, The Life of Gen. James A. Garfield (New York, 1880), p. 221.

32. Brisbin, Early Life and Public Career of Garfield, pp. 318-319.

33. James D. McCabe, Our Martyred President. . . . The Life and Public Service of General James A. Garfield (Philadelphia, 1881), p. 518.

34. Cardinal, "Lawnfield," 4.

Subsequent 1880 Construction Projects

Ancillary construction work occurred on the Mentor farm during the spring of 1880. Judd's initial plan for the stable bothered Garfield because the client did not understand the design, "I had thought of building it west of the present horse barn, large enough for carriages, and then making two additional stalls at the east end of the present barn."³⁵ Judd suggested utilizing the existing horse barn for carriages and locating the stables in the new structure. This issue remained unresolved until Garfield conferred with Judd in person in mid-April. Ultimately Garfield decided on an addition to the horse barn to store the carriages. Later that summer the workmen treated the barn and outhouse roofs with a concoction of hot coal tar and iron.³⁶ The carpenters also remodeled the tenant's house across Mentor Road. Apparently its cellar had collapsed, requiring a stout underpinning of cobble stones and mortar. Like the main house, the plasterers refurbished this structure.³⁷

Despite the busy presidential election campaign, Garfield still had time to undertake a number of small home improvement projects that fall. A four-man crew laid flagstones in the yard near the backsteps for a walk. Another craftsman built a cistern for the cesspool and laid pipes for the removal of the roof water. "Father" Barnes rebuilt the engine house for the steam treatment of the fodder. A carpenter arrived with the vestibule doors which were necessary to block the cold that winter and another energy saving project involved weather stripping. Garfield even had a front doorbell installed and another doorbell to connect the upstairs library with the rear office. A week before Christmas 1880, Garfield

35. JAG to Robison, March 18, 1880, in Robison papers.

36. "JAG Diary," IV, (May 11, 1880), pp. 396. Robison to JAG, March 16, 1880, in JAG papers (microfilm), Series 4, reel 51. Ibid., March 20, 1880; May 3, 1880, reel 52. The painters had covered the barn roofs in early May.

37. Ibid., April 29, 1880, reel 51; May 6, 1880; May 12, 1880, reel 52.

closed the house accounts with Dr. Robison. The present-day editors of the Garfield diary commented on Robison's role in 1880 as construction supervisor:

The supervisory task was much to the doctor's liking, and he threw himself into it with vigor and enthusiasm. He had his own ideas about the design of the house, but was brought reluctantly to accept the plans of Mrs. Garfield, whose will was at least as strong as his own. It was not long before the doctor was announcing that the new home would be a 'magnificent house.'³⁸

Thus a great deal of physical change had occurred at Garfield's Mentor residence in 1880. (See Base Map 2).

38. "JAG Diary," IV, (September 15, 16, 18, 1880; November 9, 13, 15, 1880; December 19, 1880), pp. 456-457, 484, 486-487, 510. The weather stripping cost \$40 to install, and an additional \$30.20 went for electric bells and labor materials. See JAG papers, November 1, 13, 1880, Series 14, reel 140 for additional details.

CHAPTER SIX

THE 1880 DARK HORSE CAMPAIGN



As the spring of 1880 passed, the farmhouse was renovated to become a three-story, painted white frame building with a long wide porch that stretched across the front. (Fig. 11 clearly depicts the front porch). A tree shaded lawn flanked the road between the house and the picket fence. A wheatfield lay across the road. The house, yard, garden, orchard, barns, and other outbuildings comprised about 12 acres of the 157-acre farm, another 70 were cultivated and the remainder contained woods and pasture. To the immediate rear of the house, a dirt lane traversed level ground northward to a point beyond the orchard, then descended an ancient lake shoreline to the railroad tracks. The refurbished Mentor farmhouse became the nerve center of a national presidential campaign--the "front porch" campaign. That summer and fall thousands visited the candidate, toured the farm, and left their imprint on American political history. Even though the farm was the locus of this political activity, the basic agrarian cycle occurred once more on the Mentor property.

Garfield completed the remodeling project at a propitious moment. This darkest of political dark horse's surprising emergence as the Republican standard bearer in 1880 is best told elsewhere, but suffice it to say that the nomination reinforced Garfield's lifelong policy that he would not actively seek position, office, or power. Like many other events that shaped Garfield's life, the nomination came almost unexpectedly. Garfield went to the convention as little more than an active partisan in the cause of fellow Ohio Senator John Sherman, though considered by some (especially his most ardent supporters) a potential presidential nominee himself. James A. Garfield traveled to Chicago in late May, 1880, as a U.S. senator-elect chosen the previous January, but would return to Mentor in early June as the GOP presidential nominee. The Ohioan benefitted from a fortuitous set of circumstances at the Chicago convention.

Long before the delegates convened in Chicago, Garfield had received growing media attention as a possible dark horse candidate, but he actually went to the Windy City to help prevent the nomination of Ulysses

S. Grant for a third term and to deliver the nominating speech for Sherman. Thirty-five ballots failed to break a deadlock between Stalwart Republicans supporting Grant, and anti-Grant Republicans most of whom backed Sherman or James G. Blaine. The convention turned to Garfield. The surprising nomination seriously divided the GOP that year. The Grant forces, led by New York's Senator Roscoe Conkling, found it difficult to support Garfield and threatened to bolt the party. The nomination of Stalwart Chester A. Arthur of New York as vice-president did little to assuage liberal Republicans who advocated party reform.¹

The Democrats chose former General Winfield Scott Hancock, a hero of Gettysburg as their standard bearer. Hancock had virtually no political or public administrative experience. This portly New Yorker, unlike his politically experienced opponent, was a true "dark horse."

Prevailing political tradition demanded that candidates remain close to home during the canvass, to shun the limelight and not to solicit votes publicly. Always an active candidate in his previous congressional campaigns, this enforced absence from the stump enormously galled the Mentor resident that summer. Despite this involuntary situation, Garfield made a number of brief talks to numerous delegations of supporters who arrived on his doorstep between July and November, 1880. Then too, he made a number of political sorties in northern Ohio as well as traveling to New York on a fence mending trip.

As news of Garfield's nomination on June 8 reached northern Ohio, it sparked a number of enthusiastic celebrations among his friends and neighbors. The residents of nearby Painesville marked the occasion with "general festivities, a tally-ho wagon and a band."² A reporter from the Chicago Tribune commented that a triumphal arch had been erected near

1. See Peskin, Garfield, pp. 451-481, for a treatment of the 1880 nominating process. Also see Leech and Brown, Garfield Orbit, pp. 201-219.

2. Cleveland Leader, June 9, 1880.

the Mentor depot. The night of the 8th, a torchlight procession made its way to the Garfield farm to serenade Lucretia, only to learn that the family was staying at Dr. Robison's awaiting completion of the finishing touches on their residence. Other Garfield fetes included a carriage drawn by four bays, proceeded by the City Cornet band, homes decorated with flags, and a speech by Garfield.³ The event certainly made big news in the Western Reserve.

As mentioned above, presidential candidates did not actively solicit votes in the 1880s. (The era of exhausting whistle stop campaign trips throughout the United States did not dawn until 1896 when Democratic contender William Jennings Bryan traveled some 30,000 miles by train to meet the voters.) The campaign managers and the candidate himself made sure that GOP partisans, opposition Democrats, and especially the uncommitted learned about the man and the issues. This was accomplished through various methods. 1) Copious campaign literature distributed nationwide. In 1880 a large number of official and unofficial stock campaign biographies appeared on the bookshelves, at party offices, and at other distribution points. They were similar in coverage, content and style, and in fact it seems upon reading this literature a century later that many were cloned from a master copy with narratives of the candidate's life and career, family activities on the farm, and lengthy descriptions of the farmhouse. Many of the biographies appeared in 1880, others (and updates) surfaced following the 1881 assassination. 2) Active press coverage. Numerous newspaper reporters from far and wide trooped to the farmhouse to visit with Garfield, and to record and later publish their impressions. 3) The "Front Porch" campaign itself. While the candidate remained at home or at least close-by, numerous delegations of dignitaries, citizens, school children, ethnic and racial minorities, college students, and partisan supporters traveled to Garfield's farm. Usually Garfield would greet these visitors, speaking for a few minutes about patriotic--not political--generalities. Nevertheless much fervent

3. "Special Dispatch to the Chicago Tribune," June 10, 1880. Painesville Telegraph, June 10, 1880; June 17, 1880.

political activity occurred at the farm in 1880, much of which has been recorded in the diaries, personal correspondence, official biographies, and press reports circulated widely.

The Campaign Biographies

The Garfield campaign sparked an outpouring of at least a dozen major published biographies in 1880. Some of the more interesting included: The Republican Textbook for the Campaign of 1880; The Life, Character and Public Services of Jas. A. Garfield; The Republican Manual; The Life of James A. Garfield; The Early life and Public Career of James A. Garfield; and The Life of Gen. James A. Garfield. Several of the authors had visited the Mentor farm prior to the Garfield nomination and had prepared their material in the eventuality that he won the nomination. These books became an excellent vehicle in which to promote the fortunes of that year's GOP dark horse nominee. The biographies filled a vital role in spreading the "good news" of Garfield's suitability and background for the White House. For example, the GOP distributed thousands of copies of The Republican Textbook to speakers who mounted the stump for Garfield. One campaign worker related that with "that book I felt like a preacher with his Bible, armed at every point."⁴ The texts contained a prescribed, set formula (similar to modern romances) containing specific descriptions of the farmhouse (soon to be called "Lawnfield"), notes of the visit to Mentor and a tour around the farm, impressions of the general and the family, and pages of generous commentary about the rural, (bucolic) "good life" as lived in Mentor.

It is instructive to read what the 1880 biographies related about the local scene. One book discussed the Mentor locale: "It was in a very retired

4. Quoted in Jerry B. Rushford, "Political Disciple: The Relationship Between James A. Garfield and the Disciples of Christ." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara, 1977) pp. 266-267.

spot and surrounded by small farms. It was rural and secluded. The post-office was half a mile away in a country store, and the railroad station still farther from his farm, and was reached by a rough country road, as circuitous as it was primitive."⁵ Another related that "It was Mentor all along there, not a regular town but a thickly settled neighborhood. There were houses every hundred rods or so, and little farms, orchards and gardens around them."⁶ E.V. Smalley, who had first visited Garfield at Mentor in 1877, observed in The Republican Manual that the "railroad runs through the meadows on the lower end of the farm; the village of Mentor, with a score of neat white houses, three little churches, and a fine brick schoolhouse, is a half a mile distant. Painesville, the county town, with a population of 5,000, is six miles eastward by an excellent gravel road."⁷ In the following account, farm visitor J.M. Bundy compared the Garfield farm to its neighbors:

Like most of the farms that border the old turnpike, or "ridge-road", near the shore of Lake Erie, it has a small frontage, only fifty rods, and runs back, across the "ridge," about a quarter of a mile in the rear, which was the old and wave-beaten shore of the lake, down across the low and spring-moistened alluvial soil of the beautiful valley, in the middle of which, on the tracks of the Lake Shore Railway. . . .⁸

Next the biographer usually took the reader to the house, described the interior and left with a general impression of the inhabitants' lifestyle. (See Fig. 12 for a floorplan). James S. Brisbin reported:

5. Russell H. Conwell, The Life, Speeches, and Public Services of James A. Garfield. . . . (Portland, Maine, 1881), p. 326.

6. Brisbin, Early Life and Public Career of Garfield, pp. 312-315.

7. E.V. Smalley, The Republican Manual: History, Principles, Early Leaders, Achievements of the Republican Party, With Biographical Sketches of James A. Garfield and Chester A. Arthur (New York, 1880), p. 249. Also see ca. 1880 clipping in JAG papers, v. 16 scrapbooks, p. 570, Series 15, reel 144 for another description of Mentor, "In the little street of Mentor were a gun-shop, a grocery, a harness shop and the post office."

8. Bundy, Life of Garfield, p. 223. Bundy, editor of the New York Evening Mail, served as official campaign biographer and had access to sources no longer extant.

The house stands upon a crest or ridge and cannot be called grand in any sense of the word, but certainly deserves the name of a very pleasant comfortable-looking country house. . . . There are two dormer windows--one in front and one in the rear--and a broad veranda extends across the front and part of side toward Cleveland, affording opportunities to enjoy the breezes, out of the heat of the sun. Lattice work has been arranged for trailing vines. The dimensions are sixty feet front by fifty deep. The apartments are all roomy for a country house and the hallway is so wide that it attracts attention the moment you enter. The first floor contains a hall, with a large writing-table, a sitting-room, parlor, dining-room, kitchen, washroom and pantry. This last on the plan bears the generous endorsement "plenty of shelves and drawers." Up-stairs in the rear part of the second floor is a room that on the plan is entitled "snuggery for general." It is rather small, measuring only thirteen and a half by fourteen feet. It is filled up with book shelves, but it is not intended to usurp the place of library, a separate building outside and at the north-east of the house. Two of the best apartments in the eastern and front part on this floor are especially filled up for occupancy of the general's mother. The front room has a large old fashioned fire-place and the greatest pains have evidently been taken to make this room a Mecca of comfort.

The rooms are finished in hard woods, and everything about the place, while plain and unpretentious, gives it an appearance of quiet comfort. There are very few of the timbers of the old house, over which the new has been constructed, visible at this time, and there will be none in sight when the carpets are laid down. . . . The barn, at the rear, furnishes accommodations for the two carriage-horses, the single carriage-horse, and the heavy working team.

The biographers also left a description of the grounds. (Fig. 13 shows the large yard). Brisbin took the reader outside to relate that the "lawn was liberally dotted with fruit trees, in the spreading branches on one of which--a cherry--a boy was plucking the luscious fruit. Several girls clustered beneath sharing the work and refreshment. A double row of noble elms was in front of the house. Not far off I noticed gooseberry

9. Brisbin, Early Life and Public Career of Garfield, pp. 316-319. Also see JAG papers, Series 15, reel 144 in v. 16, p. 570 for a newspaper clipping which gives a more negative view of the farmhouse. It reported, "They fixed the shell up a while ago and I can't say they bettered it much."

and currant bushes, betokening a garden. . . ."10 Thus these homey accounts gave a positive image of a candidate few would see in person during a presidential campaign conducted decades before today's electronic media coverage.

Then the biographer analyzed the candidate himself. The usual setting would be outside, Garfield actively working with the hired men. Again Brisbin:

Then the tall, broad-shouldered, full-chested, strongly-knit, six-foot two-inch form of Garfield came out from between the buildings. Two telegraph men were with him, and they were arranging for putting a private wire into his office. His head is massive as well as his frame, and his brain is gigantic. He has light brown hair, reddish-brown beard, large blue eyes and full, round, fair face. His weight is, perhaps, two hundred and forty pounds. He dresses plainly and prefers to wear a soft, slouch hat, with a broad brim.

The 1880 campaign literature invariably concluded with a healthy appreciation of the rural good life. For example, Bundy suggested that the farm reflected "truthfully the living and working place of a family enjoying Nature's most human aspect--that in which she responds to all of healthy, hardworking, simple human nature's needs and tastes."¹²

The Garfield Family at the Farm

During the 1880 campaign the family received a great deal of attention. According to conventional wisdom the home is the foundation of the Republic, hence to extol the virtues of family life in a presidential campaign made good political sense. Daughter Mary (Mollie) Garfield Stanley-Brown later recalled:

10. Brisbin, Early Life and Public Career of Garfield, pp. 315-316.

11. Ibid., pp. 320-321.

12. Bundy, Life of Garfield, p. 221.

As father believed there was no place like a farm for children, it was our good fortune to have a generous taste of country life. For six or seven months of each year we lived out-of-doors, were initiated by him into all the mysteries and delights of farm life, and laid away a goodly store of health, strength and vigor. The Farm was father's haven of rest--the only place where he felt he could breathe freely.¹³

Campaign biographer Bundy certainly made good use of the Garfield family. He related that the

household was enlivened by the presence of the General's two eldest boys, Harry A. and James, just returned from the famous St. Paul's School, at Concord, New Hampshire, the former bringing a well-earned prize for English declamation. There were, besides, Mollie, a bright, joyous, beautiful girl just in her teens; Irvin McDowell, next younger, and Abram, the youngest and most peculiar of a flock that has in it no "black sheep,"¹⁴

The Front Porch Campaign--July, September, 1880

Many of the political details of the 1880 presidential campaign are best told in standard scholarly biographies.¹⁵ Appropriate to this study a review of the logistics at the Mentor farm that summer, the stream of visitors who came as well as the physical changes this front porch electioneering caused to the property are certainly germane topics.

The general made certain physical changes to the structures to accommodate the political workers who flocked to the scene. Garfield

13. Mary Garfield Stanley-Brown, "Pictured By Their Children," Youth's Companion, (September 21, 1893), copy in LCHS Files.

14. Bundy, Garfield, p. 222.

15. Theodore Clarke Smith, The Life and Letters of James Abram Garfield I (New Haven, 1925), pp. 992-1043. John M. Taylor, Garfield of Ohio: The Available Man (New York, 1970, pp. 210-222. Peskin, Garfield, pp. 482-513. Leech & Brown, Garfield Orbit, pp. 206-221.

outfitted his small library building at the rear of the main house into a campaign office for the press, meeting room for some visitors, and a gathering place for the family, friends, and employees who in certain measure assisted with the canvass. (See Fig. 14 for an exterior photograph of the library). There was a stove in the library with three tables piled high with correspondence, books, and newspapers. A telegraph machine was connected to the main line on the road, tapping the Western Union's and the Atlantic & Pacific Telegraph Company's transcontinental service. Despite the attention this library received in the contemporary press as the campaign headquarters, the real issues of the day were introduced, discussed, and resolved in the "snuggery," the little room at the head of the stairs on the second floor of the main house where the general and his intimate associates planned the strategy to win the White House. Nonetheless, most attention in the biographies was directed to the activities in the better known campaign office in the library. For instance, A.G. Riddle, a frequent guest of Garfield's, left an excellent account of the activity in this little office:

It consists of but a single room perhaps twenty-two feet by sixteen feet in size. The door is midway on the southern side, opening upon the lawn to the east of the house. Within, as one entered in those days, the first significant feature in its furnishing was the book cases, filled with well-selected volumes in law, politics, history, art, science, and the belles-lettres,--a model library, and such a one as Garfield--statesman, a scholar, and a gentleman would be expected to have. Then, before the numerous windows were placed the desks, some evidently permanent in the room; other mere rude make-shifts, prepared for the emergency by some rural carpenter. Directly opposite the door, before the middle north window, sat Major Swaim, rapidly writing, or the centre of a group of visitors. To the left of the entrance, Mr. [O.L.] Judd, the telegraph operator, constantly receiving messages from every quarter of the land. Sometimes sitting at the east end of the room, dictating to Mr. [Joseph] Brown, whose desk was beside his own; sometimes at the elbow of Major Swaim; sometimes directing Mr. Judd how to answer a dispatch; more often than otherwise, standing to receive, entertain, or dismiss a visitor, was the General himself,--here, there, and everywhere; always busy, cheerful, and, to all appearance, happy.

The floor was almost hopelessly littered with papers, and with every arriving train came hundreds of letters, and newspapers by the sack. Not one of these was slighted, so far as reading

is concerned, and a vast number of the letters were actually answered, the point of courtesy being stretched to include many that were frivolous and impertinent. The comparatively few really important letters were separated from the rest, and, in the intervals of quiet, and far into the night, the General was personally busy, reading, considering, and answering these.¹⁶

On a typical day during the campaign, the candidate rose about 6 A.M., worked on his correspondence, welcomed visitors, and scheduled and managed the ever present farmwork. Guests often joined the family for meals and stayed the night. To accommodate the visitors, the boys had to double up in their quarters or even go to the barns where they slept in the hired mens' quarters or on the hay. Recreational activities included croquet, lawn tennis, cards, reading, group discussions, and singing. Seldom did Garfield turn in until after midnight.

As the 1880 campaign progressed, the general helped plan strategy, raise money, and allocate party funds. (See Fig. 15 for a photograph of the candidate in the front yard). Initially, he divided his time between managing the farm and the canvass, but the latter quickly assumed greater importance. He also invited individuals to the farm to discuss campaign issues or to give them special assignments, and he gave counsel to resolve problems and appease opposing GOP factions. (See Fig. 16 for a typical political meeting photograph). He asked for periodic updates from his supporters throughout the country concerning the progress of the campaign. Each day the mailman brought bags of letters which were screened by three assistants (George U. Rose, Joseph Brown, and Thomas M. Nichol), who answered the congratulatory messages and forwarded requests for photographs and autographs. Garfield, himself, dictated his letters and signed most outgoing mail which consumed several hours each day.¹⁷

16. A.G. Riddle, The Life, Character, and Public Services of Jas. A. Garfield (Cleveland, 1881), pp. 440-441. Also see Special Viaduct Edition of The Willoughby Republican, June 29, 1921, for additional reminescences of the 1880 campaign waged at Lawnfield.

17. See Frederick D. Williams, "Garfield's Front Porch Campaign: The Mentor Scene," Lake County Historical Quarterly, XXII (September, 1980), for a concise treatment of the 1880 campaign at the candidate's farm.

Joseph Brown later recorded his impressions of the campaign's secretarial aspects. He wrote:

Caring for a Presidential nominee's correspondence in those days was no joke. There were from one hundred to three hundred letters daily, endless details to be taken care of, and many interruptions to be endured. There was no organized staff as there would now, with expert stenographers and typists, and no telephone--only one pair of hands to hold down the job. It was drudgery. . . .¹⁸

Activities on the farm quickly developed into a routine. The family ferried guests to nearby Mentor and even to Painesville seven miles distant. Important guests or delegations stopped on the Lake Shore Railroad track a few hundred yards north of the house, walked up the lane, through the barnyard, and gathered in front of the house to hear the candidate speak. (Fig. 17 clearly shows the lane). As Garfield's first scholarly biographer noted, "The house was thus assailed, from the rear as well as the front, by an unending stream of visitors, and curiosity-led sightseers."¹⁹

Although the farm had attracted much attention during the early months of the campaign, it was not until the late summer and early fall that the

18. Joseph Stanley-Brown, "My Friend Garfield," American Heritage, XXII (August, 1971), 50. At the time of the election Brown had not yet added Stanley- to his name. (See below p. 119 for the name change). The local press reported even more correspondence, in late July, the Painesville paper reported that "General Garfield is overwhelmed with letters and dispatches. He told me that he had received more than five thousand, and more coming every day." Painesville Telegraph, July 22, 1880.

19. Smith, Life of Garfield, I, p. 1019. Paying the bills for hosting all the guests must have been a large personal expense for the Garfields. Initially the candidate personally bore the cost of those who drew upon his hospitality. Later apparently a number of his affluent friends in Cleveland collected sufficient funds to pay Garfield's personal campaign expenses. See Frederic G. Mather, "The Home of President Garfield," Potters American Monthly: An Illustrated Magazine of History, Literature, Science and Art, 18 (April, 1882), 371.

large politically motivated delegations began arriving. Garfield's own diary does not report the sizeable delegations visiting until September, although the daily summations record individuals or small groups streaming to the farm in late June. On September 4, he related that a "company of 95 ladies and gentlemen from Indiana arrived by special train, having walked to the house from the railroad, by way of the lane. . . . After spending an hour about the house and grounds, they took the train for the West."²⁰

An extremely emotional visit occurred when the Jubilee Singers of Fisk University arrived from Painesville on September 30. The Garfields gave them coffee and fruit; the collegians sang and the candidate made a few remarks about education. In his earlier political career Garfield had been a staunch Radical Republican ready to defend the rights of the Civil War's freedmen, but by the 1880s it became politically expedient to reduce the level of interest in the American Blacks' rights and aspirations. Garfield's diary entry for that event is very terse but Brown left a much more interesting account. He noted:

In the closing days of the campaign, when the autumn chill was in the air and the days in northern Ohio were chiefly gray and depressing, the colored Jubilee Singers from Fisk University, on tour and filling an engagement in Painesville, nearby, asked to come and sing to the nominee. A few neighbors were invited, and the big living room was well filled. There was an unaccountable sense of hush and expectancy. As the General passed by me in the hall he said rather tensely, "My boy! I am going to say a word to them if it kills me." I knew something was coming, and as there were no reporters present--praises be--I grabbed a notebook and, holding it against the wall, made a verbatim report of the proceedings, which soon took on a decidedly dramatic aspect. There had been an affecting little speech by the leader of the quartet prior to beginning, and as the singers poured out their melodious and at the same time vibrant but mournful spirituals, the little audience became increasingly emotional. Tears were trickling down the cheeks of many of the women, and one staid old gentleman blubbered audibly behind a door. At the

20. "JAG Diary," IV, (September 4, 1880), pp. 451-452.

conclusion of the program, the General arose and, standing at ease beside the fireplace began in a low conversational tone, using rhetorical periods which his audience from the South could quickly grasp. He made plain to me his understanding of the needs and aspirations of a race out of place, then suddenly straightening himself up, he closed his brief remarks with the following words delivered in clear, ringing tones, "And I tell you now, in the closing days of this campaign, that I would rather be with you and defeated than against you and victorious." For a moment there was complete silence and then a sound as of human expirations in unison.

The "story" of the meeting and a copy of the speech appeared in the Cleveland papers, but the closing paragraph was temporarily omitted by the reporter of that interesting event.²¹

There was only one other black contingent that came to the farm during the campaign. The Painesville Telegraph reported that on "October 20th a delegation of colored men from Cleveland came to Mentor by special train and marched to the home of Gen. Garfield headed by a band of musicians of their own color dressed in full uniform."²² (See Fig. 18 for a group portrait of this 300-member party). Minority issues were not addressed in any significant manner in the 1880 Front Porch Campaign.

21. Stanley-Brown, "My Friend Garfield," pp. 5152. Also see Joseph Stanley-Brown Papers, folder 2, Mss 3722, WRHS for a typescript copy of the manuscript. This was prepared in New York on June 24, 1924. Also see "Memoranda Concerning Joseph Stanley-Brown's Relations with General Garfield," June 24, 1924, in Lucretia R. Garfield papers, Box 147, LC. "JAG Diary," IV, (September 30, 1880), p. 463. It can well be imagined that too much vocal support by Garfield of the Blacks of that day could be perceived as a political gaffe, something akin to present-day candidates who "shoot themselves in the foot" with untoward comments or observations.

22. Painesville Telegraph, October 21, 1880. One of Garfield's advisors observed that the "colored men will call on you in a few days by chartered train. That will be all right. We will have a solid North." C.E. Henry to JAG, October 14, 1880 in Norris and Shaffer, Politics and Patronage, p. 288.

The Garfield Campaign Beyond The Farm

On July 3, 1880, the candidate had opened his presidential bid at the dedication of the Lake County Soldiers' Monument in Painesville. While not speaking directly to partisan political issues, Garfield talked for about five minutes about the meaning of the monument, and the patriotism and sacrifice it symbolized. This invitation to address his friends and neighbors gave the local press an opportunity to size up the candidate. "By the subtle chemistry that no man knows," he stated, "all the blood that was shed by our brethren, all the lives that were thus devoted, all the grief and tears, at last christalized itself into granite and rendered immortal the great truths for which they died. And it stands here today, and that is what your monument means."²³ The brief speech, the ceremony and the later reception marked a positive opening of the 1880 GOP presidential campaign. It gave the candidate an opportunity to "wave the bloody shirt," once more to remind his audience about the great conflict in the 1860s, and not so subtly linking it to the opposition.

That summer Garfield left the farm for other political activities and meetings. For instance in July he went to New York ostensibly to meet with arch rival Roscoe Conkling to mend political fences, but the Stalwart did not attend the conference. Obviously the candidate needed the support of the party's right-wing in order to defeat Hancock. Also Garfield made other limited forays into Ohio to confer with party chieftains that year.

The Campaign's Final Weeks

Probably the most dramatic and best reported political incident occurred in late September when on short notice former President Grant and a

23. Quoted in Eric Cardinal, "The Lake County Soldiers' Monument," *The Lake County Historical Quarterly*, XXII (June, 1980), 1-2. This article goes on to describe the origins and development of the Painesville Civil War monument still standing in the center of town in the 1980s.

party of political advisors stopped at Garfield's farm for a brief visit. Although Garfield had blunted Grant's drive for a third term nomination, frenetic behind-the-scenes maneuvers must have convinced the Stalwarts to display at least an outward image of party unity. Garfield recorded his impressions in the diary, mentioning "I had no private conversation with the party, but the call was a pleasant and cordial one all around." The party stayed only about an hour visiting with the Garfields and being introduced to some 200 local residents. The press carried lengthy coverage of the meeting between Garfield, Grant, Conkling, and others.²⁴

24. "JAG Diary," IV, (September 28, 1880), p. 462. Also see "Special Dispatch to the (Cleveland) Leader, September 29, 1880, in Garrett Scrapbooks, v. 2, 1884-85, LCHS. Painesville Telegraph, September 30, 1880. The clipping described the scene.

The Mentor Guards, a mounted torchlight company some fifty strong, did escort duty, and lighted the way over the dark and muddy roads to General Garfield's residence.

Long before the coming of the train at 8:30, the fence in front of the General's residence was duly decorated with the loyal and patriotic citizens of the neighboring townships, each of whom, male and female, clung to a particular picket as if it were a proscenium box secured for this special occasion. As the torchlight procession marked the advance of the distinguished party the citizens climbed the fence and advanced upon the residence by platoons, and when the carriage drove into the yard, the wide and extensive piazza of the house was packed with a solid mass of human beings. The guests were received as they stepped from the carriage by Dr. J.W. Robison, who led the way into the front hall, where General Garfield bade them welcome. First General Grant grasped Garfield's hand and shook it with a warmth that one only sees between old soldiers and comrades in arms.

After a short season of social enjoyment the whole party adjourned to the dining room, where a lunch had been laid which was partaken of, standing. General Garfield, with General Grant on one side and Senator Logan on the other, did the honors of the occasion, while Senator Conkling, at the end of the table, devoted a portion of his time to eating, but the greater part of conversation with Mrs. General Garfield and Mrs. Colonel Rockwell and with the guests at large. During the repast some sparring occurred between Senators Logan and Conkling of the lighter sort, in reference to the latter's Warren speech, concerning which Logan was very complimentary.

As soon as General Grant had finished he left the table with General Garfield to be introduced to friends without, and was followed by General Logan when he had finished a most suprisingly planned and successful attack on a plate of chicken in his immediate vicinity.

Then visitation of sizeable delegations increased in October as the canvass intensi-fied. On the 8th, 400 members of the Young Mens' First Voters Garfield and Arthur Club of Cleveland chartered a six-car train to Mentor. The candidate intoned, "Right here in this yard is a splendid specimen of American sovereignty, the roof and crown of the world of sovereignty. Enlarge it into the millions of men who vote and you have the grand, august sovereign of this last best-born time, the American Republic."²⁵ Garfield considered himself still a young man but reminded the audience that he had been voting before they were born.

Even though women of that day could not vote, they came out to see the candidate. On October 15, about 50 women who were attending a missionary society convocation in Painesville met him. Late in the month 900 "ladies of Cleveland" heard Garfield make a brief address explaining the relation of women to American public life. He stated the "will of the Nation resides in the hearts and homes and by the firesides of the fifty millions of people, and there by the hearthstone nearest to the heart of our sovereign, the people, it is the woman's great and beneficent power to impress itself upon the national will. I greet you for having brought the spirit of home to my home." He also recorded in the diary, "They were all presented to Crete and Mother. It was a curiously impressive scene."²⁶ As with racial minorities, Garfield refused to climb out on any political limbs concerning women's issues.

As October progressed, other politically spirited delegations came to the Garfield farm. A thousand businessmen from Cleveland chartered a special 13-car train on October 15. On the 19th, 500 members of the Lincoln Club of Indianapolis arrived in linen dusters and three-cornered hats, a "burlesque on the rich costumes of the Jefferson Club of Indianapolis." A band preceeded them up the lane, and once Garfield

25. "JAG Diary," IV, (October 8, 1880), p. 466.

26. *Ibid.*, (October 15, 27, 1880), pp. 468, 475. Quoted in Williams, "Garfield's Front Porch Campaign," 6.

finished speaking they cheered him, fired a cannon, shook hands all around and left. A seven-car contingent of Germans arrived, and Garfield had his speech translated to the partisan visitors.²⁷

Unlike present-day presidential elections when all Americans vote on one day, three states voted for state candidates prior to the November general election--Maine, Indiana, and Ohio. That fall Maine had gone Democratic, an event that spread widespread gloom in the GOP rank-and-file. The arrival of such delegations as the Lincoln Club of Indianapolis with their pledge to deliver the state with a 10,000-vote plurality cheered the candidate. Indiana and Ohio went heavily Republican in their state elections in late October. The Painesville Telegraph reported that the "demonstration at Mentor on Saturday afternoon over the Indiana and Ohio elections will be a big affair in every sense of the word. The Lake and Geauga county companies of Boys in Blue will have a grand dress parade at three o'clock in the afternoon and the long torch light procession will move at six. Several pieces of artillery will be stationed about on the General's farm and help along the boom."²⁸ Apparently an earlier massive celebration had brought out some 10,000 to 12,000 spectators at the farm in mid-October. Civil War veterans had formed a line at the station and marched out to the farm.

As the campaign developed, it was not only the partisan politicians who came out to Lawnfield but also the rank-and-file citizens of the Western Reserve. On October 26, 300 citizens from Warren visited Garfield and two days later 200 arrived from Portage County. On the 30th several

27. Ibid., (October 15-16, 19, 1880), pp. 468, 469-470. The local paper reported that "Cleveland's most solid businessmen paid a visit to General Garfield. The train arrived at the General's farm at about four o'clock, when the order went forth to 'form in fours' and in this manner they marched to the doorward, when General Garfield appeared upon the balcony and a rousing cheer went up." Painesville Telegraph, October 21, 1880.

28. Ibid., October 14, 1880. E.T.C. Aldrich's diary contains several brief references to the 1880 campaign. Aldrich Diary, p. 149.

groups visited, including 329 citizens of Youngstown, later in the afternoon 500 from West Salem with a glee club, then 100 iron workers from Cleveland, and at 4 P.M. 1,500 residents from the towns of Lake County and several towns of Ashtabula, Geauga, and Cuyahoga Counties. It rained heavily that afternoon but the "clubs, cavalry and foot, paraded in the field south of the road until after dark."²⁹ Garfield had reviewed the procession but then retreated to the warmth of his house while the festivities continued late into the evening. To each of the groups that visited he extended some appropriate remarks, tailored to make each group feel unique and appreciated by the presidential contender.

Despite some anxious moments when the so-called Morey Letter appeared in the press, Garfield's campaign did not falter nor did the candidate himself become impaled upon a verbal gaffe. James G. Blaine, one of his friendly rivals for leadership roles in the GOP in the 1870s, wrote:

One aspect of Garfield's candidacy was unprecedented. Never before in the history of partisan contests in this country, has a successful Presidential candidate spoken freely on passing events and current issues. To attempt anything of the kind seemed novel, rash and even desperate. Unmindful of these warnings, Garfield spoke to large crowds as he journeyed to and from New York in August, to a great multitude in that city, to delegations and deputations of every kind that called at Mentor during the summer and autumn. With innumerable critics, watchful and eager to catch a phrase that might be turned into ridicule or odium, or a sentence that might be distorted to his own or the party's injury, Garfield did not halt nor trip in any one of his seventy speeches. This seems all the more remarkable when it is remembered that he did not write what he said, and yet spoke with such logical consecutiveness of thought and such admirable precisions of phrase as to defy the accident of misreport and the malignity of misrepresentation.³⁰

29. "JAG Diary," IV, (October 26, 28, 30, 1880), pp. 474, 477-478. Also see Williams, "Garfield's Front Porch Campaign," 6-7, for several amusing campaign anecdotes.

30. This phony letter linked Garfield to a sympathetic view of the then prevalent anti-Chinese feelings in the Far West and certain eastern areas. Garfield himself favored a strong restrictive policy regarding Chinese immigration and employment. The Morey Letter episode is fully explained in Peskin, Garfield, pp. 505-510. The Blaine comments are recorded in Smith, Life of Garfield, II, p. 1039. Also see Royal Cortissoz, The Life of Whitelaw Reid, II (London, 1921), pp. 29-45, for personal account of the front porch campaign.

By November 2, it was all over. A rough count indicates that approximately 15,000 to 17,000 people traveled to to the Mentor farm to visit the candidate during the four month campaign. According to Garfield who recorded his impressions of November 2:

The day opened clear and bright with indications here, and in the weather reports, of a fair day throughout the country. Very quiet in the office-few callers and few telegrams in the forenoon. Dictated and wrote many letters. At 2 P.M. went to town hall and voted for Republican electors. On return stopped at cheese house and settled dairy accounts. During afternoon telegrams indicated peaceful election and heavy vote. At 6 returns began to come in, Judd and Jeffers taking dispatches. Some reporters, and friends from Cleveland came. Later in evening many neighbors came in. By 11 P.M. it became evident that we had carried N.Y. At 12 P.M. we gave supper to about 15 friends. At 3 A.M. we closed the office, secure in all northern states³¹ except N.J. and the Pacific states, which are yet in doubt.

As the election returns came in that evening all family members except Harry A. and James R. Garfield were present. Some of the family participated in a round robin communal letter written that evening. The impressions of the evening included the food--a "jolly feed-canvasbacks--oysters--ham in champagne. . . ."³² Joe Brown recorded activities in the campaign office:

filled with vile men smoking and spitting all over our nice floor. You can cut the smoke with a knife. Jeffrey's, an operator and a good one, from Cleveland, is helping Judd. I am helping out by taking press copies of hundreds of messages. Victory drips fairly from my brush of every³³ dip. I am unroariously enthusiastic, but decidedly stuffy.

31. "JAG Diary," IV, (November 2, 1880), p. 480.

32. Comer, Garfield, p. 46. Also see Lucretia Garfield Comer to Abram Garfield, January 29, 1951, in LRG papers, Box 147, LC for the complete text of this election night victory letter.

33. Comer, Garfield, p. 45.

"Aunt Patty," Mollie's nanny, related, "Later--We have just risen from a midnight supper, about twenty-two were gathered round the tables which were set together in the form of a cross. . . . Mamma and I were the only ladies--Grandma was in bed, and Mollie waited (on table)--The candles which have graced the mantel all summer were lighted in honor of Victory."³⁴

It was a close election. Of the more than ten-million votes cast, Garfield's plurality was less than 7,368, or less than one-tenth of one percent of the total vote cast. Garfield won 215 electoral votes, Hancock 189. Peskin views the Garfield victory as a decisive, personal, but sectional success; Garfield failed to carry one southern state. The minority Greenback party prevented his garnering a majority of the popular vote in 1880, but unlike the controversial 1876 election, Garfield's electoral success seemingly augured an affirmation of the one-party national leadership in the White House created by the Civil War some two decades previously.

As soon as the election concluded, the president-elect began receiving more guests at Lawnfield. On the 3rd the president, faculty, and 70 students from Oberlin College arrived by special train. Then too, many friends and neighbors dropped by to congratulate Garfield. President Rutherford B. Hayes and his wife visited for a few hours that week. School children came, the mail increased, more reporters made the pilgrimage to Mentor and most noxious of all, office seekers by the score either wrote or physically camped on the victor's stoop looking for a patronage appointment in the forthcoming administration.³⁵ Even while he

34. Ibid., pp. 45-46.

35. "JAG Diary," IV, (November 3-6, 1880), pp. 481-484. Brisbin, Early Life and Public Career of Garfield, p. 543. Brisbin wrote: "As the winter wore away and premonitions of the approach of spring became more noticeable, the stream of these pilgrims waxed greater and more virulent. The daily mail grew to an enormous size, and one private secretary was kept busy filing applications for office, which became so persistent as to be very annoying. Some of the more hungry ones appealed to the General's gentle wife, or to his mother, in a vain hope that they would interest themselves in behalf of the applicants. All applications were filed and not replied to." See Painesville Telegraph, January 13, 1881, for an account of a black delegation from Alabama who urged Garfield to appoint one of their race to the cabinet.

ran the campaign, office seekers hounded him. Their frustrations mounted as Garfield either made no promises or rejected their advances. Reportedly, Garfield had to fill 100,000 patronage jobs, certainly a herculean task prior to 20th century data processing. This low point of the then current spoils system came to a head the following July when a disappointed, mentally unbalanced office seeker fatally wounded the president at a Washington rail station.

Standard sources such as Peskin do a masterful job of describing Garfield's frustrations as he prepared himself for the White House. Suffice it to say that he approached the presidency with far less anticipation than normally would be expected. "The personal aspects of the presidency," Garfield recorded, "are far from pleasant. I shall be compelled to live in great social isolation; almost every one who comes to me wants something which he thinks I can and ought to give him, and this embitters the pleasure of friendship. I must confront the problem of trying to survive the Presidency, or as its said of criminals, live it down."³⁶ The president-elect stayed at Lawnfield until late February, 1881, before traveling to the capital city for his inauguration.

Besides this almost frenzied harassment of the president-elect, the hoards of visitors during the 1880 campaign took their toll on the farm. These visitors removed many souvenirs, and crops were stripped from the farm as mementos. For instance, the German delegation carried off the last of the cabbages, the Irish took the potatoes, pumpkins went to the Indiana delegation, the front gate to a workmen's group, businessmen carted off a barrel of pork and a dozen large containers of butter, others removed the family Bible and even lids to the cookstove! Obviously they trampled the grass because Garfield had the backyard resodded in October, and the

36. "JAG Diary," IV, (December 11, 1880), p. 505. It may be recalled that Garfield's untimely death later sparked the passage of the Pendleton Act in 1883, a law to reform the civil service by removing much of the patronage from the chief executive's direct responsibility. The passage of this law is often viewed as a memorial to the slain Garfield.

front in November.³⁷ A neighbor commiserated that it was the "curse of a candidate for high office to have the visitors he does not want, while those he would like to have often remain away out of pity."³⁸ The Chicago Times reported that the carpets and furniture, while new a few months earlier, were "worn and muddied," while the "stripped garden and orchard . . . plainly confess the sad tale of too many callers." The paper unsympathetically added that since Garfield would soon live in the White House, use public furniture and dishware, and have his annual salary increased to \$50,000 from \$5,000, there was good reason why the family "should not worry excessively about the irreparable damage to their carpets."³⁹ On the other hand, the Cleveland Plain Dealer stated that it would "cost Garfield half his first year's salary to put his premises in order."⁴⁰ Other than the references to resodding, the general's diary is unusually mute about the apparent damage incurred at Lawnfield in the campaign.

The Garfield Farm Receives a New Name--Lawnfield

Seemingly the name "Lawnfield" came into fashion at some undertermined point during the 1880 presidential campaign. Research for this study has discovered that the earliest point that the name Lawnfield appeared in print was June 24, 1880.⁴¹ Although there is no reason to believe or

37. "Eli Perkins of Mentor, His Version of the Condition to Which the Visiting Delegates Left Gen. Garfield's Farm." To the Editor of the Chicago Tribune (no date), in JAG Papers, v 15 Scrapbooks, p. 492, Series 15, reel 144 (microfilm). "JAG Diary," IV, (October 16, 1880; November 1, 1880), pp. 469, 480.

38. Quoted in Williams, "Garfield's Front Porch Campaign," 8.

39. Quoted in Ibid.

40. Quoted in Ibid.

41. Painesville Telegraph, June 24, 1880. The paper related that "Lawnfield is the name given to the pleasant home of General and Mrs. Garfield in Mentor by a few friends recently assembled there."

suggest this was the absolute first mention of the name Lawnfield, it is known that the property remained formally nameless in April, 1880. According to Dr. Burke Hinsdale, a family friend, "By the way, the farm should certainly be named when the house is finished. Longer to call it the 'Old Dilly Place' or 'General Garfield's Farm' is not to be thought of. Has anything better than 'Estremadura' been suggested."⁴² According to standard sources, the political reporters originated the name at some point during the campaign. An August invoice carried the name Lawnfield and a piece of family stationary bore the title "Lawnfield, Mentor, Ohio," in September.⁴³ Of course not all observers were disposed to the new name. The Painesville Telegraph reported in December, 1880, that the "Boston Post says Mrs. Garfield rejects the spooony name of Lawnfield for the Mentor Farm--this is not suprising; Mrs. Garfield is a sensible woman and undoubtedly Lawnfield sounds to her ears as it does to others, flatter than dish water would taste."⁴⁴

Agrarian Activities--1880

Once the 1880 presidential campaign got underway, Garfield's attention was generally removed from farm operations, nonetheless, much activity had occurred on the farm that year. The construction work had diverted the hired mens' attention during the spring months which delayed the planting and tilling of the crops. The construction work resulted in large piles of waste materials lying about the orchard area.⁴⁵ During

42. Burke Hinsdale to LRG, April 7, 1880, in JAG papers, MSS 3049, container 2, folder 2, WRHS.

43. Financial Papers, Bills & Receipts, in JAG papers (microfilm), Series 14, reel 140. LRG to James R. Garfield, September 19, 1880, in JAG papers (microfilm) Series 2, reel 4. Cleveland Leader, October 9, 1880.

44. Painesville Telegraph, December 16, 1880.

45. Lucretia to JAG, May 20, 1880, in JAG papers, (microfilm), Series 3, reel 8.

the summer the Garfield diary has a few references to the crops or the men working them. By the end of July, the men threshed wheat, barley, and rye resulting in 219 bushels of wheat from 7 5/8 acres, and got 475 bushels of oats.⁴⁶ Plowing occurred in September and when the men seeded an upland field north of the orchard, they added 250 pounds of Detroit Phosphate to the acre. Two wagon loads of apples were shipped to the local cider mill. In November, the workers removed some apple trees from the orchard to provide space for grapevines. Garfield decided to move the garden from the east side of the house to a place rear of the engine house. Such crops as potatoes, buckwheat, and beets received notice in the diary. Then in early December, one workmen spread 20 bushels of fresh elm ashes to the acre on half of the meadow by the barns, and bone dust on the other half to test the effects on the proliferation of grass in that area.⁴⁷

As 1880 closed, much change had occurred at Lawnfield. The house was rebuilt, given a new name by the media, and the owner nominated and elected president. As the new year started Garfield slowly worked on pressing political concerns of staffing the new administration, getting ready to move to the White House, and preparing the inaugural speech. Obviously he left the farm with great reluctance. The diary is filled with references to his tardy preparations for assuming the chief executive's job in March. When he finally left he was never to return to his beloved Ohio farm again. (Figs. 19-20 contain formal photographs of President and Mrs. Garfield).

46. "JAG Diary", IV, (July 30-31, 1880), pp. 431-432.

47. *Ibid.*, (September 10-11, 1880; October 7, 16, 1880; November 1-2; December 15, 1880) pp. 454, 459, 465, 469, 480, 486, 508, 513-514.

CHAPTER SEVEN

LAWNFIELD 1881-1916:
LUCRETIA R. GARFIELD RETAINS THE PROPERTY



The Immediate Aftermath of Garfield's Assassination

Following his election to the presidency in November, 1880, Garfield remained at Lawnfield (except for a few brief political trips) until late February when he left for Washington. His tenure in office was cut short on July 2, 1881, when he was shot by Charles Julius Guiteau, a disgruntled office seeker. Garfield lingered for 80 days, dying at Elberon on the New Jersey Shore on September 19, 1881. The nation experienced a great outpouring of grief in the aftermath of the shooting and the lingering period of unsuccessful recuperation. (Appendix B contains a typical memorial poem to Garfield). The president's body was transported to Ohio and interred at Lakeview Cemetery in Cleveland in September, 1881. Less than a decade later, an elaborate Victorian era memorial was built to commemorate the slain leader. The memorial was dedicated in 1890.¹

Many of the hastily written 1880 campaign biographies were rereleased in late 1881 or 1882 to bring the shocked public up to date regarding the details of the president's tragic condition. These books included a rerelease of James S. Brisban's book, and William R. Balch, The Life and Public Career of Gen. James A. Garfield . . ., with a lengthy subtitle-- A Full Account of His Election To The Presidency, Momentous Events of His Brief Administration, Assassination, Surgical Treatment, The Sympathy of the Nation, Removal to Elberon, Death, Autopsy, Funeral Obsequies, Interment, Etc., Etc.; James M. Bundy, The Life of Gen. James A. Garfield with a chapter on the Election, Inauguration, and Wounding of the President; Russell H. Conwell, The Life, Speeches, and

1. Just after Garfield's death, an unseemly flap arose over where the body should have been interred. An undated ca. 1881 clipping found in the LCHS collections argued that the "Sage of Mentor should be buried at Mentor." The writer further asserted that "Mr. Garfield owed his success to this district, and it is little to ask that his dust be laid among those who stood by him so faithfully in life. Aside from all this, it is alleged that Lake View Cemetery is owned by private capitalists, who only seek to retain the President's remains through mercenary motives." Undated clipping, "Claiming him," in JAG papers, File B, LCHS.

Public Services of James A. Garfield with the subtitle Twentieth President of the United States, Including an Account of his Assassination, Lingering, Pain, Death and Burial; and finally John C. Ridpath, Memorial Edition, The Life and Work of James A. Garfield, Twentieth President of the United States Embracing an Account . . . and the Tragic Story of His Death.

Examples of other posthumous tributes and reminiscences appeared in the bookstores and other literary outlets of the day. These included: John Stuart Ogilvie, The Life and Death of James A. Garfield: From the Tow Path to the White House . . .; E.V. Smalley, "Characteristics of President Garfield"; and A.F. Rockwell, "From Mentor to Elberon," the latter two articles appeared in The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine. Both Smalley and Rockwell were long time Garfield associates who visited Lawnfield in the late 1870s and again during the hectic presidential campaign. Most of the contemporary campaign biographies and those revised after Garfield's death bear many similarities virtually the same wording, descriptions, and content. Obviously these authors borrowed heavily from each other as they rushed their material to publication. As did the 1880 releases, the post-assassination versions contained standard treatments of the Mentor farm, the 1880 campaign, the lingering physical agony, and elaborate funeral. According to present-day Garfield scholar Eric Cardinal in an article "Garfield in the Eyes of his Biographers:"

The early memorial biographies were maudlin, pious, and distorted. All were fulsome in their praise, deficient in their factual research, and florid in their prose. The tone of the campaign biographies was very nearly as adulatory as the memorial volumes that followed. . . . The Garfield that emerged from these early biographies was perhaps a useful symbol of the self-made man for all Americans of the late nineteenth century, but he was hardly a flesh-and-blood human being. With all his faults carefully erased, with his virtues embellished upon, the idealized Garfield that emerged from these early biographies was a caricature: the canal boy, the log cabin president, the martyr. The public image of Garfield, when indeed the public bothered to think of Garfield, was a distorted one.²

2. Eric J. Cardinal, "Garfield in the Eyes of his Biographers: Garfield, by Allan Peskin and The Garfield Orbit, by Margaret Leech and

For those interested in pursuing the life and times of Garfield, these biographies provide essential reading to set the scene in the 1880s, because what the public as well as the family did to memorialize the slain Ohioan did much to preserve Lawnfield for future generations.

Besides this effective verbal and printed outpouring of grief, a substantial sum of unsolicited financial contributions went to Mrs. Garfield. Cyrus W. Field, the promoter of the first trans-Atlantic cable, spearheaded a donation campaign which eventually collected \$360,000 for the widow and her family. These subscribed funds came from an American public which had suffered through the 80-day ordeal and who remembered what had happened to Mary Todd Lincoln, who found herself living in an impoverished state following President Lincoln's assassination. Conservatively invested in four percent bonds, the trust fund yielded about \$12,000 yearly income. This substantial sum enabled Lucretia Garfield and her family to enjoy a comfortable lifestyle as well as subsidize further enhancement and construction projects at Lawnfield.³

2. (Cont.) Harry J. Brown, "The Lake County Historical Quarterly 20 (September 1978), n.p. has prepared an excellent historiographic essay on the most recent Garfield biographies as well as some comparison to earlier treatments. Cardinal points out that Garfield has received, despite the short presidency, much attention over the years from historians but does not really analyze why the slain president has earned so much attention in the past century. Also see John Stuart Ogilvie, The Life and Death of James A. Garfield: From the Tow Path to the White House. . . . (Cincinnati, 1881). E.V. Smalley, "Characteristics of President Garfield," The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine, XXIII (November, 1881), 168-176. A.F. Rockwell, "From Mentor to Elberon," The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine, XXIII (January, 1882), 431-438.

3. Lucretia received the president's salary for one year and a \$5,000 yearly pension. Various contemporary sources mention varying sums that went to Mrs. Garfield. See Undated Cleveland clippings, "Garfield's Family," Lawnfield File, LCHS. These funds were invested in United States bonds. Also see Buffalo Express, July 21, 1895, in LCHS Files. The LRG papers, Box 103 contain the financial records of the United States Trust Company's dealings with Mrs. Garfield. She usually received a quarterly check for approximately \$3,000 and the rate of return varied on the principal. In the early 1900s she received between \$14,000 and \$16,000 annually. Box 104 contains the records of the funds she got from the Pension Agent in Columbus, Ohio, a quarterly payment of \$1,250. Feis, Mollie Garfield contains some information about the trust fund.

Shortly after Garfield's death, the legal machinery started moving to process the estate. Since he had died intestate, a court prepared a "letter of administration," which established procedures to prepare the required "true list or inventory of all moneys, goods, chattels, rights and credits of the deceased;" and to "administer the estate according to law and to render on oath a true account to the administrator within 18 months."⁴ Joseph Rudolph, his brother-in-law, was appointed the agent to administer the Garfield estate. The court records revealed that the estate contained household goods valued at \$10,000; investments totaled \$68,294; and other property such as four horses, ten cows, three hogs, a carriage, a square box wagon, one buggy, and 250 bushels of wheat amounted to an additional \$3,000. An October 10, 1883, balance sheet indicated that portions of the estate amounted to \$45,096.⁵ (See Appendix C for a complete list of pertinent schedules listing or inventorying the total \$76,056 Garfield estate).

Despite this financial security, the assassination created some changes in the family structure in the early 1880s. Apparently Lucretia returned to Lawnfield following her husband's death but spent the winter of 1881-1882 in Cleveland. The next fall she bought a house at 968 Prospect Street in Cleveland described as an "imposing brick mansion, with a broad hall in the center and large rooms on either side. The grounds are large for a city residence."⁶

Living in Cleveland provided Mollie an opportunity to attend a favorite girl's school there, probably one reason for the move. The older boys

4. "Letters of Administration," in LRG papers, Box 98, LC. This document presents the rules and procedures under which the estate would be administered.

5. "Order to Appraise," November 4, 1881; "Deceased Inventory and Appraisal," 11, 1881, Schedules B,D,F, in JAG papers, File B, LCHS. This file contains a chronological list of the processing of the estate.

6. Painesville Telegraph, October 8, 1885. This paper had also reported that "if home is where the heart is, the associations connected with The Farm at Mentor, make it pre-eminently the home of Mrs. Garfield and her children." Ibid., November 10, 1881.

returned to their private boarding school in New Hampshire while the two youngest, Irvin and Abram, remained at home.

Meanwhile, Lucretia's father and her brother Joseph Rudolph and his family moved to Lawnfield from Hiram during the winter of 1880-1881 to assume active operation of the farm. (See Fig. 21 for a photograph of Joseph and Lide Rudolph). They continued to reside at Lawnfield during the 1880s.⁷ Lawnfield thus served as a working farm in the 1880s, a goal obviously set by James A. Garfield when he had purchased the property in 1876.

During the succeeding years Mrs. Garfield made a commitment to improve the quality of livestock on the farm. The impetus originated from Harry (Hal) Garfield, who had observed in July, 1884, "Seems to me we should be getting blooded stock on the farm all the time instead of keeping these common breeds, which are just as hard to raise and which bring not near so much money when sold as full-blooded stock."⁸ Soon Hal and Grandfather Rudolph drove to a nearby farm to inspect "some blooded Herefords. . . . They bring now as much as \$500 a head."⁹

The overall appearance of Lawnfield did not change appreciably from the summer of 1880 until the summer of 1885. According to detailed description in Potter's American:

Close by the junction, and on the north side of the stage-road, is the frame house that General Garfield so remodeled and enlarged that no vestige of the former dwelling remains, either outside or inside. The house stands with its length parallel to the road, and distance there-from fifty feet or more. A

7. Ibid., February 23, 1882. Also see Joseph Rudolph, "Autobiography," September 28, 1928, in the Harry A. Garfield Papers, Box 38, LC. Hereafter cited as the HAG papers. The Rudolfs lived with Lucretia from 1881 until 1918.

8. Quoted in Lucretia Garfield Comer, Harry Garfield's First Forty Years: Man of Action in a Troubled World (New York, 1965), pp. 80-81.

9. Ibid., p. 81.

well-kept lawn covers all this space, there being no path from the front gate to the stone step that lies at the edge of the piazza, opposite the main entrance. There is no need of a path, for everybody drives in at the open gateway at the right, lands his passengers at the end of the long piazza, and turns about on the graveled loop to await their coming. A group of tall locusts at the fence keeps off the glare of the midday sun, while the sitters upon the piazza are partially sheltered by a cluster of evergreens close at hand. . . . Stepping out at the rear of the main hall, the visitor discovers the old-style barns a little distance off; the barns evidently belonged to the house as it was in the first place. A path to the right takes one to the office, a little one-story building, where the owner of the place was in the habit of retiring whenever there was any hard work on hand.¹⁰

During this interval at least two small construction projects--one involving the main house and the other an outbuilding--occurred on the farm. The few changes were made in the years immediately following Garfield's death. In fact the only change of note involved a "new porch . . . added to the Lawnfield home, upon the east side. . . ." ¹¹ in 1882.

The local press recorded at least one new ancillary structure built on the premises in the early 1880s. The Painesville Telegraph reported that "Mr. Rudolph, who has charge of the farm of Mrs. Garfield intends making some improvements in the buildings on the place. A barn for the storing of hay and grain will be erected north of the railroad tracks. Other buildings will be put in first class repair." The county tax assessor valued the new barn at \$300.¹² The precise location of the barn has been lost--the structure no longer extant, but perhaps an archeological investigation may well uncover the site north of the railway tracks.

10. Mather, "Home of President Garfield," Potter's American, 370.

11. Painesville Telegraph, June 15, 1882. The reporter tinged the article with obvious sorrow, lamenting for the "touch of a vanished hand, the sound of a voice that is still."

12. Ibid., February 23, 1882. Auditor's Duplicates, Lake County, Ohio, 1882, v. 2, p. 110.

The Presidential Papers--Their Effect on Lawnfield

The curation and preservation of Garfield's personal library and state papers assumed great importance as a family project. Of interest and relevance to this study are the origins and development of the fireproof vault which became so integral a part of Lawnfield. Initially Garfield stored personal papers and official documents at his congressional office or in Washington residences. One of the clerks began cataloging the library materials in August 1880, and as the successful campaign generated more paper, the president-elect "wrote a long letter to (Almon F.) Rockwell requesting him to assist (George V.) Rose in getting my letters, notes of letters, together in some fireproof place."¹³ In this letter to Rockwell, Garfield told him that Rose, a Garfield secretary, was going to the capital and suggested:

I want you to assist him in packing and storing in some fireproof place my accumulated letters and papers now at the house. He will call on you soon after he reaches Washington. Please consult with him about the number and size of boxes needed and order some carpenter to make them. I want strong boxes, with rope handles, in which to enclose all my letters, papers, shorthand notes of letters, etc. If you have a place where they will be reasonably safe against fire please keep them in store until I come. . . .

Following Garfield's death, Lucretia had the papers transferred to the Treasury Department for safekeeping, and Joseph Brown was retained to organize these papers for a biography. Mrs. Garfield contacted a Treasury Department official about the delay in the biography but mentioned the proposed vault. She stated:

immediately after General Garfield's death I ordered to be collected all his papers and to be stored in a fireproof vault at Washington to be held intact until we could begin the work of

13. "JAG Diary," IV, p. 504. George Rose had served as Garfield's personal secretary since the late 1860s, but left soon after the election. Apparently the issue of some back wages created a rift between the two men. Almon F. Rockwell was a longtime friend.

14. JAG to Almon F. Rockwell, December 10, 1880, in Almon F. Rockwell papers, LC.

assorting and arranging them for future use. Consequently nothing is, or has been, in my possession since the first of October.

The work was divided between Joseph Brown in Washington and Harry A. and James R. Garfield at Lawnfield. For example, Hal spent the summer of 1883 arranging his father's books and the following year prepared a card catalogue. Meanwhile, Brown continued to process the papers at his residence on Massachusetts Avenue in the capital. He built a fireproof room and installed a security device to warn him if anything was amiss. Safe storage of the books and papers became a personal concern for Lucretia during this period, especially when Brown planned to finish his work in summer 1885.

Ultimately as ideas surfaced and discussions were held by the family and interested parties, the impetus for additional construction at Lawnfield to house the books and manuscripts became a necessity and a reality in the mid-1880s. Although the precise origins of a new library at Lawnfield remain clouded, when Brown wrote Lucretia in October, 1883, he was actively considering a permanent location. "Several plans," he stated, "conc. the place for the papers rise up before me but I send memoranda conc. only one of them the one I consider the most feasible. . . . The little sketches, accompanying it, seem to make my meaning planned. My only fear -- it may look and in reality be too expensive."¹⁶

15. Quoted in Index to the James A. Garfield Papers (Washington, 1973), p. viii. These early official biographies, using the family papers, never got underway. See LRG papers, Box 90 for correspondence that sheds light on this interesting facet. Also see the same collection, Box 91 for an inventory of the papers.

16. Joseph Stanley-Brown to Lucretia Garfield, October 18, 1883, in LRG papers, Box 20, LC. Already in 1881 the local press knew about the fireproof vault project. According to the Painesville Telegraph, December 13, 1881, "Mrs. Garfield will erect at the Mentor homestead a fireproof building for the safekeeping of the late President's valuable manuscripts and books. . . it will occupy the ground on which the wooden structure used as a office now stands." Despite this early report, nothing happened at Lawnfield.

Brown, formerly employed by President Garfield, continued to work for Mrs. Garfield. He labored diligently to get what remained of the president's papers in Washington in order, stored, and transferred to Mentor. He carried on an extensive correspondence with Lucretia probably for various motives: continuing affection for the memory of the dead president coupled with a sense of duty concerning curation of the papers; personal employment; opportunities for advancement through his connections with the former first lady; and a growing romantic inclination toward Mollie Garfield, a girl just in her teens when Brown had first met her, who became the object of his affections during the early 1880s.¹⁷

The Memorial Library Project -- 1885

Thus a variety of circumstances motivated Lucretia Garfield to make one last, major structural addition to Lawnfield. In 1885 she commissioned the construction of a major wing to be added to the rear of the main house to contain a memorial library dedicated to the slain president. She hired Cleveland architect Forrest A. Coburn to design the addition.¹⁸

17. It was around this time that Brown added the Stanley- to his name. Later Brown attended Yale to complete his education, demonstrating that his intentions toward Mollie would result in a professional career and a successful marriage.

18. Coburn was the senior partner in the firm of Coburn and Barnum, later Coburn, Barnum, Benes, and Hubbell, which designed the Blackstone building, the Western Reserve Medical School building, Guildford Cottage at Mather College and many Cleveland public school buildings. The firm was one of Cleveland's most prominent. Cardinal, "Lawnfield," 4.

Coburn had entered into partnership with Frank S. Barnum in 1878 which lasted until his death in 1897. Cleveland city directories list him as a draftsman in 1871-1872; and as an architect in 1875-1876. The 1880s were of great activity and hard work for the firm, but according to one local historian, the "firm forged steadily ahead, gaining recognition as prominent representatives of the profession." Samuel Orth, A History of Cleveland, Ohio (Cleveland, 1910), pp. 286-287. Later the principal partner Barnum was appointed the architect for the Cleveland Board of Education, and following Coburn's death, the partnership survived until it was dissolved in 1905.

While Coburn is known as the architect of record, certainly Lucretia, Harry and James Garfield and Joseph Stanley-Brown became involved in this project. Initially, Mrs. Garfield wanted a small ground floor wing added to the rear of the existing house. Apparently the architect's preliminary sketches reflected this approach, but the project evolved into something quite different. The gentle encouragement and persistent counsel of Stanley-Brown shaped major changes to the original design. Stanley-Brown's processing of the Garfield papers in Washington approached its conclusion in 1885. He stored them in a fireproof room at his lodgings in the early 1880s, but he too began to be concerned about their preservation once he had finished. Expressing his concern to Lucretia about their permanent storage, Stanley-Brown wrote on April 25, 1885:

This following idea has been tumbling about in my head for some time. Would it be possible for you to expeditiously mature plans for a suitable inexpensive fireproof building perhaps making an addition to the house that could be erected ostensibly for the purpose of holding the General's large library but to be used also as a receptacle for the papers. If the building could be so arranged that someone could occupy it in the winter season so much the better.

This is the first hard information regarding the genesis of the library project. Since Lucretia still resided in Cleveland during the early 1880s, her contacts with the architectural firm were probably oral. In any case there is little documentary evidence pertaining to her relationship with the design firm.

Additionally, Stanley-Brown argued that construction of this facility would remove a large responsibility from Lucretia's mind. He went on to advise placing the structure at the rear of the dining room or study, building it

18. (Cont.) Although several local Cleveland publications depict numerous buildings designed by this firm, no remaining documents researched to this point illustrate Coburn's & Barnum's work at Lawnfield. Conceivably some data could surface to document this work.

19. Stanley-Brown to LRG, April 25, 1885 in LRG papers, Box 21, LC.

of brick, and painting it to make it an unnoticed portion to promote security. This letter clearly displays some serious thinking about what was to become an early example of the presidential library system. Self-effacing as usual, Stanley-Brown closed with "this idea of a building just popped into my mind."²⁰

Plans for the annex proceeded on several fronts. While the interchange between Lucretia and Coburn has apparently not survived, the correspondence with Stanley-Brown illustrates a young man with many ideas. He quickly followed up with more detailed recommendations. On April 30, he mailed a typed four-page memorandum with three sketches to Cleveland (Appendix E). The sketches depict the extension of the dining room rearward, a profile view, and a general perspective. This memorandum contained detailed recommendations for a two-story brick wall with iron girders to support a covering of fire clay bricks. To Stanley-Brown, fire protection assumed top priority. "The second story room," he suggested, "should also be made of iron girders with brick arches, so that if the light framework of the roof were burned off the ceiling would be undisturbed."²¹ Already the idea of a large bay window overlooking the east lawn surfaced. Stanley-Brown was not concerned that the ancillary construction would "detract from, but rather add to the beauty and symmetry of the house."²²

During the spring of 1885, Stanley-Brown sent numerous letters to Lucretia. He forwarded personal recommendations and even copies of current periodicals to allow her to glean ideas for the project. He sent recent issues of Decorators and Furnishers as well as Building, two contemporary publications presenting information for home improvements. He bombarded the widow with ideas for chimneys and fireproof materials to preserve the structure.

20. Ibid. The Rutherford B. Hayes house in Fremont, Ohio, contained an early presidential library.

21. Ibid., April 30, 1885.

22. Ibid.

Then too, he warned Lucretia about unscrupulous architects and builders "considering you fair plucking because you have reputed wealth."²³ "Pay the architect," he cautioned, "for his plans a fair price and dismiss him. Do not pay him a percentage for over-seeing the work."²⁴ Stanley-Brown added that Captain Joseph Rudolph could serve as the construction supervisor; and already the name William Judd appears in the correspondence--the man who had managed the 1880 rehabilitation project.

The earnest Stanley-Brown certainly played the role of consumer advocate by offering other applicable suggestions on building materials, cost savings, and even the heating system including innovative ideas to prevent heat loss from the furnace when the fireplace was in operation. According to the former secretary, "This subject of heating is worth looking into carefully."²⁵

He made suggestions regarding the layout of existing rooms with the study and a proposed new room to make it "one of the most if not the most attractive in the house."²⁶ Stanley-Brown speculated that if a windmill could be utilized to supplement the hydraulic ram in the lower field linked to an interior tank, water could be provided throughout the house even in the coldest winter months. "My head fairly teems with thoughts upon this subject and if I become too 'numerous' just let me know,"²⁷ he concluded one letter by offering a tactful retreat.

As May, 1885, advanced, Stanley-Brown's interest in the Lawnfield project continue unabated. He offered many suggestions for state-of-the-art technological improvements including a gas engine to

23. Ibid., May 5, 1885.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

pump water to a tank in the attic, observing that "you have gas and the water supply is remote."²⁸ On the 22nd, Stanley-Brown recommended siting the washroom under the cellar stairs, thus "abolishing the wash house," keeping an eye on the landscape as well as the interior; placing tiles on the kitchen floor; erecting wooden rafters in the library; circulating hot air in pipes contained in a shaft covered with a removable board; and installing quality plumbing. He wondered "Where is the new well? The old one is dangerous."²⁹

It was only a matter of time before the youthful home improvement "expert" questioned the concepts advanced by the professional architect. Apparently Lucretia had sent him a copy of the plans for review which he did enthusiastically. So "deeply am I interested in the matter," he wrote, "and so radically do I disagree with your architect as to the details."³⁰

Stanley-Brown took issue with the initial design that it "gives evidence of too hasty consideration of a large subject, supplemented perhaps by not the best advice from an architect whose competency is compromised if the drawing reflects his ideas."³¹ "What is the first consideration," he queried, "in a country home indeed, in any home, though we do not find it always within the limitations which a city impose? We look for a broad, open effect, a sense of general freedom, and of space. We like to enter a hospitable hall from which ample rooms are seen opening off on all sides, a hall, the end of which commands some view of rural life."³² Warming to his self-appointed task, the critical reviewer continued, "You

28. Ibid., May 17, 1885. Stanley-Brown often closed with an inquiry and an occasional enclosure for the "other one," his love was about 16 years old at the time.

29. Ibid., May 22, 1885.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

enter your front door on the south; there is at once a sense of contraction and narrowness. A glimpse is had of the parlor through a meagre door; the dining room is reached by a narrow uninviting lane, so dark that one does not escape treading on his companion's dress; at the end of this lane one turns but to enter another passage, 6 ft x 30 ft."³³ The visitor would pass the kitchen with the "odor of cooking food, and disturbance of kitchen 'klack'." The house "cut into two parts, connected by the narrow sluiceway of a 6 ft x 30 ft, to reach the library," all of which Stanley-Brown viewed as a "gauntlet placed between the two parts of your house, that guests must run when you take them for a stroll down the lane the only pleasant walk about the farm."³⁴ He offered his own suggestions as to the future layout of the house. Stanley-Brown argued that changing the present kitchen to the hall by removing the "narrow passageway." A "wide door opens from the front hall into the parlor," and then from the parlor, by means of

similar doors you pass into the large rear room, from which a stairway can be erected in any direction to the floor above; another wide door, such as Mrs. Nordoff will describe to you, leads into the dining room; then again by another you go from the dining room to library. The fireplaces are all so arranged that they furnish an objective point to attract the eye through the doorway. What an open, generous air this at once gives the entire first floor.³⁵

The self-taught designer continued with additional recommendations. The library would remain on the ground floor, reached by yet another wide doorway in the new rear room. "As you will have an excellent cellar," Stanley-Brown observed, "for the storage of fuel, the wood-house, always so unsightly can be torn away, and a piazza erected along the rear of the house similar to the one on the front. Your back door will be protected in summer by the porch, and an arrangement of adjustable glass doors

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid.

will protect it in winter."³⁶ Then Stanley-Brown extended his advice to touch on exterior issues. As for the well, he said, "Either fill up the well, whose water I am confident is rendered noxious by seepage, or else attach a small hand pump and use it to water the grass. With the abolition of the disgusting kitchen doors and the construction of a grass-plot and a flower bed or two, how attractive will this back porch become?"³⁷

Throughout the Stanley-Brown correspondence, numerous suggestions were made but not always pursued with the intensity of those presented above, although he continued to keep the pressure on regarding the architect. On one occasion, Stanley-Brown stated that if he "thinks these details cannot be carried out, I beg to differ with him, and base my difference on a good many long days in remodeling old houses and watching with lively interest the construction of new ones. With intelligent ingenuity there is nothing that cannot be done with building materials."³⁸

Apparently architect Coburn incorporated many of these ideas into the final plans, but placed the library on the second floor at the head of the main stairway. Wisely perceiving Lucretia's endorsement of this approach, Stanley-Brown agreed, "It was an inspiration that suggested putting the library on the half-story. . . . The library now has the doubled charm of elevation from the lawn meaning seclusion and quiet and closeness to other rooms." He extended generous approbation to the final plan, "By all means carry out the plan. To have changed the old dining room would have been barbarous."³⁹ Stanley-Brown wanted to preserve the symmetry of the library but not lose the western view, the

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid. May 31, 1885.

"prettiest on the place." He recommended moving the fireplace to the north wall, putting it outside and having the entire room fireproofed.

The rich trove of Stanley-Brown/Garfield correspondence terminates in mid-June when he traveled to Ohio to add his energies personally to the project. On June 11, Stanley-Brown had suggested that red trimmings were somewhat bold perhaps a softer color to match the stone tint. He wanted brick placed in the angle of the gables because to "run the stonework all the way to the peak will make it too heavy."⁴⁰ Other recommendations regarding stone dressing for the first floor, then brick concealed by siding above this with a divider, were not followed the addition is stone to the top of the second story. Although the documentary record pointedly demonstrates that Stanley-Brown assumed a large role in the 1885 construction project, Lucretia Garfield's granddaughter, Lucretia Garfield Comer, offered a different interpretation in her biography Harry Garfield's First Forty Years. According to Comer:

The addition at Mentor was their mother's project from the first. . . . In the spring of 1885, she wrote Hal that Joe [Stanley-Brown] would finish his work for her before the end of the summer and she wanted to arrange for the safekeeping of the material. She had decided that sooner or later her home would be at the farm, and would it not be feasible to start at once to fireproof part of any addition she might later build there?⁴¹

The written record illustrates that this project definitely bore a family committee imprint with Lucretia as the final arbiter.

The family broke ground for the project in June, 1885, but it was not until mid-1886 that all construction and furnishing terminated. William

40. Ibid., June 11, 1885. Following the summer at Lawnfield, Stanley-Brown went to Yale to complete his education. Just as James A. Garfield had Dr. Robison to serve his interests, Lucretia had Joseph Stanley-Brown to look after her, or at least consult with on many subjects--construction projects, investments, family and farm.

41. Comer, Harry Garfield's First Forty Years, pp. 83-84.

Judd acted as overseer. The project had a half finished look in the summer of 1885 with progress noted in the stonework and the yard littered with building materials. A friend invited the Garfields to Cleveland to escape the noise and hubub of workmen and hammers and find quiet and peace. . . ."42 The older boys and Stanley-Brown worked on the project, and by summer's end the main structure of the annex was fairly complete -- the memorial library with its fireproof vault, the new kitchen, laundry, and maid's room. Jim Garfield recalled later, "the old kitchen has gone and the girls are delighted with the new one, especially the gas part of it. The fireplace in the new hall into which the old kitchen and pantries were being transformed will be a fine one, larger than that in the library and handsomer because of the pretty effect of the stairs behind it."43 The construction continued through the winter, and when the family moved from Cleveland at the end of May, 1886, with three carloads of household items and furniture, workmen still remained on the job. When Hal and young Irvin McDowell Garfield returned home from school in summer, 1886, they found the project just about completed.

Meanwhile Lucretia had decided to move to Lawnfield permanently. The widow had offered the Cleveland residence for sale in the fall of 1885, and although she had received a bid for the property in spring, 1886, due to personal concerns regarding the compensation offered by the buyer, Lucretia declined. She sold the house in March, 1886, for \$5,000.44

The Lucretia R. Garfield papers at the Library of Congress contain many receipts and financial records of the 1885-1886 library construction

42. Ibid., p. 85. Painesville Telegraph, June 4, 1885.

43. Quoted in Comer, Harry Garfield's First Forty Years, p. 85.

44. Painesville Telegraph, October 8, 1885. Comer, Harry Garfield, p. 85. Mortgage Deed, Cuyahoga County Deeds, v. 393, p. 175, in LRG papers, Box 104, LC.

project. For example, the lathing and plastering of "your Place at Mentor" cost \$171.93. Other bills include William Judd, "Builder and Constructor," working in the barn; "Working with Plumber in B. Pantry" and "Fixing Back Room and Front Service for a total of \$59.42." In February, 1886, Lucretia spent \$119.63 for "4-1/2 Rolls Red Morris Paper for the Blue Bed Room," 96 feet of "Gilt Moulding," 113 feet "Bamboo Moulding for the Pink Bedroom," and other items. She paid \$110 for a Persian rug. During the summer of 1886 she bought a surrey and a larger buggy for a total of \$725. That November she purchased \$16 worth of trees, bushes, and bulbs.⁴⁵ From inspection of the Garfield receipts, Lucretia paid the bills promptly to several companies located in Cleveland; apparently Mentor could not support the type of stores, merchants, and specialty shops that she needed to complete interior decoration at Lawnfield.

Once the library and other alterations were finished, probably including a porte cochere to the northwest corner of the main house, the outward as well as the interior appearance of Lawnfield changed dramatically. (Fig. 22 illustrates the library exterior). According to one observer, Mrs. Garfield has

added to the modest frame house of her husband a "Queen Anne" structure which cost \$30,000. It is the most imposing in the country, although the new part is behind and wholly subservient to the old house. . . . This still remains the head and front of the Garfield home, although remodeled to conform with the addition. A \$30,000 addition to a \$5,000 house is a curiosity in modern architecture, but sentiment for the past and its illustrious dead inspired it. There are probably sixty rooms in both new and old houses. They are all furnished in modern style and with considerable elegance, and there is an air of aristocracy about the interior which Garfield did not know in his own home.⁴⁶

45. Receipted Bills, November 5, 1885; January 21, 1886; February 1, 1886; July 17, 1886; August 17, 1886; November 4, 1886; in LRG Papers, Box 100, LC.

46. "The Garfield Family," undated clippings ca. 1886 in Garritt scrapbooks, v. 2, 1884-1885, LCHS. The improvements to the main house were valued at \$6,000 by the local assessor in 1885. This increased the tax liability for the farm from \$117 in 1885 to \$183 the following year when cost of improvements fell due. Auditor's Duplicates, Lake County, Ohio, 1885-1886, v. 2, pp. 127, 131.

This article also described then modern conveniences such as indoor plumbing, gas fittings, and steam heating. Another reported that "expensive improvements are going on in its sanitary works."⁴⁷ One undated clipping ca. 1886 referred to a "wide wing of stone has been added to the east end, and in this new part is a vault containing the papers and other valuable treasures of the late Executive, and also a study or memorial room The architecture is composite, the Gothic sentiment prevailing."⁴⁸ A decade later a visiting reporter noted that the "Lawnfield of today is not as Garfield last saw it." He continued:

Then it was a modest frame cottage, the home of a gentleman. Today a great mansion rears itself above the trees, and its red tile roof can be seen for miles. The new house does not resemble the old Garfield home as we saw it illustrated in the campaign of 1880. Mrs. Garfield built a great mansion for herself and her children, such a mansion, indeed, as Garfield might have built on his retirement from the Presidency. But she made the great mansion subsidiary to the cottage. The old home remains intact as General Garfield rebuilt it. The entrance is through the old house. It remains the front, and the new stone structure⁴⁹ is called a wing addition, although several times the larger.

Other interior changes occurred. The first floor bedroom that Garfield occupied while the second story remodeling was being completed in 1877, now became a second, "smoking" parlor. The new reception room dominated the old parlor, which Mrs. Garfield remodeled, replacing the dark decor with light, painted woodwork and airy look reminiscent of the Federal period and representative of the neo-classical style then being popularized.

Despite all the changes to Lawnfield, the major and most dramatic involved the library annex. This wing clearly dominated the house's

47. Painesville Telegraph, July 16, 1885.

48. Undated clippings in Garritt Scrapbooks, v. 2, 1884-1885, LCHS.

49. Buffalo Express, July 21, 1895, clipping in James R. Garfield Scrapbook, LCHS.

interior. A sweeping stairway led to a room far more opulent than any other room in the house. One visitor observed:

There is less simplicity in other parts of the house. The paintings in the parlors are works of art. But the one great idea in this home is Garfield the father, Garfield the statesman. Pictures and busts of him are everywhere. On the stairway leading to the library is an oil portrait of him, made in 1862, when he came from the war. Above it hang his swords. The library is a refuge-room. It is in the upper story of the new part, and an ideal spot for rest or literary labor. There are about 2,000 volumes here arranged for convenience. The tables are loaded with art, books, and magazines. Where there are walls above the books, pictures of authors, with their autographs attached are hung.⁵⁰

The library contained blond white oak paneling which dominated the room. (Figs. 23-24 are interior photographs of the library). It contained a "huge fire-proof vault room" that Lucretia lovingly named the "Memory Room," containing Garfield's private papers, books, and other memorabilia. Apparently she spent many spare hours among Garfield's effects. Harry Garfield had described the annex to Henry Howe as a "palatial 'Queen Anne' structure of stone."⁵¹ The features of the style are evident especially the bay windows, the steep gable and sawn shingle wall surfaces on the third story dormers the rock-faced sandstone facade of the first two stories with arches and blind arches suggests the Romanesque Revival then being popularized by Boston architect Henry Hobson Richardson. This memorial addition, like the earlier portions of the structure, can not be easily categorized.

Contemporaries termed the annex Gothic, Queen Anne, and plain country style mansion. Pure elements of various styles can be observed in the building, a Victorian melange. Extant ca. 1880s photographs clearly show the dramatic effect of the stone material wing on the appearance of

50. Henry Howe, Historical Collections of Ohio II (Cincinnati, 1902) p. 51.

51. Ibid., p. 50.

Lawnfield, especially from the east side. But over the years as vegetation has grown, the bulk of the addition has been masked.

Other Structural Changes at Lawnfield--1880s-1890s

As the memorial addition project advanced in June, 1885, other structural changes occurred at Lawnfield. Mrs. Garfield sold the Botten Tract tenant house to a Mike Riley, who then moved the small building to his lot near the home of Austin Riley, some distance away. It may be recalled that the tenant cottage was on the "corner opposite the house" south of Mentor Avenue. The construction crew built a "neat little cottage . . . about halfway down the lane" from the main house in early June.⁵² (Fig. 25 shows the 1885 tenant house). The campaign office was moved back near the ice house to get it out of the way of the Memorial Library project. A new well was drilled in the old orchard to upgrade the water delivery system. No precise evidence indicates exactly when the nearby well house was constructed but likely it was erected in 1885 because this 20- by 20-foot structure resembles the stone library annex. A windmill placed atop the well house pumped water then moved it to a 300 gallon tank on the upper floor of the main house. (Fig 26 is a well house photograph). This system then replaced the frequently unreliable hydraulic ram Garfield had installed in 1877.⁵³ (See Base Map 3).

Another interesting improvement resulted from the discovery of natural gas on the farm. The Painesville Telegraph reported that an "abundant supply of gas has been found at the Garfield well, ample for lighting and heating purposes. Drilling was discontinued several days since when the last vein struck at a depth of something over 800 feet. A steam heater

52. "Harry Garfield Diary," (typescript by Lucretia G. Comer), Lawnfield File, LCHS. Painesville Telegraph, May 21, 1885; June 4, 1885; June 18, 1885.

53. Ibid., July 16, 1885. The tax records do not specifically mention the well house.

will be used for warming the rooms.⁵⁴ This gas supply enabled the family to heat the house and light the yard around the clock. Although the gas well at Lawnfield apparently took care of basic energy needs, it did not provide enough flow to encourage a further search for commercial sales.⁵⁵

It is likely that the stone and brick gas works was built as a free standing structure around the same time because similar stonework appears on the well house and the main house, but no hard data absolutely establishes the precise construction date. Perhaps the gasworks was placed in an earlier structure such as the engine house where Garfield had steam treated the cattle fodder, then a stone outer covering could have been added to the converted structure. The gas was stored in a building containing a metal tank with a circular lid which rose and fell with the amount of gas contained in the storage facility.

The large scale 1885 construction projects did not mark the end of physical change at Lawnfield. On April 24, 1893, Lucretia signed "Articles of Agreement" with J.A. Reaugh and Son of Cleveland for "all the carpenter work and glazing" for a "frame barn," a project to be finished by mid-June. She paid \$2,564 for the structure which today is known as the carriage barn. The tax assessor added \$2,000 to the Lawnfield property rolls in 1893, almost the market value of what the carriage barn cost.⁵⁶ The carriage barn was built adjacent to the

54. Ibid. September 10, 1885. A strong wind had blown the gas well derrick down in late August. See Aldrich Diary, August 21, 1885, p. 172.

55. Ibid. December 14, 1892.

56. "Articles of Agreement," April 24, 1893, in LRG papers, Box 101, LC. Interestingly Stanley-Brown was listed as one of the architects. A business relationship between James R. Garfield and the Reaugh firm in Cleveland had developed prior to the barn project, when Garfield had acted as a legal representative and probably recommended the company to his mother. The contract does not mention the gasworks or any masonry work in 1893. See James R. Garfield Papers, Box 199, LC, for a record

gasworks connected by a common brick wall. This important structure remains extant in the 1980s, serving as a focal point in the rear yard. (Fig. 27 focuses on the carriage barn and windmill).

Over the years other changes have occurred at Lawnfield. Around the turn of the century, Mrs. Garfield had the long, front veranda removed and replaced by a smaller porch and a trellised, tiled arbor. The local paper reported that "Mrs. Garfield is having a new and modern portico built on the front and east side of her home at Lawnfield."⁵⁷ At some point a new main entry was built to replace the street entrance. Then too, subsequent changes in furnishings, floor, and wall coverings and decorations probably occurred, most of which have not been documented through time.

Lawnfield Under Lucretia Garfield's Management

The Lawnfield of the 1880s and 1890s must have been a very busy place both as a residence and a farm. (See Fig. 29 for a family photograph). One mid-1880s observer noted that 16 family members lived there, assisted

56. (Cont.) of his business affairs in the 1893 period. Auditor's Duplicates, Lake County, Ohio, v. 3, pp. 77-78. Limited evidence suggests that the existing barns were relocated to the rear of the property in 1893 when Mrs. Garfield had the carriage house erected. This would have been an opportune moment to get rid of the older structures, or at least remove them from sight. According to Harry Garfield in September 1893, "A recent rain has clothed the lawn in green once more, and the moved barns and the new stable add greatly to the beauty of the grounds." Quoted in Comer, Garfield's First Forty Years, p. 204. (See Fig. 28 for a photograph of young Rudolph Stanley-Brown standing near the barns located not far from the main house. He was born in April, 1889). Note the porte cochere more than likely constructed in 1885. Also see interview with Polly Garfield Hallaran, August 16, 1982. Mrs. Hallaran has no memory of extant barns in 1905-1908, but clearly recalls the carriage barn. Seemingly the cows were kept in the rear, smaller barn. Apparently chicken coops were located at the rear of the farm. This area would be a prime site for archeological testing to locate sub-surface remains of the farm's outbuildings.

57. Painesville Telegraph, March 24, 1904.

by five servants and a half-dozen farm workers. According to one article, the "farm is paying, although nothing is sold from it but beef cattle."⁵⁸ At this time (late 1880s) the yard, garden, and orchard totaled 12 acres; tilled fields accounted for another 70 acres; and 78 acres contained pasture or woodland. As late as 1900 the census taker counted ten residents at Lawnfield by name plus another seven "boarders." Besides Lucretia, the family members included her brother's family and her son James R. Garfield's family, prior to the time he built a nearby house in the mid-1890s.⁵⁹

The extensive collection of Lucretia Garfield papers owned by the Library of Congress illustrate that Lawnfield continued as a working farm during the 1880s and 1890s. Detailed account books record the purchase and sale of numerous head of cattle. For example, the farm manager bought 25 steers for \$745 or \$29.80 a head in September, 1887, and sold a cow and five steers in May, 1888, for \$247. Crops included wheat, hay, and oats in the late 1880s. These account books contain headings for real estate, horses, farm horses, cattle, sheep, hogs, sugar, wheat, oats, corn, potatoes, wood, labor, machinery--implements, fertilizers, improvements and repairs, and general expenses. As Lucretia told her sister-in-law, "I am really ambitious to have one of the best herds in northern Ohio."⁶⁰ The family perpetuated what James A. Garfield had started when he bought the old Dickey place in 1876 -- the operation, management, and improvement of a productive Ohio farm. (Fig. 30 shows various features at the farm).

During this period of Garfield ownership the farm was operated on sound business practices and made use of scientific resources. For instance, a

58. Undated clipping ca. 1885, in Garritt Scrapbooks, 1884-1885, v. 2, LCHS.

59. Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Lake County, Ohio, v. 87, sheet 13.

60. See LRG papers, Box 99, LC. LRG to Lide, January 6, 1896, in JAG papers, LCHS.

local horticulturalist conducted a dairy survey in 1905 in which he summarized the milk production that year for the 16 cows on the farm. The report contains average production from each animal, the market value of the milk, and suggestions for even greater improvement.⁶¹

Instructive, too, are the Lawnfield account books for the early 1900s. For example in December, 1901 the farm, including physical as well as Lucretia's assets totaled \$91,896, while six months later the sum had dropped to \$85,000. Also changes appeared in the book value of Lawnfield in that interval -- a decrease from \$84,070 to \$82,534 and a drop in Lucretia's personal assets from \$7,825 to \$2,063. This drop is not readily explainable at present, but could amount to a negative cash flow due to some items not carried on the Lawnfield books.⁶² Further in-depth research could be conducted in these extant accounts to reconstruct a detailed picture of the farm operations in the late 19th century.

Mrs. Garfield had considered a tree plantation for the northern portion of the farm in 1904. A detailed plan, prepared by a forest assistant, Bureau of Forestry, recommended planting white ash and black locust on one block, and basswood and sugar maple on another section with the anticipation that within 50 years the trees would be of sufficient size for wooden ware, furniture, tool handles, and other uses. The report also stated that the remnants of old open woodlots were situated in the northeast corner of the tract containing white elm, black ash, red maple, boxwood, white ash, and black oak. Other nearby species included white oak, shagbark hickory, swamp white oak, red oak, blue beech, ironwood, black gum, sycamore, sugar maple, and beech. This tract was north of the railroad tracks, an area that had not been too productive since the

61. "Dairy Report For Year Ending Dec. 6, 1905," in LRG papers, Box 99, LC. As milk the production totaled \$1,844 and as cream \$1,713. The farm's cows bore such names as "Carpenter," "Tap Horn," "Grace," "Pearl," and "Carriage."

62. "Lawnfield Bill," 1900-1903, in LRG papers, Box 101, LC.

time Garfield had tried to work it in the late 1870s. According to the survey, the "purposes of these recommendations is to advise the owners upon the establishment of a plantation of valuable timber trees, in the expectation that profits from raising trees will be greater than the returns from the ordinary grain crops."⁶³ The owner could expect to yield returns within periods of between 15 and 20 years. There is no existing record or physical evidence that Lucretia Garfield ever had this commercial woodlot prepared and planted according to the 1904 conceptual plan.

Soon after Garfield's death, an article appeared in the New York Herald with an illustration of the farm's layout. This is the only known contemporary Garfield period drawing or sketch depicting the relationship between the structures and the grounds. (Fig. 31 depicts a sketch of the farm). The elongated north/south axis is clearly shown with the "Main Road" to the south, the "Lake Shore R.R. tracks" on the north. The pre-1885 tenant's house across the road from Lawnfield appears on a small parcel -- the Botten Lot, as well as the spatial relationship of the main house, campaign building, barns and sheds (seemingly interconnected), orchards, and several fields.⁶⁴ According to one observer, the farm was about 50 rods wide, about a mile long (north/south).

A later, undated map (post-1885) pinpoints the location of various trees such as oak, elm, maple, beech, and a number of apple trees; and the windmill erected in 1885. The 1881 map described above depicted a "young orchard" due north of the library in the general vicinity of the 1885 well house. The later drawing locates several flower beds around the "Farm house" containing peonies, phlox, hydrangeas, and

63. Wesley J. Gardner. "No. 342, Recommendations for Forest Planting Upon the Garfield Farm (Lawnfield) at Mentor, Lake County, Ohio, September 15-16, 1904," in Lawnfield folder, LCHS.

64. New York Herald, September 25, 1881. The "Ram Lot" north of the ancient shoreline was not depicted on this map.

nasturtiums. Notes on the illustration gave the following instructions to the unknown individual to plant "whatever else you may have."⁶⁵

There are other extant drawings and maps of Lawnfield ca. 1900 and later. One undated specimen depicts the north/south elongated axis of the farm. This ca. 1900 drawing clearly locates the main house, three smaller structures to the rear (campaign house, ice house and perhaps a privy), the 1893 carriage barn, the tenant's house across the rear lane, three hen houses, a large barn (now moved from the front of the property), and two smaller sheds.⁶⁶ A June 1900 landscape plan for Lawnfield and nearby Hollycroft was prepared by "T. Wilkinson Elliot, Landscape Architect of Pittsburgh, PA." It seems unlikely that this extensive plan was ever implemented but several interesting details show up. The ice house is denoted. A well to the rear of the main house is connected to the windmill pumphouse by a six inch water line. A six inch sewer line and a one-and-a-half inch water line stretch back of the house beneath the lane to the rear of the property toward the north. The barns are in the same location as the undated version mentioned above. Seemingly from these two documents, the barns had been moved to the rear of the property by 1900. The later map also depicts the relationship of Lawnfield with Hollycroft (the home of James R. Garfield) to the northwest near the steep ridge above the lower fields to the north.⁶⁷ (See Base Map 4).

Mrs. Garfield presided over a sizeable farm and a large family in this period. The children grew up, left home for school (Harry A. and James R. Garfield graduated from Williams College in 1883), and started

65. "Circular bed around Farm House," in LRG papers, Box 91, LC.

66. Although undated the 1893 carriage barn is illustrated, and Garfield's property located north of the tracks date this drawing ca. 1893-1908. See untitled, undated map, Lawnfield File, LCHS.

67. T. Wilkinson Elliot, "Plan for the Grounds of Mrs. James R. Garfield," June, 1900, Lawnfield File, LCHS. This drawing also located the gas well immediately south of the carriage barn.

households of their own. One of the notable social events held at Lawnfield centered around a double wedding in June, 1888. On the 14th, Harry A. Garfield married Belle Mason of Cleveland and Mollie exchanged vows with Joseph Stanley-Brown, her patient suitor of several years. Comer's Harry Garfield's First Forty Years contains an excellent account of the twin nuptials:

The wedding was set for five o'clock, Thursday afternoon. A storm hit Mentor Wednesday night, but Thursday broke clear and they all agreed it was a good omen. Early in the morning florists and caterers arrived from town, and soon the house was transformed into a lovely garden. Palms and plants formed a background for a veritable symphony of color -- green, gold and white, modulated by delicate shades of roses and accented by deeper notes red and dark blue. The tables, arranged in the dining room and in the two reception rooms on the first floor, were artistically decorated with rosebuds and ferns. Over the fireplaces, the mantels were solid banks of roses, white carnations and maidenhair fern. On the winding stairway that led around the central chimney up to the library where the ceremonies were to be held, sweet-smelling fuchsia plants filled the window seats. The large L-shaped library was transformed into a church. The bay window at the east end of the library, lined with palms and semi-tropical plants, was made into a green alcove. Here the minister would stand under a canopy of smilax and roses. . . .

As the day wore on, guests arrived from neighboring towns, and shortly after four o'clock carriages came from the station, bringing the passengers from the special train. Soon about a hundred and fifty people filled the lower rooms of the house. . . .

As soon as all the guests were seated, the orchestra -- located in the square hall at the top of the stairs -- broke into the joyous strains of the Wedding March from Lohengrin. Harry and Belle appeared at the door, leading their train to the far end of the library where they stopped before the gold-embroidered kneeling desk. . . . As the music quieted into a soft background of harmony, Harry and Belle made their vows, knelt for the minister's blessing, then led their train to the right, taking their places on the south side of the room. . . . The orchestra broke forth again into the Wedding March as Joe and Mollie led their suite into the room. . . .

Again a hush of quiet music as Joe and Mollie followed Dr. Davis through the ceremony, made their vows and knelt for the minister's blessing. As they rose, a burst of music gave the signal for the reception. The two bridal couples stood in front of the green alcove to receive the congratulations of their

friends, and the babble of happy voices rose and fell, blurred with the music blended with the shifting of many colors.⁶⁸

The Memorial Library made an elegant setting for the double wedding, and it was probably the single most important social event ever staged in that room. Certainly other unrecorded family social gatherings and celebrations were held in the library through the years. A large fireplace occupied the center of the vault side of the room and a piano rested between the fireplace and the double doors which opened onto a wide landing connecting the annex with the main house. Obviously the family spent many evenings around the piano singing that era's favorite tunes. At the northwest corner of the Memorial Library, the fireproof vault or Memory Room -- as the family referred to it -- contained the general's personal and state papers. Shelves had been built to store the volumes into which letters and other documents were glued when Brown had processed the papers in the early 1880s. Then through the succeeding years Mrs. Garfield and her family, especially James R. who lived next door, periodically read and referred to the papers and diaries.

As the 1890s passed, the Garfield children began raising their own families. (See Fig. 32 for a family portrait). When Joseph Stanley-Brown traveled with the U.S. Geological Survey, Mollie stayed at Lawnfield to help Lucretia. Mrs. Garfield was also assisted for many years by Aunt Lide, brother Joseph's second wife. Initially James R. Garfield lived on the farm, did the chores, and commuted to his job in Cleveland, where he had a law partnership with brother Harry. (See Fig. 33 for a family photograph with James R. and Harry Garfield). Christmas was usually a big event when all who could attend came back to Lawnfield for the holidays. The year 1898 marked the last big Garfield Christmas at the

68. Comer, Harry Garfield's First Forty Years, pp. 123-125. Besides the Garfield and Rudolph relatives, ex-President Hayes and his wife; ex-Postmaster General Thomas L. James and his wife; Miss Mittleberg, the headmistress of Mollie's school in Cleveland; Patty Mays, Mollie's former governess; and Professor E.M. Gallaudet and family from Washington attended the Lawnfield weddings. Cleveland guests arrived and departed on a special train for which tickets had been arranged.

farm; after that, Lucretia began spending her winters in the South and after 1900 in South Pasadena, California. Joe Rudolph later recalled fondly that the "Mentor farm was the Mecca to which all were anxious to return, and more delightful reunions that we had especially on Christmas holidays, birthdays, weddings . . . can hardly be imagined."⁶⁹ And at the occasion of Lucretia's death, a memorial service recalled the "atmosphere of the Mentor home was one of hospitality, kindness, and service, Grandma Garfield, Grandpa Rudolph, her father, her brother, the children and later the grandchildren all found delight and comfort in her and in the spirit of love and helpfulness which filled the home."⁷⁰

The family appointed biographer, T.C. Smith, later left a poignant memorial of those busy times at Lawnfield:

The brothers and sister, with their wives -- all in the prime of life, hearty, energetic, busy; the men playing tennis with their sons, visiting, laughing, joking, fond of something approaching horse-play; the children ranging from college seniors downward, equally lively, noisy, restless -- swarming by twos or threes or in groups roughly assorted according to age; new ones constantly emerging to my view from behind houses or trees, or out of automobiles -- the entire clan sometimes gathering in the evening to crowd the capacity of the great house. And above all an older generation, as quiet, as the younger ones were restless, as sparing of speech as they were vociferous with Madame Garfield, delicate featured, moving with simple dignity and terse, direct utterance in the midst of her children and grandchildren, an influence of calmness and benignity in the midst of an unremitting bustle accentuated by the roar and screech of passing trolley-cars or the incessant rumble of heavy trains behind the woods. (Fig. 34. shows the trolley line).

69. Joseph Rudolph, "Autobiography," September 1928, p. 38, in JAG papers, Box 38, LC.

70. "Memorial Services of Mrs. Lucretia R. Garfield," in LRG papers, Box 90, LC.

71. Theodore Clark Smith, "Reflections on Completing the Biography of James A. Garfield, September 11, 1925," in HAG papers, Box 166, LC. Early 1900s photographs depict the trolley line that ran across the street from Lawnfield. This interurban line was the Cleveland, Painesville, & Eastern which connected the street railways in Cleveland with the city of

A mainstay in Lucretia Garfield's life in the 1890s was her second son James who lived at home before he built his own house nearby. Although he helped with the work at Lawnfield, James went into partnership with his uncle Joe Rudolph in 1887 to breed horses and raise cattle on a farm they purchased. The 157-acre farm owned in common by the two men contained 25 acres of woods, 50 acres of pasture, and 82 acres under cultivation. The farm also had a good farm house, barns, and a number of cattle sheds. The James R. Garfield papers at the Library of Congress contains an inventory of the existing conditions on the farm in 1887 as well as detailed production figures. The livestock included sheep, cattle, pigs, horses, and crops were oats, corn, hay, wheat, potatoes, sugar, apples, and wood.⁷² Thus 25-year-old James R. Garfield became a serious farmer in the late 1880s. In July, 1892, the two men drew up a legal partnership and had it recorded at the county courthouse in Painesville.

This agreement stipulated that all

farm property, both real and personal is owned in the following proportions: Joseph Rudolph (1/6) one sixth, James R. Garfield (5/6) five sixths. All expenses, losses, and profits shall be borne in the same proportion. Further, the farm is indebted to Joseph Rudolph in the sum of five hundred (\$500) and therefore beginning with July 1st, 1892, he shall receive

71. (Cont.) Ashtabula to the northeast. Operations on the line commenced in the summer of 1896 and lasted until May, 1926. Stop 55 marked the entrance to the Garfield home. Incidentally those pillars remain extant in 1984, although located on adjoining private property. See Harry Christiansen, Northern Ohio's Interurbans and Rapid Transit Railways (Cleveland, 1965), pp. 12-23 for an account of this local transportation system. Then too, there was a trolley car play house located in the back yard in the early 1900s. This structure was situated about 35 to 50 feet behind the main house, just to the northwest of the campaign office. Hallaran interview.

72. "Condition of Property at the time of purchase August 16, 1887," in JRG papers, Box 200, LC. See Jack M. Thompson, "James R. Garfield: The Career of a Rooseveltian Progressive, 1895-1916," (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of South Carolina, 1958), pp. 11-26 for background describing the younger Garfield's early career goals.

(\$200) two hundred dollars per annum for superintending the farm business.⁷³

However, the venture proved unprofitable and the partners disposed of the land a few years later to recoup their losses.

Around 1890 Garfield bought another 20 acres adjoining Lawnfield upon which he built a residence. Other than the years he would spend in Theodore Roosevelt's "tennis cabinet" and as secretary of the interior (1907-1909), James R. Garfield lived comfortably at Lawnfield and at his own residence, "Hollycroft," built in 1894. He employed the Cleveland firm of J.A. Reaugh and Son to construct the new house adjacent to Lawnfield. Extant records indicate that Hollycroft cost \$6,212 excluding masonry work, excavations, and sewer connections, and more than likely the large 35 room structure cost about \$10,000 to complete.⁷⁴ (See Fig. 35 for a photograph of Hollycroft).

Garfield's nearness to Lawnfield helped ensure its retention in family ownership. His own home, however, fell on more difficult times. Throughout the early 20th century the Garfields and their heirs hosted many social events and shared their home with numerous guests. Decades later new owners converted the 35-room mansion to apartments in the early 1960s and fire gutted the structure in February, 1965.⁷⁵ Later the

73. "Farm Book, Garfield and Rudolph -- Mentor, Ohio, Account Books, 1887-1895, in LRG papers, Box 93, LC. The farm was located in Mentor Township, not far from Lawnfield.

74. "Proposal," July 12, 1893; J.A. Reaugh to JRG, November 7, 1893; J.A. Reaugh to JRG, January 26, 1894; "Statement," November 10, 1894, in HAG papers, Box 103, LC. The Reaugh firm built the 1893 carriage barn for Lucretia Garfield. James R. Garfield had served as legal counsel to this firm for several years, hence he would have known much about their professional capabilities.

75. The (Mentor) News-Herald, February 26, 1965. The article stated that the Garfield family had housed some British refugees during the Second World War. Today there are a number of apartment buildings located on the site just off Hollycroft Lane.

damaged structure was torn down and the land subdivided, and today Hollycroft Lane (just west of Lawnfield) commemorates the large residence that stood less than 300 yards northwest of Lawnfield. In its heyday, Hollycroft was noted for its spacious grounds, numerous trees, and picturesque gardens and floral displays.

The Acreage Decline of the Farm

James A. Garfield had owned 157.69 acres, but over the years the size of the farm decreased to the present 7.8 acres owned by the Western Reserve Historical Society and the Lake County Historical Society. The general made the first slight diminution of acreage in 1881 just before his assassination when he sold a 3.19-acre right-of-way to the New York, Chicago & St. Louis Railway apparently for \$1,750. The deed mentioned that the company would fence the 100-foot-wide right-of-way forever and provide a "good farm crossing at a point to be selected by said grantor with cattle guards" and gates.⁷⁶ Apparently Garfield had trouble with livestock standing in the way of trains and he wanted to alleviate this problem. The next year's tax rolls recorded the decrease in acreage along with a concomittent drop in the tax liability.⁷⁷

As seen above, the president died intestate in 1881, and it was not until 1894 that his widow actually received clear title to the farm. In the interim the property had passed to the five children, who upon reaching legal age released Lucretia from all claims they might have had as her heirs. In 1894 the children transferred Lawnfield to their mother for \$1.00 and other valuable considerations. According to the transfer documents, the amount of property they gave Lucretia amounted to 154.69 acres. (Fig. 36 depicts the Garfield farm).⁷⁸

76. Deed, James A. Garfield to New York, Chicago & St. Louis Railway, Lake County Deeds, v. 11, p. 153.

77. Auditor's Duplicates, Lake County, Ohio, 1882, v. 2, p. 110.

78. "Certified Copy of Journal Entry in the Matter of the Estate of the heirs of James A. Garfield Deceased," October 23, 1894, in John P. Robison papers, LC.

Mrs. Garfield retained the farm in its entirety until September, 1908, when she sold 87.34 acres to William P. Murray, who was affiliated with the Picklands, Mather, & Company, an iron manufacturer in Cleveland, for \$4,376 or \$50 an acre.⁷⁹ Thus for the first time since James A. Garfield combined several parcels to form the Mentor farm in 1876-1877, the size decreased dramatically. The parcel sold to Murray included all land north of the Lake Shore and Southern Railway's right-of-way on the northern part of the farm. (Fig. 37 shows the smaller Garfield farm. Today the low lying area sold to Murray contains an industrial complex north of the railroad tracks.) Following this sale the size of Lawnfield stabilized at 67.35 acres, a size that would remain constant until the family donated the main house to the Western Reserve Historical Society in the late 1930s.

Lucretia Garfield's Declining Years

As Mrs. Garfield advanced in years, she began to spend more time away from Lawnfield. After renting a house in Pasadena, California, for several years, she bought a residence there in 1903. During this time the Rudolphs stayed with her and journeyed back to Ohio each summer. She also began to dispose of other property she had acquired. In 1915, she sold a farm at Wycliffe, Ohio, which she had owned since 1898.⁸⁰

79. Deed, LRG to William P. Murray, September 7, 1908, Lake County Deeds, v. 45, p. 350. W.P. Murray to LRG, August 31, 1908, in LRG papers, Box 104, LC. A \$2,500 downpayment contained a \$300 sum for rent of the acreage. Murray's use of the land is unknown at this time, but apparently he owned a large country estate in the Mentor area.

80. Besides Lawnfield, Mrs. Garfield owned a number of other properties, some of which had been in family possession since her husband's time. These other properties included the Washington residence, acreage in rural Virginia, the house in Cleveland (purchased in 1882, then sold in 1886), a parcel in Hiram, several undeveloped lots in Chicago, the house in South Pasadena, California and the farm in nearby Wycliffe in Cuyahoga County. As the years passed she disposed of some of this property, and what remained, the heirs to the estate sold in the 1900s. See LRG papers, Box 104, LC for financial records of the house at 13th and I Streets in Washington. Many documents describing the Wycliffe farm which she sold for approximately \$30,000 in 1915 can be reviewed in Box 102. The Chicago lots are described in Box 98, as is the Hiram acreage.

One project she undertook was never finished in her lifetime. The biography had lain dormant since an abortive effort shortly after Garfield's death. Then in 1911, the family gathered, consulted, and selected Williams College historian Theodore Clarke Smith to prepare a family sanctioned biography of the late president. Smith finished the project long after Lucretia's death. He worked on the project for 14 years, finally completing a massive two volume study in 1925. During this time the family sent many Garfield papers to the home of Harry A. Garfield, the president of Williams College, to be used by Professor Smith. Once he finished the work, Smith left a poignant recollection of the Garfield papers. He wrote:

Next, sharp and clear, comes the memory of the impression which the Garfield room and the Garfield papers made on me. I saw in 1911 what an extraordinary collection it was, but no single survey could do justice to it. Even now, after examining almost every volume outside of the "letters received" I still feel that I have not mastered its fulness. The look of the volumes, the smell of the old paper and leather bindings . . . above all the overwhelming record of human interests, passions, longings in the hundred and ⁸¹hundreds of letters -- these have fairly drenched my being.

Lucretia lived until March, 1918, 36 years following the assassination of her husband. Throughout that period she kept the memory of Garfield alive in various ways, especially through the Memorial Library and the Memory Room and the commissioning of a scholarly biographer to do justice to the mass of documents retained at Lawnfield. The farm was an active operation during that period, and continued as such following her death. Her passing, however, and the advancing ages of the children in large part created unresolved internal family tensions over what to do with Lawnfield.

81. Smith, "Reflections on Completing the Biography" in HAG papers, Box 166, LC.



CHAPTER EIGHT

THE INTERREGNUM, 1918-1936



Following the death of Lucretia Garfield, the fate of Lawnfield remained clouded for almost two decades. The heirs wanted to retain the farm in family ownership to perpetuate the memory of their parents, but on the other hand the increasing costs of upkeep and maintenance caused a great deal of internal family dissention as to the eventual disposition of the estate. Thus uncertainty persisted until the mid-1930s when arrangements were made with the Western Reserve Historical Society for it to assume management of the property and open Lawnfield to the public as a historical shrine.

Mrs. Garfield survived her husband by 36 years. She died at her winter residence in southern California March 13, 1918, at age 85. The Cleveland area papers quickly took note and commented on her death. The Plain Dealer reported, "She gave her heart to her children and as they worked out their destinies she devoted herself to charity and helpful acts of kindness that endeared her to many." A Disciples of Christ publication, the Christian Standard, praised her full life in public as well as private affairs.¹

Long before her death and unlike the general, Lucretia Garfield had prepared several wills. The first in 1895, another in 1902, and a major amendment in 1914 have surfaced in the family papers. In them she named as co-executors Harry and James, her two oldest sons. Essentially she bequeathed Lawnfield to Harry in addition to all her personal property on the farm. James was to receive a triangular piece of land on the west side of the farm, and Mollie would get her mother's personal effects and jewelry. The children were to share equally the family papers, books and records and similar shares of the estate's financial proceeds. The 1914 codicil specified that \$1,000 per annum was to be paid to Joseph Rudolph for the remainder of his life. Lucretia also

1. The Plain Dealer, March 14, 1918; March 22, 1918. Reserve Weekly, March 27, 1918, all clippings in Garritt Scrapbook, v. VI, LCHS. Alanson Wilcox, "Lucretia Rudolph Garfield", Christian Standard, April 6, 1916.

authorized the executors to "sell any or all my real estate, other than that situated in Mentor, Ohio, and to use the proceeds of such sale or sale for the payment of any mortgage indebtedness outstanding against my estate, and for the payment of the annuity provided for in this codicil."² Upon her death the estate had assets that amounted to \$51,668. (Appendix C contains an inventory of these assets.)

After Lucretia's death, the heirs acted swiftly to liquidate certain assets. On April 22, 1918, James R. Garfield, who had gone to California, informed Harry that he had closed the sale of the Pasadena house for \$18,000,³ and suggested that the others divide the remaining assets in the trust fund. In the early 1920s, the family also disposed of additional holdings such as the unimproved land in rural Virginia, near Washington, D.C., receiving \$38,219.⁴ The family did not act as quickly regarding the disposition of Lawnfield because the extant records indicate that James, who lived at nearby Hollycroft, closely monitored the farm's expenses, prepared a formal financial statement, and sent copies to the heirs on an annual basis throughout the 1920s and early 1930s.

The 1920s at Lawnfield

The family correspondence indicates that the maintenance of Lawnfield became an early and constant drain on the heirs' personal finances. A request for \$2,500 to repair the "old barn" surfaced in 1921. Younger brother Irvin agreed to share the expenses, stating that "we cannot let it go to rack and ruin. I feel, however, that the situation is reaching the point where we must look at it in an entirely practical manner, and I feel that we ought not to go on maintaining it, with definite view for the future in mind, as I feel it may become a burden which some of us hardly

2. "Wills," 1895, 1902, 1914, 1918 in LRG papers, Box 89, LC.

3. JRG to HAG, April 22, 1918, JRG papers, Box 111, LC.

4. "Virginia Land," in HAG papers, Box 37, LC.

feel justified in carrying."⁵ He further recommended that the family retain Lawnfield but keep it maintained effectively, and agreed with Harry that he, Mollie, and Abram dispose of the acreage south of Mentor Avenue. Meanwhile, James hoped to resolve the issue that summer, but the family did not convene with that in mind. About all that happened in 1921 was an agreement to rent the north wing above the library and the living portion of the main floor to a family they all knew socially.⁶

Other ideas soon surfaced concerning the future of Lawnfield. Joseph Stanley-Brown advanced another suggestion -- remodel the house, save the most historic elements, and rent the house to an acceptable tenant; he observed that to "continue the present status meant the rapid deterioration of the building."⁷ If implemented, Stanley-Brown's plan would have resulted in six or seven sleeping rooms, a dining room, a living room, a "splendid porch" and a "noble library."⁸ (Appendix F contains a sketch of the 1923 project). He asserted that the proposed renovation could have been undertaken for \$25,000 by strict adherence to the "severest economy in construction and especially in future maintenance, as well as the production of a house sufficiently modern and compact as to commend it at all times to the best class of renters who

5. JRG to Irvin McD. Garfield, April 4, 1921; Irvin to JRG, April 11, 1921; JRG to Irvin, April 26, 1921 in JRG Papers, Box 112, LC. As one peruses the family's correspondence, copies of the letters appear in each collection -- all siblings usually received the same news about pertinent matters.

6. JRG to Mollie Garfield, May 11, 1921; Mollie to JRG, May 16, 1921, in JRG papers, Box 121, LC. The family continued to come and stay at Lawnfield during the summers. See Mollie to JRG, September 24, 1912. Mollie's family remained six weeks on a budget of \$622 including \$274 wages for four maids. Also Joe Rudolph and his wife Lide occasionally stayed at Lawnfield during the 1920s, but he had long since retired from farming or any other active occupation.

7. Joseph Stanley-Brown to HAG, September 11, 1921, in HAG Papers, Box 41, LC.

8. Ibid. Stanley-Brown enclosed preliminary blueprints with his letter.

could pay a handsome price."⁹ These plans thus evolved into a scheme to detach and move the most historic portions of the main house to another site while salvaging the newer section in situ.

Obviously the family never came to a working arrangement to alter dramatically the house, or even arrive at a method of financing the project. The house remained as it had, but the aging structure required periodic maintenance -- a balky steam furnace attracted Stanley-Brown's attention because his granddaughter planned to be married at Lawnfield in late March, 1922.¹⁰ Apparently the heating system was repaired and the wedding took place but not necessarily at Lawnfield.

Thus the maintenance of Lawnfield, as well as caring for the family's elderly relatives, introduced unaccustomed financial burdens to the Garfield children in the 1920s. Additional measures were taken to provide for Joe and Lide Rudolph who were then in their advanced years. A financial statement for the half-year ending December 31, 1922, contained the following assessment for the heirs: property taxes, "payments to Uncle Joe," payments to Martha Ballard, and \$100 a month to Jefferson -- a total of \$2,503. Discounting the proceeds of the sale of the Hiram property, each heir received an assessment of \$260 to maintain the estate. Other expenses and wages totaled \$1,479, while income from the sale of corn, pigs, cows, and wheat amounted to \$534, divided between James and Harry, \$472, for a grand total of \$732.¹¹

9. Stanley-Brown to HAG, September 30, 1921, in HAG papers, Box 41, LC. Apparently excessive street noise became an irritant in the early 1920s. To screen the house from the street, Stanley-Brown suggested a "broad maze of evergreen trees. . . ." Certainly the trolley line that ran along Mentor Avenue contributed to the clamor.

10. Stanley-Brown to JRG, February 23, 1922, in JRG papers, Box 121, LC. JRG to Stanley-Brown, March 2, 1922, ibid. The only wedding of record occurred at Lawnfield in 1888.

11. JRG to HAG, June 1, 1923; in HAG papers, Box 37, LC. Lawnfield was a constant financial drain on the family. In 1921 wages had totaled \$4,855 and general expenses \$2,156. Farm income obviously did not match these expenses as seen above. See "Lawnfield - 1921," in JRG papers, Box 200, LC.

The ever industrious James R. Garfield submitted a proposed 1923 budget for the estate to each of the heirs.

Uncle Joe	\$1,000
Mentor taxes	930
Wages for Jefferson	1,200
Insurance	250
Repairs (estimate)	750
Coal (estimate)	<u>250</u>
	\$4,320 ¹²

This ad hoc accounting system must have confused the other heirs. For instance, Harry A. Garfield suggested that a Washington property account, Lawnfield account, and a farm account be established. Labor expenses were to be limited to one hired man at \$100 per month, taxes, actual upkeep, and repairs. As for the farm's maintenance, Harry suggested dividing those expenses five ways and further recommended not continuing any of the farm's operations except for harvesting the hay. From this streamlined system, this would leave as expenses the maintenance of the buildings offset against the hay crop and a set annuity for Joe and Lide Rudolph.

In 1924 James Garfield evaluated a proposal to subdivide the remaining acreage at the Mentor farm. A Cleveland firm submitted a detailed proposal to survey and prepare a preliminary plan recommending the disposition of approximately 30 acres, reserving about 25 acres to the family. The consulting firm considered only the land between Mentor Avenue and the ancient shoreline north of the barn.

12. JRG to HAG, June 1, 1923, in HAG papers, Box 37, LC. JRG to Irvin, July 24, 1923, in JRG papers, Box 112, LC. In the 1920s no federal Social Security existed to take care of the elderly; families had the responsibility. It is instructive to observe how the middle class Garfields assumed this charge.

A detailed topographic survey accompanied the 1924 proposal. (See Base Map 5). The map depicted the physical relationship between Lawnfield, Hollycroft, and Eastlawn. (Eastlawn was another Garfield family property located adjacent to the farm on the east, just to the east of the farm, Fig. 38). By this time the ice house no longer appeared extant but the rest of the outbuildings including the carriage barn, hen houses, small sheds, and a large barn were sited. A series of looping roads appeared to connect the three residences.¹³

The family discussed this latest in a series of schemes to dispose of the farm, then apparently rejected it because no subdivision occurred in the 1920s. As the Garfields studied the subdivision proposal, Harry A. Garfield wanted to hear more about the "proper disposition to be made of Lawnfield. . . . I am quite ready to join in a plan which will make best use of the place. As mother remarked to us at one time she would not have us make a white elephant of a home that had yielded so much to us."¹⁴

The eventual disposition of Lawnfield became a recurring theme in family conversations during the 1920s. On January 18, 1926, Harry prepared a "Memorandum Concerning Lawnfield," in which he advocated immediate action. He argued that the farm should never become a "burden rather than a joyous inheritance." Moving the main structure's most historic

13. Actual holdings totaled a bit less than 50 acres. JRG Diary, August 9, 1924, JRG papers, Box 13, LC. A.D. Taylor to JRG, August 12, 1924; JRG to HAG, August 21, 1924, in HAG papers, Box 37, LC. Also see 1924 map, Lawnfield File, LCHS. Built by Warren Corning, Jr. in 1830, William S. Aldrich bought the house in 1866 for Caroline Robison Mason, Harry A. Garfield's mother-in-law purchased the property around 1900. Harry and wife Belle spent their summers at the house in the early 1900s. Belle sold the house to Mr. John N. Garfield in 1926 who transferred the property to the Faith Lutheran Church in the 1960s. The house remains extant. See Elizabeth G. Hitchcock, Jonathan Goldsmith: Pioneer Master Builder of the Western Reserve (Cleveland, 1980), pp. 94-95.

14. HAG to JRG, August 23, 1924, in HAG papers, Box 37, LC. Irvin to JRG, August 25, 1924, in JRG papers, Box 112, LC. JRG to HAG, September 20, 1924, in HAG papers, Box 37, LC. Irvin to JRG, September 22, 1924, in JRG papers, Box 112, LC.

sections did not make sense in terms of the building's integrity, although the adjacent highway and increasing traffic noise made living at Lawnfield difficult already in the 1920s. Harry Garfield further observed that since Professor Smith had published the biography in 1925, the principal reason for retaining the house intact no longer made sense. He went on to advance the following recommendations: 1) donate the Garfield public papers to the Library of Congress; 2) store and preserve family papers and letters; 3) transfer such historic objects as the 1881 death mask to the Western Reserve Historical Society; 4) family members divide the remaining papers, objects, books and furniture; 5) the brothers and sister were to meet one last time at Lawnfield to take care of this business; and 6) the most dramatic suggestion of all, "Raze the old structure, placing on the site a suitable tablet and include all except the house lot in an apportionment in accordance with the allotment plan suggested by Jim."¹⁵ Since each family member received a copy of the memorandum, everyone had the opportunity to review and comment. The available evidence does not reveal those conversations, but the family did not implement this severe plan to eradicate Lawnfield from the farm lot.

A brief flurry of interest developed in the local press in 1928 to "Save the Garfield Home." A local historic preservation issue materialized when Helen N. Garfield (James R. Garfield's wife) responded to a query made by a representative of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) chapter in Willoughby for that organization to place a commemorative tablet at Lawnfield. As word of this leaked out an unnamed party asked if a private purchase could be made to use Lawnfield as a county museum, but Mrs. Garfield informed this individual that the family had considered razing and marking the site. This news quickly reached the local press resulting in an editorial which stated, "It is now up to the patriotic and civic organizations of the county to immediately begin a drive to raise funds to salvage this historic home before it is razed" and to "save the James A. Garfield home from destruction and present it to perpetuity as a

15. "Memorandum Concerning Lawnfield," January 18, 1926, in HAG papers, Box 124, LC. Abram Garfield to HAG, January 27, 1926; Irvin to HAG, January 28, 1926, in HAG papers, Box 38, LC.

county museum." Despite this public appeal to the Mentor area populace, no funds appeared and no county museum was established at the site in the 1920s.¹⁶

Yet another proposal came to light later that year when James R. Garfield was contacted about the possibility of organizing a county historical society with Lawnfield serving as the headquarters building. A local historical society enthusiast recommended a long-term lease at a nominal sum and even suggested that the family donate the house and grounds to an incorporated group with an endowment income. Still the issue of the "expenses of maintaining the old house is very great . . .,"¹⁷ the individual wrote. Harry realized that donating the house to a local historical organization "would be as satisfactory disposal of the property as we are likely to make."¹⁸ He also recommended that a strong fence be erected around the main house to preserve the integrity of the remaining family property, and warned James about possible future financial demands on the family to support and maintain such a family museum. Still James resisted the thought of having to give up Lawnfield, "I wish I were able to put and keep the old house in perfect order."¹⁹ Since the eldest brothers were concerned that a local historical body could not adequately finance operations at Lawnfield, this scheme never came to fruition in the 1920s but the idea resurfaced in the mid-1930s.

16. Helen Newell Garfield to HAG, June 11, 1928, in HAG papers, Box 37, LC.

17. Thomas B. Wyman to JRG, September 5, 1928; JRG to T.B. Wyman, September 17, 1928; JRG to HAG, September 17, 1928; T.B. Wyman to JRG, September 18, 1928; HAG to JRG September 21, 1928, in HAG papers, Box 37, LC.

18. HAG to JRG, September 21, 1928, in HAG papers, Box 37, LC.

19. JRG Diaries, September 8, 1928, in JRG papers, Box 15, LC.

The 1930s at Lawnfield

By the 1930s the constant financial drain of Lawnfield intensified. Instead of renewing the principal of the estate, the Garfields made withdrawals until the time when each heir had to submit sizeable contributions annually to maintain Lawnfield and provide the annuity for Joseph Rudolph. In March 1930 sister Mollie reacted to the latest request for funds by calling Lawnfield a "white elephant" and the need to pay her share of the apportionment came as a very "great shock." She asked if Harry could dispose of the place.²⁰ Around that same time Irvin wanted no more to do with Lawnfield, but he did not want James to burden himself with its upkeep. He wondered about a division of the land north and south of Mentor Avenue; and told Harry that he did not care for the objects and books still at the house. Irvin suggested these material possessions could be sold or given away. Yet the continuing responsibility to care for the elderly Joe Rudolph who resided at the farm helped postpone the family's decision to raze or sell Lawnfield.²¹

During these years the family heirs seemingly developed a love-hate relationship with Lawnfield. After stopping off at the farm for a few days in June 1930, Stanley-Brown wrote to Harry that "Mentor Farm in so many ways is very beautiful in spite of the air of decrepitude." He related that Abram assumed that "dear Jim's attitude to the problem almost amounts to an obsession," and concluded that the "property must be put on the market."²² Although the Lawnfield issue continued to provoke much internal family deliberation in the late 1920s and early 1930s, they did not or could not take action. Then too, James' strong attachment to the farm had a great deal of bearing on their unwillingness to reach consensus on a quick solution.

20. HAG to JRG, March 22, 1930, in HAG papers, Box 37, LC. Mollie to HAG, March 24, 1930; Irvin to HAG, May 16, 1930, in HAG papers, Box 41, LC.

21. HAG to Irvin, May 19, 1930, in HAG papers, Box 39, LC.

22. Stanley-Brown to HAG, June 12, 1930, in HAG papers, Box 41, LC.

Lawnfield continually sparked discussion, plans, and options among the Garfield heirs. Even Joseph Stanley-Brown occasionally got into the planning. In June, 1930, he suggested once again razing the main house and selling the land. Then Harry Garfield suggested that the family divide the land to the south of Mentor Avenue, and once this was accomplished, he suggested that James move to the "big house." James could have the furniture and other items except the keepsakes that would be divided among the family.²³ This 1930 blueprint was the latest of a long list of plans to resolve the Lawnfield issue. Mollie then argued that demolishing the house would be an expensive proposition and would not make the remaining property any more valuable because taxes still had to be paid on the land. Harry reiterated the recommendation the James move to Lawnfield and live with Joe Rudolph but the question remained of what was to happen when "Uncle Joe ceases to have use for it."²⁴

The accounting procedures assumed a more structured format in the early 1930s. James R. Garfield employed an accounting firm to prepare and routinely audit the statements. That year the estate's disbursements reached \$2,018.²⁵ According to this "statement" each heir owed a varying sum to the estate. Clearly for some of the heirs the personal cost of retaining Lawnfield had reach prohibitive levels by 1930, and consequently Mollie, Irvin, and Abram demanded timely action.

Although the Garfields had pretty much made up their collective minds to resolve the Lawnfield issue, the throes of the disastrous 1930s depression did not favor large-scale real estate or development transactions. Harry

23. HAG to JRG, June 19, 1930, in HAG papers, Box 37, LC. Irvin to HAG, June 27, 1930, in HAG papers, Box 39, LC.

24. Rudolph had reached 90 years of age at that time. Mollie to HAG, July 27, 1930. HAG to Mollie, October 20, 1930, in HAG papers, Box 41, LC.

25. "Special Report -- Statement of James R. Garfield with the Heirs of the Estate of Lucretia R. Garfield June 1, 1930 to October 31, 1930," in HAG papers, Box 37, LC. This document reveals what assets remained in Lucretia's estate some 12 years after her death.

informed Mollie on October 17, 1931, that the Cleveland Trust Company could not grant a \$25,000 loan to rehabilitate Lawnfield.²⁶

The Lawnfield problem continued unresolved. An exchange of correspondence in the summer of 1932, pointedly illustrates the growing frustration that Mollie assumed concerning the long-term growing debt she faced to retain her share of the estate. She wrote to Harry that "it has turned out just as Mother feared the farm would become a white elephant or rather a creature that devours incessantly. In these financially racking times this comes home more sharply than ever."²⁷ Mollie argued that the farm's financial history during the 14 years since her mother's death was "blunder piled upon blunder," and she had wanted to act regarding the final disposition of the farm, but others had prevented that from occurring. Seemingly Mollie wished to relinquish her share of the main house and the attendant property north of Mentor Avenue while retaining her interest south of the road. Again the entire family still wanted to keep Lawnfield while their uncle lived. As Harry informed Joseph Stanley-Brown that after Rudolph's death "there is nothing to do but tear down the old house and place a suitable marker at the site, get rid of the expense of upkeep and let the land lie as it is until such time as it can be disposed of to a reasonable advantage."²⁸ Another suggestion surfaced in which the four brothers would retire Mollie's debt to James, and summarizing this alternative, Harry A. Garfield said, "We must not allow the Lawnfield situation to cause the least difference to arise between any of us. . . ." ²⁹ The Garfield heirs were indeed sensitive to the negative potential the situation had on family

26. HAG to Mollie, October 17, 1931, in HAG papers, Box 41, LC.

27. Mollie to HAG, May 23, 1932; June 2, 1932 in HAG papers, Box 41, LC.

28. Stanley-Brown to HAG, July 21, 1932; HAG to Stanley-Brown, August 2, 1932, in HAG papers, Box 41, LC. The family continued to care for Rudolph in his declining years. He is known to have been at Lawnfield in May, 1933 about eight months before his death.

29. Abram to HAG, May 24, 1933, in HAG papers, Box 38, LC.

relationships, and to their credit each reacted to each other's concerns in a positive manner.

Lawnfield Becomes a Semi-Public Facility

Lawnfield had served as a viable farm until well into the 20th century. Following Lucretia's death in 1918 and exacerbated by the advancing ages of the five Garfield children the problem of what to do with the family residence assumed greater and greater importance as the years passed. As the heirs reached their early sixties and seventies, they unanimously agreed that something must be done with Lawnfield to memorialize their parents. Through the years the Garfield children were scattered throughout the eastern United States: Joseph and Mollie Stanley-Brown lived in New York; Harry A. and Belle in Massachusetts; Irvin in Boston; Abram lived in Cleveland; and James, following his brief stint in Washington, lived next door to Lawnfield at Hollycroft.

Resolution appeared as a distinct possibility in 1935. By late autumn preliminary negotiations between the Garfields and the Western Reserve Historical Society (WRHS) in Cleveland culminated in a promise of a gift from the family to the organization. As James recorded in his diary on October 12, 1935, "A call on Laurence Norton and discussed the suggestion that we give Mother's house to the Western Reserve Historical Society."³⁰ Abram agreed with the proposal, and apparently James sought consensus from the others. On October 19, 1935, Mollie wrote to Harry that "It was almost too good to be true that the Society wants to restore the old place -- make it a place many people will be interested to visit. I am sure little Mother would have approved."³¹ The Garfields realized that one of their most pressing family issues was on its way to resolution. Finally a feasible plan was being developed to save Lawnfield; it had taken 17 years for the Garfields to reach an acceptable agreement on this sensitive issue. Lawnfield was saved!

30. JRG Diary, October 1213, 1935, in JRG papers, Box 17, LC.

31. Mollie to HAG, October 19, 1935, in HAG papers, Box 41, LC.

CHAPTER NINE

LAWNFIELD: THE LAST FIVE DECADES



James R. Garfield's diligent efforts to save Lawnfield from the wrecker's ball paid off handsomely in 1936 as the behind-the-scenes negotiations between the family and the Western Reserve Historical Society proceeded smoothly. By the spring of 1936 hurried preparations occurred at Lawnfield to ready the main house for public visitation that summer. Garfield recorded many of his impressions about the transfer to the Cleveland organization in a positive vein, but still felt a tinge of remorse about having to give up the house. He realized that Lawnfield must be preserved by those with greater resources than the family could muster, but felt "great loss and sorrow over giving that old home to the Historical Society."¹ Despite these privately expressed misgivings and sense of personal loss, the work proceeded on schedule. James Garfield worked alongside the crew helping with painting and papering. The local press carried news of the donation in May, 1936, and the Cleveland Plain Dealer editorially characterized Lawnfield as a "Shrine of Democracy."² Laurence Norton, president of the Western Reserve Historical Society (WRHS), often accompanied James Garfield on inspection tours through the house and grounds.³

The Garfield Bequest To The Western Reserve Historical Society

The Garfields donated approximately one acre of land containing the main house and the nearby campaign office/library to the WRHS on June 15, 1936. According to the subsequent deed the premises could be used "only and solely as a memorial to our father . . . and our mother . . .

1. JRG Diary, May 14, 19, 1936, in JRG papers, Box 13. James had met with WRHS representatives in May, 1936 to discuss the official transfer which occurred in July.

2. Ibid., June 21, 26, 28, 1936. July 12, 13, 14, 1936.

3. Plain Dealer, May 21, 22, 1936. This editorial characterized Lawnfield as a "monument to an exciting era in the development of American Democracy," and referred to the site as a shrine, a term which normally transcends the known history of a given place as it assumes a higher, almost sacred connotation.

for the purposes of a historic building and museum to preserve objects of historic interest especially connected with Ohio. . . ."4 From this transfer it can readily be seen that two goals were inextricably linked by the deed: a memorial to the Garfields and a place to exhibit local historical objects.

The deed contained the following property description:

Know as a part of the Bacon Lot in the Township of Mentor, and now being in the incorporated Village of Mentor, County of Lake, and State of Ohio, and is further bounded and described as follows:

Beginning in the center of Mentor Avenue at a point which is N 74° 15' E a distance of 379.39 feet from a monument at the intersection of the center lines of Mentor Avenue with the center line of Garfield Road.

Thence following the center line of Mentor Avenue, N 74° 15' E a distance of 153.00 feet.

Thence by a line which bears N 0° 48' E (passing through an iron pipe stake at 31.29 feet) a distance of 231.29 feet to an iron pipe stake.

Thence by a line which is parallel to the center line of Mentor Avenue, S 74° 15' W a distance of 153.00 feet to an iron pipe stake.

Thence by a line which bears S 0° 48' (passing through an iron pipe stake at 200.00 feet) a distance of 231.29 feet to the place of beginning and containing 0.779 acres of land as surveyed and described by J.M. Crabbe, Registered Engineer and Surveyor No. 387.⁵

Integral to the transaction, the WRHS agreed to pay all taxes and assessments from July 1, 1936, onward, which relieved the Garfields of a heavy financial burden at the outset. The heirs retained the right to

4. Deed, James R. Garfield et al to the Western Reserve Historical Society, Lake County Deeds, v. 160, p. 385. The family members who signed the deed were Harry A. and Belle M.; James R. (widower); Joseph and Mary (Mollie) Stanley-Brown, Irvin and Susan, and Abram and Sarah Williams. At this time the estate contained about 69.53 acres.

5. Ibid.

"reenter after said premises are no longer maintained solely as a memorial. . . ."6 The historical organization received the property for "so long a period of time, and no longer" as it maintained Lawnfield as a public site.

Cosmetic repair work to open Lawnfield progressed rapidly during the summer of 1936 funded by \$10,000 donated by a group of Cleveland residents. James R. Garfield and Laurence Norton signed the contract on July 15, 1936, and the house was opened to the public in late August. When he had returned from a European vacation, Garfield toured the reopened house in early September. "I am astonished," he wrote, "at what has been done so quickly. Laurence Norton has, with Janet's assistance, arranged the old house beautifully."7 Working closely with WRHS officials, James toiled that fall with insurance matters, removing surplus items, designating those artifacts and objects to be exhibited by the society, and numerous other tasks. By mid-September, 2,500 visitors had registered, and they kept coming to Lawnfield until late November, 1936, when the house was closed for the winter. The local papers carried more news about the gift to the WRHS. The Plain Dealer published a lengthy description of the house and grounds:

Recently at the invitation of Mr. Samuel D. Dodge, I visited the home of Garfield at Mentor. The house and grounds immediately around it have since May 20, 1936, been the property of the Western Reserve Historical Society. We walked across the wide lawn from the old Corning home. Stately trees, well-spaced, shade it. The exterior of the Garfield house is much as it was when rebuilt in the spring of 1880. First, we walked back the path to the chicken yard and barn. Good healthy chickens gathered under shade trees at the corner. The barn, a New England one, with cupola and wooden shutters, short plank runway from the big door to the ground, all plainly of the day of Garfield. We went along the hedged and fenced lane, big old orchard on the left, on the right large garden with grape arbor near the center, such as one would see on a good farm 50 years ago. Way down the lane we turned its shady corner, and through a wide opening in the

6. Ibid.

7. JRG Diary, September 10, 1936, in JRG papers, Box 13, LC. Janet Garfield was the daughter of James R. Garfield.

trees saw over lowland the New York Central, once the Lake Shore. . . . Then Mr. Dodge and myself went out the long brick path to the house of James R. Garfield. We passed noble trees spaced in parklike grounds."⁸

Garfield began planning for a public dedication ceremony. The question arose whether a family member should preside or to invite a nationally prominent figure to speak. Irvin McD. Garfield put the issue into perspective, "The occasion is primarily the dedication of a building of some historical interest, and should not be made primarily an occasion for extolling the accomplishments of the man who gave the historical interest to the building."⁹

The house had been open to the public for two years before it was dedicated on August 22, 1938. James R. Garfield directed the festivities, and spoke to about 125 persons who attended a ceremony to fete Lawnfield as well as a log cabin which had been moved to the site that apparently resembled the Abram Garfield cabin in Orange Township. This cabin assumed some limited significance locally when Garfield stated, "The members of the Garfield family are pleased and proud to turn over to you a site to which children may come to see for themselves the progress which their community and nation has made in the course of a century by viewing two homes, 100 years apart in everything but ideals."¹⁰ Officials of the WRHS and the recently founded Lake County Chapter attended, and marked the official opening of the chapter's historical museum.

8. Ibid. September 20, 1936; November 20, 1936. Plain Dealer, November 15, 1936. The article reports much about the grounds and their agrarian character as well as the appearance of the barnyard and rear portion of the farm. The barn still had the cupola attached in 1936.

9. Irvin to JRG, September 15, 1936, in HAG papers, Box 39, LC.

10. Plain Dealer, August 21, 25, 1938. JRG Diary, August 23, in JRG papers, Box 18, LC. The Lake County Historical Society removed the cabin in 1983.

As for the log cabin, it did not have any visible historical linkage to Lawnfield, but the WRHS moved the structure to the site after it had been located in Cleveland for two years. James R. Garfield had attended the 1936 Great Lakes Exposition in Cleveland enjoying looking at a log cabin that he considered "almost an exact duplication of Grandfather's. Very well done."¹¹ Like many other issues affecting Lawnfield in the past, the family deliberated the idea of erecting the cabin at the farm. Only Irvin opposed the plan by telling James that to "Put it in Mentor appeals to me as a little like a circus side show. . . ."¹² At the time the WRHS perceived the structure as an added attraction similar to other exhibits displayed in the museum not directly affiliated with the Garfields. Apparently the family members resolved their differences privately because the WRHS opened the cabin to the public in 1938.

Although the historical society had opened Lawnfield to the public on a limited basis in August, 1936, it was not until February 23, 1938, that the Cleveland-based group founded a Lake County chapter to assume operations of the house museum. President Norton presided at the inaugural meeting of the Lake County affiliate at Rider's Tavern in Painesville stating that it was to be created for the "preservation of historical documents pertaining to the county and articles of historic interest with the idea of housing them in one central place, the President Garfield Memorial Home," as well as promoting the "stimulation of greater interest in the national shrine."¹³

11. Ibid., June 26, 1936.

12. Irvin to JRG, September 23, 1937, in HAG papers, Box 38, LC. Monitor, August 4, 1939. This log structure was not part of the Garfield farm. Reportedly the cabin was constructed from logs removed from a cabin that stood in Holmes County, Ohio. It may have resembled the Garfield homestead in Orange Township, Cuyahoga County about 18 miles southwest of Mentor. Of course, this was conjectural since the Garfield cabin burned down ca. 1850s; none of the children had been born that early and had no specific idea of their father's birthplace.

13. The Lake County Chapter of the Western Reserve Historical Society, "Minutes," LCHS Files. Thirty-three people attended this first meeting -- 11 from Painesville; 11 from Willoughby; three from Mentor; three from Kirtland and five came in from Cleveland.

Thus from the very beginning of Lawnfield's period of public benefit, a dual function has occurred at the site -- the memorial to James A. and Lucretia Garfield and a home for the Lake County Chapter of the WRHS, a place to store "individual, scattered and incomplete historical document collections as well as a place to display household, agricultural and mechanical curiosities of a historical nature. . . ."14 The long-term professional relationship between the parent and its offspring organization has continued into the 1980s.

The Transition Continues--Late 1930s/Early 1940s

When the family deeded Lawnfield to the WRHS, the house and office still contained furniture, personal effects, and documents dating to the mid-nineteenth century. To ascertain that all materials, artifacts, and effects were properly recorded, the WRHS prepared a comprehensive inventory of the contents of each room in July, 1938. This 26 page compilation illustrates that much of what material goods the Garfields' had owned remained in situ. For instance, the library contained framed pictures of Lincoln, Otto Prince Bismark, Mark Hopkins, Napoleon, Edward Everett Hale; one "Hallet and Davis piano"; "two show cases and contents"; one "Mahogany desk"; "one pedestal and original marble bust of President Garfield by Preston Powers, 1883," and many other items.¹⁵

The Garfield heirs reserved all rights to this personal property until they made their personal selections. Irvin wished to donate his share to the WRHS but suggested that the siblings be given an opportunity to retain specified items.¹⁶ Although the transmittal of property agreement was

14. Draft Membership Drive Letter, A.O. Beamer's Activities Folder, Lawnfield File 1938, LCHS.

15. "Inventory Prest. Garfield's House -- July 1, 1938," in Real Estate -- Garfield Home, Inventory of Furnishings, 1938 (& 1962) File, WRHS.

16. Irvin to Mollie, August 7, 1939, in HAG papers, Box 38, LC.

signed in October, 1939, it was delayed until February, 1945, due to the illness and death of Harry A. Garfield in 1942. During this transition period, the family reserved use of two rooms: one in the southwest corner of the third floor, and the Memory Room (the fireproof vault) until they removed certain preselected contents. James also informed Norton that some articles would be loaned to the WRHS and ultimately given to the organization. Books would be donated to the historical group with certain exceptions, and Garfield reviewed the 1938 inventory page-by-page indicating which items would be retained by the family.¹⁷

Physical Improvements at the Public Shrine

Since the transition to semi-public management in 1936, Lawnfield has received a great deal of upkeep and maintenance. Mrs. Ivan Sutliff, a curator between 1936-1938, has related that there was no central heat or electricity in the "Garfield residence" portion of Lawnfield. There was heat and electricity in the rear portion where the Mrs. Sutliff and her husband lived. The present staff kitchenette and adjoining hallway (now separated by a partition) were once a single room, the Sutliffs' sitting room. The current library room was their kitchen/eating area, and the present lower library room was the pantry and fruit cellar, a "dark and dingy" place. To help open the house, the couple arranged everything "just as it was when the family lived here" in consultation with James R. Garfield. In August, 1939, the local newspaper printed the names of 94 individuals who contributed toward the "restoration and preservation of the Garfield house."¹⁸

17. The family's 1940 statement of income and disbursements reflected the transfer of Lawnfield to the WRHS. Receipts totaled \$562 from dividends, rent of the cottage, and rent from the north field while the \$690 in disbursements went to taxes "Mentor Estate" and \$15 repairs to cottage for painting and papering. Clearly the large yearly debt each faced in the 1930s vanished. See Maude A. Smith to HAG, February 14, 1941, in HAG papers, Box 37, LC.

18. Mrs. Ivan (Veda) Sutliff interview, August 26, 1982, Mentor, Ohio. Monitor, August 4, 1939.

As the Garfield children had feared in the 1920s when deliberating the fate of Lawnfield, funding became a constant issue at the historic site in the 1930s and 1940s. Preliminary restoration efforts funded by \$10,000 in donations helped open the house in 1936 but by the early 1940s the increasing need for funds assumed well publicized proportions. Initially the Lake County Chapter of the WRHS raised money through membership drives, the annual Garfield festival, and admission receipts. In 1940 Norton and Arthur O. Beamer, then the head of the Lake County chapter discussed funding needs with the local state representative in the hopes that the Ohio legislature could provide supplemental appropriations because many Lawnfield visitors came from throughout the state.¹⁹ A year later the legislature voted \$10,000 for Garfield house improvements, and Governor John W. Bricker signed the bill in June, 1941. The funds were to be divided between the 1941 and 1942 biennium for repairs, painting, and landscaping the grounds as well as opening the campaign office to visitors.²⁰

Apparently the actual appropriation of state funds for the Garfield property occurred slowly. By October, 1941, Beamer reported that \$5,000 to be monitored by the State Archeological and Historical Society in Columbus was on its way to Lawnfield. The historical group let contracts in December 1941 which included \$250 for exterior carpentry repair, \$98 for masonry repair, \$28 for treating powder post beetle, \$513 for repairing and making the heating system automatic, and \$50 for art work on signs and pamphlets.²¹ Subsequent contracts included \$2,500 for a Delco heating plant, sheet metal work \$67.50, and painting \$141.50. Other appropriations earmarked \$800 for landscaping, \$500 for parking

19. Lake County News Herald, January 3, 1940.

20. Monitor, June 13, 1941. Plain Dealer, June 12, 1941. Ohio State Legislature, An Act to Make General Appropriations for the Biennium Beginning January 1, 1941, and Ending December 31, 1942 (House Bill No. 665), June 3, 1941, in Ohio State Archives, Columbus, Ohio.

21. Painesville Telegraph, October 9, 1941; December 12, 1941. Lake County News Herald, October 17, 1941.

lot improvements and new fences, \$500 for new road signs, \$300 for inside painting, \$100 for new furniture, and \$100 for restoring furniture.²²

Despite the slowdown incurred by wartime priorities, the restoration projects advanced at the Garfield house. Newspapers throughout the state carried articles pertaining to improvements at Lawnfield. For example the Delaware Gazette reported wiring and heating plant improvements in March, 1942. In October, 1943, contracts for plastering, insulation repairs, and cleaning of several oil paintings were announced. Another \$3,000 in contracts were let for extension of the fence, a tree repair service, resurfacing the drive, and enlargement of parking facilities. The Ohio Archaeological and Historical Society reported in 1943 that "time and energy have been spent chiefly on restoration and repair. Original hand-carved woodwork and furniture have been repaired and refinished" at the Garfield house.²³ A four year restoration and improvement program at Lawnfield totaled \$22,000.

Thus during World War II, Beamer proceeded slowly with badly needed improvements at Lawnfield. (Fig. 39 shows Lawnfield at the beginning of World War II). Facilitated by the infusion of the state subsidy limited restoration occurred despite the war, and during this period Beamer sought hard data about the house to conduct the restoration program. On one occasion he asked Norton to contact the heirs about the 1880s fence at the front of Lawnfield near the road, specific location of the campaign office in 1880, data to pinpoint when the Garfields planted the trees around the main house, a rough floorplan of the original room arrangement, some background on the oil paintings left in the house. Also sought was information concerning where the gas line entered the

22. Monitor, January 16, 1942.

23. The Delaware (Ohio) Gazette, March 20, 1942. Painesville Telegraph, October 21, 1943. Ohio Archaeological and Historical Society, Annual Report (1943), Columbus, Ohio, in State Archives.

building and whether it was ever disconnected and capped.²⁴ Such questions indicate that the local organization conducted an internal as well as an external restoration program at Lawnfield in the early 1940s.

The Garfields, especially Abram and James, did what they could to assist the local museum people. Architect Abram Garfield wrote to Beamer regarding the gas line, suggesting it must have entered the basement under the kitchen porch -- an area of the main house constructed in 1885 when the gas well had been drilled. He also related that the line could have entered near the laundry door -- the closest point to where the old gas meter stood which supplied the pressure. The surviving correspondence also indicates that Abram prepared drawings of the front fence, and later told James that "the fence posts themselves were round locust posts . . ." and that the road post was "covered by a plain board on the front." The architect was certain about the "covering piece of the front of the house." Abram was uncertain about the "covering piece of the draw gate, I mean, the flat board upon which we used to walk." Garfield also recalled what the "double acting hinges and the latch of the walk gate looked like . . ." and suggested that perhaps remnants could be found in the "old tool shed."²⁵ Since the two brothers resided close to Lawnfield, they could give much valuable firsthand information to Beamer's organization in the 1940s.

Because state funds were being used to upgrade Lawnfield, the Ohio State Archeological and Historical Society staff consulted with Beamer.

24. A.O. Beamer to Laurance Norton, February 6, 1942, Lawnfield Folder, LCHS.

25. Abram Garfield to Beamer, February 27, 1942, Lawnfield Folder, LCHS. Garfield suggested that Beamer test the 300 gallon water tank on the third floor for leaks. Abram thought it had been filled for at least 15 or 20 years but could have deteriorated since last being used. Also see Abram to HAG, June 10, 1942, in HAG papers, Box 38, LC. According to Abram Garfield, the walk gate was erected in the summer or autumn of 1885. Abram also indicated that the Mentor group wanted to reproduce the fence and gate directly in front of the house. He also had found the "exact kind of double acting springs and latch." Abram to JRG, June 3, 1942, in Lawnfield Files, LCHS.

Responding to an inquiry from Beamer, Erwin C. Zepp, the curator of State Memorials, commented on various aspects of the development proposals for Lawnfield. The state preservation official recommended using the old family entrance drive to reach a parking area for some 35 vehicles.²⁶ Other suggested changes involved removing the log cabin brought to the site in 1938, and construction of a "service unit" on the northwest corner of the property. This ancillary structure would have consisted of a "small one-story dwelling and a combination garage and storage building" to be screened from the main house. Zepp felt assured that the original entrance road could provide sufficient buffer on the west. On a less positive note, Zepp evaluated Beamer's interpretive tour ideas negatively by pointedly criticizing a scheme to encourage picnicking and active recreation on the grounds because such activities would "tend to cheapen the memorial idea."²⁷

Beamer often used innovative methods to accomplish work at Lawnfield despite the shortage of funds. For instance in July, 1941, he offered free admission to anyone who could correctly identify at least 10 tree species on the grounds. Apparently C. M. Shipman, a Willoughby naturalist, in collaboration with M. H. Horvath, a local landscape architect and nurseryman, then prepared a preliminary inventory of trees and bushes at Lawnfield which accomplished Beamer's goal. They identified such specimens as the Tree of Heaven, the Judas tree, the ginko, the smoke tree, fern leaf beech, weeping beech, and Japanese Lilac among the more exotic types. The pair found six species of oaks (pin, red, burr, swamp, white, English, and pyramid), six of maple (sugar, silver, black, red, cut-leaf, and box elder) and four of elm

26. Erwin C. Zepp to Beamer, July 30, 1941, in Outside Work in the 1940s Folder, Lawnfield File, LCHS. Apparently the level of contact between the local group and the state organization never became too significant in the 1940s. Contact with the Ohio State Historical Society on July 13, 1983, has indicated that Zepp's files no longer remain extant. The stone piers that mark the late 19th century entrance drive remain on private property adjacent to Lawnfield.

27. Ibid.

(American, Japanese, Chinese, and mountain). Other species noted in the Lawnfield inventory included mulberry, sycamore, linden, larch, flowering dogwood, bald cypress, black locust, purple beech, pig nut, hickory, tulip tree, and American beech. The inventory revealed at least 100 trees with a six-inch diameter immediately around the main house. Among the bushes noted were acacia, spirea, syringas, hydrangea, viburnum, magnolia, lilac, honeysuckle, buttonwood, barberry, blatternut, mulberry, dwarf horse chestnut, indigo bush, and bottleneck buckeye.²⁸

Despite the enthusiasm and funds supplied by the Lake County chapter and the state of Ohio, documents from those early years of the Garfield memorial indicate that Lawnfield has periodically faced severe financial deficits. The strapped local local history organization prepared a \$13,745 operating budget in 1945-1946 for such identified needs as interior and exterior improvements, the campaign house, cabin, barn, grounds, and research. Since insufficient funds plagued the organization, the Lake County chapter trimmed its budget to \$6,415, by deleting major priorities.²⁹ The shortfall of operating monies appears as a recurring issue as the Lake County chapter, the WRHS, and subsequent organizations grappled with the site's operations and management needs.

Expansion of the Historic Site/Diminution of the Garfield Farm

Besides these early physical improvements and plans to develop Lawnfield for visitation, the WRHS received additional land bequests from the Garfields. During the war, Beamer made a discrete inquiry to J.M. Crabbs, a Mentor land surveyor, to evaluate an additional seven acres. Beamer told Crabbs that the "additional land is a project on which we have been working for three years. The Garfield shrine needs the land

28. Lake County News Herald, July 15, 1941.

29. "Proposed Capital Expenditures Garfield House, 1945-46," Budget Request Folder, Lawnfield File, LCHS.

as protection against possible future encroachments. Mr. Garfield is in none too good health and may not be with us long."³⁰ Obviously the Mentor-based historical group was looking beyond basic upkeep and interpretation to actually preserving the resource base and buffering it against future nearby residential development.

Originally the Garfields had donated .779 acres (house and campaign building) to the WRHS. During the late 1930s and early 1940s the family and the society periodically discussed an even larger land transfer. The family gave another 3.269 acres to the WRHS in 1944.³¹ This transaction, which included the carriage barn, completed a lengthy, complicated legal process by which the numerous heirs to the property relinquished their individual interests or claims. For instance, James and Abram held a controlling 3/5 interest; other heirs such as Irvin held 1/5; Lucretia G. Comer 1/20; Louise H. Brown 1/60; Jane Garfield 1/20; and Stanton Garfield 1/20. The estate now included third generation heirs. This transfer confirmed and enlarged the previous donation made by Harry and James in 1937. Each of the surviving heirs signed an identical deed in 1947 that reserved a "right-of-way of water pipes from the well" and a 40-foot wide right-of-way "along the east line of said premises to other land now owned by the heirs of Lucretia R. Garfield."³²

30. Beamer to J.M. Crabbs, September 10, 1943, in Lawnfield File, LCHS. Crabbs conducted the survey in autumn 1843. Upon receipt of the initial survey, Beamer asked Crabbs to make some changes to satisfy suggestions made by James R. Garfield.

31. Deed, James R. Garfield et al to Western Reserve Historical Society, Lake County, Deeds, v. 202, p. 480. The legal description contained in the 1944 deed is identical to that drawn by surveyor Crabbs in 1943. The death of Harry Garfield in 1942 slowed the transfer arrangements. Harry and Belle Garfield had celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 1938 along with Joseph and Mollie Stanley-Brown. See the Boston Herald, June 14, 15, 1938 for local coverage of the 50th anniversary ceremonies. Apparently some observers felt that the carriage barn could serve as a museum building with space for offices or other specialized needs. Lake County News Herald, October 3, 1944.

32. Deeds, James A. Garfield et al to Western Reserve Historical Society, Lake County Deeds, v. 242, pp. 64-65; 67-70; 74-75; 77-81.

Thus the remaining farm acreage continued to decrease. As this transaction occurred, the heirs also decided to accept an offer of \$12,000 from Henry G. Windus for 14.511 acres south of Mentor Avenue. Mary (Mollie) Stanley-Brown sold the adjacent one acre Botten tract to Windus.³³ Developers later subdivided the land to build a number of houses on this parcel which is immediately across the street from Lawnfield.

As these various land deals concluded, a confusing legal issue surfaced in late 1946 when the Garfields learned that the previous transfer to WRHS did not give actual title to the historical society.³⁴ Legal counsel suggested that to alleviate the confusion of dealing with an expanded number of third and fourth generation heirs, the Garfields (1) convey title to the purchaser of the 14-acre property on the south side of the road; (2) remediate the situation regarding the WRHS's lack of a clear title, and (3) convey the remaining land at Lawnfield to the Land Title Guarantee and Trust Company of Cleveland which would henceforth execute all future conveyances, deeds, and title guarantees. The various second and third generation heirs transferred 48.956 acres to the Land Title Guarantee and Trust Company in September, 1947. Thus after that time one voice would speak for the future land transactions at

33. C.J. Johnston to Abram Garfield, April 17, 1946; Irvin to Abram, April 27, 1946; September 27, 1946; October 4, 1946, in LRG papers, Box 150, LC. Deeds, James R. Garfield et al to Henry G. Windus, Lake County Deeds, v. 242, pp. 356-373. Also see Deed, Mary Stanley-Brown to Henry G. Windus, v. 242, p. 375. This one acre tract (probably the old Botten parcel) had been counted as part of the larger 14.5 acres south of Mentor Avenue, never appearing as a separate entity until the legal transaction occurred in 1947. More than likely a private family arrangement had been made giving unrecorded title to Mary Stanley-Brown at some previous point.

34. This confusion had occurred when a declaration of trust prepared in 1942 which gave the authority to the five Garfields to manage a formal system of dispersals of income and property from the estate was not acknowledged or recorded as required by Ohio law, hence the arrangement was not legally binding. See "Draft Outline of Trust Agreement for Garfield Family Trust," August 22, 1941, in HAG papers, Box 37, LC. Irvin to JRG April 8 1942, in HAG papers, Box 37, LC.

Lawnfield.³⁵ Land transactions such as the sale of the 14.5 acres south of Mentor Avenue were conducted in this manner, and the record indicates that the title firm distributed the proceeds from this sale in 1947. At the end of that year approximately 48 acres remained in the Garfield estate, although managed by the Cleveland firm.

In 1947 Abram Garfield briefly considered yet another subdivision of Lawnfield involving several acres immediately south of the tracks. A local realtor, however, gave him some discouraging projections regarding this "difficult parcel to subdivide, because of its shape and low section on the north."³⁶ The real estate agent recommended that Garfield contact the Veterans' Administration about some possible use for this land but little came of the discussions.

The Land Title Guarantee and Trust Company actively managed the remaining privately owned Garfield property in the 1950s. In February, 1951 the title company confirmed the water pipe right-of-way with the WRHS as well as the 40-foot entrance right-of-way on the east side. A year later the trust company confirmed these rights-of-way with Eleanor B. Garfield, (the daughter-in-law of James R. Garfield) who had purchased a 3.44-acre tract containing the 1885 tenant's cottage, sheds, barn, and pump house for some \$2,500.³⁷ In 1956 the heirs sold the estate's remaining 45.516 acres to Jerome T. Osborne, who subdivided the land for single residence housing in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Resulting from a survey, Osborne discovered a conflicting claim on a

35. A.D. Baldwin to Irvin Garfield, December 3, 1946, in LRG papers, Box 150, LC. Deeds, James R. Garfield et al to Land Title Guarantee and Trust Company, Lake County Deeds, v. 242, pp. 436-461.

36. Cyrus Clark Ford to Abram Garfield, May 21, 1947, in LRG papers, Box 150, LC.

37. Deeds Folder, Lawnfield File, LCHS. Deeds, Land Title Guarantee and Trust Company Trustee to Eleanor Borton Garfield, Lake County Deeds, v. 323, p. 420. The well remained operative at least a decade later. See Cleveland Press, September 14, 1961.

small portion of his acquisition just west of the driveway. He donated one-third of an acre to the WRHS in July, 1958.³⁸

The last known Garfield sale occurred in 1975 when Eleanor sold her 3.44 acre parcel to the Lake County Historical Society for \$70,000. Lawnfield retained its quintessential rural flavor until the late 1950s when the acreage west and north of the main house was developed into a number of ranch-style houses. Thus by the mid-1970s the Garfields had sold all of what remained of the original farm, and only the 7.8 acres held by the two historical societies remained intact. (See Base Map 7).

The Passing Away of the Garfield Children

The five surviving Garfield children witnessed the establishment of the memorial to their parents in the late 1930s. Not too many years passed before they died. Other family members had died in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Aunt Lide passed away on June 6, 1926, and her husband Uncle or Captain Joseph Rudolph lived until January, 1934. Joseph Stanley-Brown died at Pasadena at age 83 in October, 1941.³⁹ Brown's interesting career had included a stint with the U.S. Geological Survey, several railroads, and finally work as an investment banker. Former Williams College president Harry A. Garfield succumbed in December, 1942. James lived until 1951. Mollie and Irvin died in the early 1950s. The youngest son Abram died on October 16, 1958, in Cleveland. He had worked as an architect being responsible for the creation of the City Plan Commission, president of the Cleveland School of Architecture, then a

38. Deeds Folder, Lawnfield File, LCHS. Land Title Guarantee and Trust Company, Trustee to Jerome T. Osborn et al, Lake County Deeds, v. 425, p. 379. Painesville Telegraph, August 16, 1958.

39. Obituary clipping in HAG papers, Box 41, LC. Also see Joseph Stanley-Brown, "An Eventful Career," reprinted from the Forty-Year Book of the Class of 1888, Sheffield Scientific School, Yale University, 1928, in LRG papers, Box 154, LC, for an autobiographical account of his life and career. Somewhat surprisingly he did not dwell on his relationship with President Garfield or the family after the assassination but his own professional career.

vice-president of the Western Reserve University.⁴⁰ It can be said of the Garfield children that through distinguished careers and dedication to public service, they honored their parents' memory.

Lawnfield Interpretation/Fund Raising

Since Lawnfield became a semi-public facility in the late 1930s, the local historical organizations have interpreted the site to the public in various ways. The Garfield story has been told on the first two floors while Lake County household, agricultural, and industrial artifacts have been displayed on the third floor since the late 1930s. Through the years numerous publications, promotionals, and special events have been staged at the site. Local history enthusiasts and friends of Lawnfield sponsored the Garfield House Festival in August, 1939, to raise money for "needed repairs" such as providing electricity to the third floor Lake County museum and essential painting and landscaping. The celebration featured an historical pageant entitled "General Garfield," a series of tableaux in pantomime called "Then and Now," a style show, an antique show and sale, and an "Electrical Garden" gala.⁴¹

Despite wartime exigencies that altered the civilian social fabric, the Garfield house remained open during the Second World War. As a gesture to workers who experienced longer hours, the visiting hours at Lawnfield were extended until 9 P.M. on Wednesday nights. Men in uniform were admitted free for the rest of the 1942 visiting season.⁴²

40. C. D. Russell to Mrs. Abram Garfield, January 12, 1959, in LRG papers, Box 152, LC. This document contains a statement concerning Abram's career and a resolution adopted by the Board of Governors of the Western Reserve University.

41. Beamer, "Exclusive Release to Mentor Monitor, 1939," in JAG papers. File C, LCHS. Monitor, July 30, 1939. August 4, 1939. A. O. Beamer and Cleveland resident Walter W. DuBrevil wrote the play.

42. Painesville Telegraph, August 11, 1942.

Besides traditional tours of the house and grounds, visitors received small booklets that explained Lawnfield's history, the local sponsoring historical society, and a room-by-room guide to the building. Typically these professionally published booklets contained a description of the contents as well as contemporary photographs.⁴³ These pamphlets, as well as leaflets and flyers, have done much to promote the house and its heritage to the public.

The family reviewed the publications utilized to interpret Lawnfield. For example in 1952 Frederic M. Wood, the executive secretary of the Lake County Chapter of the WRHS informed Abram Garfield that the pamphlet, "Lawnfield," was in the second printing of 2,000 replacing the same number given out from the first run. The society sold some 1,200 to 1,500 annually at Lawnfield. Wood promised to change a few minor inaccuracies that Garfield had identified.⁴⁴ Thus while the Garfield children still remained alive in the 1950s, they aided with the work of interpreting Lawnfield to a new generation of visitors.

This house museum became a popular destination point for school groups and weekend visitors in the Western Reserve. During its first two seasons of operation in 1936-1937, the Garfield site had attracted 10,346 visitors.⁴⁵ By the late 1940s nearly 20,000 people arriving from every state and a dozen foreign countries had signed the guest register annually. (Fig. 40 is a Lawnfield photograph). Attendance averaged 10,000 for the 1967-1975 interval. Since that time visitation has increased

43. "Lawnfield -- Home of President James A. Garfield," (n.d.). Frederick M. Wood, Sr., "The James A. Garfield Home (Lawnfield)," (Mentor, 1950). W.H. Van Loom, "Lawnfield Memorial to James A. Garfield," (Mentor, 1962), in Lawnfield File, LCHS.

44. F.M. Wood to Abram Garfield, January 25, 1952; Abram to Wood, February 14, 1952 in LRG papers, Box 147, LC. Abram pointed out that the old farm house remained the same until the major remodeling project in 1880; and he provided other data about the campaign office being used as a tenant house prior to his father's ownership.

45. Painesville Telegraph, February 24, 1938.

to some 15,000 people in 1983 of which 11,000 represented paid attendance.

Lawnfield Publicity

During the 47 years that Lawnfield has been open to the public, it has received a great deal of local and statewide publicity. As noted above, the LCHS has published tour booklets, opened the house, sponsored special events at the site such as antique shows and pageants, and helped inform the public about the Garfield story. Then too, numerous publications have described Lawnfield as a desirable site to visit. A 1947 publication entitled Historic Midwest Houses described Lawnfield as "one of their best known old houses of the Western Reserve." The local newspaper carried a three-part series in the spring of 1960 which glamorized the house in articles that bore such titles as "President Garfield: A Gracious Host at Beautiful Lawnfield in Mentor."⁴⁶ A decade later an article entitled "Happiness was an Ohio Farm," appeared in The Wonderful World of Ohio Magazine.⁴⁷

In more recent years there have been book sales, antique shows, and public lectures at the site. On one occasion an employee of the Cleveland Museum of Art delivered a lecture on architectural development using the Garfield library as his prime example. The speaker observed "some suggestions of the medieval or Gothic in the Garfield library with its rectilinear patterning of walls and ceilings." He found the development of the stairs not unlike that of stairways designed by Henry Hobson Richardson, the prominent Boston architect.⁴⁸ "Your Lake County Tour"

46. John Drury, Historic Midwest Houses, (Chicago, 1942), p. 13. Monitor, April 14, 28, 1960; May 12, 1960.

47. Marcella Fisher Anderson, "Happiness was an Ohio Farm," The Wonderful World of Ohio, 34 (May, 1970), 12-15.

48. Plain Dealer, September 23, 1972.

published by a local savings institution in 1973 detailed the work of the historical society; the Percy K. Smith Research Library; the third floor museum containing the Lake County collection of hats, glass, silver, furniture, dated coverlets, paintings and period clothes; and the Victorian Cottrell Parlor.⁴⁹ Finally a 1981 article "Looking at Lawnfield in Garfield's Centennial Year" explained the changes that had occurred to the house since the 1880s.⁵⁰ The interest in Lawnfield that has captured the public's attention in northern Ohio partially corroborates an extremely laudatory observation that originally appeared in 1895, "There is probably no home of a dead President, save Mt. Vernon, which interests the public as much as 'Lawnfield'. . ." ⁵¹

Site Managers

A number of individuals have managed Lawnfield since it was transferred to the Western Reserve Historical Society in 1936. Through the years such names as the Sutliffs, A. O. Beamer, the Woods, the Coopers in the 1960s, and Dr. Eric Cardinal between 1978 and 1984 have been professionally responsible for the care and upkeep of the valuable Garfield resource (see Appendix G for a list of site managers).

It is not surprising to learn that most of the individuals who have served as curators of the Garfield property since the 1930s have been historians or teachers who have displayed a keen interest in preserving and interpreting the Garfield heritage. For example, A. O. Beamer was a Harvard University graduate well known for his involvement in community affairs and one of the founders of the Lake County Chapter of the WRHS in 1938. A later curator, Frederic M. Wood, had served as a high school

49. Bobbie Hitchcock, "Your Lake County Tour," (Painesville, 1973), 2.

50. Plain Dealer, August 2, 1981.

51. Buffalo Express, July 21, 1895, clipping in LCHS Files.

teacher, principal of Willoughby High School, and headmaster of several private schools in the area.⁵² Dr. Eric Cardinal is a professional historian. On the other hand one early curator, Robert Norris, did not fit the historian mold; he had been operating a gas station in Mentor prior to his coming to Lawnfield. In reviewing the various on-site curators since the 1930s the most active included Beamer, the Coopers in the 1960s, and Dr. Cardinal.

Physical Change at Lawnfield Since the 1950s

Presently the record is unclear concerning the amount of physical change and maintenance at Lawnfield in the 1950s and 1960s. No new construction took place during this interval. The existing buildings were maintained to the extent possible with the limited funds procured by the Lake County Chapter of the Western Reserve Historical Society and subsequent organizations through normal operations and subsidies from local government. Normal maintenance such as painting, carpentry, and yardwork occurred at the site. The extent of this activity has yet to be researched and documented.

Some limited physical change occurred at Lawnfield in the early 1950s. For example, consultation between Laurence Norton and Abram Garfield resulted in the removal of the pergola (the trellis or arbor) built in 1904 across the front of the house during the winter of 1951. The Lake County Board of Commissioners made a "generous and timely appropriation" of funds to make this and other work possible. The pergola was in a "state of ruin which made the cost of restoration prohibitive and, as it was not a part of the original, its removal caused no regret."⁵³

52. Lake County News Herald, June 26, 1938. Monitor, May 8, 1942. Painesville Telegraph, February 4, 1949. For additional biographical data concerning various Lawnfield curators, see the Painesville Telegraph, January 21, 1959; Lake County News Herald, April 20, 1966 and the Monitor, April 28, 1966.

53. Lake County Chapter of the Western Reserve Historical Society, "Report of Chapter Secretary of Improvements." Report read at annual meeting, April 18, 1951, copy in LCHS files.

The Origins and Development of the Lake County Historical Society

The history of Lawnfield would not be complete without presenting a brief sketch of the Lake County Historical Society. The Lake County Chapter of the WRHS had managed Lawnfield for fifteen years when the local group of trustees changed the name to Lake County Historical Society on October 6, 1955, to "emphasize that we are the historical society for the County. This is to safeguard our position in case at any future time we need to go to the county commissioners for funds, as they are restricted by law to support only the historical society of the county."⁵⁴ These trustees reaffirmed their commitment to Lawnfield by adding to Article II of the constitution the following statement: "To preserve and maintain the Garfield Home as a memorial shrine open to the public, the first and second floors to remain as used by President Garfield and his family." Subsequent to this action, Laurence H. Norton, WRHS president, wrote to Margaret O. Collacott of the Lake County Chapter that the local group's evolution appeared "entirely satisfactory."⁵⁵

In 1956 the Lake County Historical Society (LCHS) was officially incorporated as a non-profit corporation. The organization reaffirmed its dual role as manager of Lawnfield as a "Memorial shrine, open to the public, the first and second floors to remain as used by President Garfield and his family," and the official Lake County Historical organization.⁵⁶

The two historical groups renewed their agreement pertaining to the operation of Lawnfield in January 31, 1968. The WRHS stated that it would be "responsible for all major upkeep of the house, barn, cabin,

54. "A Brief History Of the Lake County Historical Society's Relationship to Lawnfield," in LCHS Files. The 1953 declaration can be viewed as the official origins to create an independent Lake County Historical Society and to reduce organizational ties with the WRHS.

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid.

and campaign house, well house, and grounds, including drives," although at that time it only owned the house, cabin and campaign house; the rest of the property was still privately owned.⁵⁷ The LCHS assumed responsibility for "supervision and the maintenance of the property; keeping a clean, orderly, and attractive house and grounds, including cutting of the grass, but subject to paragraph I of the Western Reserve's responsibilities as set forth above; and handyman repairs."⁵⁸ In the late 1950s and the early 1960s the LCHS spent more than \$100,000 to meet its obligations but by that time expenditures far exceeded income from admissions and sale of interpretive materials.⁵⁹ As the Garfields had feared in the 1920s and 1930s, the cost of maintaining Lawnfield has affected operations at the site in more recent years.

In 1975 the LCHS bought a 3.44-acre parcel adjoining the WRHS property from Eleanor B. Garfield. This addition contained the well house, tenant house, barn, granary, and other small outbuildings of an indeterminate age. Next the local organization set forth to raise funds to construct a museum/library/office complex at the rear of the acreage. Once built, all administrative, research functions, and non-Garfield era displays were to be removed from the main house, leaving it to be used entirely for the interpretation of Garfield's life and career.

57. Ibid. The WRHS agreed to pay for all taxes, assessments, insurance on the contents of the first and second floors and one-half of the liability insurance.

58. Ibid. The agreement also mentioned that "there shall be discussion of all important repairs, remodeling and decorating and the amount of liability insurance to be carried. There also shall be consultation on any policy or action which might affect the well-being of the property, the image of the Garfield family, or the aim of either Historical Society." The agreement could have been abrogated by either with 90 days notice. Also see "Agreement," January 31, 1968, in "President Garfield's Home -- Lawnfield: A Report," November 28, 1975, WRHS.

59. "Brief History." The LCHS received use of the third floor and the curator's apartment and had to operate the property as a museum at least six months a year, pay the utilities, employment taxes, and insurance on the living quarters.

During the late 1970s, the LCHS initiated an active interpretive program on its portion of Lawnfield. The organization adapted a large shed as a one-room schoolhouse for educational programs, and moved a small cottage to the site as a Bicentennial project. According to the organization's goals, these activities facilitated fund drives thus generating new contributions for the construction of facilities and the implementation of further program development at the site.⁶⁰

In 1978 the Lake County Historical Society hired a professional historian, Dr. Eric Cardinal as the new executive director. His responsibilities included managing the Garfield House and grounds, maintaining a local research facility including a library and archives, and other duties for the organization. The staff has increased to five in 1983 with an annual budget of approximately \$81,000 for operating the house and grounds.

Enter the Federal Government

Public fascination and interest in Lawnfield has never completely disappeared since the noteworthy 1880 front porch presidential campaign. Through the intervening years, initially with the Garfields' stewardship, then the WRHS and the LCHS, the property has attracted attention. The focus began to shift in the early 1960s to the federal sector when the National Park Service evaluated Lawnfield as part of its "National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings."⁶¹ The survey documents sketched a brief history of Garfield's career, his relationship with the farm, and a physical analysis of the site. Obviously reflecting national significance, the National Park Service designated the property a National Historic Landmark in 1964, and entered the site in the National Register of

60. "Brief History." Little is known about the background of the shed.

61. Lawnfield represented Theme XXI "Political and Military Affairs, 1865-1912."

Historic Places in 1966.⁶² Thus Lawnfield acquired a national designation that reflected significance transcending the development of the Western Reserve. Lawnfield became the first National Historic Landmark in the Western Reserve, and was the 548th National Historic Landmark to be established since the program started in 1935.

In the mid-1970s the Western Reserve Historical Society reviewed its commitment to Lawnfield in an in-house survey report. The document entitled "President Garfield's Home -- Lawnfield" traced the development of the society's relationship with the property, the origin of the Lake County affiliate, their mutual involvement with Lawnfield, and the issue of funding future site operations. This question of financing Lawnfield a factor which James A. Garfield himself had often commented on in his diary -- troubled the local historical bodies since the site had become a semi-public facility in the late 1930s. Apparently as the 1970s passed, funding problems assumed serious proportions when the Lake County Commissioners withdrew their annual subsidy leaving other local entities to fund operations at Lawnfield. For example between 1966 and 1975 the maintenance of Lawnfield cost some \$87,992 with revenues derived from several sources -- Department of the Interior preservation grants \$30,000; Ohio Department of Natural Resources \$8,000; and \$40,639 from LCHS fund raising events. To supplement this the WRHS carried a \$9,352 ten-year long deficit on its books.⁶³ Lake County had added \$10,000 a year to Lawnfield's coffers prior to 1966.

The report further revealed that while attendance at other WRHS sites had increased dramatically in the 1967-1975 interval Lawnfield had actually

62. National Park Service -- Department of the Interior, The National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings Theme XXI Political and Military Affairs 1865-1912 (Washington, 1963). Ibid., "James A. Garfield Home, Lawnfield," National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings Inventory Form, Washington, 1963. This federal designation led to grant monies for rehabilitation projects at Lawnfield including a \$10,000 stipend for roof restoration and another \$10,000 for the installation of a fire prevention system and interior restoration work in 1973.

63. "President Garfield's Home -- Lawnfield: A Report," p. 2.

witnessed a decrease in annual visitation, from 12,000 in 1967 to 9,100 in 1975. On the other hand the annual operating budget increased from \$11,500 to an estimated \$24,000 in 1975. The author recommended that a close analysis should be made of this situation because the LCHS had not been able to "give the presidential estate the status it deserves in the museum world." Other issues included decreasing attendance and spiraling operating costs, which organization actually "owned" the Garfield documents and artifacts displayed at Lawnfield, artifacts preservation, and whether or not the LCHS should underwrite a more intensive fund-raising campaign at the site.

Most importantly the report concluded with several alternatives for the future management of Lawnfield. These included: 1) turning Lawnfield over to the Ohio Historical Society; 2) donating the property to the National Park Service; and 3) the WRHS assuming direct operation and responsibility. The report stated that the third option appeared most viable to the WRHS with a possible implementation target of 1977. The report's findings never got off the ground in their original configuration similar to numerous suggestions, schemes, plans, and recommendations that have surfaced since Lucretia Garfield's death in 1918.⁶⁴

A wide range of interests coalesced in the late 1970s, such as two concerned historical societies, local government, and National Park Service, to influence congressional action on Lawnfield.

Responding to these interests and using the authority granted to Section 8 of the General Authorities Act of 1970 as amended by P.L. 94-458, the National Park Service prepared a "Study of Alternatives New Area" for Congress in 1979. This report contained a standard background data

64. Ibid., pp. 4-5. Close analysis of the report indicates that funding Lawnfield was the key issue to the WRHS. This organization felt that additional funds were required to operate the property most effectively in a period of widening interest in historic sites. Although the report was never implemented in the form of its 1975 recommendations, obviously major operational changes are underway at Lawnfield in the 1980s.

section describing Lawnfield and its significance; a section analyzing the site's extant cultural resources; background and current status of property operations and management; possible threats to the resources; and several alternatives for future management.

The study of alternatives process has given National Park Service management and Congress important tools for evaluating candidate areas for inclusion in the park system. In this case Congress received a range of options appropriate to the effective operation of Lawnfield. The alternatives specified: 1) Private ownership -- the WRHS would sever its contract with the Lake County Historical Society and operate the site; 2) private/federal assistance -- Lawnfield would become an affiliate National Park Service area based on a cooperative agreement with the WRHS to "Provide assistance in the protection, restoration, maintenance, operation, and interpretation of the property"; 3) federal/private contract -- the National Park Service would acquire Lawnfield through donation of the WRHS property and either donation or purchase in fee of the LCHS portion. The National Park Service would enter into a cooperative agreement with the WRHS to operate and maintain the site; and 4) federal designation and ownership -- the National Park Service would acquire the entire site from the WRHS through sale or donation and the remaining land from the LCHS.⁶⁵

Based on the growing interest in this site coupled with the need to protect it for future generations, Congress authorized the establishment of the James A. Garfield National Historic Site on December 28, 1980. The legislation prescribes federal designation with agreements to be made with the local historical organizations to transfer property through donation or sale; as well as cooperative agreements for continued local operation of Lawnfield with managerial and technical assistance provided by the National Park Service. The National Park Service acquired 3.4

65. United States Department of the Interior -- National Park Service. "James A. Garfield Home: A Study of Alternatives." (Omaha, 1979).

acres from the Lake County Historical Society in April, 1984 for approximately \$205,000. The local organization moved its operations from Lawnfield to new quarters in Kirtland Hills the same month. Currently the Western Reserve Historical Society is managing the site with a resident curator at Lawnfield. The Cleveland-based group plans to operate the site on a year round basis.⁶⁶ The National Park Service is negotiating with the WRHS to transfer their holdings through donation to the federal government at an appropriate occasion. The preservation agency is also charged with preparing base data reports and a general management plan to guide the site's management, interpretation, and operations for the next decade.⁶⁷ (See Base Map 6).

Much has happened at Lawnfield. A frontier farm in the Western Reserve once owned and managed by a future president of the United States; guarded by his wife and children to perpetuate his memory; developed into a historical site by concerned, dedicated local interests--is now a federally managed site to preserve James A. Garfield's contributions to the nation. This 100-year private and public sector effort to preserve Lawnfield epitomizes our nation's long-standing, though not always understood or publicized, dedication and commitment to its cultural heritage.

66. News-Herald, May 13, 1984.

67. Currently (1984) this study and a historic structures report emphasizing the main house are in progress.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. The following National Park Service studies should be prepared for the James A. Garfield National Historic Site:

Archeological Survey

Historic Structure Report (Complete partial draft)

Historic Structure Preservation Guide

Historic Furnishings Study

Collections Study

Historic Grounds Study

2. A comprehensive local oral history program should be initiated with special emphasis on the pre- and post-1936 era. There probably are a number of individuals, including distant relatives, that live in the Mentor/Painesville/Cleveland area that could shed some additional light about the property and its management in the years between 1920-1960.
3. A survey to map the boundary of the 1880 Garfield farm should be conducted. The perimeter of the present 7.8 acre property should be marked to separate the National Historic Site property from the adjacent residences.
4. Peruse copies of Decorators and Furnishers and Building to ascertain if ideas presented in the two journals were employed in the 1885 construction work.
5. Intensive research in the 1880s-1900s farm records would help give a better picture of Lawnfield's commercial aspects during Lucretia A. Garfield's management.

REPOSITORIES CONSULTED OR VISITED DURING RESEARCH
FOR HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY

Boulder, Colorado

University of Colorado, Norton Library

Cleveland, Ohio

Cuyahoga County Archives

Western Reserve Historical Society

Denver, Colorado

Denver Public Library

Columbus, Ohio

Ohio State Archives

Ohio State Historical Society

Hiram, Ohio

Hiram College Library

Lakewood, Colorado

Federal Records and Archive Center

National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Regional Office Library

Mentor, Ohio

The Lake County Historical Society

Nashville, Tennessee

Disciples of Christ Historical Society

Painesville, Ohio

The Lake County Courthouse/Archives

Washington, D.C.

The Library of Congress

Williamstown, Massachusetts

Williams College, Sawyer Library

PERSONS CONSULTED DURING RESEARCH

Tom Anderson, Soil Conservation Service, Mentor, Ohio.

Dr. Harry J. Brown, Professor Emeritus, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan.

Siegfried Buerling, Director of Properties, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio.

Dr. Eric Cardinal, Executive Director, Lake County Historical Society, Mentor, Ohio.

Karen D. Drickamer, Curator of the Williamsiana Collections, Archives and College History, Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts

Eric Johannesen, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio.

David Levine, Ohio State Archives, Columbus, Ohio.

Kermit Pike, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio.

Kucera and Associates, Mentor, Ohio.

Harry F. Lupold, Lake County College, Painesville, Ohio.

Dr. Allen Peskin, Professor of History, Cleveland State University, Cleveland, Ohio.

Arlene Peterson, Archivist, The Ohio State Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio.

Dr. Theodore A. Sande, Executive Director, The Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio.

Joanne M. Sawyer, Archivist, Hiram College, Hiram, Ohio.

Louise Aldrich Windecker. Mentor, Ohio.

CHAIN OF TITLE FOR THE JAMES A. GARFIELD
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE: 1800-1983

The Garfield farm was comprised of a number of smaller parcels combined to form the three discrete land transactions between the Dickeys and the general in late 1876 and early 1877. The following chronology of ownership reflects the various small parcels of land that became the Dickey farm, transferred to Garfield in October, 1876. Each is traced from its initial ownership by the Connecticut Land Company, through its sale to subsequent owners. In numerous instances the chain of title deals only with a portion of a larger parcel. Following Garfield's death the size of the farm remained stable until the early 20th century when the heirs began to sell portions of the farm. In 1984 the remnants total approximately 7.8 acres.

The data below has been extracted from the text of the report. All documentation is contained in it. Some acreage figures may vary slightly depending on diverse factors such as rights-of-way, legal highways, accuracy of recording and inconsistent land survey data.

Bacon Lot

- 1811 September 6. Connecticut Land Company to Ralph Bacon. Mentor Township. 183 acres.
- 1811 December 16. Ralph Bacon to Warren Corning Jun. Mentor Township. 193 acres.
- 1827 March 2. Warren Corning to Warren Corning Jun. Mentor, Bacon Lot. 44 26/100 acres.
- 1842 August 15. Warren Corning Jun. pr. Administrators (Nathan Corning and Benjamin Blish) to James Dickey. 40 75/100 A. in the Bacon Lot.

A. King Lot

- 1802 December 28. Connecticut Land Company, Drafts of 1802, Draft No. 17. Connecticut Land Company to Ashbel King, et al. Mentor, Tract No. 5. 1757 A.

- 1836 May 2. Connecticut Land Company to Ashbel King (heirs of). Mentor, Tract No. 5. 1757 A.
- 1847 July 27. Alfred D. Shepard to Orrin Harmon. Mentor, Tract No. 5.
- 1847 October 6. Luman H. Haskins to Orrin Harmon. Mentor, Tract No. 5.
- 1847 October 26. Ambrose Hadley to Orrin Harmon. Mentor, Tract No. 5.
- 1847 December 4. William B. Fellows to Orrin Harmon. Mentor, Tract No. 5.
- 1848 January 6. Henry U. King to Orrin Harmon. Mentor, Tract No. 5.
- 1848 December 16. Orrin Harmon to James Dickey. Mentor, Dickey Lot in Tract No. 5. 23 35/100 A.

W. King Lot

- 1802 December 28. Connecticut Land Company, Drafts of 1802, Draft No. 17. Connecticut Land Company to Ashbel King, et al. Mentor, Tract No. 5. 1757 A.
- 1836 May 2. Connecticut Land Company to Ashbel King (heirs of). Mentor, Tract No. 5, 1757 A.
- 1837 April 14. Walter & Roswell King to Orrin Harmon. Mentor, Tract No. 5. 70.9 A.
- 1846 August 24. Orrin Harmon to James Dickey. Mentor, Tract No. 5. 38.48 A.

Sheldon Lot

- 1802 December 28. Connecticut Land Company, Drafts of 1802, Draft No. 17. Connecticut Land Company to Rising and Pierce, et al. Mentor, Tract No. 5. 1757 A.
- 1836 May 2. Connecticut Land Company to Lorain Sheldon (devisee of Francis Pierce). Mentor, Tract No. 5. 1757 A.
- 1845 June 20. Martin Sheldon to Julius C. Sheldon. Mentor, Tract No. 5. 15.13 A.
- 1846 August 24. Julius C. Sheldon (by attorney Orrin Harmon) to James Dickey. Mentor, Tract No. 5. 15.13 A.

Harmon Lot

- 1802 December 28. Connecticut Land Company, Drafts of 1802, Draft No. 17. Connecticut Land Company to Rising & Pierce, et al. Mentor, Tract No. 5.
- 1836 March 10. Calvin Kendall & Laura Kendall (heirs of Franklin Rising, only son of Asa Rising) to Orrin Harmon, in the Connecticut Western Reserve.
- 1836 May 2. Connecticut Land Company to heirs of Asa Rising. Mentor, Tract No. 5. 1757 A. in common.
- 1846 August 24. Orrin Harmon to James Dickey. Mentor, Tract No. 5. 38.48 A.

Botten Lot

- 1811 September 6. Connecticut Land Company to Ralph Bacon. Mentor Township. 183 A.
- 1811 December 16. Ralph Bacon to Warren Corning. Mentor Township. 193 A.
- 1823 August 28. Warren Corning to Lemon Brunson. Mentor, Bacon Lot. 1/2 A.
- 1826 August 5. Lemon Brunson to Henry Bliss. Mentor, Bacon Lot. 1/2 A.
- 1827 March 2. Warren Corning to Warren Corning Jun. Mentor, Bacon Lot. 44.26 A. (reserving 1/2 A. sold to Lemon Brunson).
- 1833 June 19. Warren Corning Jun. and Henry Bliss to Warren Corning. Mentor, Bacon Lot. 1 A.
- 1844 June 12. Warren Corning to Hannah Sawyer. Mentor, Bacon Lot. 1 A.
- 1851 July 14. Hannah Sawyer to Enos Mathews. Mentor, Bacon Lot. 1 A.
- 1852 May 3. Enos Mathews to James Smith. Mentor, Bacon Lot. 1 A.
- 1855 May 9. James Smith to Martin H. & Gilbert T. Winslow. Mentor, Bacon Lot. 1 A.
- 1857 March 19. M. H. Winslow to G. T. Winslow. Mentor, Bacon Lot. 1 A.
- 1858 May 2. Gilbert T. Winslow to Charles G. Barber. Mentor, Bacon Lot. 1 A.

- 1861 May 11. Charles G. Barber to Margaret Botto(e)n. Mentor, Bacon Lot. 1 A.
- 1876 September 15. Margaret Botten By Admr. (Clinton D. Clark) to Harriet M. Dickey. Mentor, Bacon Lot. 1 A.
- 1876 October 16. Harriet M. Dickey to James A. Garfield. Mentor, Bacon Lot. 1 A.

The Garfield Farm

- 1876 October 26. Harriet M. Dickey et al to James A. Garfield. Mentor, Bacon and Simmons or Corodell (Goodell) Lots. 120.44 A. Of the total of 120.44 A. described within the deed:

1.70 A. is reserved, sold to Cleveland, Painesville & Ashtabula, Railroad Company.
 1.00 A. is reserved, known as the Botten Lot
 40.74 A. is in Bacon Lot
 23.35 A. is in A. King Lot
 23.35 A. is in W. King Lot - Simmons or Goodell Lot
 15.13 A. is in Sheldon Lot
 15.13 A. is in Harmon Lot
 120.40 A. TOTAL

George M. Dickey Lot

- 1802 December 28. Connecticut Land Company, Drafts of 1802, Draft No. 17. Connecticut Land Company to Erastus Huntington, et al. Mentor, Tract No. 5. 1757 A.
- 1820 December 8. Erastus Huntington to Simeon Hodges. Mentor, Tract No. 5. 409.79 A.
- 1823 January 31. Simeon Hodges to Samuel Hodges. Mentor, Tract No. 5 and Ward Lot. 142 4/5 A.
- 1835 October 13. Samuel Hodges to Warren Corning. Mentor, Tract No. 5. 40 A.
- 1837 November 9. Warren Corning to Albion Smith. Mentor Township. 88.50 A.
- 1840 July 15. Albion Smith Ransom French. Mentor, Ward Lot. 88.50 A.
- 1844 October 4. Ransom French to Edwin French. Mentor, Ward Lot and Tract No. 5. 78 A.
- 1847 November 5. Edwin French to Harvey Cram. Mentor, Ward Lot and Tract No. 5. 78 A.

- 1848 March 25. Harvey Cram to George M. Dickey. Mentor, Ward and Huntington Lots. 52 A.
- 1852 April 17. George M. Dickey to Cleveland, Painesville & Ashtabula Railroad Co. Mentor, Tract No. 5. 1.05 A.
- 1877 April 11. George M. Dickey to James A. Garfield. Mentor, Tract No. 5 and Huntington Lot. 40 A. (1.05 A. reserved to the railroad).

The Garfield Farm's Diminution

- 1881 July 29. James A. Garfield to New York, Chicago & St. Louis Railway. Mentor Township, 1.53 A. The local tax records indicate that Garfield transferred a total of 3.19 A. to the railroad.
- 1894 Harry A. Garfield, James R. Garfield, Mary G. Stanley-Brown, Irvin McDowell Garfield, and Abram Garfield (heirs of James A. Garfield) to Lucretia R. Garfield. Mentor, Huntington and Bacon and Simmons and Corodell (sic) Lots. 154.69 A. Since Garfield had died intestate, the children fell heir to the property. When they all had reached legal age, they transferred the estate to their mother.
- 1908 September 7. Lucretia R. Garfield, widow to William P. Murray. Mentor, Huntington and Corodell (sic) or Simmons Lots. 87.34 A.
- 1936 June 15. James R. Garfield et al to the Western Reserve Historical Society. Mentor, Bacon Lot. .779 A.
- 1944 January 21. James R. Garfield et al to the Western Reserve Historical Society. Mentor, Bacon Lot. 3.269 A.
- 1947 September-October. James R. Garfield et al to Henry G. Windus. Bacon Lot. 14.511 A.
- 1947 September - October. James R. Garfield et al to Land Title Guarantee and Trust Company. 48.956 A.
- 1947 November 7. Mary Garfield Stanley-Brown to Henry G. Windus. Bacon Lot. 1 A.
- 1952 July 21. Land Title Guarantee and Trust Company to Eleanor B. Garfield. 3.440 A.
- 1956 October 24. Land Title Guarantee and Trust Company to Jerome T. Osborne et al. 45.516 A. This concludes the breakup of the farm owned by James A. Garfield in the late 1870s.

- 1975 October 8. Eleanor B. Garfield to Lake County Historical Society. 3.440 A. The present acreage at the James A. Garfield National Historic Site is comprised of this parcel and other pieces donated by the Garfield family to the Western Reserve Historical Society in 1936 and 1944.
- 1984 April, 1984. Lake County Historical Society to the National Park Service. 3.4 A.
- 1984 Lawnfield. 7.82 A. 4.40 A. owned by the Western Reserve Historical Society. 3.4 A. owned by the National Park Service.



HISTORICAL BASE MAPS



THE HARRIET M. DICKEY FARM, OCTOBER 1876

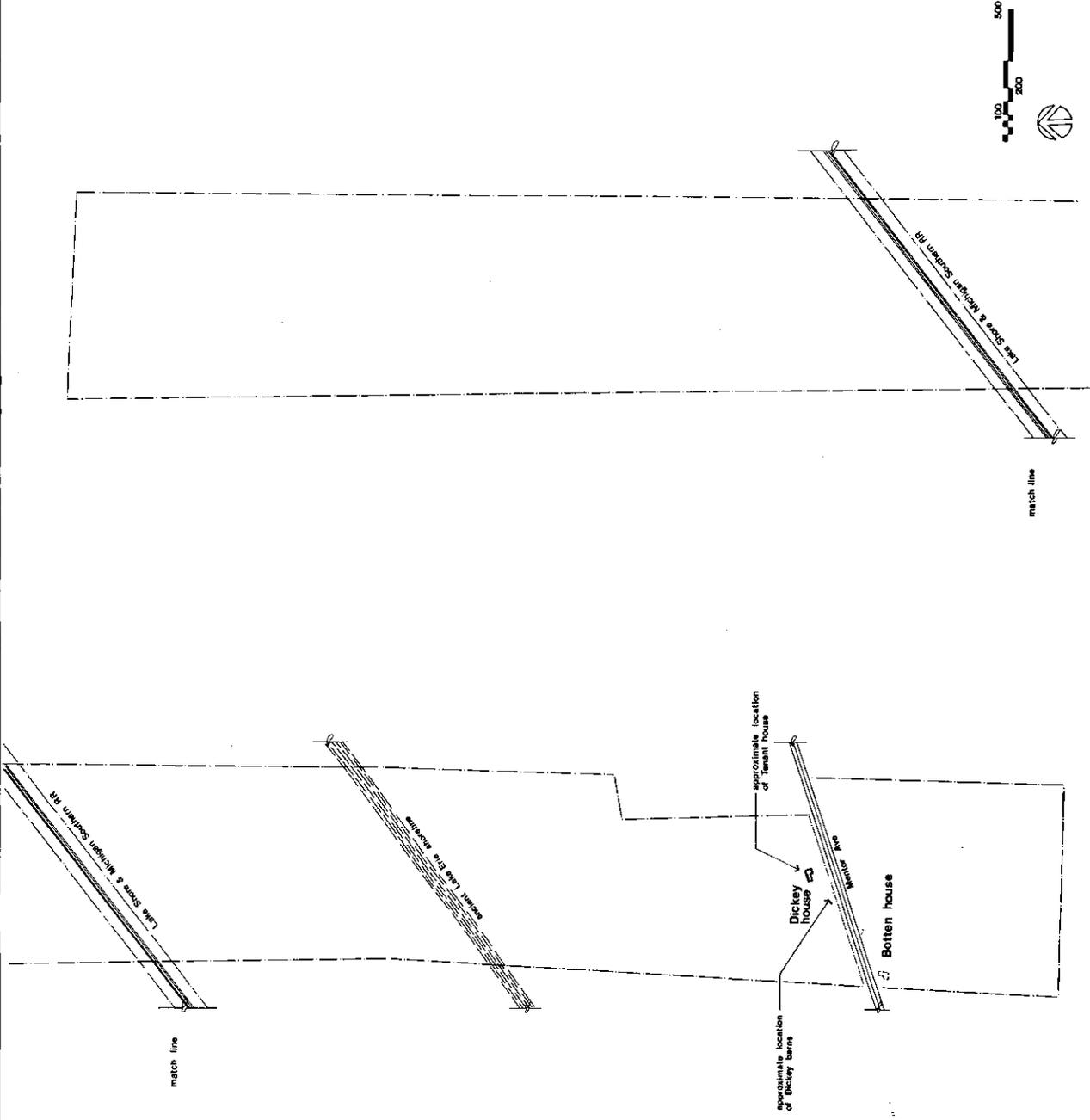
This map represents the Harriet M. Dickey farm immediately prior to her selling the property to Congressman James A. Garfield. Extensive research in the Garfield papers, local and county records, and documents, and secondary sources has not provided adequate data to make a definitive determination about the number, exact locations (in most instances), or precise dimensions or appearances of the structures and other cultural resources at the Dickey farm during that family's ownership from the early 1830s to 1876. The location of the main house is known because it is part of the extant main house. Approximate locations of the Botten Tract tenant dwelling and the tenant house to the rear of the main house are known, but the precise location of numerous other outbuildings is not known and can only be suggested. (See figure 8 for the only known photograph of the farm prior to the time it was modified by James A. Garfield.) Thus, this base map represents the tentative conclusions and logical deductions of the project historian and the historical architect based on the available source materials at their disposal and the physical evidence found in preliminary surveys at the site.

Although available documentation does indicate that there were some garden plots and cultivated fields at the Dickey farm during this period, the precise location and total acreage devoted to such land usage cannot be determined at this point.

ON MICROFILM

PPA/PLS 187-25000

DESIGNED:	SUB SHEET NO.	TITLE OF SHEET	DRAWING NO.
DRAWN:		1876	
TECH. REVIEW:		Harriet M. Dickey Farm	
DATE:		Base map 1	
			PKG. SHEET NO.
			OF



Key Plan



THE JAMES A. GARFIELD FARM, AUTUMN 1880

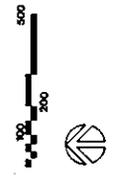
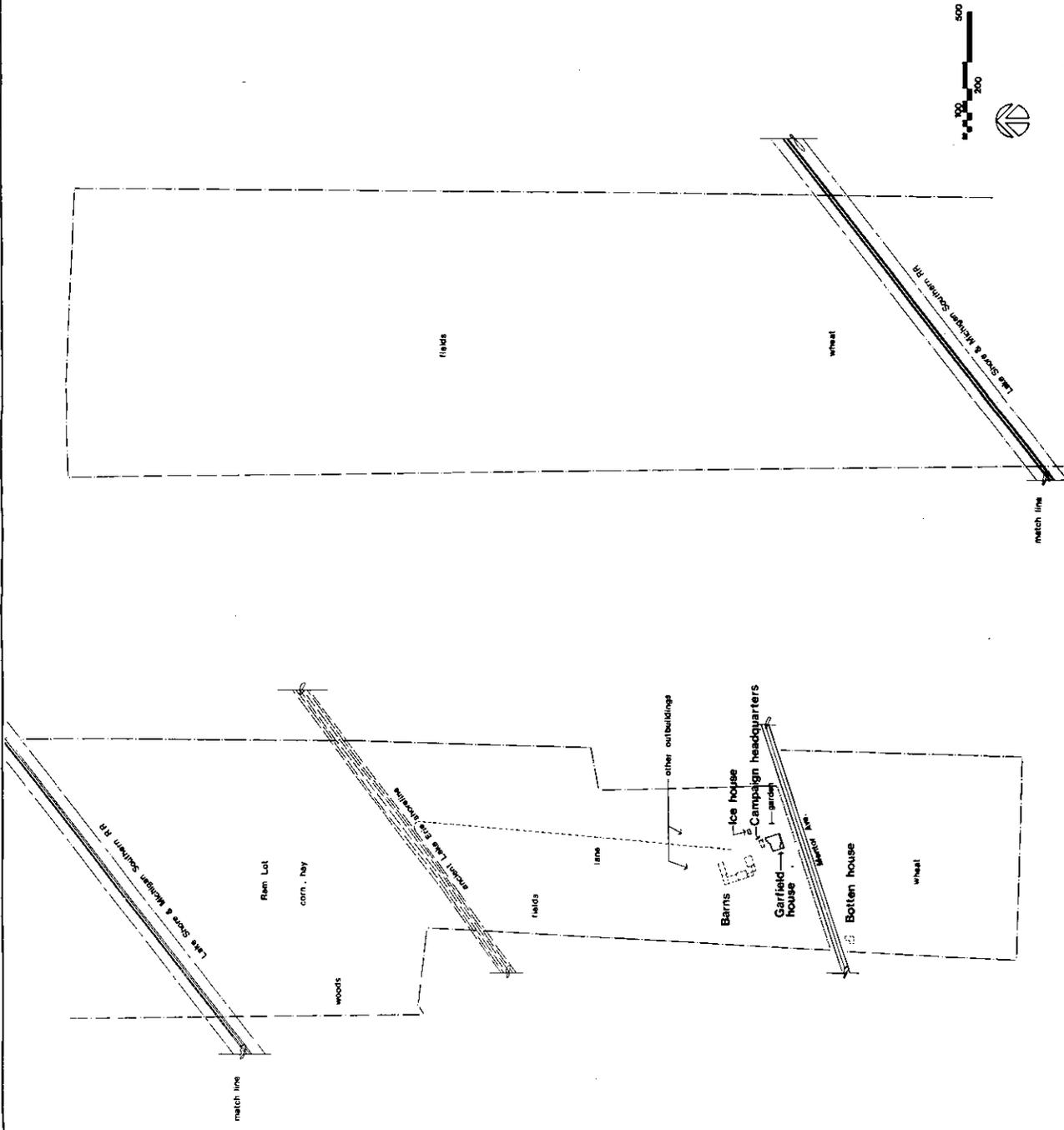
See the explanatory note placed on Base Map One. At this point major remodeling had been done to the main house as well as other improvements to outbuildings. The approximate location of these structures can be surmised from the photographs contained in figures 8, 10, 13, and 14. Garfield had moved these structures from their location near Mentor Road in the spring of 1877. According to the text Robison had contracted with a Mr. Barnes to "move the barns back fifteen rods or less from the street. All of them - the large Barn, the long shed, the carriage barn, the corn houses and hog pens." Robison wrote, "as soon after 1st of March as convenient, I am to mark the places for them to be put, he to have them raised in proper positions. . . . The location of the ice house is known due to its proximity to the campaign office. The precise location of several other outbuildings such as the 1878 engine house and the privy is not known and can only be suggested at this time. The hydraulic ram was situated north of the ancient shoreline at an unspecified point.

From a close reading of the Garfield papers the general location of the fields has been indicated on this map.

ON MICROFILM

DESIGNED: /
DRAWN: /
TECH. REVIEW: /
DATE: /

DESIGNED: /	SUB SHEET NO.	TITLE OF SHEET	DRAWING NO.
DRAWN: /		1880	487-25.001
TECH. REVIEW: /		James A. Garfield Farm	PAGE NO.
DATE: /		Base map 2	1 OF 1



Key Plan



THE JAMES A. GARFIELD FARM, AUTUMN 1885

This map denotes the period when the general construct on of the memorial addition, the relocation of the campaign office, and the construction of the wellhouse/windmill, possibly the gasworks, and tenant house on the line had been completed. A new water well was dug and the gas well later. The location of these features are known because later maps illustrated precise locations and several of these structures remain extant in 1983. Like the earlier periods the precise location of various outbuildings remains clouded. No exact evidence has surfaced to pinpoint the location of the barns and smaller sheds.

ON MICROFILM

DESIGNER: ABEY-215.002

DRAWING NO.

PRG. SHEET NO.

OF

TITLE OF SHEET

1885

James A. Garfield Farm
Base map 3

SUB SHEET NO.

DESIGNED

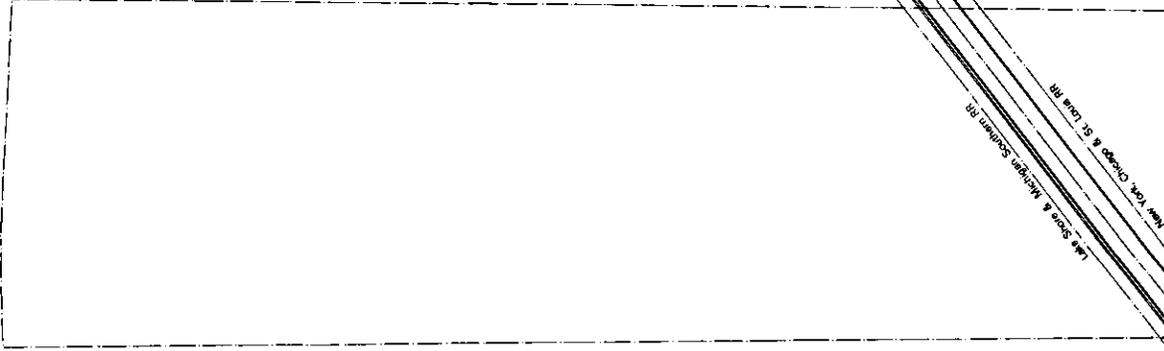
DATE

DRAWN

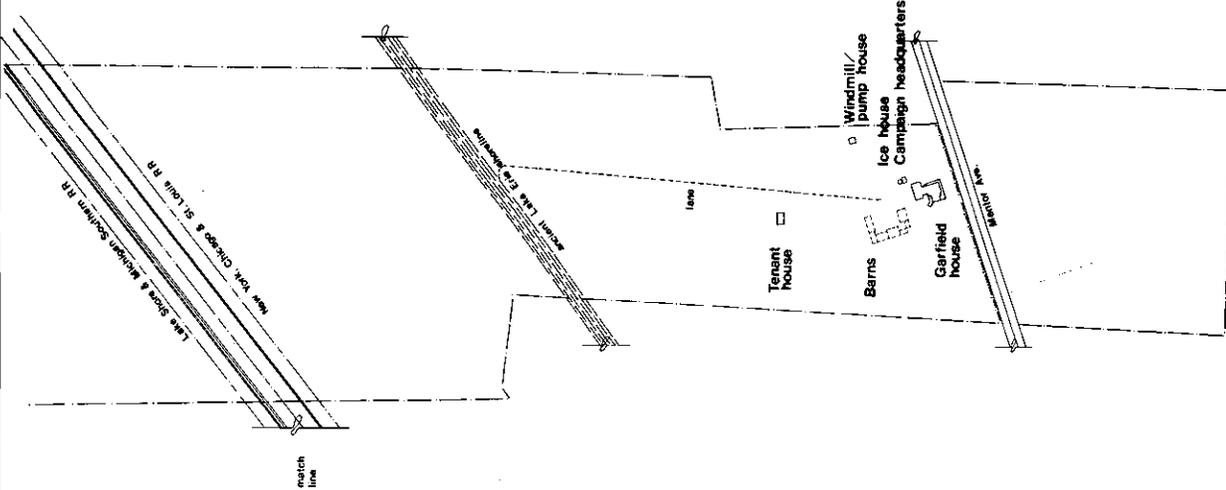
TECH. REVIEW



Key Plan



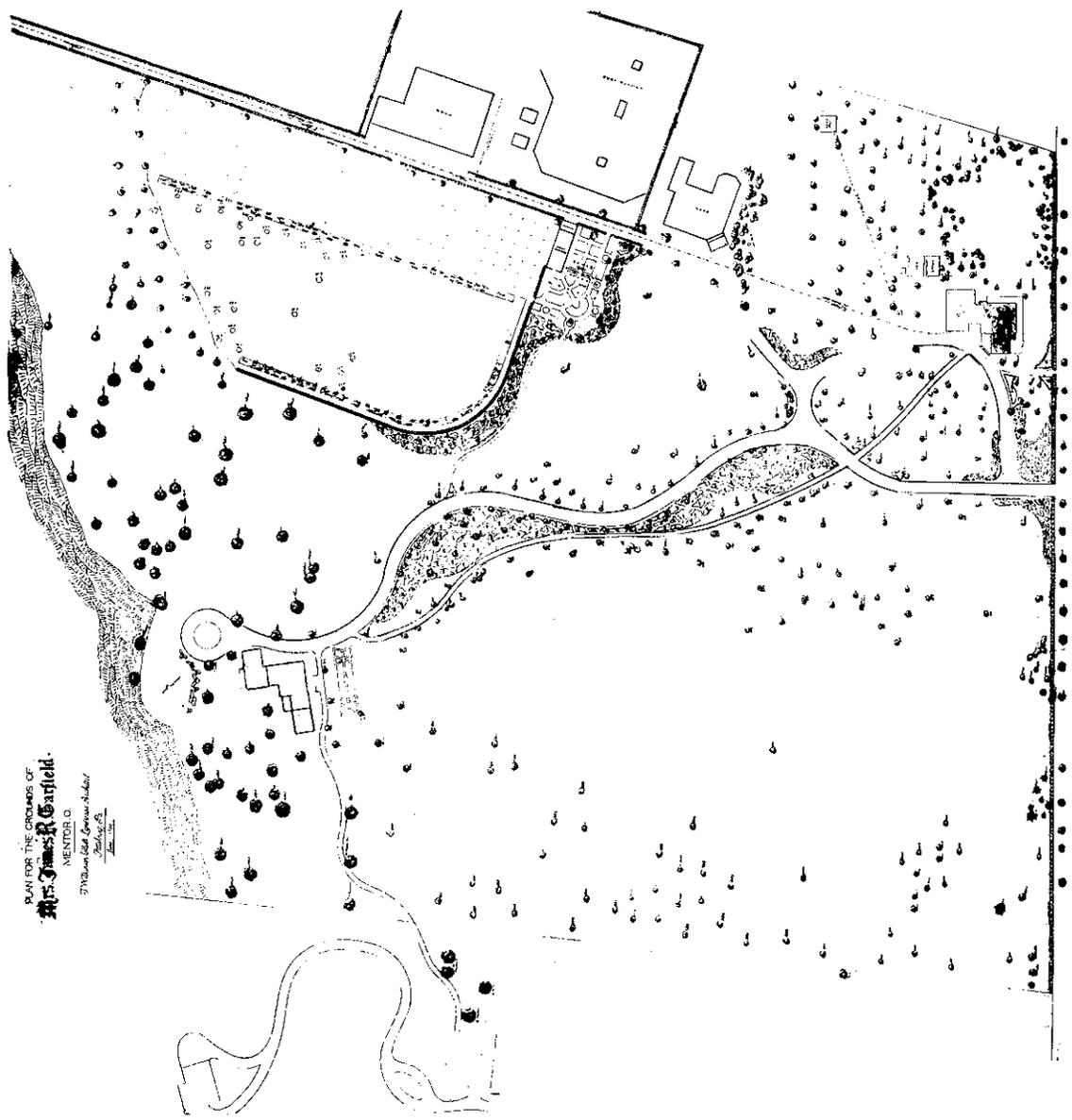
match line





THE JAMES A. GARFIELD FARM, JUNE 1900

This historic map documents the location of various outbuildings in relation to the main house. Major changes from 1885 depict the 1893 construction of the carriage barn and the relocation of the barns to the rear of the farm. The year 1893 marked the final burst of creative modification that occurred at Lawrentfield depicted on the 1900 map. The core building area remained static for many years. One must use the 1900 drawing advisedly; obviously many of the landscaping suggestions depicted on the map were never implemented.



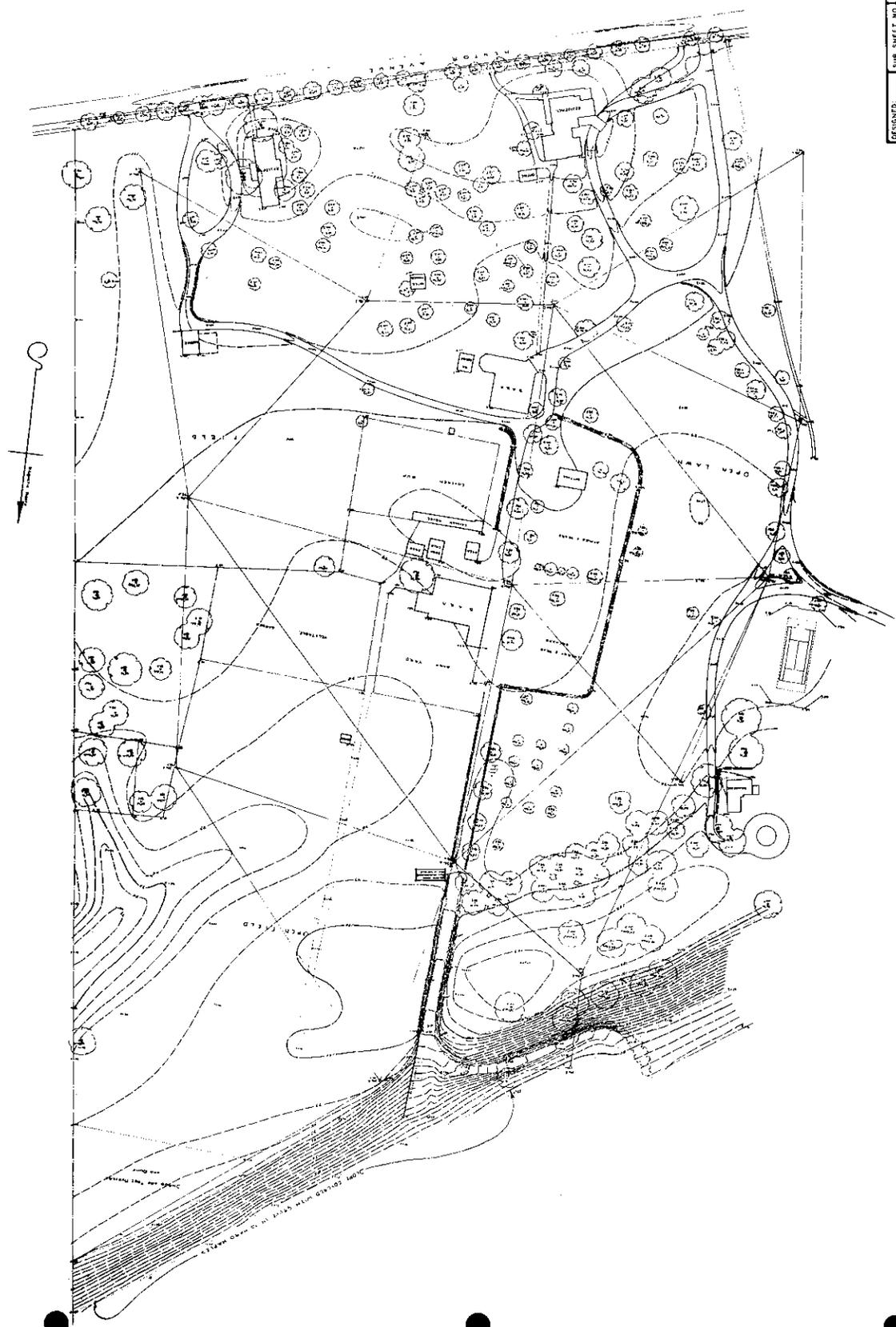
PLAN FOR THE ESTATE OF
Mr. James A. Garfield.
 MENTOR D.
 27 W. 11th St. Chicago, Ill.
 1900

ON MICROFILM

PC/AVE 487-25003

DESIGNED:	SUB SHEET NO.	DRAWING NO.
DRAWN:		
TECH. REVIEW:		
DATE:		
TITLE OF SHEET		PKG. SHEET
1900 James A. Garfield Farm		NO. OF
Base map 4		





THE JAMES A. GARFIELD FARM, OCTOBER 2, 1924

This precise rendition of the farm does not illustrate many changes from the 1900 version. By this time the ice house had been moved to the rear of the carriage barn, but not much happened at the farm following the death of Lucetta in 1918. Uncle Joe Rudolph stayed at the place in the 1920s. The various Garfield children had moved away - only James R. Garfield lived close by. Family members occasionally visited each other at the farm in the 1920s and early 1930s.



ON MICROFILM

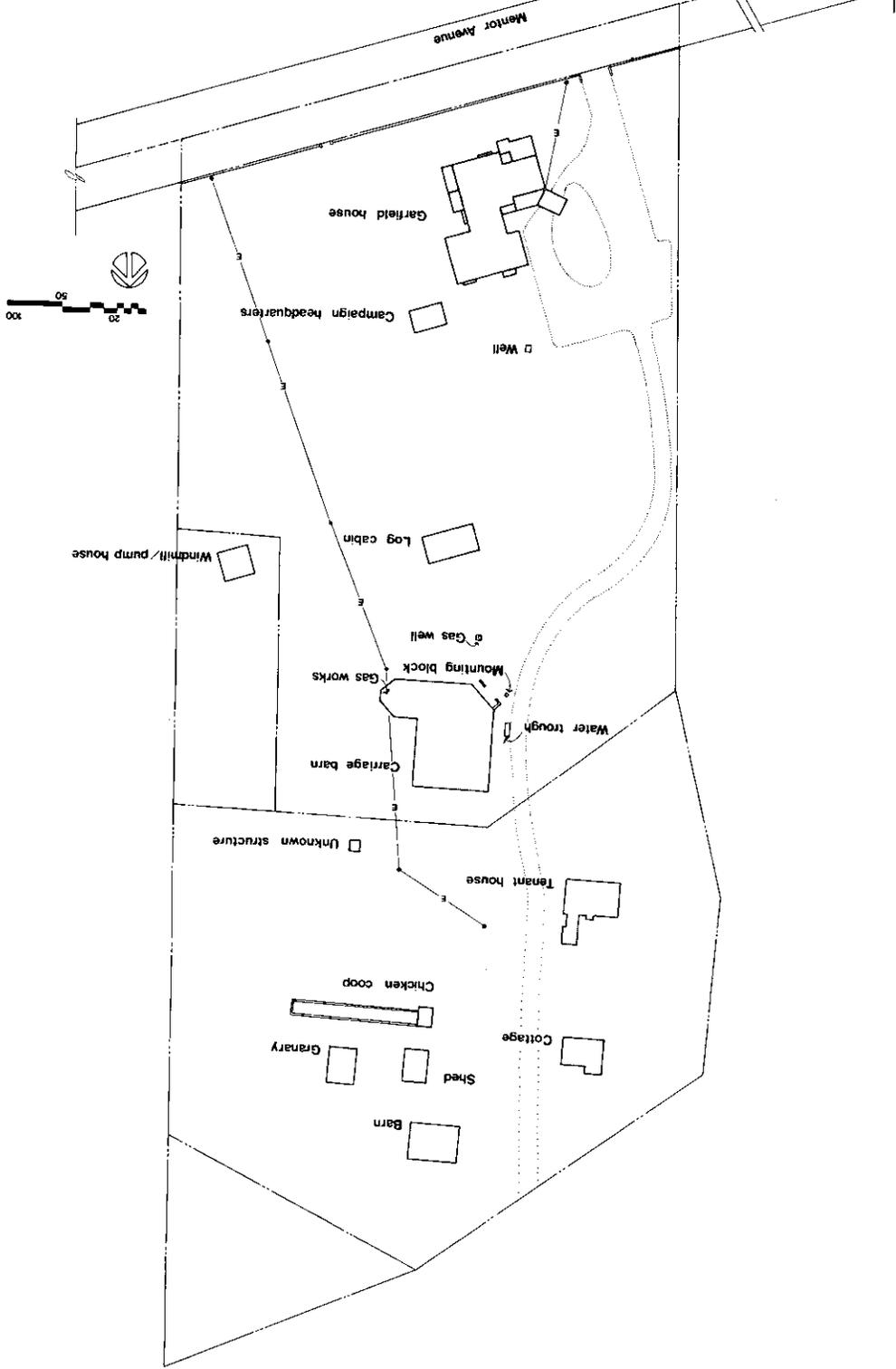
PERIODICALS 487-25.004

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TECH. REVIEW		
SUB SHEET NO.		
TITLE OF SHEET		
1924 James A. Garfield Farm Base map 5		
PAGE NO.	SHEET NO.	OF
DRAWING NO.		



This map shows the extant buildings located on the present 7.5 acre national historic site currently owned by the Western Reserve Historical Society. The log cabin placed on the site in the late 1930s has since been removed. Other nonhistoric period buildings have been moved to the site in recent years but have no bearing on the Garfield era structures. The main house, campaign office, possibly a remnant of the barn, the wellhouse, carriage barn, gasworks, granary, and tenant house and small farm related structures are in the same locations as illustrated in the 1924 map. The Garfield site is currently in a suburban residential neighborhood that bears little resemblance to the farming locale in which it was located.

THE JAMES A. GARFIELD NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, SUMMER 1982



DESIGNED: _____ DRAWN: _____ TECH. REVIEW: _____ DATE: _____

SUB SHEET NO. _____

TITLE OF SHEET: **James A. Garfield National Historic Site 1982 Base map 6**

DRAWING NO. _____

SHEET NO. _____ OF _____

ON MICROFILM



PROPERTY OWNERSHIP CHANGES: 1876-1984

This map illustrates the various changes in the size of the property since 1876. Major property transactions include a large sale in 1908, the donation of the main house in 1935, adjacent property in 1944, the sale of the 14-acre parcel south of Mentor Avenue in 1947, and the transfer of the remaining 48 acres to a Cleveland land trust company land sale in the mid 1950s. Today 7.8 acres comprise the national historic site.

Legend

- 1881 - 3.19 acres to New York Central & St. Louis R.R. - oak
- 1908 - 87.34 acres to William P. Murray
- 1935 - 0.779 acres to Western Reserve Historical Society
- 1944 - 3.269 acres to Western Reserve Historical Society
- 1947 - 14.511 acres to Henry G. Winchus
- 1952 - 3.44 acres to Edward B. Garfield
- 1956 - 45.516 acres to Jerome T. Osborne

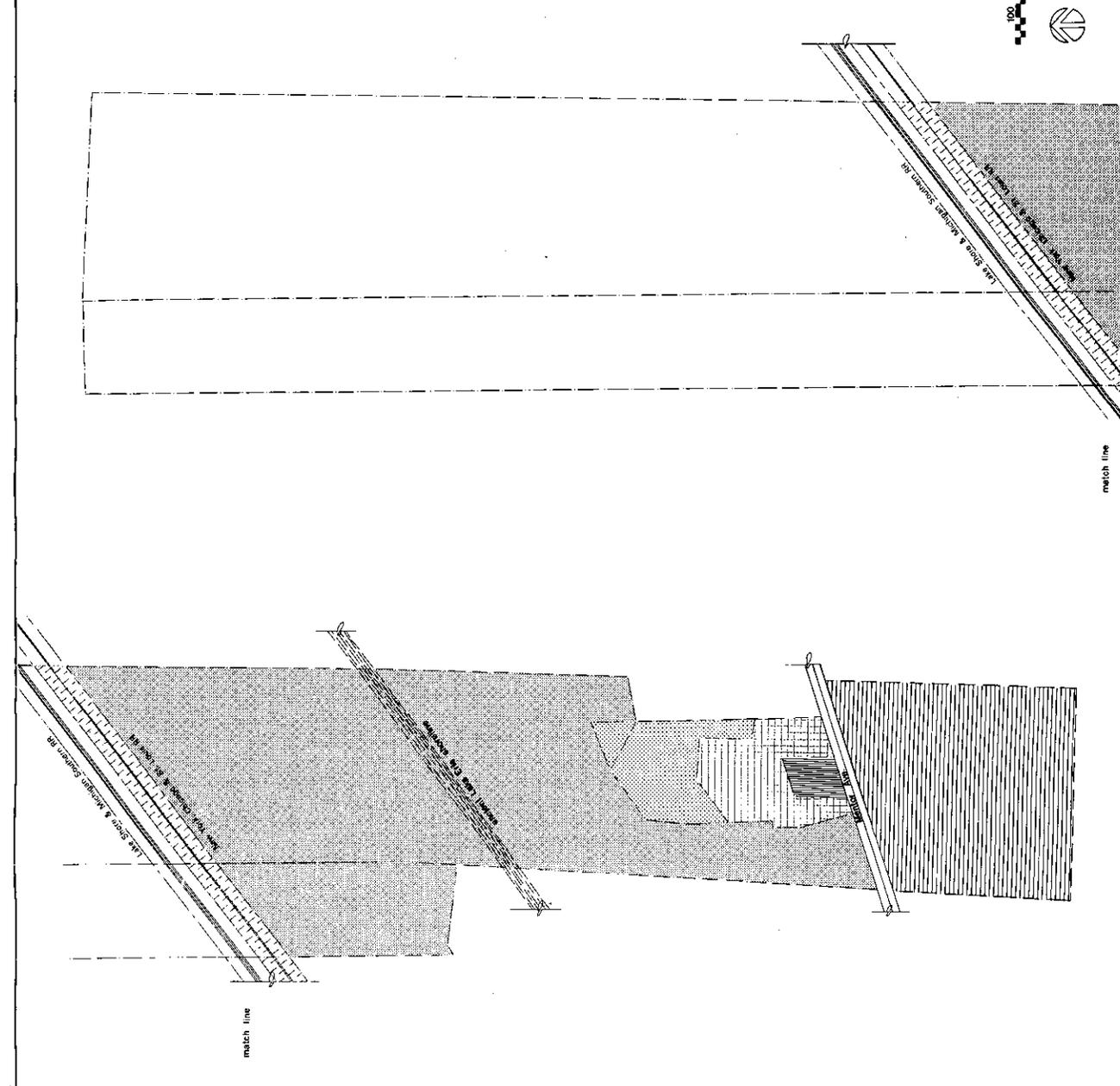


Key Plan

ON MICROFILM

DESIGNS 487-250010

DESIGNED	DATE
DRAWN	TECH. REVIEW
SUB SHEET NO.	
DRAWING NO.	
TITLE OF SHEET	
<p>Land Disposition since 1881</p> <p>Base map 7</p>	
FIG. NO.	SHEET NO.
OF	OF



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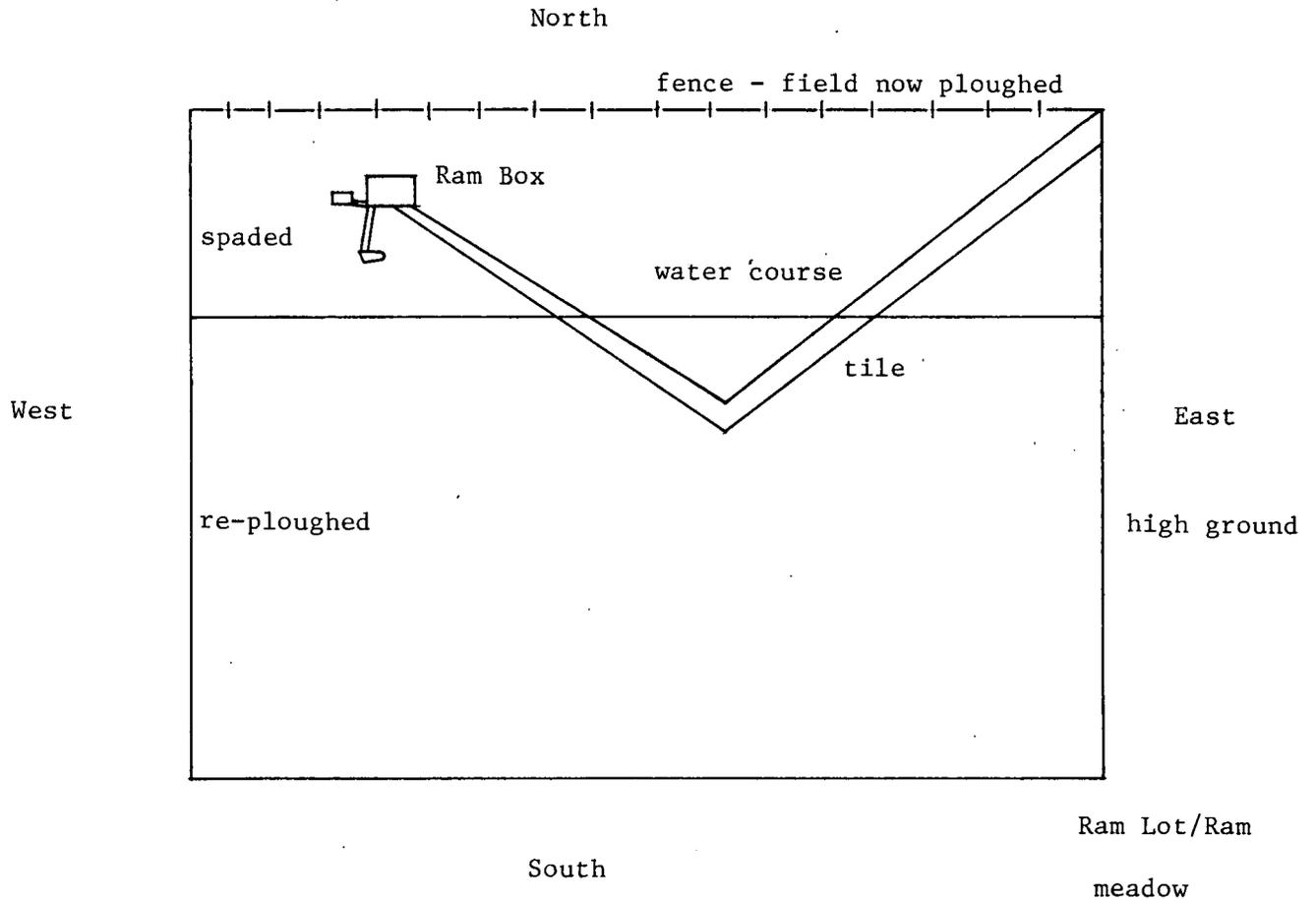
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APPENDIXES



APPENDIX A
SKETCH OF THE RAM LOT BY J.P. ROBISON, 1878



J.P. Robison to James A. Garfield
April 29, 1878, JAG Papers, LC
V. 53, p.274



APPENDIX B

TYPICAL POST-1881 MEMORIAL POEM TO SLAIN PRESIDENT

"HOME AT MENTOR"

"O this is wondrous sweet!
To rest so stilly in the long green grass,
And watch the lake blown vapors as they pass,
To catch the throb and beat
Of busy baby feet,
And feel myself once more at home, at home,
No more beside the fateful sea to roam,
Sweet Mentor home!

"I have had bitter strife--
Some hateful dream. Me seemed some evil thing
Came swift behind as I was hastening
To clasp my poor, pale wife,
And stung me like an adder, so I lay
And longed for home and Mentor day by day,
Sweet Mentor home!

"Me seemed this slimy thing
Wound round and round me with its loathsome touch,
So that I sighed, and sobbed, and sorrowed much,
That none would come to wrest
Its fangs from my breast,
An I set my feet once more toward the spot
That I have cherished in my holiest thought,
Sweet Mentor home!

"And as the day went by
The awful horror slowly crept and crept;
My stricken heart stood still, or wildly leapt;
My flesh grew parched and dry;
There rose a dimness even to my eye,
That like the eagle's had withstood the sun,
My feeble lips scarce name a name save one,
Sweet Mentor home!

"O blessed home! Come reach
That book, my Mollie, that you love so well--
The Charles and Mary Lamb--let Shkespeare tell
His matchless stories through their gentler speech;
An as I read, my boys, sit silent each,
While Grandmama beside me smiles and knits,
And busy with her cares our mother flits--
Sweet Mentor home!

"O this is rest, I ween!
After the storm and strife the cloudless calm,
After the stifling streets, the breath of balm;
The slopes of living green,
The daisied dells atween;
The bending, blessing Buckeye sky above
Around, the sheltering arms of sylvan love;
Sweet Mentor home!



APPENDIX C
ESTATE OF JAMES A. GARFIELD

Schedule A.

James A. Garfield deceased leaving a family. The following articles are not deemed assets to be administered on as such, but left with the family to be appraised:

one family sewing machine
all the spinning wheels
all the weaving looms
all the Stoves set up and kept in use by the family
all the Family Bibles and family pictures
all the school books used by or in the family

Books kept and used as part of the family library not exceeding \$100.00 in value to be selected by widow.

The entire library of decedent is included in Schedule B.

Schedule B.

11 Horses	\$ 400.00
10 Head of Cattle	300.00
4 two year old	130.00
4 one year old cattle	80.00
6 calves	60.00
3 hogs	45.00
2 lumber wagons	75.00
1 family carriage	150.00
1 square box wagon	30.00
1 buggy	100.00
1 set carriage harness	20.00
1 set team harness	20.00
2 single harnesses	20.00
Plows - Harrows and cultivators. 50 tons of hay @ 12.00	600.00
300 bushels of corn (poor)	30.00
250 bushels of wheat	312.50
500 bushels of oats	200.00
30 bushels of old barley (poor)	15.00
1 sleigh	30.00
Horse blankets and robes	20.00
Crowbar, all the shovels, chains, etc.	10.00
300 bushels of beets	60.00
15 sheep	
2 horses	400.00
Harnesses	200.00
Carriage	1,400.00
The library of decedent	<u>3,000.00</u>

Together with all the Household goods, pictures, papers, etc., belonging to said decedent - \$7,757.50

Schedule D.

Bonds, Mortgages, Notes and all other Securities for the Payment of Money due said estate:

Thos. Garfield	Notes	\$ 300.00
Savings Bank Cleveland	Account	7,759.50
Briggs & Co. Washington	Bank	16,739.52
U.S. of American	U.S. Bonds	2,300.00
New York Life Ins. Company	Life Ins. Policy	<u>25,000.00</u>
		<u>\$52,099.02</u>

Schedule F.

Assets, Personal Goods and Chattels;

600 shares Silver King Mining Stock	\$10,000.00
10 shares in Citizens Savings Bank of Cleveland	5,000.00
10 shares in Second National Bank of Cleveland	<u>1,200.00</u>
	<u>\$16,200.00</u>

APPENDIX D
LUCRETIA R. GARFIELD ESTATE

INVENTORY AND APPRAISEMENT -- Filed September 23, 1918
Volume 21, page 353

Estate of Lucretia R. Garfield, Deceased
T. G. Hart, John Tyler and Richard Inglis, Appraisers

Schedule D.

Personal Goods and Chattels:

1. Household goods	\$ 2,800.00
2. Library books	700.00
3. Three horses @ \$100.00 each	300.00
4. One colt	40.00
5. One single harness	5.00
6. One double harness	10.00
7. Three old single harnesses	5.00
8. Two horse lawn mowers	20.00
9. Ten shoats	250.00
10. Five small pigs	50.00
11. Seven cows	350.00
12. Two Yearling heifers	40.00
13. Two 2-year old heifers	50.00
14. Two calves	20.00
15. One roller	5.00
16. Two farm wagons	60.00
17. Three plows	6.00
18. One disc harrow	5.00
19. One wheel rake	10.00
20. One drag	5.00
21. One mowing machine	5.00
	<u>\$ 4,736.00</u>

Schedule E.

Account of all Moneys:

Specie	None
U.S. Treasury Notes	None
National Bank Notes	None
Cash in Bank	\$ 8,402.55
	<u>\$ 8,402.55</u>

Total Amount of Money

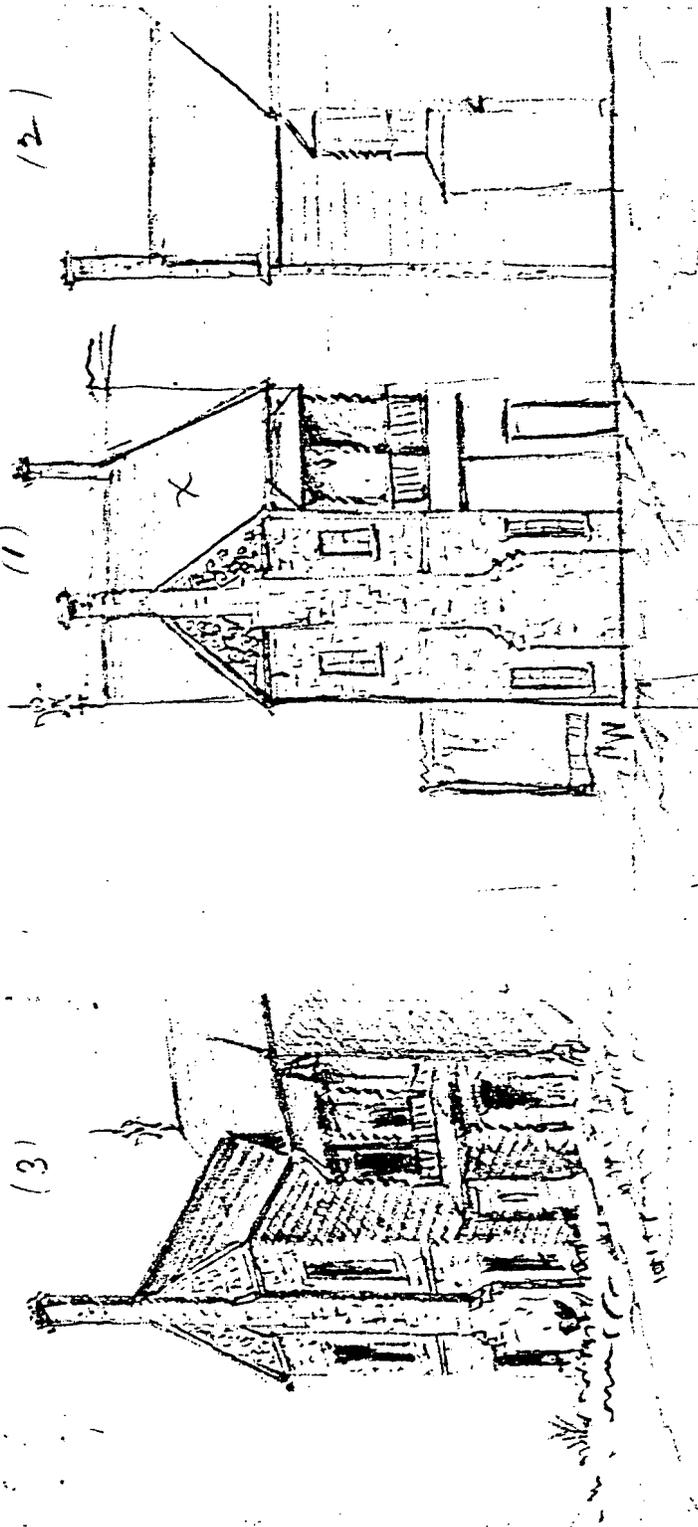
Schedule H.

Real Estate:

Located in Mentor Village, Lake County, Ohio	\$ 38,530.00
Total Assessments of Assets	<u>\$ 51,668.55</u>



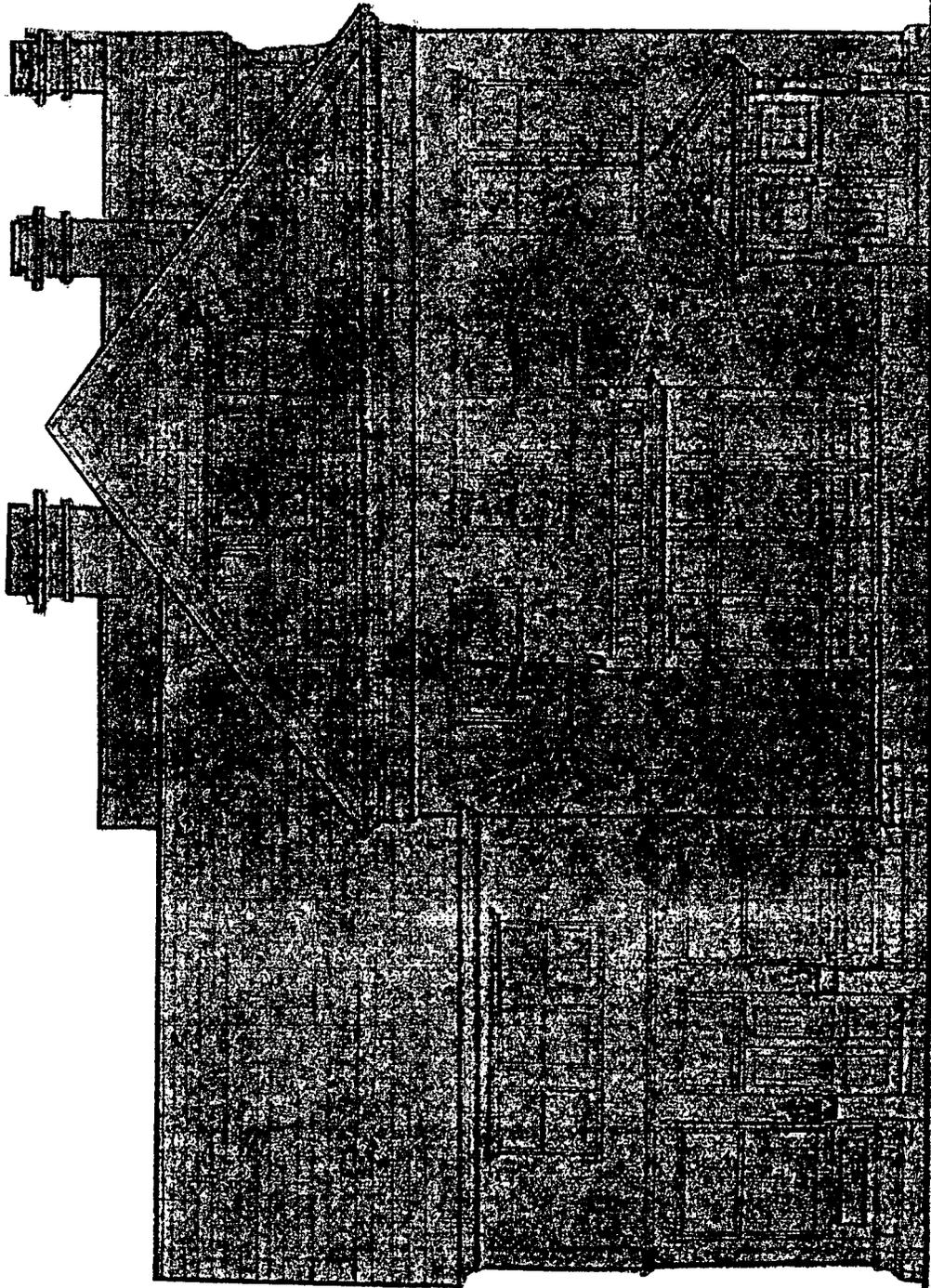
APPENDIX E
JOSEPH STANLEY-BROWN'S SKETCHES OF PROPOSED
1885 LIBRARY ADDITION TO LAWNFIELD



*Point of view

X = old roof extending east and west dormer window
 not shown - in reality shown where X is.
 Of course this elevation is raised for reason - cutting of a
 view of the kitchen

APPENDIX F
SKETCH OF THE 1923 PROPOSED REMODELING
Attributed to Joseph Stanley-Brown



APPENDIX G
LAWNFIELD CURATORS/SITE MANAGERS, 1936 - 1984

- 1936 - 1938 - Ivan and Vera Sutliff
1938 - 1939 - Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Norris
1939 - 1942 - Arthur O. Beamer
1942 - 1949 - Thelma Beamer (Mrs. A. O. Beamer)
1949 - 1952 - Frederic M. Wood
1952 - 1954 - Hazel Wood (Mrs. F. M. Wood)
1955 - 1956 - Mr. and Mrs. William Clark
1957 - 1958 - Mrs. Marie Hurst
1959 - 1966 - James C. and Barbara S. Cooper
1966 - 1977 - Frances N. Slack
1978 - 1984 - Eric Cardinal
1984 - - Dale Maugans



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PRIMARY SOURCES

MANUSCRIPT MATERIALS

Cleveland, Ohio, Western Reserve Historical Society.

Henry B. Boynton Papers, Mss 3160

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Mary (Garfield) Stanley-Brown Papers, Mss Vertical File S

Vertical File, Lawnfield, Mentor, Ohio

Vertical File, Mss G

These papers provide a great deal of pertinent data regarding the early development of the Western Reserve. The collections were helpful in preparing chapters one through three. A number of publications are included which describe the historical attributes of Lawnfield in the 20th century.

The various Garfield and related files consulted did not offer new material on the origins and development of Lawnfield, but served to fill in some of the minor details on family activities in northern Ohio. Finally, the extensive internal archives at the Western Reserve Historical Society recorded the Lawnfield story since 1936 when the society acquired the property and subsequently opened it as an historic site. The files were most helpful in sketching the visitation, financial issues and interpretive programs at Lawnfield in the decades since 1936.

Mentor, Ohio. Lake County Historical Society Archives.

Garritt, M. O. or H. A. Scrapbooks

James A. Garfield Papers

James R. Garfield Scrapbooks

Lawnfield File

Letters of James A. Garfield

The various scrapbooks, collections and documents were used extensively to develop the changes of Lawnfield in the 19th century. The clippings contained in the Garritt scrapbooks were particularly useful for the Garfield period. The Lawnfield file must be consulted for the history of the public historic site in the 1930-1960s.

Painesville, Ohio. Lake County Court House.

Lake County Administration Center

Auditor's Duplicates (Geauga & Lake Counties)

Deeds (Lake County)

Deeds (Geauga County--prior to 1840)

Probate Records

These records were utilized extensively to trace the chain of title to the Dickey/Garfield property and to make generalizations about the use and development of the land.

Papers of James A. Garfield (microfilm edition prepared by the Library of Congress, 1973.) 177 rolls.

This extensive collection was held by the Garfield family until the 1930s and 1940s. It contains family correspondence and financial records that have large bearing on the Garfield's ownership of Lawnfield. The correspondence between Dr. J.P. Robison and Garfield sheds a great deal of light on the various construction projects on the house in 1877 and 1880. Copies held at the Western Reserve Historical Society and the Library of Congress.

United States Soil Conservation Service, Wickliffe, Ohio

Aerial photography file

Washington, D.C. Library of Congress. Manuscript Division.

Harry A. Garfield Collection

James A. Garfield Collection

James R. Garfield Collection

Lucretia R. Garfield Collection

John P. Robison Collection

Alman F. Rockwell Collection

These various collections proved beneficial to the development of the family's history of ownership from 1876 until 1936. The original J. A. Garfield papers were inspected in some instances because the microfilm copies were not distinct, however, the originals especially the Robison correspondence are in terrible condition due to the ink bleeding. The papers of the Garfield children, especially James R. and Harry A., helped develop the disposition of the property in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as described in chapters seven and eight. The Lucretia R. Garfield collection contained many documents dealing with family members who lived at Lawnfield in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as well as valuable financial records. The Stanley-Brown papers proved extremely helpful in tracking the 1885 major rehabilitation and memorial library addition projects at Lawnfield.

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1880; April 15, 1880; June 10, 17, 24, 1880; July 22, 1880; October
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1881; February 23, 1882; July 15, 1882; June 4, 18, 1885; July 16,
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- "Lawnfield." Richard Van Curen & Company. n.d. (on file at the Lake County Historical Society).
- Map of Geauga and Lake Counties, Ohio. Philadelphia, 1857.
- Map of the Town of Mentor No. 10-9th Range. n.d. Mss 242 (on file at the Western Reserve Historical Society).
- "Mentor." in Simon Perkins Papers, Mss 3122 (on file at the Western Reserve Historical Society).
- Mentor Township No. 10 Range 9. ca. 1846-1848. Plat Book A. Portfolio. (on file at the Lake County Recorder's Office).
- New Century Atlas of Lake County, Ohio. Philadelphia, 1915. Detail of Village of Mentor.
- Orrin Harmon's Book of Maps or Plates, undated Mss Map 311 (on file at the Western Reserve Historical Society).
- Orrin Harmon's Book of Maps or Plates. "Map of Tract No. 5 in Town No. 10-Range No. 9 Mentor." undated Mss Map 311 (on file at the Western Reserve Historical Society).
- "Survey and Subdivision of Tract No. 5 in Township No. 10 in the 9th Range." Geauga County Court of Common Pleas. Records. v. 5. p. 36, 1936.
- "Town of Mentor or Township no. 10 in the 9th Range." n.d. Mss Map 259 (on file at the Western Reserve Historical Society).

The older maps files at the Western Reserve Historical Society helped illustrate the development of the Corning-Dickey property in the early 19th century. The maps depict the evolution of the Western Reserve's vast tracts of land to the smaller farm properties. The Elliot and "Garfield Estate" maps are the best surviving examples of drawings depicting the extent of the farm, the layout of the fields, the location of the buildings and the propinquity to Hollycroft--the home of James R. Garfield. Unfortunately research did not reveal any late 19th century maps or contemporary Garfield era versions to pinpoint locations of the structures.

PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

Eleanor B. Garfield, February 10, 1983.

Polly Garfield Hallaran, August 16, 1982.

Mrs. Ivan (Veda) Sutliff, August 26, 1982.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Fig. 1. Ca. 1802. "Town of Mentor, or Township No. 10 in the 9th Range." From a photostatic copy (copy at Western Reserve Historical Society?). Shows ownership of land after Connecticut Land Company Drafts of 1802.

1871 of 1871 ...
in 1871 ...



Fig. 2. Ca. 1835. Detail of Mentor Township. From a photostatic copy (original at Geauga County Recorder's Office?). Maps shows parcels owned by estate of Warren Corning Jun. (d. 1834) in Bacon Lot and Tract No. 5 and 40 A, parcel in Tract No. 5 owned by James Dickey, in Com.

General & ...

10
General & ...

VIII

J. Williams
J. Williams
J. Williams
J. Williams

J. Williams
J. Williams
J. Williams

IX

VIII

VII

J. Williams

III

Gold ...

J. Williams

J. Williams

J. Williams

J. Williams

Fig. 3. 1836. "Survey and subdivision of Tract No. 5 in Township No. 10 in the 9th Range." From Geauga County Court of Common Pleas, Records, v. 5, p. 57.

Fig. 4 Ca. 1846-1848. Detail of Mentor Township. From Lake County Recorder's Office, Plat Book A Portfolio. P. 8. Area shows land owned by James Dickey, 40.75 A. in the Bacon Lot and 53.5 A. in Tract No. 5 (Harmon, Sheldon and W. King Lots).

Fig. 5. Map, detail of Mentor Township. From "Map of Geauga and Lake Counties, Ohio," Philadelphia, 1857.

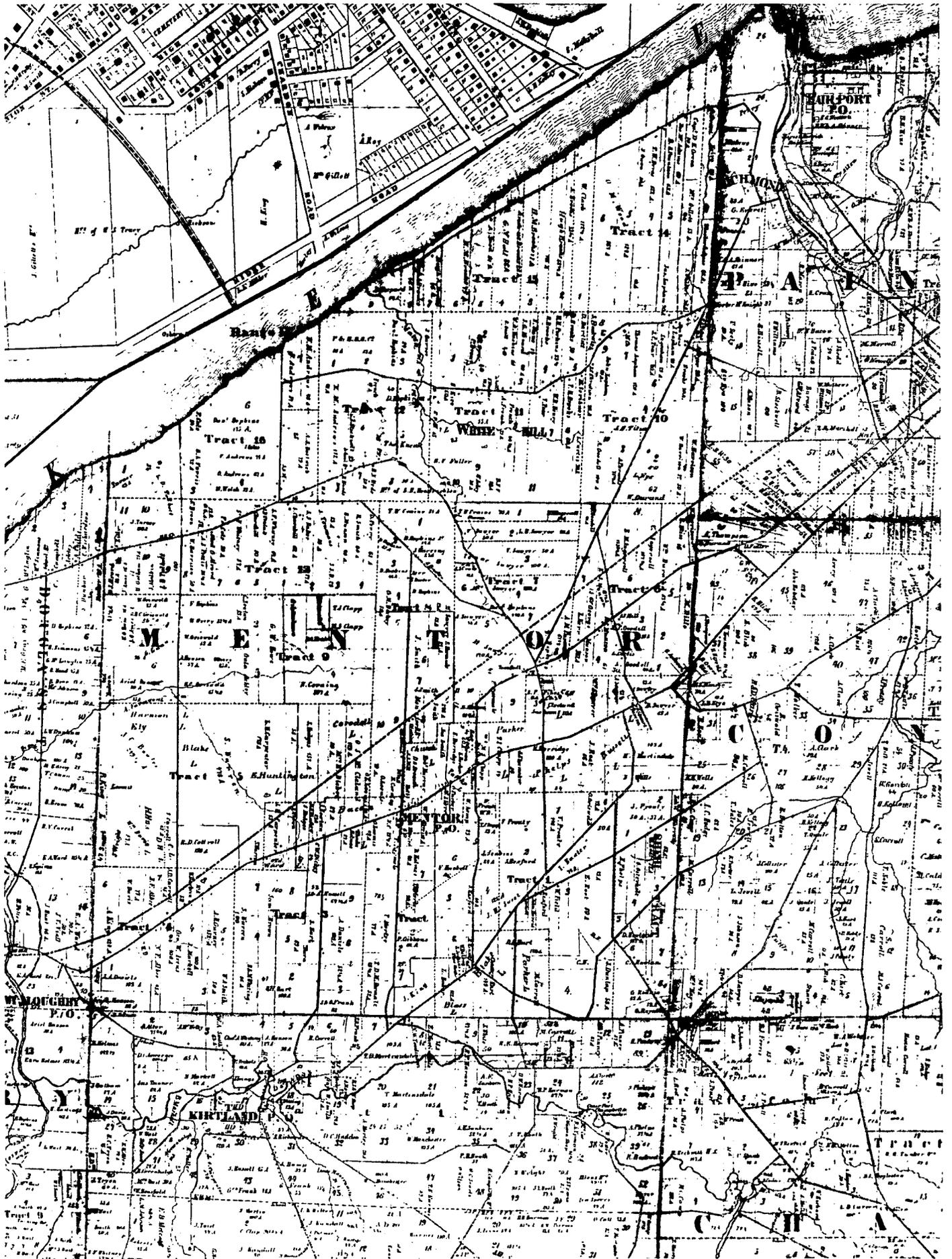


Fig. 6. Map, Mentor Township. From Atlas of Lake and Geauga Counties, Ohio. D.J. Lake, Civil Engineer, Philadelphia, 1874, p. 30.

Fig. 7. Portrait of J.P. Robison, from History of Cuyahoga County, Ohio. Crisfield Johnson, compiler. Cleveland, 1879, facing p. 206.



G. Robinson

Fig. 8. Lawnfield, exterior, west and south sides. Before remodeling done by James A. Garfield. Lake County Historical Society.

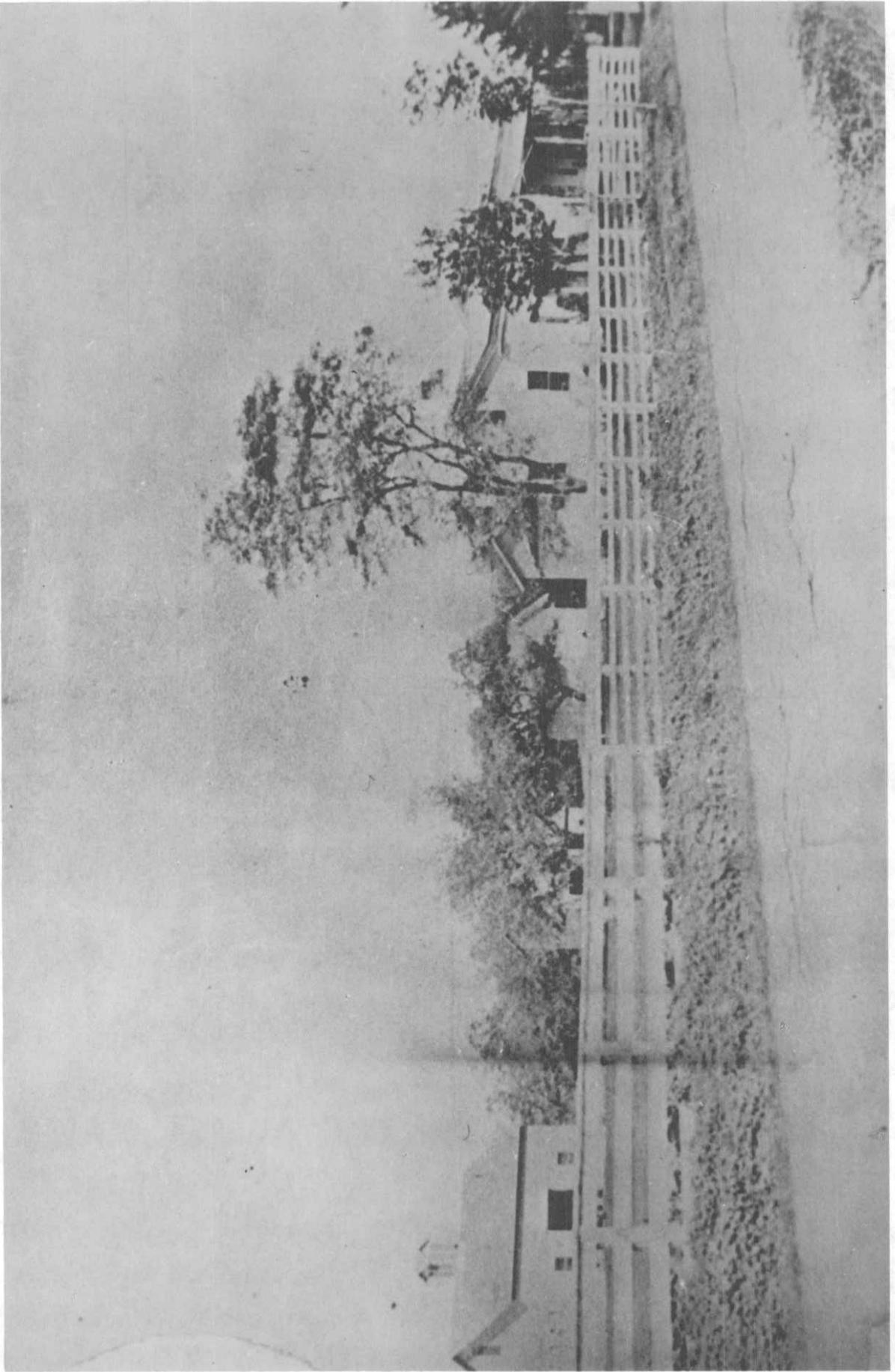


Fig. 9. Lawnfield, exterior, south side (front elevation). Lake County Historical Society.

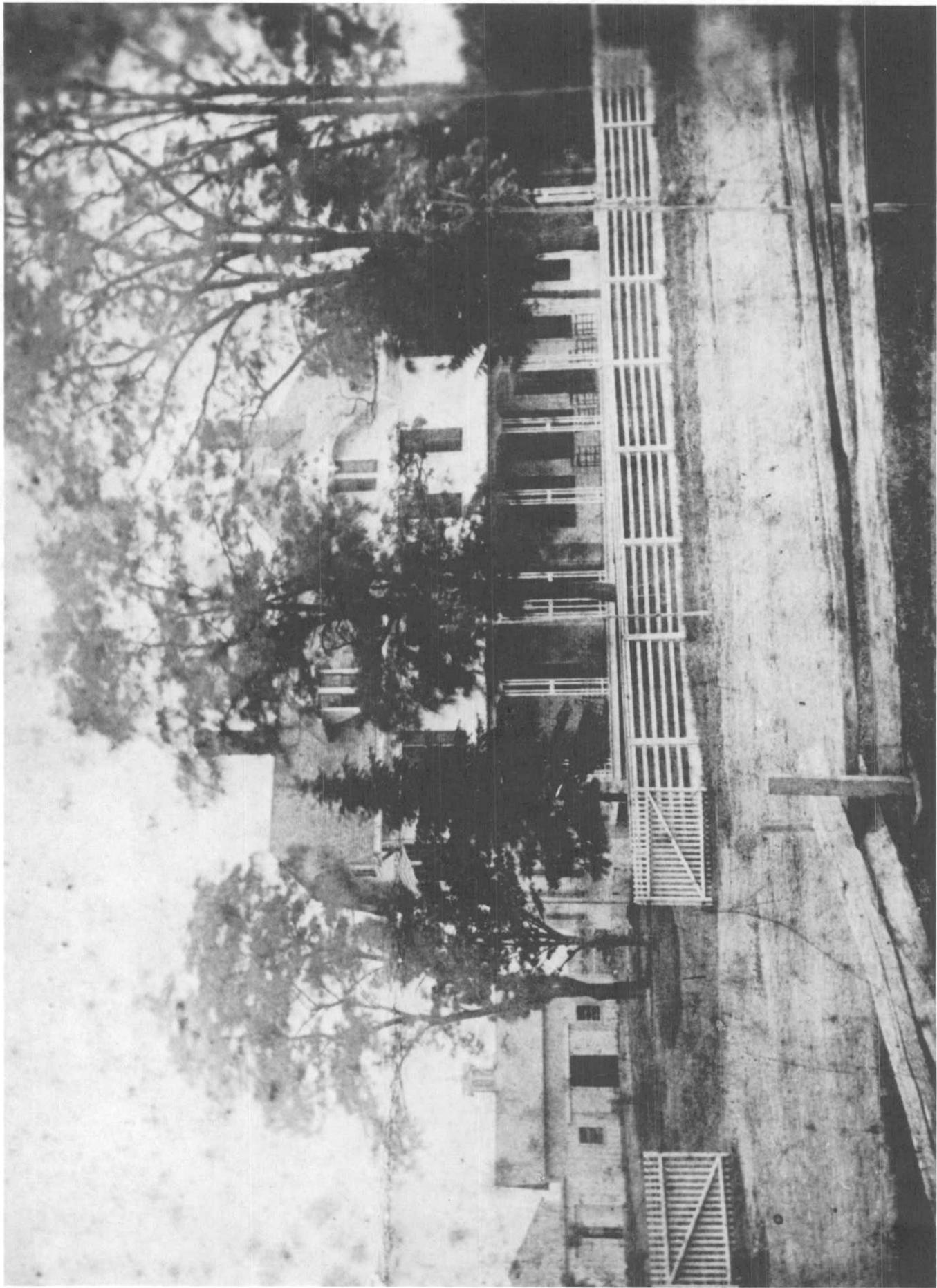


Fig. 10. Lawnfield, exterior, south and east sides. Lake County Historical Society.

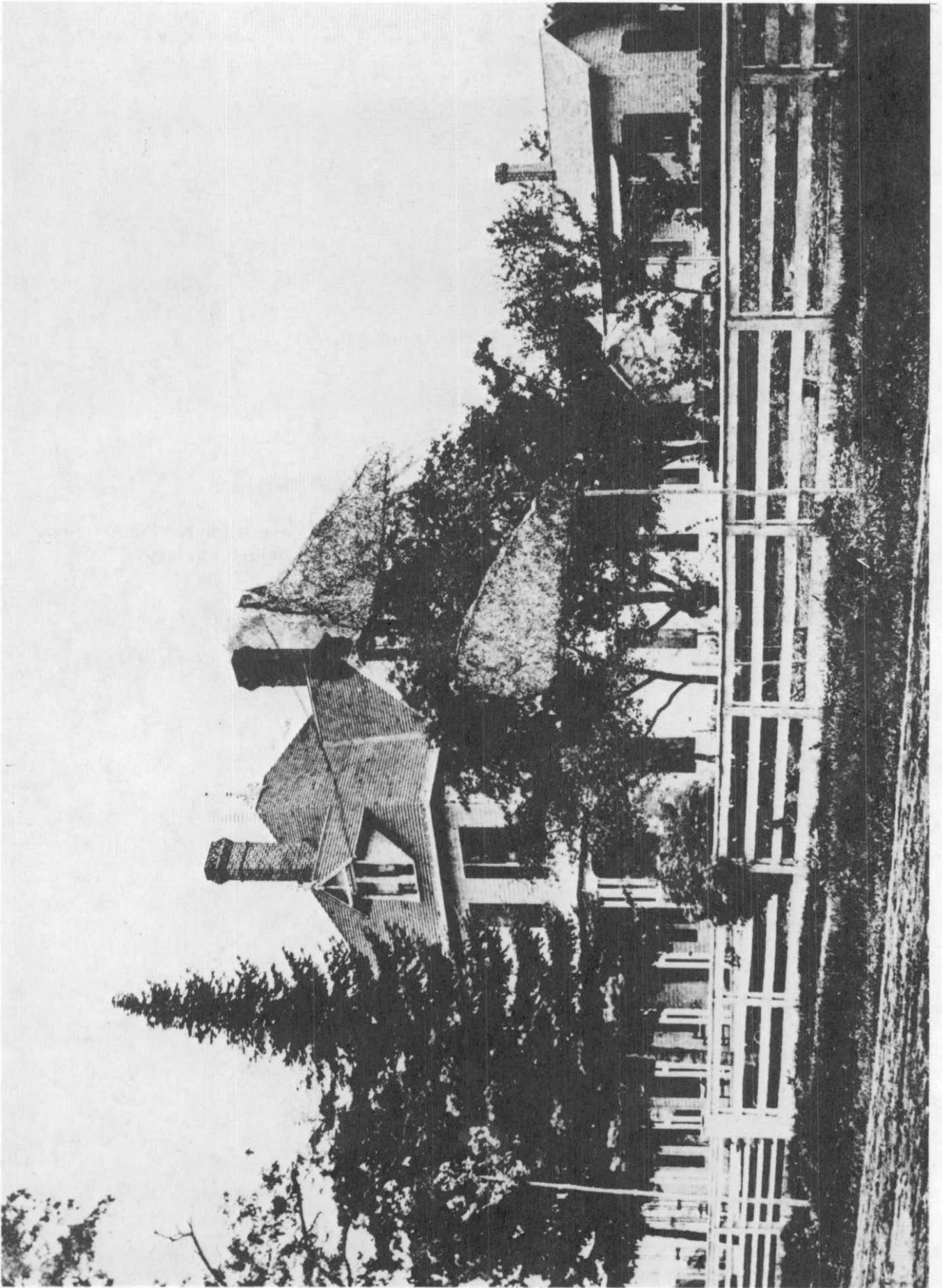


Fig. 11. Lawnfield, exterior, south side (front elevation), 1880. From scrapbook of James R. Garfield. Lake County Historical Society.



Fig. 12. Lawnfield, floor plan. "The Garfield Farm," from the New York Herald,
September 26, 1881.

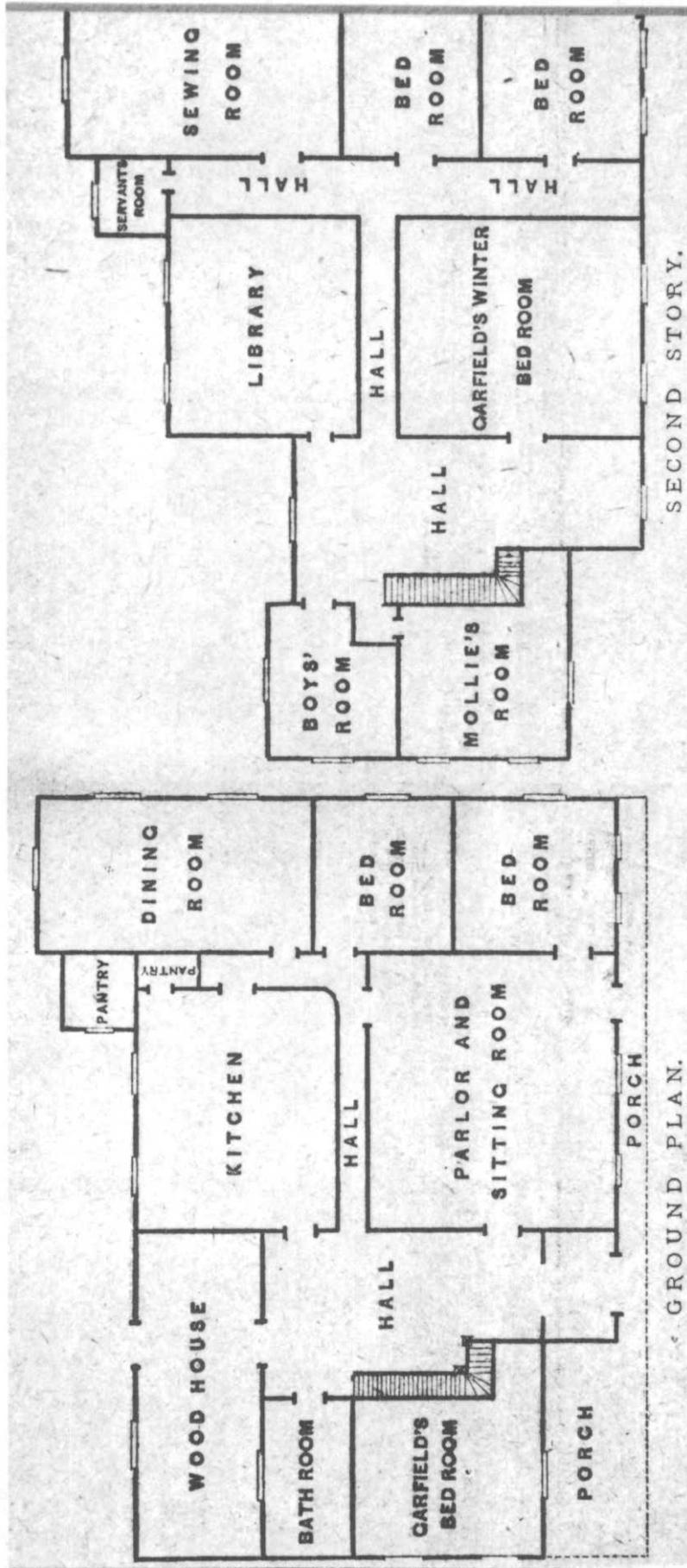


Fig. 13. "Residence of the Hon. James A. Garfield, Mentor, Ohio." L.C. Corwine, delineator. Copyright secured (1880?).

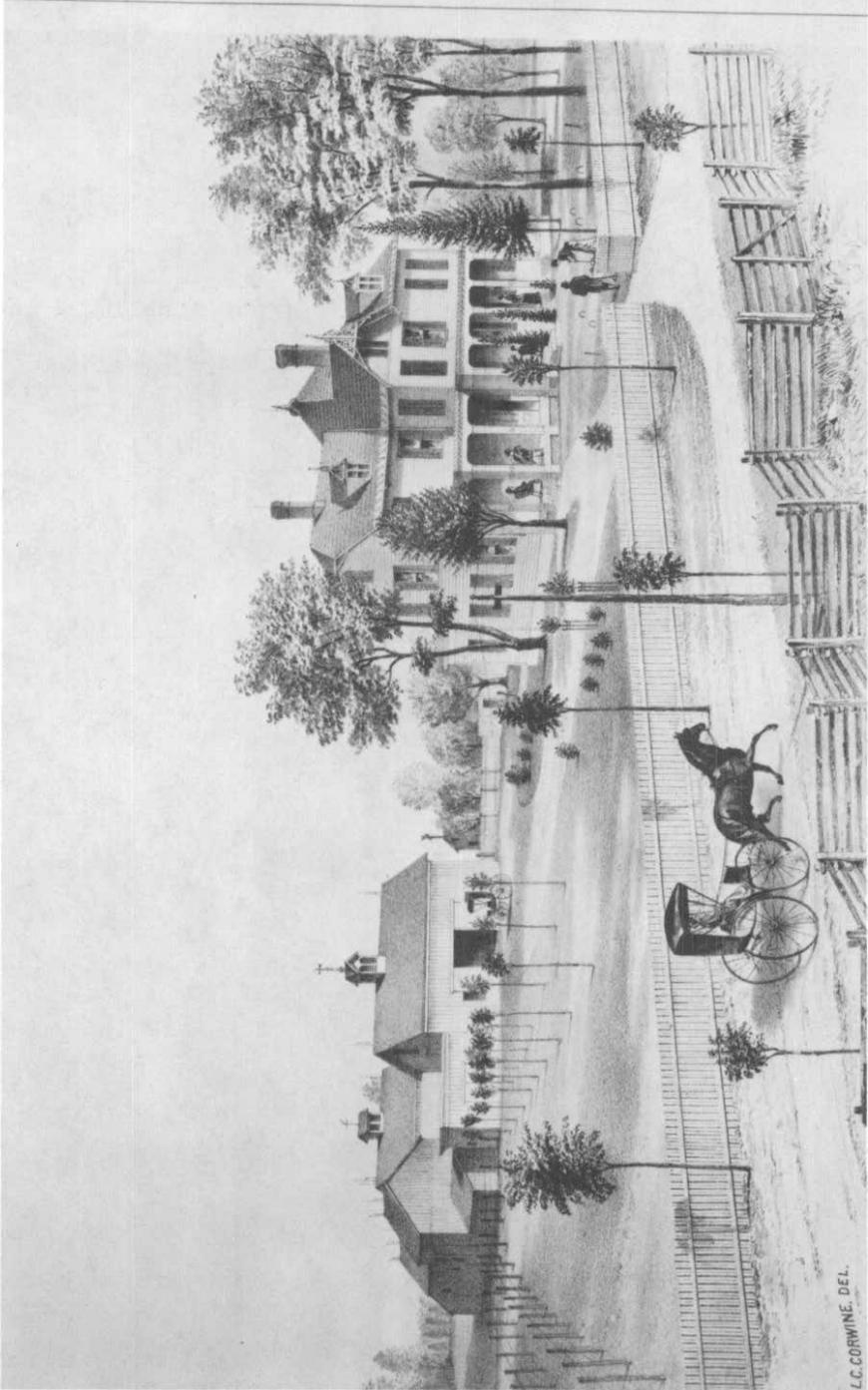


Fig. 14. Campaign Office, exterior, 1880, from scrapbook of James R. Garfield. Lake County Historical Society.



Fig. 15. Lawnfield, exterior, west and south sides. James A. Garfield is standing at the gate. Photo by A. Austin, View Artist, Toledo, Ohio. Lake County Historical Society.

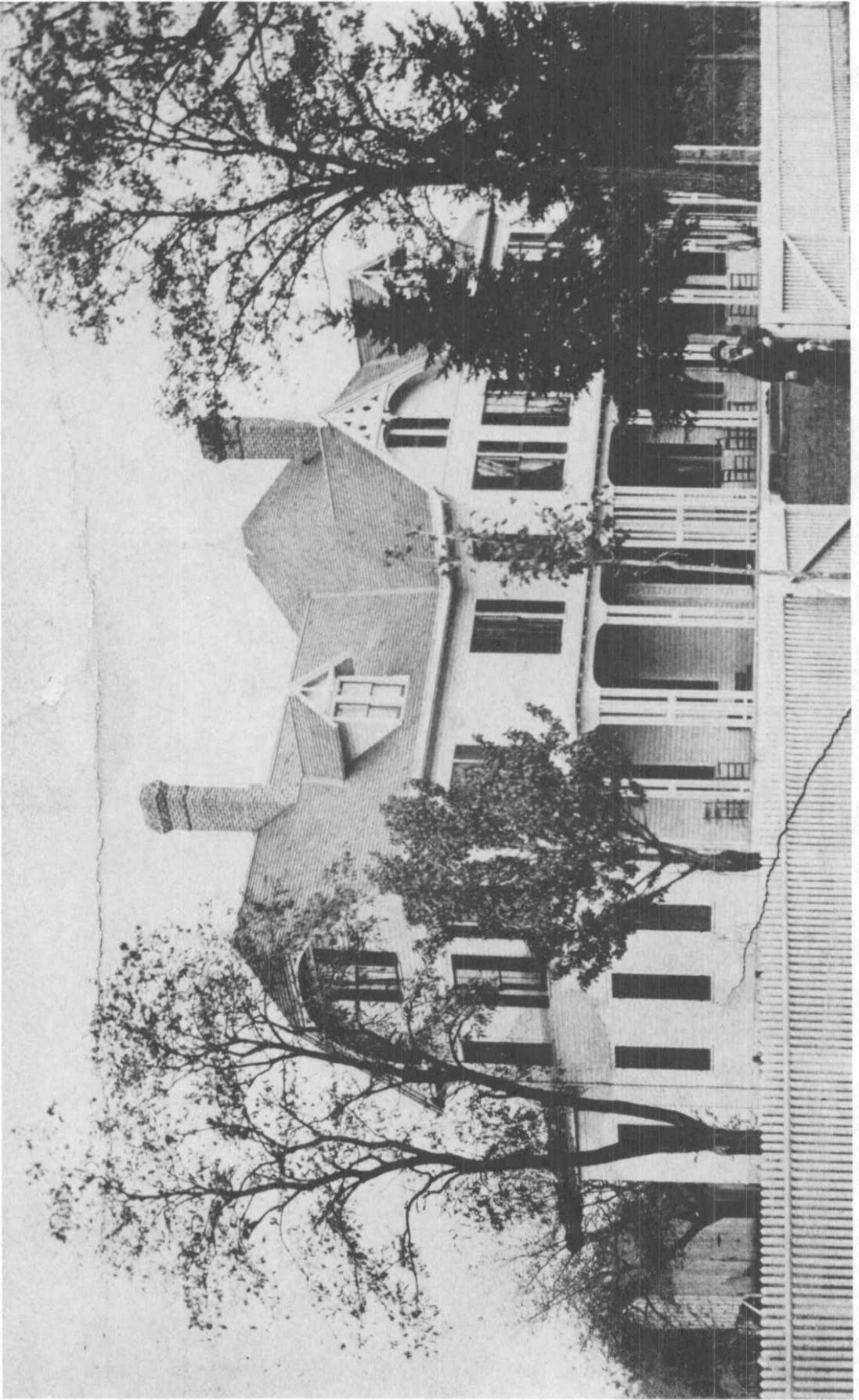


Fig. 16. "Lawnfield, Mentor, Ohio. Home of General J.A. Garfield." Exterior, west and south sides. Photo by J.F. Ryder, Cleveland, Ohio. Lake County Historical Society.

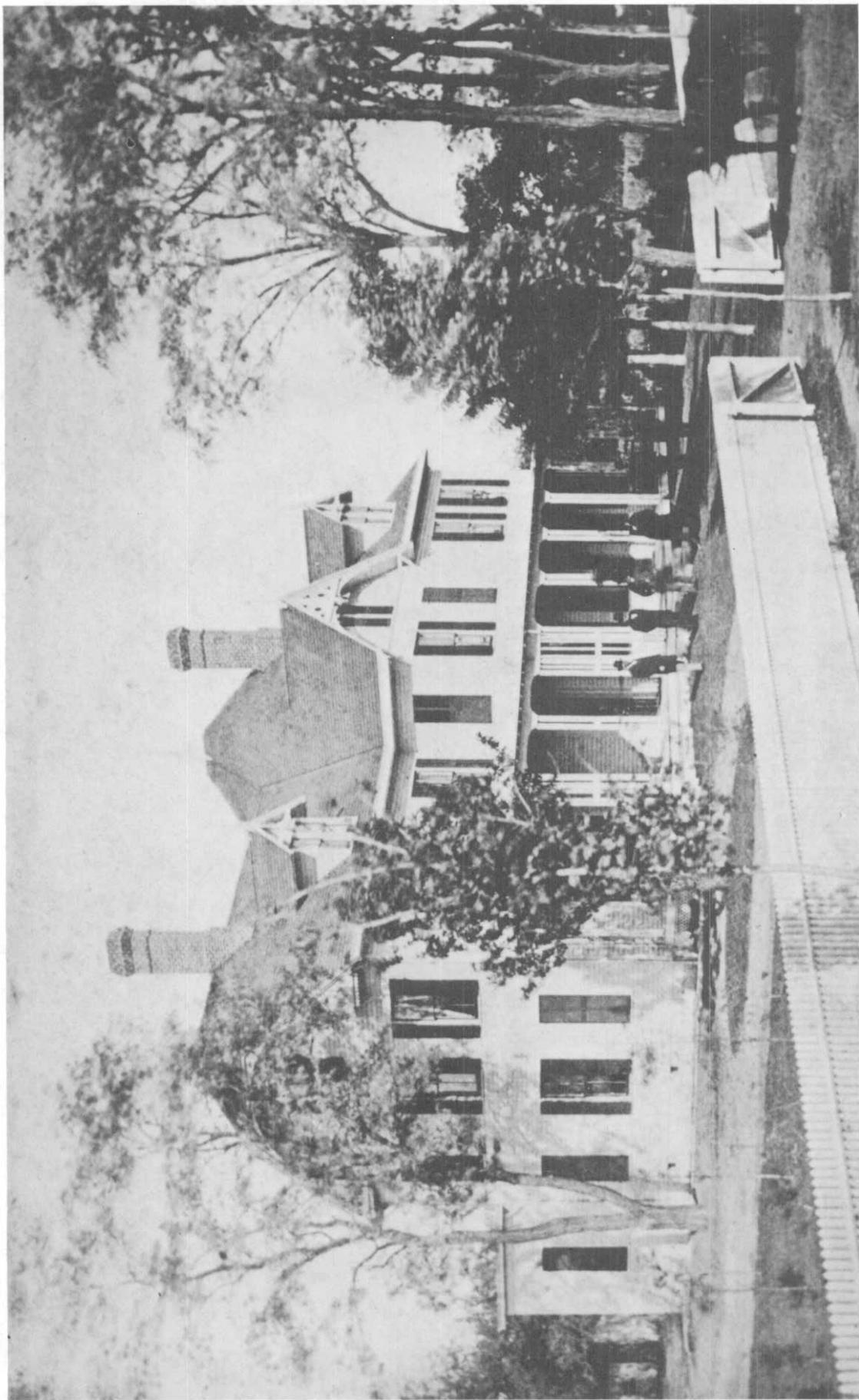


Fig. 17. Land running south of private railroad (Lake Shore & Michigan Southern) stop at Lawnfield. Lake County Historical Society.

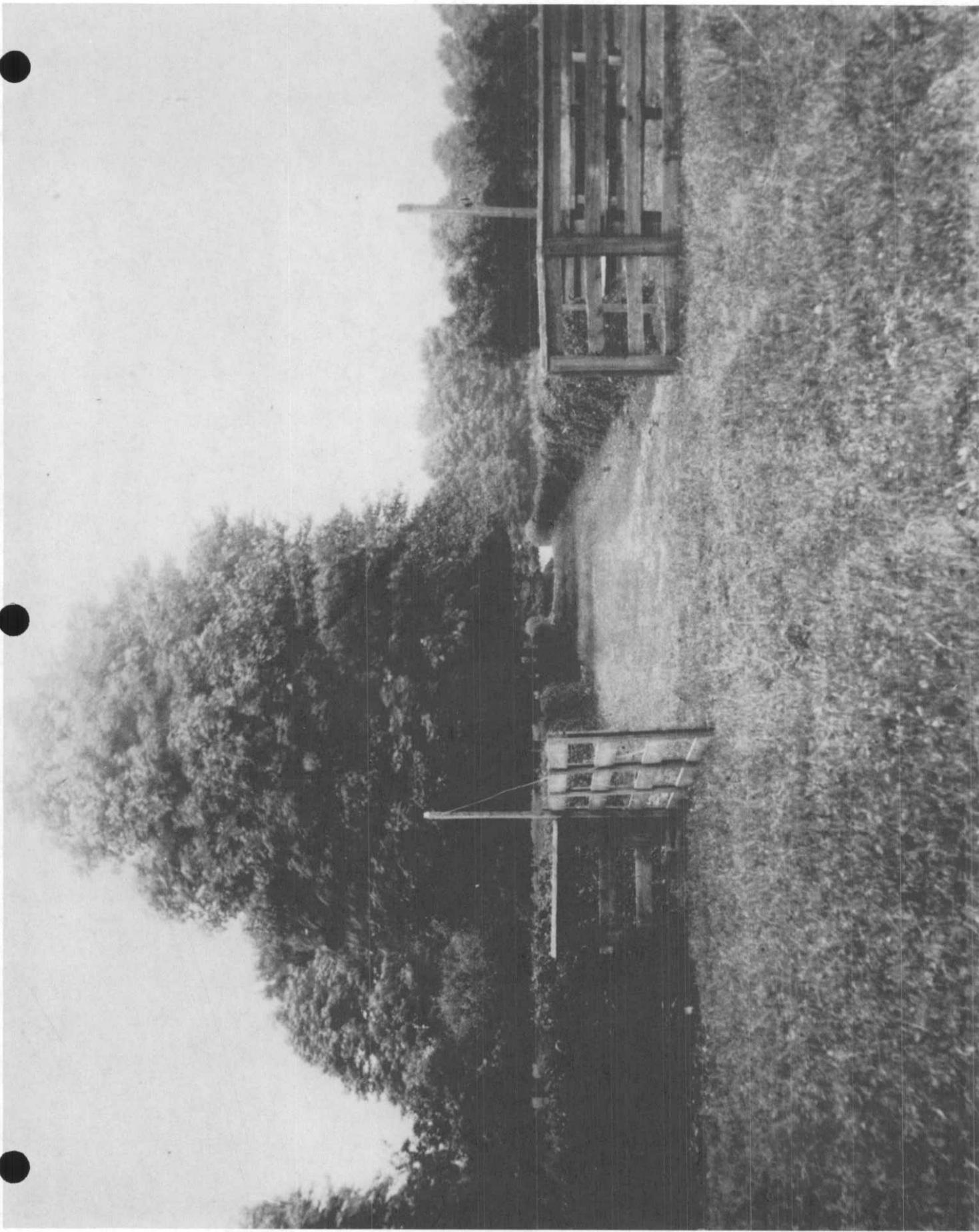
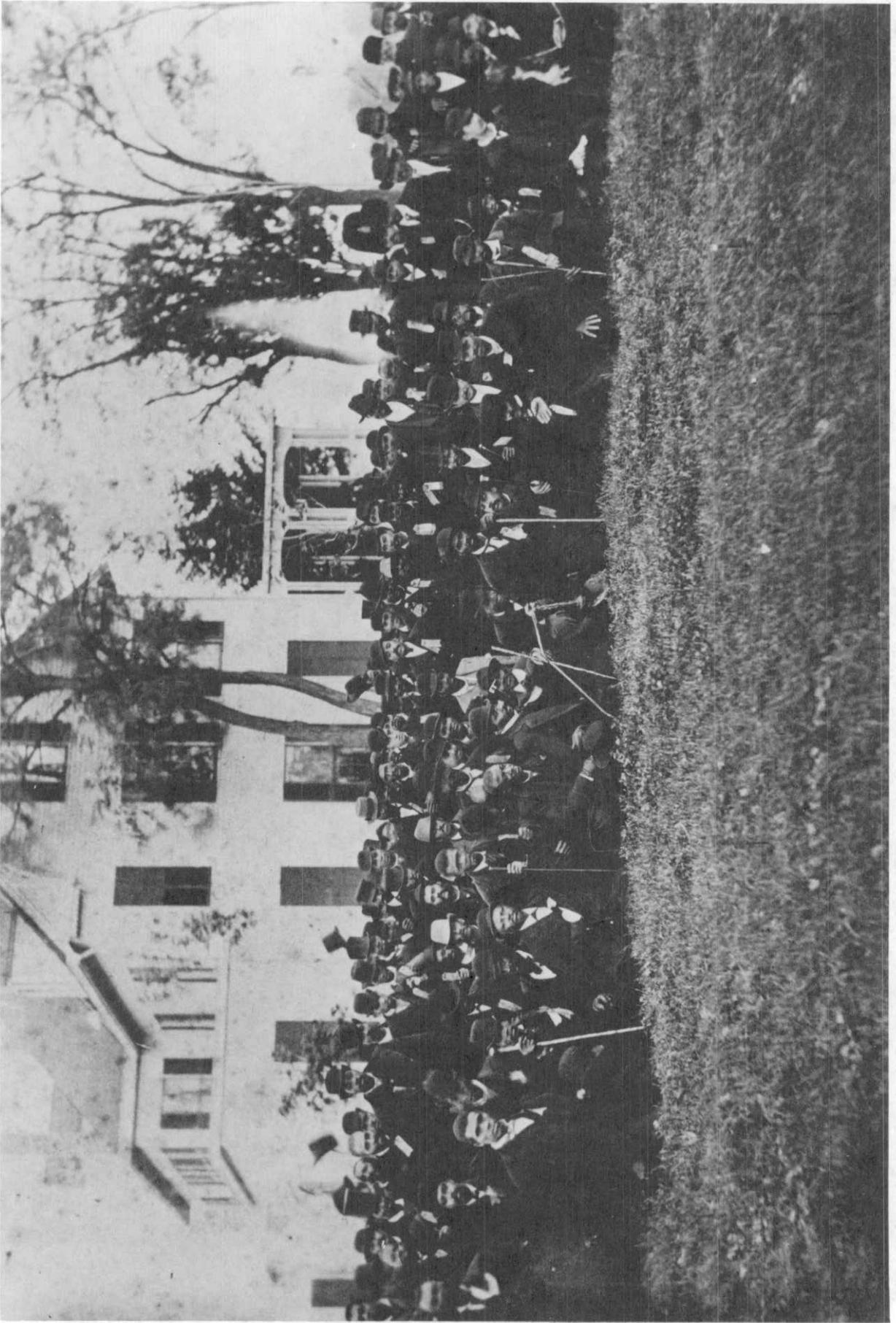


Fig. 18. "Lawnfield. Mentor, Ohio. Home of General James A. Garfield." Photo by J.F. Ryder, Cleveland, Ohio. Campaign visitors at Lawnfield, 1880. Lake County Historical Society.



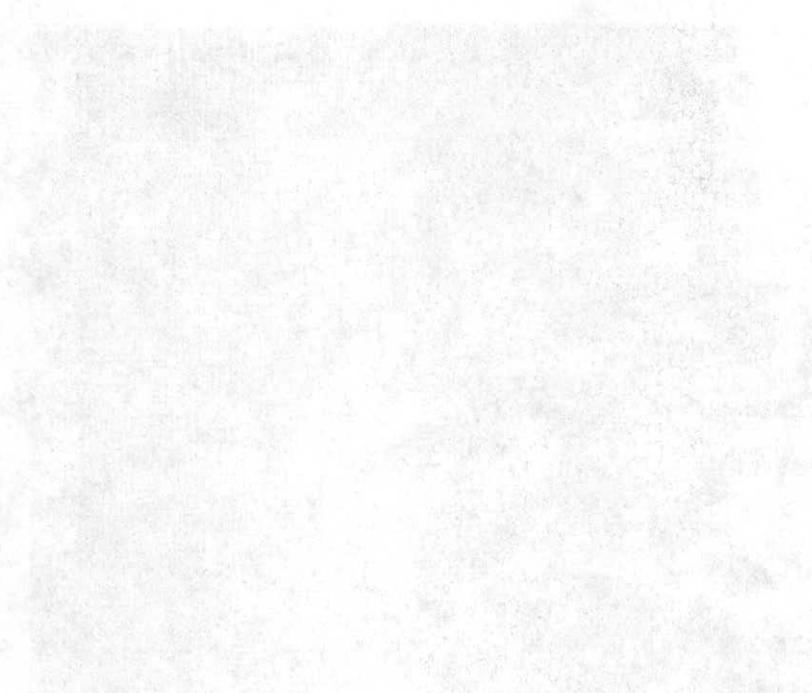
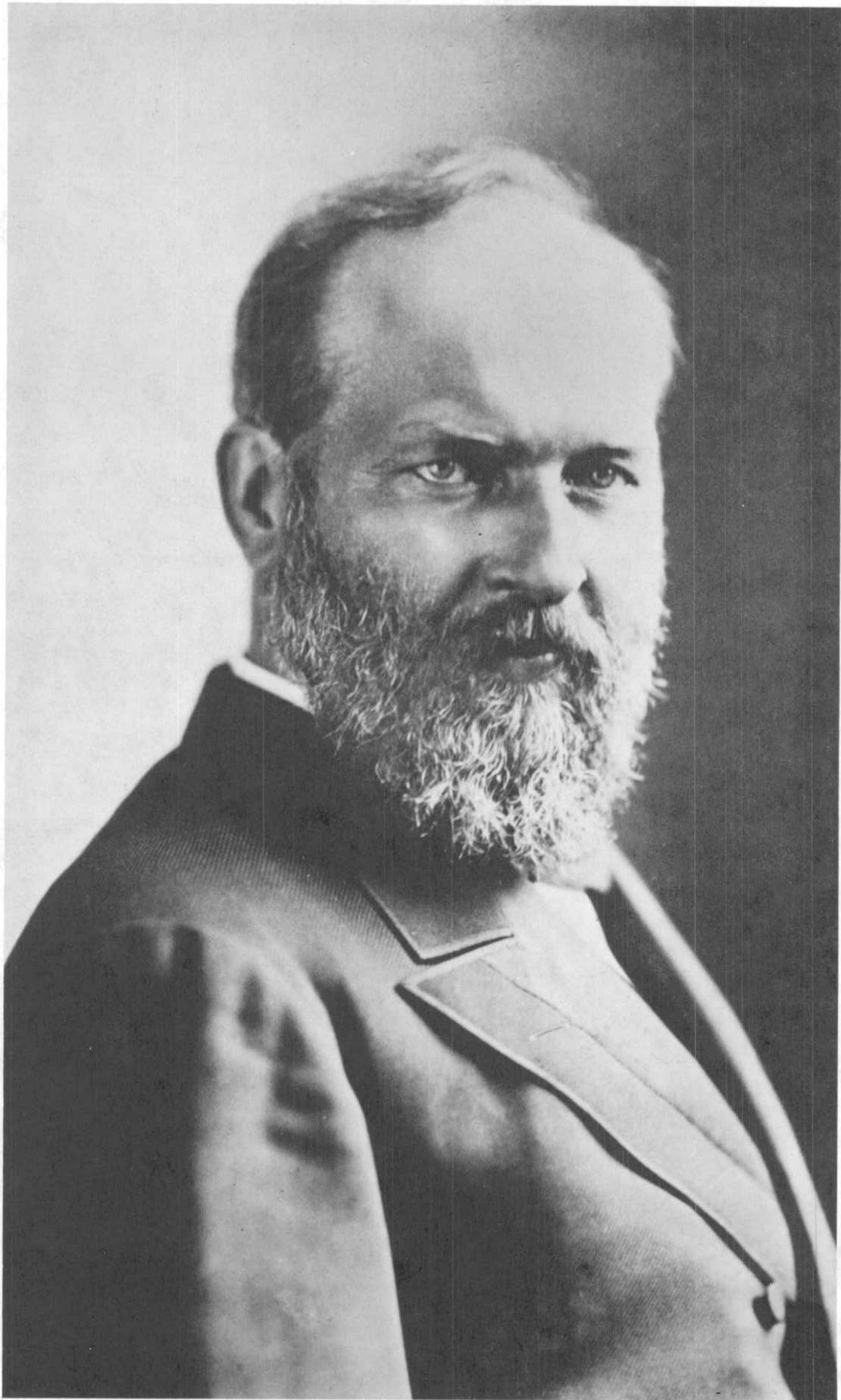


Fig. 19. Portrait of James A. Garfield. Veeder Photo, 32 No. Pearl Street, Albany, New York. Lake County Historical Society.



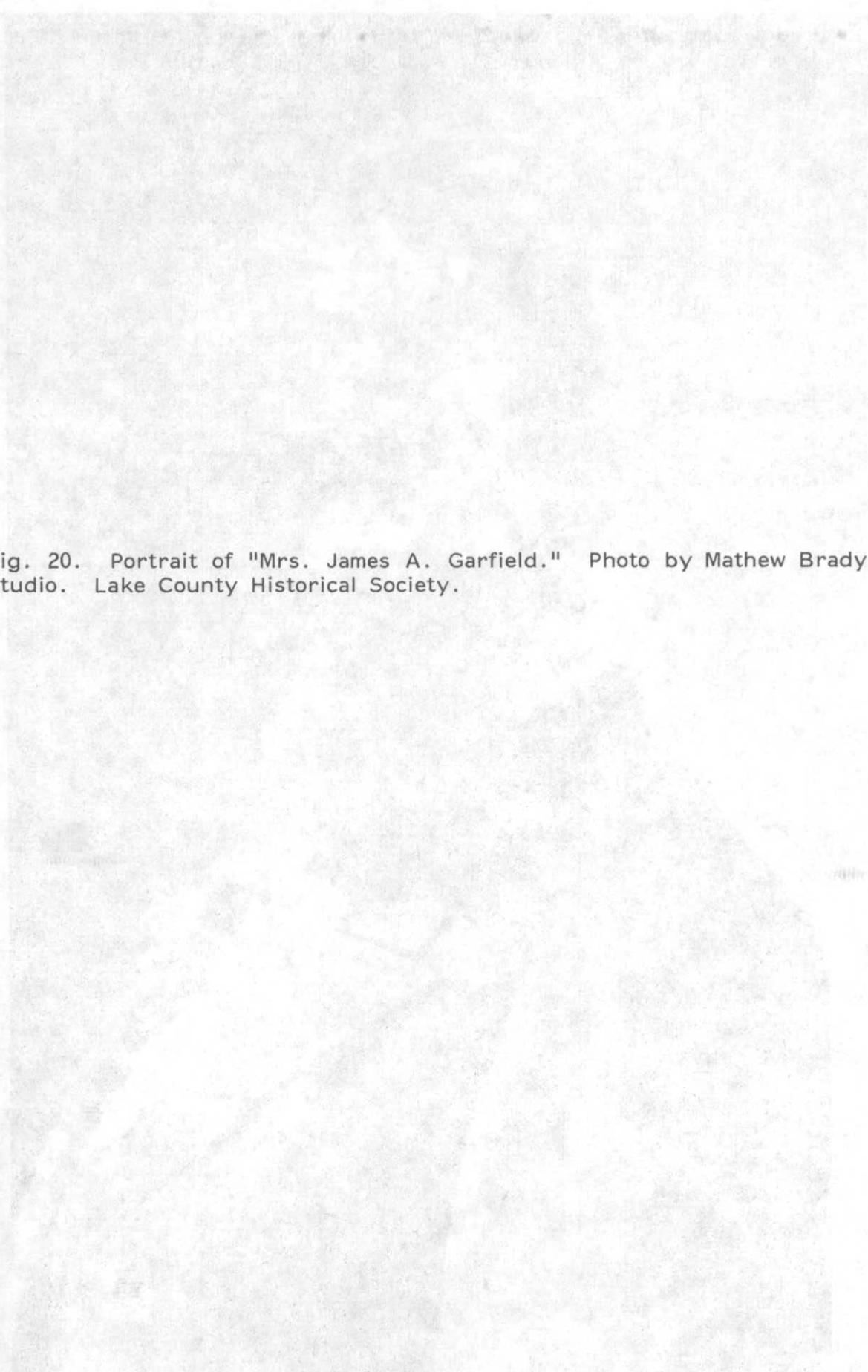


Fig. 20. Portrait of "Mrs. James A. Garfield." Photo by Mathew Brady Studio. Lake County Historical Society.



Fig. 21. Joseph and Lide Rudolph on the front steps at Lawnfield. Lake County Historical Society.



Fig. 22. Lawnfield, exterior, east side. Lake County Historical Society.

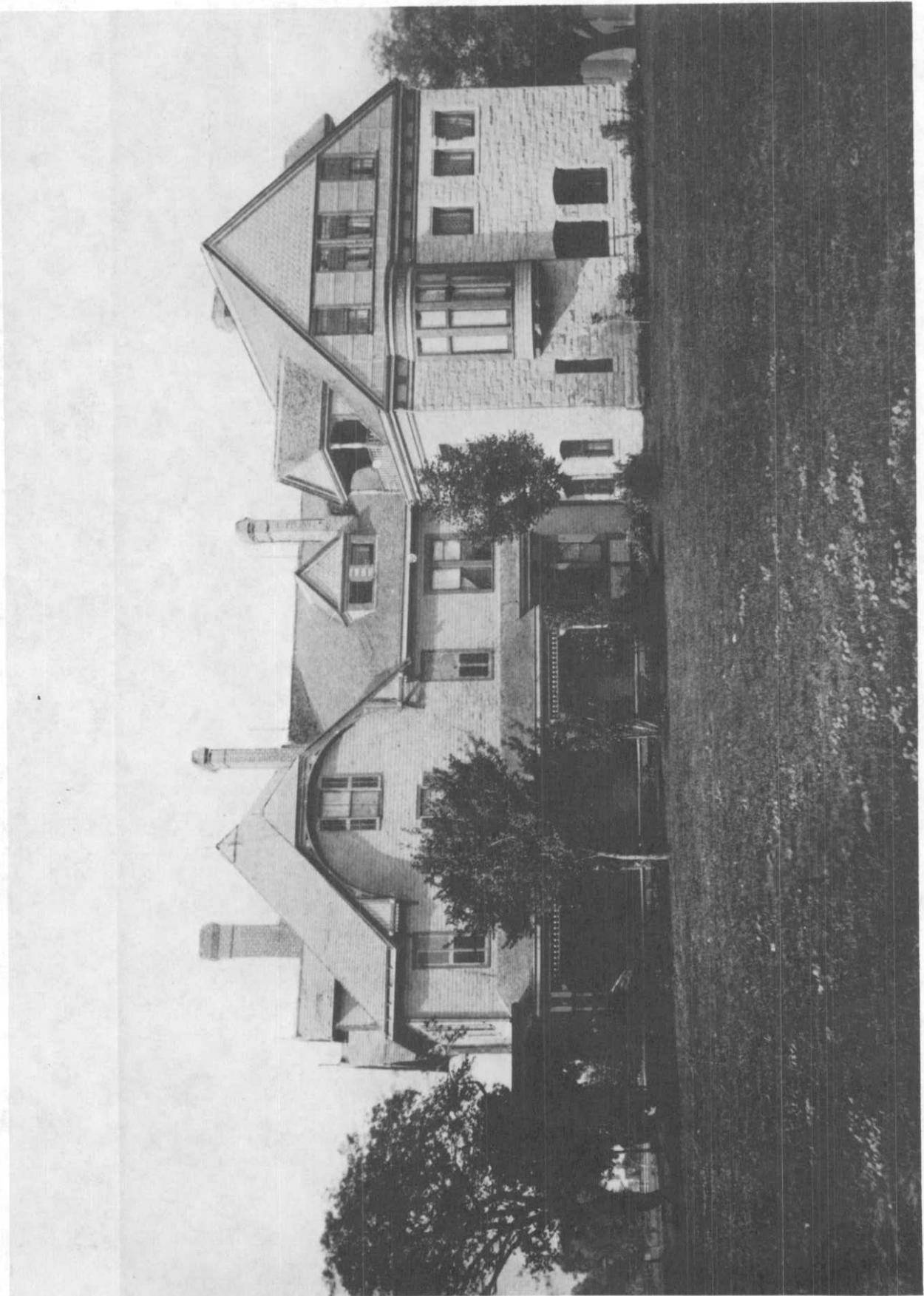


Fig. 23. Lawnfield, interior, Memorial Library. Lake County Historical Society.

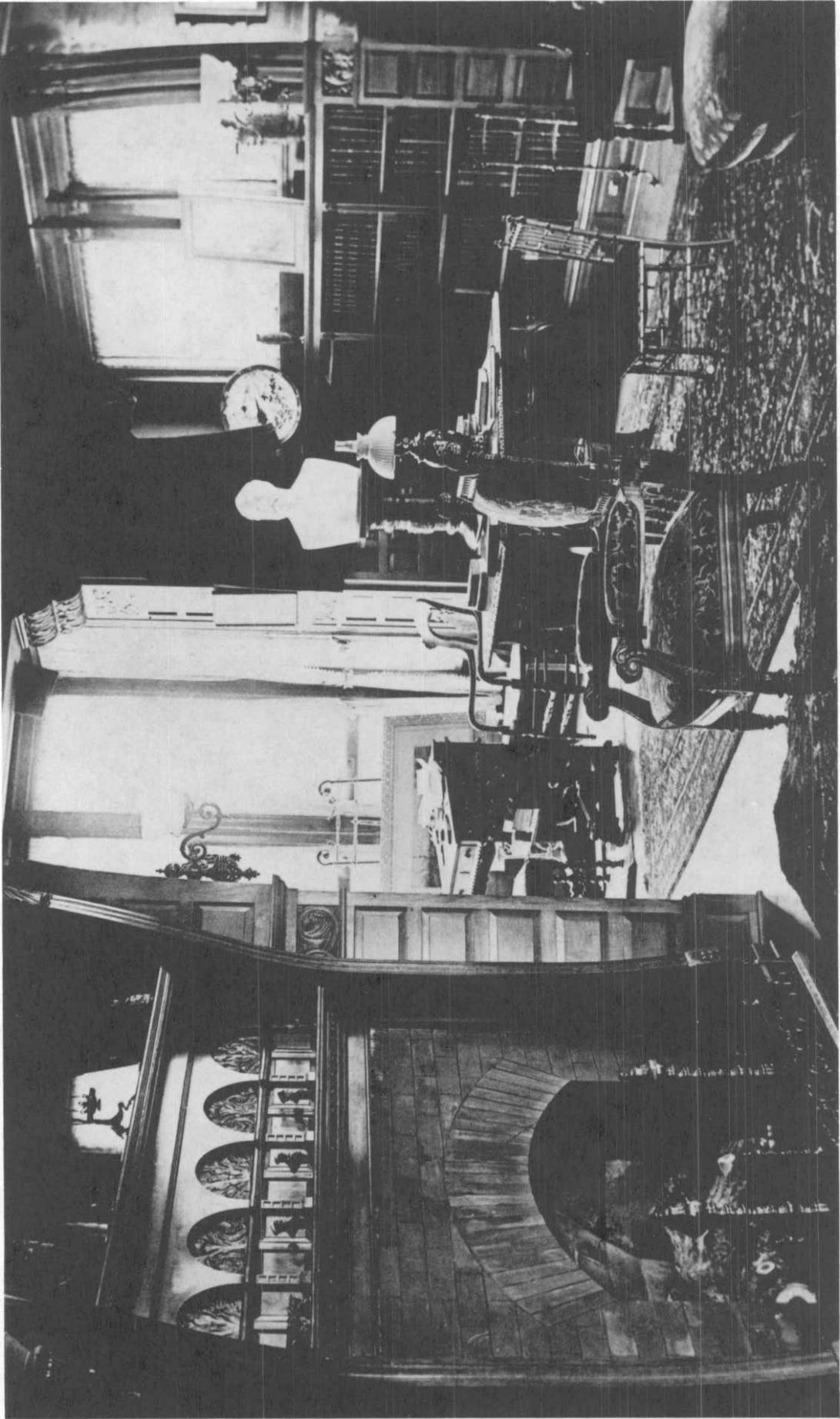


Fig. 24. Lawnfield, interior, Memorial Library. Lake County Historical Society.



Fig. 25. Lawnfield, tenant house. Lake County Historical Society.

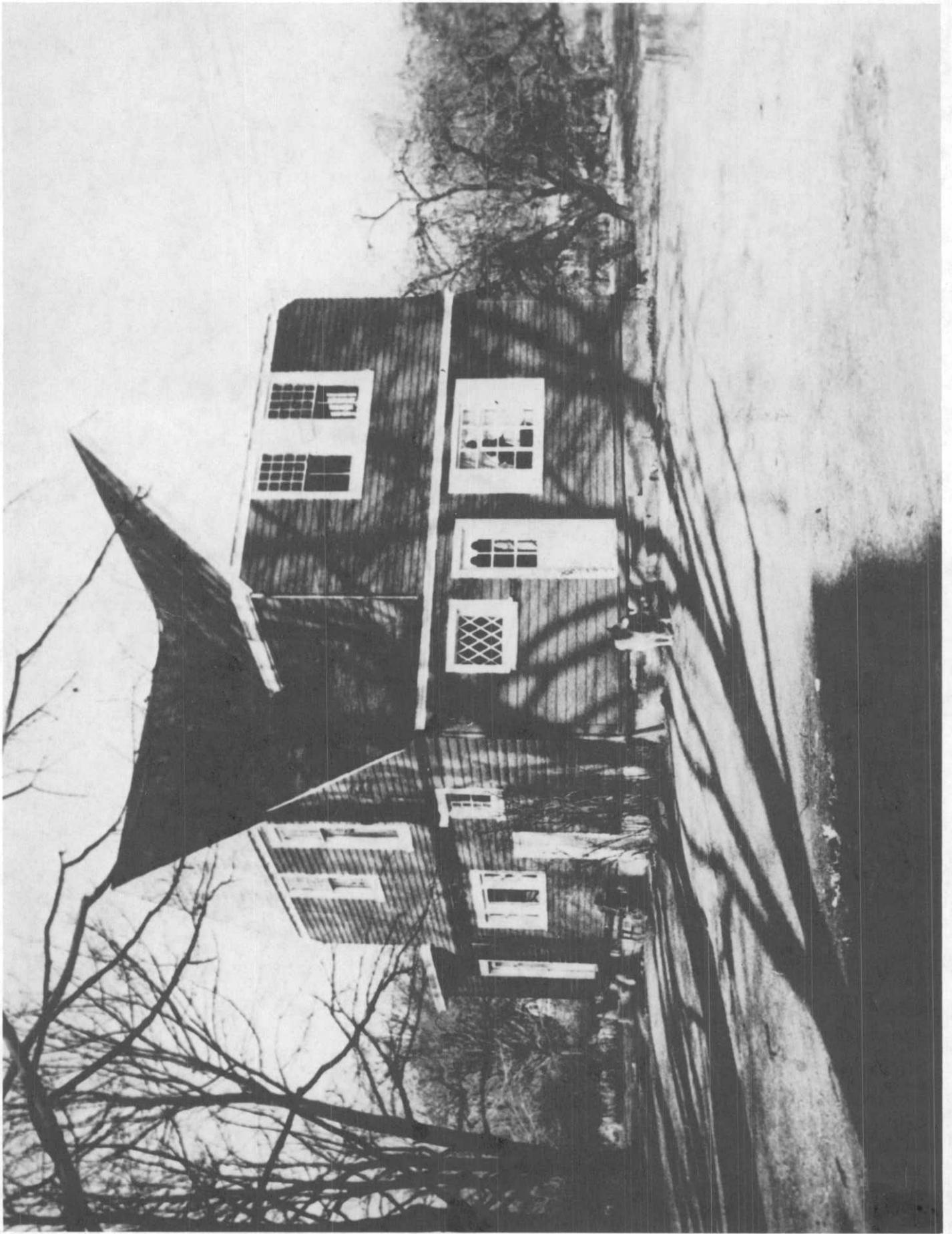


Fig. 26. Lawnfield, windmill. Lake County Historical Society.



Fig. 27. Carriage house and windmill. Lake County Historical Society. ca. 1895.

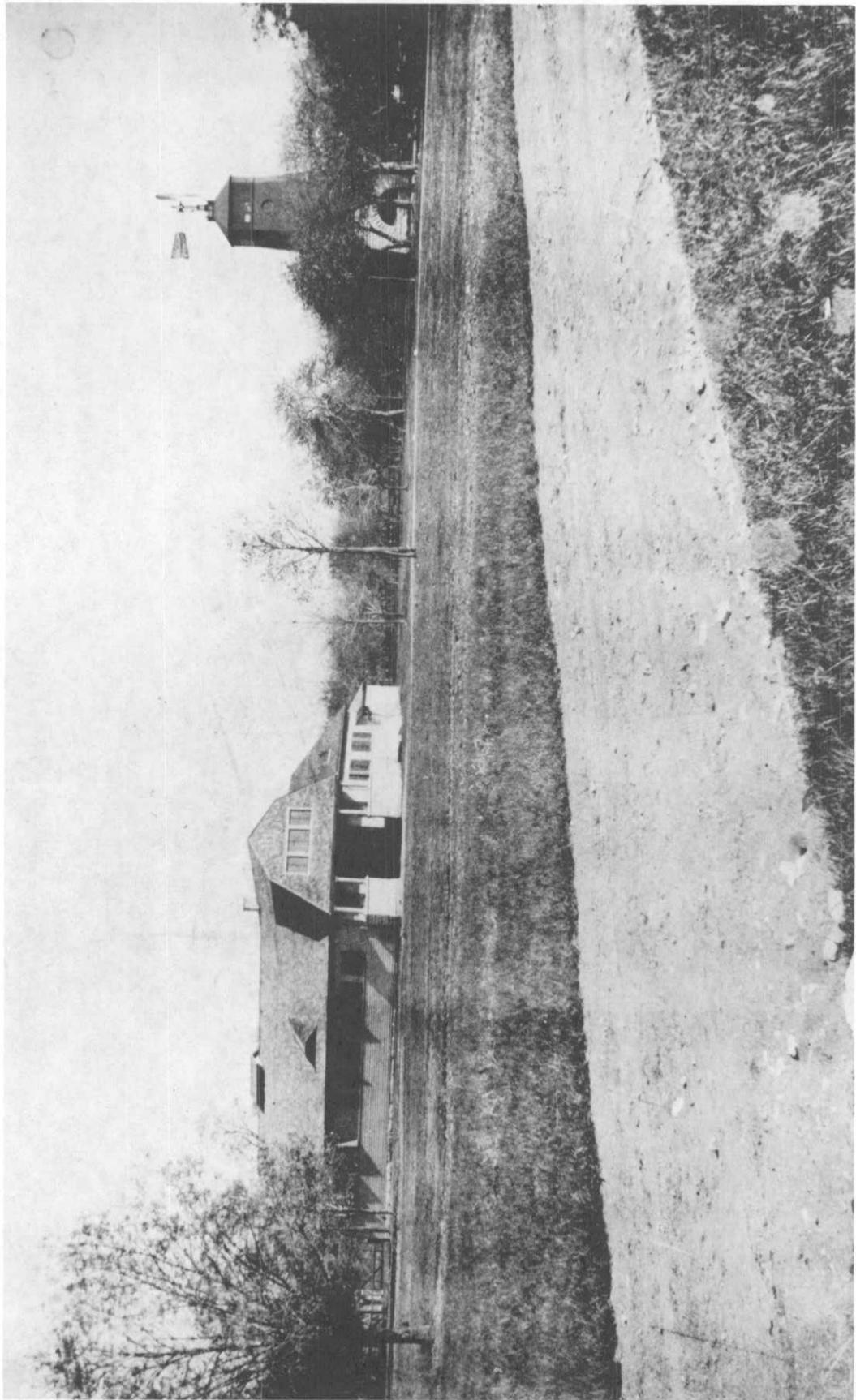


Fig. 28. Rudolph Stanley-Brown in the yard of Lawnfield, looking south. Background left, Lawnfield; background right, the barn. ca. 1892.

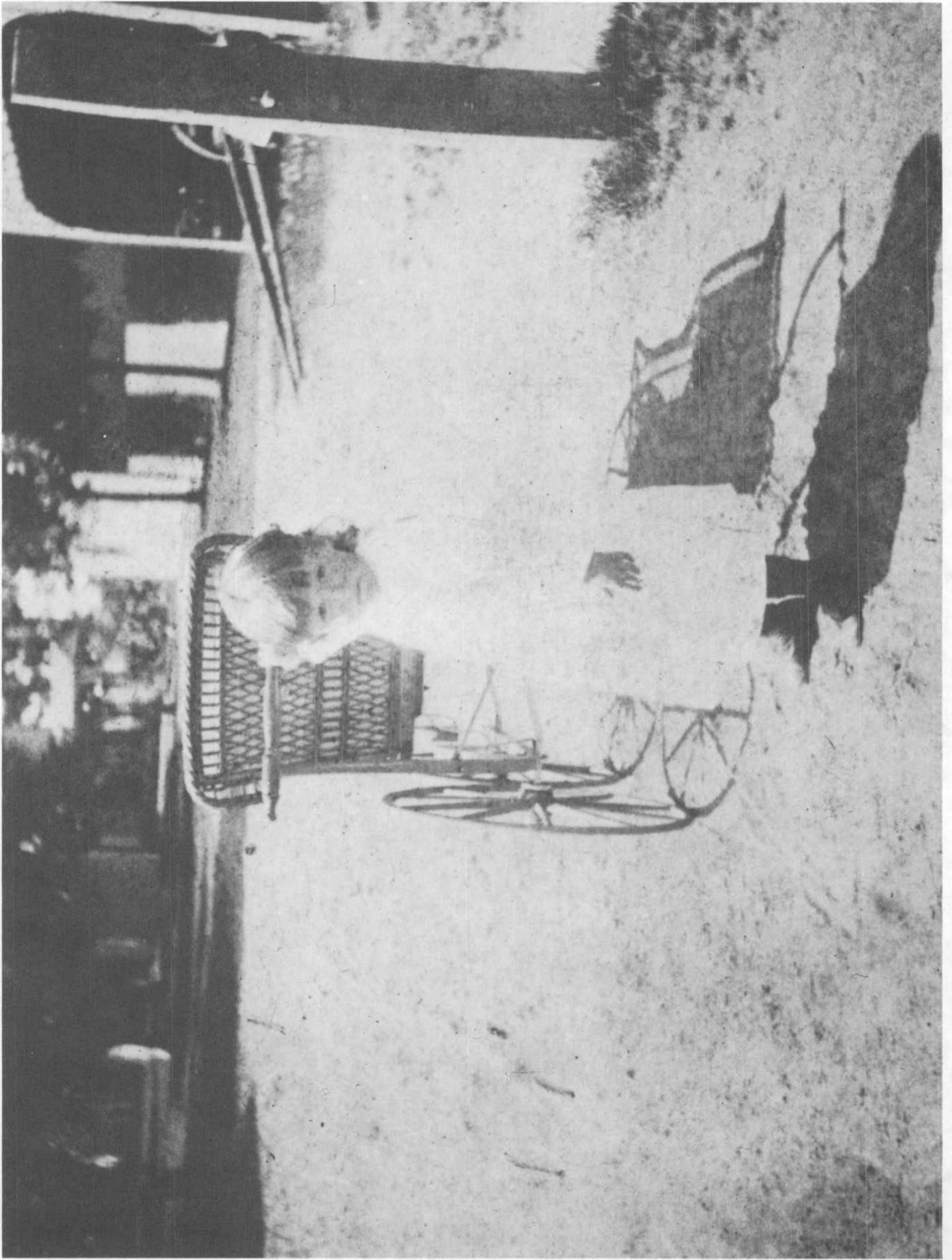


Fig. 29. Garfield family on front porch at Lawnfield. L-R: James R., Abram, Lucretia R., Eliza Ballou Garfield, Irvin M., Harry A., and Mollie. Lake County Historical Society.

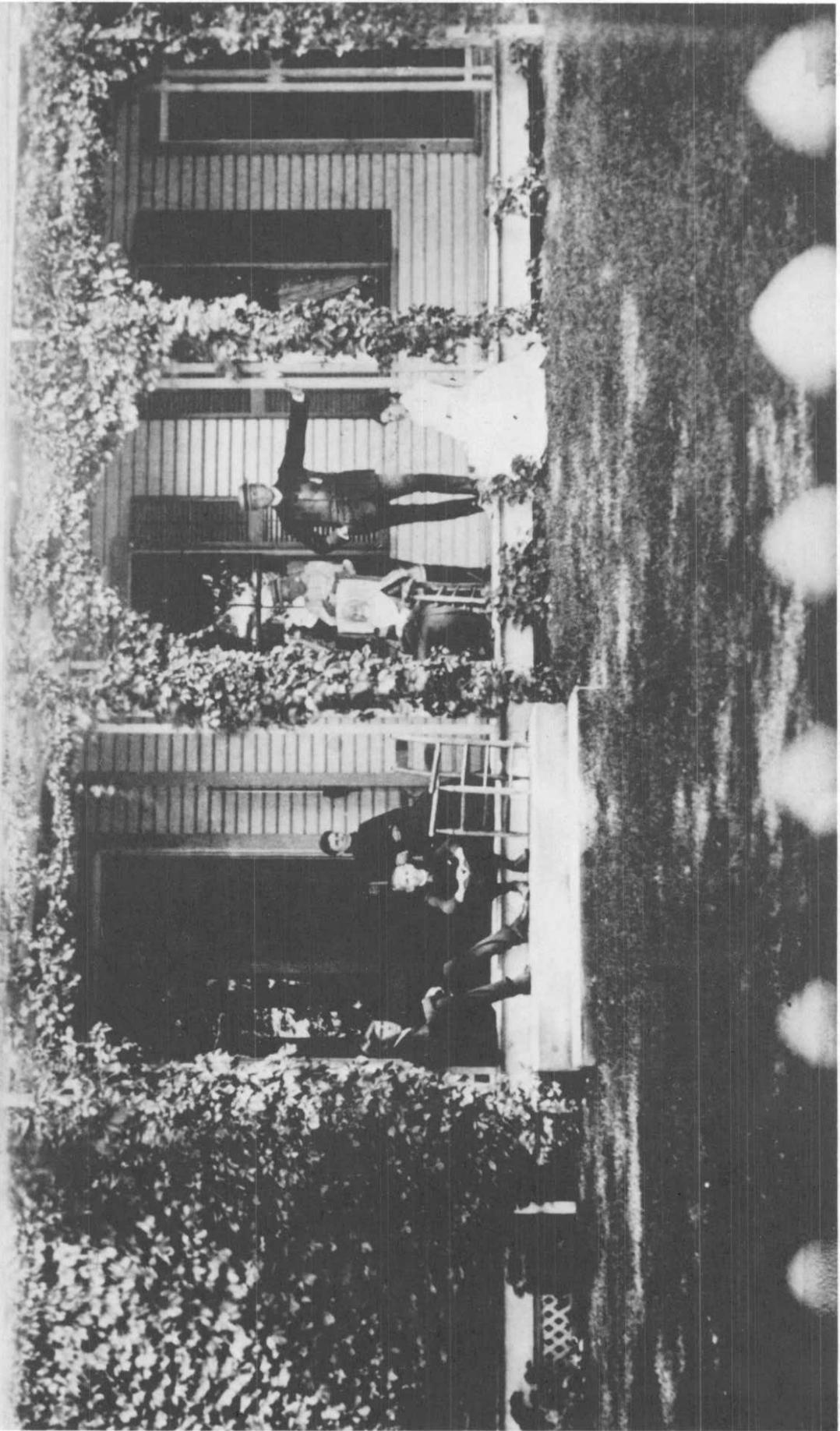
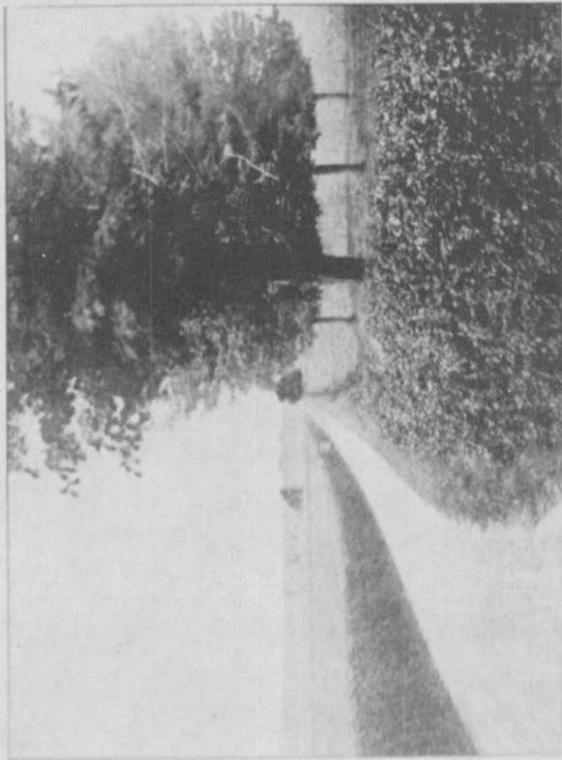


Fig. 30. Garfield Homestead ca. 1900 in Thomas A. Knight The Country Estates of Cleveland Men. Cleveland, 1903.

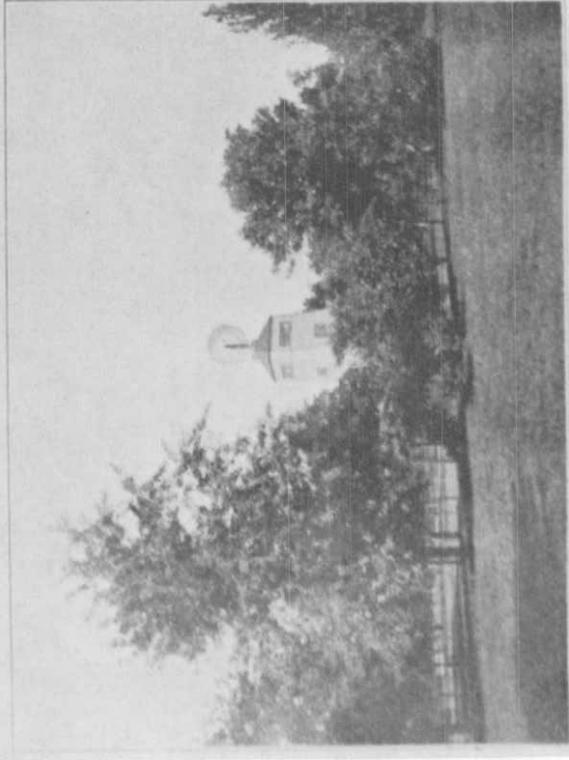
GARFIELD HOMESTEAD—MRS. JAMES A. GARFIELD



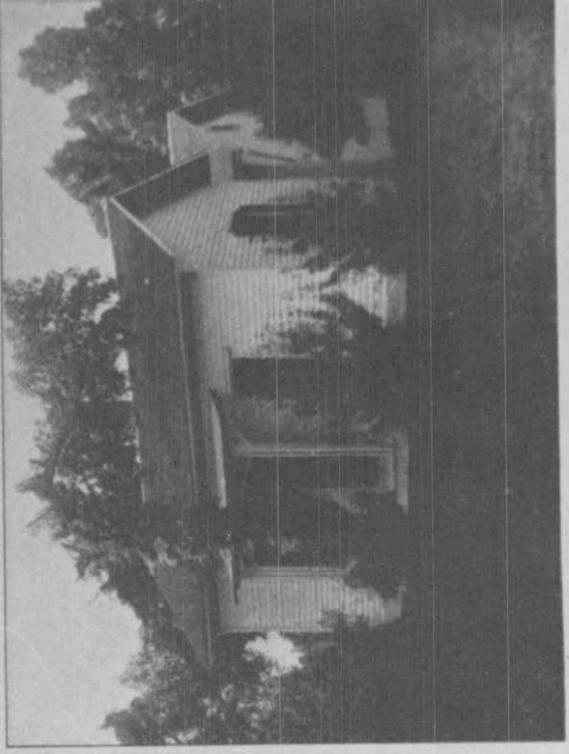
View of Historic Lane Along Which Thousands of Political Pilgrims Passed During the Campaign of 1880.



View of Old Lane From the North.



View from the House, Giving a General Idea of the Uniform Beauty



Building Which Was Used by President Garfield as an Office.

Fig. 31. Lawnfield, map of property, "The Garfield Farm," from the New York Herald, September 26, 1881.

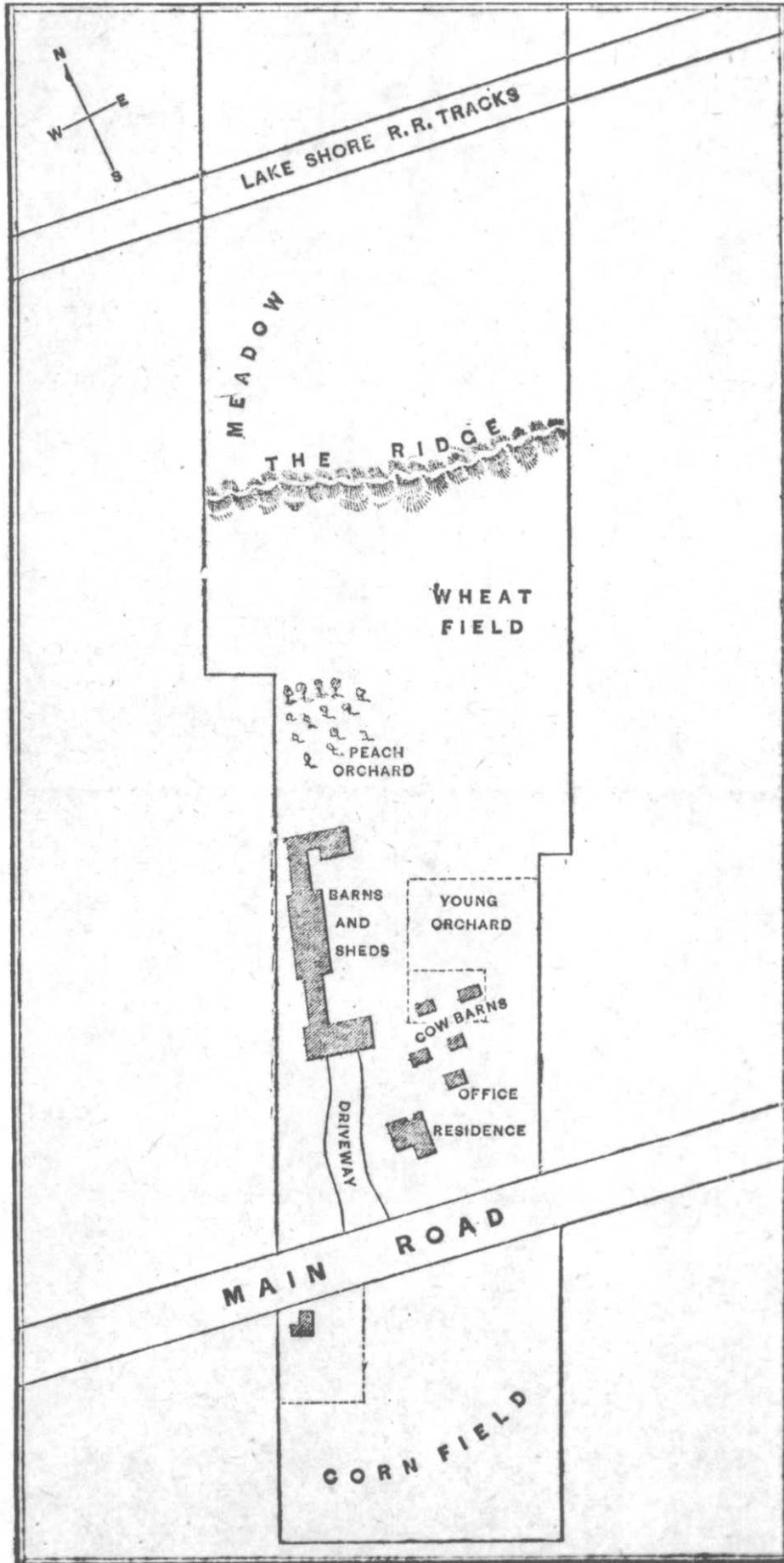


Fig. 32. Garfield Family, ca. 1890s. Lake County Historical Society.



Fig. 33. Lucretia R. Garfield with her five children and their wives and husband.
L-R: Irvin McD. and Susan, Joseph Stanley-Brown and Mollie, Abram and Ray (Sarah),
Helen and James R., and Belle and Harry A. Lake County Historical Society.

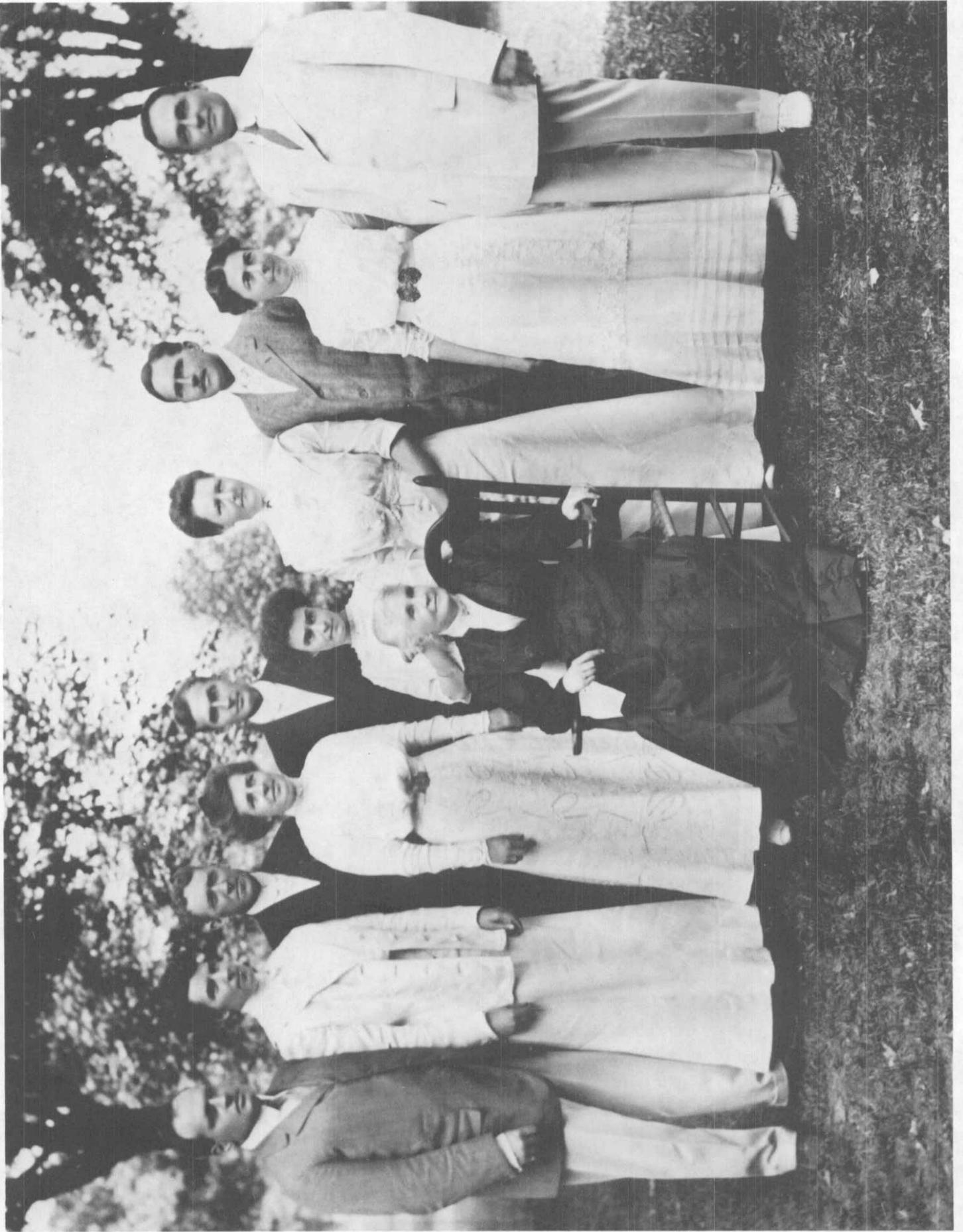


Fig. 34. Gate to the Garfield Farm, Mentor Avenue, opposite Stop 55 on the Cleveland, Painesville & Eastern Street Railway. Lake County Historical Society.

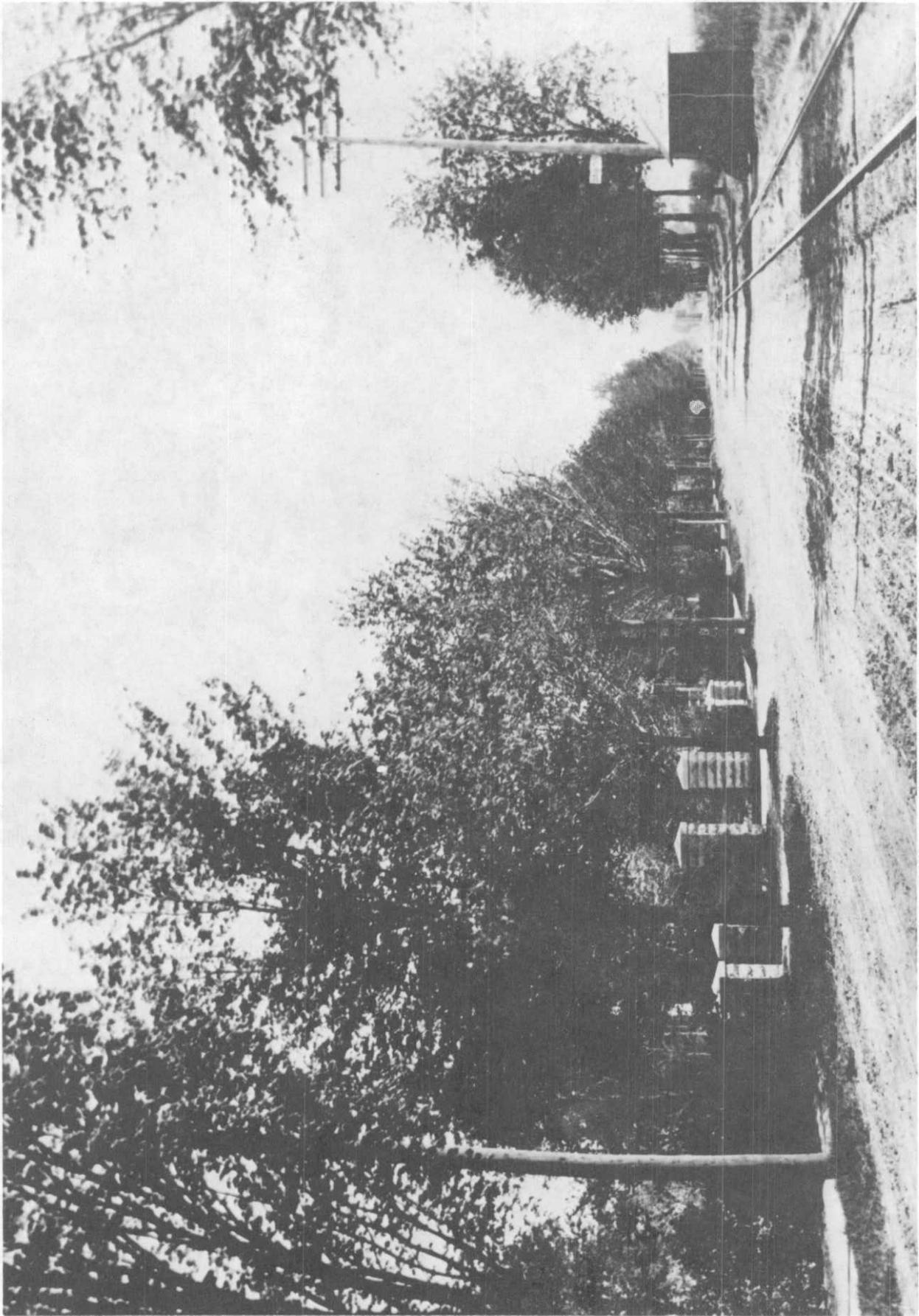


Fig. 35. Hollycroft House built by James R. Garfield 1894. Razed 1965. Lake County Historical Society.

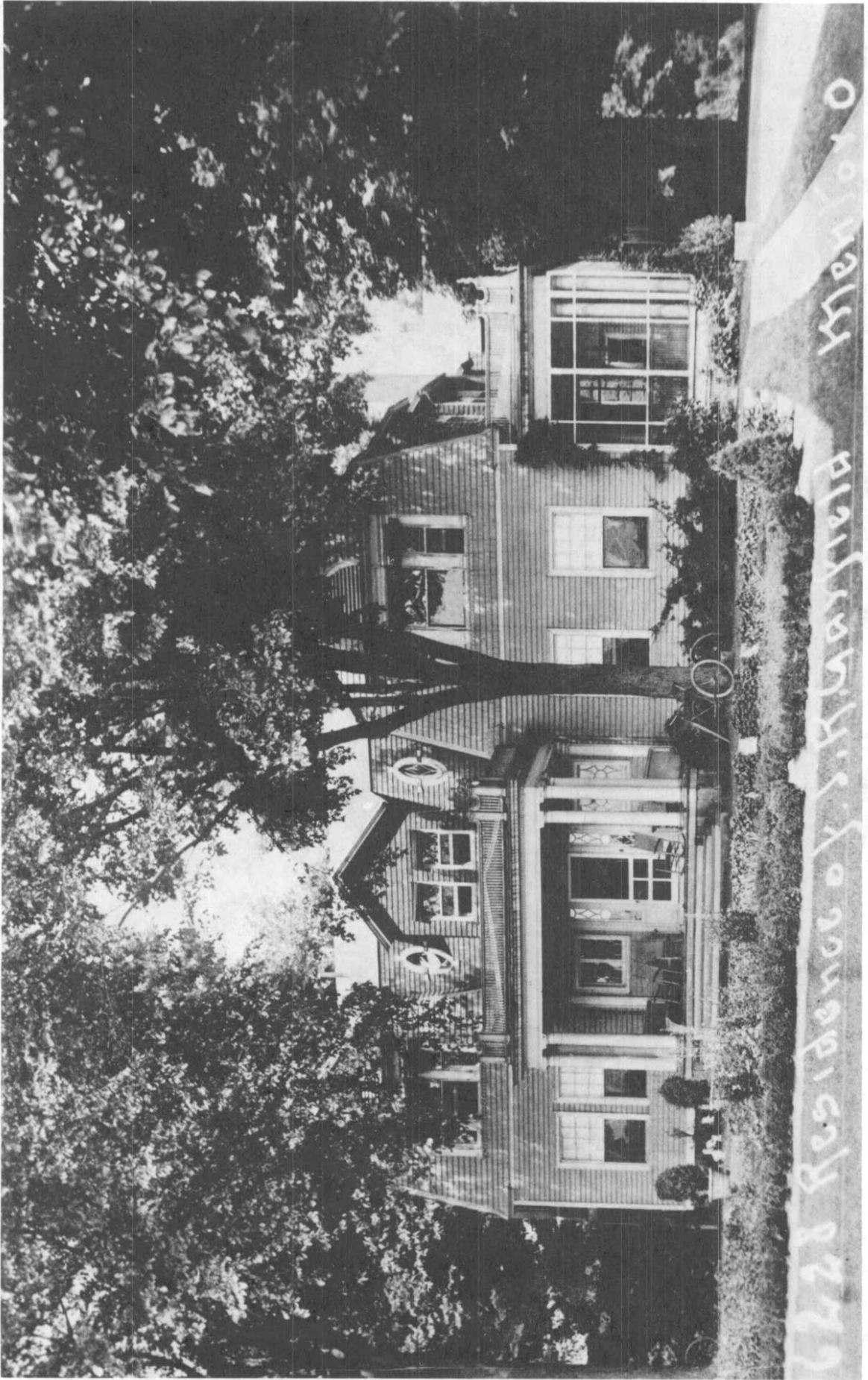
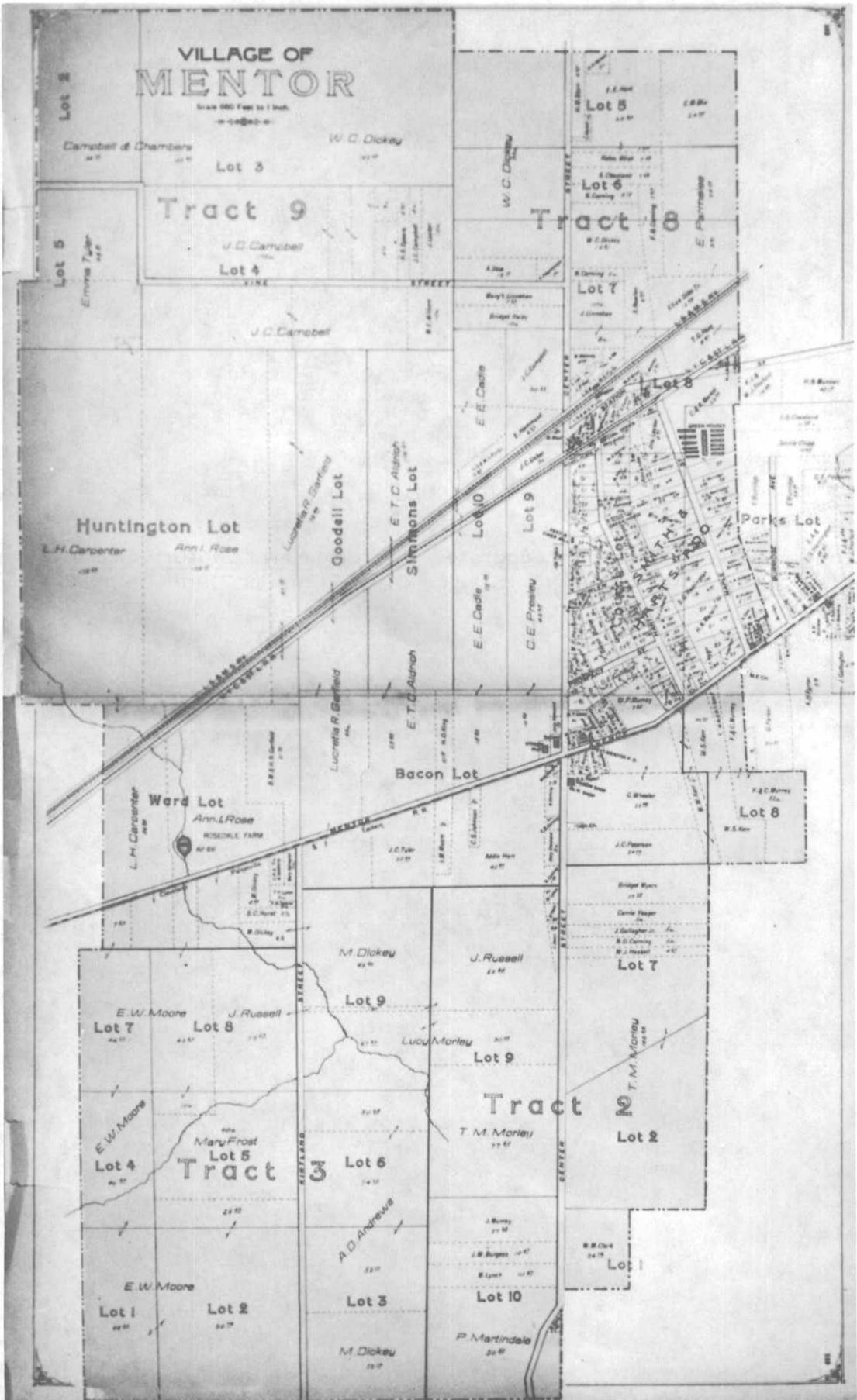


Fig. 36. Map, Village of Mentor. From Atlas of Lake County, Ohio, by H.B. Stranahan and G.D. Corey, Cleveland, 1898, p. 109.

VILLAGE OF MENTOR

Scale 500 Feet to 1 Inch



Lot 2

Carnell & Chambers

Lot 3

W. C. Dickey

Lot 5

Emma Taylor

Tract 9

V. C. Carnell

Lot 4

J. C. Carnell

Lot 5

Lot 6

Lot 7

Lot 8

Huntington Lot

L. H. Carpenter

Ann L. Rose

Goodell Lot

Simmons Lot

Bacon Lot

Ward Lot

Ann L. Rose

Bacon Lot

Parks Lot

L. H. Carpenter

Ann L. Rose

ROSEDALE FARM

Bacon Lot

Lot 8

Lot 7

Lot 4

Lot 1

Lot 8

Tract 3

Lot 2

Lot 9

Lot 9

Lot 6

Lot 3

Lot 3

Lot 7

Lot 9

Lot 2

Lot 10

Lot 10

Tract 2

Lot 7

Lot 2

Lot 1

A. D. Andrews

M. Dickey

P. Martindale

J. Russell

T. M. Morley

T. M. Morley

J. B. Buggs

M. Dickey

Edgar Russ

Camie Taylor

J. B. Buggs

W. B. Clark

W. B. Clark

M. Dickey

J. Russell

Lucy Morley

J. B. Buggs

J. B. Buggs

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J. B. Buggs

J. Russell

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T. M. Morley

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J. B. Buggs

Edgar Russ

Camie Taylor

J. B. Buggs

W. B. Clark

W. B. Clark

W. B. Clark

M. Dickey

J. Russell

Lucy Morley

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J. B. Buggs

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Fig. 37. Map, Mentor Incorporated. From New Century Atlas, Lake County, Ohio. Alexander C. Stark, Civil Engineer, Philadelphia, 1915, p. 57.

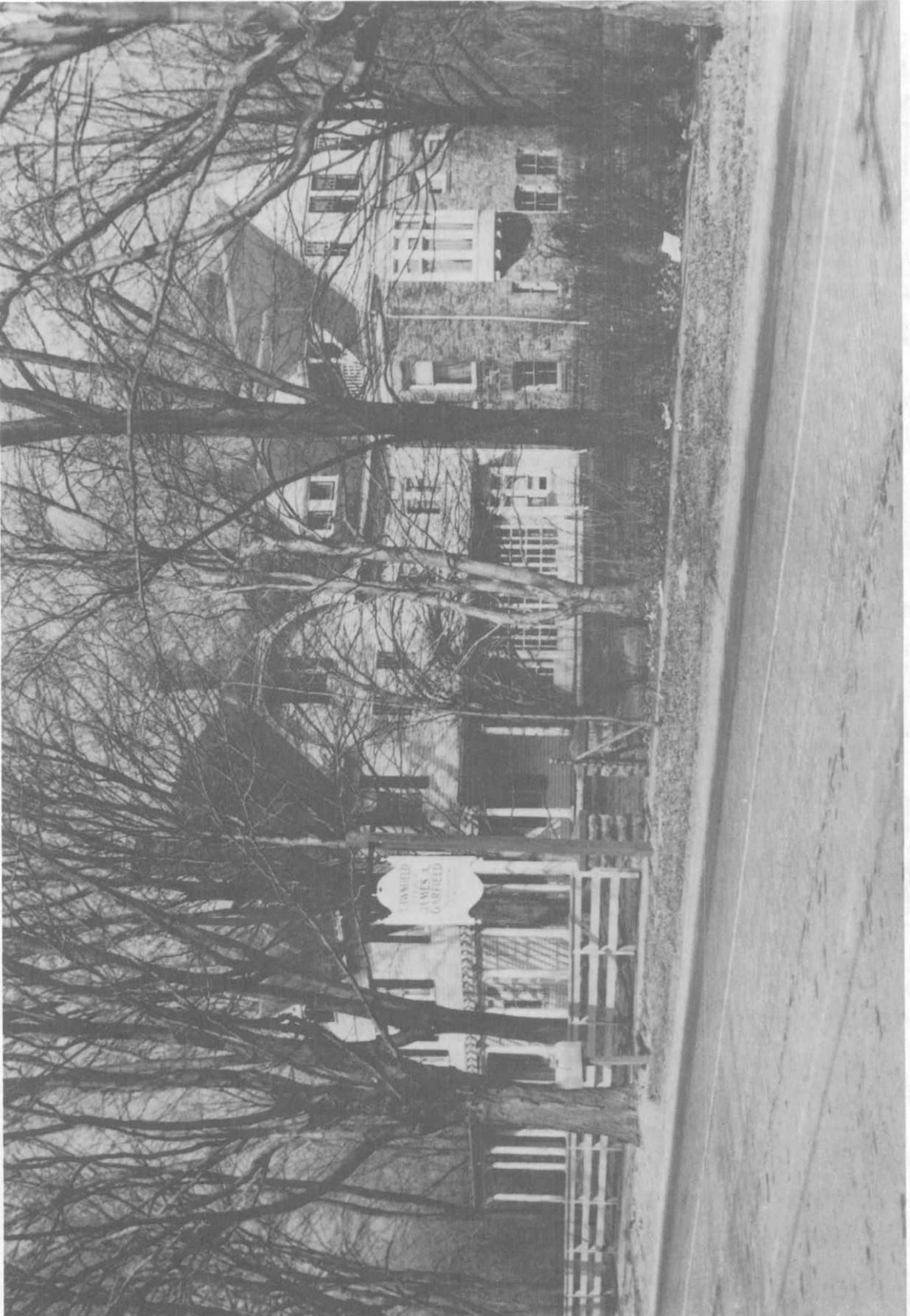
Fig. 38. East lawn, Warren Corning, Jr. built house in 1830. Harry A. and Belle Mason Garfield lived there early 20th century. House remains extant. Lake County Historical Society.



Fig. 39. Lawnfield, exterior, west side. Photo by Howard Ruck, Mentor, Ohio, ca. 1940. Lake County Historical Society.



Fig. 40. Lawnfield, exterior, north and east side. Lake County Historical Society.





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	
DATE ENTERED	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC "LAWNFIELD," JAMES A. GARFIELD FARM
AND/OR COMMON
The Dickey Farm

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 8095 Mentor Avenue
CITY, TOWN Mentor VICINITY OF 11th
STATE Ohio CODE 39 COUNTY Lake CODE 089

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (if applicable)
Western Reserve Historical Society, Lake County Historical Society
STREET & NUMBER 10825 East Boulevard 8905 Mentor Avenue
CITY, TOWN Cleveland VICINITY OF STATE Ohio 44106

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Registry of Deeds, Lake County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER 47 North Park Place
CITY, TOWN Painsville STATE Ohio 44077

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Ohio Landmark Survey
DATE 1967 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Ohio Historical Society
CITY, TOWN Interstate 71 at 17th Avenue, Columbus, Ohio STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Garfield farm's origins reach back to the early 1830s when James W. Dickey, who had migrated to the Western Reserve of northern Ohio from New Hampshire, probably built the one-and-a-half story frame house on the property located near Mentor, Ohio. There were not many changes to the structure until Congressman James A. Garfield bought the 157 acre Dickey farm in the fall of 1876 and the spring of 1877. Garfield made some modifications to the house in 1877 and a more major remodeling in 1880 when it was enlarged to two-and-one-half stories containing 26 rooms with a large porch that traversed the entire front facade. Then in 1885, four years after Garfield's assassination, his widow Lucretia added an ornate memorial library room and several other smaller rooms to the structure.

The first two floors of the Garfield Mansion have been restored to the period of the Garfields' occupancy. On the first floor is the Garfield's bedroom, just off the main hall. After the President's death, this room was converted into a sitting room for Lucretia Garfield. It has been restored to its original function. Also located on this floor is the parlor, just to the south of the main reception hall, which gives access to the dining room and kitchen as well as to the second story. In the reception hall are many family portraits. Also on the first floor are Grandmother Garfield's bedroom, the nurses' quarters and other reception halls.

The stairway from the main reception hall leads to the Memorial Library which is finished in "white oak with its ornate beamed ceiling and carved wainscoting is unquestionably the most imposing room in the house."¹ Also on the second floor are the rooms of the children, "Miss Mollie's room," the boys' bedroom, as well as the rooms of Mrs. Garfield, Zeb Rudolph's room, the trunk room and a closet which contains a water tank.

The third floor is presently used by the Lake County Historical Society as a museum. The Society relates the advancements of the frontier in Ohio with displays of many tools, implements and products of the frontier in Lake County.

There are a number of additional structures vital to Lawnfield's development. Located near the northeast corner of main house is the original Garfield library converted to a campaign office in 1880. The candidate maintained a telegraph office to receive campaign messages as well as returns from the November 2nd election. Built originally to serve as a tenant's cottage, the campaign office is a small, clapboard, single story structure. To the east of the house is the windmill pump house. Its windmill top was removed probably in the 1930s, but it remains in good condition. Northwest of the windmill is one story frame carriage barn built in 1893. Presidential carriages and other artifacts are contained within. The 1885 tenant's house is located just to the northwest of the carriage barn which is still used as a residence. At the extreme north end of the property is a portion of Garfield's barn that had been relocated to this area in the 1890s. There is one non-Garfield period structure at the rear of the property - a small frame cottage. A barn is probably a Garfield era structure, but a granary and a badly deteriorated corn crib have not been dated.

1. A. O. Beamer, Lawnfield. Home of President James A. Garfield, (Cleveland, n.d.).

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Lawnfield was the residence of Congressman, then President James A. Garfield from the autumn of the 1876 until his death in 1881. As a leading Radical Republican, he was a potent political force during the Reconstruction era. After election to the U.S. Senate in 1880, he emerged as the dark horse candidate for the presidency that year. Restrained by the then prevailing custom of not being able to seek votes as an active campaigner, he ran the famous "front porch" campaign from his Mentor farm in 1880.

With the first two floors restored and original furnishings located throughout the house, Lawnfield reflects the life and times of Garfield. His study on the second floor contains his favorite chairs and desk at which he composed many of his campaign speeches.

Built ca. 1830s and enlarged by the Garfields in 1877 and 1880, the house originally was the center of a 157 acre farm. The house, carriage barn and campaign office are owned by the Western Reserve Historical Society and is leased to the Lake County Historical Society, who maintains the house and has it open throughout the year to the public. Other extant structures at the rear of the property are owned by the Lake County Historical Society: well house, barn and tenant's residence.

BIOGRAPHY

James Abram Garfield was born in a log cabin on November 19, 1831, in Orange Township, Ohio. Reared in poverty, young Garfield attended nearby schools, at one of which he met Lucretia Rudolph, who he married on November 11, 1858. By the time of his marriage, Garfield had taught school, had exhibited a strong interest in religion and had spent two years at Williams College, Massachusetts. He also had become the head of the Western Reserve Eclectic Institute, now Hiram College. He served as president of the Western Reserve Eclectic Institute until 1861.

Although exceedingly interested in religion, Garfield chose politics rather than preaching as a career. As early as 1856 he had engaged in some political activity, and late in 1859 he won a seat in the Ohio senate. Garfield's patriotism led him to offer his services to the nation, and in the summer of 1861 he became a lieutenant-colonel in the United States Army. With absolutely no military experience, Garfield still served with merit, winning a brigadier-general's rank in March 1862. He was elected to the House of Representatives in 1862. Reluctant to leave the Army, Garfield finally decided, upon the request of President Lincoln, to take his seat in December 1863.

(Continued)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Beamer, Arthur O., Lawnfield: Home of President James A. Garfield, (Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland), n.d.
- Brown, Harry J. and Leech, Margaret, The Garfield Orbit: The Life of President James A. Garfield, New York, 1978.
- Comer, Lucretia G., Strands From the Weaving, (Vantage Press, New York), 1959.

(Continued)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 7.8 more or less

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>17</u>	<u>471100</u>	<u>4612428</u>	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See continuation sheet.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Joseph S. Mendinhall, Historian. Revised by Dr. Ronald W. Johnson.

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service.

NPS, DSC, TNE, 1984.

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

1100 L Street, N.W.

755 Parfet St., Denver, Colo. 80225

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Washington, D.C. 20240

8-303-234-5545

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES ___ NO ___ NONE ___

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is ___ National ___ State ___ Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

He was elected to the House of Representatives in 1862. Reluctant to leave the Army, Garfield finally decided, upon the request of President Lincoln, to take his seat in December, 1863.

Having been urged by the Lincoln to leave the Army, Garfield soon lost faith in the President. The ex-general felt that Lincoln's wartime leadership lacked vigor. Especially did Garfield and others resent the chief executive's plan for bringing the defeated Southern states back into the Union. After Lincoln's death, Garfield fully supported the Congressional impetus to assume control of reconstruction. The intensity of the feelings of Garfield is underscored by the fact that he voted for the impeachment of Andrew Johnson, Lincoln's successor.

What Garfield lacked in originality, he made up for in hard work. Aside from adopting a stern attitude toward the prostrate South, Garfield concentrated on financial matters while in Congress. For he hoped that by becoming master of fiscal facts, figures and balance, he could win the chairmanship of the Committee on Ways and Means, one of the House's most powerful committees. He met with partial success. In 1871 he assumed the leadership of the Committee on Appropriations, not of Ways and Means as he had desired. For four years he chaired the committee in a competent fashion, impressing all by his grasp of statistics. When the Democrats won control of the House in 1876, he surrendered the chairmanship and became the minority leader of the Republicans. He supported President Rutherford B. Hayes, but not with overwhelming enthusiasm when Hayes made gestures in behalf of Civil Service reform. The Ohio Legislature elected Garfield to the Senate in 1880, ending his long and dutiful years in the House.

When the Republican Convention met in 1880, there were three leading candidates for the presidential nomination: Ulysses S. Grant, James G. Blaine and John Sherman. Garfield acted as Sherman's spokesman, albeit in a "sickly manner" according to some, but a deadlock developed between Grant and Blaine forces. The convention could only end the impasse by turning to a dark horse, which it did on the thirty-sixth ballot, choosing Garfield.

The nominee ran his campaign from his home, called Lawnfield, during the summer of 1880. Instead of going to the people, they came to him. The fight was a rough one, however, with Garfield's opponents loudly reminding the country that Garfield never fully explained his role in the Credit Mobilier Affair or the DeGoyer Paving scandal. Despite these and other temporary setbacks, Garfield defeated the Democratic contender ex-general Winfield Scott Hancock by a slim margin of less than 10,000 popular votes.

Garfield's record as President is sparse. An assassin shot him on July 2, 1881 less than four months after inauguration. The President lingered for over 60 days but an infection hastened his death on September 19th. His remains were interred in Cleveland Lakeview Cemetery on September 25th, and less than a decade later a large Victorian era memorial was dedicated in his honor.

-Continued-

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

Owner of the Property

Lawnfield is under the direct care and custody of:

The Lake County Historical Society
Dr. Eric J. Cardinal, Executive Director
8095 Mentor Avenue
Mentor, Ohio 44060

Measured drawings have been made of the Garfield Estate by:

Mr. E. Thomas Marcel
8353 Mentor Avenue
Mentor, Ohio 44060

These drawings are the property of the Lake County Historical Society.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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DATE ENTERED

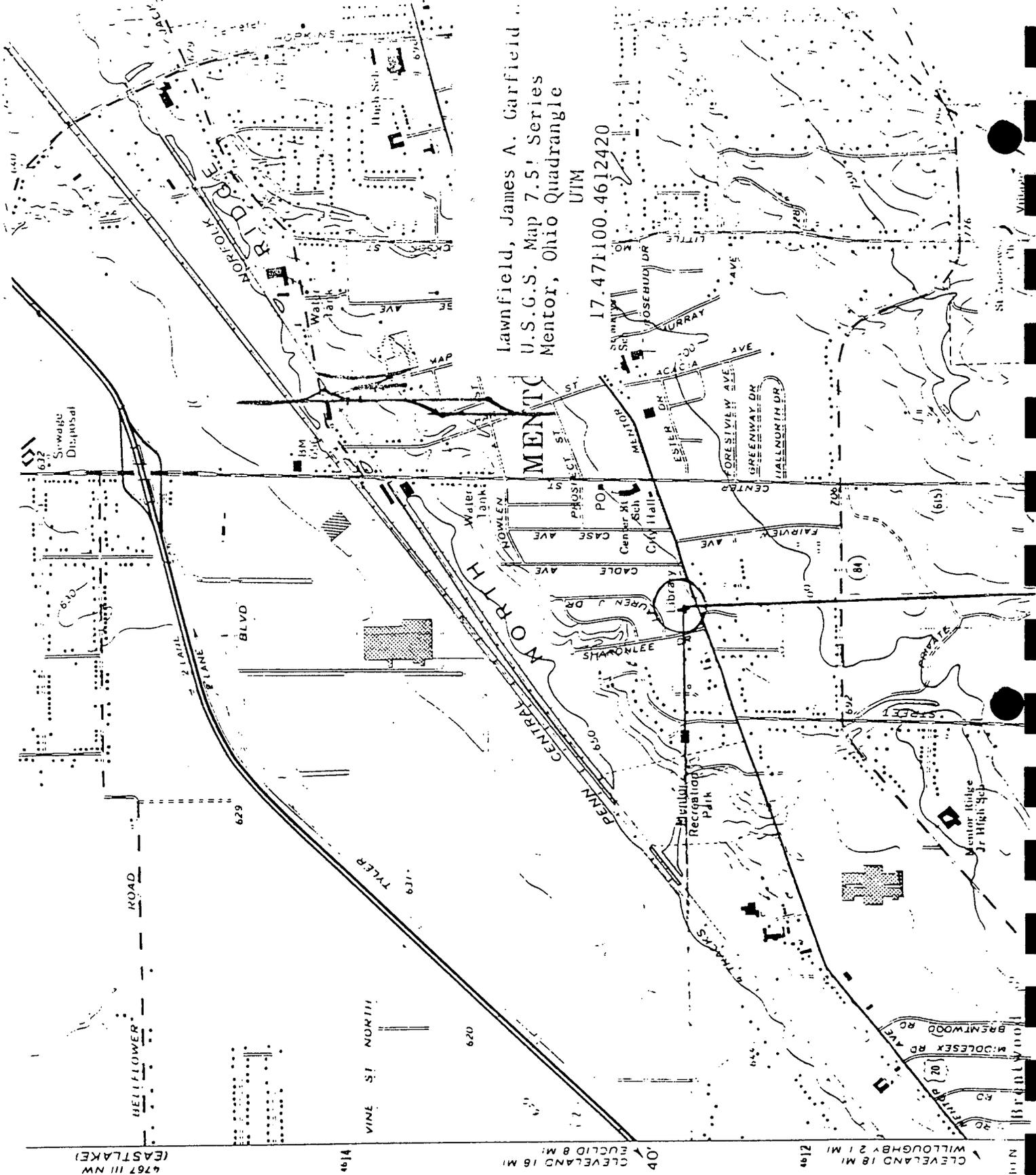
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

Peskin, Allan, Garfield, (Kent, Ohio, 1978).
Smith, Theodore Clark, James Abram Garfield, (Yale University Press, New Haven).

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 2

As shown by the red line on the accompanying map A entitled "Lawnfield" and dated July 11, 1972, from a point on the centerline of Mentor Avenue approximately 50 feet west from the center line of the Lawnfield entrance road extended proceed slightly east of north approximately 771 feet, thence northeast 455 feet to the intersection of the old east property line thence south approximately 397 feet to the center of Mentor Avenue, thence west/southwest along the center of Mentor Avenue approximately 374 feet to the point of origin.



Lawnfield, James A. Garfield
 U.S.G.S. Map 7.5' Series
 Mentor, Ohio Quadrangle

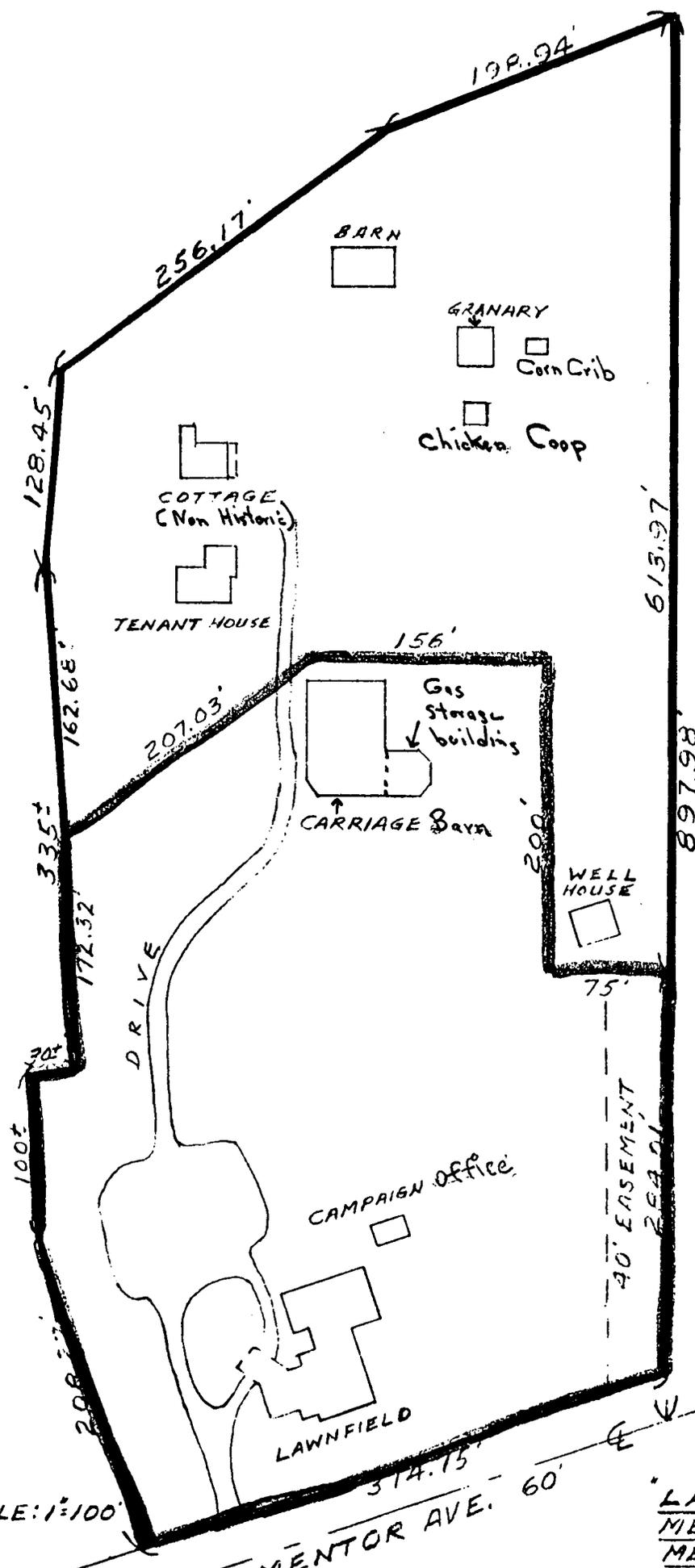
UIM
 17.471100.4612420

6767 III NW (EASTLAKE)

6614

40' CLEVELAND 18 MI
 EUCLID 8 MI

6612 CLEVELAND 18 MI
 WILLOUGHBY 21 MI



APPROX. SCALE: 1"=100'

MENTOR AVE. 60'
337

"LAWNFIELD"
MENTOR AVENUE
MENTOR, OHIO



CLASSIFIED STRUCTURE FIELD INVENTORY REPORT
(Attach 4" x 5" B & W Photo)

REGION Midwest PARK/AREA NAME JAGA PARK NUMBER _____ To be supplied by park.
STRUCTURE NAME Lawnfield or Main House. STRUCTURE NUMBER _____ To be supplied by WASO.
LOCATION OF STRUCTURE 8095 Mentor Avenue, Mentor, Ohio

(X) FARM'L REGISTER: _____ date: 1966, 1984 MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: (A) (B) (C) (D)
mm/dd/yy
(X) NPS LEGAL INTEREST: NHS - 1980 MGMT AGREEMENT: Pending donation to NPS. (

Check all of the following categories for which NPS has treatment responsibility:

Stabilization(X) Cyclic maintenance(X) Routine maintenance(X) Approved ultimate treatment(X) and HSR in progress.

APPROVED ULTIMATE TREATMENT: GMP

Preservation (PP) Restoration (RR) Reconstruction (CC)
Adaptive Preservation (AP) Adaptive Restoration (AR) Adaptive Reconstruction (AC)
Neglect (NG) Remove (RM) No Approved Treatment (NO)

Approval document: _____ () Document date: _____
mm/dd/yy

Estimated Treatment Costs:

Stabilization: \$ _____ date: _____ Level of Estimate: Estimator:
Approved Treatment: \$ _____ date: _____ (A) (B) (C) (Region)(DSC)(A&E) ()
mm/dd/yy

DESCRIPTION:

() Period of Construction: Ca. 1832 - 1885 Type of Structure: Residence ()
() Composition: Frame, stone Current Interior Use: Museum/Library ()

Verbal description: It is highly likely that James Dickey built a 1½ story frame farm-
house on the site ca. 1832. Congressman James A. Garfield had some remodeling work done
to the structure in the spring of 1877 but made more extensive changes in 1880. The
house was enlarged by raising it from its foundations and adding another story. Addi-
tional rooms were added as well as a porch, new roof and complete painting. Following
Garfield's death, his widow built a large stone wing at the rear to house a memorial
library and a fireproof vault that contained the late President's personal and state
papers. Generally the house is in good condition but roof maintenance is needed as
work in the basement.

continue on additional page(s) if necessary

If structure has been removed, how? _____ () date: _____
mm/dd/yy

Report prepared by: Ronald W. Johnson date: January 1984

CLASSIFIED STRUCTURE FIELD INVENTORY REPORT
(Attach 4" x 5" B & W Photo)

REGION Midwest PARK/AREA NAME James A. Garfield NHS PARK NUMBER To be supplied by park.
STRUCTURE NAME Campaign office/library STRUCTURE NUMBER To be supplied by WASO.
LOCATION OF STRUCTURE 8095 Mentor Avenue, Mentor, Ohio

(X) FEDERAL REGISTER: date: 1966, 1984 MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: (A) (B) (C) (D)
mm/dd/yy

() NPS LEGAL INTEREST: National Hist. Site 1980 MGMT AGREEMENT: Pending donation to NPS (

Check all of the following categories for which NPS has treatment responsibility:

Stabilization(X) Cyclic maintenance(X) Routine maintenance(X) Approved ultimate treatment(X)

APPROVED ULTIMATE TREATMENT: GMP and HSR currently in progress.

Preservation (PP) Restoration (RR) Reconstruction (CC)
Adaptive Preservation (AP) Adaptive Restoration (AR) Adaptive Reconstruction (AC)
Neglect (NG) Remove (RM) No Approved Treatment (NO)

Approval document: _____ () Document date: _____
mm/dd/yy

Estimated Treatment Costs:

Stabilization: \$ _____ date: _____ Level of Estimate: Estimator:
Approved Treatment: \$ _____ date: _____ (A) (B) (C) (Region)(DSC)(A&E) ()
mm/dd/yy

DESCRIPTION:

() Period of Construction: Ca. 1832 - 1885 Type of Structure: Residence ()
() Composition: Frame Current Interior Use: Museum ()

Verbal description: Reportedly this structure was built at an unknown date to serve as a tenant's cottage on the Dickey farm. In the spring of 1877 Garfield had it relocated from its original position north of the main house to a spot northeast. Workmen refurbished the structure that year to serve as Garfield's personal library and office. The Congressman, himself, laid the flooring. During the 1880 presidential campaign, the library was converted to a campaign office served by several clerks and two telegraph operators. Although much of the daily campaign correspondence and telegrams either were received or sent from this structure, the candidate held the really important meetings in the main house in a small room known as the "snuggery." When Lucretia Garfield contracted for the library addition in 1885, the small office was moved farther from the main house but still remains in the approximate spatial relationship to it. Today it houses a small period museum.

continue on additional page(s) if necessary

If structure has been removed, how? _____ () date: _____
mm/dd/yy

Report prepared by: Ronald W. Johnson date: January 1984

CLASSIFIED STRUCTURE FIELD INVENTORY REPORT
(Attach 4" x 5" B & W Photo)

REGION Midwest PARK/AREA NAME JAG NHS PARK NUMBER by park. To be supplied

STRUCTURE NAME Carriage Barn STRUCTURE NUMBER by WASO. To be supplied

LOCATION OF STRUCTURE 8095 Mentor Avenue, Mentor, Ohio

(X) FEDERAL REGISTER: date: 1966, 1984 MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: (A) (B) (C) (D)
mm/dd/yy

(X) NPS LEGAL INTEREST: NHS. 1980 MGMT AGREEMENT: Pending donation to NPS. (

Check all of the following categories for which NPS has treatment responsibility:

Stabilization(X) Cyclic maintenance(X) Routine maintenance(X) Approved ultimate treatment(X)

APPROVED ULTIMATE TREATMENT: GMP and HSR in progress.

Preservation (PP)	Restoration (RR)	Reconstruction (CC)
Adaptive Preservation (AP)	Adaptive Restoration (AR)	Adaptive Reconstruction (AC)
Neglect (NG)	Remove (RM)	No Approved Treatment (NO)

Approval document: _____ () Document date: _____
mm/dd/yy

Estimated Treatment Costs:

Stabilization: \$ _____	date: _____	Level of Estimate: _____	Estimator: _____
Approved Treatment: \$ _____	date: _____	(A) (B) (C) (Region)(DSC)(A&E) (

mm/dd/yy

DESCRIPTION:

() Period of Construction: 1893 Type of Structure: Barn/Gas works (

() Composition: Frame - stone facing Current Interior Use: Storage (

Verbal description: Mrs. Garfield had this structure erected in 1893 as a carriage barn and stable. The building served as a focal point in the backyard until the present. The structure has not been altered since its original construction although it does require a great deal of maintenance work to prevent structural deterioration. A stone gas storage facility with a metal tank and a moveable lid is attached to the rear of the building. Precise construction dates for this portion is not known at present but it seems likely that it predated the carriage house by some eight years back to the time that the gas well was drilled nearby.

continue on additional page(s) if necessary

If structure has been removed, how ? _____ () date: _____
mm/dd/yy

Report prepared by: Ronald W. Johnson date: January 1984

CLASSIFIED STRUCTURE FIELD INVENTORY REPORT
(Attach 4" x 5" B & W Photo)

REGION Midwest PARK/AREA NAME JAG NHS PARK NUMBER by park. To be supplied
STRUCTURE NAME Pumphouse/well house STRUCTURE NUMBER by WASO. To be supplied
LOCATION OF STRUCTURE 8095 Mentor Avenue, Mentor, Ohio

(X) FEDERAL REGISTER: _____ date: 1966, 1984 MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: (A) (B) (C) (D)
mm/dd/yy

(X) NPS LEGAL INTEREST: NHS - 1980 MGMT AGREEMENT: Pending sale to NPS (

Check all of the following categories for which NPS has treatment responsibility:

Stabilization(X) Cyclic maintenance(X) Routine maintenance(X) Approved ultimate treatment(X)

APPROVED ULTIMATE TREATMENT: GMP and HSR in progress.

Preservation (PP)	Restoration (RR)	Reconstruction (CC)
Adaptive Preservation (AP)	Adaptive Restoration (AR)	Adaptive Reconstruction (AC)
Neglect (NG)	Remove (RM)	No Approved Treatment (NO)

Approval document: _____ () Document date: _____
mm/dd/yy

Estimated Treatment Costs:

Stabilization: \$ _____	date: _____	Level of Estimate: _____	Estimator: _____
Approved Treatment: \$ _____	date: _____	(A) (B) (C) (Region)(DSC)(A&E)	(

mm/dd/yy

DESCRIPTION:

() Period of Construction: 1885 Type of Structure: Pumphouse (

() Composition: Stone Current Interior Use: Vacant (

Verbal description: The stone pumphouse was constructed in 1885 as a key link in a more effective water delivery system at Lawnfield. The structure had a windmill attached to its top for many years but was removed ca. 1930s. Underground water pipes connected the structure to the well some distance away as well as the main house. The structural style is similar to that of the memorial addition to the main house. The structure continued in use until some as yet undetermined time in the early 20th century when municipal water reached Lawnfield.

continue on additional page(s) if necessary

If structure has been removed, how ? _____ () date: _____
mm/dd/yy

Report prepared by: Ronald W. Johnson date: January 1984

CLASSIFIED STRUCTURE FIELD INVENTORY REPORT

(Attach 4" x 5" B & W Photo)

REGION Midwest PARK/AREA NAME JAG NHS PARK NUMBER by park. To be supplied

STRUCTURE NAME Tenant's House or Cottage STRUCTURE NUMBER by WASO. To be supplied

LOCATION OF STRUCTURE 8095 Mentor Avenue, Mentor, Ohio

(X) FEDERAL REGISTER: _____ date: 1966, 1984 MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: (A) (B) (C) (D)
mm/dd/yy

(X) NPS LEGAL INTEREST: NHS - 1980 MGMT AGREEMENT: Pending sale to NPS. (

Check all of the following categories for which NPS has treatment responsibility:

Stabilization(X) Cyclic maintenance(X) Routine maintenance(X) Approved ultimate treatment(X)

⇒ APPROVED ULTIMATE TREATMENT:

Preservation	(PP)	Restoration	(RR)	Reconstruction	(CC)
Adaptive Preservation	(AP)	Adaptive Restoration	(AR)	Adaptive Reconstruction	(AC)
Neglect	(NG)	Remove	(RM)	No Approved Treatment	<u>(NO)</u>

Approval document: _____ () Document date: _____
mm/dd/yy

Estimated Treatment Costs:

Stabilization:	\$ _____	date: _____	Level of Estimate:	Estimator:
Approved Treatment:	\$ _____	date: _____	(A) (B) (C)	(Region)(DSC)(A&E) (

mm/dd/yy

DESCRIPTION:

() Period of Construction: 1885 Type of Structure: Residence (

() Composition: Frame Current Interior Use: Residence (

Verbal description: The frame tenant's cottage was constructed in 1885 to replace a smaller building located on the Botten parcel across Mentor Avenue from the main house. Through the years tenant's have lived in the structure, a Garfield descendant and currently the executive-director of the Lake County Historical Society. Apparently at an undetermined date a chicken coop was attached to the northside of the structure, rehabilitated and now is used as part of the living quarters.

continue on additional page(s) if necessary

If structure has been removed, how ? _____ () date: _____
mm/dd/yy

Report prepared by: Ronald W. Johnson date: January 1984

CLASSIFIED STRUCTURE FIELD INVENTORY REPORT
(Attach 4" x 5" B & W Photo)

REGION Midwest PARK/AREA NAME JAG NHS PARK NUMBER by park. To be supplied

STRUCTURE NAME Barn STRUCTURE NUMBER by WASO. To be supplied

LOCATION OF STRUCTURE 8095 Mentor Avenue, Mentor, Ohio

(X) FAMIL REGISTER: _____ date: 1966, 1984 MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: (A) (B) (C) (D)

() NPS LEGAL INTEREST: National Hist. Site, 1980 MGMT AGREEMENT: Pending Sale to NPS. ()

Check all of the following categories for which NPS has treatment responsibility:

Stabilization(X) Cyclic maintenance(X) Routine maintenance(X) Approved ultimate treatment(X)

APPROVED ULTIMATE TREATMENT: GMP and HSR in progress.

Preservation (PP)	Restoration (RR)	Reconstruction (CC)
Adaptive Preservation (AP)	Adaptive Restoration (AR)	Adaptive Reconstruction (AC)
Neglect (NG)	Remove (RM)	No Approved Treatment (NO)

Approval document: _____ () Document date: _____
mm/dd/yy

Estimated Treatment Costs:

Stabilization: \$ _____	date: _____	Level of Estimate: _____	Estimator: _____
Approved Treatment: \$ _____	date: _____	(A) (B) (C)	(Region)(DSC)(A&E) ()

DESCRIPTION:

() Period of Construction: Ca. 1832 - 1876 Type of Structure: Barn ()
 () Composition: Frame Current Interior Use: Vacant ()

Verbal description: It is highly likely that the barn located presently at the extreme rear of the 7.8 acre site had been moved on two previous occasions from its locations just to the northeast of the main house and earlier near the street in the Dickey period of ownership. Nothing is known concerning its construction. The building requires concentrated maintenance to prevent further deterioration to its structural components.

continue on additional page(s) if necessary

If structure has been removed, how ? _____ () date: _____

Report prepared by: Ronald W. Johnson date: January 1984

CLASSIFIED STRUCTURE FIELD INVENTORY REPORT
(Attach 4" x 5" B & W Photo)

REGION Midwest PARK/AREA NAME JAG NHS PARK NUMBER _____ To be supplied by park.

STRUCTURE NAME Corn Crib STRUCTURE NUMBER _____ To be supplied by WASO

LOCATION OF STRUCTURE 8095 Mentor Avenue, Mentor, Ohio

(x) FEDERAL REGISTER: _____ date: 1966, 1984 MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: (A) (B) (C) (D)

() NPS LEGAL INTEREST: Nat. Hist. Site, 1980 MGMT AGREEMENT: Pending sale to NPS ()

Check all of the following categories for which NPS has treatment responsibility:

Stabilization() Cyclic maintenance() Routine maintenance() Approved ultimate treatment()

APPROVED ULTIMATE TREATMENT:

Preservation (PP)	Restoration (RR)	Reconstruction (CC)
Adaptive Preservation (AP)	Adaptive Restoration (AR)	Adaptive Reconstruction (AC)
Neglect (NG)	Remove (RM)	No Approved Treatment (NO) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Approval document: _____ () Document date: _____ mm/dd/yy

Estimated Treatment Costs:

Stabilization: \$ _____	date: _____	Level of Estimate: _____	Estimator: _____
Approved Treatment: \$ _____	date: _____	(A) (B) (C) (Region)(DSC)(A&E) ()	

DESCRIPTION:

() Period of Construction: Unknown Type of Structure: Granary ()
 () Composition: frame Current Interior Use: _____ ()

Verbal description: This small structure is in a badly deteriorated condition. It appears to have served as a corn crib at the rear of the Garfield farm. There is no evidence that the structure was built in the period the property has been owned by the Western Reserve Historical Society or the Lake County Historical Society.

continue on additional page(s) if necessary

If structure has been removed, how? _____ () date: _____ mm/dd/yy

Report prepared by: Ronald W. Johnson date: January, 1984

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities to protect and conserve our land and water, energy and minerals, fish and wildlife, parks and recreation areas, and to ensure the wise use of all these resources. The department also has major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

Publication services were provided by the graphic staff of the Denver Service Center. NPS D-2

