

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Snelson-Brinker House

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number State Highway 8 N/A not for publication

city or town Steelville ☒ vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Crawford code 055 zip code 65565

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mark A. Miles
Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO

May 2, 2007
Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined eligible for the
National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register

☐ removed from the National
Register.

☐ other,
(explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Snelson-Brinker House
Name of Property

Crawford County, Missouri
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
☐ district
☒ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	3	buildings
1	0	sites
0	1	structures
0	0	objects
1	4	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

Historic and Historic Archaeological
Resources of the Cherokee Trail of
Tears, 1837-1839

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC - Single Dwelling

FUNERARY-Cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

CULTURE - Museum

FUNERARY-Cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER - Double-Pen Log Dwelling

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Wood

roof Wood

other Stone

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Snelson-Brinker House
Name of Property

Crawford County, Missouri
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☒ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations N/A

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** moved from its original location.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ETHNIC HERITAGE/Native American

Period of Significance

1837-1839

Significant Dates

1837-1839

Significant Person

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Cherokee

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State Agency
- ☒ Federal Agency
- ☐ Local Government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

National Park Service, Long Distance Trails Office

Sante Fe, New Mexico

Snelson-Brinker House
Name of Property

Crawford County, Missouri
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.7 acres

UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	15	631685	4200995	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2				4			

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Philip Thomason/Teresa Douglass
organization Thomason and Associates date July 28, 2003
street & number P.O. Box 121225 telephone 615-385-4960
city or town Nashville state TN zip code 37212

Additional Documentation

submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO) or FPO for any additional items

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name St. James Historical Preservation Society, c/o Pete Vannatta
street & number 16950 County Road 2350 Telephone 573-265-5508
city or town St. James state MO Zip code 65559

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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Crawford County, Missouri
Historic and Archaeological Resources of the Cherokee Trail of Tears

DESCRIPTION

The Snelson-Brinker House is a one-story, double-pen log dwelling built in 1834 and extensively rebuilt in the late 1980s. The dwelling faces State Highway 8 and is located approximately nine miles west of Steelville, the county seat of Crawford County. The property consists of the dwelling, a ca. 1880 log and frame smokehouse/root cellar, a ca. 1910 cast iron pump, and a ca. 1988 frame privy. To the east of the dwelling is an open field and beyond the field is a cemetery with graves dating back to the 1830s. In front of the house is a wooden fence which extends along the faint traces of the original road which ran in front of the house. The dwelling is presently owned by the St. James Historical Preservation Society which operates the property as a house museum.

The dwelling consists of two log pens which share a central stone chimney (Photos 1-4). The west pen is original and the east pen was rebuilt ca. 1988 with materials and features to match the original. The dwelling has a stone foundation, a gable roof of wooden shingles, and a central stone chimney. The dwelling was built in a saddlebag plan with the two pens sharing a central chimney. The west pen has an exterior of saddle notched, unhewn logs with concrete chinking. The main entrance has a vertical board door which was added ca. 1988 and the pen's six-over-six double hung wood sash windows were also added at this time. The original east pen was in deteriorated condition in the late 1980s and it was removed and the existing pen rebuilt in its place. This pen has a vertical board door, hewn logs with "V" notching, and concrete chinking. On the rear (North) façade of this pen is a six-over-six wood sash window and a vertical board door. In the gable fields on the east and west facades is vertical board siding. The interior of both pens consist of wood floors, exposed log walls, and plank ceilings. Both pens have stone hearths at the fireplace openings and reproduction wood mantels added ca. 1988 (Photos 5 and 6). At the rear of the building is a stone patio which was also added ca. 1988.

To the north of the house is a log and frame smokehouse/root cellar built ca. 1880 and rebuilt ca. 1988 (Photo 7). The building has a gable roof of wood shingles, vertical board siding, and a log and stone foundation. On the south façade is a vertical board door which leads to the above-ground smokehouse section and a vertical board door which leads to the stone-lined root cellar. To the northeast of this building is a ca. 1910 cast iron water pump. Also north of the house is a hexagonal frame privy built ca. 1988.

To the east of the house is an open field and beyond the field is the Brinker Cemetery which contains approximately thirty visible headstones (Photos 8 and 9). The oldest grave is that of Vienna Jane Brinker, daughter of John Brinker, who was killed in 1837. Other graves in the cemetery include that of John Brinker and other members of his family. The cemetery may also contain the graves of the four Cherokee who were buried at the house but oral tradition handed down from the Brinker family places these graves in the north section of the field between the house and cemetery.¹

The Snelson-Brinker House and its related outbuildings are included as non-contributing buildings and structures to the property. The dwelling was extensively remodeled in the late 1980s which included the complete reconstruction of the east pen, and replacement of original doors, windows, and fireplace mantels. The building no longer retains integrity of its original construction. The contributing features of this property are the cemetery and fields to the east of the house. These areas encompass campsites and a gravesite associated with the period of the Trail of Tears. The property is now maintained by the St. James Historical Preservation Society and it is open to the public on a daily basis.

¹ Pete Vannatta, St. James Historical Preservation Society, Telephone Interview, 22 July, 2003.

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Crawford County, Missouri
Historic and Archaeological Resources of the Cherokee Trail of Tears

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - SUMMARY

The Snelson-Brinker House is significant under National Register criteria A and D for its association with the Cherokee Trail of Tears of 1837-1839. The dwelling was constructed in 1834 and faced a roadbed which was used by thousands of Cherokee as they emigrated to the Indian Territory. It is known that at least one detachment camped on the grounds of the house and four Cherokee died and are buried on the property. The site is one of only a few in Missouri that have been identified as a campsite and gravesite. Although largely rebuilt, the Snelson-Brinker House remains at its original site and the setting of the property has not been extensively altered since the 19th century.

The Snelson-Brinker House is significant as a campsite and gravesite during the period of the Trail of Tears. Under criterion A, the identification and location of campsites is important to understanding the exact routes taken by the Cherokee and to better understand the progression of their journey. Identification of campsites can help clarify the actual routes taken by the detachments, typical mileage completed each day, and the types of roads and road conditions which hindered or assisted their journey. Campsites also have the possibility of being significant under criterion D. At least one detachment of Cherokee and possibly others camped around the Snelson-Brinker House in 1838 and 1839. There may be artifacts at the site from this period.

As a gravesite, the Snelson-Brinker House is significant under Criteria A as reflecting the suffering and hardships endured by the Cherokee people. This event was pivotal in the history of the Cherokee Nation, and the graves at this site are illustrative of the tragedy of this event. The vast majority of Cherokee graves along the Trail of Tears are undocumented and their locations unknown. The Snelson-Brinker House is one of only a few well-documented locations of Cherokee graves along the entire Trail of Tears route which stretches over nine states. The Snelson-Brinker House meets registration requirements for the property types of "Campsites" and "Gravesites" as outlined in the Multiple Property Documentation Form "The Historic and Historic Archaeological Resources of the Cherokee Trail of Tears, 1837-1839." This nomination only addresses the Snelson-Brinker House within the context of the Cherokee Trail of Tears. Additional research may also identify the property as eligible under additional state and local contexts.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Snelson-Brinker House was built in 1834 for Levi Lane Snelson, and it served as the meeting place for the Crawford County Circuit Court during 1835 and 1836. John B. Brinker purchased the house and land on February 21, 1837.² On May 14, 1837, Brinker's daughter, two-year old Vienna Jane Brinker was drowned in the spring branch below the hill and a 16 year old slave later confessed to the murder. Brinker buried his daughter in the field east of the house and this continued to be utilized as the Brinker family cemetery.

The Treaty of New Echota signed in December of 1835, led to the forced removal of the Cherokee Nation in 1838 and 1839. Several groups of Cherokee left voluntarily in 1837 including the party of Cherokee led by Lt. B.B. Cannon. This group contained some 365 Cherokee and they began their journey west from Tennessee in October of 1837. The decision of the Cannon party to take a route northwest through Nashville, Kentucky, and on into Illinois and central Missouri was an effort to bypass the poor roads and swamps of Arkansas and southeast Missouri. Cannon's party of Cherokee crossed the Mississippi River into Missouri at Bainbridge and traveled through the state in November and December. Missouri was not admitted to the Union until 1821 and the road system in the central

² Barbara Black, "Crawford County Survey Report No. 135, Brinker Log Cabin, Meramec Regional Planning Commission, Rolla, Missouri, 1986.

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Crawford County, Missouri

section of the state remained primitive for many years. The 1836 Henry Tanner Map of Missouri shows no major system of roads in the vicinity of any of the Snelson-Brinker House (Map 1).³ However, the 1840 Jeremiah Greenleaf Map does show the road taken by the Cannon party from Caledonia to Meramec Spring and the iron works (Map 2).⁴ On December 5, 1837, Cannon's party camped at the Meramec River in the general vicinity of the Snelson-Brinker House, however, there is no specific mention of the dwelling.⁵

The majority of the Cherokee were rounded up by US soldiers and state militia in May of 1838, and during the summer the Cherokee were concentrated at three emigration depots in Tennessee and Alabama. Here the Cherokee were divided into various detachments of 800 to 1,900 persons each for the journey west. After delays due to drought conditions, the Cherokee detachments began their overland march to the Indian Territory in early October. The majority of the detachments utilized the "Northern Route" and passed through Nashville, Hopkinsville, Kentucky and crossed the Ohio River at Berry's Ferry at Golconda, Illinois. After crossing the Mississippi River at and near Bainbridge, most Cherokee detachments followed the route previously used by Cannon.

Ten of the detachments, containing some 10,000 Cherokee, traveled along the Northern Route through Missouri. One of the roadbeds used by the Cherokee was the road from Steelville to St. James which led directly past the Snelson-Brinker House. The detachment led by Richard Taylor, camped on the Snelson-Brinker property on its journey west. Given the location of the dwelling it is probable that other detachments in addition to the Taylor group stopped or camped on the property.

Taylor's detachment was the eleventh group to embark on the Trail of Tears and left from a camp on the Vann plantation near Chattanooga, Tennessee on November 1, 1838. Over a thousand Cherokee in this detachment left Tennessee but several dozen had already died by the time they reached central Missouri.⁶ Taylor's group stopped at the Brinker residence in late February 1839. W.I.I. Morrow, a physician, was among those who traveled with the Taylor detachment. Morrow noted in his diary that the group camped on the Brinker property:

26th Feby. Cloudy & cool. Traveled to Davis near Steelville 10 miles - clear - 27th clear and cold, traveled 10 miles to Brinker near Massy Iron Works - snowed some during the day a very cold night - four Indians died, and were buried viz - 2 of Mills family, Old Byrd, and Mary Fields⁷

The Reverend Daniel S. Butrick, a missionary who accompanied the Taylor detachment, also noted the deaths in his journal. His entry for February 27, 1839 states that after the detachment had stopped to camp he was informed that two people, an elderly man and a child had died on the way. "The old man was by the name of Bird, and the child

³ Henry Tanner, "Map of Missouri, 1836," David Rumsey Map Collection, davidrumsey.com.

⁴ Jeremiah Greenleaf, "Map of Missouri, 1840," David Rumsey Map Collection, davidrumsey.com.

⁵ Vicki Rozema, "Voices from the Trail of Tears," (Winston-Salem, North Carolina: John F. Blair Publisher, 2003), 88.

⁶ Duane H. King, "Report on the Cherokee Trail of Tears: Updating and Correcting the 1992 Map Supplement" (April 10, 1999), 13-15.

⁷ Ibid., 40.

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Snelson-Brinker House
Crawford County, Missouri

was a daughter of Archibald Fields, by the name of Mary."⁸ Butrick does not mention the Mills family; however, his entry for March 1 notes that two children had died in the camp the previous evening. These are perhaps the two members of the Mills family that Morrow refers to.⁹

Oral tradition in the Brinker family has these burials located in the north section of the field between the house and cemetery rather than in the cemetery itself.¹⁰ However, these burials may possibly also be within the family cemetery. The cemetery contains the grave of Vienna Jane Brinker, who was buried east of the house in 1837 and several dozen other family members were buried in this cemetery in the 19th and 20th centuries.

After 1839, the dwelling remained in the possession of the Brinker family for much of the rest of the 19th century. During the 1930s the property was purchased by Waldrige Powell and his family owned the house until the 1950s.¹¹ A photograph taken of the house ca. 1940 shows a family group in front of the dwelling but it is not clear if the house was occupied at this time (Figure 1). The dwelling was then vacant and deteriorated for several decades until it was willed by the Powell family to the Phelps County Historical Society. The dwelling and 1.7 acres were sold to the St. James Historical Preservation Society in 1988. Following its sale a grant was provided by the James H. Woods Foundation of St. Louis to restore the house. This restoration included the rebuilding of the east pen, and replacement of windows and doors. Coins found during the restoration process include copper pennies with dates of 1813, 1832, and 1834. The dwelling now serves as a house museum.

The Snelson-Brinker House meets the registration requirements for the property types of "Campsites" and "Gravesites" as outlined in the Multiple Property Documentation Form, "The Historic and Historic Archaeological Resources of the Cherokee Trail of Tears, 1837-1839." These registration requirements outlining integrity are as follows:

Location: The Snelson-Brinker House's location as a campsite and as the site of Cherokee burials has been well documented since the 19th century. The Morrow and Butrick accounts of their journey clearly identify the Brinker dwelling as a campsite and as the location for four Cherokee burials. Oral histories from the 19th century also support the tradition that the Brinker Cemetery is the likely location of the Cherokee graves.

**Design/
Materials/**

Workmanship: Campsites along the Trail of Tears were temporary accommodations for the Cherokee. They required enough space to accommodate large groups, and were primarily open fields, pasture, church yards or wooded areas. No design, materials, or workmanship elements are applicable to this property type. No grave markers associated with the Cherokee from this time period are known to exist and integrity of design, materials, and workmanship are not applicable for this property type.

⁸Ibid., 48.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰ Vannatta, Telephone Interview, 22 July, 2003.

¹¹ Black, "Crawford County Survey Report No. 135."

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Snelson-Brinker House
Crawford County, Missouri

Feeling/

Setting/

Association:

The feeling, setting, and association of a Cherokee Trail of Tears campsite is largely conveyed through its surroundings and its ability to evoke a sense of time and place of the period of significance. The campsite must retain sufficient physical characteristics of its 1837-1839 appearance to convey the sense of an early 19th century camp. The campsite must closely resemble its early 19th century physical characteristics, such as pasture or woodlands, when it was used by the Cherokee, and post-1839 buildings and structures in the immediate vicinity must be limited in number and scale. The Snelson-Brinker House is located in a rural section of Crawford County and there are no modern buildings or structures in the immediate vicinity. The field to the east of the dwelling remains open and the rest of the property to the north is composed of woodlands. For gravesites, integrity of feeling, setting, and association is conveyed through a property's ability to evoke a sense of time and place of its period of significance. This can include no markers at all, the nearby presence of memorials or markers related to the Trail of Tears, or its presence within a larger cemetery. The Cherokee graves at this site are not marked and only their general location is known. The immediate vicinity of the Snelson-Brinker House retains integrity as an early 19th century farmstead and much of the original setting of the property remains intact.

The Snelson-Brinker House possesses sufficient integrity and significance to meet National Register criteria for its association with the Cherokee Trail of Tears. The location of known campsites and gravesites along the Trail of Tears is limited and this site retains much of its sense of time and place from the period of the Trail of Tears of 1837 to 1839.

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Historic and Archaeological Resources of the Cherokee Trail of Tears

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Crawford County, Missouri
Historic and Archaeological Resources of the Cherokee Trail of Tears

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the Snelson-Brinker House is shown as parcel 3 on Crawford County tax map 72-13-3 which is drawn at a scale of 1" = 400. The parcel includes 1.7 acres and contains the house, outbuildings and cemetery. The map was created in 1981 and still shows the property as owned by the Phelps County Historical Society. Ownership is presently by the St. James Historical Preservation Society. The property is located in the SW corner of Section 5 of Township 37N, Range 5W. The property is bounded on the south by the right-of-way of State Route 8, on the west by an imaginary line following the property boundary, and on the east and north by fence lines.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The boundary of the Snelson-Brinker House includes all of the remaining buildings and structures which are historically associated with the property. The boundary also includes the Brinker Cemetery which is historically associated with the site. To the north, east and west of the property boundary are open fields and woodlands which are owned by the Missouri Conservation Commission. To the south the property is bounded by the State Route 8 right-of-way. No other properties associated with the Snelson-Brinker House are known to be in the general vicinity.

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Crawford County, Missouri
Historic and Archaeological Resources of the Cherokee Trail of Tears

Photo by: Thomason and Associates

Date: April, 2002

Location of Negatives: Thomason and Associates, Nashville, TN

Photo No. 1: Primary (south) façade of the Snelson-Brinker House, view to the northeast.

Photo No. 2: South and east facades of the Snelson-Brinker House, view to the northwest.

Photo No. 3: North facade of the Snelson-Brinker House, view to the south.

Photo No. 4: North and west façades of the Snelson-Brinker House, view to the southeast.

Photo No. 5: Interior view of the east pen of the Snelson-Brinker House.

Photo No. 6: Interior view of the west pen of the Snelson-Brinker House.

Photo No. 7: Outbuildings of the Snelson-Brinker House, view to the north.

Photo No. 8: General view of the Brinker Cemetery, view to the north.

Photo No. 9: General view of the field between the house and cemetery. The north section of the field is the traditional location for the four Cherokee burials.

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Snelson-Brinker House
Crawford County, Missouri

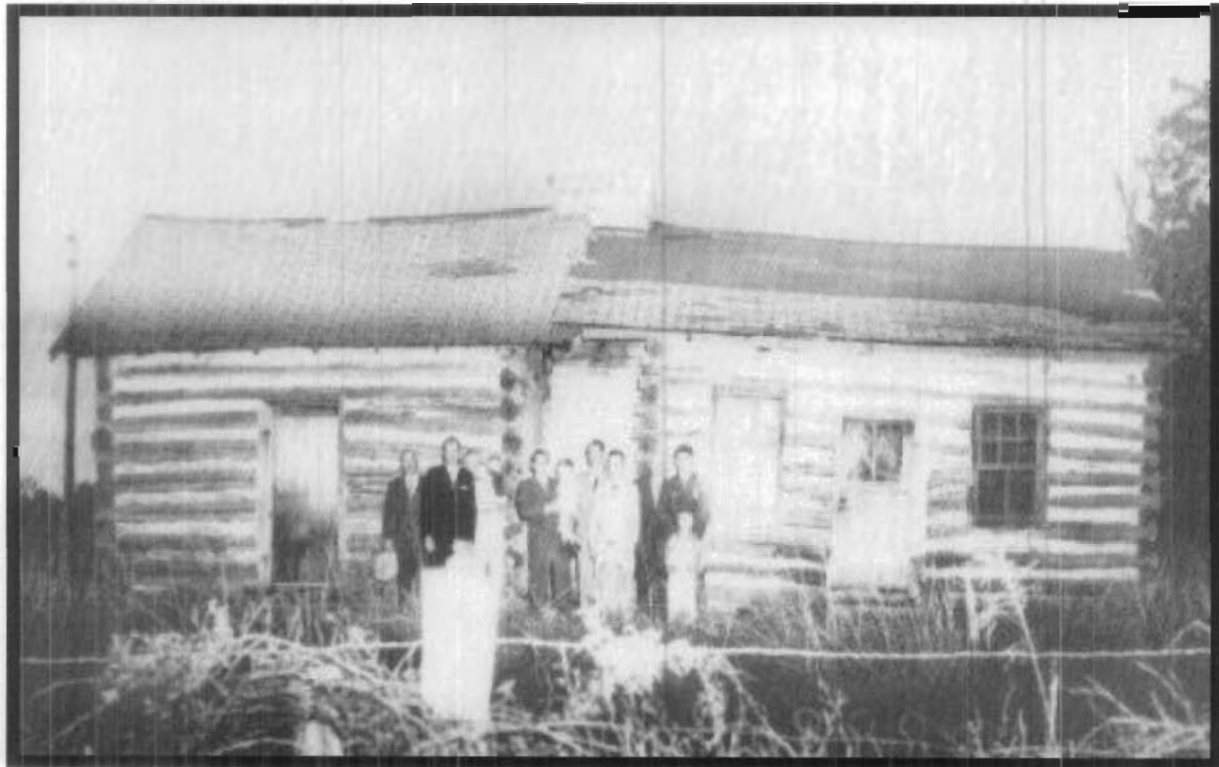


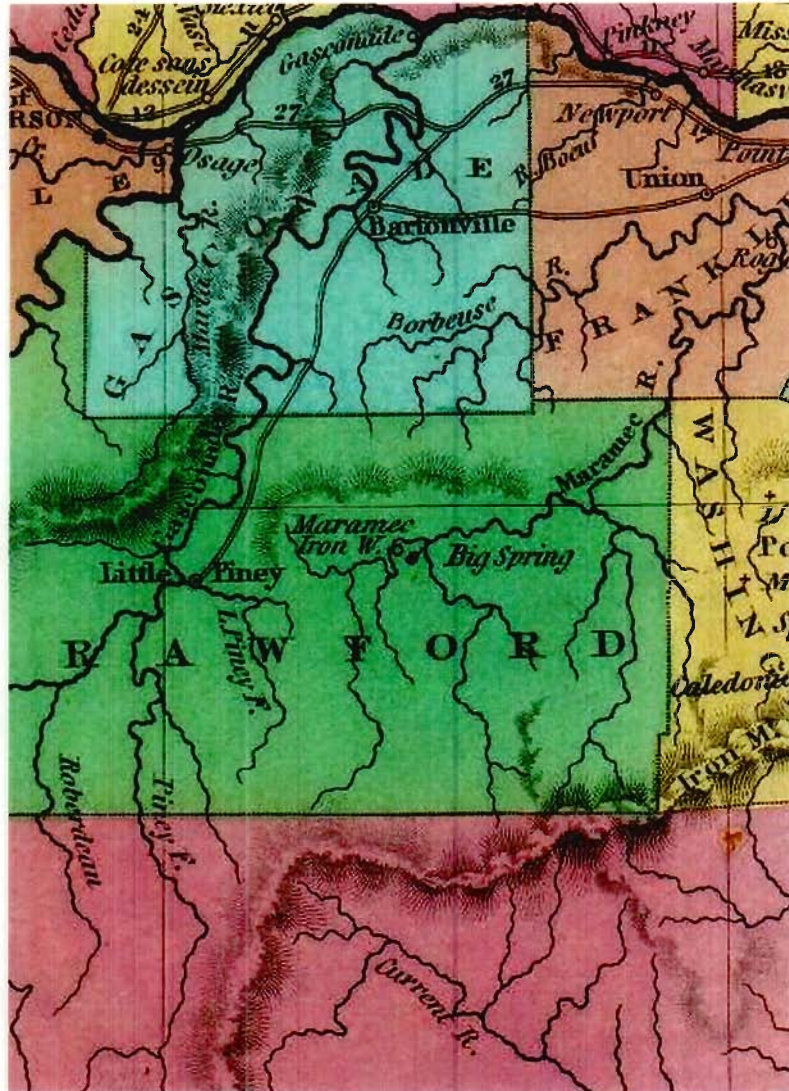
Figure 1: Ca. 1940 photo of the Snelson-Brinker House (Photo courtesy of the St. James Historical Preservation Society).

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Snelson-Brinker House
Crawford County, Missouri



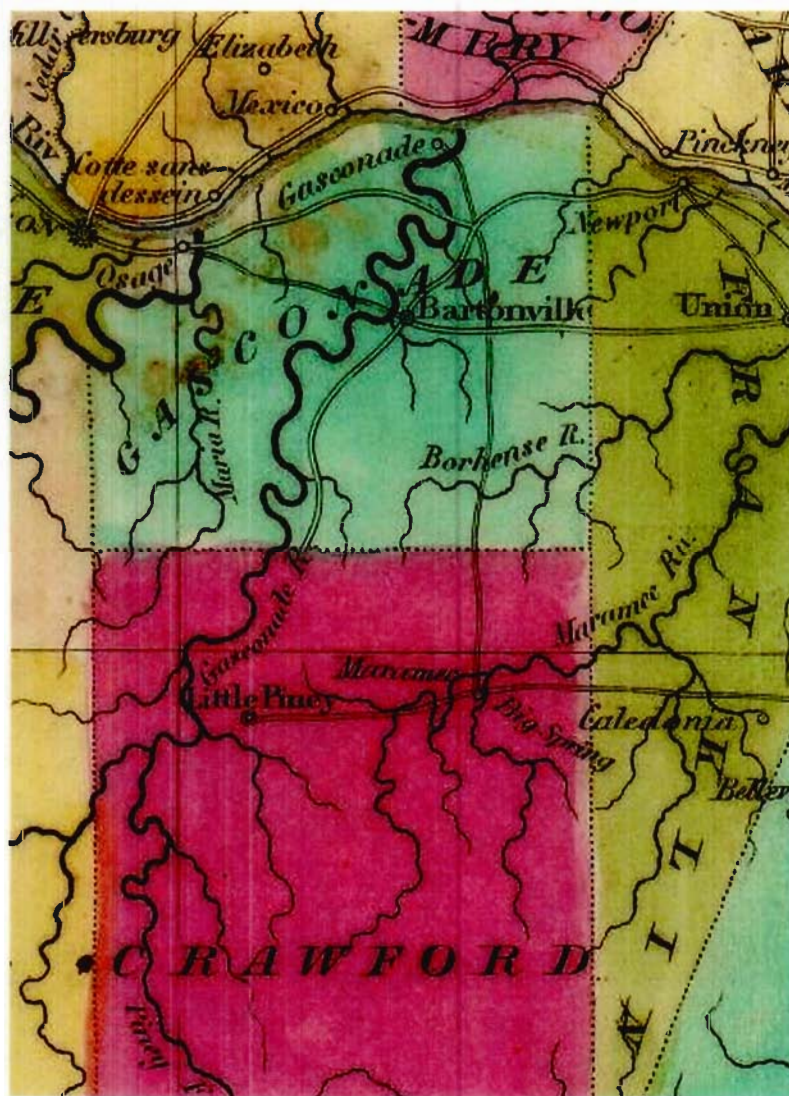
Map 1: The 1836 Henry Tanner Map of Missouri does not show any established roads leading from Caledonia to the Meramec Iron Works and Spring.

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Snelson-Brinker House
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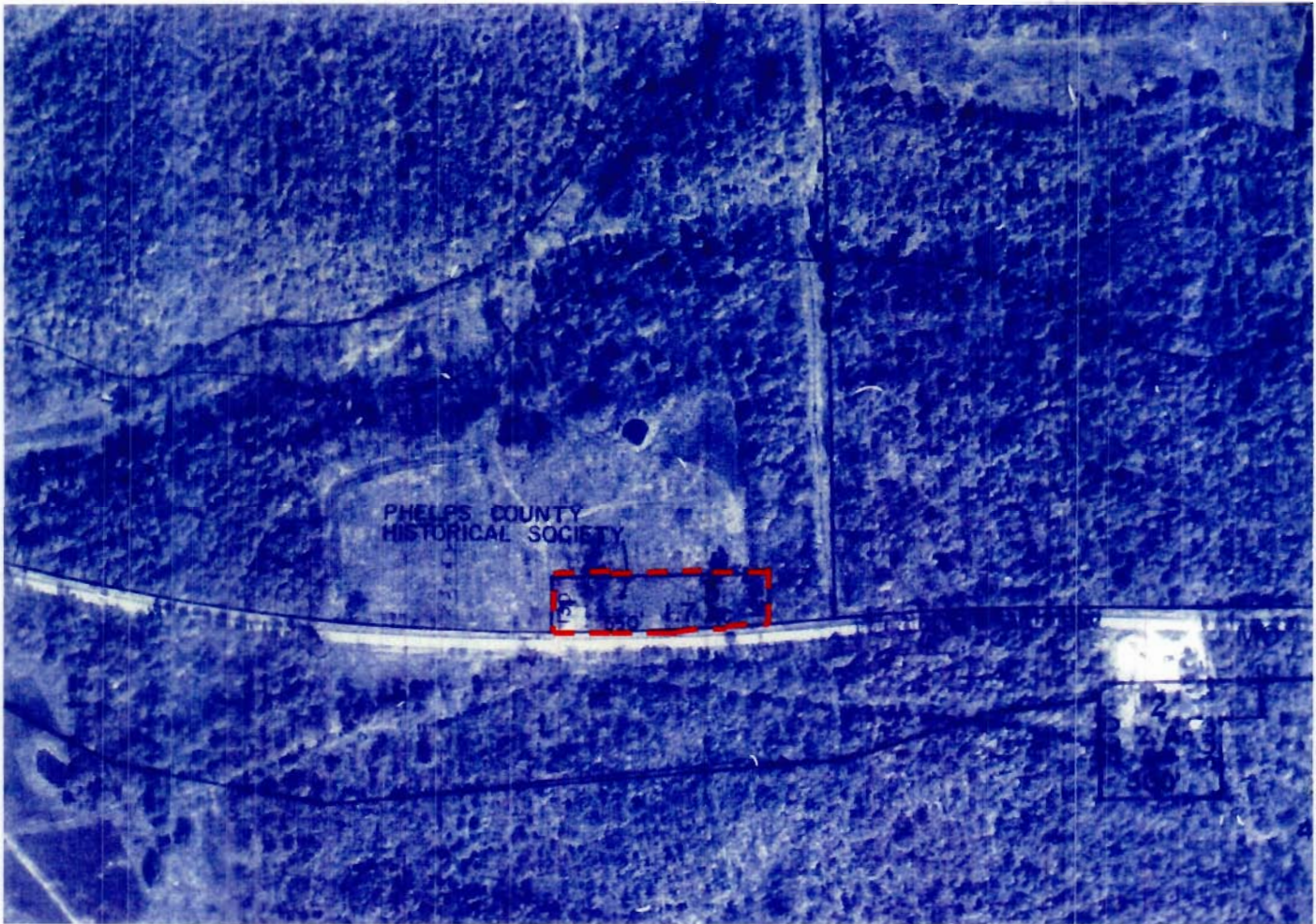
Map 2: The 1840 Jeremiah Greenleaf Map of Missouri shows the road from Caledonia to the Meramec Iron Works and Spring.

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Crawford County, Missouri



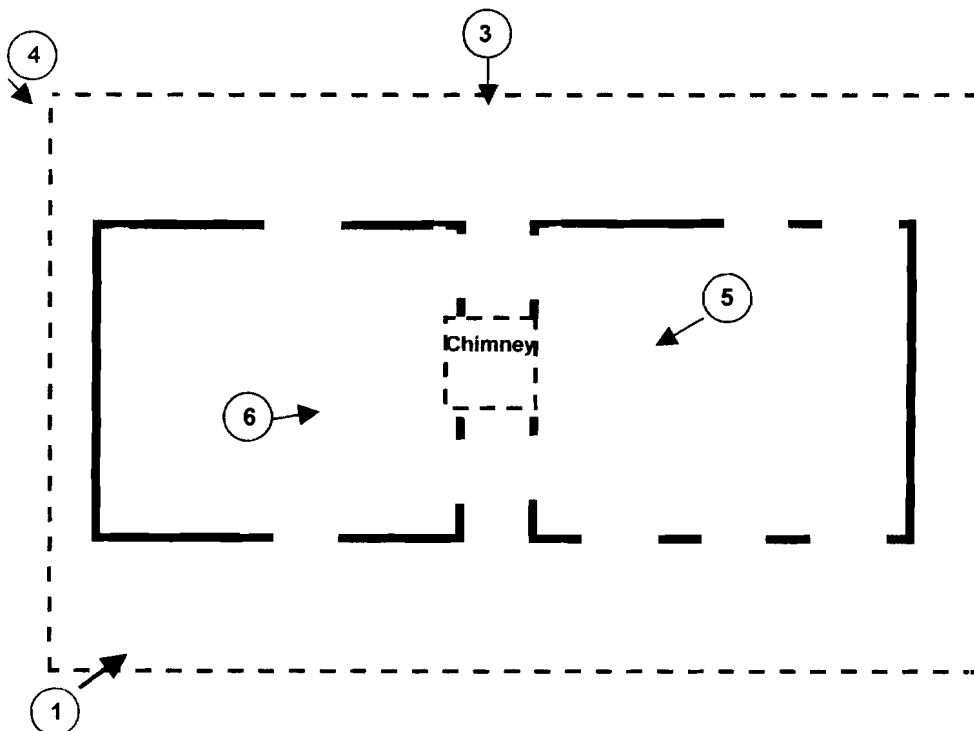
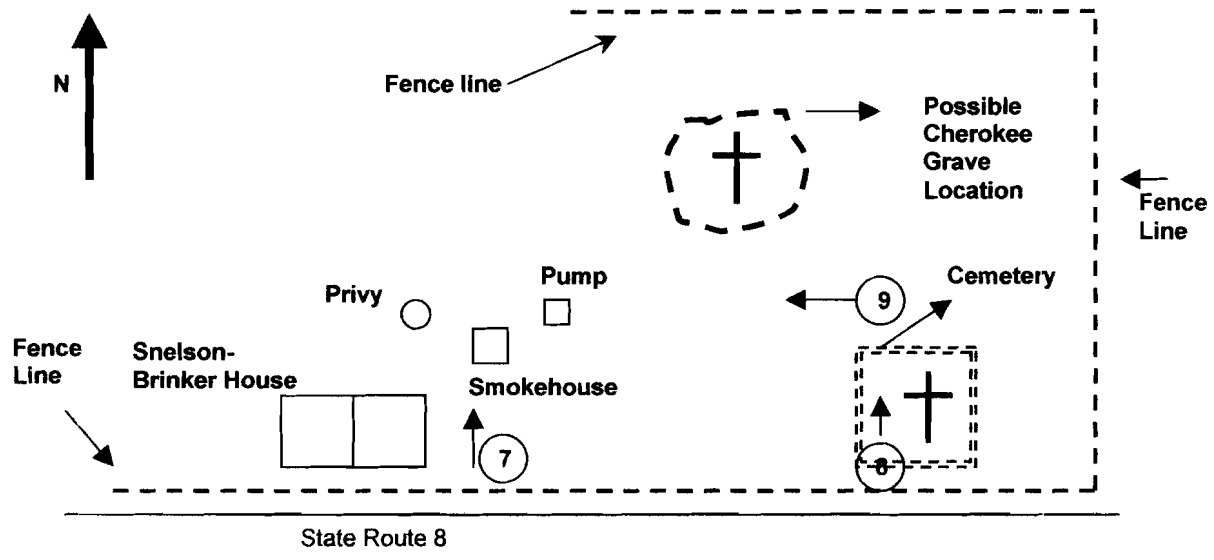
Map 3: The Snelson-Brinker House is shown as parcel 3 on Crawford County, Missouri Tax Map 72-13-3, (1" = 400').

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Snelson-Brinker House
Crawford County, Missouri



Map 4: Site Plan and Photo Key for the Snelson Brinker House (not to scale).



Brinker

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