FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT'S TOP COTTAGE

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

2002

prepared for

THE FRANKLIN AND ELEANOR ROOSEVELT INSTITUTE

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INTRODUCTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is the result of a seven month project conducted by Elmore Design Collaborative, Inc., Historical Landscape Architects, with the support and guidance of John G. Waite Associates, Architects, PLLC, to research and document the landscape surrounding Top Cottage, Franklin Delano Roosevelt's (hereafter referred to as "FDR") retreat located in Hyde Park, New York. Financial support for this project was provided by the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute of Hyde Park, New York.

In 1938, FDR built a stone Dutch Colonial Revival style cottage on a wooded hill overlooking the Hudson River. FDR built his cottage as a retreat from the numerous visitors that called on him when he was at Springwood, his family's home in Hyde Park, New York. He planned to write and relax at the cottage after his final term as President of the United States of America. Unfortunately, FDR died on April 12, 1945 before he could realize his dream.

The historic vernacular landscape surrounding Top Cottage was a mixed forest with rock outcroppings, steep terrain and some adjacent agricultural fields. FDR built the cottage more than two miles east of Springwood, on one of the highest points in Dutchess County, New York. Initial access was provided through rough, unpaved roads that wound through farm fields and woodlands. FDR had intended for the landscape to remain rustic and natural, with the forest coming right up to the foundation of the cottage. However, foundation plantings were introduced and provided a sense of domesticity.

After FDR's death, Top Cottage passed through several different owners, each of whom added their own bit of personality to both the cottage and its landscape. While the landscape became domesticated and elements of contemporary lifestyles were introduced, the historic integrity of the landscape survives, permitting glimpses of its former rusticity. While many features of the original landscape survive including the looped drive, stone fences, portions of the open fields, forest with native dogwoods surrounding the cottage, woodland drive(s), an earthen ramp and several utility poles, several other features have disappeared or have become compromised including the original foundation plantings and the viewsheds and viewing corridors. The open fields to the south have filled-in because of new plantings, successional growth and deferred maintenance. Nonetheless, Top Cottage and its landscape remain an important

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historic site, an excellent example of a cottage and landscape that was envisioned and built by a sitting President of the United States of America.

The following goal (established by the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt institute, in partnership with the National Park Service) has guided this project and its product:

 To develop a restoration and implementation plan that is appropriate for the site, attainable by its overseers, and has long-range maintenance considerations.

The purpose of this report is to record the history and changes of the landscape, document and assess its existing condition and establish the most appropriate treatment for its character-defining landscape features. Though slightly modified for this particular report, the format follows the structure as outlined in the *Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports* by the National Park Service, 1998; and the assessment follows the guidelines of the *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Treatments of Historic Properties* prepared by the National Park Service, 1996. The inventory, analysis and evaluation of each natural and man-made feature relative to the landscape's historic integrity. The treatment recommendations and budget projections will help to guide the restoration of this significant landscape and the incorporation of necessary modern day features, such as a recently installed septic disposal system and site lighting (initially this will be temporary).

This report recommends specific improvement strategies for the property's integrity, appearance and relationship to the broader landscape. Some recommendations may be undertaken immediately, while others may be done as time and money become available, and need drives their completion. The improvements range from quick fixes to long-term solutions. When fully implemented these recommendations will help to restore the landscape to its former appearance. These improvements will restore the landscape's sense of place and provide visitors with a sense of what FDR's retreat looked and felt like during his residency.

The research undertaken to complete this report was from primary sources. This report, combined with the 1997 Historic Structure Report by John G. Waite Associates, Architects, and other research that is being completed regarding interior furnishings, will help to restore Top Cottage to April 1945. While all of this research is undertaken by professional consultants, it is important to note that not all of the material sought by each researcher has been located. Researching historical properties, buildings and landscapes is an ongoing endeavor. New information will continue to be uncovered, which will strengthen the research completed to date and address questions that have been asked. It should be understood that the restoration of FDR's landscape at Top Cottage must be considered as an ongoing process and the recommendations set forth in this report are based on the information known at the time of its completion.

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GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute, in partnership with the National Park Service, established the following goal and objectives for restoring the landscape at Top Cottage:

Goal:

To develop a restoration and implementation plan that is appropriate for the site, attainable by its overseers, and has long-range maintenance considerations.

Objectives:

- 1. To research and document the history, changes and current conditions of the landscape;
- 2. To identify the most suitable treatment for this historic vernacular landscape according to the *U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and the Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes: Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, and Reconstruction;*
- 3. To restore the landscape and its viewshed(s) to April 1945;
- 4. To establish the landscape (along with the cottage) as a visitor destination and special events facility; and
- 5. To prepare a list of recommendations for future research and improvements.

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SITE HISTORY

FUNNY OR SAD!

I wonder how one's philosophy should act under certain conditions? Here is the problem:

As far back as 1933 I found that on my trips to Hyde Park from Washington, it was almost impossible to have any time to myself in the big house. The trips were intended primarily for a holiday – a chance to read, to sort my books, and to make plans for roads, tree plantings, etc. This was seemingly impossible because of

- a) visitors in the house
- b) telephone calls
- c) visits from Dutchess County neighbors
- d) visits from various people who, knowing I was going to be in Hyde Park, thought it an opportune time to seek some interview.

Therefore, I began talking about building a small place to go to escape the mob. At first the plans contemplated only a terrace on top of Dutchess Hill – in what formerly was known as "the Chestnut woods" – this terrace to include a lean-to shelter large enough to go under in case it rained, and attach to it a fireplace and kitchenette.

This gradually grew, first into a large terrace and a large living room which could be used in colder weather; thence into a plan for a small cottage, and, finally into the adopted plan of a wide porch, a living room, two bedrooms and a bath, and a wing large enough for a pantry, kitchen and double bedroom. This was called for in order to have someone take care of the place and prevent theft, etc.

I did not personally expect to occupy the bedrooms but thought that they could be used by the children in case any of them wished to move there for a holiday or for the summer.

The house was, therefore, designed by me and the detailed plans were worked up by Henry Toombs.

About the time the house was built, the newspaper men heard of the operation and asked for a story on it. The story was outlined as above written, emphasis being placed on the fact that it was intended solely to get away from official business during the day while at Hyde Park.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

December 9, 19421

In 1938, President Franklin D. Roosevelt (January 30, 1882 - April 12, 1945) built Top Cottage, a stone Dutch Colonial Revival style cottage, on a wooded hill overlooking the Hudson River in New York State. It was to be his retreat, away from the numerous visitors that called on him when he was at Springwood, his family's home in Hyde



FDR with Ruthie Bie and Fala on the west porch. Photograph by Margaret (Daisy) Suckley, February 1941. [FDRL]

Park, New York. He planned to write and relax at the cottage after his final term as President of the United States of America. Unfortunately, he died before realizing his dream.

Over the years, the cottage and its landscape experienced numerous modifications by subsequent owners. Several of the farms that FDR purchased, which provided him contiguous land ownership between Springwood and Top Cottage, have become residential subdivisions. Fortunately, much of the land that FDR owned is still undeveloped. The hill upon which Top Cottage sits is still wooded, and in the winter the Hudson River and distant mountains can still be seen. However, vehicular access to the cottage traverses through a residential subdivision, which was, in FDR's time, an open farm field.

Today, as it was for FDR, Top Cottage is tucked into the woods, though its context has changed as a result of suburban sprawl. The cottage is located approximately three miles east of the Hudson River and lies east of State Routes 9 and 9G in Hyde Park, New York. Today, Cream Street and Val Kill Drive, the same streets that provided access for FDR, provide vehicular access to Top Cottage through a single-family residential subdivision.

The cottage was built from native stones salvaged from stone fences, which farmers made as they cleared their fields for agricultural use 150 years earlier.² Top Cottage, as the house is known today,³ sits proudly on a hill overlooking the Hudson River and was said to have had views of distant mountains in nearly 360 degrees. Situated in the Town of Hyde Park, New York, the cottage is now owned by the

Beaverkill Conservancy, Inc., the land acquisition affiliate of the Open Space Institute. It is maintained by the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute (FERI) with plans to cede control and ownership to the United States National Park Service.

PROPERTY ACQUISITION AND TRANSFER

For nearly twenty years, FDR contemplated building himself a retreat or getaway from "the mob" at Springwood, which he called "the big house." Indeed, as early as 1925, he began to purchase property east of his family's estate, which ultimately extended contiguous Roosevelt property inland for nearly three miles east of the Hudson River.⁴ In 1929, FDR's attorney, Henry Hackett (hereafter referred to as "Hackett") informed him that the Dutchess Hill property of Mrs. Florence Campbell was available for \$115,000.⁵ However, FDR did not purchase the land. FDR seemed to have been drawn to the ridgeline where he built Top Cottage. (See Appendix A – Map 3)

As a young man, FDR hunted and spent much time enjoying the woods and farm fields that surrounded Springwood. This proved to serve him well later in life as he purchased, all of the land between Route 9, as it is now known, and up to and beyond Cream Street, which includes the property upon which he built Top Cottage. In fact, Nelson Brown, FDR's consulting forester from the New York State College of Forestry at Syracuse, New York, remarked in his Personal Reminiscences that FDR "had acquired and was continuing to acquire adjacent properties particularly old and worn out and abandoned farm lots." FDR enjoyed the nearly panoramic view from the high ridge where he built Top Cottage and had frequent picnics, luncheons and rendezvous.

The details of FDR's land purchases are quite extensive, owing to their number and frequency. While it is presumed that FDR consciously sought to connect his family's estate to Dutchess Hill, we know he certainly was interested in forestry and making money from the land. His first purchase was the Tompkins Farm in July 1925, which consisted of 180 acres. Ten years later, in 1935, he bought the Briggs Wood Lot – 7 acres and 13 perches and the T. Jefferson Newbold portion of the Dumphy Farm, which included 74.4 acres of land. In keeping with the theme of making money from the land, FDR rented out much of the farmland he purchased – sometimes to the same people from whom he purchased the land. In 1936, Peter Rohan sold his 133 acres to FDR and then rented a portion of it for the duration of FDR's life. In November of 1937, FDR purchased the Hughson Farm, 90 acres, and the Wright Land, 13 acres. And then in May of 1938, he bought the 22-acre parcel known as the Jones Land. After October 1938, FDR acquired the Lent Wood Lot, which was approximately 8 acres of forest, and he completed the land acquisitions⁷ needed to fulfill his twenty-year dream of "building a small place ...to escape the mob."

The land upon which Top Cottage is located consists of pieces of three different tracts of land: 1) T. Jefferson Newbold's portion of the Dumphy Farm; 2) the Rohan Farm; and 3) the Lent Wood Lot. (See Appendix A – Map 4) FDR did not have enough land to protect the serenity and privacy he desired for his new retreat until he purchased the Lent Wood Lot. Records indicate that the Lent Wood Lot was "bounded on the

FDR's Property Purchases

"All that land owned by Franklin D. Roosevelt at the time of his death situate, lying and being in the Town of Hyde Park, Dutchess County, N.Y. and lying east of the center of Mariches Creek and consisting of the following:"

(Hackett Legal Papers, GR. 73, F.D.R. Estate, Box 19)

(Italicized Text – Hackett Legal Papers, GR. 73, F.D.R. Estate, Schedule A – Real Estate, Box 19)

Property Known as:	Date Purchased	Size of Parcel	Liber of Deeds at Page #	Notes
	Turchaseu	(Fields)	(Dutchess County Clerk's Office)	
East End of Boreel Farm (Robert & Sarah to James Roosevelt)	Feb. 14, 1868	10 acres	Liber 144, p 117	Lying between the center of Mariches Creek and the west line of the Bennett Farm and bounded on the north by the south line of the Dumphy Farm and on the south by the north line of the Tompkins Farm.
Bennett Farm (Willet E. & Annie M.)	Sept. 5, 1911	194 acres	Liber 370, p 494	Subject to the leases covering Val-Kill And known as "The Valkill," certain buildings were erected by Anna Eleanor Roosevelt, Nancy Cooke [sic] and Marian [sic] Dickerman. The said buildings, hereinafter described, are owned and jointly occupied by said three persons. (Farm Lease Agreement)
Tompkins Farm (Sarah C.)	July 3, 1925	180 acres	Liber 454, p 426	
Briggs Wood Lot (Margaret)	Nov. 6, 1935	7 acres and 13 perches	Liber 548, p 245	Subject to right reserved by Margaret Briggs to cut and remove fire wood for her personal use. Part of water lot #5 in the Division of water lots.
Dumphy Farm				
T. Jefferson Newbold	June 5, 1935	74.2 acres	Liber 547, p 101	
Thomas Newbold	Nov. 1, 1937	90 acres	Liber 564, p 255	
Rohan Farm (Peter & Phebe)	April 1936	133 acres	Liber 550, p 547	
Hughson Farm	Nov. 1, 1937	90 acres	Liber 564, p 255	Same premises conveyed by T. Jefferson Newbold on Nov. 1, 1937 – Subject to right-of-way granted by FDR to Dorothy Schiff Baker by deed dated Sept. 30, 1938 in Liber 570, p 262
Wright Land (Fred E. & Harriet B.)	Nov. 18, 1937	13 acres	Liber 563, p 509	The parties of the first agreed to reserve a strip 50 feet in width along the west of this parcel for a public highway.
Jones Land (Wyatt & Eliza)	May 26, 1938	22 acres	Liber 567, p 176	Subject to right-of-way granted by FDR to Dorothy Schiff Baker by deed dated Sept. 30, 1938, Liber 570, p 262.
Lent Wood Lot (Ernest I. Hatfield)	Oct. 3, 1938	Equal undivided fifth- sixths, more or less 8 acres	Liber 669, p 206	Bounded on the north by the south line of land formerly owned by Wyatt Jones, now estate of FDR: on the west by the east line of Dumphy Farm; on the south by the north line of the Rohan Farm and on the east by the west line of the Jacobs Farm now owned by Mrs. Thackery. Part of water lot #6 in the Great Nine Partners Patent.

	Land Transactions of Top Cottage
June 5, 1935	FDR buys Thomas Jefferson Newbold's portion of the Dumphy farm, 74.2 acres
April 1936	FDR buys the Rohan farm, 133 acres
July 1938 - 1939	Top Cottage is built
Oct. 3, 1938	FDR buys Lent Wood Lot, 8 acres more or less
April 12, 1945	Top Cottage parcel consists of approximately 74 acres
July 15, 1947	A. Eleanor Roosevelt purchases all of FDR's land east of Mariches Creek from FDR's Executors
Aug. 15, 1947	Elliott Roosevelt purchases all of FDR's formerly owned land east of Mariches Creek from A. Eleanor Roosevelt
Dec. 23, 1952	Agnes F. Potter purchases 117.5 acres, which includes Top Cottage, from Elliott Roosevelt
Sept. 24, 1957	Agnes F. Potter dies and conveys land to Robert I. Potter, Gary Hunter Potter and his wife
July 17, 1974	Gary Hunter Potter dies and conveys land to Philip S. Potter, John N. Potter and Marine Midland Bank
1981	Philip S. Potter dies and conveys land to Jean O. Potter – hi wife
May 28, 1996	Owen W. Potter, as executor of his mother's estate, sells 33.59 acres of land to Beaverkill Conservancy, Inc.
	Reconnection to Val-Kill
July 1, 1997	Matthew and Loretta Lahey sell 2.22 acres to Beaverkill Conservancy, Inc.
Sept. 19, 1997 Inc.	Michael Hayden sells 3.70 acres to Beaverkill Conservancy
June 1998 Inc.	Lands of Redl sell 1.01 acres to Beaverkill Conservancy,

north by the south line of land formerly owned by Wyatt Jones, now estate of FDR." This documents that he purchased the land after buying the Jones Land on May 26, 1938. FDR's land acquisitions did not provide him the privacy and seclusion he sought. In January 1941, he wrote to the Honorable Adrian Dornbush, Associate Director, Works Progress Administration Art Program, "that he was counting the days until he could get away to Hyde Park to personally supervise the placing of the "Private Property" signs for the new cottage." ¹⁰

After FDR's death, ownership of Top Cottage passed through members of two different families. For the first year after his death, the Executors of FDR's Estate maintained control of the cottage. Then on May 1, 1946, Elliott Roosevelt, FDR's son, rented the cottage for \$75 per month for twelve months. Between FDR's death and Elliott's lease, it is assumed that improvements or modifications to the grounds around the cottage occurred – such as a looped drive immediately south of the cottage, which appears in the April 1946 aerial photograph. 11 Research has not yet identified who installed this loop drive or when, which is important because only thirteen months had passed since FDR's death. Indeed, FDR may have installed it prior to his death. In July 1947, Anna Eleanor Roosevelt (hereafter referred to as "Eleanor"), FDR's wife, purchased all of the estate's lands "lying east of the center of Mariches Creek." In August 1947, she sold all of that land to her son Elliott, who lived at Top Cottage for five years. ¹³ In December 1952, Elliott sold approximately 117.5 acres, including Top Cottage, to Agnes F. Potter. 14 The Potter family conveyed Top Cottage among themselves several times until May 28, 1996, when Owen W. Potter, as executor of his mother Jean O. Potter's estate, sold approximately 33.6 acres, which included Top Cottage, to the Beaverkill Conservancy, Inc. 15 The Potter's developed a 56-lot, singlefamily residential subdivision, known as Val-Kill Heights, on the property. 16 The 57th lot contained Top Cottage, which was their home. (See Appendix A – Maps 5-7)

While the property changed hands and varied in size, the essence of the cottage remained intact. Subsequent owners made changes to the cottage¹⁷ and the landscape. While significant amounts of land remain with the cottage and its sense of place survives, the arrival sequence that FDR created has been compromised as vehicular access is now through the Val-Kill Heights subdivision. Fortunately, no houses have been built immediately adjacent to the cottage, so it feels as though it remains in the forest – as the private retreat that FDR loved so much.

After acquiring the land, the Beaverkill Conservancy purchased three additional small pieces of land at the rear of adjacent properties. ¹⁸ (See Appendix A – Maps 8-9) The Conservancy's goal is to reconnect the land of Top Cottage with that of Val Kill cottage, Eleanor Roosevelt's retreat and subsequent home, which FDR built in 1926. Val Kill lies southwest of Top Cottage and is considerably lower in elevation. Access between the two properties existed when FDR managed his estate. This connection was severed when land was sold. However, the purchase of three pieces of land by the Conservancy physically reconnects the two cottages again and will, in the future, permit visitors to traverse between them. Presently, the National Park Service is in the process of establishing a walking trail between Top Cottage and Val-Kill, following the

old route as much as possible. The Park Service hopes to improve this trail in the future so that it can accommodate four-wheel drive vehicles.

PEOPLE OF TOP COTTAGE

Several people influenced the design, construction and aesthetic appearance of Top Cottage, each offering a different perspective. FDR is credited with the cottage's overall design – only the second sitting President to undertake such a feat. The first was Thomas Jefferson, whose most notable designs include his residence at Monticello in Charlottesville, Virginia (1796-1809), his "retreat" known as Poplar Forest in Bedford County, Virginia (1809), and the "academic village" also referred to as "The Lawn" at The University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia (1817-1826). Margaret (Daisy) Suckley helped FDR develop and formalize the cottage's design and layout. While FDR and Miss Suckley worked together to develop the schematic design for his future retreat, Henry J. Toombs, an architect, prepared the detailed construction drawings and technical specifications. The general contractor for Top Cottage was the Adams-Faber Company with offices in Montclair, New Jersey and White Plains, New York. Finally, though not directly involved with Top Cottage itself, Nelson Brown, a forester, helped FDR develop and manage the forestry activities on the Roosevelt Estate.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

FDR (January 30, 1882 – April 12, 1945) was a brilliant, complicated person who served the public as an elected official (1910-1945) and sought privacy to relax and enjoy his hobbies and personal life in Hyde Park, New York. These two diverse and yet enriching sides to FDR seemed to keep him going and gave him the strength to persevere.

Franklin, the only son of James and Sara Delano Roosevelt, was born in Hyde Park, New York on January 30, 1882. The Roosevelts were considered affluent and "...lived in unostentatious and genteel luxury, dividing their time between the Hudson River Valley and European resort." FDR was home taught until age fourteen, when he entered the Groton School in Groton, Massachusetts. He spent much time as a youth hunting and roaming the woods and fields of Hyde Park. It was here that FDR developed his appreciation for trees and birds, two of many lifelong hobbies. In 1900, he entered Harvard as an undergraduate and seemingly concentrated on the school's social life, leaving him little time for academic studies. While at Harvard he was influenced by progressive economic professors who advocated "government regulation of economic activities."20 At this same time, he "fell under the spell of the progressive president," his glamorous fifth cousin Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919).²¹ While at Harvard, FDR became interested in Anna Eleanor Roosevelt, Theodore Roosevelt's niece, and the two were engaged to marry during his final year at school. They married on March 17, 1905. FDR went to Columbia Law School and then passed the New York State bar examination. He clerked for several years with Carter, Ledyard & Milburn, a distinguished Wall Street law firm, where he participated in "several spectacular



FDR on the west porch, June 2, 1941. Photograph by Margaret (Daisy) Suckley. [FDRL]

antitrust cases."²² FDR's family, youth, education, wife, legal practice and admiration for his cousin Theodore set into motion his future political career and his efforts to help "those less fortunate."²³

FDR's political career began in 1910, at the age of twenty-eight, when he was elected as a Democrat to the New York State Senate where he quickly gained local and national attention. He "became the foremost champion in the New York Senate of the upstate farmers, and in the process he converted to the full program of progressive reform."²⁴ In 1912, he was reelected to the state senate. In 1913, President Woodrow Wilson appointed him assistant Secretary of the Navy, a position in which he served for seven years.

In 1920, FDR, the democratic vice presidential candidate, campaigned vigorously – though unsuccessfully —with James M. Cox, the Democratic presidential candidate. Thereafter, he entered the private sector and became a vice president of the Fidelity & Deposit Company of Maryland, all the while maintaining an active role in Democratic politics.²⁵

In August 1921, at the age of 39, FDR was stricken with poliomyelitis (polio) while on vacation at Campobello in New Brunswick, Canada. His legs were permanently paralyzed. This was to be a temporary setback. He worked incessantly at rehabilitation. In the winters that followed, he swam in the warm Florida waters and, "beginning in

1924, in the mineralized water at Warm Springs, Georgia."²⁶ In 1927, owing to the perceived beneficial effect of the warm mineralized water and an associated therapy program, he "established the Warm Springs Foundation, a nonprofit institution for the care of polio victims."²⁷ Warm Springs played a major role in FDR's life and, ultimately, in his death.

In 1928, FDR successfully campaigned for Governor of New York State from his automobile. He focused his attention on tax relief for farmers and cheaper public utilities. He was reelected Governor in 1930 owing to his popularity and the deepening economic Depression.²⁸

FDR used his Democratic experience and connections as Senator and Governor to campaign and win the presidential election in 1932, his first of four consecutive presidential election victories. He was the 31st President of the United States. He took office on March 4, 1933 and immediately began establishing programs for recovery and reform from the omnipresent Depression. These programs became known as the New Deal. FDR was reelected an unprecedented three times: in 1936, 1940, and 1944. He died in office on April 12, 1945.

Throughout his presidency, FDR worked diligently on recovery measures to abate the Depression and improve the economic livelihood of the hardworking American population. As evidence of the pending war increased in Europe and then in Asia, FDR, like many Americans, sought to keep the United States out. However, this attitude changed in a single moment when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. The next day, December 8, 1941, Congress, at FDR's request, voted for a declaration of war. That decision, along with the declaration of war against the United States by Germany and Italy on December 11^{th,} cast the United States into World War II.²⁹ "At a press conference Roosevelt asserted that 'Dr. Win the War' had replaced 'Dr. New Deal' but that this was to be only for the duration of the war." From that point forward, he focused much of his attention on winning the war.

The accompanying list and description of programs and recovery acts obtained by FDR during his presidency³¹ (see page 13) illustrates his concerted and continued effort of recovery and reform. The list, which should not be considered complete, is organized by years, which can then be compared to his activities in the design, development and enjoyment of Top Cottage.

During the war, FDR visited Hyde Park and Top Cottage quite frequently, and he often brought heads of foreign countries with him. On June 20, 1942, during one such trip, FDR was photographed with Winston Churchill on the west porch at Top Cottage. Presumably, many top-secret conversations involving various international figures took place on the west porch. Likewise, decisions and alliances may have been made that changed the ultimate outcome of World War II. While Top Cottage was FDR's retreat, it no doubt served as a relaxing place to make many serious decisions.

During World War II, the White House Signal Det. prepared a map of the Roosevelt Estate (between the Hudson River and Top Cottage) entitled "Crash, Post and Road Diagram." (See Appendix A - Map 2) While this map contains numerous scale related inaccuracies, it shows a great deal of detail including all of the buildings, roads and

D-4	Trus.	Described to
Date 1933	Title Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA)	Description Granted funds to state agencies for direct relief.
	Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)	At its peak employed one half million young men in reforestation and flood-control work.
	Reconstruction Finance Corporation	Provided mortgage relief to farmers and homeowners. Its powers were broadened to enable loans to small and large enterprises.
	Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA)	Its objective was to raise farm prices and increase the proportion of the national income going to farmers.
	National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA)	Businessmen demanded government stabilization and of labor a shorter workweek.
	Public Works Administration (PWA)	
	National Recovery Administration (NRA)	Administered codes of fair practice within given industries. NRA was invalidated by the Supreme Court in May 1935.
	Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)	Provided flood control, cheap hydroelectric power and regional planning for an improverished region. Nelson Brown notes one major objective as improving land-use practices to prevent soil erosion, increase the yield of timber from native and planted stands and to protect the water resources of the valley.
	Trust and Securities Act	Established to protect investors.
	Soil Conservation Service	Among other objectives, it protected pastures, woodlots, gullies and idle land, planted millions of trees and improved forest-cutting activities.
	A National Plan for American Forestry	A study prepared by the U.S. Forest Service to analyze the forestry problems in the U.S. and to make recommendations for its improvement.
1934	Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)	Established to protect investors.
		Stabilized the gold content of the dollar at 59.06 percent of its previous value.
	The Prairie States Forestry Project	Also known as the Shelter Belt Program, this 100 mile-wide belt stretched between Canada and Texas and helped farmers to plant nearly 217 million trees in more than 18,600 miles of shelter belts to limit wind and dust storms in the Great Plains States.
1935	Resettlement Administration	Provided some aid to small, poorer farmers.
	Social Security Act	Included unemployment insurance and old-age insurance.
	Works Progress Administration (WPA)	Provided employment relief that stemmed the erosion of skills and self-respect. Existed between 1935 to 1941, and employed an averag of 2.1 million workers.
	National Labor Relations Act (the Wagner Act)	Strengthened government guarantees of collective bargaining.
	National Labor Relations Board (NLRB)	Adjudicated labor disputes.
	Public Utility Holding Company Act	Regulated the control holding companies had over operating public utility companies.
1936	AAA	Switched the AAA to one of soil conservation.
	Flood Recovery Act	Recognized the role of watersheds in federal flood control policies and worked to correct and improve forest lands and their managemen on strategic and critical watershed areas.
1937	Norris Doxey Farm Forestry Act	Provided better forestry education to farm woodland owners.

wood drives meandering through the estate, guard posts and telephone jacks used by the White House Signal Det. to protect the President and his guests while at the estate and visiting Top Cottage.³²

FDR's presidency kept him away from home and his beloved estate. While time for personal life was limited, he made time to pursue his interests and hobbies, and to visit Hyde Park as often as his schedule would permit. To the extent that it was possible, FDR was involved with local community activities as well. From 1914 until his death, he was a member of the Dutchess County Historical Society and from 1926 until his death he was Vice President for the Town of Hyde Park.³³

FDR's schedule limited his time and interaction with his wife Eleanor and their five children: Anna Eleanor, James, Elliott, Franklin D., Jr., and John.³⁴ However, while at home and among the many family-related things to do, he tried to relax by focusing his attentions on improving his estate and by visiting Top Cottage for picnics, luncheons and visits with friends and family. Hobbies and other activities that FDR pursued included sailing, stamp collecting, naval book and print collecting, planting trees and forest management to improve the grounds of his estate and, of course, Top Cottage.³⁵

Margaret "Daisy" Suckley

Several people in FDR's life helped him make Top Cottage a reality. None more so, apparently, than his sixth cousin, Margaret (Daisy) Suckley.³⁶ Daisy (1891-1991), noted by author Geoffrey C. Ward as FDR's "closest companion,"³⁷ spent a great deal of time with FDR after he was elected President. She was by his side in Warm Springs, Georgia while he lay dying from a severe brain hemorrhage. She spent many years as an archivist at the Roosevelt Library in Hyde Park prior to and after his death, a position that FDR arranged for her in 1941.

Daisy Suckley grew up in Rhinebeck, New York, several miles north of Hyde Park on the Hudson River. In the early 1890s, her family home, known as Wilderstein, was enlarged to a five-story Queen Anne style mansion by architect Arnault Cannon, Jr. from Poughkeepsie, New York. The landscape and gardens surrounding Wilderstein were improved by architect and landscape designer Calvert Vaux, who also designed a gatehouse and a caretaker's cottage for Daisy's father. Daisy's home became quite lavish and ornate. By the end of the century, financial troubles set in and the Suckley family moved to Switzerland for the next ten years.

Although Daisy was one of six children, her childhood was quite lonely, a similarity she had in common with FDR. At age 15, Daisy returned to America and to Wilderstein. During World War I she sold war bonds and worked as a nurse's aid on Ellis Island comforting wounded soldiers and sailors.

In the spring of 1922, FDR's mother telephoned Daisy and invited her for tea because FDR was lonely and his mother thought a visit from Daisy would help his state of mind. The previous summer FDR had been stricken with polio and was, for the most part, home-bound. Though Daisy and FDR were distant cousins, they did not see much



Margaret (Daisy) Suckley with Fala on the west porch of Top Cottage, June 2, 1941. Photograph by FDR. [FDRL]



Wilderstein (Daisy Suckley's home), 1934. [Wilderstein Preservation Archives]

of each other in their childhood – Daisy was in Switzerland from age five to fifteen. Their first occasion to meet was at a dance in 1910; Daisy was 18 and FDR was 28 and married. Daisy went for tea and a lifelong friendship ensued.

Daisy was "quiet" and "good humored." The Roosevelt women or other members of FDR's tight political circle did not consider her a threat even though she was "attractive, bright and witty, and well read." She was, after all, ten years younger than FDR and his cousin. Daisy and FDR became quite close, and FDR found it easy to confide in her.

In 1928, FDR returned to politics as Governor of New York State. At about this time, "Daisy began secretly to amass newspaper clippings about his daily activities, the start of a collection that would one day fill a vast steamer trunk." Apparently, Daisy kept all of her correspondence, newspaper clippings and everything else having to do with FDR. After his death, she discovered that her letters to FDR were found in his stamp box, which traveled everywhere with him. Daisy wrote to Anna, FDR's daughter, and asked that the letters be returned to her. Anna complied with her request.

Few people apparently knew about or openly discussed publicly FDR and Daisy's relationship. It was not until after Daisy's death in 1991, that a trunk full of material beneath her bed exposed their careful, yet serious and, possibly, intimate relationship. The details of their relationship can be read in Geoffrey C. Ward's book entitled *Closest Companion: The Unknown Story of the Intimate Friendship Between Franklin Roosevelt and Margaret Suckley* (1995).

In 1932, FDR was elected President of the United States of America. He invited Daisy to the March 1933 inauguration in Washington, DC.

FDR found much peace in the outdoors and frequently escaped from the demands of his public life, and possibly his family life, by touring the winding roads of Dutchess County and his estate. At times, Daisy would accompany him and they repeatedly stopped at Dutchess Hill. By September 1935, FDR and Daisy began discussing plans for construction on Dutchess Hill, which she called "Our Hill." However, it was not until April 1936 that FDR began purchasing properties that included Dutchess Hill. Daisy asked FDR, "Are you going to put up any kind of a log cabin?" He responded later, "I don't think so.... No, I think a one-story fieldstone two room house...one with very thick walls to protect us against the Indians and a little porch on the West side." Apparently Daisy sent FDR a sketch of her idea(s) for what the future cottage might look like. Her sketch seems to have shown gardens and flowers, because FDR writes back stating, "Yes – I like it much – and I can understand the garden if I translate the flowers in part at least in terms of trees." FDR sought a rustic place where trees came right up to the foundation of the cottage. Daisy's suggestions for gardens and flowers were counter to his.

Plans and discussions for the cottage developed quite significantly over the next two years – with many renditions. In October 1937, Daisy sent FDR a sketch of the cottage that closely resembles what he built the following year. She continued to suggest foundation plantings and small ornamental trees around a cottage that is tucked into the existing forest.

Somehow, Daisy believed that she and FDR would retire to Top Cottage. Her correspondence with him suggests more than a retreat for him to write and relax. For example, in March 1936, she wrote:

I've been counting up the books belonging to the Ourhill Library! Can you guess how many there are? 13! The first and earliest one is dated 1926 – And the 13th has inscribed the name of the Library, and so it's the most valuable of all! Some others have very special inscriptions, which make them terribly valuable, but, I think, perhaps, the last will always be the most valuable!⁴⁵

When FDR died, a list of the books at Top Cottage was prepared. Most of the books related to nature, trees, gardens, birds, lumber and forestry. After it was built, Daisy and FDR made several trips up to the cottage with books.⁴⁶ (See Appendix C – Bibliography of Books at Top Cottage)

Research to date has not found any references to the purchase or the installation of any ornamental foundation plantings at Top Cottage. However, Daisy does mention several different varieties to FDR in their correspondence. While cleaning outside at Wilderstein she finds a patch of Cornus canadensus – Bunchberry, which she indirectly suggests would be appropriate at the cottage. She also states that, "A spring 'carpet' of English bluebells would be beautiful, too."

By December 1937, designs for the cottage were well underway. In February 1938, FDR sent his final sketch to his friend and architect Henry J. Toombs. The final construction drawings varied slightly from the sketch FDR sent to him. Construction began that summer and concluded in June 1939.⁴⁸

Eventually, Daisy and FDR's relationship changed. Geoffrey Ward wrote in his book, *Closest Companion*, that by September 1939

Daisy's dream of living and working with FDR at Top Cottage would have to be deferred. Her growing disappointment must have been great, though she left no written record of it and she may already have made her peace with the fact that she would never have exclusive possession of the man she loved. From then on, she was always careful to refer to the retreat she'd once called "Our House on Our Hill" as "your cottage." ⁴⁹

While their relationship changed, their companionship remained strong. Daisy mentions that she and FDR went to Top Cottage quite often for lunch, to take up books, picnics, afternoon tea, sitting and talking on the porch, and to look at the flowering dogwoods. They enjoyed the cottage they designed together, though not as Daisy had imagined.

Daisy traveled with FDR on his last trip to Warm Springs, Georgia and was by his side when he died. After returning to New York, she took inventory of the interior furnishings. On May 1st, 1945 while at Top Cottage, she wrote that she was "mentally saying farewell to just another chapter in F.D.R.'s life for it is probable that when I have finished this inventory, I shall never again see that lovely room as it is."⁵⁰

She worked at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library until 1963 where she identified people in letters and photographs. She lived the rest of her life at Wilderstein. She remained loyal to FDR after his death and until hers in 1991. Fortunately, she kept her

trunk full of letters and clippings that have become part of our knowledge of FDR's legacy at Top Cottage.

Henry Johnson Toombs

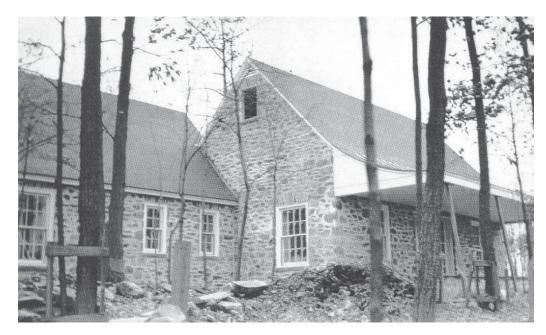
Henry J. Toombs (1896-1967), architect and sculptor prepared the architectural drawings and construction specifications for Top Cottage in the spring and early summer of 1938. His final drawings were based on the plan and section sketches that FDR sent him in February.⁵¹

Toombs received his bachelor and master's degrees in architecture from the University of Pennsylvania in 1921 and 1923, respectively. After graduation, he worked as a draftsman for Paul Cret in Philadelphia and then studied abroad for two years. ⁵² Upon his return, he took a junior position at McKim, Mead and White, a prestigious architectural firm with numerous high profile commissions around the country. In 1937, he opened two architectural offices - one in Warm Springs, Georgia and the other in Atlanta, Georgia. He served as a Captain in the United States Army Air Corps between 1941 and 1945. Throughout his architectural career he worked on a wide variety of projects ranging from private residences and banks to the American Military Cemetery at Draguignan in France and the Atlanta Memorial Cultural Center in Atlanta, Georgia. ⁵³ In 1938, when he worked with FDR on Top Cottage, Toombs maintained offices in Warm Springs, Georgia and New York City, New York. Toombs continued to practice well into the 1960s.

In the mid-1920s, Toombs visited his cousin, Caroline O'Day, Congresswoman for New York State serving as a representative-at-large. O'Day was friends with Eleanor Roosevelt, Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman, all of whom were there when Toombs visited that day. The four women were planning a cottage, which they would finance and construct on the Roosevelt estate. Toombs assisted Nancy Cook, "their chief designer," by solving a minor design conflict between a set of stairs and a chimney. The five quickly became friends and the cottage, later known as Val-Kill, became Toombs' first private commission. He refined the design and completed the working drawings after office hours. He then convinced two friends, Kellum Smith and William J. Creighton, both licensed architects, to stamp his designs.⁵⁴

In the midst of designing Val-Kill, Toombs met FDR who was acting as the general contractor for the cottage. A long-lasting friendship ensued. Toombs recalled that he was "a young fellow they (the Roosevelts) were pleased to help. An interest truly characteristic of the Roosevelts." Toombs and FDR worked together on several future projects and remained friends until FDR's death. Toombs' friendship with his cousin and her three friends continued on as well.

In 1926, the Roosevelts commissioned Toombs to design the James Roosevelt Memorial Library and the Val-Kill Shop at Val-Kill, both in Hyde Park, New York. Between the late 1920s and the 1930s, Toombs collaborated with FDR and designed a cottage known as the Little White House (1932), a guest house (1937) and a garage (1937) in Warm Springs, Georgia. In February 1938, Toombs received FDR's sketch



During construction of Top Cottage, certain trees were protected with wood frames. [FDRL]



The foundation of Top Cottage under construction, July 30 [1938]. [FDRL]



Stone tree wells were constructed around the trees on the east side of Top Cottage to accommodate an increase in the grade's elevation. June 2, 1939. Photograph by ACME Newspapers, Inc. (UPI). [FDRL]

for Top Cottage. He prepared the technical drawings and specifications for the cottage and construction began later that summer. (See the Top Cottage Historic Structure Report, 1997, by John G. Waite Associates, Architects [published in 2001 as *The President as Architect: FDR's Top Cottage* by Mt. Ida Press], for more detailed information pertaining to Toombs' friendship, commissions and involvement with the Roosevelts.)

FDR's architectural tastes were "simple." He preferred provincial and vernacular architecture to ornate, pretentious and high style, and he incorporated only the necessities of life, not its extravagances. This same philosophical approach extended to the landscape, especially at Top Cottage. While it does not appear that Toombs directly influenced site improvements at Top Cottage, he certainly understood and possibly appreciated FDR's preferences for simplicity.

FDR sought to maintain as much of the natural, rustic character around his new cottage as was possible. Considering his client's wishes, Toombs directed the contractor to clear only the trees and bushes in direct conflict with building and site improvements and to protect with "wood frames" valuable trees and bushes near the operations. The contractor, the Adams-Faber Company, paid attention to Toombs' direction and installed wood frames around numerous trees that were to be saved. While excavating the foundation, the contractor ran into bedrock. Because of a tight construction budget, the decision was made to raise the elevation of the cottage to reduce the amount of rock that needed to be removed. As a result, and in an attempt to save the trees on the east side of the cottage, stone tree wells were constructed around each tree to accommodate the increase in elevation. Care was taken throughout





PAUL D. ADAMS Builders of President Roosevelt's Cottage

JOHN H. FABER

Paul D. Adams and John H. Faber, from "The Adams Faber Story," American Builder, November 1938, p. 50. [FDRL]

construction to minimize the extent of site disturbance, a client's desire understood by the architect and followed by the contractor.

Toombs played an active role in overseeing the cottage's construction. When decisions needed to be made about changes or extras, he and FDR either spoke or corresponded to one another about each detail, regardless of its size. Much correspondence exists between the two, and it is interesting to note how involved FDR really was in both the design and construction of his retreat. It could be said that FDR micro-managed the construction of his cottage.

Toombs' architectural practice continued into the 1960s as did his friendship and correspondence with Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman. In a May 1961 letter to Cook and Dickerman, Toombs returned some of FDR's original plans for Top Cottage. In that same letter, he asked them if they "saw in the press the idea of transferring the "Top Cottage" to Washington, or rebuilding it."57 Fortunately, it was not moved to Washington.

Adams-Faber Company

On July 1, 1938, FDR contracted with the Adams-Faber Company to construct Top Cottage. 58 Upon completion of the cottage in 1939, the Adams-Faber Company wrote to the President's Secretary, M. A. LeHand stating,

Will you please convey to the President the personal appreciation of Mr. Adams and Mr. Faber for his considerate and interested cooperation throughout the progress of the building. It was indeed a pleasure to build for a client who had a real and personal knowledge and appreciation of the intricacies of construction and we would like to have the President know that we appreciate his helpful advice and suggestions.⁵⁹

The Adams-Faber Company was incorporated in 1923 and maintained offices in Upper Montclair, New Jersey and White Plains, New York, the former being their principle location. The company's officers were Paul D. Adams, President, and John H. Faber, Secretary and Treasurer. Both men graduated from Princeton University in 1915

with Civil Engineering Degrees, and both served in World War I. Prior to forming their company, Paul Adams worked in Wilmington, Delaware as an engineer with the E. I. DuPont de Nemours Company and John Faber worked in West Virginia and New York City. Each served as officers of financial institutions in addition to running their construction company.⁶⁰

Paul Adams and John Faber's company prided itself on the quality of its work and the size of its projects. According to their own qualifications package, Adams and Faber were experienced builders of large structures including nursing homes, factory buildings, commercial buildings, warehouses, schools, recreational buildings, country clubs, churches, banks, and "palatial" residences. ⁶¹ While they certainly had the knowledge and the ability to construct Top Cottage, their reasons for wanting the project must have been more for client prestige than for financial return. The original construction budget of \$15,000.00 was modified with change orders and material substitutions. Their final cost to FDR was \$16,835.25.⁶² Their original bid included prices for items that FDR later eliminated from the contract. FDR substituted materials to keep the budget down. Several change orders caused the final price to be slightly higher than originally expected.

It remains unclear how Adams-Faber became aware of the bid offering for constructing Top Cottage. However, on June 2, 1938, Henry Toombs sent five different contractors a letter indicating that he had "the drawings about complete for two residences about five miles above Poughkeepsie – one for the President and the other for Mr. & Mrs. George Backer." Adams-Faber received one of the five letters. The Company's initial review of the documents must have interested them because they sent a Western Union Telegram requesting additional information, which said, "Need Plot Plan Figures Regarding Presidents House Mail First Class." While the research is inconclusive as to how the bids came in, high versus low, FDR stated in his July 1, 1938 Press Conference at the future site of Top Cottage, that the "bids have been received and awarded to the lowest bidder and the contractor is on the job today." When a reporter asked for the name of the contractor, FDR replied "Adams-Faber."

Interaction between owner and contractor was as frequent as FDR's busy schedule would permit. John Faber commented later that FDR came to the site "whenever he was in Hyde Park (and he was there as often as he could slip away from Washington)." Faber seemed to recall fondly that FDR

would drive up to the job in his open blue Ford in a regular cavalcade – New York State Police leading, U.S. Secret Service both before and after the President's car. On arrival at the building site the guards would scatter around the building and grounds, leaving the President alone, or with his guests, in his own car in front of the building.⁶⁷

On one such visit, Adams-Faber had to mock-up some exterior wall panels so FDR could approve the stone size and mortar joint width before leaving on a seven-week west coast trip. They built the sample panels and FDR approved their aesthetic approach and technique. The stones were supplied from nearby stone fences on the estate. Upon his return, FDR drove up to the construction site and was pleased with the progress, which made the contractors happy because the exterior walls were nearly

complete. 68 Research indicates that FDR was pleased with the quality of their work and the final product.

Nelson C. Brown

While Nelson Brown did not assist in the design or construction of Top Cottage, he played a major role in helping FDR achieve his goals to reforest and manage the trees on his estate. He worked with FDR from 1929 to 1945, and continued advising Eleanor and Elliott Roosevelt after FDR's death.

Nelson Brown was a Professor of Forest Utilization at the New York State College of Forestry, now known as State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY ESF), at Syracuse, New York, when he first met FDR in 1929. He taught and served the "wood-using industry" for thirty-nine years⁶⁹ and wrote several textbooks and numerous publications.⁷⁰

Brown was born in South Orange, New Jersey on March 1, 1885. In 1902, he graduated from Yale University with a Bachelor of Arts degree, and in 1908 he received his Master's degree from Yale. Between 1908 and 1912, he worked for the United States Forest Service and was in charge of the Kaniksu National Forest located in northern Idaho in 1910. In 1911, he began his teaching career in forestry at Iowa State College as an Assistant Professor. In July 1912, he joined the College of Forestry at Syracuse University as an Assistant Professor of Forest Utilization and he became a full Professor in 1914. Three years later, he resigned his teaching position to work with the Federal Trade Commission in Europe, where he held numerous positions through March 1920. On August 1, 1921, he regained his teaching position at the College of Forestry at Syracuse University. Between 1926 and 1930, he served as Acting Dean for the College, was a member of the New York State Reforestation Commission between 1928 and 1932, and in 1933 he helped to establish the Civilian Conservation Corps, known as the C.C.C.

Brown first met FDR, then Governor of New York, in September 1929 at a meeting in Albany, New York. Brown wrote in his "Personal Reminiscences of F.D.R." that:

During the conversation Governor Roosevelt stated that he was deeply interested in forestry and wanted to see it expand and develop into its proper place in the economic and social development of the state and country. He casually remarked, "Why doesn't one of your foresters come down and see me?" One of the Board [group of people talking with FDR] stated that I was the only forester there and no doubt I would be glad to consult with him. Turning to me he said, "Why don't you come down to see me sometime?" In reply I said, "All I need is an invitation from you, Sir". "Well," he remarked, "we will arrange that sometime". I thought it was one of those polite and casual invitations that would probably be forgotten in his busy hours."

An invitation arrived shortly thereafter and Brown spent a weekend at Springwood in November 1929.⁷⁸ FDR showed Brown around the estate and informed Brown that he began planting trees in 1912, seventeen years earlier. Their friendship developed and continued until FDR's death. Throughout most of his adult life, FDR maintained a close association with the Forestry College and drew upon its expertise to advance forestry practices at his estate and across the nation.



Nelson Brown.

Brown liked FDR because "he practiced on his place the same ideas that he advanced to the nation in furtherance of more and better forests."79 In 1930, FDR and the College of Forestry "entered into a formal agreement establishing demonstration plantings on the Roosevelt estate – College Foresters provided technical assistance – suggesting varieties, planting locations and techniques of cultivation. Roosevelt's crews performed the manual labor."80 Brown wrote that FDR took "advantage of a great opportunity to bring the idea of better and more forests down to the average man and into the home."81 Among the programs that FDR established were the C.C.C. (1933), Soil Conservation Service (1933), the Tennessee Valley Authority (1933), the Prairie States Forestry Project, also known as the Shelter Belt Program (1934), the Flood Control Act (1936), and the Norris Doxey Farm Forestry Act (1937).82 (See page 13 for a description of these programs.) Brown noted that FDR provided funds to enlarge the National Forest system, to build up a forestry research program and to make the American public aware "of the importance of forests in our national economic and general welfare,"83 all the while being "opposed to Federal control of private forests."84 As a result of his leadership "in advancing the cause of American forestry", FDR received the Sir William Schlich medal from the Society of American Foresters, their highest professional honor.85

Brown and other members of the College staff, as well as students, assisted FDR on various forestry activities on his estate. These activities varied from assessment of existing conditions to flagging trees for removal, from preparing management plans to recommending specific varieties for specific locations. While much of the work was under the guise of demonstration forestry practices, FDR sought to increase the health and condition of his estate as well as reap some financial return from his forestry activities.

There are few specific references to Top Cottage in Brown's research materials, which suggests that his role and purpose was not focused on that corner of FDR's estate. However, in June of 1937, FDR mentions to Brown that he would be "delighted to try the experiment of the Asiatic chestnuts next spring." FDR tells Brown that some young chestnuts are growing at the back of the farm, possibly forty to fifty at five feet to twenty feet tall, they are "back on the top of the hill at the extreme east end of the place [his estate] I think there are some others." The next reference relates to clearing and planting on the Rohan Farm between 1938 and 1939. In 1943, they flagged trees to be removed by a logger on the slope below the cottage. See "Forestry Activities" below for the detailed description of these activities. On September 27, 1938, Brown mentions FDR's "lovely lodge up on the hilltop, and what a grand view one can get from that 'top of the world."

HISTORICAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

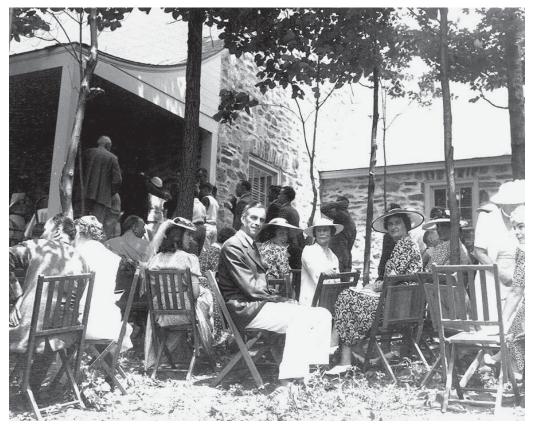
Tangible and intangible aspects of a site comprise its landscape characteristics, which collectively provide an understanding of its historic character. In this case, these characteristics help us to understand what FDR may have known and understood about his property. These characteristics vary in size from large-scale patterns, such as natural systems and land use patterns, to site specific details including vegetation, rock outcroppings, topography and viewsheds. Presumably, FDR was inherently familiar with the landscape characteristics of his property considering the time spent exploring the property.

NATURAL SYSTEMS AND FEATURES

As early as 1918, FDR, then 36 years old, was interested in purchasing land east of Springwood and extending the Roosevelt land holdings.⁸⁹ By September 1929 his interests included acquiring a ridge and its views as far as three miles east of the Hudson River. His attorney, Henry Hackett, wrote "that the view from most any part of the Rohan property further north is better than that from [the Tompkins farm], which overlooks down upon the State Hospital cottages."⁹⁰ FDR had purchased the Tompkins farm five years earlier and Hackett was comparing the views from both parcels for FDR to visualize in his minds-eye.

FDR sought the high ground, where views of distant mountains where attainable. In 1939, the *New York Herald Tribune* wrote that "Franklin always wants to get on top of any mountain he sees." ⁹¹

FDR tucked his retreat in the corner of three different parcels of land and maximized the natural systems that his land offered. The location and design of Top Cottage accentuated the site's natural prospects.



Seating on the west lawn of Top Cottage for the June 11, 1939 luncheon in honor of George VI and Elizabeth. [FDRL]

Sun and Wind

The siting of Top Cottage made excellent use of sun and wind. The winds, both the southwestern summer breeze and the colder northwestern winter breeze, brought strong seasonal changes to the cottage. These climatic variations must have affected how FDR and his guests used Top Cottage. The summer winds, especially the evening breeze, no doubt added to the pleasures of sitting on the west porch, while the winter winds probably prevented its use. The large glass doors separating the living room and the west porch allowed for a visual connection to the western views and late afternoon sunshine.

The western solar exposure extended the seasonal use of the west porch from spring through fall. Several historic photographs show FDR relaxing and entertaining guests on the west porch. The picnic for the king and queen of England utilized the west porch and level ground immediately adjacent and south of the porch.

In the late afternoon, especially in the late fall through early spring when the leaves were off the trees, FDR and his guests enjoyed the distant mountain views and the western sun reflecting off the Hudson River. This same view exists today, albeit slightly compromised by the encumbering forest.

LAND USE

By the time FDR built Top Cottage in 1938, he had purchased several farms and other pieces of land. The land use immediately around the cottage varied considerably – from steep wooded slopes and undulating rock-strewn forest to open agricultural farm fields. In 1935, three years before the cottage was built and one year before FDR purchased the Rohan Farm, an aerial photograph was taken that clearly shows land uses in the vicinity of the future cottage site.

The Rohan Farm, consisting of several open fields south of the cottage, provided vehicular access to Cream Street further east. The gently rolling terrain of the farm enabled the farmers to use their land for crop production without the inherent dangers of steeper slopes. The farm consisted of 122 acres and most of it was cultivated. There were several stone walls, some with small hedge rows that divided the parcel into smaller fields.

The adjacent properties north and west varied considerably from the Rohan farm. The Dumphy Farm (purchased in 1935-37) sloped steeply west and was wooded. The Lent Wood Lot (purchased after 1938), lying to the east, had numerous rock outcroppings and was completed wooded. Neither parcel was utilized for crop production.

The 1935 photograph and a later aerial photograph, taken in 1946, show that no houses were in the immediate vicinity of the cottage site. Several homes existed along Cream Street.

The 1946 aerial photograph shows the varied land uses after Top Cottage's construction: the cottage, access drives, opening in the woods southwest of the cottage, the hedge rows in the Rohan Farm and the forest cover on the Dumphy Farm and the Lent Wood Lot. FDR maintained these land uses while enjoying his retreat. His land uses were a direct response to the land form and the land use practices of his time.

CULTURAL TRADITIONS

FDR strayed from the norm of current building form and the use of building materials when he designed and built Top Cottage, a Dutch Colonial Revival cottage built of native fieldstone. In January 1940, at FDR's request, Miss Marguerite LeHand, the President's private secretary, wrote:

The origin of the revival of the fieldstone architecture in Dutchess County came from the collaboration of the President with Miss Helen W. Reynolds in preparing material for the book "Early Dutch Houses of the Hudson River Valley." ⁹²

Ms. LeHand wrote that several buildings in Dutchess County were built in this style, including Val-Kill cottage (1926), the James Roosevelt Memorial Library, United States Post Offices in Hyde Park, Poughkeepsie, Rhinebeck and Wappingers Falls, Haviland Middle School, Violet Avenue School, and Top Cottage (1938). The President was directly involved with various aspects of the planning, design, and construction of these buildings.⁹³

While the design of Top Cottage is credited to FDR, Henry Toombs is listed as "Associate" and is credited with preparing the detailed construction drawings and technical specifications for the cottage. ⁹⁴ FDR and Toombs seemed to enjoy their arrangement as Architect and Associate, respectively. On May 5, 1938, Toombs wrote that "it would be fun to title the drawings for the President's little house – 'Franklin D. Roosevelt, Architect, Henry J. Toombs, Associate'." On May 10, 1938, FDR wrote a memo giving instructions to:

Tell Henry Toombs it is all right to title the drawings Franklin D. Roosevelt, Architect, and Henry J. Toombs, Associate, and that this letter constitutes an assignment of fees from the Architect to the Associate – provided the fees are not exorbitant.⁹⁶

However, when this information was published, several well-known registered American architects did not think it funny and wrote frankly of their opinions on the topic.

In total, Toombs provided architectural services on four of the President's cottages, two in Hyde Park, New York and two in Warms Springs, Georgia.⁹⁷ Toombs built at least two other fieldstone houses of this style in Hyde Park.

Top Cottage was built of native fieldstone found in the stone fences running through the eastern portion of FDR's estate. The fences, commented FDR, were 150 years old and once separated the fields of Dutchess County farms and kept the cows in the pasture. The material, scale and proportions of Top Cottage are in keeping with field stone houses in the lower Hudson Valley, with which FDR certainly was familiar. Several local examples of this style and period of architecture still exist in Hurley and New Paltz, New York.

CIRCULATION

Roads

FDR made the estate more accessible by constructing many new access roadways and improving the old ones throughout his estate. Nelson Brown, FDR's forestry consultant, wrote that there were "at least 20 miles of roadways through his place.... most of them were dirt roads..." Driving himself around his property gave FDR pleasure and a small sense of freedom, although the Secret Service was not far behind. FDR told Brown, on one of their many rides through the property, that he took "great pride" in losing the Secret Service on the winding and sometimes muddy roads. "Frequently," Brown wrote, "he would even drive off the roads and across the fields and brush-grown hillsides where few drivers would even dare to get through. This always added to the worries of the Secret Service."

FDR loved to explore his estate. Brown wrote:

By nature he was a great explorer and each trip into the woods was an adventure of itself. He was keen to see new trees, new shrubs, new wild flowers, new birds or new vistas to the surrounding landscapes. These roadways provided an outlet for these interests." ¹⁰¹

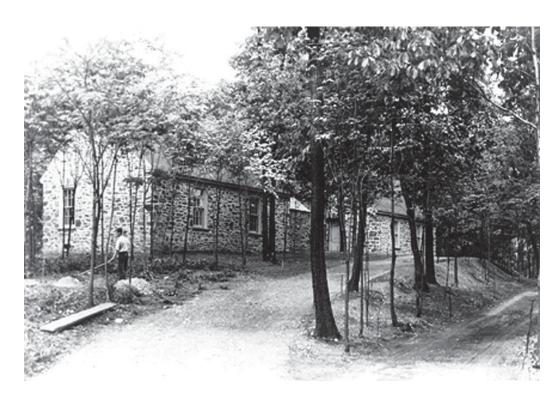
Presently, vehicular access to Top Cottage is through the Val-Kill Heights subdivision and over bituminous asphalt roads, which was not the case for FDR (See Appendix A – Map 13). Prior to building Top Cottage, when FDR frequented Dutchess Hill to enjoy picnics, guests and the views, access to the site was from Val-Kill – through the woods, up a steep incline and around a hairpin turn, "...which [took] the breath away from so many of his distinguished visitors."102 During construction, FDR rearranged his driveways by approaching the cottage from the south, through the Rohan Farm (see the 1946 aerial photograph). While the wooded road to the north with the hairpin turn was not totally abandoned, the cottage's new primary access provided a gentler ride. By April 1946, as seen in the aerial photograph, numerous drives and wooded roads traversed through the eastern portion of the Roosevelt estate. Access from the east began at Cream Street and followed the property line in a westerly direction. Approximately due south of the cottage, the access drive split with one leg continuing straight ahead toward Val-Kill cottage and a sharp right-hand turn leading across the Rohan Farm to Top Cottage. This drive lay west of a stone fence and hedge row. The historic wooded road leading to the north is clearly visible in the aerial photograph.

Roads near the cottage

Access around Top Cottage was limited while FDR was alive. He enjoyed the views, the trees and the wildlife from his car and the west porch. Immediately east of the cottage, FDR built a long, narrow looped drive that extended beyond the length of Top Cottage. Approximately five (5) feet in elevation separate the upper and lower legs of the gravel drive, which were connected by a sharp turn at the north end. The original access road from the north connected, and still does connect, to the north end of this looped drive. By April 1946, a second looped drive is built immediately south of the cottage and north of the stone fence. However, it remains unclear who built this drive and when. More research is needed to clarify the uncertainty as to whether FDR constructed it before he died or whether his executors had it installed. By 1996, when the Beaverkill Conservancy purchased the property, both looped driveways were paved with bituminous asphalt.

Pedestrian access

Pedestrian access into and out of Top Cottage was provided at three points: 1) the main or front entrance on the east elevation; 2) the kitchen entry on the north elevation; and 3) the living room entry off of the west porch, to which access was gained by an earthen ramp at the north end of the west porch. FDR and his guests would have entered the cottage through the front door, which was at grade and enabled wheelchair access. In the original architectural plans for the cottage, a terrace, presumably surfaced with cut bluestone, was planned to extend between the front door and the driveway. However, due to budgetary limitations, a much smaller bluestone "terrace" or landing was built near the door; this section of paving still exists. A photograph (dated June 2,



View of the cottage and the looped drive from the southeast, June 1939. [FDRL]



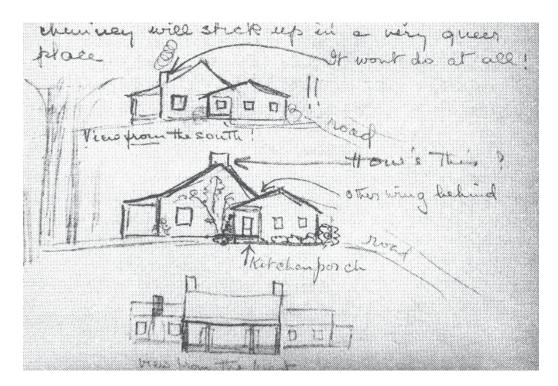
View of the north wing, showing the stone walk leading to the front door, June 2, 1939. Photograph by ACME Newspapers, Inc. (UPI). [FDRL]



View of the north elevation, June 1939. Photograph by Von Knoblauch. [FDRL]



North elevation of the north wing, 1997. Elements of the porch on the north wing may have been added by Elliott Roosevelt; the vertical siding and windows were added by the Potters. The porch was removed in 1999. [JGWA]



Daisy Suckley's 1937 sketch elevations for Top Cottage show a raised west porch. [From Geoffrey C. Ward, Closest Companion, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995), p. 103.]



Margaret (Daisy) Suckley's photograph of the west porch in September, 1944, shows the earth ramp at the north end of the porch. [FDRL]



Photograph by Chandler Roosevelt Lindsey (FDR's granddaughter) in 1947, taken from within the screened-in west porch, showing a viewing corridor to the west.

1939) of the main entrance appears to indicate that the walkway to the landing was stone; it may have been bluestone to match the landing.

During FDR's residency, the exterior kitchen doorway had a single step with an excessive riser height, similar to its present condition. This was the service entrance for the house. Elliott Roosevelt built a porch on the north elevation of the cottage, which changed the visual and physical character of the cottage, as well as the traffic flow through the kitchen door.

The earthen ramp to the west porch was built for FDR. Toombs' cross sections of the cottage do not show an elevation difference between the porch floor and the grade below, nor does Schell Lewis' 1938 rendering of Top Cottage. This presumed oversight by both professionals suggests that their drawings were prepared without considering the site's existing conditions and they chose instead to use "artistic license." However, in October 1937, when Daisy sketched her visions for Top Cottage she did graphically suggest an elevated west porch. Since the earthen ramp is not on the construction drawings, it is assumed that it was added during construction to provide FDR wheelchair access to the porch.

In 1947, Ms. Chandler Roosevelt Lindsey, FDR's granddaughter, took at least two photographs that show how Elliott Roosevelt screened-in the west porch. Prior to selling the house in 1952, Elliott Roosevelt enclosed the porch. When the Potters owned Top Cottage, they installed a bluestone terrace with semicircular bluestone steps immediately south of the west porch, followed by the addition of a fountain and fish



South elevation of central block of cottage, showing the Potter's bluestone terrace, steps, and fish pond(in the southwest corner of the terrace). These elements were removed in 1999. [JGWA]



Pathway between stable and cottage, 2000. [EDC]



The drive is terraced into the slope east of the house, 2000. [EDC]

pond in 1972.¹⁰³ The stone terrace, steps, fountain with fish pond and the porch enclosure were removed when the cottage was restored.

Both physical and photographic evidence indicates that there was a foot path, beginning at the kitchen and the north end of the looped drive, that led around a stone-lined planting bed to the earthen ramp at the north end of the west porch. The lack of vegetation, extant evidence of the stone-lined plant bed and the subtle grade change between the ramp and the looped drive survive. The path does not seem to have been formalized with a well-defined surface.

The Potters built a small stable tucked into the slope southwest of and below Top Cottage. They built a rail-fence paddock area for their Palomino and Tennessee Walker horses. ¹⁰⁴ In the mid-1970s, according to Owen Potter, he and his wife converted the stable into a cottage. ¹⁰⁵ Foot paths and a dirt roadway were constructed to provide access to the stable/cottage. The historic stone fence to the south of Top Cottage was modified to accommodate a new walkway; both the fence and the walkway still exist. The extant dirt roadway runs north/south a few feet east of Top Cottage structure and was cut into the slope.

TOPOGRAPHY

The 1963 United States Geological Survey map of Hyde Park (see Appendix B) shows Top Cottage sitting slightly above elevation 450, which is nearly 200 feet higher than Val Kill cottage and 260 feet higher than Springwood. The greatest drop in topography was toward the west. Cartographic maps show that this location is the

highest point within FDR's estate and one of the highest points within Dutchess County. This high location afforded FDR "magnificent panoramic views to the south, west and north," commanding "one of the loveliest views this part of the country affords – far to the west the Catskills and Shawangunk Mountains, and nearer, the Hudson River sweeping southward to be lost in the Highlands." 108

Topographical relief around Top Cottage varies considerably in each direction. For instance, the terrain of the old Rohan Farm, to the south, rolls gently; the Lent Wood Lot, to the east, is rough and rugged; and the slope gradually drops away to the north and quickly drops away to the west. These slopes have not changed much since FDR's time.

VEGETATION

FDR's Love of Trees

F.D.R. from the earliest years including the early days of his youth at Hyde Park, his school days at Groton, and his college years at Harvard, developed a broad interest in the outdoors, in birds and trees, and in forests. Through this early sentimental and perhaps romantic interest in the outdoors he developed a very keen interest in the economics or business phases of forestry.

Nelson Brown¹⁰⁹

As early as 1912, FDR began planting trees on his family's estate. 110 By the time he invited Nelson Brown to visit him in 1929, his knowledge of trees and his interest in forestry had grown. Brown stated that FDR's "principal interest in his estate was in his trees."111 FDR wondered about "plant[ing] trees for such products as Christmas trees, pulpwood, posts, poles, crossties, fuelwood, or other important products."112 He also wondered how long it would take certain species to be marketable and how much they might be worth. 113 FDR sold standing timber to loggers and lumbermen, oak cross-ties to the New York Central Railroad, and poles to the electric company. In 1932, he considered growing Christmas trees.¹¹⁴ By 1945, when he died, he had many acres of Christmas trees growing with the intention of selling them for a profit, and these trees eventually proved quite profitable.¹¹⁵ Along with Christmas trees, FDR planted a variety of deciduous and coniferous trees under Nelson Brown's direction and guidance, 116 "eventually planting more than one-half million trees on the worn-out pastures and fields...[on his estate]...at Hyde Park."117 His favorite tree was the Yellow Poplar, "more for its romantic interest and beauty rather than for commercial purpose."118

FDR's trees meant more to him than their financial value. They were one of his "great hobbies." Brown noted of FDR that driving through his woods:

...apparently gave him complete relaxation from the great trials and tribulations that faced him constantly at the White House in Washington....History will not and cannot record the part that his trees and woods played in maintaining the presidential morale during those trying years from 1933 to 1945. But it is sincerely believed that without

those relaxing weekends and the mental and psychological stimulation that came with complete rest in the forestall atmosphere, he may not have been able to carry on as he did. 120

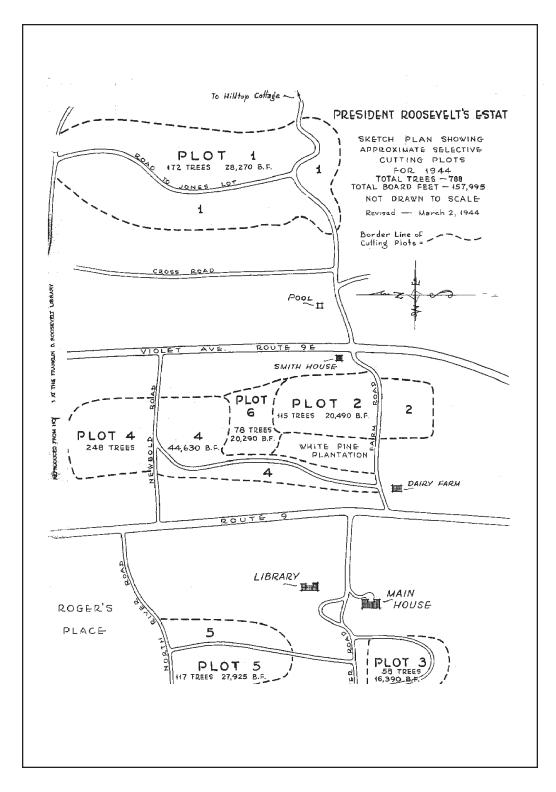
The site upon which FDR built Top Cottage was and is a mixed hardwood forest with the occasional coniferous tree, including numerous native species such as the Flowering Dogwood, Cornus florida. FDR was especially fond of the Dogwood. He frequently visited his retreat while the Dogwoods were in bloom; when he could not make the trip, he suggested to his friends that they go up and see the trees in bloom.¹²¹

Forestry Activities

In September 1938, Nelson Brown wrote FDR a descriptive planting and activity program for the following year. The first item on the list was to clear about 3 acres of birches from the Rohan Farm. In the margin, someone, presumably FDR, wrote, "Leave 1 best tree in each clump of birches."¹²² Then after visiting the estate in March 1939, S. Heiberg, Associate Professor of Silviculture and a colleague of Brown's, wrote a memo stating that the birches had been cut "south of the new lodge...[and]...only a few gray birch have been left distributed over the area." ¹²³ He went on to say that "vigorous sprouting" of the birches will occur, and therefore recommended planting the area with fast growing Red Pine, White Pine and European Larch. 124 Heiberg's recommendations were accepted, as verified by Brown's May 1939 letter, wherein he confirms that he and FDR visited the "Rohan birch lot, where 2000 White Pine, 2000 Red Pine and 2000 Larch are being planted."¹²⁵ Unfortunately, a drought later that same year ravaged the new larch plantings, but there was "considerable survival in the white and red pine in the Peter Rohan birch lot."126 Brown insisted on replacing the lost trees with Norway spruce, which he indicated was being done with 4 year-old Douglas fir and 4 year-old Norway spruce trees. 127

While planting new trees and maintaining existing plantations consumed much of FDR's and Nelson Brown's time, they also worked together on marking and removing marketable trees. By the Spring of 1942, FDR was ready to begin cutting "the larger, mature, and overmature oaks and some other species" on his estate. In November 1943, Brown and four of his students marked trees for cutting on the slope below Top Cottage – Plot 1. They marked every tree with a breast height diameter of 15 inches in width and greater. In a recapitulation to the President, Brown indicates they marked 156 White Oak, 101 Red Oak, 4 Maple, 8 Ash and 3 Elm trees for a total of 172 trees and 36,225 board feet of lumber. In Inches I

The cutting contract and timber activity moved along quickly. On December 10, 1943, Brown contracted with the Hudson Valley Lumber Corporation for the cutting and purchase of the marked trees¹³¹ and on January 11, 1944, he stated that the cutting operations on Plot 1 were complete.¹³² This cutting activity seems to be the only such activity in the vicinity of Top Cottage during FDR's residency.



"President Roosevelt's Estat [sic]: Sketch Plan Showing Approximate Selective Cutting Plots for 1944," by Nelson Brown. [FDRL]



Photograph by Allen Frost of the dogwood in bloom, May 1944. [FDRL]

Woodland

The woods surrounding Top Cottage comprised numerous deciduous, hardwood species, typical of the lower Hudson Valley. Once proliferated with American Chestnut trees, "the woods were being naturally converted from a chestnut forest to a mixed oak forest," when in 1900, an Asiatic fungus, Endothia parasitica, was introduced into New York from Asian chesnut trees imported as nursery stock. The fungus attacked the Castanea dentata – American Chestnut, the most valuable and certainly the most dominant tree in hardwood forests of the eastern half of the United States. Now only suckers grow from the live root system of American Chestnut trees and then wither before gaining much size. Suckers with one to two inch diameter trunks can be found in forests today. 134

The trees surrounding Top Cottage were tall, straight and narrow – typical of trees growing unmanaged and in close proximity to one another. Historic photographs show how dense the forest was and how closely together the trees grew. They also show that prior to construction of the house the larger trees were harvested (at least to the west of the cottage) and their rotting stumps remained. In another photograph, the forest into which FDR built his retreat had been cut for its timber; this explains why young trees proliferated in the vicinity of the cottage.

The larger trees provided an overhead, shade canopy that limited understory growth. This, combined with the earlier harvesting, afforded the otherwise dense



View of the west porch, June 1939. Photograph by Von Knoblauch. [FDRL]

woods a sense of openness. Flowering trees, such as the native Dogwood, thrived in the understory.

While FDR loved trees and what they could do for him financially, he often manipulated and selectively removed them to improve his distant views, often from a single vantage point. The care and health of his trees were of such importance to him that the trees immediately surrounding the cottage's construction site were enclosed in wood frames to protect them from damage. Toombs wrote in the construction specifications, which guided and directed the contractor, that:

All trees and bushes within the building lines, or within the driveway, walkway, etc., shall be cleared from the site of the job by the contractor. All trees and bushes of value near to the operations are to be protected with wood frames around same to the specification of the Architect.¹³⁵

The construction photographs show that the Adams-Faber Co. was quite diligent in following these specifications (see page 19).

FDR sought to improve his views by selectively removing trees that hindered his line of sight. Some of this work was done prior to construction when his workmen were "opening it up just gradually, only one tree at a time." Selective tree removal continued after construction by first bending the tree over to see if its removal would accomplish his goal. At a press conference in August 1938, FDR said that trees would be removed "one at a time so we can be sure that we don't cut a tree and be sorry about it afterwards." ¹³⁷



This detail of Margaret (Daisy) Suckley's 1937 sketch elevation for Top Cottage shows foundation plantings. [From Geoffrey C. Ward, Closest Companion, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995), p. 103.]

Foundation Plantings and the Cottage Grounds

As early as 1935, Daisy Suckley began documenting FDR's growing interest and subsequent changes to the design and layout of his future retreat. Daisy seems to have had some influence on the evolution of the cottage and its surrounding landscape. By 1937, the future cottage was taking shape, and the sketch by Daisy of the cottage included numerous foundation plantings, such as multi-stem trees and several shrubs along the north, east and south facades. These proposed plantings appeared to conflict with FDR's desires. One year later, on October 12, 1938, FDR wrote a letter stating that "I am having no lawn and keeping the woods in their natural state." However, several years after that he ordered the bushes trimmed "along the walk to the cottage because, the day before, they showered him with rain drops." During FDR's lifetime, the woods were kept in their natural state, and foundation plantings were introduced around the cottage.

Daisy Suckley, it appears, was an avid photographer and always carried her camera. She took numerous photographs, both interiors and exteriors, including picnics and gatherings that occurred at the cottage. The exterior photographs show numerous foundation plantings, which suggest a cultivated hand, much different then FDR's idea of a rustic retreat. The photographs from Daisy's collection show Hedera helix – English Ivy growing on the wall of the cottage and Spirea growing in the bed north of the west porch, Rhododendrons planted along the western edge of the west porch, and Junipers – upright and horizontal varieties – along the eastern facade. Along the south edge of the west porch there appear to be some flowering perennials or small shrubs, possibly St. Johnswort.

FDR enjoyed trees and shrubs that flowered. To supplement the spring blossom of the Dogwood, FDR wrote that he wanted "to get...from out of the woods and from the Catskills, various flowering shrubs, things of that sort, so that we will get something flowering from the first of May through September." While little evidence has been found to document the possible relocation and transplantation of trees and shrubs around Top Cottage, an undated photograph from Daisy Suckley's collection indicates that some flowering shrubs may have in fact been planted. The photograph shows a



View of the north wing of Top Cottage, September 1944. Margaret (Daisy) Suckley is holding back one of the trees. Note the English Ivy on the north elevation of the central block, and the Spirea in the bed north of the central block.[FDRL]



Margaret (Daisy) Suckley's 1944 photograph of the west porch shows English Ivy growing on the central block of the house, and Rhododendrons planted along the west foundation of the porch. Lawn is growing along the west side of the house. [FDRL]



Undated photograph by Margaret (Daisy) Suckley, looking northwest, showing Junipers planted along the east facade of Top Cottage. [FDRL]



Detail from FDR's photograph of Margaret (Daisy) Suckley with Fala, 1941. There appear to be flowering perennials or small shrubs, possibly St. Johnswort, at the south end of the west porch.



Undated photograph of Top Cottage by Margaret (Daisy) Suckley, from the south. The photograph shows a well-defined row of small pine trees and rhododendron shrubs. [FDRL]



View of the north wing and the chimney, June 2, 1939. At this point, there is a short, well-established lawn to the east of the cottage. Photograph by ACME Newspapers, Inc. (UPI). [FDRL]



In the June 1939 view of the cottage from the southeast, the understory plants and plant debris have been selectively removed and cleaned up, with only selected trees remaining. [FDRL]



Undated photograph (but probably in the late 1940s) of William A. Plog (the superintendent) and Ruthie Bie, looking from the southeast. The grass is long and unkempt, and the junipers are tall and leggy. Hedera helix is climbing the wall. [FDRL]

well-defined row of small pine trees and rhododendron shrubs. The pines, presumably Pinus strobus – White Pine, seem quite thin, leggy and planted unnaturally close to one another. These pines are indicative of transplanted pines taken from a woodland, not from a cultivated nursery. The rhododendrons, on the other hand, are similar in size and shape and also are planted quite close together. The leaves are curled to conserve water in the snowless winter scene. This straight line of planted trees and shrubs, located between the stone fence and the cottage, would eventually screen the cottage from the open field to the south.

FDR was emphatic about landscaping the cottage grounds. He wrote that he wanted to keep the woods in their natural state and that he did not want a lawn. On June 9, 1938, he reminded William Feller, of Feller Brothers, a well-digging and contracting firm, that "there will be little need for water outside of household services" as there will be "no lawn and no garden." On October 8, 1938, a Walter Cartwright wrote to FDR offering to test the soil around Top Cottage because "[u]ndoubtedly, you are planning to have a fine lawn, trees, and flower beds." Four days later, FDR wrote back and said, "I am having no lawn and keeping the woods in their natural state. However, the contractors, Adams – Faber Company, planted some grass seed (though it appears to have been sown on the soil that was disturbed during construction to prevent soil erosion).

A photograph dated June 2, 1939, recorded a short, well-established lawn. Foundation plantings were noticeably absent. To the east of the cottage, at least, the lawn extended the full length of the house. Another photograph clearly shows how the understory plants and plant debris were selectively removed and cleaned up, with only the choice trees remaining. Evidence of limbing up (removing the lower limbs from) the trees is seen in both photographs.

A later, undated photograph shows upright and horizontal junipers planted along the east facade of the house. The grass was long, unkempt and weed infested, well on its way to returning the woodland. The junipers were quite tall, leggy and untrimmed, and the Hedera helix was climbing up the wall. Adjacent trees shaded the cottage.

BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

When FDR built Top Cottage, it was the sole structure, sitting high and overlooking the Roosevelt estate. The schedule of Roosevelt's real estate holdings at his death lists the house and "a one-car frame building garage and workshop with a flat roof covered with asphalt paper and with a cement floor." Additional research is needed to document when the garage and workshop were constructed, and by whom. They may have been constructed for the caretaker's use.

Subsequent owners added onto the cottage and built several outbuildings. Elliott Roosevelt enclosed the west porch and may have added an enclosed porch on the north end of the cottage. The Potters constructed several buildings to support their family activities; these included a horse stable, a greenhouse, and, it is believed, two garages (see the description of these buildings at the end of this history). 146

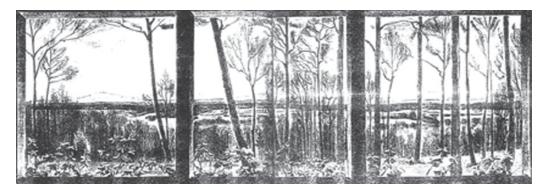
VIEWS AND VISTAS

Views played a major role in FDR's decision to purchase the Top Cottage site and then to locate, design, and construct the cottage as he did. As early as 1929, FDR's attorney, Henry Hackett described the Rohan farm by assuring him that "the view from most any part of the Rohan Property further north is better than that from this property [Sarah C. Tompkins estate], which looks down upon the State Hospital cottages." Seven years later, FDR purchased the Rohan farm, capturing that view for his cottage.

In June 1935, FDR purchased the Dumphy Farm, which included the Dutchess Hill property. As late as September 9, 1935, and presumably earlier, he and Daisy Suckley visited Dutchess Hill by themselves, 148 where they sought shelter from the rain "beneath the dripping trees." In October of that same year, FDR commented in a letter to Daisy "that we like the Hill Top and distant view..." By midwinter of 1936, FDR and Daisy were discussing the laying out and "building an all-weather road through the woods to their hilltop." Owing to the bad weather, FDR indicated that, "Our road must wait till the end of April or May." The road that they were discussing would later provide them with much easier access to the crest of Dutchess Hill, where they enjoyed time together, picnics and the view.

On July 1, 1938, FDR held a press conference at the construction site of Top Cottage, which coincided with the first day of construction. He pointed in four different directions and said: "that little vista is the north of the Catskill Range. This is the south of the Catskill. This is the Shawangunk, through there. That, south through the field is the Hudson Highlands and northeast, back here, is the Berkshires. I can actually see into Connecticut and Massachusetts." Much of the site was covered with tall narrow-growing trees and, presumably, some of the vistas to which he referred were narrow viewing corridors. However, as the press conference continued, FDR indicated that views were being opened up "gradually, only one tree at a time." While FDR loved his trees, he desired to improve the distant views from his new cottage. The Montclair Times newspaper reported that FDR "had vistas cut through the woods, so that he might visualize the location of the house and enjoy in advance the beautiful views of the highlands of the Hudson, the Catskills and the Berkshires." 154

In 1949, Olin Dows, a local artist, published a book entitled *Franklin Roosevelt at Hyde Park* in which he illustrated several different views to and from Top Cottage. ¹⁵⁵ Elliott Roosevelt lived in the cottage when Dows published his book. The views, which seemingly incorporate artistic license, suggest the existence of southwestern and northwestern viewing corridors from the west porch. Dows' rendering suggests a nearly uninterrupted viewing corridor to the southwest, while the northwest view required looking through a thin stand of trees. A 1941 photograph taken from the west porch corroborates the existence of viewing corridors through the trees. However, they were much narrower than Dows' sketches indicate. The 1946 aerial photograph indicates that the western viewshed was a wide-angled, cone-shaped view with intermittent trees interrupting this view. The viewshed appears to extend from the porch to the northwest and south at a 45 degree angle. While the 1946 aerial photograph indicates fewer trees



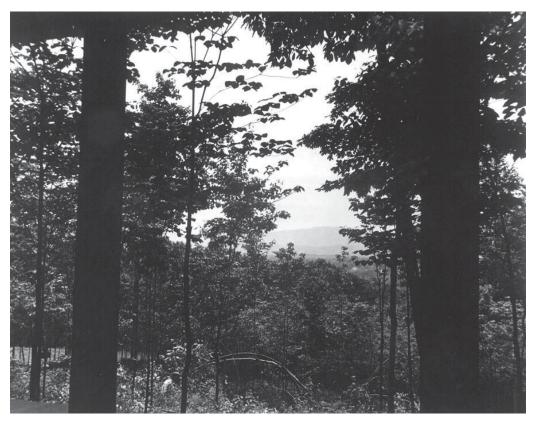
Sketch of the view from the west porch of Top Cottage by Olin Dows, Franklin Roosevelt at Hyde Park, American Artists Group, New York, pp. 178-179.



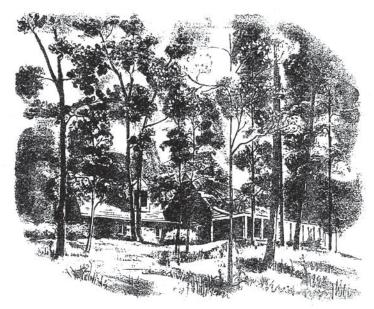
Photograph of the view from the west porch, 1941, by Lucien Aigner. [FDRL]



Photograph of the west view from Top Cottage, circa 1938-1939, by the Adams-Faber Company. [FDRL]



View looking west from Top Cottage, June 1939. Note that the view has been enhanced by bending selected trees back. Photograph by Von Knoblauch. [FDRL]



Sketch of the view from the northwest by Olin Dows, Franklin Roosevelt at Hyde Park, American Artists Group, New York, pp. 175.



View looking northwest from Top Cottage by Chandler Roosevelt Lindsey (FDR's granddaughter) in 1947.

and, therefore, more open views to the west of Top Cottage, the historic photographs clearly show that trees were there and did interfere with the western views. However, FDR sought to enhance his western views by removing one tree at a time. He even experimented with the views by bending trees over to see the view. This approach enabled careful and selective tree removal to achieve the views without the senseless removal of all of the trees on the steep western slope below Top Cottage.

Another of Dows' renderings, looking uphill at Top Cottage's northwest corner, suggests a wooded landscape with a cleared understory. No tree or leaf debris appears in the rendering, suggesting a maintained landscape, which was counter to FDR's vision for his retreat. This rendering suggests the possibility of looking northwest from the porch through the tree trunks and below the limbed-up tree branches. Chandler Roosevelt's (FDR's grandaughter)1947 photograph taken from within the screened-in west porch looks in the opposite direction to Dows' rendering. Her photograph shows a viewing corridor to the northwest.

Dows' renderings appear to idealize FDR's vision of Top Cottage as a romantic yet rustic landscape that afforded everyone with nearly panoramic views of the distant mountains. However, period photographs, both ground and aerial, indicate that the views to which FDR pointed out in his July 1, 1938 press conference may, in fact, have been quite narrow viewing corridors through the trees that came up to the house and formed an overhead canopy. These pictures contrast with the airiness of Dows' depictions of the forest.

An examination of the aerial photographs (see Appendix B) gives an overview of the development of the viewsheds. The 1935 aerial photograph shows how wooded the site was three years prior to the commencement of construction. A photograph of the west porch taken in 1939 shows stump remnants, an indication that logging took place before and/or during construction. This logging may have helped to improve some of the views that FDR was describing. The north and east views to which he referred were greatly improved, no doubt, in the late fall, winter and early spring when the leaves were off the trees. The change in color density in the 1935 aerial photograph, to the south and west of the cottage's site, suggests that these views may have existed. FDR's indication that men were removing trees to improve the views to the distant mountains is consistent with cartographic evidence of the period. The views to the south and west remained intact after FDR's death, albeit somewhat compromised as maintenance waned and the trees grew back. The 1970 aerial photograph shows the western view, though it is beginning to fill in with trees. By 1980, the forest had re-established itself, severing the year-round visual connection between the cottage and the mountains to the west.

SMALL-SCALE FEATURES

Small-scale features are elements in the landscape that provide detail and diversity, while combining utility or function and (sometimes) aesthetics. During FDR's residency, such features at Top Cottage included the west porch (an extension of the



Electrical pole marked "16." The "C.H.G.& E. Corp." [Central Hudson Gas and Electric Corporation] medallion is attached with brass nails stamped with the number "39;" this probably indicated the date of installation (i.e. 1939). [JGWA]

house into the landscape and of the landscape into the house), the earthen ramp to the west porch, the loop drive(s), the stone-lined plant bed north of the porch, and the site's utilities including the well, electrical service and septic facilities.

An original underground steel fuel oil tank, located between the chimney and the south wing, was removed for environmental reasons during the 1999-2000 restoration of Top Cottage.

Little is known about FDR's original septic system. Knowledge pertaining to the electrical service has been strengthened with new historical research information (in addition to that in the Historic Structure Report).

Electrical Service

In January 1939, nearly seven months after construction began, electrical service was provided to Top Cottage. The HSR documents the back and forth communication between FDR and representatives of Central Hudson Gas and Electric Corporation (hereafter referred to as "Central Hudson") regarding the location and installation procedure, as well as monetary reimbursement, for connecting Top Cottage to the electrical grid. Central Hudson provided electrical service to Top Cottage from Cream Street, which "was completed and service established on Saturday, January 28th, 1939."

Archival research indicates that Central Hudson installed seventeen hemlock poles between Cream Street and Top Cottage, entering Top Cottage from the southeast. Four extant utility poles have been found in the woods east of the cottage – three of the poles are tagged with numerals - "14", "15," and "16". Two poles have oval tags with insignia "C.H.G.& E. Corp." and an identification number stamped into them. One of the oval tags is attached to the pole with brass nails that has the number "39" stamped into its head.

Central Hudson was contacted to research their records regarding these poles and corresponding identification numbers. Unfortunately, the records only go back to the early 1940s. Earlier records have been lost or were destroyed. While the company's researcher was not able to offer any information pertaining to the stamped brass nails, a retired employee remembered using similar brass nails to field-date pole installation. He said that the numbers stamped into the head of each nail indicates the year of installation. He quickly added, and warned, that while this is true, "spill-over" frequently occurred. He explained that Central Hudson purchased a given number of dated nails each year and used them until they were gone, which meant there may be some "spill-over" from one year to the next. With this understanding and knowledge that Central Hudson installed FDR's electrical service in January 1939, combined with the fact that the nails are stamped "39", it is strongly believed that these poles are from the original installation of the electrical service to Top Cottage.

INTRODUCTIONS BY THE POTTER FAMILY (1952-1996)

Vegetation: Potters' Coniferous Trees

Photographic evidence suggests that most of the coniferous trees that presently exist at Top Cottage were planted during the Potter family residency. FDR maintained and managed the deciduous trees around Top Cottage, though, to the best of current knowledge, he never planted evergreen trees, except for the row of pine trees and rhododendrons. The introduction of the trees has changed the visual and aesthetic character of the landscape – views are shortened, adjacent properties are screened, and the sense of openness toward the old Rohan Farm is gone.

In the 1967 aerial photograph several dark evergreen trees appear south of the stone fence and north of the swimming pool. By 1980, more conifers were planted and seemed to be thriving. A distinct line of trees separates the open field from the swimming pool. Unfortunately, the aerial photograph was taken while the leaves were on the trees, making it harder to distinguish the extent of evergreen trees. However, by 1995, the extent of evergreen trees planted by the Potter's is clearly evident (see Appendix B). The photograph shows two lines of pine trees, one on either side of the swimming pool, and a row of trees planted along and within the looped drive east of the cottage. This photograph also shows the extent to which successional growth has filled-in the Rohan Farm – the once open field to the south is now completely overgrown.

Buildings and Structures

The following evaluation of the Potter outbuildings was made in 1999 by John G. Waite Associates, Architects. All of these features (except for the stable/cottage) were removed as part of the 1999 restoration.



The two-bay garage, looking northeast, 1998. [JGWA]

TWO BAY GARAGE

Although Architect Henry Toombs speculated that "very probably" President Roosevelt was "apt to build a garage near the servants' wing" of Top Cottage; and Christian Bie, the president's caretaker, purchased a set of garage-door hinges, door screws, a padlock, and sash fasts from the Andrews Hardware Company of Poughkeepsie in July, 1939;¹⁶⁰ it is not known if Roosevelt actually constructed a garage at Top Cottage. The two bay garage that is located to the east of the house, just off Potter's Bend, may have been constructed by the President's son Elliott, or by the Potter family. The building materials and electrical wiring suggest that the garage was constructed in the second half of the twentieth century.

The wood frame garage has novelty siding with a 4-1/2" exposure and a shed roof with mineral rolled roofing. The roof drains to the rear, or north wall. The structure is 20'-3" deep and 29'-0" long. A paneled wood entry door of stile-and-rail construction (3 horizontal lights over 3 horizontal recessed panels) and two articulated overhead garage doors are located on the south elevation of the garage. The large overhead door has eight lights, and the smaller overhead door, to the east, has four lights. Both of the garage doors are labeled *Overhead Door Company, Inc., Hillside, N.J., Nashua, N.H., Nationwide Sales - Installation - Service* on the exterior. On the interior, the large overhead door is labeled *Overhead Door Co., 89 Cor_es Ave., Poughkeepsie, N.Y.* Two windows are located at both the east and west ends of the garage; the windows have one-over-one sash with pulleys and sash weights. One-over-one storm sash are installed on the exterior face of the windows. The roof rafters (1-3/4" x 5-1/2") run in a north-south direction and are spaced 2'-



The two-bay garage, looking north, 1998. [JGWA]



The two-bay garage, looking southwest, 1998. [JGWA]

3"± on-center. The rafters are supported near mid-span by a composite wood beam fabricated from two pieces of lumber, each 1-5/8" wide x 7" high. The composite beam is supported in turn by three posts (one steel lally column and two composite wood posts, each constructed from two pieces of 2x4 nominal dimension lumber). The original roof sheathing consists of 7"± wide boards that appear to be of tongue-and-groove construction.

A small shed roof addition (12' 3-1/2" deep x 9'-10" long) has been constructed at the east end of the garage. The roof and walls of the addition are framed with salvaged 2"x 4" lumber and sheathed with porcelain-enameled steel panels on the north and east elevations. The panels were originally fabricated as signs for *Calso Supreme Gasoline*. The roof is covered with galvanized steel panels that drain to the rear, or north wall. The western half of the front elevation is open to the elements; the remainder of this elevation is covered with tongue-and-groove board sheathing.

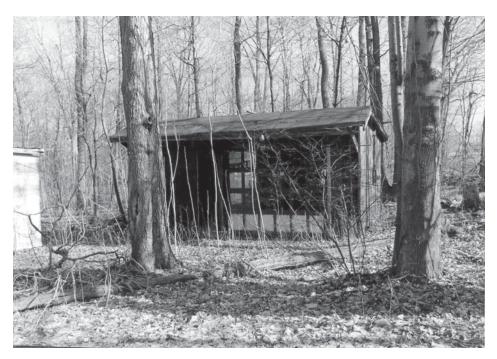
The electrical service entered the building at the northwest corner of the structure and was controlled by a single fused switch (*Murray Safety Switch, Cat. No. 840, 30 Amp, 125 v.*). The wiring consists of armored cable that services 3" steel junction boxes. Later additions were made to the circuit wiring using non-metallic sheathed cable.

The rear, north wall of the garage is bowed outward; the framing and plywood sheathing along the base of the wall is severely rotted. The replacement plywood roof sheathing along the bottom slope of the roof is water stained and rotted. The framing between the southwest entry door and the large overhead door is bowed inward. The floor appears to be earthen with areas of rotted concrete paving. The entry door at the southwest corner has been re-hung, and the butt hinges and lockset have been replaced. Originally, the door and jamb were mortised for a pair of hinges; one-and-a-half pair of hinges are now installed.

The garage site has been used for the storage of miscellaneous material and debris, including toys, tires, lawn furniture, cans, gutters, a baby crib, and aluminum window screens (probably from the casement windows installed on the west porch of the house). A wedge-shaped snowplow is located in the wooded area to the southwest of the garage (*Blackhawk Master V Snowplow, Model DL-1, No.1266, Mfd. By ARPS Corp., New Holstein, Wis. USA, patent no. 2,307,655, other patents pending*). The patent date on the snowplow falls somewhere between 1940 and 1950.

SINGLE BAY GARAGE

The shed-roofed single bay garage, located to the east and south of the two bay garage and oriented at a right angle to it, appears to be of relatively new construction. The exterior wall surface on the west elevation consists of board-and-batten construction; on the north, east, and south elevations the exterior wall surfaces of tongue-and-groove board sheathing (5"± wide) are covered with bituminous building paper. A roof of mineral rolled roofing slopes to the rear, or east wall. Along the front elevation the roof slope is reversed to provide a hooded



The single-bay garage, looking east, 1998. [JGWA]



The single-bay garage, looking south, 1998. [JGWA]

overhang. The structure is 14'-6" deep and 20'-3" long. A single articulated overhead garage door with eighteen lights (in three horizontal rows) is located on the west elevation. The garage door is labeled *Overhead Door Corp*. At the north end of the west elevation the entry door has been replaced with a hinged plywood panel. A framed door opening, without a door, is located at the east end of the north elevation, and a single light sash has been positioned at the northern end of the east elevation. The wall framing for the garage consists of 2x4 nominal dimension (1-1/2" x 3-1/2" actual dimension) lumber; it bears on a low concrete-block perimeter wall. The roof rafters (2x6 nominal dimension lumber, 1-1/2" x 5-1/2" actual dimension) are spaced approximately 2'-0" on-center and run in an east-west direction. The roof sheathing is plywood. The floor consists of an irregular, cracked concrete slab.

The electrical service entered the building on the south elevation. A *Duncan Electric Meter* is mounted on the exterior face of the south wall. The overhead conductors remain connected to the mast and may be energized. A fuse box (*The Wadsworth Electric Mfg. Co., Inc., Covington, KY., U.S.A., 100 amp, 120-240 v.a.c., 3 poles, Cat. No. 100RW6F*) is mounted on the interior face of the south wall. The fuse box has two cartridge fuse blocks, labeled *Main* and *Range*, that each have two fused branch circuits. All of the circuit wiring in the garage consists of nonmetallic sheathed cable.

The plywood roof sheathing is severely rotted. The rafters are rotted, and one is badly split. The wall framing, interior plywood sheathing, and exterior tongue-and-groove (5" wide) siding on the rear wall are severely rotted.

The garage site has been used for the storage of miscellaneous material and debris, including plastic water piping, wood ladders, plastic and glass bottles, and metal cans. An abandoned, empty fuel-oil tank (approximately 275 gallons) is located behind the garage.

WELL HEAD ENCLOSURE

The well head enclosure, located south of the house, consists of a 7'-6"± deep subterranean concrete-block structure with a concrete cap. The enclosure measures 7'-6"± on each side. A wood hatch (2'-11" square) sheathed in sheet metal, provides access through the concrete cap to the well head. The floor of the enclosure is concrete. An electric water pump and a pressure vessel are located in the enclosure. An electrical disconnect switch is mounted on the north wall of the enclosure, and armored electrical cable is routed underground to the house.

The painted sheet metal sheathing on the hatch is rusted, and the wood construction of the hatch is rotted. The armored electrical cable is rusted; the service wiring to the house requires replacement.



The well head enclosure, 1998. [JGWA]



The swimming pool, looking north, 1998. [JGWA]

SWIMMING POOL

An in-ground Gunite swimming pool is located on a berm created toward the south end of the site. The kidney-shaped pool is approximately 3'-0" deep at the north end and 8'-0" deep at the south end. There are built-in steps along the east side of the pool, toward the north end; and there is concrete paving at the perimeter of the pool. The pool was installed by Mr. and Mrs. Philip Potter, Jr. in 1964.¹⁶¹

Nearly all of the water has been drained from the structure. Plastic sheeting and debris remain in the pool. The concrete curbing around the pool is disrupted, and three pieces of the curbing are missing. Weeds are growing between the joints in the concrete paving. The pool is a significant safety hazard. As an empty structure the pool is a concrete hole in the ground; when filled with water the pool becomes a drowning hazard. There is no fence surrounding the pool, as required by current building code regulations.

SWIMMING POOL PUMP HOUSE

The swimming pool pump house is located to the west of the pool. It is constructed with 2x4 nominal dimension lumber (1-1/2" x 3-1/2" actual dimension) and sheathed with T-111 plywood siding. The structure bears on a concrete slab and is covered by a shed roof with composition shingles. There is a plywood panel door at the north and south ends of the enclosure. The pump house measures 4'-1" deep and 6'-1" long.

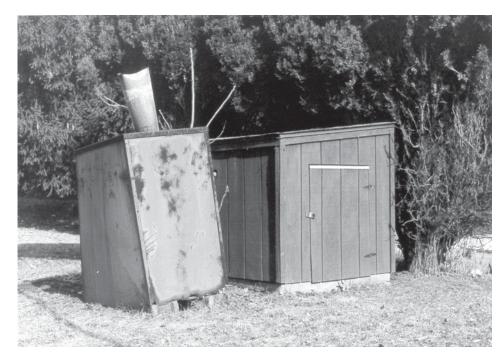
An electric circuit breaker panel is located in the pump house, along with an electrical receptacle and timer. The circulating pump for the pool has been removed. An adjacent sheet metal enclosure that measures 2'-1" deep and 3'-1" long houses an abandoned oil-fired water heater for the pool. The water heater is corroded and open to the elements. An underground oil line consisting of copper tubing extends from the water heater to the greenhouse northwest of the pool and pump house. The oil line passes through the greenhouse and connects to the half-buried exterior fuel oil tank at the northwest corner of the greenhouse. The underground fuel and electric service to the pump house and water heater are safety hazards.

FLAG POLE

To the south of the swimming pool pump house, a painted steel flag pole was erected. The flag pole is approximately 18'-0" high; it is constructed of two pipe sections (2"± diameter). The pole is set in concrete.

• SLATE TERRACE AND AWNING STRUCTURE

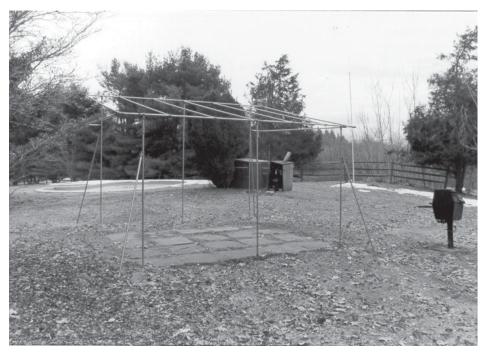
A slate terrace is located to the northwest of the pool, and adjacent to the greenhouse. It measures 10'-0" deep and 12'-0" long. Slate pavers, approximately 2'-5" square, have been laid in the grass with approximately one inch spacing. A shed roof awning structure of galvanized steel pipe (1" diameter) has been erected above the terrace; the canvas awning has been removed.



Swimming pool pump house and water heater, looking north, 1998. [JGWA]



Swimming pool pump house and water heater, looking south, 1998. [JGWA]



The slate terrace and awning structure, looking southeast, 1998. [JGWA]

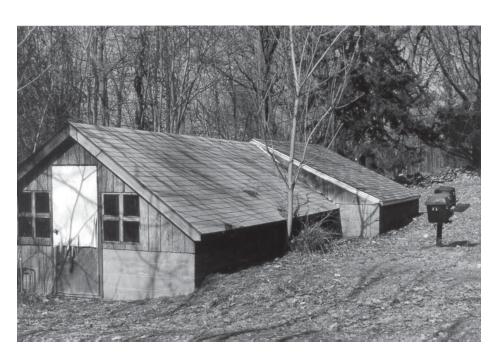
A dilapidated *Broilmaster II* (*Locke Stove Co., Kansas City, MO., Model No. G-2000*) natural gas grille is located adjacent to the slate terrace. The gas bottles have been removed.

GREENHOUSE

The greenhouse, constructed by Philip Potter, Sr. in the mid-1950s, is located to the southwest of Top Cottage. 162 The greenhouse is constructed in two sections, each with a concrete slab and block walls. The northern section (15'-0" deep x 20'-10" long) was originally used as a potting shed; it contained the greenhouse furnace. The roof construction at the northern end of the greenhouse consists of rafters fabricated from 2x4 nominal dimension lumber (1-1/2"x 3-1/2" actual dimension) with plywood sheathing and composition shingles. The southern end of the greenhouse (13'-5" deep x 26'-0" long) originally served as the glass-enclosed structure for growing plants. The glass has since been removed from the steel frame, and 2x4 nominal dimension lumber (1-1/2"x 3-1/2" actual dimension) has been laid on the steel to support a roof of plywood sheathing and composition shingles. The gable ends of the roofing are sheathed with T-111 plywood siding. A stile-and-rail wood door (four lights over two raised panels) is centered on the north elevation of the greenhouse. The door is surmounted by a two-light transom and flanked by a pair of windows, each with four-light sash. At the south end of the greenhouse a deteriorated hollow-core, flush door is centered on the south elevation. A pair of windows, each with four-light sash, flank the door.



View of the greenhouse and pump house , looking northwest, 1998. [JGWA]



The greenhouse, looking north, 1998. [JGWA]



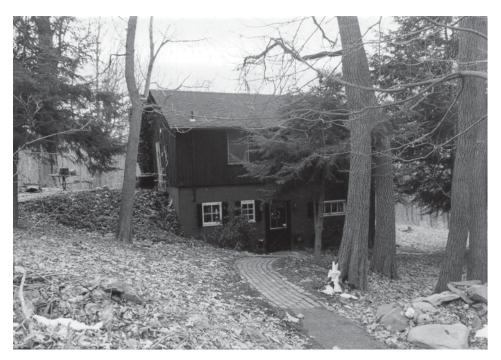
South facade of the greenhouse potting shed, 1998. [JGWA]



The greenhouse, looking south, 1998. [JGWA]



View of the stable/cottage, looking north, 1998. [JGWA]



View of the stable/cottage, looking south, 1998. [JGWA]

The greenhouse furnace has been removed; however, the perimeter fin-tube radiation piping for the heating system remains. An exterior fuel-oil tank (approximately 275 gallons) is located against the west wall of the greenhouse, at the northwest corner of the structure. The fuel-oil tank appears to have originally served the furnace for the greenhouse, the water heater for the swimming pool, and the furnace for the cottage located to the west of the greenhouse. Currently, the fuel-oil tank is used only for the cottage. The half-buried tank is rusted and overgrown with vines. The tank and underground fuel line to the cottage require replacement and relocation to prevent the possibility of leaks and contamination of the soil. The abandoned fuel lines should be removed.

The concrete block construction of the greenhouse has spalled, cracked, and settled. There is a significant settlement crack (½"± wide) in the block wall at the southeast corner of the potting shed (south elevation). The concrete-block steps at the north end of the greenhouse are deteriorated and pose a safety hazard. The north and west walls of the greenhouse, and the west slope of the roof at the northern end of the structure, are covered with vines that are trapping moisture against the building. A wood mast (3-1/2" x 3-1/2") projecting from the north gable of the greenhouse is used for the overhead telephone and electric service wiring strung from Top Cottage to the caretaker's cottage. The mast and wiring are overgrown with vines.

Currently, the greenhouse is used for the storage of miscellaneous materials. On the exterior, abandoned mattresses and debris are stored against the west wall of the greenhouse.

STABLE/COTTAGE

The caretaker's cottage, located southwest of Top Cottage and due west of the greenhouse, was originally constructed by Philip Potter, Sr. as a concrete stable with a hay loft and two stalls, where he kept two horses for his grandchildren. In the mid-1970s, Owen Potter, the grandson of Philip Potter, Sr. converted the stable into a residence. ¹⁶³ This structure still remains.

Built into the slope of the hill below Top Cottage, the two-story caretaker's cottage has a concrete-block base with board-and-batten construction at the upper level, and a gable roof with composition shingles. A galvanized steel pipe frame has been erected along the lower level of the south elevation for an awning over a slate terrace. To the north and east a brick walkway and asphalt path lead up the hill to the paved driveway of the house.

Small-Scale Features

All of the small-scale features added by the Potters were removed between June 1999 and December 2000 as part of the initial restoration.¹⁶⁴ These features included an air conditioner condensor; a television/radio tower on the north wing; electrical meters and overhead electrical wiring between Top Cottage and the caretaker's cottage; the stone terrace to the southwest of the house; and electric post lights.

NOTES

In citing works in the notes and in the photographic captions, author's names, short titles and abbreviations have been used. Sources frequently cited are identified with the following abbreviations:

Moon Library S.U.N.Y. College of Environment Science and Forestry, Syracuse, NY,

Moon Library, College Archives, Terence J. Hoverter Room, Special

Collections – Room 15.

PSF President's Secretary's Files at FDRL

FDRL Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York

EDC Elmore Design Collaborative

JGWA John G. Waite Associates, Architects PLLC

- 1. PSF Hyde Park, July Dec. 1942, Box 139, FDRL
- Unknown newspaper clipping entitled "President Shows Dream House: Plans for Future at Hyde Park" from Bill Faber's Papers on Top Cottage, FDRL.
- Other names by which Top Cottage was known include Dutchess Hill, Hill Top Cottage, Ourhill, Our Hill
- Office of the Dutchess County Clerk, Poughkeepsie, New York – Liber 454, p. 426.
- Letter: Henry Hackett to FDR dated September 27, 1929. Hackett Legal Papers, GR. 73, FDR Real Estate and Legal Papers, Box 16, Folder – Dutchess Hill.
- Nelson Brown, Personal Reminiscences of FDR, Small Collections, Nelson Brown Papers – Con't 2, p. 3.
- 7. Office of the Dutchess County Clerk, Poughkeepsie, New York: Tompkins Farm Liber 454, p. 426; Briggs Wood Lot Liber 548, p. 245; Dumphy Farm T. Jefferson Newbold Liber 547, p. 101 and Thomas Newbold Liber 564, p. 255; Rohan Farm Liber 550, p. 547; Hughson Farm Liber 564, p. 255; Wright Land Liber 563, p. 509; Jones Land Liber 567, p. 176; and the Lent Wood Lot Liber 669, p. 206.

- 8. PSF Hyde Park, July-Dec. 1942, Box 139, FDRL.
- 9. Hackett Legal Papers, GR. 73, F.D.R. Estate, Box 19 FDRL.
- 10. PSF, 1G, Hilltop Cottage, Cross-Reference See PSF 7195.
- 11. 1946 Series Aerial Photograph, Number 464 VV 16, Dutchess County Soil and Water Conservation District, Millbrook, New York.
- Office of the Dutchess County Clerk, Poughkeepsie, New York - Liber 669, p. 285.
- 13. Office of the Dutchess County Clerk, Poughkeepsie, New York - Liber 669, p. 410.
- Office of the Dutchess County Clerk, Poughkeepsie, New York - Liber 820, p. 451.
- Office of the Dutchess County Clerk, Poughkeepsie, New York - Liber 1980, p. 232.
- 16. See map entitled "Section I Val-Kill Heights, Property of P.S. Potter Estate" by M. Chazen, P.E. & L.S., dated July 7, 1965, and filed March 24, 1966 with the office of the Dutchess County Clerk, Poughkeepsie, New York.

- 17. See John G. Waite Associates, Architects, Franklin D. Roosevelt's Top Cottage / Historic Structure Report, 1997 (hereafter referred as "HSR") for a complete and indepth description of the history and changes to Top Cottage.
- 18. The three small pieces of land lie southwest of the cottage and physically connect Val Kill to lands of Beaverkill Conservancy, Inc. These parcels were purchased from Matthew and Loretta Lahey 2.22 acres, Michael J. Hayden 3.7 acres and Lands of Redl 1.01 acres.
- The New Encyclopedia Britannica, 15th ed., vol. 26 (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1993) p. 933 (Franklin D. Roosevelt, pp. 932-937).
- The New Encyclopedia Britannica, 15th ed., vol. 26 (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1993) p. 933.
- 21. Ibid.
- 22. Ibid.
- 23. Ibid.
- 24. Ibid.
- 25. Ibid.
- The New Encyclopedia Britannica, 15th ed., vol. 26 (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1993) p. 934.
- 27. Ibid.
- 28. Ibid.
- 29. Ibid.
- The New Encyclopedia Britannica, 15th ed., vol. 26 (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1993) p. 937.
- The New Encyclopedia Britannica, 15th ed., vol. 26 (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1993) pp. 934-937.
- 32. This map appears to have been compiled from several maps of various scale and level of detail, and possibly from site visits and memory as well. While the map's scale is a bit inaccurate, its existence documents a wealth of detail and other interesting information. FDRL.
- 33. The Dutchess County Historical Society wrote a remembrance piece about FDR after he died. Hackett Legal Papers, Box 19, Folder Letters Etc., FDRL.
- The New Encyclopedia Britannica, 15th ed., vol. 26 (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1993) p. 937.

- 35. Geoffrey C. Ward, ed. *Closest*Companion: The Unknown Story of the
 Intimate Friendship between Franklin
 Roosevelt and Margaret Suckley. (Boston:
 Houghton Mifflin Company, 1995), p.
 113.
- Geoffrey C. Ward, ed. Closest
 Companion: The Unknown Story of the Intimate Friendship between Franklin Roosevelt and Margaret Suckley. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1995) xvii.
- 37. Ibid. This and the rest of the personal information pertaining to Daisy are taken from the Preface and Editor's Note in *Closest Companion*.
- 38. Ibid, p. ix.
- 39. Ibid, p. xiii.
- 40. Ibid, p. xvii.
- 41. Ibid, p. 31.
- 42. Ibid, p. 36.
- 43. Ibid, p. 44.
- 44. Ibid, p. 44.
- 45. Geoffrey Ward wrote, "These volumes, enjoyed by both FDR and Daisy, were meant to be housed in the Cottage..." Ibid, p. 64.
- 46. Ibid, pp. 172, 280 and 301.
- 47. Ibid, p. 100.
- 48. Ibid, p. 113.
- 49. Ibid, p. 133.
- 50. Ibid, p. 424.
- 51. HSR, p. 8, sketches located at FDRL and at the Department of Archives and History located in Atlanta, Georgia.
- 52. HSR, p. 9.
- 53. The Henry J. Toombs collection is located at the Department of Archives and History, 330 Capitol Avenue, S.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30334, Tel. 404-656-0700. (Research Assistant at the Archives told this researcher that they will be moving into a new facility in 2002.)
- 54. Ibid.
- 55. Ibid.
- 56. HSR, Appendix A, Specifications For Top Cottage, p. S1-3.

- Letter from Toombs to Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman, May 16, 1961.
 Marion Dickerman Papers, 1918-1975: Roosevelt Family – Roosevelt, Sara, FDRL.
- Standard Form of Agreement Between Contractor and Owner for Construction of Buildings. PSF – Hyde Park, Top Cottage: 1938, Box 139, FDRL.
- 59. Letter: Adams-Faber Company to M. A. Lehand, January 16, 1939. They indicate receipt of final payment for services rendered. PSF Hyde Park: Top Cottage: 1939-43, FDRL.
- Qualifications of the Adams-Faber Company given to the Architect at John G. Waite Associates.
- Qualifications of the Adams-Faber
 Company given to the Architect at John G.
 Waite Associates.
- 62. Letter: Adams-Faber Company to M. A. Lehand, January 16, 1939. They indicate receipt of final payment for services rendered. PSF Hyde Park: Top Cottage: 1939-43, FDRL.
- 63. Letter: Toombs to Frank Seaman, June 2, 1938, same letter sent to George Campbell, John Eylers, Messrs. Miller & Gaynor and Adams-Faber Company, source unknown though it is stamped GA4HP2.
- Western Union Telegram: Adams-Faber Co. to Henry J. Toombs, Warm Springs, Ga., 10:23 A.M., June 22, 1938, source unknown though it is stamped GA4HP2.
- 65. FDR, press conference #471, July 1, 1938, FDRL.
- 66. Letter: The Reader's Digest to Faber, November 4, 1952, Faber's recollections of building Top Cottage and working the FDR, p.1, Small Collections – Papers of William Faber, FDRL.
- 67. Ibid, p. 1.
- 68. HSR, p. 28.
- 69. Armstrong, George R., ed. Forestry College: Essays on The Growth and Development of New York State's College of Forestry 1911-1961. Buffalo, NY: William J. Keller, Inc., 1961, p. 119, Moon Library.
- 70. Ibid, p. 120.

- 71. Hoyle, Raymond J. and Laurie D. Cox, eds. A History of The New York State College of Forestry at Syracuse University, Syracuse, N.Y.: 1911-1936. Syracuse, N.Y.: The College, 1936, p. 51, Moon Library. The archive has some original letters from FDR to Nelson Brown. The Nelson Brown Papers can be seen by calling Ms. Flora Nyland, Archivist at (315) 470-6719.
- 72. Ibid.
- 73. *The Newsletter* Published Quarterly by the New York State College of Forestry at Syracuse University, vol. xxix, Oct. 1929, No. 4, p. 3, cols. 2-3, Moon Library.
- 74. Hoyle, p. 51, Moon Library.
- 75. Ibid.
- 76. Ibid.
- 77. Brown, Nelson. "Personal Reminiscences of F.D.R." Unpublished work, Small Collections Nelson Brown Papers Cont.2, p. 1, FDRL.
- 78. Ibid, p. 3.
- 79. Ibid, p. 12.
- 80. "Hyde Park 'Farmer' FDR Maintained Strong Ties With ESF." *Syracuse Herald-American* 31 January 1982, Moon Library, Box – College History – Photographs, Folder – 1928 FDR & Brown, 2 of 2.
- 81. Brown, p. 9.
- 82. Ibid, pp. 9-11.
- 83. Ibid, p. 11.
- 84. Ibid.
- 85. Ibid.
- 86. Letter: FDR to Brown, June 29, 1937,
 Box Roosevelt Letters (to Nelson
 Brown), Theodore 1914, FDR 1933-1943, Moon Library.
- 87. Ibid.
- 88. Letter: Brown to FDR, September 27, 1938, Small Collections, Nelson Brown Roosevelt 1935-1938, FDRL.
- 89. FDR Press Conference, July 1, 1938, FDRL.
- 90. Letter: Hackett to FDR, Sept. 24, 1929. Hackett Legal Papers. GR. 73, FDR Real Estate & Legal Papers, Box 16, Folder – Dutchess Hill, FDRL.

- 91. Emma Bugbee, "Royal Couple to Picnic on Roosevelt's Pet Hilltop And See Catskill View He Took 20 Years to Acquire," *New York Herald Tribune*, Sunday, June 4, 1939, p. unknown. Small Collections Papers of William Faber, FDRL.
- 92. Letter: M.A. LeHand to Harlan Althen, Esq., The Poughkeepsie Eagle-News, Poughkeepsie, NY, January 10, 1940. PPF 3481 – Architecture. FDRL.
- 93. Ibid
- 94. Architectural drawings entitled "House for the President" by Henry J. Toombs, Architect, March 22, 1938, FDRL, and Technical Specifications entitled "Specifications for the President's House" by Franklin D. Roosevelt, Architect and Henry J. Toombs, Associate, May 26, 1938, HSR.
- 95. Letter: Toombs to Marguerite LeHand, May 5, 1939. PSF – Hyde Park: Top Cottage, 1938, Box. 139. FDRL.
- Memo: FDR, May 10, 1939. PSF Hyde Park: Top Cottage, 1938, Box 139, FDRL.
- 97. Letter: M.A. LeHand, January 9, 1939. PPF 1G, Hilltop Cottage: Cross-Reference, FDRL.
- 98. Felix Belair, Jr., "President Shows Dream House; Plans for Future at Hyde Park," *New York Times*, 1938. Bill Faber Papers, FDRI
- Nelson Brown's "Personal Reminiscences of F.D.R." Small Collections – Nelson Brown Papers – Cont.2, p. 31, FDRL.
- 100. Ibid.
- Nelson Brown's "Personal Reminiscences of F.D.R." Small Collections – Nelson Brown Papers – Cont.2, p. 30, FDRL.
- 102. "Adams-Faber Company Completes Construction of Roosevelt Cottage," *The Montclair Times*, December 9, 1938. Small Collections – Papers of William Faber, FDRL.
- 103. HSR, p. 62.
- 104. Owen Potter, Interview. By Thomas Elmore. May 8, 2001.
- 105. HSR, p. 62.
- 106. 1963 USGS Quadrangle of Hyde Park, New York – Dutchess County Soil and Water Conservation District, Millbrook, New York.

- 107. Nelson Brown's "Personal Reminiscences of F.D.R." Small Collections – Nelson Brown Papers – Cont.2, p. 22, FDRL.
- 108. Emma Bugbee, "Royal Couple to Picnic on Roosevelt's Pet Hilltop And See Catskill View He Took 20 Years to Acquire," New York Herald Tribune, Sunday, June 4, 1939, p. unknown. Small Collections – Papers of William Faber, FDRL.
- 109. Nelson Brown's "Personal Reminiscences of F.D.R." Small Collections – Nelson Brown Papers – Cont.2, p. 5, FDRL.
- 110. Ibid., p. 3.
- 111. Ibid., p. 6.
- 112. Ibid., p. 5.
- 113. Ibid., p. 5.
- 114. Ibid., p. 6.
- 115. Ibid., p. 23.
- 116. Ibid., pp. 1-32; and Small Collections: Nelson Brown Papers, 1930 -1951, FDRL.
- 117. Nelson Brown's "Personal Reminiscences of F.D.R." Small Collections Nelson Brown Papers Cont.2, p. 12, FDRL.
- 118. Ibid., p. 13.
- 119. Ibid., p. 3.
- 120. Ibid., pp. 18-19.
- 121. Closest Companion, p. 300.
- 122. Letter and Memo: Brown to FDR, "Notes as a result of inspection trip to Hyde Park," Sept. 24, 1938, Small Collections, Nelson Brown Papers, Roosevelt – 1935-1938, FDRL.
- 123. Letter and Memo: S. O. Heiberg to Mr. Plogg, "Memo regarding inspection trip to Hyde Park, N.Y. on March 24, 1939, Small Collections, Nelson Brown Papers, Roosevelt – 1939-1942, FDRL.
- 124. Letter and Memo: S. O. Heiberg to Mr. Plogg, "Memo regarding inspection trip to Hyde Park, N.Y. on March 24, 1939, Small Collections, Nelson Brown Papers, Roosevelt – 1939-1942, FDRL.
- 125. Memo: Brown to FDR, "Memo on visit to President's place at Hyde Park, April 27[, 1939], Small Collections, Nelson Brown Papers, Roosevelt – 1939-1942, FDRL.

- 126. Letter and Notes: Brown to FDR, "Notes on Visit to Roosevelt Place, Thursday, Oct. 26, 1939," Small Collections, Nelson Brown Papers, Roosevelt – 1939-1942, FDRL.
- 127. Ibid.
- 128. Nelson. "The President Practices
 Forestry." Reprinted from *Journal of Forestry* (Vol. 41, no. 2, February 1943),
 Small Collections, Nelson Brown Papers
 – Logging Contract, 1944, Brown, FDRL.
- 129. Letter: Brown to FDR, November 13, 1943, PPS, Subject File Hyde Park: 1943, Box 139, FDRL.
- Letter and Recapitulation: Brown to FDR, November 13, 1943, PPS, Subject File – Hyde Park: 1943, Box 139, FDRL.
- 131. Letter: Brown to FDR, December 14, 1943, PPS, Subject File Hyde Park: 1943, Box 139, FDRL.
- Letter: Brown to FDR, January 11, 1944,
 PPS, Subject File Hyde Park: 1943, Box 139, FDRL.
- 133. Nelson Brown's "Personal Reminiscences of F.D.R." Small Collections – Nelson Brown Papers – Cont.2, p. 3, FDRL.
- 134. Donald Wyman, *Wyman's Gardening Encyclopedia: New Expanded Second Edition*, New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1986, p. 216.
- 135. Henry J. Toombs, Associate,

 Specifications of Labor and Materials

 For The Construction of a House For The

 President on the Hudson, New York, May

 26, 1938, p. S1-3, Appendix A HSR.
- 136. FDR, press conference, July 1, 1938, FDRL.
- 137. FDR, press conference, August 27, 1938, FDRL.
- 138. Letter: FDR to Walter A. Cartwright, Esq., Oct. 12, 1938. PPF 1G Hilltop Cottage: June October 1938, FDRL.
- 139. Closest Companion, pp. 230-231.
- 140. Personal telephone interview: Duane Watson of Wilderstein Preservation, to Thomas Elmore, Dec. 12, 2000. Duane said that Daisy Suckley's family were avid photographers and were known for their early pictures and their vast quantity of pictures.
- 141. Closest Companion, p. 232.

- 142. HSR, p. 22.
- 143. Letter: Cartwright to FDR, Oct. 8, 1938, PPF 1G Hilltop Cottage: June October 1938, FDRL.
- 144. Letter: FDR to Walter A. Cartwright, Esq., October 12, 1938. PPF 1G – Hilltop Cottage: June – October 1938, FDRL.
- 145. Schedule A Real Estate, June 5, 1946. This document describes each parcel of land in the Village and Town of Hyde Park that FDR owned at the time of his death. It describes the parcel, its size and its approximate acreage. Hackett Legal Papers, G.R. 73, F.D.R. Estate – Box 19, FDRL.
- 146. HSR, 1997.
- 147. Letter: Hackett to FDR, Sept. 24, 1929, Hackett Legal Papers – GR 73, FDR Real Estate & Legal Papers, Box 16, Folder – Dutchess Hill, FDRL.
- 148. FDR, press conference, July 1, 1938, FDRL.
- 149. "Adams-Faber Company Completes Construction of Roosevelt Cottage," *The Montclair Times* 9 December 1938: 24. Faber Papers, FDRL.
- 150. Closest Companion, p. 31.
- 151. Ibid.
- 152. Ibid, Letter: FDR to Margaret (Daisy) Suckley, Oct. 1935, p. 44.
- 153. Ibid, p. 61.
- 154. Ibid, Letter: FDR to Margaret (Daisy) Suckley, Monday, Feb. 24, 1936, p. 61
- 155. Dows, Olin. Franklin Roosevelt at Hyde Park: Documented Drawings and Text. New York: American Artists Group, Inc., 1949.
- 156. Letter: E.R. Acker, President of Central Hudson, to FDR, January 30, 1939, PSF Hyde Park: Top Cottage: 1939-43, Box 140, FDRL.
- 157. Letter: E.R. Acker, President of Central Hudson, to FDR, January 30, 1939, PSF Hyde Park: Top Cottage: 1939-43, Box 140, FDRL.
- 158. Mitchell, MaryJane, Interview. Central Hudson Gas and Electric Corporation, Estimating Department. By Thomas Elmore. March 1, 2001.

- 159. Stoddard, Marvin. Interview. Central Hudson Gas and Electric Corporation employee retired. By Walter Elmore a friend of Marvin Stoddard. February 22, 2001.
- 160. HSR, p. 55.
- 161. HSR, p. 62.
- 162. Ibid.
- 163. Ibid.
- 164. Palazzo, Clay, Architect with John G. Waite Associates Architects and Project Manager for the restoration of Top Cottage. Telephone conversation. May 22, 2001

CHRONOLOGY OF PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

1882	Franklin Delano Roosevelt (Hereafter referred to as "FDR") is born.
1883	Anna Eleanor Roosevelt is born.
1910	FDR is elected to the New York State Senate at age 28 (<i>The New Encyclopedia Britannica</i> , 15 th ed., vol. 26, Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1993, [Hereafter referred to as Enc. Brit.], pp. 933)
1912	FDR is elected to the New York Senate for a second term (Enc. Brit., p. 933)
	FDR serves as Chairman of the Forestry Committee of the New State Senate while a Senator from Dutchess County, New York (Nelson Brown's "Personal Reminiscences of F.D.R." [Hereafter referred to as "NB"], p. 3, FDRL)
	FDR begins planting trees around Springwood, his family home. (NB, p. 3, FDRL)
1913	FDR is appointed Assistant Secretary of the Navy, a position he serves in for seven (7) years (Enc. Brit., p. 933)
1920	FDR runs unsuccessfully for Vice President of the United States with James M. Cox as the Democratic presidential nominee (Enc. Brit., p. 933)
1921	Henry J. Toombs (hereafter referred to as "Toombs") receives a bachelor's degree from the University of Pennsylvania. (HSR, p. 9)
Aug. 1921	FDR, age 39, is severely stricken with polio while vacationing at Campobello in New Brunswick, Canada. He would remain paralyzed for the rest of his life. (Enc. Brit., p. 933)
1923	Toombs receives a master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania. (HSR, p. 9)

1924	FDR begins swimming therapy for his polio in the warm mineralized springs at Warm Springs, Georgia (Enc. Brit., p. 934)
1926	Val-Kill cottage is built. (Letter: M. A. Le Hand to Harlan Althen, January 10, 1940 - PPF 3481, Architecture, FDRL.)
	Toombs, Architect, receives commissions for the James Roosevelt Memorial Library (FDR's father) and the Val-Kill Shop, both located in Hyde Park, New York. (HSR, p. 10)
1927	FDR establishes the Warm Springs Foundation, (Warm Springs, Georgia) a non-profit institution for the care of polio victims (Enc. Brit., p. 934)
1928	FDR is elected Governor of New York State – he focuses on tax relief for farmers and cheaper public utilities for everyone (Enc. Brit., p. 934)
Sept. 27, 1929	Henry Hackett informs FDR that "Mrs. Florence G. Campbell, owner of the Dutchess Hill property, formerly owned by George Schryver, will sell the property for \$115,000Perhaps before Spring she would be willing to accept less." (Hackett Legal Papers, GR 73., FDR Real Estate and Legal Papers, Box 16, Folder – Dutchess Hill, FDRL)
Sept. 1929	Professor Nelson C. Brown of the New York State College of Forestry, Syracuse, New York, meets FDR for the first time on the campus of Syracuse University. (NB, p. 1, FDRL)
Nov. 1929	Nelson Brown visits FDR, then Governor of New York State, in Hyde Park at his personal invitation and spends the weekend. (NB, p. 3, FDRL)
1930	FDR is re-elected Governor of New York State (Enc. Brit., p. 934)
May 1931	Story on forestry operations at FDR's family estate appears in <i>American Forestry Magazine</i> . The article is called "Governor Roosevelt's Forest: A Museum of What New York's Virgin Forests Looked Like When the Indians Roamed the Shores of the Hudson", by Nelson C. Brown. (Nelson Brown – Roosevelt – 1930-1935 [Letter from Brown to FDR, April 8, 1931], FDRL)
July 19, 1931	Brown visits FDR at Hyde Park to go over details of forestry operations on the estate and to discuss continuing the planting operations that began in the Spring 1930-31. (Nelson Brown – Roosevelt – 1930-1935 [Brown's memo of visit dated July 23, 1931], FDRL)
Feb. 3, 1932	FDR signs "the Bill putting the Reforestation Amendment into effect" (Nelson Brown – Roosevelt – 1930-1935 [Letter From Brown to FDR, Feb. 8, 1932], FDRL)

1932	FDR is elected President of the United States for the first time (Enc. Brit., p. 934)
1933	FDR establishes the Civilian Conservation Corps, known as the C.C.C., as a relief and conservation program. (Nelson Brown's "Personal Reminiscences of F.D.R." – Small Collections – Nelson Brown Papers – Cont.2, p. 8, FDRL)
April 18, 1934	Brown is glad that FDR agrees with placing 35 small signs in the reforestation areas in his estate. The signs will be 1' x 1.5' and attached to low stakes indicating the species, age, and kind of stock used and date planted. (Nelson Brown – Roosevelt – 1930-1935 [Letter from Brown to FDR, April 18, 1934], FDRL)
August 20, 1935	Margaret (Daisy) Suckley to FDR – "The Redwoods have come! But in the form of an envelope full of seeds! With instructions as to their care" [Roosevelt loved trees of all kinds and had convinced himself that sequoias from the Pacific Northwest could somehow be made to grow in Dutchess County. Daisy volunteered to conduct the experiment at Wilderstein.] (CC, p. 31)
Sept. 9, 1935	Daisy Suckley and FDR drive in pouring rain to "Our Hill. From this day on they referred to Dutchess Hill as Our Hill." (CC, p. 31)
Sept. 23, 1935	FDR and Daisy Suckley take a long drive over winding back roads and park on the "forested ridge" they named Our Hill. (CC, p. 32)
	Daisy Suckley to FDR –"After much deep thought, I have come to the very definite conclusion that Our Hill is, quite without exception, the nicest Hill in Dutchess County! The only problem remaining is as to how it should be spelled. Just plain OUR-HILL, or OURHILL, or Owahill, or even OW-WA-HILL!"
	I know you will welcome suggestions!
	But, really, it is the nicest of all hills" (CC, p. 35)
	"To return to your hill-top for a moment! Are you going to put up any kind of a log cabin? It would be such a perfect place for you to write your detective stories, when you can get around to them" (CC, p. 36)
	Since 1933, FDR thought about "building a small place to go to escape the mob" that followed him when he traveled to Springwood. (CC, p. 36)
Oct. 5, 1935	FDR to Daisy Suckley – responding to a sketch of a house for FDR to review and consider, he writes, "Yes – I like it much – and I can understand the garden if I translate the flowers in part at least in terms of trees – But, you know, you and I, because we are we, can't quite ever think in terms of a garden only – perhaps it's because of a good many generations in a Big Place – that we like the Hill Top and the distant view – The intimate wood or garden is a part of our bigger whole – and that is where we have a distinct advantage over B. Nichols…"

	You said once "log Cabin" – But I don't think so" (CC, p. 44)
Feb. 23, 1936	Daisy Suckley to FDR – "I'm wondering if you laid out the new Hill road today, and if it was a gorgeous day, as it was even here" (CC, p. 61)
Feb. 24, 1936	FDR to Daisy Suckley – Apparently it snowed because FDR replied, "Never have I seen so much snow here since the blizzard of '88"
	Our road must wait till the end of April or May." Geoffrey C. Ward indicates that they had been discussing the construction of "an all-weather road through the woods to their hilltop." (CC, p. 61)
March 3, 1936	Daisy Suckley to FDR – "I've been counting up the books belonging to the Ourhill Library! Can you guess how many there are? 13!" Geoffrey C. Ward stated that the books Daisy is referring to were enjoyed by both Daisy and FDR and they were to go to the future cottage. (CC, p. 64)
April 2, 1936	FDR purchases the Rohan Farm (Peter C. and Phebe A. Rohan) containing 122 acres, 1 rod and 4 perches of land as recorded in the office of the Dutchess County Clerk in Liber 550 of Deeds at page 547.
1936	FDR is re-elected President of the United States, his second term (Enc. Brit., p. 935)
Late Summer 1937	Geoffrey C. Ward states that "FDR took time out from his campaign to draw up serious plans for the small house on the hill he and Daisy loved." (CC, p. 98)
Sept. 1937	Daisy Suckley to FDR – Monday – "Wasn't O.H. lovely? And just full of dreams!
	Friday – I have the plans here, and pictures of the house too! And perhaps I shall have to take them down to show to the architect! Who knows? (CC, pp. 98-99)
Sept. 20, 1937	Wednesday P.M. – Daisy Suckley to FDR – Regarding the design of the cottage, Daisy asks, "Do you think it might be a good idea to have windows on the north and south ends of the living room? There would be such lovely vistas to look through! (CC, p. 105)
Sept. 21, 1937	Daisy Suckley to FDR – While pleading with FDR to take care of himself, Daisy mentions several plants by name, which presumably are special to him. Daisy states "if you don't take care of yourself – those rhododendrons, & azaleas, & laurels, & cypress, & yews, & tulip poplars, & dogwoods, etc. won't be attended to – not to forget the Sequoias" (CC, p. 99)

Sept. 22, 1937	Daisy Suckley to FDR – " I found a tiny variety "Cornus Canadensus" only 6-8 inches high, which grow in close patches, "forming a perfect carpet" Geoffrey C. Ward states "suitable for surrounding their hilltop cottage." Daisy continues by saying, "A spring "carpet" of English bluebells would be beautiful, too…" (CC, p 100)
Oct. 3, 1937	"Sunday night. [October 3, 1937] I made a quite perfect floor plan – but suddenly realized that the chimney will stick up in a very queer place –" (CC, p.102)
Nov. Dec. 1937	Daisy Suckley to FDR – Daisy mentions she has plans in her bag for a Dutch house that is "surrounded by trees, distance and peace and a glow of an open fire. (CC, p. 109)
Dec. 5, 1937	Daisy Suckley to FDR – "What an excellent idea, for you to have a "Retreat" on the top of your wooded hill – I have worked out a possible plan which would allow of future improvement and enlarging – & would lay pipes where they might be useful – Doors, also, in three directions –
	"Exploration of the terrain" would show where a cellar could be dug, without disturbing the most important rocks – Perhaps you would need only a small cellar under part of it –" Geoffrey C. Ward then states that "FDR's plans for his hilltop had steadily changed. He first thought merely of building a terrace on his hilltop and adding a primitive lean-to that would have included a fireplace and kitchenette; he then thought to construct a large living room so that he could visit in cold weather. Now, he thought he'd build a full-fledged cottage in which he could work away at his memoirs after 1940 without interruption." (CC, p. 111)
Feb. 3, 1938	FDR sketches a Section and Plan for Top Cottage. (HSR, p. 8, FDRL)
Feb. 1938	Geoffrey C. Ward states that "FDR sent a sketch of his proposed hilltop cottage to his architect friend Henry J. Toombs, who produced finished drawings with only slight modifications of the President's plan. There were to be three parts to Top Cottage: a central living and dining room with a high, curved ceiling and an opening onto a western porch with serene view of treetops, the slow-moving [Hudson] river, and the Catskills, far beyond…" (CC, p. 112)
May 26, 1938	The architectural drawings of Top Cottage are published in <i>The Architectural Forum</i> , which date the drawings May 26, 1938.
	Technical specifications for the construction of Top Cottage are finalized. (HSR, Appendix A)
Summer 1938 -June 1939	Construction of Top Cottage

May 28, 1938	Toombs and FDR discuss landscaping around the house and creating a small lake, which is to be 4 feet deep and would extend onto the Backer's property. (HSR, p. 55)
May 30, 1938	Toombs, FDR and William Feller, Feller Brothers – well-diggers and contractor, approve the location for the new well. (HSR, p. 22)
July 1, 1938	Standard Form of Agreement Between Contractor and Owner for Construction of Buildings is signed between Adams-Faber Company, Inc. and Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Contract indicates that the drawings were prepared by Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Architect and Henry J. Toombs, Associate. (PSF Hyde Park: Top Cottage: 1938, Box 139, FDRL)
	Perimeter of cottage is staked and marked with string. (HSR, p. 26)
	Crown Princess Louise of Sweden is guest of honor at a picnic at Dutchess Hill. (HSR, p. 27)
July 7, 1938	FDR returns signed construction contract to Toombs. (HSR, p. 34)
July 11, 1938	Adams-Faber writes to Toombs to inquire about a heating system and state the furnace should be placed in the basement prior to placing the sheathing on the first floor. (HSR, p. 36)
July 14, 1938	John Faber writes to Toombs that the excavation is complete. (HSR, p. 27)
	Adams-Faber submits sample of blue-black asphalt shingle. (HSR, p. 35)
July 27, 1938	John Faber writes that the foundations are being installed. (HSR, p. 27)
Aug. 15, 1938	The Holland Company provides shop drawings of the ductwork and register layout for the heating system. (HSR, p. 39)
Aug. 19, 1938	FDR inspects the construction site and is pleased with progress and quality of work. (HSR, p. 28)
Aug. 22, 1938	John Faber tells Toombs the plumber is scheduled to begin work today. (HSR, p. 35)
Aug. 31, 1938	Adams-Faber submits second requisition for payment. (HSR, p. 29)
Sept. 24, 1938	After "an extended trip over the place was made with Mr. Plog" Nelson Brown notes that the plantings in 1939 should include clearing the birch lot on the Rohan Farm, about three acres, will be cut down during the winter of 1938-39. Someone writes in pencil next to Nelson note, "Leave 1 best tree in each clump of birches." (Nelson Brown – Roosevelt –1935-1938. [Brown's notes after inspection trip to Hyde Park], FDRL)

Sept. 27, 1938	Nelson Brown writes that President and says, "You certainly have a lovely lodge up on the hilltop, and what a grand view one can get from that "top of the World."" (Nelson Brown – Roosevelt – 1935-1938 [Letter from Brown to FDR, Sept. 27, 1938], FDRL)
	Toombs releases a media kit with a description of the cottage and some plans, elevations and perspective renderings. (HSR, p. 41)
Sept. 30, 1938	John Faber reports that "the exterior stone walls are complete". (HSR, p. 34)
	Adams-Faber submits third requisition for payment. (HSR, p. 29)
	The "wings" of the cottage are shingled. (HSR, p. 35)
	All of the window sashes are installed. (HSR, p. 35)
Oct. 1938	Harry G. Barker of Carmel, Indiana, writes FDR and offers to make a "hand wrought lead" lantern, which FDR later accepted. (HSR, p. 46)
Oct. 4, 1938	FDR visits the cottage and tells Paul Adams that the exterior paint "should be the same color as the priming". Toombs later clarifies the color white for Adams by stating that the "color should be between a cream white and oyster white." (HSR, p. 40)
Oct. 12, 1938	FDR writes in response to Mr. Walter A. Cartwright's letter from the Virgo company, a plant food or fertilizer company, letter dated Oct. 8, 1938. FDR states that he is "having no lawn and [is] keeping the woods in their natural state." (PPF 1G – Hilltop Cottage, June-Oct. 1938, FDRL)
Oct. 31, 1938	FDR begins discussing the extension of electrical service to Top Cottage. He meets with C. E. Groesbeck, Esq., Chairman of the Board of the Electric Bond and Share Company, and mentions his intentions of extending utility lines to Top Cottage. This "brief reference" concerns Mr. Groesbeck "considerably." (PPF 5675 – Groesbeck, C.E. [Letter from Groesbeck to FDR, Nov. 7, 1938], FDRL) Adams-Faber tells Toombs that the final coat of interior paint should be
	complete by Nov. 3, 1938. (HSR, p. 40)
Nov. 1938	"The Adams Faber Story" is published in <i>American Builder</i> , p. 50. (HSR, p. 23)
Nov. 2, 1938	FDR turns down the offer to purchase the Frank Jacob farm (8.4 acres) for \$200.00 per acre. The Jacob farm lies between the Lent Wood/Top Cottage parcel and Cream Street. (Hackett Legal Papers, GR. 73, FDR Real Estate & Legal Papers, Box 16, Folder – Dutchess Hill, Letter from FDR to Henry Hackett, FDRL)

Nov. 5, 1938	FDR, Toombs and the contractors inspect the cottage. (HSR, p. 34)
	During inspection, Hall Roosevelt expresses concerns about the potential of the floors buckling due to insufficient ventilation. (HSR, p. 41)
Nov. 11, 1938	FDR responds to Groesbeck's letter and suggests he take up the matter of extending utility poles with the Central Hudson Gas & Electric Company. FDR gives Mr. Groesbeck permission to use his illustration regarding utility pole locations for electric service to Top Cottage. (PPF 5675 – Groesbeck, C. E. [Letter from FDR letter to Mr. Groesbeck, Nov. 11, 1938], FDRL)
Nov. 21, 1938	The New York Fire Insurance Rating Organization issues a certificate for the electrical work. (HSR, p. 40)
Dec. 7, 1938	Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation writes to FDR regarding, "the question of the electric line extension to serve [your] new home at Hyde Park." CHG&E indicate that electric services "can be made available either by an extension from the end of the Val-Kill line or by an extension from [their] distribution system on Cream Street. It has been [CHG&E's] plan, however, subject to your approval, to provide service from either direction by running an extension from the end of the Val-Kill line and connecting with our Cream Street distribution linewe have planned to use aerial cable on comparatively short, light poles, and to make the installation at our own expense." (PSF Hyde Park: Top Cottage: 1938, Box 139 [Letter from CHG&E to Mr. President, Dec. 7, 1938], FDRL)
Dec. 8, 1938	Mr. Groesbeck wanted "to tell the President that the matter of the pole line extension to his new house at HP [Hyde Park] is straightened out and that it will be taken care of in good shape – that he will hear in due course from the company. In the meantime the President can dismiss it from his mind." (PPF – 5675 – Groesbeck, C. E., FDRL)
Dec. 13, 1938	Mr. Ernest R. Acker, President, Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation responds in writing to FDR's letter of Dec. 10, 1938 and indicates that he understands the Presidents "wishes" that the installation of new electric service to his cottage be from Cream Street and that the President objects "to an additional pole line through the woods to the end of the Val-Kill line." Accordingly, CHG&E will provide electrical service from Cream Street on their light poles and at their own expense. (PPF – 5738 – Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corp. [Letter to FDR from E. R. Acker, President of CHG&E, Dec. 13, 1938], FDRL)
Jan. 16, 1939	Adams-Faber Company receives final payment of \$ 3,119.82 for constructing Top Cottage. (PSF Hyde Park: Top Cottage: 1939-43 [Letter from Paul Adams and John Faber to Miss M. A. LeHand, Secretary to the President, Jan. 16, 1939], FDRL)

Chronology Chronology

Jan. 26, 1939	FDR writes to approve CHG&E's proposal of December 13, 1938 for extending electric service line to Top Cottage. (PSF Hyde Park: Top Cottage: 1939-43, Box 140 [Letter from E. R. Acker, President of CHG&E, to FDR, Jan. 30, 1939], FDRL)
Jan. 28, 1939	Electrical service line installation is complete and electrical service is established. (PSF Hyde Park: Top Cottage: 1939-43, Box 140 [Letter from E. R. Acker, President of CHG&E, to FDR, Jan. 30, 1939], FDRL)
Jan. 30, 1939	Ernest R. Acker, President of Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation, writes to the President and states that his installation at their expense "represents [their] general practice in such instances[where] demonstrations are being made where unusual hazards or tree conditions exist" (PSF Hyde Park: Top Cottage: 1939-43, Box 140 [Letter from E. R. Acker, President of CHG&E, to FDR, Jan. 30, 1939], FDRL)
March 22, 1939	Paul Adams makes an inspection trip to Top Cottage and provides Toombs with a list of items that need attention. (HSR, p. 34)
March 24, 1939	S. Heilberg, Associate Professor of Silviculture, New York College of Forestry at Syracuse, notes in his memo that "The birch lot on the Peter Rohan lot south of the new lodge has been cleared and only a few standards of gray birch have been left distributed over the area." (Nelson Brown – Roosevelt – 1939-1942, FDRL)
May 1, 1939	Crown Prince and Princess of Denmark visit Top Cottage for lunch - photographed by Margaret Suckley. (HSR, p. 44)
May 30, 1939	FDR tells reporters that "there are now three pieces of furniture in it". (HSR, p. 46)
June 11, 1939	King George VI and Elizabeth are honored guests at a luncheon at Top Cottage – photographed by Margaret Suckley. (HSR, p. 45)
Sept. 1, 1939	Geoffrey C. Ward states that, "It gradually became clear Daisy's dream of living and working with FDR at Top Cottage would have to be deferredand she may already have made her peace with the fact that she would never have exclusive possession of the man she loved. From then on, she was always careful to refer to the retreat she' once called "Our House on Our Hill" as "your cottage."" (CC, p. 133)
Oct. 26, 1939	Nelson Brown indicates that the red and white pine and larch in the birch lot at the Rohan Farm had a survival rate of about 40% and that they must be replanted – he suggests Norway spruce. (Nelson Brown – Roosevelt – 1939-1942 [Brown's notes on visit to Roosevelt Place, Oct. 26, 1939], FDRL)

Dec. 6, 1939	Christian Bie submits bill for making a "Center bookcase" and two "End bookcases". (HSR, p. 46)
Feb. 1940	The Holland Furnace Company submits bill for servicing the heating system. (HSR, p. 49)
Summer 1940	Three leaks are discovered in Top Cottage's roof. (HSR, p. 49)
1940	FDR is re-elected President of United States, his third term (Enc. Brit., p. 936)
Jan. 2, 1941	FDR writes to the Honorable Adrian Dornbush, Associate Director, WPA Art Program, Work Projects Administration, and says that he is "counting the days until he could get away to Hyde Park to personally supervise the placing of the "Private Property" signs for the new Cottage." (PPF 1G: Hilltop Cottage – Cross-Reference: See PPF 7195, FDRL)
March 1941	Hall Roosevelt confronts the Holland Furnace Company about the poor quality of their work and that it will have to be removed. The company withdrew bill for services. Hall and Russell Linaka fixed the installation in conformance with New York State law. (HSR, p. 49)
March 9, 1941	Mr. Coryell, General Manager of Coryell Nursery of Birmingham, Michigan writes to G. Hall Roosevelt about sending several trees to FDR's estate as "personal memorial[s] to President Roosevelt" from "prominent Michigan men." Mr. Coryell suggests small Flowering Crab trees. (PSF Hyde Park: Top Cottage: 1939-43, Box 140, FDRL)
March 25, 1941	G. Hall Roosevelt writes back to Mr. Coryell and states, "What a generous idea!I know that [FDR] will be greatly pleased and honoredThese plants would be just right for his "Hill Cottage" (PSF Hyde Park: Top Cottage: 1939-43, Box 140, FDRL)
April 7, 1941	FDR writes a memorandum for G. Hall Roosevelt and states that, "I think Mr. Coryell's idea is grand. I suggest the small Flowering Crab, and that the half dozen or so of these plants be placed on the high point in the open field about two to three hundred feet east of the road leading to the Hill Cottage – in other words, about eight hundred or one thousand feet southeast of the cottage itself." (PSF Hyde Park: Top Cottage: 1939-43, Box 140, FDRL)
	At present, research does not confirm if these trees were sent or planted as indicated.
Aug. 24, 1941	The New York Times Magazine states that "a couple" is permanently established as staff and caretakers" at Top Cottage. FDR confirms in March 1943 that Christian Bie "and his new wife" are caretakers in my Hill Cottage." (HSR, p. 49)

Chronology Chronology

Dec. 7, 1941	Japan attacks Pearl Harbor. (Enc. Brit., p. 936)
Dec. 8, 1941	As a result of the Pearl Harbor bombing, Congress votes, at FDR's request, for a declaration of war. (Enc. Brit., p. 936)
Dec. 11, 1941	Germany and Italy declare war against the United States of America, which, along with Congress' declaration, casts the United States into World War II. (Enc. Brit., p. 936)
Spring 1942	FDR decides to remove the marketable "large, mature and overmature oaks and some other species" from the woods on the estate. (Small Collections, Nelson Brown Papers – Logging Contract, 1944, Brown, Nelson. "The President Practices Forestry." Reprinted from <i>Journal of Forestry</i> (Vol. 41, no. 2, February, 1943), FDRL)
March 1, 1942	The President spent an hour at the Dutchess Hill Cottage. (WH, p. 21)
March 28, 1942	"The President went to the Dutchess Hill cottage for lunch" (WH, p. 28)
March 29, 1942	FDR writes his name in several books including, among others, Edith Wharton's book, title not indicated. (WH, p. 29)
	While at Dutchess Hill cottage, FDR tells William Hassett about the bronze statue that he saw at the San Francisco Exposition years earlier. "He remembered the statue again and thought how beautiful it would be in the grounds [at Top Cottage]. The President begins searching for the sculptor, George Stackpole, whose name he does not remember. (WH, p. 30)
May 8, 1942	The President takes Dr. Newton B. Drury, Director of the National Park Service, "up to Dutchess Hill cottage to see the dogwoods in bloom [The President] missed his beloved dogwood last year and timed his visit so as to see it. (WH, p. 42)
	The dogwoods that FDR loves so much is the native, Cornus florida, Flowering Dogwood. It grows to 40 feet tall, native to the eastern half of the United States, its true flowers are small and inconspicuous while its white bracts are incorrectly considered its flower petals. The fruits are brilliant red berries in the fall and the autumn color is always a brilliant scarlet. (Wyman, Donald. <i>Wyman's Gardening Encyclopedia</i> . Second Edition. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1986, pp. 257-258)
June 1, 1942	The President invites members of the Dutchess County Historical Society up to the Dutchess Hill cottage. (WH, p. 48)
June 2, 1942	The president drives the Duke and Duchess of Windsor up "to the Dutchess Hill cottage in the afternoon, driving his own car." (WH, p. 54)

June 3, 1942	The President visits the Dutchess Hill cottage in the afternoon. (WH, p. 62)
June 20, 1942	The President visits the Dutchess Hill cottage in the evening. (WH, p. 68)
	King George II of Greece and the Crown Princess Martha of Norway have lunch with FDR, Margaret Hambley and others on the west porch at Top Cottage – photographed by Margaret Suckley. (HSR, p. 47)
June 26, 1942	The President takes "King George [of Greece] and Princess Martha for a ride over the place; also [shows] them the Dutchess Hill cottage. (WH, p. 70)
July 2, 1942	"In accordance with the plan which F.D.R. had told Mrs. Roosevelt, he, Princess Martha and children, Grace Tully, Harry Hopkins, Diana, and her little friend went to Dutchess Hill cottage for an indoor picnic, the weather being rainy." (WH, p. 83)
	"still no telephone there [referring to the Dutchess Hill cottage]. (WH, p. 84.)
July 3, 1942	The President takes Harry Hopkins and Louise Macy for a ride through his property and then to the Dutchess Hill cottage for tea. (WH, p. 84)
	Holland Furnace Company submits forced-hot-air heating plans – based on the same contract plans they used in 1938. (HSR, p. 49)
July 31, 1942	The President visits the Dutchess Hill cottage. (WH, p. 96)
August 3, 1942	The President has "a picnic affair on Dutchess Hill." (WH, p. 99)
Aug. 19, 1942	Margaret "Daisy" Suckley's Diary (Hereafter referred to as "DD") – "We went to Top Cottage, and took in a pile of books on trees & birds, etc. We sat on the porch & talked for a while in the quiet cool evening sunlight." (CC, p. 172)
Fall 1942	Alteration is underway for improving the second floor. (HSR, p. 54)
Nov. 27, 1942	DD – "Prof. Nelson Brown came, to go over the tree Plantation with F Mr. Plog and Prof. Brown sat in the back – We drove all around the plantations, Prof. Brown & F. discussing the condition of the trees, plans for planting 30,000 more next spring, etc." (CC, p. 187)
Feb. 1943	Nelson Brown publishes an article entitled "The President Practices Forestry" in the <i>Journal of Forestry</i> , Vol. 41, No. 2, February 1943. (Nelson Brown – Logging Contract 1944, FDRL)

Chronology Chronology

March 9, 1943	"The President [goes] for a ride in the afternoon and at last up to Dutchess hill cottage in safety over a sanded road." [The President tried several times to go up to Dutchess Hill cottage, but the icy roads deterred him.] (WH, p. 161)
Summer 1943	New bedrooms are furnished late in the summer. (HSR, p. 55)
Aug. 28, 1943	DD – "The P. was very cheerful & seemed relaxed. He also [ordered the bushes trimmed] along the walk to the cottage because, the day before, they showered him with rain drops." (CC, pp. 231-232)
Sept. 21, 1943	Brown indicates that "Merchantable sized and mature oaks and other species are to be selectively marked for cutting in the woods below the Hilltop Cottage" (Nelson Brown – Roosevelt – 1944, Folder – Misc. and Planting [Brown's memo entitled "Memorandum re plans for 1944 reforestation operations and the marking of timber for fall or winter cutting at Hyde Park in 1943-44, Sept. 21, 1943"], FDRL)
Oct. 25, 1943	Brown writes to Mr. Plog stating that he expects to visit on November 5 th and 6 th "to mark trees along the roads coming down from the Hilltop Cottage" (Nelson Brown – Roosevelt – 1944, Folder – Misc. and Planting [Letter from Brown to Plog, Oct. 25, 1943], FDRL)
Nov. 13, 1943	Brown writes to the President and says that he took four boys from the college and marked trees on five plots at his estate. One of the plots included "the slope below the Hilltop Lodge and along the roads leading up to it, including the crossroad to the Jones Lot." (PSF Hyde Park: 1943, Box 139, FDRL)
Dec. 10, 1943	Hudson Valley Lumber Corporation signs a contract to purchase FDR's lumber. Cutting is expected to begin imminently and is expected to be concluded by April 1, 1944. (PSF – Subject File – Hyde Park: 1943, Box 139 [Letter from Brown to FDR, December 14, 1943], FDRL)
1944	FDR is re-elected President of United States, his fourth term (Enc. Brit., 936)
January 1944	"The President [is] given a model of the original kneeling girl [statue - see March 29, 1942], in bronze, a faithful reproduction about eight or nine inches high, which he placed on the mantel over the living-room fireplace at the Dutchess Hill cottage. The new version was installed in the Library grounds, moved twice, and now located at the western end of the Library parking area, 'surrounded by landscaping of evergreen." (WH, p. 32)
Jan. 5, 1944	Brown inspects cutting operations "along the North-South road leading to the Jones' lot below the Hilltop Cottage" (PSF Hyde Park: 1945, Box 139 [Letter from Brown to FDR, Jan. 11, 1944], FDRL)

Jan. 12, 1944	FDR writes to Mr. Jesse Lilienthal indicating his pleasure of receiving the bronze statue known as the "Kneeling Girl". FDR writes that he is "going to put her on a pedestal, set in the trees, just outside my bedroom window at the hilltop cottage." (PPF 8621: Lilienthal, Jesse, FDRL)
Feb. 19, 1944	FDR appoints William Hassett to the post of secretary to the President. [Hassett traveled with the President until his death, keeping a daily travel diary of activities and personal anecdotes.] (WH, p. xvi)
Feb. 24, 1944	DD – "After tea we took some books to the Top Cottage [and] stayed there for a while, talking, the setting sun streaming in through the wide door onto the porch." (CC, p. 280)
May 19, 1944	DD – "About 11:30 A.M. the P. came, suggested we go to the Top Cottage, instead of his coming into the Library, to see the dogwood. We put a couple of chairs in the sun, north of the porch, & just talked, quietly, about the view, the dogwood, a little about the coming invasion in Europe." (CC, p. 300)
	The President visits "Dutchess Hill cottage in the afternoon to see the dogwoods." (WH, p. 244)
May 20, 1944	The President urges William Hassett to visit Dutchess Hill as the dogwood "was very lovely yesterday." (WH, p. 245)
May 22, 1944	DD – "At 5 we went to Hilltop with some books & pictures" (CC, p. 301)
May 23, 1944	"In the afternoon Grace, Alice, Hackie, and [William Hassett go] to Dutchess Hill cottage to see the dogwood. (WH, p. 247)
June 6, 1944	D-Day Invasion of Normandy.
July 1, 1944	DD – "At 4:15we went to Top Cottage. We sat on the porch workinguntil 6:15." (CC, p. 315)
July 28, 1944	Brown writes to FDR and says he studied "the condition of[the]woods and the roads after logging. Apparently the contractors have done a good job." (PSF Hyde Park: 1945, Box 139 [Letter from Brown to FDR, July 28, 1944], FDRL)
April 12, 1945	Franklin D. Roosevelt dies at Warm Springs, Georgia. Dutchess Hill Cottage parcel consists of approximately 74 acres. (Hackett Legal Papers, Gr. 73, FDR Real Estate – Schedule A, Box 19, FDRL)

Chronology Chronology

May 1, 1946	Elliott Roosevelt leases "Hill Top Cottage" for one (1) year at the cost of \$75 per month from James Roosevelt, Basil O'Conner and Henry T. Hackett, Executors and Trustees of the last Will and Testament of F.D.R. (Hackett Legal Papers, Elliott R., Hill Top Cottage – Rent Control, FDRL)
April 8, 1947	The Federal Land Bank of Springfield approves loan to A. Eleanor Roosevelt in the amount of \$37,000 for 33 years at an interest rate of 4% to purchase the following farms: 1) Bennett Farm; 2) Dumphy Farm; 3) Hughson Farm; 4) Rohan Farm; and 5) Tompkins Farm. (Hackett Legal Papers, Box 19, Folder – Contact Mr. FDR, Lease to Mr. FDR, FDRL)
July 15, 1947	Executors of the Estate of Franklin D. Roosevelt (James Roosevelt, Basil O'Conner and Henry T. Hackett) sell to Anna Eleanor Roosevelt "All those lots or parcels of land owned by Franklin D. Roosevelt at the time of his death situate, lying and being in the Town of Hyde Park, Dutchess County, New York, lying east of the center of Mariches Creek" for \$85,000.00 as recorded in the office of the Dutchess County Clerk in Liber 669 of Deeds at page 285.
Aug. 15, 1947	Anna Eleanor Roosevelt sells to Elliott Roosevelt "All those lots or parcels of land owned by Franklin D. Roosevelt at the time of his death situate, lying and being in the Town of Hyde Park, Dutchess County, New York, lying east of the center of Mariches Creek" as recorded in the office of the Dutchess County Clerk in Liber 669 of Deeds at page 410.
1950	The Town of Hyde Park incorrectly notes that Elliott Roosevelt builds greenhouse. (Town of Hyde Park, New York, Assessor's File, Number 6264-03-1000351)
Dec. 23, 1952	Elliott Roosevelt sells 117.529 acres of land, which includes Top Cottage, to Agnes F. Potter as recorded in the office of the Dutchess County Clerk in Liber 820 of Deeds at page 451.
Mid-1950's	Potter family constructs a greenhouse. (HSR, p. 62)
Sept. 24, 1957	Agnes F. Potter conveys to Robert I. Potter (dies April 3, 1973) and Gary Hunter Potter (dies November 22, 1973), by deed and recorded in the office of the Dutchess County Clerk in Liber 820 of Deeds at page 451.
May 16, 1961	Toombs returns original drawings by FDR of Top Cottage to Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman. (Marion Dickerman Papers: 1918-1975, Roosevelt Family – Roosevelt, Sara, FDRL)
March 1966	Potters file subdivision map with the office of the Dutchess County Clerk. Map is entitled "Section I Val-Kill Heights, Property of P.S. Potter Estate" prepared by M. Chazen, P.E. & L.S., dated July 7, 1965.

1964	Potters install a kidney-shaped, Gunite swimming pool. (HSR, p. 62)
1972	Potters construct a fish pond with a fountain. (HSR, p. 62)
July 17, 1974	Last Will and Testament of Gary Hunter Potter grants and releases unto Philip S. Potter, Jr., John N. Potter, and Marine Midland Bank Eastern, N.A. 8.1 acres, which included a 50 feet wide right-of-way known as Old Farm Lane (from Elliott Roosevelt – Liber 816 of Deeds at page 65), being part of the premises conveyed by Elliott Roosevelt on December 23, 1952 (Liber 820 of Deeds at page 451) and being the same premises conveyed by deed from Agnes F. Potter to Robert I. Potter and Gary Hunter Potter (Liber 954 of Deeds at page 431) as recorded in the office of the Dutchess County Clerk in Liber 1388 of Deeds at page 504.
Mid-1970's	Owen Potter and his wife Ellen convert the stable into a residence. (HSR, p. 62)
	An electric cord under a rug catches fire – chars the floor and causes extensive smoke damage at Top Cottage. (HSR, p. 62)
1978	Town of Hyde Park's records incorrectly indicate that the Potter family install kidney shaped pool and flagstone patio. (Town of Hyde Park, New York, Assessor's File, Number 6264-03-1000351)
1982	Philip S. Potter, Jr. dies and conveys 117.5 acres to Jean O. Potter (his wife).
Nov. 29, 1993	Potters file subdivision map with the office of the Dutchess County Clerk. Map is entitled "Final Subdivision of Lands of Potter" by Chazen Engineering & Land Surveying Co., P.C., Poughkeepsie, NY, dated Nov. 3, 1989 with several revisions dates. Three maps are filed together and are numbered 9811, maps 1 of 3, 2 of 3, and 3 of 3.
May 28, 1996	Owen W. Potter, as executor of the estate of his mother Jean O. Potter, sells Top Cottage to Beaverkill Conservancy, Inc. as recorded in the office of the Dutchess County Clerk in Liber 1980 of Deeds at page 232.
	Beaverkill Conservancy, Inc. purchased 33.59 acres, consisting of Lots 22, 34, 35 & 36 as shown on map entitled "Section I – Val-Kill Heights" filed in the Dutchess County Clerk's Office, 3/24/66 as Map # 3398 and Lot 55 on a certain map entitled "Final Subdivision of lands of Potter" filed at the office of the Clerk's Office on 11/29/93 as map # 9811.
1997	John G. Waite Associates, Architects, PLLC, 388 Broadway, Albany, NY complete Historic Structure Report on Top Cottage for The Franklin & Eleanor Roosevelt Institute, Hyde Park, NY.

Chronology Chronology

July 1, 1997	Beaverkill Conservancy, Inc. purchases 2.22 acres from Matthew and Loretta Lahey as recorded in the office of the Dutchess County Clerk in Liber 1997 of Deeds at page 269.
Sept. 19, 1997	Beaverkill Conservancy, Inc. purchases 3.7 acres from Michael J. Hayden as recorded in the office of the Dutchess County Clerk in Liber 2000 of Deeds at page 577.
	Above two purchases of land connect the Top Cottage property to the Val-Kill property and are shown on map entitled "Final Subdivision Plat Prepared For Beaverkill Conservancy, Inc." as prepared by The Chazen Companies, Manchester Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603, and approved by the Hyde Park Planning Board on April 9, 1997 and filed with the office of the Dutchess County Clerk on May 13, 1997 as Filed Map No. 10424.
Dec. 1997	National Park Service confers National Historic Landmark to Top Cottage.
June 1998	Beaverkill Conservancy, Inc. purchases 1.01 acres from Lands of Redl as shown on map entitled "Final Map of Survey of Subdivision Prepared For Beaverkill Conservancy, Inc." as prepared by Brooks and Brooks Land Surveyors, P.C., 326 Route 299, Highland, NY, revise dated June 18, 1998.
Aug-Sept. 1999	Smith & Mahoney, P.C., 382 Broadway, Albany, NY prepare a new septic design for Top Cottage. Maps are entitled "Top Cottage SDS, Valkill Drive & Potter Bend, Sewage Disposal System Plan & Details and Overall Site Plan & Detail, maps 1 and 2, respectively.
June 1999- restoration. Dec. 2000	Potter family improvements are removed as part of the Top Cottage
March 2001	Paul F. Tommell, L.S., P.C., 73 Excelsior Avenue, Saratoga Springs, New York prepares detailed site survey of Top Cottage's historic core, which consists of approximately five (5) acres.

SOURCES

CC Ward. Geoffrey C. ed. and annotated. Closest Companion: The Unknown

Story of the Intimate Friendship between Franklin Roosevelt and Margaret Suckley. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1995.

WH Hassett, William D. Off the Record with F.D.R. 1942-1945. New Jersey:

Rutgers University Press, 1958.

HSR John G. Waite Associates, Architects. Franklin D. Roosevelt's Top

Cottage / Historic Structure Report, 1997.

FDRL Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, NY

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPARISON

The following sets of photographs illustrate how the landscape at Top Cottage has changed since FDR's residency. The subject and direction of each photograph is indicated and all photographs are labeled and dated.

ENTRANCE - LOOPED DRIVE LOOKING NORTH



May 10, 1944. [FDRL]



January, 2001. [EDC]

ENTRANCE – LOOPED DRIVE, LOOKING NORTHWEST AT EAST ELEVATION OF COTTAGE



June, 1939. [FDRL]



December, 2000. [EDC]

FRONT YARD - EAST ELEVATION OF COTTAGE



June 2, 1939. Photograph by ACME Newspapers, Inc. (UPI). [FDRL]



Undated photograph by Margaret (Daisy) Suckley (between 1939 and 1945). [FDRL]

FRONT YARD – EAST ELEVATION OF COTTAGE (continued)



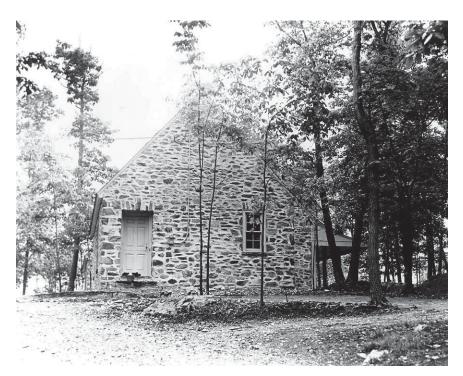
Undated photograph (but probably in the late 1940s). [FDRL]



January, 2001. [EDC]

Photographic Comparison

NORTH ELEVATION – LOOKING SOUTH AT KITCHEN/ SERVICE END OF COTTAGE



June 1939 (Von Knoblauch, FDRL)



Jan. 2001 (EDC)

EASTERN VIEWSHED – NORTH END OF LOOPED DRIVE LOOKING EAST



June, 1939. Photograph by Von Knoblauch. [FDRL]



December, 2000. [EDC]

$\begin{array}{c} \text{NORTHWEST CORNER OF COTTAGE} - \text{LOOKING} \\ \text{SOUTHEAST} \end{array}$



June, 1939. [FDRL]



December, 2000. [EDC]

$\begin{tabular}{ll} NORTHWEST CORNER OF COTTAGE-LOOKING \\ SOUTHEAST (continued) \end{tabular}$



View of the north wing, September 1944. Daisy Suckley is holding back one of the trees. [FDRL]



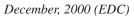
January, 2001. [EDC]

WEST PORCH – LOOKING SOUTHEAST AT EARTHEN RAMP AND WEST PORCH



Sept. 1944 (FDRL)







January, 2001 (EDC)

WEST PORCH – VIEW LOOKING NORTH



June 20, 1942. Photograph by Margaret (Daisy) Suckley. [FDRL]



January, 2001. [EDC]

WEST PORCH - VIEW LOOKING SOUTH



June 2, 1941. Photograph by Margaret (Daisy) Suckley. [FDRL]



January, 2001. [EDC]

WEST PORCH – LOOKING EAST



June, 1939. Photograph by Von Knoblauch. [FDRL]



January, 2001. [EDC]

SOUTH ELEVATION AND WEST PORCH – LOOKING NORTH FROM `STONE WALL

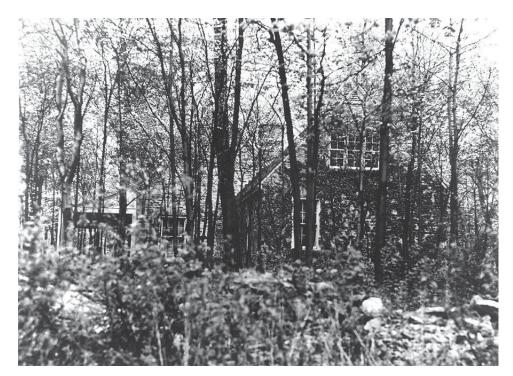


Undated photograph by Margaret (Daisy) Suckley. [FDRL]

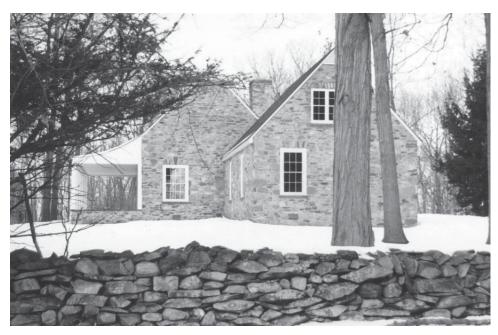


December, 2000. [EDC]

SOUTH ELEVATION AND WEST PORCH – LOOKING NORTH FROM STONE WALL (continued)



May, 1944. Photograph by Allen Frost. [FDRL]



January, 2001. [EDC]

WESTERN VIEWSHED FROM WEST PORCH



Circa 1938-1939. Photograph by Adams-Faber Company. [FDRL]



1941. Photograph by Lucien Aigner. [FDRL]



December, 2000. [EDC]

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The purpose of this section is to document and describe the current site conditions at Top Cottage, emphasizing the extant landscape features that have survived since FDR's death. This analysis focuses on the site's historic core, which includes approximately five (5) acres surrounding the cottage. The site is an important historic vernacular landscape that retains much of its historical integrity, despite the changes made by subsequent owners.

The Existing Conditions – Illustrative Rendering (See Appendix A – Map 18) was prepared from a professional land survey completed in March 2001. The land survey was prepared to document the physical conditions of the site as it existed at that time. Because of its accuracy and level of detail it will serve as a benchmark in the years to come. The illustrative plan is a graphic representation of the landscape as it presently exists. Together, the illustrative rendering and the land survey document and illustrate the site.

SETTING AND CONTEXT

The most significant changes to Top Cottage's setting and context include the surrounding land use and the size of the acreage connected to the cottage. The landscape that presently surrounds Top Cottage consists mostly of single family residential homes and some farms. A great deal of forest remains to the north and west of the cottage. Suburban sprawl has modified the context and divided several of the former large tracks of farmland into small, individually owned pieces of land. Unfortunately, the present access to Top Cottage is through Val-Kill Heights, a residential subdivision just to the south and east. Below and to the west of Top Cottage is a large subdivision, also constructed on former FDR property.

Top Cottage's present acreage (40.5 acres) is considerably smaller than it was for FDR, though it remains in close proximity to the Val-Kill property. In 1947, Eleanor purchased all of FDR's land east of the centerline of Mariches Creek. The acreage of this purchase is difficult to calculate and therefore its precise size in unknown; additional research is needed to fully document the size of Eleanor's land purchase. Within a month she sold this land to her son Elliott. In 1952, he sold 117.5 acres, including Top Cottage to Agnes Potter, whose family maintained ownership of the cottage until 1996. During their ownership, the Potters developed Val-Kill Heights, a 56-lot, single-family residential subdivision. By 1996, when the family sold Top Cottage to the Beaverkill Conservancy, the property consisted of 33.6± acres of land.

The Conservancy has purchased several small pieces of land to the south, thus creating 40.5 acres of contiguous land surrounding Top Cottage.

The cottage continues to be situated within the woodland. To the south, part of the once open field of the former Rohan Farm has become overgrown. The remaining open area is extant manicured lawn with numerous mature pine trees that the Potter family introduced.

CIRCULATION

The arrival sequence to Top Cottage has changed considerably since 1945. Vehicular circulation is from Cream Street, located to the east through the Val-Kill Heights subdivision. The road is paved and not particularly scenic – a drastic change from the gravel roads that provided access for FDR and his friends. Part of the road that once connected Val-Kill Cottage to Top Cottage survives, although it no longer connects to Val-Kill. Also, its point of connection to the loop drive at Top Cottage is no longer accessible by most vehicles. The looped drive from Potter Bend and Val-Kill Drive seems to follow FDR's alignment, though it is now paved. FDR maintained a gravel drive, in keeping with his desire to maintain a rural setting.

Pedestrian circulation is similar to that in FDR's time. The front walk leads from the drive to the front door; the earthen ramp off the west porch survives; and the walk from the ramp around the north end of the cottage appears much like it did for FDR, ill-defined yet usable.

TOPOGRAPHY

The varied topography that typifies this site appears to have remained the same, notwithstanding minor changes for small site amenities that the Potter family constructed, such as the swimming pool (removed in 1999) and the stable.

VEGETATION

The vegetation has changed significantly since FDR's death. Only one flowering dogwood, at the southern end of the looped drive, has survived. Before the recent restoration, the cottage was hidden within severely overgrown foundation plantings. The woodland that encroached and engulfed the cottage has been cut back and replaced with lawn. Saplings abound, though now as understory (where FDR kept them cleared out). FDR allowed saplings to grow close to the cottage; this condition no longer exists. The old Rohan Farm that was open during FDR's lifetime is now a residential subdivision, dense successional-growth and open lawn with pine trees. Added to these changes are the influx of invasive species including the Norway Maple (Acer platanoides) and the Tree of Heaven (Ailanthus altissima), which have severely altered the appearance of the landscape.

Several mature specimen trees with diameters greater than 12" were located by the land surveyor. It is assumed that, considering their size, these trees were here during

FDR's lifetime. See the Existing Conditions Plan by John G. Waite Associates, dated January 1998.

BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Two structures remain on the property: Top Cottage, which has been meticulously restored back to its appearance and condition from FDR's time; and the stable/cottage. The stable, which was added by the Potters, detracts from the integrity of the site, is inappropriate and postdates FDR.

VIEWS AND VISTAS

All of the views that FDR developed and maintained are now obscured by the unmanaged and natural growth. The views to the west, southwest, northwest, and east no longer exist except when the leaves are off of the trees.

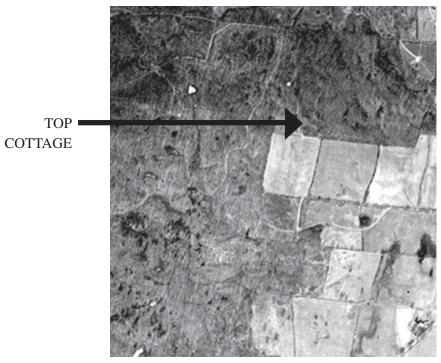
SMALL-SCALE FEATURES

Several small-scale features that support and help define the site's historic integrity still exist. These features include the earthen ramp off the west porch, the stone walls running east-west between the cottage and the old Rohan Farm, and the electrical service poles east of the cottage.

The stone wall that separates Top Cottage from the open lawn to the south originally separated the cottage from an open farm field. The wall would have been built as farmers removed stones from the field and stacked them along the perimeter of the field. The wall is approximately 2 to 2.5 feet high and runs east-west. Several holes have been opened through the wall to permit vehicular and pedestrian access. Presumably FDR created the first point of access through the wall when he constructed the approach drive from the south through the Rohan Farm along an existing hedgerow. Subsequent owners created other openings in the wall to support their use of the property.

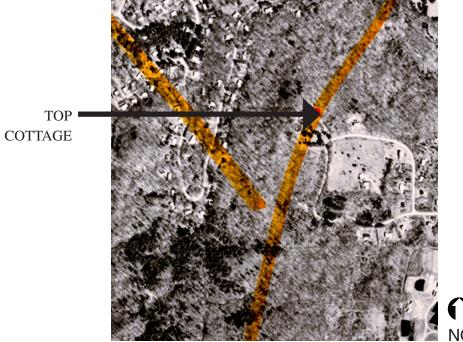
In 1939, Central Hudson Gas and Electrical Co. installed the original electrical service to Top Cottage. The service came in from Cream Street and approached the cottage from the southeast. Of the original seventeen or eighteen poles, at least three may survive. One pole, located due east of the cottage, is identified with the numeral 15. A utility pole immediately east of the driveway, just north of the house, is identified as *C.H.G.&E. CORP.*, 48565, *P*; it is also identified with the numerals 078 and 16. The *C.H.G.&E. CORP.* medallion is nailed to the pole with nails that have the number 39 stamped in their heads; this may indicate the year (1939) that the pole was placed in service. The third pole, identified with the numeral 14, is located near the former location of the Potter garages.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: SETTING AND CONTEXT





1946 Aerial Photograph. [Dutchess Co. Soil & Water Conservation District]



NORTH

1995 Aerial Photograph. [Dutchess Co. Soil & Water Conservation District]

EXISTING CONDITIONS: CIRCULATION

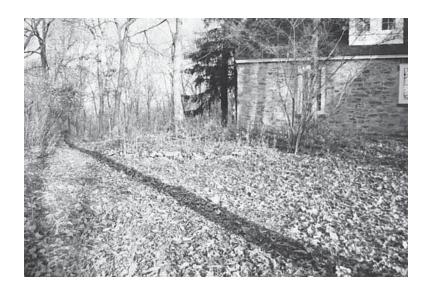


Wooded road leading north from the looped drive of Top Cottage, 2000. [EDC]



Paved loop driveway, looking north, 2000. [EDC]

EXISTING CONDITIONS: CIRCULATION (continued)





Stone-lined walk leading from looped drive at north end of cottage to earthen ramp at west porch, 2000. [EDC]

EXISTING CONDITIONS: TOPOGRAPHY



View looking south along lower segment of looped drive, 2000. The looped drive is terraced into the slope east of the cottage. [EDC]



The stable/cottage is built into the slope to the southwest of the cottage. 2000. [EDC]

EXISTING CONDITIONS: VEGETATION



Foundation plants have been removed. 2000. [EDC]



The surviving dogwood is the double stem tree at the apex of the drive. 2001. [EDC]

EXISTING CONDITIONS: VEGETATION (continued)



Successional-growth in former agricultural field to the south of the cottage, 2001. [EDC]



Val-Kill Drive (immediately south of Top Cottage), looking north, 2001. The mature pine trees were planted by the Potter Family. [EDC]

EXISTING CONDITIONS: VEGETATION (continued)



Mature trees to the south of the cottage that existed during FDR's residency. 2000. [EDC]



This view south of Top Cottage, looking west, shows Tree of Heaven, an invasive plant species. 2001. [EDC]

EXISTING CONDITIONS: STRUCTURES



Top Cottage from the southwest, 2000. [EDC]



Stable/cottage from the southeast, 2000. [EDC]

EXISTING CONDITIONS: VIEWS AND VISTAS



Southwestern viewshed from west porch, 2001. [EDC]



Northeastern viewshed looking toward the Berkshire Mountains, 2000. [EDC]



Panoramic viewshed looking westward from the west porch, 2000. [EDC]

EXISTING CONDITIONS: SMALL-SCALE FEATURES



Earthen ramp at north end of west porch, 2001. [EDC]



Opening in stone wall, south of cottage, 2000. This opening postdates FDR's residency. [EDC]

EXISTING CONDITIONS: SMALL-SCALE FEATURES (continued)





The original electrical service poles to the east of the cottage are believed to have been installed in 1939.

ANALYSIS OF SIGNIFICANCE AND INTEGRITY

This section of the report analyzes the significance and integrity of the extant landscape surrounding Top Cottage. Integrity evaluates the authenticity of the extant features within the historic landscape. The significance of a historic landscape is based on research and understanding of the archival resources, written and graphic, that document the property. It usually includes a combination of integrity and association with a historic figure or event.

SIGNIFICANCE

Significance measures the relative importance of cultural resources. In the United States, properties deemed significant must meet at least one of the four cultural heritage criteria specified by the *National Register of Historic Places*. A property may be deemed significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and/or culture if:

- A. it is associated with important events that have made significant contributions to the broad patterns of American history;
- B. it is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. it has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

This report establishes the landscape surrounding Top Cottage as a historic vernacular landscape under criterion "B" because of its association with Franklin Delano Roosevelt. A historic vernacular landscape is one that evolves through use by its occupants. It is influenced by the social and cultural attitudes of an individual(s) and reflects the character of everyday lives.

FDR was the 31st President of the United States of America. During his presidency he was actively involved with acquiring, planning, and constructing his retreat. Thus, Top Cottage is associated with a "person significant in our past."

FDR sited Top Cottage on the military crest of Dutchess Hill, taking advantage of the distant views. He improved the viewsheds and viewing corridors by having the lower branches cut off of all the trees immediately around the cottage and removing many of the saplings.

He initially sought a rustic setting with no lawn. Trees were kept close to the cottage, and vegetative debris was permitted to collect on the ground. Eventually, some shrubs and perennials were planted near the foundation of the cottage.

The design of Top Cottage and the development of the site reflect FDR's lack of mobility. The vehicle was dominant. Presumably he laid out the access road that approaches the cottage from the north, the looped drive, and the access drive through the Rohan Farm to the south. No extensive parking facilities were constructed, as the number of guests was usually small, with the exception of a few large picnics and luncheons.

Period of Significance

The period of historical significance for Top Cottage begins in 1938 when FDR began construction of his retreat and ends in 1945 when he died. He began purchasing the property immediately around Dutchess Hill in 1935 when he bought the Dumphy Farm. This purchase was followed by the acquisition of the Rohan Farm in 1936 and the Lent Wood Lot (date unknown).

Summary Statement of Significance

As a historic vernacular landscape, the Top Cottage property constitutes one of America's most significant cottage and landscape combinations because it was designed, laid out and utilized by a sitting President. The only other President known to have designed his home and landscape is Thomas Jefferson. The style and aesthetics of the landscape are consistent with FDR's desire to keep it simple and rustic. The significance of the landscape follows from its association with FDR, who sought to build a peaceful retreat where he could relax and enjoy the natural surroundings.

INTEGRITY

Integrity evaluates the authenticity of a property's historic identity and the degree to which the existing physical characteristics of the property represent its appearance during the selected period of significance. Integrity measures the extant characteristics against the historic characteristics and their significance. Essentially, a landscape with integrity must retain sufficient portions of its character-defining features.

The *National Register of Historic Places* identifies seven aspects or qualities of integrity for a landscape. These include:

· <u>Historic location</u>: the boundaries of the site during the period of significance;

- <u>Design</u>: the visual pattern /composition of features that distinguish the property during its period of significance;
- <u>Setting</u>: the relationship between the landscape and the other features or elements that comprised its historic boundaries;
- <u>Materials</u>: the natural or man-made features from which the landscape's individual features are made;
- <u>Workmanship</u>: the standard applied to the built features of the landscape and the appropriateness of repairs undertaken since its period of significance;
- <u>Feeling</u>: the impression produced by the viewer and the cumulative effect of the above five aspects to create a sense of past place and time; and
- <u>Association</u>: the degree to which the landscape remains closely connected to its history as a means of function.

While not all aspects may be present in a historic landscape, they all must be considered to determine if the landscape retains enough of its historical features to convey the appearance of its selected period of significance.

To guide this evaluation, integrity will be addressed in the context of the following questions:

- To what degree does Top Cottage's landscape convey its historic character as FDR's retreat between 1938 and 1945?
- To what degree has the original fabric of the Top Cottage landscape been retained?
- · Are changes to the landscape irrevocable or can they be corrected so that Top Cottage retains and/or regains its integrity?

Historic Location

The Top Cottage property consisted of approximately 74 acres of land when FDR died in 1945. Presently, the site consists of approximately 40.5 acres of land, including the 33.6 acres originally purchased by the Beaverkill Conservancy and 6.9 acres that the Conservancy subsequently purchased. While the size of the original parcel has changed, affecting its integrity of location, the historic core survives intact – thus supporting its integrity of location.

Design

Although this is a vernacular landscape, rather than a designed landscape, the original features that FDR added accentuated the site's natural setting. The site was manipulated to enhance its natural beauty and to take advantage of distant prospects. These modifications were made sensitively to maintain the site's natural and rustic character.

The visual pattern and composition of the extant physical features support the site's historic integrity. The cottage, earthen ramp, looped drive, mature vegetation, stone wall and topography survive intact. The cottage has been restored and many of the features added by Elliott Roosevelt and the Potter Family have been removed.¹ Some of the historic features have been lost: the foundations plantings; the front walk; the trees that grew close to the cottage; and possibly a garage and workshop. Additions include the paved driveway, pine trees, and the manicured lawn. Still other features have changed due to deferred maintenance and the lives and activities of subsequent owners. These elements include neglecting to maintain the open farm field, the forest, and the original vegetation patterns, viewsheds and viewing corridors; opening holes in the stone wall; and constructing the stable/cottage and its associated site amenities.

Despite these changes, the essence of FDR's landscape survives. The essential physical features of the design remain discernible and the spatial organization of these features does support the site's historic integrity.

Setting

Top Cottage was constructed on the crest of a wooded hill overlooking the Hudson River. It was set within the forest just north of an open farm field. FDR maintained this setting during his residency. Today, the open farm field to the south has not been maintained. Where FDR maintained no lawn or garden, there is now an expanse of lawn to the south. Intermixed with the lawn are mature pine trees that provide privacy but also restrict views to the south. The viewsheds have become obscured with maturing vegetation.

None of the changes to the landscape are irrevocable. The site's setting can be restored within its current boundaries and therefore the site does have integrity of setting. Care must be taken to limit the work so that none of the single-family homes surrounding Top Cottage become visible from the cottage.

Materials

The materials employed by FDR and Henry Toombs were basic and straightforward. The approach road and driveway were gravel; these are now paved with bituminous asphalt. The front walk on the east side of the house appears to have been made up of stone slabs (based on a June 2, 1939 photograph of the front entrance), presumably bluestone to match the surviving "terrace" at the door; the stone is missing and the walk is dirt and gravel. The ramp at the north end of the west porch was and still is earth. The few foundations plantings were commonly used and locally available; these plantings are gone. Initially, the only lawn was near the cottage; now all of the open areas are lawn. Most of the flowering dogwoods have disappeared. The stone wall survives, although several openings have been created since FDR's time.

Materials and site features added by subsequent owners have been removed as part of the restoration of the cottage and site. FDR's missing features and features with different materials can be recreated; however, care should be taken to comply with the

current Americans with Disabilities Act, current universal access codes, and general levels of safety. Maintenance must also be considered when material choices are made.

While material integrity is not as high as it might be, the changes required to restore the site can be readily accommodated.

Workmanship

The workmanship used to construct Top Cottage and its character-defining landscape features was basic and straightforward. Once original construction was completed, the work required to maintain the landscape was equally straightforward.

The workmanship required to repair, restore or reconstruct the landscape features at Top Cottage is similar to the original technologies used in FDR's time.

"Workmanship" does support the landscape's integrity.

Feeling

Without an interpretive program, a visitor may first be indifferent toward the present landscape at Top Cottage. The landscape was never meant to be awe-inspiring, or to impress visitors. In this regard the feeling remains the same.

The changes influencing the "feeling" of the landscape include the site's general neatness (as opposed to the cluttered appearance in the historic photographs); the openness within the immediate surroundings of the cottage; and the restricted views. Fortunately, the changes to these features are cosmetic and can be restored. The aesthetic "feeling" and "sense of place" can be brought back to resemble that which FDR enjoyed.

"Feeling" does support the landscape's integrity.

Association

FDR used Top Cottage as a private retreat, but also hosted meetings and receptions there. The future function of Top Cottage as a house museum and small conference center differs slightly from its original use. However, the restoration will restore the landscape to its 1945 appearance, with sensitive introductions of modern conveniences and considerations made for maintenance issues. Together, these modifications will insure the educational and interpretive value of the landscape for many years to come.

While house museums differ from private residences, they are an appropriate means to save culturally important pieces of our heritage. Therefore, "association" does support the landscape's integrity.

Summary Statement of Integrity

More than sixty years after it was created, the historic vernacular landscape at Top Cottage still conveys the character of FDR's rustic retreat. While some of the principal elements have disappeared, the remaining elements provide a glimpse at what the landscape looked like and help to suggest what it can be again.

Much work has been done at Top Cottage, and much more needs to be done. Fortunately, the major features in the landscape that need attention are cosmetic. In essence, the Top Cottage landscape survives and can be restored for and appreciated by the public.

NOTES

1. The buildings and elements removed during the recent restoration include the green-house, the swimming pool, the pool pump house, the flagstone terrace near the swimming pool, the flag pole, and the flagstone terrace near the house.

SITE ASSESSMENT AND TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

An assessment of the existing site conditions that surround Top Cottage was conducted to identify opportunities and constraints for the treatment of the landscape, and to make recommendations for guiding its treatment. Because of the site's historic value, the assessment examines each natural and man-made feature as it relates to the landscape's historic integrity.

The assessment involves three steps:

- Step 1 an inventory of natural and man-made features of the site, based on field observations;
- Step 2 an analysis of the inventory, defining the opportunities and constraints of the site; and
- Step 3 an evaluation of the inventory and analysis, resulting in a series of recommendations for proceeding with treatment.

Recommendations for treatment have been established by *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*, by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C., 1996. These Guidelines identify four possible treatments for historic resources: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction. The implications of each treatment for Top Cottage's landscape are summarized below:

- Preservation This approach prescribes the maintenance and repair of landscape features as they currently exist. It allows replacement of existing features but does not permit the addition of new features.
- **Rehabilitation** This approach allows features to be repaired or altered to make their use compatible with the site's historic value and Program, while preserving those features that are important in defining its significance.
- **Restoration** This approach requires that landscape features be returned to their original form, or back to a specific date or period of significance.
- Reconstruction This approach permits the re-creation of missing or destroyed features only after determining their interpretive significance and contribution.

Each feature is identified within one of the specific categories outlined above and is accompanied with a brief description of its present condition (Dec. 2000-March 2001), as well as recommendation for treatment. Site assessment maps, located at the end of this section, illustrate the location of each feature.

The site assessment and corresponding recommendations pertain solely to Top Cottage's historic core, and not to the larger landscape that comprises the entire site.

A. SPATIAL ORGANIZATION, LAND PATTERNS AND CONTEXT

The five (5) acre historic core is an excellent example of a "Component Landscape" located within a larger historic landscape. A component landscape is a discrete portion of a larger landscape that can be further subdivided into individual "character defining landscape features." While many changes have occurred at Top Cottage, including the size of the property and its configuration, the relationship of the extant individual features remains intact. The site's spatial organization within the property has survived, although the surrounding land patterns have changed significantly due to the proximity of single family residential land development and the encroachment of successional-growth forest.

Top Cottage's landscape is considered a historic vernacular landscape because it was not designed. Instead, modifications were made as needed or desired by the owners. The surviving components within the historic core include the cottage, a stable/cottage, the looped drive, the remnant of the historic wooded road, the stone wall (or stone fence, as FDR referred to it), electric utility poles, a partial viewshed to the west, and the natural landscape that surrounds and envelops the site.

The historic core, which is nearly surrounded by single family residential homes, is situated within the larger 40.5± acre site. Vehicular access is presently provided on public, paved roads that wind through the Val-Kill Heights residential subdivision.

Although only two families have owned the historic core of the property since FDR's death in 1945, the landscape surrounding Top Cottage has seen many developmental changes. FDR's son Elliott enclosed the west porch and, it is believed, built the north porch addition. The Potters, who bought the property in 1952 and maintained ownership until 1996, made many significant changes to the cottage and its landscape. At the cottage they added dormers and built a stone patio to the south of the west porch with a fish pond and steps up to the porch. Within the historic core, they built a stable and paddock area, converted the stable into a cottage, built a greenhouse, installed a swimming pool, built a flagstone terrace with a covered awning, constructed two garages, planted numerous pine trees, and deferred maintenance, allowing the agricultural fields and viewshed corridors to become overgrown. Most significantly, the Potters developed Val-Kill Heights. By the time this report was prepared most of the modifications that the Potter family made to Top Cottage had been reversed; the stable, pine trees, and encroaching forest remained.

The residential developments that surround Top Cottage impact the property by severing its rural ties to the broader landscape. Fortunately, no homes can be seen from

the cottage. Although the surrounding community has grown, the open fields have filledin, and the vehicular access has changed, the historic core and its historic character have survived.

B. TOPOGRAPHY

The historic core's topography is quite diverse, changing nearly 30 feet in elevation. Top Cottage sits on the site's highest point at elevation 450+/-. Surrounding the cottage are rolling lawns with encroaching forest and steep slopes with a well-established hardwood forest. The Slope Analysis Map (see the maps following this section) illustrates the site's changing topography. The darkest colors indicate the steepest slopes; the lightest colors represent more shallow slopes. The red indicates areas of minor soil erosion.

While some earthwork was done to construct the cottage, looped drive and stable/cottage, the construction was sensitive to the natural setting and its corresponding topography. Several areas within the historic core have prominent rock outcroppings, and the soils are shallow.

Recommendations

• Minor grading needs to be done to improve stormwater drainage from the gutter downspouts and to correct numerous rivulets in the open lawn, to provide universal access to the cottage and onto the west porch, to improve access to FDR's original access road to the north, to eliminate soil erosion and to cover exposed tree roots within the looped driveway. All grading improvements should maintain and reinforce the site's rural and historic character.

C. VEGETATION

Much of the original site was hardwood forest to the north, east and west, and open agricultural fields to the south. The site was rustic, and trees were retained close to the cottage. Foundation plantings were added to provide a sense of domesticity. The present vegetation has become quite overgrown with a successional-growth woodland of mixed deciduous and coniferous trees – resulting in a changed "sense of place."

1. Hardwood Forest

Presently, the hardwood forest is quite dense and supports numerous species including some coniferous trees. Deferred maintenance has permitted the encroachment of trees into former agricultural fields and into FDR's western viewsheds. Complicating matters is the existence of Acer platanoides - Norway maple and Ailanthus altissima – Tree of Heaven, both highly invasive species.

Few of FDR's Flowering Dogwoods survive around the cottage and within the looped drive.

While few trees survive in close proximity to the house, several large specimen trees remain in the immediate vicinity.

Recommendations

- Elimination of all invasive species should be a priority. This work should utilize modern, efficient and approved materials and procedures.
- Recapturing the western viewsheds should be done slowly and methodically.
 All work must be sensitive to the terrain and care should be taken not to expose the surrounding residential homes.
- The extant specimen trees should be retained and a maintenance program should be established by a licensed arborist. Likewise, a forest management program should be established to improve and maintain the health and vigor of the surrounding woodland much like FDR did.
- Reestablishing trees in close proximity to the cottage must be considered
 carefully, as there is the potential of storm damage to the cottage from falling
 trees. Root damage to the cottage foundations should also be considered.

2. Successional-Growth

As with the larger trees in the surrounding woodland, deferred maintenance has allowed the successional-growth to encroach into former open, agricultural fields and into FDR's viewsheds. Invasive species are prevalent here as well. In addition, the Potter family planted several Pinus strobus – White Pine trees in the field south of the cottage. While providing privacy, these trees restrict the southern views of the fields. The formerly distant views from the west porch are severely obscured; only when the leaves are off of the trees are there views to the Hudson River and the mountains beyond.

Recommendations

- As discussed above, the historic viewsheds should be restored. All invasive species should be eradicated, and the large pine trees should be removed.
- The successional-growth in the former agricultural fields should be removed slowly, in a southerly direction; no homes to the south should be exposed and winter views with the leaves off of the trees must be considered. The area should be maintained with biannual mowing. The removal of this vegetation will reestablish, at least in part, the open and airy sense of place to the fields.

3. Foundation Plantings

Presently, no foundation plantings exist around Top Cottage. However, historical research documents the existence of Hedera helix – English Ivy vine growing on the building, pink flowering azaleas along the south facade, rhododendrons along the western porch, junipers along the front or eastern side, and perennials north and south of the western porch. There also were numerous trees in stone tree-wells on the east terrace. Historic photographs show a line of rhododendrons and pine trees south of the

cottage, presumably between the cottage and the stone wall. In 1996, when the Historic Structure Report was begun, overgrown foundation plants engulfed Top Cottage. These were removed in 1999 when the house was restored.

Recommendations

- Reestablish the foundation plantings from FDR's residency, based on the limited
 archival evidence (unfortunately, the photographs do not show the entire
 foundation). Maintenance must be considered, especially pertaining to the
 perennial plantings. Serious consideration should be given before planting ivy
 that would grow on the building. Ivy will tend to retain moisture and contribute
 to the deterioration of the masonry.
- Consider planting a couple of flowering dogwoods on the front terrace, mimicking the stone tree-wells with a ring of stone around each tree.
- A decision must be made regarding whether or not to re-create the line of rhododendrons and pine trees. It is not known how long these plantings remained in place, or when they were replaced by the looped driveway (as shown in the 1946 aerial photograph).
- The grass areas around the cottage should be kept rather long, though not let to grow too long. Mow every two weeks or so (probably less often when it is dry or late in the summer). The mower blades should be set high (about 4"). Use a weed-wacker where the mower cannot go, taking care not to damage tree trunks or other site features.
- The rest of the lawn area and possibly the bank west of the cottage can be brush hogged every 4-5 weeks during the growing season. Stop in early October and let grow until the following spring.

D. CIRCULATION

Although subsequent owners have added additional pathways to traverse the site, the original access roads and walkways have survived. Vehicular and pedestrian circulation routes provide access about the historic core.

1. Vehicular Circulation

FDR's original access road connected the property to Val-Kill cottage. The road passed through the forest, negotiating its sometimes treacherous terrain. This road survives, although it is rarely used due to changes in property ownership, residential development, and because the connection point at the north end of the looped driveway is no longer flush and is therefore impassable by most vehicles.

After his cottage was built, FDR built a new and easier access road that approached Top Cottage from the south – through the old Rohan Farm. A section of this original drive has become part of Val-Kill Drive, now a paved and public road. Presently, Val-Kill Drive and Potter Bend are the only means of vehicular access to the site. Because the

road is now paved, traversing through a residential subdivision, a visitor's experience of approaching the Top Cottage site differs dramatically from that of FDR's.

The looped driveway survives, although it is now paved. A second looped drive that existed immediately south of the cottage has been removed, along with a driveway from Potter Bend that accessed the Potter garages. A dirt drive to the stable/cottage was constructed by the Potters.

Recommendations

- To restore a semblance of FDR's arrival sequence, the paved looped driveway should be surfaced with a gravel-like material and the north road should be reopened for visitor use. The owner has purchased three parcels of land that will enable the National Park Service to construct a walking trail (and eventually, it is hoped, a road) connecting the remains of the old road from Top Cottage to Val-Kill that still remains at both ends.
- Make a flush and smooth transition between the north gravel road and the north end of the looped driveway.
- Maintenance and accessibility issues with loose gravel drives must be considered prior to changing the paved surface of the existing drive.
- The Potter's dirt drive to the stable/cottage can be graded to eliminate its
 existence. This could be done if the decision is made to demolish the stable/
 cottage.

2. Pedestrian Circulation and Accessibility Considerations

Originally there were two pedestrian pathways that connected the cottage to the looped drive: the front walk leading to the front (east) door; and the earthen walk leading around the north end of the cottage to the earthen ramp at the west porch. Both pathways led to doorways with flush sills for easy wheelchair access. Remnants of these walks survive.

The Potters built pathways to the stable/cottage, the greenhouse, and the swimming pool. The construction of these walkways required breaking through the existing stone wall.

Recommendations

- Pathway connections through the historic core must be carefully considered.
 All paths must enhance the visitor's experience without diminishing the site's historic integrity.
- Provide an universal access from the drive to the front door and maintain the flush sill through the doorway. Consider using large pieces of native bluestone for the pathway, salvaged if possible with eased edges, to minimize the number of joints and to reestablish a historically appropriate material.
- The earthen ramp should be brought flush with the west porch. The new material should be separated from the historic earthen ramp by a fabric barrier.

- The walk around the north end of the cottage should be reinforced turf to provide universal access while maintaining a grassy type of cover.
- The Potters' walkways to the swimming pool and the stable/cottage should be removed, and the stone wall repaired (see Structures recommendations below).
- Turf lawns should be established and then let to grow long and rustic in appearance. They should be mowed biannually to prevent the reemergence of successional-growth forest.

E. WATER

There are no ponds or water features within the historic core. However, the Hudson River plays an important visual role for Top Cottage. Presently, when the leaves are off of the trees, the river can be seen glimmering in the distance. After the viewsheds are reestablished, the river might be seen year-round.

Recommendations

 Reestablish the western viewsheds so the Hudson River and the mountains beyond can be enjoyed once again by visitors to Top Cottage.

F. STRUCTURES, FURNISHINGS AND OBJECTS

Other structures, furnishings and objects include the electrical/utility poles and the stone walls. Central Hudson Gas and Electric Company set the utility poles in January 1939. Of the 17 poles that were installed at that time, three of the poles appear to be original.

The stone walls were built by farmers clearing their fields before FDR purchased the property. In 1938, he indicated that the "stone fences" were 150 years old.

Recommendations

- Maintain the existing electrical/utility poles for interpretive purposes.
- Replace or repair the missing and damaged sections of the stone walls in a manner and style consistent with their rustic appearance.

G. HISTORIC INTEGRITY

While many landscape features have been lost or modified, some features survive. These include:

- Top Cottage;
- FDR's original access road approaching from the north;
- the looped driveway (although it is presently paved with asphalt);
- the earthen ramp at the west porch;
- the foot path leading from the ramp around the north end of the cottage;
- several mature specimen trees including at least one flowering dogwood;

- the diverse topography;
- the electrical/utility poles; and
- the stone walls.

Other historic features survive, although slightly diminished in character. These include:

- the western viewsheds that have become overgrown;
- the open field south of Top Cottage that has become overgrown;
- the front walk (where the paving stones are missing); and
- the rustic appearance of the overall landscape.

These features are important elements of the landscape's history. They should be maintained and enhanced and included in the site's interpretive programs. Where possible, new features may be added during the restoration process to facilitate greater use of the site and to provide modern amenities; however, these features should not detract from the character-defining elements of the site.

H. ASSESSMENT SUMMARY AND TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

As a result of the site assessment, the following recommendations are provided for treating this historic vernacular landscape:

- Reestablish the western viewsheds.
- Eradicate invasive species, such as the Norway Maple and Tree of Heaven.
- Remove the White Pine trees.
- Reestablish the open field to the south, being careful not to expose adjacent residences.
- Create universal access to the cottage by paving the front walk, reinforcing the
 walkway leading from the west porch to the north end of the cottage, and
 modifying the earthen ramp so that it is flush with the west porch.
- Establish a gravel-like surface on the looped driveway.
- Reestablish a flush and smooth connection between the old wood road and the north end of the loop drive.
- Reestablish the old wood road as a pedestrian trail from Val-Kill cottage.
- Remove the Potters' stable/cottage and its associated amenities.
- Maintain the historic electrical/utility poles.
- Repair and replace the damaged or missing sections of the stone walls.
- Address all drainage and erosion problems.
- Selectively replace the foundation plantings and some of the flowering dogwoods.
- Establish a maintenance program for the specimen trees.

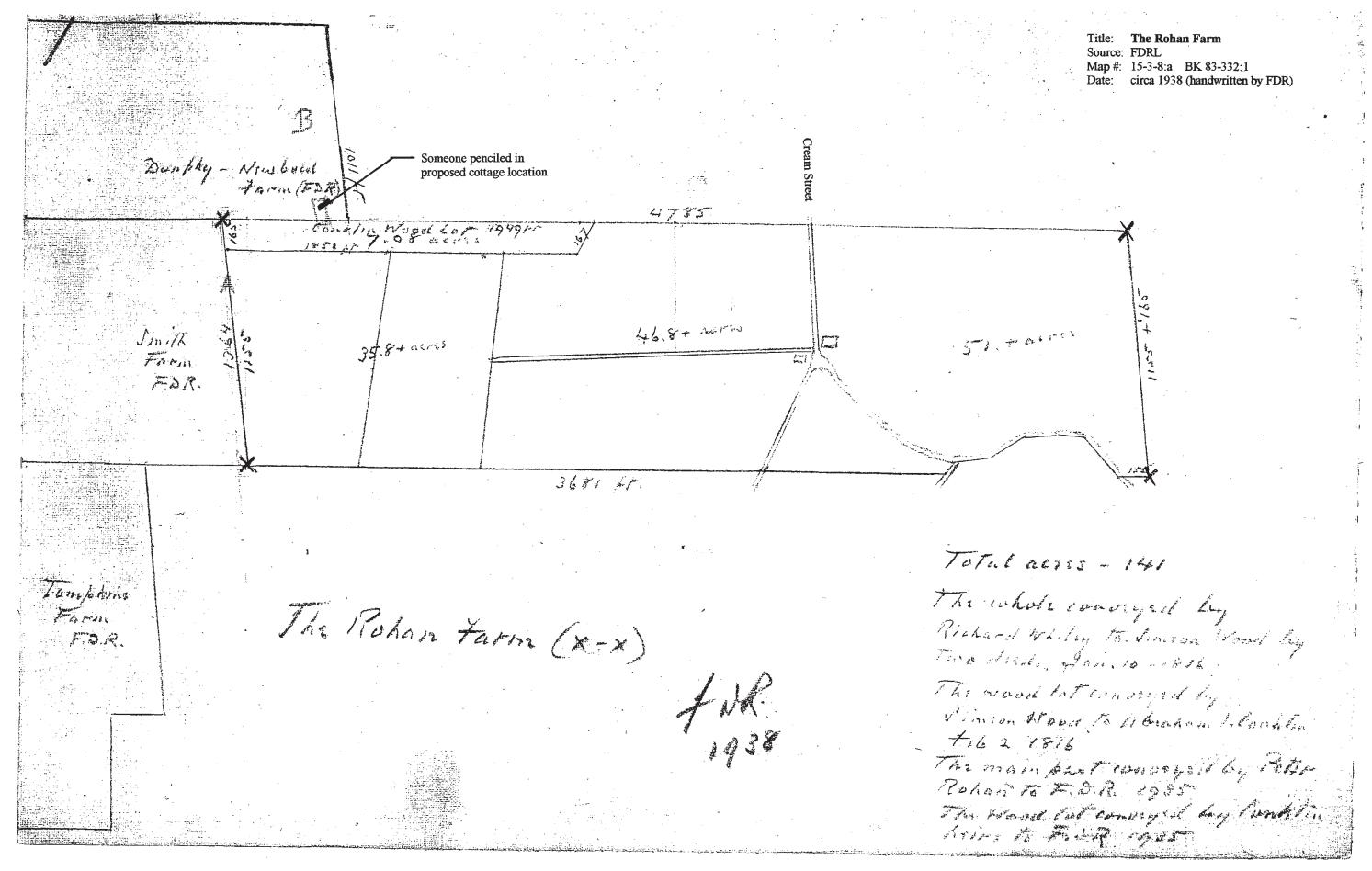
- Establish a forest management program to improve and maintain a healthy forest.
- Establish a visual "sense of place" by creating a maintenance program for the "lawn" areas encouraging rusticity while maintaining a level of appropriateness and acceptance for visitors.

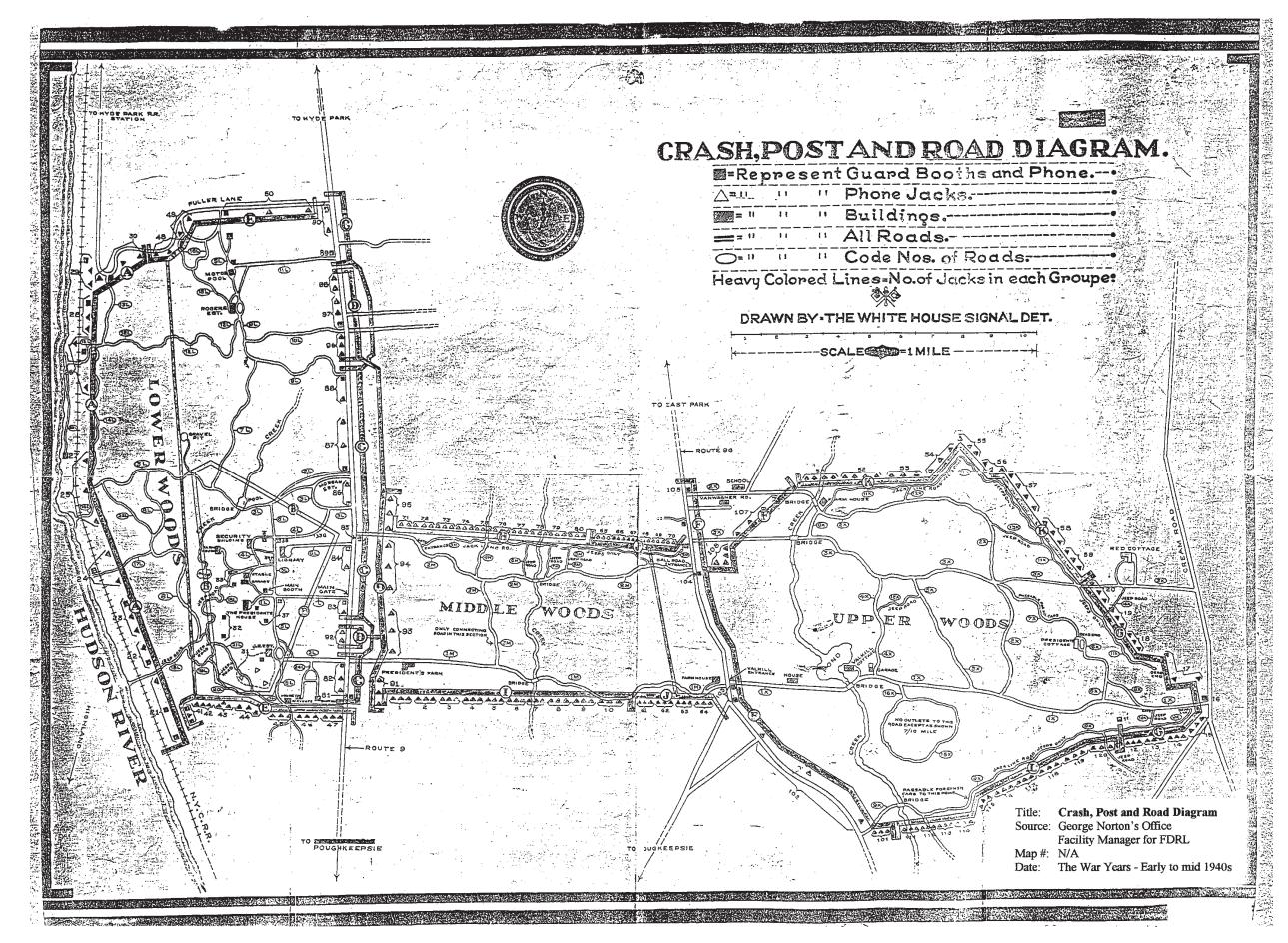
APPENDIX A

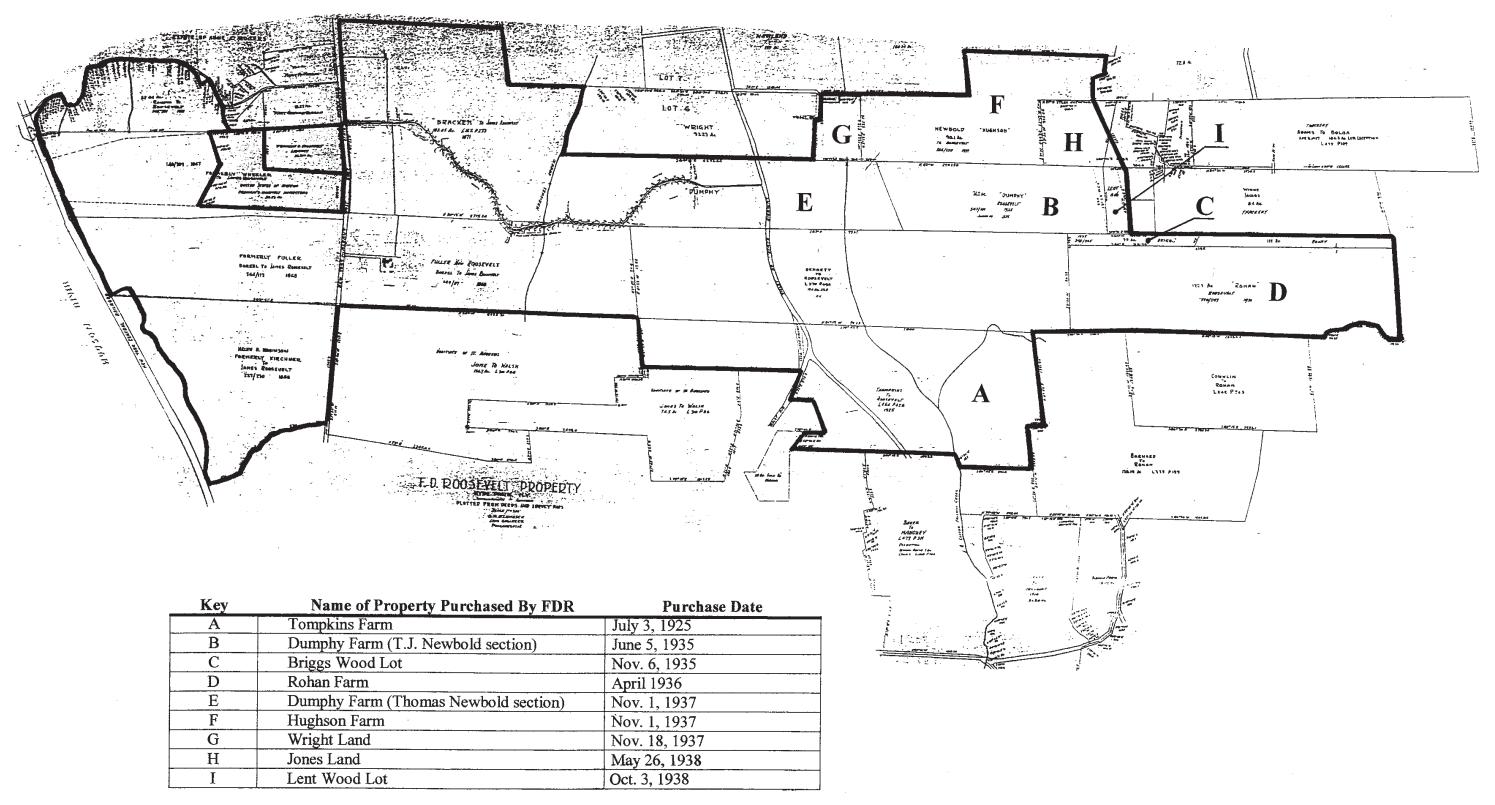
MAPS

- 1. The Rohan Farm c. 1938
- 2. Crash, Post and Road Diagram The War Years Early to Mid-1940s
- 3. FDR Property Plotted from Deeds and Surveys 1945
- 4. Accompanies: Moody, F. Kennan FDR and His Friends compiled 1981
- 5. *Val-Kill Heights, Section I 1965*
- 6. Final Subdivision of Lands of Potter: Map 1 of 3 1993
- 7. Final Subdivision of Lands of Potter: Map 2 of 3 1993
- 8. Final Subdivision Plat Prepared For Beaverkill Conservancy, inc. 1997
- 9. Final Map of Survey of Subdivision Prepared For Beaverkill Conservancy, Inc. 1998
- 10. Existing Topographic Area Plan: Top Cottage Landscape Study Jan. 1998
- 11. Existing Site Plan: Top Cottage Landscape Study Jan. 1998
- 12. Proposed Site Plan: Top Cottage Landscape Study Jan. 1998
- 13. Town of Hyde Park Tax Map Feb. 1999
- 14. Sewage Disposal System Plan and Details: Sheet 1 Aug. 1999
- 15. Overall Site Plan and Details: Sheet 2 Sept. 1999
- 16. Composite Map of Landscape of Beaverkill Conservancy, Inc. March 2001
- 17. Topographic Survey of a Portion of Lands of Beaverkill Conservancy March 2001
- 18. Existing Conditions Illustrative Rendering June 2001
- 19. Period of Significance Plan June 2001
- 20. Restoration Plan Illustrative Rendering June 2001

Appendix A A-1

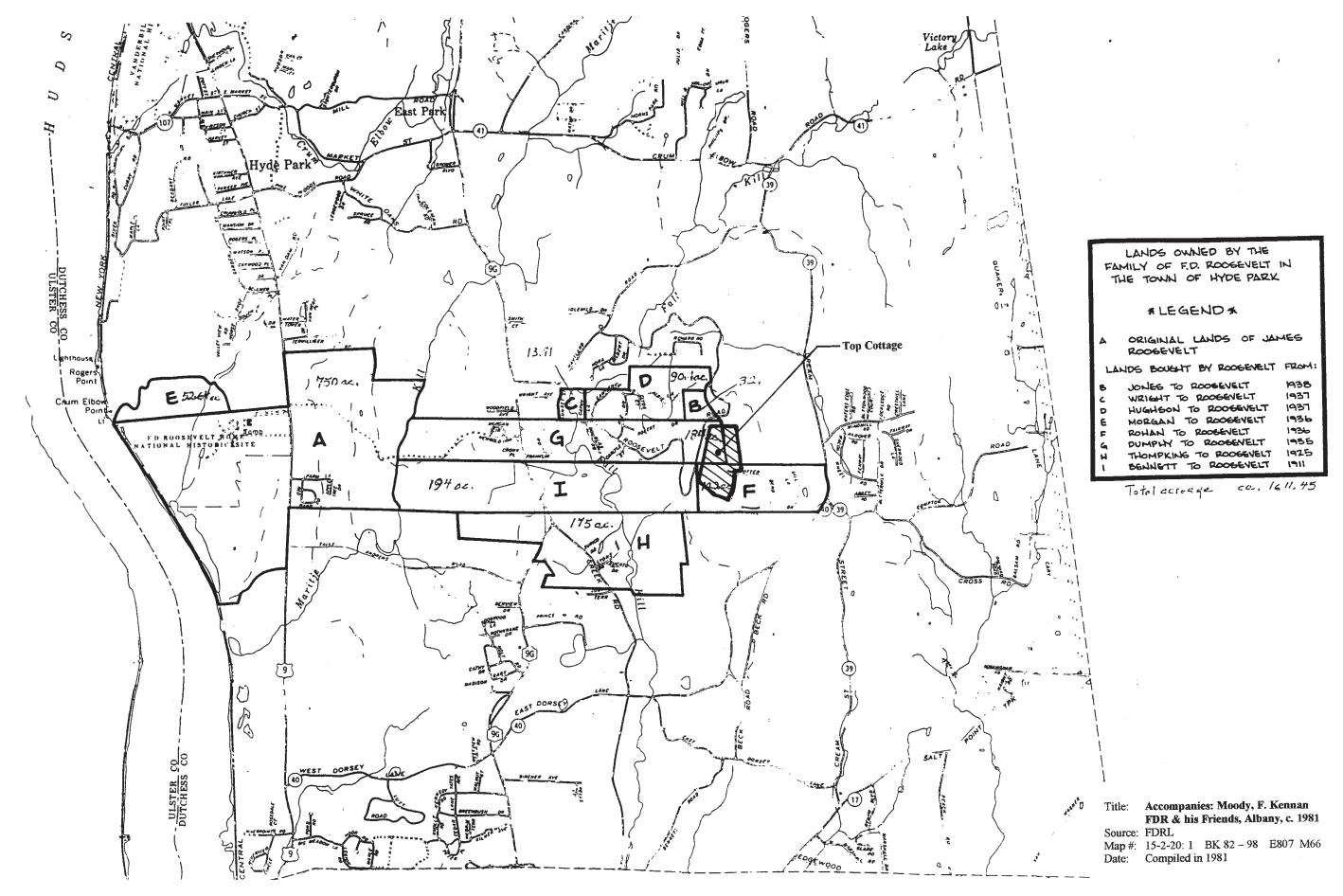


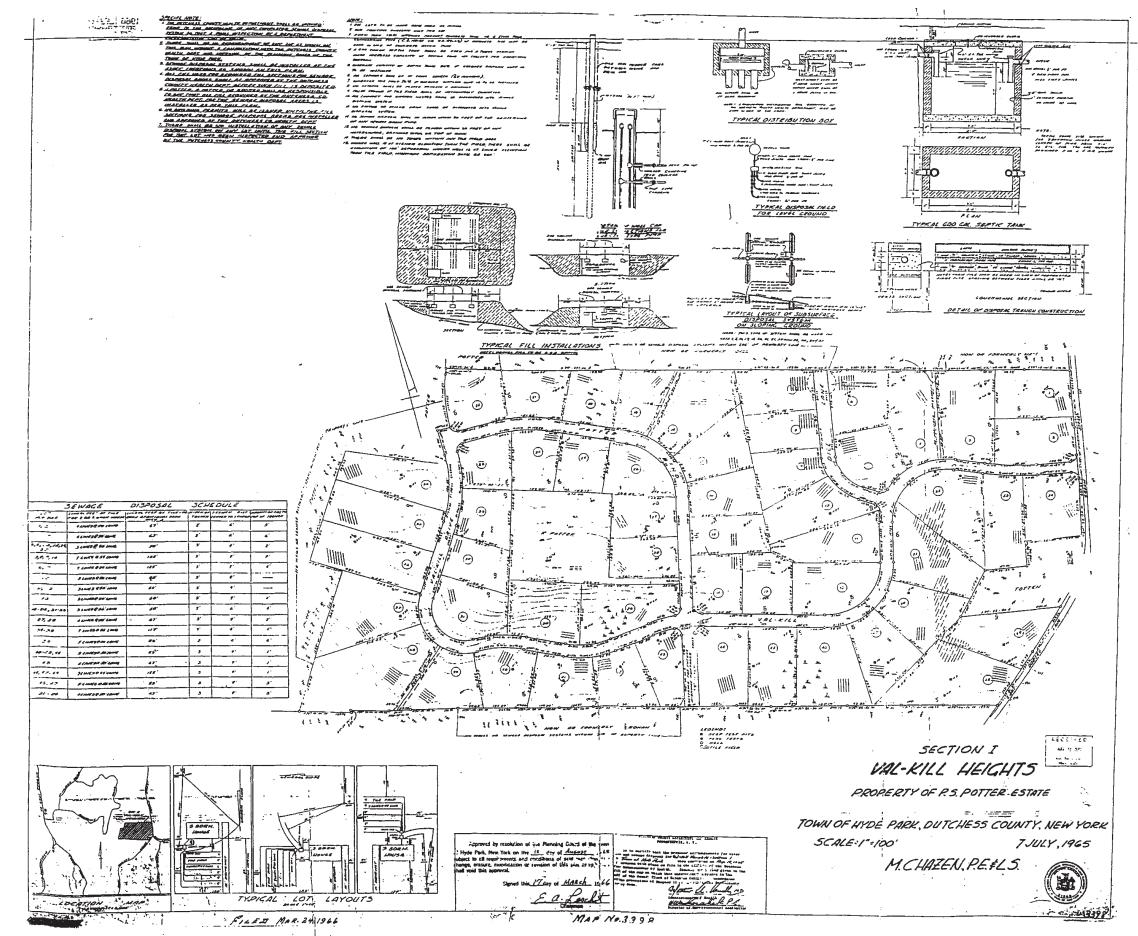


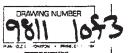


Title: FDR Property Plotted from Deeds and Surveys (1945)

Source: FDRL Map #: 15-2-24 #2 Date: circa 1945









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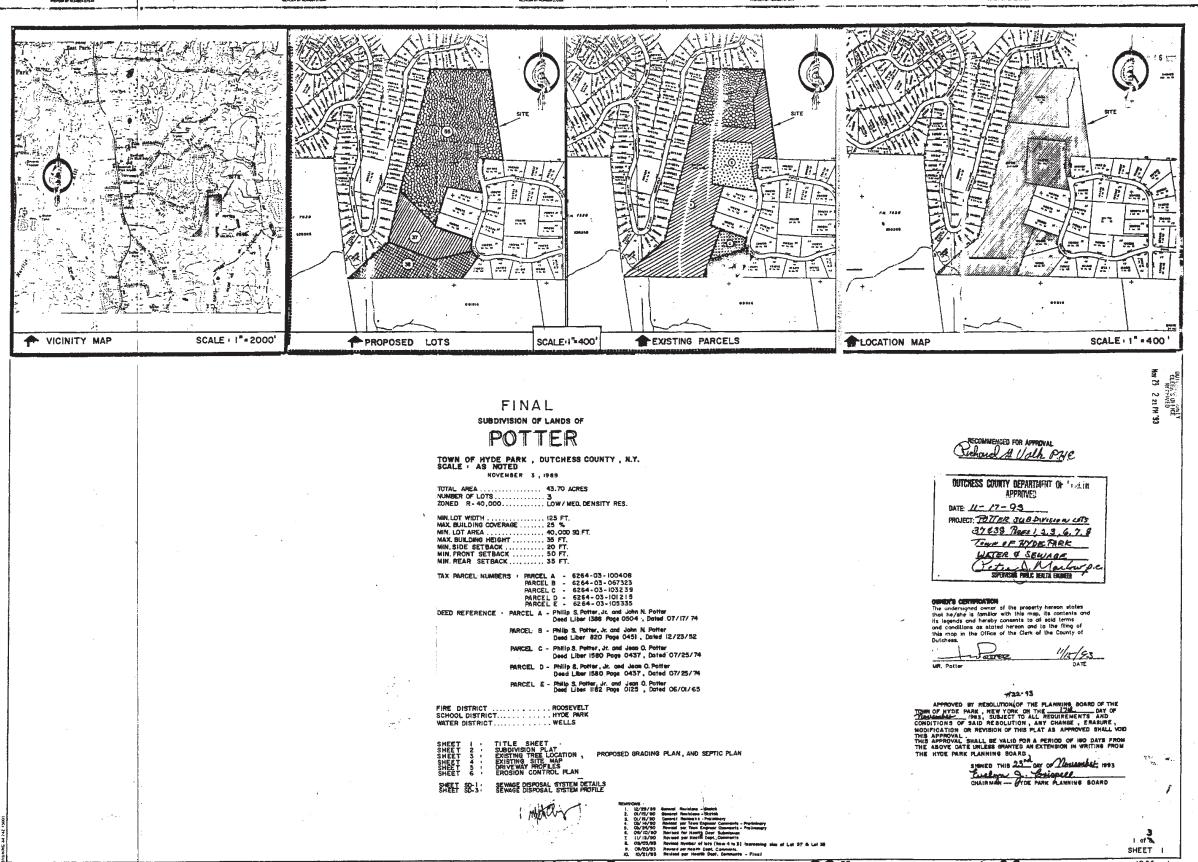
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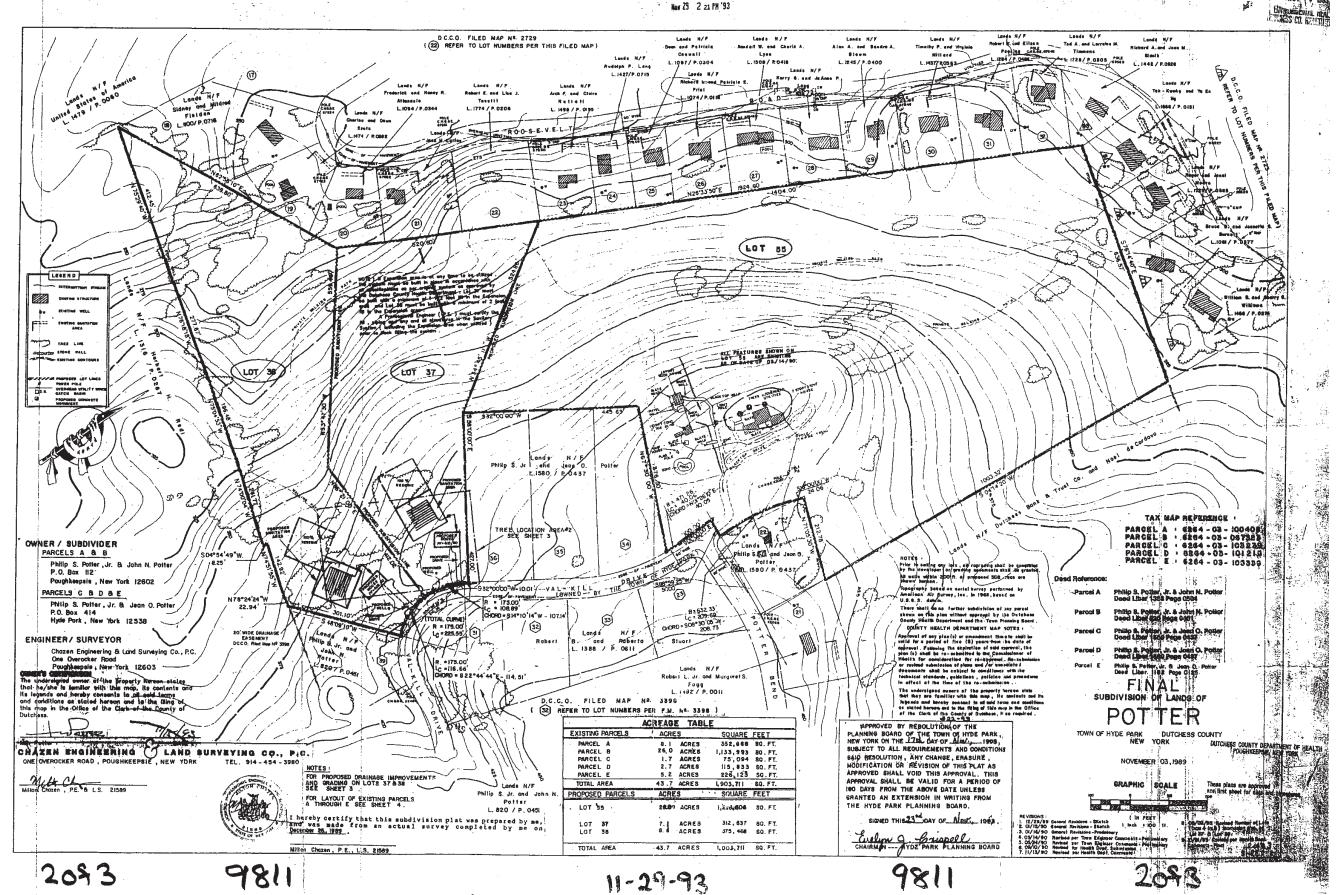


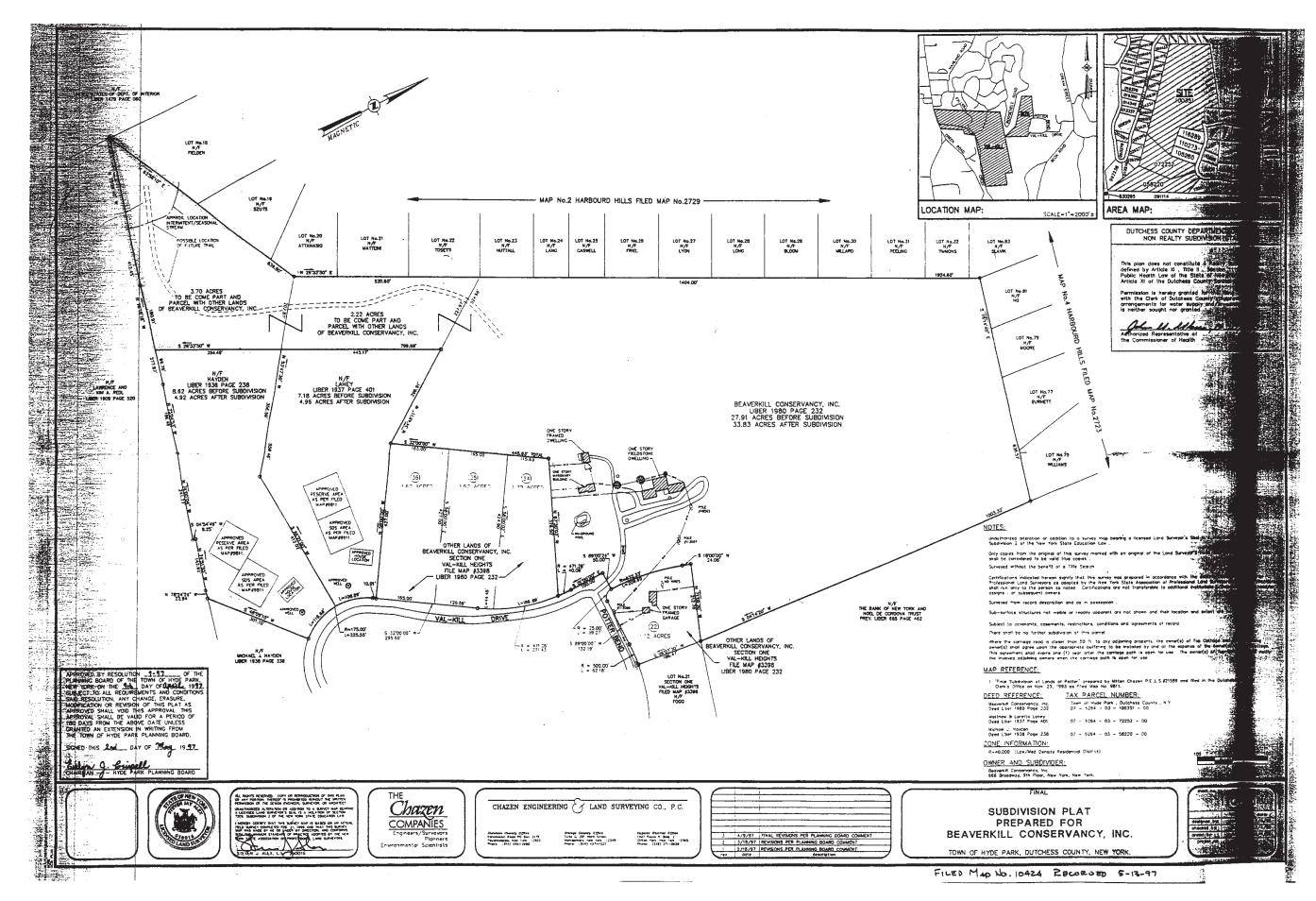


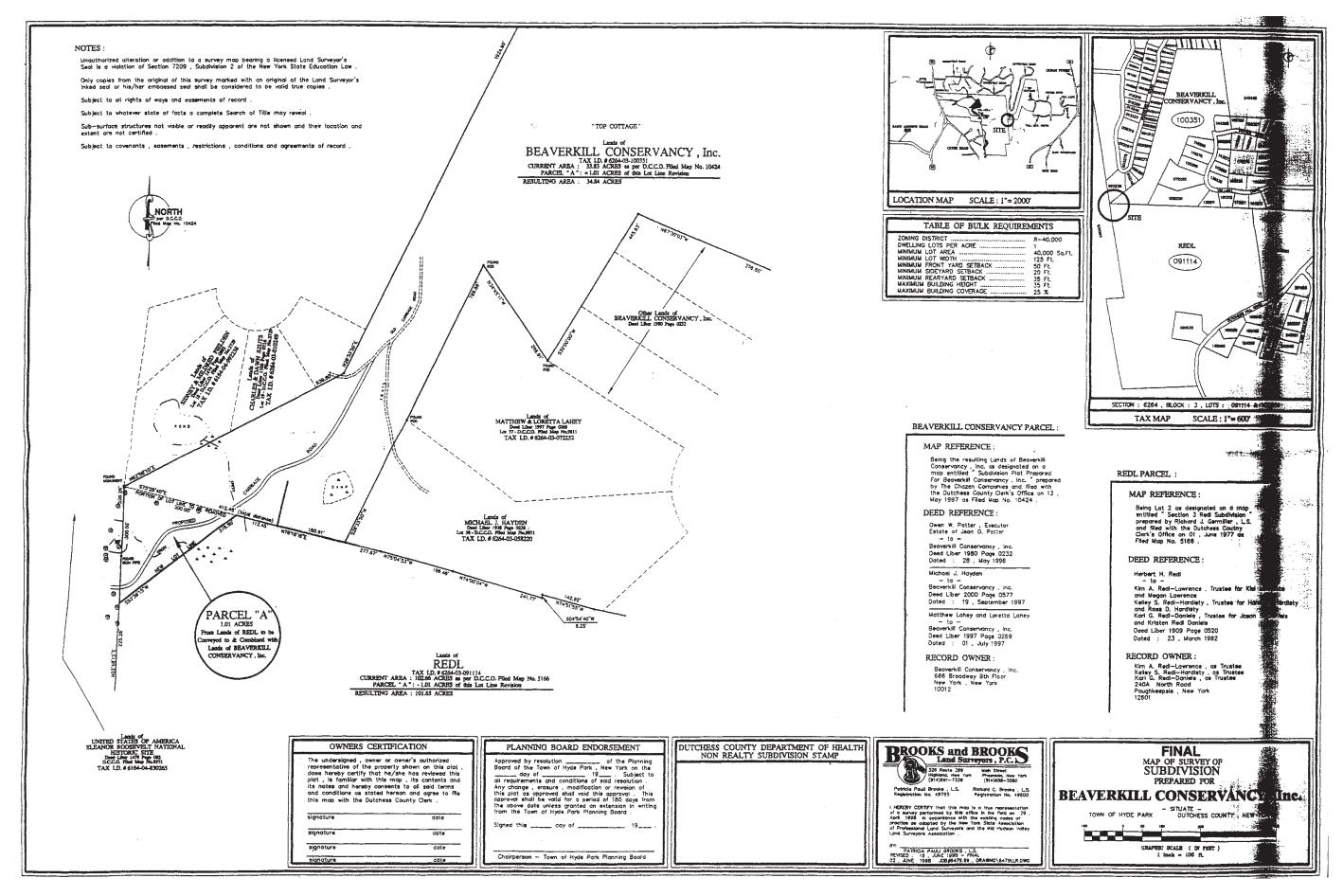
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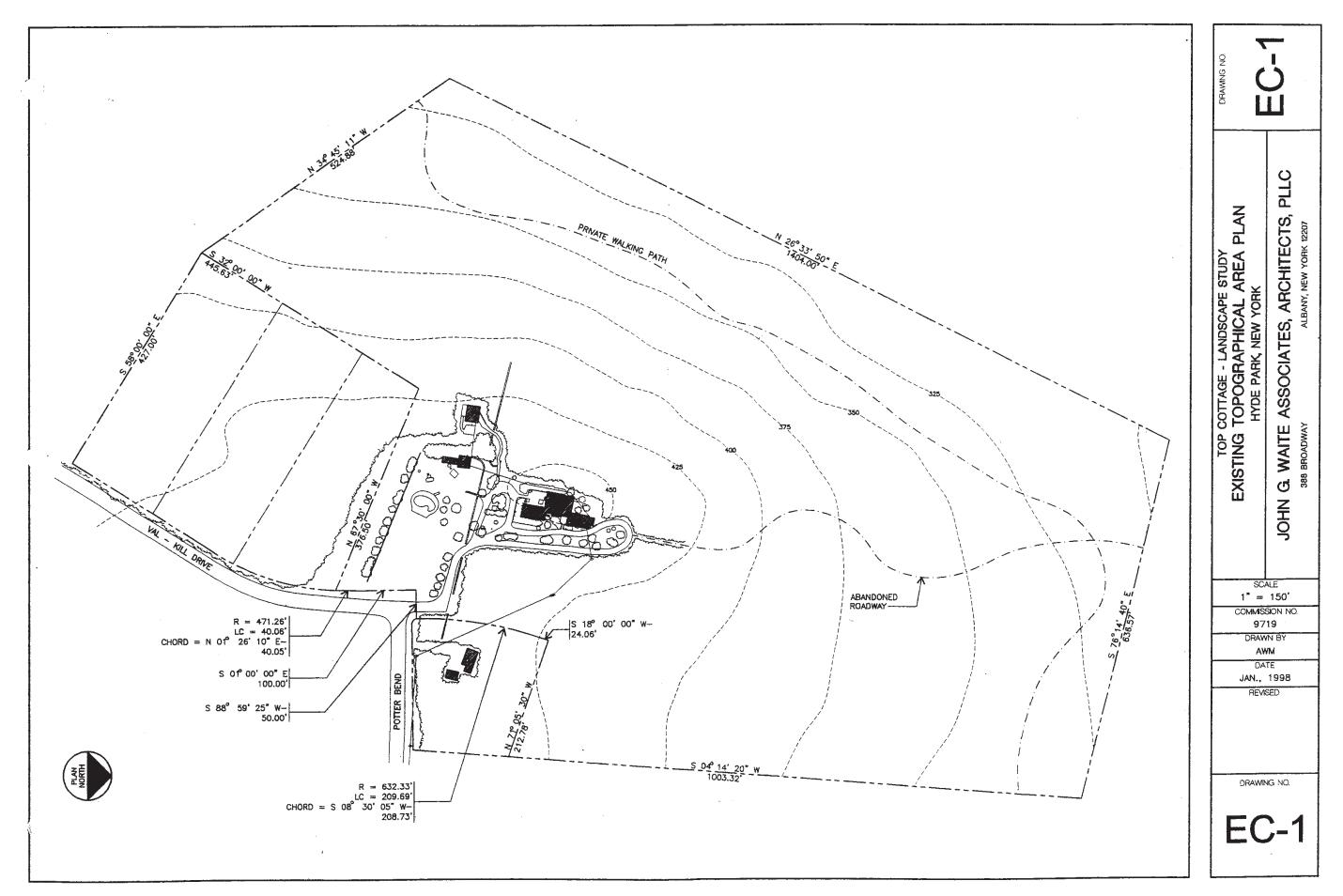
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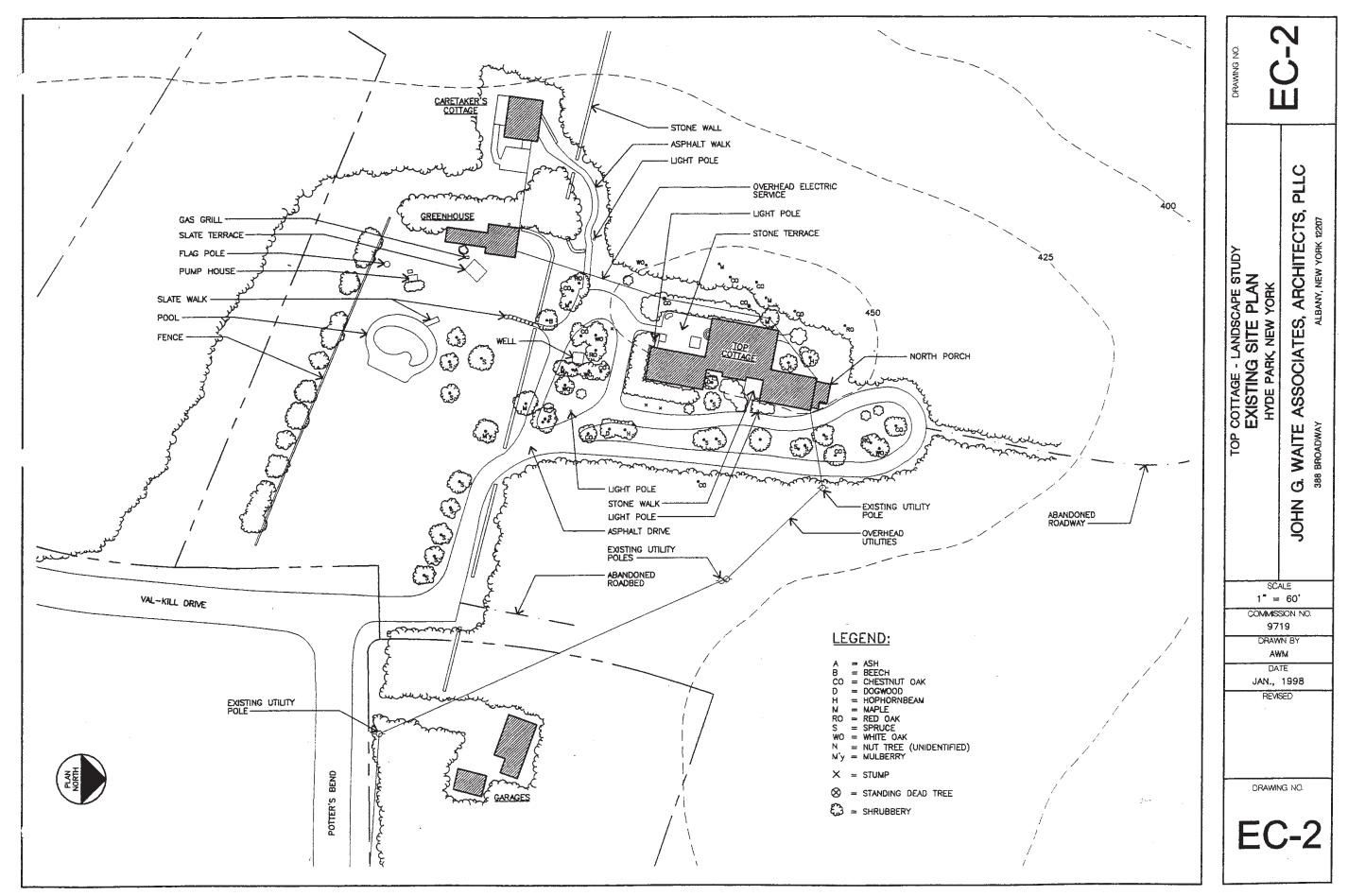
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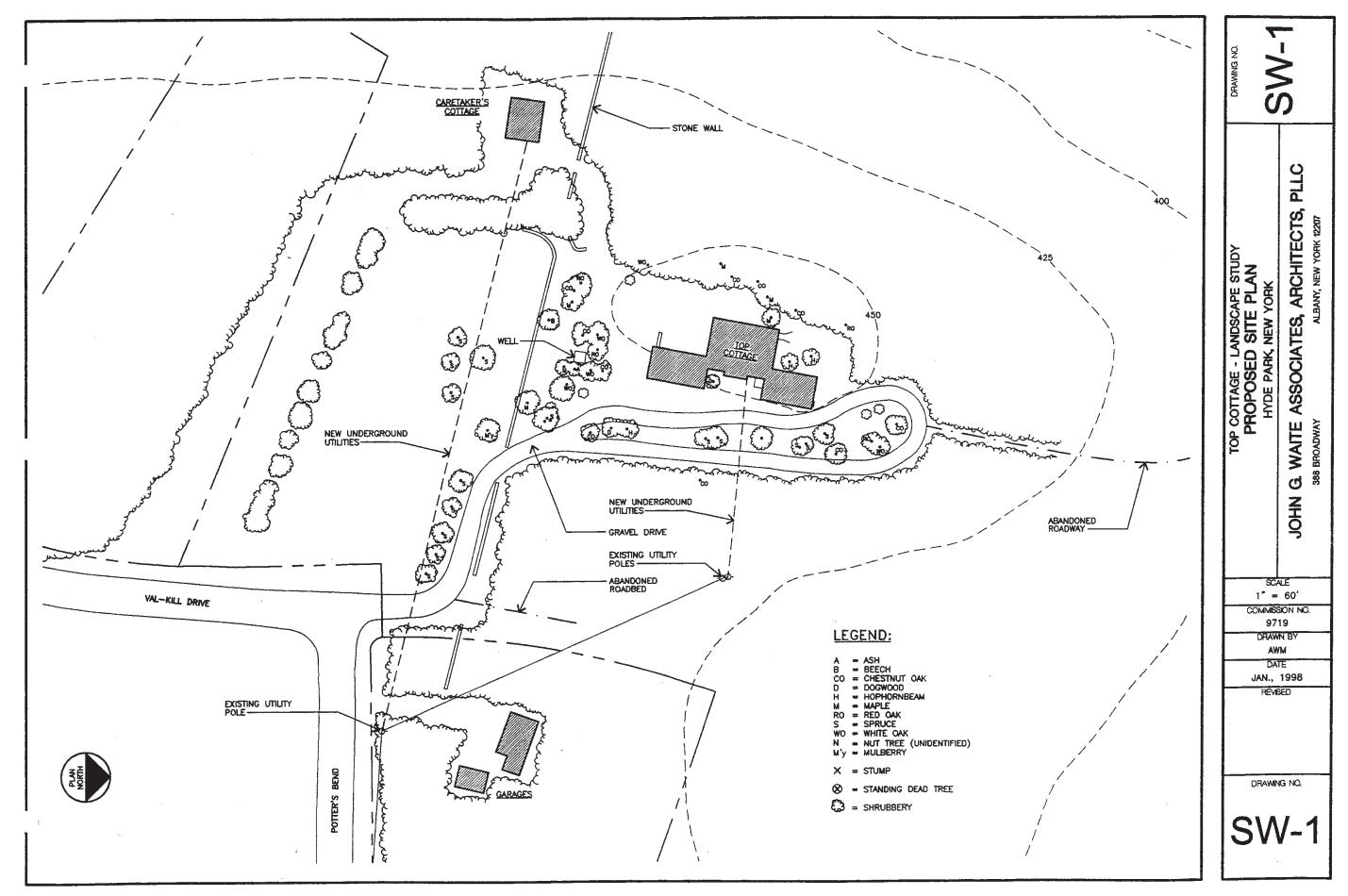


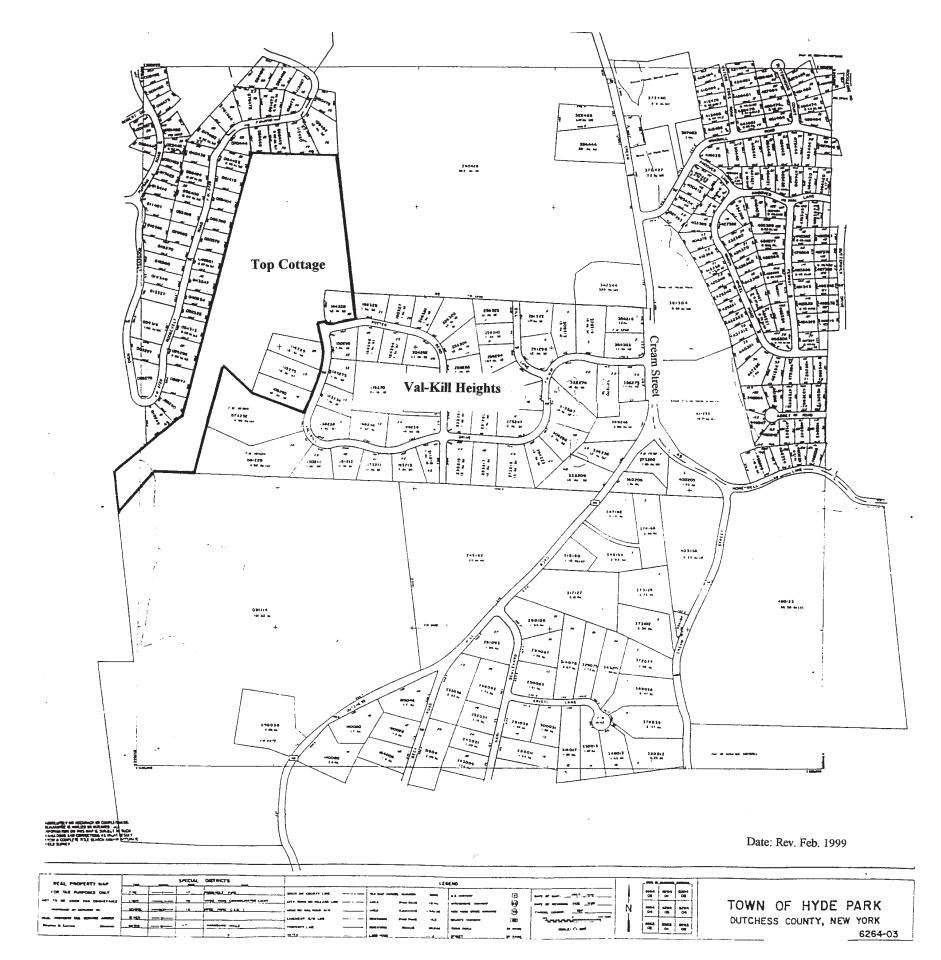


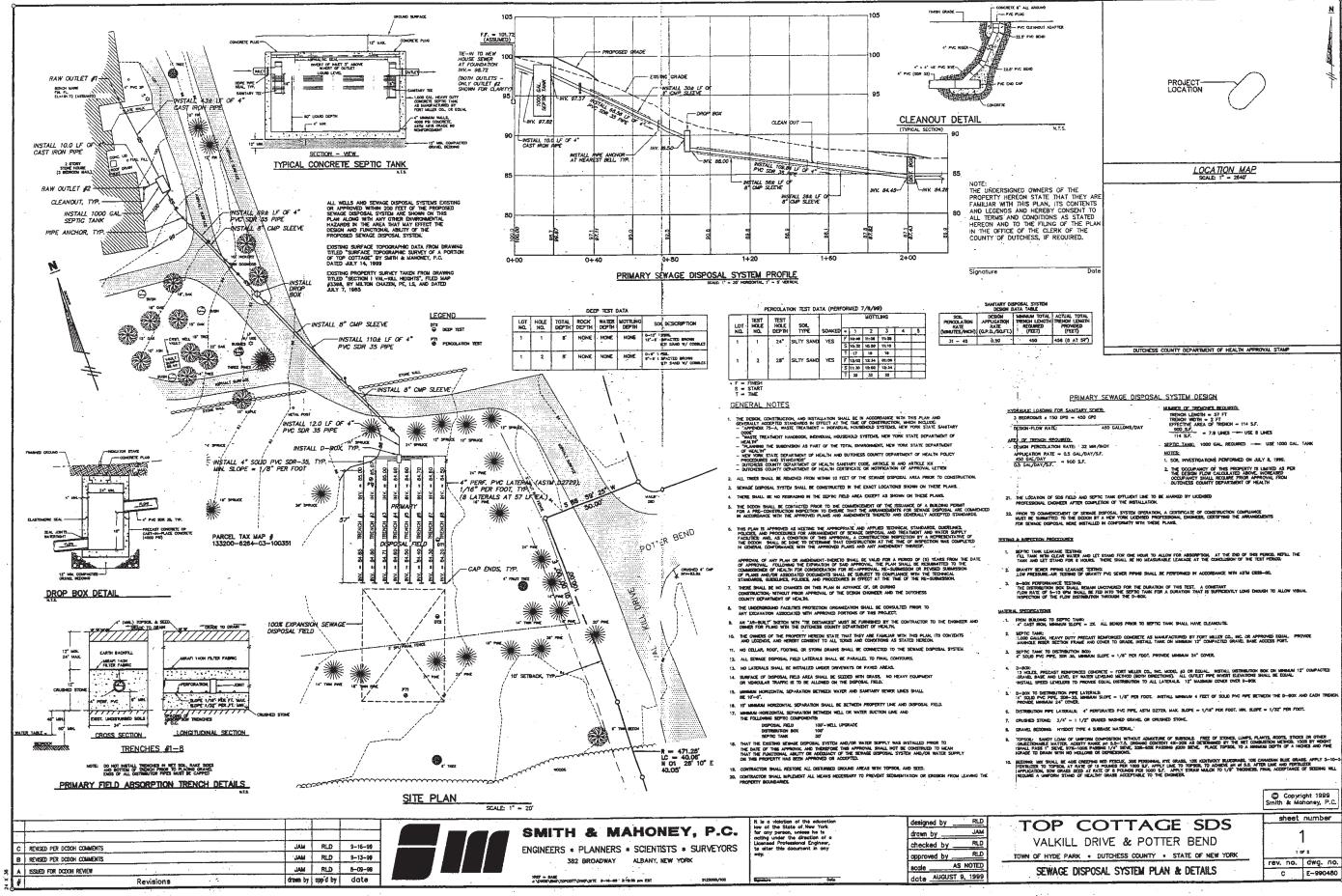


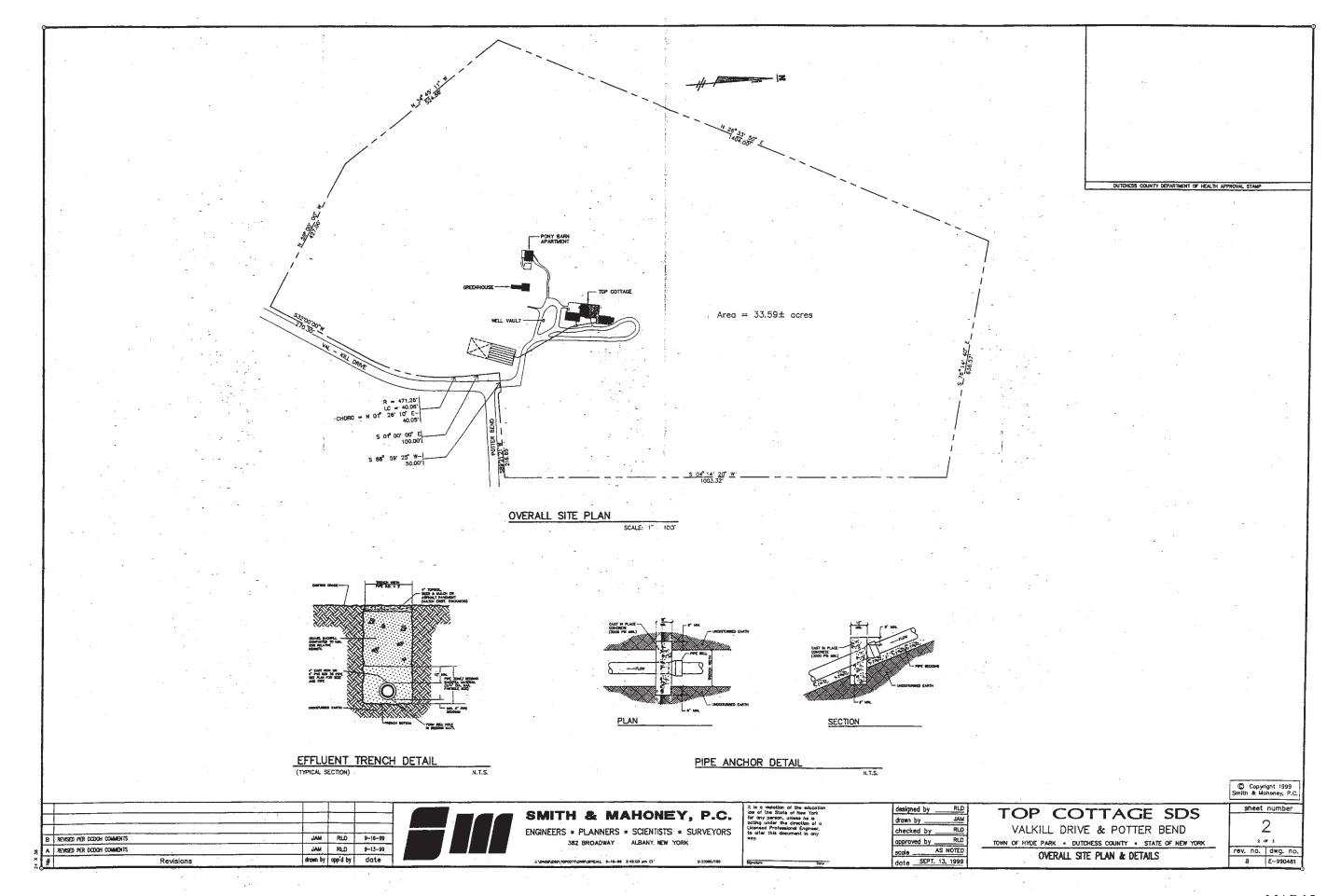


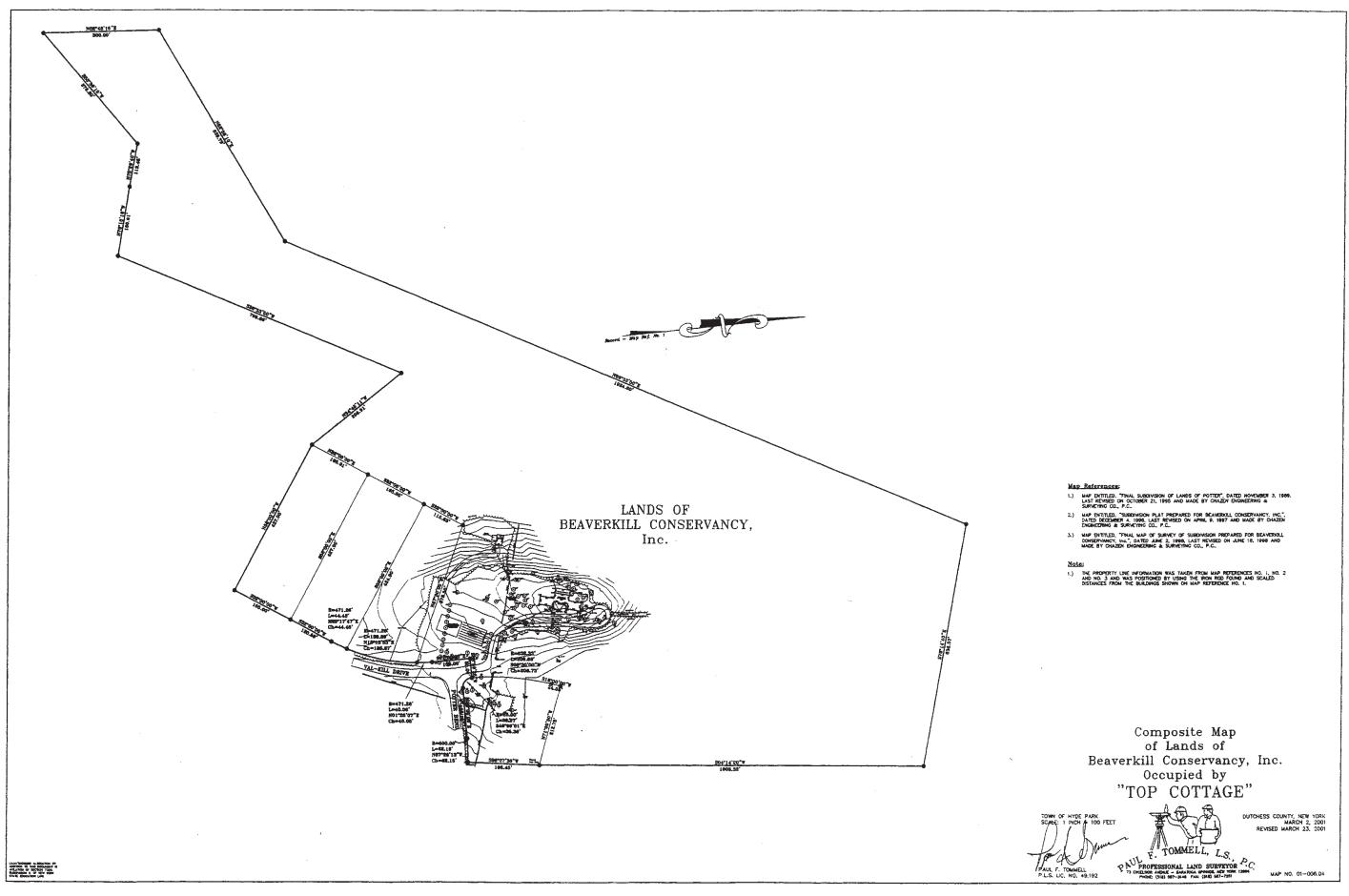


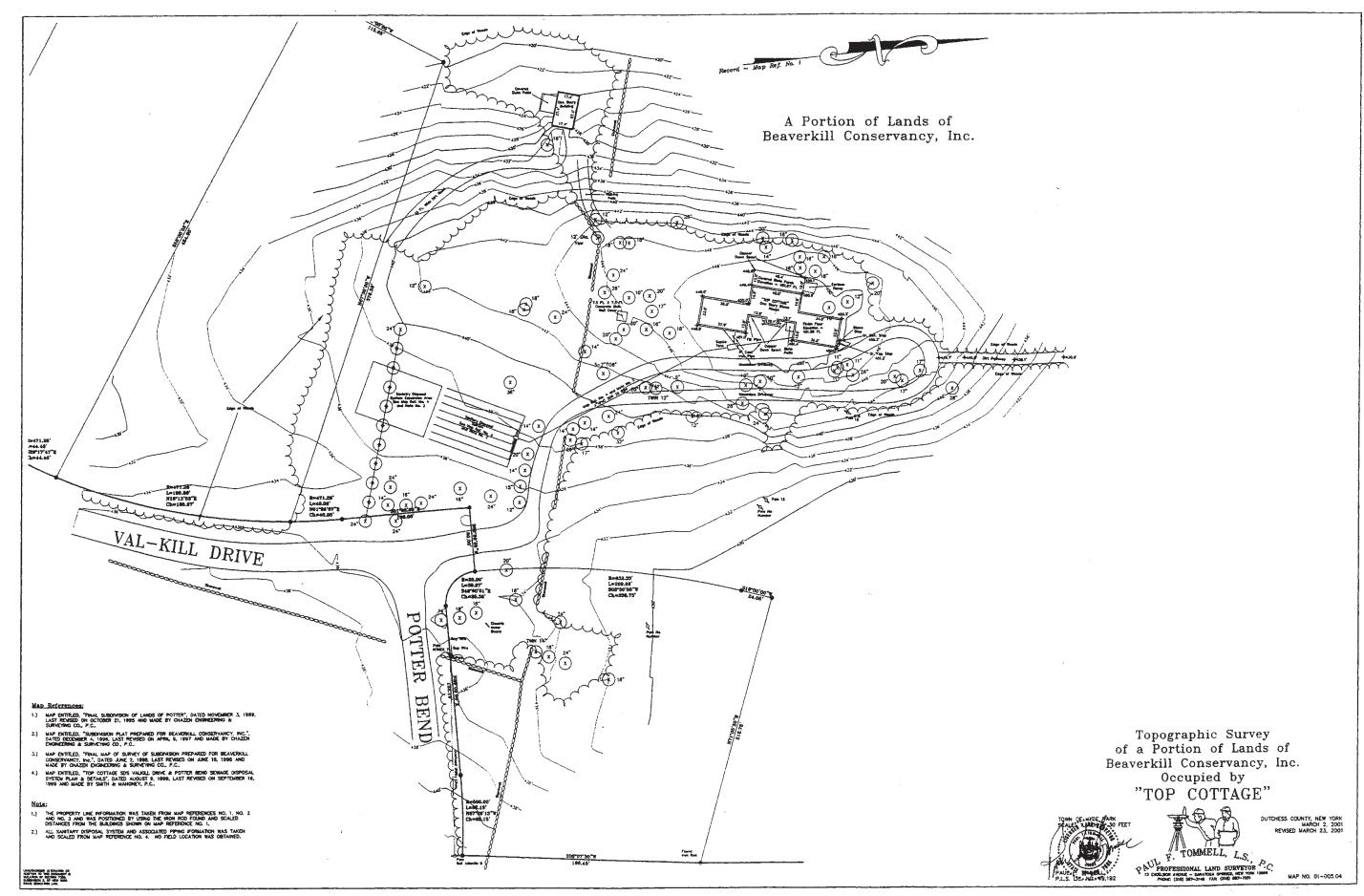


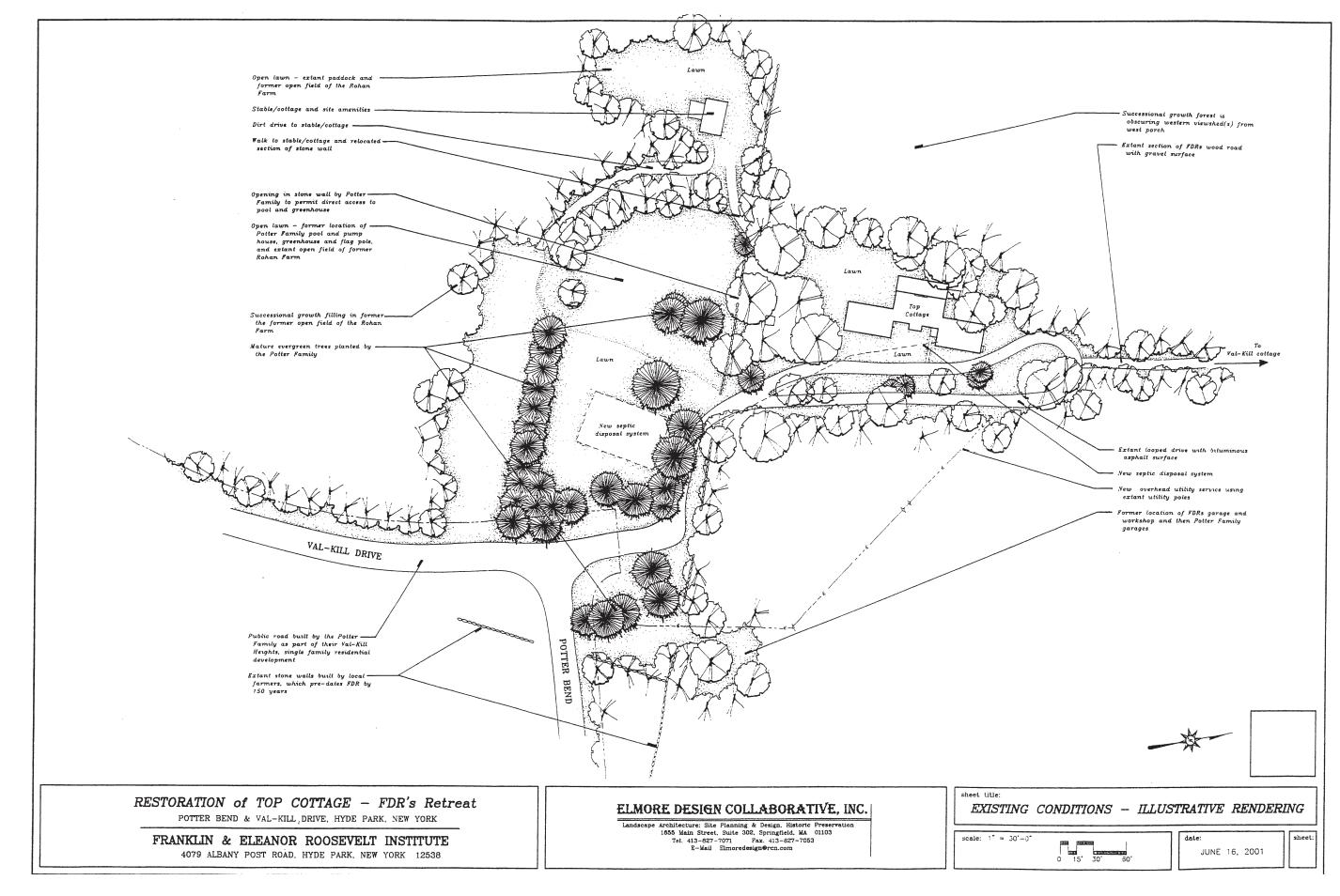


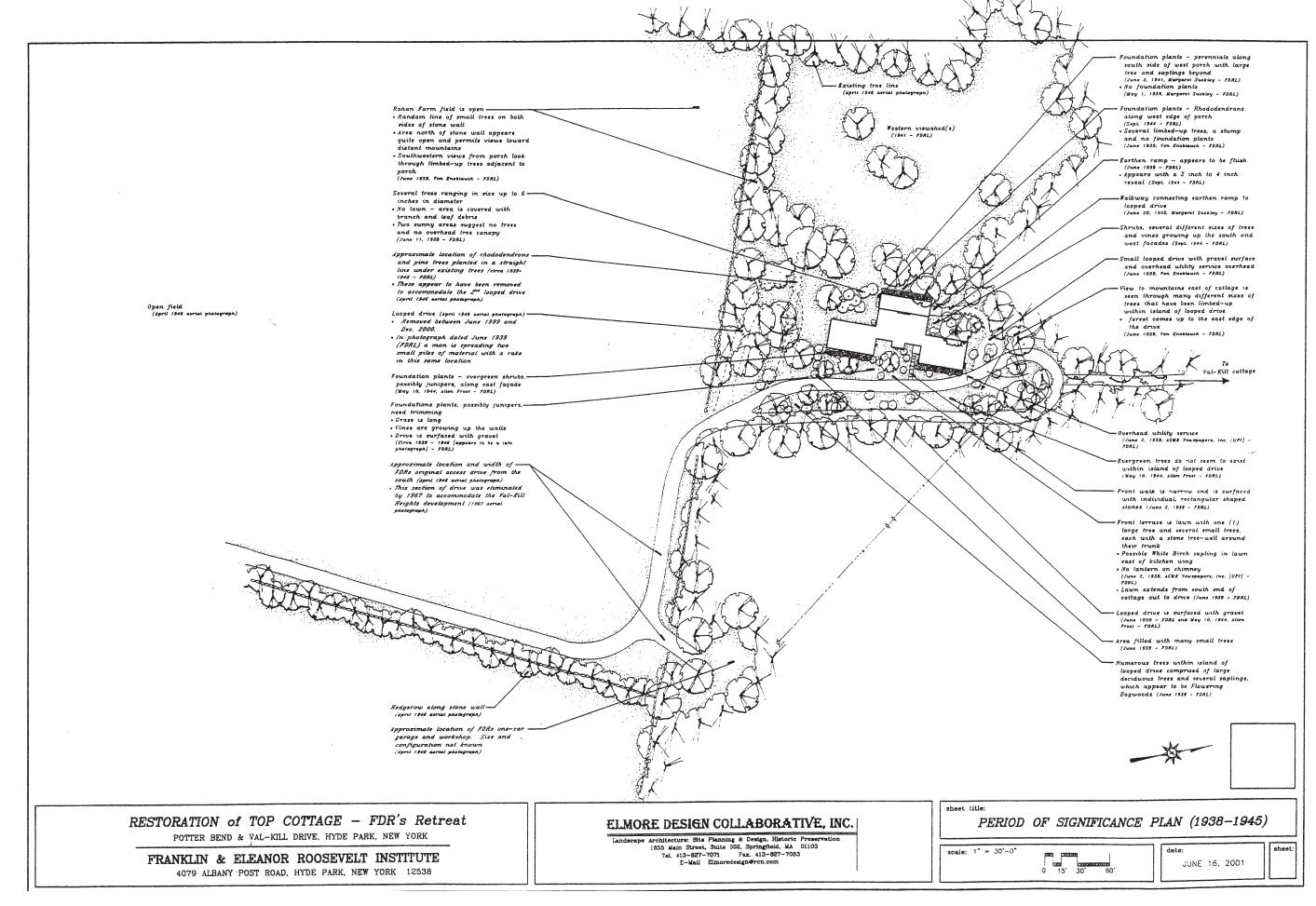


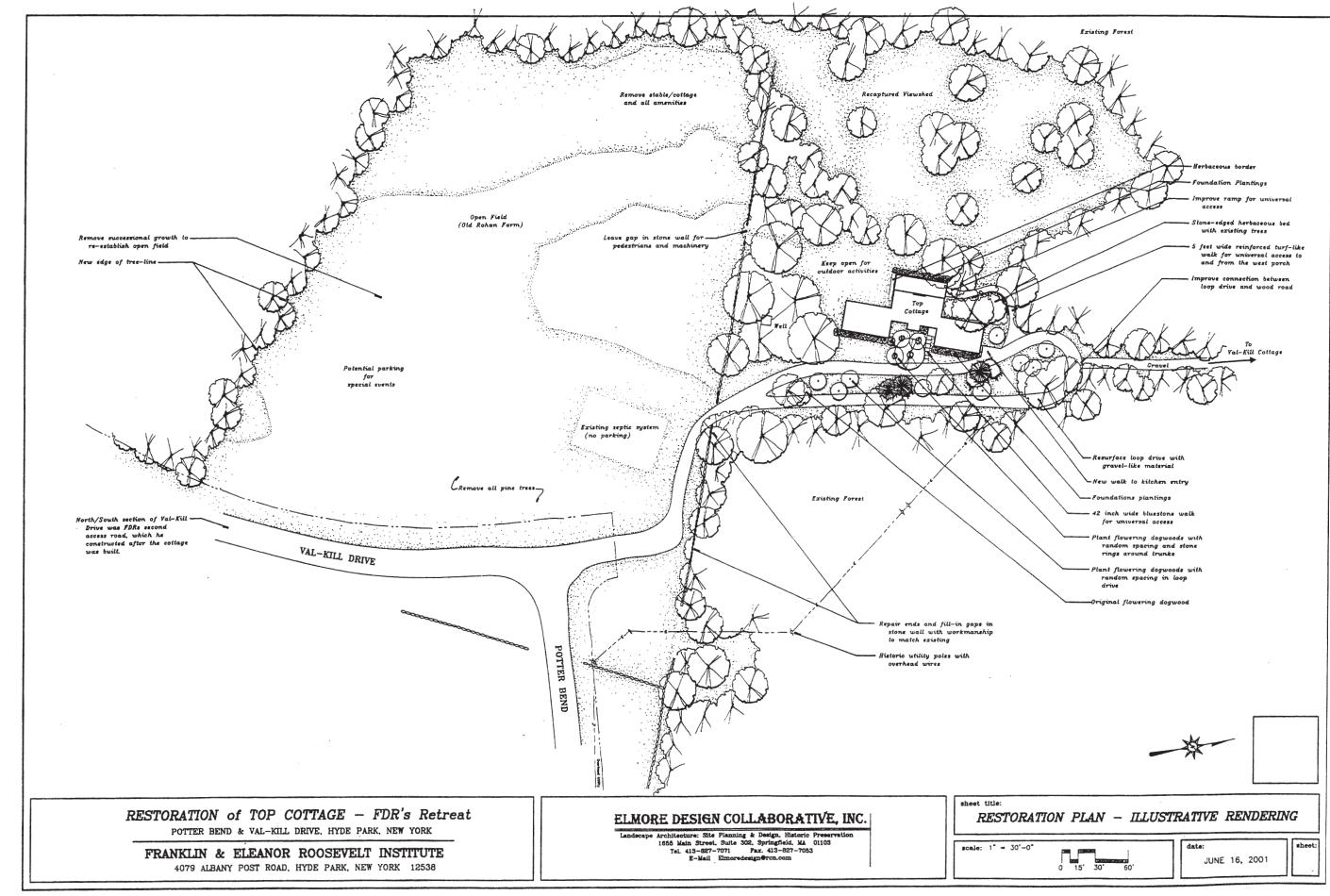












APPENDIX B

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS AND USGS QUADRANGLES

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS and USGS QUADRANGLES

The purpose for this section of the report is to document and show how changes to the landscape surrounding Top Cottage occurred, by comparing aerial photographs and United States Geological Survey Quadrangles dating between 1935 and 1995. Each picture has a red dot that identifies the cottage's location on Dutchess Hill. These aerial photographs and USGS maps were scanned and photographed with permission from the Dutchess County Soil and Water Conservation District located on Route 44 in Millbrook, New York.



∩ NORTH

1935

(Map number 8520 165)

This aerial photograph predates FDR's land purchases and the construction of Top Cottage.

Notice:

- The visible evidence of vehicular activity through the woods and over the farm fields;
- The "Rohan Farm," an open agricultural field below and to the right of the cottage site;
- · Cream Street (the white line, east [to the right] of the cottage, running north and south).





1946

(Map number 464 VV - 16)

This photograph was taken in April of 1946, one year after FDR died.

Notice:

- Top Cottage is visible;
- · The Rohan Farm is still open, except now hedgerows have developed;
- FDR's access drive from the south bisects the field and his original wood road from the north can be seen;
- The viewshed to the west can be seen it is not as heavily wooded as the surrounding forest and it focuses west to southwest;
- · A looped driveway appears south of the cottage; and
- · Just southeast of the cottage is a light-colored area that may be the location of the garage/workshop listed in the schedule of FDR's real estate holdings.





1960

(Map number C-12)

This photograph was take eight (8) years after Agnus Potter purchased Top Cottage from Elliott Roosevelt.

Notice:

- · The cottage is visible;
- The Rohan Farm is beginning to fill in from the west with successional-growth vegetation;
- · The hedgerows are maturing and becoming wider;
- The bright spots in the field south of the cottage suggest disturbance and possibly new construction;
- · Small sections of FDR's wood roads and access drive are visible;
- · The viewshed to the west-southwest appears open, though the vegetation is encroaching; and
- · The single-family residential subdivision to the west of the cottage has begun.





1967

(*Map number 378 93L*)

This photograph was taken nearly 30 years after FDR built Top Cottage and 21 years after he died.

Notice:

- · The cottage remains visible;
- The Potter's outbuildings, swimming pool and pine trees (black dots in the field) are visible for the first time;
- · The western-most portion of the Rohan Farm has filled-in with vegetation;
- · The Val-Kill Heights subdivision has begun and the roads are built;
- · Vehicular access to Top Cottage appears to be through the Val-Kill Heights subdivision;
- · The subdivision west of the cottage is nearly complete; and
- · The western viewshed is becoming more obscured.



NORTH

1963 USGS QUADRANGLE

The green swaths of color indicate trees and forested areas while the white swaths indicate open landscapes with less vegetation.

Notice:

- · Top Cottage sits high on Dutchess Hill in the woods.
- · Val-Kill cottage is just right of center in the picture, below the pond with the number "217" in it.
- Springwood and the FDR Library are located at the far left side of the picture, west of Route 9 and above center.
- It is approximately 2-1/2 miles in a straight line between Top Cottage and Springwood.
- The subdivision west of Top Cottage with the red and white striped road is nearly complete and the Val-Kill Heights subdivision has not yet begun.



∩ NORTH

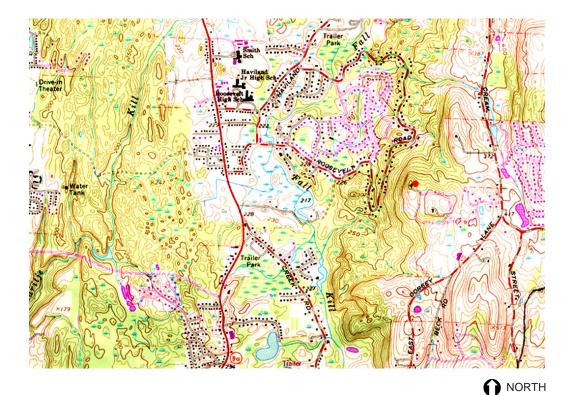
1980

(Map number 8753 43R HI)

This photograph was taken when the leaves were on the trees.

Notice:

- · The Val-Kill Heights subdivision has numerous houses completed;
- · The Rohan Farm continues to fill-in with vegetation;
- The Potter's pine trees continue to grow wider, screening their cottage from the Val-Hill Heights subdivision;
- · Top Cottage is hardly visible beneath the trees;
- · The western viewshed can barely be seen; and
- Little evidence of FDR's wood roads and access drives can be seen. However, sections of his early drive from Cream Street that ran east and west along the southern boundary of the Rohan Farm and then turned north toward the cottage have been used as subdivision roads. Compare this photograph with the 1946 and 1960 images to see which sections of the historic drive remain in use.

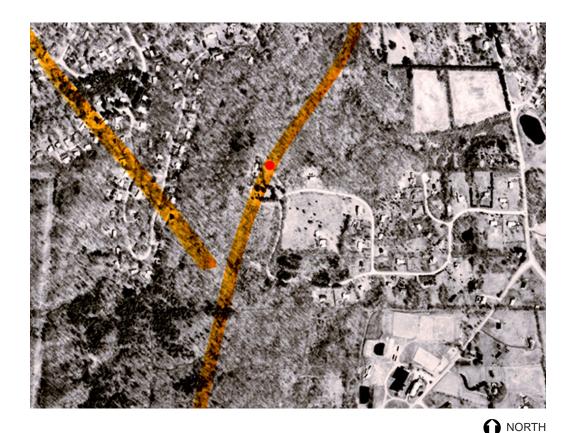


1980 USGS QUADRANGLE

The yellow and light green swaths of color indicate trees and forest areas and the white swaths indicate areas with less vegetation.

Notice:

- · The Val-Kill Heights subdivision has begun and a few houses have been built;
- Access to Top Cottage is provided through the development on paved roads;
 and
- · The subdivision west of Top Cottage continues to grow.
- This picture does not extend far enough west to show the relationship between Top Cottage and Springwood/FDR Library sites.



1995

(*Map number 5V – 128*)

This photograph was taken 40 years after FDR died and when the leaves were off of the trees. (Please ignore the orange lines. They were added to the original photograph for another purpose.)

Notice:

- · Top Cottage is clearly noticeable;
- · The Rohan Farm has filled-in with vegetation;
- · The Val-Kill Heights subdivision continues to add new homes;
- The Potters' pine trees are quite mature and visually protect their home from their neighbors' houses;
- · The subdivision west of Top Cottage is complete; and
- · Slight visible evidence remains of FDR's wood roads and access drives.

APPENDIX C

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BOOKS AT TOP COTTAGE

Appendix C

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BOOKS AT TOP COTTAGE

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Appendix C C-3

The preceding list appeared in a letter from The Rosenbach Company, 322 East 57th Street, New York 22, N.Y. and 1618 Locust Street, Philadelphia 3, P.A. The Rosenbach Company purchased books from Mr. Elliott Roosevelt. These books were from the so-called "dream House" of FDR. These books represented …

"the only collection of books, excluding the collection of miniature books in the personal possession of the President at the time of his death. They are all autographed by the President, and many contain additional manuscript inscriptions by him. They show a strong personal association, particularly in relation to his hobbies." [no date]

On a piece of desk-top calendar, someone wrote in pencil that the books in the letter from the Rosenbach Co. that have a check mark next to them (also in pencil) are noted as being on the list of books at Top Cottage on May 14, 1945.

Appendix C C-4

APPENDIX D

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Appendix D D-1

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- 1. Investigate who constructed the second looped drive, south of the cottage.
- 2. Investigate the design, purchase, installation and dates of the foundation plantings.
- 3. Investigate the installation and date(s) of the row of pine trees and rhododendrons planted between the cottage and stone wall.
- 4. Investigate how the Adams-Faber Company became aware of the bid for Top Cottage. What was their relationship with Henry Toombs?
- 5. Investigate the bid prices for Top Cottage.
- 6. Investigate when the garages (and workshop) were installed; their size, configuration, and modifications over time.
- 7. Investigate the location of the entire electrical service line installed by Central Hudson between Cream Street and Top Cottage.
- 8. Conduct personal interviews of surviving family members of:
 - · Mr. Plog Mrs. Roosevelt's property manager
 - Mr. Draisse Olin Dow said he "worked on the roads and trees" for FDR.
 p. 177.
 - · Christian Bie FDR's Caretaker for Top Cottage
 - · Others to be identified.
- 9. Review the trunk of Elliott Roosevelt's papers and other materials that are in the possession of Ford Elliott.
- Continue to look for site improvements plans for Top Cottage including planting designs, grading plans, layout plans for the driveway and access/wood roads.
- 11. Investigate Henry J. Toombs' archive at the Department of Archives and History in Atlanta, Georgia for information pertaining to the landscape at Top Cottage.
- 12. Continue to look for historic photographs that document the conditions of the site during FDR's residency.
- 13. Continue researching to document the extent of Eleanor Roosevelt's purchase of FDR's land in 1947.

Appendix D D-2

APPENDIX E

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Appendix E

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Sources contacted in pursuit of information for this research

Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation, Estimating Department

College Archives, Special Collections – Room 15, Moon Library, College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Syracuse, New York

Dutchess County Clerk, Office of, Poughkeepsie, New York

Dutchess County Historical Society, 549 Main Street, Poughkeepsie, New York

Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute, 4079 Albany Post Road, Hyde Park, New York

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library (FDRL), Hyde Park, New York

Appendix E E-2

Georgia Division of Archives and History, 330 Capitol Avenue, SE, Atlanta, Georgia Hyde Park, Town of, Assessor's Office
Hyde Park Historical Society, Town of
John G. Waite Associates Architects, PLLC, 384 Broadway, Albany, New York
Open Space Institute, Inc., 666 Broadway, 9th Fl., New York, New York
Poughkeepsie Journal, Poughkeepsie, New York

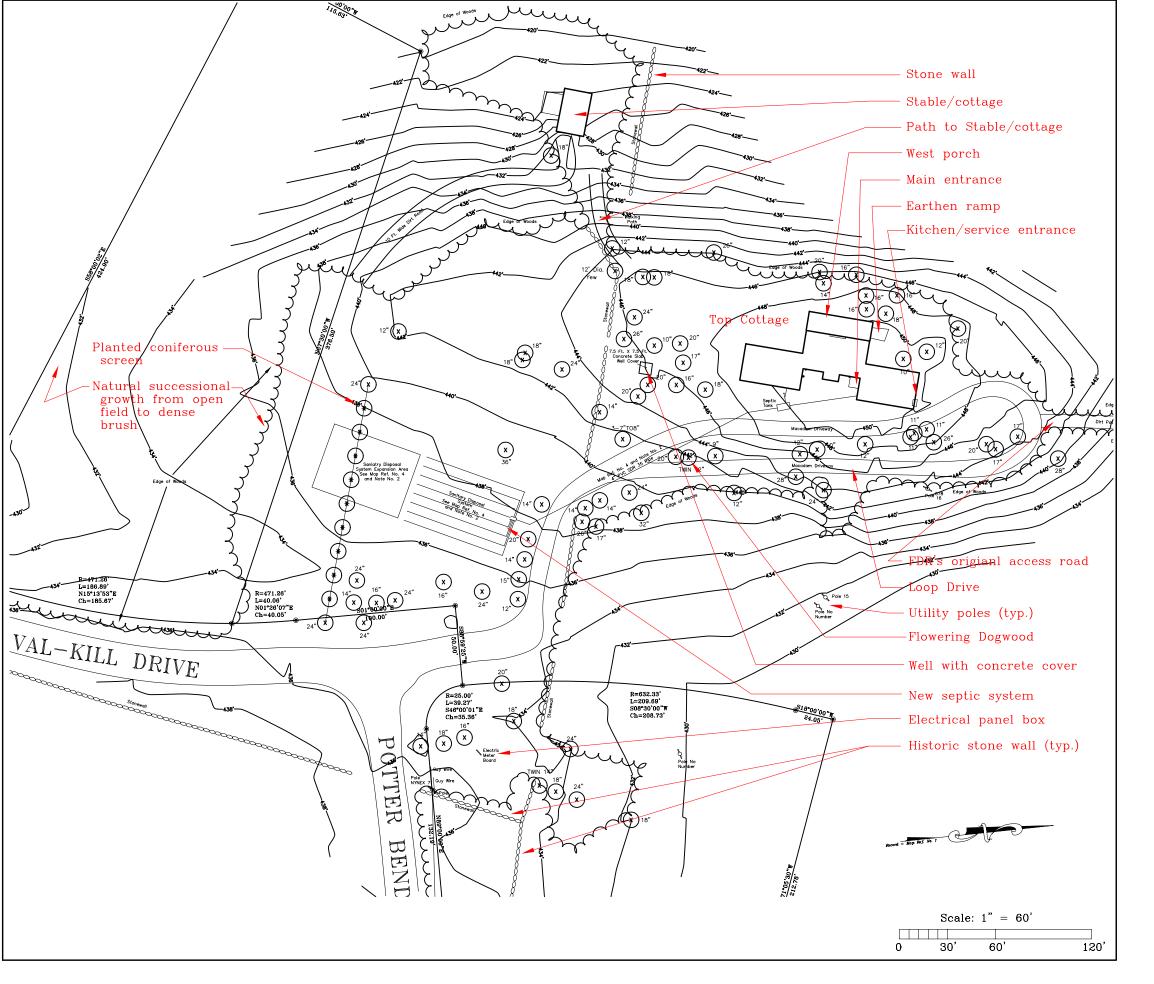
Personal Interviews:

Owen Potter, Son of Ms. Jean Potter, whose estate sold Top Cottage to the Beaverkill Conservancy

Marvin Stoddard, Retired Central Hudson employee

Wilderstein Preservation, Morton Road, Rhinebeck, New York

Appendix E E-3

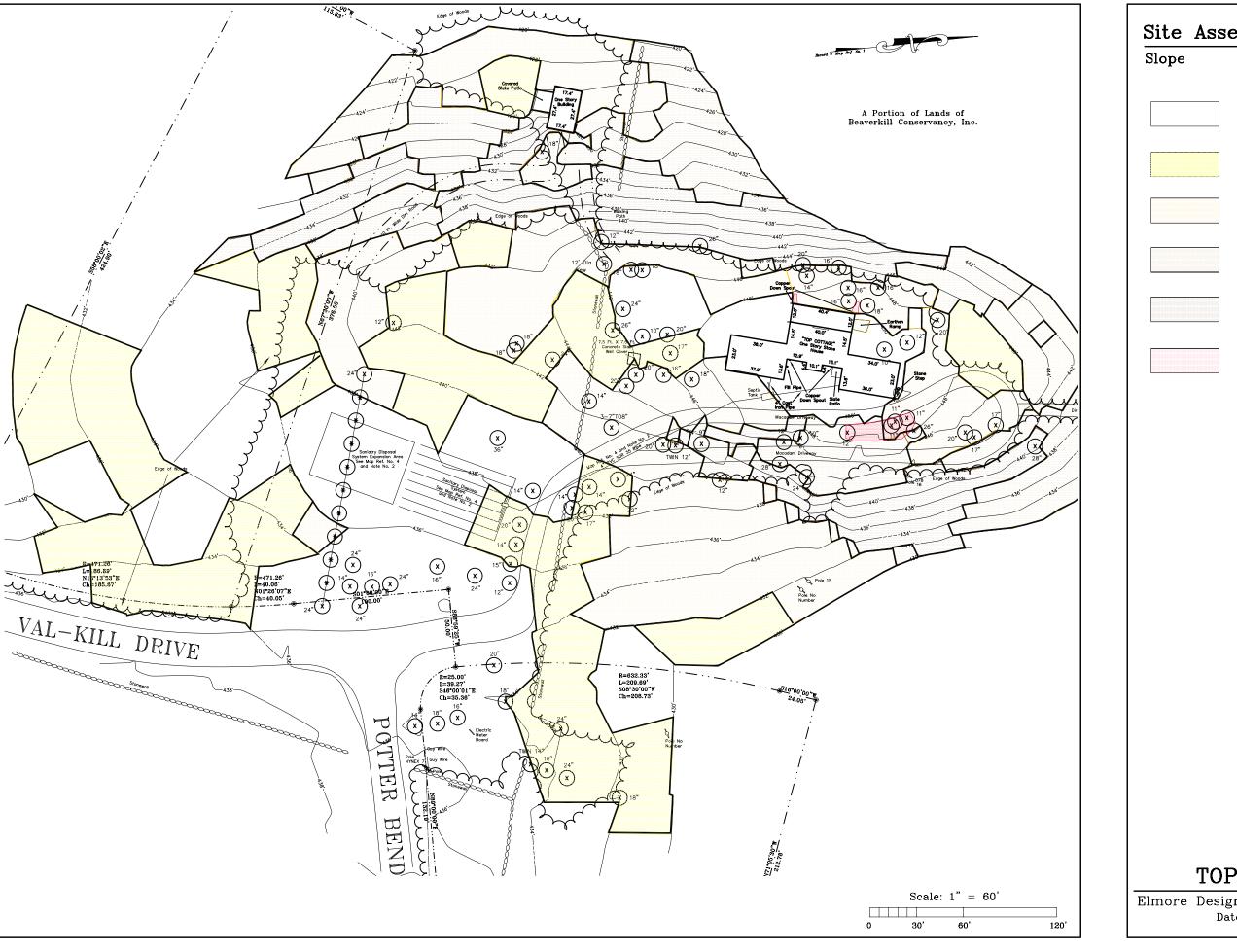


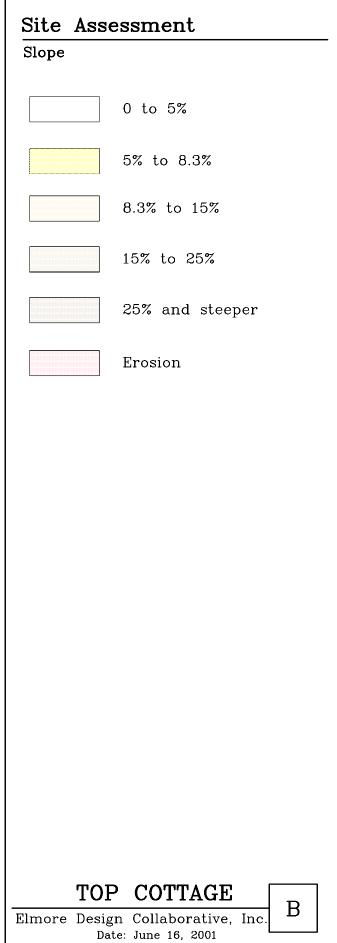
Site Assessment Individual Site Features

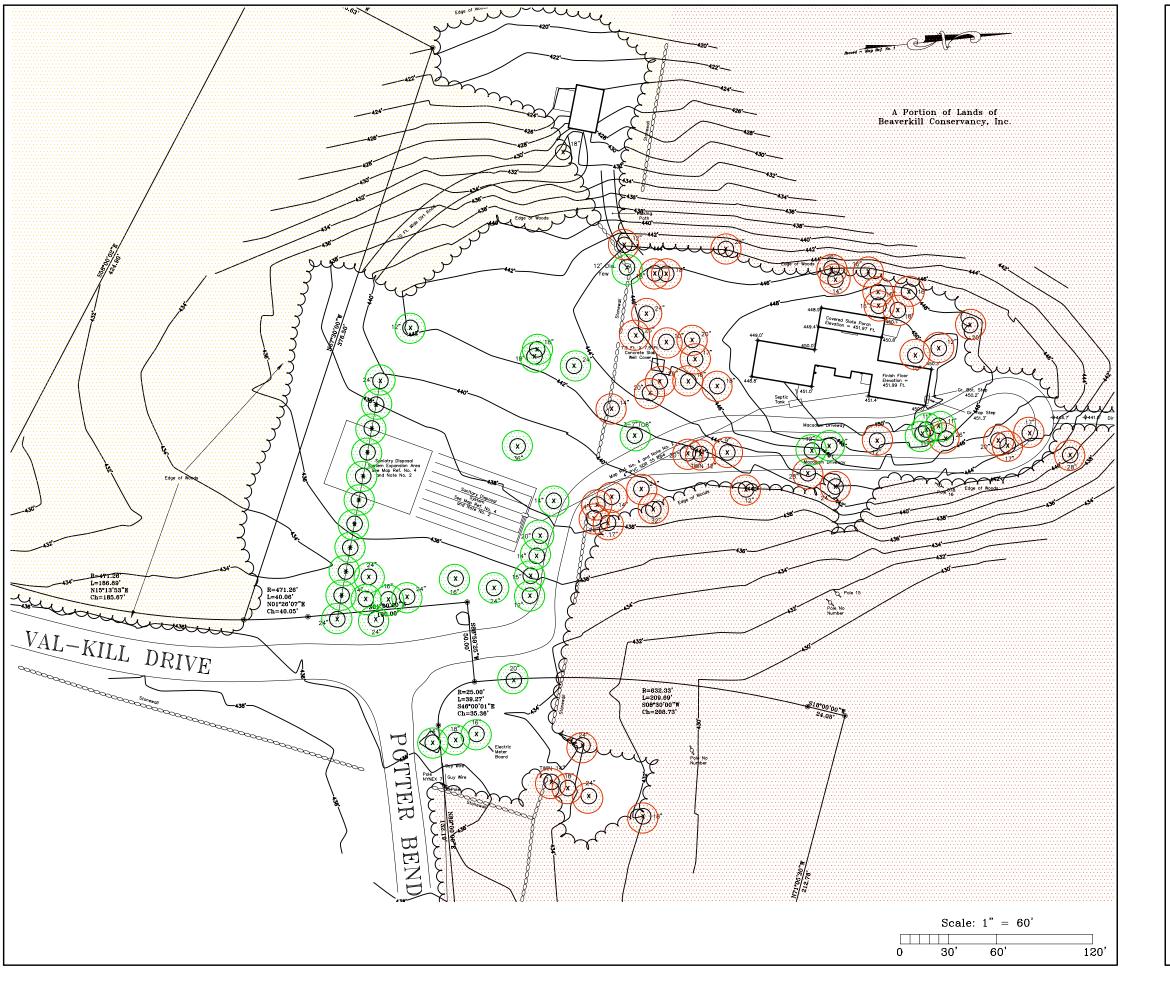
TOP COTTAGE

Α

Elmore Design Collaborative, Inc.
Date: June 16, 2001



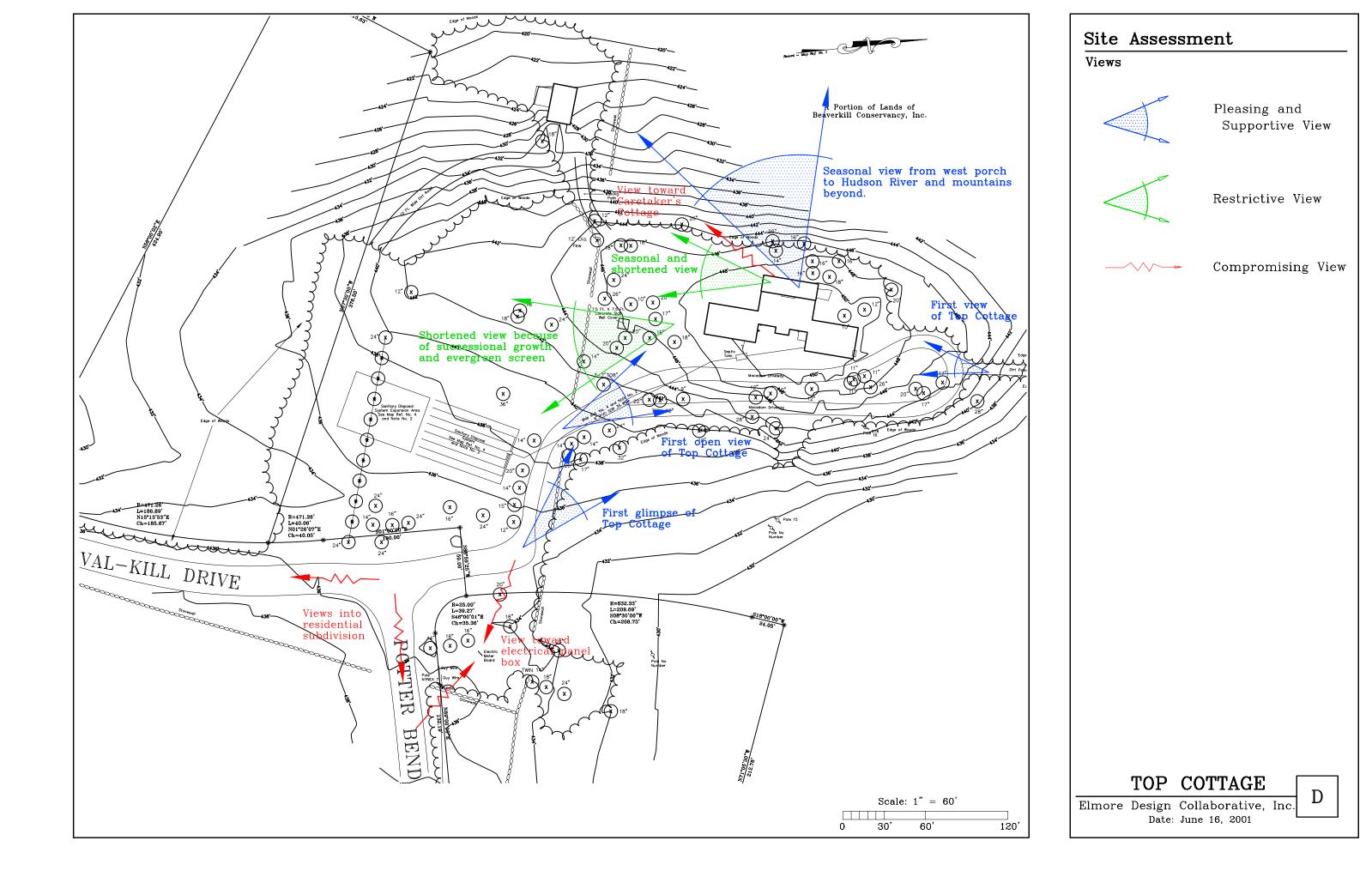


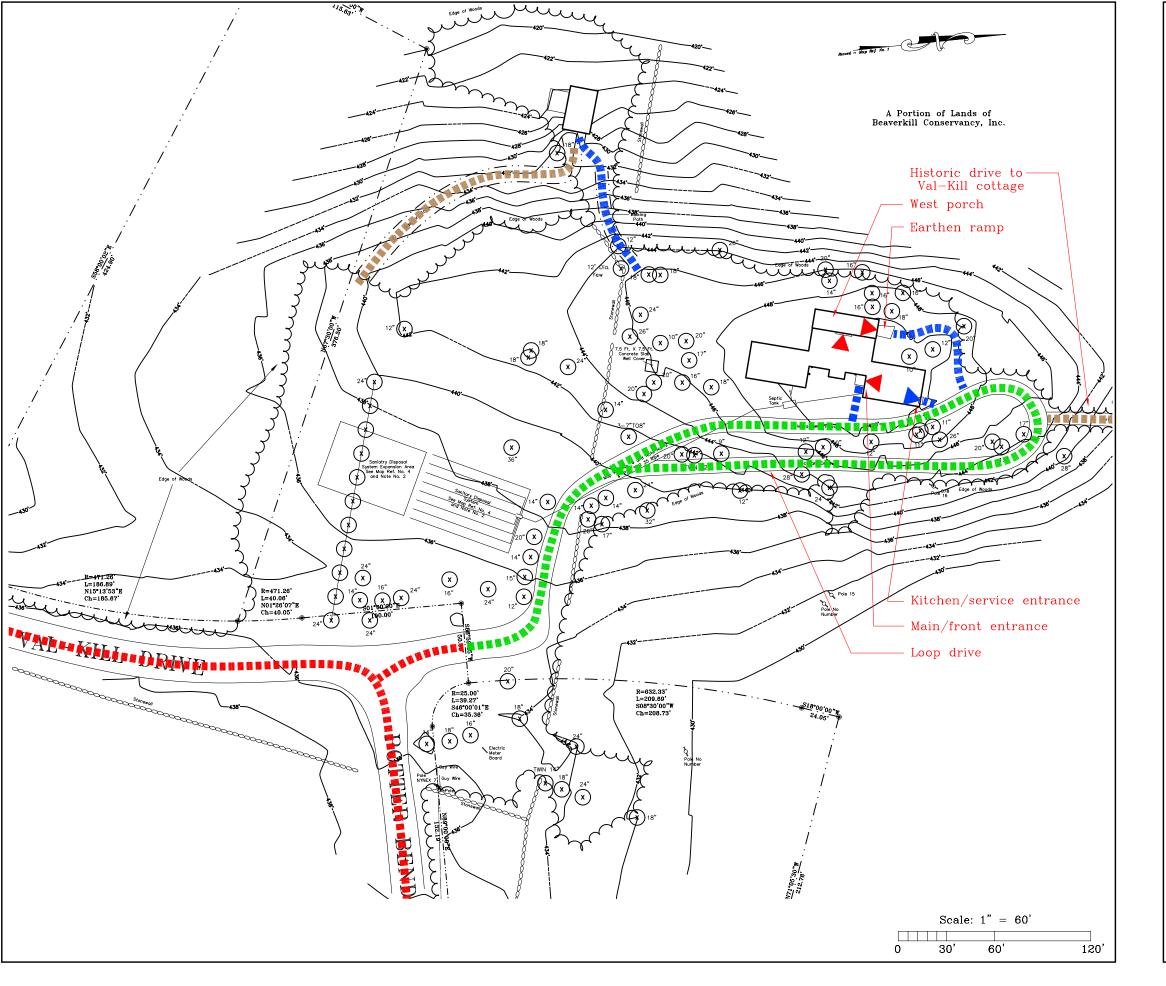


Site Assessment Vegetation Lawn or Other Successional Growth Hardwood Forest Coniferous Trees Deciduous Trees

TOP COTTAGE

Elmore Design Collaborative, Inc Date: June 16, 2001



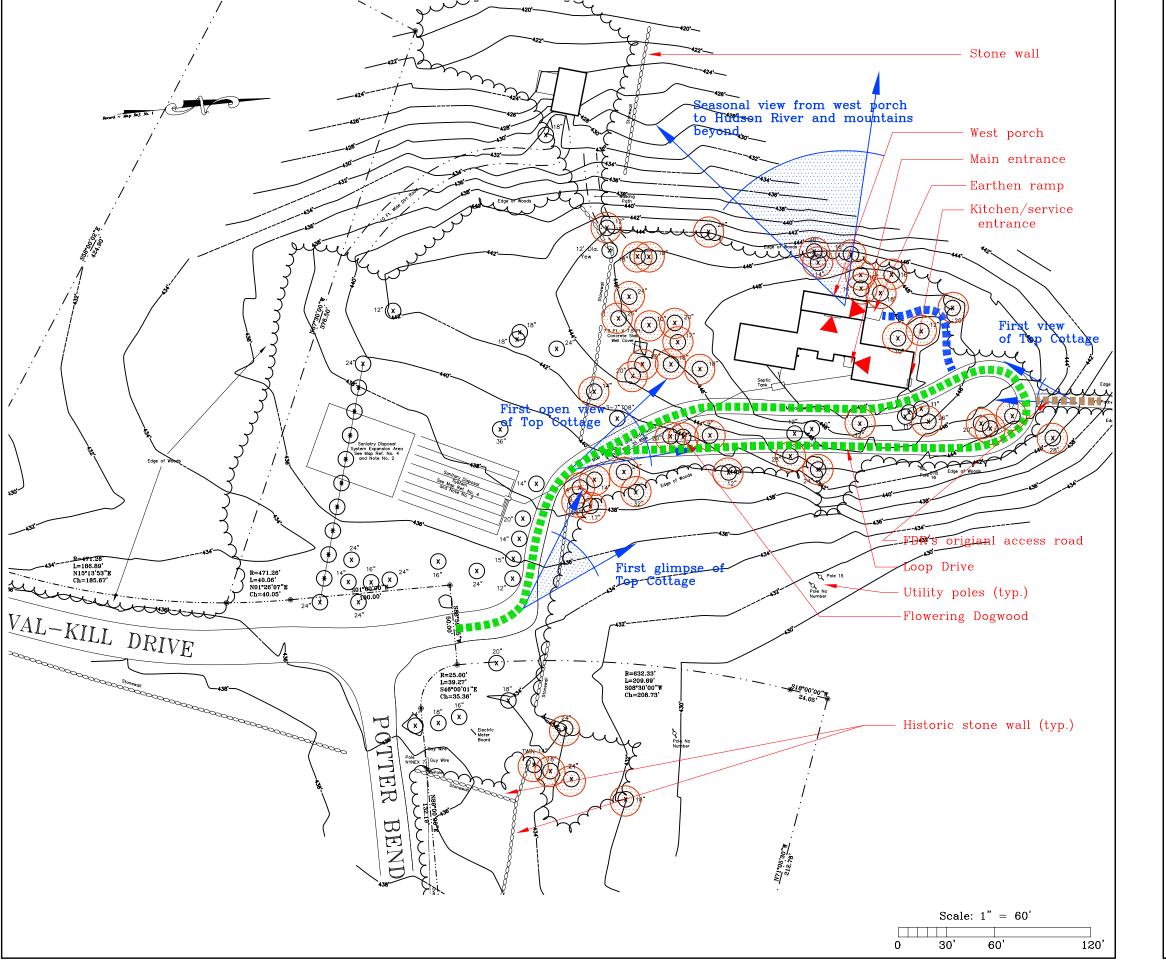


Site Assessment Circulation ■■■■■■■ Vehicular Road - Paved •••••••• Vehicular Driveway - Paved Vehicular Path - Dirt/Gravel Pedestrian Walk - Dirt ADA - Universal Access Restricted Access

TOP COTTAGE

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Elmore Design Collaborative, Inc.
Date: June 16, 2001



Site Assessment Significant Features ■■■■■■ Vehicular Driveway - Paved ■■■■■■■ Vehicular Path - Dirt/Gravel Pedestrian Walk - Dirt ADA - Universal Access Pleasing and Supportive View Deciduous/Specimen Trees (12" Dia. and larger)

TOP COTTAGE

Elmore Design Collaborative, Inc.

Date: June 16, 2001

F