

FILE

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property

Historic name: Caperton, William Gaston, Jr., House

other name/site number: Wyndridge

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2. Location

street & number: WV Rt. 3

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Union

vicinity: X

state: WV county: Monroe

code: 063

zip code: 24983

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3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: District

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>9</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>9</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of relate property listing: N/A

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6. Function or Use
=====

Historic: Domestic: single dwelling Sub: Agricultural/Subsistence:
agricultural outbuildings
Current : Domestic: single dwelling Sub: Agricultural/Subsistence:
agricultural outbuildings
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7. Description
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Architectural Classification:
Georgian
Greek Revival
=====

Other Description: N/A

Materials: foundation Stone roof Tin: standing seam
walls Wood: weatherboard other _____
=====

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

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8. Statement of Significance
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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Locally.

Applicable National Register Criteria: A & C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : N/A

Areas of Significance: Architecture
Argriculture - Early Settlements

Period(s) of Significance: 1773 - 1900

Significant Dates : 1773 1872 _____

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. X See continuation sheet.

===== 9. Major Bibliographical References =====

See continuation sheet. X

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

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

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: WV Division of Culture & History

===== 10. Geographical Data =====

Acreage of Property: Fifteen Acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A	<u> 17 </u>	<u> 543120 </u>	<u> 4160660 </u>	B	<u> 17 </u>	<u> 543120 </u>	<u> 4160320 </u>
C	<u> 17 </u>	<u> 542860 </u>	<u> 4160340 </u>	D	<u> 17 </u>	<u> 542860 </u>	<u> 4160670 </u>

Verbal Boundary Description: X See continuation sheet.

The boundaries are a rectangle containing fifteen acres with the main house at its center.

Boundary Justification: See continuation sheet.

The boundaries are extended to include all buildings of the farm and home including the spring and farm pond. It is also extended to include pasture and cultivated land that is the historical background setting of the house.

===== 11. Form Prepared By =====

Name/Title: Dr. Ronald L. Ripley

Organization: Monroe Co. Historical Soc. Date: July 1, 1991

Street & Number: P.O. Box 193 Telephone: (304) 772-5539

City or Town: Union State: WV ZIP: 24983

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Surrounded by rich native blue grass pasture lands is the house William Gaston Caperton, Jr., built in 1872. Wyndridge is a large, almost square, two-story hipped roof Georgian plan house used by the more prosperous landowner in Monroe County in the decades just prior to and just after the Civil War. It is Greek Revival in form and Southern in feel with a great hall through its center and a large one-story with loft service wing to the rear. Quiet touches of Italic along with late Victorian features are evident. The house is situated one-and-one-half miles east of the historic district of the town of Union. It is approached by a farm road from West Virginia Route Three. Wyndridge faces west with an impressive view of Bickett's Knob, the flat mountain mass just west of Union. Rolling lands, both cultivated and pasture, surround the house, along with numerous ancillary farm buildings. A virgin wood land of approximately twenty acres shields the house somewhat from West Virginia Route Three.

The west facade features a one-story portico which is Greek Revival in form with Italic elements. A second-story balustrade has been removed. There is a one-story veranda across the face of the south exposure with a small covered second-story balcony extending from the south-east bedroom. Late Victorian elements support the veranda. Connecting the formal front portico with the veranda was originally a wooden terrace with Victorian cut-work balustrade.

The standing seam tin roof is pierced by two large square brick chimneys located on its south and north planes. The foundation is native cut soapstone. There is a basement located under the south half of the house of the same stone construction. The Greek Revival front door features a three-quarter length one-over-one sidelight and a rectangular five-light overlight. The second-story front door features a full one-over-one sidelight and no overlight. The first story of the main block exhibits four-over-four double hung sash windows while the second story exhibits two-over-two double hung sash windows. All windows of the main block are shuttered. Windows of the service wing are six-over-six double hung sash windows and are unshuttered. The main block measures forty feet by forty-six feet while the service wing measures forty feet long by eighteen feet wide. The entire house is covered by lap siding. Shutters are painted a black-green. Some panels of the front door (first and second stories) are painted black, making them appear as glass panes.

The floor plan of the main block features a grand hall and staircase. To the left of the entrance are a formal parlor and dining room. To the right is an L-shaped informal parlor with two French doors opening upon the south veranda. Behind the informal parlor is a passage room from the veranda to the main hall and also to the L-shaped rear hall. The main hall also opens onto the rear service hall. There is also a division of the main hall at the juncture of the formal parlor and dining room by a black walnut screen. To the rear of the main hall is a service

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stair to the second floor. The second floor consists of four bedrooms along with the spacious second-story hall. The service wing which is to the rear of the main block has construction elements of the 1820-30 period. In its approximate center is a large square cut soapstone chimney with two fireplace fronts. This area was used as the kitchen and a large iron wood-burning cook stove was employed on the west side of the chimney while the east side was left open and the area used as a family dining room. An elevated porch opened out from this area. A large cistern was placed to the north side of the kitchen. Connecting this earlier building to the main block were two large pantries, one of which has been converted to a bathroom. One other bathroom has been constructed from part of the ell of the back service hall. Kitchen and service areas are panelled with horizontal tongue and groove beaded wood boards.

All rooms of the main block feature a fireplace and closets. All rooms in the main block are papered, some original to the 1872 period and some of a more modern period. Cornice molding was not used as seems to be the custom in the Union area.

All woodwork (door and window casings, fireplace fronts, stair railings and spindles, etc.) is constructed of native black walnut cut from the property. The woodwork retains its original preparation and has been untouched since 1872, mellowing to a rich dark black walnut patina. The window, doorway and fireplace surrounds are studded with small one-inch peculiar black walnut plugs which resemble almost to size the chocolate candy "kisses" produced by the Hershey Company. Constructed at the same time as the house and by the same craftsmen is a black walnut linen press which still remains in the upstairs hall, being entirely too large and heavy to move. It, too, is decorated with the peculiar one-inch walnut plugs. In some cases, such as door surrounds and fireplace fronts these plugs conceal the use of metal screws. In most cases, the flooring is also black walnut except the first floor hall and formal parlor where walnut and an alternating strip of pine is used to give a striped effect.

The formal parlor and dining room retain their original 1872 kerosene hanging lamps. They are still unwired except by temporary extension cord.

The main block encloses two two-story late eighteenth century log structures which are approximately eighteen feet by twenty feet each in size. William Gaston Caperton had these two earlier structures "pulled together." They are constructed of large hand-hewn logs which are V-notched with large stone and brick chimneys between. The log structures comprise the formal parlor and dining room and two upstairs bedrooms; the entire north half of the house. Between these two log structures are large closets for each of the above mentioned rooms.

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Just to the north-east of the main block stands an early contributing log one room below, one room above house with stone chimney. Stone pier supports of cut soapstone form the foundation. This log house, measuring eighteen feet by twenty feet, has one door and two windows on the first floor and one small peculiar window in the gable end of the second story. This is the early pioneer 1773 Blanton House. Logs are hand-hewn and V-notched.

Other contributing buildings just north-east of the house are a log ice house and log smoke house, each of which is approximately twelve feet square and of the same log construction as the other log structures. The south gable ends are extended without supports to form a covered entrance. Clustered on a hill and also north-east of the house and in the nominated property is a large contributing barn with vertical siding, a cattle scales and a machine shed. Each has a standing seam tin roof. Construction dates are late nineteenth century. A contributing late nineteenth century carriage shed with vertical flat-board siding is situated south of the house along with one other contributing shed of unknown use.

A spring erupts at the head of a small valley just behind the house. It is related that its waters flowed through a log and stone dairy. Only the foundation of this dairy exists and this unresearched site is not included in the property count.

Wyndridge is painted white and it stands out against its verdant surroundings and is reflected in the farm pond in front of the house. Its welcoming sight can be seen at the end of the long farm road from West Virginia Route Three.

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Under Criteria A and C, Wyndridge at one glance represents the establishment of the pioneer family in the trans Allegheny area and the final refinement of the original homestead in the late nineteenth century. The early log house of Henry Blanton, built about 1773, stands alongside the sophisticated farm home that William Gaston Caperton, Jr., had constructed one hundred years later. Rose Caperton maintained this house and farm of her father's until her death in 1970, eschewing such modern conveniences as electric lighting.

The rich land in the Union area was a prize for the early settlers and they soon established their homes here after crossing the Alleghenys from the Great Valley of Virginia. Henry Blanton was one of these early settlers and his hand-hewn log two-story house with stone chimney is the oldest remaining home of this period in the Union area. The first we learn of Henry Blanton is in the court records of Botetout County, Virginia, in 1773 when he is elected as constable. This section of Monroe County was Botetout until 1777 when it became Greenbrier and 1799 when it became Monroe. Henry Blanton is recorded in all records of these counties as a large landowner. In 1815, Henry Blanton passed his land and home one-and-one-half miles east of Union to his son, John Blanton and his wife, Betsy Wisemen Blanton. Betsy was the daughter of John Wiseman, a man of all trades in early Union; blacksmith, silversmith, gunsmith, and Baptist minister. The Blanton House stood a mere quarter mile west of the early pioneer church, Rehoboth. Rehoboth, of round unhewn notched-end logs, is still standing as a museum maintained by the Methodist Conference and is considered the oldest church west of the Alleghenys. Henry Blanton was one of the early pioneers who built this church.

In 1820, the early Blanton homestead was sold to Henry Alexander, son of James Alexander who founded the Town of Union in 1799 and was one of the original settlers. Henry Alexander maintained a brick townhouse in Union and it stood just across the street from William Gaston Caperton I townhouse. Henry Alexander's daughter, Harriette, married William Gaston Caperton I. Henry Alexander died in 1866 and to settle his estate, his grandson, William Gaston Caperton, Jr., acquired the old Blanton farm in 1872 and it was he who refined the several late 18th-century log buildings of Henry and John Blanton's into the late Victorian house we see today. William Gaston Caperton, Jr., brought workmen and craftsmen from Baltimore, Maryland, to build and assemble the house. He used native materials as had the original owners of the log houses. Native black walnut growing on the property figured prominently. William Gaston Caperton, Jr., used the services of Yale College in the building of his house. There is a letter in the collection of the Monroe County Historical Society which describes the construction and placement of lightning rods to the two chimneys of his hip roof house; it was written from Yale College.

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William Gaston Caperton, Jr., was the grandson of Hugh Caperton who in 1835 built Elmwood at Union. Caperton came to the Union area from New River in the late 18th century. Hugh Caperton became wealthy in land and the mercantile business. He figured prominently in political affairs of

the County of Monroe as well as the state of Virginia. His sons and grandsons continued that tradition in the affairs of Monroe County and the State of West Virginia. It is continued to this day (1991--Gaston Caperton, a descendant of Hugh Caperton of Elmwood, is the present of Governor of West Virginia.).

William Gaston Caperton, Jr., married Rosa Stiles Christian, a woman of the old school. Her daughter, Rose, related that she spent her days playing her Baltimore rosewood piano and attending an elegant formal garden that was constructed just north of the house. Elements of this early unevaluated garden still remain and many of the original garden bulbs bloom each spring. On the other hand, Rosa Caperton was much interested in education and her church, the Union Presbyterian Church. Her daughter relates that she is to be credited with the very early education of Matthew Clair who was to become the first black bishop of the Methodist Church. Rose relates that Rosa Caperton followed closely the career of Matthew Clair and, at times, aided financially to his education. Rosa Caperton took great comfort in later life that Matthew Clair, a man of God, had risen so far in the Methodist Church. Matthew Clair was born in 1865 and his parents worked and lived on the Henry Alexander Farm before they moved to Union. It is quite probable that Matthew Clair was born at Wyndridge. In any case, he was a frequent visitor to the farm.

Rose Caperton took over the running of Wyndridge at the end of the first quarter of the 20th century. She continued to maintain it in the style her father had established until her death in 1970. Rose was a woman ahead of her time in the early 20th century, a liberated woman who could run a farm well and raise blooded livestock, but who could still retain the cultivated and refined manners of the 19th century woman that had been instilled by her mother. An invitation to Sunday dinner or supper in a summer's evening on the veranda was a prize cherished by all. Rose was the last of the Alexander-Caperton line to own Wyndridge.

This early property established by the pioneer Blanton, Alexander and Caperton families is maintained now by the Honorable James Sprouse, Judge of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals. It is kept in its original condition and the farm lands are well groomed. Wyndridge continues to support a farming occupation as it had in the early settlers' day.

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Wyndridge is a significant well-preserved complex of farm dwellings and buildings that grew in number and evolved from the settlement period beginning about 1773, and ending in their present pattern of development about the close of the 19th century. The farm district's significance under both Criteria A and C relates to its cultural landscape, which with regard to the tout ensemble, provides a rich backdrop for the settlement period of Monroe County. As farms disappear from the West Virginia countryside due to the movement of younger generations to towns and as farms become more of a business than a family operation, Wyndridge survives as an ancient, relatively scarce and intact farm complex with a marked vernacular character that is derived in part from its larger physical context.

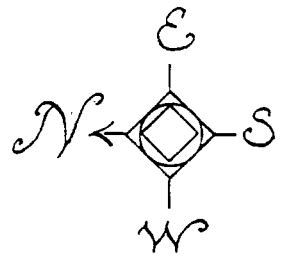
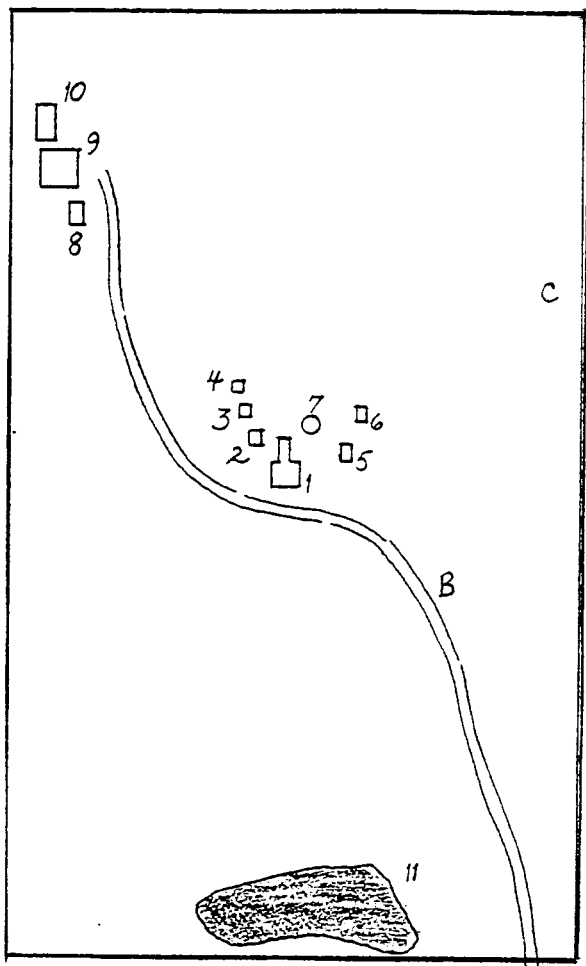
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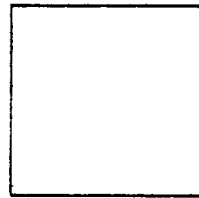
Photographic Sites

A
B
C

SCALE

1 INCH x 1 INCH = 1 ACRE

1 INCH = 200 FT. APPROX

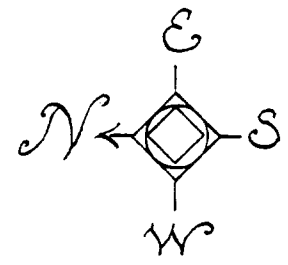
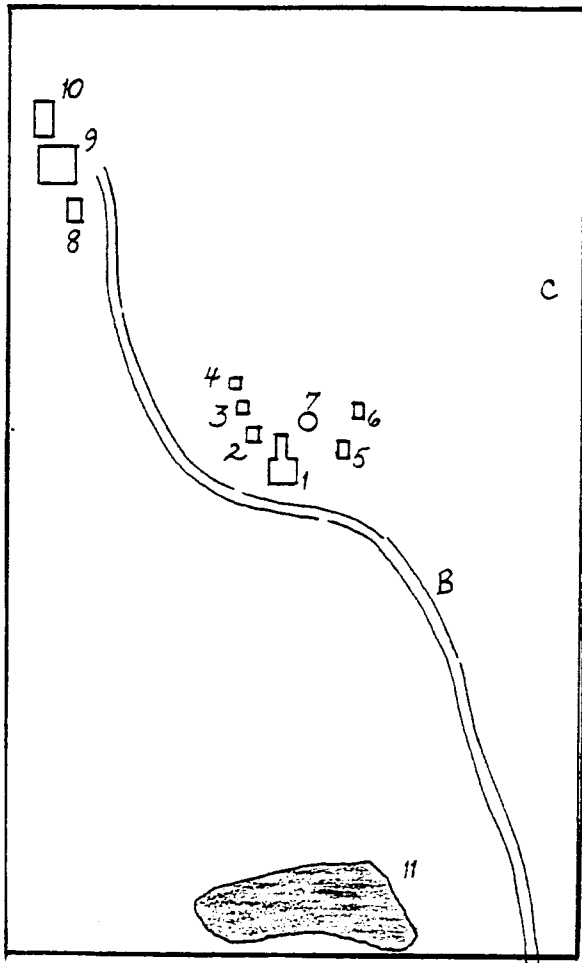


- 1 MAIN HOUSE
- 2 BLANTON LOG HOUSE
- 3 LOG ICE HOUSE
- 4 LOG SMOKE HOUSE
- 5 CARRIAGE HOUSE
- 6 SHED
- * 7 SPRING
- 8 CATTLE SCALES
- 9 BARN
- 10 MACHINE SHED
- * 11 FARM POND

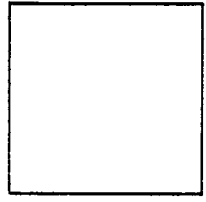
* NOT INCLUDED IN PROPERTY COUNT

← UNION

SKETCH MAP ~ WYNDRIDGE



Photographic Sites
A
B
C



SCALE
1 INCH x 1 INCH = 1 ACRE
1 INCH = 200 FT. APPROX

- 1 MAIN HOUSE
- 2 BLANTON LOG HOUSE
- 3 LOG ICE HOUSE
- 4 LOG SMOKE HOUSE
- 5 CARRIAGE HOUSE
- 6 SHED
- * 7 SPRING
- 8 CATTLE SCALES
- 9 BARN
- 10 MACHINE SHED
- * 11 FARM POND

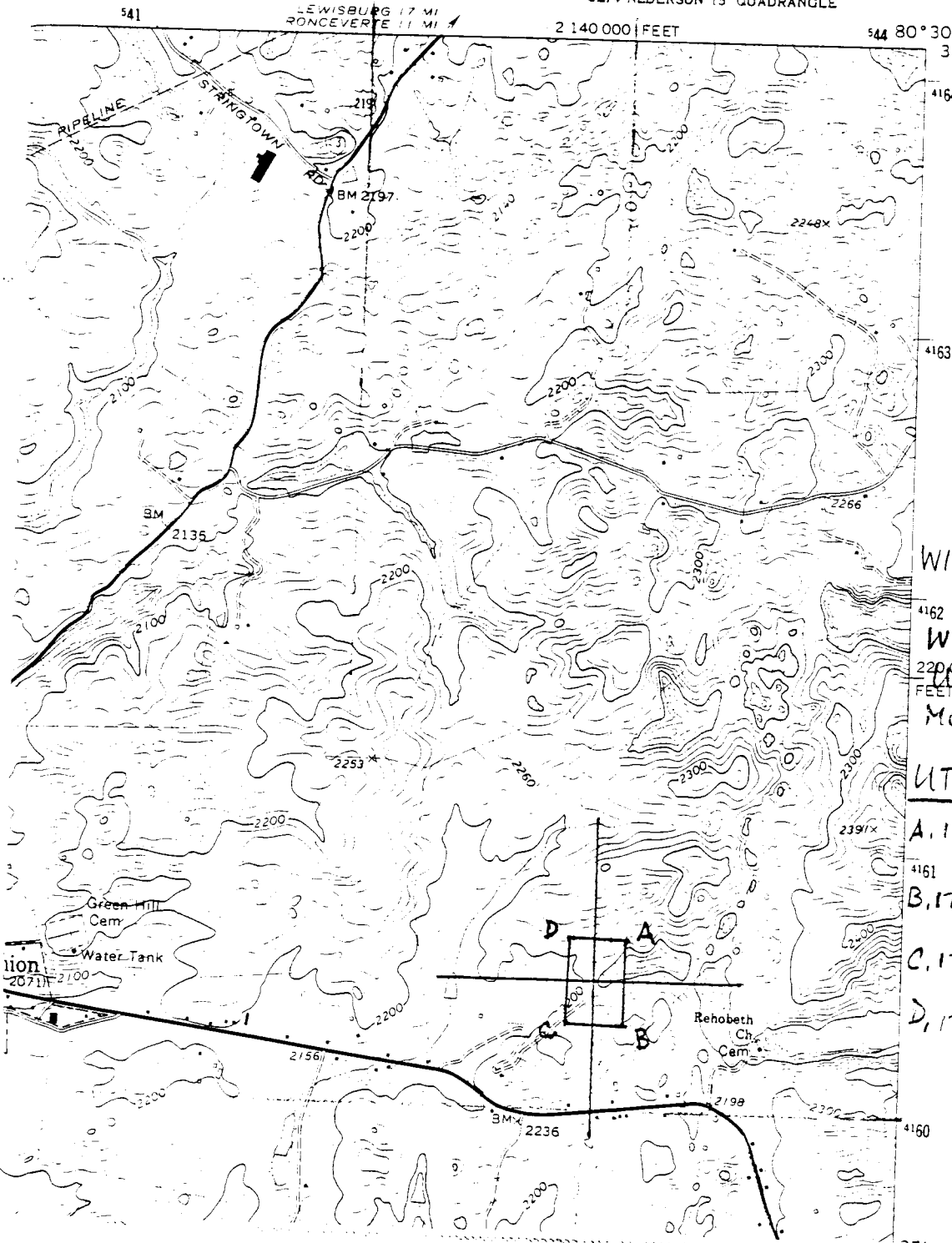
← UNION

* NOT INCLUDED IN PROPERTY COUNT

SKETCH MAP ~ WYNDRIDGE

UNION QUADRANGLE
 WEST VIRGINIA—MONROE CO.
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
 SE/4 ALDERSON 15' QUADRANGLE

4939 III NW
 (RONCEVERTE)



WILLIAM GASTON
 CAPERTON, JR.,
 W.V. RT. 3 HOUSE
 UNION VIC.,
 MONROE CO., W.VA.

UTM:
 A. 17/543120/4160600
 B. 17/543120/4160320
 C. 17/542860/4160340
 D. 17/542860/4160670

