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The Use of Architectural Drawing in the Documentation of Log Folk Housing

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1976
THE USE OF ARCHITECTURAL DRAWING IN THE DOCUMENTATION OF LOG FOLK HOUSING

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Center for Intercultural and Folk Studies
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Ira Kohn
August 1976

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THE USE OF ARCHITECTURAL DRAWING
IN THE DOCUMENTATION OF LOG FOLK HOUSING

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In order to remedy the shortcomings of past log structure documentation efforts, six proficiencies were established as necessary for the folklorist: (1) knowledge of, and use of, aerial photographs and topographic maps, (2) familiarity with usage of the compass, steel measuring tape and alidade, (3) accuracy in building measurement techniques, (4) the ability to competently compile a field notebook using standardized architectural notation, (5) operation of the camera as a recording tool, and (6) the production of measured drawings using the techniques specified by the Historic American Buildings Survey. The Rigsby House, a log structure in Warren County, Kentucky, served as a case study documentation, providing the folklorist with a demonstration of techniques adaptable to his own documentation problem. Relevant comments on the difficulties inherent in recording structures constructed of wooden timbers were interjected as necessary throughout the text. Emphasis was placed on proficiencies three, four, and six, with more limited discussion of the remaining skills. Thirty-five illustrations were broken down into one perspective photograph, one aerial photograph, one partial elevation photograph, one topographic map, one plot plan, seventeen field notebook entries, twelve measured drawings, and one log structure terminology drawing.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The academic study of log folk architecture in North America has until the last fifteen years suffered from a curious neglect notwithstanding the romanticism, symbolism and commercial profit-taking associated with the log dwelling. After all, as Donald Hutslar writes, "Everyone knows that Abraham Lincoln went from a log cabin to the White House while as far back as 1840 the campaign of William Henry Harrison capitalized on the imagery of 'the log cabin in the clearing.'"¹ Unlike Northern Europe and Scandinavia, where interest in folk housing has paralleled folklife studies in general, the study of folk architecture in North America began in earnest only in the 1960s. This is not to say that folk housing was completely neglected before 1960. Allen H. Eaton, for one, although primarily concerned with folk-craft wrote on the "Log Cabin and Its Furnishings," but he failed to include illustrative material other than photographs.² It was not until the 1960s that the American folklorist became aware of the pacesetting work of Dr. Fred Kniffen, a cultural geographer, and attempted to apply a scientific approach to the study and documentation of folk housing.

At this point a definition of folk architecture, and specifically log folk architecture, is in order. Simply stated, "Folk architecture may be said to be traditional architecture. . . . concerned with all aspects of building." Henry Glassie notes that:

During the time of the construction of a folk object, [folk housing] the tradition out of which it is produced cannot be part of the popular (mass, normative) or academic (elite, progressive) cultures of the greater society with which the object's maker has had contact, and as a member of which he may function.

Adding the word "log" to folk architecture narrows the definition only in the sense that the building material becomes limited to wooden timbers, either whole rounded timbers, shorn of branches, or hewn timbers, scored with a felling ax and then cut flat on either one, two, or four sides with a broadax. While Warren Roberts states that in the case of logs hewn from trees over two feet in diameter "it is something of a misnomer to speak of a 'log' house because the timbers in question much more resemble huge planks," both my field research in Southcentral Kentucky and folkloristic publication in general tend to support "log" as being the more commonly used designation.

For the folklorist, "In order to understand that vast majority of people who left behind no literate legacy, it is necessary to learn how to obtain information from the artifacts they did make. . . ." Thus, the study of folk architecture complements the shortcomings of

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5 Roberts, "Folk Architecture," in Folklore and Folklife, p. 290.
traditional history which, "like written history..., tends to con-
centrate on a few striking personages and events at the expense of
commonplace reality," and of oral history which, "like conventional
written history, teaches more about the narrator and his society than
it does about the societies of the past."6

As each individual folklorist attacked the study of folk housing
and log folk housing, he attempted to record on paper the documented
structures. To date, the results have been generally superficial published
documentation. When provided at all, drawings tend to be incomplete,
and often subscribe to a personalized series of notations that may ful-
fill their initial purpose at the time of their presentation, but
ultimately renders them of limited value for further comparative studies.
For example, two early 1970s articles in the journal, Pioneer America,
purport to offer comprehensive descriptions of specific log dwellings,
yet they include a total of only seven architectural drawings and maps.7
The work that is done is of a high quality, but it does not go nearly
far enough. Henry Glassie, the most accomplished draftsman and artist
in the field of North American material folk culture, states:

The easiest criticism to level at studies of traditional
architecture is that of theoretical anemia, but even sheeely

6Henry Glassie, Folk Housing in Middle Virginia, A Structural
Analysis of Historic Artifacts, (Knoxville: The University of

7Both Howard Wight Marshall, "The 'Thousand Acres' Log House,
Monroe County, Indiana," Pioneer America, 3 (January 1971):48-56., and
John M. Vlach, "The 'Canada Homestead': A Saddlebag Log House in Monroe
County, Indiana," Pioneer America, 4 (July 1972):8-17., are faulted not
for the work they have done, but rather for the work that was either
not done, or not included in the published articles. They do however,
illustrate that what the folklorist considers "complete" documentation,
is little more than preliminary information to an architect.
descriptive accounts have commonly been ruined by sloppy recording. Buildings must be exactly measured and studied in detail, and they must be precisely located on the land. Only then is description complete, and only then can the analyst move past description and begin saying something of significance about the buildings. (Italics mine.)

What knowledge, then, does the folklorist or student of folklore lack that prevents the accurate measurement and documentation of folk housing?

In order to remedy the shortcomings of past documentary efforts the folklorist must be proficient in six areas. First, he must be aware of the availability of aerial photographs and topographic maps and, once aware of their existence, he must be able to locate a given structure on them. Second, the folklorist must be familiar with the usage of an ordinary compass and steel measuring tape or, even more desirably, with a surveying instrument such as the alidade. Building measurement techniques constitute the third area of knowledge in which the folklorist must be proficient. Not only must he be familiar with measurement techniques, but these techniques must be the same techniques used by architects, archeologists, and fieldworkers of other academic disciplines in order that information can be effectively transmitted from one group of scholars to another. Fourth, and most important to the folklorist who will not proceed further, is the ability to accurately compile a field notebook, again using standardized notation. Fifth, is proficiency needed to operate a camera as a recording tool, and as an aid to area six—the ability to take all the information gathered in areas one through five, and produce measured drawings using standardized architectural drawing technique as specified by the Historic American Buildings

Glassie, Folk Housing in Middle Virginia, p. 226.
Survey. The folklorist must be proficient in all six of these areas to be considered capable of the quality architectural studies that Henry Glassie considers a vital base for any analytical study of a folk structure. The necessity for the folklorist to have this knowledge is underscored by the fact that architects and students of architecture in general ignore folk housing. Morris Ketchum, Jr., Fellow in the American Institute of Architects, President, states "... the fundamental objective is to save architectural excellence, not architectural mediocrity. We cannot afford to destroy the few examples of excellence that have been left to us." It is clear from the context of his statement that Ketchum is talking about "elite" architecture and that folk architecture, especially rural folk architecture, is far from being on his mind.

To begin the task of educating the student of folklore to the necessary recording and documentation skills, it is the purpose of this thesis to provide a manual for the use of architectural drawing in the

9"The Historic Sites Act of 1935, P.L. 74-292 (49 Stat. 666), formally ... authorized] the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior to conduct surveys; to secure and preserve drawings, plans, photographs, and other data relating to historic buildings. ... Since the 1930s the Historic American Buildings Survey has produced measured drawings, photographs, and written data for a national architectural archive. The program is administered by the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior and is conducted in cooperation with the American Institute of Architects and the Library of Congress, which is the repository of the records." Harley J. McKee, compiler, Recording Historic Buildings (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1970), p.v. It should be noted that Fred Kniffen used Historic American Buildings Survey [abbreviated as HABS] photographs in his pioneering article, "Folk Housing: Key to Diffusion," Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 55 (December 1965): 550, 553, 562, 563., and even mentioned their location in the Library of Congress, yet folklorists failed to take advantage of his insight.

documentation of log folk housing. This paper will take the form of a complete case study documentation based on my work with the Rigsby House—a log structure in Warren County, Kentucky. Specifically, the emphasis will be on accurate field technique, on the entry of recorded information in the field notebook, and on the measured drawings: proficiencies, three, four, and six as stated above. Because all six areas are so closely tied together, the paper will touch upon the remaining three areas as appropriate to the understanding of the recording and documentation process. The case study of the Rigsby House will provide the folklorist with a demonstration of techniques adaptable to his own particular documentation problem. Since this is not a formal how-to manual, I shall feel free to interject comments on relevant problems confronted both in my fieldwork and at my desk to better alert folklorists to some of the difficulties inherent in working with wooden timbers as a building material.

Written into the daubing between the two uppermost logs on the west exterior wall of the log barn on the Rigsby farmstead, inconspicuous enough so that I missed seeing them the first time around, are the dates "July 6, 1938" and "April 1, 1904." Appendix 1, Sheet 34, is a photograph of the exterior west wall elevation. The purpose of the two dates brings to mind numerous hypotheses. If one date represents the most recent daubing of the wall, does the earlier date mark the original daubing, or was the building moved from a previous location and entirely rebuilt at either date? Perhaps the dates denote ownership. Did the missing daubing to the left of the writing once hold additional notation? The point that I am trying to make is that the recording procedure rarely produces totally self-explanatory results, and yet, had the above dates
been overlooked, the questions would never have been asked. It is not in the scope of this paper to pursue the history of the Rigsby farmstead and its dwellings; rather, the end will be in the recording procedure itself. Only after the Rigsby House has been fully architecturally recorded can historical documentation commence.
CHAPTER II

THE RIGSBY HOUSE

The Rigsby House takes the form of a classic "saddlebag" log house:

. . . a widely used method of extending the size of a house by adding another room, its gable set up to the chimney end of the original structure, producing a central-chimney house. The saddlebag house may be built originally as such or it may represent an addition. It may be one story or two; it may have one, two or three front doors. The one constant feature is its central chimney, and it is generally only one room deep.1

Why then was a house that is not architecturally remarkable chosen as the focus of study for this thesis? The Rigsby House is typical enough of log folk housing to make the field notebook and measured drawings easy to adapt to other log dwellings and outbuildings. At the same time, the house has undergone a process of continuous alteration so that it also presents unique problems in documentation not shared with most log folk housing. In dealing with these problems, the folklorist must utilize the same creativity that the architect does. Architectural drawing, while certainly governed by a "correct" technique, is flexible to a larger degree than the folklorist might at first suspect.

Hopefully, the approaches that I take in solving the unique documentation problems of the Rigsby House will suggest workable methods appropriate

to other log structures and to folk housing in other building materials.  

The Rigsby House, photographed from the northeast corner on Sheet 1, stands on forty-six acres of land purchased from the heirs of Clinton Rigsby in 1973 by James P. Rodgers, of Bowling Green, Kentucky. Although the homestead has been owned at one time or another by members of the Davis, Young, McElwain, and Ewing families, the house is referred to by its present owner and by adjacent neighbors as the Rigsby House. The earliest recorded deed for the house dates from 1899 and is located in appendix 2.

Maps and Aerial Photographs

There are two excellent United States Government resources available to aid in the first step in documentation; the location of a structure, and the production of a location plan. The first resource, maps produced by the United States Department of the Interior Geological Survey, is topographic maps drawn from aerial photographs. Sheets 2, a portion of the Reedyville, Kentucky, quadrangle, illustrates the usage of these maps. The Rigsby House and Barn, circled for emphasis, were located in the same way that one would use a highway road map to locate a given city, river, or similar landmark.

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3 Maps are ordered by quadrangle. The United States Geological Survey, Washington, D. C. 20242, or, for Kentucky, The Kentucky Geological Survey, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky 40506, will furnish a composite map showing all the quadrangles in a given state, from which a needed quadrangle can then be identified.
Because only a portion of the total quadrangle map was used, details found elsewhere on the map had to be incorporated into the selected portion. Using pressure-sensitive tape, scale, compass orientation, relation of the selected area to the nearest readily familiar city, as well as house and barn identification, were added. Black ink and careful hand lettering would also produce suitable results. It should be noted that the format used to identify the sheet itself, and all other sheets in this paper, is an adaptation of that set forth by the Historic American Building Survey. 4 A graphic scale, similar to the one on Sheet 2, is a necessity for all maps and measured drawings. Without a graph accompanying the written scale, any drawing that is reduced or altered in size also loses its scale. For example, in a full size written scale, one inch may equal ten feet, but reduce the drawing to half size and one inch now equals twenty feet. In contrast, the measured distance on the graphic scale is reduced in direct relation to the reduction of the whole sheet, so that the graphic scale is still accurate.

Sheet 3 illustrates the second method of site plan location using a United States Government resource—the aerial photograph. It should be stressed that since topographic maps and aerial photographs cover the total continental United States, they offer a ready-made tool for documentary uniformity by the folklorist. Again, a small portion of a larger photograph was used to locate the Rigsby House and Barn. In order to interpret these maps, the folklorist must be familiar enough with the location of his structure that he can locate its approximate position on a photo-index, an indexed composite map containing smaller aerial photographs grouped in their proper geographic

4McKee, Recording Historic Buildings, p. 53.
Although the photographs overlap each other, definition is sharpest at the center of each photograph so that some sites may be easier to locate than others. In addition to problems of varying quality of photographic image, the folklorist must be able to recognize changing land usage patterns. For example, on Sheet 3 there is a clear indication of a road running north from the Rigsby Barn to the Green River; on Sheet 2, seventeen years later, the road ends slightly past the Rigsby House. According to local oral history, the road running past the Rigsby House led to a major ferry crossing point on the Green River which is described as being Edgar’s Ferry on the September 14, 1899 deed, located in appendix 2. When studied in the above manner the map becomes more useful than just a simple location device.

On Sheet 3 both white and black drawing ink and hand lettering were used to record scale, compass orientation, surface landmarks, and building position. The white ink was made necessary by the green growth areas which the camera recorded as dark grey. Once the location plan is complete a plot plan can be undertaken.

**Mapping the Site**

The plot plan or site serves to relate the studied structure to both man-made features of the surrounding landscape, such as other dwellings or outbuildings, roads, and fences, and to the surrounding physical landscape itself. Sheet 4, drawn to scale with the use of an

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5 Before ordering a photo-index, it is often useful to contact city or county agencies. In Warren County, Kentucky, for example, aerial photographs are used to record property ownership for tax accounting purposes, and the index number of a given aerial photograph can be found in this way. The address for a photographic size and price list is General Services Administration, National Archives and Record Service, Washington, D. C. 20408. You can expect a month delay per each correspondence.
alidade and plane table, places the Rigsby House on its site and presents a means by which the distance and compass direction of other physical features of the farmstead can be determined and utilized for future research. Lettering, done with an HB drawing pencil, does not always reproduce quite as well as ink but has the definite advantage of being correctable in the drawing process. Pressure-sensitive tape, available in shape, line, symbol, and grid patterns, as well as a wide range of lettering sizes and styles, was used extensively on Sheet 4. Lightly drawn contour lines give an indication of topography, but fading light and cold weather made the alidade increasingly difficult to operate and the effort was ultimately abandoned as non-essential to the study. While specific elevations would be desirable for a farmstead study, approximate contour intervals are sufficient for a single structure examination.

The folklorist desirous of using the alidade and plane table is referred to Manual of Field Geology, Chapter 6. Briefly described, the alidade is a telescopic sight which rests upon a flat board on which a sheet of drawing paper is attached. The flat board, or plane table, is mounted on an adjustable tripod.

The alidade and plane table can be adapted to many kinds of field projects, and they can be used for rapid sketching of features as well as for precise mapping. These instruments have a great advantage in that the map is drawn directly on the plane table as instrumentation proceeds. This insures that features will be plotted as they are examined in the field and will therefore be shown as naturally and completely as possible.7

An alternative method to the alidade and plane table is the use of a compass and steel measuring tape. This is the simpler of the two


7Compton, Manual of Field Geology, p. 88.
methods, but it is also more limited and less accurate. Distances between desired objects are measured with the steel tape while orientation of objects to each other is determined with the compass. Recorded information can then be mapped out in the field or at the desk. Of course the larger the distance between two objects, the more difficult it becomes to maneuver the steel tape, especially as is the case on abandoned farmsteads where scrub growth and heavy underbrush have intruded. For the above procedures, the Brunton compass is recommended because it comes equipped with two viewing sights, making it more accurate than a common compass, but not in competition with the magnifying capacity of the alidade when larger distances are involved. No matter which method is chosen, the measuring of the plot plan requires more than one person. Two persons can complete the task successfully (the Rigsby House was done in this manner) but the addition of a third fieldworker frees one person to carry the field notebook and make all necessary records and calculations while the other two persons record measurements.

Photographic Documentation

After completion of the plot plan, the next step in the documentation of the Rigsby House was to obtain a photographic record of the structure which then could be used along with the field notebook to serve as reference material for the measured drawings. Photographs can serve as the major recording device in a casual survey or study of folk housing, but unless the photographer is proficient enough to overcome inadequate lighting, perspective distortion, and frequently impossible working conditions, and still meet the standards of the Historic American Buildings Survey, his photographs become useless as
precise recording devices. Henry Glassie, in *Folk Housing in Middle Virginia*, raises a practical argument against comprehensive documentation when he states, "Ideally, photographs of every house would have been taken, in addition to the drawings, but expenses held photography to a minimum." What then is the minimum amount of photography necessary to supplement the field notebook in the production of the measured drawings? For the Rigsby House, approximately fifty views were photographed at three exposures each with the two extra exposures being "bracketed" around the correct exposure meter reading. Of these fifty photographs, sixteen were enlarged to eight by ten format to be of specific use in developing the architectural measured drawings.

The photographs can be broken into three main categories. Perspectives, of which Sheet 1 is an example, serve to relate component parts of a structure to each other and to their surroundings. Interior and exterior wall elevations, the second category, are taken at right angles to each wall face, and every attempt is made to eliminate distortion. Third, architectural details ranging in size from whole door and window casements to nails and hardware are photographed. If the subject matter is not to be measured, a one-foot to three-foot stick marked off in alternating black and white one-inch intervals is placed in the photograph. In my opinion, there is no set rule as to whether the photographs should be taken before, after, or concurrently with the field measurements. Since most of the field work on the Rigsby House was undertaken in late

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8McKee, *Recording Historic Buildings*, pp. 63-96., is an excellent guide to photographic technique and quality standards desirable for recording architecture. To a large extent, this information can be applied to any object of material culture. Numerous photographic examples are included.

9Glassie, *Folk Housing in Middle Virginia*, p. 16.
November and early December, when daylight was short and weather conditions variable, photography was given preference as the more delicate of the two operations, although for the purpose of this thesis, the field measurements were ultimately more important.
CHAPTER III

THE FIELD NOTEBOOK

Preparation

While it can be successfully argued that not every folklorist can produce measured drawings of a quality acceptable to the Historic American Buildings Survey, there is no excuse for inaccurate field measurement and documentation technique. A folklorist, using the text and illustrative material in this chapter as a guide, should be able to document a given log structure on a competence level that can be easily utilized and understood by professionals in other academic disciplines. Sheets 5 through 21, discussed individually below, are the completed pages of the field notebook of the Rigsby House done to Historic American Buildings Survey standards. Complemented by photographs and written notes, final measured drawings can be delineated, if necessary, by a draftsman more qualified than the folklore fieldworker. How then does the fieldworker produce a competent field notebook?

The field notebook used by the Historic American Buildings Survey is "8 1/4 inches by 10 1/2 inches, containing cross ruled sheets."¹ In Bowling Green, Kentucky, a 7 3/4 inch by 10 1/2 inch hard cover notebook was more readily available and judged equally acceptable. Green tinted or off-white paper is recommended as it is easier on the eyes when working under a strong sun. It should be noted that, ideally, the person

¹McKee, Recording Historic Buildings, p. 36.
entering measurements and sketching in the notebook should do only that, while two other fieldworkers take the actual measurements. Unfortunately, ideal conditions rarely exist. All the compilation of the field notebook for the Rigsby House was done solely by the author, not out of a desire to martyr himself, but out of necessity. Notations were made with an HB drawing pencil and were done freehand. A knapsack served as a storage container for a small pencil sharpener and at least two or three spare pencils, as I managed to lose a pencil every three or four days in the thick weeds surrounding the house. Since I had a one-half mile walk to the Rigsby House, I decided against using a drawing board to support the notebook, although I would recommend its use to anyone not facing a similar problem. An abandoned metal porch chair served as a convenient work table, while two large paper clips kept the notebook opened and flat in spite of frequent gusts of wind.

For the measurements themselves, a six-foot wooden folding rule with a six-inch metal extension, of the type used by carpenters, and a twenty-foot retractable measuring tape will serve as minimum equipment. A one-hundred-foot steel or fiberglass tape on a wind-up reel gives greater accuracy for longer distances but must be kept taut. When working alone, I found that by carrying a small hammer and a few four-penny (4d) finishing nails I could attach the twenty-foot measuring tape at a given point, measure off twenty feet, and then attach the tape at the just marked spot and measure off another twenty feet, or whatever distance was necessary. Of course, this method entails leaving a small hole in the measured surface, but in the case of log architecture no obvious damage should result. The same method will work with the one-hundred-foot tape. As a general procedure guide the Historic American
Buildings Survey states:

Cumulative or 'running' measurements, taken by holding the end of a tape at a corner or other datum point, and reading successively all desired points along the line without moving the tape, avoid the accumulation of small errors. ... Through and overall measurements should be taken except where this is clearly impossible . . . ."  

It is not until the folklorist actually approaches a log structure, measuring tools in hand, that the immensity of the measuring procedure is confronted. Where does one begin, and when is the architectural documentation completed? As far as I could determine, the folklorist may begin his recording procedure with the documentation of any exterior elevation of the structure. There is no specific reason not to begin on the interior, but there are definite advantages to commencing with the exterior. First, if for some reason the total documentation is not completed, exterior measurements are more suited to less specific survey studies than interior measurements. Henry Glassie, in his study of folk housing in middle Virginia, included in his initial visit to a dwelling "a drawing of each of its sides." It was not until his initial survey was complete that he returned to record "notes on details and took exhaustive internal and external measurements." Second, log exterior elevations usually contain fewer architectural features in relation to interior walls. Trim is minimal and the same elements frequently are repetitive in occurrence. Third, and most subjectively, working on the outside of a structure heightens the anticipation of what will be found in the interior and seems to aid in an understanding of the relationship of the interior design to the exterior form. Of course, environmental

2 McKee, Recording Historic Buildings, p. 36.
3 Glassie, Folk Housing in Middle Virginia, p. 16.
factors such as weather conditions often dictate measurement procedures.

Finally, when is the field notebook completed? Unfortunately there is no clear-cut answer to this question. In the Rigsby House, for example, the study was completed when December weather conditions made further fieldwork impossible. The point at which every possible measurement has been taken and recorded is, with few exceptions, beyond both the needs and the patience of the folklorist. If we consider the drawings as historical records, as Orin Bullock suggests, then we should strive to make them "detailed, complete, and accurate enough to provide all of the information necessary to reconstruct the building if, for any reason, it should be destroyed." Experience reveals that this is a difficult result to achieve.

The Rigsby House Field Notebook

For both clarity and convenience the Rigsby House drawings are grouped in the following order: (1) exterior elevations, (2) interior elevations and, (3) plans. Architectural evidence suggests that the north cabin of the saddlebag is the original cabin, and although this remains to be proven, the north cabin will be considered before the south cabin in the above categories. Wall elevations will begin with the east, or front elevation, and proceed counter-clockwise around each log cabin. While technically, according to Donald A. Hutslar, "a 'cabin' was a rough structure for short-term occupancy [and] a 'house' was built for permanent residency," Henry Glassie, reflecting common practice,


5See Appendix 3, Sheet 35, for a cross section illustration of log dwelling terminology.
refers to the individual components of a saddlebag as cabins. 6

Sheet 5 is typical of the measuring and recording procedure used on the eight exterior elevations and the remaining field drawings in general. In the lower left-hand corner of the sheet, the subject matter is identified as the east elevation, north cabin; the compass orientation of the house having already been determined with the Brunton compass on the plot plan. Above the title, the house is identified by name, located by at least county and state, the date of documentation recorded, and its recorder identified. While sheet numbers are specified normally in only the measured drawings, I have utilized them in the field notebook in order to avoid having two separate numbering systems in this paper. Although the Historic American Buildings Survey field notebook papers do not have to be drawn to scale, the use of a scale actually makes drawing easier and highlights obvious drawing errors. If a scale is not used this information should also be noted. 7 All measurements on Sheet 5 were taken continuously, although notation of the measurements were based upon available space on the drawing paper. It is equally important to record data that cannot be measured directly as it is to record data directly measured. The dimensions of the visible portion of the chimney, for example, could not be measured in position but were estimated from the dimensions of the chimney stones located at ground level between the north and south cabins. The Historic American Buildings Survey states that:

... it is common practice in dealing with architectural


7McKee, Recording Historic Buildings, p. 37.
RIGSBY HOUSE
WARREN CO, KY.
NOV. 11, 1975
IRA KONN
SHEET 5 OF 35 SHEETS

EAST ELEVATION - NORTH CABIN
subjects to take measurements to the nearest one-quarter inch for general drawings and smaller fractions for details, but this rule can be modified to fit the occasion.

In the case of log folk housing, the one-quarter inch standard was adopted with the reservation that measurements were, to a great extent, dependent on the exact placement of the measuring tape. Movement of the tape to a parallel position often gave a different reading for the same measurement. This follows what one would normally expect when recording structures that were often built on insufficient foundations for their supported weight.

Sheet 6, because of its fairly simple facade, presented ample room for information on the nature of the logs and the clapboards used on the north cabin. Similarly, foundation nature, construction, and materials were noted so that, in conjunction with photographs taken of the north elevation, more detailed drawings could be constructed at a later date. The clapboards below window B suggest a simple solution to a problem theorized by Warren Roberts:

For some time, I was aware that many traditional houses had window and doors on the front and back but none in the gable ends. I was unable to understand the reason why this is so. Finally, though, it struck me that where I had seen dilapidated houses with windows in the gable ends, the wall beneath these windows was usually badly rotted from rain water which had run down the wall and leaked in around the window.

Of course, one gable end often faced north or northwest to minimize exposure of the house to prevailing winter winds, and thus doors and windows along this end were also minimized to increase climate protection of the interior.

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8McKee, *Recording Historic Buildings*, p. 36.

LOGS - 8" TO 12" HIGH
SASH OPENING 2' 4" X 3' 6"
SASH 2'' EXCEPT 1" CENTER
MUNTINS 3/8" ON EXTERIOR
8" X 10" WINDOW LIGHTS

B - DOUBLE HUNG
SASH OPENING 2' 6" X 3' 10"
SASH - 2" Bot.
1 1/2 SIDES AND TOP
MUNTINS - 3/8"
SILL AT 2" L

RIGSBY HOUSE
WARREN CO. KY.
NOV. 6, 1915
IRA Kohn
SHEET 6 OF 35 SHEETS

LOGS - SQUARED NOTCH, EXTEND 1 1/2" TO 3".
PINE, AT LEAST ONE OAK.

25"
FIELDSTONE (SECTION 2)
PIER

10"
FIELDSTONE (SECTION 1)
STONE PIER

18' 11" WITH CANTILEVER

NORTH ELEVATION
NORTH CABIN
150.10"
The west elevation of the north cabin, Sheet 7, presents the problem of documentation of a log structure that has had siding applied over the logs. James P. Rodgers, the present owner of the Rigsby House, reports that a shed addition existed on the west elevation of both the north and south cabins. The missing shed addition explains the ledger nailed to the top plate, the notched half-exposed log, and the molding trim surrounding the shiplap siding. The abundance of wall hooks and the partial conversion of the window into a cupboard suggests that the shed served as a kitchen or storage room, but this cannot be confirmed without additional research. The unique nature of the cupboard warranted detailed measurement and a separate photograph. The wooden wall hook was similarly measured and photographed.

Investigation of the door frame of the east elevation of the south cabin, Sheet 8, revealed partially decipherable markings that were recorded both by hand and by camera. Inadequate light conditions rendered the photographs unusable and reinforced the wisdom of what seemed at the time to be a needlessly repetitious procedure. White chalk lightly rubbed over the markings served to heighten contrast between the surface and the recessed areas, making the cryptic markings more easily decipherable.

Perhaps one of the most common questions concerning log house documentation arises when the folklorist attempts to locate by measurement door and window position on an exterior wall. Where exactly is the measurement taken? Is the tape read at the outside of the window or door casement or is it read at the actual opening? As far as I could determine, either method is acceptable and both can be found in the Historic American Buildings Survey measured drawings. What is not
DOORS: A. Missing, was hung as an interior door.
B. 6 vertical boards.

WINDOWS: Sash opening 2' x 3' 11".

CUPBOARD REPLACEMENT FOR TOP SASH MOUNTINGS.

2 SHELVES, 4" DEEP.

RT. (South) Door.

ATTACHED TO HINGES.

WEST ELEVATION - NORTH CABIN

RIGSBY CABIN
WARREN CO., KY.
NOV. 12, 1975
IRA KOHN
SHEET 7 OF 35 SHEETS
LOGS - SILL 7" HIGH, 7½" DEEP, OAK
POSSIBLE RED GUM, POPLAR
CHERRY OR WALNUT
CEMENT AND CLAY DAUBING - MIXED

DOOR - 6 VERTICAL BOARDS, 3 BATTENS
WRITING ON UNDERSIDE OF HEAD

SOUTH

WINDOW - SINGLE HUNG, SASH OPENING 2'4" X 3'10"
SASH 1½" EXCEPT 2½" BOTTOM
12 LIGHTS 8" X 10"
MUNTINS ½"

RIGSBY HOUSE
WARREN CO. KY.
NOV. 11, 1975
IRA KOHN
SHEET 8 OF 15 SHEETS

EAST ELEVATION - SOUTH CABIN 15"
acceptable is to fail to make clear which method is used! For the Rigsby House, measurements, unless specifically noted, were taken at the outside casement edge of all exterior wall openings. By including casement face measurements, and, or, sash dimensions, the interior opening can also be determined.

Another problem frequently facing the fieldworker is how to determine the height of a given structure when the given structure seems at first to be too tall to measure. Gable end window openings, such as those on Sheets 6 and 10, often provide one solution. With the six-foot wooden extension rule fully extended, it was possible to lean out the second level window and measure from the peak of the gable to a point six feet below. This point was marked either visually or with a marking pencil or chalk stick. On the north gable end, Sheet 6, it was then possible to lean out the first story window and again, using the six-foot rule, continue the measurement downward. The total measurement was completed by standing on the ground and measuring from the second marking point to the sill. In the case of the south elevation, Sheet 10, the wooden rule was held over the head until it reached the mark six feet down from the peak of the gable. A second marking was then made, and the rule was moved downward again, completing the total measurement. An alternative solution is to use either the alidade or the surveyor's level, although this requires knowledge of specific technique. When a direct measurement method is lacking:

Inaccessible features can sometimes be approximated by comparison with others which can be reached. Counting units of known size like brick, stone or clapboard courses is quite reliable, . . . approximations should always be identified on notes or drawings. Inaccessible spaces and rooms should be simply so noted.10

10McKee, Recording Historic Buildings, p. 39.
DOOR - MISSING
SILL AT 6'2".

RIGSBY HOUSE
WARREN CO. KY.
NOV. 12, 1975
IRA KOHN
SHEET 9 OF 35 SHEETS

WEST ELEVATION - SOUTH CABIN 15Q=1'0"
LOGS - POPULAR, ALSO POSSIBLE RED GUM,cedar, CHERRY
OR WALNUT - NO OAK
8"± HIGH, 5 1/2" to 7" WIDE

WINDOW - 6 LIGHTS, 8'x10''
MUNTINS 1/2''
SASH - 1'10" X 2'2"
SASH - 1" EXCEPT TOP 1/2"

RIGSBY HOUSE
WARREN CO. KY.
NOV. 6, 1975
IRA KORN
SHEET 10 OF 35 SHEETS

SOUTH ELEVATION
SOUTH CABIN
1 SQ. = 1'0"
On the Rigsby House, clapboard exposure on the gable ends could have been used to approximate building height in the absence of gable end window openings. It should be noted, however, that not all clapboards exhibit uniform exposure. On Sheet 9, for example, the seventeen clapboards were spaced irregularly enough to warrant a plus and minus sign after the exposure measurement.

For the interior of the Rigsby House, documentation becomes more time consuming as a direct result of the increased architectural detailing in the stairwells and fireplaces and in the modern usage of decorative wooden trim and moldings. Problems were compounded by irregular angles caused by decomposition of the sills and resultant settling of the house, and by the builder's desire to create a finished surface over the irregular log walls. It should be remembered that in drawing a wall elevation, the fieldworker is recording three-dimensional architectural features in a two-dimensional manner. It is for this reason that the corner staircase on Sheets 11 and 12 seems improperly drawn when the drawings are viewed individually. The reader must study the two elevations together in order to properly visualize the three dimensionality of the subject. Similarly, it is necessary to provide depth information for the chair rail, base molding, and door battens on Sheet 11, in order that these details can be visualized as the three dimensional objects that they are. Special attention should also be given to architectural features where uniformity of size is the expected modern commonplace. For example, on Sheet 12, the rise of the stair treads defies modern building practice in their variation in height, a frequent occurrence in log folk housing, most likely influenced by the cramped quarters available for stair placement.
Before completing the interior of the north cabin, it is interesting to compare the small detail drawings on Sheets 13 and 14. The base cap molding profile utilizes a separate scale from the sheet as a whole, and this information is clearly noted under the drawing. The detail drawing is designated as approximate because measurements were taken with a wooden rule and the curve of the molding was not specifically determined. An alternative and more accurate method is to use a profile gage, also called a template former, which "consists of a series of thin metal laminations which slide, held together by a long screw whose tension can be adjusted." In comparison, the mantel turning on Sheet 14 is not drawn to scale, and this information is clearly noted to avoid confusion with the stated scale of the south elevation.

The field notebook for the interior elevations of the south cabin echoes in technique that of the interior of the north cabin. In viewing Sheet 15, the question is raised as to why the window sash details are omitted while the door details are included. The window details, equally determinable from the interior or exterior, are included on Sheet 8, but the door battens, not visible on the exterior east elevation of the south cabin, could be drawn only on the interior elevation. It should also be noted that the interior trim of the south cabin is similar to that of the north cabin, while the wall covering itself is very different. Sheets 16 and 17 record the wall covering material and the horizontal position of the boards. Because of the narrow five and one-half inch width of the shiplap boards, each board

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RIGSBY HOUSE
WARREN CO. KY. NOV. 7, 1975
IRA KHN SHEET 14 OF 35 SHEETS

MANTLE - POPLAR, RESIDUE OF WHITE
PAINT, PROBABLY HAS HAD
PAINT STRIPPED.

MANTLE TURNING
(NOT TO SCALE)

VERTICAL BOARDS
14 1/2" X 1" DEEP
PAINTED TAN-WHITE.
TRIM - FADED BROWN PAINT

6' 2 1/2" LENGTH, 2" DEEP
6' 3" LENGTH, 2 3/4" DEEP
2" DEEP
POSSIBLY WAS ONE STONE

SOUTH ELEVATION - INTERIOR
NORTH CABIN

1 SQ. = 0'6"
was not separately drawn. In this case, drawing in every board would have reduced the overall page to indecipherable clutter. The field-worker has an obligation to include as much detail as possible in his notebook, but not so much that his pages become too congested to interpret.

Sheet 18, the interior south elevation of the south cabin, presented just the opposite problem from the one discussed above. Here, a wall, free of any openings, was recorded as thoroughly as possible. The exact board placement and nailing pattern was noted, as well as the somewhat dubious method of nailing two butting boards on the line of their joint. Sheet 18 completes the field documentation of the lower level of the Rigsby House. The upper one-half story of both the north and south cabins was not drawn in the field notebook in deference to December weather conditions; instead, measurements were simply noted in a descriptive list form, in order that sufficient information would be available to complete any measured drawing that might later be deemed necessary.

The technique used in Sheet 19, the floor plan of the Rigsby House, differs from that of the previous interior and exterior elevations. While the information necessary for the plan was gathered in the field, the actual drawing was compiled at the desk from the already completed field drawings. For example, the north cabin floor plan combines Sheets 5-7 and Sheets 11-14. Additional information, such as the flooring size and direction, and the number of and direction of the floor joists, came from notations made in the field but not incorporated into the elevation drawings. Since the floor plan is frequently the only drawing included in a published presentation, additional measurements such as door sizes and construction materials are often common components of the drawing.
2 NAILS PER BOARD - AT JOINTS, HEADS OF NAILS SECURE BOTH BOARDS.

3'6"
3'3 1/2"

1/2"X1"LATTICE

15 ROWS HORIZONTAL SHIPLAP BOARDS 5 3/8" TO 5 1/2" X 5/8" THICK, PAINTED BLUE-GREEN

1"X6" BASE NOLDING

15'6 1/2"

RIGSBY HOUSE
WARREN CO. KY.
NOV. 15, 1975
IRA KHN
SHEET 18 OF 35 SHEETS
It is also necessary to include "a directional north arrow or compass . . . on every sheet which contains a map or plan." 12

Sheet 20, the east patio and north cabin entrance steps, is also a plan, although the post detail and the posts and crosspiece details are elevations. Markings on the north side of the north cabin door casing suggest that a board approximately two inches by four inches spanned the distance from the door frame to the single post and served as a handrail. The position of the two hooks on the crosspiece to the north of the concrete slab, seen photographed on Sheet 1, suggests the possibility of a hanging sign, although there is no direct evidence to support this hypothesis. Both Sheet 20 and Sheet 21, the foundation plan of the west (rear) addition, are positioned in relation to the Rigsby House. The small concrete slab opposite the west (rear) door of the north cabin indicates that the rear addition probably had a doorway at this location.

Sheets 20 and 21 complete the field notebook entries for the Rigsby House. The next step in the documentation of log folk housing is to utilize the completed field notebook and the photographs to produce the more formal measured drawings.

12McKee, Recording Historic Buildings, p. 53.
FOUNDATION: FLAT FIELDSTONE 6" TO 10" WIDE, FLUSH ON EXTERIOR FACE, MORTARED AND TOPPED WITH CONCRETE. CONCRETE 5½" WIDE, FLUSH ON EXTERIOR FACE.

RIGSBY HOUSE
WARREN CO. KY.
NOV. 12, 1975
IRA KOHN
SHEET 21 OF 35 SHEETS
CHAPTER IV

THE MEASURED DRAWINGS

Measured drawings, produced on the drafting table using the techniques and vocabulary of the architect, are the final presentation of a given documentary problem. The following description of the measured drawing is important enough to the folklorist to be included in its entirety:

Measured drawings have much in common with architects' contract or 'working' drawings but there are some important differences. Contract drawings are made to direct the construction of new buildings; their basic dimensions are given to points established at an early stage and covered up as construction proceeds. They define and allocate construction to be bid competitively with the completeness and rigidity of a legal document.

Measured drawings start from an existing structure; measurements for them are taken between material lines or points on the surface. In elevation they tend to repeat elements and indications of materials more generously than do architects' contract drawings, giving a greater emphasis to pictorial quality.

Although drafting skills have not been necessary in the production of the field notebook, the folklorist who desires to produce Historic American Buildings Survey quality measured drawings must be familiar with architectural drafting techniques. While it remains in the future for the creation of a closer interdisciplinary relationship between folklore and the vocational arts, abundant published materials exist on the subjects of mechanical drawing in general, and architectural

1McKee, Recording Historic Buildings, p. 46.
drafting in particular. Because drafting skills are often taught at high school levels, texts are simple to follow and usually include practice illustrations and problems. The reader should be aware, however, that architectural documentation is similar to folkloristic study in that it is an evolving discipline, and older manuals and texts tend to become rapidly dated.² The folklorist documenting log folk housing would be wise to consult previous Historic American Buildings Survey log structure measured drawings before entering into a documentation project. In spite of the scant number of such drawings, the diversity of coverage and technique is remarkable.³

Sheets 22 through 33 comprise the measured drawings for the Rigsby House. In actual Historic American Buildings Survey usage, Sheets 2 and 4 would also be considered as introductory material to the measured drawings, although for the purpose of this paper they were considered in Chapter II. All drawings were done with 5H, 2H, and HB drawing pencils on opaque buff 12 inch by 18 inch paper. While it is not the purpose of this paper to offer instruction in architectural drafting, comments on technique will be included as necessary to the understanding of the drawings.


³A November 24, 1975 consultation of photostatic copies at the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D. C. 20540, revealed approximately one hundred and sixty measured drawings of log structures. The following specific studies served as examples of the application of architectural drawing technique to log folk housing; N.H.-36, N.J.-92, N.C.-5, Tex. 3269, and Pa. 511.
The first floor plan of the Rigsby House, Sheet 22, combines elements from Sheets 19, 20, and 21 of the field notebook. Why, one might ask, are the field notebook drawings insufficient in themselves? Unlike the field notebook, the measured drawing of the first floor plan is drawn exactly to scale using an architect’s scale. As a general rule, plans and elevations are drawn at 1/4 inch scale, while interior elevations, doors, windows, and stairways vary from 3/8 inch to 1 1/2 inch scales. At the bottom left corner of Sheet 22 a legend identifies the two major construction materials: log and stone. Because a full written description of the Rigsby House would normally be included with the measured drawings, only minimal descriptive notes are included on the drawings themselves. As in any form of artistic expression, design and composition are integral parts of a well-planned measured drawing. It should also be noted that a graphic scale, similar to that used in the field notebook, is included. A north arrow also appears when it is appropriate.

The second floor plan of the Rigsby House, Sheet 23, is identical in technique to that of Sheet 22, the first floor plan. A dotted line serves to indicate the position of the cantilevered top plates of the north and south cabins, which extend beyond the east and west wall lines. The Rigsby House presented a puzzling problem in documentation in that the combined rear (west) walls of the north and south cabin were 1 foot 6 1/2 inches longer than the combined front (east) walls. Initial visual examination of the Rigsby House did not suggest any


ALL FLOORING RUNS FROM NORTH TO SOUTH
JOISTS - HALF-LAPPED LOGS, HEWN ON UPPER SURFACE
CEILING JOISTS - NORTH CABIN 7-2\(\frac{1}{2}\) x 6\(\frac{1}{2}\)
SOUTH CABIN 7-2 x 7\(\frac{1}{2}\)

CEILING HEIGHT - 7'6"
3\(\frac{1}{2}\) T\&G SOFTWOOD FLOOR

CONCRETE OVER LOOSE STONE

CEILING HEIGHT - 8'0"
3\(\frac{1}{2}\) T\&G SOFTWOOD FLOOR

DOTTED LINES INDICATE FORMER ADDITION

FIRST FLOOR PLAN
\(\frac{1}{4}\)-10'
SECOND FLOOR PLAN

LEGEND
LOG
STONE

EXTERIOR DOTTED LINES
INDICATE POSITION OF CANTILEVERED TOP PLATES

IRA KOHN
DEC 27, 1975
RIGSBY HOUSE
ANNA VICINITY, WARREN COUNTY, KENTUCKY

SWEET 25 OF 35 54 FEET
large deviation from a rectangular format. A second, more careful examination of the west elevations revealed that the north Cabin had separated from the south cabin by approximately 6 inches. That still left an unexplained 1 foot distance. Remeasurement revealed that the board siding on the west elevations protruded past the ends of the log walls. The original measurements were faulty in that they did not indicate the log position under the exterior siding; thus, Sheets 22 and 23 are not as accurate as possible, but they do effectively indicate the overall shape of the Rigsby House.

Sheets 24 and 25 are pictorial exterior elevations of the Rigsby House. Here, accuracy is of utmost importance (compare the measured drawings of the east and north elevations with the Sheet 1 photograph of the same exteriors). All materials are drawn to scale unless otherwise specifically noted. Dimensions were obtained from the field notebook, while photographs of the elevations supplied individual details such as log placement, size of daubing spaces, and obvious structural or decorative flaws. Building materials are indicated "but for survey purposes when the indication becomes too intrusive it can be omitted from the drawings, or shown only on a portion of the drawings. . . ." On both Sheets 24 and 25 the fieldstone foundation fill and the roofing material follow the above rule. The photographs of the Rigsby House were clear enough so that joints on the exterior siding could be observed and recorded without needing to have been previously entered in the field notebook.

In the interior of the Rigsby House, only two walls were considered important enough to record in the measured drawings.

6McKee, Recording Historic Buildings, p. 50.
Sheet 26, the south elevation and plan of the north cabin, and Sheet 27, the north elevation and plan of the south cabin, were chosen because they both indicate interior wall surface treatment and decorative trim, and because they document the otherwise unrecorded stonework of the chimney and hearth. Both measured drawings incorporate a common technique in architectural drawing by utilizing multiple views of the same object in order to give that object a three-dimensional quality. Each view is related to the other views by thin lines called extension lines. For example, looking at the south elevation of the fireplace wall in Sheet 26, and then mentally pivoting the elevation ninety degrees so that the ceiling moves towards him and the floor moves away from him, the viewer can produce the floor plan of the wall. In the same way, if the fireplace wall elevation is pivoted so that the left side moves away from him and the right side moves towards him, the cross section results. It is important to note that the door panel section of Sheet 27, drawn to full scale, still needs to be accompanied by a graphic scale; otherwise, the printer's reduction of the drawing would render the written scale meaningless.

Sheet 28 is a section drawing and refers directly to Sheet 22. As Charles W. Lessig states in *The Restoration Manual*, general "sections are the only kind of drawings which show the construction of floors and roofs effectively, as well as any unusual methods of support." In Sheet 22 the short, right-angled lines lettered A and B represent the architectural symbols for a cutting plane. If the Rigsby House were to be sliced from top to bottom along a line connecting the two

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A symbols on Sheet 22, the result would be section A-A on Sheet 28. Slicing the south cabin on a line between the two B symbols would produce section B-B on Sheet 28. The advantage of the application of this technique to the Rigsby House is that it is now possible to see the first floor joists, roof rafters, sheathing, ridge pole, and gable end studs. A special note on the section drawings reveals that the gable end windows were omitted from section A-A. In this case, it was felt that the drawing would suffer from overcrowding if total accuracy was desired. Omission would be incorrect only if not noted on the drawing.

According to the Historic American Buildings Survey's procedural order, detail drawings follow the plans, elevations, and sectional studies. If conditions permit, it is perfectly acceptable to record an architectural detail in a photograph as long as the photograph contains a measuring stick to record scale. However, to be useful as a recording device, camera placement must be well chosen, the image being distortion free and well illuminated. For the folklorist working with log folk housing, these conditions are often difficult to obtain. The doorway details of Sheet 29 were constructed directly from measurements and commentary entered in the field notebook. Photographs served as references to check the precision of the field notes. The doorway details differ from the actual doors of the Rigsby House in that they have been drawn as if all boards were either plumb or level. In actuality, this was rarely found to be the case. For the Rigsby House, doorway construction cannot be considered remarkable or unique, but it should be remembered that detail drawings do not necessarily have to document outstanding architectural features. In log folk housing it is the more common features that often provide a true picture of the structure.
Sheet 30, window and sash frame details, unlike Sheet 29, records
two less common window treatments. The first level, north, north cabin
window sash and frame are representative of the single hung, six-light
sashes used in the Rigsby House. It is the below-the-window-frame
treatment that is unique to the structure. Again, cutting planes are
used to provide an above view and side view cross section of the window.
It should be noted that in this window and in all other windows of the
Rigsby House, the sashes themselves, whether fixed or moving, are
positioned between tracks formed by tacking 1/2 inch by 3/4 inch lattice
strips to the window frames. The two second level, east, north cabin
windows are unique as far as my field experience and readings indicate.
At some time in the history of the Rigsby House the top plate of the
north cabin was elevated by the addition of an approximately 6 inch
timber to the top north and south logs. The reason for the alteration
is unclear and beyond the scope of this paper. However, the net result
of the change was a gap of over one foot between the east top plate
and the top of the second level, east, north cabin window frames. As
a result, enough space became available so that the sash could be slid
upward, through an opening in the frame, into the space normally
occupied by the chinking and daubing, exterior clapboards having made
the wall fill unnecessary. I know of no other log dwelling with windows
constructed in this manner.

Sheets 31 and 32 complete the architectural detailing of the
Rigsby House. Again, scale and dimensioning are carefully recorded.
Written description, always kept to a minimum on the measured drawings,
merely titles each entry, positions it in relation to its placement
in, or on, the Rigsby House, and describes details not self-explanatory
INTERIOR DOOR CASING
WEST DOOR-SOUTH
CABIN-SECTION
SCALE—F.S.

STAIRWELL CLOSET TURNBUTTON
SOUTH CABIN

STAIRWELL DOOR KNOB
SOUTH CABIN
SIDE VIEW—FULL SIZE—FRONT VIEW

SIDE VIEW—FULL SIZE—FRONT VIEW

FLAT HEAD WOOD SCREW

STAIRWELL CLOSET DOOR KNOB
SOUTH CABIN
SIDE VIEW—FULL SIZE—FRONT VIEW

WINDOW CONVERTED TO A
CABINET—FACED INTO REAR ADDITION

MISCELLANEOUS
DETAILS

IR A K O H N  JAN. 7, 1976
RIGSBY HOUSE
W E E N T 3 1 0 F 3 5 S H E E T S
ANNA VICINITY—WARREN COUNTY—KENTUCKY
POPLAR WALL HOOK
SIDE VIEW — SCALE — FULL SIZE — FRONT VIEW
LOCATED ON WEST EXTERIOR WALL — NORTH CABIN

MISCELLANEOUS DETAILS

V-NOTCH AND V-SADDLE NOTCH

SQUARE NOTCH

DETAIL — S.E. CORNER OF SOUTH CABIN
SCALE 1 = 1'0"

DETAIL — N.E. CORNER OF NORTH CABIN
SCALE 1 = 1'0"

IRA KOHN JAN.17,1976
RIGSBY HOUSE
ANNA VICINITY — WARREN COUNTY — KENTUCKY

SHEET 32 OF 35 SHEETS
in the drawings themselves. Fred Kniffen writes that “the square notch seems to be a deterioration from both the V-notch and the half dovetail.”

On the Rigsby House, however, square notching of the north cabin is superior in execution to be V-notching of the south cabin. The V-notching has deteriorated so that it is not possible to conclusively state whether or not the notching was originally intended as a straight V-notching or as a combination of the V-notch and the V-saddle notch as they are defined by Warren Roberts.

With the perspective study of the Rigsby House, Sheet 33, the measured drawings are completed. Here, line quality and shading are artistically as well as architecturally determined. Pictorial quality takes precedence over accuracy. “Perspective drawings do not reveal the true size and shape of the building but are used for interpretive purposes only.” Sheet 33 could easily replace the photograph of the Rigsby House, Sheet 1, because the perspective drawing records a structure both as the eye sees it and as the camera records it.

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10Heplar and Wallach, Architecture: Drafting and Design, p. 223.
PERSPECTIVE
Note: Chimney and steps are not to scale

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CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This paper has attempted to provide the folklorist with a working guide to the documentation of log folk housing. Using the Rigsby House as an illustrative case study, the folklorist should be able to apply the selected entries from the field notebook and measured drawings to any log folk dwelling or outbuilding. Many of the procedures and techniques utilized in the documentation procedure will also successfully adapt to folk architecture of stone or frame construction. My field experience, however, with the reconstruction of log folk housing suggests the inclusion of one more point. If the purpose of a documentation project is to record a structure that is to be in any way altered by future planned restoration or reconstruction, two measurement procedures used on the Rigsby House should be included. The first procedure involves the recording of the exterior wall angles. If the wall angles are not recorded before a log dwelling is dismantled, the walls may not assemble so that the corners are plumb. This may be the case even if the logs are sound and well fitting. After much effort, one wonders if the walls of the structure were plumb before they were dismantled. At least, this is what I wondered when I found myself in the above situation. The problem was not an unsolvable one, but to rule out its future occurrence, the exterior wall angles of the Rigsby
House were recorded in the field notebook elevations. On Sheet 6, the north elevation of the north cabin, for example, the wall angles are recorded as 89 degrees and 92 degrees from the horizontal. These measurements were determined by placing the Brunton compass against the extended six-foot rule (any long and straight object would suffice), which in turn was resting against the side of the house at the desired corner. Due to the irregularity of the corner notching, the angle measured may not be completely accurate, but the Brunton compass does capably provide an indication of wall deviation from perpendicular.

A second measurement problem arose when the top plates for the reconstructed cabin were to be positioned, and it was found that the plates were no longer an equal distance from the foundation of the house. Again, was this the case with the original dwelling or, perhaps, was the original foundation out of level? In the documentation of the Rigsby House the Brunton compass was used to relate the foundation height of the house at each corner to the height of each adjacent corner. A surveyor's level could also have been used to produce a more accurate result. First, a reference point was established and marked at the top of the stone foundation at the southeast corner of the Rigsby House. The Brunton compass was then placed at the northeast corner and sighted to the reference point. When the compass was reading level with the original marking, its position was recorded on the northeast corner. Since the compass was level, equal heights were now indicated on both corners. Upward or downward measurements could relate the height of the second corner to the first marked corner. Each corner was in turn sighted until all corners could be related to the reference point.
No instruction manual of this type can cover every possible situation that can arise in the field. As with any other academic discipline, experience cannot be taught. As long as the architectural historians continue to concentrate on "elite" and urban architecture, it will be left to the folklorist and the student of folklore to document log folk housing. If this paper has served to provide the fieldworker with an insight into the documentation procedure, it will have accomplished its intended goal.
APPENDIX 2

Below is the wording of the first recorded deed to the present James P. Rodgers property, on which the Rigsby House is located. Only the property deeded to Luisa Davis and her brothers and sisters belonged to the Rigsby farmstead.

Warren County Deed Book 92, p. 463.

This indenture made and entered into this the 14th, day of September 1899 by and between A. V. Davis of the first part and W. E. Davis and his heirs and Luisa Davis and her brothers and sisters who are the children of W. O. Davis and his wife Martha E. Davis of the second part Witnesseth: That the party of the first part for and in consideration of the natural love and respect which he has for the said parties of the second part has this day bargained and sold and by these presents does bargain sell and convey into the parties of the second part his entire home farm on the South side of Green rive /sic/ at the mouth of Ivy Creek and at Edgar's ferry in the County of Warren and State of Kentucky and apportions /sic/ said farm amongst them as follows:

to the said W. E. Davis all that part of said farm which is bounded on the North by Green river, on the East by the land H. J. Amos, on the South by the lands of Pat Grady and on the West by Ivy Creek.

to the said children of W. O. Davis and his wife Martha E. Davis the remainder of said farm which is bounded on the North by Green river, on the East by Ivy creek and the lands of Pat Grady, on South by the lands of L. P. Arnold, and on the West by the lands of Burton, to have and to hold unto the said parties of the second part their heirs and assigns forever with all the appurtenances thereon with general warranty of title. But the party of the first part hereby retains a home on said farm during the term of his natural life and so much of the products of said farm each year as will be necessary to cloth and feed hisself and to pay his other incidental expenses and to feed such live stock as he may see proper to keep on said property. In testimony whereof the party of the second part has hereinto set his hand and seal the day and date first above written.

A. V. Davis L.S.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


