

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	
DATE ENTERED	

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

"LAWNFIELD," JAMES A. GARFIELD ESTATE

AND/OR COMMON

The Dickey Farm

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

1059 Mentor Avenue

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Mentor

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

11th

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Ohio

CODE

39

COUNTY

Lake

CODE

089

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

**OWNERSHIP**

**STATUS**

**PRESENT USE**

— DISTRICT

— PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

— AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

— UNOCCUPIED

— COMMERCIAL

— PARK

— STRUCTURE

— BOTH

— WORK IN PROGRESS

— EDUCATIONAL

— PRIVATE RESIDENCE

— SITE

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

**ACCESSIBLE**

— ENTERTAINMENT

— RELIGIOUS

— OBJECT

— IN PROCESS

— YES: RESTRICTED

— GOVERNMENT

— SCIENTIFIC

— BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

— INDUSTRIAL

— TRANSPORTATION

— NO

— MILITARY

— OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Western Reserve Historical Society, Mr. Frederick Crawford

STREET & NUMBER

10825 East Boulevard

CITY, TOWN

Cleveland

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Ohio 44106

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Registry of Deeds, Lake County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

47 North Park Place

CITY, TOWN

Painsville

STATE

Ohio 44077

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Ohio Landmark Survey

DATE

1967

— FEDERAL — STATE  COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Ohio Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Interstate 71 at 17th Avenue, Columbus, Ohio

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Built in 1832 by James Dickey, the Garfield house was originally a one and one-half story frame house. It remained this way for more than forty years of occupancy by the Dickey family until 1876 when the Garfields purchased the house and farm of 152 acres at a cost of \$115 per acre. As soon as the Garfields acquired the house they made alterations in it by adding another story. The house then became a two and one-half story house with a large porch that traversed the entire front facade. In 1886, after the President's death, Mrs. Garfield added the library and several rooms in back. It had always been the wish of Garfield to have a larger library though he never saw it built.

The first two floors of the Garfield Mansion have been restored to the period of the Garfields' occupancy. On the first floor is the President and Mrs. Garfield's bedroom, just off the main hall. After the President's death, this room was converted into a sitting room for Mrs. Garfield. It has been restored to its original function for the purpose of interpretation. Also located on this floor is the parlor, just to the south of the main reception hall, which gives access to the dining room and kitchen as well as to the second story. In the reception hall are many family portraits. Also on the first floor are Grandma Garfield's bedroom, the nurses' quarters and other reception halls.

The stairway from the main reception hall leads to the Memorial Library which is finished in "white oak with its ornate beamed ceiling and carved wainscotting is unquestionably the most imposing room in the house."<sup>1</sup> Also on the second floor are the rooms of the children, "Miss Mollie's room," the boy's bedroom, as well as the rooms of Mrs. Garfield, Zeb Rudolph's room, the trunk room and a closet which contains a water tank.

The third floor (attic) is presently used by the Lake County Historical Society as a museum. Here are housed articles of local history. There are displays which relate the advancements of the frontier in Ohio by display of many early tools, implements and products of an early society in Lake county.

Upon the completion of the final additions to the house, there were some 26 rooms which could accomodate some 20 people comfortably.

There are a number of other structures vital to Lawnfield as a landmark. Located on the northeast corner of the house is the old Campaign Office. It was here that a telegraph office was maintained to receive messages of the returns of the election. The Campaign Office is a small, clapboard, single story building. Located to the rear (north of the house) is a replica of the type log cabin in which the President was born. The building is run down and detracts from the appearance of the estate (see accompanying photograph). To the east of the house is the old windmill pump house. The top has been lost, however, it remains in quite good condition. North of the windmill is a one story frame structure called the carriage house. Inside are the presidential carriages and other artifacts. At the extreme north end of the property is the original barn used by Garfield.

1. A. O. Beamer, Lawnfield: Home of President James A. Garfield, Cleveland, n.d., p.9.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1876-1881

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Lawnfield was the residence of President James A. Garfield from 1876 until his death at the hands of an assassin in 1881. As a leading Radical Republican he was a potent political force during Reconstruction. After election to the Senate, he emerged the "dark horse" candidate for the presidency in 1880. Planning his assault on the presidency from his "campaign room" at Lawnfield, he spoke from the portico of his house, giving the name "front porch" campaign to his part in the election.

With the first two floors restored and original furnishings throughout the house, Lawnfield reflects the life and labors of President Garfield. His study on the second floor contains his favorite chair and desk at which he composed many of his campaign speeches in 1880.

Built and enlarged by the Garfields in 1877-79 from one and one-half to two and one-half stories, the house originally stood on 152 acres. The house is owned by the Western Reserve Historical Society and is leased to the Lake County Historical Society, who maintains the house and has it open throughout the year to the public.

## BIOGRAPHY

James Abram Garfield was born in a log cabin on November 19, 1831, in Orange Township,\* Ohio. Reared in poverty, the young Garfield attended nearby schools, at one of which he met his future wife, Lucretia Rudolph, whom he married on November 11, 1858. By the time of his marriage, Garfield had taught school, had exhibited a strong interest in religion and had spent two years at Williams College, Amherst, Massachusetts. He also had become the head of the Western Reserve Eclectic Institute, now Hiram College, which school he had attended between 1851-1854. He served the Institute as principal until 1861.

Although exceedingly interested in religion, Garfield chose politics rather than preaching as a career. As early as 1856 he had engaged in some political activity, and late in 1859 he won a seat in the Ohio senate. Defeat of his bid for reelection in 1861 probably affected him less than it would have normally because of the final break between the North and the South. Garfield's patriotism led him to offer his services to the Nation, and in the summer of 1861 he became a lieutenant-colonel in the United States Army. With absolutely no military experience, Garfield still served with merit, winning a brigadier-general's rank in March, 1862. Back in his Congressional district

\*located in Cuyahoga County

(continued)

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Beamer, Arthur O., Lawnfield: Home of President James A. Garfield, (Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland), n.d.
- Feis, Ruth S.B., Mollie Garfield in the White House, (Rand, McNally & Company, New York), 1963.
- Gomer, Lucretia G., Strands From the Weaving, (Vantage Press, New York), 1959.
- Smith, Theodore Clark, James Abram Garfield, (Yale University Press, New Haven), 1925.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 4.877

UTM REFERENCES

A	19	471100	4612428	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See continuation sheet

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Joseph S. Mendinghall, Historian

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service (202) 523-5464

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

1100 L Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Washington, D.C.

20240

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL     

STATE     

LOCAL     

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Joseph S. Mendinghall*

DATE 9/28/83

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

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Owner of the Property

Lawnfield is under the direct care and custody of:

The Lake County Historical Society  
Mrs. William J. Slack, Administrative Secretary  
8095 Mentor Avenue  
Mentor, Ohio 44060

Measured drawings have been made of the Garfield Estate by:

Mr. E. Thomas Marcel  
8353 Mentor Avenue  
Mentor, Ohio

These drawings are the property of the Lake County Historical Society.

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he was elected to the House of Representatives in 1863. Reluctant to leave the Army, Garfield finally decided, upon the request of President Lincoln, to take his seat in December, 1863.

Having been urged by the President to leave the Army, Garfield soon lost faith in the President. The ex-general, too recently from the battlefield, felt that Lincoln's leadership lacked vigor. Especially did Garfield and others resent the chief executive's plan for bringing the wayward Southern states back into the Union. After Lincoln's death, Garfield fully supported Congress' drive to assume control of reconstruction. The intensity of the feelings of Garfield is underscored by the fact that he voted for the impeachment of Lincoln's successor, Andrew Johnson. Moreover, he was highly incensed at those who did not vote for impeachment.

What Garfield lacked in originality, he made up for in hard work. Aside from adopting a stern attitude toward the prostrate South, Garfield concentrated on financial matters while in Congress. He did this deliberately, for he hoped that by becoming master of fiscal facts, figures and balance he could win the chairmanship of the Committee on Ways and Means, one of the House's most powerful committees. Genius is not in most of us, but ambition always is, and Garfield sought to win power by siege tactics, not by dash and brilliance.

He met with partial success. In 1871 he assumed the leadership of the Committee on Appropriations, not of Ways and Means as he had desired. For four years he chaired the committee in a competent fashion, impressing all by his ever-ready statistics. When the Democrats won control of the House in 1876, he surrendered his chairmanship and became the minority leader of the Republicans. He supported the President, Rutherford B. Hayes, but not with overwhelming enthusiasm when Hayes made gestures in behalf of Civil Service reform. The Ohio Legislature elected Garfield to the Senate in 1880, ending his long and dutiful years in the House. But the Senate was to be denied the benefits of Garfield's talents when he became President.

When the Republican Convention met in 1880, there were three leading candidates for the presidential nomination: Ulysses S. Grant, James G. Blaine, and John Sherman. Garfield acted as Sherman's spokesman, albeit in a "sickly manner" according to some, but a deadlock developed between Grant and Blaine forces. The convention could only end the impasse by turning to a dark horse, which it did on the thirty-sixth ballot, choosing Garfield.

The nominee ran his campaign from his home, Lawnfield, instead of going to the people, they came to him. The fight was a rough one, however, with Garfield's opponents loudly reminding the country that Garfield never

(continued)

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fully explained his role in the Credit Mobilier Affair. Seemingly unperturbed, Garfield on election day calmly turned his attention to the cultivation of a garden. After the votes had been cast and counted, Garfield could concentrate on agricultural matters with even greater calmness, for he had won.

We do not know how successful a President Garfield would have made, even though he gave an uninspired inaugural address, because at 9:20 A.M. on July 2, 1881, an assassin shot him. Two bullets struck Garfield. One lodged near his spine. The wound proved mortal. The President struggled for life for over two months, but death overcame him. He passed away on September 19.

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As shown by the red line on the accompanying map A entitled "Lawnfield" and dated July 11, 1972, from a point on the centerline of Mentor Avenue approximately 50 feet west from the center line of the Lawnfield entrance road extended proceed slightly east of north about 500 feet, thence northeast 120 feet to the intersection of the old property line (1943) thence east along the 1943 survey line 205 feet, thence south approximately 120 feet, thence east approximately 80 feet to a point, thence south approximately 345 feet to the center of Mentor Avenue, thence west along the center of Mentor Avenue to the point of origin.

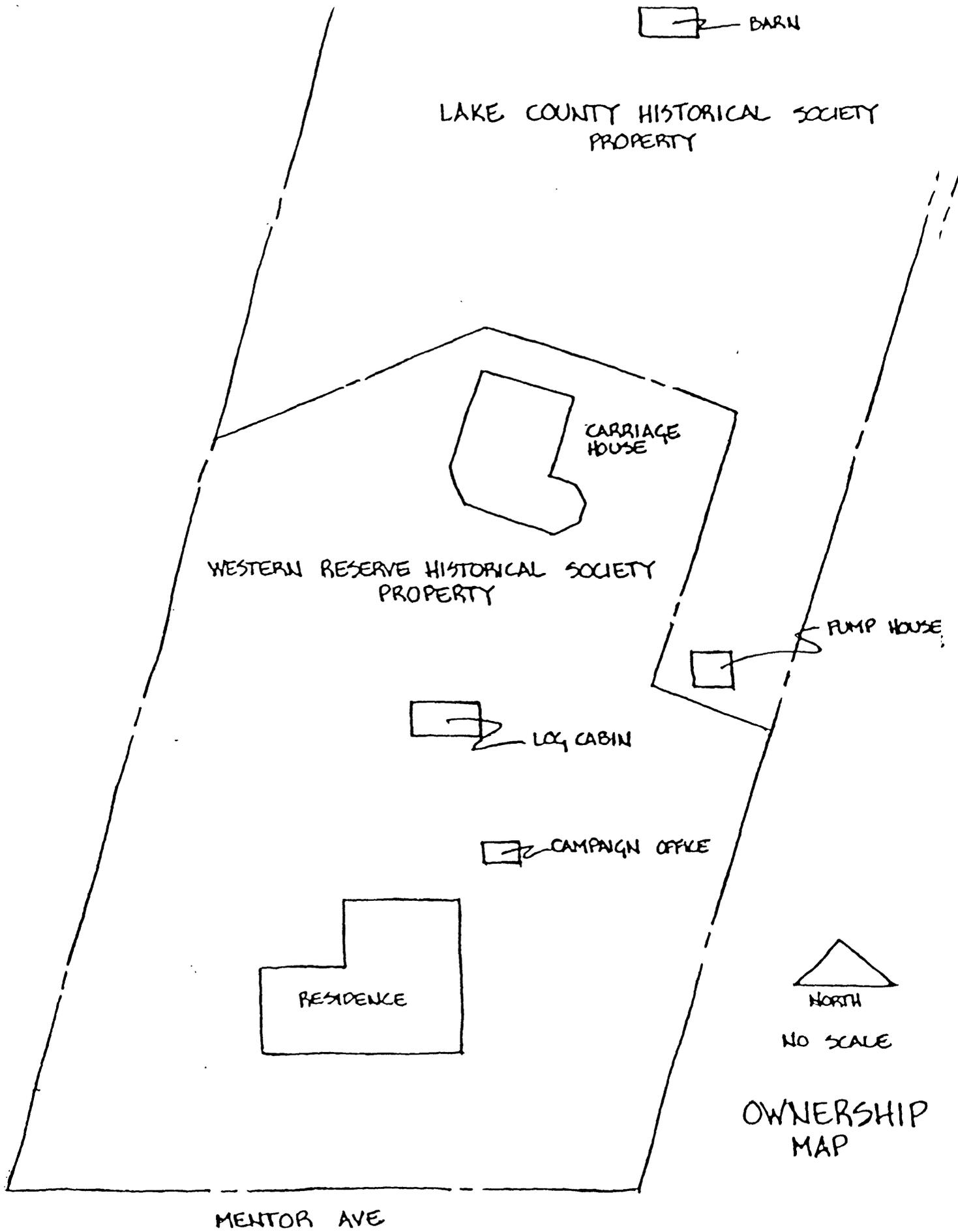
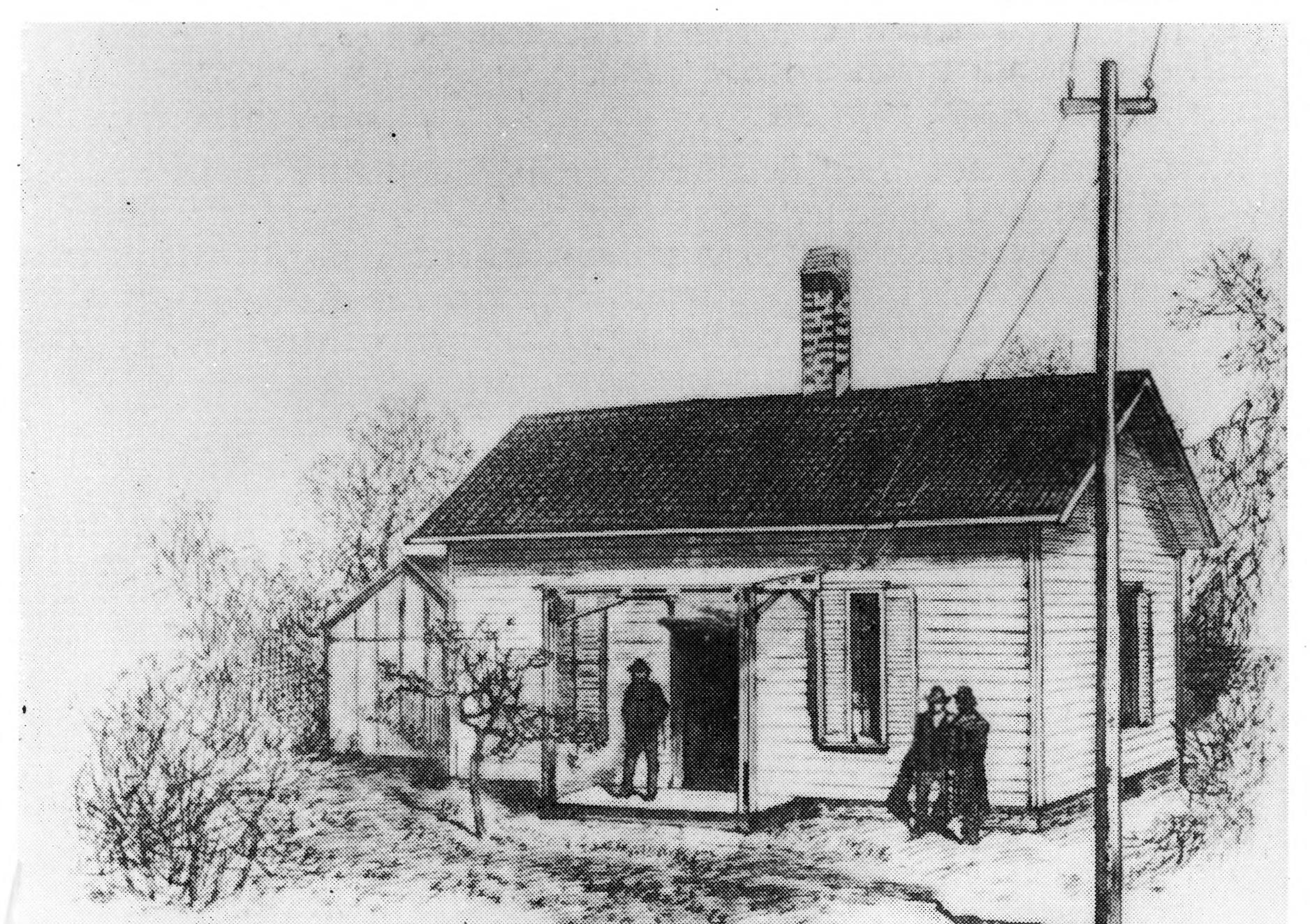


FIGURE 2



"Lawnfield," as Garfield named his home, today.

NPS Photo, 1962



GEN. GARFIELD'S TELEGRAPHIC OFFICE.

The little clapboard building at Lawnfield that served as Garfield's telegraphic office during the campaign of 1880.

From W. H. Van Loon, Lawnfield  
(N.P., 1962), p.8



The house erected by James Dickey in 1832, which James A. Garfield bought in 1876. Garfield remodelled the house between 1877-1879, making it into a two-and-a-half story building.

Courtesy Lake County Historical  
Society, Mentor, Ohio.



Garfield's bedroom, Lawnfield.

Courtesy Lake County Historical  
Society, Mentor, Ohio



Desk and favorite reading chair in President's study at Lawnfield.

From G. E. Van Loon, Lancaster

(R.P., 1942), p. 4