

Using West Virginia GeoExplorer's Historical Gazetteer Feature

gaz - et - teer: a geographical index or dictionary

This *Historical Gazetteer* is a geographical database of place names found in historical documents. Instead of just helping you find locations in the present or recent past, it can guide you to them based on earlier names, alternate spellings, time period, and other criteria.

It currently contains about 3,500 place names for locations in Jefferson County, WV. It will be expanded to include other portions of the State as time permits.

Section I below describes the search fields and what they include. Section II shows you how to search the Historical Gazetteer.

I. Description of Fields

Gazetteer fields include:

- **Place name:** location name with variant names and spellings, date built, recorded, or destroyed;
- **County Name** and **U.S.G.S. Quadrangle**;
- **U.S.G.S. Point Number**;
- **Description, Geocator, Feature Type,** and **Subtype**;
- **Reference number(s)** [in brackets]

Descriptions of Fields

The **Place name** field includes the location name with variant names and spellings, date built, recorded, or destroyed:

- Names and alternate spellings for specific locations.

Example: Potomac River (recorded 1734) [5, 22] Bathommek River, Betomek, Brooke of Chesapeak, Cahongarooton, Cheneoow-quoquey, Co-hon-go-roo-ta River, Cohongo River, Cohongoluta River, Cohongoronta River, Cohongoronto River, Cohongoroota River, Cohongorooto River, Cohongoruton River, Potamack River, Potamak River, Potawmack River, Potomach River, Potomack River, Potomacke River, Potomak River, Potomeack River, Potomock River

- **Date recorded, altered, or destroyed:** construction dates are often poorly documented or estimated by comparing a structure to others having similar materials, construction techniques, or architectural styles. Dates in this field can be altered as new information is found.
- Type of structure on property (if available).

Example: frame bank barn, brick farm house, block tenant house, tile dairy barn

If a structure has been reliably located on a property (e.g., sketch map of the location of a spring house on a National Register site), separate records for each significant structure may have been created.

Examples:

- Altona bank barn (built 1830, 1916; surveyed 2013) [5]
- Altona brick farm house (built 1832; recorded 2013) [5]
- Altona tenant 1, frame house (built ca. 1870; recorded 2013) [5]
- Altona tenant House, frame (built ca. 1900; recorded 2013) [5]
- Altona, four square frame farm house (built ca. 1925; recorded 2013) [5]

The **County name** is taken from those provided by the USGS, Graphic Names Information System: <http://geonames.usgs.gov/>. When the database expands to include locations outside of West Virginia, a **State** field will also be added.

The **U.S.G.S. Quadrangle name** as defined in the USGS Graphic Names Information System.

The **Description field** provides additional information on name, date, or location that may help the user distinguish among similarly named places.

The **Geolocator** is a unique code that identifies the location of the earliest recorded property within which a place falls. In the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia, these codes refer almost exclusively to patents made by the Colony of Virginia or by Thomas Lord Fairfax, owner of the Northern Neck. Using measurements from the earliest documents, we have mapped the boundaries of these properties and recorded them using the ESRI GIS system. (Approximately 1,200 of these parcels were mapped for the Jefferson County, WV, area and they can be viewed through the **Browse Resources | GIS Portal** feature in WVGP.) Outside of this area, the same type of code can be used to identify the first deed recorded at a particular location.

For historians trying to develop a sense of place, knowing the location of a property, its boundaries, and geographic features is a good starting point. During the early stages of research, the boundaries of the original properties provide a useful framework for storing accumulated information. As research proceeds, the original boundaries, subsequent subdivisions, and information about the people and events within them provide the data we need to understand an area's social, cultural, and economic development.

Feature Type, Subtype, Function or Use, Architectural Styles, and Exterior Building Materials are not yet available. They will be added as time permits, with a goal of providing researchers a detailed structural inventory.

Reference number(s) are appended to the place name field and appear in a separate field, to indicate the source(s) of information. You can view the list of sources cited by clicking on the link just above the **Gazetteer Search** form.

Each row of search results begins with links to the **Geolocator GIS** and (when available) to **Google Maps**. The former displays a place's location within the boundaries of the original deed or land grant. The latter points to the specific location on a modern map. Use this **Historical Gazetteer** with the GIS search features found in **Advanced Catalog Search** and **Full Search** to find more extensive information about places of interest.

At present, this historical gazetteer focuses on places that fall within the boundaries of present day Jefferson County, WV. In the future it will be expanded to include other West Virginia counties and relevant adjacent locations. Soon, we will be adding separate, searchable maps for municipalities so you can locate specific structures, see where people lived, and view other demographic information.

II. Searching the Historical Gazetteer

A. Viewing a location

1. Click the **Gazetteer** button on the menu bar to reach the **Gazetteer Search** page (Figure 1).



The screenshot shows the 'Gazetteer Search' interface. It features a title 'Gazetteer Search' in red. Below the title are four input fields: 'Geolocation', 'Place Name', 'County', and 'Quadrangle'. A note below the Geolocation field says 'Use * as a wildcard before and or after your search (ex: fair*)'. At the bottom, there is a 'Feature Date (mm/dd/yyyy) between' section with two date input boxes, a 'clear' button, and a large 'Search' button.

Figure 1. Gazetteer Search.

2. Although you can use a variety of search criteria individually or in combination, most users start with a **Place Name** search and then add other fields to narrow the results. You can add a wildcard * symbol before or after a search term to include results containing words before or after that term.

Example: A search for **Place Name = burr*** produces the results set shown in Figure 2.



The screenshot shows the search results for 'burr*'. The search form is visible at the top with 'burr*' entered in the 'Place Name' field. Below the form is a table of results. The first result is 'Burr-McGarry log tenant house (built ca. 1810) [5]' located in 'CT908, Jefferson, Charles Town'. A 'Geolocator' icon is shown to the left of the result. The page number '1/1/181' is visible in the bottom right corner.

Geolocator	Feature Type	Feature Subtype	County Name	Quadrangle	Feature Date	Place Name
	Burr-McGarry log tenant house (built ca. 1810) [5]		Jefferson	CT908		Charles Town

Figure 2. Place Name search with wildcard on right

A search for Place Name = *burr* generates the results showing in Figure 3.

Gazetteer Search

Geolocation

Place Name
Use * as a wildcard before and or after your search (ex: fair*)

County

Quadrangle

Feature Date (mm/dd/yyyy) between to

Geolocator	Feature Type	Feature Subtype	County Name	Quadrangle	Feature Date	Place Name
		Peter Burr House Frame / Log Farm House (built ca. 1750) [5]	CT908, Jefferson, Charles Town			1/1/1770
		William Burr, Leonard Davis, Log Farm House (built ca. 1815) [5]	CT905, Jefferson, Charles Town			1/1/1815
		James Burr Frame Farm House (built ca. 1800) [5]	CT908, Jefferson, Charles Town			1/1/1800
		Burr-McGarry log tenant house (built ca. 1810) [5]	CT908, Jefferson, Charles Town			1/1/1810

Figure 3. Place Name search with wildcard on left and right

3. To view the parent property of a specific item (e.g., Peter Burr House Frame / Log Farm House), click the **gold pushpin link**  to the left. A GIS tab will open with the appropriate county displayed and the parent property highlighted (Figure 4). Use the **Zoom to** feature to enlarge the map, or close the label box for the property and use the magnify wheel on your mouse to alter the image size. To close this map page, click the x on the tab. (You can leave it open if you want to view it later.)

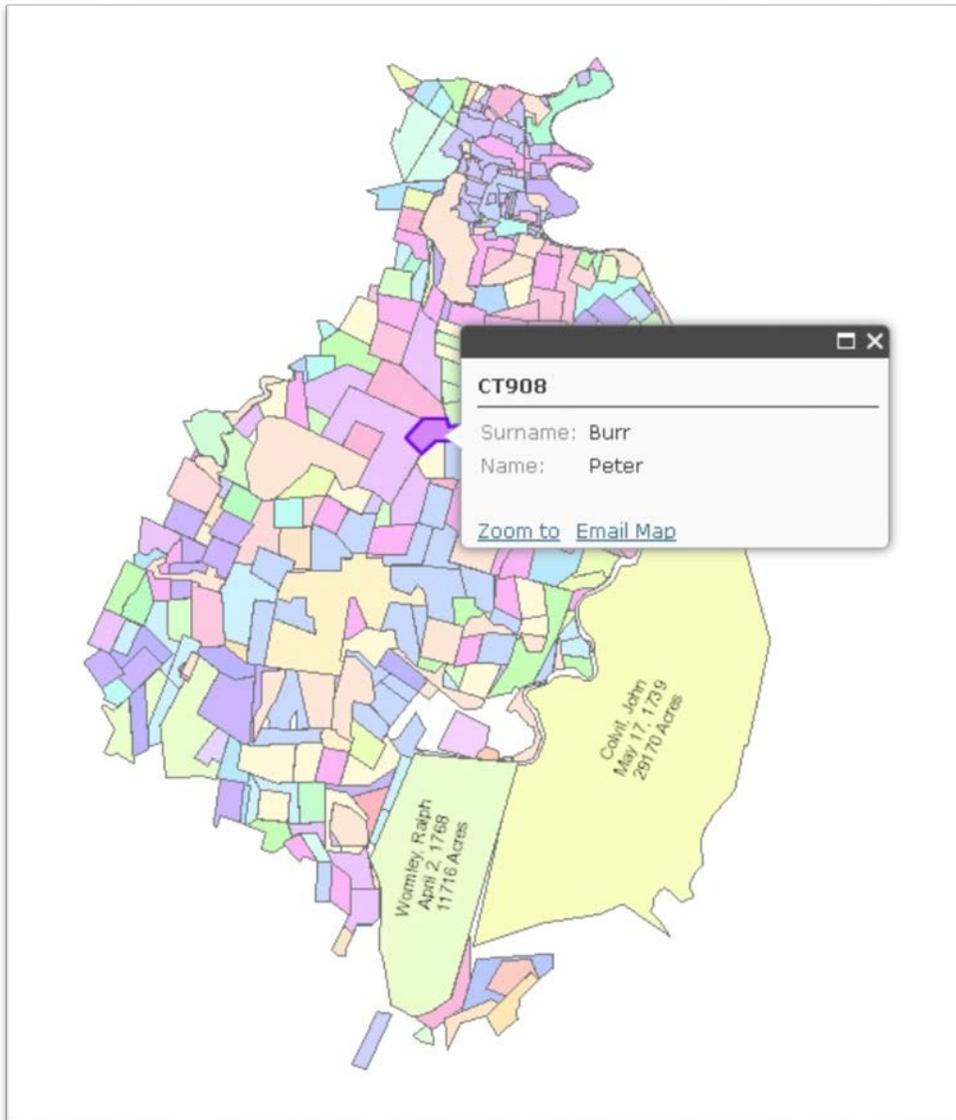


Figure 4. Pushpin link to parent property.

4. To view the specific location of the item using latitude and longitude, click the orange pushpin link  to the left. A Google map will open, with the orange pushpin marking the location (Figure 5).

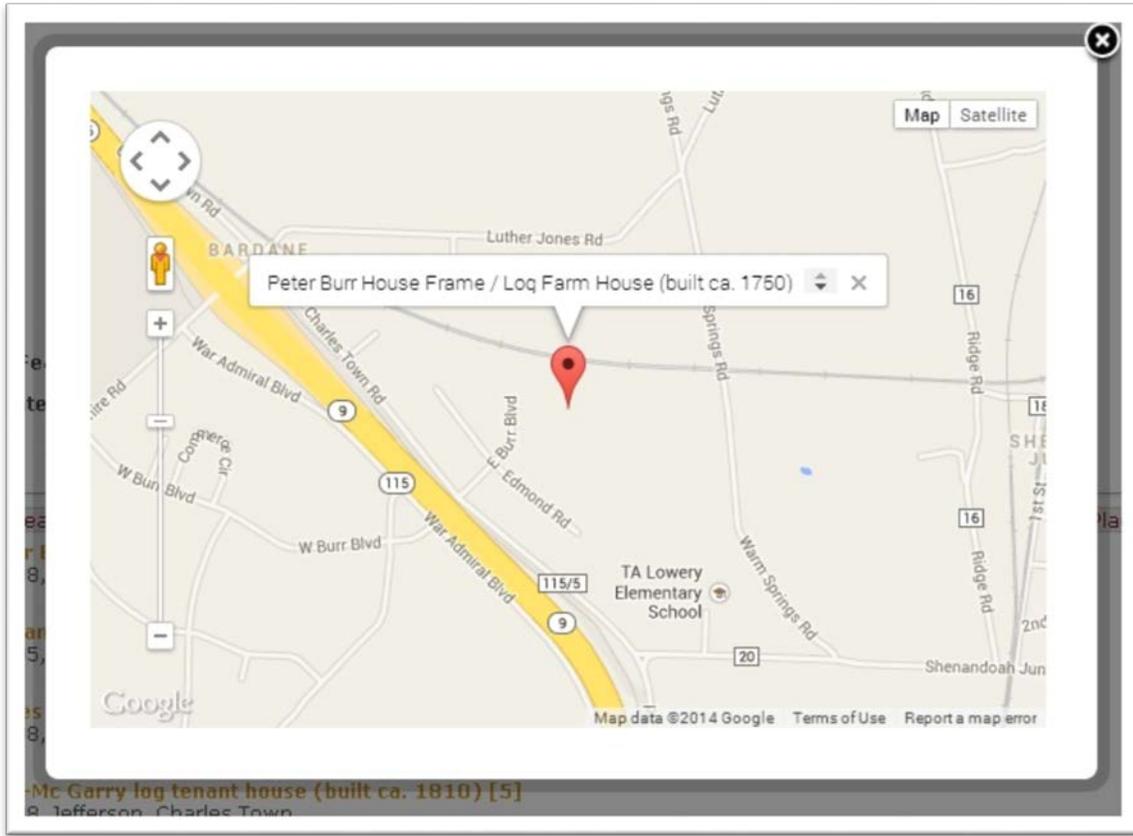


Figure 5. Pushpin link to Google graphic map.

(To display the Place Name information on the map, click the pushpin.) You can change to the satellite view by clicking the Satellite button on the upper right corner of the window (Figure 6).

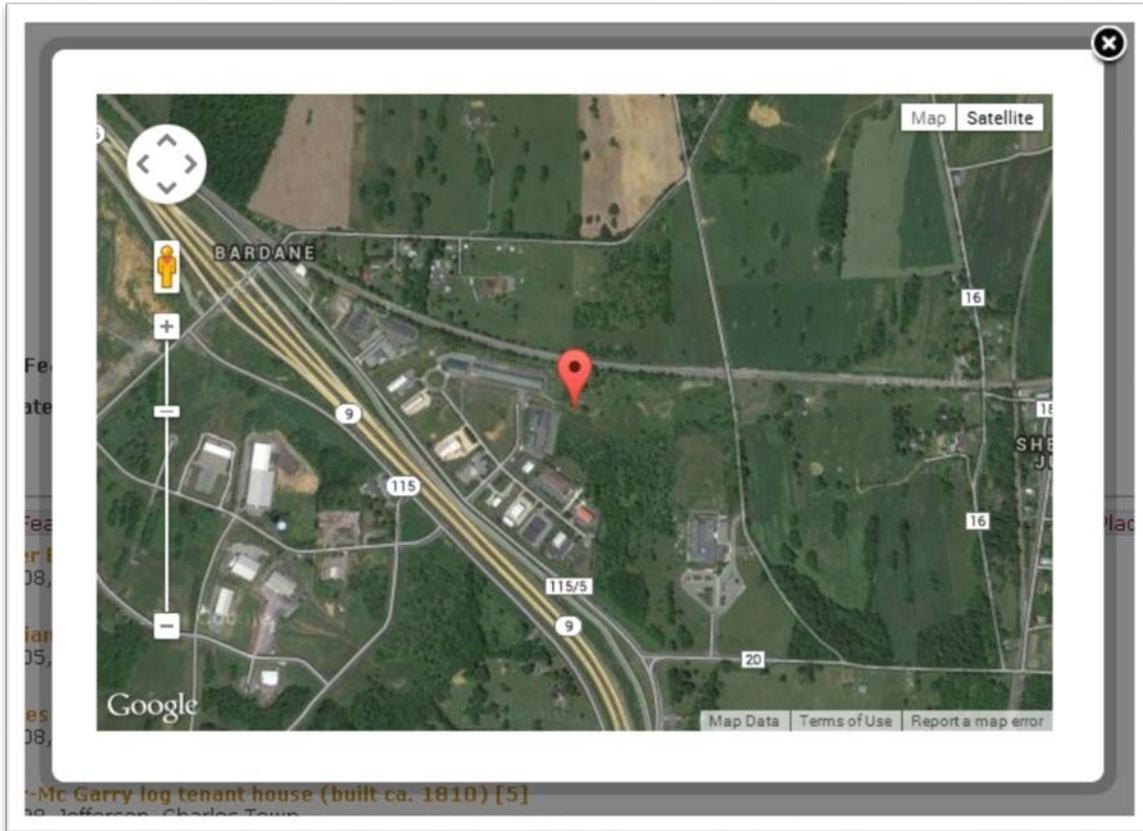


Figure 6. Pushpin view of GIS location, satellite view.

Searching by Lot

WVGP also lets you search by lot within a village or municipality, such as Shepherdstown, Middleway, or Shenandoah Junction. (At present, it is available only for Harpers Ferry; i.e., Geolocation HF605.) Locations that can be viewed on the Harpers Ferry map have .X. following the Geolocation code in the results set.

For example, a search for *Hill Top House* yields the result shown in Figure 7. Selecting the  icon displays the Harpers Ferry map with the specific lot highlighted (Figure 8).



Geocator	Feature Type	Feature Subtype	County Name	Quadrangle	Feature Date	Place Name
		Seminary Lot, Magazine Hill. Hill Top House Hotel. -400 Ridge Street (built ca. 1919) [4]	Jefferson	HF605.X.U-7		Harpers Ferry #JF-0063-0176

1/1/1919

Figure 7. Search result for Harpers Ferry map (Geocator contains X).

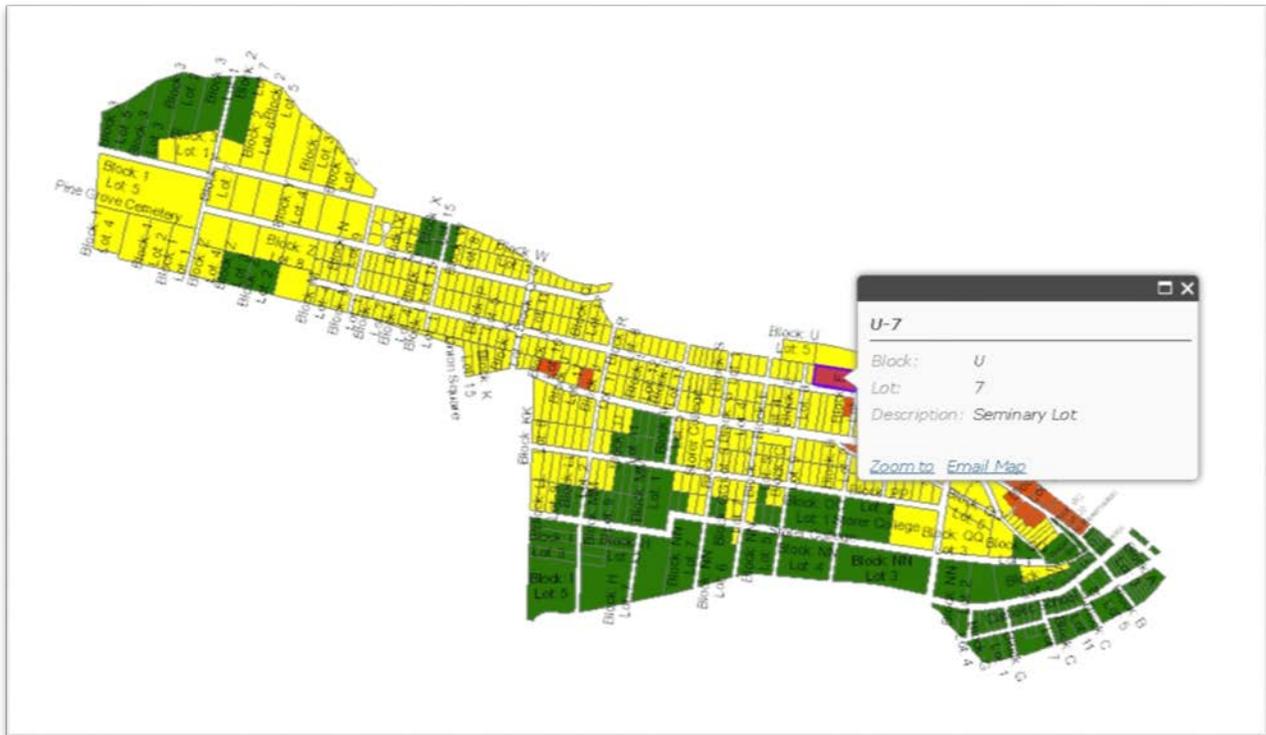


Figure 8. Harpers Ferry map with lot highlighted.

B. Narrowing your search

1. Adding search criteria

Place Name searches often produce results that contain many similarities, and it's not unusual to find identical place names for different locations, even within the same county. For example, a **Place Name** search for **fairview*** produces the results shown in Figure 9.

Gazetteer Search

Geolocation

Use * as a wildcard before and or after your search (ex: fair*)

Place Name

County

Quadrangle

Feature Date (mm/dd/yyyy) between to

Geolocator	Feature Type	Feature Subtype	County Name	Quadrangle	Feature Date	Place Name
	Fairview (recorded 1928 [4])	BV810, Jefferson, Berryville				1/1/1928
	Fairview	MID310, Jefferson, Middleway				1/1/1928
	Fairview, William F. Weller (recorded 1883) [3]	CT305, Jefferson, Charles Town				1/1/1883
	Fairview Cemetery (recorded 1980) [22]	MID 107, Jefferson, Middleway # 1538801				1/1/1980
	Fairview / Four Corners Frame Farm House (build ca. 1850; recorded 1928 [4], 2013) [5]	MID308, Jefferson, Middleway				1/1/1850
	Fairview Brick Farm House (built ca. 1870; recorded 2013) [5]	SHEP206, Jefferson, Shepherdstown				1/1/1870
	Fairview Farm Frame Farm House (built ca. 1870; recorded 2013) [5]	CT90C, Jefferson, Charles Town				1/1/1870
	Fairview Frame Farm House (built ca. 1870) [5]	CT304, Jefferson, Charles Town				1/1/1870
	Fairview Farm Bank Barn (built ca. 1870) [5]	CT304, Jefferson, Charles Town				1/1/1870

Figure 9. Similar place name results from multiple locations.

If you know the general location of the place you seek, try **adding the appropriate U.S.G.S. Quadrangle name** to eliminate possibly irrelevant results. For example, if you think that the site your want to locate is near Shepherdstown, narrow your results to the **Shepherdstown Quadrangle** (Figure 10).

Gazetteer Search

Geolocation

Use * as a wildcard before and/or after your search (ex: fair*)

Place Name

County

Quadrangle

Feature Date (mm/dd/yyyy) between to

Geocator	Feature Type	Feature Subtype	County Name	Quadrangle	Feature Date	Place Name
		Fairview Brick Farm House (built ca. 1870; recorded 2013) [5]	JEFFERSON	shepherdstown	1/1/1870	

Figure 10. Place name search limited by U.S.G.S. Quadrangle

2. Although specific fields for building / location type, building materials, and building style are not yet available, **you can currently create Place Name searches to find many of these features**. For example, terms such as *cemetery*, *marker*, *tenant house*, *spring house*, *cabin*, or *ground barn* will produce significant results (Figure 11).

Gazetteer Search

Geolocation

Use * as a wildcard before and/or after your search (ex: fair*)

Place Name

County

Quadrangle

Feature Date (mm/dd/yyyy) between to

Geocator	Feature Type	Feature Subtype	County Name	Quadrangle	Feature Date	Place Name
		Glen Burnie Stone Bank Barn (built ca. 1820) [5]	JEFFERSON	shepherdstown	1/1/1820	
		York Hill, stone bank barn (built 1814) [5]	JEFFERSON	shepherdstown	1/1/1814	

Figure 11. Place name search with limiters

III. Expanding your searches

Once you have located a specific property, you can use other types of searches to find more information about related locations, persons, or events.

For example, an **Advanced Catalog Search** on *Book or Journal Title or Caption (contains) York Hill* (Figure 12), produces a large results set that includes drawings, photographs, and documents related to your subject.

The screenshot displays the 'Advanced Catalog Search' interface. At the top, there are five tabs: 'BASIC CATALOG SEARCH', 'ADVANCED CATALOG SEARCH' (highlighted in red), 'PUBLIC RECORDS SEARCH', 'PERSONAL INFORMATION NUMBER (PIN) SEARCH', and 'FULL SEARCH'. The 'ADVANCED CATALOG SEARCH' tab is active. Below the tabs, there are search options: 'Show: 10 records per page' and 'Format: List'. The main section is titled 'Advanced Search Criteria' and includes a 'Moderate' button and an 'Add New...' button. The search criteria are defined as follows: 'Find: York Hill' as a 'Book or Journal Title or Caption (contains)', AND another empty field as a 'Author (last name, first name)', AND another empty field as a 'Author (last name, first name)'. Below this is the 'Search Limits' section, which includes: 'Format: All Formats', 'Topics: (Choose up to three...)', 'Personal Identification Number (PIN)' with a 'Find' button, 'Geolocator' with a 'Find' button, 'Publication Date (mm/dd/yyyy)' with a 'between' dropdown, input fields, and a 'to' field, and a 'clear' button, and 'Event Date (mm/dd/yyyy)' with a 'between' dropdown, input fields, and a 'to' field, and a 'clear' button. At the bottom, there are 'Remove Limits...' and 'Search' buttons.

Figure 12. Advanced Catalog Search on York Hill

A Gazetteer Search for York Hill's parent property SHEP303 will display the locations of additional properties that developed within the original area (Figure 13).

Gazetteer Search

Geolocation
Use * as a wildcard before and/or after your search (ex: fair*)

Place Name

County

Quadrangle

Feature Date (mm/dd/yyyy) between to

Geolocator	Feature Type	Feature Subtype	County Name	Quadrangle	Feature Date	Place Name
		Rock Spring Stone foundation of barn (built ca. 1850) [5]	SHEP303, Jefferson, Shepherdstown			1/1/1850
		Spring Hill brick / stone farm house (built ca. 1840) [5]	SHEP303, Jefferson, Shepherdstown			1/1/1840
		York Hill, log farm house (built ca. 1800) [5]	SHEP303, Jefferson, Shepherdstown			1/1/1800
		Rock Spring (Ridge Rd) Brick Farm House (built 1805) [5]	SHEP303, Jefferson, Shepherdstown			1/1/1805
		Rock Spring Frame Hay Barn (built ca. 1850) [5]	SHEP303, Jefferson, Shepherdstown			1/1/1850
		Rock Spring Block Dairy Barn (built ca. 1920) [5]	SHEP303, Jefferson, Shepherdstown			1/1/1920
		Rock Spring, Spring House (built ca. 1805 [8])	SHEP303, Jefferson, Shepherdstown			1/1/1805
		Spring Hill frame bank barn (built ca. 1890) [5]	SHEP303, Jefferson, Shepherdstown			1/1/1890
		York Hill, stone bank barn (built 1814) [5]	SHEP303, Jefferson, Shepherdstown			1/1/1814

Figure 13. A Gazetteer Search for additional sites within the boundaries of the parent property.

An **Advanced Catalog Search** for the same **Geolocator** (SHEP303) yields results containing drawings, photographs, and documents of locations within the footprint of the parent property (Figure 14). (Examine the tutorials on the **Search Results** page to learn more about other search methods.)

The screenshot shows the 'Advanced Catalog Search' interface. At the top, there are five tabs: 'BASIC CATALOG SEARCH', 'ADVANCED CATALOG SEARCH' (which is highlighted in red), 'PUBLIC RECORDS SEARCH', 'PERSONAL INFORMATION NUMBER (PIN) SEARCH', and 'FULL SEARCH'. Below the tabs, the 'Advanced Search Criteria' section contains three search criteria, each with a text input field, a dropdown menu for search type (all set to 'Author (last name, first name)'), and a 'Find' button. The 'Search Limits' section includes a 'Format' dropdown set to 'All Formats', a 'Topics' section with a 'Choose up to three...' prompt, and fields for 'Personal Identification Number (PIN)', 'Geolocator' (set to 'SHEP303'), 'Publication Date (mm/dd/yyyy)', and 'Event Date (mm/dd/yyyy)'. Each of these fields has a 'Find' or 'clear' button. At the bottom, there are 'Remove Limits...' and 'Search' buttons.

Figure 14. Advanced Catalog Search for a Geolocation (SHEP303)