

HERSHBERGER FARM, HOUSE
.4 mile east of Business Route 220,
.35 mile southeast of Cessna
Cessna Vicinity
Bedford County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5392-A

HABS
PA
5-CESSNA
IA-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
Northeast Region
Philadelphia Support Office
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

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Location: .4 mile east of Business Route 220, .35 mile southeast of Cessna, Cessna vicinity, Bedford County, Pennsylvania

USGS Bedford, Pennsylvania Quadrangle
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:
17.4440500.711570

Present Owner: Bedford County Air Industrial Park Authority
203 South Juliana Street
Bedford, Pennsylvania 15222

Present Occupant: Vacant

Significance: Probably one of the earliest surviving frame houses in Bedford Township, this brick-nogged house was built in the 1820s by one of the German farmers who settled this region. It offers potentially unique opportunities to document methods of construction and finishing details of a traditional house of this time and place.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Circa 1821. Although the Bedford County Historic Sites Survey assigned a circa 1870 date to the Hershberger Farmhouse, the documentary and architectural evidence suggest a pre-1840 construction date. The property was conveyed to John Hershberger by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in a September 1821 patent, and Hershberger probably built the house soon afterward. Archaeological testing in the yard of the house yielded numerous early 19th century ceramic sherds and other contemporary artifacts.
2. Architect: The farmhouse is a vernacular structure representing local construction techniques of the early 19th century.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The following is a complete chain of title to the land on which the farmhouse and other structures stand. References are to records in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds for Bedford County, in Bedford, Pennsylvania.

1821 Patent, 17 September 1821, recorded in Patent Book H, Volume 18, page 289.
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to John Hershberger.

1853 Deed, 3 September 1853, recorded in Volume A-5, page 432.
Heirs of John Hershberger to Dewalt Hershberger.

1884 Deed, 1 November 1884, recorded in Volume O-3, page 419.
Executors of Dewalt Hershberger estate to Samuel B. Hershberger.

1925 Deed, 16 July 1925, recorded in Volume 175, page 428.
Samuel B. and Laura B. Hershberger to Herman R. Hershberger.

1925 Deed, 16 July 1925, recorded in Volume 175, page 430.
Herman R. Hershberger to Samuel B. and Laura B. Hershberger.

1944 Deed, 20 June 1944, recorded in Volume 234, page 336.
Heirs of Samuel B. and Laura B. Hershberger to Carl R. and Bessie H. Pencil.

1946 Deed, 21 November 1946, recorded in Volume 238, page 181.
Carl R. and Bessie H. Pencil to Moray C. Cain and Clara M. Cail.

1979 Deed, 16 October 1979, recorded in Volume 37, page 133.
Clara M. Cain AKA Clara M. Cail to Fred E. and Connie R. Claycomb.

1989 The property recently was conveyed to the Bedford County Air Industrial Park Authority by Fred E. and Connie R. Claycomb.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: unknown.
5. Original plans and construction: No original plans or drawings have been located. The house clearly was built in two parts, with the rear ell a later addition. Since no evidence of a stairway was found in the front block, it seems likely that the present ell may have replaced an earlier rear wing that contained the original stairway.

The first floor plan appears to have originally included a narrow full-length hall/kitchen at the north end and two smaller rooms at the south end. The second floor was divided into four rooms of approximately equal size (see attached sketch plans). The fireplaces and cooking hearth were located at the north gable end of the structure.

6. Alterations and additions: The architectural evidence indicates that the 2-story rear ell was added in the 1870s or 1880s, presumably by either Dewalt Hershberger or Samuel Hershberger. The rear ell contained a new, more formal entrance and central hallway, with stairways providing access to all four levels of the house; in addition to the hallway, the ell featured a kitchen on the first floor and a single large bedroom on the second floor. The original entrance in the west facade may have been closed at that time, and use of the original kitchen in the main block probably was discontinued.

A circa 1900-1910 photograph shows that the rear of the farmhouse looked much the same as it does today, except that the back porch had not yet been enclosed on the first floor. Ms. Dolores Cain and Ms. Jeane Kenney (the wife and daughter of Mr. Charles Cain, who grew up on the Hershberger Farm) report that numerous minor alterations were made in the late 1940s and 1950s. These included the replacement of several windows, enclosure of the back porch, abandonment of the outside privy and installation of a toilet and shower in the cellar of the house. The triple and double windows in the west wall date to this period. A 1950s photograph in the Cains' possession shows the house's appearance to be virtually identical to its present appearance, except for the new enclosed porch.

After Fred Claycomb acquired the property in 1979, he divided the southwest room on the first floor of the main block into a bedroom and bathroom. He made no other alterations, but the greatest physical deterioration of the house occurred during the next ten years, when it was occupied by tenants.

B. Historical Context:

The historical context of the house and the rest of the farmstead was discussed in the overview report, HABS No. PA-5392.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Hershberger Farmhouse represents a vernacular house type constructed in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, of which few examples survive in this rural area north of Bedford. Constructed by one of the German farmers who settled this region, the brick-nogged frame house, with its three-room plan and apparent cooking hearth and bakeoven, reflects the Germanic antecedents of its original owner and offers potentially unique opportunities to document the methods of construction and finishing details of a traditional house of this time and place.
2. Condition of fabric: The foundation, framing, and roof of the house are sound. Through alteration and neglect, much of the original interior fabric has been lost, including the original cooking fireplace and bakeoven. The original entrance has been replaced by a large modern window, and a number of windows and all but one pair of shutters are lost or replaced.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The 2½-story house is ell-shaped, built in two distinct parts, with an obvious joining between the foundation of the rear ell and the original front section. The front block measures 30'3" x 24'5", and the rear ell measures 16' in width (joined to the front block) x 22'1" deep.
2. Foundations: Rubble stone foundation walls are 18-20" thick, forming a full basement under the entire house. The sloping site occupied by the house exposes only 6-12" of the foundation on the west front and south gable end of the house; this part of the foundation has been covered by concrete on the exterior. Only two of the rear ell's original three foundation walls remain; they are largely above ground level, exposing two full-size windows on the north side. The ell's original south foundation wall has been removed to allow extension of the basement room into the area under the porch. The new foundation wall is concrete block, as are the piers built to support the timber sill above the old wall.
3. Walls: The exterior walls of the original front block are covered by several types of wood siding: on the front (west)--unpainted 7" lap-siding except for recent infill around a modern first-floor window; on the north--9" lap-siding bearing traces of old mustard yellow paint; on the south--unpainted 4" tongue-and-groove German

siding; on the east, protected by the porch roof--7" lap-siding with gray-white paint. Siding is affixed with 2" cut nails. The corners are finished by butting the siding against 3" verticals, finished with a large, double-quirked bead. Similar moulding surrounds the exposed brick of the chimney back on the north wall.

The rear addition is sided with unpainted 7" tongue-and-groove German siding, except for the pantry area at the east end of the porch which has 2.5" tongue-and-groove German siding. Corners are finished with plain narrow verticals. The siding is applied over a resin-paper backing.

4. Structural system, framing: The front block has a diagonally braced and pinned post-and-beam frame with 6" x 6" corner posts, medial posts in the front and rear walls, and 4" x 4" studding on 18" centers. All principal timbers are hewn. In all exposed sections (where siding has been removed to examine the structural system), the frame is filled by soft brick and lime mortar nogging.

The roof structure of the front block is constructed of tapered, squared, quarter-sawn oak rafters, half-lapped and pinned at the ridge, and braced by lapped and pinned tie beams 6.5' above the floor, as shown in Photograph #PA-5392-A-3.

The rear ell is framed with sawn 2" x 4" studding, doubled at the corners, on hewn sills. The wall cavity is hollow, not brick-filled. The roof structure of the ell is framed with both hewn and sawn timbers which are butted at the ridge, without a ridge pole.

5. Porches: A two-story ell-shaped porch, 7' deep, fills the offset on the south wall, where the two sections of the house join. It is supported on the concrete block foundation described in part 2 above, and is covered by extensions of the house roof, the slope of which makes the second-floor porch less than a full story in height. The first story of the porch has been enclosed. The east end of the enclosure forms a pantry accessible from the kitchen.

Faint markings around the door on the north side of the ell indicate that a small entrance porch once allowed access to this door, which is approximately 5' above ground level.

6. Chimneys: The house has interior brick chimneys centered in each of its three gable ends. That on the south end tops a 20" x 18" interior flue which appears not to be part of the original construction. It is built inside the original south wall, with chair rail and peg rail extending behind it, and has no base beneath the first floor.

The chimney on the north wall is of greatest historical interest because of a 7' wide by 5' high expanse of its brick back which is exposed on the exterior of the house. This feature is rarely found in Central Pennsylvania. The width of this exterior exposure, with the 110"-wide stone chimney base in the cellar and evidence of in-

filling of the original hearth width with short boards on the first floor, makes the existence of an early cooking hearth a virtual certainty. Additionally, the survival of an ash clean-out hole and a small air passage in the exposed exterior brick wall appear to indicate that the original fireplace included a bakeoven. Partial demolition of the surviving chimney/fireplace, much reduced from its original size, revealed no clue to its early arrangement.

A second-floor fireplace, now closed and with its original hearth partially infilled, was also served by this chimney. At the attic level, this chimney measures 3'9" x 1'10".

A third chimney, at the east end of the rear ell, served a basement fireplace with a slightly arched 49" x 49" opening (the top supported by two curved iron lintels). Stove pipe holes into this chimney on all three floors indicate the use of cookstoves in the basement and first floor levels at some period in the house's history. Some missing bricks in the right wall of the fireplace suggest removal of the hardware to support a fireplace crane. It is likely that this fireplace in the later addition to the house was designed to replace the original cooking hearth when the front of the house was converted to more formal use. The inclusion of a fireplace, rather than just a flue for a cookstove, supports a relatively early date for the ell.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: The original Hershberger Farmhouse entrance has been replaced by a modern three-part window, but it is apparent nevertheless that the division of the front facade into bays displayed a pattern seen frequently in stone and log houses of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. That pattern finds two rather closely-spaced window bays occupying approximately half the facade width, while the other half of the facade contains only the entrance bay. This pattern usually signifies a distinctive interior plan, which is in fact the case in this house (see section C.1 below).

A doorway onto the porch at the rear of the front block of the house may be an original opening. Trim on this frame matches that on other original window and door openings. The four-panel door probably is not original (see discussion of doors in section C.5.a. below).

The original outside cellar entrance, located near the southeast corner of the front block (beneath the present porch) has been partially closed with concrete. It was replaced by an opening created at the north end of the east wall of the original foundation, providing access from the basement room of the rear ell.

A door in the back (east) foundation wall of the ell, in the concrete block portion under the porch, opens at ground level, providing outside access to the cellar. This entrance is covered by an aluminum

awning attached to the house wall.

b. Windows and shutters: The fenestration of the front facade of the Hershberger House is described in section 7.a. Window arrangement on the other facades, including the ell, is regular in that the openings are aligned with each other on the first and second floors.

Exterior window trim in the front part of the house consists of a narrow, deeply-cut moulding and narrow sills with no apron beneath. Windows in the ell are faced with 3" plain boards along the sides, plain sills without aprons, and projecting architrave mouldings at the top.

The front block of the house originally had shutters on the first story, but only one pair remains (see Photograph #PA-5392-A-5). They show three equal-sized recessed panels when open. Flush panels on the back have narrow beads on their vertical edges, but not top and bottom. They are mounted with small butt hinges with slender pintles. Several hand-forged S-shaped hold-backs survive where there are no surviving shutters. The hold-backs are riveted to 8" x 1" pieces of flat stock which attach to the siding.

8. Roof:

a. Shape, covering: The Hershberger Farmhouse has a moderately sloped, side-gable roof to which is joined, at right angles, the similarly pitched gable roof of the ell. The ridge of the rear roof is approximately 4' lower than the front ridge. The front or western slope of the roof is of rusted standing-seam metal; the remainder of the roof is of asphalt shingles.

b. Cornice, eaves: The house has no decorative cornice. Plain boxing, without returns, covers a slight projection of the attic joists under the front roof eaves. The projecting joists at the rear eaves can be seen from the second-story porch, where the boxing was removed to accommodate extension of the house roof over the porch. Similar plain boxing, without returns, appears beneath a minimal overhang of the roof of the rear ell.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: See attached sketch plans.

The Hershberger House exhibits a common variation of the traditional Germanic or Continental plan. Classic marks of its type include: (1) overall dimensions (a rectangle tending toward a square); (2) fenestration of the front facade (discussed in section B.7.a. above); and (3) division of the first floor into a narrow, full-length "kuche" or kitchen, a front "stube" or parlor, and a rear "kammer" or bedroom. Hershberger variations on the classic Germanic form include (1) the gable-end (rather than central) chimney and cooking hearth; (2) division of the second story into four rooms, rather than three;

and (3) the absence of a stairway (see section C.2 below).

Most significant of the variations is the chimney placement, which is usually considered an essential diagnostic element in identification of the Continental plan. Regionally, however, central chimney houses are almost never found, although the characteristics mentioned above as classic marks of the type appear with great frequency in local examples of early stone and log houses, which tend to outnumber frame examples substantially. [Restoration architect G. Edwin Brumbaugh liked to call these "melting pot houses". To him they represented evidence of significant cross-pollination of old-world building traditions by the time Central Pennsylvania was settled].

2. Stairways: The significant fact about the Hershberger House stairways is the absence of any evidence of stairs in the original front block. The stairways linking the four levels of the house are located in a hall which is entirely contained in the rear ell. A thorough search for signs of an earlier stairway in the original house produced no confirming evidence whatsoever. In fact, all evidence supports the conclusion that the original front block never contained a stairway. Not only do both first- and second-story floorboards show no evidence of piercing where stairs would have emerged through them, but the second-story floorboards run the full length of the house, beneath the partitions; therefore, they are not later replacements, but survive as built. This unusual situation, in a house where corner winder stairs would be expected in the offset created by the kitchen chimney, suggests that the house must have had a back ell with stairs--a forerunner of the present ell and stairway.

The present stairways are stacked above each other from cellar to attic. Straight runs link the cellar to the first floor and the second floor to the attic, but the stairs between the first and second floors rise to a landing, turn back upon themselves, and rise two additional steps. In addition, two steps lead straight off the landing into a short hall (not thought to be part of the original plan) in the front portion of the house. Another door, up one step, opens from the landing onto the second-story porch.

The cellar stairs are enclosed, with access to the top landing through doors from both the hall and the kitchen. The first-story stairway is open, and had a railing and banisters which do not remain. The attic stairway is enclosed, with a beaded board-and-batten door on the first step. The back of this door and the attic stair risers retain old chalky blue paint.

3. Flooring: Flooring in the older portion of the house is 5-10" random width yellow pine on the first floor, white pine on the second, laid parallel to the front wall. The first floor is supported by 14" wide log joists, flattened top and bottom, which are so closely set that there is not sufficient space between them for another timber of the same dimensions. There is no summer beam. The first floor has a

continuous seam beneath the center partition; floorboards in the parlor are noticeably narrower than those in the kitchen, a sign of finer finish in the more formal room. Second-story flooring (as remarked on in section C.2. above) was laid as a deck on which the partitions were erected.

Flooring in the later addition is 2.5-4" yellow pine.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Hair plaster over hand-split lath survives throughout the front section of the house, although modern paneling and plasterboard have been used to alter the interior partitions extensively. Enough original walls survive, however, to make the original floor plan clear. Plain 4.5" baseboard with a beaded top and a 3.5" beaded and moulded chair rail remain on most original walls. A small fragment of double-beaded 2.5" peg rail survives in one bedroom, but obvious plaster patching betrays its earlier existence in other rooms.

Walls and ceilings in the later rear ell are plaster over sawn lath; there is an 8" baseboard, but no chair or peg rail. The first floor kitchen has narrow tongue-and-groove wainscoting above the baseboard to a height of 36".

5. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: The Hershberger House contains four different types of doors: six-panel, four-panel of two very slightly different types, and batten doors in the basement and attic.

Two six-panel doors on bedrooms in the older section of the house may be part of the original fabric. The doors have raised, beveled panels surrounded by narrow mouldings cut on the rails and stiles (not applied). The backs are unadorned--flat recessed panels, no mouldings. One door has mustard yellow paint on its back; it has been cut down slightly to fit a new, crudely-constructed frame. The other door hangs in one of two original interior door frames; they are made of plain 4" stock, beaded on the inside, with a delicately cut 1½" moulding applied on the outside edge. Both six-panel doors show evidence of earlier Norfolk thumb latches.

The majority of doors are four-panel, with recessed panels and two very slightly different panel mouldings. The frames have shallowly cut 4" moulding with mitred corners. The board-and-batten doors are just utility doors, with no fine finishing touches except for typical beaded edges on the boards.

- b. Windows: Original windows in the front section of the house are 6/9 double-hung sash on the first floor and 6/6 on the second floor (see Photographs #PA-5392-A-4, #PA-5392-A-5, and #PA-5392-A-6). The individual lights measure slightly less than 8" x 10". Four original windows survive on the first floor, and two on the second. They are

framed by narrow, deep-cut moulding similar to that on the exterior.

Original windows in the ell are 2/2 double-hung sash with 11.5" x 26" lights (see Photograph #PA-5392-A-7). Two survive on the first floor and five on the second. Two basement windows are 2/2, with lights measuring 12" x 16". Window frames are like the door frames described in section C.5.a., with 4" moulded aprons beneath the bedroom window sills.

6. Decorative features and trim: None not already described. If anything, this house is notable for its lack of decoration. No mantels or stair rail survive. However, it should be noted that the few finishing touches on original fabric--the window, door, chair rail, and shutter trim--are all well-executed in a delicate style that is typical in plain, yet well-made early houses of this region.
7. Hardware: See section B.7.b. above for a description of shutter hardware.

Doors in the house have a variety of iron box locks with either white or brown porcelain knobs. These variations in manufacture within a single structure are typical. Houses virtually never have all of the same type.

8. Mechanical equipment: The house retains no historic mechanical equipment.

a. Heating: Fireplaces in the original kitchen and the bedroom above were certainly early sources of heat for the house. The use of stoves for heat is evidenced in the original house by stovepipe holes into the south gable-end chimney at both the first and second-story levels, in the ceiling of the southwest parlor room, and in the wall between the southwest and southeast bedrooms. In the rear ell, stovepipe holes into the rear chimney are found in the basement, first and second stories, as well as in the ceilings between these levels (see Photographs #PA-5392-A-7 and #PA-5392-A-8). More recently, a coal-fired hot-air furnace heated the house.

b. Lighting: No evidence of lighting systems prior to electric lights was found.

c. Plumbing: A bathroom in part of the first-floor southeast room of the original house was installed by the most recent owner, who purchased the property in 1979. A toilet and makeshift shower in the basement of the ell sufficed between the 1940s and 1979, and the outside well and privy were used before that time.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house originally faced west, toward the nearest major road (now Business Route 220), to which the

farmstead was linked by a long lane. Following the addition of the present ell, the house orientation seems to have turned toward the north, so that the exterior door into the front of the stair hall became the principal entrance. Still later, entrance to the house shifted to the porch on the southeast, from which three doors gave access into the kitchen, the rear of the hall, and the southeast room of the front of the house. After this pattern of entry was established, the original entrance on the west was replaced by a window and the north entrance porch was removed, making the door inaccessible from the ground.

The sloping site occupied by the house results in the foundation being almost entirely concealed at the southeast corner, and almost completely above ground at the northeast corner. This placement and orientation permitted ground-level entrance to the principal rooms from the front, as well as to the basement from the rear.

See the attached site plan for the arrangement of structures.

2. Historic landscape design: Very little evidence of the historic landscape survives. A ca. 1900-1910 photograph indicates that the yard of the house once was enclosed by a white picket fence, and a grape arbor stood in the yard south of the house. Archaeological testing revealed that a brick walkway led from the former exterior cellar door upslope to the well, which was located just west of the 1½-story frame outbuilding. No other features are known.
3. Outbuildings: Outbuildings in the immediate vicinity of the house include the 1½-story outbuilding (HABS No. PA-5392-C), a small frame shed, and a privy. All of these structures are described separately. A frame smokehouse once stood in the yard east of the house, and a frame summer kitchen stood just east of the 1½-story outbuilding.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural drawings:

No architectural drawings of the farmhouse are known to exist.

B. Historic views:

A thorough search at the Bedford County Historical Society, the Bedford Public Library, and among local informants produced only two historic photographs of the farmhouse. Both of these are views looking north at the rear of the house.

1. Photograph dating to ca. 1900-1910: This view appeared in the Bedford Gazette approximately 10-12 years ago, but no source was given. A copy of the newspaper photo was provided by Ms. Dolores Cain, but the quality of the copy was so poor that a photographic reproduction of the copy would not be legible, according to the project photographer.

The Bedford Gazette did not retain either the original photograph or a record of the person who submitted it.

2. Photograph dating to the 1950s: An original 3" x 5" black and white print of this photograph was provided by Ms. Dolores Cain, but it was not reproduced as part of the photodocumentation because the appearance of the house was virtually identical to its present appearance and it provided no important information regarding the structure's original appearance. The print was returned to Mr. and Mrs. Charles L. Cain, Route 3, Box 522, Bedford, PA 15522.

C. Interviews:

1. Ms. Dolores Cain: interview at the site, October 1989. Ms. Cain's husband, Charles L. Cain, grew up on the farm in the late 1940s and 1950s. She and her daughter, Ms. Jeane Kenney (also interviewed), were frequent visitors to the farm.
2. Mr. Fred E. Claycomb: interview at the site, July 1989. Mr. Claycomb owned the property between 1979 and 1989, and made several structural alterations.

D. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Heberling Associates. "Determination of Adverse Effect Report, Hershberger Farm". Report prepared for the Federal Aviation Administration, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, and the Bedford County Air Industrial Park Authority, 1989.

Huntingdon County Historical Society. "Huntingdon County Historic Sites Survey". Report submitted to the Office of Historic Preservation, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg, 1980.

2. Secondary and Published Sources:

Glassie, Henry. Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968.

Nelson, Lee H. "Nail Chronology as an Aid to Dating Old Buildings", American Association for State and Local History Technical Leaflet #48, History News 24(1).

Stotz, Charles M. The Architectural Heritage of Early Western Pennsylvania. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1966.

E. Likely sources not yet investigated:

None known.

F. Supplemental material:

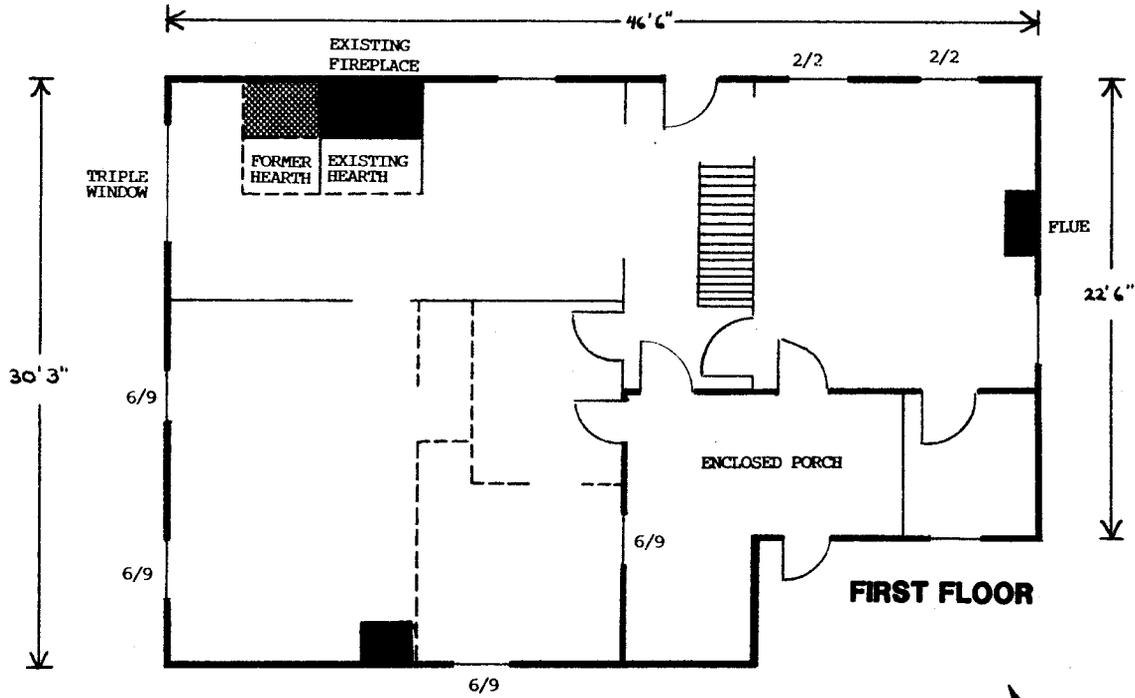
None.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The Bedford County Air Industrial Park Authority, in association with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Bureau of Aviation, is proposing to replace the existing Bedford County airport facility with a new facility to be located near the village of Cessna, Bedford Township. The proposed airport facility will be constructed in two stages, with approximately 150 acres of land required for the first stage components.

The structures of the Hershberger Farm stand in the mandated clear zone at the west end of the proposed first-stage runway, and are to be removed as part of the airport project. A Memorandum of Agreement between the FAA and the Pennsylvania SHPO stipulated that the farm buildings must be recorded to HABS standards before demolition. The present documentation was prepared between April and June 1990.

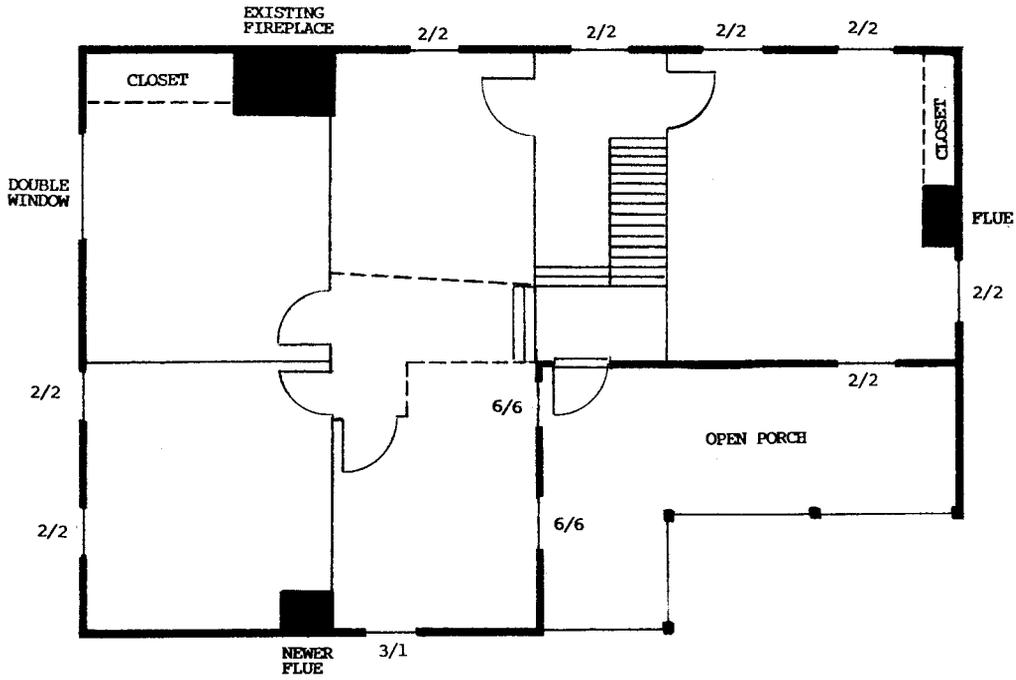
Prepared by: Nancy S. Shedd
Title: Architectural Historian
Affiliation: Heberling Associates
Date: May 1, 1990



HERSHBERGER FARMHOUSE



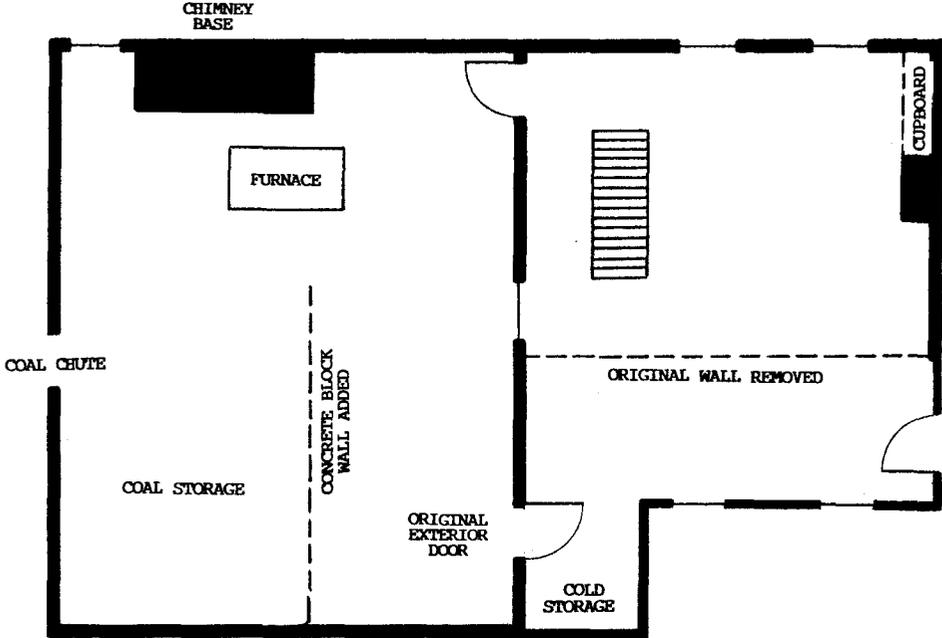
FLOOR PLANS



SECOND FLOOR



CELLAR



HERSHBERGER FARMHOUSE

FLOOR PLANS