

ABRAHAM CYRUS FARMSTEAD, WASH HOUSE
25 feet south of farmhouse at 3271 Cyrus Road
Cyrus
Wayne County
West Virginia

HABS No. WV-266-B

HABS
WVA
50-CYRUS,
2B-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
ABRAHAM CYRUS FARMSTEAD, BROODER HOUSE

HABS No. WV-266-D

HABS
WVA
50-CYRUS
2D-

- Location: About 300 feet south of the farmhouse at 3271 Cyrus Road (County Road 1 / 6), Cyrus, Wayne County, West Virginia.
- Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 17. 362395. 4240830.
USGS Quadrangle: Burnaugh, West Virginia/ Kentucky
- Significance: The Brooder House was built in 1943 to help meet the needs of war-time agricultural production. Though situated on farmlands then owned by Abraham Cyrus, the Brooder House represents the establishment of his son Abraham Frederick's independent farm enterprise. Apparently not built from a known published or officially distributed plan, the Brooder House incorporates useful design features observed by the builders in other local chicken houses.
- Description: The Brooder House is a one-room outbuilding of balloon-frame construction joined with wire nails. It is 24 feet 3 inches long and 12 feet 4 inches wide, and faces 127° (magnetic). Its shed roof has a pitch of 6° and a dip of 307°. The roof is covered by crimped-seam metal sheets atop several layers of roofing paper. Its purlin boards are laid contiguously across 13 rafters, which have 24 inch centers and exposed ends. Its exterior is clad in tongue-and-groove drop siding, painted white and cut neatly at narrow corner boards. Under the western eaves, two hopper-style ventilation boards drop to reveal chicken wire. The shed's sills are bolted to a cement block foundation. The cement blocks simulate cut stone blocks with drafted edges. The blocks are laid in three courses on concrete footers poured in a wall trench. The upper two courses are broken in three places: for the only door, and for two narrow passages for chickens through the east wall. Each passage, 16.5-inches wide, is closed by a wooden door which slides up and down as needed. On its north end, the building has a two-panel door on the left and a six-pane casement window on the right. Outside the door is a 25-inch-square concrete pad. There are six six-pane hopper windows on its east side arranged in two groups of three. All its window sash are 34 inches wide.

The floor inside the building consists of reinforced concrete

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poured as eight rectangular panel slabs each a little less than 3 feet wide. The interior space formerly was divided into two areas. Maturing chickens were kept in the southern part, where hinges attached to studs of the south and west walls allowed roosts to be lifted for cleaning the floor. The northwest corner was partitioned off with chicken wire on 2x4 framing, to provide a fully enclosed area about 6 feet square for storing 100-pound bags of chicken feed. The east wall of the partition apparently was removed when the building was converted to general and occasional storage. Formerly, the Brooder House was electrified, and had water piped from a well near the Wash House (HABS No. WV-266-B). As a brooder house, it never had nesting boxes.

History:

This outbuilding was a brooder house, where chickens were raised from chicks to pullets. It formerly had a fenced-in yard. The Brooder House was built in 1943 by Abraham Jackson "Pop" Cyrus (then 46) and his son Abraham Frederick "Abe Junior" Cyrus (1921-1990), then 22. At the beginning of World War II, Abe, Jr. was working in a factory in Michigan, but to gain a farm deferment from the military draft, returned to White's Creek to raise chickens. Abe Jr. kept chickens until about 1956. He sold his chickens and eggs mostly around Huntington, W. Va. His operations included a large laying house, extensively modified around 1956 for use as a garage, but extant 150 feet to the east along the entrance lane. Brown leghorns were raised in the brooder at first, but this was changed after the war.

Sources:

Abraham Jackson Cyrus

Interview by D. Bailey, 2-5 P.M., February 3, 1993

Larry O. Hatten

Interview by D. Bailey, 9-10 A.M., February 13, 1993

Historian:

Douglas L. Bailey, Consulting Archaeologist

618 Grant Street, Fairborn, Ohio 45324

May 31, 1994

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FLOOR PLAN

(Based on field data collected by D. Bailey, 1992.)

