

3251 CYRUS ROAD (COMMERCIAL BUILDING)  
(Miles-Dodson-Finley Store)  
Cyrus  
Wayne County  
West Virginia

HABS No. WV-269

HABS  
WVA  
50-CYRUS,  
5-

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

3251 CYRUS ROAD (COMMERCIAL BUILDING)  
(PILES-DODSON-FINLEY STORE)

HABS No. WV-269

HABS  
WVA  
50-CYRUS,  
5-

Location: 3251 Cyrus Road, village of White's Creek (unincorporated),  
at Cyrus, Wayne County, West Virginia.

Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 17. 362475. 4240990.  
USGS Quadrangle: Burnaugh, West Virginia/ Kentucky

Significance: In the years 1941-1954, this was the community store and post office in Whites Creek (Cyrus). It succeeded the Chapman, Lambert, and Piles stores. After 1955, it was partitioned, enlarged, and used as a house. The former store/post office is considered by the West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office to be eligible to the National Register of Historic Places in terms of associations with community history.

Description: The former store-residence fronts the road as a one-story gable-roofed frame building with front and side porches. Its rear end is cantilevered over the hillside, where it is seated on a cement block two-room cellar with poured concrete floor. It is covered uniformly with a red-brick aggregate siding (except at its front and cellar), but was built in several stages and has been altered extensively. It has a standing-seam metal roof. Presently the building has ten rooms and central hall on its main floor, and, beneath these, two cellar rooms and a subdivided dug-out crawlspace.

The building was built in three main stages. After 1955 it seems to have been altered incessantly with materials salvaged and donated from a variety of sources, and applied with little eye toward stylistic coherence. As a typical example, one of the otherwise identical front five turned-square-posts supporting the front porch was installed – upside down.

The original one-room store, erected 1941, comprised the front 40 feet of the building. This space now is partitioned into the front five rooms and connecting hallway. The store was gable-roofed, 22 feet 5 inches across at front, about 40 feet front to back, with a good raised-seam metal roof. Rafter ends were exposed, not enclosed; front end rafters were notched. The store had no side porch, but did have a front porch, which later was replaced.

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The store's sides and back end were sided with vertical planks (no battens) painted white. Its front end was covered with brick-pattern pressed metal sheet siding, originally painted silver, but later painted yellow, during the Dodson or Finley years (1944-46 or 1946-1954). Flooring in this front section is oriented north-to-south, and consists of 2-1/4-inch-wide oak tongue-and-groove boards, all original and intact. None of the front five side windows are original. Beneath the eaves (and over certain side windows) are the original narrow store windows, now covered with short planks, and sometimes painted white or patched with red brick siding dating to the Brinkley years. The present front door is not original, and has been planed crudely to fit its frame. The two front window frames (and 2-over-2 sash) replace slightly narrower frames, whose former casings are outlined on the pressed metal siding. Aside from flooring no features or details exposed in the interior date to use of the building during the store years, 1941-1954.

On the south side of the former store, on the same lot, are two storage sheds and a repair ramp. In the 1960s Warner Brinkley, a retired railroad worker, brought the sheds in sections from the N. & W. railroad yard at Neal (five miles north of Cyrus), where they were no longer needed in section work. Brinkley placed both beside a repair ramp he built of railroad crossing ties. Brinkley used them only to service and repair his own car.

The south shed is a one-room shed-roofed building set up on three cement blocks, small wooden blocks, and a wheel drum. It has pre-fabricated walls, floor, and door made with plain rather narrow boards and finished two-by-fours. Its dimensions in plan are 88-1/2 inches north-south and 62-1/2 inches east-west (front-to-back). Its south, west, and north walls are made of vertical boards (5 to 8 inches width) with narrow battens. Wall sections are joined by three horizontal wales and corner posts, all 2x4s. Braces are not original, except those on doors. Its floor is made of 5-inch boards spaced ca. 1/2-inch apart. The floor is covered with automotive oil, grease, and grime into which are imbedded nuts, bolts, nails, washers, cotter pins, wire bits, etc. Roofing is three lapped sheets of tar-paper (and a metal sheet patch) over variable-width boards set north-south upon four rafters. Their

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lower ends are notched to sit on the topmost wale of three across the back wall; upper front ends run through notches in a plank plate (not original). On interior walls various narrow boards and 2x4s have been nailed up for hanging tools and parts from hooks and nails. Nails used throughout are common wire-nails. On the east, two hinged doors meet and can be locked at the middle. Hinges are original, but have been reattached with a wide variety of bolts, screws, and nails. The hasp on the right lock stile is a recent addition. Traces of silver gray paint adhere to the inside surfaces of all door boards. The building is in fair condition.

The north shed is a small one-room shed-roofed building in fair condition. Walls, floor, and door are prefabricated sections made of plain boards 5 to 8 inches wide and rough two-by-four framing. The shed is 50 inches wide (north-south), and 62 inches deep. Roofing is thick tar-paper over boards laid across three rafters (only the rafters seem original). The shed sits on two planks each laid across two cement blocks. Recent 2x4s have been nailed against the original end-rafters to repair or strengthen them. Each wall has a centrally-placed interior wale. At the back of the shed, three planks are laid with ends upon side wales for use as a shelf, an original feature. Ribbons (not original) have been added at the sides to bear nails for hanging tools and parts. Back ends of rafters rest on a plate supported by two 2x4s at back corners. Upper front ends of end rafters rest on 2x4 corner posts, and all front rafter ends rest on a plate nailed against the front corner posts. All rafters are notched where they rest on plates. The shed has one hinged door with its lock jamb on the right. The door is made of eight vertical 5-inch wide tongue-and-groove boards. Traces of silver paint remain on the door's upper wale. Upper and lower hinges are original, but have been repaired. Of hardware on the lock stile and jamb, only the lower, centrally-placed hinged hasp is original. ["Original", as used above, is used with respect to origin as elements of construction done by the railroad company.]

The repair ramp is fronted by a concrete apron, and is sited on the slight hillslope along the house. The ramp consists of two portions, one inclined, the other more level. The level portion

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is the principal work area. It is analogous to a repair pit but being so open allows more convenient access to wheel wells, rocker panels, certain wiring etc. Just beyond the west end of the ramp are a 12-foot tall light pole with three shaded lights, electrical outlets run from the house, and the two sheds. The outdoor lot light was moved from the front of the old store, where formerly there were gas pumps.

The ramp is constructed mostly of creosoted railroad ties and planks. The four vertical posts supporting the level part of the ramp are 9-1/2-inch square trestle beams. Twelve-by-four-inch crossing ties were used for level drive surfaces on which wheels were directly supported. Plank sections of various dimensions brace and reinforce the structure. Long round-headed bolts, 2-1/4-inch washers, and 1-1/8-inch square nuts join the principal members. Long planks were used to form the incline. The juncture of the incline and level portion is supported by loosely-laid blocks.

History:

This building was built as a store-residence in 1941, and was used as such from 1941 to 1954. During a part of this period at least, a post office occupied part of the store. After 1955 it was converted for use as a residence and was enlarged.

In May of 1941 Jesse R. Piles and wife Lena G. bought ten of the 28 lots in White's Creek from Herma Johnson, an heir of George W. Johnson (1833-1909). Jesse Piles built the store on Lots 18 and 19 in the summer of 1941 and ran it until August of 1944, when he sold it to Harry and Dolly Dodson. The Dodsons ran it less than two years, and sold it to Edgar Finley and his father Ell in July of 1946. In 1954 U.S. Route 52 was completed through Cyrus: as a result, Cyrus Road, until then part of the Big Sandy River Road (County Road 1), was made into a cul-de-sac. That year, at a better location – the new intersection of Route 52 and the White's Creek Road – Finley built a new grocery store/ service-station. The old Finley store, no longer used as such, was sold to Warner Brinkley in April of 1955. Brinkley converted the store entirely into a residence for his family. He partitioned the store and added many rooms, the porches, and the cellar.

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During the early years of the store, a vacant one-room building on Lot 17 [HABS No. WV-270], owned by Frank Chadwick (b. 1898), was rented briefly by the Piles or Dodsons to store feed for sale. Highway plans dating to 1953 show the Finley store and nearby buildings in its last days. The store is depicted as a 30x48-foot rectangle labelled "1 S.F. Store" with an unlabelled 24x48 rectangle adjoined to its south side. The function and dates of construction and removal of the former southern addition are not known. It probably was built by the Finleys, and lessened the need to rent the old office on Lot 17. (Dimensions and plans of a few buildings, such as the Albert Thacker House [HABS No. WV-267] are not depicted accurately on the 1953 map.)

Sources:

West Virginia State Road Commission  
1953 Plan and Profile for Construction of State Road Project No. S-617 (1), Route No. Sec. 1, Ceredo District, Wayne County, White's Creek Bridge and Approaches. Plan scale 1"=100'. On file, Map Drawer 21, Wayne County Clerk's Office, Wayne.

Interviews

Eustace A. Chadwick

Interview by Douglas L. Bailey, 1-2 P.M., August 10, 1992

Frank and Marie Chadwick, 3-5 P.M., August 3, 1992

Interview by Douglas L. Bailey,

Dorothy Smith

Interview by Douglas L. Bailey, 3-5 P.M., July 30, 1992

Historian:

Douglas L. Bailey, Consulting Archaeologist  
618 Grant Street, Fairborn, Ohio 45324  
May 31, 1994

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CHAIN OF TITLE

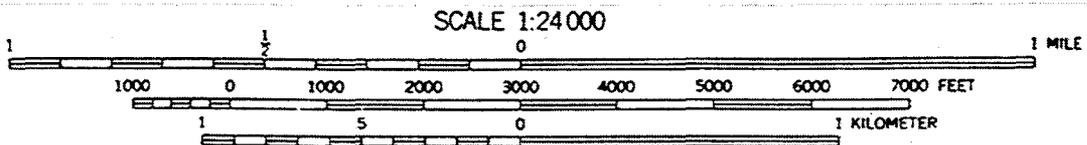
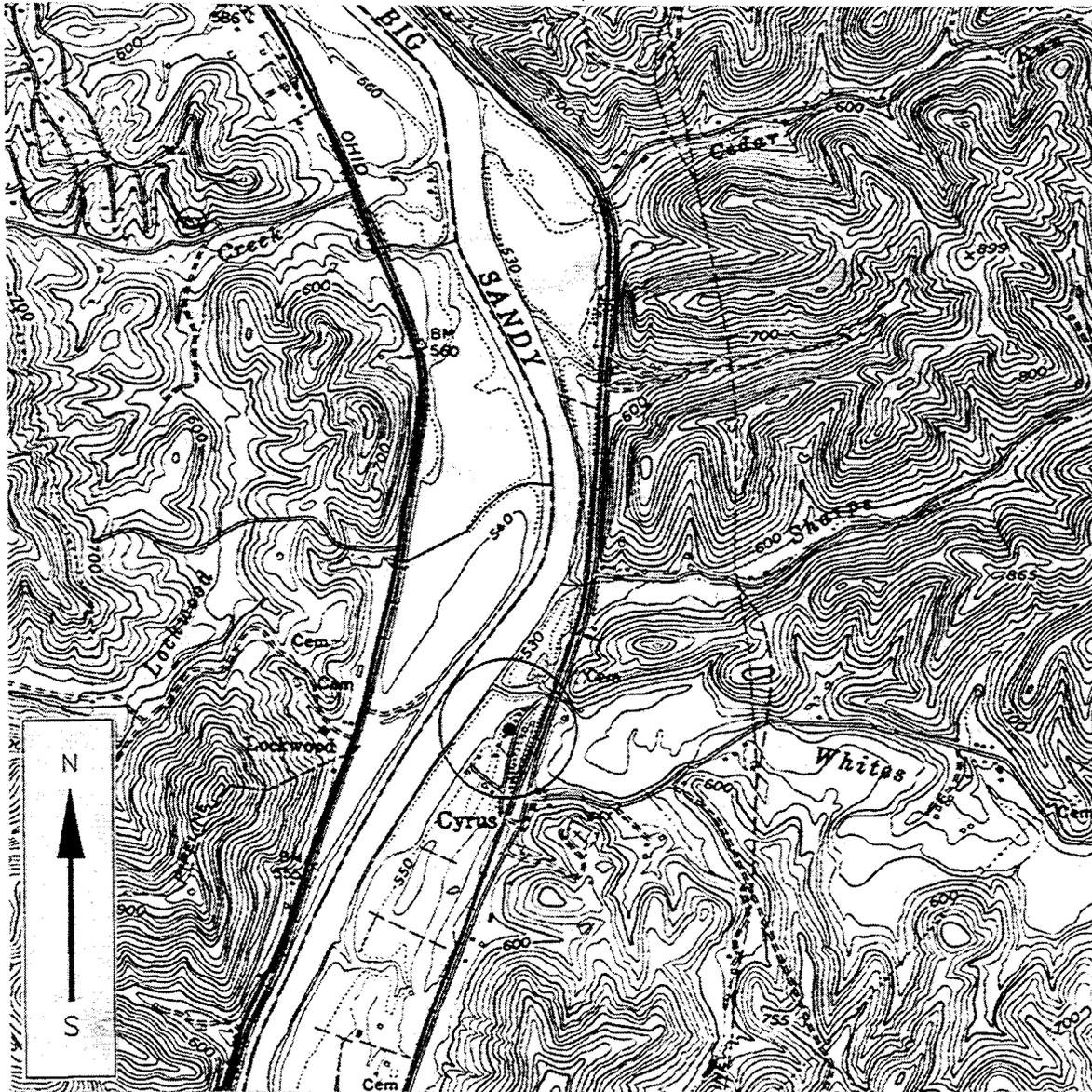
References to the Chain of Title to the land on which the structures stand are in the County Clerk's Office, Wayne County Courthouse, Wayne, West Virginia.

- 1991 Deed, October 31, 1991, recorded in Deed Book 545, Page 639.  
June E. Brinkley to Cyrus Dock Company, Inc.
- 1990 Deed, May 31, 1990, recorded in Deed Book 534, Page 694.  
Heirs of Warner Brinkley to June E. Brinkley.
- 1989 Contract of Sale, July 17, 1989.  
June E. Brinkley and Heirs of Warner Brinkley to M. P. Coals, Inc.
- 1955 Deed, April 25, 1955, recorded in Deed Book 280, Page 445.  
Edgar Finley and Doris Finley (wife) to Warner Brinkley.
- 1949 Deed, May 25, 1945, recorded in Deed Book 251, Page 320.  
Ell Finley and Nora Finley (wife) to Edgar Finley.
- 1946 Deed, July 10, 1946, recorded in Deed Book 231, Page 201.  
Harry Dodson and Dolly Dodson (wife) to Edgar Finley and Ell Finley.
- 1944 Deed, August 22, 1944, recorded in Deed Book 219, Page 27.  
Jesse R. Piles and Lena G. Piles (wife) to Harry Dodson and Dolly  
Dodson (wife).
- 1941 Deed, May 1, 1941, recorded in Deed Book 206, Page 192.  
Herma Johnson to Jesse R. Piles and Lena G. Piles (wife).
- 1909 Will, February 9, 1909, recorded in Will Book 2, Page 408.  
George W. Johnson to Herma Johnson.

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LOCATION MAP

Portion of USGS Topographic Quadrangle: Burnaugh, Kentucky/ West Virginia  
Scale of 1:24,000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET

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### LOCALE MAP

Annotated portion of:

Cyrus Dock Company, Inc.

1992 Supplemental Map: Modification No. 1, DEP Permit No. 0-5003-91.

NPDES Permit No. WV 1010808, MSHA LD. No. 46-07946. April, 1992.

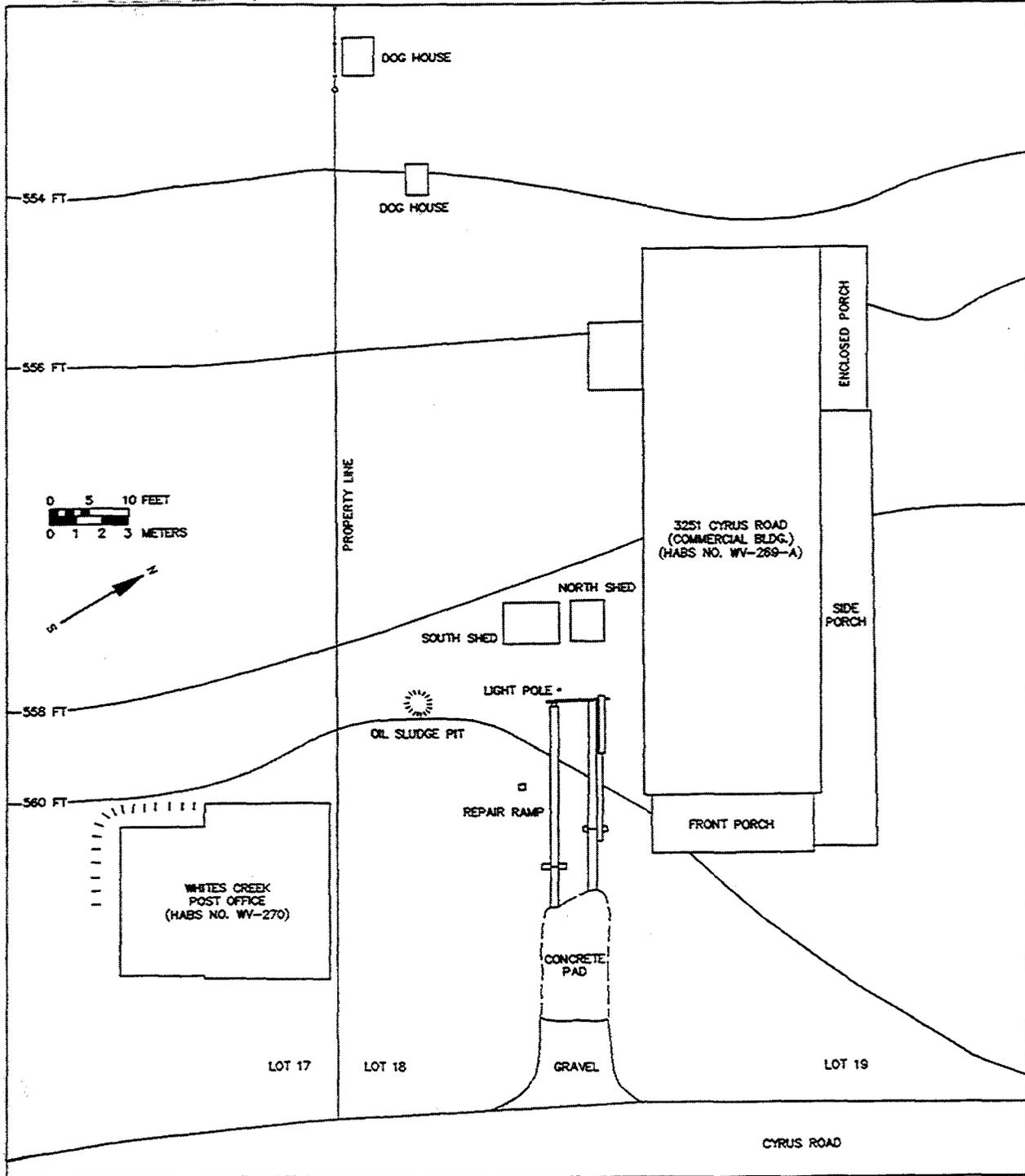
Scale 1 inch: 100 feet, or 1: 1200.



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

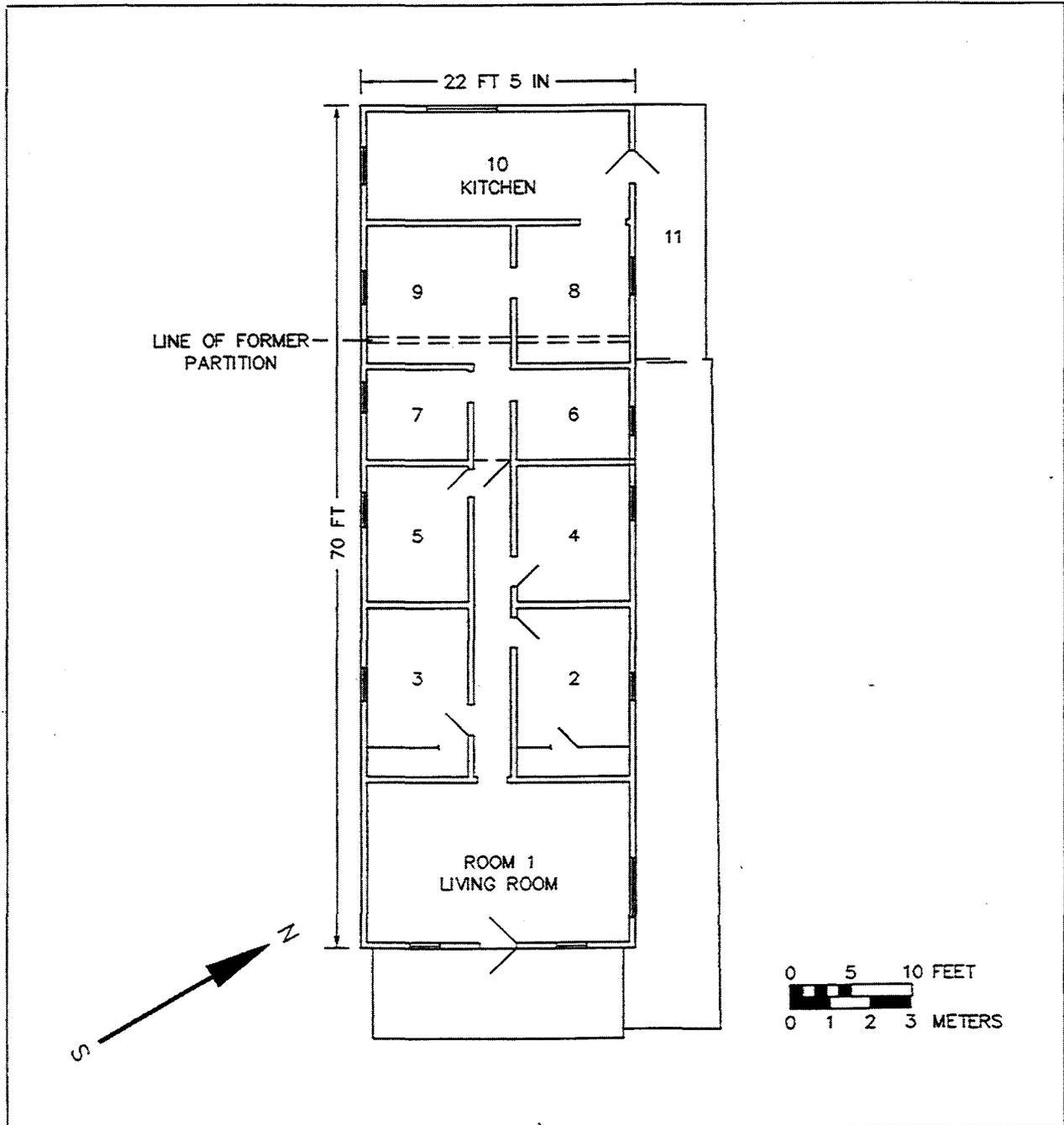


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GROUND FLOOR PLAN

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



PLAN OF BASEMENT ROOMS

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

