

3249 CYRUS ROAD, WASH HOUSE  
Cyrus  
Wayne County  
West Virginia

HABS No. WV-267-C

HABS  
WVA  
50-CYRUS,  
4C-

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

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Location:

Immediately southwest of the house at 3249 Cyrus Road (County Road 1/6), Cyrus, Wayne County, West Virginia

Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 17. 362500. 4241065.  
USGS Quadrangle: Burnaugh, West Virginia/ Kentucky

Significance:

The Wash House is a utilitarian structure used coevally with the Albert Thacker House, built in 1903 and occupied by a local blacksmith. The Thacker House and Wash House are considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in terms of their associations with community history.

Description:

The Wash House is a gable-fronted, multi-roomed, two-story outbuilding, 196 inches long and 149 inches wide. Its lower story is a partly-buried one-room cellar or basement having apparently unreinforced concrete walls 7 inches thick. The cellar is approximately 135 inches wide and 181 inches long. Its floor is comprised of six rectangular slabs of concrete, each about 67 inches long and 60 inches wide. The cellar has one window and one door on its north side, and one window on each of its ends; only the small window on its east end is fixed; windows on the west and north are 6/6 sliding sash. Outside of each end window is an identical concrete window box, 45.5 inches wide 18 inches front-to-back, and 13 inches deep.

Its upper story, the wooden superstructure, has a recessed entry hall with doors leading to two small rooms. One room is 135 inches wide and 63 inches deep. The other, 119 by 96 inches in plan, has two 26-inch shelves at its west end, and a 17-by-12-inch chimney. Leading up to the hall-porch of the upper story are four concrete steps. Leading down along the north side to the cellar door are concrete steps and a walk in very poor condition.

Formerly, the Wash House had board-and-batten siding. The building presently is sided with white-painted fiber-board shingles, applied in 1977. This siding covers a window with one-pane hopper sash in the south end of the small upper room. The Wash House's gable roof is covered with raised-seam metal sheets. Its ridgeline is oriented at 120° (magnetic).

3249 CYRUS ROAD, WASH HOUSE  
HABS No. WV-267-C (Page 2)

History:

The Wash House was built around 1903 by Albert Thacker (1862-1939). The Newmans stored salt pork in the meat room on the upper floor of the Wash House. They raised hogs in a small lot about half-way down the bank behind Don Newman's garage on Lot 10. One or two hogs were killed around Thanksgiving of each year. These were slaughtered and salted in a special building on Millard Cyrus' farm about a mile up White's Creek.

The small room on the upper floor was as a playhouse by the young Newman girls Doris (born 1932) and Opal (born 1934), and as a bedroom for one or two years around 1950. It is now used only for general household storage.

During their occupancy Pauline and Willie Newman used the basement as a wash room, and seasonally as a "summer kitchen" and in canning. At first they had a stove that burned coal and wood, but after 1945 they put in a gas stove and took out the unneeded part of the chimney in the basement. Even after 1977, when the utility room was built onto the back of the house [HABS No. WV-267-A], the basement continued to be used for hanging wash to dry out of bad weather.

The doors into the meat room and basement were taken from the house when it was remodelled in 1960-1961. The door into the small upper room is original.

Bennie McSorley, Pauline Newman's fifth cousin, put new siding on the building in 1977 about the time he built the utility room onto the house.

Sources:

Pauline Newman

Interview with Douglas L. Bailey, 2-3 P.M., February 1, 1993

Historian:

Douglas L. Bailey, Consulting Archaeologist  
618 Grant Street, Fairborn, Ohio 45234  
May 31, 1994

FLOOR PLANS

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

