

## Supplementary Listing Record

NRIS Reference Number: SG100004562

Date Listed: 11/1/19

Property Name: Powell-Decker Farm

County: Butler

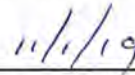
State: OH

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This Property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation



Signature of the Keeper



Date of Action

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Amended Items in Nomination:

In Section 1, the historic name is "Howell and Anna Powell Farm." The "Other Names" is "Powell-Decker Farm."

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The OHIO SHPO was notified of this amendment.

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**DISTRIBUTION:**

**National Register property file**

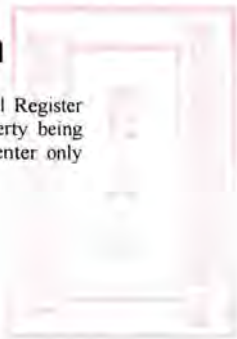
**Nominating Authority** (without nomination attachment)

4562

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Powell-Decker Farm

Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 2720 Cincinnati-Brookville Road

City or town: Fairfield State: OH County: Butler

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A \_\_\_ B X C \_\_\_ D

<u>Barbara Power</u> DSHPO Inventory & Registration		<u>9/16/2019</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:		Date
<u>State Historic Preservation Office, Ohio History Connection</u>		
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government		

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
_____	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
_____	
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

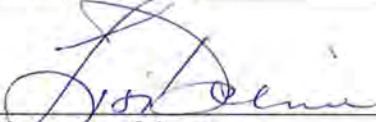
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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

  
Signature of the Keeper

11/1/19  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

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**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling = House  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/Outbuilding = Barn, Shed  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/Storage = Corncrib

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling  
DOMESTIC/Secondary Structure



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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: I-House  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK, STONE

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Powell-Decker Farm is located 18 miles northwest of Cincinnati, Ohio. It is located one-half mile west of the Great Miami River in Ross Township in southern Butler County, just southwest of Hamilton, the county seat. The farm consists of an I-house type farmhouse (built in 1841), a bank barn (built 1826), a corncrib (built 1850), and a work shed (built 1850). Three of the four buildings are contributing resources; the work shed is a non-contributing resource, due to non-historic alterations. The farmhouse is one of only a few intact examples of its type in Butler County and, along with the farm's outbuildings, the farm is a good representation of a mid-nineteenth century southwestern Ohio farm. The farmhouse retains significant characteristics of its type and plan and the farm's general layout has remained consistent since the mid-nineteenth century. The overall general appearance of the Powell-Decker Farm has not changed, and has a very good sense of feeling, association, and workmanship.

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## Narrative Description

### Setting

The property faces State Highway 126, which connects Cincinnati, Ohio to Brookville, Indiana. The topography of the land is generally flat with Dry Run Creek dividing the original farm. The acreage around the farm site was turned into a real estate development in 1976. After the land was subdivided, the property consisted of 2.54 acres immediately surrounding the farm. To give the house the feeling of isolation of open farmland, trees were planted behind the house to obscure the homes built during the 1970 and 1980s in the Dry Run Estate development.

The farm is a courtyard plan with the house and barn located at opposite ends of the farmyard with the access drive forming a boundary to the west with the other outbuildings forming the perimeter of the courtyard on its western edge. The 1841 I-House farmhouse has a large garden plot located between the house and barn.

### 1841 Farmhouse (CONTRIBUTING)

Built by Howell Powell in 1841, the farmhouse (Photos 1 & 2), is situated with the front façade facing south. The main part of the house is two stories and has a rubble stone foundation built 28 inches above the grade. The front half of the building has a full basement with windows and the rear of the building features a crawl space. Four evergreen shrubs line the front façade in front of the basement windows. The main portion of the house has common bond brick load-bearing walls, and a gabled roof topped with asphalt shingles. The front façade features a recessed entryway with brick steps leading up to the front entry door, which has a transom with four fixed-pane windows and a pair of three-paned sidelights. Windows on the front façade and east elevation are original 6/6 wood windows, with stone sills and lintels, and wood shutters. The house has a cornice with decorative wood brackets that spans the front façade and the two side elevations. The one-and-one-half story gabled addition has lean-to standing seam metal roofs on the left and right (originally open porches, later enclosed and altered) (Photo 3). On the rear of the addition are two new French doors with runners and sliding wood doors that led to a wood deck which wraps around the entire rear elevation (Photo 4). There are a pair of original 2/2 wood windows located on the half story, above the doors.

Inside, the house features four rooms on first floor with a central hall, stairs and porch, with three rooms on the second floor. The house's plan is a typical of a five-bay I-house, one room deep and two rooms wide, with a central hallway with a stairway leading to the second story (Photo 23). The rear gabled addition is somewhat unusual in its placement off the center bay of the main house and flanked by one-story porches. Typically this house type features rear ell additions with 1 or 2 story porches on one side of the ell. The house has three chimneys, all internal, and four fireplaces. The basement still has its original dirt floor and outer stairway entrance to the west elevation of the building. The house retains all of its original floors, original windows, working

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shutters and decorative brackets. Wood decorative trim still remain inside and outside of the house. The rooms in the house feature nine-foot ceilings in the living and dining rooms, and ten-foot ceilings for the second floor front bedrooms. The rooms toward the rear of the house vary from eight feet high (the old kitchen, master bedroom and porch) and seven feet high for the new kitchen and the upper rear bedroom. Additional headroom in the new kitchen and the upper restroom/study and laundry (porch) both take advantage of existing joists to allow for vaulted ceilings.

### Additions/Alterations

In an effort to return the house to its mid-nineteenth century appearance, the Decker family removed additions to the house in the 1980s that were made after Howell Powell's ownership. A one-story rear addition to the gabled center rear had been added in the mid-1860s and a second addition of an indoor bathroom was made in 1950, which consisted of half of the original roofed porch. Both additions altered the appearance of the original brick house built by Howell Powell with designs that were not consistent with Powell's original house. The renovations made by the Decker family included bricking in the rear porch under the existing roof to create a new bathroom, laundry and dressing area. The exterior chimney to the rear of the house was removed after the rear half of the building was re-roofed from cedar shakes to a metal roof in 1950.

The Decker family built a large raised deck encircling the original rear center gabled addition with flanking porches. This new deck was constructed over the old removed addition, added around 1865. In an effort to hide any new work from general view, two full trellises were constructed. The trellises have one to each side of the building and a large deck to the rear that connects them. This addition included two new stairways to the house from each rear corner with brick entries created from original bricks (Photo 4). One rear door was replaced and one similar door was added to improve view and access to the backyard. New rear doors are hidden from view by two sliding solid wood doors.

On the rear elevation, one old passage to the 1860s addition was returned to its original form with old bricks. The box gutters were rebuilt after a fire burned part of the cedar shingle roof in 1994. The design of the box gutter was not altered and the original decorative brackets were retained. The last of the original cedar shingled roof was changed to a Class A roof that year but kept the appearance of cedar shingles. In 1982 the Decker family added a new brick entry stoop in front of the house, which has steps on all three sides (Photos 1 & 2).

Room spaces were altered in 1982 to create bathrooms, a laundry room, and four closets into the plan of the house. A geothermal heating system was added in the basement in 1982, to replace an oil gravity-fed furnace. Damage caused by placement of large vents into original wood flooring in 1948 was repaired with existing wood from the house. Due to a new heating/cooling system, no external mechanical elements are outside the house. All utilities to the house are buried underground, including electric, water, sewage and phone lines.

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### **1826-1850 Barn (CONTRIBUTING)**

The 60' x 30' timber framed barn features a stone foundation, vertical wood siding, and a metal roof. A pair of sliding doors is located on the west elevation. Louvered windows are found underneath the gables on the north and south elevation. The entire barn is timber-framed with mortis and tenon construction. The main entrance to the barn leads to an open area, historically used for threshing. The barn is divided into three separate portions- one portion is a step down from the threshing floor, and on the opposite end serves as a storage area. The second story hayloft is partially open and features a wood trussed gabled roof.

The barn originally included a two story addition to the east end to feed hogs and sheep. It replaced an older one-story roofed lean-to addition in 1840s to feed livestock with an increase 10 feet along the entire rear of building. An addition by 1850 to the west side of the barn increased capacity and had a passage for horses with doors at each side. By 1900 a hay hoist was added to the inside of barn to provide for bales of hale to be stacked the entire length of the barn.

Work was done to replace deteriorated horizontal siding and remove the entire small door openings not found in the 1850s period. These small door openings were cut into the barn siding in the early 1900s to store hay bales on the second floor. New dried poplar lumber was placed to match existing horizontal siding as needed. The doors were changed from the original hinged doors to sliding doors similar to those already present on the corncrib. Two large sections of flooring in barn were repaired in 1982 (Photos 15-17).

### **1850 Corncrib (CONTRIBUTING)**

The corncrib measures 20 X 30, and has a stone foundation, vertical wood siding, and a standing-seam metal roof (which replaced the original cedar shingled roof in 1950). In 1990, the interior of the building was renovated as a den for the Decker family (Photos 11 & 14). The windows added to the corncrib were acquired from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. The building kept its original hardware for sliding doors. New doors were constructed to match and replace the existing doors. Each set of doors can be opened to reveal the new windows or closed to hide them (Photos 11 and 12). Despite being remodeled, the corncrib still keeps its farmyard location, original exterior appearance and its original siding.

### **1850 Work Shed (NON-CONTRIBUTING)**

The work shed (Photos 7-10) measures 16 x 20 ft. It has similar vertical siding as the other outbuildings, and has a standing-seam metal roof. The front of the shed features a pair of sliding doors with an arched window above it. The east elevation of the shed feature two large custom built wood framed arched windows.

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The work shed was used for general agricultural equipment repairs, carpentry around the farm and storage of small farm tools. Previous owner William Moeller had converted the work shed into a garage in 1950. The original heavy-timber structure was turned into a 24'x 20' garage by extending the width 8 feet, and joists were extended and siding added. Moeller also roofed the original cedar shingles to metal roofing. In 1984, the Deckers returned the shed to its original shape and size. Two large windows, custom built by Stephen Decker, were constructed and installed (Photo 10). The entry on the south elevation was turned into a larger double-sliding wood door entry centered to replace the old hinged door at the east side of the southern elevation. The new doors added a new arched transom above to match the two new windows on east elevation. Because of the recent additions (notably the windows and new entry) made to the work shed, which has greatly altered its appearance, the work shed is a non-contributing building on the property.

### **Integrity**

The Powell-Decker Farm retains historic integrity conveying the significance of the 1840s farmhouse, 1826-50 barn, other 1850s farm buildings, and farmyard. The farm is situated in its original location, and the farm's design still remains intact, as all of the farm's buildings are situated as they have been since construction. The house still retains most of its original materials, including windows, operable shutters, stone, and brickwork. Much of the credit for the originality of this building is the fact that so many of its residents, after Howell Powell, were tenant farmers. These tenant farmers were not owners of the farmland, and did not control the farm. Due to this, changes made to the 1841 house were rare. Although the setting of the surrounding area has changed from agricultural to suburban residential in the last few decades, the 2.54 acres surrounding the farm's buildings and the dense foliage surrounding the farm makes the farm appear in its original setting with no visual intrusions. The property as a whole, retains much of its original materials and exhibits 19<sup>th</sup> century workmanship. Its feeling and association with the agricultural history of Butler County is evident, as it retains its farmhouse and three outbuildings from its period of historic significance.



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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Agriculture

\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1841-1861

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1841

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Powell-Decker Farm is significant under Criterion A as it represents a remnant of the history of agriculture in Butler County and southwestern Ohio from 1841-1861. Howell Powell had first settled in Butler County in 1816. He cleared and farmed the land, with his wife Anna, and lived on the property through 1826 as a tenant farmer. In 1827, Powell became the owner of the farm, which he continued to own until 1861. In the mid-nineteenth century, Butler County, Ohio was one of the leading producers of corn and hogs in Ohio. The Powell-Decker farm serves as an example of the development of agriculture in southwestern Ohio during this time.

Under Criterion C, the farmhouse is significant for being an example of the I-house building type. The property also retains its original core outbuildings from its period of significance, which begins in 1841 with the construction of the farmhouse, and ends in 1861 when Howell Powell sold the farm. The house is an example of a five bay, center hall plan, brick I-house in Ross Township and one of only six of its kind in the area to survive to the present day. The farmhouse, along with the barn and corncrib generally appear as they did in the mid-nineteenth century. The Powell-Decker Farm represents a farm of a southwestern Ohio pioneer who lived on the land until 1861.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

### **Background History**

After the Northwest Indian War ended and the Treaty of Greenville in 1795 was signed, land in the Ohio Country opened to European-American settlement. The area of Butler County west of the Great Miami River was part of a series of surveys called the Congress Lands, and was initially surveyed in 1798. The first owner of the property was John Brown, a land speculator, who bought section 33 of Butler County.<sup>1</sup> Records show John Brown paying Butler County taxes on the property in 1807. In 1815 the village of Venice was established on his land at the intersection of five Native American trails to Cincinnati, Ohio; Brookville, Indiana; Oxford, Ohio; Hamilton, Ohio and Cleves, Ohio (see Figure 6).

The first farmer to work the land was Howell Powell, a Welsh immigrant, who arrived as a tenant. The first written record for Howell Powell was his marriage to Anna Appleton in 1817.<sup>2</sup> Anna was a daughter of a Welsh farmer in the first Welsh settlement in Ohio just 4 miles west, in

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<sup>1</sup> Ohio. Butler County. *1853 Tax Records*. Lane Public Library Smith Library of Regional History, Oxford, OH.

<sup>2</sup> Ohio. Butler County. *Ohio, County Marriages, 1774-1993*. Digital Images. Ancestry.com. September 27, 2015, <http://ancestry.com>

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Shandon, Ohio and born in New Jersey. Howell Powell was 23 and Anna Powell was 20 in the 1820 census and they had one child, John Powell, living on the farm.

Spurred by the Panic of 1819 a turn in the market during the first half of the 1820s reduced the price of land in Ohio from \$2.00/acre to \$1.25/acre, possibly enabling Powell to buy the surrounding land. During this same period agricultural prices fell with farmers producing greater quantities to make up the price shortfall. In 1827, Howell Powell purchased the land from John Brown. The purchase was made after Howell Powell had cleared the land and built a log cabin. Howell Powell owned and farmed the land for thirty-four years, the longest land-owner associated the farm during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. (The Decker family has the longest ownership with currently thirty-seven years)

John Brown's grandson Daniel Brown bought the farm from Howell Powell in 1861. Daniel Brown owned property to the west, along with his brother William Brown. Daniel Brown doubled the size of his old farm to over 215 acres. Instead of living in the house, Daniel Brown farmed the land and left the house to Benjamin Brown, his son, to live in. The addition to the farmhouse created during Daniel Brown's ownership was a 12' x 28" on the rear. This addition included a summer kitchen and storage room that was made to the house circa 1865.

Daniel Brown owned this farm for 24 years and left the property to Benjamin Brown his son in 1875. By this time the boundaries of property had shifted eastward to include land to the east of the original Powell farm and eliminated lands to the west of Dry Run Creek. Benjamin's daughter, Mary, was the next owner with her husband Charles W. Stephan, who owned the farm into the 20th century. Charles and Mary E. Stephan resided in the farmhouse when the 1913 flood of the Great Miami River, flooding the basement of the house. In 1928, Charles Stephan sold off his final farm holding to J. F. Stadler; six years later he sold the farm to William Kraus. The farm site was sold in 1948 to William Moeller.

In 1976 William Moeller sold the farm to H&G Development, who developed the land into lots for individual homes, leaving the original farm on a 2.54 acre lot as original building site (see Figure 7 - Dry Run Estates). H & G Development had bought the farm to divide into lots for housing and for seven years had allowed the buildings on the property to deteriorate. In 1982, the Decker family purchased the remaining 2.54 acre lot with the original buildings, and still owns the property to this day.

### List of Ownership

Decker Family Trust	Aug 2014 to present
Stephen and Mary Decker	Aug 1982 to 2014
H&G Development	June 1976 to 1982
William Moeller	June 1948 to 1976
William Kraus	June 1934 to 1948
J.F. Stadler	June 1928 to 1934
C.W. Stephan	June 1915 to 1928

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M.E. Stephan	June 1904 to 1915
Benjamin Brown	1876 to 1904
Daniel Brown	1861 to 1876
Howell Powell	1827 to 1861
John Brown	1807 to 1827

### Criterion A: Agricultural History in Butler County, 1830-1865

Before 1830, farms in southwest Ohio were generalized. Rye was a widely grown crop, as it could be made into whiskey and easily transported. Supplies of corn were fed to pigs and hogs that could be sold at market. While all of these animals served as food sources, sheep also provided wool for use in textiles. Wheat was grown and separated into grain and straw. Local mills would grind grain into flour, while the straw was used for bedding. Alfalfa hay and oats were grown to feed the work animals, such as horses and mules. However, the agricultural industry was most dependent upon hog production, especially in Butler County. Corn was also easily grown and harvested, and was fast becoming the largest agricultural crop in Ohio. Supplies of corn were fed to pigs and hogs that could be sold at market.

In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Butler County consistently ranked amongst the top producers of all counties in Ohio in terms of total agricultural output, but especially with hogs and corn. According to Agricultural Census records, by 1840, Butler County was the top producer of corn in Ohio, with 2,243,561 bushels. It also was a top producer of oats and swine (both 2<sup>nd</sup> in the state). In 1850, it ranked second in Ohio in both corn and swine, and by 1860, it still ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in corn and 4<sup>th</sup> in swine.<sup>3</sup> Generally, high production of corn and hogs was not coincidental; counties that had produced more bushels of corn also had produced more hogs.

In southwestern Ohio, farming was highly profitable due to the roads leading directly and easy to Cincinnati. Hogs were driven to markets there where they could be sold for profits higher than most other remote areas of the country. The Ohio River and the Miami and Erie Canal then were used to transport these products throughout the country bringing prosperity to the farmers of southwestern Ohio. The canal beginning in 1825 in Middletown to Hamilton in Butler County, reached Cincinnati by 1827. Cincinnati became a prosperous market for hogs, and earned the nickname of "Porkopolis." As early as 1835, there were complaints in local newspapers of hogs walking through the streets of Cincinnati (Jones 1983). In 1845 the canal connected Cincinnati on the Ohio River and Toledo on Lake Erie. By 1850, Cincinnati was the country's leading center for pork processing, and Ohio produced more corn than any other state. It also ranked second in wheat production.

According to agricultural census records for Butler County in 1850 and 1860, the vast majority of Ross Township farmers produced corn, wheat, and oats. For livestock, Ross Township was

<sup>3</sup> Ancestry.com. *U.S., Selected Federal Census Non-Population Schedules, 1850-1880* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010.



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particularly well suited raising hogs, but all families had at least one milking cow and one ox. By the 1860s, Ohio farmers had a more difficult time earning a living off the land. Competition from states in the new western plains states reduced the prices that Ohio farmers could receive when they sold their crops. This trend is evident in Ross Township, as production of corn and wheat decreased from 1850 to 1860, and the number of hogs also decreased in the same period. In addition, roughly half of the farms in the township raised sheep in 1850, but only a few farms in the township were raising sheep in 1860.<sup>4</sup> Agriculture still remained a lucrative business in Butler County, however, and continued to be for the rest of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Howell Powell**

Howell Powell worked the land as a tenant farmer for John Brown for almost ten years beginning in 1817. During this time, he cleared the land for farming and lived in a log cabin he built with his wife Anna Powell. The log cabin Powell originally built in 1817 is long gone; but the original bank barn built in 1826 still remains. Powell purchased the 82 acre farm from Brown in 1827.

By 1840, Powell had built an addition on the barn's interior for feeding pigs, hogs, and lambs. Because of the large amount of corn being grown, a corncrib was built circa 1840 to store corn for feeding to the pigs and hogs. His farm produced enough corn, hogs, wheat, hay, and oats to allowed Powell to replace his original log cabin and build two additional outbuildings. The new brick farmhouse was built during the period of the farm's expansion. The present-day farmhouse and outbuildings still reflect this period of construction and expansion by Powell, who would occupy and farm the land for the longest period of ownership. The Powell-Decker Farm reflects this evolution of farming from tenant to farm-owner, with the productivity of the farm traced through its successive improvements.

Prices for crops and livestock in southwestern Ohio had steadily increased following the downturn in the 1820s and due to ease of delivery to markets in Cincinnati. The road in front of the farm insured easy transportation to Cincinnati with designated water troughs for animals set along the route.

The 1850 and 1860 United States Census for Agriculture lists the Howell Powell Farm on its schedules. According to the 1850 Census, the Howell Powell farm had produced 1,260 bushels of corn, 45 bushels of wheat, and 160 bushels of oats. Powell's livestock included 12 swine, and 3 milk cows, and two cattle.<sup>5</sup> Ten years later, Powell's farm had produced 800 bushels of corn, but 355 bushels of wheat. The livestock included 30 swine (more than double the number in 1850), and 2 milk cows. The total value of the farm was \$8750 in 1860, \$1500 more than its value in 1850. It was not the largest farm in Ross Township, but it was particularly high valued for a farm with only 55 acres of improved land.

Howell Powell operated the farm successfully until 1861. This farm brought relative prosperity to the Powell family, and the building of his house and outbuildings are a testament to the

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<sup>4</sup> Ancestry.com 2010.

<sup>5</sup> Ancestry.com 2010.

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prosperity of agriculture in Butler County in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Hog production on this farm and a clear trail to Cincinnati and national markets helped make Ross Township a leader in corn and hog production in Butler County and Ohio throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### Criterion C

The Powell-Decker farmhouse is a good example of the 2-story, center hall house plan now referred to as an I-house type.<sup>6</sup> The I-house is based on traditional British folk forms that were common in the mid-Atlantic states of Maryland, New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and the upland south states of Virginia and North Carolina, eventually making their way to the Midwest by the 1820s. Although features of the I-house vary from example to example, the distinct identifying feature of the I-house is its plan: two stories, one room deep and at least two rooms wide. They may also have one or story side or rear additions. Typically constructed in the early to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the relatively simple house plan frequently displayed stylistic architectural features associated with the Greek Revival or Italianate styles, most commonly in the form of cornice returns, classical door and window pediments, or brackets supporting the eaves along the roofline and decorative porch trim. Examples of I-houses in the Ohio River Valley, for example, may have two-story Greek Revival-style porches and may be associated with a building tradition found in the south. There are three principal versions of the I-house found in Ohio. The Pre-Classic I-house has a two room over two room plan, is three bays wide, and can either be symmetrical or asymmetrical in design. The Four-Bay I-house, as the term indicates, is four bays wide. Because of its configuration it is likely to have an asymmetrical plan, and it is quite common to see two front entrances on this variety of I-house. Finally, the Classic I-house, of which the Powell-Decker farmhouse is an example, has a five-bay façade with a central hallway.<sup>7</sup> I-houses quickly became associated with agricultural prosperity in the rural landscape of the Midwest.

The Powell-Decker farmhouse's architecture illustrates the prosperity of the new markets out of Cincinnati that were opened in the 1840s that provided building products to rural areas along the established hog route. The construction materials of the house were produced and extracted locally. Dry Run Creek, located on the western edge of the farm provided the rubble stones for all of the four building foundations and a kiln to make the bricks from local clay. By 1840, building products were becoming available in Cincinnati for home construction: double-hung windows, wood shutters, limestone lintels, cherry stair rails and wood external brackets. These building materials all could be acquired when delivering farm goods to Cincinnati markets. For the first time these rural farmers could buy manufactured components in Cincinnati inexpensively. Items were made in Cincinnati or shipped there by steamboat on the Ohio River or by barge on the Miami and Erie Canal.

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<sup>6</sup> The term I-house was created in the 1930s by a cultural geographer named Fred Kniffen, who analyzed American folk architecture and chose the name because it was particularly popular in the states of Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa (states that begin with the letter 'I') and due to the types tall, narrow form.

<sup>7</sup> Stephen C. Gordon, *How to Complete the Ohio Historic Inventory*. Ohio Historic Preservation Office, Columbus, OH, 1992.

Powell-Decker Farm

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

There are five individual I-houses listed on the National Register of Historic Places in Butler County. Three of them are associated with the Augspurgen Amish/Mennonite Settlement Thematic Resources nomination. The Christian Iutzi Farmhouse in Madison Township (1834) (NR81002904) is an example of a four-bay I-house with two front entrances. The Christian Ehresman house (1867) (NR84002903) is a later example of an I-house with rear ell and a two-story porch. The John Augspurgen Farm #1 (1846) was a house very similar in design to the Powell-Decker house, but this property no longer exists in its location. One other Butler County example of a five bay I-house is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Cochran Farmhouse, built around 1836, (listed 1973) (NR73001390) is located close to the village of Millville, in northern Ross Township. The farmhouse was part of a farmstead with outbuildings that covered 8 acres of land, and has surroundings similar to the Powell-Decker Farm.

In addition, other examples of three and five bay I-houses can be found in Ross Township, including four on Cincinnati-Brookville Road, within a mile of the Powell-Decker farm, but none are as substantial as the Powell-Decker house. These houses have been significantly altered with newer replacement materials and modern additions altering their original house form. In addition, these houses no longer are connected to Ross Township's agricultural past. The Powell-Decker farmhouse is one of the earlier examples of the I-house type in the county and retains the significant features defining the type and shows the variation to the plan with its uncommon center rear wing.

There are three other properties in Butler County on the National Register that are agricultural in nature. The properties that are not associated with the Augspurgen Amish/Mennonite Settlement Thematic Resources nomination and include the before-mentioned Cochran Farmhouse and the Shaw Farm (NR74001405). There are also two other properties listed that consist of outbuildings without historic farmhouses -- the Garver-Reustchler Barn (80002947), and the John Scott Barn and Granary (05001142). Both the Cochran Farmhouse and the Shaw House are properties with farmhouse and outbuildings intact. The Shaw Farm, with its farmhouse built in 1804, represents the initial settlement of Butler County. The Cochran Farm is the only other agricultural property in Butler County that consists of an intact farm from the prosperous mid-nineteenth century. Like the Powell-Decker Farm, the Cochran farm's setting has been impacted by housing development.

Agricultural resources in Ross Township have become increasingly rare in recent decades, as the trend for land use in the area gravitates toward housing developments and the suburban expansion of nearby Hamilton. The Powell-Decker Farm is a remaining example of an intact agricultural property during one of Butler County's most prosperous periods. Together, the evolution of the farm from tenant to owner and the original 19<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse and remaining barn and farm outbuildings expand the understanding of the agricultural history of Ross Township and Butler County.

Powell-Decker Farm  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Powell-Decker Farm

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

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Powell-Decker Farm  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

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Wentworth Inc. "Historic Styles" last modified 2018.  
<https://www.wentworthstudio.com/historic-styles/federal/>, web.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

---

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** 2.54 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Powell-Decker Farm  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |             |                 |                   |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 16 | Easting: 702209 | Northing: 4353900 |
| 2. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 3. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 4. Zone:    | Easting :       | Northing:         |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Located in Dry Run Estates, Section 2, Lot 123, Ross Township, Butler County, Ohio  
Sec 33 Town 3 Range 2 - Lot 123

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The area selected for this nomination is composed of the original 1841 farmhouse, barn, corncrib, and work shed situated on the remaining portion of the original farmland. This area also composes the lot as platted by Butler County Auditor's and Recorder's Offices.

Powell-Decker Farm  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

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### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Stephen Decker, with assistance from SHPO Staff  
organization: Decker Family Trust  
street & number: 2720 Cincinnati-Brookville Road  
city or town: Hamilton state: Ohio zip code: 45014-5959  
e-mail skdecker68@gmail.com  
telephone: (513) 738-4434  
date: 12/26/2018

---

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Name of Property: Powell-Decker Farm

City or Vicinity: Fairfield

County: Butler

State: OH

Powell-Decker Farm

Name of Property

Butler County, OH

County and State

Photographers: Stephen Decker and Ron Ciminero

Date Photographed: 9/8/17–9/25/17 (the photographs represent the current appearance of the properties included in the nomination)

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: 1 of 31

Photos

1. South Elevation of House, view looking north.  
Taken by Stephen Decker, 9/9/2017
2. South Elevation of House, view looking north.  
Taken by Ron Ciminero, 9/18/2017
3. South & West Elevation of House, view looking northeast.  
Taken by Ron Ciminero, 9/18/2017
4. North Elevation of House, view looking south.  
Taken by Ron Ciminero, 9/18/2017
5. East Elevation of House, view looking south.  
Taken by Ron Ciminero, 9/16/2017
6. Looking south down driveway, view looking north.  
Taken by Ron Ciminero, 9/16/2017
7. Exterior of Shed, view looking northeast.  
Taken by Stephen Decker, 9/19/2017
8. West Elevation of shed, view looking east.  
Taken by Stephen Decker, 9/7/17
9. North Elevation of shed, view looking south  
Taken by Ron Ciminero, 9/16/2017
10. East Elevation of shed, view looking west.  
Taken by Stephen Decker, 9/19/17
11. South elevation of corncrib, view looking south.  
Taken by Ron Ciminero, 9/16/2017
12. South elevation of corncrib, with doors closed, looking north.  
Taken by Stephen Decker, 9/19/17

Powell-Decker Farm

Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

13. East elevation of corncrib, view looking southwest.  
Taken by Ron Ciminero, 9/16/2017
  
14. North elevation of corncrib, view looking south.  
Taken by Stephen Decker, 9/9/17
  
15. South elevation of barn, view looking east.  
Taken by Stephen Decker, 9/8/17
  
16. Barn, South and East Elevations, view looking southwest.  
Taken by Ron Ciminero, 9/16/2017
  
17. Barn, East and North Elevations, view looking southwest.  
Taken by Stephen Decker, 9/8/17
  
18. House, Second story bedroom, view looking northeast.  
Taken by Stephen Decker, 9/8/17
  
19. Master Bedroom, view of original flooring, view looking southwest.  
Taken by Stephen Decker, 9/8/17
  
20. Looking into Living Room from entry, view looking east.  
Taken by Ron Ciminero, 9/16/2017
  
21. Dining Room, view looking northwest.  
Taken by Ron Ciminero, 9/16/2017
  
22. Dining Room, view of fireplace, view looking southwest.  
Taken by Stephen Decker, 9/8/17
  
23. Entry to stairs and passage to bedroom, view looking north.  
Taken by Ron Ciminero, 9/16/2017
  
24. Interior of shed, view looking north.  
Taken by Stephen Decker, 9/25/17
  
25. Interior of corncrib, first story, looking south.  
Taken by Stephen Decker, 9/8/17
  
26. Interior of Corncrib, hayloft, view looking south.  
Taken by Stephen Decker, 9/8/17
  
27. Interior of Corncrib, hayloft, view looking southwest.  
Taken by Stephen Decker, 9/8/17



Powell-Decker Farm

Name of Property

Butler County, OH

County and State

28. Interior of barn, second story, view looking west.

Taken by Stephen Decker, 9/8/17

29. Interior of barn, first story, view looking east.

Taken by Stephen Decker, 9/8/17

30. Interior of barn, first story, view looking west.

Taken by Stephen Decker, 9/8/17

31. Interior of barn, first story, view looking west to entryway.

Taken by Stephen Decker, 9/8/17

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding

Powell-Decker Farm

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior,  
1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



Figure 1: Aerial photo, taken pre-1970 of Powell-Decker Farm, framed photo found in house, author unknown

Powell-Decker Farm  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

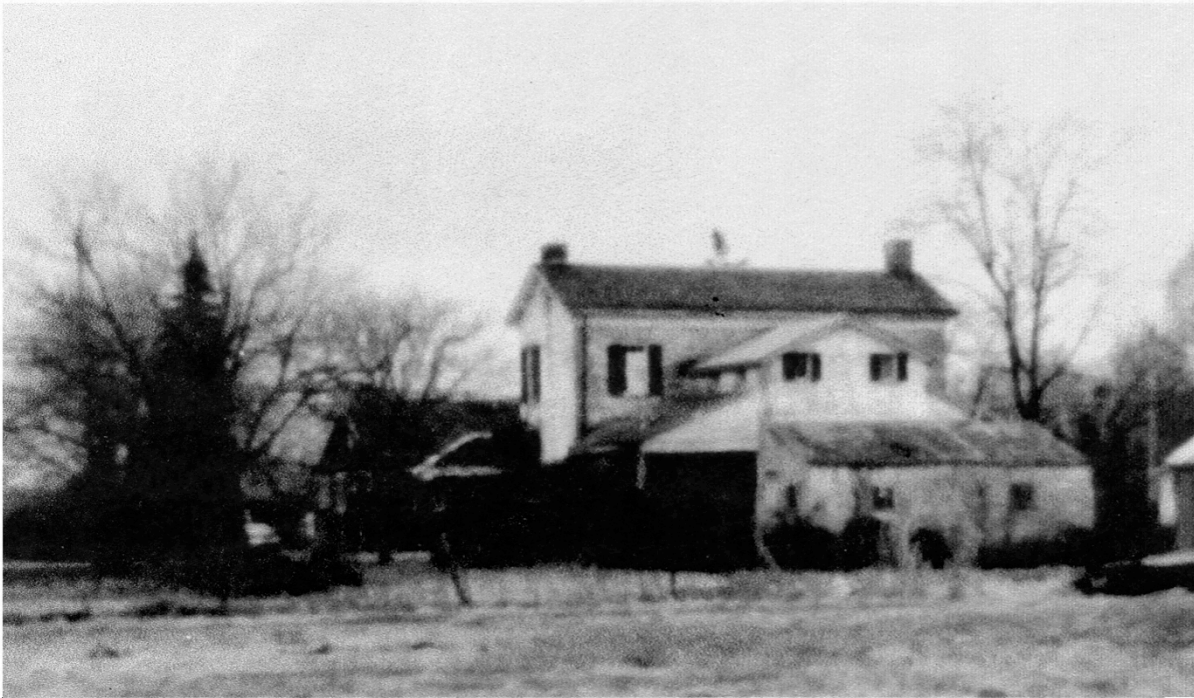


Figure 2: Rear of 1841 Federal Style House in 1976 when H & G first bought the property. Photo given to the Decker Family by visitors to property in 1983.



Figure 3: View of 1841 House and old additions, taken in 1976.  
Photo given to Decker family by visitors to property in 1983.

Powell-Decker Farm  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State



Figure 4: Front façade and East Elevation, Photo taken in 1982 by Stephen Decker during restoration.



Powell-Decker Farm  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

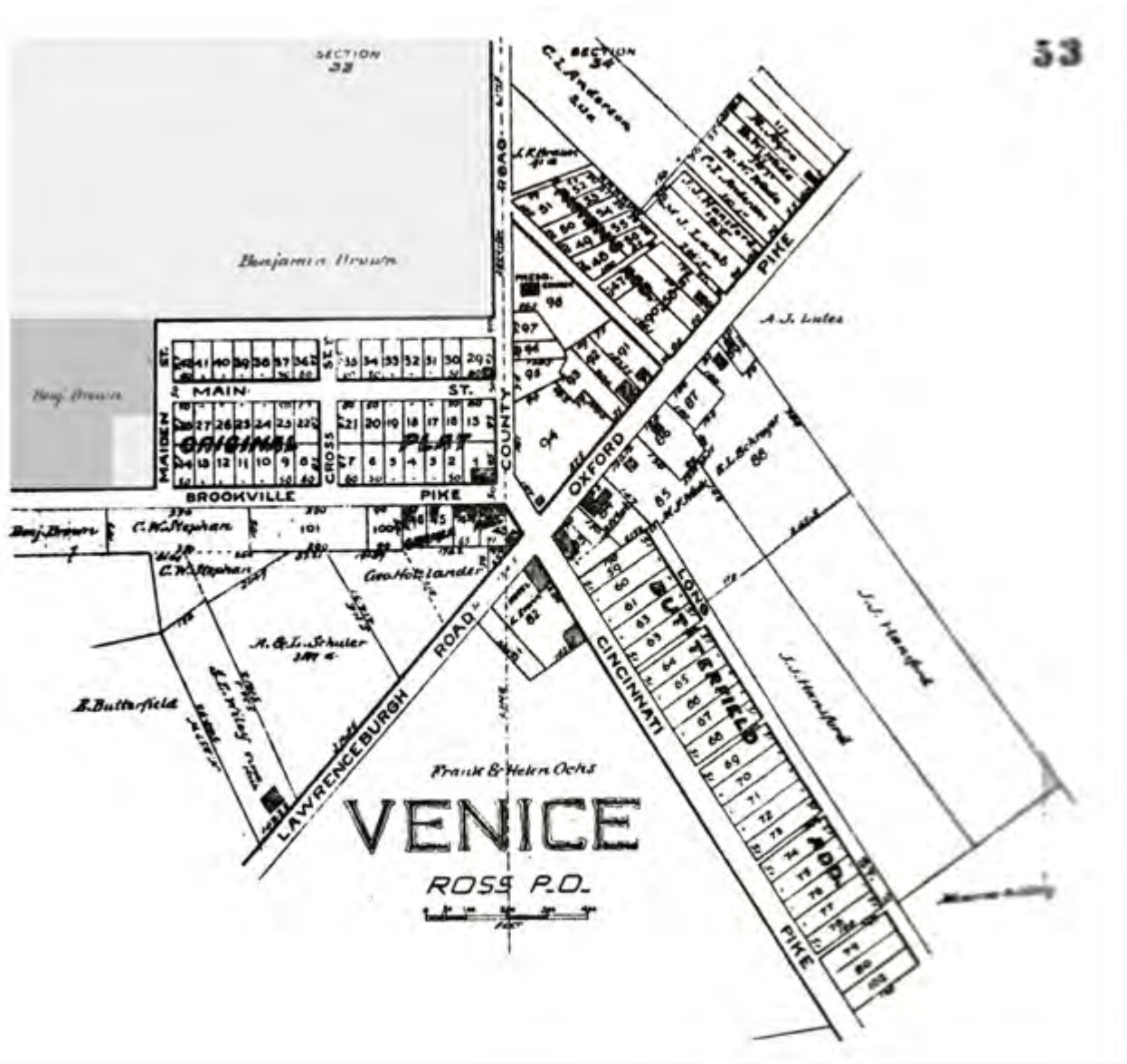


Figure 6: Benjamin Brown owned all of the land bordering the town called Venice to the north and west sides in 1875 (shown in the light gray). The undeveloped farmland of this property became Dry Run Estates Section 2 in 1977. The remaining portion of the original property (shown in the dark gray), which included the original farm buildings, became the Powell-Decker Farm in 1982. Map from 1875 Butler County Atlas.

Powell-Decker Farm  
 Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
 County and State

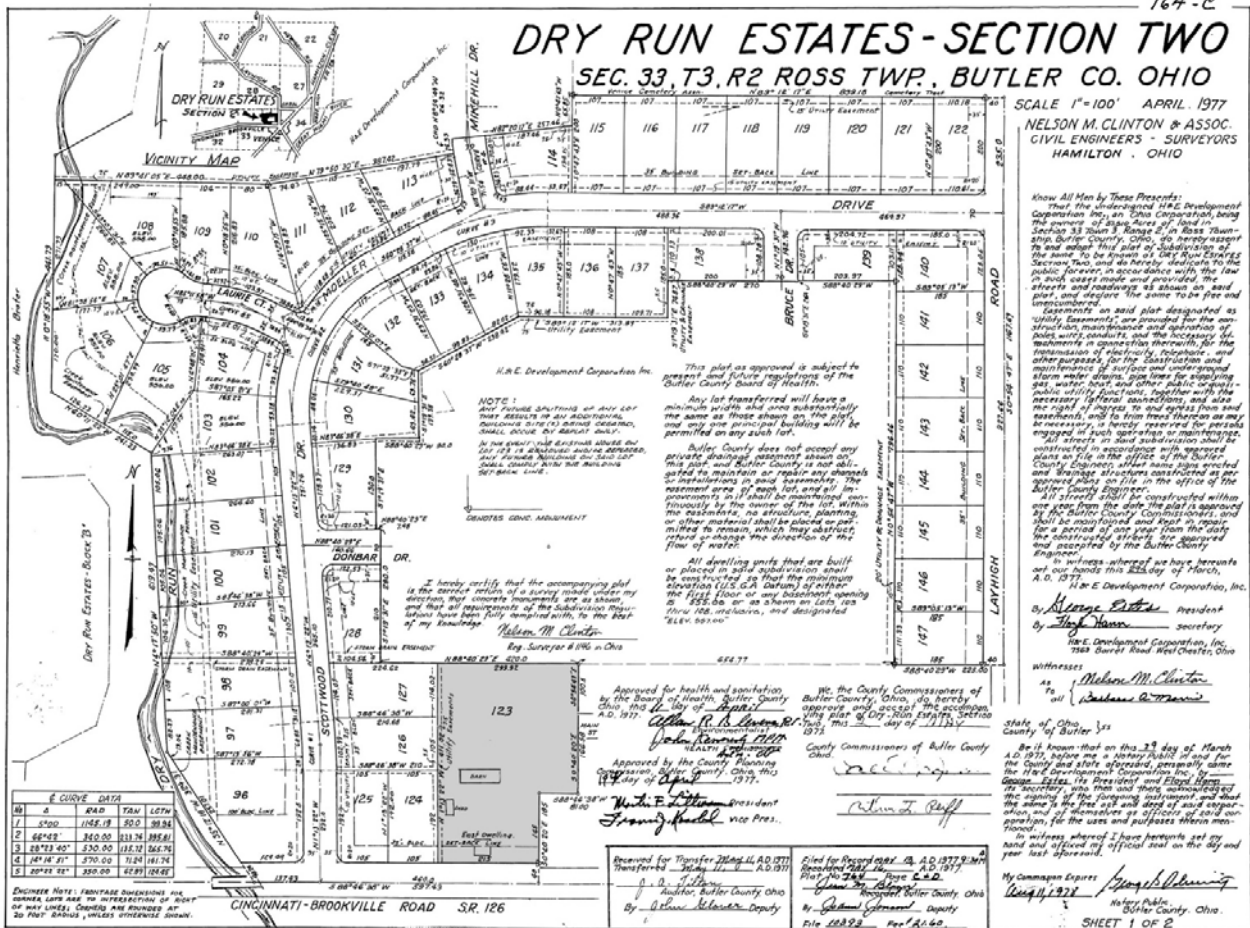


Figure 7: Dry Run Estates Section 2 Plat, 1977

Plat of Dry Run Estates Section 2, including the Powell-Decker Farm (shaded in gray), from Butler County Recorder. All property shown was once farmland of the Powell-Decker Farm.

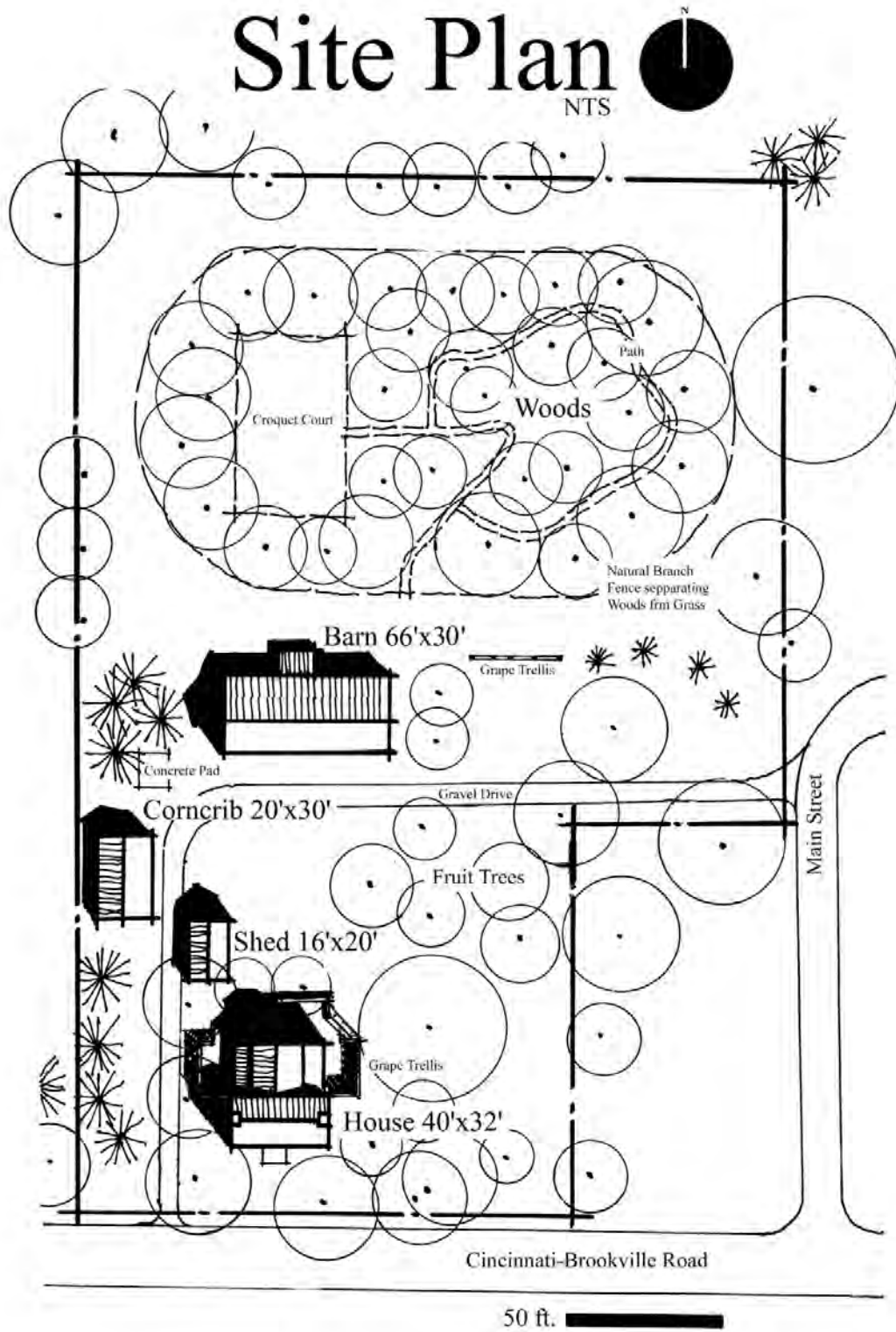


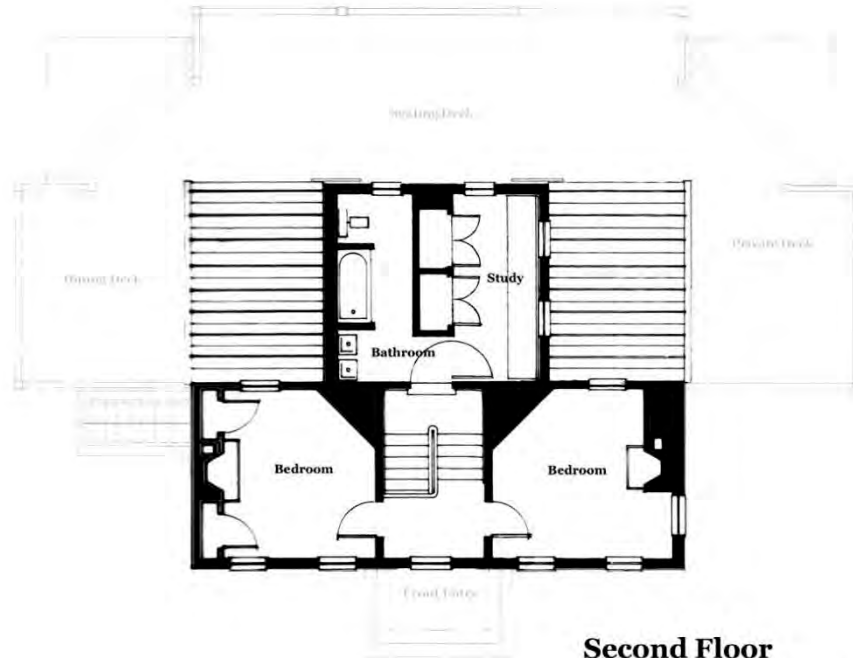
Figure 8: Site Plan

Powell-Decker Farm  
Name of Property

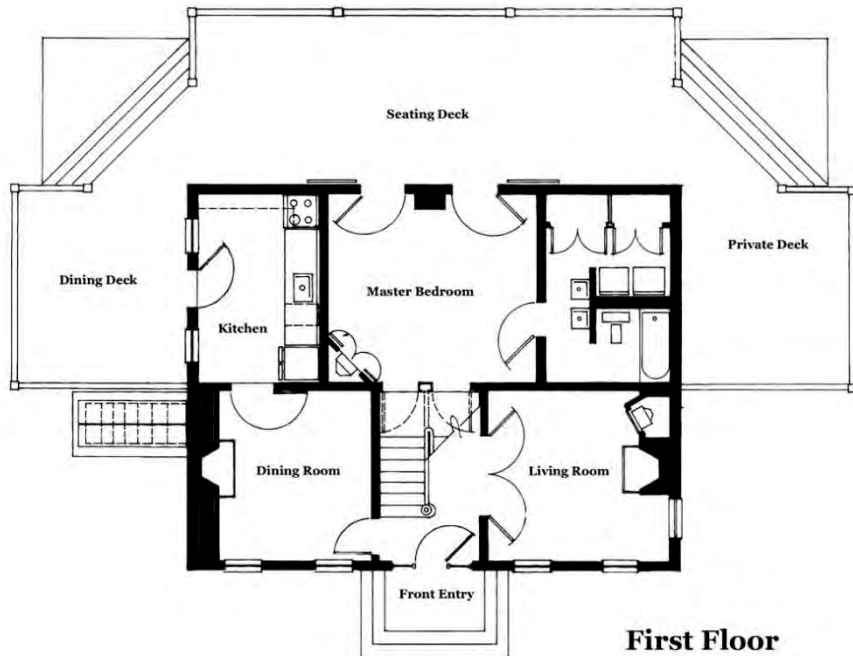
Butler County, OH  
County and State

# House Plan

NTS



**Second Floor**  
800 sq. ft. second level



**First Floor**  
40'x32' Main Level

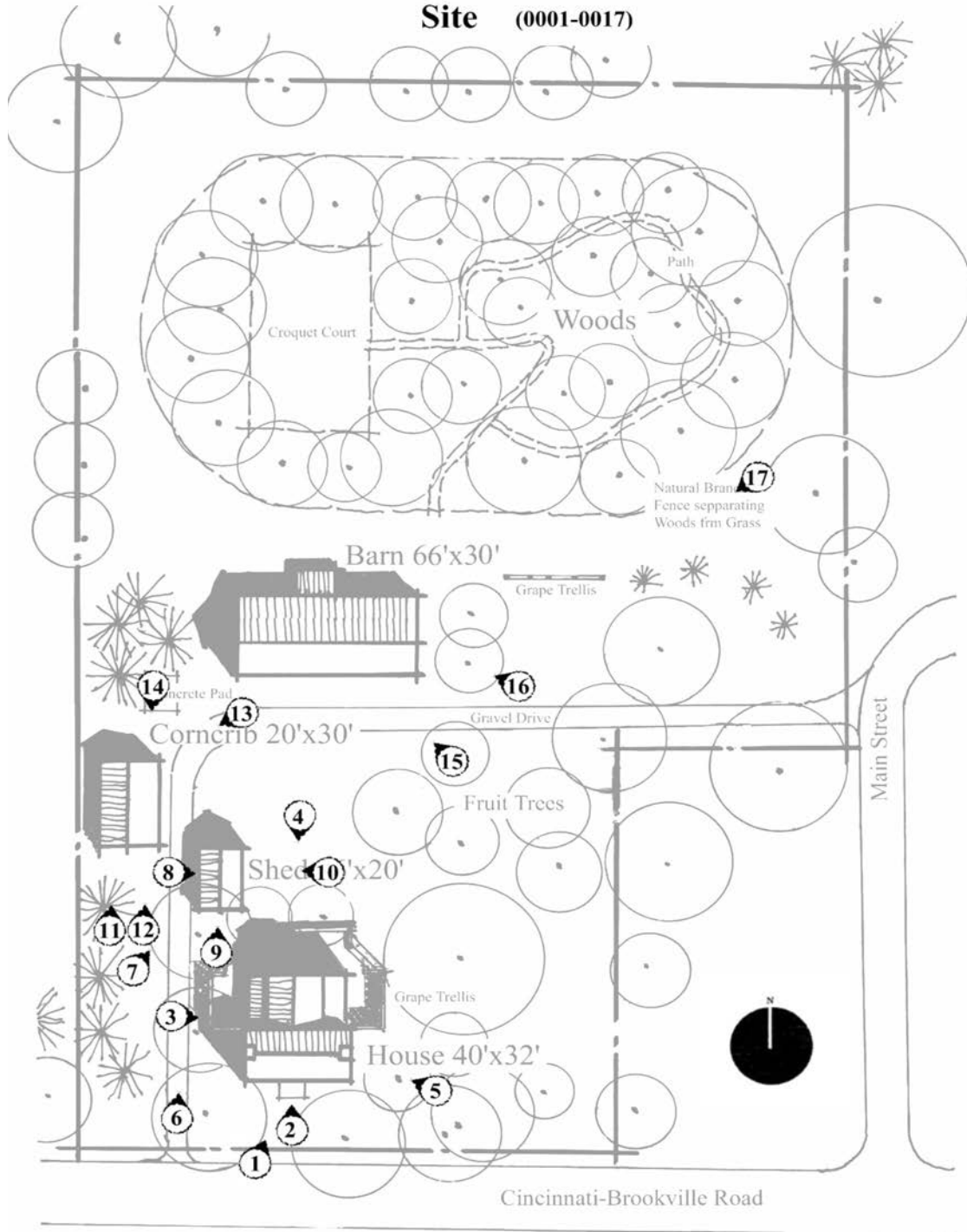


Powell-Decker Farm  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

# Locations of Photos

Site (0001-0017)



50 ft. 

Photo Map 1 of 4

Powell-Decker Farm  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

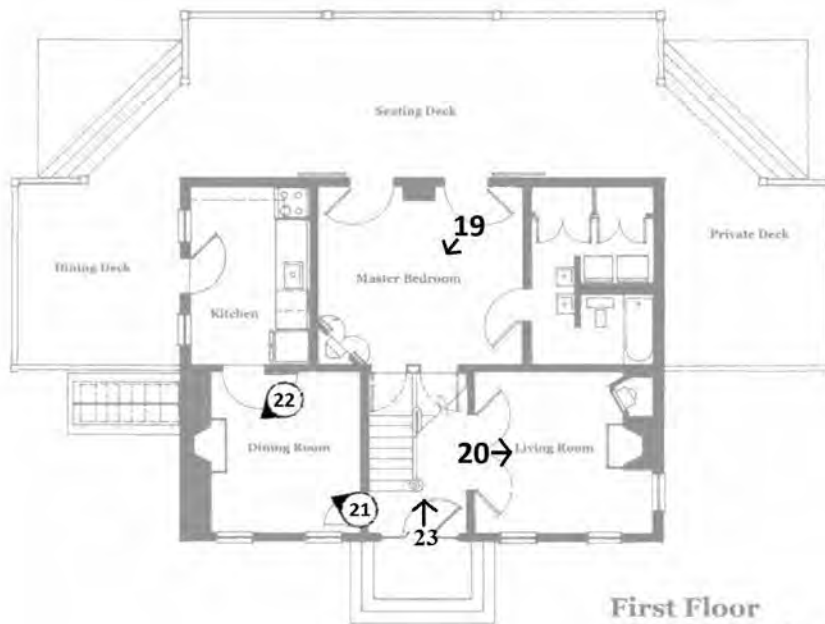
# Locations of Photos

House (0018-0023)

Plan   
Not to Scale



Second Floor  
800 sq. ft. second level



First Floor  
40'x32' Main Level

Photo Map 2 of 4

Powell-Decker Farm  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

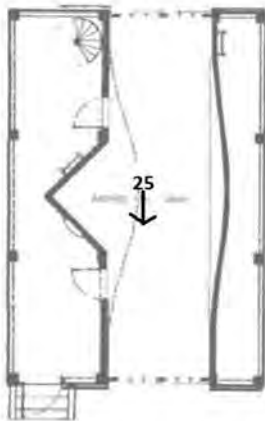
# Locations of Photos

## Shed (0024-0024)

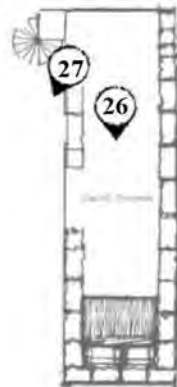


First Floor  
16' x 20' Single Level

## Corncrib (0025-0027)



First Floor  
20' x 30' Main Level



Second Floor  
8' x 30' Second Level

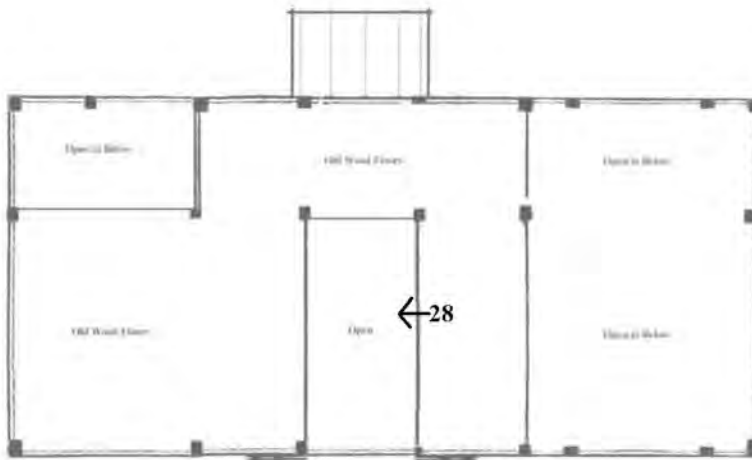
Powell-Decker Farm  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

# Locations of Photos

## Barn (0028-0031)

Plan  
Not to Scale



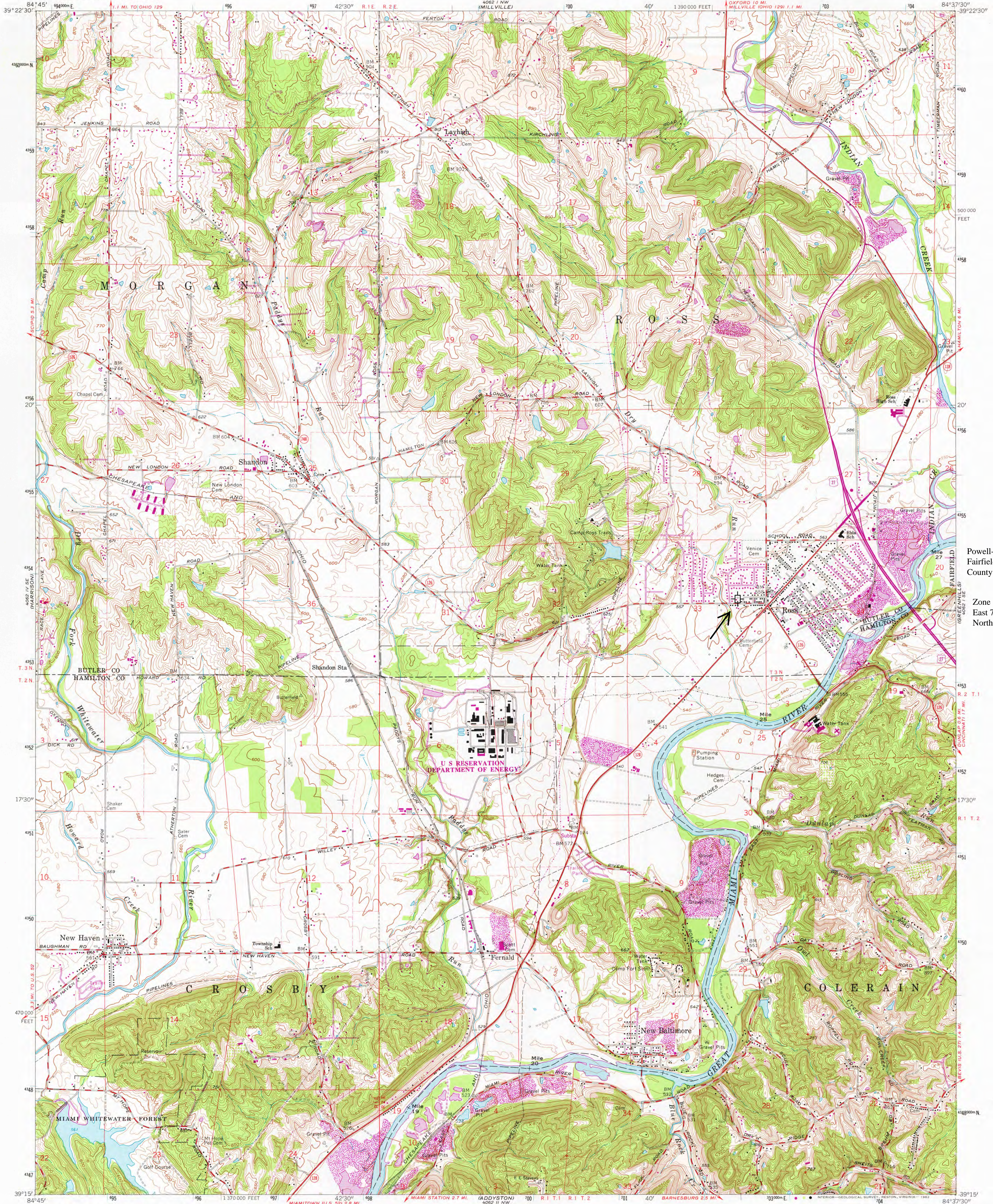
**Second Floor**  
Wood Lumber Second Level



**First Floor**  
66'x30' Main Level

Photo Map 4 of 4

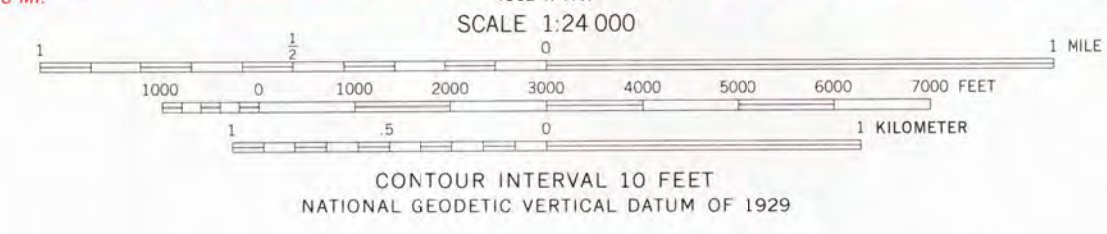
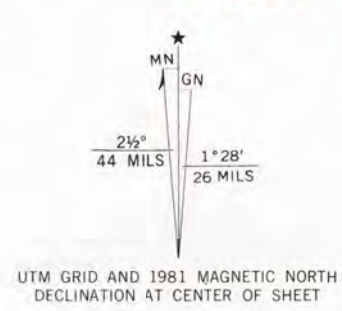




Powell-Decker Farm,  
Fairfield vicinity, Butler  
County, Ohio

Zone 16  
East 702209  
North 4353900

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey in cooperation with the Defense Mapping Agency. Revised in cooperation with State of Ohio agencies. Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and City of Cincinnati. Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1954. Field checked 1955. Revised 1965. Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Ohio coordinate system, south zone. 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 16, shown in blue. 1927 North American Datum. To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 3 meters south and 5 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks. Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked. Area west of the Great Miami River lies within the Miami River Survey Area east of the Great Miami River lies within the Between the Miamis Land based on the Great Miami River Base. Dotted land lines established by private subdivision of the Symmes Purchase. There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map.



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
U.S. Route	State Route

SHANDON, OHIO  
N3915-W8437.5/7.5  
1965  
PHOTOREVISED 1981  
DMA 4062 1 SW-SERIES V852

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled in cooperation with State of Ohio agencies from aerial photographs taken 1979 and other sources. This information not field checked. Map edited 1981

RETURN TO:  
USGS AND HISTORICAL MAP ARCHIVES

MAY 20 1982  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY









2720













































































































Printed on 100% recycled paper  
with soy-based inks.

**History of the Mill**  
The mill was built in 1850 by  
John Smith and his sons. It was  
used for grinding grain and  
producing flour. The mill was  
operated until 1950, when it  
was abandoned. It was rediscovered  
in 1980 and restored to its original  
glory. The mill is now a museum  
and a popular attraction for  
visitors. It is a fine example of  
early American industrial  
architecture.

**Specifications**  
The mill is made of  
red pine and is  
20 feet long and  
10 feet wide. It has  
two large spoked  
wheels and a  
heavy wooden  
frame. The mill is  
powered by a water  
wheel and is  
operated by hand.  
The mill is a  
fine example of  
early American  
industrial  
architecture.







UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Powell-Decker Farm

Multiple Name:

State & County: OHIO, Butler

Date Received: 9/24/2019      Date of Pending List: 10/16/2019      Date of 16th Day: 10/31/2019      Date of 45th Day: 11/8/2019      Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100004562

Nominator: SHPO

Reason For Review:

Accept       Return       Reject      11/1/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary NR Criteria: A and C.  
Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria AOS: Agriculture, Architecture; POS: 1841-1861; LOS: local. The 1841 farmhouse. Rare local example of a five bay, center hall plan, brick I-house.

Reviewer Lisa Deline

Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2239

Date 11/1/19

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No      see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.





September 17, 2019

Julie Ernstein, Acting Chief, National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 7228  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Ernstein:

Enclosed please find two new National Register nominations for Ohio. All appropriate notification procedures have been followed for the new nomination submissions.

NEW NOMINATIONS

Powell-Decker Farm  
WHK Studio One

COUNTY

Butler  
Cuyahoga

The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the information to the National Register of Historic Places nominations for Powell-Decker Farm and WHK Studio One.

If you have questions or comments about these documents, please contact the National Register staff in the Ohio Historic Preservation Office at (614) 298-2000.

Sincerely,

*for*  
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barbara A. Logan".

Lox A. Logan, Jr.  
Executive Director and CEO  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
Ohio History Connection

Enclosures

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
NPS TRANSMITTAL CHECK LIST

OHIO HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE  
800 E. 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43211  
(614)-298-2000



The following materials are submitted on \_\_\_\_\_  
For nomination of the Powell-Decker Farm to the National Register of  
Historic Places: Butler County, OH

- Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form  
\_\_\_ Paper \_\_\_  PDF
- \_\_\_ Multiple Property Nomination Cover Document  
\_\_\_ Paper \_\_\_ PDF
- \_\_\_ Multiple Property Nomination form  
\_\_\_ Paper \_\_\_ PDF
- Photographs  
\_\_\_ Prints \_\_\_  TIFFs
- CD with electronic images
- Original USGS map(s)  
\_\_\_ Paper \_\_\_  Digital
- Sketch map(s)/Photograph view map(s)/Floor plan(s)  
\_\_\_ Paper \_\_\_  PDF
- \_\_\_ Piece(s) of correspondence  
\_\_\_ Paper \_\_\_ PDF
- \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS:

- \_\_\_ Please provide a substantive review of this nomination
- \_\_\_ This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
- \_\_\_ The enclosed owner objection(s) do \_\_\_ do not \_\_\_  
Constitute a majority of property owners
- \_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_