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Ι	I. NAME							
-	COMMON: Walnut Grove							
	AND/OR HISTORIC:	<u> </u>						
		Cyrus) Farm a	nd Worksho	p (Walnut	t Grove)			
[2. LOCATION							
Ŀ	STREET AND NUMBER:				<u></u>			
	Route 606, app.	.8 miles we	st of Stee					
	CITY OR TOWN: Steeles Tavern				DNAL DISTRICT:			
	STATE			Sixtl COUNTY:	n (6)		_	
	Virginia 24476		51		oridge			
ſ	3. CLASSIFICATION		<u>IT</u>		DI TUBE	/0.		
^ '	CATEGORY (Check One)		OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLI		
Z	District Duilding	Public	Public Acquisit	ion:	Groupied	Yes:	_	
C	Site Structure	🛛 Private	🗌 In Pro	cess	Unoccupied	Restricted		
	🗋 Object	🔲 Both	🗌 Being	Considered	Preservation work	X Unrestricted	1	İ
_					in progress	□ No		
J	PRESENT USE (Check One or M	lore as Appropriate)						
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z i	4. OWNER OF PROPERTY	<u></u>						- 9
	Virginia Polytec	hnic Institu	te				Virg	
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^	CITY OR TOWN: Blacksburg			STATE:	ginia 24060	CODF 51	{ .	
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1	6. REPRESENTATION IN EXIST	ING SURVEYS				1		
•	TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic America	an Buildings	Survey					ENTRY NUMBER
	DATE OF SURVEY: 1957	7	🙀 Federal	🗌 State	County	Local		
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7.	DESCRIPTION						ч. -		
					(Chec	k One)			
	CONDITION	👷 Excellent	🗌 Good	📋 Fair	Det	eriorated	🗌 Ruins	Unexposed	
	CONDITION		(Check Or	ie)			(Che	ock One)	
		Alter	red	Unaltered			Moved	🙀 Original Site	
	DESCRIBE THE PR	RESENT AND ORI	GINAL (if kno	wn) PHYSICA	LAPPEA	RANCE			

Walnut Grove today is an experimental farm run by the Shenandoah Valley Research Station. There are five buildings on the property dating to McCormick's occupancy: the main house, blacksmith shop, old mill, old office and slave cabin. The last three are part of a three-acre McCormick Memorial; the main house provides office space for the Shenandoah Station.

The main house is a brick, two-story structure with tin roof and large, simple interiors. The main house was built around 1822 and thus was Cyrus McCormick's home from the age of thirteen onwards. The small office behind the house may well pre-date it.

The blacksmith shop, where the McCormicks worked on their inventions, is a two-story log structure on a high stone foundation. Minor restoration was done in 1938, but the building is essentially intact.

The grist mill, immediately adjacent to the workshop, has working wooden parts, a stone and brick chimney, a shingle roof and stone foundation. A ramp leading to the second floor entrance was once formed by a split log, but has been replaced by more easily maintained wooden planks.

The slave cabin has been moved (from position "D" to position "E" on accompanying map A) and converted into a public rest room. In the process it has lost most of its integrity and all of its dignity. The cabin was originally a two-story structure with a large stone chimney. Both the chimney and the second story have been removed. (The springhouse, labelled "E" on accompanying map A, may have been a McCormick period building, but due to its complete dilapidation was removed.)

Adjacent to the mill and workshop is a well-kept picnic and parking area, part of the McCormick Memorial. Models of early reapers are on display in the workshop, and a recorded voice narrates Walnut Grove's history inside. The memorial area is purposely under-publicized, but is open to the public on an unlimited basis.

Boundaries:

The boundaries are those of Walnut Grove, which is bounded by the same lines today as it was when the McCormick family worked and experimented on it. The boundaries are shown by the orange line on the accompanying map B, labelled "Walnut Grove Farm" and dated June 11, 1954.

 $\boldsymbol{\mathcal{S}}$

ERIOD (Check One or More as	Appropriate)		
Pre-Columbian	16th Century	📄 18th Century	20th Century
📋 15th Century	17th Century	X 19th Century	
SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicat	ole and Known) 1809-	1847	
REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Ch			
Abor iginal	📋 Education	Political	📋 Urban Planning
Prehistoric	Engineering	Religion/Phi-	Other (Specify)
Historic	Industry	losophy	
Agriculture	X Invention	Science	
Architecture	Landscape	Sculpture	
Art	Architecture	Social/Human-	
	Literature	itarian	
Communications	Military	Theater	
Conservation	Music	Transportation	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The McCormick Farm and Workshop, or Walnut Grove, is the birthplace of Cyrus McCormick, inventor, manufacturer, and philanthropist. It was here that he built the world's first working reaper, and here that its commercial manufacture was first begun.

Biography:

Cyrus McCormick (1809-1884) was born at Walnut Grove, the eldest son of Robert and Mary Ann (Hall) McCormick. He had little formal education, but in 1831 he patented a hillside plow of original design. When his father abandoned twenty years of periodic attempts to perfect a reaping machine, Cyrus continued the project. He avoided Robert McCormick's mistakes and constructed a crude machine built on entirely different principles. The 1831 experiments were encouraging and the following July, a new machine with added parts was given a successful public trial on late oats in the field of John Steele. This machine combined seven principles which remain essential to reaping machinery down to the present day: divider, reel, straight reciprocating knife, fingers or guards, platform, main wheel and gearing, and front-side draft traction. None of these principles were original with McCormick, but never before had they been combined together into one machine.

In 1837 a financial panic resulted in the failure of the Cotopaxi iron furnace. This left McCormick and his father deeply in debt, and serious work on the reaper was begun. Commercial manufacture was first undertaken at Walnut Grove, but in 1843 he sold rights to build the reaper elsewhere in Virginia. In 1844 manufacturing was begun in Brockport, N.Y., Cincinnatti, Ohio, and other western points. The branch factories proved to be less efficient than had been hoped, and in 1847 McCormick decided to reconcentrate all manufacturing in one place. With great foresight he chose Chicago, then an insignificant lakeport.

McCormick's patent expired in 1848 and in two years there were at least thirty rival reaper manufacturers; by 1850 there were over a hundred. McCormick spent the rest of his life in constant legal defense of his patent rights. He outfought and outlasted two generations and lived to lead a third.

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☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1973-729-147/1442 3-1

Form 10-300a	UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERI	R STATE
(July 1969)	NATIONAL PARK SERVICE	Virginia
	NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PL	ACES COUNTY
	INVENTORY - NOMINATION FOR	Rockbridge
(INATIC	ONAL HISTORIC	FOR NPS USE ONLY
	ANDLASKE) (Continuation Sheet)	ENTRY NUMBER DATE
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(Number all entries	•) Walnut Grove Statement of Signific	ance Page #2

In 1851 McCormick introduced his reaper at the first great world's fair in London; he was awarded the Council Medal there, and continued to win major prizes at subsequent world fairs at Paris, London, Hamburg, Lille, Vienna, Philadelphia and Melbourne, 1855-1880. The French made him a chevalier, an officer of the Legion of Honor, and in 1879 elected him a member of the French Academy of Sciences as having done more for agriculture than any other living man.

The accolades were more than deserved. With the advent of the reaper, crops could be cut whenever they were ready, in less time, with less labor, less cost, and a greater yield. The reaper facilitated the rapid settlement of vacant lands by a large, westward-moving population. A greater proportion of people than ever before were freed to build up the nation's urban and industrial base. The reaper also enabled the north to more quickly end the Civil War, enabling it as it did to feed both the civilian population and the largest armies the world had ever seen, while simultaneously exporting large quantities of grain to Europe. The income from this trade did much to relieve the tremendous financial strain of a government waging a total war of conquest.

McCormick was not only a pioneer in the invention and evolution of reaping machinery, but also in the creation of modern business methods. He was among the first to use field trials, guarantees and testimonials in advertising, cash and deferred payments for merchandise, and labor-saving factory machinery designed to insure greater production. More than most men, he was able to convert his creative ideas into reality.