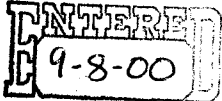


NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018



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 How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

=====

1. Name of Property

=====

historic name **Decker, Henry Farmstead**

other names/site number: **Decker-Treon Farmstead**

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number **2595 W. Lower Springboro Rd** not for publication **n/a**  
city or town **Springboro** vicinity **X**  
state **OH** code **OH** county **Warren** code **165** zip code **45066-9702**

=====

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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   nationally   statewide  X  locally. (   See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Barbara Paves      7/26/00  
Signature of certifying official      Date

Ohio Historic Preservation Office -- OH SHPO  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

=====  
4. National Park Service Certification  
=====

I, hereby certify that this property is:

\_\_\_\_ entered in the National Register  
    \_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

----- determined eligible for the \_\_\_\_\_  
            National Register  
            \_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

----- determined not eligible for the \_\_\_\_\_  
            National Register

\_\_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_\_ other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

=====  
5. Classification  
=====

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Non-contributing	
5		buildings
		sites
3		structures
		objects
<u>8</u>	<u>      </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

=====

6. Function or Use

=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: **Agriculture/Subsistence**

Sub:

- Domestic/single dwelling**
- Domestic/secondary structure/kitchen**
- Domestic/secondary structure/garage**
- Agriculture/Subsistence/barn**
- Agriculture/Subsistence/chicken coop**
- Agricultural fields**

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: **Domestic**

Sub:

- Domestic/single dwelling**
- Domestic/secondary structure storage**
- Domestic/secondary structure/storage shed**
- Agriculture/Subsistence/barn**
- Agriculture/Subsistence/storage**
- Agricultural fields**

=====

7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

**Queen Anne-Eastlake-Stick**

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<b>limestone</b>
roof	<b>Shake</b>
walls	<b>Wood/weatherboard/shingle</b>
other	<b>Tin</b>

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====

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.

**X** 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 a grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

**Architecture**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance **1846-ca. 1945**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates **1846**  
**ca. 1860**  
**1878**  
**ca.1900**

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====

9. Major Bibliographical References

=====

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data  
 State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

=====

10. Geographical Data

=====

Acreage of Property 9.76

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	736740	4380840	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)  
See Continuation Sheet

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)  
See Continuation Sheet

=====

11. Form Prepared By

=====

name/title	<b>Glenn A. Harper and Carole R. Endres</b>	date	
organization		telephone	<b>513-748-5449</b>
street & number	<b>2595 W. Lower Springboro Rd.</b>	zip code	<b>45066</b>
city or town	<b>Springboro</b>	state	<b>OH</b>

=====  
Additional Documentation  
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====  
Property Owner  
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name **Glenn A. Harper and Carole R. Endres**  
street & number **2595 W. Lower Springboro Rd** telephone **513-748-5449**  
city or town **Springboro** state **OH** zip code **45006-9702**

=====  
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. 470 et seq.).  
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.  
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**Exterior Physical Description**

The Henry Decker Farmstead (Photo #1 & 2) is located one mile west of the city of Springboro, at the intersection of West Lower Springboro (formerly Springboro-Franklin Road) and Weidner Roads, in Clearcreek Township, northwestern Warren County, Ohio.

The property includes (approximately) ten acres of the original forty acre farmstead. The southern boundary of the property borders Clear Creek, from which the Township takes its name. The property consists of both rolling and flat terrain, with the house and out-buildings primarily located at the northern edge of the property, on high ground facing Lower Springboro Road. The agricultural fields stretch south and southwest along a flood plain to a narrow woodland bordering the creek (Photo # 3).

The farmstead retains eight of the original twelve buildings and structures known to have been constructed from ca. 1850 through the early 1900s. These include the house, summer kitchen, barn and attached wagon shed and corn crib, combination workshop/poultry house, poultry house, two circular stone-lined wells and a cistern. The concrete foundation of a metal corn crib, destroyed in a wind storm and two concrete watering troughs also remain. Buildings and structures no longer extant include the original log house, what may have been a wash house with small bell tower, a hog house, an elevated water tank and the corn crib. A tobacco shed attached to the main barn was recently demolished. However, the concrete walls of the stripping shed remain.

**House**

The two story, T-shaped, Stick and Eastlake Style house (Photo #4 & 5) was constructed ca. 1878. It sits on a locally quarried, limestone foundation. A basement runs the full length of the house and a crawl space is located under the living room. The framing of the house is a combination of braced and balloon framing consisting of hewn beams and full dimensional studs which extend from the sills to the roof plate.

The walls consist of wide, flat boards or sheathing nailed to the studs and clapboards



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which are nailed to the sheathing. The base of the house is finished off with a beveled water table. All windows are 1/1 double hung sash, many with original panes. There are three porches or verandas and six exterior doors, five with single glass panes and Eastlake style trim and a solid four-panel door which leads from the rear of the house to the summer kitchen. The steeply pitched roof is clad with wood shingles, replicating the original roofing material. Box gutters supported with small brackets are lined with sheet metal and are set back approximately one foot from the edge of the roof. Three corbeled chimneys penetrate the roof.

Characteristics typical of the Stick and Eastlake styles can be found on all elevations of the house. Flat horizontal boards or banding frame vertical tongue and groove wainscot above the water table and half way up the walls, delineating the first and second floors (Photo #6). The east elevation has a rectangular double bay window with narrow side windows (Photo # 7). Wood-shingled awnings with braces shield first floor windows on the north, east and west elevations. All gable roof-ends are supported by scroll pendants which extend from the soffits to several feet below the roof line. Decorative applied or projecting eave trusses further enhance all (three) street-facing elevations (Photo # 8). Hooded gable dormers with smaller applied projecting trusses are located on the second floor of the same elevations. Triangular panels beneath each hood contain sawn swan and sunburst relief designs. The verandas located on the north, west and east elevations have flat, mansard sheet metal and wood-shingle roofs with bracketed box gutters. Heavy Eastlake style turned posts with fan-like brackets support the porch roofs. A spindled frieze runs below the roof-line of each veranda and square baluster railings support a smaller spindled frieze and beveled railings. Lattice vents enclose the space below the tongue-and-groove floors. Porch ceilings consist of tongue-and-groove paneling. The east veranda had been enclosed (incorporating part of the original mansard roof) and converted to a room ca. 1960s and the west veranda had been removed. Both were reconstructed in the early 1990s, to match their original appearance.

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**Orientation and Plan**

Today, the main entrance of the house is from the west veranda, through the kitchen. However, the house was originally oriented to the north, with the main elevation facing Lower Springboro Road. Here, the north veranda leads to separate doors which open to the parlor (dining room) and the living room. This earlier orientation is verified from a ca. 1940's aerial photograph which shows a lane or driveway leading from Lower Springboro Road to the north side of the house (Photo #9). The driveway continued past the house to the agricultural buildings and then back to Lower Springboro Road, providing access to the property from either direction. A sidewalk which leads from the north veranda and ends in the yard provides additional evidence of this earlier orientation. In the 1970s the road grade was raised and banked on the south and a guard rail was installed eliminating the driveway and the historic access to the property. In addition to the two north doors, a separate, seldom used door also leads from the west veranda to the parlor (dining room). The kitchen can also be entered from the east veranda and from the south side of the house, from a breezeway leading to the summer kitchen (Photo # 4 & 5) (See house floor plan).

**Interior Description**

The first floor of the house consists of a living-room, dining room, kitchen and walk-in closet. Doors and windows are framed with symmetrically molded trim with corner blocks and a series of pointed arches (Photo # 10). A heavy, four-panel door separates the living room and dining room (Photo # 11). Both rooms feature cast-iron fireplaces with tiled-hearths, slate mantels, decorative fire-back and wooden over mantles with mirrors (Photo # 12). The dining room mantel features small framed relief tile busts of a boy and girl on either side of the firebox. The interior walls retain much of the original plaster and wooden lath. A small area of the north wall of the living room (exposed when wall-paper was removed by a previous owner) is inscribed with the name: Farquar and dated April 5, 1905. The Farquar's were wall-paper hangers from Franklin, Ohio who apparently were hired to paper the room in that year. The largely reconstructed kitchen features matching symmetrically molded window and door trim with corner blocks, a decorative pressed metal ceiling and a plate rail.

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The second floor is approached by a dog-leg, open string stair with an oak handrail, which extends to the landing. There are simple brackets at the ends of the second floor stair risers. A substantial newel at the stair landing supports turned balusters and an oval handrail which extends to the upstairs hallway, forming an ell to enclose the stairway. The upper set of stairs have a simple molding below the nosing and simple brackets at the ends of the risers. The second floor contains three bedrooms and a bathroom. Before the house was plumbed the bathroom was part of the south bedroom. The ceilings of the upstairs rooms generally conform to the gable roof form. There is access to a small attic through a shallow south bedroom closet. In contrast to the more formal rooms of the first floor the wood work and doors of the second floor are of simple design. All woodwork and floors are painted. The four-panel doors retain the original Eastlake style hardware and original door handles. In 1994, the bathroom was remodeled in a design reminiscent of the early 1900s. The original wood floor was exposed and painted and wainscoting was installed. A marble sink and claw-foot cast iron tub were installed and a narrow one-over-one window matching the hall window, which had been covered, was reopened.

### **Outbuildings**

#### **Summer Kitchen**

The summer kitchen is a 14'x 10', timber-frame building, which appears to have been designed to complement the verticality of the house. The summer kitchen sits on limestone piers and has a steep gable roof and vertical tongue-and-groove siding. The summer kitchen is connected to the house by a shared shed roof which covers a concrete floored breezeway (Photo # 3). A ca. 1890s photograph (Photo # 13) shows this space enclosed and it later contained a small bathroom. The previous owner rebuilt the shed roof and recreated the breezeway as it might have originally appeared. The two bay north elevation includes the entrance from the breezeway, through a four-panel door and a single 9 over 6 double hung window to the right of the door. The south and west elevations also have single six over six windows. The east elevation contains an interior chimney which protrudes through the east end of the wood-shingled

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roof. The bricks at the top of the chimney are laid to form a triangular chimney cap. A box gutter which matches those on the house drains water from the shed roof and the north side of the summer kitchen roof. The interior walls and ceiling consist of vertical tongue-and-groove boards and the floor is comprised of random width boards. Evidence of a wood or coal-fired stove can be seen in a now-closed flu-pipe hole in the chimney. Recent repairs (1996 and 1997) to the summer kitchen include the replacement of a badly deteriorated corner post and vertical siding at the northeast corner of the building, the addition of a matching beveled water table, dry-laid rubble stone enclosure of the spaces between corner piers and repairs to the flooring.

### **Barn**

The original barn is a 32' X 42', two-level, three-bay, timber-frame, threshing barn, with a limestone foundation. The gable-end barn has several gable-end and shed-roof additions (Photo #14, 14a & 15). The barn is constructed into the side of a hill, creating two levels with a drive providing access to the second floor at ground level. The threshing barn consists of a central drive or threshing bay with wide random-width flooring and flanking bays and mows. The main supporting posts and beams are 8" X 10". The posts extend 14.5 feet from sill to plate. A massive swing beam, 15" X 10" X 21' extends along the right side of the threshing floor. Numerous trap doors open to the lower stabling area. A stairway leads to the stable and seven milking stanchions. Opposite the stairway on the upper level are three granaries. A hayrack is mounted in the loft.

The barn was added to on at least three or four occasions. The additions (probably in this order) include a wagon shed and corn-crib (possibly original); a rear gable-end addition which formed a T-shaped barn; a small, gable-end wagon barn with a Gothic peak; a rear shed-roof addition and a tobacco shed with adjacent stripping shed. The tobacco shed was badly deteriorated and was recently demolished and a new wall with barn door was constructed to enclose the exposed west elevation of the shed (Photo # 15). The concrete walls of the stripping shed remain.

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The basement of the barn appears to have been remodeled in the 1920s-1940s. At this time a concrete floor was laid throughout the lower portion of the barn, with the exception of the tobacco shed. The milking stanchions appear to have been installed at this time. The concrete floor was designed to drain animal waste into the barn yard. A concrete pad, retaining wall, two concrete watering troughs and the concrete base for the corn crib were probably also constructed at this time. Like the tobacco shed itself, the rear shed roof addition appears to have been used for curing tobacco. Elongated doors remain on all elevations and long poles used for hanging the tobacco still lay on the rafters. A circa 1940s aerial photo also shows what appear to be tobacco seedlings shaded with white cloth (Photo # 9).

The barn retains a considerable amount of original hand-forged wrought-iron hardware, including strap hinges, latches and locking mechanisms. Perhaps the most unusual feature of the barn is a devise known as an "overhead beam winch", sometimes referred to as a windlass, which is located in the wagon shed. This early example of hand made farm machinery was probably used to lift wagons or other pieces of equipment for repair purposes. With the exception of the worn out ropes the winch is intact. (Photo # 16 & 17).

**Workshop/Poultry House/Garage**

A two level 18' by 20', timber and balloon frame, gable-end building with poured concrete foundation and beveled siding, is built into the bank just south and west of the house. A small brick chimney protrudes from a standing seam metal roof. The structure contains a workshop on the ground level and a small poultry house or chicken coop and small garage at the rear of the building (Photo # 18).

**Poultry House**

A second 12' by 12' shed-roof poultry house is located on flat ground southwest of the house. The south-facing house or coop is entered from the east elevation and includes windows on the south and west elevations (Photo # 18). Both poultry houses contain their original roosts.

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**Stone-lined Wells and Cistern**

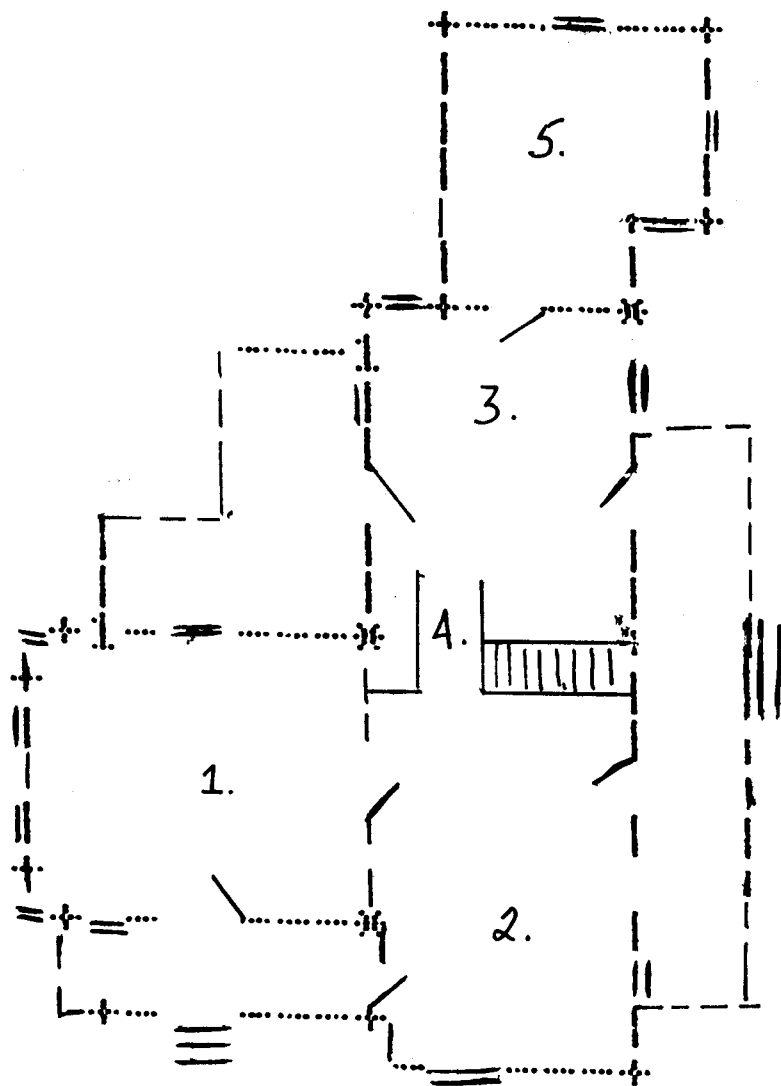
The property retains two circular limestone-lined wells. One is located next to the house and continued to provide water for domestic purposes until the 1980's, when county water was installed. The other well is located near the corn crib and at one time was connected to two concrete watering troughs by iron piping and later an electric powered pumping system. A cistern is located behind the house next to the summer kitchen.

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- 1. Living Room
- 2. Dining Room
- 3. Kitchen
- 4. Hallway
- 5. Summer Kitchen

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The Henry Decker Farmstead is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C, as an example of a small 19th and early 20th century farmstead, consisting of both pattern book, high style domestic architecture and vernacular agricultural buildings. The farm buildings are significant because the complex is relatively in tact and because it represents nearly 150 years of farming practices and changing architectural needs.

**The Land and the Landscape**

The Henry Decker Farmstead is located on an Ohio Land Grant known as The Land Between the Miamis, because it bordered the "Virginia Reservations" or Virginia Military Lands, separated by the Little Miami River on the east and the Great Miami River on the west.

On March 3, 1801, Congress passed a law for the subdivision of the land between the Miamis and north of the Symmes Purchase, including all but a fraction of central and western Warren County. The region was to be subdivided in the township and range system, previously adopted by Judge Symmes. However, some of "Symmes Settlers" had already located on the land in advance of the surveyors, thinking they were within the Symmes Purchase. In 1799 and again in 1801, Congress gave these settlers the right of preemption to their location and directed the surveyor general to run the section lines to fit their improvements. This accounts for many of the crooked section lines north of the Symmes Purchase.

Daniel Richardson was apparently one of "Symmes Settlers" for the original deed from Thomas Jefferson for Section 18, Township 3, Range 4, dated 1807, grants him such a preemption. The 40 acre farm that was to become the Henry Decker Farmstead was part of this section. The farm began to take shape in 1833, when Abel Janney deeded approximately 39 acres and a mill dam to Griffith Hinchman. Daniel Antrim acquired 39.2 acres in 1846 and apparently built a log house on low ground near Clear Creek and the original gable-end barn. An 1867 Atlas Map of Warren County shows a house located near the creek. Antrim farmed the land until selling it to Henry Decker in 1877. It was Decker who built the new farmhouse, summer kitchen and other out-buildings.



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The Decker family owned the property until selling to Isaac Treon in 1917. Other than tobacco, it is not know what was historically grown on the farm. One can assume, however, that small fields of hay and corn were grown for the dairy cattle. The farm also likely included a large kitchen garden.

The property remained a 40-acre farm until farming was discontinued ca. 1961. Though it was the smallest farm in the township in 1858, it was located in an area where farm size seldom exceeded 100 acres and where farms of considerably less than 100 acres were common. This may have been due to the history of the land north of the Symmes Purchase, discussed earlier. As the century progressed, many larger farms began to be broken up and sold off. By 1903, farms of 20-30 acres were common. This may have been due to the growing population in and around Springboro. Today, because of urban sprawl, there is little resemblance to the historic landscape, particularly in eastern Clearcreek Township.

Though only ten acres of the original 40 acre farmstead remain, the configuration of the original farmstead is basically the same, with fence rows separating small (six-eight acre) bottomland fields spread out along Clearcreek. In addition, six acres of the Property included in this nomination remain in agriculture, with another acre in grass, thus maintaining the historic appearance of the area surrounding the farmstead buildings.

**Henry Decker House and Summer Kitchen**

The Stick and Eastlake Style house and complementary summer kitchen remain architectural curiosities in northern Warren County, an area still dominated by the sturdy, unadorned, box-like, I and double pile, masonry houses of its early Quaker settlers.

The Henry Decker house is a good example of high-style Stick and Eastlake style architecture, particularly in its rural setting. In fact, the house retains most of the

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architectural features characteristic of these styles. These include an overall vertical orientation, patterned wall surfaces (clapboards and imbricated shingles) horizontal and vertical banding or stickwork, a steeply-pitched gable roof, overhanging eaves and decorative gable treatment. These features are further enhanced by three highly ornamental Eastlake-influenced verandas with heavy turned posts, balustered porch railings and a spindled porch frieze supported by fan-like brackets. Other characteristics of the style original to the house but no longer present, include metal cresting on all three veranda roofs and forked finials at each of the house's gabled peaks.

The summer kitchen, though much simpler in design, mimics the verticality of the house. Characteristics which contribute to this vertical orientation include vertical siding and the steeply pitched roof.

### **A Pattern Book House**

The Henry Decker House may have been built from published architectural plans, a late 19th century merchandising technique that transformed the house construction business. Mail order architectural plans appeared in book and portfolio form (generally referred to as plan or pattern books) or in periodicals. Many of these publications such as A.J. Bicknell & Co., *Bicknell's Victorian Buildings*, *American Victorian Cottage Homes*, by Palliser, Palliser & Co. and *A Victorian Housebuilder's Guide*, by George E. Woodward & Edward G. Thompson, included elevations, drawings, floor plans, cost estimates, specifications and a sample contract form.

Scores of books and periodicals were published by enterprising architects attempting to expose themselves to the largest possible audience. Books were often arranged according to price so potential buyers could identify the design which fit their budget. Architects also advertised their plans in the major periodicals of the day, such as *Ladies' Home Journal*. Armed with professionally drawn working drawings and detailed house descriptions, a customer could then hire a local contractor or builder to construct the house or build it himself.

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Though a survey of the above publications and others has not turned up a published plan matching the design of the Henry Decker House, there are many similarities to those of similar size and scale. The failure to locate a matching plan is not surprising since plans were often altered during the building phase. In the case of the Henry Decker House, the builder also used a more conservative braced framing technique, rather than succumbing to the popular balloon frame construction. Stylistically, the house is typical of the variety of choices illustrated in the above publications and mentioned in the table of contents of R.W. Shopnell's, *How to Build, Furnish and Decorate*, including "Gothic, Queen Anne, Mansard, Shingle, Italianate and Swiss styles."

A recent historic properties survey of old Springboro and numerous nineteenth century houses in Clearcreek Township revealed a small number of late Victorian houses but none with the elaborate detail and strong influence of the Stick and Eastlake styles found on the Henry Decker farmhouse.

### **Agricultural Buildings**

According to a ca. 1940 photograph, the Henry Decker farm building complex was a somewhat densely concentrated, self contained area consisting of the barn and numerous out-buildings and structures designed to accommodate a small-scale animal and crop operation. Though several of the buildings and structures, including the water tower, hog house, and metal corn crib, are no longer extant, those that remain represent nearly 150 years of farming practices and changing agricultural needs.

### **Barn**

The barn provides the clearest evidence of changes, having undergone numerous additions and alterations. The original three-bay barn, hand-hewn and sawn timber-frame structure ca. 1860, probably functioned as a threshing barn, with hay or straw stored in mows on either side of the threshing floor and grain stored in granaries opposite the stairway to the stable below. A massive swing beam typical of threshing

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barns extends along the right side of the threshing floor, permitting threshing of grain and turning of the horse teams unhindered by a post. Large threshing doors through which straw could be thrown or blown to form straw stacks, were located on the down-slope side of the barn. The doors were eliminated with the construction of a rear gabled-end addition. Cuts in the posts on either side of the opening, to accommodate hinges verify this former barn feature. The addition created additional second floor grain storage capacity and sheltered space for farm animals below. A large trap door verifies this function.

Possibly contemporary with the threshing barn or added soon after is the timber-frame wagon shed, which houses a unique hand-hewn, hand-carved "overhead beam winch", also sometimes referred to as a windlass. The winch was used to hoist heavy items, such as wagons or other farm equipment for repair purposes or possibly animals for butchering. Machines of this type may have been common in nineteenth century barns but most have long since disappeared. The wagon shed also contains a slant-sided, timber-frame corn crib. The slant-sided corn crib is said to be constructed in this fashion to shelter the corn from the weather and because it was easier to unload.

A small, gable-end wagon or carriage barn, ca. 1870s was constructed next to the central bay or drive, forming an ell. The wagon barn contains a small loft.

By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, southwest Ohio had become an important cigar-filler tobacco producing region. Though the core of the tobacco-growing region was centered in Montgomery and Darke counties, the presence of tobacco barns across much of southwest Ohio indicate a much larger growing area.

It was during the late nineteenth or early twentieth century that the Deckers, like many of their neighbors, began growing cigar tobacco. This labor-intensive but profitable crop probably provided a much needed cash infusion for the small farming operation. The Treons continued this tradition.

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The barn was enlarged, doubling its size, to accommodate the air-curing of tobacco. A shed roof addition was added to the south elevation. A long, 100' X 40' low, gabled-end tobacco barn, sometimes called a shed, with attached stripping shed, typical of Ohio air-cured cigar tobacco barns, was constructed next to the west elevation and joined to the rear shed (Photo # 9).

According to geographer Karl Raitz, air-cured tobacco barns were constructed with south and west facing exposures to take advantage of prevailing wind direction. Both the rear shed and larger tobacco barn were sited in this manner.

Characteristics typical of Ohio air-cured tobacco barns present on the shed and recently demolished tobacco barn include outside-mounted sliding doors which provided access to tobacco wagons and improved air flow and elongated (sill to plate) hinged ventilator doors which could be opened on warm, bright days with low humidity and closed in the evening when the temperature dropped. Drying racks and poles for hanging tobacco also remain in the tobacco shed.

The stripping shed contained a small stove which kept the building warm during late-fall days and also heated a tub of water for evaporation, helping to keep the humidity high enough to keep the tobacco pliable in order to avoid shredding. The walls of the stripping shed remain as do the remains of a brick chimney, probably indicating the location of the stove.

The barn also appears to reflect changes in dairy farming which began to occur around the turn of the twentieth century. Probably as a response to more stringent agricultural sanitation requirements, the lower part of the barn was concreted to facilitate cleaning and waste disposal for the small dairy operation. The metal stanchions also may have been added at this time. Finally, though the original threshing barn form remained basically unchanged, a hay track and grappling fork were installed probably in the late nineteenth century.

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Refer to the barn plan for the location and estimated construction dates of the additions and alterations.

**Poultry Houses**

Like most of the other out-buildings on the Henry Decker farm, the poultry houses are small and could accommodate only a few dozen chickens. One of the poultry houses is located in the lower level of a multi-use structure. Probably typical of small farming operations, this structure also housed a workshop and small garage. The workshop area was heated by a small wood stove connected to a brick chimney. The second poultry house is a shed roof structure typical of early twentieth century poultry houses, similar to that illustrated in Farm Buildings, Sanders Publishing Company, 1907. It includes windows and a louvered ventilator on the south-facing exposure.

**Stoned-lined Well**

One of the two circular stone-lined wells is located next to the corn crib. Concrete watering troughs were constructed next to the well and at the rear of the wagon shed. Iron pipes carried water to the two troughs and probably to a gravity water tower which is no longer extant. Later an electric pumping system was used to fill the troughs.

Despite the previously discussed changes to the barn, the small size of the Henry Decker farmstead probably allowed the Deckers and later the Treons to participate only marginally in the new construction technologies and scientific farming practices which brought dramatic changes in American agriculture after the turn of the century.

Though many farmers did not feel compelled to abandon or alter traditional farming and building practices, economics may have also played a part in the Decker's and Treon's decision. Change occurred only when it could significantly increase farm income, primarily alterations and additions to the barn to accommodate the growing of tobacco. Other major improvements or major growth and expansion were simply not economically feasible.

NPS Form 10-900-a  
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

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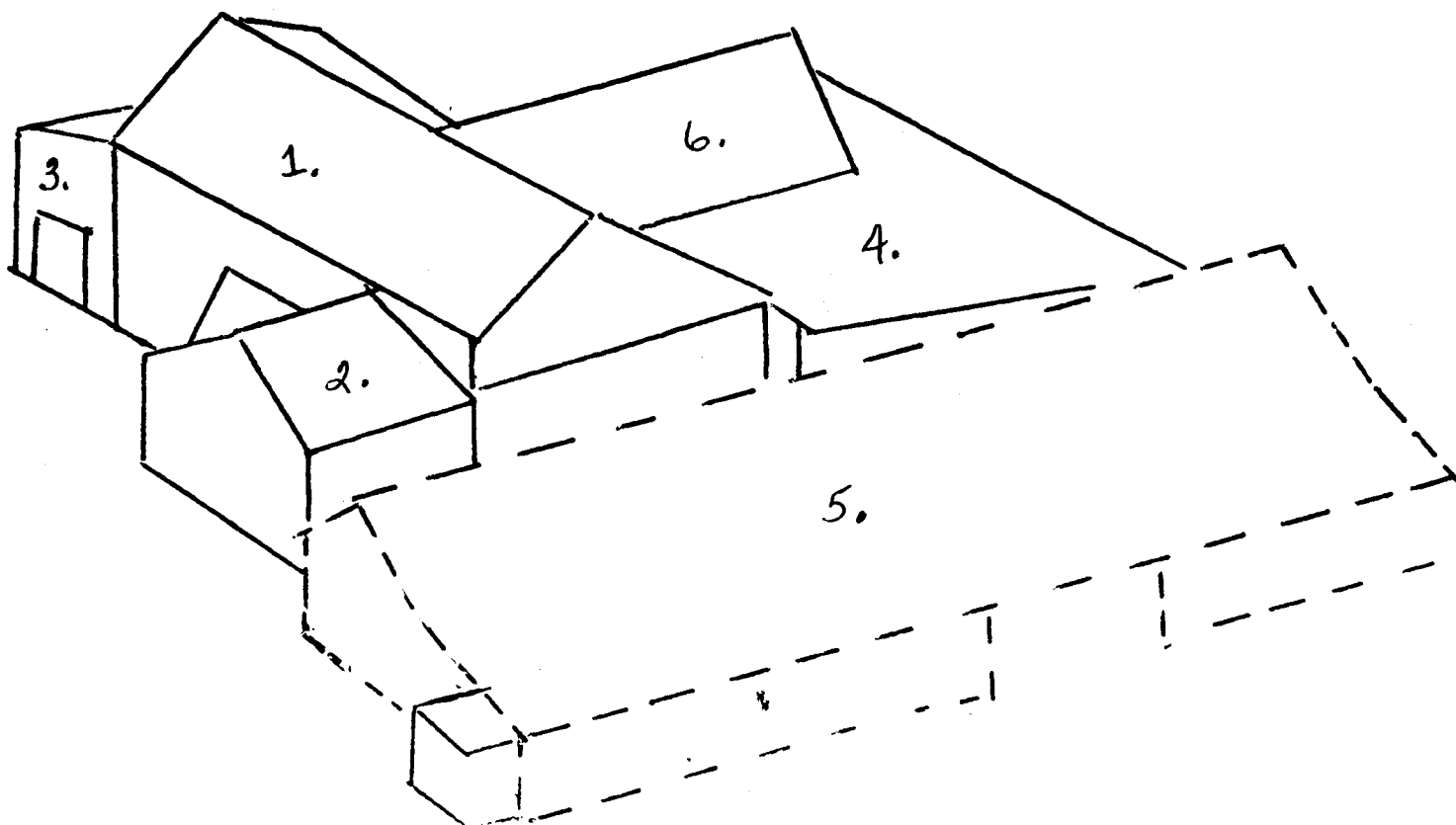
Today the Henry Decker farmstead provides us with an increasingly rare example of nineteenth and early twentieth century subsistence or small cash-crop farming practices in southwest Ohio.

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- |                                    |                                       |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Threshing Barn, ca. 1860        | 4. Tobacco Shed, ca. 1900             |
| 2. Gable End Wagon Barn, ca. 1870s | 5. Tobacco Barn, ca. 1900             |
| 3. Wagon Barn/Corn Crib, ca. 1860  | 6. Rear gable-end addition, ca. 1870s |



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**Verbal Boundary Description**

Situated in the township of Clearcreek, County of Warren and State of Ohio in Section 13, Town 2 East, Range 5 North, and being Tract #1-B, 3.816 acres in the southwesterly part of an original 6.670 acre tract, deed book 46, page 835, Warren County deed records; said 3.816 acre tract being bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at a point on the centerline of Lower Springboro Road, said point being found by measuring from the point of intersection of the centerline of Factory Road with the centerline of Lower Springboro Road and along the centerline of lower Springboro Road following courses: (1) north 83 deg. 02' 22" east 1974.81 feet (2) and thence north 86 deg. 58' 18" east 483.24 feet to the point of beginning: Thence from said point of beginning and continuing along the centerline of Lower Springboro Road south 68 deg. 30' 20" east 428.88 feet to a point in Weidner Road, thence in said road and along easterly line of said original 6.679 acre tract the following courses: (1) south 14 deg. 40' 00" west 370.67 feet (2) south 20 deg. 53' 40" west 55.80 feet to the most southeasterly corner of said original 6.679 acre tract, the same being the southerly line of said tract south 86 deg. 58' 18" west 254.90 feet to the southwesterly corner of said tract; and thence along the westerly line of said tract 3 deg. 01' 42" west 582.14 feet to the point of beginning containing 3.816 acres according to a plat ( drawing c-7712) by Duane, Hasselbring, Kuhlman & Associates, Registered surveyors, Middletown, Ohio, April, 1981

Situated in Section 13, Town 2 East, range 5 North, Clearcreek Township, Warren County, Ohio and being part of an original 40.004 acre tract as recorded in Official Record 141, page 442 and Survey Record 46, Page 11; said 5.9440 acre tract being more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at a stake found on the northeasterly corner of a 8.401 acre tract (O. R. 655, Pg 804, S.R. 80, Pg.79) on the centerline of Lower Springboro Road; said point of beginning being found by measuring from a spike found on the northeasterly corner of

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K.E.G.G. Subdivision (P.B. 17, Pg.66) on the aforesaid centerline and along said centerline the following courses: (1) North 83 deg. 02' 22" east 345.64 feet to an iron pin found; (2) and thence North 87 deg. 02' 40" east 159.00 feet to the point of beginning; Thence from said point of beginning and continuing along said centerline North 87 deg. 02' 56" east 324.09 feet to an iron pin found on the northeasterly corner of a 3.816 acre tract (O.R. 521, Pg. 511, S.R. 46, Pg.21); Thence along westerly and southerly lines of said tract the following courses; (1) south 3 deg. 01'42" east 582.14 feet to the southwesterly corner of said tract; (2) North 86 deg. 58' 18" East 254.90 feet, passing an iron pin set at 177.97 feet, to a spike set on the southeasterly corner of said 3.816 acre tract on the centerline of Weidner Road; Thence along said centerline South 20 deg. 53' 40" West 230.14 feet to the southeasterly corner of the aforesaid original 40.004 acre tract; Thence along a southerly line of said tract North 77 deg. 48' 17" west 472.88 feet, passing an iron pin found at 26.51 feet, to an iron pin found on the southeasterly corner of the aforesaid 8.401 acre tract; and thence along the easterly line of said tract North 5 deg. 32' 40" West 669.42 feet to the point of beginning containing 5.9940 acres more or less of which 0.2230 acres are in Lower Springboro Road right-of-way and 0.2835 acres are in Weidner Road right-of-way, according to a (8/86) Survey (Drawing C-9997) by Duane & Assoc., Inc., Ohio Professional Surveyors, Middletown, Ohio, September, 1992.

**Boundary Justification:**

The boundary includes the farmhouse, outbuildings and approximately 1/4 of the fields and forest that have historically been part of the Henry Decker Farmstead and that maintain historic integrity.

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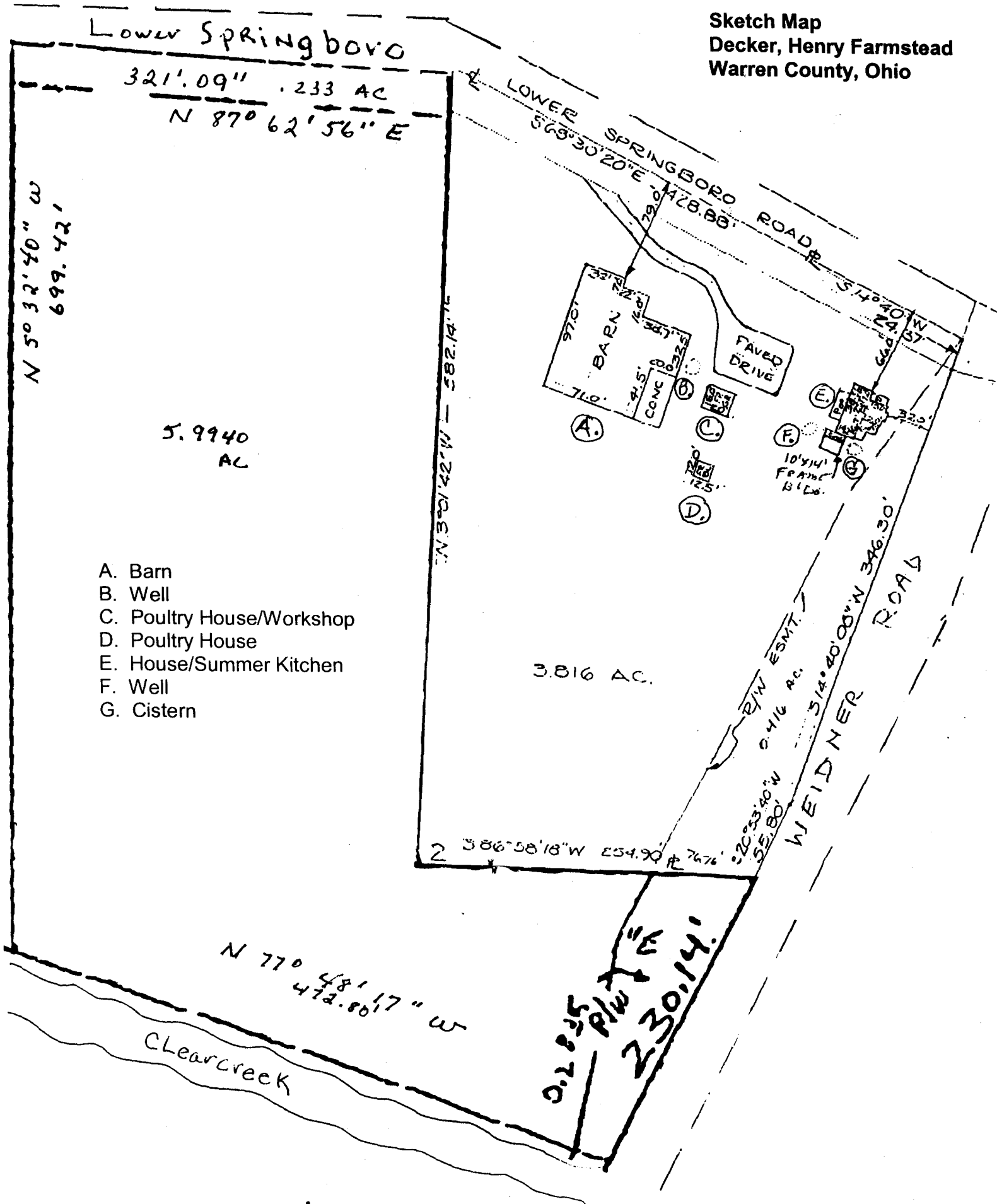
Section Photographs Page 1 Decker, Henry Farmstead  
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All photographs taken between March and November, 1999 by Glenn A. Harper. Originals and negatives in possession of the owners, Glenn Harper and Carole Endres except for two historic photographs 9 and 13.

1. View of the farmstead, camera facing northeast
2. View of the farmstead, camera facing northeast
3. Farm field, camera facing southwest
4. House and summer kitchen west elevation, camera facing east
5. House and summer kitchen west elevation, camera facing east
6. House east elevation, camera facing west
7. Bay window east elevation, camera facing southwest
8. Gable detail west elevation, camera east
9. Aerial historic photograph of farmstead, circa 1940s
10. Window trim, camera facing east
11. Door and trim camera facing east
12. Mantel, camera facing east
13. Historic photograph of house and summer kitchen west elevation, camera facing east, ca. 1890s
- 14a. Interior, timber-frame barn
14. Barn, north and east elevation, camera facing southwest
15. Barn, south and west elevation, camera facing northeast
16. Barn, overhead beam wench, camera facing south
17. Barn, overhead beam wench, camera facing north
18. Workshop/Poultry House and Garage/Poultry House, south and west elevation, camera facing northeast

Sketch Map  
Decker, Henry Farmstead  
Warren County, Ohio



Lower Springboro

321'.09" .233 AC  
N 87° 62' 56" E

N 50° 32' 40" W  
699.42'

5.9940  
AC

- A. Barn
- B. Well
- C. Poultry House/Workshop
- D. Poultry House
- E. House/Summer Kitchen
- F. Well
- G. Cistern

LOWER SPRINGBORO ROAD  
569° 30' 20" E 428.88'



3.816 AC.

WEIDNER ROAD  
514° 40' 08" W 346.30'

2 386° 58' 18" W 254.90' R 7676

N 77° 48' 17" W  
472.80'

Clearcreek

2.2825  
PLAT  
230.14'

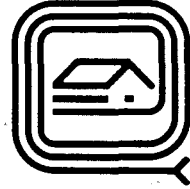
20° 33' 40" W  
55.80'

0.416 AC.

**Ohio Historic Preservation Office**

567 East Hudson Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43211-1030  
614/ 298-2000 Fax: 614/ 298-2037

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**OHIO  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY**  
SINCE 1885

September 22, 2000

Glenn A. Harper and Carole R. Endres  
2595 W. Lower Springboro Road  
Springboro, Ohio 45066

Dear Mr. Harper and Ms. Endres:

Congratulations on the recent listing of your property into the National Register of Historic Places!

The National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior listed the **Decker-Treon Farmstead** at 2595 W. Lower Springboro Rd. in Springboro OH on September 8, 2000. The nomination was made in connection with a state plan to identify and document prehistoric and historic places in Ohio which qualify for National Register status under provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended.

The Ohio Historic Preservation Office (OHPO) is available to advise you in maintaining the historic character of your property. As you know from previous mailings received from this office, there are no restrictions placed on your property following the National Register listing. However, the OHPO strongly encourages owners of historic properties to consider all options before completing work that could damage the structure or impair its historic integrity. Careful planning can facilitate the sensitive incorporation of contemporary alterations with the historic fabric. The OHPO provides free information on how to sensitively rehabilitate and repair historic properties, upon request.

Thank you for your interest in historic preservation and the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

Barbara A. Powers  
Department Head  
Planning, Inventory and Registration.

Cc: Glenn A. Harper, Form Preparer  
Senator Richard Finan, District # 7  
Representative George Terwilleger, District #2  
James A. Dalton, Clerk, Clearcreek Township Trustees  
Patricia Smith, Clerk, Warren County Commissioners  
Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Government  
Ohio Department of Transportation

# Ohio Historic Preservation Office

## National Register of Historic Places File Checklist

The following materials are contained in this file of the National Register form for:

Name: Decker, Henry, Farmstead

County: Warren

Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form

Multiple Property Nomination form

Photograph(s)

Photograph(s) (copies)

USGS map(s)

USGS map(s) (copies)

Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)

Correspondence

Other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_