United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM  

1. Name of Property  

historic name: Cranz, Edward Farm  
other name/site number: NPS Tract #120-33, List of Classified Structures HS-564-568  

2. Location  

street & number: 2780 Oak Hill Drive  

not for publication: N/A  

city/town: Peninsula  

vicinity: x  

state: OH  

county: Summit  

code: 153  

zip code: 44264  

3. Classification  

Ownership of Property: public-Federal  

Category of Property: district  

Number of Resources within Property:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributing</th>
<th>Noncontributing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em><strong>6</strong></em></td>
<td><em><strong>1</strong></em> buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em><strong>1</strong></em></td>
<td><em><strong>1</strong></em> sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em><strong>1</strong></em> structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em><strong>2</strong></em> objects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em><strong>7</strong></em></td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: ___0___  

Name of related multiple property listing: Agricultural Resources of Cuyahoga Valley
4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 does not meet the National Register Criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official

[Date]

Ohio Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature]
Signature of commenting or other official

[Date]

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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]
Signature of Keeper

[Date]
Date of Action
6. Function or Use

Historic: Domestic________ Sub: single dwelling________
Agriculture/Subsistence____ processing________

Current: Domestic________ Sub: single dwelling________
________________________________________

7. Description

Architectural Classification:
Mid-19th Century____
________________________________________
Other Description: Other: New England One-and-One-Half

Materials: foundation stone____ roof asphalt____
walls wood____ other _________

Describe present and historic physical appearance. _X_ See continuation sheet.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: __Locally____________.

Applicable National Register Criteria: A and C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : N/A____

Areas of Significance: Agriculture________
Architecture________
________________________________________

Period(s) of Significance: 1867-1930 ______

Significant Dates : 1867 1890 ___

Significant Person(s): N/A________________
Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: _ Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. _X_ See continuation sheet.

9. Major Bibliographical References
_X_ See continuation sheet.

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 -- Specify Repository: Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 12_______

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A 17 450240 4560700 B 17 450390 4560760
C 17 450510 4560470 D 17 450330 4560540

_X_ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: _X_ See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification: _X_ See continuation sheet.
The nominated property contains those buildings and sites which have historic association with the farm and retain historic integrity.
Name/Title: Jeff Winstel, Historian, Paulette Oswick, Historical Architect, Melinda Campbell, Historian
Organization: National Park Service/CUVA Date: 5/92, 4/90, 8/87
Street & Number: 16510 Vaughn Road Telephone: 216/526-5256
City or Town: Brecksville State: OH ZIP: 4414
Cranz, Edward Farm
Peninsula, Ohio
Summit County

The Edward Cranz farm is set atop a plateau on the north side of Oak Hill Road in Peninsula, Ohio, on land he purchased in 1865. In the fall and winter, when the vegetation on the hillside south of the property thins out, the house commands a view of the valley.

Resources within the Cranz farm which contribute to the historic cultural landscape include six buildings: the farmhouse, chicken coop, smokehouse, bull pen, carriage house, and toolshed; and one site: the agricultural field. The fence, which is of undetermined date and origin is considered noncontributing, as is the 1970s pole barn.

The house, built by Edward Cranz in 1867, has undergone two major alterations. In 1890, Edward "made a substantial addition to the house" which probably consisted of a west wing. In the 1970s, owner Donald Springer added several wings to the west (rear) of the nineteenth-century structure, nearly doubling the size of the house. Nevertheless, numerous components of the original structure remain intact.

The house faces east, and, as a result of its three phase construction, is composed of a string of gables and cross-gables. The core of the house is a New England One-and-a-Half house type, a building form associated with the New England cultural influence in the Cuyahoga Valley and elsewhere in the Western Reserve. The ground plan of the one-and-one-half-story core is rectangular and the roof form is side-gabled. Orientation of the facade is parallel to the axis of the roof and the fenestration is regular and balanced. As is typical of this building type, the house bears modest references to Greek Revival architecture; the squat massing, the relatively shallow pitch of the roof, and the wide frieze boards are characteristic.

A one-story porch extends the length of the facade. The dropped hip roof of the porch is supported by chamfered posts on pedestals capped by jigsaw cut scrolled brackets. A centrally located chimney, visible in the 1894 photograph, has been removed. Most of the original windows--six-over-six pane double-hung sashes--remain. A picture window has been added to the first floor of the south elevation. The sandstone foundation and the original chestnut support beams remain.
A one-story addition was appended to the west side of the core. It consists of a gabled-section, oriented perpendicular to the main block, and a cross-gabled section which intersects the western portion of the south elevation. This is probably the "substantial addition" of 1890. The south facade of the addition has an enclosed porch set into the area between the cross-gable and the original house. The addition features a centrally located chimney and a sandstone foundation. A historic photograph from the 1890s indicates that the addition's original windows were 2/2 sash, not the 6/6 glazing pattern that is now evident. The recessed porch has now been filled-in and is faced with four glazed, vertical panels, one being a storm door.

The original frieze windows that would be characteristic of this building type appear to have been replaced by Craftsman paired or grouped windows. Groups of three vertical casement windows are cut into the frieze board on the front facade and the rear elevation of the core structure. A paired casement window is found on the north elevation. These windows were probably installed c. 1930.

The 1970s rear addition has a concrete foundation. It begins at the west wing, and is comprised of three parts. The eastern-most section is a continuation of the west wing. Following this is a shorter gable with similar ridge line which continues the wing and intersects a gabled section with a perpendicular ridge. On the south elevation, the first and second sections have picture windows; the third section has a bay window. On the north elevation, the first section has a single door and an open porch beneath an extended roof. The second section has another door with side lights, and the third section has a brick chimney attached to the gable wall. The west end of the house has two windows composed of side-by-side, twelve-pane windows.

Most of the windows in the house have black shutters—some are aluminum and a few are wooden. The house is sided with wooden clapboard siding painted white. Most of the siding on the older sections of the house appears to be original. The roofing material is asphalt shingle.

Directly north of the house is a 300-year-old walnut tree which was determined to be the oldest tree in Summit County in the 1950s.
Cranz, Edward Farm  
Peninsula, Ohio  
Summit County

The Cranz farm has five contributing outbuildings. The Summit County Tax Auditors Office lists the construction dates for the carriage house, the storage building, and the flat barn as 1900. The chicken house and smoke house evidence historic functions and construction materials that associate it with the farm’s period of significance.

To the west of the walnut tree, set among the young spruce trees which dot the landscape on the north side of the house, are the smokehouse, the storage shed, and the chicken coop. The first is the wood-framed smokehouse. It has vertical board-and-batten siding, four-pane and three-pane windows, an asphalt shingle front-gabled roof, and a sandstone foundation. The interior fireplace and chimney are made of brick.

West of the smokehouse is a one-and-one-half story storage building with horizontal clapboard siding. The east elevation of the building has a door constructed of vertical planks. Above the pedestrian door is a smaller opening; the hinged cover is constructed of vertical planks. The windows on the west and south elevations are six-over-six pane double-hung sashes. The south window is flanked by four-pane windows. The roofing material is asphalt shingle.

To the west of the smokehouse and north of the storage building is a chicken coop with a ceramic block foundation and a front-gabled roof covered with composition sheeting. The three windows on the west elevation are two-over-two pane double-hung sashes. The window on the south elevation is a four-pane fixed window. The window on the north elevation is four-over-four pane with a double-hung sash. The walls are covered with vertical channel siding.

To the northwest of the chicken coop is a carriage house which was constructed at the turn of the century. It has a gabled roof with perpendicular orientation; a dropped shed roof extends from the front gable wall. This shed-roofed section faces east and contains the double entrance archways (segmental arches with flattened corners).
Cranz, Edward Farm
Peninsula, Ohio
Summit County

The land north of the house is mowed lawn for about 100 feet to a wooden fence. The fencing surrounds pasture land. A flat barn used as a bull pen is located within the fence. It has a poured concrete floor and foundation, a gable roof, and stalls for two bulls. It is a wood-frame building with plank siding—vertical on the sides and horizontal on the pediment. It has a set of double wooden doors which make up most of the western wall. To the north and northwest of the pasture and southeast of the house are old fields which have succumbed to primary (and therefore retrievable as farm or pasture land) successionary growth.

Immediately to the northeast of the carriage house is a modern barn, constructed to replace a historic barn which was destroyed by fire several years ago. The barn is approximately 30 feet from the original location, faces south, and serves as a garage, although it was built to keep horses. It is a one-story barn sheathed in vertical planking. The roof is front-gabled with a shallow pitch. The roof appears to be covered with asphalt shingles.

While the majority of the accompanying photographs were taken in 1986, 1987 and 1990, park staff site inspection has confirmed that the photographs represent the property’s current condition.

Endnotes


2. Ibid.
Cranz, Edward Farm
Peninsula, Ohio
Summit County

The Edward Cranz Farm is being nominated under Criterion A for its agricultural significance and Criterion C for representing building types that are important examples of building practices related to the agricultural development of the Cuyahoga Valley. The nominated property is consistent with the description, significance statement, and registration requirements for the Agricultural Resources of Cuyahoga Valley MPD associated property type: Farmstead.

**Historical Development**

The Cranz farm, like all of the farms in the Connecticut Western Reserve, was originally owned by the Connecticut Land Company, a group of eastern investors. This particular piece of property, Lot 10 of Bath Township, was owned by James Burr. Simon Perkins, who had a land office in Warren, Ohio, purchased the property in 1829. He, and probably his son of the same name, retained it until 1862.¹

Early settlers and observers of the landscape preferred the Cuyahoga Valley bottomlands to the upland plateaus. This may explain why Lot 10, which would become the Cranz farm, was not purchased by a farmer until well after the initial settlement of the valley areas in the first decades of the nineteenth century.² Lot 9, which adjoins the property on the west and is similar topographically, had been sold to Samuel J. Ritchie in 1862, who built a sawmill on the property; no evidence, however, of the mill remains today. The same year, John H. Jones purchased Lot 10, and it is probable that he took advantage of the new mill to sell lumber from his land.³

In 1864, Lot 10 was purchased by Libbens Point, who sold it the following year to Edward Cranz, the first farmer to purchase the property. Cranz was born in Wurttemburg, Germany, and came to America when he was eleven. He spent much of his youth on his father's dairy farm in a new German settlement in Winesburg, Ohio. As a young man he was apprenticed to a saddle and harnessmaker, and was later a merchant in Bakersville, Mt. Hope, and Winesburg, Ohio.⁴ In 1865, he and his wife, Louisa, bought Lot 10 of Bath Township, just a short distance from the farm purchased the year before by his brother William.
Cranz, Edward Farm
Peninsula, Ohio
Summit County

Cranz completed construction of a house on the property in 1867, and in 1890 he built an addition, which probably consisted of a west wing.\(^5\)

The population census for 1870 indicates that Cranz, who was then forty-seven years old, operated the farm with the help of his sixteen-year-old son Albert. However, he may have received much help from his wife, Louisa, and his eldest daughter, Wilhelmine, because it was customary that women were primarily responsible for the production of cheese and butter on the farm—from milking the cows to manufacturing the final product (see Multiple Property Listing, Item E).\(^6\)

In 1895, Edward and Louisa Cranz sold the farm to their second son, Edward, Jr., but remained on the farm for the rest of their lives.\(^11\) Edward, Sr., was seventy-seven, and past the prime of life, so a seventeen-year-old named Parkins King boarded with the Cranz’s to help Edward, Jr., and his wife Malinda continue operating the dairy and sheep farm. King was not the first paid laborer on the farm, however, for Edward, Sr., had employed a man thirty years before. Counting King, Edward, Jr.,’s family, and Edward and Louisa, a total of eight people lived on the farm in 1900. The number was reduced to seven in 1901 when Edward, Sr., died of pneumonia.\(^12\) That year, Edward Jr. acquired ownership of the farm.

Walter Cranz, son of Edward, Jr., and Malinda, acquired the farm upon the death of his father in 1924, but only after filing a $12,000 suit of Manifest Injury against his sister Louisa,\(^14\) who had apparently inherited the farm. Walter Cranz continued operation of the farm until around 1930,\(^15\) when he discovered that he could earn a living from selling gravel from the pit on the northeast corner of his property.\(^16\) By the 1950s, Walter was declared an Incompetent Person by the Summit County Court and Allen Johnson was appointed his guardian. On June 29, 1956, Johnson sold the farm to Celia F. Cranz.\(^17\)

Celia did not revitalize the tradition of family farming on the lot, but kept her job as a nurse at a local hospital. She did, however, set to work cleaning, repairing, and adding modern plumbing fixtures to the house, which had fallen into disrepair during Walter’s ownership. Between 1956 and 1968 she sold all but 17.47 acres of the lot to several individuals.\(^18\)
Cranz, Edward Farm
Peninsula, Ohio
Summit County

In 1968, Kenneth and Gizella King bought the remaining 17.47 acres of the Cranz farm. This purchase included the house which Edward Cranz, Sr., had built, as well as the barns and outbuildings constructed during the lifetime of Edward, Jr. In 1971, Donald D. Springer purchased the property. Springer continued Celia Cranz’s efforts to rehabilitate the deteriorating house during the 1970s. He also added several gables and wings to the west side of the house, and picture windows to the south side, which overlooks Ira Road. In addition, Springer restored the original front entry porch, which is one of the few surviving porches of its kind in the Cuyahoga Valley. Springer has used the farm primarily as his private residence, however, for a time he kept horses as a sideline to his full-time medical career.

In 1979, the U. S. Government purchased the property. Springer still lives on the site, and has a term of retention until 2004.

Criterion A: Agriculture

The Edward Cranz farm has association with the Railroads, Industrialization and Scientific Farming era, 1851-1913, and represents one of the more prosperous farms that survived the period of Agricultural Decline and Economic Diversification, 1913-1930, in the context area.

Edward Cranz was a progressive farmer, as he maintained an active membership in the Summit County Agricultural Society. In 1872, he was instrumental in selecting lands for the new fairgrounds in Akron. Data from the 1870 U. S. Agricultural Census indicates that the farm was typical of many of the upland dairy and sheep farms in the Cuyahoga Valley. The primary function of the farm was dairying and sheep raising. Cranz’s 119 acres of improved land supported twelve cows, which produced milk for 400 pounds of butter and 200 pounds of cheese. As of 1870, Cranz made his cheese and butter on the farm, instead of taking it to area factories. In addition to cows, the Oak Hill pasture land supported 33 sheep, which produced 340 pounds of wool. Cranz also raised a few hogs.
Cranz, Edward Farm
Peninsula, Ohio
Summit County

In addition to livestock, Cranz produced 18 tons of hay, 200 bushels of oats, and 400 bushels of corn, which could be used as feed. The oats, however, may have been sold to his neighbor down the hill, Ferdinand Schumacher. Schumacher’s Akron oat business, later to become the Quaker Oats Company, was a well-established business by 1870 (see Multiple Property Listing, Item E).

Cranz’s other market crops included 300 pounds of winter wheat, 100 bushels of barley, and 60 bushels of Irish potatoes. He maintained a small orchard and a garden, which each yielded $25 worth of fruit and vegetables. Finally, twenty-five gallons of molasses were produced on the farm. These, in addition to the cheese, butter, and wool, were probably sent to market on the canal, and later on the Valley Railroad, which was completed in 1880.

In the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, probably when Edward, Jr., assumed control of the farm, the Cranz’ ceased manufacturing cheese on the farm. Instead, like many dairy farmers in the Cuyahoga Valley, they utilized the local cheese factory, which, in this case, was conveniently located at the Ira Road stop of the Valley Railroad, just over the border of Northampton Township.

The number of outbuildings constructed in 1900 indicates the prosperity of the farm under Edward Jr. One of these outbuildings, the chicken house, provides evidence of emphasis being put on market produce. The nearby growing urban markets created growing demand for fresh poultry products. As income from chicken and eggs increased, farmers built special structures to house them, rather than letting them roost in trees or barn lofts, as had been done before.

The increasing urbanization of northeast Ohio in the early 20th century, coupled with the increased productivity of western farms, caused the abandonment of many farms in the valley. The farms that survived were often the more prosperous ones. Some farms in the area diversified their operations, such as the Cranz farm, when gravel deposits were discovered on the farm.
Cranz, Edward Farm  
Peninsula, Ohio  
Summit County  

Criterion C: Architecture  

The Edward Cranz Farm contains several structures that reflect building practices associated with historic agricultural practices in the Cuyahoga Valley. The spatial relationships between the buildings, and the associated fields, conveys the sense of a functionally related group.

The farmhouse is not considered architecturally significant. The porch infill and the picture window compromise the building’s design integrity. The farmhouse is, however, historically significant and is considered an integral and contributing element in the district.

The smokehouse is one of the resources on the farmstead that retain sufficient integrity to be considered architecturally significant. Features that convey the smokehouse’s historic function include the single door, air vents located under the eaves, small rectangular massing, and gable roof. The chimney and hearth, the vertical board and batten construction, and the single window are features usually associated with a summer kitchen. These features indicate that the smokehouse may have functioned as a summer kitchen also, although, summer kitchens are usually located directly behind the house and are larger in scale. Nonetheless, both building types were common to 19th century farmsteads, until early 20th century conveniences such as electricity and refrigeration made them obsolete.

The toolshed and flat barn evidence the simple frame construction and gable roof form associated with turn-of-the-century farm outbuildings. The toolshed’s tongue and groove horizontal siding and the milled trim pieces, are typical of the mass-produced, easily attainable materials used for utilitarian structures. The flat barn's rough, vertical plank siding and lack of any trim indicate the purely functional nature of the structure. Also called the bull pen, this barn's construction is more crude than other outbuildings and is somewhat removed from them, being located adjacent to the fenced pasture area.
Cranz, Edward Farm
Peninsula, Ohio
Summit County

Features of the chicken house convey the Scientific Farming Era's concern with ventilation and light--which increased productivity. The southern elevation with numerous windows brought optimal amounts of light into the structure, and the number of windows and doors improved ventilation.

Surrounding the pasture is a post-and-rail fence (noncontributing). The pasture land delineated by the fence and the surrounding fields are considered contributing sites. The delineation of pasture or grazing lands by a fence became common in the mid-19th century. As agriculture became more mixed-use, fence laws were created to keep animals out of the fields. The location of the farm reflects the preference for fields located in the well-drained uplands area of the valley.
Cranz, Edward Farm
Peninsula, Ohio
Summit County

Endnotes


3. U. S. Bureau of the Census, Agricultural Census Schedules, 1870; Summit County, Tax Auditor's Records, 1872-1865. This theory is further supported by the existence of 119 acres of cleared land on the 153.8 acre lot in 1870, only five years after it was purchased by Edward Cranz. Normally, it would have required a much longer period of time to clear this much land.


5. Summit County, Tax Auditor's Records, 1862-1913. The house is first listed on the tax auditor's records in 1867.


8. Ibid.


Cranz, Edward Farm
Peninsula, Ohio
Summit County


15. Springer interview.


18. Ibid., Vol. 4871, p. 68, Vol. 5177, p. 188.


20. Wyatt interview.
Cranz, Edward Farm
Peninsula, Ohio
Summit County

Major Bibliographical References.

**Akron Beacon Journal**, 12 April, 1901, 15 October 1915.

Grismer, Karl H. *Akron and Summit County*. Akron, Ohio: Summit County Historical Society, [1952].


Summit County Recorder. *Deeds, 1895-1879*.


Beginning at a point where Oak Hill Road meets the eastern-most fence line, proceed west 405 feet along Oak Hill Road to the tree line apex formed by driveway intersections. Proceed northwesterly along tree line a distance of 280 feet; thence northeasterly following tree line for 270 feet. From this point, proceed northwesterly a total of 520 feet along tree line crossing the "Y" intersection formed by the old lane. From this point proceed northeasterly a total of 400 feet along the northern edge of the old lane; thence southeasterly along the old lane a distance of 210 feet. Following a southeasterly line from the northern edge of the old lane, leave the lane and proceed through the woods a distance of 660 feet to a point near the eastern most north-south leg of the fence line. Continue south along fence line a distance of 430 feet to the point of beginning.
EDWARD CRANZ FARM
PENINSULA, OHIO
SUMMIT COUNTY

JEFF WINSTEL
5/92
CRANZ FARM SKETCH PLAN
CUYAHOGA VALLEY NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
DRAWN: OHUMPHREY  DATE: JULY 21, 1937  DWG. NO. 614
SCALE: 1" = 200'-0"
MEMO TO FILE:

The National Park Service and Western Reserve Historical Society approved a land swap in 2001. The Hale Farm National Register property is now co-owned by both entities. The Ed Cranz Farm is now the property of WRHS.

For more information see report in Summit County files, NADB # 14609, by Linda Whitman (1999). Also, Section 106 correspondence file R98 4388.
THE OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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: Cranz, Edward, Farm

County: Summit

MPD Cover Form: Agricultural Resources of the Cuyahoga Valley MPS

County Filed In: Summit

☑ Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form

☐ Ohio Historic Inventory form

☐ Photograph(s)

☑ Photograph(s) (copies)

☐ USGS map(s)

☑ USGS map(s) (copies)

☑ Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)

☑ Correspondence

☐ Other ________________________________

______________________________

______________________________

CES: 10/01