

AR LISTED

DEC 09 1999

AHPP

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: May Farmstead

Other Name/Site Number: Spring Valley (NW0071)

2. Location

Street & Number: Approximately 3 miles Northeast of Bass on Cave Creek

Not for Publication: N/A

City/Town: Bass

Vicinity: X

State: AR County: Newton

Code: AR101

Zip Code: 72612

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>3</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

May Farmstead
Name of Property

Newton County, AR
County and State

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4. State/Federal Agency Certification

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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. _____ See continuation sheet.

Clayton A. Slater
Signature of certifying official

10.26.99
Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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5. National Park Service Certification

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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 Keeper

Date
of Action

May Farmstead
Name of Property

Newton County, AR
County and State

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6. Function or Use

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Historic: DOMESTIC Sub: single dwelling
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE agricultural outbuilding

Current : VACANT/NOT IN USE Sub: _____

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification:

OTHER: Double Pen

Materials: foundation limestone roof METAL
walls weatherboard other STONE
log

Describe present and historic physical appearance:

Summary

The Monroe and Ada May House is a circa 1880 Ozark vernacular single pen hand-hewn log house, extended circa 1910 to form a double pen plan. The original pen is constructed of native cedar and oak logs; however, the logs are clad in clapboard to match the exterior of the c. 1910 addition. The entire house rests on a native limestone foundation and is covered by a corrugated metal side gabled roof. The house is currently in the process of restoration by Norton Arts, Inc., conservators of fine and historic works of art. Also included in the nomination are the historic barn and spring house, both of which are contributing.

Elaboration

The Monroe and Ada May House is a 19th century Ozark vernacular two-story single pen hand-hewn log house, extended to form a double pen plan. The original pen of the house was constructed of native cedar and oak logs resting on a native limestone foundation. After the second pen was added, the entire exterior was covered with painted clapboard. The side gabled roof was originally covered with hand-split red oak wood shakes and was later covered with corrugated sheet metal between 1914 and 1926. The gable roof extends to cover both the front porch and

May Farmstead
Name of Property

Newton County, AR
County and State

the kitchen addition. Portions of the original roof remain under the existing metal roof. One native limestone end-wall chimney is found on the east side of the house.

The front, or southeastern, elevation consists of a full-facade porch covered by a shed extension of the side gabled roof supported by eight hand-chamfered posts. Approximately five feet from each end of the house are located two original four-panel doors. Four four-over-four double-hung wood sash windows provide lighting for this elevation and are placed on each side of the doors. These windows are original to the house.

The southwestern side elevation is fenestrated by three four-over-four double-hung wood sash windows on the lower level and two single-hung pocket windows with four panes on the upper level of the gable end. The rear, or northwestern, elevation is fenestrated by three single-hung pocket windows with four panes and an original hand-planed wood door five feet from the northeast corner of the house. The northeastern elevation is fenestrated by one single-hung pocket window with four panes to the left of the end-wall chimney on the lower level and two four-over-four double-hung wood sash windows on either side of the chimney on the upper level. A storage access was made by the previous owner in a portion of the wall near the north corner. Much of the original materials was saved and stored on-site.

The interior consists of four rooms downstairs, two on the southwest side and two on the northeast side, and two rooms upstairs. One door connects the two front rooms of the house. This door is made of vertical hand-planed painted boards with hand wrought hardware. Similar doors connect the south room with the room to its north and to the boxed narrow stairs leading to the second level. The interior ceiling and walls of the front southern room are covered with period wallpaper. In the remaining rooms the wall covering is fractional revealing earlier coverings made of newspaper, catalogs, feed sacks, and other paper products. The earliest publication date revealed is 1893. Historic conservation and restoration of the house are in progress.

The two historic outbuildings, the barn and the spring house, are included in the nomination. The large barn with side sheds, located approximately two hundred feet northeast of the house, is constructed of hewn cedar logs sheathed with sawn planks. The small, gable roof spring house is one hundred feet southwest of the house and covers a large spring that both provided household water and cooled such perishables as milk and butter.

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8. Statement of Significance

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

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

May Farmstead
Name of Property

Newton County, AR
County and State

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: Architecture

Period(s) of Significance: c. 1880, c. 1910

Significant Dates: c. 1880, c. 1910

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:

Summary

The May House and Farmstead is being nominated under Criterion C with local significance as the best and most intact example in this section of Newton County of a late nineteenth/early twentieth century Ozark farmstead.

Elaboration

One of the last regions to be penetrated by white settlers after crossing the Mississippi River, the Ozark Plateau is an area dissected by ridges and valleys, open glades and bottom lands. As an eroded plateau, the Ozark Mountains are covered with mixed hardwoods. Dotted with numerous springs, creeks and rivers, it attracted settlers following the cession of lands by the northwest Arkansas Cherokee in 1828. Unlike those who moved up the valleys of such major waterways as the Arkansas, the Ouachita, and the White Rivers, settlers who chose the Ozarks typically traveled overland or followed the drainage of smaller tributaries. Naturally, these settlers - many of whom emigrated from such eastern states as Tennessee, Kentucky and the Carolinas - sought out land that would allow them to pursue the agricultural traditions they brought with them; this resulted in settlements along those watercourses that were bordered by bottom lands suitable for agriculture.

May Farmstead
Name of Property

Newton County, AR
County and State

Located on a horseshoe bend of Cave Creek, the May farmstead was named Spring Valley by Ms. Ada May, the great-grandmother of the current owner (she became so strongly associated with this property that the adjacent rise above Cave Creek remains known as "Miss May Bluff"). Born Ada Thompson in 1869 and raised in this area, she married Monroe May in 1884 at the age of fifteen. The young couple purchased this property in 1886, and it is believed that they constructed the single-pen log section of the main house soon thereafter.

Family interviews and local oral tradition relate that Ms. May was a "...well-informed, widely read lady who entertained progressive ideas and was always active in community betterment." She was a leader in the surrounding communities of Ben Branch, Cave Creek and Bass, and her father, Dr. George Thompson, served as the community doctor in this isolated area. In fact, Ada worked with her father and developed a love of medicine that led her to obtain her state certification as a midwife.

Monroe and Ada May raised four children in this house. Willie May, the grandfather of one of the current owners, left home as a young teenager and joined a traveling show, working as a roustabout. He later helped to build - and then managed - the historic Bella Vista resort community in northern Benton County. Walter May, another son, remained in the area, marrying Ruth Rush, a sister to the Gene Rush for whom adjacent Gene Rush Wildlife Management Area is named. The current owners purchased the property from Oran May, the son of Walter and Ruth May, in 1998.

The May house remained a single-pen log structure (with its exterior stone chimney) until some time before 1914, at which time the frame pen was added and the roofline changed to cover the entire structure. The visible logs on the interior and exterior are cedar and oak, and approximately one foot in diameter; they appear to be square-notched throughout. The weatherboard sheathing and trim - painted white and blue - were added at that time, and the metal roof was applied over the original wood shingles within a few years thereafter. Given that they are both constructed of sawn lumber, it is likely that the associated barn and spring house were built at the same time as the house expansion, or at least substantially rebuilt at that time.

The May house and farmstead - complete with its log and frame double-pen residence and intact outbuildings - remains a remarkably intact example of a typical late nineteenth century Ozark Mountain farm. The evolution of the main residence from a simple, single-pen log building into a larger building through the addition of the later frame pen was a common solution to the needs of a growing family. The years spanning the turn of the century saw tremendous dissemination of technology across the entire nation; and though sawmills had existed in Arkansas for decades before this period of time, their presence in such isolated sections of the Ozark Mountains often took much longer to occur. The pairing of the later frame pen with the earlier hewn log pen, then, is reflective of this trend and the desire of those who lived here to take advantage of such "progress," as people did nationwide. The significance added by the preservation of the spring itself, not to mention the spring house, and the barn are only enhanced by the virtually unspoiled natural setting that doubtless drew

May Farmstead
Name of Property

Newton County, AR
County and State

the May family to this site in the first place. It is the preservation of the buildings, the site features and the associated landscape that elevates this historic Ozark farm to the level of significance worthy of National Register listing.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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Bibliography

Gottfried, Gerbert and Jan Jennings. American Vernacular Design. Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1988. p 21, 37, 61, 81, 103.

Interviews with Audrey Yates Robbins (granddaughter of Monroe and Ada May), 1998.

Newton County Historical Society. Newton County Family History. Jasper, Arkansas, 1992.

Sizemore, Jean. Ozark Vernacular Houses. Fayetteville, Arkansas: The University of Arkansas Press, 1994.

Smith, Kenneth. The Buffalo River. Kingsport, Tennessee: Kingsport Press, Inc., 1967. p 166.

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: _____

May Farmstead
Name of Property

Newton County, AR
County and State

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: aproximately four acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>15</u>	<u>502030</u>	<u>3976900</u>	B	<u>15</u>	<u>502170</u>	<u>3976900</u>
C	<u>15</u>	<u>502170</u>	<u>3976760</u>	D	<u>15</u>	<u>502030</u>	<u>3976760</u>

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary of the nominated property is delineated by the polygon whose vertices are marked by the following UTM reference points:

A 15/502030/3976900, B 15/502170/3976900, C 15/502170/3976760, D 15/502030/3976760

Boundary Justification:

This boundary contains all the historically significant property known to be associated with the May Farmstead.

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11. Form Prepared By

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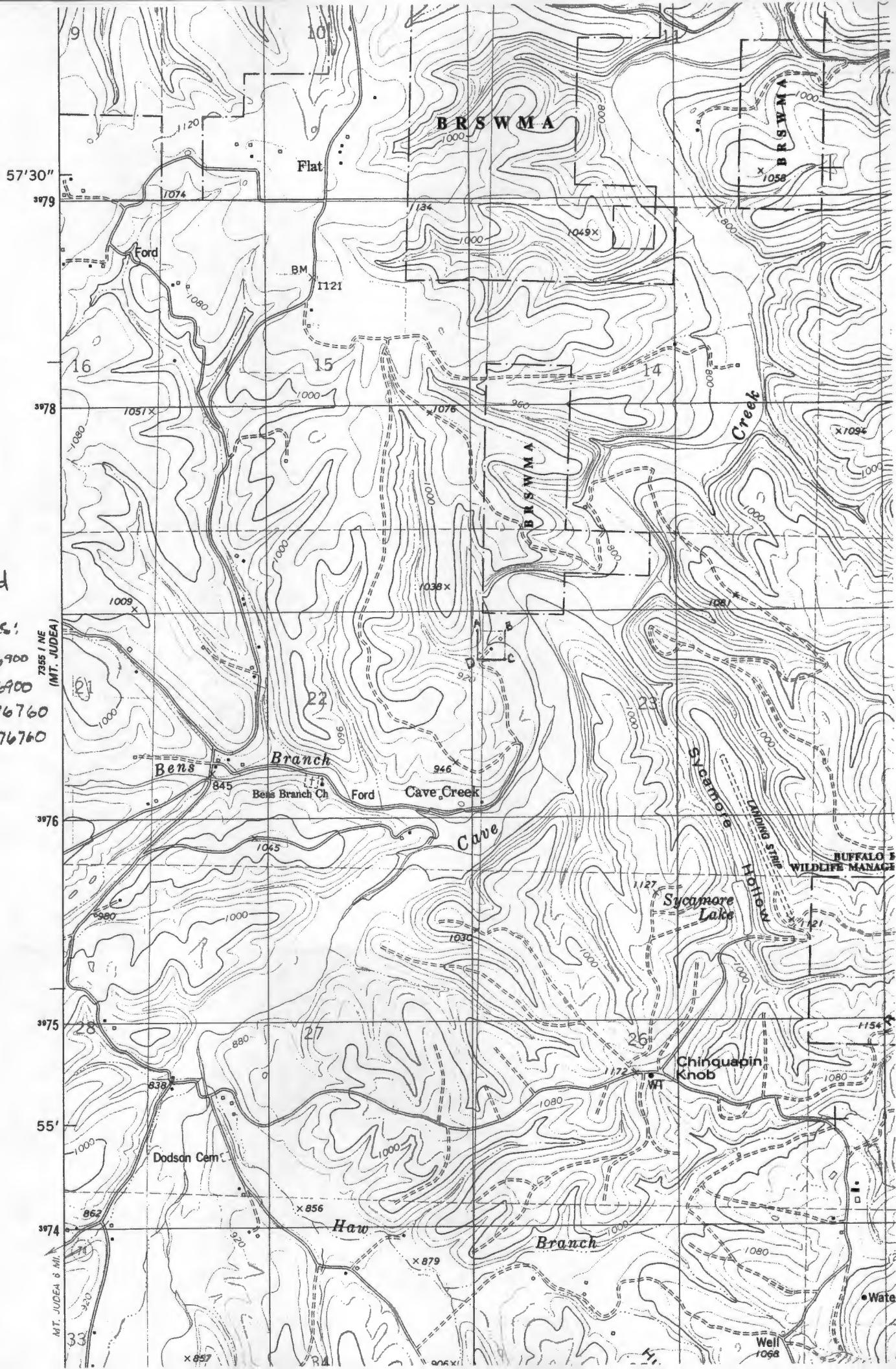
Name/Title: Amy Bennett

Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: 10/05/99

Street & Number: 1500 Tower Bldg., 323 Center St. Telephone: (501) 324-9880

City or Town: Little Rock State: AR ZIP: 72201

May Farmstead
 Newton Co., AR
 UTM References:
 A. 15/502030/3976900
 B. 15/502170/3976900
 C. 15/502170/3976760
 D. 15/502030/3976760





Any Error -

South

North



1
Ludlow, Louis, Ak

Aug 2, 1944

Aug 4, 1944

Aug 11

Southwest - Indian - Oklahoma



May Farmstead

Newton County, AR

Amey Bennett

May 1999

AHPP

Northwest elevation and western elevation
looking south east



Newton County, AK
Amy Bennett

May 1999

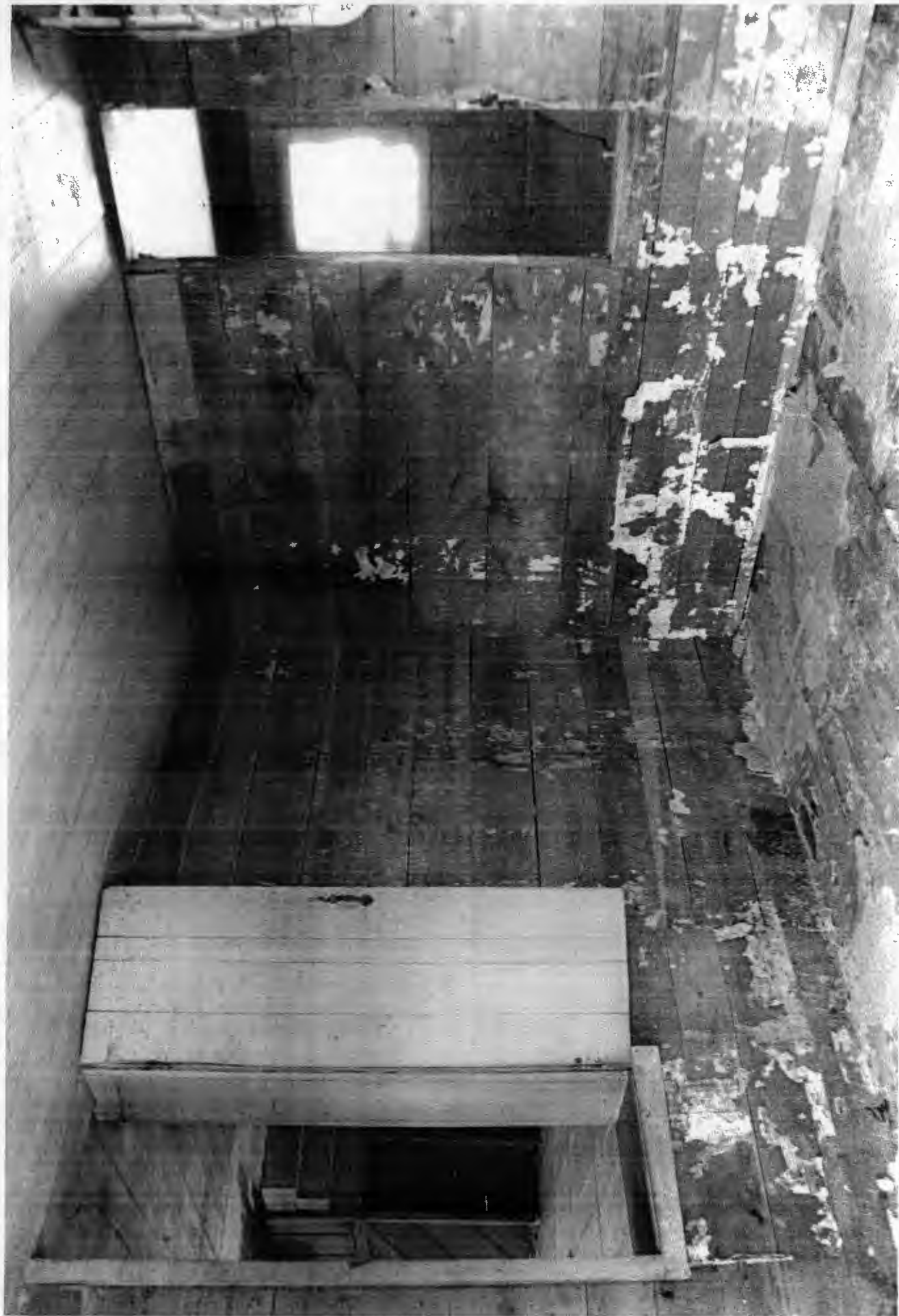
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View of northeast side with
detail of chimney, looking west



May 1999
Newton County, AR
Amy Bennett
May 1999
AHP

View of ~~past~~ northeast elevation, east and south
elevations of barn and Miss May Bluff
looking northwest



Newton County, AR
Amy Bennett
May, 1999
AHpp

Interior e. 1410 portion looking
north



Newton County, AR

Ann Bennett

May 1944

1211P

Interior view of original pen
looking north



May 1949

Newton County, AK

Amy Bennett

May, 1949

AHPP

Interior upper floor looking north



Maytarnstead

Newton County, AR

Amy Bennett

May, 1999

AHPD

Spring House, south and east elevations
looking southwest



May Farmstead
Newton County, AR
Amy Bennett
May 1992
AHPP

Barren western elevation looking northeast