

Augusta County Historical Society
Acc #50
Cyrus McCormick Farm Dedication and Letters
1966

Size: 2 folders

Scope & Content

The collection contains the following items:

1. Cyrus McCormick Farm Dedication Program which took place June 9, 1966. The farm was formally designated a National Historic Landmark.
2. International Harvester World- a copy of a 1966 magazine published by Harvester International Company, Chicago, Illinois.
3. Cyrus McCormick Farm-a pamphlet which describes the farm. On the cover is a reproduction of a painting by N.C. Wyeth of the blacksmith shop and gristmill at Walnut Grove, the home of Cyrus McCormick.
4. Four letters- **four** letters, written 1842-183, from C. Branton to Dr. C.C. Cocke that discuss the state of farming as well as personal matters. Several references are made in regard to the McCormick reaper. In the second letter, Mr.Branton writes, "Mr. McCormick of the valley of this state has devised a reaping machine which will cut 15 to 20 acres a day....I have ordered three of them, one for myself, one for..... and one for you. I thought it a safe bargain and that you would not object."

Mr. Branton in his letter of July 1, 1842 discusses farming and notes that "McCormick and his reaper is all the rage here now. If it succeeds, it will be very useful—but I doubt if it is a practical affair. I have one but it is not yet in operation."

Historical/Biographical Note

In 1841 at age 22, Cyrus McCormick designed and built the first successful horse-drawn mechanical reaper. After building nearly 100 reapers in the family workshop, Cyrus McCormick moved his operation west. He built the first McCormick factory in Chicago in 1847. By the fall of that year, 700 reapers had been produced and sold. It eventually expanded into the International Harvester Company, building and selling farm machinery, construction equipment and motor trucks. The descendants retained ownership of the McCormick farm at Steeles Tavern, Virginia until 1955 when the 635 acres was sold to the Virginia Tech Education Foundation. The entire farm except for a two-acre site on which the mill and shop are located has been turned over to the Virginia Agricultural Experimental Station.

Organization/Arrangement

Folder 1:

- (1) Cyrus McCormick Farm Dedication Program
- (2) International Harvester World (magazine)

(3) Cyrus McCormick Farm (pamphlet)
Folder 2: Four letters from C. Branton to Dr. C.C. Cocke.

Miscellaneous