

with the rural elite of the Upper Peninsula Zone, 1770-1830 +/-, is a two-story house often of brick construction and laid out on a stair-passage (most often center-passage) plan. The interiors of the dwellings of the rural elite are typically fitted with paneled fireplace walls or mantles, open stairways with turned balusters and newels, and an internally consistent hierarchy of finishes signifying the relative importance of rooms within the house. Because the dwellings of the rural elite are recognized as expressions of social and economic status, there are non-architectural features that define the property type. In the period of greatest significance, the dwellings are associated with, and occupied by, individuals ranking in the top two deciles of assessed wealth within their hundred. Furthermore, these individuals are land owners, most owning multiple farms, who are engaged in extensive commercial relations and invest in agricultural improvement and the early industrialization of agriculture.

This thematic National Register nomination was written in 1989 and resulted in the listing of ten dwellings. A list of additional dwellings that were already listed on or determined eligible for the National Register and were potentially related to the theme was included in the text of the nomination. Several of the buildings on that list are located within the Route 301 Corridor study area and face a potential impact from the proposed corridors. They include Cann Farmstead (N-3997), Eliason House (N-413), Summerton (N-112), Rumsey Farm (N-113), Cochran's Grange (N-117), Hedgelawn (N-118), and the eighteenth century farm complex at N-5149. All of these sites possess dwellings and complexes of outbuildings with the features that would make them potentially eligible for nomination within this theme. Bellvue (N-3975) no longer possesses its dwelling, but there may be evidence linked to the outbuildings and the history of the property's development that could be valuable for further expansion of the nomination.

#### **The Rebuilding of St. Georges Hundred, 1850-1880+/-**

Through the middle decades of the nineteenth century, St. Georges Hundred was the scene of extensive improvements in farming and architectural design. The drive toward agricultural reform (which began in the first quarter of the century) was allied closely with contemporary attitudes toward the purpose and appearance of rural architecture. Over an extended period of 40 years nearly every house and farm building was subject to what locals referred to as "repairs and renewals." The self-described goal of St. Georges Hundred farmers was to realize the dream of an estate. The aggressiveness with which they pursued that ambition led to the transformation of local agricultural practice and architectural design.

The emerging consensus among scholars is that rebuilding cycles are actually part of broader historical building patterns, and that a direct correlation can be established between agricultural, economic, and social forces, and architectural transformations. The term "rebuilding" is used here because that is literally what took place in mid-nineteenth century St. Georges Hundred. In this period

agricultural practice, social organization, images of domestic order, and the structure of regional economic systems were reconsidered and reformed. The most visible result was a new architecture involving the extensive alteration of old houses, redevelopment of established sites, development of new sites, and even reworking of new buildings.

Historically, the rebuilding of St. Georges Hundred has its origins in the early nineteenth century in the years prior to 1820. Through the eighteenth century and into the first two decades of the nineteenth century, building activity in St. Georges Hundred moved through a series of building cycles. These cycles can be read as generally consecutive while having substantial periods of overlap. In order, they are 1) impermanent architecture; 2) durable housing beginning as early as the close of the first generation of permanent English settlement; 3) the introduction of stair-passage plan types in the late 1740s; and 4) by the end of the eighteenth century, the pattern of separate kitchen buildings beginning to be replaced by the custom of incorporating kitchens onto the secondary and tertiary elevations of the main house as service wings or ells. By the third quarter of the eighteenth century architectural traditions of southern New Castle County in general, and St. Georges Hundred in particular, had been fully developed. At the time of the 1816 tax assessment, the majority of buildings in St. Georges Hundred were built of wood. Of the 567 taxables, only 30 percent owned land. The lack of owner-occupied housing for two-thirds of the population is significant. Almost 400 taxable individuals and their families were living in housing provided for them on other people's land. Some of these dwellings were on out plantations, but the majority seem to have been grouped around crossroads, in villages, or in close proximity to the owners' dwellings. The types of buildings these folk occupied were typically hall or hall-parlor dwellings with separate outbuildings containing the cooking functions of the household and quarters for the servants. There were, of course, the houses of the wealthy which incorporated fashionable stair-passage plans and attached service wings.

This thematic nomination contains buildings that illustrate the end of a historic period defined in agricultural and architectural terms. The patterns described in this nomination are not unique in American, Canadian, or European history, but the intensity with which they were manifested in St. Georges Hundred is remarkable. In the rebuilding period we find not only the roots of American agribusiness, but also the drive to monumentalize an American landscape through the vernacular architecture of a single community.

Individually, at least 22 of the farms on Tables 1 through 4 are eligible, or potentially eligible, for nomination to the National Register under the criteria of the existing thematic nomination *The Rebuilding of Saint Georges Hundred*. They include J. Kanely Farm (N-5226), B.F. Hanson Farm (N-5225), A. Crockett Farm (N-5224), C. Polk Estate (N-5221), The Maples (N-106), Rosedale (N-5148), S. Holton Farm (N-107), S. Burnham Farm (N-5151), N-5149, Summerton (N-112), Rumsey Farm (N-113), Cochran's Grange (N-117), Hedgelawn (N-118), Fields Heirs (N-105), R.G. Hayes House (N-5153), Armstrong-Walker House (N-5146), Achmester Farm (N-3930), Weston (N-121), J.P. Cochran Farm (N-5239), Eliason House

(N-413), J. Appleton House (U-202), and the S.H. Rothwell Farm (N-5191). The greatest period of significance for all the resources is the mid-nineteenth century, and several of the properties retain important surviving agricultural outbuildings. Together, they constitute a significant group of resources linked by their shared common agricultural environment; along with other previously listed or potentially eligible structures, they could form an integral part of a rural agricultural historic district.

The historic woodlot near Mount Pleasant could also be considered a significant part of this thematic nomination as it relates to the remaking of the agricultural landscape in the nineteenth century and is a rare surviving example of a manmade woodlot and wet meadow. Many of the properties included in this theme also possess historic planting in the yards that reach almost to the road. These are considered elements of the historic landscape and setting for the farmsteads and are part of what makes them potentially eligible for the National Register. Every effort should be made to avoid disturbing these plantings; where it becomes necessary to remove or destroy them, they should be documented thoroughly beforehand.

The S. Burnham Farm (N-5151) and the eighteenth century agricultural complex at N-5149 both require further intensive investigation; both resources appear to be abandoned at the present time and their current condition cannot be determined from the road. Both are probably eligible for nomination under the Rebuilding of St. Georges Hundred and N-5149 is most likely eligible for nomination under Dwellings of the Rural Elite as well. Both properties are definitely contributing elements to the agricultural environment and landscape of the two thematic nominations.

Of the 23 properties that are related to this theme, thirteen are already listed on the National Register. Three of the farms on Route 301 between the Maryland state line and the beginning of the Ridge and Reconstruction alternatives would require Determination of Eligibility forms (N-5226, N-5224, and N-5221). In the Ridge alternative, N-5151 and N-5149 are the only properties that would require Determination of Eligibility forms. The South Reconstruction alternative contains three properties that would need Determination of Eligibility forms under this theme and the South Modified Reconstruction contains two (N-5153, U-202, N-5191, N-5239, and the historic woodlot near Mount Pleasant).

### **Agricultural Tenancy in Central Delaware, 1770-1900**

Between 1770 and 1900, tenants occupied at least half of the farms in central Delaware at any given time. Not only did tenancy represent an accepted and respected economic alternative, but tenants in many areas fared better financially than did their owner-occupant neighbors. Tenants and tenant farms reflected a cross-section of the population and landscape of central Delaware. Agricultural tenancy played a major role in shaping the eighteenth century rural landscape and in the revival of the agricultural economy of the region in the nineteenth century. Tenancy provided one of several solutions to the