

DESCRIPTION OF RECORDED RESOURCES

1. McKennan-Klair House (CRS #N-1250). The McKennan-Klair house (Plate 2) is a brick and fieldstone dwelling built in at least two early construction phases, with additional expansion occurring in the mid-20th century. The house is set well back from the north edge of Limestone Road on a spacious lot that falls gradually toward the east. The house is oriented to face south, with the roof ridge parallel to the direction of the slope, with the result that the cellar at the east end is at grade level.

The overall form of the dwelling is that of an elongated I-house, two stories (with cellar) high and one room deep, with a short kitchen wing to the rear. The asbestos-shingled roof has a narrow box cornice and two pedimented dormers symmetrically arranged on the front slope. Window treatment is generally consistent throughout, featuring 6/9 double hung sash windows on the first story, and 6/6 on basement and second stories. The basement and first story windows have paneled wooden shutters.

The oldest section, reputed but not confirmed to date from the 1720's, comprises the west end of the structure. It is built of brick covered with stucco, and features a shallow pentroof above the second story windows on the west gable end. The section's L-shaped plan suggests a traditional two-room, hall-parlor



PLATE 2: McKennan - Klair House, View Looking Northwest

arrangement, but with the kitchen in a wing to the rear of the "hall." The three-bay facade of this section is in general symmetrically organized around a center entrance with four-light transom and paneled reveals, opening into the "parlor." The symmetry is in-exact due to the pair of side-by-side windows to the right of the entrance.

The interior of this section is plainly finished with simple moldings and plain, plastered window reveals. A fireplace located in the west wall of the "hall" has been filled in and covered. In the northwest corner of the kitchen, supported on a brick arch in the cellar, is a second fireplace. The fireplace opening is slightly arched, and measures approximately 3-1/4 feet high and 5 feet wide. Its most singular feature is its smoothly curving front. Along the east wall of the kitchen is a simple, enclosed stair.

The eastern, fieldstone, section was built in 1818 according to a date stone high in the gable end, which has flush eaves and two small attic windows. The form of this section can be described as a "2/3 Georgian I," consisting of a stair hall with a single room to one side. The three-bay facade features an entry with four-light transom and paneled reveals, to left of center. The walk-in basement is entered at the east end, where a large cooking fireplace, about 4-1/2 feet high and 6 feet wide with a heavy timber lintel slightly cambered at the bottom, is located immediately to the right of the entry.

The upper floors of this section are carefully finished with details derived from Federal influence. On the first floor, panels of very narrow, shallow reeding ornament the deep parlor window reveals, the rear doorway jambs, and the apron below the stairs. Architraves have simple, but strongly-articulated, moldings and unmolded, square corner blocks. The fireplace mantel is designed as a broad entablature supported by pairs of attenuated, reeded, engaged colonnettes. The ends of the entablature, above the colonnettes, are slightly advanced and each bears a reeded oval medallion. At the center is another slightly advanced section displaying a reeded fan. Below the mantel shelf is a narrow reeded band in a herringbone pattern. The fireplace opening is edged with a narrow molding with recessed bulls-eye corner blocks.

The main stair features a very slender columnar newel, square balusters, and a simple railing shaped as a 3/4-round molding. The second floor bedroom has plastered window reveals, six-panel doors with iron latches, in simple architrave moldings, and a fireplace mantel with reeded pilasters.

Two 20th-century additions occur at the rear. A small lean-to extension was made to the kitchen wing in 1954, and a larger one-room unit, on a concrete foundation with large expanses of glazing, was built behind the stone section in 1974. These elements, however, have not compromised the overall integrity of the building's historical form. A shed-roofed porch, with chamfered

wood posts on stone bases, extends across four bays of the facade. This feature is likely of late 19th-century derivation.

Also on the property are a small frame woodshed with lean-to roof, and two late 19th-century wooden shed or shop structures with vertical board siding and front gable orientation, that have been remodeled and enlarged for storage space. These structures can be considered contributing elements in the complex, but are not of individual importance. Most noteworthy, apart from the dwelling, is a gable-roofed, stone springhouse located on a small creek that runs behind the house.

Most of the agricultural activities associated with the property took place on the opposite side of Limestone Road, where a large, stone bank barn, with an 1823 date stone, was extant until the late 1970s when it was removed for a housing development.

Local tradition attributes the earliest portion of the house to John Ball, a blacksmith who acquired the property in 1706 (see Table 10, Summary of Deed Transactions of the Armor Property, in Catts et al. 1986, p. 146). The first documented mention of a house on the property is found in the Mill Creek Hundred tax list for 1804, in which a brick house and frame barn valued at \$400 are noted. At this time the property was owned by the Reverend William McKennan, who had acquired it in 1756. McKennan, a Scotch-Irish immigrant, was pastor of the Red Clay Creek Presbyterian Church from 1758 until his death in 1809. The

following year, McKennan's heirs sold 130 acres to Frederick Klair of Plymouth Township, Montgomery County, PA. Klair appears to have made many improvements to the property, as it was valued for tax purposes at \$4,100 in 1816. Two years later he had expanded the house by building the finely-appointed stone addition on the east end, and by 1823 had completed a substantial stone bank barn on the south side of Limestone Road. The farm remained in the Klair family through the rest of the 19th century. Although large portions have been sold over the years, the house and its associated structures remain in the hands of a Klair descendant.

2. Aquila Derrickson House (CRS #N-211). The Aquila Derrickson house (Plate 3) is located on a 1.5-acre lot on the west side of Limestone Road. The lot rises some 15 feet above the roadway, there by giving the house considerable visual prominence. A semicircular driveway extends up from the road and around the back of the house, where it passes a shed-roofed frame garage. The treeless front yard falls in a series of broad terraces, bisected by a flight of concrete steps, to the highway. Vegetation consists of several small conifers at the south end of the house, scattered shade trees, and low, neatly-trimmed hedges around the front and north side of the house.

The house, oriented to face northeast, is a 2-1/2 story structure built of local fieldstone covered with stucco. The massing consists of a side-gable main block and short ell, with a



PLATE 3: Aquila Derrickson House, View Looking Northwest

small, 2-story gabled frame unit attached to the latter. The gable roofs have synthetic shingles; the wooden box cornice has partial returns. Stuccoed interior chimneys and pairs of small fixed-light attic windows are located at each gable end. A small diamond-shaped date stone, which reads "A. Derrickson 1846," is set high on the north gable.

The main elevation is symmetrically arranged as six bays, with a pair of entrances in the center two bays and round-headed dormers above the second and fifth bays. Each entrance features deep, paneled reveals and five-light transoms. The left door has five molded panels, while the upper half of the right-hand door is glazed. The full-length front porch (which is perhaps from the later 19th or early 20th century) has a shed roof, wood floor, and chamfered posts, between which are frieze panels of wood latticework.

Window openings in the stone portion of the house are fitted with double hung sash in very narrow surrounds, with wood lintels and sills. On the facade, the first floor openings (which are tightly shuttered) are very tall, suggesting 6/9 light sash, while those above (and elsewhere in the stone part) have 6/6 sash. First floor shutters are paneled, while those of the second story are louvered. The 2-bay frame unit at the west end of the stone ell has 2/2 double hung sash. In general, fenestration on the sides and rear is more informal than that of the front. The rear also has a series of shed-roofed porches ranged around the

re-entrant angle formed by the main block and ell. These porches, which have plain wood posts and cement floors, are of 20th century origin but do not interfere with the overall character of the house.

Although the setting of the house has been considerably altered through loss of outbuildings and by recent adjacent construction of a church (to the south) and large office building (to the north), the Derrickson house preserves its historical location on high ground above Limestone Road. The house itself retains integrity of design, materials and workmanship, the design intent of its builder readily appreciable.

The house was built in 1846 for (or by) Aquila Derrickson, who in 1844 acquired adjacent parcels of land on the south side of Limestone Road from the estate of Benjamin Springer and from Thomas Brown of New Garden Township, PA (N.C. Co. Deeds, N5/477, F4/456). With his wife, Margaret, he had four children, Calvin, Joseph, Bayard and Sarah, but died intestate in 1881. Aquila Derrickson's inventory clearly conveys his agricultural livelihood (wheat, corn), and also indicates that he was owner of a mill for the processing of a fiber crop, such as hemp or flax, or wool (items listed include a set of cards, a mule, a boiler, and tanks, ricker, and reel). His participation, however modest, in the larger economy of the nation is indicated by his holding 1/4 interest worth \$1250 in a mortgage on a Nevada silver mine (Inventory of Aquila Derrickson, Jan. 7, 1882).

Within the next year, Aquila Derrickson's farmlands had been divided among his three sons, with Bayard purchasing the tract on which this house is located from the other heirs (N.C. Co. Deeds, T12/88). Nineteenth century maps indicate that Bayard Derrickson retained ownership of the property at least to 1893 (Beers 1868; Hopkins 1881; Baist 1893). Although no record of the conveyance has been located, the property eventually came into the possession of heirs of Bayard's brother, Calvin, and was sold to the present owners by Calvin's grandson, Calvin Harvey Ball, in 1960 (N.C. Co. Deeds, L66/331).

3. James H. Walker House (Pennington House (CRS #N-4094)). The Walker house (Plate 4) is situated at the southeast corner of Limestone Road and a now-dead-end roadway that passes beside a new office building. The wood frame dwelling, clad in synthetic shingling, is two stories high on a concrete-covered masonry basement. The massing is roughly T-shaped, in which a broad front gable unit with a two-level polygonal bay projects from a one-room-deep, side-gable block. A diminutive one-room gabled unit is centered at the rear. Window arrangement is informal, with variation in size and occurrence (singly or in pairs) of the 1/1 double hung sash. Porches to either side of the front gable have shed roofs and turned corner posts.

This house was built about 1900 by James Henry Walker, according to his granddaughter, Sara P. Evans (personal communication, April 1, 1986). It was erected on the site of a

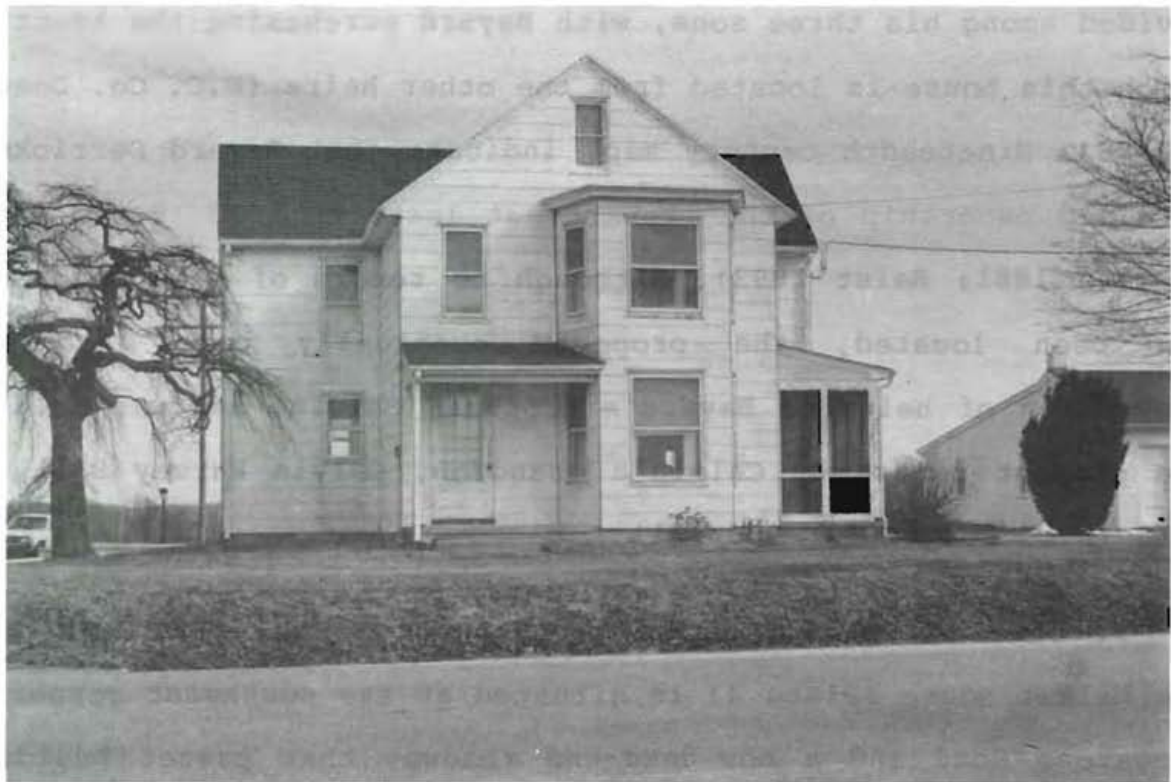


PLATE 4: James H. Walker House (Pennington House), View Looking Northeast

wheelwright shop (demolished by Walker) that had been associated with the Mermaid Tavern across the road during the Tavern's period as a commercial establishment, which ended around 1875. Walker built this house as a residence for himself; the Mermaid, which he also owned, was rented to tenants who farmed the once-extensive acreages held by the Walker family between Pike Creek and Limestone Road.

4. Donald Ross House (CRS #N-4251). The Donald Ross house (Plate 5) is sited on high ground on the west side of Limestone Road. It consists of a 2 1/2-story side gable main block of fieldstone, oriented to face west, and a 1 1/2-story wood frame ell off the rear (east). The fieldstone walls of the main block extend only to the upper edge of the second story windows, the gable ends being frame with clapboard cladding. The fenestration of the west and north sides features, on the first story, two windows with an entrance centered between them, and on the second story, two windows over those below. The south side has two windows on each floor. Each entrance has a single-light transom panel; windows have 6/6 wood sash in plain surrounds with narrow molded edges and wood sills. A recent shed-roofed dormer extends the full width of the front slope of the roof. An exterior fieldstone chimney stack is located on the east side, where the ridge of the roof of the ell meets the stone section. The frame ell, clad in wide clapboard, has an entrance on the south side, asymmetrically placed between 6/6 windows in flat frames with



PLATE 5: Donald Ross House, View Looking Northwest

narrow cornices, and sheltered by a shed-roofed porch with square posts and flagstone floor. The upper story is illuminated by a window in the east gable end and by a small wall dormer on the south side.

The interior has been remodeled for office use, with walls newly-plastered and fluorescent lighting installed. Features that remain include the open stair running along the east wall of the stone section, which features stock Craftsman-type square balusters and newel, and on the second floor, several doors with five horizontal panels and glass knobs.

According to information from the New Castle County Department of Planning, this dwelling was built as a tenant house in the 1930's under the ownership of Donald Ross (Del. BAHP CRS File, Former No. N-1107). The property was originally part of much larger holdings of the Chambers family, to one member of which, John Chambers, the large bank barn to the south has been attributed. The house may represent a reconstruction of some previously existing building; Ross was also responsible for a major reconstruction of the barn, which in recent years has been remodeled for office use.

5. Harmony School (CRS #N-202). Harmony School, District No. 32 (Plate 6), is located on the east side of Limestone Road almost opposite the intersection with Route 72. It is a 1 1/2-story front-gable structure of stuccoed stone. Each side wall



PLATE 6: Harmony School , View Looking Northeast

has three regularly-spaced windows. Shed-roofed additions have been built across the original front (south) and rear elevations, and new chimneys built on the north end and at the southwest corner. The interior has been remodeled for residential use. A hipped-roofed bell platform, with bell, dating to 1907, remains near the south gable end as a reminder of the structure's original use.

Harmony School, built in 1845, served the local agrarian community until 1959, and as such remains an important artifact of rural life along Limestone Road (Catts et al. 1986:218-219). It is the second school of that name, the first having been built around 1817 about 1/2 mile north on the opposite side of Limestone Road. This structure and its lot were sold in 1845, and which time the District Commissioners acquired the lot opposite present Route 72, and arranged for construction of the building that remains today.

5A. Edward Naudain Property (CRS #N-4287). This complex, located on Route 72 west of Limestone Road, includes a dwelling, barn, garage/machine shed and a range of poultry sheds (Plates 7,8). The house is a 2-story rectangular structure of wood frame construction on a cast concrete block foundation. The roof is oriented with a clipped gable end at the front, above a two-bay facade with full length porch, two-thirds of which has been fully enclosed. Fenestration of the sides and rear is informal, with windows of varying dimensions occurring singly and in pairs. The exterior is covered with synthetic siding.



PLATE 7: Naudain House, View Looking North



PLATE 8: Outbuildings, Naudain House Property , View Looking North

The barn and garage/machine shed are timber frame structures on masonry footings, clad in vertical beaded tongue-in-groove board siding. Both have large sliding doors centered in their south walls, below side-gable roofs the eaves of which show projecting rafter ends. The poultry sheds, west of the house, have flat slanted roofs and walls of rough vertical planking.

The structures in this complex appear to date from the first quarter of this century in terms of forms and materials, and may represent construction for a tenant family. The land on which they are located is historically associated with the Chambers family, members of which lived and farmed along Limestone Road through much of the 19th century.

6. David Chambers House (CRS #N-1107). The David Chambers house (Plate 9) is located near the west side of Limestone Road north of Route 72. It consists of a two-story, side-gable stuccoed fieldstone block with additions to the south and west. The original fieldstone section has an informally-arranged four-bay facade reflecting the two-room, hall-parlor plan (altered ca. 1930 with relocation of the interior bearing wall) of its original construction. Interior gable-end chimneys mark the location of fireplaces, one of which, at the south end, has been filled in. The main entrance, which is set directly at grade, has an eight-panel door set within deep reveals with molded panels on beaded tongue-in-groove boarding. A "shadow" on the stucco above the entrance indicates the former presence of a porch. Windows



PLATE 9: David Chambers House, View Looking Northwest

have 6/6 replacement sash in narrow surrounds edged with quarter-round molding. On the interior, the reveals are splayed, and in the parlor and room above it are framed with plainly-molded architraves. In the parlor, full-height built-in cupboards with paneled door are located to one side of the remaining fireplace, which appears to have been remodeled.

The original, enclosed winding stair, located on the other side of the parlor fireplace, has been removed. The existing stair, installed ca. 1930, is a Craftsman-type feature with square newel post and balusters, running along the west wall of the parlor. The upper floor, although repartitioned to accommodate the later stair and hall, retains wide board flooring and several vertical beaded plank doors with late 18th or early 19th century hardware. During remodeling of the house, ca. 1930, a large two-story wing was added to the west side, and one of the angles thus formed was subsequently filled in with an expansively-glazed sunporch. A garage was also added to the south end of the house.

According to Catts et al. (1986:104) this property came into Chambers family ownership around 1816. In 1821, Isaac Chambers conveyed the property to David Chambers, who resided here until his death in 1852. At that time, Chambers having died intestate, his farm was divided, with 28 1/4 acres, including the stone house, assigned to his widow, Elizabeth, as tenant in dower. The other half was eventually divided among his nieces and nephews,

with John W. Chambers receiving three-quarters (New Castle Co. Orphans Court Records, VI/116; VI/343; VI/446). John W. Chambers eventually obtained possession of Elizabeth's 28 1/4 acres, and when he did in 1869 his widow, Mary Jane, inherited the tract. In 1889 she conveyed the tract to her son, Isaac Newton Chambers (N.C. Co. Deeds, M14/482). Following the latter's death in 1910, his son William H. took possession of the tract, but was forced to sell it in 1928 in payment of a mortgage debt. (N.C. Co. Deeds, W35/483). The purchaser, William P. Naudain, was responsible for the major remodeling and expansion that occurred around 1930.

7. Samuel Dennison House (CRS #N-1090). The Samuel Dennison house (Plate 10) is situated on a small lot on the west side of Lime-stone Road. A range of wood and cement block sheds is located on adjacent property behind the house to the west.

The house, built in 1876 according to a date stone in the south gable, is a 2-1/2 story structure on a full basement. It is constructed of local fieldstone, with side-gable orientation and an L-shaped plan. The exterior is stuccoed, except on the facade. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles and the aluminum-covered box cornice has partial returns at each of the three gable ends. The west and south gable ends feature stuccoed interior chimneys with corbelled caps. An exterior cinder block chimney on the north end appears to be a replacement.



PLATE 10: Samuel Dennison House, View Looking Southwest

Fenestration is very regular, arranged as 5 over 5 on the facade and 2 over 2 on the ell and the side elevations. Windows have 2/2 double hung sash in narrow molded surrounds with drip shelves and timber lug sills. At attic level in each gable end are pairs of small fixed-light sash.

The centered main entry has paneled reveals, a flat, glazed transom panel and three-light sidelights, plus narrow pilasters with half-round moldings terminating in simple brackets. The door itself has four strongly-articulated panels, the upper two with round-arched tops. Other entries, with plain architrave moldings, are located on the south side of the ell and on the rear of the main block.

Alterations to the exterior consist chiefly of removal of shutters (stored in the cellar); a screened front veranda with paneled concrete pedestals, chamfered wood posts with molded caps, and tongue-in-groove flooring and ceiling; and a series of lean-to frame units, clad variously in wood and asphalt shingling, that extend south off the end of the rear ell.

The interior plan of the main block is of the "Georgian I" type, with one room to either side of a center stair hall. Features include deep, curved window reveals, simple wood mantels framing stove flues, quarter-turn staircase with turned balusters and newel post; and tall doors with four vertical panels in simple molded frames (some surmounted by moveable glazed transom

panels). In the cellar can be seen sturdy chamfered posts supporting the floor beams, and also the brick corbels, high in the walls, that support the gable-end chimney stacks. A sub-basement at the west end of the ell contains a vaulted well chamber, the opening of which has been partly filled in.

Few significant alterations have occurred in the interior. Bathrooms have been modernized, and the south front room has been partitioned to create a combination kitchen-dining area. On the second floor, two bedrooms in the north end of the main block have been remodeled as a single large room, but the interior trim remains intact.

The land on which this house is situated was part of a 96-acre tract purchased by Robert Dennison in 1824 from Richard Chambers of White Clay Hundred (N.C. Co. Deeds, D4/60). Robert Dennison died intestate in 1852; the farm was sold to pay his debts, but was brought back that same year into family ownership by Samuel, one of Robert's three sons (N.C. Co. Deeds, K6/86). Samuel and his wife, Elizabeth, resided on the farm, which at the time of their acquisition included a log house and frame barn (Mill Creek Hundred Tax Assessments, 1852). Under their ownership, the present farmhouse was erected in 1876, the event commemorated in the gable-end date stone bearing their initials. In 1894 Samuel Dennison sold the farm to a son, John W. Dennison (as he had previously sold another farm to another son, Robert), but probably remained on the home farm until his death, which

occurred within the next six years (N.C. Co. Deeds, L16/382). At the time of John W. Dennison's death (1901) the farm supported a dairy operation in addition to producing wheat, corn and hay. In his will, John Dennison requested that his heirs "remain on the home farm" until the younger son, Horace, reached his majority (N.C. Co. Wills, X2/171; inventory of John W. Dennison, filed Nov. 14, 1901). In 1907, the older son, Frank G. Dennison, took possession of the farm, on which he established a poultry facility and a farm machinery business subsequently inherited by his sons Frank, Jr. and Howard, respectively, in 1955 (N.C. Co. Deeds, K21/233; N.C. Co. Register of Wills, File #34608). The property was sold out of the family in 1977. The current owner resides in the farmhouse and rents the outbuildings (under separate ownership), some of which appear to date from Frank Dennison's ownership, as part of a trucking concern.

8. James Ocheltree House (CRS #N-1095). The James Ocheltree house (Plate 11) commands a prominent site on the east side of Limestone Road. Once part of a farmstead, the house has recently been remodeled and now provides office space for the new housing development that is under construction east and south of the house. A barn on the property was extant in 1978, but has since been removed. No other farm structures or domestic outbuildings remain on the property.

The Ocheltree house is 2-1/2 stories high, of stuccoed fieldstone on a full basement. The massing consists of a side-



PLATE 11: James Ocheltree House, View Looking Southeast

gable main block with interior gable-end chimneys, oriented to face west, and an ell of the same materials, to which a 2-story frame unit has been recently added at the east end. A garage on the north end was added about 1972. The facade of the house is symmetrically divided into five bays, with a centered entrance set in a Greek Revival-style molded frame with sidelights and multi-light transom. A porch with thick Tuscan Doric wood columns and dentil cornice extends the width of the facade. A secondary entrance in the south end has a narrow paneled door with four-light transom. Window openings are fitted with 6/6 double hung sash, the frames of which are obscured by stucco. The wood shutters are paneled on the first story, louvred on the second. Two round-headed dormers with small 6/6 windows are symmetrically arranged on the front roof slope.

The house was abandoned and subject to vandalism for several years prior to its acquisition and rehabilitation by the current owner. In addition, a fire destroyed the then-existing extension off the ell, and resulted in loss of interior features such as the original stair and portions of original trim. Remaining, however, are curved, plastered window reveals; two first-floor fireplaces with engaged Ionic colonnettes and inset oval and lozenge-shaped panels; and narrow warming cupboards built into the sides of the chimney breasts. The basic room arrangement of the main block, consisting of a center stair hall with one room to each side, has also been preserved.

The house was built for James Ocheltree, who acquired several large tracts of land from the estates of his in-laws, Robert Bines and Maxell Bines, in 1810 and 1812 (New Castle Co. Deeds K3/516; I3/105). By the time of Ocheltree's death in 1839, there were two houses on his farm, an "old dwelling house" and a "new dwelling house lately erected." By this indication in Ocheltree's will (N.C. Co. Wills T1/450) it can be surmised that the house was erected around the middle or late 1830's, a date not out of keeping with the form and remaining features of the building. In his will, James Ocheltree bequeathed 1/3 of the annual "profits and proceeds" of the farm to his widow, Margaret, on the understanding that she would contribute 1/3 the cost of "any stock for the purposed of grazing for the market or in the business of dairying."

In December 1839, Margaret Ocheltree conveyed her rights in the farm property, for a consideration described as "natural love and affection and \$5," to her son, Maxwell Bines Ocheltree, who is recorded as a Constable for New Castle County and Mill Creek Hundred in 1833 and 1834 (N.C. Co. Deeds, E5/162; N.C. Co. Deeds, R4/144; S4/82). Maxwell Ocheltree and his wife, Elizabeth, lived in Wilmington, apparently renting the Mill Creek Hundred farm to tenants. This arrangement was intended to continue, according to his will, after his death (which occurred in 1884), until his youngest son Samuel reached the age of 26 (N.C. Co. Wills, H2/27), at which time the farm was to be sold. The will also

required Elizabeth to "buy and spread upon the farm annually, 500 bushels of lime, or its equivalent of bones," to maintain the fertility of the soil.

Elizabeth Ocheltree died only 4 years later, in 1888, still in possession of the farm. Her will provided for the partition of the farm into thirds, each third held by one or two brothers in trust for another, who would receive the income and whose children would receive "the principal and corpus" of the share upon his death (N.C. Co. wills, L2/219). By some means, Maxwell Ocheltree came into possession of the entire farm, and sold it at public sale to Samuel McDaniel of Wilmington in 1903. By 1929 it had passed into the holdings of the Renappi Corporation, along with a number of other tracts on Limestone Road and elsewhere in Mill Creek Hundred. It was apparently held for development purposes which are now being realized through DiSabatino Homes, Inc.

9. Gutherie-Dennison Farmstead (CRS #N-1096). The Gutherie-Dennison farmstead is an agricultural complex consisting of a main house, barn, tenant house, and range of dilapidated poultry sheds. The complex is set some 400 feet back from the east side of Limestone Road on fairly level ground. A line of conifers stands as a windbreak close to the north side of the house, and scattered shade trees occur in the farmyard area.

The farmhouse (Plate 12) is an L-plan gable-roofed structure of stretcher-bond brick construction on a fieldstone basement.

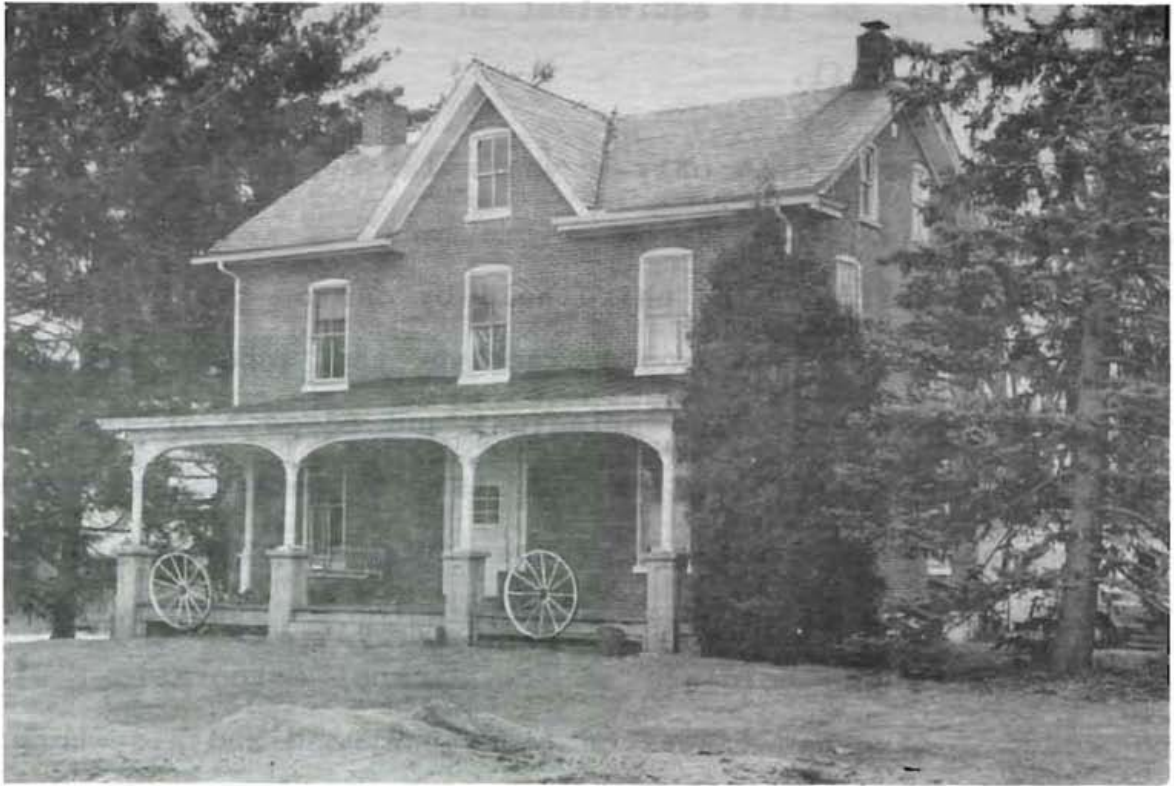


PLATE 12: Robert Dennison House, View Looking Northeast

The overall form is of the I-type (two stories high, one room deep, side-gable orientation) with an integral rear ell. The roof has synthetic shingles and box cornice with partial gable-end returns. Fenestration is balanced, with the facade symmetrically divided into three bays, and each side elevation divided into two bays. Window openings have segmental brick arches, timber sills, and 2/2 wood double-hung sash. Symmetry of the facade is emphasized by the attic-level gabled wall dormer centered above the entrance. The latter is of the Greek Revival type, with six-light transom and three-light sidelights. The original glazing has been replaced with vividly colored panes of glass, and the entrance has been sealed by the current tenants with an exterior wood panel. A full-length veranda features concrete pedestals supporting chamfered wooden posts, between which are shallow "arches" with paneled spandrels. The rear ell is two stories, two bays long and one room deep. To it is attached a brick unit with shed roof, and to this brick unit is attached a 1-story stuccoed frame addition.

The interior plan of the main block is arranged with a center stair hall flanked by a single room to each side. The gable-end chimneys serve stove hearths, each of which has a simple wood mantel. The staircase features turned balusters and a ten-sided newel post. Woodwork is characterized by simple stock moldings; most interior doors have four vertical panels and glazed, moveable transoms. The south bedroom retains an original pair of

sliding pocket doors by which the space can be divided into two smaller rooms.

The house has two date stones. One in the south gable has the date 1886, to which the house corresponds in terms of form, materials and features. The second date stone, reading "1822", is located in the north gable. It was very likely retained from an earlier house on or near the site of the existing dwelling.

The barn (Plate 13) is located southeast of the main house, and is oriented perpendicular to the house, with the cattle shed facing south. The barn is of the bank type, with a center aisle flanked by two-level haymows. The exterior walls are of fieldstone, and the interior is framed with bents of hewn and sawed timbers, with mortise and tenon joining of the principal members. At the east gable end is a full-height, roughly square unit of fieldstone which contains the remains of a wooden silo. At the forebay area on the south, there is a large gabled hay shed addition, supported on fieldstone piers and clad in vertical board siding, which creates an expanded cattle shed at ground level. On the north side, an earthen ramp with fieldstone retaining walls rises to a timber framed covered "bridge" spanning a 15 to 20 foot space between the ramp and the barn proper. Extending beneath the "bridge" is a rutted drive leading to a small fieldstone and wood frame granary set in the reentrant angle formed by the barn's foundation and the ramp. A date stone in the west gable of the barn contains the date 1825 and the initials A



PLATE 13: Alexander Guthrie Barn, View Looking Southeast

E G. The current tenant of the property believes that the forebay extension was built ca. 1913.

Between the barn and main house is a side-gable, 1-1/2 story clapboarded frame structure that appears to have been built early in this century, perhaps as a tenant house. It has been remodeled as a garage, with wide vehicle doors and a "carport" on the west side. Northeast of the farmhouse is a long range of low, gable-roofed sheds, set gable end to gable end, that appear to date from the early-to mid-20th century and may have originally housed poultry. They are now either empty, used for storage, or for sheep.

The bank barn (the oldest structure in the complex) was built, according to the date stone, in 1825 by Alexander Guthrie, who inherited the farm from his father (also named Alexander) in 1810 (N.C. Co. Wills, Q1/413). Its distinctive features include the two-level haymows to either side of the center aisle, the curious covered "bridge" between the earthen ramp and barn proper, and the unusual stone-enclosed wood silo on the east end.

When Alexander Guthrie died in 1860, his will provided for the sale of his holdings east of Limestone Road (N.C. Co. Wills, X1/367). The following year, the Guthrie farmstead was purchased by Samuel Dennison, whose home farm lay to the south on the west side of the road (N.C. Co. Deeds, M7/421). In time, Samuel's son,

Robert, came to occupy the old Gutherie farm, living as a tenant until his father formally conveyed the property to him in 1890 (N.C. Co. Deeds, X14/427). The farmhouse, with date stone of 1886, was thus built during Samuel Dennison's ownership but very probably for Robert Dennison, who lived here until his death in 1909. The dwelling, although its use of brick is somewhat unusual along Limestone Road with its lingering 19th-century tradition of fieldstone construction, remained firmly in local tradition as evidenced in its I-house form and the distinctive centered gable that appeared on many 19th-century expressions of this house type, both in this area and further south in Delaware.

Robert Dennison died intestate, and upon the order of the Orphans' Court his farm was sold at public sale in 1910 (N.C. Co. Deeds, W22/116). The purchaser was his nephew Horace P. Dennison, to whom expansion of the barn for dairying, plus erection of many of the poultry sheds, can probably be attributed. Horace Dennison died in 1955, and five years later his heirs sold the property to the Catholic Diocese of Wilmington (N.C. Co. Deeds, 065/596). Tenants now used the property for dairying, sheep, and a small landscape concern.

10. Hannah Gutherie Farmstead (CRS #N-9580). This property is a farmstead consisting of a dwelling, barn, garage, and assortment of agricultural sheds. It is located on the northwest corner of the Limestone Road-Little Baltimore Road intersection, with the principal structures located on slightly elevated ground

near Limestone Road. The land falling gradually to the west includes fallow field and barnyard areas dotted with metal corncribs, feeding troughs and large concrete and/or metal sheds.

The farmhouse (Plate 14) is an L-plan structure built in two phases. The first phase (ca. 1860) is a two-story, side-gable, single-pile block of stuccoed fieldstone constructed on a fieldstone basement. The symmetrical, three-bay facade, oriented to the south, has a center entrance with two-light transom and a shed-roofed screened porch across two of the bays, and a wooden cornice with crude "modillions." The west wall has no openings, but the east end has two small square windows at attic level, two sash windows at second story level, and an entrance and window at first story level. This entry is framed with an applied architrave with triangular pediment and fluted pilasters. Both gable ends terminate in interior chimney stacks, and have eaves flush with the walls. Window openings have timber lintels and sills, and are fitted with 6/6 double hung sash in very narrow frames.

The second phase of construction (from the later 19th century) is a two-story, single-pile ell of stuccoed brick on a fieldstone foundation. The east wall has two bays, with two 6/6 windows on each story that are not exactly lined up with those of the stone section. The ell has a gable roof with box cornice and eaves slightly projecting over the north wall to encompass an interior gable-end chimney. Fenestration of the north wall is asymmetrical, and includes both 6/6 and 2/2 sash.



PLATE 14: Hannah Guthrie House, View Looking West

Subsequent to completion of the ell, a shed-roofed enclosed rear entry unit was added along the west side. Other features which do not appear to have been part of the first two construction phases include the front porch and the "pseudoclassical" modillion cornice and east entry architrave.

The outbuildings in the complex appear to date from the late 19th and early 20th centuries to the very recent past. Chief among them is a bank barn, set close to Limestone Road, with an earthen ramp and center-aisle entry on the east side (Plate 15). The barn, clad with synthetic shingling, is framed with circular-sawed timber bents with mortise and tenon joining, on a high fieldstone foundation. The T-plan of the gable roofs encompasses an extended forbay/hay shed supported on fieldstone piers that has been further extended through addition of another gabled unit, thereby creating a large cattle shed beneath the barn's superstructure. The shed area has been still further enlarged by construction of a range of lean-to units along the south side. Other structures on the farmstead include a timber-framed garage with board-and-batten siding, fieldstone foundation and corrugated metal roof; a corrugated metal machine shed; and, to the northwest of the barn a silage pit and several wood, metal and cement-block animal sheds and troughs.

The land on which the farmstead is located was purchased in 1792 by Alexander Guthrie, whose home plantation lay on the east side of Limestone Road to the south (N.C. Co. Deeds, M7/421).

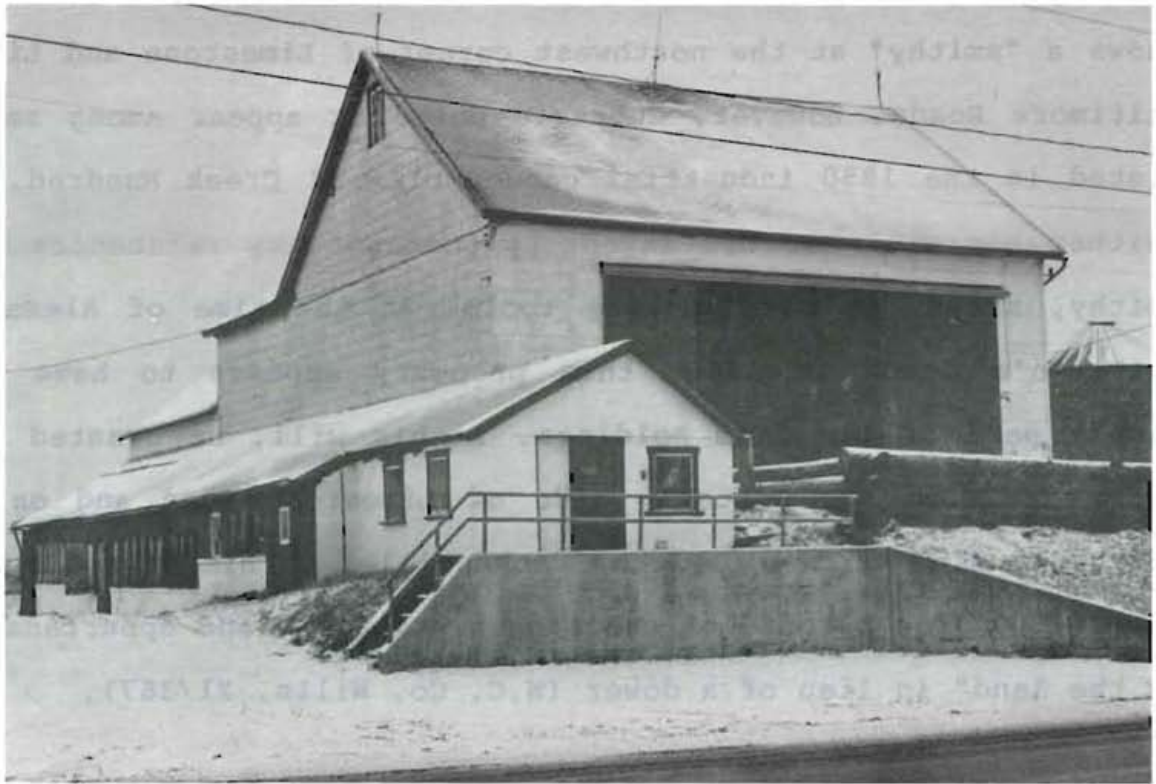


PLATE 15: Bank Barn, Hannah Guthrie Farmstead, View Looking West

Gutherie's lands passed to his son, also named Alexander, in 1810 (N.C. Co. Wills, Q1/413). The 1849 Rea and Price map of Delaware shows a "smithy" at the northwest corner of Limestone and Little Baltimore Roads. However, Gutherie does not appear among smiths listed in the 1850 industrial census of Mill Creek Hundred, and neither his will nor his inventory contains any references to a smithy, shops, or metalworking tools. At the time of Alexander Gutherie's death in 1860, this property appears to have been simply part of his farm holdings. In his will, he granted "all that part...on the westerly side of Limestone Road and on the northerly side of the road to Brackenville" to his wife, Hannah, plus \$2000 "for purpose of erecting a homestead and appurtenances on the land" in lieu of a dower (N.C. Co. Wills, X1/367).

Original construction of the house on this property can thus be reasonably dated to the early 1860s when it would have been home to Hannah Gutherie and her minor son, Alexander. The latter subsequently inherited the property, but may not have resided here as an adult, as at the time he sold the property (to James and Sarah Faulkner) in 1918, he was living in Hockessin (N.C. Co. Deeds, V27/442). The farm remained in active use, however, as evidenced by the barn and garage that appear to be of late 19th or early 20th century origins, and by the subsequent expansion of the barn for dairying. The property remained in the Faulkner family until 1938, when it was sold to Joseph and Paul Mitchell, who included it among their own family's dairy farm holdings

(N.C. Co. Deeds, U40/216). It continues to be used for agricultural purposes today under the ownership of Edward Williams, who acquired it in 1976.

11. Tweed's Tavern (CRS #N-1101). The building known as Tweed's Tavern (Plate 16) is located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Limestone and Valley Roads. The main part of the structure is two stories high and one room deep, with side-gable orientation to the northeast. The exterior is stuccoed and trimmed with aluminum shutters and aluminum-covered box cornice. The windows are fitted with modern 6/6 sash. A portion of this part of the structure (the interior of which has been gutted and rebuilt) is reported to be constructed of hewn logs above a fieldstone basement, and as such, it is believed to represent the remains of the log tavern structure associated with this corner from perhaps the late 18th century to the middle of the 19th century. Across almost the entire front is a shed-roofed wood frame unit consisting of one large room. At the rear is a large two-story gabled addition, of frame construction covered with stucco. This section was built in 1982.

Historically, this corner is associated with the second of two taverns (the other being the Mermaid) known to have operated on Limestone Road prior to about the middle of the 19th century. According to Catts et al. (1986:117-119) a tavern was operating here prior to 1801, under Ezekiel Reece. James Tweed, from whom the site derives its name, acquired the property in



PLATE 16: Tweed's Tavern, View Looking Southwest

1802 and operated the business as the Mudfort Tavern. By 1849, the tavern was no longer active, as the Rea and Price map of that year simply shows the site belonging to Thomas Baldwin (while the still-active Mermaid is so designated on the same and subsequent maps). That the tavern was of log construction was substantiated by the 1804 tax list for Mill Creek Hundred, and that the structure was still extant in 1852 is indicated by the tax list for that year.

12. Robert Miller House (CRS #N-4292). The Miller House (Plate 17) is situated north of Tweed's Tavern on the west side of Limestone Road. The stuccoed frame structure has a T-plan consisting of a two-story side-gable main block and one-story gabled rear wing. The front on the house features two first floor windows with an entrance off-center between them, and a lean-to porch roof supported on wood posts set on a concrete floor. The second floor front windows have been filled in.

The main block is divided into two rooms on each floor, with the stair ascending along the rear wall of the south room. The stair has square Craftsman-like balusters and newel post. In the rear are a living area, kitchen and bath.

From available evidence, the house appears to date from the first quarter of this century, and may have been built as a tenant house. It has experienced significant alteration over time.



PLATE 17: Miller House , View Looking South

13. J.C. Gantt House (CRS #N-1099). The Gantt House (Plate 18) is located on an elevated lot on the east side of Limestone Road. The 2-1/2 story wood frame dwelling, clad in wide aluminum siding, has a masonry foundation, gable roofs with box cornices, and interior gable end chimneys. The form is a T-plan, consisting of a side-gable main block and gabled rear wing. The facade is symmetrically divided into five bays with centered entrance framed by blocked-up sidelight panels. There are two windows on each floor, plus pairs of smaller windows at attic level, in each gable end. Windows sash have 2/2 lights, and the shutters are paneled on the first story, louvred on the second. A screened porch is located on the north side of the rear wing, and a projecting window bay has been added on the south gable end.

The interior of the main block has a Georgian I-type plan, of one room to either side of a center stair hall. The open stair has turned balusters and a newel post with fluted sides and chamfered corners. The interior woodwork consists of narrow stock molding, with bull's-eye corner blocks on door and window architraves, and five-panel doors with glass knobs. The parlor fireplace, fixed for a coal grate, has a tall mantel built up of flat elements.

According to Mrs. Gantt, the house was built around 1910. The lot on which it is located was originally part of the Springer property to the north.



PLATE 18: J.C. Gantt House, View Looking North

14. George Springer House (CRS #N-1109). The George Springer house (Plate 19) is located on the east side of Limestone Road, with only a thick hedge and path between the front of the house and the edge of the roadway. At least four phases of construction are discernable in the house: 1) a stone structure of which nothing remains except its south wall and possibly a foundation; 2) a fieldstone block, the north wall of which was originally the south wall of the first structure; 3) a one-story clapboarded kitchen wing with attached garage on the south side of the fieldstone block; and 4) a one-story addition with board-and-batten siding built between 1973 and 1976 over the site of the first structure.

The fieldstone section is 2-1/2 stories high, with large stone quoins and side gable orientation. Nearly square in plan, it is two rooms deep, with possibly a side stair hall along the north wall. The facade is divided into three bays, with the entrance located in the northernmost bay. The door is recessed within deep, paneled reveals and is surmounted by a four-light transom. A similar transom is attached to the outer edges of the reveals, with hinges along the edge to indicate the former presence of an outer door. A large interior gable end chimney is located in the south wall. A 1973 investigation reported that the chimney serves two fireplaces on the first floor, one with a recessed opening in a side wall, the second cornered into the side of the first (CRS file #N-1109). Window openings have rather



PLATE 19: Springer House, View Looking North

wide surrounds with molded edges; all are fitted with 6/6 double hung sash, except for two 6/9 windows in the rear (east) and a single 2/4 window at attic level on the south gable end. A large shed-roofed dormer with three 6/6 windows has been erected on the east slope of the roof.

The kitchen and garage additions of the house appear to have been built within the past few decades and, as noted above, the latest addition occurred in the 1970's. They are of frame construction with side-gable orientation on masonry foundations.

The fieldstone section of this house appears to be the remains of the residence of George Springer, which is shown on an 1827 map accompanying a division of the dower portion assigned to his mother, Elizabeth, in 1801 upon the death of his father, Nicholas (N.C. Co. Orphans Court Record M, p. 327). George Springer died in 1835, and in his will (N.C. Co. Wills, T/138) a reference is made to "the old part of the house." This suggests that the house was built in at least two phases, and corresponds to physical evidence that the existing structure was added to a structure already present. The original stone section probably was built after 1816, for in the Mill Creek Hundred tax assessment of that year George Springer is listed as having only a log dwelling, plus a log and stone barn. Something of the nature of George Springer's livelihood is conveyed in the inventory of his estate (March 12, 1835) which included crops such as corn, wheat, oats and barley, plus ten head of "feeding steers [sic]" which he was presumably fattening for market.

By 1842, John, one of George's three sons, had taken possession of the farm, which he retained until 1878 when he sold it to Hamilton Graham of Coatesville, PA, and Hamilton Graham, Jr. of Kennett Square, PA (N.C. Co. Deeds, I5/519; F11/337). According to the 1881 Hopkins and 1893 Baist maps of the area, the Grahams opened a kaolin pit on the southern part of the Springer farm tract, although they sold most of the tract, including the house, to Jeremiah Moynihan, then of Chester Co., PA, in 1883 (N.C. Co. Deeds, Q12/131). That it continued to be used for agricultural purposes into the 20th century is indicated by the will of Moynihan's widow, Alice, which called for the farm to operated either by her adult children or by tenants until the youngest child reached the age of 21 (N.C. Co. Wills, Z2/221).

15. Springer-Yeatman Farmstead (CRS #N-1110). The Springer-Yeatman property includes a dwelling, barn, springhouse, garage and corncrib situated on the east side of Limestone Road just below the Pennsylvania state line. Not used for agricultural purposes, the buildings are set on an immaculately-landscaped lot and are connected by a curvilinear blacktop drive.

The house (Plate 20) is oriented to the south, and thus roughly perpendicular to the road. It has a 2-1/2 story side-gable, double-pile main block of fieldstone, with a later 1-1/2 story, side-gable wood frame wing off the east gable end. The facade of the stone section is divided into three bays, with the entry in the right bay; the west side has two windows at each



PLATE 20: Springer - Yeatman House, View Looking North

floor. At the entrance, the six-panel door is deeply recessed within paneled reveals and surmounted by a four-light transom. A wood and glass storm door, also with a four-light transom, is set near the outer edges of the reveals, in effect creating a small vestibule the depth of the wall. Windows in the stone section (6/9 on first floor, 6/6 on second) have timber sills and panelled shutters. An interior chimney is centered within the west gable end, with a small fixed-sash attic window to each side. The composition shingle roof has a simple box cornice with partial returns. Two dormers with partial cornice returns and 6/6 sash are symmetrically situated on the rear (north) roof slope. Also off this side is a large, nearly square, one-story clapboarded addition with a decked, flat roof.

The clapboarded east wing is three bays long, with an entrance in the south side in the center bay flanked by 6/9 sash. The upper floor of this unit is illuminated by wall dormers with 6/6 sash windows and partially-returned gables. A small clapboarded vestibule is wrapped around the northeast corner, just behind an exterior gable-end chimney.

Interior information is very limited, due to the occupant's refusal to permit access. BAHP site files, however, include an investigation card dated 1973, which reports back-to-back fireplaces along the west wall of the stone section (implying a two-room depth) and a stair hall. A snapshot included with the inventory card shows a low fireplace with tall, plain mantel.

The barn (Plate 21) is situated southeast of the house, and is oriented so that the stable area faces south. A date stone in the structure reads "RBLT 1932." The barn is a bank-type structure with fieldstone walls and a timber-framed, gabled forebay or hay shed extended on low stone walls that are continued south to form a small pen in front of the barn. The upper level is accessed from the north, via a short ramp with curved stone retaining walls leading to a pair of full-height wooden sliding doors hung from a metal track. Two entrances to the ground level are located side by side in the west wall. These have arched openings and board-and-batten doors hung on iron strap hinges (See also Jicha and Cesna (1986), and Appendix A of this report).

The semi-subterranean springhouse is located south of the house. The fieldstone structure bears a shallow gable roof with deep front overhang and a small cupola with louvred openings and a weather vane. East of the barn is a narrow rectangular timber-framed corncrib, and to the north of the barn is a frame garage.

The building history of this complex is not easily readable. The stone section of the house is very likely of early 19th century date, but the east wing, although very carefully done, appears to be more recent. One clue may be the "RBLT 1932" datestone on the barn, which seems to indicate that the structure was rebuilt to some degree in the early 1930s while owned by William Hagerty. Such a project might also have include renovation or reconstruction of a previously-existing frame wing on the

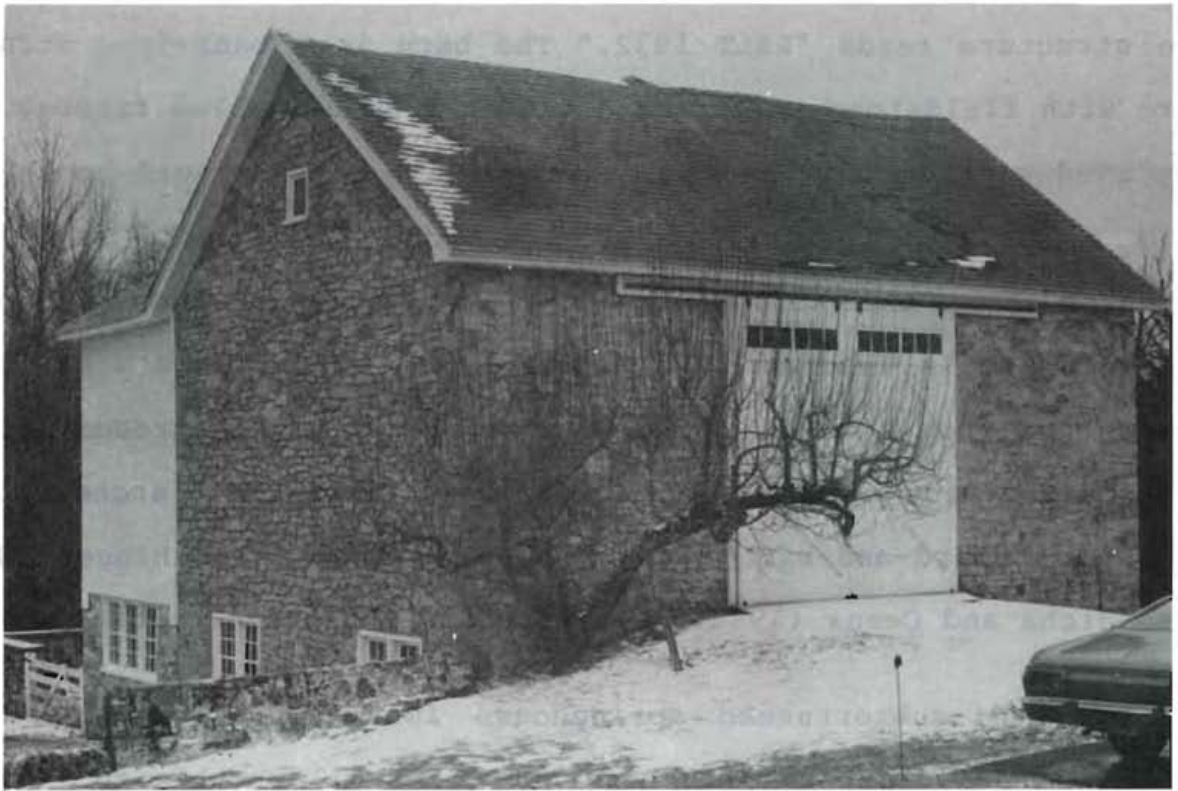


PLATE 21: Springer - Yeatman Barn, View Looking Southwest

house (plus, possibly the north side addition) and very likely of the springhouse as well. The overall effect is of a clearly historic complex that has been "tidied up" to retain a feeling of age and past use, but at the same time to provide a more leisured environment compatible with a rural-suburban lifestyle.

The land on which this complex is located was included in a 20-acre tract acquired by Stephen Springer from his mother, Elizabeth, in 1813 (N.C. Co. Deeds, X4/423); and in 1816 the tract contained a log dwelling, stone barn and stable according to the Mill Creek Hundred tax assessment of that year. Elizabeth Springer held as her dower two tracts of land to the south totalling 46 acres, representing the widow's third of her husband, Nicholas' estate (N.C. Co. Deeds, G4/465). Upon her death in 1826, 14 acres of her dower holdings were conveyed to Stephen Springer, who ten years later (1837) sold both his original 20 acres plus the 14 to Thomas J. Yeatman (N.C. Co. Deeds, X4/423). Yeatman not only farmed the property, but in addition operated a blacksmith and wheelwright shop near the corner of Limestone and Southwood Roads (1849 Rea & Price Map of Delaware; 1850 Industrial Census for Mill Creek Hundred). Thomas Yeatman died in 1851, leaving his wife, Luemma, two daughters and a minor son, Alfred. His will mentions smith's and wheelwright's tools and shops (which with the rest of his estate were to go to Alfred upon the latter's reaching his majority). The will also permitted Luemma to occupy "the stone part of the house," a phrase that

indicates that a stone house was present by that time, and also that another part of the house was of a different material, such as wood (N.C. Co. Wills, V1/226).

Alfred Yeatman is not listed in either the 1860 or 1870 Industrial Census for Mill Creek Hundred, but the Pomeroy & Beers map of 1868 associates him with a shoe shop and blacksmith shop, again at the Limestone-Southwood road intersection (which he owned, but may not have operated himself). In 1871, Alfred and his wife Rachael sold the property to Thomas M. Ector of Pocopin Twp., Chester Co., PA (N.C. Co. Deeds, O9/367). Ector is listed in the 1880 Industrial Census of Mill Creek Hundred as operating a blacksmith shop with one man employed and a product valued at \$1400. In 1887, Ector sold the shops and 6/10 acre to his son, Thomas J. Ector, who operated the smithy at least until 1893 (N.C. Co. Deeds, U13/338; Hopkins 1881; Baist 1893).

Thomas M. Ector died intestate in 1900, by which time his son, Thomas J., was also deceased. In 1904, their heirs sold the property to William Kelly of Chester Co., PA, who immediately sold it to William Hagerty of Mill Creek Hundred (N.C. Co. Deeds, U19/450, B20/254). It may be under Hagerty's 33-year ownership that the barn was "rebuilt" and improvements made to other buildings on the old Yeatman farmstead.