

AUG 23 1994  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received MAY 29 1984  
date entered JUN 28 1984

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Weaver, Valentine House Weaver, Valentine House

and/or common Weaver House

2. Location

street & number 146 S. Church Street N/A not for publication

city, town Macungie vicinity of

state PA code 42 county Lehigh code 077

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<u>N/A</u> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name W. Richard Covert

street & number 33 N. 11th Street

city, town Allentown vicinity of state PA 18101

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Lehigh County Courthouse

street & number Hamilton & Fifth Streets

city, town Allentown state PA

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title NONE has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved

date \_\_\_\_\_

N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Valentine Weaver House stands on Church Street not far from the center of Macungie, Pennsylvania, in what remains an essentially suburban setting. As such, the nature of the house is derived from the vocabulary of suburban architecture rather than the more urban styles evident on Main Street. From the lithographic view of the estate published in the 1876 Illustrated Atlas of Lehigh County, it is evident that the property is very little changed; the house, stone out-building and barn all remain, though little but the frame is left of the barn, and enough topographic evidence of the front lawns and the circular walkway to provide a clear sense of the original landscaping.

The principal building of this estate is of course the house; like so many suburban residences of the period, it was derived from the popular 1850s pattern book, A. J. Downing's The Architecture of Country Houses (1851). The house takes the form of the "Gothic Cottage", with a central projecting pavillion in front of the main gabled building containing the entrance and marking the position of the interior circulation. The front gable frames a third floor, round-headed window, subdivided into double round-headed panes with the ever popular "Bullseye" in the lunette. That gable is in turn bordered with extremely fine carpentered Gothic verge boards with pierced and molded scroll work that outlines the gable. Of regional interest are the flared ends to the gables on all the roofs, which suggest either a contemporary Japanese influence or perhaps a vestigial survivor of the ancient double-pitched roofs of the original German community. The roofs are covered with fancy patterned slate. On either side of the central block are slightly recessed wings articulated with pairs of windows which light the principal rooms. Those of the first floor reach all the way to the floor level of the porch, and imply an awareness of contemporary suburban fashion in this country home. The porch is the final, gloriously intact feature of the facade -- an ample, wide spreading three bay wood construction that shifts the proportional system of the facade from the Gothic of the roof to an almost classical repose across the front. The entrance is framed by pairs of squared wood porch posts that support a shallow pediment, while on either side are porch bays that reach the end of the house. Delicate pierced woodwork was formed into elegant brackets and what is essentially a frieze-like screen spanning from post to post.

(continued)

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates            1876                            Builder/Architect

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

When the 1876 Lehigh County Atlas was published, one of the buildings that its editor chose to illustrate was the home of "V.W. Weaver, Macungie, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania". That home was singled out, not only because it was a large, expensive country seat, but also because it was the home of Valentine Weaver, one of the major figures in the development of the iron industry in Pennsylvania. According the local county histories, it was Weaver more than any other individual who built the regional iron industry, including both the Macungie Iron Works and the Lock Ridge Iron Company at nearby Alburdis. His career marked the end of the free wheeling days of the early iron industry when skills learned at the foundry led to management positions. It was in those same years that the iron industry shifted from a decentralized business to the mature, large scale turn-of-the-century empires initiated by Carnegie's United States Steel. The Thomas Iron Works, where Weaver was employed, linked a group of small iron companies, providing management and marketing, enabling them to compete with the larger corporations. Finally, the house itself is of interest as a well-preserved residence that describes the contrast between the lifestyle of the suburban/rural industrial magnates and their urban counterparts. Its remarkable level of completeness adds to its significance.

The extent of Valentine Weaver's involvement with the regional iron industry is documented in The History of Lehigh County, Pennsylvania (Lehigh Valley Publishing Company), as well as in brochures issued by the Thomas Iron Company (New York, 1904). Weaver was born in 1826 in Northampton County, where he entered business as a clerk in the 1840s. In 1846 he learned the trade of machinist as an apprentice at the Crane Iron Works, and subsequently was shifted by that company to their iron works at Catasauqua.

After 1850 he shifted from the <sup>D.A.M.?</sup>Welsh owned and run Crane Iron Company to the Thomas Iron Works, run by Samuel Thomas, former agent from Crane, who organized his own company at Hokendauqua. Weaver served as superintendent of Hokendauqua through the Civil War, and then left to erect an iron works, the Lock Ridge Furnace at Alburdis. That site is now a Pennsylvania Historic Park; interestingly, its iron master's mansion, across the street from the gate, shows the same general configuration as the Weaver House, but with three registers across the front instead of the five of the Macungie dwelling. The houses are similar even down to motifs such as the curved up eaves of the roof, the paired, square posts and shallow pediment of the front

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

A.M. Davis & O.A. Gray & Son, New Illustrated Atlas of Lehigh County, Pennsylvania  
(Reading Publishing Company, 1876)  
Lower Macungie Bicentennial Committee, A History of Lower Macungie Township, Lower  
Macungie, 1976

(continued)

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1.38

Quadrangle name Allentown West Quad

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A 

1	8	4	5	12	9	10	10	4	4	8	4	4	4	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C 

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D 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

see attached

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state Pennsylvania code 42 county Lehigh code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title George E. Thomas, Ph.D.

organization Clio Group, Inc.

date March 7, 1984

street & number 3961 Baltimore Avenue

telephone (215) 386-6276

city or town Philadelphia

state PA

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Larry E. Tise State Historic Preservation Officer

title

date

5/14/84

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

date

6/28/84

[Signature]  
Keeper of the National Register

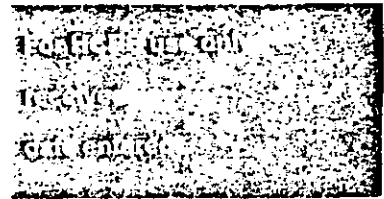
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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The side elevations show simple rectangular windows with a Gothic pointed sash lighting the attic. To the rear are two-story polygonal bays that form the transition from the projecting front block to the slightly recessed off-center rear el. On the south side of the el, a one-story porch screens the kitchen from the summer sun. That porch has less elaborate woodwork than the front porch, but conforms to the pattern of chamfered square posts with molded necking at the top. Around the corner at the west end of the house is a handsome brick octagonal outhouse capped by a tapering roof with a wood finial. Because of the accommodation of the porch to the rear of the outhouse, it seems safe to assume that the porch was added at a slightly later date. Further around, on the northwest corner of the house, is an attached, brick gable roofed smokehouse that retains its oven and smoke chambers.

The interior of the house is in keeping with the cottage styled exterior. The broad center hall contains a handsome stair with a veneered newel and turned walnut balusters and railing rising to the second floor. On either side are large parlors that are entered through "grained" paneled doors and molded "grained" jambs with panels of "Burl Walnut" painting. Large floor to ceiling windows on the front open onto the porch, and brilliantly illuminate the rooms. One handsome, Second Empire marble fireplace, infilled to serve as a heat register, remains in the south parlor, while none survive in the north parlor. The dining room stretches across the axis of the house at the front of the rear el, and is accented by the south bay; beyond is the kitchen, which stretches across the full width of the el.

The main stair opens onto a broad landing on the second floor; that level is subdivided into large chambers conforming to the partition lines of the first floor. The millwork, like that of the first floor, is painted and grained to simulate hardwood. Here it is darker with the flashes of deep red and brown in imitation of mahogany. Such graining, while out of fashion in urban architectural designs under the influence of theoreticians such as John Ruskin, was still common in rural design. For the designer of the Weaver House, it helped to establish the hierarchical difference between the first and second floors. The attic is essentially unfinished, and approached by a rear stair that continues down to the first floor. Whether it served as a dormitory for any of the original owner's seven children is unknown. The only finished space is a small room in the front gable, with the attic showing the nailers and the undersides of the slates.

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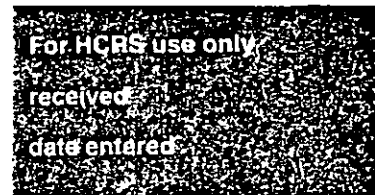
3

To the rear of the house is a small, rectangular springhouse of rubble stone with a low gabled roof. Heavy timber window frames supporting the masonry and the low proportion suggest that it antedates the main building. The barn is of the familiar wood framed type, with heavy timbers sheathed in vertical boarding, most of which has weathered away. It is now in ruins.

One final point of interest about the house remains to be noted. The original building was serviced by one of the most elaborate networks of machinery surviving from its era. A large central furnace provided hot air heat for the house; adjacent to it are the remains of a calcium carbide gas system with its own pressure bell and lines to provide gas lighting. Finally, remains of automatic coal fed systems are in evidence as well, suggesting that the builder of iron furnaces was confident enough in machinery to incorporate it into his home.

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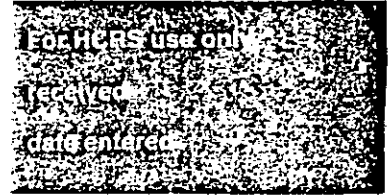
2

porch, and the side bays at the rear el. This suggests that both houses were built by a crew hired by the Thomas Iron Company, or perhaps both were supervised by Weaver, accounting for their similarity. The fact that Weaver and Thomas acquired the Church Street property, along with other holdings in the Macungie region in 1874 provides the date for the construction of the house, and further clarifies the connection to the Lock Ridge superintendent's residence. After completing the Lock Ridge Furnace and getting it underway, Weaver moved on to another of the Thomas companies, the Pine Grove Furnace in Cumberland County before returning to the Macungie region. It was there, in the vicinity of the Lock Ridge company, that he remained for the rest of his life, serving on the board of directors for the Macungie Iron Company and National Banks in Slatington and Catasaqua.

Finally, it is the Church Street residence that forms the principal memorial to Weaver in his home community of Macungie. Fortunately, the fabric of the house and available documentary evidence makes it clear that the house is remarkably intact, containing not only early mechanical systems, but also a full range of out buildings that describe Weaver's lifestyle. Of greatest interest is the full range of grained wood finishes that continued a popular idea of the mid 19th century, but one which was largely replaced in the 1870s by the Ruskinian value system of honesty with materials. All the door frames and paneled doors of the first floor are tinted in imitation of chestnut with imitation burl walnut panels inset in the jambs of the front rooms. With the second floor grained mahogany it forms one of the most complete programs of graining to survive, and provides further evidence of the few changes to the house. Its survival here confirms the conservatism of rural life, but also suggests that it may have reflected Weaver's personal taste. Moreover, the house, with its smokehouse, springhouse, ice house and other ancillary structures, provides a striking image of the self sufficiency of rural life which continued into the late 19th century. The Weaver family remained in the home until three years ago.

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Charles Rhoads Roberts et al.: History of Lehigh County, Pennsylvania and a Genealogical and Biographical Record of Its Families, Volume 3 (Lehigh Valley Publishing Company, Ltd, 1914)

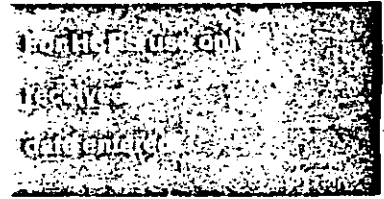
The Thomas Iron Company, (New York: Post and Dover Company, 1904)

Lehigh County Courthouse, Department of Records, Allentown PA



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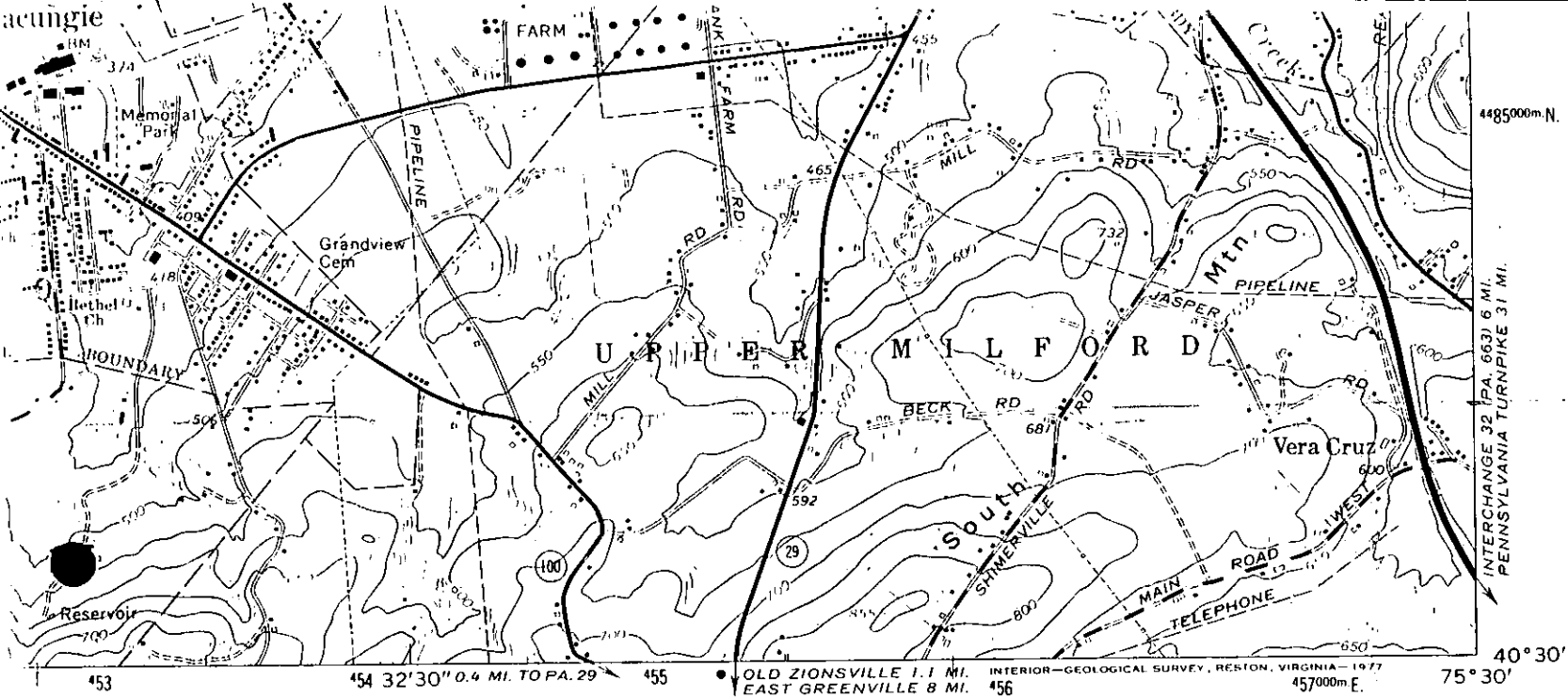


Continuation sheet Valentine Weaver House

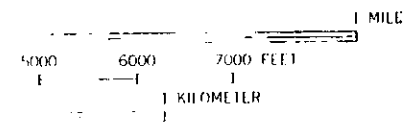
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Beginning at the concrete monument, northwest corner of land late of George Lohrmann; thence along boundaries of Macungie Village the following two courses and distances: (1) South  $88^{\circ}44''$  west 155.5 feet to an iron pipe; (2) North  $1^{\circ}16''$  west 182 feet to iron pipe, being the southwest corner of land of the Macungie Baptist Church; thence along the southerly boundary of Macungie Baptist Church north  $88^{\circ}$  east 330.5 feet to an iron pipe on west right-of-way of Church Street; thence along the westerly right-of-way line of Church Street, south  $1^{\circ}16''$  east 182 feet to an iron pipe, being the northeast corner of land of George R. Lohrmann south  $88^{\circ}44''$  west 175 feet to the concrete monument and the place of beginning.

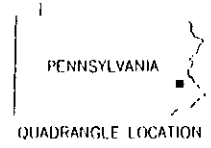


4485000m N.  
 INTERCHANGE 32 (PA. 663) 6 MI.  
 PENNSYLVANIA TURNPIKE 31 MI.



**ROAD CLASSIFICATION**

- Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty - - - - -
- Medium-duty - - - - - Unimproved dirt - - - - -
- Interstate Route    □ U. S. Route    ○ State Route



**ALLENTOWN WEST, PA.**

SE/4 ALBURTIS 15' QUADRANGLE  
 N4030—W7530/7.5

1964

AMS 5865 II SE—SERIES V831

(MILFORD SQUARE)  
 5564 17 NW

1929  
 STANDARDS  
 22092  
 IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST