

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY FORM  
 OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION Box 1026  
 PA HISTORICAL & MUSEUM COMMISSION Harrisburg, PA 17120

7. Local survey organization  
 West Whiteland Historical Commission

8. property owners name and address  
 W. Dale & Diane S. Snyder  
 1181 King Rd  
 West Chester, PA 19380

9. tax parcel number / other number  
 41-6-28

10. U.T.M. zone 18 44 9 7 3 0  
 easting  
 Map# 17 44 2 9 7 6 0  
 northing  
 usgs sheet: Malvern 1.2A

11. status (other surveys, lists etc.)  
 CCHSS

12. classification  
 site ( ) structure ( ) object ( )  
 building (x)  
 in N.R. district yes ( ) no ( )

13. date(s) (how determined)  
 1782

14. period  
 1700-1799

15. style, design or folk type  
 (log) Vernacular

16. architect or engineer

17. contractor or builder  
 David Ashbridge

18. primary building mat./construction  
 Log

19. original use  
 Residence-farm

20. present use  
 Residence-non-farm

21. condition  
 Above average

22. integrity  
 Above Average

23. site plan with north arrow

24. photo notation  
 PG: D. Snyder  
 PV: SE View  
 PD: 3/1983

25. title/location  
 WWHC 09-74; #9



26. brief description (note unusual features, integrity, environment, threats and associated buildings)

The David Ashbridge log house is located on the north side of and very near King Road (old Indian King Road in use prior to 1777) and enjoys a southern exposure. The slightly banked house consists of a log core built in 1782 and a frame addition built in 1970 which is recessed from the core and to the west of it. The core is rectangular (20'x25'), single pile and has two stories with a full attic, a wood shake single gable roof and an eastern gable end chimney. The two rectangular, gable end windows on the western end are covered by the addition. The three bay symmetrically arranged facade of the core has a pent eave and a small open porch on the west end in front of the entrance. The large, double sash windows are 6/6. The walls of the core are constructed of widely spaced, hand-hewn logs up to the second floor window sills above which is frame construction. The 1798 Direct Tax describes the house as "hewn logs - 2 low stories." By 1845 the roof had been raised to expand the available living space and a chair rail along all 4 exterior walls on the second

(continue on back if necessary)

27. history, significance and/or background

Architecture

This modest log house has maintained a high level of architectural integrity and is one of 3 known habitable log dwellings which still survive in a township where log houses were once very common. In 1798, the Direct Tax lists 151 dwelling houses and 71 are of log construction. David Ashbridge was a Quaker farmer who was disowned by Friends in 1776 "for joining in

(continue on back if necessary)

28. sources of information  
 Ashbridge, W.T. "The Ashbridge Book"; Ashbridge, David, Estate Papers #3983; Bulletin Archeological Soc. of Del., XVI:#1April, 1954. The Excavation of a Colonial Log Cabin (over)

29. prepared by:  
 Diane Snyder  
 WWHC

30. date  
 12/1981

revision(s)

(continue on back if necessary)

1. County  
 Chester

2. municipality  
 West Whiteland Twp.

3. street address or specific location  
 1181 King Rd.

4. survey code  
 029-09-41-021

5. present name  
 David Ashbridge Log House

6. other name (historic name if any)  
 David Ashbridge Log House

floor marks the location of the original roof. The log walls rest on a stone foundation with an excavated cellar typically present only under half of the house. The logs are exposed to view on the interior of the south wall but are covered on the exterior with horizontal wood clapboard and board and batten siding.

A two room plan is utilized on the first floor. On the eastern end is a brick cooking fireplace with a raised brick hearth, a metal crane and evidence of a bake oven. The exposed ceiling joists in both rooms are large, rough, hand-hewn logs.

The second floor has random width pine flooring and contains a hall, two rooms and a bathroom. The small fireplace in the eastern room shares the chimney with the cooking fireplace but has a separate flue. Undoubtedly added when the roof was raised, the fireplace has a plain wood mantel with beaded wood surrounds and a warming cabinet above it. The attic also has wide random width flooring and no ridge pole. Nested stairs were added to provide convenient access to the second floor and attic.

The 1970 addition which contains the kitchen and master bedroom is rectangular (13'x 23'), single pile and has two stories with crawl space underneath, an attic and a wood shake roof. A one-story, wood shake shed roof portion contains a utility room and powder room. The exposed, kitchen ceiling joists are large, rough, hand-hewn logs which were re-claimed from the barn on the property which collapsed in 1970. The field stone walls are the only remains of that bank barn.

#27 cont.

the military association and signing their articles." He served in the Revolutionary War as a private in the 4th Battalion of the Chester County Militia. When the war was over, he purchased 96 acres of land (an average size farm for the area) and quickly built a log home for his two motherless children. The manner in which the logs were hewn and the way the house was constructed suggest that David Ashbridge had little previous practical experience in building a log house. The survival of his creation through two centuries stands as a tribute to his native talent.

Following David Ashbridge's death in 1788 the property was inherited and continued to be worked as a farm by his son-in-law, George Vernon. In 1814 the farm consisted of "a log dwelling, a log barn, a log springhouse, and log pot house." In 1824 the house and barn were sold on 1 acre and 83 perches of land to a series of tradesmen including a cordwainer, a weaver and a wheelwright. An additional 13 acres of farm land had been acquired by 1836 when William B. Gibson, a house carpenter and farmer, bought the property. It was William B. Gibson, who raised the roof by 1845 to add a full second story and an attic to allow him to take in boarders. The property was offered for public sale in 1864 to settle the estate of Mr. Gibson and was described in the newspaper as "a two storied dwelling house, 2 rooms on the first floor and 4 on the second; a good frame barn with stone stabling underneath." By this time a log house was not considered an asset and any reference to logs was carefully omitted from the property description.

The David Ashbridge house is conveniently located near the Glen Loch Station on the Pa. RR mainline and the Half Way House on the West Chester RR. For approximately 100 years between 1865 and 1970 most of the owners of the house were employed by the Pa. RR.

The David Ashbridge house has survived with a high degree of integrity since its construction in 1782. Following the addition of the second full story and attic (ca. 1845) virtually no changes occurred until 1970 when the small wing was added and central heating and indoor plumbing were introduced.

#28 cont.

near Wilmington, Del.; Chester County Court House - Recorder of Deeds; Chester County Historical Society: 1) 1798 Direct Tax 2) County Tax Lists 3) Newspaper Clippings - West Whiteland Lands 4) Minutes Goshen Monthly Meeting 5) U.S. Census Records; Glassie, Henry: Personal Communication, 1980; Kniffen, Fred and Glassie, Henry: "Building in Wood in the Eastern United States," Geographical Review, Jan 1966, pp40-66.; Pa. Archives, Fifth series.

EVALUATION /Vo. V, pp 607,609, and 642./

EVALUATOR(S)

West Whiteland Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania  
Multiple Resource Nomination

Survey Code 029-09-41-021      Page 3  
David Ashbridge Log House      Map #17

Summary Statement of Significance:

The Ashbridge Log House is eligible for listing under criterion C as an example of the German log building tradition as interpreted by an English settler. In closely examining the visible construction techniques, it becomes apparent that the logs were put in place sideways. Usually in a log building, the finished edge is exposed to the walls to allow for a flat protective finish of siding, stucco or paint to be applied to the outside. In this case the flat surface was turned inward to make it easier to place the chinking between the widely spaced logs. This made it more difficult to place the siding. According to students of vernacular log building traditions, this dwelling was built by an individual who had seen a German-built log building but was not able to properly copy what he had seen. Instead he built what he thought he had seen and what he felt was the best way to erect a log building.

Additional Photographs:



PG: DIANE SNYDER  
PV: SOUTHEAST WALL  
PD: FEB. 1983  
LOCATION: WWHC #09-74-7A

West Whiteland Township,  
Chester County, PA  
Multiple Resource Nomination  
Survey Code 029-09-41-021  
David Ashbridge Log House  
Map #17

This Deed, made this 31st

Between CHARLES G. LAGUE and

NATIONAL REGISTER

of the one part, and W. DALE SNYDER and

(hereinafter called the "Grantee" of the other part.

Witnesseth, That in consideration of SEVENTY ONE THOUSAND (\$71,000.00)

in hand paid, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, the said Grantors do hereby grant and convey unto the said Grantees, their Heirs and assigns, as tenants by the entireties Dollars.

ALL THAT CERTAIN lot or piece of ground, with the hereditaments and appurtenances, thereon, Situate in the Township of West Whiteland, County of Chester and State of Pennsylvania, bounded and described as follows, to wit:

BEGINNING at a stone in line of land belonging to Lewis S. Hickman Jr., and a corner of land now or late of William J. Haldeman; thence extending along land of William J. Haldeman, North 21 degrees, 26 minutes West, 70 feet to a point in the title line of King Road; thence extending along the title line of King Road North 68 degrees, 40 minutes East, 98.44 feet to a point; thence extending South 21 degrees, 20 minutes East, 69.91 feet to an iron pin; thence extending South 68 degrees, 34 minutes West, 98.31 feet to the point and place of beginning.

ALSO ALL THAT CERTAIN lot or piece of ground, with the hereditaments and appurtenances, thereon, Situate in the Township of West Whiteland, County of Chester and State Pennsylvania, bounded and described as follows, to wit:

BEGINNING at a point in the title line of King Road at a corner of land now or late of William J. Haldeman; thence leaving King Road and extending North 21 degrees, 26 minutes West, 284.1 feet to an iron pin, thence North 68 degrees, 34 minutes East, 140.7 feet to an iron pin; thence South 34 degrees, 29 minutes East, 107 feet to an iron pin; thence South 17 degrees, 32 minutes East, 180.6 feet to a point in the title line of King Road; thence along the same South 68 degrees, 40 minutes West, 153.19 feet to the point and place of beginning.

BEING the same premises which William M. Favre and Barbara P., his wife, by Indenture bearing date the 13th day of May A.D. 1976 and duly recorded at West Chester in the Office for the Recording of Deeds in and for the County of Chester in Deed Book C-48 page 217 &c., granted and conveyed unto Charles G. Lague and Evelyn L., his wife, in fee.

## Individual Properties:

After considering the properties evaluated as not eligible for the National Register, we have some additional thoughts on the significance of the following properties:

029-09-41-302 Malvern Federal Building - While it is true that the 1960's addition is not consistent with the Secretary's Standards for Historic Restoration, it in itself does not destroy the cultural importance of the Malvern Federal Building as an important commercial landmark in West Whiteland Township. This additive feature to the main block is easily removed and could be replaced with its original penthouse roof. In addition, upon reviewing the written description of #26 of the form, we noticed that the chronology of the historic changes vs. the more modern 1964 changes was not entirely clear and may have been confusing.

029-09-41-021 David Ashbridge Log House - This house is in fact an excellent example of a vernacular building tradition that was common to southeast Pennsylvania but which has very few surviving examples. This property was built by an English farmer using a German building tradition. However, in this case, the builder interpreted the technique in his own fashion. Most log buildings are built with the intent of covering the exposed logs with lathe and weather board or some other protective covering. This would serve to protect the building from the weather as well as present a pleasing and prosperous appearance to the community. In order to attach the wall covering, the flatter portion of the logs is usually placed on the wall face. In this particular building the rounded sides were placed on the wall surfaces. As Henry Glassie has told the West Whiteland Historical Commission, this was obviously the work of a man who had seen but not studied the German building techniques and who had gotten it wrong. This log house is important to Criterion D in that it tells vernacular building historians a great deal about the transferral of material cultural information. As far as the two changes that have been made to the house, the 1840's roof raising is a good example of the adaptability of log construction and is of course an historical change done to create a larger living space. The second change done in 1970 does not intrude upon the historic nature of the David Ashbridge house. It is set back from the facade and is screened from the public view by a number of evergreen trees. An examination of the exterior fabric of the building indicated that the siding is part of the historic fabric of the house.

029-09-41-061 Daniel Meredith House - We are currently doing more research on the owners and builders of this house as well as the building type. In reviewing the survey, we find it may be the only surviving example of a 3-bay, side hall dwelling left in the township.

029-09-41-221 Ball & Ball - This 19th century building began as a typical 3-bay, double-pile, side-hall dwelling. The subsequent changes done in 1876 are however extremely important. They were done at the height of a revival of interest in colonial architecture and material culture. Reproductions of 18th century furniture were turned out by many numbers of factories and numerous buildings were colonialized. This is

