

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		1. County Chester	
8. property owners name and address Church Farm School Box 662 Paoli PA 19301		9. tax parcel number / other number 41-2-84		10. U.T.M. zone 18 easting 446990 Map#8 443216310 northing usgs sheet: Malvern 5.3A	
12. classification site () structure () object () building (x) in N.R. district yes () no ()		13. date(s) (how determined) 14. period 1840-1849		15. style, design or folk type Vernacular	
16. architect or engineer		17. contractor or builder		18. primary building mat./construction Stone/stucco	
19. original use Residence-farm		20. present use Residence-farm		21. condition Above average	
22. integrity Above average				5. present name Colfelt House	

23. site plan with north arrow

24. photo notation
 PG: Nancy Carville
 PV: southeast elevation
 PD: 4/25/1980

25. file/location
 CCHS, WWHC #09-29, 2A



2. municipality West Whiteland Twp.
 6. other name (historic name if any)
 John Bell Farm

3. street address or specific location
 463 N. Ship Rd.

26. brief description (note unusual features, integrity, etc.)

The Colfelt House rests at the base of the North Valley Hills in a remote area of the Township. It always has been part of a large tract (never less than 100 acres) and, consequently, its integrity of setting has been well-maintained. As it appears today, the Colfelt House is a handsome example of the Elizabethan/Queen Anne style. It began, however, as a rather plain farmhouse built in the first half of the 19th century. The core is a familiar vernacular type: a two-story, stone, five-bay, single pile (40'x21') central block from which extends a two-story service L (23'x10'). The central block is built on a two-room, center-hall plan with chimneys at each gable end and at the rear of the kitchen wing. It has a full basement showing rectangular fireplace supports. The house was essentially rebuilt in 1889 by Rebeca Colfelt, a transplanted Philadelphian. Large cross gables and assorted picturesque dormer windows were added

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27. history, significance and/or background

Agriculture

The Colfelt House is significant as a well-preserved farmhouse dating from the period of agriculture's dominance of West Whiteland's economy. It retains its rural setting and the surrounding land continues to be farmed. The history of the tract of land on which the house sits can be traced to the Jacobs family (mid-18th century), whose homestead is located along the

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28. sources of information CCHS: West Whiteland Clipping File-Lands: L9-17-1919, CR 3-22-1954, L 9-14-1872, L 5-11-1872, L 11-26-1887, L 2-8-1868, VR 2-4-1885. Reid Title Search #2013		29. prepared by: M.L. Wolf Brandywine Cons.	
30. date 12/1981		revision(s)	

(continue on back if necessary)

4. survey code 029-09-41-322

#26. cont.

to the former single gable roof. Other additions included a two-story library wing on the west, a kitchen extension off the rear, a two-sided porch with central cross gable, and oval and circular undersized windows. The cross gables, dormer windows, and second story of the library wing have ornamental strap work characteristic of the Elizabethan style. Other features common to this popular Queen Anne variant are the triple-casement windows with diamond panes and the tall brick chimneys with corbelled caps. The original floor plan was preserved despite the extensive alterations. The closed-string central stairway rises four flights to a finished attic. Most of the fireplaces were remodeled using colored tiles. The original kitchen fireplace, however, is remarkable for its elaborate carved and paneled chimney breast (which also was added, no doubt, in 1889). Outbuildings on the premises include a springhouse, tenant house, corn crib, and barn. The barn was rebuilt twice - once in 1872 after a fire and again in 1934, as its datestone indicates, by Lawrence Colfelt.

#27 cont.

same road. Samuel H. Jacobs inherited 641 acres of the family's large holdings in the area in 1814, but lost it all at Sheriff's Sale in 1821. The land then passed through a succession of owners, among them Job B. Remington of Philadelphia and Jabez Jenkins. John Bell, a Quaker farmer, purchased 154 acres in the early 1840's and it was he who probably built the core farmhouse. Bell deeded some land to his son, John T., in 1865, but remained at the farm until his death in 1868. The executors of his estate, through Zook and Chase Realtors, sold 104.1 acres in 1887 to Rebecca Colfelt, daughter of a prominent Philadelphia politician, James McManes, and wife of a Presbyterian minister, Reverend Dr. Lawrence M. Colfelt. This sale caused a local paper to lament the increasing transfer of land from the heirs of its original owners "into the hands of strangers." The renovation of the house was undertaken in 1888-1889. She died in 1919 at Saratoga Springs; her son, Lawrence, maintained the West Whiteland residence until his death in 1954. Although a New York stockbroker, he kept close ties with the Township and served as Master of the Whiteland Hunt. His wife also was a well-known local equestrienne. Church Farm School acquired the tract in the 1950's and uses it today as a residence for the school principal.

Architecture

The Colfelt House is primarily of significance for its architecture. It is the Township's finest example of Elizabethan/Queen Anne style. This style was introduced to the popular taste at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876 and it spread quickly to established communities along the Main Line. West Whiteland's exposure to the style, however, was limited to just a few houses. As in the case of Ivy Cottage and the Dr. Price House, a higher style was imposed over a plain farmhouse with extraordinary skill and taste. The design of the Colfelt House is welcome evidence of the transmittal of late 19th century urban aesthetics into a once very rural and conservative Great Valley

EVALUATION

EVALUATOR(S)

West Whiteland Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania
Multiple Resource Nomination

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Colfelt House Map #8

Summary Statement of Significance:

The Colfelt House is an example of the "Arts and Crafts" movement in architecture during the last decades of the nineteenth century and is therefore eligible for listing under criterion C. It also illustrates the adaptability of the traditional 5-bay, center-hall plan in that the 1889 changes were added to the core without extensive modifications of the house or its floor plan. The addition of a library wing and the large cross gables on the roof enabled this traditional Great Valley farmhouse to become very avant-garde and acceptable as a dwelling for its owners.

Verbal Boundary Description:

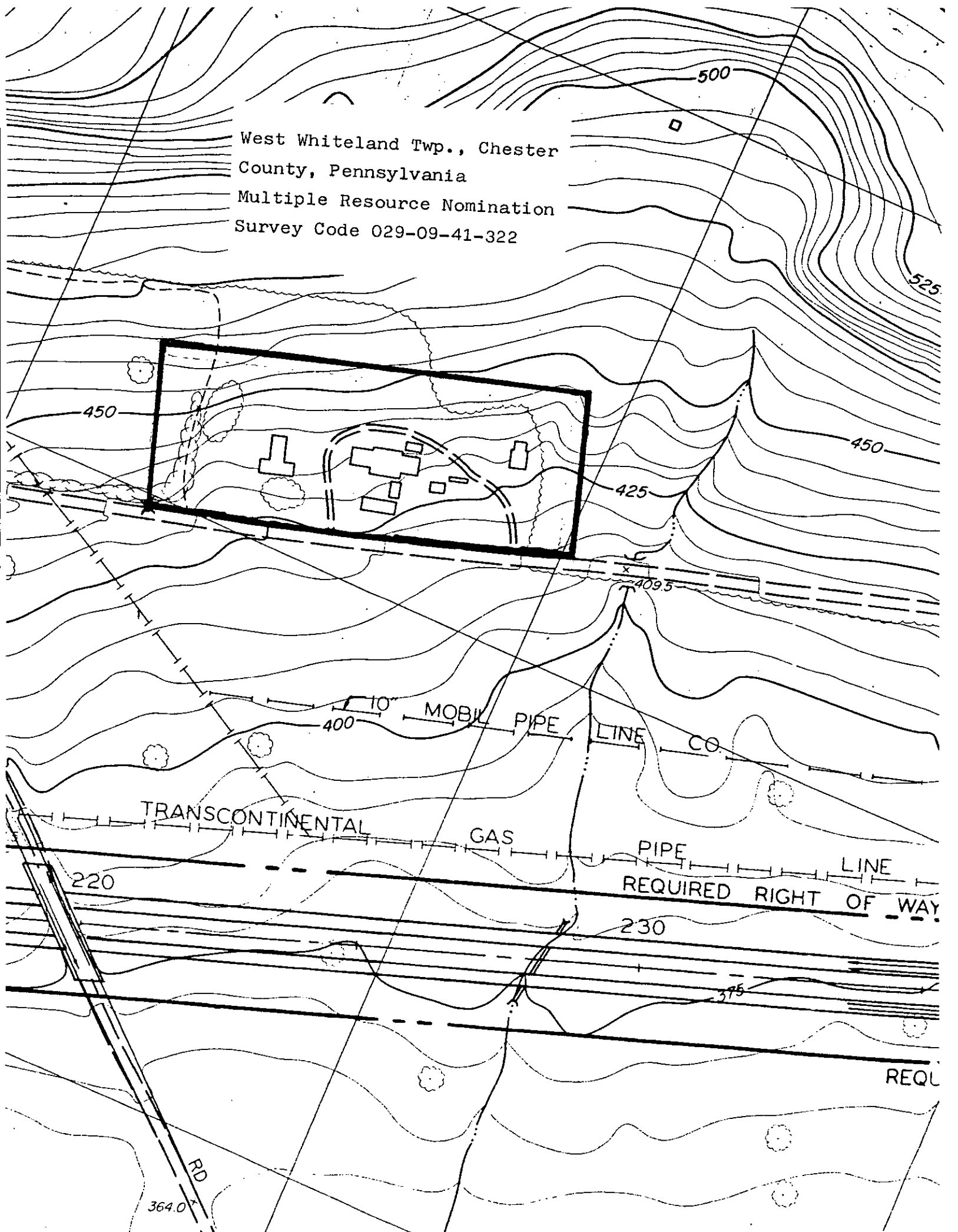
Beginning at a point in the northern edge of Church Farm Road and 500 feet east of the northern edge of Ship Road; thence north 19° west 300 feet to a point; thence north 73° east 762.5 feet to a point; thence south 19° east to another point in the northern edge of Church Farm Road; thence in a westerly direction following the courses of the northern edge of said Road to the place of beginning, containing 5.3 acres.

Additional Photographs:



PG: Nancy Carville
PV: South View
PD: April 1980
Tenant House
Location: CCHS#09-50#19A

West Whiteland Twp., Chester
County, Pennsylvania
Multiple Resource Nomination
Survey Code 029-09-41-322



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

West Whiteland Township, Chester County, PA MRA

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

For NPS use only
received
date entered

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The nominated acreage consists of a rectangle with the complex located at the center, surrounded by a green buffer to maintain the integrity of the setting.

Contributing structures on the site were built shortly after the 1889 alterations were made to the main house and while the farm was still agriculturally prominent in the Great Valley. They include: the 2 1/2 story, frame Gothic Revival tenant house and a 1 1/2 story stone and frame bull pen with shake roof. Twentieth century structures present on the site which do not contribute to the significance of the resource include: a 1934 stone and frame barn with attached garage and stable, a 1 story stuccoed 3 car garage (located to the northeast of the barn) and a large rectangular frame corncrib with shake roof.