



BROWNBACKS 0.3 MI.  
PHOENIXVILLE 6.9 MI.

Stephen Needelfitz House  
 Western Land - Zone B  
 Post-town Outd  
 A E443660 N4446940 C4443700 N4446640  
 B E443710 N4446810 D E4435500 N4446770

WILSON CORNER 1.1 MI.  
KIMBERTON 3.2 MI.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name MEREDITH, Stephen. HOUSE  
other names/site number N/A

### 2. Location

street & number Half way between Pughtown & Bucktown on Route 100 N/A not for publication  
city, town South Coventry Township N/A vicinity  
state Pennsylvania code PA county Chester code 29 zip code 19464

### 3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>2</u>	<u>      </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>1</u>	<u>      </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		<u>2</u> objects
			<u>2</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Dr. Brent D. Glass  
Signature of certifying official  
PA Historical & Museum Commission  
Date 3/24/93

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
 DOMESTIC/secondary structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
 DOMESTIC/secondary structure

**7. Description**Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

GREEK REVIVAL

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE  
 walls STUCCO  
 roof METAL  
 other

**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

The Stephen Meredith House sits prominently on a knoll overlooking Pughtown in South Coventry Township, northern Chester County. It is a Greek Revival style, stone dwelling built in 1844 in the temple form. It is approached by a winding driveway from Route 100 over a stone arch bridge and around a small pond. The driveway rises to a tree and shrub-landscaped lawn with gazebo and a barn, surrounded by once farmed fields that are now simply mowed. The Meredith House is a three bay by four bay, gable-entrance, two story building. Included is the stone barn, part of which predates the house by about fifty years, and a vaulted root cellar of early origin. The bridge dates to the 1844 period, the small stream having been forded, or "run through", before that time. It was repaired in 1940 at which time it was capped with concrete slabs. The pond, built about 1960, and gazebo, installed about 1980, are noncontributing to the historical period. Small scale resources, including a stone wall, root cellar and well, although old enough, have not been counted in the totals. An earlier stone house that stood between the 1844 house and the barn was taken down about 1933, and the stone used in building a one floor kitchen with ample farm porch on the north side. The kitchen was attached to the east side of the 1844 house in a manner sympathetic to its style, leaving its integrity undisturbed. Other than the addition, the house has been little changed in its 150 year lifetime. The Meredith House is an excellent example of the Greek Revival style as interpreted in a rural township.

As is typical of the temple house, the front entrance, facing south, is at the gable permitting use of the gable roof line in the creation of a triangular pediment at both south and north gables. Also characteristic of the temple house is the Doric entrance porch across the full front facade, approached by stone steps leading up to the high podium. Virtually unchanged from its original appearance, the Meredith House is two stories high with basement exposed at the rear and on the west side. The front and rear elevations (south and north gable ends) are three bays across and identical with a semi-circular fanlight at the center of each pediment. A rectangular house, the west elevation is three bays deep and the east side is four bays deep at the second floor level, the first floor being partly covered by the kitchen addition. The original kitchen, which remains, was in the basement of the house with a heavy stone floor and large fireplace.

All windows are six-on-six lites with panelled exterior shutters on the first floor and louvered ones on the second floor windows. The doorway of the front elevation consists of a panelled door, rectangular transom, and vertical sidelights, all set within a deep, panelled door reveal. The door is framed by a Doric architrave. A one-story Doric entrance porch spans the full length of the south elevation, composed of a built-up, dentilated cornice supported by four Doric columns and four Doric pilasters. The columns and pilasters rest upon a high, elevated podium. The surrounding earth has

 See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name MEREDITH, Stephen. HOUSE  
other names/site number N/A

### 2. Location

street & number Half way between Pughtown & Bucktown on Route 100 N/A not for publication  
city, town South Coventry Township N/A vicinity  
state Pennsylvania code PA county Chester code 29 zip code 19464

### 3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>2</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>3</u>	<u>2</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
 DOMESTIC/secondary structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
 DOMESTIC/secondary structure

**7. Description**Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

GREEK REVIVAL

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE  
 walls STUCCO  
 roof METAL  
 other

**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

The Stephen Meredith House sits prominently on a knoll overlooking Pughtown in South Coventry Township, northern Chester County. It is a Greek Revival style, stone dwelling built in 1844 in the temple form. It is approached by a winding driveway from Route 100 over a stone arch bridge and around a small pond. The driveway rises to a tree and shrub-landscaped lawn with gazebo and a barn, surrounded by once farmed fields that are now simply mowed. The Meredith House is a three bay by four bay, gable-entrance, two story building. Included is the stone barn, part of which predates the house by about fifty years, and a vaulted root cellar of early origin. The bridge dates to the 1844 period, the small stream having been forded, or "run through", before that time. It was repaired in 1940 at which time it was capped with concrete slabs. The pond, built about 1960, and gazebo, installed about 1980, are noncontributing to the historical period. Small scale resources, including a stone wall, root cellar and well, although old enough, have not been counted in the totals. An earlier stone house that stood between the 1844 house and the barn was taken down about 1933, and the stone used in building a one floor kitchen with ample farm porch on the north side. The kitchen was attached to the east side of the 1844 house in a manner sympathetic to its style, leaving its integrity undisturbed. Other than the addition, the house has been little changed in its 150 year lifetime. The Meredith House is an excellent example of the Greek Revival style as interpreted in a rural township.

As is typical of the temple house, the front entrance, facing south, is at the gable end, permitting use of the gable roof line in the creation of a triangular pediment at both south and north gables. Also characteristic of the temple house is the Doric entrance porch across the full front facade, approached by stone steps leading up to the high podium. Virtually unchanged from its original appearance, the Meredith House is two stories high with basement exposed at the rear and on the west side. The front and rear elevations (south and north gable ends) are three bays across and identical with a semi-circular fanlight at the center of each pediment. A rectangular house, the west elevation is three bays deep and the east side is four bays deep at the second floor level, the first floor being partly covered by the kitchen addition. The original kitchen, which remains, was in the basement of the house with a heavy stone floor and large fireplace.

All windows are six-on-six lites with panelled exterior shutters on the first floor and louvered ones on the second floor windows. The doorway of the front elevation consists of a panelled door, rectangular transom, and vertical sidelights, all set within a deep, panelled door reveal. The door is framed by a Doric architrave. A one-story Doric entrance porch spans the full length of the south elevation, composed of a built-up, dentilated cornice supported by four Doric columns and four Doric pilasters. The columns and pilasters rest upon a high, elevated podium. The surrounding earth has

 See continuation sheet

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 2 Meredith, Stephen, House  
South Coventry Township  
Chester County

been shaped into a gentle slope which rises to complement the elevation of the podium. A dentilated cornice is found at both south and north pediments. The rear elevation repeats the front facade except that the entrance is at the basement level and there is no podium or porch.

The kitchen addition is three bays across and one bay deep. A porch is formed by the overhang of the addition's gable roof and shelters the north elevation of the addition. The kitchen covers only the two center bays of the east elevation of the main house. The fourth (north) bay is left to open onto the deep porch. The vaulted root cellar is dug into the bank at the rear of the house directly east of the old basement kitchen entrance. It is entered by descending stone steps, and iron hooks are imbedded in its ceiling. For many years, a wind pump, or wind mill, stood over the hand-dug well that is beside the root cellar, and is so noted on the 1873 map of South Coventry township.

Internally, the house continues its mode of Greek Revival influence. The floor plan is that of a side hall with wide, open staircase rising and turning to the second floor. A small room is found behind the hall and two equal-sized larger rooms open off the hall to the right. Rooms have high ceilings, windows are set with deep reveals and are large to flood the rooms with light. Each window and door is framed simply, both first and second floors, with flat wooden pediments and graduated pilasters. The stairway and wide hall are lighted by a window at both the first and second floor levels. The stair rail is a hand-turned cylinder supported by delicate spindles in an open string style.

The two matched first floor rooms have a wide squared opening for hinged double doors between them. Narrow chimneys jut into each room, one with a very small mantel. These were stove chimneys, never fireplaces, and provided house heat with fancy parlor stoves. There are deep plaster cornices around each room and hallway on the first floor and a finely worked ornate plaster square in the center of each ceiling, using the egg and dart motifs around the edge. The hall ceiling has a different plaster medallion around the light fixture which children of the family called the banana design. These originally held candles, then gas lights and are now electrified. A curious feature is found on the second floor in two of the four bedrooms. An opening, approximately 3"x6", simply flat framed with the center open to an upward channel through the partitions to the attic where it ends at the floor level and there is left open. It has been said that these were an early climate control for the bedrooms. The attic is unfinished.

The barn has experienced several modifications and one partial fire since its inception in circa 1780/90. At the time the 1844 house was built, the barn received a short addition to its north end, the stone jointure clearly visible. It faces southwest and was stone on three walls and frame on the southwest side. Old photographs show a forebay that has been removed, as has the barnyard wall that enclosed the animal exercise yard. The stable, originally dirt floored, was concreted and brought up to milk producing standards about 1935. Currently, all evidence of stanchions and troughs are gone, the floor, still concrete, being flat and used for storage of small equipment for the property. The three stable doors remain. The mow area of the barn was converted into office and more storage space in January of 1991. Levi Esh, an Amishman, was the contrac-

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Meredith, Stephen, House  
South Coventry Township  
Chester CountySection number 7 Page 3

tor. The adzed beams of the stable were retained, but a stairway was located in the middle of the floor. The hay mow floor was made a near open span, but Queen trusses were retained. A third floor was created in the upper half of the mow area with the original roof structure remaining in the sealed off top region above the square. The three stone walls, the early section having lime mortar, were not changed. The frame infill on the southwest side which was deteriorating plywood of an in-between remodelling, was redone with 3/4" wooden siding into which new windows were put. Although the internal changes have been extensive, they have been the catalyst to repairing and preserving the original stone structure which was in a growing and serious state of deterioration.

The stone arch bridge was built about the same time as the 1844 house to make the creek crossing easier and cleaner for Meredith's carriage. There are no photographs to verify its appearance, but the stone work in the foundations appear to be old. Later repairs caused it to be more modernly pointed and a concrete cap was added to shed water. Some of the stone retaining walls were similarly early dry stone walls which as they needed repair were mortared.

The Meredith House still has rural ambiance on the east and south sides, an active farm bounding the property on those sides which helps to maintain the original landscape; but on the north and west, small commercial enterprises, a gas station and a bank are crowding closer to the property line. Further, busy Route 100 is being studied for widening and/or rerouting from Eagle to Pottstown. The Stephen Meredith House has succeeded in maintaining its integrity largely because its exemplary architecture and pure form are self-evident, and because it is not over-sized. It is manageable for today's owner. It is the only example of Greek Revival architecture within the township and for many miles around.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

ARCHITECTURE

1844

1844

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

UNKNOWN

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Stephen Meredith House is important to the architecture of South Coventry Township and the surrounding townships because it is the only example of a Greek Revival era, temple form house found within the area. Sitting prominently on the east side of busy Route 100, the Meredith House has been a landmark since its construction in 1844, and retains integrity.

In 1713, Simon Meredith and James Pugh took title to 700 acres in three adjacent plots. After several transfers and exchanges of property, the northernmost 46 acres of Pugh land was sold to Dr. Meredith in 1844. Meredith was born in August of 1802 in Concord Township, Delaware County, a son of John and Ann (Mendenhall) Meredith, and grandson of Simon Meredith, above, of South Coventry Township, Chester County. He early studied at the University of Pennsylvania and practiced allopathic medicine at St. Mary's (Warwick Township) and at Pughtown. He enjoyed a large and successful medical practice in addition to maintaining an active role in political and educational affairs. He frequently presided over Chester County Republican conventions and often served as a delegate to statewide Republican conventions. He represented Chester County in the Pennsylvania State Legislature during 1867 and 1868. Dr. Meredith died in December, 1874, at his home in retirement at St. Mary's. The family followed Quaker tenets. He and his wife, Ann, raised two sons and two daughters in the South Coventry house, both sons following their father into medical practice. Son Henry Clay Meredith, with a degree from the University of Pennsylvania, practiced from the family home until his death in 1891. He was also active in political matters and at the state level in the legislature. The older son, John Quincy Adams Meredith, practiced in Texas, returning to Reading in later life. Both sons served in the medical department during the Civil War, John in Texas where he remained for many years.

H. Clay Meredith (as Henry was known) married Laura A. Stockton in 1869. Laura was the eldest daughter of the Rev. Dr. William R. Stockton, minister at St. Peter's Protestant Episcopal Church in Phoenixville from 1858 to 1894. One child was born to H. Clay and Laura Meredith but died at age 6 in 1882. H. Clay Meredith died in May, 1891, aged 49, after which time Laura moved back to Phoenixville. She died in November of 1910. Laura put the Coventry farm in the capable hands of her brother, Charles H. Stockton who had held a mortgage on it since 1873. Charles was a successful career Navy man who eventually rose to the rank of Admiral and who was living in New York at the time. In 1902,

See continuation sheet

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 2Meredith, Stephen, House  
South Coventry Township  
Chester County

he sold the farm to the tenant farmer of many years, Jacob Scholl, a son of Pughtown's hotel keeper. Jacob and Annie Scholl held the farm almost as long as the Merediths did, selling in 1953.

The Meredith House, one of the most imposing private residences in the township since its building date, reflects the prominence and prosperity of its first owner. Of importance is its Doric entrance porch set upon a high podium, and the relationship of the house to its site, elevated upon a miniature Acropolis. Equally important are the interior design features and ornamental plaster work rarely found in local country homes. The Meredith House is a true example of the Greek Revival style, and should not be confused with later "farmhouse-to-columned-estate conversions." It was built during a period of cultural awakening to architectural root sources and a desire to relate to a conservatively eloquent dignity - a patrician way of life for those who could afford it.

The style found expression in West Vincent Township in the Griffith house in Birchrunville, built in 1847 by a Baptist clergyman, (NR, 1991, Birchrunville Historic District) and in East Brandywine Township at Lyndell in the McClure Mansion, also built by a doctor, 1835. The Griffith house is of the temple style with a pillared porch two stories high, entrance in the gable end, but it is less perfect in other details. Further, the interior has no fine moldings or ornamental plaster on ceilings. The McClure Mansion, a Classical Revival style dwelling retaining certain Federal features, has beautiful molded plaster cornices and delicately-carved plaster ceiling medallions. The McClure house is larger than the Meredith house and on a general grander scale. Further, it has a central hall and a core that was built in 1750, whereas the Meredith house, a side hall floor plan, was a newly complete structure at 1844. The Borough of Phoenixville had a fine example of a similar Classical Revival in the Reeves Mansion, built in 1854 by Phoenix Iron Company owner, David Reeves. Again a much larger house than the Meredith house, it was desecrated and razed in the 1980's by the church who bought the land. Once called the most beautiful house in the Schuylkill Valley, it was sacrificed for changing ideologies.

There are sixteen columned-front "country estate" dwellings found close to the Schuylkill River from Valley Forge to Pottstown, and recorded in the White Horse Farm National Registration, 1987, which are not to be confused with these original built Classical Revivals. The "Country estate" houses were remodellings of ordinary farmhouses to suit a particular fancy of the city businessman from roughly 1908 to 1930. The Meredith, Griffith, McClure and Reeves houses were each a full-blown architectural statement lauding the purities and beauties of classical elements as interpreted by each owner. It can be noted that the four houses cited are relatively separated geographically, albeit all are in northern Chester County, and no one is 'like' the other.

The Stephen Meredith House stands uniquely important to the built scene of South Coventry Township. In an area where houses built in a simple, functional, sometimes country Georgian style were the architectural norm, this house breathes a refreshing independence and shows cosmopolitan awareness of broader influence. Maintaining full integrity, it has been respected for its excellence both in structure and ambiance.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Chester County Court House, High Street, West Chester, PA. 19380. Recorder of Deeds.  
Chester County Archives, 117 Gay Street, West Chester, PA. 19380. Old deeds, Wills, Orphans' Court records, Tax records, obituaries.  
Chester County Historical Society, N.High Street, West Chester, PA. 19380. Clipping files, Census records, family name files, church records, St. Peters Episcopal Church, Phnxv.  
Wiley, Samuel, Cyclopedia of Chester County Biography and History, Philadelphia, 1893. Meredith and Stockton.  
Thomson, W.W., Chester County and Its People, Chicago, 1948. Meredith & Stockton.  
French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, Box 360, Pottstown, PA. 19464. Files on Pughtown and Stephen Meredith House.  
PennDOT, St. Davids office. District Press Office, Eugene Blaum and John Wade. Telephone conversations RE: dating of Route 100, historically, and inquiry regarding to intentions on rerouting highway. Spring, 1992.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Other: French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 10.02 acres

UTM References

A	1 8	4 4 3 6 6 0	4 4 4 6 9 4 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	1 8	4 4 3 7 0 0	4 4 4 6 6 4 0

B	1 8	4 4 3 8 4 0	4 4 4 6 8 1 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	1 8	4 4 3 5 0 0	4 4 4 6 7 7 0

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is identical to Chester County Tax Parcel #20-4-163.1. (See enclosed map).

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the present tax parcel were used in their entirety because they encompass an appropriate setting for the property's architecture without introducing other noncontributing resources or vacant land. Among excluded neighboring parcels are a 32.6 acre parcel (TP 20-4-163.2) farmed by the owner and a 4 acre parcel (TP 20-4-163) divided into small commercial lots.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Estelle Cremers for  
organization French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust date 9/14/1992; Resubm: 12/10/1992  
street & number Box 360, R.D.#2 telephone 215-469-6977 (contact)  
city or town Pottstown state Penna. zip code 19464