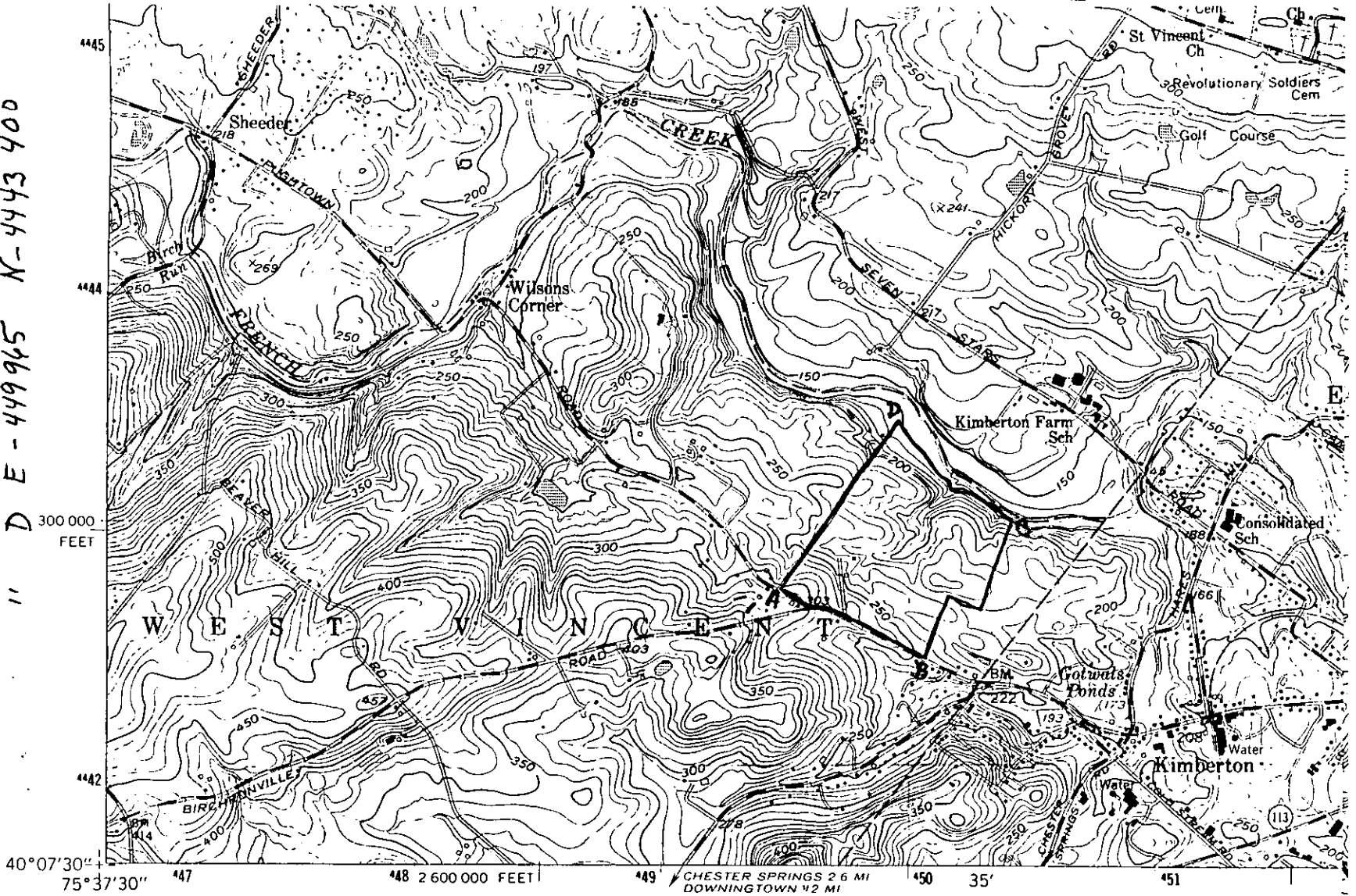


French Creek Farm
Chester Co.

Phoenixville Quad
Zone 18

Reference A E-449490 N-4442710
 " B E-450065 N-4442420
 " C E-450440 N-4442990
 " D E-449965 N-4443400



(DOWNTOWN)
5864 11 SW

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and USCE

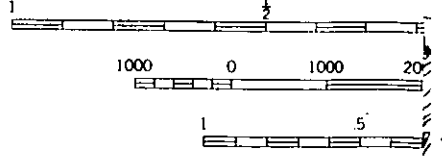
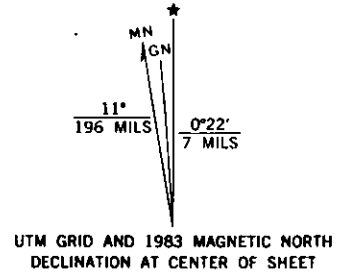
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1951. Field checked 1955

Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Pennsylvania coordinate system, south zone
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 18, shown in blue
 1927 North American Datum

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 6 meters south and 30 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map



CONT
NATIONAL GEO

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH
 FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOL
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAP

RECEIVED

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

JUL 6 1988

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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 FRENCH CREEK FARM
other names/site number The Aman Farm

2. Location

street & number Kimberton Road N/A not for publication
city, town Kimberton (W.Vincent Township) N/A vicinity
state Pennsylvania code Pa. county Chester code 029 zip code 19442

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>4</u>	<u>4</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 structures

AGRICULTURE/animal facility

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

AGRICULTURE/animal facility

AGRICULTURE/storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/stone farmhouse

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE/Sandstone

walls STONE/Sandstone

roof WOOD/Shingle

other WOOD

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

French Creek Farm is situated in the northeast corner of West Vincent Township bounded by Pughtown/Kimberton Road, Ford Road, a neighboring property, and 1500 feet along French Creek. Nestled amid rolling farm land near an early crossroads later called Kimberton, it now has housing developments pushing close to its southern boundary and some loose development on its northwest boundary. There are, however, several farms adjoining on the western side of Pughtown Road, and a number of still active farms in the township. The buildings are clustered in a rough circle in the center of the farm. They face either south or east. The contributing buildings, vernacular in style, are a pointed stone springhouse (1795), a stuccoed small barn and two-story stuccoed wagonshed (1796/7), a pointed stone two and one half story smokehouse (1799), and an ell-shaped pointed stone farmhouse built in three stages (1803/4, 1808, 1812). The non-contributing building is a stone and frame gambrel-roofed barn (1943). The non-contributing structures are two metal grain storage bins of moderate size (1960), and an in-ground pool (1970). All buildings maintain the integrity of their building dates having had very few outward changes.

Built into a low bank, the springhouse (12'9" x 14'8") is 1½ stories with a gable wood shingle roof. The entrance, a simple battened plank door, is in the east gable wall at spring level. A 4-lite window is above the door. The south wall shows a 3-lite rectangular window at spring level with a 4-lite window above under the eaves. The west wall shows only a plank door on the loft level, and the north side has no fenestration.

The smokehouse (12'x12') uses the low bank on the north side to give two entering levels. The basement room faces south and the middle room faces north. On the south facade of the smokehouse there is a 4-lite window beside the basement door, and a 6-lite vertical casement at the middle level. The west gable wall shows a 6-lite vertical casement at the ground or basement level, an 8-lite vertical casement at the middle level, and a door in the gable. The middle floor room has its entry a little above grade on the north side. The east wall has no fenestration, being entirely taken up with the chimney. All doors on the springhouse, smokehouse and small barn are battened planks. Quoins are evident on both the springhouse and the smokehouse. The two buildings are connected by a low retaining wall with steps to reach the different levels. A fireplace is in the basement room of the smokehouse.

The 2½ story main house is just a few yards north of the springhouse and smokehouse, facing south. With a 6-bay facade, the easternmost 4 bays contain the oldest section (30'x18'). That section's front four bays are divided into a door and window for each of its two first floor rooms, with symmetrically arranged windows on the second floor. The north wall of this section repeats one window and door for the kitchen, but has only one window in the second room. The second floor fenestration of the north wall allows only one window per room. The east wall has no fenestration until the attic where there is one 4-lite window. Chimneys are stuccoed stone and all are original size and shape. There are no shutters on the house; window surrounds on the outside are simple and pegged.

All sash, including the dormers, are 6/6 except in the attic gables where they are 4-lite sash. The front and back porches are shed roofed and the entry porch on the west wall is gabled. The two dormer windows are shingled on the sides.

The west gable wall became an inside wall when the first 2½ story addition (18'x18') was built in 1808. This addition extended the facade by another door and window, making a total of six bays across the front on each floor. The new west gable provided also a window beside its fireplace on each floor. In 1812, the final addition, also 18'x18', was attached to the north wall of the first addition, making an ell-shaped house. The core of the house and each of the additions is built with 22" stone walls from the base-

See continuation sheet

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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

ARCHITECTURE

1795-1812

1796/7
1803/4

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

AMAN, GEORGE

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

FRENCH CREEK FARM exemplifies early Pennsylvania farm architecture as found in northern Chester County where a large portion of the inhabitants were second or third generation Germans, sons of Montgomery County German farmers. Since these areas mixed the Germans with English/Welsh neighbors, their architecture shows both influences. French Creek Farm is an unusually good example of this progression in that it, basically, represents the bold fieldstone style with heavy quoins typical of the German, but changes the floor plan to that of the Englishman, putting fireplaces on end walls rather than in a central chimney, and bringing the kitchen out of the basement to the main floor.

East and West Vincent Townships, as Leaseholds until 1790, had been settled by hard working men of middle to poor income. They built their homesteads as they were financially able, which gave rise to the additive house. At 1800, there were few, if any, true Georgian houses in the area. The average house was either a 3-bay English house with the entrance in the center bay, or a 4-bay German house with either one or two front doors. Additions were made as the necessity for more space arose. In 1808, the French Creek Farm farmhouse was extended longitudinally, making a 6-bay facade, and in 1812, the second addition turned it into an ell-shaped house. Situated in the center of 122 acres of actively farmed land, the buildings, with the exception of the barn, have maintained their integrity, and make a locally important representation of early 19th century farm architecture. The farmhouse particularly shows that period's stone additive style. The smokehouse and small barn are also well preserved and rare surviving examples of late 18th century auxiliary buildings. Four of its five buildings have survived intact with only a few minor, reversible changes. Since the four were built by the same person from 1795 to 1812, there is a visual unity in the complex rarely remaining in rural homesteads today, as constant modernization adds new buildings and tears down older ones. Most farmsteads have kept the wagonshed because it remains useful for storage, but the smokehouses have disappeared as their use dwindled. Like the wagonshed, the springhouse remains on 50% of the farms in direct relation to its ability to function. The small stone barn fell victim to the ever expanding agricultural operation. There is no other farmstead in West Vincent Township which has preserved these early auxiliary buildings as well as on French Creek Farm.

Son of Johann Georg and Agnes (Rush) Amend of Whitmarsh Township, Montgomery County, John Aman was almost 50 years old when he came to the banks of the French Creek in Chester County. Enticed in 1794 by the economic benefit of buying into a less developed area, John and his wife, Sophia, brought with them five sons and three daughters, ranging from two years to twenty. John Aman was a farmer with a side trade of blacksmithing when he bought the undeveloped half of John Lloyd's newly patented 400 acres. Aman's oldest son, George, just twenty years of age, was a journeyman stone mason. While the parents lived in a log house situated near the Pughtown/Kimberton road, George picked a new site on the farm and practiced his trade. He built the springhouse, small barn and wagonshed across the road a short distance northeast of his parents' buildings. Then he mastered the intricacies of a fireplace to build the live-in smokehouse, which became his bachelor quarters, and freed him from the crowded conditions in the old one floor log house (30'x26') of his

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Chester County (PA) Recorder of Deeds, Court House, West Chester, Deeds: R2-41-197; Z2-48-115; I3-57-256; V4-93-217; G5-104-100; Y6-146-220; E7-152-292; X14-345-266; D19-451-31; Q20-488-1; X38-124; N61-267.
Register of Wills & Orphans Court Records, 117 W. Gay Street, West Chester, PA. Family name.
Chester County (PA) Archives, West Chester. Tax transcripts & Assessment records.
Chester County Historical Society Library, West Chester, PA. Various files under AMAN.
Montgomery County Historical Society, Norristown, PA. Various files under AMAN.
Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA. Mame Wood Collection & files under AMAN.
Dapp, Rev. Chas. F., History of Zion's or Old Organ Church, Spring City, PA., The Inter-Borough Press, 1919. Hand-written death notice and burial records.
Obituaries, "Joshua Aman", "John Aman", The Daily Republican, Phoenixville, PA. 1886, 1892.
Chester County Historical Society Library, West Chester, PA. Census Records, 1810, 1920, 1840 & 50
Watson, John F., Annals of Philadelphia & Pennsylvania in the Olden Time, Vol. I, Leary, Stuart Co., Philadelphia, 1857, pages 219-220.
Bailey, Nathaniel, Dictionarium Brittanicum, 1730, enlarged 1736.
Sheridan, _____, A Complete Dictionary of the English Language, Both with Regard to Sound & Meaning. William Young, Philadelphia, 1789, 4th Edition.

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:

Department of Agriculture/Century Farm

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Approximately 2 acres

UTM References

A	<u>18</u>	<u>449490</u>	<u>4442710</u>	B	<u>18</u>	<u>450065</u>	<u>4442420</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>18</u>	<u>450440</u>	<u>4442990</u>	D	<u>18</u>	<u>449965</u>	<u>4443400</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description The boundary of French Creek Farm is shown as parcel #4 on the West Vincent Tax Map included. The nominated part is shown within the southwest section of the farm by dash lines. Beginning at a point 10' NE of the long axis of the swimming pool and proceeding south 296' to a point intended for a corner; thence proceeding west 296' to a point intended for a corner; thence proceeding north 296' to a point intended for a corner; thence proceeding east 296' to the place of Beginning.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification The legal boundaries of French Creek Farm are those of Tax Parcel 25-5-4 of West Vincent Township, and contain 122.4 acres. These present limits are the historical boundaries of French Creek Farm since 1812 when the final division between father and son was made. Although these boundaries convey the historic setting of the farm, only that portion surrounding the buildings is nominated. In choosing the boundaries, consideration was given to the extreme points of historic architectural interest within the district and arbitrary lines were drawn in a square around them. The farmed fields do not contribute to the architectural significance and are excluded from the nominated property.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Estelle Cremers
organization French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust date June 22, 1988
street & number R.D.#2, Box #360 telephone 215-469-6877
city or town Pottstown state Pennsylvania zip code 19464

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2French Creek Farm
West Vincent Township
Chester County

ment to the gable roof. The roof is wood shingles. Large quoins are evident. A simple box cornice is used.

The only partition wall in the completed house is between the first kitchen and the parlor, now a dining room. The partition is repeated on the second floor. Every room has its own fireplace. There are two cooking fireplaces in the house, one in the east wall of the original dwelling and the other in the north wall of the second (1812) addition. The cooking fireplaces show their large adzed lintels with simple shelf well above. The parlor mantel and bridal chamber above it (1803/4) have punched and reeded mantels of similar design with a built-in narrow cupboard beside each one. Chair rail is used in the entire house. Floors are original random width poplar, one having been replaced with narrow width oak. Ceilings are about 8' high and plastered. With the exception of the door to the west in the second addition inside the glassed-in entry porch, all doors are six panelled. The excepted door has 9 lites above two vertical and one horizontal panels. The door into the present dining room (parlor of the first house) is battened on the inside. Transoms are 4-lite rectangles.

Interior window treatments are of two kinds, the earliest being square-cornered with a wooden trim board; those in the last (1812) addition have rounded cheeks. There are three stairways in the house, two of them being closed tight-winding stairs beside their respective fireplaces. The stairway in the first addition (1808) was first enclosed against the west wall of the 1803 house, turning at a landing into the addition. About 1930, the enclosure was removed and a chestnut rail and square spindles installed in its place with a square newel post. Walls are plastered except chimney breasts in the additions which are pointed stone.

In 1950, two gabled dormer windows were added to the south roof, and the full south porch was glassed-in with 12-lite sash and three doors. A porch was removed from the west entrance of the second (or north) addition and replaced with a glassed-in entry porch. A porch to the east of the second addition in the ell of the house was enclosed with board siding and windows in 1970.

The 18th century small barn stands about 50 yards west of the house, facing east. It is 1½ stories high, gable roofed in wood shingles, and is 21'x18' in size. There are two Dutch doors to the east under a short extension of the gable roof. One door leads into a pen with a sliding cattle bar in the door frame; the other door leads into a feeding passage. There is a small square window and a recessed utility box in the north wall, another small square window in the west wall. The loft has a board & batten throw-down door in the north gable. The south wall has only a door leading into the wagonshed.

The wagonshed (21'x34') is raftered over with adzed half-round tree trunks to make a second floor. The wagonshed opens on the east end only and has never had doors. The only fenestration to the building is in the south wall where two small 3-lite windows throw light to the deeper reaches of the ground floor. A hinged battened plank door is on the second floor above them.

The 1943 gambrel-roofed barn is built on the foundations of the earlier barn and incorporates the stone end walls of that earlier barn. By datestone, it was built by George Aman in 1837, added to by John Aman in 1866 and 1893, and rebuilt by George M. Aman in 1903. The 1903 barn burned in 1943 and was immediately rebuilt by Harold W. Aman in the form standing today. It is 58'x36' plus a 12' overhang. It faces east. The north end wall is completely covered by a two floor shed-roofed lean-to. The shed has three large 6/6 windows in the north wall and open space beneath. The barn holds 36 head of cattle. There are two round air vents on the roof. A one floor milk house, gable-roofed, is attached to the south side of the barn. Two metal round grain storage bins, erected in 1970, stand behind the barn on the west side of the lane.

The storage bins and modern barn, although related to the farm function of the property, are outside the period of significance, as is the pool, and are, therefore, noncontributing. The springhouse, smokehouse, small barn and wagonshed have had no changes either outside or inside except for the installation of electricity. They have been maintained as they were originally built. The main dwelling house,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

French Creek Farm

Section number 7 Page 3

also, has retained its original size, shape, fenestration and style. Its porches have been changed, two by enclosure and one by restructuring, and two attic dormers have been introduced.

Internally, the house is also remarkably intact, the installation of modern conveniences (electricity, tap water, heat, and baths), and the 1930 removal of the enclosure around the stairway in the 1808 addition causing the only modifications. The entrances and floor plan are unchanged. All of the fireplaces are in working condition. The buildings on French Creek Farm continue to portray the architectural appearance and visual unity they had when they were built.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

French Creek Farm
West Vincent Township
Chester County, Pa.

parents. He married Elizabeth Meredith in 1803. For her, George built a full sized two floor stone dwelling using all of his best skills.

George built simply but with an eye for detail. The 1803/4 house was not large, but it had the extra graces of two finely cut mantels and side cupboards, a kitchen hearth with a generous bake oven. There were two windows for each room, a great improvement over his parents' log house that had only one window in total. The new house was a cut above the rudimentary. Like the Montgomery County home of his grandparents, there were two front doors, one into each room, and a back door as well. When time allowed and the need arose, he added a carefully measured addition, and four years later, a two floor 'efficiency' for his parents. George's house was complete and so it has remained, with no more additions. Not until 1950 and 1970 were porches enclosed to provide extra living space.

There are three styles of additive-type farmhouses in the West Vincent area. One type is added to longitudinally, enlarging the house to a longer rectangle, as George's first addition did. Another type makes an ell-shaped building, as seen in the final Aman addition. A third method, and very popular after 1830, added vertically by extending the walls upward and raising the roof. This method caused the introduction of half, or small, windows under the eaves. There are many three, four and five bay, ell-shaped houses in the township - few six bay, and an occasional seven bay rectangular add-on without the ell.

On a farm nearby on St. Matthew's Road is a house that started out identical to the four bay French Creek Farm 1803/4 house. It belongs to descendants of Thomas Wilson who married George Aman's sister, Sarah. It may have been built by George, having the same setting in the center of the farm, and the two-front-door facade. Like the Aman house, there are no hallways and chimneys are on end walls. It has had an addition to the rear, making an ell, but unlike the Aman house, it was extended vertically about 1840 to make bedrooms in the attic, a method of enlargement which became a building style some twenty years later. It has retained only its wagonshed, and its barn was rebuilt in 1859.

A farmstead slightly farther away but within the township, which does have a six-bay facade constructed in additive fashion, is the Bradley Evans home on Bartlett Lane. Dated 1783, this home is on a generally larger scale than the French Creek Farm dwelling. It sets on a rise of land rather than in the midst of farmed fields. It is no longer an active farm, has lost its barn totally, but retains a carriagehouse, a smith shop, a smokehouse and springhouse clustered around it. All buildings are stuccoed fieldstone except the main house which is pointed. The house has been restored to today's perception of colonial, replacing the porch with a pent roof¹. and installing flat, two-board railing across the front. The original 3rd and 4th bays have been appropriated as an entrance foyer with the addition of a graceful stairway that dates to c.1865. Many original features and hardware are in evidence, both in the house and on outside buildings.

The Aman farmhouse is typical of West Vincent farm architecture at about 1800 in its use of fieldstone, corner quoins, 2½ stories, ell-shaped, gable-roofed with end wall chimneys and plain in character with little ornamentation. It is somewhat singular in its facade of three front doors. It has better than average integrity, having had few changes to its final 1812 building date. While a few contemporary farmsteads still retain a number of outbuildings, their styling many times reflects a variety of periods according to the date of their building. French Creek Farm, having had but one builder (excluding the main barn), has a unity and cohesiveness to its stone architecture not easily found in local farmsteads. Of note is the lack of even an early silo, and more importantly, of later Harvestors or

* * * * *

- The porch was a most common feature of early stone farmhouses in northern Chester County. Every farmhouse had both a front and back porch, one for pleasure and one to extend the work space of the kitchen. Of ancient origin, its use in the architecture of early Pennsylvania is noted by John F. Watson in *Annals of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania* on pages 219-220 where he says that every house in Philadelphia "in the olden days" had a porch to the street. Both Bailey's dictionary (ed.1730) and Sheridan's (ed.1789) define "porch", "piazza" and "portico". The sheltering effect of the porch was important to the architecture of northern Chester County. While the pent roof (essentially an English feature) is esthetically pleasing to today's eye, it is not an historically correct feature for the German farmhouse of this area.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

French Creek Farm
West Vincent Township
Chester County, PA.

Section number 8 Page 3

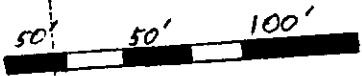
metal sheds. No property in either West Vincent Township or in the surrounding townships can produce a small stone barn and wagonshed or a smokehouse comparable in size or architecture to those buildings on French Creek Farm. Particularly singular is the retention of elongated casement windows as seen in the Aman smokehouse. This element of 18th century continental influence is rare.

The sprawl of urban domestic development is pressing to the perimeters of French Creek Farm, leaving this intact farmstead to maintain the rural landscape and quiet agricultural setting of its late 18th century beginnings. It conveys to an unusual degree its association with historic building patterns tracing to a mixed Germanic/Welsh region. As architecture reflects elements and patterns of living, it is a well preserved example of the simple traditions that left so deep an impression as to reach into our twentieth century.

Section 5

~~11 400'~~

French Creek Farm
Chester Co.
--- Boundary



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CREEK

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FRENCH CREEK FARM

4

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10 370' 1 AC.

15071
465'

11.1
62 AC.

12
3 AC.

13.1
4.3 AC.

13
5 AC.

11
4.4 AC.

14.2
2.1 AC.

14.1
1.2 AC. 390'

470'S
193.9'
310.2'
161'
17
ST. MATTHEW'S RD.

18.1
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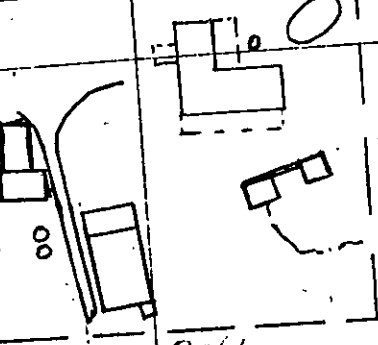
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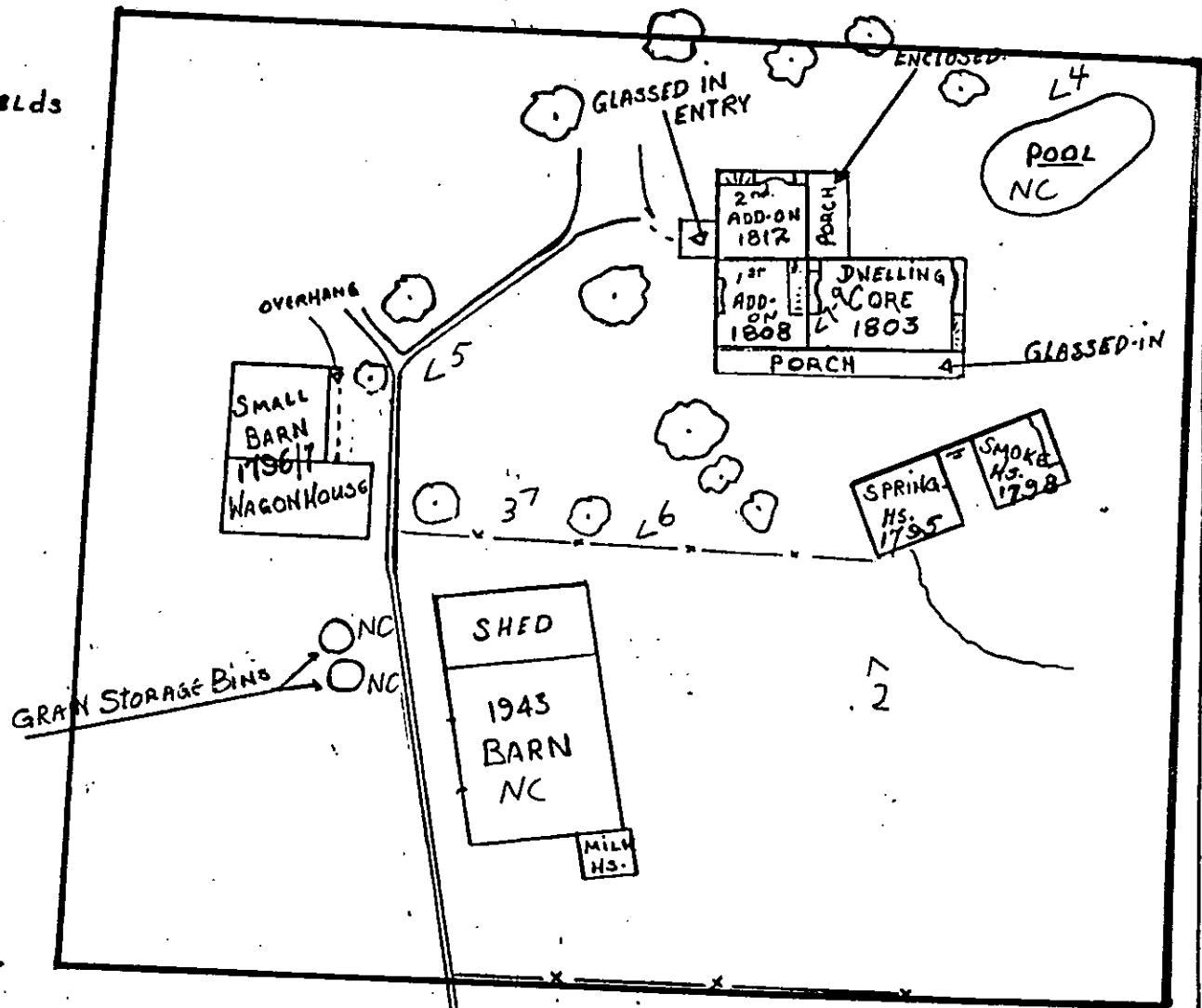


FUGHTOWN / KIMBERTON
15071
1569.1'

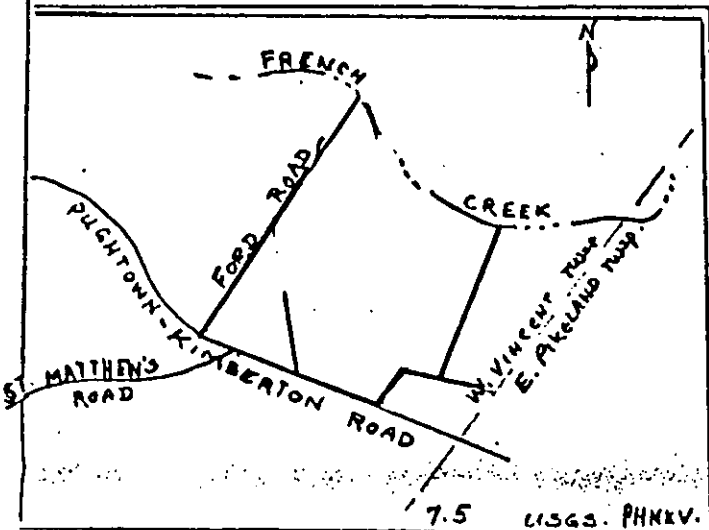
7
17.6 AC.

8.5

Farmed Fields



Farmed Fields



↑ 1 Farmed Fields

French Creek Farm
Chester County

- Boundary
- NC Non contributing Resource
- < Photo View

PUGHTOWN-KIMBERTON ROAD