

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 Stover, Isaac House

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number River Road

city, town Erwinna (Tinicum Township)

N/A not for publication

N/A vicinity

state Pennsylvania code PA county Bucks

code 017

zip code 18920

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
1	
	buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
1	0
	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

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/hotel

7. DescriptionArchitectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian/Second Empire

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone: sandstone

walls Brick

roof Stone: slate

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Isaac Stover House is located in Tinicum Township, Bucks County, on the west side of River Road (SR 32) approximately 1600 feet south of Geigel Hill Road (LR 09138). The house faces toward the Delaware River, one hundred feet to the east. Associated with the house, but not included in the National Register nomination, is a frame barn to the southwest, presently being converted into a residence. The Isaac Stover House, a large, asymmetrical, six bay, brick, double pile house surmounted by a slate, dormered, mansard roof, was constructed in the 1850s and substantially remodelled in the 1870s. The appearance of the building remains the Second Empire remodelling. The only alteration to the exterior is a small, one story, gable roof, stuccoed frame, room built in 1988 onto the rear elevation.

The house is constructed with a cut sandstone foundation with brick walls. The facade features an all stretcher bond; side and rear elevations are common bond, with one row of headers for every seventh course. A raised brick dripcourse runs the length of the facade and indicates the former presence of a shed roof porch.

The house consists of two sections, a formal block and a kitchen wing; each section is three bays. The formal block composes the northern half of the building while the kitchen wing forms the southern half. The facade is unified by the common treatment of the windows, a bracketed cornice around the entire building, and the porch running the length of the facade. The wall below the porch is stuccoed and painted white to reflect light. The porch features a bracketed cornice which matches the building's cornice, decorative spandrels, and is supported by squat, panelled piers with pronounced capitals. The piers rest on square, panelled pedestals which sit upon sandstone plinths.

All of the windows, except the dormer windows, are 6/6 sash. The first floor windows on all elevations have simple lintels; those on the facade and end walls have panelled shutters. The formal entrance to the residence is a single panel door flanked by sidelights and topped by a transom. The entrance to the kitchen wing is crowned by a multi-light transom.

The second story windows on all elevations are surmounted by bracketed segmental arched crowns which were added during the 1870s remodelling. The mansard roof with a concave shape supplanted a gable roof during the same remodelling. Three symmetrically placed dormers adorn the front and rear elevations and two dormers are found on each side elevation. The dormers are capped by bracketed, segmental arch

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pediments and feature scrolls at the base of their surrounds. The upper sashes of the dormers have arched lights; the lower sash is a standard, two light sash.

The interior plan of the house reflects the exterior in its division between formal spaces and work areas. The formal block of the house consists of a side passage, double parlor plan. The formal doorway with transom and sidelights leads into the hall which runs the depth of the house. The front entrance area is bisected from the stair passage by an elliptical archway with a wood surround featuring stylized pilasters and keystone. The staircase turns twice before reaching the second floor and has a very simple balustrade with straight spindles and slightly bulbous newels. An arched statuary niche is located halfway up the first rise of the stairs. The hall has a panelled wainscoting topped with a chairrail. The floors are random width as they are throughout the house. The door under the stairs has been replaced with a divided, glass panel door which leads to the rear addition. A four panel door opens from the hall into each formal parlor. Pocket doors separate the two parlors. The parlor fireplaces, located on the north wall, exhibit marble surrounds; the north wall in both parlors is panelled. A small closet is to the west of the fireplace in the front parlor. The fireplace in the rear parlor is flanked by closets. Door and window trim is linear and simple.

The kitchen wing of the house once exhibited a two room plan. A four panel door from the hall opens into what was once the front room and which is now divided into a passage and two rooms. The front room has an exterior entrance on the east wall. Interior trim remains intact, although the fireplace on the south wall has been sealed. The back room still serves as a kitchen and features a large cooking fireplace on the south wall which is panelled. A small closet is to the west of the fireplace. A door to the outside is located on the west wall. On the north wall of the room is a door which provides access to the basement stairs. Service stairs to the second floor from the kitchen wing have been removed. It is unknown whether the service stairs were removed during a nineteenth or twentieth century remodelling.

The second floor plan mirrors the first with a few exceptions. The east end of the formal stair hall has been enclosed to incorporate two baths. A simple enclosed stair to the attic is located along the north wall of the kitchen wing in a hall which includes a linen closet. The formal stair does not lead to the third floor. The fireplace surrounds in the four second floor rooms are identical to each other and feature a flat, geometric design which is similar to the door and window surrounds found on both the first and second floors. Closets with four panel doors are located on the fireplace walls.

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The third floor contains four bedrooms. A bath is located at the east end of the stair hall. The rooms on the south wing of the house have closets on the interior wall dividing the two rooms. Evidence remains that indicates that stoves were tapped into the chimneys. The rooms on the north half of the house have closets and baths on the north wall. Doors throughout the third floor are four panel or two panel.

The Isaac Stover House retains an outstanding architectural integrity dating from the remodelling in the Second Empire Style during the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century.

A

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)
Architecture

Period of Significance
ca. 1850-1880

Significant Dates
N/A

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 Isaac Stover House is significant as one of the best preserved examples of ornate Victorian residential architecture, particularly the Second Empire style, in north-eastern Bucks County. The house, most likely built in the 1850s, was remodelled during the later nineteenth century, a period of exceptional growth and prosperity for much of Bucks County. The Isaac Stover House is a physical manifestation of the area's later nineteenth century wealth resulting from the increased marketing of agricultural products and natural resources.

The land upon which the Isaac Stover House sits was part of a forty-five acre tract which Henry S. Stover purchased from Thomas Kennedy in 1830. Written sources indicate that Riverside Farm (listed on the National Register) was the only house on the property. According to a history of Bucks County written in 1887 by J. H. Battle:

...he (Henry S. Stover) bought a property with a mill site at Erwinna, from Thomas G. Kennedy, which property was formerly owned by William Erwin, Esq. The following year he moved with his family upon the property, and erected extensive flour and saw-mills upon the same. (1)

In 1859 Henry Stover divided the forty-five acres between two of his sons, Isaac and Jordan. Jordan Stover received a little over fifteen acres including Riverside Farm and "remodelled and partially rebuilt the old home, making it an elegant and commodious residence."(2) Isaac received the remaining acreage.

According to the federal census records, Isaac Stover lived in the same household as his father Henry in 1850, as did his brothers, Jacob, Henry, Jordan, his sister Emeline and John Betrick, a miller. Tax records confirm that Isaac lived with his father; for example, in the tax lists for 1847, Isaac Stover was described as a single man residing with "H. S. Stover". From this information, it would appear unlikely that there were two separate houses on the forty-five acre tract; this would indicate that the Isaac Stover House post-dates 1850, although it has been traditionally dated to ca. 1837 (Note: Isaac Stover was only seventeen years old in 1837).

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By the time of the 1860 federal census, only Jordan Stover and his father still resided together at Riverside Farm, which Jordan now owned. The 1860 census listed Isaac as the head of an adjoining household (most likely the Isaac Stover House). Living with Isaac was his wife, Elen, and their two sons. The census listed Isaac as a lumberman which confirms biographies of Isaac found in local histories. W.W.H. Davis' History Of Bucks County (1905) described Isaac as a partner with his brother, Jacob; the two of them "rented the saw-mill of their father, and engaged extensively in supplying hardwood lumber for the California trade". (3) In 1870, Isaac Stover's real estate was valued at \$13,000; his household in 1870 consisted of his wife and six children. Ten years later, Isaac Stover's household had seven members including himself, his wife, his three youngest children, his sister-in-law, and her daughter.

The Stover Family held onto the property until 1958. The house remained a private residence until the 1980s when it became a bed and breakfast inn. During Isaac Stover's ownership, most likely during the 1870s, the house was remodelled in the Second Empire style. The remodelling of the house fits into the larger rebuilding of the rural landscape which occurred throughout the eastern United States between the 1830s and 1880s. This rebuilding occurred as a result of the increase in the production of agricultural goods for market and the greater exploitation of natural resources. In Bucks County this rise in market agriculture and processing of natural resources was especially dramatic due not only to the presence of railroads, but also to the building of the Delaware and Lehigh Canal, and Bucks County's close proximity to both New York City and Philadelphia. For these reasons, the building and rebuilding of the houses along the canal, especially by millers and merchants such as Isaac Stover and other members of his family, was notable. The Stover family dominated the milling industry in northeastern Bucks County. In addition to the lumbering and milling which Isaac and Jacob Stover managed, their father, Henry, built a grist and sawmill in nearby Point Pleasant and a grist and saw mill across from the Isaac Stover House which Jacob Stover and later, Jordan Stover also operated. (Stover Mill, 1832; listed on the National Register). Ralph Stover (Isaac's uncle) purchased a grist mill in nearby Bedminster Township (Stover-Myers Mill, listed on the National Register), while Ulrich Stover (Isaac's uncle) operated a mill in Haycock Township.

The houses erected by the Stovers, and other wealthy individuals, while reflecting the larger pattern of mid-to-late nineteenth century rural rebuilding, share common features. Four of the houses associated with the Stover family--Riverside Farm, the Isaac Stover House, the Erwin-Stover House, and the Stover-Myers House (in Bedminster Township)- are built of brick, were remodelled during the 1870s, exhibit an asymmetrical six bay fenestration and are all well preserved. Only the Stover-Myers House and the Isaac Stover House were remodelled in the Second Empire style. The majority of other houses in the township and vicinity are not as large as these residences and most are of stone construction. Brick houses in the area appear to be concentrated along the canal or in the villages. This pattern also holds true for more ornate

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Victorian style dwellings in the township which are also found more often in villages and along the Canal. No other large, well-preserved Second Empire style houses are located in Tinicum Township. The Stover-Myers House, in Bedminster Township, was remodelled in the Second Empire style, but features a straight-sided mansard roof rather than a ~~convave~~ curved roof, and has had porch length windows with Queen Anne style sash placed on the facade. A frame, six bay Second Empire style house is located in the borough of Riegelsville (at Easton and Bridge Streets). This house, which postdates 1891, is less ornate than the Isaac Stover House and features Colonial Revival detailing in the portico and pedimented window lintels. A stone Second Empire style house, the Buckman House (Solebury Township) was designed by Bucks County/Philadelphia architect, Thomas Cernea, during the 1870s. Unlike the Isaac Stover House, the Buckman House is an "L" shaped building with a three bay main block. The house also features a wrap around porch and a central tower.

Although an anomaly in the township in style and size, the Isaac Stover House is similar in form to other houses in the township. A large number of the houses in Tinicum Township are asymmetrical four bay dwellings, sometimes with two entrances on the facade. These houses like the Isaac Stover House, may have a division of a formal block with an attached kitchen wing. Also found in the township are more symmetrical five bay houses with central passages. (4)

The Isaac Stover House, of the houses in Tinicum and surrounding vicinity, best represents an exuberant interpretation of the Second Empire style. The house retains a remarkable integrity. The mansard roof with its opulent dormers, the bracketed porch with its decorative spandrels, and the ornate window hoods make the exterior an excellent example of the Second Empire style. The retention of the interior woodwork including the arch delineating the entrance from the stairs, the paired marble fireplace mantels in the downstairs parlors, and the matching mantels in the upstairs bedrooms further highlight the building's excellent integrity and outstanding Second Empire features.

ENDNOTES

1. J. H. Battle, ed. History of Bucks County, Pennsylvania (Spartanburg, S. C.: The Reprint Publishing Company, 1985 [1887]), 1136.
2. Battle, 1138.
3. W. W. H. Davis, History of Bucks County, Pennsylvania (New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1905), 583.
4. Bucks County Conservancy, Windshield Survey of Tinicum Township, 1981, 1982.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

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

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 0.7 acres

UTM References

A

1	8
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4	9	4	1	9	0
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4	4	8	2	7	1	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a point on the westerly side of SR 32 located approximately 1450 feet south of the intersection of LR 09098, thence westerly approximately 150 feet to a corner, thence southerly and parallel to SR 32 approximately 200 feet, thence easterly approximately 150 feet to a corner on the westerly side of SR 32, thence along same approximately 200 feet to point of beginning.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries include the nominated resource, the land between the resource and SR 32, and the land immediately surrounding the resource to the north, south, and west.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Nancy Van Dolsen, Architectural Historian

organization Bucks County Conservancy date 31 October 1989

street & number 85 Old Dublin Pike telephone (215) 345-7020

city or town Doylestown state PA zip code 18901

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Bucks County, Deeds.

Bucks County, Tax Records 1835-1880.

Bucks County Conservancy, Windshield Surveys of Riegelsville Borough, Solebury Township and Tinicum Townships, 1978-1983.

Davis, W. W. H., "The Settlement of Tinicum Township", Bucks County Historical Society Papers, Volume VII, (Easton, Pa: Chemical Publishing Company, 1901) pp. 618-9.

Fretz, Rev. A.J., Stauffer-Stover Family History, (Harleysville, Pa: Harleysville News, 1899) pp. 73, 85.

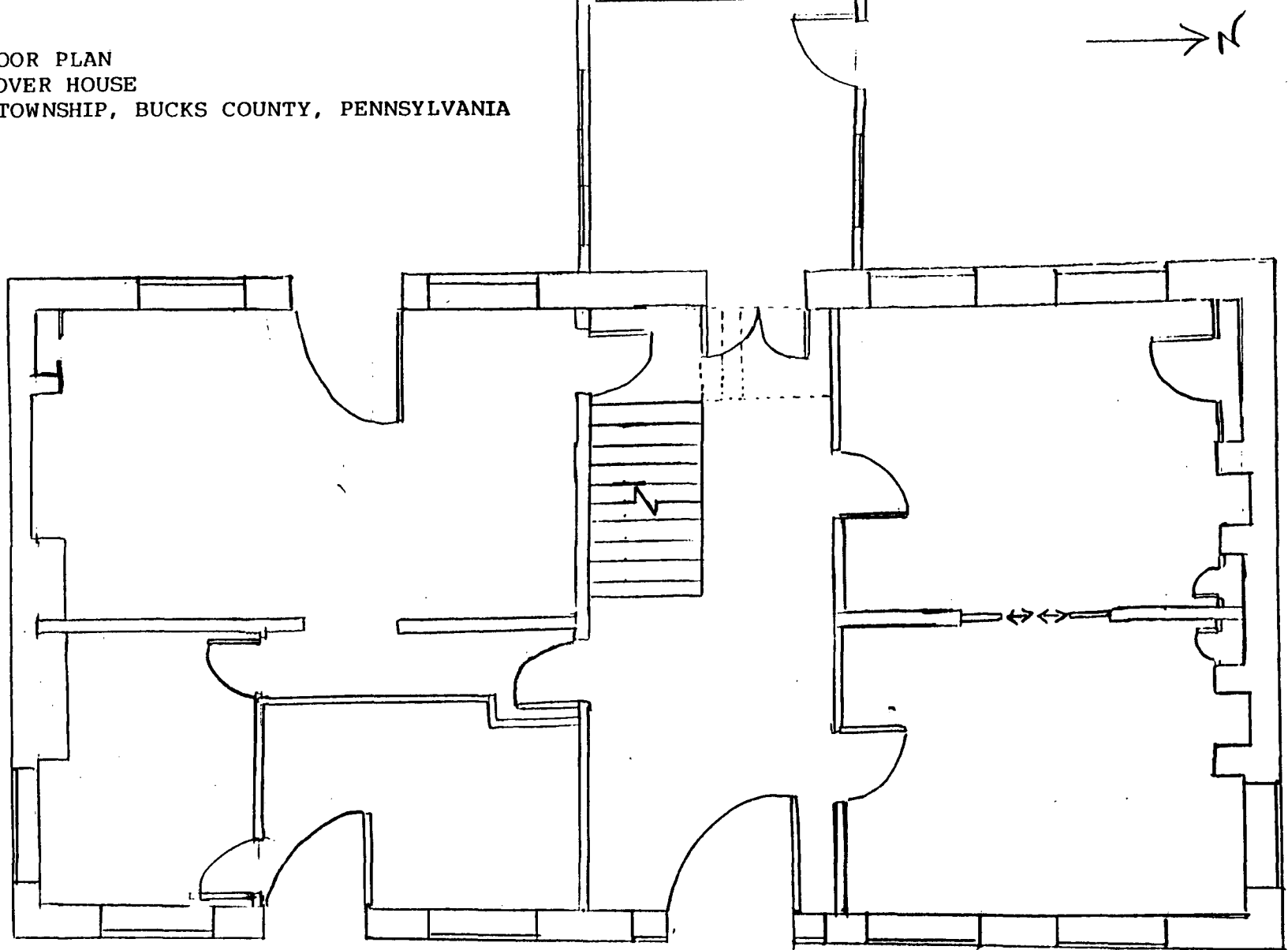
Keichline, William H., "Early History of Bedminster Township", Bucks County Historical Society Papers, Volume V.

MacReynolds, George, Place Names in Bucks County (Doylestown, Pa: Bucks County Historical Society, 1976).

Moore, Judith Hayman and William Sisson, National Register Nomination for Riverside Farm, 1988.

"The Stover Mill (Erwinna, Pa.) and How It Ran". (Tinicum Township Civic Association, 1976.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN
ISAAC STOVER HOUSE
TINICUM TOWNSHIP, BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA



not-to-scale
NVD
3/89

