

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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Ostheimer, Martha and Maurice, Estate

other names/site number Grimmet, Wee Grimmet

2. Location

street & number 620 West Lincoln Highway  Not for publication

city or town Exton (West Whiteland Township)  vicinity

state Pennsylvania code PA county Chester code 029 zip code 19341

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Brent Glass Dr. Brent Glass 12/6/95  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Exec. Dir., PA Historical and Museum Commission  
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official/Title Date

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

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property (Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

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

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

Contributing Noncontributing
1 buildings
1 sites
2 structures
0 objects
4 Total

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling
Industry/extractive facility

Commerce/business
Domestic/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

20th century revivals/renaissance

foundation stone
walls stone
roof slate
other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
XX C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1924- ca. 1935

Significant Dates

1925

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

McIlvaine, John Gilbert

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 6.9

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

UTM grid for reference 1: Zone 18, Easting 443475, Northing 4430000

UTM grid for reference 3: Zone, Easting, Northing

UTM grid for reference 4: Zone, Easting, Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

Form prepared by Estelle Cremers, W. Whiteland Historical Commission Resource Strategies, Inc., dated 10/11/95, 1801 Ridge Rd., R.D. #2, Pottstown, PA, zip 19465, telephone 610 469-6977

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

Property owner: Resource Strategies, Inc., 626 West Lincoln Highway, Exton, PA, zip 19341

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form.

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The Martha and Maurice Ostheimer Estate is located on the south side of Pennsylvania Route 30, one-and-a-half miles west of the intersection of Routes 30 and 100 (Exton crossroads) in West Whiteland Township, Chester County. The nominated property occupies 6.9 acres and includes two buildings (one contributing and the other previously listed in the National Register and therefore excluded from the resource count), two contributing structures and one contributing site. The larger of the buildings is Grimmet, a Tudor Revival house designed by architect John Gilbert McIlvaine. It was built in 1924 and enlarged in 1952. The other building, Wee Grimmet, is a circa 1820 stone house with a circa 1935 addition designed by McIlvaine. (Wee Grimmet was listed in the National Register in 1984 as part of West Whiteland Township Multiple Resources for its 19th century history and architecture.) The contributing structures consist of a small stone arch bridge built for the Ostheimers in the early 20th century and the designed landscape surrounding Grimmet (counted singly) including terraces, stone retaining walls and steps, and the remains of circular pools. The site of a 19th century stone quarry is counted as one contributing site. These resources retain integrity and convey the property's use as a gentleman's farm of the early 20th century.

The nominated property is presently divided into four lots. Tax Parcel 28.1, Lot #1 borders on the south side of U. S. Route 30, is heavily wooded and contains the site of the 19th century stone quarry and a portion of an access road leading to the main house, Grimmet. Tax Parcel 28.1, Lot #2, is located south of Lot #1 and contains Grimmet and associated designed landscape features. Tax Parcel 28.1A sits to the east of Lots #1 and #2 and includes the stone arch bridge and the National Register-listed, Wee Grimmet. These lots were formerly part of the Ostheimers' 38.5 acre farm. Also included as integral to Grimmet's setting is a portion of Tax Parcel 28.1, Lot #3 which includes a portion of a low stone wall bordering the southern side of Lot #1 along with a natural pond and a meadow.

Grimmet was built in 1924 under the design and direction of architect, John Gilbert McIlvaine for his cousin, Martha McIlvain Ostheimer and her husband, Dr. Maurice Ostheimer.

Set well back from Route 30 (Lincoln Highway) and separated from the highway by mature woodlands on Lot #1, it has singular individual privacy not found in many West Whiteland properties today. The house faces north toward Lot #1, but focuses greatly on the south facade which faces a more open setting. Grimmet's scale is large, approaching manor house size. Although the 1952 enlargement added two rear sections to the original house, and extended the west gable end by one bay, Grimmet retains maximum integrity to its original Tudor Revival appearance. The 1952 work is in complete sympathy in style, materials and mass with the 1924 building. Its integrity has been scrupulously maintained.

Built entirely of brown sandstone, the house is a many gabled building too complicated

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arrangement of space seems at times unrelated to the outside shapes. Built on two levels, the central mass is roofed by two side-by-side gables, each ridge running north/south. On the outer side of each central gable is a lateral wing, cross-gabled to the central section. The central matched pair of steeply gabled walls is broken by a 3-sided second floor oriel bay window over the main entrance. Each gabled wall has one bay on the second floor over two bays on the first floor, entrance and oriel being centered under the jointure of the two north/south gables, making a five bay central facade.

Slightly recessed from the center block, each two story wing is two-bays long by two-bays deep, making a stretched nine-bay facade on the full north wall. However, the west wing is almost twice as long as the east wing. The second floor windows of the wings are flush with the walls and break the roof line as dormer windows. From the rear, (south side), it is seen that the two main north/south central gables end in line with the south walls of the wings. Except for a one-bay extension to the west wing as part of the 1952 work, this comprised the 1924 house.

Taking advantage of the roll of the site, a fourth stone mass on the south side, started from a lower ground level, allowing an exposed basement area with two floors above the basement. The gable roof line (12/12) follows the N/S axis of the center gables but, since it starts from a lower level, its peak is lower than the central gables.

Also seen from the south view is a fifth stone mass extending eastward from the fourth section. It is flat roofed and has one floor above the ground level. The fourth and fifth sections comprise the major portion of the 1952 expansion. This fifth section contains all of the service rooms for the complete house. It is belted at the top, first with cap stones and then with copper guttering above the windows of the first floor. The guttering is relieved at strategic points with copper rain-catchers which are down-spouted to underground drains. This wing, with entrance of its own on the first floor east facade, features a heavy stone lintel supported with chamfered stone blocks. Stone lintels are used throughout the building.

The hillside that banks the east end of the house is brought into the whole by a high retaining wall to bring it level with the first floor front elevation. The patio/parking space thus made for the main entrance is connected to the lower level by a long flight of stone steps along the outside of the retaining wall which leads to an attached 3-car garage on the lower level. The garage was built in 1952 when the service wing was attached. It uses the same stone for walls with some wood infill, and has a pitched, but low roof line in the style of an Adirondack shelter (short front with longer back). The north gable is incorporated into the retaining wall, and since the garage is on the basement level of the service wing, accessed internally to the basement, it does not draw attention to itself; rather, it blends into the retaining walls and the house walls.

The general layout of the first floor is that of a large conference room to the west, a central reception post, kitchen, one large office and five smaller offices. The second floor holds

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seven offices, and the basement has two offices plus a library/drafting room, secretarial area, copy room, and furnace and supply rooms. No structural or partition changes have been made to the original spaces.

There is impressive millwork throughout the interior, beginning with the round-topped entrance door with leaded art glass lights in the upper portion. The stairhall foyer has chamfered and adzed oak beams and doorways, oak random-width, pegged floors blending with walnut and oak paneling. The oak stairwell is enhanced by hand-wrought iron standards, with scrolls at the tops to support a brass hand rail. Hand worked hanging glass and iron lighting fixtures are found throughout the building. There are built-in dressers, chiffoniers and built-in bookcases throughout. All windows are iron casement sash. There are enough chimneys to provide a fireplace for every room. Each fireplace is treated individually as pertains to surrounding decoration. Few mantels are seen. The living room fireplace has the most unique treatment in that it is cast stone with six blocks across the front which tell in relief the story of the McIlvaine's journey across the ocean to Pennsylvania about 1740. The low relief blocks were applied in 1952. Other fireplace treatments make use of hand-fired tiles as well as a variety of interesting wooden moldings. The 1952 service area also uses hand-made tiles in the kitchen.

The Tudor arch is prominent in several fireplaces and the dark-toned wood, particularly adzed oak beams and door lintels, relate to the Tudor period, giving a feel of weight and solidity.

The land falls quickly away from the front (north) of the building, making use of a long-ago quarry now softened by second growth trees. McIlvaine took advantage of the sharp drop by a high retaining wall about fifteen feet in front of the main entrance. From this, he laid out broad stone steps leading first to a stoned patio and then to the floor of the quarry. Here he drew a circular garden with a fountain and shallow pool in the center. Cultivated shrubbery, mature oak, ash and beech trees mix with uncontrolled tall honeysuckle bush which combine in a wild and natural state around the garden.

To the west and south of the building, a more level terrain was sculpted into two more circular pools rimmed with low concrete curbing. One is viewed from the 3-sided windowed bay of the west wing, another from the balconies of several south facing windows of that section. Between these pools, McIlvaine envisioned azaleas and specimen trees of Japanese maples and evergreens laced with bridal trails and paths for both horse and human. As the lawn rolls gently to the southeast, leveled with two sunny terraces, a low stone wall and again wide stone steps, it leaves the southern boundary of Lot #2 and enters Lot #3. About one third acre of Lot #3 is included in this nomination as it is Covenanted Land pledged by Oakland Business Park to be kept forever open. This land holds a natural "carp and ice pond" (shown on ca.1880 maps) which is part of Grimmet's visual landscape. While the basic designs of terraced levels and always circular pools can still be seen, most of the garden work has been allowed to relax into

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perimeter shrub and tree borders. It did in its glory extend along and into quiet lanes that tied together Grimmet and Wee Grimmet (a quarryman's house for which McIlvaine later drew a small addition for the Ostheimers) and other neighboring points.

The 1952 addition, while constructed after J. Gilbert McIlvaine and Martha McIlvain Ostheimer died, continued McIlvaine's initial style and plan for the 1924 house. The addition was the desire of Alfred J. Ostheimer, 3rd, son of Maurice and Martha Ostheimer, who became owner in 1939. Since no architect is known for the addition, it is quite possible that plans for the larger house had been laid in 1924 but not executed until 1952. One's impression of the building at normal view would be that it was all built at one time (1924) in the style of a Tudor Revival domicile.

Only the use of Grimmet has changed, turning it from a domestic single dwelling to a business orientation with twelve offices. The building adapted easily. No internal changes were necessary. Therefore, Grimmet's integrity is immaculate. Beginning about 1965 several interests merged into family corporations, and new interests succumbed to the building pressures, desires, and supposed inevitability of Exton development. The 38.5 acre farm and nearby area is known as Oaklands and is filling with corporate centers, business centers, a medium-sized shopping mall with residential complexes. Further, the Exton By-Pass is being built south and west of Grimmet which will tie into the Downingtown/Coatesville By-Pass in Caln Township not far west of Grimmet's entrance.

The National Register-listed Wee Grimmet consists of two main sections: a circa 1820 core and a circa 1935 wing to the east to which is attached a small laundry room. The stuccoed stone core is single-pile and two stories with a full cellar and attic. Its north and south elevations are three bays, each with a centered entrance. A two plan is utilized on the first and second stories of the core. The addition, of compatible scale and material, contains a kitchen, library and two bedrooms. All the windows of the house, which are of the casement variety, appear to have been installed when the addition was built.



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The Martha and Maurice Ostheimer Estate is significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Grimmet, the centerpiece of the nomination, is a significant part of West Whiteland Township's 20th century architecture and an excellent example of the work of architect John Gilbert McIlvaine. The associated quarry site and quarryman's house (Wee Grimmet, National Register) help convey the property's evolution from 19th century industrial estate to rural 20th century estate. Architect McIlvaine's work is also reflected in alterations to Wee Grimmet completed when Dr. Ostheimer moved there following his wife's death.

Grimmet illustrates the changing architectural styles that emerged on the late Victorian landscape in and around Philadelphia and in central Chester County in the early 1920s. Built when the economy was booming to new heights, it reflects the affluence of the times. New styles vied with Revivalism for public favor, and architects looked to England and Europe for inspirational elements they could mold into new concepts. McIlvaine was in the forefront of this architectural advance along the eastern seaboard. Reminiscent of the English or Scottish countryside of an earlier time, Grimmet holds excellent integrity to its building date.

Grimmet was built for Dr. Maurice Ostheimer, an Orthopedic Surgeon and teacher at the University of Pennsylvania, and his wife, Martha McIlvain Ostheimer. After living in Philadelphia from 1907 to 1923, they followed a fifty year regional pattern whereby Philadelphians moved out of the city to rural settings, first as summer retreats, and then as year-round homes when rail and road travel improved. Martha had grown up in Chester County with a large family of cousins and relatives living in the Chester Valley. There was no question that they would look to relocate in the direction where family ties were strong. In 1923, they purchased a 38.5 acre farm from a quarryman and limeburner, Edward Sheehy, along the south side of Route 30. The tract included the remains of the Roberts/Sheehy marble quarry. The quarry had reverted to native cover and was surrounded by young forest by that time, and it offered an intriguing challenge to the horticultural bent of Mrs. Ostheimer. This 38 acre farm had been a part of the Oaklands tract, which in turn had been a large section of Whiteland Township patented to Richard Thomas in 1707. In 1923, a cousin, Donald McIlvaine - brother to J. Gilbert McIlvaine - had become owner by marriage in 1915 to the Oaklands estate. The Oaklands manor house still stands across the highway a short distance east of Grimmet. It was quite natural that the Ostheimers would choose cousin, J. Gilbert McIlvaine, to design and supervise the building of Grimmet.

J. Gilbert McIlvaine, (1879 - 1839), whose working years as an architect were 1903 to 1938, was a graduate of Trinity College, Connecticut, and the University of Pennsylvania. He entered the offices of Wilson Eyre shortly after receiving his masters degree in architecture. They formed the partnership of Wilson Eyre & McIlvaine in 1911 and worked together until Eyre retired, after which McIlvaine carried on the firm name until 1938. McIlvaine died in 1939 at age 60 after a year of battling a brain tumor.

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In 1925, McIlvaine was president of the Arts and Crafts Guild of Philadelphia. His work with Eyre was rewarding and educational. The firm practiced a variety of architecture, including landscape, garden structures, memorials, monuments and churches as well as domestic and agricultural buildings, notably the huntsman's stable. Often using the medieval past and the British countryside for examples in residential design, especially influenced by Englishman Philip Webb and American James P. Sims, the firm advertised widely through architectural exhibitions and through magazine articles publicizing their own achievements. Eyre was extremely visible as founder and editor of House and Garden magazine where he published his own plans as well as those of the Philadelphia architectural community. Eyre and McIlvaine Associates were in contrast to Frank Furness, whose "masculine designs, even brutal," played in opposition to those of Eyre and McIlvaine, who frequently infused their designs with "a whimsical quality that seems to make them more a part of the world of imagination and childhood fantasy than of Philadelphia . . . ." [Tatum, George B. Penn's Great Town, page 120]

Working during the period of discussion between Arts and Crafts, Colonial Revival, and pure restoration, Eyre and McIlvaine appear to have steered around these controversies by creating styles that, while somewhat Revival in nature, were too innovative and imaginative to be caught in waves of disagreement. Their designs were completely of their own times and ideas. In their country houses, they used simple materials in straight forward ways. They are said to have done as much as anyone to establish the tradition of distinguished country houses for which the Philadelphia area was known in the early 20th century. Some of their work achieved an effect not unlike the designs of McKim, Mead, & White, with whom they shared the belief that "Nothing is so offensive as a building overloaded with ornament."

Grimmet, a name brought with the McIlvaine family as the name of the last manor lived in before leaving Scotland, is one of at least eleven examples of McIlvaine's work in the Downingtown/Exton area, and is joined by many more in the greater Philadelphia region, including a cooperative effort with Sterling Calder on the Logan Circle fountain. Examples in the Downingtown/Exton area are: 1905 - The J.K. Eshleman Estate, Poorhouse Road, Downingtown, PA.

- 1907 - John E. Lloyd Residence, "Valley Brook Farms," North Lloyd Rd., Downingtown
- 1907 - Martha G. Thomas, "Meadow House," (Alt. & Add.), Whitford Rd., Exton
- 1908 - Gardner's Cottage, Glen Isle Farm, Poorhouse Rd., Downingtown
- 1909 - Mrs. M.C. Breese residence and stable, 517 E. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown
- 1912 - Max Livingston "Lochiel Farm" (Alt. & Add.), 111 N. Ship Rd., Exton
- 1913 - Francis Strawbridge Farm, (Alt. & Add.), 325 N. Ship Rd., Exton
- 1916 - S.L. Downing Residence, East Caln Township, Downingtown

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- 1916 - A.R.McIlvaine, "Glen Isle Barn/Stable," Poorhouse Rd., Downingtown  
1917 - East Brandywine Baptist Church, Horseshoe Pike, (Rt. 322), Downingtown

McIlvaine's own home was in Downingtown and is included in the East End Historic District under the name of Breesy Court at 517 East Lancaster Ave. He drew the plans for Mrs. M.C. Breese, a daughter of former Governor Andrew Gregg Curtin. Mrs. Breese's daughter, Elizabeth, became McIlvaine's wife. Breesy Court is a two story dwelling that sets perpendicular to the avenue. Built in 1909, its basic design is "Jacobean Revival," utilizing French doors, wide cornice overhang, casement windows and garden wall arches holding pastoral scenes worked in iron. The residence contains twenty rooms, three baths, eight fireplaces and features much hardwood paneling in the interior. As at Grimmet, fountains and pools were part of the formal garden setting.

Grimmet's architectural context in West Whiteland Township includes a variety of styles designed and erected during the working years of McIlvaine by prominent Philadelphia architects, and located on formerly large estates. This is illustrated by:

Chesterridge (or Glen Loch East), now owned by Devereux Foundation was built in 1908 to plans of architect George B. Page, for Benjamin Rush, President, Insurance Company North America . . . Georgian or Colonial, hip-roofed mansion with wide verandah and spacious lawn;

Clarence Sears Kates Mansion (off North Ship Rd.), an 1854 farmhouse remodeled after England's "Haddon Hall" ca. 1904 by architect Milton Medary, is called "Rural Gothic" or "Cottage Style" by West Whiteland's Historical Commission, but is really a storybook castle in small scale;

Medary also drew plans for the Church Farm School's "Graystock Hall" and other Church Farm School buildings.

The 'Resort Community' of Bradford Hills, on the line of West Whiteland and East Bradford townships has a few Queen Anne examples termed "Shingle Tudor;"

Morstein, (1898/99). Large example of work of Frank Furness & J. Evans. Colonial Revival style, former summer estate of John F. Lewis, maritime attorney, President of Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts who entertained Philadelphia friends here by the "trainload," now adapted to commercial use;

Autun/Meadowcourt, (1928), French Chateau style designed by architect Edmund B. Gilchrist, completed in 1929.

Although many others can be referenced, not one looks even remotely like any one of the others.

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West Whiteland Township Multiple Resources nomination of 1983 includes the above houses and many others. Grimmet was not included in that nomination because those completing the nomination were wrongly assured by the owner at that time that not more than 10 % of the house was old. This has been found to be in error. On the contrary it is a fine example of a meticulous architect. While many of McIlvaine's works in West Whiteland and Downingtown are listed as alterations and additions, those that were new construction show complete refreshing application of ideas rather than variations on earlier themes, or, as in some cases, direct copies of existing buildings from history.

After Mrs. Ostheimer died, the Doctor deeded Grimmet with the 38.5 acres to his son, Alfred J. Ostheimer, III, and daughter-in-law, Ruth, in 1939. Ruth was an excellent gardener on par with Martha Ostheimer, and she kept the gardens in perfect order. After 1947, Alfred formed the Ostheimer Realty Corporation and made plans for future marketing of some of the 38 acres. They did not, however, plan to sell the house, for in 1952, they enlarged the house. Whether or not they were completing McIlvaine's plans is not known, but no new architect seems to have been employed. The addition added a larger dining room, new kitchen and service rooms, several bedrooms, and a large basement with south-facing greenhouse window and a billiard room.

In 1966, Alfred Ostheimer merged for a time with West Chester Laboratory Supply Company and drew up a plan called West Caln Manor, Inc., for part of the 38 acres. In 1972, the association became Grimmet, Inc. Lots were laid out and a complex under the name of Oakland Corporate Center was visualized and built during the 1980's adjacent on southern boundary of the Ostheimer Estate. Grimmet itself was sold to a planner/developer and parceled into four lots. Wee Grimmet, the smaller house, was sold independently with one acre. In 1990, the consulting firm of Resource Strategies, Inc. (RSI) took possession of the present 1.5 acre lot #2. No changes to the house were necessary, and none have been made, RSI finding it quite adequate to their purposes. The formal gardens, however, were more than the business cared to maintain. Ponds, with the exception of the 'carp' pond, were allowed to drain and revert to grass. Although McIlvaine was known for landscape designs, and did lay out the gardens at Grimmet, those gardens are not in their present condition considered representative of his work.

Wee Grimmet, a National Register dwelling also credited to McIlvaine for an addition, lays a very short distance to the east of Grimmet. Dr. Ostheimer lived there after Mrs. Ostheimer's death. The core is a ca. 1820 three bay, 2-floor quarryman's house. McIlvaine added a modest addition to the eastern end sometime after Grimmet was completed, probably ca. 1935.

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Grimmet shows complete originality of design and great care in execution. Although now used as offices of Resource Strategies, Inc., its interior and exterior have been meticulously maintained and its integrity handsomely preserved. Although the extensive gardens and pools that once graced the exterior, the pride of Mrs. Ostheimer and Ruth, have been allowed to return to grassy circles, the original ambiance of the property is still present. The wooded quarry site, small stone arch bridge and Wee Grimmet contribute to the property's setting and historic use as a rural estate. The meadow and pond at the southern end of the nominated property complemented Grimmet's setting and designed landscape, affording important views to and from the manor house.

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Chester County Court House, West Chester, PA. 19380, Recorder of Deeds office.

Chester County Archives, Westtown Road, West Chester, PA. 19380, Old records, Wills, Tax records.

Chester County Historical Society, North High St., West Chester, PA. 19380. Clipping files, family names files, McIlvaine genealogies.

Futhey, J. Smith, and Cope, Gilbert, History and Biography of Chester County, Everts, Philadelphia, PA. 1881. Biography: A. Robinson McIlvaine and family, pg. 643.

West Whiteland Multiple Resources, 1982, National Register nomination.

Tatum, George B. Penn's Great Town. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1961, Second Edition. Pages 120, 121, 126, and 127.

Tatman, Sandra L. and Moss, Roger W. Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects; G.K. Hall & Co., Boston, 1985. McIlvaine, J.Gilbert and Eyre, Wilson.

American Art Annual, 1917, 1924. American Federation of the Arts, Washington, D.C., Maxwell, W.J., under direction of the General Alumni Society. Book of the School of Architecture, University of Pennsylvania. H.M. Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1917. Page 142.

Telephone conversations with William R. McIlvaine, Sr., 3/1993; Mrs. Joseph St. Georges, 1995.

Research of Barbara Burdic, 1975 with Ruth McIlvaine, West Whiteland Historical Files.

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**Boundary Description**

The nomination boundary is defined as Lots #1 and #2 of Tax Parcel #41-4-28.1 and T.P. 41-4-28.1A in West Whiteland Township and a portion of Lot #3 of Tax Parcel #41-4-28.1 described as follows: Approximately one and a third acres of Lot #3, immediately adjacent to the southern boundary of Lot #2, both of T.P. #41-4-28.1, is included by an arbitrarily drawn line through Lot #3 beginning at a point on east side of proposed Grimmet Boulevard, referenced in deed description for Lot #2 as "N 49-40-West a distance of 63.92 feet to point on the easterly side of Grimmet Boulevard"; thence continuing said above direction SE approximately 164 feet to a point and thence NE 84-08' 08" approximately 126 feet to a point a corner with T.P. 41-4-30; thence NW along said parcel T.P. 41-4-30 a distance of 63 feet to a point of jointure with T.P. 41-4-28.1A, containing approximately one and a third acres. The total acreage for this nomination is 6.91 acres.

**Boundary Justification**

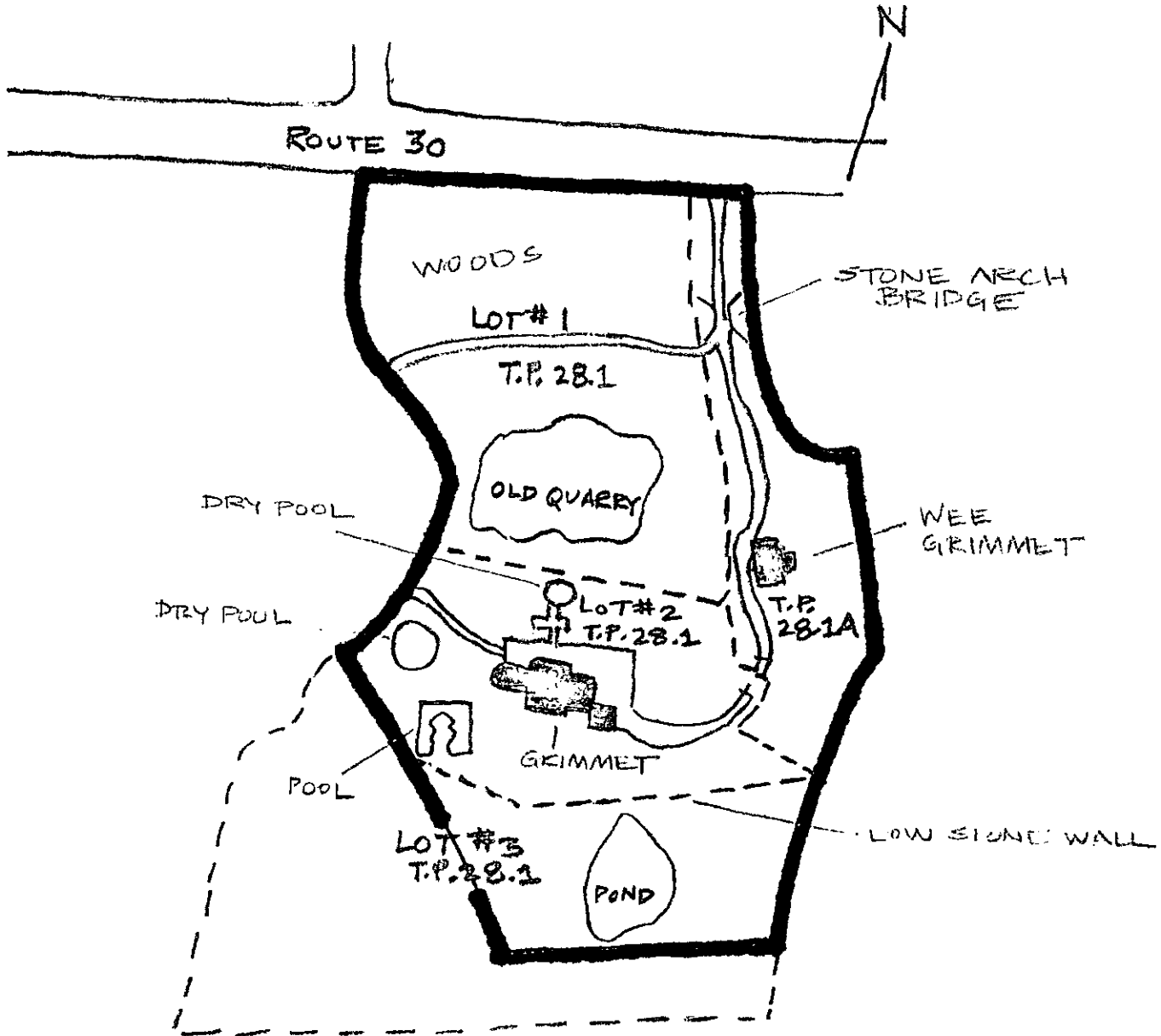
The nomination boundary is limited to the current Lot #1, Lot #2, and a portion of Lot #3 all of which are designated under tax parcel #41-4-28.1, and all of tax parcel #41-4-28.1A. Lot #2 of T.P. 28.1 includes Grimmet and the majority of associated designed landscape features. Tax parcel #41-4-28A includes the stone arch bridge and Wee Grimmet (National Register). Excluded is the western remainder of the Ostheimer 38.5 acre tract (T.P. 28.1B), which is under separate ownership and is slated for development. The only resource on this excluded acreage is a wood frame gardener's cottage which sits west of the Grimmet property. The cottage, however, is not related in style or construction to Grimmet. A portion of Lot #3 has been included which, though not historically part of the Ostheimer Estate, appears to have been integral to its siting.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

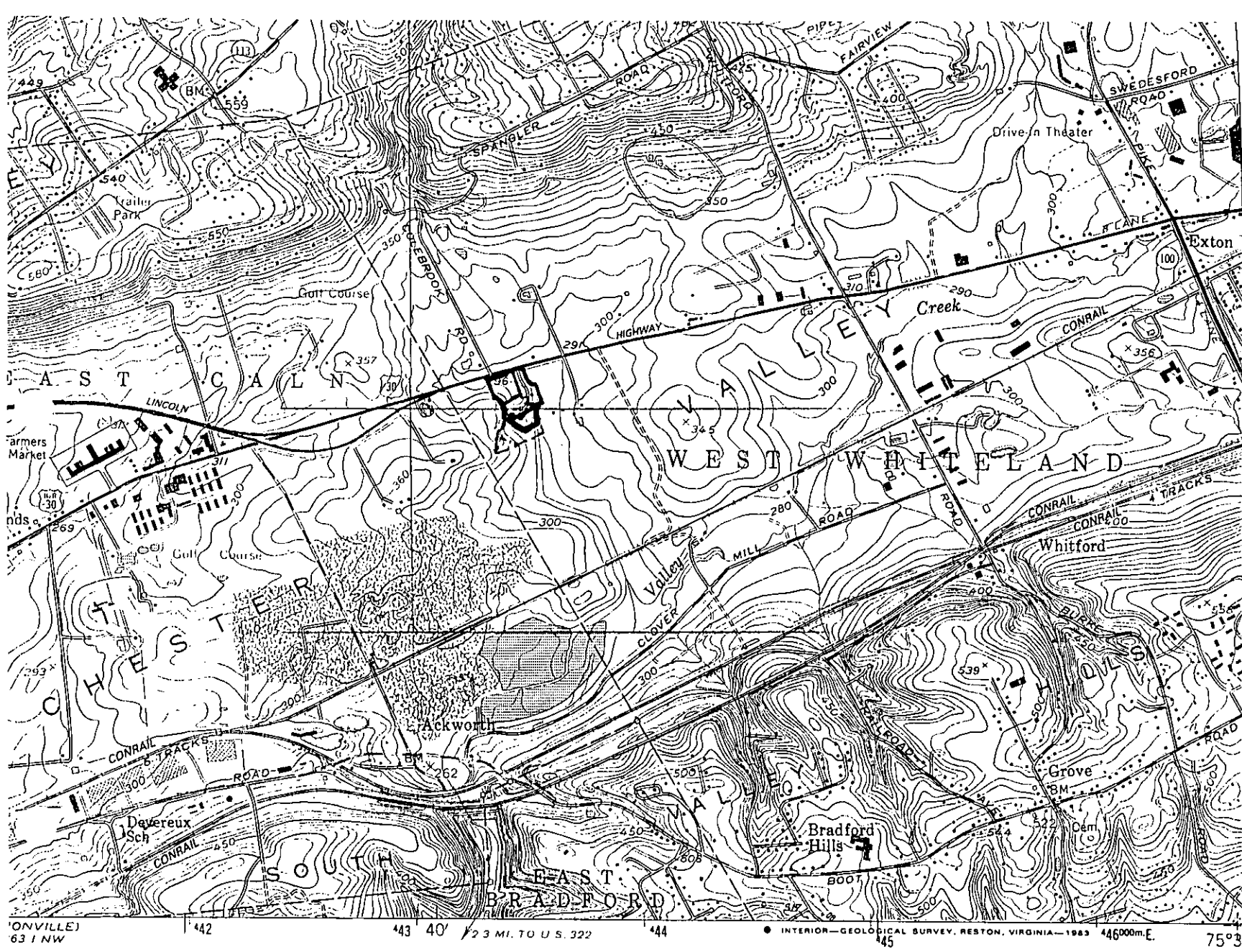
SITE PLAN  
Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

MARIEHA AND MAURICE OSTHEIMER  
ESTATE  
CHESTER COUNTY, PA



NOT TO SCALE





PA 0176 MI.  
PHILADELPHIA (CITY MALL)

30

WEST CHESTER 4.9 MI.

4429

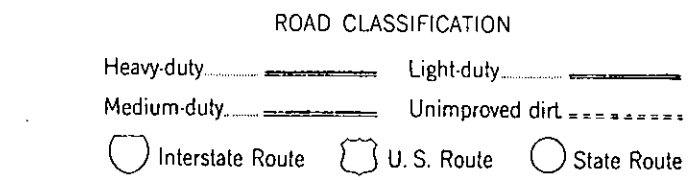
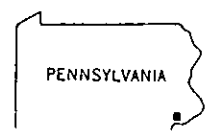
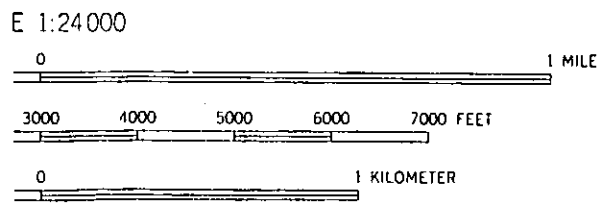
4428000m.N.

40°00'

75°37'30"

Downingtown PA Quad  
Chester Co., PA

Grismet  
Zone B  
E 443475  
N 4430000



DOWNINGTOWN, PA.

(WEST CHESTER)  
5863 INE