

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received AUG 7 1985
date entered NOV 19 1985

Continuation sheet N-121

Item number 7

Page 1

N-121

Property Name: ^v Weston (S. Brady Farm, 1868): built ca. 1850

Location and Verbal Boundary Description:

Weston is located on the east side of Rt. 896 and the Pennsylvania railroad tracks approximately 1/2 mile north of the intersection of Rt.896 and Rt. 429. The nominated area includes the entire 36 acre parcel remaining from the mid nineteenth century farmstead.

The nominated parcel begins at a point 400 feet south of the intersection of the present farmlane and the eastern berm of the Pennsylvania Railroad tracks, extends 2500 feet to the east at which point it turns north for 1500 feet before turning west and running back out to the south berm of the railroad tracks. The property is closed off by joining the two points on the south side of the railroad berm.

The nominated parcel contains sufficient acreage to provide for the preservation of the house, outbuildings, grounds, and immediate setting.

Tax parcel 13.012.00-194

Owner: Dixie Robb

Route 1, Box 487

Middletown, Delaware

Description:

"Weston consists of an imposing main house made up of the original two-story brick farmhouse adjoining a later and larger brick three-story addition whose design displays influences of both Greek Revival and Italianate styles. Later still, a one-story wood structure was added to the north and east sides of the original house. Significant outbuildings on the farm include icehouse, smokehouse, barn, granary and tenant house. Together they represent an excellent and relatively unaltered example of a large and prosperous farm complex in St. George's Hundred in the mid-nineteenth century.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received 9/7/85
date entered

Continuation sheet

N-121

Item number 7

Page 2

The house combines elements of Greek Revival and Italianate styles. The facade consists of four floor to ceiling windows on the first floor, five slightly smaller windows on the second floor and five small windows set in a bracketed frieze on the upper floor. All windows are placed symmetrically and have plain wood lintels. In common with other houses in Delaware of this period, there are no windows in the north wall. First and second story windows are sash, four-over-four; those above being double sash. Shutters are three panel and white on the first story, louvered and painted green on the second.

The main entrance is a double-leaf two panel door with each top panel arched. The door is surrounded by a plain architrave, recessed transom and sidelights. Above the transom is a shelf supported by two brackets. The doors are approached through a porch, twenty-seven feet long and one-story high, supported by four square columns.

The most prominent features on the exterior are the large pairs of sawwork brackets supporting the overhanging boxed cornice. There are five pairs on the north and south walls, four on the east and six on the west wall. Above the cornice is a low-hipped roof sheathed with tin and bearing the remnants of an observatory deck. There is a pair of chimneys (replaced in 1941) in each gable end.

The interior consists of a central hall with stairway. The ballustrade follows a continuous oval course to the third floor. On the north side is a ballroom running the full length of the building with the original marble faced fireplace with wood surround. To the south of the hall is a library of the same length but originally designed as two rooms. The large ornate cast plaster medallions that supported the chandeliers are still in place in the library and ballroom.

On the second floor is a hallway, four bedrooms (one with fireplace) and bathroom. A strip of marble serves as a threshold for every room. The third floor consists of a small open room with exposed rafters.

The east wall of the large three-story wing adjoins the original farmhouse. The two-story, common bond brick building is one room deep with three windows in the north and south walls of the second floor. Two windows remain in the south-facing first floor wall. All are symmetrical with six-over-six sash. Brackets and facades are similar to those on the large wing but proportionally much smaller. Shutters are also similar except those on the first floor are two panel. Surmounting the structure is a medium pitch gable roof with one chimney at the east gable.

The first floor interior was originally one large room used as a common room, dining room and kitchen with a large deep fireplace at the end of the room. The mantle has been altered but the fireplace is relatively intact with the wrought iron crane for cooking still visible. On the second floor were two bedrooms. When the large addition was built the upper floor became servants quarters.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received 8/2/85

date entered

Continuation sheet

N-121

Item number

7

Page 3

A white clapboard addition, built in 1941, extends to the north and east of the original house covering the existing porch and water pump. A powder room also was added to the old dining room. In addition, the original door and adjacent window on the south side of the old wing were removed and replaced with a larger door. Alterations in 1941 to the main wing included the removal of an original side door and middle window from the south wall, the space being bricked up. This enabled the library to be created out of two rooms with a central fireplace instead of the original two, and window seats added to the remaining two windows on the south side. Bookcases were built into the window recesses and into either side of the fireplace. The porch was also repaired, with the columns replaced and the cornice repaired and ornament on fascia removed.

Outbuildings consist of a granary with hand hewn beams, unaltered on the first floor and with an apartment on the second. There is a tenant house of white clapboard behind the main house, which may have been moved onto the site sometime in the twentieth century. Other buildings include an icehouse with circular stone cellar, now converted into a guesthouse and re-roofed, and an unconverted smokehouse nearby. Completing the farm complex is a 30 by 55 foot gable-end bank barn with cattle and horse stalls on the first floor and hay mows above.

"Weston" is a significant architectural example from the rebuilding period in Delaware, ca. 1830 to 1860. A growing market for grain and other farm produce, the consolidation of land holdings, and the improvement of the means of transportation, brought new agricultural prosperity to the state. This manifested itself in buildings larger and more ornate than anything that had been seen before. Weston combined features of Greek Revival and Italianate styles in an unmistakable display of its owner's new found status. The house, together with its related outbuildings, shows great architectural merit and is an excellent example of a prosperous farm in Delaware in the mid-nineteenth century.

Historical Background and Significance:

James Brady brought his family from Ireland in 1828, settling first in Pennsylvania. The family moved to Delaware in 1847 when three sons, Samuel, William and George bought the 496 acre farm from the Rev. Nicholas Patterson and his wife. The farm subsequently remained in the Brady family until 1933.

By the time the Bradys arrived, Delaware was enjoying an agricultural boom. The cash value of the farm was \$18,000 in 1850, well above the mean farm value in St. Georges Hundred. Wheat, corn, oats, potatoes and orchard produce were the most important crops. The Delaware Railway ran through the Brady property when it was extended to Middletown in 1855 and stimulated the distribution of farm produce to the growing urban centers of Delaware, Pennsylvania and Maryland. The nearby Chesapeake and Delaware Canal also facilitated transportation.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

8/7/85

date entered

Continuation sheet

N-121

Item number

7

Page 4

Grain growing remained an important source of income and has remained so to the present. The last generation of Bradys to work the farm also had a lumber and sawmill business and housed the mules in the barn. The present owners, who acquired the property in 1952, at one time kept dairy cattle in the barn.

In 1941, the then owner, Dr. Carl H. Davis, made several alterations to the old wing main house and built a wood addition to the east and north of the original building, thereby creating a separate kitchen, pantry and glassed-in terrace. At a later date alterations were made to the icehouse to convert it to a guesthouse and to the upper floor of the granary to turn it into an apartment. These changes do not substantially violate the integrity of the farm complex.

With its mid-nineteenth century detailing and full range of outbuildings, Weston represents the zenith of rebuilding activity in St. Georges Hundred.

Nomination by Richard Dodds

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received 10/31/85
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

WESTON N-121

UTM

- A 18/439220/4371830
- B 18/439090/4371800
- C 18/439070/4371880
- D 18/439590/4371720
- E 18/438600/4371840
- F 18/438140/4371930
- G 18/439150/4371890
- H 18/439210/4371900