

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Minnesota
COUNTY:	Hennepin
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	SEP 17 1974

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Gideon, Peter, Homestead

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
24590 Glen Road

CITY OR TOWN:  
Excelsior

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
Third

STATE: Minnesota CODE: 22 COUNTY: Hennepin CODE: 053

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
William W. Pye

STREET AND NUMBER:  
24590 Glen Road

CITY OR TOWN:  
Excelsior

STATE:  
Minnesota

CODE:  
22

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Hennepin County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:  
5th Street between 3rd & 4th Avenue South

CITY OR TOWN:  
Minneapolis

STATE:  
Minnesota

CODE:  
22

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Minnesota Historical Society

DATE OF SURVEY: March 1973  Federal  State  County  Local

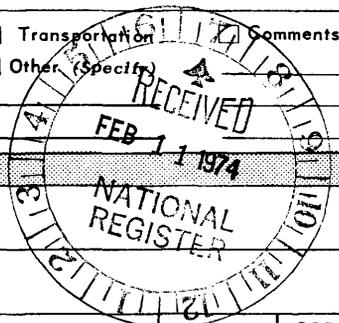
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Minnesota Historical Society

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Bldg. 25, Fort Snelling

CITY OR TOWN:  
St. Paul

STATE:  
Minnesota

CODE:  
22



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Minnesota

COUNTY: Hennepin

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE: SEP 17 1974

7. DESCRIPTION

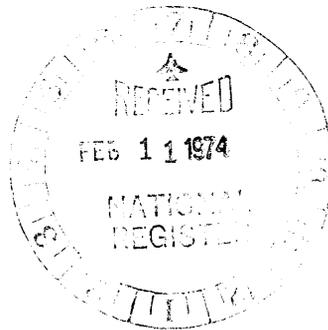
CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The site of Peter Gideon's horticultural experiments from 1854 to 1899 is in excellent condition with many of the trees he planted still standing.

The gabled farm residence was constructed by Gideon after his apple tree experiments proved successful, and an addition was built in the first decade of the 1900's. Although in an altered state, the house is a vital part of the entire complex which has been marked by the Minnesota Historical Society, and is being preserved amidst residential development.

*1854-1899  
apple trees*



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Minnesota	
COUNTY	
Hennepin	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	SEP 17 1974

(Number all entries)

7. Description

The house is a composite of two continuous units: the original farmhouse and an early twentieth century addition. The original portion is of frame construction which has retained a great deal of original clapboarding. It is two storeys in height and joins the addition to form a "T" configuration. Ridges of both portions intersect at a common plane to give the house a unified appearance. The interior of the original has been modified to accommodate kitchen facilities with bedrooms above.

The addition actually allows a stylistic classification to be made; that being a variation of the so-called "Neo-colonial". It boasts a simple doric colonade and open front porch with central dormer from the extended second storey above. Well defined gables and dentil type brackets add to the design quality. The interior of this portion remains essentially "as built" and the entire structure is in process of preservation.

The immediate grounds provide an adequate buffer from recent housing developments. The property is surrounded by a border of trees and bushes allowed to grow thick as a shield. The house is approached by a up-hill winding gravel driveway through a thicket. Some of the original apple trees remain to the immediate north of the house.



**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal             | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric            | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic               | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture           | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce               | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications         | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation           |   |  | _____  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

"Peter M. Gideon, a native of Ohio who took up a claim on Lake Minnetonka in 1853, devoted forty-one years of his life to developing fruit trees that would withstand northern winters. Although his accomplishments in fruit culture are numerous, the most famous and most important to Minnesota is the Wealthy apple, a variety he developed by 1868 from seeds obtained from Bangor, Maine, seven years earlier. The introduction of the Wealthy, which Gideon named for his wife, the former Wealthy Hall, marked an epoch in American apple growing, since it was the first full-sized variety to survive cold winters, bear regularly, and have good keeping qualities. To northwestern fruit growers the Wealthy was for decades unequalled as the most profitable apple for marketing.

Having inherited a love of horticulture from his parents, Gideon began growing seedlings when he was a very young child in Ohio. By the time he arrived in Minnesota he had a deep interest in the culture of many fruits, and in 1854 he planted on his Lake Minnetonka farm orchards of apples, peaches, pears, plums, and quinces. Within ten years, however, all his trees had died, leaving him little to show for his hard work.

There is an often-told story that at this time Gideon had only eight dollars in his pocket -- money that might well have been spent for a badly needed suit of clothes. He determined, however, to spend it for seeds in order to continue his experiments. For the new suit he substituted a garment of his own making. He sewed together two castoff vests, cut the legs from an old pair of trousers and attached them to the vest for sleeves, and reinforced the patches on the rest of his worn clothing. Thus he made a suit that was described as "more odd than ornamental." With the money saved he obtained the means to continue the experiments that at last resulted in the Wealthy apple.

Never satisfied with his efforts, Gideon continued to test and improve the Wealthy and in so doing developed several additional strains, among them the hardy Peter and Gideon apples. In 1878 he became superintendent of the University of Minnesota's experimental fruit farm, which was established that year on a tract adjoining his property. Some of the trees he planted still flourish there. For years he was an indefatigable laborer who "loved to work, not for fame or for money," according to one acquaintance, "but for the benefit of his fellow men."

(see continuation sheet)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Minnesota's Major Historic Sites, Holmquist & Brookins (1972) p.42

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

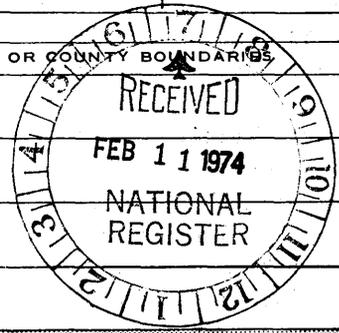
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		44° 54' 15"	93° 35' 31"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

UTM  
15/453280  
4972260  
CD

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **2 acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: **Henry M. Harren -- Survey Analyst**

ORGANIZATION: **Minnesota Historical Society** DATE: **2/1/74**

STREET AND NUMBER: **Fort Snelling, Building 25**

CITY OR TOWN: **St. Paul** STATE: **Minnesota** CODE: **22**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: Russell W. Fridley  
Russell W. Fridley

Title: Director, Minnesota Historical Society

Date: February 4, 1974

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

[Signature]  
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 2/1/74

ATTEST:

[Signature]  
Keeper of The National Register

Date: 2-16-74

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Minnesota	
COUNTY	
Hennepin	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	SEP 17 1974

(Number all entries)

#8 Significance

The Wealthy apple became a favored variety throughout America and was even known in Europe; its fame brought Gideon wide acclaim as a horticulturist. Although his reputation as a fruit breeder was unchallenged, he was considered personally eccentric and a temperamental nonconformist. He was an outspoken advocate of temperance, abolition, woman's suffrage, and Universalism. On the other hand, he did not hesitate to decry horse racing, prayers at secular meetings, and men's beards. "No man had ever more the courage of his convictions," said his daughter at the time of his death in 1899. "He believed thoroughly in his work, and in his ideas as a man meant to accomplish the best results.... But his ideas were as often blighted and frost bitten as his beloved trees," she wrote. "His religion, his philosophy and his politics, which cost him so many sympathizers, were as truly his own production as the Wealthy apple."

Two markers commemorate Gideon's accomplishment in producing the Wealthy apple on his Lake Minnetonka farm. They stand at the junction of Hennepin County road no. 19 and Glen Road. The original Wealthy apple tree is believed to have stood about eighty rods north of the monument erected in 1912 by the Native Sons of Minnesota in Gideon Memorial Park. The second marker was erected in 1965 by the Minnesota Historical Society."

Significant statement from:

Minnesota's Major Historic Sites, Holmquist & Brookins (1972) p.42





United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Note: These changes apply to  
Gideon, Peter, Homestead in  
Hennepin County, Minnesota.**

**REFERENCE NUMBER:** 74001019

**STATE:** MINNESOTA

**COUNTY:** Hennepin

**RESOURCE NAME (HISTORIC):** Gideon, Peter, Farmhouse

**CITY:** Shorewood

**VICINITY OF:**

**ADDRESS:**

**CERTIFICATION DATE:**

**REMOVED DATE:**

**COMMENTS:** Property is located within the city of Shorewood,  
not Edina.

*Nina M. Archabal*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nina M. Archabal  
State Historic Preservation Officer

JUN 17 1988

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date