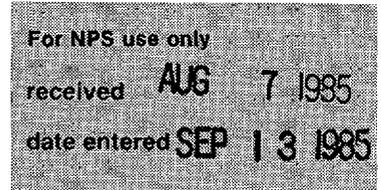


**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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✓
Property Name: Old Ford Dairy (D. J. Cummins, 1868)

Location and Verbal Boundary Description:

The Old Ford Dairy is located on the west side of Rt. 13 approximately 1.80 miles south of the St. Georges Bridge and .5 miles south of the junction of Rt. 412 and Rt. 13. The nominated property contains the house, yard, and outbuildings and is composed of a five acre square containing the above listed structures. Excluded from the nomination, but within the designated boundaries, are a modern frame garage, gambrel roof barn, and machine sheds. These structures are listed as noncontributing due to their construction within the past fifty years.

The nominated parcel begins at a point west of Rt. 13, 250 feet north of the present farmlane, and runs due west for 1,400 feet. Here it makes a 30° turn and runs south for 500 feet, and then runs back east for 1,400 feet. The eastern boundary is then formed as it runs north for 500 feet to join the two points.

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

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UTM 18.43900.76700 Tax parcel 13-003.00-014

Owner: Parkway Gravel, Inc.

4048 New Castle Avenue

New Castle, Delaware

Description:

The structure is a two-and-a-half story, five by two bay, double cross-gable, vernacular Victorian farmhouse. This frame structure is covered by wood siding painted white, and built on a stuccoed brick foundation. A rear wing features another cross gable. The cornice is boxed, with paired brackets running the full perimeter of the roofline. There are two brick gable end chimneys with corbelled caps in the main block, and a third plain gable end chimney in the rear wing.

The windows are two-over-two sash with distinctive wood pediment-shaped lintels over each window and wood surrounds, all painted green. The windows in each of the cross gables are six-over-six sash, but the corners of the top sash in each case, have been

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clipped to form an angle matching the pitch of the gable. The attic is lit by four-light semi-elliptical gable end windows.

The center front passage of this center-hall plan house is entered through a double panelled door with three-light transom and sidelights. The trim surrounding of the door is a repeat of the pediment motif over the windows.

The house has two porches, one on the front (east) facade and one on the south facade. The front porch is a one-story, three-bay wood porch. The four-by-four posts that support the porch have beveled edges and trim detail, indicating that the porch is contemporary with the house.

The property which was once a dairy, still has all the outbuildings relating to that phase of its history. They are all arranged on the north and south sides of a farm-lane running behind the house. Directly behind the house is a small board-and-batten, gable roof structure, possibly a meathouse, on a brick foundation. The doors are hung with strap hinges.

There is a drive through, two-and-a-half story granary built of braced frame construction on a stone foundation. At the far end of the road is a rectangular grain storage bin. East, toward the house, one passes the three-story gambrel roofed dairy barn. It is built on poured concrete footings.

There is evidence of a portico having been on the north side of the rear addition, but other than that, there are very few structural changes evident. There are shutter holders all the way around the house, but currently there are no shutters.

Historical Background and Significance:

At the time of the 1850 agricultural census, the Old Ford Dairy owned by W. Polk fell into the upper range of St. Georges Hundred farmsteads based on improved acreage, but was placed exactly in the mid range of local farm values. Like most of his neighbors, Polk was involved in cereal production cultivating and harvesting wheat, oats, and Indian corn in above average amounts. In fact, Polk's Indian corn harvest was in the top ten percent for the entire hundred. Also significant to the farm's value in 1850 were butter production and farm implements. By the 1860 agricultural census, Polk's farm had nearly doubled in value with significant increases in the reported value of livestock, slaughtered animals, wheat, oats, and butter. At the same time Polk described equally significant decreases in the value of farm machinery and Indian corn. Part of the change in the farm's value rests in the fact that Polk was able to acquire an additional 50 improved acres between 1850 and 1860.

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As a farm of average value with deviations in the categories of individual crops and other areas of production, the Old Ford Dairy represents the strength of St. Georges' grain based economy at mid century. Absent from the farm values is any mention of orchard produce indicating that, on the eve of the Civil War, peaches and apples as cash crops were still a wave of the future. The house itself with its extensive vernacular Gothic detailing, incorporation of service spaces into a rear ell, and setting amidst a courtyard of agricultural buildings devoted to grain production and dairying underscore that the economic foundation for the rebuilding period of the nineteenth century lay in grain, butter, and livestock for urban markets.

Nomination by B. Herman and Trish Bensinger