

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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N-1104

Property Name: T. Pierson Farm

Location and Verbal Boundary Description:

The T. Pierson Farm is located near Hockessin on the north side of Southwood Road, approximately 0.5 miles east of the Delaware/Pennsylvania line. The site boundaries include all of Parcel Number 08-007.00-003, which contains 13.39 acres. The boundaries are delineated on the attached map titled, New Castle County Property Tax Map, 1985.

UTM References: A. 18/438810/4404430
B. 18/438820/4404200
C. 18/438550/4404200
D. 18/438540/4404420

Owner: Wilson T. Pierson
R.D.1, Box 206
Hockessin, Delaware 19707

Description:

The T. Pierson Farm contains three buildings that contribute to the historic significance of the site: a circa 1810 stone house with a late nineteenth century frame addition, a circa 1820 frame barn, and a mid-nineteenth century frame outbuilding.

There are two non-contributing buildings: a large, modern pole shed; and a modern, single pitch roofed poultry shed with additions.

The house is a two story, two bay, gable-roofed building that is constructed with rubble fieldstone. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, a two story, three bay, frame wing was added to the east endwall of the stone section, which created a balanced five bay facade with a center crossgable. The frame wing is sided with whitewashed weatherboard, and has a gable end bay window and heavily molded window heads. The facade wall of the stone wing has been stuccoed to create a unified appearance. The windows in both wings are two-over-two sash with paneled shutters on the first floor and louvered shutters on the second floor. The roof is covered with composition shingles and is edged by a molded box cornice. A shed-roofed porch, that appears to be contemporary with the frame addition, extends across the full facade of both wings. The porch was later glazed, but it retains its primary decorative elements: trimmed rafter ends, chamfered posts, and a beaded verge. A one story, frame lean-to abuts the rear elevation of the frame wing.

The barn is a bi-level, stone building with a frame front wall, frame gables, an original bridge house with a projecting gable, and a gable-roofed hay shed. Atop the gable roof is a pyramidal-roofed cupola with louvered sides. On the southeast side of

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the hay shed is a two level, shed-roofed addition. Two shed-roofed additions are adjacent to the bridge house. Appended to the southeast addition is another shed-roofed addition with a root cellar.

The uncoursed fieldstone walls are stuccoed, and the siding of the gables and additions consist of red boards with white battens.

The barn is entered through the bridge house via an artificial ramp. The bridge has double doors hung on strap hinges. In one of the doors is a smaller domestic size door for ease of entry. The upper level is tripartite in form. The main portion of the barn consists of a center driveway/threshing floor, semi-enclosed by threshing floor walls and flanked by hay mows. The straw shed is of the same proportions except it is two bays deep and was apparently built in two periods. The frame long wall of the barn appears to have been sided at one time, indicating that the straw shed was added.

The framing consists of hewn principal timbers and vertical sawn secondary timbers. Inner bents have three posts with the stone wall as a fourth support. The girt is framed over the plates and the frame wall post is flared and notched. Rails connect each of the posts. One end rail is inserted in the stone wall. The center rail is lower and cambered. Three studs extend from each rail to the floor as a nailing surface for the horizontal board wall.

The roofing system consists of bridled common rafters over principal purlins supported by braced, diagonal flared struts emanating from the girt.

The gable end bents consist of just the roof truss. The end girt lies on the truncated gable wall trenched over the plates, and the framing members of the gable provide a nailing surface for the board and batten siding.

The flooring system consists of longitudinal girders carrying face-hewn log joists and square hewn timbers. Additional longitudinal logs over the transverse beams raised the center driveway above about two feet. Vertical sawn joists are tenoned into girders beneath the gable-roofed hay shed. Vertical sawn joists are also beneath the bridge house.

The original plan of the lower level has been obliterated by early twentieth century alterations which also occurred in every working barn in the hundred. Most likely there was a recessed stable wall as indicated by the upper level frame long wall.

The outbuilding is a braced frame, gable-roofed building with a braced frame, lean-to addition. All timbers are vertical sawn. It is sided on the exterior with board and batten. Its batten door hangs on H-L hinges, secured with hand-headed nails.

Significance:

The T. Pierson Farm is significant under Criterion A because it articulates two major rebuilding periods in nineteenth century Mill Creek Hundred, and is significant

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under Criterion C because the buildings on the site are well-preserved regional types.

It is likely that this site is the same site as the Thomas Pearson farm listed in the 1816 tax assessment records. Thomas Pearson at that time owned 130 acres, 100 of those acres were improved, with a stone house and a wood stable.

The pre-1816 stone house and the circa 1820 stone and frame barn were a part of the transformation of the architectural landscape when log buildings were displaced by stone buildings. The barn is significant because its framing reveals the change from bents with principal horizontal timbers to the beginning of the standardized four post bent scheme. Traditional framing features such as the flared post and purlin strut were retained.

The late nineteenth century rebuilding is reflected in the frame addition to the stone house. By stuccoing the stone facade and adding a center gable, the Piersons transformed the earlier dwelling into a Victorian creation. This is typical of the second rebuilding period when older dwellings were altered with additions rather than being totally replaced with new dwellings as in the early nineteenth century rebuilding period.

The barn reflects the growth of the dairy industry in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Additional storage had to be added to handle the requirements of increased crop yields and machinery acquisitions. These additions also reflect the nineteenth century notion of having a multiple purpose building housing most of the farm activities.

CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

SEE 1"=100' MAPPING

SEE 1"=100' MAPPING

13 - (11)

1 - (12)

N-1104 T. Pierson Farm
New Castle County Property Tax Map, 1985
Parcel Number 08-007.00-033

