

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

The National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings

Cedarcroft
Chester County, Pennsylvania

A vivid and romantic personality, Bayard Taylor was popularly regarded by mid-nineteenth century America as a great writer. He was a type specimen of his age, a man of strong will who drove himself toward the success he desperately desired. Yet as a poet Taylor had his deeper side. His Home Pastorals (1875) has been called "intrinsically as well as historically valuable." His translation of Faust has achieved enduring appreciation and has been widely recognized as "a handsome contribution to American culture." Although the bulk of his work is deservedly forgotten, Taylor is historically memorable both for what he represented and for what his contemporaries believed him to be.

"Cedarcroft," which Taylor built in 1859, was the scene of some of the author's fruitful labors and is a direct expression of both his character and the ethos which he represented. Its lavish design and scale reflect that blending of the romantic and materialistic impulses peculiar to his age.

Today Cedarcroft's once-extensive grounds are part of a residential development. The mansion itself, however, survives in a relatively unaltered condition, and continues to serve as a private residence.

* * * * *

NSHSB: 12-30-71
R S G

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

| | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| STATE: Pennsylvania | |
| COUNTY: Chester | |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY | |
| ENTRY NUMBER | DATE |

1. NAME

COMMON:
"Cedarcroft"

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Bayard Taylor House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
RFD Kennet Square

CITY OR TOWN:
East Marlborough

STATE: **Pennsylvania** CODE: COUNTY: **Chester** CODE:

3. CLASSIFICATION

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

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

| | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> | Government <input type="checkbox"/> | Park <input type="checkbox"/> | Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> | Comments <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> | Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> | Private Residence <input checked="" 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 <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME:
Mrs. Susanne Thompson

STREET AND NUMBER:
"Cedarcroft", RFD Kennet Square

CITY OR TOWN: **East Marlborough** STATE: **Pennsylvania** CODE:

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Chester County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Westchester** STATE: **Pennsylvania** CODE:

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Pennsylvania
COUNTY: Chester
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY NUMBER DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

"Cedarcroft" is a large, two-and-a-half story house with a modified hipped roof. It is constructed of brick with stone quoins a corbeled cornice, and a brick belt course. The most conspicuous feature of the house is a four and a half story tower, which projects from its east, or front, elevation. Surrounding its fourth floor, the tower has an open balcony with an iron railing, and its curved pyramidal roof has a gabled dormer on each of its four sides. At the base of the tower, five round arches provide an entrance porch sheltering the door, which has side lights and a transom set under a long stone lintel. The front elevation has two bays on either side of the tower. Those to the north are wider, for this side of the house has a wing with a cross gable roof which begins behind the tower. These two bays have a small rectangular window between the main windows of the first floor, and a single gabled dormer above them.

The south elevation has a five-bay front. The central bay is in a projection with a cross gable roof, a circular lunette in its pediment, and an arched French window on its ground floor. There is a single gabled dormer on either side of the projection. The rear of the house has four windows on the second floor and two doors and a bay window on the first floor. The north elevation has three bays to the west of the wing, which on its northern side has a single story, shed-roofed extension, with three windows above it on the second floor and a small window in the pediment.

Several hundred feet to the north of "Cedarcroft" is a stable, now owned by Cedarcroft, Incorporated. A barn, now converted into a house, is to the northwest. To the west of the house is a low brick structure of undetermined date, which contains an arbor and pool.

The doorway of "Cedarcroft" opens into a hall containing a free-hanging single flight staircase. To the left of this hall is a parlor, which has a wooden mantle with a stone fireplace opening. Behind this room is a wide lateral hall which extends into the southern projection. A library with a bay window at the southwest corner of the house is said to have been used by Bayard Taylor for his writing. The dining room is at the northwest corner. Both of these rear rooms have marble mantles. The northern wing contains the kitchen and pantries, while its single story extension provides a garage. On the ground floor, the parquet flooring, brown wood - work, and moulded ceilings are believed to be original. Two large mirrors over the mantles in the parlor and library are said to date from Bayard Taylors's time.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

A vivid and romantic personality, Bayard Taylor was popularly regarded by mid-nineteenth century America as a great writer. He was a type specimen of his age, a man of strong will who drove himself toward the success he desperately desired. Yet as a poet Taylor had his deeper side. His Home Pastorals, (1875) has been called "intrinsically as well as historically valuable."¹ His translation of Faust has achieved enduring appreciation and has been widely recognized as "a handsome contribution to American culture."² Although the bulk of his work is deservedly forgotten Taylor is historically memorable both for what he represented and for what his contemporaries believed him to be.

"Cedarcroft", which Taylor built in 1859, was the scene of some of the author's fruitful labors and is a direct expression of both his character and the ethos which he represented. Its lavish design and scale reflect that blending of the romantic and materialistic impulses peculiar to his age. In its relatively unaltered condition, the house is a striking memorial to both Taylor and his epoch.

BIOGRAPHY

Bayard Taylor was born in 1825 in Kennet Square, a small Pennsylvania community. As a boy he began to rebel against his Quaker environment, and succeeded in attracting some notice as a poet. In 1844 he published a volume of verse, Ximena, and the same year went as a touring correspondent to Europe. Upon his return he published a record of his experiences, Views Afoot, (1846), which proved to be extremely popular. He now pursued the career of a journalist, and in 1849 sailed to California to cover the gold rush for the New York Tribune. Returning to the east in 1850, he produced another successful travel book, Eldorado, and won more recognition as a poet. In the same year he was married to Mary Agnew, with whom he had long been in love. The match was a tragic one, however, for his wife was dying of tuberculosis and lived only until December.

¹ Spiller p. 821

² Op Cit, p. 822

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Kunitz, Wilson, ed. American Authors, 1600-1900, pp. 730-732

Malone, Dumas, ed., Dictionary of American Biography, N.Y: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936, Vol. XVIII, pp. 314 - 316.

Spiller, Robert, et al, Literary History of the United States, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960, pp. 769, 821-823.

Pratt, Genevieve R., "Cedarcroft, 1852-1952", a pamphlet published in 1952 by the Chester County Day, at the Request of Cedarcroft, Inc.

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 ONE ACRE | | |
|--|----------|---------|---------|--|---------|---------|
| CORNER | LATITUDE | | | LONGITUDE | | |
| | Degrees | Minutes | Seconds | Degrees | Minutes | Seconds |
| NW | ° | ' | " | ° | ' | " |
| NE | ° | ' | " | ° | ' | " |
| SE | ° | ' | " | ° | ' | " |
| SW | ° | ' | " | ° | ' | " |
| | | | | 39 | 51 | 35 |
| | | | | 75 | 43 | 09 |

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 |
| | | | |

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Edmund Preston, Survey Historian

ORGANIZATION: Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic preservation, National Park Service DATE: 7/20/71

STREET AND NUMBER: 801 - 19th Street N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: D.C. CODE:

12 STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>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:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Title _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> | <p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____ Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____ Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date _____</p> |
|--|---|

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

| | |
|------------------|------|
| STATE | |
| Philadelphia | |
| COUNTY | |
| Chester | |
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| ENTRY NUMBER | DATE |
| | |

(Number all entries)

"Cedarcroft"
Bayard Taylor House

7. Description (1)

The second floor has a central hall, six bedrooms, four bathrooms, and a parlor. The woodwork and mantles on this floor are believed to be original, except in the southwest bedroom, where the fireplace is entirely new. The top floor has one large and three small bedrooms, as well as two storage rooms. The tower has a single chamber on each of its four upper floors. The basement has a wine cellar set below its main level.

Changes known to have been made to "Cedarcroft" since Taylor's time include the removal of two single-story wooden porches which flanked the projection on the south elevation, and the removal of the tower's finial. The north wing's single-story extension is probably a later addition, as are perhaps some or all of the dormers. The house appears to be in good condition structurally, although it is in need of many minor repairs on the interior.

In 1852, Bayard Taylor purchased the estate which he named "Cedarcroft". He laid the cornerstone in 1859, placing under it a zinc box containing various items for posterity, including poems by himself and R. H. Stoddard.¹ He moved into the house upon its completion the following year. Except for periods of absence, it remained his home until 1874, when he moved to New York. He left his parents in residence at the estate, only returning for short visits. Upon Taylor's death in 1878, his wife and daughter inherited "Cedarcroft". By 1882, it had become the property of T. E. Sickles, who sold it in that year to Isaac Warner, Jr. The next year, the estate was purchased by Dr. Richard J. Levis, and in 1893 Clara Barrington became the owner. The next year, a fire occurred at the house. At the turn of the century, it was bought by Edward R. Green, and four years later it became a boys' school under corporate ownership. In 1913, the property was purchased by J. B. D. Edge, whose tenure appears to have been extended. In 1952, the property was bought by Cedarcroft, Incorporated: "men with a vision...had acquired possession of the property, planning subdivisions with attractive homes to be built upon its beautiful acres..."² The house itself became the property of William Nichols about 1954. In 1968, it was purchased by the present owner, Susanne Thompson.

¹ Pratt. The present owner believes this box to be located in the wall of the second floor, above the cornerstone. It is said to have been Taylor's intention that it be opened in the year 2359.

² Pratt.

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(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

"Cedarcroft"
Bayard Taylor House

8. Significance (1)

Taylor now immersed himself in a series of worldwide journeys and wrote many volumes of travel literature which secured his place in the imagination of the American public. In 1847 he married for a second time, and the next year settled at "Cedarcroft", which he built near his native village. He found, however, that life at the estate tended to be dull and expensive, requiring him to engage in hack writing and more travel. During the Civil War, he served as a correspondent and then as a diplomat to Saint Petersburg, where he was for a time in charge of the American mission. After the war he turned to the writing of novels, more poetry, and a painstaking translation of Faust. In his later years, Taylor's poetry began for the first time to achieve a genuine depth.³ He was the recipient of many honors, but was nevertheless in continual financial straits. Unable to sell "Cedarcroft", he left his parents in residence there and in 1874 moved to New York. In 1878, his difficulties seemed to have been ended by an appointment as minister to Germany, a country in which he had achieved a great reputation. His health was broken, however, and he died in Berlin in December of the same year.

3

Op Cit, p. 821