

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED **SEP 25 1979**
NOV 13 1979
DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

STELLA PEPPER GYLES HOUSE

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

SW of Georgetown
Northwest corner of the intersection of
Delaware Roads 518 and 62

CITY, TOWN

Georgetown *ms.* VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
One

STATE

Delaware

CODE
10

COUNTY

Sussex

CODE

003

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mrs. Preston Workman

STREET & NUMBER

Trap Pond Road

CITY, TOWN

Georgetown VICINITY OF

STATE
Delaware

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Sussex County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

The Circle

CITY, TOWN

Georgetown

STATE
Delaware

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Delaware Cultural Resource Survey (S-120)

DATE

1978

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Hall of Records

CITY, TOWN

Dover

STATE
Delaware

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Stella Pepper Gyles House is a large, five-bay, single-pile frame-and-shingle farmhouse with a three-bay wing to the side, set back slightly from the facade of the main section of the house. It is situated at the intersection of Delaware Roads 518 and 62 three miles outside of Georgetown, the Sussex County seat. A small lean-to rear wing is attached to the rear of the three-bay wing. Immediately behind the lean-to section is a small, rectangular, gable-roofed shed which probably served as a wood shed. At the end of the three-bay section nearest Road 62 and set slightly forward of the house is a brick, gable-roofed milk house with a shingle roof, board-and-batten door with simple board trim, and side and rear ventilators with interior shutters. The interior of the milk house, which is in deteriorated condition, is plastered. The floor level is one foot below the ground. Shallow troughs 18 inches wide extend around three sides of the structure. Situated to the rear of the house are two badly deteriorated sheds. A mid-19th century barn and granary, in somewhat better condition, are located to the southeast of the house across Road 62.

The exterior of the house is devoid of any decoration, though generally symmetrical and well-proportioned. The only exception is a one-bay, one-story porch shading the doorway in the central bay. The porch, like most of the trim on the house, is constructed of cypress and appears to be contemporary with the house. The porch has square box posts with very simple boxed pedestals and equally austere square capitals. The porch roof is a low, pedimented gable with simple box cornice and quarter-round mouldings which are duplicated on the main house. The porch has side rails and built-in plank benches.

Simple mouldings surround the doorway and windows in the five-bay section. A box cornice runs along the eaves. The four-panel door has a four-light transom. The northwest gable end wall of the house contains two six-over-six double-hung sash windows on both first and second floors, an interior end chimney, and two four-light casements, one on either side of the chimney, at attic level. An interior end chimney also rises from the southeast gable end, which also contains two four-light attic level windows, although the lower windows are absent, making room for the three-bay side wing.

The side wing is somewhat cruder in construction than the larger section and appears to predate it slightly. It has three six-over-six lights at the first floor level in front. At the second floor level are unusual three-over-six double-hung sash windows. The gable end of the smaller wing also has an interior end chimney. One lower and one upper window are located near the front corner of the wing's gable end.

The shed addition at the rear of the smaller side wing is extremely crude and appears to be of early 20th century construction. It was used primarily as a covered area for the hand pump and for storage for the kitchen, which is located in the first floor of the three-bay section. The small, gable-roofed shed at the rear of the lean-to or shed addition may have been moved up to the rear of the house at the time the lean-to section was built. It appears to be of late 19th century construction as do the sheds to the rear of the house. Those are in a state of partial collapse and are seriously afflicted with rot. Their condition

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES Mid-19th Century BUILDER/ARCHITECT A.C. Pepper (?)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Stella Pepper Gyles House is one of several houses built in a concentration southwest of Georgetown by the Pepper Family during the early to mid-19th century. The concentration is a good example of the pattern occurring in Delaware and elsewhere during that period of the division of large family land holdings by inheritance. The earliest of the Pepper Houses still standing is the Carlton David Pepper House situated one-half mile away from the Gyles House. The earlier structure is by far the more elegant of the two, though they are similar in style. The Stella Pepper Gyles House is extremely plain, though its construction appears of high quality. Like the other Pepper House, it possesses a brick milk house, an extremely rare structure for its place and time. The existence of the two brick structures is explained by the fact that the family owned a brick kiln about one-half mile from the Gyles House along present Delaware Road 62.

The Stella Pepper Gyles House possesses considerable architectural significance in its own right as one of the best remaining examples in Sussex County of the sort of large, plain farmhouse occupied by the average rural farm family in the middle 19th century. It was enlarged as the family grew. It possessed few frills.

The plain style of the house is partly due to the very strong Methodist sentiment in central Delmarva of the mid-19th century, which frowned on ostentatious displays of abundance. As the victorian age blossomed, however, the Methodists relented somewhat and victorian gingerbread began to appear on the old clapboard and shingle farmhouses of the region. The Stella Pepper Gyles House is made further significant by its complete lack of any such decoration, or of any evidence that gingerbread was ever tacked on to its unpainted cypress eaves.

Cypress, the main building material in the house, was a typical building material of the 18th and early 19th centuries, but few structures built of the wood remain. That the Gyles House is still standing and in relatively good condition is unusual. The house appears to have undergone a bare minimum of interior and exterior alterations since the late 19th century. It contains no interior plumbing and the barest rudiments of electrical wiring.

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Stella Pepper Gyles House

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and the fact that they are of considerably later construction than either the House, the milk house, or the two larger agricultural buildings across Road 62 minimizes their importance to the nomination.

The main section of the house is a five-bay center hall plan structure with a total of four fireplaces - two in each of the first and second floor end walls. While the structure is almost completely lacking in what would normally be considered Greek Revival detailing, its basic shape would appear to date it in that period. The fact that it possesses mill-sawn timbers and lacks some construction features, such as mortised and tenoned rafters, found in Sussex County farmhouses until well into the 1830's, would appear to date it in the late 1840's or early 1850's. The structure is an unusually good example of the transitional style of local farmhouse construction.

The central hallway on first and second floors as well as the rooms on the first and second floors of the five-bay section contain cove-moulded chair-rail mouldings, wide pine floorboards, and very simple paneling on end walls around the fireplaces. All interior walls are plastered. The southeast end wall contains a low closet with four-paneled door, a simple Greek Revival fireplace surround and mantelpiece, and a glass-paned cupboard. The wall also contains an enclosed stairway, as does the second floor wall.

In one modest display of ostentation, a carpenter lock with brass trim adorns the door of the bedroom over the parlor at the northwest end of the house. A small bedroom is located over the lower front hallway. The first floor of the side wing contains the kitchen. The second floor of the wing contains two bedrooms and a narrow rear hallway from which a back stairway descends to the kitchen. Narrow, beaded boards in which wooden pegs are mounted are attached at shoulder level to the walls of the inner bedroom in the wing and the lower front hall. The lower central hall gives access to a rear six-panel door with four-light transom.

The present owner quotes Mrs. Gyles, who died recently in her mid-90's, as recalling that the rear of the house once had a two-story gable-roofed rear wing which was attached to the rear of the three-bay section where the lean-to wing is now located. There is interior evidence of this in the form of a now-useless doorway in the outer wall at the top of the back stairway.

The once-landscaped grounds of the house are overgrown and there is considerable evidence of woodpecker invasions of the upper shingled walls of the main house. The two farm buildings across Road 62, though in considerably better condition than the delapidated structures to the rear of the house, are only in fair condition. They are typical of mid-19th century agricultural structures of the area. The granary is a

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

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rectangular, gable-roofed braced frame structure with unpainted weatherboard siding and a sawn shingle roof. It has hand-hewn framing members joined with mortised and tenoned joints and pegged. The gable end facing Road 518 has two large lower board-and-batten doors and one smaller upper board-and-batten door. The structure rests on brick piers and has a board floor.

The barn is of identical construction. It is a gable-roofed structure with shed-roofed additions at each side. Doorways are located in each of the end walls of the additions and in the central gable end.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA	10	1

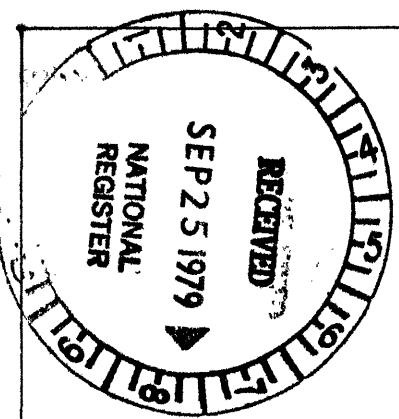
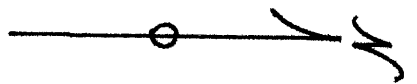
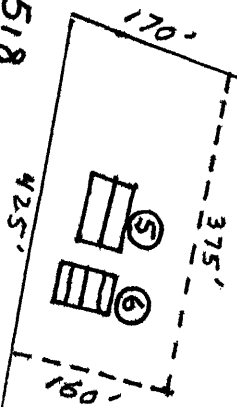
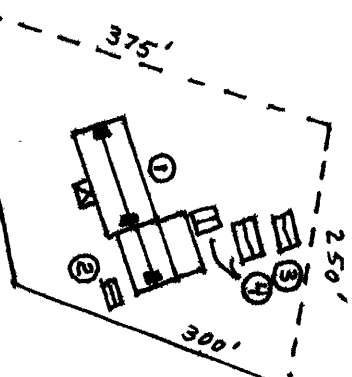
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The area being nominated consists of two irregular rectangles, one running north, north-east with Delaware Road 62 and situated west of the road; and one running east, south-east from Road 62 with Delaware Road 518, east of Road 62. The two rectangles are located at the northwest and northeast corners of the Road 62-Road 518 intersection. The total area of the rectangle to the west of Road 62, which contains the house, the milk house, the wood shed, and two delapidated sheds, is 84,375 square feet, or about 1.96 acres. The total area of the rectangle to the east of Road 62, containing the granary and the barn, is 66,000 square feet or about 1.53 acres. The total area of the site is 150,375 square feet or 3.5 acres. See attached site plan for exact dimensions of the two rectangles.

STELLA GYLES FARM
 NEAR GEORGETOWN, DEL.
 (NOT DRAWN TO SCALE)

DELAWARE ROAD 518

DELAWARE ROAD 62



- 1. HOUSE
- 2. BRICK MILK HOUSE
- 3. } SHEDS
- 4. }
- 5. BRANARY
- 6. BARN