Property Name: George Brady Farm Manager's Dwelling

Location and Verbal Boundary Description:
The Brady Farm Manager's House is located on the east side of route 896 approximately .15 miles south of the intersection of routes 301 and 896. The nominated parcel includes approximately one acre containing the house and a frame outbuilding.

Owner: William Brady
Middletown, Delaware
19709

Description:
The Brady Farm Manager's Dwelling is rare surviving example of a type of labor housing once common throughout St. Georges Hundred. Associated with Greenlawn (N-188), the Manager's House was a mid-level dwelling provided for the personnel who ran the farm. The mansion house was for the owner and his family; and cottages were provided for day and resident labor.

The Brady Farm Manager's Dwelling is a one-and-a-half story frame building laid out on a cruciform plan with a projecting lobby entry, a hall-parlor like main block, and a rear service wing. The building is clad with plain milled weatherboard and capped with a gable roof with projecting eaves. The exterior of the house is further ornamented with plain gothic windows in the gable ends, a front door flanked by narrow light sidelights and transom, and the application of factory produced sawn work brackets ornamenting the front porch.

Associated with the house is a contemporary frame building with similar gothic windows and sheathed with board-and-batten siding.

Historical Background and Significance:
The Brady Farm Manager's House is associated with Greenlawn (N-188, NR
1973), Marldale (N-5051, NR 1980), and Weston (N-121, see Weston in this nomination). As George Brady developed his fortune through the mid 1800s he acquired and occupied a number of properties which now chart his architectural and social progress. The first of these, Marldale, was purchased through profits made in working the canal trade; the second, Weston, was built as Brady relocated himself in close proximity to the twenty farms he owned and managed in lower New Castle County; the third, Greenlawn, was acquired from his deceased brother's estate and remodeled extensively as Brady settled on the northern edge of Middletown near the railway depot and town's business district.

At the time of Brady's move to Middletown, he owned over a score of farms. Each farm was occupied by a farm manager who worked on shares with Brady and who occupied the primary dwelling on the steading. At Greenlawn, Brady and later his heirs, occupied the main house, and provided the farm manager with a second smaller dwelling just to the north. The economic arrangements between the Bradys and the resident farmer were the same as those made with the farmers on the outlying farms.

Architecturally, the Manager's House is a reflection of the same aesthetic expressed in Brady's remodeling of the main house. The trim found on the Manager's House is similar to that used on the conservatory attached to the back of Greenlawn. In its design, siting, and use of trim, the Manager's House underscores the hierarchy of social relationships defined with economically developed class lines.
Jack Michel and David Allmendinger, directors, Rural History and Community Studies Project, American Studies Program, University of Delaware, 1982-1983. (This project collected, coded, and analyzed data from the manuscript agricultural census returns for 1850 on a statewide basis.)

Laura Tuthill and David Allmendinger, 1816 New Castle Tax Assessment Records Project, American Studies Program, University of Delaware, 1978-1979. (This project collected, coded, and analyzed data gleaned from the 1816 tax assessors' work books.)

Bernard L. Herman, "Struck with Thunder: Building and Rebuilding Rural Architecture, 1700-1900," manuscript prepared with funding from the Delaware Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, 1981.


Sam'l Rea and Jacob Price, Map of New Castle County, Delaware, (Philadelphia: Smith and Wistar, 1849).


Manuscript Resources: Delaware State Archives (D.S.A.), Dover, Delaware

New Castle County Deed Books

New Castle County Probate Records

New Castle County Orphans Court

New Castle County Loose Road Records

Private Accounts Collection
Properties Listed in the National Register of Historic Places and Relevant to this Nomination.

Greenlawn N-188
Woodlawn (J.K. Williams) N-120
Achmester N-3930
Shallcross House N-116
Cochran Grange N-117
Hedgelawn N-112
Hanson House N-5225
The Maples N-106
Charles Cochran House N-113
Monterey N-432
McDonough House N-424
Biddles Corners N-3935
Augustine Beach Hotel N-150
Hazel Glen N-148
Odessa Historic District
Fort Penn Historic District
Middletown Historic District
The windows are all six over six sash excepting the rear kitchen wing which varies from two over two to six over six sash. The windows have wood trim and blue louvered shutters. The attic is lit by six over six sash gable end lights. The center front passage is a single leaf door surrounded by a three pane transom and sidelights.

The front porch (south facade) is a one story, five bay, wood structure; three bays of which are screened in. The supports are Doric columns and the shed roof is pedimented above the doorway, reiterating the shape of the pedimented dormers. Decorative fish scale shingles fill the pediment. The rear porches have been enclosed, except a portion above the bulkhead to the basement.

The house is carefully landscaped in a Victorian fashion with iron posts and ornamental shrubberies in patterned arrangements. The plantings, in some cases are miniature species, and the attention to landscaping has been carried around to the back of the house.

Directly behind the house is a small stone, stuccoed structure which appears to have been a meathouse.

Historical Background and Significance:

The Maple Grove farm through the written sources and remaining buildings reveals the rise and decline of agriculture in the southern New Castle County during the mid-nineteenth century. The grain based agrarian economy enabled many farmers to use the profit to invest in apple and peach orchards to grow fruit for urban consumption. In 1850, Maple Grove concentrated on Indian corn, oats and butter and had a large investment in farm implements and machinery ($1,000). Maple Grove farm's success was at its height in 1870 when its cash value tripled to $60,000. While butter production decreased slightly, wheat increased ten fold and Indian corn remained at the same high level (2,000 bushels). The major difference was the $5,500 value of orchard products earned from four acres of fruit trees. Farm machinery doubled in value and $2,500 in wages were paid for labor.

Ten years hence, Maple Grove reflected the depressed state of post-Civil War Delaware agrarian economy. Orchard values decreased ten fold, machinery value decreased by 1/2 and the total cash value of the farm was 10% lower than in 1870. The
only notable increase was in hay, apparently a new cash crop. The ostentatious facade and tree lined drive are the result of a prosperous grain based economy. The re-building period is reflected in the additions and landscaping of the Maple Grove estate. The significance of Maple Grove is in its exceptional appearance and well-preserved state and its social and agricultural past reflecting in a microcosm the history of the surrounding region.

Nomination by Trish Bensinger and Bert Jicha