

S-00150. McColley's Chapel, McColley's Chapel Road
(PIN: 135-5.00-44.00)
(Detail Map #5)

Description: This property is located on the south side of the intersection of Redden Road and McColley's Chapel Road (County Road 213). The property includes a chapel and cemetery on the west side of McColley's Chapel Road.

The one-story, wood-framed, c. 1898 gabled-end chapel (.001) stands slightly back from the roadway facing east-northeast. A small gabled ell, which houses the chancel, extends from the center of the rear wall. The rectangular-shaped building measures three bays wide by four bays deep with all openings framed in plain, wood-framed cap trim. The east façade features a modern handicap ramp trimmed in iron railing in front of a centralized double-door entry, topped by wood-framed signage. Large, narrow double-hung, four-over-four wood-framed windows flank the entrance. The sidewalls of the main block are pierced by double-hung, six-over-six wood-framed windows, and the sides of the ell by double-hung, one-over-one openings. The entire exterior of the building is clad in asbestos shingles, and the gabled roof in sanding-seam metal. Plain-boxed cornices trim the roofline, and are particularly highlighted in the front and rear walls with gabled returns. A brick chimney rises from the exterior of the south sidewall.

The interior of the chapel maintains a center aisle plan with the pulpit and altar centrally located at the center of the west end. Aside from the pews, the majority of the fixtures and interior furniture (lighting, pulpit, altar seating, organ, and piano) appear to be replacements. Congregational seating consists of low rectilinear boxed pews. Much like the framing around the window and door openings, the opening leading into the altar area is cased with plain cap trim, topped by a large pediment. The back wall of the altar is framed with columned casing, topped by an architrave with dentil molding.

A mid-nineteenth-century cemetery (.002) surrounds the church. The graves are roughly arranged in rows, with headstones that face east-northeast. Some plots are spatially divided by iron railing or edging. Many of the headstones have elaborate low-relief carvings, with variations of wreaths, urns, and weeping willows. The simplest of the gravestones are the obelisks that are scattered throughout. Burials range from 1860 to 2007, with the oldest being found closest to the sides of the church, and the newer burials on or near the periphery of the property. The older markers appear to be of marble and are deteriorated and hard to read. The newer markers appear to be of granite. Some of the newer markers may be replacements for older stones.

Applicable Historic Context(s): Lower Peninsula/Cypress Swamp Zone; Urbanization and Early Suburbanization, 1880-1940+/-; Architecture, Engineering and Decorative Arts theme; gabled front church property type.

Historic Overview: According to a sign posted on the property, McColley's United Methodist Church was originally built in 1858 and was remodeled in 1898. Epitaphs from the headstones in the cemetery and architectural evidence seen in the church validate both dates. The church and cemetery are depicted on the 1868 Beers map.

The land on which the church sits was donated by James Redden in 1857, and the chapel was built soon thereafter under the direction of Trustan P. McColley, for whom it was named (Scharf 1888:1239; Parsons 2008:Section 8). The original 1858 chapel was in need of repair by 1887

(Scharf 1888:1239), and was destroyed by fire in the late 1890s. In 1898 the congregation rebuilt a new building, the one that is present on the property today.

Evaluation: McColley’s Chapel is being nominated for the National Register by the Sussex County Historic Preservation Planner under Criterion C, Criteria Consideration A, as “a well preserved example of the once common Methodist meeting house type that was constructed throughout Delaware in the late eighteenth and through the nineteenth century” (Parsons 2008). The nomination, which was provided to JMA by DelSHPO, is in draft form, and the proposed National Register boundary is not specified. The status of the surrounding cemetery is also uncertain: the boundary justification in Section 10 clearly states that the cemetery is not included in the nomination, but the physical description (Section 7) claims that the graveyard, which surrounds the church and includes stones dating to the founding of the church, contributes to the significance of the property. The period of significance is also problematic. In Section 8 it is stated as being from 1858 (the founding of the church) through 1891 (the reconstruction of the church). The church, however, was rebuilt in 1898 (as stated in “History of McColley’s Chapel,” also in Section 8), and if its significance hinges on its architectural merit exclusive of the older cemetery, then the period of significance would logically begin in 1898.

JMA concurs with Parsons that the church is eligible under Criterion C, Criteria Consideration A. McColley’s Chapel is a modestly designed, gabled-front church typical of rural areas in nineteenth-century Sussex County. Its simple vernacular details of high, narrow windows, double front doors, and simple cornice returns lends it an understated elegance that reflects its spiritual purpose. The building is unusually well preserved. Other than the addition of a handicap ramp at the front, there have been no changes to its original form. Though it has been resided, the cement-asbestos shingles do not detract from the overall design or feeling. Its location at the intersection of two small roads provides an open, rural setting that is enhanced by the gravestones surrounding the chapel. As a largely intact example of a typical late nineteenth-century vernacular religious building, McColley’s Chapel is recommended eligible for the National Register under Criterion C. Because the church is being recommended eligible solely on architectural grounds, as judged in purely secular terms, it meets the requirements of Criteria Consideration A.

As a religious property, McColley’s Chapel could possess historical significance under Criterion A if 1) it is associated with a theme in the history of religion having secular scholarly recognition; 2) it is associated with another historical theme, such as exploration, settlement, social philanthropy or education; or 3) it is significantly associated with traditional cultural values. McColley’s Chapel houses a small, local congregation, and research has not demonstrated its association with any significant historical trend. Built in 1858, it was the oldest Methodist Episcopal Church in Georgetown Hundred (Scharf 1888:1239), but the original building is no longer extant, and the current building, erected in 1898, reflects a later period in the church’s history.

According to a local informant, the land on which the church sits once belonged to John Redden. The Redden name is prominent in this area and appears to derive from either John Redden, a local farmer (Federal Writers’ Project 1938:379), or Colonel William O. Redden, a Civil War hero (Scharf 1888:1239; Page 2005:124). Even if John Redden was influential enough to be the source of local placenames, the church is not directly associated with him or his farming practices. Limited research has not revealed any association of the property with any other individuals significant in the history of the local community. Therefore, it is recommended not eligible under National Register Criterion B.

Although it is likely that the church building incorporates standard late nineteenth-century construction techniques, deconstruction and/or demolition may reveal that it contains information important to the understanding of vernacular architecture traditions. If the church is to be demolished as part of this project, it should first be more thoroughly investigated by a qualified architectural historian, conservator and/or specialist; selective demolition should be used to fully determine whether the property is eligible under Criterion D and has important information to yield. If it is determined that the building was constructed using standard building technology of the time, including balloon or platform framing, this property would not be eligible for listing under Criterion D, and the demolition could proceed. Should the qualified architectural historian, conservator and/or specialist recommend the property significant, it should be fully documented prior to demolition.

In the absence of a clear boundary definition in the draft National Register nomination (Parsons 2008), JMA recommends that the National Register boundary for the property include the entirety of present-day Sussex County tax parcel 135-5.00-44.00, encompassing the chapel and the cemetery. The cemetery, which contains markers dating from the founding of the church, is included within the proposed boundary because it enhances the rural, communal, and spiritual qualities that the simple gable-front church building conveys. This recommendation is in accordance with guidelines set forth by the National Park Service, which stipulate that the boundary should “encompass but not exceed the extent of the significant resources and land areas comprising the property” (U.S. Department of the Interior 1991:56).

S-00150



chapel (.001), façade and north side, and cemetery (.002), view to SSW



chapel (.001), rear and south side, and cemetery (.002), view to NNE



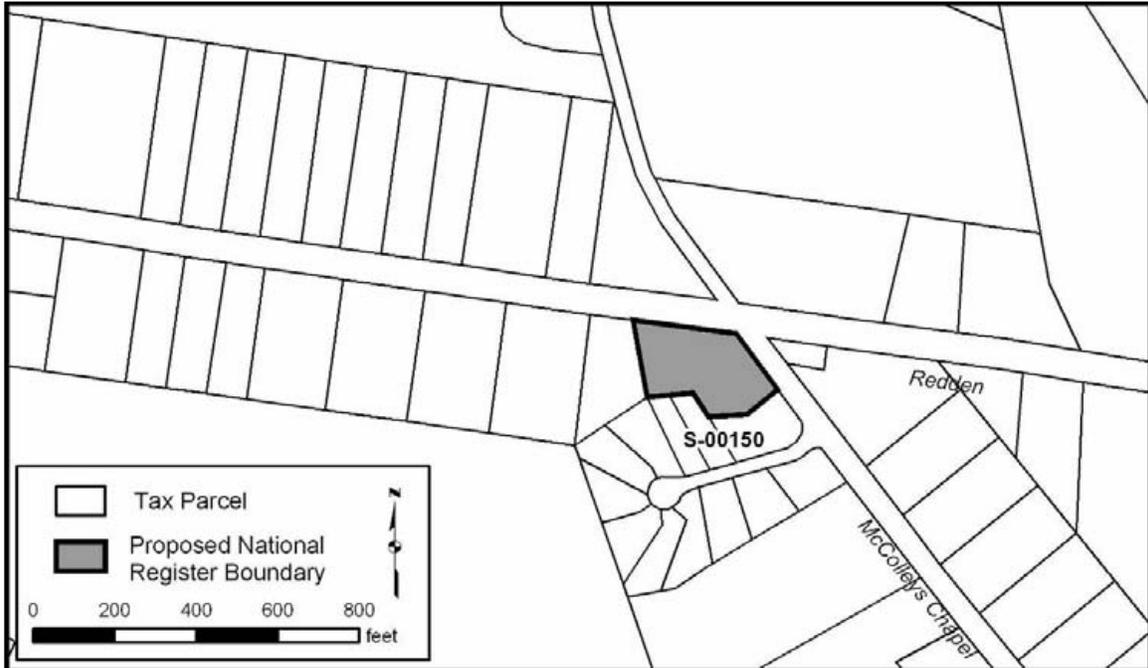
chapel (.001), rear and north side, and cemetery (.002), view to S



chapel (.001) façade and south side, view to NW



gravestones in cemetery (.002), view to NW



(2003 aerial)

**S-03180. Compton-Pennell Farm, North Side, Maple Branch Road
(PIN: 135-3.00-5.00)
(Detail Map #4)**

Description: This chicken farm contains a substantial number of older and more recent buildings and outbuildings. Older buildings and outbuildings include the farmhouse, an equipment barn, a barn, and a trailer, while newer buildings include chicken houses, a shed, and mobile homes. A dirt farm lane extends north from the road along the west side of the house and intersects perpendicular farm lanes that provide access to the outbuildings.

The main block of the c. 1900 house is a low, two-story, five bay, wood-framed I-house. A shed porch shelters the first story openings on the south façade. This three-bay porch has turned posts and sawn brackets. The main entry is placed in the center of the façade wall and is flanked by paired two-over-two, double-hung sash windows. Shorter two-over-two, double-hung sash windows are placed in the second story of the façade. The gable ends of the original block are fenestrated with two-over-two, double-hung sash windows. A gabled two-story ell projects from the center of the rear wall of the house and may have been part of its original construction. This ell is flanked on its east and west sides by single-story shallow shed-roofed additions. These additions are primarily fenestrated with one-over-one, double-hung sash replacement windows. The house has a concrete foundation and is sheathed in aluminum siding.

The gabled and shed roofed, c. 1900 wood-framed equipment barn (.002) is oriented with its front gable facing south. The front gable is flanked by two open shed-roofed equipment bays. The south gable is pierced by vertical board, side-hinged doors in the ground floor and loft level. The remaining walls are blank. The building sits on a brick and concrete-block foundation, is sheathed in horizontal wood siding, and has a roof sheathed in metal. It is in poor condition with pieces of the siding missing and wall framing exposed.

The c. 1940 gabled-roof barn (.003) is sited with its roof ridge oriented east-west. This wood-framed outbuilding is two stories in height. The front wall has four door openings, lacking doors in its ground floor, and a side-hinged, vertical board door placed in its second-story wall. The gable end walls are blank while two door openings are placed in its rear wall. Its lower walls are exposed concrete block while its upper walls are sheathed in corrugated metal sheet and clapboard.

The c. 1950 trailer (.004), an example of the streamlined “Airstream” type, measures approximately 22 feet in length, 6 feet 6 inches in height, and 6 feet in width. Two doors are placed in one wall, while the remaining walls are fenestrated with awning windows. The trailer is clad in sheet metal.

Applicable Historic Context(s): Lower Peninsula/Cypress Swamp Zone; Urbanization and Early Suburbanization 1880-1940+/-; Agriculture theme and Architecture, Engineering, and Decorative Arts theme; agricultural complex and enlarged I-house property types

Historic Overview: The earliest identified deed for the property is one filed in 1900 conveying the 87-acre and 34-square perch property from Charles E. and Maria L. Compton to Joseph C. Pennell for \$600. This deed indicated that the parcel was part of a larger tract owned by Moulton Dickerson. A farmer in Kent County, he had four children: Nehemiah, Asa, Jacob, and Josiah. Dickerson, who died in 1844, owned a tract of land of approximately 200 acres that was devised

by an order of the Orphans Court to his wife, Orpah Pennell Dickerson (Dickerson 1844; Runk 1899).

In 1924 the heirs of Joseph C. Pennell, including his widow Lydia C. Pennell, sold the tract to Elberta Simpler for \$2,875 (Sussex County Deed Book 247:259, December 13, 1924). Two days later, Simpler sold the 87 acre and 34 square perch parcel to Robert F. Clendaniel for \$1 and other valuable considerations (Sussex County Deed Book 247:267, December 15, 1924). The property has remained in Clendaniel family ownership since that time and is currently owned by Howard A. and Deborah H. Clendaniel (Sussex County Deed Book 1317:115, January 24, 1985).

Evaluation: The property was evaluated for the National Register both for its dwelling, a c. 1900 I-house, and as an agricultural complex. Agricultural complexes typically consist of a dwelling or dwellings, domestic and agricultural outbuildings, related utilitarian and non-utilitarian spaces and features, and associated agricultural fields, woodlots, and orchards. To be eligible under Criterion A, the complex must have the ability to convey information or be associated with important events in the agricultural history or development of Sussex County or Delaware.

Review of historic aerial photos shows the evolution of the agricultural use of the property, little of which is reflected in the current landscape. The property is currently dominated by six broiler houses located east and west of the house complex. These were added to the property between 1968 and 1992. In 1962 none of these large broiler houses was present, but there appears to have been a smaller chicken house to the west of the house that is now gone. In the 1930s, a portion of the house precinct apparently contained a small orchard.

Of the agricultural outbuildings that historically stood on the property, only two are present: an equipment shed and a small barn. The loss of other older outbuildings has compromised the integrity of the property to the point where it can no longer convey any historical significance it may once have had as an agricultural property. It is therefore recommended not eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A.

Site-specific research on the property has not revealed any association with any person significant in the history of Ellendale or of Sussex County. Therefore, the property is recommended not eligible under Criterion B.

Both the property as a whole and the house were evaluated for significance for their architecture. As noted in Frederick et al. (2006), to be significant as an example of a farm complex, a property must possess the following features.

- Feeling of a farm complex
- Setting of land reflecting agricultural use or at a minimum a visual buffer between the farm and surrounding land use(s)
- Historic house with or without additions and extensions
- Historic barn with or without additions and extensions
- At least two agricultural or domestic outbuilding(s) and/or structure(s) exclusive of the main barn or house that retain sufficient integrity of materials and design to convey the types of farming conducted on the property
- Identifiable plan or arrangement of buildings and structures of the farm
- Some small scale-features associated with the practice of farming including fence lines or ruins

- Some vegetation associated with farming including gardens, fields, woodlots, or treelines
- Circulation network connecting the parts of the farm
- Few modern structures located within the historic farm plan
- Retention of spatial relationships of buildings within the farm complex
- Retention of spatial relationship with buildings and/or complexes associated with the main farm

Considering these points, due to the demolition of many of the older outbuildings and the addition of numerous modern buildings, the property lacks the feeling of a historic-period farm complex. Few of the older outbuildings remain. Therefore, due to lack of integrity, the property is recommended not eligible for the National Register under Criterion C as an example of an agricultural complex. The house itself is a typical late I-house altered by construction of additions, replacement of windows, and siding in modern materials. Lacking both significance and integrity it is recommended not eligible under Criterion C.

Deconstruction and demolition may reveal the property contains information important to the understanding of vernacular architecture traditions, particularly if the house or the barn should be older than first anticipated. If either of these buildings is to be demolished as part of the project, it should first be evaluated by a qualified architectural historian; selective demolition should be used to fully determine whether the property is eligible under Criterion D and has important information to yield. If it is determined that the buildings were constructed using standard building technology of the time, including balloon or platform framing, this property would not be eligible for listing under Criterion D and the demolition could proceed. Should the property be recommended significant by the qualified architectural historian, it should be fully documented prior to demolition.

S-03180



main building (.001) façade and west side, view to NE



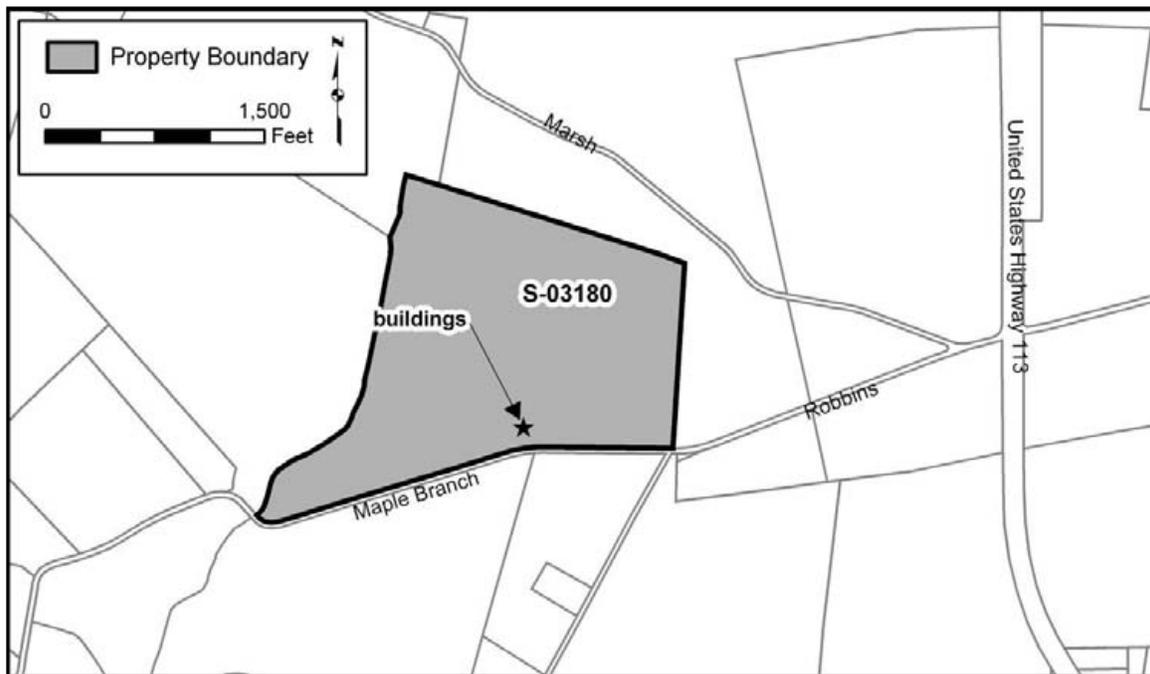
main building (.001) rear, view to SW

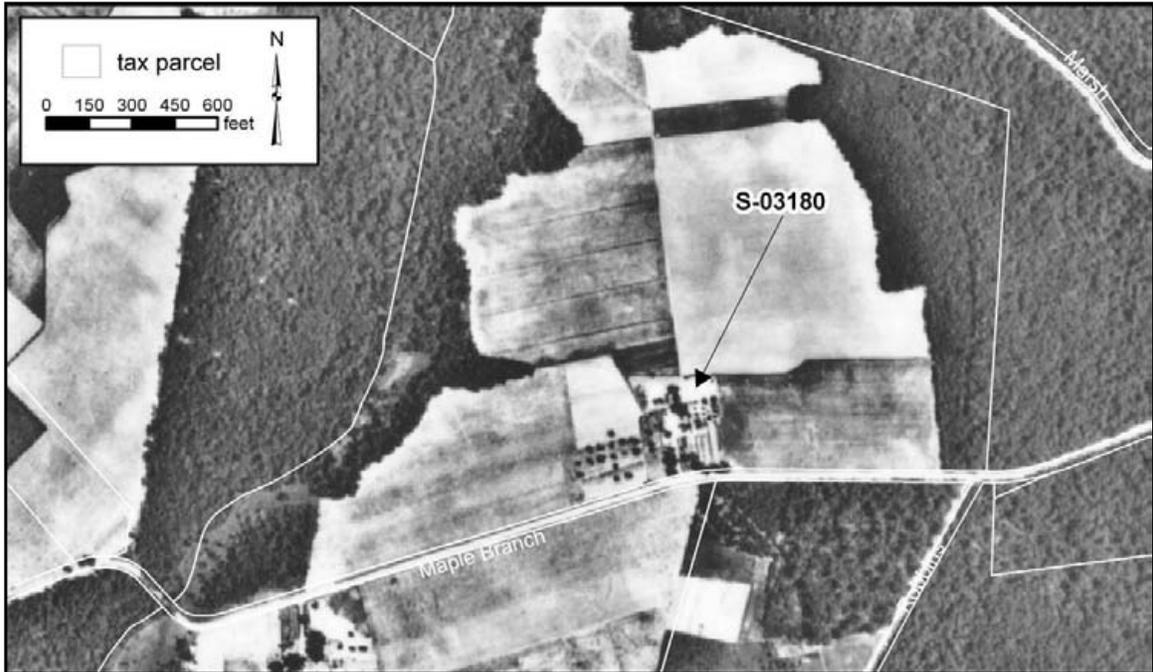


barn (.003) and equipment barn (.002), view to NW

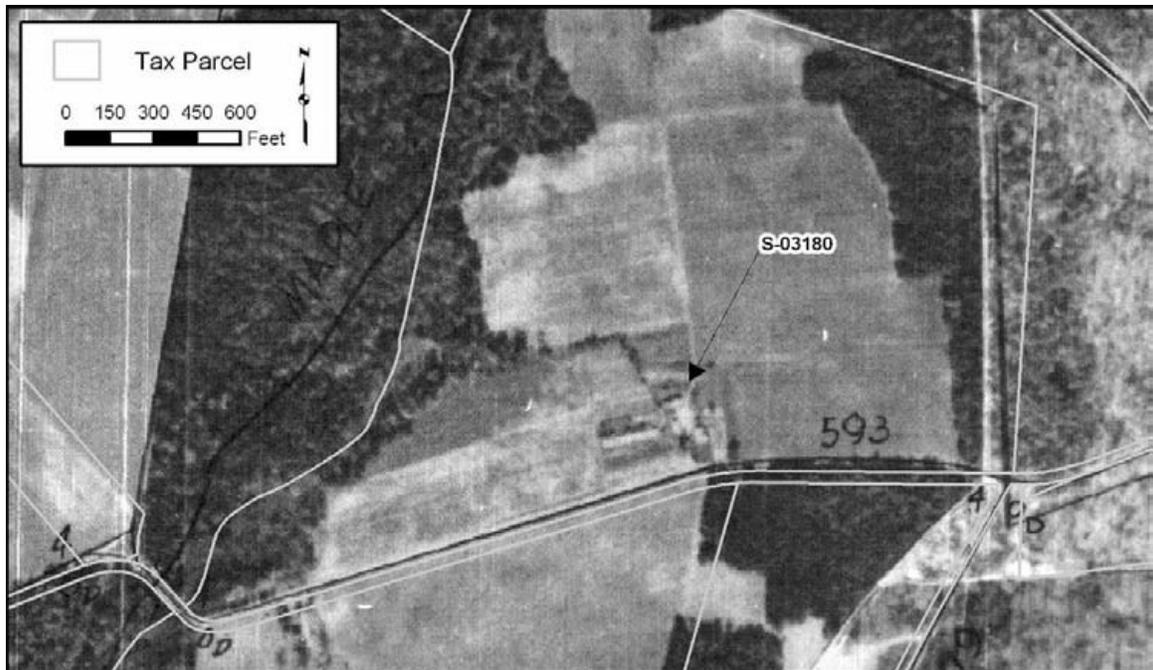


trailer (.004), view to SE

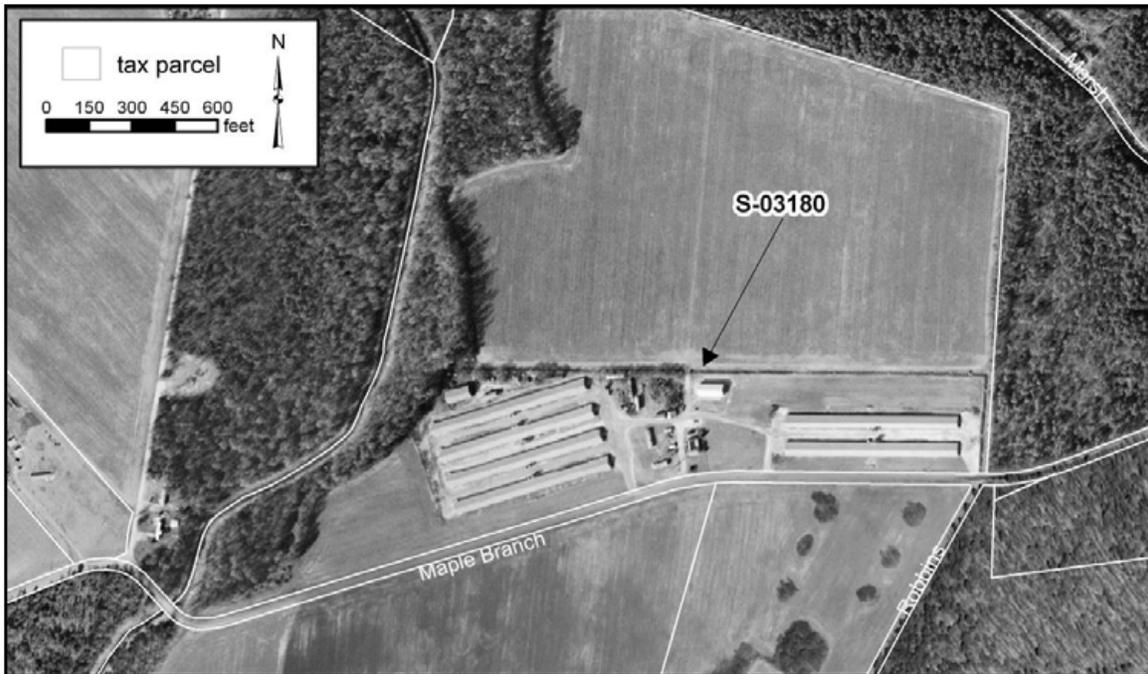




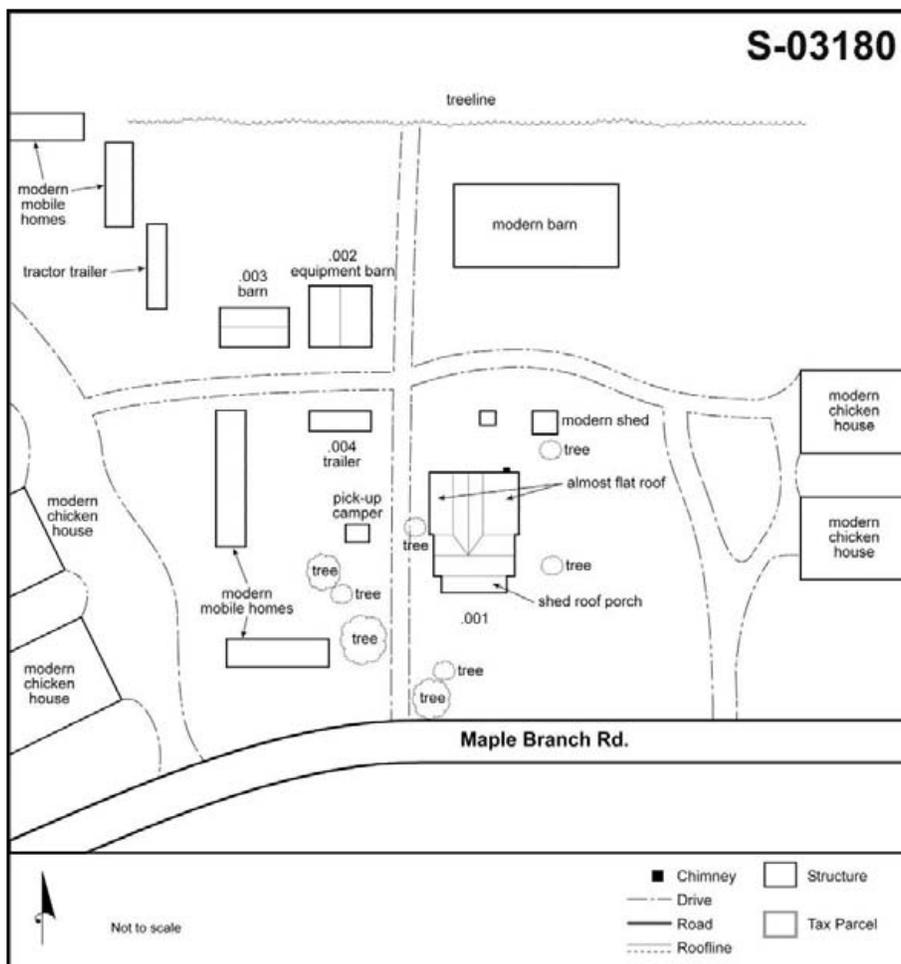
(1937 aerial)



(1962 aerial)



(2003 aerial)



**S-03181. Joseph Robbins House, 15127 Old State Road
(PIN: 135-3.00-26.00)
(Detail Map #4)**

Description: This farm property is located on the east side of Old State Road and includes a house, a garage, numerous agricultural outbuildings, and several modern buildings and structures. The house, sheltered by several Japanese maples and with a few nearby shrubs, sits close to the road. A sand driveway extends in a loop around the house and connects to a dirt driveway that extends to the east between outbuildings. Agricultural fields surround the house precinct on three sides.

According to the present owners, this c. 1900 house was completely updated in 1950. The two-story, side-gabled, wood-framed dwelling with rear ell features a hipped-roof porch that extends across the majority of its façade wall. This porch, which shelters the main entry, has wood replacement box columns and a concrete-block and poured concrete deck and foundation. The porch shelters the central front entry, installed c. 1950, with its half-wheel light and four-panel door. A secondary entry is placed in the south side wall near its junction with a rear ell. This entry contains the same type of door as used on the façade. A third, rear entry is placed in the center of the ell wall and contains a modern six-panel aluminum-clad door. Windows consists primarily of two-over-two, double-hung sash replacements with horizontal divisions and two-light attic windows. The house sits on a stuccoed masonry foundation, while the walls are sheathed in aluminum siding. The roof junction is marked by a boxed cornice with returns, while the roof is sheathed in composition shingles. A concrete-block chimney adjoins the rear wall of the ell.

The first outbuilding, a c. 1950, wood-framed, side-gabled, two-car garage (.002) is placed east of the house. Its south façade wall is marked by two corrugated metal, roll-down, garage doors. The two gable-end walls are blank, while the rear wall is marked by two, eight-over-eight, double-hung sash windows. The garage sits on a concrete-block foundation, its walls are sheathed in cement-asbestos siding over the original clapboards, and its roof is sheathed in asphalt shingles.

A small well house (.003) is placed east of the garage and south of a modern trailer. This c. 1950, gabled front building is marked by a replacement plywood door and metal cladding over the original vertical board siding. The door is placed in the south wall. The remaining walls are blank.

A wood-framed, c. 1950 equipment shed (.004) is placed south of the garage and south of the driveway. This gabled front structure is constructed of concrete block with the gable peaks sheathed in horizontal wood siding. The walls are deteriorated with the doors missing. The north façade has a central wood and glass garage door with 8 lights and 24 panels. The west wall has a two-over-two, double-hung sash window, and a southwest side, one-light, three-panel, broken door. The east wall has a central corrugated metal sliding door, while the south wall is marked by two, four-light metal sash windows. The structure sits on a concrete-block foundation.

A c. 1950, side-gabled, wood-framed workshop (.005) is placed east of the equipment shed. The three metal ventilators that rise from the roof ridge are similar to those found on many local hatcheries, but the configuration of the interior of the building, with its open rafters and exposed roof braces suggests that it never functioned as a hatchery. The hatcheries previously recorded within the study area tend to be built of concrete block and have finished interiors, most likely to keep the chicks warm and clean. The north façade of the workshop has a five-panel wood door

inserted in a former sliding door opening and a sliding metal door. Three windows, eight-over-eight and four-over-four, double-hung sash are placed in that wall. The gable ends are fenestrated with two, eight-over-eight, double-hung sash windows, while a two-panel, one-light, broken wood door is placed in the west wall. The rear wall is fenestrated with four eight-over-double, hung-sash windows. The walls are sheathed in clapboard. The rear wall conveys the level of deterioration of this outbuilding with missing clapboards and partially buckled framing. The building has an asphalt shingle roof.

A c. 1950, single-story, side-gabled, wood-framed chicken house (.006) is placed east of the workshop. This building is placed on concrete-block piers, is sheathed in horizontal wood siding, and plywood, and has a roof sheathed in corrugated metal. Four plain wood batten doors are placed across the south façade wall. Between them, continuous screened openings extend the length of the wall. The east gable end has a plain wood door, while the north wall has three plywood and screened doors, and eight hatches. The latter presumably allowed chickens access to the yard. Its roof is sheathed in corrugated metal.

A second chicken house (.007), probably erected c. 1960, is placed east of the first. It sits on a concrete-block foundation, is sheathed in horizontal wood siding and plywood panels, and has a roof sheathed in corrugated metal. Its north wall contains three door openings with missing doors and four screened openings. The end wall contains double plywood doors placed in the center of the wall, while the rear wall contains two door openings with doors missing, and screened openings.

A third chicken house (.008) is placed across the driveway from .006. This c. 1960 house, set on concrete-block piers, has a shed roof and walls sheathed in asphalt and bricktex. Its roof is sheathed in corrugated metal. The south façade wall contains 22 screened openings and 11 batten doors. The west end wall contains a central door opening, now boarded over, while the opposite end wall is blank. The rear wall contains six door openings with missing doors.

An early 1960s metal-clad shed (.009) is placed north of .008. This structure sits on a concrete-block foundation and has a shed roof clad in corrugated metal. The west wall has a door opening with a missing door, while the north wall has a missing window. The rear wall has a door opening with a missing door.

The final outbuilding, a corn crib (.010) is located east of .007. Constructed in c. 1950, the collapsing structure is rectangular and single pen in form with wood slat sides. It sits on concrete-block footers and has a door on its west wall.

Applicable Historic Context(s): Lower Peninsula/Cypress Swamp Zone; Urbanization and Early Suburbanization 1880-1940+/-, Suburbanization and Early Ex-urbanization 1940-1960+/-; Agriculture theme and Architecture, Engineering, and Decorative Arts theme; three bay I-house and agricultural complex property types.

Evaluation: This property was evaluated in LeeDecker et al. (1992:97) and was recommended not eligible for the National Register because it lacked “clear architectural distinction,” and its integrity of materials and workmanship had been compromised by recent alterations.

JMA evaluated this property for historical significance as an agricultural complex. Agricultural complexes typically consist of a dwelling or dwellings, domestic and agricultural outbuildings, related utilitarian and non-utilitarian spaces and features, and associated agricultural fields,

woodlots, and orchards. To be eligible under Criterion A, the complex must have the ability to convey information or be associated with important events in the agricultural history or development of Sussex County or Delaware.

Although the property remains in agricultural use, the oldest outbuildings date to c. 1950, at least half a century after the house was built. The farm as currently configured does not reflect a turn-of-the-century complex, but rather a mid-twentieth-century chicken farm. The critical buildings for a chicken farm of that period—the broiler houses—are no longer in use, and one of them is more than half-collapsed. Because it lacks integrity as a farm complex of any period, this complex cannot convey any agricultural significance it may have once possessed. Therefore, it is recommended not eligible for the National Register under Criterion A.

Limited research has not resulted in the identification of any association between the property and any individual important to the history of Ellendale or the local area. Therefore, it is recommended not eligible under Criterion B.

The property was evaluated for architectural significance both for its house and for its agricultural outbuildings. The house, a late three-bay I house of little distinction, has been altered by replacement of windows, replacement of doors, sheathing in modern siding materials, and replacement or reconstruction of the porch. It lacks both significance and integrity, and JMA concurs with LeeDecker et al. (1992:97) in recommending the property not eligible for the National Register under Criterion C.

The farm has been evaluated for architectural significance, as well. As noted in Frederick et al. (2006), to be architecturally significant as an example of a farm complex, a property must possess the following features.

- Feeling of a farm complex
- Setting of land reflecting agricultural use or at a minimum a visual buffer between the farm and surrounding land use(s)
- Historic house with or without additions and extensions
- Historic barn with or without additions and extensions
- At least two agricultural or domestic outbuilding(s) and/or structure(s) exclusive of the main barn or house that retain sufficient integrity of materials and design to convey the types of farming conducted on the property
- Identifiable plan or arrangement of buildings and structures of the farm
- Some small scale-features associated with the practice of farming including fence lines or ruins
- Some vegetation associated with farming including gardens, fields, woodlots, or treelines
- Circulation network connecting the parts of the farm
- Few modern structures located within the historic farm plan
- Retention of spatial relationships of buildings within the farm complex
- Retention of spatial relationship with buildings and/or complexes associated with the main farm

The historical house on this property is retained, although it has undergone substantial alterations including replacement of the front porch and windows and application of new siding. With its nine historic-period support buildings, this property does retain the feeling of a farm complex within an agricultural setting, but many of the outbuildings are in poor condition and, as a result,

their integrity of design has been compromised. Elements of the design and spatial relationship of the farm remain, but the lack of integrity of individual components renders the agricultural complex not eligible for the National Register under Criterion C.

The buildings on the property represent common examples of wood framing and concrete-block construction and are unlikely to provide new information on this construction types that are not already available through other means; therefore, the property is not likely to be eligible under Criterion D.

S-03181



main building (.001) facade, view to E



left to right: main building (.001) rear and south side and garage (.002), view to NW



left to right: garage (.002) and main building (.001) façade and north side, view to SE



left to right: garage (.002) and main building (.001) rear and north side, view to SW



well house (.003), view to NE



left to right: equipment shed (.004) and workshop (.005), view to N



workshop (.005), view to SE



interior of workshop (.005), view to S



chicken house (.006), view to NE



chicken house (.007), view to N



chicken house (.008), view to W



shed (.009), view to NE



corn crib (.010), view to S

