

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY FORM PHOTO/SITE PLAN SHEET

Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission

Bureau of Historic Preservation

Box 1026, Harrisburg, PA 17108-1026

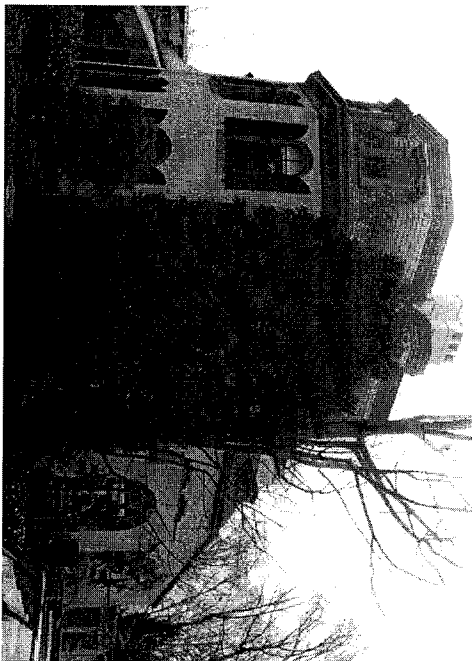
Survey Code/Tax Parcel/Other No.: 037 / 66 00 04321 00 5 Block-Unit #023-001 County: Montgomery

Municipality: Whiteman Township Address: 300 Lewis Lane

Historic Name/Other Name: _____

SITE PLAN

PHOTO INFORMATION



Number	Description of View	Direction of Camera
1	House – façade	
2	House – façade	
3	Carriage House	
4	Cabin	
5	Cabin	
6		

Photographer Name: Robert Wise Date: 1999

Negative Location: Robert Wise Consulting, Station Square I, Suite 104,
37 N. Valley Road, Paoi PA 19301

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY FORM - DATA SHEET

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Bureau for Historic Preservation

89B

IDENTIFICATION AND LOCATION

Survey Code: 037 Tax Parcel/Other No.: 66.00 04321.00 5 Block Unit #023-001

County: 1. Montgomery 091 2. _____

Municipality: 1. Whitpain Township 2. _____

Address: 300 Lewis Lane Historic Name: Haas House

Other Name: _____

Owner Name/Address: Carole E. Haas 300 Lewis Lane Ambler PA 19002

Owner Category: ☒ Private ☐ Public-local ☐ Public-state ☐ Public-federal

Resource Category: ☒ Building ☐ District ☐ Site ☐ Structure ☐ Object

Number/Approximate Number of Resources Covered by This Form: 4

USGS Quad: 1. Lansdale 2. _____

UTM A. _____ C. _____

References: B. _____ D. _____

HISTORIC AND CURRENT FUNCTIONS

Historic Function Category: _____ Subcategory: _____ Code: _____

A. Residence 1870 7,398 SF Dwelling _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

Particular Type: A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

Current Function Category: _____ Subcategory: _____ Code: _____

A. Single Family Residence Dwelling _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification:

B. _____

D. _____

A. Second Empire _____

C. _____

Other: _____

Exterior Materials: Foundation _____

Walls stucco _____

Other _____

Roof _____

Walls _____

Other _____

Structural System: 1. _____ 2. _____

Width _____ Depth _____ Stories/Height 3 _____

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Year Built: ca. 1870 Additions/Alterations Dates: ca. ca.

Basis for Dating: x Documentary Physical

Explain: Tax records

Cultural/Ethnic Affiliation: 1. _____ 2. _____ Associated Individuals: 1. _____ 2. _____

Associated Events: 1. _____ 2. _____ Architects/Engineers: 1. _____ 2. _____

Builders: 1. _____ 2. _____

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

PREVIOUS SURVEY, DETERMINATIONS

EVALUATION (Survey Director/Consultants Only)

Individual NR Potential: x Yes No Context(s): _____

[illegible]

Classification: This Second Empire house is a Class II resource. The Plexiglass alterations, are associated with the current resident, the Otto Haas family. The cabin is also an important structure in its own right, assuming it is the original building on the property.

THREATS

Threats: x 1. None 2. Public Development 3. Private Development 4. Neglect 5. Other

Explain:

SURVEYOR INFORMATION

Surveyor Name/Title: Robert Wise Date: 6/16/2000

Project Name: Whitpain Township Historic Resource Survey

Organization: Robert Wise Consulting/Whitpain Township Telephone: (610) 722-5818

Street and No.: Station Square 1, Suite 104, 37 North Valley Road

City, State: Paoli, Pa Zip Code: 19301

Additional Survey Documentation: n/a

Associated Survey Codes: n/a

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL RESOURCE SURVEY FORM
NARRATIVE SHEET 89C

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
Bureau for Historic Preservation

Survey Code: 037 Tax Parcel/Other No.: 66 00 04321 00 5 Block-Unit #023-001
County: Montgomery 091 Municipality: Whitpain Township
Address: 300 Lewis Lane
Historic/Other Name: Haas House

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

This house is a highly altered example of Second Empire architecture. Built c. 1870, the core is a three story house with a concave mansard roof. The dormers in the mansard roof have slight arches in the center to match the arched windows. The chimney punctures the roof just inside the mansard, and a tower has been built to mimic the chimney mass. The roof has decorative scalloped slate. The house is clad in stucco and has angled corners to allow more windows. The windows on the first two floors have arched heads and arched shutters. A rear addition to the core is a 2½ story element with segmental arched dormers and an end chimney. A large entry porch has a decorative arch above the door. There is another stucco-clad shed addition on the rear. On the opposite side of the house is a plexiglass porch.

Associated Resources:

- (1) **Log and Stone Cabin** Associated with this house is a small building that is half stone and half log. There is a large interior chimney in one of the end gables, and a solitary shed roof dormer peeps through the roof as well. The windows on the log portion of the building are small, and the door is in the stone portion. (C)
- (2) **Carriage House.** This building is a 1½ story, end-gabled structure with a square cupola on the roof. There is a centered gable on the façade sheltering an arched window. This carriage house has irregular fenestration and a Dutch door. (C)

Classification: This Second Empire house is a Class II resource. The Plexiglass alterations, are associated with the current resident, the Otto Haas family. The cabin is also an important structure in its own right, assuming it is the original building on the property.



Haas House as it was in 1845

The Haas House and "Yost Log Cabin"

By Marjorie H. Gerhart
Photography by George S. Peck
Artwork by Becky Huttinger

The book about "Dawesfield," *Reminiscences of Dawesfield and Vicinity*, by Saunders Lewis, Illustrated and Elaborated by Morris J. Lewis, M. D., 1896, shows a picture of the home now owned by Dr. and Mrs. F. Otto Haas. It is described as a tenant house built in 1821 by Dr. James. The Haases have owned about ten acres and this house which has grown over the years from a modest tenant house into an elegant, stately home with a large greenhouse and stone terraces since 1950. They more recently acquired an additional forty acres of former Wertsner property.

Dr. Haas has deeds and a description of his title that trace continuous ownership of the property on which his house stands from the purchase by George Wertsner in 1845 from Rebecca and Elizabeth James.

An Indenture dated June 3, 1856, shows that George Wertsner and his wife, Hester, sold a messuage and lot of a little more than ten acres to Coleman Fisher, Jr., of Philadelphia. Coleman Fisher was married to Mary, the daughter of Samuel Wilson, M.D. and Elizabeth Paul. The Fisher's had three children, S. Wilson Fisher, Sidney, who died in

1887, and Elizabeth. When Coleman Fisher died in 1876, he left his property to his wife, Mary, as long as she remained a widow. The estate was to go to his children after they attained the age of twenty-six. His widow died in 1887. Since Sidney had died, S. Wilson Fisher and Elizabeth inherited the estate.

In an article about S. Wilson Fisher in *Biographical Annals of Montgomery County*, it is related that the house was much enlarged and improved while Coleman Fisher lived. The estate became known as "Briar Hill." S. Wilson Fisher, who graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and was admitted to the bar to practice law, lived there for a time with his wife, Clara Frances. He never practiced law because he was more interested in astronomy and the natural sciences. He purchased about thirty-eight more acres in the vicinity from the Mercer Home for Presbyterian Clergymen. In 1909, S. Wilson Fisher and his wife conveyed their rights to "Briar Hill" and the original ten acres to his sister, Elizabeth. Elizabeth Fisher sold the estate to Charles Chauncey Savage, Jr., and his wife, Silvine Von Dorsner Savage, in 1935. In turn, they sold it to F. Otto Haas and his wife, Dorothy W. Haas, in 1950.

The Haases have made many changes in the house. They added the greenhouse. They believe the present dining room, which was formerly the living room, is the oldest section of the abode. They marvel at the twenty-two inch walls throughout the dwelling. The outside walls, plaster over stone, are painted about every four years. The house has been a variety of colors and shades. Right now it is a soft tan with brown. Stables and barns have been added. They have also preserved another structure of the past by moving an old log cabin to their grounds to save it from destruction by the projected relocation of Route 202.

This reminder of early life in the township, known as the "Yost Cabin" because it was formerly located on Yost Road, was researched carefully by Price and Dickey, Architects, to ascertain its origin and condition before a decision to move it was made. Mrs. Elizabeth H. Dewey of Green Lane, Pennsylvania, had researched the chain of title in 1968. The property on which the log cabin stood was part of an original 200 acre tract of land that was divided into sections of different sizes as it was distributed to relatives or sold over the years. The exact date of the building was not pinpointed. Originally, the 200 acres were parts of grants from William Penn to Samuel Fox and James Claypoole. It became a portion of Richard Whitpain's holdings that were sold by his widow, Mary, to John Eldridge, William Ingram, J.B. Blackall and J. Vace. Later, John Whitpain recovered the land along with Rees Thomas and Anthony Morris. It was sold in 1748 by Thomas, Morris and Ann Whitpain, John's widow, to Randle Osborne. The land remained in the Osborne family for a number of years. Around 1784, Mary Osborne DeHaven received ten acres and Ann Osborne Cunard received eight acres from Richard Osborne. In 1798, Randle Osborne, Jr., sold fourteen acres to Daniel Yost.

Isaac Detweiler acquired the eight acre tract in 1807 and the ten acre plot in 1816 that had formerly belonged to the Osborne women. In 1846 and 1847, both properties were acquired by John S. Kolb who owned them until 1850 when his estate was sold by the sheriff. The ownership then passed into a number of hands until William Knoll, the uncle of the present owner, Mrs. Donald Spacht, came into possession of ten acres of the land in 1906.

Exactly when or by whom the cabin was built is difficult to determine. The U.S. Direct Tax of 1798 shows dwelling houses and out buildings similar in description to what the Yost Road Cabin might have been at that time. It was thought by the writers of the report to Dr. and Mrs. Haas that this structure on this particular ten acres might be any one of several building described in the 1798 tax record, but most likely, the house of James Howel, located next to Valentine Bush, listed as "1 log house . . . 14 by 16 . . . value \$50 . . ."

Tax records from 1769 for the Randles show a dwelling but this may have gone with any of the various divisions of the property.

A "Map of Montgomery County Pennsylvania from Original Surveys under the Direction of Wm. E. Morris, C. E., 1848" indicates a log house with "J. Culp" beside it, probably a misspelling of J. Kolb.

The log cabin, before it was moved, had an addition built in the mid-nineteenth century that was not recommended to be moved. The president of the Goshenhoppen Society who regretted not being able to add this log cabin to its collection described it as a "St. Gotthard" type because of the stone end that indicated Swiss influence, as noted in log buildings in the Canton of Uri.

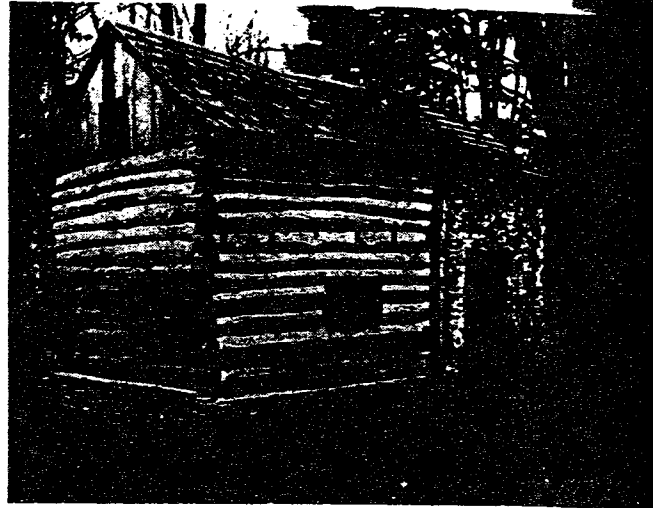
The stairs to a second floor were thought to be original, although the door at the foot was not. The unusually high fireplace opening is off center to allow for the stairs. There is no evidence of a mantel, but there are open shelves recessed on the smaller side. Parts of the window frames may be original, but no initial sash remains. The Dutch-door to the outside has original strap hinges on both leaves. The log walls were covered with plaster on the inside and later clapboards on the outside.

The architects proposed removing the log cabin by disassembling and restoring the logs as they were originally, with the inside and outside exposed. A new, chemically fireproofed roof would be used. The beams and ceiling that had been frequently whitewashed over the years would be left unpainted. The cost of restoration was estimated as \$40,000.

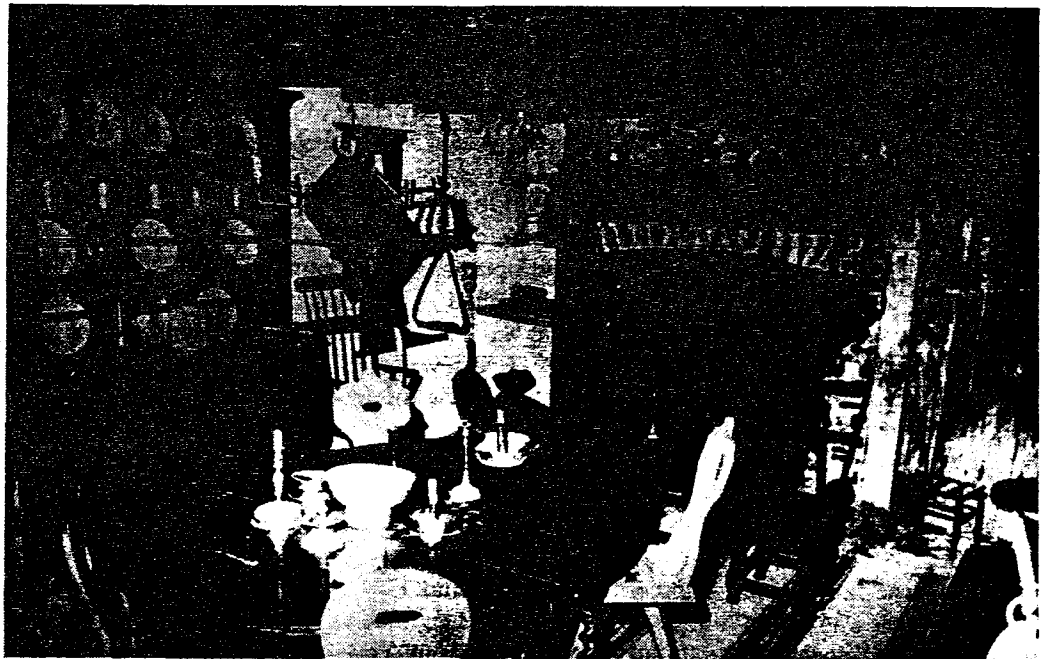
Fortunately, the restoration was carried out and today there is a charming reminder of how many of the early inhabitants of this area lived.



Home of Dr. and Mrs. Haas Today



Yost Log Cabin



Interior of Yost Log Cabin

Chain of Title — Log Cabin Property North Side of Yost Road, Whitpain Township

c. 1967	William Knoll to Mrs. Donald Spacht, his niece, by will
Feb. 7, 1906	Charles Irwin adm. for Jennie Miller to William Knoll (10A, 2A) Book 550, page 160
Jan. 18, 1902	Charles Thompson Gouldy to Jennie Miller (10A, 2A) Book 475, page 232
Apr. 2, 1901	Amos Beyer to Charles Thompson Gouldy (10A, 2A) Book 470, page 438
Apr. 5, 1886	Lewis Beideman to Amos Beyer (10A, 2A) Book 278, page 382
Jan. 6, 1884	Frederick G. Shepps to Lewis Beideman (10A, 2A) Book 277, page 189
Apr. 4, 1878	William W. Gilbert to F. G. Shepps (10A, 2A) Book 242, page 283
Nov. 10, 1877	Catherine A. Kinckiner to Wm. Gilbert (10A, 2A) Book 239, page 452
Dec. 24, 1874	Abraham S. Hallman for Joseph Kinckiner (d. 1870) to Catherine Kinckiner (10A, 2A, 18A) Book 22, page 234
Apr. 19, 1851	Joseph Crater & Mary to Joseph Kinckiner (10A) Book 117, page 402
Apr. 18, 1851	Joseph Swartley & Catherine to Joseph Crater (10A, 18A) Book 99, page 531
1850	Philip Hahn, Sheriff, estate of John S. Kolb to Joseph Swartley (10A, 18A)
Tract I-A:	
Apr. 2, 1846	Jacob S. Bean & Jacob Clemens, to John S. Kolb (10A) Book 69, page 642
Apr. 12, 1842	Issac Detweiler & Barbara to Martin Detweiler (10A)
April 1816	Jacob Weber, Frederick Zeofos & John Shearer for Benjamin Weber to Isaac Detweiler (10A)
1798	Howell James to Benjamin Weber (10A)
n.d.	Callawallader to Lawrence Egbert
n.d.	Samuel Maulsby to Callawallader
1791	Part of land owned by Isaac DeHaven to Samuel Maulsby Book 7, page 543
1784	Randle Osborne to Mary Osborne DeHaven

Tract 1-B:
April 1847 Henry Beideman to John S. Kolb (18A83p) Book 69, page 640

April 1842 Abraham Gotwals & Henry Detweiler for Isaac Detweiler to Henry Beideman (18A83p) Book 67, page 666

April 1807 Valentine Bush & Elizabeth to Isaac Detweiler (8A) Book 24, page 5

Feb. 1803 Peter Schneider to Valentine Bush (8A) Book 24, page 4

Nov. 21, 1791 Henry Cunard & Ann to Peter Schneider (8A) Book 6, page 374
Richard Osborne to Ann Osborne Cunard

Tract 2:
Mar. 26, 1852 Joseph Crater to Joseph Kinckiner (2A) Book 117, page 404

Tract 3:
Apr. 4, 1865 Isaac Detweiler & Ann to Joseph Kinckiner (18A) Book 144, page 552

Original
200A Tract
May 23, 1791 Randle Osborne, Jr. to Daniel Yost (14A)

1785 Richard Osborne to Randle Osborne, Jr. (14A)

1784 Randle Osborne to Richard Osborne (14A)

1748 Rees Thomas, Anthony Morris and Ann Whitpain to Randle Osborne (14A)

c.1731 Rees Thomas, Anthony Morris and Ann Whitpain to Randle Osborne

May 28, 1718 John Whitpain to R. Thomas, of Merion Book F5

Apr. 24, 1713 Wm. Aubrey, of London to Rees Thomas & Anthony Morris Book E7, page 258

1690 J. Blackall to Wm. Aubrey Book E79, page 143

July 30, 1689 Mary Whitpain (Ex) of Richard Whitpain to John Eldredge, William Ingram, J. Blackall & J. Vace Book E74, page 192

— John Marshall to Richard Whitpain (1000A) Book C23, Page 27

— James Claypoole to John Marshall (4500A) Book C23, page 25

— Wm. Penn to James Claypoole (1000A) Book A1, page 140

— Samuel Fox to Richard Whitpain (1500A) Book G23, page 52

— Wm. Penn to Samuel Fox (1500A) Book A5, page 136





