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.: 060 / 66-00-04112-11-5 Block 010C Unit 080 County: Montgomery

Municipality: Whitpain Township Address: 1411 Morris Road

Historic Name/Other Name:

SITE PLAN

PHOTO INFORMATION

Number	Description of View	Direction of Camera
1	Stone and Stucco Houses	
2	Stucco House and Ice House	
3	Barn	
4		
5		
6		

Photographer Name: Robert Wise Date: 1999

Negative Location: Robert Wise Consulting, Station Square 1, Suite 104, 37 N. Valley Road, Paoli PA 19301

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY FORM - DATA SHEET

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Bureau for Historic Preservation

89B

IDENTIFICATION AND LOCATION

Survey Code: 060 Tax Parcel/Other No.: 66-00-04112-11-5 Block 010C Unit 080
County: 1. Montgomery 091 2.
Municipality: 1. Whitpain Township 2.
Address: 1411 Morris Road Historic Name: Normandy Farm
Other Name:
Owner Name/Address: Normandy Farm Limited Partners 1411 Morris Road Blue Bell 19422
Owner Category: x Private ___ Public-local ___ Public-state ___ Public-federal
Resource Category: x Building ___ District ___ Site ___ Structure ___ Object
Number/Approximate Number of Resources Covered by This Form: 11
USGS Quad: 1. Lansdale 2.
UTM References: A. ___ C.
B. ___ D.

HISTORIC AND CURRENT FUNCTIONS

Historic Function **Category:**	**Subcategory:**	**Code:**
A. Residence	Dwelling	
B.		
C.		
D.		

Particular Type: A. ___
B. ___
C. ___
D. ___

Current Function Category:	**Subcategory:**	**Code:**
A.		
B.		
C.		
D.		

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification: A. ___
B. ___ C. ___
D. ___ Other: ___

Exterior Materials: Foundation ___ Roof ___
Walls ___ stone ___ Walls ___
Other ___ Other ___
Structural System: 1. ___ 2. ___
Width ___ Depth ___ Stories/Height 2.5 ___

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Year Built:____ca._____ 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: ___Yes _x__No Context(s):_____
Contributes to Potential District ___Yes ___No District Name/Status:

Classification: Normandy Farm is an excellent collection of buildings, and it warrants a classification as a Class I resource. (DOE 7/14/1998)

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: 060 Tax Parcel/Other No.: 66-00-04112-11-5 Block 010C Unit 080
County: Montgomery 091 Municipality: Whitpain Township
Address: 1411 Morris Road
Historic/Other Name: Normandy Farm

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

See the proposed National Register Nomination.

Historic resources on the farm:

1) Main House
2) Carriage House
3) Barn
4) Gate House
5) Gate House
6) Tenant House
7) Smoke House
8) Tennis House
9) Potting Shed
10) Greenhouse
11) Walls and Gates

Normandy Farm is an excellent collection of buildings, and it warrants a classification as a Class I resource. (DOE 7/14/1998)

Normandy Farms

By Agnes Baker Jefferson
Photography by George S. Peck

Former Franklinville Inn Today, Built c. 1834

In Bean's History on pp. 1175—ff., there is a lengthly biographical sketch of William Singerly and a full page picture. In a flowery stilted discourse, the author extols the activities, achievements and accomplishments of how the sickly business man from Philadelphia came to the country to improve his health and made this his summer and weekend home.

Briefly, he brought a new kind of cultivation of crops called "soiling" and innovated a system of "dry" feeding of animals. He stocked and perfected the breed of Holstein-Fresian cattle and Cotswold and Southdown sheep. He bred horses for both working and racing, some of which came from the finest stock in Kentucky.

President Grover Cleveland was once a guest at the Singerly home. Singerly called the extensive holdings "Record Farms" after the Philadelphia Record, the newspaper which he controlled and published. The date of his occupancy is 1873 to probably early 1920. The full-page picture shows how the grounds looked at the height of his activities, before the next owner, Ralph Beaver Strassburger, took over the manorial enterprise and built the present high white wall.

However, before Singerly, Edward Mathews gives hints of early history in this area:

The property dates to 1730, when Jacob Levering bought 100 acres of Rees Thomas and Anthony Morris. This acreage extended southwest along the State road. Henry Levering, Jacob's brother, owned the continuous tract all the way to Centre Square. Some of this was sold to Adam Lutz in 1760. (Adam Lutz allowed the Continental Army to detour over his land on the way to the Battle of Germantown.) The first named tract remained in the family of Daniel Levering until 1776. Issac Martin, the wheelwright, was his son-in-law.

An involved account indicates that the descendants of the Levering family, through Catherine Levering Heist (married John Heist), created a stone house which was operated as the Franklinville Tavern in about 1834. John Hiest was a Justice-of-Peace and their sons, John and Dr. D. Levering Heist, each attained prominence in his field.

The Tavern remained such until Mr. Singerly came to Whitpain in the early 1870's.

As mentioned before, Ralph Beaver Strassburger arrived on the scene as early as 1913, adding farms to the domain until 1929. Much has been written elsewhere of Mr. Strassburger. It is the purpose here to only point out that at present, there remain about fifteen houses, plus the school house, which at one time were individually owned.

Attention is called to the fact that the corner or manor house, as stated before, was once the Franklinville Inn. It had several owners beside the Heists. The small stone house within the entrance-to-the barns lane was the birthplace of Mr. Strassburger, having been moved here from Worcester near Skippack.

The west corner main farm house and barn were once the home and lands of Charles Kreible. His son, Hiram Krieble, was the maternal grandparent of Edward and Merrill Zimmerman.

The next farm, southwest facing DeKalb, was once the Samuel Brinton property and then Eugene Whittock's, Henry Whittock's father.

Going west on Morris Road, there are a group of buildings which were once the holdings of Reuben Rodebaugh, the very able and prosperous butcher.

3/1948
MWIB

The houses on Township Line Road-East, which are painted red and white, the Normandy Farm colors, are of later vintage, and little of their history is known by this writer.

NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Normandy Farm

other names/site number ~~Franklin House~~ N/A or The Record Farms ?

2. Location

street & number 1411 Morris Road, Blue Bell N/A not for publication

city or town ~~Blue Bell~~ WHITPAIN TWP N/A vicinity

state Pennsylvania code PA county Montgomery code 091 zip code 19422

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☐ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:)

Name of Property

Montgomery County, PA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- [x] private
- [ ] public-local
- [ ] public-State
- [ ] public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- [x] building(s)
- [x] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
108		buildings
		sites
12		structures
		objects
11		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

-0-

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/hotel
DOMESTIC/single dwelling
DOMESTIC/secondary structure
AGRICULTURE/agricultural outbuilding
AGRICULTURE/storage
AGRICULTURE/animal facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

~~VERNACULAR~~
~~LATE 19th & 20th CENTURY REVIVALS/Dutch~~
Colonial Revival
Other: Dutch Colonial Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone
walls stucco
stone
roof ~~shingle~~ (wood)
other metal ~~(roof)~~
wood (~~siding~~)

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Normandy Farm
Name of Property

Montgomery County, PA
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [X] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [X] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [X] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- [ ] A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- [ ] B removed from its original location.
- [ ] C a birthplace or grave.
- [ ] D a cemetery.
- [ ] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- [ ] F a commemorative property.
- [ ] G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1834 ~~1993~~ - 1949

Significant Dates

1834
1873
1913

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

~~Singerly, William~~
~~Strassburger, Ralph~~ B. N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibilography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- [ ] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- [ ] previously listed in the National Register
- [X] previously determined eligible by the National Register
- [ ] designated a National Historic Landmark
- [X] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # PA-6062
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- [X] State Historic Preservation Office
- [ ] Other State agency
- [X] Federal agency HABS
- [ ] Local government
- [ ] University
- [X] Other

Name of repository:
Wissahickon Valley Historical Society

Normandy Farm
Name of Property

Montgomery County, PA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 9.~~5929~~ 6

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1			
2			
3			
4			

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cynthia Rose Hamilton

organization Powers & Company, Inc. date 10/13/98

street & number 2230 Mt. Vernon St. telephone 215-236-9006

city or town Philadelphia state PA zip code 19130

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name

street & number telephone

city or town state zip code

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Review of First submission

Normandy Farm
Whitpain Twp, Montgomery County

Section 1

Other Name: since the Franklin House had been dramatically altered and since Singerly was the builder of the barn, we suggest Singerly's name for it: the Record Farms.

Section 2

Enter Whitpain Twp for municipality.

Section 5

Enter category of property as buildings rather than district.

Change the classification of greenhouse to building since greenhouses conform the the Register's definition of buildings as housing human activity. Change references in Section 7 also.

Section 7 Narrative (only items marked with an "x" apply)

(x) a. Introductory paragraph does not adequately summarize the setting, scale, construction materials, construction date(s), architectural style(s) or integrity.

Give the dates of the buildings, contributing/noncontributing status, and assess the integrity of the property.

() b. Important exterior features are not adequately described, such as:

() c. Important interior features are not adequately described, such as:

(x) d. Secondary buildings are not adequately described. More detail is needed on:

The survey form for Normandy Farm in 1993 identifies six tenant houses, whereas the current nomination appears to include only one tenant house and one tennis house (one of the tenant houses?). Exclusion or demolition of tenant houses should be addressed in Section 7 and/or 10 as appropriate.

(x) e. More detail must be provided on alterations or additions to the building(s) and how these affect integrity. You must describe and date changes and additions made to the building(s). You must then assess how these changes or additions affect the building's ability to reflect its significance.

(x) f. The narrative must be reorganized as follows in order to provide sufficient clarity:

Reorganize narrative according to directions on pp 6-7 of the Pennsylvania Guidelines for Completing the National Register Form.

(x) g. Other substantive problems:

Describe the setting and layout of the property, including landscape features, terrain, etc. For all resources, give the date of construction and an assessment of integrity.

7/2-3 discussion of barn: is the ventilating equipment extant; give the dates of the three white silos and identify the materials they are made of; how many dutch doors are on the south and east facing facades; how many metal milking stalls were added to the barn, and when.

7/3 para 5-7 discussion of gatehouses: clarify the where the main entrances are on these houses and what the statement "the western having been screened in" refers to; are both houses identical in their interior; how many bathrooms?

7/5 para 2: explain that since the greenhouses are interconnected they have been counted as one contributing building. Also, briefly address how they retain integrity despite being in a ruinous state (if in fact they do retain integrity).

7/5 last para description of gates is too prosaic compared to the intro paragraph on 8/1 which characterizes them as "Elaborate entrance gates structures". Either expand the description of the gates or change the Section 8 language.

(x) h. Editorial comments: See notes on text.

Section 8 Form

End period of significance in 1949 (or perhaps 1951 when the cattle were sold and that period of the farm's history ended).

Enter N/A for Significant Person; delete Singerly and Strassburger.

Delete Criterion B. Although BHP's 1993 evaluation concluded that the property appeared eligible under Criteria A, B, and C, having read the nomination and re-examined this issue, we recommend that Criterion B be deleted. It is our opinion that the property much more clearly conveys an association with the broad themes of Agriculture under Criterion A and Architecture under Criterion C, than it does the importance of Singerly or Strassburger.

Section 8 Narrative (only items marked with an "x" apply)

(x) a. Introductory paragraph does not adequately summarize the importance of the resource in terms of National Register criteria and areas of significance.

Specifically state the Criteria, areas of significance and period of significance. The property being nominated should be regarded as a gentleman's estate as well as a progressive farm. Rework the intro paragraph to reflect this.

() b. Narrative does not adequately outline the history of the building(s) as follows:

(x) c. Narrative does not adequately show that the property's significance is reflected by existing resources.

(x) d. The following National Register criteria and/or area(s) of significance which appear applicable to this property have not been adequately explained:

The significance for agriculture needs rethinking and reformulation. Although the farmlands have been lost, the prominence of the barn and the general appearance of the property still conveys agricultural significance. Downplay the notion of the farm as a model or innovator (see

comments below), but still note that the owners were able to afford the best available facilities and animals of the time and wanted to farm well, and the farm was a prominent showpiece.

To deal with agriculture as an area of significance the narrative must be substantially enhanced to explain the context of prevailing agricultural methodologies from the late 19th through early 20th centuries and how the resources reflect practices made possible by an ability and willingness to spend money. Briefly outline the general agricultural picture of the local area, in terms of general patterns of production, farm sizes, etc. Specific information about the operation of this farm over time, including cultivated acreages, cropping, herd sizes, and products, should be included in the narrative. Such information is available for the 19th century in the federal agricultural census returns, and for the 1920 in the PA state agricultural census returns (which are located in the State Archives in Harrisburg).

General comments:

1. The characterization of the buildings as innovative types is questionable since, except for the barn, the remaining resources seem to better reflect Strassburger's gentleman's estate building program. None of the examples of "innovativeness" given in the nomination can really be regarded as such because they were either standard practice, too elaborate to emulate, or not practical for their time (keep in mind that a baseline requirement of the experiment stations and state "model farms" of the late 19th and early 20th centuries was that the examples had to be practicable for most farms).
   a. The barn qualifies better as a folly than a model farm building. It is big and extravagant, and a highly unlikely candidate as a model to copy since few farmers would have the labor or financial resources to maintain the thing. The description of the features of the barn suggests nothing out of the ordinary for the time, other than size (and the narrative focuses on architectural features anyway).
   b. The same is true for the ventilator system installed in the barn in the 1920s—this was not an unusual thing to do in the 1920s.
   c. The reference to the 1885 silo is a problematic argument for innovativeness. The silo apparently doesn't exist now anyway and the notion of using silage was both commonly known and materially impracticable. Stevenson says the first silo was built in PA in 1880 in Berks County and that there were 2000 in PA by 1885. Early all early silos were built underground and above ground silos didn't start becoming common until 1887. Round silos did not come into use until about 1900. At first the silo was not a well understood or even practical methodology. No one understood how to pack or cover them; there was much spoilage of feed and therefore of milk flavor; and agricultural experiment stations warned farmers away from their use. In PA silos were not firmly established for dairy feeding until after 1900 (and for beef not until nearly WWI).
   d. The reference to milking is also problematic since the labor intensive milking practices described in the narrative were not yet realistic for run of the mill working farms at the time.
   e. Finally, the creation of prize herds has always been a favorite activity of the rich who take up farming.

(x) e. Narrative does not adequately place the building(s) in context or compare it with known resources. Adequate context or comparisons must be provided as follows:

In order to develop Architectural significance, develop a context identifying examples of other properties with buildings of similar architectural age and style and compare this property to them. Explain how this property is a significant example of its architectural style.

To develop a context for Agriculture, identify similar large farming operations/gentlemen's farms in the local area or region. Are there other farms in the area which went through a similar process of growth at this time and evolution from stock farm through horses to cattle raising?

(x) f. The following National Register criteria and/or areas of significance should not be claimed for this property:

Delete Criterion B. It is unlikely that a case can be made for either Singerly or Strassburger as agricultural innovators. They were rich guys who liked to indulge themselves and the theme of nouveau riche urbanites setting themselves up on swank country estates doesn't constitute an innovative agricultural activity. Regarding them as leaders or as successful is problematic since the nomination notes that Singerly went into debt to the amount $145,000 and Strassburger cheated on his income taxes and we don't have any evidence that anybody copied them or that anybody except for one sycophantic county historian regarded either of them as leaders. (If anyone is significant as an innovator it is Jason Sexton, Singerly's farm manager, who designed the barn and was plugged into the local farm progress network.)

(x) g. Narrative needs to be rewritten or reorganized as follows in order to provide sufficient clarity:

Reorganize the narrative according to the directions on pp 10-11 of the Pennsylvania Guidelines for Completing the National Register Form.

(x) h. Other substantive problems:

8/1 para 3: there is a discrepancy in the recorded acreage for this property between the text and the footnote.

8/1 para 4: where was Singerly from?

8/4 top: comment regarding Singerly's success is problematic, since at the top of 8/5 it says he ran up a huge debt trying to run the farm. In the narrative, the "success" of the farm should be carefully defined—does it mean a profitable farm, a famous farm, a well-managed farm ....—did Singerly and Strassburger get into financial difficulty because of their farming activities or for unrelated activities?

8/4 bottom: where were the 1885 silo, creamery, and blacksmith shop and when were they demolished?

8/5 last para: the discussion of the fencing is confusing; the narratives seems to be saying that wooden fences appear as low stone walls.

8/8 para 1: briefly address the most recent history of the property, including proposed use of the nominated property and its relationship to the surrounding subdivision.

8/8 para 2: when was the property sold to subdevelopers and is it now subdivided?

(x) i. Editorial comments: Note comments on text.

Section 9, Bibliography

If agricultural significance is retained the bibliography must include legitimate resources related to agricultural history.

Section 10
Enter acreage as 9.6 (round up to nearest 1/10th of an acre).

Boundary justification must include an explanation for the exclusion of other acreage historically associated with Normandy Farm.

Add property boundaries to site plan.

A sketch floor plan of the house should be provided, including identification of the 1834 house, 1923 addition, and undated addition.

Original USGS Quad map with proper labeling required.

Two sets of appropriately labeled bw photographs are required.

In addition, if several months elapse between this return and your resubmission of the nomination, please update the list of property owners with any changes in property owners or their addresses. Then return the list of property owners to our office with your resubmission.

dates abbr.
incl. dates
integrity

Normandy Farm encompasses nine-and-one-half acres of gently rolling farmland, bounded by Morris Road to the south, DeKalb Pike (Route 202) to the east, and privately owned lands to the north and west. The site is comprised of a main house, carriage house, massive barn, two gate houses, tenant house, smokehouse/summer kitchen, potting shed, tennis house, and remnants of former greenhouses, bordered on the south and east by white stucco-covered stone walls with elaborate entrance gates. While the buildings are generally vernacular in form and design, the main house was extensively renovated in the early 20th century in the fashionable Dutch Colonial Revival style, and strong influences from the northern regions of France are evident on the massive barn, which is the site's dominating feature.

Are roads & gates incl. in resource count?

describe setting, landscape features, terrain, layout, etc

property's

Main House (1 contributing building) house dwelling

The main house was constructed in three primary builds and began as a vernacular building that was enlarged and transformed into a Dutch Colonial Revival. Built of brick covered with a smooth white stucco, the house is comprised of two two-and-one-half story sections, each with a gambrel roof with continuing pent above the second story.

Is this the 1st section?

The earlier 1834 section faces DeKalb Pike and is five bays in width and three bays deep. Entrances to this section are located on the south and east facades, the original primary entrance being the latter which features a round-arch opening with fanlight transom and paneled jambs. Centered on this elevation is a large 16/16 window with Palladian tracery above. The remaining windows contain 12/12 sash on the first story with 8/8 above. Three gabled dormers with 8/8 sash penetrate the roofline.

In 1923, the addition was constructed to the west which is five bays in width and four bays deep. The main entrance to this build is centered on the south facade and is similar in design to the main entrance of the original section. An additional unornamented entrance is located on the west facade. The windows on the first story contain 12/12 sash, with 8/8 sash on the second story. The roofline of this section is also penetrated by three gabled dormers with 8/8 sash, with the easternmost dormer containing paired sash.

Located at the building's northwestern corner is a one-story, three-bay by two-bay gable roof kitchen which was also added in 1923. A glass-enclosed portico shields the entry which faces west. This section contains 8/8 windows and an end chimney.

A third section is visible only along the rear (north) elevation and is a two-story exposed brick section organized into three bays and entered through a doorway similar in design to the primary entrances on the other two builds. The date and sequencing of this section is unknown. As on the 1923 section, the first story windows are 12/12 with 8/8 on the second story.

The interior was substantially renovated in 1923 with features characteristic of the Colonial Revival era. The first floor contains a series of large open rooms linked by wide openings rather

than hallways. The rooms are finished in plaster walls and ceilings with 20th century molded baseboard, chair rail, crown molding and window and door trim.
The stair leading to the 2nd floor is elaborately finished with a column and turned balustrade with matching screen on the stringer wall. The large arched window on the building's east elevation lights this stairhall.

The 2nd floor is organized around a long double-loaded corridor with numerous bedrooms and bathrooms to either side. While the features and finished date to the 1923 renovation, the layout appears to be reminiscent of the building's early history as an inn. A separate stair in the central corridor accesses the 3rd floor which contains additional bedrooms and is also finished with Colonial Revival features.

integrity

Carriage House (1 contributing building)
Standing to the immediate west of the main house, along Morris Road, is the carriage house which is constructed of stucco-covered stone. This building was seemingly built in sections, though the progression is difficult to determine given the absence of a datestone. The building post-dates 1884, as evident by the presence of an earlier carriage house in the drawing of the farm published in Bean's 1884 history. The westernmost section is two stories in height with a gabled roof and end chimney. An entrance is provided on the north elevation and is sheltered by a simple porch with built-in benches. This section served as a living quarters for one of the farm hands.

The section to the east is one-and-one-half stories with paired and grouped 6-light casement sash along the first story and gabled dormers with 6/6 sash above. An additional one-and-one-half story gabled section continues to the south, terminating in a massive end chimney. Entrances to these sections are provided by two sets of double-leaf garage doors on the east elevation.

The interior of the eastern section served to house the carriages and later the automobiles. A large entry room with tiled walls leads through large sliding doors into the main room which contains a tile floor and plaster walls and ceilings.

integrity

Barn (1 contributing building)
The dominant building within the walls of the site is the main barn. Built in 1875 on the site's highest ground, the barn is organized in a T-shaped plan, oriented toward DeKalb Pike. The top of the "T" measures approximately 330' x 50' with the stem of the "T" extending 200' x 30'. The barn is unique in style with a brick first-story painted white and white vertical board siding with red battens above. Diagonal battens were added to the corners in the early-mid 20th century and are reminiscent of the architecture native to the countryside of northern France. The barn's cross-gabled roof is sheathed in standing seam metal finished in the farm's familiar red paint.

where is the 1885 silo?

date added

Penetrating the ridgeline are a series of metal ventilators which are indicative of the technological advances instituted at the farm.

dates? silos? dates of additions

Along the west facade are four man-made ramps which lead to the projecting entrance bays with paired wood-plank doors. Centered on the west elevation of the main section is a front-gabled two-story structure clad in brick painted white. Three white silos stand at the north end of the barn and connect to a one-story addition. A T-shaped gabled addition extends from the barn's south end.

material? how many?

On the barnyard facing facades to the south and east are a series of Dutch doors with the exposed framing painted red. Fenestration throughout is provided by 6/6 sash which are more elaborate than the louvered or slatted barn window openings typical of Pennsylvania bank barns.

how many?

The interior of the barn reflects the dairy farming era of the early-mid 20th century. The first floor of the main (west) section of the barn contains ~~the~~ metal milking stalls with corked floors installed to protect the animal's hoofs. The first floor of the stem of the "T" housed the horses and contains horse stalls with large sliding wooden doors and cork floors and an elegantly paneled room at the easternmost end which was used for grooming. On the second floor of the barn are the four threshing floors and the grain mows which held the great quantity of fodder required for such a large operation.

dates of addition

integrity

Gate Houses (East and West) (2 contributing buildings)

Located on either side of the west Morris Road entrance are two-and-one-half story gate houses built prior to 1884. Though not identical, both stucco-covered stone structures are "T"-shaped in plan with gabled roofs. The main entrances face Morris Road and are denoted by small entrance porches, the western having been screened-in. Secondary entrances are provided on the east elevations. The windows on the east house contain primarily 2/2 and 4/4 double-hung sash while the west house contains 1/1 sash.

western what? - main entrance or the porch?

The interiors are organized around a central stair hall with original wooden balustrades with turned balusters and newel posts. On either side of the hall on the first floor are the original parlor and dining room with kitchen to the rear. The west gate house is deeper in plan and the dining room is currently toward the rear with the kitchen, though this may be a later alteration. The second floor contains four bedrooms and several bathrooms organized around the center stair hall.

of each? how many?

These houses contain many original features and finishes with original doors, door trim, window trim, marble mantles, wood floors and plaster walls and ceilings.

integrity

Tenant House (1 contributing building)
To the north of the west gate house is a two-and-one-half story, gable roof, stone tenant house with a datestone bearing the date '1834.' Originally located in nearby North Wales, this building was slated for demolition in the 1930s when the owner of Normandy Farm had the building relocated to its current site.

The house is five bays in width with a center entrance, and two bays deep. The entrance is elaborately finished with a paneled wooden door with multi-light transom, set into a deeply recessed paneled jamb. The first floor windows are 6/9 wooden, double-hung sash on the first story and 6/6 double-hung sash on the second story. A full-width front porch with simple wooden posts adorns the main elevation. Crowning the main elevation is a denticulated wooden cornice.

The interior is organized around a center stair hall with turned wooden balustrade. The parlor is located to the north of the stair hall and is finished with wood floors, plaster walls, original wooden baseboard and chair rail, and an elaborately carved mantle with cupboards. Located on the south side of the stair hall is the kitchen which contains a large cooking fireplace with wood mantle. Original baseboard and chair rail survive on the perimeter walls. The second floor contains bedrooms with plaster walls and ceilings, wood floors, baseboard and chair rail.

Smokehouse/Summer Kitchen (1 contributing building)
Behind the East Gate House stands a gable roofed, smokehouse/summer kitchen constructed of uncoursed stone with an end chimney to the south. This building is entered through a doorway on the east elevation and through a basement entrance along the south elevation. The interior is lit by 6/6 wood sash. The floors are wood, the walls and ceilings are plastered, and the northern section is finished with wood baseboard, chair rail and full-height shelving.

date

Tennis House (1 contributing building)
East of the barn, across the barnyard, stands the one-story, stucco-over-stone gable roofed building which was built as a summer residence for the Strassburger's tennis instructor. The main entrance is located on the west elevation, with additional entrances on the south and east elevations. The building is three bays in width with a center entrance and two bays deep and is lit by 6/6 double-hung windows. The roof is clad in standing seam metal and is finished in the familiar red paint.

date

The interior is divided into two rooms, presumably for a parlor and bedroom. Interior finishes consist of unornamented plaster walls and ceilings.

Potting Shed (1 contributing building)
To the south of the tennis house is the one-story, hipped roof, stone potting shed which is partially below grade. The main entrance is located on the south elevation and is denoted by a an overhanging pediment that penetrates the roofline. Paired two-light casement sash with louvered shutters serve as the fenestration. The interior is finished with unornamented plaster walls and ceilings. date

Greenhouses (1 contributing ~~structure~~ building)
Located to the northwest of the carriage house are the abandoned and deteriorated stone, metal, and glass interconnected greenhouses. While once quite elaborate, these greenhouses remain in a ruinous state. — but... (affirm how they retain integrity) date

Walls and Gates (1 contributing structure)
The white stucco-covered walls that border the ~~site~~ property along Morris Road and DeKalb Pike are the ~~site~~ property's most familiar attribute. Beginning at the intersection, these walls continue for approximately 500' along Morris Road and DeKalb Pike breaking only to allow for three entrance points. Two entrances are located along Morris Road; the western entrance formed by a simple break in the wall and the eastern entrance marked by a semi-circular masonry arch with prominent voussoirs and an elaborately shingled conical roof. Double-leaf wooden doors serve as gates. The DeKalb Pike entrance is defined by an inward curving of the walls and an arched masonry opening with wooden gates and shingled roof. date

8/1 characterizes these as "elaborate entrance gate structures" — a more detailed description would be helpful here

dates for resources

integrity for bldgs & structures

Located in Whitpain Township, Montgomery County, Normandy Farm is a regional landmark, distinguished by its white stuccoed walls with elaborate entrance gate structures that encompass a rarely surviving tract of farmland in a section of the county that has witnessed intense development pressures in recent years. Within those walls, lies a remarkable collection of 19th and 20th century farm buildings that tell the story of farm life in the county over the course of two centuries. Normandy Farm was the largest farm in the county in the early decades of this century, its barn among the largest on the east coast.[1] The farm is significant as one of the county's most important surviving examples of agricultural life, ~~for its association with two owners who were regarded as leaders in advancing agricultural technologies~~, and for the progressive farming techniques that were implemented on this site by these owners.

The history of Normandy Farm dates back to the early 18th century, when in 1730, Jacob Levering purchased 100 acres from Rees Thomas and Anthony Morris.[2] Levering passed the property on to his daughter Catherine and her husband Jacob Heist, who in 1834, built the Franklin House, "a tavern which offered food and lodging to travelers on the newly constructed state road between Norristown and Doylestown in Bucks County."[3] The Franklin House is the earliest section of the existing main house, fronting DeKalb Pike. Jacob Heist retained the property until his death in 1847.[4]

At some point between 1849-1871, William A. Johnson purchased the Inn, added to it, and built at least three tenant houses for the farm.[5] In 1873, prominent businessman William Singerly purchased the property which consisted of three tracts totaling 68 acres, for use as a country retreat.[6]

many of them - The nominated area?

discrepancy w/footnote

Philadelphia?

Singerly graduated from the City High School in 1850, and directly entered the business world. In addition to his formal business training, Singerly ostensibly inherited his business aptitude from his father, a successful local businessman. In the 1860s, Singerly was called to manage the Germantown Passenger Railway in which his father was a large stockholder. Upon his father's death in 1878, Singerly took possession of his father's stock, which was valued at $750,000.[7] This financial infusion was seemingly directed toward improvements to his newly acquired farm.

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[1] William Wright, Normandy Farm, Historic American Buildings Survey, HABS No. PA-6062, Washington, DC, National Park Service, Summer 1994, 1.
[2] Agnes Baker Jefferson, "Normandy Farms," *Whitpain...Crossroads in Time* (Whitpain Township: Whitpain Township Bicentennial Commission, 1977), 199 and Meghan MacWilliams, The Acanthus Group Building Preservation, "Normandy Farm & Its Barn," Compiled for The Conservancy of Montgomery County, 1996, 2.
[3] MacWilliams, 2. The datestone on the original section of the building is inscribed, "J & C - Heist - 1834."
[4] Wright, 3.
[5] Douglas Dinsmore, Archaeological & Historical Consultants, Inc. "Normandy Farms," Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey Form, Pennsylvania Historic & Museum Commission, April 1993.
[6] MacWilliams, 2 and Dinsmore. The deed for this transaction (Deed book 214, p. 422) lists three tracts, the first containing 55 acres; the second 17 acres; and the third 10 acres. The third 10-acre tract was located in Upper Gwynedd and was probably used as farmland. William Wright's history prepared for HABS contains discrepancies in the date of purchase and acreage, stating that Singerly purchased the property which consisted of 82 acres in 1874.
[7] Theodore Bean, ed., A *History of Montgomery County*, (Philadelphia: Everts & Peck, 1884), 1176.

82 acres - header is 68 acre - time lapse?

Shortly after the purchase, Singerly presumably made renovations to the Franklin House to convert it to a private residence, though the date and scope of such changes has not been determined. An 1884 drawing of the main house shows a two-and-one-half story gable roofed building fronting DeKalb Pike with an ell extending west from the southern end of the main block. A porch with wooden balustrade at the 2nd story continues around the south and east facades.[8]

Two years after his purchase, Singerly commissioned the construction of the impressive barn, which was described in an 1885 newspaper article,

> "MR. SINGERLY'S FARMS.
> The Great Barn Over Two Hundred Feet
> Long and Nearly Fifty Wide.
> The Wonder of Great Agricultural Country.
> How the Famous Holstein Herd is Sheltered
> in a Mansion with All the Modern Conveniences."[9]

Move to 8/4 + coordinate w. other 1885 descrip. of barn

The barn is T-shaped and was built with four earthen ramps leading to the second level, which qualify it as a bank barn, despite the fact that the site is naturally flat. While bank barns were common to the region, only a few examples of Pennsylvania bank barns remain in Montgomery County and none equal the size or ~~uniqueness of~~ design as that of Normandy Farm. The barn is oriented with the barn yard on the warmer southeast side, which is typical of this barn type.[10]

Unlike contemporary barns in the region, there was a clear focus on the architectural quality of Singerly's barn. The bricks on the first level were painted white to match the boards on the second level, and the two-tone red and white paint scheme and board and batten construction of the barn are also quite elaborate. The use of double-hung windows rather than the more common slatted or louvered openings is also quite unusual and reflect the expense that was afforded in the construction of the utilitarian buildings.

The technological significance of Singerly's farm was recognized by contemporary historians such as Theodore Bean whose 1884 *History of Montgomery County* includes a substantial entry on Singerly. Included in this history is a description of the barn and a statement of Singerly's impact on improving agricultural technologies,

> "The main barn is 214 feet in length by 44 feet in width and two stories in height. The first story is built in brick, resting upon a substantial stone foundation, and the second story is frame. Other structures, extending from either side of the barn proper, increase the line of buildings nearly 400 feet, while from the centre of the main building a wing, thirty feet in width, extends one hundred and fifty feet

Beyond size, what were the features of this barn that made it an improved agricultural building?

[8] The drawing of William Singerly's "Home Farm" was published in Bean's History of Montgomery County, 1176.
[9] MacWilliams, 1. Quoted derived from, *The Press*, Philadelphia, PA, October 31, 1885, column 1-2:7.
[10] Robert F. Ensminger, *The Pennsylvania Barn: Its Origin, Evolution, and Distribution in North America* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 55.

> forward, dividing the yard into two equal portions. The great barn presents a pleasant appearance in detail as a whole. A writer, in describing it to a local paper, says: 'It is certainly about as near perfection as the present state of advancement of agricultural, mechanical and architectural science, coupled with abundance of means, will admit of. It is...the model barn of the country, and in point of capacity, stands, it is said, second to none in the United States."[11]

extravagent, but What makes it a model barn?

> "[Singerly's country home led] to the development of what is probably the most extensive and elaborate high-grade stock farm in the country, which as a kind of informal agricultural academy, has exerted a marked influence upon the advancement of farming and stock interest in the region round about."[12]

describe this influence

According to Bean, the farmland which Singerly purchased was somewhat impoverished. Utilizing a careful fertilization process, Singerly brought a high degree of richness to the soil, that coupled with a careful drainage plan, produced the most desirable crops in great quantity.[13] Singerly was a strong advocate of the system of stall-feeding cattle, recognizing the system's superiority over pasturing in terms of economy of food and production of milk. His cattle were said to be comfortably stalled and supplied with pure running water.[14] Singerly spared no effort or expense in creating what was regarded as the best stock farm in the state. — by whom?

Singerly named his farm "The Record Farms" after *The Philadelphia Record* newspaper which he secured control of on May 1, 1877.[15] In the decade after purchasing the farm, Singerly acquired surrounding tracts and expanded his land north and west from the original tract to comprise 600 acres extending from the west side of Morris Road to the east site of Township Line Road.[16] This acreage required the care of 15 employees, who reportedly wintered on the farm."[17] Singerly owned 160 thoroughbred Holstein Yearlings reportedly "constituting undoubtedly the finest private herd in the country" as well as 200 cows, heifers and calves all of which were thorough or high-breeds, 130 fattening steers and 850 sheep - mostly high grade Cotswold.[18]

— caps? breed?

An article appearing in the Philadelphia newspaper, *The Press* in 1885 details the various breeds owned by Singerly,

> "On the sheep farm, which the arrangements are equally perfect, are to be found grade Cotswold and grade Merinos. Among the cattle are Durham, Aryshires, Guernseys and Alderneys, besides the Holsteins and common stock, among the

What makes Bean an authority on livestock?

[11] Bean, 1174.
[12] Bean, 1175.
[13] Bean, 1175.
[14] Bean, 1176.
[15] Bean, 1176.
[16] Wright, 3.
[17] MacWilliams, 3.
[18] Bean, 1175.

horses are Percherons and other stocks. Several of the Holsteins weigh over 1700 lb."[19]

contradicts top of 8/5 – reword → "attention given to"?

Much of the success of Singerly's farm could be attributed to Jason Sexton, the farm manager, who was directly responsible for the operation which had grown to 825 acres by the final years of the nineteenth century.[20] Sexton was at the forefront of technological innovations in agriculture and organized meetings for the Farmers' Institute sponsored by the Department of Agriculture where farmers learned of new and improved farming methods.[21] *The Press* reported in 1885 that Sexton was primarily responsible for the design of the main barn,

> "The barn whose capacity exceeds that of any other in the United States; was designed by Jason Sexton, the manager of the farms. It (the barn) stands on a high knoll facing and two hundred yards distant from the Old State Road. It is two hundred and fourteen feet in length and forty four feet in width. The stables are nine feet in height and the mows and threshing floors are eighteen feet in height to the eaves. The first story brick rests on a stone foundation. The second story is a frame construction sheeted vertically with barn boards, the joints being covered with joint moldings and all water tables covered with tin. The roof is made of tin. The ridge of comb running lengthwise with the building is surmounted by four handsome cupolas.
>
> At the Southwest side of the main barn, and separated from it by a covered driveway of thirty feet in width, is the silo - a stone structure 44 feet by 22 feet, which is sufficiently large to hold 300 tons of ensilage - a quantity sufficient to maintain the entire herd for six months."[22]

a silo dating to 1885 extant?

The silo described in *The Press* article was perhaps one of the first of such structures in the county. Silos, which were first seen in Pennsylvania in 1880, were a revolutionary innovation, functioning to store ~~inexpensive~~ silage which extends the lactation and significantly increases the yearly output of the cows.[23] The silo described in *The Press*, pre-dates the three existing silos which were built in the late 1920s.[24] Along with the barn, Singerly built a creamery and a blacksmith shop, which presumably stood on the north side of the barn, away from the calf barn, and have since have been demolished.[25]

silage allows year-round feeding

→ Were these on the 9.5 acre area being nominated? What is at their locations now?

[19] MacWilliams, 4; Quoted from *The Press*, p. 7.

[20] Michael J. Schwager and Jean Barth Toll, editors, "Part VII: Business & Industry," *Montgomery County - The Second Hundred Years* Volume 2 (Philadelphia: Montgomery County Federation, 1983), 1274. MacWilliams asserts that while Singerly died in 1898, Sexton's employment was perhaps continued until 1901 when it was sold to William Wilson.

the property

[21] Schwager and Toll, 1274.

[22] MacWilliams, 3. Quote derived from *The Press*, Philadelphia, PA, October 31, 11885, 7.

[23] Schwager and Toll, 1274.

[24] MacWilliams, 4. In an interview with Arthur Rush, the most recent farm manager, MacWilliams learned that the three existing silos were erected in the late 1920s.

[25] MacWilliams, 4. MacWilliams' information on the creamery and blacksmith shop came from William Wright, "Normandy Farm," HABS #PA-6062, *Historic American Building Survey*, Washington, DC, Summer, 1994:3 and from interviews with Arthur Rush, the most recent farm manager, who remembered the locations of these structures. *The*

Upon Singerly's death in 1898, it was discovered that he had amassed debt totaling $145,000, perhaps indicating that his investment on the farm had far exceeded his return. The Chestnut Street Trust and Savings Company acquired the land from a sheriff's sale and over a period of several years sold pieces of land to local farmers.[26] In 1901, William Wilson purchased the tract of land consisting of 82 acres containing the main house and barn and within three years had purchased an additional 28 acres west of Morris Road.[27] In 1913, Wilson sold these two tracts which formed the core of what was to become Normandy Farm to Norristown native Ralph Beaver Strassburger.[28]

Like Singerly, Strassburger was a prominent local businessman with an interest in agriculture, and for Strassburger, horses in particular. In 1911, Strassburger married May Bourne, the daughter of Commodore Frederick G. Bourne, president of the Singer Sewing Machine Company.[29] It was reported in the *Philadelphia Bulletin* that the couple received four million dollars from the May Bourne's parents as a wedding gift, and it was believed that it was this money that made possible the purchase of Normandy Farm in 1913.[30] Strassburger's fortune grew in the next decade allowing for the purchase of the *Norristown Herald* and the *Norristown Times*, which he consolidated to form the *Times Herald*.[31] In addition to Normandy Farm, the Strassburgers also maintained a racing stable in Chantilly, France, a residence in Paris, and an estate in Deauville, France.[32]

Following Singerly's pattern, Strassburger rapidly purchased the surrounding tracts which had been sold-off after Singerly's death and soon had accumulated over 500 acres. The Strassburgers made significant changes to the property, transforming it to its present appearance. One of their first undertakings was the demolition of the wooden fences that appear in the 1884 sketch and the erection of the white stuccoed walls that divide the yards. The walls that currently border the property on two sides appear as low stone walls in the 1884 drawing. Strassburger raised these walls, and added the stucco coat and the elaborate gates. These walls, with their elaborately shingled arched roofed gates, are reminiscent of the rural landscape of Normandy, France, the district for which they named the farm, and the place where the Strassburger's honeymooned.[33]

North Penn Atlas of 1916, Philadelphia, 1916 shows two half-stone structures close to Township Line Road, which may be the creamery and blacksmith shop.

[26] MacWilliams, 5. MacWilliams' information extracted from "Singerly Farms Sold By Sheriff," *Norristown Weekly Herald*, November 28, 1898.

[27] Wright, 4.

[28] MacWilliams, 5. MacWilliams confirms the land transfers between 1898-1913 through various sources including newspaper articles and deeds.

[29] MacWilliams, 5.

[30] MacWilliams, 5. As reported in Joseph A. Slobodzian, "Legacy: $4 million estate recalls family's forgotten glory," *Philadelphia Bulletin*, April 29, 1979: C-1.

[31] MacWilliams, 5.

[32] MacWilliams, 5.

[33] MacWilliams, 6. In MacWilliams interview with farm manager, Arthur Rush, Rush stated that at one point Strassburger employed 100 laborers for landscape improvements such as taking down wooden fences, erecting the stone walls, paving driveways, and planting floor beds and trees.

In 1923, the Strassburgers renovated the house in the fashionable Dutch Colonial Revival style, adding the large addition with kitchen to the north and west.[34] Extensive interior renovations were also made at this time with most existing features and finishes dating to this renovation.

While the greenhouses appear in the 1884 sketch and therefore pre-dated the Strassburger ownership, May Bourne Strassburger had a passion for gardens and flowers and the Strassburger's apparently altered and expanded the facility, perhaps even importing sections from Germany.[35]

Strassburger first used Normandy Farm to breed thoroughbred horses. In his 1922 autobiography, Strassburger describes his farm,

> "Mr. Strassburger's estate, Normandy Farm, at Franklinville, Gwynedd Valley, PA, is one of the most extensive in the state, comprising nearly one thousand acres, and over thirty houses and barns, one of the later being five hundred feet in length. The farm is chiefly devoted to the raising of thoroughbreds and hunting horses. Among some of the horses are 'Pancrea' (Peter Pan Mint Cake) from James R. Keene's stud in Kentucky; 'Gingersnap Second,' a granddaughter of 'Meddler' and brought from Haras de Fresnay, France, owned by Clarence H. Mackay; and 'Wolverton II,' winner of the Radnor Hunt Cup, Rose Tree Hunt Cup, Fox Hall Cup, Monkton (Maryland), defeating thirty of the best point - to - point horses in America."[36]

In the final years of the 1920s, Strassburger transported the majority of his thoroughbreds to his estate in Deauville, France and transformed Normandy Farm into an Aryshire cattle farm, with Aryshires brought from Scotland.[37] Renovations to the barn were extensive and included both interior and exterior work. In the interior, Strassburger converted the horse stalls into milking stalls to accommodate one hundred head of cattle and he also installed milking machines. Among the exterior changes made around this time were the addition of the diagonal corner battens, a feature very uncharacteristic for barns in this region, which Strassburger added to resemble his estate in Deauville, France.[38] Perhaps the most significant technological advancement represented in the barn is the mechanical system installed by Strassburger which utilized metal ventilators operated by an electrical fan to pull air in or blow air out. This is a significant advancement from the common system which relied on wooden rooftop louvered vents and window openings without any mechanical augmentation. It was also at this time that

intact? this is questionable considering battens

whether or these are original to the barn

when was the fan added? electricity

[34] The datestone on the south elevation of the addition is inscribed "1834 - R:B:S - 1923." Wright lists the date of these renovations as 1924 (Wright, 5).

[35] MacWilliams, appendices. In the 1996 MacWilliams interview with farm manager Arthur Rush, Rush details May Bourne Strassburger's affection for gardens and flowers and indicates that the Strassburgers remodeled the greenhouse, brining a section from Germany.

[36] MacWilliams, 6. Quoted directly from R.B. Strassburger, *The Strassburger Family*, 173-174.

[37] MacWilliams, 6.

[38] MacWilliams, 11. As reported in the MacWilliams history, Mark A. Hornbaker of The Acanthus Group of Building Preservation, studied the nails used in the installation of the battens and determined that the vertical battens were nailed with cut nails while the diagonal battens were nailed with wire nails, proving the later addition of the diagonal battens. Hornbaker also studied the molding profiles of the battens to substantiate this theory.

the three silos which remain standing, were built to hold feed for the three hundred head of Aryshire.[39] Soon after these renovations, Strassburger's herd of prize cattle were to become known as "The Whitpain Herd."[40]

during the depression?

In the MacWilliams 1996 history of Normandy Farm, the author asserts that the primary reason for the conversion from a horse farm into a cattle farm was to achieve greater profits, perhaps due to the demand for milk in a region experiencing tremendous population growth. In interviews with MacWilliams, farm manager Arthur Rush detailed the labor-intensive process Strassburger required of his workers to increase milk production,

> "Milk production was kept on each cow daily...A farm hand would have to empty the milker into a single bucket, carry in it (to the milk weighing area and chart area), weight it a record that weight under a cow's name every time they milked. That was twice a day.[41] — weigh it and ?
>
> [The farm hands] used to clean out the feed troughs daily. They would not leave any unused feed in the troughs. Everything was cleaned daily. Bedding was changed daily, stalls were cleaned daily, floors were swept daily. There was a dust grit put on the floor every day to keep the dust down. Walls were white-washed when needed. Windows were cleaned. Everything was spotless. He [Strassburger] was a man of perfection. He always wanted his barn kept very neat and clean because people were always moving through here to take a look at his Aryshire herd."[42]

The success of Strassburger's cattle operation was realized over the course of two decades. By 1941, Normandy Farm had grown to encompass 1,500 acres, extending from Whitpain Township into Lower Gwynedd Township. This increase in acreage was necessary to grow the vast quantities of fodder required for the extensive cattle operation.

Strassburger's financial success was drastically diminished, however, when in 1947 he was indicted for failing to pay $12,000 in income taxes. After fleeing Normandy Farm for their estate in Deauville, the dairy herd was sold at auction in 1951 and the land was from that point used for crop farming.[43] What's the difference?

Strassburger died in France in 1959 and sometime thereafter May Bourne Strassburger and son Peter Strassburger returned to live at Normandy Farm which had decreased to 701 acres after the sale of a number of tracts of farmland. When May Bourne Strassburger died in 1975, Peter

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[39] MacWilliams, 7. MacWilliams asserts that it is likely that the original silo mentioned in *The Press* was taken down for the erection of the three new silos.
[40] MacWilliams, 7.
[41] MacWilliams, 7.
[42] MacWilliams, appendices. Quote derived from MacWilliams interview with farm manager Arthur Rush.
[43] MacWilliams, 8. The Normandy Farms Auction Book from the 1951 auction survives in the collection of the Montgomery County Conservancy.

check the Pa Agr. Census of 1924 + 1927

became the sole heir of the entire Strassburger estate which was valued at $4.1 million dollars.[44]

Peter Strassburger did not remain at Normandy Farm following his mother's death, and gradually sold off portions of the estate. When he died in 1993, the estate, which was left to two distant cousins, had been reduced to 73 acres, approximating the size of Strassburger's original purchase.[45] In recent years, the cousins sold the property to a firm of developers. — when

now subdivided?

Normandy Farm gains its significance in the areas of architecture and agriculture ~~and is a uniquely surviving example of the evolution of farm life over two centuries.~~ The resource meets National Register criterion A in that it has contributed to the agricultural development of Montgomery County; criterion B for its association with locally important businessmen William Singerly and Ralph B. Strassburger; and criterion C as a significant example of a well preserved farmstead built over a period of nearly a century.

Context & Comparison for architecture & agriculture

[44] MacWilliams, 8.
[45] MacWilliams, 8.

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BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at a point at the (which side of road?) edge of pavement on the northern corner of the intersection of US Route 202 and Morris Road, thence 180 meters (600 feet) along the edge of pavement of US Route 202 in a northeasterly direction to a point; thence in a northwesterly direction approximately 70 meters (230 feet) to a point; thence in a northerly direction approximately 52 meters (170 feet) to a point; thence in a northwesterly direction approximately 40 meters (130 feet) to a point; thence in a southwesterly direction approximately 22 meters (70 feet) to a point; thence in a southwesterly direction approximately 106 meters (350 feet) to a point; thence in a southwesterly direction approximately 30 meters (100 feet) to a point, thence in a northerly direction approximately 28 meters (90 feet) to a point; thence in a southwesterly direction approximately 60 meters (200 feet) to a point; thence in a southwesterly direction approximately 210 meters (700 feet) to a point; thence in a northeasterly direction approximately 16 meters (50 feet) to the place of beginning. Comprises lots B-3, B-4, B-5, B-6 and B-7 of the Windemere subdivision, totaling 9.5929 acres.

can follow this up on map

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

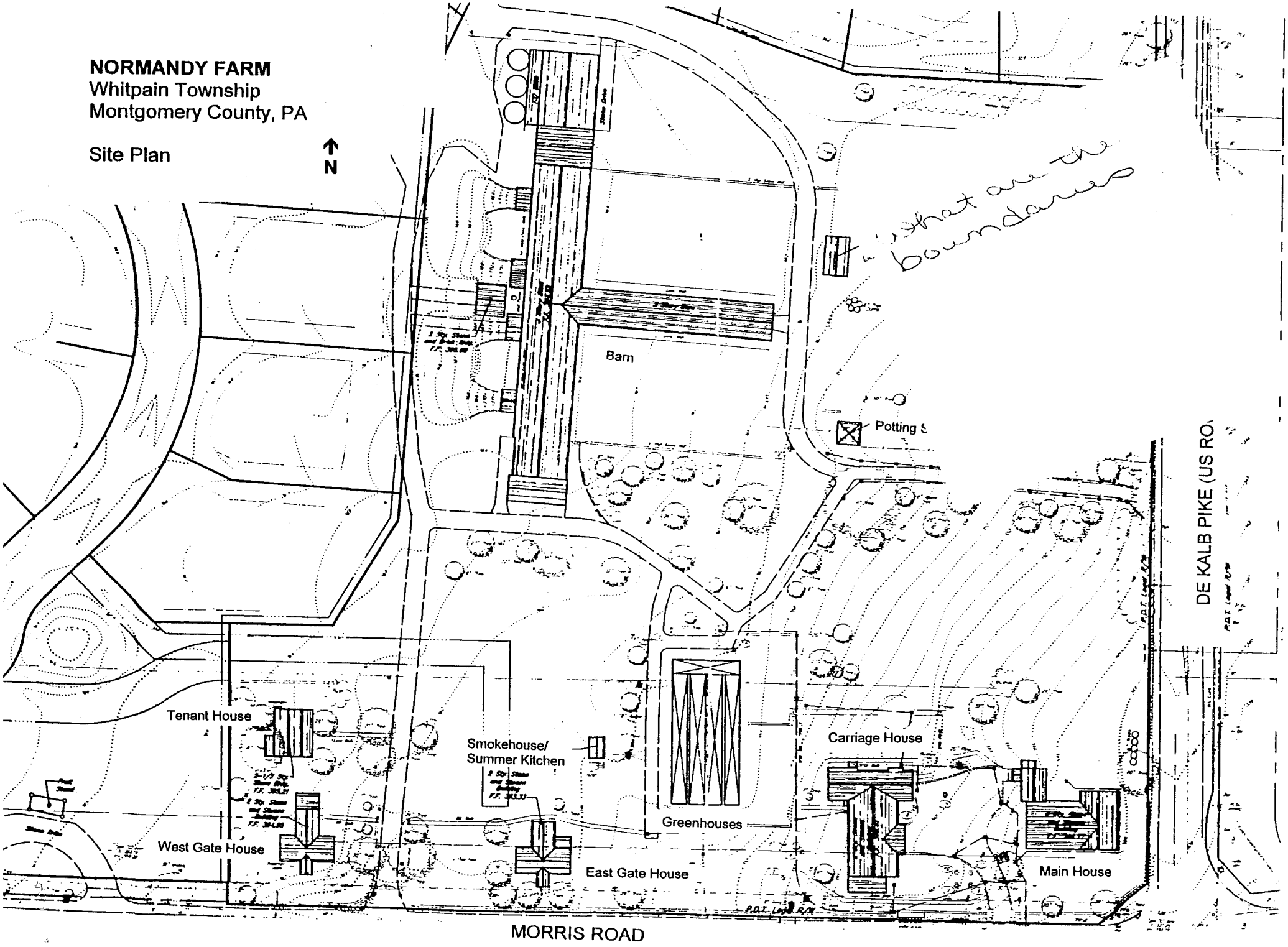
The boundary includes the farm's primary historic buildings and the walls of the complex.

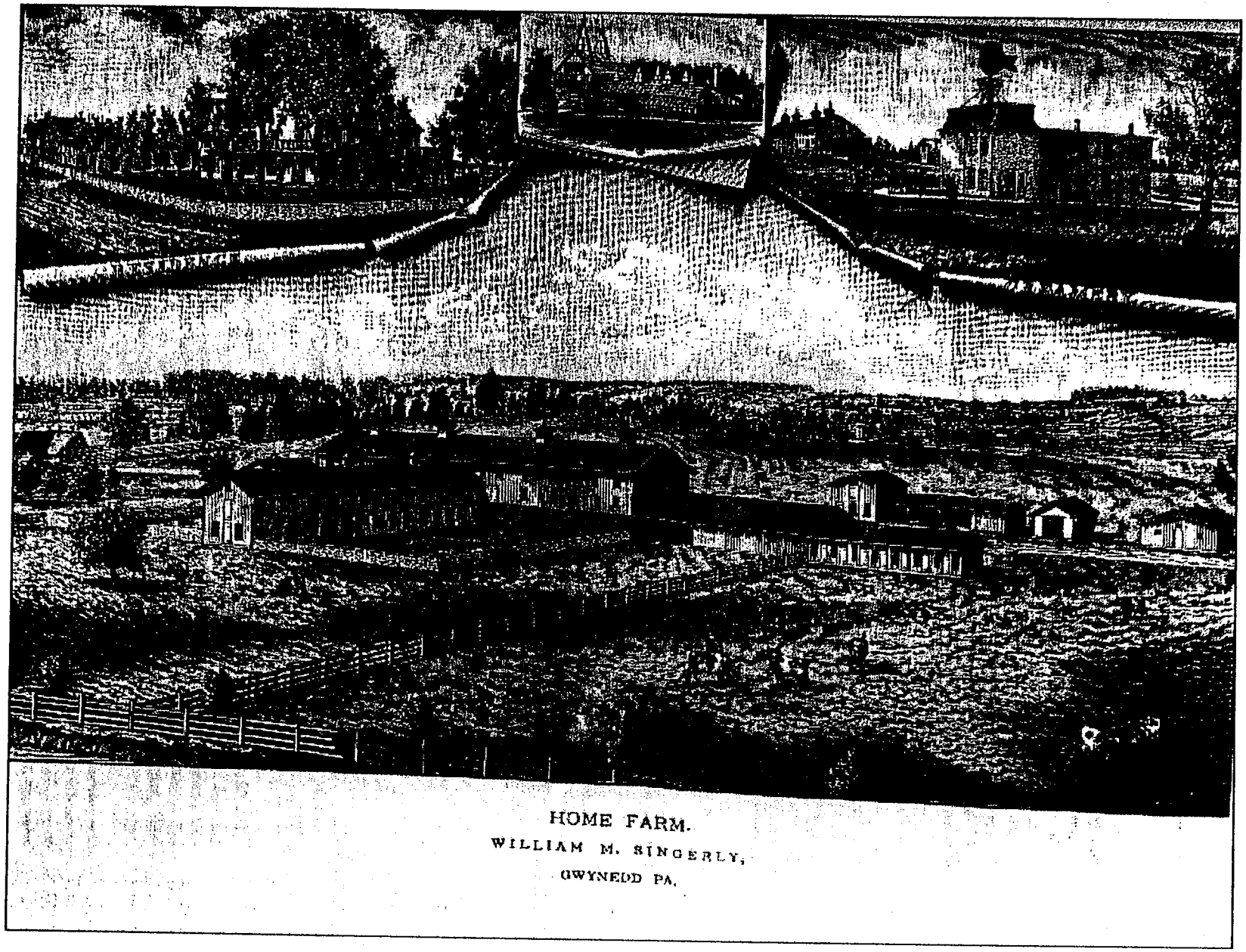
Why has other acreage been excluded?
Why only 9.5 acres?

NORMANDY FARM
Whitpain Township
Montgomery County, PA

Site Plan

N





Drawing published in Theodore Bean, ed., A *History of Montgomery County* (Philadelphia: Everts & Peck, 1884).