

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only

received **MAR 30 1987**
date entered

1. Name

historic Fordhook Farm

and or common Burpee Farm

2. Location

street & number 105 New Britain Road

N/A not for publication

city, town Doylestown Township N/A vicinity of

state Pennsylvania code 042 county Bucks code 017

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
☒ district	☐ public	☒ occupied	☐ agriculture
☐ building(s)	☒ private	☐ unoccupied	☐ commercial
☐ structure	☐ both	☐ work in progress	☐ educational
☐ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	☐ entertainment
☐ object	N/A in process	☒ yes: restricted	☐ government
	N/A being considered	☐ yes: unrestricted	☐ industrial
		☐ no	☐ military
			☐ museum
			☐ park
			☒ private residence
			☐ religious
			☐ scientific
			☐ transportation
			☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Jonathan Burpee and Blanche Burpee Dohan

street & number 105 New Britain Road

city, town Doylestown N/A vicinity of state Pennsylvania 18901

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Bucks County Courthouse

street & number East Court Street

city, town Doylestown state Pennsylvania

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Bucks County Register of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date April 24, 1985 ☐ federal ☐ state ☒ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Bucks County Conservancy, 11 North Main Street

city, town Doylestown state Pennsylvania

7. Description

Condition

☒ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved

date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Fordhook Farm is a sixty acre farm situated on the north corner of Lower State Road and New Britain Road in Doylestown, Bucks County. The nominated resource is a sixteen acre portion of this farm which circumscribes twelve contributing buildings and two contributing structures dating from the late eighteenth to early twentieth centuries. The buildings and structures have been well maintained and possess good integrity.

The core of the nominated property consists of a fieldstone main house, barn, springhouse and icehouse which represent the working farm of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. All of these resources, except for the icehouse, are referenced in the 1798 Federal Direct Tax list for New Britain Township. A carriage house to the northeast of the main house dates from 1868. The "farmhouse" located to the west of the main house took its present form in the mid-nineteenth century. The "cottage" and seed house were built to the northwest and west of the main house by W. Atlee Burpee in the 1890s and as such are representative of late Victorian frame architecture. The two greenhouses to the southwest of the main house were constructed by the Burpee Company in the early twentieth century and continue to be used today by Delaware Valley College.

The main house is the most architecturally complex building and bears the mark of all the farm's significant owners and activities. Today it presents four main sections, although it may have been built in more than four periods. Section One is 2½ stories high, five bays wide and one pile deep. Traces of architectural evidence, as well as the 1798 tax description of a house of "old stone," 30 feet by 20 feet, suggest that three bays of Section One were built sometime in the mid- to late eighteenth century. Two more bays were added soon after 1800, perhaps when John Fritzinger owned the house. Showing an artistic flair on these two bays is the one remaining window arch, a raised jack arch with enhanced keystone and terminating "ears." A gambrel roof was added to Section One in the 1870s. A two story projecting bay and one story masonry pantry were added on the northwest facade c. 1905 by W. Atlee Burpee. The c. 1905 addition has a projecting bay window filled with a series of leaded casement triangular windows on the first floor and a second story doorway opening onto a porch above the pantry.

Most of the distinctive architectural elements on the interior of Section One date from the ownership of James Thomas or John Fritzinger. These elements include the Federal carved fireplaces with heart pattern gougework in the mantles, paneled doors, chairrail, entrance doorway with fan transom, and exterior door pieces (the southeast doorpiece

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Fordhook Farm 7 Page 2
Section number 7 Page 2

having been cut down partially at a later time). The stone hearths on both ends of the second floor also show an unusual treatment using small stone set in patterns, some resembling a German cross.

Section Two has the general exterior appearance of a "two-thirds" Georgian house. It is 2½ stories high, three bays wide and two piles deep with a gable roof. A classically styled twentieth century porch on the southeast facade extends around to Section Four. There is also a rear enclosed portico. Interior chimneys are located on each gable end, although the western chimney actually relates to Section One, with the western gable a continuation of the eastern end wall of Section One. The interior woodwork and floorplan indicate that Section Two was built as early as 1838 by stone mason Asher Bennett, or soon after 1842 when George Murray purchased Fordhook and moved his boy's school from Doylestown Borough to the farm.

The most distinctive interior features of Section Two are the living room and trim work. The living room is unusually large, stretching from the front to the back of the house. In most c. 1840 house this space would have been divided into two parlors. Yet the fireplace location supports the conclusion that this room was originally one large room. The fireplace is located in the center of the side wall of the living room. The support for the fireplace in the basement indicates that the fireplace is of original size and location. Although the fireplace is original, the mantelpiece which is of Colonial Revival design appears to have been replaced during the Burpee renovations during the first decade of the twentieth century. The window and door surrounds in the living room are of the Greek Revival style, using essentially broad, flat post and lintel articulation with surmounting finish trim. This post and lintel treatment is repeated in the entrance and stair hall. The passage from this hall to the living room is through a grandly proportioned opening giving this section of the house more of a public feeling. The staircase and second story rooms have standard period trim and details although there are no fireplaces on the second floor. The southeast bedroom has a series of mirrors and closets across the end wall installed in the early twentieth century.

Section Three was added to the west corner of Section One. It is a stone summer kitchen and attached frame storage, lavatory and wood shed. The overall dimensions of this one story gable addition are 31 feet by 18 feet. The frame portion was built or rebuilt c. 1900. Access to the basement in Section One is gained from the kitchen portion of Section Three.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Fordhook Farm

Section number 7 Page 3

The final major section of the house, Section Four, was designed by Charles R. Lee of Philadelphia c. 1902. It is brick with pebble dash plaster exterior, two and one half stories high, two bays wide and one pile deep with a gable roof. Section Four is located on the northeast gable end of Section Two and is flush with Section Two's rear wall. A two story, one bay, one half pile bathroom extends from the southeast facade of Section Four against Section Two. A porch, re-designed c. 1920, extends from Section Two across Section Four's southeast facade. In keeping with Section Two, Charles Lee designed Section Four with similar size, large 6/6 windows, interior end gable chimney, continuous cornice and gabled dormers.

The interior of Section Four features a library fireplace with 12 inch by 1½ inch Pompeian brick. The mantle is set above the exposed brick facing and is supported by heavy paired brackets. This naturally finished mantle compliments the oak finished floor and 6 inch by 10 inch quarter oak ceiling beams. A narrow enclosed staircase leads to the second floor and a large bedroom with fireplace dressed with a Colonial Revival mantelpiece similar to the one in the Section Two living room.

Overall the main house can be characterized as the house of a "gentleman farmer" built in a succession of compatible additions. It is a large rambling house with prevailing Colonial design influence and large spacious halls and rooms. From its c. 1902-1905 renovation through 1939 the main house was used mostly for summer use by Blanche Burpee (wife of W. Atlee) and David Burpee who otherwise resided in Philadelphia. After 1940 David Burpee used the house year round.

The barn consists of four main sections: the primary fieldstone portion, an attached open fieldstone carriage shed on the southwest gable end of the main section, a frame gabled addition over an earthen bank, and frame stables semi-attached to the east corner of the southwest facade of the main section at right angles into the barnyard. Despite the additions, the main 2½ story stone section dominates the overall appearance and represents a barn form common in central Bucks County during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It incorporates ideas that were to become distinctive among Pennsylvania bank barns: animal stabling on the ground level with doors opening into the stone wall barnyard and the ground level rising around the sides and rear to a bank leading to the second level for hay and grain storage. Unlike most Pennsylvania bank barns, however, the main section has an attached 1½ story carriage shed with stone walls and open southwest facade. This apparently served to protect wagons and carriages through the mid-nineteenth century until the present carriage house was built. The original fieldstone section also appears to have been enlarged from

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Fordhook Farm

Section number 7 Page 4

its original 40 foot length as listed in the 1798 Direct Tax to its present dimensions of 27 feet by 60 feet. The 1½ story 19 foot by 45 foot frame gable extension in the barnyard appears to have been built c. 1900 by W. Atlee Burpee for additional stables. The frame 1½ story projection over the barn bank was added by W. Atlee Burpee around the turn of the century. The gable ends of the main section have a scalloped barge board similar to the trimming on the ice house. The interior was adapted to the office of David Burpee c. 1960 with a large conference room in the stabling, along with a dark room, archives and offices on the lower level. The upper level remains traditional storage area.

The springhouse and icehouse were constructed between the late eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries. The springhouse is most likely the "milk house" described in the 1798 Direct Tax as a 10 foot by 12 foot stone building although it actually measures 12'6" by 12'10". It is one half story built into the ground, with a gable roof which now extends five feet past the northeast facade to cover the entrance. The icehouse was probably built in the early to mid-nineteenth century. It is a one story, 14 by 15 foot, fieldstone building with a pyramid roof and a gabled, dormer-like extension on the northwest facade. It has a door on the ground level on the southwest side.

The carriage house is a substantial (27 foot by 54 foot) 2½ story plastered masonry building with a gable roof and two large cross gables. A full length, one story flat roofed porch stretches across the southeast facade and garage openings. There are two outside staircases to the upper level: one c. 1908 stair on the southwest gable end that to a large study constructed for David Burpee, and the other stair on the northeast gable end that leads to rooms first used for seed storage, then for the farm offices and seed development, and now for an apartment. The study, remodeled c. 1908 for David Burpee, is a spectacular, large room lighted by Palladian windows and dressed with extensive Tudor woodwork from chestnut trees on Fordhook Farm. Depressed arches span the 25 foot depth of the room with carved brackets and open beams above.

The last building associated with the pre-Burpee farm complex is the "farmhouse." This building appears to have been a combination summer kitchen, bakehouse and smokehouse. It is a two story stone and frame building four bays wide and one bay deep with a gable roof. Plastered stone walls encase the easternmost first floor bay and rise slightly above the second floor joists. The chimney flue is on the interior end of this stone section and presently services a wood stove in the frame section. The exterior is now covered with horizontal siding with a full length, partially enclosed, one story shed roof porch on the southeast

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Fordhook Farm

Section number 7 Page 5

facade and a shed portico on the northwest entrance. As a plain outbuilding there is very little articulation in woodwork or design to suggest a construction date. Certain trim and the curved window reveals in the stone portion indicate a c. 1840-1850 construction period. Other elements, such as wide floor boards, up-and-down saw marks, although found commonly in an earlier period, were still found in secondary buildings in the mid-nineteenth century. The unusual location of the stone walls in only part of the first floor suggests that this stone section remains from an earlier structure which was rebuilt to its present form.

W. Atlee Burpee purchased the farm in 1888; in the 1890s he built the "cottage" to serve as his family's weekend residence during the summer. It is a large 2½ story frame house with complex floorplan. It features exterior elements characteristic of the Queen Anne style. The primary facade and gable roof face the southeast, with a projecting "L" with cross gable on the southwest end of the building, and a three story turret on the southeast corner. Shed porches cover the majority of the first story of the main facade. There is a minimum of ornamental woodwork, gingerbread, or decorative shingles due partly to the re-siding of the house in recent years, although early photographs also do not show elaborate ornamentation. After the main house was remodeled for the Burpees's use, the "cottage" became the residence of W. Atlee, Jr. After 1930 it was converted into two apartments, which is still its use today.

The most significant building at Fordhook associated with the Burpee Seed Company is the 2½ story frame seed house. It is a rectangular 58 foot by 28 foot building with a gable roof. The building shows a late Victorian flair in the "kick" incorporated into the horizontal siding above the first floor windows and echoed in an even greater overhang across the gable end at the cornice line. The building is entered from large wagon doors in the center which divides the functions of the interior. The western half, well lit with large 6/6 windows, was used for drying and cleaning the seed. This half has many of the seed racks still in place. The eastern half served as storage and packaging with numerous small seed drawers still lining the northwest wall. There is an open frame staircase leading up to a cupola and a pulley-type elevator in the center bay. The cupola houses a large bell once used to mark the beginning and ending of the work day, lunch breaks, and emergencies such as fires. A brick exterior chimney runs up the northeast gable end and once served a wood stove. The integrity of this important building is excellent.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Fordhook Farm
Section number 7 Page 6

The greenhouses are extensive, early twentieth century, 1½ story gabled roof glass structures on plastered masonry foundations. On the northeast end of the long greenhouse is a masonry 1½ story potting and operations building with a large chimney stack towering nearly 30 feet.

Two c. 1930 garages also stand near the "cottage." They are single bay, frame buildings with gable roofs. Two contributing frame sheds are located to the southeast of the greenhouses.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
☐ prehistoric	☐ archeology-prehistoric	☐ community planning	☐ landscape architecture	☐ religion
☐ 1400–1499	☐ archeology-historic	☐ conservation	☐ law	☒ science
☐ 1500–1599	☒ agriculture	☐ economics	☐ literature	☐ sculpture
☐ 1600–1699	☒ architecture	☒ education	☐ military	☐ social/
☒ 1700–1799	☐ art	☐ engineering	☐ music	☐ humanitarian
☒ 1800–1899	☒ commerce	☐ exploration/settlement	☐ philosophy	☐ theater
☒ 1900–	☐ communications	☐ industry	☐ politics/government	☐ transportation
		☐ invention		☐ other (specify)

Specific dates c. 1760–1937

Builder/Architect c. 1900 Charles Lee; others unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Fordhook Farm is significant in a number of areas. This farm contains late eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings representative of traditional Bucks County architecture, with distinctive architectural alterations and buildings added by the Burpee family in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Beginning in 1888 the farm played an integral part in the development of the Burpee Seed Company into the nation's foremost seed business. Fordhook Farm was the first experimental and seed production farm in the Burpee Seed Company. Hundreds of varieties of flowers and vegetables were developed and entirely new hybrids were invented at this farm for sale by the Burpee company. The firm's world famous annual catalogue was also designed here by the company's founder, W. Atlee Burpee. In addition, this farm and its extensive seed trials helped to educate students from leading agricultural schools and seed associations.

Fordhook Farm's main significance is associated with the Burpee Seed Company. W. Atlee Burpee left his medical studies at the University of Pennsylvania in 1876 and founded a seed business in Philadelphia with two partners. The business began as store that sold seeds, pigeons and poultry. Within two years Burpee became the sole owner and began to expand the business despite considerable competition. During the nineteenth century the Philadelphia area was the center for the nation's leading seed companies. Landreth Seed Company, found by David Landreth near Bristol, Bucks County, had been operating for almost a century when Burpee opened his business. Other seed firms in or around Philadelphia included Henry A. Dreer, Robert Buist, Maule, Mitchell, Johnson, Stokes, Moore, Simon, Ely, Waterer, and Mingle. The Wilson Seed Company, headquartered in Mechanicsville Village, Bucks County, was also begun in the 1870s.

While many of his Philadelphia area competitors distributed seeds worldwide, W. Atlee Burpee developed sales practices and unique experimentation that allowed his firm to quickly surpass his competitors. Burpee located his company's headquarters at 485 North Fifth Street in Philadelphia in 1882. In 1888 W. Atlee bought Fordhook Farm for the purpose of seed testing and production. The fine soil and temperate climate plus convenient access to Philadelphia via the Pennsylvania Railroad line nearby attracted Burpee to Fordhook Farm. Burpee quickly expanded Fordhook Farm from 100 acres to over 500 acres by buying up adjacent farms. In the early twentieth century he expanded the farm further, reaching even into Doylestown Borough with the purchase of the Fair Grounds in the 1920s. By 1915 the company had also acquired Sunnybrook Farm in southern New Jersey and Floridale Seed Farm

9. Major Bibliographical References

see attached

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 16 acres

Quadrangle name Doylestown

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	8
---	---

4	8	7	0	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	4	6	0	6	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

B

1	8
---	---

4	8	7	1	3	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	4	6	0	5	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

C

1	8
---	---

4	8	7	3	6	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	4	6	0	5	7	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

D

1	8
---	---

4	8	7	4	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	4	6	0	6	3	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

E

1	8
---	---

4	8	7	3	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	4	6	0	7	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

F

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification

see attached

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kathryn Ann Auerbach/William A. Sisson

organization N/A/PHMC

date September 14, 1985

street & number 105 New Britain Road/Penn Museum

telephone (215) 345-8966/(717) 783-8946

city or town Doylestown/Harrisburg

state Pennsylvania

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☒ national ☐ state ☐ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Dr. Larry E. Tise, State Historic Preservation Officer

date

3/26/87

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date

4-30-87

Louise Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Fordhook Farm

8

2

Section number _____ Page _____

in Lompoc, California to develop seeds under different growing conditions. As seed production activities were gradually transferred to California during the mid-twentieth century, the land acquired around Fordhook Farm in Bucks County was sold or donated for public use, and seed production at Fordhook Farm came to an end in 1981.

Although the Burpee company acquired many properties, Fordhook Farm best represents the historical importance of the firm. Burpee's Philadelphia offices and warehouses for seed packing and shipping were maintained by W. Atlee Burpee and his son David (who succeeded as company president on his father's death in 1915) until 1973 when the firm moved its headquarters to Warminster Township, Bucks County. The Philadelphia buildings are now demolished. The farms and farm buildings which adjoin the nominated property and which were added to Fordhook Farm do not reflect all of Burpee's uses for seed experimentation and production. Only Fordhook Farm represents the full range of experimentation and sales practices that brought Burpee Seed Company its national prominence.

Seed trials and production were critical to the success of the firm, and Fordhook Farm was the primary seed trial and production farm for the company from the late nineteenth through the early twentieth century. In seed trials each variety of seed was constantly watched as it germinated and grew, with information such as germination, size of yield, taste of vegetables, appearance of flowers, resistance to disease, and reaction to first fall frosts being recorded. Significant scientific advances in seed production were made at Fordhook including the creation of the world's first hybrid flower and vegetable. Numerous other hybrids and varieties were also developed here, including the Hybrid Tomato, Pepper, Spinach, Golden Bantam Sweet Corn, Netted Gem Muskmelon, and Fordhook Lima Bean. Burpee's famous Marigolds and Sweet Pea also underwent extensive testing here. According to Professor Johnson of "The American Agriculturist," "There was not an experiment station in the United States supported by the state or national legislation, that had anything like the variety of tests that were conducted on the Fordhook Farm."¹ In addition, Fordhook Farm produced tremendous numbers of varieties of seeds for sale. By 1923 a total of 22,000 different varieties of seeds were being grown at Fordhook.

Fordhook Farm takes on added scientific and agricultural significance as the location of the first permanent seed trials in the United States. The Hatch Act of March 2, 1887 granted federal funds to the states to establish experiment stations. The first federally

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Fordhook Farm

Section number 8 Page 3

supported experiment station was founded in April, 1888 at Storrs, Connecticut.² Fordhook slightly predated this station, being purchased on March 29, 1888. Permanent seed trials were quickly established at Fordhook in 1888 since the 1889 Burpee Annual mentions flowers growing at Fordhook "last season." Although there may have been other agricultural experiment stations before Fordhook, records indicate that they were discontinued after a short span of time and did not operate on a permanent basis.³

Seed trials and production were critical, yet the firm's famous seed catalogue also played a key role in the company's success. Varieties tested extensively at Fordhook Farm were featured in the annual publication. The catalogue presented the physical characteristics and growing patterns of each variety to customers. W. Atlee Burpee saw the catalogue, which he called the "Silent Salesman," as the link between his company and customers, and as the key to the company's reputation and success. "But most important of all," he wrote, "our catalogue bears the face of a friend, in which our customers have confidence. That confidence is the one thing we are willing to go any amount of trouble to protect and defend."⁴ Burpee believed that the "Silent Salesman" was so important to his sales that he entrusted writing the text of the catalogue to no one else but himself. He wrote descriptions for each of the 6,000 odd varieties that were listed in the catalogue. He produced the catalogue in the library of the c. 1902 addition of the main house at Fordhook. After his death the catalogue was produced in the main house or the "cottage" until 1980 when this operation was transferred to the main office in Warminster. W. Atlee Burpee's early commitment to sales and customers' confidence paid off handsomely. By 1893 the Burpee Seed Company was the largest mail order seed house in the world. The firm remains today the premier mail order seed business in the United States.

W. Atlee Burpee also furthered the success of his enterprise by stressing direct communication, friendly service and reliability to his customers. He invited letters on the success or failure of his products and offered a blanket guarantee if a customer was dissatisfied. At the expense of a great deal of correspondence, Burpee had every customer's letter answered and offered numerous information leaflets free upon request. He ensured that all growing methods were simple and understandable enough for the average gardener to use. Burpee made reliability his first aim, and did everything possible to support the company's slogan, "Burpee Seeds Grow."

W. Atlee and David Burpee also helped educate agricultural scientists and college students as well as home gardeners at Fordhook

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Fordhook Farm

Section number 8 Page 4

Farm. Members of the American Seed Trade Association, the Canada-American Society, and other national and international seed associations visited Fordhook Farm to learn about the Burpee company's experiments and seed varieties. Many foreign and American students, including students from Pennsylvania State and Cornell Universities learned the seed business at Fordhook. Most closely associated with Fordhook was the Delaware Valley College of Science and Agriculture, begun in 1896 as the National Farm School and located on adjoining farm properties. Staff from Fordhook Farm taught students from the Delaware Valley College who worked and visited at the farm. College professors and presidents were often dinner guests at Fordhook to discuss advances in agricultural technology. Both W. Atlee and David Burpee served on the Board of Trustees of Delaware Valley College for a number of years.

In addition to its many other associations with the Burpee company, Fordhook Farm also served as a home to the Burpee family. After its c. 1902-1905 renovation the main house was used by W. Atlee Burpee, his wife Blanche, and David as a summer residence. The "cottage" was also the residence of W. Atlee, Jr. from c. 1902-1905 until 1930. After 1940 David Burpee made the main house his year round residence.

All of the buildings at Fordhook Farm played an integral part in the Burpee Seed Company's operations. The main house, barn, springhouse, icehouse and carriage house were built before W. Atlee Burpee purchased the farm in 1888 and were adapted for use by the seed company. Three bays of Section One of the main house was constructed some time between 1760 and 1798 when a stone house of the same dimensions as Section One was listed in the 1798 Direct Tax. The original section of the barn was also constructed about this time. By 1805 John Fritzinger, a Hessian soldier, became the owner of Fordhook. He is credited with enlarging Section One to its present five-bay size and adding architectural embellishments such as the raised keystone jack arch over the first floor window, south facade, the elaborately carved door and mantle pieces, and the hearths with small stones in decorative patterns. He may also have been the person responsible for enlarging the stone barn to its present size. Section Two of the main house was built c. 1840 by Asher Bennett who owned Fordhook for only several years, or by George Murray who ran a locally famous boys' school in the house. The carriage house was constructed on the property in 1868.

W. Atlee Burpee adapted the pre-1888 buildings to his firm's use and erected more buildings and structures on the nominated property. He retained the great majority of the Federal and Greek Revival features of Sections One and Two of the main house, and he hired Charles Lee of Philadelphia to design the Section Four addition in c. 1902. This

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Fordhook Farm

Section number 8 Page 5

addition incorporates a blend of Tudor, Classic and Colonial traits. W. Atlee Burpee also added two frame sections to the barn c. 1900. The second floor of the carriage house was converted to a study for David Burpee in 1908. The "cottage" was erected by W. Atlee Burpee in the 1890s as a weekend summer residence for his family. He also built the seed house on the nominated property in c. 1895.

The buildings on the nominated property possess architectural significance as the best preserved examples of buildings and structures found on seed farms in Bucks County. Buildings on other Bucks County seed farms have either been demolished or substantially altered. The buildings of the Landreth Seed Company in Bristol, for example, no longer stand, having succumbed to the eastward expansion of that town. In Mechanicsville, the seed house for the Wilson Seed Company still stands on the fringe of a historic district; however, this 2½ story rectangular building has been converted into a residence. Only the buildings of the Burpee seed farm, including the seed house and greenhouses, survive intact in Bucks County.

Fordhook Farm also stands out in central Bucks County as a precursor of nineteenth century farms that were converted into twentieth century gentleman's farm estates. Central Bucks County has long been blessed with prosperity, and in the immediate area around Doylestown, many fine county houses, estates and better-than-average farms are located. A number of fine houses were constructed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, for example, Philip Fretz embellished his family's farm complex into a study of Italianate and Victorian decorations and profiles. Not far down the road another related Fretz built his large brownstone country mansion and stables c. 1880. Closer to Doylestown, in 1910 Henry Mercer remodeled a traditional farmhouse into Fonthill, a French, castle-like chateau of concrete. Other eighteenth and nineteenth century farmhouses were also remodeled during the early twentieth century. While some farmhouses remained somewhat conservative in appearance, others were receiving two-story columned porticos. The Fordhook main house is larger than the average farmhouse of the area, and the remodelings and additions of c. 1902 predate the remodeling of most area country houses which were accomplished with greater frequency after 1930.

Thus Fordhook Farm stands out in Bucks County for its architecture that represents the conversion of eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings into a gentleman's farm estate. The nominated property is also important in commerce, agriculture, education, and science as the main seed testing and production farm of the Burpee Seed Company.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Fordhook Farm

Section number 8 Page 6

¹Forty Years Burpee Service, Fortieth Anniversary Supplement, 1876-1916. (Philadelphia: W. Atlee Burpee Co., 1916), p. 3.

²This experiment station was the beginning of the present-day University of Connecticut.

³Robert J. Zoller. Memo to David Burpee, August 15, 1947.

⁴Roy Johnson, "The Personality That is Behind the Burpee Business," in Printer's Ink Journal, Vol. XCI, No. 12. Reprinted in Forty Years Burpee Service, p. 20.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Fordhook Farm

Section number 9 Page 1

Primary Sources:

Burpee, Jonathan. Letters to Kathryn Ann Auerbach. August 21 and December 29, 1985.

Deed and Mortgage Books, 1681-Present. Bucks County Courthouse. Doylestown, PA.

1798 Direct Tax List, New Britain Township, Bucks County, PA. Microfilm copy at the Bucks County Historical Society, Doylestown, PA.

Zoller, Robert J. Memo to David Burpee. August 14, 1947.

Secondary Sources:

Burpee, David. W. Atlee Burpee, Fordhook Farms, Doylestown, Pennsylvania, Visitor's Guide. Brochure (Warminster, PA.: W. Atlee Burpee Co., 1976).

Coutts, Carla. "The Dean of American Seedsmen," Bucks County Panorama Magazine, Vol. 17, No. 4 (April 1975).

The Doylestown Democrat, "The Farm School--The First Quarterly Report of the School Managers," January 6, 1898, p. 1.

Forty Years Burpee Service, Fortieth Anniversary Supplement, 1876-1916. (Philadelphia: W. Atlee Burpee Co., 1916).

Encyclopedia of Pennsylvania Biography. Vol. XXXII. (New York: Lewis Publishing Co., 1969), p. 237.

Kraft, Ken. Garden to Order. (New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1962), p. xi.

MacReynolds, George. Place Names in Bucks County. (Easton, PA.: John S. Correll Publishing Co., 1916).

Matthews, E. History of Seven Central Bucks County Townships. Vol. 2 (manuscript, Bucks County Historical Society, 1946), pp. 12, 14-19.

"Remembering a Man of Many Firsts: David Burpee, 1893-1980," Seed World, (August, 1980).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Fordhook Farm

Section number 9 Page 2

Stedman, Betty, "Bucks County Known All Over the World--90 Years of Good Growing," Realtor Magazine, Vol. 15, No. 1 (Spring 1966).

Streland, Arnie. "Fordhook Farm: Bucks County's Green Thumb, 1733-1981," (privately held manuscript).

Interviews:

Jonathan Burpee and Blanche Burpee Dohan. Interviewed by Kathryn Ann Auerbach, January 29, 1985 at Fordhook Farm.

Mrs. Madelyn Hillman (daughter of Dr. Joseph Krauskopf, founder of the National Farm School). Interviewed by Kathryn Ann Auerbach, April 22, 1985.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

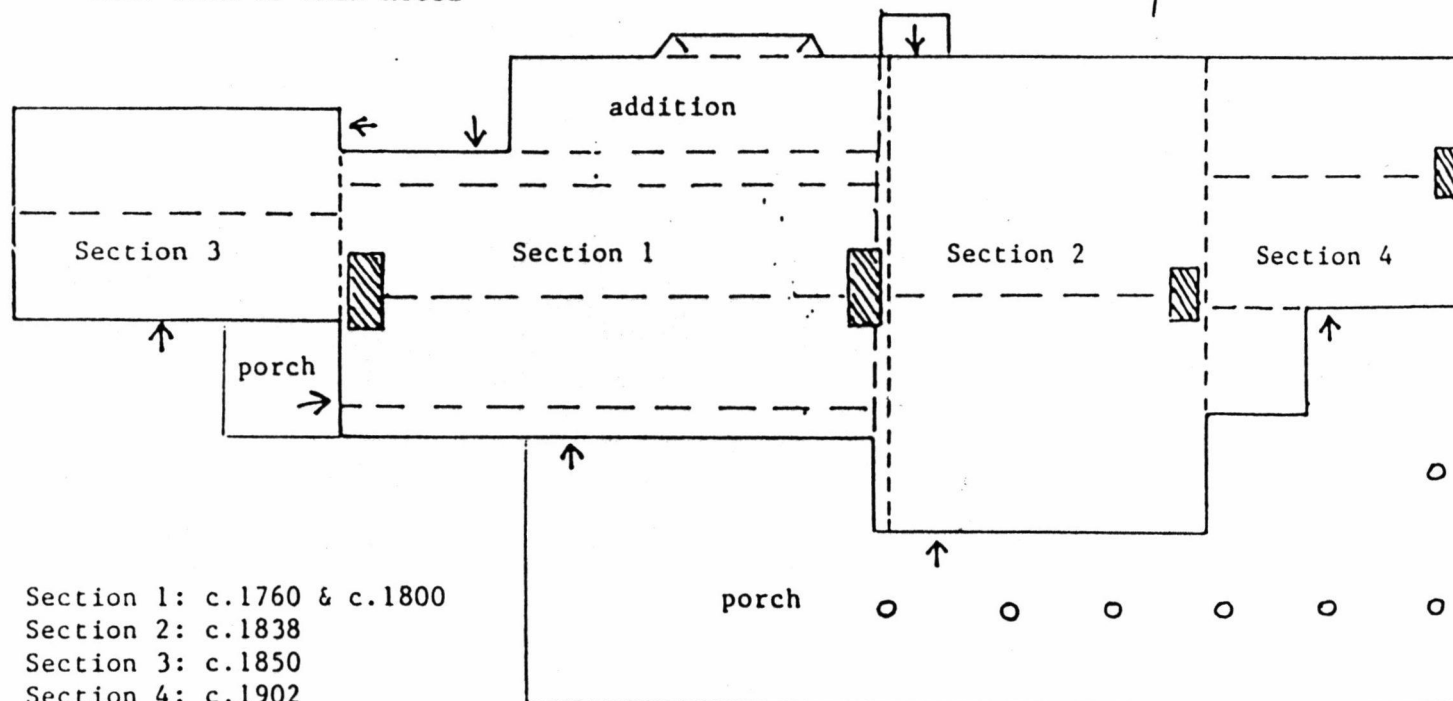
Fordhook Farm

Section number 10 Page 1

Beginning at a point on the northeast side of New Britain Road (T-346) being 50 feet northwest of the boundary line between county tax parcels #9-7-36 and #9-7-37, and then proceeding easterly approximately 680 feet to a point being roughly 290 feet southeast of the southeast corner of the main house; then proceeding northeasterly approximately 450 feet to a point; then proceeding northwesterly parallel with New Britain Road approximately 390 feet to a corner; then proceeding westerly parallel with the first course cited above, 1200 feet to a corner, a point on the northeast side of New Britain Road; then proceeding southeasterly 625 feet along the edge of the said road to the place of beginning.

Fordhook Farm as purchased by W. Atlee Burpee in 1888 contained 99 acres and 110 perches of land. This was a part of the original tract of 100 acres of land which is tracable to the property's first occupancy in the eighteenth century and was diminished by the right of way of the State Road, later known as Route 202. In recent years the property has suffered further diminution with the construction of Routes 611 and the 202 By-pass around the Borough of Doylestown. Fields from the former farm still remain to the southeast and northwest of the nominated property. However, these fields are no longer used for gardening trials and show no evidence of their former use. Thus the boundary is drawn to include the nominated contributing resources and immediately adjacent land, and to exclude non-contributing vacant fields.

Fordhook Farm
Bucks County
ROOF PLAN OF MAIN HOUSE

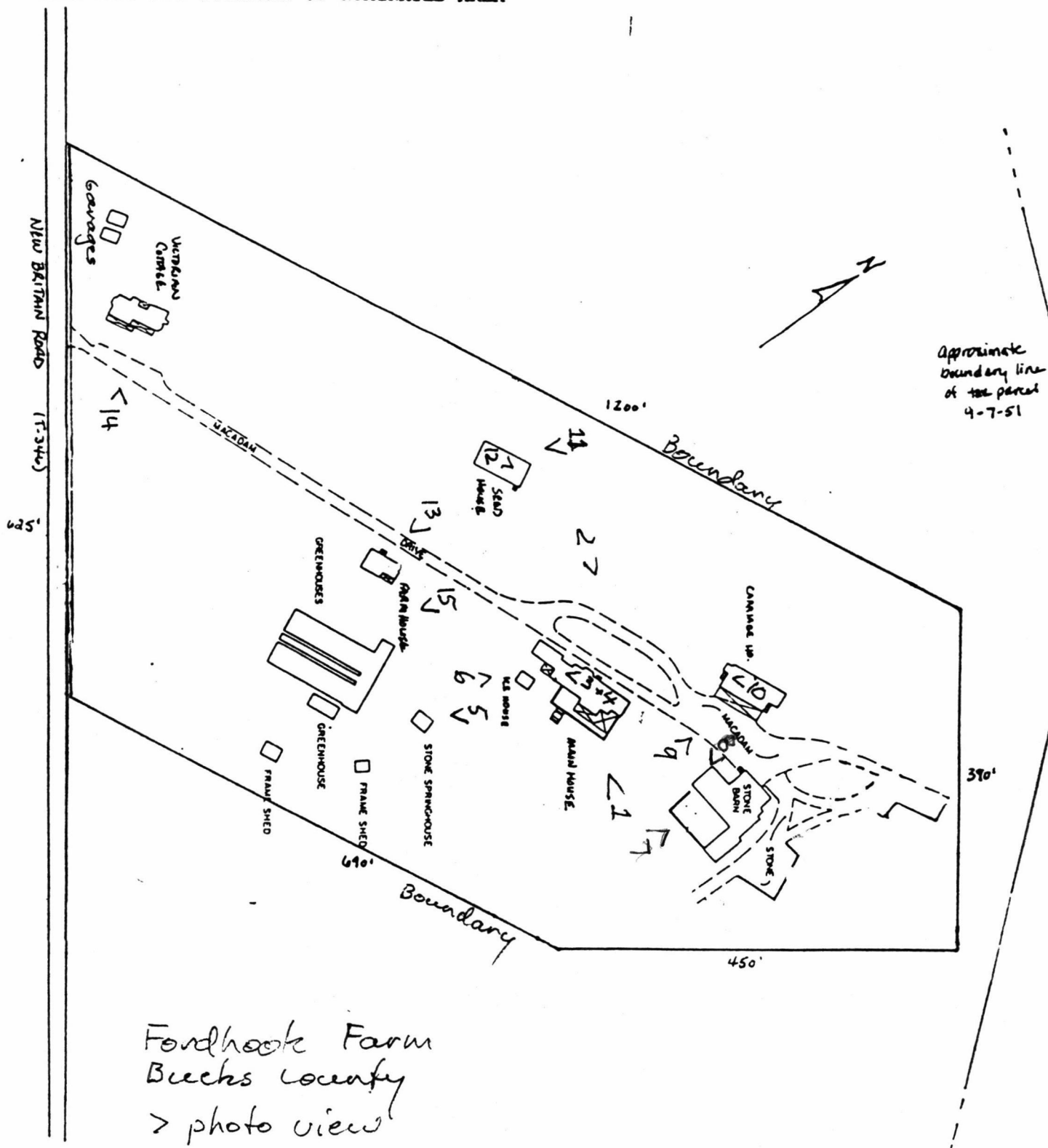


Section 1: c.1760 & c.1800
Section 2: c.1838
Section 3: c.1850
Section 4: c.1902
addition : c.1900

MAR 30 1987

SITE PLAN AND BOUNDARY OF NOMINATED AREA

MAR 30 1987



87000674

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Fordhook Farm
Bucks County
PENNSYLVANIA

MAR 30 1987

Working No. _____

Fed. Reg. Date: 3/2/88

Date Due: 4/30/87 - 5/14/87

Action: ACCEPT 4-30-87

Entered in the _____ RETURN _____

National Register _____ REJECT _____

Federal Agency: _____

- ☐ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____

Reviewer _____

Discipline _____

Date _____

_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition

- ☐ excellent ☐ deteriorated
☐ good ☐ ruins
☐ fair ☐ unexposed

Check one

- ☐ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one

- ☐ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

8. Significance

Period Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- ☐ summary paragraph
- ☐ completeness
- ☐ clarity
- ☐ applicable criteria
- ☐ justification of areas checked
- ☐ relating significance to the resource
- ☐ context
- ☐ relationship of integrity to significance
- ☐ justification of exception
- ☐ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title

date

13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



Name: FORDHOOK FARM
Location: New Britain Road, *Bucks County* #1
Doylestown Twp., PA.
Tax Map #: 9-7-51
Date of photo: 2/10/1985
Credit by: Kathryn Ann Auerbach
Negative filed: Kathryn Ann Auerbach/BCC
Negative #: KAA: 85-3/4
Description: Sections 2 & 4, exterior,
E & SE or front facades

MAR 30 1987



Name: FORDHOOK FARM #2
Location: New Britain Road, Bucks County
Doylestown Twp., PA.
Tax Map #: 9-7-51
Date of photo: 2/16/1985
Credit by: Kathryn Ann Auerbach
Negative filed: Kathryn Ann Auerbach/BCC
Negative #: KAA: 85-4/25A
Description: Main house, exterior, NW view
of all sections.



Name: FORDHOOK FARM #3
Location: New Britain Road, Bucks County
Doylestown Twp., PA.
Tax Map #: 9-7-51
Date of photo: 2/10/1985
Credit by: Kathryn Ann Auerbach
Negative filed: Kathryn Ann Auerbach/BCC
Negative #: KAA: 85-3/11
Description: Section 1, interior, dining room
decorative mantle & c



Name: FORDHOOK FARM #4
Location: New Britain Road, Bucks County
Doylestown Twp., PA.
Tax Map #: 9-7-51
Date of photo: 2/10/1985
Credit by: Kathryn Ann Auerbach
Negative filed: Kathryn Ann Auerbach/BCC
Negative #: KAA: 85-3/17
Description: Section 2, interior, living
room, windows to south



Name: FORDHOOK FARM #5
Location New Britain Road, Berks County
Doylestown Twp., PA.
Tax Map #: 9-7-51
Date of Photo: 2/10/1985
Credit by: Kathryn Ann Auerbach
Negative filed: Kathryn Ann Auerbach/BCC
Negative #: KAA: 85-3/30
Description: Spring House, northeast view
with gable overhang.



Name: FORDHOOK FARM #6
Location: New Britain Road, Berks County
Doylestown Twp., PA.
Tax Map #: 9-7-51
Date of photo: 2/10/1985
Credit by: Kathryn Ann Auerbach
Negative filed: Kathryn Ann Auerbach/BCC
Negative #: KAA: 85-3/32
Description: Sections 1 & s and Ice house,
south view



Name: FORDHOOK FARM #7
Location: New Britain Road, Berks County
Doylestown Twp., PA.
Tax Map #: 9-7-51
Date of photo: 2/10/1985
Credit by: Kathryn Ann Auerbach
Negative filed: Kathryn Ann Auerbach/BCC
Negative #: KAA: 85-3/5
Description: Barn, SE & SW or barnyard
facades



Name:

FORDHOOK

Location:

New Britain Road, *Bucks County* #8
Doylestown Twp., PA.

Tax Map #:

9-7-51

Date of photo:

2/16/1985

Credit by:

Kathryn Ann Auerbach

Negative filed:

Kathryn Ann Auerbach/BCC

Negative #:

KAA: 85-4/31A

Description:

Barn, exterior, original & c.
1900 sections, side shed



Name: FORDHOOK FARM
Location: New Britain Road, Berks County #9
Doylestown Twp., PA.
Tax Map #: 9-7-51
Date of photo: 2/10/1985
Credit by: Kathryn Ann Auerbach
Negative filed: Kathryn Ann Auerbach/BCC
Negative #: KAA: 85-3/6
Description: Carriage house, SE or front
facade



Name: FORDHOOK FARM

Location: New Britain Road, *Bucks County* #10
Doylestown Twp., Bucks Co. PA

Tax Map #: 9-7-51

Date of Photo: 2/16/1985

Credit by: Kathryn Ann Auerbach

Negative Filed: Kathryn A. Auerbach/ BCC

Negative #: KAA: 85-4/17A

Description: Carraige house, interior,
library- cathedral ceiling



#11

<u>Name:</u>	FORDHOOK FARM
<u>Location:</u>	New Britain Road, <i>Bucks County</i> Doylestown Twp., PA.
<u>Tax Map #:</u>	9-7-51
<u>Date of photo:</u>	2/10/1985
<u>Credit by:</u>	Kathryn Ann Auerbach
<u>Negative filed:</u>	Kathryn Ann Auerbach/BCC
<u>Negative #:</u>	KAA: 85-3/35
<u>Description:</u>	Seed House, exterior, view from the north



Name: FORDHOOK FARM
Location: New Britain Road, Bucks County, PA. #12
Tax Map #: 9-7-51
Date of photo: 2/16/1985
Credit by: Kathryn Ann Auerbach
Negative filed: Kathryn Ann Auerbach/BCC
Negative #: KAA: 85-4/20A
Description: Seed house, interior, seed drawers and stairs



Name:
Location:

FORDHOOK FARM
New Britain Road, Berks County
Doylestown Twp., PA. #13

Tax Map #:
Date of Photo:

9-7-51
2/16/1985

Credit by:
Negative filed:
Negative #:

Kathryn Ann Auerbach
Kathryn Ann Auerbach/BCC
KAA: 85-4/14A

Description:

Farm House , exterior, north
view (possibly old bake house)



#14

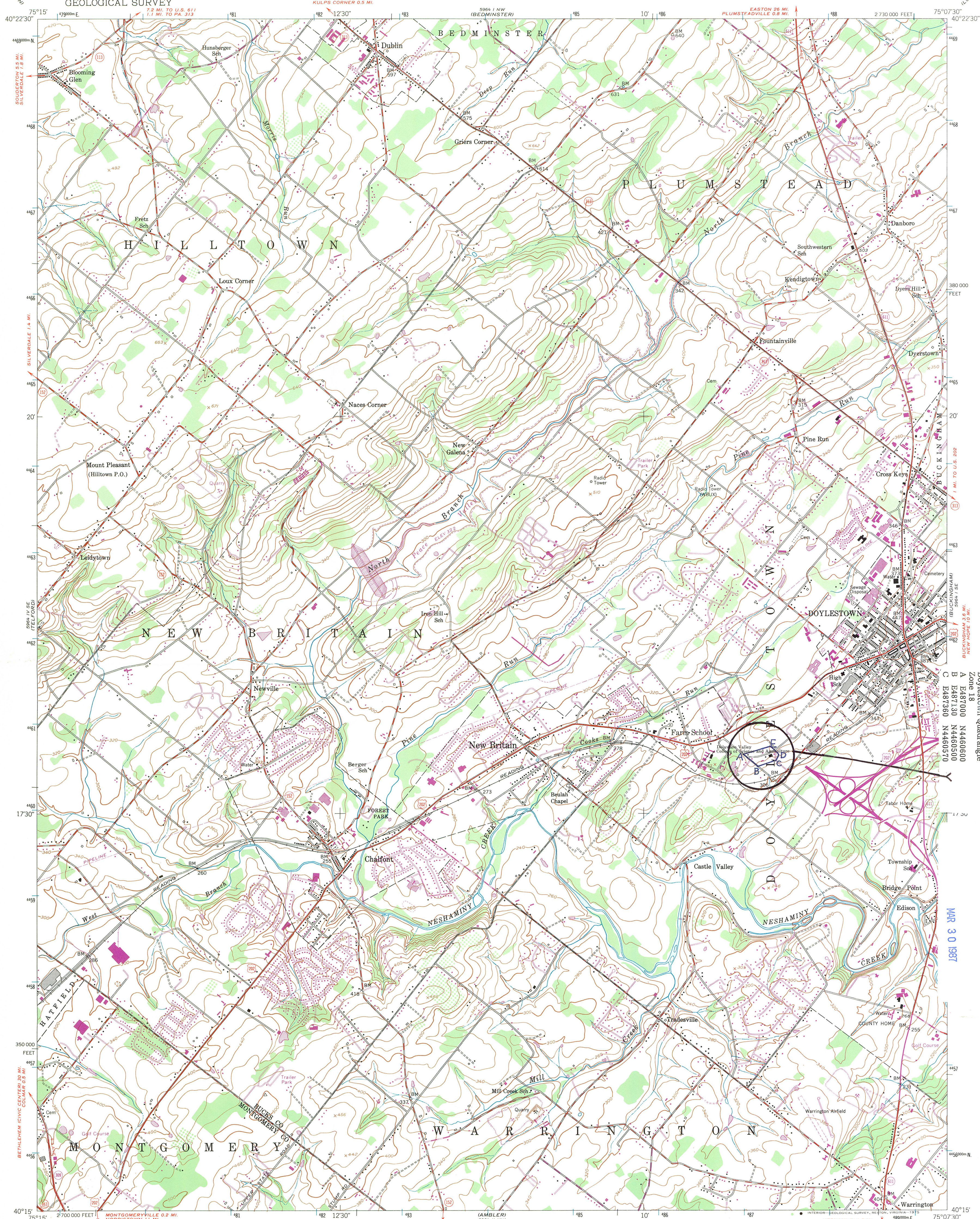
<u>Name:</u>	FORDHOOK FARM
<u>Location:</u>	New Britain Road, <i>Bucks County</i> Doylestown Twp., PA.
<u>Tax Map #:</u>	9-7-51
<u>Date of photo:</u>	2/16/1985
<u>Credit by:</u>	Kathryn Ann Auerbach
<u>Negative filed:</u>	Kathryn Ann Auerbach/BCC.
<u>Negative #:</u>	KAA: 85-4/10A
<u>Description:</u>	"Cottage", exterior, SE facade,



Name: FORDHOOK FARM #15
Location: New Britain Road, Bucks County
Doylestown Twp., PA.
Tax Map #: 9-7-51
Date of photo: 2/16/1985
Credit by: Kathryn Ann Auerbach
Negative filed: Kathryn Ann Auerbach/BCC
Negative #: KAA: 85-4/27A
Description: Greenhouses, exterior, glass &
masonry sections.
MAR 30 1987

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

DOYLESTOWN QUADRANGLE
PENNSYLVANIA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



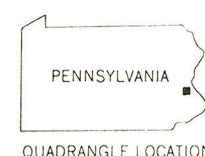
Mapped by the Army Map Service
Edited and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS
Topography from aerial photographs by stereophotogrammetric methods. Culture revised by the Geological Survey 1953
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Pennsylvania coordinate system, south zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 18, shown in blue
Purple hatching indicates areas to be submerged

UTM GRID AND 1973 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

SCALE 1:24000
CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———
U. S. Route ——— State Route ———

DOYLESTOWN, PA.

N4015-W7507.5/7.5

1953
PHOTOREVISED 1968 AND 1973
AMS 5964 I SW—SERIES V851

FORDHOOK FARM
Bucks County
Doylestown Quadrangle
Zone 18
A E487000 N4460600
B E487130 N4460500
C E487380 N4460570
D E487420 N4460630
E E487320 N4460630

MAR 30 1987



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION
BUREAU FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
BOX 1026
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17108-1026

National Register of Historic Places
US Dept. of Interior
Carol Shull, Chief of Registration
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

Re: NR Nomination Forms

Dear Ms. Shull:

The following National Register nomination forms are being
submitted/resubmitted for your review and response:

see attached list

The proposed action is:

XX listing in the National Register

 determination of eligibility (owner objection)

If you have any questions regarding the nominations please
call us at (717) 783-8947.

Sincerely,

Greg Ramsey, Chief
Division of Preservation Services

GR:sk

MAR 30 1987

Bristol Historic District, bounded roughly by the Delaware River on the southeast; Lincoln Street on the northeast; Pond and Cedar Streets on the northwest; and Mill Street on the southwest, in Bristol Borough, Bucks County

Jayne Estate Building, 2-16 Vine Street, Philadelphia, Philadelphia County

Ehnnart's Mill Historic District, Old Mill Road, Lower Saucon Township, Northampton County

Coatesville Historic District, bounded roughly by Chestnut Street on the north; Sixth Avenue on the east; Oak Street between Sixth Avenue and Fifth Avenue, Fifth Avenue between Oak Street and Harmony Street, and Harmony Street between Fifth Avenue and First Avenue on the south and First Avenue between Maple Avenue and Chestnut Street on the west, in Coatesville, Chester County

Harriman Historic District, bounded roughly by West Circle on the southwest, Farragut Avenue on the southeast; McKinley and Cleveland Streets on the northeast; and Trenton Avenue on the northwest in Bristol Borough, Bucks County

Brush Creek Salems Church, Brush Creek Road, Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County

Bangor Episcopal Church, corner of Main Street and Water Street, Caernarvon Township, Lancaster County

Fordhook Farm, 105 New Britain Road, Doylestown Township, Bucks County

George Diehl Homestead, Diehl Road, Cherryhill Township, Indiana County

Hugh Laughlin House, TR422, Redstone Township, Fayette County