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N-5165

Property Name: S. Higgins Farm (1868); Shady View Farm (1984)

Location and Verbal Boundary Description

The S. Higgins Farm is located on the north side of route 423 approximately 1.25 miles east of its intersection with route 13 at McDonough. The nomination consists of one acre containing only the house and the yard. No out-buildings are included.

Owner: Harold Scannel

R. D. 2, Box 500

Middletown, Delaware

19709

Description:

The S. Higgins dwelling is a two-story frame house built in the vernacular Victorian style.

The overall shape is squarish rectangular with a jog in the northwestern corner. The original weatherboard siding was covered in the 50's with aluminum siding and again in the 1980's. The structure rests on a plastered brick foundation. The house is finished with a hipped roof and boxed cornice. Any cornice trim is concealed by aluminum covering and sits near the interior chimney pile near the southeast corner. The irregular, four bay facade features a two-and-a-half story tower with pyramid roof set off-center to the west. The tower has a small room with windows at the top. The windows of this irregular facade are very tall and narrow, one over one sash, with decorative vine relief on the head and relief pendants on the side trim. The entry is a two leaf, wooden door, set in the tower, with centered door knobs set in circular, etched brass plates with recessed panels above and below. The architrave is identical to the windows, and there is a large 3 light transom. On the west facade there is an added bay window, and on the north facade there is a small

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two-story addition with hipped roof. The front porch was recently rebuilt but features a very large off-center gable roof. The rear porch is a recent addition.

The dwelling has an off-center passage stairway in line with the entry and tower. The house is currently occupied by the owners of the farm and is unavailable for examination.

Historical Background and Significance

The Samuel Higgins farmstead is a good example of the rebuilding period of nineteenth century New Castle County.

The agricultural censuses record the rise and decline of Samuel Higgins through the thirty years of the late nineteenth century 1850-1880.

Mr. Higgins' income was derived mainly from Indian corn, wheat, oats, and butter with a few cattle and swine. He apparently ran a small dairy but was out of it by 1870, depending mainly on grain production. While grain remained the backbone of his operation, S. Higgins invested in fruit orchards and derived a fair income similar to other farmers in the area. He also was caught like the others, when the peach bubble burst with a combination of market loss and peach blight during the post-war depression. The dwelling of S. Higgins reflects the extensive rebuilding period of southern New Castle County and the prosperity brought on by a grain-based economy.

Nomination by Bert Jicha

S. HAGGINS House
N-5165

