

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

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

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N-413

Property Name: A. Eliason House

Location and Boundary Description:

The A. Eliason House is located on the east side of route 896 approximately .5 miles north of the intersection of routes 896 and 15 north of Mount Pleasant. The house and farmstead stands in cultivated farmland near the present Summit Airfield. The nomination includes the house, smokehouse, granary, cartshed, and a brick stable. Noncontributing elements are a modern addition to the brick stable and modern farm buildings to the rear of the lot. The nominated acreage encompasses 7 acres.

Owner: Frederick C. and Clara Yaiser

R.D.1, Box 364

Middletown, Delaware

19709

Description: The A. Eliason House is a five-bay, three-story brick dwelling with a shallow hipped roof, and two one-story, tetra-style porches. Built in the 1850s by Andrew Eliason, the house is laid out on a center-passage plan with an original service wing off the east elevation of the main block. Laid in mechanical bond on the front or west elevation and common bond on the remaining walls, the exterior is distinguished by six over six light sash windows diminishing in size from the ground floor to the third. The central windows are set off by two over two sidelights. The main entry into the front of the house is through a central doorway with a plain transom and side lights encased in an austere classically inspired architrave. Also of note on the exterior of the main block of the house is the use of shallow ogee modillion blocks.

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Behind the house extends a range of service structures progressing in the locally customary manner from those associated with the functions of the household back to those housing the dirtiest aspects of farm life. From the house eastward these are a two-story brick combination carriage house and storage loft, an earthfast cartshed framed on cedar posts and having a deep shed roof, a braced frame granary containing corn cribs flanking a central drive-through wagon floor and having overhead grain storage facilities, and at the end of the range a brick stable which recently has been altered with its conversion to a tractor shed.

Historical Background and Significance:

The A. Eliason House was commissioned in the 1850s by Andrew Eliason. Eliason's progress as a successful farmer in St. Georges and Pencader hundreds should serve as a coda for this nomination. As a subscriber to Scharf's History of Delaware, Eliason sponsored a biography as ostentatious as his three-story brick house. Scharf describes Eliason's rising fortunes from the time he worked as a drover on the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, through his years as a tenant farmer, to his success as a landholder supervising the production of at least three farms. While Eliason's fortunes differ only in degree from those of his landed neighbors, his interest in the commissioning of history describes the final phase of the rebuilding cycle of the mid 19th century.

In the historical progression of agricultural reform, land reallocation, shifting markets, and rebuilding activity, the final phase was the creation of an appropriate past to match the historic present. It is significant that in these biographical sketches published by Scharf, the subjects' almost invariably mention the physical improvements made to their dwellings. The houses, as symbols of personal attainment and the definition of an economically stratified social class hierarchy, were monuments to a present order. Through the writing of history, those monuments became fixed in the time, place, and mind of singular historic moment.