

Joseph Jackson House
North side of Old Baltimore Pike, .6 mile
northwest of Baltimore Pike, west of
West Grove
West Grove Vicinity (London Grove Township)
Chester County
Pennsylvania

HABS NO. PA-1224

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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. PA-1224

JOSEPH JACKSON HOUSE

Location: North side of Old Baltimore Pike, .6 mile northwest of Baltimore Pike, west of West Grove, West Grove Vicinity (London Grove Township), Chester County, Pennsylvania.

Present Owner: Willis E. Roberts, West Grove R. D., Pennsylvania.

Statement of Significance: Built in 1742 by an English Quaker, this house has interesting brick patterns and retains a considerable amount of its fine original interior detail, including some excellent graining.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: Joseph Jackson 1733-1760; Samuel Jackson 1760-1775; Lewis Pusey 1775- ; Ellis L. Pusey -1852; Daniel Pennington 1852-1871; Thomas M. Harvey 1871-1886; William B. Harvey 1886-1911; Lewis M. Paschell 1911-1925; James P. Hood 1925--1938; Roland P. Hood 1938-1958; Shannon Pepple 1958 when he sold to the above, Willis E. Roberts.
2. Date of erection: 1742.
3. Architect, builder, suppliers: Unknown.
4. Original plans, construction: Original house consisted of the south front and the wing to the north on the west side. The original stairs were and are in the south end of this north wing. Cellar is under the south section only, and a vault is on a lower level extending west of the house.
5. Alterations and additions: The original north wing was extended approximately 11', probably early in the 19th century. The original west wall of the north wing was cut away and a large bay window was installed circa 1900. The bay window was still there in the late 1930s, but has since been replaced by a row of windows. The front porch dates from circa 1900. The northeast wing of the house is a 20th century kitchen, approximately 14' x 20', a frame structure covered with composition shingles.
6. Important old views and references:
 - a. Views: J. Smith Futhey and Gilbert Cope, History of Chester County, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Louis H. Everts, 1881), facing page 27 is an excellent view of the house, old house, mill and outbuildings.

Halliday Jackson, Proceedings of the Sesqui-Centennial Gathering of the Descendants of Isaac and Ann Jackson (Philadelphia, 1878).

- b. References: Sources of information, all to be found in the Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pennsylvania unless otherwise noted.

Futhey, J. Smith and Cope, Gilbert. History of Chester County, Pennsylvania. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Louis H. Everts, 1881.

Anderson, Bart. Descendants of John and Mary (Ignew) Miller. Longhand manuscripts.

Classified clipping files, printed and manuscript, in Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pennsylvania under heading London Grove Township. Lands.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

Joseph Jackson (1699-1760), the builder of this house, was the son of Ephriam Jackson, an English Friend, who came to Chester County in 1687. In 1734, Joseph married his second wife, Susanne Miller, sister of William Miller who built the 1730 Miller House at Avondale, then New Garden Township. The Jackson House is dated in black brick in a manner similar to the Miller House. Joseph Jackson was a miller; the foundations of the mill are to the south of the house. This mill was operated well into the 20th century. The mill is mentioned in the 1749 road papers of Chester County as well as in an advertisement in a Philadelphia paper. The present borough of West Grove, immediately to the east, was known as Penningtonville in the mid-19th century after the then owners of this mill. The farm and mill were models and much visited. The first experimental farm established by State College was nearby in the same township. Copy of a newspaper account at the time Harvey owned the farm is available.

C. Supplemental Material:

1. "To be sold by Joseph Jackson, of London Grove, township, in Chester county, a plantation containing 150 acres of land, 40 acres of plow land cleared 18 acres of good meadow made, and more may be made, an orchard, a good brick house, a good barn, and a good merchant mill; as also 250 acres of land joining to the aforesaid, and the good will or lease of 112 acres of land, joining to the said 250 acres aforesaid. There is on the said 362 acres of land, 2 plantations, houses, barns, and good orchards and meadows made, and more may be made. Whoever has a mind to purchase any of the aforesaid premises, may apply to the said Joseph Jackson, living on the said premises, and know the titles and terms of sale."

2. PUBLIC SALE OF
VALUABLE REAL ESTATE

"By virtue of the last will and testament of Ellis L. Pusey, late of the township of London Grove, in the county of Chester, deceased, will be sold at Public Sale, on the premises, on Saturday, (7th day,) the 20th day of December, (12th mo.,) 1851, all that valuable plantation and tract of land, Grist and Saw Mill, lately occupied by said deceased, situate in the said township of London Grove, bounded by lands of Robert Good, Henry Underwood, Mahlon Kinsey, Joseph Michener and others, containing about ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FIVE ACRES, about two miles south of Chatham, sixteen miles from Wilmington, and about eighteen miles west of West Chester. This property is a fine grazing farm in a high state of cultivation. The improvements are 2 large and well built two story brick Dwelling Houses with back buildings; large double-floored barn, nearly new, large grist mill in good order, well suited for customer and merchant work; saw mill, tenant house, wagon house, hay house, smoke house, and other out buildings. The mills have a never failing water power, and are capable of doing a profitable business. There is on the premises, two good apple orchards, some excellent meadow land, and a large quantity of prime timber. The property is well fenced and watered, White Clay Creek running through the same, and is in every way worthy the attention of farmers, millers and capitalists. Sale to comence at 1 o'clock, P.M., of said day. The conditions will be made easy.

JONATHAN PUSEY
JOSEPH P. WILSON
Executors of Ellis L. Pusey, dec'd."

American Republican, West Chester, Pa., November 11, 1851.

3. A Fine Stock Farm

"About a mile from the village of West Grove, on the Baltimore Central Railroad, is situated the fine old farm of Thomas M. Harvey. For a long distance over the neighboring hills Friend Thomas can see his broad acres stretching, and on the fertile meadows are as fine a herd of cattle as can be found in the county when its large size is considered.

The old place was but recently purchased by him, but already the hand of improvement can be seen on every side. There have lately been erected a large addition to the barn, an immense corn crib, one of the most improved patterns of milk house, a pig pen under cover and capable of holding 200 head of stock; and this year he is building a tenement house on the hill between the old house and West Grove. The old farm house is itself a curiosity. On the north-west end, built of black brick, in the wall is the date 1742 in figures two feet long. The bricks for building the walls were brought from England. The interior

division walls are quite substantial, being eighteen inches thick, of solid brick. The east walls of the rooms are in some cases covered with fine hard wood paneling, and cupboards and mantel shelves show very clearly that the carpenter of long ago was not afraid to rub a plane over the seasoned oak and ash. There is not so much as one cut nail in the whole house that was put there when it was built all of these useful articles had formerly to be pounded out by hand, one at a time. The hinges on the doors instead of being the neat affairs of to-day, are ponderous wrought iron bars, strong enough to resist the rust and wear of an eternity. The dining-room contains four windows, no two of which are the same size. In the march of improvement the old house has been left undisturbed, and Friend Harvey likes the grand old place well enough to keep it as it stands. But up at the barn may be seen a sight which would delight the eyes of any stock fancier. Here in capacious stalls stand a herd of about sixty head of Jersey and Guernsey cows, nearly all herd book animals and many of them imported. Mr. Harvey has a large number of herd book calves and heifers, which he is raising, and which will soon take the place of the cattle which cannot be entered in the herd register. Down in a stable by himself stands the old Guernsey "Sir Champion," an imported bull of very large size. He does not appear to be cross, and likes to have his forehead scratched, but it is well to be careful, for in a fit of playfulness he could easily give one a toss. Mr. Harvey appears to be a believer in the Guenon system of telling what cattle are worth, and says he finds it does not fail. This Sir Champion has the Guenon marks upon him as distinct as any cow in the herd, and is thought by his owner to be the finest animal of his kind in the country.

"Down below the mill race is the pig pen, a more respectable looking building than many a man's house. It is connected with the milk house by a pipe through which all the skim milk is conveyed. The milk runs into a large cistern inside the building, and thence as it is needed into a boiler, where it is mixed with meal and heated before feeding to the pigs. These pigs are respectable, fat, well-fed animals, and never an impudent squeal was heard during an hour's visit. There are about fifty separate pens, arranged in the form of a T each one of which has its separate yard. Like the herd of cattle, these animals are all pure stock, some of them having been imported. Some of the pig raisers talk of establishing a herd book, but Mr. Harvey thinks it impracticable, as the pigs multiply so rapidly that no book would ever hold them.

"Here also are fine chickens, turkeys, and in fact everything which will make farming attractive. A young man on a place like this would not want to rush into the city, but would enjoy a farmer's life if science is applied to it. Friend Harvey enjoys showing his visitors round the premises, and takes a just pride in exhibiting his fine animals and fertile fields."

Daily Local News, West Chester, Pa., March 23, 1878.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This brick house, from 1742, has interesting brick patterns and retains most of its fine original woodwork and hardware, including some excellent graining.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Two-and-half stories with basement; main block, 38' (five-bay front) x 19' plus original wing to the north 18' x 22'. This north wing was extended 11' probably 19th century.
2. Foundations: Stone.
3. Wall construction: Flemish bond bricks imported from England, and frame. The west gable end of the main block has a wavy pattern in black bricks and across the west side of the wing and main block is the date "1742" in 2' figures of black brick between the second-story windows.
4. Chimneys: One chimney located directly above each gable on the front section. Both are constructed of brick, as are the two located on the ridge of the northern section. All are said to be original.
5. Porches: Front porch was added circa 1900.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The south front doorway and door are original. The door has six panels, the two smaller ones being at the top. There is a four-light transom above the door. The door to the left is later having once been a window. It has a two light transom above. The west side has a double paneled door with projecting hood above it.
 - b. Windows and shutters: On the south front one original window, to left of front door has been changed into a door. In the west wall of the main section, a new window has been put in, to the north of the chimney on both first and second floors. The original west wall of the north wing was cut away and a large bay window was installed circa 1900. The bay window was still there in the 1930s, but has been replaced by a row of windows. No shutters remain, but nearly all hold backs are present. The windows are for the most part nine-over-six-light double-hung wooden sash, as in the south front section,

or six-over-six. These are the original windows while the two-over-two-light double-hung wooden sash windows are later replacements.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Gabled with steep pitch, slate on southern sections; the rest is tin.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The original plaster cove cornice across the south front has been removed from the east and west sides and yet the wooden cornice section remains on the west side.
- c. Dormers: None.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The south section of the house has two rooms, fireplaces in the outside end walls. There are plaster partitions between rooms. The original north wing contains a stairway and one room. The second floor has three bedrooms, excellent woodwork and one room with a fireplace over the original north room.
2. Stairways: Original stairway contained in original north wing.
3. Flooring: Original floors remain, except for the west room of the south section. Oak on the first floor; pine on the second.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster. East and west walls of the first floor had paneling, now gone. The second floor of the south section had three bedrooms with paneling or board partitions for the east and west walls. This paneling remains in fine condition. The paneling is of either seasoned oak or ash.
5. Doorways and doors: Practically all openings and doors are original. They are either of horizontal boards or of three raised panels. All are wooden.
6. Trim: Chair rails and baseboards are of excellent quality and original. The paneled ends are gone except for a small section in the east wall.
7. Hardware: Most all of the original hardware has survived. It is of excellent design and in excellent condition. All the hinges are of wrought iron and the majority are of the snibell type.
8. Lighting: Modern electricity.

9. Heating: All fireplaces original. Modern central heating has been installed.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Situated on a bank well above the road, facing south.
2. Outbuildings: Mostly standing as shown in 1881, except the mill.
3. Walks, driveways, enclosures: None.
4. Landscaping, gardens: There are a few large trees left, notably a beech tree to the west which shades the 1742 date in black brick.

Prepared by Bart Anderson
Curator, Chester County
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