

"WHILLSIDE" (JAYBROOK)

King of Prussia Road just south of Gulph Creek Road
Radnor Township
Delaware County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-1002

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
120 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

"HILLSIDE (GAYBROOK)"

Street Address: King of Prussia Road just south of Gulph Creek Road
Radnor Township, Delaware County, Pennsylvania

Present Owner: Charles M. Tatum, above address

Present Occupant: Owner

Present Use: Residence

Brief Statement of Significance: A typical early Pennsylvania farmhouse of simple design, which retains many original features.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: House was standing on 145 acre trace conveyed April 1, 1816 by administrators of William Thomas, deceased, to Peter Pechin, tanner, of Lower Merion Twp., who took up residence here (Delaware County Deed Book M, p. 310). Pechin family lived here until World War I, when acquired by Charles S. Walton, adjoining landowner; heirs of Charles S. Walton conveyed it in 1929 to Charles M. Tatum and sister, Juliana Randolph Tatum Perry.
2. Date of erection: Prior to 1816 (probably 18th century)
3. Architect, builder, suppliers etc.: No information
4. Original plans, construction etc.: No information
5. Notes on alterations and additions: First house on site was a log house which stood to east, close to road, and survived well into 19th century and whose history is well known to octogenarian Elizabeth Pechin, who still lives opposite; the present section in center, consisting of dining room and center room, was built next (probably also in 18th century), and some time in the 19th century the present living room to the west was built (probably pre-1830). The present frame kitchen wing (kitchen below, bed and bath rooms above) was added on the east side, rear, of house in 1929 by architect J. Brognard Okie. At the same time clapboard in the second floor of west end of the house was renewed and other minor changes were made.

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6. Important old views and references: The name Hillside seems not to have been used by the Pechin family until about 1900. It is curious that there is in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania a watercolour by Eugene Castello, labelled "'Hillside,' Radnor" and dated July 1887 (#ARP.061), which describes the old stone house pictured as "Old Morgan Homestead Radnor, Pa. About 200 years old, formerly Morgan's Corner." This house does not appear to be either this Hillside or the Morgan Farmhouse (see report on it), and no one knows of any other property called Hillside or any other Morgan Farmhouse of this late date. At any rate, Hillside was always identified with the Pechin family, is called locally "the old Pechin place" and had no connection with the Morgans who owned land to the south.
- B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure: None known
- C. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated: None

Prepared by Francis James Dollett Date June 1988

For Radnor Historical Society

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This building has a very simple design typical of early Pennsylvania farmhouses.
2. Condition of fabric: The building is in a good stable condition and is well maintained as a private residence.

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Forty-seven and one-half feet (47-1/2') by twenty-one feet (21'), not including the kitchen addition.
2. Foundations: Stone
3. Wall construction: Original walls are of stone construction. West end of second story and two-story kitchen addition to east are of recent date and clapboarded.
4. Porches: Wooden porches exist on the south and north elevations. (See photographs.)
5. Chimneys: Two, of stone, both original.

6. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: Doors are panelled below (four panels) with glass of nine lights above; have vertical strip panelling on inner side, probably reproductions.
- b. Windows and shutters: Some old windows with original glass panes. Shutters outside are replacements.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Gable roof (gable and valley over additions), wood shingles. Adzed and pegged rafters (original) in old section.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Simple wood cornice.
- c. Dormers: None

C. Technical Description of Interiors:

1. Floor Plans:

First Floor: Four main rooms (including kitchen but not including lavatory)
Second Floor: Five main rooms, 2 baths, 2 halls

2. Stairways: Two enclosed stairways, one from center room and one from dining room (south-east); both are original.
3. Flooring: Random width floor boards, mostly original but a few modern replacements throughout.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plastered directly on walls, painted and/or papered. Original adzed ceiling beams remain in center room; the similar old ones in dining room were destroyed by fire in 1929 and have been duplicated.
5. Doorways and doors: Original doorways on interior throughout except in new kitchen wing are of vertical strip panelling (batten type).
6. Trim: Very little. Narrow wood framing around windows is all.
7. Hardware: A very little is original; most of it is reproduction installed by Okie in 1929.

8. Lighting: Electricity
9. Heating: Central heating. Gas stove. Dining room fireplace has one in bedroom above it; center room fireplace backs onto fireplace in living room at west end; no second floor fireplaces on this chimney. Center room has plain mantel shelf, which is original. All mantels are framed in wood with plaster panels above mantel shelf and around edge of fireplace.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Rear of house faces sharp hillside which drops to valley containing branch of Gulph Creek, Schuylkill River stream. The front of the house faces south.
2. Enclosures: None
3. Outbuildings: A two-story spring house converted (upper part) into garage; stone and frame barn converted into house.
4. Walks, driveways etc.: Roughstone walk from drive to front door; stone retaining wall around grass terrace.
5. Landscaping, gardens etc.: Natural setting; little if any landscaping.

Prepared by F. J. Dallett Date June 1958

For Radnor Historical Society