

605 Unionville Rd.
East Marlborough Township

Deed book, page Date	Grantor, Grantee, other information	Price Acreage
Cited in mortgage H, 42 & 43 5/4/1750	Abigail Cloud to Robert Wickersham, tract of land on which Wickersham built a messuage (dwelling) between 1750 and 1757. (In 1757 Wickersham took out a mortgage which mentioned a messuage on the property, the first evidence of a dwelling on this tract.)	200 acres
N, 1 5/29/1759	Sheriff Benjamin Davis to Jacob Taggart, messuage and tract of land, property of Robert Wickersham, sold for debt	£46 2d 200 acres
E2, 35 4/7/1789	James Bennett & James Pyle, executors of estate of Jacob Taggart, deceased, to John & Sarah Taggart, two tracts, part of the 200 acres above: 1) 75.5 acres, 2) 14 acres	£265
E2, 40 4/8/1789	John & Sarah Taggart to James & Hannah Pyle, tract of land, part of E2, 35 above	£221 11 s 75.5 acres
E2, 42 4/9/1789	James & Hannah Pyle to John & Rachel Pennock, tract of land, part of E2, 40 above	£150 50 acres
Q2, 280 1/7/1797	John Pennock, blacksmith, and wife Rachel to George McFarlan, house carpenter, tract of land. According to Cyrus Stern's McFarlan-Stern Genealogy, there was a dwelling on this property when George McFarlan bought it.	£500 50 acres
M3, 224 4/21/1816	Jeremiah Baily, yeoman, and wife Elizabeth to George McFarlan, yeoman, lot of woodland	\$454.00 3.5 acres
X2, 7 3/11/1802	Peter Wackerly, yeoman, and wife Maria to George McFarlan, tract of land	\$684.00 57.5 acres
Will, written 1837 proved 1845 Will #10810	George McFarlan will, leaving to son Joseph "the plantation whereon I now reside," consisting of 111 acres: the above three transactions.	
(The following two transactions are included because of their interest. They do not relate directly to the Sorzano house:		
A6, 470 3/21/1853	Joseph & Eliza McFarlan to Directors of Common Schools of East Marlborough township, tract of land This is the land where Fairview School was built.	\$87.50 80 perches

U7, 226 3/30/1870	Joseph & Eliza McFarlan to Bayard Taylor, tract of land south of present West Locust Lane	\$5,702.72 51 acres 3 roods 14 7/8 perches)
U6, 366 4/1/1863	Joseph & Eliza McFarlan to William B. Gause, message and tract. This is the homestead where Joseph McFarlan grew up, now (2001) the home of Thomas & Barbara Schenarts.	\$5,508.56 52 acres 74 perches
Will, written 1871 proved 1872 Will #16910	Joseph McFarlan will, leaving to wife Eliza "all my estate both personal and real."	
V10, 387 3/31/1891	George W. McFarlan & Joseph Pyle, executors of Joseph McFarlan estate, to Thomas Rakestraw, message and tract. Rakestraw's wife was Josephine McFarlan	\$3,100.00 10 acres 120.27 perches
Will, written and proved 1923 Will # 39657	Thomas Rakestraw will, leaving real property to wife Josephine.	
E17, 229 5/16/1926	Josephine C. Rakestraw to Evans R. Jackson, message and tract of land	\$1.00 6 acres 81.27 perches
E33, 219 6/27/1961	Evans R. & Lillian C. Jackson to Paul B. & Edith M. Stott, message and tract of land	\$1.00 6 acres 81.27 perches
C37, 561 7/20/1966	Paul B. & Edith M. Stott to Holiday Gardens of Kennett Square, Inc., message and tract of land	\$70,000.00 6 acres 81.27 perches
W40, 1045 9/6/1972	Holiday Gardens of Kennett Square, Inc. to Holiday Gardens, Inc., message and tract of land	\$1.00 6 acres 81.27 perches
I55, 120 7/27/1979	Holiday Gardens, Inc. to Douglas T. & Jean L. Sorzano, parcel of land, part of premises in W40, 1045	\$1.00 1.210 acres
1439, 290 2/21/1989	Douglas T. & Jean L. Sorzano to Devault Packing Co., parcel of land	\$95,000.00 1.210 acres
2002, 31 5/16/1990	Devault Packing Co. to Douglas T. & Jean L. Sorzano, parcel of land	\$95,000.00 1.210 acres

from Cyrus Stern: The McFarlan and Stern Families of Chester County, PA., and New Castle County, Del.

West Chester, PA: F. S. Hickman, 1885.

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John Pennock was a blacksmith; his stone house contained but two or three rooms; his shop and a shed near by George used for a carpenter shop and wood-house. As his family increased he enlarged the house; first, by an addition to the south end, and later by a two-story kitchen on the north.

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25. Joseph, b. 3d mo. 1, 1804; d. 6th mo. 15, 1872, m. 3d mo. 4, 1830, Eliza Ann Kennedy, daughter of Ebenezer Kennedy...Joseph McFarlan occupied the homestead [now, 2000, home of Thomas and Barbara Schenarts] for many years, but finally sold the old buildings and about 50 acres of land, and erected new buildings on a beautiful elevation by the side of the road. About the year 1870, he sold 50 acres adjoining Cedarcroft, to Bayard Taylor. Some 10 acres remain with the new buildings, where Joseph died.* His widow retains the home, and with her youngest daughter and son-in-law occupy it at the present, 1884.

*Joseph marrying into a Presbyterian family, very soon gave him a new theme of thought, the result being his uniting with his wife in membership with said church at Fagg's Manor, and in the fellowship of which he lived and died, and in whose cemetery his mortal body rests.

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Of the seven children of Joseph and Eliza McFarlan, one is of special interest:

Josephine C., b. 5th mo. 24, 1846; m. 10th mo 3d, 1876, Thomas Rakestraw, b. 1850, son of Lydia (Bushong) and the late Abram Rakestraw, and grand-son of Thomas and Mary (Lippincott) Rakestraw. Post Office, Willowdale, Chester County, Pa. [These are Gilbert Pratt's grandparents. Their daughter Genevieve Rakestraw Pratt (Mrs. Arthur Pratt) was Gilbert's mother.]

Re original 200 A property: Abigail Cloud nee Johnson married 1) Thomas Wickersham (so Robert Wickersham was her son or stepson), 2) 1727 Isaac Baily, 3) 1738 Mordecai Cloud who died 1745.

Joseph McFarlan was taxed on

1850	104 acres @ \$40, \$4160; 2 horses, \$80; 5 cows, \$105; 1 carriage, \$30 County tax, \$8.75; State tax, \$13.34, Dog tax \$1.00 , (crossed out)
1856	100 acres @ \$40, \$4000; 2 horses, \$75; 2 cows, \$42; 1 carriage, \$20 County tax \$8.35; State tax \$12.64
1858	100 acres @ \$40, \$4000; 2 horses, \$120; 3 cows, \$120; 1 carriage, \$20 County tax \$12.78; State tax \$10.87
1860	under names of Joseph & Edward McFarlan (son Edward would have been 25 in 1860): 104 acres, \$4563; 2 horses, \$40; 2 cows, \$50; 1 carriage, \$20 County tax \$17.02; State tax \$14.33
1861	104 acres, \$4563; 2 horses, \$40; 7 cows, \$145; 1 carriage, \$30 County tax 14.84; State tax \$11.87
1862	104 acres @ \$47, \$4888; 1 horse, \$25; 5 cows, \$90; 1 carriage, \$30 County tax \$17.54; State tax \$12.80
1863	55 acres @ \$50, \$2750; 1 horse, \$45; 4 cows, \$90 County tax \$10.09; State tax \$7.21
1864	55 acres @ \$50, \$2750; 1 horse, \$50; 4 cows, \$100 County tax \$14.50; State tax \$7.25
1868	55 acres @ \$52, \$2600; 1 horse, \$60; 4 cows, \$140 County tax \$29.30; State tax \$17.58

Usually when someone built a house, his taxes would increase, but I found no evidence of this.

1/24/01 talk with Gilbert Pratt

Thomas & Josephine Rakestraw had a gas generator to provide carbide lighting. They stopped using it, however, when a similar gas generator at a neighbor's caused a serious fire.

Gib remembers that the house had a cistern in attic, bathroom upstairs in front part of house had indoor toilet and copper-lined tub.

When Gib lived there c. 1918-25, it was a two-family house. Kitchen added on N side toward front, for family (Josephine) in front part of house. Another family (Gib's) lived in back part of house, also in addition to west, present garage would be a part of it.

'False chimneys' added when remodeled, by Josephine & Thomas, he thinks.

Photo shows double-terraced front yard, steps down to street, big spruce tree NE of house, Gib says from the top you could see the Delaware River.

There was a dug well just N of Worths' line.

Back part of house had 2-holer outside toilet, story about banging something against the side of the privy when the cook was in there, pinching her 'heinie.' Got in a lot of trouble for that.

Very deep 'vault' (root cellar)

Josephine rode sidesaddle, even rode when older. Thomas Rakestraw came from Lancaster County and worked with William Rakestraw at nurseries where Landhope is now. Josephine played the dulcimer, and Thomas went to hear her and ended up marrying her. She built the house, around 1926, where Gib & Bucky live now.

Thos. Rakestraw purchase was 10 acres; when sold by his heirs it was about 6 acres. Gib says Frank Worth (Ralph Worth's father) got the 4 acres to the south.

Gib thinks the house was called Rosewood, will call me if he finds corroboration. (He called; Rosewood was Rigaudieres' house.) Belle View is the name written on back of one of the photos he gave me.

1870 B. Taylor purchase was S of West Locust Lane.

Jacksons built greenhouses.

Trolley was across the road, c. 1906-29. Gib remembers in winter overhead wires would be covered with ice, trolley would have to back up and try again to break through, causing brilliant sparks, like fireworks, reflecting on ice-covered trees.

(Gib was born in 1916 in a house where the Sun station is now, lived 2 years in Kennett during WWI, at present Sorzano house till 1925/6, 1 year in present nursery gift shop (former nursery office), when first married Gib & Bucky lived in 3rd house to the south, then in big nursery house til 1950. He mentioned that in the development next to Eckman property on Street Rd. there is an old water wheel, cast iron, half buried, which was used by the Taggarts (?) to water their stock from the creek. Also said they couldn't get water at Fairview School so went to a log cabin across from the Sun Station for water, so it took a long time, what with spilling it and having to go back to fill up.)

HISTORY OF
DOUGLAS AND JEAN SORZANO HOUSE
605 UNIONVILLE ROAD
EAST MARLBOROUGH TOWNSHIP
CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

In 1861, when Joseph McFarlan built “Belle View,” the surrounding countryside was much less crowded and busy than it is today. McFarlan had sold the homestead where he grew up, the present (2001) Schenarts property. Beyond that, to the north, the next house was at the intersection of Routes 926 and 82. Across from Belle View down Locust Lane, there was only the stone house now owned by Stephanie Jackson. Cedarcroft was brand new, having been built the year before, but it stood alone in its splendid park.

The McFarlan property was part of the land transferred (apparently in an unrecorded deed) by Abigail Cloud to her son Robert Wickersham in 1750. (Abigail Johnson had quite a career, marrying, first, Thomas Wickersham; second, Jeremiah Baily; and third, Mordecai Cloud.) Besides other property, Thomas Wickersham owned this 200-acre property southwest of the intersection of Routes 926 and 82, which went to Abigail when he died. In 1759 it was sold at sheriff’s sale to Jacob Taggart. There’s no indication of the reason Robert lost the property--illness? laziness? bad luck?--but sheriff’s sales were pretty frequent in the past, there being fewer safety nets than there are now.

Thirty years later Jacob Taggart’s executors sold part of the property to his son John and wife Sarah, who sold the greater part of it the next day to James and Hannah Pyle, who in turn, the day after *that*, sold 50 acres to John Pennock, a blacksmith, and his wife Rachel. The Pennocks kept the property for about twelve years and then sold it to George McFarlan. It was probably the Pennocks who built a house and some outbuildings, which are mentioned in the McFarlan genealogy as having been on the land when George McFarlan bought it, though the deed says nothing about a messuage [dwelling].

Anyway, that was the birthplace of Joseph McFarlan in 1804 and his childhood home as well. In 1845 his father died, leaving to Joseph “the plantation whereon I now reside,” by then a total of 111 acres. And it was the farm from which he carved out about 10 acres for his fine new house in what turned out to be the twilight of his life, as he had only eleven more years to enjoy it. In 1853 the McFarlans sold off 80 perches for the one-room Fairview School, and in 1870 they sold Bayard Taylor about 51 acres south of West Locust Lane.

When Joseph’s wife Eliza died around 1890, Thomas Rakestraw bought the house. Thomas Rakestraw, according to his grandson Gilbert Pratt, came from Lancaster County to work with his relative William Rakestraw at the nurseries on the corner where Landhope is now. The story is that Thomas, hearing that Josephine McFarlan could play the dulcimer, made some pretext to meet her, went to hear her and ended up marrying her. Gilbert remembers that Josephine rode horseback even when older, always sidesaddle.

Thomas and Josephine had been living in Belle View for several years before they bought it, according to the genealogy. Gilbert Pratt, whose mother Genevieve was the Rakestraws’ daughter,

says they had a gas generator to provide carbide lighting but abandoned it when a neighbor's house was set afire by a generator. Early in the 20th century there was a cistern in the attic. Gilbert remembers, too, a bathroom upstairs in the front part of the house with an indoor toilet and copper-lined tub.

Gilbert's family lived in the house from about 1918 to 1925, at which time the house was remodeled to accommodate two families. The "false chimneys" were added then, Gilbert thinks. A kitchen was built on the north side for the grandparents, who occupied the front part of the house, while Gilbert's family lived in the rear and in an addition to the west, now the garage. There was a two-holer "reading house," and Gilbert tells a story about it: there was a crack in the seat and once, when the cook was in there, he and his brother banged something against the outside wall, pinching her "heinie"! They got in a lot of trouble for that, he says. The cellar had a very deep "vault" or root cellar. One of the old photographs shows a handsome double-terraced front yard with steps down to the street and a big spruce tree northeast of the house. Gilbert says that from the top of this tree you could see the Delaware River.

From about 1906 to 1929 a trolley ran north from Kennett, turning east to West Chester at Doe Run Road. Gilbert remembers the excitement when ice encrusted the overhead wires, causing the trolley to make several passes in order to get up the hill by East Locust Lane. Each time there would be brilliant sparks like fireworks, lighting up the ice-covered trees.

In 1923 Thomas Rakestraw died, and about three years later his widow Josephine built the house where Gilbert and Valeria Pratt live now and sold Belle View to Evans and Lillian Jackson. The Jacksons built the greenhouses, where they grew tomatoes and sweet peas and other flowers. Also, Mrs. Jackson had a large peony patch and shipped peonies to New York.

After keeping the property for over thirty years, the Jacksons moved to Ridgecote Lane, where they sold off building lots. Paul and Edith Stott bought the property in 1961. Five years later the Stotts sold to Holiday Gardens, owned by Lucas Sorzano, whose son Douglas lived in the house with his family and worked in the greenhouses producing potted plants. In 1979 Douglas and Jean Sorzano bought Belle View.

HISTORY OF

**DOUGLAS AND JEAN SORZANO HOUSE
605 UNIONVILLE ROAD
EAST MARLBOROUGH TOWNSHIP
CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

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To Douglas and Jean Sorzano
605 Unionville Road
Kennett Square, PA 19348

Research into history of property:	\$200.00
50 photocopies of deeds, census records @ \$.50	25.00
18 photocopies of clippings, wills, maps, etc. @ \$.25	<u>4.50</u>
Total	\$229.50