

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	SEP 26 1979
DATE ENTERED	NOV 15 1979

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC The Gardiner Wright Mansion  
AND/OR COMMON The Marsh House

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER 228 South Front Street \_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CITY, TOWN Georgetown CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
STATE Delaware VICINITY OF One  
CODE 10 COUNTY Sussex CODE 003

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME C.B. Marsh  
STREET & NUMBER 228 South Front Street  
CITY, TOWN Georgetown STATE Delaware  
VICINITY OF

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Sussex County Courthouse  
STREET & NUMBER The Circle  
CITY, TOWN Georgetown STATE Delaware

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Delaware Cultural Resource Survey S-105  
DATE 1974 \_\_\_ FEDERAL  STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Hall of Records  
CITY, TOWN Dover STATE Delaware

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Gardiner Wright Mansion sits in two acres of landscaped grounds facing to the east on Georgetown's South Front Street. The three-bay, double-pile, center-hall-plan mansion is constructed of three courses of brick stuccoed on the exterior and plastered within.

The house is of basically Regency style with some Empire and early Italianate details. In overall plan it consists of two double-pile, single-bay, brick rectangular sections placed parallel to each other. A two-story brick central hall runs the full depth of the house, joining the main sections together. The front of the central bay is recessed six feet from the main front line of the house, allowing for a recessed entrance and second-floor balcony. The parallel side sections have low hip roofs. The roofline of the central hall section is set perpendicular to those of the side sections and its roofline is one-and-a-half-feet lower.

Though the house was extensively restored by James M. Tunnell, Jr., an earlier owner in the late 1940's, its original design and all interior and exterior details which were in place at that time have been retained. An original kitchen wing running from the rear of the house, which was in bad repair, was removed. A rear screened-in, flat-roofed porch was added. A new wing was added to the north side of the house which contains a one-story kitchen and a two-story garage with servant's quarters overhead. The new wing was very carefully designed to match the style of the original house as closely as possible, as was a new shed outbuilding to the north of the garage.

Two original outbuildings, a wood shed, and an extremely unusual two-level milk house are placed symmetrically at the rear of the house. Both are constructed of brick and covered with white-painted stucco. Both have pyramidal roofs with slight overhangs at the eaves. The cornice is simple box-type with an ovolo moulding above.

The main body of the house is perfectly symmetrical and extremely plain. The tall windows, which are set into the brick walls, have no exterior shutters or decorative mouldings. The only decorations are brackets under the cornice and cut-out wooden curvilinear gingerbread trim over the small second-floor porch. The brackets are of two sizes with large and small ones placed alternately. All brackets have turned pendants and are essentially Italianate.

The low hip roofs have relatively narrow eaves. Original wooden shingles have been replaced by asphalt shingles. Interior chimneys rise on the sides of the structure near each of the four corners. The white-painted stucco on the brick exterior shows some evidence of patterning to simulate stone blocks.

The interior of the house contains eight fireplaces. Mouldings and door and window surrounds (of the bull's-eye type) are either original or careful replicas of the originals. The interior walls of the central hallway are of brick, three courses wide and plastered over. All the mantels are wood and of an early Victorian design.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1841

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Gardiner Wright Mansion, a large, three-bay, double-pile stuccoed brick structure located at the south end of Georgetown's Front Street, is significant as a very fine and unusual example of mid-nineteenth-century plantation architecture in lower Delaware. The mansion which was built in 1841 by Sussex County, Delaware, planter and Businessman Gardiner H. Wright, is virtually unique in its design in lower Delaware. It is essentially of Regency style with certain Empire and early Italianate features. In certain respects, such as its general massing and the ornate carved wooden floral design around its front entrance, the house is quite similar to "Swanwyck," the best known example of a Regency country house in Delaware before it was remodeled some years ago. As such, it is architecturally significant as one of the last remaining examples of the Regency style in Delaware and as a transitional structure of importance to southern Delaware.



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One interior wall, between what was originally the front and rear parlors, has been removed. Modern valances have been placed in the room, but the window trim is original. Original ornate plaster designs on the ceilings have also been removed.

The bookshelves and some panelling in the library at the front north side of the house appear to date from the restoration, although they are done in the same basic style. The dining room, entered through double two-panelled doors, contains wainscot panelling. A pair of modern French doors have been set into the rear wall leading to the modern porch. An original cupboard with glass-paned doors is in the east wall.

A butler's pantry has been built into the rear of the hallway separating the parlor and the dining room. The stairway rising from the front of the hall runs to a landing and then up to the upstairs hall. The posts and rail closely resemble those in another early Georgetown House (The Judge's).

The second floor of the house contains four bedrooms, each with a fireplace. The two rooms on the southwest side have wainscot panelling which appears original. All upstairs panelling, window surrounds, and interior shutters repeat the design of those on the first floor.

An original basement extends under the house displaying the brickwork, chimney bases, and heavy beams supporting the first floor.

While the interior of the house has undergone considerable alteration, many of the original features remain. The exterior design, the most significant feature of the house, has not been seriously altered.

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structures in use when the area was an active plantation. The boundary is 410.8 feet along South Front Street by 250 feet deep for a total area of 102,700 square feet.

SOUTH BEDFORD STREET

SOUTHEAST FRONT STREET

230 FEET

2.09 ACRES

45'

106'

410.80 FEET

SITE PLAN OF  
GARDINER WRIGHT MANSION  
GEORGETOWN, DELAWARE

RECEIVED

SEP 26 1979

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

1. - MANSION

2. - MODERN GARAGE

3. - MODERN KITCHEN

4. - MODERN PORCH

5. - ORIGINAL MILK HOUSE (15' x 15')

6. - ORIGINAL OUTBUILDING (15' x 15')

7. - MODERN OUTBUILDING

DRAWN TO SCALE AFTER SUSSEX COUNTY TAX MAP BY R. B. CARTER