

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

6.30
JUN 20 1978

DATE ENTERED

12 1978

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Commdr.
Commodore Thomas MacDonough House, The Trap

AND/OR COMMON

The MacDonough House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

N of Delaware
~~on west side of~~ U.S. Route 13 across from the~~NOT FOR PUBLICATION~~

CITY, TOWN

intersection of State Road 423

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

McDonough

VICINITY OF

One

STATE

Delaware

CODE

10

COUNTY

New Castle

CODE

002-02

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

DISTRICT
 BUILDING(S)
 STRUCTURE
 SITE
 OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC
 PRIVATE

 BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

IN PROCESS
 BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

OCCUPIED
 UNOCCUPIED
 WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

YES: RESTRICTED
 YES: UNRESTRICTED
 NO

PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE
 COMMERCIAL
 EDUCATIONAL
 ENTERTAINMENT
 GOVERNMENT
 INDUSTRIAL
 MILITARY
 MUSEUM
 PARK
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE
 RELIGIOUS
 SCIENTIFIC
 TRANSPORTATION
 OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Ms. Brigitta Moulson

STREET & NUMBER

C/O The Greenville Company, Inc. 4006 Concord Pike

CITY, TOWN

Wilmington

VICINITY OF

STATE

Delaware 19303

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Public Building

STREET & NUMBER

Rodney Square

CITY, TOWN

Wilmington

STATE

Delaware

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Delaware Cultural Resource Survey, N-425

DATE

1972

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Division of Historical & Cultural Affairs

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		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The MacDonough House is located about fifty feet to the west of the southbound lane of Route 13. The house faces the highway which in this section approximately follows the course of the Old King's Road. There is no major crossroad in the immediate area but a secondary road does terminate across from the house. The area around this corner has come to be known as McDonough.

The MacDonough House was built in several distinct sections. The two main sections, brick to the north and frame to the south, were built in the mid-eighteenth century and early-nineteenth century respectively. The brick section had a three-bay facade with a door located centrally on the front and rear. The frame addition enlarged the facade by another three bays and was built flush with the earlier portion. In order to make the roof pitches the same on the front the peak of the brick section was raised. However, the rear walls of the two sections do not line up and this causes the roof to be skewed. A false gable at the end of the frame section modifies this to some extent. In order to unify the facade, the entry in the brick section was filled and the door in the north bay of the frame section became the main entrance to the farmhouse. On the interior, a center-hall, single-pile plan replaced the one-room plan of the eighteenth-century house. The lower floor of the facade has an asymmetrical five-bay appearance because of its off-center entry while the upper floor reflects a roughly-symmetrical, six-bay appearance.

The north section of the McDonough House is built of locally fired brick and is laid in Flemish bond on all sides. Glazed headers are employed on the east facade to further enhance the decorative patterning of the brickwork. The foundation, below the water table, is laid in English bond on all sides. The water table is quite unusual because beveled bricks are not employed to fill the right angle formed as the foundation steps out. A two-brick-deep belt course is found on both the front and rear of the dwelling. They are located just below the second floor windows and served as flashing for what indications show to be a pent eave located across the width of each facade. They were removed sometime in the nineteenth century. Evidence for the front and rear doors is indicated in the now white-washed brickwork. The doors and window opening on the first floor and the basement windows were capped by segmental arches and finished with queen closers. The arches have been filled with an unbonded brick infill on the first floor level but are still present in the basement. The windows have nine-over-nine, double-hung sash. Panelled shutters on the first floor and louvered blinds on the second floor flank the windows. An interior end chimney is located in the north gable end. This wall rises in uninterrupted Flemish bond from the water table to the eaves.

The frame section of the MacDonough House was built between 1820 and 1830. Originally clapboard-sheathed, it is now covered in asbestos siding. Like the brick section, the windows have nine-over-nine light sash and are flanked by shutters and blinds. A Victorian porch is centered over the door. It has turned posts and a railing with square balusters. A scalloped board forms the trim between the posts at the cornice line. The roof is metal and slopes on three sides. The six-panel door is surmounted by a transom. There is another Victorian porch at the rear of the frame section. It also has turned posts similar to those on the front porch. Here, however, the trim consists of a simple box cornice and brackets with turned spindle insets. The door is also panelled and matches the front door in position. The front and rear doors both date to an earlier period than the porches. The gable roof over the two main sections of the house is sheathed in composition shingles; these cover clapboard shingles; the latter which can be seen at the eaves. Three

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" 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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Begun in the mid-eighteenth century and enlarged and altered at various times in the nineteenth century, the MacDonough House, also known as the Trap, is chiefly noted for its associations to Commodore Thomas MacDonough the "Hero of Lake Champlain" in the War of 1812. The house is also significant as a fine example of small scale but affluent eighteenth century Delaware plantation housing enlarged in the context of the economic prosperity of mid-nineteenth century rural Delaware.

Commodore MacDonough was not the first of his family to achieve prominence in Delaware. James MacDonough, who settled at the Trap in 1748 became a substantial land holder in the area of St. Georges Hundred, New Castle County, purchasing a second farm, the Halt (Holt) in 1750, and additional tracts of farm land in 1749, 1760, 1761, 1763, 1765 and 1766. James MacDonough had two sons, Patrick and Thomas, who received the Trap and The Halt respectively on the death of their father around 1802. The tax assessor's workbooks for St. Georges Hundred in 1816 list the estate of Patrick MacDonough as including a one-hundred-and-forty acre tract containing a brick dwelling, old barn and stable while his wife Sarah owned two slaves. His nephew Thomas owned another sixty acres with a small dwelling house. Little is known of Patrick except that he died in 1807 and was buried in the small family graveyard adjacent to his house. His brother Thomas, father of the Thomas listed in the 1816 tax records, died in 1795 after serving in Delaware as a doctor, a major in the Delaware Regiment in the Revolutionary War, third justice of the Court of Common Pleas, second justice of the Court of Common Pleas, and the Orphan's Court and associate judge of the Court of Common Pleas. Inventories for both Thomas, senior, and Patrick show that by 1800 the MacDonough family was quite affluent in terms of land holdings, slaves and personal property. On his death in 1795, Thomas MacDonough left his farm, The Halt, to his son Thomas; Patrick, however, tied up his estate with provisions for the life tenancy of his wife Sarah before the old family seat could be disposed of. Eventually The Trap did come into the possession of Patrick's nephew, Thomas.

Commodore Thomas MacDonough joined the American Navy as a midshipman in 1800 and initially served under Stephen Decater in the expeditions against the Tripolitan pirates. In 1804 he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. With the advent of the War of 1812, MacDonough was assigned to the frigate *Constellation* as First Lieutenant and later ordered by President Madison to assume command of the American fleet on Lake Champlain. On September 11, 1814, Thomas MacDonough's American force engaged the British fleet in the battle that helped clinch the outcome of the negotiations concluding the War of 1812. MacDonough's fame was nationwide and besides being promoted to Commodore he received tokens of appreciation from several states including Vermont, New York and Delaware.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY under 1 acre

Latitude $39^{\circ}29'29''$ ²⁹
 Longitude $75^{\circ}39'30''$ ⁰⁴

UTM REFERENCES

A

ZONE	EASTING								

C

ZONE	EASTING								

B

ZONE	EASTING								

D

ZONE	EASTING								

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated area is bounded on the north by a hedgerow which is 25' from the north wall of the house; on the east by a hedgerow which is 44' from the front of the house; on the south by the property boundary which is 87' from the south end of the house and on the west by an arbitrary line 94' from the rear wall of the house. The southwest corner of the rectangle has been cut into so as to exclude one of the outbuildings. The boundary here runs along the driveway for 34'. Included within the boundary is the house, a shed, a root cellar and a privy.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Bernard Herman, Lecturer, American Studies Dept., University of Delaware
Joan M. Norton, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION	DATE
<u>Div. of Historical & Cultural Affairs</u>	<u>February 1978</u>
STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
<u>Hall of Records</u>	<u>(302) 678-5314</u>
CITY OR TOWN	STATE
<u>Dover</u>	<u>Delaware</u>

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE *Lauren [Signature]*

TITLE *Director, Division of Hist + Cult Affairs* DATE *6/26/78*

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Charles [Signature] DATE *12-12-78*

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST *Lynn D. Beebe* DATE *Dec. 8, 1978*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED	DEC 12 1978

Commodore Thomas MacDonough House, The Trap

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

pedimented-gable dormers pierce the roof. These are found on the front and rear of the brick section and on the front slope of the frame section. They date to the period when the frame section was built. Like the original block, there is an interior end chimney in the frame section.

Later-nineteenth century additions to the house include frame one-and one-and-a-half-story wings to the south gable end wall and southwest rear wall. These are sheathed in asbestos siding over clapboard and have six-over-six light sash windows. The gable roofs are sheathed in composition shingles. On the interior they are simply finished with plaster over mill-sawn lath and rough mill-sawn partition walls.

On the interior of the main two portions of the MacDonough House, the first floor reflects the early-nineteenth century period of enlargement. In the brick section all of the eighteenth century trim except a few panelled window aprons and window has been removed. The aprons have three raised bevel-edged wood panels and are all in their original position except one from the northwest corner of the room which was removed. The room has a Greek-Revival period mantel with deeply-fluted flattened pilasters bull's-eye capitals and a broken elaborately moulded cornice. These were installed when the original corner stair and fireplace were removed. A five-panel door in what was originally the south gable end of the brick section connects it to the added hall and parlor in the frame portion. The center hall contains a closed string stair with squared balusters which leads to the second floor by way of an intermediate landing. The 1830's parlor is finished with the same combination of federal and Greek-Revival period trim as is used in the brick section with the addition of panelled chimney closets built into the flashes of the gable end stair.

The second floor of the eighteenth-century core contains two-thirds of an original panelled end wall. The panelling was originally divided into three balanced fields with a projecting segment of cornice visually defining each field. The central area focuses on the hearth with two large raised bevel-edged panels flanking the fireplace opening and a built-in cupboard. The fireplace is finished with a heavy bolection moulding surround and the cupboard directly over the hearth is finished with butterfly shelves and with glass-panelled cabinet doors with brass pulls hung on H-hinges. A narrow vertical raised panel on either side of the cupboard finishes the central field. On one side of the fireplace and chimney breast is a panelled closet door with a raised panel directly over the door frame filling the open space to the cornice. This opens out from a closet containing a double-beaded edge coat rail with turned clothes pegs. This forms the second of the three fields. A similar door on the other side of the chimney breast, the now removed third field, probably held the landing of the corner stair which lead up from the first floor. The exterior surface of the wall was first painted red and then later turquoise green. The added second floor chamber dating from the 1830's was simply finished with plaster walls. The trim consists of a later-nineteenth century mantel with a deeply reeded surround, a mantel shelf supported on sawn brackets and closets in the chimney breast. The attic story is finished with plaster over wood lath. This dates from the

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period of the 1830 construction. An attic partition door displays evidence of some later mahogany graining.

To the west or rear of the MacDonough House is a group of outbuildings connected with the farm. Included within the nomination area are three outbuildings. Two of these, a shed and a root cellar are set back-to-back and are located just behind the late-nineteenth century additions to the house. The shed is about twenty-feet long and thirteen feet wide and the gable roof runs parallel to the roof of the house. The shed has vertical board siding and a vertical board door held by strap hinges. The gable of the root cellar is perpendicular to the shed. The root cellar which is set into the ground has a stone foundation and is approximately twenty-feet square. Also included at the northeast corner of the nominated area is a privy. It also has vertical board siding and is finished with plaster and lath on the interior.

The MacDonough House is set in an unlandscaped yard with only a few trees. Hedges mark the east and north sides. The south boundary of the property is undefined by a natural border. To the west is a farm building complex of which only the above mentioned buildings are included in the nominated area.

See continuation sheet

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Commodore Thomas MacDonough House
New Castle County, Delaware

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE Amendment

Amend last two paragraphs of description as follows:

To the rear of the MacDonough House is a group of farm-related outbuildings. They sit quite close to the house and include fourteen buildings. The oldest of the structures are a shed and a root cellar (#2,3) set back-to-back just behind the late nineteenth century additions to the house. The shed is about twenty feet long by thirteen feet wide and the gable roof runs parallel to the roof of the house. It has vertical board siding and a vertical board door held by strap hinges. The gable of the root cellar is perpendicular to the shed. Approximately twenty feet square, the root cellar has a foundation of stone rubble. To the northwest of this and still within the yard of the house is a privy (#4). It has vertical board siding and a plastered interior. West of this are two sets of connecting barns and pole sheds, one on each side of the lane. They date to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, exact dates are undeterminable. The barns and sheds are faced with lapped vertical boards or board and batten, and all have metal roofs. The foundations are stone rubble, brick piers or concrete. Sash have multi-paned windows and strap hinges hold doors. An interesting feature is the manner in which the vertical sheathing boards of the feed barn are separated to allow for ventilation, and the manner in which the sash of the animal shed slide from side to side. Near the south boundary is a windmill and a pump house.

The MacDonough House is set in an unlandscaped yard with only a few trees. Hedges mark the east and part of the north side of the property. To the south is a large grassy area. To the west the farm buildings.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Commodore Thomas MacDonough House

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

In addition to its associations with Commodore Thomas MacDonough, The Trap is architecturally significant as a small but well-appointed, mid-eighteenth century, Delaware plantation house. During the tenure of James and Patrick, the house consisted of only one principal room downstairs and two smaller rooms on the second floor. However, the use of brick and the fine interior woodwork as displayed in the fully panelled end wall on the second floor indicate that despite the apparent smallness of the dwelling, its builder and residents were people of superior affluence in the immediate area of St. Georges Hundred. This is further borne out by Patrick MacDonough's 1803 inventory which listed among other things six yellow Windsor chairs, an eight-day clock, silver items such as teaspoons, sugar tongs and a creamer, and a "pleasure sleigh." Other buildings listed at this time were a granery, corn crib, smokehouse and kitchen. The additions made later in the nineteenth century greatly enlarged the physical dimensions of the house but effected relatively little change in the dwelling as a projection of affluence and social position.

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Commodore Thomas MacDonough House
New Castle County, Delaware

CONTINUATION SHEET

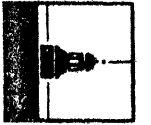
ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE Amendment

Amended Acreage of Property

about 1.4 acres

Amended Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated area follows the deeded boundaries of the property as follows: beginning at a stake at the northeast corner of the property in the westerly right-of-way of Route 13, S 10° 06' 11" W 218.59 feet to a stake in the westerly right-of-way of Route 13, thence N 79° 53' 49" W 288 feet, thence N 7° 49' 29" E 189.10 feet, thence S 85° 37' 27" E 297 feet to the stake which was the point of beginning. The north boundary line is twenty-three feet from the north gable end wall of the house; the east boundary (or westerly right-of-way of Route 13) is forty-seven feet from the facade of the house; the south boundary is fourteen feet from the rear wall of the pump house; and the west boundary bisects one of the pole sheds attached to the barn. The nominated area includes all of the outbuildings located within the property boundary.



DELAWARE DIVISION OF HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

DRAWN BY

SSH

DATE

11/29/78

SCALE

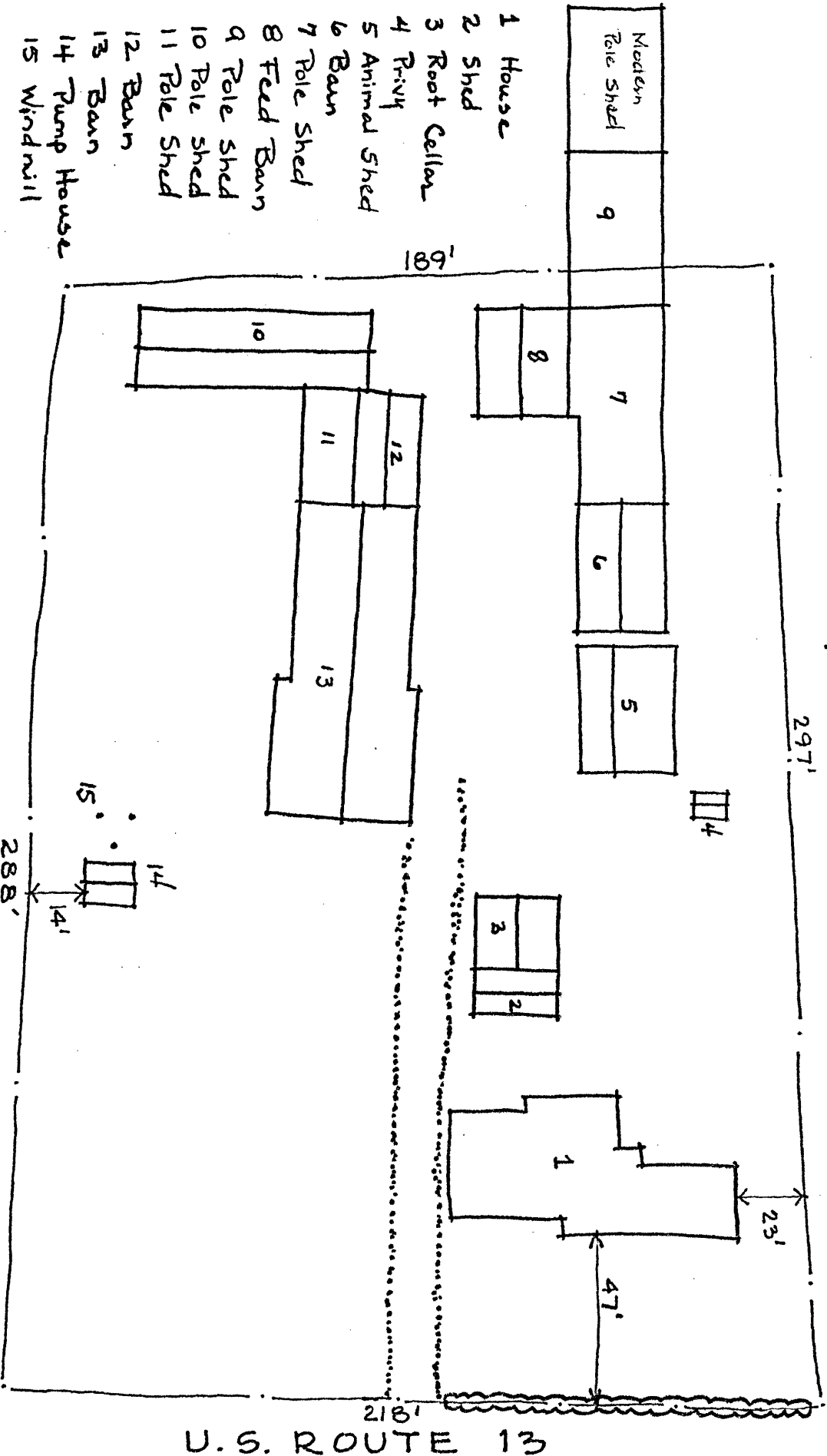
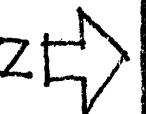
NONE

FILE

N-424

TITLE

Sketch Map



- 1 House
- 2 Shed
- 3 Root Cellar
- 4 Privy
- 5 Animal Shed
- 6 Barn
- 7 Pole Shed
- 8 Field Barn
- 9 Pole Shed
- 10 Pole Shed
- 11 Pole Shed
- 12 Barn
- 13 Barn
- 14 Pump House
- 15 Windmill

COMMODORE THOMAS MACDONOUGH HOUSE
 NEW CASTLE COUNTY, DELAWARE