

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NCRS use only

received DEC 10 1980

date entered DEC 11 1980

**1. Name**

historic The Fisher Homestead

and/or common Cedarcroft Farm

**2. Location**

street & number One quarter mile east of County Road  
#264 northwest of Lewes

not for publication

city, town Lewes  vicinity of congressional district One

state Delaware code 10 county Sussex County code 005

**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 William G. Fisher, Sr.

street & number 1012 Colonial Avenue

city, town Norfolk  vicinity of state Virginia

**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 CRS S-182, S-823  
Delaware Cultural Resource Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1974  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Old State House, The Green, P.O. Box 1401

city, town Dover state Delaware

## 7. Description

**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

Fisher Homestead is located on Oyster Rocks Neck on the south side of the Broadkill River on a farm consisting of about 175 acres of fast land and another 375 acres of marsh. Family tradition cites this property as the location of the earliest Fisher family settlement in Sussex County, although no evidence of a late seventeenth century occupation has been found. The boundaries of the present nomination generally surround the area occupied by a mid-nineteenth century family farmhouse and its surviving dependent structures, which is situated on the southern half of the farm overlooking several hundred acres of marsh which were used for pasture and a source of hay during and prior to the nineteenth century. The original farm was divided in 1848 by the Sussex County Orphan's Court. The construction of the present farm house was the result of that division. The lane leading up to the house was first laid out by the court as a private road leading to the hay marshes.

The Fisher farm house is located on a ridge of Rumford loamy sand running generally north and south across the farm. The setting of the structure is not typical of rural domestic sites of the period, but this probably results from the configuration of the 1848 Orphan's Court division. built about 1850, the house is a typical example of the application of Greek Revival details to the traditional Delaware farm house form, in its Sussex County variant. The house was originally constructed as a frame, two-story, single-pile, side-hall plan dwelling with wood pilasters at the corners and a one-story Greek Revival portico. The roof features a heavy moulded cornice with partial returns on the gable ends. There was an original one-story, three-bay wing attached to the northeast gable end, and a second one-story, three-bay wing attached to the rear of the side wing. In the early 1900's the side wing was raised to two stories, and the portico replaced by a three-bay porch. The heavy cornice and the pilasters were reproduced in the new second floor portion. In the 1930's, the original weatherboards were covered with sawn cedar shingles, and the cedar shingled roof covered with tin. In addition, the three-bay porch was partially glassed in.

The house in its present configuration is a center hall plan structure. The interior is exactly simple in design. It contains interior end chimneys with fireplaces at each end of the house and a third interior end chimney in the rear one-story wing with a large kitchen fireplace. The first floor section which was the original northeast side wing contains a large room and a smaller room separated from the main one by an angled wall. Both rooms are apparently original. The smaller room was used as a first floor bedchamber. The baseboards, door surrounds, doors, and fireplace surrounds are extremely simple. The

# 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates Ca. 1850

Builder/Architect

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Fisher Homestead appears likely to have been settled in the last quarter of the seventeenth century, by members of a small contingent of Quakers who settled in eastern Sussex County after 1682, when the area was included in the domains granted to William Penn. Because the property has been owned continuously by a single family for nearly 300 years, and because there have been extensive changes on local place names during that period, it has been difficult to precisely determine the original grant. It is likely, however, that the property was purchased by John Fisher I before his death in 1686, and settled by his son John Fisher II, before 1701 when he bought an adjoining property. Members of the Fisher family were prominent in the Sussex County Quaker community into the nineteenth century, by which time most Quaker families in the area had converted to Methodism.

The origin of the present Fisher farmhouse lies in the 1848 Orphan's Court division of the farm, which split the farm in two through the latter half of the nineteenth century (though shortly after 1900 it was reunited into a single farm). The existing house was built about 1850 to serve the south half of the divided farm. Although this structure is much closer to the marsh than is to be expected for owner-occupied rural dwellings of the period, it does occupy the highest available land and is oriented toward the only available road, the court-ordered road to the hay marshes to the south and east of the house. An earlier house dating from the late eighteenth century, which was demolished by the family in 1912 after the two sections of the farm had been rejoined, sat north of the present house and was typical of the settlement pattern for owner-occupied rural dwellings of the mid-eighteenth century. The standing structure is typical, both in its original form and in the well-documented additions which have been made to it of vernacular rural dwellings in coastal Sussex County.

The existing Fisher farmhouse with, its remaining dependent structures, is significant as one of the better remaining examples of a mid-nineteenth century farmstead in the area. Its significance is enhanced by the isolation of the property, which has served to preserve the agricultural landscape in which the Fisher family lived. The structure has also avoided most of the alterations made to nearby houses of the same general type in recent years because it has served as only a summer residence for the past twenty-five years.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Scharf, J. Thomas. "History of Delaware, 1609-1888." Philadelphia: L.J. Richards & Company

Beers, D.G. "Atlas of Delaware." Philadelphia: Pomeroy and Beers. 1868.  
Sussex County Orphans Court Book "V", Page 166. (Division of property of Charles Fisher)  
Fisher Family Photograph Collection and Records.

# 10. Geographical Data

**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

Acreege of nominated property .9 acres (40,000 sq. ft)

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

Quadrangle name Lewes Quadrangle, Delaware

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A 

1	8
---	---

4	8	2	0	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	2	9	3	1	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

  
Zone Easting Northing

B 

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

  
Zone Easting Northing

C 

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D 

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E 

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F 

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G 

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H 

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

**Verbal boundary description and justification** The boundaries of the nomination consist of a square 200 feet by 200 feet containing within it all the standing structures remaining. The southeastern boundary line runs parallel to the front of the farm house, and

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard B. Carter, Sussex County Preservation Planner

organization Sussex County Preservation Planner's Office date November 19, 1980

street & number Old Courthouse telephone (302) 856-7701, Ext. 361

city or town Dover state Delaware 19901

# 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title Chief, Bureau of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

date Nov. 19, 1980

For HCPS use only  
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*[Signature]*  
Keeper of the National Register

date 12/11/80

Attest: *[Signature]*  
Chief of Registration

date 12-11-80

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received DEC 10 1980

date entered DEC 11 1980

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 1

fireplace surrounds and mantelpieces are constructed in a simple Greek Revival style, the molded baseboards and simple balustrade are typical of those found in rural Sussex County farm houses of the period. Most doorways contain transoms on the first floor of the house, which is a somewhat unusual feature. In the simplicity of the Fisher House is indicative of the Quaker heritage of the family.

The second floor consists of four bedrooms with a narrow hallway running along the northwest side of the house. The bedroom above the parlor in the original section of the second floor has a fireplace which once again is of simple design. The windows in the original sections of the house are single-hung six-over-six each. Those in the newer section are double hung six-over-six sash. An original three-bay porch on the southwest side of the rear one-story wing was enclosed with glass in the 1930's. At that time a bathroom addition was built on the roof of the rear side porch and connects to the second floor hallway of the main house.

Though the placement of windows in the front facade is symmetrical, they are placed irregularly on the end walls. the southwest gable end has only one window, placed near the front corner at the second floor level. The northeast gable end has two windows on each floor. The structure rests on a brick foundation. Like nearly all houses of its period in the eastern Sussex coastal area, it has no basement.

Associated with the farm house are a number of outbuildings relating to the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century occupation of the property, including a simple frame, shed-roofed, three-occupant privy and a frame milk house with a stuccoed brick foundation, an earthen floor set about 18 inches below ground level, and louvered windows with interior board shutters. A powerhouse from the 1920's is frame and rests on a block foundation. It was designed to house a "Delco" gasoline-powered farm generating plant, and was in use until the advent of rural electrification in the 1940's. The property also contains a frame garage which was converted from a late-nineteenth century wagon shed. The structures relating specifically to farming activities have been demolished, though the Fisher family photograph album contains good pictures of the various structures in use from the late-nineteenth century until the 1940's. A large cement water trough of about ten feet in length, dating from the early 1900's, is located to the rear of the kitchen wing of the main house.

The nominated area includes only the immediate surrounds of the existing struc-

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received DEC 10 1980

date entered DEC 11 1980

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 2

tures at the farm, but the surrounding 175 acres of fast land on the Fisher Farm possesses considerable historical archaeological potential. If an adequate test of the site becomes possible in the future, a historical archaeological nomination may also be developed. In the field north of the present farm house and buildings are two cenotaph monuments placed by the father of the present owner in 1912. The one nearest the house marks the approximate location of the old Fisher family cemetery used during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Since the family members were Quakers, they did not use tombstones to mark the graves and the cenotaph is the only evidence of it. The second monument marks the site of what was apparently the second Fisher home on the farm. This structure, which dated from the second half of the eighteenth century, went with the northern half of the farm when it was divided in 1848. When the two sections of the farm were rejoined after 1900, the father of the present owner demolished the house and erected the cenotaph to mark its location. Though the family was under the impression that this structure was the original house dating from the late seventeenth century, a surface test of the area indicates that the structure was built probably after 1740.

It therefore seems likely that an as yet unknown late seventeenth century house site is also located on the farm. Also located on the farm is the remnant of an early dike which runs parallel to the road to the hay marshes indicated on the 1848 Orphan's Court plot. The purpose of this dike is unknown but it is obviously of considerable age since it has mature trees growing on it. The present owner was told by his father that the dike was already unused and overgrown in his boyhood in the 1860's. Though there are known to have been early tidal grist mills in use in the general area which would have made use of such structures, there is no historical evidence to suggest that this dike, which is several hundred yards in length, was used for that purpose.

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received DEC 10 1980

date entered DEC 11 1980

Continuation sheet

Item number 10

Page 1

Verbal Boundary Description (continued)

begins at a point fifty feet south of the southern front corner of the house. It runs two hundred feet in a northeasterly direction and turns ninety degrees to the northwest, thence two hundred feet in a northwesterly direction, turning ninety degrees to the southwest, thence two hundred feet in a southwesterly direction, turning ninety degrees to the southeast, thence two hundred feet in a southeasterly direction to the point of beginning.

MARSH

HAY MARSHES

OYSTER ROCKS ROAD

WOODS AND FALLOW GROUND

18th century house site

N

PRIVATE ROAD

CULTIVATED FIELD

cemetery site

BOUNDARIES OF NOMINATION - 200' x 200'

19th century farm site

standing structures

TENANT HOUSE SITE (LATE 19TH CENTURY)

ROAD TO HAY MARSHES

PRIVATE ROAD

EARLY DIKE

EARLY FARM ROAD TRACE (ROAD AS LAID OUT ON 1848 PLOT)

FISHER BRANCH



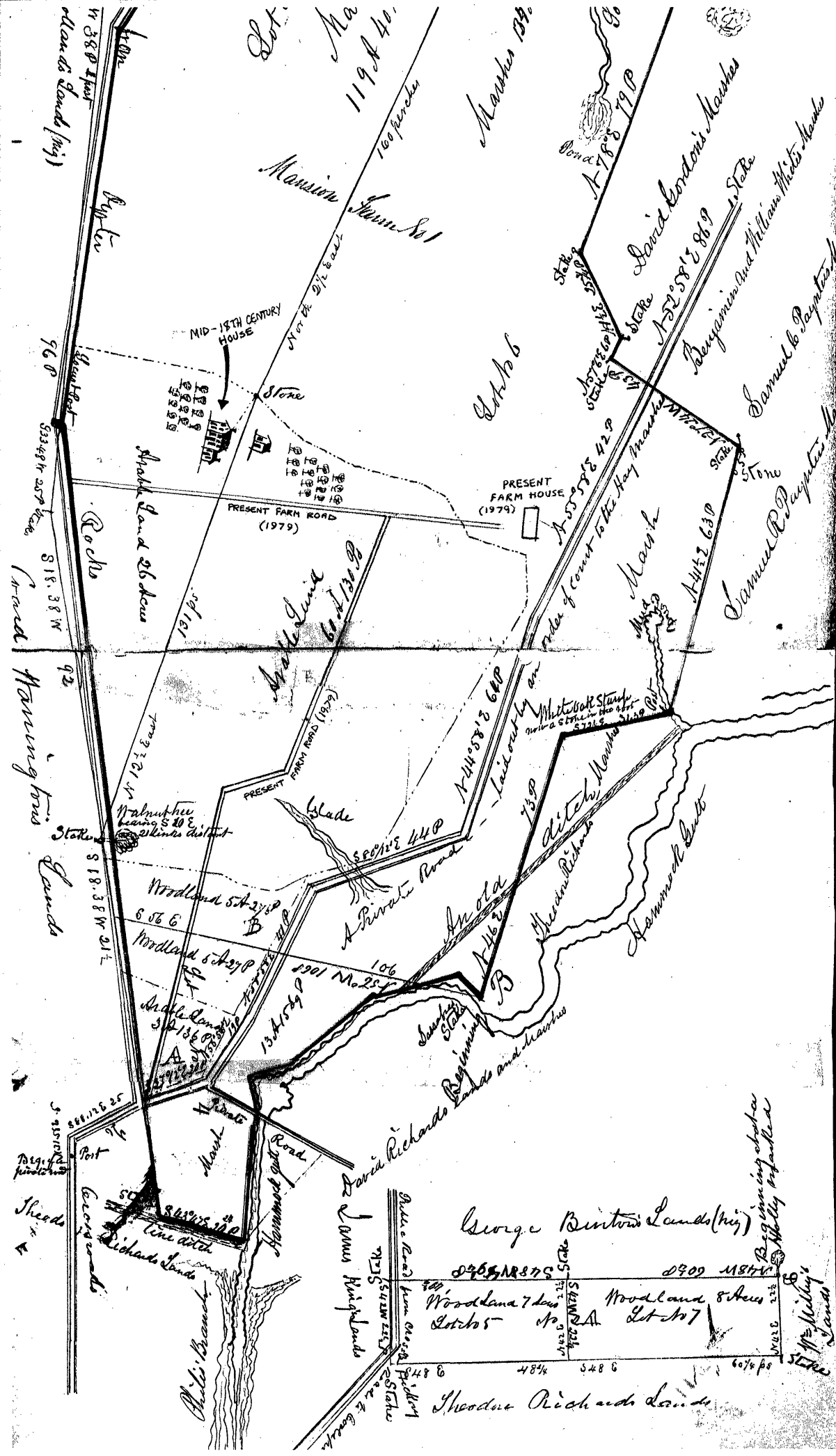
**FISHER HOMESTEAD**

OYSTER ROCKS NECK, DEL.

drawn by Dick Carter

1979





Lot. No  
 119 A 40  
 100 perches

March 1840

Mason's Farm No 1

David Gordon's Marshes  
 State A 1788 79 P  
 State A 1752 58 8 86 9  
 Benjamin and William Matis Marshes

Samuel R. Payton  
 State A 1752 63 P

MID-18TH CENTURY HOUSE

Lot No 6

PRESENT FARM HOUSE (1979)

PRESENT FARM ROAD (1979)

order of Court to the Hayman

Woodland 6 acres  
 State A 1752 63 P

Woodland 8 acres  
 State A 1752 63 P

Woodland 7 acres  
 State A 1752 63 P

George Binton's Lands (1817)

Woodland 7 acres  
 State A 1752 63 P

Theodore Richards Lands

Big winning about a  
 1/2 mly infanterie

State A 1752 63 P

388 P  
 State A 1752 63 P

96 P  
 State A 1752 63 P

92  
 State A 1752 63 P

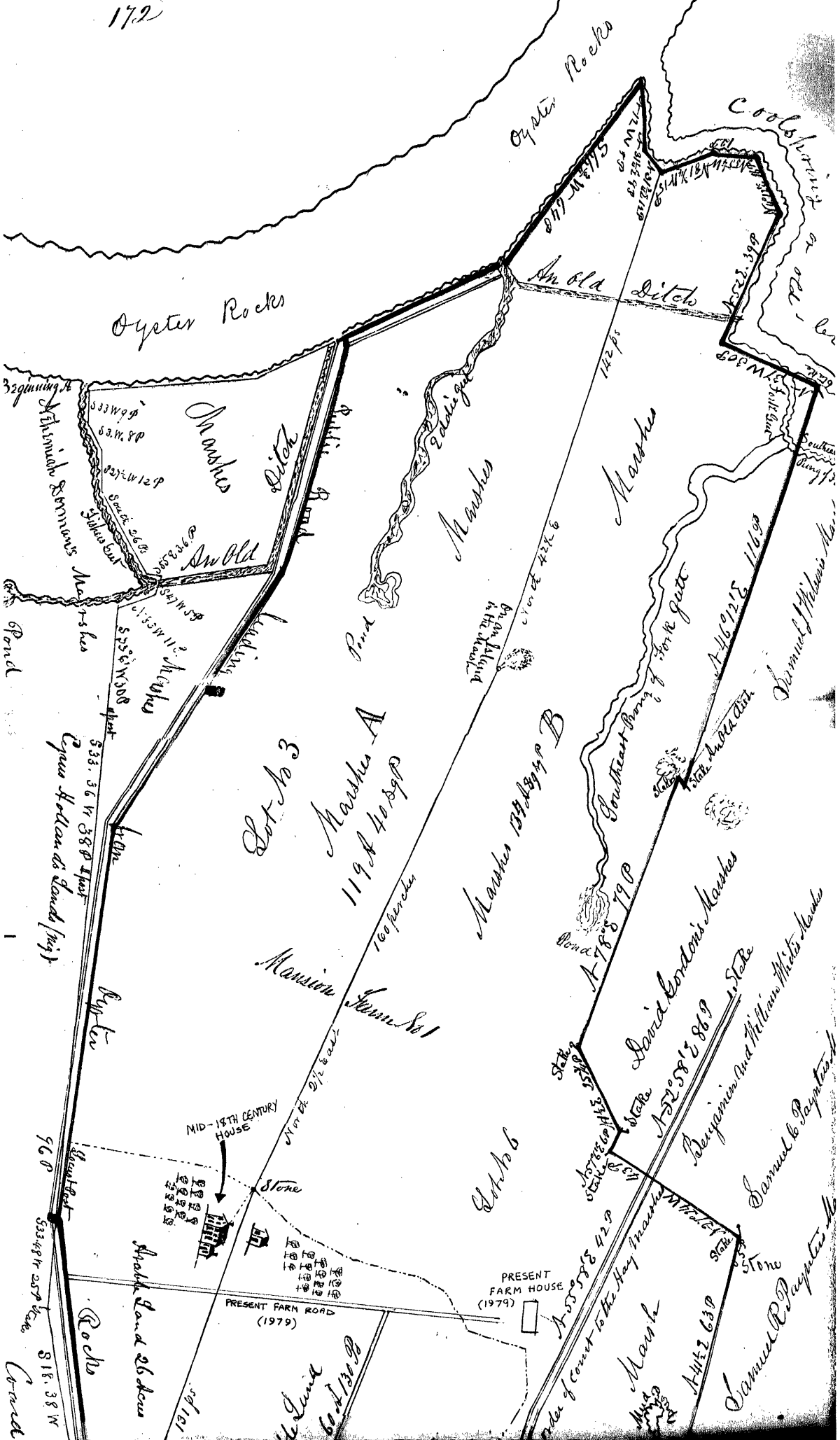
818.38 W  
 State A 1752 63 P

5 2510 25  
 State A 1752 63 P

548 6  
 State A 1752 63 P

48 6  
 State A 1752 63 P

60 6  
 State A 1752 63 P



Copy of 1848 plot of division  
of Fisher property, showing  
location of 18th century house  
and use of marshes for hay  
mowing. (From Sussex County  
Orphan's Court Book "V", Page  
166)

