

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

1677
[Stamp: NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, OCT 11 1990]

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Rider Potato House
other names/site number CRS# 6820

2. Location

street & number Route 3
city, town Laurel
state Delaware code DE county Sussex code 005 zip code 19956
not for publication
vicinity

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: [x] private, [] public-local, [] public-State, [] public-Federal
Category of Property: [x] building(s), [] district, [] site, [] structure, [] object
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 1, Noncontributing N/A buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total 1
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing: Sweet Potato Houses of Sussex County, Delaware

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this [x] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [x] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. [] See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: Daniel P. [Signature] - SHPO Date: 9/25/90
Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. [] See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official: [Signature] Date: []
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
[x] entered in the National Register. [] See continuation sheet.
[] determined eligible for the National Register. [] See continuation sheet.
[] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[] removed from the National Register.
[] other, (explain:)

[Signature: Patience Andrus] Date: 11/15/90

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/processing, storage

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Potato House

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concretewalls wood shingle

roof corrogated aluminumother brick (chimney)

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Rider Potato House is a one and one half story, gable fronted, balloon frame structure built circa 1920 of dimension cut lumber. It is located south/southwest of Laurel, Delaware, .3 miles southeast of the junction of Roads 506 and 505 lying on the south side of Road 505. It belongs to a farm complex which is not being considered for nomination and measures 18 feet 5 inches by 24 feet 5 inches. The surrounding environment consists of open fields and scattered stands of various trees as well as seven agricultural outbuildings which lie in close proximity to the potato house. Broiler houses and the cultivation of Indian corn are the major operations on the Rider Farm today though in the heyday of the sweet potato the farm grew Indian corn and produce vegetables such as peas, tomatoes, and cucumbers as well as cantalopes and strawberries.

The potato house is set out on the typical center aisle plan and is double sheathed with exterior wood shingles over interior planking. Red Rosin (insulating paper) was used for additional protection between shingles and planks. The building was moved from its original site approximately 500 feet northwest of present site in 1950 and currently rests on a concrete foundation.

Fenestration is minimal and typical of potato houses with gable end orientation. Front gable end consists of a first floor entry and second floor loading door. Rear gable end consists of a first and second floor window. All windows and doors are fitted with tight hatches. The main entry door on the front gable end retains original sliding interior and exterior doors.

The interior chimney stands in the rear end of the building while the stove was located in the center of the ground floor. A four inch ventilation gap runs the length of the interior on both sides between walls and ceiling facilitating circulation of air between floors and around storage bins.

 See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture
Architecture

Period of Significance

1920-1937

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

~~N/A~~ unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Rider Potato House is eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places as an example of an architectural reflection of a broad historical trend and as a significant architectural type. The potato house, as a functional type, relates to the Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan's study unit III under the 1880-1940 period and is an example of that plan's property type 1B reflecting major economic and cultural trends relating to agriculture.

The broad historical pattern to which the potato house is directly linked is the modernization of agricultural practices in southern Delaware during the first half of the twentieth century including the emergence of truck farming, the growth of perishable produce crops, and the development of modern agricultural marketing.

The growth of sweet potato cultivation in southern Delaware was one of the major manifestations of these changes in production practices and crop choice. The potato house is the remaining physical evidence of this important trend in Sussex County's agricultural history when the sweet potato was "king".

Sweet potato cultivation dominated the region particularly in the years between 1910-1940, and was one of the first crops to benefit from truck farming and modern agricultural marketing. The long (eight month) and multi-phased process of sweet potato production impacted the culture and economy of the rural community in Sussex County during the years of its prominence as one of the area's cash crops.

The potato house is significant as an architectural type. It was essential

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Delaware Agricultural Statistics, Historical Series 1866-1974, Bul. No. 419, Newark: University of Delaware, Agricultural Experiment Station, 1976.

Hancock, Harold B. The History of Sussex County, Sussex County Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

Herman, Bernard and Siders, Rebecca. The Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan, prepared for the Delaware State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, 1987.

Oral History Interviews with retired sweet potato farmers of Sussex County, August 1986. Tapes with the Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, University of DE.

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

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property .064 acres (1332.3 square feet)

UTM References

A 18 | 453103 | 4267912
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____ | _____ | _____

B _____ | _____ | _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____ | _____ | _____

Tax Parcel Map #: 5-32-1, 2.1

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for the site is a rectangle surrounding potato house and adjoining addition and extending ten feet from respective roof lines on each side of that rectangle.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary is justifiable because this asks for the consideration of only the potato house. The property and additional structures associated with the site are not included in this nomination. Shed addition is included within the boundary description only because it is inseparable from the potato house.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Judith Quinn

organization Center for Historic Architecture & Engineering date December 23, 1987

street & number Urban Affairs, University of Delaware telephone 302-451-2394

city or town Newark state Delaware zip code 19716

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

CRS#-6820

Storage bins have been removed. Original stairs in the southeast corner provide access to the second/attic story.

The second/attic story is well finished. Horizontal wood panelling is nailed to studs, rafters, and collars leaving no exposed framing members. The finished treatment reflects the value of, and care taken in the construction of the building. Similar treatment of the upper story is found in the Wright Potato House (CRS#6758).

A sliding trap door is found in the second floor ceiling. It would have been opened to contribute an additional passage for ventilation on warm days in the house. Similar sliding trap doors have been found in a number of potato houses.

In recent years a modern, vinyl sided lean-to shed has been added to the north (lateral) side of the building. There is however, no alteration to the construction of the potato house other than the clipping of the eaves approximately eight inches to accommodate the new addition which lies flush against the north side. The potato house remains a separate building visually and structurally. The dimensions of the building including the shed are 24 feet 5 inches by 36 feet 8 inches.

Despite modern alterations the Rider Potato House remains a significant example of the property type. The interior and exterior retain complete architectural integrity. Though lacking its potato bins, it remains one of the most complete examples of a potato house extant today. The excellent condition of the shingled exterior, the quality of second floor panelled interior, ventilation features, and original sliding doors mark the Rider Potato House as an especially important example of the building type.

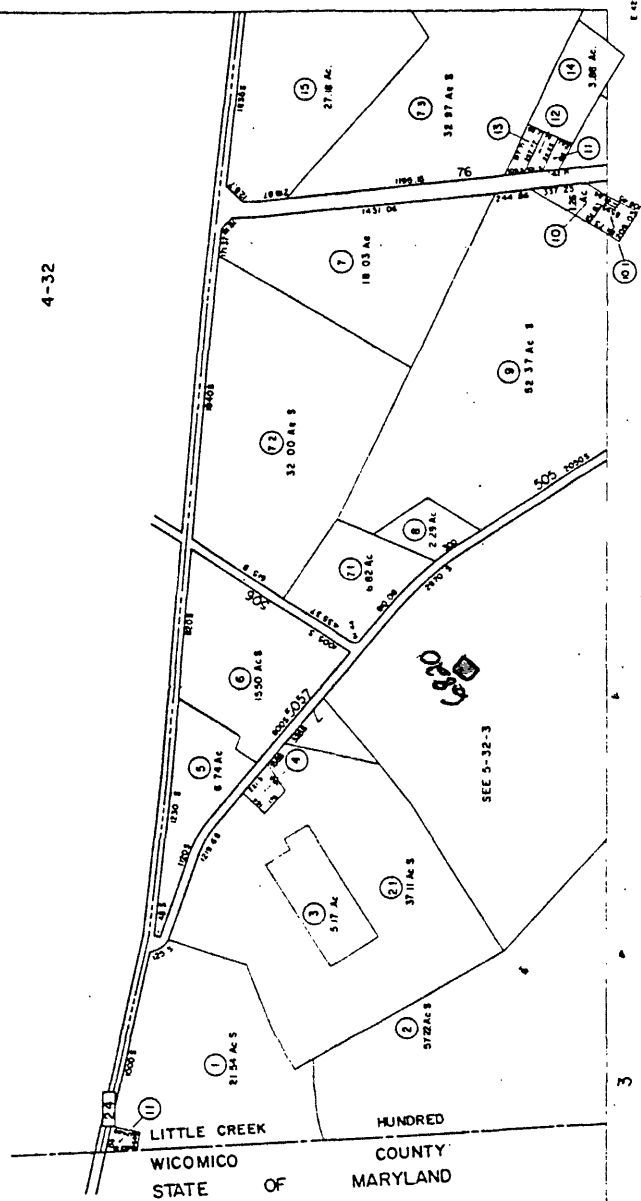
**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 1CRS#-6820

to the process of sweet potato production in both curing and storage capacities and was developed as a distinct building type to provide the functional needs required for a successful, saleable sweet potato crop. Potato houses share common construction elements and are recognizable on the landscape as belonging to this specific property type. The Rider Potato House is a significant example of the building type because it retains an important number of elements characteristic of potato house construction and function. These elements include; double sheathing, minimal fenestration, interior chimney, tightly fitting window and door hatches, interior ventilation features, and original interior and exterior sliding doors on the front entrance.

Despite modern alterations the Rider Potato House remains a significant example of the property type. The interior and exterior retain complete architectural integrity. Though lacking its potato bins, it remains one of the most complete examples of the potato house, and stands as an important reflection of the interaction between aesthetics and function. The excellent condition of the shingled exterior, the quality of second floor panelled interior, overall sound construction, and clear evidence of sweet potato storage (i.e. chimney, ventilation elements) are all indicative of the Rider Potato House's significance. It has integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and association.

4-32

4-32



LEGEND

County line	Map parcel number
Municipal line	Original lot number
District line	Map scaled dimension
Section line	Duplicate same owner
All Parcel line	Original lot line
Property line	All Dimensions Shown in Feet

**SUSSEX COUNTY
DELAWARE**

DATE OF REVISION
 DATE OF COMPLETION DEC 8, 1975 DATE OF PHOTOGRAPHY DECEMBER, 1975
 SHEET LAYOUT BASED ON THE DELAWARE STATE PLANNING COORDINATE SYSTEM

Tax Parcel
MAP 5-32-1
Rider Potato House
Sussex County, DE

21