

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: New York	
COUNTY: Orange	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
General Henry Knox's Headquarters

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Knox Headquarters (John Ellison House)

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Quassaick Ave. (State Route 94) and Forge Hill Road

CITY OR TOWN:
Vails Gate

STATE New York	CODE	COUNTY: Orange	CODE
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
State of New York, New York State Historic Trust

STREET AND NUMBER:
Parks and Recreation

CITY OR TOWN: Albany 12226	STATE: New York	CODE
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Goshen	STATE: New York	CODE
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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Built in 1754, the John Ellison House (or Knox Headquarters) is a two-and-one-half story stone house with a full cellar, hipped roof, and two interior stone chimneys set behind the ridge. A one-story frame wing, added in 1799, with a gable roof, central chimney, and clapboarded walls, adjoins the main house on the east side.

The main stone house is 44 feet or five bays wide and 36 feet deep and has a 11 by 21 foot one-story porch inset in the northwest (rear) corner, which gives the structure its L-shape. The hipped roof on the north (rear) elevation slopes far down to a one-story height to cover the rear porch. The wall of the main house is constructed of random coursed field-stone and ~~is~~ two feet thick. The south (front) elevation and the east and west ends of the roof have a dentilated cornice. Windows are adorned with exterior panelled shutters and the center door in the south facade is topped by a rectangular transom.

A center hall, divided into two sections, extends through the main house from front to rear and divides the four rooms on the first floor into pairs. The stairs is located in the front hall of the hall. To the left (west) of the hall are the dining room and in its rear, General Knox's bedroom. On the right side of the hall is a parlor or sitting room and behind this, the General's Office. The parlor has deep window seats; floors throughout the house are of wide boards, and all first-floor rooms have fully panelled fireplace walls. The kitchen, with its huge fireplace, is located in the basement.

The second floor has two large and two smaller bedrooms. The large master bedroom and guest room both have fully panelled fireplace walls. The house, largely original and very little-altered, was restored in 1954. The John Ellison House is furnished in the period and is open to visitors as an historic house museum.

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SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian; 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1779-1783

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Built in 1754, the John Ellison House served during the period 1779 to 1783 as the headquarters of Major Generals Henry Knox, Nathanael Greene, Fredrich von Steuben, and Horatio Gates during the various encampments of the Continental Army at New Windsor, New York.

The Ellison House has been very little altered over the years.

History

In 1754 Colonel Thomas Ellison, a well-to-do settler, built this large stone house for his son, John, who operated an adjacent grist mill. The structure was erected by the mason William Bull. General Henry Knox, Washington's artillery chief, occupied the house four times during the War for Independence: June and July, 1779, the fall of 1779, November 20, 1780, to July 4, 1781, and from May to September 1782, when he left to command the fortifications at West Point, N.Y.

In June and July of 1779 General Nathanael Greene, then Quartermaster General of the Continental Army, also shared the house with Knox.

In August 1779 General (Baron) Fredrich von Steuben, Inspector General of the Army, made the house his headquarters.

From December 1782 to June 1783 the house served as the headquarters of General Horatio Gates, the victor of Saratoga, who was in immediate command of the 8,000 soldiers at the New Windsor Cantonment, about one-mile to the north. It is possible that Major John Armstrong, Gates' aide-de-camp, may have penned in this house the letters known as the "Newburgh Addresses", which called on the officers to reject the authority of the Continental Congress and to establish a new state in the wilderness. Gates was sympathetic to this plan but the scheme was brought to a halt by Washington's famous speech at the "Temple of Virture" at the New Windsor Cantonment on March 15, 1783.

The owner of the house, John Ellison, provided the army with flour and firewood and also, in 1778, served in the New York militia.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Russell D. Bailey & Associates, A Report on Historic Sites and Buildings in The Hudson River Valley (Prepared for the Hudson River Valley Commission, Utica, N.Y., 1967), 38-38a.

New York, A Guide to the Empire State (American Guide Series) (New York 1956), 603.

Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. X, 475-477.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	41°	27'	21"	74°	03'	05"	°	'	"
NE	41°	27'	16"	74°	02'	43"	°	'	"
SE	41°	27'	07"	74°	02'	53"	°	'	"
SW	41°	27'	15"	74°	03'	06"	°	'	"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **50 acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY:

NAME AND TITLE:
Charles W. Snell, Survey Historian

ORGANIZATION **Division of History, Office of Archeology and History Preservation, National Park Service** DATE **5/9/72**

STREET AND NUMBER:
801 19th Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE **D.C.** CODE

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION	NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION
<p>As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Title _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____ Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____ Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date _____</p>

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General Henry Knox's
Headquarters (Continuation Sheet)

STATE New York	
COUNTY Orange	
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(Number all entries) Statement of Significance (1)

Later owners of the house allowed the property, mill, and a store to deteriorate. In 1917, the Knox Headquarters Association was formed to raise funds for its purchase and preservation. In 1922, the New York State Legislature accepted the house and grounds as a gift from that association. Restoration of the house was completed in 1954.

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9. Major Bibliographical References (1)

Melvin J. Weig, "Historic Sites and Buildings of the Colonial-Revolutionary Period Located in and around Newburgh, New York," (NPS typescript, Bronxville, N.Y., Feb. 25, 1937), 9-10.

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Boundaries for Knox's Headquarters (John Ellison House), Vails Gate:

Approximately 50 acres of land, including Knox's Headquarters House, beginning at the northwest corner at the junction of Quassaick Avenue and Forge Hill Road at Latitude 41° 27' 21" - longitude 74° 03' 05", hence going east along the southern edge of Forge Hill Road about 1700 feet to the northeast corner at Latitude 41° 27' 16" - longitude 74° 02' 43", then continuing southwest about 1150 feet to the southeast corner at 41° 27' 07" - longitude 74° 02' 53", proceeding from here northwest about 1200 feet to the southwest corner at latitude 41° 27' 15" - longitude 74° 03' 06", hence running north about 600 feet to the point of beginning, the northwest corner.

Precise boundaries, as described above, are on record on a copy of U.S. Geological Survey Map: Cornwall Quadrangle, New York, 1957, 7.5 Minute Series, on file with the Historic Sites Survey, Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service.