

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

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Continuation sheet

Item number K-1598

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1. Property Name: "MCCLARY HOUSE"

2. Location & Verbal Boundary Description: Northeast corner of Main and McClary Streets, Leipsic, Delaware. It is sited on a parcel of land fronting Main Street, 39 feet wide and 136 feet deep, containing .112 acres.

3. Owner: John T. Moore, Box 407, R.D. 4, Persimmon Tree Lane, Dover, Delaware 19901.

4. Property Description:

Situated on the northeast corner of Main and McClary streets the McClary House was built as a timber framed, two-story, single-pile dwelling covered with mill sawn weatherboard and resting on a full brick foundation. Built as a hall-parlor plan the house retains an interior gable end chimney at either end of the structure and a common rafter roof covered with wood shingles under later tin sheathing.

Alterations to the structure include the addition of asbestos shingle siding, the removal of the first floor partition wall and wings built on to the rear elevation. Despite these changes the house continues to exhibit its original lines and much of its mid-nineteenth century architectural character.

5. Historical Background:

The present structure is one of three owned by the McClary family in 1868. The McClary family derived its fortunes in the nineteenth century by following the water. Working in a seasonal round of trapping, oystering, harvesting marsh hay and market gunning, the McClary family is emblematic of the "Proggers" mentioned in the 1870 census. Proggers were those individuals who did not pursue a single water related occupation, but harvested from the wetlands all that was salable and would insure a comfortable existence.

6. Significance:

The McClary House is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C because of its representation of a conservative vernacular frame tradition that was once very common to the region. This particular structure is neither the most stylish or the most humble but rather represents a middle ground of architectural competence. The McClary House was built in the mid-nineteenth century as the residence for a family of waterman. In erecting the dwelling a number of traditional features were employed. Most of the building is mortise and tenon construction and the plan of the house is based on a hall-parlor form with the central door opening directly into the parlor. The facade however displays the balanced facade common to much of the

OMB NO. 1024-0018  
EXP. 10/31/84

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eighteenth and nineteenth century structure with a central door flanked by window openings. The roof cornice has partial return more common to Georgian and Federal building style than to the nineteenth century.

Furthermore, the house documents the shift in Leipsic's economic base from larger agrarian, commercial and ship building concerns to an extra-local market based in securing "wild" produce for the urban markets of Philadelphia and New York,