

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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

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K-1285

Property Name: Jefferson Lewis House

Location and Verbal Boundary Description:

The Jefferson Lewis House is located on a farm property of 201 acres on the southwest corner of the intersection of Route 42 and Road 168 at Seven Hickories. The nominated property is a less extensive tract that includes the house and the agricultural outbuildings arranged behind the house. The nominated tract preserves the historic setting. The boundaries of the nominated property are as follows: the easterly boundary is Road 168 extending 750 feet south of the access lane and 1250 feet north of the access lane. The north boundary is a line running parallel to Route 42 for 1250 feet. The south boundary runs perpendicular to Road 168 for 1250 feet west from the road. The west boundary is a line 2,000 feet long that connects the westernmost point of the south and north boundary lines. The total acreage included for the nominations is 57.39 acres.

Owner: Harold M. and Cora A. Hilyard
R.D. #5, Box 715
Dover, DE 19901

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Description:

The Jefferson Lewis House is a brick, 2-story, 3-bay, center-hall-plan house. Erected c. 1800, the exterior is relatively plain and had been completely stuccoed and painted white during the first half of the nineteenth century. The house has a gable roof with gable-end interior chimneys. The cornice is a box cornice without decorative mouldings, but it does have partial returns. The interior is relatively simple in its use of decorative trim. The only exception is an elaborate mantel in the south parlor that has fluted pilasters and a heavy overmantel.

There is a late-nineteenth-century porch over the entrance on the facade. On the north gable end, there is another entrance that has a hood as protection. There is a short frame wing on the rear that was added during the mid-nineteenth century. It has a single chimney in the rear gable end and there is an enclosed porch on either side of the wing. There is a full basement under the main block of the house.

The house and farm complex are located at the end of a long lane that approaches from the east from Road 168. The lane passes to the south of the house and continues west to the farm buildings which are arranged mostly on the north side of the lane. The complex has three 2-story barns. One barn is a braced frame building and dates to the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The other two barns are early-twentieth-century structures. The one located next to the original barn and the farm lane is a cement block and frame building used as a dairy barn. The last barn is actually a large 2-story granary and dates to the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The remainder of the out-buildings are a mix of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century milk houses, corn cribs, machine sheds and chicken houses.

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Historical Background:

This house was acquired by Jefferson Lewis as part of the 1824 division of the lands of his father Philip Lewis. As part of the settlement Jefferson received $\frac{4}{6}$ of the 200 $\frac{1}{2}$ -acre "Mansion Farm". He later bought out the shares of his two brothers. The house had been built by his father, about 1800.

Philip Lewis began acquiring property in the area in 1791, and eventually owned most of the land around the town of Kenton and as far southeast as Seven Hickories. Philip was the developer of Kenton, which was originally known as Georgetown, then as Lewes Crossroads before it was changed by the State Legislature to Kenton.

The farm has always contained just over 200 acres and has the same boundaries as shown on the 1824 plot drawn for the Orphan's Court supervised division of the land. The farm remained in the hands of the Lewis family until 1892, when it was sold to Sallie G. Taylor of Kenton. Ms. Taylor maintained the property in her own name and not with her husband.

Statement of Significance:

The Jefferson Lewis House is eligible under Criterion C, as an unaltered example of a typical Delaware farmhouse that is somewhat unique in that it still retains some of its original related agricultural buildings and for the fact that it still retains the same setting as it has throughout its history. The house is also eligible under Criterion A for its association with Philip Lewis. This house was the "Mansion Farm" of Lewis and was the place from which he directed the development of the town of Kenton.