

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received SEP 7 1983
date entered

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

1. Name

historic TIMOTHY CUMMINS HOUSE

and or common

2. Location

E of Smyrna

street & number Route 6, Duck Creek Hundred not for publication

city, town Smyrna vicinity of

state Delaware code 10 county Kent code 001

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Benjamin D. and Lucille Burrows

street & number R.D. 2

city, town Smyrna vicinity of state DE 1977

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds, Kent County Courthouse

street & number Federal Street

city, town Dover state DE 19901

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Delaware Historic Site Survey (K-203) has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1983 federal state county local

depository for survey records Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

city, town Dover state DE 19901

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

The Timothy Cummins House is a 2-story brick dwelling that was constructed in the 1780's as his mansion house and farm. It is located in Duck Creek Hundred, Kent County, Delaware on the Smyrna-Leipsic Road. The house is on the north side of the road and it is part of a working farm of 125.5 acres. The land is flat and is part of an extensive agricultural area that extends along the Delaware Bay. The Bay is 6 miles due east. A few miles closer to the shore the land becomes marsh and part of the Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge. of the land outside of the refuge is cleared farm land with some small forested areas. The land has been cleared since the early-eighteenth century, when the area was first developed for agricultural use.

The house is, in plan, a typical Georgian dwelling. It is a 5-bay, 2-story, center-hall plan with a rear wing that housed service functions. The house faces south. The facade is laid in Flemish bond, while the rest of the walls of the main house are laid in Liverpool bond. The facade has a wide belt course. The present porch is in the Greek-Revival style and appears to date from the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The porch base and floor have been replaced with a concrete pad and cinder block, but it was just laid under the original porch covering doorway with a plain square transom. The gable rafter roof is pierced with two chimney stacks that rise up the interior end-walls. The cornice is a simple box cornice with plain trim. To this point the house is a mostly typical large dwelling for the period. However, the rear wing, the dormers, and the windows of the main house are constructed in a fashion that is more typical of the early-eighteenth century. The windows of the main house are tall, narrow, nine-over-nine sash windows with plain surrounds on the first floor and on the rear of the main house. 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/ humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates c. 1780 Builder/Architect unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Timothy Cummins House is a well-preserved example of a dwelling house that was constructed by wealthy planters during the last quarter of the eighteenth century. However, the house has many features that are more typical of the early-eighteenth century. This combination of stylistic elements from the entire range of architectural traditions of the eighteenth century makes the house eligible under Criterion C as a significant example of the conservative nature of central Delaware architecture. The house is both fashionable and out-dated for its construction period of the early-1780's. The use of Flemish bond on the facade and the Georgian floorplan indicate a concern that the house be modern, but the tall narrow windows and the small 1½-story kitchen wing are elements that would be "old fashioned" by the 1780's. The house is also a good example of the intensive use of the land in Duck Creek Hundred as the population increased during the eighteenth century. The plantation is typical of the type of farm operation created by the rising middle-class population in central Delaware after the end of the Revolutionary War. The original plantation occupied a few hundred acres and was crowned with a substantial brick dwelling.

Timothy Cummins (1757-1823) was the son of a prosperous innkeeper and planter, Daniel Cummins (1736-1797). In 1780, Timothy married Rachel Pennington. Two of Timothy's brothers, John and George, were successful businessmen and landowners but Timothy appears to have preferred the life of a gentleman farmer. When his father died in 1797, he owed him a large sum of money that was to be deducted from his inheritance. At his own death in 1823 he had a personal estate of \$3,942.

His will states that his wife was to have a life interest in the plantation and that at her death it would become the property of his son, Daniel Bell. Daniel married his cousin Mary Ellen Cummins in 1839. Her brothers, George W. and Daniel J., were the owners of Woodlawn and Glen Fern, respectively. Daniel Bell Cummins did not occupy the land but used it as a tenant farm. He was a banker and merchant in Philadelphia. The land was sold out of the family in 1906. This pattern is repeated fairly often in Duck Creek. During the nineteenth century, tenancy increased as the landowners became involved in mercantile operations and left their home plantations in the care of managers.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Beers' Atlas of Delaware (1868)
 Byles' Atlas of Kent County, DE (1859)
 T. Cummins 1823 Will, Hall of Records, Dover, DE
 Kent County Mutual Insurance Company Records, Hall of Records, Dover, DE
 Scharf's History of Delaware (1888)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 2.87

Quadrangle name Smyrna

Quadrangle scale 1:2400

UTM References

A 18 453 390 4347 660
 Zone Easting Northing

B
 Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

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 Stephen G. Del Sordo, Historian

Bureau of Archaeology and

organization Historic Preservation

date May 1983

street & number Old State House, The Green

telephone 302-736-5685

city or town Dover

state DE 19901

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

 national state x 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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

David R. Kuffel

title

date 8/31/83

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 10/6/83

for Melissa Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet T. Cummins House

Item number 7

Page 2

-2-

second-floor windows are six-over-nine sash windows. Four small 4-light openings are used to light the attic. The rear roof slope also has a low shed dormer to provide additional light to the attic. This dormer, which is very medieval in appearance, is repeated on the first section of the rear wing. However, the opening of the dormer on the main house is a 4-light window, while those on the rear wing are four-over-four sash windows.

The rear wing is composed of two sections. The first is a 1½-story brick kitchen and the second is a 1-story cinder block garage that replaces an older section of the wing. The kitchen closely resembles an early-eighteenth-century one-room plan dwelling that was once the most common form of housing on the Delmarva Peninsula. In some cases they were the original dwellings that became incorporated into a rebuilt and large house. In this house, though, the kitchen was built at the same time as the main house.

The interior of the kitchen has plain plaster walls that have been painted. The north wall has a large walk-in cooking hearth. The interior of the main house is modest, but it does contain well-preserved and executed Federal-style mantels and moldings.

The agricultural buildings associated with the house consist of modern buildings. They are separated from the house by a wide lane and are not included in the nomination. Daniel Bell Cummins, Timothy Cummins' son, inherited the property upon his father's death in 1823. In 1863, he insured the farm with the Kent County Mutual Insurance Company. The policy states that the farm buildings consisted of a meat house, workshop and henhouse, wagon and cart house, cow house, 23x18 log granary and crib, a 20x108 large barn, and a 23x26 new frame stable.

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Continuation sheet T. Cummins House

Item number 10

Page 1

The boundary for the Timothy Cummins House is a rectangular figure that protects the house and excludes the modern barns located on the north side of the access lane that comes north from Route 12 and passes to the west of the house. The boundary starts on the east side of the lane at the intersection of the lane and the north side of Route 12. It goes north for 500 feet along the lane, then goes at a right angle to the lane for 250 feet, then at a right angle to the last line and in a southerly direction for 500 feet to the north side of Route 12, then along the north side of Route 12 for 250 feet to the place of beginning. The total acreage is 2.87 acres.