

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

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



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Property Name: **Kenton Post Office**

Located and Verbal Boundary Description:

The building is located on the west side of Main Street south of Commerce Street in the town of Kenton. It is known as parcel #33 on Kenton Hundred tax map 44.08.01. The nominated property includes the entire plot of land of 8512 square feet or .195 acres.

Owner: **Nancy Wilson Cook and Thomas A. Cook**
P.O. Box 127
Kenton, Delaware 19955

Description:

The Kenton Post Office was built in 1881 as a frame store and dwelling. It is a narrow 3-bay, center-hall, 2-story building. Constructed in an Italianate style, the structure is little changed from its original appearance. The only change has been the replacement of the original 1-bay entrance porch with a full facade pent eave. The Post Office retains its roof brackets, 2-over-2 windows and the corner boards with their very vernacular attempt at cornice moldings at the top. The projecting bay window on the facade is original.

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The 2-story rear wing is plainer than the main block. The foundation is brick as is that of the main block. The roof pitch is very slight and the cornice has the frieze but not the brackets found on the main block. Both the rear wing and the main block have standing seam tin roofs. The only outbuilding on the lot is a small balloon frame storage shed towards the rear lot line.

Historical Background:

The Kenton Post Office was built in 1881 by Francis Greenwell. The transfer of title in 1881, from James Williams to Francis Greenwell, specifically state that the costs of erecting the building were not to incur to Williams. Apparently Greenwell was building the store as he was making settlement on the land.

The building was intended for and first used as a small store leased to shopkeepers by Greenwell who owned the building on either side of the shop. It was not until early in this century that the Post Office was transferred to this building. The upper floor remains in use as a residence.

Statement of Significance:

At present, the Kenton Post Office serves as the social center for the town as it is the one building that residents must come into. More importantly, the building is an important visual reminder of the economic prosperity that maintained the town from after the Civil War till the end of the nineteenth century. Its small-scale, and incorporation of Italianate details, makes it the only commercial building of its type in town. As such, it is being nominated under Criterion C for its use of the Italianate style, and under Criterion A for its association with the once vibrant commercial sector in the town of Kenton.