

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

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

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Item number 7

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N-1613

Property Name: J. McCormick Farm

Location and Verbal Boundary Description:

The J. McCormick Farm is located on the west side of Newport Gap Turnpike (Route 41) approximately 0.2 mile north of its intersection with Mill Creek Road (Road 282). The nominated site occupies the northern half of Parcel Number 08-026.00-032, encompassing roughly 25 acres. The site boundaries are delineated on the attached map titled, New Castle County Property Tax Map, 1985.

UTM References:

| | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| A. 18/443950/4400450 | D. 18/443480/4400460 |
| B. 18/443650/4400410 | E. 18/443450/4400440 |
| C. 18/443610/4400450 | F. 18/443730/4400800 |

Owner: Mrs. W. Newlin Mitchell
3300 Newport Gap Pike
Wilmington, Delaware 19809

Description:

The J. McCormick Farm contains a stone house that was constructed in two phases during the first half of the nineteenth century, and a circa 1830 frame and stone barn. Associated with the house and barn are several outbuildings of varying dates. There are seven sheds and outbuildings of modern construction which are non-contributing buildings to this site. There are two contributing outbuildings to this site. One is a one story, gable-roofed building with a corn crib incorporated on one long wall. The other long wall is partially stone with a frame half-wall. The timbers are hewn and the construction is braced frame. The second contributing outbuilding is a late nineteenth century corn crib. This corn crib is a rectangular, two bay, gable-roofed building. It is braced frame with hewn timbers and some re-used timbers. It is the only building in Mill Creek Hundred to exhibit both the notched post and the slotted head post. In total, there are four contributing buildings and seven non-contributing buildings.

The house is a two story, gable-roofed, stuccoed masonry building with a two story rear wing that appears to be the original section of the house. The facade has a symmetrical, three bay, center door arrangement that is sheltered by a full length, shed-roofed porch. The six-panel door is set within a paneled reveal and topped by a four-light rectangular transom. The window frames on either side of the door were widened so that paired, one-over-one sash could be inserted. However, all other windows are the original six-over-six sash with paneled shutters on the first floor and louvered shutters on the second floor. The roof is covered with wooden shingles and is pierced by two gable dormers on the facade elevation. A brick interior end chimney rises through each endwall. The interior is arranged with one room on either side of an

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enclosed, straight run staircase. Much of the original woodwork is intact, including splayed and paneled window reveals, molded four-panel doors, and molded mantels.

The rear wing is a two story, gable-roofed structure with its facade oriented to the barn. Due to the addition of a small frame wing on the facade, it is difficult to discern the original fenestration. The interior first floor contains a hearth and an adjacent corner staircase.

The circa 1830 J. McCormick barn is a bi-level, stone barn with a frame front wall and a straw shed. There is a shed-roofed addition on the southeast elevation. The stone walls consist of semi-coursed fieldstone with a pebbled stucco finish. Additions are sided with board and batten.

The upper level floor plan is three bays long by three bays deep with bays of equal dimensions. The center bay driveway and threshing floor is flanked by hay mows and is entered via double doors which are hung on rollers. In the southeast threshing floor wall is a door to the stair to the lower level, and an entranceway to the southeast mow.

The framing members consist of hewn principal and vertical sawn secondary timbers. The scheme of the inner bents is a little different compared to other Mill Creek Hundred barns. This bent consists of four posts with rails at variable heights defining the threshing floor walls. The girt is joined below the heads of the two outer posts with a through tenon and two pins, both atypical. A shim, or thin piece of wood, was pounded into the mortise and tenon joint to make the fit tighter. Also unusual, but not so out of place, are down braces from the posts to the sill. There are no end bents, just roof trusses.

The roofing system consists of replacement common rafters, butted and nailed at the apex. The rafters rest on principal purlins which are supported by diagonal, straight struts (as opposed to flared) emanating from the girts and braced both to the girt and purlin. On the gable ends, the girt laps over the plate and rests on a ledge of stones and on two, large, stones protruding from the center.

The flooring system consists of two lateral girders which are sills for the bent posts. The girders support replacement plank joists.

The original lower level floor plan is masked by early twentieth century dairy stanchions. There are three brick arched doorways in the southeast gable end with original board and batten doors, clinched with hand headed nails, and hung with strap hinges.

Significance:

The J. McCormick site is significant under Criterion A because it represents the two major rebuilding periods that took place in Mill Creek Hundred during the nineteenth century, and under Criterion C because both the barn and the house are well-preserved examples of that transformation.

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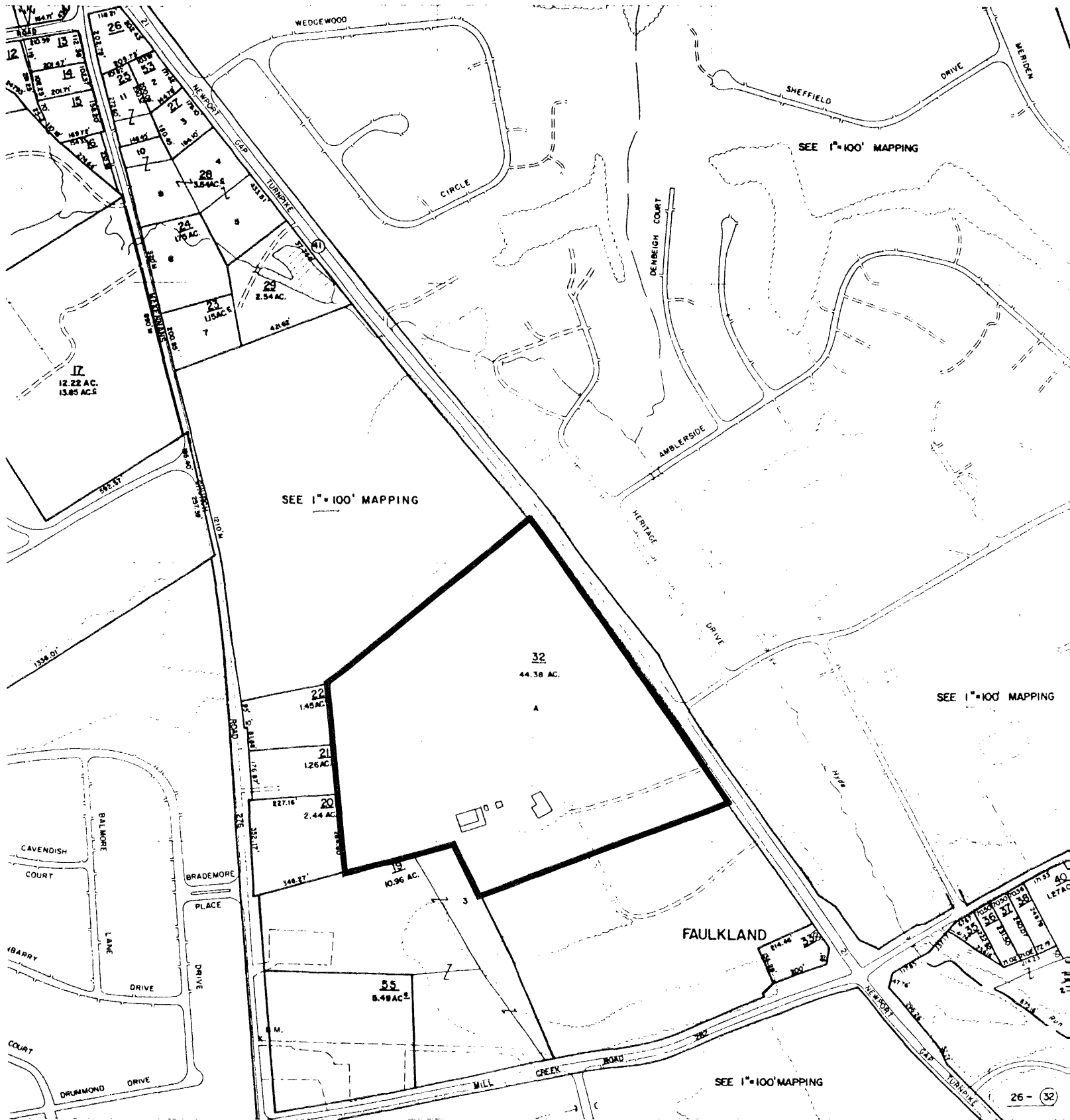
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The first rebuilding period which took place in the first few decades of the nineteenth century is represented by the stone wing on the dwelling, the stable/corn crib, and the barn. This rebuilding occurred because of several factors, both social and economic, which culminated in the transformation of a log dominant architectural landscape to a stone dominant landscape.

The bank barn is important as a symbol of this emerging social and economic order. The frame infrastructure of the barn suggests several things. The atypical inner bent fits in with the idiosyncratic nature of pre-1840 Mill creek Hundred bents. Although this bent type is seldom found in this hundred, it was used in Pennsylvania and other northern states. This framing idiosyncrasy represents an attempt to find an efficient framing method, which resulted in the slot headed post assembly in Mill Creek Hundred.

The later rebuilding period in the latter decades of the nineteenth century is represented by additions on both the house and barn. The earlier dwelling was supplanted by a larger, center stair plan addition, relegating the original house to a domestic service status. This was typical in Mill Creek Hundred for this rebuilding period. Rather than replacing old dwellings as in southern New Castle County, in Mill Creek Hundred these early stone dwellings were either altered by additions or supplanted in order to re-create them in a new style.

The barn straw shed is a larger replacement of an earlier original straw shed. The straw shed and additions represent a continued dependence on dairy farming as the most intensive and efficient use of valuable land.



N-1613 J. McCormick Farm
 New Castle County Property Tax Map, 1985
 Parcel Number 08-026.00-032