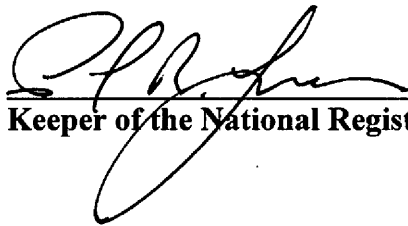




United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

The attached property, the William Russell House, in Sussex County, Delaware, reference number 77000395 was listed in the National Register of Historic Places by the Keeper of the National Register on 4/18/1977, as evidenced by the FEDERAL REGISTER/WEEKLY LIST notice of Tuesday, February 7, 1978, Part II, Vol.43, No. 26, page 5185. The attached nomination form is a copy of the original documentation provided to the Keeper at the time of listing.


Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places

9/8/2008
Date

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

William Russell House

AND/OR COMMON

Russell Farmhouse

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

410 Pilot Town Road

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Lewes

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1

STATE

Delaware

VICINITY OF

CODE

10

COUNTY

Sussex

CODE

003

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

__ DISTRICT

__ PUBLIC

__ OCCUPIED

__ AGRICULTURE

__ MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

__ UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

__ PARK

__ STRUCTURE

__ BOTH

__ WORK IN PROGRESS

__ EDUCATIONAL

__ PRIVATE RESIDENCE

__ SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

__ ACCESSIBLE

__ ENTERTAINMENT

__ RELIGIOUS

__ OBJECT

__ IN PROCESS

YES RESTRICTED

__ GOVERNMENT

__ SCIENTIFIC

__ BEING CONSIDERED

__ YES UNRESTRICTED

__ INDUSTRIAL

__ TRANSPORTATION

__ NO

__ MILITARY

__ OTHER

FORM AS SUPPLIED TO OWNER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mrs. William C. Lynch

STREET & NUMBER

410 Pilot Town Road

CITY, TOWN

Lewes

VICINITY OF

STATE

Delaware

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

Sussex County Court House

STREET & NUMBER

The Circle

CITY, TOWN

Georgetown

STATE

Delaware

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Delaware Preservation Checklist; Delaware Cultural Resource Survey, S-160

DATE

1974

__ FEDERAL STATE __ COUNTY __ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Division of Historical & Cultural Affairs, Hall of Records,

CITY, TOWN

Dover

STATE

Delaware

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The William Russell House is a three-bay, double-pile, side-hall, frame house built around 1803. The original cypress-shingle siding has been painted white. The portico is a reproduction of the nineteenth-century one shown in a late-nineteenth-century picture of the house. All of the windows except the two in the attic have been replaced. The front doorway, simple in detail, is original, but the door dates to the late nineteenth century. A box cornice is below the pitched tin roof. There is an interior end chimney on the west side of the house.

Two additions form a wing to the rear of the house. One was built at the time the house was constructed, while the one to the south was constructed in the early twentieth century. During the nineteenth century, there was a colonnade leading to a back kitchen which then stood on the site of the twentieth-century addition.

The original portion of the house has a side hall plan. The one-room early-nineteenth-century wing on the south runs almost the entire width of the house. The partition wall and corner fireplaces in the side rooms were removed in the twentieth century. Today a stone fireplace is along the west wall of the house, but there remains evidence in the floor of the patching which occurred when the fireplaces and partition wall were removed.

The original chair rail in the side hall and the original four-panelled doors in the rear of the hall have been retained. The entry to the main room off the side hall is quite large and most probably was altered with the removal of the partition wall. A closed-string stairway rises in the southwest corner of the hall. The chair rail follows the stair to the first landing. The simple walnut balustrades and newel are original to the house. Underneath the stair is an interesting half-size doorway leading to a small closet. The inside of the door is finished while the outside is not. Apparently, it was originally put on the wrong way and left that way. Contiguous to this doorway is the door to the wing and another doorway to the outside. Random-width pine flooring is in the hall. There was originally one window in the side hall, but in the twentieth century a triple sash unit was added in its place.

The living room, once two separate rooms, has a plain cornice, early window surrounds, and the original random-width pine floors except where the corner fireplaces were removed.

There are four rooms over the earliest part of the house and one large room on the second floor of the twentieth-century back wing. In the oldest portion of the upstairs there are exposed beaded corner posts, simple chair rail, and exposed beaded beams. Most of the four-panelled doors and window surrounds are original to the house.

The closed-string attic stairway is walnut. The attic windows are original. There is a fire opening in the roof and the original ladder to the opening is still in the attic, although not in place. The fire opening was included in many houses in Lewes to conform to fire regulations popular in eighteenth-century England. An opening in the roof made it easier to extinguish a fire by getting on the roof.

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

To the southeast of the house is the original brick milk house. An earlier floor in the outbuilding was about 1½ to 2 feet lower than the present floor. The lower floor helped to keep the milk house cool and damp.

The William Russell House sits on the south side of Pilot Town Road and faces Lewes Creek. Once surrounded by farmland, it now has twentieth-century houses on both the east and west sides. The nominated area is defined on the north by the original property boundary line which follows Lewes Creek in front of the house. The south boundary line of the nominated area is a parallel line to Pilot Town Road, 300 feet from the road, which includes the remaining early-nineteenth-century outbuilding.

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 type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Local History
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

William Virden

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The William Russell House is significant as the home of one of the leading citizens of nineteenth-century Lewes, William Russell, a tanner and large landowner. It is also significant because much of its early-nineteenth-century architectural detail remains. It is one of the few remaining houses of its period still on its original site in the Pilot Town area of Lewes.

William Russell, the son of Emanuel and Esther Russell, was born in 1777. He was a descendant of Philip Russell, who ran an inn on Second Street in Lewes and who came to America as the cup bearer on the ship, the WELCOME, which brought William Penn to America.

According to legend, William Russell hired a local carpenter, William Virden, to build his house. Virden had gone to Philadelphia to study carpentry and there met Russell who offered to bring him back to Lewes and to hire him for \$100 a year, plus his keep. Virden died in 1803 and, if the legend is correct, Russell must have built his house prior to this time. However, he did not receive title to the land until 1812 when he purchased a parcel of land which included "...the dwelling house wherein the sd. William Russell now dwells..." from Abraham and Elizabeth Hargis. Possibly Russell had contracted with Hargis to buy the land much earlier, but the transaction was not concluded until 1812.

William Russell acquired much land in Pilot Town, just outside the limits of Lewes. Here, many eighteenth and nineteenth-century pilots and shipcarpenters lived. Because Russell's tanning business required ready access to the sea, the Pilot Town area was a logical place for him to work and to live. Much of the property he acquired is today still owned by his descendants. His great-granddaughter still owns the house.

Around 1800 Russell began a tannery on his property in Pilot Town. His tanning operations were quite large and successful. At one time there were twenty huge vats in operation. The doorstep of the William Russell House is a portion of one of the large millstones used by him in his tannery to crush white oak bark used in tanning hides.

Russell also operated a limekiln on his property. On his return trips from Philadelphia where he shipped his hides, he utilized his relatively empty vessels to bring lime to Lewes.

For over forty years, Russell was a ruling elder of the Lewes Presbyterian Church. His first wife was Elon Wyatt, who died before 1811. On February 19, 1811, he

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

married Elizabeth (Betsey) Coleman, the daughter of William Coleman, a prominent Lewes silversmith. Russell died in 1858 and was buried in the Lewes Presbyterian churchyard.

The architecture of the William Russell House is typical of the small, shingled houses which are common along Lewes Creek. It is one of the few remaining on its original location. Much of its interior and exterior detail, including exposed beaded corner posts, exposed beaded beams on the second floor, and four-panelled doors throughout the house, attest to the conservative trend in Sussex County architecture. Many eighteenth-century architectural details were used in Sussex County well into the nineteenth century. Consequently, although the William Russell House was built in the early nineteenth century, it has eighteenth-century detail.

Its double-pile, side-hall plan is a popular Sussex County configuration. The original flooring remains in most of the house. In the main room, once divided by a partition wall with corner fireplaces, there is patching evident in the flooring where the partition and the two fireplaces were removed and replaced by one large stone fireplace in the twentieth century. There is original chair rail in the hall, along the stairs, and in most of the second-floor rooms. The closed-string staircase is well executed and original. To the southeast of the house is an early milk house, the only remaining outbuilding on the property.

Legends surround the William Russell House. One purports that the house was built on the site of a house occupied by a Frenchman who had a vineyard and ran a winery in the eighteenth century. His wine cellars reputedly remain under the kitchen wing of the house.

Today the William Russell House is an antique store.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Culler, Virginia, "History of Lewes, Delaware," Colonel David Hall Chapter N.S.D.A.F. 1966.
 "The Russell Farmhouse," privately published pamphlet.
 Sussex County Deeds, Wills, Inventories, and Court Records.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	18	48,690,0	4,292,100	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The William Russell House is bounded on the east by the middle line of the driveway (approximately 50 feet from the house); on the south by a line parallel to Pilot Town Road (300 feet from road); on the west by the lot line (approximately 120 feet from the house); and on the north by Lewes Creek.

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

Sue Fox, Research Archivist

ORGANIZATION

Division of Historical & Cultural Affairs

DATE

September 15, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

Hall of Records

TELEPHONE

678-5314

CITY OR TOWN

Dover

STATE

Delaware

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

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

Lauren M. New

TITLE Director, Division of Historical & Cultural Affairs

DATE

9/25/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

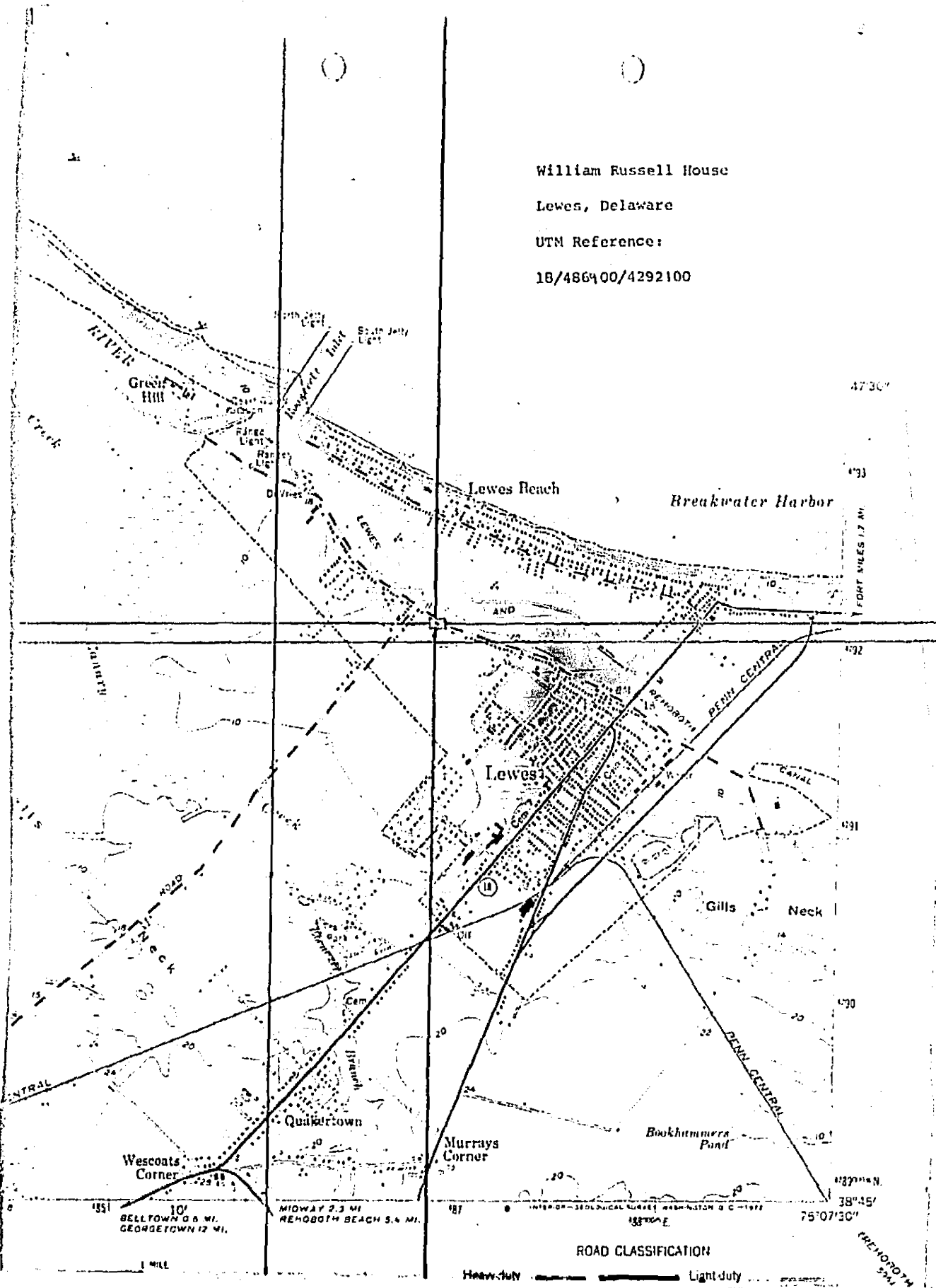
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

William Russell House

Lewes, Delaware

UTM Reference:

18/486400/4292100



4730'

4731

4732

4733

4734

4735

4736

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4738

4739

4740

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4742

4743

4744

4745

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy duty ——— Light duty ———

10' BELLTOWN 0.6 MI. GEORGETOWN 12 MI.

MIDWAY 7.3 MI. REHOBOTH BEACH 5.4 MI.

138° 00' E

75° 07' 30"

PENNY CENTRAL

UTM Reference:

18/486900/4292100

47°30'

47°31'

47°32'

47°33'

47°34'

47°35'

75°07'30"

75°07'30"

75°07'30"

75°07'30"

75°07'30"

75°07'30"

75°07'30"

75°07'30"

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75°07'30"

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75°07'30"

75°07'30"

75°07'30"

75°07'30"

Breakwater Harbor

Lewes Beach

Lewes

Gills Neck

Quakerstown

Murrays Corner

Bookhammers Pond

Wescotts Corner

BELLYTOWN 0.3 MI.
GEORGETOWN 12 MI.

MIDWAY 2.3 MI.
REHOBOTH BEACH 3.4 MI.

133000 E.

133000 E.

TREHOBOTH ST.
344' 11" N

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy duty ——— Light duty ———

Medium duty ——— Unimproved dirt

U. S. Route

State Route

LEWES, DEL.

18345 - 17507.5/7.6

1954

REVISED 1970
MS 1161 1 SW-SERIES 7832



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

1 MILE

100 200 FEET

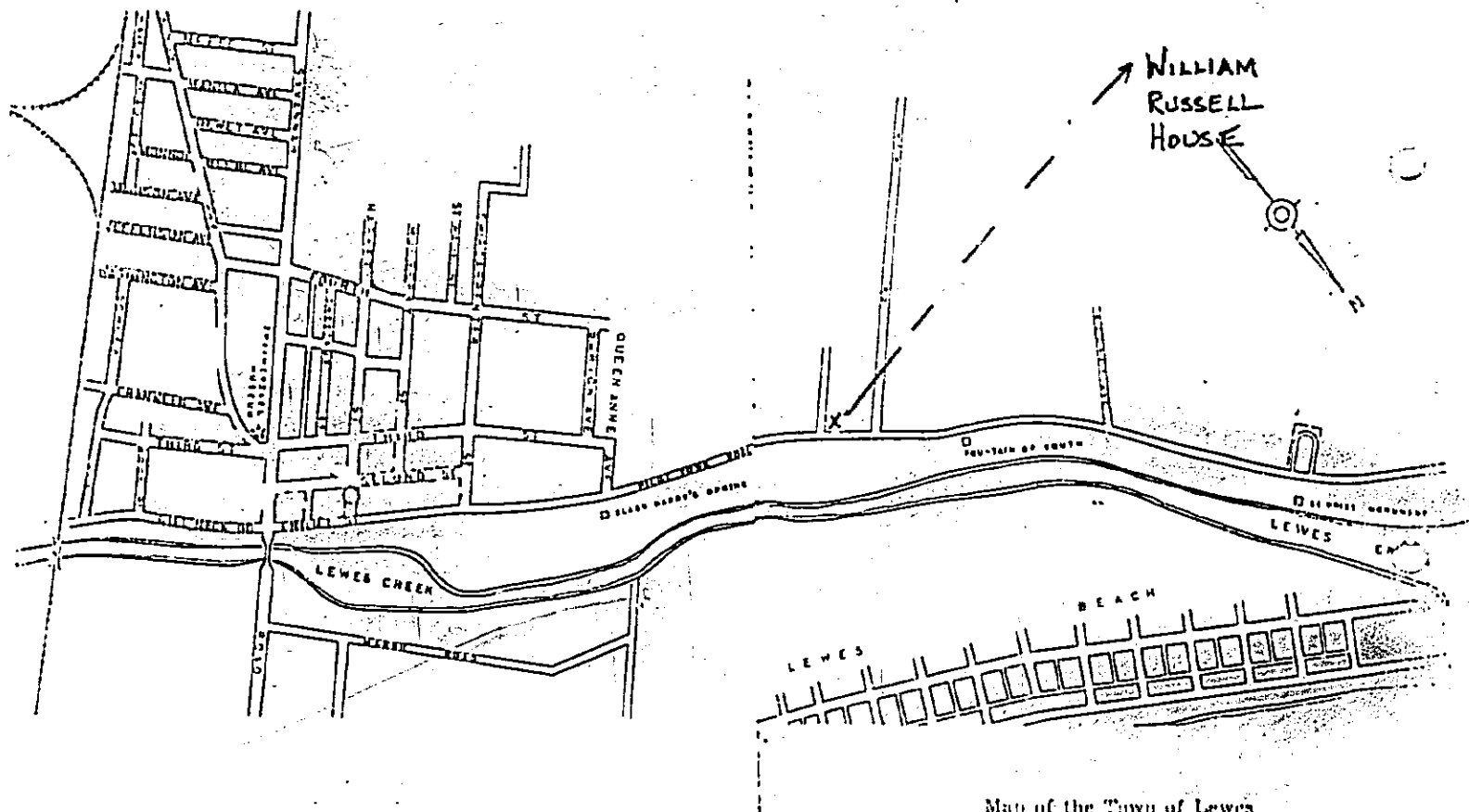
1 2 KILOMETER

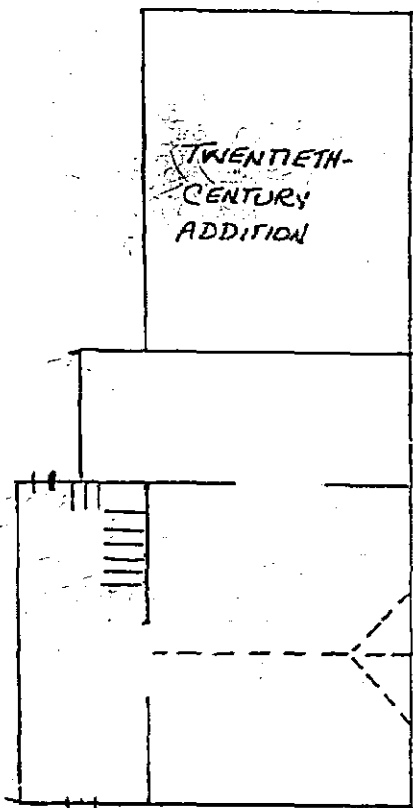
DATE

SCALE

NO. 20242

ON REQUEST





WILLIAM
RUSSELL
HOUSE

LEWES, DELAWARE

NOT TO SCALE

1976 SNF

FIRST FLOOR PLAN
SHOWING PARTITION
WALL AND CORNER
FIREPLACES REMOVED
FROM HOUSE

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE DELAWARE

Date Entered APR 18 1977

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Russell, William, House	Lewes Sussex County

Also Notified

Hon. William V. Roth, Jr.
Hon. Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
Hon. Thomas B. Evans, Jr.

COPY OF CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION