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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

RECEIVED 2280

MAY 15 2015

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

### 1. Name of Property

historic name HESS, CHRISTIAN, HOUSE & SHOEMAKER'S SHOP

other names/site number CHRISTIAN HESS HOMESTEAD; WEAVER HOUSE

### 2. Location

street & number 111 STONY BROOK ROAD

city or town SCHOHARIE

state NEW YORK code NY county SCHOHARIE code 095 zip code 12157

	not for publication
	vicinity

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this  nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property  meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Ruth A. Perpent DSHPD 4/28/15  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register \_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register \_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_ other (explain):

Joe Edison H. Beall 6-30-15  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**CHRISTIAN HESS HOUSE & SHOEMAKER'S SHOP**  
 Name of Property

**SCHOHARIE, NEW YORK**  
 County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

**Category of Property**  
 (Check only **one** box.)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	<b>Total</b>

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed  
 in the National Register**

N/A

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

VACANT

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE

walls: WOOD CLAPBOARD

\_\_\_\_\_

roof: METAL

other: BRICK, GLASS

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**Narrative Description**

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**Summary Paragraph**

The Christian Hess House and associated shoemaker's shop are the two historic features of the nominated property, which is located on Stony Brook Road in the Town of Schoharie, Schoharie County, New York. The nominated house is a story-and-a-half building with gable roof, constructed in traditional New World Dutch fashion for a timber frame dwelling; it was built into a banked site in order to allow for an accessible-at-grade kitchen that corresponds with the southwest, or roadside, elevation. A lean-to and porch extend from the rear elevation of the original section of the house, and there is additionally a modern wing (1977) abutting its northeast elevation. While the earlier and later sections abut one another and communicate internally, they are nevertheless differentiated as separate blocks. In addition to the ca. 1783 Hess dwelling, this nomination includes the small shoemaker's shop that appears roughly contemporaneous in age with the house. It is located across Stony Brook Road a short distance southwest of the house. Both it and the house were built with a series of closely spaced H-bents that define their story-and-half forms, a definitive characteristic of New World Dutch timber frame construction; the house's original two-room first floor plan additionally reflects eighteenth-century Palatine German preferences relative to the disposition of interior space and relates to an identified type. At first floor level, the interior rooms are spanned by exposed, hand-planed transverse ceiling beams, and there is a centrally placed chimney mass that serves a fireplace at this level and a second one below at basement level. The lower fireplace, which has an adjacent bake oven, corresponds with the accessible-at-grade basement kitchen, or keeping room. It, too, is spanned by substantial oak ceiling beams, though these were not smoothly finished like those in the two rooms above, indicating it as a less formal area of the dwelling. The nominated house and shoemaker's shop form a relatively rare pair of local historic resources likely built between the conclusion of the Revolution in 1783 and ca. 1805.

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**Narrative Description**

**Location & Setting**

The Christian Hess House and the associated shoemaker's shop are located near the intersection of State Route 30 and Stony Brook Road on the southern outskirts of the Village of Schoharie in Schoharie County, New York. The house is situated on the north side of Stony Brook Road, a few hundred feet east of the intersection, while the shop is located on the opposite, south, side of the road; both were constructed with their roof ridges on a northeast-to-southwest orientation. The historic section of the house presents itself as a story-and-a-half structure when viewed from the northwest, while the southwest elevation additionally reveals the exposed-at-grade basement level. The immediate topography of the house site is varied; the ground rises upwards from road level on the house's northwest side but falls away steeply on the adjacent southwest side. There is a more gradual rise between road level and the rear of the house, the principal entrance to which is accessed from a porch on that side. A split rail wood fence aligns the property along Stony Brook Road and also extends in front of the house's northwest side. There are decorative plantings along portions of this fence and the area around the house is interspersed with both young and mature deciduous trees. An open grassy area is located behind the dwelling, where a small garden is also situated. Across Stony Brook Road and beyond the shoemaker's shop runs the course of Stony Brook Creek, which meets Schoharie Creek at a point further to the west; beyond it, and further to the south on the opposite bank, is a dwelling and a hill from which rises a stand of mature pine trees. A house is additionally situated between the nominated property and State Route 30, located on the northeast corner of that roads intersection with Stony Brook Road.

**Hess House, ca. 1783 & later (contributing building)**

The historic portion of the Hess house, not inclusive of the 1977 wing, appears to have been developed in two phases, as the rear lean-to presumably post-dates the construction of the main block; it may have well been an open feature that was enclosed at a later date to provide additional living space. This latter feature now incorporates two interior staircases, one of which leads downwards to the basement and the other to the upper

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story. The location of vertical circulation within the main block, prior to the addition of the lean-to, has not been definitively confirmed but was likely in the main block's northeast corner, adjacent to where the present stair upward from the lean-to is located. Access between the basement and first floor appears to have originally required going outside, by means of a covered porch or similar feature, a condition not unknown in eighteenth century Dutch and Palatine German houses in New York State.

The northwest elevation is punctuated by two windows; that to the south is fitted with twelve-over-twelve sash and has a simple casing with drip cap, while the other is squarer in proportion and fitted with eight-over-eight sash. Some of the clapboard siding on this elevation is beaded and presumably early, if not original, while the balance represents subsequent material. The roof is covered with standing-seam metal and, rising from its ridge, is a brick chimney with stone chimney cap. Approximately one foot of the house's mortared stone foundation is expressed above grade on this elevation.

The southwest elevation fronts on Stony Brook Road. Fenestration consists of three windows and a door corresponding with basement level; these windows have eight-over-eight sash. There are three windows corresponding with first-floor level, two with twelve-over-twelve sash and the one in the lean-to with eight-over-eight sash; and there are two windows at half-story level that have eight-over-eight sash. A simple, raking wood moulding follows the roofline of the main block and lean-to, and a small louvered vent is present in the gable field below the roof's apex.

The southeast, or rear elevation, is spanned by a porch, which shields a door which is flanked by sidelights. Four square piers sustain the roof of the porch, the pitch of which is shallower than the roof of the lean-to which it extends from; it is partially enclosed by wood railing. As for the northeast elevation, there are two windows at first-story level—one a small opening with six-over-six sash, the other a large casement fitted with two 15-light windows—and two windows with six-over-six sash corresponding with the half story. A concrete block chimney is present on this elevation and is positioned so that it rises between the two upper windows. The modern wing obscures a small portion of this elevation.

As for the 1977 wing, it has four windows—two at each level—in addition to a door on the southeast elevation; two windows, one at each level, on the opposite northwest elevation, and two windows, one at each level, corresponding with the southwest gable elevation. There are additionally quarter-round louvered vents at attic level. A lean-to with long sloping roof extends from the wing's northeast gable elevation. In scale, massing and overall treatment the wing is similar in many regards to the historic section of the house. It has clapboard siding, a standing-seam metal roof, and a concrete foundation.

The interior of the main block, not inclusive of the lean-to and the 1977 wing, consists of a kitchen/keeping room, along with an unfinished area, at basement level; two rooms, which function as a sitting room and a kitchen, at first-floor level; and bed chambers at half-story level. The lean-to additionally accommodates a small entrance hall, a bathroom, and two staircases at first-floor level: one leads downwards to the basement, the other upwards to the half-story. In order that the latter staircase could access the upper story, a portion of the top plate was removed between the first and second rafter. There is presently no vertical circulation within the main block; a small box staircase presumably provided internal communication between the first and upper floor originally. As for the 1977 wing, at first-floor level it accommodates a single open area which serves as a combination living and dining room, and it includes an additional room situated in the lean-to as well as living space above the main section.

The interior of the dwelling had been substantially renovated by the time the present owners purchased it in the 1970s. As such, it contrasts some level of original finish with an overlay of later-era materials. The basement kitchen/keeping room retains its original cooking hearth and bake oven, though the mantel is a later

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installation; this fireplace had been bricked in during the 1950s but was found intact when that material was removed. The ceiling retains its original appearance, with massive, roughly hewn and exposed oak beams and the exposed undersides of the first-floor floorboards. A large stone-laid hearth is present in front of the firebox, which retains its cooking crane, to the left of which is a bake oven. Above this fireplace is expressed the masonry arch which sustains the hearth and fireplace in the room above. Parts of this room are lined with vertical wood planks, and a hand-planed plank door separates it from the unfinished area behind it, where the mass of the bake oven is expressed. A built-in bench, not original, marks the wall corresponding with the exterior.

The two first-floor rooms retain their exposed ceiling beams and wide-plank flooring. The bents were spaced roughly five feet on center and the beams measure roughly nine and a half inches in depth and between five and six inches in width. The room above the kitchen/keeping room, presumably the parlor, has a small fireplace with a brick firebox corresponding with the chimney breast, which is centered against the wall dividing this room from the adjacent one. Installed within the rear wall of the firebox is a cast-iron plate that served as a protective fire-back and which was reused from a German stove cast in Pennsylvania in the 1740s. It was either added following the reconstruction of the firebox, as its temporary removal indicated no evidence that the brick behind it had ever seen fire, or it was original to that location. Neither the Federal style wood mantel nor the Delft tile skirt that embellishes the fireplace opening is original to the house and both represent later restoration treatments. Several Charles K. Jahnke landscape paintings of Schoharie County hang on one of the walls of this room; Jahnke owned this house prior to the current owners and used it in part as his studio.

The stair upwards from the lean-to leads into a cross hall, from which is accessible a large and well-lighted bed chamber that spans the south side of the plan.

Hess Shoemaker's Shop, ca. 1805 & later (contributing building)

The shoemaker's shop is an important and by all indications rare example of a purpose-built trade shop. Like the house, its frame was constructed in traditional New World Dutch fashion with a series of closely spaced H-bents, the timber frame being cut on the scribe rule, evidence of a pre-1810 date of construction. The oldest section is a roughly square plan building with gable roof, the ridge of which is perpendicular to the adjacent road. There is additionally a gable-roofed wing at the rear, creating an L-shaped footprint, the two sections being connected by means of a short gable-roofed hyphen. The gable side of the older portion, that which faces the road, has a wood plank door and nine-light window corresponding with the first story and a second slightly larger wood plank door and smaller four-light window corresponding with the half story. The roof of the early section is steeply pitched and the exterior is covered with clapboard, some of which (near the gable apex) is of noticeably wide width/exposure. Roofing consists of both corrugated and standing-seam metal, the former being that which corresponds with the earlier section. A large sliding door is present on the southeast elevation, a later but nevertheless historic-period modification. A door and window, shielded beneath a porch, provide for access to the later wing on its northeast elevation.

The interior of the original section was, as might be expected, modestly finished. The roughly hewn anchor beams were left exposed and the walls were fitted with horizontal wood plank. The Hess period of occupancy is in part represented by lamp black graffiti that remains on the plank walls, which includes the names "FRANK HESS," "A HESS" and the date "1877."

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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

**ARCHITECTURE**

**COMMERCE**

**Period of Significance**

ca. 1783- 1907

**Significant Dates**

ca. 1783; ca. 1805; 1907

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

N/A

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The cited period of significance, ca. 1783- 1907, is initiated with the construction of the nominated dwelling and terminates at 1907, the year when the property was transferred out of Hess family ownership by Ida Hess, daughter of Albinus Hess and granddaughter of Christian Hess. This period includes all those physical modifications deemed significant to the property's history.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

N/A

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph**

Abstract

The Christian Hess House and the associated shoemaker's shop are architecturally and historically significant resources located on the outskirts of the Village of Schoharie in Schoharie County, New York. The nominated house is presumed to have been built in the period immediately following the American Revolution, given the widespread destruction of the Schoharie Valley during the war, the result of raids conducted by Loyalists and Native Americans acting on behalf of the English Crown. It exhibits features expressive of Palatine German domestic architecture in New York State and the overarching New World Dutch tradition of which its construction is representative. The dwelling's first definitive resident, Christian Hess (1778-1835), was of Palatine German descent and a shoemaker and leather manufacturer by trade. Hess died while returning from a leather-procuring trip to Matanzas, Cuba; his son Albinis (b. 1806) carried on his father's trade subsequently, and it appears Zambert Cromer may have carried on the shoemaker's craft in the nominated shop during the 1870s, by which time Albinis had turned his attention to farming. Given that the shop appears to date to ca. 1805, it appears that it is that in which both Christian and Albinis Hess, and later possibly Zambert Cromer, worked there. The ca. 1783 dwelling, to which a modern off-set addition (1977) has been added, is a timber-frame building built in characteristic New World Dutch fashion with a series of closely spaced H-bents that define its story-and-a-half form. A lean-to extension, located on the rear elevation, represents an early historic-era modification—and possibly the enclosure of what was originally an open feature providing a covered passage between the principal level and basement kitchen. The shoemaker's shop, like the house, was also constructed in the New World Dutch manner. While its precise origin is unclear, the house may have been built for a member of the Weaver family before being acquired by Christian Hess around the time of the latter's marriage. The original floor plan included an accessible-at-grade basement kitchen/keeping room on the southwest roadside elevation, with an adjacent storage room behind; two rooms at first-story level, not inclusive of the lean-to, one heated by fireplace and the other presumably by a stove at one time; and space in the unheated half-story. Certain aspects of the house, namely the two-room first-floor configuration and central chimney, relate it to eighteenth century Palatine German house design in New York and illustrate the continued pervasiveness of traditional housing forms in this region in the post-Revolutionary era. Taken together the house and shoemaker's shop remain important architectural resources that illustrate the reconstruction of the built environment of Schoharie following the destructive years of the Revolution.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance**

Historical Context and Early Ownership Chronology

Schoharie County's first European-American settlers were Palatine Germans who had come to the American Colonies via England as religious refugees in the early eighteenth century. The Palatines were initially established in two work camps in the Hudson River Valley, on lands contained within Livingston Manor, and there worked briefly in association with the ill-conceived "naval stores project." That enterprise soon proved unsuccessful, which led to a diaspora beyond the original settlement areas in present-day Columbia and Ulster counties, and, by 1712, the first Palatines arrived in the wilderness of the Mohawk Valley. The year 1723 witnessed the arrival in the Mohawk Valley of 100 Palatine families from the initial 1710s Hudson River Valley immigration, following the granting of land for settlement just west of Little Falls under the Burnet Patent. The Palatines quickly founded other settlements in the Mohawk-Schoharie region, at places that bear names such as German Flatts and Palatine Bridge, where they established "dorfs" or farm villages. Settlements were also established along the fertile course of the Schoharie Creek, among them Brunnen Dorf, or the present day Village of Schoharie. These frontier settlements were vulnerable to attack during the French & Indian War and the American Revolution, a condition that all but ensured that the Palatines would again bear first-hand witness to the ravages and suffering of war that had driven them from their homeland in Europe.

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The Schoharie area was particularly devastated during the Revolution, at which time many of its buildings were destroyed by pro-British raiders and their native Iroquois allies. The Schoharie Valley was considered a prime target for attack by Loyalists during the war, given the quantity of wheat produced there on its fertile and by that time well-established farms. The year 1780 was particularly traumatic for residents of the area; in October of that year forces under the command of Sir John Johnson laid waste to many Schoharie-area houses and farmsteads. The region, as New York Governor George Clinton noted after the raid, "is burnt and laid waste." It is currently believed that the nominated house dates to the immediate post-Revolutionary period, at which time many new buildings were erected to replace those destroyed during the war. The so-called Hartman's Dorf house, relocated to the Old Stone Fort Museum complex in Schoharie, is a two-room house of a related type that has been dated, by dendrochronology, to ca. 1786, indicating the persistence of this traditional housing form in the post-war era.

Schoharie was for a time a district of Albany County, prior to the formal organization of Schoharie County. It was formed as a town within Albany County in 1788 but became the founding town of the newly created Schoharie County at the time it was raised, in 1795. In 1797 a part of the town was used to form the adjacent towns of Blenheim, Broome, Cobleskill, and Middleburgh. Lands were also taken from it to form the towns of Esperance and Wright in 1846. Schoharie was, and in large measure remains, an agricultural community. Following the demise of regional wheat farming in the early nineteenth century, both cheese-making and dairying assumed more important positions in local agriculture.

Although the earliest identified occupant of the house is Christian Hess, various documentary sources suggest that the dwelling was not built for him but was constructed earlier, with Hess's occupancy having occurred after 1805, the year of his marriage. In the 1799 tax assessment of Schoharie, Hess was indicated as the owner of a "lott" but not a corresponding house or farm, a condition repeated in the subsequent assessments between the years 1800 and 1803. It is believed that the property was originally associated with the Weaver family and that the house may have been built for and occupied, prior to Christian Hess, by John or Johannes Weaver.

Christian Hess was born in 1778 to parents Johannes Hess and Anna Maria Hess, and in October 1805 he married Margaret Schaeffer (1782-1872), a member of another old Palatine family. The couple's children included Albinis (b. 1806), Peter (b. 1809), Leonard (b. 1811), David (b. 1814), and Jenette. Jenette Hess married Dr. James Lewis and died in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania in 1833; her passing was noted in her former community and a service conducted to honor her memory. As recorded in the state census of 1825, the Hess's Schoharie household consisted of seven male and two female members. The property had four acres of associated land on which the family kept a small number of livestock. By 1835 the Hess property had been expanded to include seven acres.

The elder Hess was a leather manufacturer and shoemaker, the latter a trade which his son Albinis pursued for a time in later years as well. In an advertisement published in the *Albany Gazette* in 1804, the discontinuation of Christian Hess's business partnership with Joseph Esnor was announced, though Hess indicated he would continue on independently:

The business in future will be carried on  
by Christian Hess, at the same place,  
as usual; where Tanning and Currying  
is carried on with dispatch—who has on  
hand a quantity of Sole Leather, cheap,  
for cash.



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CHRISTIAN HESS

A Journeyman and Apprentice, to the  
above business, wanted.

Schoharie, June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1804<sup>1</sup>

The precise nature of Hess's arrangement with Esnor—such as whether Hess had apprenticed with Esnor and learned his trade from him—is not known.

Christian Hess died in May 1835 in the New York City area; by one account, "Christian Hess, of Schoharie," died in New York City "on his passage from Matanzas." A similar account, captured in the handwritten notes of local historian Betty Schaeffer, indicates that Hess "died near the city of New York on board a vessel on his return to this place [Schoharie] from Matanzas in Cuba, where he had been on business."<sup>2</sup> According to Schaeffer, Hess had left for Cuba in 1833. While molasses, sugar and rum were the chief imports from Matanzas in this era, it nevertheless appears that Hess traveled there for the purpose of procuring leather for his manufacturing interests. Hess may have taken ill with cholera, as a news story published in the *New England Farmer* in 1833 under the title "Bad News for Matanzas" indicated that this disease was "making awful ravages" at that time.<sup>3</sup>

It appears the nominated shoe shop may have been operated for a time in the 1870s by Zambert Kromer ("Cromer" variously), who, in the federal census of 1870, was listed as residing adjacent to the households of Margaret and Albinus Hess and who indicated his occupation at that time as a boot and shoemaker. In the Schoharie County directory of 1872-73 Kromer was identified as a "custom shoemaker." As noted by historian Ross Thompson, during the first half of the nineteenth century the shift towards mechanized shoe production was fully underway in America, though in rural areas like Schoharie, the local craftsman continued in some measure to provide this indispensable service. As such, the nominated shoemaker's shop is representative of a local commercial interest and a resource type eventually displaced by large-scale manufacturing.<sup>4</sup>

Christian Hess's widow, Margaret, continued to reside in the nominated house until her own death. Margaret Hess was identified as the owner on the 1866 map included in the Schoharie County atlas published by Stone & Stewart. The house is shown on that map as occupied by "Mrs. Hess," while a second Hess household, that of "T. Hess," is shown immediately adjacent to the shoe shop, which is also marked. Ten years earlier, as depicted on the Schoharie County wall map published by R.P. Smith of Philadelphia in 1856, the house was noted as that of "Mr. B. Hess," while a second household, that of "A. Hess" was nearby. The latter was presumably Christian and Margaret Hess's son, Albinus Hess, who at the time of the 1855 state census was residing in a house valued at \$500 with his family. Albinus Hess noted his occupation in 1855 as shoemaker. Margaret Hess, meanwhile, resided in a house valued at \$1,000, presumed to be the dwelling in question; the identity of the "Mr. B. Hess" shown on the map remains unclear. Margaret Hess noted herself as a widow and a 73-year old resident of Schoharie and lived alone. The second Hess house, headed by her son, Albinus Hess, may have been located on the opposite side of the Stony Creek, but was nevertheless nearby.

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<sup>1</sup> "Dissolution of Copartnership," *Albany Gazette*, 18 June 1804.

<sup>2</sup> The first source, an itemized list of deaths compiled from newspaper sources, indicated Hess's death on 7 May 1835; copies of the Schaeffer notes were provided by the present owner.

<sup>3</sup> *New England Farmer and Horticultural Journal* (15 May 1833) vol. XI, no. 44, 351.

<sup>4</sup> Ross Thompson, *The Path to Mechanized Shoe Production in the United States* (North Carolina Press, 1989), 11-13.

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The 1860 federal census largely depicted similar conditions, with two nearby Hess households, one headed by Albinis and the other by his widowed mother, Margaret. By 1870 Albinis Hess, then 64, had turned to farming along with his son, Frank, 16. Margaret Hess, by then 87, continued to live alone in a separate dwelling—the nominated house. She died at the advanced age of 90, in March 1872, nearly 40 years after the death of her husband, and is buried in the Old Stone Fort Cemetery in Schoharie.

Following the death of his mother, Margaret, in 1872, Albinis Hess acquired the nominated house, which was described in a deed between him and Anna M.C. Schaeffer as “the orchard and homestead of the late Christian Hess, deceased.” In the state census of 1875, Hess, 68, was shown as residing in a household that included himself, his son, Frank, 21, and daughter, Ida, 19. In 1879 Hess transferred the property to his daughter, Ida, for \$320. It was described in part as “the homestead of late Christian Hess, deceased.” In 1907 Ida Hess, then of Watervliet, Albany County, transferred the property to Henry and Mary Klahr, who soon thereafter defaulted on a mortgage agreement, leading to the property’s sale in 1916.

In 1958 the property was acquired by Charles K. Jahnke, from whom the present owners acquired it in 1972. Jahnke retired to Schoharie from a career in banking in New York City in the 1950s and purchased the Hess house, which he used in part as his painting studio. He was a prolific landscape artist whose work focused on the landscape of the surrounding region, and he is credited to some extent with ensuring the survival of the house to present times.

Architectural Overview

The term “New World Dutch” encompasses the related building traditions in New York State inclusive of its early Dutch, German and other Northern European peoples. While some variation might be found in comparing the vernacular domestic architecture of the Dutch with that of the Palatine Germans, it is generally acknowledged that these two distinctive cultural groups nevertheless constructed both wood frame and stone houses in a related manner. As such, the traditional houses of Palatine Germans in the Hudson, Mohawk and Schoharie valleys are contained within the larger overarching “New World Dutch” building tradition of New York State, one which was markedly different from New England building traditions.

The nominated house was built in characteristic New World Dutch fashion for a timber-frame dwelling. The frame consists of a series of closely spaced H “bents,” a term derived from the Dutch term *gebint*, and a common rafter roof. Each of these bents, in this case spaced roughly five feet on center, is formed by two vertical posts which are linked by an anchor beam upon which the floorboards of the upper story rested. Prior to the broad adoption of plaster-on-lath ceilings, these beams were expressed on the interior and as such were both structural and aesthetic in nature; while the taste for exposed ceiling beams faded after the Revolution, early nineteenth century examples are not unknown. The posts received the top plates which in turn received the common rafters, the corresponding collar ties of which defined the ceiling height of the upper story. This framing concept, which gave rise to the story-and-a-half house, was much employed in areas of New York State settled by Northern Europeans. It continued to be employed into the nineteenth century, and its influence came to be felt in adjacent parts of western New England. The so-called “raised Cape” is among the hybrid forms which demonstrate the intermingling of New World Dutch and New England building traditions, combining as it did spatial features of both.

The house’s original two-room, roughly square-shaped plan and its accessible-at-grade basement kitchen are characteristic of Palatine German houses in New York and are seen in both stone and timber-frame examples. The two-room plan was of the open-cell type, with direct entry into one of the two principal rooms, typically the kitchen; the addition of the lean-to to the Hess house—likely created by the enclosure of an earlier tiered porch— allowed for the introduction of an entrance hall at a later date. In earlier examples, one of the two

**CHRISTIAN HESS HOUSE & SHOEMAKER'S SHOP**

Name of Property

**SCHOHARIE, NEW YORK**

County and State

principal rooms was serviced by a large jambless fireplace and the other by means of a five-plate stove which was filled with hot coals through a passage at the fireplace's rear. By the time the nominated house was built, more conventional English, or "jambled," fireplaces had been adopted, and the stove used in the opposite room was of the six-plate or "airtight" type. The two rooms forming the first-floor plan were often disposed as a "groot kamer" or best room, which evolved into what is commonly referred to as a parlor, the other being a less formal room used for multiple purposes, including food cooking, eating and perhaps sleeping. The term "stube" or stove room was, as its name suggests, typically used to denote that which lacked the fireplace. In the instance of the nominated house, the presence of a basement kitchen/keeping room allowed that function to be removed from the first floor of the plan, where it would have corresponded with a hearth. The two-room house plan, with or without a basement kitchen, is strongly equated with houses built in Palatine German settlement areas; however, examples of this type, including that with a stove and hearth room, have been found in Dutch-settled areas as well.

It is presently surmised that the lean-to was formed all or in part by the enclosure of a formerly open feature, which would have provided a covered passage from the basement kitchen to the first floor. Such an arrangement was not unknown, as examples have been identified in other areas, among them Ulster County in the mid-Hudson Valley.

Jeptha Roots Simms, writing in the 1840s in his *History of Schoharie County*, offered the following analysis of the region's architecture, in which he viewed the region's New World Dutch architecture as less formalized than that of the English population. "The Germans and Dutch do not generally display as much taste in the selection of a site for, and the erection of their dwellings, as do the English," Simms opined. "Frequently a Dutchman's house fronts its owner's barn, instead of fronting a public highway. A small kitchen and an oven are often separately erected—both detached from the dwelling."<sup>5</sup>

**Conclusion**

The nominated house and shoemaker's shop are important historic and architectural resources that chronicle the history of the Schoharie region in the decades following the conclusion of the Revolution. Given the widespread destruction of the Schoharie Valley in 1780, the Hess dwelling is likely among the oldest extant houses in the immediate area, and in both plan and construction it retains specific attributes which link it to Palatine German house design in both regional and statewide contexts. The significance of the site is greatly augmented by the survival of the small shoemaker's shop. This somewhat rare example of an early nineteenth century commercial enterprise shares direct associations with Christian Hess and his son, Albinis, and is expressive of the contributions of the local craftsman and the era predating the ascendance of large-scale shoe manufacture.

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**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

N/A

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<sup>5</sup> Jeptha R. Simms, *History of Schoharie County and Border Wars of New York* (Albany: Munsell & Tanner, 1845), 604.

**CHRISTIAN HESS HOUSE & SHOEMAKER'S SHOP**

**SCHOHARIE, NEW YORK**

Name of Property

County and State

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Thompson, Ross. *The Path to Mechanized Shoe Production in the United States*. North Carolina Press, 1989.

Simms, Jephtha R. *History of Schoharie County and Border Wars of New York*. Albany: Munsell & Tanner, 1845.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** .82 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u>	<u>555772</u>	<u>4721576</u>	3	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	4	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary for this NRHP nomination is depicted on the three maps including with this documentation, all of which are entitled "Christian Hess House & Shoemaker's Shop, Schoharie, Schoharie Co., New York." These maps were drawn at scales of 1:24,000, 1:12,000 and 1:4,000.

**Boundary Justification**

The NRHP boundary as drawn includes the two principal architectural resources associated with the development of this land beginning ca. 1783. The .82 acres of land included in the boundary is historically associated with the property during the cited period of significance, ca. 1783-1907; no additional land has been included outside of that which remains from the historic period.

**CHRISTIAN HESS HOUSE & SHOEMAKER'S SHOP**

**SCHOHARIE, NEW YORK**

Name of Property

County and State

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title William E. Krattinger  
organization NYS Division for Historic Preservation date February 2015  
street & number Peebles Island State Park telephone (518) 268-2167  
city or town Waterford State NY zip code 12188  
e-mail William.Krattinger@parks.ny.gov

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

PHOTOGRAPHS, TIFF format, by Travis Bowman, April 2014

Digital files maintained at NYS Division for Historic Preservation, Peebles Island State Park, Waterford NY 12188.

- 0001 Exterior, Hess house, view looking eastwards towards west elevation; 1977 addition to left of original house
- 0002 Exterior, Hess house, view looking north to south elevation
- 0003 Interior, Hess house, south room first floor, view looking to southwest corner
- 0004 Interior, Hess house, south room first floor, mantel and fireback
- 0005 Interior, Hess house, basement kitchen, view looking west; kitchen fireplace and oven to right
- 0006 Exterior, shoemaker's shop, viewing looking south towards north-facing façade
- 0007 Interior, shoemaker's shop, nineteenth-century graffiti, north wall

**Property Owner:**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Charles Keese  
street & number Same as nomination address telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.





Schoharie, NY  
Quadrangles

Hess House &  
Shoemaker's House



1:24,000  
1 in = 2,000 ft

Copyright: © 2013 National Geographic Society

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N  
Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Datum: North American 1983  
Units: Meter



 Hess House



**Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation**



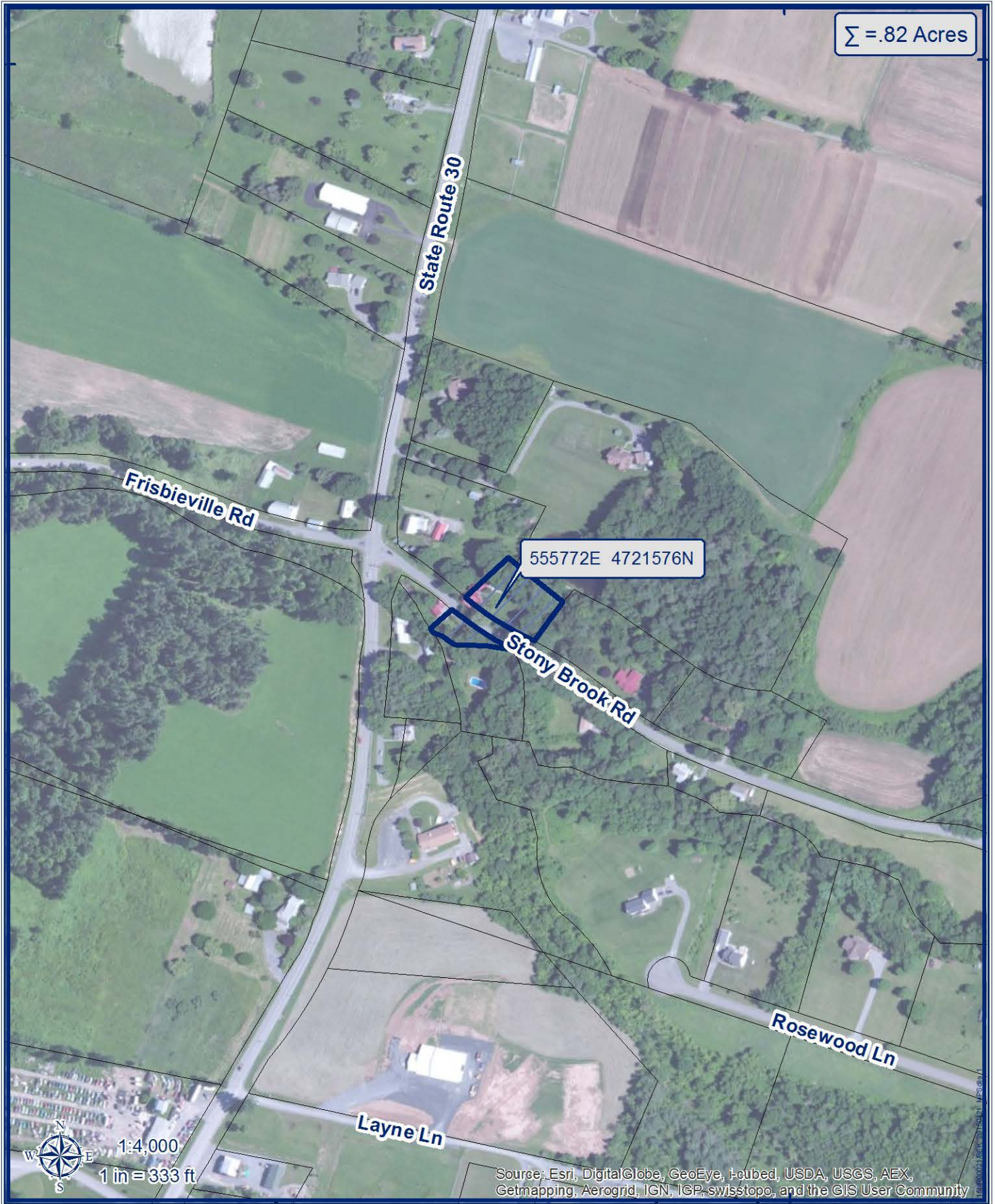




4722000

4722000

$\Sigma = .82$  Acres



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Helvex, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

556000

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N  
Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Datum: North American 1983  
Units: Meter



 Hess House



**Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation**





















of the  
AHE  
1877



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Hess, Christian, House and Shoemaker's Shop  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Schoharie

DATE RECEIVED: 5/15/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 6/09/15  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/24/15 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/30/15  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000369

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 6-30-15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.





**New York State Office of Parks,  
Recreation and Historic Preservation**

Division for Historic Preservation  
P.O. Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189  
518-237-8643

RECEIVED 2280

MAY 15 2015

Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor

Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
Rose Harvey  
Commissioner

30 April 2015

Alexis Abernathy  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye St. NW, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to submit the following four nominations, all on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

First Unitarian Church of Buffalo, Erie County  
Inglewood & Thurston Historic District, Monroe County  
Christine Hess House and Shoemaker's Shop, Schoharie County  
Alligerville Historic District, Ulster County.

Please feel free to call me at 518.268.2165 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank  
National Register Coordinator  
New York State Historic Preservation Office