

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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K-1303:

Property Name: Thomas Attix House

Location and Verbal Boundary Description:

The Attix House is located on the north side of Road 140, 3/4 mile east of Road 142. The 200-acre farm is divided into north and south halves by Road 140. This nomination includes only that portion of the land north of the road and further restricted to the land 1,000 feet north of the highway and 500 feet on either side of the driveway include all of the related agricultural buildings. The total nominated acreage is 22.96 acres.

Owner: Sarah Chance
R. D. 1
Clayton, De 19938

Description:

The Thomas Attix House was constructed around 1880 as a replacement for an earlier dwelling on the farm. The original house is pictorially represented on an 1870 Kent County Orphan's Court Plot map as a 3-story, Greek Revival building. While drawings of this type are not totally reliable, it does at least indicate that a dwelling was on the property. There are a number of early nineteenth-century outbuildings that would indicate a longer period of occupation for the farm. The present Thomas Attix is, in plan, a 3-bay, 2-story frame building with a rear wing. The entire house sits on a brick foundation. Its style is basically that of a Gothic Revival dwelling; however, there are a number of Queen Anne elements that have been incorporated into the house and which give it a very eclectic appearance.

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The major Gothic features are the cross gables on the main roof and the rear wing which are pierced with lancet windows. Coupled with a slightly steeper main roof, these serve to achieve the desire for strong vertical thrust for Greek Revival dwellings. This is muted by the Queen Anne features, most notably the full porch across the front and the projecting bay on the east gable end. Additional Queen Anne elements include the paired one-over-one windows, the interior double chimneys, and the decorative woodwork found on both the exterior and the interior of the house.

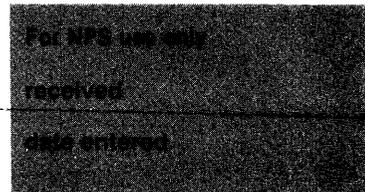
The outbuildings on the farm are related to its long agricultural history. The major structures are a frame barn, cattle sheds, and machine shed. These all have vertical board siding and corrugated metal roofs. These buildings date to the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century period of the second occupation on the farm. Two buildings survive from the initial occupation of the farm. The first is a brick milk house located behind the cattle shed. It is a small, 1-story building. The second structure is also near the cattle shed. It is a small, 1-story, sawn-plank bull pen. The planks are laid up similar to a log building and are covered in vertical board siding. It has a corrugated metal roof.

Historical Background:

The Thomas Attix House was built around 1880 to replace an earlier structure. Thomas had acquired the farmstead on the death of his father, Edward, in 1870. It is not known how long Edward Attix had the farm, but he is listed as the owner on Byle's Atlas of Kent County, published in 1859. The Attix family had been in Kent County from the mid-eighteenth century. Edward's grandfather, Aquilla, had owned a number of farms in Duck Creek Hundred, including one in the "Forest of Duck Creek" on Jordan's Branch. This is the approximate location of the present Thomas Attix House and farm. Unfortunately, that is the only description given for the 200-acre farm. Many Kent County deeds do not give a specific location for the land involved instead reference is made to adjoining landowners or to geographic features such as creeks or stands of trees.

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Statement of Significance:

The Thomas Attix House is a combination of two diverse building styles and is a rare example of the blending of Gothic Revival and Queen Anne stylistic features in Kenton Hundred. While certain elements of both styles overlap, such as the one of classical motifs for decorative moldings, the symmetry of the Gothic Revival is the antithesis of the mostly asymmetrical floor plans of the Queen Anne. Because of the successful melding of these two traditions, the Thomas Attix House is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C.