

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH 0685518

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED **OCT 2 1978**

DATE ENTERED **DEC 12 1978**

**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

GOVERNOR GEORGE TRUITT HOUSE

AND/OR COMMON

None

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Route 388, 1/2 mile north of junction with Route 382

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Magnolia

VICINITY OF

One

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Delaware

10

Kent

001

**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:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mr. Bruce Frazier

STREET & NUMBER

Route 1, Box 14

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Magnolia

VICINITY OF

Delaware

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Kent County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

The Green

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Dover

Delaware

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Delaware Cultural Resource Survey; K-928

DATE

1978

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Hall of Records

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Dover

Delaware

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Governor George Truitt House is situated on a sandy knoll in South Murderkill Hundred in Kent County on the east side of the old State Road, which runs from Canterbury to Milford. Just to the east of the house is a small stream which feeds Pratt Branch, in times past known as Bishops Branch, which is part of the Murderkill River drainage network. The terrain of this portion of Kent County features gently undulating cultivated fields and occasional wooded areas.

The Truitt House is of late Georgian plan and detailing and was probably constructed during the late 18th century. It is comprised of a brick core and a braced frame wing. The brick core is two-and-one-half stories high, one room deep, and built according to the side hall plan. The braced frame wing, which appears contemporary with the brick core, is also two-and-a-half stories high but is of the hall-and-parlor plan. The Truitt House features a gable roof and an interesting modillioned box cornice with bed moulding; which is common to many of the more elegant houses built in Delaware during the late 18th century. The most unusual feature of the house is its exterior chimney with sloped weatherings and corbelled lip, situated on the east gable end of the brick core.

The external appearance of the house has been somewhat altered over the years. The most obvious changes are the application of stucco to the exterior walls of the brick core, the use of insulated simulated brick composition siding on the frame wing, and the addition of dormers and a porch during the 1930's. The one-story hip roofed porch with vertical board siding has a continuous series of **paired** one-over-one sash windows and runs the full length of the facade.

The brick core has been covered with an unpainted stucco, which conceals the brick bond on the facade and east gable end. Some stuccoed areas have separated from **and fallen** off the north or rear exterior wall, revealing three course American bond construction. The original window sashes have been replaced with modern one-over-one pane sashes, probably at the same time the porch was added. The original window surrounds have been covered by later mouldings, to bring the surrounds flush with the applied stucco. The shutters are now missing. Entrance to the cellar, which lies only under the brick core, is through a brick bulkhead entrance with wooden steps on the extreme right of the facade and is now enclosed by the porch.

The foundation and cellar walls are of brick laid in seven-course American bond with a hearth and exterior end chimney supporting arch projecting into the cellar from the east wall. The cellar has a plain pattern brick floor and a brick partition wall running from front to rear which divides the cellar into two similar sized sections. The partition wall has a vertical board and beaded batten door mounted on H/L hinges, which are secured by wrought iron nails. At the juncture of the foundation with both facade and rear walls are two 15-inch by 20-inch basement windows with vertical diamond cross-sectioned wrought iron bars. Heavy barked logs, averaging 10 inches in diameter, with slightly adzed or planed tops, support the flooring of the first floor above.

# 8 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

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SPECIFIC DATES	1796-1818	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Unknown
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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Governor George Truitt House is significant as the country home of an early nineteenth-century Delaware governor, and for its notable late-Georgian architectural characteristics.

Delaware possessed a national reputation throughout the era of the early republic as the staunchest supporter of Federalist theories and practices. George Truitt's election as the state's eighth Governor represented a continuation of this deeply-rooted Federalist tradition.

Oddly enough, there is very little in the secondary literature that illuminates the life and career of George Truitt. An attorney in Kent County, he was deeply involved with the state political scene and was a member of the State Convention called to ratify the Constitution of the United States. He served four terms in the State House of Representatives and served one term in the State Senate. With Nicholas Van Dyke of New Castle as his running mate on the successful Federalist party ticket, Truitt was elected governor and served a three-year term from January, 1808 to January, 1811. An examination of the Kent County Deed Book index indicates that he was actively acquiring lands in central Kent County throughout his life.

George Truitt died October 8, 1818 at the age of sixty-two and was buried in the wagon yard of his country home. His wife and daughter were buried beside him. In the spring of 1903, the Delaware General Assembly appropriated funds to move the remains of Governor Truitt and his family to the Barratt's Chapel Cemetery six miles to the east.

The Truitt House is a good example of the late-Georgian, side-hall-plan house as it appeared in Delaware. In its plan and detailing it is typical of the plantation dwellings built by the well-to-do during the late 18th century. Most of its interior detailing remains intact. The most unusual architectural feature is its exterior end chimney with sloped weatherings. Only a few other examples are known in Delaware; most houses, whether of wood, brick, or stone, incorporate interior end chimneys. While it is true that the use of more recent exterior coatings/sidings and porch addition have changed the outward appearance of the house as Governor Truitt knew it, the changes do not permanently mask its basic architectural character.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Beers, D. G. Atlas of the State of Delaware. Philadelphia, Pomery & Beers, 1868.  
 Byles Map, Kent County, 1859.  
 Kent County Orphans Court Plot Book 1, Folio 163.  
 Munroe, John A. Federalist Delaware 1775-1815. Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1954.  
 Scharf, J. Thomas. History of Delaware: 1609-1883. Reprint Ed., Port Washington, N.Y.: Kenikat Press, 1972.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Wyoming

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES 390

A 1,8 4,5,3 3,8,7 4,3 1,8 8,5,0  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B                    
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C                  

D                  

E                  

F                  

G                  

H                  

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the Governor Truitt House nomination is shown as the red line on the accompanying map entitled, "Governor Truitt House K-928 Sketch Map." *framed 12-06-78 J.F.T.*

## 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

Dean E. Nelson, Historian

August 7, 1978

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Delaware Division of Historical & Cultural Affairs

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

Hall of Records

(302) 678-5314

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Dover

Delaware

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE X

LOCAL   

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



TITLE Director, Div. of Historical & Cultural Affairs

DATE

9/25/78

## FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

*Charles A. Harrington*  
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

12-12-78

ATTEST: *Lynn D. Beebe*  
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

Dec 11, 1978

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

The original front door to the brick sidehall core was replaced by one typical of the mid-19th century. It opens into the stair hall which retains all of its original interior architectural detail, which includes baseboards, chair rail, and moderately heavy cornice. Directly ahead is the half-turn, open-string staircase featuring turned balusters. Located under and to the right of the staircase is a door with two large raised panels, divided by a wide central rail which at one time led to the cellar. It has been blocked off and is currently a closet. Unlike many other side-hall-plan houses in Delaware, there is no rear doorway at the end of the hallway.

To the right of the hallway is the parlor, which retains most of its original architectural character. The door leading from the hallway to the parlor features a double-faced, raised, six-paneled door with predominant lock rail mounted on butt hinges. The lock has been replaced, as are most others throughout the house, with Victorian cast iron box locks with brown and black marbleized ceramic knobs. Wide planed moulding surrounds the door. The most striking feature of the parlor is the fine, large, raised panel wainscoting which runs from baseboard to chair rail all around the room. The original wide floorboards survive intact. The mantel, situated on the chimney breast on the east wall, is typically federal with its reeded pilasters, moulded shelf cornice, and plain entablature with a centrally-located reeded panel. The fireplace has been closed and the plastered chimney breast pierced for a stove flue. At some time during the Victorian period the first floor windows were lengthened, one-over-one sash windows installed, and in the process, small sections of the chair rail were removed and adjacent pieces of wainscoting cut out. The original cornice has also been removed from the parlor. The ceiling is of plaster over lath.

The second story stair landing is lighted by facade and rear windows. The parlor chamber door has four raised panels with a predominant lock rail and is suspended on butt hinges. All the original woodwork survives in this room. Here, the interior detail is more modest than on the first floor and consists of baseboards, chair rail, cornice, and a paneled chimney breast comprised of a wide raised panel above a narrower panel, both emphasizing the horizontal. There is no mantel shelf associated with the fireplace; a simple moulding surrounds the fireplace opening. A nineteenth-century board and batten fireplace cover is now used to close the opening. A vertical board closet has been added in the southeast corner of this room and butts against the chimney breast.

The two-story, single-pile, braced frame wing is joined to the west gable end of the brick core and is accessible from both the hallway and the second floor staircase landing. The first floor of the braced frame wing was probably originally a hall-and-parlor plan with an interior end chimney, but numerous alterations have

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

changed this arrangement. The chimney has been totally removed and replaced by a brick stove flue set into a more recent room partition. The studs have been removed from the first floor of the west gable end of the frame wing and the kitchen expanded by a one-story shed roof wing.

The two rooms on the second floor are formed by a lath and plaster over stud wall, which runs parallel to the facade and rear exterior walls. These rooms are quite plain, with simple baseboards and raised four-panel doors comprising the only woodwork in this section. In the southeast corner, where the brick and frame section join, is an enclosed box winder stair which gives access to the attic of both frame and brick sections of the Truitt House. The roof is of the common rafter system with mortise and tenon pegged ridge joints and "bird mouth" rafter ends pegged into the plates. Repairs to the attic flooring on the west gable end of the braced frame wing revealed the location of the now-removed interior end chimney. There are four dormers in the attic, two on either side of the gable roof. That these are 20th-century additions is evidenced by the presence in situ of the stubs of rafters sawn out to accommodate the dormers, which are of recent 2-inch by 4-inch framing and wire nail construction. An old, but not original, wooden shingle roof rests under the composition shingles visible from outside. Two, small, attic-level windows flank the exterior end chimney of the brick sidehall core.

There are numerous old trees which shade the front yard of the Truitt House. To the west of the house are several agricultural outbuildings which date from the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The barn is typical of those constructed throughout Delaware in the last half of the nineteenth century. It is of braced frame, mortise and tenon construction with heavy vertical board siding and a wooden shingle gable roof. Several other outbuildings, once used for storage of corn, are one-story high with sheet iron gable roofs and narrow vertical board siding raised on low brick piers. The boundaries of this nomination coincide with the approximately two acres of land now associated with the house and include the outbuildings.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

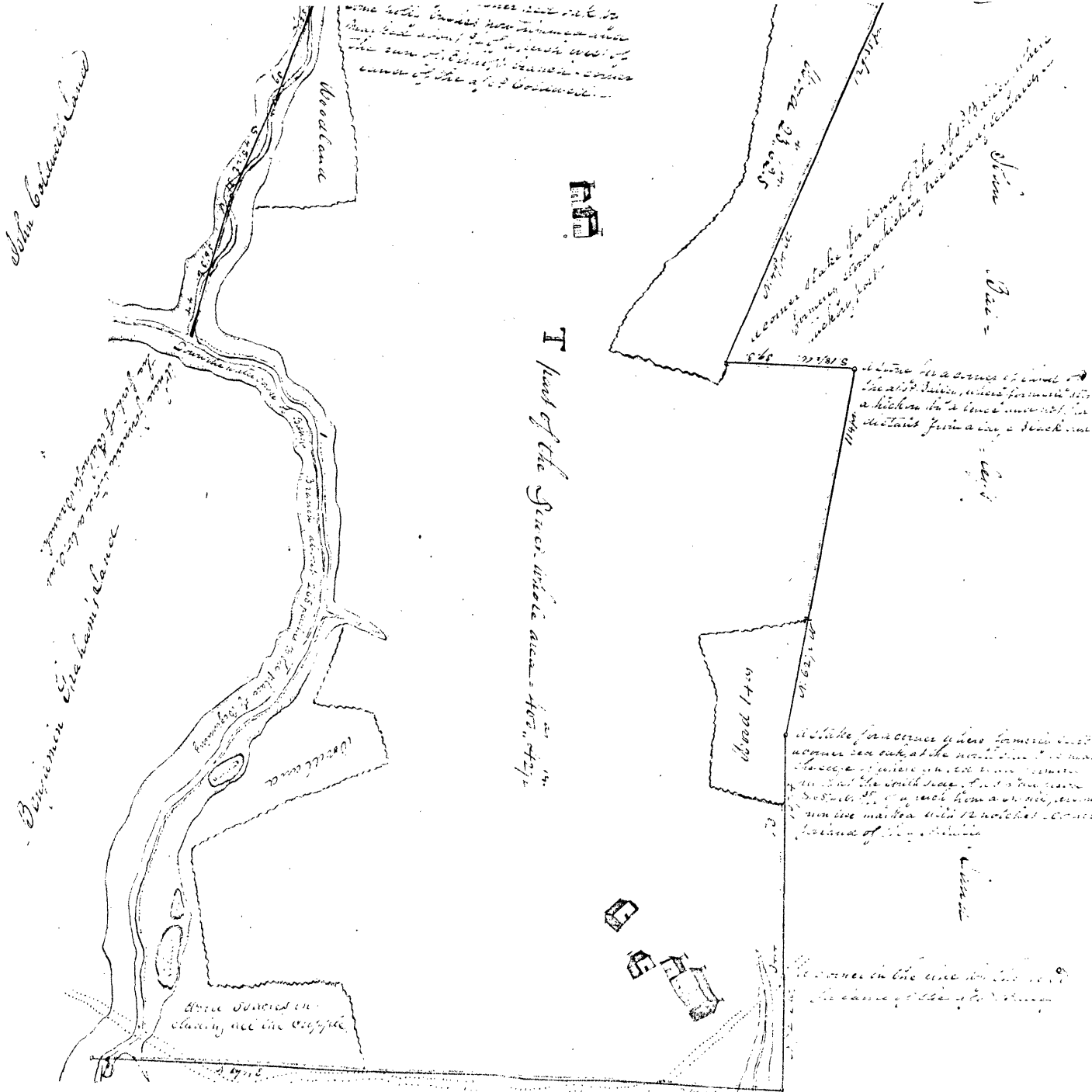
PAGE 1

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The earliest known pictorial representation of the Truitt House appears on an 1826 survey in the Kent County Orphans Court Plot Book, drawn to document the landholdings of Truitt's grandson, George Fisher, who had been willed the land. A copy of this survey is enclosed. In general, the house sketches that appear on these surveys indicate the grosser physical characteristics of the particular house and its orientation to roads and waterways. They are less reliable in their treatment of lesser details, such as placement of doors and windows.

(Kent County Court House)

Kent County Orphans Court Plot Book 1 folio 163



Governor George Truitt House K-928 OCT 2 1978

as shown in 1826 survey Kent County Orphans Court Plot Book 1 folio 163