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Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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 COONS, CHARLES H., FARM

other names/site number "PROSPECT FRUIT FARM"

### 2. Location

street & number 516 CHURCH AVENUE


not for publication

city or town GERMANTOWN

vicinity

state NEW YORK code NY county COLUMBIA code 021 zip code 12526

### 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. Purpant DSHPO 5/15/15  
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): \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature] 7/22/15  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**COONS, CHARLES H., FARM**  
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**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 type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
5	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

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE

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

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

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**7. Description**

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

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate

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

foundation: STONE

walls: WOOD CLAPBOARD

roof: ASPHALT

other: GLASS, METAL, BRICK

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**Narrative Description**

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**Summary Paragraph**

The Charles H. Coons Farm, or Prospect Fruit Farm as it was known at the turn of the twentieth century, is a historic farmstead located in the Germantown area of Columbia County, New York. The principal architectural features of the farm are a frame Picturesque farmhouse, ca. 1880, which displays distinctive Italianate-style attributes; a ca. 1810 timber-frame New World Dutch barn, representative of an earlier phase of the property's history; and a frame horse barn that is likely contemporary with the dwelling. There is additionally a small light-frame shed, which is located north of the Dutch barn, and a windmill and water pump, situated to the southeast of the dwelling. Although the house was erected in the post-Civil War era, it is evident that recycled material from an earlier vernacular dwelling was used in its construction, as evidenced by material visible in the basement. The farm is located on the north side of Church Avenue and west of Viewmont Road, which intersect nearby, a few miles south of the Germantown hamlet, the principal development of which is clustered along the east-west course of Columbia County Route 8. The house is located close to Church Avenue and was oriented to face southwards, with the Dutch barn and horse barn located to the east, the former having its principal entrance on the south elevation, the latter having its principal entrance facing west, towards the house. These three buildings remain in a largely intact and evocative agrarian landscape characterized by tilled fields and wood lots. To the immediate south of the nominated property, beyond the crossroads, is a small hamlet with Lutheran church; the Coons Farm is situated on the northern periphery of this hamlet. All three principal buildings are excellent specimens of their respective typologies; the centerpiece of the farm, the Coons house, is a notable local specimen of Picturesque design that incorporates within its physical fabric reused framing components from a story-and-a-half dwelling likely built in the eighteenth century. Although its historic acreage has been greatly diminished, the principal architectural features of the Charles H. Coons Farm remain to portray the history of what was a premier Germantown-area fruit farm.

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**Narrative Description**

**Location & Setting**

The property is located at 516 Church Avenue (County Route 33), immediately west of that road's intersection with Viewmont Road, in that part of the Town of Germantown known historically as Viewmont ("Viewmonte" variously), the name given to the small hamlet located a short distance to the south. The three principal buildings that compose the nomination are relatively tightly clustered near the road, west of a woodlot that extends in that direction from Viewmont Road. To the immediate south, across Church Avenue, is a house of relatively modern construction, while to the west, on the north side of the road, is a frame story-and-a-half dwelling resided in at one time by the Lasher family. There is a semicircular driveway in front of the house which connects with Church Avenue at two points and which is partly aligned by mature conifer trees. A small landscaped area is present behind the house, which communicates with a porch that has both an open and an enclosed section. Most of the area around the house is open and planted with grass, save for the large conifers adjacent to the driveway. The nomination boundary includes 5.95 acres of associated land.

**Charles H. Coons House, ca. 1880** (contributing building)

The Coons house, a frame building of rectangular plan erected over a stone foundation with fully excavated basement, is two-stories in height with an intersecting gable roof. The façade, which has a southern orientation, is symmetrically composed and five bays wide; there are four windows and a central entrance at first story level and five windows at second story level. A full-width verandah sustained by six evenly spaced posts aligns the façade at first story level; the four outermost posts rest on wood plinths and all six are embellished with low relief detailing and corresponding brackets and scroll-sawn ornamentation. The first story windows, corresponding with the front range of rooms, have windows that extend downwards to floor level and are fitted with two-over-four sash. The second story windows, of a more conventional type, are fitted with two-over-two sash excepting the central unit, which is divided by a central mullion into two units, each fitted with one-over-

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one sash. All are flanked by louvered wood shutters and have decorative surrounds with moulded cornices. The front door is of a heavily paneled double-leaf type and has a segmental-arched head. The three innermost bays of the façade correspond with an intersecting gable, within which is centered a louvered vent contained within a decorative casing with pointed-arch top. A heavy paneled and bracketed frieze is present at cornice level and follows the upward rake of the intersecting gable; the cornices are boxed and presently fitted with gutters. Two chimneys are visible on this elevation; that to the east, an exterior chimney, rises through the front pitch of the main gable roof, while the western one straddles the roof ridge. The roof is covered with asphalt.

The two side elevations are similarly conceived, though not without variation, the eastern elevation being the more fully developed of the two. That elevation incorporates two projecting bay windows, both three sided, at first-story level in addition to a third window positioned near the northeast corner. Each of the windows corresponding with these bays is fitted with one-over-one wood sash, while the other window has two-over-two sash. These windows, like the three centered above—which also have two-over-two wood sash—have decorative surrounds and moulded cornices like those on the façade, and there is a louvered window like that employed on the façade in the end gable. Decorative bracketing and paneling embellishes the roofline. A similar three-bay arrangement was employed on the opposite, west, elevation, although projecting bays were not employed there. One of these windows, at first-story level near the northwest corner and corresponding with the dining room inside, is a tripartite unit.

As for the rear elevation, it was four bays wide with windows at first and second-story level and a louvered vent in the gable field of the rear intersecting gable. Some alteration has occurred to the fenestration on this secondary elevation, including the insertion of a sliding door to service the open porch. A portion of this elevation is concealed behind that portion of the porch that has a screened enclosure, which has a steeply pitched gable roof the ridge of which meets the rear wall at a right angle.

The interior of the Coons house retains the bulk of its historic-era finish work and its floorplan, the latter being of somewhat conventional nature with rooms disposed around a central stair hall. The principal entrance leads into the hall, which is flanked on the east and west sides by parlors serviced by end-wall fireplaces. The east parlor, the more refined of the two front rooms, is distinguished by the two projecting bay windows, which frame the fireplace and corresponding chimney breast. The mantel, which has a round-arched opening, is of a faux marble type fashioned from slate. Other finishes include parquet flooring; plaster-on-lath walls and ceilings; decorative corbels from which the bay window arches spring; paneled window aprons; and struck plaster cornice work. The opposite parlor is similarly conceived, with a fireplace centered against the end wall, though without the projecting bays of the east parlor. Other noteworthy original features include segmental arched openings with moulded wood casings which accommodate sliding pocket doors, providing for communication between the hallway and parlors, and the struck plaster cornices employed in the hall. The rear range of rooms at first-floor level accommodates a kitchen, dining room and bathroom.

Access to the second floor is by way of the central staircase, which is of the open-stringer type. The stair rises in a straight run before turning 180 degrees in a tight semicircle to approach the second-floor landing, this semicircular being echoed in the wall at first-floor level. Original features of the stair include the moulded stringer board, moulded handrail, and the turned newel post and balusters. Floors upstairs are laid with medium-width tongue-and-groove pine boards while walls and ceilings are plaster on wood lath. There is evidence of the reuse of earlier Federal-style material upstairs, in the form of a six-paneled door and a mantel that appears to have served as a backdrop for a stove.

In the basement is visible the framing system that sustains the first floor. Evident there are a number of joists that show clear evidence of having been reused from a story-and-a-half structure, as indicated by the former position of the tie beam. The mortise that accommodated this tie beam has a diminished housing which

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indicates it to be scribe rule joinery (pre-1810); also evident are vertical grooves along either side of the beam, which were used to secure sticking for mud infill. These features suggest a house frame of likely eighteenth century date.

In the unfinished attic the roof frame is visible; framing components are circular-sawn dimensional hemlock. Also visible there is a metal-lined cedar cistern, which allowed for gravity-fed indoor plumbing. The spacing of the roof boards which rest on the rafters suggests the building originally had a wood shingle roof.

**New World Dutch Barn and attached shed, ca. 1810 & later** (contributing building)

This barn consists of the original five-bent/four-bay structure, gable roofed, in addition to an attached gable-roofed wing that extends from the west elevation. The original barn was built on the square rule, indicating a likely date of construction after ca. 1810. It is of characteristic New World Dutch barn design, with a three-aisled plan, the central aisle defined by the massive H-bents that help to sustain the purlin plates on which the rafters are in part sustained. Among the noteworthy features of the barn are the curved braces of the H-bents, an unusual feature that relates to other barns in the Germantown area and which is presumably the mark of a single builder or group of related builders. Both sections have novelty siding and standing seam metal roofing, though a portion of the original weatherboard siding of the Dutch barn is present on the west elevation, within the addition. Though updated with new treatments, the original fenestration of the barn's south elevation remains, consisting of a large entrance bay with paired doors beneath a pentice roof—this corresponding with the transverse center aisle—and smaller doors corresponding with the side aisles. All three sets of doors are now on hung on sliders. As for the attached shed, it had two open bays on its south-facing elevation, one of which has since been enclosed.

**Horse Barn, ca. 1880** (contributing building)

This barn was built over a rectangular plan and is gable roofed; it accommodated a number of functions, among them horse quartering—as evidenced by the remaining stables—and upper level storage, the latter function being accommodated by means of a hoist corresponding with a door on the north gable end. This building has sliding entrance bays at first-story level on the west side, in addition to a human door and a window, and three doors corresponding with the upper level. On the north side are two windows fitted with six-over-nine wood sash reused from an earlier application. Siding is of the novelty type and the roof is covered with slate shingles; a cupola of square plan with vents on each of its four facets straddles the roof ridge.

**Small Shed, ca. 1900** (contributing building)

This small shed is located behind the Dutch barn, to the north. It is a gable roofed building of rectangular plan with wood siding and a standing-seam metal roof, and features light framing consisting of dimensional lumber.

**Windmill and water pump, ca. 1910** (contributing structure)

This windmill and associated pump are situated southeast of the house, adjacent to the driveway. The mill rests on a bolted steel skeletal frame and within its footprint is located a cast-iron pump, which was manufactured in Seneca Falls, New York.

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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.)

**AGRICULTURE**

**ARCHITECTURE**

**Period of Significance**

**ca. 1810- ca. 1914**

**Significant Dates**

ca. 1810; ca. 1868; ca. 1880; 1912; 1914

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

**COONS, CHARLES H.**

**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. 1810- ca. 1920) reflects the presence of the New World Dutch barn, a feature representing an earlier period in the property's history, and terminates with the death of Augusta M. Coons in 1914. This period encompasses the construction of all the resources included within the boundary and also reflects the residency of Charles H. Coons from the mid-1860s until his death in 1912.

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

N/A

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph**

The Charles H. Coons Farm is an architecturally and historically significant property in the Germantown area of southwestern Columbia County, New York. The principal figure associated with this farm in the later nineteenth and early twentieth century, Charles H. Coons (1844-1912), acquired the property in the 1860s, immediately prior to his marriage to Margaret A. Tompkins (1847-1914). Coons, a descendant of one of the early Palatine German families that settled this area of the Hudson Valley in the early eighteenth century, was noted in an obituary as “one of Germantown’s leading citizens and one of the most prosperous fruit growers in the town.” It was in the period following the couple’s marriage that the present farm house, a dwelling of Picturesque conception with distinctive Italianate-style design features, was erected to replace an earlier house, and it was also during Coons’s ownership that a new barn was erected to the east of the house. Predating those Coons-era improvements is a New World Dutch Barn that survives within the farmstead—a holdover from an earlier period of development and farming that was incorporated into the later farm—which under Coons’s skillful guidance was among the preeminent fruit farms in this region and by some accounts statewide, producing at one point 2,000 barrels of fruit and upwards of 75 tons of grapes annually. Also evident within the existing house are framing and finish features that suggest they were reused from an earlier dwelling that the later house presumably replaced in the post-Civil War period. The property, consisting of the dwelling, two barns, a shed, and approximately eight and one-half acres of associated land, is being nominated in association with NRHP criteria B and C, in the areas of agriculture and architecture, at the local significance level. Criterion B is being cited given Charles H. Coon’s local stature and preeminent position as a major Germantown fruit grower in the latter nineteenth and early twentieth century period, during which time he gave his farm the name “Prospect Fruit Farm”; Criterion C has been invoked given the survival of the farm’s principal architectural components, namely the Picturesque house, New World Dutch barn, and the later barn, all of which are significant examples of their respective typologies.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance**

**Early History of Germantown**

Germantown’s first European settlers were a contingent of Palatine German families which came to the Hudson Valley from England in the early eighteenth century as refugees from the war-devastated Palatinate. Warfare, famine and taxation were among those factors which drove thousands of Palatines out of their ancestral homes in the Rhine Valley to London, where their swelling ranks strained English efforts to accommodate them. In 1710 New York Provincial Governor Robert Hunter, acting on behalf of the British Crown, purchased 6,000 acres of land in the Hudson Valley from the Livingston family for the resettlement of these Palatine refugees; a plan developed by the English called for the Germans to engage in the manufacture of tar, rosin and other materials essential to English naval efforts as the central feature of this colonization effort. This location came to be known as “East Camp,” so as to be distinguished from “West Camp,” the latter a second German settlement on the opposite side of the Hudson River in present-day Ulster County. While the conditions the Palatine settlers faced in their first year in Columbia County were exceptionally difficult—leading many to migrate into the Mohawk and Schoharie valleys, where German culture left its distinctive mark—others from the first group which arrived in 1710 remained in the immediate Germantown area, which retained its distinctive ethnic complexion into the nineteenth century. The “naval stores” project ultimately failed due to any number of variables, among them shifting political agendas in England, a lack of adequate supplies, and the German settler’s unfamiliarity with the specialized skills required to create the desired products.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Columbia County at the End of the Century: A Record of Its Formation and Settlement, Its Resources, Its Institutions, Its Industries and Its People, vol.II* (Hudson: The Record Printing and Publishing Company, 1900), 605-619.

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The Germans that stayed following the outmigration into the river valleys west of the Hudson River shaped the development of Germantown, which continued to receive new German families as the eighteenth century progressed, the Rockefellers being prominent among these. Germantown remained a rural community at the turn of the nineteenth century, characterized by small clusters of development, Hudson River landings, and a network of outlying farms. These same conditions were to be found in 1813, at which time the following description of Germantown was offered in Spafford's *Gazetteer of New York*:

The inhabitants are principally the descendants of the early German families who settled here in 1710. They are still characterized by the steady habits of their ancestors, and they own the soil which they cultivate and with much care. By a timely economy of forest trees, the lands there are remarkably well supplied with timber, and no town on the tide-waters of the Hudson has groves of equal value. There are 33 looms in families, and the clothing is almost exclusively manufactured in the household-way. There are 2 meeting-houses or churches, one for Lutherans, and one for Presbyterians; and 3 school-houses. There are 3 docks and store-houses on the Hudson, but they are little used at present; but it has an excellent fishery on the Hudson which is much used. The soil is various, and tracts of clay, sand and loam, afford a great variety of products, and Germantown is noted for the abundance and excellence of its fruit. Its agriculture is respectable and rapidly improving.<sup>2</sup>

Agriculture, the backbone of the local economy in Germantown in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, followed a regional pattern characteristic of the river valley areas of eastern New York. The cultivation of cereal grains, namely wheat and rye, were principal pursuits in the eighteenth century, with wheat reaching the height of its profitability during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The nineteenth century was characterized by the increasing cultivation of market products, namely fruit, including grapes, pears, apples, cherries and berries, especially as the profitability of wheat cultivation fell off after the 1820s. The success of fruit growing in Germantown should come as little surprise, given that many of the early Palatine settlers came from an area of the Rhine Valley where viticulture was much practiced. Charles H. Coon was among those in Germantown who focused his agricultural endeavors on fruit cultivation, the importance of which locally had been noted by Spafford as early as 1813. The nearby Hudson River served as the principal line of transportation for Germantown's farms prior to the arrival of the railroad, after which time the importance of the river as a means of communicating with distant markets to the north and south was greatly reduced.

**Charles H. Coons & the Prospect Fruit Farm**

Charles H. Coons was born in Germantown in 1844 to parents William H. and Maria Miller Coons and educated in the local common schools. Members of the Coons family, its name a variation of the German spelling "Kuhn," were among the first pioneering families to come to the Hudson Valley during the Palatine migration of the 1710s. As noted in *Columbia County at the End of the Century*, Coons purchased the nominated farm at the age of 24, ca. 1868, and by 1900 he owned 225 acres of land. In 1869 he wed Augusta M. Tompkins and the couple had five children. A sense of the complexion of the household in the mid-1870s is provided for by information contained in the 1875 New York State census. The household at that time consisted of Charles Coons, age 30, whose occupation was listed as farmer; his wife, Augusta, age 27; two young children, Celia and Tompkins; Elizabeth Williams, a domestic servant, 13 years old and a native of Dutchess County; and two farm laborers, William Barringer, age 17, and James Donnelly, age 18, both of whom were noted as being of German birth, though Donnelly's name suggests he may have been of Irish extraction. Charles Coons was noted as the outright owner of his land, and the house at that time was valued at \$600, a valuation that suggests the nominated house may not have been built by that date and was instead erected subsequently though soon thereafter. By the time of the 1880 federal census five years later, Coons was residing in the house with Augusta, children Clara—possibly the "Celia" recorded in the census five years

<sup>2</sup> Horatio G. Spafford, *Gazetteer of New York* (Albany: N.C. Southwick, 1813), 193.

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earlier—Tompkins and Sanford, and laborer William Barringer, age 21, whose birthplace was noted as “Strausburg” and presumably the same as the German-born individual recorded in the household in the 1875 census. By that time Coons’s occupation was noted as both a farmer and fruit grower. He was indicated as the owner of the property on the 1873 and 1888 atlas maps of Columbia County, published by D.G. Beers and Beers, Ellis & Company, respectively, in addition to the 1891 map of the Hudson River Valley by Watson & Company.

Contemporary sources indicate that Charles H. Coons was both a successful and prolific fruit grower in Germantown in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and there are additionally clear indicators of his prominence in the local community, among them as a member and trustee of Christ Lutheran church, located in Viewmonte a short distance from the family’s farm. In *Columbia County at the End of the Century*, Coons, who in that source was said to be “one of the largest fruit growers in the state” and who produced 2,000 barrels of fruit and upwards of 75 tons of grapes annually, was also noted as someone heavily invested in his community and church. “Charles H. [Coons] takes an interest in town and county affairs and is active in school and educational work, having served as trustee of the school many terms. His family... are members of the Lutheran church... of which Mr. Coons has been an officer for the past twenty-five years and at the present time [1900] one of its trustees.” It is clear that Coons was held in particularly high regard by his peers at Christ Lutheran church, which, following his death by pneumonia in 1912, produced a resolution that was subsequently published in the *Columbia Republican* of Hudson, under the heading “Resolutions of Respect.” It read in part “The empty chair is in our circle as well as in his home, but his place in life’s memory will live as time shall be meted out to each of us while here on earth...”<sup>3</sup>

In an obituary published in that same newspaper shortly after his death, the following was noted of Charles Coons’s character and his place in the life of the community:

The deceased was one of Germantown’s leading citizens and one of the most prosperous fruit growers in the town. He had distinct qualities that made him very successful. He had marked capacity for business and his counsel and advice among his friends and neighbors were always considered of the greatest value.<sup>4</sup>

While the extensive fruit farm that Coons oversaw has now largely fallen away, evidence of its output can still be discerned in agricultural census data, such as that compiled in the 1880 federal census. His farm at that date consisted of 115 acres of land, divided into 63 acres of arable land, 30 acres of meadow, pasture, orchard and vineyard, in addition to 25 acres of woodlot. The farm, inclusive of land and buildings, was valued at \$7,500. Coons raised Indian corn and oats, the latter presumably cultivated as feed for the four horses that were part of his livestock, but did not plant buckwheat, rye or wheat as some of his neighbors did. His orchard consisted of five acres of land with 200 apple trees in addition to 22 peach trees. The centerpiece of his farm was an 18-acre vineyard from which he produced 30,000 pounds of grapes in 1879; by 1900, that figure approached 75 tons. A news item included in the *Columbia Republican* in 1897 noted that “Charles H. Coons has named his farm “Prospect Fruit Farm, a very appropriate title to which we think it well entitled.”<sup>5</sup>

The Coons family intermarried with another of the early Germantown families, the Dicks, who were also prominent fruit growers. In November 1900 Charles and Augusta Coons’s daughter, Clara, wed Alfred H. Dick (b. 1862), a son of Peter H. and Mary Dick. The Coons-Dick wedding was one of two local weddings that by

<sup>3</sup> “Resolution of Respect,” *Columbia Republican* (Hudson, New York), 16 February 1912.

<sup>4</sup> “Another Victim of Pneumonia, *Republican*, 23 January 1912.

<sup>5</sup> *Republican*, 19 August 1897.

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one account “was making more stir in the community than did the presidential election.”<sup>6</sup> The ceremony and reception, described as “one of those charming weddings that cast their brilliancy over an entire community and radiate in every direction,” was conducted at the nominated house with 200 guests in attendance.<sup>7</sup> Both Peter and Alfred Dick worked for Hudson River steamship companies before turning their attention the cultivation of fruit towards the turn of the twentieth century. In 1897 Peter Dick resigned his position with the Cornell Steamboat Company and retired to Germantown, where, according to *Columbia County at the End of the Century*, “He purchased his father’s old homestead... which is now devoted entirely to fruit of various kinds; over 2,000 fruit trees of different varieties have been planted on the farm during the past two years.” The Dicks, like the Coons family, raised pears and apples, which were shipped via the Hudson River to New York City and across the Atlantic Ocean to European markets. Alfred H. Dick also returned to Germantown in this period, at which time he assumed the duties of his father as the head of the household and overseer of the family farm. The house of Peter and Alfred H. Dick was previously listed on the NRHP (2008) though, not unlike the Coons farm, most of its associated agricultural acreage has since been lost.

Charles H. Coons’s death in 1912 came shortly after the formation of the Germantown Fruit Growers Association; his affiliation, if any, with the founding of that organization is not presently known. Coons’s prominence in local civic, business and religious affairs made him a fixture in the social registers published in the *Columbia Republican* and other newspapers, which indicated that the Coons’s house was the scene of various social gatherings and holiday entertainments. An account published in 1909 indicated that Charles Coons was the owner of a new automobile, a newsworthy local item at that date.<sup>8</sup>

Augusta M. Coons died two years after her husband, in 1914, having been stricken with paralysis. Her passing was, like that of her husband, much lamented locally. “The deceased was an estimable woman,” an account in the *Columbia Republican* noted, “with kindness and generosity of good feeling as marked characteristics in her life among her neighbors and friends.”<sup>9</sup>

**Architectural Analysis**

The farm Charles H. Coons purchased in the latter 1860s was previously resided on by members of the Lasher family, which owned five farmsteads in the immediate vicinity, including that to the immediate west of the nominated property. The Lashers, like the Coons and Dicks, were among the prominent old German families of this area. The farm was shown as occupied by “B.C. Lasher” at the time the 1851 wall map of Columbia County was published by John Gillett. A legal description of an adjacent parcel published in 1940 cited the “lands of Charles H. Coons (now deceased) formerly of Bastian C. Lasher,” thereby confirming the owner prior to Coons. At the time of the 1855 New York State census Bastian C. Lasher, age 71, was residing in a frame house valued at \$600—the same value ascribed to Coons’s house in 1875—along with his wife, a grown daughter, and two individuals noted as “servants.” In the federal agricultural census of 1850, Lasher was indicated as having a 160-acre farm on which he cultivated Indian corn, rye, oats and hay as principal products. The present evidence suggests the property’s New World Dutch barn is a relic of the earlier Lasher farm, which likely included a story-and-a-half house that was later dismantled and incorporated into the newer Picturesque farmhouse built for Coons.

Though by all indications built after 1875, the nominated house nevertheless reflects the Picturesque ideals first espoused in the United States in the antebellum period by Andrew Jackson Downing and Alexander Jackson

<sup>6</sup> Viewmonte news items, *Republican*, 22 November 1900.

<sup>7</sup> “Brilliant Wedding at Viewmonte,” *The Daily Register* (Hudson, New York), 4 December 1900.

<sup>8</sup> “Germantown Man has New Auto,” *Republican*, 19 November 1909.

<sup>9</sup> “Sudden Death in Germantown,” *Republican*, 1 December 1914.

**COONS, CHARLES H., FARM**

Name of Property

**COLUMBIA COUNTY, NY**

County and State

Davis, among others. It was during the 1840s that this new architectural sentiment, inspired by English precedents, initiated the shift away from a long-entrenched Neoclassical tastes towards new domestic architectural idioms, the Gothic Revival and Italianate styles being prominent among these. Although the Coons house adheres to the conventional gable ended, two-story type with five-bay façade and central entrance—a testament to the persistence of this traditional house form in the post-Civil War era—it nevertheless exhibits features which are indicative of Picturesque influence, namely the use of prominent front and rear intersecting gables, the full-width front verandah, and the projecting bay windows of the east elevation. The roofline was embellished with a bracketed and paneled cornice, which, along with the scroll-sawn and incised detailing of the front porch, relates to Italianate-style design motifs. The interior featured a curving central staircase, faux marble mantelpieces in the principal rooms crafted from slate, and struck plaster cornices and woodwork with rounded moulding profiles characteristic of the Italianate style. Very little alteration has been made to the character-defining features of the principal public areas of the house, as most of the later alterations were made to secondary areas of the dwelling. The house appears to have been fitted out with a new steam heating system during the Coons's tenancy; a news item in the *Columbia Republican* published in 1900 noted that "Charles Morgan, of Tivoli, is placing the new heaters and a hot water system in the house of Charles H. Coons."<sup>10</sup>

Evidence of an earlier epoch in the farm's history is portrayed by the New World Dutch barn and, additionally, by those architectural fragments and farming components reused within the existing house. Dutch barns were, along with English three-bay barns, a central feature of the early New York State farmstead and a predominant type within the Dutch cultural hearth of the Hudson Valley, which included the region's early German settlers. This iconic vernacular barn type was predicated on a three-aisled plan, a configuration achieved by the use of massive H-bents, which formed the structural core of the barn. Unlike English barns, the interiors of which were accessed by doorways on the longer eaves sides, Dutch barns were accessed via the gable end. Grain threshing, sometimes accomplished by treading with horses, was accommodated within the central aisle, while the side aisles provided rooms for animal stables and other functions. In this example, the original self-contained structure was later augmented with the addition of an ell. The nominated barn exhibits standardized square-rule framing, which came into broad usage after 1800. It is one of a number of local examples that employ curved braces at the junction of the main H-bent posts and tie beams, a distinctive feature of the frame and presumably the mark of a single builder or group of associated builders. The barn remains an excellent representation of the New World Dutch type. As for the reused posts incorporated into the later house, the manner in which the joinery was cut along with the vertical grooves for mud sticking suggest these to be the remnants of a relatively early house frame, and one that predated the construction of the Dutch barn.

The later barn, by all indications built for Coons, provided for additional functions, among them the quartering of horses and presumably hay and fruit storage, its commodious loft space being accessible by way of the north gable end hoists. Further analysis is required to understand how the two buildings functioned in the post-Civil War period and collectively served the needs of what was, by the turn of the twentieth century, a fruit farm of considerable output.

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

N/A

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<sup>10</sup>*Republican*, 1900 (newspaper fragment).

**COONS, CHARLES H., FARM**  
Name of Property

**COLUMBIA COUNTY, NY**  
County and State

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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

*Columbia County at the End of the Century: A Record of Its Formation and Settlement, Its Resources, Its Institutions, Its Industries and Its People, vol. II.*  
Hudson: The Record Printing and Publishing Company, 1900.

Spafford, Horatio G. *Gazetteer of New York*. Albany: N.C. Southwick, 1813.

**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**

**Acreage of Property** 5.95 acres  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u>	<u>593040</u>	<u>4661941</u>	3	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	<b>Zone</b>	<b>Easting</b>	<b>Northing</b>		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 included with this documentation, all of which are entitled "Coons, Charles H., Farm, Germantown, Columbia Co., New York." These maps were drawn at a scale of 1:24,000, 1:12,000 and 1:5,000.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary has been drawn to include 5.95 acres of land. Although greatly diminished from its acreage ca. 1900, at which time the farm encompassed 225 acres of land, the present acreage represents the core of the historic farmstead and includes the farm's principal remaining architectural resources.

**COONS, CHARLES H., FARM**

Name of Property

**COLUMBIA COUNTY, NY**

County and State

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title William E. Krattinger

organization NYS Division for Historic Preservation

date January 2015

street & number PO Box 189

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 by William E. Krattinger, May 2015

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

- 0001 EXTERIOR, Coons house, view of principal elevation, looking north
- 0002 EXTERIOR, Coons house, perspective view looking northeast showing west elevation
- 0003 EXTERIOR, Coons house, detail view showing double-leaf front doors
- 0004 INTERIOR, Coons house, principal staircase
- 0005 INTERIOR, Coons house, view looking from center hallway into east parlor
- 0006 INTERIOR, Coons house, detail view of mantel in second-floor southwest bedroom
- 0007 EXTERIOR, New World Dutch barn and ell, view looking north
- 0008 INTERIOR, New World Dutch barn, view showing posts, anchor beams and braces of H-bent center aisle
- 0009 EXTERIOR, horse barn, view looking to southeast showing north and west elevations

**Property Owner:**

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

name Harold and Corinne Farberman

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.



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



Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation

Saugerties & Clermont, NY  
Quadrangles



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



Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation



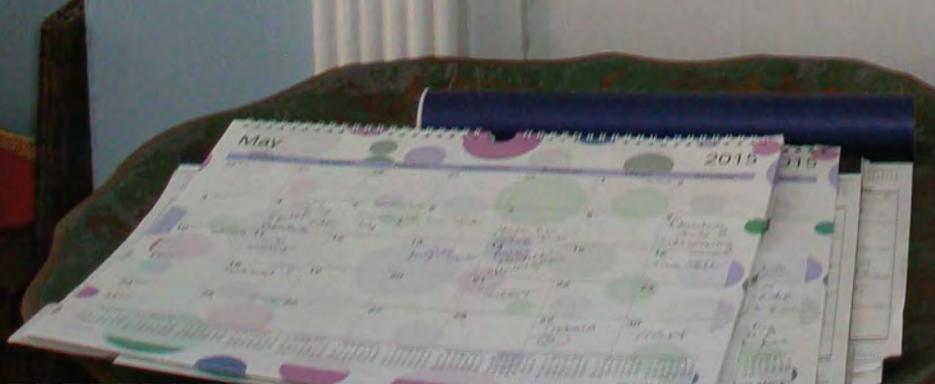


















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Coons, Charles H., Farm  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Columbia

DATE RECEIVED: 6/12/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 7/07/15  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 7/22/15 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 7/28/15  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000475

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 7/22/15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

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

REVIEWER *Deerately* 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.



**Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation**

ANDREW M. CUOMO  
Governor

ROSE HARVEY  
Commissioner

RECEIVED 2280

JUN 12 2015

Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

3 June 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:

Charles H. Coons Farm, Columbia County  
Former Parsonage of the Reformed Dutch Church of Coeymans, Albany County  
Brigadier General David McCarty Stone Cottage, Albany County  
First Congregation Church of Walton, Delaware County

Also enclosed are new discs for the Waccabuc Historic District, Westchester, County, which was returned to us for more information. A new cover sheet was not requested.

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