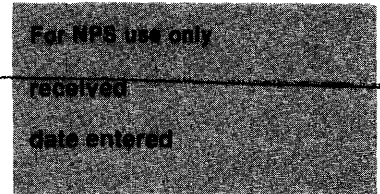


**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
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Property Name: Alfred L. Hudson House

Location and Verbal Boundary Description:

The house is located on the north side of ^{DE} Road 90, just west of the Delaware Railroad tracks and 3-1/2 miles east of Route 300. The entire farm contains 217 acres on both sides of Road 90 and on both sides of the railroad. This nomination includes only that portion of the property that is west of the railroad, south of Mill Creek, north of Road 90. The nominated Tract is a triangle with a base and height of 2,000 feet. The nominated property contains 45.9 acres and protects the house, the farm complex that ranges behind the house, and also incorporates portions of the historic boundaries for the tract.

Owner: Grace Caulk
Box 66
Woodside, DE 19980

Description:

The Alfred L. Hudson House is an interesting blend of Gothic Revival architecture with late-nineteenth-century, Queen Anne decorative elements. Based on a traditional 5-bay, center-hall, 2-story plan with a rear wing, the house has typical Gothic Revival cross gables on both the front facade and on the east side of the rear wing. At first glance, these would indicate that the house was built in the mid-nineteenth century, but the use of two-over-two windows, the double one-over-one windows in the center of the second floor and in the cross gables, and the use of brackets on the heavy roof cornice all indicate a construction date in the 1880's. The porch on both the front and rear also date from this time period. The posts that support them are square, but contain all the elements of a classical column.

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The entire house sits on a brick foundation and has a full basement. The structural system is balloon frame and was originally covered in weatherboard. It now has aluminum siding over the weatherboard. This has been the only change to the exterior of the house.

The outbuildings are ranged in a line along the farm lane that goes in a northerly direction along the east side of the house. The major building is the barn which is a large gambrel-roofed building. The first floor is concrete block that has been painted white. To the north of the barn is a 2½-story granery that has mortise and tenon joints. Also associated with the complex is a 1-story chicken house, a milk house, machine shed and garage.

Historical Background:

The Alfred L. Hudson House was built in the early 1880's, as a replacement dwelling for an earlier structure. James W. Spruance had owned this farm, and numerous other properties in the Smyrna vicinity, from the early 1850's until 1881. He was a land speculator and merchant based in Smyrna. During the late 1870's, he began developing a residential community between Smyrna and Clayton. The development failed and, in 1881, Spruance was forced to sell over 1400 acres of land which was a significant portion of his real estate.

Hudson was also a Smyrna-based merchant and was responsible for the modernization of the Hudson Mansion (K-302.358) on Mt. Vernon Street in Smyrna. The Hudson house and farm was a tenant farm and not a principal residence for Hudson.

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Statement of Significance:

The Alfred L. Hudson House provides an interesting addition to the evolution of Kenton Hundred architecture. Built during the 1880's, the house is based on the design of a typical Delaware farmhouse and has the basic stark feature of Gothic Revival architecture. However, the verticality associated with the Gothic Revival is softened by the use of the Italianate brackets, the wide and heavy cornice, and the facade porch with its corner brackets that are placed at an exaggerated and almost horizontal slope. In drawing elements from two divergent design motifs, the Hudson House is eligible under Criterion C in that it provides a clear example of the maintenance of basic house form with the ability, albeit in a conservative fashion, to incorporate more modern external design features.