

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

DATA SHEET  
FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUN 1 1976

DATE ENTERED

MAY 13 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

\*\* HISTORIC

Seeley, Samuel W., House

AND/OR COMMON

McGee, Robert, House

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

274 East Commerce Street

\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Bridgeton

\_\_ VICINITY OF

2nd

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

New Jersey

CODE

034

COUNTY

Cumberland

CODE

011

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

\_\_DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

\_\_STRUCTURE

\_\_SITE

\_\_OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

\_\_PUBLIC

PRIVATE

\_\_BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

\_\_IN PROCESS

\_\_BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

OCCUPIED

\_\_UNOCCUPIED

\_\_WORK IN PROGRESS

**ACCESSIBLE**

YES: RESTRICTED

\_\_YES: UNRESTRICTED

\_\_NO

**PRESENT USE**

\_\_AGRICULTURE

\_\_COMMERCIAL

\_\_EDUCATIONAL

\_\_ENTERTAINMENT

\_\_GOVERNMENT

\_\_INDUSTRIAL

\_\_MILITARY

\_\_MUSEUM

\_\_PARK

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

\_\_RELIGIOUS

\_\_SCIENTIFIC

\_\_TRANSPORTATION

\_\_OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Dr. J. R. Moore

STREET & NUMBER

154 West Commerce Street

CITY, TOWN

Bridgeton

\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

New Jersey

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Clerk's Office, Cumberland County, Court House

STREET & NUMBER

West Broad and Fayette Streets

CITY, TOWN

Bridgeton

STATE

New Jersey

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Historic American Building Survey

New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory 508.26

DATE

1937, 1974

FEDERAL  STATE \_\_COUNTY \_\_LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress

Department of Environmental Protection

CITY, TOWN

Washington, D.C.

STATE

Trenton

New Jersey

## 7 DESCRIPTION

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

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

The original S. W. Seeley House, constructed circa 1799, was simply a two story rectangular dwelling with one room on each floor. It was built of common bond brick and had a front and rear door, each of which was flanked by one bay on each side.

In 1815, Robert McGee enlarged and altered the house. The present description differs only slightly from its appearance during McGee's residency. The house is a 2 1/2 story, 2 level house. The front or north side is Flemish bond brick (erroniously referred to as common bond in HABS. This obvious error probably stemmed from the fact that the house was completely covered with ivy at the time it was measured by HABS.) The rest of the house is common bond brick with the exception of the southeast corner which is frame. This is due to the fact that McGee's additions were done in two stages. The front section was added in 1815, thus making the house L-shaped. Approximately 1820, the southeast corner was added and the southwest corner (the original section) was enlarged from 2 to 2 1/2 stories, thus necessitating the raising of the roof and the reframing of the rafters.

The house has a box cornice and 2 rear dormers with pedimented overhangs and returns. It has two inside end chimneys. The windows are 6 lights over 9 lights on the first two floors of the 1815 addition, while the attic windows are 4 over 4. The windows in the original part of the house are not all original, although the original windows, which are 6 over 6, have been found and are currently being readied for installation. The window trim throughout is plain, although there are exterior brick hoodmolds over the first floor windows and frame ones over the second floor. The first floor windows are flanked by paneled shutters, while the second floor has louvered ones. The house has a high stone foundation and a brick water table. The front doorway has a fielded 6 panel door with a wide lock rail, an arched fanlight, brick arch, and reeded columns.

To the rear of the house is a brick walkway and small brick patio, probably added by McGee because their location correspond with his relocation of the rear entrance. Several feet from this patio is a large brick-lined well that had been covered and remained undetected until quite recently (August, 1974). The well has a diameter in excess of 6 feet and is at least 50 feet deep.

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Samuel Seeley House  
Bridgeton  
Cumberland County  
New Jersey 034

**CONTINUATION SHEET**

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DATE ENTERED

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7. DESCRIPTION (CONTINUED)

Samuel W. Seeley House, Cumberland County, New Jersey

Inside, the house has original random width pine floors throughout. A tudor or four centered arch separates the main section of the front room from the alcove. The front room has an interior cornice, but the rest of the house has no molding. The mantles have reeded pilasters and complete entablatures. The front stairway is a P-shaped 1/2 turn winder with wellhole and nosed treads, while the rear stairway is a 1/4 turn winder with wellhole. Both stairways have stringboards. The interior doors are either 6 panel or plank doors, all of which are beaded. The 6 panel interior doors are uneven--the center panels are 2" larger than the lower panels and have wide lock rails. Original hardware, where existing, consists of iron knob latches with lockbars, iron thumb latches, and H-L hinges. On the interior, the windows have architrave trim. The cellar floor is brick in the 1815 section, while the original section remains unexcavated. The rafters in the attic are tenoned and pinned at the ridge. The existing original windows are all mortised and tenoned.

Alterations to the house include closing 2 windows, the conversion of a rear door into a window, and the removal of the 1799 chimney. These were all done by McGee when he enlarged the <sup>to</sup>swelling. Twentieth century alterations include the raising of the floor level of the room on the southeast corner of the first floor 8" so that it became level with the room on the southwest corner, the closing of a corner fireplace in the alcove, the addition of a side porch, a new front stoop (which replaced the original frame stoop and benchseats), and the division of the second floor room of the original house into a smaller room and a walk-in closet. During the 1940's, this closet was converted into a bathroom, the first one in the house.

Restoration plans call for the reinstallation of the existing windows, the reconstruction of the original front stoop, the reopening of the closed fireplace in the alcove, and the rebuilding of the 1799 chimney.

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

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

**ARCHITECTURE:** The Seeley House is significant primarily in the area of architecture since none of its residents obtained sufficient prominence or recognition to warrant inclusion. Architecturally, the house is both typical of a specific period of building and unique locally in that few other illustrations still exist in Bridgeton.

The construction and design of the Seeley House typify the style of architecture prevalent in the Middle Atlantic States during the Federal period. The classical influence which dominated architectural design during the house. The doorway with its arched fanlight and reeded columns is characteristic of the period. In virtually every respect, McGee adhered to the prevailing geometric motifs. Windows are perfectly balanced not only with the windows above them, but also with the corresponding openings on the other side of the house. The large Tudor arch, the mantles, and the delicately decorated cornice in the main room are all characteristic of the period. The balance on both the exterior and the interior is an earmark of the Federal period.

In some respects, the original Seeley House also typifies an earlier type of house--the small country home of a family of modest means. In 1800, the house was the farthest structure from the center of town (to the East). Its almost rural location, its smallness, and the simplicity of its design all represent the type of home so frequently found throughout rural early America. Furthermore, the house provides a typical illustration of how existing structures could be tastefully altered and enlarged by the second occupants.

In addition to being a representative example of early American architecture, the Seeley House has local significance of a different nature. Along with the two Elmer houses, also located on East Commerce Street, this house is one of the few remaining residences in Bridgeton constructed during the Federal period. The Seeley House is the purest of these

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Cumberland County Court House Records. Bridgeton, New Jersey.  
 Elmer, Lucius Q. C. History of the Early Settlement and Progress of Cumberland County (Bridgeton: George F. Nixon, Publisher, 1869), 28, 38-71, and 105.  
 Mulford, William D. Historical Tales of Cumberland County (Bridgeton: Evening News Company, 1941), 17, 62, and 93.  
 Shourds, Thomas. History and Geneology of Fenwick's Colony

(Bridgeton: George F. Nixon, Publisher, 1876), 534.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than 1/2 acre  
 UTM REFERENCES

A	18	43,046,0	4,316,411,0,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

## 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 Research (Dr. Arthur F. Sewall, Historian) Historic Sites Section, Nanci Kostrub.

ORGANIZATION Department of Environmental Protection DATE \_\_\_\_\_

STREET & NUMBER P. O. BOX 1420 TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

CITY OR TOWN Trenton STATE New Jersey

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ LOCAL X

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 Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection

DATE NOV 18 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE 9/3/76

ATTEST: [Signature]

DATE 5.12.76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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Samuel Seeley House  
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New Jersey 031

**CONTINUATION SHEET**

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (CONTINUED)  
Samule W. Seeley House, Cumberland County, New Jersey

three houses in that it has undergone less extensive remodeling than have the other two. During the period 1800-1820, Bridgeton began its transformation from a sleepy hamlet to an expanding and diversified community. Consequently, the Seeley House is significant in that it is one of the handful of structures dating from this take-off stage. Thus, the Seeley House is both characteristic of a particular period of architecture and unique in that the surrounding area has few other surviving illustrations of that period.