

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**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 The DeWint House

AND/OR COMMON The DeWint House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Livingston Avenue and Oaktree Road

__ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Tappon

__ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

26

STATE

New York

CODE

36

COUNTY

Rockland

CODE

87

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

Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of New York

STREET & NUMBER

71 West 23rd Street

CITY, TOWN

New York

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

New York

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Rockland County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

New City

STATE

New York

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE

1936, 1940

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress Annex/Division of Prints and Photographs

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D. C.

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 DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The DeWint House was built by Danuel DeClark in Tappan, New York in 1700. This date is set in brick numbers, over a foot high, in the west side of the house. The house is one and a half stories tall, with a steeply-pitched, shake-covered roof and wide eaves. The rectangular structure measures approximately 23' wide and 47' in side length. The north, east, and west walls are constructed of rubble stone masonry for the height of the first story. The entire west wall and the north and south walls above the first story are built of brick in alternating rows of headers and stretchers. The house has a central hallway and stair which runs the width of the house, dividing each floor into two rooms. The simple doorway on the front (west) facade is flanked by two 14 light casement windows on either side. The door on the rear (east) facade is flanked by one window on a side. Directly above these windows are a pair of dormers, which also have 14 light casement windows. There is a third door, in the west corner of the north end of the house. This door formerly opened into a one-story kitchen addition which was removed between 1850 and 1856. It was within this small apartment that the DeWint family resided during Washington's stays. There is one other window, similar to the rest, which is located at the second story level in the south end. Located diagonally above this window is a peephole which has been bricked in. The house has two internal gable end brick chimneys and a root cellar which can be entered only at the south end of the house.

The interior of the house, which is maintained in a 1780 appearance, has a kitchen on the north, with a brick floor, and in the south end, the room which was used by Washington as his headquarters. This room has a wooden floor, an ornate, Delft-tiled fireplace, and the table upon which Andre's death warrant was signed. There is also a trapdoor in this room which opens into the root cellar and a former escape tunnel.

A simple stair case leads to the second floor which has two rooms, both used as bedrooms. The pegged and whitewashed beams are exposed here. Two skylights were cut into the west slope of the roof at the second floor level, to provide the necessary heat to keep the house dry. The interior walls are of stone, plastered over.

The only other feature which dates from the historic period is the original well, to the west of the house, which is still operative.

The DeWint House is maintained as a Masonic shrine on a 12 acre tract of land. The grounds are kept landscaped, and the only other structure is the former carriage house, now the Masonic museum and caretaker's residence. Built circa 1800, the two and a half story, white clapboard and brick structure housed the stables on the lower floor, carriages on the upper floor and hay in the loft.

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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" 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 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 1700, 1780, 1783

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The DeWint House, in Tappan, New York sheltered General George Washington upon several occasions during the last years of the American Revolution. Washington's most notable stay was that of September 28 to October 7, 1780, during the trial and execution of Major John Andre, the British spy, which were held in Tappan.

Built in 1700, in the style of New York Dutch architecture, the one-and-a-half story house with its steep-pitched roof and overhanging eaves was visited by the American commander-in-chief on three other times.

Located at the intersection of Oak Tree Road and Livingston Avenue, the DeWint House has been restored and is maintained as a Masonic memorial to George Washington.

HISTORY

About eighty years before Andre's capture, Danuel DeClark built what is now called the DeWint House. A sometime brewer, justice of the peace, and captain of the militia in what was then part of Orange County, DeClark erected in 1700 a one-story stone and brick house, which had a central doorway in both the east and west fronts. The house possessed two notable exterior features: a very steeply pitched roof and the year "1700" in nearly two-foot high brick numbers in the wall of the west front. A one-story kitchen stood at the north end of the building. By 1746, Rem Remson, of Brooklyn, owned the building. He sold it in the same year to Johannes DeWint, a native of St. Thomas Island in the West Indies. As he still owned the house when Washington appeared, it has become known as the DeWint, rather than the DeClark house.

Washington accepted the hospitality of the DeWint family at four different times in the closing years of the Revolution. He first resided there between August 8-24, 1780. His third visit occurred over May 4-8, 1783, when he met and conferred with Lieutenant General Sir Guy Carleton in order to discuss the British evacuation of New York City and the exchange of prisoners. That conference resulted in some agreement, but left much unsettled. Washington's last sojourn in the DeWint house occurred between November 11-14, 1783, when a snowstorm forced him to halt in Tappan while on his way from Hackensack, New Jersey, to West Point.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- S. Sydney Bradford, "The DeWint House," National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings form 10-317, February 1966.
- R. Ernest and Trevor N. Dupuy, The Compact History of the Revolutionary War (New York, 1963).
- Douglas Southall Freeman, George Washington, 7 vols. (New York, 1948-1957), V.
- Benson J. Lossing, Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution, 2 vols. (New York, 1859), I.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

12 acres

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 8	5 8 8	6 7 0	4 5 4	1 3 7 0	B	1 8	5 8 8	7 6 0	4 5 4	1 8 0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING				ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		
C	1 8	5 8 8	4 5 0	4 5 4	1 3 7 0	D	1 8	5 8 8	4 6 0	4 5 4	1 3 7 0

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Beginning at the southwest in intersection of Livingston Avenue and Palisades Road, proceed west along the south curb of Palisades Road approximately 486' to the west bank of Sparkill Creek; thence south along Sparkill Creek's west bank for approximately 641' to the southern boundary of the DeWint property; thence east in a straight line 500' to the west curb of Livingston Avenue; thence north approximately 342' along said curb to the point of origin.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY (original form prepared by Richard Greenwood, Historian)

NAME / TITLE

Cecil McKithan, Historian

ORGANIZATION Historic Sites Survey Division, National Park Service	DATE January 1978
STREET & NUMBER 1100 L Street, NW.	TELEPHONE 523-5295
CITY OR TOWN Washington	STATE D. C.

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL _____

STATE _____

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

Landmark Designated: April 23, 1966
 Boundary Certified: George Henry
 DATE: APR 11 1978

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DATE

11/24/78

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CONTINUATION SHEET DeWint House ITEM NUMBER #8 PAGE 2

None of the preceding lodgings in the DeWint House has attracted as much attention as has Washington's second visit between September 28 and October 7, 1780. It was then that Andre suffered the usual fate of spies.

Andre and Major General Benedict Arnold almost successfully arranged the British commander at West Point on August 3, 1780, had been in correspondence with the British commander-in-chief, Sr. Henry Clinton, since May 1779. On the night of September 21, 1780, Clinton's Adjutant General, Andrè, landed from the Vulture in the Hudson River, then undoubtedly met and conferred with Arnold, and sought to return to New York during the night of the 22. He was apprehended on the morning of the 23rd and taken to West Point on September 26, and from there was shortly transferred to Tappan and imprisoned in a tavern. The latter still stands, but is greatly changed from the time of Andre's incarceration.

Washington, shocked by what he termed "Treason of the blackest dye...",¹ considered Andrè a spy from his capture until his death. He did not regard him as "a common prisoner of War" and instructed that he be "...most closely and narrowly watched" in ordering Andrè to be brought to West Point from Tarrytown on September 25.² On September 29, the day after the commander-in-chief had arrived at the DeWint house, Washington ordered that a board of fourteen general officers should consider Andrè's case. The following excerpt from Washington's orders of September 29 to the Board of General Officers underscores his own attitude apropos of Andre.

Major Andrè, Adjutant General to the British army will be brought before you for your examination. He came within our lines in the night on an interview with Major General Arnold, and in an assumed character; and was taken within our lines, in a disguised habit, with a pass under a feigned name and with the enclosed papers concealed upon him.³

The board, headed by Major General Nathanael Greene, met at the Dutch church (demolished in 1836) in Tappan on September 29. It took the generals, to whom the spy admitted that he had not landed on September 21 under a flag of truce, little time to find the British soldier guilty of spying. Consequently, the board recommended his execution.

¹General Orders. Orangetown, September 26, 1780, in John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., The Writings of George Washington (39 vols.; Washington, D.C., 1931-1944), XX, 94-96.

²Ibid., Washington to Lt. Col. John Jameson, September 25, 1780, XX, 86-87.

³Ibid., XX, 101.

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CONTINUATION SHEET DeWint House ITEM NUMBER #8 PAGE #3

Washington accepted the board's findings and confirmed the sentence. Because of the strenuous efforts by the British to save Andre, Washington postponed the young man's demise. But on October 1, Washington refused to act upon Andre's request that he be shot rather than hanged, which was the customary fate of spies. The execution occurred on October 2. During it the American commander labored in the DeWint House. He was considering major military problems, matters that

...were vastly greater questions in his mind, most surely, than that of the just fate of an attractive young spy who had come within the American lines to bargain with a traitor.⁴

⁴Douglas Southall Freeman, George Washington (7 vols; New York 1948-1957), V, 220.

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CONTINUATION SHEET DeWint

ITEM NUMBER #10

PAGE 2

These boundaries enclose the DeWint House within a portion of its original tract. Although the DeWint House and the well are the only features of national significance, the surrounding grounds and landscaping provide a suitably harmonious rural setting.