

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY-NOMINATION FORM

(Type all Entries-complete applicable sections)

1. NAME

HISTORIC
Old Stone Tavern
AND/OR COMMON
The Nowell House, The Bell House, The Old Stone House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Main Street
CITY OR TOWN:
Little Creek
STATE: Delaware CODE: 10 COUNTY: Kent CODE: 001

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both <input type="checkbox"/> Considered	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being <input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>Awaiting restoration</u>
		Comments	_____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME:
Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, State of Delaware
STREET AND NUMBER:
Hall of Records
CITY OR TOWN: Dover STATE: Delaware CODE: 10

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEED, ETC.
Kent County Courthouse
STREET AND NUMBER:
The Green
CITY OR TOWN: Dover STATE: Delaware CODE: 10

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
None
DATE OF SURVEY: _____
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Federal State County Local
STREET AND NUMBER:
CITY OR TOWN: _____ STATE: _____ CODE: _____

7. DESCRIPTION	
CONDITION	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed <i>(Check One)</i> <i>(Check One)</i> <i>(Check One)</i> <i>(Check One)</i> <i>(Check One)</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered <input type="checkbox"/> Moved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The principal portion of the Old Stone Tavern is a five-bay, one-room deep, two-story Georgian building constructed of dressed stone.

At the eave line, a corbelled cornice of rubbed brick laid in Flemish bond distinguishes the west, or front, façade. The roof is pierced by three dormers, decorated with Victorian detailing. A portico of recent date covers the first story of the three center bays. The north façade is broken east of its center by a first-story window, which abuts the fireplace apron in the interior. On the east façade is a two-story frame wing sheathed in shiplap weatherboard. This wing contains a kitchen on the first level and servants' quarters above. A porch extends along the south façade of the addition and turns the corner to embrace a portion of the east façade of the main structure. The south façade is an unbroken stone wall.

The flooring of the main structure is hung from the twenty-one-inch stone bearing walls. The first floor is divided by partition walls into a center hall and two adjoining rooms. In the south room the paneled window casings are more broadly splayed than in the north room. The windows have all been rehung, those on the western façade with larger lights. Interior detailing includes bullseye corner blocks at the lintels and reeded fireplace mantels. The south room is more finely detailed than the north room, which lacks corner blocks.

The second-story hall has been greatly diminished by the addition of a bathroom. Access to the finished attic is provided by an enclosed staircase surmounting the main stair. The north bedroom in the second story features two closets on either side of the chimney, set in a plastered wall. The south bedroom, like the room below it, is the more richly detailed of the two second story rooms. It has been divided into two smaller rooms by a recent partition.

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

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

The Old Stone Tavern is typical of the architecture prevalent in Delaware during the second and third decades of the nineteenth century. Its corbelled brick cornice has parallels in stone buildings nearby at York Seat (1826) and at the Octagonal Schoolhouse (1834). Its interior detailing, with deep reeded mouldings and vigorous bullseye corner blocks, echo styles popularized through the writings of Asher Benjamin, whose seven books on house carpentry and architecture were being widely circulated at the time.

8. SIGNIFICANCE			
PERIOD <i>(Check One or More as Appropriate)</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16 th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18 th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15 th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17 th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19 th Century	
SPECIFIC DATES <i>(If Applicable and Known)</i>			
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE <i>(Check One or More as Appropriate)</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(Specify)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Military		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The first documentary references to the stone house in Little Creek is dated 1829, when it was sold, with a two-acre lot, by Sheriff Nehemiah Clarke in execution of judgement against John Bell and Manlove Hayes.

This two-acre lot was divided from the main Simpson's Choice tract in 1764, when the lands of Mary Hunter were divided among her children, John, Henry and Lucy Bell. At the time of the division, there were no improvements on this particular lot.

The land remained in the Bell family until Henry's son John lost it at a sheriff's sale in 1829. It changed hands several times during the next quarter-century, finally becoming the property of Abraham Nowell in 1858.

Stone buildings, particularly buildings constructed of cut Piedmont stone, are rare in Kent County, which is devoid of native rock. The Nowell House is therefore an architectural curiosity, even though it otherwise differs only in quality from its nearby contemporaries.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Kent County Deed Book N-4, page 492; Deed Book B-4, page 50; Deed Book C-4, p. 166; Deed Book E-3, p. 180; Deed Book C-3, pp. 34-35; Deed Book S-1, p. 249.
Eberlein, Harold Donaldson and Hubbard, Cortlandt V. D. Historic Houses and Buildings of Delaware. Dover: Public Archives Commission, 1963.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES
DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY
OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES

LATITUDE			LONGITUDE		
Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
39°	09'	51" N	75°	262"	51" W

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Two

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

State:	Code:	County:	Code:
State:	Code:	County:	Code:
State:	Code:	County:	Code:
State:	Code:	County:	Code:

11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title:
Edward F. Heite, Vincent Rogers and Rosemary Troy
Organization:
Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs
Street & Number:
Hall of Records
CITY/TOWN: Dover STATE: Delaware CODE: 10
Date: 10/13/72

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ___ State ___ Local X

I hereby certify that this property is included in the 89-National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Name: _____
Dr. E. Berkley Tompkins

Date: _____

ATTEST:

Title: Director, Div. of Historical
and Cultural Affairs

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

Date: _____