

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only
received
date entered

1. Name

historic Gutherie-Dennison Farmstead

and/or common S. Dennison House

2. Location

street & number Limestone Road (Box 175)  not for publication

city, town Hockessin  vicinity of ~~Congressional District~~

state Delaware code \_\_\_\_\_ county New Castle code \_\_\_\_\_

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Catholic Foundation, Diocese of Wilmington

street & number 1925 Delaware Ave.

city, town Wilmington  vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state DE

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. New Castle Co. Recorder of Deeds

street & number 800 French St.

city, town Wilmington state DE

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Architectural Investigation of Route 7 North Corridor New Castle Co., Delaware has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1986  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Del. Bureau of Archaeology & Historic Preservation, CRS #N-1096 Transportation Del. Dept. of

city, town Dover state DE

---

## 7. Description

---

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

---

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Gutherie-Dennison farmstead is an agricultural complex consisting of a main house, barn, tenant house, and range of dilapidated poultry sheds. The complex is set some 400 feet back from the east side of Limestone Road on fairly level ground. A line of conifers stands as a windbreak close to the north side of the house, and scattered shade trees occur in the farmyard area.

The farmhouse is an L-plan gable-roofed structure of stretcher-bond brick construction on a fieldstone basement. The overall form is of the I-type (two stories high, one room deep, side-gable orientation) with an integral rear ell. The roof has synthetic shingles and box cornice with partial gable-end returns. Fenestration is balanced, with the facade symmetrically divided into three bays, and each side elevation divided into two bays. Window openings have segmental brick arches, timber sills, and 2/2 wood double-hung sash. Symmetry of the facade is emphasized by the attic-level gabled wall dormer centered above the entrance. The latter is of the Greek Revival type, with six-light transom and three-light sidelights. The original glazing has been replaced with vividly colored panes of glass, and the entrance has been sealed with an exterior wood panel. A full-length veranda features concrete pedestals supporting chamfered wooden posts, between which are shallow "arches" with paneled spandrels. The rear ell is two stories, two bays long and one room deep. To it is attached a brick unit with shed roof, and to this brick unit is attached a 1-story stuccoed frame addition.

The interior plan of the house is arranged with a center stairhall flanked by a single room to each side. The gable-end chimneys serve stove hearths, each of which has a simple wood mantel. The staircase features turned balusters and a ten-sided newel post. Woodwork is characterized by simple stock moldings; most interior doors have four vertical panels and glazed, moveable transoms. The south bedroom retains an original pair of sliding pocket doors by which the space can be divided into two smaller rooms.

The house has two date stones. One in the south gable has the date 1886, to which the house corresponds in terms of form, materials and features. The second date stone, reading "1822", is located in the north gable. It was very likely retained from an earlier house on or near the site of the existing dwelling.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 2

The barn is located southeast of the main house, and is oriented perpendicular to the house, with the cattle shed facing south. The barn is of the "double decker" bank type, with a center aisle flanked by two-level haymows (see Jicha and Cesna, 1986). The exterior walls are of fieldstone, and the interior is framed with bents of hewn and sawed timbers, with mortise and tenon joining of the principal members. At the east gable end is a full-height, roughly square unit of fieldstone which contains the remains of a wooden silo. At the forebay area on the south, there is a large gabled hay shed addition, supported on fieldstone piers and clad in vertical board siding, which creates an expanded cattle shed at ground level. On the north side, an earthen ramp with fieldstone retaining walls rises to a timber framed covered "bridge" spanning a 15 to 20 foot space between the ramp and the barn proper. Extending beneath the "bridge" is a rutted drive leading to a small fieldstone and wood frame granary set in the reentrant angle formed by the barn's foundation and the ramp. A date stone in the west gable of the barn contains the date 1825 and the initials A E G. The current tenant of the property believes that the forebay extension was built ca. 1913.

Between the barn and main house is a side-gable, 1-1/2 story clapboarded frame structure that appears to have been built early in this century, perhaps as a tenant house. It has been remodeled as a garage, with wide vehicle doors and a "carport" on the west side. West of the farmhouse is a long range of low, gable-roofed sheds, set gable end to gable end, that appear to date from the early-to mid-20th century and may have originally housed poultry. They are now either empty, used for storage, or for sheep. All these farmstead structures are considered contributing elements in the complex.

## 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 checked="" 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** 1825;1886;ca.1913 **Builder/Architect**

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Gutherie-Dennison farmstead is significant under Criterion C for its retention of structures embodying distinctive features of types, periods and methods of construction characteristic of the architectural history of rural Mill Creek Hundred and north-western Delaware. At least three phases of construction, spanning nearly a century, are readily discernable in this complex, which is one of only two active agricultural units remaining on Limestone Road. These phases are represented by the barn, the farmhouse, and the expansion of the barn and the poultry sheds.

Two of these three represent building forms that are almost diagnostic of the Delaware Valley Cultural Region, and thus, on the local level, with that portion of the region represented by Mill Creek Hundred and Limestone Road. These forms are the Pennsylvania bank barn and the I-house, whose two-story, single pile form, with or without "Georgian" symmetry or other features derived from formal styles, was overwhelmingly the living environment of choice in this area during the late 18th and 19th centuries. The third feature, the large hay shed extension of the original barn forebay, represents a distinctive local response to the expansion of dairy herds in Mill Creek Hundred in the late 19th and 20th centuries (personal communication with Bert Jaicha, New Castle Co. Planning Office, 8 April 1986).

The bank barn was built, according to the date stone, in 1825 by Alexander Gutherie, who inherited the farm from his father (also named Alexander) in 1810 (N.C. Co. Wills, Q1/413). Its distinctive features include the two-level haymows to either side of the raised center aisle, the curious covered "bridge" between the earthen ramp and barn proper, and the unusual stone-enclosed wood silo on the east end. According to Jicha and Cesna (1986), this "double decker" bank barn type represents a variation on the traditional bank form intended to increase functional capability through the vertical expansion of the haymow area and the creation of additional storage or activity space beneath the aisle or driveway.

When Alexander Gutherie died in 1860, his will provided for the sale of his holdings east of Limestone Road (N.C. Co. Wills, X1/367). The following year, the Gutherie farmstead was purchased

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 2

by Samuel Dennison, whose home farm lay to the south on the west side of the road (N.C. Co. Deeds, M7/421). In time, Samuel's son, Robert, came to occupy the old Gutherie farm, living as a tenant until his father formally conveyed the property to him in 1890 (N.C. Co. Deeds, X14/427). The farmhouse, with datestone of 1886, was thus built during Samuel Dennison's ownership but very probably for Robert Dennison, who lived here until his death in 1909. The dwelling, although its use of brick is somewhat unusual along Limestone Road with its lingering 19th-century tradition of fieldstone construction, remained firmly in local tradition as evidenced in its I-house form and the distinctive centered gable that appeared on many 19th-century expressions of this house type, both in this area and further south in Delaware.

Robert Dennison died intestate, and upon the order of the Orphans' Court his farm was sold at public sale in 1910 (N.C. Co. Deeds, W22/116). The purchaser was his nephew Horace P. Dennison, to whom expansion of the barn for dairying plus erection of many of the poultry sheds, can probably be attributed. Horace Dennison died in 1955, and five years later his heirs sold the property to the Catholic Diocese of Wilmington (N.C. Co. Deeds, 065/596). Tenants now used the property for dairying, sheep, and a small landscape concern.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 10

Page 1

Gutherie-Dennison Farmstead (CRS #N-1096): The property included in this nomination occupies a portion of parcel #08-018.00-20, and consists of approximately 12.5 acres. Although still partly used for agricultural purposes, the property is significant for its architectural characteristics; thus only a portion of the total present acreage is included. The boundaries of the nominated property encompass all contributing architectural and landscape features associated with the activity area of the farmstead, including farmhouse and outbuildings, the windbreak on the north side of the house, shade trees scattered among the outbuildings, and the major portion of the farm lane that enters the complex south of the house. The west (front) boundary, some 250 feet from the house, preserves the character of the deep setback of the farmstead from the road, although the expansive front yard is now quite devoid of landscape features. No architectural or landscape elements contributing to the significance of the resource are excluded by the boundaries as delineated.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

New Castle County Deeds, New Castle County Wills (see Specific Citations in Text); Hall of Records, Dover, DE  
 Jicha, Hubert F. and Valerie Cesna, National Register Nomination for Agricultural Buildings in Mill Creek Hundred, 1800-1840, on file at Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Dover, Del. (1986)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Approx. 12.5 acres

Quadrangle name Kennett Square, PA-DEL.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A	1, 8	4, 39, 7, 80	44, 0, 1, 81, 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	1, 8	4, 39, 6, 00	44, 0, 1, 6, 0, 0
E			
G			

B	1, 8	4, 3, 9, 82, 0	4, 40, 1, 6, 8, 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	1, 8	4, 3, 9, 55, 0	4, 40, 1, 7, 2, 0
F			
H			

**Verbal boundary description and justification** The boundary of the Guthrie-Dennison Farmstead is shown as the dashed line on the accompanying map entitled "Figure 2, Site Boundary, Guthrie-Dennison Farmstead." See continuation sheet

### 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 M. H. Bowers, Architectural Historian

organization Louis Berger & Assoc.

date 1 April 1986

street & number 100 Halsted St.

telephone 201-678-1960

city or town East Orange

state NJ

## 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title

date

For NPS use only

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

date

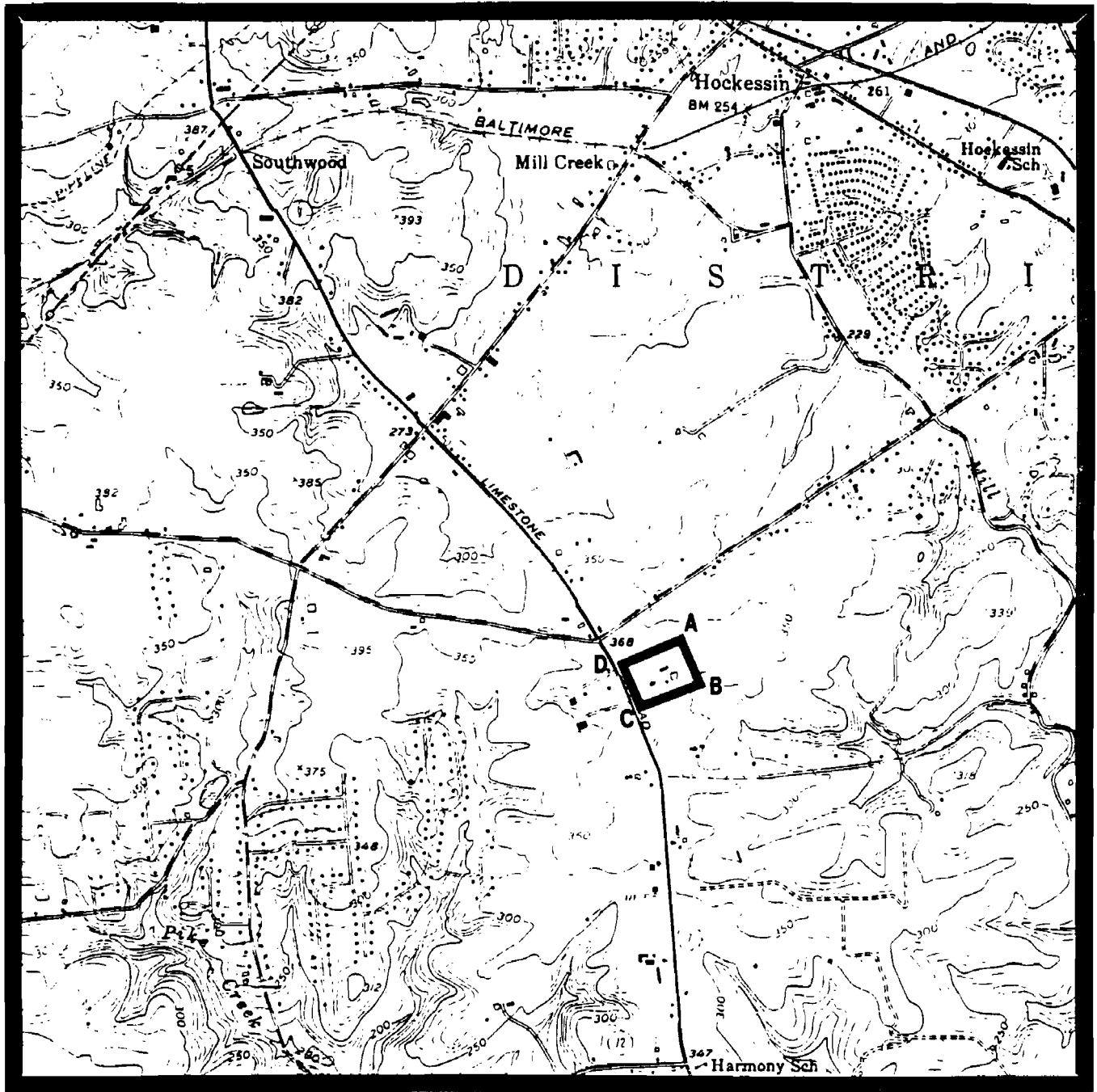
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

-173-

date

Chief of Registration



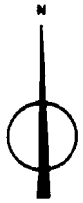
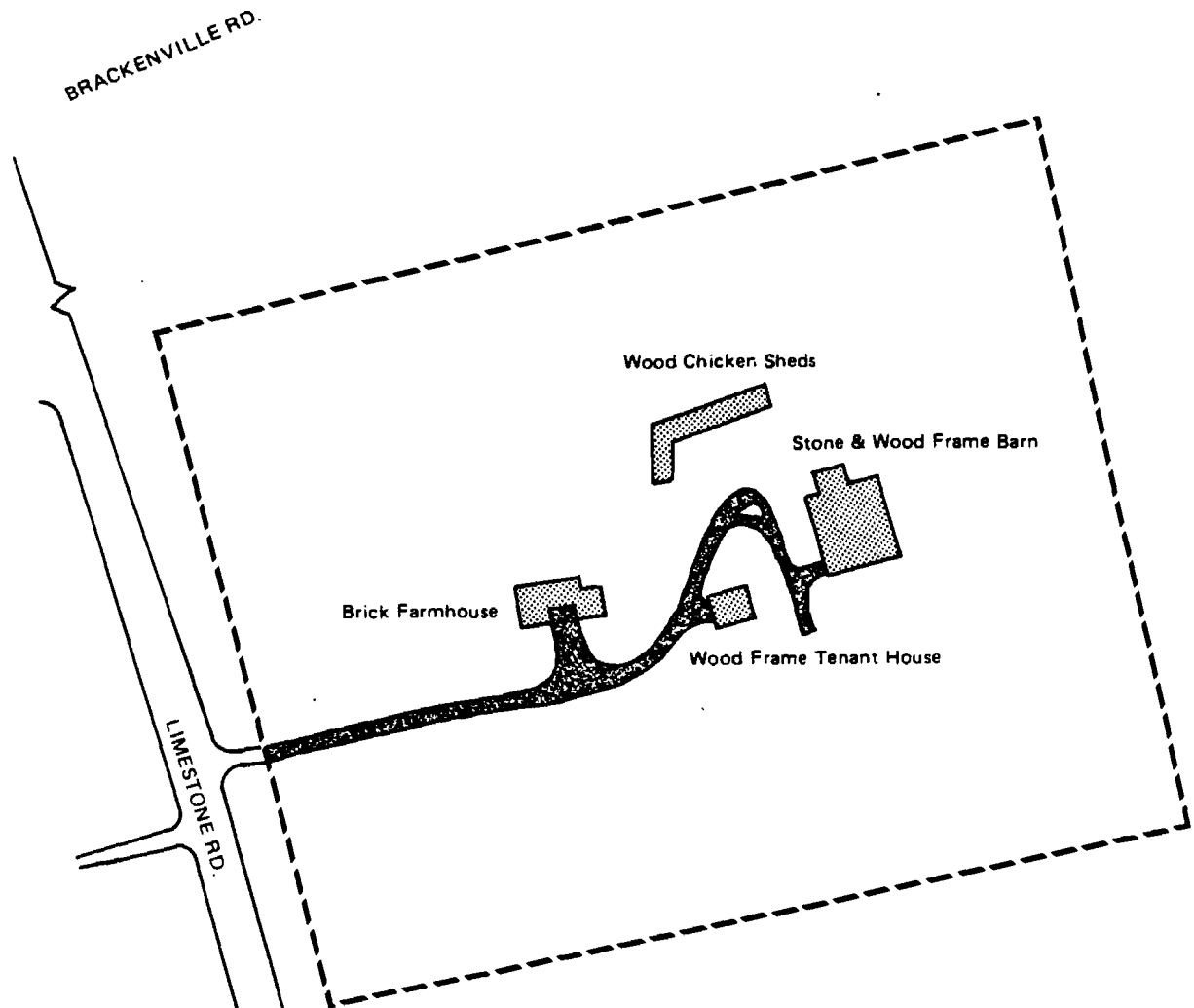
**FIGURE 1:**  
**Guthrie-Dennison Farmstead**  
**Limestone Road**  
**New Castle Co., DE**  
**UTM: A - 18/439780 4401810**  
**B - 18/439820 4401680**  
**C - 18/439600 4401600**  
**D - 18/439550 4401720**






**SOURCE:**  
 USGS Kennett Square Quadrangle  
 Pennsylvania-Delaware  
 7.5 minute series



**FIGURE 2**  
**Site Boundary, Guthrie-Dennison Farmstead**  
**Limestone Road, New Castle Co., Delaware**



**LEGEND**

-  SITE BOUNDARY
-  CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES
-  ROADWAYS WITHIN SITE

