

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED  
DATE ENTERED

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 Keith House - Washingtons Headquarters

AND/OR COMMON Name Headquarters Farm

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Pineville Road

CITY, TOWN Upper Makefield Township VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 8th

STATE Pennsylvania CODE 42 COUNTY Bucks CODE 017

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input 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	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input 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 Mr. and Mrs. James Rendall

STREET & NUMBER Pineville Road, R. D. #2

CITY, TOWN Newtown VICINITY OF Pennsylvania 18904

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Bucks County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER East Court Street

CITY, TOWN Doylestown STATE Pennsylvania

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places

DATE 1949 FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

CITY, TOWN Harrisburg STATE Pennsylvania

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE		CHECK ONE	
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED	DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED			
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED				

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Early appearance indicates that a center section, constructed of stone, was the first structure on the site. This section exhibited typical Georgian symmetry with a three bay front. First and second floor windows were six over six light. The roof was gable style with boxed cornice.

Later additions included wings on either side. The left front wing was constructed in three bays. Windows were nine over six light. The roof, slightly lower than the center section, was gable style with boxed cornice.

A smaller addition to the right front included a pentave and shed roof. Three window openings were placed in the front wall of the second floor. Two windows and a door were included in the first floor, front wall.

Later additions to the structure raised the roof in the left front section. Federal style window heads and lights were also included in this section. The shed roof on the right front section was replaced with a gable style and the entire house was stuccoed.

Also, at a later time, an addition to the far left of the structure was added to complete the present appearance.

The outbuildings include a stone banked barn with all four walls of limestone with sandstone quoins. A stone and frame ell was added to the upper portion of the bank. A second stuccoed stone and frame building was added perpendicular to the lower bank wall and a one story passageway connects it with the stone barn. A large pentave goes across the stone barn lower bank joining the roof of the passageway and the eave of the frame barn. These buildings have been renovated in the 20th century.

Between the barn complex and the house is a 1½ story stone carriage house. In the field is a small stone spring house.

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 checked="" 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

The original Keith Farm consisted of 230 acres in what was originally the Manor of Highlands, one of William Penn's four manors. William Keith, a Scotch-Irish yeoman acquired the land in 1761. The land prior to Keith's purchase was owned by a group of investors, based in London, called the Pennsylvania Land Company.

During the Eighteenth century most of the prominent families in the area were Quakers who followed their religious attitudes of pacifism. The Keiths, however, were Presbyterians and sympathetic to the revolution. When American troops were stationed along the banks of the Delaware River, the Keith family made its home available to General Washington. For ten days, from December 14 to 24, 1776 Washington made his headquarters in the Keith home. It was in this home that Washington met with aids staying in near-by homes to plan his Christmas eve attack on the Hessians in Trenton.

Legend recalls that counter spy John Honeyman, whose true colors were known to no one else but Washington, was imprisoned in the Keith springhouse. The Tories, as well as the Americans, believed him to be a spy for the British. Honeyman, it is believed, was imprisoned in order to inform Washington of the Hessian's plan for a Christmas eve celebration.

The Architectural significance of the house lies in its example of Eighteenth century stone construction with additions. The evolution of the house and farm can be studied in the construction of later wings.

Headquarters Farm is located on land which was known as the Manor of Highlands, set aside by William Penn for use by his family and which comprises a portion of Upper Makefield. However, it was not used as intended. Penn complained that people were already living on the land, and he sold it to a group of investors known as the "London Company" in 1697. Later, a land auction was held in Philadelphia in 1761 and the land was sold by the London Company to many people, most of whom were already living on it. William Keith at that time purchased 231 acres which already contained a house and buildings. The earliest section of the house probably dates prior to 1742 because William Keith was paying taxes in the township at that time.

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The oldest section of the house is the present dining room in the east portion. It contains a large "walk-in" fireplace which has a stone sink in one end. This room was restored by the present owners, Mr. and Mrs. James Rendall, shortly after they purchased the property in 1955, under the direction of Edwin Brumbaugh, architect.

The adjoining room in the main part of the house was added later and is a step higher. It is now a living room and contains a small enclosed winding stair. It originally was two rooms, divided in the center with a narrow room in back and another narrow room in front. The main beam which divided the two rooms remains in the center of the present room. There were two corner fireplaces, probably back-to-back, one in each room. This section was probably added when William Keith purchased the land on which he had been living, in 1761. The house then consisted of the original section with a room downstairs and another above it plus the second section with a front and back room on each story. Many houses in the area were enlarged when the people who had been living on the land as tenants became owners in 1761.

Next, the section to the west was added with a central hall and large open staircase. Although the date of this section is not known it appears to be very early 18th century architectural style. The end room on the west side probably was built about 1805, which is indicated by the rounded rather than angular deep walls surrounding the windows.

The property remained in the Keith family for 133 years after its purchase from the London Company. It should also be noted that the Keith family was active members and supporters of the Presbyterian Church of Newtown, the records of which may contain additional information about the family.

After the death of John Slack Keith, who died intestate in 1893, his four children who were his heirs sold the property to John Paxon, M. D., previously of Langhorn. It was during the ownership of Paxon, between 1894 and 1907 that extensive renovations were made: the west section of the house was raised, the entire house was stuccoed, gabled dormers were added and small-paned windows were replaced with two-over-two.

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At a later date, the dormers and porch were removed, possibly after the property was acquired by Henry Bristol who was the owner for thirteen years between 1933 and 1946. During that post-depression period many properties in this area were improved and renovated.

The only major work on the house which has been done since 1955 by the present owners, in addition to the previously mentioned restoration of the dining room, is the restoration of the spring house.

The outbuildings are of 18th century and early 19th century architecture.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Davis, W. H. History of Bucks County 1905, pp. 121-122  
 Battle, John H. History of Bucks County Pennsylvania 1887  
American Archives-Fifth Series Vol III 1776 Letters of General Washington From the Keith House

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

QUADRANGLE NAME Lambertville

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 5045.00 446035.0  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B           
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C         

D         

E         

F         

G         

H         

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

ORGANIZATION Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

Box 1026

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Harrisburg

STATE

Pennsylvania

**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 89-663), 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 ED WEINTRAUB, Director  
Office of Historic Preservation

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

ATTEST: KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

OFFICE OF REGISTRATION

Keith House-Washington's Headquarter  
Bucks County  
Zone 18 N4460350  
E504500

Jericho

U P P E R M A K E

Jericho

Woodhill

Fairfield Sch

W R I G H T S T O W N

Wrightstown

Penns Park

Ryans Corner

4461  
PINEVILLE 0.3 MI.

4460  
17°30"

BUCKINGHAM 4.5 MI.  
PINEVILLE 0.6 MI.

4458

4457

