

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Pennsylvania	
COUNTY: Bucks	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
James-Lorah House

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Judge Chapman House; VIA House

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
132 North Main Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Doylestown

STATE Pennsylvania	CODE 42	COUNTY: Bucks	CODE 017
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**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"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Village Improvement Association (VIA)

STREET AND NUMBER:  
132 North Main Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Doylestown

STATE:  
Pennsylvania

CODE:  
42

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Court House, Register of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Court Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Doylestown

STATE:  
Pennsylvania

CODE:  
42

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historical American Building Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: Sept. 1965  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Bucks County Historical Society

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Pine and Ashland Streets

CITY OR TOWN:  
Doylestown

STATE:  
Pennsylvania

CODE:  
42

STATE: Pennsylvania
COUNTY: Bucks
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

ORIGINAL

The James-Lorah House is a spacious, two and a half story Nineteenth Century, stucco townhouse, displaying a medium gable roof with cornice and double, end, brick chimneys. Marble steps lead to the entrance on the main facade which contains a single, two-panelled door with a six light transom. Above the transom is a segmental pediment. Fenestration is symmetrical. The first floor displays a six-over-six light, two sash window on either side of the door, with segmental pediment and panelled shutters. The three windows on the second floor are six-over-six light, two sash with lugsills, segmental pediment and louvered shutters. Above these are eyebrow windows, each of six lights with a lugsill, segmental pediment, and panelled shutters. The attached one and a half story wing has a high gable roof with a single, end brick chimney. The entrance on the main facade displays an eight panelled door with a flush fanlight. On either side of the door is a six-over-six light, two sash, unpedimented window with a lugsill and panelled shutters.

Inside the main house there is a vestibule leading to a center hall at the rear of which is a stairway leading to the upper floors. On the right is the drawing room with marble mantle. Opposite are double parlors, both with fireplace and marble mantles. The silver door knobs and hinges are unusual, as are the chandeliers in the hall and drawing room.

PRESENT

The house has been preserved by the Village Improvement Association as a typical Victorian Mansion. The rooms are all redecorated, but no major changes were made in the construction of the house. The exterior of the house is virtually unaltered, with the exception of a large auditorium, added in the 1960's to the rear of the small wing which had been the doctor's office.

\*wing added

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1844

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <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 (Specify) |
| <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 Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This house... has been a center of public service with its history of law, medicine, religion, music, and literature": Fred A. Martin, A.I.A., Doylestown architect and historian.

In 1806, Zerick Titus bought this land, and erected on it- probably where the small office wing now stands - a harness and saddler's shop. Five years later, he sold the property to Abraham Chapman, a descendant of one of Bucks County's earliest settlers, and the first white man to locate North of Newtown. He married the daughter of Doylestown's first doctor, and they moved from Wrightstown to Doylestown in 1813, when the County seat was moved there. In later years he was referred to as the Father of the Bucks County Bar Association.

In 1834 he gave the property to his son Henry, who had the old saddler's shop reconstructed and enlarged in 1841.

In 1844, prior to his second marriage to the daughter of Gov. Francis Shunk of Pennsylvania, he had this large, handsome residence built on to the smaller building, "at that time the finest house in the borough" (Doylestown Old and New, Davis). The builder was David Goucher, who had worked with his brother Thomas as a "joyner" for several years in the area, then left him to take up carpentry.

Gov. Shunk visited the young Chapman's during the first year they lived in the house; he was given a cannon salute when he arrived on the out-skirts of Doylestown.

Henry Chapman served one term in the State Senate, and one term in the U. S. Congress. In 1861 he was elected President Judge of the Bucks-Montgomery District, where he served for then years, then retired to "literary pursuits". He was the grandfather of Dr. Henry Chapman Mercer who built Doylestown's three "concrete extravaganzas": Fonthill, The Moravian Pottery and Tile Works, and the Mercer Museum, which houses his world-famous collection, "Tools of the Nation Maker". It is said Dr. Mercer was born in the front bedroom of this house.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Doylestown, Old and New", W.W.H. Davis, Intelligencer Print, 1904, p. 192  
 "History of Bucks County", W.W.H. Davis, Lewis Publishing Co., 1905.  
 "Design Resources of Doylestown", Published by Doylestown Borough Planning Commission, 1969.  
 "Picturesque Doylestown" pamphlet published by Doylestown Merchant's Association, 1965.  
 "Saddle Soap to Silver Polish", paper read by Fred F. Martin, A.I.A. 1964.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		40°	18'	46"
NE	° ' "	° ' "		75°	07'	52"
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1/2 Acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
Mrs. Kenneth W. Gemmill

ORGANIZATION: Village Improvement Association      DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Five Spruce Farm

CITY OR TOWN: Jamison      STATE: Pennsylvania      CODE: 42

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name [Signature]  
State Liaison Officer

Title Deputy Executive Director, Pa. Historical and Museum Commission

Date 6/11/72

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

[Signature]  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

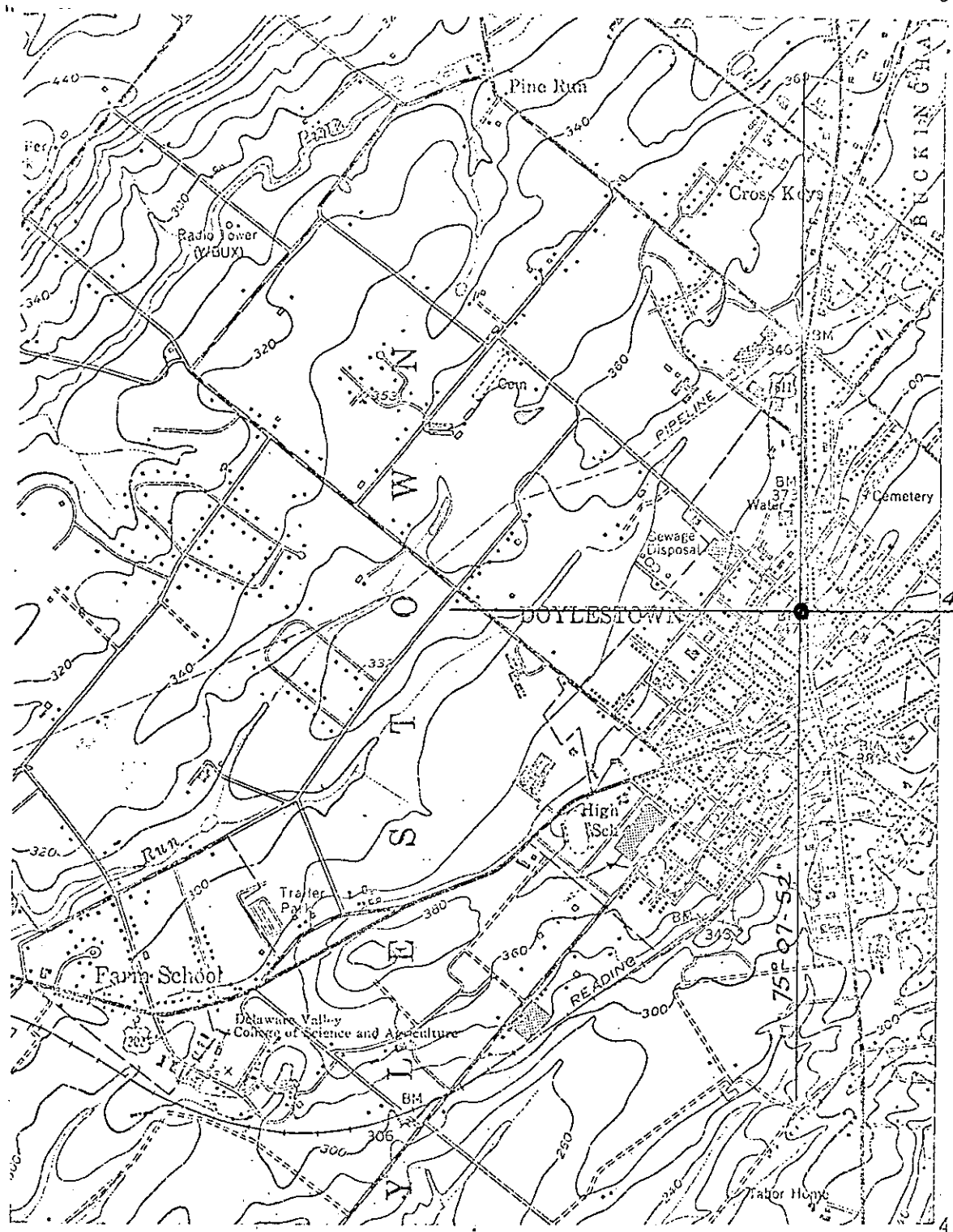
[Signature]  
Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

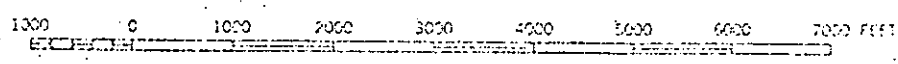
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40°-20'-00"

75°-07'-30"  
40°-20'



40°-17'-30"  
75°-10'-00"

40°-17'  
75°-07'-30"



SCALE 1:24 000

James Lorah House  
Doylestown, Pa.

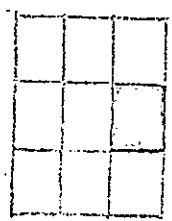
DOYLESTOWN, PA.

N4015-W7507.5/7.5

1953

PHOTOGRAPHIC 1948

AMS 5064 I SW-SERIES V831



1877 map  
17 route