

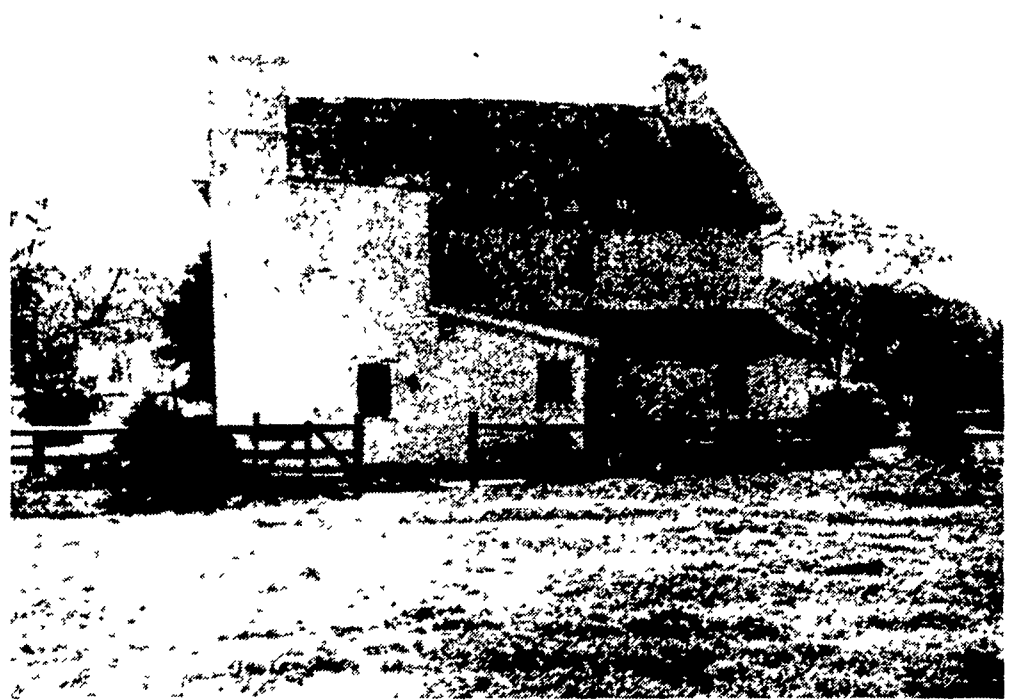
Bicentennial farm

The Kenneth Skiles family moves into the future by building onto and improving the past



Fireplaces are one of the distinctive features of the Skiles homestead. There had been five in the house at one time, but at present, the family is

only using three. Here, Mrs. Kenneth Skiles points to an old and valued piece of needlepoint made by a Skiles ancestor.



The chimneys are as distinctive a feature of the outside of the house as the fireplaces are on the inside. From the back of the house it is easy to see

why Kenneth Skiles says that a grown man is able to move about on the inside of the chimneys with little trouble.

CAINS - The Kenneth Skiles family, Narvon R2, likes to move into the future by building onto the past. This is evident in both their farming operation and their home. After Skiles purchased the farm from his father four years ago, he and his family began remodeling and restoring the farmhouse which has been in the same family for over 100 years. As a result of this refurbishing, they found that their home was a living lesson in the

history of architecture, and, as a result, the whole family became involved in its past. As far as Mrs. Skiles can tell from studying her "drawer full" of deeds that have been passed down and have come into her possession, the house dates back to 1734 when it was part of a 175 acre Messuage plantation. At that time it was sold for 50 English pounds, or \$87.50 in today's currency. "What is now the family

room was actually the whole house at that time," Mrs. Skiles and her husband clearly explain. "The house has been added onto three times since then," they note. A quick tour around the 1734 house turned 1976 family room reveals thick, two-foot stone walls, the ghost of a walk-in fireplace, and a rearranged open fireplace located near the center of the room on a diagonal. "Those chimneys were wide," explains Skiles. "A fully grown man could easily climb up and down in them."

place in the family room and one was built where a walk-in had been, but all three remain connected to the original flues.

Fireplaces are not the only objects of interest in the Skiles home. Several of the doors also carry a legacy with them. The door into the family room was, and is, an "Indian door." Made to keep the Indian arrows from breaking the panes of glass in the upper part of the portal, a front panel was built onto it which slides up and is bolted into place over the glass.

What is really amazing, yet true in most cases of family history, is that Skiles never even knew the extra panel on the "Indian door" existed.

"I lived here for 40 years and didn't know it until we started working on the house," he says almost incredulously.

The first addition to the house which, as far as the Skiles can tell, was built around the 1800's, possibly 1804-1816, has another fascinating entryway into the house. This door, similar

to one Mrs. Skiles has seen at the Edward Hand House in Lancaster, is double thick with six-inch boards nailed horizontally onto the inside of the door with homemade nails.

"That hinge is pretty unique, also," points out Skiles as he shows the handmade hinge which runs almost the entire width of the door.

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