

Kimberton Village National Historic District

Description

Kimberton Village is a quaint 18th century village located off Route 113 in East Pikeland Township. The Kimberton Historic District includes sixty-two buildings and two structures along three eighteenth and nineteenth century roadways that helped to make the village a local education, market, and transportation center. The village is also locally significant for its namesake, Emmor Kimber, an enterprising educator who arrived



here in 1817 and promptly established himself as the community's leading citizen and a prominent county figure. Kimberton's architecture reflects the village's two phases of growth. At the district's western end, around an early crossroads (Kimberton and Hare's Hill roads), stand eighteenth and early nineteenth century stone buildings that are representative of the eighteenth century vernacular architecture of this part of Chester County. The opposite end of the district reflects the development of building lots around the post-Civil War railroad station. The regular plan and sitting of house in this section of the district are distinctive in comparison to other historic villages in northern Chester County.

Significant Historical Structures located in Kimberton Village

Chrisman's Mill. Located on the southeast corner of Kimberton Road and Hare's Hill Road, the 2-1/2-story brownstone mill building is now used as the Kimberton Post Office. The grist mill was established about 1796. It was acquired by Emmor Kimber in 1820. A tenant house on the site was used to house single men who worked for Kimber. The site also includes a large barn and a small shed barn and a small shed. The mill was fed from a raceway that captured the water power of Royal Springs Creek.

French Creek Boarding School for Girls. Although a Quaker by faith, Emmor Kimber opened his boarding school for girls in 1818 to children of all denominations, and orphans or students from distant parts were admitted at any time without previous application. It was located on the corner of Kimberton Road and Hares Hill Road in a two-story, Colonial-style building known as Kimber Hall. The once exclusively girls' school would later become available for boys as well. The curriculum evolved over the years to include reading, writing, English grammar, history, geography, arithmetic, delineation of maps, astronomy, botany, chemistry, and sewing. He also offered, for an extra five-dollar fee, courses in drawing, oil and watercolor painting, French, Greek, and Latin. In addition to all of those courses, students could also learn about mechanics tools, gardening, husbandry, etc. The school was located on

the road from Norristown to Yellow Springs, 27 miles from Philadelphia. The children who traveled from Philadelphia to the school came by organized stage coach for a fare of a \$1.75 round trip. In addition to local students and the ones from Philadelphia, students also came from New York, Wilmington, Baltimore, and cities in adjacent states. The school operated until 1848.

Kimberton Inn. Located on the northeast corner of the Kimberton Road and Hares Hill Road intersection, this structure dates back to 1796. Over the years it has functioned as an inn, a tavern, and a restaurant. It has changed names throughout the years as has been known as the Kimberton Hotel (1800's), and The Kimberton Inn and Country House (1950's - 1980's) and today, The Kimberton Inn.



Sign of the Bear Tavern. Also located at the intersection of Kimberton and Hares Hill Roads, the two-story stuccoed building was built around 1771 and functioned as a tavern and stagecoach stop. Emmor Kimber acquired the property and turned it into a store and post office. The site also includes a spring house and barn. The general merchandise store remained into the 20th century.

