

Jacob Brookover, on March 17, 1767 bought 114 acres called "Fatt Oxen" in Frederick Co, Md.



Photo credit: Jack L. Finglass, Winter, 1976

Property name: Fat Oxen

Location: Urbana Pike (MD 355), Frederick, Frederick County

Description: Fat Oxen is unpretentious, yet elegantly refined. Constructed of Flemish bond brick and facing southwest, the house rises from a knoll 1 1/2 stories over a high rough stone foundation. The kitchen wing is attached to the southeast elevation and is also 1 1/2 stories in height, although shorter. Both the main block and subsidiary wing are unusually deep for a house of this scale. The roof rises at a very gradual pitch. Fat Oxen dates from the third quarter of the 18th century and is basically Georgian vernacular in style. The house has two double parlors with a partially open center hall and is five bays wide and two bays deep. The wing is two bays wide and two bays deep. A high wooden mid-19th century porch with railings shaded the two doors on the facade until it was removed in 1976. The doorway in the third bay is original. The subsidiary door in the fourth bay appears to have been added at a later date. Perhaps this doorway was a window at one time. This change would greatly enhance the stylistic refinement. Both doors have two-light transoms. Two gable-roofed dormers with round-arched 6/6 sash windows pierce the roof on the southwest facade. A basement bulkhead entrance is located at the northwest corner of the structure. Most window sash are 6/6. Central enclosed chimneys are found at either end of the house and an extremely wide stone chimney originally covered the southeast elevation. A more modern brick stack now rises through the southwest side of the roof at the gable end. The rear elevation has been greatly altered throughout the life history of the structure. However, the original 18th century door frame and 9/9 sash remain. The interior of Fat Oxen exhibits many alterations, and woodwork from every period can be found. However, much of this woodwork is of great merit, including beaded chair rails, baseboards, flat paneled shutters in the window reveals, and interior doors. Each of the four main rooms in the main block have back-to-back interior corner fireplaces. The mantels are rare due to the fact that the raised paneled over-face design continues down only one side of the fireplace opening. This design alternates from the left to the right side of the opening, depending on which direction the opening faces. The chimneys are rare in that they are asymmetrically placed along the roof ridgeline. This arrangement is most evident at the basement level. Only one brick hearth remains visible. The period stairway exhibits heavy molded handrails and simple rectangular balusters. A heavy chair rail runs across the stair landing and continues to the second floor level. The basement area is perhaps

one of the few intact period cellars in the area. A finished wooden stair descends from under the main stair to the dirt floor. Original plank partitions and sorting bins are extant in the southeast half of the basement.

Significance: Fat Oxen is significant to Frederick County not only as the residence of many who were influential in the development of the county, but also as a good example of a mid-18th century English farmhouse built in an area largely settled by Germans in the mid 18th century and where the vast majority of surviving structures are of German character