

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(NATIONAL HISTORIC  
LANDMARKS)

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Delaware	
COUNTY: New Castle County	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:  
New Castle

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
New Castle

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
New Castle

STATE: Delaware      CODE: 10      COUNTY: New Castle County      CODE: 003

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
various private and public: address correspondence to  
Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Department of State

CITY OR TOWN: Dover      STATE: Delaware      CODE: 10

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
Recorder of Deeds, New Castle County

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1100 King Street

CITY OR TOWN: Wilmington      STATE: Delaware      CODE: 10

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Buildings Survey-see individual buildings

DATE OF SURVEY: various dates       Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Library of Congress/Annex

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Division of Prints and Photographs

CITY OR TOWN: Washington      STATE: D.C.      CODE: 11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Delaware	COUNTY: New Castle	ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

## 7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

New Castle is very fortunate to have a large number of surviving historic houses. Little altered, nearly all of the structures are well preserved and being used for purposes in keeping with their historical character, that is as residences and small shops. The Green, bounded by Delaware, Market, Harmony, and 3rd Streets, with its old public buildings, and the adjoining Market Square between Market and 2nd Streets, where the town hall stands, was originally the Public Square laid out during the Dutch period. Not until the arsenal was built and leased to the Federal government in 1809 was the land considered as two plots and the Courthouse Square divided from the narrow Market Square by the present Market Street. Beyond the dense nucleus of historic buildings bounded by The Strand, Harmony Street, Third Street and Delaware Street, there are a number of buildings typical of the early and mid-19th centuries which continue the historic and residential character of the district.

The colonial State House and Courthouse still dominate the Green and the old town. Built of brick in various stages during two centuries, the building has recently undergone restoration. The large early Georgian colonial central section of Flemish bond brickwork with glazed headers was the original part of the building. In 1845 the small west wing of 1809 was removed and the present larger one of rough textured brick was added. The arcaded octagonal cupola of this building formed the center of the twelve mile circle which determined the arc of the northern boundary of the colony and state.

The George Read House, Number 30 The Strand, erected in 1797-1801, is an outstanding example of late Georgian-early Federal structure. The monumental entrance doorway with its great fanlight above and glazed panels at the sides, the Palladian windows on the side at the second story and the Palladian window above the entrance doorway create an imposing brick edifice of great distinction. A curved balcony of delicate ironwork and the fine carving on much of the exterior woodwork add refinement of detail which gives special elegance to this building.

Several of the other notable buildings include the following. The Old Town Hall, corner of Delaware and Second Streets, built in 1873, is of brick, three stories high with a white square and octagonal cupola. It has an arcade through the center of its first story that originally led to the stalls of the town market at the rear. The Amstel House, made of local brick laid in Flemish bond, with a belt course and water table is a good, well preserved example of a typical early Georgian house. The Old Dutch House, 32 Third Street, constructed between 1698 and 1704 is a fine example of Dutch Colonial with low pent eaves and an overlarge central chimney. The Van Leuvenigh House, southwest corner of The Strand was built in 1765 as a Georgian house, altered about 1840 to include Greek Revival features.

(continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**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) 1651, 1664, 1682, 1776

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |                                                  |                                      |                                         |                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginol              | <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/Phi-  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry    | osophy                                  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention   | <input type="checkbox"/> Science        | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | Architecture                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature  | itarian                                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            | <input type="checkbox"/> Music       | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

New Castle on the Delaware, six miles south of Wilmington, is the oldest town in the Delaware River Valley. Once a fine natural harbor for large vessels, the town was situated in a commanding position with a sweeping view of the Delaware River. Founded in 1651 by Peter Stuyvesant as the seat of the New Netherland government on the Delaware River, it received its present name in 1664 when it was seized by the British. William Penn received the colony in 1682 and it was here that he first arrived in America. New Castle was the colonial capitol until 1776 and very briefly, in 1776-77 the state capitol of Delaware. The many historic buildings illustrate a broad range of architectural history, extending from Colonial through the Federal era. A large number of well-preserved original buildings survive, set in an historic scene that has almost no modern intrusions. The streets and the broad Green preserve unspoiled the work of seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth-century builders, maintaining the intangible atmosphere and character of a mid-eighteenth century town.

HISTORY

The first settlement at New Castle's site was made by the Dutch in 1651, to regain the river trade usurped by the Swedish. Peter Stuyvesant, Governor for the Dutch West India Company, directed the building of Fort Casimir on Sand Hook, a point of land now washed away, that extended beyond the end of what is today Chestnut Street. After a brief interlude of Swedish control in 1654, Fort Casimir became a permanant village under Dutch control. In 1656 it became New Amstel, named for a suburb of Amsterdam and by 1657 was a town of 100 buildings. In 1664 Sir Robert Carr took the town for the Duke of York. This event was followed by a new influx of colonists from England and a final name change to New Castle. In 1682 the Duke of York deeded the property to William Penn. Then in 1704, New Castle became the seat of government of the Lower Counties when a separate assembly was set up for its counties of Delaware from that of Penn's province. When Wilmington was occupied by the British during the Revolution, the state capitol was moved to Dover. This resulted in increased trade for New Castle as did the establishment of the National capitol in Washington, D.C. when travel across the peninsula and up and down the river accelerated with New Castle as a transfer point. Inns and stage routes multiplied and the resulting

(continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bennett, George Fletcher, Early Architecture of Delaware, Wilmington, Del., 1922.  
Delaware--A Guide to the First State, American Guide Series, New York, 1955, pp. 232-52.  
 Eberlein, Harold D., and Hubbard, Cortlandt V. D., Historic Houses and Buildings of Delaware, Wilmington, Del., 1963, pp. 167-99.  
 Morrison, Hugh, Early American Architecture, New York, 1952, pp. 531-32.

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	UTM <sup>1</sup> 18.451820.4390510	' "		'	'	"
NE	° 18.452250.4390300	' "		'	'	"
SE	° 18.451670.4389540	' "		'	'	"
SW	° 18.451260.4389920	' "		'	'	"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 95 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Patricia Heintzelman, architectural historian, Landmarks Review Project, original form prepared by Charles Snell, 1967

ORGANIZATION: Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service DATE: 8/30/74

STREET AND NUMBER: 1100 L Street

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: D.C. CODE: 11

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

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)  
 Title \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS) Landmark Designated: Dec. 24, 1967

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation date

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS) Boundary Certified: *Carroll Lewis* 6-20-75

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Chief, Div. of Arch. Surveys date

ATTEST:

Boundary Affirmed: *Advent* 7/2/75  
 Keeper of The National Register  
 Director, OAHIP date

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Delaware	
COUNTY New Castle County	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

7. Description: (1)

New Castle

There are many fine structures which line The Strand, some of which were once inns at the time when it was a busy waterfront street. The street was lowered in 1803 and the additions of steps and porches can be seen on several of the houses. Opening off The Strand is Packet Alley. From here a wharf once existed which serviced packet boats when New Castle was a link between Washington, D. C. and points north.

Other buildings of interest are numbered on a visitors guide which is included as a sketch map number 1.

Boundaries

In order to include to the fullest extent the historic development of old New Castle, the boundary is drawn as follows; beginning at the point where the old dike, originally built in 1655, empties into the Delaware River, and continuing in a southwesterly direction along the bank of the river to a point directly in line with South Street, north along this line to 3rd Street, then west along 3rd Street to the rear property lines of the properties on the west side of South Street, then north along these rear property lines to Fifth Street, then along the rear property line of buildings on the north side of Fifth Street in an easterly direction, continuing in a straight line across Harmony Street through the open field to the dike, then in a southeasterly direction down the far side of the dike to the point of beginning, approximately 95 acres, as shown on sketch map 2. The docks indicated on the U.S.G.S. map are beyond the boundary.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(NATIONAL HISTORIC  
LANDMARKS)

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Delaware	
COUNTY	
New Castle County	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

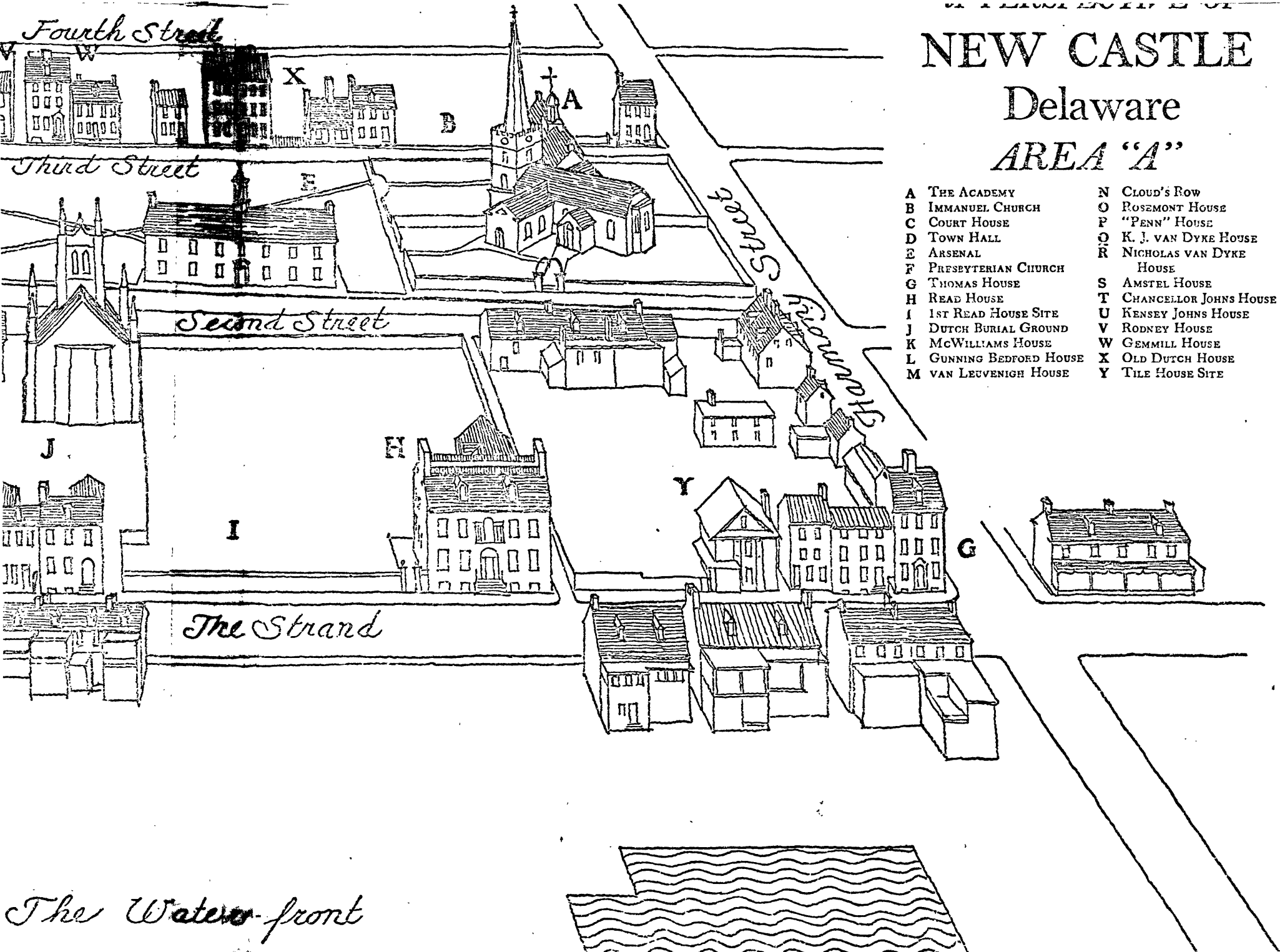
8. Statement of Significance: (1)

New Castle

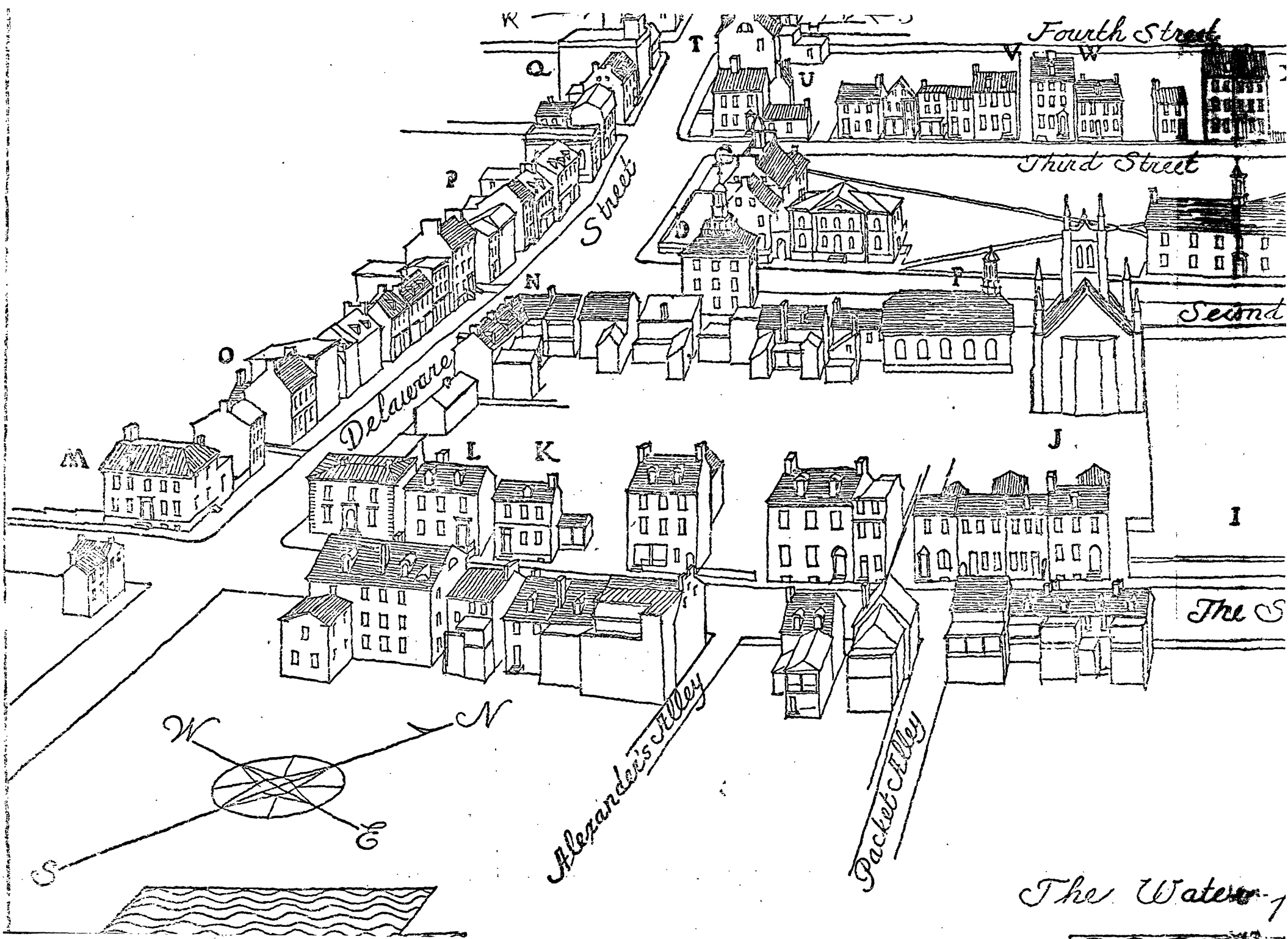
property led to the building of the New Castle and Frenchtown Railroad connecting the steam packet service of the Delaware with the steamboats of the Chesapeake Bay.

The slow decline of river traffic and the increasing importance of Wilmington lessened New Castle's commercial importance. When the main railroad line was put through Wilmington, New Castle lost its position as the county seat and became the quiet town it remains today. As a result, most of the old town has remained intact.

# NEW CASTLE Delaware AREA "A"



- |   |                       |   |                         |
|---|-----------------------|---|-------------------------|
| A | THE ACADEMY           | N | CLOUD'S ROW             |
| B | IMMANUEL CHURCH       | O | ROSEMONT HOUSE          |
| C | COURT HOUSE           | P | "PENN" HOUSE            |
| D | TOWN HALL             | Q | K. J. VAN DYKE HOUSE    |
| E | ARSENAL               | R | NICHOLAS VAN DYKE HOUSE |
| F | PRESEYTERIAN CHURCH   | S | AMSTEL HOUSE            |
| G | THOMAS HOUSE          | T | CHANCELLOR JOHNS HOUSE  |
| H | READ HOUSE            | U | KENSEY JOHNS HOUSE      |
| I | 1ST READ HOUSE SITE   | V | RODNEY HOUSE            |
| J | DUTCH BURIAL GROUND   | W | GEMMILL HOUSE           |
| K | MCWILLIAMS HOUSE      | X | OLD DUTCH HOUSE         |
| L | GUNNING BEDFORD HOUSE | Y | TILE HOUSE SITE         |
| M | VAN LEUVENIGH HOUSE   |   |                         |



Fourth Street

Third Street

Second

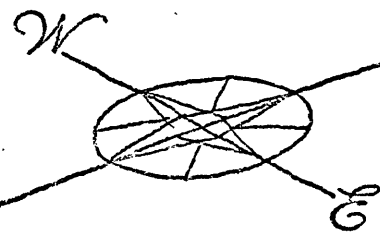
The S

The Water

Delaware Street

Alexander's Alley

Packet Alley





**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**  
(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)  
(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Delaware	
COUNTY: New Castle	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON: Corbit-Sharp House

AND/OR HISTORIC: Corbit-Sharp House

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: Main and Second Street

CITY OR TOWN: Odessa

STATE: Delaware CODE: 10 COUNTY: New Castle County CODE: 003

**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"/> Private 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 type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME: Wintherthur Museum, Mr. Horace L. Hotchkiss Jr., Curator

STREET AND NUMBER: The Corbit-Sharp House, Main and Second Street

CITY OR TOWN: Odessa STATE: Delaware CODE: 10

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Recorder of Deeds, New Castle County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER: 1100 King Street

CITY OR TOWN: Wilmington STATE: Delaware CODE: 10

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic American Buildings Survey (7 photos, 1936)

DATE OF SURVEY: 1936  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Library of Congress/Annex

STREET AND NUMBER: Division of Prints and Photographs

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: D.C. CODE: 11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Delaware  
COUNTY: New Castle  
ENTRY NUMBER  
DATE  
FOR NPS USE ONLY

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Corbit-Sharp House is a two-and-a-half story brick structure, 46 feet long and 36 feet deep. The walls are laid in Flemish bond, with a molded water table, granite beltcourse and carved granite window lintels, providing exterior architectural decoration on the facade. The pedimented doorway, into which an arched transom is cut, is a fine example of the Doric type and is almost identical with the doorway of the famed Stamper-Blackwell House on Pine Street. White paneled shutters frame the windows on the lower level, while green louvered blinds are used on the second story. A cornice with carved mutule blocks rather than modillions surrounds the main block of the house under the low hipped roof. Foliated wooden consoles frame the arched dormer windows of the front, while the other dormers have plain rectangular windows. An intricate lattice work railing surrounds the roof deck between massive capped chimneys. On the south end of the main house a two story brick kitchen wing was added, prior to 1800, replacing the original kitchen in the cellar.

The house is a central hall plan with two rooms to each side. Broken pedimented door frames open into the hall which has a paneled dado and a cornice of carved mutule blocks, patterned after the exterior cornice but reduced in scale to fit the room. Midway in the hall is a lintel of full Doric entablature, supported by fluted pilasters which frame the stairway.

The parlor on the first floor has a paneled overmantel with crossetted corners and a finely carved dentiled molding under the mantel shelf and around the room cornice. The dining room has a similar cornice and fielded paneling on the chimney breast wall with flaking cupboards concealed within the side paneling. There is a ventilator in the floor that allowed heat to rise from the original kitchen in the cellar below. There is also a secondary staircase to the kitchen which opens off this room. All of the bedrooms have fielded paneling on the fireplace walls and ovolo moldings around the fireplace but are otherwise plainer in decoration.

Across the front of the house on the second story is a large room patterned after the ballrooms of some Philadelphia and southern mansions, but which was used here as a drawing room and bedroom. The chimney breast is framed by fluted pilasters supporting an entablature and modillioned cornice which extends around the room. A broken pediment crowns the overmantel frame and is repeated in the pediments of the flanking doors. A fret carved base molding and chair rail complete the wainscoting. This plan of a projecting chimney breast framed by fluted pilasters is identical to the Powell drawing room in Philadelphia, down to the guilloche of the baseboard and the chair rail fret. This room therefore illustrates in detail how the entire house embodies the sophisticated elegance of Philadelphia, transported down the Delaware River to Odessa, giving an example of provincial wealth and grandeur to almost rival that of its inspiration.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |                                        |                                       |                                                  |                                       |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century            |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1772-74**

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   | <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

The William Corbit House, erected in 1772-74 in Odessa Delaware, is one of the finest examples of a late Georgian house to be found in the Middle Colonies. The main section is oblong with a hipped roof and balustraded roof deck. The walls are of brick laid in Flemish bond and the facade has a stone beltcourse and window architraves. A wooden cornice with carved mutule blocks goes all around the building. Though not unusually large, the rooms have fine proportions and architectural details. The Corbit House is also important because it serves as a documented example of the impact of the architectural design of a major city, in this case Philadelphia, on smaller towns in the area. Odessa was once an area of economic importance as a trade center and Corbit had close business and social contacts with Philadelphia. Although his house, like his life style, was a simpler version of the city model, the ambitions of its builder to emulate the elegance of his Philadelphia counterparts, produced one of the highest achievements of the period in the domestic architecture of Delaware, and of the Middle Colonies.

HISTORY

William Corbit, son of a prosperous Delaware merchant and landowner, was twenty years old when he was sent to Philadelphia to learn the tanners trade. Through this first and subsequent close connections with the city he acquired urban habits and tastes. By the age of 27 he had accumulated considerable wealth by his craft and real estate investments and was able to begin building an imposing house on land located on the rise above the tannery. Using the great houses of Philadelphia for a model, the house was begun in 1772 and completed in 1774. The interior woodwork was executed by Robert May and Company who also worked on the adjoining David Wilson Mansion, 1769, built by Corbit's brother-in-law. The house originally stood on a narrow terrace of land with five granite steps descending to the tanyard road. Prior to 1800, a two story wing with kitchen and bedrooms was added to the south side of the house. For 150 years the Corbits retained possession of the property. In 1938 it was sold to H. Rodney Sharp, who restored it in 1940 and preserved it as a small private museum, along with the Wilson House. At this time the old tannery road was removed and the property relandscaped, destroying the old outbuildings.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Bennett, George F., Early Architecture of Delaware, Wilmington, Del., 1922  
 Eberlein, Harold D., and Hubbard, Cortlandt V. D., Historic Houses and Buildings of Delaware, Wilmington, Del., 1963, p. 125-27.  
 MacDonald, Betty H., Historic Landmarks of Delaware and the Eastern Shore, Lancaster, Pa., 1963, p. 31.  
 Morrison, Hugh, Early American Architecture, New York, 1952, p. 532.  
 Sweeney, John A. H., Grandeur on the Appoquinimink; the House of William Corbit at Odessa, Newark Del., 1959.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
NW	Degrees Minutes Seconds 39 ° 27 '14 "	Degrees Minutes Seconds 75 ° 39 ' 27 "	Degrees Minutes Seconds ° ' "	Degrees Minutes Seconds ° ' "		
NE	39 ° 27 '07 "	75 ° 39 ' 23 "				
SE	39 ° 27 '01 "	75 ° 39 ' 27 "				
SW	39 ° 27 '02 "	75 ° 39 ' 30 "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **25 acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: **Patricia Heintzelman, architectural historian, Landmarks Review Project, original form prepared by Charles Snell, 1967.**

ORGANIZATION: **Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service**      DATE: **12/13/74**

STREET AND NUMBER: **1100 L. Street, NW**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington,**      STATE: **D.C.**      CODE: **11**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION      NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Designated: **Dec. 24, 1967.**  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Boundary Certified: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date: **6-30-75**

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Arch. Surveys

Boundary Assumed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Keeper of The National Register. **7/1/75**

Director, OAHF      date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(NATIONAL HISTORIC  
LANDMARKS)

(Continuation Sheet)

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7. Description second page

The house was acquired by H. Rodney Sharp in 1938, and a few Victorian additions and alterations were removed including a bay window, a lean-to bathroom addition on the side and a two story back porch. The later kitchen addition was converted into living quarters for the curator and a modern kitchen and pantry were added. Second Street, which once continued past the front of the house down to the tannery was removed and a garden, designed by H. Rodney Sharp, was installed south of the house. The removal of Second Street caused some dis-orientation to the placement of the house, but no serious injury to the integrity occurred. Also at this time, various outbuildings were removed with the exception of the old smoke house which is located at the western corner of the house. Again no harm was done to the house itself ~~but an interesting group of buildings that would have demonstrated~~ the workings of an 18th century tannery is lost. A scale model is included as part of the museum exhibit which illustrates the appearance of the property before these alterations were made. The site of the tannery has undergone preliminary excavation and more extensive investigation is planned.

BOUNDARY

The boundary has been drawn to include the site of the tannery by the estuary of the Appoquinimink Creek; beginning at the intersection of Main Street and the walkway between the Corbit House and the Wilson House at the northwest corner, then proceeding south along Main Street about 103 feet to the next house, then proceeding about 22 feet along the side of this house in a southwesterly direction to a rear wall; then in a southeasterly direction about 800 feet to the edge of the marshland, then following south and west to a point at Longitude 75°39'39"; Latitude 39°27'02" at the southwest corner, then north about 1600 feet in a straight line to the point of beginning, an area of about 25 acres.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

((NATIONAL HISTORIC  
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8. Significance second page

Then in 1958 it was presented to the Wintherthur Corporation,  
which now maintains it as a house museum.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

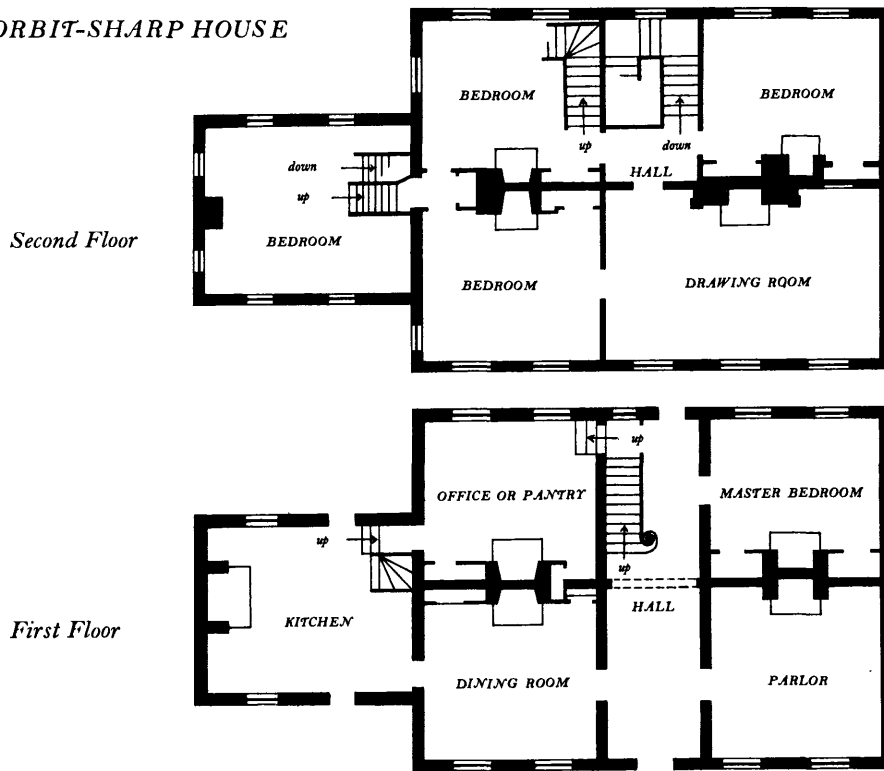
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THE CORBIT-SHARP HOUSE



Plan of the Corbit-Sharp House, from The Corbit Sharp House,  
museum pamphlet.

