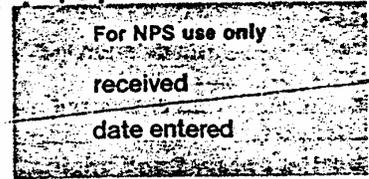


OM. NO. 1024-0018
EXP. 10/31/84



United States Department of the Interior National Park Service National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries--complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic

and/or common Delaware City Historic District

2. Location

street & number NA

NA not for publication

city, town Delaware City vicinity of

state Delaware code 10 county New Castle code 002

3. Classification

Category

- district
- building(s)
- structure
- site
- object

Ownership

- public
- private
- both

Public Acquisition

- NA in process
- being considered

Status

- occupied
- unoccupied
- work in progress

Accessible

- yes: restricted
- yes: unrestricted
- no

Present Use

- agriculture
- commercial
- educational
- entertainment
- government
- industrial
- military
- museum
- park
- private residence
- religious
- scientific
- transportation
- other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple (see owners list)

street & number

city, town _____ vicinity of _____ state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. New Castle County Recorder of Deeds

street & number City/County Building, 800 French Street

city, town Wilmington state Delaware

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Delaware Cultural Resource Survey (N-6333)

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records Bureau of Archeology and Historic Preservation
Old State House, The Green

city, town Dover state Delaware

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (If known) physical appearance

The Delaware City Historic District is located within the limits of Delaware City, an incorporated town of approximately 1,800 people that is situated in the eastern central area of New Castle County. The town is strategically located at the eastern terminus of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal where it joins the Delaware River. Laid out in 1826, just two years prior to the opening of the canal, the town contains significant development dating through 1930. This sixty-eight acre (approximate) district is made up of 252 sites that include 232 major buildings, not counting outbuildings, and 24 vacant lots. (Several sites contain more than one building.) Of the 232 buildings, 24 of them are not compatible with the definition of contributing structures; in other words, 90% of the buildings contribute to the significance of the District.

Delaware City is located 14 miles south of Wilmington, the largest city in Delaware, and 40 miles south of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The built area of town is roughly bounded by the Delaware City Branch of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal on the east, the Delaware River on the north, Dragon Creek on the west, and Delaware Route 9 (Fifth Street) on the south. East of the canal branch, but outside the boundaries of the district, is Polktown, a small community that was settled by free Blacks in the 1830's, and the Fort duPont site, established in 1863 as an auxiliary gun battery, later used as the headquarters for the Delaware River and Bay Defenses during World War I and World War II, and now used as the Governor Bacon Health Center. Polktown, Fort duPont, and the Delaware City Branch of the C and D Canal have not been included in this nomination since encompassing all of these sites within contiguous boundaries would also have necessitated including large areas of incompatible structures. Therefore, the Delaware City Historic District is composed of the major part of Delaware City proper.

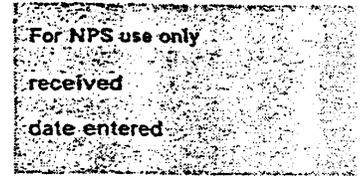
The surrounding landscape is sparse in terms of tree cover. One feature that was important to the economy of Delaware City is the expanse of marshland bordering parts of the canal, the river, and the creek that harbored substantial game bird and muskrat populations. Much of the outlying area beyond the marsh was highly productive agricultural land during the nineteenth century and is still so used. One major change to the landscape in recent years (1954) has been the development of the Tidewater Oil Company Refinery (now Getty Oil Company) on a site a mile-and-a-half northwest of Delaware City. The border of undeveloped land between the refinery and the town is great enough so that Delaware City still retains its isolated quality on the edge of the river.

Three related National Register sites are located just outside the district:

1. Eastern Lock of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal (N-1599, NR 1975).
2. Fort Delaware (N-145, NR 1971), a Civil War Prison located on an island in the Delaware River.
3. Chelsea (N-429, NR 1982), an 1848 brick, Greek Revival style dwelling built for Thomas Jefferson Clark, member of one of the leading families in the area.

The physical layout of Delaware City is based on a grid plan with the canal forming a diagonal boundary on its eastern edge. An 1851 survey of the town reveals a compact plan with ten major streets and nine cross streets of carefully graduated widths. In addition, the plan includes two public squares, and two wharves at river's edge near the canal lock. Washington Street, the main residential street, was plotted as the central axis measuring 100 feet wide, while the two parallel streets on either side

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 1A

DELAWARE CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT - N-6333

DESCRIPTION

of it, Clinton and Adams Streets, measure 80 feet wide. The remaining parallel streets measure 60 feet wide. The cross streets range from 30 to 80 feet in width, some of them serving merely as connecting alleys.

Early in the town's history, the northeast end of Clinton Street was established as the commercial district. The location of the commercial district and the direct access to the wharves and the canal lock transformed Clinton Street into the town's main thoroughfare.

College Square and Washington Square, the two planned public areas that appeared on the 1851 survey, were never formally developed and soon disappeared from later maps. By 1868 College Square had been subdivided and occupied by several dwellings and a school-house. Washington Square, although not subdivided until early in the twentieth century, disappeared from the plans between 1881 and 1893. A baseball ground appears on Beer's 1868 map of Delaware City, but a Methodist Church began construction on this site in 1876.

The earliest concentrated development occurred in the northeast end of town along Clinton Street, Washington Street, Hamilton Street, and along Third Street toward the canal. The lot sizes in these areas are very small, most of them having only a 20 to 40 foot frontage. This careful parceling of space appears to have been in anticipation of the great rush in acquiring land that was expected but never realized. After about 1880 land was parceled more generously. This later building period occurred at a slower rate and tended to expand along existing areas of development, so that the most recent buildings are located on the edges of the district.

Almost all of the buildings in the district are set close to the sidewalk facing the broad, tree-lined major streets. Only outbuildings and a few small dwellings face the cross streets. Some of the street fixtures, including brick sidewalks and cast iron fences, are still intact.

Most of the buildings in Delaware City are residential structures dating from the 1827-1880 period. The earliest buildings are brick, Federal style structures, but the great majority built during this period are Greek Revival and Italianate dwellings constructed in frame.

The Federal style dwellings, about five in all, are two-story, brick, gable-roofed double dwellings with symmetrical four-bay facades and fanlight entrances (see .62, .158, .147, .164). There is also an attached row of three similarly styled dwellings (see .123).

The Greek Revival style that is expressed in Delaware City is limited to the two or two-and-a-half story, flat-roofed, square plan rather than the temple front and crossing plans found elsewhere in the northeastern area of the United States. The details most

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 1B

DELAWARE CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT - N-6333

DESCRIPTION

commonly found on these starkly cubic plans are molded box cornices, transom and sidelight door surrounds, recessed panel doors and shutters, and classical porticoes (see .80, .89). The transition to the later Italianate style is a subtle one since the same box-like plan was preferred. The use of large cutwork scroll brackets at the cornice and ornate porches with turned and cutwork ornamentation are the primary decorative features that differentiate the Italianate-influenced buildings from those with Greek Revival details (see .109, .216). Many of these buildings combine decorative features from both styles so that the main impact of the 1830 to 1880 period are clusters of square two, and two-and-a-half story buildings throughout the center of town. Also during this period a significant number of the more traditional two-story, gable-roofed house-type was constructed in two-bay, three-bay, and four-bay (double dwelling) plans.

In the 1870's and 1880's several Gothic Revival style and two Second Empire style buildings appeared, but their overall impact was slight in light of the widespread popularity of the Greek Revival and Italianate types that preceded them. The Gothic Revival style buildings, in general, have a two-story, side-hall or center-hall configuration with a central cross gable, bargeboard trim, and ornate porches (see .133, .224, .166).

Of the three surviving churches that were constructed prior to 1880, two of them, dating from 1851 and 1876, are Gothic Revival (.35, .39) and the earliest, dating from 1835, is a simple Neoclassical type (.140); all three are brick.

The 1880 to 1910 period saw a decrease in building activity but styles tended to be more diverse than in the period that preceded it. Queen Anne style dwellings became popular, introducing such features as projecting bays, turrets, and wrap-around porches (see .120, .143, .169). The most notable change in the buildings of this period is the breaking away from the symmetrical, rectangular facades that dominate the town. Gable front and cross-wing plans became the preferred house form by the turn of the century. The earlier examples of this type retain the bargeboard trim, gable aprons, and ornate porches that were introduced in the 1870's and 1880's (see .104, .221), while the later examples possess very little applied ornamentation (see .177, .118).

In the 1920's and 1930's, bungalow dwellings were introduced. Plans and materials are so varied that no one type can be termed representative. Exterior wall treatments range from weatherboard and wooden shingles to stucco and brick. Stylistic types include gable-roofed, hip-roofed and cross-gable versions (see .36, .43, .134, .144).

The relationship of these various building periods to one another, in terms of their location, is fairly consistent. From the initial settlement area at the northeast end of town between Clinton Street and Adams Street, expansion was directed away from the river and the canal toward the southwest and northwest.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 1C

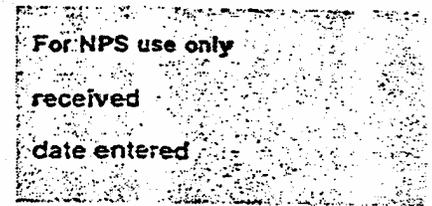
DELAWARE CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT - N-6333

DESCRIPTION

Clinton Street, the town's main thoroughfare, is the most diverse street in terms of building use. It is composed mainly of residential buildings but also contains the commercial district, two churches, and two schools along its half mile length. Between Second Street and the Delaware River is a combination of residential and commercial buildings with the commercial buildings concentrated on the northwest side of the street. A significant cluster of mid-to-late nineteenth century commercial buildings is located between Front Street and the river. This cluster includes the town's two hotels: the frame 1828 "Delaware City Hotel" and the brick circa 1835 "Central Hotel." A fire in 1887 destroyed eleven buildings at the northeast end of the commercial district. The replacement buildings display a variety of late nineteenth century plans, including gable-front and Italianate forms, while the southwest end of the block is composed of a more unified row of two-and-a-half story Greek Revival/Italianate buildings. Across the street from this commercial block is the canal and the canal lock. Between Front and Second Streets the commercial district has been adversely affected by the construction of a new fire station and extensive alteration, therefore it has been excluded from the district. Across the street from this intrusion, however, is a group of 1830 to 1880 dwellings, including two brick Federal style homes and several Greek Revival/Italianate homes. The area between Second and Third Streets is solely populated with dwellings except for the 1849 Gothic Revival Style "Christ Episcopal Church" (.35) at the west corner of Clinton and Third Streets. The buildings in this area are a mix of periods and styles ranging from the 1828 Federal style "Van Hekle House" (.164) to circa 1900 Queen Anne style dwellings (.168, .169). The majority of these houses, however, are mid-to-late nineteenth century Greek Revival/ Italianate forms. Between Third and Fourth Streets a definite change in building style occurs. Rather than the combination of nineteenth century styles found in the center of town, this block is composed almost entirely of early twentieth century gable front plans and bungalows. "Ebenezer United Methodist Church" has occupied its lot on the northwest side of the street 'since 1876. The block between Fourth and Fifth Streets displays a sharp contrast of early twentieth century bungalows and mid-nineteenth century buildings. The early twentieth century development is a continuation of the trend from the previous block and the reason for the early buildings being located here is due to the fact that Fifth Street is the major access route to Delaware City from the west. Two rows of workers' housing are situated on this block. The row dating from 1850 (.42) was associated with the canning factory that stood on the north corner of Fifth and Clinton Streets. The factory was replaced by a similar row of workers' housing (.45) circa 1900. The two other landmarks on this block are the 1858 Greek Revival style "Delaware City Academy" and the 1883 Italianate "Delaware City Public School."

The Historic area of Washington Street extends from Front Street to Fourth Street, the majority of its buildings dating between 1830 and 1870. These Federal, Greek Revival, and Italianate buildings are interspersed between Front and Third Streets. The major landmarks on this street are the Delaware City National Bank (.83) and the Polk/Henry

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 1D

DELAWARE CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT - N-6333

DESCRIPTION

House, two of the largest Greek Revival style buildings in town; the Charles Ash House (.61), one of two Second Empire style buildings in town; and the Christ Episcopal Church Rectory, a finely detailed 1870 Gothic Revival dwelling (.52). Also of note, are two well-preserved dwellings: the circa 1826 Federal style "Dunlap/Worrell House" (.62) and the circa 1850 Greek Revival "John Ash House" (.80). The block bounded by Third and Fourth Streets is primarily occupied by late nineteenth century gable front and cross-wing plan dwellings.

The area on Adams Street that is included in the district lies between Front and Fourth Streets, however, most of the pre-1880 development is confined to the one block area between Second and Henry Streets. The earliest building in this group is the 1830 Federal style "Hall/Dunlap" row. The others are 1850 to 1880 Greek Revival/Italianate and gable-roofed side-hall forms. The entire block between Williams Street and Second Street contains only two houses; these are the circa 1850 "Captain George Maxwell House," an unusual circa 1850 Italian Villa (.119), and the "Edwin Reybold House," a circa 1900 Queen Anne style house (.120). The southwestern end of Adams Street is characterized by a couple of late nineteenth century cross-gabled dwellings (.106" .133) and an early twentieth century hip-roofed bungalow (.134).

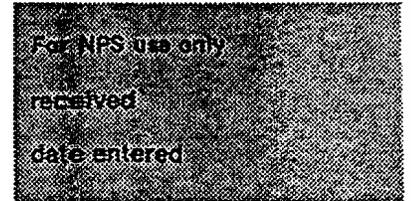
Only two-and-a-half blocks of Jefferson Street, between Williams and Third Streets, lie within the district. Two-thirds of the block bounded by Williams and Second Streets is occupied by a cemetery; the 1835 "First Presbyterian Church" and a circa 1880 Queen Anne style dwelling are the only buildings on the block. Originally three churches and a school occupied each of the four corners. The Queen Anne dwelling was built on the site of the school and the other two churches, Catholic and Methodist, were demolished. The remainder of Jefferson Street contains a diverse' group of dwellings including Greek Revival/Italianate, Second Empire, Queen Anne, and bungalow styles.

The area of town between Clinton Street and the canal is more sparsely populated than the areas previously discussed. The only substantial concentration of buildings on Hamilton Street is the two block area between Second and Third Streets. These ten dwellings date primarily from the 1860's and follow a simple two-story, gable-roofed, side-hall plan.

The dwellings along Third Street and Franklin Street date between 1860 and 1880. Most of these are similar to the gable-roofed houses on Hamilton Street; however, three of them are two-story, hip-roofed Italianate buildings.

Fifth Street, the southwestern boundary of the district, has a concentration of circa 1900 dwellings along its southwest side between Washington Street and Bayard Street. These are mostly gable-front plans. The "B. Ogle House" (.247), which sits across from Bayard Street, is an interesting 1850's Greek Revival building that was later remodeled with Gothic Revival details. The extreme southeastern end of Fifth Street is the site of the 1930 Colonial Revival style "Delaware City Public School."

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory-Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 1E

DELAWARE CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT - N-6333

DESCRIPTION

Thirty buildings in the district are constructed of brick; the rest are frame. There are no stone buildings.

Residential structures currently account for approximately 86% of the buildings in the district. Nine percent (9%) support commercial activities, while 3% are used by religious organizations, and 1% serve municipal functions.

The process of defining the boundaries of the Delaware City Historic District involved reviewing the results of an existing architectural survey of the town and examining these buildings and their relationship to each other in the field. The survey was conducted by the Delaware City Area Historical Society in 1979 and 1980 under the general direction of Richard Hendricks, their president. All of the buildings bounded by Fifth Street, the canal, the Delaware River, and Monroe Street were inventoried, including modern and substantially altered structures. The documentation on each site consists of the Delaware Cultural Resource Survey Locus Identification Form and Structural Data Form, and 35mm black and white photographs. This survey data is stored at the Delaware Bureau of Archeology and Historic Preservation in Dover.

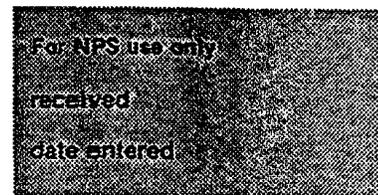
Since Delaware City's architectural development reveals many significant building periods and styles dating from 1827 well into the twentieth century, contributing structures within the district are defined as all pre-1933 buildings that possess sufficient integrity so that their scale, massing, fenestration, and details convey the character of their particular period of significance. The pivotal structures that illustrate the major areas of significance possess a very high degree of integrity. While a good number of the less individualistic buildings that contribute to the district have been altered somewhat by the addition of rear wings, modern siding, or replacement windows, they do possess the essential form and style of their period, and in terms of significance they reveal the popularity of various styles and the relationship of building forms that the pivotal structures alone cannot convey.

Justification of Boundaries

The boundaries of the Delaware City Historic District follow the historic expansion of the town as a whole through 1930. By the third quarter of the nineteenth century, the City's pattern of development had largely been set. Buildings constructed since that time are located along the perimeter of the early developmental core and also infill some of the sparsely settled areas within that core. The boundary itself has been drawn to coincide with property lines and curb lines as much as possible.

While the southeastern boundary of the district adjacent to the canal appears convoluted, this configuration was established by mid-nineteenth century development. Beers' Atlas of 1868 clearly shows development along Third Street extending from

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory-Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 1F

DELAWARE CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT - N-6333

DESCRIPTION

Clinton Street to the canal, and along Fifth Street down to the canal. The areas along the canal that have been excluded from the district contain mid-twentieth century expansion that was previously undeveloped ground.

As the major access route into Delaware City by land, Fifth Street, the southwestern boundary of the district, began to be developed by the middle of the nineteenth century. Fifth Street is also one edge of the city limits, and so building activity tended to stay on the northeast side of it until the 1940's. Outside of this boundary is a tract of World War II military housing, a trailer court, and some mid-twentieth century residences.

The northwestern boundary follows a zigzag line separating contributing structures from mid-twentieth century residences. Prior to modern construction, this excluded area was undeveloped land.

The northeastern boundary follows what has been the extent of building expansion at this end of town since the middle of the nineteenth century. Beyond this boundary is a short stretch of unused land and a barge dock at the edge of the Delaware River.

A block and a half on the northwest side of Clinton Street has been excluded from the district because of modern construction and unsympathetic renovation. This area could have been included within the district boundaries as a non-contributing element; however, since these intrusive buildings are concentrated in one area, it was decided to exclude them.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1933	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates c. 1826-1930 Builder/Architect (see inventory)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

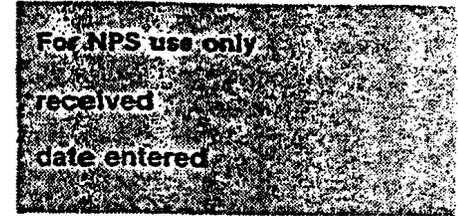
The Delaware City Historic District is significant for its architecture, for its beginnings, as a planned settlement, and for its importance as a nineteenth century canal-oriented transportation center. The buildings within the district date from 1826, the year the town was laid out, displaying significant development through 1930. The town was envisioned by its backers as a place that would develop into a major shipping and 'trading point for traffic that passed along this trans-peninsular trade route, and so, its early plans were based on the completion of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal. Through the nineteenth century, Delaware City profited from activities that centered around the canal, but by the end of the century canal traffic waned as the railroads expanded their lines. Delaware City was the only stopping point on the canal in Delaware. At the western terminus in Maryland, Chesapeake City served a simile function. For these reasons the Delaware City Historic District is being nominated to the National Register on the basis of Criterion A, since it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history, and on the basis of Criterion C, since its architecture embodies the distinctive characteristics of several types, periods, and methods of construction.

Five churches and a cemetery are being included in this nomination as exceptions to the general rule that does not allow cemeteries or properties owned by religious institution to be considered eligible. The churches are designated as contributing structures since their primary significance is derived from their architectural importance, rather than from religious associations. The cemetery is significant because it reveals important information about the religious divisions between various ethnic groups in Delaware City during the nineteenth century. The churches and the cemetery are integral parts of the district contributing to the overall development of the town.

In 1675 Edmund Andros, Governor of the Duke of York's territories in America, granted to Henry Ward, Justice of the Peace, a large tract of land that included most of the present day area of Delaware City. This land remained in the possession of Ward's family for the next 125 years; however, it is not known what kind of settlement, if any, occurred during their ownership. In 1801 Henry Ward Pearce sold the tract to John, Clayton and Barzillia Newbold of neighboring New Jersey. John acquired the part of this tract that would later be Delaware City.

A land speculator, John Newbold, built a wharf on his land immediately after purchasing it. The wharf became a center for grain shipping and trading, lending this spot the name "Newbold's Landing." When they realized that the eastern terminus of the proposed Chesapeake and Delaware Canal would be located at the wharf, Newbold's sons, Daniel and William, plotted a town at Newbold's Landing in 1826 and named it Delaware City. Given its strategic location at the junction of the canal and the Delaware River, it was thought that Delaware City would soon rival Philadelphia as a trade and commercial center.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory-Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 2

DELAWARE CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT - N-6333

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

By 1827 ten dwellings had been erected within the town limits. However, John Newbold's land was seized in 1828, a year before the opening of the canal, and offered at sheriff's sale. Manuel Eyre, who owned other land in Red Lion Hundred, bought the 393 acres that comprised the small settlement. Eyre undertook a promotional campaign to sell lots, but only sold a few over the next couple of years. With the opening of the canal in 1829 the town grew, but not at the great rate that its backers had expected. This was due primarily to competition from the railroads. In spite of this competition, Delaware City's greatest period of growth occurred between 1830 and 1880. Much of the town's activity centered around the canal; however, the great improvements in agricultural production in the surrounding area, as well as the fishing industry, brought considerable economic prosperity and notoriety to Delaware City.

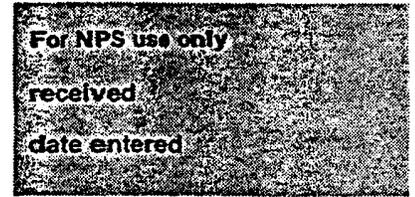
Although the town got off to a slow start, Delaware City's population had grown to 1,320 by 1860. Most of its inhabitants were from Delaware, Maryland and New Jersey families; however, a good number of Scottish, Irish and German immigrants were attracted to the town, as well. By 1880 the number of people residing in Delaware City dropped slightly to about 1,200. Today, as a result of recent housing, Delaware City counts approximately 1,800 people within its boundaries.

A post office was opened when the town was laid out in 1826, and in 1849 the Delaware City Bank was established. The town was incorporated in 1851 and a government consisting of three commissioners, an assessor, and a treasurer was set up. In 1875 an act was passed creating the position of mayor in addition to the existing board of commissioners. As the result of a referendum vote in 1960, the number of commissioners was increased to five.

Delaware City's initial settlement is unusual, as it was established to coincide with a specific event: the opening of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal. Whereas most towns in New Castle County grew from existing crossroads communities, Delaware City was planned before settlement even occurred. Conceived and designed as a city that would expand to take full advantage of its location on a major trade route, Delaware City was laid out on a formal grid plan with public squares and graduated street widths. The main thoroughfare was named after Governor DeWitt Clinton of New York, who before his career as governor had been a major leader in the movement to build the Erie Canal. When the town limits were extended in 1871, maps later appeared depicting an expanded grid of streets that, on paper, seemed to quadruple the size of the city. Although the public squares were never executed and development did not occur much beyond the original town limits, the aspirations for economic prosperity that founded Delaware City in 1826 can be seen in the carefully planned design that is still evident today.

The Chesapeake and Delaware Canal shortened the route by water between Philadelphia and Baltimore by 316 miles. Delaware City saw the passage of freight as well as passengers through the canal. Local produce was brought to Delaware City for shipment to Baltimore and Philadelphia, and barges filled with coal, lumber, lime and grain were

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory-Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 3

DELAWARE CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT - N-6333

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

locked through the canal. The Ericsson line of steamers, originating in Philadelphia, traveled the canal daily on its route to Baltimore. The town provided the facilities and the manpower to operate and maintain the locks, it contained three hotels and several small commercial enterprises that could supply travelers and ship crews with minor provisions, and it fostered a few successful grain and coal dealers who could take advantage of the canal trade.

Like the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal in the Potomac Valley and the Erie Canal in New York State, the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal slowly lost its importance as railroad lines multiplied. The Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad, which was completed in 1838, traversed the northern part of the peninsula offering the Philadelphia to Baltimore route at a faster rate than the canal could provide. The Delaware Railroad, a major north/south route, began construction in 1852 and had completed its line down the length of the state by 1859, providing a ready means to market for southern Delaware farmers.

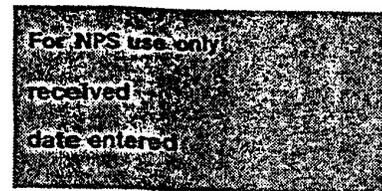
In 1886, William D. Clark, a lifelong resident of Delaware City, observed: "The railroad is becoming more and more popular with the citizens, as with it the time in the city (Philadelphia) is so much greater than that given by boat. The boat can only be popular for freight and summer excursions."

The Federal Government bought the canal in 1919 with plans to convert it into a sea level route. When the canal was re-opened in 1927, the eastern terminus was diverted to Reedy Point, two miles south. Any canal traffic would bypass Delaware City. The original Delaware City Branch of the canal has been dredged and is now only used by small pleasure craft.

Industry and commercial enterprises have been small-scale operations throughout Delaware City's history. Some of the first businesses established in town were John Hopper's blacksmith shop in 1840, the Robertson and Price grist mill in 1859, and the Hilles, Boyd and Company coal wharf also in 1859. Several general merchandise stores existed over the years, but Delaware City was never an important commercial center. Many people did their shopping in Philadelphia since it was only two hours away by steamer. The few manufacturers located in Delaware City include a cannery that marketed the "Delaware City Brand" tomato, a mincemeat factory, and a stamped tin factory. In an effort to encourage industries to form in Delaware City, in 1887 the commissioners decided to exempt any manufacturing company that occupied five acres or less from paying all taxes for a period of ten years. Even this incentive did not bring much activity.

In 1832 Isaac Reeves of New Jersey conducted experiments with peach trees near Delaware City. This was the first large-scale attempt to raise peaches for market and the great profits he earned by this pursuit influenced other local farmers to set out peach orchards. By 1840 half of the land around Delaware City was cultivated with peaches.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory-Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 4

DELAWARE CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT - N-6333

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

For the next 20 years Delaware City was recognized as the nation's major peach-producing region. The produce was shipped from the wharves in Delaware City to Philadelphia and New York. Around 1855 a blight began attacking the orchards, quickly destroying them. By 1880 no orchards remained in Delaware City.

Fishing for sturgeon, herring and oysters provided employment for many people in the 1880's. Sturgeon were so plentiful that three companies involved in catching the fish and processing the roe into caviar were located in Delaware City. Because of pollution in the Delaware River, this practice was stopped by the 1930's.

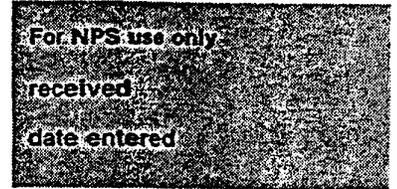
Architecturally, Delaware City's main emphasis is on buildings of the mid-to-late nineteenth century, its greatest period of growth. Its earliest buildings date from 1826 with significant development occurring through 1930.

Several of the earliest buildings in town are brick Federal style dwellings. The accepted plan was a two-story, gable-roofed, double dwelling with a symmetrical four-bay facade and fanlights above the entrances. The double-pile version of this style can be seen in the McClime/McIntire House (.158) and the Dunlap/Worrell House (.62); both of these houses have interior end parapet chimneys. Of particular note, the McClime/McIntire House possesses two decorative features not found on any other building in town: a glazed header lozenge on its northeast chimney and bullseye cornerblocks on its exterior window lintels. The VanHekle House (.164) is a single pile version of this same style.

The most prominent house type of the mid-nineteenth century is the Greek Revival style. Based strictly on the two or two-and-a-half story, flat-roofed, square plan, there are no temple front or crosswing versions of this style in Delaware City or in its environs. The Barnes House (.89), a two-story, three-bay, frame dwelling, exhibits the classical portico, the recessed panel shutters, and the recessed panel door with sidelights and transom that are characteristic of this style. The John Ash House (.80) is a two-and-a-half story, three-bay, side-hall-plan brick example of the same style. The Polk/Henry House (.84) and the Delaware City Bank (.83) are both precisely symmetrical, five-bay, two-and-a-half story plans with classical details. Notable for its difference in detailing, the brick Delaware City Academy emphasizes its five-bay facade with brick pilasters between each set of windows. Not unique to Delaware City, this severe square style was prevalent throughout southern New Castle County during the 1840's to 1860's.

The introduction of the Italianate style did not bring about much of a change in Delaware City's architecture since it was based on the same flat-roofed, square plan as the Greek Revival style. The bracketed frieze and the ornate porch exhibited on the L. Laboub House (.208) and on the house at 219 Clinton Street (.171) illustrate the primary innovations of the Italianate style in Delaware City. Because of the subtle difference between the Greek Revival and Italianate styles, features from both styles were sometimes combined, creating a transition between the two. The William Mullin House (.128) is a good example of this hybrid type. Its giant order corner pilasters and its door with transom and sidelights reveal the classical elements of the Greek

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory-Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 5

DELAWARE CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT - N-6333

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Revival while the elaborate bracketed frieze shows the animated styling of the Italianate. The Captain Maxwell House (.119) is the only Italian Villa in Delaware City. The Delaware City Public School (.182), a two-story, gable front, brick building with a bracketed box cornice, relieving arches above the windows, and a corbelled brick beltcourse is the only other Italianate-influenced building that deviates from the rigid square plan.

The few Gothic Revival dwellings that appeared in the 1870's and 1880's are primarily simple, center-hall plans with a facade cross gable (.166, .133, .188). Interestingly, the most ornate Gothic Revival dwelling is actually a remodeled Greek Revival building (B. Ogle House, .247). The Gothic Revival is more fully expressed in the town's ecclesiastical architecture: the 1849 Christ Episcopal Church (.35) and its rectory that dates to 1870 (.52); the 1876 Ebenezer United Methodist Church (.39); and the 1904 St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church (.59).

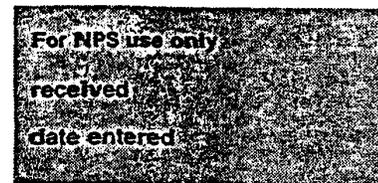
The Charles Ash House (.61), a brick Second Empire style dwelling built in 1871, and the circa 1875 frame Second Empire dwelling at 206 Jefferson Street (.145) are the only buildings of their kind in Delaware City. Both of them are finely detailed with molded window cornices, elaborate dormers, and cutwork trim.

During the 1880 to 1910 period a major change in building form occurred with the introduction of irregular plans in the form of elaborate Queen Anne style dwellings and the introduction of less ornate gable front and cross wing plans. The Edwin Reybold House (.120) is the most complex of the Queen Anne dwellings. Its major features are the hexagonal corner tower, the cross gables with spindle gable aprons, and a frieze with bas-relief trim.

Although the rate of building slowed down considerably in the twentieth century, new dwellings tended to be stylistically more diverse than in previous periods. Gable front plans and cross wing plans followed no set pattern and the bungalows that were constructed in the 1920's were similar to each other only in their one-and-a-half story height. The Gustav Stickley-designed bungalow (.36) is a massive brick ell-plan, while the red-shingled bungalow at 418 Clinton Street (.43) has a profusion of braced cross gables, and the hip-roofed square bungalow at 225 Adams Street (.134) is stark in its geometric simplicity. The 1930 Delaware City Public School (.232) is the only Colonial Revival building in Delaware City, however, statewide this type of school was commonly built in the 1920's and 1930's.

Architecturally, Delaware City contains important examples of the major nineteenth century and early twentieth century styles as interpreted in Delaware. These include Federal, Greek Revival, Italianate, Second Empire and Gothic Revival buildings in the nineteenth century, and Queen Anne and Bungalow styles in the twentieth century. As the only town in Delaware that served the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, Delaware City

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory-Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 6

DELAWARE CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT -

N-6333 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

is important for its initial settlement that was planned to coincide with the canal and for its relationship to the canal during its peak of activity as well as during its waning years.

Level of Significance

The level of significance claimed for the Delaware City Historic District is state because of the importance of its relationship to the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal. The C and D Canal was part of a well-traveled East Coast transportation route and Delaware City was the only town in the state that served the canal in a major capacity. Townspeople operated the lock, built wharves, and ran small businesses and hotels. Being situated at the eastern terminus of the canal, Delaware City's settlement was actually initiated by the opening of the canal and its major focus until the early part of the twentieth century was on canal activities.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 68 (approximate)

Quadrangle name Delaware City, DEL-NJ

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References See Continuation Sheets

A	18	449540	4381090
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	18	448630	4380330

B	18	449220	4380020
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	18	448970	4380990

Verbal boundary description and Justification

See Continuation Sheets

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state NA code NA county NA code NA

state NA code NA county NA code NA

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Valerie Cesna, Historic Preservation Planning Aide

organization New Castle County Department of Planning date August 1983

street & number 2701 Capitol Trail telephone (302) 366-7780

city or town Newark state Delaware 19711

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title _____ date _____

For NPS use only

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

date _____

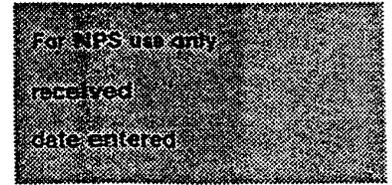
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date _____

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory-Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 1

DELAWARE CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT (N-6333)

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Baist, G. Wm. Atlas of New Castle County, Delaware. Philadelphia: G. Wm. Baist, 1893.

Beers, D. G. Atlas of the State of Delaware. Philadelphia: Pomeroy and Beers, 1868.

Conrad, Henry C. History of the State of Delaware. 3 vols. Wilmington, Delaware: by the author, 1908.

Diary of William D. Clark, 1880.

Diary of William D. Clark, 1886.

Industries of Delaware. Wilmington, Delaware: Richard Edwards, Editor and Publisher, 1880.

Map of New Castle County, Delaware. Philadelphia: G. M. Hopkins and Co., 1881.

Mayor and Council of Delaware City. Delaware City's History. Delaware City, Delaware, 1963.

Mayor and Council of Delaware City. Delaware City Sesquicentennial 1826-1976.

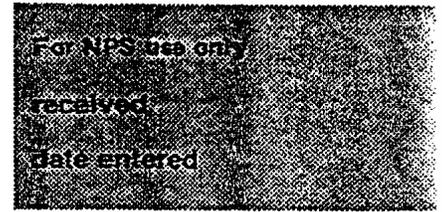
New Castle County Department of Planning. A Delaware City Comprehensive Development Plan Background Study. Wilmington, Delaware, 1968.

Rea, Samuel L. and Price, Jacob. Map of New Castle County, Delaware. Philadelphia: Smith and Wistar, 1849.

Scharf, J. Thomas. History of Delaware 1609-1888. Philadelphia: L. J. Richards and Co., 1888.

Stickley, Gustav. More Craftsman Homes. New York: The Craftsman Publishing Company, 1912.

United States Bureau of the Census. Population Census, Delaware, 1830, 1840, 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory-Nomination Form

Continuation sheet

Item number 10

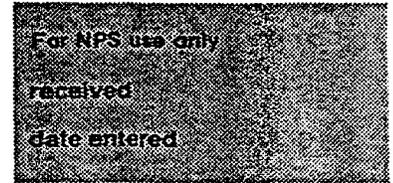
Page 1

DELAWARE CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT (N-6333)

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the Delaware City Historic District begins at the vest corner of the junction of Clinton Street and Harbor Street. It continues in a southwesterly direction in a straight line along the northwest side of Clinton Street to the southwest property line of site number .251. It then proceeds northwest to the rear property line of site number .67, then turns southwest and continues in a straight line along the rear property lines of site numbers .66 and .65. The boundary then crosses Williams Street, proceeds northwest to the rear property line of site number .64, continues southwest along the length of that same rear property line and then runs southeast to the rear property line of site number .63. It proceeds southwest in a straight line along the rear property lines of site numbers .63, .62 and .61, then runs southeast along the northeast side of Second Street to the east corner at the intersection of Clinton Street and Second Street. From that point the boundary continues northeastward along the southeast side of Clinton Street to the south corner at the intersection of Clinton Street and Front Street. It then crosses Front Street to the west corner of the parcel that contains the brick "Central Hotel" and continues northeast to the end of the hotel's front property line. The boundary turns and proceeds south along the hotel's east property line, then crosses Front Street to the rear property line of site number .147. It then continues southwestward along the rear property lines of site numbers .148 and .149, and then follows an imaginary straight line across the parcel on which site number .150 is located to the rear property line of site number .151. The boundary continues in a straight line to the northeast property line of site number .152 and then proceeds southeastward to the rear property line of that same site. Traveling southwestward, the boundary follows the rear property lines of site numbers .153 and .154. From that point it proceeds northwestward 104 feet along the northeast side of Williams Street, then crosses the street and follows the rear property lines of site numbers .155 and .156. It then turns and runs southeastward along the northeast property line of site number .202, crosses Hamilton Street, and continues northeastward along the northwest property line of site number .203. The boundary then proceeds south along the west side of Canal Street to the north corner at the junction of Canal Street and Second Street. It continues in a northwest direction along the southwest property line of site number .206 and proceeds northeast along the northwest property line of that same site. From there it travels northwestward along the southwest property line of site number .205 and then northeast along its northwest frontage. The boundary then crosses Hamilton Street traveling northwest along the southwest property line of site number .199 and then proceeds southwestward along the rear property lines of site numbers .159, .160, .161, .162 and continues southwest in a straight line across Second Street to the north corner of site number .198. It then runs southeastward along the northeast property line of site number .198, turns southwestward and follows the northwest side of Hamilton Street to a point twenty feet southwest of the property line between site numbers .193 and .192. From there the boundary crosses Hamilton Street, follows the northeast property line of site number .207, then turns and proceeds southwestward 55 feet along the rear property line of the same parcel. It continues southeastward along the northeast property line of site number .209, turns southwest and runs along the front property line of the same

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory-Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

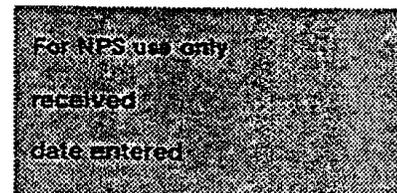
Item number 10

Page 2

DELAWARE CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT (N-6333)

parcel for 41 feet, then turns southeastward crossing Bayard Street and following the northeast property line of site number .211. The boundary continues in a northeasterly direction along the rear property lines of site numbers .214, .213 and .212, then it follows the northeast property line of site number .212, and then proceeds southwest along the northwest side of Franklin Street encompassing all that area that lies between site number .212 and site number .220. From there it travels northwestward for 104 feet along the southwest property line of site number .220, then it runs northeastward along the rear property lines of the parcels that face Franklin Street, and crosses Third Street. It then proceeds northwestward to the north corner where Bayard Street crosses Third Street and turns southwest crossing Third Street again and continuing down the southeast and southwest property lines of site number .210. The boundary then travels northeastward along the rear property line of site number .210, it crosses Third Street and proceeds northwestward along the southwest property lines of site numbers .208 and .189. From there it crosses Third Street and follows the rear property lines of site numbers .176, .177, .178, .179 and .180. Then it proceeds northwestward along the southwest property line of site number .180, crosses Clinton Street and travels southwestward to the west corner at the intersection of Clinton Street and Fourth Street. The boundary continues in a southeasterly direction across Clinton Street and along the northeast side of Fourth Street to the south corner at the intersection of Fourth Street and Hamilton Street. Then it proceeds northeastward across Hamilton Street, along the front property lines of site numbers .221 and .252, the northeast property line of site number .252, and then southwestward along the rear property lines of those same two parcels. From there it crosses Fourth Street and travels southeastward along the northeast/ side of Fourth Street: to the south corner at the junction of Fourth and Canal Streets. Then it turns southward to the north corner at the junction of Canal Street and Fifth Street. The boundary proceeds northwestward from that point along the northeast side of Fifth Street to the southeast property line of the vacant lot that is designated as site number .231. Then it crosses Fifth Street, follows the southeast, southwest and northwest property lines of site number .247 and crosses Fifth Street again, traveling' northwest on the northeast side of that street to a point thirty feet northwest of the southeast property line of site number .225. The boundary then crosses Fifth Street and follows the southeast property line of site number .246, and the rear property line of that parcel and site number .245. From there it proceeds northwestward on the southeast side of Hamilton Street to the east corner at the intersection of Hamilton and Fifth Streets. Continuing in a northwest direction, it crosses Hamilton Street and follows the southwest property line of site number .185 for 100 feet. Then it crosses Fifth Street again and follows the southeast property line of site number .244. It proceeds northwestward along the rear property lines of site numbers .244 and .243, and then southwestward to the corporate limits of the town. From that point the boundary proceeds northwestward in a straight line to the point where the corporate limits intersect the northwest property line of site number .234. It continues northeastward along that property line and then travels southeastward along the southwest side of Fifth Street to a point 26 feet southeast of the property line between site numbers .239 and .240. From there it crosses Fifth Street and follows the rear property lines of site numbers .45, .44, .43 and .42 and then it crosses Washington Street and proceeds along the southwest and northwest

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory-Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number 10

Page 3

DELAWARE CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT (N-6333)

property lines of site number .104. After crossing Fourth Street it follows the rear property lines of site numbers .103 and .102, turns northwestward along the southwest property line of site number .105 and crosses Adams Street. From that point it travels southwestward along the southeast property line of site number .134, and then along the southwest and northwest property lines of that same parcel. The boundary continues along the rear property line of site number .133, it crosses Third Street, follows the southwest boundary of site number .135, then travels northeastward along the southeast side of Jefferson Street to the east corner at the intersection of Henry Street and Jefferson Street. Then it crosses Jefferson Street, proceeds along the southwest and northwest property lines of site number .145, and continues along the northwest property line of site number .144. It then turns southeastward and travels 100 feet along the northeast property line of site number .144, then follows the rear property lines of site numbers .143 and .142 and then crosses Second Street. From then it proceeds northwestward to the east corner at the intersection of Second and Madison Streets, then it travels northeastward to the south corner at the junction of Madison and Williams Streets. The boundary then turns southeastward and travels along the southwest side of Williams Street to a point 104 feet southeast of Jefferson Street, then it crosses Williams Street, follows the northwest and northeast property lines of site number .118, and proceeds southwestward 115 feet along the southeast property line of that same parcel. From that point it crosses Adams Street, proceeds 108 feet along the northeastern property line of site number .80, and then it travels northeastward along the rear property lines of site numbers .79, .78 and .77. After crossing Front Street the boundary proceeds northwestward along the southwest property line of site number .76 and then continues on the northwest property line and on the 136.4 foot northeast property line of that same parcel. From there it travels southeastward along the northeast property line of site number .75, then it crosses Washington Street and follows the northeast property line of site number .74 to the rear property line of site number .20. From that point it runs northeastward in a straight line to a point on the northeast property line of site number .1 that is midway between Washington and Clinton Streets. The boundary then proceeds southeast along the northeast property line of site number .1 to the point of origin.

The boundary of the Delaware City Historic District is shown as the bold black line on the accompanying map entitled "Sketch Map, Delaware City Historic District," drawn at a scale of 300 feet to the inch. The enclosed area comprises approximately 68 acres.