

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number S-162

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8. S-162:

Property Name: CARLISLE HOUSE

Location & Verbal Boundary Description:

The Carlisle House is located at 205 S. E. Front Street on the north side. It has an L-shaped lot fronting on S. E. Front Street, with adjoining property lines at Franklin Street and on Cedar Alley. Its other sides are bounded by occupied house lots. Its two long sides are 200 feet and 162.25 feet, with the leg being 99 feet long and 47.8 feet wide. It occupies .462 acres.

Owner: Agnes S. Collins, 66 Pine Beach Road, Henlopen Acres, DE (obtained 12/9/81 at Sussex County Board of Assessments).

Property Description:

The Carlisle House is a 2-story, 5-bay, center-hall-plan house that was built c. 1794 by David West, a ship's carpenter. It has a gable roof with dormers and six-over-six sash windows. It has interior gable end chimneys with corbelled tops. The exposed stacks have been whitewashed and the right stack has the date 1794 painted on it. The roof's box cornice has a partial return. There are wooden corner pilasters with Doric shadow capitals. The upper openings are six-over-six sash windows, while the lower openings are six-over-one sash windows with a center door having sidelights and a transom. There is a pent roof across the front with a pedimented entrance hood supported by paired Doric columns. There are two side wings, one a glassed conservatory and the other a modern garage. There is a 2-story rear wing with a 2-story flat-roofed addition, a 1-story flat roof addition, and side porches. The whole is covered with aluminum siding.

Historical Background:

The house was built in 1794 by a ship's carpenter named David West. In 1859, the house, as well as numerous other properties in south Milford, was owned by M. R. Carlisle, a Milford shipbuilder. The land behind the house and fronting on the river is listed in the nineteenth century as "shipyards".

Property Significance:

The Carlisle House is one of the last surviving artifacts from a once prosperous shipbuilding industry that helped to develop Milford and the surrounding area. The framing techniques and interior joinery are reminiscent of shipbuilding technology and were built by ship carpenters, most likely employed at the Carlisle shipyards located behind the house along the Mispillion River. The Carlisle family were major shipbuilders and responsible for much of the new construction of boats, as well as repair and maintenance functions. The House is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C and Criterion B for its association with the Carlisle family.

