

PH0697699

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED FEB 22 1979  
APR 24 1979  
DATE ENTERED

**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

*Brown, Dr. John A., House*  
The "Anchorage"

AND/OR COMMON

Dr. John A. Brown House (Preferred)

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

4 7th Avenue

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Wilmington

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

One

STATE

Delaware

CODE

10

COUNTY

New Castle

CODE

002-3

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Corbett ✓

STREET & NUMBER

4 7th Avenue

Delaware

CITY, TOWN

Wilmington

STATE

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Public Building

STREET & NUMBER

Rodney Square

CITY, TOWN

Wilmington

STATE  
Delaware

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Delaware Cultural Resource Survey; N-4046

DATE

1978

\_\_\_ FEDERAL  STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Hall of Records

CITY, TOWN

Dover

STATE  
Delaware

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

## CHECK ONE

## CHECK ONE

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The "Anchorage" is situated south of the junction of present-day Broom Street and Maryland Avenue just within the southwest limits of the City of Wilmington and on the southern slope of a hill providing a panoramic view of the southern portion of the city and the adjacent meanders of the Christiana River. The mansion house and several outbuildings once formed the nucleus of a 100-acre farm bounded on the Christiana/Wilmington Turnpike in southern Christiana Hundred of New Castle County. Originally a semi-rural agricultural environment almost a mile from mid-nineteenth-century Wilmington, by the 1880's the "Anchorage" lands were annexed in the wake of the city's rapid post-Civil War industrial, commercial, and residential expansion. The present property contains the mansion house, vigorously shaded yard, walkways, outbuildings and a vegetable garden on about one acre of land in a section of early- to mid-twentieth-century single and double residences and row housing.

On both interior and exterior, the "Anchorage" exhibits three distinct periods of construction. The principal core is a substantial two-and-one-half-story, three-bay, side-hall plan, quarried granite dwelling with late federal detailing, which combines with archival evidence to suggest an 1820's construction date. Later in the century, a subsequent owner attempted to make the house more fashionable by adding two square multiple-story brick Italian Villa towers to the north gable end. At this time, the exterior of the stone core received a coating of stucco and a columned porch was added to the facade. Interior changes accompanying the mid-nineteenth-century modernization were minimal; two first floor federal mantels were replaced by ones of marble. In the second quarter of the twentieth century, the father of the present owner enclosed the porch in the colonial Revival manner. He also installed non-structural partition walls, dividing several large rooms within the stone core to better accommodate a growing family. These partitions were purposefully built in such a manner as to leave unharmed the original architectural fabric and to facilitate removal at some future date.

The original core of the "Anchorage" is constructed of quarried granite and the walls are approximately two feet thick throughout. The house is built according to the two-room-deep, side-hall plan. It is two-and-one-half-stories high, with two gable-roofed dormers symmetrically located on both front and rear slopes of the gable roof, which features a flattened deck in place of the customary ridge and a box cornice with bed molding. Currently, the roof is covered with grey brick pattern composition shingling. This house, for the plan, is unusually deep from front to rear, which gives the building a squat appearance when viewed from the south. On the south gable end are two interior end chimneys, which are of exposed common bond brick linked by a low brick parapet wall. A part of the internal structural support of the house is comprised of a load-bearing wall that divides the front half of the house from the rear and runs from the cellar to the attic flooring. At the level of each story on the southern gable end are pairs of six-over-six pane sash windows that flank this brick partition wall. The front rooms are also lit by windows set in this wall. All of the windows of this part of the house are framed by heavy pegged mortise and tenon lintels, jambs and sills. Most wooden detailing is painted white and the sashes and muntins are painted green. All first story windows have white solid panel Victorian shutters, and those on the second story have green louvered shutters.

# 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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Local History
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Unknown

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The "Anchorage" is significant to the architectural history of the Wilmington area as a well preserved late-federal stone mansion house. In plan, scale and detailing, the original core of the "Anchorage" is typical of the residences built by prosperous Delaware families in the first decades of the nineteenth century. Archival and architectural evidences suggest that the core of the house was built between 1819 and 1827 for Jeremiah Woolston, a prominent Wilmington banker. It is built of quarried Brandywine granite, a material used extensively throughout the nineteenth century in northern New Castle County and adjacent Chester County, Pennsylvania for residential and industrial construction.

Several decades after Woolston built this house, a subsequent owner, probably Dr. John A. Brown, added to it two brick Italian Villa towers and replaced some federal interior detailing. It is the unusual juxtaposition of the radically dissimilar federal and Italianate forms that gives the "Anchorage" outstanding architectural significance. This house clearly documents an unusual instance of the common Victorian enthusiasm for altering earlier, stylistically outmoded buildings in order to both enlarge and modernize them. In Delaware, the usual Victorian modifications of an existing building involved window enlargements or the addition of assorted turned or pierced decorative elements and perhaps a cross gable or two. The modernization of the "Anchorage", guided by then current, fashionable, mid-nineteenth century architectural thought, involved substantial new construction which, at the same time, left the federal character of the original building largely intact.

The "Anchorage" is additionally significant as the residence of several successive families that played prominent and varied roles in the development of nineteenth-century Wilmington. It was built by Jeremiah Woolston, a founder and later director of the National Bank of Wilmington and Brandywine. In addition to his role in the financial affairs of the Wilmington Community, Woolston was an incorporator of the Wilmington Spring Water Company which, early in the nineteenth century, constructed and operated a fountain serving the entire city. In 1810 the Wilmington Borough Council purchased the entire operation for \$10,000 and established the city's first water department.

In 1835, Woolston sold his house and its associated 100 acres to Captain John Gallagher of the United States Navy. Gallagher, a Marylander, began his long naval career during the War of 1812 as a lieutenant on the U.S. frigate "United States" under the command of Captain Stephan Decatur. Gallagher participated in the famous naval engagement in which the "United States" resoundingly defeated the British frigate "Macedonian" in the Atlantic Ocean west of the Canary Isles

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Beers, D.G. Atlas of the State of Delaware. Philadelphia, Pomeroy & Beers, 1868.  
 Scharf, J. Thomas History of Delaware: 1609-1883. Reprint Ed., Port Wash, N.Y. Kenikat Press, 1972.  
 New Castle County Deed Book  
 Rea, Samuel and Jacob Price. Map of New Castle County, Del. Philadelphia, Smith and Wistar, 1849.  
 Baist, G. Wm. Atlas of N.C. County, Philadelphia, 1893.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre

QUADRANGLE NAME Wilmington South

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 450980 4398270  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B           
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C         

D         

E         

F         

G         

H         

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property is bounded on the east by 7th Avenue, on the south by an extension of the centerline of Anchorage Street, on the west by 8th Avenue, and on the north by an irregular line approx. 100 ft. south of and parallel to Maryland Avenue.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Dean E. Nelson, Historian

December, 1978

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

Hall of Records

(302) 678-5314

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Dover

Delaware

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE   

LOCAL X

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.

*Revised*

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Deane E. Nelson*

TITLE Acting Director/Deputy State Historic Preservation

DATE 2/13/79

Officer

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 4.24.79

ATTEST: *William Lebovich*

DATE 4/24/79

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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On the front of the original core is a full facade classical porch on a grey-painted brick foundation, added in the mid-nineteenth century. The low hipped porch roof, now covered by red composition roll sheathing, is supported by six fluted wooden columns. When the porch was enclosed in the 1930's, the spaces between these columns were fitted with large triple windows resting on raised panel wainscoting, and surmounted by elongated seven-pane fanlights. A set of wide concrete steps leads to the porch.

On the rear of the stone core, situated at the end of the hallway, is the brick kitchen wing. As originally constructed, it was a shed-roofed, single-story-and-attic, three-bay wing with six-over-six sash windows. An additional bay was later added on the west gable end of this kitchen wing, with lancet arched windows and conforming shutters. The exterior roof is formed by a standing seam tin roof painted primer red.

Above the juncture of the kitchen wing with the side-hall plan stone core is a shed-roofed, weatherboard frame room which now houses a small bathroom - again, with a lancet sashed window. The upper panel of the shutters for this window are louvered.

On the north gable end of the stone core are positioned two square multiple-story brick Italian Villa towers. The largest tower is aligned squarely with the north/south axis of the stone core and is four stories tall, of common bond construction. It is neither painted nor stuccoed. This tower is covered by a low hip roof with projecting eaves that cover large elaborate wooden scrollwork brackets. Each story is progressively shorter. The north wall of this tower, opposite the original stone core, contains an interior end chimney. On the first floor of the east side of this tower is a double four-over-four pane sash, round-headed window under a rounded wooden lintel. Each window on the remaining three stories are single four-over-four pane sashes that decrease in height with each successive story. At the second story window there is a small balcony with an ornate cast-iron foliated railing. This pattern of fenestration is repeated on the opposing wall. The windows are shutterless.

Positioned on the north gable end at the junction of the kitchen wing and stone core is a smaller, three-story, square tower with a low hipped roof with bracketless projecting eaves. On the second and third stories are arrow-loop windows with correspondingly abbreviated wooden lintels and sills. There is a single small room at each story of this tower.

The front entranceway is located on the right of the stone core. There is a marble stoop and the door has six-raised panels with grained painting. The doorway recess is decorated with partially-reeded flush panels and a deeply-grooved Victorian architrave with bulls-eye corner blocks surmounted by a single-paned transom. This doorway opens into the large hallway which runs the depth of the house. The ceilings

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on the first floor are almost twelve feet high. The interior walls throughout the house are of plaster over stone, brick or lath, and are variously painted or wall-papered. To the left of the hallway are two doors which each open into what were originally the large front and rear rooms of the first floor. During the 1930's, each of these rooms was divided into two smaller rooms by the addition of a non-structural wallboard-over-stud partition, installed in such a manner as to preserve the original fabric of the room. The partitions bisect the mantels and chimney breasts of each room, but the wallboard is cut away to accommodate without injury the marble mantels still in place. These mantels are of King of Prussia marble, which is characterized by white and dark-grey streaks. The mantels have a plain cornice and entablature with engaged Tuscan columns. A panel of similar marble closes the fireplace opening and features a round-headed foliated tracery metal grill. It is reasonable to assume that these marble mantels were installed with the addition of the Italian Villa towers in the mid-nineteenth century. The chimney breast and flanks are of plaster and wooden roll-molding forms a heavy bead at their juncture. It is possible that in the process of replacing the wooden Federal mantels on the first floor, other Federal detailing was removed as well. The two-foot thickness of the stone walls is evident in the curved window reveals.

The arched doorways to these first floor rooms were also reduced in size to accommodate single doors to conserve heat and provide additional privacy. On the right side of the hallway is a ceiling-high, elliptical arched doorway with heavy Victorian double doors, which open into a large parlor in the first floor of the large brick Italian Villa tower. This parlor also has a handsome King of Prussia marble mantel, tall ceilings, and two tiers of solid-panel Victorian interior shutters at each window.

At the far end of the hallway is an open-string, scroll-bracketed staircase with two molded square balusters per tread, and turned newels and draped handrail of dark hardwood. The risers are painted white and the treads brown. Under and to the left of the staircase is a set of glazed double doors, which open directly into the kitchen wing. Beneath the staircase is a set of steps which lead to the cellar.

The foundation is of stone and the cellar is now floored in concrete. The floor joists are covered with lath and plaster and there are several wrought iron hooks anchored in the joists. Placed over the easternmost fireplace supporting arch is a very fine wooden Federal mantelpiece, which formerly framed the second story rear bedroom fireplace. On the north cellar wall is an entrance to the cellar of the large brick tower, which has been finished as a game room and bar.

The second floor of the stone core is now used as an apartment and two chambers have been partitioned like the rooms on the first floor. The front chamber retains its

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original elaborate Federal mantel and chimney closets with raised panel doors. The mantel features handsome punch and gouge work, reeded pilasters and an oval sunburst panel centered on the frieze. As mentioned previously, the original mantel from the rear bedroom fireplace was removed and installed over a fireplace supporting arch in the cellar. A smaller, modern, Federal-style mantel is now in place. The doorways to these rooms are framed by restrained crossetted architraves.

A third bedroom is situated at the eastern end of the second story stair hall. The doors throughout the house are a mixture of raised, six-panel doors dating to the initial construction of the house and Victorian doors with applied mouldings which are probably associated with the addition of the towers and marble mantels. All are mounted on butt hinges and feature mid-Victorian cast-iron box locks with ceramic or glass knobs.

Most of the attic is finished with wallboard. The framing members, functioning both as collars for the roof system and as principal support for the flat roof deck, are half-lapped and nailed into the rafters. The underside of an old, if not original, riven and finished shake roof is visible in part of the attic. A set of small wooden steps lead to a hatchway which gives access to the roof deck.

To the rear of the residence is a brick, one-story gable end facade outbuilding, which has served various utilitarian purposes over the years. A brick walkway, bridged by a grape arbor, leads from the asphalt-paved driveway to this building.

Also on the property is an important mid-nineteenth-century carriage house with Gothic detailing and unusual construction. It is two stories high with a wooden shingled gable roof with exposed rafter ends topped by a hipped roof louvered cupola. The building is framed with heavy pegged mortise and tenon braced timbers. Nailed over this framing is a layer of heavy, horizontal planking with exterior walls formed by vertical board and batten siding. The second story has a pair of lancet arched windows with conforming vertical board shutters mounted on heavy strap hinges. The gable end has a decorative sawn bargeboard. Appended to the west of the carriage house is a low, two-bay shed-roofed wing. The light grey coat of paint on the carriage house is much weathered.

Immediately east of the carriage house is a small, two-story, two-bay, flat-roofed, green composition shingled frame house built during the first quarter of this century.

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on October 25, 1812. In 1835, Gallagher was promoted to captain and in the same year he purchased the Woolston house and lands naming it the "Anchorage" in nautical allusion to his retirement. Captain Gallaher died intestate at age 58 and in 1842 the property was deeded jointly to his widow and his son, Dr. Charles R. Gallagher.

In 1848 Dr. John A. Brown purchased the "Anchorage" and the associated 100 acre farm. Undoubtedly the most flamboyant of persons to occupy the mansion house, Dr. Brown was an energetic physician, educator, political activist, agriculturist and purveyor of the "celebrated 1776 Root Beer." Dr. Brown circulated an advertising card in Wilmington which bore a perhaps overstated autobiographical summary of his achievements:

Dr. J. A. Brown, native of Massachusetts and founder of the Tremont and Massachusetts Infirmaries in Boston, afterwards the Rhode Island Infirmary in Providence, and ten years extensive practice in that state: the originator of the celebrated 1776 Root Beer, which, under this supervision, was extensively manufactured in Providence, Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and other small villages; one of the principal actors in the Rhode Island Revolution, being owner of a Printing Office, Proprietor and Editor of the paper called the "New Age" which had much to do with giving to that State a constitution, in place of the old, worn out Charter from the English King, Charles the Second.

In 1849 I located near Wilmington, Delaware as an Agriculturalist as I still am. Though the city has now occupied some twenty acres of my place, I yet have some fifty acres left...

Dr. Brown owned the "Anchorage" for a period of seven years. Though there is no conclusive evidence that the "Anchorage" was victorianized during Brown's ownership, Dr. Brown did have a large family and it is reasonable to assume, given his cosmopolitan flair, that he chose to use the incongruous Italian Villa mode in order to enlarge the building to better suit his family's special needs. Despite the enlargement, it seems the "Anchorage" was inadequate for all of Brown's enterprises. In 1856 he sold the house and eight acres to Levi G. Clark. In 1860, on acreage adjacent to the "Anchorage", Dr. Brown built a fifty room mansion named "The Living Home" which he operated as a private institution for the care of the feeble, sick and insane. "The Living home" has since been demolished.

Brown was also deeply committed to education and took it upon himself to secure through old acquaintances in Massachusetts a first rate teacher for the nearby Richardson Schoolhouse. During the summer and in his spare time the teacher worked on Dr. Brown's farm and transported milk, root beer and farm produce to Wilmington for sale. At present, little is known of Brown's root beer manufacturing operation at the "Anchorage."



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The transition of the Brown property from agricultural to urban residential use is an important reminder of Wilmington's rapid post-Civil War industrial, commercial and residential expansion. Originally almost a mile from mid-nineteenth-century Wilmington, by the 1880's the property was incorporated within the expanded city limits. Prior to his death, Dr. Brown had built and sold more than a dozen frame houses and had opened up for residential development 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th Avenues. Today, the section of Wilmington built upon Brown's former 100 acre farm is known as "Browntown" and nearby "Anchorage" and "Brown" Streets commemorate his leading role in the urbanization of the area.

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- Weslager, Clinton A. The Richardson's of Delaware, Wilmington: Knebels Press, 1957.
- "Delawarean", January 17, 1863, Newspaper Advertisement.
- "Delaware Gazette" August 11, 1848, Newspaper Advertisement.

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FILE N-4046 TITLE Sketch Map  
SCALE 1" = 100' DATE 11/78 BY JCA

