

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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JUN 3 1993

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL
REGISTER

1. Name of Property

historic name Tatnall, Joseph, House

other names/site number "Oliver Evans House;" N-12807

2. Location

street & number west side of South James Street, near Christiana Creek
(on CIBA-GEIGY plant property) not for publication n/a
city or town Newport, Christiana Hundred vicinity n/a
state Delaware code DE county New Castle code 003
zip code 19804

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Samuel R. [Signature] State Historic Preservation Officer 6/1/93
Signature of certifying official Date

Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, Hall of Records, P.O. Box 1401, Dover, DE 19903
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====

4. National Park Service Certification

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I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 ___ See continuation sheet.
___ determined eligible for the
 National Register
 ___ See continuation sheet.
___ determined not eligible for the
 National Register
___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain): _____

Patricia Andrews

7/14/93

Signature of Keeper

Date
of Action

=====

5. Classification

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Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
___ public-local
___ public-State
___ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> buildings
<u> </u>	<u> 0 </u> sites
<u> </u>	<u> 0 </u> structures
<u> </u>	<u> 0 </u> objects
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) Historic & Architectural Resources of Newport, DE

=====
6. Function or Use
=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>DOMESTIC</u>	Sub: <u>Single Dwelling</u>
<u>INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/ EXTRACTION</u>	<u>Manufacturing facility</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/ EXTRACTION</u>	Sub: <u>Manufacturing facility</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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7. Description
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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER; double-cell plan
COLONIAL; Georgian

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE
roof STONE; Slate
walls BRICK
STUCCO
other WOOD

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance
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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
INDUSTRY

Period of Significance ca. 1750-1929

Significant Dates ca. 1750; ca. 1780; 1915

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form
Tatnall, Joseph, House
New Castle County, Delaware
Historic and Architectural Resources of Newport, Delaware

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreeage of Property less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	447720	4395620	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By

=====

name/title Peter E. Kurtze, Architectural Historian

organization _____ date April 30, 1992

street & number 109 Brandon Road telephone (410) 296-7538

city or town Baltimore state MD zip code 21212

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Tatnall, Joseph, House
name of property
New Castle County, Delaware
county and State
Historic and Architectural
Resources of Newport, Delaware
name of multiple property listing

=====

Description:

The so-called "Oliver Evans House" is five bays wide, two rooms deep, 2½ stories in height with a gambrel roof. It stands near the north bank of the Christiana Creek; the principal facade faces south, toward the creek.

The building was constructed in three stages: the two easternmost bays were built first, probably ca. 1750; later in the 18th century, the building was expanded an additional three bays to the west, resulting in a symmetrical, five bay facade composition. The third period of construction occurred in the early 20th century, when the house was rehabilitated to serve as the administrative offices of the Krebs Pigment & Chemical Company. At that time, in addition to interior and exterior work reflecting then-current standards of restoration, a 1½-story gambrel-roofed ell was added to the north elevation, and small one-story wings were constructed against the east and west ends, comprising a sunporch and vault respectively.

The house is constructed of brick, which is partially coated with stucco. Exposed brick on the north elevation is laid in English bond; the masonry of the west end is laid in three-course common bond. A typical brick measures 8" long, 3-3/4" wide, and 1-7/8" high; mortar joints average 9/16" wide. Evidence of an early stucco coating survives on the north elevation. There is an ovolo-profile water table on the south facade.

The stucco-finished south facade is five bays wide, with a central entrance comprising an eight-panel door within a plain surround with a molded edge, surmounted by a four-pane transom. The door is hung on large interior strap hinges, and has an unusual T-shaped strap iron reinforcement at the lock rail. The two bays to the east of the entrance hold nine-over-nine light, single-hung sash in pegged frames with flattened-ogee profile backband. These frames are fitted with iron straps that can be fastened diagonally across the windows. An arched cellar window is located in the second bay from the east. The western bays hold twelve-over-twelve light, double-hung sash; window frame detailing is similar to that of the east windows, but lacks the diagonal bars. A pent roof spans the facade. On the second story, all five bays are marked by six-over-nine windows; the frame and sash of the two west windows appears to have been replaced, but the other three are early. The facade is capped by slate-covered gambrel roof, above boxed cornice with crown mold.

The stucco-covered east end is spanned by a one-story, hip-roofed brick sunporch installed ca. 1915. Four small irregularly spaced square windows appear

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 2

Tatnall, Joseph, House
name of property
New Castle County, Delaware
county and State
Historic and Architectural
Resources of Newport, Delaware
name of multiple property listing

=====

at second-story level; photographs indicate that prior to the ca. 1915 renovations this area was unfenestrated. The building cornice returns at the end; a string course marks the location of a former pent roof. A single small square window lights the attic; evidence on the interior shows that formerly there were two rectangular window openings in this area.

On the north elevation, the original brickwork is exposed, but retains traces of an early stucco rendering. Joist ends mark the location of a former pent spanning this elevation above the ground floor. Brickwork is laid in English bond. Windows are nine-over-nine sash on the ground floor, six-over-nine above; there is a smaller six-over-nine window at the stair landing, and an unusual blocked arched opening which apparently originally held a small window to light the cellar stairs. A ca. 1915 two-story, two-bay-wide, gambrel-roofed brick addition projects from the second bay from the east of the north elevation. The addition is designed to be compatible with the building, as reflected in its materials and Colonial Revival detailing.

On the west end, brick is laid in three-course common bond. A rectangular brick addition housing a vault with a false hipped roof was added across this wall in the ca. 1915 period. The second story level is unfenestrated; two six-over-three single-hung sash light the attic, above a string course.

The two easternmost bays represent the first period of construction, ca. 1750. At this stage, the building had attained its present 2½-story height and gambrel roof form. The first floor was organized according to the traditional "double-cell" or "Quaker" plan, one room wide and two rooms deep, with back-to-back corner fireplaces sharing a common flue which rose against the interior of the west wall. This plan type occurs in the lower Delaware Valley in the latter half of the eighteenth century; spatially, it may be characterized as a relatively rare variant of the hall-and-parlor type, with two rooms placed one behind the other rather than side by side. In this section of the house, original trim has been removed or obscured behind modern paneling. The essential elements defining the double-cell plan remain evident.

In a second building campaign late in the 18th century, this original two-room structure was expanded by three additional facade bays, reflecting a stair passage running the full depth of the house against the former west exterior wall, with two more rooms located to the west of the passage. This pattern of expansion is relatively common in the region. Its result was to bring the house into conformance with the then-fashionable five-bay, symmetrical "Georgian" facade and associated four-room central passage plan. Surviving evidence of an early stucco

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 3

Tatnall, Joseph, House
name of property
New Castle County, Delaware
county and State
Historic and Architectural
Resources of Newport, Delaware
name of multiple property listing

coating suggests that this treatment may have been applied at the time of expansion, to unify the two sections of the house. The Period 2 section retains a considerable amount of early interior detailing, including architrave, chair rail and baseboard trim, an open-string stair with turned balusters and scrolled step-ends, and an elaborate paneled hearth wall in the southwest parlor comprising a crossetted fireplace surround and overmantel flanked by arched cupboards with raised-panel doors and butterfly shelves. The parlor also has paneled wainscoting and a molded cornice.

Around 1915, the Krebs Pigment & Chemical Company carried out an extensive expansion of its facilities; in addition to constructing several new major industrial buildings, this program included the rehabilitation of the house to serve as administrative headquarters. Period photographs indicate that the rear addition and end wings were constructed at this time.

The fine paneled hearth wall and cupboards characterizing the parlor appears somewhat overscaled, and there are inconsistencies in the relationships among certain of its elements. In view of the restoration which the house underwent in the early 20th century, at which time incorporation of decorative elements from other buildings was a commonly accepted treatment, it was initially thought that this woodwork might have been re-fitted from another location. Examination of the methods of installation (as closely as possible without destructive investigation), however, presented no useful evidence to support this interpretation. Additionally, Mr. Horace Ingram recalled in an interview that his father, John Ingram, who worked as a finish carpenter with the Krebs Company, traveled to Philadelphia to select lumber and construction materials for the restoration of the house, but did not suggest that architectural elements from elsewhere were installed. It now appears that this woodwork may be substantially original (except for relatively minor repairs and replacements), and that its relative elaboration in comparison to other trim in the house reflects a characteristic observed by Herman in New Castle County houses of the period, in which "the focus of [decorative] attention was the hearth, and the decoration around the fireplaces was scaled to meet and occasionally exceed the general degree of ornamentation in the particular dwellings."¹

Following its acquisition of the property in 1929, the E. I. Du Pont de Nemours Company carried out additional work in the house. This included filling-

¹ Bernard L. Herman, Architecture and Rural Life in Central Delaware, 1700-1900. (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1987), p. 49.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 4

Tatnall, Joseph, House
name of property
New Castle County, Delaware
county and State
Historic and Architectural
Resources of Newport, Delaware
name of multiple property listing

=====

in the basement with concrete.

The various rehabilitation and restoration efforts have not significantly compromised the architectural integrity of the house. On the exterior, the two small wings constructed against the ends of the building, and the north ell, are subordinated to the early section of the house and do not obscure its historic form and massing. The interior retains considerable integrity of plan and finishes. Although some decorative detailing has been removed (although it has not been determined whether this occurred in the course of rehabilitation or at some previous point), particularly in the eastern section of the house, clear evidence of the original plan remains intact to express an important aspect of the building's architectural significance.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 1

Tatnall, Joseph, House
name of property
New Castle County, Delaware
county and State
Historic and Architectural
Resources of Newport, Delaware
name of multiple property listing

=====

Statement of Significance:

The "Oliver Evans House" is significant for its architecture, as an example of a type of building which characterized the Pennsylvania Piedmont region in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Its sequence of construction, beginning as a two-bay, two-room, "double-cell" plan dwelling which was more than doubled in size within a generation by the construction of a central passage and two additional rooms, exemplifies a pattern of expansion which reflects the influence of Georgian influenced design on the traditional architecture of the region in the later 18th century. The house derives additional significance from its association with the Krebs Pigment & Chemical Company, Newport's principal employer during the first quarter of the twentieth century, which rehabilitated the house to accommodate its administrative offices during an extensive expansion of its plant ca. 1915.

As originally constructed, ca. 1750, the 2½-story gambrel-roofed brick house stood two bays (one room) wide by two rooms deep, conforming to the "double-cell" or "Quaker" plan which defined a specific type of traditional dwelling in the Pennsylvania Piedmont region during the latter half of the 18th century. This building type is defined by a two-room plan, one behind the other, usually with back-to-back corner fireplaces. The distribution of the "double-cell" plan type is limited to the lower Delaware Valley, and examples of the type are relatively rare. Small houses of the period more commonly reflect the hall-and-parlor type, with two rooms placed in linear fashion. The original section of the "Oliver Evans House," comprising the two easternmost bays, thus represents an example of a relatively rare building type.

The expansion of the original house, which apparently took place within a quarter-century of its construction, also reflects a regionally significant architectural form. A central stair passage and two additional rooms were constructed, achieving the then-fashionable five-bay, symmetrical "Georgian" facade and associated four-room central passage plan. In this expansion, the builder installed sophisticated decorative detailing, including architrave, chair rail and baseboard trim, an open-string stair with turned balusters and scrolled step-ends, and an elaborate paneled hearth wall in the southwest parlor, to complement the statement of the plan and exterior. This transformation of a regionally-distinct building type into an expression of widespread popular taste during the last quarter of the 18th century has been observed in various contexts in the Mid-Atlantic region, and its occurrence is perhaps best documented in the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 2

Tatnall, Joseph, House
name of property
New Castle County, Delaware
county and State
Historic and Architectural
Resources of Newport, Delaware
name of multiple property listing

=====

Delaware Valley;² the "Oliver Evans House" presents an exceptionally clear example of this architectural trend, which some historians refer to as the "Georgian Revolution."

The ownership history of the building is unclear. By the early 20th century, the property occupied by the house had become absorbed in a large parcel which, according to an aerial photograph taken before 1926, included several early buildings in close proximity to one another (all but the resource under consideration have since been demolished, and industrial buildings constructed on their sites). It is difficult to determine how the present property boundaries correspond to the original town lots.³ In the 1750s, Joseph Latimer (1719-1897) owned an interest in a parcel of creekfront property which may have included the site of the house. Latimer was a Newport merchant and landowner who became President of the Delaware Convention and signed the ratification of the Constitution in 1787; he owned numerous parcels in and around Newport and in Pennsylvania, however, and his direct association with the subject building has not been confirmed. His residence during this period appears to have been located at the northeast corner of Market and James streets, where he also operated a store. At the time of Latimer's purchase of an interest, the creekfront lot already contained a wharf, of which Joseph Jones and William Sutton were proprietors; Jones and Sutton are credited with the construction of a storehouse and dwelling on the property. By the mid-19th century, the property had come into the possession of Joseph Tatnall, who lived in the brick house and operated a wharf and warehouse here. This association is borne out by historic maps. The 1868 Beers atlas identifies the house as the property of Tatnall & Richardson; Hopkins' atlas of 1881 indicates J. Tatnall as resident. (The historic name "Joseph Tatnall House" was selected to reflect the individual most reliably associated with the building in the historic period, but should not be construed as reflecting the builder or initial occupant.) In recent years, the building has come to be called the "Oliver Evans House," honoring the 18th century engineer and inventor who was a native of Newport, but there is no apparent historical justification for this attribution; local historians identify Evans' birthplace as a stone house at the southeast corner of Christian and James streets, which has

² see, for example, Henry Glassie, "Eighteenth-Century Cultural Process in Delaware Valley Folk Building," Winterthur Portfolio, Vol. 7 (1972), pp. 29-57; see also Herman, op cit.

³ The information in the following paragraph is derived primarily from Ella Weldin Johnson, Story of Newport. (Wilmington, DE: Paragon Press, 1963).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 3

Tatnall, Joseph, House
name of property
New Castle County, Delaware
county and State
Historic and Architectural
Resources of Newport, Delaware
name of multiple property listing

=====

not survived.

The house substantially achieved its present appearance around 1915, when the Krebs Pigment & Chemical Company, owner of the property since 1901, carried out an extensive expansion of its facilities; in addition to constructing several new major industrial buildings, this program included the rehabilitation of the house to serve as administrative headquarters. Period photographs indicate that the rear addition and end wings were constructed at this time.

The Krebs Pigment & Chemical Company played a significant role in the economic development of the town of Newport in the early 20th century. In 1901, Danish immigrant Henrik J. Krebs acquired a parcel of creekfront farmland in the southwestern quadrant of the town and began erecting a plant for the production of lithopones, or white pigments. The factory was completed and placed into service in February 1902; an extensive expansion of the physical plant occurred in 1915-1916. On its twenty-fifth anniversary, the plant covered 7 acres and produced 150,000 pounds per day. Henrik J. Krebs died October 7, 1929, aged 82 years, and the plant was acquired by E. I. Du Pont de Nemours & Co.; lithopone remained its principal product until 1948, when a new facility to produce organic colors was constructed. In 1965, chromium dioxide for coating magnetic recording tape began to be produced, in addition to pigments; a new chromium dioxide plant was added in 1978. Du Pont retained the chromium dioxide plant when the pigment facility was sold to CIBA-GEIGY in 1984.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 1

Tatnall, Joseph, House
name of property
New Castle County, Delaware
county and State
Historic and Architectural
Resources of Newport, Delaware
name of multiple property listing

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Major Bibliographical References:

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

Glassie, Henry, "Eighteenth-Century Cultural Process in Delaware Valley Folk Building," Winterthur Portfolio, Vol. 7 (1972), pp. 27-57.

Herman, Bernard L. Architecture and Rural Life in Central Delaware, 1700-1900. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1987.

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

Johnson, Ella Weldin. Story of Newport: a Square Little Town in the State of Delaware. Wilmington, DE: Paragon Press, 1963.

Scharf, J. Thomas. History of the State of Delaware, 1609-1888. 2 Vols. Philadelphia: L. J. Richards & Co., 1888.

Interview with Horace and Sarah Ingram, Newport, DE, April 24, 1992.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 1

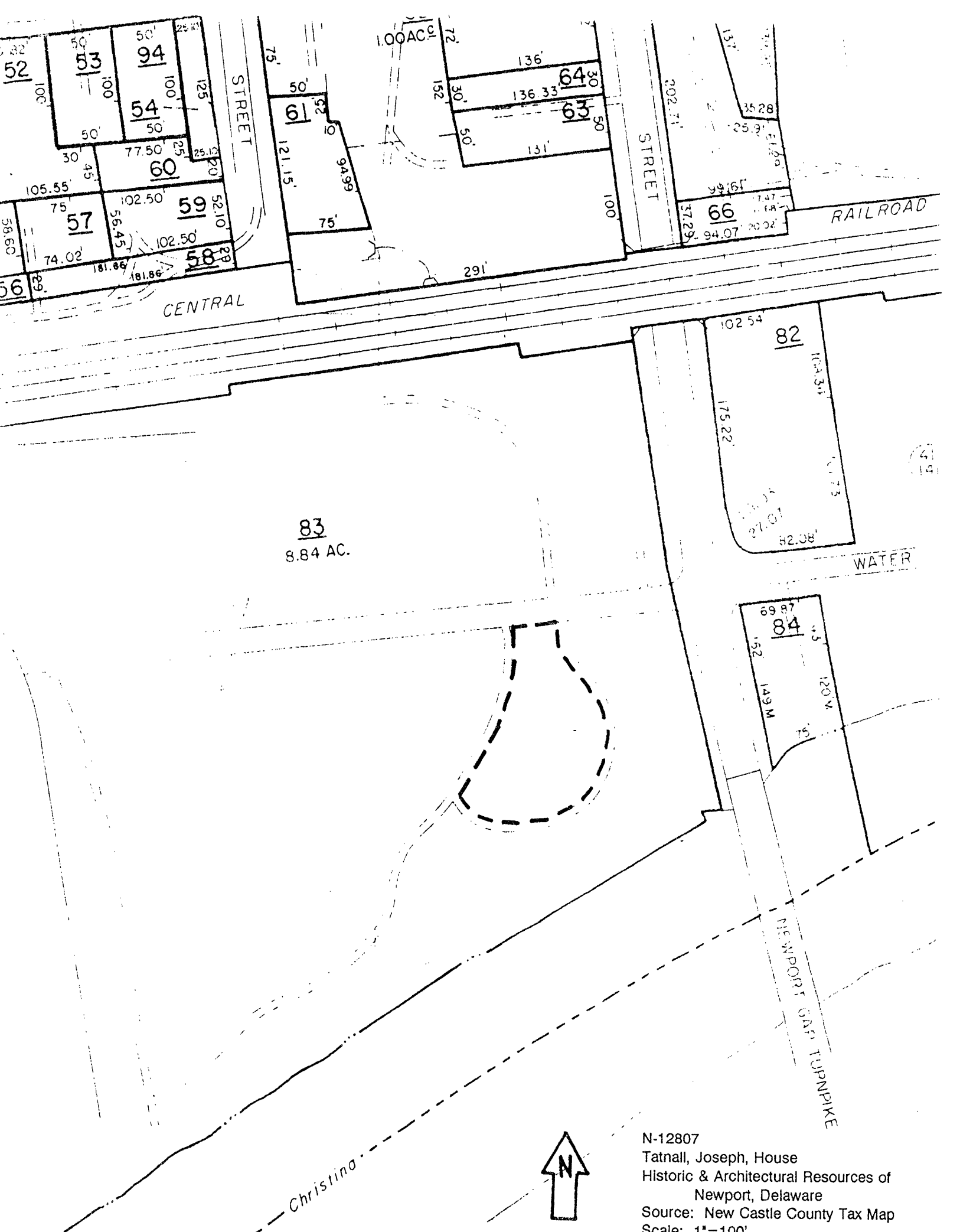
Tatnall, Joseph, House
name of property
New Castle County, Delaware
county and State
Historic and Architectural
Resources of Newport, Delaware
name of multiple property listing

=====

Geographical Data:

Verbal boundary description: The nominated property is defined as an oval measuring approximately 130' by 100', corresponding to the inner edge of a paved driveway which encircles the house, and indicated by the broken line on the sketch map which accompanies this nomination. This represents part of a larger parcel indicated as 20-003.00-083 on the Property Map of New Castle County, Delaware.

Boundary justification: The boundaries described above were selected to enclose the remnant of the historic setting associated with the building. Immediately outside these boundaries, the surrounding area is densely developed with large-scale industrial structures, primarily of mid-20th century date, so that the character of the surroundings is no longer consistent with that which existed during the period of significance.



CENTRAL

STREET

STREET

RAILROAD

WATER

NEWPORT CAR TURNPIKE

83
8.84 AC.

82

84



N-12807
Tatnall, Joseph, House
Historic & Architectural Resources of
Newport, Delaware
Source: New Castle County Tax Map
Scale: 1"=100'

Christina