

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received AUG 7 1985
date entered SEP 5 1985

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

1. Name

historic Perry - Shockley House

and/or common The Shockley House

2. Location

street & number 219 Washington Street not for publication

city, town Millsboro vicinity of

state Delaware code 10 county Sussex code 005

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. & Mrs. Wilbur S. Shockley

street & number 219 Washington Street

city, town Millsboro vicinity of state Delaware

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Sussex County Courthouse

street & number The Circle

city, town Georgetown state Delaware

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title DE Cultural Resource Survey S-5740 has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1983 federal state county local

depository for survey records DE Bureau of Archaeology And Historic Preservation

city, town Dover state DE

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 type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Perry-Shockley House is situated on a one-acre lot on Washington Street in the south central Sussex County, Delaware town of Millsboro. It is an irregularly-shaped Queen Anne-style house of two-and-a-half stories and wood-frame construction set on a brick foundation. The front section of the house is based on a modified "T" plan with hip roof and three gables with two smaller dormers projecting from the south and east front corners of the hip roof. An original gable-roofed, two-story rear wing extends from the back of the house. The main front section of the house is surrounded on three sides by a one-story porch topped by a painted seamed copper roof, with a pediment over the entry bay. At the rear of the house are a wood frame shed and small poultry house with a 1930's wood-frame hip-roofed garage further back on the site of the original barn.

The house is sided with horizontal cedar or cypress weatherboarding with patterned cedar shingles in the gable ends. All windows in the house are original two-over-one double hung sashes with simple board trim with simply-moulded drip caps, except for the small window in the east front dormer which is semi-circular with twenty-one small rectangular or semi-circular panes. The roof has overhanging eaves with exposed, decoratively sawn rafter ends with small, sawn brackets at the bases of the exposed rafters in the gables. The gables originally had decorative trusswork (as may be seen in the accompanying early photo) but this has since been removed, as has original decorative cresting across the top of the hipped roof. The roof originally was covered with three layers of wood shingles, which were covered by asphalt shingles in the early 1950's. It is pierced by three chimneys, one of which extends through a small, windowless dormer in the north side of the house. Another extends from the rear of the hipped roof while the third extends from the rear of the rear wing. All have brick corbelled tops. It is evident from the early view of the house that the wood building to the rear of the house, which originally housed the carbide gas plant in one section and a smoke house in the other, also once had a brick chimney which has since been removed. The sheet copper roof of the front porch has an ornately moulded box cornice supported by paired Doric columns (with three columns at each corner) atop brick pedestals. Original wooden front and side steps were later replaced by cement. All porch railings are intact as are original screen doors for the front door and for the screened portion of the porch running along the south side of the house. The pediment in the porch roof over the entry has a sawn sunburst decoration set into it. A smaller second-floor sleeping porch on the rear wing has a shed roof with overhanging eaves and decorated rafter ends. The gable which extends from the main block of the house on the south

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 type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1901

Builder/Architect John Perry

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Perry-Shockley House is eligible under Criterion "C" as an exceptionally good example of the late Queen Anne style as it was interpreted in southern Delaware towns. It is one of the best-preserved and least altered surviving examples of its style and type in the Town of Millsboro in central Sussex County, Delaware. The house was designed and built by its first owner, John Perry, a Wicomico County, Maryland native who came to Millsboro in 1900 to establish a lumber company in partnership with Charles Bell Houston, one of the town's most prominent businessmen. According to the recollections of several persons who knew him, Perry was a pains-taking perfectionist in most ways and his careful attention to detail was focused in the construction of the house. At the time of its construction "Houston-Perry & Co." had lumber holdings in North Carolina as was then common for southern Delaware lumber companies. Perry went to North Carolina and personally chose the heart pine lumber for the framing of the house, had it milled to his specifications and loaded on vessels. It was transported up the coast and brought into the Indian River and then up the river to Millsboro. Though such a use of the river had been common in the 19th century, this was one of the last-known examples of it. He served as contractor on the house, using his own carpenters and workmen from his lumber company and supervising every detail. As a result, the house possesses such unusual and unexpected details as an original triple thickness cypress-shingle roof - that is, all three layers were put on at the same time. The mother of the present owner had an asphalt shingle roof installed over the original roof in the early 1950's, not because the wood shingles had worn out, but because the outer layer had begun to curl and she thought this unsightly. The Perry-Shockley House also possessed various technological innovations such as the town's first use of "Baltimore Heaters", semi-circular coal-fired devices which fit into specially built fireplaces, and a communication system of bells from the kitchen to all bedrooms operated by wires and wet-cell batteries.

Despite powers of imagination which led him to conceive of one of the first plywood processes, Perry was a poor businessman and was forced to sell his home and business and move elsewhere in 1909. The house was purchased by Peter S. Shockley, father of the present owner, who continued Perry's interest in technological innovation. Shockley installed the town's indoor plumbing system and domestic windmill. Congressman Henry

9. Major Bibliographical References

Interview with owner, Wilbur S. Shockley, conducted in 1984.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1 acre

Quadrangle name Millsboro, Delaware

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	8	4	7	4	3	4	0	4	2	7	0	8	3	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated area is a rectangular lot of 108.9 feet wide along Washington St., Millsboro, Del., by 404.07 feet deep, totalling 44,003.2 sq. ft. (one acre, more or less). Front corner of lot (Pt. A on location map) is 280 feet south of corner of Monroe and Washington Streets.

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

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard B. Carter, Sussex County Preservation Planner

organization Sussex County Government date 11/84

street & number P.O. Box 589 telephone (302) 856-7701, Ext. 361

city or town Georgetown, state Delaware

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

John P. Khan

title Director, Division of Historical & Cultural Affairs

date 7/10/85

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

for Melissa Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 9/5/85

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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DESCRIPTION 7 2

side has a single-story bay window with paired windows on the first floor, with a small, hip-roofed one-story bay with a single south and a west window immediately behind it. The gable which extends on the north side of the house has a two-story triple-faced bay with a window in each face on each floor (except in the front on the first floor where a door gives access to the porch) All windows on the first floor in the front section of the house have wood-panelled shutters except for those in the screened porch area and in the bay windows.

The interior of the house has undergone almost no alterations structurally. In the front section are an entry hall with ornamental stairway and a parlor, with a dining room and den immediately behind in the area where the gables extend on the north and south sides. Behind this in the rear wing are a breakfast room, a large kitchen and a utility room separated from the dining room by a small back hall with back stairway to the second floor. The floors throughout the front section of the house are oak. Those in the parlor and dining room are laid in an unusual and finely executed octagonal design. Mouldings around doors and windows on both first and second floor are ornate with bullseye corners. An arched opening with turned latticework divides the entry hall from the den. The parlor and den fireplaces have ornate iron coal stoves with cast floral designs and glazed tile hearths. Those fireplaces and that in the dining room which is closed have ornate fireplace surrounds, mantels and mirrored overmantels with turned, sawn and carved decoration. The mantelpiece in the parlor is brown marble with carved decoration. The wide entry door has eight panels below a ground glass with four panels above, a large two-lite transom and a one-lite sidelight on one side with raised panelling beneath it.

On the second floor are four bedrooms, each with an opening for a coal stove with less ornate mantels. The small sleeping porch extends from the rear bedroom in the rear wing.

Original latticework shields between the front and back yards and a picket fence around one side of the property visible in the early photograph have been removed, as has the original barn and pony shed. With these exceptions, the house retains an extraordinary amount of its original integrity.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	8	2

A. Houston, who lived in an older home across the street, was so impressed by this system that he asked if Shockley would run a water line across the street and supply him with water as well. This was done and the arrangement continued until town water was installed in 1926. Shockley also had a partial cellar dug to house a coal furnace and installed a steam-heating system in the house. He replaced the Baltimore Heaters with the ornate coal-burning fireplaces now in the house. He also installed a carbide lighting system which utilized a small gas plant in a shed to the rear of the house, which was tied to the windmill by a pipe to supply the water needed for the process. The gas was piped to lighting fixtures throughout the house including lamps and ceiling fixtures. It didn't involve the older mantle type of burner which would have had to be lit with a match, but rather a battery-powered electrical ignition device which was operated in the case of lamps with a pull chain and in the case of ceiling fixtures by a push button in the wall. This system was in use until Shockley's death in 1917. His widow didn't feel entirely comfortable with it and went back to using coal oil fixtures until electricity was installed in the town in the late 1920's.

Partly because of its superior materials and workmanship and partly because of careful maintenance over the years, the Perry-Shockley House is in a remarkable state of preservation. Several of its original outbuildings have been taken down over the years as has the windmill. The original barn and a small pony stable were demolished in the 1930's to make way for a wood frame garage (the stable, oddly enough, housed a pony, a goat and a pet reindeer, which Perry kept for his sons). The house has undergone no structural alterations other than those carried out by Shockley in 1909 and the removal of some minor elements of trim from the roof and gables (See early photograph for view of the house as it appeared about 1915).

