

PH0001376

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

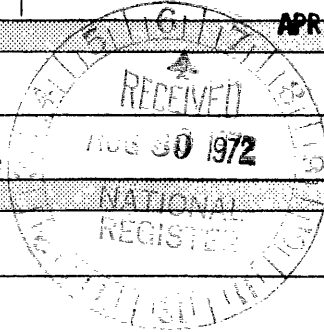
(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

|                       |            |
|-----------------------|------------|
| STATE:<br>Delaware    |            |
| COUNTY:<br>New Castle |            |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY      |            |
| ENTRY NUMBER          | DATE       |
|                       | APR 3 1973 |

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Lesley-Travers Mansion

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Deemer House, Travers House, Lesley House



**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
112 West 6th Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
New Castle

|                   |            |                       |             |
|-------------------|------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| STATE<br>Delaware | CODE<br>10 | COUNTY:<br>New Castle | CODE<br>003 |
|-------------------|------------|-----------------------|-------------|

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

| CATEGORY<br>(Check One)  | OWNERSHIP  |   | STATUS  | ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC  |  |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> District<br><input type="checkbox"/> Site<br><input type="checkbox"/> Object  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building<br><input type="checkbox"/> Structure   | <input type="checkbox"/> Public<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private<br><input type="checkbox"/> Both   | Public Acquisition:<br><input type="checkbox"/> In Process<br><input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied<br><input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied<br><input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress | Yes:<br><input type="checkbox"/> Restricted<br><input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)   |  |   |   |   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural<br><input type="checkbox"/> Commercial<br><input type="checkbox"/> Educational<br><input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> Government<br><input type="checkbox"/> Industrial<br><input type="checkbox"/> Military<br><input type="checkbox"/> Museum | <input type="checkbox"/> Park<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence<br><input type="checkbox"/> Religious<br><input type="checkbox"/> Scientific | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Comments   |  |

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Mrs. Major N. Travers, Jr.

STREET AND NUMBER:  
112 West 6th Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
New Castle

|                    |            |
|--------------------|------------|
| STATE:<br>Delaware | CODE<br>10 |
|--------------------|------------|

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Public Building

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Rodney Square

CITY OR TOWN:  
Wilmington

|                   |            |
|-------------------|------------|
| STATE<br>Delaware | CODE<br>10 |
|-------------------|------------|

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_

ENTRY NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: APR 3 1973

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7 DESCRIPTION

|           |                                    |   |                                |   |                                |                                    |
|-----------|------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| CONDITION | (Check One)                        |   |                                |   |                                |                                    |
|           | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good      | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair  | <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated             | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins | <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed |
|           | (Check One)                        |   |                                | (Check One)                                       |                                |                                    |
|           | <input type="checkbox"/> Altered   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered | <input type="checkbox"/> Moved | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site |                                |                                    |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The basic organizing element of the Lesley-Travers Mansion is a five-bay, center-entry structure, to which are joined several appendages and wings. From an entrance hall, access is possible to three major adjoining rooms and a hallway. The three-sectioned oak stairway provides communication to the second floor from the entry hall. The house is stacked room-on-room throughout, including the basement, which once served as servants' quarters.

The house was executed in a Gothic Revival vocabulary, with particular attention to the quality of detailing. The walls, laid in common bond brick with flush joints, were intended to receive paint. The door and window jambs are splayed, the entrance doors have arched heads, and the water table is beveled. The windows are framed by cast-iron sills and hood mouldings, and glazed with French cylinder glass. Sheathed in slate shingles, the roof is trimmed with tin gutters, ridges, and valleys. Interior details include plaster mouldings, ribs, bosses, and other ceiling ornamentation.

Construction details include stone foundation walls faced with brick, and brick interior walls throughout the structure. The structural members are of pine, with pine and oak surface paneling. The house is equipped with speaking tubes, servants' bells, and an alarm system. The central heating system was installed when the house was constructed, and the original gas lighting fixtures remain.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

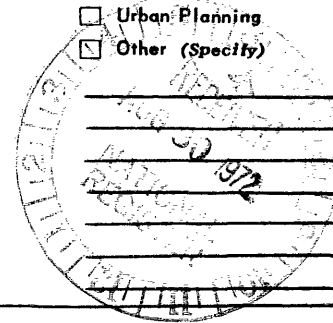
- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1855

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  |

- Urban Planning  
 Other (Specify)



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1855, Dr. Allen Voorhees Lesley signed articles of agreement with Thomas and James M. Dixon, Baltimore architects, to draw plans for his mansion in New Castle. During the same period when Rhenish castles were appearing on the banks of the Hudson River, Dr. Lesley applied the impressions gleaned from his extensive travels to the plans for his own home.

Dr. Lesley presented the Dixons with detailed specifications for the finishing work on the house. The builder was Augustin Van Kirk of Salem, New Jersey.

A native of Philadelphia, Dr. Lesley was born on Vine Street in June of 1822. The son and grandson of cabinetmakers, he deviated from the family trade to take a medical degree at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Lesley's reputation as a surgeon was well-known; at an early date, he applied microscopy and techniques of anesthesia to the treatment of disease.

The Lesley connection with Delaware apparently springs from the purchase of a farm near Delaware City by Allen Lesley's father, the secretary-treasurer of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal Company. Dr. Lesley lived on the farm for a time after graduating from the University of Pennsylvania, but moved to New Castle after his marriage in 1844. As a state senator and speaker of the senate, Dr. Lesley held Democratic pro-slavery views.

Between Dr. Lesley's death in 1881, and 1903, the house remained in the hands of a succession caretakers. Seldon S. Deemer, a New Castle steel manufacturer, purchased the house in 1903. He restored the house and added new plantings to the garden already full of foreign shrubs that had been brought to New Castle and successfully domesticated. However, Deemer sold much of the acreage surrounding the mansion. John Campbell, who bought the property in 1930 for a fraction of the price Deemer had paid, continued the sale of the land. The house itself deteriorated, acquiring the name "Campbell's Folly." In recent years the house has again been restored to accommodate both living quarters and the office of a weekly newspaper.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Papers in the possession of Mrs. Major N. Travers, Jr.  
 Biographical and Genealogical History of the State of Delaware. Chambersburg,  
 Pennsylvania: J.M. Runk & Company, 1899.  
 Eckman, Jeannette, ed. New Castle on the Delaware. New Castle: The New  
 Castle Historical Society, 1950.  
 "Deemer Mansion" Typescript. University of Delaware, Delaware Collection.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

| LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES<br>DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY |                         |                         | O<br>R | LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES<br>DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY<br>OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES |                         |  |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------|---|-------------------------|--|
| CORNER   | LATITUDE                | LONGITUDE               |        | LATITUDE  | LONGITUDE               |  |
|  | Degrees Minutes Seconds | Degrees Minutes Seconds |        | Degrees Minutes Seconds   | Degrees Minutes Seconds |  |
| NW   | 0 ' "                   | 0 ' "                   |        | 0 ' "   | 0 ' "                   |  |
| NE   | 0 ' "                   | 0 ' "                   |        | 39 39 39  | 75 34 12                |  |
| SE   | 0 ' "                   | 0 ' "                   |        |   |                         |  |
| SW   | 0 ' "                   | 0 ' "                   |        |   |                         |  |

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Three

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

| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|--------|------|--------|------|
|        |      |        |      |
|        |      |        |      |
|        |      |        |      |
|        |      |        |      |

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
Vincent Rogers and Rosemary Troy

ORGANIZATION: Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs DATE: 7/10/72

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Hall of Records

CITY OR TOWN: Dover STATE: Delaware CODE: 10

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name Dr. F. Berkeley Tompkins  
 Title Director, Div. of Historical and Cultural Affairs  
 Date 8-24-72

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

Robert W. Utley  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 4/3/73

ATTEST:  
[Signature]  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 3/23/73

SEE INSTRUCTIONS