

Huguenot House
Near Taylor's Bridge
New Castle County, Delaware

HABS No. Del- 77 ✓

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Delaware

Historic American Buildings Survey
Weston H. Blake, District Officer
909 West Street, Wilmington, Delaware

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HUGUENOT HOUSE
Near Taylor's Bridge, New Castle County, Delaware.

Owner: Mrs. Preston Lea.

Date of Erection: 1711, by Elias Naudain, 2nd.

Present Condition: Fair, somewhat neglected.

Number of Stories: Two and attic, cellar underneath and much lower story service wing on south end.

Materials of Construction: Generally brick, second story of service wing frame (modern). Formerly shingled, now covered with corrugated metal roofing.

Other Existing Records: "Early Architecture in Delaware", George Fletcher Bennett; "History of Delaware", p 1016, by J. Thomas Scharf.

Additional Data: This very early example of Delaware architecture is interesting both as to exterior and interior. The four bay facade with 12 over 12 sash downstairs and 9 over 9 on second story gives unusual wall space and the rather high string course gives emphasis to the main story and pleasing proportions. The simple hood over the front door offers shelter and stresses the entrance.

The plain, simple and primitive character of the interior paneling and trim as well as the rather heavy stair balusters, hand rail and newel post are in accord with the age of the home as is the rather heavy interior cornice.

Louisa R. Rogers

Approved

Victor A. Hale

District Officer

3/19/37

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
 HUGUENOT HOUSE (ELIAS NAUDAIN HOUSE)

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An Addendum to
 Huguenot House
 Taylors Bridge Vicinity, Delaware
 in HABS Catalog (1941)

Location: Taylors Bridge vicinity, Blackbird Hundred,
 New Castle County, Delaware

Present Owner: Mrs. Nowland, Wilmington, Delaware, a de-
 scendant of the original owner, Elias Naudain

Brief Statement
 of Significance: Built about 1711, the Huguenot House is one
 of the oldest surviving in Delaware, and
 preserves many characteristic features of
 the period.

HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

In 1711, Elias Naudain, a Huguenot colonist, built the house at Taylor's Bridge that is generally known as the "Huguenot House," though it seems likely that the first built part was started somewhat earlier. This house still belongs to Elias Naudain's descendants, though for a long time past it has been occupied by tenant-farmers.

The house faces north and has two full floors and a very low attic. It is built of brick, laid in Flemish bond, and the water-table is topped with moulded bricks. There was once a penthouse extending entirely across the north and south fronts of the house (the traces of which are plainly visible); there was, therefore, no belt course.

A line of division in the brickwork of the north front shows clearly and indicates the extent of the western or first built part of the house. This line occurs at the west end of the present hood above the house door.

This first structure consisted of two full floors in what is now the main block of the house, and a one-story-and-attic wing. Just what exactly was the original extent of the wing it is impossible to say, because of successive

alterations and enlargements that have obliterated many of the original lines. The brickwork in the north front of the wing shows where the original masonry has been pulled out irregularly at different times and replaced by later brickwork until all the western end is practically modern masonry.

Indoors, one treads on surer ground. Evidence, intact, shows that the plan was basically the "Resurrection Manor plan", with slight variations. The "great room" (extending the whole depth of the house from north to south) is lighted on the north by the one window on the ground-floor west of the door-hood. There is a corresponding window at the south end of the "great room."

On the west wall of the "great room" is the capacious fireplace; to the south of it a deep cupboard with paneled doors; to the north, the winding stair (closed off by a door) to the bedrooms above. Between the fireplace and the stair, a door, with one step down, opens into the "added" room. This "added" room (co-eval with the "great room") was doubtless a roomy kitchen. It probably had a separate stair to the attic overhead.

The whole west wall of the "great room" is encased in admirable paneling ---- cupboard with its doors, chimney-breast, over-door to "added" room, and door and doorway to stair ---- vigorous bolection mouldings adding their fitting accent to the composition. Around the whole room is a wooden cornice with excellent mouldings.

The extent of the last built part of the house appears to be all that is eastward of the present door-hood and the sharp line of division showing in the brick masonry. This eastern part of the house is finished with the same punctilious care as the slightly earlier western part. The "Huguenot House" is, beyond all question, one of the most significant of the early houses of Delaware.

ADDENDUM TO
HUGUENOT HOUSE
(Elias S. Naudain House)
Route 9
Taylor's Bridge Vicinity
New Castle County
Delaware

HABS No. DE-77

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
Northeast Region
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HUGUENOT HOUSE
(Elias S. Naudain House)

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This report is an addendum to a three page report previously transmitted to the Library of Congress.

Location: Route 9
Taylor's Bridge vicinity
New Castle County, Delaware.

Significance: The Huguenot House, located near Taylor's Bridge in Appoquinimink Hundred, is an extraordinary example of an early to mid-eighteenth-century Delaware plantation house. The house, which reflects three major periods of growth, contains exceptionally well-preserved interior finishes including paneled fireplace walls in all principal rooms. The house also exhibits a number of regionally identifiable vernacular building characteristics including evidence of pent eaves, collarless common rafter roof construction, and glazed header flemish bond.

Description: The Huguenot House consists of an approximately 22 by 60 foot, center-passage, two-story, brick core and a one-story, roughly 22 by 24 foot, brick gable-end kitchen. The core of the house is chiefly notable for its fully paneled fireplace walls and closed-string, turned baluster stair. The interiors date from the third quarter of the eighteenth century and reflect improvements made by either Andrew Naudain (who occupied the house from 1749 to 1769) or his son Elias Naudain II (who resided in the structure from 1769-1800). The interiors include fielded panel walls in the ground floor parlor and dining room as well as in the best second story chamber over the parlor. The interior of the chamber over the dining room is paneled with planed vertical board.

The Huguenot House reflects two major colonial building episodes and one major nineteenth-century remodeling. The earliest house comprised the southeast gable end and was 22 feet deep by 35 feet in length. Built of brick laid in glazed header flemish bond, the first period house was distinguished by a pent roof across its principle elevation and small circular attic windows. By the end of the colonial period the main block of the house had been enlarged substantially into its present day appearance. The Naudains extended the building 25 feet in length and converted the dwelling into a center-passage plantation house. The exterior brickwork repeated the use of glazed header flemish bond and a pent roof. The interior of the house appears to have been substantially remodeled at this time. Compass arched doors for dining room cupboards and the parlor partition were inserted and fielded paneling installed for the new dining room fireplace. Stylistic evidence suggests that these changes were most likely made by Andrew Naudain during his

HUGUENOT HOUSE (Elias S. Naudain House)
HABS No. DE-77 (Page 5)

1749-69 tenure, but it is possible the additions could have been undertaken by Elias Naudain II shortly after he inherited the property in 1769. The third period of change focused on the demolition and rebuilding of the kitchen wing in the second quarter of the nineteenth century and on the installation of late federal period chimney pieces in the parlor and parlor chamber.

History:

The Huguenot House was probably begun by Elias Naudain I who acquired the property from Johannis Jacquet in 1735. The property then descended to Elias's son Andrew who lived in the house from 1749-1769, and then to his son Elias Naudain II who occupied the dwelling until his death in 1800. The property passed out of the Naudain family in 1816 when William Corbit, a wealthy Quaker tanner and farmer, purchased the house and land. The buildings on the property were noted in 1827 when Daniel Corbit bought the property back from the estate: "a large two story Brick Dwelling house and Kitchen barn and other outbuildings and also a frame Dwelling house and Kitchen corn crib etc thereon erected." The 1827 barn survives in ruinous condition.

The architectural and documentary history of the Huguenot House has been explored at length by Johanna McBrien (1992). The house was first recorded by HABS in 1936 with subsequent information collected in 1941, 1960, and 1993. The Huguenot House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Sources:

Physical description based on field work including scaled field notes and photography undertaken by the Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering for the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office, January-May 1993.

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

Johanna McBrien, "Historic Structures Report: The Elias Naudain House, Appoquinimink Hundred, New Castle County, Delaware," manuscript report (1992), Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering research files.

Historian:

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