

**Mitchell - Hurley (Bank) House, 119 N. Walnut Street**

This corner was originally occupied by John Draper, local shipbuilder, who built ships on the Mispillion river at the base of N.E. 4th Street until his death about 1820. His daughter, Ann Draper Yoe, sold the corner lot and home to a banking investment house looking for a prominent office in Milford. The Draper-Yoe home was moved to N.W. 2nd street (Wilson home). A brick, three-story bank building was built on the corner lot in 1850, but the organizers absconded with all bank deposits causing a failure and serious panic among investors in Milford. James R. Mitchell purchased the bank building and lot in 1855, modifying the interior as a residential home for his family. He and his daughter lived in the house until it was sold to the Thaw family in 1895. In 1920, Thaw heirs sold the property to E Millis Hurley, Milford grocer and town historian. Millis Hurley stocked the home with rare books, manuscripts and photographs from collections he purchased from early Milford families. Following Hurley's death in 1986, Charles Parker resided in the historic Bank House and bequeathed it to his neighbor, Michael Rivera, after his death in 2008.



**Old Methodist Cemetery, 220 North Street**

In 1787, town founder, Joseph Oliver, donated a lot to the Methodist religious group for the purpose of erecting a meeting house and graveyard on the property. A wooden church was built on the site. Its imprint can still be seen today on the right side of the cemetery's iron entrance gate. By 1840 the original wood frame meeting house was in disrepair. Church trustees built the three-story brick Methodist Church in 1842 that later became known as St. Paul's AME church. The Old Methodist churchyard contains early tombstones from the Causey, Hammersly, Primrose, Sipple, McColley and other early founding citizens of Milford. Civil War General A.T.A. Torbert was buried in this cemetery following his untimely death at sea in 1880. The second Methodist congregation overlooked the old cemetery from 1842 until the church was moved in 1875 to Railroad Avenue and named Avenue Methodist Episcopal church.



**James M. Hall Home, 10 North Street**

The James M. Hall home was built in 1880 by a Philadelphia investor and banker who had moved to Milford in 1883 to live next door to his widowed sister, Clara W. Yardley, on N.W. Front Street. Hall became a director and President of the First National Bank located on the corner of N. Walnut St. and N.W. Front (Wilmington Trust site). Following his death in 1910 the home was inherited by his sister who sold it to Alice B. Gebhardt and her husband, a furniture merchant in 1921. Later, heirs of the Watson family purchased the property and left it to Miss May Watson, a respected school teacher who lived in the home until her death. The home was then purchased by the Avenue Methodist Church, but was later deemed surplus following a plan to extend a new fellowship hall onto the lot. The Church board donated the home to restoration investor, Daniel Bond, with the caveat that the home be moved to a new location. On July 22, 2009, the movers arrived to transport the three-story home two blocks east to North Street, adjacent to Dan Bond's home at The Towers. The house-moving was a festive day for the town. Many believed the home was much too large to move successfully. Bond completely reconstructed the 130 year-old residence at its new location.



**Lofland-Abbott Home, 115 N.W. Front Street**

In 1810, Purnell Lofland, early Milford merchant, built this Federal style home for his son, Dr. James P. Lofland, prior to his death in 1819. His last will provided for his four children, but specifically directed the "house across the street" should go to his son, James. Dr. James P. Lofland lived in this home until his death from typhoid fever in 1851. He was the most respected physician in Milford at this time and Speaker of the Delaware Senate in 1830. The Lofland home was inherited in 1851 by his son, James R. Lofland who served as Secretary of State under Governor Peter F. Causey in 1855. He enlisted in the First Delaware Calvary with his good friend Col. George P. Fisher and later served as paymaster for U.S. troops during the Civil War. He was elected to the U.S. Congress in 1872. James R. Lofland died in 1894 and his home was purchased by Sylvester J. Abbott about 1897. Senator Abbott was a clothing merchant and banker who, in 1910, was appointed as Deputy Auditor for the U.S. Treasury by Theodore Roosevelt. He lived in the former Lofland home with his wife, Rosalie and two daughters until his death in 1923. His daughter, Mary Pauline, married Professor Richard M. Browning, Jr., an organist, in 1914. In 1939, she returned to live in the home with her sister, Rosalie. Local teacher and councilwoman, Tommie Staley and her husband, Phillip, owned this home from 1990-2011.



# A Guide to Milford's Historic and Landmark Properties

This guide contains several private residences, churches and businesses that are not open to the public. Please check with Milford Museum staff for information on selected properties that can be toured.

## Welcome to the City of Milford

The *Walking Tour Guide of Milford* is published by the Milford Museum commissioners to provide a brief history of early homes, schools, and landmarks within Milford city limits. All of these structures are more than 100 years old and several predate the founding of Milford in 1787. Please use this publication as a convenient guide to Milford's early history. Most of these buildings are privately owned and we request that you respect their privacy. Many of the landmarks can be visited during the annual spring Milford House Tour sponsored by Downtown Milford, Inc. and other organizations as fund-raising events. The Milford Museum retains many early photos and histories on all these buildings and encourages you to visit our museum for more detailed research.

**Central-New Windsor Hotel, 24 N.W. Front Street**

The site of the New Windsor Hotel was occupied from 1808-1880 by an earlier hotel named "The Union" and built by Martinus DeWaele. Frank Kramlich arrived from Reading, Pennsylvania in 1887 to purchase the venerable hotel from descendants of the DeWaele family. Kramlich rebuilt the earlier hotel into a large imposing structure, mostly constructed of wood. During the disastrous Milford fire of January, 1891 that started in the stable behind the Watson-Carlisle home at 12 N.W. Front Street, most of the hotel was burned. Undeterred, Frank Kramlich, again rebuilt the Central Hotel this time using brick. He added indoor plumbing and central heat making the new Central Hotel a regional landmark and center for business travelers and restaurant patrons. It became the largest and most advanced hotel south of Wilmington. Kramlich sold the hotel in 1908 to Thaddeus Windsor, scion of the Thomas B. Windsor family, owners of the hotel in South Milford. Thad renamed the old Central Hotel, the New Windsor Hotel and managed the restaurant and hotel until his death in 1950. The New Windsor Hotel gradually fell into disrepair over the next fifty years and was purchased in 1999 by Riverbank Associates. By 2001, Riverbank had completed an extensive restoration project. Today it is owned by Mobias Group and leased to the State of Delaware as an office building.



**Sorden-Adkins Home, N.W. Front Street**

Joseph Oliver sold the lot on which this home stands to William Sorden in 1787. After Sorden's death in 1806 this lot was purchased by Dr. William Burton. Dr. Burton sold the property to Isaac Davis, who in turn sold the property in 1820 to Leonard Atkins, a banker. The home became known as the "Mollie Adkins Brown" home in 1920 when this descendant of Leonard Atkins bequeathed her extensive collection of books to the citizens of Milford, forming the first Milford public library. She often invited school children to her home to read before a library room was completed in the Milford Community Hall in 1925.



**Grier-Rogers Home - "Lakelawn", 301 Lakeview Avenue**

"Lakelawn" was the name given to this home by Dr. Frank Layton Grier (1870-1937). Frank Grier was the son of local foundryman and inventor, George Smith Grier and his wife, Margaret Layton Grier. Dr. Frank L. Grier graduated from dental school in 1894 and married, Florence Caulk, the daughter of Camden dental researcher, Levin D. Caulk, in 1898. "Lakelawn" is the home Dr. Frank Grier built for his new bride in 1898. Following a tragic fall from his horse in 1895, Dr. Caulk died from a brain injury. In 1900, Dr. Frank Grier and his brother, Dr. G. Layton Grier, moved the dental research business to Milford. They proceeded to develop innovative amalgam fillings and synthetic porcelain that launched the L.D. Caulk, Co. on a world-wide expansion and financial success. Dr. Frank Grier headed the manufacturing side of the business while his brother, Dr. Layton Grier, handled marketing and finance. "Lakelawn" was the site selected to entertain President Warren G. Harding during his visit to Milford on June 9, 1923. Unfortunately, President Harding only had time for a whirlwind tour of downtown Milford and the old ballpark. Dr. Frank Grier died at "Lakelawn" in 1937 and the home descended to his children. In 1948, undertaker, John Rogers, purchased the property for his undertaking business. The home is still owned by Perry & Diana Rogers and is operated as "Rogers Funeral Home."



**Dr. Mark G. Lofland Home, 200 N. Walnut Street** This home was built about 1856 by Samuel Raughley who later sold the property to Dr. Mark G. Lofland, who lived here until his death in 1881. Dr. Lofland was the son of Dr. James P. Lofland and brother to James Rush Lofland and Peter L. Lofland, all prominent citizens from 1850 to 1900. The Lofland family retained possession of the home after the death of Dr. Mark G. Lofland and the home eventually passed to the family of Arthur Hall. Following the death of Arthur Hall, Michael Rivera purchased the home and shop for his furniture upholstery business. Mike lives in the historic home today with his wife, Cathy.



**Causs-Marshall & Banking House, 112 N. W. Front Street** This original brick home (eastern half) was built by John May Laws in 1787 on a lot purchased from town founder, Joseph Oliver. John Laws was a merchant who traded goods at a river wharf at the rear of his home. The western side of the home was added in 1811 as a branch of the Commercial Bank of Delaware from 1812-1831. It was later used as an office of Discount and Deposit for the Bank of Smyrna from 1831-1876. The two structures were built separately and joined in 1879 by Andrew Donnell of Newark, who purchased both structures for his daughter, Mary Louise Donnell Marshall, and her husband, Dr. George W. Marshall, M.D. who set up his new medical practice in the Marshall house. After his death in 1915, Dr. George W. Marshall was followed in the medical profession by his son, Dr. William Marshall, II. "Dr. Wid Marshall" practiced medicine in this home and the early Marshall Hospital, located on a lot to the east from 1914-1938. Dr. "Wid" and his wife, Mary Bowser (Bowdie Marshall) lived in the Marshall home until his death in 1971 and her death in 1982. The home was converted into the "Banking House Inn" restaurant by Hubbard Macklin and his partner Chuck and sold in 2000 to local restoration investor, Daniel Bond. Today the home is operated as the "Victorian Tea Room." The old Marshall hospital building was razed in 1951. The former hospital site serves as a boxwood garden for the Marshall home today.



**Isaiah James Home, 206 N.W. Front Street** This classic colonial English home was built in 1787 on land purchased by Isaiah James from Milford's founder, Joseph Oliver. James was an early Milford tanner, who conducted a major animal hide-tanning operation behind his home and along Tanner's Branch joining the Mispillion River behind Avenue Methodist Church on Church Street. After James' death about 1798, Benjamin Potter arrived from Accomac, Virginia to purchase this tanning operation and expand it to the west side of Tanner's Branch (Mullet Run). The James residence was passed down through various owners until it was purchased by local architect, R. Calvin Clendaniel in 1985. Clendaniel restored the early brick home to its current condition and rents it as a family residence. This is an excellent example of the type of colonial homes that were owned by merchants and artisans during the 18th century.



**Parson Thorne's Miller Home, 414 N.W. Front St.** When Parson Sydenham Thorne purchased the former Cullen family farm and mill property in 1786, he and his wife, Betty Crapper Thorne, built this modest brick home for the miller they employed to manage the industrial property for the Anglican minister and his new wife. Following the death of Parson Thorne in 1793, the property was inherited by his nephew, Peter Caverly and managed until his death in 1814. The home was occupied by subsequent millers for James Clayton from 1814-1823, Armwell Long and John Darby until 1849. The historic home was owned by Henry Hynson, local businessman, from 1880 until his death when it was inherited by his son, George B. Hynson, author of "Our Delaware," the State song and Delaware Governor candidate in 1912. Following Hynson's death in 1924, the "Miller's Home" was rented and later sold to preservationist, Leonard Elfreth, of Philadelphia. Mr. Elfreth restored the home in 1962 and bequeathed it to his son, Allen Elfreth, who leased the home as a rental property until its sale in 2011. The home has woodwork and panel details similar in design to the parlor in the Parson Thorne Mansion, suggesting that the same carpenter did both homes.



**William A. Humes Home, 206 S. Walnut Street** William A. Humes moved to Milford in 1878 from Indiana to start a farm equipment and hardware store with his brother-in-law, William S. Taylor, on N. Walnut Street next to the Mispillion River. After a successful two year start, Humes built a very distinctive Victorian home at 206 S. Walnut Street where he lived until his death in 1927. The home was inherited by his daughter, who married Harry L. Grier. The Grier's had a daughter, Sara, who married Milton Dill and the home became known as the Sara Grier Dill home until her death. Zelma and Robert Nicklas purchased the home during the 1990s and later sold it to a retired couple from Washington, D.C.



**Godwin-Clark-Baker Home, 206 N. Walnut Street**

Daniel Godwin bought the lot at 206 N. Walnut Street in 1840 from Peter F. Causey who was living at the corner of N. Walnut & N.W. 2nd Street (Currey-Torbert homesite) prior to his move to the old Crapper Mansion in South Milford in 1850. Daniel Godwin sold his Milford properties about 1840 and moved to Philadelphia to pursue a lucrative career in merchandising. The properties included the corner brick store he built in 1843 (Lou's Bootery shoe store), the National Hotel he built about 1830, and the stately Federal-style home he built on the sloping hill for his personal residence. This home became the home of Robert H. Clark, paymaster for the U.S. Navy in Washington about 1845. The home stayed in possession of the Clark family until 1900 and later was purchased by Dr. John B. Baker after World War II and served as his pediatrician office until his retirement in 1985. His son, John B. Baker, Jr. owns the home today.



**Carlisle-Collins Home, 205 S.E. Front Street**

This home was one of the earliest shipbuilder residences built before Henry Hudson divided South Milford into building lots for development in 1810. The original home on this site claims a date of 1794 as displayed on the chimney; however, the owner, David West, built only small wooden boats for local trade. Peter F. Causey purchased the lot in 1828 and sold it to a young ship carpenter named Manlove Carlisle (1817-1881). From 1833 until 1855, Manlove Carlisle and his partner, William F. Reville, built ocean-going sailing ships, some three-masted schooners more than 160 ft. in length, at the shipyard directly behind this home on the Mispillion River. When Wm. F. Reville retired in 1855, Thomas H. Carlisle, purchased his interest in the partnership and bought the home from his brother, Manlove. By 1868, Thomas Carlisle was living in the home at 205 S.E. Front St. and his brother, Manlove, moved to a new home at 209 S.E. Front Street. Thomas H. Carlisle died in 1890, leaving the Carlisle home to his wife and daughter. Carlisle's daughter inherited the home and lived here with her husband, Mr. Collins, and a son, Thomas Carlisle Collins. T.C. Collins owned the home until his death in 1960s. The property is owned by Sheila B. Wrook today. The former Carlisle-Reville shipyard stocks are located along Cedar alley in the rear are occupied today by Memorial park at the entrance to the walking bridge over the Mispillion leading to BiCentennial Park on the north side.



**McColey-Marshall Home "Eglington Hall", 700 S.E. 2nd Street**

The original rear section of this mansion was built by Henry Eglington from 1792-95. His widow married William Black, owner of the 130 acre farm that included the old grist mill on Marshall's Pond. In 1805, William Black added a large room downstairs and two rooms above the early kitchen. In 1820, the home and farm, inherited by Black's widow, was sold to Rev. Truett P. McColey, a local merchant and part-time Methodist preacher. Rev. McColey added the impressive three-story front section to the home in 1833 and lived here until his death in 1874. McColey's son, Hiram W. McColey, inherited the property and later bequeathed "Eglington Hall" to his family in 1888. The mansion and property were sold at auction as part of an Orphan's Court partition order in 1932. Dr. William Marshall, II and his wife, Mary Bowser purchased the home for use as a summer retreat. Dr. Marshall maintained the home until his death in 1971, when it was sold locally. Today it is owned by Brenda & David Carr, who have undertaken a major restoration and upgrade of the historic home.



**Union Cemetery, S. Rehoboth Blvd (Behind Bus Co.)**

The earliest mill constructed in the Milford area was a grist mill built by Joseph Booth in 1695 along Herring Branch, the site of Marshall's Pond dam today. Evidence suggests that John Walton and his family built several homes along the road leading from their mill (1735-1785) to Fork Landing where they owned a wharf on the Mispillion river. The old road behind Rumpstich Machine Works and Jorlin bus offices was the location of the first graveyard in this area. The present Union Cemetery was organized in 1873 by Thomas Humphries, owner of the 100 acre "Fork Farm" and the brick mansion located at the wharf site (1862-1903). Earliest tombstones in the Union Cemetery date to 1850, but earlier wooden markers and stones date back to 1735. Today the cemetery is the final resting place for twelve Civil War veterans and several Spanish American War veterans. It is maintained by the City of Milford Division of Parks & Recreation and several local Boy Scout troops.

