

HOUSE

New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail  
Main Street and Glade Road  
Heislerville  
Cumberland County  
New Jersey

HABS NO. NJ-1194

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
P.O. Box 97127  
Washington, DC 20013-7127

# HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

## HOUSE

HABS No. NJ-1194

Location: Main Street and Glade Road, Heislerville, Cumberland County, New Jersey

Significance: This frame vernacular Gothic Revival house features impressive spindlework details and is in good condition. Located at the intersection of two old county routes, its form and site reflects the prosperity that once existed in Heislerville, a small town that historically was a stopping point en route to a resort and a lighthouse, East Point.

Description: Built ca. 1870. This wood-frame front-facing gable-and-wing dwelling is five bays wide, two bays deep, and two-and-one-half stories tall with a three-and-one-half-bay long wing on the rear that terminates in a one-and-one-half story shed-roofed space. It sits on a masonry foundation, is covered with horizontal siding punctuated by slender corner pilasters, and has a gable roof with a wide, raking cornice. The front-facing main facade is symmetrical, with a central double glazed door on the first floor; the balance of the openings are one-over-one-light double-hung sash in wood surrounds. The front slopes of both the main block and the ell feature two steeply pitched cross-gable dormers; these and the attic story gable ends contain small, one-over-one-light pointed sash windows with plain but oversized hoods. There are two interior gable-end brick chimneys. There are two porches with identical spindlework detailing: turned and chamfered posts, cornice brackets, lace-like frieze and support brackets. The raised, one-story, hip-roofed front porch shelters the three center bays. A full, raised, one-story shed-roofed porch lines the inner facade of the ell; it covers miscellaneous door and window openings.

History: As early as 1800, the people who lived in this area met in the local school for church services. In 1828 an Methodist Episcopal Church was organized here, and the Heisler family was a prominent element of the congregation. The town, named for them, grew during the nineteenth century. Many residents were watermen, as the town is located where the Maurice River enters the Delaware Bay. Much of the commercial activity consisted of oystering, with limited vegetable and berry farming. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Heislerville's population rose from 100 to 450; at that time a post office was established, and the West Jersey and Seashore Railroad (Maurice River Branch) passed within one mile of the town. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, menhaden (or bunker fish), was processed at a plant located between Heislerville and Leesburg. At the plant on Menhaden Road—which is gone—the fish was steam cooked, pressed to collect the oil, and the remains were dried and ground into meal that was used in animal feed and fertilizer; the oil was used to make paints, inks, soaps, and lubricants.

Today the town is a modest crossroads village en route to East Point Lighthouse, once a resort community complete with hotel and restaurant; the hotel, located west of the lighthouse, burned in 1900.

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Project Information: The project was sponsored by the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail (NJCHT) of the National Park Service, Janet Wolf, director. The documentation was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), Robert Kapsch, chief, under the direction of Sara Amy Leach, HABS historian. The project was completed during summer 1992. The project historian was Kimberly R. Sebold (University of Delaware). The photography was produced by David Ames, University of Delaware, Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering.