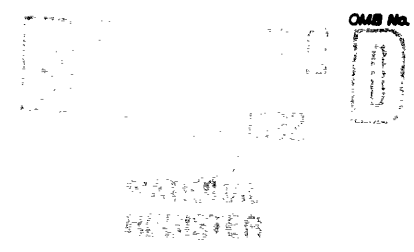


United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16).

1. Name of Property
Historic name Springer, Charles, Tavern
Other names/site number Oak Hill Inn; Four Mile Inn; Sign of the Three Tons; N-507

2. Location
Street & number 4921 Lancaster Pike
City, town Wilmington, Christiana Hundred
State Delaware code DE county New Castle code 003 zip code 19807

3. Classification
Ownership of Property: private
Category of Property: building(s)
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 3, Noncontributing 2 buildings

4. State/Federal Agency Certification
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

5. National Park Service Certification
I, hereby, certify that this property is:
entered in the National Register.
determined eligible for the National Register.
determined not eligible for the National Register.

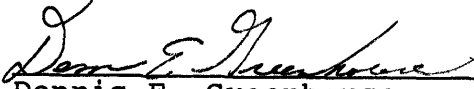
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Charles Springer Tavern, N-507

In my opinion the Charles Springer Tavern
meets /does not meet The National Register
criteria.


Dennis E. Greenhouse
County Executive
New Castle County,
Delaware

3/26/91
Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic Hotel

Agriculture/Agricultural Outbuilding

Domestic/Secondary Structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Vacant/Not In Use

Vacant/Not In Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

other: Federal Vernacular

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone/Granite

walls Stone/Granite

Wood/Log, Weatherboard

roof Asphalt Shingle

other Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Charles Springer Tavern is a two-story, log and stone building that evolved in four major construction phases during the period from 1750 to 1850. It functioned as a tavern throughout the nineteenth century, but has been a private residence since the early twentieth century. On the property surrounding the tavern a number of outbuildings were constructed during the nineteenth century. The three sites that survive are contributing elements of the nomination: the ruins of a stone barn built in 1852, the ruins of a stone springhouse, and a stone mileage marker identifying the location as being four miles from the City of Wilmington. The known outbuildings that do not survive include: a wheelwright and a blacksmith shop, a smoke house, a privy, a small frame barn, a corn crib and a row of stables. There are also two twentieth century outbuildings that are non-contributing: a frame fruit and vegetable stand and a frame garage.

The property is located in Christiana Hundred, New Castle County, Delaware in the western suburbs of the City of Wilmington. The tavern fronts on the north side of Lancaster Pike (State Road 48), and is situated 8/10 of a mile west of the intersection with Center Road (State Route 141) and less than 3/10 of a mile east of the intersection with Centerville Road. It is surrounded by mid-twentieth century residential subdivisions. The tavern rests on a 1.12 acre parcel of land. Portions of the two adjoining parcels containing the ruins of the barn and springhouse are also included within the boundaries for a total nominated area of 3.5 acres.

Observations on the chronology and structural details of the building are drawn from field observation and discussions and correspondence with the present owner, Mr. Kennard Potts and his son, Mr. Kennard L. Potts.

Viewed in its entirety, the form of the tavern is a two-story, four-bay building with a shed-roof rear ell. The building reached its present form by means of four major building phases.

The first was the construction of a two-story, two-bay, gable-roofed log section. When built, the sills of this structure rested on the ground. There is no confirmed date of construction, but the log section is thought to have been completed by about 1750.

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In 1780, a stone, two-story, two-bay, gable-roofed building was constructed against the west endwall of the log house. It has four complete stone walls and is structurally independent of the log section. Because this stone wing was built on a foundation, its floor levels and roof level were originally a few feet higher than those of the log wing.

The third building phase occurred as a renovation to the log section. Its roof level, window and door openings and floor levels were raised to match those of the stone wing. The construction date of these renovations is uncertain.

The fourth building phase involved the construction of a stone, one-and-a-half story lean-to on the rear wall of the log section. The construction date of the stone lean-to is also uncertain. However, it is estimated that the renovations to the log section and the construction of the stone lean-to occurred between 1780 and 1850. After the completion of the basic structure, the building continued to evolve as some of its interior and exterior trim was updated.

The present appearance of the tavern exterior clearly exhibits each wing and its construction materials. However, for most of the twentieth century those sections were not evident. Stucco covered all of the exterior at least since 1898 when the building was described as a "stone dwelling" in a deed. (N.C.Co. Deeds Y15/243).

In 1980, the current owner began to remove the stucco. With the stucco off, it was evident that the top two rows of logs and the altered areas of the window openings had never been chinked. This suggests the building was first stuccoed when the roof, floors, and windows of the log wing were raised and that the log renovation phase was intended to unify the appearance of the building.

When the stucco was removed, it was also discovered that the wall of the log wing abutting the 1780 stone section is out of plumb to such a degree that the two sections of the building do not touch at the front of the second story level. That wedge-shaped space and unchinked logs are now filled with small pieces of stone and mortar. Ghosts of lath marks are still visible on the log facade.

The application of stucco was apparently intended to unify the appearance of the three sections of the building. Although it has been removed, there are elements which tend to unify the building such as the roof shape and materials, the full facade porch and the two-over-two replacement windows.

The side-gable roofline of the adjoining log and 1780 stone sections is continuous and clad with asphalt shingles. There is a molded box cornice with partial returns on the gable ends of the two sections. There are two chimneys piercing the roof of the adjoining 1780 stone and log sections: one interior chimney of stone and brick located at the log building's west endwall and an interior brick chimney in the southwest corner of the 1780 stone section. The rear lean-to is also clad with the same asphalt shingles as are the roofs of the building's two porches.

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Most of the window frames and sashes on all three sections of the building are two over two replacements of the original windows. These appear to be of uniform size and shape as is evident on the facade (See photo No. 1). The only original frame and sash is the four light garrett window in the west gable endwall of the 1780 stone section. The first floor facade and some of the other first floor windows feature panelled shutters. The second floor facade windows feature louvered shutters. These also tend to unify the 1780 stone and log sections of the building.

Another unifying element is the full-facade open porch which spans the length of both the 1780 stone and log facades. This porch features a tongue-and-groove floor and five square wood posts supporting a shed roof. There are exposed rafters in the ceiling of this porch. This porch is a replacement of a wrap-around porch evident in the 1918 survey of the Rupert Investment Co. There is also an enclosed shed-roof porch on the east endwall of the log house. Apparently, this portion of the wrap-around porch was originally enclosed in the 1920's to serve as a milk-shed, using water from an adjacent well. During the 1960's, Mr. Potts rebuilt the east endwall of the porch and removed the previous milk-shed functions.

Log Building Description

The original log building was a two-story, single-pile, gable-roof, 16 x 18 ft. house which is believed to have been constructed by 1750. This log structure appears to have been a hall-plan possibly dirt-floored house with sills that originally rested directly on the ground. Although the walls, floors and roof were later raised to match those of the 1780 stone building, the later building is similar to the original log structure. The renovated section's floor dimensions are almost identical to those of the original log house and the first floor plan appears to be similar to the original. The later window and door openings appear to be placed over the original ones as well.

Only the facade (south) wall of the log house is presently visible on the exterior. ~~Weather board siding covers the east endwall.~~ The rear or north wall is covered by the stone lean-to addition. The west log endwall is covered by the adjoining 1780 stone wall. None of the log walls continues beyond the second-story level.

The exposed two-bay facade of the log building provides much of the evidence for the two major construction phases of the log section. The original log wall was laid with horizontal logs joined at the corners with full dovetail notches. The uppermost two rows of logs were added later. These two rows of logs appear to be of a different wood-type and are joined at the corners with square notches. The lower, dovetailed notch portion of the wall consists of logs of a uniform color and wood-type. The dovetailed notching is similar from row to row. There is little evidence of the chinking found in the upper portion of the wall, because the lower logs are laid so tightly. The mortar between the lower logs was repointed by the present owner after the stucco was removed. It is probable that the lower portion of the log facade wall was built at one time and the uppermost rows were added at a later date, in order to raise the walls to the same level as the 1780 stone section.

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Two rows of horizontal notches in the log facade provide further evidence about the two construction phases of the log building. A row of horizontal notches is visible along the length of a log one row above the present-day first-story window. These indicate the location of the floor joists for the present second-story. In a log about two rows beneath this series of notches are two remaining notches in another series that indicate the location of the floor joists of the original log building (See photo No. 9).

The fenestration of the log facade provides further evidence regarding the two periods of the log house's construction. Directly beneath the present second-story windows are the filled-in openings of the lower portion of the original second-story windows. Beneath the only first-story window, a similar filled-in window may be found. Evidently, when the floors, walls, and roof were raised in the log renovation phase, new window openings were cut directly above the original openings (See photo No. 9). The original door jambs and sills are visible through the crawl space beneath the log section. The later doors were installed above the original ones in the same approximate location.

The crawl space beneath the log section is accessible through the basements of the later two wings. The south stone foundation wall of the lean-to section supports the original log sills, wall, door sill and jamb of the north wall of the original log house. These sills and jamb originally rested on the ground. A space above the stone foundation wall provides access to the crawl space beneath the log section of the house. (See photo No. 10). Some of the original log joists with bark are visible through the crawl space. Also visible inside the crawl space are two rubblestone walls which provide intermediate support for the first floor joists. These walls run parallel to the front and rear walls of the log house. The stone walls were evidently added when the floors, walls and roof were raised.

The floorplan of the first floor of the log house seems to duplicate the original. Although the walls, floors and roof of the building were raised during the renovation phase, the door openings appear to be positioned over the original ones discernible in the crawl space. Then, as now, there were three door openings to the house: the facade (south) opening, the center rear (north) opening, and the center opening on the east endwall. At the present time, the rear door opens to the stone lean-to and the opening on the east endwall leads to the enclosed porch. Another opening, cut through the west log endwall when the 1780 stone addition was built, was enlarged by the present owner (See first-story floor plan).

The first story hall of the log building probably served the living, cooking and dining needs of its original occupants with sleeping accommodations upstairs. Cooking may have been done over the fireplace located in the center of the west endwall. This fireplace has been walled-in by the present owner. To the right of the walled-in fireplace is a built-in cupboard presumably installed after the floors were raised. Presently, this room serves as a dining room. To the left of the opening to the enclosed porch in the northeast corner is the batten door to the boxed-in winder-stair

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leading to the second floor and attic. The winder-stair is another feature which was probably added some time after the floors were raised. Access to the second story in the original log house may have been provided by winder-stair or ladder.

The second story of the log section is presently divided into two chambers. It is uncertain whether the present two-room configuration reflects an earlier time period or is a more recent modification. (See second floor plan). Aspects of the interior fabric of these rooms such as the floors, moldings, and trim date from the mid-nineteenth century (after the raising of the log section) to recent times. Although the floorboards of the 1780 stone section and the log section are on the same plane, they are not continuous. On the north wall of the log section are two door openings which provide access to the bedroom and bathroom of the lean-to section. In the northeast corner of the log section is a batten door leading to the winder-stair which continues to the attic over the log house.

There are two attics on the building: one over the 1780 stone section and one over the earlier log section. Although the two attics are adjacent to each other, there is no access from one attic to the other. In the log section, the rafters are mortised and tenoned and joined at the apex of the roof. These rafters notch over a false plate. On the north side of the building, the false plate rests on the stone lean-to section of the house. Roman numerals indicate the order of construction of the vertical-sawn rafters, and horizontal nailing strips support the plywood sheathing above. Although the roof construction of the two attics is similar, there are several indications that the two roofs were constructed at different times. The width and depth dimensions of the rafters are dissimilar. Secondly, there are large notches intended to receive nailing strips in the rafters over the log section, while the notches in the stone section are less obvious. Thirdly, the Roman numerals in the log section are much larger than those used in the stone section.

Further evidence that the two attics were constructed at different times is a scar of a lower roofline on the stone gable. The log walls do not continue beyond the second floor and the stone gable endwall of the 1780 stone section is common to both the 1780 stone and log attics. This mortar line indicates an earlier roofing system for the log house which was still in place after the construction of the 1780 stone endwall addition. The scar also provides additional evidence that the roof, floors and walls of the log house were raised after the construction of the 1780 stone section.

However, the mortar line is only visible on the north (rear) side of the chimney and stone wall. There is no scar indicating an earlier roofing system on the south side of the stone wall. One explanation of this disparity is that the stone and log sections shared a common roofline in the front, but different rooflines along the back until the roof, walls, and floors were raised. Since logs were added to the facade in order to raise the walls and roof, this explanation seems unlikely.

Another possible explanation for the absence of the scar is the space which exists

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between the two buildings in the front of the log section, but not in the rear of the log section on the second-story level. This wedged-shape space is evident on the facade and has been filled in by chinking of mortar and stones by the present owner. This space is also evident in the log section's attic where there is a space ~~in~~ the attic floor on the south side of the chimney, but not on the north (rear) side. The eight to ten inch space between the log and stone buildings is visible down to the dining room ceiling level. The previous roofline of the log building may have pulled away from or may never have been joined to the stone gable on the south or facade side of the building. When the roof, walls and floors were raised, a common continuous roof was raised between the 1780 stone and log section and was joined at the rear of the log section to the top of the stone lean-to addition.

1780 Stone Building Description

The 1780 stone building is a structurally independent two-bay, single-pile, two-story house which adjoins the west endwall of the log house. The 1780 date is documented by a datestone in the gable of the west endwall of this building, "C.S. 1780." The interior dimensions of the stone building are almost identical to those of the log building. The rear stone wall projects about eighteen inches beyond the log wall on the exterior of the building to accommodate the thicker stone wall. (See first floor plan). The interior floorplans of the first and second floors seem to be very similar to the original.

The exterior walls of the 1780 stone section are uncoursed roughly laid fieldstone. The stone walls show evidence of having been whitewashed at an earlier date. The two-bay facade or south wall of the 1780 stone section features a right-bay entrance. The five-panelled door features a plain surround and appears to be original to that section. A vertical mark on the stone work to the left of the door indicates a previous entrance porch which has since been removed, perhaps when a wrap-around porch was added in the nineteenth century.

The east endwall of the 1780 stone section is covered by the adjoining log wall. The north or rear stone wall abuts the stone lean-to in its southwest corner. There is a rear entry on the north wall almost directly across from the facade entry. The west gable endwall features the original garrett window and the 1780 date stone above. There is one first floor window on this wall centrally located beneath the garrett window and datestone.

Access to the 1780 stone basement is available in the northeast corner of the first floor room or through a bulkhead door in the front porch floor. This room consists of stone walls and a poured concrete floor with a corbeled fireplace support in the southwest corner of the room. This basement room houses the oil furnace which presently heats the building and the breaker box for the electrical system. Some of the ceiling joists are original, but some are replacements. A few are hewn, but others are vertical sawn on the bottom faces and circular sawn on the side faces. Along the top of the east stone wall of this basement is an opening to the previously described crawl space of the log section, through which the rubblestone support walls

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and some of the original door jambs and sills of the original log building can be seen.

The first floor of the 1780 stone house consists of a single room which presently serves as the living room of the residence. Physical evidence suggests that the bar for the tavern was located in the northwest corner of this room. Scars along the walls and ceilings clearly indicate a corner enclosure about three feet deep. (See photo No. 13). Charles Springer's 1808 probate inventory lists, "1 corner cupboard walnut," although the location is not designated, (N.C.Co. Probate Records, Charles Springer Inventory). Bars of the period have been described as a counter enclosed by a grill or row of posts through which drinks were passed. The bartender would keep his cash box and account book behind this grill-like structure (Ward: 1968, p.6). The fireplace is located in the southwest corner of the room. Although it is in its original location, the brick surround is a more recent addition.

Along the east endwall of this room, stands an open-string, straight-run staircase, leading to the second floor. This staircase is a 1930's replacement of the original boxed-in, winder-stair. Evidence for the original winder-stair may be found in the northeast corners of the basement and the second story. The ceiling of the second floor hall has recently been removed leaving the ceiling joists visible. In the square area of the former winder-stair to the attic, the exposed joists seem to be of more recent vintage than the exposed joists of the rest of the second story. The replacement of the winder-stair by the open-string staircase appears to be the only alteration to the original first floor plan.

The second story of the 1780 stone section presently contains a large bedroom along the west endwall and an open stair hall. (See second floor plan). This floor plan is probably similar to the original configuration, although there was probably a small chamber in the front half of the hall. About half of this space is presently occupied by the straight run staircase. Before this staircase was cut, there would have been room enough for a small chamber, in the south portion of the hall, since the boxed-in, winder-stair occupied the north portion of the hall.

Much of the original 1780 fabric is still evident in the two second story rooms. At the time of the preparation of this nomination, the owner had undertaken the removal of wallpaper and ceiling plaster. This provided the opportunity to study the ceiling joists, wall construction and other features of the second-story 1780 stone section. In addition, the attic which was previously inaccessible was made accessible through a hole in the ceiling of the hall.

The large bedroom located along the west endwall retains many of its original features. The original random-width floorboards are laid from endwall to endwall. There is a four-inch baseboard with a small bead at the top. The two 2/2 windows located directly across from each other on the north and south walls feature deep plaster reveals. There are two original doors located adjacent to each other on the partition wall serving the closet and the entry to the hall. The smaller closet door

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on the left is a raised four-panel door with H-hinges. The larger raised, six-panel door to the right is attached with the original L-hinges. The mitred-cornered molding surrounding these doors appears to be original. The fireplace is in its original location in the southwest corner, although the mantel has been removed. The plaster on the three stone walls is applied directly over the stone. The ceiling joists of the bedroom and the adjoining hall apparently were intended to be exposed since they feature beaded corners. The exposed joists run from the front to the back of the two rooms.

The removal of wallpaper in the stair hall revealed some of the original construction features of the partition wall between the hall and the bedroom. The partition wall is formed by five to six-inch wide vertical planks which have been nailed to the side of one ceiling joist. The planks are separated by spaces of five to six inches. Split lath was then nailed to both sides of the planks and covered with plaster.

The 1780 section attic had become accessible through a hole in the ceiling as a result of the owner's renovations. The roof construction of the 1780 stone building is very similar to that of the adjoining log system. The roof system consists of common rafters, meeting at the apex with a mortise and tenon joint. The vertical sawn rafters are notched over a false plate. Small Roman numerals indicating the order of construction are visible at the top of some of the rafters. Horizontal nailers are attached to the rafters. Above this is plywood sheathing put in place by the present owner. Although the roof construction of the 1780 stone building is similar to that of the log building, it is evident that the 1780 roof was constructed before the renovations of the log section. The reasons were detailed in the previous discussion of the log section's roofing system.

The Stone Lean-to Section Description

The one-and-a-half story stone lean-to section joins the rear wall of the log section. Only three stone walls were built since the rear log wall provides the south wall of the stone lean-to section. The lean-to building is the same width as the log section and is about fifteen feet deep. (See first floor plan). The exterior walls are uncoursed roughly laid fieldstone. There is one exterior entrance to the lean-to: a center-bay door on the rear wall. This entrance features a pedimented entrance porch.

The basement under the stone lean-to section is only accessible from the outside through stairs along its east wall. There is a poured concrete floor and stone walls in this basement. The space presently serves as the laundry room for the house. There are various types of ceiling joists in this room: at least two are hewn on three sides; while a fourth is hewn on four sides. The south foundation wall supports the rear wall of the log house. The exposed lower portion of the rear log wall with its sills, door jamb and sill is detailed more fully in the description of the log section of the building.

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The rear entrance to the stone lean-to section provides access to the first floor of the lean-to. There is one room on the first floor of the lean-to which presently serves as the modern-day kitchen of the house. This may have been its original function also. According to Mr. Kennard L. Potts, son of the present owner, a small coal-fed ~~stove~~ stove previously stood in the northwest corner of the kitchen until it was removed by his father in the 1960's. With this alteration, an interior brick chimney which led to the roof of the lean-to was also removed.

The second story garret rooms of the lean-to section are only accessible from the second-story log section. The larger of these two rooms located in the northwest corner serves as a bedroom, while the smaller of the two rooms in the northeast corner serves as a bathroom. A step down is required to reach each of these rooms from those of the log section. (See second story floor plan).

There is no attic or crawlspace above the stone lean-to section. The rafter ends and plate of the rear slope of the log section rest on the stone lean-to section. This is visible on the exterior east endwall of the main block. The extension of the roofline northward beyond the original log building probably coincided with the raising of the log walls, floors and roof during the log building's renovation phase. (See photo No. 6). This provides evidence that the stone lean-to was built about the same time that the floors, walls and roof of the log section were raised.

List of Outbuildings and Non-contributing and Contributing Sites

During most of the nineteenth century, the Charles Springer Tavern was situated on a 65 acre parcel of land. By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the tavern complex included the following buildings: the tavern; a stone barn; a stone springhouse; a row of sheds for stabling horses between the tavern and the barn; a small frame barn; and a small frame corn crib between the stone barn and the row of sheds; a stone smokehouse; a privy; a blacksmith shop; and a stone mileage marker. Of these, only the tavern, the ruins of the stone barn, the ruins of the stone springhouse and the mileage marker remain. (See sketch plan).

The following are contributing elements to the Charles Springer Tavern:

1. (N-507.1) The Charles Springer Tavern.
The tavern is a contributing building.
2. (N-507.2 also N-508) The Ruins of Moses Journey's Stone Barn.
Three of the stone walls of the bank barn remain. The barn was constructed by Moses Journey who purchased the tavern property in 1848. The 1852 construction date is verified by a datestone in the southwest gable, "M. Journey 1852." The barn walls have been stabilized by the present owners, Mr. & Mrs. Frederick C. Field. A portion of the stone barnyard walls stand parallel to the north and south walls of the barn. The barn walls are a contributing building.

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3. (N-507.3) The Ruins of the Stone Springhouse.
The springhouse ruins are located on Little Falls Creek to the northeast of the tavern. Three of the four rubblestone walls remain, but the west wall has fallen over. The walls appear to have supported a gable roof. The original construction date is uncertain. The springhouse ruins are a contributing building.
4. (N-507.4) The Stone Four-Mile Marker.
The marker is located about one hundred yards northwest of the house on the north side of Lancaster Pike. The marker is inscribed as follows: "4 to W," and indicated the distance to Wilmington. The stone marker is about two feet high and 1½ feet wide. It is a rounded arch shape and stands adjacent to a stone wall. The four mile marker is a contributing object.

The following are non-contributing buildings on the Charles Springer Tavern property:

1. (N-507.5) The Fruit and Vegetable Stand.
The wood stand for selling fruits and vegetables was built in the twentieth century after the tavern's period of significance. It is a non-contributing building.
2. (N-507.6) The Frame Shed was formerly used as a garage.
It was built in the twentieth century after the tavern's period of significance. It is a non-contributing building.

The approximate locations of other buildings (now demolished) in the tavern-complex are also known. The following sites have been historically associated with the Charles Springer Tavern (See sketch plan).

1. (N-507.7) The Site of the Blacksmith Shop.
According to the present owner, the wheelwright and blacksmith shop formerly stood in front of the tavern until it was removed in the 1930's. Its presence there is also documented by an 1860 map H. Eckel's Preliminary Survey for the Wilmington and Brandywine Railroad.
2. (N-507.8) The Site of the Smokehouse.
According to the present owner, a stone smokehouse stood to the north of the lean-to section until it was removed by him ca. 1940.
3. (N-507.9) The Site of the Privy.
This stood to the west of the smokehouse according to the present owner.
4. (N-507.10) The Site of the Small Barn.
According to a 1918 survey of the property commissioned by the Rupert Investment Company, a small frame barn stood to the south of the larger Moses Journey Barn.

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5. (N-507.11) The Site of the Corncrib.
According to the above-mentioned 1918 survey, a small frame corncrib stood to the south of the small frame barn.

6. (N-507.12) The Site of the Carriage Shed.
An 1898 deed (N.C.Co. Deeds, Y 17/243) and a 1918 deed (N.C. Co. Deeds, P 27/442) document a "row of shedding" for the stabling of horses and carriages. Tradition indicates this stood between the tavern and the barn.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

Circa 1750 - 1780

Significant Dates

Transportation

Circa 1800 - 1880

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Statement of Significance

The Charles Springer Tavern is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C. It is architecturally significant due to the integrity of the building which incorporates log and stone construction techniques that were utilized during four major phases of construction in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In addition, the stone ruins of a barn and springhouse are remnants of a tavern complex, typically associated with nineteenth century rural taverns. The series of expansions of the tavern itself and the tavern-complex occurred during a widespread rebuilding trend in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This trend was characterized by the replacement of impermanent log and wood frame buildings with durable stone construction. The Charles Springer Tavern is also eligible under Criterion A. Its significance under the theme of transportation derives from its use as a rural tavern on the Wilmington (later Lancaster) Turnpike. The turnpike served as a regional route linking the agricultural regions of southeastern Pennsylvania and northern Delaware to the mills, markets and port of Wilmington. As a rural tavern, the Charles Springer Tavern served the needs of both local and regional travellers.

Significance Under Criterion C for Architecture

The Charles Springer Tavern was constructed during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The eastern two-story log structure was probably constructed by 1750. By 1780, a two-story, stone west endwall addition had been completed. Shortly thereafter, the one-and-a-half story stone rear wing was added. At about the same time that the lean-to was added, the roof, walls, and floors of the two-story log structure were raised to match those of the adjoining 1780 stone section.

Log was the predominant construction material in the Piedmont Region of northern Delaware for most of the eighteenth century when the first construction period of the Charles Springer Tavern occurred. Log construction persisted into the early nineteenth century. The original two-story log building with sills that rested on the ground was typical of the impermanent construction techniques of the early settlement period. However, during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a rebuilding period occurred during which stone and other more permanent construction

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materials replaced the previously favored log. The construction of the 1780 stone endwall addition to the tavern occurred at the beginning of this rebuilding period. During the rebuilding period, the construction of stone endwall additions to previously existing log buildings was quite common. The later stone lean-to addition was also representative of this rebuilding period. The log portions of buildings which received stone additions were usually subsequently removed. The Charles Springer Tavern is a rare surviving example of a building which retained its earliest log structure. In addition, the tavern is unique in the interior and exterior integrity of its three sections.

Although the log section was altered when its roof, floors and walls were raised, even these alterations occurred by about 1850 within the tavern's period of significance as a tavern. In spite of these alterations, much of the exterior fabric of the log house is intact, providing evidence of its early history. The exposed log sills and door jambs visible in the crawl space and in the lean-to basement provide evidence of the building's first phase of existence when the sills rested directly on the ground. The location of these door jambs and sills as well as the filled-in window and door openings on the facade indicate that the original floorplan is similar to that of the log section today. On the interior, the closed-in hearth indicates that the first floor of the log house may have served as the original kitchen.

Much of the second phase of the log section's construction is also evident. On the exterior facade, the uppermost rows of logs demonstrate that the building's walls were raised by the addition of logs. On the interior, the china cabinet, floors, and boxed-in-winder-stair are also products of the second phase of the log house's construction.

That the kitchen function of the tavern was shifted to the stone lean-to addition sometime after it was built is substantiated by the present owner's assertion that a coal-fed cookstove was present in the first floor of that section until it was removed in the 1960's. Although the room has been refitted with a modern kitchen, the room continues its traditional function. Evidence that cooking over a hearth had been replaced by a "ten-plate stove and pipe," is provided by the 1808 probate inventory of Charles Springer, (N.C.Co. Probate Records, Charles Springer). The location of this stove is not specified. Presumably, this stove was located either in the log kitchen or the rear lean-to addition.

The 1780 stone endwall addition to the original log house also retains much of its interior and exterior integrity. The builder tried to replicate the floor plan of the original log section in its dimensions and openings. Balance between the adjacent log and stone sections was more fully achieved with the raising of the floors, walls and roof of the log section to match those of the stone section. The application of stucco in the nineteenth century was an attempt to unify the three sections of the building.

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The interior fabric of the second-story 1780 stone section has been remarkably well preserved. The ceiling joists with decorative beaded edgings were meant to be exposed to view. The application of plaster over stone and the split lath and plaster over the plank partition wall exemplify construction techniques of the period. The side-by-side raised panelled doors with molded surrounds and original hardware in the bedroom are also typical of the period.

By 1780, the original log two-story house was in place as well as the adjacent two-story stone building. The construction date of the rear stone lean-to and the renovation of the log structure is uncertain. The function of the log and stone building prior to 1802 is also uncertain. There is a lack of documentary evidence which would indicate whether a tavern was open on the site prior to 1802. In that year, Charles Springer petitioned the Court of Common Pleas for permission to open a tavern in his dwelling (Ward: 1968, p. 272).

However, there are several other examples of New Castle County rural taverns in the same time period which were initially constructed of log. The Rising Sun Tavern of Stanton was initially a log building which was replaced around 1810 by a stone building. Two other taverns on Limestone Road (State Rt. 7) were originally log buildings which received later additions. Tweed's Tavern (CRS: N-1101) was originally built with logs, but later was encased with a stone addition. The earliest portion of the Mermaid Tavern (NR: 242) was constructed of log with the sills laid directly on the ground around 1723. Later additions of stone (circa 1750) and frame (circa 1800) completed the Mermaid Tavern. Although the function of the Charles Springer Tavern prior to 1802 is unknown, it is possible that a tavern operated on the site in either the 1780 log and stone or the prior log building. The building's location along an early road renders this possibility more likely.

Owners of rural taverns such as the Charles Springer Tavern tended to develop complexes of buildings to serve the ancillary needs of travellers in the nineteenth century. Thomas Springer had inherited the property from his father, Charles Springer, circa 1802. By 1804, Thomas possessed 160 acres, a stone and frame tavern house and a log barn with a total valuation of \$1,080.00, (N.C.Co. Tax Assessment Records, 1804). By 1816, Thomas Springer had added a stone stable and two small wood tenements (N.C.Co. Tax Assessment Records, 1816). By 1852, Moses Journey, who purchased the property in 1848, had added a stone barn. An 1860 map places a wheelwright and blacksmith shop in the foreground of the tavern (H.Eckel, Preliminary Survey for the Wilmington and Brandywine Railroad). The ruins of a springhouse are still standing in a creek bed southeast of the house. A row of sheds for the stabling of horses and carriages led from the rear of the tavern along Lancaster Pike to the barn. This "row of shedding" is documented in at least two deeds (N.C.Co. Y17/243 (1898) and D27/442 (1918)). A 1918 survey for the Rupert Investment Company depicts the tavern then labeled as a "stone dwelling-house," a frame concrib, a frame barn and a stone barn on the site. In addition, the property included a privy and a stone smokehouse which were removed by the present owner in the 1940's.

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At least three other rural taverns in the region also developed into tavern-complexes by the early nineteenth century. Tweed's Tavern which consisted of a log house, kitchen and sheds in 1804 had expanded to a log dwelling-house, cookery (tavern), frame barn and stables by 1816, (Catts et al: 1986, p.118). The Rising Sun Tavern which consisted of a log house and stone barn in 1804 had expanded to a stone house, barn and stable in 1816, (Thompson: 1987, p.32).

The growth of the complex at Mermaid Tavern closely parallels the development of the complex surrounding the Charles Springer Tavern during the nineteenth century. Among the buildings included on the Mermaid Tavern site by 1827 were: the tavern, a stone barn, stone sheds, a stone blacksmith shop, a stone springhouse, a small log tenement, and a stable for twenty-four horses. Later, in 1849, a wheelwright shop was added to the complex which stood at the intersection of Limestone Road and Mermaid-Stoney-Batter Roads (Catts et al: 1986, p.155-157). Of these buildings, only the tavern remains.

Significance Under Criterion A for Transportation

The Charles Springer Tavern is also eligible for the National Register under Criterion A as a significant tavern complex that served the needs of local customers and regional travellers along a major regional transportation route. The Lancaster Turnpike (originally Wilmington Turnpike) linked the agricultural regions of southeastern Pennsylvania and northern Delaware to the mills of the Brandywine and Red Clay Creeks and from there to the port of Wilmington.

The development of transportation links was inextricably tied to the growth of the regional economy in New Castle County as an economic hinterland to Philadelphia in the eighteenth century. Rivers provided the earliest transportation links between the dispersed farmsteads along the Delaware, Christiana, Appoquinimink, Brandywine Rivers and the White and Red Clay Creeks. The earliest roads were intra-regional connectors to coastal towns.

With the advent of the market-based production of wheat, came the development of grain milling sites along the Brandywine, Red Clay, and White Clay Creeks. Initially, these mills were custom sites serving the needs of local farmers. Later, merchant millers ground wheat for a fee. The ground wheat was then transported to port towns such as Newport (founded in 1737) and Wilmington (founded in 1739).

During the eighteenth century, a network of regional roads developed in New Castle County due to the growth in population and inter-regional trade. Limestone Road (State Rt.7) is an example of a regional route which joined the agricultural regions of southeastern Pennsylvania and northern Delaware to the milling and transportation center of Stanton. Old Wilmington Road which is thought to be the route along which the Lancaster Turnpike was built was another example of an inter-regional trade route.

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The early to mid-nineteenth century witnessed a period of major transportation improvements in New Castle County. These improvements included the building of turnpikes, canals and railroads. The General Assembly of the State of Delaware approved the incorporation of nine turnpike companies from 1808 to 1815. In 1829, the Chesapeake ~~and~~ Delaware Canal was built to link the Chesapeake and Delaware Rivers. Early railroads included the New Castle and Frenchtown Railroad and the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad in 1838 (Coleman, et al: 1985, p.33-35).

The Wilmington Turnpike Co. (later the Lancaster Turnpike) was commissioned by the General Assembly as a hard-surfaced toll road in 1808. The route of approximately six miles extended from the borough line of Wilmington to a point in Mill Creek Hundred where it joined the Newport-Gap Turnpike, the first hard-surfaced toll road commissioned by the General Assembly earlier in 1808. The Wilmington (Lancaster) Turnpike was designed to link the Brandywine mills and port of Wilmington to the agricultural regions of southeastern Pennsylvania and northern Delaware. The road was constructed in two phases by its contractor, Thomas Maguire. By October 1812, the first four-and-one-half miles were complete to just beyond the four-mile mark of the Charles Springer Tavern. The remaining one-and-a-half miles were completed by December, 1817 (Scharf: 1888, p.416-417).

Nineteenth century maps trace the evolution of the Wilmington or Lancaster Turnpike. Throughout its history, the route has retained the same alignment although the road has been widened. The 1820 Henry Heald map shows the route of the newly constructed turnpike although the name is not provided. Deeds of this period refer to the road as Wilmington Turnpike. The 1849 Rea and Price Map of New Castle County also refers to the road as the Wilmington Turnpike. By 1868, on the D. G. Beers Atlas of the State of Delaware, the road is labelled as the Lancaster Turnpike. The Lancaster Turnpike continued to operate as a toll-road until 1877 when it was opened as a public road (Scharf: 1888, p.417). On the 1881 Hopkins map, the road is still labelled as the Lancaster Turnpike. However, on the 1893 Baist Atlas, the road is simply labelled as, "Lancaster".

The construction date of at least two major sections of the Springer Tavern predate the construction of the turnpike (1809-1817). There is evidence to suggest that the turnpike was built as an improvement to an existing road, perhaps the Old Wilmington Road. Two early deed references for properties in the vicinity of the tavern refer to an earlier road. An 1805 deed for property adjoining the road refers to it as "the public road," (N.C.Co. Deeds, D3/70). Later in 1807, a deed for another property refers to the "Wilmington Road," (N.C.Co. Deeds, G3/75). Usually, the new turnpikes were built along pre-existing roads such as "The Wilmington and Great Valley Turnpike," (Concord Pike), built along the old Concord Road (Scharf: 1888, p.418).

The Charles Springer Tavern was well situated on the north side of the newly constructed turnpike and east of the intersection with the road connecting Centerville

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to Newport. Its location was just beyond the tollgate and the ford over Little Falls Creek. (See Rea and Price Map, 1849). A small stone mileage marker inscribed "4 to W," which informed travellers of the distance to Wilmington, still stands about 100 yards northwest of the tavern. Undoubtedly, the tavern benefited from its location ~~the~~ the turnpike.

Wade P. Catts, et al detected a pattern in the geographical location or tavern proximity along Limestone Road, a public road. Taverns along this road in the early nineteenth century were located about three miles from each other. For example, the Rising Sun Tavern (now demolished) was located 3.5 miles south of Mermaid Tavern. Mermaid Tavern, in turn, was located 2.5 miles south of Tweed's Tavern. The authors speculate that the pattern existed because taverns which were spaced more closely or further apart tended to be unsuccessful.

A similar pattern of tavern proximity emerged along Lancaster Turnpike in the nineteenth century. The Jackson Inn (now demolished), also known as the Conestoga Inn or the Two-Mile Inn, was located two miles to the south of the Charles Springer Tavern, and two miles north of the Wilmington City boundary. The Charles Springer Tavern (also known as the Four-Mile Inn) was located at the four-mile marker to Wilmington. These two taverns were both located just beyond tollgates on the Turnpike. In addition to the competitive economic forces which determined tavern proximity along Limestone Road, the decisions of turnpike owners and managers undoubtedly influenced the locations of tollgates, mileage markers and successful taverns along the Lancaster Turnpike.

There is documentary evidence showing that the owners of the tavern and the adjacent house (believed to be the toll-keeper's) may have been part-owners of the stretch of turnpike fronting on their properties. If they were share-holders or part-owners of the turnpike company, then they may have exerted some influence on the location of taverns and toll-keepers' booths. The property descriptions in the 1838, 1839, and 1842 deeds mention that the tavern property began "at the center of the Wilmington and Lancaster Turnpike." Similarly, the deeds for the possible toll-keeper's house from 1807 to 1847 indicate the owner owned "half the Wilmington Road." In regard to the tavern property, this practice was stopped with the 1848 sheriff's sale. Then the boundary was set at the edge of the Lancaster Turnpike.

Nineteenth century rural taverns in northern New Castle County tended to evolve into tavern complexes including stables, barns, and wheelwright and blacksmith shops. These served the needs of the local community as well as regional travellers. The communities surrounding the tavern-complexes tended to evolve into small villages or tavern hamlets.

An analysis of nineteenth century historic maps reveals that a small hamlet developed in the vicinity of the Springer Tavern on Lancaster Pike between Centerville Road and Center Road. Most of the buildings in the vicinity seemed to be agricultural

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and residential in character with the exception of the tollkeeper's property and a school. At least one large estate belonging to J. C. Grubb was located on the south side of Lancaster Pike in the second half of the nineteenth century.

One of the earliest buildings, the Oak Hill School (CRS: 12083) has been historically associated with the tavern since the early nineteenth century. This building located on the north side of Lancaster Pike was labelled on nineteenth century maps as being adjacent to the James Armor property (CRS: N-506) on the east. As early as 1820, the Henry Heald map of New Castle County depicted the Oak Hill Schoolhouse on the site. To the west was a property designated as a tavern with the name of Springer.

On the north side of Lancaster Pike between the Oak Hill School and the Springer Tavern (later Oak Hill Inn) stood a small stone house believed to be the toll-keeper's house. The small stone house received a frontal addition after James Armor purchased the property in 1847. The resulting Vernacular Italianate structure, the James Armor House (CRS: N-506), was the site of a 66 acre farm during the second half of the nineteenth century.

After Armor's purchase in 1847, a new toll-keeper's house was evidently constructed on the south side of Lancaster Turnpike, immediately adjacent to the road. This toll-keeper's house or booth was one of the four buildings in the J. C. Grubb's complex on the 1868 Beer's Atlas. A building in the same location was labelled as a tollgate in 1860 on H. Eckel's Preliminary Survey for the Wilmington and Brandywine Railroad. This non-surviving structure did appear on the Hopkins (1881) and Baist (1893) maps of the area. Prior to this time, the tollgate appeared to be an actual physical barrier across the road. The 1849 Rea and Price map shows a bracket-like symbol across the road, labelled with the word "gate".

On the 1868 Beer's Atlas, a cluster of four buildings (including the second tollhouse) was evident on the south side of the Lancaster Turnpike. Of the four buildings in the J. C. Grubb's complex at least two are still standing: "Highfield Hall," (CRS: N-495) and "Limerick," (CRS: N-505). "Highfield Hall," the circa 1845 Italianate mansion identified with J. C. Grubb, is now part of the Masonic Home. "Limerick" was constructed by Jacob Robinson in 1815. The property was used as a tenant farm on the Grubb property during most of the nineteenth century and was expanded to a country estate by the Downs family in the early twentieth century.

In contrast to the small rural hamlet which developed around the Charles Springer Tavern, a larger single-street village emerged around the Mermaid Tavern in the nineteenth century. This "village" included a more diverse array of structures than those surrounding the Charles Springer Tavern. Among the buildings to be found in the Mermaid Tavern vicinity were: a schoolhouse, a cabinet-maker's, a mason's, a doctor's, a spinner's and weaver's, and a cord wainer's shop, (Catts et al: 1986, p.86). One factor which may have discouraged a similar diversity of structures

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around the Charles Springer Tavern was the ownership of the Lancaster Pike by the Wilmington Turnpike Company. The influence of the turnpike owners undoubtedly affected development along the road, while it was a toll-road from 1812-1877.

Perhaps because of the larger and more diverse community which developed around the Mermaid Tavern in the nineteenth century, the Tavern became a well-known center for political, social and commercial functions within its local community and region. For instance, the tavern served as a post office, a polling place, the meeting place for the Mill Creek Hundred Road Commissioners, the Harmony Grange and the Firemen's Mutual Insurance Company.

The Charles Springer Tavern probably served a similar function as a center for social, commercial and political activities within its own community. For example in 1828, the tavern was the scene of a sheriff sale of nearby William Armor estate as advertised in the American Watchman (Historical Society of Delaware Genealogy Files). The extent of the tavern's influence as a social, commercial and political center within its community is speculative. Further research would uncover the extent of the tavern's prominence within its community.

Documentary Evidence of the Charles Springer Tavern

The earliest information verifying the Springer ownership of a tavern on the site comes in the form of tavern petitions. Tavern licenses were required of tavern proprietors or owners by Delaware's Colonial Legislature as early as 1740 (Ward: 1968, p.5). Many of the early petitions were brief listing only the petitioner's name, a statement attesting to his good character, with the name of the Hundred providing the only clue to the location. Either tavern owners or proprietors could apply for licenses, making it difficult to link tavern owners with petitions. However, many of the petitioners requested licenses for taverns within their own dwellings. This is the case with the 1802 petition by Charles Springer of Christiana Hundred for a tavern in his dwelling. (Ward: 1968, p.272). Charles Springer, (possibly the C. S. on the 1780 datestone of the stone section) willed the property to his son, Thomas Springer in 1802 (N.C.Co. Wills, Book P/125).

Thomas Springer of Christiana Hundred was listed on the 1804 tax assessment list as owning "160 acres, 75 improved, 55 not improved, a stone and frame tavern house, log barns, \$20.00 worth of stock and 18 pounds of plate valued at \$20.00." The total value of his real and personal estate in 1804 was \$1,302.90. (N.C.Co. Tax Assessment Records, 1804). By the 1816 tax assessment, the total value of Thomas Springer's real and personal estate was \$7,154.00. This included, "192 acres of land @ \$35.00 an acre, 167 improved with one stone dwelling occupied as a tavern, a stone stable, and log barn, two small wooden tenements, 25 acres of woodland, and livestock valued at \$284.00" (N.C.Co. Tax Assessment Records, 1816).

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During Thomas Springer's period of ownership from 1804 to 1824 and afterwards, the tavern was known as the "Sign of the Three Tons." During this period, taverns were advertised to their sometimes illiterate customers by means of painted signboards. The "three tons," illustrated on the sign were three barrels which advertised that beer and wine were sold inside (Ward: 1968, p.267). Two references verify this appellation. An undated tavern petition was made by a Thomas Springer of Christiana Hundred for, "The Sign of the Three Tons, on the road from Wilmington to Lancaster," (Ward: 1968, p. 273). In 1828, an announcement for a sheriff sale of the nearby William Armor estate in Christiana Hundred was in the American Watchman. The announcement states that the sale would be held at "the house of Charles Springer, the Sign of the 3 Tons," (Historical Society of Delaware Genealogy Files).

Charles Springer, the son of Thomas Springer, inherited the property from his father in 1824. In his will, Thomas Springer designated that Charles Springer would inherit the property on the condition that he provide for "maintenance and education" of two younger brothers and four sisters, who were apparently minor children at the time (N.C.Co. Wills Book S/30). Charles Springer sold the 65-acre tavern portion of his property in 1838 to John S. and James Caldwell (brothers). (N.C.Co. Deeds, B5/219), thus ending the Springer period of ownership of the tavern.

From 1838 to 1848 the tavern witnessed an unstable period of ownership. Deed records indicate that for brief period in the 1830's and 1840's, the tavern and the adjacent toll-keeper's property were owned by the same owners: James Caldwell and later James V. Emlen. Both properties seemed to be the scene of intense real-estate speculation. Until his death ca. 1840, James Caldwell also owned the 180-acre tract which included the 49-acre toll-keeper's property to the north and east of the 65-acre tavern property. As a result of an Orphan's Court settlement, 66 of the 180 acres (including a small stone house) were sold to James Emlen in 1843 (N.C.Co. Deeds, L5/19-22). In 1842, James Emlen had already purchased the tavern property from John S. Caldwell (N.C.Co. Deeds, K5/394). James Emlen sold the adjoining toll-keeper's property to James Armor in 1847. The tavern property was sold by sheriff's sale to Benjamin A. Janvier on May 31, 1848. This action was taken on behalf of Caleb Emlen to recover debts incurred by James Emlen who had apparently died by this time (N.C.Co. Deeds, Y5/212-214). Benjamin Janvier, in turn sold the property to Moses Journey on the same day, (N.C.Co. Deeds, Y5/197-198).

With Moses Journey's purchase of the property in 1848, the tavern entered into a stable period of ownership until 1892 when the estate was sold at a public sale after the death of Journey's widow, Margaret. During the Journey's period of ownership, Moses Journey was evidently a proprietor of the tavern. A tavern license was granted to Moses Journey between 1850 and 1855, (Shogren: 1987, p.11). However, H. Eckel's 1860 survey of the Wilmington and Brandywine Railroad indicates that by that time, the "Oak Hill Inn" was under the proprietorship of G. Lobb.

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During the Journey's period of occupancy, the tavern became known as the Oak Hill Inn, a name which has persisted until the present day. On Rea and Price's 1849 map of the property, Moses Journey's property is clearly labelled as Oak Hill Inn. This label was probably chosen because of its proximity to the Oak Hill School and to distinguish it from the Springers. Deed referenes for 1892, 1918, and 1924 continue to name the property as "Oak Hill" or "Oak Hill Inn." The 1868 Beers Atlas refers to the property as "Oak Hill Inn" owned by "M. Journey." However, the 1881 Hopkins map lists the property "Mrs. M. Journey" with 64 acres. By 1893, the Baist Atlas labels the property as simply "Mrs. Journey's Heirs." The lack of identification of the property as a tavern on the 1881 and 1893 maps may indicate that the building had ceased to function as a tavern. With the spread of railroad lines, the popularity of rural roadside taverns seemed to decrease.

In addition to operating the tavern, Moses Journey farmed the 65-acre parcel until his death circa 1880. Three walls of his 1852 barn still stand. Information obtained from the 1850 Agricultural Census for the State of Delaware indicate that at that time, Moses Journey farmed 160 acres, 100 of which were improved and 60 which were unimproved. The total value of his property at that time was \$8,000.00. By 1860, the value of his property had declined to \$7,000.00 according to the Agricultural Census for that year. Information obtained from the 1880 Agricultural Census for the State of Delaware shows that the acreage had been reduced to 62 and that farm labor had been employed. Margaret Journey was listed as the owner, reflecting Moses Journey's death.

It is uncertain whether the tavern continued its operation after the Journey's ownership ended in 1892. James Brown purchased the 65-acre parcel known as "Oak Hill," at a public sale after Margaret Journey's death. According to the deed, the sale was consistent with the provisions of Moses Journey's will. (N.C.Co. Deed S15/456). In 1898, after James Brown's death, the property was again sold at public sale to James Brown, Jr., Isaac R. Brown, Samuel T. Brown and William Brown, (N.C.Co. Deeds, Y17/243-247). Their relationship to the previous James Brown is unknown. The property description for the 65-acre parcel mentions a, "2½ story stone dwelling-house, a stone barn and shedding and other buildings." By this time, the house had been covered with stucco giving the impression that the entire building was built of stone. The reference is also significant since it describes a dwelling-house rather than a tavern, giving another indication that the tavern was no longer in operation.

Anna Swift Rupert purchased the property from Isaac R. Brown et al in 1918. (N.C.Co. Deeds, P27/442). This deed again refers to a "2½ story stone dwelling house," and refers to the 1918 survey which depicts the buildings on the property. This survey indicates that the Ruperts also owned the adjacent James Armor property and had purchased many other properties in the vicinity. The Oak Hill property was transferred to the Rupert Investment Co. in 1924, a trust held by Charles G. and Anna Swift Rupert.

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In 1933, the Fuddy Family moved to the Oak Hill Inn, which they rented from the Rupert Investment Co. Mary Fuddy married Mr. Kennard Potts, the present owner, in 1939 and they purchased the property in 1947 from the Rupert Trust.

During the post World War II period, the Ruperts were gradually divesting themselves of their trust properties including the tract surrounding the Oak Hill Inn which became the Sedgely Farms Subdivision. Mrs. Mary M. Potts lived with her husband in the house until her death in 1988. Mr. Kennard Potts is still living in the former tavern.

Comprehensive Planning

The Charles Springer Tavern is located in the central portion of Delaware Piedmont Zone I. The period of significance for the building falls within three of the comprehensive planning chronological time periods:

- 1730 - 1770± Intensified and Durable Occupation
- 1770 - 1830± Early Industrialization
- 1830 - 1880± Industrialization and Early Urbanization

The estimated date of construction of the earliest log section of the house is circa 1750. The early log house relates to two historic themes: Settlement Patterns and Demographic Changes (11), and Architecture, Engineering and Decorative Arts (12) during the 1730 - 1770± Intensified and Durable Occupation period.

The construction date of the 1780 stone section is documented by the datestone in its west gable. The construction date of this addition coincided with a major rebuilding period in the Northern Piedmont zone. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries less permanent buildings such as log were replaced by more permanent construction such as stone. Because the construction date of the 1780 stone section is known to have occurred during the 1770 - 1830± Early Industrialization period, Architecture, Engineering and Decorative Arts (12) emerges as an important historic theme for this period.

The construction date of the stone lean-to and the renovations of the log section are uncertain. The construction of the stone lean-to and the unification of the three building sections by the raising of the log section's roof, walls and floors and the application of stucco also related to the historic theme: Architecture, Engineering and Decorative Arts (12). These improvements occurred either within the 1770 - 1830± Early Industrialization period or the 1830 - 1880± Industrialization and Early Urbanization period.

The construction of Moses Journey's stone barn is also associated with the rebuilding period. The 1852 datestone in its gable documents that its construction occurred within the 1830 - 1880± Industrialization and Early Urbanization period. The construction of this barn relates to two historic themes: Architecture, Engineering

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and Decorative Arts (12) and Agriculture (01).

A major theme associated with the Charles Springer Tavern is that of Transportation and Communication (10). The tavern and its ancillary buildings comprised a tavern-complex along Lancaster Turnpike, one of the first hard-surfaced toll-roads in northern Delaware. Documentary evidence indicates that the tavern served the needs of travellers on Lancaster Turnpike from at least 1802 to circa 1880. Lancaster Turnpike functioned as a toll-road from 1809 to 1877 roughly coinciding with the operation of the tavern. The Transportation and Communication Theme (10) occurred within two comprehensive planning chronological time periods: 1770 - 1830± Early Industrialization and 1830 - 1880± Industrialization and Early Urbanization.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Primary

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Delaware State Archives. Orphans Court Records, James Caldwell Book S, Vol. 1, p. 197-200.

Delaware State Archives. Probate Records, Charles Springer and Thomas Springer.

Geneology Files, Historic Society of Delaware Library.

New Castle County Recorder of Deeds, Land Records.

New Castle County Register of Wills, Charles Springer Book P, p. 125, and Thomas Springer Book S, p. 30

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State historic preservation office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government New Castle County, Planning Dept.

University

Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property Approximately 2 acres

UTM References

A

1	8	4	4	6	8	5	1	0	4	4	0	1	2	9	0
Zone			Easting				Northing								

B

Zone			Easting				Northing								

C

Zone			Easting				Northing								

D

Zone			Easting				Northing								

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Wilson, Valerie Cesna/Historic Preservation Planners
organization New Castle County Planning date July 27, 1990
street & number 2701 Capitol Trail telephone 302-366-7780
city or town Newark state DE zip code 19711

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 2

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 3

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 2

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for the Charles Springer Tavern includes four pieces of property: 1) The entire 1.12 acre parcel on which the tavern stands (tax parcel 07-031.20-011), 2) The southern third of the parcel on which the barn ruin stands (tax parcel 07-031.20-008), 3) That portion of the parcel on which the springhouse ruin stands, lying on the southwest side of Little Falls Creek (tax parcel 07-032.10-001, 4) The highway right-of-way lying between the southern property lines of the three building parcels and the northern edge of the shoulder of Lancaster Pike (State Route 48). The boundary encloses approximately two acres. The exhibit titled "New Castle County Tax Parcel Map, Revised 6-21-79," illustrates the boundary more clearly.

Boundary Justification

The nominated boundaries are drawn to include the minimum area that encloses the tavern, its contributing outbuilding ruins, and its historic setting. The entire legal parcel for the tavern is included because it is relatively small. It represents only a small fraction of the original tract. The sites of six non-extant outbuildings are scattered over this parcel, and the potential for archaeological remains is also a consideration in including the entire parcel. Only a portion of the two parcels containing the barn ruin and the springhouse ruin are included in the boundary; the excluded portions of those parcels contain modern dwellings that have no historic relationship to the Tavern. The highway right-of-way is purposely included within the boundaries, even though there are no buildings on it. Because the Tavern is significant to the history of Lancaster Pike, its physical relationship to the road is an important aspect of that history.

Charles Springer Tavern

Deed References

Charles Springer Tavern
 4921 Lancaster Pike
 Wilmington, DE 19807
 Tax Parcel: 07-031.20.011

January 15, 1947 (Book U-46, Page 337)
 Grantor: Rupert Investment Company, a corporation of the
 State of Delaware
 Grantee: Mr. Kennard H. Potts and Mrs. Mary Morgan Potts
 (Husband and wife)
 Consideration: \$10.00
 Parcel: 37,923 sq. ft.

March 27, 1924 (Book X-32, Page 41)
 Grantor: Charles G. Rupert and Anna Swift Rupert
 Grantee: Rupert Investment Company
 Consideration: N/A
 Parcel: "Property known as Oak Hill"

May 13, 1918 (Book P-27, Page 442)
 Grantor: Isaac R. Brown, et al
 Grantee: Anna Swift Rupert (wife of Charles Rupert)
 Consideration: \$21,287.50
 Parcel: "Property known as Oak Hill," 65 acres, two
 roads, 16 perches, 2-1/2 story stone
 dwelling-house.

October 10, 1898 (Book Y-17, Page 243)
 Grantor: Walter H. Hayes and James Hoffecker, Jr., Trustees
 of the late James Brown
 Grantee: James Brown, Jr., Isaac R. Brown, Samuel T. Brown
 and William Brown (highest bidders at a public
 sale)
 Consideration: \$50.00 plus \$3,000.00 mortgage and accrued
 interest
 Parcel: "Property known as Oak Hill," 65 acres, two roads,
 16 perches, 2-1/2 story stone dwelling-house.

April 12, 1892 (Book S-15, Page 456)
 Grantor: Benjamin Nichols, trustee
 Grantee: James Brown
 Consideration: \$6,000.00
 Parcel: 65 acres known as "Oak Hill"
 James Brown was the highest bidder at a public sale of Moses
 Journey's (d) estate. Moses Journey had provided in his
 will that the property be sold at a public sale and that the

proceeds be divided among his children after his wife, Margaret's death. There are no previous deed references in this deed.

May 31, 1848 (Book Y-5, Page 197)

Grantor: Benjamin A. Janvier and Margaret B. Janvier

Grantee: Moses Journey

Consideration: \$4,000.00

Parcel: 65 acres, 2 roads, 16 perches

There is no specific previous deed reference in this document. There is a mention of a "deed poll," for a sheriff sale by George Platt.

May 31, 1848 (Book Y-5, Page 212)

Grantor: George Platt, Sheriff of New Castle County

Grantee: Benjamin A. Janvier (highest bidder)

Consideration: \$1,900.00

Parcel: 65 acres, 2 roads, 16 perches

There is no specific previous deed reference. This sheriff sale was held so that Caleb Emlen could recover a \$1,850.00 debt owed by James V. Emlen, the previous owner, "late of New Castle County."

March 28, 1842 (Book K-5, Page 394)

Grantor: John S. Caldwell and Rebecca Caldwell (husband and wife)

Grantee: James V. Emlen

Consideration: \$3,000.00

Parcel: 65 acres, 2 roads, 16 perches.

There was no specific previous deed reference in this document.

April 9, 1839 (Book C-5, Page 33)

Grantor: James Caldwell and his wife, Sarah

Grantee: John S. Caldwell

Consideration: \$1,125.00

Parcel: 65 acres, 2 roads, 16 perches

James and John S. Caldwell had purchased the property as "tenants in common" in 1838. With this transaction, John S. Caldwell was purchasing an "undivided half-share." This document also provided a summary of ownership stating that the Caldwells had purchased the property from Charles Springer who had inherited it from Thomas Springer.

October 8, 1838 (Book B-5, Page 219)

Grantor: Charles and Eliza Springer

Grantee: John S. and James Caldwell (tenants in common).

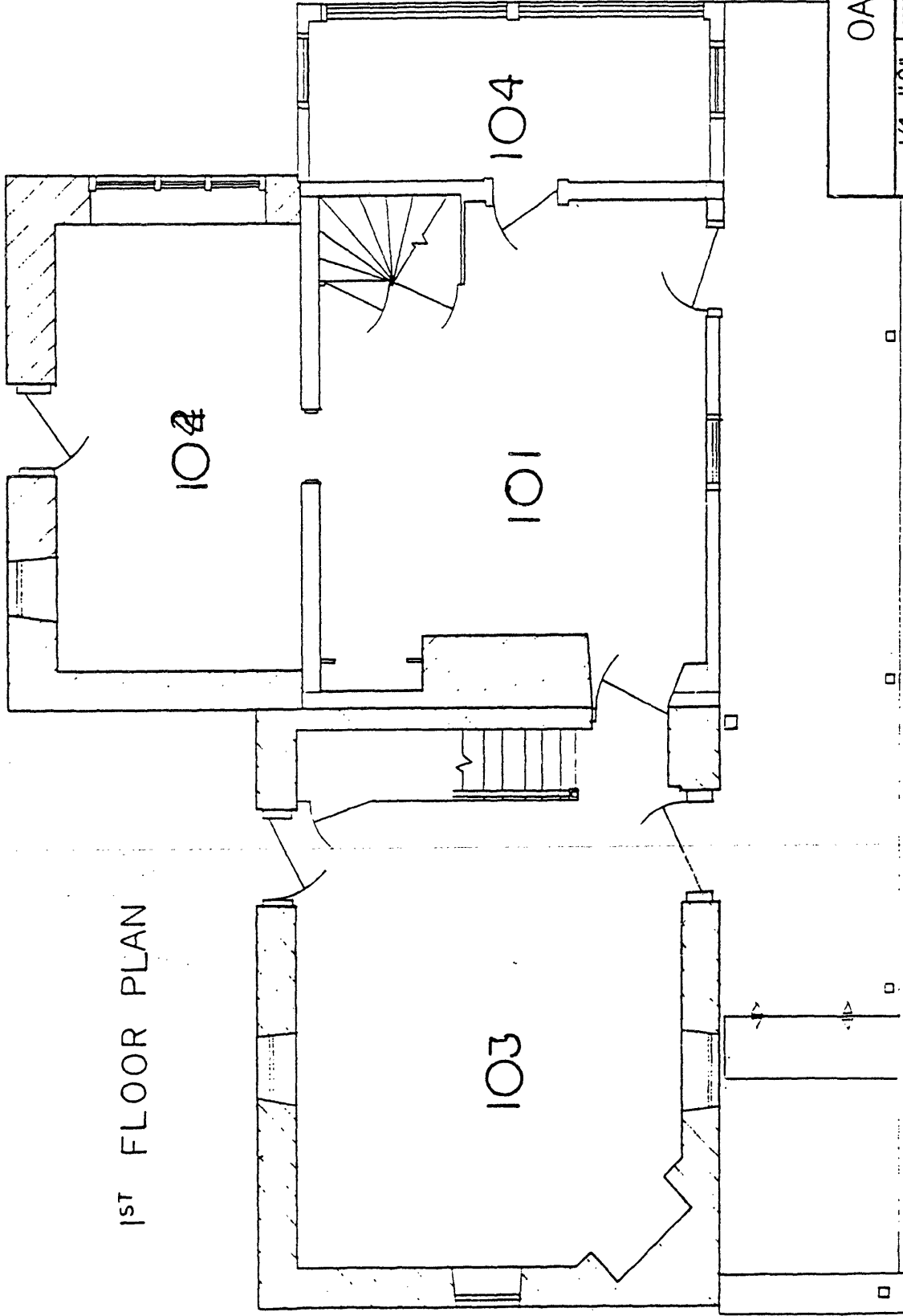
Consideration: \$2,150.00

Parcel: 65 acres, 2 roads, 16 perches.

There is no previous specific deed reference. There is mention of Thomas Springer's 1824 will to his son,

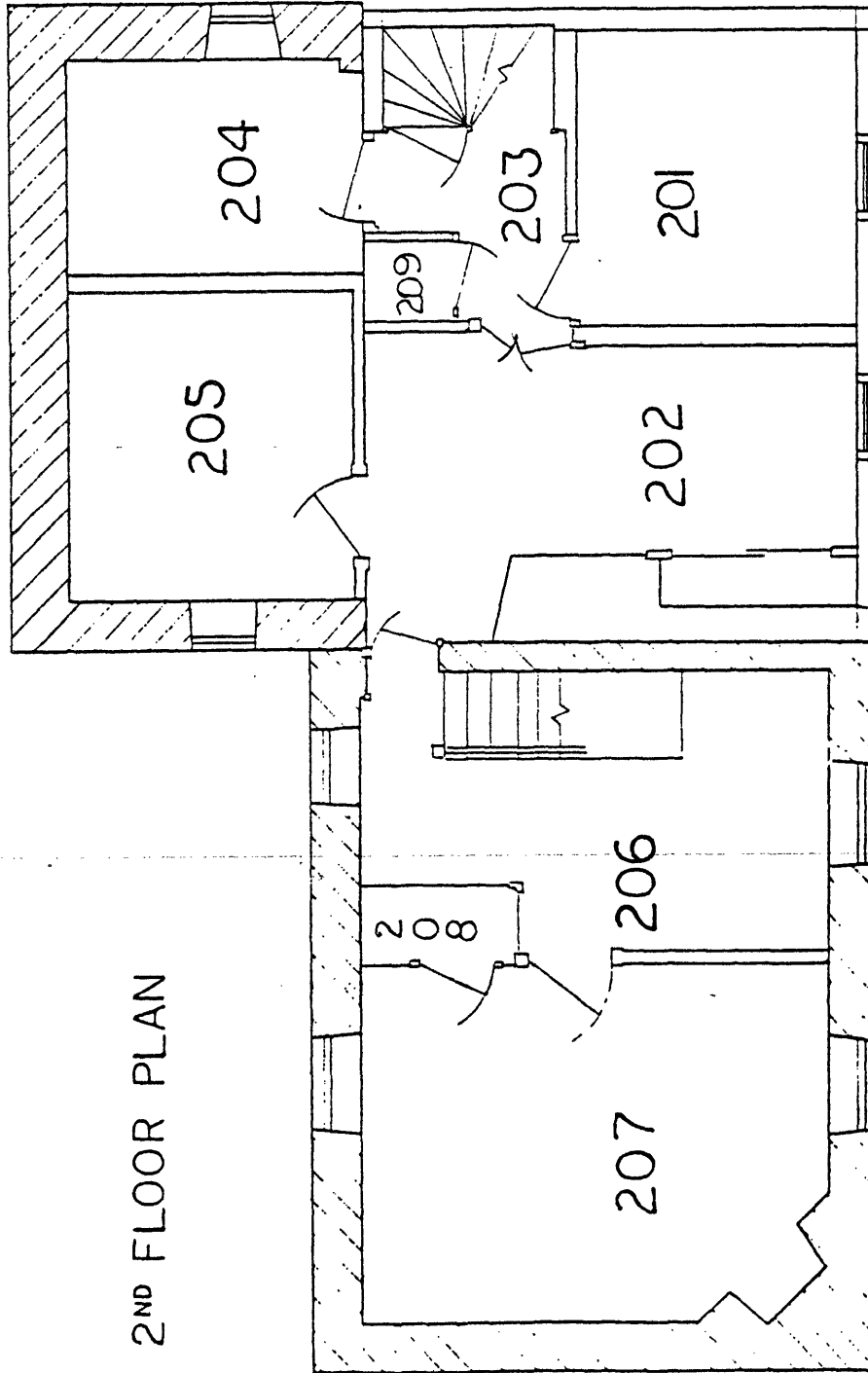
Charles Springer Will Books S-30. Thomas Springer, in turn, inherited the property from his father, Charles Springer, circa 1802.

1ST FLOOR PLAN



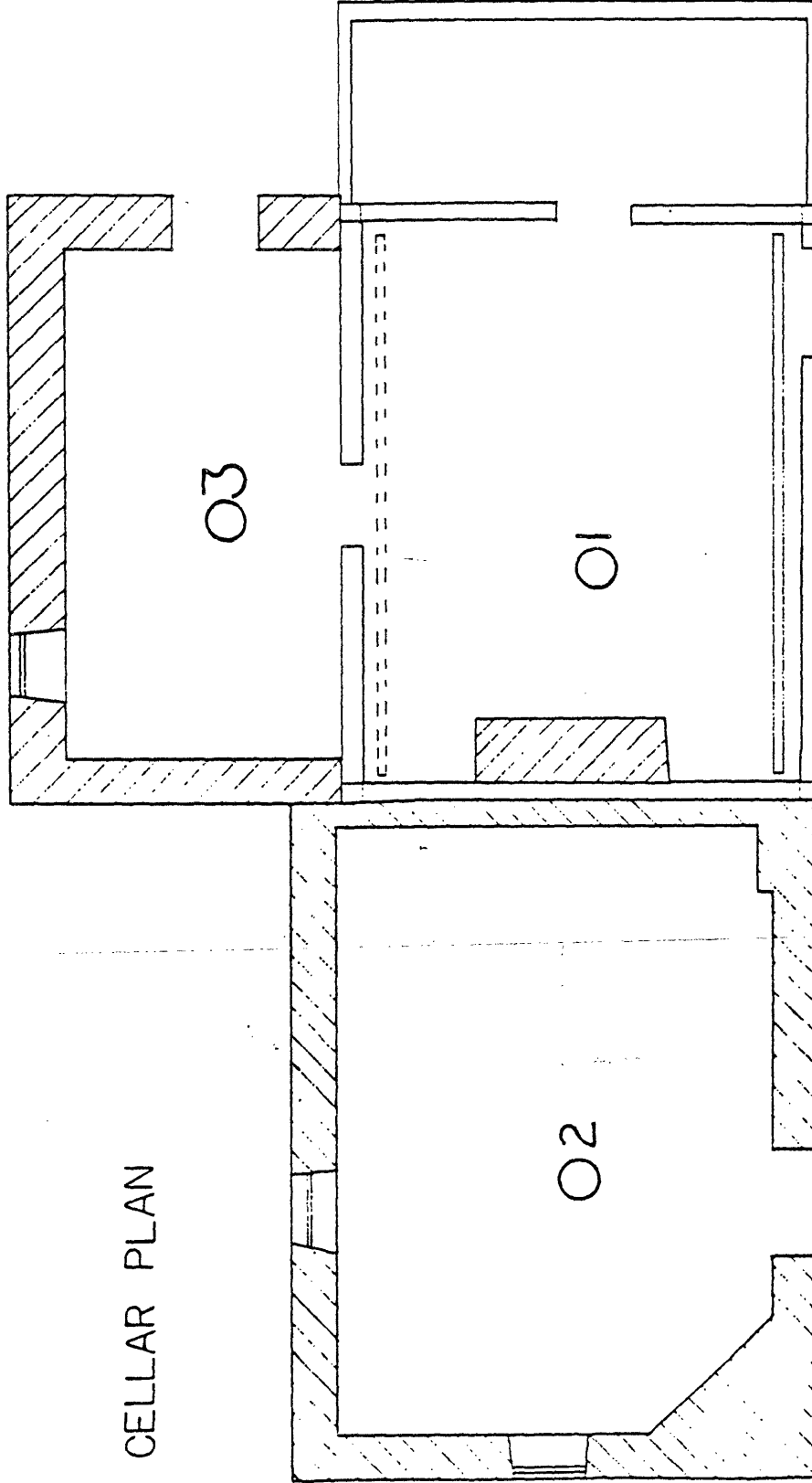
OAK HILL INN	
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"	APPROVED BY
DATE: 12/9/1987	SMS
	SWS
4291 LANCASTER PIKE	
WILMINGTON, DE.	
DRAWING NUMBER	2 OF 4

2ND FLOOR PLAN



OAK HILL INN	
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"	APPROVED BY
DATE: 12/9/1987	SMS
4291 LANCASTER PIKE	
WILMINGTON, DE.	
DRAWING NUMBER	3 OF 4

CELLAR PLAN



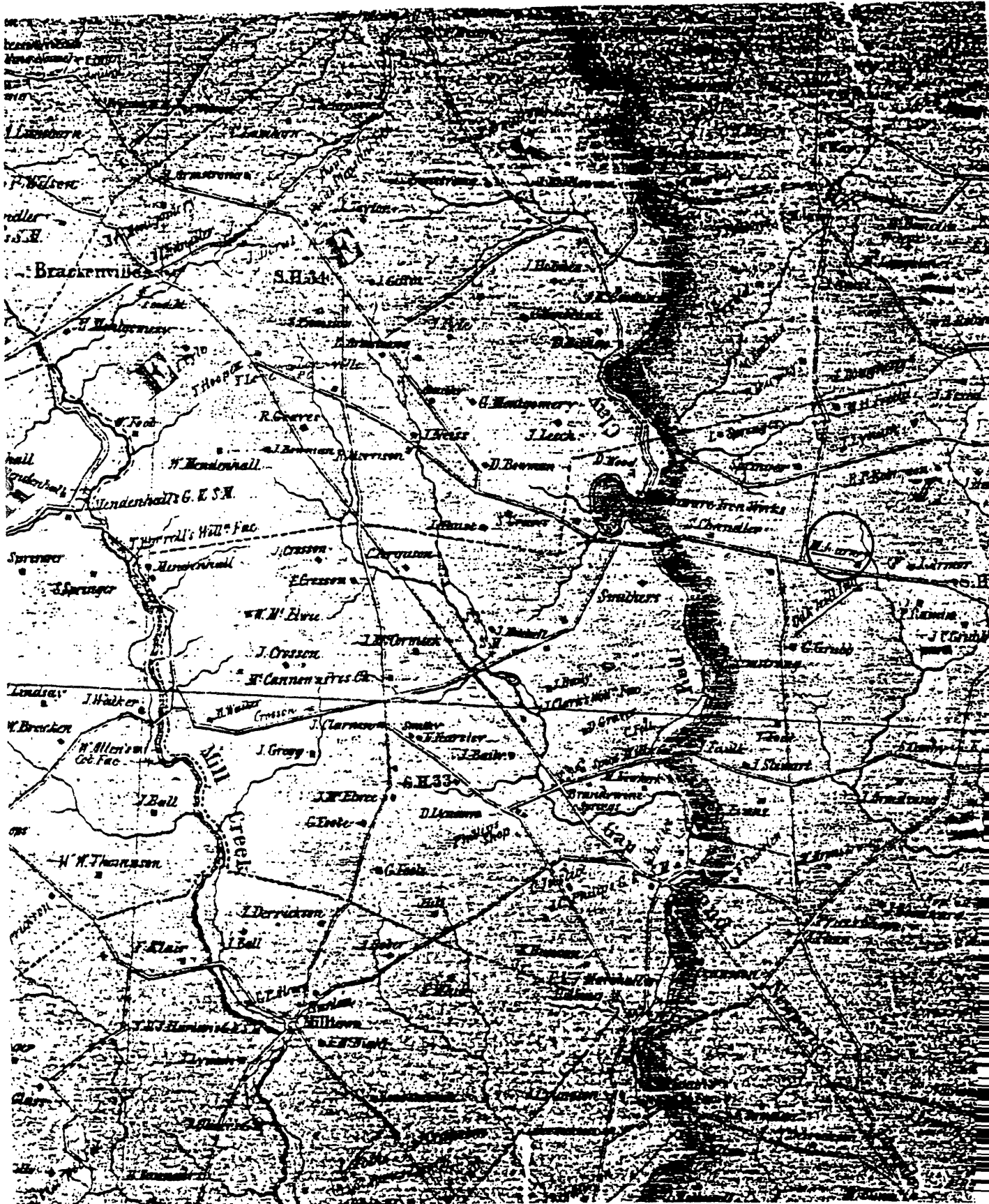
OAK HILL INN

SCALE: 1/4" = 1'0" APPROVED BY
DATE: 12 9 1987

DRAWN BY SMS
SWS

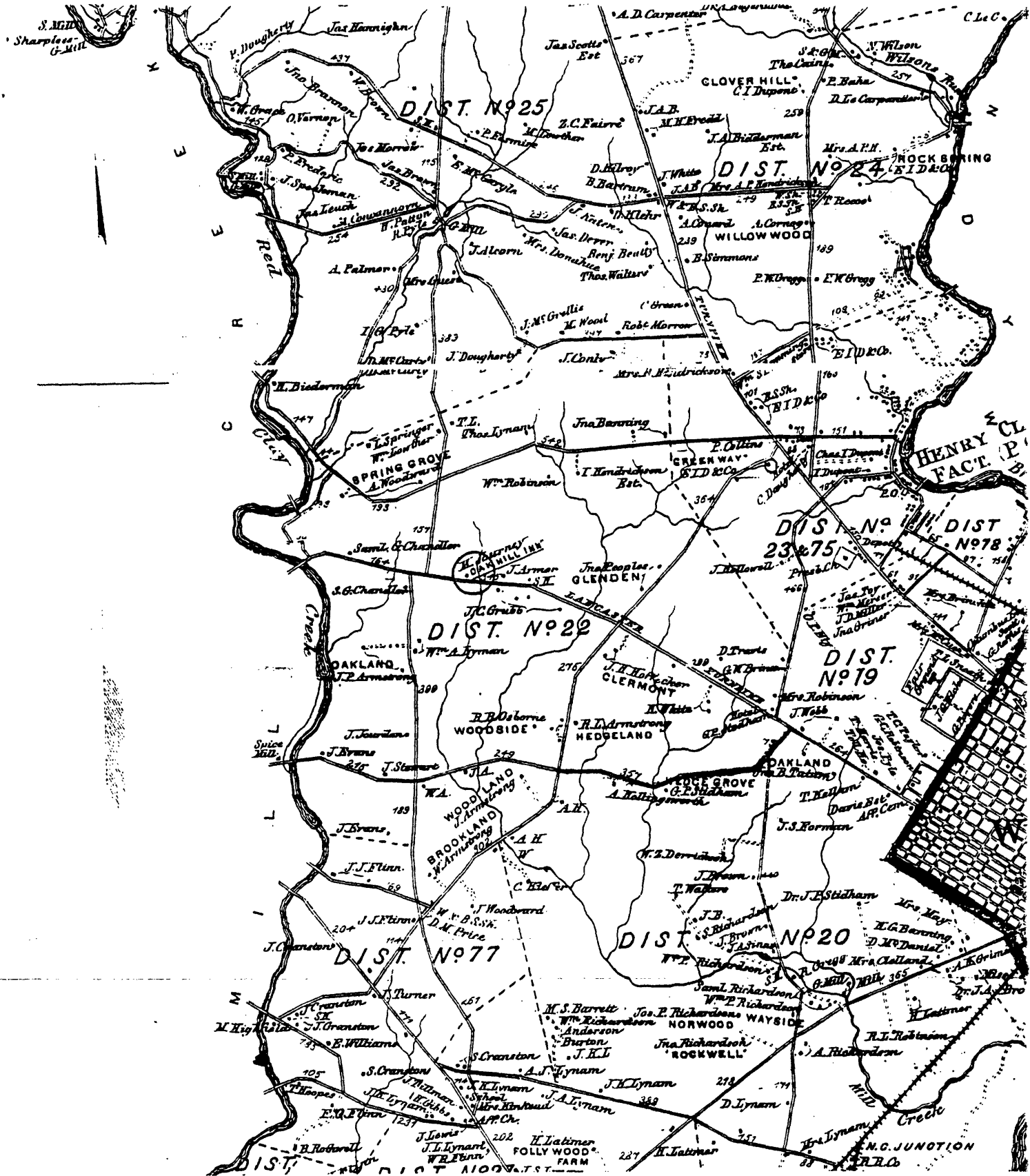
4291 LANCASTER PIKE
WILMINGTON, DE.

DRAWING NUMBER
1 OF 4



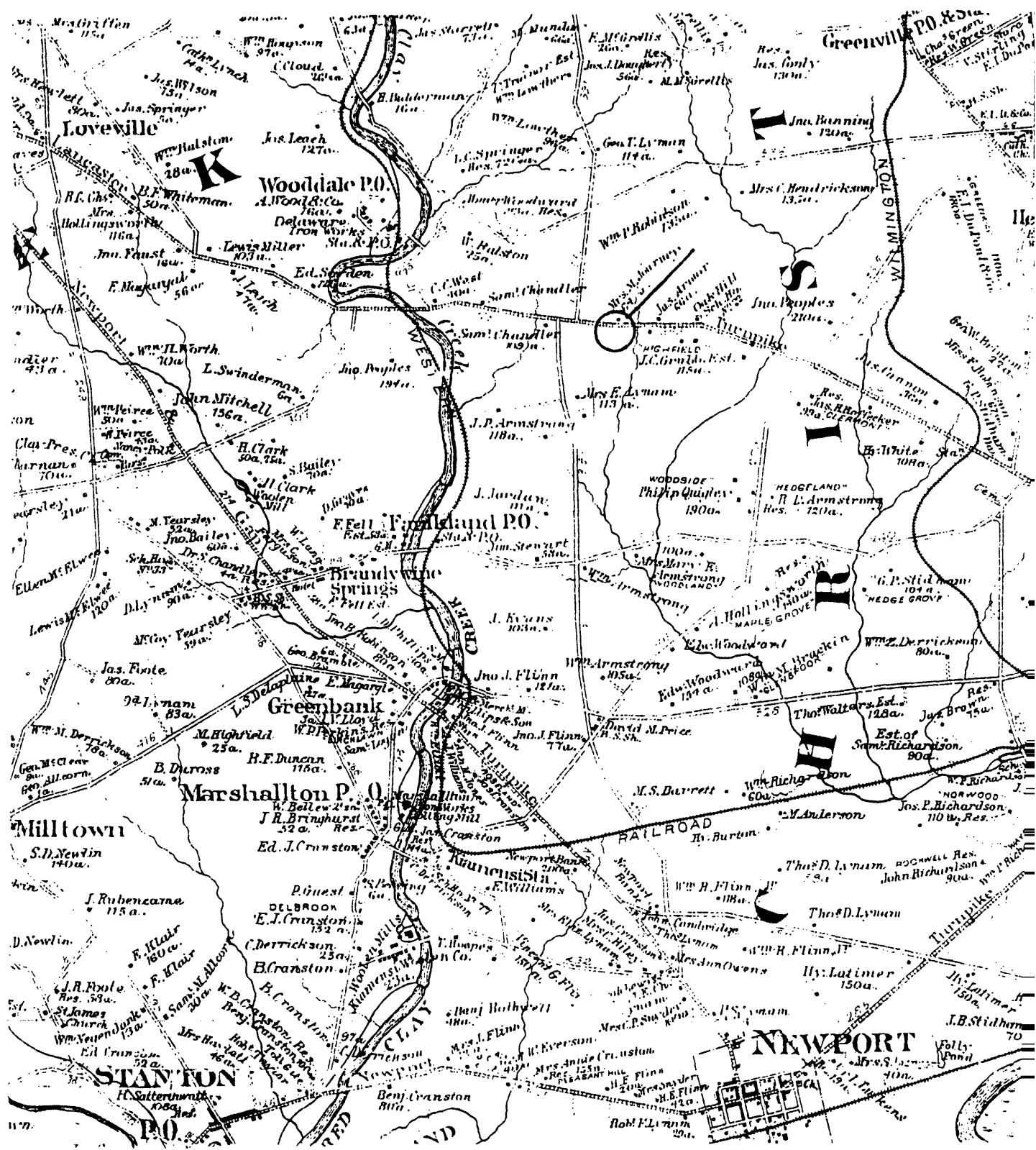
Samuel Rea and Jacob Price Map of New Castle County,
 Delaware Philadelphia: Smith and Wistar, 1849
 Scale: 1 1/4 inch = 1 mile





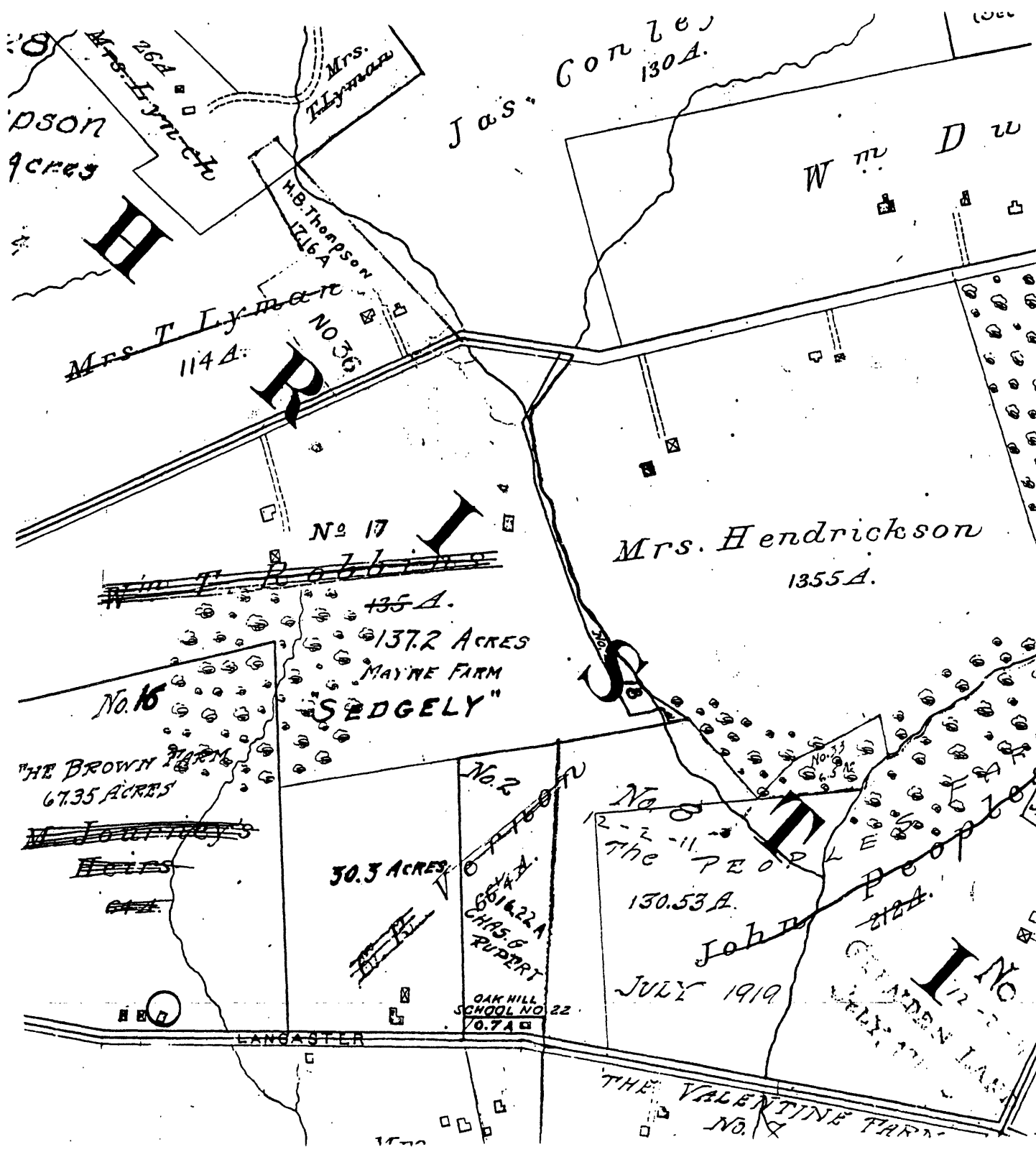
D. G. Beers Atlas of the State of Delaware
 Philadelphia: Pomeroy and Beers, 1868
 Scale: 1½ inch = 1 mile





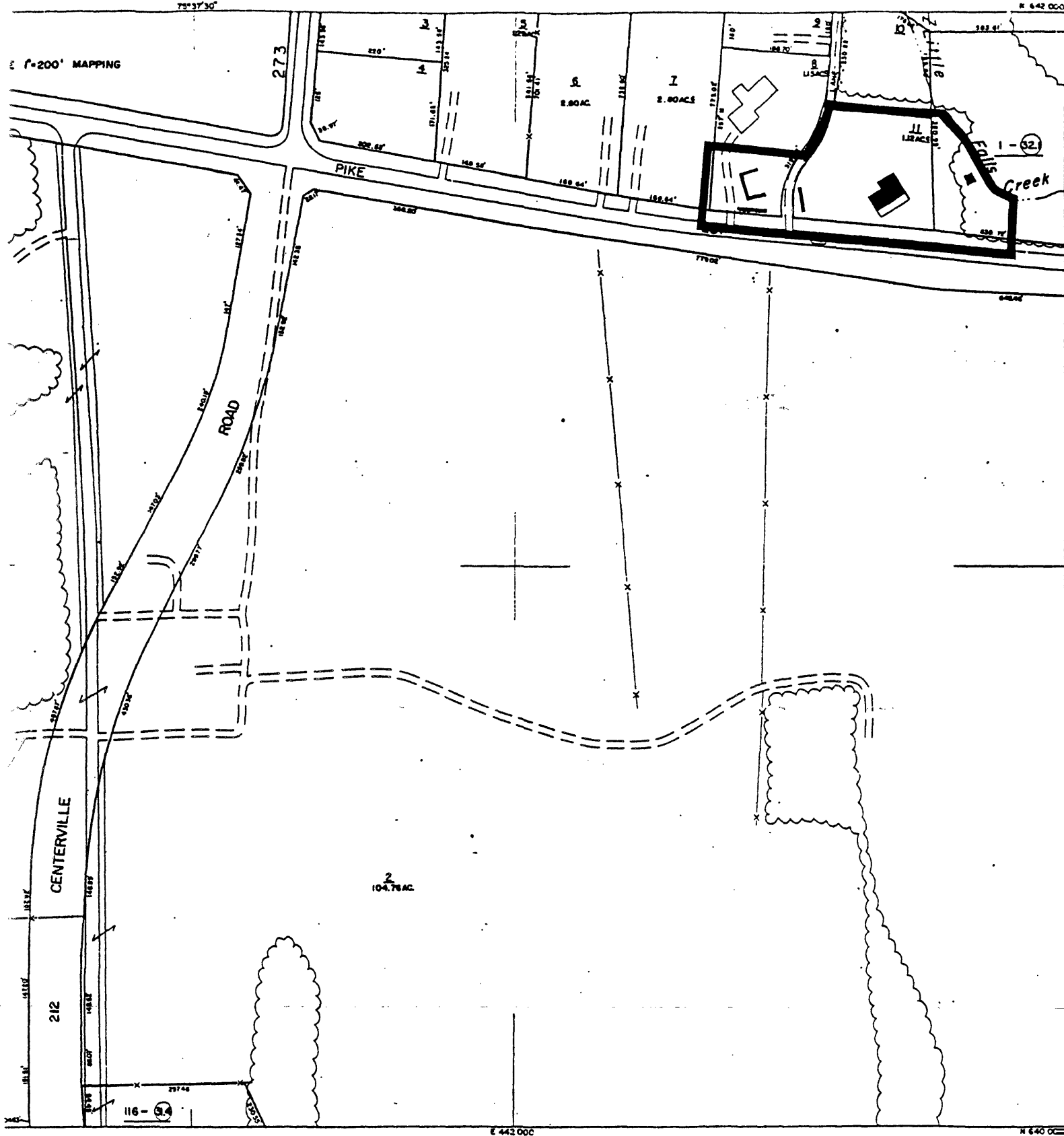
G. M. Hopkins, Map of New Castle County, Delaware
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 Scale: 1-3/4 inch = 1 mile





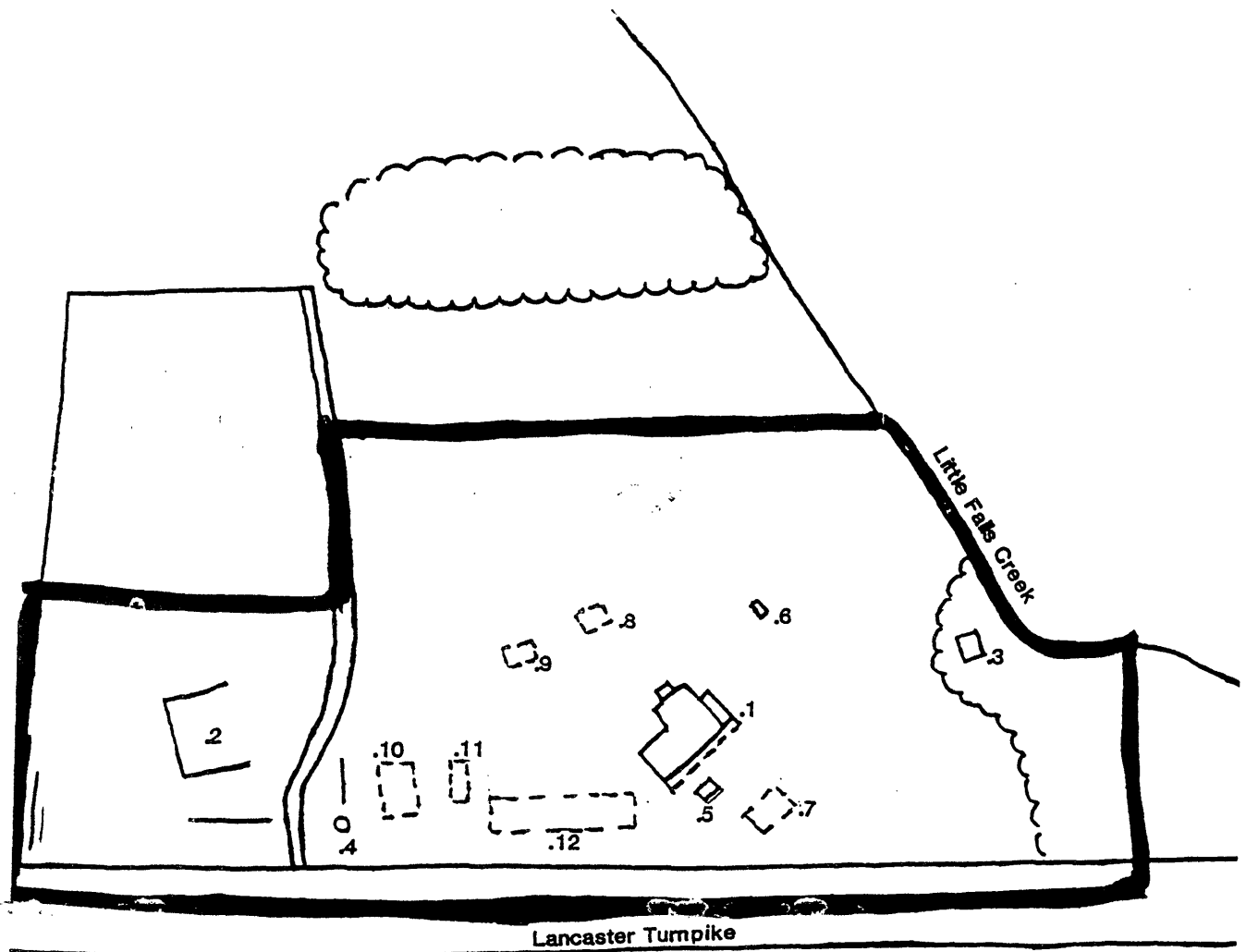
G. William Baist Atlas of New Castle County, Delaware
 Philadelphia: G. William Baist, 1893
 Scale: 1-3/4 inch = 1 mile





Charles Springer House and Tavern (N-507 and N-508)
 New Castle County Property Tax Map
 Revised 6/21/79

Parcels 07-031.20-011, 07-031.20-008, 07-032.10-001
 Approximate Scale: 1 inch = 225 feet



SKETCH PLAN OF THE CHARLES SPRINGER HOUSE AND TAVERN
(N:507.1 - 507.12)

- .1 (N:507.1) The Charles Springer House and Tavern
- .2 (N:507.2
also N:508) Moses Journey's Barn Ruins
- .3 (N:507.3) Springhouse Ruins
- .4 (N:507.4) Four-Mile Marker
- .5 (N:507.5) Fruit and Vegetable Stand
- .6 (N:507.6) Frame Shed
- .7 (N:507.7) Site of the Blacksmith Shop
- .8 (N:507.8) Site of the Smokehouse
- .9 (N:507.9) Site of the Privy
- .10 (N:507.10) Site of the Small Frame Barn
- .11 (N:507.11) Site of the Frame Corn Crib
- .12 (N:507.12) Site of the Carriage Shed

Not to Scale

Anne Wilson
3/30/90

CHARLES
 SPRINGER
 HOUSE AND
 TAVERN (N-507)
 WILM. SOUTH
 PA.-DEL.
 QUADRANGLE
 7.5 MINUTE
 SERIES
 SCALE 1:24000
 1967 PHOTO-
 REVISED 1987
 18/446850/4401290



(NEWARK EAST)
 5863 II NW

Mapped, edited and published by the Geological Survey
 Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA

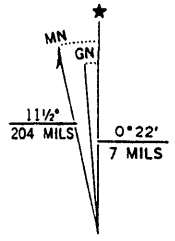
Topography in Delaware by planetable surveys 1935-1936
 Topography in Pennsylvania by photogrammetric methods
 from aerial photographs taken 1950. Field checked 1954
 Revised from aerial photographs taken 1965. Field checked 1967

Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Delaware
 coordinate system and Pennsylvania coordinate system, south zone
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
 zone 18, shown in blue. 1927 North American Datum
 To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
 move the projection lines 6 meters south and
 32 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
 generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
 the National or State reservations shown on this map



UTM GRID AND 1987 MAGNETIC NORTH
 DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET