

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

Johnson Hall National Historic Landmark
historic

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Hall Avenue, West State Street and Johnson Avenue not for publication

city, town Johnstown vicinity of

state New York code 31 county Fulton code 075

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple (public and private); see Continuation 4-1

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Fulton County Courthouse

street & number West State Street

city, town Johnstown state New York

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic American Buildings Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1936 and 1940 federal state county local

depository for survey records Division of Prints & Photographs, Library of Congress

city, town Washington state DC

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
moved date

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Johnson Hall, located just under a mile northwest of Johnstown, New York is an 18th century Georgian home of imposing proportions, flanked by two dependencies and situated in a park-like landscape of more than 18 acres. The house sits atop a small knoll, faces southeast and is at the northwestern end of a circular drive that projects northward from Hall Avenue. To the west and north of the house is a modern caretaker's house with a small garage.

In plan, the site approximates an acute triangle whose tip is to the south. Hall Avenue, West State Street and Johnson Avenue partially define the triangle, although Hall Avenue bends westerly where the drive to the house intersects it. All the buildings within the landmark are east of Hall Avenue. A well-maintained lawn with sporadic trees is to the southeast (in front) of the house; grassland and woods are to the northwest. Northeast of the house Hall Creek flows from northwest to southeast through a densely wooded and overgrown ravine, joining Cayadutta Creek in downtown Johnstown. West of Hall Avenue, in the quadrilateral created by this street with Johnson Avenue and West State Street, is an expanse of lawn interspersed and edged with trees. Several picnic tables are distributed throughout this area and there is a gravel parking lot in the northern corner. A stone-built overlook is sited on the western edge of the property giving views north to the house and south toward the High School. At the southern tip of the landmark property, in the acute angle formed by the intersection of Hall Avenue and West State Street, an early 20th century statue of Sir William Johnson provides an appropriate introduction to the visitor approaching the site from Johnstown.

The main house at Johnson Hall (HABS NY-3107) is rectangular, 2 1/2 stories tall with a hipped roof, and is five bays wide. It is built of wood, atop a rubble foundation, but the wood siding is rusticated in simulation of ashlar blocks. The house is two bays deep.

The present day Johnson Hall is essentially an 18th century structure. In the 19th century, however, the building underwent a series of evolutionary changes, many of which were reversed by restorations in the early part of this century and in the 1950's. Early 19th century exterior views of the house show it to have been much as at present. Intervening photographs, however, of circa 1890, portray a Georgian house heavily encrusted with Victorian details. These included two-story projecting bay windows on both the front and rear of the house (in each instance, replacing the two windows north of the doors); a one-story projecting bay on the left (southwest) facade; an imbricated slate roof with tiny gabled dormers; molded window cornices; an elaborate wooden front porch; and, above all, a square belvedere.

(See Continuation Sheet 7-1)

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
			<input type="checkbox"/> science
			<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
			<input type="checkbox"/> social/
			<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
			<input type="checkbox"/> theater
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1763 Builder/Architect Samuel Fuller

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Johnson Hall was built in 1763 as the home of Sir William Johnson (1715-1774), one of the most important figures in the British colonization of North America. Not only did he win acclaim in battle against the French, but he was a trusted and respected negotiator with the Native American tribes. Johnson played a major role in maintaining good relations with the Iroquois Confederacy, with far reaching consequences for the eventual settlement of North America.

* * *

William Johnson came to the New World from his native Ireland in 1738 to oversee his uncle's lands near Amsterdam (NY). The following year he purchased a tract nearby where he built the first of his three homes, Mount Johnson, in 1743. There he founded and managed a flourishing trade in furs. Furs, in fact, were the basis of his considerable fortune, and allowed him to become a significant landowner; his holdings are said to have reached 750,000 acres at one point.

Fur and land transactions naturally brought Johnson into contact with the owners of those two commodities, the Native Americans. The tribes knew him as Warighajage, meaning "man who does much business" but Johnson also brought a certain amount of altruism to his dealings with them. Furthermore, it was clearly in his interest to avoid mistrust and hostilities and, if possible, encourage tribal alignment with England rather than France.

Throughout the 1750's Johnson cultivated his relations with the Iroquois Confederacy to the extent that they would become valuable to the British cause in the French and Indian War and, indirectly, to himself. In 1754 he participated in the Albany Congress and helped to formulate British Indian policy. In the following year he was appointed Superintendent of Indian Affairs in the lands north of the Ohio. This would become a position of considerable importance after the French and Indian War (1754-1763).

Johnson's military role in that war, while not as spectacular as that of Wolfe or Montcalm, nonetheless earned him a baronetcy. In September of 1755, at the Battle of Lake George, he defeated the French led by Baron Dieskau. His military skills were combined effectively with his expertise in tribal diplomacy in 1759 when he captured Fort Niagara at the head of the largest Native American force ever assembled under the British flag.

(See Continuation Sheet 8-1)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(See Continuation Sheet 9-1)

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 22+/-
Quadrangle name Peck Lake, NY

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	1 8	5 5 0 4 2 0	4 7 6 2 7 0 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	1 8	5 5 0 0 7 0	4 7 6 2 5 0 0
E			
G			

B	1 8	5 5 0 4 8 0	4 7 6 2 1 0 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	1 8	5 5 0 1 7 0	4 7 6 2 6 8 0
F			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

(See Continuation Sheet 10-1)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Charles H. Ashton and Richard W. Hunter

organization Heritage Studies, Inc. date October 15, 1984

street & number RD 6, Box 864, Mapleton Road telephone (609)452-1754

city or town Princeton state New Jersey

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

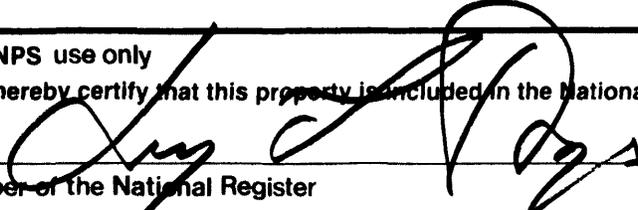
national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title _____ date _____

For NPS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

 date 6/10/85

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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Publicly Owned

People of the State of New York (Office of General Services),
Empire State Plaza, Tower Building, Albany, NY 12242
Section 162.15, Block 2, Lots 1 and 32

City of Johnstown, City Hall, Johnstown, NY 12095
Section 162.19, Block 2, Lot 1

Privately Owned

Richard and Margaret Sescovic, 50 Briggs Street, Johnstown, NY 12095
Section 162.15, Block 3, Lot 2

Edward and Ruth White, 137 Hall Avenue, Johnstown, NY 12095
Section 162.15, Block 3, Lot 31

Johnstown Historical Society, 17 North William Street, Johnstown,
NY 12095
Section 162.15, Block 3, Lot 33

CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIAL

Donald Murphy, Mayor of the City of Johnstown, City Hall, Johnstown,
NY 12095

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The first phase of restoration began in 1906 following the acquisition of the property by the State of New York. Restoration work included removal of all three projecting bays; removal of the belvedere, slate roof and gables; and installation of the sash now present. Some interior restoration was done at the same time.

The property was transferred to the Education Department in 1946, and further restoration took place, mostly in 1952 and 1953. This work was centered around the construction of two new chimneys with the result that the basement kitchen and all eight fireplaces on the upper floors were built. Most or all of each of the eight fireplace walls were built at the same time, although in some instances parts of the walls existed. The wall which now creates the two rooms on the first floor to the left (south) of the central hall had been removed at an earlier date, creating one large room running the depth of the house. The restoration thus recreated what are known as the Blue Parlor and the children's room. Despite the 19th century alterations and 20th century restorations, a great deal of fabric believed to be original survives. This includes the paneled wainscoting in both the upstairs and downstairs halls, and the paneled wainscoting and plaster work on the walls which do not contain fireplaces.

As seen by the modern visitor, the central entrance on the main (southeast) facade is within a classically-derived surround which includes fluted pilasters and a triangular pediment with dentils and modillions. The handling of the order, however, shows a curious departure from classical precedent: the pilasters actually support the frieze (which is scored to simulate a stone flat arch) and the architrave is between the pilaster capitals. Flanking the entry are two narrow 6/6 windows (each sash two panes wide and three tall). Other first floor windows on this facade are 12/12 and all have three-panel shutters.

The second floor is similar to the first, although the five major windows are 8/12 with two-panel shutters. The narrow windows flanking the central opening are repeated from the first floor but are 4/6. At eaves level the house is encircled by a modillion cornice, which is repeated at a smaller scale at the break in the roof's hip.

The rear (northwest) facade is at least as grand as the front, if not more so. The same five-bay scheme is followed, complete with central entry; however, the door surround differs from its counterpart. It has the same triangular pediment with dentils and modillions, supported by fluted pilasters, but the architrave is plain and there is no frieze. Unlike the front, there are no small flanking windows. To the right (south) of the door is a recent ramp, running parallel to the facade.

(see Continuation Sheet 7-2)

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Windows on this facade are 12/12 and 8/12, with three and two-panel shutters, on the first and second floors respectively. The middle bay of the second floor contains a large Palladian window which lights the stair hall. Both side facades (northeast and southwest) are unusual in that they have no windows. Furthermore, the left (southwest) facade has four false windows, two per floor, represented by closed shutters.

The plan of the interior is the traditional Georgian arrangement of four rooms and center hall on each floor. On either side of the hall, the partition separating the front and rear rooms contains a chimney, so each of the eight rooms is served by a fireplace. The two brick chimneys thus rise through the roof on the building's transverse axis, about midway between the hall and the side facades. The stair is in the north (right rear) corner of the hall, and is a dog-leg in plan. It has turned balusters and a broad, shaped bannister whose several nicks and notches are traditionally ascribed to soldiers quartered here during the Revolutionary War.

The two two-story stone buildings to the rear and behind (north and west of) the house are both laid up in rubble, and their second story walls project slightly over those on the first. Both have a series of small vertical openings at eaves level, just below the hipped roof.

The north (original) stone building (HABS NY-392) has two 12/12 windows with flat-arch lintels on each of the side facades of the first floor, now sealed with diagonal-board shutters. The only other openings of consequence are on the front (southeast): there is a central door at ground level and another door on the second floor, both of diagonal boards. The roof is wood shingle. The interior is used as exhibit space on the first floor, although there is a stair to the second floor in the front left (south) corner. Walls and ceiling are plastered and the floor is carpeted.

The west (reconstructed) stone building dates from the late 1960's; its predecessor burned in 1866. Similar in size and mass to the surviving original, its appearance differs principally in the fenestration. The southwest facade (which faces the landscaped courtyard created by the three buildings) has a door at the west end and two 12/12 windows. There are no doors or windows on the southeast facade. On the northeast side, the land slopes away to allow for an exposed basement; it has a central door flanked by two 12/12 windows. The main level has three 12/12s. The rear (northwest) facade has only a single 12/12, centered on the main level. The hipped roof is sheathed in wood shingle and is pierced by a single brick chimney.

The caretaker's house, east of Johnson Hall, is frame, four bays wide, two bays deep, and two and a half stories with gabled roof. Built on a stone foundation which formerly held a barn, the house appears stylistically to date from early in this century. Its garage is of similar age.

(see Continuation Sheet 7-3)

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The statue of Sir William Johnson, at the extreme southern tip of the site, was erected in 1904. It is stone and portrays Johnson facing downhill toward his town. It stands about twelve feet tall including the base.

The Johnson Hall property has been subjected to fairly intensive archaeological investigations since World War II, especially in the 1950's. These investigations have concentrated mostly on the areas to the north and east of the house. Excavations were carried out prior to and during the reconstruction of the northern stone building to establish its location. Other features revealed by archaeological excavations prior to 1980 include: an unidentified outbuilding and section of road downhill (northeast) of the northern stone building; a tunnel between the main house and the west stone building; three structures, including a probable blacksmith shop, about 250 feet north northwest of the main house close to the creek; the remains of a stockade between the two stone buildings and to the west of the main house; an early block house or storehouse overlaid by what is reputed to be the 'Indian store'; a concrete fountain pool and other landscaping and garden features; and the remains of a number of other unidentified buildings.

Over the past three years (1981-84) archaeologists of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation have continued investigations at Johnson Hall. The presence of the stockade and a cobblestone courtyard (possibly an enclosed farmyard) to the rear of the house has been verified. Other structural features have also been encountered including: two parallel walls, eighteen inches apart, to the rear of the house; a rectangular cobblestone feature in front of the house; and an 18th century outbuilding on the southwest side of Hall Avenue.

Further archaeological resources undoubtedly lie in the vicinity of the main house and stone buildings. There is a well, for example, in front of the house while additional outbuildings and garden elements can be expected to the north and west. Elsewhere in the grounds of Johnson Hall there are surface indications that archaeological remains probably lie below ground. There is an area of irregular terrain presently under grass approximately 200 feet south of caretaker's house. In the bed of Hall Creek about 40 feet due north of the caretaker's house is an alignment of large stone boulders, the remains of a dam that retained a mill pond which stretched upstream toward Johnson Avenue.

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Extending east southeast from the dam, parallel and west of Hall Creek, are traces of a raceway, represented by a muck-filled channel with dense vegetation. This is probably a head race as it leads towards a constriction in the creek, approximately 150 feet downstream from where the boundary of the state-owned land (Block 3, Lot 32) crosses Hall Creek, where there appear to be remains of a mill site. These remains consist of two parallel lines of large, deliberately laid boulders, four on each side of the creek which at this point measures only 12 to 15 feet in width. Other larger rocks are piled up behind these boulders, and in the creek bed, between the two lines of boulders, there is a rectilinear cut, roughly two feet across and one foot deep, which is apparently manmade (? a wheel pit). The above-ground evidence indicates that this is probably the location of the mill powered by the pond, dam and raceway upstream. This may be the site of the saw and grist mill built by Sir William Johnson in the early 1770's although excavation and further documentary study are still necessary to test this hypothesis.

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The French and Indian War ended in 1763 with the Treaty of Paris but Sir William continued in his position as Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the rest of his life. As such he was the representative of the Crown in all its dealings with the Iroquois Confederacy and other neighboring tribes, a role that can be likened to that of an ambassador. Johnson thus occupied a position of great influence in the aftermath of the war, although Pontiac's Rebellion and British economic measures in the mid-1760's prevented him from establishing the centralized control over the tribes and fur traders that he desired. By negotiating a treaty with Pontiac in 1766, he laid the groundwork for British expansion into the Great Lakes area which had formerly been French territory. He also presided at the Council of Fort Stanwix in 1768, where the Iroquois ceded land south and east of the Ohio River as far west as the mouth of the Tennessee, thus paving the way for a significant surge of westward settlement into what later became Kentucky.

* * *

At the end of the French and Indian War in 1763, Sir William set about creating a home in a setting appropriate for a baronet and the Superintendent of Indian Affairs. He had been using the phrase "Johnson Hall" in his correspondence for over a year, probably anticipating construction of this new estate with the coming of peace. Johnson's choice of the word "Hall," meaning the manor house of an estate with tenants, can be seen here as a portent of his intentions.

Construction began on May 10, 1763, under master builder Samuel Fuller, who may have also built Sir William's earlier house, Fort Johnson, in 1749. The Hall was not the only building erected; others built in the next few years included a coach house, mill, storehouse, and the two flanking stone buildings (of which one has survived).

Johnson's plan for his estate included the attracting of settlers, and his own home was necessarily designed as a billboard advertising the fortunes which could be accumulated in the New World by a humble fur-trading commoner from Ireland. It was built in the most current of styles, the Georgian, and no expense was spared to make it a fitting seat for a gentleman. Later it would be described as "probably the finest mansion in the province out of the city of New York, at the time of its construction...." Johnson Hall became the site of many meetings and councils with the Native American tribes and it was there that gifts from the British government were distributed. On those days Sir William would stage a fair, complete with greased pig contests and sack races. Another part of Johnson's plan was the founding of a town, Johnstown, named for his son, in 1765. To provide a stimulus for the growth of the new town, Johnson built a school, church and courthouse.

(See Continuation Sheet 8-2)

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Johnson did not live to participate in the colonies' rebellion although his legacy of diplomacy with the Native American tribes was undoubtedly a factor in drawing five of the six tribes in the Iroquois Confederacy into the Revolution on the British side. In July of 1774, while addressing a group of about 600 tribal members at the Hall he suffered a fatal stroke. The Johnson Hall property passed to Sir William's son but was seized by New York State and sold after the Revolution. It remained in private hands and underwent numerous changes, until reacquired by the State in 1906.

* * *

Architecturally the house cannot be compared with its contemporaries in New York, Boston, or Philadelphia. In the context of the Mohawk Valley wilderness of the mid-18th century, however, it is outstanding. The nearest town of any size was Albany, forty miles distant. There was no pool of skilled housebuilders available for hire such as one might find in the cities, and some of the detailing reflects that fact. The entablature of the front door, for instance, is a vernacular interpretation of its classical antecedents.

Two large stone outbuildings, behind the house and just beyond the planes of its end walls, were also built in the mid-18th century. One -- the more southerly, has survived. The other burned in the 19th century. It was recently reconstructed by the State of New York. The original function of these two outbuildings is unknown. It is surmised from surviving documents that their uses included storage, Johnson's study, and slave quarters. While stone was obviously also an excellent fortification material, it is unlikely that the two outbuildings were built with a military function in mind.

Symmetrical flanking outbuildings were not an uncommon feature of Georgian mansions, particularly in the Middle Atlantic colonies and the South. In this context the outbuildings are not unique or unusual. It is unexpected, however, to find them constructed of a material different from that of the main building. It is significant that the siding of the Hall itself, although wood, is rusticated to appear as ashlar.

The other two standing buildings on the property, a caretaker's house and its associated garage, are not historically related to Johnson Hall and Sir William's vision for the Manor. The house, which appears on stylistic grounds to date from this century, may stand on the rubble foundation of an 18th century barn (built after Johnson's death). The garage is contemporaneous and is of no historical interest.

* * *

(See Continuation Sheet 8-3)

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The wealth of archaeological data associated with Johnson Hall has been clearly demonstrated through the excavations of the past three decades. These investigations have uncovered a wide variety of structural remains and other subsurface features relating to the 18th and 19th century occupation of the property. Judging from the documentary evidence and the presence of many, as yet unexplored topographic anomalies, other significant buried resources can be expected. There are documentary references to a mill, coach house, shay house, tailor shop, several barns, dwellings, slave quarters, gunsmith shop, lime kiln and kitchen -- all or some of which have yet to be definitely identified through archaeological research. The landmark possesses an unusually high degree of archaeological integrity and has the potential to yield much valuable information on the structural and functional attributes of the Johnson estate and the lifeways of its inhabitants.

* * *

The site has been restored by the State of New York and is open to the public. Although the restoration and associated archaeological investigations have been carefully researched and documented, it is primarily for its historical associations that the site is a National Historic Landmark.

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(see Continuation Sheet 9-2)

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date entered

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the Johnson Hall National Historic Landmark is outlined on the enclosed tax map and is described as follows: beginning at Point A, the northwestern corner of Section 162.15, Block 2, Lot 1 in the City of Johnstown, New York (proximate to the intersection of Johnson Avenue and West State Street); thence proceeding generally southeast along the southwestern boundary of 162.15/2/1 and 162.19/2/1 to the southeastern corner of the latter; thence proceeding generally northwesterly along the northeastern boundaries of 162.19/2/1 and 162.15/2/1 to Point B, the intersection of this line with the extension in a southwesterly direction of the southeastern boundary of 162.15/3/32; thence proceeding generally northeasterly along this extension and property line, thus crossing Hall Avenue, to Point C, a point on this line which is 100 feet from the northeastern corner of 162.15/3/32; thence proceeding generally southeast into 162.15/3/31 along a line parallel to northeastern boundary of the latter lot and 100 feet from it, to Point D, 225 feet from line BC; thence proceeding generally northeast perpendicular to line CD at Point D crossing Hall Creek into 162.15/3/2 to Point E, a point on this line 25 feet east of the property boundary between 162.15/3/31 and 162.15/3/2 and 25 feet from it; thence proceeding generally northwest along a line parallel to the property boundary between 162.15/3/31 and 162.15/3/2 and 25 feet from it (and thus parallel to line CD) to Point F, the intersection with the extension in a northeasterly direction of line BC; thence proceeding generally southwest along this extension to the northeastern corner of lot 162.15/3/32; thence proceeding generally northwesterly and southwesterly along the next two courses of the boundary of 162.15/3/32 to the intersection with the northern boundary of 162.15/3/33; thence proceeding generally northwesterly along this northern boundary to the northwestern corner of said lot; thence proceeding generally southwesterly along this property line and that of 162.15/3/32, the extension of the latter across Hall Avenue, and the northwestern boundary of 162.15/2/1 to the point of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary of the landmark is largely, but not entirely, coterminous with the boundary of the property owned by the State of New York. The landmark boundary includes sufficient property to convey the significance of the resource, yet the property is small enough to avoid including an inordinate amount of unrelated land and buildings.

(see Continuation Sheet 10-2)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

JOHNSON HALL NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

Continuation sheet

10-2

Item number

10

Page

2

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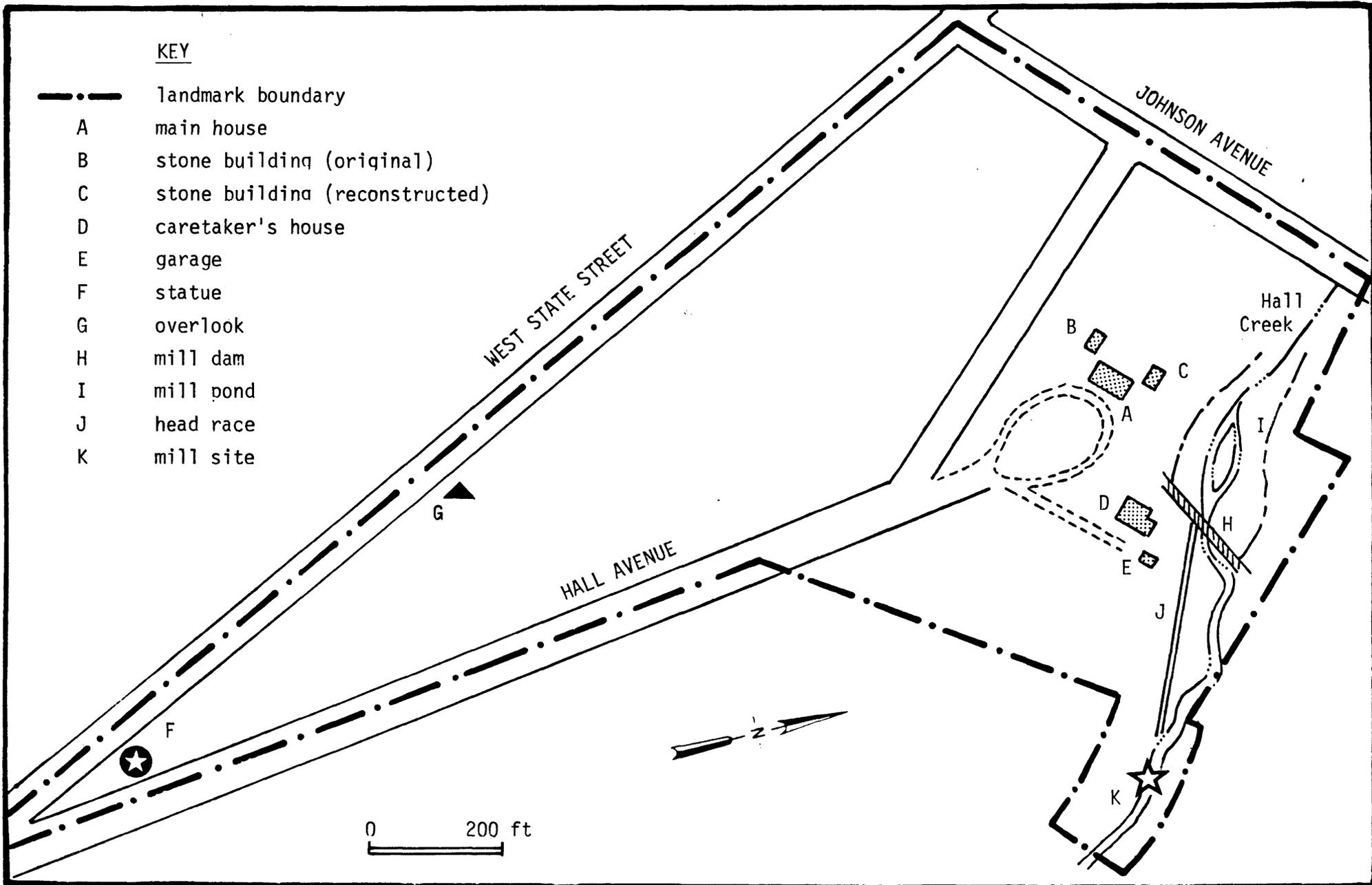
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On the northwest and southwest the boundary coincides with roads (Johnson Avenue and West State Street). Across these roads from the landmark are later houses dating from approximately the turn of the 20th century up to the present. West State Street in particular appears to have been a rural road in this area until very recently and is still in part, but new housing has been and is being built opposite the southern end of the State property. Because the bulk of the landmark has been in public ownership for so long (since 1906), plantings in the western half of the property -- apparently made to set the landmark off from its surroundings have now matured. Particularly along West State Street and to a lesser extent on Hall Avenue, heavy shrubbery taller than head-high further separates the landmark from its neighbors.

The State lands do not extend as far south as the acute intersection of West State Street and Hall Avenue, marked by a statue of Sir William Johnson bearing a 1904 tablet. The boundary of the landmark has been extended to include the statue because of its age and clearcut relationship to Johnson Hall. Immediately south of the monument to Sir William, the neighborhood (on the fringes of Johnstown) is of some antiquity, but not of an age approaching that of Johnson Hall. Most of the houses are two story frame Victorian structures of interest in their own right but not related to the landmark.

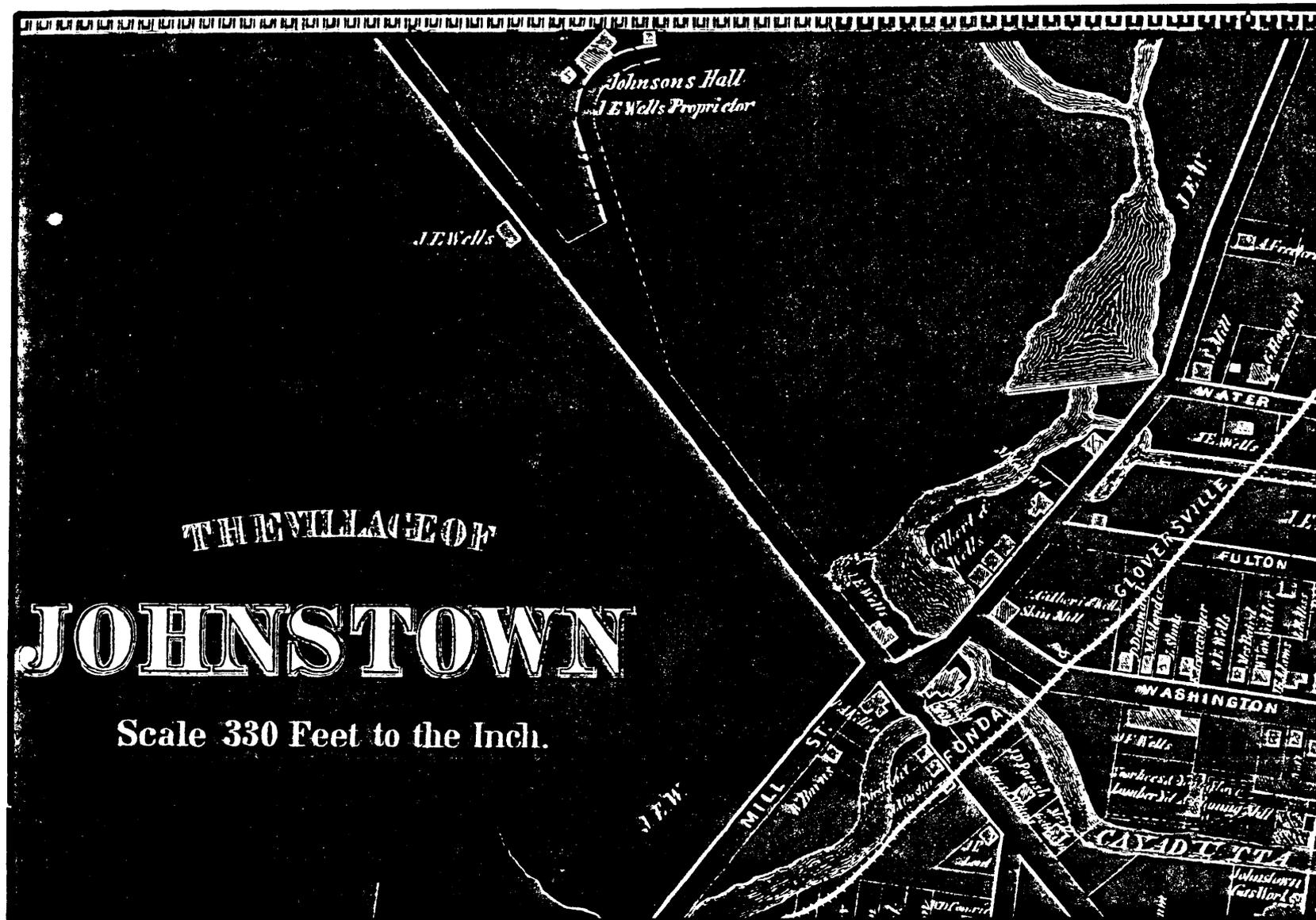
On the east, the landmark boundary and the state property line partly coincide with Hall Avenue. This is an appropriate boundary because the east side of Hall Avenue, opposite the State property, is lined with mid-20th century houses. Several hundred feet southeast of the main house the combined landmark boundary/state property line angles northeast, toward Hall Creek. One hundred feet short of the intersection of the state property line and the creek the landmark boundary diverges from the state property line, to include about half an acre of privately owned property. This decision was made in order to include the probable remains of a mill. The area of the landmark is more extensive to the southwest of Hall Creek as the hydropower system and principal milling activities appear to have been located on this bank. The remainder of the landmark boundary follows the northwestern edge of the state property but also incorporates Block 3, Lot 33 owned by the Johnstown Historical Society so that the full extent of the mill pond is included.

Although Sir William Johnson was the owner of extensive tracts of land which were related to his activities at Johnson Hall, no serious consideration was given to attempting to include them within the landmark. Among his other holdings he owned the site of the nearby settlement of Johnstown, an attractive town with several distinctive late-19th century commercial buildings. Although Sir William founded the town and provided some of its public buildings, its appearance today relates much more to its later phase than to Johnson and the Hall.



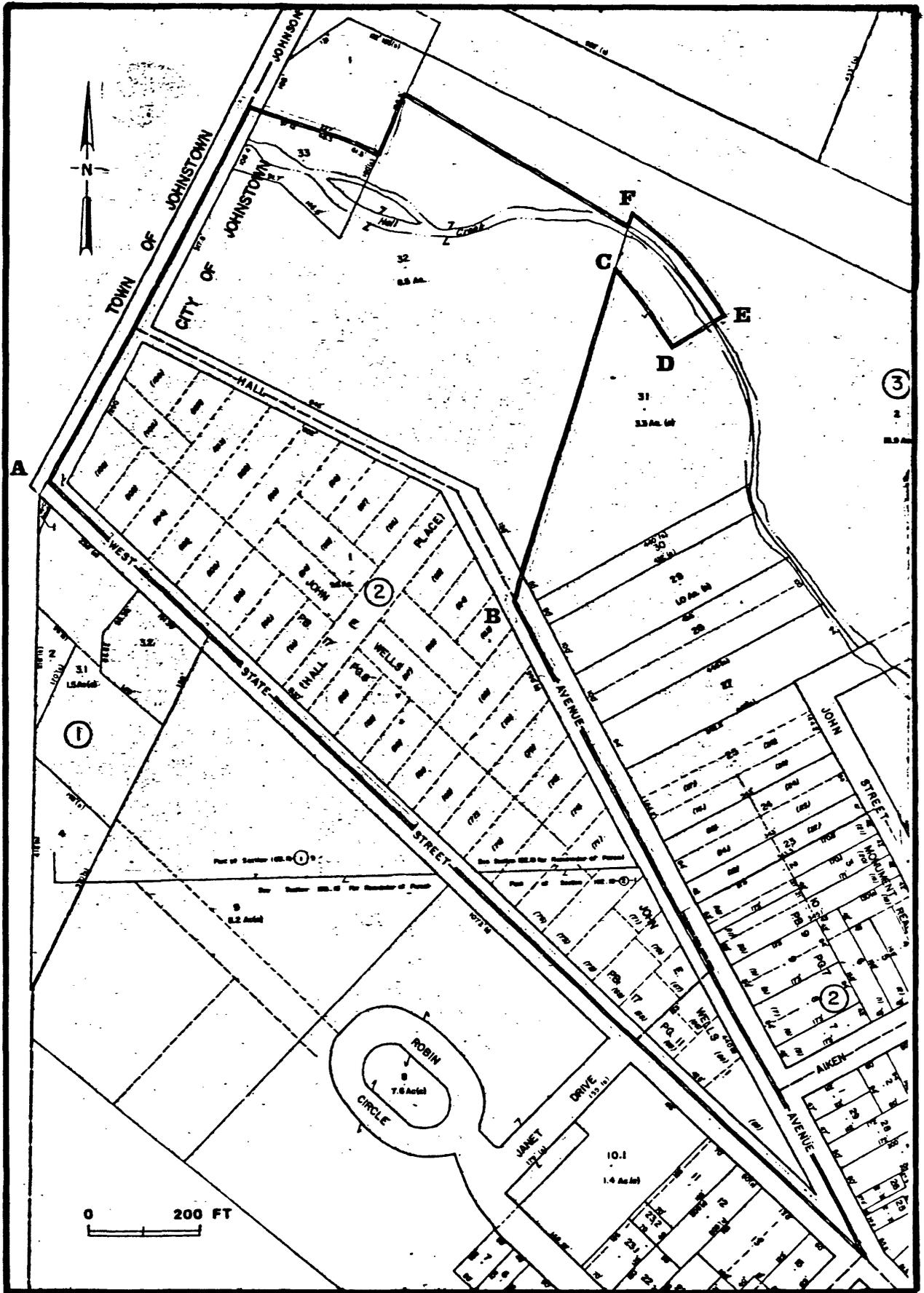
JOHNSON HALL NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK, JOHNSTOWN, FULTON COUNTY, NEW YORK.

Site Plan (Source: Waite and Huev 1971).



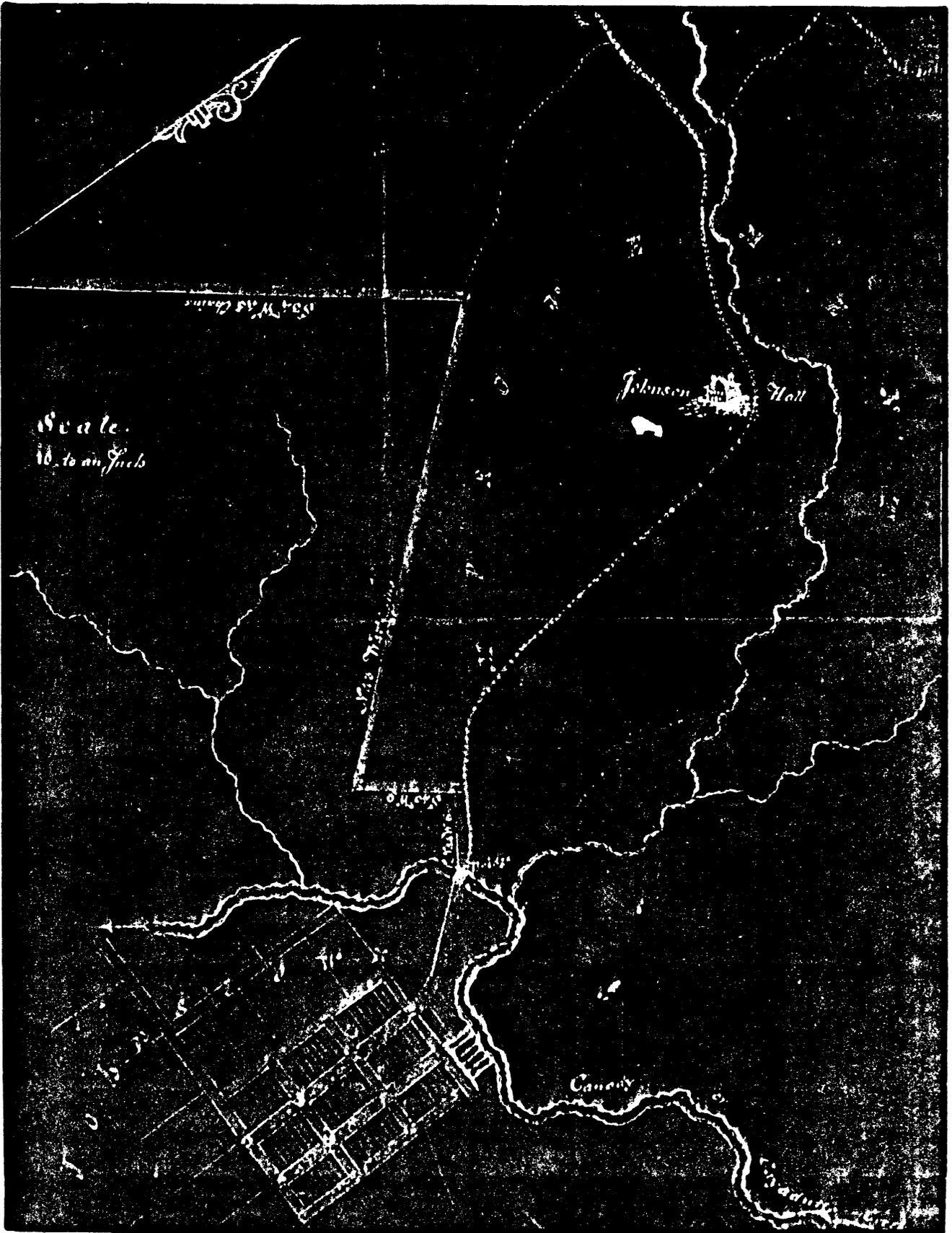
JOHNSON HALL NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK, JOHNSTOWN, FULTON COUNTY, NEW YORK.

Shanahan, J.J. "Village of Johnstown." Atlas of Montgomery & Fulton Counties, New York. Beach Nichols. c.1870.



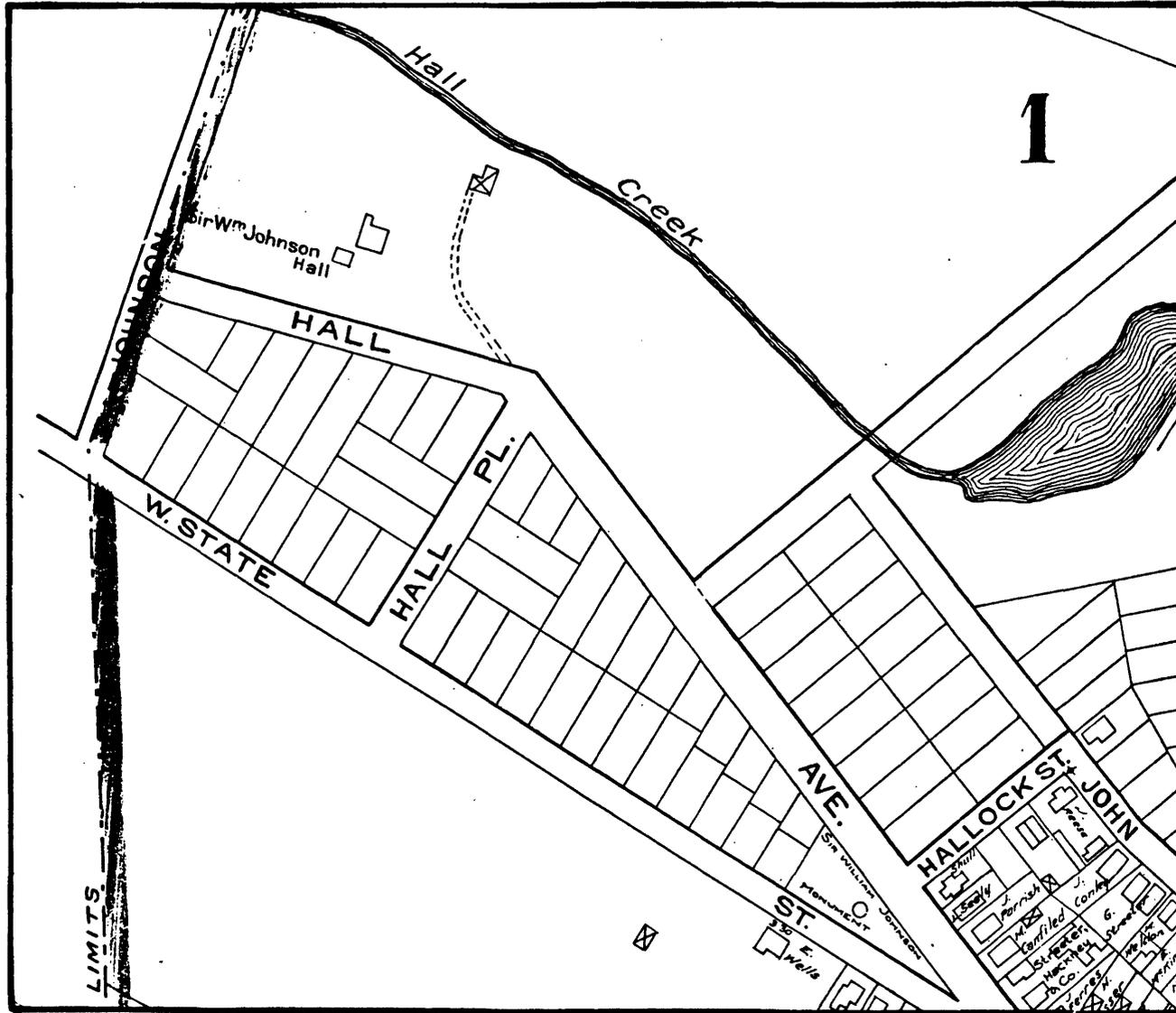
JOHNSON HALL NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK, JOHNSTOWN, FULTON COUNTY, NEW YORK. LANDMARK OUTLINED.

(Source: City of Johnstown tax maps, Sections 162.15 and 162.19).



JOHNSON HALL NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK, JOHNSTOWN, FULTON COUNTY, FULTON COUNTY, NEW YORK.

Untitled late 18th century map of Johnstown and Johnson Hall (original in New York State Archives, Albany; copy on file, New York State Department of Parks and Recreation, Division of Historic Preservation, Peebles Island).



JOHNSON HALL NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK, JOHNSTOWN, FULTON COUNTY, NEW YORK.

New Century Atlas of Montgomery-Fulton Cos., N.Y. 1905.