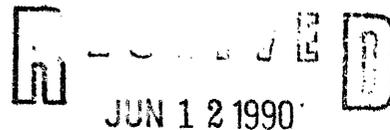


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

=====

1. Name of Property

=====

historic name: WHITE HALL

other name/site number: Cann, William, Tenant House; Elliason, Andrew, Tenant House; N-3985

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number: 130 Michael Lane

not for publication: NA

city/town: Bear, Pencader Hundred vicinity: X

state: Delaware county: New Castle code: 003 zip code: 19701

=====

3. Classification

=====

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Buildings

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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White Hall N-3985

In my opinion the property White Hall ✓ meets/        does not  
meet the National Register criteria.



9/7/87

Dennis Greenhouse  
County Executive  
New Castle County,  
Delaware

Date



=====  
7. Description  
=====

Architectural Classification:  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other Description: vernacular Greek Revival/Italianate

Materials: foundation BRICK roof METAL/aluminum  
walls WOOD/weatherboard other wood porch

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

=====  
8. Statement of Significance  
=====

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

Applicable National Register Criteria: A & C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : N/A

Areas of Significance: Agriculture  
Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period(s) of Significance: 1836 1938

Significant Dates : N/A \_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person(s): N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. X See continuation sheet.

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White hall is a frame, nineteenth century tenant farm dwelling that was built in three phases during the first half of the nineteenth century. It is located in southern Pencader Hundred between the villages of Glasgow and Kirkwood, and is situated on the north side of Howell School Road (County Road 54) 0.9 mile east of its junction with State Route 896 and 0.6 mile west of Woods Road (County Road 402). The house sits back from the road about .1 mile, facing it squarely. Access is by a dirt lane that runs perpendicularly from the road to the house for most of its length, then arcs around the west end of the house, ending in the rear yard. Three pairs of maple trees flank the entrance of the lane; however, they have nearly died back. To the rear of the house is a cluster of four outbuildings dating to the 1930s and later. They include a frame dairy barn, a concrete block milkhouse, a frame implement shed and a frame chicken house. This property is now part of a modern subdivision of single family homes with additional access from a new street known as Michael Lane which provides its post office-approved address.

The overall condition of the house is good. It has been unoccupied a couple of years, and unfortunately, during that time all of the fire-place surrounds were removed. The majority of its other interior features remain intact. The exterior also exhibits a high degree of integrity. Modern alterations are limited to enclosures of the rear porch; replacement of the original window shutters with non-operable, louvered aluminum shutters; and the addition of corrugated metal roofing. Because of its resemblance to standing seam tin, the new roofing does not detract from the building's character. The house is currently being rehabilitated and will retain its use as a single family dwelling.

The house in its entirety appears as a frame, gable-roofed, two-story building with a symmetrical five-bay facade and a two-and-one half story rear wing that creates a "T" configuration. However, details of construction reveal at least three building phases. The original structure (circa 1830) is contained within the northern end of the rear wing. A one-bay addition was made to its southern endwall at an unknown date. The final building phase (circa 1860) created the two-story, five-bay section that now serves as the main block. The addition of another half-story to the first two wings also occurred during this last phase.

Dating each building phase is problematical due to a lack of clear documentation. The bulk of the current 180-acre tract was created in 1836 when the Orphan's Court reapportioned William Cann's 876 acres to divide the property among his heirs. The individual parcel boundaries pre-dating this survey are unknown. The 1836 survey mentions a house and outbuildings on the parcel, and the survey map depicts a building that resembles the first phase of the existing house. It is not know if

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the house was existing when Cann acquired the property in the 1820s or if he is responsible for its construction. The third construction phase, also undocumented, is stylistically very similar to many dwellings in central Delaware that are known to have been built at mid-century. The second building phase can only be bracketed between the loosely estimated dates of the first and third phases. Both William Cann and Andrew Elliason, the subsequent owner, held substantial amounts of real estate in Pencader Hundred. Existing records for their property consolidate information on their total holdings without differentiating the individual tracts.

The 1836 Orphan's Court Survey depicts a two-story, gable-roofed dwelling with a chimney at each endwall and a fenestration pattern with a three-bay arrangement on the first floor and two bays on the second floor. The proportions of the original section resemble this sketch. However, the first floor fenestration has been altered.

The original section is supported by a brick foundation measuring approximately 16' by 20'. The foundation surrounds a crawl space and is coated with stucco on the exterior. The floor joists are logs hewn flat on the top face only. The first floor ceiling joists are logs with hewn top and bottom faces; bark remains on the untrimmed sides. White lines indicate the removal of a lath and plaster ceiling. The second floor ceiling joists are square (6-1/2" x 3-3/4") and finely finished. Two corners are molded (concave half circle-quirk-bead) and the original dark bluish-green paint is still evident. Because the molded corners are against the ceiling rather than being visible from the room below, it seems that the joists were reused from another building and installed in reverse. A plaster ceiling hides these joists from view. The wall structure of the first and second stories also differs. Saplings hewn on the inner and outer faces serve as studs on the first floor. Since only a small area of the first floor framing is actually exposed and it is located below and adjacent to a window, it is possible that the saplings are the result of a repair. On the second floor, a larger expanse of framing is exposed revealing a wall constructed of 2" x 3-3/4" vertical-sawn studs that are tenoned into what was originally the plate. No corners are exposed, so the presence of bracing cannot be determined.

The building is sided with weatherboard that is nailed directly to the studs; no sheathing was employed. The original siding is retained on the first story of the west elevation and on the first and second stories of the north endwall. It is irregular in width, the exposed portion ranging from five to eight inches. The other wall surfaces are sided with weatherboard that has a consistent 6-1/2" exposed width. The cornerboards are plain. Windows have six-over-six light sash with a plain board surround.

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The interior of the original wing has few original details. The north endwall contains a brick fireplace and the remnant of an enclosed corner stair. The fireplace (constructed of 8-1" x 2-1/2" x 4" bricks) has an opening 4' wide, 2'11" high and 1'9" deep. The lintel is a flat arch supported by an iron bar. A plaster coating has been removed and piece of stove pipe in the chimney indicates a later change in heating technology that has since been removed.

The one-bay addition to the south endwall of the original house is a frame structure on a brick foundation that encloses a full basement. The interior dimensions of the basement are: 10'7" along the endwall; and 14'8" on the side. The foundation is laid in a running bond with irregularly grouped clusters of headers. The top course is a header row. Brick size varies, but 8-1/4" x 4-1/4" x 2-1/2" is an average dimension. The joists are reused lumber that is hewn on four sides (7"x 6"). The joists are tenoned into hewn sills. All wall and ceiling surfaces in the basement are whitewashed. A bulkhead entrance on the west wall has been partially blocked.

The addition is framed with 2" x 3-3/4" studs. First floor ceiling joists are logs hewn on the top and bottom faces. The second floor joists are not exposed. These joists are very similar in size and workmanship to those on the first floor of the original house. Considered along with the continuous floorboards between the two sections and the similarity in the framing of the second story main structure, this suggests that the original house was partially reworked when the addition was constructed. The south endwall of the original house was removed at some point and a new partition was built further within the original space. The result is that the partition wall between the two rooms does not correspond to the break in the foundation. A brick fireplace similar to, but smaller than the one in the original section is centered on the partition wall in the addition. Windows have six-over-six light sash and the exterior siding is weather-board with an exposed width of 6-1/2".

The second addition, circa 1860, substantially changed the character of the building. This addition, larger than both previous structures combined, became the main block and the earlier structures were incorporated as a rear service wing. Measuring roughly 40' x 20', the house was built on a five-bay, center hall, single pile plan with a 6' hypen in the rear that connects to the earlier structures.

This section rests on a rubble fieldstone foundation that encloses a full basement. A stone chimney support is centered on the west endwall and brick chimney support is centered on the east endwall. Three brick piers (approximately 13" x 15") provide intermediate joists support. The joists are vertical-sawn, 3" x 10" lumber, that is tenoned into vertical-sawn

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sills. A square pit, roughly 4' square, was located on the west side of the dirt-floored basement. Recent installation of a concrete floor has obscured this feature. A staircase is located in the section of the foundation that supports the hyphen.

The exterior is sided with weatherboard (5" exposed width) and plain cornerboards. The weatherboards appears to have always been painted white. Traces of dark green paint appear on the cornerboards and the cornice, although the most recent application of paint on these features is white. Windows have over six-over-six light sash with a plain board surround, a plain dripcap, and a lug sill with narrow cove molding below. These windows are about a third larger than those in the earlier wings. The original shutters have been replaced with non-operable, louvered aluminum shutters. The entrance on the main facade is a double leaf door with a white porcelain knob and keyhole cover. Each leaf has three raised and heavily molded panels: Round-arched panel on top, a circular panel in the middle, and an octagonal panel below. The door is surrounded by a four-light transom and three-panel sidelights above a molded rectangular panel. A shed-roofed porch with a bracketed cornice and four square columns shelters the three center bays of the facade. The door on the west wall of the hyphen has four panels and a two-light transom.

The roof is a low-pitched gable with a corrugated metal covering. A brick interior end chimney rises from each endwall. A box cornice with a cyma recta molding outlines the roof edges and the overhanging verges. A frieze with scroll brackets emphasizes the cornice on the facade and gable ends.

The interior plan consists of a center hall with a room on either side. The hall contains an open string, straight run of eleven stairs that stops at a landing and then turns in the opposite direction with a run of four more treads. The octagonal newel post has an ivory disk set into its top, and the turned balusters are spaced two per tread. The stair railing and the first floor doors in the hall are stained and varnished. All other woodwork in the hall is painted white.

Each of the four rooms is similarly appointed. A blocked fireplace occupies the center endwall of each room. All interior doors have six recessed panels with applied moldings, white porcelain knobs and porcelain escutcheons. Door and window trim is heavily molded. The first floor, west parlor is the only room with grained woodwork and doors; all other rooms have doors and woodwork painted white. The second floor, east chamber is the only room with built-in clothes closets on either side of the fireplace.

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Another element of the circa 1860 building phase was the addition of a half-story to the two earlier wings. The windows at this level have three-over-six light sash and the interior is very plainly appointed. These rooms are accessible only by means of the corner staircase in the original structure; they most likely functioned as servants quarters.

Four outbuildings are located to the rear (north) of the house:

.2 Dairy Barn, circa 1930

The barn is a frame, two-story, gambrel-roofed building on a concrete block foundation. The exterior walls are covered with vertical board siding and the roof is clad with a corrugated metal. The lower level has a concrete floor with built-in troughs and two rows of metal stanchions. (Contributing).

.3 Milkhouse, circa 1930

The milkhouse is a small, concrete block building with a wood-shingled, gable roof, a batten door and six-over-six light windows. (Contributing).

.4 Implement Shed, circa 1930

Earthfast poles are the primary support for this three-sided, gable-roofed shed. The exterior is covered with vertical board siding and the roof is clad with corrugated metal. A metal track above the open side indicates that sliding doors once enclosed this side. (Contributing).

.5 Chicken House, post 1940

The chicken house is a one-story, shed-roofed, frame building on a cinderblock foundation. It is sided with plywood (Non-contributing).

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White Hall is significant under Criterion A as a property that embodies the tenets of the agricultural reform movement and the associated restructuring of the built environment that transformed southern New Castle County during the middle of the nineteenth century. This documented transformation of the southern agricultural landscape is roughly bounded by the years 1820-1870. White Hall is also significant under Criterion C for illustrating in its three building phases the progression of popular domestic architectural forms through this period. In its final form both its functional plan and its stylistic details are characteristic of the mid-nineteenth century environment in this region.

Significance under Agriculture can best be understood in the context of an aggressive reform movement that advocated a reorganization of the landscape, introduction of scientific farming methods, and a reliance on day labor. The traditional social structure became more stratified as major landowners set about organizing their properties into agricultural estates. During this 1820-1870 period, improvements to real property became one of the most important vehicles for expressing class level. White Hall's significance under Architecture embraces both formal and stylistic elements that are important in understanding this rebuilding period. The first phase of construction shows the regional preferences for common living spaces and the separation of domestic chores to outbuildings. Later expansions of the house created specialized spaces and incorporated domestic chores into a rear service wing. The incorporated domestic chores into a rear service wing. The final phase of the building expresses style through formal symmetry and the use of nationally popular architectural details that express a renewed pre-occupation with social status in this region. With few exceptions, the gentleman farmer/agriculturalists of southern New Castle County chose a 5-bay, center hall house form with Italianate and/or Greek Revival details to improve their properties.

White Hall is located in an area that has historically been the wealthiest agricultural district in the state. The soil type, Matapeake-Sassafras Association, is a highly fertile and well-drained sandy-loam that is considered to be one of the finest soils for farming. Extending from southern Pencader through Saint Georges and into Appoquinimink Hundred, this soil type in combination with the relatively flat terrain and moderate climate had enabled farmers to produce abundant grain crops, primarily wheat. During the eighteenth century, much of the wheat from this region supplied the Brandywine Mills near Wilmington. By the end of the eighteenth century poor farming techniques had seriously depleted this once rich soil. Poorer and poorer harvests depressed land values and a substantial out-migration of the population resulted. This enabled the wealthier land

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owners to amass substantial acreage by buying up the abandoned tracts. It was this group that in 1804 formed the New Caste County Agricultural Society, one of the first agricultural societies in the nation. The stated goals of this group were in direct response to the agrarian depression.

The society advocated reconsolidation of land holdings and promoted scientific farming methods such as soil improvement, mechanization, and keeping written accounts. By the 1810s, the majority of available land was owned by less than a third of the taxable population. It was the actions taken by land owners that determined the future course for the region as a whole.

The act of consolidating small farms into large tracts necessarily required a change in the way land would be managed. Land owners set about creating agricultural estates, and in so doing they restructured agricultural practices and redefined social relationships.

Agriculture shifted from small scale farming to agriculture as a business. A landowner's own activities were removed from actual farm labor and instead centered around the management of land in his holding. Detailed records were kept on all aspects of farming in order to monitor the productivity and cost effectiveness of each activity. Slavery was discontinued late in the eighteenth century in favor of day labor which was determined to be more economical. Owner and worker relationships were often formalized through contractual agreements. Portions of consolidated land holdings were operated as individual farms by farm managers on a crop share basis. In all probability, White Hall served as the residence of a farm manager.

White Hall is a portion of the lands that were consolidated by William Cann. Between 1823 and 1832, he acquired eleven properties in Pencader Hundred. Several had been purchased at Sheriff's sales. At his death in 1834, Cann had amassed over 876 acres. The Orphans Court inventory for Cann's estate counts eight dwellings (five of them log), five tenements, three kitchens, three stables, one granary, one barn and some shops within his acreage. The Court resurveyed the property to create tracts of relatively equal value. The tract on which White Hall sits can be identified as Parcel Number 8, "... containing within Said Bounds one hundred and thirty-two acres of wood and cleared Land with a Dwelling House, Kitchen, Barn and stable, also a small tenement thereon erected." One of the buildings that is depicted on the survey map appears to be contained in what is now the rear service wing of the house. Andrew Elliason (1810-1890), by right of his wife, Lydia Ann Cann (William Cann's daughter) acquired Parcel Number 8 and several other parcels in the estate.

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Elliason also aspired to the ideal of an agricultural estate and did accomplish that goal. The White Hall parcel and other Cann parcels appear to have been his first land acquisition. In the two or three years previous to this, Elliason had worked as the manager of James T. Bird's farm. In 1833, he was able to purchase Bird's stock and farming implements and stayed on there as a tenant. After the 1836 receipt of White Hall, his next major acquisition occurred in 1838 when he purchased from his two half brothers the farm that he would make his lifelong home (N-413, The Hermitage, NR). In 1871, he bought George Harbert's farm (N-6194, Fairview, NR) and by 1888, he had become the owner of yet another farm, bringing his total holdings to about 900 acres.

As wealthy landowners sought to redefine the landscape, agriculture, and social structure, they also expressed this new order architecturally. During the period 1820-70, a majority of properties in the region underwent some type of building renewal. On domestic structures, three types of activity prevailed: replacement of existing buildings, extensive remodeling of existing buildings, or remodeling of new buildings shortly after construction. On his home farm "The Hermitage" Elliason replaced the existing house in 1856 with an imposing three-story, brick residence. The stair passage plan and combination of Greek Revival and Italianate details employed on this house were also favored by most of the landowners in his class. At White Hall, Elliason chose to remodel the existing farm manager's house. First, by constructing a one-room addition and later by building a new house and incorporating the existing structure into it as a rear service wing. The newest section of the house (c. 1860's) is similar in plan and style to Elliason's own home, but is built on a smaller scale and constructed in frame rather than brick. The existence of the original house illustrates this shift in domestic order that occurred as architectural renewal progressed. The original structure conveys the traditional notion of common living spaces and the separation of household chores to outbuildings. Measuring roughly 16 x 20 feet, the original house was composed of one or two rooms in which most of domestic life occurred. The kitchen building mentioned in the 1836 Orphan's Court survey does not survive but is important in understanding that household work was physically separated from the living space. By 1820 over 80% of the farms in southern New Castle County had separate or adjoining kitchens. The function of the one-room addition is not specifically known, but indicates a trend toward specialized room functions. With the construction of the stair-passage-plan wing, the house became an expression of the new social order. This new wing re-oriented the house to face the road, imparted a new style and symmetry and created a plan with specialized room functions. It was probably after this major construction phase that the house was named White Hall.

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The architecture that the landed class commissioned served to reinforce a class structure that supported the operation of an estate. White Hall represents the middle range of housing quality available. It is similar, although obviously less grand than Eliason's own mansion, yet it is also more substantial than the dwellings occupied by laborers.

None of the original outbuildings survive. However, the early twentieth century dairy barn, milkhouse, and implement shed are important to the continued agricultural use of the property. After 1900, wheat and dairy products continued as major cash crops in southern New Castle County. Dairying, however, shifted from butter production to the sale of fluid milk. Improved transportation and the advent of pasteurization made fluid milk more profitable for New Castle County farmers. With this transition, dairy barns acquired new features. Concrete was promoted as a modern and sanitary material for agricultural buildings, dairy barns in particular. Beginning in the first quarter of the twentieth century, new dairy barns were built with concrete lower levels, built-in waste troughs that permitted easy cleaning, and metal stanchions. At the same time, the lower levels of many older barns were remodeled to contain these features also. The dairy barn at White Hall is typical of this new style barn. Stylistically, it also shows the new preference for gambrel-roofed buildings. The adjacent milk house is also constructed with concrete block.

White Hall is important to our understanding of New Castle County's agricultural history from the early nineteenth century through the early twentieth century. Architecturally, it traces housing options from traditional forms to the emergence of a formal regional style by mid-century. The surviving outbuildings express a renewed cycle of agricultural improvements that continued into the twentieth century.

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### Comprehensive Planning

The history of White Hall expands the available information on New Castle County's agricultural reform movement, and therefore, is important primarily under the historic theme Agriculture. As a building that was remodeled several times in response to the reforms of the time, its history also pertains to the theme Change Through Occupation. In its final form the building is a fine example of the vernacular Greek Revival style dwelling that characterizes its regional landscape, and so, is significant also to the theme Architecture. As major landowners and as enthusiastic participants in the agricultural reform movement, the two early owners of White Hall, William Cann and Andrew Eliason, should be recognized under the theme Major Families and Individuals.

With an early nineteenth century construction date and continued association with agricultural and architectural history into the twentieth century, White Hall and its contributing outbuildings fall within three historic periods:

1770--1830	Early industrialization
1830--1880	Industrialization and early urbanization
1880--1940	Urbanization and suburbanization

White Hall is located within geographic zone II: Upper Peninsula. Occupying the central inland portion of the state, the Upper Peninsula zone is characterized by sandy loam or sandy clay loam subsoils and land contours ranging from level to gently rolling to steep forms. White Hall is located in the central area of this zone where the land is fairly flat at 70 to 80 feet above sea level and the soils are of the Matapeake-Sassafras Association. According to the Soil Survey for New Castle County, "The potential for farming the soils in this association generally is better than that of any other in the County." This particular fact is one of the primary reasons for the early and continued dominance of farming in the region that is defined by this soil.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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X See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):N/A

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

NA previously listed in the National Register  
 NA previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 NA designated a National Historic Landmark  
 NA recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 NA recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data:

X State historic preservation office  
 Other state agency  
 Federal agency  
 X Local government: New Castle County  
 University  
 Other -- Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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10. Geographical Data

=====

Acreage of Property: 4.3

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing      Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>18</u>	<u>438020</u>	<u>4380425</u>	B	_____	_____
C	_____	_____	_____	D	_____	_____

\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: \_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

The nominated property is shown as parcel 11-042.20-017 on the attached subdivision and tax parcel map for Caravel Woods.

Boundary Justification: \_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

The boundary includes the land remaining with the house and outbuildings including the historic lane that led to the farm complex. The traditional farm acreage has been subdivided from the farm for a modern housing development.

=====

11. Form Prepared By

=====

Name/Title: Valerie Cesna, Historic Preservation Planner

Organization: New Castle County Dept. of Planning Date: Dec. 1987 and  
Dec. 1989

Street & Number: 2701 Capitol Trail Telephone: (302) 366-7780

City or Town: Newark State: Delaware ZIP: 19711

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#### Primary

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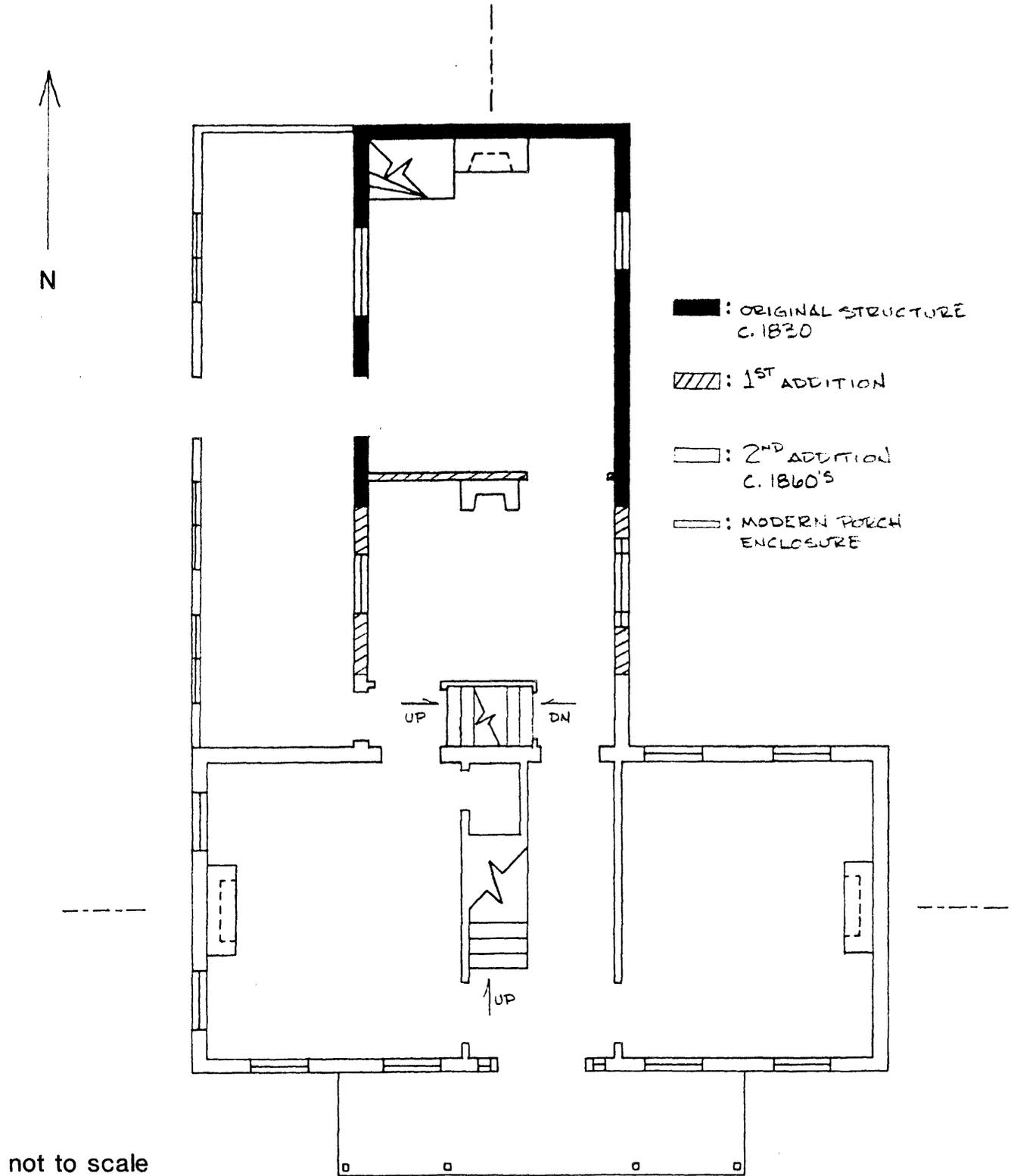
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N-3985

WHITE HALL

843 Howell School Road (County Road 54)

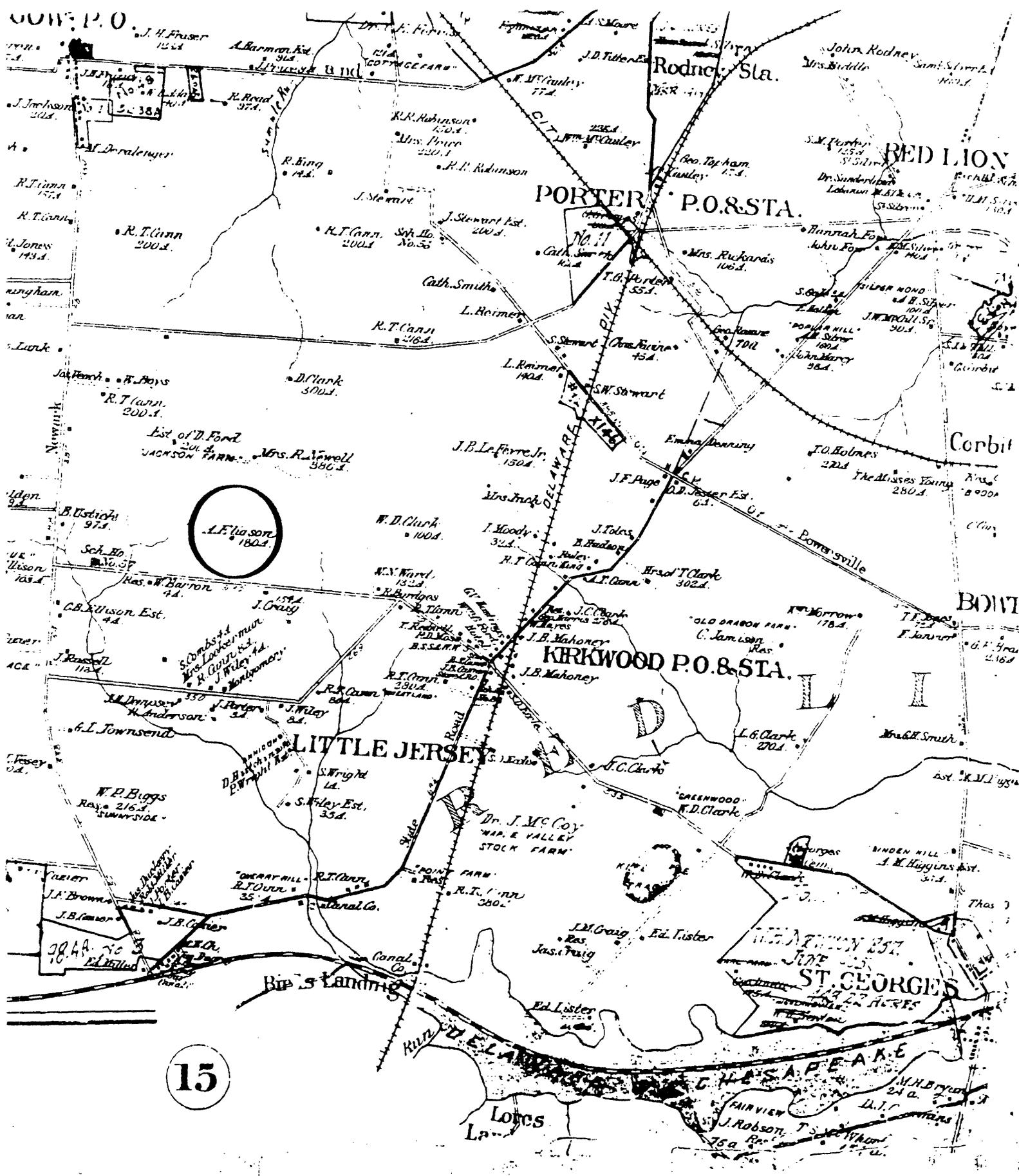
Pencader Hundred, Bear vicinity

New Castle County, Delaware

AS OF APRIL, 1990, NOW KNOWN AS 130 MICHAEL LANE







ATLAS OF NEW CASTLE COUNTY, DELAWARE  
 PHILADELPHIA: G. WM. BAIST, 1893.

SCALE: 1 3/4 INCHES = 1 MILE

