

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAY 12 1976  
DATE ENTERED JUL 12 1976

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC **\*\*** ROCKWOOD

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
610 Shipley Road

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
One

CITY, TOWN  
Wilmington (Brandywine Hundred) VICINITY OF

STATE Delaware CODE 10 COUNTY New Castle CODE 002

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
___DISTRICT	___PUBLIC	___OCCUPIED	___AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	___PRIVATE	___UNOCCUPIED	___COMMERCIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
___STRUCTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	___EDUCATIONAL ___PRIVATE RESIDENCE
___SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	___ENTERTAINMENT ___RELIGIOUS
___OBJECT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	___GOVERNMENT ___SCIENTIFIC
	___BEING CONSIDERED	___YES: UNRESTRICTED	___INDUSTRIAL ___TRANSPORTATION
		___NO	___MILITARY ___OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME  
New Castle County / Gordon S. Gargraves

STREET & NUMBER  
102 Middleboro Road / 610 Shipley Road

CITY, TOWN  
Wilmington VICINITY OF  
STATE Delaware

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. New Castle County Recorder of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER  
The Public Building, 11th & King Streets

CITY, TOWN  
Wilmington STATE Delaware

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
Delaware Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings N-435

DATE  
1972 \_\_\_FEDERAL  STATE \_\_\_COUNTY \_\_\_LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS Division of Historical & Cultural Affairs

CITY, TOWN  
Dover STATE Delaware

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Designed by architect George Williams in stages between 1851 and 1857, the Rockwood Estate includes the manor house, porter's house, gardener's cottage, and stable, and various outbuildings originally surrounded by 211 acres of landscaped grounds.

The estate was designed in rural Gothic taste and meant to fit the description of the ideal villa found in contemporary books. The two-and-a-half-story mansion is made of rough, dark, Brandywine granite, with finished, gray granite quoins, window and door surrounds. Wooden bargeboards, finials and pendants, and cast iron balustrades are all painted darker than the stone. The roof is gabled, covered with tin, and surmounted by clustered, red brick chimneys.

The entrance front or north facade of the house is symmetrical in its general outline but not in its detail. Two large, projecting, gabled bays frame the two-bayed center section. The gabled bay on the east has an end chimney framed by cut granite quoins. The chimney is pierced by an arched, blind window. The other gabled bay has a large, double casement window. Similar windows are found at the second floor level of the center bay, and next to the entrance porch on the ground level. The projecting entrance porch is supported by slender Gothic columns and decorated with scrollwork and chevron moulding. Other decorative detail on this facade includes bargeboards carved with a flat, floral vine motif, pendants, and finials at the apex of each of the gables.

The gable on the east end of the house repeats exactly in form and detail the features of the east gable on the north facade. To the north of the gable, the straight lines of a triple, full-length, glass doorway contrasts sharply with the decorative scrollwork of the projecting porch. A glass-enclosed conservatory projects in an easterly direction from the gabled section of the east front. It is supported by cast iron columns on pedestals of tall, slender, Gothic proportions. The remainder of the conservatory is largely built of wood with iron supports encased in the wooden piers that frame the windows. A small balustrade surmounts the exterior wall; it is composed of pierced, cast iron plaques separated by square, finial-topped newels.

The garden front is really the main facade of the house. A single-story veranda spans the entire front and the seven bays are organized into a 3:1:3 grouping. The side groups of three bays are further divided so that the central bay has three full-length glass doors. This is repeated in a diminished fashion on the second floor where a double casement window lies between single casement windows. Further emphasis is added to this grouping by the small gables which tops the side sections and echo the shape of the large gable of the central pavilion. This pavilion is the main axis of the garden facade.

The west wing, or servant's quarters, includes part of the original house built from 1851 to 1855, as well as the addition designed by Williams in 1856 and the ten-room addition of 1895. The construction is consistently the same rough dark granite accentuated by the lighter cut granite quoins and window surrounds.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

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SPECIFIC DATES 1851-1855, 1857, 1895 BUILDER/ARCHITECT George Williams

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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Although Rockwood is being nominated primarily for its architectural significance, to a large extent its significance lies in its remarkable portrayal of an age. Constructed between the years 1851 and 1857, the estate comprised a mansion house, porter's lodge, stable, carriage house, gardener's cottage, and 211 acres. As it exists today, it is an unusually complete and effective statement of early Victorian taste in the tradition of Andrew Jackson Downing and John Claudius Loudon. Designed in the rural Gothic style by the architect George Williams, the mansion house is a consummate statement of both early Victorian romanticism, and the picturesque merger of irregular architecture and naturalistic landscape. When taken in conjunction, the architecture, the plan, the garden, and the remaining furnishings depict a total physical sensibility that is fast vanishing from the American scene.

Joseph Shipley, the owner and builder of Rockwood, was born in Wilmington in 1795. As a direct descendant of William Shipley, one of the founders and first chief Burgess of Wilmington, Joseph Shipley was a member of one of the leading Quaker mill-owning families in the area. A merchant by trade, he began a business in Philadelphia but moved to Liverpool, England, in 1819. Here he became a founding partner of Brown and Shipley, an international backing firm. Upon his retirement in 1850, Joseph Shipley returned to his native Wilmington and almost immediately activated the plans for his new home.

Shipley had had plans drawn up for his new home while he was still in England. Upon his arrival here he chose a site which would lend itself well to the size and form of the Gothic-revival structure and began amassing the 211 acres which would compose his estate. Construction of the house began in September of 1851, and Shipley moved in during 1855. He continued to live at Rockwood until his death on May 9, 1867, when the estate was willed to his two unmarried sisters, Sarah and Hannah.

At their decease, the estate was to be divided equally among the nieces and nephews. In the meantime, one of their grand-nephews, Edward Bringhurst IV, who was the grandson of Joseph Shipley's older brother, Samuel, came to live at Rockwood with his family. Hannah Shipley died in 1892, and the estate was offered at auction. The house, land and furnishings were purchased by Edward Bringhurst IV. His daughter, Miss Mary Bringhurst, lived in the house for a century. Rockwood remained in the ownership of Shipley-Bringhurst descendants until 1975 when Mr. Gordon S. Hargraves gave the house and six surrounding acres to New Castle County.

Under the direction of the County Department of Parks and Recreation, there will be restoration and preservation of the grounds within the "ha-ha" wall and the exterior of the Rockwood buildings to provide a conducive setting for the early Victorian theme of the museum. Restoration and preservation of the building's interior will be

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Vincent, Gilbert T. Rockwood: A Romantic Villa In Brandywine Hundred, 1972  
(Master of Arts thesis submitted to the University of Delaware).

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 162 acres  
UTM REFERENCES

E 18/455305/4402040  
F 18/455420/4402040  
G 18/455510/4402090  
H 18/455660/4402305

A | 1, 8 | | 4, 5, 5 | 6, 8, 0 | | 4, 4, 0, 2 | 8, 2, 0 |  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
C | 1, 8 | | 4, 5, 4 | 9, 4, 0 | | 4, 4, 0, 2 | 4, 2, 5 |

B | 1, 8 | | 4, 5, 5 | 1, 8, 0 | | 4, 4, 0, 2 | 6, 8, 0 |  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
D | 1, 8 | | 4, 5, 4 | 9, 8, 0 | | 4, 4, 0, 2 | 3, 4, 0 |

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Rockwood Estate, located in Brandywine Hundred, adjacent to the city limits of Wilmington, Delaware, is bounded as follows: to the north by Interstate-95, to the east by Shipley Road, to the south by Washington Street Extended, and to the west by Rockwood Road.

The following properties are excepted from the nomination: (1) the Weissinger Property,

## 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

Richard E. May, Planner (with Gary Smith, U. of D. Graduate Student)

ORGANIZATION

New Castle County, Dept. of Parks & Recreation

DATE

January 1, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

102 Middleboro Road

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Wilmington

STATE

Delaware

# 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

*Lauren [Signature]*

TITLE

*Director, Division of Hist & Cult. Affairs*

DATE

*5/28/76*

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Active

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

*7/12/96*

ATTEST

*[Signature]*

DATE

*6-25-76*

SUPPLY CLERK OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ROR for WJM 7/8/76

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

Originally, the small west wing provided a balance for the conservatory on the east end of the house. The addition of a second story to this wing in 1856 offset this balance. The character of the house was changed again with the addition of the 1895 wing. The second story of this wing reflects the influence of such architects as Greene and Greene, and Frank Lloyd Wright.

Interior:

The interior decoration of Rockwood presents as complete an illustration of mid-century aestheticism as does the exterior. Each room is given definable masculine or feminine characteristics, and is decorated with a distinct combination of stylistic details that define the function of the room by evoking a specific emotion. The interior parallels the exterior in its picturesque interplay of the Gothic and classical traditions in architecture.

The plan is organized with a central axis starting at the entrance door, crossing the stair hall, bisecting the small anteroom between the two front rooms, and continuing out the door into the garden. As shown in the plan, the lateral axis is broken by the asymmetrical arrangement of the rooms. In fact, except for the placement of the drawing room, dining room and intervening anteroom, which reflects the symmetrical garden facade, the room arrangement follows the irregular pattern of the exterior.

The stair hall displays much of the mixture found in the architectural detail throughout Rockwood: the archway is composed of a combination of Jacobean, Georgian, and Greek revival motifs; the staircase is Jacobean and classical; the cornice is Roman revival. In size and proportion, the stair hall is the most impressive room in the house. The ceiling rises two full stories and has a heavy cornice proportionate to its height. The room is girded on two sides by the oak staircase and on the other two by the second floor balcony. The staircase epitomizes the duality of the interior decoration in that the first rise and landing have large square newel posts and a heavy Jacobean balustrade. Simple, classical balusters start at the second level and continue up the stairs and around the gallery without newel posts. All the first-floor rooms have varnished oak doors, the same finish as the staircase. In addition, all rooms have twelve-inch baseboards, and floors made of rough pine of random widths which were originally covered with either oilcloth or carpeting.

To the left of the stair hall is the "breakfast room" of Williams' plan. Shipley used the room as a library. This room has a simple cove cornice bordered by an egg-and-dart and a small, gilded, half-round moulding around the bottom, and a half-round moulding on the top. The fireplace has a white marble hearthstone, while the mantel is wood with plaster decoration, painted to resemble marble.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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The drawing room lies to the south of the breakfast room and forms, with the dining room, the symmetrical pair of major rooms on the garden front.

The conservatory opens up off the east side of the drawing room. It has the shape of a long rectangle with one end attached to the house. The three walls and roof are entirely glazed and supported by eight interior cast iron columns bearing the wooden framing. The original heating plant of the conservatory included hot water pipes under the sandstone floor, with fifteen cast iron grates to conduct the heat into the room. The furnace is self-contained and is placed in the cellar under the drawing room.

In contrast to the drawing room, the dining room is Gothic in character. The white marble fireplace is composed of short Gothic side panels and an opening in the form of a Tudor arch with Gothic leaf carving in the spandrels. The cornice consists of a series of large quarter and half round beads as well as a cyma reversa and cyma recta of leaf patterns. Much of the original furniture of the dining room has survived. It is mahogany, massive in form, and skillfully built.

The bedrooms at Rockwood correspond largely to the shape and position of the first floor rooms. All the rooms have fireplaces of white marble that are generally plainer in character than those on the first floor. The cornices are also simpler. Although the walls of the bedrooms were originally papered, the designs are not known.

The gardens and the site of the entire Rockwood estate were as carefully conceived as the architecture of the mansion house. The plan is derived from the gardenesque school of landscape gardening that was reaching its zenith of popularity in the 1840's and 1850's.

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carried out with particular detail in the East Wing to recreate the grand manner of Rockwood as a museum for the enjoyment of the public, utilizing loaned, donated and/or purchased furniture presented in the Manor House. Many of the pieces of furniture already in the house are documented pieces of the Shipley and Bringhurst families. The museum activities at Rockwood will include use of the conservatory, first floor drawing room, breakfast room, cross hall, dining room, entry hall, study and the four second floor bedrooms adjacent to the entry hall balcony.

At the entrance to the grounds of Rockwood stands a small porter's house built in a style similar to the main house. This was the home of Joseph Shipley's gardener, David Shaw who came here from Scotland in 1852 and remained to serve the family for fifty years. His son, Robert, who was born in this house became noted for his etchings, particularly those of the Wilmington area.

The Rockwood museum and grounds will be open to the public throughout the year.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

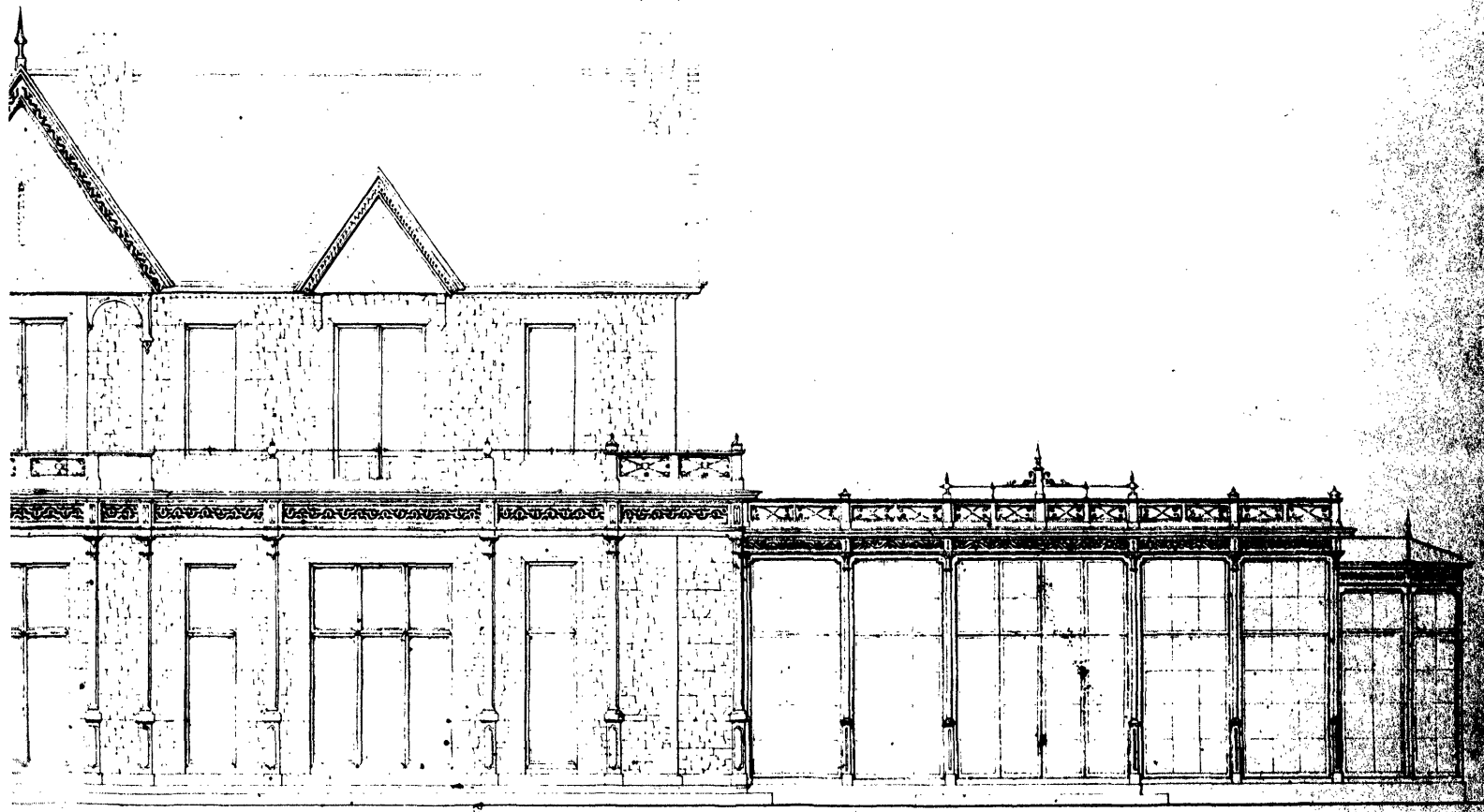
ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 2

located at 630 Shipley Road; (2) the John W. Morris Property, located at 301 Rockwood Road; (3) the Daniel Preston Property, located at 401 Rockwood Road; (4) the Iacono Property, located at 403 Rockwood Road; (5) the Robert Grimble Property, located at 501 Rockwood Road; (6) the Eisenman Property, located at 503 Rockwood Road; (7) the Foulger Property, located at 601 Rockwood Road; (8) the Wilber Daddow Property, located at 603 Rockwood Road; and (9) the Masonic Hall Property, 12 acres recently sold to Louis E. Capano Builders, located adjacent to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.

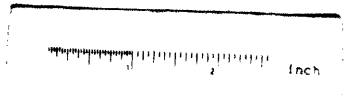


WIPLEY ESQ<sup>RE</sup>

WORKING DRAWING



TOWARDS THE GARDEN



ORIGINAL ELEVATION, SO. SIDE  
NEWCASTLE COUNTY, PARKS & REC.

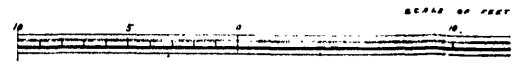
George W. Wilson, Architect  
Liverpool June 20, 1887

J. SHIPLEY

WORKING DRAWING



ELEVATION TOWARDS 7



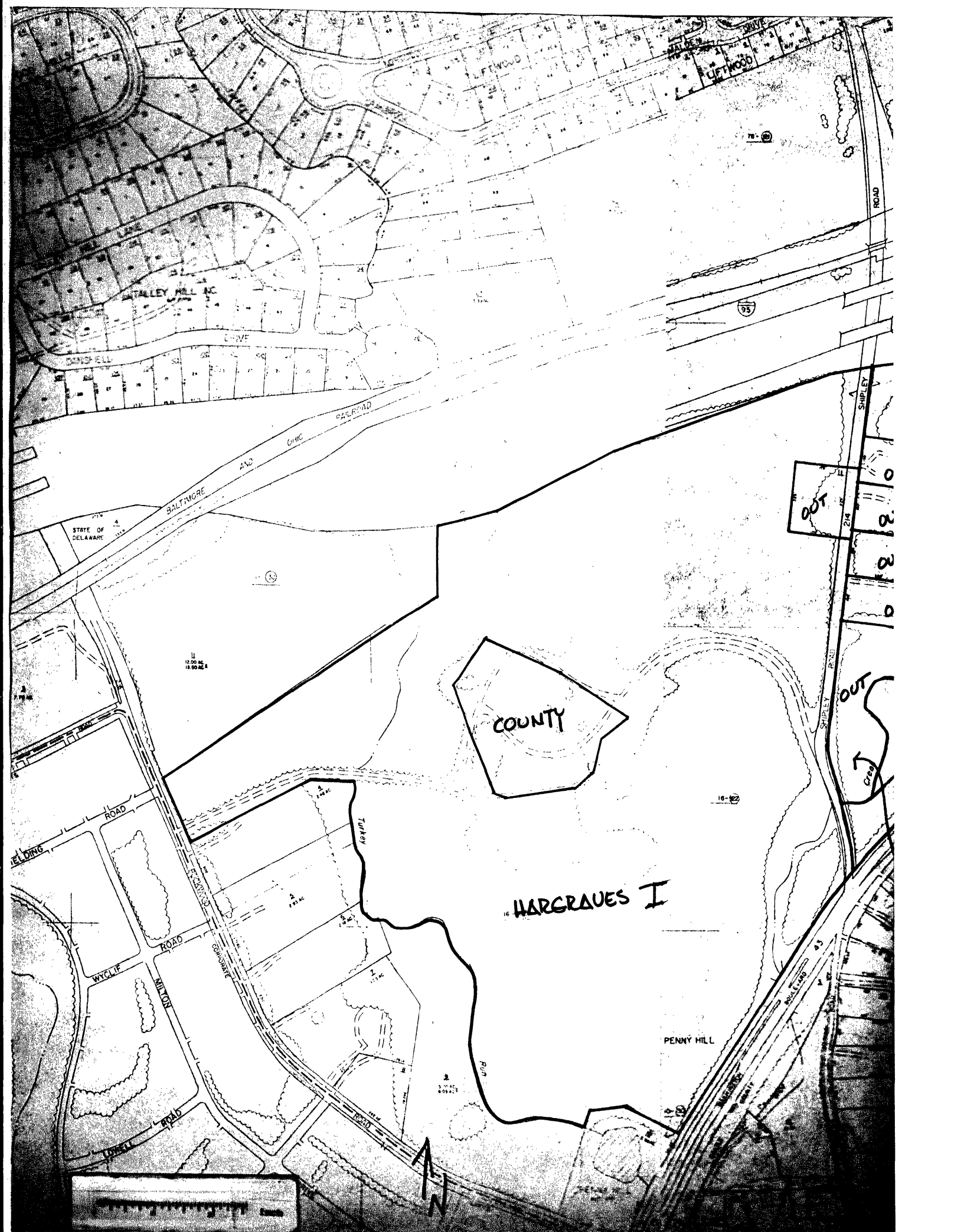
Rockwood  
Wilmington, DE

Original Elevation, 1851

Collection of the H.F. duPont Winterthur Museum

MAY 12 1976

JUL 12 1976



BATLEY HILL NC

COUNTY

HARGRAVES I

PENNY HILL

RAILROAD

BALTIMORE AND OHIO

SHIPLEY ROAD

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STATE OF DELAWARE

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ELDRING ROAD

WYCLIFF ROAD

MILTON ROAD

LOVELL ROAD

ROCKY HILL ROAD

CONVERSE

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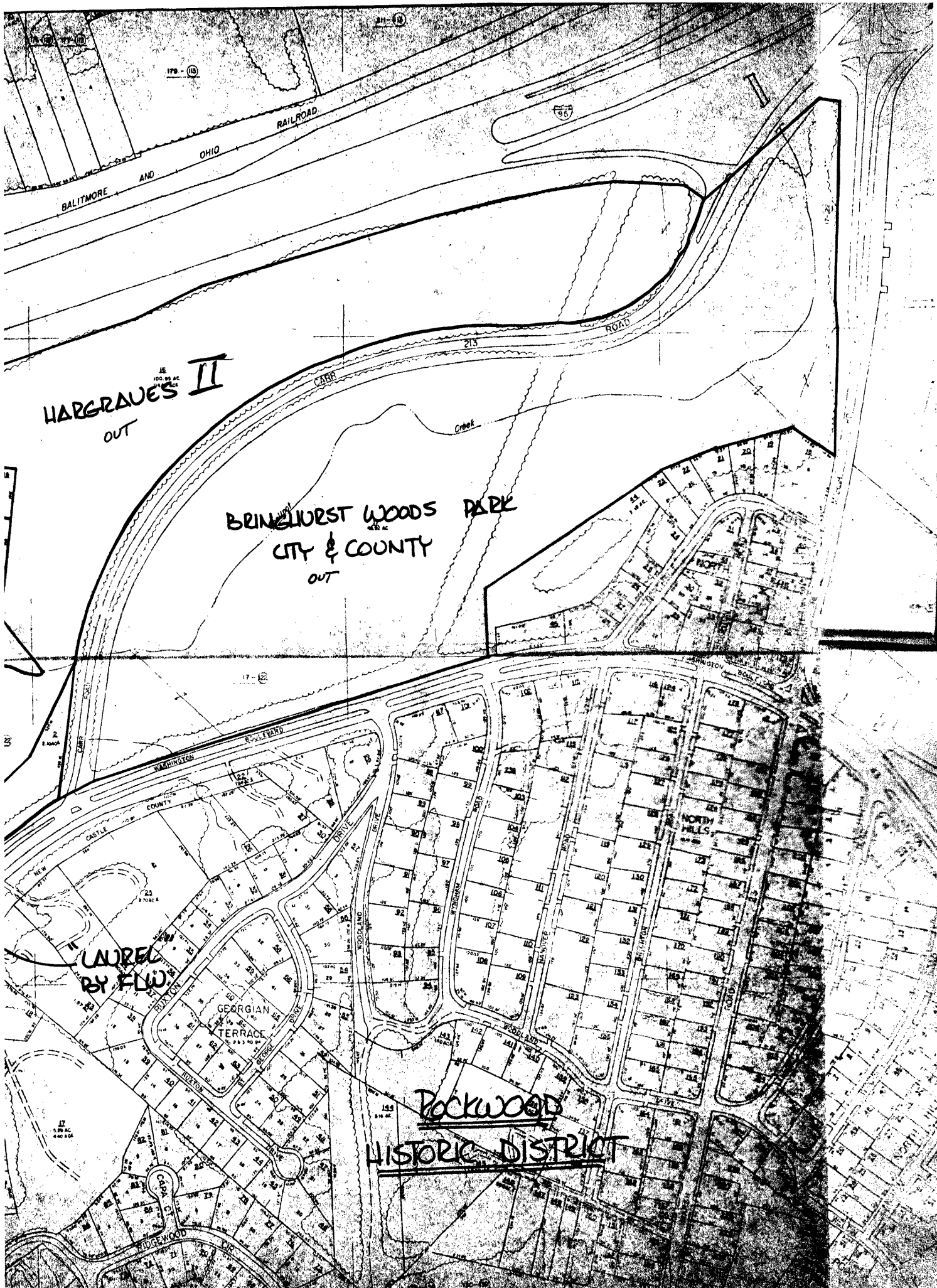
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HARGRAVE'S II  
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BRINGLORST WOODS PARK  
CITY & COUNTY  
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LAUREL BY FLU

Rockwood  
HISTORIC DISTRICT

NORTH HILLS

BALTIMORE AND OHIO RAILROAD

CATER ROAD

WASHINGTON BOULEVARD

CASTLE COUNTY

GEORGIAN TERRACE

WINDSOR

WINDSOR

BRIDGEWOOD

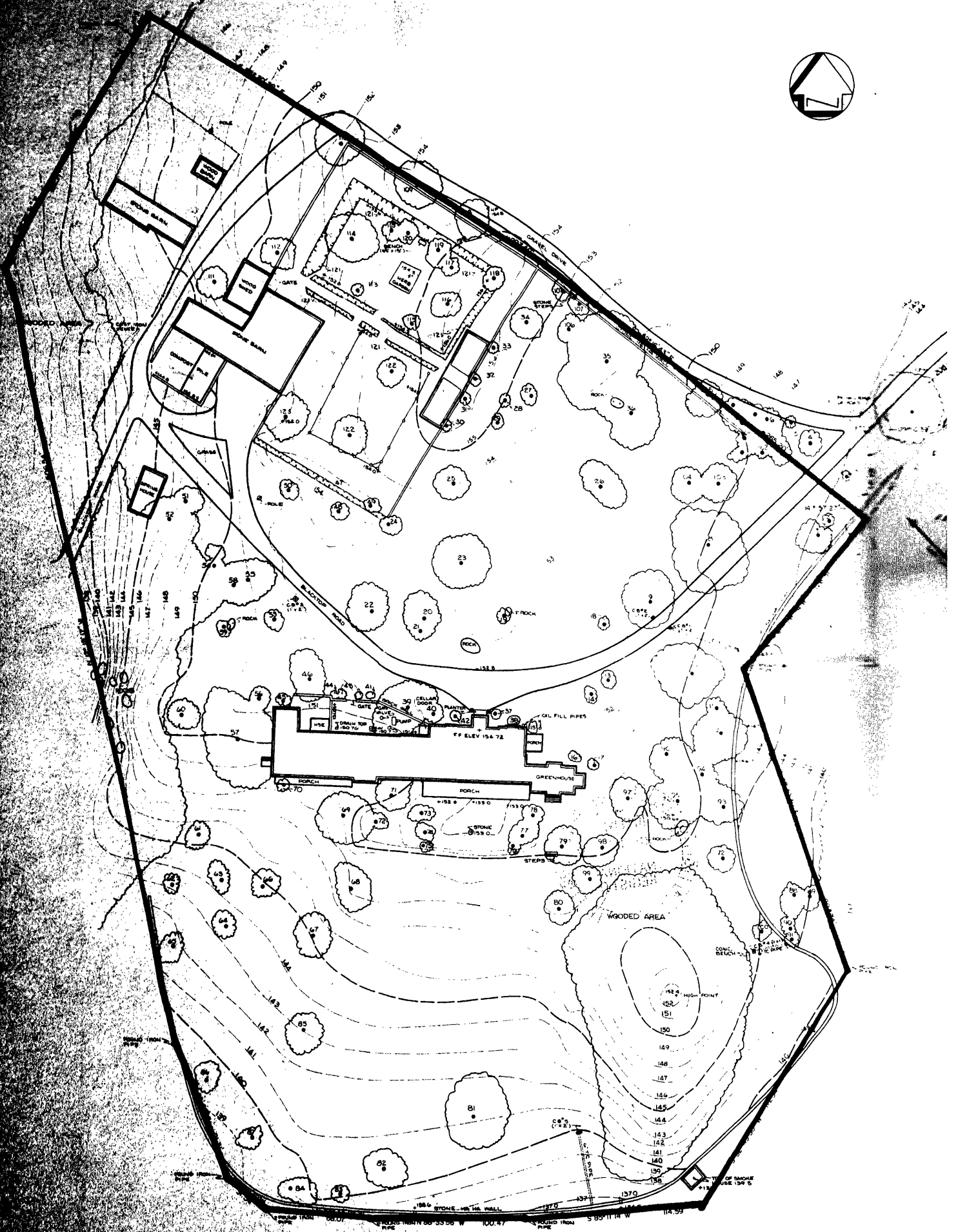
Rockwood  
Wilmington, DE

County Assessment Office Map  
1974

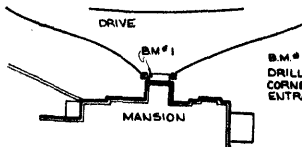
Shows property ownership

MAY 12 1976

JUL 12 1976

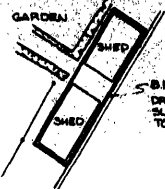


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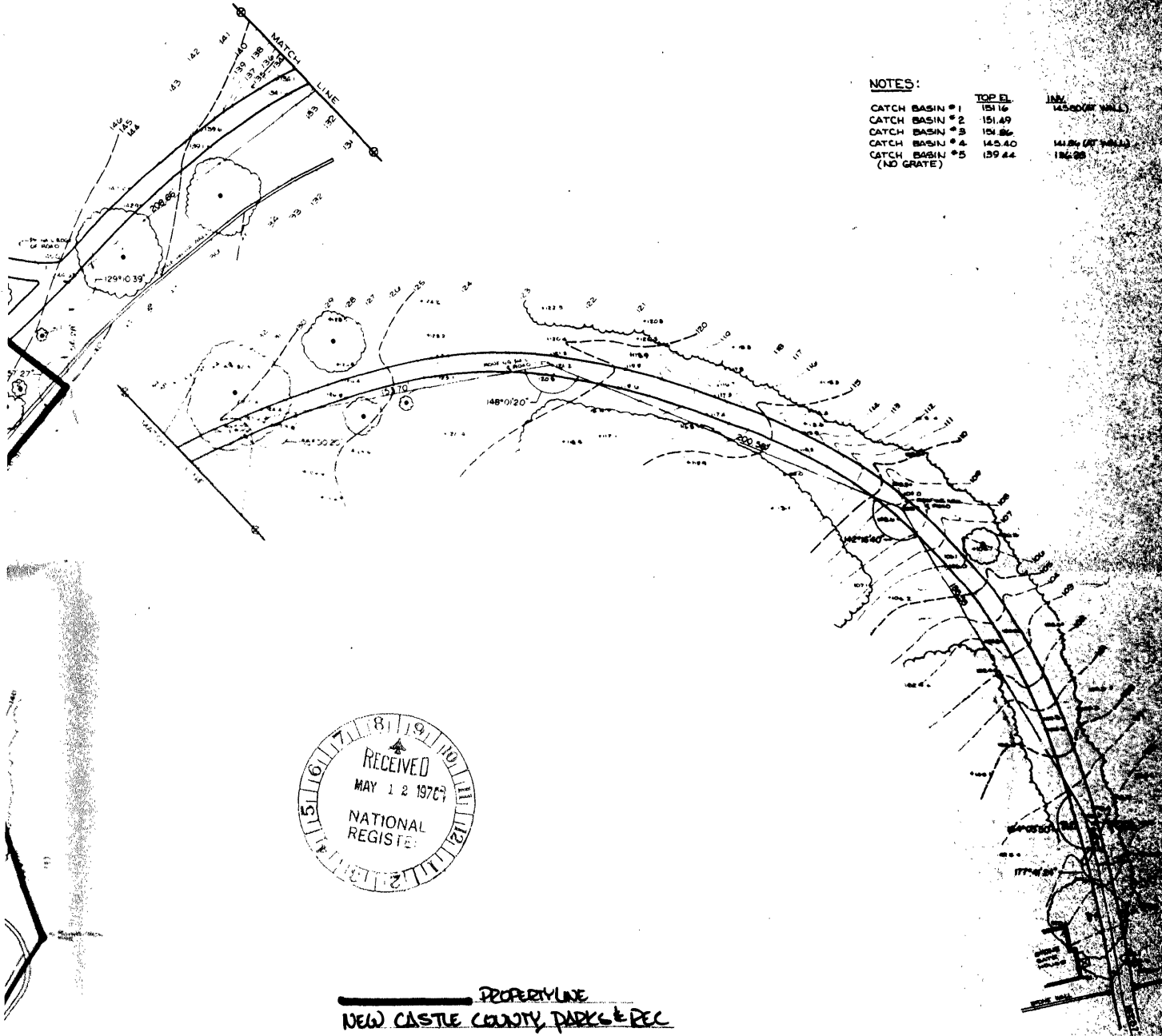
B.M. #1 - 153.60 (NGS DATUM)  
DRILL HOLE - NORTHWEST  
CORNER, FIRST STEP, MAIN  
ENTRANCE TO MANSION.

LOCATION OF BENCHMARK #1



B.M. #2 - 156.54 (NGS DATUM)  
DRILL HOLE - GRANITE  
SLAB, MAIN ENTRANCE  
TO GARDEN

LOCATION OF BENCHMARK #2



NOTES:

	TOP EL.	INV.
CATCH BASIN #1	151.16	145.00 (W/ WALL)
CATCH BASIN #2	151.49	
CATCH BASIN #3	151.86	
CATCH BASIN #4	145.60	141.24 (W/ WALL)
CATCH BASIN #5 (NO GRATE)	139.44	134.00



PROPERTY LINE  
NEW CASTLE COUNTY PARKS & REC

REVISIONS		
Number	Date	Description

Checked by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Checked by: \_\_\_\_\_

TOPOGRA...



Rockwood  
Wilmington, DE

Manor House Plot

E.H. Richardson Associates, Inc., Consultants  
Newark, DE  
1975

MAY 12 1976

JUL 12 1976