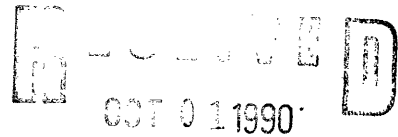


1691

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

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 Chipman Potato House other names/site number CRS#-5873

2. Location

street & number Road 465, Box 264 city, town Laurel state Delaware code DE county Sussex code 005 zip code 19956

NA not for publication vicinity

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private/public and building/site/structure/object.

Name of related multiple property listing: Sweet Potato Houses of Sussex County, Delaware Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, 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. Signature of certifying official: Daniel W. [Signature] Date: 9/25/90

In my opinion, the property meets/does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official: INA Date: State or Federal agency and bureau

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. removed from the National Register. other, (explain:)

for Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/processing, storage

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Potato House

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brickwalls wood/weatherboard

roof tinother concrete (first floor)

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Chipman Potato House is a large, two story, balloon frame structure of tall, narrow proportions measuring 24 feet by 36 feet. It was built in 1913 by Joseph and Ernest Chipman with the help of Alva Hudson of Laurel, Delaware. It is located two miles northeast of Laurel lying on the east side of Road 465A and the south side of Road 465. The surrounding environment consists of cultivated fields of Indian corn, meadows, and small stands of trees. Chipman Pond lies directly to the northwest of the site and buildings in close proximity include the former Chipman Mills, Christ Church, and the former Joseph Chipman farm house. Additional outbuildings have been removed or rebuilt (i.e. cart shed into a garage). Originally the land and outbuildings of Ernest Chipman adjoined the property on the east and the two parcels functioned as one large family farm. There is no such unity today, and the potato house stands as the only remaining structure (with integrity) which reflects the former association of Joseph and Ernest Chipman's association. The farm finally passed from Chipman hands in the 1950s though parts of the adjoining farm of Ernest Chipman are still inhabited by his daughter Pauline Carmean. Crops grown on the Chipman Farm during the heyday of the sweet potato included Indian corn, and produce vegetables such as peas, tomatoes, and cucumbers as well as cantalopes and strawberries.

The Chipman Potato House stands as an exceptional example of potato house construction while representing a variation on the most frequently encountered potato house type. The greatest difference is found in the building's fenestration which has an unusual total of twelve windows as well as a main entry door on the front (south) gable end, and a side entry on the east lateral side of the building. Fenestration is generally limited to doors and windows on only the gable ends of the building. The main entrance at one time had interior

 See continuation sheet

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)

Agriculture
Architecture

Period of Significance

1913-1937

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Ernest Chipman
Joseph Chipman
Alva Hudson

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

The Chipman Potato House is eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places as an excellent example of an architectural reflection of a broad historical trend, and as a significant architectural type. The potato house, as a functional type, relates to the Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan's study III under the 1880-1940 period and is an example of that plan's property type 1B reflecting major economic and cultural trends relating to agriculture.

The broad historical pattern to which the potato house is directly linked is the modernization of agricultural practices in southern Delaware during the first half of the twentieth century including the emergence of truck farming, the growth of perishable produce crops, and the development of modern agricultural marketing. The growth of sweet potato cultivation in southern Delaware was one of the major manifestations of these changes in agricultural practices and crop choice. The potato house is the remaining physical evidence of a trend in Sussex County's agricultural history when the sweet potato was "king".

Sweet potato cultivation dominated the region particularly in the years between 1910-1940 and was one of the first crops to benefit from truck farming and modern agricultural marketing. The long (eight month) and multi-phased process of sweet potato production impacted the culture and economy of the rural community of Sussex County during the years of its prominence as one of the area's cash crops.

The potato house is significant as an architectural type. It was essential to the process of sweet potato production in both curing and storage capacities and

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Delaware Agricultural Statistics, Historical Series 1866-1974, Bul. no. 419, Newark: University of Delaware, Agricultural Experiment Station, 1976.

Hancock, Harold B. The History of Sussex County, Sussex County Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

Herman, Bernard and Siders, Rebecca. The Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan, prepared for the Delaware State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, 1987.

Oral History Interviews with retired sweet potato farmers of Sussex County, August 1986. Tapes with the Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, University of Delaware.

Scharf, Thomas. History of Delaware, 1609-1888, Philadelphia: L.J. Richards & Co., 1888.

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
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property .46 acres (964 square feet)

UTM References

A

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4	5	3	1	9	3
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4	2	6	7	9	1	2
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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Tax Parcel Map #: 2-32-13, 47

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for the site is a rectangle extending ten feet from the roof line of the building on all sides.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary is justifiable because this nomination asks for the consideration of only the potato house. The property with which the potato house is associated is not included in this nomination and therefore a boundary which encompasses additional outbuildings/structures is not relevant to this (potato house) nomination.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Judith Quinn
 organization Center for Historic Architecture & Engineering date December 23, 1987
 street & number Urban Affairs, University of Delaware telephone 302-451-2394
 city or town Newark state Delaware zip code 19716

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
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sliding doors characteristic in potato houses. This door has now been enlarged for tractor access but the sliding doors remain stored in the building. A second and third (attic) story loading door are also placed on the front gable end. Rear gable fenestration consists of first, second and third (attic) story windows. Lateral sides consist of two bays with two windows on first and second floors on the west elevation, and two second floor windows over a single window and side entry door on the east elevation. All windows and doors retain their original hinged shutters/hatches and hardware. In addition, windows on the lateral sides were originally glazed. Their six over six light window frames remain stored in the house. Glazed windows are an extraordinary feature in a potato house.

The building is of balloon frame construction with dimension cut lumber. A unique element in its structural system is the inclusion of four large samson posts which carry the major floor joists of second and third floors. These posts are mill cut posts measuring 6 by 6 (inches) and are capped by a trapezoidal cushion which in turn supports the overhead beam. Samson posts are generally found in more massive structures where additional support is required. Joseph and Ernest Chipman may have been imitating a structural device employed in their grist mill located just north of the potato house. The use of structural elements from the mill must remain purely speculative because the Chipman Mills were destroyed by fire in November, 1986.

The building's original narrow face, milled weatherboards are completely intact. Four layers of horizontal wood planking sheath the building. Insulating paper (red rosin) is still visible between the layers while sawdust and straw are packed around the interior brick chimney.

Like the fenestration, the plan of the Chipman Potato House is unique. The first and second floors do not follow the characteristic center aisle plan. Instead, intersecting partitions divided each (first and second) floors into four quadrants. Each quadrant contained at least three storage bins. Nailing patterns on overhead beams and floor boards indicate original placement

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of the bins. A two and one half foot walk space on the inside perimeter of the building provided easy access to all bins. This plan is similar to that found in the Phillips Potato House (CRS# 6786)

The attic story was converted into a third functional storage floor. Its plan is a center aisle plan. The slated bins are intact. Eleven bins flank the west side of the aisle and ten flank the east side. They are narrow and rise to ceiling height. One whole identifying tag listing name of renter, rent charged, and number of bushels stored remains tacked to an attic story bin post. All the bins in the Chipman Potato House were numbered. Surviving numbers painted on bin end posts in the attic story establish that the house originally had fifty bins. The bins generally measure 9 by 3 feet.

The roof is a tin replacment for the original wood shingles. At the time the roof was replaced the exterior chimney stack was removed. The interior section of the chimney still stands in the north end of the building.

Originally the building was heated by two stoves. The main stove stood in the front of the house on the first floor and was connected by a tin stove pipe to the chimney in the opposite gable end. A second stove was located beside the chimney itself and was fired up in very cold weather. One of the original coal stoves survives in the building.

The Chipman complex is today dispersed. Originally it was the farm of the Chipman brothers and was run as a family business which included the farm, the Chipman Mills and a general store. According to Pauline Carmean, surviving daughter of Ernest Chipman, the potato house was largely the responsibility of her father though reportedly everyone was quite proud of building.

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was developed as a distinct building type to provide the functional needs for a successful, saleable sweet potato crop. Potato houses share common construction elements and are recognizable on the landscape as belonging to this specific property type. The Chipman Potato House is an excellent example of the property type retaining elements characteristic of potato house construction and function. These elements include; multiple siding, tall and narrow proportions, interior chimney, window hatches, original coal stove, interior ventilation features, and extant storage bins.

The Chipman Potato House is an extraordinary example of this architectural type. Its exterior and interior conditions are unusually complete and intact. The fenestration of the building is unique while the plan and storage bin placement are likewise unusual. The cast iron stove, wooden bins, and identifying tags are rare manifestations of the overall function and production of the potato house. It is an important reflection of dominant agricultural and cultural trends in southwestern Delaware during the early 1900s, and an excellent example of architectural and aesthetic variation of the building type.

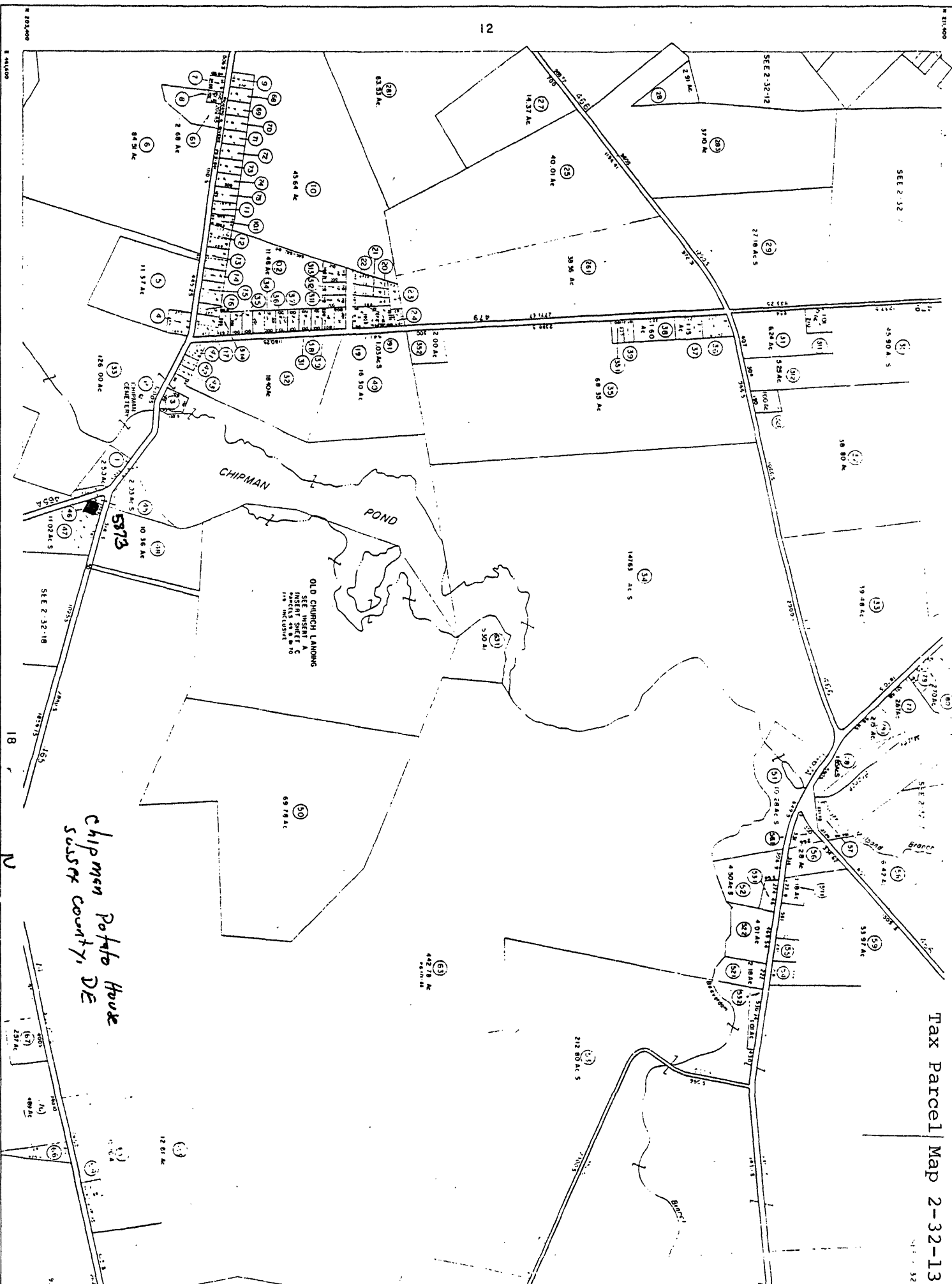
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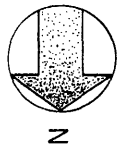
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DATE OF CORRECTION JUNE 19, 1974 DATE OF PUBLICATION DECEMBER, 1971

SUSSEX COUNTY
DELAWARE

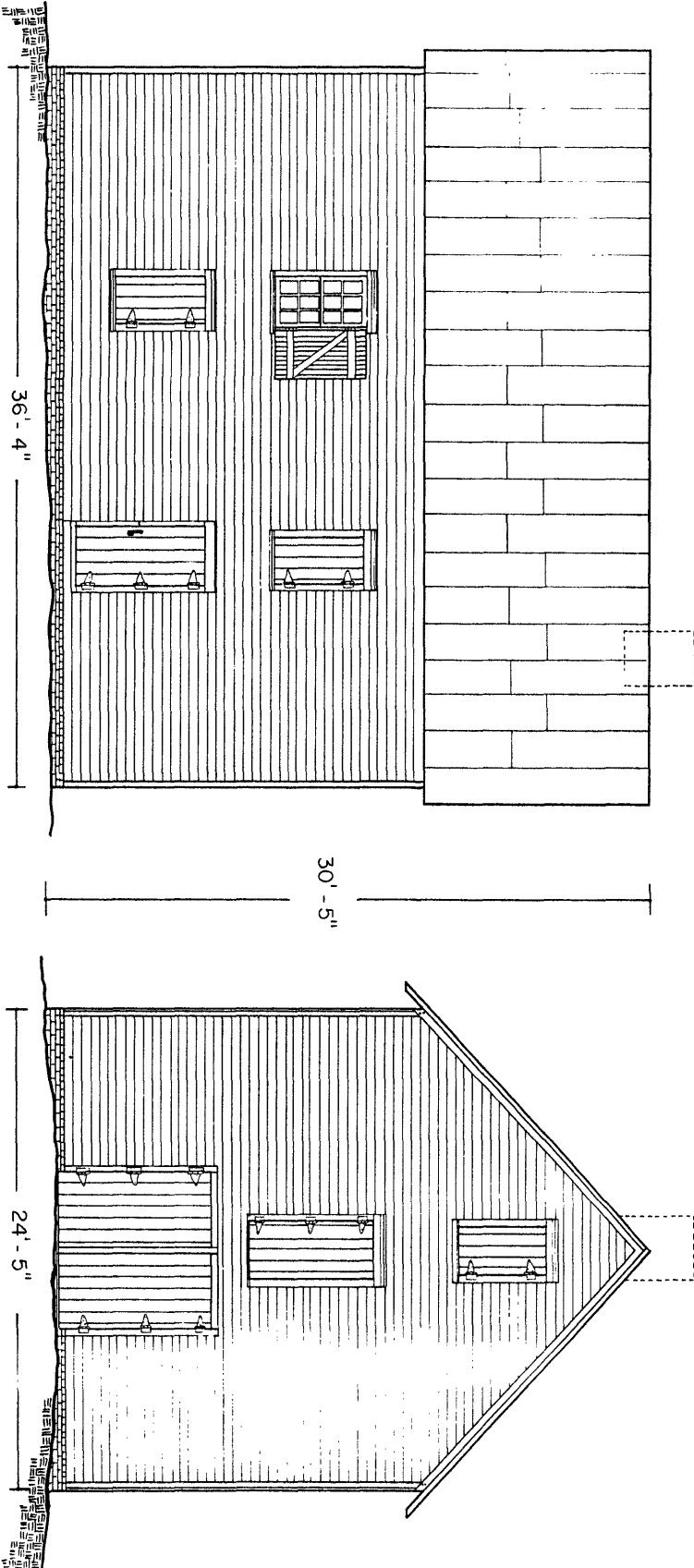
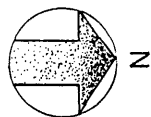
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MAP



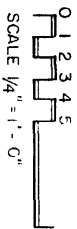


KEY	
	EXISTING
	MISSING
	EARTH



EAST ELEVATION

SOUTH ELEVATION



DRAWN BY: JUDITH QUINN

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

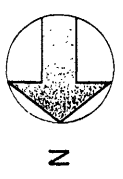
NAME AND LOCATION OF STRUCTURE
CHIPMAN SWEET POTATO HOUSE
ROAD 465, BROADCREEK HUNDRED, LAUREL VICINITY, SUSSEX COUNTY, DELAWARE

DATE OF DELINEATION: DATE OF THE DRAWING

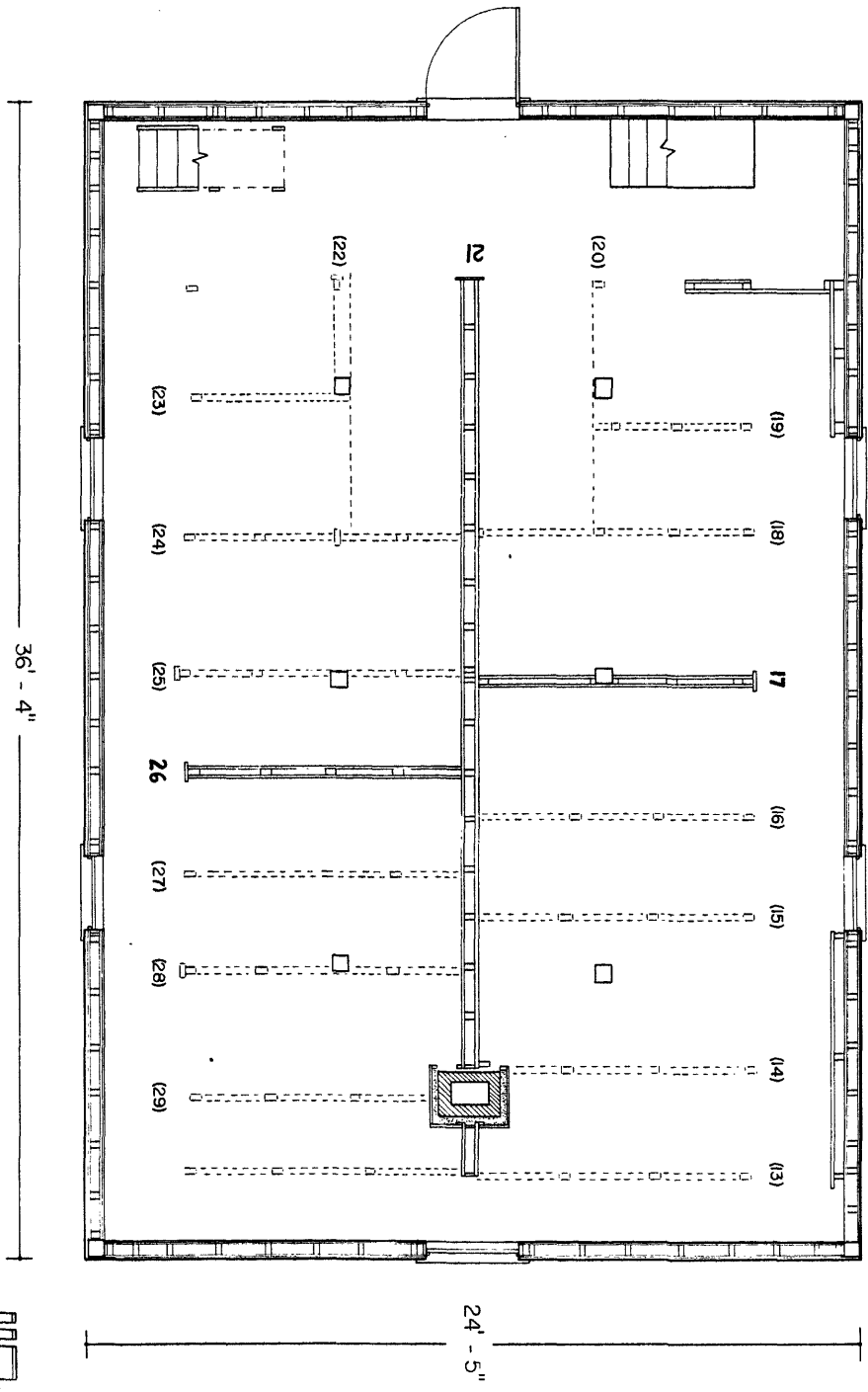
SURVEY NO.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY SHEET OF SHEETS

IF REPRODUCED, PLEASE CREDIT: HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, NAME OF DELINEATOR, DATE OF THE DRAWING



KEY	
	EXISTING
	RECONSTRUCTED
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	OVERHEAD
	STRAW
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SECOND FLOOR PLAN

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 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NAME AND LOCATION OF STRUCTURE
 CHIPMAN SWEET POTATO HOUSE
 ROAD 465, BROADCREEK HUNDRED, LAUREL VICINITY, SUSSEX COUNTY, DELAWARE

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