

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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Item number 7

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15. (N-5557, N-5576, N-5577, N-5578, N-5579):

A. Property Name: Curtis Paper Mill Workers' houses

B. Location and Verbal Boundary Description: The Curtis Paper Mill houses are located on Curtis Lane, to the east of Rt. 72 and approximately 1/4 mile north of the intersection of Rt. 72 and Cleveland Avenue. The properties being nominated include single and two multi-family dwellings and the lots on which they are situated (Property Tax Map, City of Newark, no. 14, lot nos. 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227; and no. 8, lot no. 30).

C. Owner: Susan C. Hawkins, 284/286 Curtis Lane, Newark, DE 19711

Douglas A. O'Dell & Luciano Timateo, 288/290 Curtis Lane,
Newark, DE 19711

James R. Greer, 294 Curtis Lane, Newark, DE 19711

Mrs. Viola B. Greer, 296 Curtis Lane, Newark, DE 19711

Gregory P. Keegan, 298 Curtis Lane, Newark, DE 19711

D. Property Description

The Mill houses on Curtis Lane include two rectangular 2 1/2 story frame structures which served as multi-family worker's dwellings, and one 2 1/2 story, single family house which was used as the superintendents house. The two rows of worker's houses have many similar architectural and structural characteristics. They mainly differ, however, in that the southernmost building contains four family units, while the next building to the north houses only two family units. Each structure, is constructed of a stone rubble foundation and wood frame with weatherboardsiding. Six-over-six double hung sash windows are regularly spaced at each building's west front facade. The houses have interior chimneys visible at either center or ends to the gable roofs. Frame porches each with a shed roof and either turned of square post supports, extend from the central entries of the main facades. The rows also have single story sheds projecting from the rear of each living unit.

Nos. 284/286 and 288/290, contained within one building, feature two cross gables with a pair of end windows centered over each main entry. The building to the north, containing nos. 294 and 296, has a continuous gable roof which runs parallel to Curtis Lane. No. 298, located immediately north of the two row houses and at the intersection of Curtis Lane with Old Paper Mill Road, was built as a single family residence and is slightly more elaborate in both architectural form and ornamentation than the row houses described above. This frame residence has a gable roof at each building wing and molded box cornice with returns at the gable ends. Two-over-two double hung sash windows appear regularly spaced at the three bay north building facade fronting on old Curtis Mill Road. A single story portico with molded cornice and scroll brackets, supported by squared posts, is located at the center entrance of this facade. At the

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southwest corner of the building is a frame porch, also featuring a molded cornice, brackets and turned posts. From the opposite side of this house, at the east facade, extends a one story addition with a raised panel door and overhead hood on plain brackets.

E. Historical Background

In 1848, a mill site on White Clay Creek, formerly the location of a paper mill and saw mill, was purchased by F.A. and S.M. Curtis. The two brothers, originally from Newton, Massachusetts, newly erected substantial factory structures for the purposes of operating a paper mill, originally known as "Nonantum". The enterprise was subsequently joined by their sons, A.A. and W.C. Curtis, and continued to flourish as the Curtis & Bros. Company, manufacturers of fine quality paper.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century the firm erected and maintained a series of houses for their mill workers, in addition to a single home for the company's superintendent. These buildings erected across the road from the Curtis Paper Mill, appear on Baist's 1893 plan of Newark and vicinity. A fourth brick house, reportedly occupied at one time by members of the Curtis family and on the east side of Rt. 72, has since been demolished. Workers living in the mill houses were apparently not charged rent by the proprietors of the Curtis Paper company. The Curtis paper company and mill housing were subsequently owned by a Mr. Mason c. 1918. In the mid 1900s the entire collection of workers' houses was sold to Oscar Elliot, who proceeded to sell the dwellings to individual owner/occupants.

Today these buildings retain their original architectural characteristics. Their superficial appearances, however, reflect the effect of more recent individual ownership. In some cases the building's original white weatherboard siding has been maintained; in others, the more recent owners have chosen to apply new siding of contrasting color and materials. Once exemplifying the uniformity of company housing, these buildings currently demonstrate a sense of individuality and private ownership on the part of the present occupants.'

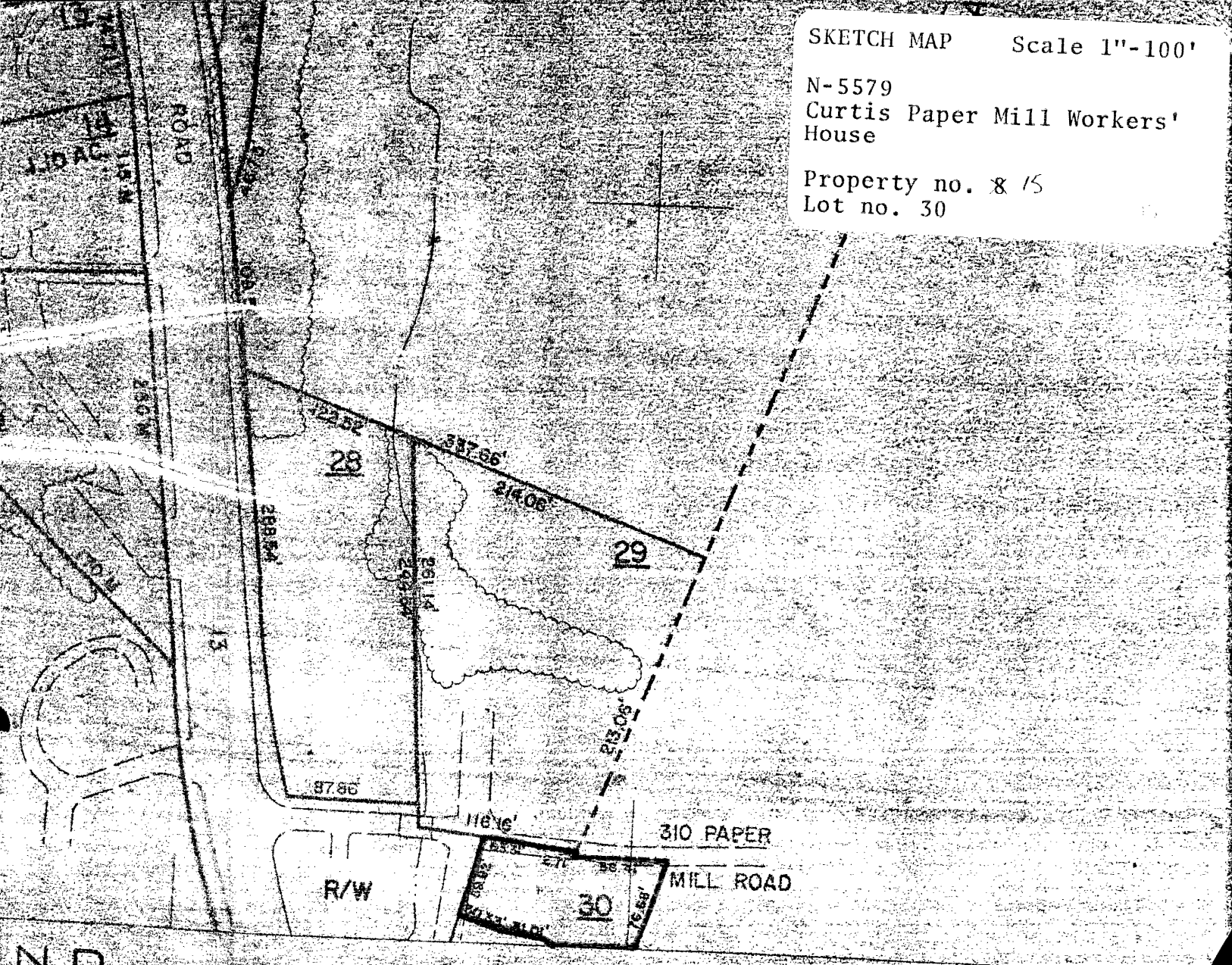
F. Significance:

Number 284 through 298 Curtis Lane are excellent examples of the type of company owned mill housing constructed during the latter half of the nineteenth century. This enclave of dwellings retains much of its original appearance and includes workers row houses as well as a superintendent's house. These structures were originally built and maintained by the Curtis Bros., proprietors of Newark's oldest continuously operating paper company.









SKETCH MAP Scale 1"-100'

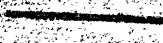
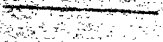
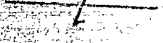





N-5579
Curtis Paper Mill Workers'
House

Property no. 8 15
Lot no. 30



N D

-  CEMETERY
-  CHURCH
-  SCHOOL
-  WOODED AREA
-  FENCE
-  MARSH
-  BENCHMARK
-  BLOCK/SECTION

-  PARCEL OUTLINE
-  INTERIOR PARCEL LINE
-  PARCEL HOOK
-  PARCEL NUMBER
-  120 AC. TOTAL ASSESSED ACREAGE
-  125 AC ± TOTAL CALCULATED ACREAGE
-  37-40 PARCEL & CONTROL MAP No
-  29 SUBDIVISION LOT No

15 30

SKETCH MAP Scale 1"-100'

N-5575 - N-5578
Curtis Paper Mill Workers'
House

Property no. ~~1415~~
Lot no. 222-227

