

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

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

For NPS use only

received AUG 3 1987
date entered SEP 8 1987

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

1. Name

historic Fairview

and/or common George Harbert Farm

2. Location

street & number County Road 433 (Bethel Church Road)

NA not for publication

city, town Middletown vicinity of

state Delaware code 10 county New Castle code 002

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name William A. Gordon III

street & number 4485 Thomas Lane

city, town Beaumont vicinity of state Texas 77706

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. New Castle County Recorder of Deeds

street & number City/County Building, 800 French Street

city, town Wilmington state Delaware

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Delaware Cultural Resource Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1980 (Site #N-6194) federal state county local

depository for survey records State Bureau of Archaeology & Historic Preservation
Old State House, The Green, P.O. Box 1401

city, town Dover state Delaware

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Fairview is located in Pencader Hundred on the north side of Bethel Church Road (County Road 433), approximately one mile east of the Maryland state line, and approximately .8 miles west of the intersection of Bethel Church Road and Choptank Road (County Road 435), in the vicinity of Summit Bridge. The house and farmstead stand in cultivated farmland abutting the south side of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal.

The stuccoed brick house and wing date from circa 1840. North of the dwelling, four outbuildings are clustered in a quasi-courtyard fashion with the farm lane dividing the yard on its path to the fields beyond. The farm buildings date from the turn of the twentieth century, except for one modern twentieth century pole shed which has a sense of form compatible with the other buildings. A concrete trough in the center of the courtyard is a contributing structure. Altogether, there are four contributing buildings, one non-contributing building, and one contributing structure.

Fairview was built in the subdued Greek Revival style typical of central Delaware in the mid-nineteenth century. This style was marked by a square, symmetrical facade, and by the use of plain trim and recessed panels, although mantels were sometimes quite elaborate.

Fairview is a two story, five bay, brick dwelling with a hip roof sealed by raised seam metal. Two interior chimneys on each side elevation service hearths in each of the main rooms. The house is laid out in a center passage, double pile plan with an original flounder roofed service wing off the northwest (rear) elevation of the main block. The white stuccoed exterior walls are constructed of brick in an undetermined bond. The facade fenestration features a five over five symmetrical alignment with a center entrance door. The windows are double hung sash with large lights in a six over six pattern, and are finished with a large bead surround and a granite lug sill. Recessed panel shutters are on the second story. The center hall is entered via a single leaf paneled door with two very narrow, vertical, recessed and moulded panels. Trim consists of a moulded bead over a four light flat transom, and four-light sidelights over a recessed panel. The entrance is sheltered by a cantilevered hip-roofed hood trimmed with a moulded box cornice and a denticulated frieze. There are two nearly identical hoods on the northeast side elevation.

On the interior, a center stair passage, austere in finish, divides the house laterally. A rather plain stairway leads to the second story. The stairway is trimmed with a turned newel post with a moulded cap and base. There are two turned balusters per tread on the open string stair. Doors on the first floor are identical to the entrance way door with vertical, recessed panels, and are finished with imitation wood graining.

The front northeast room, the parlor, features a black marble mantel with distinctive markings. Front room wall and window trim are equally elaborate with wooden cornice and baseboard wall trim. The windows are finished with recessed panels, one beneath the windowsill, and several lining the reveals. The side trim is plain and extends to the floor. At the top, the side trim supports a moulded cornice.

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The back two rooms are more modestly finished, lacking the wall cornice. Windows and doors are trimmed with corner blocks.

Second story chambers are also more modestly trimmed. Both front bed chambers have frame mantels with pilasters and Tudor-arched openings. The Tudor arch also appears on window openings which are additionally trimmed with beaded surrounds and corbelled sills.

Associated with the dwelling are four outbuildings arranged in a courtyard fashion with the farm lane running through the center. Northwest of the house is a 1 1/2 story, gable-roofed, crib barn built in the late nineteenth century. The construction consists of vertical sawn, braced frame principals (posts and girts) with nailed braces and rails. Common rafters are spiked to a ridge board and are held rigid by variable-sized collar boards. Siding consists of beaded, rabbeted vertical board, and vertical slats. The roof is covered with wood shingles. Entrance is via gable end double doors at each end. Tripartite in plan, the barn has a central driveway flanked by corn cribs. The loft served as a granary, but the bins are non-extant.

Northwest of the crib barn is the non-contributing building, a modern implement shed identical in form to the crib barn. The implement shed is 1 1/2 stories with a gable roof and is sided and roofed with galvanized, corrugated metal. The infrastructure consists of earth fast telephone poles with bolted roof trusses.

East of the new implement shed is an older implement shed probably built in the early 20th century. This implement shed is L-shaped in plan with a shed-gable roof covered with corrugated metal and capped with a half-round ridge piece. The framing consists of spiked post and rails. Several of the timbers were re-used from an older building. One section has suffered from fire, but the building generally retains its integrity.

Southwest of this older implement shed is a masonry dairy dating from the early twentieth century. The dairy is rectangular in plan with a gable roof, frame gables sided with weatherboard, and poured concrete walls. The interior is open with a beaded, wide board ceiling. There is a small, gable roofed frame addition on the northeast elevation.

Between the implement shed and the dairy, towards the center of the farmyard, is a large, poured concrete water trough dating from the early twentieth century. Also located close to the old implement shed, and adjacent to the farm lane, is a well. The twentieth century implement shed, dairy and concrete trough represent agricultural continuity on the farm, and contribute by providing text for the farmhouse.

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The construction of these managers' homes represents one aspect of the rebuilding phenomenon. Tenant farming was often somewhat centralized with farm machinery taken from farm to farm instead of each tenant having his own. With the advent of horse-drawn machinery, landowners were able to invest heavily in order to better engage in capital intensive grain farming where equipment and speed were needed to plant and harvest in a short period of time. The same advantages were afforded to farmers in the mid-west who flooded the wheat market after the Civil War. During this period, Delaware farmers began cultivating peaches as a cash crop for export to the large eastern cities.

Peaches were grown in Delaware during the eighteenth century primarily for distillation into brandy. Peach trees were first planted to bear market crops in 1832 near Delaware City, and were planted throughout central and southern Delaware from 1850 to 1900. The extension of the railroad and the invention of the "arctic" car enabled orchardists to plant prodigious numbers of trees and be relatively assured of prompt delivery to the big cities. Land values soared, sometimes doubling, between 1850 and 1870. Peach culture declined rather quickly in north central Delaware due to a glutted market and the natural 20-year life span of the peach tree. The greatest factor in the decline was the onset of the "Peach Yellows," a blight which destroyed the fruit and eventually killed the tree.

As greater numbers of trees were planted in southern Delaware and adjacent lands in Maryland, farmers in the north central hundreds returned to the traditional grain and butter cash crops. Some wealthy farmers acquired property in Maryland to continue peach cultivation. The prosperity of this era has led to a local tradition of calling large farm dwellings "Peach houses." These buildings should be more appropriately called "Wheat houses," since it was principally the cultivation of that crop which enabled the farmers to erect such structures.

The dwellings that survive today in the Pencader, Appoquinimink and St. Georges Hundreds were the homes of the wealthy who redefined the architectural landscape even as they redefined farming practices and social relationships. Prior to 1820, houses were constructed on a hall-parlor plan with outbuildings for domestic service functions. The nascent renewal began with the remodeling of older homes in the 1820's and 1830's. The architectural style which emerged featured an unheated center stair passage, and combined Gothic, Italianate and Greek Revival styles expressed in a rather subdued manner. Domestic functions, formerly relegated to outbuildings, were incorporated into the dwelling in the form of a service wing, lending to the building an L-configuration.

Fairview is a great example of the type of dwelling built during this period with its five bay fenestration, and center hall, double pile plan. The hip roof and brace of double chimneys and the granite window sills bespeak an ostentation beyond the ordinary farmhouse and on par with the Andrew Eliason house (N-413, NR). The interior, however, retains the subdued Delaware version of the Greek Revival style with muted wood trim and grained doors. The parlor is the exception with its elaborately moulded trim, paneled window reveals and striking black marble mantel. Ornamentation is held in check except for the front rooms.

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Fairview is representative of the type of farm which developed in north central Delaware during the nineteenth century.

George Harbert acquired the farm in 1830 and built the impressive brick dwelling around 1840. In 1828, two years previous to his purchasing the property, the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal had been completed. It is difficult to ascertain whether Harbert benefited from being adjacent to the canal as, say, William J. Hurlock did--a farmer who spread on his land some of the shell marl discovered near St. Georges during the digging of the canal. In general, the canal was more important as a symbol of emerging trade with the west than it was as a transportation system.

Fairview, abutting the canal, is outside the perimeter of the fertile area known as the Levels, but none the less shares physical and historical characteristics with that area. George Harbert proved to be a successful cultivator of the rich farmland he owned. In the 1860 Agricultural Census, it was recorded that Harbert owned 380 acres, 340 acres improved, which was nearly twice as much land (on a single farm) as the average farm in the surrounding area. Harbert harvested 2 to 3 times the amount of grain as other farmers and produced substantial amounts of butter (1050 pounds) from the milk of ten dairy cows. He had implements worth \$800 and 9 horses and 4 oxen to pull them. The 2200 bushels of oats were fed almost exclusively to the horses, and the 3400 bushels of indian corn was raised for the other livestock as well, including 13 swine. With only \$50 worth of orchard produce, it is evident that Harbert had not begun to harvest the peach orchards he, in all probability, began planting in the preceding years as almost 90% of his fellow farmers had done. Unfortunately, Harbert is not listed in other assessments with which to compare his 1860 production. However, it is quite probable that Fairview followed the documented historical pattern of this defined agricultural area.

In 1871, Fairview was bought as a tenant farm by Andrew Eliason, one of the four he owned at the time of his death. As a tenant farm, Fairview would have been run by a farm manager who would have lived in the dwelling. Andrew Eliason was a wealthy farmer who was active in other aspects of society such as being a director in the Middletown National Bank. Eliason was a subscriber to Scharf's 1888 publication History of the State of Delaware, 1609-1888, and commissioned a biographical history of his life. In this sketch, Eliason's rag-to-riches story is recounted as well as his participation in agricultural reform and civic activities. Eliason's biography, and others, specifically mention physical improvements made to their dwellings. The specific mention of active and past rebuilding reveals how the landowners of this new social order monumentalized their achievements in the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century.

Level of Significance

Fairview represents well the pattern of agricultural history in north central Delaware as a productive farm, managed at first individually, and later by tenants; and it also represents the rebuilding phenomenon of the nineteenth century. Because of its association with these phenomena, local significance is being claimed for this property.

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This nomination furthers the objectives outlined in the Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Plan. The study units covered are time periods 1830-1880 and 1880-1940; and the cultural concepts involved are Landscape and Social, Cultural and Economic Processes.

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"/> 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1937	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates Circa 1840 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Fairview is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A because of its association with the rebuilding phenomenon which occurred in southern New Castle County throughout most of the nineteenth century; and under Criterion C as a good example and representative of the vernacular Greek Revival style popular in this rebuilding period (1840 to 1880). The house is in excellent condition and has experienced few changes to compromise its integrity. The outbuildings are arranged in a typical courtyard fashion representative of late nineteenth century farm plans. Fairview is one of the few unaltered examples from this period of agricultural reform and architectural rebuilding.

Fairview can best be understood in the context of major societal changes-- agricultural reform, social change, and architectural renewal, that occurred in southern New Castle County in the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century. Fairview is located in an agricultural area known for its flat terrain and rich soil. It is adjacent to and shares the same characteristics as the "Levels," an area known historically and presently for having some of the best farmland on the east coast. The soil type, Matapeake-Sassafras association, found in portions of Pencader, Appoquinimink and St. Georges Hundreds, is considered one of the finest soils for farming in terms of friability and fertility, and demarcates this area as the most productive in the state. The terrain and soil have historically enabled farmers to grow grain crops, especially wheat, in great abundance. Throughout the eighteenth century farmers from this area supplied the reknowned Brandywine Mills, near Wilmington, with wheat. However, by the end of the eighteenth century, due to poor farming practices, even these rich soils were exhausted.

One of the nation's first Agricultural Societies was formed in New Castle County in 1804 by farmers alarmed by the depressed state of agriculture. The society's goals were to encourage the farmer to practice scientific farming. An equally important tenet of the reformers in southern New Castle County was the reconsolidation of farmland. During this period of poor harvests, depressed land values and depopulation, wealthy landowners were able to acquire substantial amounts of land. The acquisition of land altered the character of farming and the social relationships between farm worker and landowner. Agriculture as business was to emerge from the ashes of this agrarian depression.

Farmers developed the business side of agriculture by keeping records of virtually every aspect of the farm and determining the cost effectiveness of each factor. Slavery was discontinued late in the eighteenth century because day labor was deemed more economical and efficient. Owner and worker relationships were formalized through contractual agreements. Portions of consolidated land holdings were run as individual farms by farm managers on a crop share basis. The houses built for the managers were comparable in form and finish to the landowner's dwellings although less ostentatious.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Approx. 45 acres

Quadrangle name Elkton, MD-DE

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>5</u> <u>7</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>6</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>4</u> <u>8</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>2</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>4</u> <u>9</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

D	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>5</u> <u>4</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

E	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

F	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

G	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

H	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet.

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

state	NA	code	NA	county	NA	code	NA
-------	----	------	----	--------	----	------	----

state	NA	code	NA	county	NA	code	NA
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Hubert F. Jicha, III, Assistant Historic Preservation Planner

organization New Castle County Department of Planning date December 1986

street & number 2701 Capitol Trail telephone (302) 366-7780

city or town Newark 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

title John R. Kern Director, DE Div. Of Hist. & Cult. Aff. date 7/22/87

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Patrick Andrews date 9/8/87
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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- Bernard L. Herman, Brad Brook, Hubert F. Jicha III, "Levels Historic District," A Draft National Register Nomination, prepared 1985.
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- Roger A. Martin, History of Delaware Through its Governors, (Wilmington, McClafferty Printing Co., 1984).
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- New Castle County Recorder of Deeds, Land Records.
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- United States Bureau of Census: Agricultural Census, Delaware, 1850.
- U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Soil Survey New Castle County, Delaware, (Washington, D. C.: GPO, 1970).

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The boundary of the nominated property lies within the legal parcel as indicated on the attached sketch map which is referenced: New Castle County property Tax Map, 1985, parcel number 011-057.00-001. The portion nominated is a square piece 1,400 feet to a side, totalling 45 acres. Bethel Church Road constitutes one boundary line, and a parallel line is located beyond a branch northeast of the complex. Additional farmland was included within the two other boundary lines to comprise a square. This configuration was chosen in order to include the farmhouse, the agricultural complex, and sufficient land to retain integrity of setting.

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Fairview (N-6194)

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register
Criteria.

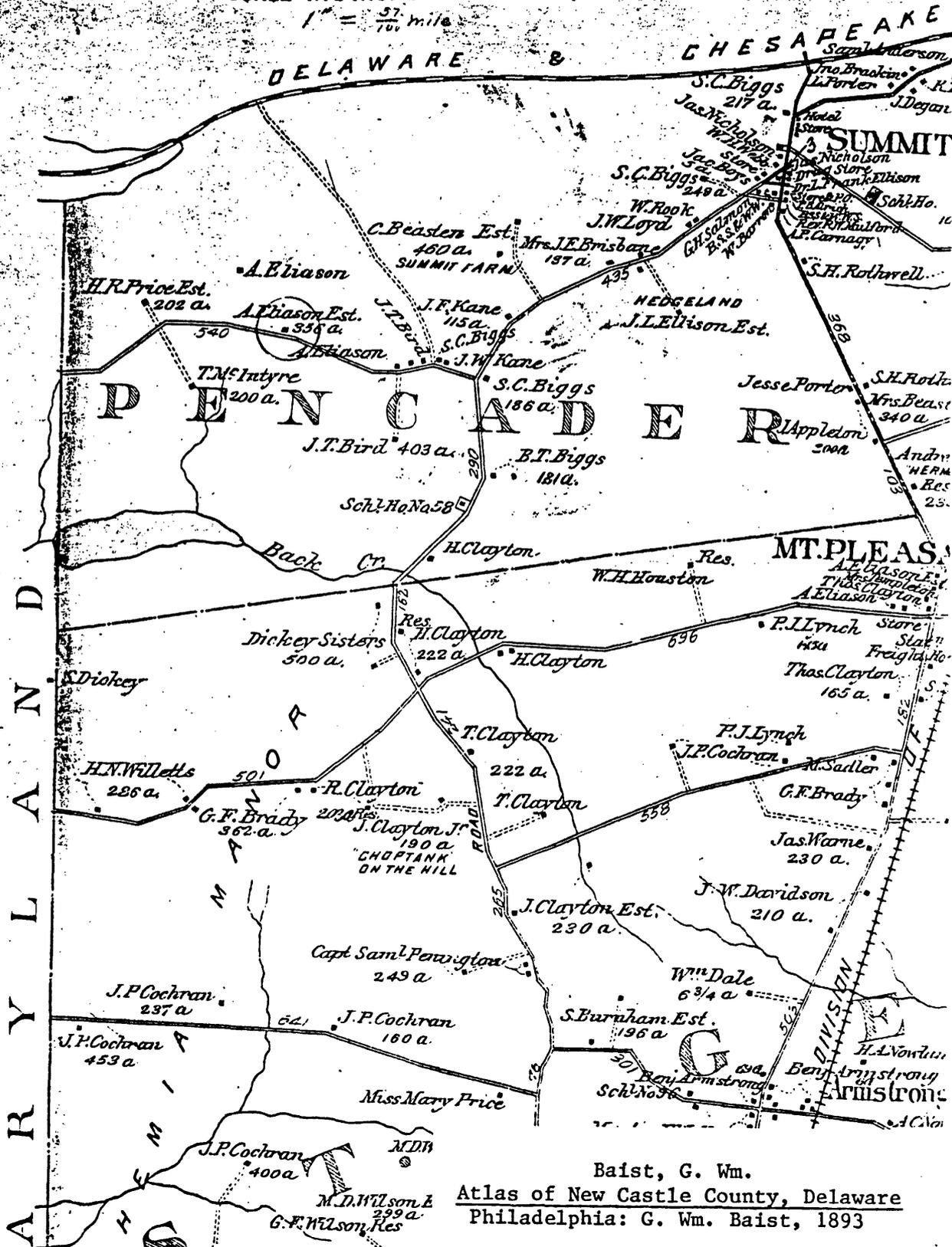
Rita Justice
Rita Justice
County Executive
New Castle County, Delaware

2-10-87
Date

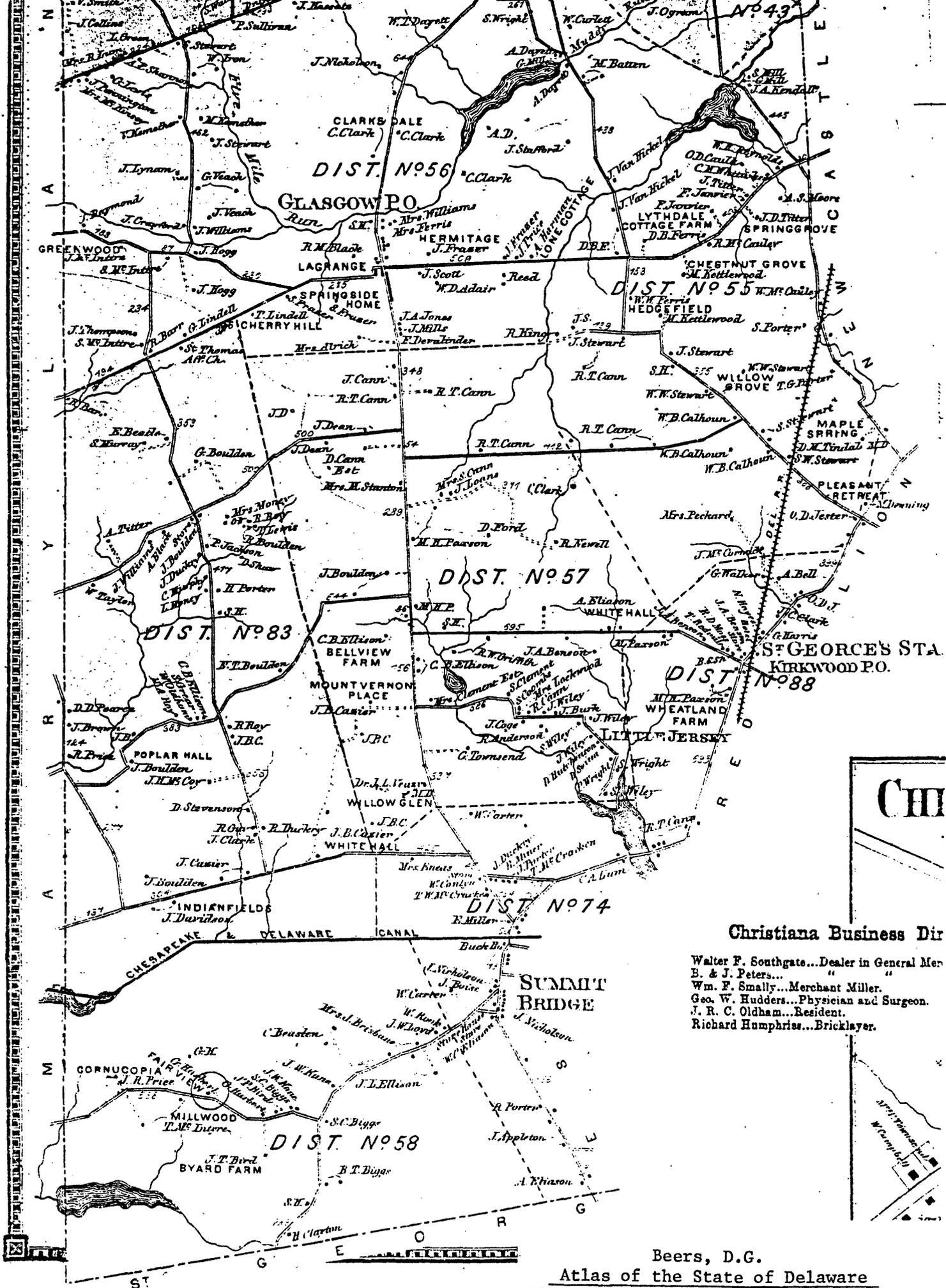
ATLAS OF
 PUBLISHED BY G.W. BAIST
NEWCASTLE COUNTY
 DELAWARE

SCALE—1.75 INCHES—ONE MILE.

1" = $\frac{57}{70}$ mile



Baist, G. Wm.
 Atlas of New Castle County, Delaware
 Philadelphia: G. Wm. Baist, 1893



Christiana Business Dir

Walter F. Southgate...Dealer in General Mer
 B. & J. Peters... " "
 Wm. F. Smally...Merchant Miller.
 Geo. W. Hudders...Physician and Surgeon.
 J. R. C. Oldham...Resident.
 Richard Hampriss...Bricklayer.