

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

NOV 20 1978

DATE ENTERED

5/17/79

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Abbott's Mill Amendment

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
On Road 620 west of Route 36

CITY, TOWN
Milford

STATE
Delaware

VICINITY OF
One

CODE
10

COUNTY
Sussex

CODE
0015

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
State of Delaware, Division of Historical & Cultural Affairs

STREET & NUMBER
Hall of Records

CITY, TOWN
Dover

STATE
Delaware 19943

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Sussex County Court House

STREET & NUMBER
The Circle

CITY, TOWN
Georgetown

STATE
Delaware

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Delaware Historic Sites Inventory, S-177

DATE
1972

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Division of Historical & Cultural Affairs

CITY, TOWN
Dover

STATE
Delaware

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT

☒ GOOD

☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED

☐ RUINS

☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED

☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE

☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

When the nomination was originally submitted, only the mill structure was nominated; the acreage totalled .36. This amendment extends the boundaries to include the surrounding buildings and open space, affording the entire complex recognition and protection. The entire 8½-acre property is held in perpetuity by the State of Delaware. The complex is being developed for use by the Delaware Nature Education Society.

Abbott's Mill is located on Road 620 about two miles southwest of Milford. The millpond, formed by the dam on which the mill rests, is similarly named. They are on Johnson's Branch, one of the main tributaries of the Mispillion. The complex is in a rural area and consists of the mill, the miller's house, and three outbuildings. Also associated with the complex is the open space on both sides of the mill race until it flows into Johnson's Branch and the land on the west side of the branch, until it intersects a small ditch.

The mill is a two-and-a-half-story frame structure with several wings. The superstructure is of undetermined date; however, the minimal architectural detail present indicates a construction date in the late-nineteenth century. The structure is built on the brick foundation of an earlier mill. The heavy framing members of the mill are sheathed with a vertical board siding which now is covered by a pressed-tin siding. The wooden roof shingles have been covered by a standing seam tin sheathing. A large dormer, virtually a cross gable, pierces the gable roof. The building is three bays wide and two bays deep. The windows have six-over-six light sash. The only architectural detail on the building is found in the slight peaking of the window lintels.

The mill structure has several wings. They reflect a different period of construction than the main block of the mill. The largest wing is a two-story, gable-roofed structure set perpendicular to, and to the rear of, the main section of the mill. Half of the ground floor of this section is cut away and the upper floor is supported by wooden posts. To the east of the main block, above the mill race, are two shed-roofed wings. The far side of these are supported by concrete blocks due to the severe erosion of the land when the dam gave away early in this century. Across the front of the mill is a shed-roofed wing at the first floor level. Under part of this is an open loading dock; the enclosed half contains a small office. Each is similarly sheathed in pressed tin with metal roofs.

On the interior, the mill has four levels which hold equipment for the mill's operation. A series of wooden and cloth chutes carry the grain from one level to the other, connecting the processes. Most of the chutes are made from beaded boards and have small glass inserts to watch the flow of the grain. The latter are covered by tear-drop-shaped, swinging wooden covers with moulded edges. Among the equipment in the mill are: Wolfe Company hopper machines; a Wolfe Company speed indicator; two pair of buhr stones one crane; one Wolfe Turbine and gear train, line shaft and pulleys; one Massey-Ferguson sheller; two McCormick-Deering feed grinders; a Eureka wheat scourer with outlet ducts; a Fairbanks, Morse & Company 20-horsepower, 350 rpm-style H-engine; drive train, line shaft and Wolfe Company conveyor machinery; several types of graders; grain and meal binds; one rocker-type bolting machine; one Philadelphia Inter-Elevator Flour Dresser

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 type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input 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 checked="" 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-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		Industrial Archaeology	
				Local History	

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Abbott's Mill is a well-preserved example of a late-nineteenth/early-twentieth-century milling complex. At one time gristmills of this type occupied virtually every suitable site along the streams of central and southern Delaware. They were basic to the economic and social life of this agricultural region where grains were a major crop. Very few of these remain, and even fewer are in as good condition and contain so much of their machinery.

There has been a gristmill at Abbott's Pond since 1808; before that, there was a saw mill at the site built by Nathaniel Whiley in 1795. The foundation of the present mill is likely to date from 1808, but the superstructure has been rebuilt. The mill was in operation until 1960, and its flour was known to have been some of the best in the area.

The last miller, Ainsworth Abbott, bought the mill in 1919. It is his name which the mill and millpond carry. He made several changes in the operation of the mill, including the installation of a diesel engine to provide an alternate means of power. The machinery still in the mill is in excellent condition and could be made operable once again.

The mill adapts the technological ideas promulgated by Oliver Evans. Experts from Hagley Museum examined the mill and its machinery. It was their opinion that: "The unusual combination of early and late milling technology in the Abbott's Mill, with its complimentary power sources, its remarkable state of preservation and its completeness, coupled with its location and charm, give it high historical, social and technological value."

Located in a rural area outside Milford, the environment of Abbott's Mill has remained unchanged in this century. It provides a fitting setting for the future interpretation of the mill. It is hoped that the mill might be at least minimally operational at some time in the future. Present plans call for the development of the other buildings as a nature center and for the stabilization of the mill.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Interview with Mr. E. Millis Hurley

Scharf, J. Thomas History of Delaware, 1609-1888 Vol. III. Philadelphia, L.J. Richards & Company, 1888, pg. 1254

HAER Inventory, June 1974 by Tommy Guider

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 8½ acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Milford

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES See map dated 5.15.79

CA	18	45	8	5	7	5	4	3	0	4	4	1	0	D	18	4	5	8	6	8	9	4	3	0	4	2	9	0	
ZONE	EASTING					NORTHING	ZONE	EASTING					NORTHING																
AC	18	4	5	8	7	4	3	4	3	0	4	2	8	0	B	18	4	5	8	7	5	0	4	3	0	3	9	1	0
E															F														
G															H														

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Property expanded to include not only the mill but the outbuildings, privy and mill house. Property is bounded as shown on the enclosed survey.

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 Originally, Edward F. Heite, Historic Registrar
Amendment, Joan N. Larrivee, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION
Division of Historical & Cultural Affairs

DATE

STREET & NUMBER
Hall of Records

TELEPHONE
(302) 678-5314

CITY OR TOWN
Dover

STATE
Delaware

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ____

STATE X

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.

Deputy
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Daniel R. Griffith

TITLE Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 11.16.78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Charles H. ...

DATE 5-17-79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *Anna Jane ...*

DATE 5-17-79

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

Abbott's Mill Amendment

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	NOV 20 1978
DATE ENTERED	<i>Increase approp</i> 5/11/79

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 6 PAGE 1

Historic American Engineering Record
1974 Federal
Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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NOV 20 1978

DATE ENTERED

Increase apparent
5/17/79

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

by Grisson and Company and McFeeley; two wooden screw conveyors; and a Sprout, Waldron and Company Monarch cracked corn separator. Originally powered by a wooden water wheel, a water turbine replaced it in the late-nineteenth century. The last miller, Ainsworth Abbott, made many improvements probably adding most of the above equipment. He installed the diesel engine in order that he might continue to run the mill when the water level in the pond was low. He also constructed a drive shaft from this engine through the west wall of the building (away from the race). This provided power for sawing lumber. This drive shaft is also still in place.

To the north and west of the rear wing of the mill is a row of outbuildings. The first of these is a small, gable-roofed, vertical lapped-board, sheathed structure with a metal roof. It was used as a machine shop by Mr. Abbott. Next to this building is a garage/stable. It also has vertical lapped-board sheathing and wood shingle roof, covered with metal. Four sliding doors make the entire side of the building, which faces the road, moveable. The roof is pierced by a cupola with open louvered sash and a wood shingle roof. The window frames in the cupola and on the rest of the building reflect the same detailing as those on the main portion of the mill. The stable wing to the east has a roof which slopes up from the rear wall, peaking at the front wall, and overhangs for several feet beyond the wall affording protection to the door and stall windows. To the rear of this building is the privy. It is sheathed with board and batten siding.

The miller's house stands to the west of these buildings. It is a frame Gothic-style structure built in 1905. It replaces an earlier brick, one-story mill house. This house is sheathed in clapboard and has a metal-sheathed gable roof with a cross-gable. The facade of the side-hall-plan house is three bays wide. A rear wing extends the west wall of the house and allows for a side porch on the east side. A kitchen wing is set perpendicular to the rear wing and connects to its east side. An open porch supported by turned columns spans the facade. Pierced brackets decorate the porch. The front door has etched glass in its upper portion. The windows have two-over-two light sash set in rectangular frames, except in the attic where the frames are pointed. The shutters now in place are a more recent addition.

The Abbott's Mill property is bounded on the south by the dam and the roadway, on the west by a private residential piece of property, on the north by undeveloped land, and on the east by Johnson's Branch and its creek bed. It is mostly undeveloped land and will be used for nature trails by the Delaware Nature Education Society who will be using the house and outbuildings for offices, workshops, exhibits, restrooms, and an orientation center. The future use of the mill is uncertain at this point.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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

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DATE ENTERED

Abbott's Mill Amendment

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

7

PAGE

3

Description Continued

Change to Paragraph 1, line 4:

Change 8½-acre to read 9.3-acre

Clarification of Nomenclature in Paragraph 2, line 2-3

The branch of the Mispillion shown as Johnson's Branch on the U.S.G.S. Map, and the branch on which Abbott's Mill is located was historically known as Bowman's Branch. It is noted as such in the 1963 and 1964 deeds which granted the State of Delaware ownership of the property and, most recently, on the survey which was done by Charles D. Murphy, Jr. in 1978.

Clarification of building nomenclature and dates of construction, see Paragraph 2, line 4:

<u>S-177</u>	<u>Structure</u>	<u>Date</u>
.1	Abbott's Mill	c. 1868-1874 (wing c. 1900)
.2	Machine Shop	Late 19th century
.3	Garage/Stable	c. 1868-1874
.4	Miller's House	1905
.5	Privy	c. 1850-1880

Change to Paragraph 2, line 5:

Change mill race to read tail race

Add the following paragraph after Paragraph 5:

To the east side of and beneath the mill structure is the wheel pit. The water turbines still remain here. To the north is the tail race; it is entirely included in the nominated area. The head race through the dam has been modified in the course of roadwork on the road over the dam in front of the mill and in creating a recreational pond from the old millpond. Due to this the dam and head race as it runs through it are not included in the nominated area.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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Abbott's Mill Amendment

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Boundary justification:

The boundaries of the Abbott's Mill nomination are being amended due to the fact that we are now aware of the importance of protecting the complete cultural resource. Whereas originally only the mill as bounded by its foundation walls, was nominated, it is now recognized that the entire complex of buildings located around the mill from a resource which is in many ways unusual. In most cases either the miller's house has been so altered as to have lost the sense of it in relationship to the mill, or alternately, the miller's house remains but the mill has been destroyed. In the Abbott's Mill Complex, the resource remains virtually unchanged since Ainsworth Abbott acquired the property in 1919. He operated the milling complex until 1962 and it was in 1963 and 1964 that the property came into the possession of the State of Delaware. All of Abbott's lands were deeded to the state. Much of the land on the north side of Road 620 is open land. The property does include the entire tail race for the mill. Control of this would have been important to the miller. The mill, the miller's house and other outbuildings are grouped closely together on the north side of Road 620. The yard which lies between them held a saw mill and would have been a gathering place for local residents when they brought their grain to be milled. Road 620 crosses the mill dam; the mill pond lies on the south side of the road. At this point, the head race from the mill pond through the dam is almost non-functioning. Work on the roadway has caused changes to be made to it and recently it was scheduled to be closed due to upcoming changes to the road. This possibility has been averted. However, due to its changed nature, the dam and the head race is not included in the nominated area. The bounded area ends at the right-of-way of the road.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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DATE ENTERED

Abbott's Mill Amendment

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 2

Change acreage to:

9.3 acres

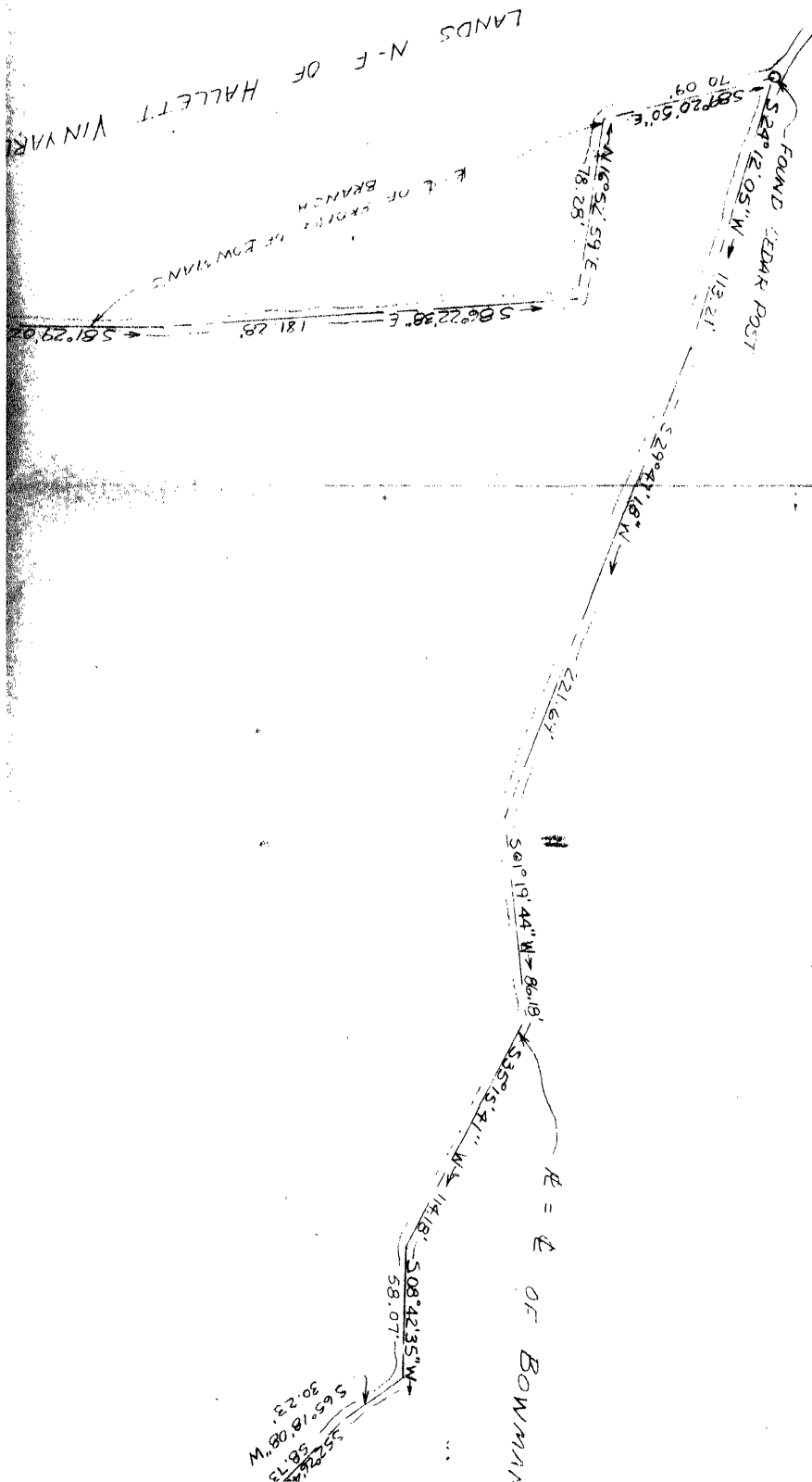
Change UTM references to:

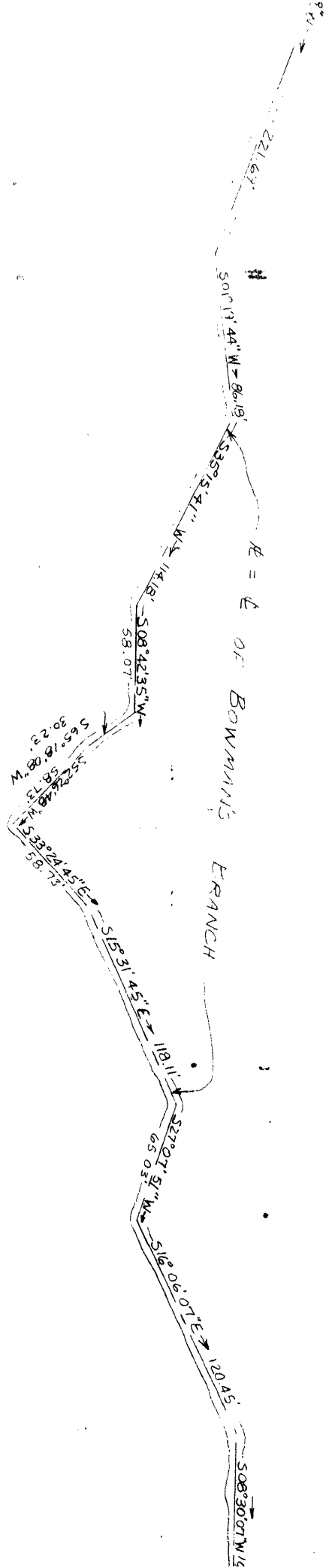
- A 18/458735/4304250
- B 18/458775/4304035
- C 18/458745/4303920
- D 18/458580/4304050
- E 18/458640/4304285

Note: The main run of Johnson's Branch is not shown on the U.S.G.S. map, we have had to pencil it in.

Change verbal boundary description as follows:

The amended nominated area is bounded as shown in the survey of Charles W. Murphy, Jr., dated October 25, 1978. Generally, the boundaries are as follows: on the west, a line parallel to and about 29 feet to the east of the house of the property until it meets the run of a small ditch; on the north, the center of a small ditch on its various courses until it meets the run of Johnson's Branch; on the east, the center of Johnson's (or historically, Bowman's) Branch on its various courses until it meets the right-of-way of Road 620; and on the south, the north right-of-way of Road 620 until it meets the first line. It includes the mill, the miller's house and three outbuildings (a garage/stable, a machine shop and a privy) all located along Road 620 and undeveloped land from these structures to the back of the property.





NCH

S 53° 31' 45" E 118.11' 120.45'

S 27° 07' 51" W 65.03'

S 16° 06' 07" E 120.45'

S 08° 30' 07" W 120.46'

S 13° 43' 23" E 65.08'

S 17° 14' 52" W

266.25'

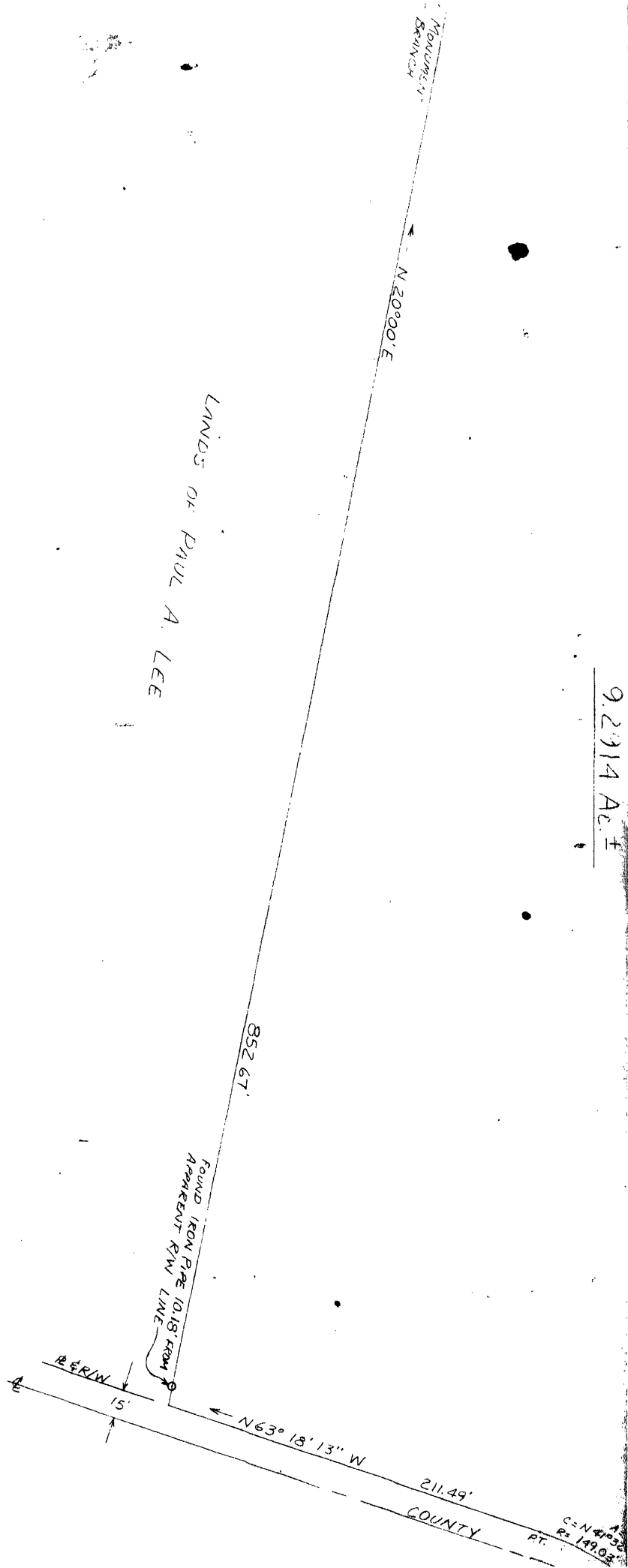
230.15'

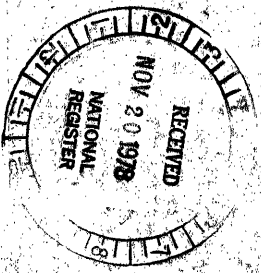
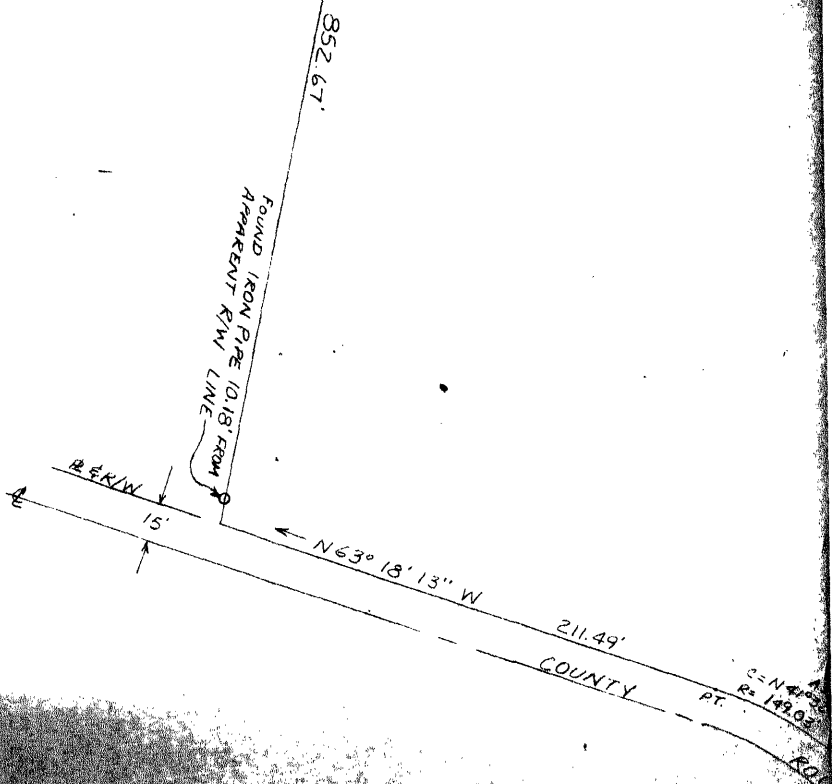
A = 119.17' C = N 22° 41' 12" W 118.14' R = 261.95 D = 26° 06' 08"

N 10° 53' 42" E 62.00' N 19° 44' 05" W

LANDS OF PAUL A. LEE

158.44
N 20°00' E
4.25' FROM E. OF BRIDGE

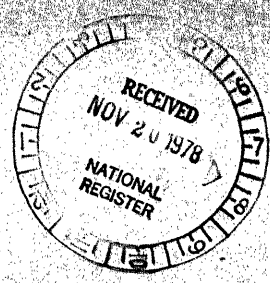
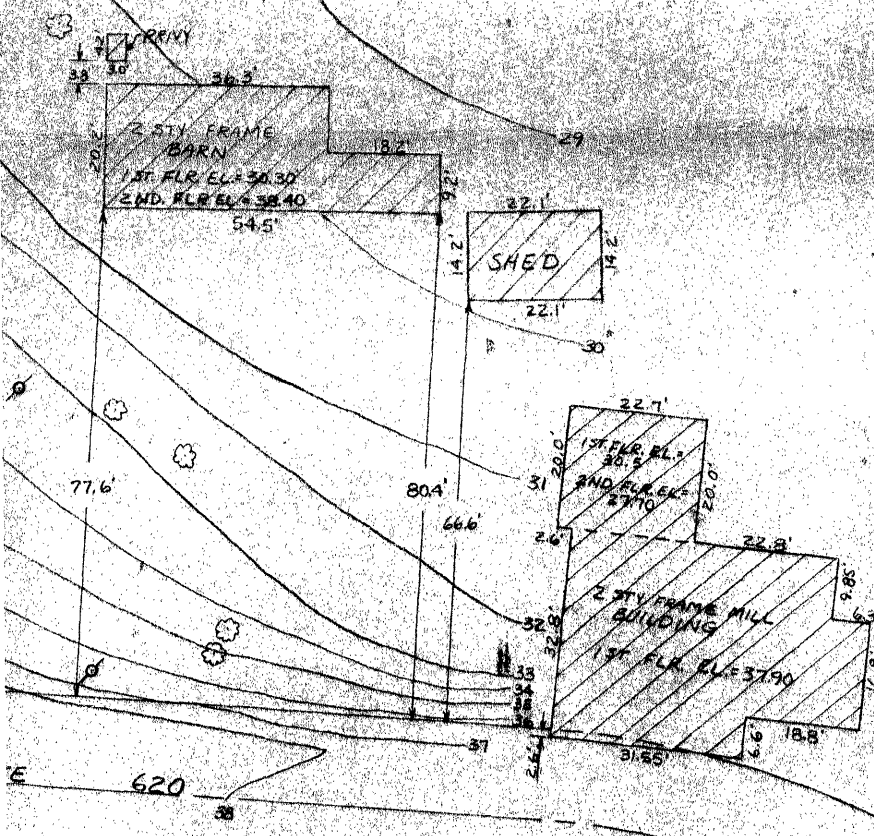




Abbott's Mill Amendment S-177
Property Boundary

LANDS OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE	
CEDAR CREEK HUNDRED	
SUSSEX COUNTY, DELAWARE	
Scale: 1" = 50'	Survey by:
Date: 10/24/78	Charles D. Murphy Jr. P.L.

[illegible]



UTILITY POLE
DECIDUOUS TREE
(SPREAD NOT TO SCALE)

Abbott's Mill Amendment S-177
Sketch Map

PLACEMENT AND TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY PROPERTY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE	
CEDAR CREEK HUNDRED,	
SUSSEX COUNTY, DELAWARE	
Scale: 1"=20'	Surveyed By:
Date: 10/25/78	Charles D. Murphy, Jr. P.L.S. 291

Abbott's Mill (amendment)
 near Milford, Sussex County, DE
 Sketch map to identify
 buildings

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K-277.5

K-277.3 *garage/stable*
 2 STY. FRAME BARN
 1ST FLR. EL. = 20.30
 2ND FLR. EL. = 39.40
 54.5'

K-277.2

Machine Shop

1ST FLR. EL. 30.5
 2ND FLR. EL. 41.10

2 STY. FRAME MILL BUILDING
 1ST FLR. EL. = 37.70

K-277.1

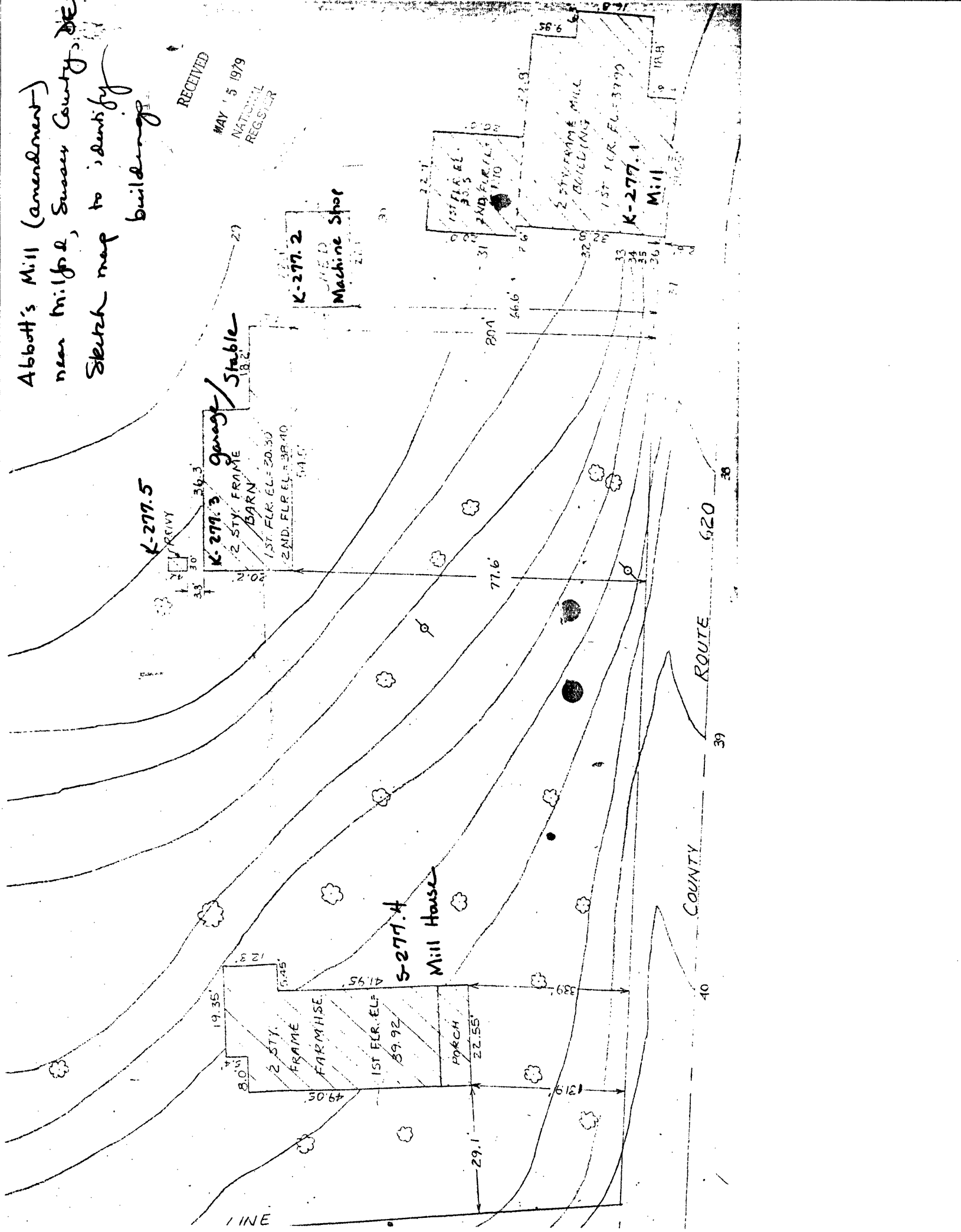
Mill

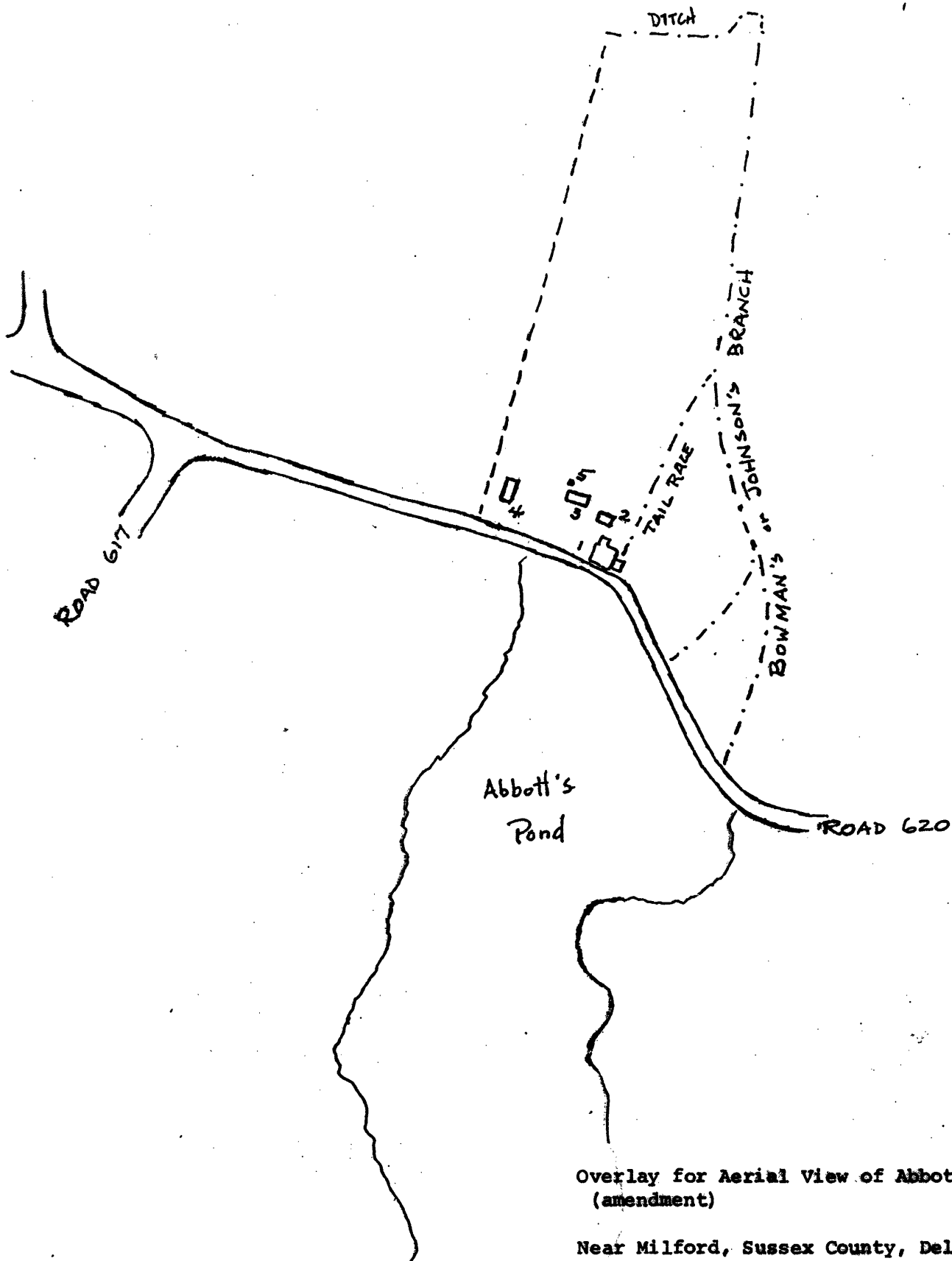
S-277.4

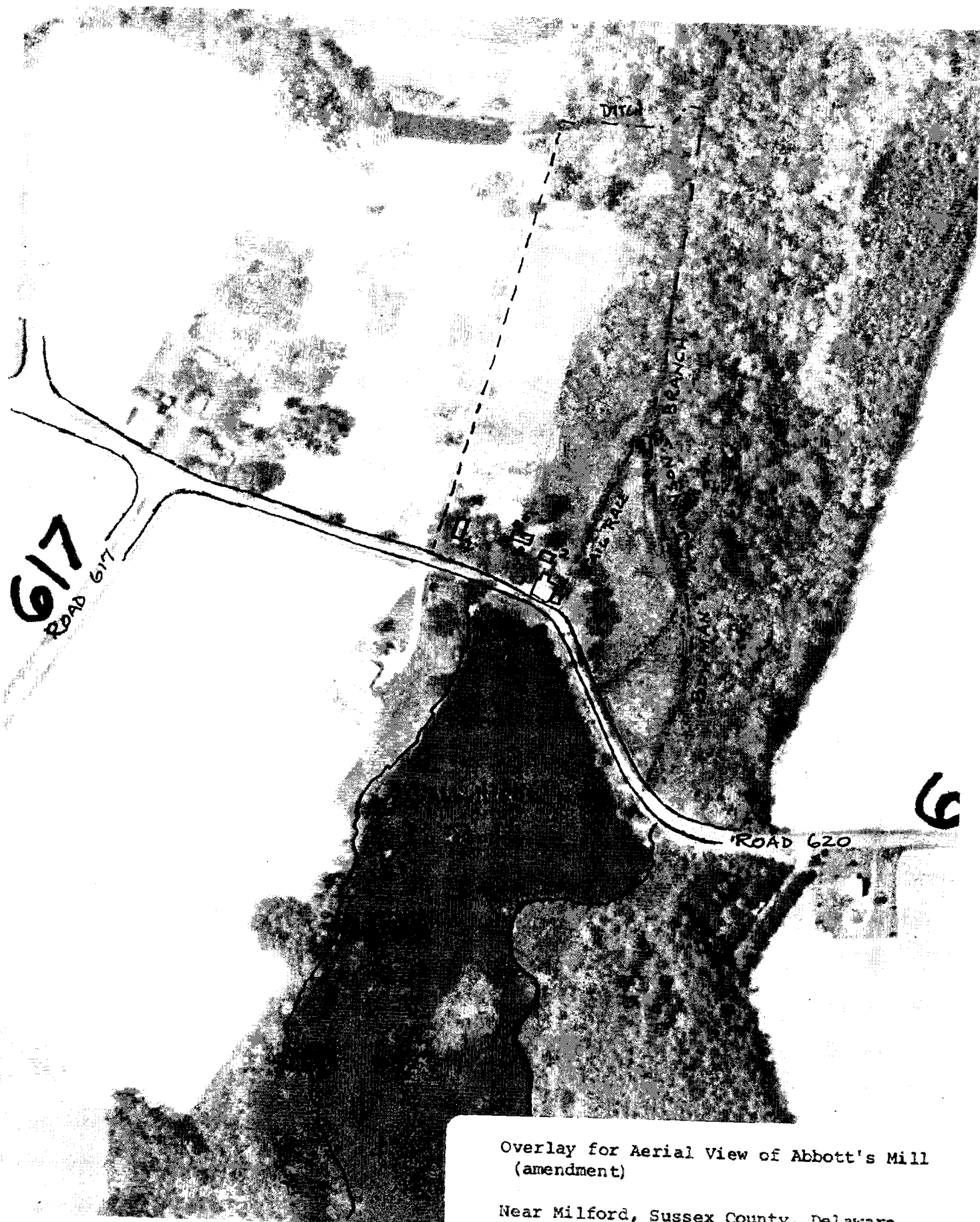
Mill House

2 STY. FRAME FARMHOUSE
 1ST FLR. EL. 39.92
 PORCH 22.55'

ROUTE 620
 COUNTY







Overlay for Aerial View of Abbott's Mill
(amendment)

Near Milford, Sussex County, Delaware