

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

For HCARS use only
received **FEB 16 1983**
date entered

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

1. Name

historic TITUSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT

and/or common

2. Location

street & number River Drive N/A not for publication

city, town Hopewell Twp. Titusville vicinity of congressional district

state New Jersey code 34 county Mercer code 021

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name MULTIPLE - SEE ATTACHED LIST

street & number

city, town N/A vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Township of Hopewell, Municipal Bldg.

street & number Scotch Road and Route 546

city, town Hopewell Twp. state New Jersey

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

1. NJ Historic Sites Inventory: D & R Canal portions
title 2. NJ and National Registers of HISTORIC PLACES has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1. 1979-80 2. SR 11/30/72 NR 5/11/73 federal state county local

depository for survey records OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

city, town 109 WEST STATE STREET, TRENTON state NEW JERSEY

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" 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

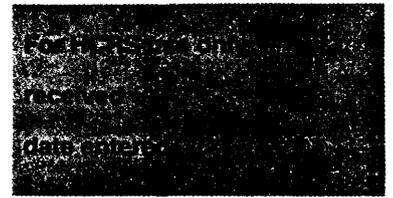
Six digit numbers throughout this nomination refer to individual survey forms on file in the New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory: Delaware and Raritan Canal 1979-1980

The Titusville Historic District is primarily contained on a strip of land between the Delaware River and the Delaware and Raritan Canal. Of the 100 structures in the district almost all are residential with the exception of two churches, one school, and scattered commercial buildings. River Drive is the principal street, and runs the length of the district, parallel to the River and Canal. Four short secondary streets run perpendicular to River Drive and two run east off the "island" to encompass historically related structures east of Route 29. There is a strong village character to the district due to the dense linear grouping of primarily 19th century structures physically isolated from development and modern transportation routes to the east and abutted to the north and south by woods. Most of the buildings are 2 1/2 stories tall, 1500 square feet, wood frame with outbuildings, similar set-backs and first level open porches. Only 3% can be classified as intrusions.

The physical character of the district reflects its three development phases. In the early 19th century the area was primarily rural and relatively undeveloped; a vernacular stone farmhouse and mill artifacts survive. Titusville grew as a commercial center for the surrounding area after the construction of the Delaware and Raritan Canal in 1834, and more so with the introduction of the Belvidere-Delaware Division of the Pennsylvania Railroad (often called the "Bel-Del") in 1851. By the early 20th century with the economic failure of the canal, Titusville became a summer vacation spot. The major architectural movements of the 19th century are represented primarily in vernacular adaptations of high styles. The early 20th century bungalows are representative of Titusville's resort era. The district has been spared much later 20th century development due to its physical isolation and lack of developable

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Continuation sheet Titusville Historic District 7
item number

Page 1

Description (cont.)

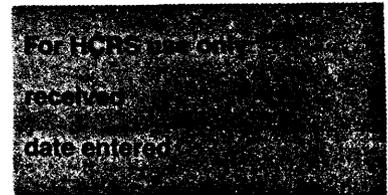
land. The earliest structures are concentrated at the intersection of Church Road and River Drive and north of Fiddler's Creek. This area is also the historical commercial core shown on the 1874 map as consisting of three hotels, railroad related structures, and several small businesses. Any commercial structures remaining have been adaptively used as residences. South of Church Road and to the east is residential. The majority of those houses lining River Drive date from the second half of the 19th century with early 20th century bungalows appearing on the side streets. Industrial structures are found in two spots: Fiddler's Creek and River Drive and Fiddler's Creek and Route 29.

The topography of the district is flat except along the western boundary where the land dramatically falls about thirty feet to the river's edge and to the east of Route 29 where it gradually rises to a ridge. The flood plain and topography make further development virtually impossible between River Drive and the river. There are large lawns between River Drive and the canal. The largest of these lawns is part of the schoolyard, while the others are associated with the larger homes in Titusville. These latter yards are unlikely to ever be developed because they are behind the houses, with no access to the street. There is a dense growth of trees throughout the district. All lawns are landscaped with gardens. Fences of stone and wood separate properties, and walks lead from the main sidewalk to all front porches. Gravel driveways prevail and "garages" are usually 19th century barns or outbuildings adaptively used. Parking areas off River Drive allow spectators to pull over.

Most of the structures within the district are vernacular adaptations of high styles. Due to the rural and vernacular nature of the structures, most dates and building activities are based on the research and mapping information rather than on visual inspection or association with prevalent styles in American architecture.

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Continuation sheet Titusville H. D.

Item number 7

Page 2

Description (cont.)

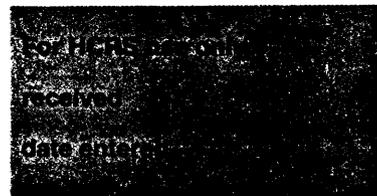
Most of the buildings in Titusville are wood frame originally clad in clapboard. Many of these houses have been "modernized" with asbestos shingles or aluminum siding. There are eleven load-bearing masonry structures: two stone houses on River Drive (12.37.10 and 12.37.01 which is covered with stucco), eight brick structures on River Drive (12.37.06, 12.37.09, 12.45.01, ~~12.47.02~~, 12.51.03, 12.39.01, 12.61.02 stuccoed, and 12.08.01) and one on Church Road (12.45.03). Most structures are 2 1/2 stories except the one story bungalow cottages at the south end of the island and three houses which are a full 3 stories.

The farm of Joseph Titus (1727-97) was the first recorded use of land in this area. The farm was located north of the district. By 1802, a large log basin and jetty were located at the mouth of Fiddler's Creek, and there was a sawmill on the Titus Farm. The mill site is now occupied by an Amoco Service Station. (11.87.03) Evidence of the mill pond and dam are south of the station.

In 1819 Levi Knowles petitioned the county of Hunterdon for permission to open a public road along the river bank from a sawmill on Titus Island (which was 293 acres running along the river north from Fiddler's Creek) to Tomlinson's Ferry. (Washington's Crossing Vicinity). This road corresponds to the present-day River Drive.² On a map accompanying the petition, a store belonging to Levi Knowles was shown at the river, as well as a lane running inland from the river corresponding with the present Church Road. Although his store is gone, Knowles' house is believed to be #12.37.16, built c. 1800. This two story stone house has two bays with a flush two bay siding which is smaller in both massing and proportions to other stone houses in the Delaware Valley.

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Description (cont.)

River Drive remained the main thoroughfare along the Delaware River until the predecessor of Route 29 was built in the 1870's. Until then, only a tow path existed east of the Canal, so all traffic travelled through Titusville when going to and from Lambertville to the north and Bernardville (now Washington's Crossing) to the south. The main bridge, a one lane wooden structure spanned the Canal at Church Street. A second bridge crossed the Canal to the north of the district. Today, a third bridge crosses the Canal at Grant Street.

After the construction of the Delaware and Raritan Canal in 1834, several large tract farms were subdivided into building lots in Titusville. Of the nine structures built between 1830 and 1849, the most notable house was the Joseph Titus residence, 18 River Drive (12.37.10). Built c. 1835 in the vernacular Federal style, it is two stories tall and has five bays and a center hall. Also built in 1835 on River Drive was a two story, five bay center hall structure known as Sargeant's Tavern (12.21.03). The structure remains today in fair condition. Three bridgetenders' houses were constructed by the Canal Company. One stood at the southeast corner of the canal and Church St., another at the northern end of River Drive and Route 29. Both have been demolished. A third stood at Grant St. and the canal and was moved to the subdivision off of Church Road.

The J. W. Otley and J. Keily Map of Mercer County (Camden, 1849) shows approximately 17 structures in Titusville with most occupying the area from Fiddler's Creek to the Presbyterian Church. Marked on this map are a hotel, a wheelright shop, a store, a post office, and the Presbyterian Church and School. The 1849 will of Joseph Titus states Titusville included ³ cooperage, a lumberyard, a grist mill, a sawmill, and a long basin.

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Description (cont.)

By 1860 the village had grown to some 31 structures, including two hotels, and a series of mercantile and commercial establishments serving the local farmers and rail and boatmen. The Titusville Hotel, (12.45.10) originally 5 bays with a center hall, dates from 1850. At three stories tall, it was the biggest structure in town and was built as a result of increased activity along the canal and in Titusville. The Belvidere-Delaware Railroad arrived here in 1851. In response, a large grain warehouse was constructed next to the tracks at Church Street (northeast corner) and passenger and freight houses built opposite also on Church Street. The tracks have been abandoned, but ran parallel to the canal, to the west of it, and only foundations remain of the railroad structures.

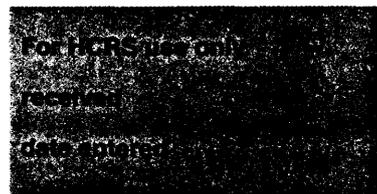
On the eastern banks of the canal stood the Agnew and Snook Mills, a harness shop, a blacksmith and carpenter shop, several residences on the south of Church Street up the hill and the bridge-tender's house previously mentioned. The buildings and church on the eastern side of Route 29 shown on the 1875 map are included in the historic district.

The Greek Revival style arrived in the 1850's. The best example of this is the J. Hart house, 22 River Drive (12.37.03), c. 1853. This three story, three bay half house has Greek Revival door and window surrounds around the door and windows as well as three knee-high windows on the third floor and corner pilasters. The Italianate style appeared in Titusville in the late 1850's and is best represented by the P. A. Van Cleeve house (12.37.06), c. 1860. This three story, three bay center hall, hipped roof house is typical of the Italian Villa house so often seen in the Victorian pattern books. Unfortunately the center monitor and original porch have both been removed.

Several structures have Italianate influence mostly in the use of brackets along the cornice or scrolled porch brackets. Among these are 12.45.03 on Church Road, and 12.37.09, 12.51.02, 12.68.05, and 12.68.17 on River Drive. Additionally, 42 River Drive (12.47.

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Titusville H. D.

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Description (cont.)

.02) was designed in 1874 by Captain James Bird, a Lambertville architect. The two churches in Titusville both exhibit the Italianate influence. The brick Presbyterian Church on River Drive (12.51.03) built in 1855, shows the transition from the Greek Revival to the Italianate, while the Methodist Church on Church Road (12.45.04) built in 1865, is more of a rural vernacular adaptation of the Italianate style. The house on River Drive at 12.80.19 is another good example of the style's influence. Built c. 1875, this two story, five bay center hall house has exquisite detailing around the windows and along the cornice.

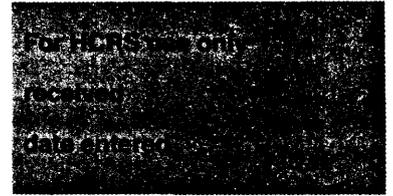
The Second Empire style had less influence in Titusville, accounting for only two structures. The house at 12.68.03 dates from c. 1860 although extremely tall mansard roof suggests a later modification. The other Second Empire house is 12.80.03. Built c. 1875, this house is a 3 bay center hall type and has a bracketed cornice, bell cast mansard roof, and gabled dormer.

The 1929 construction of Route 29 passed through a match factory which would have stood just south of the Agnew and Snook Mills (11.81.03) and closer to the canal. Extant remnants of early industrial buildings and commercial enterprises include the Titusville Canning and Fruit Company, c. 1889 (12.21.01), the grocery store and post office (12.37.07), a tiny shoemaker's shop adjacent to 12.37.08, a wheelright shop (12.37.10) and what may be a "Shop" as shown on the 1875 map at 12.68.02. Other enterprises shown on the 1875 map included butcher, barber, basket, carpentry, and carriage shops which were washed away in the floods of either 1903 or 1955. Both floods rose 12 feet on Titusville houses, and many small structures along the river were unable to withstand the waters.

At the turn of the 20th century, most of the building was taking place at the south end of the island in the Colonial Revival and Bungalow styles. The Van Noy house (12.68.06), 1898, the Rhine house (12.68.13), circa 1900, and the Edgerton house (12.51.01), 1900, are the better examples of the Basic Box type houses. One building in the late Shingle style is the Hansbury house (12.80.21), 1900.

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Description (cont.)

In the period from 1910 to 1930 when the "summer people" came to stay at Titusville, they often built small one story bungalow type houses. These, for the most part, are located on Rivera, Grant and Trimmer Streets, and form a visually cohesive grouping. Virtually all the houses are now single family, year round residences. Intrusions within the area consist of small, post-World War II "developer" homes most often on the side streets near the canal or further south on the island. The newer buildings are in scale with the historic structures, primarily one to two stories in height and usually constructed of wood frame. Those built after 1901 account for 22% of the total structures within the district, and only 3% are intrusions.

The district is distinguished from its surroundings by the age and architectural styles of the older structures and by its physical isolation. The surrounding areas to the east of the canal outside of the district boundaries are composed of houses built from the 1930's to the 1950's and by a commercial strip along River Road (Route 29) north of Church Street. In addition, Washington Crossing State Park, a national historic landmark, is located to the immediate south. Heavily wooded undeveloped areas are at the northern end of the island.

This was a broad-brush survey of above-ground resources. The potential archeological resources remain to be identified.

Footnotes:

1. Hopewell Township Ratables, September 1802.
2. Hunterdon County Roads, Book I, P. 121.
3. New Jersey Archives, Will 555K and Lee, P. 363.
4. Everts and Stewart 1875 Map.

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 checked="" 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/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

NA

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Titusville Historic District is composed of a linear grouping of primarily 19th century well-preserved structures which form a small village. The historical and architectural development of the area is directly associated with the construction of the Delaware and Raritan Canal in 1834, the widening and deepening of the canal in 1852, the introduction of the Belvidere-Delaware Division of the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1851, and the town's early 20th century role as a summer resort. Although two or three small commercial establishments existed here prior to the construction of the canal and the railroad, it was the introduction and upgrading of these transportation links that directly resulted in developing Titusville as a small commercial center for the surrounding region. The probating of Joseph Titus' will in 1850 opened much land for development and many businesses were built to service the vicinity of the canal. As prosperity increased after 1855, houses grew in size and stylistic quality and additional mercantile and commercial establishments appeared. When the canal fell into decline in the early 20th century, the town's role as a commercial center diminished. The railroad, which continued to offer passenger service between Lambertville and Trenton until 1950, brought vacationers here from the cities, creating Titusville's new role as a summer resort. Due to the district's isolated location between the canal and the river, its physical terrain, and near maximum growth potential, later 20th century development as seen on the eastern banks of the canal has had little occurrence within the district. Titusville today is a peaceful community compared to its 19th century bustling self, but its extant structures portray every phase of its development and significance.

While the Titusville area is intimately associated with the major Revolutionary War campaigns of 1776-1777, the region seems to have been relatively unpopulated in the late colonial period. In fact, the "isolation" of the area may account for Washington's choice of nearby Johnson's Ferry for his crossing of the Delaware on December 25, 1776.

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 82
Quadrangle name LAMBERTVILLE AND PENNINGTON, NJ Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>9</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>4</u> <u>6</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u>	B	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u> <u>7</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>4</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u> <u>8</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u> <u>9</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>4</u> <u>6</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	D	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>4</u> <u>6</u> <u>1</u> <u>9</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>
E	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>9</u> <u>7</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>4</u> <u>6</u> <u>2</u> <u>1</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>	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>
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>	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>

Verbal boundary description and justification

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET AND MAP ENCLOSED

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

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

(Revisions by Candace Peck & Terry Karschner, Office of Historic Preservation)

name/title David Gibson & Steve Bauer

organization Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission date November 1980

street & number 25 Calhoun Street telephone 609-292-2101

city or town Trenton state New Jersey 08625

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Allen C. Seneca*

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date 1-7-83

For HCRS use only

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

J. Melrose Brien Entered in the National Register date 3/17/83

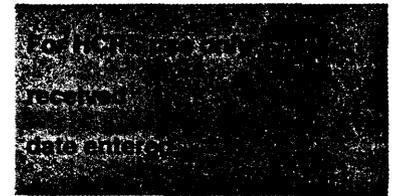
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet

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Significance (cont.)

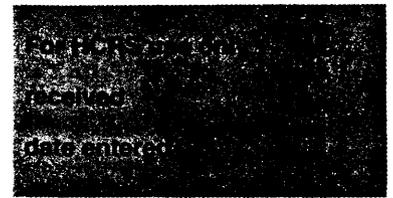
It is nowhere documented when the first settler took up residence in what is now the "island" village of Titusville. Road returns, dated November 28, 1779, for the "Pennington to Bellemont Ferry Road" locate portions of the right-of-way on land belonging to Joseph Titus (1727-1797), whose homestead farm was located off the present-day Fiddler's Creek Road, between Fiddler's Creek and Strawberry Mountain (aka Kuser's Mountain) outside the district. Upon Joseph Titus' death on December 4, 1797, the Titus' holdings along the Delaware (293 acres) passed to his son Uriel (1757-1834).² This tract extended along the Delaware River from Fiddler's Creek northward to the Lower Bellemont Farm tract and the Sand Gully Fisheries, a little to the north of the present intersection of Fiddler's Creek Road and State Route 29.³ Fiddler's Creek Road is at the northern extent of the developed portion of the island of Titusville.

South of Fiddler's Creek, where the village of Titusville was later to stand, the land was owned by John Knowles (d. 1816). Knowles' tract extended along the River from Titus' line south to the ravine now dividing the Presbyterian Church cemetery. South of the Knowles' land was owned by Job Phillips (1733-1822), John Vannoy, James Burroughs and Joseph Tomlinson at Johnson's Ferry.

There is no evidence that John Knowles did anything with his property, but Levi Knowles, son and heir to John, left records of his activities. In 1819, a petition was submitted by Levi Knowles to open a public road along the river bank from Titus sawmill to Tomlinson's Ferry.⁴ This road, with the exception of the far northern tip, corresponds to the present River Drive, which traverses the entire length of the "island" of Titusville. On the map accompanying the return there is a notation of a store on the river bank belonging to Levi Knowles, with a lane running inland from the River corresponding to the present-day Church Road. From this, it can be assumed that the first sign of commercial activity in the village of Titusville proper came with the opening of Levi Knowles estate in 1816.⁵ Levi Knowles house is presumed to be at 12.37.19, the oldest house in the district, c. 1830, and his store is now gone.

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Significance (cont.)

In 1825, Levi Knowles defaulted on a mortgage and his property was sold at auction to Moses Quick from Ourton.^{6,7} In 1831, Quick's⁸ Titusville holdings were auctioned off to Uriel Titus for \$6,000.⁸ Shortly thereafter, Uriel Titus and others petitioned to have the lane running from the old Methodist Church to the river bank store opened as a public thoroughfare.⁹

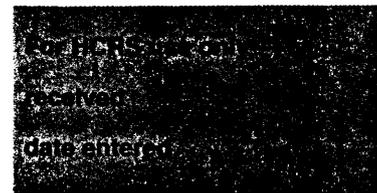
This "flurry of excitement" in the tract that was soon to become "Titusville" coincides with the development of the Delaware and Raritan Canal Feeder. In February, 1832, Uriel Titus sold the Canal Company a 113' strip of land from Sand Gully to the ravine in the Presbyterian churchyard.¹⁰ (There was, at the northern end of the Titus property a commercial venture known as Sand Gully Shad Fisheries. Whether this was a Titus operation is unclear.) In March, 1832, Titus mortgaged the former Levi Knowles farm for \$2,000.¹¹

The coming of the canal encouraged some development in Titusville. A United States post office was opened on April 3, 1833, with John Hoff serving as the first postmaster.¹² Uriel Titus began to subdivide his land into building lots. One lot was sold to John Farley^{13,14,15} before Uriel died in 1834 and his will refers to "river lots,"¹⁶ indicating Titus family plans for the development of the community.¹⁶

Uriel Titus died October 26, 1834, and left his Titusville holdings to his son, Joseph (1796-1849). Joseph Titus' will¹⁷ and obituary¹⁸ indicate that he was a rather enterprising individual. In addition to personally underwriting an eighth part of the annual budget of the Titusville Presbyterian Church, he provided the land for the church and graveyard in 1839, and in 1846 he donated the land on which the parsonage (12.51.02) was built.²⁴ Joseph Titus built a tavern c. 1835, "for accommodation of boatmen near Titus Cove" which he rented to John Sargeant until he sold it to him in 1846.^{20, 21} Titus also ran the former Levi Knowles' store;²² operated a log basin, lumberyard, sawmill and grist mill;²³ and farmed. The mills were situated on Fiddler's Creek at 11.81.03 and 12.21.16.

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Significance (cont.)

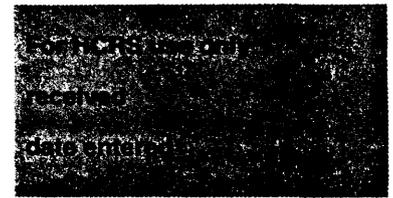
Despite the entrepreneurial efforts of Titus and Knowles, real estate activity in Titusville was quieted by the Panic of 1837.

Joseph Titus donated the land for the church and graveyard in 1839.²⁵ The church was furnished and dedicated in June, 1839. In his will, Joseph Titus bequeathed land and created an endowment for the first Titusville school to be operated as a parochial school for the Presbyterian Church. He also provided the land and building for "Temperance Hall," in addition to leaving \$2,100 to various agencies of the Presbyterian Church and the American Bible Society. When it was decided to build a new church in 1854 Joseph Titus, Jr., owner and president of a brick manufacturing company at the corner of Fiddler's Creek Road and River Road, gave the bricks for the new structure. The church was dedicated in 1856.²⁶ (12.51.03)

Renewal of real estate activity in Titusville was signalled by a March 1850 act of the New Jersey Legislature validating the will of Joseph Titus. This was necessary to insure clear title to the valuable lands which Titus' heirs were in the process of selling in 50' wide building lots at prices ranging from \$120 to \$150 per lot.²⁸ In the next decade the building boom spread beyond the Titus family holdings to those of their neighbors south of the Presbyterian Church. Coinciding with the settlement of Titus' will was the widening and deepening of the D & R Canal and the construction of the Belvidere-Delaware Railroad, built alongside the canal north of Trenton in 1851. By the 1850's the operators of the Delaware and Raritan Canal were in the position of owning the best means of transporting Pennsylvania's seemingly limitless supply of coal to New York City's unquenchable industrial furnaces. Much of this coal came from the Lehigh Valley, where prior to 1852 it was brought all the way down Pennsylvania's Delaware Canal to enter the D & R at Bordentown. In 1852, however, the feeder was widened, deepened, and locks were built to receive Lehigh Valley coal at Lambertville. The barges were locked into the Delaware River at New Hope, transported across the river attached to a cable, and locked into the D & R just south of the Lambertville Lock. From there they proceeded on to New Brunswick and New York.

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Significance (cont.)

Conveniently located halfway between Trenton and Lambertville, by 1860 Titusville had grown to some 31 structures, including two hotels - the Titusville Tavern (12.31.03, c. 1835) and the Delaware House (12.45.01, c. 1858) - and a series of mercantile and commercial establishments serving the local farmers, the railroad and the canal barges. This period of Titusville's commercial growth is chronicled in the 1873 History of Burlington and Mercer Counties:

"About 1850 Hoff and Nevins (sic) moved into a new store which was built in that year, on the opposite side of the street from the old stand, by Peter A. Van Cleef, who had had an interest in the business. In 1856, the building was converted into a hotel...In 1858 Hart and Ege built a store in which they traded until 1869, when they were succeeded by Hart and Farley...The hotel mentioned above, which from 1850 to 1855 was a store building, was opened in 1855 by Benjamin Burrows (Burroughs?). It has had numerous occupants. It is now owned by Hoppock Brothers and managed by Henry C. Savage. It is known as the Delaware House. The Riverview was built in 1878 by C. H. Swift, who has occupied it continually since.

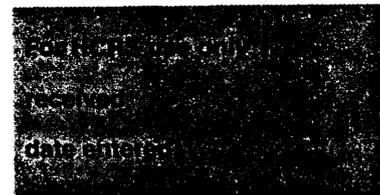
Among the early blacksmiths was Joshua Perrine (Primer?) who built a shop in 1845, which changed occupants as often as once a year, until it was purchased by George H. Smith, the present blacksmith in 1862.

The village contains two churches, two hotels, two stores, one harness shop, one blacksmith shop, two wheelwright shops, a post office, a flouring mill, a schoolhouse, and a population of three hundred.²⁹

The coming of the Belvidere-Delaware Railroad in 1851 led to the erection of a grain elevator to handle shipment of local crops to market. An earlier elevator was built by the canal next to the log basin connected to the canal and used for the storage of logs brought down the canal and the river for Titus' sawmill. Long lines of horsedrawn wagons jammed Titusville while they waited to unload grain and, later, tomatoes and pumpkins for the Titusville Fruit and Vegetable Canning Company (12.21.01), 1889, which seasonally employed 50 people to produce its "Delaware Valley" brand until 1912.³⁰

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Significance (cont.)

Other industries in Titusville included shad fisheries at Sand Gully (begun in the mid-18th century outside the district) and at the Vannoy farm in the southern end of the village. Another early industry, begun in 1764, was the lumber industry, fostered by rafters who floated rafts of felled lumber down the Delaware from southern New York State during the high spring water. Titusville, a short distance above the final obstacle, the falls at Trenton, became a favorite stopping place. A large log basin and jetty were located at the mouth of Fiddler's Creek and there was a sawmill on the Titus farm by the end of the 18th century.³¹ The U.S. Census of 1850 lists two lumber merchants in the area -- John Welling (Joseph Titus' son-in-law) and Joseph Scudder, and two millwrights, William and Jacob Kugler. Raftsmen stayed at the Titusville Hotel, the Delaware House and the Riverview House, at the upper end of the village with an attic floor that could "stable 60 raftsmen",³² (12.21.07). More than 3000 rafts reportedly floated down the river in the spring of 1875. Sawmill representatives came to Titusville to dicker for the rafts, some 85' wide³³ and 200' long. The rafting industry lasted into the 20th century.

During the 1890's and in the years preceding World War I, the railroad, with frequent trains into Trenton and points beyond, aided the development of Titusville as a summer resort. Many summer cottages were built at the southern end of the island at Trimmer Avenue and in the Washington Crossing area on the southerly side of County Route 546. Somewhat atypical of the "summer crowd" was former State Assemblyman and Senator James H. Van Cleef (1841-1917), scion of a Titusville entrepreneurial family, who went on³⁴ to law school and settled in New Brunswick, where he was mayor. The Van Cleefs summered at the large brick house at 26 River Drive and housed the household staff up the street at 18 River Drive.

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Significance (cont.)

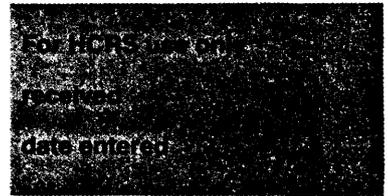
By 1911, George Agnew, who purchased the Titus mills on Fiddler's Creek in 1870, turned the grist mill and saw mills into a rubber mill, after a fire in the former buildings. Agnew bought worn out rubber material and by a secret chemical process extracted the pure rubber still remaining and converting it into sheets for future use.³⁵ Agnew's mill burned in 1897 and was immediately rebuilt. Today it is the site of the Amoco Service Station on Route 29 (11.81.03), where foundations of earlier mills are visible in the ravine to the south. The Agnew family lived in grand style on River Drive in a house designed by Captain James Bird (12.47.02)

Route 29, or River Road, was completed as a state highway by the mid-1920's and the improved automobile access further established Titusville as a summer resort area. The Depression, however, fell particularly hard on Titusville, with many properties being sold at mortgage and tax sales. The Delaware and Raritan Canal also failed. It was at this time that many former summer homes were made into year-round residences.

By the 1940's the dominance of the automobile prompted the demise of Titusville as a commercial center for western Hopewell Township, and its emergence as a bedroom suburb of Trenton. It became particularly attractive to State employees who eagerly sought the recreational opportunities of the river and close proximity of the State Capitol. While the area along Route 29 south of Trenton has become lined with residential development and strip commercial activities, Titusville has remained remarkably unchanged from its 19th century past.

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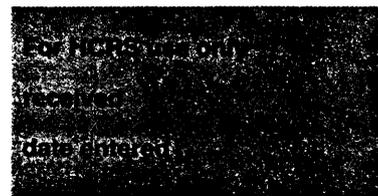
Significance (cont.)

Footnotes:

- 1 New Jersey Archives, Tavern Licenses: G. Johnson, 1761.
- 2 Hunterdon County Roads, Book 1, Page 121.
- 3 Cf. Hunterdon County deeds, Book 2, Page 442.
- 4 Hunterdon Roads, *ibid.*
- 5 NJ Archives, Wills, 2818J.
- 6 Hunterdon Deeds, Book 39, Page 321.
- 7 True American, 6 August 1825, Page 4.
- 8 Hunterdon Deeds, Book 50, Page 515.
- 9 Hunterdon Roads, Book 2, Page 295.
- 10 Hunterdon County Deeds, Book 54, Page 307.
- 11 Hunterdon County Mortgages, Book 14, Page 138.
- 12 J. L. Kay, New Jersey Postal History
- 13 Hopewell Township Tax Map, Block 134, Lot 4.
- 14 Hunterdon County Deeds, Book 61, Page 377.
- 15 True American, October 10, 1848.
- 16 NJ Archives, Will 4179J.
- 17 NJ Archives, Will 555K.
- 18 State Gazette, 8/6/49, Page 3.
- 19 State Archives, Hunterdon County Tavern Licenses, J. Sargent, 1830.
- 20 Mercer Deeds, Book L, Page 459.
- 21 Hopewell Township Tax Map, Block 134, Lot 3.
- 22 Woodward and Hagemen, Page 826.
- 23 New Jersey Archives, Will 555K.
- 24 Mercer County Deeds, Book F, Page 362.
- 25 Mercer County Deeds, Book B, Page 319.
- 26 First Presbyterian Church Brochure
- 27 First Presbyterian Church Brochure
- 28 Laws of New Jersey, Pages 156-7.
- 29 Woodward and Hagemen, Page 836.
- 30 Crews, Page 11.
- 31 Hopewell Township Ratables, September, 1802.
- 32 Crews, Page 10.
- 33 *ibid.*
- 34 Fitzgerald's Legislative Manual, 1900.

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Hunterdon County Mortgages, Book 19.

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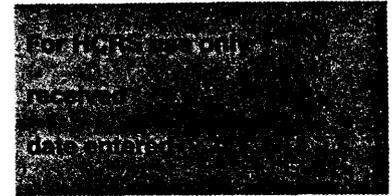
Will Research, New Jersey Archives, Trenton, New Jersey.

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--, Laws of New Jersey, 1850.

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(Geographical Data)

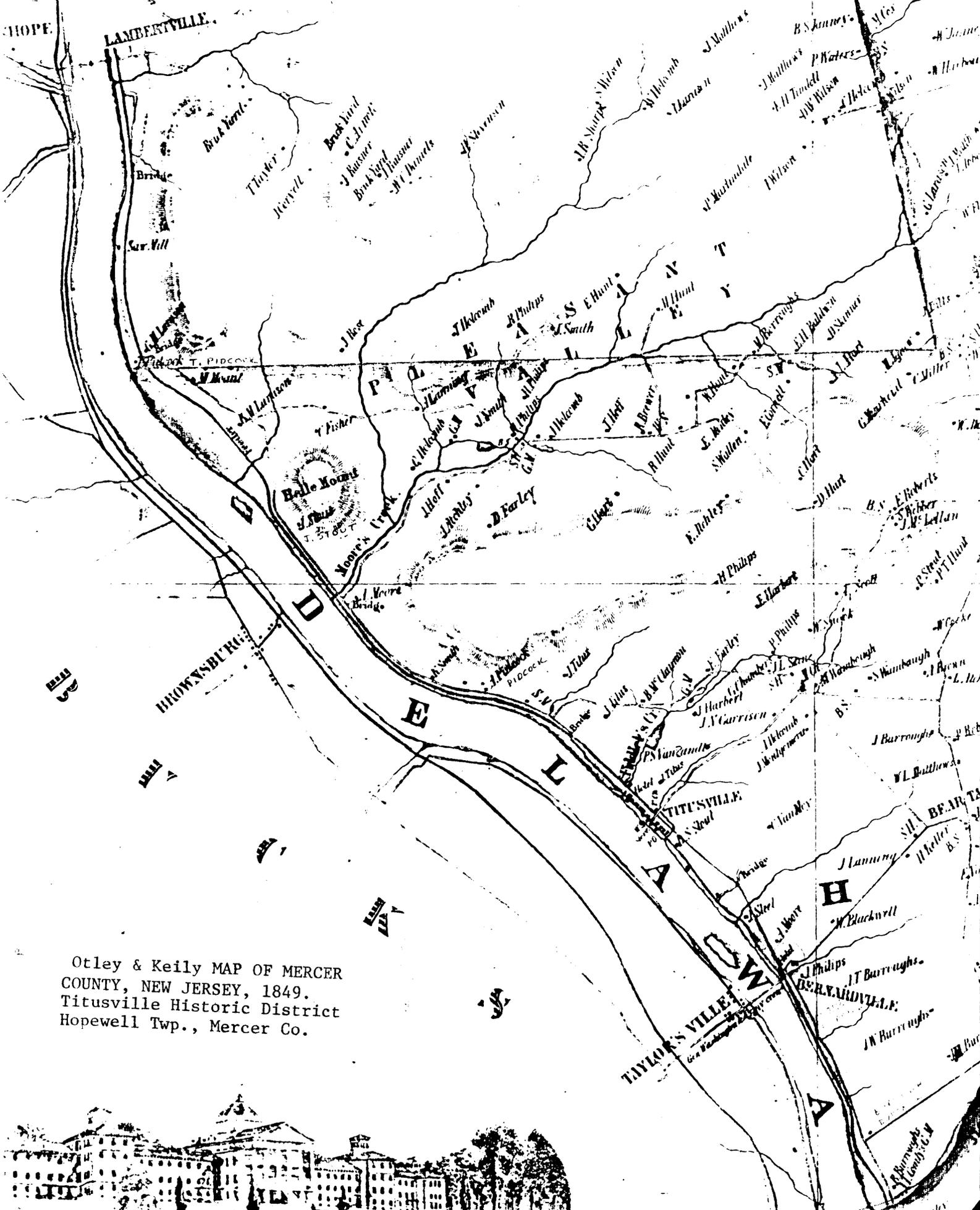
Verbal Boundary Description:

See enclosed map.

Verbal Boundary Justification:

The northern, southern, and western boundaries of the historic district correspond to the natural features of the land. The eastern boundary is congruent with the western boundary of the Delaware and Raritan Canal National Register Historic District as it is proposed for revision, except where it crosses the canal district at Church Street and Fiddler's Creek to include seven structures and ruins of architectural and historical significance associated with the village of Titusville.

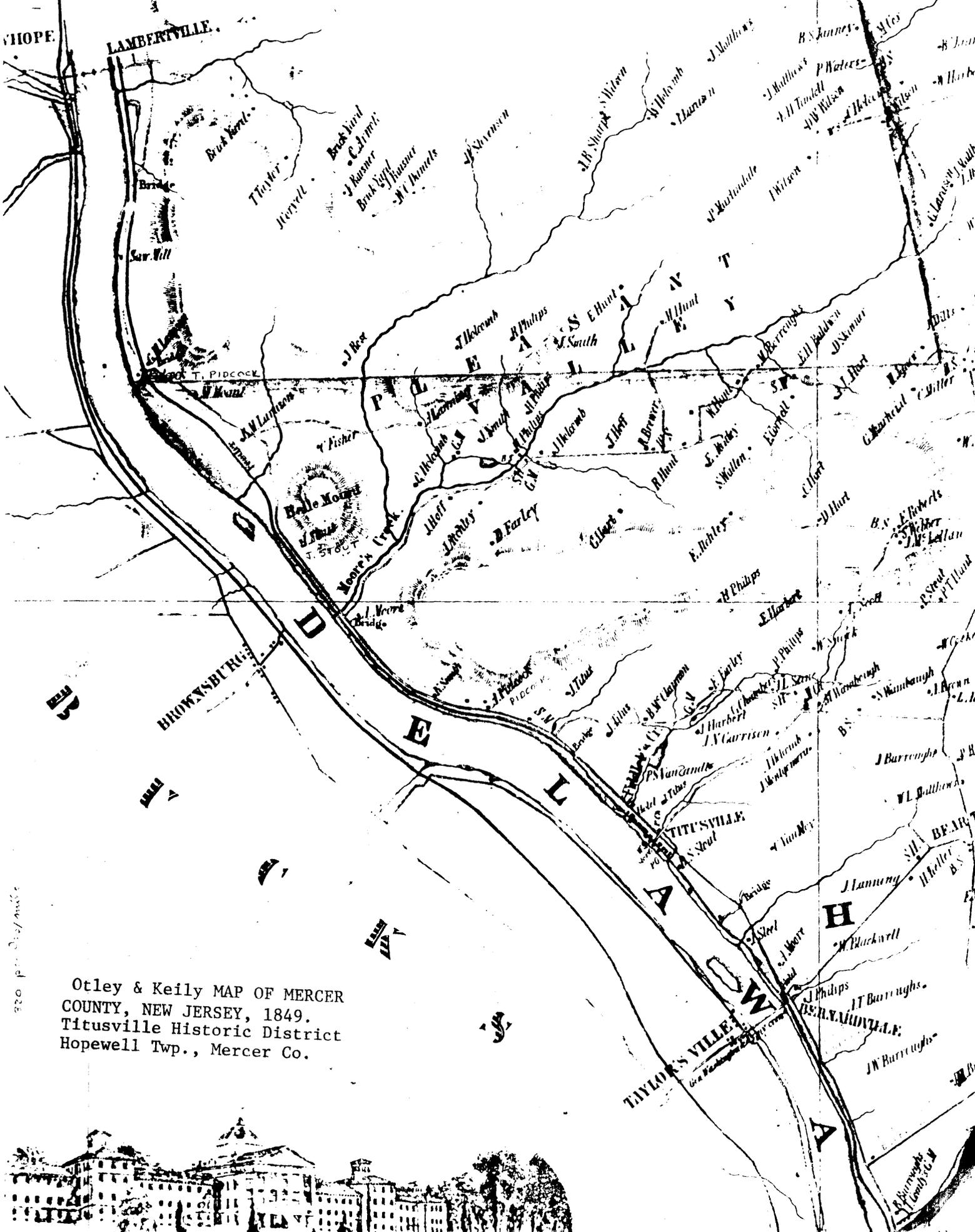
H O P E W E L L T W P .



Otley & Keily MAP OF MERCER COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, 1849. Titusville Historic District Hopewell Twp., Mercer Co.



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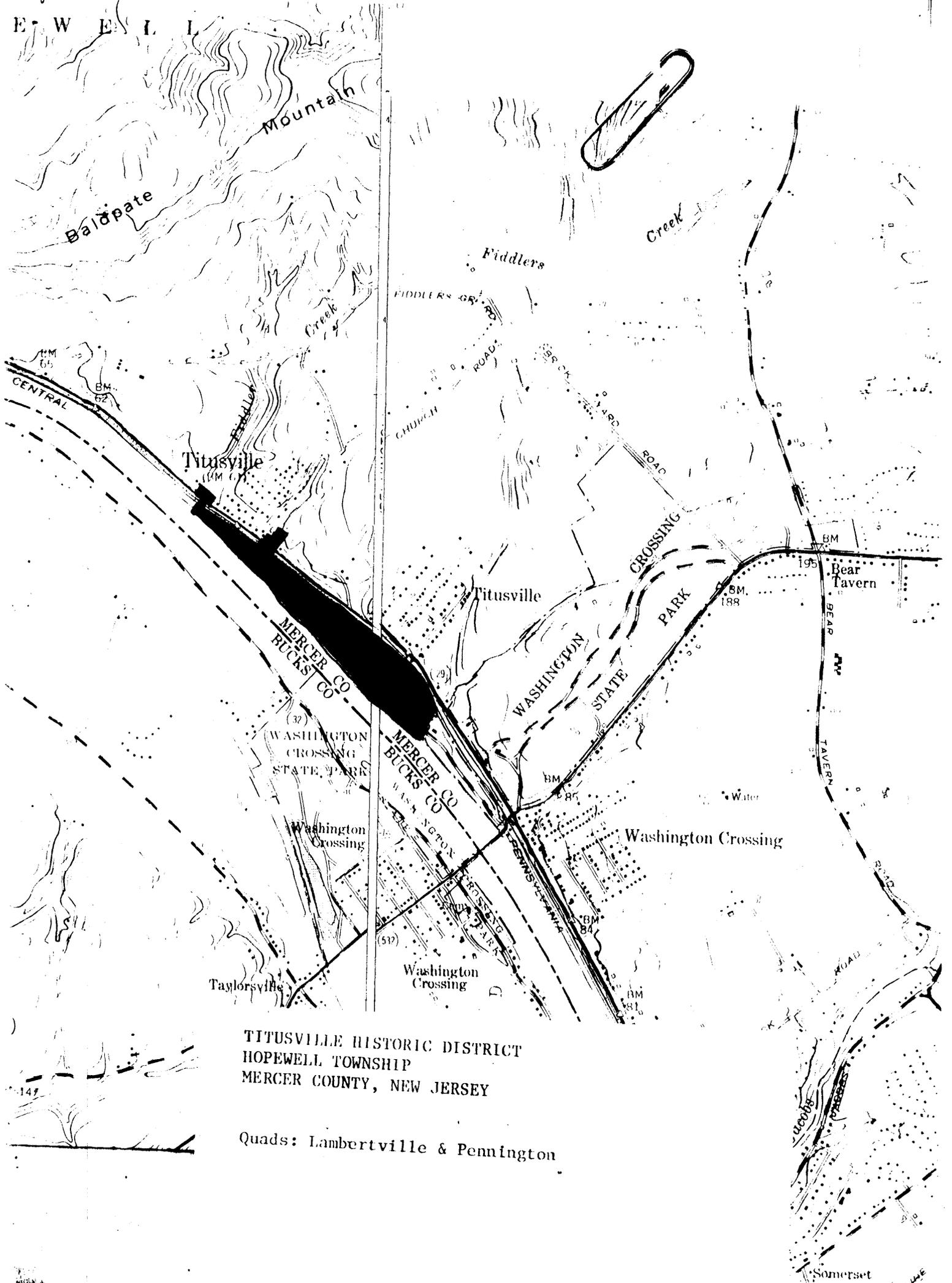


Otley & Keily MAP OF MERCER COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, 1849. Titusville Historic District Hopewell Twp., Mercer Co.

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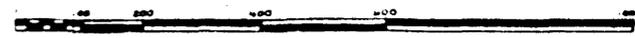
TITUSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT
 HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP
 MERCER COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

Quads: Lambertville & Pennington

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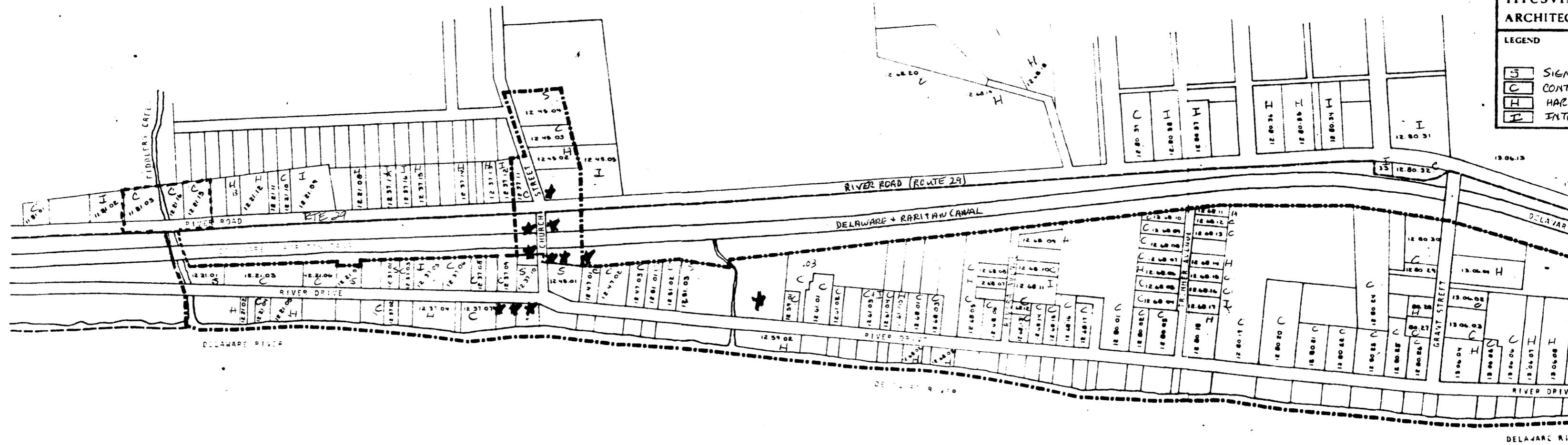
Somerset

Titusville Historic District
Hopewell Township
Mercer County
New Jersey



State of New Jersey
DELAWARE AND RARITAN CANAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
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