

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 3 Page 1

Thomas Justis House, N-257

In my opinion the Thomas Justis House
meets / does not meet the
National Register criteria.



Dennis E. Greenhouse
County Executive
New Castle County
Delaware

10/7/21
Date

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4. National Park Service Certification

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I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): _____

Recorded in the
National Register
Delaney 9/23/93

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

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Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) n/a

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6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Federal Vernacular

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone: Granite

roof Asphalt

walls Stone: Granite

Stucco

other Wood

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Thomas Justis House
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The Thomas Justis House is a stuccoed stone, vernacular Federal style dwelling that was built during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. It was expanded around 1900 by means of a stuccoed frame, Colonial Revival style addition. The property on which it is situated contains less than half an acre. In addition to the house, the parcel contains fragments of a stone foundation that once supported a frame barn; and a small board and batten shed that rests on a portion of the barn foundation. The barn foundation and shed are non-contributing elements of this nomination.

The Justis House is situated in Mill Creek Hundred in the northern region of New Castle County. The property is located on the north side of Milltown Road approximately one-half mile east of the intersection with Limestone Road (State Route 7) and approximately one-and-one-half miles west of the junction with Newport Gap Pike (State Route 41). Throughout the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century, the property was farmed. At its largest, the farm encompassed 110 acres. The last division of the property occurred in 1972, leaving only 0.41 acre with the house. Immediately abutting the Justis House property are Saint John the Beloved Roman Catholic Church and the residential subdivision, Sherwood Addition. The surrounding area are densely settled with post World War II housing developments.

The facade of the Justis House points southeast, parallel to Milltown Road. The barn foundation is located to the side and rear of the house, off its north corner.

The Thomas Justis House was constructed in two main sections. The earliest section of the house is at its southwest end which was constructed some time between 1804 and 1816, according to tax assessment records. It is a stone, two-story, three-bay, gable-roofed building laid out on a double pile, side passage plan. Throughout the interior, its original Federal style woodwork remains in excellent condition. About 1900, the Ball family built a frame, two-story, gable-roofed wing on the northeast endwall. This addition extended the facade by two bays giving it the appearance of a five-bay, center door dwelling. The addition is three rooms deep, forming a one-story kitchen wing at the rear. The interior of the early twentieth century addition is fitted with Federal Revival style trim.

The exterior of both wings are thickly stuccoed, creating a unified appearance; however, a seam on the facade and some differences in the window

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trim make the two building periods evident. There was an attempt to achieve symmetry in the fenestration of the five-bay facade, although the windows of the circa 1900 section are narrower than those in the original section. Both sections have nine-over-nine sash windows with paneled shutters on the first floor, and six-over-nine sash windows with louvered shutters on the second floor. The windows in both sections have molded surrounds; but the wood sills on the original section are almost twice as thick as those on the circa 1900 section. The original door has six raised and molded panels. It is set within a deep reveal that has four panels on each side and a three-light transom above. The Federal style surround is composed of a flat pilaster on either side of the door, and a slightly pointed lintel with a band of punch and gouge trim slightly below it.

The west endwall of the original section is pierced by three small windows at the attic level, while the first and second story levels are windowless. The rear wall has one window per floor: a twelve-over-twelve sash on the first floor and an eight-over-twelve sash on the second floor.

The east endwall of the circa 1900 wing has an irregular pattern of fenestration. On the first floor, a Dutch door and a sash window are located towards the rear wall. Three, nine-over-nine sash windows are asymmetrically arranged on the second floor. A single one-over-one sash is located in the center of the gable. This endwall also features a full-length screened porch. It has a shed roof supported by four wooden Tuscan columns and a poured concrete floor. The ceiling is finished with tongue and groove boards.

The five-bay front block has a continuous gable roof over both the original section and the circa 1900 section. However, there are differences in the treatment of the cornices. The original section features a molded box cornice with a cyma reversa bed molding. There are no returns on its west gable end where the verge is flat and trimmed with a plain board. The early twentieth century section has a shallower box cornice, partial gable end returns and an extended verge. Each section has an endwall chimney. At the west endwall (original section) is an interior brick chimney which serves the fireplaces in the front and back parlors and the two chambers. At the east endwall (1900 section) is an exterior brick chimney located forward of the ridge; this section chimney serves the dining room.

The rear kitchen is a frame, one-story, gable-roofed wing with a

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large, exterior end, stone chimney. Its stone foundation encloses a crawl space. The exterior walls and the chimney are stuccoed. Each side wall has an exterior door and a two-over-two sash window. The west side is sheltered by a full-length, open porch while the east side has a simple, gabled door hood. The endwall is pierced by a sash level. The roof cornice is a molded box with partial gable end returns and an extended verge.

Upon entry to the front of the main block, the central passage extended the full length of the house and contains a closed string staircase on the right. There is a rear exit door at the end of this central passage. Between the original chair rail and the original five-and-one-half inch baseboard, there is a decorative applied molding arranged in rectangles to resemble paneling. Although this feature is found in the front and back parlor, the central passage, the stairs and the second floor hall, it appears to be a twentieth century addition. The random width floor boards of the hall run in opposite directions to those found in the front and back parlors.

Access to the original front parlor is to the left. The original five-and-one-half inch baseboards and chair rail may be found in this room, the central passage and the back parlor. A particularly fine feature in this house can be found in the slightly splayed reeded window reveals.

The Federal mantel of the fireplace on the west end wall of the front parlor incorporates similar reeding on its pilasters and in a narrow reeded band beneath the mantel shelf. The central block displays a punch and gouge motif of five sets of nested arcs. Similar nested arcs can be found on the right and left blocks.

The back parlor can be accessed through a widened doorway from the front parlor or from the central passage. It displays similar original baseboards, the chair rail and the later applied paneling. The room is lit by a single twelve-over-twelve window on the rear wall with plain reveals. The Federal fireplace mantel is slightly less elaborate than the one in the front parlor with the reeded motif displayed on the side blocks. The most outstanding feature in the room is a pair of double-leaf door, upper and lower china cabinets on either side of the fireplace. These are original and indicate that the room may have served as a dining room. A portion of the north and east walls above the chair rails have built-in bookcases which were a later addition.

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Access to the early twentieth century portion of the first floor may be gained through a deep doorway directly across from the entry to the front parlor. There are three rooms in this section: the front dining room, a middle kitchen, and a rear kitchen. Throughout this section, there are nine-inch tall baseboards, three-and-one-half inch, deeply molded window and door trim, and in the dining room, there are narrow wood floorboards. There is no chair rail as found in the original section, nor any of the applied paneling found in the early nineteenth century section. The windows and door reveals throughout this section have a depth of six-and-one-half inches. On the east endwall of the dining room, is a Federal Revival style fireplace with a plain central block and side pilasters. The middle kitchen is lit by two nine-over-nine windows: one on the east wall and one on the north wall. Access to the full depth porch may be gained by a Dutch door on the east end wall. The back kitchen incorporates a floor to ceiling pantry closet. All of these features are typical of those found in the early twentieth century Colonial Revival style homes.

The major exception to this pattern is the large stone hearth with a heavy timber lintel found in the north end wall of the rear one-story kitchen addition. This hearth evidently predates the circa 1900 construction period. Tradition indicates that this was part of a free-standing kitchen building or a kitchen building or kitchen addition at one time. Above the rear kitchen is a small garret room, accessed by a straight run staircase along the north wall of this addition. This is an unheated room with walls and ceiling of cut lath and plaster. Although it is now used as a storage room, it was probably once used as a servant's room.

Access to the basement is through a door in the southwest corner of the back kitchen and beneath the staircase in the main block. There is one large room under the original section and two smaller basement rooms under the circa 1900 section of the house. The two basement rooms in the early twentieth century section correspond approximately in measurement to the dining room and middle kitchen above. There is a crawl space under the rear kitchen room instead of a basement. In both sections, the floor is poured concrete and the walls are built of rubblestone.

In the early nineteenth century section, the rubblestone walls are whitewashed with a skim coat of plaster which makes it difficult to see the stone work. On the west end walls are two large stone relieving arches. The arch under the parlor chimney has a width of six feet eight inches in depth.

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Along the rear wall near the ceiling is an interlocking gear system with a pipe which leads under the stairs to an area in the rear room above the well in the circa 1900 basement. This is possibly part of an early water piping system. The ceiling joists in the original section are vertical sawn on the sides and bottoms and join a hewn intermediate support beam which runs parallel to the roof pitch from endwall to endwall- a common feature in double pile houses.

The opening to the circa 1900 section of the basement is a twenty inch wide smooth wall opening with a wood lintel above two sets of nailing strips on each side. There are two rooms to this section of the basement with a load-bearing eighteen inch thick stone wall which butts against the east endwall. The ceiling joists in each room are circular sawn on the broad faces and vertical sawn on the bottom faces (showing the later construction date).

Along the east endwall of the front room is a large stone relieving arch with a width of seven feet eight inches and a depth of four feet which supports no chimney above. Similar relieving arches are found in buildings dating to the eighteenth century. This provides evidence that a previous structure, possibly the log structure owned by Thomas Justis in the 1804 tax assessment, existed on the site prior to the original section. The stonework in the walls of the front room is similar to that found on the relieving arch, indicating that the stone foundation walls may predate even the early nineteenth century section. The dimensions of this room are thirteen feet in depth and fourteen feet nine inches in width approximately corresponding to the dining room above.

The rear room of the circa 1900 section of the basement shows evidence of a different type of stonework. In the center of the north floor is a well cover, and to the left of that is a small round arch. A larger circular opening fitted with iron rings, approximately four feet in diameter, may be found in the parallel partition wall. Along with the previously mentioned gear system, this may be an indication of an early piped water system.

Access from the first to the second floor may be gained through the closed string staircase that has thin balusters with beaded moldings and concave faces. The newel post is a slender column and the staircase is decorated with wall pilasters and a continuation of the chair rail. There are also drop pendants below the newel posts. There are eleven steps to a

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landing where there is a window with the characteristic reeded reveals. There are four more treads in the opposite direction to the second floor after this landing. The previously mentioned applied molding continues up the stairs and in the second floor hall to the landing between the second and third floors.

The front parlor chamber, rear parlor chamber and central hall continue the original five and one-half inch baseboards and chair rails found in the original section below. In the parlor chamber, there are two six-over-nine facade windows with plastered masonry reveals. The fireplace located on the west endwall is less elaborate than those below with a Federal mantel with an applied diamond shape reeded molding on the central block. The fireplace is flanked by two original closets with the original six-panel doors and hardware. The back parlor chamber is similar but has a less elaborate mantel consisting of two applied diamond shaped reeds on the central block. Here again there are two closets framing the fireplace with original doors and hardware. The square room above the hall, characteristic of Georgian form houses, has been converted to a bathroom.

There are two doorways piercing the stone between the early nineteenth century hall and the early twentieth century section of the house leading to two more bedrooms. The front bedroom has similar nine and one-half inch baseboards and deeply molded door and window trim as in the circa 1900 section below. Again, there is no chair rail or applied molding in this bedroom. The rear bedroom of the circa 1900 section was not accessible.

The closed string staircase is continuous to the attic level which was finished and partitioned in the twentieth century. In the original section, there are three small finished garret rooms, one of which is a bathroom. There are also two closets. There are batten doors and manufactured strap hardware on all the doors. In the ceiling of one of the closets is a ceiling door to a crawl space through which the rafters are visible. These rafters are vertical sawn on the side faces and circular sawn on the bottom faces (indicating the later construction date). There appears to be no access from this part of the attic to the other side.

The physical evidence of the Justis House suggests that both the early nineteenth century and the early twentieth century sections retain a great deal of their architectural integrity. However, the evidence stimulates many questions about the building's previous use. The gears and paired

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arcs penetrating the stone walls in the basement beneath the circa 1900 section suggest an early water piping system. Whether this piped water system dates to nineteenth century or the early twentieth century when the house was enlarged to a five-bay structure, is not know at this time. Secondly, the presence of the seven foot wide relieving arch in the front basement room of the circa 1900 section provides strong evidence of a previous structure which may even predate the original section. Finally, the large stone kitchen hearth in the circa 1900 kitchen points to several possibilities: 1) a separate kitchen building; 2) a kitchen wing which was located adjoining the original 1804-16 house; or, 3) the possibility that this kitchen hearth was at one time part of the previous structure indicated by the presence of the relieving arch in the basement.

Thomas Justis' 1841 inventory provides a few clues. First there is a reference to the "contents of front cellar." The early nineteenth century section contains a cellar which is one large room so there is a possibility that this refers to the front room of the circa 1900 cellar which is divided into two rooms. Secondly, there is a reference to the "contents of Well House." Whether the well was in the same section as in the circa 1900 basement room or a building above it is not known, but this may refer to the circa 1900 basement or a building above it. Thirdly, there is a reference to the "contents of kitchen" and "contents of kitchen garret." Whether the kitchen in 1841 was a separate building or an addition, the existence of a kitchen garret provides the possibility that the present kitchen garret existed at that time. (N.C. Co. Probate Records, Thomas Justis Inventory, 1841).

.2 Barn Foundation With Shed

This feature is located northeast of the house. The remaining fragments of the barn foundation are constructed with uncoursed rubble fieldstone. Most of the foundation is gone; however, a portion of what had been the southwest and southeast walls remain on the nominated parcel. A small piece of what had been the northwest foundation wall is located on an adjacent parcel abutting the rear line of the Justis parcel. That portion of the foundation has been incorporated into a garage. There is a slight depression in the ground where the barn stood.

The shed rests on the southwest end of the barn foundation. It is a small frame building, square in outline. Its gable roof shows exposed rafter ends, and its walls are sided with board and batten. (Non-contributing)

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8. Statement of Significance

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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

circa 1804

circa 1900

Significant Dates

n/a

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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The Thomas Justis House is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C. The house is an outstanding example of a Federal Vernacular style dwelling which retained the integrity of its original features to an unusual degree. The two-story, three-bay, double-pile, side-passage house was constructed of stone in early nineteenth century Mill Creek Hundred. Due to the retention of its original floor plan and the integrity of its Federal Vernacular interior and exterior features, the house retains a high degree of architectural integrity. The extension of the house into a five-bay, center hall dwelling by a turn of the twentieth century endwall addition compliments the architecture of the house. Constructed during an early nineteenth century rebuilding period in which mostly log dwellings were replaced by more permanent dwelling materials, such as stone, the original house denotes the relatively elevated socio-economic position of its owners. Within a five mile radius of the Thomas Justis House, several other stone houses have been found which date to the same time period and exhibit similar finish details. Some fact regarding Justis' occupation as a house carpenter present a strong possibility that he built his own house. Whether Justis also had a hand in building any of the other houses is, as yet, unknown. In either case, the Thomas Justis House is associated with a group of dwellings that demonstrate a strong local response to a widespread rebuilding trend.

Mill Creek Hundred experienced a transformation of its built environment during the first half of the nineteenth century. In terms of dwellings, log structures were being replaced by houses built of more permanent materials, such as stone. The construction of a stone dwelling was an indication of its owner's more elevated social and economic position or aspirations. A comparison of tax assessment data for the years 1798 and 1816 provide evidence of the rebuilding which occurred during this period. In 1798, 57.6% of dwellings were constructed of log, while 18.6% were constructed of stone. By 1816, the percentage of stone buildings had increased to 38.1% and the and the percentage of log buildings had decreased to 28.7% (Jicha and Siders, 1985). The availability of fieldstone in Mill Creek Hundred influenced the preference for stone over other permanent construction material. Barns and other agricultural outbuildings experienced a similar rebuilding during the same time period.

The stone portion of the Thomas Justis House was constructed during this rebuilding period between 1804 and 1816. Thomas Justis first appeared on the Mill Creek Hundred Tax Assessment List in 1804. In that year, Justis

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possessed one log dwelling and one log barn on eighty-six acres. In 1804, tax assessment data place Justis in the 33.8% of taxables for the \$364 value of his acreage. By 1816, Justis had replaced the log house with a stone dwelling, wood barn, and a stable of unknown material on sixty acres. These improvements placed him in the 60.1% (despite the decrease of twenty-six acres) gives some indication that possession of a stone dwelling (along with the other buildings on the site) was indicative of a higher socio-economic status.

This rebuilding period during which the previously preferred log dwellings were replaced by more permanent building materials, such as stone, coincided with the widespread acceptance of the Georgian form in the Pennsylvania Piedmont zone, which includes northern Delaware. The fullest expression of the form may be found in the five-bay, two-story, double-pile dwelling with an unheated central passage. The central passage served a social function to separate the mediate between the private and public spaces of the dwelling. There were many variations of the Georgian-form plan built in northern Delaware during this period. Among these were the two-thirds, side passage, double-pile form; the one-third, double-pile form; and, the symmetrical three-bay, center passage form. Any one of these two story variations could also be found in the single-pile house. The Thomas Justis House represents the two-story, three-bay, side-passage, double-pile form.

There are many surviving examples of Georgian form stone houses constructed during this time period in rural Mill Creek Hundred. There are a few examples of center passage houses with a full five-bay facade in the vicinity. The Benjamin Hersy House (CRS# N-1244), constructed around 1800, represents the five-bay, single-pile form. The Simon Cranston House (CRS# N-1605) constructed in 1812, represents the five-bay, double-pile form. The presentation of a full five-bay facade signified the prominence of its owner within the community during the early nineteenth century.

A more frequent variation of the Georgian-form stone house constructed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in rural Mill Creek Hundred were the one-third and two-thirds side hall plans usually associate with urban townhouses. These were sometimes built as endwall additions to previously existing buildings, or were more commonly expanded by means of later endwall additions. An example of the former is the McKennan-Klair House (CRS# N-1250), an example of the two-thirds single-pile form. Constructed in 1818, the stone portion was an endwall addition to a

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previously existing eighteenth century two-room plan, hall-parlor house. Two examples of the latter are the Z. Derrickson House (CRS# N-10,149) and the F. Flinn House (CRS# N-229). Both of these houses are examples of three-bay stone houses originally constructed in the early nineteenth century which received endwall additions later in the nineteenth century. Examples of early nineteenth century stone houses which were later expanded by means of endwall additions are so numerous that they represent a widespread trend in northern Delaware. The stone portion of the Thomas Justis House may have been built as an addition to the pre-existing building made evident by the seven foot relieving arch in the basement. The two-thirds, double-pile house later received a two-bay, double-pile addition circa 1900, expanding it to a five-bay, double-pile house.

The earlier portion of the Thomas Justis House retains many of its original Federal interior and exterior features. The introduction of Federal style elements into Mill Creek Hundred is evidence of sophistication in a rural environment. Among the federally-influenced exterior features are the symmetrically placed windows on the facade, including the two nine-over-nine first floor windows and the three six-over-nine second story windows. The side passage entry with its six-panel door and deep paneled reveal, three-light transom, and side pilasters also provide evidence of Federal style influence.

Federally-inspired interior elements include the first and second floor chair rail, the five and one-half inch baseboard, the six-panel doors found throughout the original section. The double-leaf paneled door, and top and bottom china cabinets found in the back parlor provide further evidence of this influence. The four original mantels in the front parlor, back parlor, front parlor chamber and back parlor chamber provide additional evidence of sophisticated Federal style influence in a rural setting. Projecting side and central blocks and elaborate punch and gouge decoration found particularly on the front and back parlor mantels are elements of the Federal style.

A particularly fine feature may be found in the gouged reeding seen on the front and back parlor mantels. The front parlor mantel displays this reeding on its side pilasters and on a narrow band beneath the mantel shelf. The back parlor mantel is less elaborate with the reeded motif shown on the side blocks. Similar reeding has been previously described on the deep

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paneled window reveals of the front parlor windows and the landing window between the first and second floors.

Further investigation indicates that reeded window reveals and mantels similar to those found in the Thomas Justis House may be found in other stone houses built in southeastern Mill Creek Hundred in the early nineteenth century. The 1818 portion of the previously mentioned McKennan-Klair House (CRS# N-1250) displays reeding on its parlor window reveals and parlor mantel. A reference may be found in the Cultural Resource Survey inventory description of the Justa Justis House (CRS# N-253) which constructed in the early nineteenth century. The circa 1800 stone portion of the Swithin Chandler House (CRS# N-1591) also features reeded window reveals. The reeded motif found in these four houses built in the same vicinity in the same time period is suggestive of the work of a single craftsman or group of craftsmen.

By profession, Thomas Justis was both a farmer and a carpenter. Two early documents verify his occupation as a carpenter. One of these is an 1802 deed by which he purchased a fifteen-acre parcel of land from Sen Justis in Mill Creek Hundred in which he is referred to as an "house carpenter" (N.C. Co. Deeds, Y-2:390). Later in a circa 1807 probate inventory of Jacob Justis' estate, there is mention of a \$25 payment for carpentry work and "schooling of David, a minor child" (N.C.Co. Probate Records Jacob Justis, Inventory 1807). The evidence suggests that Thomas Justis constructed his own house and may have been involved in the construction of similar houses in the vicinity such as the McKennan-Klair, the Justa Justis and the Swithin Chandler houses.

Justa Justis, whose exact kinship ties to Thomas Justis are unknown, has also been mentioned as a builder in the Mill Creek Hundred vicinity. Justa Justis was about twenty years younger than Thomas Justis and has been credited with the construction of the Brandywine Springs Hotel in 1828. The hotel was constructed of native stone and timber in the Greek Revival style. Born in 1876, Justa Justis was described as follows in an 1899 biographical directory: "He was a farmer throughout his life, and in addition to this calling, was also a contractor and builder. He erected many dwelling houses and other structures in Mill Creek Hundred and built the famous old Brandywine Springs Hotel." (Runk, 1899:437).

Census Bureau records indicate that at the time of his death in 1841, Thomas Justis was about seventy years old. His probate records provide some

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substantiation of his role as a carpenter in Mill Creek Hundred. The list of items offered for sale includes such items as: "mallett, scraper, lot of paint, stone augurs and paint key, lots of paints, turpentine, drawing knife, gouger, 1 pr. chissels, saw, handsaw, jack plane, augurs, 1000 shingles, pincers, wood lath, white pine boards, and a wooden horse", to mention a few. (N.C.Co. Probate Records, Thomas Justis Inventory: 1841). The inventory is more suggestive of a warehouse of carpentry materials and tools than a mere workshop. In contrast, the 1836 probate evaluation (not offered for sale) of Justa Justis' home merely lists a "lot of carpenter tools," valued at \$2. (N.C. Co. Probate Records, Justa Justis Inventory, 1836). The evidence suggests a group of master builders responsible for the construction of several Federal style houses and the construction of the Brandywine Springs Hotel, led by either Thomas Justis and/or Justa Justis. It is possible that Justa Justis, the younger man, received his training under Thomas Justis. More research needs to be done on the possible business and personal connection of these two men, although a more detailed discussion of the Justis family genealogy may be found in a later section of this document.

A series of social and economic changes in Mill Creek Hundred including increased population, participation in wheat specialization among farmers and early industrialization and improved transportation undoubtedly encouraged the architectural changes of the early nineteenth century. Previous mention has been given to the transformation from log to more permanent building materials such as stone, and the widespread acceptance of Georgian form dwellings. The increased popularity of Federal Vernacular style elements was also taking place during the period of socio-economic change in southeastern Mill Creek Hundred. This changing environment undoubtedly proved advantageous to a carpenter such as Thomas Justis who was able to employ his skills to satisfy his own needs and the needs and desires of his customers.

Little is known about Thomas Justis who apparently built his own home between 1804 and 1816 and lived there until his death in 1841. Married to Mary Wollaston in 1799, Thomas Justis was descended from a large extended family of early Swedish settlers in Mill Creek Hundred. From a study of the Justis family deeds and probate records, it appears that he maintained close business and personal relationships with members of the Justis family, but his exact kinship ties are unknown. The Justis or Justice family descended from early Swedish settlers named Gostaffson. The Gostaffson name was later anglicized to Gostos, and later to Justis. Information obtained from the Historical Society of Delaware Justis Family Genealogical File reveals that

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only one branch of the Justis family can be traced from recent times to the seventeenth century. This is the branch from which Justa Justis descended. Previous reference has been made to Justa Justis and his house (CRS# N-253) which is still standing at 2113 Duncan Road.

Justa Justis was the grandson of Neils Justis who died in 1774, leaving the bulk of his estate to his wife and one of his sons, Jacob Justis. Little was left to his other three sons (Swen, Andrew and Enoch) or his four daughters (Mary, Steena, Sussanah and Margaret) (N.C. Co. Wills, K-1:75). Several incidents indicate Thomas Justis' relationship to the Justa Justis branch of the family:

- 1) After Jacob Justis' death, around 1807, Thomas Justis' and John Stilly's word was accepted by the Register of Wills as witnesses to Jacob's oral will. (Both men were visiting the house at the time.) (N.C. Co. Probate Records, Jacob Justis inventory)
- 2) Thomas Justis was chosen in 1808 to be the administrator of the estate of Steena, daughter of Neils Justis and sister of Jacob Justis. (N.C. Co. Probate Records, Steena Justis Inventory, 1809)
- 3) In 1807, Thomas Justis was chosen as administrator of James Robinson's estate and guardian of his two children by the Orphans' Court. Mary Robinson was the sister of Jacob Justis. (N.C. Co. Probate Records, Andrew Justis Inventory, 1807)
- 4) Thomas Justis purchased a five-acre lot from Justa Justis in 1831. (N.C. Co. Deeds, N-4:255)

The pattern of these relationships also suggest a relationship of trust toward Thomas Justis among the members of the Justis family.

From their wills, it does not appear that Thomas or Mary Justis had any surviving children. In his will, Thomas Justis left small sums of money to: Joseph Justis, Hanna Justis (daughter of Justa Justis), and Hanna Mary Justis (daughter of David Justis, brother of Justa). In her will, Mary Justis also makes no mention of her children, leaving sums of money to various nieces and nephews. (N.C. Co. Wills, V-1:57) However a Census Bureau figures from 1800-1840 reveals a curious pattern of occupancy by children and young adults of various ages at various times. If it is assumed that the oldest male and

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female are Thomas and Mary Justis, the occupancy of the house by children and young adults of various ages at various times is suggestive of a pattern of boarding children. The previous reference to "schooling" of David Justis is curious. Perhaps they were boarding children and young adults for the purpose of education, apprenticeship or merely as extra "hands". David Justis, Justa's brother, was chosen by Mary to be the executor of Thomas Justis' will.

From these examples it is apparent that Thomas Justis maintained a close relationship with Justa Justis' family. It is interesting to speculate that Justa Justis may have been an apprentice carpenter under Thomas during the early 1800s. Justa Justis died in 1836, at the age of fifty, leaving the bulk of his estate to Catherine, his widow, and their six children. (N.C. Co. Wills, T-1:262) Justa Justis' probate records reveal that Thomas Justis owed a \$1,200 debt of unknown nature to the estate of Justa Justis. (N.C. Co. Probate Records, Justa Justis Inventory, 1836) Thomas Justis died in 1841 about the age of seventy. Mary Justis sold the home in 1841 in order to pay this and other debts.

Thomas Justis was also a farmer. Census Bureau figures for the years 1820 to 1830 indicate he was involved in agriculture. Tax assessment information for 1828 indicates that he was a successful one. In 1828, Justis' total acreage was 114 with livestock valued at \$250, for a total value of \$2,622, placing in the 69.8% of taxables. (Jicha and Siders, 1987) Justis' 1841 probate inventory indicates that he was a traditional rather than a progressive farmer, growing buckwheat, wheat and livestock with non-mechanized farm tools, such as scythes, a mowing scythe, plough, corn sheller, fork and rake, horse cart, etc.

From 1842 to 1857, the Thomas Justis House was occupied by physicians. Dr Alexander Lowber resided there from 1842 to 1854 and Dr. Watson Quimby occupied the house from 1854-1857. (N.C. Co. Deeds, R-6:179) Farmers are known to have resided in the house from 1857-1915. Among these were William Derrickson who purchased the dwelling in 1857 (N.C. Co. Deeds, 2-16:391), living there until it was purchased by John Ball in 1885. (N.C. Co. Deeds, E-13:212) His son William, also a farmer, purchased the house in 1899 (N.C. Co. Deeds, X-17:106), residing there until 1915. Tradition indicates that during the Ball period of ownership, the addition of two bays and the incorporation of the rear kitchen fireplace was accomplished. From 1915 to 1941, the house passed through a succession of seven owners when it was

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purchased by Roy and Harriette McClenahan. (N.C. Co. Deeds, Q-42:24) Upon his death, Mr. McClenahan willed the house to his daughter, Katherine McClenahan True, who is the present owner with her daughter, Mary Catherine Alvarez.

Like this house, the life of Thomas Justis presents us with unanswered questions. Further research would be needed in order to clarify his family and business relationships as carpenter with Justa Justis, "contractor and builder". Further research would also be needed in order to locate other houses in Mill Creek Hundred with the characteristic Justis reeded window reveals and elaborate punch and gouge mantels in order to see whether a group of "master builders" was at work in the early nineteenth century. Additional field research might also be able to determine the form(s) and number(s) of structures which previously existed on the site of the present circa 1900 addition.

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Comprehensive Planning

The Thomas Justis House is located in Geographic Zone 1: Piedmont.

The period of significance falls within the chronological period for Early Industrialization (1770-1830 +/-) since the Federal style portion of the house was built some time between 1804 and 1816. The circa 1900 Colonial Revival style addition is a typical form of dwelling expansion in the Piedmont zone. Therefore, for research purposes, the chronological period for Urbanization and Early Suburbanization (1880-1940+/-) should also be noted.

The primary historic theme associated with the Thomas Justis House is Architecture, Engineering and Decorative Arts because the building exhibits the local vernacular expression of the Federal style in its form, plan and interior finish. Its construction during a noted period of architectural building (first quarter of the nineteenth century) also associates the house with the theme Settlement Patterns and Demographic Changes.

Census Bureau Records
 Summary for Thomas Justis House

Year: 1800

<u>Males</u>		<u>Females</u>	
<u>#</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Age</u>
2	16-26	1	10-16
1	26-45	1	16-26

Year: 1810

<u>#</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Age</u>
1	0-10	1	16-26
2	16-26	1	26-45
1		26-45	

Year: 1820

<u>#</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Age</u>
1	10-16	1	16-18
1	16-18	1	18-26
1	18-26	1	26-45
1	45 and older		

Year: 1830

<u>#</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Age</u>
1	5-10	1	10-15
1	10-15	1	15-20
1	50-60	1	20-30
		1	40-50

Year: 1840

<u>#</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Age</u>
1	20-30	1	10-15
1	60-70	1	20-30
		1	60-70

"Free Colored Male"

1	24-36
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9. Major Bibliographical References

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(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: New Castle County Planning Dept.

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property 0.41 Acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>18</u>	<u>443570</u>	<u>4398240</u>	3	___	_____
2	___	_____	_____	4	___	_____

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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Section 9 Page 1

Thomas Justis House
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Primary

Delaware State Archives. Probate Records. Andrew Justis, Jacob Justis, Steena Justis, Thomas Justis.

Delaware State Archives. New Castle County Tax Assessment Records, 1798, 1803-4, 1816, 1822, 1828, 1853.

Duncan Family Papers, Mr. and Mrs. Holland Z. Yeaple.

Genealogy File. Historical Society of Delaware Library.

"Justis Family Genealogy File," Historical Society of Delaware Library.

New Castle County Recorder of Deeds, Land Records.

New Castle County Register of Wills and Administrations, K-1:75 (Neils Justis), U-1:162 (Thomas Justis), V-1:57 (Mary Justis), T-1:262 (Justa Justis).

United States Bureau of the Census. State of Delaware Population Census. Manuscript Returns: 1800, 1810, 1820, 1830, 1840.

Secondary

Bowers, Martha H. Architectural Investigations of the Route 7 North Corridor, Milltown to the Pennsylvania State Line, New Castle County Delaware. East Orange, New Jersey: The Cultural Resource Group, Louis Berger and Associates, Inc. 1986.

Coch, Francis. A Little Known History of Newark, Delaware and Its Environs. Newark, DE: The Press of Kells, 1936.

Garrison, J. Ritchie, et. al. After Ratification: Material Life in Delaware, 1789-1820. Newark, DE: Museum Studies Program, University of Delaware, 1988.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 2

Thomas Justis House
name of property
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Secondary (Continued)

Glassie, Henry. "Eighteenth-Century Cultural Process in Delaware Valley Folk Building." In Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach, ed. Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture. Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 1986.

Herman, Bernard L. Architecture and Rural Life in Central Delaware, 1799-1900. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1986.

Historic Context Master Reference and Summary. Newark, Delaware: University of Delaware, Colleges of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, Arts and Science, and Engineering, 1989.

Jicha, Hubert F. III and Rebecca Sheppard Siders. "Mill Creek Hundred, New Castle county, Delaware Tax Assessment Analysis for 1798, 1804, and 1816." (University of Delaware Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, Unpublished Computer Analysis, 1985).

Michel, H. John Jr. "A Typology of Delaware Farms, 1850" (University of Delaware, Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering). Unpublished Manuscript, 1984.

Pursell, Carroll Wirth, Jr. That Never Failing Stream: A History of Milling Along Red Clay Creek During the Nineteenth Century. University of Delaware Master's Thesis, 1958.

Runk, J.M. Biographical and Genealogical History of the State of Delaware. Chambersburg, PA: J.M. Runk and Company. n.d.

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

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 3

Thomas Justis House
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Maps

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

Beers, D.G. Atlas of the State of Delaware. Philadelphia: Pomeroy and Beers, 1868.

Hopkins, G.M. Map of New Castle County, Delaware. Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins and Co., 1881.

Rea, Samuel and Price, Jacob. Map of New Castle County, Delaware. Philadelphia: Smith and Wistar, 1849.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 1

Thomas Justis House
name of property
New Castle County, DE
county and State

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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for the Thomas Justis House is the legal parcel on which it is situated. On the accompanying map titled "New Castle County Tax Parcel Map, Revised 6/16/85, the parcel is outlined and identified by the parcel number 08-038.30-386. The rectangular parcel measures approximately 170 feet along the front and is approximately 105 feet deep.

Boundary Justification

The legal parcel was chosen as the boundary because all of the acreage that was once a part of this property has been sold off, subdivided, and developed. The current 0.41 acre parcel is a very small vestige of the 110 acre farm. However, the residential subdivision and the church parking lot that surround the Thomas Justis House prevent the extension of the boundary beyond the legal parcel.

=====
11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Anne Wilson, Valerie Cesna, Historic Preservation Planners

organization New Castle County Planning Department

date 1/30/90

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

city or town Newark state DE zip code 19711

=====
Additional Documentation
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage
or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====
Property Owner
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Ms. Katherine M. True and Ms. Mary K. Alvarez

street & number 1001 Milltown Road telephone _____

city or town Newark state DE zip code 19808

=====
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.
=====

Thomas Justis House

Deed References

Thomas Justis House
1001 Milltown Road
Tax Parcel: 08-038.30-386
Current Owners: Katherine M. True and Mary K. Alvarez
Deed: 821/0332

January 19, 1989 (Book 821, Page 0332)

Grantor: Katherine McClenahan True
a/k/a Katherine McClenahan True
Grantee: Katherine McClenahan True and Mary Katherine Alvarez
Consideration: \$10
Parcels: Lots 17 and 18 in Subdivision Sherwood Addition,
Recorded January 12, 1972
Willed to Katherine McClenahan True by Roy P. McClenahan and
Harriette McClenahan (d. 04/08/68)

May 13, 1941 (Book Q-421, Page 24)

Grantor: Harold E. Smith and Evangeline L. Smith
(husband and wife)
Grantee: Roy P. McClenahan and Harriette McClenahan
(husband and wife)
Consideration: \$11,500.00
Parcel: No acreage given. Land owned by Smiths divided by this
transaction.

March 23, 1933 (Book P-38, Page 231)

Grantor: Harry A. Harrington and Pearl E. Harrington
(husband and wife)
Grantee: Harold E. Smith and Evangeline L. Smith
(husband and wife)
Consideration: \$7,000.00
Parcel: 74 acres, one road and 23 square perches of land,

March 22, 1924 (Book R-32, Page 417)

Grantor: Christian E. Jacobs and Bessie Jacobs
(husband and wife)
Grantee: Harry A. Harrington and Pearl E. Harrington
(husband and wife)
Consideration: \$11,500.00
Parcel: Same as above

January 24, 1922 (Book W-30, Page 186)

Grantor: Henry Zimmerman (widower)

Grantee: Christian E. Jacobs and Bessie Jacobs
(husband and wife)

Consideration: \$12,500.00

Parcel: Same as above

February 28, 1921 (Book F-30, Page 443)

Grantor: Christian E. Jacobs and Bessie Jacobs
(husband and wife)

Grantee: Henry Zimmerman (widower)

Consideration: \$16,500.00

Parcel: Same as above

March 5, 1920 (Book E-29, Page 544)

Grantor: Robert E. Parsons and Nannie B. Parsons
(husband and wife)

Grantee: Christian E. Jacobs

Consideration: \$3,000.00

Parcel: Same as above

November 5, 1915 (Book V-25, Page 319)

Grantor: William B. Butler (widower)

Grantee: Robert E. Parsons

Consideration: \$5.00

Parcel: Same as above

April 23, 1915 (Book N-25, Page 184)

Grantor: Ann Eliza L. Ball (widow of William Frances Ball)
(died April 4, 1914)

Grantee: William B. Butler

Consideration: \$10,000.00

Parcel: Same as above

March 3, 1899 (Book X-17, Page 106)

Grantor: John Ball and Sarah Ann Ball
(husband and wife)

Grantee: William F. Ball

Consideration: \$5,000.00

Parcel: Same as above

March 25, 1884 (Book E-13, Page 312)

Grantor: William M. Derrikson

Grantee: John Ball

Consideration: \$7,000.00

Parcel: Same as above

March 21, 1857 (Book Z-16, Page 391)

Grantor: Dr. Watson F. Quimby and Annie G. Quimby

Grantee: William M. Derrickson

Consideration: \$6,500.00

Parcel: Same as above

March 23, 1854 (Book R-6, Page 179)

Grantor: Dr. Alexander and Adeline Lowber
(husband and wife)

Grantee: Dr. Watson Quimby

Consideration: \$6,400.00

Parcel: 110 acres of land

April 1, 1842 (Book I-5, Page 151)

Grantor: Samuel Barr and Margaret H. Barr

Grantee: Dr. Alexander Lowber

Consideration: \$7,050.00

Parcel: 110 acres

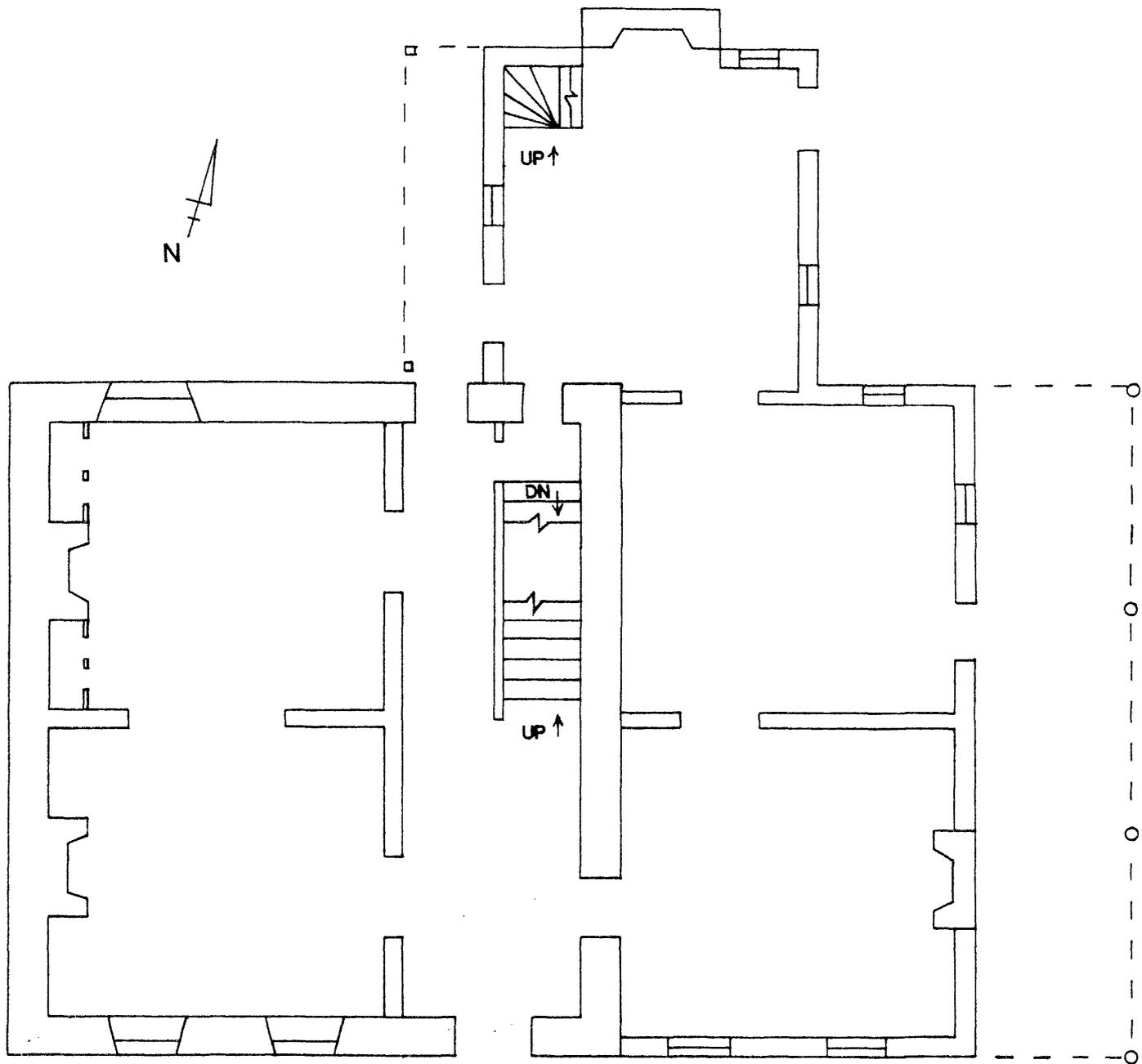
March 21, 1841 (Book G-5, Page 183)

Grantor: Mary Justis (Widow of Thomas Justis)

Grantee: Samuel Barr

Consideration: \$6,000.00

Parcel: 110 acres. Reference to Will of Thomas P. Justis (U-1:162).
No further deed references given.

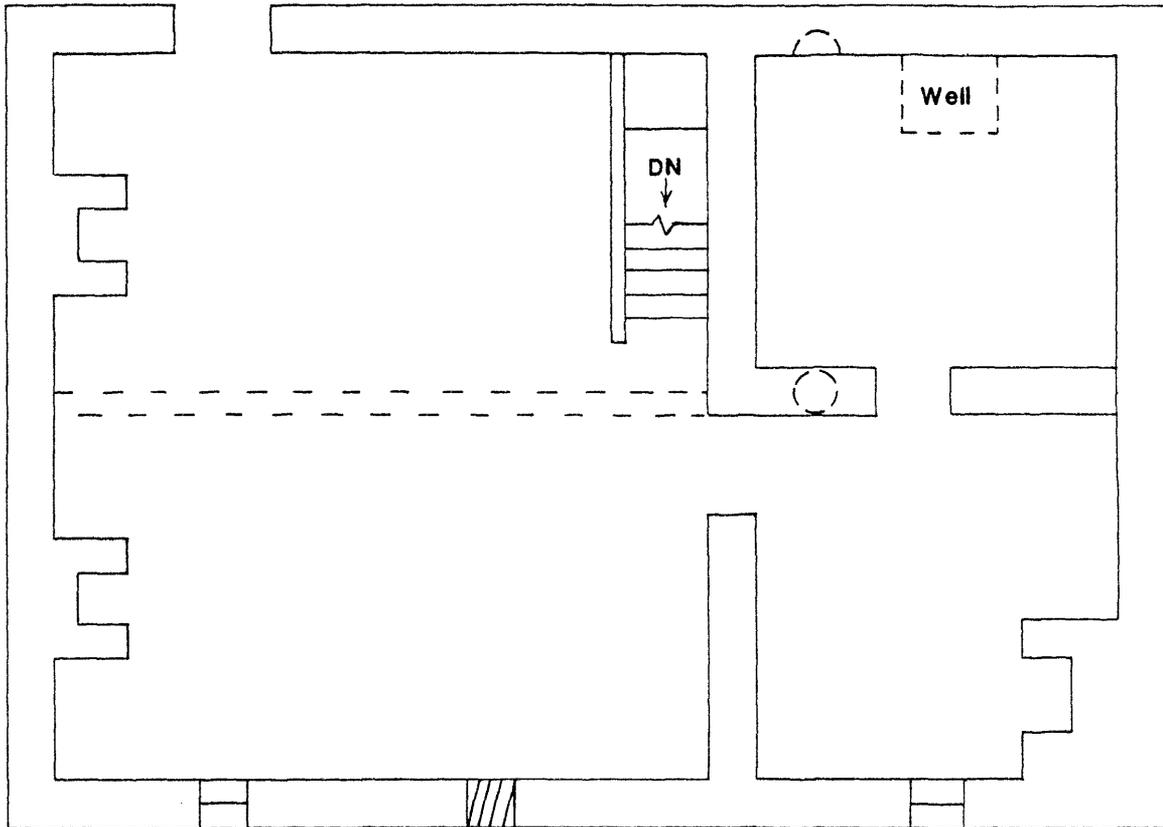


Not to Scale

Anne Wilson
December, 1989

Thomas Justis House
N-257
1001 Milltown Rd.
Mill Creek Hundred
New Castle County, Delaware

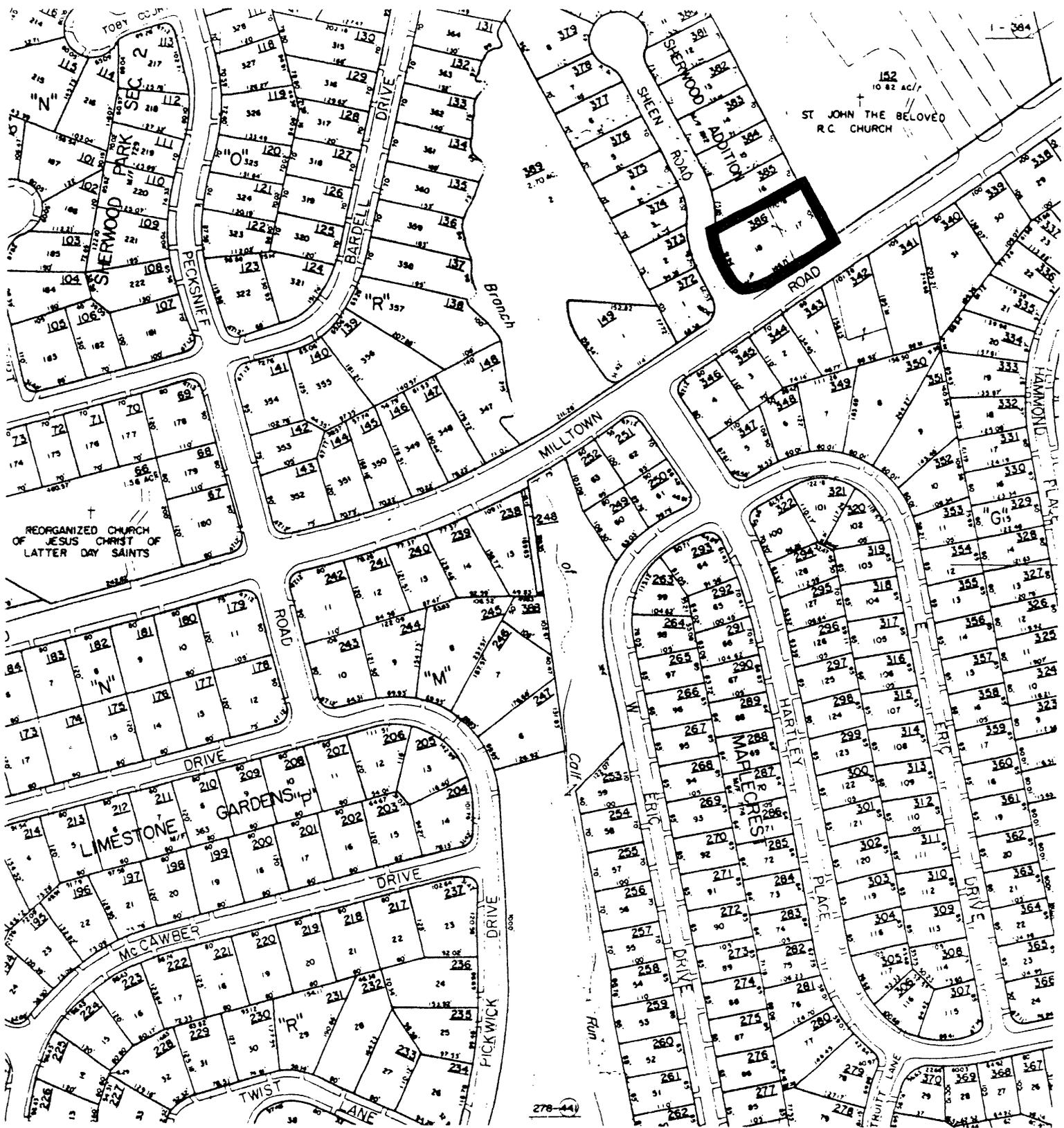
Basement Plan



Not to Scale

Anne Wilson
December, 1989

Thomas Justis House
N-257
1001 Milltown Rd.
Mill Creek Hundred
New Castle County, Delaware



THOMAS JUSTIS HOUSE, N-257

New Castle County Property Tax Map

Revised 06/26/85

Parcel #08-038.30-386

Scale: 1 inch = 100 feet



NEWARK EAST QUADRANGLE
 DELAWARE-NEW CASTLE CO.
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

AVONDALE, PA. 8 MI.
 HOCKESSIN 4 MI.

445

440 000 FEET

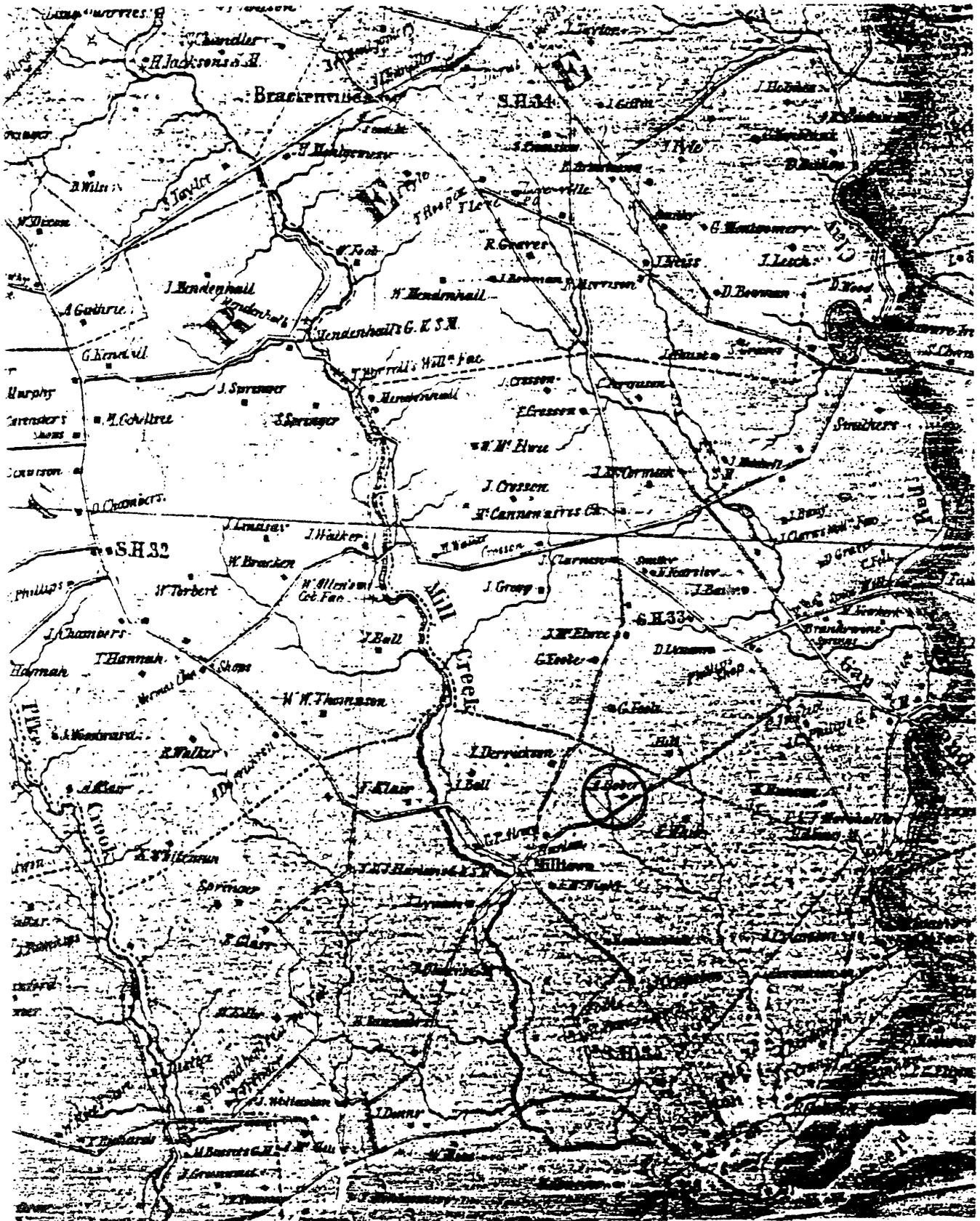
75°37'30"
 39°45'

NEWPORT 1.5 MI.
 NEW CASTLE 6.1 MI.
 ELSMERE 1.9 MI.
 WILMINGTON (CITY HALL) 4.8 MI.

630 000
 FEET
 THOMAS JUSTIS
 HOUSE
 (N-257)
 NEWARK EAST, DEL.
 QUADRANGLE
 75 MINUTE SERIES
 SCALE 1:24000
 1951 PHOTO
 REVISED 1983
 18/443570/4398 240

5963 1 SE
 WILMINGTON NOR

4396



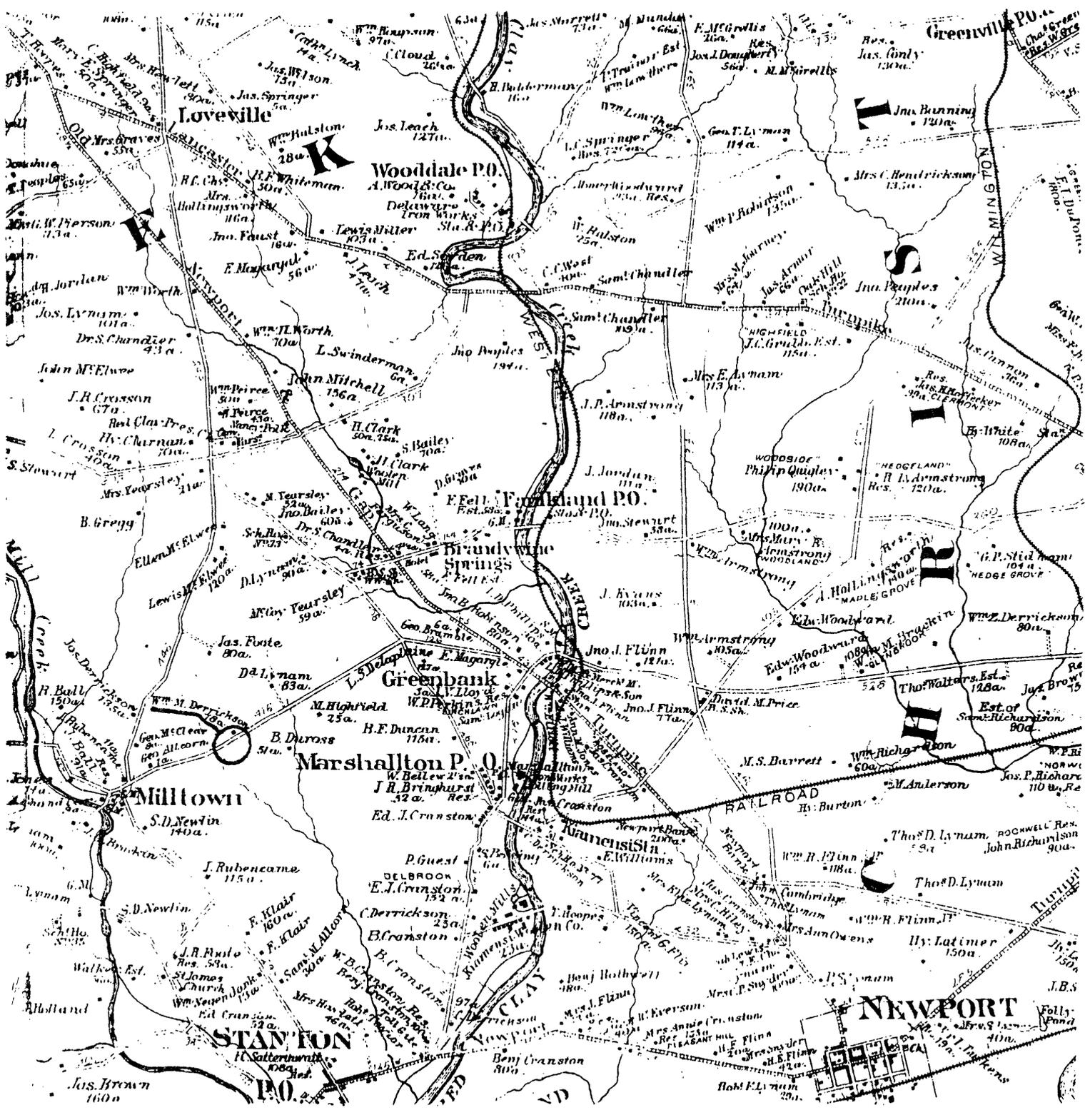
Samuel Rea and Jacob Price Map of New Castle County, Delaware,
 Philadelphia: Smith and Wistar, 1849
 Scale: $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch = 1 mile





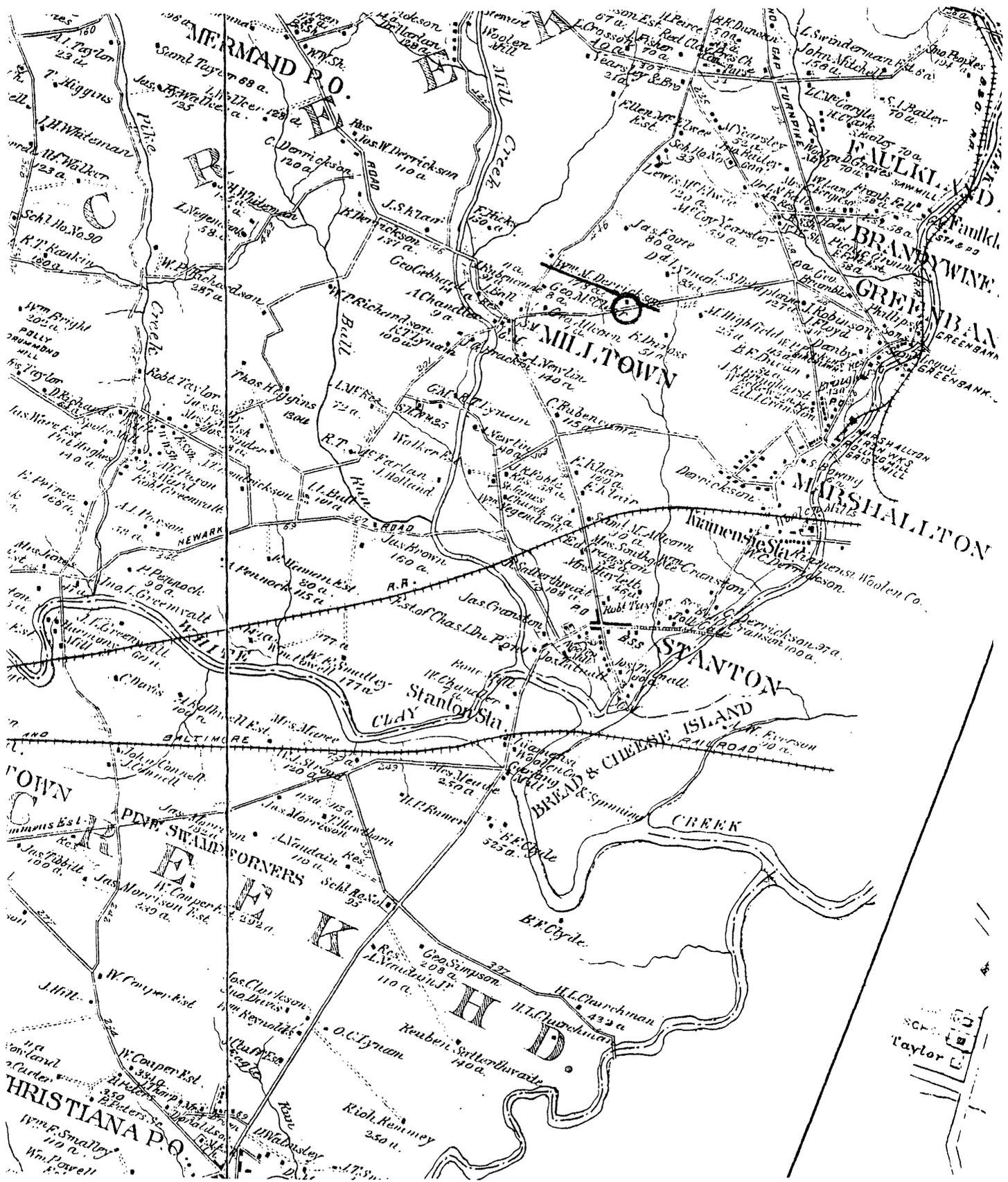
D. G. Beers Atlas of the State of Delaware Philadelphia:
 Pomeroy and Beers, 1868
 Scale 1½ inch = 1 mile





G. H. Hopkins Map of New Castle County, Delaware Philadelphia:
 G. M. Hopkins, 1881
 Scale: 1-3/4 inch= 1 mile





G. William Baist Atlas of New Castle County, Delaware
 Philadelphia: G. William Baist, 1893
 Scale: 1-3/4 inch = 1 mile

