

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Hersey-Duncan House
other names/site number N-1244

2. Location

street & number 2116 Duncan Road N/A not for publication
city, town Wilmington, Mill Creek Hundred x vicinity
state Delaware code DE county New Castle code 003 zip code 19808

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site		<u>1</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		<u>1</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		<u>2</u> objects
		<u>2</u>	<u>2</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature] SHPO 9/28/90
Signature of certifying official Date
DELAWARE DIVISION OF HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

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:) _____

[Signature] 11/15/90
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action


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Hersey-Duncan House, N-1244

In my opinion the Hersey-Duncan House
meets / does not meet the
National Register criteria.


Dennis E. Greenhouse
County Executive
New Castle County
Delaware

5/1/70
Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Domestic: Secondary Structure

Domestic: Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)Other: Federal Vernacular

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone: Granite

walls Stone: Granite

Stucco, Asbestos

roof Asphalt

other Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Hersey-Duncan House is a substantial Federal style, stone dwelling built circa 1804. Within the nominated boundaries of the property is one contributing outbuilding: a nineteenth century, stone smokehouse. A mid-twentieth century garage and an in-ground swimming pool are non-contributing features located in the domestic yard space.

The Hersey-Duncan house is located in southeastern Mill Creek Hundred north of Marshallton on the west side of Duncan Road. The property is situated approximately 1/10 of a mile northwest of the intersection of Kirkwood Highway and Duncan Road, and approximately 1/2 mile southeast of the intersection of Duncan and Milltown Roads. The house stands at 2116 Duncan Road on 3.6 acres of land, surrounded by twentieth century subdivisions and commercial development. When the house was constructed ca. 1804, the Benjamin Hersey property consisted of 115 acres and extended eastward to include a portion of Newport Gap Pike and Red Clay Creek. By 1852-1853, tax assessment records show Benjamin W. Duncan had expanded his holdings to 165 acres and a frame barn. In the nineteenth century, the property extended westward to include what is now Dunlinden Acres. The present legal parcel now contains the stone house, a nineteenth century stone smokehouse, a mid-20th century garage, a late nineteenth century tenant house which has been extensively altered, an early twentieth century chicken coop, and an auto body supply shop built on the foundation of the barn.

The nominated portion of the property encompasses the northern half of the parcel which contains the dwelling, smokehouse, garage, and swimming pool. The tenant house and the remnants of the barn foundation are too altered to contribute to the significance of the property. The chicken coop is later than the defined period of significance. Approximately 1.8 acres are contained within the nominated boundaries.

The Hersey-Duncan house is a very well preserved early nineteenth century stone dwelling with vernacular Federal style interior and exterior features. Its form is a two-story, five-bay, center passage plan with two-story, stone, rear kitchen wing that creates an ell. Due to the exterior stucco and the interior finishes, it cannot be

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determined by physical inspection whether the kitchen wing is original to the house or an early addition. Two twentieth century additions do not detract from the integrity of the building. A stuccoed frame, one-story, gable-roof kitchen was added to the north endwall of the main block circa 1950. In the 1930's, a two-story frame wing was added to the south side of the nineteenth century rear kitchen wing; a location previously occupied by an open porch. An early twentieth century photograph of the rear wing indicates that the rear wing was at that time twice as long as it is now. At that time, the chimney, which serves the nineteenth century kitchen hearth, was located about halfway between the main block and the west endwall of this wing. At the present time, this interior chimney is located on the west endwall at the ridge line of the roof. The construction material of the extended portion of the wing is not evident in the early twentieth century photograph. Another early twentieth century photograph of the facade of the main block reveals the house was stuccoed at that time. The stucco has been removed from the facade, the south endwall, and the exposed portion of the rear wall by the present owners.

The exterior walls of the main block are uncoursed roughly laid stone with structural quoining. Stucco covers the exterior walls of the 1950's one story kitchen addition which continues the facade. The walls of the early nineteenth century kitchen wing consist of stucco over stone. An angled seam, revealing the original outline of the rear wing, joins the south wall to the asbestos sided portion of the rear addition.

The roof on the main block is side gabled, typical of the Georgian Form. A side gable roof rests on the 1950's addition and an end gable roof rests on the rear wing. All roofs are covered with asphalt shingles. On the main block there is a molded box cornice with a bed molding and partial returns on the gable ends. There are three chimneys: Two interior brick at the gable ends on the ridge line of the roof which serve the fireplaces of the parlor, parlor chamber, dining room, and the dining room chamber. Another interior brick chimney at the gable end of the rear wing serves the kitchen hearth. There are two porches adjoining the building. One of these is a shed roof rear entry porch to the 1950's addition, featuring a concrete floor and two thin wood posts supporting the roof. The facade features a 3/5 length porch with a slate floor, four wood chamfered posts and a shed roof. Constructed in 1968, this replaced a Victorian 3/5 facade

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porch with turned balusters, wood posts and roof supported by brackets, evident in an early twentieth century photograph.

The fenestration of the five-bay facade is symmetrical with four 9/9 windows on the first floor and five 9/9 windows on the second floor. The window trim consists of molded surrounds and lug sills. There are panelled shutters on the first floor facade windows and louvered shutters on the second floor facade windows, a feature typical of the period. There are no window openings on the north and south endwalls of the main block except for the two garret windows on each wall. The center bay door consists of two top panels with a central glass insert (a 1908 addition) and then two bottom panels. There is a deeply panelled reveal and a four light transom over the door.

The central passage extends the full length of the main block and opens to the rear kitchen wing at the end. The passage features the original 5-1/4 inch baseboard with a simple bead on the top, and the original four inch chairrail. The bottom edge is molded with ogee and bead, and the cap is quirk ogee. This chairrail does not continue past the first floor. Upon entry, the parlor is to the left. The original floors are laid with random width pine. The baseboards in the parlor are 9-1/2 inches high and are modern (1908) replacements. A four and one-half inch chairrail with a molded cap is also a modern (1968) replacement. The front and rear walls were furred out in 1908 but the side walls are original, although the entrance to the parlor was widened in 1908. There are two 9/9 windows in this room symmetrically placed on each of the east and west walls. These windows have plain slightly splayed reveals. Some of these windows feature nineteenth century venetian blind hardware. The fireplace is located on the south endwall and typically features the most elaborate mantel in the house. The original Federal mantel is embellished by punch and gouge pilasters and a central block containing swag motifs.

The dining room may be reached by crossing the central hall and also displays a high level of interior finish. Here the chairrail which joins the window sills, and the 5-3/4 inch baseboard with a beaded top edge are original as are the floors. The plate rail, however, is a 1908 embellishment. Two slightly splayed, symmetrically placed facade windows light this room. Both windows have 2-1/2 inch deep drawers in the sill which are not presently functional. The center of the north endwall contains the original fireplace with a Federal mantel without punch and gouge decoration. To the left of this fireplace is a china

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closet with two sets of double doors. Between the upper and lower doors is a pull out tray. To the right of the fireplace is a chimney closet set on the side of the fireplace. The upper door is molded with two panels but the lower non-panelled door slides vertically. Beyond the chimney closet is the entry to the 1950's kitchen and laundry addition.

At the northwest corner of the dining room is a doorway leading to the nineteenth century kitchen wing. Access to the second floor may be had by the straight run staircase which is located along the wall adjoining the main block. There are three small windows in this room. Two are arranged on either side of the fireplace on the west endwall of the rear addition. Each of these windows features deep masonry reveals indicating stone construction. Another is located on the north wall. The main feature of this room is the 19th century kitchen hearth in the center of the west endwall with the crane and hook in the brick hearth. On the south wall is a doorway through which access may be gained to the 1930's addition. This contains a hall which leads back to the central hall of the main block.

The stair hall contains a closed string staircase located on the left side of the hall. The staircase features plain rectangular balusters, a slender newel column and drop pendants from the upper newels. There are eight steps leading to the first landing on the right, two more steps to another landing on the right and two steps to the upper hall. The double landing causes a delicately curved balustrade between the second and third floor stairs. At the top of the stairs over the front hall, is a small square room, commonly found in the Georgian form houses. This room is presently lined with shelves and serves as a linen closet.

The parlor chamber contains two symmetrically arranged windows along the front and two along the rear walls. These are slightly splayed and have deep reveals. The original baseboard is similar to that found in the dining room and central hall of the first floor. On the south endwall there is a fireplace with the original Federal mantel with punch and gouge trim and no central block. There are two side blocks and a surround with punch and gouge trim. Two modern closets with six-panel doors flank the fireplace.

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The dining chamber also shows a less elaborate level of decor than found below. As in the dining room, there are two symmetrically placed windows on the east facade wall. The same beaded baseboard as in all rooms except the parlor is found in this room. A smaller fireplace than in the parlor chamber is located on the north wall of this room. The Federal mantel displays punch and gouge trim on two side blocks and the fireplace surround. There are original closets on either side of the fireplace, and these retain the original six panel doors. Through a door in the northwest corner of this room, entry may be gained to a small bedroom above the rear kitchen. The room has been altered, so there are few original features. A door on the south wall of this room leads to a hall which contains the bathrooms and closets of the second floor.

The closed string staircase continues to the third floor which features five steps to a landing, two more steps to a second landing and three more steps to a door to the attic. Above the parlor there is a room in which walls and ceilings are finished with plaster. Access is gained through a batten door. The room above the dining room, however, is unfinished, leaving the rafters exposed. The rafters are vertical sawn and mortised and pegged at the ridge and matched by the use of Roman numerals.

The basement may be accessed by a door beneath the central stair. The floor material is poured concrete and the walls are whitewashed rubble stone. There are two relieving arches supporting the parlor and dining room fireplaces. Both of these retain their original wood lintels. The original stairs on the north end of the rear foundation wall have been blocked, but another modern set are located at the south end of the same wall. The floor joists are vertical sawn and run front to back, but run side to side under the center hall. This is a typical feature of a center hall Georgian form house.

It is evident that the Hersey-Duncan house retains the integrity of its original floor plan, and of its interior and exterior finish. Much of the credit for its survival is due to the care of the Duncan family and their descendents who have lived in and maintained the house for 150 years.

There is one contributing structure on the Hersey-Duncan site: A nineteenth century gable roof smokehouse. The building is square in shape and constructed of stone which is presently covered with

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whitewash. There are three ventilator holes on each side wall. The gable roof is presently covered with a metal roof covered with black asphalt paint. The interior has been re-done as a storage shed and is lined with shelves. There is a batten door on the east wall of the smoke house.

The twentieth century garage is a non-contributing structure within the Hersey-Duncan site boundaries. The garage is a one story, gable roofed, two-car building of frame construction.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Agriculture

Period of Significance

1800-1860 +/-

Significant Dates

Ca. 1800

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Hersey-Duncan house is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under criterion C as an excellent example of a Federal era vernacular style dwelling. The five-bay, single pile, center passage plan house reflects the relatively elevated socio-economic status of its builder and subsequent owners. Built by a prominent Red Clay Creek miller in the early nineteenth century, the property was sustained by the efforts of a mid-nineteenth century progressive agriculturist. Accordingly, the property is also eligible for listing under criterion A for its importance to the development of intensive scientific agriculture in Delaware.

The Hersey-Duncan house retains many of its original Federal interior and exterior features, providing evidence of the penetration of Federal style elements into rural Mill Creek Hundred. Among the Federally influenced exterior features are the symmetrical five-bay facade, with its 9/9 first and second story windows.

The center bay, six-panel door with its four light transom and side pilasters also reflects this influence. Federally inspired interior features include the four original mantels found in the original portion of the house. The projecting side and central blocks of these mantels as well as the varying degrees of punch and gouge decoration provide surprising evidence of sophisticated Federal elements in a rural setting. The china and chimney cabinets in the dining room and the first floor chairrail and beaded baseboard also suggest Federal influence. Finally, the floor plan of the main block with its center hall passage represents the continuation of the Georgian floor plan into the Federal period.

Mill Creek Hundred experienced a transformation of its built environment during the first half of the nineteenth century. In terms

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of dwellings, log structures were being replaced by more permanent buildings such as stone. The construction of a stone dwelling was an indication of its owners' more elevated social and economic position or aspirations. A comparison of tax assessment data for the year 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 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 materials. Barns and other agricultural outbuildings experienced a similar rebuilding during the same time period.

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 and 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-hall, double-pile form, the one-third, double-pile form and the symmetrical three-bay center passage form. Any one of these variations could also be found in the single-pile house. The Hersey-Duncan house represents a two-story, five-bay, single-pile, center passage (with kitchen ell) variation of the Georgian form in northern Delaware.

There are many surviving examples of Georgian form stone houses constructed during this time period in rural Mill Creek Hundred. The two-third, side-hall plan, usually associated with urban town-houses, was a popular variation. These were sometimes built as endwall additions to previously existing buildings, or were later expanded by endwall additions, frequently to five-bay, center-hall dwellings. An example of the former is the McKennan-Klair house (Del. BAHF CRS:

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N-1250), representative of the two-third, single-pile form. Constructed in 1818, the building was an endwall addition to a previously existing eighteenth century, two-room plan, hall-parlor house.

The Thomas Justis house, a two-third, double-pile, side-passage house (Del. BAHP CRS: N-257) was constructed of stone between 1804 and 1816. A circa 1900 endwall addition expanded the building to a full five-bay, center-passage, double-pile house.

The Hersey-Duncan site is one of a few surviving houses constructed with a full five-bay facade in the vicinity. Two other stone houses are the Simon Cranston house (Del. BAHP CRS: N-1605) constructed in 1812, and the A. Whiteman house (Del. BAHP CRS: N-369). Both of these buildings represent the five-bay, double pile form. The Ashton Richardson house (Del. BAHP CRS: N-160) constructed of brick circa 1804 is another example of a Federal Vernacular dwelling constructed by a milling family. The two-and-a-half story, five-bay house also retains many of its interior and exterior Federal features such as a punch and gouge work. Built between 1798 and 1804, the presentation of the Hersey-Duncan house with its full five-bay facade, symbolized the prominence of its owner in early nineteenth century rural Mill Creek Hundred.

The Hersey-Duncan site was well situated in southeastern Mill Creek Hundred. Delaware's four northern Hundreds, including Mill Creek, fall mostly within Delaware's Piedmont geographic zone. The Piedmont zone is characterized by hilly terrain with major and minor streams such as the Brandywine, Red Clay, and White Clay Creeks. Most of these streams flow from north to south, draining into the Christina River and from there east to the Delaware River. Mill Creek Hundred is bordered on the east by Red Clay Creek, by White Clay Creek to the south and west, and by the Pennsylvania border to the north and west. The fall line which separates the Piedmont plateau from the coastal plain is located roughly parallel to Route 2 in southern Mill Creek Hundred.

Early settlers in Mill Creek Hundred found an area which was heavily forested, but well suited for agriculture when cleared. The soil, a

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fertile mixture of clay base with stone is well irrigated by the numerous streams which flow through the area. Early farmers participated in mixed agriculture, producing wheat, oats, Indian corn, hay, dairy products, livestock and fruit and vegetables for their own consumption. By the late eighteenth century, farmers in the Piedmont zone participated in the production of wheat for market. This specialization was enhanced by the location of milling sites on the Brandywine, Red Clay, and White Clay Creeks. These streams fed into the Christina and Delaware Rivers. The flour was transported by river to urban markets, particularly Philadelphia, or for export overseas.

While continuing the practice of mixed farming and the production of wheat for market, agriculture in the Piedmont zone became more specialized in the mid-nineteenth century. Farmers tended to specialize in dairying, but also in the production of livestock. According to Jack Michel, progressive farmers in the four northern hundreds were encouraged to increase the "intensity of their production, rather than the scale of their production." According to Michel, four factors led to increasing agricultural specialization. "First, the quality of land here was marginally less than that of the large farm hundreds (to the south). Second, the population density in these hundreds was relatively great, and the average farm size relatively small. Third, these farmers used less labor outside of the family than any other farmers in the state. Fourth, these farmers had the highest investment in machinery of any farmers in Delaware." (Michel 1984:40)

Evidence to support the growth in population density can be found in tax assessment data and Census Bureau records for Mill Creek Hundred in the early nineteenth century. Census Bureau figures for the years 1820 and 1830 in Mill Creek Hundred show an increase of more than one-third from 3,049 to 4,654. A comparison of the assessment data for the years 1804 and 1816 indicate that the median number of acres per landholder decreased from 100 in 1804 to 76 in 1816. During the same time period, the median value of acres rose from \$475 in 1804 to \$2142 in 1816. (Jicha and Siders, 1985).

Mid-nineteenth century farmers in the Piedmont zone, including Mill Creek Hundred, were aided in this transition to increased

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specialization by the proximity to urban markets and improved transportation. According to Michel, the rural population in the Piedmont zone started to decline by 1870. Agriculture continued its economic decline in northern New Castle County until the Great Depression, when it ceased to be a viable economic option.

The growth of industry and industrial villages in the Piedmont zone during the nineteenth century undoubtedly contributed to the increase in population and land values, smaller landholdings and agricultural specialization discussed above. The earliest industries were water powered grist and sawmills along the Brandywine, Red Clay, White Clay Creeks and other streams in the region. Sawmills and custom gristmills were an indispensable factor in the development of early agriculture in the region. Custom grist millers served local farmers by grinding wheat in return for a portion of the flour produced. Merchant millers, however, ground wheat for sale and sold flour on the open market. In the late eighteenth century, increasing numbers of grist millers along the creeks were merchant millers transporting their wheat to Philadelphia markets.

The period between 1810-1860 showed an increasing diversity in mill types. Red Clay Creek, the eastern boundary of Mill Creek Hundred, was second in importance to Brandywine Creek as a milling center in Delaware, enjoying proximity to the Christina River at Stanton and Newport. In his master's thesis, That Never Failing Stream: A History of Milling Along the Red Clay Creek During the Nineteenth Century, Carroll W. Pursell traced the diversification of Red Clay milling sites. Some of the grist and sawmills of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries developed into textile mills due to the curtailment of foreign imports during the War of 1812. Snuff, fertilizer, paper, spoke and felloe mills also developed along the Red Clay Creek during the first half of the nineteenth century. Later, iron rolling mills such as the Marshall Rolling Mill and the Delaware Iron Works operated into the early twentieth century. Even as early as 1820, Census Bureau figures document the progress of early industrialization in Mill Creek Hundred when 569 individuals identified their occupation as engaged in agriculture and 312 were engaged in manufactures.

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The development of improved transportation lines such as turnpikes and the railroads aided in the early industrialization in Mill Creek Hundred. Early millers relied upon the Christina River to ship flour to markets in Philadelphia. Turnpikes such as the Newport Gap (1818), Lancaster Pike (1817), and Kennett Pike (1812) aided Red Clay millers providing links to wheat fields in southeastern Pennsylvania. Later, railroad construction, especially the Wilmington and Western Railroad (1872) aided millers along Red Clay Creek. Early industrialization also encouraged the growth of small industrial villages such as Marshallton.

The location of the Hersey-Duncan property proved to be an excellent milling site. The original property lines included a portion of the Red Clay Creek above the "Fall Line" and a portion of Newport Gap Pike. Tax assessment records for 1798 list Solomon Hersey (Benjamin's father) as owning a merchant mill. At that time, Hersey owned 200 acres, a frame house, a log barn, and a mill. Tax assessment data indicate that with the total value of his acreage assessed at \$1,225, he placed in the top 92.9% of taxables. (Jicha and Siders, 1985).

Solomon Hersey died in 1801, willing one-half of his real estate in Mill Creek Hundred to each of his sons, Benjamin and Isaac, with Benjamin designated as executor of the estate. His five daughters and their children were granted small sums of money. A codicil provided that his three slaves were to serve out their terms and be freed within a few years. Hersey provided for the payment of debts by the sale of land in Newport, Delaware and Maryland. He further specified that any additional debts be paid from the proceeds of his Mill Creek Hundred estate (N.C. Co. Probate Records, Solomon Hersey Inventory, 1801).

Isaac and Benjamin continued operation of their father's grist and saw mills. Tax assessment records in 1804 reflect the division of Solomon Hersey's estate. Isaac is recorded as owning 115 acres, valued at \$900, a log stable, two mills, and a frame dwelling house - perhaps the frame house his father owned in 1798. In 1804, Benjamin possessed 115 acres valued at \$900, two mills, and a stone dwelling house, the first verification of a stone dwelling on the property. In 1816, tax assessment records list "one framed merchant mill, one water wheel,

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and two pairs of stones," on two acres with Benjamin and Isaac as co-owners. However, their individual landholdings are listed separately in 1816. Isaac had apparently replaced the frame dwelling with a log dwelling and possessed 110 acres. The total value of Isaac's holdings, including a, "female slave and one cow," was \$3,743. Benjamin retained the stone dwelling, 110 acres, one female and one male slave, stables and livestock. The total value of Benjamin's holdings was \$4,431. For the value of their acreage alone (excluding the value of the gristmill and other property) Isaac placed in the 71.4% and Benjamin placed in the 77.7% of Mill Creek Hundred landholders. (Jicha and Siders, 1985). Undoubtedly, if the value of the mill was included, both would be among the wealthiest citizens in Mill Creek Hundred.

In 1819, Benjamin and Isaac Hersey lost their father's divided estate on Mill Creek Hundred, including the mill, their homes, and over two hundred acres of land. Joseph Derrikson, executor of Zachariah Derrikson's estate obtained a judgment against Benjamin Hersey, executor of Solomon Hersey's estate, as a result of an unpaid debt of 200 pounds. Having sold the Maryland property, the entire Solomon Hersey estate in Mill Creek Hundred was sold at sheriff's sale to Jesse Trump, Jr. for \$5200, on March 25, 1919. According to the deed poll, the parcel contained, "a stone dwelling house, tenant house, grist mill, and other improvements thereon erected containing two hundred and sixty acres." (N. C. Deeds, V-3:389).

Shortly after purchasing Solomon Hersey's estate, Jessie Trump sold a portion containing the gristmill and 28 acres to James Buckingham for \$3200 on April 14, 1819. (N.C. Co. Deeds, V-3:414). The Hersey property was further subdivided on January 31, 1820 when Jesse Trump sold approximately 100 acres to Joseph W. Paxson for \$2,722. No mention is made in either of the two deeds of the stone house. However, the Paxson deed is significant in that it contains a plat, outlining the parcel bordering on James Buckingham's, Jesse Trump's, and Justa Justis's lands. (N.C. Co. Deed, W-3:257). Although the Paxsons were granted a portion of Red Clay Creek with this deed, there is no evidence that they or subsequent owners had or operated a mill on the property.

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Tax assessment information for 1822 gives us the first definite indication that the Hersey-Duncan house had been transferred to Joseph Paxson in 1820. The tax lists for Mill Creek Hundred state that Joseph W. Paxton (sic) owned 100 acres, "a stone house and frame barn," presumably the same stone house listed in 1816 for Benjamin Hersey. Little is known about the Paxson family who resided on the property until 1839. Census Bureau records for 1820 list a two-person household (presumably Joseph and Phoebe Paxson, his wife) with one of the members engaged in agriculture. In 1839, Joseph W. Paxson sold the property to Benjamin W. Duncan for \$4,537.12. Duncan family members and their descendents have held the property until the present time. (N.C. Co. Deeds, C-5:31).

The Duncan family descended from John Duncan, a Quaker emigre from Glasgow, Scotland, who married and settled on the eastern shore of Maryland prior to the Revolutionary War. One of his sons, John Duncan, a businessman and farmer moved to Wilmington and married Elizabeth Woolston in 1803. After the birth of his second son in 1805, the family moved to Baltimore and then to Harford County, Maryland, but later returned to Wilmington in 1852. Benjamin W. Duncan was the oldest son of five children of John and Elizabeth Duncan. His two younger brothers, John and Jeremiah, purchased a hardware store in Wilmington in the 1830's. One of Jeremiah's sons, Henry B. Duncan briefly held the title to the Hersey-Duncan property from 1894 to 1896. (McCarter and Jackson, 1882:258 and 312). Perhaps this family history of involvement in both agriculture and business contributed to Benjamin Duncan's success as a progressive farmer.

Benjamin W. Duncan and his wife Martha successfully operated a farm on the property from 1839 to Benjamin's death on March 30, 1870. Census Bureau records for 1840 indicate two male children under age 5 and one female child between 5-10. Benjamin F. Duncan, age 10 in the 1850 census and 19 in the 1860 census was the only heir when his father died in 1870.

Information obtained from the United States Census Agricultural Schedule for the state of Delaware in 1850 and 1860 indicate that Duncan practiced mixed agriculture, raising wheat, Indian corn, oats,

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Irish potatoes, hay, barley, and sweet potatoes. By 1860, he also cultivated bees for honey, and raised fruit from an orchard. According to statistics compiled by Jack Michel from the 1850 Delaware Agricultural Census, Duncan specialized in raising livestock for slaughter more than the average Mill Creek Hundred farmer (Michel, 1984: Tables 11, 12, and 13). In 1850, the average Mill Creek Hundred farmer owned 5 swine and 8.1 other cattle compared to Duncan's 7 swine and 17 other cattle. As previously stated, several factors including the poorer quality of land, increased land value, smaller farm size, greater population density, and greater investment in machinery encouraged Piedmont zone farmers to greater specialization, especially in dairying, but also in livestock production. In 1850, with 3 milk cows compared to 4 for the average Mill Creek Hundred farmer, Duncan indicated a smaller than average participation in dairying.

Three indicators show that Duncan probably enjoyed more success than the average Mill Creek Hundred farmer: the size of his land-holdings, the value of his landholdings, and his heavy investment in machinery. In terms of improved acreage, Duncan owned 165 acres compared to the mean number of 88 for the Mill Creek Hundred farmer. (Michel, 1984: Table 8). The value of his landholdings increased from \$6200 in 1850 to \$12,000 in 1860 as measured by the Agricultural Census. This represents a substantial increase even if offset by inflation. Finally, by 1860, Benjamin Duncan possessed a high investment in agricultural machinery worth \$390. (U.S. Census, State of Delaware Agricultural Schedules 1850 and 1860).

His 1871 probate inventory lists the following machines: a reaping machine, a threshing machine, a grain fan, corn sheller, as well as a wagon, an ox cart, horse cart and plow. (N.C. Co. Probate Records, Benjamin Duncan Inventory, 1871). With his high investment in agricultural machinery, larger land holdings, practice of mixed agriculture, as well as agricultural specialization in raising livestock and dairying, Duncan represents a successful progressive agriculturalist in the second half of the nineteenth century Piedmont zone.

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As previously stated, Benjamin F. Duncan inherited his father's property in 1870 and continued its operation as a farm. Less is known about the operation of the farm during this period. B. Franklin Duncan married Mary Elizabeth Catlin. Their three children were Florence E. Duncan (b. 1876), Herman F. Duncan (b. 1878), and Edith M. Duncan (b. 1883). In 1907, Herman F. Duncan acquired the parcel, including a, "Frame and stone dwelling house, Frame tenant house, frame barn, and other buildings containing about 113 acres." He purchased the property from his sisters, Florence E. Newlin, Edith M. Duncan, and also Benjamin F. Duncan, their father, for \$9,000. (N.C. Co. Deeds, 0-21:295). Herman F. Duncan operated a dairy farm, selling milk for ice cream at Brandywine Springs Park among other customers. Herman Duncan married Helen Tatnall and they had one child, Mary Duncan, who now owns the property with her husband, Holland Z. Yeaple. Between 1952 and 1954, Herman Duncan sold a large portion, about 84 acres, for lots which became Dunlinden Acres. Other portions of the estate have subsequently been sold off to other suburban housing developments.

Comprehensive Planning

The Hersey-Duncan House is located in the lower central area of the Piedmont Zone. The house is located approximately .3 mile west of Red Clay Creek, a watercourse that powered many mills during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The period of significance for the house is 1800-1860 +/-, the period during which the dwelling and smokehouse appear to have been built. The period of significance overlaps two of the comprehensive planning chronological time periods:

1770-1830 +/- Early Industrialization

1830-1880 +/- Industrialization and Early Urbanization

The primary historic theme relating to the Hersey-Duncan House is Architecture (12), because it is a very fine example of a Federal style vernacular dwelling. The house also relates to three other themes. The Hersey family, the first occupants of this house, participated in the first period of milling activity on Red Clay

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Creek. The Herseys established a grist and saw mill late in the eighteenth century and operated it until 1819. Later in the nineteenth century, their mill seat was developed into an iron rolling mill and the hamlet Marshallton grew around it. Therefore, the property relates to the theme Manufacturing (06). Agriculture (01) should also be recognized as a related theme due to the activities of Benjamin W. Duncan who acquired the property in 1839 and farmed it until his death in 1870, after which time his son and heirs took over. The diversity of products and the intensity of his methods causes Duncan to stand out as one of the more successful and progressive agriculturalists of his day. Finally, the theme Settlement Patterns and Demographic Change (11) relates to the period when the Hersey-Duncan House was built. The construction of the Hersey-Duncan House coincided with a trend in which stone became a preferred building material, replacing a tradition of log buildings.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Primary

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Delaware State Archives. New Castle County Tax Assessment Records, 1798, 1803-1804, 1816, 1822, 1828, 1852-1853.

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

Geneology File, Historic Society of Delaware Library.

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

New Castle County Recorder of Deeds, Land Records

See continuation sheet

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 : New Castle County

University

Other

Specify repository:

NEW CASTLE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Approximately 1.8 acres

UTM References

A

1	8	4	4	5	1	0	0	4	3	9	8	3	1	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries for the Hersey-Duncan House comprise the northern half of the legal parcel on which the dwelling, smokehouse, garage, and swimming pool are located. The boundary begins at the northwest corner of the parcel which abuts the south side of Wild Cherry Lane; it then proceeds east along the south side of Wild Cherry Lane for 263.49 feet to where that lane joins Duncan Road; it then proceeds southeast along the southwest side of Duncan Road for 325 feet; the boundary then proceeds

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries for the Hersey-Duncan House contain the nominated dwelling and the only surviving outbuilding that retains enough of its original fabric to qualify as a contributing building (smokehouse). A mid-twentieth century garage and an in-ground swimming pool (both non-contributing) also lie within the boundaries, but only because they happen to be located in the immediate yard with the dwelling. The Hersey-Duncan Farm contained 260 acres, at its largest, in the early nineteenth century but by the 1950's most of the farm was sold and developed, resulting in the 3.6 acre parcel that remains today. See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

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United States Bureau of the Census Schedule of Agriculture, State of Delaware. Manuscript Returns 1850, 1860.

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Maps

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Verbal Boundary Description

due west to a point where the rear lot lines of tax parcels 08-039.30-202 and 08-039.30-203 join; the boundary line then proceeds northwest along the rear lot lines of tax parcels 08-039.30-203, 08-039.30-204, 08-039.30-205, and 08-039.10-235 to the place of beginning containing approximately 1.8 acres. The boundaries for the Hersey-Duncan House are more clearly illustrated on the attached map titled "New Castle County Property Tax Map, Revised 04/28/86, Parcel #08-039.30-010."

Boundary Justification

The southern half of this 3.6 acre parcel is excuded from the nomination because the three buildings occupying this part of the site are all non-contributing.

N-1244

Hersey-Duncan House

Deed References

Hersey-Duncan House
2116 Duncan Road
Tax Parcel: 08-039.30-010
Current Owners: Mr. and Mrs. Holland Z. Yeaple

November 26, 1952 (Book C-53, Page 78)
Grantor: Herman F. and Helen T. Duncan
Grantee: Carolyn H. Gaffney
Consideration: \$5.00
Parcel: Lot in Dunlinden Acres (The house was willed to Mrs. Yeaple by Herman F. Duncan, her father. The deeds were traced through a lot in Dunlinden Acres which was originally part of the Duncan property. The individual lots in Dunlinden Acres were sold by Herman and Helen Duncan when the construction of each house was completed between 1952-1954).

November 22, 1907 (Book 0-21, Page 295)
Grantor: Benjamin F. Duncan, widower, et al.
Grantee: Herman F. Duncan (single man)
Consideration: \$9,000.00
Parcel: 113.75 acres, including "Frame and stone dwelling house, frame barn and other buildings."

March 5, 1896 (Book A-17, Page 520)
Grantor: Henry B. Duncan and Mary A. Duncan (wife)
Grantee: Mary E. Duncan, wife of Benjamin F. Duncan
Consideration: \$4,000.00
Parcel 115 acres

January 11, 1894 (Book I-16, Page 70)
Grantor: Benjamin F. Duncan and Mary E. Duncan
Grantee: Henry B. Duncan, City of Wilmington
Consideration: \$4,000.00
Parcel: 115 acres (Same lands conveyed to Benjamin F. Duncan by Benjamin W. Duncan who died intestate on March 30, 1870. No further deed references in this document).

March 28, 1839 (Book C-5, Page 31)
Grantor: Joseph W. Paxson and Phoebe Paxson
Grantee: Benjamin W. Duncan
Consideration: \$4,537.12
Parcel: 100.75 acres and twelve perches of land

January 31, 1820 (Book W-3, Page 257)

Grantor: Jesse Trump, Jr. and Maria Trump (wife)

Grantee: Joseph W. Paxson

Consideration: \$2,722.00

Parcel: 100.75 acres and twelve perches of land
This deed contained a plat which outlined the boundaries of the property).

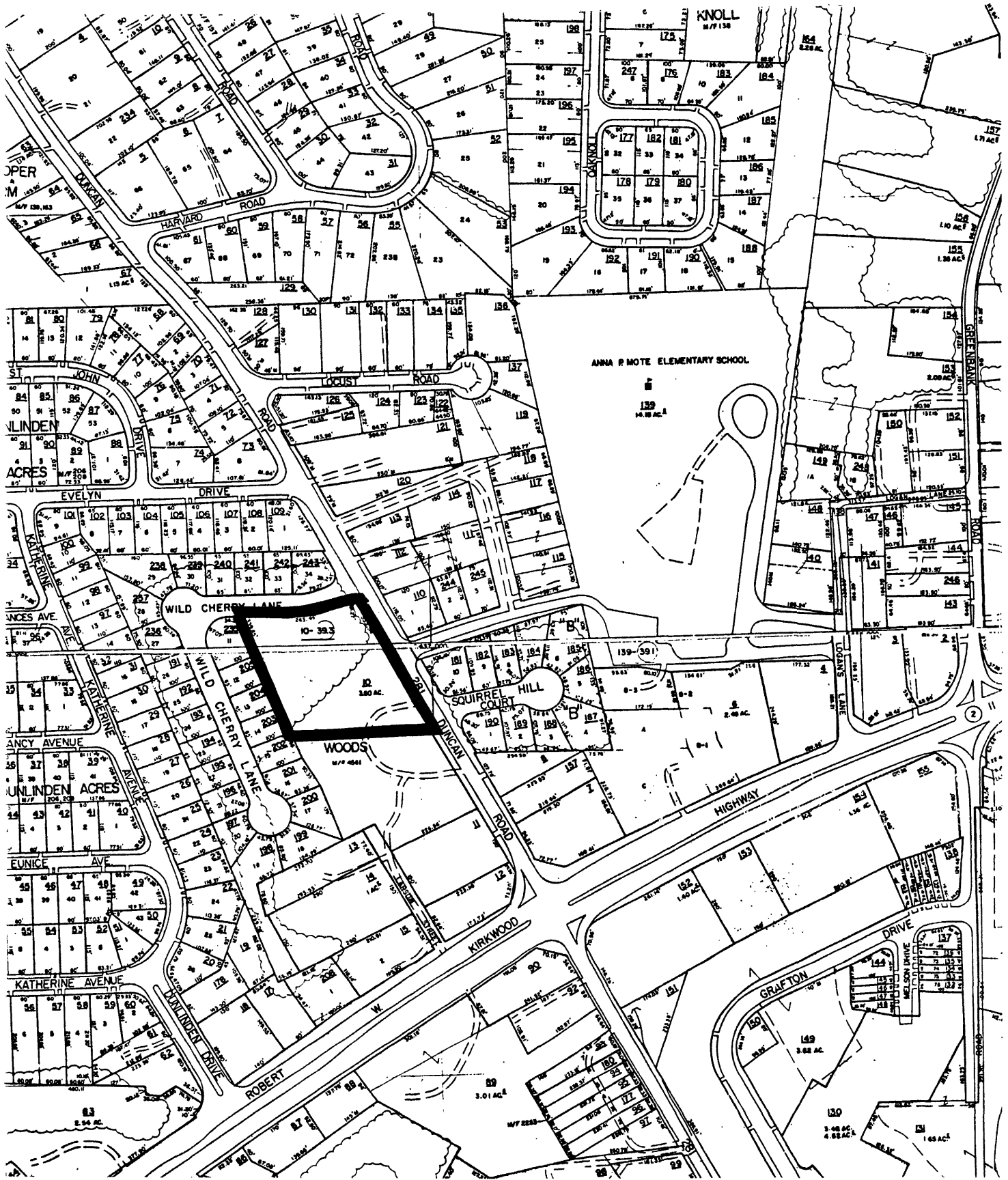
April 14, 1819 (Book V-3 389)

Grantor: John Moody, Esquire, High Sheriff of New Castle County. This is a deed poll or record of a sheriff sale of the estate of Solomon Hersey (executor, Benjamin Hersey, Solomon's son). The estate was sold to repay a 200 pound debt to the estate of Zachariah Derrickson.

Grantee: Jesse Trump, Jr.

Consideration: \$5,200.00

Parcel: 260 acres, "a stone dwelling house, tenant houses, grist mill, and other improvements thereon erected..."
This property was divided equally between Benjamin and Isaac Hersey, sons of Solomon Hersey, in 1801. (Delaware State Archives, Probate Records, Solomon Hersey).



THE HERSEY-DUNCAN HOUSE, N-1244

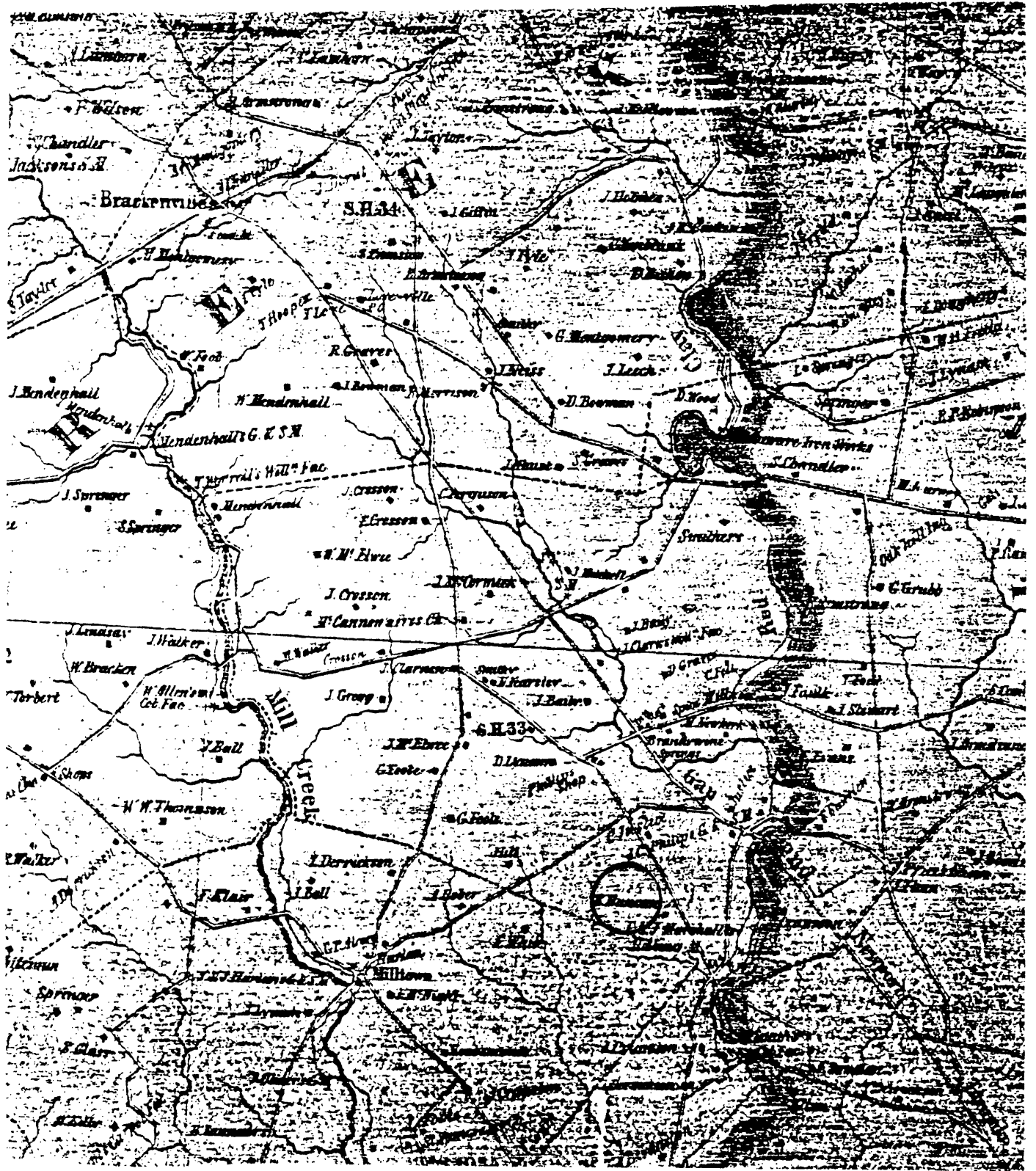
New Castle County Property Tax Map

Revised 04/28/86

Parcel #08-039.30-010

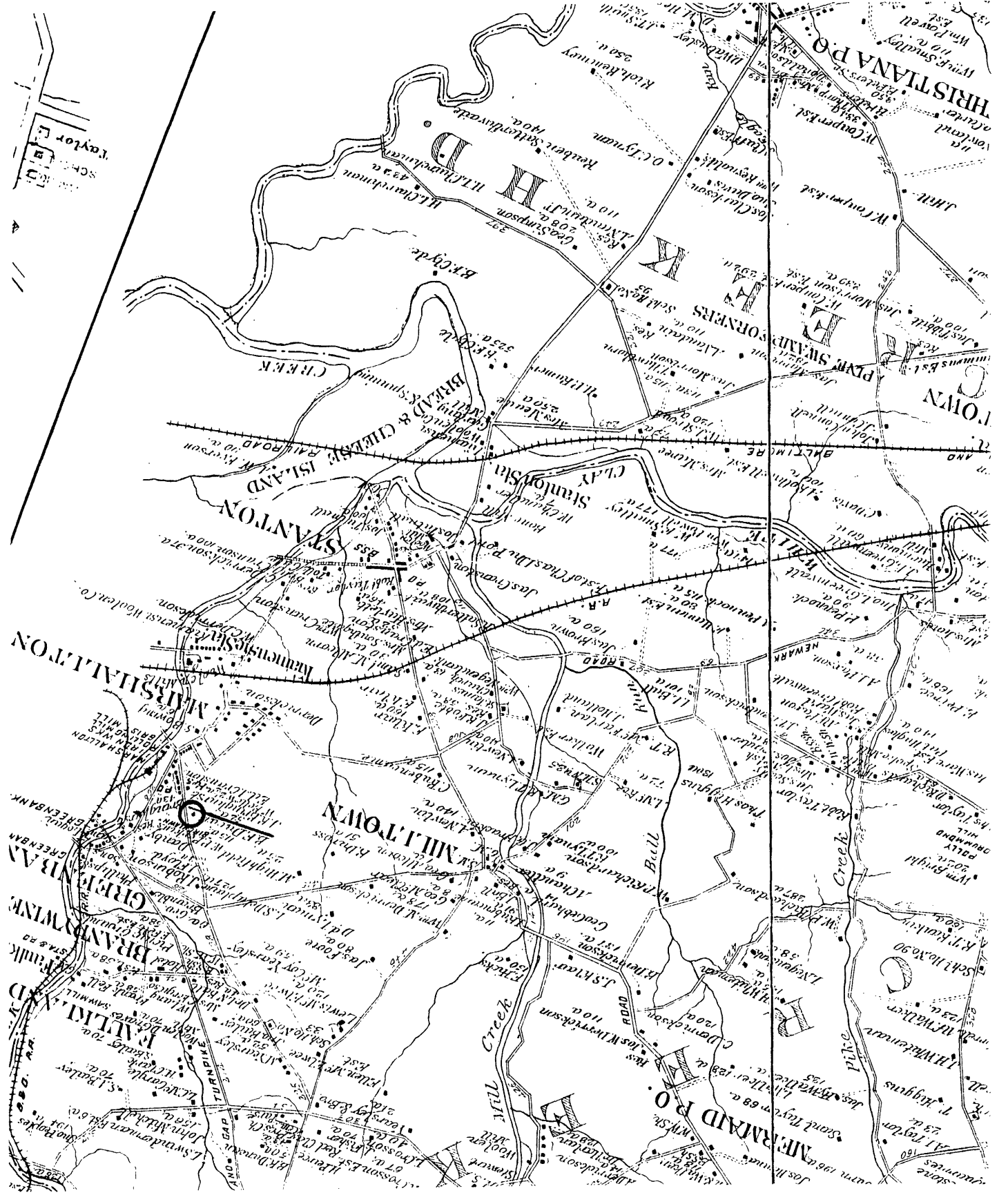
Scale: 1 inch = 295 feet

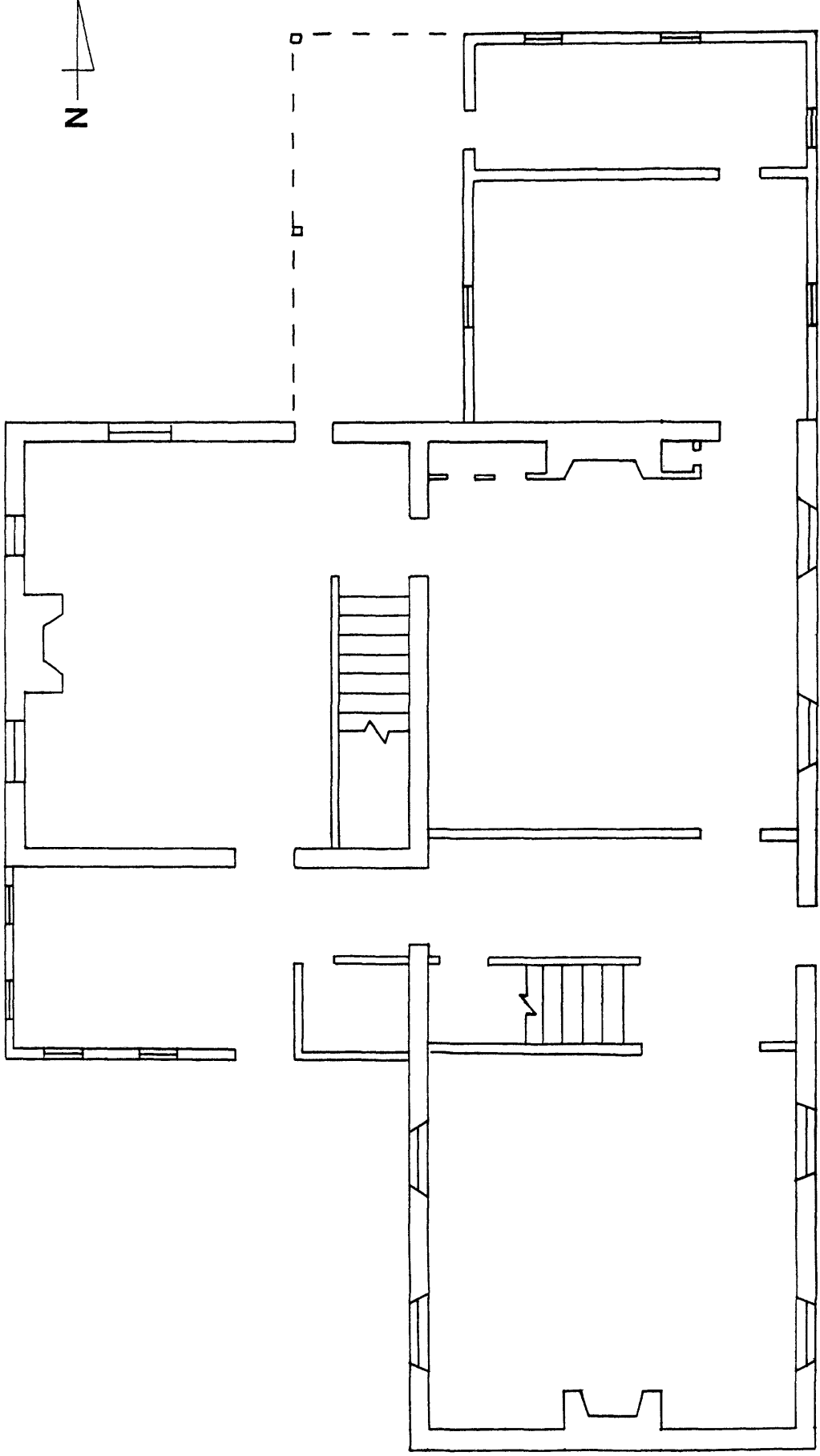




Samuel Rea and Jacob Price Map of New Castle County, Delaware,
 Philadelphia: Smith and Wistar, 1849
 Scale: 1 1/2 inch = 1 mile







The Hersey-Duncan House
 N-1244
 2116 Duncan Road
 Mill Creek Hundred
 New Castle County, Delaware

Not To Scale

Anne Wilson
 December, 1989