

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received MAY 18 1983  
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Fell Historic District

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Faulkland Road, and New Fell's Lane NA not for publication

city, town Wilmington vicinity of ~~congressional district~~

state Delaware code 10 county New Castle code 002

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple (See Owners List)

street & number

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

5. Location of Legal Description

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

street & number City/County Building, 800 French Street

city, town Wilmington state Delaware

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Delaware Cultural Resource Survey (N-6760) has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1982  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation  
Old State House, The Green

city, town Dover state Delaware

## 7. Description

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

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Fell Historic District is located in Mill Creek Hundred at Faulkland, Delaware. It is nestled into the steeply sloping west bank of Red Clay Creek, and straddles the north and south sides of Faulkland Road, which cuts through the district. The original tract as purchased by Jonathan Fell in 1828 included 93 acres of land along Red Clay Creek in both Mill Creek and Christiana Hundreds, on which there was already standing a merchant mill, a barn, and a miller's residence. Fell converted the mill into a spice manufacturing facility and over the next half-century additional structures were added. Today, the nominated district contains 16+ acres, and within its boundaries are eight architecturally and historically significant buildings that were built and/or owned by the Fell family from the early nineteenth through the early twentieth centuries. This group of buildings includes the circa 1830-1840 stuccoed fieldstone Greek Revival Fell Mansion; an 1894 Romanesque Revival stone carriage house; a circa 1860 Carpenter Gothic frame gatehouse; two circa 1860 frame tenant houses, one of which was built in a "Swiss Chalet" style; a circa 1800 stone barn and a stuccoed stone miller's residence of the same period; and lastly, a stone Georgian Revival dwelling dating from 1925. The Fell Mansion, the carriage house, the "Swiss Chalet" and the Georgian Revival dwelling are individually eligible for the National Register for their architectural significance. The four remaining buildings substantially contribute to the significance of the district in that they provide the links that illustrate the development of this manufacturing/business family and their interest in varied contemporary architectural styles over nearly a century.

Set in a landscape of steeply sloping hills ascending from the banks of Red Clay Creek, the terrain has dictated the arrangement of the structures in the district. The mansion is situated at the top of the hill overlooking the barn and the site of the mill which both lie along Faulkland Road. Between the mansion and the creek are the tenant houses. All vestiges of the spice manufacturing facility have disappeared and the farming activities have ceased, however, the domestic architectural fabric of the Fell country estate remains intact. It is this domestic core within the boundaries of the original estate that defines the district. All eight of the buildings being nominated were owned or built by the Fell family. There are no non-contributing structures within the district.

The principal change in the visual aspect of the district, aside from the loss of the spice mill, is the screen of trees that has grown up in the original farmland, meadow, and open spaces. These trees, however, do shield the district from the modern development outside of its boundaries. Faulkland Road, which cuts through the district, retains its original contours and configurations, and the tenant houses and the mansion retain their original nineteenth century appearance. The barn and carriage house, converted into private residences during the twentieth century, retain their exterior design and fabric without loss of integrity. The miller's residence, which the Fell's converted into a two-family residence, has been returned to its original early nineteenth century function as a single family dwelling with minimal loss of integrity.

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FELL HISTORIC DISTRICT: PROPERTY OWNERS LIST

1. The Fell Mansion

Leigh Hoiriis  
2323 Fell's Lane  
Faulkland  
Wilmington, Delaware 19808

2. The Carriage House

Ernest J. & Mary Joy Breton  
2321 Fell's Lane  
Faulkland  
Wilmington, Delaware 19808

3. Gatekeeper's Cottage

Parker T. Fernald  
Manager  
Corporate Real Estate  
Hercules, Inc.  
910 Market Street  
Wilmington, Delaware 19899

4. The Swiss Chalet

Peter & Margaret DeMasi  
802 McKennan's Church Road  
Wilmington, Delaware 19808

5. Tenant House (3010 Faulkland Road)

Mr. Donald Burawski  
New Castle County  
Department of Parks and Recreation  
102 Middleboro Road  
Wilmington, Delaware 19804

6. The Stone Barn

Roger & Kaye Murray  
3007 Faulkland Road  
Faulkland  
Wilmington, Delaware 19808

7. The Miller's Residence

Mrs. Barbara Stoltenbert  
1705 Hillcrest Road  
Marshalltown, Iowa 50158

8. Twentieth Century Georgian  
Revival House

Parker T. Fernald  
Manager  
Corporate Real Estate  
Hercules, Inc.  
910 Market Street  
Wilmington, Delaware 19899

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FELL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESCRIPTION: JUSTIFICATION OF BOUNDARIES

The boundaries of the Fell Historic District were drawn to include the structures built and owned by four generations of the Fell family; New Fell's Lane, which leads to the Mansion from Faulkland Road; and the area that encompasses the location of the now defunct "Old" Fell's Lane, the original access route to the Mansion. The narrow strip of vacant land between these two lanes, overgrown with trees and bushes and acting as a natural buffer between the Mansion and the Barn, is also included within the boundaries of the District. Under single ownership until the 1940's, the District today is still a cohesive unit, but with seven different landowners. As much as possible, the boundaries follow existing property lines. The few modern dwellings that lie in the immediate vicinity of the District are visually unobtrusive due to the screen of trees within and adjacent to the District. Originally part of the Fell Estate, the land surrounding the District has been developed as suburban housing units to the east and west, as a golf course to the north, and as State parkland to the south.

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FELL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESCRIPTION: INVENTORY OF BUILDINGS

1. The Fell Mansion (2323 Fell's Lane)

Although a definite date cannot be assigned to this Greek Revival structure, a handwritten survey of the Mansion was found among the Fell correspondence, dated August 29, 1840, and approved by Courtland J. Fell (owner from 1829 to 1848), which gives an accurate description of the exterior as well as the interior arrangement of the rooms. Today the house is almost identical to the survey of 1840, with some additions. The Mansion is a two and one-half story, double-pile, five-bay symmetrical structure built of field stone with a rough cast, pebble-dashed stucco veneer. In dimension it is roughly 50 x 40 with a gable roof that was originally covered with cedar shingles (now asphalt) and is pierced by three segmental dormers. There is a molded box cornice and at each end of the roof is a double-linked chimney.

At the front entrance is a projecting one-bay Doric portico reached by seven wooden steps. Two fluted Doric columns support a Doric entablature, and single Doric pilasters flank each side of a deep-set doorway with an "Adamesque" fanlight. The interior has a 10-foot wide entry hallway flanked by two rooms on each side, and an open cherry wood stairway leading to the two upper floors which contain five rooms each.

Appended to Courtland J. Fell's survey is a paragraph written by Franklin Fell (owner from 1848 to 1867), dated November 28, 1857, stating that he adopted the same survey and that he had added to the Mansion a one-story stone kitchen, frame out-kitchen and adjoining woodshed. The one-story kitchen wing, attached to the southwest end of the Mansion, is identical to the Mansion in stucco and window sizes, but deviates from the classical motif in the use of a crenellated roof line. This section is still used as the kitchen.

William Jenks Fell (owner from 1867 to 1903) modified the northeast end of the Mansion by adding a full-length porch and replacing the original windows on this side with two full-length, French-type doors which lead directly onto the porch. Intricate wrought iron decoration completely surrounds the porch. The Fell's family relates that William Jenks Fell had many southern friends, and this porch is the result of his trying to impart a southern character to the Mansion.

When indoor plumbing became the fashion, during the lifetime of William Jenks Fell, a small, two-story addition, approximately two bays wide was attached to the back of the Mansion. This addition was stuccoed to match the rest of the Mansion, and the classical motif was retained and used here as well.

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FELL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESCRIPTION: INVENTORY OF BUILDINGS

2. The Carriage House (2321 Fell's Lane)

Southwest of the mansion, William Jenks Fell built a carriage house in 1894. T-shaped in plan and constructed of uncoursed, roughly-finished granite, this two-story Romanesque Revival structure housed not only carriages but the attendant and his family as well. Meticulous in detail, the carriage house boasts such elements as a square cupola with corner pilasters and molded round-arched louvered panels situated at the roof crossing, round-arched windows with rock-faced ashlar voussoirs, trefoil mullions, and some of the original stained glass. Gable aprons with a large circular motif adorn the three end walls.

Stories are told of how William Jenks Fell, every night during the construction of this building, measured each course of stone laid during the day to make certain the work was completed to his satisfaction.

During the 1950's, Mrs. Eldred B. Hoiriis, granddaughter of William Jenks Fell, converted the carriage house into a private residence, and then sold the structure. Retaining the original mass and fabric, modifying the exterior only slightly through the addition of dormers and the enclosing of the carriage door with a large picture window, the essential integrity of the original carriage house has been preserved and has not been seriously compromised.

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FELL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESCRIPTION: INVENTORY OF BUILDINGS

3. The Gate House (3101 Faulkland Road)

The Gate House is so-called because it is situated at the entrance to "new" Fell's Lane which was constructed when automobiles replaced carriages. Facing Faulkland Road near the crest of the hill that leads down to Red Clay Creek, this Carpenter Gothic dwelling was built sometime prior to 1871. Its appearance today is exactly as described in an application for insurance to the Mutual Insurance Company by Franklin Fell in 1871.

Built into the hillside on a one-story stone foundation, the Gate House is a one and one-half story frame structure sheathed with weatherboard siding. Its three-bay, center door facade has a one-bay flat-roofed porch supported by Doric posts. The gable roof is pierced by two gable, wall dormers on the facade, while on the rear elevation the upper story is lit by two small eyebrow windows. Attached to the rear of the structure is a one-story board and batten shed, described in the insurance application as a kitchen and used today for the same purpose.

Used by the Fell family as a tenant house, this dwelling was rented either on a year's lease or for the summer months to visitors vacationing at the nearby Brandywine Springs.

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FELL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESCRIPTION: INVENTORY OF BUILDINGS

4. Double Tenant House (3012-14 Faulkland Road)

Built to resemble a Swiss chalet, this picturesque frame structure, built along and overlooking Faulkland Road as it gently descends toward Red Clay Creek, is said to have been built by William Jenks Fell upon his return from a European trip in the 1860's. The dwelling is described in an application for insurance by Franklin Fell in 1871. It, too, has not changed from its description of over one hundred years ago. This two and one-half story building is rectangular in plan and rests on a one-story stone foundation. A central cross gable balances identical right and left sides with matching verandahs, covered balconies and porches, and an outside staircase. Unique in design with a perfect balance of textures, open against closed spaces, and repetition of shapes, there is a unity within the variety.

As with the Gate House, this Swiss-style dwelling was always used by the Fell family as a tenant house.

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FELL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESCRIPTION: INVENTORY OF BUILDINGS

5. Tenant House (3010 Faulkland Road)

Adjacent to the Swiss-style house and descending the hill with an orientation toward Red Clay Creek, is the third tenant house. This house also appears on the 1871 application for insurance, however, the description of it differs from the appearance of the house today.

This tenant house began as a two-story frame house on a one-story stone foundation. Added to the back of the house, probably close to the turn of the century is a two-story, one-bay ell, containing a sunken living room with a projecting bay window surmounted by stained glass. The one-bay, wooden front porch seems to have been added the same time as the ell. On the interior, the open staircase leading to the second floor has a most unusual wooden baluster of a trefoil cut-out design. This same motif is used on the stairway leading down into the sunken living room. During the twentieth century, a one-car garage was added to the west endwall.

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FELL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESCRIPTION: INVENTORY OF BUILDINGS

6. The Stone Barn (3007 Faulkland Road)

Situated on the opposite side of Faulkland Road from the two tenant houses is the stone barn. It is a massive, fieldstone structure with large structural quoins. This structure appears on the 1816 assessment list for Mill Creek Hundred as owned by William Faulk. Rented out to tenant farmers throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the barn was converted into a residence by Mrs. Eldred B. Hoiriis, granddaughter of William Jenks Fell, during the 1950's. Today, the original central entranceway to the bank-type barn has been utilized as the entrance to this private residence and three gable dormers have been added to the gable roof. The interior utilizes the original beams and flooring.

These minimal changes have not compromised the original integrity of the barn, which retains its distinctive mass and fabric.

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FELL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESCRIPTION: INVENTORY OF BUILDINGS

7. The Miller/Farmer's Residence (3001 Faulkland Road)

The miller/farmer's house is located near the site of the Faulkland Spice Mill. Built into the hillside near the banks of Red Clay Creek, this unpretentious stuccoed stone, two and one-half story dwelling is the earliest structure in the District, dating from the tenure of the Faulks. Known to the Fell family as the farm house, and utilized by the tenant farmer, this structure is listed in the 1803 assessment list for Mill Creek Hundred as an "unfinished stone dwelling" on William Faulk's property. At some point during either Courtland J. or Franklin Fell's ownership, this house was converted into a double-dwelling and given a cross-gabled roof. The structure was partially damaged by fire in 1878, and an agreement containing the plans and specifications for the rebuilding of this dwelling was found among the Fell papers.

During the 1940's, Delano Boynton, grandson of William Jenks Fell, moved into this structure and converted it back to a single dwelling.

By replacing the separate entrances with a double window and placing the new entrance on the right side, the house was returned to its original function as a one-family dwelling with minimal loss of integrity.

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FELL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESCRIPTION: INVENTORY OF BUILDINGS

8. Georgian Revival, Twentieth Century House (2325 Fell's Lane)

The most recent structure in the District is this Georgian-Revival residence dating from 1925. The facade is a perfect replication of an eighteenth century Georgian plan. Constructed of rubble fieldstone, it is two and one-half stories, five bays with a gable roof that is pierced by three gable dormers in the front and two in the back. The center doorway with semi-circular fanlight has an elegant surround with broken pediment, engaged columns and pilasters of a Tuscan-Doric order.

The rear of this rectangular structure departs from the rigid symmetry of the facade due to two one-story wings that project from the east and west sides. The central entrance is reached through the small courtyard between them. Above the entrance, which has both transom and sidelights, is a Palladian window repeating the decorative elements on the door beneath.

The house was designed by Lyman D. Bothwell, husband of Harriet Fell Fulton, who is the granddaughter of William Jenks Fell. It was the home of the Bothwell's until Hercules, Inc. bought the property in the 1970's.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Local History
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1803-1925

Builder/Architect

Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Fell Historic District is significant because it preserves, virtually intact, a nineteenth century wealthy gentleman's country manufacturing/farming estate with its collection of buildings of various sizes, shapes, architectural styles and functions, which in and of itself created a self-sufficient economic unit. Historically, the district must be seen in the context of the Fell family which was responsible for the development and final dissolution of the estate. Architecturally, the district illustrates a compendium of architectural styles that reflects not only the social status of the occupants, but also the Fell family's interest in architecture through their choice of divergent yet contemporary architectural fashion. On the basis of its architectural integrity and of these illustrative qualities, the district is considered significant in terms of National Register criterion C as it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; and in terms of National Register criteria A and B for its association with events and persons significant to the local past.

Having its origins sometime in the eighteenth century, this district began as the site of a merchant mill. This, its first period, dates from 1780-1829, although none of the existing buildings date prior to 1803. The stuccoed, field stone residence (1803) and the stone barn (1803-1816) were built by William Faulk, a miller. When Jonathan Fell bought this nucleus of three buildings (including the mill, which is no longer extant) in 1829, the district entered its second period which spanned the years 1829-1903. Courtland J. Fell and Franklin Fell, sons of Jonathan Fell, and William Jenks Fell, who was the son of Franklin, were products of Philadelphia society and they brought cosmopolitan tastes and current Philadelphia fashion to Faulkland, Delaware, during their subsequent ownership. This awareness of current style can be seen in the buildings they added to the estate during their tenure: the Greek Revival Mansion (c. 1836), the Swiss-style tenant house (1860's), the Carpenter Gothic Gate House (1860), the modified tenant house (1860) and the Romanesque Revival carriage house (1894).

With the death of William Jenks Fell in 1903, the district entered its final period characterized by litigation, the division of the estate among the heirs, and the erection in 1925 of the last building in the district, the Georgian Revival residence of Harriet Bothwell, granddaughter of William Jenks Fell. During the 1950's, the stone barn and carriage house were renovated, and the properties began to be sold off individually. Today, the only properties still held by the Fell's heirs are the mansion and the miller/farmer's residence.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Fell Family Papers (Private)  
 New Castle County Recorder of Deeds  
 Hagley Museum - Records of Fell Company  
 Pursell, C. W., Jr. - Two Mills on Red Clay Creek in the Nineteenth Century

## 10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property 16+

Quadrangle name Newark, DE and Kennett Square, PA-DE

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A 

1	8
4	4
5	5
8	0

4	4	0	0	0	3	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

B 

1	8
4	4
5	4
5	0

4	3	9	9	6	9	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

C 

1	8
4	4
5	0
9	0

4	3	9	9	6	1	0
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D 

1	8
4	4
5	4
2	0

4	4	0	0	1	5	0
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E 


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F 


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G 


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H 


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### Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet

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

state NA code county NA code

state NA code county NA code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Gretchen Fitting, Planning Aide/Valerie Cesna, Planning Aide

organization New Castle County Dept. of Planning date March 25, 1983

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

city or town Newark state Delaware

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

Deputy  
 State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Daniel R. Griffith*

title \_\_\_\_\_ date April 27, 1983

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

Entered in the  
 National Register

date 6/16/83

*for*  
 Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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FELL HISTORIC DISTRICT: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Although the actual mill building is no longer in existence, the group of buildings that comprise this district supported the mill and represent the continuous use of this land as a mill site from circa 1780 to the 1890's. Due to its hilly terrain and numerous streams, northern New Castle County proved to be a suitable area for the erection of mills at an early date. By 1804, Mill Creek Hundred, the 43 square mile political unit in which the Fell historic district is located, contained 23 mills within its boundaries. The majority of these were saw and/or grist mills. William Faulk's grist and saw mill, the property that was purchased by Jonathan Fell in 1829, is included in this count.

Eighteenth century mill operations in New Castle County tended to be small-scale, family-run industries with the family living on the site. Some recognized examples of nearby mills contemporary with Faulk's facility are the Greenbank Mill (N-191, NR 1973), the Graves Mill historic district (N-5005, NR 1979), and the John England Mill (N-248, NR 1972). As with the Faulk Mill, these three operations were composed of a relatively small mill building, the owner's house and sometimes a barn and a tenant house. Trends in nineteenth century mill development followed two different routes. Many mills, such as the ones mentioned above, remained small in scale, but were improved by more complex mill machinery. Several mills, however, expanded into factory complexes, simultaneously developing a community around the industry in the form of worker's housing. This type of factory-scale mill can be seen in the Auburn Mills (N-5003, NR 1980) and the Garrett Snuff Mill (N-4098, NR 1978), both ordered industrial communities. In the context of these neighboring mills the Fell Spice Mill was one that remained relatively small-scale during the nineteenth century, functioning under the direction of a single family. The arrangement of buildings within the Fell historic district is typical of mill site arrangement in the county, as well. Partly due to the nature of the terrain and partly due to status and tradition, the mill owner's house is usually situated on a hill overlooking the mill activities and tenant houses below.

As a small-scale mill operation the Fell historic district is typical of many nineteenth century mill sites in New Castle County, however, the district is also quite unique to this area in the sophistication of its building styles and the architectural diversity of its domestic compound. Nowhere else in the county can there be found such an eclectic grouping of formal architectural styles in a rural industrial setting. In addition, one building in the group, the "Swiss Chalet" style tenant house, is unique in the state.

This deliberate choice of formal architectural styles may be the result of the Fell family being based in Philadelphia where there was a greater awareness of architectural fashion, as well as the Fells' travels both in this country and abroad. Typically, nineteenth century rural buildings in Delaware tend toward vernacular versions of Greek Revival and Italic styles. Perhaps another reason that building styles were chosen so carefully by the Fells is that this property functioned as

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FELL HISTORIC DISTRICT: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

their estate as well as an industrial site. Since the spice mill at Faulkland was only one branch of the family's business concerns, this property in a sense, served as a country home away from Philadelphia and a showplace to greet visitors and family. It was not until late in the nineteenth century that this concept of a formal estate as part of a family's industrial concerns was picked up in neighboring mills, when the Israel Marshall House (N-5003, NR 1980) was built in 1897 at the Auburn Mills.

Attracted to the Faulkland area after a visit to the Chalybeate waters at Brandywine Springs, Jonathan Fell, founder and proprietor of a spice manufacturing facility in Philadelphia, purchased a mill site on Red Clay Creek from John Faulk in 1828. Although Faulk's name has been perpetuated by the name of both the road and the site, it was the Fell family who made the area well-known, and developed it into their family "compound."

After the death of Jonathan Fell in 1829, his son Courtland J. moved from Philadelphia to Faulkland to manage the newly acquired mill and made Faulkland his permanent residence. The Greek Revival mansion that he built reflects the architectural style currently in fashion in Philadelphia. Beloved by every generation of Fells as well as their relatives and friends, the beauty and serenity of the mansion and its surroundings were often mentioned in correspondence. The death of Courtland J. Fell in 1848 left the family business in the hands of Franklin, his younger brother, under whose direction (1848-1867) the spice business grew. The simple merchant mill was enlarged and improved with new machinery. It used a steam engine and water power equal to one hundred horses and was brought to world-wide prominence. The mill was used primarily for the manufacture of mustard, cocoa, the grinding of spices, and the making of hominy. Adhering to their motto, never sell an article otherwise than represented, the Fells gained the confidence of the public and earned a fortune for themselves.

Inheriting his father's desire for wider business interests, Franklin branched out into real estate development and mining and selling of coal in the anthracite region of Pennsylvania. Reflecting his interests in real estate is his building of at least two of the three tenant houses at Faulkland. Leases found among the Fell papers indicate that these rentals were on a yearly basis as well as for summer only.

Turning the direction of the firm over to his son, William Jenks Fell, in 1867, Franklin Fell retired from the mercantile life and settled permanently at Faulkland. That same year the first of a series of disasters struck--the mill was destroyed by fire. Not only did the fire weaken the financial position of the Faulkland Spice Company, but it also destroyed the original eighteenth century mill.

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Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 3

FELL HISTORIC DISTRICT: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Within two years, the old spice mill was replaced by a new and larger one, but this too was destroyed by a second fire in 1874. The crowning calamity came a year later when on July 10, 1875, Franklin Fell died. His only son, William Jenks Fell, inherited his father's fortune (estimated at \$100,000) and a firm that had little chance of survival. After having been rebuilt and rented out, the spice mill was totally destroyed by a fire in 1878. This fire terminated the spice manufacturing business on Red Clay Creek.

William Jenks Fell continued to utilize the site for milling activities. Listed in the Delaware State Directory in 1894 was the notation: Faulkland, Fell, W. J. Flour Mill. It is ironic that after a century of continuous use the Faulkland mill site became what it had been originally, a grist mill. Residing at Faulkland until his wife's untimely death in 1881, William Jenks Fell thereafter divided his time between Philadelphia and Faulkland, building some nine years before his death (1894) the Romanesque Revival carriage house located near the mansion.

Having nearly exhausted the family fortune, William Jenks Fell at his death in 1903 left the Faulkland estate to his granddaughter, Harriet Fell Fulton. Feeling that he and the Fell family had been disgraced by his daughter, Elizebeth Fell Boynton, who had divorced her first husband to marry another man, he disinherited her and left the estate to his granddaughter. Borrowing money in order to buy the estate from her daughter, Elizabeth (Elsie) Fell Boynton made the mansion her home until her death in 1940.

Today, the Faulkland mansion and the miller/farmer's residence are still retained by descendants of the Fell family, and even though new owners have acquired the remaining six buildings that comprise the domestic core of the Fell estate, these properties as a group represent the impact of nearly a century of building activity under one family.

Level of Significance

The district is of local significance, even though the property has unusual architectural features which make it of interest to the architectural and social history of the state. Architecturally this district is totally unique to Mill Creek Hundred and New Castle County. Seen as a whole, the district embodies unusual and distinctive examples of architectural styles and survives intact as an example of a nineteenth century gentleman's estate with its collection of buildings whose functions express status.

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

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

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received

date entered

Continuation sheet

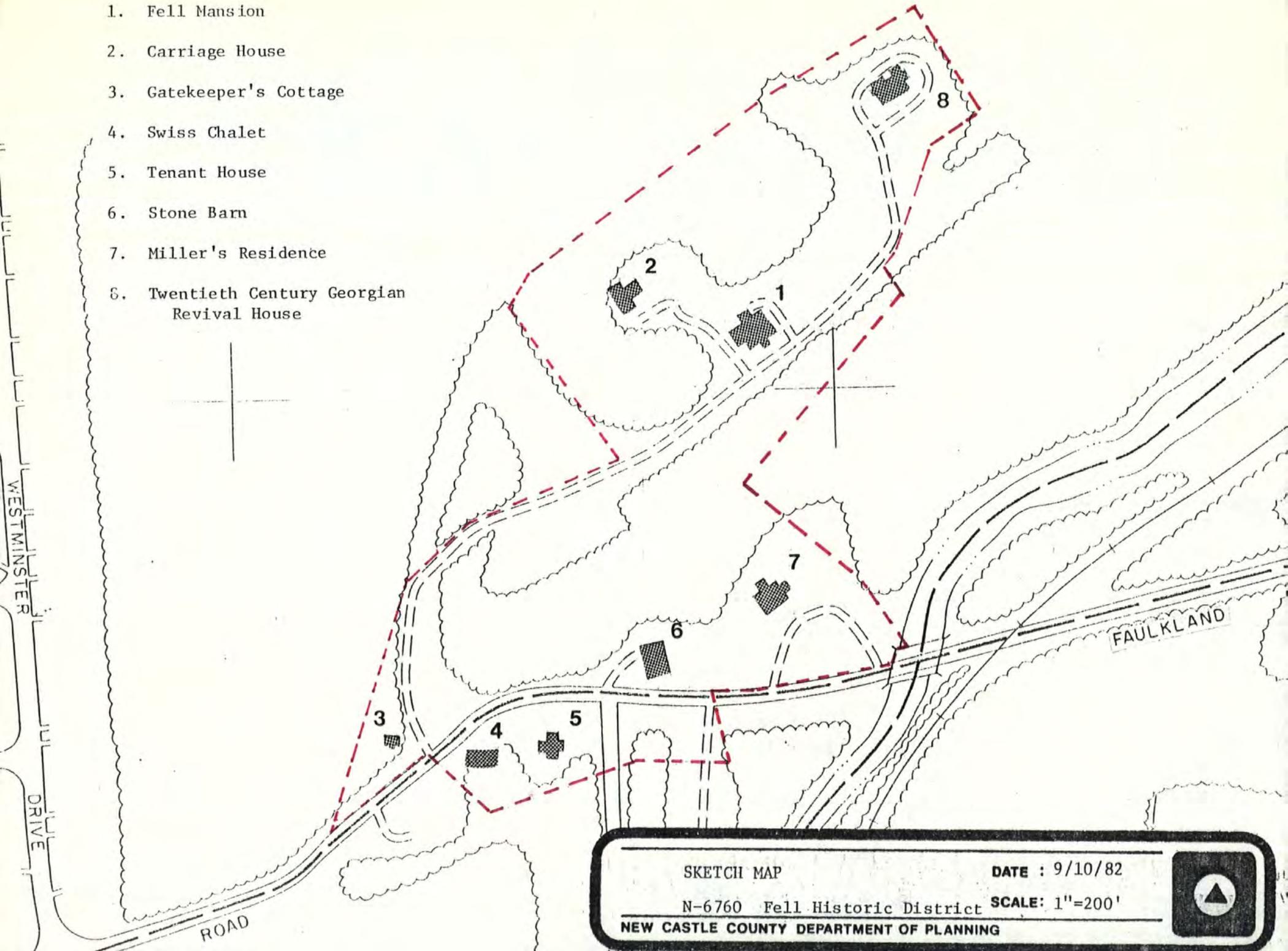
Item number 10

Page 1

FELL HISTORIC DISTRICT: VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The western boundary of the Fell Historic District begins at the western corner of the intersection of Faulkland Road and New Fell's Lane. From this point it runs 220 feet southwest along the northern edge of Faulkland Road. It then traces an imaginary straight line that runs 450 feet northeast to a point where it meets the western edge of Parcel 18. From there it continues in a northeasterly direction 430 feet along the northwestern edge of Parcel 18. The boundary then proceeds northwest 320 feet along the southwestern border of Parcel 2. It then travels northeast 70 feet along the northwest edge of Parcel 2. The remainder of the northwestern boundary of the District proceeds 223 feet northeast along the northwest edge of Parcel 11, and 201.36 feet along Parcel 2, then continues in a straight line 375.64 feet northeast into Parcel 1. The boundary line then turns 90 degrees toward the south and runs 365 feet in a southeasterly direction. From that point, the boundary travels 300 feet southwest along the treeline that defines the front yard space of the Georgian Revival House. It then runs 30 feet southeast along the northeast edge of Parcel 2 and 430 feet southwest along the southeast edge of the same parcel. The line then continues 350 feet southeast along the northeast edge of Parcel 5 and then runs 20 feet west and 25 feet south avoiding the Faulkland Road bridge that crosses Red Clay Creek. The boundary continues 310 feet west along the northern edge of Faulkland Road, then travels 130 feet south along the eastern edge of Parcel 17. It then runs 420 feet west along the southern edges of Parcel 17 and Parcel 7. The boundary line then turns and runs 155 feet northwest along the southwest edge of Parcel 7 to the point of origin. These boundaries enclose an area of approximately 16 acres. The parcels referred to in these boundaries are those that appear on the 1982 New Castle County Property Tax Maps designated by the number 08-33.00.

1. Fell Mansion
2. Carriage House
3. Gatekeeper's Cottage
4. Swiss Chalet
5. Tenant House
6. Stone Barn
7. Miller's Residence
8. Twentieth Century Georgian Revival House



SKETCH MAP

DATE : 9/10/82

N-6760 Fell Historic District

SCALE: 1"=200'

NEW CASTLE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING





## 8. Significance

Period \_\_\_\_\_ Area of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates \_\_\_\_\_ Builder/Architect \_\_\_\_\_

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- \_\_\_\_\_ summary paragraph
- \_\_\_\_\_ completeness
- \_\_\_\_\_ clarity
- \_\_\_\_\_ applicable criteria
- \_\_\_\_\_ justification of areas checked
- \_\_\_\_\_ relating significance to the resource
- \_\_\_\_\_ context
- \_\_\_\_\_ relationship of integrity to significance
- \_\_\_\_\_ justification of exception
- \_\_\_\_\_ other

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

## 10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UMT References \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal boundary description and justification \_\_\_\_\_

## 11. Form Prepared By

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_\_\_ national \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

## 13. Other

- \_\_\_\_\_ Maps
- \_\_\_\_\_ Photographs
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: 202 272 - 3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



Name: *Fell Mansion*

Location: *Fell Historic District*

Photographer: *V. Cerna*

Date of Photograph: *1982*

Location of Negative:

*Bureau of Archaeology & Historic Preservation*

Description: *view from SW*

Photograph Number: *1*



Name: Carriage Howe

Location: Fell Historic District

Photographer: V. Caine

Date of Photograph: 1992

Location of Negative:

Bureau of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

Description: view from SE

Photograph Number: 2



Name: Gate Keeper's Cottage

Location: Fell Historic District

Photographer: V. Ceona

Date of Photograph: 1982

Location of Negative:

Bureau of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

Description: view from SW

Photograph Number: 3



Name: *Swiss Chalet*

Location: *Fell Historic District*

Photographer: *V. Ceona*

Date of Photograph: *1982*

Location of Negative:

*Bureau of Archaeology + Historic Preservation*

Description: *view from NW*

Photograph Number: *4*



Name: *Tenant House*

Location: *Fell Historic District*

Photographer: *V. Cerna*

Date of Photograph: *1982*

Location of Negative:

*Bureau of Archaeology + Historic Preservation*

Description: *view from NW*

Photograph Number: *5*



Name: *Stone Barn*

Location: *Fell Historic District*

Photographer: *V. Cesna*

Date of Photograph: *1982*

Location of Negative:

*Bureau of Archaeology + Historic Preservation*

Description: *view from SW*

Photograph Number: *6*



Name: *Miller's Residence*

Location: *Fell Historic District*

Photographer: *V. Cesna*

Date of Photograph: *1982*

Location of Negative:

*Bureau of Archaeology + Historic Preservation*

Description: *view from SE*

Photograph Number: *7*



Name: 20<sup>th</sup> Century Georgian Revival House

Location: Fall Historic District

Photographer: V. Ceana

Date of Photograph: 1982

Location of Negative:

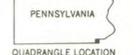
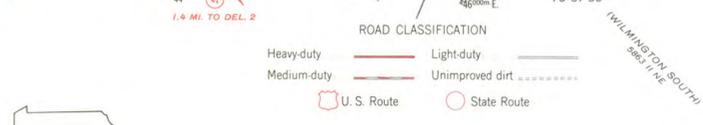
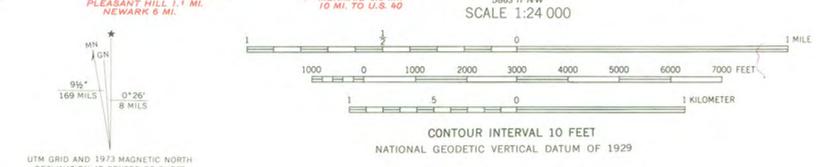
Bureau of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

Description: view from SE

Photograph Number: 8



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, USCGS, and Pennsylvania Highway Department  
Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric methods.  
Aerial photographs taken 1950. Field check 1954  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grids based on Pennsylvania coordinate system,  
south zone, and Delaware coordinate system  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 18, shown in blue  
Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with  
State of Pennsylvania agencies from aerial photographs  
taken 1968 and 1973. This information not field checked  
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

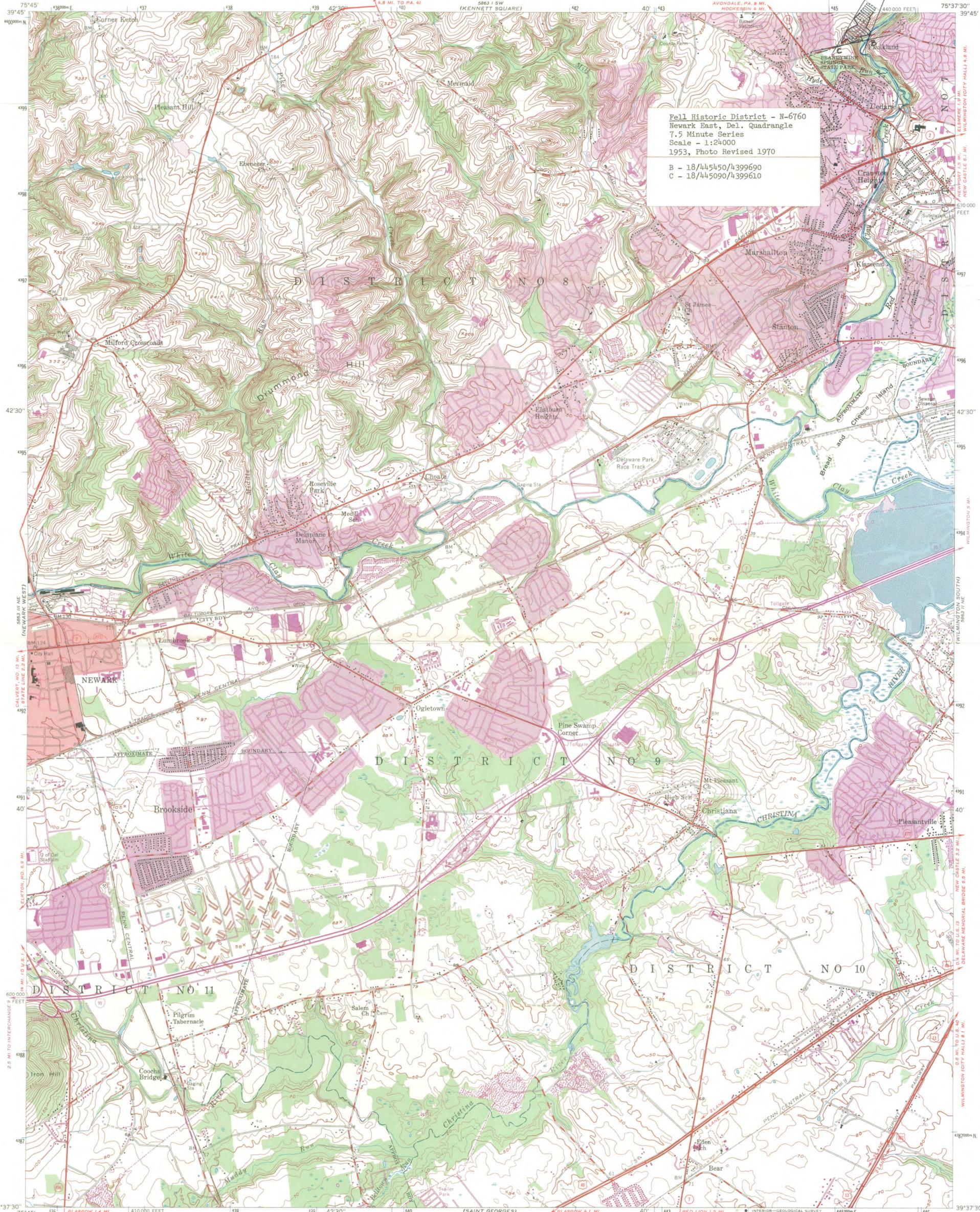


KENNETT SQUARE, PA.-DEL.  
N 3945-W 7537.5/7.5  
1954

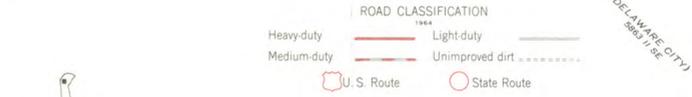
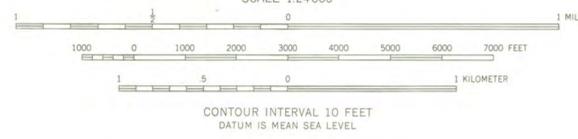
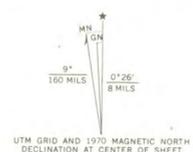
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

PHOTOREVISED 1968 AND 1973  
AMS 5863 1 SW-SERIES V831

Fell Historic District - N-6760  
Newark East, Del. Quadrangle  
7.5 Minute Series  
Scale - 1:24000  
1953, Photo Revised 1970  
B - 18/445450/4399690  
C - 18/445090/4399610



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Delaware Geodetic Survey  
Topography from aerial photographs by multiplex methods  
Aerial photographs taken 1951. Field check 1953  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Delaware coordinate system  
Red tint indicates area in which only  
landmark buildings are shown  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 18, shown in blue  
Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs  
taken 1970. This information not field checked  
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



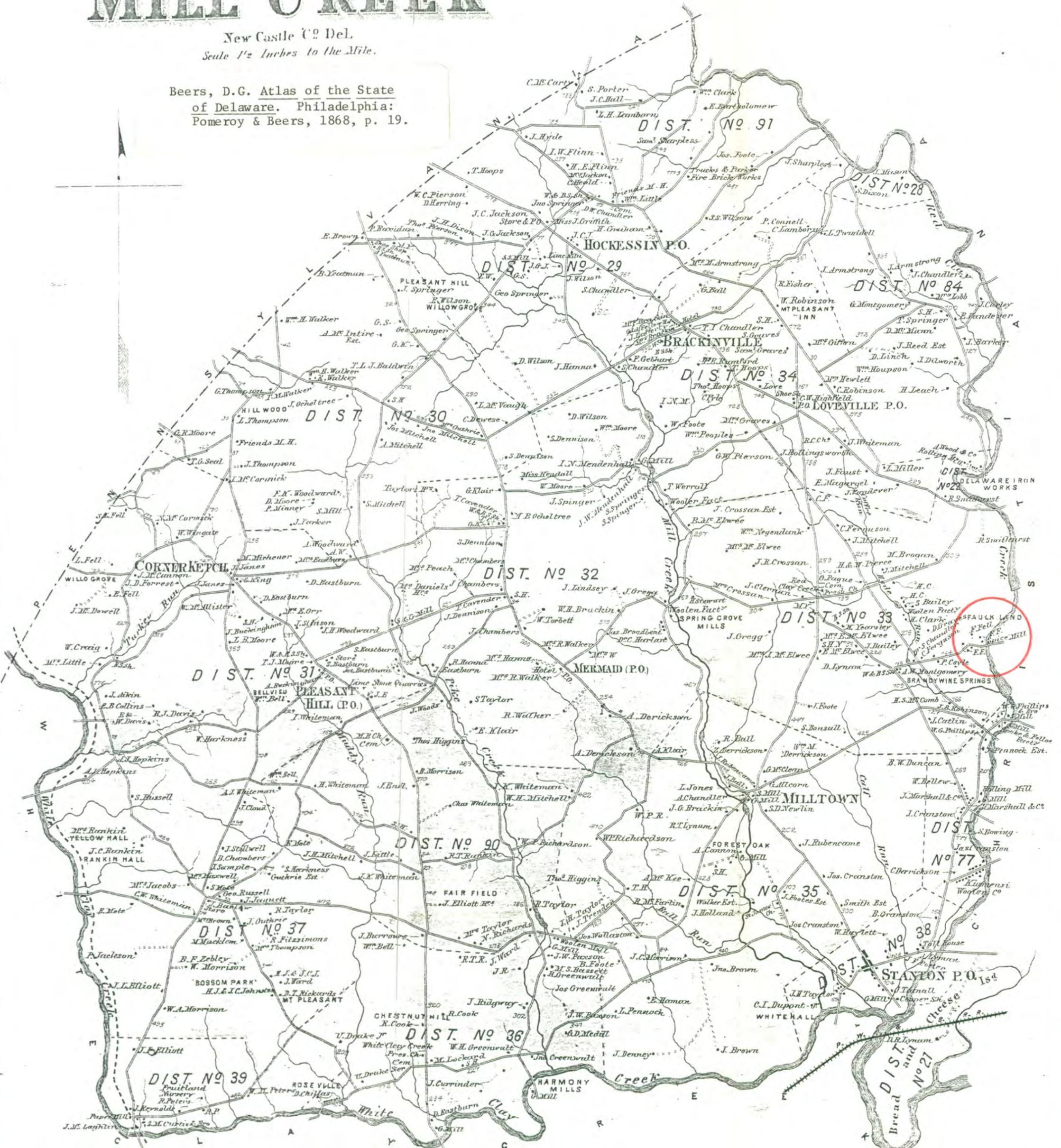
NEWARK EAST, DEL.  
NW/4 WILMINGTON 15' QUADRANGLE  
N 3937.5—W 7537.5/7.5  
1953  
PHOTOREVISED 1970  
AMS 5863 II NW—SERIES V832

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

# MILL CREEK

New Castle Co Del.  
Scale 1/2 Inches to the Mile.

Beers, D.G. Atlas of the State  
of Delaware. Philadelphia:  
Pomeroy & Beers, 1868, p. 19.





STATE OF DELAWARE  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
**DIVISION OF HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS**  
OLD STATE HOUSE • THE GREEN • DOVER • 19901  
(302) 736-5685

BUREAU OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

April 28, 1983

Carol Shull  
Chief of Registration  
National Register of Historic Places Branch  
Interagency Resource Management Division  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed are the forms needed to nominate the Delaware Industrial School for Girls, Fell Historic District, Kaumagraph Building, Lore School and the New Century Club of Wilmington to the National Register of Historic Places.

If you have any questions, please contact Stephen G. Del Sordo of my staff.

Sincerely yours,

Daniel R. Griffith, Deputy  
State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosure

