

**Agricultural Tenancy in Central Delaware,
1770-1900+/-:
A Historic Context**

prepared by

Rebecca J. Siders
Bernard L. Herman
David L. Ames
Andrea L. Marth
Gabrielle M. Lanier
Margaret H. Watson
Elizabeth M. Bellingrath
Nancy I. Van Dolsen
Leslie D. Bashman
Susan M. Chase

Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering
College of Urban Affairs and Public Policy
University of Delaware
Newark, Delaware

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PREFACE

The *Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan* establishes agricultural tenancy as a historic context priority. The State Review Board for Historic Preservation concurred with this assessment, funding the development of a historic context on the theme of agricultural tenancy in the Upper Peninsula Zone (Figure 1) between 1770 and 1900 with a matching funds grant from the Historic Preservation Fund to the Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, University of Delaware. Carried out between June 1990 and July 1991, the project was administered by the Delaware Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

Comprehensive discussion of agricultural landscape preservation must address the history of rural tenancy. Between 1770 and 1900, tenants occupied at least half of the farms in the Upper Peninsula Zone at any given time. Not only did tenancy represent an accepted and respected economic alternative, but tenants in many areas fared better financially than did their owner-occupant neighbors. Tenants and tenant farms reflected a cross-section of the population and landscape of the Upper Peninsula Zone. Agricultural tenancy played a major role in shaping the eighteenth-century rural landscape and in the revival of the agricultural economy of the zone in the nineteenth century. Tenancy provided one of several solutions to the restoration of the depleted and exhausted soils of the early nineteenth century and the farm labor shortages. Through lease-stipulated improvements (such as fertilizing with lime or guano, crop rotation, and ditching and draining for land reclamation), landlords saw the productivity of their land begin to return. Tenants invested their profits in livestock, particularly horses and oxen as a means of production. Production and capitalization represent two key elements in the tenancy context. While acquiring one's own land remained a priority for residents of the Upper Peninsula Zone, many found that the land they could tenant came in larger, more productive parcels than the land they could buy. This was particularly true for African-Americans. Thus, tenancy provided a form of access to limited resources. From the late eighteenth through the nineteenth century, tenancy was an accepted and usually mutually profitable method of agricultural land management for residents and landowners in the Upper Peninsula Zone. Tenancy also illustrates the competitiveness and hierarchical nature of rural life and work from the late colonial period through the nineteenth century.

Delaware histories are mostly silent on agricultural tenancy. In part, this is due to the fact that prior to the study of Delaware's 1850 manuscript agricultural census by the Delaware Rural History Project, it was not known that tenancy rates were as high as 80 percent in some

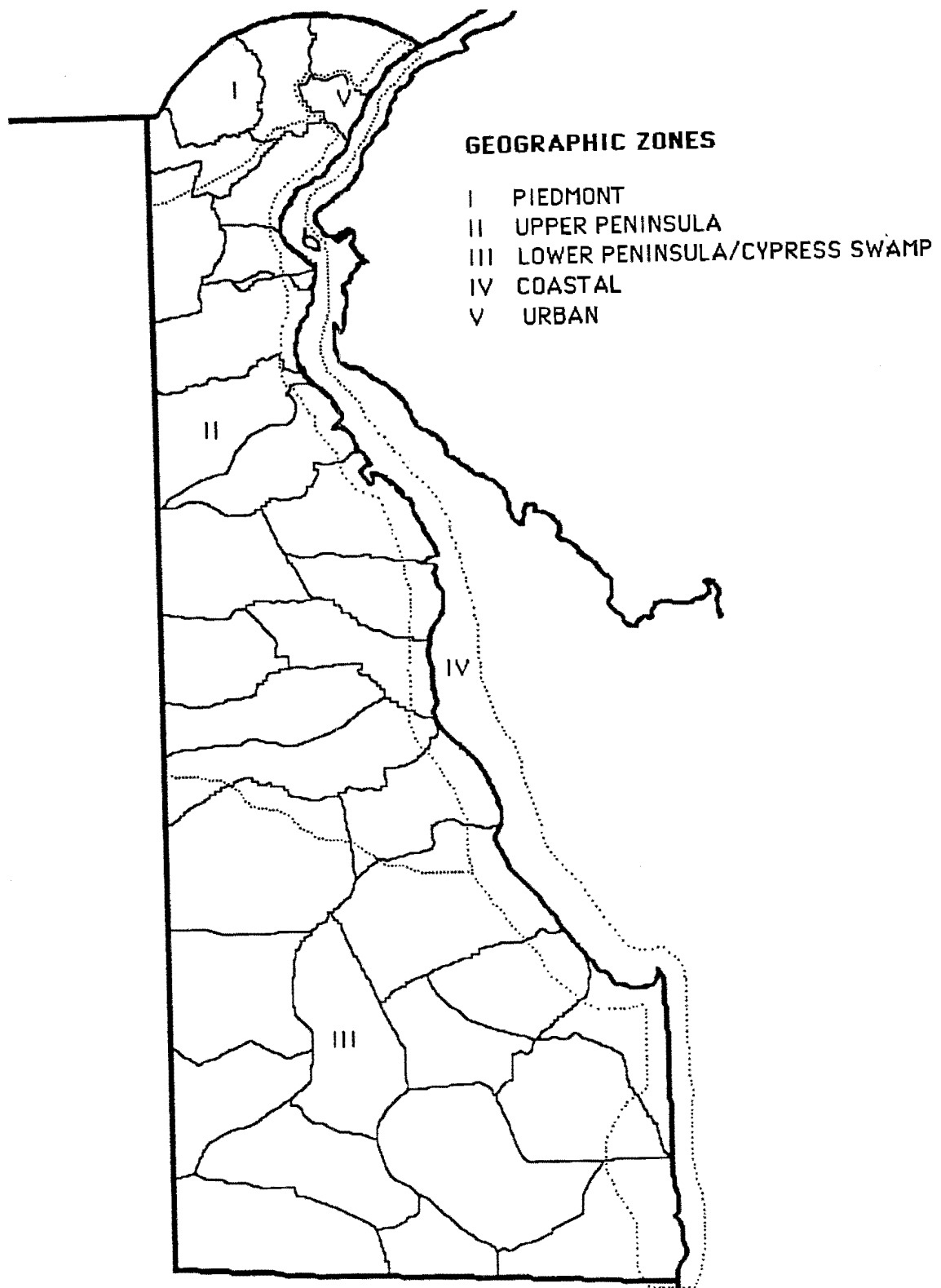


Figure 1: Geographic Zones in Delaware

Source: *Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan*, p. 33.

parts of the state.¹ Recent publications indicate that the relationships between tenants and landlords were neither simple nor straight-forward, varying greatly depending upon the particular situation.² Materials from the John Dickinson Collection, for example, describe the logistics of tenancy from the standpoint of a single non-resident landlord who owned more than 3000 acres in Kent County alone.³ National Register nominations such as *Dwellings of the Rural Elite in Central Delaware, 1770-1830+/-* outline the process of developing a farm for occupation by its owner and eventually turning it into a tenant property.⁴ Finally, several recent archaeological reports generated through Delaware Department of Transportation projects document sites that were occupied as tenant farms.⁵ Because tenancy was a common circumstance, comprehension of the role of tenants is crucial to understanding Delaware agriculture and the architectural resources that remain in the rural landscape today. Because of the scarcity of studies on Delaware tenancy, we grounded our study in information generated from primary source materials including tax assessments, a variety of court records, inventories and probate administration accounts, wills, insurance policies, and period newspapers. Methodologies included quantification, bibliographic search, site identification, fieldwork, and extensive documentary research. Questions addressed by the project include the nature of the architectural landscape occupied by tenants and landlords, the possibilities for economic and geographic mobility among tenants, the effect of race and gender on an

¹ Statistical results of the Delaware Rural History Project are located at the Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware.

² H. John Michel, Jr., "The Regional Organization of Delaware Agriculture, 1849," 1985. After Ratification: Material Life in Delaware, 1789-1820, essays by Bernard L. Herman, J. Ritchie Garrison, and Rebecca J. Siders, 1988. David Grettler, "The Landscape of Reform: Society, Environment, and Agricultural Reform in Central Delaware, 1790-1840," 1990. Joan M. Jensen, Loosening the Bonds: Mid-Atlantic Farm Women, 1750-1850, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986.

³ John Dickinson Collection, Delaware Bureau of Museums and Historic Sites, Dover, Delaware.

⁴ Dwellings of the Rural Elite in Central Delaware, 1770-1830+/-: A National Register Nomination. Herman, Lanier, Siders, and Van Balgooy. 1989. Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware.

⁵ Data Recovery Excavations at the Grant Tenancy Site, Centre Road and Lancaster Pike, New Castle County, Delaware; Taylor, Thompson, Snyder, and Gardner; 1987; Delaware Department of Transportation Archaeological Series No. 56. Tenant Farmers, Stone Masons, and Black Laborers: Final Archaeological Investigations of the Thomas Williams Site, Glasgow, New Castle County, Delaware; Catts and Custer; 1990; Delaware Department of Transportation Archaeological Series No. 82. Archaeological Investigations of the Flemings Landing Bridge Replacement, New Castle and Kent Counties, Delaware; Coleman, Hoseth, Custer, and Jagers; 1988; Delaware Department of Transportation Archaeological Series No. 64. Final Archaeological Investigations of the A. Temple Site (7NC-C-68), Chestnut Hill Road (Route 4), Ogletown, New Castle County, Delaware; Hoseth, Leithren, Catts, Coleman, and Custer; 1990; Delaware Department of Transportation Archaeological Series No. 81. Phase I & II Archaeological Research of the Proposed Bridge 260 Replacement, County Road 346, Whitten or Walther Road, New Castle County, Delaware; Custer, Coleman, Shaffer, and DeSantis; 1985; Delaware Department of Transportation Archaeological Series No. 36. Phase I & II Archaeological Investigations of the Ogletown Interchange Improvements Project Area, Newark, Delaware; Coleman, Hoseth, and Custer; 1987; Delaware Department of Transportation Archaeological Series No. 61. "The Place at Christeen": Final Archaeological Investigations of the Patterson Lane Site Complex, Christiana, New Castle County, Delaware; Catts, Hodny, and Custer; 1989.

individual's potential for becoming a tenant or landlord, economic stratification of tenants and landlords, economic strategies employed by whites and blacks, and differences in the composition of black and white tenant households.

Throughout the course of the project we worked closely with the staff of the Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation and an advisory group of scholars and professionals interested in agricultural tenancy in Delaware from a variety of perspectives. The advisory committee provided comments and research direction for the project and included Valerie Cesna (New Castle County Preservation Planner), Hubert Jicha (Kent County Preservation Planner), James Stewart (Chief, Delaware Bureau of Museums and Historic Sites), Madeline Thomas (Curator of Education, Delaware Bureau of Museums and Historic Sites), Wade Catts (Archaeologist, University of Delaware Center for Archaeological Research), LuAnn DeCunzo (Archaeologist, University of Delaware Department of Anthropology), Steve Del Sordo (Historian, Delaware Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation), and Alice Guerrant (Archaeologist, Delaware Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation).

Project staff from the Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering included Rebecca J. Siders and Bernard L. Herman, principal investigators, and four student research assistants who participated in various aspects of the project including data entry, fieldwork, archival research, and statistical analysis--Andrea Marth, Gabrielle Lanier, Margaret Watson, and Elizabeth Bellingrath. Andrea Marth was particularly helpful in managing the administrative work related to the computer data entry, field work, and bibliographic research. Nancy Van Dolsen researched many of the legal precedents and, with Leslie Bashman, produced many of the illustrations. Susan Chase contributed much of the population census data related to African-Americans. David Ames reviewed products, participated in advisory committee meetings, authored much of the chapter on preservation planning, and provided valuable insight for the direction and focus of the project. Thanks are also extended to the many property owners who allowed access to their farms.

Methodology

Few comprehensive studies of tenancy have been completed for areas in the mid-Atlantic region. In Delaware, virtually no extensive examination of tenancy has been attempted prior to this study. To truly understand the nature of tenancy and its effect on the agricultural landscape, the research design for this project addressed the population and properties of three specific areas in the Upper Peninsula Zone in great detail. Most of the information has been generated from primary source materials but the project also used a variety of other sources and types of research. These included creation of quantified data bases from tax assessments for identification of statistical patterns in landholding, wealth, slaveowning, race, and gender; examination of other primary sources; development of a

selected bibliography of secondary and period sources; and examination of extant sites in the field. Each of these elements is discussed in further detail below.

Documentary Research

One of the difficulties in undertaking a comprehensive study of tenancy is the actual identification of tenants and tenant farms. Few tenant leases survive in Delaware--those that have surfaced to date have been found in deed books, coroner's inquests, a variety of court dockets, and collections of family papers. Though these leases provide a glimpse of the relationship between tenants and landlords, they fall short of enabling us to look at tenants through an extended time period or as a coherent group within the overall population. The historic context narrative was developed from a variety of source materials: first, period documentation including tax assessments, manuscript agricultural and population censuses, probate records, legal depositions, orphans court proceedings, historic atlases, newspaper accounts, and private journals; and second, existing National Register nominations, archaeological field reports, and other secondary sources.

Tax Assessment Data Bases

Many of the nineteenth-century tax assessments for Kent County actually identified, by name, tenants who were holding particular farms, along with information about the size and type of farm land, the buildings on the farm, and the value of the property. Because each tax assessment exists as a window on tenancy, the analysis of multiple lists gives a sequence and a means to measure change over time and discover pattern on the land in the distribution of land, animals, slaves, and wealth. The tax assessment data sets were used in conjunction with those for the 1850 agricultural census, 1770-1830 orphans court valuations, and scattered local tax lists from 1795 to 1830.

Comprehensive tax assessments made throughout the state in the nineteenth century vary in detail. In some hundreds they include itemizations of individual land holdings, and describe the amount and type of acreage and its value, along with lists of livestock, slaves, and silver plate. A poll tax based on the man's ability to work or produce income completed the valuation. In general, males over the age of 16 were taxed for these items; women and minor children were assessed only for real estate, livestock, and slaves. Because they did not vote, they failed to enter the assessment records when they did not own taxable property. Males who owned land in one hundred but lived elsewhere were assessed only for the value of their real estate; their poll tax was levied in the hundred where they maintained residence.

The statistical data sets identified two different groups of descriptive information. One focused on each taxable (an individual person being taxed for real and personal property only or a combination of real and personal property and poll tax) and itemized information about livestock, slaves, number of properties owned, number of tenants, total taxable wealth, poll tax, race, and gender. The second isolated each discrete parcel of real estate for details about

amount of acreage, value of land, improved or unimproved land, distinctions between town lots and farms, name and status of the resident, and number, construction material, and condition of different types of buildings on the land. The two data bases were linked by an identification number that tied the owner of a property to specific cases in the property data base.

The three hundreds chosen for the study sample were Appoquinimink (including Blackbird) in New Castle County, and Murderkill (North and South) and Little Creek (the western half of which became Kenton Hundred) in Kent County. They were selected for several reasons: 1) each represents a geographical band across the state; 2) they include the various types of farm land available in the region (some of the richest agricultural lands in the state were located in northern Appoquinimink, while the coastal sections of Little Creek contained less productive marsh land); 3) all the hundreds have comprehensive cultural resource surveys that identify properties potentially related to the tenancy context; and 4) a good selection of comprehensive tax assessments were available throughout the nineteenth century for each hundred. The years that were chosen for the three sample hundreds were:

Murderkill--1822, 1860, 1896

Little Creek--1822, 1860, 1896

Appoquinimink--1816, 1861 (a usable late nineteenth century list does not exist)

Additional assessments used for comparative analysis include: Duck Creek (1797/1804, 1822, 1852, 1896), Dover (1797/1804), Pencader (1797, 1804, 1816), St. Georges (1816), and summaries prepared by the Bureau of Museums and Historic Sites for the Kent County 1797/1804 assessments.⁶

The tax assessment data sets describe a variety of patterns, such as 1) differences between owner-occupied and tenant-occupied properties in terms of number of buildings, types of buildings, size and value of farms, material and condition of buildings, value per acre, value per farm, and the intensity of farming; 2) the economic mobility of tenants based on their ability to purchase land, changes in the total value of their property, changes in status from non-landowner to landowner and from tenant to landowner to landlord; 3) the geographic mobility of tenants (movement from one farm to another and from one hundred to another); 4) the differences in the economic status of tenants and landlords (decile location, percentage of capital invested in livestock and farming tools, land ownership); and 5) the question of how race and gender affected issues of tenancy.

⁶ At the start of the project we over-estimated the amount of tax assessment data that we would be able to quantify and analyze. Some quantified materials could not be used effectively in the study, but the data sets remain available. Other material was partially coded: data on individuals was entered but the property information was not although it can be added at a later date.

Bibliography

A selected bibliography developed from secondary and period literature, particularly related to trends in agricultural reform, agricultural and economic history, and comparative studies of tenancy in other regions is included. Period sources included farm journals from the region, writings from agricultural magazines such as the *Memoirs of the Philadelphia Society for the Promotion of Agriculture*, publications on preferred building types (both dwellings and agricultural outbuildings) and farm plans, newspaper advertisements, petitions and legislation, orphans court valuations, historical atlases, and period commentaries on rural life. The historic context also draws on primary documents such as various court records, manuscript population and agricultural census, probate accounts, insurance policies, private daybooks and accounts, and county poor house records.

Farms

An additional note on our methodology regards the definition of farms. Scholars who have studied historic agriculture differ in their assessment of what constituted viable, subsistence-level farms.⁷ Lucy Simler, writing on Chester County, Pennsylvania, describes a group known as "smallholders" who held parcels of 20 acres or less, in comparison to tenants who held larger, more viable commercial farms of 60 acres or more.⁸ While some smallholders worked as farm laborers, many more found employment in the nonagricultural trades of the rural economy. Weavers, carpenters, hatters, tanners, millers, and blacksmiths represented the local craft population that depended on the larger farm economy. Still, their own agricultural labors tended to be incidental and occasional responses to the farm settings in which they lived and worked. Jack Michel, in his study of mid-nineteenth century Delaware agriculture, believes that a figure of 60 to 80 acres was more accurate in Delaware by 1850. Michel, unlike Simler, based his average on what was required for market agricultural production. Our research suggests, however, that defining a viable farm in terms of acreage belies the role period perceptions played in defining the reality of commercial agriculture practice. In the eyes of nineteenth-century residents, properties as small as 10 to 20 acres were termed farms. In this study, any discussion of farms will refer to properties of 10 acres or more. The threshold for farm designation comprised several characteristics. First, properties of less than 10 acres usually were not assigned a value per acre but were treated as a lot, whereas farms over 10 acres were assessed on their value per acre. In many cases the tax assessment refers to these parcels of more than ten acres as "a farm of 20 acres" indicating

⁷ A subsistence-level farm is defined as a farm that produces crops and/or livestock in an amount sufficient to sustain the household diet, but creates little or no surplus for sale at market.

⁸ Lucy Simler, "Tenancy in Colonial Pennsylvania: The Case of Chester County," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series XLIII:4 (October 1986).

that the tax assessor perceived it as a farm. Second, tenants on properties of less than 10 acres rarely possessed more in the way of livestock than a cow and a few pigs, indicating that they were not involved in full-scale market farming but were keeping livestock in order to supplement the household diet and budget. Third, management of a plot as small as 20 acres could involve forms of farm management including crop rotation systems. In 1811, for example, Timothy Hanson, Jabez Jenkins, and Cornelius P. Comegys, viewed Thomas Stout's farm of 20 acres (5 acres cleared), estimated its annual rental value at \$20, and described the land as follows:

...the cleared land is enclosed with a fence not sufficient to prevent creatures from destroying the grain &c...direct that the lot should be equally divided into two appartements, and that each may be tilled every other year...no more land ought to be cleared...⁹

Fourth, merchants' account books show that the merchants and grain brokers of Leipsic and Little Creek Landing accepted consignments of corn and grain that were as small as 14 bushels as well as the bigger harvests of more than a hundred bushels. The wide range in marketed grain by volume implies that merchant-brokers provided ready outlets for crops from small as well as large farms. For farmers of ten to a thousand acres, the broker represented an equally accessible outlet regardless of farm size. Finally, between 1822 and 1860 in Little Creek Hundred the median size of owner-occupied farms was cut by one-quarter, dropping from 100 to 72 acres, as more people became landowners. While landownership was becoming possible for a greater number of folks, the size of their parcels was dropping drastically. Still, the decline in farm size did not signal an end to productive market agriculture. In April 1838, William Huffington wrote, "it has been reduced to a certainty, that even in our country, forty acres of land may be made to support a large family in every comfort of life."¹⁰ The veracity of that observation, as we shall see, lay in changing farm size, agricultural intensification, and the economics of tenancy.

Field Work

Finally, the project included a field component. This work sought to identify rates of survival and geographic distribution patterns for property types. Comparison of the tenant properties listed on the 1860 tax assessment with Beers' 1868 Atlas of Delaware, USGS quad maps, and the Delaware Cultural Resource Survey Inventory identified a number of sites where tenant properties might be extant. Reconnaissance fieldwork determined if the buildings on the existing sites matched the descriptions in the tax assessments. In Little Creek and Kenton hundreds, 39 sites were tentatively identified as tenant sites in 1860; 41 were

⁹ Kent County Orphans Court, Book G p. 104 (August Term 1811). Court of Chancery, Kent County Court House, Dover, Delaware.

¹⁰ Huffington, Delaware Register and Farmer's Magazine, April 1838, p. 196.

found in North and South Murderkill hundreds. Comprehensive identification of tenant sites in Appoquinimink and Blackbird hundreds was unsuccessful. The results of the reconnaissance survey are summarized in Appendix A.

Preservation Planning

A set of criteria were designed to evaluate the significance of architectural resources in relationship to the historic context. These criteria differ from the criteria for evaluating eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places because they are tailored to a particular historic context and address issues such as integrity, frequency of survival, and the specific architectural and documentary features that associate the resource with the agricultural tenancy context. A treatment strategy for the historic context and property types was developed, including goals and priorities for identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment of all property types associated with the context.

Conclusion

For the most part, the methodology was successful--only two major problems arose. The first came from underestimating the amount of time required to create the data sets. As a result, we were forced to cut back on the number of tax assessments used for statistical analysis. The second problem was related to fieldwork. While we were able to conduct reconnaissance survey review for tenant sites in Little Creek and Murderkill hundreds, the tax assessment data for Appoquinimink Hundred in 1861 did not identify tenant farms that could be matched with the 1868 Beers Atlas. Consequently, we were unable to conduct any on site field visits in Appoquinimink Hundred. All research notes, statistical data sets, and analysis materials are located at the Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, University of Delaware.

Information Needs

One of the requirements for a fully developed historic context is the identification of information needs--areas of research that may contribute to the context but require further exploration beyond the scope of the current project. During the course of preparing our historic context for agricultural tenancy, several promising research questions and sources came to light but could not be pursued due to constraints of time and money. They are identified here in the hope that future projects may address them and add to our understanding of agricultural tenancy.

Economic Situation in the First Quarter of the Nineteenth Century

A variety of sources indicate that events of major importance occurred in Kent County, if not the whole state, during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. A primary problem was the constricted flow of capital. The Kent County Court of Common Pleas

Executions records significant activity, primarily in suits for payment, indicative of tight money. Although judgements are made requiring payment of debts, payment was held up in many cases because goods seized could not be sold due to the lack of available cash. Probate records contain long lists of debts and debtors--many of whom are labeled "desperate," possibly indicating that the person's lack of resources or potential income created an unlikely situation for collection of the debt. Closer examination of Common Pleas cases (including dockets, insolvent debtors' petitions, executions, etc.) will provide valuable information regarding the economic situation in the area. The analysis of these records will yield important data about the demographics of debt and the consequences of foreclosure for landlords and tenants. One possible consequence of the lack of capital may have been a decrease in new building projects, particularly new farm buildings.

Disease and Mortality

Research indicates that a great number of individuals succumbed to a variety of chronic diseases (rather than accidents or specific epidemics) in Little Creek Hundred in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Raw population counts indicate that similar conditions and problems existed in other hundreds as well. Although little has been written on disease in Kent County, or the state, for that period, the records of the Delaware Medical Society (founded in 1789) and other sources such as coroners's accounts provide data on this subject. The unsettling quality of high mortality rates exerted a pronounced influence on the availability of land for prospective tenants. Many of the landowners who died, for example, left minor children. Their estates, in some cases, were administered through the Orphans Court for periods of up to twenty years. Many of the properties owned by these children were let out to tenants in order to generate income for the upkeep of the orphans. The peculiar relationship between mortality, patrimony, and tenancy remains a critical element in any study of tenant farms as a property type.

Markets for Different Crops

One set of potentially informative documents on the economics and products of tenancy are the records of railroad shipping companies. These records may reveal information regarding the types of crops being sent to particular markets from different locations in Delaware following the 1850s establishment of rail service the length of the state. Steamship records for the companies that worked along the Delaware River may show what crops were being sent to Philadelphia and other port markets, the seasonality of shipping, and the types and volume of shipped produce. Since different crops required different types of farming and farm buildings, these records may help determine the significance of particular building types in certain periods.

Changes in Status of Individual Tenants

One question raised by the advisory committee was that of the possibilities for change in the economic status of tenants. Were they able to become landowners after tenantry for a period? What strategies did they employ to achieve that status? While we have addressed some of these questions, particularly in the area of investment of capital by tenants, time constraints prevented us from tracking individual tenants in a systematic way through their life cycle. One example of a successful individual is Andrew Eliason, a resident of St. Georges and Pencader hundreds in the nineteenth century. From his start as a drover on the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, Eliason spent several years as a tenant farmer before becoming a landholder and supervising the production of crops and livestock on three farms.¹¹ Given the number of tax assessments in Kent County in the nineteenth century, tracing specific individuals from one tax year to another should be possible. This could provide very valuable information for the tenancy context.

Agricultural Reform Farm Implements

The early- to mid-nineteenth century was a protracted period of progressive agriculture that entailed extensive experimentation with new seed strains, crop rotations, fertilizers, and farm machinery. In our search for evidence of the effects of agricultural "reform", we realized that a review of probate inventories throughout the century could provide an excellent picture of the changing nature of farm equipment. Machinery from mechanical threshers to scythes posed certain demands on the rural labor force. The equipment to sow, cultivate, reap, thresh, and store required hands to work and managers to supervise. The relationship between landlords, farm managers, tenants, and day laborers can be advanced from the types of farm equipment and working livestock found in inventories. Identification of the types of farmers (tenants or owner-occupants) who purchased and used these new implements may provide a clearer picture of the influence of progressive agriculture on tenancy.

¹¹ "Rebuilding of St. Georges Hundred, National Register Nomination." Herman et al. 1984.

I. ELEMENTS OF THE HISTORIC CONTEXT

A historic context is defined as an "organizational format that groups information about related historic properties, based on theme, geographic limits, and chronological period."¹² The *Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan* (hereafter "the Delaware Plan") identifies eleven elements that must be defined in order to complete a fully-developed historic context:

- * historic theme
- * geographic zone
- * chronological period
- * information needs and recent preservation activity
- * reference bibliography
- * method for involving the general and professional public
- * mechanism for updating the context
- * known and expected property types
- * criteria for evaluating existing or expected resources
- * distribution and potential distribution of property types
- * goals and priorities for the context and property types¹³

Each of these elements has been addressed in this historic context for agricultural tenancy. The principal defining elements of the agricultural tenancy historic context are its **historic theme**--Agricultural Tenancy; its **geographic zone**--the Upper Peninsula Zone; and its **chronological period**--1770 to 1900+/- . Chapter I discusses each of these elements and describes them in terms of the Delaware Plan. Property types are introduced in Chapter I-- **known and expected property types**, **criteria for evaluating existing or expected resources**, and **distribution and potential distribution of property types** are covered in detail in Chapters II and III. **Information needs and recent preservation activity** are discussed in the Preface. A **reference bibliography** concludes this volume. Consisting of both primary and secondary sources, it was compiled through searches of libraries and archives as well as the solicitation of suggestions from the advisory committee. The **method for involving the general and professional public** was the creation of an advisory committee of scholars and preservation professionals. The committee was consulted regarding the research methodology, the bibliography, and the direction of the research, and the members of the committee were made aware of the progress and problems encountered. Recommendations for a **mechanism for updating the context** are included in Chapter VI: Priorities and Goals for Agricultural Tenancy, along with **goals and priorities for the context and property types**.

¹² Federal Register, 9/29/83, p. 44716.

¹³ Delaware Plan, p. 55.

Historic Theme: Agricultural Tenancy

Agricultural tenancy is a subtheme of the historic theme of Agriculture defined in the Delaware Plan. The second volume of the Delaware Plan, *Historic Context Master Reference and Summary*, describes agriculture in the Upper Peninsula Zone as follows.

The 1770-1830+/- period witnessed the advent of agricultural reform and experimentation resulting in new systems of crop rotation and field patterns. Like farmers in the Piedmont Zone, landowners in this zone became more concerned with the productivity of their soil in this period. They formed the New Castle County Agricultural Society in 1819 and began to experiment with ways to increase their crop yields. This activity would eventually result in the highest level of wheat and dairy product yields in the state.

During [the 1830-1880+/-] period, the Upper Peninsula Zone was divided into two agricultural regions: the northern part (New Castle, Red Lion, Pencader, St. Georges, Appoquinimink, Duck Creek, and Little Creek hundreds), known as the grain region, and the southern section (Dover, Murderkill, and Milford hundreds), or mixed farming region. In the grain region the land is fairly level; the soil is well-drained and very productive. The farms were large compared to the rest of the state, cultivating an average of three times more acreage per farm than the other regions (about 150 acres). Primary crops were corn and wheat, produced in the highest volume per acre in the state. In addition, these farmers produced a great many dairy products, again more than anywhere else in the state. In essence, this region held the state's first modern market-profit farms.

The mixed farming region consisted mostly of self-sufficient family farms. The soil was wet and exhausted, forcing a much less intensive use of the land. Farm size in this region averaged about 50 acres, with much of it still in woodland. Wheat was grown only for family use, with corn being the only real market crop.

Some of the differences between these two regions may be attributed to the opening of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal in 1829 and the gradual north-south extension of the railroad in the 1850s. These new methods of transporting produce to the major markets affected the grain region much earlier than the mixed farming region.

In the later part of the period the peach industry flourished, creating fortunes for many farmers in the northern section of the zone. The railroad allowed quick and easy transportation of this perishable crop to the large urban markets. By the 1870s economic decline in the rural markets set in due to major national shifts in grain production and the relocation of the milling industry to the upper midwest; agriculture was forced to become more diversified.

By the agricultural census of 1880, farm values had dropped to their 1850 levels. Rural social movements, such as the Grange, grew to meet the needs of the rural populace. The Depression years of the 1890s ...undermined the local landholding patterns of the area, resulting in the diversification of land ownership and the reallocation of property. Proprietors of twenty or more farms in the 1860s now found themselves reduced to five or six properties or completely dispossessed. During [the 1880-1940+/-] period the agricultural economy continued its trend

toward greater commercialization.¹⁴

This context will explore the role of tenant farms, tenant farmers, landlords, and farm laborers in the agricultural community of nineteenth-century central Delaware, and the effect those individuals had on the landscape. Particular emphasis is given to architectural resources illustrating the theme.

Tenant farms accounted for approximately half of the farms in the region from the late eighteenth century through the nineteenth century and played a major part in agricultural development. Tenancy offered certain advantages to both landlord and tenant. The landlord profited from the contractual improvement of depleted agricultural lands and a solution to the shortage of seasonal farm labor. The tenant gained access to larger, more productive farms, and the chance to acquire more livestock and farming equipment. Such capitalization represented the first step toward the leap into the landowning classes. While tenants and landlords typically formalized arrangements by lease, individual terms and situations varied. Tenancy represented social as well as economic circumstance. Tenants contracted themselves for varying lengths of time, regardless of their age or social status. Tenants came from all walks of life--some owned their own livestock and/or slaves, some even owned land that they rented to others. It was not unusual for a tenant to occupy more than one piece of land, particularly if one was mostly arable, or cleared, land and the other was woodland. As tenants and landlords strove to maximize yields and profits agricultural tenancy contributed to the success of agricultural reform methods in the Upper Peninsula Zone and the accompanying rise in farming production. In short, Delaware agriculture depended upon tenancy for its survival from the colonial period to the present.

Agricultural tenancy is not synonymous with farm labor. Through either verbal or written contracts, landowners arranged for the cultivation and maintenance of their lands. The tenant who occupied that land obligated himself to meet specified requirements including land clearance and cultivation, building and enclosure improvements, and of course either a fixed rent or a share in the harvest. These tenants represented a class of nonlandowning but land holding farmers and farm managers. Other tenants occupied the farm with the landowner or manager and worked at specific seasonal tasks. These individuals, who were typically provided with a small house and garden plot, received wages but seldom profits (or losses) from the harvest. Nonresident, nonlanded day labor represents a third category that augmented the work force of resident tenants and cottagers. Slaves represented a significant but diminishing segment of the agricultural work force from the eighteenth through the mid-nineteenth centuries.

¹⁴ Delaware Plan, vol. 2, Historic Context Master Reference and Summary, pp. 27, 30-31, 35.

Each tier of agricultural labor and management used and furnished the physical environment according to differing needs, sensibilities, and accessible resources. A case in point is the late eighteenth century estate of Dr. Thomas Evans of Pencader Hundred. Evans owned three farms. One, the home farm, was occupied by himself and his heirs. In addition to the mansion house, Evans had improved his farm with numerous outbuildings including barn, granary, stables, corncribs, and tenements. Resident tenants operated the other two farms, both of which were limited to house, kitchen, and barn--a pattern that has been identified with other archaeologically examined Delaware tenant farms. The tenements and lots on Evans's home farm were rented to resident laborers who also appear in Evans's agricultural accounts building debt and credit through contracted services including hoeing, plowing, reaping, threshing, and gleaning. The house and lot these lesser tenants rented consisted only of a small wooden dwelling, garden space, and an animal pen. Still, Evans's accounts record a fourth group who traded the credit of their labor for the doctor's ministrations, dry goods, and provisions. Although they were not resident on Evans's lands, they certainly tilled the landowner's fields. The presence of slaves owned by some of Evans's neighbors as well as Evans himself is well documented but the accommodations and working spaces for slaves, men or women, in the house or farmyard is poorly defined. Where did Evans's two slaves live? Where did they work?

The instance of Evans's estate stands as a prime example of the potential and pitfalls inherent in the recognition of the cultural resources identified with the historic context of tenancy from the 1770s through the end of the 1800s. Landowners', farm managers', cottagers', and laborers' (free and slave) houses and farm buildings all draw from the same architectural repertoire and agricultural economy. With the exception of "house and garden" lots (and even this is not absolute) there are no distinctive functional property types associated with an agricultural tenancy historic context. There are, however, many historic properties--houses, outbuildings, and farms--concretely linked to tenant farming. What identifies these properties with a tenancy context is the world of dependent economic associations revealed in the documentary record. Thus, as the following context study clearly demonstrates, we know the historic properties of a tenancy context through associative property types. The key implications for historic properties identified with the historic context for rural tenancy 1770-1900+/- are first, that these properties are identified almost exclusively in the documentary record; second, that the historic properties linked to tenancy are known through associative rather than functional property types; and third as the following examples reveal, the experience and cultural resources bound to a tenancy context are extremely variable.

James Collins, a white man, leased "40 acres of land valued @ \$35.00 [per acre] all cleared with a frame tenement" from John Cowgill, a multiple property owner with extensive

livestock holdings. Collins owned no livestock or other taxable property, but may have made arrangements with Cowgill for use of some of his 6 horses and 2 yokes of oxen at plowing and harvest time.

Rachel Harper, a widow, was tenanted a 203-acre farm belonging to the estate of her husband Charles--"150 acres Cleared with a Brick dwelling frame Barn Stables &c."--the land was valued at \$20 per acre. An inventory of her husband's estate in 1815 reveals that the house contained a common room, middle room, parlor chamber, parlor, c[hamber] room, garrett, kitchen, and cellar. Other buildings on the property included a granary, fodder house, three corn cribs, and a smoke house. Charles Harper's estate was also taxed for a second property of 75 acres valued at only \$10 per acre that was leased to Benjamin Doratheia. Rachel Harper owned 3 horses and 2 yokes of oxen in addition to 42 other creatures for a total taxable value of \$300.

Jesse Dean, mulatto, owned a 20-acre farm (valued at \$8 per acre) that he leased to John Derham, his son-in-law. Dean himself was tenanted a 250-acre farm belonging to Mary Ann Fulce, a minor. The farm contained "200 acres Cleared with old Brick house...50 acres of woodland;" the land was valued at \$10 per acre. Dean owned a large number of livestock, compared to either black or white taxables--among them were 5 horses and 1 yoke of oxen. His investment in livestock represented 66% of his total taxable wealth.

John Jackson leased 144 acres from the heirs of Wilson Buckmaster, "120 acres cleared with old frame dwelling barn and stable...24 acres Gum Swamp;" the land was valued at \$30 per acre. Jackson owned 2 horses, 2 yokes of oxen, and 21 other animals--an investment of \$188 in livestock.

George Cubbage owned 4 slaves (3 males between the ages of 19 and 24 and a 12-year-old girl) valued at \$620. He occupied a farm of 144 acres--"130 acres Cleared with frame dwelling Stables &c...14 Acres Woodland;" the land was valued at \$30 per acre. His livestock holdings were not as extensive as others with farms of this size: 1 horse, 1 yoke of oxen, 1 cow, 2 young cattle, and 3 hogs, for a total value of \$120.

There are several subthemes associated with the context considered here that will be explored in some detail: Settlement Patterns & Demographic Change; Transportation & Communication; Architecture, Engineering & Decorative Arts; Retailing & Wholesaling; and Finance. Each of these subthemes relates in some way to the historic development of agricultural tenancy in Delaware and will be discussed in the narrative.

Geographic Area: Upper Peninsula Zone

The geographic area for this historic context is the Upper Peninsula Zone, defined by the Delaware Plan as follows:

The Upper Peninsula Zone covers the largest land area of all the

zones, stretching from the southeastern border of the Piedmont Zone through New Castle, Pencader, Red Lion, St. Georges, Appoquinimink, Blackbird, Duck Creek, Little Creek, Kenton, East Dover, West Dover, North Murderkill, South Murderkill, and Milford hundreds to the Sussex County line. The soils in this zone range from medium-textured to moderately coarse, with some areas being well-drained and others very poorly drained. The subsoil consists of sandy loam or sandy clay loam. Land contours range from level through gently rolling or sloping to steep. Major topographical features for this zone include Garrison's Lake, Killen Pond, Lums Pond, and McCauley Pond. Originally, the entire area was full of waterways. Many of the large creeks and rivers that flowed in the Delaware River were navigable by small boats for a fair distance inland. In addition, numerous small streams drained into the larger creeks. Like those in the Piedmont Zone, these streams have been subject to heavy silting and deposition over the past three centuries and in most cases are no longer navigable except by canoe or rowboat. The major streams that remain are the Christiana River, Duck Creek, Smyrna River, St. Jones Creek, Murderkill River, Little River, Leipsic River, Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, Appoquinimink River, and Blackbird Creek. The zone was also heavily wooded with a variety of trees: oak, hickory, poplar, walnut, ash. Indian corn grew wild in many areas, and the land was inhabited by a large range of animals. At the present time much of the zone is under cultivation for agriculture. Dover, the state's capital, is the only large town in the zone, but there are many smaller communities.¹⁵

The Upper Peninsula Zone contains the three test hundreds used to establish the historic context: Little Creek and Murderkill in Kent County, and Appoquinimink in New Castle County (see Figure 2). The test hundreds represent a cross-section of the types of agricultural lands found in the zone. Additionally, each hundred provides a cross-section of Delaware, stretching from the coastal shoreline well into the rural hinterlands. Finally, extensive runs of documentary records available for their populations combined with the extant agricultural topography enabled us to match landscape and written evidence for the historic context.

Delaware hundreds are roughly equivalent to townships in other states. Hundred boundaries were used as divisions when recording the population for tax assessments and census records. Individuals commonly described themselves in legal documents (such as property deeds, wills, inventories, &c.) as "William Harper of Little Creek Hundred." Court records used hundred designations to locate real estate. Property deeds and orphans court valuations might refer to a piece of land located "in Little Creek Neck and Hundred" or "in Little Creek Hundred on the road from Kenton to Maryland." In the context period, voting was administered by referees from each hundred. The original hundred boundaries established in the seventeenth century were occasionally changed. Kenton Hundred, for

¹⁵ Delaware Plan, p. 34.

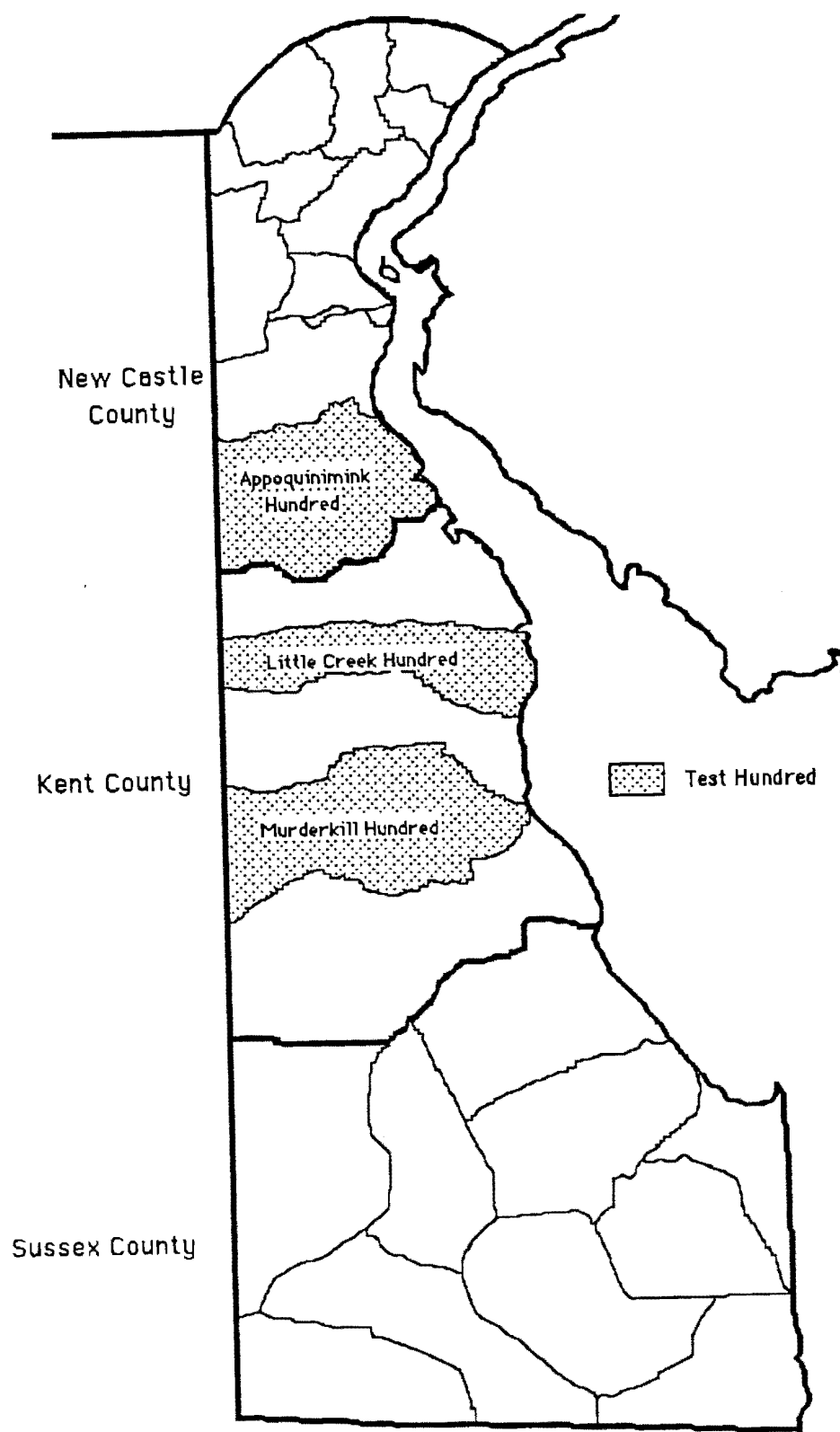


Figure 2: Location of Test Hundreds

example, was partitioned from the western halves of Duck Creek and Little Creek hundreds in 1869.

The Test Hundreds

Appoquinimink Hundred. Originally bounded on the north by Appoquinimink Creek and on the south by Duck Creek, both of which flow east into the Delaware River, Appoquinimink Hundred was the southernmost hundred in New Castle County, between St. Georges Hundred and the Kent County line (Figure 3). A third waterway, Blackbird Creek, became the dividing line when Blackbird Hundred was partitioned from Appoquinimink in 1875. Blackbird Creek flows from the southwest corner of the hundred northeast into the Delaware River. Numerous small landings were located on the banks of these three creeks and were used for shipping crops on the Delaware River. Other small creeks run throughout the hundred emptying into the Delaware and its tributaries. Extensive coastal wetlands range along the Delaware River. These tidal areas provided the environment for water trades such as the shad fishery and agricultural efforts such as pasturing and salt hay cultivation.

Most of the arable land in the hundred was used for agricultural purposes. Appoquinimink and Blackbird hundreds contain five basic soil types. Most fertile are the Matapeake-Sassafras associated soils characterized as "nearly level to steep, well-drained, medium-textured and moderately coarse textured soils on uplands." The Matapeake-Sassafras soils compose the Levels west of Middletown and represent Delaware's most productive farming resource. The southwest corner of New Castle County is composed primarily of the Fallsington-Sassafras-Woodstown association described as "undulating, poorly-drained to well-drained, medium-textured and moderately coarse textured soils on uplands." Much of this section of the hundred is broken up with shallow ponds and second growth timber. Farming here has historically been of a less intensive character than on the better lands to the immediate north. An area of Sassafras-Fallsington soils extends to the east of the association. Here the land is slightly more fertile with "nearly level to gently sloping, well-drained and poorly drained, moderately coarse textured and medium-textured soils on uplands." The Keyport-Elkton association to the east exhibits the same qualities on what are some of the oldest farmlands in the state. Finally, the eastern shoreline composed of marsh and "short tidal streams" ranges along the coastline.¹⁶

The Delaware Railroad, built in the 1850s, ran north to south through the hundred, separating the western third of the hundred from the eastern section. In 1868, there were two rail stations in Appoquinimink Hundred: Blackbird Station, Sassafras Station, and Townsend. The western third contained a few crossroads towns and a dispersed settlement pattern.

¹⁶ Earle D. Matthews and Oscar L. Lavoie. Soil Survey of New Castle County, Delaware. USDA with Delaware Agricultural Experiment Station. Washington, 1970, ff 97.



Figure 3: Appoquinimink Hundred, Beers' Atlas of Delaware, 1868

Several small river and crossroads towns including Blackbird, Deakynesville, Fieldsboro, and Noxontown Mills, comprised the nucleated settlements to the east. Encompassing 114 square miles, the hundred stretched approximately 13 miles from the Delaware River shoreline to the Maryland border and roughly 10 miles from the Appoquinimink Creek to Duck Creek. This study refers to Appoquinimink Hundred as it was prior to the creation of Blackbird Hundred--in the later period, statistics for the two hundreds following the division have been aggregated to insure continuity.

Little Creek Hundred. Little Creek Hundred is located in northern Kent County, between Duck Creek and Dover hundreds (Figure 4). It is bounded on the north by the Leipsic River and the Little Duck Creek and on the south by the Little Creek, all of which flow east into the Delaware River. These rivers are fed by numerous small tributaries that wander through the hundred, reaching back to the divide that separates the Delaware watershed from the Chesapeake. There is easy access to water everywhere in the hundred, but the western section is considerably less marshy and swampy than the eastern coastal portion.

During the mid to late eighteenth century the hundred contained some of the most fertile agricultural lands in the state. The western third of the hundred consisted of Fallsington-Sassafras-Woodstown and Pocomoke-Fallsington-Sassafras associations of level to sloping, variably drained soils composed of moderately to rapidly permeable subsoils and clay and sand loam. The Sassafras-Fallsington association occupying the middle third of the old hundred are comparable to those found in Appoquinimink Hundred. To the east the moderately permeable salty clay loam soils of the Othello-Matapeake-Mattapex association give way to tidal marsh.¹⁷

Of the two major ports in the hundred, Leipsic (or Fast Landing) is located on the Leipsic River, approximately 6 miles from the Delaware River coastline; Little Creek Landing is on the Little Creek, approximately 2 miles inland. Both were prominent grain shipping ports in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The only railroad station in Little Creek Hundred was Moorton Depot, located roughly in the center of the old hundred.

From 1770 to 1869, the hundred encompassed 71 square miles, stretching approximately 19 miles from the coast of the Delaware River to the Maryland border. In 1869, Kenton Hundred was created from the western sections of Duck Creek and Little Creek hundreds. The new western border of Little Creek Hundred became the track of the Delaware Railroad, which lies to the west of and roughly parallel to U.S. Route 13. The new hundred was approximately half the size of the original area. Because Kenton Hundred was partitioned

¹⁷ Earle D. Matthews and William Ireland, Jr. Soil Survey of Kent County, Delaware. 1971. ff 66.

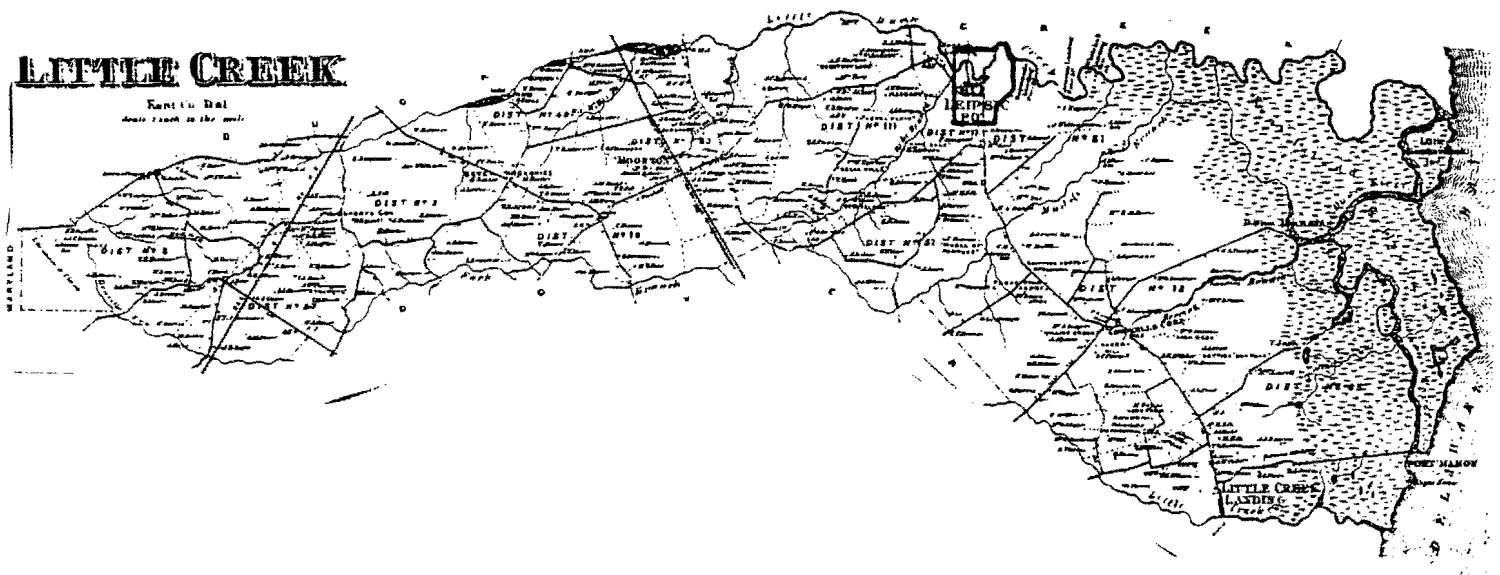


Figure 4: Little Creek Hundred, Beers' Atlas of Delaware, 1868

from two different hundreds, the statistics in this study cover the area within the official boundaries of Little Creek as they existed in each period.

Murderkill Hundred. Bounded on the north by the Saint Jones River and Murderkill Creek to the south, Murderkill Hundred is located in central Kent County between Dover Hundred and Mispillion Hundred (Figure 5). The soil associations for Murderkill Hundred are comparable to those described in Little Creek Hundred. In 1867 the hundred was divided in half as North and South Murderkill hundreds. The dividing line was a series of roads running from the Maryland border through Petersburg, Plymouth Station, and Canterbury, and ending at Barker's Landing on the Saint Jones River. Other small towns scattered throughout the hundred include Camden, Lebanon, Willow Grove, Magnolia, Frederica, Felton, Berrytown, and Whiteleysburgh. The Delaware Railroad ran straight through the center of the hundred. There were five railroad stations located in Murderkill Hundred in 1868: Wyoming, Willow Grove Station, Canterbury Station, Plymouth Station, and Felton. The largest of the test hundreds, Murderkill Hundred encompassed 140 square miles, extending 18 miles from the Delaware shoreline to the Maryland border and 10 miles from the Saint Jones River to the Murderkill Creek. For the purposes of the historic context, North and South Murderkill are treated as a single study area.

Chronological Period: 1770-1900+/-

The overall time period for this context is 1770 to 1900. It covers two of the time periods identified by the *Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan* and part of a third: 1770-1830+/-: Early Industrialization, 1830-1880+/-: Industrialization and Early Urbanization, and the first two decades of 1880-1940+/-: Urbanization and Early Suburbanization. The beginning of the time period was defined as 1770 because the extent and availability of documentary records is much better after 1770 than before that date. Similarly, the survival of rural buildings representing all sorts of uses dramatically rises through the mid1800s. The relationship between standing structures and broad patterns of agricultural, architectural, economic, and social change has been described in several recent studies.¹⁸ A study of the earlier colonial period would rely largely on archaeological source materials. The end date was set at 1900 because the nature of agriculture in the state began to undergo major changes in the twentieth century related to crops, production methods, transportation, and markets. The methods of reporting census and assessment data also began to change, making it more difficult to compare data in a reliable manner. Specifically, geographic areas are identified differently and with different boundaries in the census after

¹⁸ Herman, 1987. Grettler, 1990. Michel, 1984.

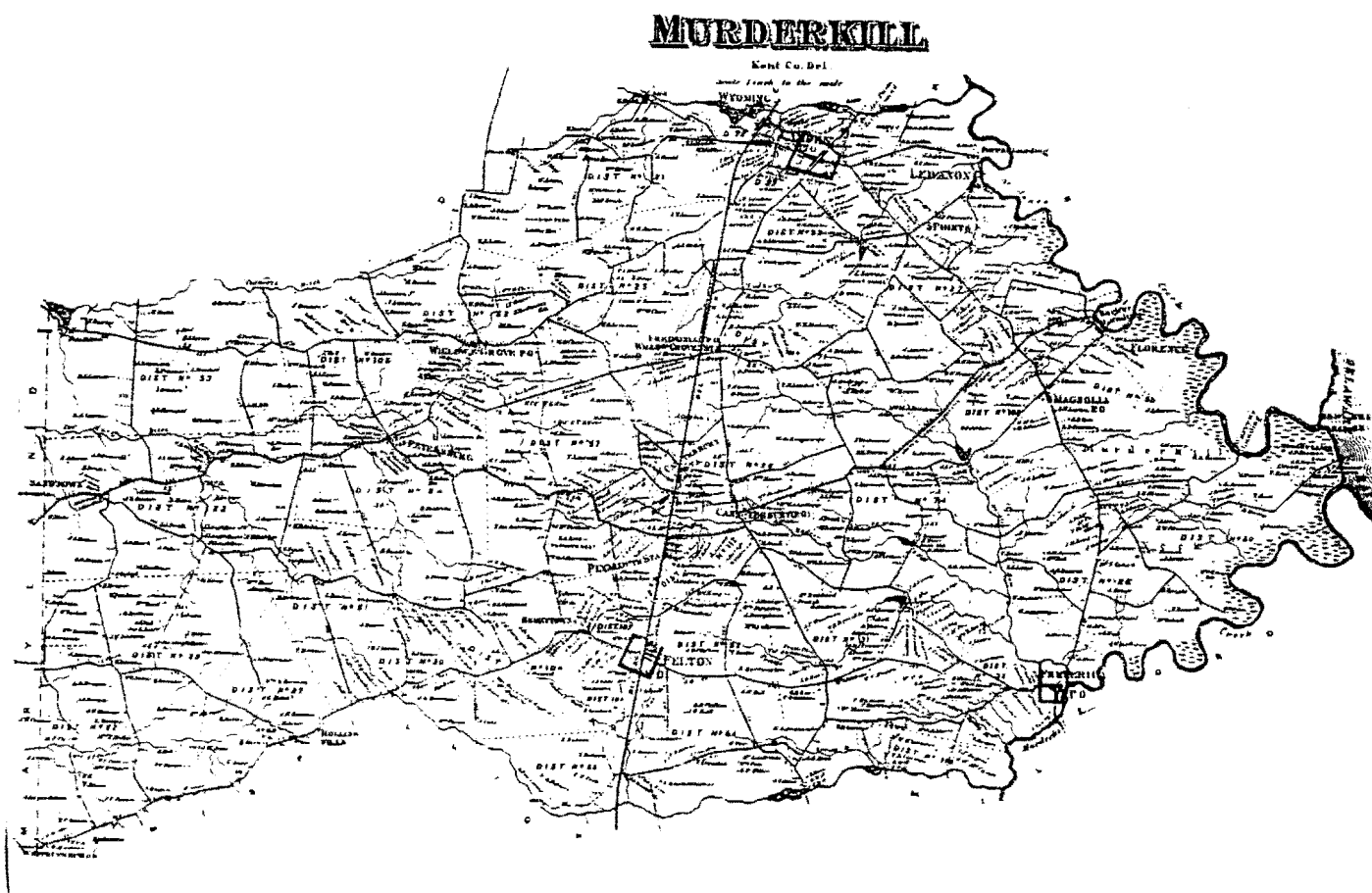


Figure 5: Murderkill Hundred, Beers' Atlas of Delaware, 1868

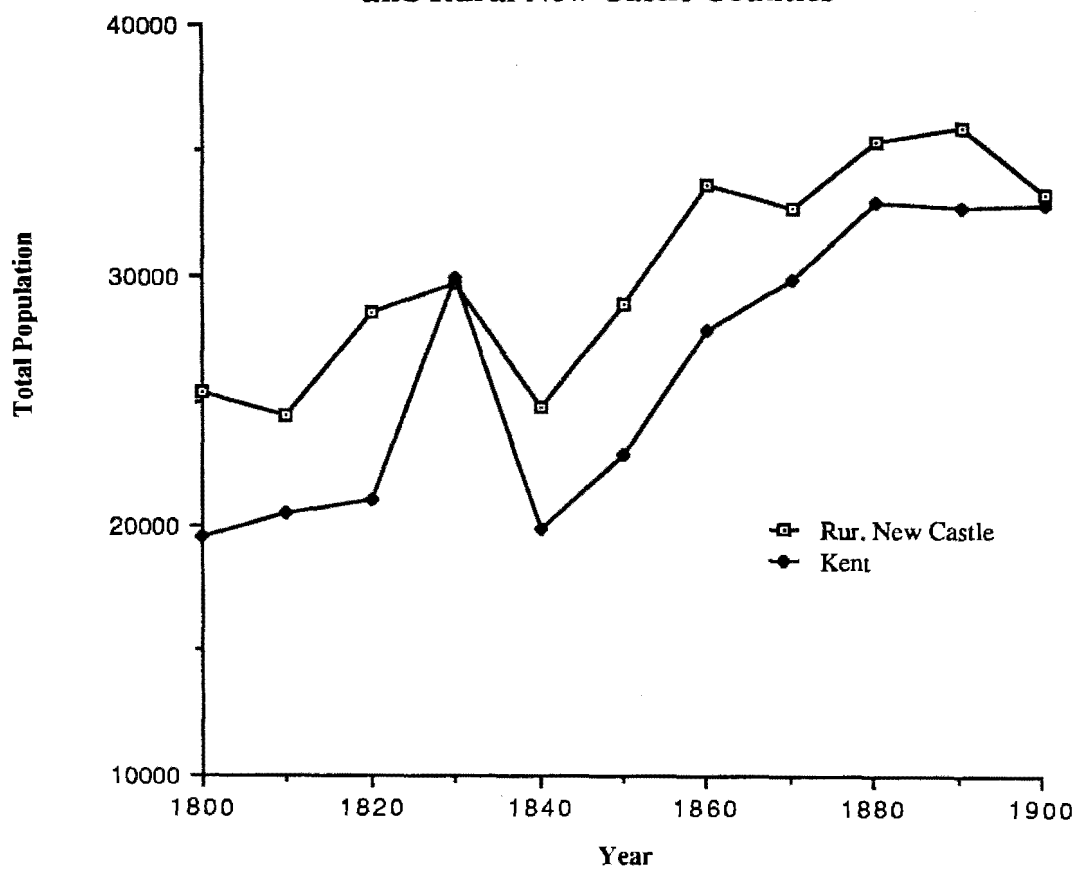
1900, thus making it difficult to reconstruct census data for particular areas. In addition, the manuscript census is only available through 1910, further complicating any attempt to obtain census data on individual people, households, and farms. Assessment lists after 1900 lose much of their detailed descriptive material after 1900, making it difficult to recover information such as tenant names and details of building types and construction material.

Demographic Patterns in the Upper Peninsula Zone

Several of the major causes of agricultural tenancy in the Upper Peninsula Zone were related to demographic conditions. Population growth in the Upper Peninsula Zone was minimal during the first four decades of the nineteenth century; in some periods there was actual decline in the total population (Figures 6 and 7). Between 1800 and 1840, Kent County's population increased by only 2%. Appoquinimink Hundred, just over the county line, lost 27% of its population in the same period; Little Creek Hundred increased by 7%; and Murderkill lost 33%--one-third of its total population. During the middle part of the century, from 1840 to 1870, the population of Kent County rose by 50%. This was mirrored by growth in Appoquinimink (40%) and Murderkill (68%) hundreds. Little Creek grew by 29% between 1840 and 1860 before it was partitioned for Kenton Hundred. In the final third of the century, from 1870 to 1900, population growth in the zone slowed dramatically; Kent County's population increased by only 10%. Appoquinimink Hundred lost one-fifth of its population; Little Creek lost one-quarter; Murderkill Hundred remained virtually stable.

These changes in the population are emphasized by changes in the number and size of households recorded by the population census in Appoquinimink, Little Creek, and Murderkill hundreds. In Murderkill Hundred, the number of households increased by 142% over the century; in Appoquinimink, the increase was less substantial (47%) but still significant, and Little Creek Hundred saw a rise of similar proportions (45%) between 1800 and 1860 (Figure 8). A decline in the average household size suggests that much of the increase in households was probably due to new family formation. Table 1 illustrates the drastic reduction in the average household size in Appoquinimink, Little Creek, and Murderkill hundreds--in each one, it was reduced by almost half over the century. (Figure 9 illustrates the change in average household size for the three hundreds.) An analysis of the age-groups reported by the census between 1800 and 1840 reveals that between 40% and 57% of the population was under the age of 30 in all three hundreds during this time period. In 1830 and 1840, the single age group with the largest segment of the population in all three hundreds was that of 20 to 29 year olds, comprising 13-15% of the total population. These figures indicate the probability that a large number of new young families were being formed in the middle of the century. Rather than live in the same house with an extended family, they were opting to build new homes for themselves.

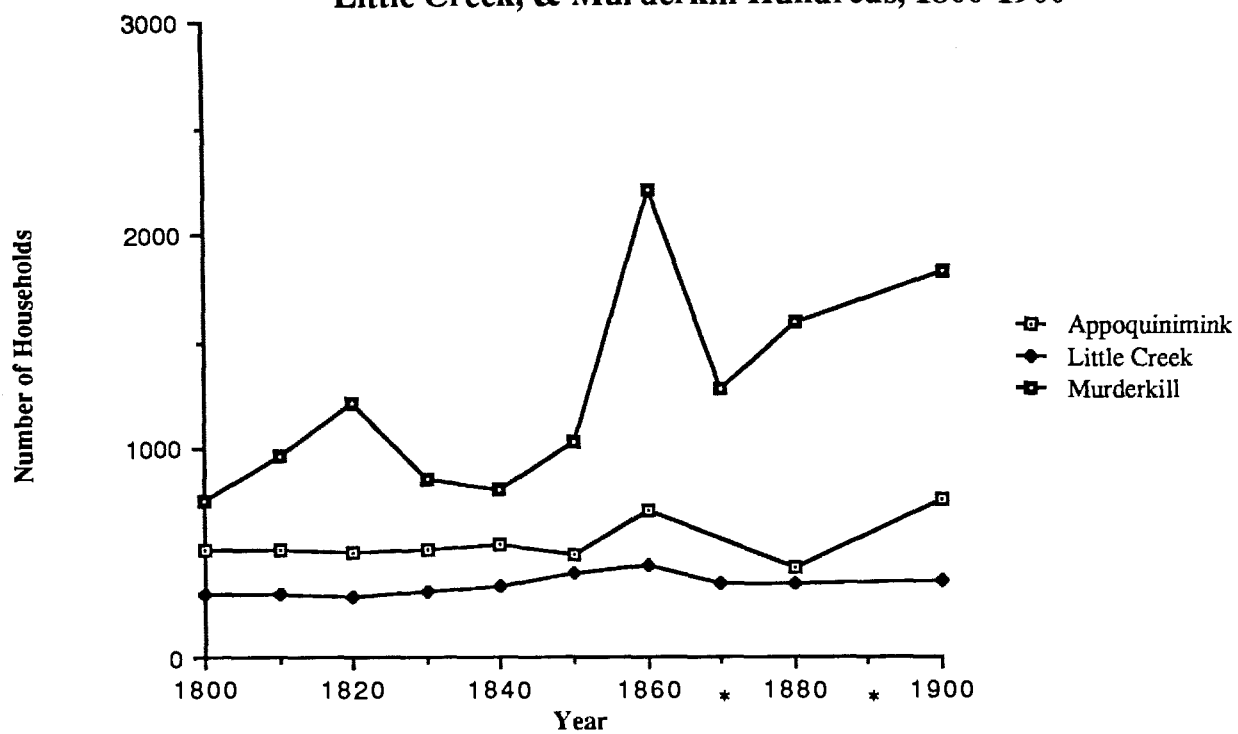
**Figure 6: Population Change in Kent
and Rural New Castle Counties***



Source: U.S. Manuscript Population Census

* Rural New Castle County population figures include all parts of county with the exception of the City of Wilmington

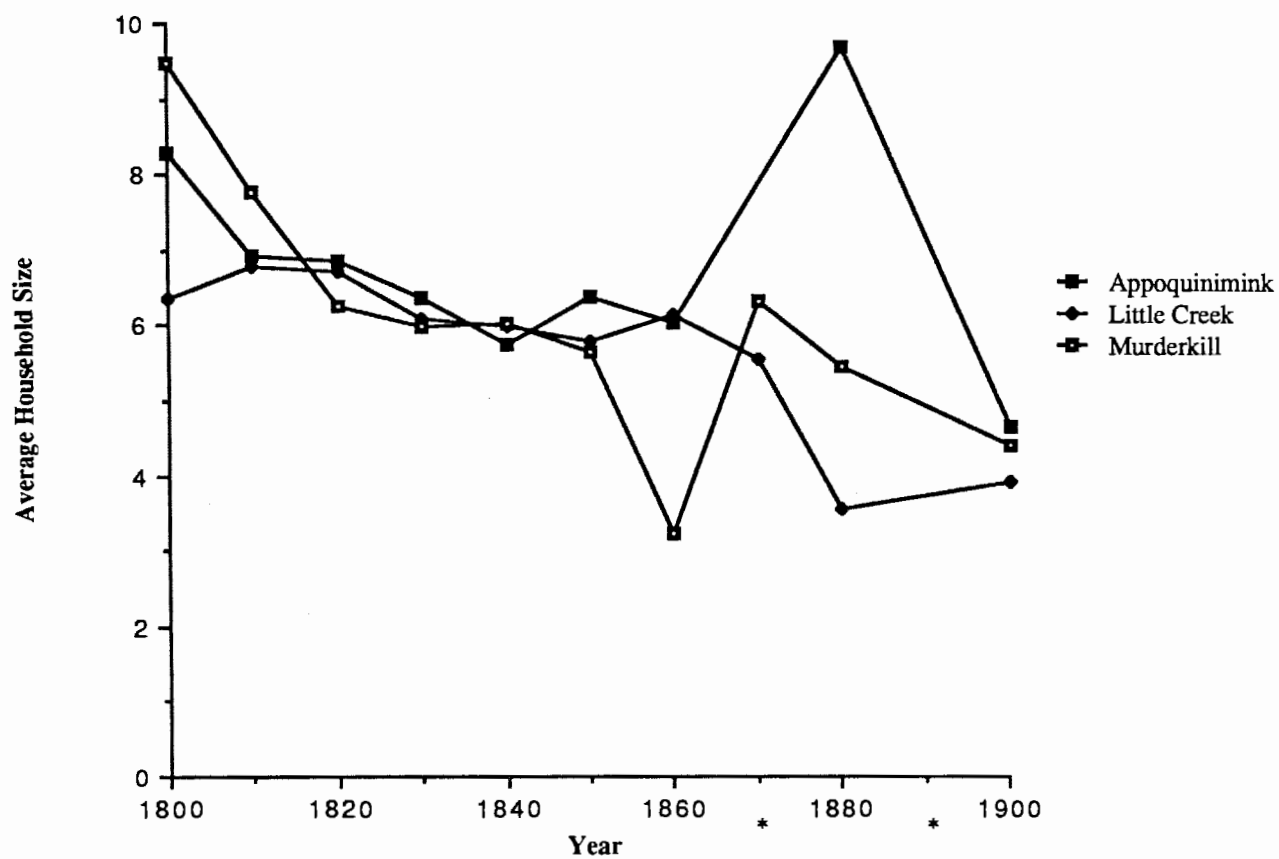
**Figure 8: Change in Number of Households: Appoquinimink,
Little Creek, & Murderkill Hundreds, 1800-1900**



Source: U.S. Manuscript Population Census

* Data unavailable for Appoquinimink 1870, and for all hundreds in 1890.

Figure 9: Change in Average Household Size: Appoquinimink, Little Creek, and Murderkill Hundreds, 1800-1900



Source: U.S. Manuscript Population Census

* Data Unavailable for Appoquinimink in 1870 and for all sampled hundreds in 1890.

Table 1
Average Household Size: 1800-1900

	Appoquinimink Hundred	Little Creek Hundred	Murderkill Hundred
1800	8.3	6.4	9.5
1810	6.9	6.8	7.7
1820	6.8	6.7	6.3
1830	6.9	6.1	6.0
1840	5.7	6.0	6.0
1850	6.4	5.7	5.6
1860	6.0	6.1	3.2
1870	N/A	5.5	6.3
1880	9.6	3.5	5.4
1890	N/A	N/A	N/A
1900	4.6	3.9	4.4

Source: Manuscript Population Census, 1800-1900.

Some of the population loss in the early decades was probably due to outmigration following the panic of 1816 and the crop failure of 1817, and the reorganization of landownership patterns in the late eighteenth century. In 1838 William Huffington wrote:

Most of the old and time honored families, who once adorned our society by their primitive manners, and friendly hospitality, have been broken up and scattered abroad. And their possessions have fallen into the hands of a few land jobbers; and they are let out to a migratory race, who changing their residence with every revolution of the seasons, form no attachment for their places of abode; take no care of the soil or the improvements; and dilapidation and poverty follows, as a necessary consequence.¹⁹

This idea of migration is supported by a quick survey of the surnames listed in the population census between 1800 and 1830 in Little Creek Hundred. Of the 213 names included in the 1800 manuscript census, 57% had disappeared by 1820 and another 12% of the remaining families were gone by 1830. New surnames were appearing at a rapid rate also--between 1800 and 1820, 112 new names appeared in the census; between 1820 and 1830, an additional 89 names were recorded.

Property Types

One of the most important parts of a fully developed historic context, from a preservation planning perspective, is the definition, description, and evaluation of property

¹⁹ William Huffington, in The Delaware Register and Farmers' Magazine. April 1838, p. 196.

types related to the particular context. The Delaware Plan defines property types as follows:

Property types relate historic contexts to individual resources by functioning as conceptual bridges between historic themes and particular buildings, structures, sites, and objects. To function as a classification system, property types must be general; they must also be particular enough to provide for the meaningful evaluation of integrity and significance reflected in individual historic resources...property types are the physical resources that embody and manifest the characteristics of the historic context. A property type is a group of individual resources which have some shared physical or associative characteristics that set them apart from other resources.²⁰

Elements that must be included in the definition of property types are the description of known and expected property types, development of criteria for the evaluation of existing or expected resources in terms of the historic context and the property types, and identification of the distribution and potential distribution of expected property types. These items are addressed here and in Chapters II and III.

Evaluation Criteria for the Agricultural Tenancy Historic Context

The primary criterion for evaluation of a resource for inclusion in the agricultural tenancy historic context is the positive linkage of one or more specific tenants with the property at one or more points during the period of the context (1770 to 1900+/-). This linkage can be made through a combination of documentary sources including tax assessments, leases, insurance policies, Orphans Court valuations, probate administration, day books or farm journals, leases, and property deeds. The period of significance for the resource is the period during which it was tenant-occupied. There may be only one period of significance for a property or several spread throughout the period of the context. The length of the period of significance is limited only by the length of tenant occupancy.

Once a property has been determined eligible for inclusion in the agricultural tenancy historic context, further action towards nominating the property to the National Register of Historic Places should be determined by its evaluation against the Secretary of the Interior's criteria for integrity and significance. It should be noted that the specific items discussed here relate only to the nomination of a resource under the agricultural tenancy historic context--in some cases a resource may be nominated for its relationship to other contexts and it should be evaluated against those criteria as well.

Criteria for Integrity. The Secretary's Standards specify seven areas of integrity to be considered when determining whether a property is eligible for nomination to the National Register: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The most important elements in relation to the agricultural tenancy historic context are feeling, design,

²⁰ Delaware Plan, p. 23-24.

location, and setting. Association with a major character such as a multiple property owner or a member of an agricultural reform society can also be important. The key is that a level of integrity for these elements must remain in connection with the period of tenancy. Another important point for purposes of integrity is that the buildings being nominated under the context should relate to the period of significance (i.e. the period of tenant occupation). A field evaluation of the site should be conducted by an individual who is CFR 61 qualified in architectural history or a closely related field to determine whether the extant buildings date to the period of significance that has been identified through the documentary record.

Criteria for Significance. The Secretary's Standards specify four areas of significance:

- A. association with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of our history;
- B. association with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction, a master, or high artistic values; or represent a significant and distinguishable entity;
- D. information, or potential information, important to history or prehistory.

Properties eligible for inclusion in the agricultural tenancy historic context could be nominated under criterion A, B, or C, depending on the particular property, its history, and its circumstances of tenancy. Properties related to this context are unlikely to be nominated under criterion D because this context deals only with above-ground resources.

Physical and Associative Property Types

Once a linkage has been made between a resource and a period of tenant occupation and the resource has been evaluated for its relationship to one or more of the physical and associative property types established for the agricultural tenancy historic context, it must then be evaluated against the criteria for integrity and significance. A certain level of information about the history of the property, its owners, and its tenants must be collected in order to compare it to the physical and associative characteristics described in Chapters II and III. At a minimum, this would include at least one period description for the period of tenant occupation (describing buildings and land). This description need not be the same source that provides the linkage establishing the site as a tenant farm. Potential sources for period property descriptions include orphans court valuations, tax assessments, insurance policy applications, and deed records. While we considered using more minimal standards for inclusion in the context, we concluded that a period description was necessary to establish a linkage between the tenancy period and the extant structures on the farm; from our test fieldwork, we derived more than adequate numbers of resources eligible for the context. The minimum level of information collected should also include biographical and tax assessment information for both landlord and tenant (describing taxable property such as livestock,

slaves, and land, as well as race, gender, and total wealth). Ideally it would also include a history of property owners and a tentative history of the construction of buildings on the site.

Chapter II identifies certain physical characteristics that should be met by all tenant farms considered for inclusion in the historic context--these relate primarily to characteristics of dwellings, farm buildings, and farm size. Only one specific physical property type was identified for agricultural tenancy--house and gardens. Specific characteristics and criteria for evaluation of resources related to this property type are discussed in Chapter II as well.

Most of the property types related to the agricultural tenancy context are associative in nature with characteristics determined by historic documentation. These property types include resources related to multiple property owners, estates, and African-American tenancy. The characteristics of these property types, defined historically through documentary research, are described in Chapter III along with specific criteria for the evaluation of resources related to those property types.

Distribution of Property Types

Location patterns for tenant farms are difficult to identify because geographic location does not appear to have been a major factor in determining whether a property was tenanted. Tenant farm sites were distributed in a fairly random manner throughout the Upper Peninsula Zone. Maps of the tentatively identified extant sites in Murderkill and Little Creek hundreds from circa 1860 illustrate the lack of pattern (Figures 10 and 11). It is possible that more extensive and positive identification of tenant sites from other periods in the context may present more identifiable patterns, but this would require extensive documentary research on numerous individual properties and is outside the scale of this project. Since different farms were tenanted at varying times, survival rates for tenant farms should be determined for several specific points in time throughout the context. Based on the reconnaissance fieldwork in Murderkill and Little Creek hundreds, approximately one-third of the tenant farms identified on the 1860 tax assessments survive today. At any given time between 1770 and 1900, approximately half of the farms were tenant-occupied; the particular sites that made up that group changed through time. At this time there is no way of measuring how many of the entire population of tenant farms actually survive, nor can we measure how much of the surviving agricultural landscape is made up of tenant-related sites.

Distribution patterns for the house and garden property type are equally difficult to discern. While some of the identified properties appear to be located in or near small towns such as Leipsic and Little Creek Landing, others are located at the edge of a farm. Since very few sites have been positively identified so far, however, further research on such sites throughout the zone is required before the existence of a particular pattern can be proven.



Figure 10: Farms Potentially Eligible for Inclusion in the Agricultural Tenancy Historic Context, Murderkill Hundred

(See Appendix A for explanation of the methodology used to identify the tenant farms.)

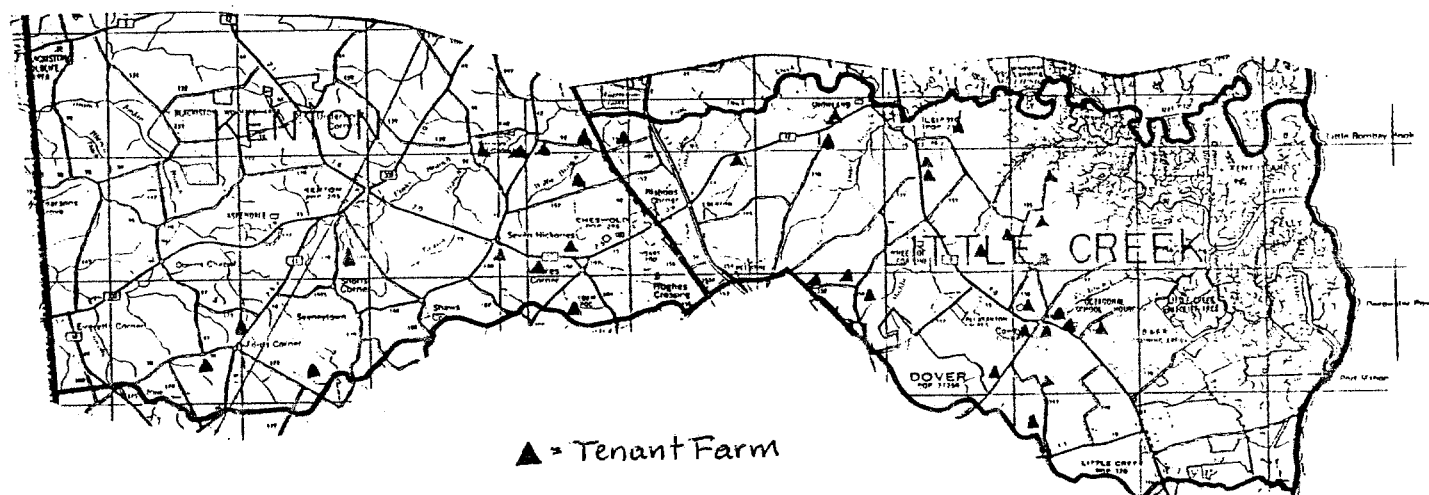


Figure 11: Farms Potentially Eligible for Inclusion in the Agricultural Tenancy Historic Context, Little Creek Hundred

(See Appendix A for explanation of the methodology used to identify the tenant farms.)

II. PHYSICAL PROPERTY TYPES FOR AGRICULTURAL TENANCY

The difficulty in identifying physical property types for the agricultural tenancy historic context is that beyond including farm dwellings and agricultural outbuildings that were built prior to 1900, there are no particular physical characteristics that separate tenant farm buildings from other structures. Period descriptions and extant sites present a wide range of possibilities among tenant farm buildings. This is due to the fact that tenancy was a result of shifting economic and social characteristics of the time period, geographic area, and property owners, rather than particular physical characteristics of a property. This chapter will describe the few physical characteristics and limitations of tenant farms, tenant farm buildings, and the one physical property type that has been found to be associated with agricultural tenancy--the house and garden--and will establish the evaluation criteria for those property types.

Tenant Farms

Between 1770 and 1900, the economic base of the Upper Peninsula Zone was agriculture--more than three-quarters of its land was occupied for agricultural purposes. Grains were the primary crops in the northern section of the zone (including Appoquinimink and Little Creek hundreds), with farms averaging 150 acres in wheat and Indian corn. Further south, in Murderkill Hundred, farmers grew a wider variety of market crops and their farms averaged 160 acres. This variety in farming practices is emphasized by figures from the tax assessments and agricultural census returns. At the time of the 1860 census, 1,004,295 acres of land were under production in Delaware on 6,588 farms. The average farm was 168 acres, and the average value of a farm was \$4770. About two-thirds of the land was improved. With 2,971 farms, New Castle County had the highest proportion of farms per county (45% of the state's farms). They were proportionately the smallest, averaging only 79 acres per farm. New Castle County contained 23% of the productive farm land in the state; of its 234,671 acres, 81% was improved. The average value per farm in the county was \$5599, 17% higher than the state average. Patterns in land use varied greatly between regions in the state. Kent County held 1,948 farms (29% of the farms in the state). The average farm size was close to the state average (159 acres per farm) but was twice the size of the average farm in New Castle County. Considerably less of Kent County's land was improved--60% compared to 81% in New Castle County. Average farm value was very close to New Castle County, at \$5169, but was still higher than the state average.

This was also a time of great change in agriculture in the state--between 1860 and 1880, the number of farms in the state increased by a third. In the same period, over 85,000

acres were added to Delaware's agricultural lands, but the average farm size dropped by one-quarter, from 168 acres to 124 acres. Approximately two-thirds of the farm land was improved throughout the second half of the nineteenth century.

Throughout the three test hundreds, the farms occupied by tenants exhibited certain general characteristics in comparison to those that were owner-occupied. They were generally larger and worked more intensively than owner-occupied farms. They also tended to cluster in specific size ranges, that differed from those of owner-occupied farms, throughout the nineteenth century. Owner-occupied farms tended to occupy a much wider range of farm sizes, but average farm size was consistently and significantly smaller than tenant farms.

Little Creek Hundred. In 1822, Little Creek Hundred contained 161 farms²¹ covering 27,364 acres. More than two-thirds of the farms and farmlands were occupied by tenants. Overall, the average farm size for both owner- and tenant-occupied farms was 170 acres. Tenant farms ranged in size from 10 to 490 acres; owner-occupied farms varied more, running anywhere from 25 to 900 acres. A slightly higher proportion of tenant farms were over 100 acres--two-thirds as opposed to three-fifths--than owner-occupied farms (Figure 12).

By 1860, the hundred held 220 farms on 29,211 acres. While half of the farms were tenanted, they occupied nearly 60% of the agricultural lands. The average farm was 133 acres but farm sizes differed greatly depending on whether they were owner- or tenant-occupied. Tenant farms ranged in size from 15 to 400 acres, averaging about 150 acres. More than two-thirds of tenant farms were over 100 acres. Owner-occupied farms continued to represent a greater range of farm sizes, running from 12 to 800 acres, but averaging only 80 to 110 acres. In sharp contrast to tenant farms, two-thirds of owner-occupied farms were 100 acres or less (Figure 13).

In 1860 the agricultural census recorded 157 farms in Little Creek Hundred, only 8% of the farms in Kent County. At 182 acres, the average farm in Little Creek Hundred was larger than those in Appoquinimink and Murderkill hundreds, New Castle County, Kent County, or the state. Approximately 69% of the farm land was improved. The average farm value was \$5935, about 15% higher than the Kent County average.

In 1896, after the partition of Kenton Hundred, the Little Creek Hundred contained 122 farms on 18,544 acres. Tenants occupied 61% of the farms and 71% of the farm lands. At 152 acres, the overall average farm size continued to hold a middle ground between owner and tenant farms. The gap between owner- and tenant-occupied farms remained the same as

²¹ As stated in the Preface, "farm" refers to agricultural properties of 10 acres or more.

Figure 12: Distribution of Farm Sizes in Little Creek Hundred, 1822

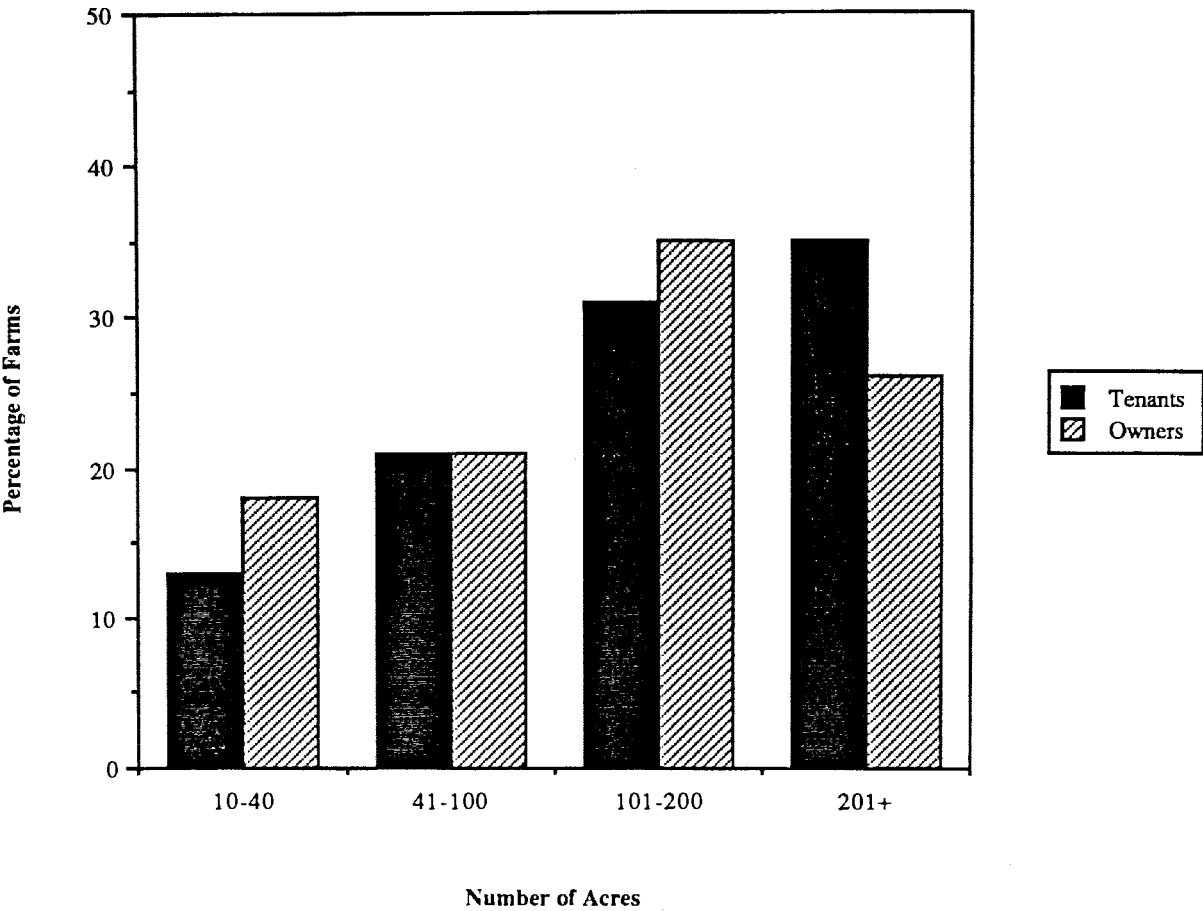
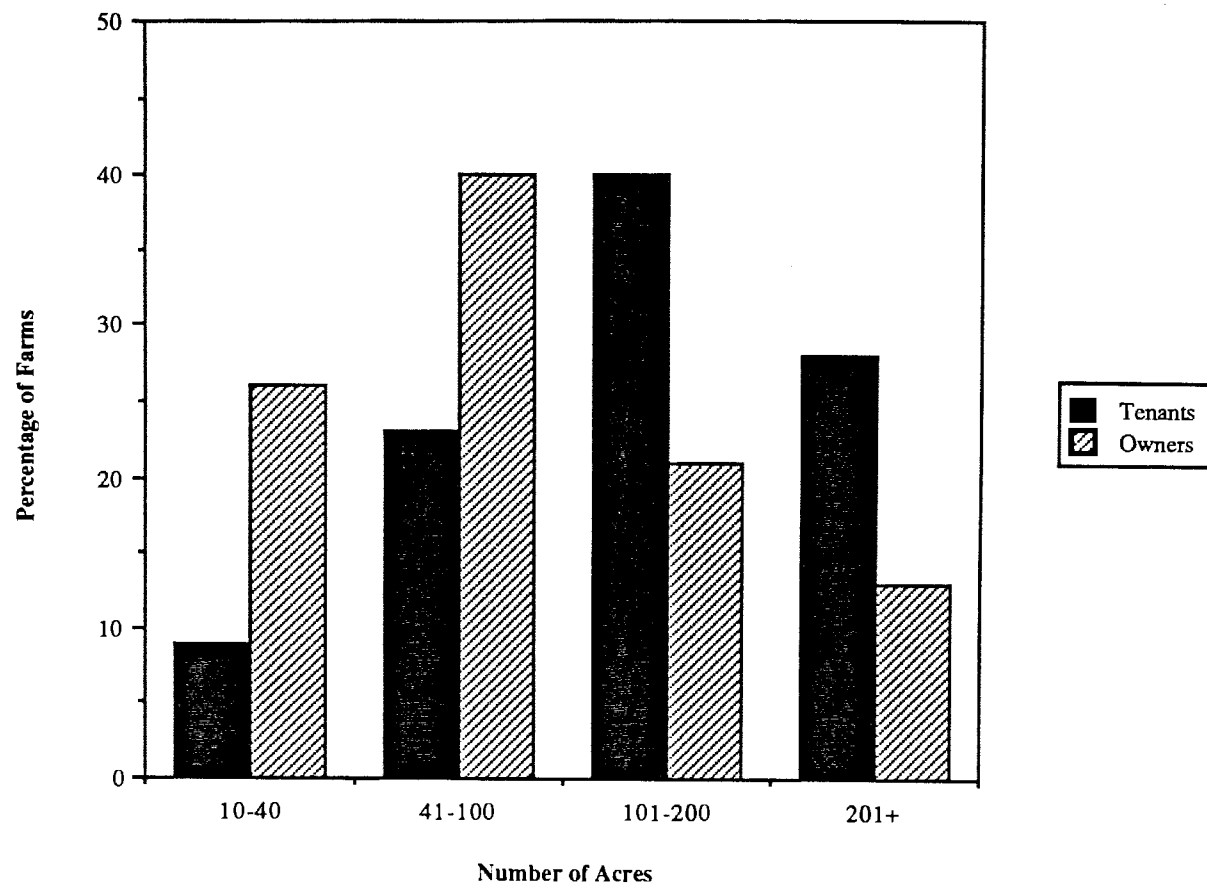


Figure 13: Distribution of Farm Sizes in Little Creek Hundred, 1860

it was in 1860, even though the average farm size for owner-occupants had increased by 17%. For the first time, the range of farm sizes occupied by tenants exceeded that of owner-occupied farms--tenants ranged from 14 to 740 acres while owners ran from 12 to only 400 acres. While 55% of owner-occupied farms fell below 101 acres, less than 30% of tenant farms did so (Figure 14).

Murderkill Hundred. Murderkill Hundred presented a similar picture on a larger scale: in 1822, 446 farms encompassed 75,046 acres. Tenants occupied two-thirds of the farms and agricultural land. The average farm in the hundred was 168 acres, whether owner or tenant occupied. The range in farm sizes was roughly equal for both groups: 10 to 700 acres. A slightly higher proportion of owner-occupied farms were more than 100 acres in size--three-quarters as opposed to two-thirds of tenant farms (Figure 15).

By 1860, the number of farms in Murderkill Hundred had increased to 517, covering 66,515 acres. Tenants occupied two-fifths of the farms but slightly more than half of the agricultural land. Average farm sizes for tenant and owner-occupied farms had begun to diverge--tenants averaged 153 acres while owners possessed an average of 109 acres. The range of farm sizes differed more in this tax year than in 1822 or 1896--tenants held between 10 and 518 acres while owners could hold as much as 800 acres. Finally the percentage of farms that were above or below the 100-acre mark differed the least in this year--while half of the owner-occupied farms were 100 acres or less, 42% of the tenant farms fell in that group also (Figure 16).

According to the 1860 agricultural census, Murderkill Hundred contained 426 farms, with an average farm size of 162 acres. Some 71% of the agricultural lands were improved and the average value per farm was \$4211, 19% lower than the county average.

In 1896, North and South Murderkill hundreds contained 556 farms on 58,536 acres. Tenants occupied slightly more than half of the farms and two-thirds of the farm land. The overall average farm size, 105 acres, represented a point midway between owner-occupied farms (88 acres) and tenant farms (120 acres). Throughout the century, Murderkill farms, whether tenant- or owner-occupied, shared the same range of sizes--in 1896 both groups ran from 10 to about 600 acres. More than two-thirds of owner-occupied farms were now less than 101 acres, as opposed to less than half of the tenant farms (Figure 17).

Appoquinimink Hundred. In 1816, the tax assessment for Appoquinimink revealed that 354 farms occupied 63,187 acres. While the range of farm size was much greater here than in Little Creek or Murderkill hundreds in 1822 (10 to 1285 acres), the average farm was still about 175 acres, comparable to the other hundreds in that period.

In 1860, the agricultural census recorded 304 farms in Appoquinimink Hundred, representing only 10% of New Castle County's farms but 22% of the total farm land in the county. Average farm size was more than double the county average--173 acres per farm--

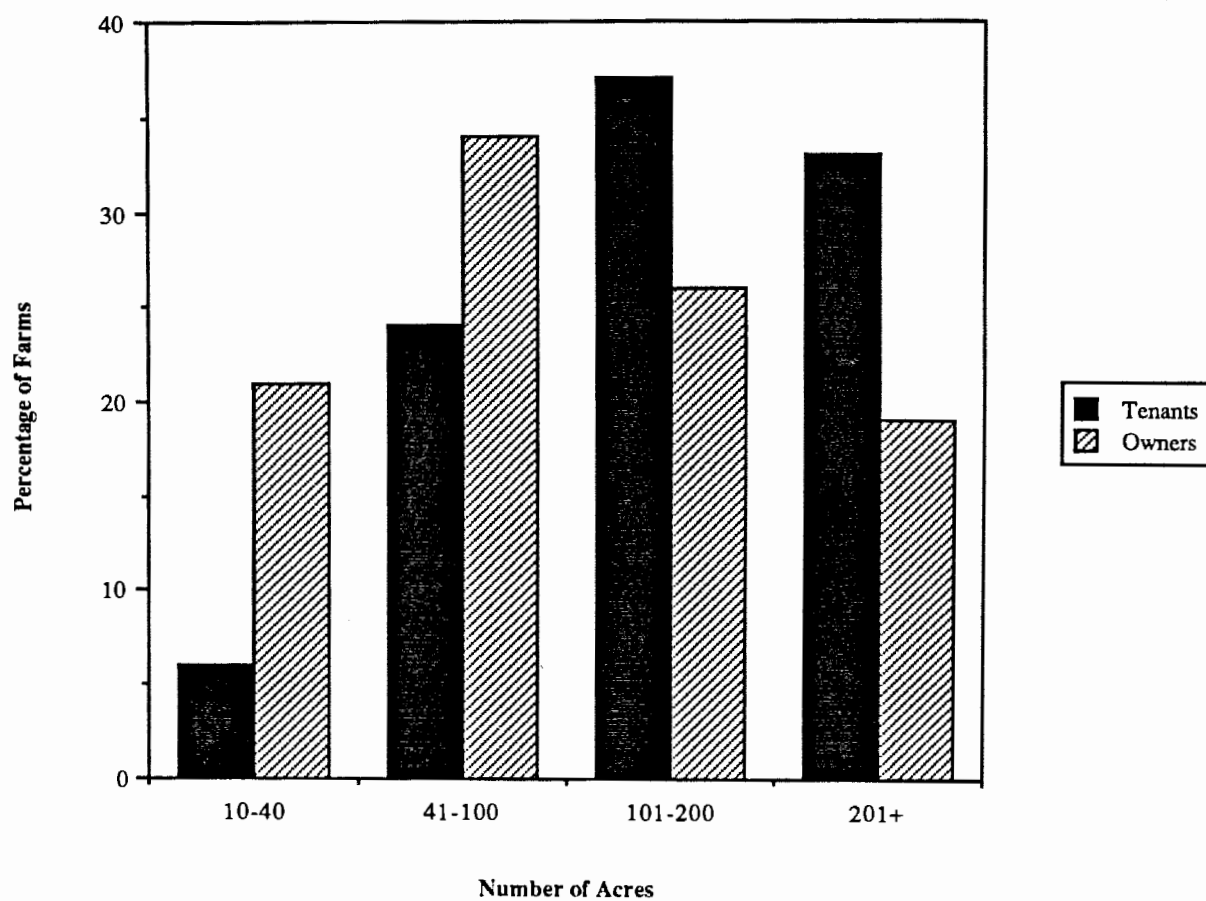
Figure 14: Distribution of Farm Sizes in Little Creek Hundred, 1896

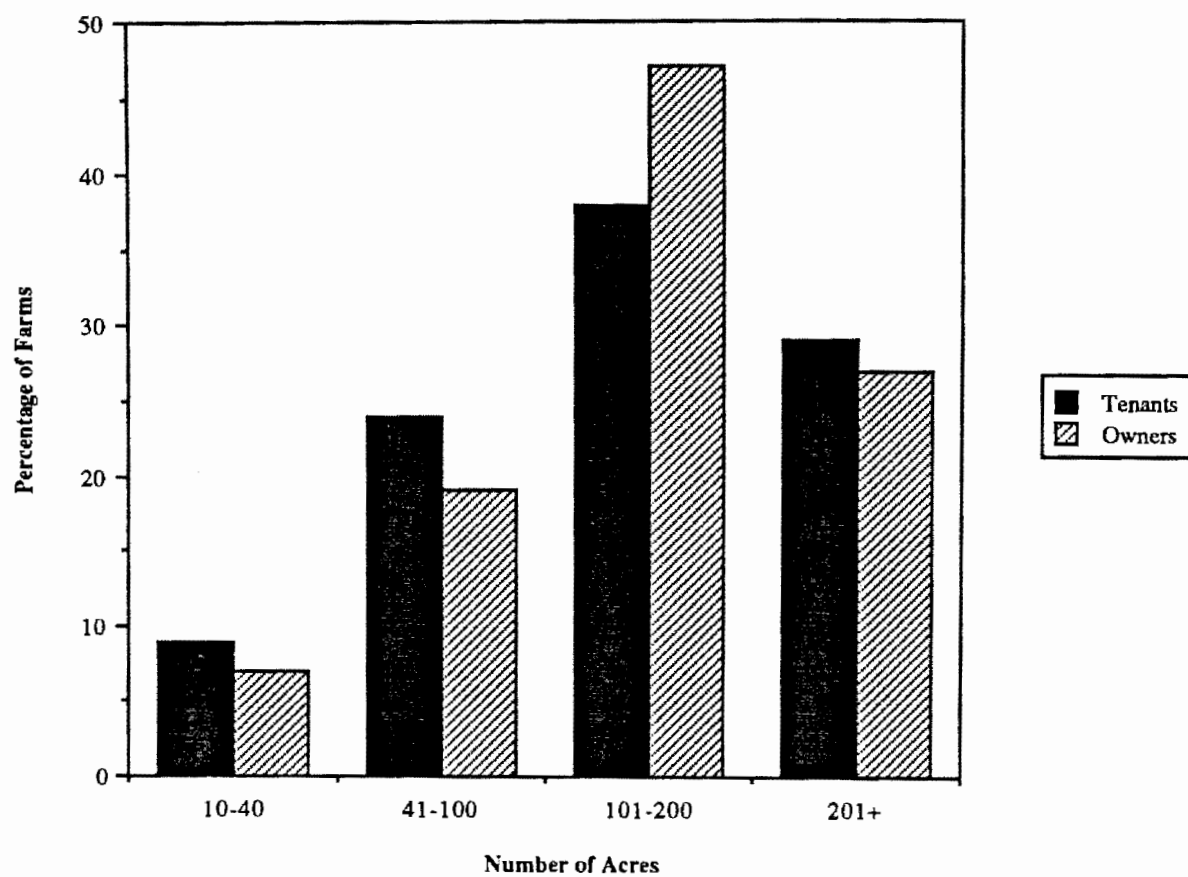
Figure 15: Distribution of Farm Sizes in Murderkill Hundred, 1822

Figure 16: Distribution of Farm Sizes in Murderkill Hundred, 1860

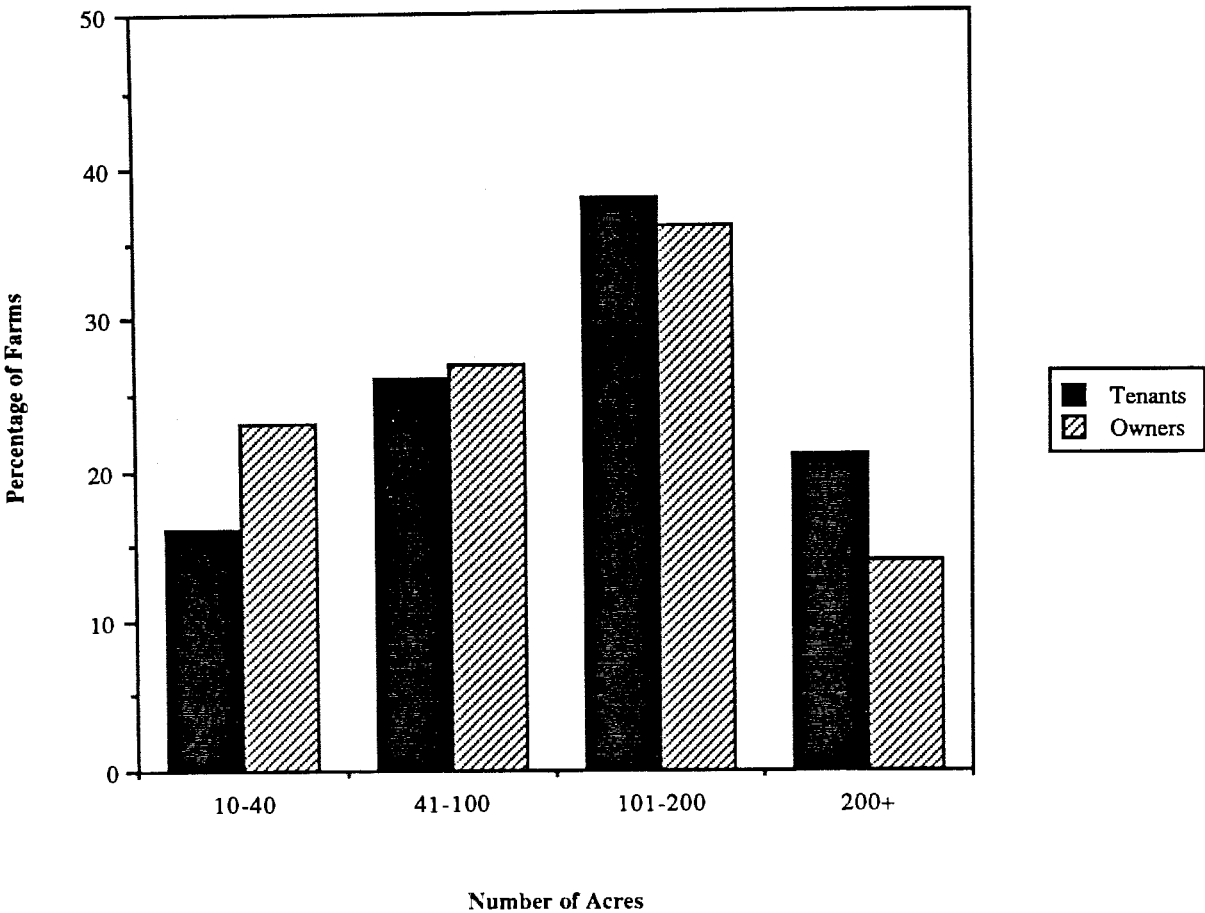
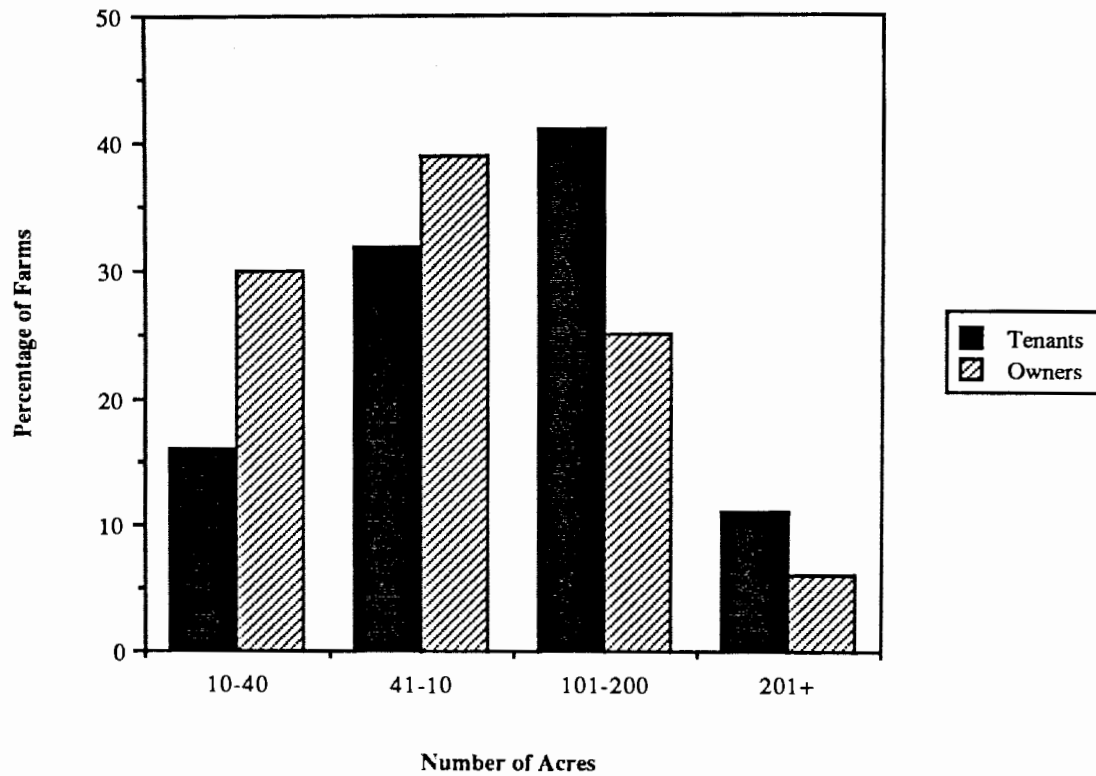


Figure 17: Distribution of Farm Sizes in Murderkill Hundred, 1896

reflecting the variation in farm sizes from the northern Piedmont to the grain belt of southern New Castle County. Almost three-quarters of the agricultural land in the hundred was improved. The average value of a farm in Appoquinimink Hundred was \$7122, one-quarter higher than the county average.

The tax assessment for 1861 recorded 241 farms occupying 35,417 acres. The average farm, at 147 acres, remained comparable to Murderkill and Little Creek hundreds in the 1860 tax assessment. The range of farm sizes had been drastically compressed since 1816, however, dropping from a high of 1285 acres in 1816 to 570 acres in 1861.

Physical Evaluation Criteria

The physical evaluation criteria for tenant farms should follow the criteria established for agricultural property types, specifically farm complexes, as well as the National Register of Historic Places criteria for significance and integrity. The evaluation criteria for agricultural complexes stipulate that to be eligible for nomination to the National Register a property must contain a farm dwelling plus outbuildings and some of the farm land that establishes the setting for the resource. The farm buildings should reflect a level of architectural integrity for the period of significance. The boundaries of the nominated parcel should include any evidence of historic hedgerows, drives, tree lines, or established planting practices. Boundaries for individual buildings should be considered on a case-by-case basis. Each of these areas is discussed below in greater detail as they pertain to tenant farms and farm buildings as a whole. Specific criteria to be considered for tenant dwellings and outbuildings are discussed later in this chapter.

Physical Evaluation Criteria for Tenant Farms. There are two overall evaluation criteria that are specific to the inclusion of a farm property in the historic context for agricultural tenancy: 1) association with a tenant, and 2) farm size. The first criterion related to the agricultural tenancy historic context is connected to the associative characteristics established in Chapter II: the farm must have been occupied by a tenant at some point in time between 1770 and 1900. To be eligible for inclusion in the agricultural tenancy context, some or all of the existing farm buildings should date to the period of tenant occupation. This should be confirmed by means of 1) a property history developed from historical documentation and 2) field examination of the buildings by a recognized authority on Delaware architecture. While the buildings need not have been constructed during the period of significance (the period of tenant occupation), there must be evidence that they were on the site during that period.

Farm size is one of the few physical criteria that qualifies a farm for inclusion in the agricultural tenancy historic context. During the period of tenant occupation the farm must have contained at least 10 acres of agricultural land. This land did not all have to be arable,

in fact, a portion of the property was usually unimproved woodland or cripple. Nor is there an upper limit on the number of acres that the farm could possess--while the average tenant farm contained between 140 and 170 acres, farms ranged in size from 10 to 750 acres. While it is preferable that a tenant farm be nominated with the same amount of land that it contained during the period of significance, it is not required. The property should retain some degree of integrity in terms of setting and location, however, and if nominated, the parcel should extend beyond the immediate farm complex to preserve the landscape and setting.

Tenant Farm Buildings

The farm dwellings and outbuildings associated with tenant farms represent the same range of materials, condition, form, and plan seen on owner-occupied farms. In contrast to the common misconception that tenant housing was mostly dingy, cramped, and dilapidated, the tax assessments reveal that many tenants lived on farms that had building complexes containing large, well-constructed dwellings and multiple outbuildings, all in good condition.

Farm dwellings reveal some interesting information about the status of tenants. In 1822, the tax assessment for Little Creek Hundred listed 208 dwelling houses, 95% of which were located on farms. Construction materials were identified for 87% of the dwellings--while the overwhelming material was wood (82% were log or frame), 18% were brick. This confirms data from a statistical study of property descriptions in the Kent County Orphans Court records between 1770 and 1810 which revealed that between 15 and 25 percent of the dwellings in the county were of brick construction.²² While it might be expected that most of these dwellings had been built for owner occupation, the tax assessment reveals that more than half of the brick dwellings were actually occupied by tenants. (This does not mean that the houses were not originally built for owner-occupation, but rather that they had become available through circumstance as tenant farms.) Tenants did not necessarily have to live in one-story, one-room broken-down log dwellings. For example, between the 1760s and the 1930s, John Dickinson and his heirs housed a series of farm managers and tenants in the three-story brick dwelling that had been built for and was occupied by the Dickinson family in the mid eighteenth century (Figure 18).

By 1860, some agricultural buildings, particularly stables and barns, were more likely to be present on tenant farms than on other farms. In 1822, only 29% of all properties in Little Creek Hundred contained stables, but 36% of tenant farms and 38% of owner-occupied farms contained stables. By 1860, when 47% of all properties in Little Creek hundred contained

²² Study of the Orphans Court records for Delaware, 1770-1810, Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, University of Delaware, 1985.



Figure 18: John Dickinson Mansion, *ca.* 1935.
Historic American Buildings Survey, Library of Congress.

stables, nearly twice the proportion (85%) of tenanted farms contained stables. By comparison, only 68% of owner-occupied farms contained stables. Barns are another example. In 1822, 18% of tenant-occupied farms in Little Creek Hundred contained barns, but only 15% of owner-occupied farms and only 13% of all properties in the hundred included barns. By 1860 35% of tenant-occupied farms contained barns, as compared to only 22% of owner-occupied farms. Because tax assessors failed to enumerate separate outbuildings as frequently in the latter part of the century as they did earlier, information on barns and stables was sketchy for 1896. Still, the statistics suggest an increasingly strong relationship between agricultural buildings and tenant farms in the nineteenth century.

Evaluation Criteria for Tenant Farm Buildings

Farm Dwellings. In order to be eligible for inclusion in the agricultural tenancy historic context, a farm dwelling must have housed a tenant at some point in time between 1770 and 1900. As stated above, the dwelling could have been built anytime prior to 1900, but through historic documentation and field examination must be proven to have been in use on the site during the period of significance. There are no characteristic patterns visible in the size, condition, form, material, or architectural style of tenant farm dwellings during the period of the historic context: they ran the gamut from one-story, one-room-plan, log structures through two-story, three- or five-bay frame houses to two-and-a-half-story brick dwellings with rear service wings (Figures 19, 20, and 21). Because of the variety of buildings occupied by tenants, researchers are strongly cautioned not to make assumptions about the architectural quality of a dwelling affecting its eligibility for occupation by a tenant. For this reason, it is imperative that archival documentation be confirmed by a thorough study of the physical evidence in the building regarding its period of construction, the possibility that it has been moved from another location, and the level of integrity dating to the period of significance for the context.

Agricultural Outbuildings. Agricultural outbuildings exhibit the same level of variety in number, type, size, form, material, architectural style, and function. While some tenant farms contained only a dwelling, others possessed the minimum configuration of a stable and log corncrib, and still others had the extensive complexes of agricultural outbuildings encouraged by agricultural reform (barns, granaries, corncribs, etc.). Once again, the only physical requirement is that the buildings included in the historic context must be proven through historical documentation and field examination to have been on the site at the time of tenant occupation. There is no requirement as to the minimum number of outbuildings that must remain standing, although a higher priority for preservation should be placed on those properties where the majority of the buildings from the period of significance remain extant in good condition and with most of their integrity intact.



Figure 19: J. Alston Tenant House, Little Creek Hundred

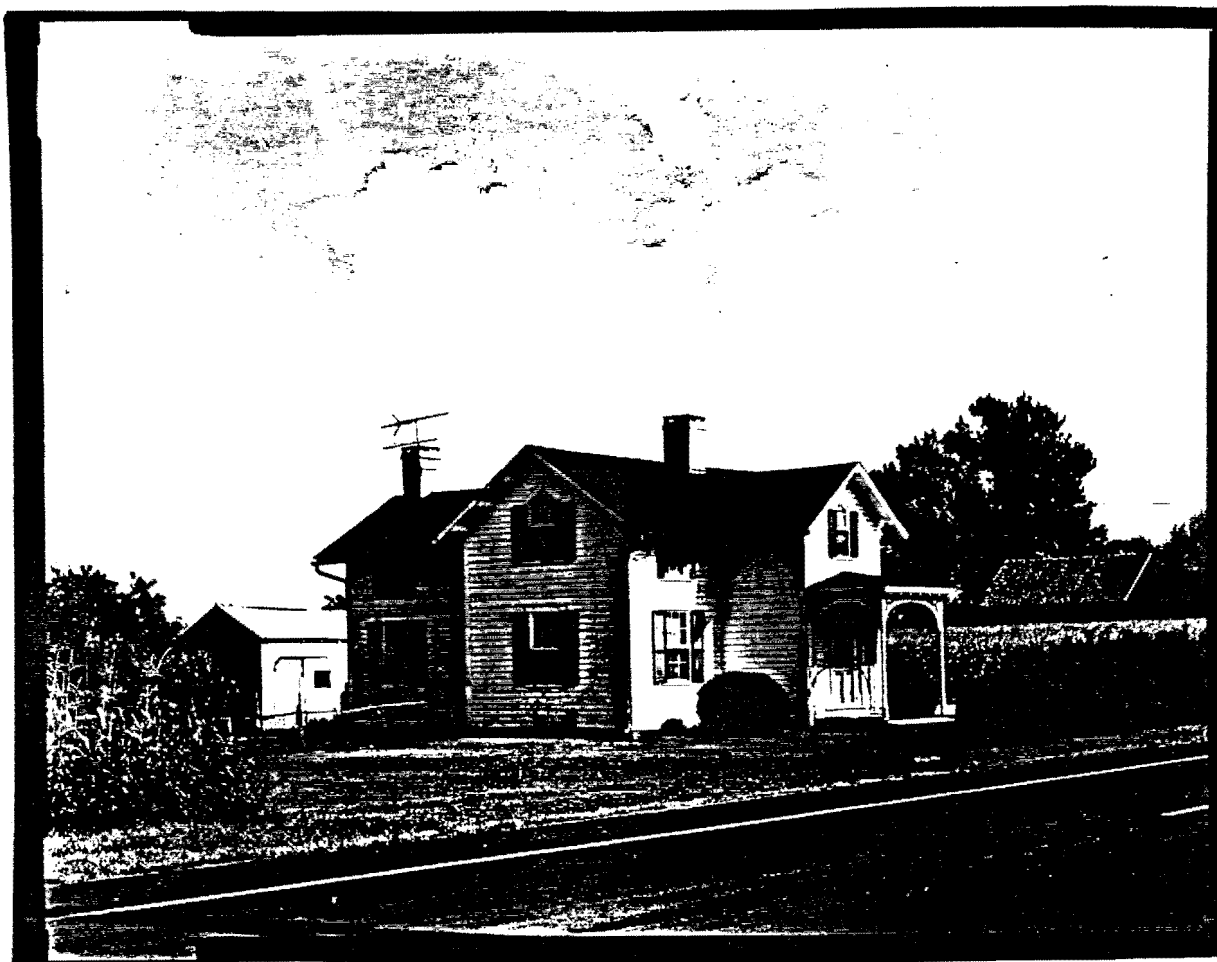


Figure 20: Greenlawn Farm Manager's House, St. Georges Hundred

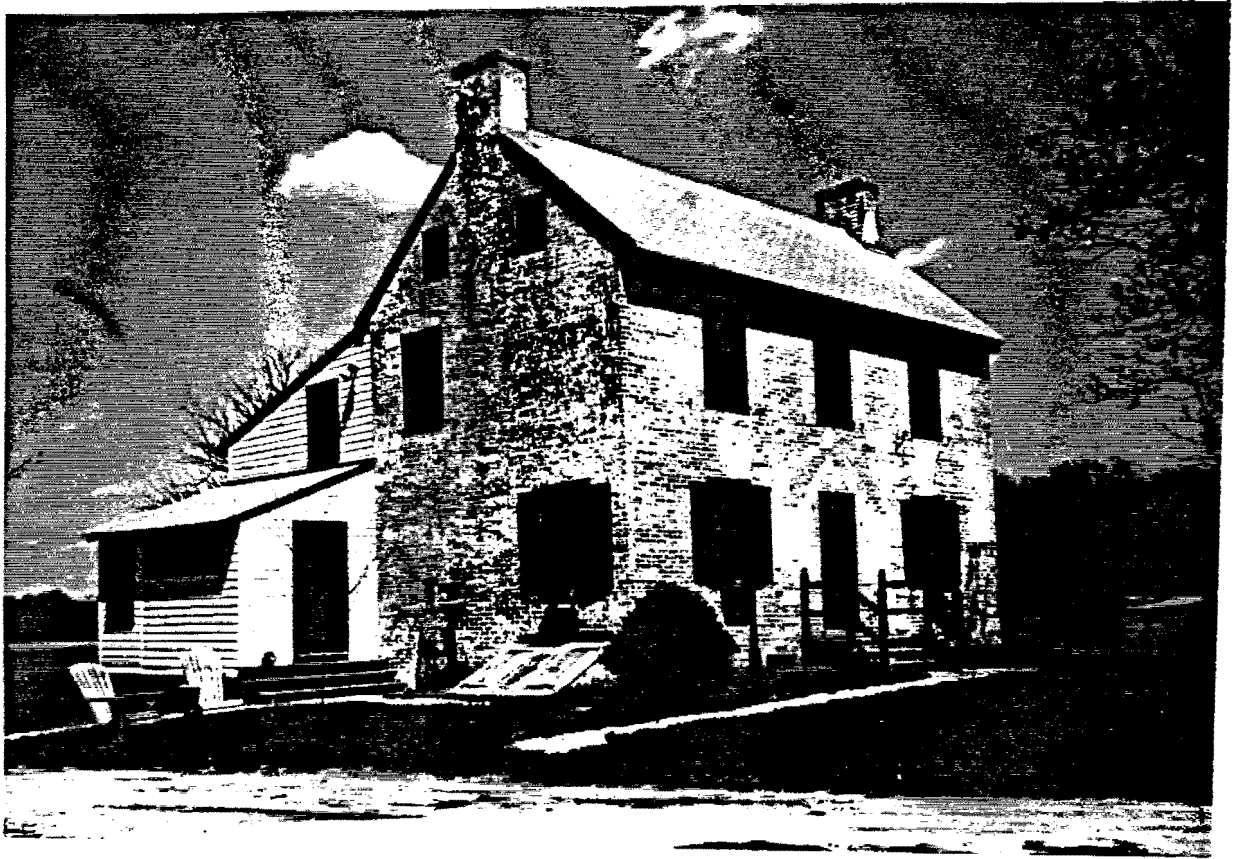


Figure 21: William Lewis Tenant House, Murderkill Hundred

While all of the above requirements apply to tenant farms and farm buildings, there is one other physical property type related to agricultural tenancy that does not fit within this framework. Any resource identified with the property type of *house and garden* should be evaluated in light of the following discussion and within the criteria specified below.

House and Gardens

The construction of "house and gardens" after English models represented another strategy by Kent County landowners to ensure that farm laborers would be available whenever they were needed. A house and garden is a dwelling contained on a plot of land large enough to incorporate a market garden; the plot can be located in a rural town or on the edge of a farm. The designation of a particular dwelling type, the "house and garden," in late nineteenth century tax assessments for Little Creek and Murderkill hundreds has identified a key property type associated with rural tenancy and spurred our investigation of the relationship between agricultural labor and tenancy. The house and garden has antecedents in the English agricultural landscape, where it was also referred to as "cottage-garden." In his 1893 study of English agricultural practices, Kebel noted: "Employers are becoming gradually alive to the fact that if labourers are to be retained for farm service, they will require suitable house accommodations not too distant from their work."²³

The wheat crop grown by Kent County farmers in increasingly larger amounts after the first quarter of the nineteenth century demanded intensive seasonal labor for sowing in the spring, and harvesting in late summer. Providing laborers with dwellings on or immediately adjacent to farmsteads in exchange for seasonal work in the wheat fields made sound economic sense for farmers who could not afford to maintain seasonal farm hands as year-round household members. These dwellings included a small plot of land, or garden, where laborers were free to raise vegetables to sustain themselves and to sell any surplus at local markets. Chester County farmers referred to these as "Garden Tenements."²⁴ According to J. B. Bordley, it was to the advantage of a farmer to provide housing for his laborers and their families in the form of "a small very confined house called a cottage"--these laborers were referred to as "cottagers." Bordley specified that the garden plot attached to the house should not be so large as to cause the cottager to put his effort into his own crops rather than his employer's. Figure 22 shows the design Bordley proposed for a cottage, including the yards and the garden plot--the whole of which he specified should be about one-quarter of an

²³ Kebel, T.E., The Agricultural Laborer, 1893, p. 93.

²⁴ Lucy Simler, "The Landless Laborer In Perspective: Part II. Inmates and Freeman: A Landless Labor Force in Colonial Chester County," paper presented to the Philadelphia Center for Early American Culture, April 18, 1986, p. 3.

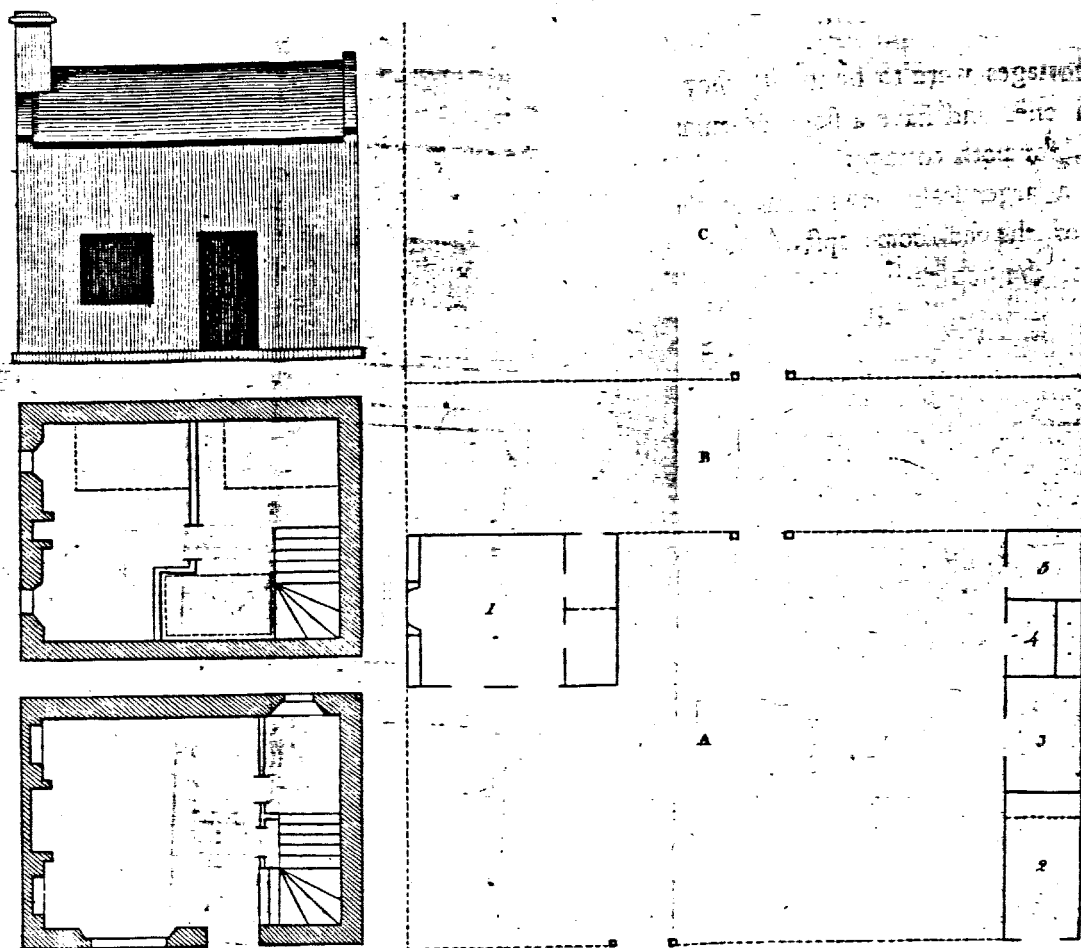


Figure 22: Bordley's Plan for a Cottage.

Section A was the front yard and included 1) cottage, 2) cowhouse, 3) manure and wood shed, 4) necessary, 5) sow and pigsty. Section B was the back yard. Section C contained the garden, about 80 by 136 feet.

acre.²⁵

There were 28 "house and gardens" identified on the 1860 Little Creek Hundred tax assessment list, representing 9% of the 324 dwellings assessed in the hundred that year. The tax assessment described the physical characteristics of the house and garden in varying detail. The majority of this typically wooden house were two stories in elevation, but one and one-and-a-half story house and gardens were also assessed. House and gardens ranged greatly in value, from Daniel Cowgill's rental property of unknown material and stories valued at \$200, to Samuel Burton's two-story brick dwelling (also a rental property) valued at \$800, and to Charles P. Hayes' \$650 two-story, frame, owner-occupied house and garden. Most of the house and gardens were valued between \$200 and \$1000.

Kent County Mutual Insurance Company policies contain detailed descriptions of insured structures, including a number of house and gardens. Designed to insure specific physical structures, the insurance policies make no comment on the surrounding gardens and fail to illuminate the relationship between the dwelling and its garden. In the four policies that have been matched with a tax assessment description, the house and garden was the only property owned by the individual, and the number of stories and value have matched the figures noted in the policy. While each of the dwellings listed in the policies was a two-story, frame dwelling with an attached kitchen, there was considerable variation among the properties. Julia Ann Jones owned a "two Story frame house 16 feet by 16 feet...with kitchen attached 8 feet by 8 feet one room above, one below" that was valued at \$300. Pleasanton Hamm possessed a "two Story frame House 16 feet by 24 feet with Shed Kitched attached 12 feet by 16 feet" valued at \$600 and containing furniture that was valued at \$300. Two of the properties were located in Little Creek Landing: Captain James Hollingsworth insured a "two Story Frame dwelling 30 feet by 22 feet with one Story kitched attached 16 feet square warmed by Stoves and coal burn" that was valued at \$600; Charles P. Hayes' "two Story frame Dwelling House...20 feet by 40 feet with kitch attached one Story 20 feet by 12 feet" was valued at \$1,050. The insurance policies also trace additions and changes made to the dwellings. Therefore, we know that Charles P. Hayes transferred his policy, perhaps when he sold the property, to William B. Melvin in 1870, following which Melvin applied for additional insurance to cover the result of his effort to "raise [the attached kitchen] to two Stories and build Shed."²⁶

The 28 house and gardens in the 1860 Little Creek tax assessment were owned by a

²⁵ Bordley, J.B., Essays and Notes on Husbandry and Rural Affairs. Philadelphia: Budd and Bartram, 1801, pp. 389-391.

²⁶ Kent County Mutual Insurance Policies. Julia Jones, #312, 1852; Pleasanton Hamm, #384, 1854; Captain James Hollingsworth, #398, 1854; Charles P. Hayes, #427, 1855;

total of 19 taxables, 14 of whom were male, and 5 female. Of the male owners 6 owned multiple house and gardens; with the exception of one, all were prosperous farmers, and many were involved in commercial trades. James Heverin (1816-1891) was a forty-four year old "merchant, grain broker, and ship owner...who carried on his farms at the same time."²⁷ Similarly, George Parris combined a lucrative lumber business with farming and an extensive system of property rental. William Henry Morris of Little Creek Landing, the "non-farmer" of this group, was a ship's captain and probably involved with the thriving grain-export business there.

This group will be used to explore the relationship of house and gardens to the demands of an increasingly commercialized agricultural economy that emphasized wheat as an export along with a variety of specialty crops that Kent County supplied to the growing market of nearby Philadelphia. Heverin, Cowgill, and Scott each owned several house and gardens, including some of the least valuable, one-story dwellings. Did these large farmers build, or cause to be built, a group of low-end house and gardens in order to assure themselves of an "obligated" supply of labor nearby? The private account books of John Moore & James Law Heverin provide some evidence of the existence of a clear demand for day-labor, and the payment of wages by a combination of goods, cash, and perhaps credit. House and garden tenants were frequent customers of Heverin's store and may have been receiving wages in the form of credit to their accounts. In 1861, for example, Heverin's account for Robert Collings, the owner of a house and garden at Little Creek Landing, includes charges against Collings' account for payments made to Robert Short and others. Short was listed in the 1860 census as a "farm hand" living in Collings' household.²⁸

Approximately one-quarter of the house and garden owners were women. All were widows, ranging in age from 35 to 61 years old. Rachel Brown, Sophia Endsor, Julia Ann Jones, and Ruth Palmatory had been heads of their own households, including (in 1860) at least 2 minor or unmarried children, for more than a decade. In each case, the woman's house and garden constituted her entire taxable wealth; none of them was assessed for livestock or additional real estate. The average value of these 5 house and gardens was \$395, comparable to the median value for all the house and gardens (\$400); the range of the widows' property values (\$300 to \$500) indicates that they were inhabiting the middle range of this type of housing stock.

Certain questions are yet to be answered regarding widow-owners: 1) Did the house and garden represent the widow's dower, and if so, was the investment by farm families in

²⁷ James Law Heverin, Day Book, Kent County Private Accounts. Delaware State Archives, Dover, Delaware.

²⁸ James Law Heverin, Ledger. Captain Robert Collings' Account (1861), p. 399.

these often substantial dwellings on small pieces of land intended to protect the integrity of the working farm for heirs? 2) If the house and garden was not acquired before her husband's death, what about it appealed to a widow? Was the garden a more generous or fertile plot of land than a "lot?" Was its location--near other farms or local merchants--a deciding factor for someone who might want to sell their surplus garden produce? The answers to these questions, if developed in the future, would help to expand the understanding of the house and garden property type, as well as help to predict possible locations of this type throughout the state.

Of the 28 house and gardens on the 1860 Little Creek tax assessment, 16 were occupied by tenants, all male. The tenants ranged in age from 32 to 70, with an average age of 44 years. They controlled households averaging 5 persons. None listed themselves as farmers in the 1860 census. Instead their occupations included trader, merchant, confectioner, teacher, waterman, shoemaker, wheelwright, and blacksmith. Only Lewis Aaron identified himself as a laborer, but he paid for his account at James Heverin's store with both cash and "By order on mutten," suggesting that husbandry was at least a part-time occupation.²⁹ Simler's study of occupations in Pennsylvania agricultural communities revealed that "individuals moved in and out of occupations over the life cycle," with crafts being practiced by sons until they inherited land and continued until the farm was sufficiently developed to provide adequately for family needs. Individuals often returned to their crafts upon retirement.³⁰ This may help explain the occupations of Manlove Killingworth, 67-year-old shoemaker, and Obediah Voshell, 70-year-old blacksmith.

Delaware's topography made the combined occupation of waterman and farmer ideal. The room-by-room inventory for John Brown, deceased husband of house and garden owner Rachel Brown, suggests extensive farming and harvesting from both the sea and nearby creeks.³¹ Two otter traps, decoy ducks, muskrat and otter stretchers, mole traps, muskrat "gigs," crab net, and oyster tongs were among the utensils stored in Brown's outbuildings. John Cameron, 57-year-old waterman and a house and garden tenant, may have made his living exclusively by supplying himself with food and furs from the water; he may also have supplied local individuals, merchants, or even the Kent County Poor House--as one J.

²⁹ James Law Heverin, Ledger. Aaron Lewis' Account (1860), p. 232.

³⁰ Lucy Simler, "The Landless Laborer In Perspective: Part I: The Union of Manufacturing and Agriculture In Colonial Pennsylvania, 1683 -1776," paper presented to the Philadelphia Center for Early American Culture, April 18, 1986, p. 9-10.

³¹ Kent County Probate Records, John Brown, ca. 1860. Delaware State Archives, Dover, Delaware.

Reynolds did, earning \$2 for six bushels of oysters.³²

One of the difficulties in discussing house and gardens is the notion of "dwelling type." The tax assessments are unclear on the physical manifestation of a house and garden; additional primary research reveals that house and gardens, like tenant dwellings and barns, were built in a variety of sizes and plans. What distinguished a house and garden from a "house and lot" to the tax assessor? Was the difference in the size of a "garden" compared to a "lot," the location of the house and garden, or its relationship to other elements of the agricultural landscape that made it distinct in the eyes of the Little Creek assessor? At this preliminary stage, indications are that it is the relationship (both economic and physical) of these properties to farms that may be the determining factor. House and gardens may have served the needs of several groups within the population--retired farmers, landless laborers, and widows. Older individuals might practice other occupations when they retired from farming while maintaining a close proximity to "the art of Farming" by performing seasonal labor at nearby farms. William Lewis cut wheat for one and one-half days for the Kent County Trustees of the Poor. His reduced payment of 94¢ was annotated by the Overseer: old, "shaky hand."³³

Economically marginal, landless laborers may have preferred the proximity of house and gardens to local farms for seasonal work while engaging in cottage industries--and the sale of surplus from their gardens--to supplement their farm labor wages. The location of house and gardens in the towns of Little Creek Landing or Leipsic did not necessarily imply the embracing of a non-agricultural, or "town" economy. James Heverin's 1100 acre farm, Lawland, "on the Little Creek and Delaware Bay" must have provided ample opportunities for farm labor.

Evaluation Criteria for House and Gardens

The evaluation criteria for the property type *house and garden* are similar in some respects to those of tenant farms and farm buildings. First, a history of the property, its owners, and its tenants should be compiled using primary sources such as tax assessments, census records, insurance policies, court records, and so forth. In this documentation there should be some association of the property with the term "house and garden" or "garden tenement" or "cottage" or there should be documentary evidence of a setting and location that matches that of a typical house and garden. The most common configuration of buildings on a house and garden lot is that of a dwelling with an attached kitchen; there may have been other small outbuildings as well.

³² Kent County Trustees of the Poor. Accounts (1860).

³³ Kent County Trustees of the Poor. Accounts (1860).

The property history should include information about the occupations of the owners and/or tenants and their connections to local farms and rural village communities. These connections appear to be linked to the motivation of certain people for building or occupying a house and garden.

Setting is particularly important as a criteria for evaluation of this property type. Since it is the combination of the dwelling and its accompanying garden that makes it a distinctive property type, any resource nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under this type should retain the same property boundaries that it had in its period of significance--i.e., the entire historic area of the house and garden should be nominated.

Preservation Considerations for Physical Property Types

There are several specific factors influencing the survival of resources related to agricultural tenancy in the Upper Peninsula Zone. Increasing development pressures in the area of the U.S. Route 13 corridor have resulted in the demolition of a number of agricultural sites, many of which may have contained resources related to tenancy. Changing farm practices have rendered many farm outbuildings obsolete and abandoned, often causing them to deteriorate from neglect. In many cases, this alters the farm complex greatly from its nineteenth-century appearance; such losses of integrity can cause a farm to be ineligible for either the agricultural tenancy context or nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Finally, many of the tenant farm dwellings and outbuildings were of log or frame construction. These materials are less durable and survival rates are much lower than they are for buildings of brick construction, particularly in the earlier time periods. Consequently, the stock of surviving resources related to agricultural tenancy may be skewed more and more towards buildings, particularly dwellings, of more durable construction and dating from the mid nineteenth century or later. It is difficult to make any predictions regarding the expected condition of any of the tenancy-related resources. Among the sites viewed during reconnaissance fieldwork, we saw varying levels of condition, ranging from abandoned and completely overgrown farm dwellings to well-maintained farm complexes. There was no consistent or predominant pattern visible in the level of condition.

III. ASSOCIATIVE PROPERTY TYPES FOR AGRICULTURAL TENANCY

Most of the characteristics of property types related to the agricultural tenancy historic context are associative in nature. The primary associative characteristic is the positive linkage, through historic documentation, of one or more specific tenants with the resource at one or more points during the context period (1770-1900+/-). Once that connection has been established, the characteristics for the associative property types are related to the social and economic circumstances of the landlord and the tenant. Landowners, specifically landlords, could be part of one or more of several groups including multiple property owners, nonresident landowners, single property landlords, guardians or trustees for minor children, or landowning tenants. Tenants could also belong to one or more of several groups including landowning tenants, farm managers, widows, subsistence level farmers, or market farmers. Each of these groups and the properties they occupied have certain distinctive characteristics. The criteria for evaluation of existing and expected resources related to these associative property types are tied directly to these historically defined characteristics.

Associative Characteristics of Landowners and Landlords

Throughout the nineteenth century, landownership was restricted to between one-third and two-fifths of the taxable population. In Murderkill and Little Creek hundreds, the incidence of landownership rose between 1822 and 1896; in Appoquinimink it declined slightly between 1816 and 1861 (Table 2).

Table 2
Percent of Taxable Population as Landowners

<u>Hundred</u>	<u>1816/1822</u>		<u>1860/1861</u>		<u>1896</u>	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Appoquinimink	320	38.2	343	34.1	N/A	
Little Creek	152	34.3	254	37.1	233*	41.0
Murderkill	440	38.6	749	45.1	917	44.8

* Half of Little Creek Hundred was partitioned off in 1869 to create Kenton Hundred.

African-American Landowners. Race was clearly a factor in determining access to landownership; landowners, as a general rule, were primarily white and male (Figures 23 and 24). In 1822, the 11 African-American landowners in Little Creek Hundred were a small minority of the taxable African-American population (8%). Most had been free residents of

Figure 23: Racial Distribution of Landowners, Little Creek and Murderkill Hundreds

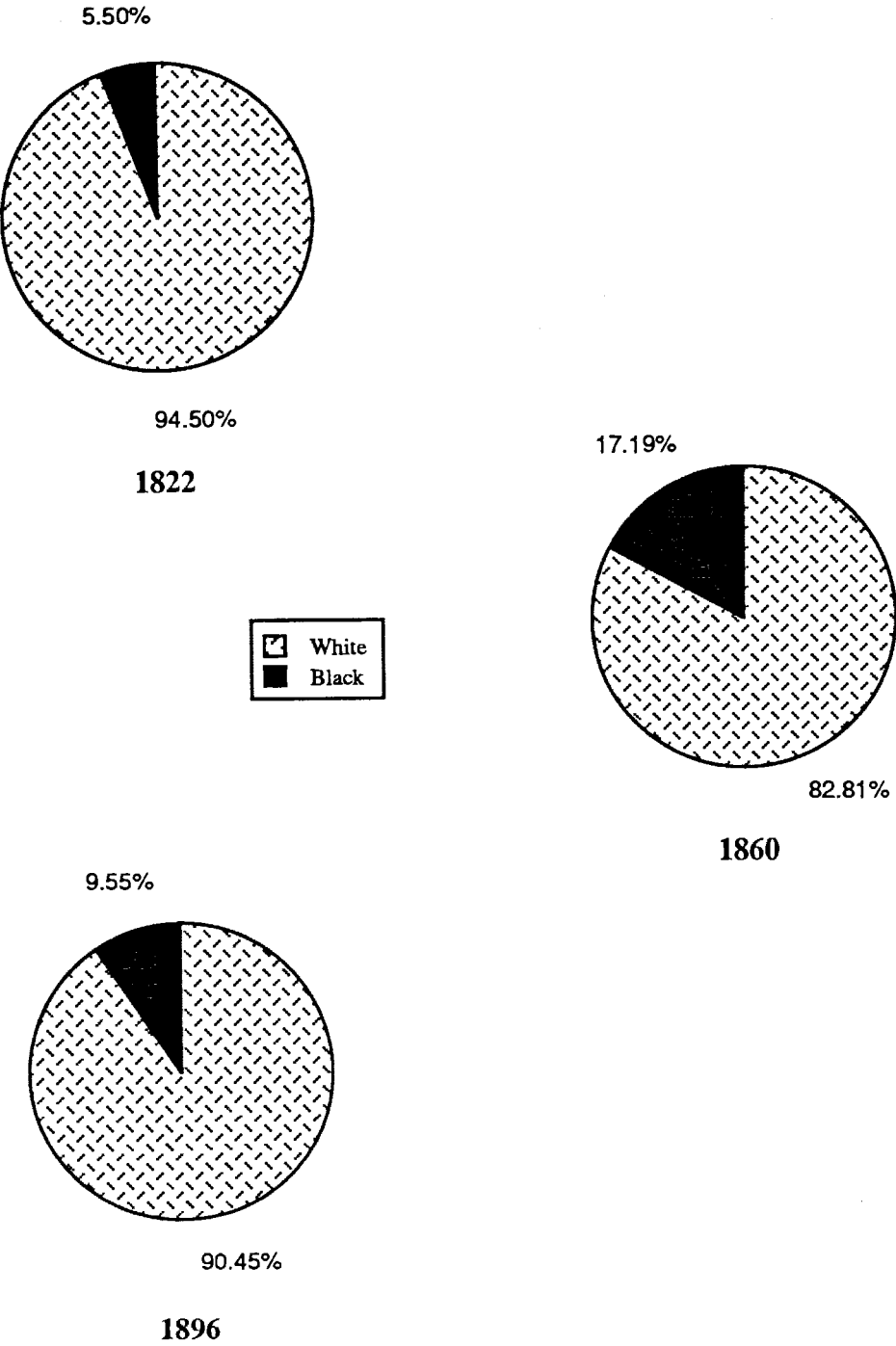
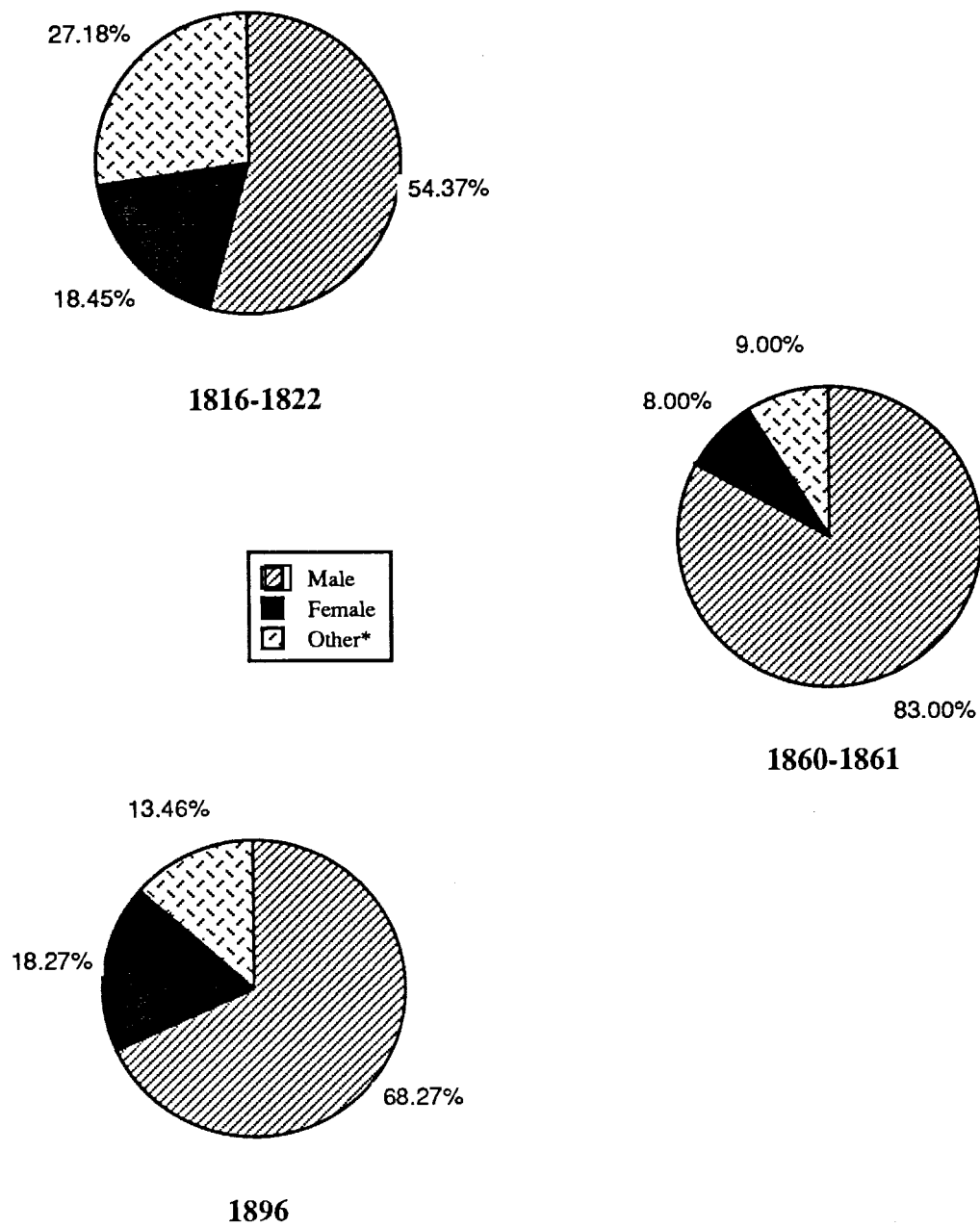


Figure 24: Gender Distribution of Landowners in the Test Hundreds



Little Creek Hundred since the mid-eighteenth century. Of this group, 5 had not purchased their land, but had inherited portions of larger estates. Others resided on small plots of 5 acres or less, suggesting a pattern of acquisition similar to that found by George W. McDaniel in southern Maryland. His survey of African-American landownership revealed that African-American-owned lands were purchased from prominent whites. Small parcels were sold at less than full market value or were given to families to encourage them to remain as a viable work force in areas where labor was scarce.³⁴ Like the parcels of the Little Creek smallholders, these properties were so small that they had little or no value as competitive agricultural units. Because such parcels allowed for little more than subsistence gardening, the labor of their owners on the larger farms in the area was almost assured.

Only 5 of the 11 properties were 10 acres or more, and this number is misleading. The Conselor family owned 4 of the 5 farms, which had been broken out through inheritance from a single larger farm. Elijah Conselor had died in 1801 leaving a widow and five children. The farm remained intact until Elijah's eldest son Jeremiah died in 1811. At the request of Elijah's widow, the estate was partitioned among the heirs. Within two years of her husband's death, Jeremiah's widow, Elizabeth, was remarried to her brother-in-law Elijah Conselor, whose land was contiguous to the portion that Elizabeth and her children owned. Elijah also tenanted 2 additional sections of the divided estate. Although possession of the farm may have been legally divided, it functioned as a single farm unit. The fifth farm, 20 acres of land that was entirely improved and had an assessed value of \$8 per acre, belonged to Jesse Dean. Dean was unusual in that he was not only a landowner, but was also a tenant.

In 1860, 27 African-Americans owned 28 pieces of property in Little Creek Hundred; they represented 20% of the African-American population. Of the 28 properties, 11 were farms of 10 or more acres. By 1896, the agricultural landscape in Little Creek had virtually closed for the African-American population. While 17% of the African-Americans owned land (including 5 women), only 2 owned farms of 10 acres or more--one property was 12 acres and the other was 13 acres. By this point African-Americans very clearly had access to commercially competitive farms only through tenancy.

Without extensive research, it was difficult to locate the farms of the 15 African-American farm owners identified in the three tax assessments. For the most part, the names of the African-American population do not appear on Beers' Atlas of 1868. Of those present on the map (Dean, Williams, Reese, Bolden, Durham, and Handy), most appear on the more inland stretches of road rather than the coastal areas or properties with access to the waterways (Figure 25). This was less of a detriment than earlier in the century because of the

³⁴ George W. McDaniel, *Hearth & Home, Preserving a People's Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982), 190-191.

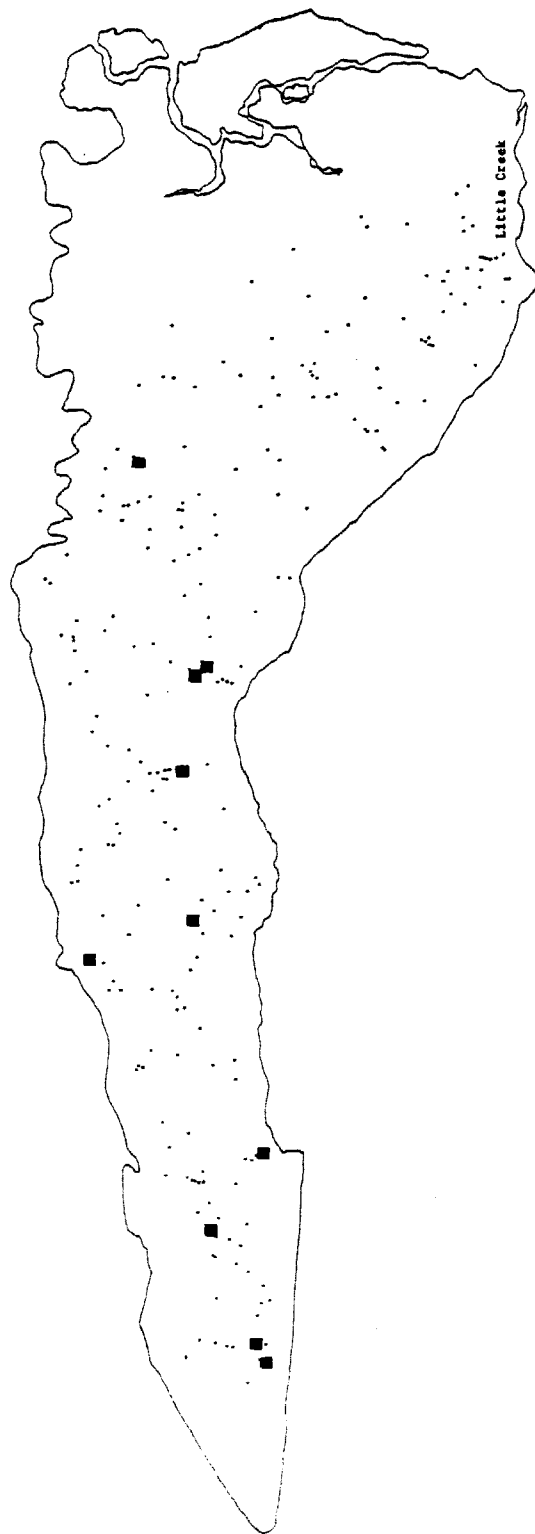


Figure 25: Location of African-American Landowners in Little Creek Hundred, Beers' Atlas of Delaware, 1868

Delaware Railroad. Moorton, an area settled by the Durhams and Deans, furnished the only train depot in Little Creek Hundred.

Distribution of Wealth Among Landowners. Economically, landowners were in better condition than most other inhabitants of the zone. The distribution of wealth in the Upper Peninsula Zone was far from equitable (Figures 26, 27, and 28). Half of the population owned virtually no taxable property (livestock, silver plate, slaves, land, or boats), while one-tenth of the population controlled between two-thirds and three-quarters of the taxable wealth. Although the economic gap between landowners and non-landowners narrowed gradually toward the end of the century, property ownership always conferred distinct economic advantages. In all three hundreds, the majority of landowners in each of the tax assessments were among the wealthiest 20% of the population and the total value of their taxable property was far higher than that of the average taxable. In Little Creek Hundred, for example, landowners' total estates were valued at least twice as highly as those of everyone else. In 1822, the average total estate value among landowners was 2.5 times higher than that of the average resident. In 1860 and 1896, the wealth gap narrowed slightly, with landowners' estates valued at 2.3 and 2.1 times those of others. Compared to people who owned no land at all, landowners occupied an especially privileged position. In 1822, non-landowners' average total estates were valued at less than one-tenth of the average value of landowners' estates. Through the century, non-landowners gained only slightly more economic stature--their average estate values never rose above 15% of the average landowner's.

The narrowing of the wealth gap between landowners and the rest of the population was paralleled by a gradual decline in the number of properties owned by a single individual. While one-third of all landowners owned more than one property in 1822, only one-quarter did so in 1896. Not surprisingly, fewer landowners kept tenants over the century. Two-thirds of all Little Creek landowners kept tenants in 1822, but by the end of the century, less than half did so; in Murderkill, two-fifths of the landowners kept tenants in 1822, but by 1896 only one-quarter of them leased their land.

Landowners and Livestock. Livestock holdings declined throughout the population and among all groups as the nineteenth century progressed. Landowners were no exception to this trend. In Little Creek Hundred, the average number of livestock held by a landowner dropped from 11 in 1822 to 3 in 1896; Murderkill's landowners averaged 25 animals in 1822 but only 5 in 1896.

In 1822, the typical landowner kept a horse, 4 to 5 head of cattle including milk cows, 3 to 4 sheep, and 2 pigs. A small number of landowners kept a team of oxen for heavy agricultural work, and an even smaller number kept a mule. By 1860, a slightly higher proportion of the landowning population owned oxen. Horses were also more common; nearly

Figure 26: Distribution of Wealth in Little Creek Hundred, 1822-1896

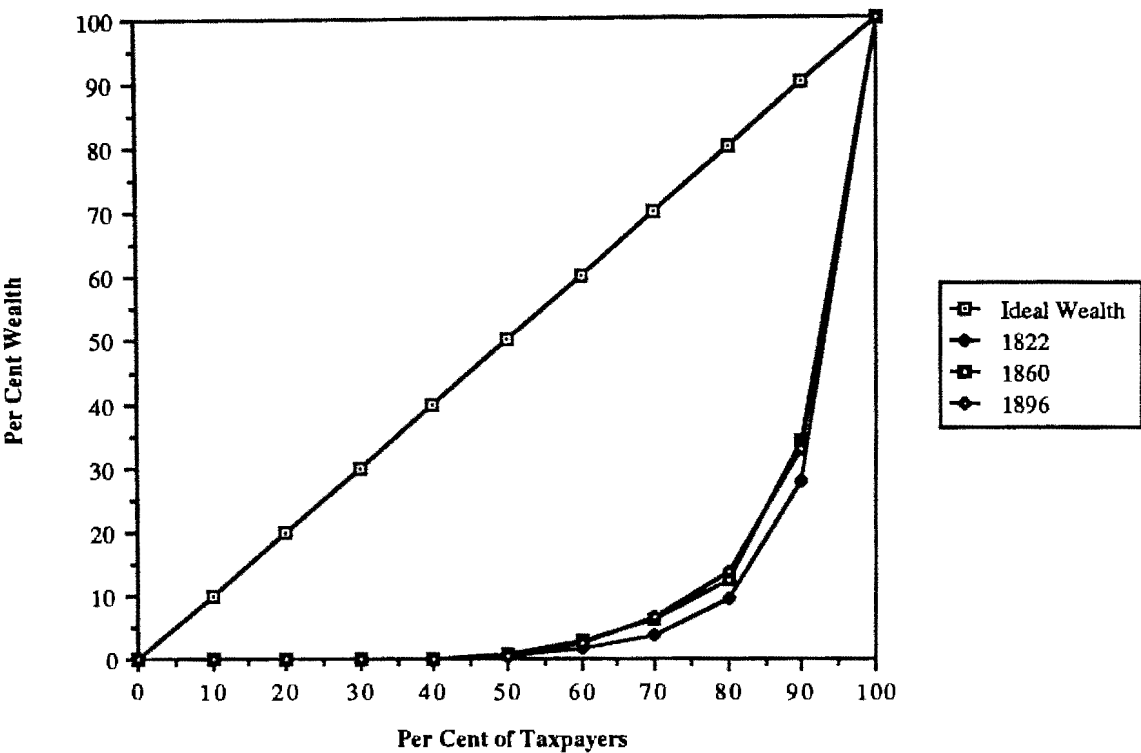


Figure 27: Distribution of Wealth in Murderkill Hundred

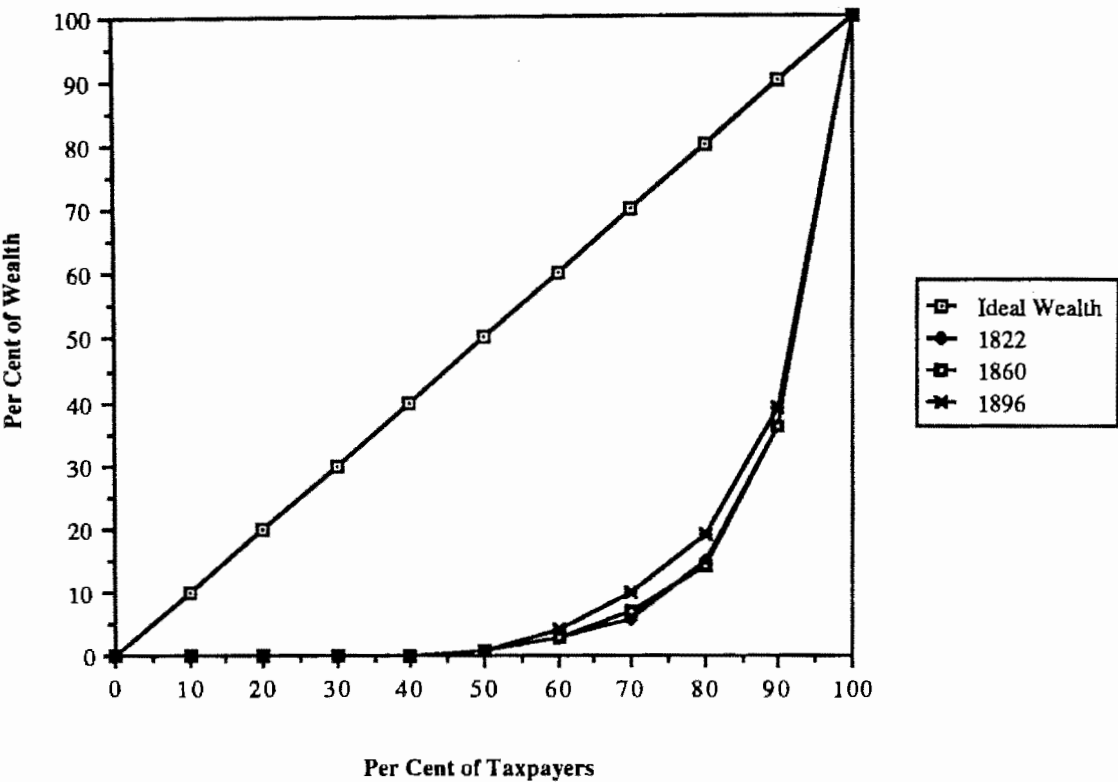
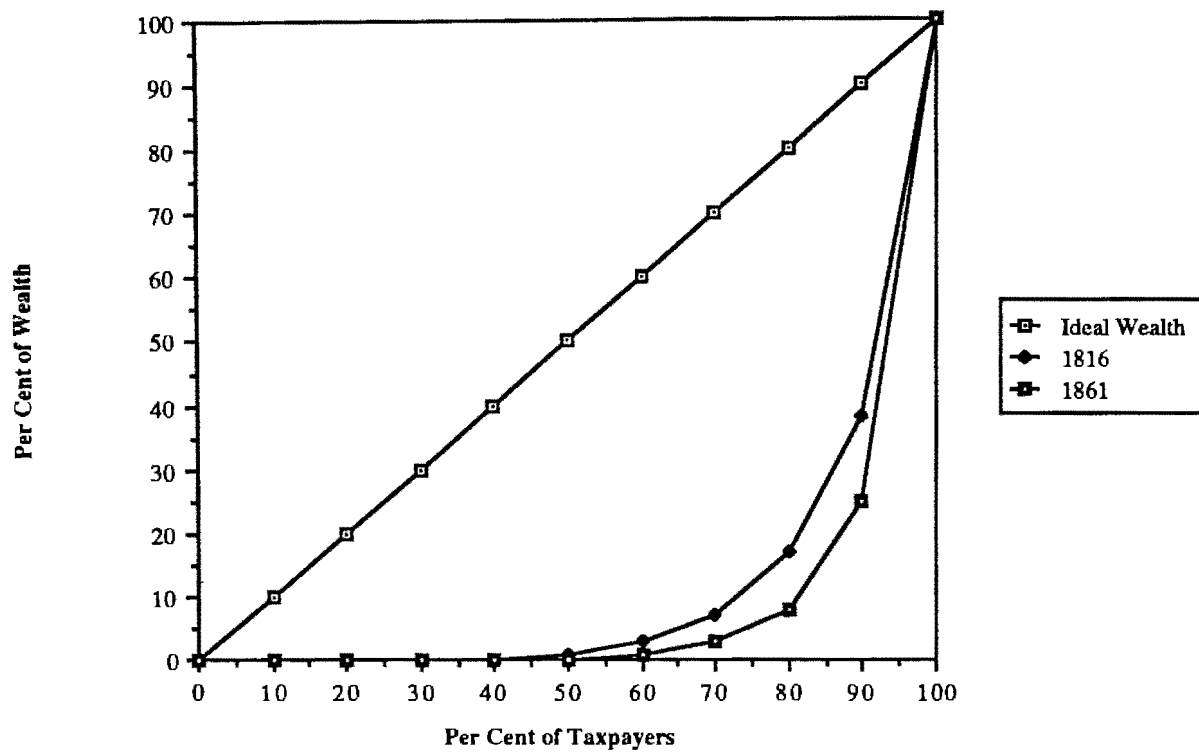


Figure 28: Distribution of Wealth in Appoquinimink Hundred



half of the landowning population kept at least one horse at this time. Cattle, sheep, and swine declined in popularity. By 1896, although most landowners had a cow or two, only one-third of all landowners kept a horse. Other farm animals were even less common; at least 93% of the population owned no oxen, sheep, pigs, or mules.

Of the 11 African-American farm owners in 1860 Little Creek, 8 owned at least two horses. Only 2 landowners, Robert Dean and William Williams, owned more than 10 stock animals. Williams and Dean were exceptions in the African-American population because they were both landowners and tenants.

Landlords

Like landowners, the landlord population in the Upper Peninsula Zone was predominantly white and male. Over the course of the nineteenth century, this trend grew even more pronounced. In 1822, males accounted for 90% of the landlord population in Little Creek, and by 1896 97% of the landlord population was male. Similarly, the percentage of white landlords increased from 74% in 1822 to 93% in 1896, while African-American landlords declined from 21% in 1822 to a low of 6% in 1860 and 1896. Murderkill Hundred exhibits a similar pattern in terms of race: between 95 and 97% of the landlord population was white in all three tax assessment years. The gender breakdown among landlords in Murderkill was slightly different--males represented 47% of the landlords in 1822, rose to a high of 81% in 1860, and then dropped back down to 68% in 1896. The low frequency in 1822 reflects a very high percentage of heirs and estates (40%).

Distribution of Wealth. As a group, landlords in the Upper Peninsula Zone were economically more secure than the rest of the population. In terms of estate valuation, livestock ownership, improvements to the land, and overall quality of the land itself, landlords stood well above the average resident. Throughout the century, the average individual's total estate was valued at less than one-quarter of the average landlord's estate. In some cases the greater wealth of landlords may have been partly due to better quality farmland. In Little Creek Hundred, for example, landlords' farm land was consistently more than 50% improved. In 1822, two-thirds of the average landlord's farm land was improved and in 1860, although the average farm size declined, the percentage of improved acreage rose to nearly three-quarters.

Landlords and Livestock. Although livestock ownership declined dramatically throughout the entire population by the end of the nineteenth century, landlords consistently owned more farm animals than the general population. The average Little Creek resident owned 23 farm animals in 1822, but only 5 by 1860 and 4 by 1896. Each landlord, by comparison, owned an average of 56 farm animals in 1822, more than twice the number owned by average folks. Even in 1860, landlords owned an average of 18 farm animals, more

than three times the general average. By the end of the century, however, livestock ownership had dropped off equally precipitously for both landlords and average residents, both of whom averaged 4 animals apiece. Murderkill exhibited a similar pattern: in 1822, the average resident owned 18 animals while landlords averaged 28; by 1860, the gap had narrowed with the average resident possessing 9 animals and the average landlord 14; in 1896 there was no difference between the two populations--both owned an average of 5 animals.

While landlords tended to own more livestock than the general population, livestock ownership among landlords was not especially common. Throughout the century, more than half of all landlords owned no livestock at all. Those who did keep animals commonly owned a horse, a few head of cattle, some sheep, and a number of pigs. Early in the century, oxen were occasionally kept as well, although they declined in popularity by 1896.

Among landlords, there are two groups that require separate discussion--multiple property owners and the administrators of tenant-occupied estates.

Multiple Property Ownership of Tenant Farms

One of the most common misconceptions about agricultural tenancy is that the majority of landlords were owners of large numbers of properties, all leased to tenants. The reality in the Upper Peninsula Zone is that while there were multiple property owners as landlords, the landlord population was more or less evenly divided between multiple property owners and single farm owners. In both Little Creek and Murderkill hundreds, each group represented between two- and three-fifths of the population in each tax assessment year. The detailed discussion that follows is based largely on the population of Little Creek Hundred; a general review of Murderkill Hundred indicates that similar patterns will be visible there.

In 1822, 1860, and 1896, the multiple property owners of Little Creek Hundred were a remarkably stable group, both in terms of the number of properties they controlled, taxable wealth, and racial and gender composition (Table 3).

Table 3:
Multiple Property Owners in Little Creek Hundred

	<u>1822</u>	<u>1860</u>	<u>1896</u>
Number of Owners	50	73	63
Percent of Taxable Population	11%	11%	11%
Average Number of Properties	2.9	3.3	2.7
Median Number of Properties	2	2	2
Range of Properties	2-8	2-17	2-12

The tendency toward male dominance of the agricultural landscape noted in the general landowning population was less pronounced among the multiple property owners of Little Creek Hundred. In 1822, two-thirds of the multiple property owners were male; the remainder were women or the minor heirs of an estate still held in probate. While the proportion of males in the group rose to nine-tenths in 1860 it dropped back down to two-thirds in 1896. No particular reason for this occurrence has been discovered at this point. The landlord population was also less racially diverse than the general population--all but one of the multiple property owners were white in each of the tax years. The single exception, from 1860, was William Williams, who owned 5 acres with a log house that he leased to David Miller and another 4 acre parcel that he worked himself; Williams was also a tenant.

Distribution of Wealth. Multiple property owners, not surprisingly, occupied an enviable economic position within the taxable population. Most, though not all, were from the wealthiest 20% of the population and maintained livestock holdings in addition to their lands. While they were consistently much more wealthy, on the average, than the average landowner or the average taxable, the gap between these groups narrowed slightly over the century. In 1822, the average taxable wealth of the multiple property owners in Little Creek Hundred was 48% greater than that of the average landowner, and 80% greater than that of the average taxable individual. By 1896 the gap had so that the average taxable wealth for multiple property owners was only 37% higher than that of the average landowner, and only 70% greater than that of the general population.

In each of the three tax assessments, one-tenth of the taxable population owned 2 or more pieces of property (Table 3). While the average number of properties fluctuated slightly, the majority of multiple property owners throughout the century owned 2 properties. In many cases, the second property was a piece of marsh or woodland. The exceptional case in 1860 and 1896 was George Parris, the wealthiest taxable in the hundred that year and the owner of the largest number of properties in any of the three tax assessments. Parris owned 17 properties and leased land to 14 tenants; his influence was sustained throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, and was diversified among farms and town properties.

Throughout the nineteenth century, multiple property owners consistently comprised just over one-tenth of the total taxable population, yet they controlled more than half of all properties in Little Creek Hundred until the end of the century. In 1822, they owned two-thirds of all the properties in Little Creek ranging from lots of unspecified size to 500-acre farms. In 1860, multiple property owners controlled a slightly smaller proportion of the total number of properties (58%) and again their holdings ranged from wharves and town lots to farms of 800 acres. Although there were a few large farms, a larger percentage of their properties were in lots or small parcels of less than 10 acres. By 1896, multiple property owners controlled 14% fewer properties than they had in 1822 and held half of the total

number of properties in the hundred. While their properties ranged from town lots to large farms, only 40% of these properties were farms of 10 acres or more.

In the early part of the century, multiple property owners controlled lands that were more highly valued than those of single property owners. The average value of their lands in 1822 was 7% higher than that of single property owners. Like the economic gap between multiple landowners and the rest of the population, the difference between the value of lands owned by multiple property owners and those of single property owners lessened during the second half of the century. In 1860, lands controlled by multiple property owners were valued at just 3% higher than other properties. By 1896, the average value for lands of multiple property owners had fallen to 4% less than the average for single property owners. The declining average value of landholdings may have resulted from the escalating number of small land parcels. House and lots, lots, house and gardens, buildings without land, and 1 or 2-acre parcels were noted with increasing frequency toward mid-century. While these four parcel types accounted for one-tenth of all properties taxed in 1822, they comprised one-third of all properties by 1860, and two-thirds in 1896. In 1860, slightly less than one-third of the holdings of multiple property owners were made up of these properties; by 1896 house and lots, lots, or house and gardens, represented nearly two-thirds of all the multiple property owners' holdings. In a predominantly agricultural economy, these small land divisions offered little possibility for cultivation, but may have played an important role as rental stock for agricultural laborers. Average holdings of unimproved lands including woodland, marsh, and cripple declined through the century, possibly reflecting the effects of marsh reclamation and the need to maintain woodlots for home consumption. Overall investments in unimproved lands decreased dramatically from 1822 to 1896, reflecting the intensified cultivation of the land.

As the nineteenth century progressed, multiple property owners experienced a gradual decline in farm ownership. In 1822, more than two-thirds of their parcels were enumerated as farms. In 1860, only half were farms, and by 1896, only one-third. While multiple property owners possessed some of the most highly valued farms in the hundred, the average value of their farms was only slightly higher than that of single property owners in 1822 and 1860, and in 1896 was actually 6% lower than the other farms in the hundred.

Multiple Property Owners and Livestock. Individuals who owned 2 or more properties demonstrate some different patterns of livestock holding than the average land owner. A slightly smaller percentage of multiple property owners held livestock than the landowning population in general. In 1822, for instance, 50% of the multiple property owners were assessed for livestock, compared to 56% of all property owners. The higher frequency of non-resident landowners among multiple property owners may explain the reduced dependence upon stock--livestock would have been listed in the hundred where the

landowner maintained residence unless they were specifically located on the farm assessed in Little Creek Hundred. Fewer individuals in the multiple property owner group continued to maintain livestock holdings as the century progressed, although a sizeable proportion of the multiple property owner population--50% in 1822, 40% in 1860, and 62% in 1896--had never maintained livestock holdings. Among the multiple property owners who did, the trend over the century was to own fewer animals--16 in 1822 and only 10 in 1860--of greater value.

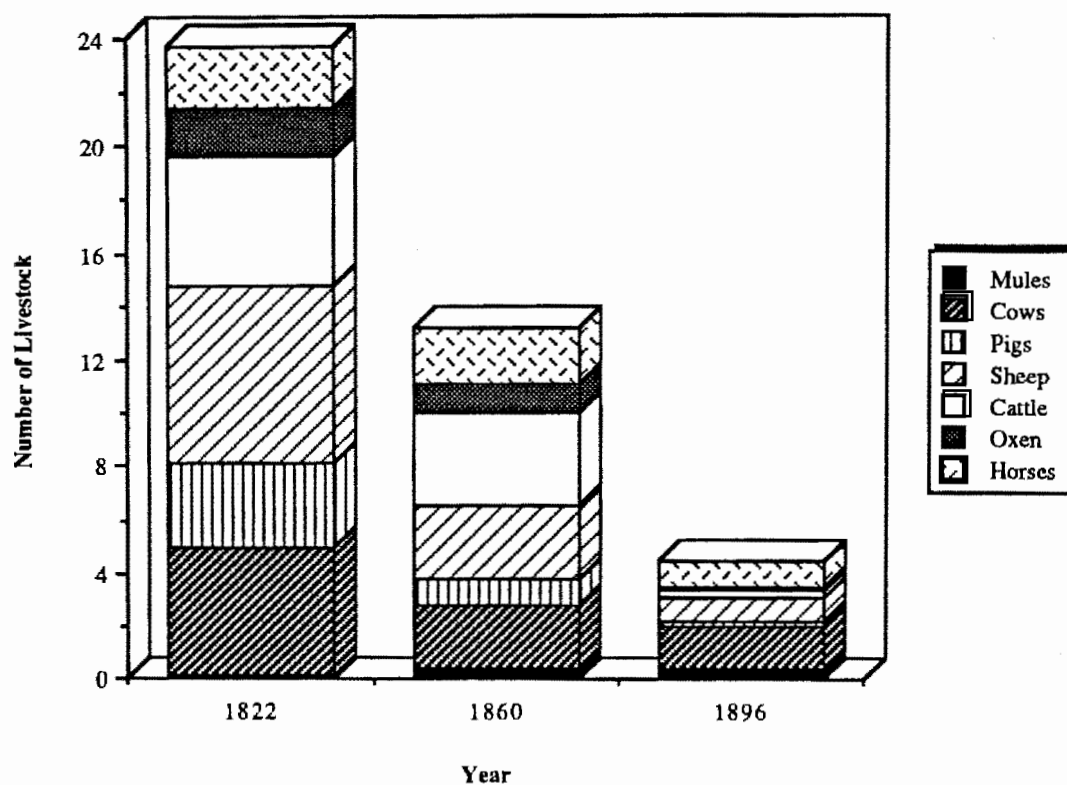
The changing composition of the multiple property owners' livestock holdings provides clues to shifts in the emphasis of Little Creek's agricultural economy (Figure 29). The typical multiple property owner in 1822 maintained 3 horses, 5 milk cows, 5 head of cattle, 2 oxen, 7 sheep, 2 oxen, and a few pigs. While mules became more common on the landscape, they were never prevalent among the multiple property owners' livestock holdings. Among the changes in the average livestock holdings noted in 1860 were the sharp decreases in cows and sheep. The average livestock holding in 1860 included 2 horses, 2 cows, 4 cattle, 4 sheep, 2 oxen, and a few pigs. By 1896, startling changes in the animal landscape occurred. The average livestock holding of multiple property owners was reduced to a horse, a cow, and a sheep; gone from the average farmstead were cattle, oxen, pigs, and mules.

Unlike the rest of the population in 1822, multiple property owners owned sheep most frequently (36% were assessed for 8 or more sheep). Herds of 10 to 15 sheep were most common, although individuals were assessed for anywhere from 1 to 45 sheep. Sheep were a hallmark of agricultural reform in the 1810s, when the Spanish Merino breed was introduced to America in hopes of developing a home woolen industry. Gouverneur Emerson and Jacob Stout each maintained herds of 40 or more sheep in 1822, perhaps expecting to supply Alexander Murphy's woolen manufactory in Kent County. By 1832, however, the county's sole woolen manufactory had diversified its purpose to include the processing of quercitron bark for the tanning industry.³⁵ Little Creek Hundred's marshy lands had proven ideal for the "sheep rot," and the American woolen industry collapsed in the 1820s. The 1860 assessment for Little Creek Hundred revealed that only 6% of the multiple property owners now held more than 8 sheep. By 1896, only 5% of the multiple property owners were assessed for more than a dozen sheep.

Multiple Property Owner Farm Buildings. Dwellings, like farms, gradually became less common among multiple property owners. In 1822, more than one-third of their parcels contained no dwelling. By 1860, half of all properties had no dwellings, and by 1896, more than two-thirds of all properties were dwelling-less. In contrast, the tax assessments indicate a dramatic increase in outbuilding construction among multiple property owners between

³⁵ Documents Relative to the Manufacturers in the United States. House Document 308 (22-1), [serial set] 223 (1823), 672-3.

Figure 29: Composition of Average Livestock Holdings for Multiple Property Owners in Little Creek Hundred, 1822-1896



1822 and 1860. While in 1822 there were only 119 outbuildings in the assessment list (19 barns, 44 stables, 28 secondary dwellings, 2 mills, 1 shop, 10 granaries, 1 smokehouse, 3 corn cribs, and 11 sundry structures), by 1860 that number had more than doubled to reach 280 (40 barns, 107 stables, 4 secondary dwellings, 1 mill, 5 shops, 27 granaries, 74 corn cribs, and 22 sundry structures). In 1896, the assessor abbreviated his description to an expedient "etc." for 35 cases; consequently, exact numbers for corn cribs and carriage houses are unknown. The available information suggests that outbuildings present on the landscape (35 barns, 35 kitchens, 39 stables, 18 secondary dwellings, 10 mills, 12 shops, 38 granaries, and 19 sundry buildings) tended primarily toward artisanry and milling. In 1896, 35 kitchens appear in the assessment list for the first time.

Conclusion. Multiple property owners represented an important segment of the landlord population--they controlled some of the largest, most productive agricultural lands in the Upper Peninsula Zone throughout the century. During the same period, however, their investment interests appear to have turned toward the acquisition of commercial properties and small residential lots in town. While their ownership of farms decreased, they were very active in the construction of new outbuildings. A significant number of the multiple property owners farms also would appear to fall into our second landlord associative property type--*tenant-occupied estates*.

Tenant-Occupied Estates

The frequency of death among landowners with minor children was one of the major factors contributing to tenancy in the first thirty years of the nineteenth century and directly contributed to the creation of one of the associative property types related to the agricultural tenancy historic context: properties that were tenant-occupied during the period of administration following the death of a landowner with minor children. In the first part of the nineteenth century, a number of properties required administration until the heirs reached adulthood. The administration of these estates could result in one of two situations, both of which could be related to agricultural tenancy. First, the executor of the estate or the guardian of the minor children could choose to maintain the lands as tenant farms to produce an income to pay for the children's upkeep and education. Alternatively, the land could be sold to provide capital for the same purpose or to settle debts of the estate. The direct result of this action was to allow the ownership of land to change hands and leave the family. A second consequence was that, prior to the sale of the land, the widow's dower would be partitioned off, creating two properties from one and increasing the number of farms in operation. Both of these types of solutions created extensive documentary trails in the orphans court, chancery court, register of wills, register of deeds, and probate court. One example of the division of a single farm into three parcels is illustrated by Figure 30, a plot

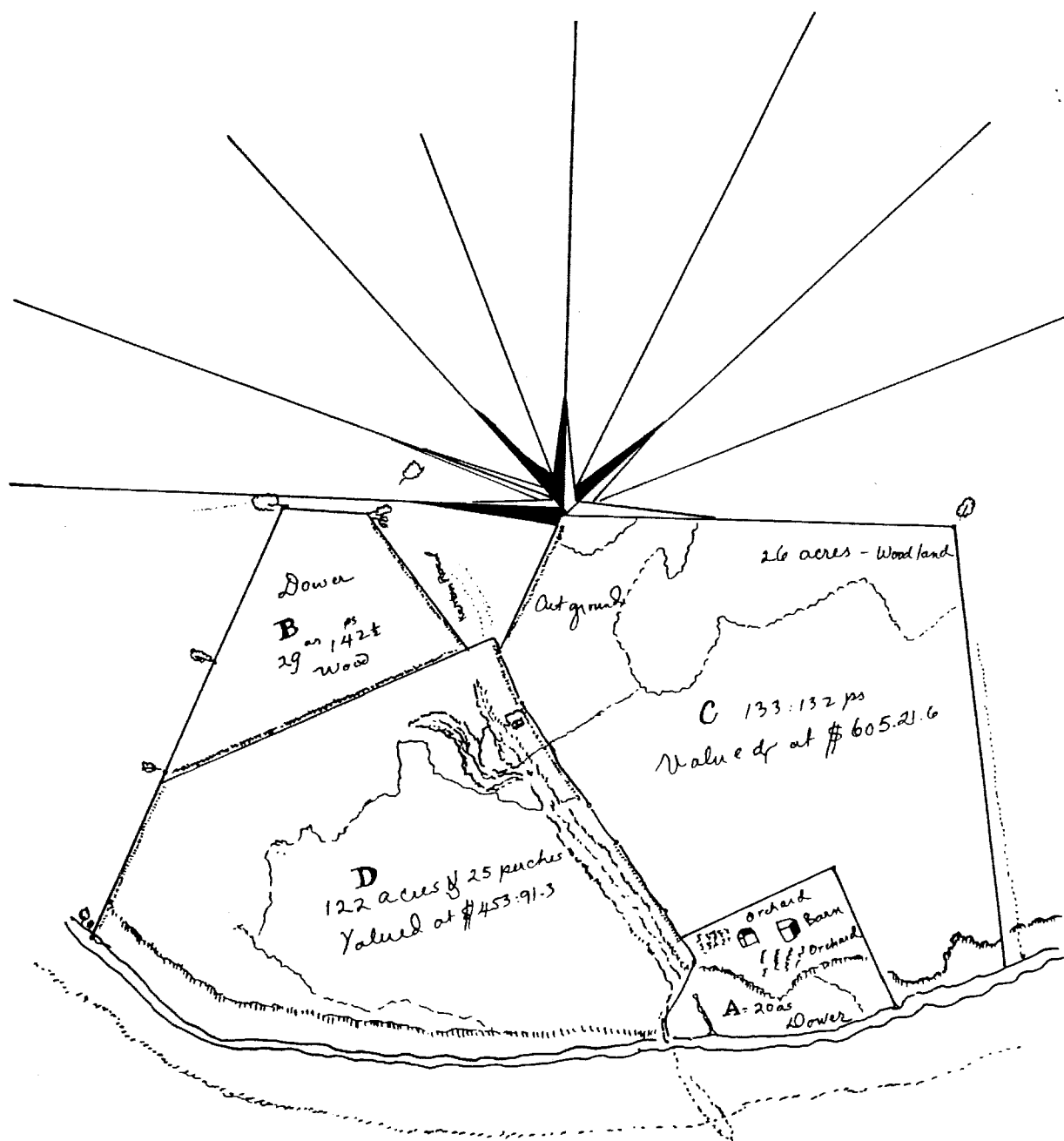


Figure 30: Plot of the division of the lands of Abraham Moor, Kent County Orphans Court Records, Plot Book 1, page 80. Section A and B, containing the house, outbuildings, and some woodland were partitioned off to the widow; the remaining 257 acres was divided into two parcels.

of the division of the lands of Abraham Moor in 1830. The house and surrounding land, along with approximately 30 acres of woodland were set aside for the widow while the remaining 257 acres were divided into two parcels that could be sold at auction or bought by Moor's children.

An unusually high percentage of estates in the 1822 Little Creek Hundred tax assessment indicate a high death rate. In 1822, 14% of all taxable entities in the hundred were estates; in 1860 the figure was only 2% and in 1896 it was 3%. The population in Appoquinimink Hundred was similar to Little Creek--16% of the taxables were estates or minor children in 1816, and only 2% in 1861. In Murderkill Hundred the pattern was even more pronounced, with over 30% of the taxables in 1822 being estates or minor children; the figure dropped to about one-tenth in 1860 and 1896. "Estate" refers to property assessed for the heirs of a deceased landowner. Estate landholdings were controlled by an administrator, executor, trustee, or guardian--i.e., while it was in probate or while minor children were under the guardianship of the Orphans Court. Described in the tax assessments as "Charles Harpers Heirs," "Mary Ann Fulce minor," or "John A. Banings Estate," these estates were taxed only for land.

The seasonal fevers that plagued the marshy, swampy, eastern portion of Kent County were a major cause of the high death rate.³⁶ Mary Dickinson's refusal to live in St. Jones Hundred due to the mosquitos and seasonal fevers led her husband, John Dickinson, one of the largest landowners in Kent County in the late eighteenth century, to turn his massive property in St. Jones Neck into tenant farms, even the mansion house originally built by his father.³⁷ Kent County Poor House records reveal that fevers of varying types ("remittent" and "intermittent" most commonly mentioned) plagued 18% of the inmates treated from 1822 to 1824. An excerpt from Franklin's *History of North America* clearly describes the problem in Delaware:

The mild temperature of this country is very favorable to health in the northern parts; but the people who inhabit the borders of the Delaware Bay are annually visited with intermitting or bilious fever in August and September; and owing to this circumstance, the former is known among the vulgar by the name of the long month.³⁸

Malaria was a problem in Delaware from the time of the earliest settlements and was known ague, miasma, or intermittent fever; it was "the scourge of death in low, warm, wet,

³⁶ Sources include Scharf's History of Delaware, the Jeanette Eckman Collection at the Historical Society of Delaware.

³⁷ John Dickinson Collection, Bureau of Museums and Historic Sites, Dover, Delaware.

³⁸ Benjamin Franklin, History of North America, Leeds: Davies and Company, 1820, pp. 53-54.

swampy countries such as Delaware."³⁹ After the discovery of quinine in 1820, however, death was no longer a foregone conclusion for malaria cases.

Population census records for 1800 to 1830 reveal that the population of Little Creek Hundred declined during the period. After 1830 a period of intensive population growth began that lasted through the mid-1800s. While much of the demographic loss may be due to out-migration by the white population, some was due to the disease engendered by the local environment. Kent County overall was experiencing the same pattern--its population increased by only 2% through 1840. In the mid-1800s it began to exhibit the same intensive growth that started a decade earlier in Little Creek.

One consequence of death among landowners was the fact that many of them left large families with one or more minor children. When a landowner with minor children died, the county Orphans Court was responsible for overseeing the management, care, and division of his lands among the rightful heirs in accordance with his will and the laws of inheritance. The court appointed a guardian for each minor child. The guardian was then responsible for all necessary maintenance and upkeep, collection of rents, and the preservation of farm and woodlands. Once appointed, the guardian's first activity was to request a valuation of the lands and potential rents expected by the minors. The appraisers were three court-appointed freeholders from the neighborhood who were also neighbors of the deceased and landowners. They viewed and valued the property, describing the land, buildings, fields and crops, fences, orchards, and necessary repairs. They also provided an estimate of the amount of rent that could be charged for the land per year. The guardian then leased the land either to himself or to another party.

One effect of the high death rate among landowners was visible in the administration of orphans' property in court. Because of the number of individuals required to begin the administration process and the fact that most were required to be freeholders, court proceedings were often delayed by deaths. One example of the consequences of the high death rate for orphans is the case of Margaret and Eliza Hall, of Little Creek Hundred.

Margaret and Eliza Hall (minor daughters of Robert Hall) were orphaned in 1814 and their uncle, Preston Bedwell, was appointed as guardian. Three freeholders (Andrew Naudain, Charles Harper, and Robert Hopkins) were appointed to carry out a valuation of the property in Little Creek Hundred. They completed the valuation just prior to the death of Charles Harper. Two years later, a new guardian, John Bell, appointed because Preston Bedwell had died, requested another valuation--this time by Andrew Naudain, Daniel Cowgill, and John Pleasanton. Six months later, Bell appeared in court complaining that the

³⁹ Jeannette Eckman Collection, Historical Society of Delaware, Wilmington, Delaware. Box labelled "Medicine."

rents had not been valued and eighteen months later the court was informed that the rents had not been valued because Daniel Cowgill had died. A new freeholder (Samuel Price) was appointed. In 1820, three years after Bell requested the valuation, a new guardian (John Brown) was appointed for Elizabeth and he requested a valuation with new freeholders (William Ruth, Elias Naudain, and Thomas Marim) because the previous request had not been completed due to the death of Andrew Naudain. Six months later, the lands were finally valued as:

...that farm and premises whereon David Vining free negro now lives--...two log'd buildings sufficient for the farm, One of which is in good repair; the other...should be weatherboarded and covered; One Crib and Smoke house should be repaired, One Stable in good repair, One other Crib and Small tenement on the premises not worth repairing; there being a few apple trees standing we are of opinion that fifty young apple trees more should be planted...the fencing in tolerable repair...

The property contained 185 acres, most of which seemed to be "low and wet and poor," and was valued at \$80 per year.⁴⁰ All in all, the orphans waited three and a half years for a valuation of their property, and the delays were due largely to the deaths of 4 freeholders.

One potential consequence of these sorts of delays and periods of no direct oversight of the minors' lands by the Orphans Court was abuse of the farm lands by an unscrupulous tenant or guardian. He could plant crops guaranteed to bring him a high profit over a few seasons, without concern for proper husbandry of the land. This could cause serious damage to the value of the orphans' inheritance, but it did present certain opportunities for tenants. The Orphans Court was concerned with two things--preserving the land and buildings in good repair until the children reached adulthood and providing sufficient income for the care and education of the children so that they did not become a burden on the county. Many of these estates resulted in long-term (10 to 20 years) of tenancy opportunities until the children were all of age. The widow might choose to remain on the main farm with the children and some laborers in the form of slaves, relatives, or hired hands. In other cases, children went to live with other family members and the main farm was leased out to a tenant. Many of these tenants were relatives, sometimes a brother of the deceased or one of his son-in-laws, or again the children's guardian. While this situation might appear to be very advantageous for the tenant who was acquiring a prime farm, he needed to remember that he could be held accountable to the orphans for his care and husbandry of their land. It was not unusual for grown children to return to the Orphans Court and sue their guardian and/or tenants for damages arising from actions that devalued their inheritance.

⁴⁰ Kent County Orphans Court, Book H p. 245 (August Term 1820).

Another result of the death-related delays was the inability of the guardian to place a tenant on the property until he knew what he could charge for rent--this meant that there was no income from the property and it was standing vacant with no one to maintain the buildings. While the guardian might have very good intentions regarding the upkeep of the farm, he probably had land of his own to work as well, not to mention the fact that in a significant number of cases in the early nineteenth century, administrators and guardians were sometimes managing two or three estates at one time. It was impossible for them to personally work all the land and maintain all the buildings in the manner required by the Orphans Court--they had to find reliable tenants.

The problem of multiple probate administration between 1800 and 1820 in Kent County could impact on tenancy and tenant farms. In many instances, a person appointed as administrator to one estate found himself by default as executor of another as well. Administration of estates was not a responsibility that ended with death--it was passed on to one's heirs and administrators. The Harper family of Little Creek Hundred was an example of this sort of situation. William Harper, Sr., died in March 1810, leaving a widow (Rachel) and five children: John, Charles, David, Joseph, and Mary. Rachel and Charles Harper were appointed as executors; Rachel was to be guardian of the two minor children, Joseph and Mary. In 1812 John Harper died, leaving five minor children (Rachel, Margaret, Henry, John, and Sally Ann) under the guardianship of his brother Charles. Charles now had two estates to administer, not to mention responsibility for rearing five additional children. He died in 1815. His wife, Rachel, and Robert Hopkins were appointed executors of his estate and held responsible for Charles' liability in the other two estates as well. In 1818, Charles' mother (and co-executor of William's estate) died also; her son Joseph was named executor of her estate, inheriting his mother's guardianship of his younger sister Mary and her inherited property. (Mary's final guardianship account was not passed until 1825.) Meanwhile, Robert Hopkins was busy filing administrative accounts for Charles, John, and William Harper. When he died in 1819, his executor, Abraham Moor, took over responsibility for all the estates. In sum, William Harper's estate had a total of five different administrators between 1810 and 1825. Of the five people responsible for handling the five estates, only two were still alive in 1822.⁴¹

The implications for the land and buildings under the care of these administrators were that over a fifteen year period there was no consistent form of management. By the time one person began to get things under control and set up a plan for managing all the farms, he or

⁴¹ Kent County Probate Records for William Harper (1810-1825) and Charles Harper (1815-1820); Delaware State Archives, Dover, Delaware. Kent County Orphans Court Records, Book G, p. 141, 1812 (John Harper's children), Court of Chancery, Kent County Courthouse, Dover, Delaware.

she died, and the administrative process started all over again. While one administrator might plan to construct new farm buildings, another might put his priorities elsewhere. One might advocate crop rotation while another favored a different method. Each of these plans might begin to get underway but unless the guardian/administrator planned very far ahead, there was no way to be sure that his scheme would be carried out to its full extent.

When a man died intestate in Delaware, his wife was entitled to one-third of all his real and personal property. The remainder was divided among his children. Many men left wills in which they stipulated as their wife's third a certain piece of property, specific livestock, or furnishings. The Orphans Court partitioned off the widow's dower at her request. In many cases the request came when the widow remarried and she wished to take her dower share into her new marriage. Upon a petition to the court, five freeholders would be appointed to view the lands and determine first, whether the land could be divided without detriment to the heirs, and second, what the most equitable division would be. In a significant number of cases, the widow's dower included the main dwelling house along with a share of the land (Figure 31). Three courses of action were open to the children for the remainder of the land: 1) they could request a division of the remaining land into equal shares; 2) one of them (usually one of the sons) could petition for the right to purchase his siblings' shares; or 3) they could request permission to sell the land and divide the proceeds. Often the chosen course of action was determined by the size of the property--if it was too small to divide, the court might refuse a request for partition.

Conclusion. These options had implications for tenant farms and tenancy in the sense that division or sale of older parcels created a larger number of smaller farms that either required tenants or were affordable for new landowners. The breakup of these family holdings had an impact on the architectural landscape as well--when the widow kept the farm buildings and sold off farm-size parcels, the new owners had to build new farmsteads on that land. Some of those farms eventually became tenant farms. The occupation of estate farms by tenants and their oversight by administrators or guardians is often heavily documented. Information regarding new buildings, farming practices, and rents can contribute to an understanding of the system by which a property was preserved for minor heirs as well as comprehension of the major concerns of the administrator landlords.

Evaluation Criteria for Tenant Farms and Landlords

The most obvious criteria of evaluation is that any tenant farm must have been owned by a landlord and occupied by a tenant at some point in time--the significance of the resource in relationship to the historic context for agricultural tenancy must be tied to both of these elements. The only physical criteria for evaluation are those outlined in Chapter II as applicable to all potential tenant farms.

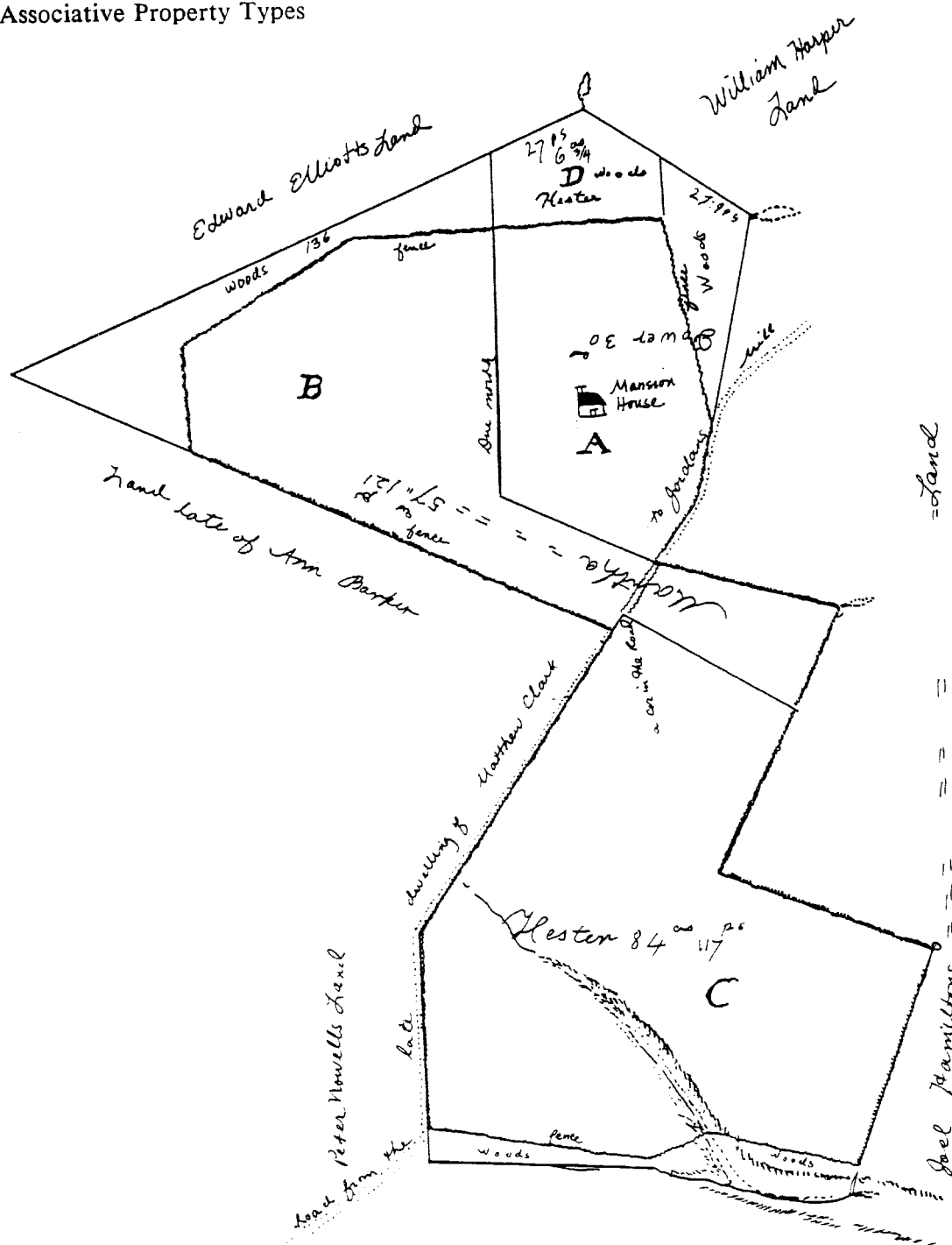


Figure 31: Plot of the division of the lands of John Melvin. Kent County Orphans Court Records, Book G, page 81 (1810). Section A, which contains the mansion house and 30 acres was partitioned off to the widow; each of the two daughters received land without buildings.

Multiple Property Owner Tenant Farms. A *multiple property owner tenant farm* is defined through historic documentation proving a period of ownership by a multiple property owner and the occupation of the farm by a tenant during the same period. This evidence is most likely to be found in tax assessments or insurance policies. A multiple property owner tenant farm may have multiple periods of significance because it changes hands over time and not all of its owners lease it out; it may also have one long period of significance associated with one landlord. The statement of significance for the multiple property owner tenant farm should examine the role of the multiple property owner in the economy, daily life, and architectural landscape of the community and the specific property under consideration. The characteristics of the owner in terms of race, gender, and taxable property should fall within the limits detailed above. The statement of significance should also consider the identity and circumstances of the tenant.

Tenant-Occupied Estates. Inclusion in the associative property type *tenant-occupied estates* is defined historically by documentation of an instance when the farm was part of an estate that was being administered following the death of its owner and the administration of the estate required the farm to be occupied by a tenant for a period of time. This connection is most likely to be documented through probate administration records, orphans court records, and chancery court records. These records include administration, guardianship, and trusteeship accounts that document the receipt of rents and repairs; the court records also contain descriptions of buildings, crops, repairs, tenants, and acreage. In cases where a dower partition or division of the property occurred, there are also plots of the land showing buildings, fields, and natural landmarks. Any discussion of significance should establish the history of such administration as related to the tenancy of the farm, examine the relationship between the tenant and the landlord/administrator, and evaluate the impact of both parties on the buildings and landscape.

Associative Characteristics of Tenants

A tenant is defined as a person who occupies land that is not his own by means of a verbal or written agreement with the owner of the land and in return for a specified rent. The extensive description of tenants included here is based largely on Little Creek in 1822 and 1860. Time did not permit this level of analysis in other years, but it should be a high priority for future activities related to the context.

The tenant population in Little Creek Hundred demonstrated a higher percentage of males and African-American than the general taxable population. As the century progressed, women represented an ever-shrinking percentage of farm tenants (7% in 1822, 4% in 1860, and 2% in 1896). African-American farm tenants enjoyed greatest numerical strength in 1822, when 21% of all farms were leased by "blacks" or "mulattos." The percentage of

African-American tenant farmers decreased to 8% in 1860, then rose to 11% in 1896.

As a group, tenants varied greatly in terms of their property and farm land. Of the 104 tenant farms in Little Creek Hundred in 1822, 92 tenants were positively identified on the tax assessment. The remainder were either partial names that could not be matched with a full name on the list or were women who were not assessed for taxable property.

Tenants as a group were located at all wealth levels, but were concentrated in the middle deciles (5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th)--41 percent of the total population in those deciles were tenants, and 72% of the tenants were located in those deciles. At a minimum, 50% of the 7th and 8th deciles were tenants as opposed to 32% of the 5th and 6th deciles. Approximately 8% of the tenants were located in the top 20% of the population, representing 9% of that group. Those tenants in the top fifth of the population probably fall into the class of farm managers or guardians to estate properties. The bottom two-fifths of the population contained only 20% of the tenants--about 12% of the group without any taxable property.

A look at the taxable property belonging to tenants in 1822 reveals significant information about the kinds of property that were likely to guarantee success for a tenant. Ownership of livestock was a significant characteristic of agricultural tenants in 1822. Of the 92 tenants that were positively identified in Little Creek Hundred, 74% owned livestock in some form and 16% owned both land and livestock. This is not unexpected given that horses and oxen were signs of the capitalization of agriculture. To effectively work a property over 10 acres, the farmer needed access to a plowing force. Perhaps a landlord was more likely to lease to a tenant who could prove that he owned the means of production, thus guaranteeing fewer problems with production of requisite crop rents. Demonstrated ability to manage a farm in a profitable manner (through references from a previous landlord or the possession of one's own productive land) may also have helped in acquiring a better farm for leasing.

While approximately half of the entire taxable population owned at least one animal, 90% of all tenant farmers owned livestock. Tenants were much more likely to own horses and oxen, the means of production for agricultural endeavors (85% of the tenants who owned livestock only owned a pair of either oxen or horses and most of them owned both). Pigs and cows, the most popular creatures owned by the general population, were also a high priority for tenants. In addition, livestock-owning tenants tended to own larger numbers of animals than those folks in the overall population who owned livestock (the median number of animals for tenants was 19, with 40% owning more than 10; among the general population, the median number of animals was 9, and 47% owned more than 10 creatures). Tenants were also more likely to own animals that were raised for market purposes (sheep and beef cattle).

Among those who owned both land and livestock (15% of the tenant population), the ownership patterns again indicate that a priority was placed on possession of horses and oxen. While only 60% of those who owned livestock in the general population owned horses, all of

the landowning tenants owned horses and 60% owned oxen as well (compared to 42 % in the general population). In the general population pigs and cows were the most commonly owned types of stock--approximately 90% of the landowning tenants possessed these animals, generally in larger numbers than the overall population.

African-American Tenancy

African-Americans formed a significant portion of the Upper Peninsula Zone population, representing anywhere from 20 to 40% of the total population in any hundred during the nineteenth century. Changes were occurring in the balance between the African-American and white populations throughout the state during the nineteenth century (Figures 32, 33, and 34). The free African-American and slave population represented a potential pool of farm laborers and tenants. Kent County contained the largest percentage of free African-Americans of any county in the nation during the mid-nineteenth century,⁴² rising from 22% in 1800 to a high of 29% in 1840 and then leveling off at about one-quarter of the population for the remainder of the century. The percentage of free African-Americans was even higher in Little Creek Hundred--they represented 29% of the population in 1800, 40% between 1810 and 1840, and dropped to 20% in 1880 before recovering to 35% in 1900. The percentage of free African-Americans in Murderkill was almost identical to that of Kent County; Appoquinimink Hundred's free African-American population was only 18% of the total population in 1800, rose to 27% by 1810, and ranged between 27% and 33% for the remainder of the century (Figures 35, 36, and 37).

While a population with a high percentage of African-Americans was not unusual for this region in the nineteenth century, the high proportion of free African-Americans in all three hundreds was unusual. In Murderkill Hundred, slaves represented less than 10% of the African-American population from 1810 on; Little Creek Hundred's slaves were less than 8% of the African-American population from 1820 through 1860. Appoquinimink Hundred relied on slaves in greater proportions for a much longer period--slaves did not drop below 8% of the total population until 1840. In Kent County, slaves were a minority group from 1800 on, representing less than one-quarter of the African-American population. The African-American population in neighboring Sussex County was 69% slave in 1800; the balance did not shift to favor free African-Americans until 1810, some 20 years after the same change had occurred in Kent County.

⁴² Munroe, John A., "The Negro in Delaware," *The Southern Atlantic Quarterly* (1957) no. 4. Also, Bureau of the Census, *A Century of Population Growth, 1790-1900* (Washington, 1909), p. 82, as cited in Elizabeth Hornsey, "Free Blacks in Kent County, Delaware, 1790-1830," Working Papers from the Regional Economic History Research Center, 1979.

Figure 32: Population Distribution in Kent County, 1800-1900

Source: U.S. Manuscript Population Census, 1800-1900

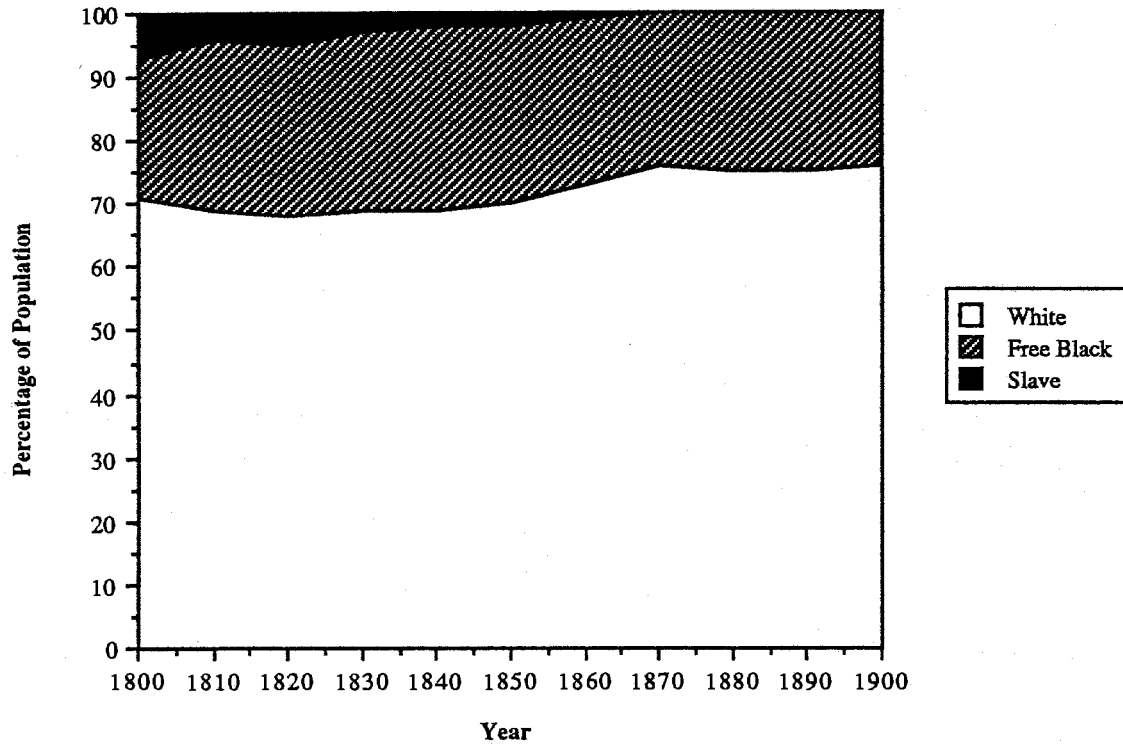
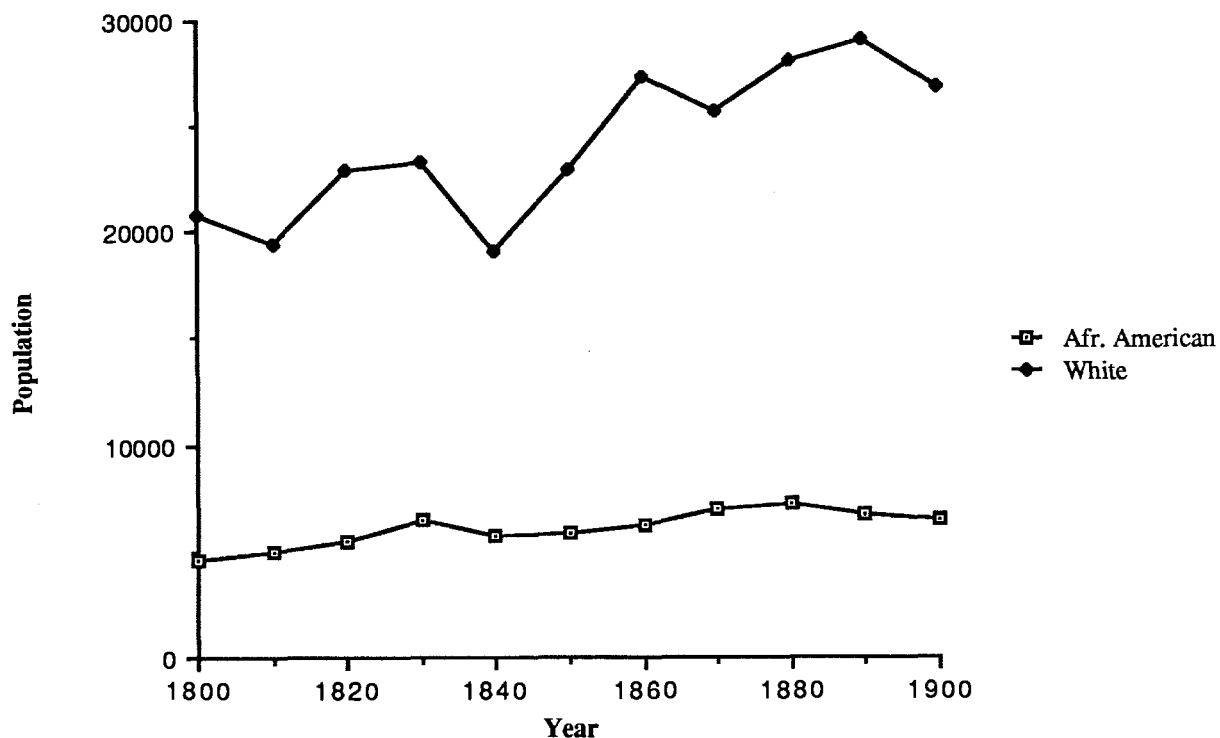


Figure 33: Changes in the African-American* and White Populations of Rural New Castle County



Source: U.S. Manuscript Population Census

*"African-American" includes slaves and free blacks 1800-1860.

Figure 34: Population Distribution in Delaware, 1800-1900

Source: U.S. Manuscript Population Census, 1800-1900

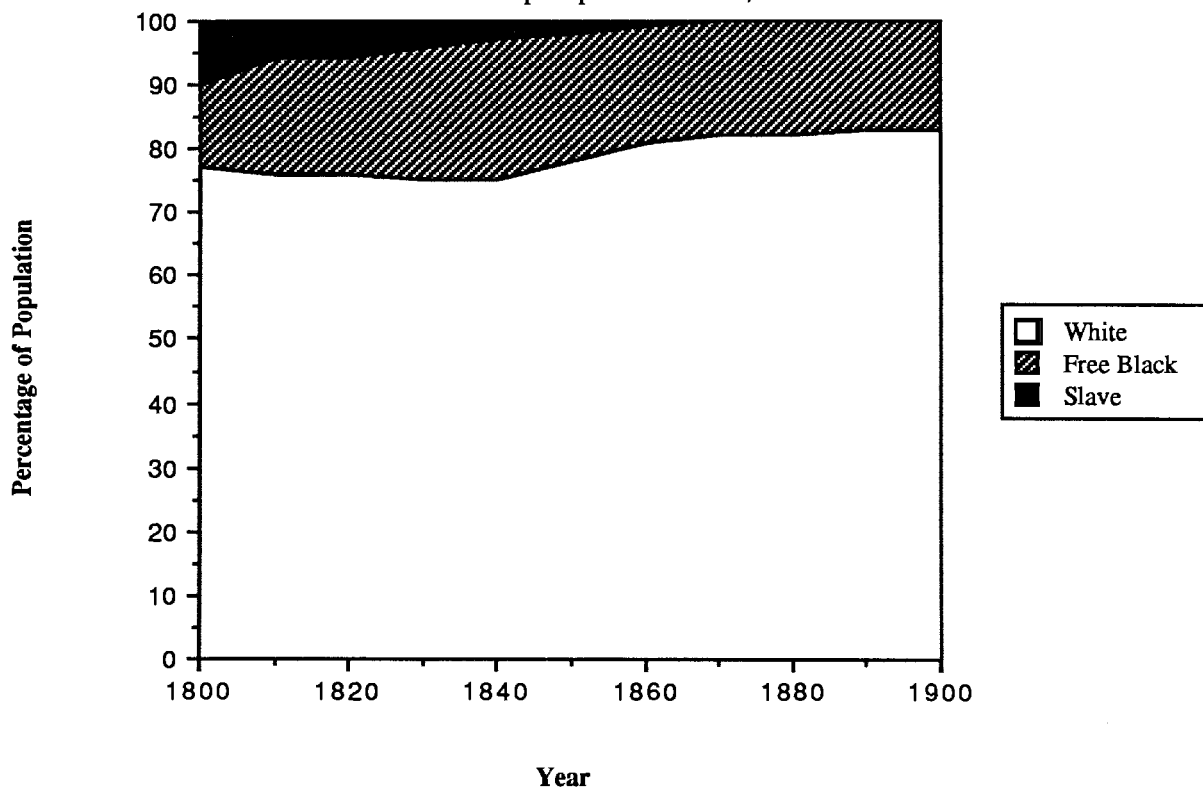
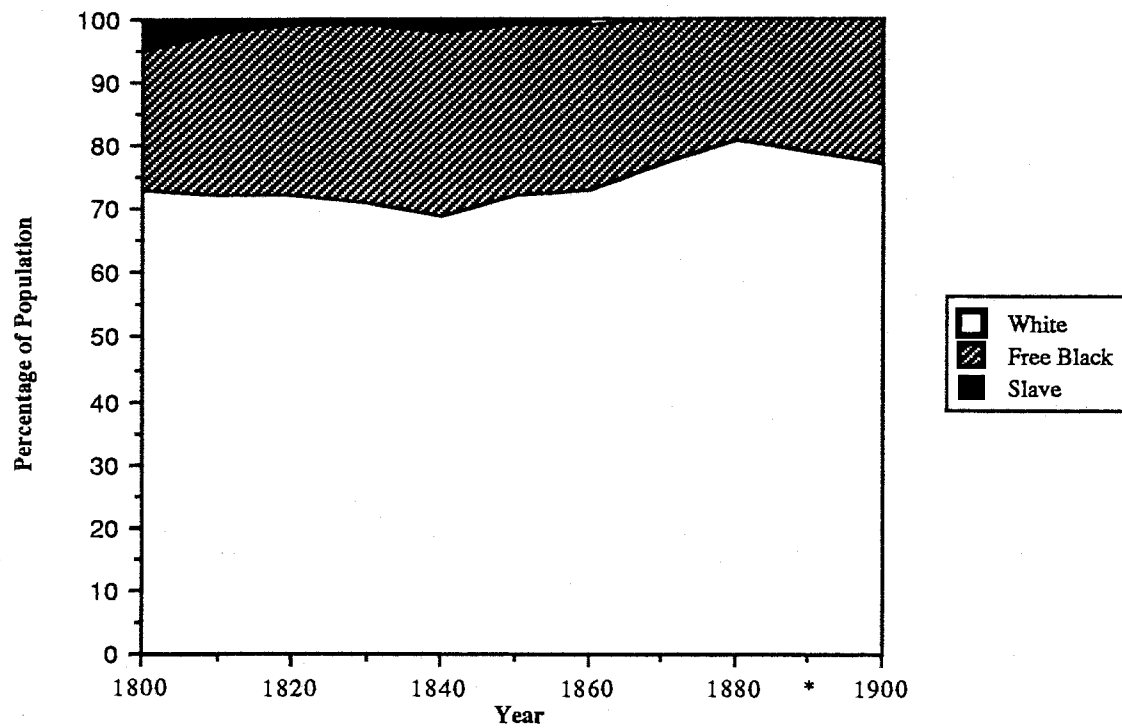


Figure 35: Population Distribution in Little Creek Hundred, 1800-1900



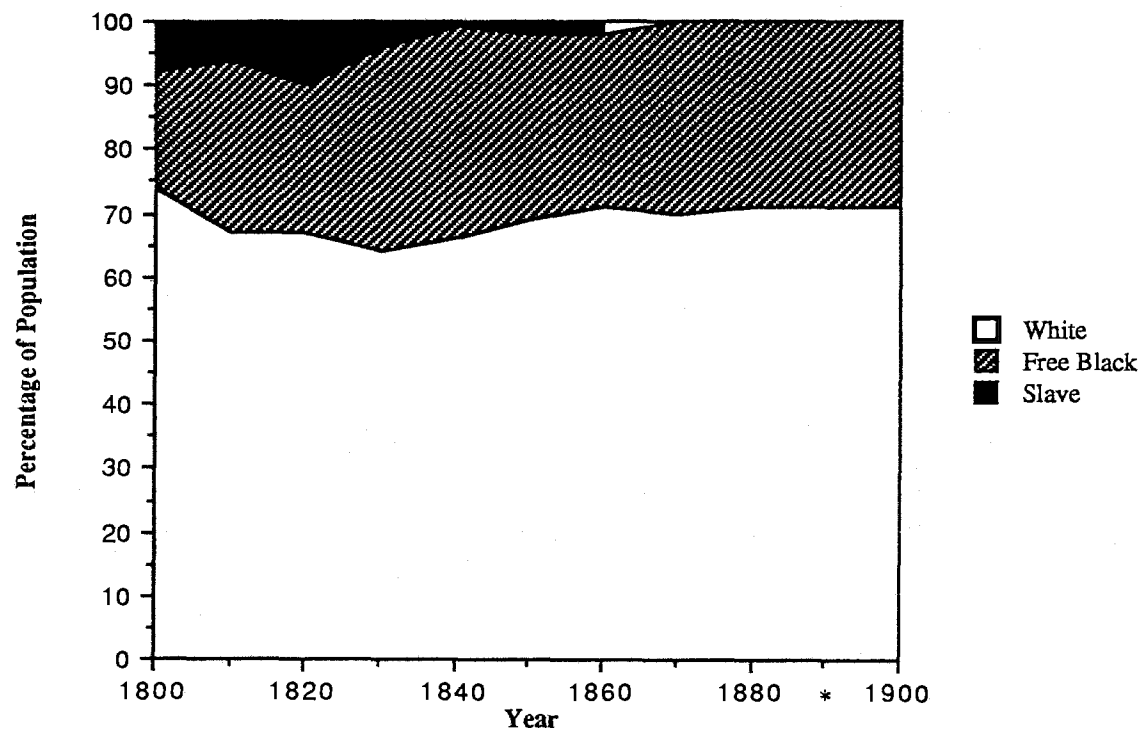
Source: U.S. Manuscript Population Census
 * Data unavailable.

Figure 36: Population Distribution in Murderkill Hundred, 1800-1900



Source: U.S. Manuscript Population Census
 * Data unavailable.

**Figure 37: Population Distribution in
Appoquinimink Hundred, 1800-1900**



Source: U.S. Manuscript Population Census

* Data unavailable.

The tax assessments reflect a very different picture of the economic status of African-Americans in the Upper Peninsula Zone. Consistently, a smaller proportion of the taxable population was represented by African-Americans than was visible in the closest census year (Table 4). Compared to the free African-American population, a higher proportion of the white population was considered eligible to be accorded at least a poll tax. In Murderkill Hundred, the difference between the two figures lessened considerably over the century: in 1822, free African-Americans represented 14% of the taxable population as compared to 27% of the census population in 1820; by 1896, they accounted for 18% of the tax assessment population but only 23% of the census population in 1900. In Little Creek Hundred, however, the gap between the two groups widened over the same time period: in 1822 only 30% of the taxable population were free African-Americans, as opposed to 40% in the census for 1820; by 1896, although the percentage recorded by the census had dropped to 35%, the percentage of the taxable population had plummeted to 17%. The appearance of free African-Americans on the tax assessment rolls reveals a great deal about their actual status: poll taxes for African-Americans were consistently lower than for whites. This may indicate a perception on the part of the white population that African-Americans would be unable to generate a labor-based income equivalent to that of a white male of the same age and same amount (or lack of) taxable property. Information on wage rates for African-American and whites engaged in similar tasks could provide the data necessary to explore this issue.

Table 4:
Distribution of Free African-Americans in the Population
Census and Tax Assessments

	Percent of the Total Population as Free African-Americans					
	1820	1816/1822	1860	1860/1861	1896	1900
Appoquinimink	23%	18%	27%	17%	N/A	29%
Little Creek	40%	30%	30%	20%	17%	35%
Murderkill	27%	14%	26%	18%	18%	23%

Source: Tax Assessments (1816, 1822, 1860, 1861, 1896) and Population Census (1820, 1860, 1900)

Certain differences exist in the condition of African-American tenants as opposed to the overall tenant population. First, while the size of more than half of the African-American tenant farms was above the median tenant-occupied farm size (11 of 19 African-American tenants occupied farms of more than 150 acres), the per acre value of the improved

land was generally very low. The value of improved farm land in the hundred ranged from about \$4 to \$50 per acre, but the value for land held by African-American tenants was generally only \$6 to \$8, indicating that the farm lands these folks were being permitted to access was marginal for agricultural use (possibly the parcels whose fertility had been seriously depleted in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.) The major exception to this rule was Benjamin Fransisco, the richest African-American in the hundred in 1822. Fransisco owned more than 100 animals, including 2 yokes of oxen and 3 teams of horses. His \$693 investment in livestock was the second largest among the group of tenants who owned livestock and slaves. Fransisco was renting 2 properties: the first was 400 acres (68% improved) on which was erected a brick dwelling house and several outbuildings in good condition; the second property contained 67 acres (100% improved). For both properties, the per acre value of the improved land was \$40 per acre, one of the highest values for agricultural land in the hundred. Caleb Hill was the second wealthiest African-American in the hundred and owned a similar number of livestock, including 4 yokes of oxen and 6 horses. His 200-acre farm was 100% improved and the value per acre was \$15, considerably less than Fransisco's. These two men both owned taxable property that was more valuable than that of the three African-American tenants who owned land of their own.

Distribution of Wealth. In terms of the representation of African-Americans in the wealth structure, there were almost none to be found in the wealthiest 20% of the population. A few were located in the 8th decile and the rest were distributed over the bottom 70% of the population, heavily concentrated in the poorest 40%. In 1822, the distribution of wealth among the African-American population was uneven. Although a few of the wealthiest African-Americans could still be considered wealthy within the overall population, at least half of the African-American population lived at subsistence-level. Half the population owned no real or personal property and were assessed solely for a poll tax. Among the other half, most owned nothing more than a single cow or a few pigs to supplement the household's diet. More than half of all the taxable wealth owned by the African-American population was owned by the tenants and landowners who represented only 20% of their population.

African-American tenants followed a slightly different distribution pattern from the one established by African-Americans in general--17 of the 22 African-American tenants in Little Creek Hundred in 1822 were located in the 6th, 7th, and 8th deciles, while very few were among that portion of the overall population that owned no taxable property. This is particularly significant in view of the fact that 65% of the African-American taxables were among that propertyless 40%. African-American tenants were much more likely to come from the small segment of their population that owned some type of taxable property. For example, William Williams owned parcels of 4 and 5 acres and tenanted a farm 115 acres, 87% of which was improved and valued at \$30 per acre. He also owned 46 stock animals,

including sheep, cattle, horses, and oxen. His total value for taxable property placed him in the 9th decile. Financially he was certainly in a position to exercise every competitive advantage against his white neighbor farmers.

When the personal assessed wealth of the African-American tenant population and landowning population are compared in 1822, the richest segment of the population is found as tenants. The two wealthiest members of the African-American population in Little Creek Hundred were Benjamin Fransisco and Caleb Hill. Both Fransisco and Hill were non-landowning tenants who appeared to be completely self-sufficient farmers. Despite their apparent wealth, Fransisco and Hill were only in the 7th or 8th decile of the total population. In contrast, by 1860 African-American landowners possessed taxable property of nearly equal value to that of African-American tenants.

The landlords who rented to African-Americans in Little Creek Hundred were mostly absentee (non-resident) landowners, administrators or guardians of estates, or multiple landowners who represented the wealthiest group in the entire population.

In 1822, there were 21 identifiable African-American tenants in Little Creek Hundred, of whom 17 managed farms of 10 acres or more. The average farm size was 164 acres; half of the farms were between 160 and 280 acres. Most were at least 60% improved, and their improved acreage had an average per acre value of \$12. While the range of value per improved acre ran from \$4 to \$40, more than half of the farms fell below \$8 per acre. The valuation per improved acre for white tenant farms, by comparison, was \$59 per acre. This low valuation may have been related to actual soil conditions as well as economic and social pressure to permit African-Americans access only to land that was already exhausted. It may also be due to a much more deep-seated tendency for assessors to perceive lands occupied and worked by African-Americans as automatically having a lesser value regardless of the true condition of the soil. This kind of prejudice is very hard to document, but some evidence is available. Based on case studies in Little Creek Hundred, the following patterns have been observed. Generally, African-Americans sold their land only to other African-Americans and the selling prices reflected the lower value per acre exhibited in the assessments. However, when a court ordered the sale of real estate owned by African-Americans, such as in the settlement of an estate, white farmers were the highest bidders and they usually paid a price above the assessed value.

Most of the African-American agricultural tenants in 1822 owned some livestock--14 of the 17 possessed at least one pair of horses or oxen. Although horses were more expensive to purchase and maintain, African-American tenants seemed to opt for horses over oxen (while 13 of 17 owned horses, only 8 owned oxen). Jeffrey Cotten, a tenant on 280 acres (only 50 were improved), owned 2 horses and some cows, pigs, and sheep. Prince Laws tenanted 100 acres, 90 of which were improved. He owned 1 horse, a team of oxen, some

cattle, pigs, and cows.

By 1860, the landscape of Little Creek Hundred had changed dramatically with regard to the African-American population. The tenant population had decreased by half, while the landowning population more than doubled. There were no women represented in either group. The 11 African-American agricultural tenants occupied farms of at least 30 acres. Farms ranged in size from 30 to 223 acres, but averaged 124 acres. The average value per improved acre was \$20, with five of the eleven farms having a value between \$16 and \$20 per improved acre. Only one farm, a 70-acre property tenanted by Trusten McCawley, was entirely improved. Most of the farms were about three-quarters improved. All of the African-American tenants owned their own means of production--all owned horses and half owned both horses and oxen.

There were only 7 African-American tenants in 1896, none of whom were women. Six of the tenants occupied farms of 10 acres or more, ranging in size from 25 to 300 acres. Of the 6 farms, 4 contained less than 90 improved acres. Half of the African-American tenants owned livestock and none owned more than 7 animals. This is a stark contrast to the 46 animals owned by Williams in 1860 and the 115 owned by Hill in 1822. Only 3 of the tenants owned their own means of production, 2 having horses and 1, Napoleon Morgan, having a yoke of oxen. All 3 had the same landlord, John H. Bishop, a wealthy multiple property owner. The ownership of the horses and oxen may reflect his demands of his tenants.

Conclusion. In the early part of the nineteenth century, tenancy was the best course of action for an African-American who wanted to farm for market purposes. Throughout the century, their ability to purchase land was restricted primarily to small parcels or pieces of land with little value for agricultural purposes. Successful African-American tenants invested their capital in livestock, particularly horses and oxen, possibly in order to demonstrate their capability as efficient, reliable farmers.

Evaluation Criteria for Tenant Farms and Tenants

Once again, the most obvious criteria of evaluation is that any tenant farm must be owned by a landlord and occupied by a tenant at some point in time--the significance of the resource in relationship to the historic context for agricultural tenancy must be tied to both of these elements. The only physical criteria for evaluation are those outlined in Chapter II as applicable to all potential tenant farms.

Consideration of tenants in general should determine the type of tenant--did he or she own livestock, particularly horses or oxen? Did the tenant own land somewhere else that he leased out to another tenant, possibly a relative? The characteristics of the particular tenant should be discussed in terms of the subjects described above--his or her location in the economy, race and gender, ownership of land and/or livestock, the size of the tenant farm,

the quality of the land, and the extent to which it was improved. The statement of significance should also consider the specific relationship between the tenant and the landlord, establishing if possible how the tenant was able to acquire the farm and what sort of conditions were included in his lease. A final topic that should be addressed is how the period of tenancy fit into the life of the tenant overall--was it part of his economic strategy for acquiring land of his own or was he a lifetime tenant?

African-American Tenant Farms. This property type is defined by the historically documented occupation of a tenant farm by an African-American tenant. All of the topics appropriate to tenants in general should be considered here, but special attention should be given to the economic position of the tenant as well as his familial, economic, or social connection to the landlord.

IV. Landlord and Tenant Relationships

The social and economic circumstances of owners and tenants dictated the terms and frequency of agricultural tenancy. Death of a property owner with minor children, ownership of farm land by non-resident or multiple property owners, shortages of farm labor, lack of cash for land purchases, and the scarcity of land available for purchase by young families and new immigrants resulted in situations favorable to agricultural tenancy. Other elements contributing to tenancy were the inability of free blacks to purchase even subsistence-level parcels, depletion of agricultural lands, proximity to modes of transportation, and the advent of the agricultural reform movement. Physiographic features such as soil quality or type and the lay of the land played a much smaller role in the development of rural tenancy in Delaware.

Throughout the context period (1770-1900+/-), tenants and landlords came from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. They could be black or white, male or female, rich or poor. The number of properties one could lease out or the number of properties a tenant could occupy was limited only by labor and capital. Some individuals played the roles of tenant and landlord, renting out their own land while renting from another landlord. Some landlords were local residents; others lived as far away as Wilmington or Philadelphia and supervised their properties by way of yearly visits and local agents. Some landlords were in actuality estates administered by executors and agents. Some tenants possessed livestock of their own; others rented draught animals from the landlord; still others pooled assets with a neighbor to acquire a working team or breeding stock.

The contractual relationship between a landlord and a tenant was standard business. Based on a written or verbal lease stating terms for payment of rent and care of the property, tenancy also relied on common practice and assumptions as well as legal precedent. The tenant was responsible for good care and husbandry of the farm as well as the production of sufficient high-quality crops to satisfy his rent payment. Leases might also stipulate the repair or construction of outbuildings and the improvement or protection of agricultural lands through ditching, draining, fencing, and fertilizing. In some cases, the evidence of the construction and improvements stipulated by nineteenth century leases remains on the rural landscape today in the form of farm complexes, fence lines, hedge rows, tree lines, etc.

In 1818 S. H. Black described the state of New Castle County agriculture:

First, that from the situation of our land generally in this county, at the present time, when cultivated by the owner, according to the prevailing mode, it nets him, clear of taxes, repairs, and labor, nothing; and is not improving in quality, or fairly advancing in price. And when it is cultivated by tenants, themselves, their families and stock, must be deprived of a portion of what is justly due them, or the landlords must lose their rents. And when rents are obtained by pressing, as it were, the

vital blood from the occupants, more is lost in the destruction and wreck of the property than is gained by the proprietor in money or in produce: and consequently, that neither landlords nor tenants gain anything, nor ever will, so long as affairs remain as they are at present; every cultivator of a poor soil on lease, being in fact but a fashionable day laborer, and every owner of such land, if his only resource, no more than a splendid pauper.⁴²

Apparently, agriculture was not a business for making money, whether the farmer was a tenant, landlord, or owner-occupant. In fact it was an undertaking that required considerable outlay of capital and labor in order to make any profit. Gouverneur Emerson, a multiple property owner in Little Creek Hundred in the 1850s, 60s, and 70s did not see much improvement in the situation when he wrote in 1855:

It might have been said of many, that the more land they possessed to fence, pay taxes upon, and receive unprofitable labor, the poorer the owners. These often lived with the reputation of wealth, but on dying had their bankruptcy revealed. If such was the hard lot of the proprietor, that of the tenant was not much better, and he was too often overwhelmed by pecuniary distresses whilst nobly struggling to secure a living for his family.⁴³

The success and profitability of tenancy depended on the production of high quality crops, soil improvement, and reasonable rents. Failure to meet these conditions on the part of either tenant or landlord often resulted in financial ruin for one or both parties.

The effects of contractual terms on the property types associated with the agricultural tenancy historic context are many and varied. To develop preservation planning strategies from survey to treatment for this context, we need an overview of the contractual, economic, and legal aspects of landlord-tenant relationships. Lease terms, legal rights of both parties, procedures for rent collection, restrictions and directions for care of the land, and systems for choosing a tenant represent the categories of information necessary to understand the material and landscape consequences of tenancy.⁴⁴

Choosing a Tenant

The selection of a tenant for a farm was a crucial concern for landlords. Whether they resided in Philadelphia or Wilmington or elsewhere in the state, landlords could not constantly monitor the actions of their tenant and the condition of their property. The ideal tenant was

⁴² G. Emerson, Address delivered before the Agricultural Society of New Castle County, 4-5.

⁴³ Ibid., 3-4.

⁴⁴ The court cases referred to in this chapter are references taken from the Delaware Reports, volumes I, II, III [Samuel M. Harrington, Reports of Cases Argued and Adjudged in the Superior Court and Court of Errors and Appeals of the State of Delaware, Vol. I (Wilmington, DE: Mercantile Printing Co., 1901), Harrington, Reports... Vol. II (Dover, DE: S. Kimmey, 1841); Harrington, Reports... Vol. III (Wilmington, DE: Mercantile Printing Co., 1901)].

a man or woman who could be relied upon to keep the farm in good condition and hopefully, to improve it somewhat during their tenure. Most landlords were willing to put in some effort to make their tenant farm attractive to a good tenant. In 1874, William Wilson of Pencader Hundred wrote

I want the place a year so that I can fence it, I want to put up a porch, a corn crib, a hen house, a yard, and a garden. I also want to whitewash and paint some. I wish to make the place fit for a respectable tenant. I will not spend one cent on the place while Hudsons live there.⁴⁵

Some landlords, like John Dickinson or Sarah Ann Sipple, employed local residents as agents--they were responsible for collecting rents, settling minor problems with tenants, overseeing repairs made at the landlord's expense, and most importantly, providing recommendations for future tenancy. Recommendations might also come from someone whose opinion the landlord trusted, such as a relative or close family friend. Reverend Nicholas Ridgely relied on his brother, Dr. Henry Ridgely of Dover, for references. In 1847, the doctor wrote

I have been applied to by several persons for the Draper farm for next year, thinking that I had the renting of it. Three have requested me to write to you for them. Robert Donavan is an excellent farmer & will agree he says to make 500 loads of manure every year. He is however a very [quick?], fickle changeable kind of a fellow. John Jackson is an old man, but very industrious, & a good farmer: he has been renting land for a long time & has never been turned off by any of his landlords: he lived in one of our places ten years ago and the farm has not had as good a tenant since. John Flouacris is a young man & a hard working fellow: he makes a good deal of manure & tills his crops well: he now lives on one of my neck farms...He has a fine field of corn, the best in the neighborhood...any one of these three will, I think, make you a good tenant...⁴⁶

The most important qualities for Ridgely's prospective tenants were proven ability as a productive farmer, good character, and willingness to work at improving the land. These characteristics and abilities could have an immediate impact on the construction of new farm buildings, hedgerows, fencing, land reclamation, and planting practices--all of which may survive today on an agricultural property that is being considered for inclusion in the agricultural tenancy historic context.

Lease Terms

The lease terms for tenant farms in the Upper Peninsula Zone were usually straight forward and specific. The lease period ranged from one year to twenty. Often the lease was

⁴⁵ Letter from William Wilson to Alexander Wilson, Wilson Correspondence, 1874.

⁴⁶ Letter from Dr. Henry Ridgely to Reverend Nicholas Ridgely, c. 1847, Ridgely Collection, Delaware State Archives, Dover, Delaware.

written for a single year and then renewed informally each year. Leases generally began in March and rental payments were due following the harvest in November. A written lease between John Dickinson and William White in 1781 for a six-year term provides a clear example of the contractual terms and performance conditions of tenancy.

Eight hundred Bushels of good sound clean merchantable Winter Wheat,
to be delivered annually at Philadelphia or Christiana Bridge--or two
hundred and fifty pounds in gold and silver

5 Tons of good clean well cured and well kept merchantable red Clover
Hay of the first Crop to be delivered at Dover
100 pounds of good sweet potted Butter
50 pounds of good sweet Lard
50 pounds of good Candles, six to the pound to be mixed with Beeswax,
if I supply it--the Quantity to be encreased in proportion to the
Quantity of Beeswax I shall supply
50 pounds of clean good white wool
50 pounds of well swingled & well hackel'd good & well cured Flax
25 pounds of hard soap
3 well fattened Beeves, being Cows or Steers well grown & between four
& seven years old
10 Good Hogs, each weighing about one hundred & fifteen pounds, well
fattened with good sound Indian Corn

The Tenant to have the two white Mares & their Colts, the grey Mares,
the Bay Mare, the two Bay horses, & the sorrel horse, twenty five Cows,
twenty one calves, thirty Hogs & sixty sheep Ages of Horses & Cattle to
be ascertained as nearly as may be, and stock of all sorts to be returned at
the End of the Term in kind and of as good Breeds as those received

(If) more use of the stock to belong to the Tenant, the Tenant is to have
the Use of the Cider Mill & the two stalls, which are to be returned at
the End of the Term in perfectly good Order

The place to be let is all that part of my Estate lying between the
plantation leased some years ago to William Maxwell, & that lately leased
to John Dickinson junior, excepting a Corner formed by the Division
Fences between Me and Joshua Gordon & land formerly of John Smith,
containing as I intend to add a little more by clearing about fifteen acres,
each Tenant which is to have range for one Cow & one sow of pigs, good
Wood for building & dead wood for firing--& (also) excepting a small
p(iece) intended to be conveyed to Joshua Gordon for straitning the Road
& also excepting the priviledges granted by me to Joseph Wheeler I and
my Family are to have the priviledge of lodging, boarding for ourselves
& servants, when we come to Kent & pasturage & feed for our Horses

If the Tenant sows in anyone year more than ten acres in Oats, ninetenths
of all the Oats he shall raise that year shall belong to me

No field or part of the premises to be sowed in Winter Grain more than once
in three Years No field or part of the premises to be planted in Indian Corn
more than once in three years

No Timber or Wood to be cut for Rails, Fencing or Repairs but in the

swamps, or between the new Ground now stubble Field and Clarke's point & marsh, & none to be cut beyond the Line formed by the Extension of the Northwesterly Line of the said stubble Field to the Creek--The Tenant will also be permitted to clear out all the Trees except twelve Poplars growing between the large stubble Field & the Calf pasture

No wood to be cut for firewood but dead wood in the land to be cleared

No Tree or Trees, to be deadended under any pretence whatever except in the Land to be cleared and no Trees fit for Rails or Timber to be deadended even there

No Trees to be cut down or injured in the groves that are left standing
No Fruit Tree of any kind to be cut down or injured The Garden and the Clover Field before the Door or any part thereof not to be ploughed up...of good Fruit Trees not to be hurt

No waste of any kind to be done or suffered by the Tenant Tenant not to assign the Premises or any part without Lease in Writing first⁴⁷

Tenancy increasingly came under scrutiny by agricultural reformers who looked to English models for improvement. John Taylor, a Virginia farmer, decried the contemporary system of tenancy in which

[t]his necessary class of men are bribed by agriculturists, not to improve, but to impoverish their land, by a share of the crop for one year; an ingenious contrivance for placing the lands in these states, under an annual rack rent, and a removing tenant.⁴⁸

Taylor argued that wages in money, rather than rents in the form of crop shares, stimulated gradual agricultural improvement because "the condition of both parties would be annually bettered."⁴⁹ Acknowledging that a wage system would not likely develop, Taylor attacked short-term leases as fundamentally incapable of promoting good husbandry. Only by establishing long leases--at least 20 years in duration--could sustained improvement of the soil take place. Landlords were not eager, however, to enter into lengthy relationships with tenants who had not proven their abilities at farming. In a letter to the secretary of the Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture, one landlord wrote that he would not grant a lease longer than three years to any new tenant, noting that "trials of temper, industry, and management, are as necessary, in this kind of co-partnership, as is integrity." Instead of

⁴⁷ Agreement between John Dickinson and William White, October 29, 1781. John Dickinson Collection, File 66/#
1. Bureau of Museums and Historic Sites, Dover, Delaware.

⁴⁸ Taylor, 127.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 129.

extended lease periods, he continued, the practice of holding-over "under the terms, without actual renewal of the lease, for many years" characterized typical arrangements for tenancy.⁵⁰

Rents

Rents were paid in cash, crops, or a combination of the two. Crop rents specified yield amounts such as "three hundred Bushels of good clean Sound well cured merchantable Wheat"⁵¹ or percentages. The lease often specified that the tenant deliver the crop rent to a specific location, sometimes the landlord's residence and sometimes a wharf or granary at a shipping port such as Leipsic.

In 1836, the Superior Court of Delaware ruled that a tenancy without any limitation as to time was for one year; a tenant was liable for one year's rent even if he occupied the property for only part of the year. The court also declared that if a tenant informed the landlord that he intended to quit the premises, any occupation beyond his announced departure made the tenant liable for the whole year's rent because his stay "prevented another tenant from coming in."⁵²

Nonpayment of rent and abandonment of leased properties presented a real problem for landlords in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In 1793, the General Assembly passed an act "for the better regulation of distresses for rent."⁵³ The preamble of the act recognized the economic suffering due to a lack of regulation over the taking of goods for payment of rent when a tenant had broken a contract or lease. Under the new regulations, a tenant was given notification in writing that he had five days either to pay the past due rent or to provide the sheriff with sufficient security for the amount of the rent. The landlord needed only to register a complaint with the sheriff. After five days, the constable seized the tenant's goods for appraisal by "two reputable freeholders." After the appraisal, sale of the goods was to be advertised for six days. Revenues from the sale paid the rent and the sale costs. Surplus cash was retained for the tenant. If the tenant was able to prove that no rent was actually due and his goods had been sold, he could recover "double the value of the goods or chattels so distrained and sold, together with full cost of the suit." Other provisions in the act stipulated that if the tenant's goods that were sold included crops

⁵⁰ Letter from Richard Peters of Belmont Farm to Dr. James Mease dated June 10, 1810. In "Lease of a Farm, on Shares," Memoirs of the Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture. Volume 2 (1811), 262.

⁵¹ Lease, John Dickinson to William Maxwell, Dover Hundred. John Dickinson Collection, Bureau of Museums and Historic Sites.

⁵² Lofland vs. Emory, Reports, vol. II, 297-299

⁵³ Laws of the State of Delaware, 1700-1797, Chapter XXXIX, 1147-115.

or cattle, the purchasers "of any such corn, grass, hops, roots, fruits...or other products, shall have free egress and regress to and from the same where growing, to repair the fences from time to time, and when ripe, to cut, gather, make, cure, and lay up and thresh, and after to carry away."

The cases that tested this act commonly resulted in judgements that favored the landlords. There were provisions protecting the tenant's rights after an event, but the first actions taken in any case were usually to protect the landlord's property.⁵⁴ Landlord's rights to collect rents were also protected when their tenant was sued by another party. In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, suits for recovery of debts were seen in large numbers. Often when the defendant's goods were inventoried prior to sale, there would be a note on the inventory stating that the sale of those goods would be subject to the landlord's claim for rent. In many cases after the goods were sold and the landlord was paid there was nothing left to pay the debt from the original judgement.

Directions for Care and Use of the Land

One of the areas of greatest relevance for the theme of agricultural tenancy and the recognition of related property types resides in the contractual expectations related to the cultivation and maintenance of the land. Two of the key elements in any tenant lease dealt with the preservation of arable land and woodland management. As the agricultural reform movement increased its influence in the Upper Peninsula Zone, leases increasingly included instructions to tenants about activities designed to improve the quality of the property. Ditching and draining, for example, reclaimed arable land from marsh and swamp land. Fertilization with lime and guano and crop rotation increased the fertility of the soil. When a landlord required these procedures by lease he had the legal system on his side to insure enforcement.

The Delaware courts protected agricultural land from activities that were contrary to "customary" agricultural practice. John Layton, second husband of Sarah Wilds, was tenancing a property that had belonged to Wilds' first husband; the rents were to be used to reduce the debts owed by Wilds' estate. Rather than increasing the value of the land, Layton had 'exhausted' the land by tilling two-thirds of the land in Indian corn, rather than the one-third customary for "good husbandry." The court issued an injunction to restrain Layton from tilling the property because Layton was farming the land "contrary to the usage of the country in which it is situate. Such improper tillage, when tending to depreciate the value of the

⁵⁴ The State, use of J.S. Adams vs. Peter Vandever et al, Reports, vol. II, 397-400. Clark vs. Adair, Reports, vol. III, 117. Biddle vs. Biddle, Reports, vol. III, 539-540. Caldwell vs. Cleadon & Moody, Reports, vol. III, 420.

V. TENANCY AND AGRICULTURAL REFORM

Tenancy was inextricably bound to agricultural reform efforts in central Delaware. For landlords, tenants represented a source of capital; rents paid in crops were converted to cash through consignment to local grain merchants. Tenant properties enabled landlords to compound capital and labor in the social and economic organization of the Delaware agricultural landscape. Tenant leases became instruments for farm improvement, in the sense that manuring, cultivating, and fencing were contractual obligations that landlords expected their tenants to meet. Tenancy both shaped and was shaped by Delaware's agricultural economy, especially in response to the development of large-scale commercial farming in the Midwest and the growth of urban markets along the Atlantic seaboard for garden produce following the Civil War.

The Agricultural Economy of Delaware

The evolution of the Delaware agricultural economy during the nineteenth century generally reflected national trends: the three most influential factors were the agricultural reform movement, new methods of transportation, and the growth of the Midwest as a major grain and milling belt. Between 1770 and 1900, Delaware farming shifted from one-crop farms dependent upon the Delaware Bay trade to diversified farming supported by rail transport. As Manlove Hayes wrote in the *Delawarean* in 1860, the three factors that had contributed most to the strength of the state were "steamboats and railroads, lime and guano, and the Agricultural Society."⁵⁹

As a result of the British blockades in the early 1780s, the state's economy was stagnant. There was practically no cash flow because taxes could not be collected while trade was blocked, and the General Assembly could not do anything to promote trade because there was no cash flow. Agricultural trade and the economy were so dependent upon one another that the

whole structure of Delaware's public and private economy was built upon the foundation of the bay trade. Government obligations could not be met until the water routes had been cleared and surplus grain stocks sold.⁶⁰

By the 1790s, as the agricultural economy recovered, financial institutions were beginning to make an appearance in the state. The First Bank of Delaware was founded in 1795, and in 1807 the Farmer's Bank of Delaware was incorporated. There was a shortage of

⁵⁹ Carol Hoffecker, *Readings in Delaware History*, Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 1973, p. 105.

⁶⁰ Hoffecker, p. 61.

currency in Delaware as trade with England was not even and Delaware spent its specie in England, without having reciprocal trade to circulate the currency.⁶¹ The shortage of cash had a clear effect on tenancy, as described by Dr. Tilton:

The farm rents used to be paid in money altogether. Since the revolution, the depreciation & fluctuation of our money has given occasion to our rents being often paid in produce, and the letting of the lands, sometimes, though rarely on shares.⁶²

Extreme weather during the Revolutionary War years, early and late frosts that diminished the harvest, cold snowy winters, and a devastating drought drastically reduced corn and wheat yields and caused prices to rise. Reduced crop yields and low water levels on the Brandywine River contributed to the slowing of production at the Brandywine Village grist mills.⁶³

While he noted that the major market crops remained wheat and corn, Dr. James Tilton described the range of crops produced for local consumption in late eighteenth-century Delaware:

For man's use, are cultivated wheat, barley, indian corn & buckwheat, besides potatoes, cabbage and various kinds of pulse & other garden truck. These all furnish provender for cattle; besides which, oats and various kinds of grass, more especially Timothy & Clover are cultivated for the use of cattle.⁶⁴

Cereals were the mainstay of Delaware agriculture although regional variations were evident due to soil conditions. Rye was an extremely lucrative grain crop, but it needed dry soil and would not tolerate Delaware's swampy regions. In the northern part of the Upper Peninsula Zone, peaches were a major crop between 1835 and 1877, when the "peach yellows" blight devastated the industry. Other crops grown in New Castle and Kent counties included oats, Irish potatoes, peas and beans, sweet potatoes, butter, orchard produce, and wool.

The first Federal agricultural census, taken in 1850, showed that Indian corn, oats, and wheat were the crops produced in highest volume in the state. Indian corn was not grown for human consumption, however, it was intended as fodder for livestock. Between 1860 and 1890 the number of bushels of Indian corn produced in the state dropped from 3,892,337 to 3,097,164, a decrease of 20%. A similar pattern occurred in both Kent and New Castle

⁶¹ John A. Munroe, Federalist Delaware 1775-1815, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1954, 36.

⁶² "James Tilton's Notes on the Agriculture of Delaware in 1788", Agricultural History, 20:176-187 (July, 1946), 184.

⁶³ Joanne D. Passmore, Charles Maske, and Daniel E. Harris. Three Centuries of Delaware Agriculture. Delaware State Grange and the Delaware American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, 1978, 25.

⁶⁴ "James Tilton's Notes on the Agriculture of Delaware in 1788", Agricultural History, 20:176-187 (July 1946), 180.

counties. The main market crop produced in central Delaware through 1860 was wheat. According to Gouveneur Emerson, the production of wheat in Delaware increased by 50% between 1840 and 1850, as a direct result of agricultural reform.⁶⁵ This was particularly true in Kent County, where the number of bushels of wheat produced increased by 143% between 1860 and 1890. However, by the end of the century wheat had lost its lustre as the major market crop.

In the nineteenth century, several factors contributed to the decline of wheat as a cash crop. Crop devastation by a variety of insects and diseases (Hessian fly, midge, chinch bugs, rusts, and smut) led to the abandonment of wheat as a major cash crop in much of the eastern United States by the 1830s, although in Virginia and Pennsylvania, sound farming practices maintained wheat cultivation through 1860. Central Delaware farmers also continued to grow wheat. In 1854, a bumper crop of wheat in the "new West" region, coupled with an increased demand for American wheat due to the outbreak of the Crimean War, led to accelerated railroad-building in the region, assuring its future dominance as a wheat belt.⁶⁶

Delaware farmers replaced wheat with a variety of garden truck produce that could be shipped to market by rail. These perishable goods had a high market value in rapidly growing urban centers such as Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Wilmington.

In the late 1800's fruit growers diversified by growing apples, pears, black cap raspberries, blackberries, quince and whortleberries...Apples became king in Kent County and Sussex became the top strawberry county in the country. The typical central Delaware farm at the turn of the century grew a few peaches, lots of apples, a few pears, grapes, small fruits, plus field crops and livestock--probably a small dairy herd.⁶⁷

Diversification of crops protected the farmers, to some extent, from financial ruin due to particular pests or market conditions. It also allowed farmers with small parcels of land to participate in a lucrative market. At the same time diversification helped provide some measure of economic stability it also limited the possibility of windfall gains.

The arrival of the Delaware Railroad in Kent and Sussex counties by 1860 boosted the ability of central Delaware farmers to produce perishable crops for the urban markets in Wilmington, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, thus encouraging the shift away from wheat as a major crop.

⁶⁵ Gouveneur Emerson, Address delivered before the Agricultural Society of New Castle County, Delaware, Wilmington, Sept. 11, 1855, 6.

⁶⁶ Paul W. Gates, Farmer's Age: Agriculture 1815-1860, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968, pp. 44, 163, 164, 166-167.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 72.

Agricultural Reform

In the early 1800s the agricultural reform movement became active in New Castle and Kent counties. Many of the most active members of the agricultural societies were multiple property owners and landlords. Their efforts were part of an overarching movement that occurred throughout the United States during the first half of the nineteenth century. Several developments characterized the movement. The formation of agricultural societies promoted European agricultural methods and published the results of their members' scientific research on cultivation and husbandry. Widespread attempts were undertaken to reclaim farm land and improve the quality of existing fields by the application of new soil cultivation techniques and a variety of fertilizers. Technological innovation prompted the invention and perfection of a series of dramatic new agricultural implements as well as improvements in design and materials of familiar tools.

Beginning with Delmarva landowners such as John Spurrier, S.H. Black, James Tilton, and John Bordley, Americans familiar with the development of English agricultural reform societies sought to establish a similar forum for agricultural improvement in the United States. The purpose of these societies was not an exchange among working farmers of practical ideas, but the dissemination of information about agricultural progress abroad.⁶⁸ The Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture, for instance

was formed...by some citizens, only a few of whom were actually engaged in husbandry, but who were convinced of its necessity; and of the assistance which such an association, properly attended to, would afford to the interests of agriculture...Many citizens have the mistaken idea, that their not being *agriculturalists*, disqualifies them from becoming useful members of our Society...The interests of *Commerce, Arts, and Manufacturers*, form, with *Agriculture*, an indissoluble union; to which citizens of every class and calling, have it amply in their power to contribute.⁶⁹

Farmers in the eastern United States faced several major challenges in the first decades of the nineteenth century. Among them was the shift of the wheat belt from the mid-Atlantic region (that included Delaware) to the "new West" (Illinois and Wisconsin) by the 1850s. Another pressure on farmers was the serious shortage of agricultural labor, a factor that shaped the development of the agricultural landscape.⁷⁰ A final inducement for agricultural reform was the favorable home market that developed by about 1820. The timing of this development was opportune: just as the export markets crashed, urban centers like

⁶⁸ Percy W. Bidwell and John I. Falconer, History of Agriculture in the Northern United States, 1620-1860, Clifton, NJ: Augustus M. Kelley Publishers, 1973, p. 184-5.

⁶⁹ Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture. Memoirs, Volume I (1815), p. iii, v (note).

⁷⁰ Gates, p. 272-278.

Philadelphia demanded increasing amounts of agricultural produce.

Labor Sources

One of the pressures facing American farmers at the beginning of the nineteenth century that shaped the manner in which the agricultural landscape would develop was the serious shortage of agricultural labor.⁷¹ Farmers could not hire the labor they needed to help on a seasonal basis, but they could lease some of their land to another person, making the tenant responsible for contracting labor. In the Upper Peninsula Zone, free African-Americans comprised a cheap labor force that could be effectively prevented from emigration to the West or to northern urban centers during the first decades of the nineteenth century by a variety of legal maneuvers on the part of powerful white landowners.⁷² This labor force cushioned Delaware from the severe shortages experienced in rural areas without a sizeable free African-American population. The desire of white farmers in Delaware to retain (even to detain) the free black population is striking when compared to contemporary visions in other slave states in the "upper South" region of the nation. In 1818, John Taylor of Virginia published a series of essays on agriculture in which he argued that free blacks "wound[ed] agriculture...being an unproductive class living upon it." Taylor espoused the colonization of all free blacks.⁷³

Prior to emancipation, slaves were enumerated along with other taxable property in the assessment lists. These lists demonstrate that slave labor played a very limited role in the agricultural economy of the Upper Peninsula Zone. During the nineteenth century, only a very small portion of Delaware's total population was slave--from 10 percent in 1800, the figure dropped to 4% or less by 1830. Kent County's slave population represented 5% or less of the total population from 1810 on; Little Creek Hundred reflected the same pattern. In 1800, slaves in Delaware represented 43% of the African-American population. The slave population declined steadily, in both real numbers and as a percentage of the African-American population, through 1860, when it reached 8%. In contrast, Kent County (and particularly Little Creek Hundred) contained an African-American population made up of a much larger proportion of free blacks. Slaves represented only 26% of the Kent County African-American population in 1800, declining in real numbers and as a percentage of the African-American population until it reached 3% in 1860. In Little Creek slaves represented

⁷¹ Gates, p. 272-278.

⁷² Elizabeth Moyne Homsey, "Free Blacks in Kent County, Delaware, 1790-1830," Working Papers of the Regional Economic History Research Center. Greenville, DE: Eleutherian Mills-Hagley, 1979.

⁷³ M. E. Bradford, Editor, The Arator: Being a Series of Agricultural Essays, Practical and Political: In Sixty Four Numbers by John Taylor, Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1977, 116.

only 20% of the African-American population in 1800, declined to 12% by 1820, and plummeted to 1% in 1840. In 1850 there were no slaves reported in Little Creek Hundred; in 1860 11 slaves were counted. This was paralleled in the 1822 and 1860 tax assessments by a drop in actual numbers from 78 slaves owned by 19 taxpayers in 1822 to 6 slaves owned by 5 individuals in 1860. Evidently, slaves were not viewed as a cost-effective labor force in Little Creek Hundred as early as the late eighteenth century.

One source of indentured labor in Kent County was the local poor house. Records from the Kent County Poor House indicate an inmate population that consisted largely of either the very young or the very old--those who could work were being indentured out.⁷⁴ Current research on poor houses in the mid-Atlantic region has found that this pattern is consistent with areas where there was a high demand for labor, but that these areas were usually industrial regions, not rural or agricultural areas.⁷⁵ Most of the youthful population of the Kent County Poor House was bound out by indenture to local farm families, where young girls would be instructed in the "mystery of housewifery" and boys in "husbandry" or "farming," providing a ready supply of cheap labor to local families. Farmer Joseph Farrow obtained John Brachner, a 9-year-old boy, for a term of eleven years, during which Brachner would be taught "the art of farming" in exchange for relieving the county of the cost of his maintenance.⁷⁶

Widows and marginal farmers might obtain the household help they needed but could not afford to hire by obtaining apprentices from the poor house. Rebecca Warters, an 8-year-old girl, was apprenticed to Widow Ann Hamm of Little Creek Hundred for a period of ten years during which she agreed to serve "honestly and obediently in all things as a faithful Apprentice ought to do." In exchange, Mrs. Hamm agreed to provide meals, lodging, and instruction in "the art and mistery of housewifery."⁷⁷

According the provisions of indentures in Kent County, apprentices were to receive twelve to eighteen months of schooling. Up to half of that education, however, would only be provided in the last two years of service. This would have varying effects, depending upon the age of the apprentice at the initiation of the indenture. Women were apprenticed until they reached their majority--age eighteen--and typically received twelve months of education. Men were apprenticed until their majority--age twenty--and received eighteen

⁷⁴ Proceedings of the Trustees of the Kent County Almshouse. February 1791 to May 1820. Delaware State Archives, Dover, Delaware.

⁷⁵ Monique Bourque, research for dissertation in the Department of History, University of Delaware.

⁷⁶ Proceedings of the Trustees of the Kent County Almshouse. February 1791 to May 1820.

⁷⁷ Proceedings of the Trustees of the Kent County Almshouse, Apprentice Indenture List, 1816.

months of education. At the conclusion of their terms of service, apprentices were due two new suits of clothing and sometimes a small cash stipend. A recent study of agricultural reform in Kent County views the 1810s as a crucial period for reformers.⁷⁸ The nation's economic slump precipitated increased rates of farm failure, providing opportunities for wealthy individuals to buy up smaller farms from which to generate rental income. Multiple property ownership not only afforded protection from the vicissitudes of the agricultural economy, but allowed the accumulation of wealth that effecting reform required. Proponents of marsh reclamation, for example, an expensive reform effort, typically owned two or more farms.⁷⁹

Depletion of Agricultural Lands

Early nineteenth-century landholders greatly concerned themselves with the condition of agricultural land. The valuations of land brought to the Orphans Court by local freeholders repeated over and over their directive that land should be farmed in rotation. The most frequently described system was composed of three fields, only one of which was to be farmed in corn each year and one in wheat. The field farmed in corn was to be sowed the following season in wheat. Figure 38 illustrates this rotation system as it was described by John Bordley. A typical description was that of the land belonging to George W. and Hunn Jenkins: "the said land to be continued in three fields one of which to be tilled in Corn and the same Sowed down in wheat in the same year, and so in Rotation each of said fields to be tilled only one year in three." While the Jenkins farm was 600 acres in size, these instructions were also applied to smaller farms like the 186-acre parcel tenanted by David Vining, free negro. While 115 acres were arable, "much bordering on the margin of the marsh, [it was] low and wet and poor not worth cultivating." The "farm is divided into three fields and should stay that way, one should be tilled in Indian Corn (and the same sowed in wheat)."⁸⁰

As in the 1822 case of Wilds vs. Layton mentioned previously, individuals managing estates could be (and were) sued for improperly managing farm lands by not rotating crops.⁸¹ The courts would not set a precedent allowing the exhaustion of agricultural lands. This attitude is also reflected in the tenant leases that stipulated crop rotation patterns and limited the clearing of new land.

⁷⁸ David J. Grettler, "The Landscape of Reform: Society, Environment, and Agricultural Reform in Central Delaware, 1790-1840" (Ph.D. Diss., University of Delaware, 1990), 163-173.

⁷⁹ Grettler, 172-3, 177.

⁸⁰ Kent County Orphans Court Records, Book G p. 205 (1815) and Book H p. 245 (1820).

⁸¹ Reports of Cases Adjudged and Determined in the Court of Chancery of the State of Delaware. Volume 1. Philadelphia: T. & J.W. Johnson & Company, 1876.

	No. 1.	2.	3.	Fields.
1781.	Maiz	Wheat	—	There are no <i>Grass-</i> <i>Fields</i> , for supporting these Corn-Fields,— not one. (7)
1782.	Wheat	—	M.	
	
1783.	—	M.	W.	
	

Figure 38: Diagram of the Rotation System for a 3-Field Farm.
John B. Bordley, *A Summary View of the Courses of Crops...*
Philadelphia: Charles Cist, 1784. Page 11.

The New Castle County Agricultural Society was formed in 1819. Attempts to form an agricultural society in Kent County were made in 1818 and 1835, but a permanent society was not established there until 1854.⁸² Many of the members of the Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture were non-resident landowners in Kent County.

In evaluating the influence of these Society members among Appoquinimink, Little Creek, and Murderkill farmers, it is important to remember that the phrase "useful members" as used by the Philadelphia Society and the New Castle County Society did not refer to either women or blacks. Nor were average white farmers likely to become members in these societies. How widely the journals published by the agricultural societies were circulated, even assuming that their reading public extended beyond the subscriber, is unknown.

The Impact of Nineteenth-Century Agricultural Publications in Central Delaware

Exchanges of information regarding agricultural reform theories and practices were facilitated by local newspapers that chronicled the activities of agricultural societies and carried advertisements for the technological changes that accompanied reform. In Kent County, the *Smyrna Times* advertised exhibitions of the latest agricultural equipment held on the grounds of local farms. In August 1854, for instance, "Farmers and the public generally" were invited to view George Cummins' "Michigan Double Plow" at his home farm in Duck Creek Hundred. Cummins displayed both his wealth and his "advanced farming" mentality, while his neighbors socialized. If few farmers of average means could afford to purchase such equipment, they were nonetheless made aware of the benefits of the new technologies. By these exhibitions and other efforts, the spirit of agricultural reform might be widely disseminated.⁸³

Manufacturers' claims for ease and efficiency surely appealed to owners and tenants alike. With the next year's harvest in mind, Kent County farmers read the following announcement:

Farmers and Thrashers. Read This. McCormick's Improved Iron Beam Reaping and Mowing Machine, for 1855. This Machine is warranted to Cut from 10 to 20 Acres of all kinds of Grass or Grain per day, and to do it as well as can be done by any hand. - Price \$150; \$65 cash, and the balance at 4 months, with interest.⁸⁴

Equipment such as McCormick's reaping and mowing machine allowed family-operated farms to work the land more efficiently both in terms of time and the cost of labor. The machine reduced the need for extra hired hands and enabled them to handle larger crop yields. An

⁸² Grettler, 163 (note).

⁸³ *Smyrna Times*, August 30, 1854.

⁸⁴ *Smyrna Times*. October 11, 1854.

expert farm hand could reap four acres of wheat per day using a cradle, while an average worker might reap only half that amount. Many of the technological advancements viewed as hallmarks of agricultural reform increased farmers' dependence on horses. Horse-power was applied to grinders, threshers, corn shellers, hay balers, gins, mowers, hay rakes and reapers. While oxen were stronger than horses and required less feed for maintenance, they were not swift enough to operate reapers. Mules also offered cheaper maintenance than horses, but do not appear to have been preferred over horses among the farmers in the Upper Peninsula Zone although they were present upon the landscape.⁸⁵ The often-advertised "Reading's Premium Horse-Power Corn Sheller"--guaranteed to shell "1,000 bushels of corn in one day, employing four horses and four men"--was practical for only the wealthiest farmers.⁸⁶ Although most tenant farmers in the Upper Peninsula Zone owned at least one, and probably two, horses, few owned enough to handle the corn sheller. The acquisition of such machinery would have required significant investment in addition to the purchase of the equipment.

Agriculture reform saved farming in the "Old Atlantic states," argued Gouveneur Emerson in 1855. Only the intensive application of fertilizers like lime and guano averted the crisis of infertile lands in Kent County at the beginning of the century. Emerson lauded the restorative powers of guano, claiming that Kent County had been the largest purchaser of the fertilizer in the nation in the preceding year. A physician who lived in Philadelphia, Emerson was a multiple property owner in Little Creek Hundred. He owned several farms in the eastern portion of the hundred that were rented to tenants and used for experimentation in new agricultural practices. Emerson's own efforts to convert Kent County farmers to agricultural reform included maintaining a test-field of corn on a public road. The exceptional productivity of Emerson's field was attributed to the annual application of "ammoniated superphosphate" that proved so effective in maintaining high crop yields that Emerson could boast: "The present crop is thought to be very fine, although it is the fourth in regular succession, on the same ground."⁸⁷ A local newspaper correspondent from Willow Grove concurred with Emerson:

To our good natural soil, our farmers are adding those cheering blessers of down-hearted land, guano, lime, poudrette &c...Ton after ton of guano has reached our region within a few weeks and it is going under the sod

⁸⁵ Gates, 227-229.

⁸⁶ Delaware Herald. Wednesday, March 22, 1854, p. 4.

⁸⁷ Gouveneur Emerson, "An Address Delivered before the Agricultural Society of New Castle County, Delaware at its Annual Exhibition" [held in Wilmington, Sept. 11, 1855] (Philadelphia: T.K. and P.G. Collins, Printers, 1855), 5.

now, to be *driver* for the coming crop.⁸⁸

Agricultural reformers urged farmers to use every bit of available manure, including "poudrette," a refined term for human excrement borrowed from the French. Earlier farmers such as Richard Mansfield and S.H. Black had specifically encouraged the use of plaster on crop fields.

In Kent County, notices of real estate sales testify to the importance attached to fertilization as a hallmark of a well-managed farm. It was not uncommon for landowners to include detailed accounts of fertilization along with the other appointments of their properties. Daniel Cummins described his 200 acre "Font Hill Farm" as highly improved:

Upon this Farm, no less than 60,000 bushels of lime, 20,000 bushels of Wood Ashes and 50 tons of Guano have been spread within the past 5 years...⁸⁹

Advertisements for the sale of more modest farms also testified to the acceptance of agricultural reform practices throughout the County. A 72-acre farm near Camden, Delaware, "divided into 3 fields" assured potential buyers that the seller had preserved the productivity of his lands by rotating crops.⁹⁰

Newspaper accounts of the Kent County Agricultural Fair described another result of agricultural reform practices--the diversification of crops and livestock. Irish potatoes, pumpkins, coconut squash, rutabagas, carrots, and beans were among the prized vegetables in October of 1854--all crops recommended by proponents of agricultural reform for their ameliorative effect on the soil. Specialty breeds of poultry, like the Shanghai fowl, were also awarded prizes.⁹¹ The agricultural fair engaged farm communities in a dialog with technological innovation. Local firms as well as individuals displayed the wondrous mechanization of horse-drawn corn shellers, drills, and reapers. Plowing matches offered spectators the opportunity to cheer their neighbor's deft handling of new farm implements. Would Daniel Cummins behind the "double Michigan" out-manuever Hunn Jenkins at the "Centre Draught" plow?⁹²

The nineteenth-century reform climate led some observers to note the dark side to technological innovation, however, and to question the plight of the agricultural laborer.

⁸⁸ Delaware Herald, Wednesday, April 26, 1854.

⁸⁹ Real estate advertisement, Delaware Herald. Wednesday, March 22, 1854, p. 3.

⁹⁰ Delaware Gazette (Wilmington, Delaware: C.P. Johnson) December 21, 1858, n.p.

⁹¹ Smyrna Times, October 11, 1854.

⁹² Smyrna Times, October 11, 1854.

Thomas Francis Bayard urged agricultural societies to instill good reading habits in the farm hand. New technology, he warned, "tends to deaden his intelligence." In order to cultivate moral improvement on the agricultural landscape, Bayard charged agricultural societies with establishing libraries "of sensible and entertaining books to refresh the weary and attract inquiring minds among the laboring class."⁹³ The enlightenment of farm laborers was a common theme. In a section entitled, "Hints Respecting Hired Laborers," the *Farmer's Every-day Book* counselled farmers to honor their obligations "beyond wages" to agricultural laborers. Farmers must set an example of ideal citizenry--honesty, thrift, hard work, and literacy--for their hands.⁹⁴ Another mid-century farm publication proclaimed its motto: "To Improve the Soil and the Mind."⁹⁵

As the nineteenth century progressed, farming increasingly became the subject of scientific inquiry. The early agricultural societies encouraged scientific experimentation by their "gentlemen farmer" members, who were able to recommend efficient and economical solutions to repair the agricultural landscape of the new nation. The Philadelphia Society for the Improvement of Agriculture published in its *Memoirs* the results of the scientific experiments carried out by members like Gouveneur Emerson.

Efforts to devise the perfect farm concentrated on the form of agricultural buildings, and the relationship of outbuildings to the farmhouse and fields. Topography, adequate drainage, and landscaping of the farmstead were essential elements of planned farming. Like other elements of agricultural reform, farmstead planning depended on simultaneous reform efforts. The effects of marsh reclamation, for instance, might influence patterns of building locations:

the site of the building was originally chosen...because of a slight eminence which lifted the house out of the miasmatic dampness of marshy, low ground, which in the days of modern drainage has become as dry and healthful as any surrounding hill.⁹⁶

Countless publications counseled farmers to abandon the organically-developed arrangement of buildings and to adopt scientifically proven, symmetrically pleasing plans. The advocates of farmstead reorganization were not without critics. K.J.T. Eckblaw echoed the complaint of his predecessors:

the popular [farm] literature consists mainly of compilations of plans...or

⁹³ Bayard, 6.

⁹⁴ John L. Blake, *The Farmer's Every-day Book or, Sketches of Social Life in the Country* (Auburn, NY: Miller, Orton, and Mulligan, 1856), 260-265.

⁹⁵ John L. Blake, *The Farm and the Fireside* (NY: J.C. Derby, 1855), title page.

⁹⁶ K.J.T. Eckblaw, *Farm Structures* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1914), 67.

of discussions of farmsteads too expensive or impractical to be applied to present ordinary conditions.⁹⁷

Examples of buildings advocated by proponents of agricultural reform were "granaries or crib barns, bank barns, livestock barns or stables, carriage houses, threshing barns, and cartsheds."⁹⁸ Agricultural reformers also urged the construction of farm buildings which could combine many functions under one roof.

The exterior appearance of farm buildings was stressed by agricultural manuals, one of which assured its readers:

Barns can be pleasing objects, and impart an impression of comfort and completeness upon all who see them. This attractive appearance will depend upon the symmetry and exterior finish of the buildings themselves, their grouping, [and] the planting of suitable shade trees.⁹⁹

Some wealthy farmers in central Delaware rebuilt and reorganized their farmsteads according to the precepts favored by the reformers. For example, in 1886 when J.K. Williams remodelled his farm in St. Georges Hundred, Woodlawn, he laid out his bank barn (Figure 39) and two cartsheds (Figure 40) as three sides of a courtyard with a fence completing the inclosure. At Woodlawn, Williams also constructed a multi-purpose building that functioned as a carriage barn, chicken house, and piggery (Figure 41).¹⁰⁰

The Effects of Tenancy and Agricultural Reform

Tenancy played an essential role in assuring the success of reform programs that the multiple property owners embraced. Landlords exacted compulsory improvements from their tenants, whose increasingly limited economic status compromised attempts to resist unfair terms. Although the average farmer resisted innovation, a tenant often was compelled to embrace a program of reform. Agricultural landlords, white and black, set specific and often rigorous terms for the cultivation of their farms by tenants. These terms included provisions for reclamation of marshlands, selection of crops that might be grown, rotation patterns for those crops, protection of remaining woodlands, and restoration of the soil by the use of fertilizers.

Tenants had little choice but to practice farming techniques that were compatible with agricultural reform, in some cases, in direct violation of their economic best interest. For

⁹⁷ K.J.T. Eckblaw, Farm Structures, New York: The Macmillan Co., 1914, 3.

⁹⁸ Herman (1987), 199.

⁹⁹ Barn Plans and Outbuildings (New York: Orange Judd Co., 1884), xii.

¹⁰⁰ Herman, 211-213.

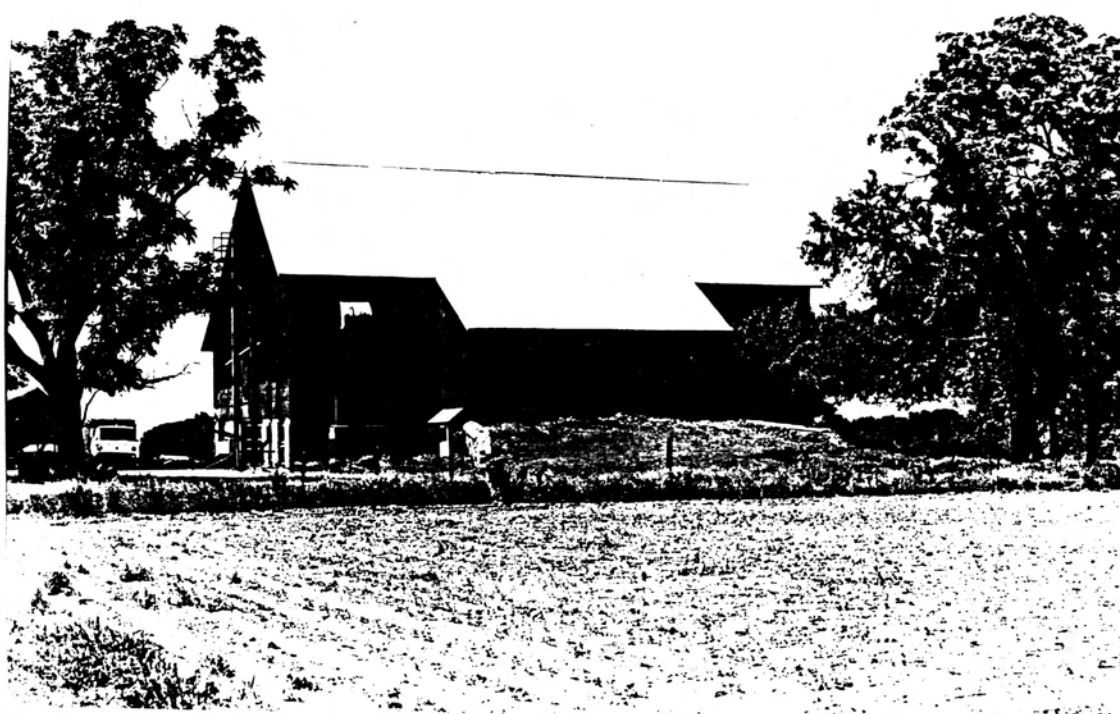


Figure 39: Main Bank Barn, Woodlawn, St. Georges Hundred.
Photographed for the Historic American Buildings Survey by David L. Ames.

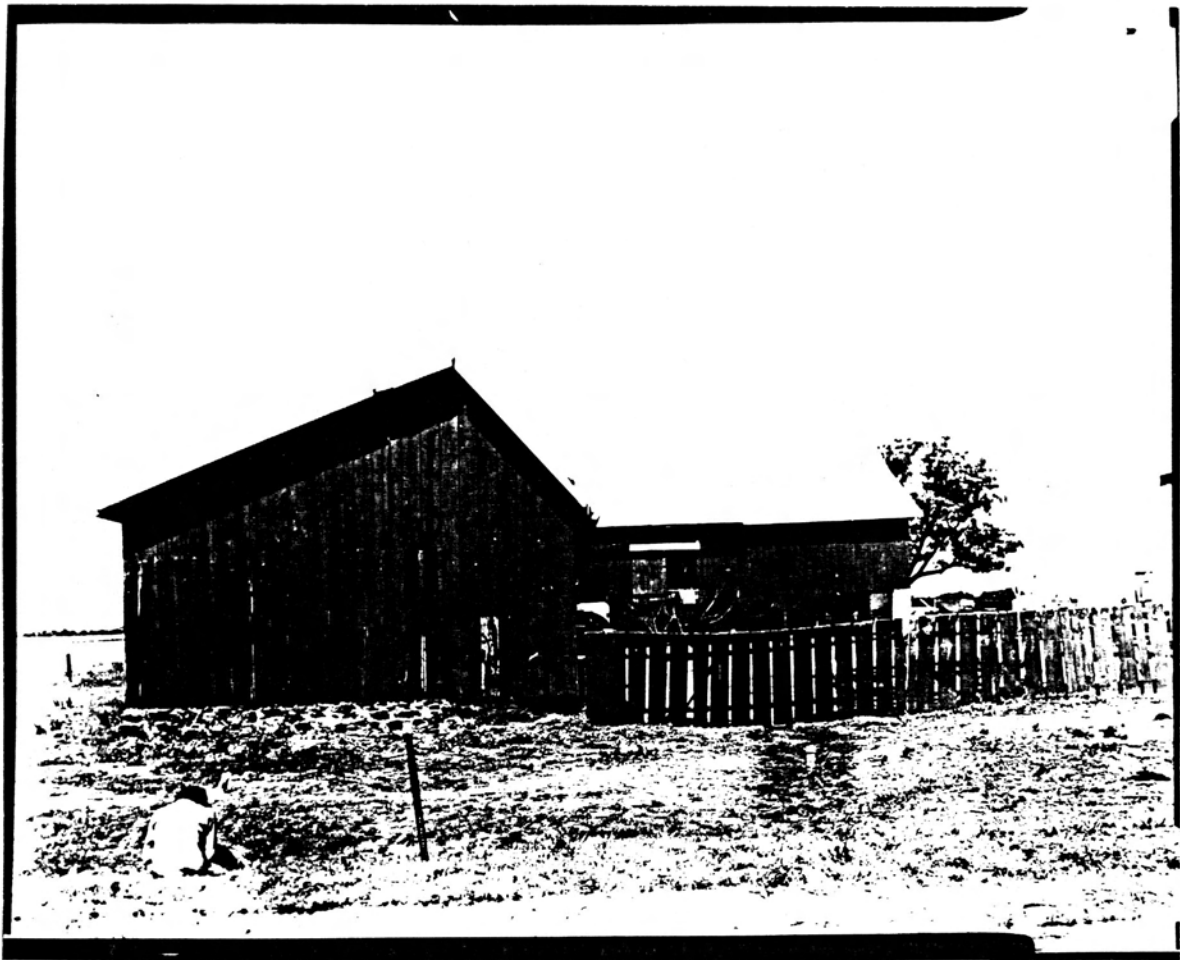


Figure 40: West Cart Shed, Woodlawn, St. Georges Hundred.
Photographed for the Historic American Buildings Survey by David L. Ames.



Figure 41: Carriage Shed, Woodlawn, St. Georges Hundred.
Photographed for the Historic American Buildings Survey by David L. Ames.

instance, Kent County landowners demanded protection of their gardens and sheep, hallmarks of agricultural improvement, against predation. Poor tenants opposed the penning of swine and dogs. Feeding penned animals represented an unwelcome burden; free-ranging pigs fed themselves and offered the poor cost-free bacon.¹⁰¹ Furthermore, under lease agreements, tenants might be held responsible for damages done to the landlord's property by their own or roaming swine.¹⁰² The practice of "good husbandry" could be both an aspiration and a constraint. To gain access to more productive lands, individuals had to cultivate not only their fields, but their reputations as responsible tenants. Ownership of errant swine or dogs posed double threats to economic security. More than that, they threatened a social order founded on the privatization of property. Also, landed tenants or farm managers signed petitions for swine control, even as poor landowners, small holders, and laborers petitioned against it.

In the Upper Peninsula Zone agricultural tenancy provided a location for the dissemination of contemporary agricultural science. There, elite landlords forged an economic system for improving their farmlands. By requiring tenants to work their lands according to contemporary agricultural practice, landlords assured that the their landholdings would remain highly productive, and hence valuable. By complying with the terms of their leases, tenants would, theoretically, benefit from increased crop yields.

¹⁰¹ Grettler, 178-9. Herman, "Fences", in After Ratification: Material Life in Federal Delaware, 1789-1820, Newark, DE: Museum Studies Program, University of Delaware, 1988.

¹⁰² "Lease of a Farm, on Shares," 269.

VI. PRIORITIES AND GOALS FOR AGRICULTURAL TENANCY

The historic preservation planning process in Delaware is divided into three general stages (Figure 42): I. Establishing the Planning Framework, II: Identifying the Historic Resource Base, and III: Establishing Preservation Goals for the Historic Resources. The planning framework is formed by a fully developed historic context. The elements of a historic context were listed in Chapter 1 (Definition of the Historic Context) and help to formulate the organization of this report. Goals and objectives for the identification of the historic resource base (Phase II) are derived from the historic context and its associated property types. Phase II includes four major preservation planning activities: 1) the identification of historic resources; 2) the evaluation of those resources in relationship to the historic context and National Register Standards; 3) the registration of resources deemed eligible for the National Register; and 4) the listing of all resources and property types related to the historic context (in this case, agricultural tenancy).

This chapter will set forth goals and priorities for the agricultural tenancy historic context and its property types with the following steps:

- 1) place the context within the priorities of the Delaware Plan,
- 2) present goals and objectives, derived from this historic context and its associated property types, for the identification, evaluation, and registration of historic resources related to agricultural tenancy, and
- 3) discuss issues raised by the historic context for the preservation of resources related to agricultural tenancy.

Agricultural Tenancy and the Goals and Priorities of the Delaware Plan

The Agricultural Tenancy historic context is a subtheme of the major historic theme of "Agriculture" in the Historic Context Matrix. It also relates to the historic theme of "Settlement Patterns and Demographic Changes." The Delaware Plan has set priorities among the 18 major historic themes for Delaware and related these priorities to the five chronological periods and five geographic zones within the state.¹⁰³

The highest priority for preservation in the Delaware Plan is on agricultural historic resources built during the chronological periods of 1770-1830+/- and 1830-1880+/- in the Upper Peninsula, Lower Peninsula/Cypress Swamp, and Coastal zones.¹⁰⁴ The plan concluded

¹⁰³ Ames, Callahan, Herman, and Siders. Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan, Newark, Delaware: Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, 1989.

¹⁰⁴ The chronological periods and themes in the plan are A. 1630-1730+/-: Exploration and Frontier Settlement; B. 1730-1770+/-: Intensified and Durable Occupation; C. 1770-1830+/-: Early Industrialization; D. 1830-1880+/-: Industrialization and Early Urbanization; and E. 1880-1940+/-: Urbanization and Early Suburbanization.

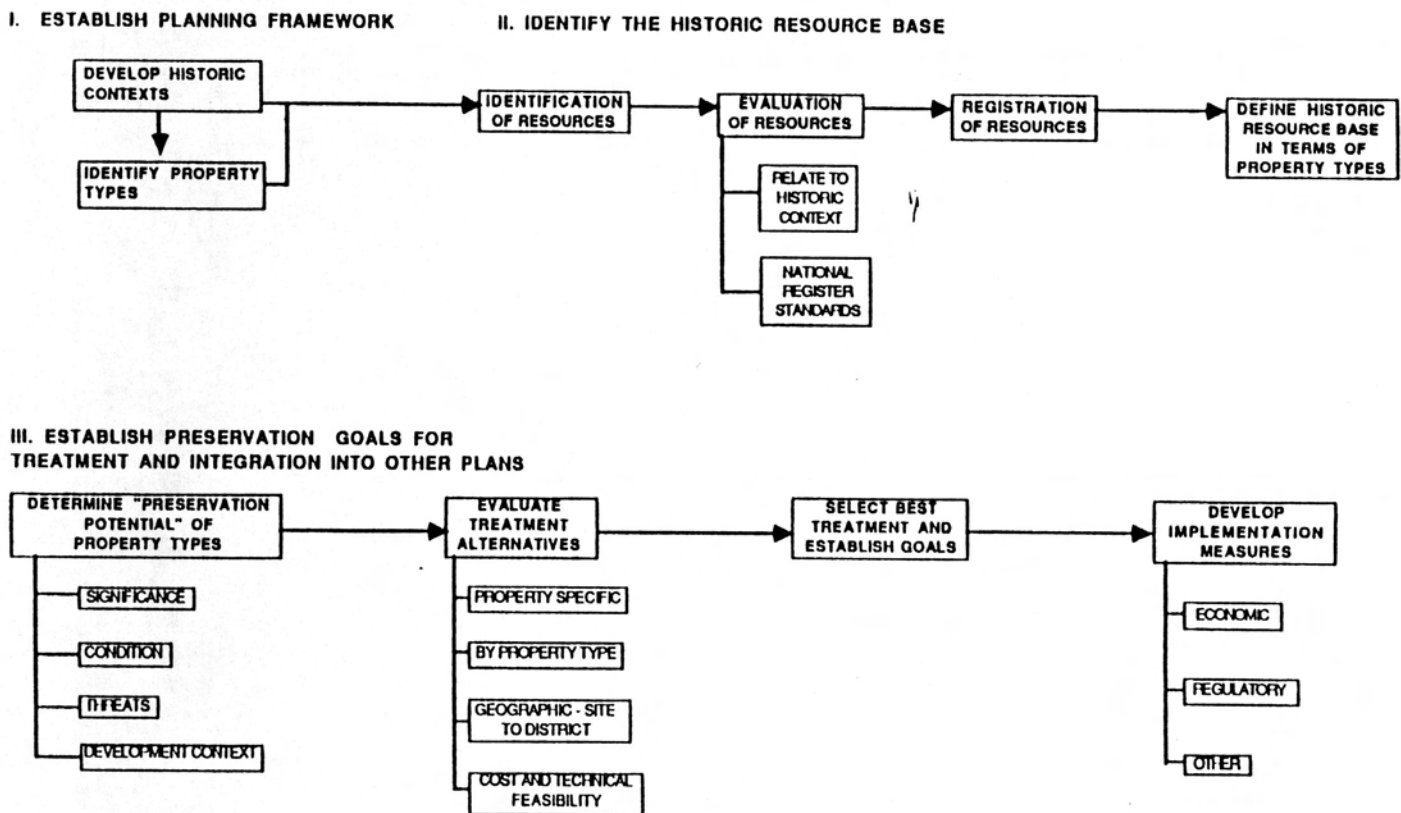


Figure 42: Three Stages of Preservation Planning
 Source: *Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan*, p. 56.

that the most threatened and fragile historic resources in the state are those related to agriculture historic resources, built from 1770 to 1880 in the Coastal Zone.

In the past four to five years, extensive research has been completed on the statewide agricultural historic context and its associated property types resulting in the identification, evaluation, and registration on the National Register of Historic Places of a number of historic properties related to the agricultural tenancy historic context.¹⁰⁵ From this work tenancy has emerged as an important dimension of the agricultural economy of Delaware, and one whose nature suggested that it should be have high priority for historic context development.

Goals for Identification Activities

Based on criteria developed in the historic context, identification activities are undertaken for the purpose of locating all of the historic properties related to the context, in this case agricultural tenancy. Identification activities include, but are not limited to, archival research, informant interviews, cultural resource survey and analysis. Normally, the field surveys are the primary identification activity.

Because few distinctive physical property types were found to be associated with the agricultural tenancy historic context, we recommend that identification activities for tenancy be incorporated into all the identification activities and evaluation criteria related to properties in the larger historic context for agriculture. Documentary research would form the primary identification activity.

Research Design. Identification activities are essentially research activities for which a statement of objectives or research design should be prepared. Within the framework of comprehensive planning the research design provides a vehicle for integrating the various activities performed during the identification and for linking those activities directly to the goals of the historic context.

Limiting the geographical area of the agriculture tenancy historic context to three hundreds in the Upper Peninsula Zone was based partly on the need to examine tenancy in greater depth than could be done on a zone- or state-wide basis. There was an underlying assumption that the findings of this context would be applied to identification and evaluation activities on a statewide basis as part of the overall historic context for agriculture. At the time the research was begun it was not known that the context would not yield specific

¹⁰⁵ For example see, Herman, et.al. National Register of Historic Places: Dwellings of the Rural Elite in Central Delaware, 1770-1830, Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, University of Delaware, 1989; Susan Mulchahey, et.al., National Register of Historic Places Eligibility Evaluation: Baltimore Hundred, Sussex County, Delaware, Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, University of Delaware, 1990. Judith A. Quinn and Bernard L. Herman, Sweet Potato Houses of Sussex County, Delaware National Register Nomination, Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, University of Delaware, 1988.

property types.

We have developed three specific goals for identification activities related to the agricultural tenancy historic context.

- 1) To conduct an intensive level survey and nomination of the potentially eligible sites identified in Appendix A of this report. This goal should be promptly addressed and we recommend that it be accomplished within three years. This project will be highly labor-intensive since it will require both intensive-level field work and extensive archival research on each property.
- 2) To conduct a reconnaissance and intensive level survey of agricultural tenancy sites in other hundreds throughout the state using the research design for reconnaissance survey discussed in Appendix A. Any sites identified as potentially eligible should be added to the thematic or multiple resource National Register nomination developed above. Since it would be impossible to undertake this level of survey for the entire state in a one-year project, it is our recommendation that it be split according to the geographic zones identified in the Delaware Plan. All of the zones should be addressed within six years. These projects will also be highly labor-intensive.
- 3) To review the potential eligibility of all agricultural properties reviewed for National Register eligibility for inclusion in the agricultural tenancy context. The linkage of a farm with tenancy would be established during the course of developing a documentary history of the resource. It is our recommendation that all evaluations of the significance of agricultural properties would have to establish the history of tenancy of the property and relate it to the Agricultural Tenancy Historic Context. The research design for identifying and evaluating tenancy would be that used in the agricultural tenancy historic context. Over time, the evaluation and registration process would result in a series of properties known to be part of the agricultural tenancy historic context. This goal would be addressed on an on-going basis with no particular schedule.

Outreach as an identification activity. To facilitate the understanding of the significance of tenancy in the Delaware agricultural history, we are recommending that a short summary of the historic context be written and published for a professional audience of planners, as well as historical society members and the general public. This publication would provide a tenancy checklist so that individuals would be guided to the appropriate archival sources for determining whether the property they were interested in was ever a tenant farm and whether it might relate to the historic context.

Integrating Identification Results into the Comprehensive Plan. The results of these identification activities and the agricultural tenancy historic context would be integrated into the *Historic Context Master Reference and Summary* volume of the Delaware Plan as part of the plan's five-year update.

Goals for Evaluation

The primary goal for evaluation is that any resource identified through survey activities related to the agriculture context shall be evaluated for potential inclusion in the Agricultural Tenancy Context. Second, all existing National Register nominations for sites that are potentially eligible for inclusion in the agricultural tenancy context should be upgraded to include a thorough discussion of tenancy and its relationship to that particular site. Third, we recommend that a comprehensive review be carried out of all National Register nominations for agricultural complexes and properties fitting the description of house and gardens in order to determine whether they are candidates for inclusion in the agricultural tenancy historic context. Fourth, based on the results of the above evaluations, we recommend that the evaluation criteria for associative property types be further expanded. Fifth, survival rates for tenant farms at specific points in time should be developed from the survey and evaluation. Sixth, the property type *house and gardens* should be explored in further detail, particularly in other parts of the zone and the state; it is important to locate some of these properties for field evaluation and to establish better documentation of patterns and links to different part of the community. Lastly, this entire context should be tested against other zones in the state.

Goals for Treatment and Integration Into Other Plans

In Phase III of the preservation planning process, once the pool of specific properties and property types related to the historic context have been defined, goals are established for the actual preservation and treatment of these resources. Under the standards of the Secretary of Interior, a goal is a statement of "preferred preservation activities...to provide the greatest possible protection of properties within the historic context. Establishing preservation goals is the last element of a complete historic context under the National Park Service guidelines and the Delaware Plan.

Under the Delaware plan, goals for preserving a specific historic resource take place in four steps after the resources have been evaluated. First, the "preservation potential" of property types is determined based on their significance, condition, threats and development context; second, a range of feasible treatment or preservation alternatives are evaluated; third, the "best" treatment alternative is selected and fourth and finally actual implementation measures for protecting the resource are designed.

Threats to Resources Related to Agriculture and Agricultural Tenancy

Since tenant farms are a part of the larger agricultural historic contexts, they are by definition subject to the same type and geographical distribution of threats described in the Delaware Plan. Since such a large percentage of nineteenth century farms were tenanted at

one time or another, a significant number of these resources will be lost due to development of agricultural land and abandonment of smaller farmsteads through consolidation of agricultural holdings. Therefore it is important to determine which farms are most representative of agricultural tenancy and to undertake at least interim treatment actions to preserve them in some manner.

General Treatment Alternatives for Agricultural Historic Resources

The most fundamental agricultural historic recourse is the historic agricultural landscape itself of which farmsteads and their individual buildings are a part. The most desirable treatment goal is to maintain the agricultural landscape in continued use as much as possible. Maintaining an agricultural landscape under development pressure intact requires an agriculturally productive landscape in which the goals of historic preservation can be combined with those of other planning goals such as agricultural land preservation and environmental management. Such preservation is undergirded by both regulation and controls as well as incentives. Such a preservation treatment plan has yet to be developed for the Agricultural Historic Context for Delaware. Until such a landscape-based policy is in place, treatment efforts can only focus on farmsteads and individual buildings.

Selection of properties for preservation treatment. The fact that tenancy is a changing characteristic of individual farms, and that the desired way of preserving farms is to maintain them in continued and productive use suggests that the primary means of treatment and preservation of agricultural tenancy will be through documentation especially through visual documentation of the Historic American Building Survey and the Threatened Building Survey of Delaware. Although tenancy is a changing characteristic of farms, farms that are good representatives of the agricultural tenancy historic context should be identified on the basis of the following criteria: 1) meeting the evaluation criteria for the historic context and/or specific property types; 2) being examples of property types that survive in low numbers, particularly African-American tenant farms and low-end tenant housing; and 3) having been occupied by tenants during a significant period in Delaware's agricultural history. Selection of these properties will result from the identification and evaluation activities described earlier.

Identification of Tenant Farms to Be Documented from the Agricultural Tenancy Historic Context. It is our recommendation that from the farms identified by this context, two be selected for documentation according to Historic American Buildings Survey standards and at the intensive level in the Delaware Threatened Buildings Survey protocol. This will insure that a minimum number of tenant farms have been documented at a high level.

Our second recommendation is that the associative and physical property types identified for agricultural tenancy be added to the list of priorities for documentation under

the Delaware Threatened Buildings Survey.

In the long range, candidates for additional documentation should be identified as part of the five-year plan update in which all registered resources related to agricultural tenancy are evaluated.

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APPENDIX A:
RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY RESULTS

APPENDIX A: RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY RESULTS

The reconnaissance fieldwork conducted for this project was intended to serve two purposes. First, it was to identify some of the resources that were potentially eligible for inclusion in the agricultural tenancy historic context. Second, it was to provide some idea of the rate of survival for tenant farm properties in the study hundreds. As the methodology section describes below, the field work was successful in both of these tasks, but only in relation to those resources that were associated with tenancy in 1860.

Methodology

The first step in the process was to develop a list of property owners' names from the 1868 Beers' Atlas and the 1860/61 tax assessments for the study hundreds. In every case where a name on the map matched a name on the tax assessment, the site was marked on a copy of Beers' Atlas. These maps were taken to the Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation for comparison with SPO maps marked with Cultural Resource Survey Inventory numbers. In each case where a marked site from Beers' Atlas matched a CRS number, the site was identified on a set of USGS quad maps. In some cases, although no site had been inventoried, the USGS map indicated some buildings at a location matching a marked site on Beers' Atlas. These sites were also marked for field survey.

Second, the USGS maps, copies of Beers' Atlas, and the tax assessment descriptions were taken out into the field. Each site marked on the USGS map was located and the buildings on the site were compared to the description in the tax assessment. In many cases, the historic structures were clearly no longer standing. In other cases, they had been so heavily altered that it was extremely difficult to determine if any part of the structure matched the tax assessment description. When a clear match was identified between the description and the standing structure, this was noted along with information identifying the historic owner, tenant, and if possible, the associative and/or physical property types related to the resource. In some cases, property owners held more than one tenant farm with buildings of similar description (i.e., two-story frame dwelling) and while it was clear that the identified site matched one of the landowner's properties, we could not identify the exact tenant without further research.

Results

In Little Creek and Kenton hundreds, the 1860 tax assessment listed 115 tenant farms. Preparation for the field work identified 77 potential sites; 38 of those resources were determined potentially eligible for inclusion in the agricultural tenancy historic context. This represents a tenant farm survival rate from 1860 of 33%. In North and South Murderkill hundreds, the 1860 tax assessment listed 207 tenant farms. Preliminary research prior to the

field work located 124 potential sites; some 65 resources were determined potentially eligible for inclusion in the context. The survival rate for tenant farms from 1860 in Murderkill was slightly lower than in Little Creek--only 31%.

The following table lists all of the sites in Little Creek/Kenton Hundred and North/South Murderkill Hundred that were considered in the field survey and the results of our examination. In the first column is the Cultural Resource Survey number; if there is no number, the site is one of those identified by a match between Beers' Atlas and buildings marked on the USGS quad map. The second column contains the name of the owner as it appears on the 1860/61 tax assessment. The third column identifies the tenant who occupied the property in 1860. The fourth column indicates whether the property possesses integrity in relationship to the historic context of agricultural tenancy. Very simply, this column indicates whether or not the property matches the tax assessment description for a particular tenant property; in some cases, the words "possible" or "unknown" indicate that we could not reach a definite conclusion. It is important to note that we were determining integrity primarily in relationship to the evaluation criteria for this context. While some properties may be marked "ineligible" for this context, they may very well be eligible under a different one and should not be automatically considered ineligible for any National Register nomination. Some of those marked "ineligible" may also turn out to be eligible under the tenancy context at a different point in time--our field work and evaluation dealt only with the occupation of the farm in 1860. The fifth column gives, in those cases that are potentially eligible for the context, a preliminary identification of the physical or associative property type to which this resource would most likely be related. The last column indicates whether or not the structure(s) retain the minimum level of architectural integrity required for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. In most cases we were unable to view the interiors of the buildings and in other cases, the buildings were too far from the road to make an accurate evaluation of architectural integrity. For this reason, many of the resources indicate "maybe" or "unknown" in this column.

Reconnaissance Survey Results

Little Creek and Kenton Hundreds

<u>CRS #</u>	<u>Historic Owner</u>	<u>Tenant Name</u>	<u>Context</u>	<u>Property Type</u>	<u>Integrity</u>
K-132	J. A. Nicholson		Eligible	Multiple property owner	Maybe
K-148	Manlove Hayes		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-166	Gove Emerson M.D.	William Williams Farris Potter William Dill	Eligible	Multiple property owner/African-American tenant	Yes
K-189	Mrs. DuHamel	William I. Lank	Eligible	Tenant farm	Unknown
K-191	Mrs. Hannah M. Davis	Osten Tomelson	Ineligible	N/A	None
K-234	George Janvier	Thomas Sampson	Ineligible	N/A	Maybe
K-321	H. Stout Heirs		Eligible	Estate	Yes
K-359	I. J. Short	J. Berry	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Unknown
K-833	Hoffecker & Huffington		Ineligible	N/A	Unknown
K-947	Robert B. Jump	Samuel Sherard Benjamin Wallace	Ineligible	N/A	None
K-1278	J. B. Hays		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-1281	Ebenezer Cloak	William Wilcott	Eligible	Tenant farm	Maybe
K-1285	Jefferson Lewis		Ineligible	N/A	Unknown

K-1290	Thomas H. Denney	Joseph Pool	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Maybe
K-1291	John Moor		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-1292	Mason Bailey	Armwell Durborow Edward Concellor	Eligible	Multiple property owner/African-American tenant	Maybe
K-1293	Mason Bailey	Armwell Durborow Edward Concellor	Eligible	Multiple property owner/African-American tenant	Maybe
K-1370	James Jones	William S. Jones Noah Laws	Ineligible	N/A	Unknown
K-1374	Thomas Denney	John Everett	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Yes
K-1382	James Stroud	William Pruitt	Eligible	Tenant farm	Unknown
K-1383	Isaac Register	Stephen Williams Isaac Sammons	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Yes
K-1394	Moses Price	William Hillard	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Unknown
K-1399	Robert Hill	James Shahan	Eligible	Tenant farm	Maybe
K-1400	Thomas Denney		Ineligible	N/A	Unknown
K-1609	Mrs. Bishop		Ineligible	N/A	Maybe
K-1627	Elihu Jefferson	Robert Dean	Eligible	Multiple property owner/African-American tenant	Unknown

K-1628	Elihu Jefferson		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-2034	George Parris		Possible	Multiple property owner	Yes
K-2036	Sarah A. Sipple	Samuel W. Nowell	Eligible	Tenant farm	Yes
K-2039	George Parris		Eligible	House & garden /Multiple property owner	None
K-2040	John Alston		Eligible	House & garden	Yes
K-2042	John Alston	Timothy Brown	Eligible	African-American tenant	Yes
K-2046	Enoch Spruance	Jacob M. Hill	Possible	Tenant farm	Unknown
K-2049	Hilyard Estate	John Parker	Ineligible	N/A	Yes
K-2052	Isaac H. Register	John Anderson	Eligible	African-American tenant	Maybe
K-2053	John Slaughter	J. C. Slaughter	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Maybe
K-2054	Andrew N. Harper	John Barcus	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Unknown
K-2055	Andrew N. Harper		Possible	Multiple property owner	Unknown
K-2056 & 2057	Joseph Disch	Joseph E. Disch	Ineligible	N/A	None
K-2067	Robert B. Jump	Samuel Sherard Benjamin Wallace	Ineligible	N/A	Maybe

K-2068	H. Taylor		Ineligible	N/A	Unknown
K-2069 & 2073	Nathan Farrow	William Williams	Ineligible	N/A	None
K-2070	Henry L. Wilson	William Ennis	Ineligible	N/A	Yes
K-2071	Andrew J. Wilson	Truitt Melvin	Ineligible	N/A	None
K-2072	William Cowgill	Emanuel Laws	Eligible	African-American tenant	Unknown
K-2075	H. Stout Heirs		Eligible	Estate/Multiple property owner	Maybe
K-2076	Mrs. Mary Reed	Mathew Hutchinson	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Unknown
K-2081	Walker Mifflin	owner-occupied	Ineligible	N/A	Maybe
K-2086	Hiram W. McCawley	Edward Plesington	Possible	Tenant farm	Maybe
K-2091	Heverin & Hobson		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-3161	H. Stout Heirs		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-3163	Elihu Jefferson	owner-occupied	Ineligible	N/A	Unknown
K-3171	C. Brown		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-3172	Jonathan Moor	owner-occupied	Ineligible	N/A	Maybe
K-3178	John Numbers	owner-occupied	Ineligible	N/A	None
K-3179	Robert Dean	Isaiah Munce	Eligible	African-American landlord & tenant	Yes

K-3194	Mathew Hazel Sr.	John B. Goodin Mathew Hazel Jr.	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Maybe
K-4332	Jonathan Moore		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-5480	John S. Coudright Estate	Mrs. Mary Coudright	Ineligible	N/A	None
K-5985 or 5986	Dr. William Cummins	Benjamin F. Hurlock	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Unknown
K-6414	Henry L. Wilson	William Ennis	Ineligible	N/A	Yes
K-6432	Rias Taylor		Possible	Tenant farm	Unknown
None	H. Stouts Heirs		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	Abraham Moor Heirs	Henry C. Forcum	Eligible	Estate	Unknown
None	Henry Ridgely M.D.	George Graham	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Yes
None	B. F. Hamm		Possible	Tenant farm	Maybe
None	Isaac Register	Stephen Williams Isaac Sammons	Ineligible	N/A	None
None	James Moor	owner-occupied	Ineligible	N/A	Unknown
None	I. J. Short		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	J. Bower		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	Samuel Hutchinson	William A. Hickey	Ineligible	N/A	None
None	William Berry Heirs	Thomas Scuse	Eligible	Estate	Unknown

None	Mrs. Mary York	Mrs. Raughly	Ineligible	N/A	None
None	William E. Riggs	William Smith	Ineligible	N/A	Yes
None	Andrew N. Harper	John Barcus	Ineligible	N/A	None
None	Robert B. Jump	Samuel Sherard Benjamin Wallace	Ineligible	N/A	None
None	Alexander Laws	Charles Wheatman Samuel L. Hall	Possible	Multiple property owner	Unknown

North and South Murderkill Hundreds

K-495	John S. Caulk	William Thompson	Eligible	Non-resident landlord/African- American tenant	Unknown
K-818	Philemon C. Carter		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-824	William Lewis	Thomas B. Lewis William B. Lewis	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Yes
K-828	Andrew Draper	owner-occupied	Ineligible	N/A	Unknown
K-829	William Lewis	owner-occupied	Ineligible	N/A	Maybe
K-830	Avery Draper	Henry R. Draper	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Maybe
K-835	John West	owner-occupied	Ineligible	N/A	Unknown
K-859	J. S. Kersey		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-928	Mrs. Anderson		Ineligible	N/A	None

K-942	W. H. Ridgeway		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-942	W. H. Ridgeway	self P. E. Ross William Porter	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Unknown
K-1406 & 1407	Samuel Warren		Unknown	Multiple property owner	Unknown
K-1414	J. L. Heverin	John H. Jackson	Possible	Multiple property owner	Unknown
K-1571	T. D. Cubbage	B. C. Cubbage	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Maybe
K-2073	Samuel S. Dill		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-2678	John J. Conner	owner-occupied	Ineligible	N/A	Maybe
K-2483	John P. Emerson	Benjamin Blizzard	Possible	Tenant farm	Maybe
K-2684	McIlroy McIlvaine	owner or Cornelius W. Coffin	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Maybe
K-2706	T. Reed	owner-occupied	Ineligible	N/A	Unknown
K-2707	T. Reed	owner-occupied	Ineligible	N/A	Unknown
K-2711	Mark G. Chambers	James Alberts	Possible	Estate	Yes
K-2719	James Grier	owner-occupied	Ineligible	N/A	Maybe
K-2726	William Townsend	John Emery self	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Unknown

K-2732	James Grier	Martin & Morris	Eligible	Multiple property owner/African-American tenant	Yes
K-2733	Joshua Lindale		Ineligible	N/A	Maybe
K-2735	William Greenlee	self Lemuel Clark	Eligible	Tenant farm	Maybe
K-2736	Samuel Virden	John D. Anderson Liticia Walker Burton Demons William Wilson self	Unknown	Multiple property owner	Unknown
K-2745	John B. Conner		Unknown	Multiple property owner	Unknown
K-2764	Samuel Virden	John D. Anderson Liticia Walker self	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Maybe
K-2777	James Prattis	owner-occupied	Ineligible	N/A	Maybe
K-2804	James L. HeVerin	Nehemiah Moore	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Unknown
K-2807	Samuel D. Roe	Parrott Kirby	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Unknown
K-2825	John P. Emerson	Benjamin B. Blizzard	Possible	Tenant farm	Unknown
K-2826	J. Baily		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-2833	Caleb Smithers		Possible	Multiple property owner/African-American tenant	None

K-2844	William P. Herring	Thomas M. Wilson	Eligible	African-American tenant	Maybe
K-2846	John Hurd	owner-occupied	Ineligible	N/A	Unknown
K-2859	John W. Carter	self John Ferncrook	Possible	Multiple property owner	Unknown
K-2861	Mrs. Needles		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-2865	Noah Holden	Phinias J. Bush	Possible	Multiple property owner	Unknown
K-2883	Thomas Draper	James Jester Matthew Marsh	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Maybe
K-2890	J. Cook		Possible	Tenant farm	Maybe
K-2995	Thomas Draper		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-3005	Jonathan Tinley	self Labe Parmer	Eligible	Tenant farm	Maybe
K-3010	William Fleming or Mrs. Mileham		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-3014	Thomas Killen	self Jacob Kemp Alexander Pearson	Eligible	Tenant farm	Maybe
K-3017	J. Longfellow	self William Camper	Eligible	Tenant farm	Maybe
K-3018	Charles Holden		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-3062	J. Longfellow	owner-occupied	Ineligible	N/A	Maybe

K-3070	Unity Sipple		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-3075	J. G. Longfellow	owner-occupied	Ineligible	N/A	Maybe
K-3080	James Longfellow Estate		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-3092	Philemon Carter	owner-occupied	Ineligible	N/A	Maybe
K-3095	John W. Cooper	self John P. Cannon	Possible	Tenant farm	Maybe
K-3105	Noah Holden	George Russ Isaac Hammond Edward Hamilton	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Maybe
K-3108 or 3109	John W. Carter		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-3111	John Hurd	owner-occupied	Ineligible	N/A	Unknown
K-3112	J. Longfellow		Unknown		Unknown
K-3121	Philemon Carter		Unknown		Unknown
K-3130	James Knight	P. Short	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Maybe
K-3138 or 4132	McIlroy McIlvaine	owner or Cornelius W. Coffin	Eligible	Multiple property owner	None
K-3140	James F. Sipple	self Sappe & Cary	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Maybe
K-3143	William Edwards	self	Possible	Tenant farm	Unknown

Y. W. Edwards
Alexander Conner

K-3145	Samuel S. Cooper	John Edwards	Possible	Tenant farm	Maybe
K-3218	Thomas H. Howell	self Henry Postle	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Unknown
K-3354	E. Jackson		Ineligible	N/A	Unknown
K-3546	W. H. Ridgeway		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-3588	J. Green		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-3591	Joshua R. Clement		Possible	Multiple property owner	Maybe
K-3596	Joshua R. Clement		Possible	Multiple property owner	Maybe
K-3599	Joshua R. Clement		Possible	Multiple property owner	Maybe
K-3602	Joshua R. Clement		Possible	Multiple property owner	Maybe
K-3603	Samuel S. Cooper		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-3614	T. D. Cubbage	owner-occupied	Ineligible	N/A	Maybe
K-3614	T. D. Cubbage	B. C. Cubbage	Eligible	Tenant farm	Maybe
K-3717	Jonathan Catlin	Sylvester H. Willey	Possible	Multiple property owner	Unknown

K-3737	Charles I. DuPont	John Patterson Jr.	Eligible	Non-resident landlord	Maybe
K-3753	William Evans		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-3788	Ignatious T. Cooper	James H. Cook	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Unknown
K-3793	Henry C. Cooper	John Greenlee	Eligible	African-American tenant	Maybe
K-3807	J. B. Conner		Ineligible	N/A	None
K-3811	James Anderson	Robert Thomas	Possible	Multiple property owner	Unknown
K-4290	John B. Conner	Emmanuel Hignutt William Burke Job Coverdill	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Maybe
K-4291	Isaac Godwin	John Quilling	Eligible	Tenant farm	Unknown
None	Caleb Smithers		Eligible	Multiple property owner/African-American tenant	Unknown
None	Thomas Draper		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	Thomas Draper		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	John J. Conner		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	John J. Conner		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	John B. Conner		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	David McBride		Ineligible	N/A	None

None	Caleb Smithers		Ineligible	N/A	Unknown
None	John Richardson		Eligible	Non-resident landlord	Maybe
None	Daniel McBride		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	John W. Hall	Andrew Barratt James Hazzard	Eligible	Multiple property owner	None
None	John S. Kersey	William & James Kersey	Eligible	Multiple property owner	Yes
None	Samuel Warren		Possible	Multiple property owner	Maybe
None	Isaac Young's Heirs	Daniel Gray	Eligible	African-American tenant	Maybe
None	Simeon Blood		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	Elias Townsend		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	James Hopkins	James Carter James Pearson	Eligible	Estate/African-American tenant	Unknown
None	Alexander Jackson	Peter Burris	Ineligible	N/A	None
None	Richard F. Hastings	Thomas Bell	Eligible	Tenant farm	Unknown
None	J. Longfellow	William Camper	Possible	Tenant farm	Unknown
None	William Case		Unknown		Unknown
None	J. H. Boon		Unknown		Unknown
None	Thomas B. Coursey		Unknown		Unknown

None	William Greenlee		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	John W. Cooper	self John P. Cannon	Possible	Tenant farm	Maybe
None	Samuel S. Cooper	John Edward	Possible	Tenant farm	Maybe
None	J. H. Dudley		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	I. T. Cooper		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	J. Cook		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	J. Green		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	H. K. Hargadine		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	J. Jackson		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	Thomas Pickering		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	J. S. Kersey		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	James F. Sipple		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	Emerson		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	E. Harris		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	John Gruwell		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	John Clark		Ineligible	N/A	None
None	William Meredith		Ineligible	N/A	None