INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to describe the results of Phase II excavations at the John Ruth Inn Site (7NC-D-126, N-10892) which is located within the Ogletown Interchange Project Area, White Clay Creek Hundred, north-central New Castle County, Delaware (Figure 1, Plate 1). The Ogletown Interchange Project Area right-of-way encompasses 100 acres with approximately 3.5 miles of linear right-of-way (Figure 2). The John Ruth Inn Site was identified during a Phase I/II survey of the area in 1985 and 1986 (Coleman, Hoseth, and Custer 1987). Further Phase II field work and report preparation took place between January 1987 and November 1987. The excavations were undertaken by the University of Delaware Center for Archaeological Research (UDCAR) for the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act to evaluate the effects of the proposed relocation and reconstruction of Delaware Routes 4 and 273 on significant, or potentially significant, cultural resources as defined by the National Register of Historic Places (36CFR60).

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Ogletown Interchange Project Area and the John Ruth Inn Site are located in the east-central portion of New Castle County (Figure 1). The entire project area is in an area transitional between the Fall Line and High Coastal Plain physiographic zones of Delaware. More detailed descriptions of the local environmental setting presented are available in the work of Custer (1984:23-25) and Custer and DeSantis (1986). The John Ruth Inn Site is located on a 0.5 acre parcel in the former town center of Ogletown (Figure 1). The twentieth century environment of the Ogletown area bears little resemblance to the overwhelmingly rural nature of the project area during the previous two centuries of occupation. Prior to limited residential development in 1920, which continued through the 1960's, the project area consisted of dispersed farmsteads, agricultural fields, pastures, and woodlots. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries limited commercial facilities such as a country store, inn/hotel and post office were present. Within the last three decades considerable residential and commercial development has been completed, and the area has assumed the appearance of a mixed land-use suburban environment with housing subdivisions and small business and commercial complexes.

REGIONAL HISTORY

The following regional history is abstracted from two previous DelDOT reports (Coleman et al. 1984; Coleman et al. 1985). Other sources consulted for this project are found in the attached bibliography. A more detailed history of the John

Ruth Inn Site will be provided at the end of the regional history.

The earliest colonial settlement in Delaware known as Swanendael ("valley of swans") was made at present Lewes in 1631 under the sponsorship of patroons of the Dutch West India Company for the purpose of whaling and raising grain and tobacco. This venture was privately financed, but it ended in tragedy when the all-male population was wiped out by the local Indians in a massacre in 1632. Farther north, a group of Swedes in the employ of the New Sweden Company built Fort Christina in 1638 in what is now part of the present city of Wilmington establishing the first permanent European settlement in Delaware. The Swedish government supported the venture, and Fort Christina became the nucleus of a scattered settlement of Swedish and Finnish farmers known as New Sweden.

The Dutch claimed the identical land -- from the Schuylkill River south -- by right of prior discovery, and in 1651 the West India Company retaliated by building Fort Casimir at New Castle in an attempt to block Swedish efforts to control commerce in the Delaware River. The Swedes captured this fort in 1654 and renamed it Fort Trinity. Rivalry between Swedes and Dutch continued, and the Dutch recaptured Fort Trinity in 1655, and also seized Fort Christina. As a result, New Sweden went out of existence as a political entity due to lack of support from the homeland although the Swedish families continued to observe their own customs and religion.

In 1657, as a result of peaceful negotiations, the City of Amsterdam acquired Fort Casimir from the West India Company, and founded a town in the environs of the fort called New Amstel. This was a unique situation in American colonial history -- a European city became responsible for the governance of an American colony. A small fort was also erected at Lewes in 1659 for the purpose of blocking English intrusion, and a few settlers built homes there including 41 Dutch Mennonites who established a semi-socialistic community in July of 1663. They, too, were under the supervision of local officials appointed by the burgomasters of Amsterdam.

English hegemony of the region began in 1664 when Sir Robert Carr attacked the Dutch settlement at New Amstel on behalf of James Stuart, Duke of York, brother to Charles II. This attack was an important move on England's part to secure her economic position in the New World. New Amstel, renamed New Castle, was besieged and sacked by English soldiers and sailors resulting in the deaths of three Dutch soldiers and the wounding of ten others. English troops plundered the town, and English officers confiscated property, livestock, and supplies belonging to the City of Amsterdam, as well as the personal property and real estate owned by the local Dutch officials. The homes of the Mennonites and other settlers at Lewes were also pillaged.

A transfer of political authority from Dutch to English then followed, and the Dutch settlers who swore allegiance to the English were allowed to retain their lands and personal properties with all the rights of Englishmen. Former Dutch magistrates continued in office under English authority, and Swedes, Finns, and Dutch alike peacefully accepted the rule of the Duke of York through his appointed governors. In 1682, the granting of proprietary rights to William Penn and his representatives gave economic and political control of the Delaware region to Philadelphia, the new seat of government (Munroe 1978).

The settlement pattern for this early period was one of dispersed farmsteads located along the Delaware and its tributaries, such as the Christina, Appoquinimink, Brandywine, Mill Creek, White Clay and Red Clay Creeks, where the land possessed good agricultural qualities. The Swedish and Dutch settlers had pushed their settlement far up the valley of the Christina toward the Elk River. The town of Christina Bridge (modern Christiana), so named because it was the crossing place of that river, was established by about 1660 at the head of navigation of the Christina.

With the arrival of Penn in the 1680's, settlers pursued an individualistic system of land settlement, with the proprietors granting tracts or parcels of land. Penn usually granted land to families, the standard size being about 500 acres. In the study area, property sizes at the end of the seventeenth century ranged between 100 and 700 acres, but there were also nearby tracts of over 1000 acres. These large grants belonged to land speculation companies, such as the London Company, or to the friends and relatives of the proprietors, such as Letitia Penn's Manor of Stenning. Based on contemporary deeds, land warrants and surveys, there were less than a half a dozen land owners in the project area at the beginning of the eighteenth century (Figure 3). By the end of the century the area surrounding the hamlet had seen significant partitioning of the original land plots.

By 1683, the cultivated areas of the region consisted of the three lower counties, New Castle, Kent, and Sussex, and three Pennsylvania counties, Philadelphia, Buckingham (Bucks), and Chester. The total population of all six of these counties in 1683 has been estimated to have been about four thousand people. In New Castle County five tax districts,-called Hundreds, had already been established by 1687. With the growth of the population, four more hundreds were created in 1710, including White Clay Creek Hundred, which includes the study area (Conrad 1908:287).

With the exception of the port towns of Philadelphia and New Castle, there were no other major commercial or social centers in the area during the seventeenth century. The small clusters of dwellings (hamlets) that sprang up were situated either on the major transportation routes of the period or on a navigable watercourse. The most prosperous of these communities

were those located so as to take advantage of both forms of transportation. The villages of Christina Bridge and Cantwell's Bridge (present-day Odessa) were the only hamlets of any size in the area and both were located on major rivers and roads. Very few were located inland, or they were only accessible through road transportation, for the inland road network was almost nonexistent. An exception to this was "Ogle's Town", which was located along the road to the Elk River as early as 1679. Ogle's Town along with neighboring Glasgow (Aiken's Tavern) was established at the intersection of overland inter-regional connectors. Like many similar inland crossroads towns established in the Colonial period, Ogle's town stagnated after an initial period of rapid mid-eighteenth century growth. During this early history, as well as the later nineteenth century history, Ogletown functioned as a transportation and commercial center. Ogletown, like neighboring Stanton and Glasgow, experienced little economic and population growth throughout the late nineteenth century and mid-twentieth century.

In the New Castle County region, water transportation was a major mode of travel and commerce in the late seventeenth century. Most of the farmstead tracts and land grants had frontage on or access to a water course to ensure that communication and the moving of produce to local markets could be accomplished (Hoffecker 1977). In a country that was heavily wooded with a mixture of oaks, walnut, hickory, chestnut, and maple, water travel was the easiest, safest, and most effective means of transport. Overland travel was extremely difficult, because roads were few in number and very poor. The road from the Head of Elk to Christina Bridge, the area's major overland transportation route and one of the most heavily travelled road in Pre-revolutionary America, was in horrible condition.

Swedish settlers in the region grew rye and barley on their farms, but later immigrants quickly replaced these grains with wheat when it was found that it could be grown more easily. More importantly, it was realized that wheat was a marketable commodity, and the farmers and settlers in the area soon shifted from a subsistence-oriented to market-oriented agriculture. Wheat and, to a lesser extent, corn were grown and then shipped by water to local milling sites. The transportation of grains to milling sites supported an extensive coastwide trade employing shallops or other similar boats. Milling sites were among the earliest manufacturing complexes in the region. There was a mill in New Castle by 1658, and one on Red Clay Creek by 1679 (Pursell 1958). Villages such as Christiana Bridge, Newport, and Appoquinimink grew larger as a result of this shipping trade and became market places for the surrounding country. By the start of the eighteenth century, the region was beginning to be recognized as a wheat and grain producing area.

Attempts at the mining and smelting of iron ore were unsuccessful in the Delaware region during the seventeenth century. In Delaware, the Iron Hill area in western Pencader Hundred was an area known to contain iron deposits by 1673, the

date of publication of Augustine Hermann's map which labels the spot "Yron hill". The manufacture of iron became more widespread with the start of the eighteenth century. By 1716, iron production was well established in Pennsylvania. In Delaware, Sir William Keith had started a blast furnace on the slopes of Iron Hill by 1725, and a bloomary furnace was known to be in operation near St. James Church in Mill Creek Hundred operated by John Ball (Swank 1884:142, 179). From documentary sources, it appears that Ball purchased the land in 1706 and erected the bloomary soon thereafter. Deed records indicate that he was a blacksmith by trade.

White Clay Creek Hundred and New Castle County were part of a broader regional economy that was centered in Philadelphia. This city, in the last quarter of the seventeenth century, quickly began to dominate the economic scene in the lower Delaware Valley. New Castle County was part of Philadelphia's agricultural and commercial hinterland, along with western New Jersey, northeast Maryland, southeastern and northeastern Pennsylvania, and Kent and Sussex counties in Delaware. Farmers in the region sent their grains to the local milling centers where the wheat flour was then shipped to Philadelphia for export to the West Indies, other North American colonies, and southern European countries. The farmers and merchants in New Castle County quickly adapted to this market system of agriculture. It is estimated that over one-half of the farmers in the area were situated within eight miles (or a half-day's journey) of a mill or shipping wharf (Walzer 1972:163).

Settlement in New Castle County during the eighteenth century continued much as it had in the previous century. In the Philadelphia region, there was a large influx of immigrants between 1725 and 1755, particularly Scotch-Irish, most of whom were indentured servants. As the overland road transportation network improved, colonists began to move inland away from the navigable rivers and streams. Good, productive land was settled first, but as the population began to grow, marginal property was also occupied. The size of farms in New Castle County ranged between 100 and 200 acres, indicating a decline in size from the seventeenth century. This was due to a tendency for the large grants and tracts to be divided and subdivided by sale and inheritance (Munroe 1954:19). By mid-century, improved land in the Ogletown area was selling for a little over one Pennsylvania pound per acre. In the study area, settlement of patented tracts began in earnest in the first quarter of the eighteenth century (Figure 3). Deed records become more common during this period, and several extant and non-extant houses in the vicinity of Ogletown were constructed at this time.

In regards to urbanization, Lemon (1967; 1972) has divided the eighteenth century in the Philadelphia region into three periods of growth. The first period (1700 to 1729) was one of urban stagnancy after the initial rapid growth of the seventeenth century. However hamlets - unplanned towns that sprang up at crossroads and around taverns, ferries, churches, and mills - did

begin to appear at this time. Ogletown, in White Clay Creek Hundred, and the Mermaid Tavern intersection on Limestone Road, are examples of eighteenth century hamlets in New Castle County. Both were located at crossroads on major transportation routes.

The second period of urbanization that Lemon recognizes (1730 to 1765) saw a renewal of town growth based on internal trade. Towns such as Newport, Cuckholdstown (modern Stanton), Milltown, Hockessin (then known as "Ockesson") and Newark were established and prospered during this period. Christina Bridge, which had stagnated since initial settlement in the 1680's, began a remarkable period of growth and prosperity as a major grain transshipment port for agricultural products from Delaware and the Upper Chesapeake Bay area.

The town of Stanton, known as Cuckoldstown as early as 1746, became an important milling and grain center in the late eighteenth century. A grist mill is known to have been in the vicinity of Stanton by 1679, and by 1800 the town rivaled Newport as a local grain processing center. Ships of moderate draft were able to navigate up the Red Clay Creek and take on local, as well as southeastern Pennsylvania, farm produce, most of which had been transported overland down the Limestone Road and other roads from the Pennsylvania area. Located at the confluence of Red and White Clay Creeks, Stanton was never a large town. A map of the New Castle County region, drawn in 1777, did not include the location of Stanton, and a travelers' guide, published in 1789, showed only a mill and ten houses in the vicinity of the town (Colles 1961:170). Hockessin, or Ockesson, grew around the location of the Hockessin Friends Meeting House constructed in 1738. Nearby were a school and a blacksmith shop, the only structures in the hamlet until the 1820's.

Wilmington was by far the largest urban center in New Castle County that developed in this period. Chartered in 1739, Wilmington soon became a port of entry and a post town, and was an important link in the Philadelphia trading network. Of special significance to the city's location was its proximity to the Brandywine Mills. Wilmington was thus a receiving center for local and regional farm produce, brought by water from Christina, Stanton, and Newport, and shipped up the Delaware to Philadelphia (Lindstrom 1978; Walzer 1972).

Lemon's third period of urban development (1766-1800) was marked by less noticeable town growth which paralleled more erratic economic patterns. Little growth in the towns of New Castle County took place during this period. However, increases in population and land tenancy were noted (Lemon 1972:216), and in New Castle County this period witnessed a rapid growth in inland transportation routes.

The conditions of roads in New Castle County improved considerably over the course of the eighteenth century, but in some locations they were still unsatisfactory even by contemporary eighteenth century standards. Most improvement was

due to increased population growth and interregional trade. By 1750, the roadbeds of many of the area's present-day state roads (Routes 4, 7, 273, and portions of Pennsylvania's Route 896) were already established. The extensive road construction and reconstruction that began in the mid-eighteenth century was preceded by a 1752 Act of the Legislature directed to "erecting public bridges, causeways, and laying out and mantaining highways" (Laws of the State of Delaware 1797). Because of the continued non-maintenance of the public roads, an additional Act was passed in 1762 "for the better regulation of the roads in New Castle County". This act established a statewide system of King's Roads which were to receive the highest priority for maintenance and improvement. Prior to the Revolutionary War, importantly, all of the roads in the area were simply intra-regional connectors to the surrounding area. The road network within the study area represents the earliest roads within the Mid-Atlantic region (Walzer 1972). As stated earlier, secondary historic references (Scharf 1888:933) place the existence of a road from Ogle's Town to the Elk River as early as 1679.

The earliest extant road plat for the project area is a 1750 road return showing the course of a road running from Christiana Bridge to Nottingham (Route 273). Within the project area are shown Thomas Ogle's House, Thomas Ogle's Mill and Mill Pond, and Thomas Ogle's old house (Figure 4). No other structures in Ogletown are shown to exist on this plat. A 1755 road plat also includes the Ogletown area and shows three main roads in the project area: The Great Road from Ogle Town to Head of Elk, the great road from Christiana Bridge to Ogle Town and to Nottingham, and the great road from Ogle Town to Joseph England's Mill and northward to Corner Ketch (Figure 5). Again, no other structures are shown in the Ogletown area. As will be shown in the later history, this is not a reliable portrayal as it is very probable that the John Ruth Inn Site was occupied by an earlier tavern occupation.

Based on these dates and events and the known influx of colonists to the area which resulted in the formation of White Clay Creek Hundred in 1710, it is probable that the England's Mill Road was initially laid out in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. In addition to its use as a major agricultural produce transportation route, extending from the Pennsylvania farmlands to the transshipment centers on the streams, the road may also have functioned as an overland route for the transport of burned and unburned limestone, which was quarried and processed in the vicinity. An 1832 repetition for the proper laying out of Red Mill Road supports this contention. "The road..... has been from time immemorial a useful public road, not only from the general access it affords to Mill, Meeting, and Market but from its bearing towards points favorable to the general intercourse of a large portion of our citizens. It is believed that this road was a long time ago laid out as a public road and that the record of it has been lost....." In proximity to the project area, this road plat shows the John Ruth Inn and the William Heisler House Site (Coleman, Hoseth, and

Custer 1987 and Figure 6). Throughout the late eighteenth and early and mid-nineteenth century, the road from the head of Elk to Christiana Bridge (Route 4) and from Newark to Christiana Bridge (Route 273) was constantly being petitioned for straightening and other improvements. Petitions from this era of improvement date to 1763, 1766, 1812, 1842, and 1850. The most significant attempt at a lasting road improvement was the formation of the Elk and Christiana Turnpike Company to control the road running from Christiana Bridge to the Delaware-Maryland line, covering seven miles and forty-two perches. The company, chartered in 1813, opened the road for business in 1817, and abandoned the road less than 25 years after it had been completed. A February, 1841 act revoked the charter, and the road was converted to a toll-free road.

The last road to be laid out within the project area was the Salem Church Road which was petitioned in 1827 and laid out from the house of Nicholas LeHury in Ogletown to the Christiana and Elkton Turnpike near the Methodist Meeting House. After 1827 and throughout the nineteenth century, there were essentially no additional roadways added in this area as can be seen from a comparison of the 1849 Rea and Price Map (Figure 7) with the 1868 Beer's Atlas (Figure 8), Hopkins 1881 Map (Figure 9), and Baist's 1893 Atlas (Figure 10).

Farming in the eighteenth century in New Castle County continued to be a system of mixed husbandry, combining the cultivation of grains with the raising of livestock. Farming was the most important occupation for between 80 and 90 percent of the area's population (Egnal 1975). Wheat remained as the primary grain produced, followed by rye, corn, barley, oats, and garden vegetables. In many areas, generations of repeated tillage had begun to exhaust the soil. Agricultural practices in New Castle County followed an extensive, rather than an intensive, use of the land (Lemon 1972:179).

Delaware's manufacturing capacity in this century began to become realized. During the eighteenth century, the iron industry, lumber products, and grain milling enterprises continued to grow and prosper. New industries were started that engaged in the preparation of snuff from tobacco, the production of salt from brines in lower Delaware, and the rudimentary beginnings of the textile industry. By the end of the century, Delaware was one of the leading manufacturing states, and Wilmington and its environs constituted one of America's leading industrial areas.

In the northern Delaware area, the nineteenth century was marked by rapid industrial and urban growth and population expansion, and was accompanied by a noticeable decline in the number of people engaged in agriculture. The rapid growth of the population during the early decades of the century forced many new farmers in the Middle Atlantic area to clear and farm lands of poor or marginal quality. Many of these farmers were hard pressed to turn a profit from their farmsteads, and this resulted

in an outmigration of a large portion of the population during the 1820s and 1830s to better lands to the west, particularly in the Ohio River Valley (Hancock 1947). The loss of jobs related to agriculture was partly offset by the development of new sources of income and employment, particularly in urban and industrial contexts. Thus, much of the surplus population that had in previous centuries been farm laborers, tenants, or unemployed, moved into urban and industrial centers where jobs were more plentiful. These trends occurred over the first half of the nineteenth century, and by 1860 were well established (Lindstrom 1979).

Urbanization in New Castle County during the first quarter of the century was closely tied to transportation routes and agricultural and industrial production. However, most of the towns of importance in the eighteenth century, which were settled because of their location on major transportation arteries, remained major marketing, milling, and shipping centers for only a brief period into the nineteenth century.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, methods and routes of transportation underwent substantial changes in New Castle County as first turnpikes, then canals, and finally railroads were introduced. Throughout the century, improved transportation was the key to urban, agricultural, and industrial development. One of the first successful turnpikes in Delaware, and most important to the history and development of the study area, was the Newport and Gap Turnpike, begun in 1808. Although the pike was a more direct route to the wharves of Newport, it was a toll road, had numerous grades, and crossed several watercourses, all of which made the Limestone Road (Route 7) an important and well-traveled transportation route for teamsters throughout most the nineteenth century. By 1820, White Clay Creek Hundred had 28.5 miles of roads, rating it number eight out of the nine hundreds in the County, above only Red Lion Hundred in the proportion of road to surface area.

The most significant canal built in Delaware was the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, completed in 1829. Originally planned to connect the Elk and Christina Rivers, it was later constructed across the peninsula below New Castle, just north of Reedy Island. The canal was expected to bring wealth and prosperity to the communities of northern Delaware, and in fact, two new towns were constructed, Delaware City and Chesapeake City, at the termini of the Canal. Instead of widespread prosperity, however, the canal contributed to the economic decline of Christina, Newport, Stanton, and New Castle as goods previously shipped overland across the peninsula could now be sent more cheaply by water. Even Chesapeake City and Delaware City were disappointed in their expected economic boom, and growth in these towns was slow. Although not the original purpose of its construction, the Canal also came to serve as a border between two distinct socio-cultural sections of Delaware: the industrial/commercial area of northern New Castle County, and the agrarian communities of southern New Castle, Kent, and Sussex

Counties. The Canal would continue to function as a borderline throughout the remainder of the century, and does so today.

Railroads came to New Castle County in the 1830s. The first line, the New Castle and French Town Railroad, was constructed in 1832 as a direct result of the opening of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, and was an effort to compete with that transportation route (Hoffecker 1977:43). In 1838, the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad was completed, and quickly became the major transportation route across the peninsula. Throughout the remainder of the century, rail lines continued to be built in northern New Castle County, such as the Baltimore and Ohio, the Wilmington and New Castle, and the Wilmington and Western railroads. The Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad intersected the Red Mill Road a few hundred feet north of the Route 4 intersection at Ruthby Station (Figure 10). The towns of Newark, Stanton, Hockessin and Newport benefited from their proximity to these railroads, staving off the economic stagnation and decline that were experienced by Christina, Ogletown, and Glasgow in the late nineteenth century. Locally, the advent of the railroad, and with it cheaper and more efficient means of transporting goods and produce, marked the end of the prevalence of small market towns. In conjunction with the general economic demise of these locations, taverns, hotels, and stores, also disappeared from the landscape in the Ogletown vicinity. The John Ruth Inn lost its tavern license in 1869 and terminated functioning as a store in 1880. The Hawthorn Hotel stopped functioning as a hotel in 1870 and as a post office in 1900.

New Castle County continued to be predominately agricultural throughout the nineteenth century. In White Clay Creek Hundred in 1816, there were 315 taxables, the overwhelming majority of whom were farmers or worked in some related field such as blacksmithing/wheelwrighting, coopering, or carpentry. At that time, there were approximately 190 houses:

42(26%) log	37(19%) brick	10(5%) stone
8 old log		
5 old wooden		
29 wooden		
42 house and lots		
1 old frame		
8 frame		
7 shops		

These totals can be compared with the totals derived from Mill Creek Hundred (Catts et al. 1986) which contained in the 1804 assessment 168 houses of which 99 were log houses (59%), 48 stone houses (28.5%), and 21 brick houses (12.5%), and indicate the more substantial nature of the Mill Creek Hundred housing stock.

At the start of the 1800s, however, agriculture in New Castle County was in a dismal situation. Farming practices continued much as they had during the previous century with the use of the four field system of cropping. Wheat was the dominant crop and the use of fertilizers was infrequent. A large number of tenant farmers worked the land. Production was, on the whole, quite low during the first quarter of the century. The revival of the New Castle County Agricultural Society in 1818, one of the first such organizations in the nation, encouraged farmers in the use of improved drainage techniques, fertilizers, and machinery. With these developments, New Castle County was on its way to becoming one of the finest agricultural counties in the United States by 1860. Fertilization, farm machinery, and improved drainage were helpful in this agricultural success, but the county's rich natural resources, its fine transportation network, and the proximity of cities were advantages with which other areas, particularly Kent and Sussex counties, found it difficult to compete in quantity and number of agricultural and raw products.

Mill Creek Hundred, which is adjacent on the north to White Clay Creek, contributed to this agricultural success through the quarrying and transporting of limestone for fertilizer. Many of the families in the study area maintained quarries and kilns, such as the Eastburn's, Black's, and Jeanes'. By 1850, there were at least twenty limestone kilns in the vicinity of Limestone Road (Cooch 1936:43).

Tenant farming, which had been quite common in the eighteenth century, became even more prevalent during the nineteenth century. Large landowners, having acquired much of their holdings during the hard times of the 1820s and 1830s, leased their lands to tenants. Most land owners were white farmers, while some tenants and farm laborers, particularly in Kent and Sussex counties, were black. In other cases, the tenant was a member of the land owner's family, as was the situation with the Robert Ferguson farm (Coleman et al. 1983). By 1900, over 50% of all the farmers in Delaware were tenants or share croppers. Tenancy remained a dominant farming practice into the twentieth century (Bausman 1933:165).

Regional development during the nineteenth century was much more complex than in the previous decades, primarily due to the great strides in industrialization, urbanization, and transportation that were part of the Industrial Revolution. The first half of the century witnessed a noticeable decline in Philadelphia's economic influence over the region, caused by Baltimore's rise, the competition for markets between the two cities, and due to the development of mid-western centers of production, a drop in the consumption by both local and foreign markets of Philadelphia's agricultural produce. The area responded by diversifying its agricultural production, but primarily it devoted increasingly more of its resources to manufacturing (Lindstrom 1978:122).

Much of the reemergence and success of both industry and agriculture in Delaware can be attributed to improved transportation facilities beginning in the 1830's. The linking of Wilmington by railroad with Baltimore and Philadelphia in 1837 provided not only Wilmington but also its hinterland with excellent markets both for the purchase of raw materials and the sale of finished products. Contained within this hinterland was also a sizable population of skilled mechanics and machinists who were able to perform the skilled labor required by the new technologies. This combination of good transportation, a large trained labor pool, and a ready supply of raw materials allowed industry in northern New Castle County to grow and diversify very rapidly into the 20th century (Hoffecker 1977).

PREVIOUS CULTURAL RESOURCE INVESTIGATIONS

PRELIMINARY ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

The John Ruth Inn Site is located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Red Mill Road and Routes 4/273 (Figures 1, 2, and Plate 1). The site is within the ROW of proposed construction of the Ogletown Interchange area, Segment 1 (Coleman et al. 1987). Background archival research employing deed records and prior design maps for several episodes of Routes 4/273 construction enabled prediction of this former structure's location. The site was found to be the location of a building constructed by 1849 (Figure 7) and most likely was the site of an inn/tavern functioning as early as 1790 (Coleman and Custer 1985).

Phase I research consisted of two steps: 1) background and archival research, and 2) field survey. Background and archival research consisted of consultation with the staff of the Delaware Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (BAHP), review of all inventories of prehistoric and historic cultural resources maintained by the BAHP, review of historic atlases and maps, interviews with local landowners and experts in local history, review of archival materials such as deeds, tax assessments, probate records, road books, petitions, and other court records, and inspection of aerial photographs on file at the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), Glasgow Office. Information from previous archaeological investigations within the project area was extensively consulted (Thomas 1980).

Background information indicated that the site had served as the social and economic center for the surrounding community from at least the late eighteenth and probably since the early to mid-eighteenth century until the late nineteenth century. A similar social role for taverns is shown by research on other taverns within the Route 7 corridor (Catts et al. 1986), in Stanton (Thompson 1987), and other tavern sites in the eastern United States (Rockman and Rothschild 1984). Background research suggests that the site may have been the site of a mid-eighteenth century tavern run by Thomas Ogle II as will be noted