

6.0 SITE HISTORY AND HISTORICAL LAND OWNERSHIP

6.1 JONES SITE HISTORY – INTRODUCTION AND LAND USE SUMMARY

Site 7NC-J-204 was situated near the intersection of three land tracts first surveyed in the early 1700s. Three individuals patented or acquired the three land tracts at the southern end of the present SR 1 corridor: William White, Thomas Brown, and John Turner. Archival map research and georeferencing established that Brown was the patentee of the tract that contains all of the Jones Site (Figure 6-1). Turner and White were the original patentees or early owners of two tracts adjoining Brown's land, within roughly 100 to 200 feet of the Jones Site (Table 6-1). Ultimately, all three tracts were combined into one property by George Davis in the mid-nineteenth century. Therefore, the history of all three tracts will be described, following a brief summary of land use history. A chain of title for the tracts on or immediately adjacent to the Jones Site is provided in Table 6-2, following the land use summary.

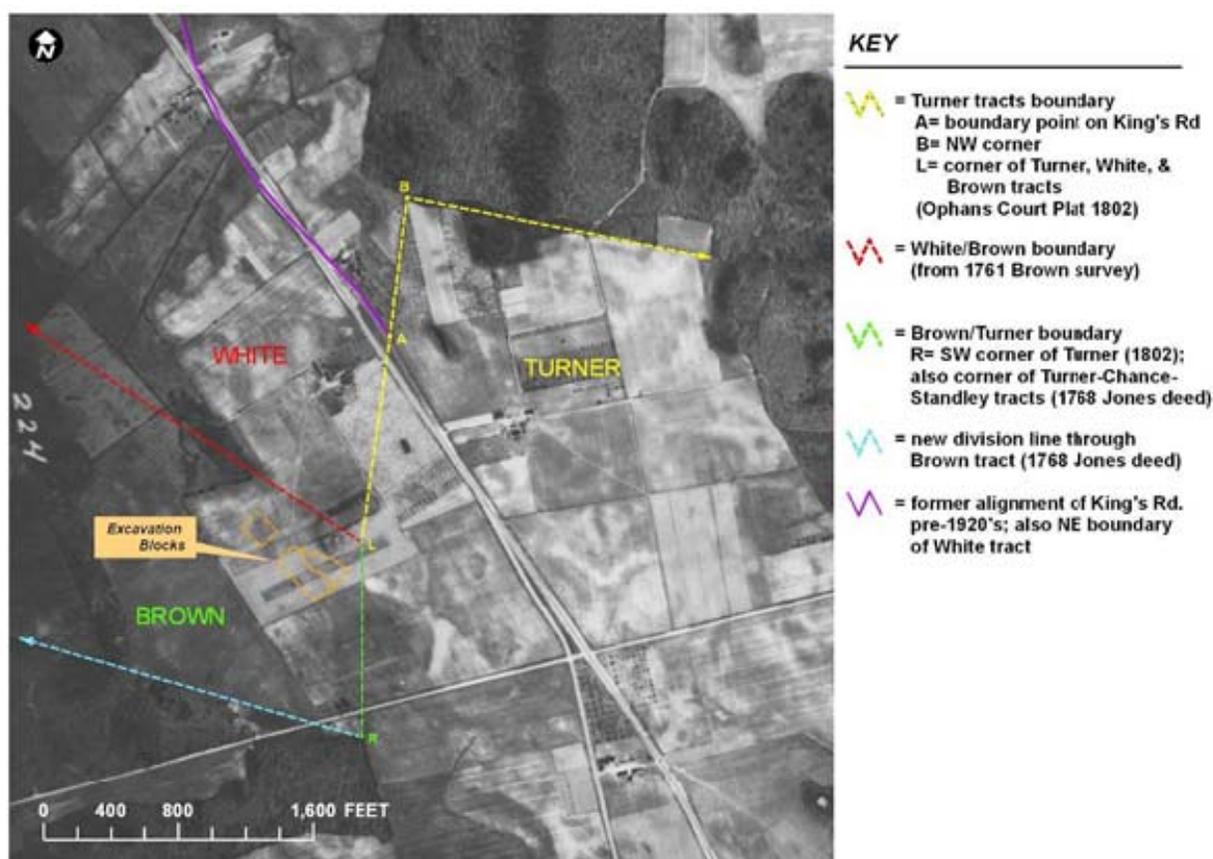


Figure 6-1. Original Land Tracts of the Jones Site Area on 1926 Aerial Photo (US Army Air Corps)

Table 6-1. Patentees or Early Landowners of the Jones Site and Immediate Vicinity

Patentee/Early Owner	Date Patented or Acquired	Acreage	Comments
Thomas Brown	1760	172 ³ / ₄ acres	Contained all of the Jones Site
William White	1741	100 acres	Near Jones Site
John Turner	Prior to 1752	Ca.261 acres	Near Jones Site

The Jones Site was situated on 172 acres of land that Thomas Brown patented in 1760. In 1767, the property was divided and 110 acres of the tract was sold at public auction to John Jones; this portion of the Brown patent land contained the Jones Site. During Jones family ownership of the property (1767 – 1806), the family’s mansion house was probably at Mt. Jones in St. George’s Hundred and later at another plantation in Appoquinimink Hundred (probably Shrewsbury Plantation) inherited by the Jones orphans (Cantwell and Sarah).

John Jones was a successful lawyer and judge and the Jones family was one of the wealthiest in Delaware. The 110-acre property probably functioned as farmland during the Jones tenure, probably inhabited by tenants, but also conceivably by some of Jones’ 29 slaves. Though the Jones family was very wealthy, and extensive documentation exists about their lives, no records specific to the occupation and use of the 110-acre tract containing our site emerged. The first documented dwelling on the 110 acres was a log cabin that appeared on the tax rolls in 1816. However, the property could have contained one of the seven log cabins documented on the combined properties owned by John’s son and heir, Cantwell Jones, in 1797.

The value of the property increased from \$300 to \$550 between 1816 and 1817 when the proportion of the land listed as improved jumped from just 5 of the 110 acres to 40. But following this high water mark, the property appears to have entered a period of a long and steady decline in use and value. In 1816, the tract was owned by absentee owners and successful businessmen from Smyrna, Henry Draper and Piner Mansfield. Henry Draper described the property as his “small farm in Newcastle County” in his will written in 1819 (Kent County Wills 1820). Draper died in 1820; his will also stated that the farm should be rented out until his daughter reached age eighteen and then sold for the benefit of both of his children. But the log cabin was removed from the tax rolls for the 110 acres sometime between 1822 and 1845. The log cabin was still on the property in 1822, but the number of improved acres had dropped back to 5, and the value had plummeted to \$150, half its 1816 value. This coincides with a major financial panic in 1819 during which the value of American agricultural exports dropped significantly, and credit was severely restricted (Rothbard 1962). During this time period, the tract was owned by the Draper heirs and then by another wealthy businessman with multiple landholdings, Jacob Raymond. In 1834, the tract was described as “100 acres on thin woodland.” By 1845, Raymond’s 125-acre tract was described as “Bush land & old fields” worth \$600.00, or only \$4.80 per acre (NCC Appoquinimink Hundred Tax Lists 1845). No main buildings (i.e. dwellings, schools, churches) were shown on the 110 acres in 1849 (Rea & Price 1849).

The 110 acres were purchased by George Davis in 1854, along with adjoining properties to the north (the former White tract) and east (the former Turner tract) by 1859. Davis was a wealthy businessman from Smyrna who did not live on the property. The main dwelling for the combined acreage was the farmhouse on the former White tract, north of the Jones site, on the west side of the main highway between Smyrna and Blackbird. The White/Kennedy farmhouse was built by 1845 and remained standing until the 1990s as the main residence for the farm (Figure 6-2).

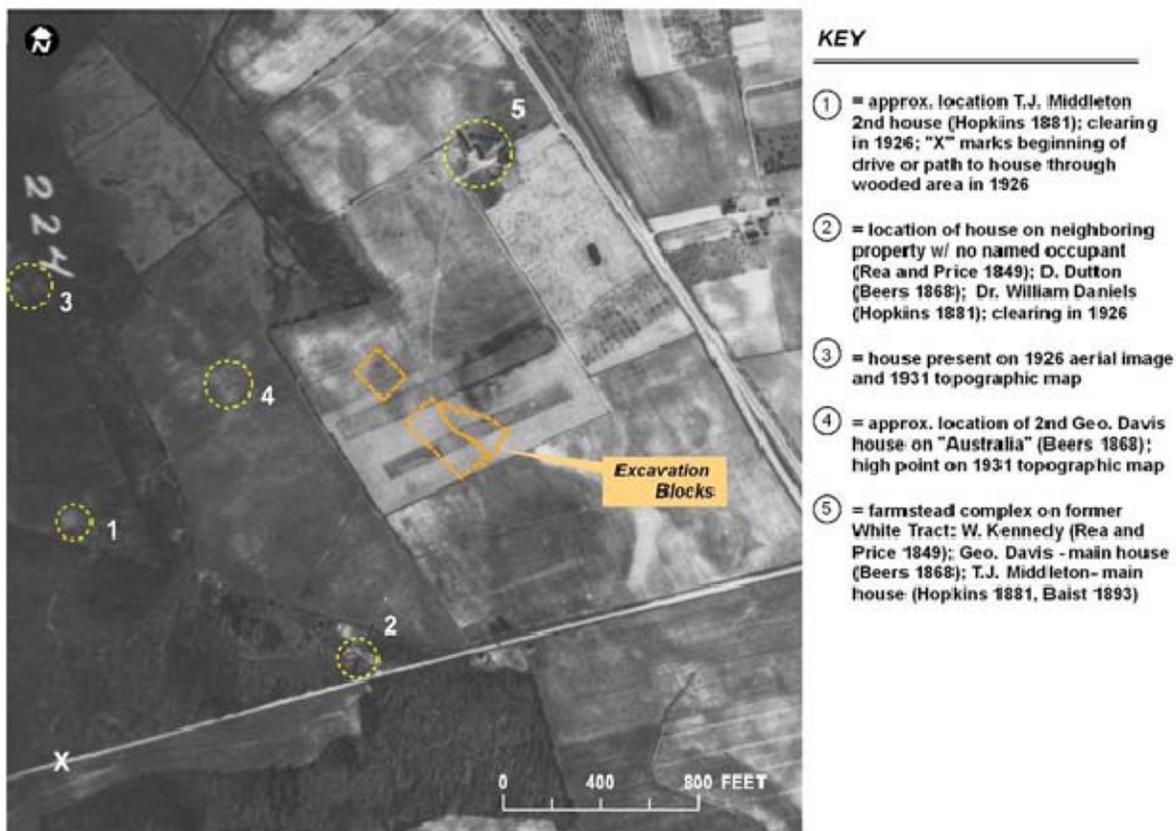


Figure 6-2. Historic House Locations near the Project Area on 1926 Aerial Photo (US Army Air Corps)

A second building was added to the Davis tenant farm between 1849 and 1868 (Beers 1868). This new building, possibly a tenant house, was southwest of the main house and set further back from the main roadway (see Figure 6-2). This second dwelling was perhaps built by Davis for extra income on the property that was called "Australia" by 1868. This dwelling was the closest documented structure to the Jones Site and was probably situated outside the project area to the west in the adjoining agricultural field, based on its location on an 1868 map and the presence of a high spot in the topography. This second house on Australia was located on the former Brown tract, which was purchased by George Davis in 1854. Therefore, the second house was probably added by Davis sometime between 1854 and 1868. This second dwelling was gone by 1881,

indicating a use of less than 35 years. Such a short span of use could suggest that the house burned down or was moved.

Aerial photography from the 1920s and 1930s depicts the Jones Site within a semi-rectangular subarea of the farm, southwest of the main farmstead and west of an orchard (Figure 6-3). Unless the 1820s-era log cabin was situated on or near the Jones Site, the Jones Site itself was probably used for farming purposes such as pasture land or growing crops since the 1770s. The land was part of a sod farm operated by the Adams family in the 1980s.

Table 6-2. Chain of Title for the Jones Site, 7NC-J-204

Instrument Date	Grantor	Grantee	New Castle County Book (Vol.): Page	Acres	Price	Land Description	Comments
<p><i>Note: 3 tracts (Brown, White, & Turner) include or about the Jones site, on land that became part of George Davis' property on W side of public road [Site was probably on Brown tract only; probably 100 feet south of White tract & 200 feet west of Turner tract].</i></p>							
<p><i>Brown Tract:</i></p>							
February 2, 1760	Penn family, Proprietors (signed for the Proprietors by James Hamilton, Philadelphia)	Thomas Brown	Warrants and Surveys B1 #15	172 ¾ acres	Quitrent of 1 penny sterling per acre per year	Bounded by lands of Wm. White to the northeast; Joseph Standley & a swamp to southeast; late Joseph Chance to southwest; other lands of Thomas Brown to west & John Gooding to north.	Patented 200 acres of land; surveyed May 19, 1761 (Warrants & Surveys B2 #71) & found to be 172 ¾ acres. Patent says land adjoined Alexander Chance (son of Joseph?).
1760-1767	Thomas Brown	Wm. Vanburkloe		110 acres		Part of Brown's 172 acres.	No deed found; may have never been recorded, since Vanburkloe may not have paid in full.
January 23, 1768	John Thompson, Esquire (Esqr.), High Sheriff of New Castle Co., Delaware	John Jones, Esqr	Deed Y (1): 264	110 acres	25 pounds, 5 shillings	Bounded by Alexander Chance, Joseph Standly, John Turner, William White, John Gooding	<u>Wm. Vanburkloe</u> (Burchlow) owed debt to Thomas Brown. Land sold by court order. John Jones was highest bidder at public auction August 20, 1767.
Ca. July 1780	John Jones	Cantwell Jones (son of John Jones) and Sarah Jones (daughter of John Jones)	Will L (1): 201	Not stated	None: bequeath	Multiple specific properties were bequeathed to son or daughter, none of which were the project area. All the rest of his real & personal estate was left to his two children, to be equally divided at age 21 (or when Sarah married).	Will dated April 1, 1780. Recorded July 29, 1780. John Jones' two children, Sara & Cantwell Jones, were minors
1805	Cantwell Jones	Nephews and nieces of Cantwell (children of Cantwell's sister, Sara [Mrs. Robert Milligan])	Will Q (1): 63	Not stated	None: bequeath	All the residue of his property, to be equally divided among them.	Will written January 23, 1805. Recorded February 6, 1805. Cantwell Jones apparently never married & was childless.
May 8, 1807	Richard C. Dale, Esqr., Sheriff of New Castle County	Thomas Lea (an Executor of estate of Cantwell Jones) & wife, Sarah	Deed L (3): 375	110 acres	\$440.00	Plantation in the Forest of Appoquinimink Hundred. Same land sold by John Thompson, Esqr., Sheriff, to John Jones, Esqr., father of Cantwell Jones, in 1768	Cantwell Jones' estate was ordered liquidated by Delaware Supreme Court in April 1806 to pay debt of \$830.08 due to Thomas Marsh Forman, + interest accrued since 1799. Land was auctioned November 4, 1806.
June 5, 1811	Thomas Lea & wife, Sarah	Nathaniel Nowland	Deed ?	110 acres			Source: Richards and Richards N.D. and mentioned in 1815 deed. Nathaniel & Nancy Nowland had acquired land to the E of tract from the John & James Turner estate settlement in 1801.

Instrument Date	Grantor	Grantee	New Castle County Book (Vol.): Page	Acres	Price	Land Description	Comments
October 3, 1815	Nathaniel Nowland & wife, Nancy	Henry Draper & Piner Mansfield	Deed Q (3): 380	110 acres	\$500.00	Plantation Cantwell Jones owned at time of his death in the Forest of Appoquinimink. Sold at public auction November 4, 1806, to Thomas Lea, Esqr. Lea & wife, Sarah, sold land to Nathaniel Nowland in 1811.	Sold to them as tenants in common.
April 13, 1817	Piner Mansfield & wife, Ann	Jacob Raymond	Deed T (3): 217	Half-interest in the 110 acres	\$350.00	Land Nathaniel Nowland purchased from Thomas Lea & wife, Sarah, in 1811.	Nowland & wife, Ann, sold to Henry Draper & Piner Mansfield as tenants in common in 1815.
Ca. 1820	Henry Draper, merchant	John Draper & Sally Ann Draper (children of Henry Draper)	Kent County, Delaware, Will book	Not stated	None: bequeath	Includes his "small farm in New Castle County."	Draper's will dated January 6, 1819. Recorded July 11, 1820. Wishes the farm to be rented until Sally Ann reaches 18 years old. Then, farm to be sold with proceeds equally divided between the 2 children.
December 15, 1828	John R. Draper (son of Henry Draper) and Joshua L. Layton & wife, Sarah Ann (nee Draper; daughter of Henry Draper)	Jacob Raymond	Deed I (4): 67	Half-interest in the 110 acres	\$175.00	Land Nathaniel Nowland purchased from Thomas Lea & wife, Sarah, in 1811. Nowland & wife, Ann, sold to Henry Draper & "Pierce" Mansfield as tenants in common in 1815.	Now Jacob Raymond owned 100% interest in the property.
September 1853	Jacob Raymond, Esquire, estate	Daniel Cummins & wife, Martha Ann (nee Raymond; daughter of Jacob Raymond)	Orphans Court Case File Sept. 1853: 259	Tract C No. 8: 110 acres, 8 square perches	None: inheritance	Bounds lands of Daniel wells, George W. Buckingham, heirs of Hamilton Morton, Margaret Darrah, & the Crumpton tract.	Jacob Raymond died 1852. Impartial surveyors divided his land: dower land for the widow, & the rest divided into equal thirds for the 3 children. Orphans Court record, September 1853, described northeast corner of the tract as " <u>a corner stake in an old field for land of the heirs of Hamilton Morton, near where stood an old house.</u> "
January 14, 1854	Daniel Cummins & wife, Martha Ann	George Davis	Deed Q (6): 20	110 acres	\$1,100.00	Adjoins lands of George W. Buckhanan, James Noland, Daniel Wells, & others	Same land as Jacob Raymond bought from Joshua Layton & wife, & John A. Draper (1/2) & Piner Mansfield & wife (1/2).

White Tract [Jones Site is ca. 100' south of this tract]:

October 9, 1741	Proprietors (Wm. Penn)	Joseph Stanley	Warrant Deed??				Mentioned in note accompanying 1752 survey plat.
Ca. 1752	Joseph Stanley	William White	Deed book??	100 acres		On west side of King's Road from Salisburytown (Smyrna) to Blackbird Bridge. Bounded on northeast by (the late?) Edward Dwolf, on east by John Turner, on southwest by Thomas Brown, & on northwest by	Surveyed April 21, 1752. Accompanying note dated August 21, 1752, from R. Peters: Stanley conveys the 100 acres granted him by warrant in 1741 to White, & that a return [deed] ought to be made to White.

Instrument Date	Grantor	Grantee	New Castle County Book (Vol.): Page	Acres	Price	Land Description	Comments
						John Gooding.	
Ca. 1777	Wm White	John Darrach & wife, Jane (nee White; Wm.'s daughter)	Will??		None: bequeath?		Wm. White died 1777. Administrator was his son-in-law, John Darrach (married Wm.'s daughter, Jane, 1775).
Ca. 1805	John Darrach [Sr.] estate	Ann (Mrs. John C. Brush), Wm., John [Jr.], Eleanor (Mrs. Wm. Kennedy), Thomas, & Lydia Darrach (all children of John & Jane Darrach [Sr.])	Kent County Orphan Case File Vol. G: 87 [Runk 1899: 271]				John [Sr.] died by February 1805, probably intestate. His estate was inventoried & then sold at public auction March 1805.
July 23, 1812	Lydia M. Darrach (daughter of the late John Darrach [Sr.])	Eleanor ("Ellen") Kennedy (nee Darrach, sister of Lydia; Mrs. Wm. Kennedy)	Will	Not stated	None: bequeath	Leaves all of her lands to her sister.	Will dated July 23, 1812; Lydia died ca. 10 days later. Not recorded until 1833 (due to confusion of War of 1812).
December 4, 1854	Wm. Kennedy, Margaret Darrach; Mary Ann Evans; Reed Gordon & wife, Mathilda; Elijah Lacey & w., Susan M.; Thomas J. Campbell & wife, Eliza J.; Wm. Purvis & wife, Anna; David J. Kennedy (heirs of Eleanor Kennedy [nee Darrach; Mrs. Wm. Kennedy])	George Davis	Deed S (16): 219	105 acres, 57 perches	\$950.00	"Formerly the property of Wm. White, late of Kent County" (DE), desd. Bounds State road leading from Blackbird to Smyrna, & lands of J. Nowland, George Davis, vacant land, Dr. Wm. Daniel, & Wm. Reynolds' heirs. Land and premises.	Eleanor Darrach (1783 – 1818) married Wm. Kennedy in 1805.

Turner tract [Jones Site is ca. 200 ft. west of this tract]:

By 1752		John Turner					Described as owner of land east of the White tract on survey plat dated April 21, 1752. Also listed as owner of land adjacent to Brown tract in 1768 deed for Brown tract. See above.
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Instrument Date	Grantor	Grantee	New Castle County Book (Vol.): Page	Acres	Price	Land Description	Comments
March 19, 1802	Estate of John and James Turner	Hannah (daughter of John Turner; widow of Richard Armstrong), Jane Turner, and sister Mary Turner	John & James Turner Orphans Court records 1802	Tract No. 2: 67 acres, 90 square perches	None: inheritance	The tract closest to the project area (on the west side of the Old King's Rd.), was Tract No. 2. Tract 2 was on both sides of the Old King's Rd.	No house shown on Tract 2 (was a house shown on two other of the 4 tracts, on east side of main road)
February 1, 1859	James Nowland & wife, Mary Ann/ Appoquinimink Hundred	George Davis/ Town of Smyrna	Deed F (7): 230	89 acres, 129 perches	\$300.00	On both sides of the road from Blackbird to Smyrna. Bounds lands of George W. Buchanan, Jabes (?) Goodin, Hamilton, James Nowland, & the road from Blackbird to Smyrna.	Seems to include parts of Turner Lots 2 & 3 from 1802 plat. On west side of main road: only Lot 2 from 1802 (plus small triangle of non-Turner land west of Lot 2?).

George Davis as owner of portions of all 3 tracts (110 acres. of the Brown tract; 100 acres of the White tract; & 89 acres. of the Turner tract), & post-Davis owners:

May 14, 1855	George Davis & wife, Mary Jane/ Town of Smyrna, Kent County, Delaware	Andrew Davis/ New Castle County	Deed T (6): 369-370	20 acres	\$450.00	Parcel on southwest side of State road from Smyrna to Black Bird. Rectangular tract on 1878 orphan court map.	Andrew Davis died in 1892. He is described in 1879 deed below as a "colored man."
Ca. 1878	George Davis	Mary K. Davis; Ann Eliza Johns (nee Davis; Mrs. Henry V.D. Johns); Elizabeth B. Neavitt (nee Davis; Mrs. F.B. Neavitt); Elva Brown (nee Davis; Mrs. George Brown); Georgia Davis (all children of George Davis); & George Read Lofland (grandson of George Davis)	Will	Multiple properties	None: bequeath	All the rest and residue of his real estate (except those specifically devised in the will) should be sold within 5 yrs. of his decease. After payment of debts, proceeds to be divided equally among his 5 children & 1 grandson.	George Davis' will written August 1 & 9, 1872. At that time, he was living in Town of Smyrna at premises known as the "Williams Lot," inherited from his father. Bequeathed the Wms. Lot & Mansion to wife, Mary J. Davis. Left a number of separate farms in Cecil County, Maryland to his children & to a friend, George Biddle.
1878	George Davis' estate	N/a: description of land for sale.	Orphans Court File, George Davis, 1878	5 parcels in Blackbird Hundred	n/a: description of land for sale	Lot No. 2 contains the project area: 315 acres, 154 square perches.	Part of George Davis' estate to be sold by his Executors. Includes plat of Lot No. 2, with only 1 house shown: on west side of public road from Blackbird to Smyrna.
May 1878	Mary J Davis, Mary K. Davis, and JE Collins(?) as heirs of George Davis	William Tschudy & wife, Henrietta and Samuel Catts	Deed H (11): 307	315 acres 154 perches	\$438	Northwest corner of the intersection of the old King's Road and the Green Spring Station road, sometimes referred to as Buchanan's Crossroad	

Instrument Date	Grantor	Grantee	New Castle County Book (Vol.): Page	Acres	Price	Land Description	Comments
December 12, 1879	William W. Tschudy & wife, Henrietta, and Samuel Catts	Thomas J. Middleton	Deed Y (11): 298	Not stated: "be the contents what they may"	\$4,200.00	Bounded by public road leading from Blackbird & Smyrna road towards Green Spring Station known as the Proster Road, by lands of Dr. Wm. Daniel, Wm. Nailor, Rachel J. (Reynolds) Truax, Andrew Davis, & by public road from Blackbird to Smyrna.	Dr. William Daniels lived to the south on road just outside Davis tract.
August 31, 1909	Thomas J. Middleton	George W. Hurd	Deed I (22): 266	152 acres	\$5,600.00	present configuration of tract	
May 31, 1910	George and Elizabeth Hurd	Philemon Scott	Deed U (22): 572	152 acres	\$6,500.00	present configuration of tract	
September 6, 1918	Philemon Scott and Martha B	Eugene Martin and Mary Margaret	Deed V (27): 322	152 acres	\$8,000.00	present configuration of tract	
April 10, 1919	Eugene Martin	Benjamin Green	Deed E (28): 379	152 acres	n/a	present configuration of tract	
April 10, 1919	Benjamin F. Green (single)	Eugene Martin and Mary Margaret	Deed E (28): 357	152 acres	\$5.00	present configuration of tract	
November 9, 1921	Eugene H. Martin & wife, Mary	James P. Dukes & J. Elwood Dukes	Deed U (30): 484	2 tracts: No. 1, 152 acres; & (No. 2, 30 acres 102.4 square perches)	\$1.00	Tract No. 1 (152 acres) = present configuration of tract.	Tract No. 2 is on Massey's Church Rd. & road from Green Spring Station To Buchanan's Corner (n/a).
February 20, 1930	James P. Dukes and Linda	John David and Sarah E.	Deed T (36): 486	152 acres	\$1.00	present configuration of tract	
June 21, 1937	John David and Sarah E.	Charles G. Larrimore	Deed M (40): 412	152 acres	\$4,500.00	present configuration of tract	
August 1, 1941	Elizabeth L. Edwards, Admr. of Charles H.G. Larrimore	Ethel M. Adams, William A. Adams Jr., Clarence J. Adams (all single)	Deed G (43): 130	152 acres	\$4,200.00	Land with the dwelling house and other buildings erected thereon.	Orphans' Court ordered Edwards to sell tract to pay debts of Larrimore. Public auction April 19, 1941. Survey recently completed; still 152 acres.
October 30, 1990	Ethel M Adams, William A Adams Jr., Clarence Adams	State of Delaware	Deed 1101: 248	45.62 acres	\$384,300.00	Ca. 260 foot frontage on Smyrna Landing Road, lot depth ca. 1,276 feet. No buildings.	Part of Parcel #1501600158. Could be land needed for SR 1 to SE of project area (previous 5-mile segment of SR 1).

6.2 THE THOMAS BROWN TRACT

The Thomas Brown tract was the land parcel that contained the Jones Site. The Jones Site was located near the northeast corner of the tract granted to Brown in 1760 by the Penn family (New Castle County [NCC] Warrants and Surveys 1760). It was surveyed in 1761 as containing 172 ¾ acres (NCC Warrants and Surveys 1761) (Figure 6-4). The parcel was then bounded by lands of William White to the northeast, Joseph Stanley (Standley) and a swamp to the southeast, the late Joseph Chance to the southwest, other lands of his (Thomas Brown) to the west, and John Gooding to the north. Brown was to pay the Proprietors of the colony a quitrent of 1 penny sterling per acre per year. Since Brown was listed on the 1760 patent as being of New Castle County, perhaps he had settled on the other land he had patented, to the west of the new patent land.

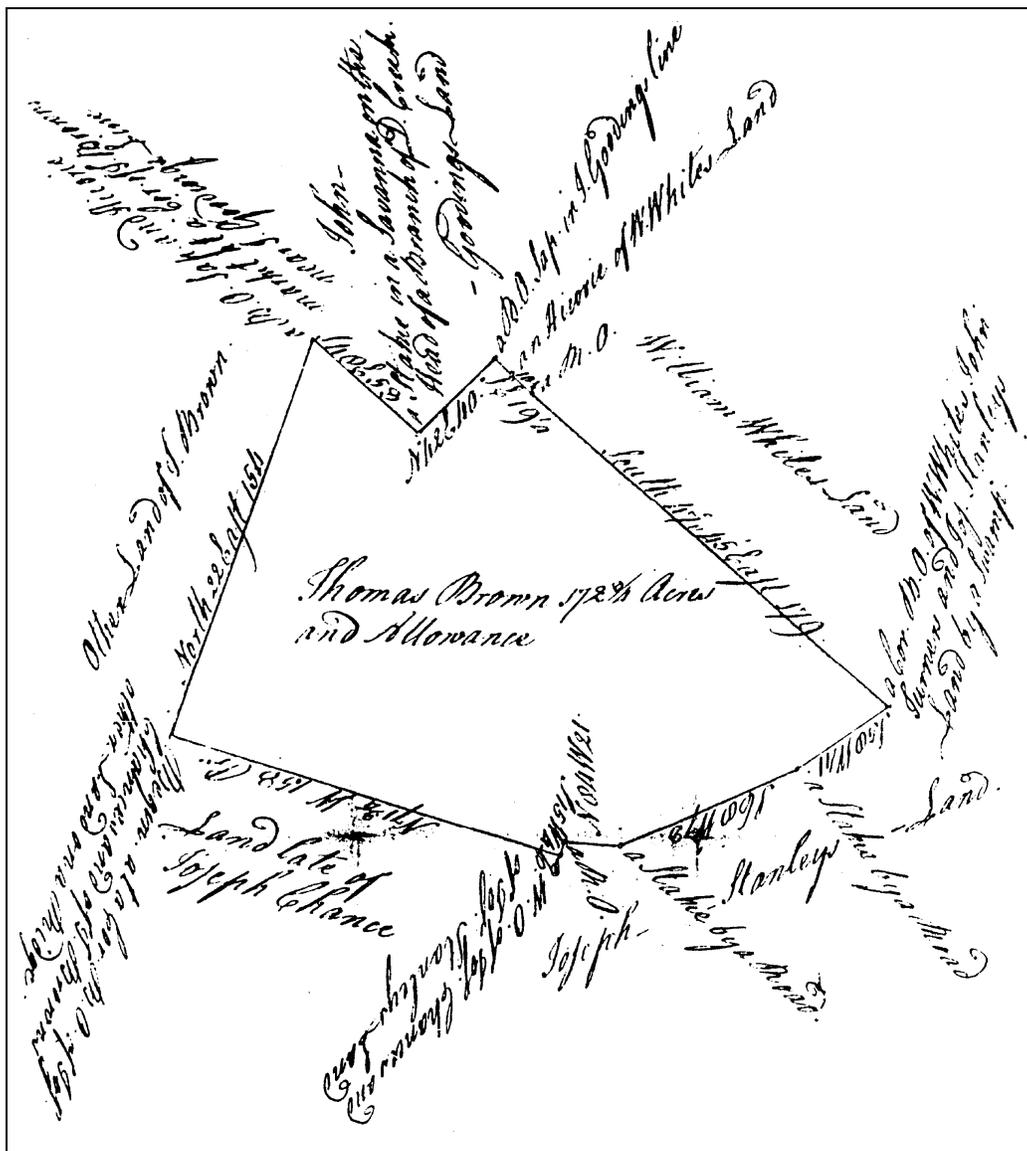


Figure 6-4. Original 172-acre Thomas Brown Patent in 1761

Thomas Brown may have sold a portion of his 172 acres to William Vanburkloe by 1767, but the deed may not have been formally recorded since Vanburkloe apparently did not pay Brown in full. Vanburkloe owed a debt of 80 pounds, 40 shillings, 6 pence to Brown. Information on William Vanburkloe was not readily available, although a Vanburkloe family had patented a plantation in central Kent County known as Lisbon or Lisburne (Catts et al 1995). Vanburkloe's tract of 110 acres was sold by court order to pay the debt. John Jones was the highest bidder at a public auction held August 20, 1767, paying 25 pounds, 5 shillings (New Castle County Deed Book [NCCDB] 1768). John Jones, Esquire, was a resident of St. George's Hundred in New Castle County, Delaware, at the time of the auction. The 110-acre tract was described as the following:

Beginning at an old marked White Oak being a corner of the Lands of Alexander Chance Joseph Standley and John Turner and running thence therewith North five degrees and thirty minutes West sixty perches to an old marked Black Oak being a corner of the Lands of the said John Turner and of William White thence with the said William White's land North forty seven degrees and thirty minutes West one Hundred and sixty perches to another Black Oak of the said William White and a Line Tree of the said John Goodings Land thence with the said Gooding's Line South West one Hundred and forty perches to a post in the old line thence running acrofs the Tract by a new Division Line South Seventy degrees East two Hundred and twenty perches to the place of Beginning... (NCCDB 1768)

No specific buildings or improvements were mentioned in the 1768 deed. The configuration of the land when Jones purchased the 110-acre tract in 1768 remained the same until the 1850s (see Brown tract on Figure 6-1). The Jones Site received its name from this family by Parsons in 1999. The remainder of the Thomas Brown tract, located to the south and west of the portion sold to Jones on the opposite side of the "new Division Line", was not included in the purchase.

John Jones, Esquire, was the son of Edward and Mary Jones, and a prominent resident of northern Delaware. John Jones appears to be the first of a succession of wealthy owners of the Brown tract over the next century, who typically owned multiple land tracts in New Castle and Kent Counties. Evidence suggests that the Brown tract was not the location of the owner's home and was likely farmed by resident or non-resident tenant farmers well into the late nineteenth century. The first known documented dwelling on the Brown tract was a log cabin that was listed in the 1816 tax rolls.

John Jones, Esquire, was an attorney living in New Castle County by June of 1756, when he was appointed one of the county's Justices of the Peace (Garrett n.d.:27). He was living in St. Georges Hundred of this county in November 1756 when he was appointed one of three captains from the hundred in the Lower Regiment of the county's militia during the French and Indian War (Scharf 1888:141). Jones also was reappointed as a Justice of the Peace for the county in 1769 (Scharf 1888:142). He was still serving as a justice of the peace or a grand jurymen in 1775 when he signed a New Castle County resolution in May 1775 for taxing citizens for a defense fund (Scharf 1888:222). Jones was among the representatives from New Castle County to the Delaware Convention in 1776 where the state's constitution was adopted (Scharf 1888:235). In 1777 Jones was appointed a Justice of the Courts of Common Pleas and Orphans

Court for New Castle County (Scharf 1888:242). Jones was elected to the Delaware Supreme Court in 1778 as the third justice (Scharf 1888:248).

John Jones amassed a large fortune in real estate and monies. Jones' first wife, Mary, died young, and Jones remarried to Lydia Cantwell, sister of Richard Cantwell. Richard Cantwell was the builder of Cantwell's Crossing (also known as Cantwell's Bridge and Odessa) on the Appoquinimink Creek. Richard Cantwell also represented New Castle County in the Delaware Convention in 1776 (Scharf 1888:235). Richard and Lydia were children of Edmund Cantwell, the first Sheriff of New Castle County (Historical Society of Delaware name card for John Jones; Peden 1996:142; Reed 1973:25).

John Jones died in 1780, leaving his two minor children, Cantwell and Sarah, and since no mention was made of his second wife, it is presumed she had already preceded him in death (New Castle County Will Book [NCCWB] 1780). A multitude of specific properties were bequeathed to his son or daughter; however, not mentioned by name was the 110 acres he had bought in 1768. All the rest of his real estate was left to the two children, to be equally divided between them at the age of 21 (or when Sarah married). John's "mansion house" in New Castle County where he lived at the time of his death was left to Sarah. John's sister, Mary Patterson, was left 500 bushels of wheat per year for life, and was given the right to live in the mansion house until Cantwell turned 21.

The Jones mansion house in 1780 is most likely a dwelling on a farm known as Mount Jones, in St. Georges Hundred. Located north of Odessa and north of Drawyer's Creek on the west side of the King's Highway (Route 13), the Mount Jones dwelling house was still standing in 1989, surrounded by farmland. The house was nominated to the National Register as part of a study of the homes of the rural elite in central Delaware in the last quarter of the eighteenth century to first quarter of the nineteenth century (Herman et al. 1989). Built circa 1760 by John Jones, the Mount Jones mansion is a brick, two-story, four-bay, four-room plan structure with interior brick chimneys at each gable end. Jones was one of a group of elite farmers who tended to be the wealthiest people in their communities, have two-story brick homes with a central stair passage, and owned land – sometimes multiple properties – and luxury items like carriages. Fewer than 3 percent of U.S. families in the late eighteenth century owned a carriage (Soltow 1989:72).

John Jones asked in his will that his farms be carried on and tilled as usual, and that the executors keep as much of the property as possible until the children reached age 21. The profits could be used to keep the buildings on the plantations in repair. This suggests that all of Jones' farmland, including the Brown tract, was being actively farmed in 1780. If any of the slaves were deficient in their duty or unruly and disobedient, the will states they could be sold by the executors. John named his sister, Mary Patterson, and his friend (and brother-in-law), Richard Cantwell, as executors. John's friend, George Read, was named the attorney for his affairs.

John Jones' estate in Appoquinimink Hundred was valued at £80 in 1784, and £90 in 1785, a fairly high amount for the region. The tax records list the entry as "John Jones Est." because Cantwell and his sister Sarah were probably still minors and not in control of the property. By July 1788 the executors of John Jones' estate, Mary Patterson and Richard Cantwell, had both died, and George Read, Esquire, was named administrator. Cantwell Jones may have turned 21 by April 1789 when he was named administrator of his late father's estate; this may mean that

Cantwell was born in 1768 (the same year his father bought the Brown tract). When he reached age 21 he was allowed to sell the family's home, Mt. Jones, in St. Georges Hundred, according to stipulations of his father's will. Cantwell did sell a substantial amount of his father's properties, but he did not sell Mt. Jones (Herman et al. 1989).

Sarah Jones married a successful lawyer named Robert Milligan in the 1780s and moved to his family home in Cecil County, Maryland. By 1790, she and Robert had two daughters and owned thirty-four slaves (U.S. Census Bureau 1790a). They would later have two sons, including John Jones ("J.J.") Milligan who was born in 1795 at Bohemia Manor.



Figure 6-5: Sarah Cantwell Jones. Portrait by Charles Wilson Peale, 1790.

Like his father, Cantwell Jones became a wealthy property owner with a considerable estate, including the land on which the Jones site is situated. Historical records include many details about his family, his property, and his business, but these records, though detailed, provide no specific details about what the land of the Jones site was used for, or who may have occupied it.

Cantwell Jones had moved to Appoquinimink Hundred by 1790, possibly to Shrewsberry Plantation which he had inherited through his mother's (Lydia Cantwell) side of the family. Perhaps when his Aunt Mary died and his sister married and moved away, Cantwell went to live with his mother's relatives. Shrewsberry was acquired by Edmund Cantwell before 1679, bounded by Blackbird Creek, and contained 837 acres in 1726 (Bryant 2008.:122).

Cantwell Jones went on to study law at the College of Philadelphia (later known as the University of Pennsylvania) in the early 1790s. The law professorship was established in 1790 with James Wilson as the instructor. The professor's lectures were recorded in notebooks and later published by his son, including questions posed to the students and a summary of their answers. Cantwell was among a class of 15 law students from prominent Delaware families including the Dickinsons, Rodneys, Morrisises, and Reads (Hall 2007). Cantwell was one of the signers of a treaty executed on the Holston River with the Cherokee in 1794, perhaps due to his training in law (Lillian Goldman Law Library 2008). Cantwell signed the treaty and listed that he was from Delaware. He may have set up a law office on a lot of land which he owned outside of the county seat, the town of New Castle. This lot could have housed his father's law office as well as - or instead of - Cantwell's office.

Cantwell Jones was assessed a tax of 190 pounds in the 1796 tax assessment for Appoquinimink Hundred (New Castle County [NCC], Appoquinimink Hundred Tax Lists 1796). This amount was the highest in his tax district, and only two others were assessed at 100 pounds or more - Thomas Rothwell and Daniel C. Heath. In 1797, Cantwell Jones' assets comprised a total of 2,560 acres of land, with 1,160 acres improved and 1,400 acres unimproved. Two brick dwellings, seven log dwellings, and nine outhouses were listed, although there is no way to discern which may have been located on the Jones Site tract. The entire estate was valued at \$25,026.00, with \$1,603.00 for livestock. He had one slave 8-14 years of age, six from 14-45 years, and seven under 88 years of age, all valued at \$1,093.00. The personal property was valued at \$2,701.00, and the personal tax due was \$266.00.

Cantwell Jones petitioned the Delaware General Assembly on January 6, 1797:

Delaware resident Cantwell Jones informs the court that he has "lately purchased in the State of Maryland a family of Slaves," who had previously lived in Delaware. Jones, "being desirous to bring the said family into this State again ... as well with a view to improve his lands here, as to gratify the said Slaves by settling them again amongst their relations who are also the property of your petitioner, prays that permission may be granted him to transport the said slaves, to wit, Adam, Fan & their four children Susan, Rose, Sol, and Harry into the State of Delaware. (Delaware General Assembly 1797).

This is likely Cantwell's purchase of some of the Jones family slaves that went to Maryland with Cantwell's sister, Sarah, when she married Robert Milligan in the 1780s. Perhaps Sarah died and Cantwell bought the slaves from her estate. She was still having children as late as 1795, so it is plausible that Sarah died in childbirth or from complications of childbirth, which was common in this era. According to the U.S. Census, Jones owned 32 slaves in 1800, one of only 2 slave owners in the state to hold more than 30 people in slavery (the other was Joseph Porter of Kent County) (Williams 1999). Could some of these slaves have lived or worked at the Jones site? It is possible, but impossible to show.

In 1801, when the John and James Turner estate was being settled, the plat map of the land being divided illustrated that Cantwell Jones owned the land to the west of the Turner tract (New Castle County Orphans Court, John and James Turner 1802). The archival record did not indicate that Cantwell Jones ever resided on the land containing the Jones Site. His wealth,

upbringing, known profession, and estate records point to Cantwell residing on a grand estate within a mansion, not on a small farm like the property containing the Jones Site.

Cantwell Jones' last will and testament was written on January 23, 1805; he died within days of this writing, since the will was recorded on February 6th (NCCWB 1805). Cantwell apparently never married and was childless. He gave all of his land and property to his "nieces and nephews" by his sister Sarah (the "children of Robert Milligan"); since Sarah is not mentioned in the will, she probably was already deceased by January 1805. The will bequeathed cash to Elizabeth Greenwood and her two sons Richard and James. The relationship between Mrs. Greenwood and Cantwell Jones is not known. However, Cantwell was listed next to a James Greenwood, presumably Elizabeth's husband, in the 1800 Federal Population Census for Appoquinimink Hundred, and his will states that he is of that hundred. Cantwell named his friends Robert Milligan (also Cantwell's brother-in-law), Joseph Tatnall, and Thomas Lea as executors of his estate.

Details of Cantwell Jones' accounts with local merchants are preserved in the original papers of one of his executors, Thomas Lea. From these papers, we can learn some of the mundane details of Jones' life, but unfortunately, nothing that tells us about the Jones site. In mid-December 1804, Cantwell purchased a new pair of boots for himself and had a new pair of soles ("bottoms") added to another pair of boots. William Bryant received \$8.00 from the estate in March 1805: \$6.00 for the new boots and \$2.00 for the repairs (Lea ndb). Jones purchased multiple goods and services from a Jesse Corse, as detailed in records submitted to the estate for payment. The first Corse entry is dated April 1, 1801 and the last was on December 31, 1804. Most of the account with Corse involve purchases of hardware, tools, horse shoes, and repair of tools and vehicles. For example, Jones' sulkey (or horse-drawn riding wagon) was mended by Corse several times, as was his ox cart, ditching shovel, and scythe. Farm and equine-related tools purchased by Jones included hoes, dung forks, bridle bits, and rings for an ox yoke. Over the years, Jones paid on his account in cash, typically every few months. The first payment to Corse was one bushel of potatoes in May 1801. Jones' business with Corse amounted to over 204 pounds, with 114 pounds in payment, with a balance due to Corse of 90 pounds. Corse was paid \$239.06 by the estate in installments: \$100.00 in 1815, \$83.00 in 1817, and \$56.06 in 1818 (Lea ndb).

Cantwell wanted to free all of his slaves eventually, and he was very meticulous on how to proceed with granting their freedom. His will listed each of his 29 slaves and the time period that must elapse before they were free, ranging from May 1, 1805, which was only three months from the date on the will, to 13 years. The estate was not inventoried until August, and the six slaves that were to be freed in May 1805, apparently were released, as their value was listed in the inventory as only ten cents. Cantwell's personal property was valued at \$10,284.53. Notable items included a gold watch, a mahogany clock, dozens of books (including history, philosophy, surveying, French grammar), 100 sheep, 2000 bushels of corn, 32 cows/ bull/calves, salt pork, salt beef, 25 cords of hickory wood, 35 cords of oak wood, and the present crop of wheat estimated at 850 bushels. This would suggest that Cantwell still owned many luxury items at the time of his death, although it appears he had many unpaid debts.

Robert Milligan and Thomas Lea reported twice to the Orphans Court regarding lands from the Cantwell Jones estate (NCC Orphans Court Dockets Records 1805). The August 23, 1805 entry states that the personal estate of Jones was appraised at \$10,284.53. The executors had paid \$2,084.33 of the estate's debts, but the estate still owed \$24,854.25. The executors recommended selling Shrewsbury Plantation and a lot of land adjoining the Town of New Castle to pay the estate's debts. One year later, they reported to the Orphans Court that the "lot of ground" adjoining the Town of New Castle had been sold at public auction, in November 1805, to Henry Rowan for \$430.00. Elizabeth Greenwood, the woman who had been bequeathed money in Cantwell Jones' will, was not paid by his estate until 1818 (\$250.00) and 1819 (\$100.00). Between 1818 and 1819, she had re-married to a Mr. Hay (Lea ndb).

When Robert Milligan died in 1806, Catharine Milligan, presumably a sister to Robert, was the guardian of his four children: George Baldwin, John Jones, Catharine Mary, and Lydia Cantwell Milligan. Cantwell Jones' sister Sarah Jones Milligan had died by 1806, leaving these four grandchildren of John Jones as orphans. The Orphan Court Case File for Robert Milligan stated that he had several properties in his possession when he died including one described as the following:

Mansion farm which was of the late Cantwell Jones, as follows; A brick dwelling House in tolerable repair, except for the roof and one floor, which is in bad condition, a kitchen of same materials, a sawed logg meat house, both in good repair, a granary of sawed loggs but very much wanting a roof, a carriage house of round loggs but indifferent, two stables of loggs in pretty good repair, two corn cribs one of round loggs the other of sawed loggs, and the latter very good the former very ordinary, with an orchard containing seventy apple trees rather on the decline. (NCC Orphan Court Records 1810)

This "mansion farm" of Cantwell Jones with a brick dwelling is likely Mount Jones in St. Georges Hundred, built circa 1760 by John Jones, as described previously. Ownership of Mt. Jones passed from Cantwell Jones' estate to his niece, Catherine Milligan, and remained as a tenant farm under the tenancy of a Richard Mansfield (Herman et al. 1989) Shrewsbury Plantation in Appoquinimink Hundred is presumably the final residence of Cantwell Jones since he lived in that hundred. Robert Milligan's children inherited Shrewsbury Plantation from Cantwell Jones' estate, patented by the children's great-grandfather, Edmund Cantwell, in 1684. An 1849 map of Appoquinimink Hundred depicts a "J.J. Milligan" owning a residence northeast of Blackbird Creek and south of Appoquinimink Creek (Rea and Price 1849). Presumably, this property is Shrewsbury Plantation, with Cantwell Jones' nephew, John Jones Milligan, as its owner by 1849. John Jones Milligan grew up to become a Princeton-educated lawyer and served as a U.S. Congressman from Delaware from 1831-1839 (Biographical Dictionary us congress – online). The Milligan family retained the property until at least 1868, when an "R. Milligan" was the owner (Beers 1868, Plate 35).

Throughout the period of Jones ownership, details concerning the use and occupation of the Brown tract remain frustratingly invisible. We know that Cantwell Jones had tenants (he had given his brother-in-law power of attorney to collect their rents in 1791 (Herman et al. 1989)).

But we have no information about who those tenants may have been. We know that Cantwell Jones had more than 30 slaves, but where all of them lived and worked is uncertain.

The Delaware Supreme Court determined in April 1806 that Cantwell Jones' estate had to be liquidated to pay \$830.08 plus interest since 1799 owed to Thomas Marsh Forman. Thomas Lea, one of the executors of the Cantwell Jones estate, and his wife, Sarah, bought the 110-acre Brown tract at a public auction in November 1806 for \$440.00 (NCCDB 1807). This ended the thirty-eight-year period of ownership by the Jones family.

Lea's daybook ledger from 1775 to 1809, is located at the Historical Society of Delaware, and was invaluable for providing an insight to the economy and people of the period (Welsh 1973:86). Lea and Tatnall traded extensively directly with many Caribbean islands (Welsh 1973:93-94). Thomas and Sarah Lea sold the 110 acres to Nathaniel Nowland of New Castle County, Delaware, in 1811 (Richards and Richards N.D.). In three years, Nowland was serving his country in the War of 1812 (Ancestry.com -War of 1812 records 813:177, 183).

By 1815, Nathaniel Nowland had married Nancy Turner, the daughter of the late John Turner who owned most of the land adjacent to and directly across the King's Road to the east of the Brown tract. Nancy inherited this land from her father in 1802. Nathaniel and Nancy Nowland sold the 110 acres to Henry Draper and Piner Mansfield for \$500.00 as tenants in common and not as joint tenants in 1815 (NCCDB 1815). Henry Draper was a ship owner and merchant from Smyrna, Kent County, Delaware (McCarter and Jackson 1882:531). Draper owned several ships which traveled the Mid-Atlantic coast. Piner Mansfield was the principal jeweler in the Smyrna area, a local preacher, and a dentist, also having served during the War of 1812 (*Smyrna Times*, Vol. L, No. 11, page 10).

Tax assessments for 1816 show the Mansfield and Draper tract as having five improved acres and 105 acres unimproved with one log cabin all valued at \$330.00, or \$3.00 per acre. This appears to be the first known time that a dwelling has been mentioned in specific connection with this land. There is no way to know for certain when this log cabin was built. However, in 1817, the Draper and Mansfield tract had 40 acres improved and 70 acres unimproved, but no dwellings were listed (Ackerman nd:47; NCC Appoquinimink Hundred Tax Lists 1817). The property was valued at \$5.00 per acre in 1817, for a total value of \$550.00. Perhaps the added value stemmed from the fact that 35 more acres had been cleared by 1817.

An examination of a number of land valuations contrasts the Brown tract with other nearby neighbors in the SR1 corridor and others in Appoquinimink Hundred (Table 6-3). One rate per acre was set for a property by the assessors, and this rate was applied to both the improved and unimproved acreages on the property. In 1817, the Brown tracts valuation of \$5.00 per acre was at the low end of this limited sample. Valuations of \$6.00, \$7.00, and \$8.00 were assessed for some of the neighbors within the SR1 corridor from Smyrna to Blackbird, although John Nowland's land (presumably part of the Turner estate) also was at the low end with a \$5.00 rate. Another property in the hundred with "good land" near the Kent County line was valued at \$12.00 per acre. A property in the estate of Robert White containing a store house, granary, and two wooden dwellings was valued at \$16.00 per acre.

Table 6-3. Assessed Land Values of Jones Site Property and Selected Nearby Properties, New Castle County Tax Lists

Year	Property owner	Property Description	Value/ Acre	Notes
1816	Mansfield and Draper	5 A. [acres] improved, 105 A. unimproved, 1 log cabin	\$3.00	Brown tract
1817	Draper and Mansfield	40 A. improved, 70 A. unimproved	\$5.00	Brown tract
1817	James Reynolds	250 A. improved with a small wooden dwelling, part of 534 A. near Blackbird	\$6.00	Reynolds Tenancy Site (7NC-J-224)
		284 A. unimproved, part of same 534A. as above	\$7.00	
1817	Nathaniel Nowland	40 A. improved with a log dwelling and 10 A. unimproved	\$5.00	Part of John and James Turner estate
1817	Robert Stanly	90 A. improved with one old log dwelling and 43 A. unimproved	\$7.00	Stanly was neighbor of Brown tract; could be former "old house" from 1854 deed.
1817	Evan Webster	75 A. improved with a small log dwelling and 25 A. of swamp	\$8.00	Buckson Site (7NC-J-207)
1817	James Buckson	300 A. of poor "forrest" land: 150 improved with small wooden dwelling and 150 A. unimproved	\$6.00	
1817	Benjamin Blackiston's estate	211 A. of "good land" near Kent Line: 111 improved with log dwelling and 100 A. unimproved	\$12.00	
1817	John Buckson's estate	127 A.: 80 improved and 47 unimproved	\$5.00	
1817	Joseph Webster	100 A. improved with log house and 77 A. unimproved	\$10.00	
1817	William Welden Junior	30 A. improved with log dwelling and 70 unimproved	\$7.00	
1817	Robert White's estate	120 A. improved with 2 wooden dwellings, store house and granary	\$16.00	
		115 A. unimproved	\$16.00	
1845	Jacob Raymond (Kent Co.)	125 A. "Bush lands & old fields"	\$4.80	Brown tract
1845	William Reynolds	600 A. with 2-story house & 4 out houses	\$6.67	Reynolds Tenancy Site (7NC-J-224)
1845	William C. Allston	200A. with 1-story log dwelling & 3 out houses	\$10.00	Sandom Branch Sites (7NC-J-227/228)
		100 A. with 1 old log house	\$7.00	
1845	Ann Weldon	92 A. with no improvements	\$4.89	Sites 7NC-J-195A, and 7NC-J-199/200
		100 A. with 1-story log dwelling & 3 out houses	\$10.00	
		228 A. with 1 old log house	\$3.50	
		35 A. with 2-story dwelling & 2 out houses	\$28.57	
1845	James Reynolds	100 A. with 1-1/2-story frame dwelling & 2 out houses	\$7.50	
		145 A. with 1-story frame dwelling & 2 out houses	\$6.90	

Table 6-3. Assessed Land Values of Jones Site Property and Selected Nearby Properties, New Castle County Tax Lists

Year	Property owner	Property Description	Value/ Acre	Notes
1845	James Reynolds Jr.	13 A. with 2-story frame dwelling & 2 out houses	\$30.77	

Piner Mansfield sold his half interest in the 110 acres to Jacob Raymond in 1817 for \$350.00 (NCCDB 1817). Mansfield and his wife, Ann, were still residing in Kent County when the deed was signed in April 1817. Therefore, it is likely that the property was occupied by tenants. In 1822, the Draper and Raymond tract still contained the log cabin and five improved acres, but was valued at only \$150.00. The drop in land value and improved acreage between 1817 and 1822 suggests the cabin may have fallen into disrepair or been abandoned. Perhaps the land was devalued due to poor crop yields and/or the swampy conditions, which hampered usage of some of what had been considered “improved” land in 1817. There was also a major financial panic in 1819 across America, that could also have been a contributing factor.

Henry Draper briefly refers to the farm in his will dated 1819 as his “small farm in New Castle County” (Kent County Will Books 1820). Henry died by July 1820, leaving two minor children, John and Sally (Sarah) Ann Draper. He instructed that the farm should be rented until Sally Ann reached age 18. Then, the farm was to be sold with the proceeds equally divided between the two children. Henry’s dwelling house and lot (in Smyrna) were to be rented out until John turned 21, with the proceeds divided between the two children. The rents were to go to administrators, for maintenance and support of the two children, until they reached legal age.

Draper’s two children, John R. Draper, a 23-year old successful Kent County businessman, and Sarah Ann Draper (Mrs. Joshua Layton) of Sussex County, sold the one-half interest in the 110 acres to Jacob Raymond in 1828 for \$175.00 (NCCDB 1828; Richards and Richards n.d.). The transaction gave Raymond sole interest in the tract. In 1834, the land was valued at \$500.00. Its description as “100 acres on thin woodland” following the earlier apparent drop in value, reduction in improved acres, and the disappearance of the cabin all point to a steady decline following 1817.

Jacob Raymond, son of James and Rachel Moore Raymond, was born in 1788. Raymond married Eliza Blackiston in 1814 (Hancock 1988:89). She inherited the old Blackiston Mansion in Smyrna, adding a 3rd story (Hancock 1988:90). As a young man, Raymond worked for John Cummins, becoming a partner after three years.

Raymond started his own shipping and trading business in 1835, and continued to buy and sell grain and staves, which he exported to Philadelphia, New York, and beyond (Hancock 1988:230; McCarter and Jackson 1882:225). Raymond was president of the Bank of Smyrna from 1843 to 1852, and served in the Delaware House of Representatives in 1833 (McCarter and Jackson 1882:225). The Federal Population censuses indicate that Jacob Raymond lived in Smyrna from 1810 to 1850, and apparently never resided on the old Thomas Brown tract (U.S. Census Bureau 1810, 1850a). The 110 acres may have been rented as farmland or left to lie fallow. In the mid-

1840s, Raymond's real estate totaled 600 acres in Maryland and 400 acres in Delaware (Hancock 1988:230). By 1845, Raymond's 125-acre tract was described as "Bush land & old fields" worth \$600.00, or only \$4.80 per acre (NCC Appoquinimink Hundred Tax Lists 1845). No buildings of value were standing by 1845, apparently, and Raymond owned no livestock associated with this tract. This valuation is at the low end of a small sample of other properties in the SR1 Corridor and in the hundred (see Table 6-3). It was equivalent to an unimproved tract nearby owned by Ann Weldon and containing Sites 7NC-J-195A, and 7NC-J-199/200. The neighboring land including the Sandom Branch Sites (7NC-J-227/228) owned by William C. Alston was worth twice as much (\$10.00/acre). However, Allston's land was improved with a 1-story log house and three outbuildings. Another tract owned by Allston was similar in size to the Brown tract, at 100 acres, but was worth \$7.00 per acre. This second Allston tract included an "old log house". This seems to reinforce the idea that the Brown tract was not occupied by a tenant or very productive land in the mid-nineteenth century.

The 1850 Federal Census for Agriculture enumerated farm products for the year ending June 1, 1850. The census was taken by an assistant marshal who interviewed the farms's owner, agent, or manager. The farms were typically listed in the order in which the census taker traveled from one to another. The 1849 Rea and Price map of New Castle County was used as a guide to mapping the route as the census taker traveled south along the public road through the SR1 project area. Jacob Raymond did not appear on the agricultural census for Appoquinimink Hundred, suggesting he was an absentee landlord (U.S. Census Bureau 1850b). No 110-acre farm parcel was observed in the census listings near the known owners of nearby farms. This supports the hypothesis that the property was not an active farm by 1850. Clearly, the Raymond family had extensive landholdings and was not relying on farming for its income. The 110-acre farm was barely more than a tenth of Raymond's owned acreage and was not likely of major significance to the family's livelihood.

Jacob Raymond died in 1852, and the Orphan Court Case File listed eight tracts of land owned at the time of his death; number eight was the 110-acre tract (NCC Orphans Court Records 1853). Daniel Cummins and his wife (Raymond's daughter, Martha Ann) were the recipients of the parcel. Daniel Cummins started out as a clerk for his brother, George Wilson Cummins, in his store, where he soon received interest in the business. After two years, Daniel joined Jacob Raymond and the mercantile business in Smyrna became known as Raymond and Cummins (Hancock 1988:88). Daniel soon married Martha Ann Raymond. In 1844, at the age of 24, Cummins bought out Jacob Raymond (Hancock 1988:90). In the mid-1840s, Cummins purchased Font Hill, a large farm just west of Smyrna (Hancock 1988:90-91; McCarter and Jackson 1882:319).

The Orphan Court record, dated September 1853, was the first, last, and only mention of the northeast corner of the tract being "a corner stake in an old field for land of the heirs of Hamilton Morton, near where stood an old house." It appears that the house was no longer standing, since the wording used was "where stood" instead of "where stands." Also, the location of the house is unclear: by this wording, the house could have stood on Raymond/Cummins' 110 acres, or the adjacent Morton property. If the "old house" had been on the 110 acres, it may be the log cabin that was standing by 1816 and gone by 1845 (Ackerman nd:47 and NCC Appoquinimink Hundred Tax Lists 1845). Daniel and Martha Ann Cummins sold the 110-acre tract to George

Davis in January 1854 for \$1,100.00 (NCCDB 1854a). Cummins was living in Duck Creek Hundred (which includes Smyrna) when the property was sold. The adjoining lands of the 110 acres were owned by George W. Buchanan, James Nowland, Daniel Wells, and others in 1854.

6.3 THE WILLIAM WHITE TRACT

The William White land tract was immediately north of the Thomas Brown tract (see Figure 6-1). The boundary between the tracts was very near to the northeast side of the Jones Site, but could be as much as 100 feet to the north, possibly making the White tract only peripherally related to the Jones Site. However, both tracts were acquired by George Davis in 1854 and functioned as a single farm after that date.

Joseph Stanley (also spelled Standley) may have been the original patentee of the White tract. The Proprietors of the colony conveyed land to Joseph Stanley or William White on October 9, 1741. Stanley may then have assigned 100 acres of the land to William White ca. 1752. The tract was surveyed April 21, 1752, and an accompanying note dated August 21, 1752 asks that a “return” be made out to White (Figure 6-6). The land was situated on the west side of the King’s Road from Salisburytown (modern-day Smyrna) to Blackbird Bridge. Neighboring land was owned on the northeast by Edward Dwoolf, on the east by John Turner, on the southwest by Thomas Brown, and on the northwest by John Gooding.

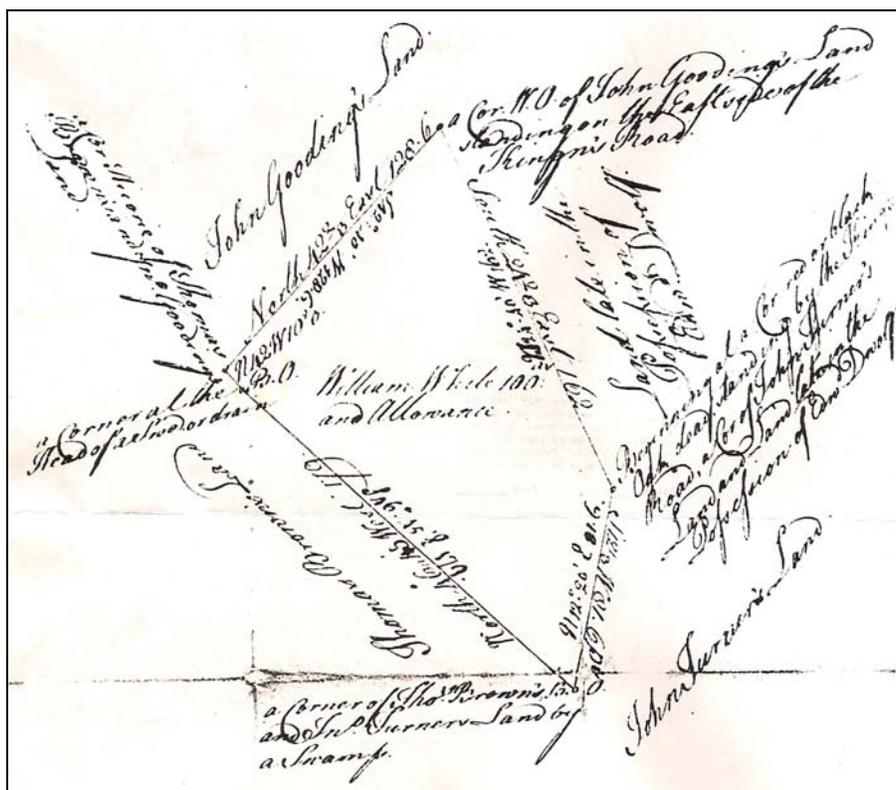


Figure 6-6. Survey of William White's 100-Acre Tract in 1752 (NCCDB 1752)

Land transfer records for the William White tract do not contain formal deeds for the parcel from the 1752 filing to 1854, when descendants of his sold the land. So, an archival reconstruction of the possible land owners who inherited the land outside of probate court may shed light on the century-wide data gap.

William White, a Scottish Presbyterian, came to the Duck Creek Landing and Blackbird Creek area at least by the 1730s (De Cunzo et al. 1992: 36). In 1748, White purchased the land in Kent County at Duck Creek Landing near the Delaware River Bay on which the John Darrach Store would later be constructed (De Cunzo et al. 1992:36). William White owned two sloops, or shallops, named the *Mulberry* and *Red Cedar* (De Cunzo et al. 1992:36; Hancock 1988:252). His ownership of two sea-going vessels and a residence at Duck Creek Landing would probably have made him one of the more successful individuals in the region. By the mid-eighteenth century, Duck Creek Landing was one of the more prominent shipping ports in central Delaware, where many cargo vessels left directly for the West Indies. White purchased at least ten parcels of land between 1734 and 1765 (De Cunzo 2004:24).

The Kent County tax records valued William White's assets as £40 for 1770, and £50 for 1772, 1773, and 1774, respectively (De Cunzo et al. 1992:37). John Darrach (pronounced *Dar-rah*) married William White's daughter, Jane, in 1775. Darrach, a Scottish-Irish Presbyterian, had been assessed in Kent County in 1772 and 1773 at £15, and in 1774 for £20, and was a local patriot leader during the revolution.

After the onset of the American Revolution, White's Kent County property values declined only slightly, to £45 for 1776 and 1777. He died in 1777, and an inventory of his estate was performed in the spring of 1778 by his administrator, and son-in-law, John Darrach (De Cunzo 1992:38; de Valinger Jr. 1944:316). White's estate was valued at almost £1,800 (De Cunzo 2004:24). White's sloop *Red Cedar* and half interest in the sloop *Mulberry* accounted for 20 percent of his personal estate. Seven slaves comprised another 25 percent of the estate's value. Sheep, cattle, hogs, and wheat raised on his Duck Creek farm made up almost 20 percent. Thirty pounds cash was inventoried within his house in Smyrna (De Cunzo 2004).

A comparison with estates of 25 men and women who died in Kent County between 1765 and 1799 revealed that none had wealth approaching that of William White (Bedell et al. 1999:746-70). Darrach apparently received the bulk of his father-in-law's estate, as his property value in Kent County increased from £30 to £100 from 1777 to 1778, while his father-in-law's estate was crossed out on the tax list (De Cunzo et al. 1992:38). A new house was mentioned in the inventory, but no other buildings were mentioned, especially for property in New Castle County. William White was not listed in the 1784 tax list for Appoquinimink Hundred in New Castle County.

John Darrach (1741-1804) was one of three brothers from County Antrim, Ireland, who came to Delaware in 1760 (Runk 1899:267). Darrach stored wheat at the Crossroads in Kent County for the military around 1781 (Peden 1996:67). John and Jane Darrach had six children (De Cunzo et al. 1992:38; Kent County Orphans Court Records 1807; Runk 1899:271):

- Ann (1775 - 1811); married John C. Brush (died ca.1820-1825); their children were Mary Ann, Jane, and Mathilda Brush.

- William (1777 - 1800).
- John (1781 – 1810); married Margaret; at least one child, William.
- Eleanor (1783 - 1818); married William Kennedy in 1805, son of David Kennedy, Senior. The senior Kennedy died in 1802, leaving behind him at least four children (William, Mary, Margaret, and David Junior). William and Eleanor had at least four children: Ann (Mrs. William Purvis), David Junior (married Eliza Jane _____), Mary, and Susan (Mrs. William Lacey).
- Thomas – (1785 - 1808).
- Lydia (1787 - 1812).

John Darrach (Sr.) died in 1804, probably intestate. In February 1805, his personal estate was inventoried at 1,480 pounds, 2 shillings, 10 pence and then sold at public auction March 1805. Items included the sloop *Eleanor* and the sloop *Lydia Ann* (apparently named after his daughters). Stewart Redman paid the estate \$1,405.11 in April 1807 for a tract of land in New Castle County, ordered sold by the Orphans Court, to settle Darrach's debts (Kent County Probate Records 1805-1810). This land does not appear to be the 100 acres near the Jones site. The probate records include payment by Abraham Pearce on January 30, 1807, of \$101.25 cash for "rent of farm of the decsd. for the year 1805." Pearce also paid the estate \$88.78 for 170 bushels of corn in September 1807. It is not clear whether the farm rented by Pearce was the tract bought by Redman in 1807, or the 100 acres near the Jones Site, or another tract entirely. Robert Patterson paid the estate \$309.33 in April 1807 for "rent of dwelling house and store of the decd. for the year 1805." The estate received \$75.00 for the sale of wheat in 1808 and \$32.20 for corn.

The archival research uncovered an interesting note pertaining to Lydia Darrach's (a daughter of John Darrach Sr.) estate. Her brother-in-law, William Kennedy, who was the executor of her estate with his wife (her sister), Ellen, wrote a note of apology to a local judge in 1833, when an inquiry was made to why no will was probated for the estate of Lydia Darrach, who had died in 1812, a good 21 years earlier. Mr. Kennedy's response was that she had died a week or two after the "commencement of the late war" and the "confusion and excitement and consequent insecurities of the period... caused the will to be of too little consideration to be remembered" (Kent County Register of Wills, Probate Records 1812-1833). Lydia's will, dated July 23, 1812, left all of her lands to her sister, Ellen (Eleanor). Their other siblings had died by 1812. However, Lydia stipulated that her three nieces, Maryann Brush, Jane Brush, and Mathilda Brush, should receive one-half of the annual rents, divided equally, after the death of their father, John C. Brush. The funds were meant for their raising, or education, or the nieces could receive the money when they attained legal age. Lydia's nephew, William (John Jr.'s son), received \$100.00 from the estate.

After Lydia's death in 1812, William Kennedy and his wife, Eleanor Darrach Kennedy, were the sole owners of the 100-acre White tract. William Kennedy then had two farms totaling 310 acres in 1817, with the first farm containing 70 acres improved with two log dwellings, and 90 acres unimproved on the road from Smyrna at Blackbird (Ackerman nd:53; NCC Appoquinimink

Hundred Tax Lists 1817). The second farm contained 10 improved acres with one log dwelling and 140 unimproved and was described as “in the tenure of Hugh McClery” (NCC Appoquinimink Hundred Tax Lists 1817). The 1824 tax year listed William Kennedy as having 440 acres with 150 acres improved, 290 acres unimproved, with three log dwellings, and two outbuildings, all valued at \$660. His land holdings in New Castle County increased by 130 acres from 1817 to 1824, and it is possible that the increase was the acquisition of the tract in question.

The 1849 Rea and Price atlas for Appoquinimink Hundred illustrates that a “W Kennedy” (probably William) owned the farmstead on the 100-acre tract. This farmstead, of unknown construction date, was still standing in the 1990s, and was located near the road to the northeast of the Jones Site (Figure 6-7).

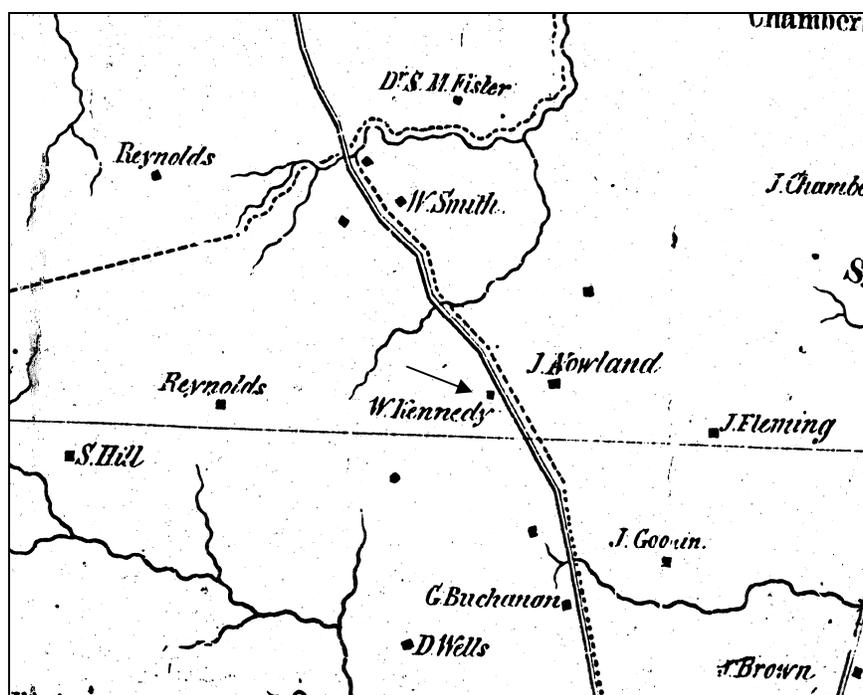


Figure 6-7. The W. Kennedy farmstead on the former White tract in 1849 (Rea & Price 1849)

The basic configuration of that parcel did not alter for over 110 years, from 1741 to 1854, during which time the parcel remained in the ownership of William White and his descendants. The Kennedy and Darrach descendants sold the 100 acres to George Davis in 1854 for \$950.00 (NCCDB 1854b). Eleanor (nee Darrach) Kennedy died in 1818. Heirs of Eleanor’s in 1854 were Thomas B. Darrach, William Darrach, James Darrach, Mary Ann Purvis, Mary Ann Evans, Mathilda Gordon, Susan M. Lacy, Anna Purvis, DH Kennedy, and E.J. Campbell (NCC Orphans Court Records 1854). The tract was mentioned as “formerly the property of William White, late of Kent County,” deceased. Since there was no reference to any other previous owners, this further substantiates that the land had been passed down over the generations without sale or probate. The descendants mentioned in the deed transaction were:

- William Kennedy of St. George's Hundred (Eleanor's widower?),
- Margaret Darrach of the same hundred (Eleanor's sister-in-law),
- Mary Ann Evans, Reed and Mathilda Gordon of New York City (Eleanor's nieces),
- Elijah and Susan M. Lacey of Niles Bruin County, Michigan (Eleanor's daughter),
- Thomas J. and Eliza J. Campbell from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (Eleanor's daughter?),
- William and Anna Purvis of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (Eleanor's daughter), and
- David K. Kennedy of Hampshire County, Virginia (Eleanor's son).

None of the grantors in the 1854 deed were residing in Appoquinimink Hundred. This suggests that the farm was occupied by tenants during the White/Darrach/Kennedy tenure.

The Federal census of agriculture for Appoquinimink Hundred revealed that the property was being farmed in 1850. Eleanor (Mrs. William) Kennedy owned the 105-acre White tract in 1850. A house labeled "W Kennedy" is shown on the 1849 Rea and Price map on the southwest side of the public road, on the White tract. The White tract probably appears on the census as two separate farms, one of 90 acres and another of 15 acres. The manager or agent of the 90-acre farm was Mathew Durham and the cash value of the farm was \$1,200.00 (U.S. Census Bureau 1850a). Only 40 acres of the property were improved. The cash value of farm implements and machinery was \$50.00. Livestock included one horse and three swine valued at \$75.00. The value of animals slaughtered during the year also was \$75.00. The farm produced only one crop: 290 bushels of Indian corn. It is likely that Durham resided on the farm in the "W Kennedy" farmstead shown on the 1849 map.

The 15-acre farm - presumably on the White tract - was managed by Perry Hamilton in 1850 (US Government 1850b). Twelve of the acres were improved and the farm's value was \$400.00. Farm implements and machinery were valued at \$25.00. One horse, two milch cows, and two swine made up the livestock, valued at \$75.00. Twenty-five dollars' worth of animals were slaughtered during the year. The crops were 80 bushels of Indian corn and 15 bushels of Irish potatoes.

The 100-acre White tract was defined in 1854 as follows:

Beginning at a stake on the east side of the State road leading from Blackbird to Smyrna, a corner for Land of J Nowland and George Davis, thence south sixteen and three quarter degrees west eighty six and four tenths perches, to a stake in an old field where a Black Oak is called for, thence forty seven and a half degrees west one hundred and sixty perches to an old marked maple stake in a swamp corner for land of said Davis, thence with land said to be vacant North forty five and one quarter degrees W. twenty seven perches to a white oak stake, corner of land now of Dr. William Daniel, thence North thirty seven and one half degrees

west ten and seven tenths perches to a stake a supposed corner of William Reynolds heirs, thence with the land of said heirs North forty five degrees East, one hundred and twenty four and five tenths perches to a stake on the west side of the aforesaid State Road, thence, down the said Road and binding therewith about one hundred and sixty four perches to the place of beginning. (NCCDB 1854b)

No mention is made of any structures or improvements. No mention of “where an old house once stood” is located in the deed records. The corner that adjoins the quote from the former Brown tract was located in the center of an “old field where a Black Oak is called for,” suggesting trees had been removed or died and the area had formerly been farmed (NCCDB 1854).

6.4 THE TURNER TRACT

The western edge of the Turner Tract was situated very near the eastern edge of the Jones Site, or as much as 200 feet to the east. The tract was apparently patented by John Turner, although archival research has not revealed information on the original warrant survey for this tract. Few records reveal information on John Turner. The estate of John and James Turner was probated on March 19, 1802 (NCC Orphan Court Records 1802). A plat map of the John Turner estate was prepared, dividing the estate among four parties (Figure 6-8).

John Turner was listed as an owner of land adjoining the White tract in 1752 and the Brown tract in 1768 (NCC Surveys 1752; NCCDB 1768). Both John and James Turner served as privates in the Revolutionary Army (Peden 1996:270). The 1784 tax assessment for Appoquinimink Hundred lists James Turner’s assets valued at £12, with John Turner’s property valued at £9. Both John and James Turner were listed in the 1782 reconstructed census, and a John Turner Estate and James Turner Estate were listed in the 1787 taxables for Appoquinimink Hundred (Hancock 1983:9; Scharf 1888:1019-1020). Another entry for the Turner men was in 1797, when James Turner’s estate contained 200 acres, with 100 improved, 100 unimproved, with two log dwellings, all valued at \$300.00. As can be seen on the 1802 plat, the Turner dwellings were on the opposite (east) side of the main road from the Jones Site (see Figure 6-7).

The land was divided four ways in 1802 going to John’s three daughters 1) Nancy (Mrs. Nathaniel Nowland), 2) Hannah (through her son Samuel Armstrong), and 3) Jane Turner; and 4) Ms. Mary Turner, a sister to James. The tract closest to the Jones Site was Lot No. 2 in the 1802 division, containing 67 acres on both sides of the Old King’s Road. Lot No. 2 went to Samuel Armstrong, whose father, Richard Armstrong, had just died earlier in 1801; Samuel’s status as a minor sent the matter to the Orphans Court. The map from the Turner estate settlement referenced Cantwell Jones as owning the land west of the Turner estate.

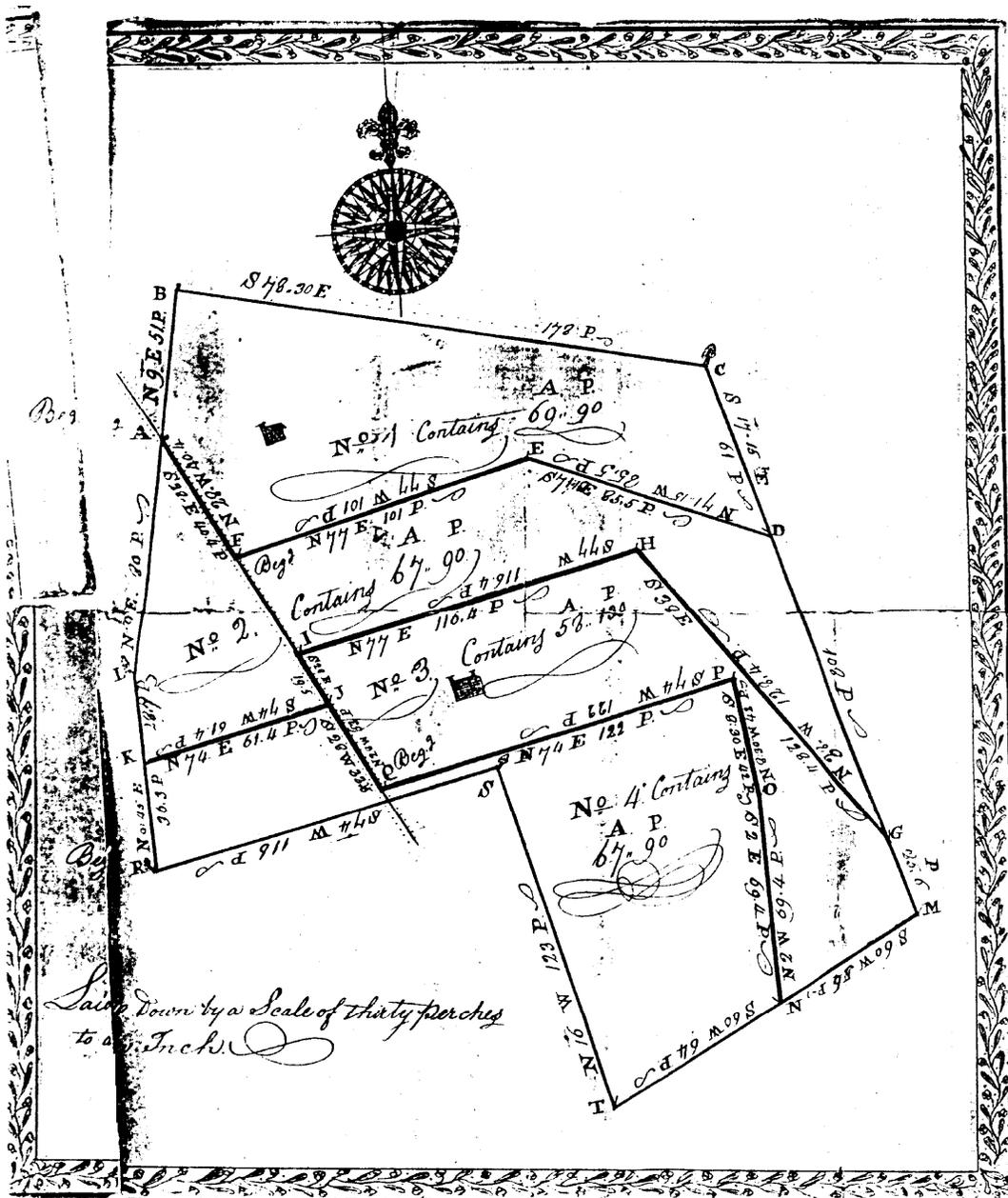


Figure 6-8. Plat of John and James Turner Estate Land in 1802 (NCC Orphans Court Record 1802)

Nancy Turner inherited Lot No. 1 containing 69 acres on the east side of the Old King's Road with a house and married Nathaniel Nowland. The 1849 map of the project area shows one residence remaining on the former Turner tracts (see Figure 6-7, Rea & Price 1849). The "J Nowland" house east of the main road appears to coincide with the location of the house on Lot No. 1 on the 1802 plat. The house shown on Lot No. 3 east of the main road in 1802 is apparently gone by 1849.

The Federal census of agriculture for Appoquinimink Hundred revealed that portions of the Turner tract were being farmed in 1850. James “Nolan” appeared on the 1850 agricultural census of Appoquinimink Hundred as the owner of a 69-acre farm (U.S. Census Bureau 1850b). Since Lot No. 1 from the 1802 division contained 69 acres 90 perches and a house on the east side of the main road, it appears the census is referring to Lot No. 1. This portion of the Turner tract is entirely on the opposite side of the main road from the project area, but is included here for comparative purposes. Forty acres of the James Nowland farm were improved in 1850 and the farm’s value was \$1,200.00. Farm implements and machinery were valued at \$25.00. Livestock included two horses, three milch cows, two oxen, and three swine, worth \$100.00. The value of animals slaughtered during the year was \$15.00. The only crop was 300 bushels of Indian corn and 100 pounds of butter were produced. James Nowland was probably the son of Nathaniel and Nancy Nowland. James Nowland is listed as the owner, agent, or manager of the farm on the 1850 census and as the owner of the house on the 1849 map, he likely had inherited the farm by 1849 and was residing in the house on the east side of the main road.

This leaves the agricultural status of the portion of the Turner tract on the west side of the main road in question. The agricultural census-taker seems to have traveled south along the main road from Blackbird, based on landowners known from other archival research for the SR1 project (i.e. the Reynolds and Brooksons). The entry before James Nolan on the agricultural census was Perry Hamilton, 15 acres. Hamilton’s land plus the 90-acre farm listed before him, managed by Mathew Durham, add up to 105 acres and have been hypothesized to be the White tract (which contained 105 acres when sold in 1854). The entry before Durham is Benjamin Smith, farming 24 acres. The Smith family owned property on the east side of the main road, north of the Turner tracts, on the 1849 Rea & Price map; therefore Benjamin Smith does not appear to have farmed the Jones site project area. After recording James Nolan’s information, the census-taker presumably continued south along the main road; he next visited a 45-acre property owned or managed by Daniel Bartlet. All of Bartlet’s acreage was improved in 1850 and the farm was worth \$1,000.00. Farm implements were valued at \$25.00. Livestock included 3 horses, 1 milch cow, and 5 swine. The livestock was valued at \$100.00 and \$10.00 worth of livestock were slaughtered during the year. Bartlet’s farm produced 100 bushels of Indian corn and 10 bushels of Irish potatoes. Could Bartlet have been farming another part of the Turner property, south of Lot 1 in the 1802 plat? It is possible that Bartlet’s 45-acre farm was somewhere on the Turner property, on 1802 Lots 2, 3, or 4. Portions of 1802 Lots 2 or 4 were on the west side of the main road, and Lot 2 was on or near the Jones site. The entry after Bartlet is “George W. Buchannan” with 260 acres; Buchanan is known to have owned the property south of the Turner tract. However, the 1849 Rea & Price map show “G. Buchanan” as owning two houses on the east side of the main road. It is also plausible that Bartlet’s 45 acres corresponds to the northernmost of the two Buchanan farmsteads. Both of the Buchanan houses were south of the Turner tract; the boundary between the Turner and Buchanan properties was just south of a future road oriented roughly east-west.

There is a known relationship between the Turner and Buchannan families – Samuel Armstrong (the minor who inherited Turner Lot No. 2 shown on the 1802 plat of the estate) married one of George Buchannan’s daughters in 1855. Samuel and Anne Armstrong moved into the southern tenant house on George’s farm, and the Buchanans resided in the northern house (Scholl et al. 1994:20-21). Armstrong bought the southern house and a portion of the Buchannan farm

surrounding the house several years later. Samuel Armstrong could have been farming his portion of the Turner tract in addition to working his portion of his father-in-law's farm.

The Turner/Nowland heirs may have redivided their inherited lands. In 1859, 89 acres of the 1802 estate was sold by James Nowland and his wife, Mary Ann, to George Davis for \$300.00 (NCCDB 1859). Metes and bounds given in the 1859 deed for the new tract of 89 acres were plotted and compared to points shown on the 1802 Turner estate plat. It was found that the 89-acre tract was composed of land on both sides of the main road from Blackbird to Smyrna (Figure 6-8). On the west side of the main road, the tract was the semi-triangular portion of old Lot No. 2. To the east of the main road, the new parcel contained all of old Lot No. 3, plus the triangular portion of Lot No. 2 to the east of Lot No. 3. The tract bounded other land of James Nowland, which included the remainder of Lot No. 2 to the east of the main road.

The Nowlands were residents of Appoquinimink Hundred in 1859, and Davis lived in Smyrna. The probable residence of the Nowlands continued to be on Turner Lot 1 from 1802, not within the 89 acres sold to Davis. The "J. Nowland" residence on the 1868 Beers Atlas appears on the east side of the main road, in the old Lot No. 1 area. By 1867, George Davis had acquired the remainder of the 1802 Turner estate lands on the west side of the main road and north of a new road. This semi-rectangular tract had been a portion of Lot No. 4 in the 1802 division, and contained approximately 15 acres.

6.5 GEORGE DAVIS AND CONSOLIDATION

George Davis had acquired the Brown and White tracts, and portions of the Turner tracts between 1853 and 1859 (see Figure 6-9). George Davis was one of eight children of the Honorable Isaac Davis, who served in both the Delaware House and Senate, and Delaware Supreme Court (McCarter and Jackson 1882:256). He married Mary Jane Perkins, daughter of Dr. John D. Perkins, and they had five daughters, all of whom survived him (McCarter and Jackson 1882:237). Davis, who lived in Smyrna, located approximately three miles to the south of the site, acquired dozens of farms in Delaware and Maryland.

In 1855, George Davis and his wife, Mary Jane, sold a 20-acre rectangular lot to Andrew Davis, for \$450.00 (NCCDB1855). The new lot was outside of the project area, on the west side of the old King's Road, near the northwest corner of the old William White parcel. No buildings were listed in the conveyance, and it is probable that the land was purchased to construct a house site. Andrew Davis was African-American, and could possibly have been a freed slave of the George Davis family (NCCDB 1879). George Davis owned four African-American slaves in Appoquinimink Hundred in 1860, three adult males and one adult female (U.S. Census Bureau 1860a). The Federal census of agriculture for Appoquinimink Hundred in 1860 listed an Edward Davis either owning or managing a 21-acre farm valued at \$400.00 (U.S. Census Bureau 1860b). Andrew Davis apparently added a dwelling to his 20-acre parcel by 1868, although the map lists "L. Davis" as the owner (Beers 1868). Andrew T. Davis' 20 acres with a frame house was valued at \$750.00 in the 1870s, with no livestock associated with the property (NCC South Appoquinimink Hundred Tax Lists 1873-1877). The 20-acre parcel was owned by the Davis

family at least through the 1890s (Beers 1868; Hopkins 1881; Baist 1893). Andrew Davis died in 1892.

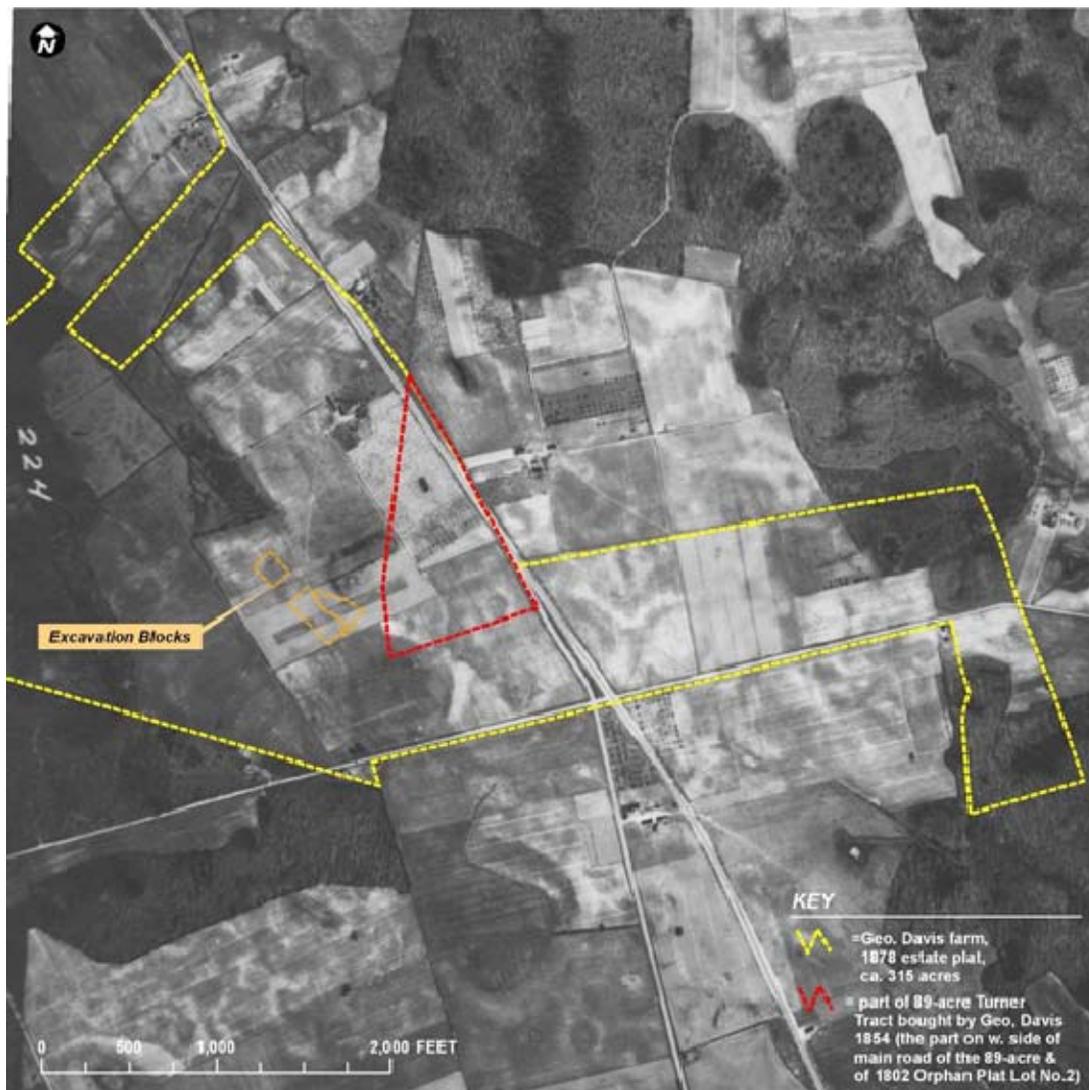


Figure 6-9. Turner/Nowland Land Sold to George Davis in 1859, Outlined in Red on 1926 Aerial Photo (US Army Air Corps)

The George Davis farm was not identified under his name on the Federal census of agriculture for Appoquinimink Hundred in 1860. The census detailed products from 303 farms in the hundred. The listings on the census were compared to the 1868 Beers map of the region, but a clear path from neighbor to neighbor was not readily seen. The census-taker seems to have made multiple visits to the same neighborhoods during his visits from June 1st through June 30th. The Davis farm was probably listed under an agent or manager's name and therefore could be any name. The number of houses in the hundred increased dramatically from the 1849 Rea & Price to the 1868 Beers map, and many of the same surnames have multiple house locations in 1868. A Nehemiah Davis is listed under a farm of 310 acres, and the last name and acreage suggested it

may be our project area. However, a check of the 1868 map and the names of nearby listings of the Crawfords and Rothwells places this farm in the far northwest corner of the hundred, northwest of Townsend. Known owners of property near the project area were listed near each other on the 1860 census, including W. C. Alston (200 acres) and James Nowland (110 acres). The census taker listed Jacob Hill (400 acres) after Alston, but then recorded George W. Buchanan's farm (300 acres) before heading north along the main road to list Nowland. The Hills have owned farms to the west of the project area, on a road paralleling and east of the railroad tracks, so the census taker seems to have worked in a circle that day, skipping a number of farms, including that of George Davis. Perhaps the newly-combined farm was not yet being actively farmed by the time of the 1860 census. Another possibility is that the known house (on the former White tract) was being rented to someone who worked elsewhere instead of on the Davis farm. It seems unlikely that Davis' farm can be positively identified on this census.

The 1868 Beers map of the region depicts the George Davis farmstead as "Australia", with two structures owned by Davis on the west side of the main road (Figure 6-10). The northernmost of the two presumed dwellings was in the location of the "W. Kennedy" house in 1849 (Rea & Price 1849). The location of the second presumed dwelling is partially obscured by the final letter in "Australia," but the bracket to the right of "Geo. Davis" indicates two structures owned by Davis. The southern Davis structure was added sometime after 1849, and appears to be situated to the east of the Jones Site (see Figure 6-2, Historic House Locations). This building was the closest documented building to the Jones Site on any cartographic image. Also, between 1849 and 1868, a farmstead for D.D. Dutton was added to the south of the Jones Site, on the north side of a new road on neighboring property. The new road crossed the main road to the southeast of the project area, and connected Smyrna Landing on Duck Creek to a second new road that paralleled the main road. The second new road connected the Blackbird area to the north with the new railroad station called Sassafras Station (later called Green Spring Station) to the south.

The 1857-1861 tax assessments for Appoquinimink Hundred in New Castle County contain the following information for George Davis:

- 226-acre tract with a frame dwelling and frame barn valued at \$9,000.00
- 135-acre tract with a frame dwelling and frame barn valued at \$3,375.00
- 40-acre tract of marsh land valued at \$200.00
- 160-acre tract of brush land valued at \$1,600.00

George Davis acquired 210 acres of the Brown and White tracts in 1854 for \$2,050.00 and sold 20 acres to Andrew Davis in 1855, leaving him with 190 contiguous acres by the time of the 1857 tax list. After purchasing 89 acres of the Turner tract in 1859 for \$300.00, George Davis owned 279 acres. The 279-acre tract does not seem to be included in the 1857-1861 tax lists, either alone or as a combination of entries. It is possible that the tax lists were not kept up-to-date, especially with the high volume of land transactions involving Davis.

George Davis died on April 12, 1877 (McCarter and Jackson 1882:237). When Davis wrote his will in 1872, he was living in the Town of Smyrna at a premises known as the “Williams Lot,” inherited from his father. Davis bequeathed the Williams Lot and mansion to his wife, Mary J. Davis. He left a number of separate farms in Cecil County, Maryland to his children and to a friend, George Biddle (Table 6-4). He instructed that all the rest and residue of his real estate (except those specifically devised in the will) should be sold within 5 years of his decease. His estate’s executors could sell the lands at private or public auction, for cash and/or credit. Rents, until the lands were sold, were to be collected by the executors. After payment of debts, the proceeds were to be divided equally among his five children and one grandson. George’s children were Mary K. Davis, Ann Eliza Johns (nee Davis; Mrs. Henry V.D. Johns), Elizabeth B. Neavitt (nee Davis; Mrs. F.B. Neavitt), Elva Brown (nee Davis; Mrs. George Brown), and Georgia Davis. George’s grandson was George Read Lofland, a minor.

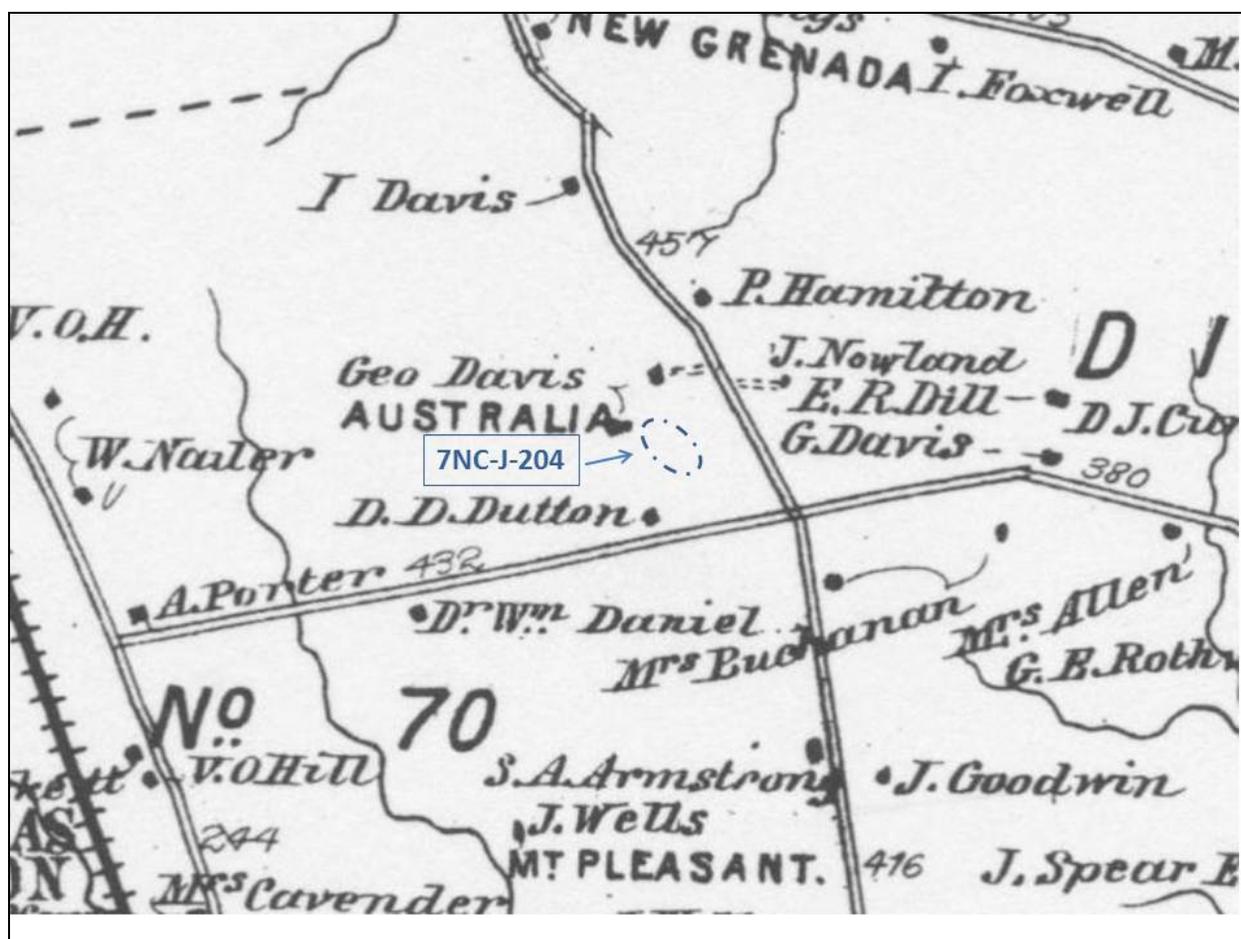


Figure 6-10. The Project Area in 1868: George Davis’ Farmstead “Australia” (Beers 1868)

Table 6-4. Other Property Owned by George Davis when he died in 1877

Property name	Location	Willed to	Acres
Dwelling House	Smyrna	Wife, Mary Jane Davis	
Williams Lot	Smyrna	Wife, Mary Jane Davis	
Temple Lot	Irishtown, near Smyrna	Wife, Mary Jane Davis	
Wellington Farm	Cecil County, Maryland	Daughter, Mary K. Davis	470
World's End	Cecil County, Maryland	Daughter Ann Eliza Davis (Mrs. Henry Johns)	260
Price's Land	Cecil County, Maryland	Daughter Elizabeth B. Davis (Mrs. F.B. Neavitt)	228
Bearten Farm	Cecil County, Maryland	Son-in-law Henry Johns	203
Bell Haven	Cecil County, Maryland	Daughter Georgia Davis	290
Priceland	Cecil County, Maryland	Friend George Biddle	260

The 1873-1877 tax lists for Appoquinimink Hundred assessed George Davis for six land tracts worth a total of \$26,225.00 and livestock worth \$303.00 (NCC Appoquinimink Hundred Tax Lists 1873-1877):

- 230-acre tract with a frame house and barn, valued at \$9,350.00
- 50-acre tract of bush land valued at \$500.00
- 112-acre tract with a frame house and barn valued at \$3,360.00
- 56-acre tract of wood and brush valued at \$840.00
- 265-acre tract with a frame house and barn valued at \$10,900.00
- 25-acre swamp valued at \$250.00

George Davis' estate was taxed for the same six tracts in 1877-1881. The first three entries were later crossed through and disregarded, so the total estate was valued at \$8,635.00. This suggests that the first three properties had been sold by the estate's administrators. Blackbird Hundred was formed from part of Appoquinimink Hundred ca. 1877. Five tracts in Blackbird Hundred belonging to the George Davis estate were slated for sale in 1878 (NCC Orphans Court Records 1878):

- No. 1, bounded by lands of John Jerrel, lands formerly of Jacob Deakyne, by the Duck Creek, by the Public Road leading to Barlows Landing & by the Public Road leading from said landing Road toward Taylors Bridge, by lands of Albert G. Deakyne & others & contains 241 acres & 49 square perches, and has a landing within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the building where Grain or lime can be landed, & where Stock or Poultry can be sent to the Philadelphia Market by Steamboat, & persons wishing to visit the City on business or pleasure can take the boat at almost at their door, or by a ride of a few miles can reach the depot on the Delaware Rail Road, the Soil is well adapted to the groth [sic] of Grain or Grass, Peaches, apples, & Small

fruits of all kinds can be produced in abundance, this property is also convenient to Churches, Mills & has a Post Office ½ mile of the door.

- **No. 2, immediately on the Public Road leading from Middletown to Smyrna, about 2-1/2 miles from the latter town and within 2 miles of a landing on the Duck Creek where Grain or lime can be landed and is within 1-1/2 miles of a first class Grist Mill, and about the same distance from Green Spring Station on the Delaware Rail Road, it contains 315 acres & 154 square perches of land and if desired could be divided into two farms, the Soil is light loam & can be made very productive.**
- No. 3, on the Public Road leading from Richardsons Grist & Saw Mills to Green Spring Station on the Delaware Rail Road the farm running down to the aforesaid station where Grain or lime can be shipped, & where the Several trains of cars stop going either North or South, it contains 113 acres & 32 square perches of land, the Soil is light loam & could be made very productive, there is a never failing stream of water running through the farm, it is about 3 miles from the flourishing Town of Smyrna & about 2 miles from two Grist Mills & about ½ mile from a Public School.
- No. 4, 34 acres & 28 perches of land, it is Situate near to & has all the advantages of No. 1 above described, the Soil is a Stiff loam well adapted to the growth of Grain or Grass.
- No. 5, 54 acres & 12 square perches of land more or less Subject to the Dower of Mrs. Frances Ann Allen widow of Jeremiah Allen dec'd in 5 acres & 24 perches thereof, this tract adjoins Lot No. 2 and has all the advantages mentioned in the description of Lot No. 2, The Soil is a light Loam & well adapted to the growth of Grain or Grass and all the different varieties of Fruits or Vegetables.

The second lot for sale, No. 2 above, included the project area and was surveyed in May 1878. This lot totaled roughly 315 acres with one dwelling on the west side of the main road (Figure 6-11). The 315-acre lot may have been a combination of two of the tracts from the 1870s tax lists: the 56-acre wood and brush land plus the 265-acre lot with a frame house and barn. The value of both of these two tracts decreased from the 1873-1877 assessment to the 1877-1881 assessment: the 56-acre lot decreased to \$560.00 and the 265 acres decreased to \$7,950.00.

The house shown on the 315 acres in 1878 appears to be in the same location as the “W. Kennedy” house in 1849 and the northern of the two “Geo. Davis” structures in 1868 (Rea & Price 1849; Beers 1868). The absence of the southern house of the pair of “Geo. Davis” houses shown in 1868 suggests that it was no longer standing by 1878. Perhaps this accounts for some of the decrease in value of the property, although depressed economic conditions may also be a factor.

6.6 POST-DAVIS OWNERSHIP

George Davis' estate sold 315 acres (Lot No. 2) to William and Henrietta Tschudy and Samuel Catts in May 1878, which included all of the area surrounding Site 7NC-J-204 north and west of the intersection of the two roads (Figure 6-11; NCCDB 1878). The trio also owned land to the north of the tract still on the west side of the old King's Road. The firm of Tschudy and Catts was based in Smyrna, where, in 1879, they purchased a large peach basket factory on Commerce Street that had over 100 employees and produced over 1,000,000 baskets a season (Edwards 1880:124). The factory also prepared timber for the shipbuilding industry; Catts was part of the lumber firm of VanGasken and Catts. Tschudy had operated a general store in Smyrna since 1858.

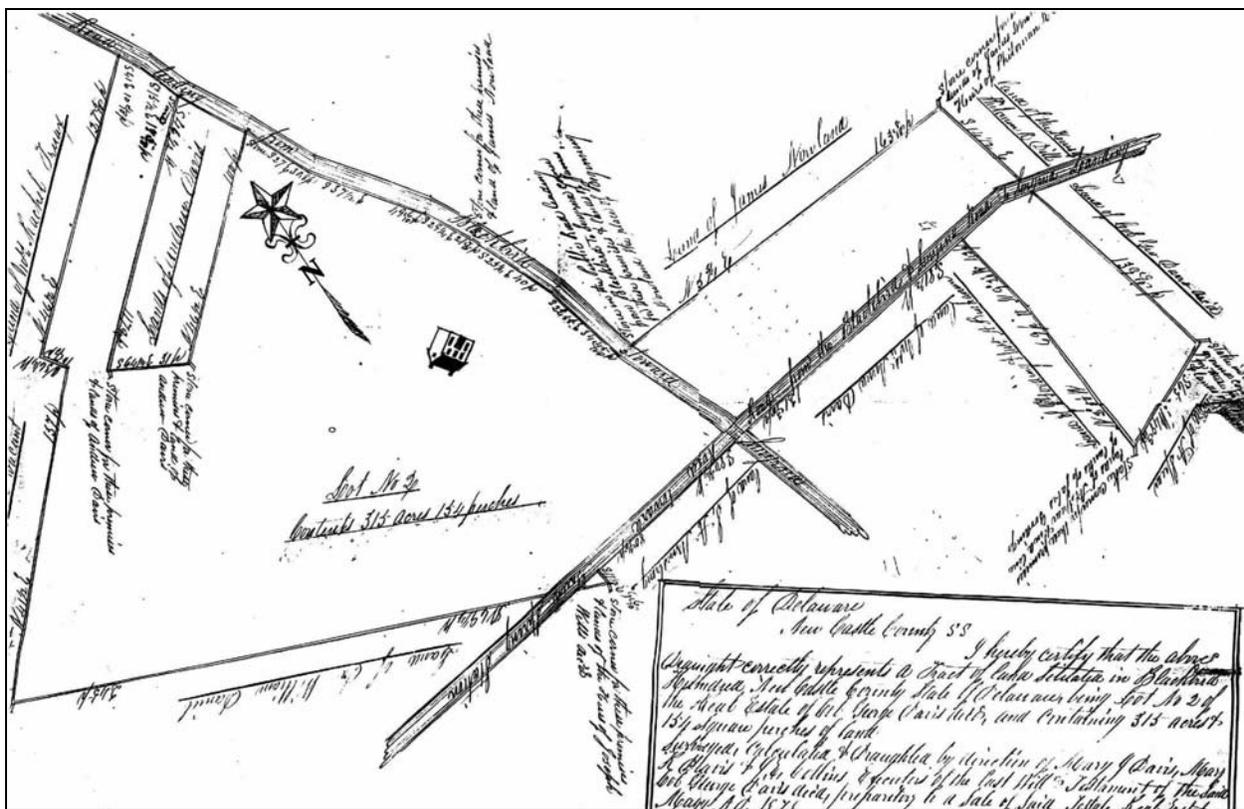


Figure 6-11. George Davis' Estate in 1878, Lot No. 2, ca. 315 Acres (NCC Orphans Court Records 1878)

Tschudy and Catts only retained the land a year before selling the portion of the George Davis tract on the west side of the main road to Thomas J. Middleton in 1879 (NCCDB 1879). The acreage is not specified in the deed. Thomas J. Middleton is illustrated as owning two farmsteads on the property in 1881 (Figure 6-13; Hopkins 1881). The northern dwelling appears to be the house shown since 1849 on the west side of the main road to Smyrna (the W. Kennedy farmhouse). The second Middleton house was apparently added after 1868, near the southeastern edge of the property, southwest of the first house and northwest of the

Dutton/Daniels house (see Figure 6-2, Historic House Locations). It is estimated that the brick clamp in Block A of the Jones Site was roughly at the mid-point of a line drawn between the W. Kennedy farmhouse and the second Middleton house, and not in close proximity to either dwelling.

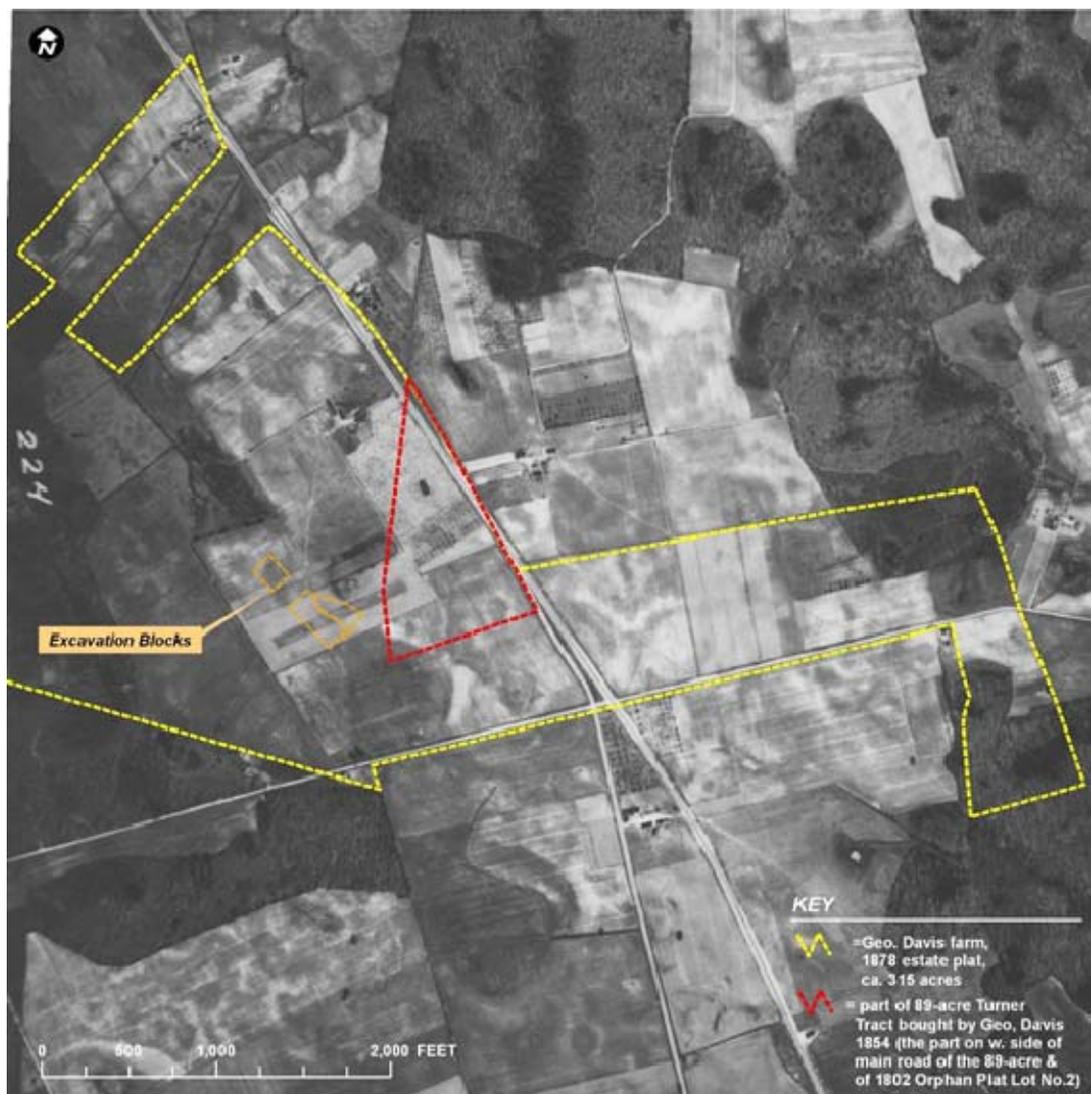


Figure 6-12. Boundary of George Davis Estate Farm in 1878, Outlined in Yellow on 1926 Aerial (US Army Air Corps)

Thomas J. Middleton is one of the first owners known to have resided on the former Davis farm, based on cartographic and census data. There were two men named Thomas Middleton in the 1880 Federal Population Census in Delaware (U.S. Census Bureau 1880). Both lived in Blackbird Hundred in New Castle County and both were White. The elder of the two, Thomas, was 73 years old and had been born in Pennsylvania (U.S. Census Bureau 1880). The families visited by the census taker before Thomas Middleton were that of James T. Carrow, followed by

seems that the census taker moved from north to south along the main road in the vicinity of the project area.

An 1893 map of the area shows the T. J. Middleton property with two houses in the same configuration as in 1881 (Baist 1893). The 1890 Federal Population Census is not available since the records were destroyed in a fire years ago. However, Thomas J. Middleton appears in the 1900 Federal Population Census as a 51-year-old farmer, still living in Blackbird Hundred, New Castle County (U.S. Census Bureau 1900). Middleton lived in the Western district of the hundred, and owned his mortgaged farm. Thomas J. resided with his 53-year-old wife, Mary A., his 51-year-old sister-in-law, Clara L. Ewell, his 17-year-old niece, Edna E. Ewell, and two boarders. The Middletons had been married for 25 years and had no children - either living or deceased. Clara, like her sister, had been born in Maryland, and Edna was born in Georgia. Edna attended school in the past year, and like her mother, aunt, and uncle, could read, write, and speak English. The boarders in the household were Isaac H. Rider, a 30-year-old Black man, and Nelson Postles, a 16-year-old Black man. Both boarders worked as farm laborers and could speak English, but only Isaac could read and write. Isaac was listed as married for six years but there is no mention of his wife in the household. Since the boarders were included in the same dwelling as the Middletons and their relatives, it appears that they all resided in the same house - presumably still the former W. Kennedy farmstead northeast of the Jones site where the Middletons lived in 1880.

The family visited by the census taker prior to the Middletons in 1900 was that of William Durham, a 27-year-old Black farm laborer who lived in a rented home with his 24-year-old wife, Sarah. It is unclear whether the Durhams' house was on the farm of the Middletons or the farm of the previous family on the census, William (?) Armstrong. The Armstrongs rented a farm in 1900 and probably were residing on the former Buchanan farm, south of the former Davis farm; the Armstrongs married into the Buchanan family and moved to the Buchanan farm in the 1850s (De Cunzo 2004:167). Therefore it seems that the census taker was traveling from south to north.

The family after the Middletons on the 1900 census was that of William Nailer (Nailor), a 75-year-old White farmer who owned his farm. His 29-year-old wife, Mary E., and a boarder - a 13-year-old Black male named Harvey Cammomile (?) - completed the household. The Nailors are known owners of part of the Turner tract on the opposite (east) side of the main road from the project area parcel. The family visited after the Nailors was that of Otis Marvel, who lived with a wife, two children, and five boarders. Marvel rented his farm. The presence of multiple boarders in many households in the 1900 census of the area may speak to economic conditions at the turn of the century.

Middleton retained the land until 1909, when he sold it to George W. Hurd for \$5,600.00 (NCCDB 1909). The tract then contained only 152 acres, and remained at this acreage until the 1990s. Hurd and his wife, Elizabeth, only kept the parcel a year, selling the land to Philemon Scott in 1910 for \$6,500.00 (NCCDB 1910). Philemon Scott and his wife, Martha, conveyed the tract to Eugene and Mary Martin in 1918 for \$8,000.00 (NCCDB 1918). In 1919, Eugene Martin sold it to Benjamin Green, who immediately sold it back to Martin the same day (NCCDB 1919).

