2.0 ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

The project area is located along the boundary between the Delaware Shore and Mid-Drainage physiographic zones. Topographically, this region is characterized by gently rolling hills intersected by small to large drainages and marshes. The project area specifically is crossed by secondary drainages of Primehook Creek and Broadkill River, including Brittingham, Ingram and Sowbridge Branches. Vegetation in the project area consists of secondary growth woodlots and agricultural fields. Woodlots are generally small, often acting as barriers between agricultural fields and Sand Hill Road. All agricultural fields were in corn at the time of field investigations.

Surface soils of Sussex County, Delaware found within the survey area include the Rumford, Sassafras, Evesboro, Woodstown and Fallsingston Series (Mackenzie 2000). Sassafras sandy loam (SaA) constituted the most frequently mapped soil type in the eastern portion of the projects area; Evesboro loamy sand - loamy substratum (EvB) dominated the west (Table 2-1). Other specific soil types mapped include Rumford loamy sand – 0 to 2 percent slope (RuA), Rumford loamy sand – 2 to 5 percent slope (RuB), Fallsington sandy loam (Fa), and Evesboro sandy loam – 5 to 15 percent slope (EsD). Table 2-1 details the soils within the general vicinity of the project area; Table 2-2 lists the soils identified during investigations.

Table 2-1. Soil Types Mapped for the Milton Area

Soil Type	Characteristics
EsD	Nearly level to gentle slopes. Rarely farmed, normally wooded in hardwoods, Virginia Pine, and yellow poplar
EvB	Slightly elevated ridges and slopes of ridges, retains water. Often farmed
Fa	Poorly drained, occasionally cultivated in corn or soy bean
RuA	Droughty, low in natural fertility. Regularly cultivated in corn, soy bean, truck crops, and melons. Low runoff, moderate threat of wind erosion
RuB	Level portions of upland flats. Low water retention. Slight threat of wind erosion. Regularly cultivated in corn, soy bean, truck crops, and melons
SaA	Some washing of surface soil. Well drained, good water retention, few agricultural limitations.

Table 2-2. Soil Types Identified During Field Investigations

Survey Area	Soil Type	Land Use/ Ground Cover	Survey Methodology	Site
A	RuB	Manicured	STP, TU	Plum Site (#S-10025)
B	SaA	Manicured	STP, TU	Driveway Site (#S-10023)
C	RuB EsD	Wooded	STP	Chamber Pot Site (#S-10024)
D–North	RuA SaA	Manicured Agriculture	STP PED	None None
D–South	RuA SaA	Manicured Agriculture	STP PED	Shell Button Site (#S-10026)
E	SaA	Agriculture	STP	None
F	RuA	Wooded	STP	None
G	EsD EvB	Wooded Wooded	STP STP	None None
H-North	EvB	Agriculture	STP, PED	None
H-South	EvB RuA	Agriculture Agriculture	STP, PED STP, PED	Two Hills Site (#S-10027)

2.2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

2.2.1 Sussex County

William Penn acquired Pennsylvania from King Charles II in 1681, and was granted the "Three Lower Counties on Delaware" the following year (Hancock 1976). The southernmost county was named Sussex County by Penn, and he instructed county magistrates to grant land warrants of 300 acres to married men and 100 acres to single men. Any land granted needed to be seated within one year and yearly rents were one penny per acre or an equivalent value in produce.

Sussex County was the location of the first attempted settlement by Europeans in what would become Delaware (Hancock 1976). Early settlements were concentrated along the coasts of Delaware Bay and the Atlantic Ocean, and near waterways. Lewes, on the Delaware Bay, was the first town in the county. One of the first grist mills in the county was built in Lewes in 1676. A courthouse with a prison was built in the 1680s. The western portion of the county was less well-drained and settlement was delayed in this area, except for along Broad Creek and the Nanticoke River.

Sussex County was the most sparsely populated of the three Delaware counties, with probably fewer than 1,000 residents in 1700 (Hancock 1976). In 1704, representatives from the three Delaware counties began to meet in New Castle, Delaware, in a legislative assembly separate from the Pennsylvania colony assembly, although the Governor was still appointed by William Penn. A governing body called a Levy Court was established in each of the three counties in 1735. Delaware was the first state to ratify the U.S. Constitution on

December 7, 1787. Georgetown replaced Lewes as the county seat in 1791. By 1800, hamlets were established, with clusters of houses near grist mills, sawmills, ports, and fords.

Tobacco cultivation was an important part of the county's economy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Hancock 1976). During the American Revolution, the local farmers supplied corn, wheat, and meat to the American army. Soils became depleted by the mid-nineteenth century due to repeated growing of the same crops and poor farming techniques, but by 1860, increased knowledge of fertilizers and cultivation methods helped keep farms productive.

The first newspaper in the county was established in 1831 (Hancock 1976). The construction of the Delaware Railroad in the 1850s encouraged the development of towns which functioned as market centers for the surrounding farmers. Industrial enterprises in the first half of the nineteenth century included the manufacture of salt along the Indian River and the Atlantic Ocean (Hancock 1976). Bog iron was extracted and shipped to bloomeries for iron production. Tanneries produced leather goods. By 1860, the leading enterprises in the county were grist mills (37 produced goods worth $179,000) and lumber mills (56 produced $90,000 in products). Six shipyards built vessels worth $63,000. Blacksmithing, and the manufacture of carriages, wagons, and tin, copper, or iron items were other industries. A total of 305 men were employed in manufacturing in 1860 in Sussex County.

The county's residents had divided opinions on the Civil War. Both armies received recruits from the area, although the Union Army was the more common choice. Branch railroads were constructed after the Civil War, and vegetables, fruit, and berries were transported for sale in non-local markets. The county was the leading producer of peaches in the state by the 1880s. Northern settlers were attracted to the fertile farmland and a number of canneries were built in the county. The county was the nation's leading strawberry producer by 1900, and had orchards with over 1.5 million peach trees.

Population grew slowly after the Civil War, with 31,000 residents in 1860 and 43,000 by 1920. Electric lights illuminated Milford by 1887 and Georgetown by 1905. The county built 34 miles of macadam roads between 1903 and 1917. T. Coleman duPont sponsored the construction of a concrete highway spanning the length of the state. The first 20 miles of Route 13 were finished by 1917, and the remainder was completed by 1924.

The American holly (*Ilex opaca*) was adopted as the Delaware state tree in 1939 (Taber 1995:183). Also known as the Christmas holly or evergreen holly, the species was more common in the southern portions of Delaware than the northern. The harvesting of this species for Yuletide decorations was a cottage industry in Delaware, employing local residents of all ages in the fall.

The county's population doubled between the 1920s and 1970s, to over 90,000 (Hancock 1976). Eighty-five percent of Sussex County residents were rural by 1970, with over one-half of the state's farms and roughly one-half of the state's cropland.

2.2.2 Town of Milton

The town of Milton developed at the head of the Broadkiln Creek. The town became a grain shipping port and flour milling center in the nineteenth century, and evolved into a center for shipbuilding in the second half of the century (Journal 1957; Hancock 1976). By the turn of the century, the economic prosperity of the town was over, as the shipbuilding industry was no longer profitable. Canning and food processing became the dominant industry in the early twentieth century, supplemented by cottage industries including button making and holly wreath making.

The original patent for the land that became Milton was held by James Bray (or Gray) in 1686, and the land was owned by Samuel Rowland in 1719 (Welch 1935). Later owners were George Conwell, south of Broadkiln Creek, and William Perry (or Peery), north of the creek. Early names of the settlement included Osborne's Landing, Conwell's Landing, Upper Landing, and Head of Broadkill.

Two branches merged at the head of Broadkiln Creek, on the west edge of Milton. The southern branch was known as Long Bridge Branch and the northern branch later was called Pemberton Branch. In 1733, a tract of 192 acres between the branches at the head of Broadkiln Creek was granted to Henry Osburne (Hancock and McCabe 1982:67). A second parcel of seven acres was laid out at the same time, north of Long Bridge Branch and abutting the south edge of the first tract. The second parcel was "mill land." The Long Bridge was mentioned as being near the parcels, but does not appear on the reproduced plat map.

Milton was founded in 1763 by a Mr. Forgus (Hancock and McCabe 1982). The town developed on both sides of Broadkiln Creek, west of the swampy region that borders the creek and the Delaware Bay. A bridge was constructed on Union Street in 1793 joining the town lands north and south of Broadkiln Creek.

The town of Milton was chartered in 1807. Shipbuilding was present in Milton from the early 1800s, when the brothers, Cornelius and William V. Coulter, were in business (Welch 1935). The town had four stores and seven granaries by 1809. The first school not in a private dwelling, was established in 1816. The Milton Academy was founded in 1819 and operated until 1880.

In 1814, eight grist mills and eight sawmills were located within four miles of the village of Milton (Heite 1991:12). However, three local citizens petitioned the General Assembly for permission to build a mill dam and bridge and a grist mill near the center of the village. Brothers William W. and John S. Conwell partnered with Dr. Joseph Maull on the undertaking. Despite some local opposition, the law authorizing the project was passed February 9, 1815 (Heite 1991:12). The Mill Pond was formed from Long Bridge Branch and the unnamed branch that flowed into the head of Broadkiln Creek (Hancock and McCabe 1982:67). According to a survey, the mill pond would inundate 52.5 acres, which is similar to the size of the surviving pond, later known as Wagamon's Mill Pond. The Conwells already owned much of the land to be flooded, as their inheritance from their mother, Eunice Conwell, but the partners were required to buy the remainder (Heite 1991:12). The location

where the mill dam was to be built already had a bridge over the head of navigation of the Broadkill River. Fergus' Bridge carried a major north-south road (later called Mulberry Street) over the marshland, and was built by 1794 (Heite 1991:10). A causeway south of the bridge crossed the bog south of the river. This area, at the northeast end of the pond later called Wagamon's Pond, was known as the Lower Mills in the nineteenth century.

A tanyard was operating in Milton by 1816 under the management of Nathaniel Lofland (Atkins 1905 in Hancock and McCabe 1982:10), with a second opening in 1825. The tanyards were located near the top of the rise overlooking the north bank of the Broadkill River, and were active until 1860 (Henderson 1987:21). Hall and Hazzard Tannery in Milton was operating via horse power in the 1830s, with four employees and two horses (Hancock and McCabe 1982:129). They sold leather to customers up to 150 miles away.

Milling of bark occurred at four mills in Milton in the nineteenth century (Henderson 1987:21). Much of the ground bark was exported, but the local tanyards also were supplied. Black oak (quercitron) bark was especially prized for tanning due to its high concentration of tannin. To tan a hide, roughly twice its weight in finely ground bark would be needed, or approximately 150 pounds for a steer-sized hide (Kellogg 1984:84). Bark was typically removed from the tree in the spring, when the sap was high and the bark was easiest to separate from the trunk (Prance and Prance 1993:91). Traditionally, a four-person barking crew usually consisted of a spudder, a fitter, and two bucklers. The team would strip off sections of bark roughly 4 feet long by 18 inches wide. The next step was to dry the bark. Dried bark could be stored indefinitely and wouldn't lose its tannin (Kellogg 1984:84). Once dried, the bark was cut in a grinding mill to the coarseness of cracked corn. In traditional methods for tanning, the tanners would layer the hides in vats or pits with the chopped bark in between the skin layers. Water was sometimes added, although the moisture in the hides was sometimes sufficient. The tannins would leach from the bark into the hides slowly. Every few weeks, the bark would need to be removed and replaced with a fresh batch of bark. The tanning process often took six to nine months to reach the desired level of leather quality and appearance. Tanning with vegetable matter usually dyed the skin brown, so was not preferred for preparing some types of fur (Kellogg 1984:87).

Milton was officially incorporated as a town in 1865, and was surveyed in 1867 by John C. Hazzard. A state directory in 1868 describes Milton as "laid out with great regularity and taste" (Delaware State Directory 1868). The landing was "on the creek being just below the town" in 1868. The principal business was mercantile, with "two or three shipyards, some fishing and commerce" and "quite a trade in lumber in the village and vicinity, and a flourishing Academy" (Delaware State Directory 1868 in Hancock 1976:137). The town had at least two hotels, four physicians, and eight merchants by 1868 (Figure 2-1).

S. Martin and James Ponder operated shipyards in 1868 north of Front Street and south of Broadkiln Creek (Figure 2-1). Ponder also owned a steam-powered bark and sawmill on Front Street, built around 1863. The sawmill mainly prepared timber for shipbuilding. The bark mill ground quercitron bark and could grind 3 tons per day (Welch 1935). The mills were destroyed by fire in 1877 and were not rebuilt.

The grist mill built ca. 1815 at the Lower Mills was located near the center of town in 1868 on town lot 77, at the intersection of Mulberry and Coulter Streets (Figure 2-1). The mill was still actively in use in 1878 (The Delawarean 1878). A bridge and dam along Mulberry Street formed the Mill Pond to the west, which drained into Broadkiln Creek at the northeast end of the dam. Water flowed from the southeast end of the dam into a mill race leading to the grist mill and back into Broadkiln Creek to the northeast.

By 1891, Milton contained three shipyards, and 18 vessels carried freight from the town to New York and Philadelphia (Hancock 1976). The shipbuilding industry declined by the turn of the century due to several factors. The market for wooden ships was for large vessels, and the Broadkill River channel was not wide or deep enough for these ships. The local, high quality shipbuilding timber was already consumed, and the industry became more dependent on pine wood. Lastly, iron and steel hulled ships became more popular, and larger mechanized urban shipyards were developed elsewhere to provide this product (Hancock and McCabe 1982:69-71).

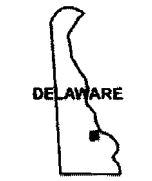
Milton was the last incorporated town in Delaware to receive a direct rail connection (Henderson 1987:39). The Virginia branch of the Queen Anne Railroad reached the southern end of Milton in 1897 (Henderson 1987:40). Prior to this time, farmers and merchants had to travel seven miles northwest to Ellendale or four miles south to Harbeson to reach a railroad station on the Junction and Breakwater line (Henderson 1987:41). The Queen Anne Railroad crossed the Mill Pond north of present-day S319, and connected the town to the Philadelphia/Baltimore/Washington rail lines at Ellendale to the west and Lewes to the east.

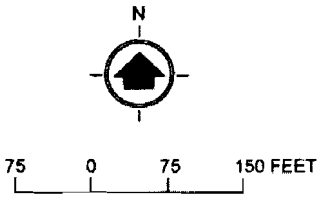
Other industries developed in the late nineteenth century to fill the gap left by the decline of shipbuilding. The Milton Brick Manufacturing Company opened in 1887. The Douglas & White Shirt Factory employed a number of women in Milton by the end of the 1890s (Henderson 1987:72). William B. Tomlinson opened a drying factory in town in the 1890s, known as Tomlinson and Burton, and later as Tomlinson and Co., as part of the emerging local food processing industry (Sussex County, Broadkiln Hundred Assessments [BKA] 1893). The factory dried peaches and apples (Welch 1935 in Hancock and McCabe 1982:21).

James Ponder was the driving force behind the incorporation of the Milton Canning House Building Company in 1893 (Hancock and McCabe 1982:166). Fifty-one other local residents and businessmen were involved in establishing the cannery. The cannery was established at Chandler's Wharf in North Milton (the portion of town north of the Broadkill River). The cannery replaced one owned by George L. Counselman lost to fire in 1891. The Milton Canning House Building Company built two canneries ca.1902: one near the Queen Anne Railroad tracks in South Milton, and one replacing the firm's earlier cannery from 1893. The company was based in northeastern Maryland. Two more canneries were added in 1907: Royal Packing Company between Federal and Chestnut Streets, and Goodwin Brothers and Conwell, Inc., on the site of the James Ponder's former shipyard. The latter cannery was the result of a local effort. George Goodwin, also a sea captain, brought back 175 men, women, and children from Baltimore in 1907 to work at the cannery. Each cannery typically was powered by coal-fired steam engines, and maintained on-site quarters for its workers (Henderson 1987: 79-82). The Draper Company was one of the longest-lived

Figure 2-1. Map of the Town of Milton i

Source:
Beers Atlas, 1868





PARSONS

Milton in 1868 (Beers 1868: Plate 87)

canneries in the county. Harry R. Draper purchased the Workman & Company factory near the Queen Anne Railroad station in South Milton in 1907 (Hancock and McCabe 1982:175). The company canned mainly peas and tomatoes at that time. The firm employed around 1,000 people in Milton during the summers of the 1970s (Hancock 1976) and was the only cannery still operating in the 1980s (Henderson 1987:82). Under the name Draper - King Cole, Inc., the company packed 27 types of vegetables.

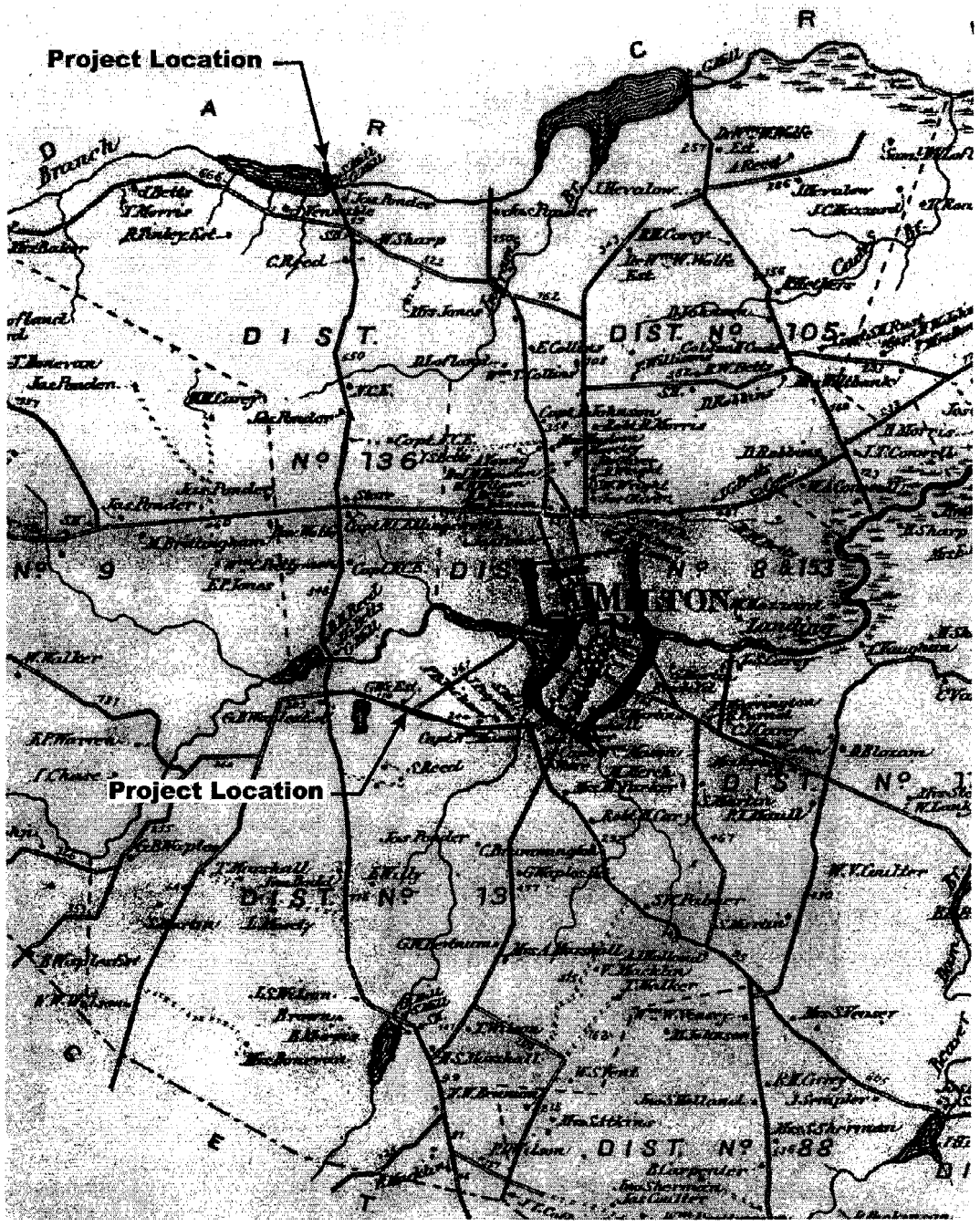
The Diamond State Roller Mills was incorporated in 1946 by partners William B., Richard, and William B. Wagamon, Jr. (Heite 1991:18). The building replaced earlier grist mills at the Lower Mills on Wagamon's Pond. The state of Delaware purchased the ponds in the mid-twentieth century and converted them to recreational use, for boating and fishing (Heite 1991). The ponds had become stagnant and algae-filled in the early twentieth century, causing complaints about their appearance and smell (Hancock and McCabe 1982). Fish ladders were added by the State in front of the dams to aid fish in swimming upstream into the ponds (Heite 1991). By 1955, Paynter's Pond had become known as Wagamon's Pond, and the Sawmill Pond was Diamond Pond (USGS 1955). These pond names are still in use. Milton was the seventh-largest town in the county in the 1970s, with approximately 1,490 residents (Hancock 1976). By 1992, a public boat ramp was located at the north end of Diamond Pond, near the S319 bridge (USGS 1992).

2.2.3 Milton Project Area

Both roads within the project area appear in maps as early as 1868 (Figure 2-2). Property owners along the project area in 1868 are noted on the Beers Atlas maps. Beginning at the southern end of the project area, Captain William Mason owned three buildings, presumably residences, on the southwest side of SR5, at the T-shaped intersection with present-day S319 and Federal Street (Figure 2-2). Two buildings appear to remain in this location in 1914 (Farm Journal Farm Directory 1914) (Figure 2-3). Captain Mason was a merchant dealing in general merchandise; in 1868, his store and another building were southeast of the three buildings near the junction of SR5 and Chestnut Street.

A sawmill stood on the north side of present-day S319 on the east side of a mill pond (present-day location of Bridge 3-806) by 1815; the earliest map found that depicts the sawmill dates to 1853 (Figure 2-4). A bark mill occupied the western side of the same mill pond, north of the road, after 1822 and by 1828. The 1853 plat depicts a probable miller's house to the north of the bark mill (Figure 2-4). These mills, owned by the Paynter family in the nineteenth century, will be discussed in Section 2.2.4, Former Mills Near the Project Area. The bridge that now spans the mill pond was evaluated as part of this project (see Chapter 4, Bridge 3-806). Neither mill was standing by 1914 (Figure 2-3).

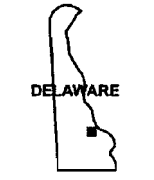
Roughly two acres to the west of the mill tract were owned by William B. Tomlinson by 1907. Tomlinson was a successful banker and businessman who owned several large tracts, one lot with a house, and a house and wharf in 1905. Along with livestock, Tomlinson's real and personal property in the county was worth $5,980.00 in 1905 (BKA 1905 – 1908). The parcel fronting on present-day S319 may have been a lot plus tenant house valued at $1,500.00 before 1905 and $1,800.00 by 1905 (BKA 1892, 1893, 1896 – 1900, 1901 – 1904,

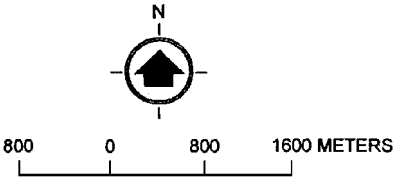


Legend:

Survey Area

Source:
Beers Atlas, 1868





PARSONS

Figure 2-2. 1868 Map of Project Area, Milton, Delaware
(Beers 1868)

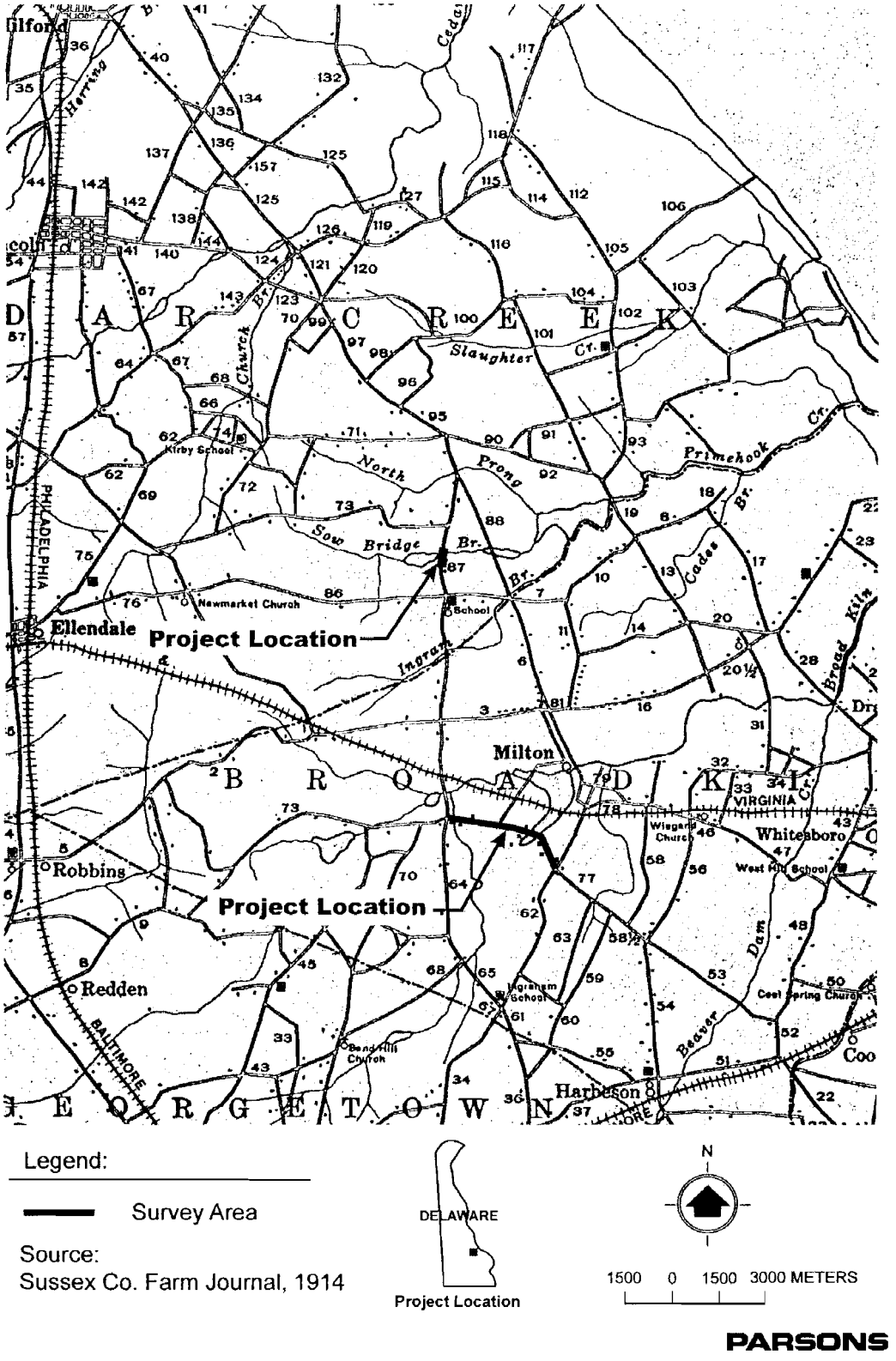


Figure 2-3. 1914 Map of Project Area, Milton, Delaware
(Sussex County Farm Journal 1914)

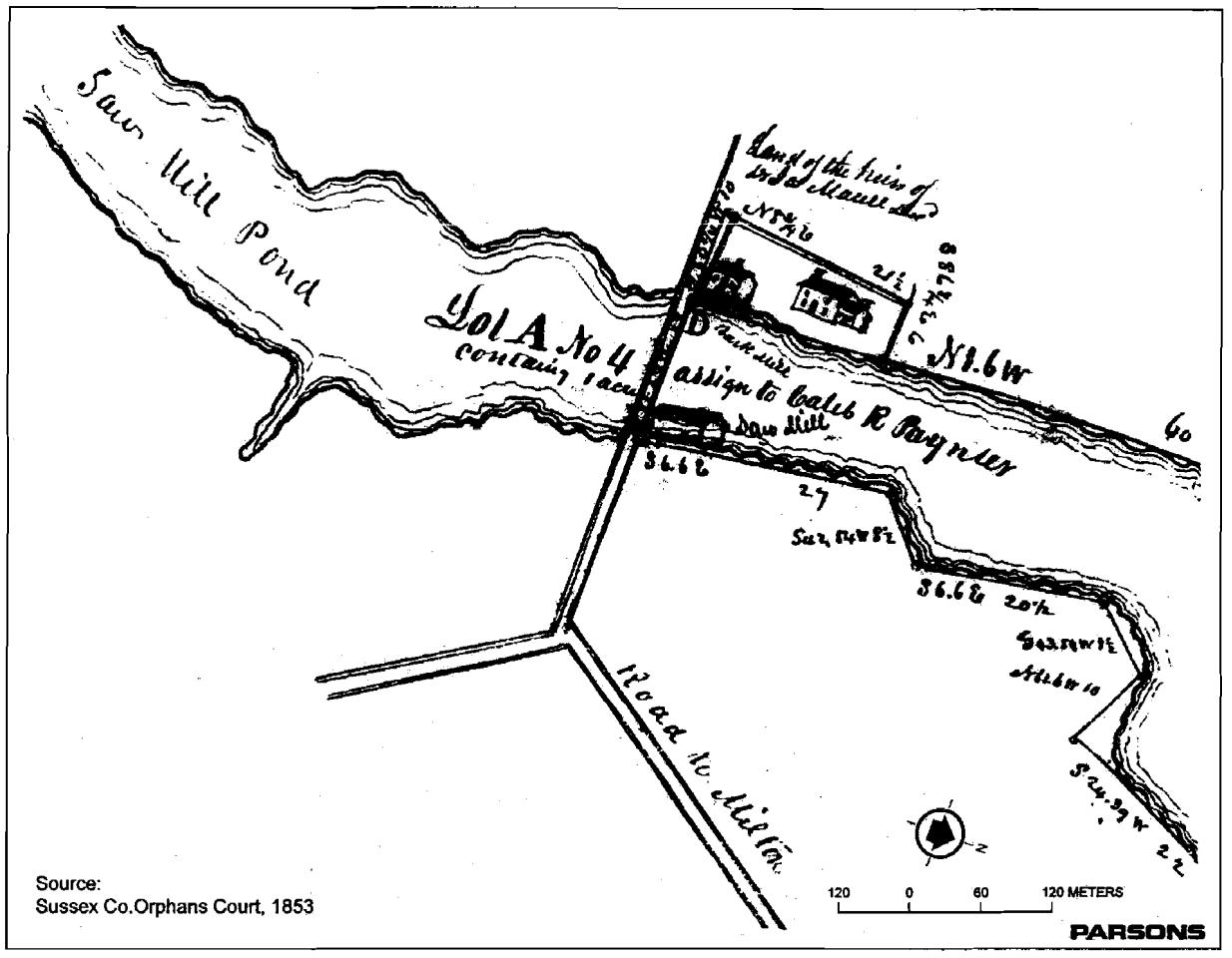


Figure 2-4. Detail of Plat of the Upper Mills (Present-Day S319) in 1853, Estate of Samuel R. Paynter
(Sussex County Orphans Court Record Book 1853b)

1905 – 1908, 1913). A dwelling is shown on the north side of S319 to the west of the mill property in 1914 (Figure 2-3). It is possible that this was the Tomlinson tenant house. The next two buildings on the north side of S319 west of J. Paynter's were both owned by P.B. Hickson in 1868 (Figure 2-2). Neither appear on a map from 1914 (Figure 2-3).

In 1868, the neighboring property to the west was owned by the estate of G.B. Waples. The building was west of an intersecting road leading from S319 to Lavinia Street in Milton. The Waples house appears to be missing by 1914, although another structure may have been added to the west. No buildings south of S319 occur in the project area on the 1868 map, although five have been added by 1914. A pond south of S319 and east of SR30 in 1868 appears to have been filled in and replaced by a stream that flows under S319 by 1914.

SR30 north of S319 in the project area will not be modified beyond the current right-of-way. Therefore, land use patterns will be discussed briefly. Dickerson Branch, a stream that flowed into the northwestern end of Mill Pond, also flowed under SR30 in 1868 (Figure 2-2). It appears that Dickerson Branch had been dammed just west of SR30, creating a pond. J. G. Betts owned a grist mill on the west side of SR30, north of this stream. North of the grist

mill was the residence of D.H. Reed. Both buildings are gone by 1914, although the pond remained (Figure 2-3). Captain N.C. Ellingsworth owned the next four buildings along SR30, including a store north of an intersecting road (present-day Route 16). The two Ellingsworth buildings south of Route 16 may have been standing in 1914.

On the west side of SR30, William C. Prettyman owned land south of Route 16 and James Ponder owned land to the north of Route 16. The Prettyman residence was gone by 1914, but another building had been added to the north. The Ponder residence may have been present in 1914, with another building added to its south.

After crossing Ingrams Branch, the next properties along SR30 in 1868 belonged to W. Sharp and a school house on the east side, and C. Reed on the west side. The school still appears on the 1914 map with a church in place of the Sharp residence. The Reed residence is gone by 1914. North of the schoolhouse, SR30 intersects with a road leading to Ellendale (present-day Route 231).

North of present-day Route 231, a probable miller's house owned by James Ponder was standing on the east side of SR30 in 1868 (Figure 2-2). The next buildings to the north were a sawmill and grist mill owned by Ponder, flanking Sow Bridge Branch. The current bridge carrying SR30 over Sow Bridge Branch is slated to be modified and the bridge was evaluated as part of this project (see Chapter 4, Bridge # 3-918). The history of the former Ponder mills will be presented in the following section.

2.2.4 Former Mills Near the Project Area

Paynter Mills on Sawmill Pond (now Diamond Pond)

Historically, a miller's house, bark mill, and sawmill stood to the southwest of Milton, on the north side of present-day S319 and Diamond Pond, west of the intersection of SR5 and S319. This area became known as the Upper Mills. The sawmill was built by 1815 and the bark mill was added after 1822 and by 1828 on the opposite side of the stream. The bark mill operated until ca. 1845 and was still standing as a "ruin" in 1878. The sawmill was still standing and probably still operating in the 1890s. The sawmill was standing when it was sold in 1901, but the bark mill had been destroyed by then. By 1904, the sawmill was no longer on the tax rolls, and was therefore a ruin or gone. Neither building appears on a map dated 1914. The sequence of owners of the mills and the mill property will be discussed below.

Conwell ownership. Brothers John S. (- 1816) and William W. Conwell (- 1821) and Dr. Joseph Maull petitioned the General Assembly for permission to build a mill dam and bridge plus a grist mill near the center of the village of Milton in 1815 (Sussex County Deed Book [SCDB] 1815: 431). This area in town, near Fergus Bridge, came to be known as the Lower Mills. The Conwells provided land south of the Broadkiln River and Maull contributed monetarily to the venture, for the most part. The petition called for condemning the land to be flooded and assessing damages to be paid to the landowners (Hancock and McCabe 1982: 319). Supporting documentation revealed that the Conwells already were operating a mill upstream from the proposed grist mill site in 1815 (Delaware State

Assembly Legislative Petitions, Mis., January 1815 in Hancock and McCabe 1982: 80). This area outside of the town came to be called the Upper Mills. One reason for requesting permission to build a mill dam in the Lower Mills was its location below the convergence of two branches. The combined water flow would provide "an ample supply of water" year-round. The water flow in the single branch at the Upper Mill was reportedly not sufficient to supply power throughout all four seasons (Delaware State Assembly Legislative Petitions, Mis., January 1815 in Hancock and McCabe 1982: 78). The partners built a grist mill at the Lower Mills near the heart of the village of Milton, on Mulberry Street.

Maull ownership of mills. Dr. Joseph Maull (1781 – 1846) acquired John S. Conwell's land and his interest in the (Upper and Lower) mills in 1816 (SCDB 1816: 448), and William W. Conwell's land and interest in 1821 after their deaths (SCDB 1821a: 159; Heite 1991:15). Maull was the second generation of his family born in the American colonies. His father was John Maull, Jr. (1742 – 1832) and his grandfather was John Maull, Sr. (1714 – 1753). John Maull, Sr. probably emigrated to the American colonies on a ship from Bristol, England in 1725 (Maull 1941:5). His father died soon after arriving in America, and John (Sr.) was brought to Lewes, Delaware, by his future father-in-law, Nehemiah Field. John Maull (Sr.) worked as a ship's pilot. After marrying Mary Field, John (Sr.) bought two lots in Lewes and retained them until his death in 1753. John Maull, Jr., worked as a shipwright in the Lewes area. John (Jr.) married Mary Marsh and had 10 children. Their seventh child was Joseph Maull, born in Lewes in 1781 (Maull 1941: 15 in Hancock and McCabe 1982:196).

Joseph Maull married twice, first to Penelope Shields in 1802 and second to Sarah Watson (nee Davis) in 1820 (Maull 1941:29). Joseph Maull became a doctor and was practicing in Broadkill Hundred by 1809. He bought a dwelling house, an old blacksmith shop, and two rental lots in the Village of Milton from the estate of Peter Morgan in 1809 (SCDB 1809: 489). Joseph served in the volunteer militia artillery at Lewes during the War of 1812 (Maull 1941:30). Active in public affairs, Dr. Maull served as a State Senator in 1816, 1820, 1838, and 1842, and Speaker of the Senate in 1845. Dr. Maull was appointed Governor of Delaware in 1846 upon the death of Governor Thomas Stockton. However, Dr. Maull died within a few months of taking office in 1846.

Joseph Maull owned five-sixths interest in a "Merchants Mill" in 1822 (the grist mill at Lower Mills), valued at $500.00 (BKA 1822). His sawmill was worth $150.00 in 1822 (BKA 1822). Maull added a bark mill by 1828 at the Upper Mills on the opposite side of the stream from the sawmill (BKA 1828; and Welch 1935 in Hancock and McCabe 1982: 20). The "Saw Mill & Bark Factory" were valued together at $500.00 in 1828 (BKA 1828).

The sawmill and bark mill increased in value to $700.00 by 1836 (BKA 1836). By contrast, the grist mill that Maull still owned near the heart of the village of Milton at the Lower Mills was valued at $600.00 (BKA 1836). The "Mansion" lot, presumably where Maull lived in or near Milton, was worth $300.00 in 1836. Maull also owned several rental houses and a large tract of land (180 acres). His real estate, livestock, and silver plate were worth $2,914.00 in 1836. Dr. Maull's real and personal property were at similarly high levels in 1840, when the total worth was $2,779.00 (BKA 1840). He owned one male African-American slave, aged 19, by 1819 (BKA 1819). The slave may have been named Joshua (illegible handwriting), and appears on the 1822 tax rolls as a 23-year-old (BKA 1822). Maull may have sold or

freed Joshua by 1824, when no slaves appear on his assessment list (BKA 1824). No evidence of slave ownership after this date was found for Maull (BKA 1828, 1836, 1840).

The bark mill reportedly operated until ca. 1845 (Welch 1935 in Hancock and McCabe 1982: 20). Perhaps the bark mill was shut down temporarily by Maull's heirs after his death in 1846. In Maull's will, he requested that the mills be sold together, "as it is not expedient for the mills to fall into separate hands" (Sussex County Will Book 1846: 168; in Heite 1991:43).

Paynter ownership of mills. Samuel Rowland Paynter (1801 - 1851) bought the sawmill and bark mill by present-day S319 (the "Upper Mills") from the heirs of the late Dr. Joseph Maull. Paynter was the son of Samuel Paynter (1768 – 1845), a successful local businessman and former Governor from 1824 to 1827 (The Chronicle Weekend 1989). The elder Paynter owned a grist mill and sawmill by 1828 (BKA 1828). Samuel R. Paynter operated a general store on the Broadkill River in Drawbridge, conducting a "heavy mercantile business, embracing large speculations in grain, wood and bark, and the building of vessels" (Scharf 1888:545).

The Upper Mills property was added to Samuel R. Paynter's tax rolls in 1850 as "Saw & Bark Mill, & Cripple & c. & Grist Mill & Lots of Ground & c. from Jos. Maull's hrs" and was valued at $1,200.00. Paynter's real and personal property in 1848 had been valued at $2,900.00 including livestock worth $271.00, silver worth $22.00, four slaves worth $325.00, and 1,143 acres of land valued at $ 2,282.00 (BKA 1848 – 1851).

Samuel R. Paynter owned more than one grist mill and more than one sawmill in Broadkiln Hundred in 1850, according to the Federal census of industry (U.S. Census 1850). The statistics on the grist mills were combined into one set of figures; the same was true for the sawmills. Paynter's two sawmills in Broadkiln Hundred together processed 4,000 logs and produced lumber worth $4,000.00 in 1850. The water-powered sawmills employed four men total, with average wages of $80.00 per month. Paynter had invested $8,000.00 in real and personal property in the sawmills. Paynter's bark mill was not listed in the Federal industrial census in 1850. This could mean that the bark mill was not in operation from June 1849 to June 1850, or that it was in operation but produced articles valued at under $500.00 in that year.

Samuel R. Paynter died at his home in Drawbridge in 1851 intestate (Scharf 1899:1030). Paynter's estate of 1,415 acres was divided among his heirs in 1853 (Sussex County Orphans Court Record Book [SCO] 1853a: 498). The Orphans Court records contain plats of Paynter's various landholdings and details as to the widow's dower and the three surviving children's shares. Samuel's son, Caleb R. Paynter (1832 – 1864), inherited the mills in the project area on present-day S319 (SCO 1853b: 32) (Figure 2-4; SCO 1853b: 35). The property was Lot A No. 4 of the estate, one acre described as a "Mill Seat with a Saw Mill and Bark Mill thereon erected called and known by the name of the Upper Mills and Stream together with a certain Lot of ground and dwelling house thereon..."(SCO 1853b: 47). Both mills and the miller's house were north of the road (present-day S319). The bark mill was on the west side of the mill pond, with the miller's house to the north. The sawmill was on the

east side of the mill pond. The road was described as "the public road that passes over the sawmill dam to Milton" (SCO 1853b: 47).

The Orphans Court records mention that John J. Johnson was the resident miller at the Upper Mills (formerly known as Maulls Saw and Bark Mills) on Long Bridge Branch in 1853. Johnson was a 31-year-old laborer in 1850, living near Milton with his wife, Sarah (age 25), children William (age 4) and Mary (age 1), and a relative or servant named Mary Roach (age 10) (Hancock and McCabe 1982:119). Johnson did not appear on the 1860 Federal Census for Broadkill Hundred, suggesting he had died or found employment elsewhere (Leonard n.d.).

Caleb R. Paynter's "Saw mill & bark mill & Dwelling house & Lot" at the Upper Mills were valued at $2,300.00 in 1861 (BKA 1861 – 1862). Caleb also inherited from his father the ca. 1815 grist mill and miller's house on Mulberry Street near downtown Milton (Figure 2-5, SCO 1853b: 35). The grist mill, dwelling house and lot at the Lower Mills were worth $2,700.00 in 1861. Caleb was not assessed for livestock or slaves, suggesting he was primarily a businessman and not a farmer. Federal census records agree with this assessment. Caleb R. Paynter was a 28-year-old residing in his widowed mother's home in the Georgetown area of the county, according to the 1860 Federal Population Census (Leonard n.d.:92). His occupation was miller and he owned real and personal property valued at $24,000.00. This would seem to place him among the upper income levels, compared to residents of the area.

The sawmill of Caleb R. Paynter appeared on the 1860 Federal industrial census in Broadkiln Hundred (U.S. Census 1860). Since the business only employed one person (a male earning $20.00 per month), it can be assumed that Paynter owned a single sawmill in 1860. The 100,000 feet of "ship timber" produced at the sawmill in the past year was valued at $2,000.00. The water-powered sawmill used approximately 100,000 feet of logs valued at $1,000.00 as raw material.

Paynter's bark mill did not appear on the 1860 Federal industrial census of Broadkiln Hundred (U.S. Census 1860). In fact, of the 25 manufacturers in this census, only one was producing ground bark or quercitron (a John Tharp). Including Caleb R. Paynter's sawmill, there were five lumber operations in Broadkiln Hundred in 1860.

Caleb R. Paynter died by 1864, leaving as heirs two brothers and a sister: John H., Edwin R., and Emma R. Paynter (SCO 1864: 326). Caleb had been a resident of Georgetown Hundred in Sussex County at the time of his death. His brother, John, of Georgetown Hundred, was administrator of his estate, and his brother Edwin was living outside of Delaware in 1864. Caleb's personal property was not of sufficient value to cover his debts, so John petitioned for the sale of Caleb's real estate. Caleb still owned the 4 lots of land and mills in the Milton area he had inherited from his father in 1853, but they were in the possession of Andrew J. Pettyjohn, tenant, in September 1864.

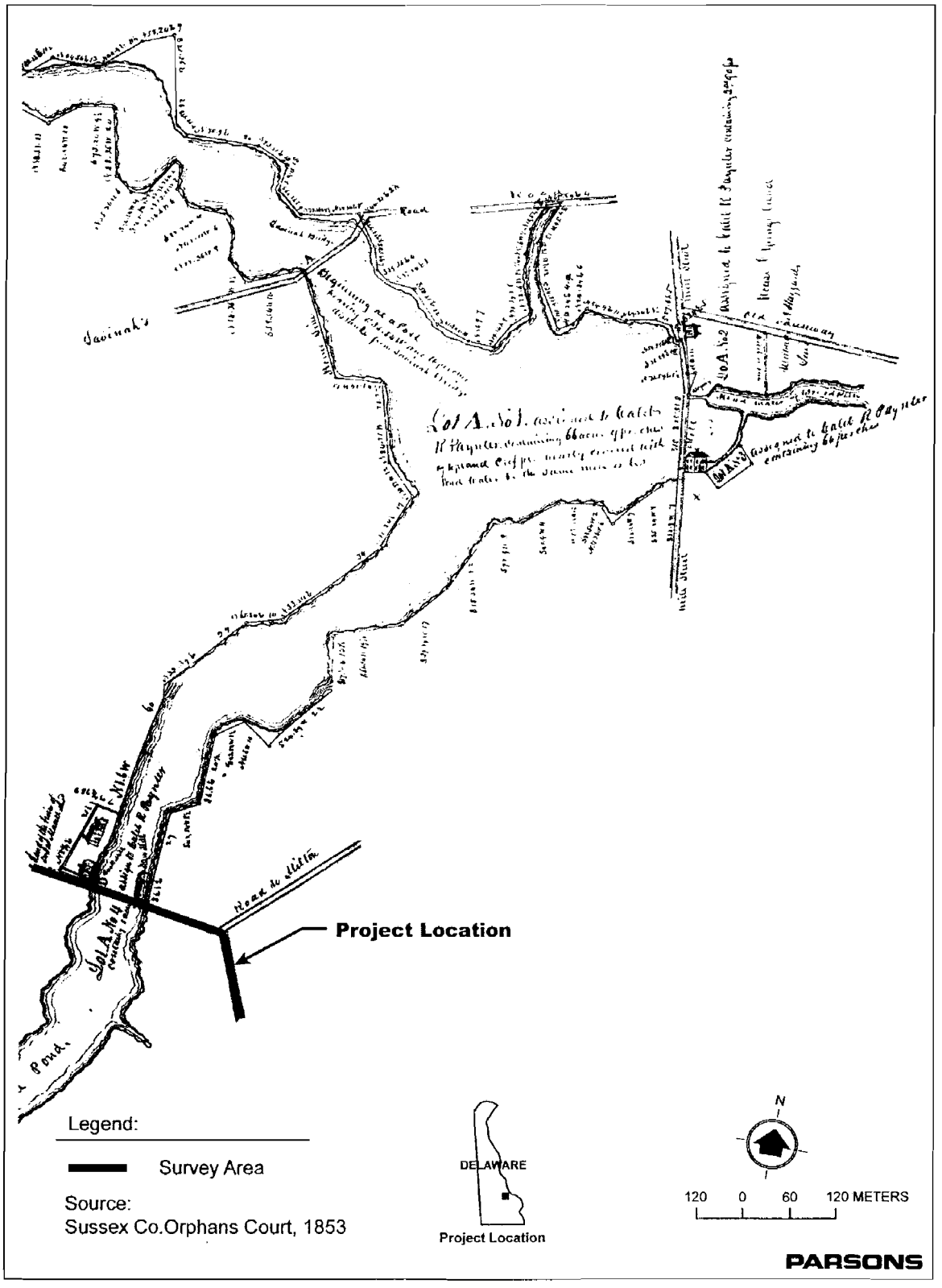


Figure 2-5. Plat of the Lower (Mulberry Street) and Upper Mills in 1853 (Present-Day S319), Estate of Samuel R. Paynter
(Sussex County Orphans Court Record Book 1853b)

Caleb R. Paynter's real estate was ordered sold by the Orphans Court in October 1864 to satisfy his debt of $14,034.56 (SCO 1865: 361). The four lots were sold at public auction February 1865. Mrs. Sarah ("Sallie") A. Paynter (Caleb's mother) bought all four lots for $10,000.00. She paid $4,000.00 for Lot No. 4 containing the Upper Mills (sawmill and bark mill) and stream, plus a dwelling house on one acre (SCO 1865: 362).

Sallie A. Paynter was a 51-year-old widow in 1865 when she purchased her late son, Caleb's, real estate (Leonard n.d.:92). Her real and personal property was valued at $45,000.00 in 1860, a sum that probably exceeded the typical resident's net worth. Besides 28-year-old Caleb, her household in 1860 included two younger sons, John H. (age 21; law student), Edwin R. (age 20; law student), and daughter Emma (age 16). Sallie A. Paynter died in Georgetown, Delaware, early in 1866 (Scharf 1899:1030).

The property stayed in the Paynter family's hands for the remainder of the nineteenth century. Sallie's sons John and Edwin both became attorneys and John served as attorney-general in the 1860s and again in the 1880s (Scharf 1888:545-547 and 1029). Sallie's daughter, Emma, married a prominent lawyer, Custis W. Wright (Scharf 1899:1030). Clearly, the Paynter children were not directly involved in the daily operations of the family's mills.

In 1878, Paynter's sawmill was still in operation but the bark mill was a ruin (The Delawarean 1878 in Hancock and McCabe 1982). The Paynter sawmill was not found on the 1870 Federal industrial census for Broadkiln Hundred (U.S. Census 1870). However, the listings available on microfilm for this hundred appear to be incomplete and were mistakenly recorded on the page of another hundred. Therefore, it is possible the statistics for this business have been lost. Alternatively, perhaps the sawmill produced less than $500.00 in products and was not included in the census. Only two sawmills appeared on this census, belonging to J.G. Betts and James Ponder. However, the Beers 1868 atlas depicts five sawmills in the hundred. In 1880, the industrial census adopted a new format, with separate data sheets for different industries. Four lumber mills and sawmills appeared in the 1880 census for Broadkiln Hundred. However, none were under the Paynter name: James G. Betts, Joseph Hunter, James Ponder, and Thomas R. Ingraham were the owners.

Paynter's sawmill was still on the tax rolls in 1892 and therefore was probably still in operation (BKA 1892). The sawmill (at the Upper Mills) and the grist mill (at the Lower Mills on Mulberry Street in the town limits) were valued at $6,000.00 in 1892. The mills were reassessed in 1898, and the value dropped to $2,000.00, suggesting damage or possibly obsolete equipment in one or both of the mills.

The grist and sawmills belonging to Sallie Paynter's heirs (Edwin R. Paynter, Emma R. Wright, Rowland G. Paynter, and Hannah E. Paynter) were valued at only $1,000.00 in 1901. The Paynter heirs sold several tracts to John T., Hamilton K., and Daniel Wagamon in September 1901 (SCDB 1901: 499; BKA 1901 – 1904). The Wagamons paid $1,100.00 for the "Milton Grist and saw mills" including "mill streams and mill houses and tenant houses, lands covered with water and other wise" (SCDB 1901: 499). The grist and sawmills were on tracts No. 1, 2, 3, and 4 of Lot A, assigned to Caleb R. Paynter in the Orphans Court

proceedings in 1853 (Figure 2-5). The bark mill at the upper mills had "been destroyed" by September 1901 (SCDB 1901: 499).

The 1901 transaction also involved the sale of two more tracts: one acre in the town of Milton adjoining William C. Prettyman, and another tract near the town of Milton:

> ...adjoining Paynters said mill and upon the south and southwestern most side of the public road leading from said Paynters saw mill ... to Coolspring, containing nearly one acre of land, more or less. (SCDB 1901: 500)

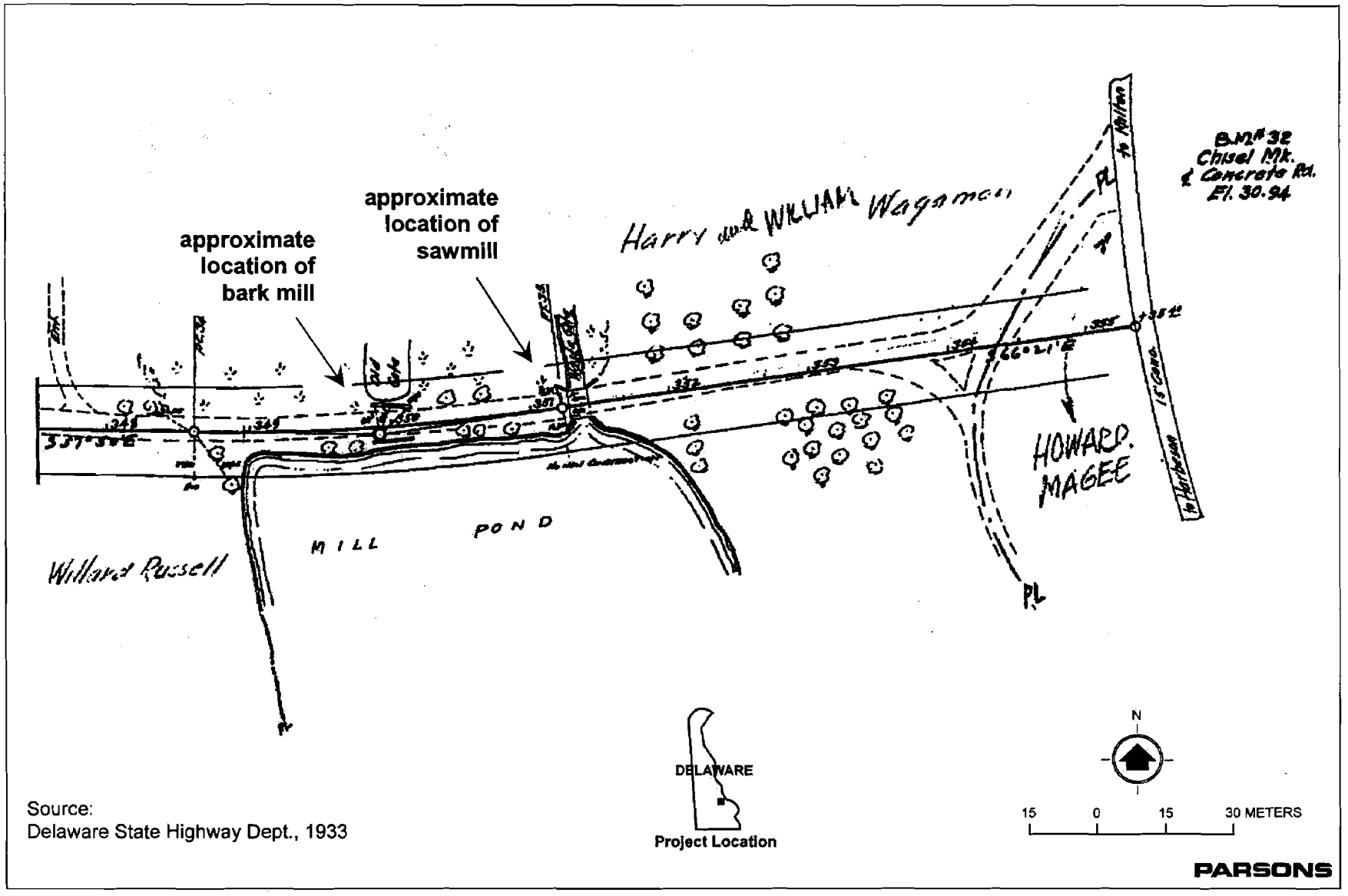
The latter parcel appears to be the land at the southwestern corner of the S319/SR5 intersection (currently an undeveloped parcel in the project area).

Wagamon ownership of mills property. The Wagamons replaced the grist mill at the Lower Mills on Mulberry Street with a new grist mill by 1904. The new grist mill was valued at $4,000.00 by 1904, and the sawmill no longer appeared on the assessment rolls by 1904 (BKA 1901 – 1904). A plat of the division of neighboring property in 1907 shows the one acre-tract north of the public road from Milton to Georgetown (now S319) and west of "Paynter's Mill Pond" (SCO 1907: 204). A railroad line reached Milton in the 1890s; the railroad tracks were slightly north of the north end of the acre.

Hamilton K. Wagamon conveyed one-half interest in the property to Henry C. Wagamon in 1911 (SCDB 1911: 238), and his other half interest to William B. Wagamon in 1921 (SCDB 1921: 88). In 1913, Henry C. Wagamon and his wife, Emma E., lived on a lot they owned on Mulberry Street in Milton; Henry worked at Diamond State Roller Mills. William B. Wagamon and his wife, Lottie E. also lived on a lot they owned in Milton, where William worked as a general storekeeper (Farm Journal 1913: 47).

By 1914, neither the bark nor sawmill buildings are shown on a map of the area, and a single large pond (Mill Pond) still extends from west of the town of Milton southward to south of the S319 bridge (Figure 2-3). However, the miller's house appears to still be standing in 1914 on the north side of S319. Between 1907 and 1933, the bridge and dam over the former Lower Mills mill dam (under present-day S319) apparently had been rebuilt. A plat prepared in 1933 before a road improvement project (Delaware State Highway Department 1933) depicts two gates: an "Old Gate" to the west and an active gate, the "Waste Gate," to the east (Figure 2-6). The land immediately north of the bridge appears to be marsh land, with the pond (now known as Diamond Pond) to the south of the bridge.

In 1933, Harry and William Wagamon owned the property north of S319, from SR5 on the east to beyond the entrance drive ("Ent" on the 1933 plat) on the west (Figure 2-6). The Wagamon property on the west of the bridge encompassed the one acre which historically contained the bark mill and miller's house, plus ca. 2 acres of land immediately to the west that formerly belonged to William B. Tomlinson. The entrance drive shown on the 1933 plat probably was on former Tomlinson land and may be a tenant house on 2.5 acres owned by Tomlinson from the 1890s to 1913 (BKA 1892, 1893, 1896-1900, 1901-1904, 1905-1908, and 1913).



Source:
Delaware State Highway Dept., 1933

Figure 2-6. Plat of the Upper Mills Area (Present-Day S319) in 1933
(Delaware State Highway Department 1933)

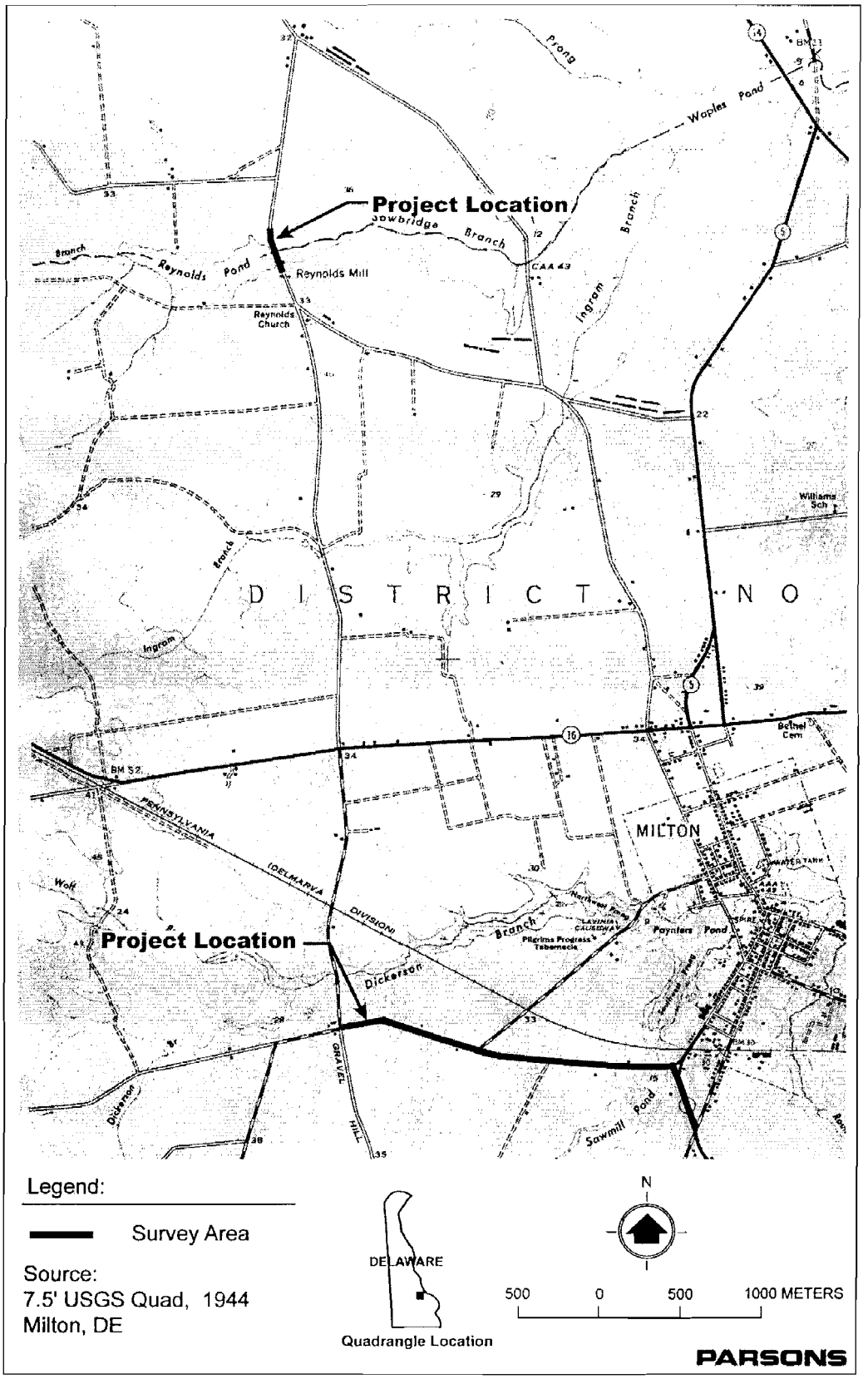


Figure 2-7. 1944 Map of Project Area, Milton, Delaware (USGS 1944)

By 1944, Mill Pond (then called Paynter's Pond) ended north of the railroad crossing of the stream, with marshland to the south (Figure 2-7; U.S. Geological Survey [USGS] 1944). The pond south of the S319 bridge/dam was called Sawmill Pond by 1944. The Wagamons formed Diamond State Roller Mills, Inc. in 1946 (Heite 1991: 44). Diamond State Roller Mills, Inc. sold the upper mills property and mill pond to Henry C. Wagamon in 1953 (SCDB 1953: 477) and 1957 (SCDB 1957: 13). The ponds were known as Wagamon's Pond (north of the railroad tracks) and Diamond Pond (south of S319) by 1955 (Figure 2-8) (USGS 1955).

Post-Wagamon ownership of mills property. Henry C. Wagamon and his wife, Ruth, sold the Upper and Lower mills property and ponds to Cool Spring Power and Water Company in 1963 (SCDB 1963: 87). The Wagamons conveyed the:

> ...mill, mill seat, lands, pond, streams, buildings, dam, bridges, gates, improvements and property known as the Diamond State Roller Mills or Wagamon's Lower Mill Property and Pond...situated partly within and partly outside the corporate limits of the Town of Milton... (SCDB 1963: 87)

The first six tracts involved in the 1963 deed included the standing mill (Diamond State Roller Mills) and three warehouses with their machinery and contents near Mulberry Street in the town of Milton. Tract Number 7 included the current project area near Diamond Pond/S319. Tract 7(a) in the 1963 deed included the acre on the west side of the stream upon which formerly stood the bark mill and the probable miller's house, plus the stream south of the railroad bridge and north of S319. Tract 7(b) included the two acres east of the stream where the sawmill once stood. Tract 7(c) was the acre southwest of the intersection of S319 and SR5. Tract 7(d) was the Diamond Pond mill pond south of S319 and the water control rights:

> No. 7: (a) All that certain stream and branch extending southerly from the Old Queen Anne Railroad bridge or right of way to the State Highway leading from Milton to Sand Hill Church; and also that lot of land lying on the Westerly side of said stream and branch, containing about One acre, be the same more or less, and adjoining said railroad on the North and the aforesaid highway of [sic] the South. Being a part of the original Diamond State Roller Mill property.
>
> (b) All that lot of land lying on the Easterly side of the above mentioned stream or branch, adjoining the Old Queen Anne Railroad right of way on the North, the State Highway leading from Milton to Harbeson on the East, and the State Highway leading from Milton to Sand Hill on the South, containing about Two (2) acres, more or less, and known as the Atkins Lot. Being a part of the same land which Henry C. Wagamon acquired by deeds from the Diamond State Roller Mills, Inc. dated August 14, 1953, recorded in Deed Book 423, Page 477, and deed dated Dec. 11, 1957 and recorded in Deed Book 482, Page 138.
>
> (c) All that lot of land lying on the Easterly side of the Upper Mill Pond, on the south side of the State Highway leading from Milton to Sand Hill, on the West side of the

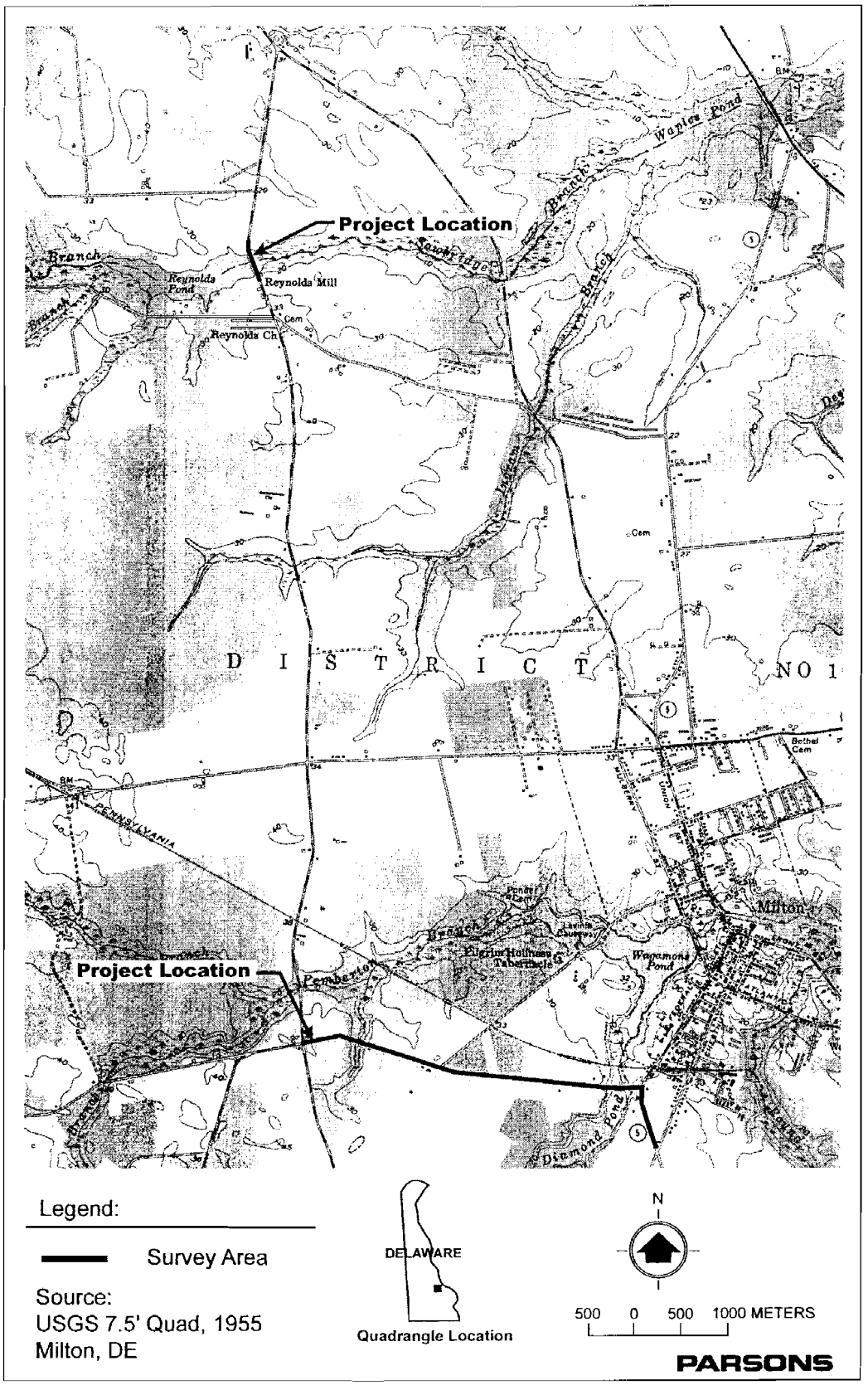


Figure 2-8. Map of the Project Area in 1955 (USGS Milton Quadrangle 1955)

State Highway leading from Milton to Harbeson, and adjoining lands of Carlton Draper on the South, containing about One Acre, more or less. This also being a part of the lands acquired by Henry C. Wagamon under the aforesaid deeds from the Diamond State Roller Mills, Inc.

(d) All the right, title and interest of the parties of the first part in and to the upper mill Pond lying on the South side of the State Highway leading from Milton to Sand Hill, containing 65 acres, more or less, with all water rights and rights pertaining to the dam, gates, etc. Being also acquired under the aforesaid deeds from Diamond State Roller Mills. (SCDB 563: 90-91)

Cool Spring Power and Water Company sold the property northwest of the S319/SR5 intersection, south of the Penn Central Railroad, and west of Clarence Moore in 1973 (SCDB 1973: 643). The 6.714-acre parcel was purchased by the Milton Land and Realty Company. The price of $32,000.00 included a second parcel, along the west shoreline of Wagamon's Pond (formerly Paynter's Mill Pond) north of the Penn Central Railroad and south of Lavinia Street. Cool Spring Power and Water Company retained the right to control "the water level of all lakes, through dams and gates" (SCDB 1973: 643). Dover Heights, Inc. purchased the 6.714 acres in 1979 for $7,000.00 (SCDB 1979: 144), and then sold it to B & G Associates for only $10.00 in 1986 (SCDB 1986: 13). The current owners, Aaron W. and Elaine E. Smith, bought the parcel in 1994 for $30,000.00 (SCDB 1994: 216). The Smiths already owned property to the west of the 6.714-acre parcel, containing the house known as the Rose Cottage (Chapter 4).

Ponder Mills on Sow Bridge Branch (now Reynolds Pond)

A miller's house, grist mill, and sawmill once stood to the west of Milton, on the east side of present-day SR30. The mills were near the boundary of Broadkiln Hundred and Cedar Creek Hundred. A sawmill was present by 1810, under the ownership of John Smith and the estate of Wrixam Warren.

Curiously, one plate in the 1868 Beers Atlas depicts the mills to the north of a stream (Beers 1868 Plate 85; Figure 2-1), while the adjoining plate shows the mills to the south of the stream (Beers 1868 Plate 63; Figure 2-9). The stream, named Sow Bridge Branch, had been dammed to form a mill pond on the west side of SR30. The stream and the center of the mill pond form the boundary between Broadkiln Hundred to the south and Cedar Creek Hundred to the north. However, the property appears on the tax assessment rolls for Broadkiln Hundred, so the buildings were apparently located south of the stream. This pond appears on the 1914 map and was named Reynolds Pond by 1944. Two buildings were standing in 1914 and 1944 south of Sow Bridge Branch, and apparently represent the miller's house and the grist mill. The frame grist mill was still in use in 1940, opposite the south end of the milldam (Figure 2-10); Delaware State Highway Department 1940). A two-story frame house was standing roughly 300 ft. south of the grist mill in 1940, and was probably the miller's house (Figure 2-10). The probable miller's house was gone by 1955, although the area was still known as Reynolds Mill.

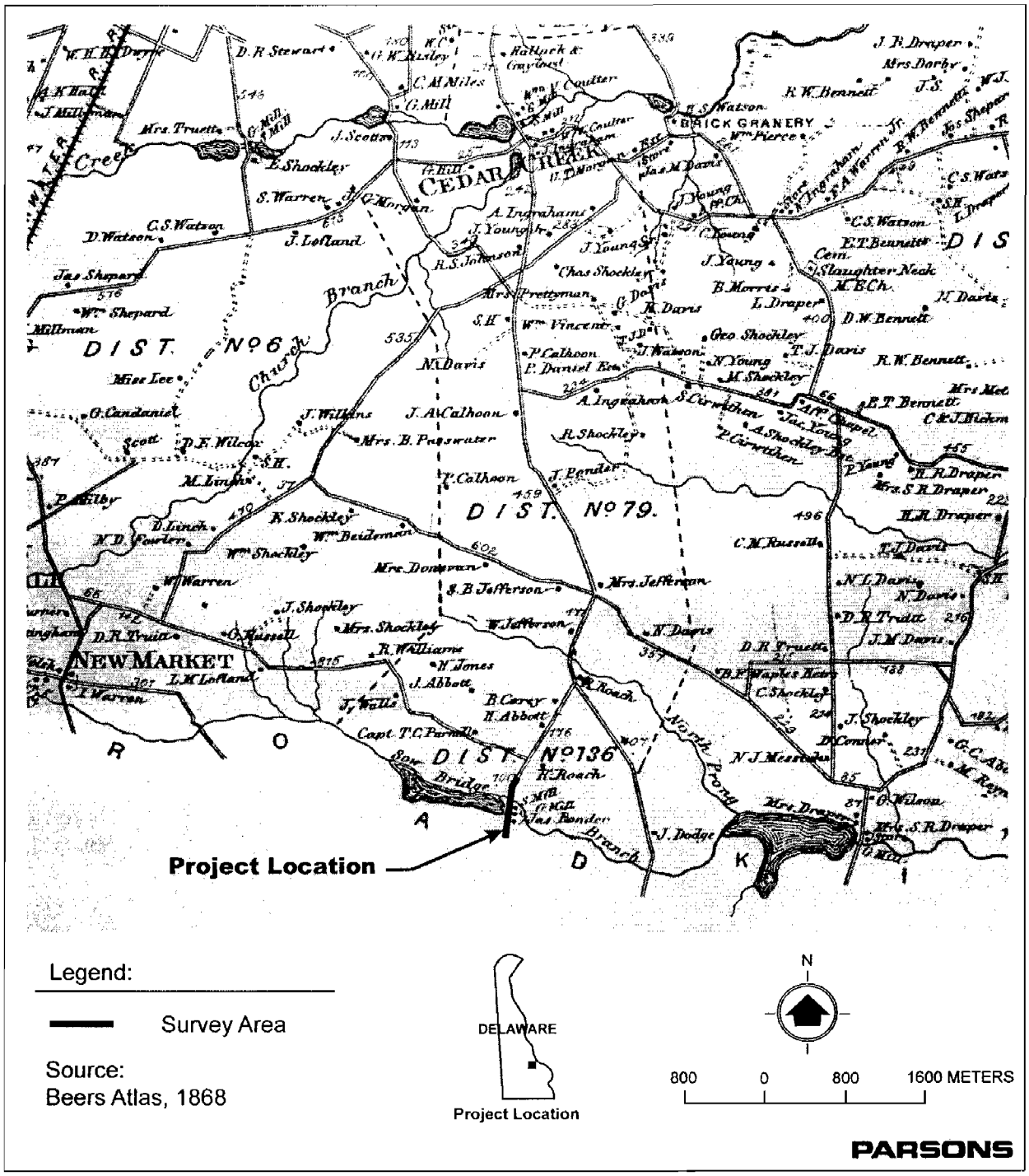


Figure 2-9. Map of Cedar Creek Hundred in 1868

(Beers 1868)

Smith and Warren ownership of the mill. John Smith patented land in Sussex County. By 1810, his patent land had been combined with land patented by Urissa (?) Warren, a widow. Part of the property was in Cedar Creek Hundred, and part was in Broadkiln Hundred. Smith

was a merchant living in the city of Philadelphia by 1810, although he had formerly resided in Sussex County. In February 1810, Smith sold a one-half interest in the property to Nathan Reed of Sussex County for $362.00 (SCDB 1810a: 426). The deed mentions a sawmill by the Main Road, a lumberyard adjoining the mill, and a mill pond. The property included 10 (or possibly two) acres south of a run, and four acres on the north side of the run. Reed was to receive one-half of all profits arising from the mill and mill pond. In 1811, Reed purchased another 20 acres of the mill property from Spicer Warren for $200.00 (SCDB 1811: 427). The land had been sold by the county sheriff to Spicer Warren in a public auction to settle the debts of Wrixam Warren, deceased (SCDB 1810b: 319).

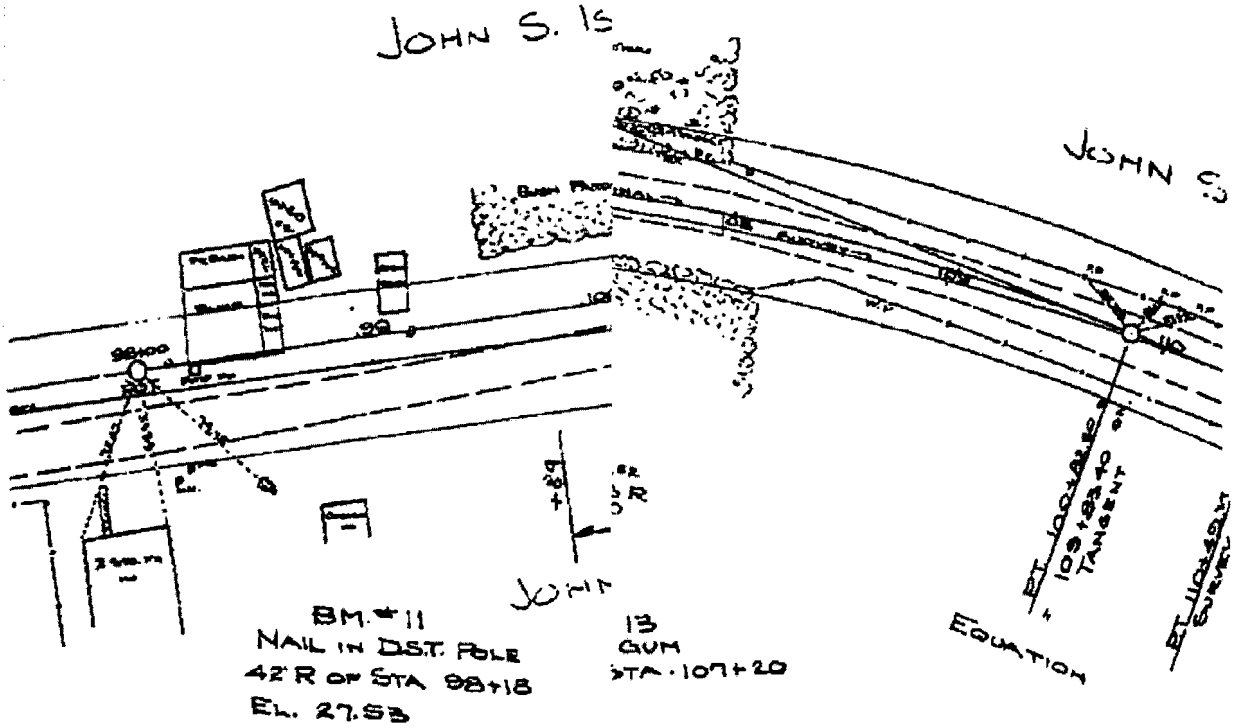
Reed and McIlVaine ownership of the mill(s). Nathan Reed retained the mill property until his death. The parcel, which had been expanded to 60 acres, was sold at public auction to satisfy debts Reed owed to John D. Smith and Milby Simpler. William McIlvaine paid $460.00 for the land in 1825, including "a mill seat & c. [etc.] adjoining James Kingsland (?) and others" (SCDB 1825: 58). McIlvaine bequeathed the mill property to Myers Reynolds and Silas M. Reynolds (will mentioned in SCDB 1905: 603).

Reynolds ownership of mills. Myers Reynolds and his wife conveyed their one-half interest in the mill property to Silas M. Reynolds in 1849 (SCDB 1849: 260). It appears that the only mill on the property by 1850 was a sawmill, since that was the only industrial business owned by Silas Reynolds in the 1850 Federal census of industry (U.S. Census 1850). In the year ending June 1, 1850, Reynolds processed 1,000 logs into "various kinds of lumber" worth $1,000.00. He employed one man at an average wage of $20.00 per month at his water-powered sawmill.

Silas Reynolds retained sole ownership of the property for 10 years, selling the property to John and James Ponder in 1859 (SCDB 1859: 263). By this date, Reynolds had built a grist mill on the tract. The Ponders paid $1,500.00 for the "Saw and Grist Mill Mill pond and Dam Situate on Sow Bridge Branch and about Sixty acres land adjoining to the mills and mill pond" (SCDB 1859: 263). The property is described as being the "same mills land and premises that were devised to the said Silas M. Reynolds and Myers Reynolds by William McIlvain deceased" (SCDB 1859: 263).

Ponder ownership of mills. John Ponder (c.1792 - 1863) served as postmaster of Milton from 1829 to 1849 (Atkins 1905 in Hancock and McCabe 1982:11). Ponder was the head of a household in Broadkill Hundred as early as 1830 (Jackson and Teeples 1977:18). He was the only Ponder listed in the 1830 Census for Delaware as a head of household. Ponder owned a house and lot in Milton by 1828, plus a grist mill, a granary in Milton, and almost 400 acres of land (BKA 1828). Ponder was a merchant in Milton by 1850, selling general merchandise, lumber, grain, and iron ore. The family also built, bought, and sold sailing ships.

John Ponder apparently was widowed by 1850, since no wife was listed in the 1850 census. Other members of the household in 1850 were his son, James (age 29, merchant), Tamer Lindle (age 66), James H. Davis (age 14, clerk), and Jeremiah York (age 15, black).



Source:
Delaware State Highway Dept., 1940

15 0 15 30 METERS

PARSONS

John Ponder owned both a grist mill and sawmill in the Milton area by 1850. Ponder's grist mill was water powered in 1850, and the operation employed one hand at $20.00 wages per year (1850 Products of Industry Census in Hancock and McCabe 1982:130). The grist mill produced meal worth $1,600.00 in the previous year. Ponder's sawmill, also water-powered, employed one hand at $20.00 per month. The lumber produced was worth $900.00 in 1850.

John Ponder was a 68-year-old merchant in 1860, living in Milton with his son James (age 40), and relatives Sally W. (age 22, possibly James' wife), Ida (age 6), John (age 4) and James (age 1). Other household residents were probably servants: Hetty Primrose (age 30) and Abigail Prettyman (age 14). John Ponder's real and personal property was valued at $38,500.00 in 1860, while his son, James, was worth $71,000.00 (Leonard n.d.:112).

John Ponder and his son, James, formed a partnership in the 1850s named John Ponder & Son. John Ponder & Son owned 60 acres of land containing a mill in 1861 valued at $1,500.00 (BKA 1861 – 1862). This mill property is the one purchased from Reynolds in 1859. The partnership also owned a wharf and granary worth $500.00, as well as livestock valued at $300.00. John Ponder reportedly built a steam-powered sawmill on the Broadkill River in 1860 to manufacture lumber. The grist mill owned by Ponder & Son (at Reynolds Pond) processed 3,200 bushels of corn into cornmeal worth $2,240.00 in 1860 (U.S. Census 1860). One male employee at the grist mill averaged a wage of $20.00 per month. Their sawmill (also at Reynolds Pond) manufactured 50,000 feet of board worth $500 in 1860, using 50,000 logs. The sawmill also had one male employee earning $20.00 per month.

John Ponder devised his one-half interest in the mills to his son, James, in 1863. James Ponder (1819 - 1897) had joined his father's business, Ponder & Son, as a young man. Ponder served as postmaster of Milton from 1853 to 1861. James Ponder also served in the General Assembly and then as Delaware Governor from 1870 to 1874. After he retired, he was involved in the banking industry (The Chronicle Weekend 1989). Governor Ponder's home, which he built in the mid-nineteenth century, still stands in the Milton Historic District at 416 Federal Street. The house has been converted into a funeral home (Parks 2002: 32).

The Honorable James Ponder worked as a fire insurance agent in the 1870s, and still owned the family mercantile business selling fertilizers, grain, and lumber. Ponder also considered himself a farmer during this time period, and operated a sawmill, according to the State Directory of 1872 to 1873 (Hancock and McCabe 1982:261). Ponder's sawmill and grist mill at Reynolds Pond were depicted on the 1868 Beers Atlas (see Figure 2.2). These mills did not appear on the 1870 Federal industrial census for Broadkiln Hundred, but the records appear to be incomplete. The only mills listed under James Ponder's name in this census are the steam-powered saw and bark mills that he built on Front Street in the town of Milton around 1863 (Welch 1935). The mills on Front Street were destroyed by fire in 1877 and were not rebuilt. The 1880 Federal industrial census records also appear to be incomplete for Broadkiln Hundred; no record of Ponder's mills at Reynolds Pond was found (U.S. Census 1880).

By 1896, James Ponder acquired extensive property worth over $30,000.00 in Broadkill Hundred (BKA 1896 – 1900). The saw and grist mill on SR30 owned by Ponder were worth

$1,000.00 in 1896. This suggests the mills were still in operation at the turn of the twentieth century (BKA 1896 – 1900). Ponder bequeathed the property to Sallie W. Ponder in 1897.

Sallie W. Ponder's sawmill and grist mill were valued at $800.00 in 1901 (BKA 1901 – 1904). The sawmill was absent from the tax rolls for Sallie W. Ponder by 1905, suggesting it was no longer standing or was a ruin. However, the grist mill and pond were evaluated at $500.00 in 1905 and the land was valued at $10.00 per acre. Sallie sold the "mill, mill pond and dam, known as Reynolds Mill property" and the 60 acres "adjoining to the mill and the mill pond" to William T. Chase in 1905 for $1,100.00 (SCDB 1905: 603).

Post-Ponder ownership of mills and property. William T. Chase and his wife, Rosena, had two children and lived on the 80 acres they owned in 1913. Chase worked as a miller, presumably at his grist mill on Reynolds Pond (Farm Journal 1913: 38). Chase's property was sold to satisfy debts of over $2,500.00 in July 1913. Charlotte E.W. Burton bought the mill seat, mill house, and sixty acres known as the Reynolds Mill property at auction for $2,900.00 (SCDB 1913a: 102). Burton was a widow living in the town of Milton. She sold the property to Horatio S. Macklin of Georgetown, Delaware, in November 1913 for $100.00 more than she had paid for the property (SCDB 1913b: 209). Macklin and his wife, Laura, were still residents of Georgetown in 1918 when they conveyed the property to Fred K. Jensen for $3,000.00 (SCDB 1918: 105).

Jensen sold the 60-acre mill property to John S. Isaacs for $3,500.00 in 1943 (SCDB 1943: 143). Jensen and his wife, Ella, were residents of Broadkiln Hundred at the time, and Isaacs lived in Cedar Creek Hundred. The grist mill and miller's house were still standing in the 1940s, when a plat was made for a road improvement project along SR30 (Figure 2-10). The grist mill was still in use in the 1940s (Delaware State Highway Department 1940: 13). The mill pond to the west of SR30 was called Jensen's Mill Pond at that time. In 1944, the mill pond was known as Reynolds Pond and the miller's house and grist mill (known as Reynolds Mill) were still standing on the east side of SR30 (Figure 2-7) (USGS 1944).

John S. Isaacs and his wife, Mary C., owned dozens of tracts in Delaware. They transferred ownership of 79 tracts, including the Reynolds Mill property, to a corporation named John S. Isaacs & Sons, Inc. in 1948 (SCDB 1948: 541). Tract No. 76 was the Reynolds Mill Property, consisting of "all that certain Mill site, Mill house, Mill pond and dam, also all the machinery now in said Mill house or attached thereto" plus sixty acres adjacent (SCDB 1948: 574). The miller's house was removed or destroyed between 1944 and 1955 (USGS 1955). The grist mill was still standing in 1955, but was not in use (USGS 1955). John S. Isaacs & Sons Realty Company, Inc., sold the mill property on Sow Bridge Branch to Harry H. Isaacs, Jr., of Ellendale, in 1962 (SCDB 1962: 296). The grist mill was reportedly still standing until the 1970s, when it was destroyed (Heite 1991). Earle L. Isaacs owned land adjacent to the millpond and also held the water rights to the pond in the 1980s (McWilliams 1983). Harry H. Isaac, Jr.'s, land was seized and sold to settle a suit brought by Delaware Farm Credit for over $973,000.00. His father, Harry H. Isaacs, Sr., bought a dozen tracts at public auction in December 1996 for $250,000.00, including the Reynolds Mill property (SCDB 1997a: 226). Isaacs sold the properties back to his son the following year (SCDB 1997b: 111). Both men were still residents of Ellendale, Sussex County, in 1997. The Reynolds Mill property has been subdivided and the portion that formerly contained the mills and millers house contains

6.22 acres north of Route 231 and east of SR30 (Tax Parcel 2-35 6.00 11.01). The wooded wetlands on the eastern side of the SR30 bridge over Reynolds Pond are part of this parcel. The parcel was appraised in 2003 at $3,000.00 for the land and $10,200.00 for improvements (Sussex County Real Estate – Property Taxes 2003a).