

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name _____

other names/site number Robinson, Pearl G., House/S-9121

2. Location

street & number 212 Atlantic Avenue/Route 26 not for publication

city or town Millville vicinity

state Delaware code DE county Sussex code 005 zip code 19967

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is: <input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet. <input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet. <input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:) _____ _____ _____	Signature of the Keeper _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	Date of Action _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
6	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
6	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

- Domestic/single dwelling - residence
- Domestic/single dwelling - residence
- Domestic/secondary structure - outhouse
- Agriculture/ animal facility - chicken house
- Agriculture/storage - corn crib
- Agriculture/agricultural outbuilding - milk house
- Domestic/ secondary structure - garage

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

- Domestic/single dwelling - residence
- Domestic/single dwelling - residence
- Domestic/secondary structure - outhouse
- Agriculture/ animal facility - chicken house
- Agriculture/ storage - corn crib
- Agriculture/agricultural outbuilding - milk house
- Domestic/secondary structure - garage

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

- Late Victorian/Queen Anne
- Vernacular

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation Concrete Block
- walls Vinyl
- roof Asphalt Shingle
- other Brick
- Wood

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See Continuation Sheets

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture

Period of Significance

c. 1885 to c. 1950

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:
McCormick, Taylor & Associates, Inc.

Robinson, Pearl, G. House
Name of Property

Sussex County, DE
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 26.33 Acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	8
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6	0	7	9	0
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2	2	6	8	3	1
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3

1	8
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6	0	3	6	9
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2	2	6	7	7	3
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2

1	8
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6	0	7	5	0
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2	2	7	0	1	3
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4

1	8
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6	0	3	7	9
---	---	---	---	---

2	2	6	9	5	5
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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Charles A. Richmond/Historic Structures Specialist

organization McCormick, Taylor & Associates, Inc. date July 2003 (Revised December 2003)

street & number 2 Commerce Square, 2001 Market Street telephone 215.592.4200

city or town Philadelphia state PA zip code 19103

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Pearl G. Robinson

street & number 212 Atlantic Avenue/Route 26 telephone N/A

city or town Millville state DE zip code 19967

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**National Register of Historic Places
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Robinson, Pearl G., House Sussex County, DE

Architectural Description

The Pearl G. Robinson House (Tax Parcel 1-34-12-411.00; S-9121) is a c. 1885, two and one-half story, three-bay, vinyl-clad, Queen Anne-inspired dwelling with an asphalt-shingle cross-gable roof. The main (north) façade features on the first floor a central fixed picture window flanked by faux louvered shutters; on each side of the window there is a vinyl sash 1/1 window with faux louvered shutters. A one-story hipped roof porch with a central gable peak extends across the full façade and wraps around to the east and west sides; it is supported by wood Doric posts. On the second floor of this façade are three vinyl sash 1/1 replacement windows with faux louvered shutters. The gable peak has a tripartite arrangement of a central wood sash 1/1 window flanked by smaller fixed lights. The front gable peak features bargeboard. The east façade features the same fenestration as the main façade. The roof has a pedimented dormer with a vinyl sash 1/1 window. A central brick chimney is visible from this façade. The west façade features the same fenestration and dormer style as on the east façade; it also has a double-leaf entrance. The rear wings to the east and west that form a cross-gable to the main block feature the same fenestration. When compared to other dwellings along the Route 26, the Pearl G. Robinson House is a distinctive example of vernacular Queen Anne architecture. This dwelling is a contributing feature.

To the south of the main building lies a one and one-half story, three-bay, wood shake shingle-clad c. 1920 bungalow with an asphalt-shingle front-gable roof and a raked cornice that once functioned as a strawberry picker's house. The main (north) façade features an enclosed one-story porch with a hipped roof; it has a single-leaf central entrance with a wood and glazed door. Flanking the doors there are paired wood 1/1 windows. The gable peak has a wood 1/1 window. The west façade features a wood 1/1 window in the porch and two wood 1/1 windows in the main block. The rear façade features a single-leaf entrance with a screen door and a wood 1/1 window. This building was relocated to the property about thirty years ago according to an oral interview with the current homeowner, Pearl G. Robinson (Oral interview with Pearl G. Robinson, March 21, 2002). This strawberry picker's bungalow is a contributing feature.

To the east of the strawberry picker's bungalow there is a wood outhouse with a wood shake side-gable shingle roof. The main (north) façade has an open single-leaf entrance. Based on physical evidence, this outhouse was likely constructed for the family that lived in the strawberry pickers house. The outhouse is a contributing feature.

To the west of the main house there is a one-story, one-bay, masonry, milkhouse with a front-gable roof and a central lantern at the ridgeline. The main façade has a single-leaf entrance with a wood door. The gable peak is clad with wood shake shingles. Based on physical evidence, this milkhouse was likely constructed c. 1920. The milkhouse is a contributing feature.

To the southwest of the main house lies a one-story, asbestos shingle-clad chicken house with a corrugated metal shed roof. The main façade features a central single-leaf entrance with a wood door flanked by wood sash

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Robinson, Pearl G., House Sussex County, DE

6-light awning windows. Based on physical evidence, this chicken house was probably constructed c. 1950. It is no longer being used for broiler chickens. The chicken house is a contributing feature.

To the southwest of the main house at the terminus of the farm lane there is a one-story, four-bay, aluminum-clad contemporary garage with an asphalt-shingle side-gable roof. The main façade features two bays of vehicular entrances with roll-down metal doors, one three-light awning window flanked by faux shutters, and a single-leaf pedestrian entrance. The roof has a central lantern at the ridgeline. This vehicular garage, based on physical evidence, was likely built c. 1990. The modern garage is a noncontributing feature.

An early twentieth century, one and one-half story hand-hewn log corn crib (or "stack") is located south of the dwelling. The front (north) façade features a single-story weatherboard door, attached with two original iron hinges, and a front-gable roof with wood shingles. The outside joints are attached by mortise and tenon (dovetail) joinery with wood pegs, and the entire building rests on a deteriorating base of brick and concrete block piers. The first floor of the building is unchinked horizontal slats; the north and south gable peaks feature vertical weatherboard siding. The building was likely moved at the property sometime in the mid-twentieth century, according to an oral interview with the current homeowner, Pearl Robinson. The corn crib is a contributing feature.

Following field survey in March 2002, open fields were situated in the front and side of the dwelling, flanking the farm lane (in sum, the Pearl Robinson property is 26.33 acres). The arrangement of farm buildings and outbuildings for the Pearl G. Robinson property appears to be a local variant of the range plan; other agricultural-related outbuilding may have been moved or demolished over time, obscuring the original layout of the farm. Updated field survey in July 2003 shows that the Banks Wine and Spirits Shop is located northwest of the Robinson property. This store was constructed early 2003 on a separate but adjacent tax parcel. This store is not a part of the Pearl G. Robinson property, nor is it a contributing feature.

Today, the fields surrounding the Pearl G. Robinson property are not being actively cultivated, but according to the current owner, these field were leased out to tenants several years ago.

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Robinson, Pearl G., House Sussex County, DE

Statement of Significance

When considering the four eligibility criteria, the seven attributes of integrity, and the characteristics of the agricultural complex found within Baltimore Hundred, Sussex County, the Pearl G. Robinson House is recommended eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with agriculture. The Pearl G. Robinson House is not recommended a contributing feature to the Millville District, as the Millville District is being recommended an ineligible district. This Pearl G. Robinson dwelling and related outbuildings are not notable as individual buildings for their architectural style or method of construction; however, when taken as part of the whole agricultural landscape, they represent one of the most complete farmsteads along Route 26 in Baltimore Hundred. While the Pearl G. Robison House has been modified with vinyl siding and replacement windows, and a modern vehicular garage has been constructed at the terminus of the farm lane, the farmstead retains many of its agricultural outbuildings, and appears to function as a farm. Outbuildings have likely been moved to the property during the twentieth century; however, this is a common phenomenon in Baltimore Hundred, and represents evolving agricultural practices over time.

A distinctive component to the Pearl G. Robinson property is that the spatial arrangement of the farm fields suggests broiler chickens were not the mainstay of this farmstead, as evinced by the small chicken house located to the rear of the dwelling. Unlike other farms along Route 26, the Pearl G. Robinson property does not appear to exclusively rely on poultry production – rather, the presence of the strawberry picker's bungalow suggests that strawberry farming was the farm's major crop during its Period of Significance from c. 1885 to 1950. The Pearl G. Robinson House retains a good amount of integrity as an Agricultural Complex, and is significant because it can provide insight to agricultural practices other than broiler production in the Coastal Zone of Baltimore Hundred. The Pearl G. Robinson House is not known to be affiliated with any persons important to local, state or national history (Criterion B). While the main dwelling still possesses some physical characteristics of vernacular Queen Anne styling, and the broiler house and strawberry picker's bungalow also possess some physical characteristics of their respective property types, they are not unique characteristics to a given time period or method of construction, nor are they known to represent the work of a master architect (Criterion C). Other, better, more intact examples exist along Route 26 of each of these property types. Owing to prior ground disturbances from agriculture; there is little probability that new information will result from any archaeological testing performed in the vicinity of the property (Criterion D).

Historical Background and Significance

Baltimore Hundred is located along the southeastern coast of Sussex County, Delaware. Bounded to the north by the Indian River Bay, to the south by the state of Maryland, to the east by the Atlantic Ocean, and to the west by Dagsboro Hundred, Baltimore Hundred's boundary was much contested through the eighteenth century. Both the colonies of Delaware and Maryland claimed the area of Baltimore Hundred; it was not until 1775 that Worcester County, Maryland released its claims to the land and ceded the territory to Delaware (Scharf, p. 1339).

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Settlement during the early-mid nineteenth century mimicked colonial patterns throughout Baltimore Hundred. People preferred to live in non-nucleated patterns away from previously established communities. The arrival of the railroad through Sussex County in the 1850s and 1860s, however, forever altered these settlement patterns. The Delaware Railroad, which pushed south to Delmar in 1859, helped connect Sussex County to northern urban communities (Williams, pp. 1-2). Small towns or crossroads proliferated (such as Roxana and Frankford) in response to these rail lines. While these new railroad lines were an improvement over the shallow, shoal-filled bays and atrocious dirt roads in Baltimore Hundred, the rail lines did not bring immediate local prosperity (Carter, p. 8). Instead, these railroads helped to slowly transform the nature of commerce and transportation throughout the Baltimore Hundred area over time (Carter, p. 8).

One of the emergent property types along the Route 26 corridor that typically dates to the period of Industrialization and Early Urbanization (c.1830-1880) is the Agricultural Complex.¹ An Agricultural Complex is composed of a farmstead with one or more dwellings on the property, along with yards, gardens, fences, ditches, wells, and other standing "domestic and agricultural outbuildings" (De Cunzo & Garcia, pp. 234-5). Most Agricultural Complexes from this time period (c.1830-1880) featured vernacular I-house dwellings that the farm owner is presumed to have lived in; other dwellings such as tenant houses, or farm manager houses may have been located on the property which date to this time period, but most are anticipated to have been razed, moved, or deteriorated (De Cunzo & Garcia, p. 235). Domestic and agricultural outbuildings such as corn stacks (houses), small barns, sheds, granaries, hay poles, and root houses are also expected features of intact nineteenth century Agricultural Complexes – however, due to their often impermanent nature, and changes in agricultural technology, few are expected to have survived into the twenty-first century. According to De Cunzo and Garcia, "utilitarian and nonutilitarian spaces and features directly associated with these buildings—landscaped lawns, yards, and gardens; kitchen gardens; work yards; animal pens; wells and other water sources; drives, lanes, and paths; trash and other waste disposal area and features" are all key features spatially to the farmstead plan of Agricultural Complexes (De Cunzo & Garcia, p. 235). Agricultural fields, wood lots, marshes, ditches, streams, and orchards are all important natural features of Agricultural Complexes as well, which contribute to the overall setting and feeling of a property (De Cunzo & Garcia, p. 235). The Pearl G. Robinson House (S-9121) is an Agricultural Complex that likely originated during this era (c. 1880) in southeastern Baltimore Hundred.

¹ The following discussion of the Agricultural Complex property type is derived from Lu Ann De Cunzo and Ann Marie Garcia's October 1992 *Historic Context: The Archaeology of Agriculture and Rural Life, New Castle and Kent Counties, Delaware, 1830-1940*; this same definition of an Agricultural Complex was used again by De Cunzo & Garcia in their August 1993 report "*Neither a Desert Nor A Paradise: Historic Context For The Archaeology Of Agriculture And Rural Life, Sussex County, Delaware, 1770-1940*". While the original context focused on the northern two-thirds of Delaware, the "social and cultural aspects of farm life" as developed in the report can be refined with modification to Baltimore Hundred, Sussex County, Delaware area (De Cunzo & Garcia, p. i). In addition, John Bedell's *Historic Context: The Archaeology of Farm and Rural Dwelling Sites in New Castle and Kent Counties, Delaware 1730-1770 and 1770-1830* (2002) also helped inform, to a lesser degree, the definition of an Agricultural Complex within this report. Meetings with MTA, DelDOT, and the Delaware SHPO in December 2002 and May 2003 encouraged a focus on the evaluation of agricultural resources functionally, rather than stylistically.

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Robinson, Pearl G., House Sussex County, DE

Even throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, inhabitants in Baltimore Hundred clung to historic settlement patterns and gravitated toward rural, agricultural pursuits. Many locals kept one foot "firmly planted in the eighteenth century" as conservative attitudes and agricultural practices persisted in southeastern Delaware well into the twentieth century (Williams, p. 95). The one limited exception to this pattern occurred as communities grew around transportation routes forming small, linear roadside towns. The advent and affordability of the automobile, coupled with an improved highway system, prompted the development of truck farming. Paved roadways facilitated the timely transport of perishable fruits such as strawberries to urban markets, along with poultry. Ultimately the development of the commercial chicken broiler industry proved to be "one of the most significant events in the evolution of Delaware commercial agriculture" that helped replace waning maritime interests (Herman & Lanier, p. 238-239).

Delaware was centrally located in what was known as the "Middle Atlantic Trucking Region" during the 1920s (Doerrfeld, p. 11). In excess of 900 miles long, this region extended from the coast of Maine southward to the Low Country of South Carolina (Doerrfeld, p. 11). Averaging only 50 miles in width, this truck farming corridor owed its existence to three factors: the string of large cities and towns situated on the east coast which served as ready markets, soils ideally suited for the cultivation of fruits and vegetables, and the "mild, semi-marine climate, having long frost-free seasons" due to the regulating effects of the Atlantic Ocean (Doerrfeld, p. 11). In 1924, the du Pont Highway (or U.S. Route 13 and U.S. Route 113) was constructed; this roadway functioned as a vital north-south transportation artery for the state and further enhanced Delaware's truck farming economy (Williams, p. 112; Federal Writers' Project, p. 81). As Coleman du Pont's desire for a "road of the future" matured into fruition, and the State Highway Department was established by a 1917 session of the Legislature, the state of Delaware was positioned for commercial growth (Federal Writers' Project, pp. 80-81). By *circa* 1920, improved roadways meant that strawberries could be picked "in the early morning, loaded into crates and packed for market by midday and be in Philadelphia and New York by evening, there to be sent to retail stores in time for the next morning's contingent of shoppers" (Collins & Eby, p. 207). These transportation developments likely helped fuel the growth of Agricultural Complexes in Baltimore Hundred, such as the Pearl G. Robinson House.

Crops such as strawberries, apples, sweet potatoes, corn and tomatoes were grown in southeastern Delaware, but peaches, which had been a boon to many Sussex County farmers in the 1860s, were decimated by disease in the early 1890s (Doerrfeld, p. 11). During the 1890s, the canning industry likewise shifted focus away from peaches to the canning of tomatoes, corn and peas (Doerrfeld, p. 11). The invention of the sanitary can and associated processing equipment rendered the handmade can of the nineteenth century obsolete (Doerrfeld, p. 11). By the 1940s, the advent of frozen foods supplanted the popularity of canned goods, and many canneries heeded the capitalist imperative and closed by the end of World War II when profits evaporated (Doerrfeld, p. 1).

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Robinson, Pearl G., House Sussex County, DE

Railroad lines passing through the region to the west of the Robinson property, coupled with the expansion of paved highways in the twentieth century also promoted growth of the egg and poultry industries (Collins & Eby, p. 207).² While many local farmers had previously been engaged in egg production, it suddenly became profitable to raise and dress broiler chickens for delivery to New York City and Philadelphia. Broiler chicken production rose to unprecedented levels during this time period, and was a savior for the local and state economy during the Great Depression of the 1930s. While the Pearl G. Robinson House has a modest size chicken house on site, this farmstead appears to be unique in that broiler production does not appear to have been the mainstay of the Agricultural Complex.

While Cecile Long Steele, a housewife from Ocean View, is credited for having "created" the broiler chicken industry in Baltimore Hundred in 1923, the industry had started on a much smaller scale several years earlier. By *circa* 1917, "virtually every farm wife had her flock of laying hens" to augment family income (Collins & Eby, p. 207). Despite the fact that Baltimore Hundred's chicken flock was hard hit in the mid-1920s by "range paralysis," commercial egg and broiler farms continued to grow (Williams, p. 9). Word of Cecile Long Steele's success in raising chickens "exclusively for sale as broilers" spread quickly throughout Baltimore Hundred and the Delmarva Peninsula (Herman & Chase, extracted from Gabrielle Lanier & Bernard Herman's *A Field Guide to Delaware Architecture*, pp. 237-241). By 1928, Delaware's annual poultry production grew from "two million broilers [in 1928] to sixty million in 1944" (Williams, p. 121). The broiler chicken industry that the Steeles had created prompted many downstate farmers to expand their field acreage of corn and also start cultivating drought-resistant soybeans for chicken feed (Williams, p. 122). Physically, the landscape of southern Delaware changed as well from the poultry industry. Long, one-story chicken houses began to hug the flat landscape, and tall vertical storage towers were built by agribusinessmen "to process corn and soybean into mash for chickens" (Williams, p. 122). The move to broilers also meant a decrease in truck farming in many areas, and the decreased profitability of canning operations in the region (Williams, p. 122). Not only had a fungus disease ravaged many important income-producing truck crops such as strawberries and tomatoes *circa* 1920, but a drop in the salinity levels of the Indian River Bay decimated the bay's shellfish population (Krajewski, p. 3). The burgeoning commercial broiler industry was therefore an ideal solution for Baltimore Hundred farmers looking for new, stable forms of income.

The rapidly increasing demand for chickens meant that many relatively poor farmers could get rich virtually overnight (Williams, p. 122). The broiler chicken industry flourished in Baltimore Hundred for a variety of reasons, chief among which were the temperate climate, cheap building, labor and overhead costs (especially for heating fuel), readily available credit for financing, close proximity to markets, and a porous soil which provided for good drainage and aided in disease control (Tomhave, p. 131). Although the average farm size declined in Sussex County (from an average of 123 acres in 1880 to an average of 78 acres in 1930) along with the percentage of land used for farming activities, many farmers were able to take advantage of agricultural and

² Before 1917, Sussex County in total had less than 35 miles of paved roadway. By 1924, Coleman Du Pont's "revolutionary concrete highway" - Route 113 - ran the entire length of the state of Delaware and "provided new economic opportunities," especially for farmers (De Cunzo & Garcia, p. 31). See Lu Ann De Cunzo & Ann Marie Garcia's "Neither A Desert Nor A Paradise:" *Historic Context For The Archaeology of Agriculture And Rural Life, Sussex County, Delaware, 1770-1940* (August 1993).

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Robinson, Pearl G., House Sussex County, DE

technological changes and increase their own revenues (Callahan, n.p.; Herman & Lanier, p. 7). Tenant farming increased during this period as well, with "over 50% of Delaware's farmers being tenants of sharecroppers" around 1900 (De Cunzo & Garcia, p. 31). High levels of farm tenancy continued throughout the region well into the twentieth century (De Cunzo & Garcia, p. 31). With this monetary windfall, many larger Baltimore Hundred farmers constructed new family farmhouses and agricultural outbuildings, altered their existing homes, or moved older housing stock to their properties for tenant residences. A small bungalow cottage was relocated to the Pearl G. Robinson House (S-9121) property sometime in the early twentieth century, illustrating this local practice.

New and existing agricultural complexes along the Route 26 vicinity from Ocean View to Clarksville were deeply influenced by the poultry industry in the first and second quarters of the twentieth century. As discussed earlier, many farm wives had been raising small flocks of chickens since the mid-to-late nineteenth century to supply their families with eggs and meat. After the explosion of the broiler industry, led by the Steeles in Ocean View in the 1920s, farmhouses, along with agricultural and domestic outbuildings, began to change. Grain/corn farming continued on many farmsteads; however, corn was now typically being grown for chicken feed rather than for human consumption or export. As such, corn cribs (or "stacks") from the nineteenth century were moved around farms, and were used to store grain. Small equipment sheds, granaries, small barns, and chicken houses are all individual anticipated Agricultural Property Types within these Baltimore Hundred Agricultural Complexes, as are modified I-houses with Colonial and Gothic Revival exterior stylistic elements that helped form the hub of many farmsteads along Route 26.

By the turn of the twentieth century, the natural landscape of western Baltimore Hundred was much altered with the removal of most of the timber from the Cypress Swamp. Other areas that once contained tracts of wood were likewise harvested. In 1930, a conflagration burned uncontrollably in the Cypress Swamp for over eight months; another fire ravaged the swamp again in 1931 (Murray, n.p.; Beaven & Oosting, p. 368). These fires, worst in an area known as the "Burned Swamp," along with a large-scale ditching project commenced in 1936, effectively put an end to all cypress shingle-making activities in the Cypress Swamp (Murray, n.p.; Federal Writers' Project, p. 510). Holly production for seasonal urban markets did occur *circa* 1900 in areas such as Millsboro and Milton, but wreath production was limited in scope to an annual affair. After steam and diesel-powered ship engines gained popularity, and local timber reserves evaporated from the Cypress Swamp, ship building in coastal areas in Baltimore Hundred all but disappeared. Decimated after the Great Depression, some local shipbuilders continued their work by building the specialized small craft vessels like the flat-bottomed scow boat, popularized in Selbyville.

Millville, situated about four miles west of Bethany Beach along Route 26/Atlantic Avenue, also witnessed growth during the era of Urbanization and Early Suburbanization (c. 1880-1940). Around 1886, a group of residents, including Elisha C. Dukes, felt as though a post office was needed for the community of over 200 people (NSDAR, p. 23; U.S. Postal Service, *Post Office Department Reports of Site Locations*, 1886). While the names Dukestown or Dukesville were suggested for the hamlet, others wanted an appellation more descriptive

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Robinson, Pearl G., House Sussex County

of the place. Since the leading industry in the low and marshy area was the lumber mill of Captain Peter Townsend, and sorghum, molasses and gristmills proliferated nearby, the name Millville was chosen (NSDAR, p. 23). Elisha Dukes, proprietor of the local general county store, served as the first postmaster (NSDAR, p. 23). A small schoolhouse "stood off the main road to the northwest" in Millville before a newer one-room structure took its place; today, the Methodist Church occupies the lot where this schoolhouse once stood (NSDAR, p. 23). Millville continued to expand on a limited scale during the early twentieth century, for the Millville Hardware Store commenced operations in 1930, and the Millville Fire Company organized and constructed a hall in 1939 (Connors, n.p.). The Pearl G. Robinson House is located on the outskirts of Millville, and likely shared much of its agricultural history with this small linear hamlet.

Today, the Pearl G. Robinson property is not being actively farmed, though its fields have been cultivated by corn in the past five years, as evinced by the condition of the fields north of the main dwelling and an oral interview with the current owner, Pearl G. Robinson. Most of the outbuildings are in serviceable condition; while the strawberry picker's bungalow is no longer being used as a residence, it is nonetheless in good physical condition. The generous set back of the main dwelling and agricultural outbuildings from Route 26/Atlantic Avenue further lend to the integrity of the agricultural feeling and setting of the Pearl G. Robinson property.

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Oral Interview with Pearl G. Robinson, March 21, 2002.

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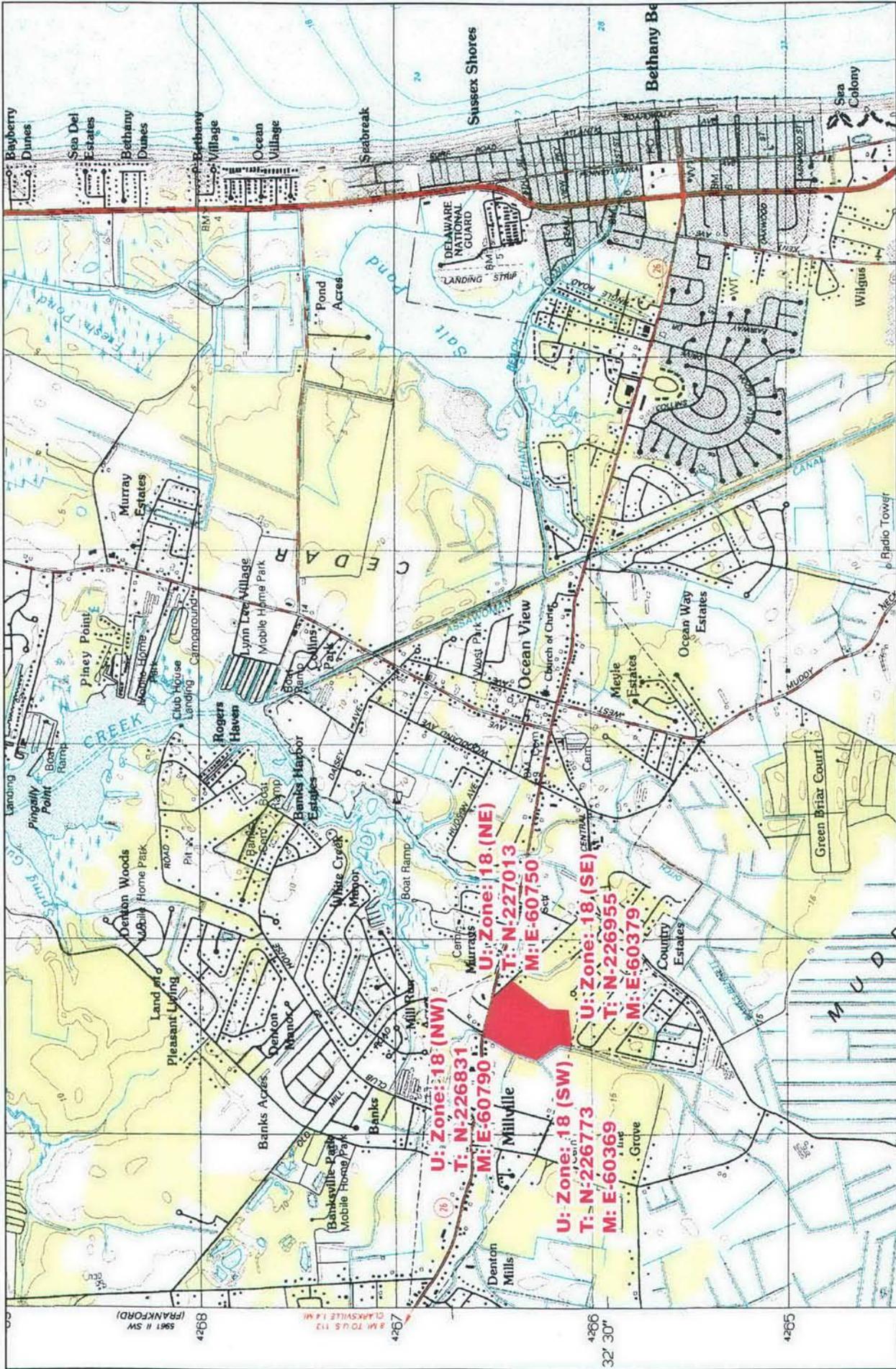
National Register Boundary

In accordance with "National Register Bulletin: Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties (Revised 1997)," consideration was given to the distribution of resources, current legal boundaries, historic boundaries, natural features, and cultural features. The proposed boundary for the Pearl G. Robinson House follows that of tax parcel 1-34-12-411.00 along Route 26/Atlantic Avenue and Road 349A, which is sufficient to convey significance under Criterion A.

Since the property is being recommended eligible under Criterion A as an Agricultural Complex usage type, the main dwelling, strawberry picker's bungalow, outhouse, chicken house, corn crib, milk house and agricultural fields are all contributing features. The modern garage, located at the end of the farm lane, is not a contributing feature, nor is the new liquor store, now located northwest of the main dwelling (this structure is located on an adjacent but separate tax parcel).

Boundary Justification

This boundary is sufficient to encompass the dwelling, related outbuildings, and agricultural fields, and 26.33 acres of land surrounding the property. This boundary was prepared in accordance with the guidelines spelled out in the National Register Bulletin: "Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties."

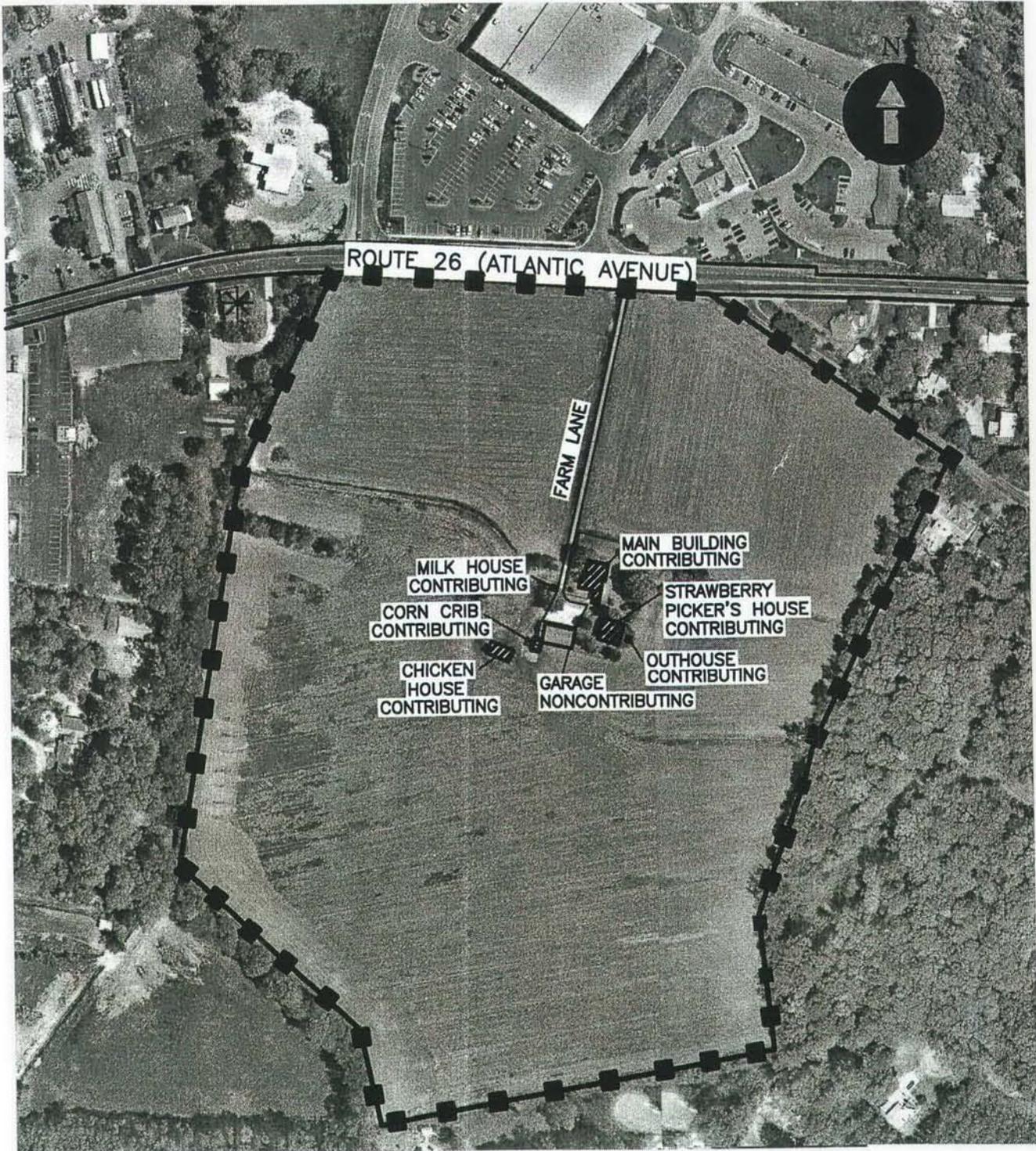


Bethany Beach, Delaware
 USGS Quadrangle
 1984, Photorevised 1991



Robinson, Pearl G., House
 212 Atlantic Avenue
 Sussex County, DE

Robinson, Pearl G., House
 212 Atlantic Avenue
 Sussex County, DE



APPROX SCALE 1"=220'

* C.2003 BANKS LIQUOR STORE NOW LOCATED HERE, PER JULY 2003 FIELD SURVEY

	BUILDING 50 YEARS OLD OR OLDER
	BUILDING LESS THAN 50 YEARS OLD
	NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARY (FOLLOWS TAX PARCEL BOUNDARY)



Photo 1: Residence, front (north) façade, facing south.



Photo 2: Residence, side (west) façade, facing east.



Photo 3: Residence, side (east) façade, facing west.



Photo 4: Strawberry picker's house, facing southeast.



Photo 5: Strawberry picker's house and outhouse, facing north.

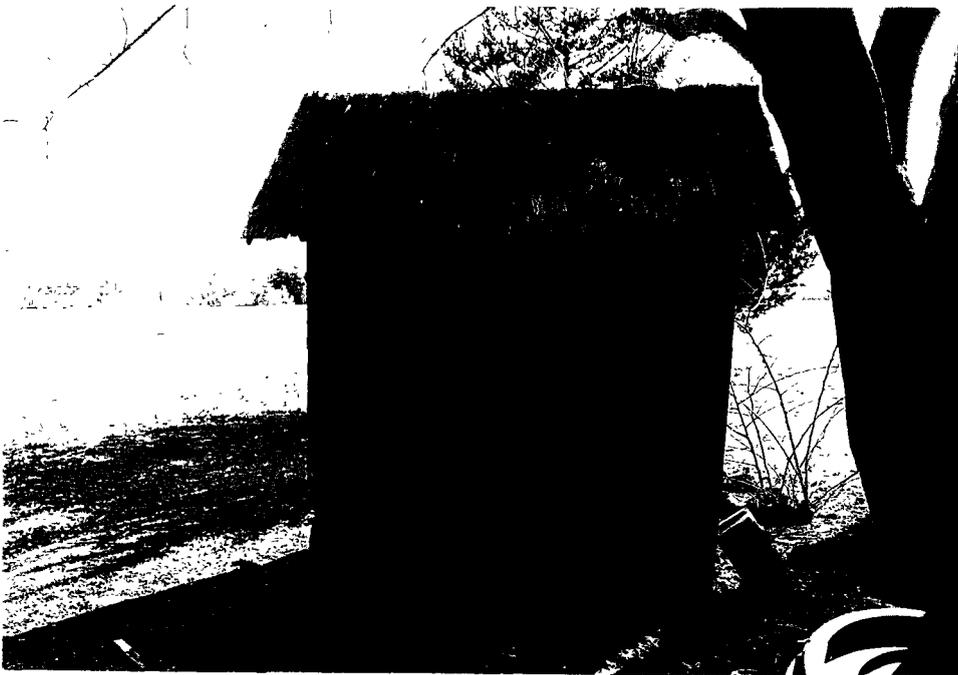


Photo 6: Outhouse, facing southwest.



Photo 7: Chicken house, facing southwest.



Photo 8: Chicken house, facing northwest.

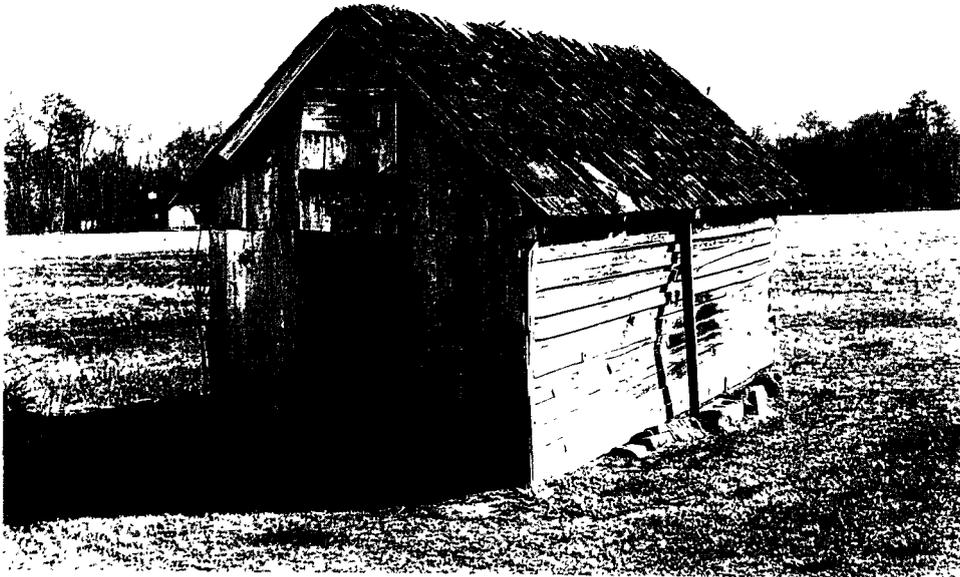


Photo 9: Corn crib, facing south.



Photo 10: Corn crib, facing north.

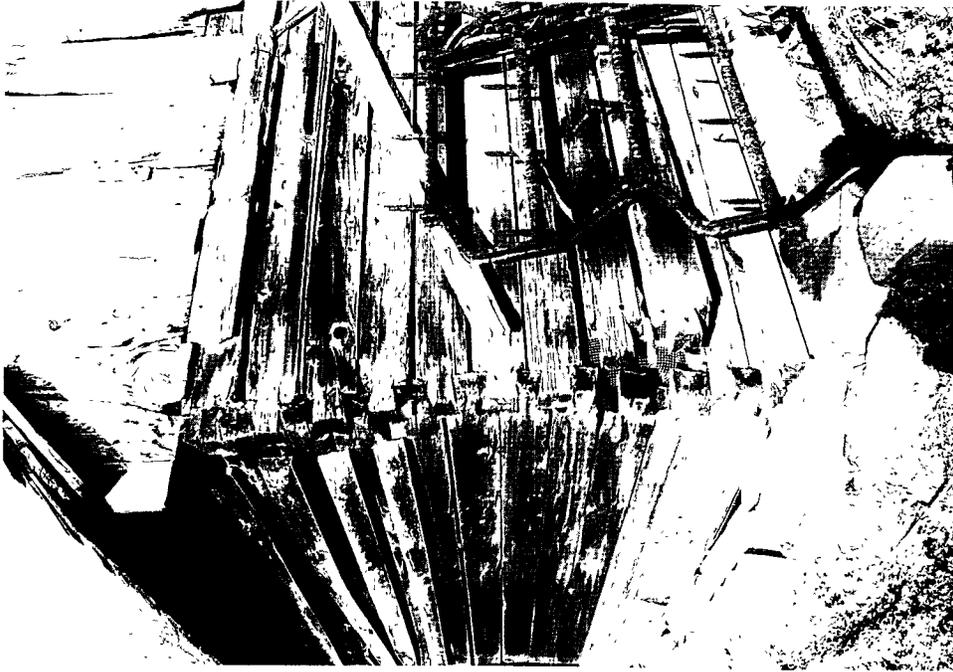


Photo 11: Detail, corn crib joints.



Photo 12: Milk house, facing east.

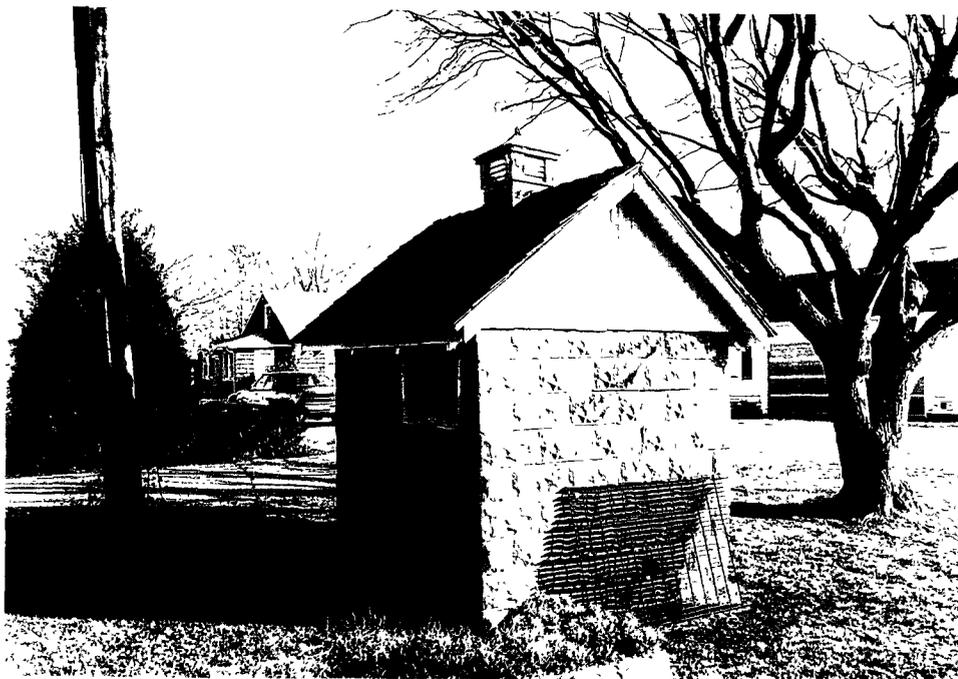


Photo 13: Milk house, facing west.



Photo 14: Garage, facing south.

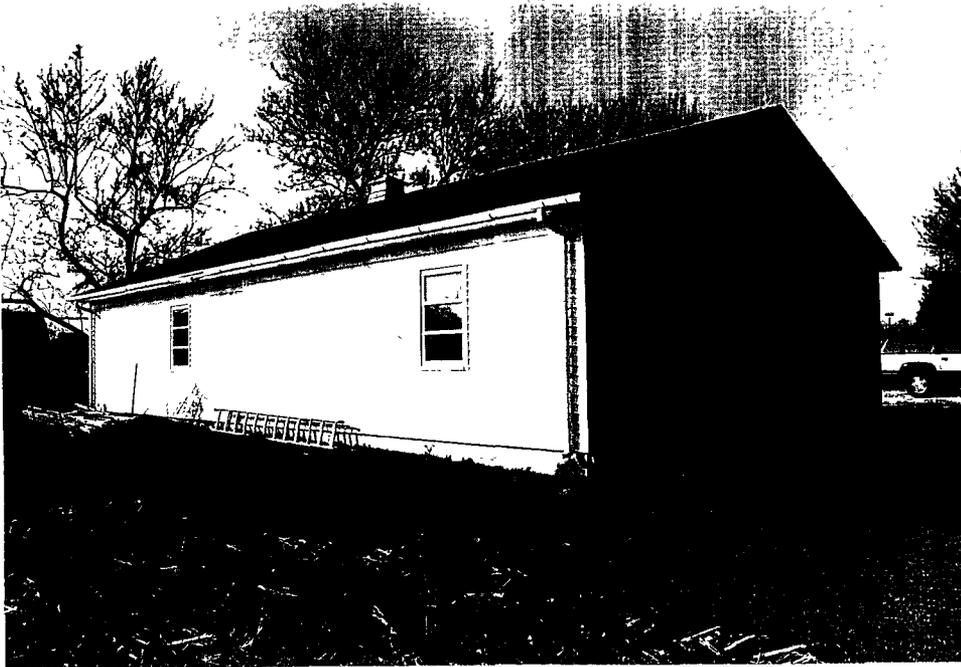


Photo 15: Garage, facing north.



Photo 16: View north from property; Food Lion grocery store is visible on the opposite side of Route 26.