K-78

Wilmer's Mill House
High Street, Chestertown
c. 1733

Simon Wilmer (d. 1699) acquired Stepney and established a mill on the upper reaches of Radcliffe Creek in the late 17th Century. Rebecca Tilghman Wilmer (d. 1725), Simon's widow, stipulated in her will that the "negro man James" was to keep the mill for two years for the use of her son Simon and brother Tilghman (Richard), after which he was to be free.[1] Simon Wilmer, II (d.1737) bequeathed in his will "part of my lands on which the grist and saw mills stand . . . with mills and Miller's House" to his sons Lambert and Charles.[2]

In its original configuration the mill house was a three bay long, gambrel roof dwelling with its Flemish bond facade facing "the road leading from my mill to Chestertown."[3] Its first kitchen was located on the east gable and was probably a single room, 1-1/2 story brick structure. The plan of the house was unique in the area. Double doors opened into the hall which had a large fireplace with flanking closets, paneling stretching across the entire composition. On the opposite side of the room there were two doors, one close to the back door which opened onto a stair that ascended against the north wall with winder at the top, the other door opening into an unheated room lighted by the south window. On the west gable a date had been laid in glazed headers. The numerals

17 3

were still discernible before the house fell into ruin in the 1970's.

Lambert Wilmer died in 1750, leaving the majority of Stepney,

including the mill, to his son Simon. In the 1783 Tax Assessment, Wilmer's lands are described as having "two brick dwelling Houses and Kitchens, one Grist Mill, 7 out Houses, two Orchards joining Chestertown."[4]

To his son, Simon (V), Simon Wilmer left that part of Stepney which was "located on the southwest side of the road leading from my Mill to Chestertown up along the same as to the northwest corner of a lot of ground sold by me to the Trustees for the Poor of Kent County, just below the hill called Stoney Hill – then to the Creek and up the Creek . . . and the Mill and Mill Seat . . . "[5]. From 1798 to 1809 Simon (V) retained ownership of the mill and miller's house.

It was probably during this period, or perhaps in the last years of his father's (Simon IV) life that the millhouse underwent a major remodeling. A new frame wing was built on the west gable; two rooms deep, covered by an asymmetrical roof. The principal room had its fireplace built back-to-back to the old fireplace.The front room was finished with paneled wainscoting and a corner cupboard. A built-in bench adjacent the second floor fireplace served as a balustrade for the stair. A window seat was built into the single dormer on the south. Access between this and the main part of the second floor was achieved via a break in the brick wall. This change resulted in the obliteration of the decade numeral in the gable. The "3" remained behind the plaster and slightly above the roof. The "17" was concealed by the chimney.

On the first floor, the back room of the addition had chair rail and other period trim, but the most curious feature was the location of an exterior batten door next to the back corner post on the west wall with a 3/6

window immediately adjacent. Also interesting, the room had been constructed on brick piers with clapboard infill whereas the front room and the main house were constructed on a stone and brick basement respectively.

At the same time as the construction of this addition, a third part was built to house a kitchen. Most likely the brick kitchen mentioned in 1783 was removed at the same time that the new west extensions were made.

The year before Simon (V) sold his patented inheritance, including the mill, mill house and land, he purchased his boyhood home, the White House Farm or Stepney.[6] By the time he sold the old farm to his younger brother, Lemuel, in 1818, he was no longer residing in Kent County, but in New Jersey.[7]

John Whaland purchased the mill in 1809 [8] and the mill and mill house remained in the Whaland family until 1880 when it was sold to Hiram and Mary Elizabeth Brown.[9] The Whalands in the meantime had built a house on the opposite side of the road which remained until the 1940's.

The Chestertown Strawboard and Manufacturing Company purchased Whaland's Mill in 1882 [10] which it held until 1898 when it was sold to Thomas Topping.[11] The Toppings built another house between the old miller's house and the mill. They sold the Mill Farm in 1924. In 1927, the interior of the old brick house was sold to Henry Francis duPont, who transported it to Long Island and incorporated it into his summer house called "Chestertown House".

From that point to the early 1970's, the house remained vacant and deteriorated until it was finally torn down. Some of the bricks from the old house were used in a new wing at Hodges Bar Farm.

1. Wills, Lib. 1, fol. 275.
2. Wills, Lib. 2, fol. 58.
3. Wills, Lib. 3, fol. 137.
4. Kent Co. Tax Assessment, 1783.
5. Wills, Lib. 7, fol. 608.
6. Land Records, Lib. BC 5, fol. 293.
7. Land Records, Lib. WS 2, fol. 268.
8. Land Records, Lib. BC 5, fol. 523.
9. Land Records, Lib. SB 1, fol. 298.
10. Land Records, Lib. SB 2, fol. 635.
11. Land Records, Lib. JTD 1, fol. 327.

1500785104

1. STATE Maryland COUNTY Kent County TOWN VICINITY STREET NO. High Street extended ORIGINAL OWNER ORIGINAL USE Dwelling PRESENT OWNER T.A. Stradley PRESENT USE Vacant WALL CONSTRUCTION Brick & Frame NO. OF STORIES 1 ½	HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY INVENTORY 2. NAME Mill House K-78 DATE OR PERIOD c. 1730's STYLE Colonial ARCHITECT BUILDER 3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE

4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION OPEN TO PUBLIC NO

Set back from the road and close to Brooks' Mill(K-787) is a small colonial house consisting of a three bay brick gambrel roof section and a three bay frame catslide section. The brick portion is laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers. It has an unusual molded brick water table, segmental arches over the windows, and a chimney on the west end. The brickwork is covered with stucco which is falling off. The original frames are still intact as well as the cornice, the double doors and the louvered shutters. There are two flat headed dormers on the gambrel roof and some of the sash are remaining. The rear wall has been removed and the roof is collapsing. It was originally panelled on all sides to the ceiling. The

5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE Endangered RUINS Interior Exterior

6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional) 7. PHOTOGRAPH

8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages)
INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.

9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER
Michael Bourne
Maryland Historical Trust

DATE OF RECORD Feb. 15, 1968

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS MAY BE ADDED ON SHEET OF SAME SIZE

wing was built as a single room, with a fireplace backed up to the one in the brick section and a winding stair next to it. There is brick nogging in the wall and exposed corner members and plates covered with beaded boards. Originally there was paneled wainscot and corner cupboard. A cell room was added behind this room in the eighteenth century. There is chair rail still intact. The shutters, some hardware and scraps of sash and door remain as well as beaded clapboard on the facade and beaded shiplap on the east side. The ruin poses a wealth of building details, especially the exterior.

K-78

March 16, 1970

Mr. Michael Bourne
Great Hopes
Sudlersville, Maryland 21668

Dear Michael:

It was very good to see you today, and I hope that I was able to give you some information that was helpful to you. I am listing below what information we have about the woodwork bought in Maryland for Mr. du Pont's house at Southampton. You may recognize the names of the houses. Most of this woodwork was bought through Mr. H. L. Lindsey, who lives somewhere near you in Maryland. It might be worth while talking with him.

K-78 → 1/21/24--Paneling and woodwork from old Wilmer house, Chestertown, Maryland. Bought through H. L. Lindsey (Pine Room). Courtesy of Mr. Wilbur Hubbard

--Woodwork, old house at Georgetown, Maryland, 1766. Also bought through Mr. Lindsey.

9/3/24 --Paneling, Chapman house, 1762.

7/20/24--Paneling from Brown house, Chesterown, Maryland. Bought through Mr. Lindsey. This house is further described as "Violet Grove on the road from Chestertown to St. Paul's Church." It was owned by a Mr. Hynson Rodgers, and the tenant was Charles M. Brown. (Thus there are references to two Brown houses in the files.)

12/4/24--Paneling from Fairlee Creek house. Bought through Mr. Lindsey.

6/18/25--Woodwork in house at Quaker Neck, Kent County, near Chestertown. Bought from Mrs. Harold Baker.

There is a further reference to correspondence with a Mrs. Lea Tomlinson Stine re Serena Smith property. Apparently this is a house near Georgetown, and a further note says that the woodwork was used in the reception room at Southampton.

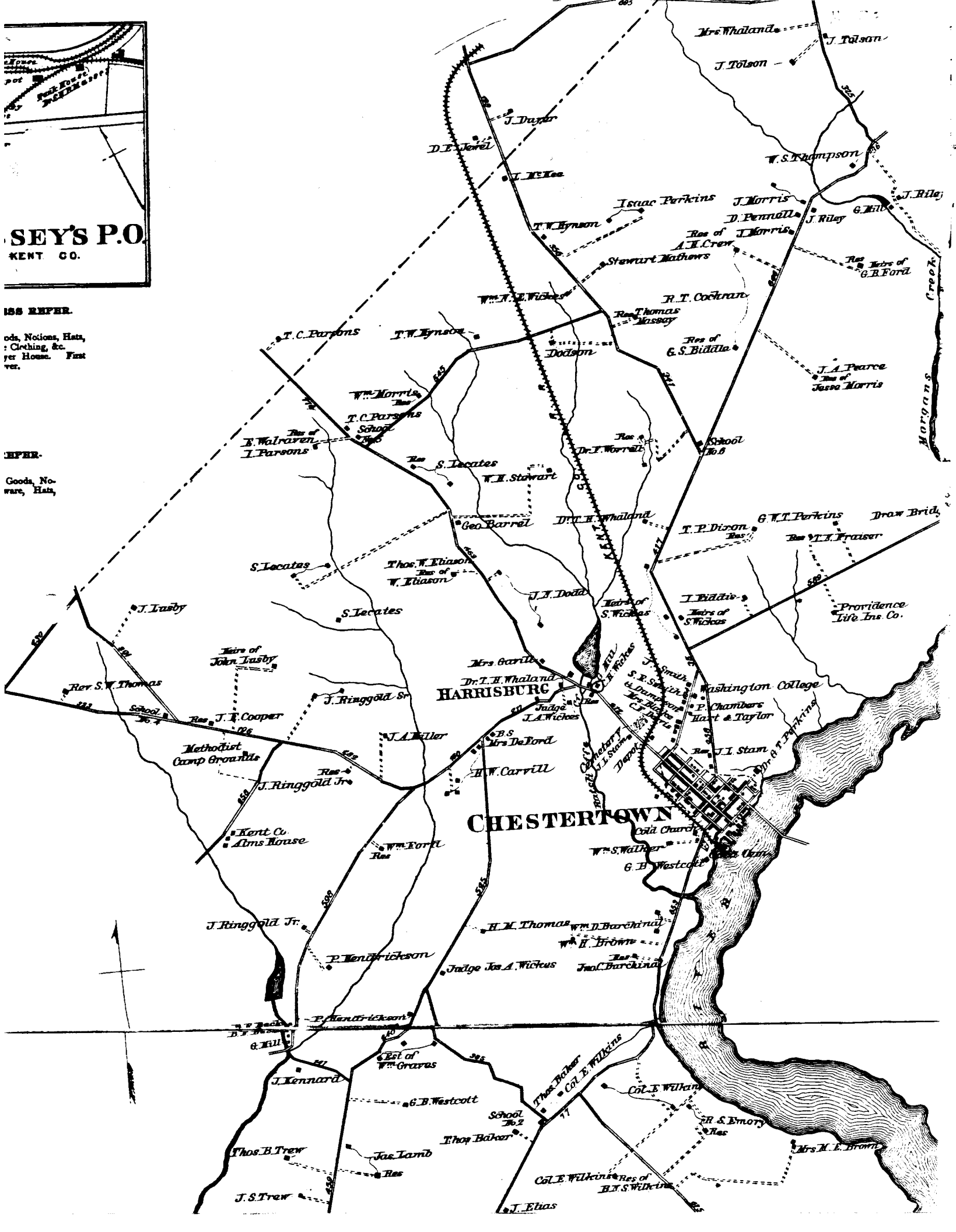
Please let me know if you have any further questions about the graduate work, and I shall be glad to talk with you at any time.

Sincerely,

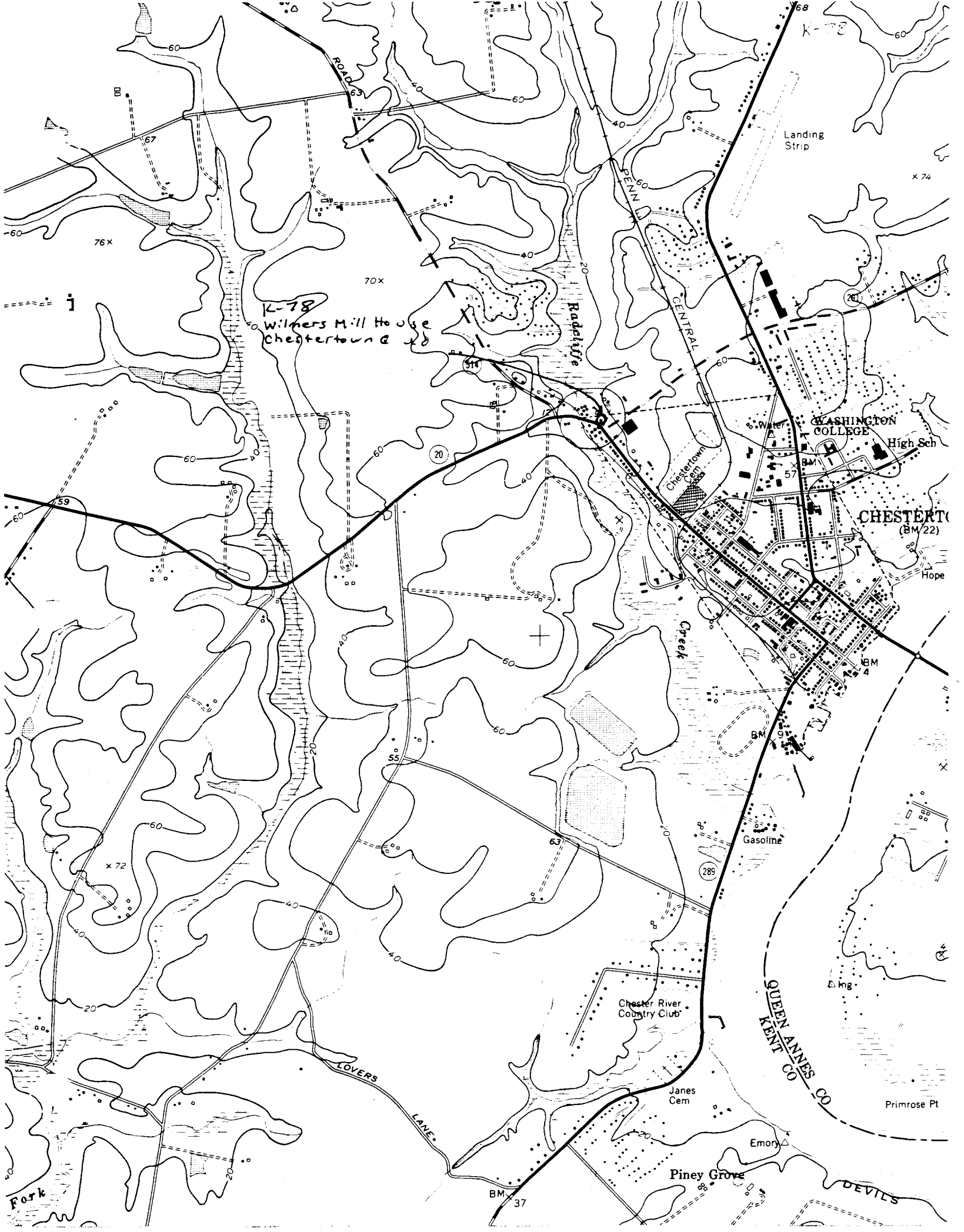
John A. H. Sweeney
Deputy Director
Collections and Interpretation

JAHS:mew

The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware 19735 *Tel.* 302 656-8591



SEY'S P.O.
KENT CO.
ISS REFER.
ods, Notions, Hats,
: Clothing, &c.
yer House. First
ver.
EFER-
Goods, No-
ware, Hats,
Mrs Whaland
J. Tolson
J. Tolson
J. Dayer
D. E. Jewel
I. McKee
W. S. Thompson
J. Riley
G. Mill
Isaac Perkins
J. Morris
D. Pennell
J. Riley
J. Morris
T. W. Hynson
Res of A. H. Crew
Stewart Mathews
Res Heirs of G. B. Ford
Wm N. E. Wickes
R. T. Cochran
Res Thomas Massey
T. C. Parsons
T. W. Hynson
Dodson
Res of G. S. Biddle
J. A. Pearce
Res of Jesse Morris
Morgans Creek
Wm Morris
Res
T. C. Parsons
School No 5
Res of E. Walraven
I. Parsons
Res
S. Lecates
W. H. Stewart
Dr. F. Worrell
School No 6
Geo. Barrel
Dr. T. H. Whaland
T. P. Dixon
Res
G. W. T. Perkins
Draw Bridge
Res T. N. Fraiser
S. Lecates
Thos. W. Eliason
Res of W. Eliason
J. N. Dodd
Heirs of S. Wickes
I. Biddis
Heirs of S. Wickes
Providence Life Ins. Co.
J. Lusby
S. Lecates
Heirs of John Lusby
Mrs Garvill
Dr. T. H. Whaland
HARRISBURG
Judge J. A. Wickes
Washington College
P. Chambers
Hart & Taylor
Rev. S. W. Thomas
School No 4
Res
J. F. Cooper
J. Ringgold Sr
J. A. Miller
B. S. Mrs De Ford
Methodist Camp Grounds
Res
J. Ringgold Jr
H. W. Carvill
Cemetery
J. L. Stam
Depot
Res
J. L. Stam
Dr. G. T. Perkins
CHESTERTOWN
Kent Co. Alms House
Wm Ford
Res
Cold Church
Wm S. Walker
G. B. Westcott
J. Ringgold Jr.
H. M. Thomas
Wm D. Burchinal
Wm H. Brown
P. Hendrickson
Judge Jos A. Wickes
Res Jno C. Burchinal
P. Hendrickson
G. Mill
Est of Wm Graves
J. Kennard
Thos Baker
Col. E. Wilkins
Col. E. Wilkins
G. B. Westcott
School No 2
R. S. Emory
Res
Thos Baker
Thos B. Trew
Jas. Lamb
Res
Mrs M. E. Brown
Col. E. Wilkins
Res of B. N. S. Wilkins
J. S. Trew
J. Elias


K-78
Wilmers Mill House
Chestertown Q
ROAD
PENN
CENTRAL
Radcliffe
Creek
Landing Strip
WASHINGTON COLLEGE
High Sch
Water
Chestertown Cem
CHESTERT
(BM 22)
Hope
Gasoline
Chester River Country Club
QUEEN ANNES CO
KENT CO
Janes Cem
Primrose Pt
Emory
Piney Grove
DEVILS
LOVERS LANE
Fork
BM 37
BM 9
BM 4
BM 57
20
289
514
63
55
59
67
68
70
76
72
74

FEB 1963

20

Chestertown
√ next to Mill
Kent County
McBourne, 1963
K-78

1 8 3 A

K # 78-A

Mill House - K-78

MOB 68

Mill House - K 78

MOB 68

HOUSE OUT SIDE CHESTERTOWN - KENT CO.

1750-80 ARCHITECTURALLY IMPORTANT

BECAUSE OF COMBINED STYLES AND.

USE OF DIVERSE MATERIALS

PRIVATELY OWNED:

603-4

Cutslide portion - K-78

Cornice, gambrel, stucco detail - K-78

14073 68

Cornice detail - K-78

14 OB 68

dormer detail - K.78

Wilmer's Mill House, ruin
(old Wilmer House)
Chesterton Pacific Rd

MDB 68

catslide portion, brick piers - clapboard etc - detail - K-78

MOB 68

Mill House K-78

MOB 68

Shutter & trim detail - K-78

MOB 68

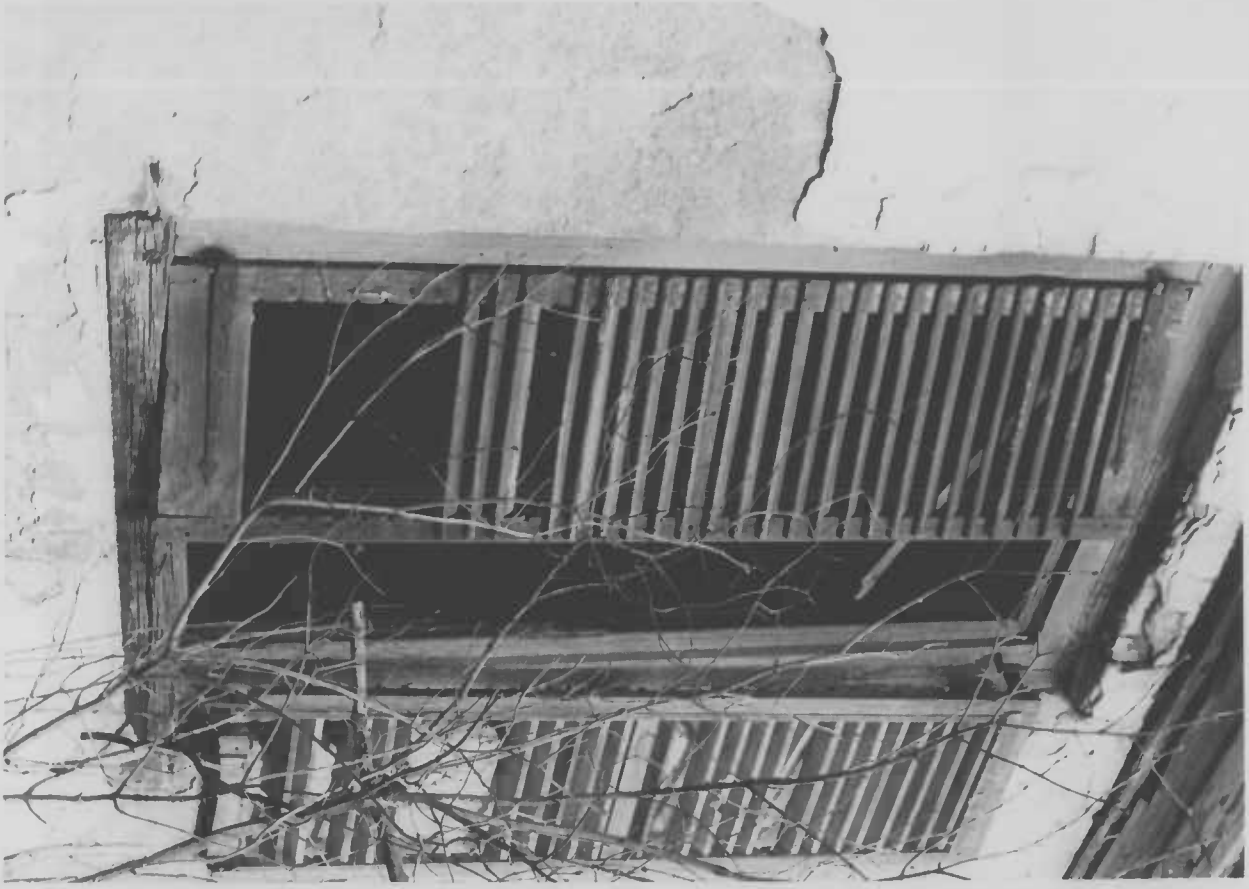
Doorframe - Detail - K-78

603-15

MOB 68

Dormer detail - K-78

14013 68



Detail Shutter - K-78

14013 68

beaded clapboard between brick piers - K-78

MOB 68

Stone foundation detail K-78

140B 68

brickwork + molded brick detail - K-78

14073 68

basement window detail - K-28

MOB 68

beaded clapboard - detail - K-78

14013 68

door + frame detail - K-78

14073 68

Vertical bar grill detail - K.78

6-3-7

14 OB 68

mortar joint detail - K-78

MOB 68

Brick Nogging — K-78

603-6

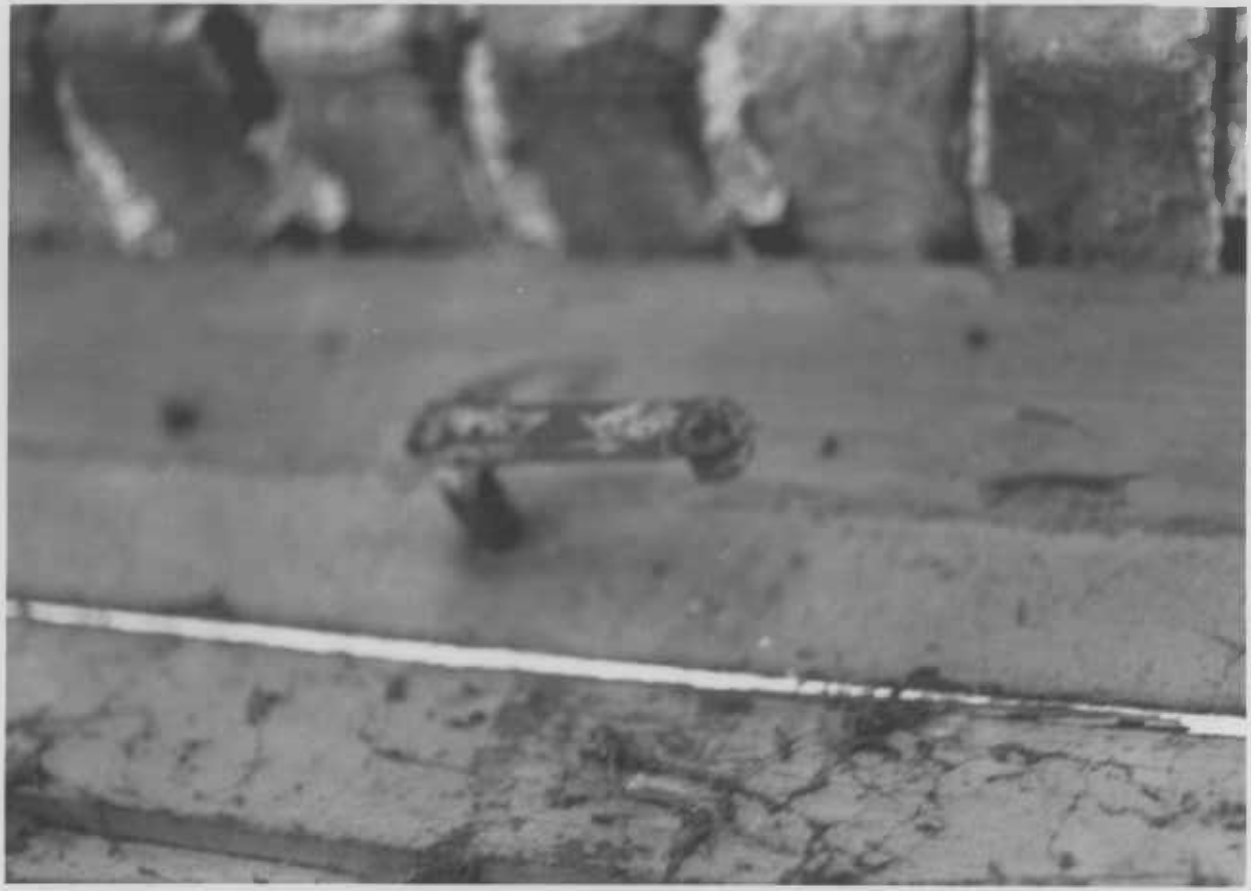
M 03 68

fireplace detail - K-78

MOB '68

door catch - k-78

140368



bar catch - detail - K-78

MOB 68