

IV. ARCHITECTURAL EVALUATIONS

A. Introduction

The area of potential effect (APE) for the proposed improvement was defined as consisting of the four properties lying adjacent to the relevant segment of roadway. A review of Delaware SHPO survey files found that six previously inventoried architectural resources stood within the APE, viz., N-442, N-1358, N-1388, N-1389, N-1391, and N-1394. These resources lacked detailed documentation according to current Delaware SHPO procedure. Resource N-442, the Granogue Estate, was recommended for listing in the National Register by Delaware in 1971, but the Keeper of the National Register disapproved its listing on the grounds that the estate did not meet National Register criteria as then defined. The other five resources were inventoried on brief survey forms during the years from 1972 to 1976. None of these six resources have been listed in or determined eligible for the National Register.

Due to the lack of standard Delaware SHPO inventory documentation for the six previously identified resources, CRS forms were completed for these properties following field investigation. An additional architectural resource more than 50 years old within the APE, the Donnelly House or N-13709, was identified in field investigation and received documentation via CRS form. Figure 5 depicts the locations of the seven surveyed architectural resources. Table 1 lists the architectural resources recorded by this investigation and summarizes the result of the evaluation. The CRS forms compiled are presented in Appendix A. Full photographic documentation of the properties was completed for the Delaware SHPO inventory. Due to the great number of survey photographs taken for the investigation, however, only a representative selection is presented in this report.

Field investigation identified the Smith's Mill-Granogue Historic District (N-13716), a rural historic landscape containing the seven inventoried resources, all of which constitute contributing elements in the district. The historic district is discussed in detail below and its boundaries are depicted in Figure 5. A Determination of Eligibility form was completed for the historic district, which is presented in Appendix B.

B. Smith's Mill-Granogue Historic District (N-13716)

Most of the APE for the proposed improvement, including the entire portion to the west of Brandywine Creek, lies within the Smith's Mill-Granogue Historic District, a rural historic landscape identified by the architectural resource investigation (see Figure 5). The term *rural historic landscape* refers to the concept developed by the National Park Service to enable the evaluation of rural communities with regard to National Register eligibility (McClelland et al. n.d.). The National Park Service defines a rural historic landscape as "a geographical area that historically has been used by people, or shaped or modified by human activity, occupancy, or intervention, and that possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of areas of land use, vegetation, buildings and structures, roads and waterways, and natural features" (McClelland et al. n.d.:2).

The Smith's Mill-Granogue Historic District extends over an area of approximately 614 acres, of which some 608 acres lie on the west bank of Brandywine Creek in Christiana Hundred, and about six acres are on the east bank in Brandywine Hundred. The district represents the cultural landscape of a rural community, comprising resources evocative of two consecutive periods. During the earlier period represented by the district, the late eighteenth through early twentieth centuries, the landscape was that of an agricultural community typical of those in Delaware's Piedmont region. The land was devoted to mixed farming in which a wide variety of farm products were raised for the inhabitants' own subsistence and substantial quantities of wheat, beef, and butter were produced for market. The wheat and other cereal grains were

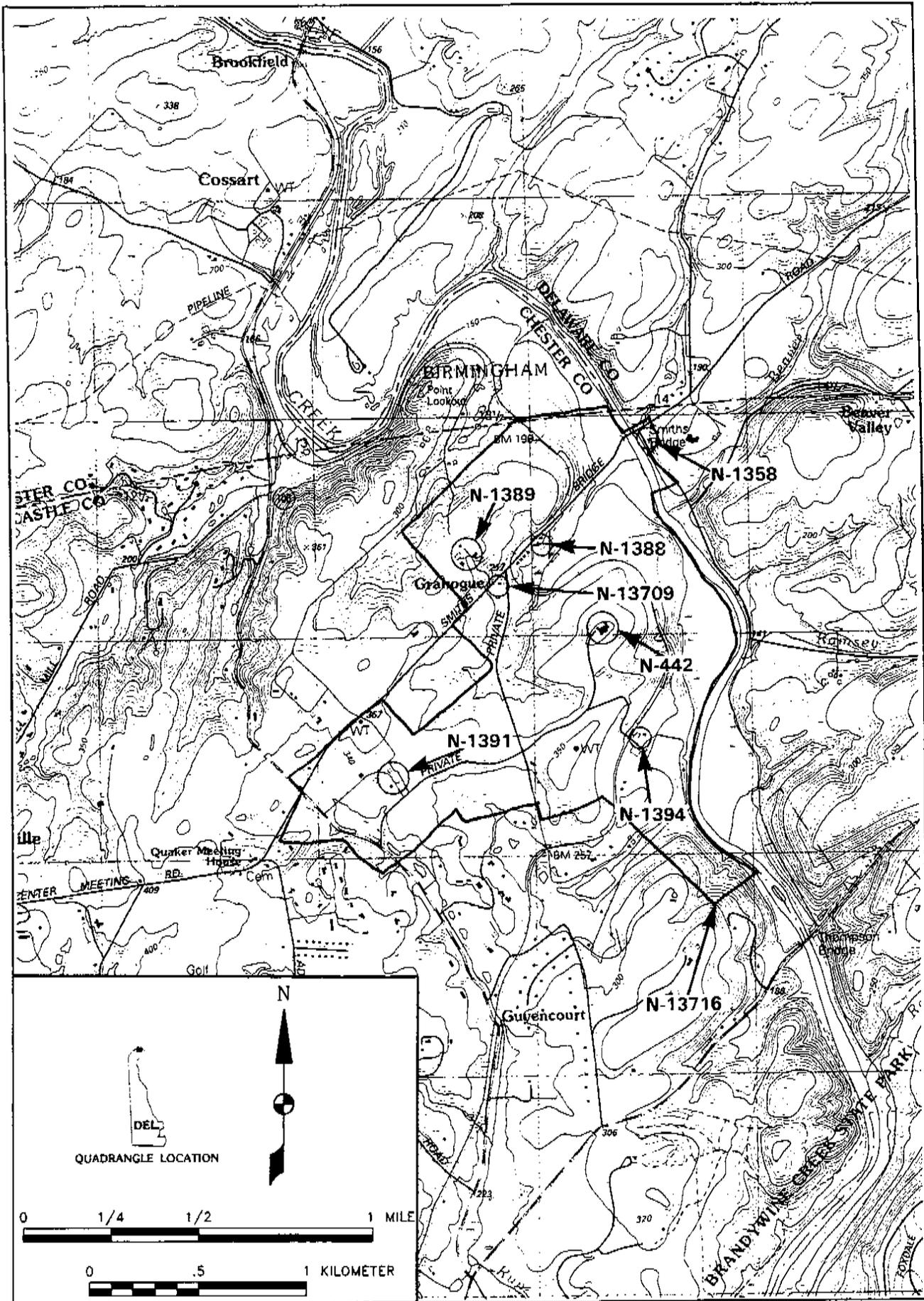


FIGURE 5: Architectural Resources Identified in the Area of Potential Effect

SOURCE: USGS 7.5 Minute Wilmington North, DE-PA Quadrangle, 1993

refined at mills in the neighborhood or elsewhere in the region. The later period, beginning in 1921 with Irénée du Pont's purchase of the Christiana portion of the district and lasting to the present, is characterized by the extensive reshaping of this rural landscape into that of the country house estate, consisting of the mansion, the gardens and landscaped estate grounds, the subordinate homesteads, the employee houses and other auxiliary buildings and structures, and the estate's agricultural lands. Despite the reordering of the district landscape as a portion of the Brandywine Valley "chateau country" in the 1920s, the earlier agrarian landscape remains distinctly traceable in numerous resources evidently surviving from that period: buildings, ruins (such as the foundations of Smith's Mill), roads, rail lines, bridges, mill races, and farm fields, pastures and woodlots. In the course of the survey conducted for this architectural resource investigation, it became apparent that the properties constituting the Smith's Mill-Granogue Historic District possibly form but a portion of a larger contiguous rural historic landscape of consistent character. Identification and documentation of this larger historic district, however, lies beyond the scope of the present investigation.

Over 80 percent of the Smith's Mill-Granogue Historic District (505 of the 614 acres) is encompassed within the bounds of the *Granogue Estate* (N-442), situated on the southeast side of Smiths Bridge Road in Christiana Hundred (Plate 1). On the Granogue property are four pre-1921 homesteads that, in accordance with Delaware SHPO guidelines, are inventoried as individual architectural resources, viz., the Hagey-Palmer House (N-1388) (Plate 2), the McCullough-Barksdale Farm (N-1391) (Plates 3 and 4), the Harvey-Ely Farm (N-1394) (Plates 5-7), and the Donnelly House (N-13709) (Plate 8). Three of these four older houses are accompanied by varying numbers of pre-1921 outbuildings. The Granogue Estate itself contains a wide array of contributing elements dating to the estate years, including the mansion, eleven employee cottages, eleven garages, five bridges, two water towers, and numerous other buildings and structures (Plates 9-22). For the overall Granogue Estate, as well as for the two other properties surveyed during the investigation, all of the constituent buildings and structures of greater than 50 years' age are documented on CRS forms that are presented in Appendix A.

Across Smiths Bridge Road to the northwest from Granogue is the *Chandler-Rust Farm* (N-1389), the fifth farmstead purchased by Irénée du Pont in 1921 (Plates 23-28). This 103-acre property, which constitutes about 17 percent of the district, was given by du Pont to a daughter in 1933. Renovated by Irénée du Pont and by the Rust family during the 1920s and 1930s, it is representative of the sort of "pocket country house estate" that was actually more numerous in most of the rural areas affected by the country house movement than the full-blown estate represented by Granogue itself. Such smaller estates typically consisted of a long-established farmstead with a house renovated according to Colonial Revival stylistic principles.

The final segment of the district's land area consists of an approximately six-acre portion of the Ellis McDonald property situated on the southeast side of Smiths Bridge Road, on the east bank of Brandywine Creek, on which stands the *Smith's Mill House* (N-1358), accompanied by the mill building foundation and raceways (Plates 29-31). (The remaining 27 or so acres of the McDonald property consists of a 1959 mansion and its outbuildings and landscaped grounds of the same date, which do not contribute to the district.) The Smith's Mill House, at present occupied by the caretaker of the McDonald property, and the remnants of the mill complex are clustered by the river and Brandywine Creek Road. The property is landscaped (via topography and plantings) so that the house and mill site are situated in their own discrete area.

The separate parcel of land adjoining the project area roadway on the east bank and on the northwest side of Smiths Bridge Road consists of four acres of pasture with some stable buildings dating to the 1990s. The latter parcel does not contribute to the district.

Although the present superstructure of *Smiths Bridge* dates to 1961, when the covered bridge built in 1839 burned, the abutments and wing walls of the 1839 structure survive in modified form (reduced somewhat in height to improve traffic visibility). These surviving elements of the historic bridge maintain the contour of

that structure, thereby conveying a sense of its historic appearance, so that the bridge demonstrates integrity of feeling and thus constitutes a contributing element in the historic district.

The rail line of the *Wilmington and Northern Railroad* (later a branch line of the Reading Railroad), laid out in 1869, runs through the historic district, passing Smiths Bridge about 1,000 feet to the west. As the rail line was judged in the investigation to lie too far from the portion of roadway proposed for improvement to be affected by the proposed work, it was not documented on a CRS form. It does appear to retain its historic character, however, and hence constitutes a contributing element in the historic district.

The Smith's Mill-Granogue Historic District is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The district is significant under Criterion C, which "applies to properties embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; possessing high artistic values; or representing a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction." In reference to the Smith's Mill-Granogue Historic District, Criterion C is invoked with regard to both of the phases or eras represented on the district's cultural landscape. National Register Bulletin 30 indicates that in a rural historic landscape,

Significant physical qualities may be present in a number of ways. The organization of space, visible in the arrangement of fields or siting of farmsteads, may illustrate a pattern of land use significant for its representation of traditional practices unique to a community. Buildings and outbuildings, whether high-style or vernacular, may be distinctive in design, style, or method of construction, and be representative of historic local or regional trends. . . . Significance may be based on vernacular patterns of land use and division, architecture, circulation, and social order (McClelland et al. n.d.:14, 19).

More than enough buildings and other cultural features survive from the earlier period (i.e., the late eighteenth through early twentieth centuries) to represent the spatial arrangement and vernacular construction typical in the Piedmont region, including dwellings, barns and other farm outbuildings, roads and farm lanes, fields and other farmlands, the traces of historic property division such as fences, tree lines and hedgerows, and the gristmill site and its water races. At Granogue and the Chandler-Rust Farm, the historic district constitutes a landscape evocative of the country house estate era that enjoys a high degree of preservation. The Granogue mansion, perhaps the largest and, atop its high knoll, the most grandly situated of the du Pont mansions, the main water tower, and the main garage with its attached residence are highly distinctive examples of their building types. The Chandler-Rust Farm well exemplifies the more modest form of rural estate.

The Smith's Mill-Granogue Historic District demonstrates the integrity necessary to represent its significance. With generally quite limited modification in the form of post-1950 buildings, additions, and alterations, all three surveyed properties (the Granogue Estate, the Chandler-Rust Farm, and the Smith's Mill House) are essentially intact in terms of their historic character. This is especially true with regard to Granogue, where the preservation sensibility of Irénée du Pont, Jr., the present owner, has operated to preserve the estate's 1920s appearance with a high standard of maintenance and as few modifications to the estate's building stock as practicable. During 1998-1999, Mr. du Pont carried out a complete restoration of the mansion's Aeolian-Skinner house organ (installed in 1923), making the instrument fully operable and preserving one of the very few country house organs present in its original installation in this country. The historic district demonstrates integrity in all seven aspects as defined by the National Park Service: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The boundary of the historic district, depicted in Figure 5, encompasses the three historic architectural properties, including the historic buildings and structures that represent contributing elements as well as the agricultural lands and other open spaces that are historically associated with and serve as the historic setting for the architectural resources.



**PLATE 1: Granogue (N-442), View of Mansion and Surrounding Landscape,
Looking East**

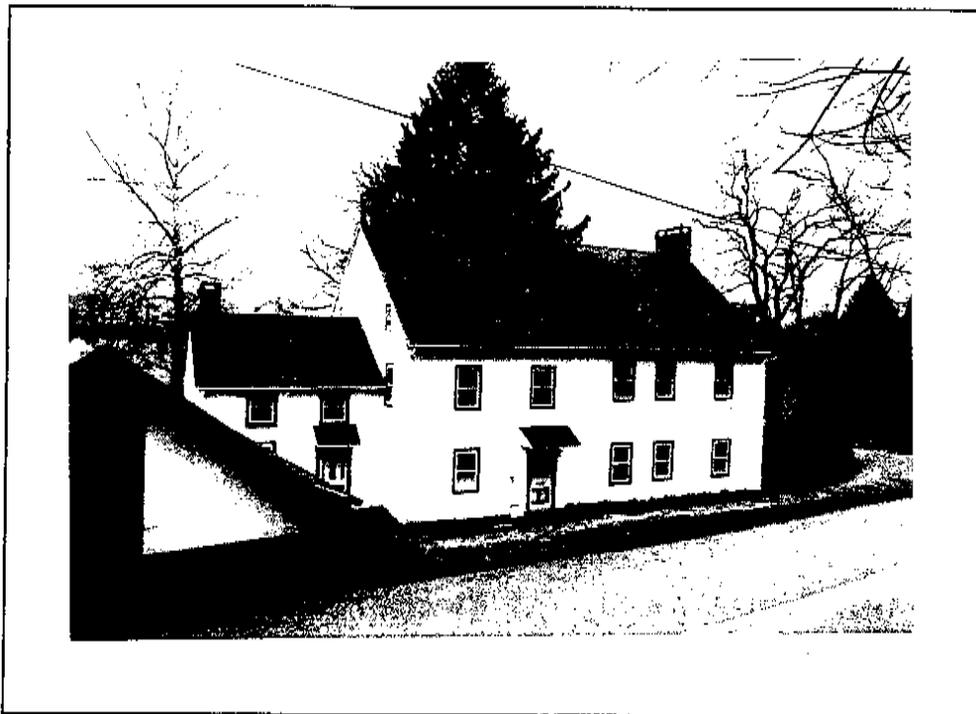


PLATE 2: Hagey-Palmer House (N-1388), Looking South



PLATE 3: McCullough-Barksdale Farm (N-1391), House, Looking North

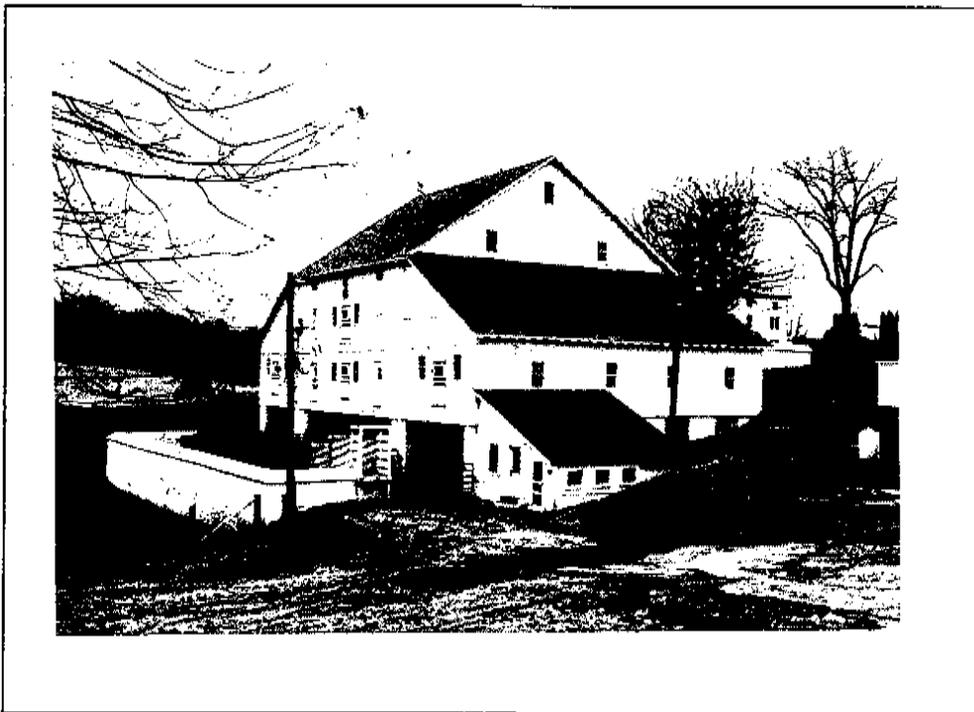


PLATE 4: McCullough-Barksdale Farm (N-1391), Barn, Looking West



PLATE 5: Harvey-Ely Farm (N-1394), House, Looking North

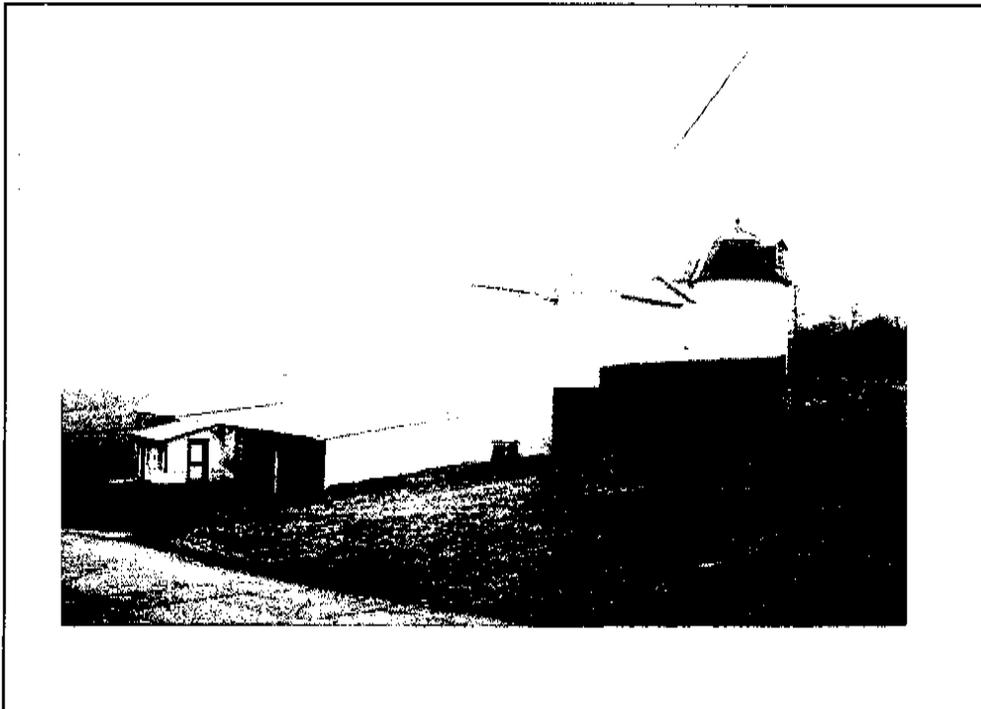


PLATE 6: Harvey-Ely Farm (N-1394), Barn, Looking South

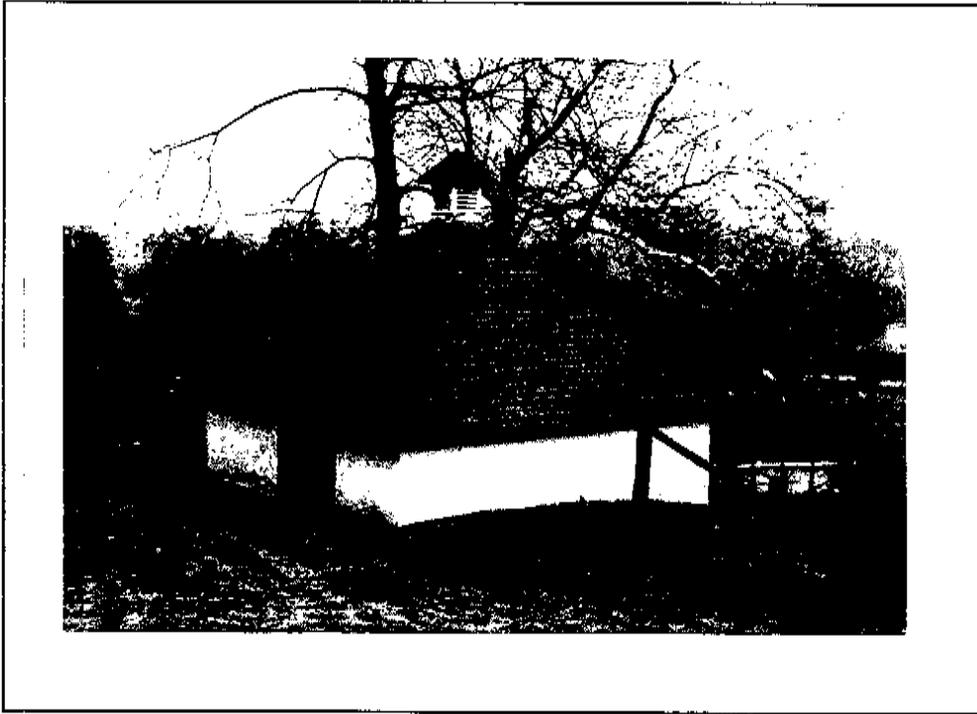


PLATE 7: Harvey-Ely Farm (N-1394), Icehouse, Looking East



PLATE 8: Donnelly House (N-13709), Looking Northeast



PLATE 9: Granogue (N-442), Mansion, Partial View of Principal or Northwest Facade of Main Block (at Center) and Front Wings, Looking East



PLATE 10: Granogue (N-442), Mansion, Southeast and Northeast Facades, Looking West



PLATE 11: Granogue (N-442), Mansion, Southwest Facade, Looking Northeast



**PLATE 12: Granogue (N-442), Group of Employee Cottages by Granogue
Railroad Station Site on Smiths Bridge Road, Looking Northeast**



PLATE 13: Granogue (N-442), Employee Cottage, Looking East



PLATE 14: Granogue (N-442), Employee Cottage, Looking Northeast



PLATE 15: Granogue (N-442), Studio Cottage, Looking Southeast



PLATE 16: Granogue (N-442), Main Garage, Looking Southeast



PLATE 17: Granogue (N-442), Main Garage, Looking North

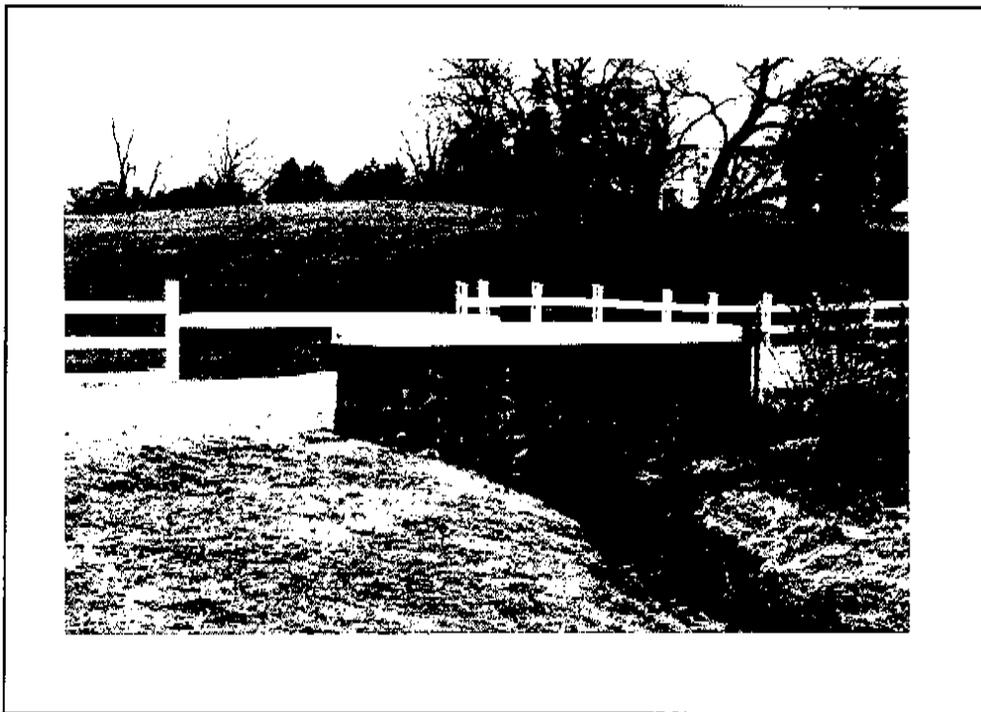
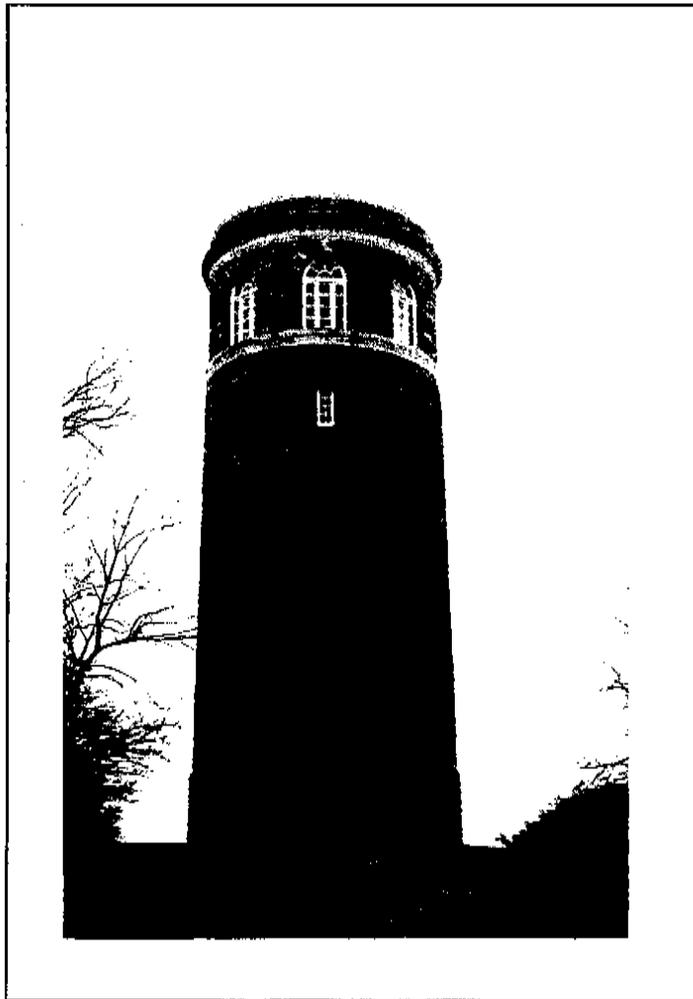


PLATE 18: Granogue (N-442), Bridge, Looking Northwest



**PLATE 19: Granogue (N-442), Former Public Road Bridge (Now Part of Estate),
Looking Southeast**



**PLATE 20: Granogue (N-442), Main Water Tower,
Looking Southeast**

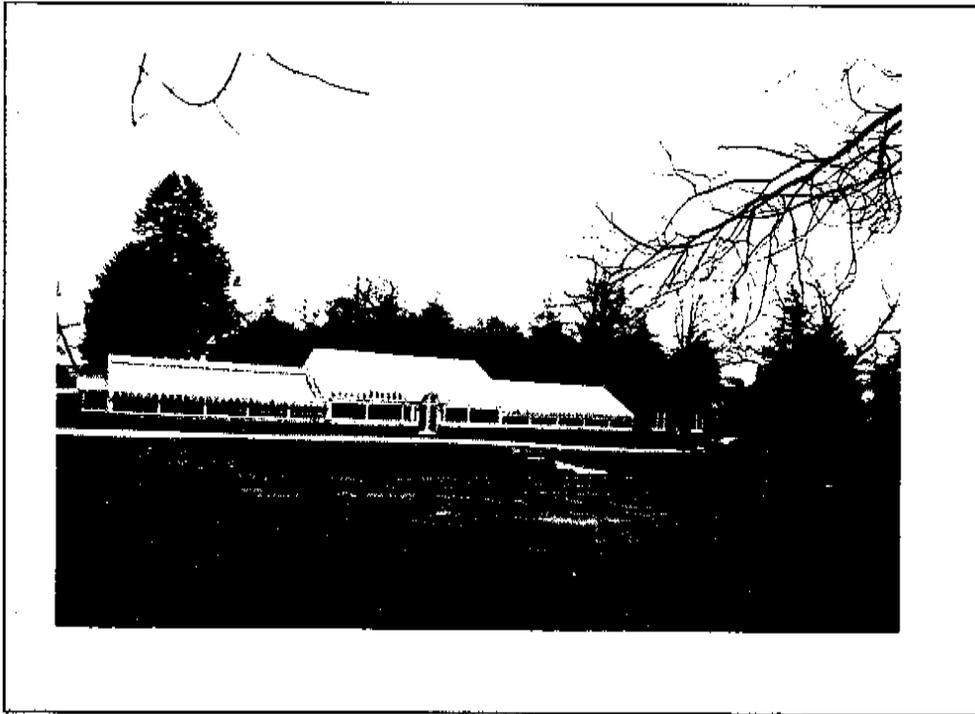


PLATE 21: Granogue (N-442), Greenhouse, Looking North



**PLATE 22: Granogue (N-442), Swimming Pond (with Mansion on Knoll to Rear),
Looking East**



PLATE 23: Chandler-Rust Farm (N-1389), House, Looking South



PLATE 24: Chandler-Rust Farm (N-1389), Barn, Wagon Shed (to Right Rear) and Playhouse (in Foreground), Looking Northeast



PLATE 25: Chandler-Rust Farm (N-1389), Cottage, Looking North

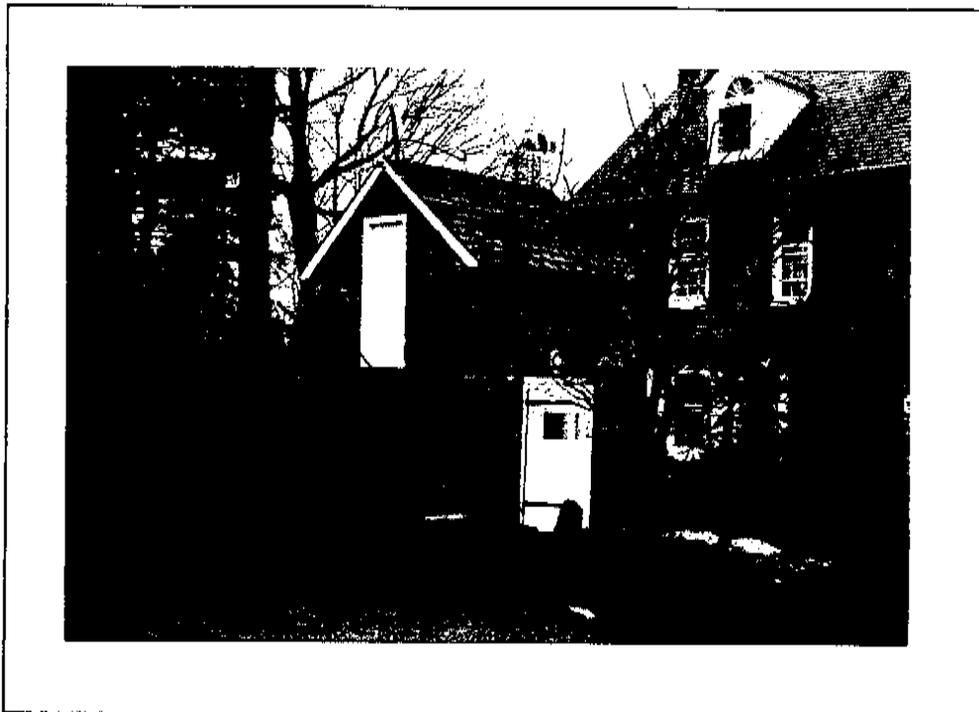


PLATE 26: Chandler-Rust Farm (N-1389), Smokehouse (with House to Rear),
Looking East



PLATE 27: Chandler-Rust Farm (N-1389), Springhouse, Looking West

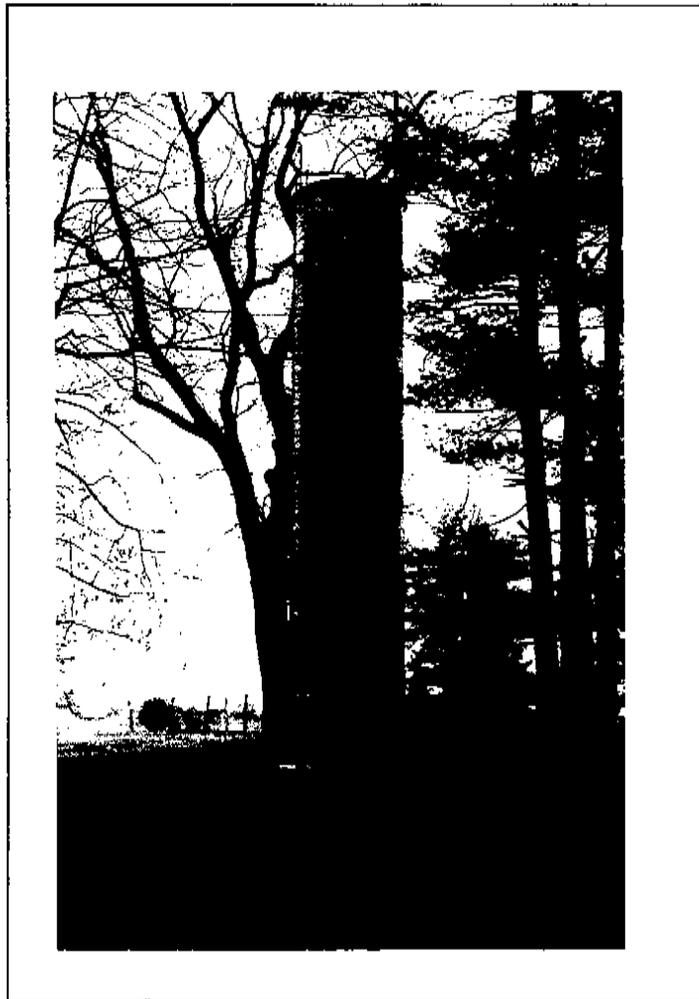


PLATE 28: Chandler-Rust Farm (N-1389), Water Tower, Looking East



PLATE 29: Smith's Mill House (N-1359), View in Context with House to Right Rear, Mill Ruin at Center, and Smiths Bridge to Left, Looking East



PLATE 30: Smith's Mill House (N-1359), Looking East



PLATE 31: Smith's Mill House Property (N-1359), with Mill Ruin in Foreground, Head Race at Center Extending Toward Rear, and House to Left Rear, Looking South