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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NATIONAL REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name West Potato House
other names/site number CRS#-6617

2. Location

street & number Route 2
city, town Delmar
state Delaware code DE county Sussex code 005 zip code 19940
N/A not for publication
x vicinity

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	1	N/A buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site		sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		objects
		1	NA Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
Sweet Potato Houses of Sussex County, Delaware

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. 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. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official *James M. Gifford* - SHPO Date 9/25/90
Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official *INA* Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Patricia Andrews Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 11/15/90

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/processing, storage

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Potato House

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation rock face concrete block

walls wood/weatherboard

roof asphalt shingle w/wood shingle in situ

other brick (chimney)

concrete (cellar floor)

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The West Potato House is a one and one half story, balloon frame structure of tall, narrow proportions built circa 1925 of dimension cut lumber. It is located in Little Creek Hundred, 1/10 of a mile north of Road 454A on the west side of Route 13. The building belongs to a complex which is not being considered for nomination. The surrounding environment includes uncultivated fields and meadows and stands of trees. In close proximity to the building are a barn, a garage, and a house. In 1977 the complex stopped functioning as a farm, though during the sweet potato era the farm was known as the George Culver Farm. It is reported that at one time this complex was the largest farm in the area. The major occupation of the current inhabitants is running a garage and auto parts business. The potato house is strictly a storage building.

The potato house is oriented in typical fashion on a gable end to gable end axis and rests on a six course foundation of rock face concrete block. It measures 37 feet 6 inches by 13 feet 9 inches.

A unique element of the building is a concrete lined cellar. No other potato house found in Delaware contains a cellar. The inclusion of a cellar suggests that the building was used for the storage of additional produce making the building a combination potato house/root cellar.

Fenestration is minimal. Front and rear gable elevations contain one centered second story window and one very small slated, rectangular, ventilation opening in the gable. A centered first story door on the gable front of the building provides access. A modern, gable roof shed has been added to this entryway.

Lateral walls are unfenestrated though two half windows (three lights each) are set into the foundation and light the cellar on lateral sides of the building.

The roof is modern asphalt shingles over original wood shingles.

The original mill sawn weatherboards and corner boards remain intact. Potato bins have been removed. The overall condition of the building is excellent.

See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Agriculture
Architecture

Period of Significance
1925-1937

Significant Dates
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
~~N/A~~ unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The West Potato House is eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places as an excellent example of an architectural reflection of a broad historical trend, and as a significant architectural type. The potato house, as a functional type, relates to the Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan's study unit III under the 1880-1940 period and is an example of that plan's property type 1B reflecting major economic and cultural trends relating to agriculture.

The broad historical pattern to which the potato house is directly linked is the modernization of agricultural practices in southern Delaware during the first half of the twentieth century including the emergence of truck farming, the growth of perishable produce crops, and the development of modern agricultural marketing. The growth of sweet potato cultivation was one of the major manifestations of these changes in production practice and crop choice. The potato house is the remaining physical evidence of this important trend of Sussex County's agricultural history when the sweet potato was "king".

Sweet potato cultivation dominated the region particularly in the years between 1910-1940, and was one of the first crops to benefit from truck farming and modern agricultural marketing. The long (eight month) and multi-phased process of sweet potato production impacted the culture and economy of the rural community in Sussex County during the years of its prominence as one of the area's cash crops.

The potato house is significant as an architectural type. It was essential to the process of sweet potato production in both curing and storage capacities and was developed as a distinct building type to provide the functional needs required for a successful, saleable sweet potato crop. Potato houses share common construction elements and are recognizable on the landscape as belonging to this

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Delaware Agricultural Statistics, Historical Series 1866-1974, Bul. no. 419,
Newark: University of Delaware, Agricultural Experiment Station, 1976.

Hancock, Harold B. The History of Sussex County, Sussex County Bicentennial Committee,
1976.

Herman, Bernard and Siders, Rebecca. The Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation
Plan, prepared for the Delaware State Office of Archaeology and Historic
Preservation, 1987.

Oral History Interviews with retired sweet potato farmers of Sussex County. August 1986.
Tapes with the Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, University of Delaware.

Scharf, Thomas. History of Delaware, 1609-1888, Philadelphia: L. J. Richards & Co., 1888.

See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property .024 acres (506.5 square feet)

UTM References

A	<u>18</u>	<u>450137</u>	<u>4259022</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	_____	_____	_____
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D	_____	_____	_____
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See continuation sheet

Tax Parcel Map#: 5-32-13,9.5

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the site is a rectangle surrounding the potato house and extending five feet from the roof line of the building on all sides.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary is justifiable because this nomination asks for the consideration of only the potato house. The property and additional structures associated with the site are not included in this nomination.

See continuation sheet

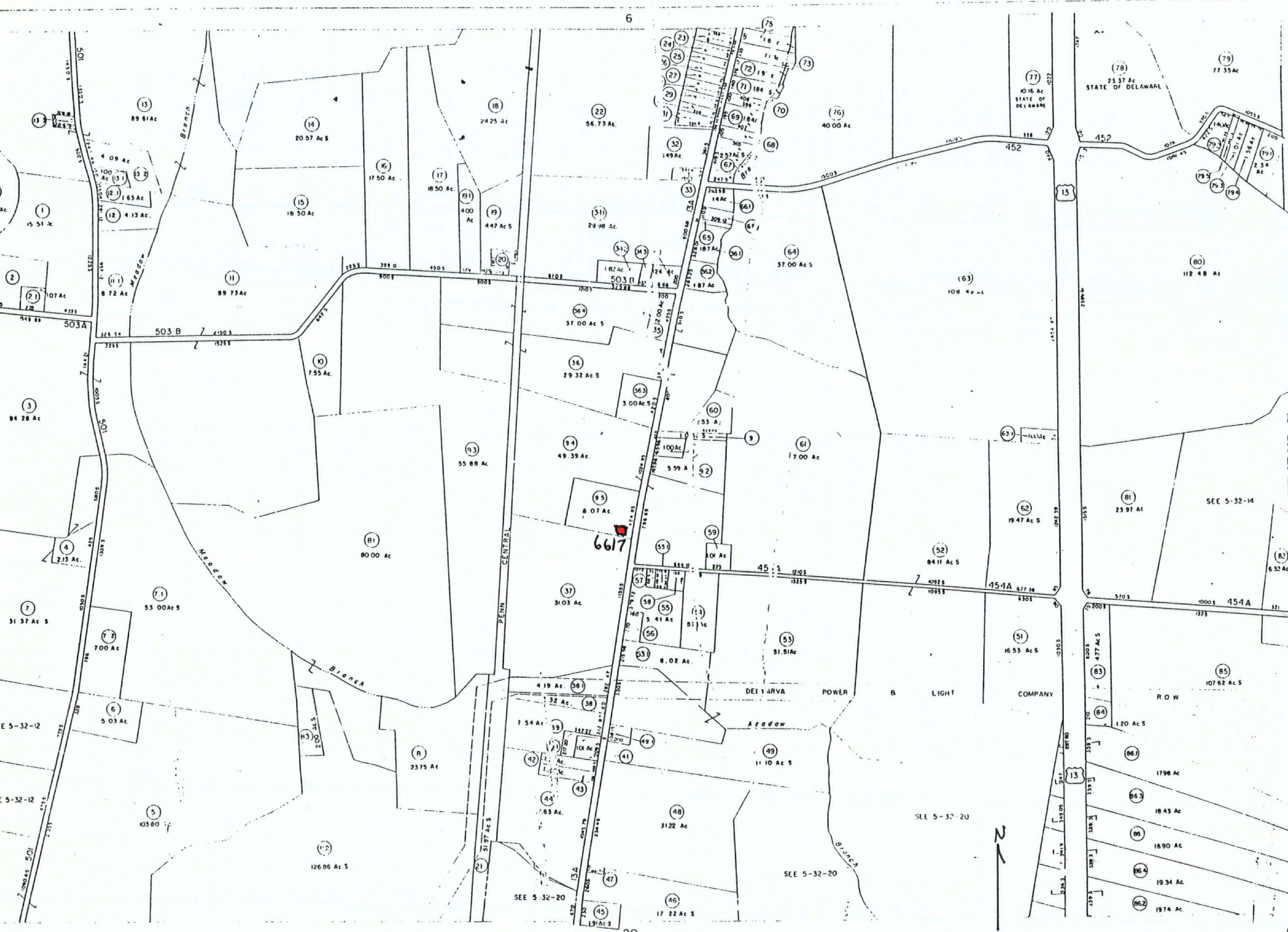
11. Form Prepared By

name/title Judith Quinn
 organization Center for Historic Architecture & Engineering date December 23, 1987
 street & number Urban Affairs, University of Delaware telephone 302-451-2394
 city or town Newark state Delaware zip code 19716

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 1

CRS#-6617

property type. The West Potato House is a significant example of the property type because it retains an important number of elements characteristic of potato house construction and function, and is in excellent condition. These elements include; tall, narrow proportions, minimal fenestration, ventilation features, and tightly fitting door hatches. The structural integrity of the West Potato House contributes substantially to the importance of this building. It shows no signs of deterioration. The concrete cellar is a unique feature in the existing survey of Delaware potato houses and its large size attests to the impact of the sweet potato culture on the George Culver Farm during the 1920s and 1930s. The West Potato House has integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and association.



SUSSEX COUNTY
DELAWARE

LEGEND	
—	County line
- - -	Warded line
---	District line
○	Map parcel number
○	Original lot number
○	Map's area distance

West Polato House, Sussex city, DE
Tax Parcel 5-32-13
Map

DATE OF REVISION
DATE OF PHOTOGRAPHY DECEMBER 1971

THE INFORMATION SHOWN HEREON
HAS BEEN OBTAINED FROM 1970
AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS OF SUSSEX COUNTY, DELAWARE,
AND FROM THE RECORDS OF THE COUNTY ENGINEER.

SERVICE

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

10/1/90

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Sweet Potato Houses of Sussex County MPS

DELAWARE

		Date Listed
COVER	Substantive Review	11/15/90
1. Chipman Potato House	Substantive Review entered in the National Register.	11/15/90
2. Collins Potato House		11/15/90
3. Dickerson Potato House	Substantive Review entered in the National Register.	11/15/90
4. Hearn Potato House		11/15/90
5. Hitch, E. L. Potato House	Substantive Review National Register	11/15/90
6. Moore Potato House		11/15/90
7. Phillips Potato House	Substantive Review entered in the National Register.	11/15/90
8. Ralph Potato House		11/15/90
9. Rider Potato House	Substantive Review entered in the National Register.	11/15/90
10. Stanley Potato House		11/15/90
11. West Potato House	Substantive Review	11/15/90
12. Wright Potato House	Entered in the National Register.	11/15/90

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: West Potato House

MULTIPLE NAME: Sweet Potato Houses of Sussex County MPS

STATE & COUNTY: DELAWARE, Sussex

DATE RECEIVED: 10/01/90 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 10/17/90
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/02/90 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/15/90
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90001701

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: Y SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 11/15/90 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

A good example of the property type (sweet potato house) associated with an important architectural and agricultural historic context in Sussex County, DE.

RECOM./CRITERIA accept A&C
REVIEWER Patrick Anders
DISCIPLINE Historian
DATE 11/15/90

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

count resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

historic current

DESCRIPTION

architectural classification
 materials
 descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

summary paragraph
 completeness
 clarity
 applicable criteria
 justification of areas checked
 relating significance to the resource
 context
 relationship of integrity to significance
 justification of exception
 other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

acreage verbal boundary description
 UTM's boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

sketch maps USGS maps photographs presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

_____ Phone _____

Signed _____ Date _____



West Potato House

Delmar Vicinity, Sussex County, DE

Judith A. Quinn

August, 1986

CHAE - University of Delaware

SE view

⑨



West Potato House

Delmar Vicinity, Sussex County, DE

Judith A. Quinn

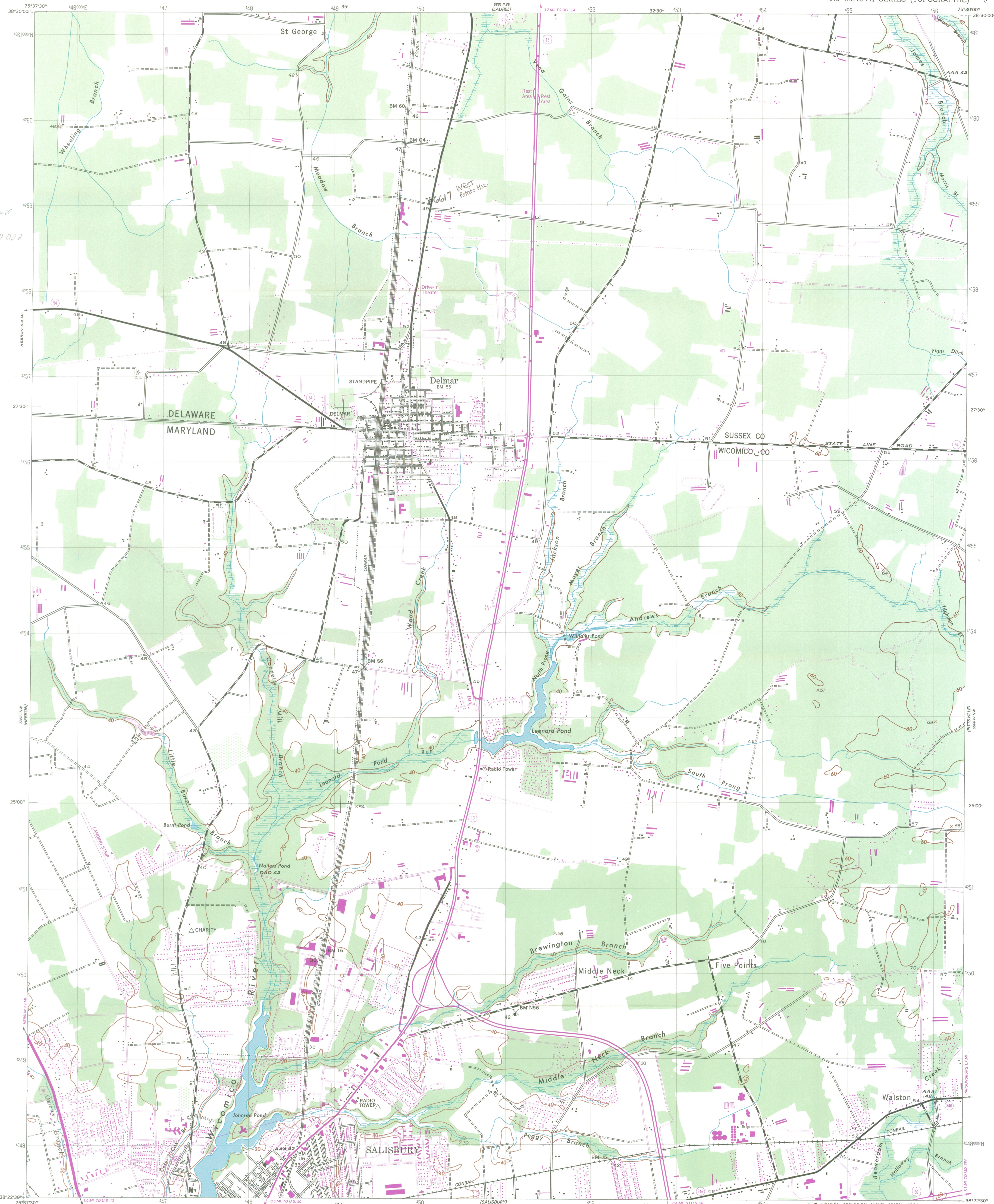
August, 1986

CHAE - University of DE

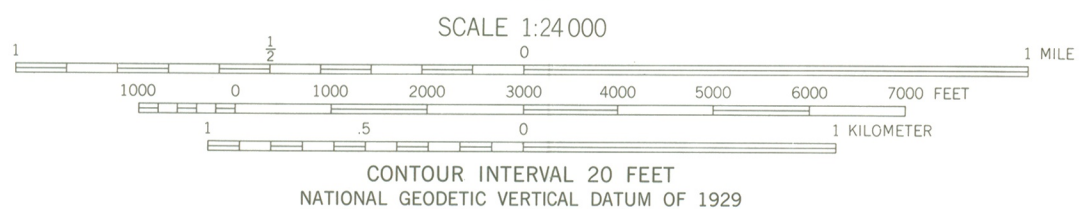
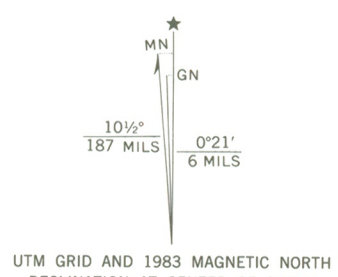
SW view

⑨

West Potomac House
S-6617
18/450132/4259022



Mapped by the Army Map Service
Published for civil use by the Geological Survey
Control by NOS/NOAA
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1942. Topography by planimetric surveys 1942
Polyconic projection, 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Maryland
coordinate system and Delaware coordinate system. 1000-meter
Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 18. 1927 North American
Datum. To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 8 meters south and 31 meters west
as shown by dashed corner ticks
Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled by
the Geological Survey from aerial photographs taken 1982
and other sources. This information not field checked
Map edited 1983



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

DELMAR, MD. - DEL.
38075-05-TF-024

1942
PHOTOREVISED 1983
DMA 5880 I NE - SERIES V833

