

3.0 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW AND HISTORIC CONTEXTS

3.1 Introduction

The history of New Castle County, Delaware, and more specifically Pencader and New Castle hundreds, provides an interpretive context for the evaluation of identified and located historic resources within the APE. The majority of historic resources pertain to Delaware's place in twentieth century American history. However, certain historic resources reflect Delaware's colonial and nineteenth century history.

3.2 Exploration and Frontier Settlement 1630-1730±

This portion of the Delmarva Peninsula witnessed the contests of European imperial powers for control of land and trading opportunities. Initially, colonists from Sweden and the Netherlands fought one another for possession of settlements and forts along the Delaware River. Early attempts by the Dutch to establish a settlement in Delaware Bay date to 1631. Swedish settlement began in 1638 with the arrival of colonists from the New Sweden Company under the direction of the Dutchman Peter Minuit, who served the Swedish royal company and directed the construction of Fort Christina at the site of present-day Wilmington, Delaware. From this palisaded fort, New Sweden briefly dominated the fur trade along the Delaware River.

The Dutch West India Company challenged Swedish hegemony when Governor Peter Stuyvesant launched a military expedition from Manhattan in 1651. By establishing Fort Casimir (presently New Castle), the Dutch obstructed Swedish navigation of the river until 1654, when a Swedish military force captured the fort. Dutch forces returned in 1655, recaptured Fort Casimir, besieged Fort Christina, expelled representatives of Sweden's authority, and placed the region under the jurisdiction of New Netherland. Dutch authority on the Delaware River and the Hudson River capitulated upon the arrival of a British invasion force in 1664. Thereafter, the Duke of York governed the former Dutch colonial holdings.

A 1682 land grant from the Duke of York to William Penn placed the territory south of Pennsylvania and on the western shore of the Delaware Bay and River under the governance of his colony. After 1704, the three lower counties of Pennsylvania received Penn's permission to organize an assembly separate from Pennsylvania.

Early sustained settlement of land within Pencader and New Castle hundreds occurred after a 1701 William Penn grant of 30,000 acres known as the Welsh Tract. The Welsh settlers

developed the natural resources in the Iron Hill area and instantiated Penn's claim to the region against the claims of George Talbot, who also received a grant of land in the area from George Calvert, Lord Baltimore (Scharf 1888:950). Although they oriented their economic activities toward agriculture, the Welsh settlers also constructed iron pits, bloomeries, and furnaces at various times to process the iron ore mined from Iron Hill. By 1725, investors from Philadelphia and the local area organized an iron works known as Abbington Furnace at Iron Hill, which operated sporadically until 1735 (Owen and Owen 1977:4-5; Scharf 1888:951, 957).

The cultivation and processing of grains and other agricultural goods also characterized the economic pursuits of early settlers. Wheat was the principal crop, and also corn. Members of the New Sweden colony erected gristmills prior to 1650. The Dutch also established mills at their settlements along the Delaware (Weslager 1970:52-58). Milling on tributaries of the Brandywine River date to 1687 (Pursell 1958:5). Due to its location between the Brandywine and Christina rivers, Wilmington developed as a mercantile community and shipping point based on trade and milling. By the early eighteenth century, New Castle County was a major exporter of flour, reaching markets in the West Indies, as well as fellow colonies, and two provinces in Quebec (Kuhlmann 1929:20-22).

3.3 Intensified and Durable Occupation 1730-1770±

Settlement in the Upper Peninsula Zone greatly increased. Settlements became villages, and villages became towns. Town development corresponded to the prosperity of the wheat trade, milling, shipping, and location on trade routes (Siders *et al.* 1993:12). In the project APE, a hamlet began to develop around Aiken's Tavern, located near the juncture of major east-west and north-south transportation routes.

During this time period, the large land holdings that had characterized the Welsh Tract increasingly were subdivided into smaller farms of both the owner-occupied and tenant varieties. Farmers also now cleared greater portions of their land for crop farming, leaving fewer acres in wood lots and pastures. Wheat and corn remained the principal crops (Siders *et al.* 1993:12-13).

The intensification of agriculture strained available farm labor, and some planters augmented the indentured labor force with chattel slaves. African slaves arrived in the colony through the commercial, maritime activities of Dutch slave traders and the emigration of Maryland tobacco planters in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The number of slaves increased throughout the eighteenth century, reaching approximately 2,000 in 1775. Efforts to

abolish the slave trade in the colony resulted in the General Assembly producing a measure to that effect. However, Governor John Penn vetoed the legislation. After the Declaration of Independence, the new state constitution prohibited the import and export of slaves (Munroe 1984:53-58).

3.4 Early Industrialization 1770-1830±

The War for Independence touched the Route 40 Improvements project APE. During the American Revolution, British and Hessian troops marched through New Castle County in 1777 as they sought to capture Philadelphia. In an effort to block the British advance on Philadelphia, American infantry engaged an advanced force of British infantry and Hessians at Cooch's Bridge and forced the main British army to move northward. Before and after the action at Cooch's Bridge, British officers utilized the buildings in the hamlet of Aiken's Tavern for headquarters prior to their movement to the battlefield at the Brandywine River in September 1777 (Scharf 1888:958). As a result of its historic and architectural significance, Aiken's Tavern was designated a NRHP historic district in 1977.

In the late eighteenth century, the hamlet of Aiken's Tavern grew into a crossroads community that featured a stage stop on the New Castle and Frenchtown Turnpike, the precursor to U.S. Route 40 and the major east-west route through the region. The 1800 U.S. Census enumerated 25 buildings and 159 inhabitants of Aiken's Tavern (Rogers and Easter 1959:52; Scharf 1888:958). The name Glasgow, a reference to the surname of an early landowner, had been used to describe the hamlet since the 1790s, but Glasgow gained prominence in the 1820s and Aiken's Tavern was discarded (Catts and Custer 1990:21).

The hamlet served travelers on the road between Newark and Middletown (precursor to old S.R. 896/Glasgow Avenue) and on the New Castle and Frenchtown Turnpike (precursor to Route 40/Pulaski Highway), which ran between Head of Elk, Maryland and the city of New Castle. Early efforts to develop a canal across the Delmarva Peninsula favored an alignment near this hamlet in 1801, but the project stalled due to insufficient funding. Later, the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal was completed in 1829, on an alignment farther south of Glasgow (Hoffecker 1977:39-40; Scharf 1888:948-949, 954).

Aside from Aikens Tavern/Glasgow, the land within the project APE remained decidedly rural and agricultural during this period. The profitability of agriculture in New Castle County, however, began to decline in the early nineteenth century, a trend experienced in other Atlantic seaboard states. Exhausted soil and fertile lands in the West reduced land values in the region.

To revive agriculture from its depressed state, elite farmers promoted various farming reform movements. The experiments and writings that Thomas Jefferson and James Madison produced for the Agricultural Society of Albemarle typified this effort to preserve the nation's agrarian character. Taking up the call in Pencader Hundred, Samuel H. Black, a prominent doctor, brigadier general of the state militia, and member of the state legislature, advocated improvements to farming techniques and demonstrated his innovative farming methods at LaGrange (N-576), his farm located in Glasgow. Black participated in the Agricultural Society of New Castle County (formed in 1819) and built a granary at LaGrange that incorporated his ideas for improvement by facilitating access for wheeled vehicles (Allmond 1958:56-61; Herman 1987:116-118). The granary was included in a 1985 Historic American Building Survey and still stands on the farm (HABS No. DE-216). LaGrange is located west of the Route 40 APE.

The improved agricultural techniques, combined with a generally favorable combination of soils and climate, would make lower New Castle County, an area that includes the project APE, the wealthiest agricultural district in the state on the strength of the high wheat and dairy yields. The proponents of scientific agriculture brought an industrial order to farming as they sought to place it on a more rational basis. To propagate their ideas, they owned more than one farm, while also investing in speculative ventures such as transportation, banking, or manufacturing. Multiple farm ownership increased the tenancy rate and decreased the number of slaves held. Consequently, the slave population gradually declined during the nineteenth century, particularly in New Castle County (Herman 1987:6; Siders *et al.* 1993:13). Between 1770 and 1900, tenant farms accounted for approximately one-half of the farms in the region. Tenancy benefited both the landlord and tenant. The landlord could keep fields in cultivation and reduce the need to hire seasonal farm labor. The tenant gained access to larger and more productive farms, and received a chance to acquire livestock and farm equipment. Tenancy provided a way to maximize yields and profits. Tenant farms in New Castle County tended to be larger and more intensively worked than owner-occupied farms (Siders *et al.* 1991:3, 26).

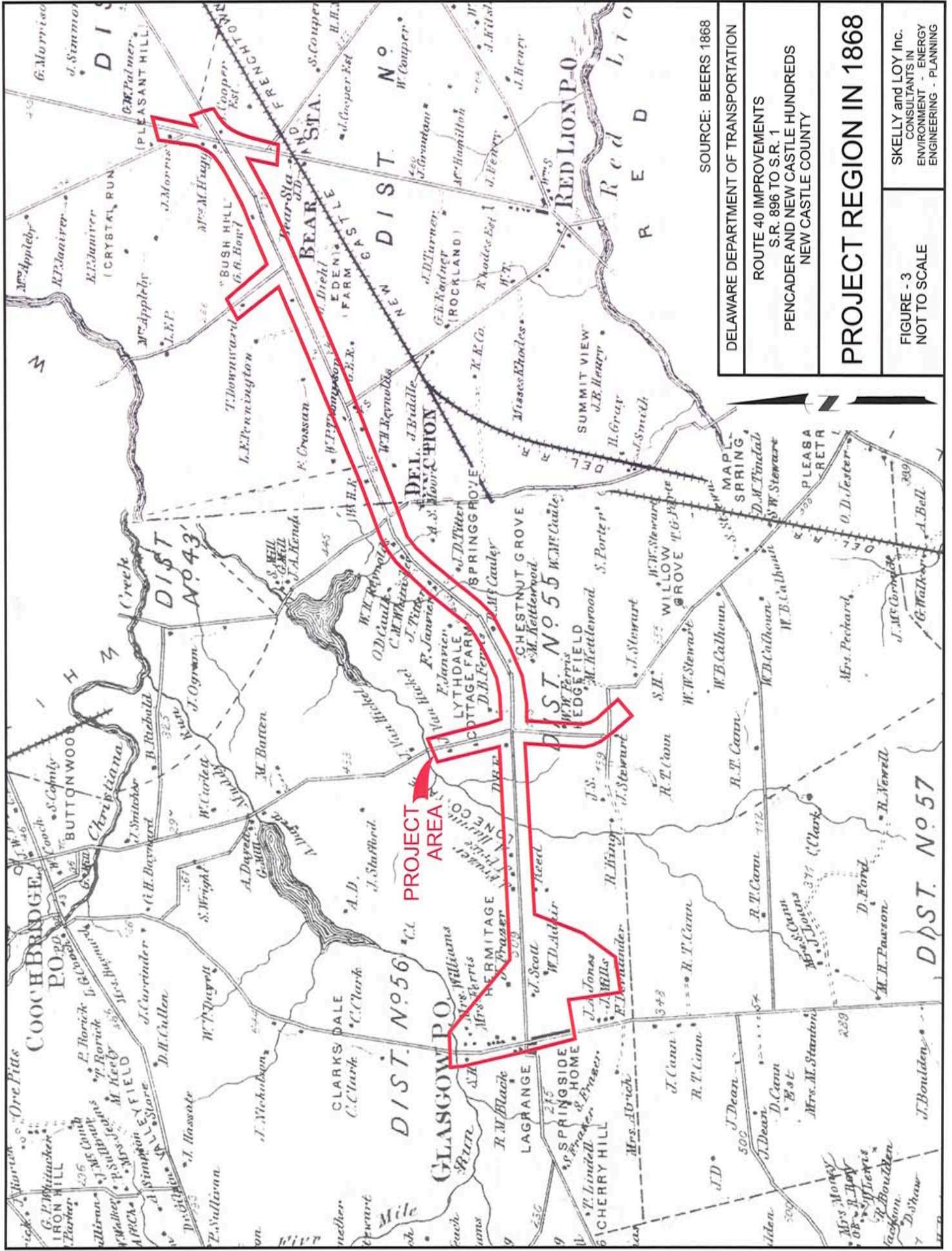
The tenets of scientific farming extended into the domestic sphere as well. Elite farmers transformed how the household was built and organized, incorporating kitchen and service wings into the main house, constructing new and more specialized buildings, and rationalizing the location of outbuildings. The result was an architectural renewal that began at the close of the period, which would reach full flower in the middle and late nineteenth century (Siders *et al.* 1993:13-14).

3.5 Industrialization and Early Urbanization 1830-1880±

The architectural renewal and rebirth begun in the 1820s would continue into the last quarter of the century. From approximately 1820 to 1870, there were three roughly concurrent types of domestic architectural activity: the remodeling of existing structures; the replacement of old buildings with completely new ones, and the substantial remodeling of new buildings within a few years of their initial construction (Herman 1987:12). During the same period, houses were often given names, both to distinguish them from other farms in the region, and to create and evoke a sense of identity (Herman 1987:122-123).

One farmhouse in the project APE dates from this period, the Ferris/Shuman Farmstead (a second, the Pennington/Fox Farm, was lost to fire between the initial survey and this report). The Ferris/Shuman Farmstead was built in the mid-nineteenth century, apparently as a new house, in the then-current Italianate style. Also called Lythdale Cottage Farm, it was part of a family enclave located on both sides of what is now Route 40. Multiple farm complexes in close proximity owned by the same family was a common phenomenon in New Castle County at the time (Beers 1868; G.M. Hopkins & Company 1881; Siders *et al.* 1993:33) (Figures 3 and 4). It was owned by the Ferris family, whose home farm was historically located across the road from where the Ferris/Shuman Farmstead now sits. In 1849, the Ferris/Shuman Farmstead was listed as the property of M. James. In 1868, at the approximate time the Ferris/Shuman farmhouse was built, the farm was owned by D.B. Ferris. Historical records indicate that this was D. Brainerd Ferris, a farmer who grew predominantly grains (Bureau of the Census 1870, 1880). In addition to the farmhouse, the atlas indicated two other houses in the immediate vicinity as belonging to him (Beers 1868). They and the Ferris/Shuman Farmstead were apparently either rental properties or tenant farms. None but the Ferris/Shuman farmhouse is extant.

Agriculture continued to define the local economy of the project region to the close of the 1830-1880 period. The types of crops grown shifted, however. As the Midwest began to dominate the grain market, local farmers turned to mixed agriculture emphasizing dairying and beef cattle and fruits and vegetables, commodities that could exploit nearby urban markets through an improved transportation infrastructure. Grains were still grown, but primarily as fodder, rather than as an export crop. Peaches also became an important market crop beginning in the 1830s (De Cunzo and Garcia 1992:26-27). The transportation improvements that made the transition possible included the completion of the Chesapeake & Delaware Canal in 1829, and the opening of the east-west New Castle & Frenchtown Railroad in 1831. The



SOURCE: BEERS 1868

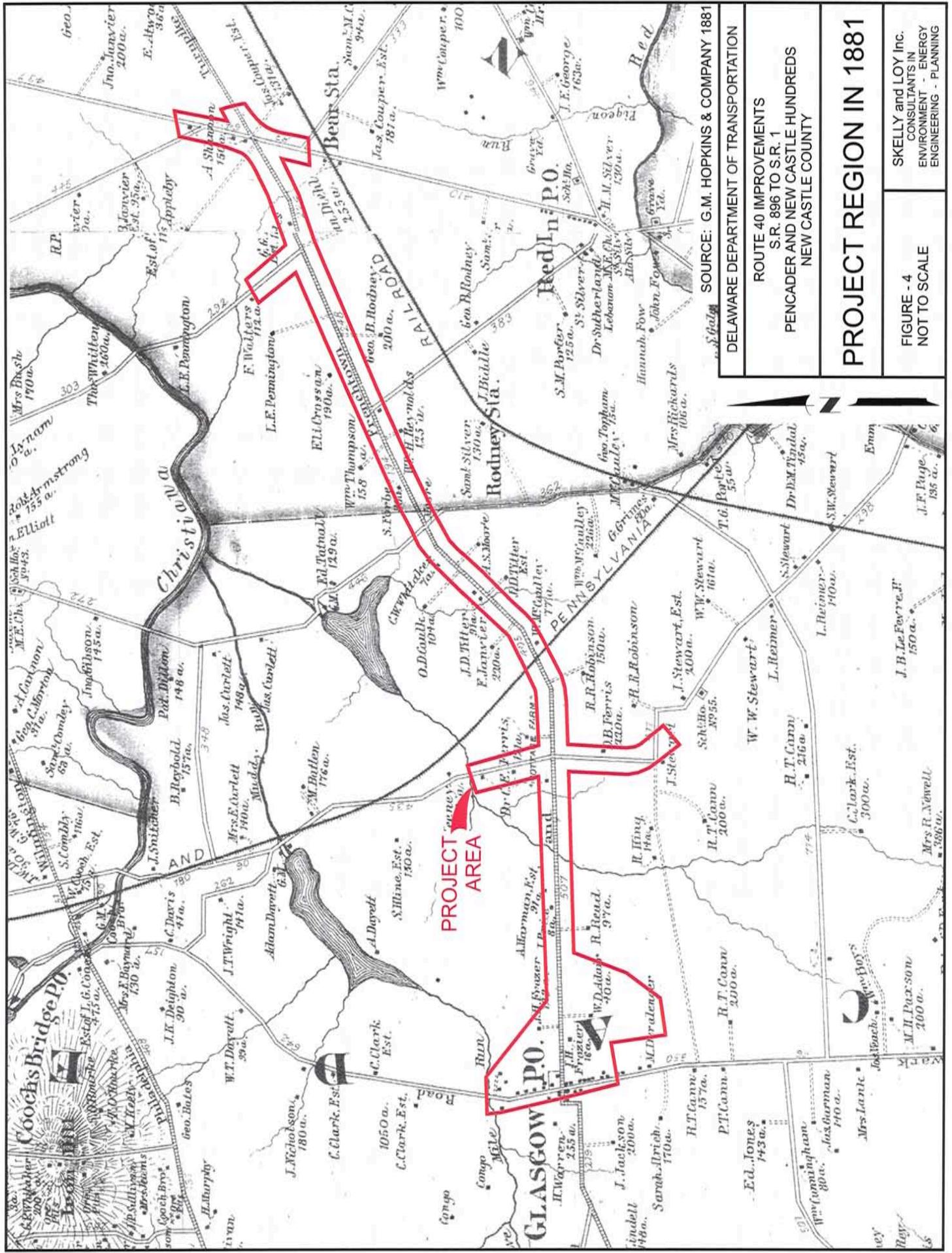
DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROUTE 40 IMPROVEMENTS
 S.R. 896 TO S.R. 1
 PENCADER AND NEW CASTLE HUNDREDS
 NEW CASTLE COUNTY

PROJECT REGION IN 1868

FIGURE - 3
 NOT TO SCALE

SKELLY and LOY Inc.
 CONSULTANTS IN
 ENVIRONMENT - PLANNING
 ENGINEERING - PLANNING



SOURCE: G.M. HOPKINS & COMPANY 1881
 DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
 ROUTE 40 IMPROVEMENTS
 S.R. 896 TO S.R. 1
 PENCADER AND NEW CASTLE HUNDREDS
 NEW CASTLE COUNTY
PROJECT REGION IN 1881
 SKELLY and LOY Inc.
 CONSULTANTS IN
 ENVIRONMENT - ENERGY
 ENGINEERING - PLANNING

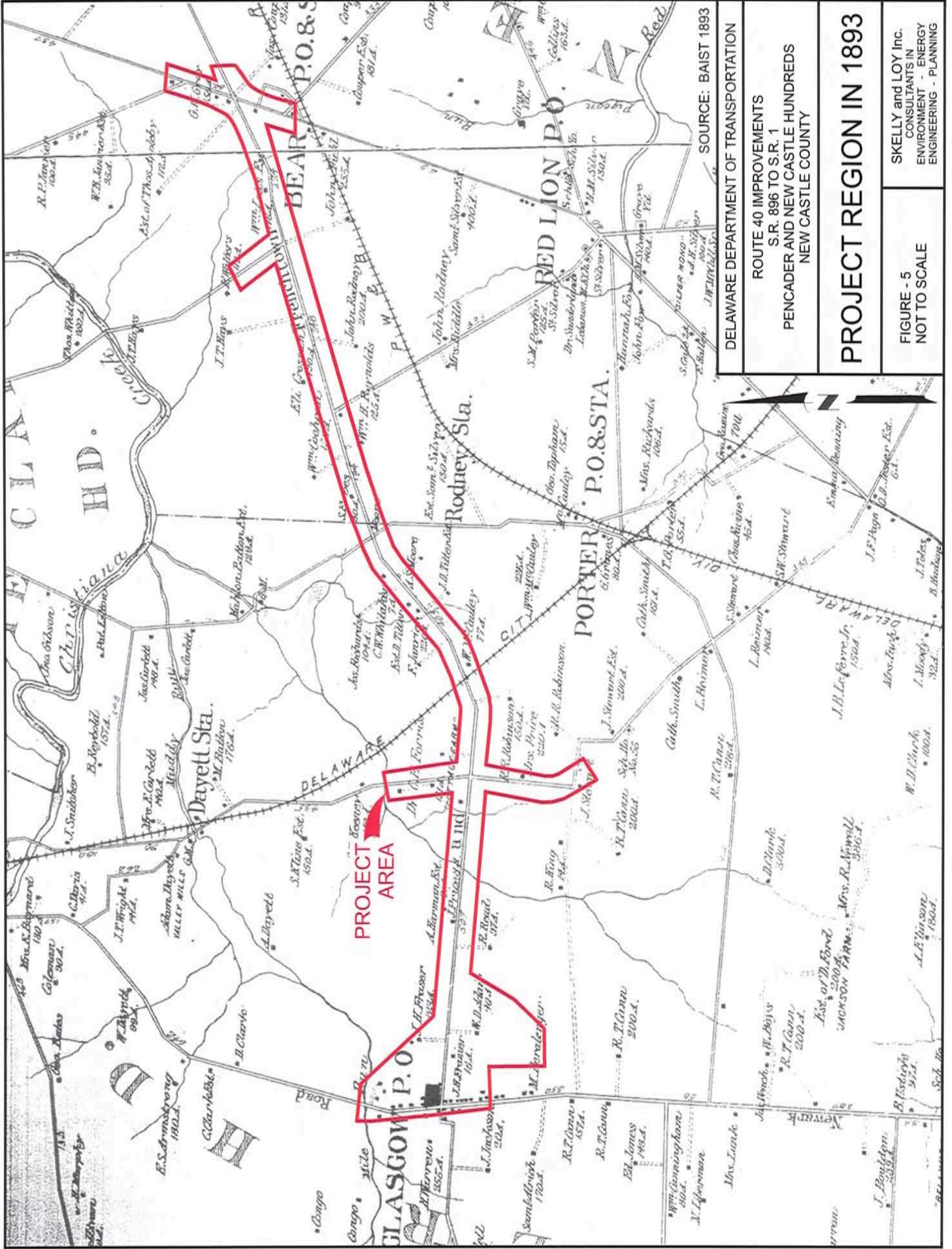
FIGURE - 4
 NOT TO SCALE

railroad right-of-way approximated the path of U.S. Route 40. The canal and railroad made it easier for farmers to move produce to ports on both the Delaware River and the Chesapeake Bay. But the transportation improvements most beneficial to the farmers of central Delaware were the construction of the Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore Railroad (PW&B) in the late 1830s and early 1840s and the building of the downstate Delaware Railroad in the 1850s. The railroads provided farmers with fast, all-weather connections to the urban markets of Philadelphia, New York, and Washington, D.C. (Lichtenstein Consulting Engineers, Inc. 2000:36-39). Another railroad line was constructed through the project APE in the 1870s, the Pennsylvania & Delaware Railroad. The Pennsylvania & Delaware Railroad ran from Pomeroy, Pennsylvania to Delaware City and sought to capture some of the bituminous coal trade carried by the Pennsylvania Railroad's main line (Scharf 1888:948). The railroad right-of-way passed through Pencader Hundred east of Glasgow (Baist 1893; G.M. Hopkins & Company 1881) (see Figure 4; Figure 5). The Pennsylvania & Delaware Railroad was a relatively minor player in the Pennsylvania Railroad's Delaware operations (Hayman 1979:61-62).

The shift in crop production did not decrease the rates of agricultural tenancy; in fact, it became quite pronounced. Tenant farms accounted for approximately half of the farms in New Castle County, with many of the farms featuring domestic dwellings built specifically for tenants (Sheppard *et al.* 2001; Siders *et al.* 1991:3). Not everyone agreed that the arrangement was for the best. Scharf, in his 1888 state history, wrote that "Many large tracts of land are held by non-residents and are occupied by a class of citizens, whose tenure being uncertain, they do not become deeply interested in the affairs of their transient homes" (Scharf 1888:852).

The rural nature of New Castle and Pencader hundreds in general and of the APE in particular is reflected in nineteenth century atlases. As maps from the mid- and late nineteenth century indicate (Baist 1893; Beers 1868; G.M. Hopkins & Company 1881) (see Figures 3 and 4; Figure 5), the area along what is now Route 40 (then the New Castle and Frenchtown Turnpike) was lined with farms of various sizes. The amount of land within each farm seems to be in keeping with the mid-nineteenth century New Castle County range of large estates approximating 80.9 ha (200.0 ac) and small farms with as little as 10.1 ha (25.0 ac) (Herman 1987:113-114).

Town development was limited in the APE, due to the economic activity of communities closer to the Delaware River. "The relation of Wilmington, New Castle City, and Newport and other towns outside the bounds of the hundred has prevented the founding of other villages, with their separate business histories" (Scharf 1888:852). An exception was Bear, located at the east end of the Route 40 Improvements Project APE in New Castle Hundred. In the early



SOURCE: BAIST 1893

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROUTE 40 IMPROVEMENTS
 S.R. 896 TO S.R. 1
 PENCADER AND NEW CASTLE HUNDREDS
 NEW CASTLE COUNTY

PROJECT REGION IN 1893

FIGURE - 5
 NOT TO SCALE

SKELLY and LOY Inc.
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 ENGINEERING - PLANNING

nineteenth century, Bear featured a tavern. It developed as a crossroads community at the point where the Christiana to Red Lion Road intersected the New Castle and Frenchtown Turnpike. Another road, the Old Hamburg Road, connected Bear to Hamburg Cove on the Delaware River. The tavern was demolished in 1845. Later, the hamlet functioned as a station stop serving the New Castle & Frenchtown Railroad, which first used horse-drawn carriages on tracks. At the Bear Station, fresh horse teams replaced exhausted horses coming from either Glasgow or New Castle (Hoffecker 1977:43). Soon steam engines replaced horses, and the railroad constructed a station and water tank by the 1850s. Bear featured a newly built railroad station in 1882, but the station was demolished in the 1950s (Scharf 1888:428-429, 853). The building stock of Bear in the nineteenth century included two general stores, a blacksmith shop, an Odd Fellows hall, a village green, a post office, and railroad buildings (Traver and Thomas 2002).

A distinct community type that flourished during the 1830-1880 period were African American enclaves in the vicinity of African Union Methodist (A.U.M.) churches and facilities that processed agricultural products, particularly after the abolition of slavery (Livesay 1968:93-96; Munroe 1984:145-152; Skelcher 1995). Many factors accounted for their development, including the need for a permanent and tractable labor force, state sanctioned racist policies (such as the deliberate non-collection of taxes from African Americans by local authorities in order to deny blacks voting rights and participation on juries and substandard public education for blacks), and a desire for self-determination and financial independence.

In Pencader Hundred, the African American community centered its secular and religious activities at the St. Thomas A.U.M. Church, historically located on U.S. Route 40 outside of the project APE. The building is no longer extant. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the African American population of Pencader Hundred accounted for approximately 35 percent of the whole. In numbers, it had the second largest African American population in Delaware, ranking behind only Wilmington. The St. Thomas community sponsored an annual camp meeting and religious revival to correspond with a larger church gathering and community festival in Wilmington known as the Big Quarterly (Baldwin 1981:197-211; Catts and Custer 1990:68-69; Skelcher 1995:117). According to a local informant, a number of African American owned farms were located south of Route 40 and S.R. 896. They included the 8.1 ha (20.0 ac) farm of his great-grandfather, James Alfred Price, located on the south side of Route 40 just east of S.R. 896. His great-grandfather and his descendants also farmed other land in the vicinity, either as owners, renters, or tenants (Robert Price, personal communication 2002).

3.6 Urbanization and Early Suburbanization 1880-1940±

During this time period, agricultural practices underwent another transformation. Increased mechanization, electrification, the introduction of gasoline-powered tractors and trucks, the subdivision of farms into smaller tracts, and the beginning of large-scale poultry production produced an expansion of truck farming and dairy products. Older buildings, particularly those built to house draft animals, were replaced or put to new uses (Siders *et al.* 1993:45). Tenancy remained a “central feature of the sociocultural context of agriculture in the state,” and good tenants remained a feature of the socioeconomic landscape into the 1920s, when a scarcity of good tenants began. This made farm land ownership by landlords a less satisfactory investment (De Cunzo and Garcia 1992:188-190).

Farming also began to play a less prominent role in the economy, as canneries and other new industries began to be established. Strips of farmland located along transportation routes also began to be subdivided for residential development (Siders *et al.* 1993:47-48). The houses built on these new lots were often vernacular buildings, with the massing and minimal details influenced by the architectural styles popular during the time period, including Colonial Revival, Craftsman, Bungaloids, and Cape Cods. The only evidence of such residential construction within the project APE includes six houses east of Porter Road in the project APE, which are representative of this trend.

The use of gasoline-powered engines had an impact far beyond agriculture. The growing affordability of private automobiles and popularity of automobile tourism made the construction of better roads a priority. The Delaware State Highway Department was formed in 1917 to construct and improve Delaware’s primary road system (Lichtenstein Consulting Engineers, Inc. 2000:10-11). In the 1920s, state highway engineers began improving U.S. Route 40. Some envisioned developing it into a coast-to-coast highway. By 1927, U.S. Route 40 extended through Delaware into New Jersey, *via* ferry service. After 1950, the Delaware Memorial Bridge carried vehicles over the Delaware River.

As traffic volumes increased on Route 40, the Delaware State Highway Department undertook various projects to increase safety on the road. For example, the highway was widened to the south through the addition of a new eastbound lane in 1933 (Delaware State Highway Department 1933, 1934). In 1945, the westbound lane was widened (Delaware State Highway Department 1945).

The increasing number of travelers touring the United States in private cars and improvements to the highway system contributed to the development of the tourist service

industry. In the 1910s and 1920s, automobile camping, or “gypsying,” became increasingly popular. To accommodate automobile travelers, first municipalities and then private businesses began developing campgrounds. Around 1920, some campgrounds began to build cabins or cottages. They tended to be small, homey buildings offering bedrooms, stoves, and a screened porch. Indoor plumbing became common during the 1930s and 1940s. The cabins were frequently arranged in a semicircle around the campground’s combination office, manager’s quarters, and restaurant/store; often there were gasoline pumps out in front of it. Cabin courts grew phenomenally, rising from 1,000 recognized by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in 1922 to 32,000 camps in 1934. Beginning in the late 1930s, the units would be built together with common walls, and the motel would be born (Rosin and Bowers 1992:13-15). Within the project APE, a cabin camp named the Crow’s Nest, Inc., was historically located in the vicinity of the intersection of U.S. Route 40 and Porter Road. According to mapping for road improvements in 1933, the Crow’s Nest featured eight small cabins in a grove of trees, a two-story, frame house, and a garage (Delaware State Highway Department 1933). Highway engineers mapped the tourist cabins as late as 1945 (Delaware State Highway Department 1945). The Crow’s Nest is no longer extant.

Other buildings and facilities developed by the 1930s, including service stations and auto parts stores; automobile showrooms; bus stations; diners and other eating establishments; and roadside stands (LeeDecker *et al.* 1992:202-301). Historically, the largest grouping of gas stations, diners, and motels near the project APE stood at the intersection of Routes 40 and 13, east of the APE. It featured a wide array of tourist and trucker services (Brusca 2002). One building within the project APE operated as an automobile showroom for a short period of time.

3.7 Suburbanization and Exurbanization 1940-Present

What began as rudimentary tourist camps with limited service facilities evolved into the motel industry after World War II (Belasco 1981:passim; Hoffecker 1988:183; Munroe 1984:203). The boom years of motel construction occurred in the immediate post-World War II era. Between 1939 and 1952, for example, the number of motels/motor courts jumped from 13,000 to 41,000. The motel industry during this era through the late twentieth century was also characterized by franchise or chain ownership and standardization in design. The most common design employed during this era is now ubiquitous: a U-shaped complex with the office in the center. Many early motels employed Colonial Revival-esque touches, to facilitate

identification by a traveler on the highway (LeeDecker *et al.* 1992:299-301). One motel building is located within the project APE.

The post-World War II era was also a time of intense residential and commercial construction in the Upper Peninsula Zone. The trend actually began in New Castle County in the early 1900s, but it accelerated in the mid-century. Increasing job opportunities in manufacturing and the industrial chemical sector diminished the predominance of agriculture. Farms were subdivided into smaller units of production and other uses (De Cunzo and Garcia 1992:28-29). Populous New Castle County became increasingly suburban in nature, characterized by tract housing, suburban subdivisions, and strip commercial development. The impetuses were the end of World War II, phenomenal population growth, high employment rates, and a general feeling of optimism about economic expansion. As G.I.s returned home and began families, a building boom occurred; for the first time in history more Americans owned than rented houses (Clark 1986:193-199, 206).

The suburban tract housing that appeared on the landscape during this period took a variety of forms, including planned subdivisions and strip developments along the edge of farm fields. Houses were often modest examples of Cape Cod and Ranch style dwellings, styles the new home owners sought. These styles of homes are commonly found in post-World War II residential areas throughout the United States (Clark 1986:201).

The Cape Cod-style dwelling became popular in the early twentieth century during the Colonial Revival. The Colonial Revival, as an aesthetic movement, owes its popularity to a growing interest in early American decorative arts and architecture that emerged after the 1876 Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia. Through its associative values of patriotism, heritage, and American exceptionalism, American material culture bearing the influence of Colonial Revival style continues to be popular (Axelrod 1985; Rhoads 1977). Antecedents for the contemporary Cape Cod-style dwelling can be found in the seventeenth and eighteenth century examples of domestic architecture from the New England region. The massing of typical Cape Cod style houses consists of one-and-one-half-stories in height and three bays in width. The main entry is usually located in the center of the facade to create the suggestion of bilateral symmetry. Typically, gable roof dormers pierce the plane of the building's gable roof.

The development of the Ranch style house owes its national ubiquity to the emergence of the California style in post-World War II American popular culture. The house designs of Cliff May, which were published in *Sunset* magazine in the late 1950s, extended the popularity of this house form across the United States. Typically, Ranch style houses appear on building lots as one-story buildings with a rectangular plan and a low pitched roof silhouette, with either a

hipped or gable type roof. Depending on the location of the extension or addition, Ranch house plans vary from L-shaped to T-shaped plans. Large picture windows and sliding glass doors leading out to patios characterize the type. Patios and large picture windows (also called window walls) are crucial, character-defining features of the type. Patios extended the living space outdoors into a partially enclosed space used for social and leisure functions, and evoked the California good life idiom (Clark 1986:211; McAlester and McAlester 1990:479-480).

Despite these trends, the Route 40 APE maintained its rural character well into the late twentieth century. However, over the past 20 years, the corridor has seen extensive and dense residential and commercial development that compromises the historical integrity of the area. Presently, the APE is dominated by structures and buildings that reflect the current phase of highway commercial development and suburbanization of New Castle County. Developers have converted arable land tracts into retail and residential developments that consist of undistinguished, serviceable building types. Although they exist in select locations, agricultural pursuits no longer characterize the cultural landscape of the project area.