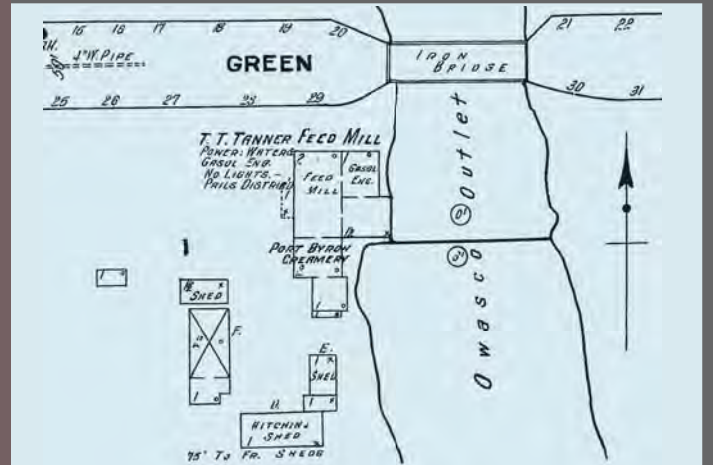


PHASE 1A
CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
(REVISED AND UPDATED)
FORMER HITCHCOCK
ELECTROPLATING FACILITY
VILLAGE OF PORT BYRON
CAYUGA COUNTY, NEW YORK



PREPARED FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, LLC
BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK

BY
JOHN MILNER ASSOCIATES, INC.
CROTON-ON-HUDSON, NEW YORK

DECEMBER 2012



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**FORMER HITCHCOCK ELECTROPLATING FACILITY
VILLAGE OF PORT BYRON
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PREPARED FOR

ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, LLC
627 COURT STREET
BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK 13904

BY

T. ARRON KOTLENSKY, RPA



JOHN MILNER ASSOCIATES, INC.
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CROTON-ON-HUDSON, NEW YORK 10520

DECEMBER 2012

OPRHP MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

SHPO Review Number:	Not Applicable
Involved State and Federal Agencies:	U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
Phase of Survey:	Phase IA
Location Information:	
Location:	58 Green Street
Minor Civil Division:	Village of Port Byron (MCD 011.47)
County:	Cayuga
Survey Area:	Approximately .75 acre
USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Map:	Montezuma, N.Y. and Weedsport, N.Y.
Report Author:	T. Arron Kotlensky, RPA
Date of Report (revised and updated):	December 2012
Date of Report (original):	January 2011

JMA MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

John Milner Associates, Inc. (JMA) conducted a Phase 1A cultural resources survey of the former Hitchcock Electroplating Facility and associated property located at 58 Green Street, Village of Port Byron, Cayuga County, New York, on behalf of Lockheed Martin IS&GS (SERAS# 0-107) in December 2010. Lockheed Martin, in conjunction with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), was investigating the former Hitchcock Electroplating Facility for contamination of structures and soils by hazardous materials related to electroplating activities carried out on site between the 1950s and early 2000s. The results of the Phase 1A survey were used by the EPA to assist them in meeting their obligations under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and implementing regulations of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (36 CFR 800). The results of the survey were reviewed by the New York State Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP), acting in its capacity as the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). All work detailed here was carried out in accordance with the guidance provided in Section 2.4 of the January 1988 CERCLA/SARA Environmental Review Manual, and *Standards for Cultural Resource Investigations and the Curation of Archaeological Collections in New York State* (the *Standards*) issued by the New York Archaeological Council, and recommended for use by OPRHP.

Subsequent to the completion of the original Phase IA cultural resources survey by JMA in January 2011, the EPA determined that contaminated soils and structural materials could not be removed from the site of the former Hitchcock Electroplating Facility without complete removal of the former mill structure and its contents, which lie wholly within the zone of contamination. To document the existing conditions of the structure and gather historical data of the former mill site prior to its demolition and removal, Environmental Restoration, LLC, contracted with JMA, Inc. to complete photographic documentation (exterior and interior) of the former mill structure (see Appendix I) and complete an oral history of the mill site with the current and long-time owner of the property, Mr. Delvin E. Wilt, who resides in a house adjacent to the mill property (see Appendix II). Color digital photographic documentation was completed according to archival standards established by the National Park Service. Copies of documentation materials are being submitted to the Cayuga County Historian's Office and the New York State Archives.

Structures utilized by the former Hitchcock Electroplating Facility are connected to a former multiple-use mill (frequently referred to as the "Green Street mill" by local sources) that dates to the nineteenth century but continued in operation into the early twentieth century. Through most of its history, operators of the mill processed lumber and grain, but other uses included box-making, a creamery, and of course, the later electroplating operation. JMA focused its Phase IA investigation on this structure, while including a pedestrian survey of the surrounding property to record the presence of associated features or outbuildings. In the opinion of JMA, at the time the original Phase IA cultural resources survey was conducted, the extant mill structure attached to the electroplating facility met eligibility requirements for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under: Criterion A because the mill was "associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history" in its association with the Erie Canal; Criterion C because the mill contained "characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction" related to local waterpowered mills of the nineteenth century; and Criterion D because the mill "may be likely to yield information important" to local history and the history of the Erie Canal. At the time the original Phase IA cultural resources survey was completed, JMA recommended implementation of one of two possible courses of action to preserve the eligible aspects of the property or, at the very least data that it contained: a) if contamination was found to be limited to only those soils and structural materials directly associated with electroplating activities (structural bays, elements, and soils within site hot zones), then any structural bays,

elements, features, and underlying soils associated with the feed mill within site cold zones (uncontaminated portions of the property) should be preserved as practicality permits and protected as much as possible from disturbance during removal of contaminated structural materials and soil, or b) if soils and materials associated with the greater property, specifically the feed mill structure and its associated features, were also found to be contaminated and warrant demolition, excavation, and removal from the site, then site and structural background research and documentation should be undertaken prior to such activities.

The completion of digital photographic documentation and an oral history with the long-time owner of the property were completed in October 2012 to comply with this recommendation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

JMA would like to thank Delvin E. Wilt for relating his extensive personal knowledge of the Green Street Mill and offering to be interviewed for this project; Dawn Roe, historian for the Village of Port Byron, for taking the time to do background research on the Project Area and answer several questions about the mill and local history; Mike Riley, Erie Canal researcher and president of the Lock 52 Historical Society, for contributing background on the Project Area mill and helping guide my writing on the Green Street mill, as well; Chick Walker, historian for the Town of Mentz, for answering questions and putting me in touch with Dawn Roe and Mike Riley; and Sheila Tucker, Cayuga County historian, for taking the time to answer my questions and offering her services. JMA would also like to thank Ron Ward for providing a driving tour of Port Byron and pointing out the locations of various points of interest related to local history and the Green Street mill.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE INVESTIGATION

In December 2010, John Milner Associates, Inc. (JMA) conducted a Phase 1A cultural resources survey of the former Hitchcock Electroplating Facility and associated property located at 58 Green Street, Village of Port Byron, Cayuga County, New York, on behalf of Lockheed Martin IS&GS (SERAS# 0-107). Lockheed Martin, in conjunction with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), was investigating the former Hitchcock Electroplating Facility for contamination of structures and soils from hazardous materials related to electroplating activities carried out on site between the 1950s and early 2000s. Depending on the outcome of soil and structural materials testing, the EPA could advise partial or full demolition and removal of structural material associated with the former electroplating facility. The results of the Phase 1A survey will be used by the EPA to assist them in meeting their obligations under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and implementing regulations of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (36 CFR 800). The results of the survey will be reviewed by the New York State Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP), acting in its capacity as the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO).

The purpose of the original Phase 1A investigation was to identify previously recorded archaeological or historic sites that might be affected by proposed project activities. The Phase 1A survey also evaluates the potential for there to be previously unrecorded archaeological or historic resources within the area that could be affected by the undertaking. The information contained in the original report, and repeated in this revised and updated report, is intended to help assess what effects remediation activities at the former Hitchcock Electroplating Facility will have on archeological or historic resources. JMA focused its investigation on the extant former mill building that houses the electroplating facility in order to provide an assessment of the structure's eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. All research and report preparation were conducted in accordance with Section 2.4 of the January 1988 CERCLA/SARA Environmental Review Manual, and the New York Archaeological Council's *Standards for Cultural Resources Investigations and the Curation of Archaeological Collections* (NYAC 1994), recommended for use by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP).

Subsequent to the completion of the original Phase IA cultural resources survey by JMA in January 2011, the EPA determined that contaminated soils and structural materials could not be removed from the site of the former Hitchcock Electroplating Facility without complete removal of the former mill structure and its contents, which lie wholly within the zone of contamination. To document the existing conditions of the structure and gather historical data of the former mill site prior to its demolition and removal, Environmental Restoration, LLC, contracted with JMA, Inc. to complete photographic documentation (exterior and interior) of the former mill structure (see Appendix I) and complete an oral history of the mill site with the current and long-time owner of the property, Mr. Delvin E. Wilt, who resides in a house adjacent to the mill property (see Appendix II). Color digital photographic documentation was completed according to archival standards established by the National Park Service. Copies of documentation materials are being submitted to the Cayuga County Historian's Office and the New York State Archives.

1.2 PROJECT LOCATION

The former Hitchcock Electroplating Facility and associated property (Project Area) is located at 58 Green Street, Village of Port Byron, Cayuga County, New York (Figure 1). The property fronts on the south side of Green Street

and is adjacent to the west bank of the Owasco Outlet, a stream that empties from Owasco Lake into the Seneca River. A bridge of recent construction carries Green Street over the outlet. The Project Area comprises less than an acre in area and is situated within a light residential neighborhood northwest of the central business district of the Village of Port Byron. Between the early 1850s and 1917, New York State operated the “enlarged” Erie Canal along the southern edge of the Project Area, which had an influence on the industrial development of the property within the Project Area. The current Area of Potential Effects (APE) of the proposed project includes structures and soils confined to the 58 Green Street property only.

1.3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND¹

The former Hitchcock Electroplating Facility was operated by various business owners as a metals plating and refinishing facility from the 1950s until 2003, who leased the property from the owner. The facility was used for custom nickel and chromium plating on a contract basis and produced a variety of finished products including nickel plated snap swivels and fishing tackle.

At the request of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) conducted removal site evaluation (RSE) activities in December 2005 and May 2006. The RSE activities included a gross inventory of hazardous substances and pollutants that were stored at the site, a visual evaluation of site conditions and sampling of an underground settling tank and some of the vats and containers. The results of the RSE indicated that there were multiple open top vats which contained corrosive plating solutions, approximately 49, 55-gallon drums, approximately 60, 5-gallon pails, and an assortment of 40 and 50 pound bags of dry chemicals. Many of the drums and other containers had contained acids, basic solutions, cyanide solutions, chromate solutions, flammable liquids, oxidizers and other hazardous materials. On September 5, 2006, an Action Memorandum was approved authorizing a time critical removal action at the Site.

EPA and its cleanup contractors mobilized to the Site on October 16, 2006 in order to perform the time critical removal action. The removal activities included stabilization, characterization and disposal of hazardous materials stored in vats, sumps, drums and tanks; removal of contaminated debris from the facility and building decontamination. All hazardous materials were transported off-Site to Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) approved disposal facilities.

At the time of the original Phase IA cultural resources survey, the front portion of the structure was being utilized as storage space for a local antiques dealer. Since that time (January 2011), the EPA moved forward with continued remediation of the site, which consequently involved complete demolition and removal of structural materials and soils associated with the former electroplating facility in October 2012.

¹ Lockheed Martin project personnel provided most of the text for the Project Description and Background from a formal site visitation report. JMA edited the text and removed some specific information not relevant to the cultural resources issues discussed in this report.

2.0 BACKGROUND RESEARCH

2.1 GEOLOGY, DRAINAGE, AND SOILS

The Project Area is located within the Eastern Lake section of the Central Lowland physiographic province, itself a part of the greater Interior Plains division (Fenneman and Johnson 1946). Topographically, the Project Area lies within an area of gently rolling, undulated hills marked by several drumlins running north-south to northwest-southeast (several are visible in Figure 1). The Project Area is underlain by bedrock of the Vernon Formation, which mostly comprises red, green and soft mud shales associated with the Upper Silurian series. The Vernon Formation tends to be deeply buried beneath surficial soil deposits, particularly those of glacial origin (USDA 1971:197). The Project Area is adjacent to the Owasco Outlet, the principal stream that drains Owasco Lake, one of the Finger Lakes. The Owasco Outlet feeds into the local Seneca River drainage basin, itself a part of the larger Great Lakes-Saint Lawrence River drainage system. Surficial geology of the Project Area is dominated by glacially-deposited lacustrine silts and clays and is more locally characterized by Eel silt loam of the Eel series (Eel) (Table 1; Figure 2; USDA 1971:129-130). Eel series soils tend to be fairly deeply deposited and well-drained, and prior to intensive cultivation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, could support dense woodlands.

Table 1. Soils within the Project Area.

Symbol	Name	Slope %	Soil Horizons Depth cm (in)	Color	Texture	Drainage
Eel	Eel silt loam	0-3	A 0-36 (0-14) B 36-72 (14-28) C 72-102 (28-40)	10YR3/2 10YR 4/1 10YR 4/1	silt loam silt loam silt loam to very fine sandy loam	well-drained

2.2 PREVIOUSLY RECORDED CULTURAL RESOURCES

JMA reviewed the consolidated site files of the OPRHP and the New York State Museum (NYSM) to identify previously recorded archeological sites and historic properties located within the boundaries of the Project Area and those within one mile of the Project Area. Reported archeological resources in Cayuga County include sites that were documented by archeologists in the early twentieth-century (e.g., Beauchamp 1900; Parker 1920), sites identified during research programs by the NYSM and Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences (e.g., Ritchie 1980; Ritchie and Funk 1973), and sites identified during recent cultural resource surveys in the vicinity of the Project Area (e.g., Kellar et al. 1996; Ewing et al. 1999; HAA 1999, 2007; and Curtin 2002, 2004). JMA identified no archeological sites within the Project Area and identified one previously recorded archeological site (Lock 52 Port Byron Erie Canal site) located within one mile of the Project Area and within the Village of Port Byron (Table 2). The collection of structures associated with the Lock 52 Port Byron Erie Canal site was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1998 (NR#98001146) and designated as a National Historic District in the same year.

Table 2. Archeological sites located within one mile of the Project Area.

OPRHP Site #	Site Name	Time Period	Description
A01147.00022	Lock 52 Port Byron Erie Canal Site	1850s - 1917	A series of structures and subsurface archeological deposits associated with Lock 52 of the enlarged Erie Canal

2.3 HISTORIC SETTLEMENT PATTERN

JMA reviewed both written and cartographic documents relating to historical settlement of the region encompassing Port Byron. Written sources examined for the Project included county and local histories written by Storke (1879) and Kerns (1922), and state histories by Ellis et al. (1973) and Klein (2001). JMA personnel also interviewed Dawn Roe, the village historian, about the development of the village through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. JMA utilized the extensive online map collections available through the Cayuga County historic cartography website to assess the development of the built landscape encompassing the Project Area (Hecht 2011). Historic maps examined for specific development of the Project Area and local landscape included: the 1829 Burr atlas; the Geil 1853 county wall map; the 1859 Gray and Lathrop county wall map; the 1875 Beers county atlas; Sanborn fire insurance maps published from 1884 to 1931; 1904 New Century Atlas of Cayuga County; and the 1902 USGS 15-minute topographic survey (see Figures at end of report). These maps provide a visual reference for Port Byron's arc of development from a center of commerce tied to the Erie Canal and local investment to a center of light commerce, industry, and legacy residential neighborhoods following the closing of the canal in 1917. They also depict the locations of structures located within the commercial and residential areas of Port Byron, often providing the names of occupants or businesses, and visually document the growth and stasis of the village over time.

Predominantly native groups, but also some European Americans, had established permanent settlements and farmsteads in the region encompassing Cayuga County by the mid-eighteenth century. However, these settlements, especially those of the Iroquois devastated by the Sullivan-Clinton expedition in 1779, lacked the influence that federally and state-sanctioned land sales would have over settlement beginning in the mid-1780s. The survey of the New Military Tract in the early 1790s provided the framework for nineteenth century settlement in rural areas of Cayuga County through the creation of state-backed land sales. The survey resulted from an agreement between the U.S. government and New York State with recent war veterans to award tracts of land as payment for military service. The survey created 28 townships (subsequently most of these municipal boundaries have changed) each composed of 60,000 acres; each of these townships was sub-divided into grids of 100 lots each measuring 600 acres in size. The orderly layout of townships and lots was both an ideological product of late-eighteenth century ideas on land ownership but also a practical strategy for the initiating agricultural development of the region (Ellis et al. 1967; Heaton 2003; Schein 1993; Snow 1940). The formal grid of the New Military Tract survey determined the placement of roads and thereby dictated the resulting settlement pattern for the region (Wehner and Holmberg 2003). In general, early roads followed the boundary lines that demarcated individual lots within the survey. The formal grid of the road network is apparent on early maps of the region and is still visible on the modern landscape. Within the New Military Tract townships, each 600-acre lot was assigned a number. Most of the 600-acre lots were bought up, sub-divided, and resold by speculators. Although the eventual subdivision and settlement of these areas did not typically conform to the boundaries of the original lots, the numbers assigned to each lot were retained and are referenced in later records of property transactions, historical accounts, and cartographic depictions (e.g., Burr 1829; Geil 1853; Gray and Lathrop 1859; Beers 1875; New Century Atlas 1904; USGS 1902).

The parceling of land in the New Military Tract led to cores of nascent but proven farms that were growing increasingly prosperous through access to national and international markets by 1800. These small landholders began to form a coherent agricultural landscape across central New York but engaged the support of other interests to remain competitive. Often emigrating from eastern New York or New England, established millers built saw and gristmills to process the timber and grain produced by the region's farms. Local farmers often invested in these early industries for profit but also out of necessity. In turn, the new mills fostered further agricultural and commercial development, both locally and across the state, as they allowed farmers to increase their yields. Owners generally situated mills at advantageous locations that included stream segments with high enough head for generating power, locales with a concentration of successful farms, and proximity to a road or later, the Erie Canal. Subsequently, the locations of mills provided focal points for further settlement, with businesses and civic and religious institutions establishing nearby. Burr's atlas depicts the locations of saw and gristmills in Cayuga County in 1829, with four mills operating near Port Byron alone. The completion of the Erie Canal in the mid-1820s provided another impetus to the growth of Port Byron and secured opportunities for mills that processed timber and grains consumed and transported on the canal, but also handled local supply and demand. Canal and farm reinforced each other, and with them, the commercial towns that provided access to the canal. The prosperity of Port Byron, founded initially as "Bucksport" in 1825 with the opening years of the canal, grew from a direct relationship between farmers, millers, entrepreneurs, and the canal. People established other industries in Port Byron to profit from the canal, including dry docks to repair canal boats and blacksmiths to produce and repair iron hardware and shod mules. The state operated the Erie Canal through Port Byron until 1917, when it closed it with the opening of the larger State Barge Canal five miles north of Port Byron. Together with the national trend of once-local industries and commerce concentrating in larger urban areas, the closing of the older canal deprived many Port Byron businesses of profit, leading some to closure, while others adapted. Although the completion of the nearby New York State Thruway in the early 1950s provided a transportation corridor similar to that of the canal, the Thruway has not bolstered the local economy of Port Byron as well as the Erie Canal once did.

2.4 EXISTING CONDITIONS

JMA personnel conducted a field visit of the Project Area on January 11, 2011, meeting with project participants from Lockheed Martin and the EPA, and spoke at length with the current property owner, Delvin E. Wilt, a grandson of Delvin M. Wilt, who purchased the mill in 1912 or 1913 (Mr. Wilt currently lives in a house adjacent to the Project Area property). During the field visit, JMA personnel took several digital color photographs and made notes about the overall conditions of the Project Area, concentrating on the extant mill structure and former electroplating facility. The Project Area is set on a rectangular parcel of land in a residential neighborhood in the northwestern section of the Village of Port Byron (Figure 3). The built aspects of the Project Area are dominated by the former mill structure and electroplating facility that fronts on the south side of Green Street (Photographs 1-3). An active driveway runs along the west face of the mill and provides vehicular access to both the mill building and the adjacent dwelling belonging to Mr. Wilt. The mill structure itself is in sound condition and has been actively maintained by the present owner. The combined mill structure has several connected bays and extensions, which make for an irregular floor plan and exterior appearance (Photographs 4-7). The Owasco Outlet runs from south to north, parallel to the east side of the Project Area, while open yard space occupies the southern portion of the Project Area between the mill structure and the former enlarged Erie Canal (Photograph 7). The canal runs east-west along the southern edge of the property and its northern berm and towpath is faintly visible to the rear of the mill building in Photograph 7.

3.0 ARCHEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

3.1 PREHISTORIC-PERIOD ARCHEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY

JMA's review of the consolidated site files of the OPRHP and the NYSM did not identify any prehistoric archeological sites either within the Project Area or within one mile of the Project Area. The lack of prehistoric sites discovered within the vicinity of Port Byron and nearby portions of the Town of Mentz is not surprising since only a small number of archeological surveys have been conducted to date within and close to the village (i.e., future surveys of greater scope have a high likelihood of discovering prehistoric sites in the vicinity of Port Byron). Despite the lack of identified prehistoric sites, the topographic setting and natural resources found within and surrounding the Project Area (relatively level well-drained soils and terrain, proximity to flowing perennial streams, and prehistorically wooded surroundings) suggests that the Project Area has a moderate to high potential to contain material evidence of prehistoric activities.

3.2 HISTORIC-PERIOD ARCHEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY

David Burr's atlas of Cayuga County (1829) depicts the earliest evidence of historic-period occupation within the specific Project Area and vicinity. However, intensive agricultural use of the land encompassing the Project Area may have commenced two to three decades prior to the map's publication of 1829, suggesting that there is a moderate potential for the Project Area to contain evidence of a farmstead or other evidence of early settlement. JMA's review of cartographic resources suggests that a mill operation occupied the Project Area or vicinity as early as the late 1820s (Burr 1829). Later maps of Port Byron indicate that a single mill operation, along with other light industrial users, continuously occupied the Project Area from the late 1820s into the twentieth century (Geil 1853; Gray and Lathrop 1859; Beers 1875; Sanborn fire insurance maps published periodically from 1884 to 1934). These maps detail change over time in the plan of the mill building, its ownership, and the locations of small auxiliary buildings that occupied the southern portion of the property adjacent to the canal. They also depict the mill dam that bridged the Owasco Outlet beside the mill and adjacent headrace, both of which were removed during the mid-twentieth century. Altogether, the Project Area has a high probability of containing traces of structural features and materials related to past industrial uses of the property that are no longer visible on the ground surface surrounding the mill structure.

3.3 PRIOR GROUND DISTURBANCE

The Project Area is largely dominated by the extant mill structure and structures related to the former electroplating facility. The construction of these and related site features (e.g., mill dam, headrace, straightening of the Owasco Outlet) has probably disturbed if not entirely removed evidence of prior occupation and land use within the footprint of the mill building itself. Despite this, some isolated pockets of undisturbed soils may remain in the southern portion of the Project Area between the mill building and the northern berm and towpath of the enlarged Erie Canal. However, construction of the canal itself may have contributed to disturbance of soils within the southern portion of the Project Area as well, along with the construction and use of auxiliary buildings associated with the mill and other uses of the site over time. Overall, more than half of the Project Area has been severely disturbed by nineteenth and twentieth century industrial development of the property.

4.0 INVESTIGATION OF THE GREEN STREET MILL

4.1 HISTORICAL USE AND CHRONOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

Exact construction dates for the current mill at 58 Green Street remain unknown but based on historical map research, municipal tax assessment records, and informant interviews, the oldest portions of the current mill structure date to at least 1884, and may date to as early as the 1830s (Dawn Roe and Delvin E. Wilt, personal communications; historic map research; see Appendix I). As discussed in Section 3.2, the earliest map representation of a mill operation in the vicinity of the current mill appears on David Burr's county map of 1829 (Figure 5), while the Geil county wall map of 1853 indicates that a tannery and "furnace" roughly occupied the Project Area (Figure 6). Successive map publications beginning with the Gray and Lothrop map of 1859 depict a waterpowered-mill within the Project Area, with each map portraying the basic location and at least a simple plan outline of a mill and its adjacent dam on the Owasco Outlet (Figures 7-16). The intersection of the Erie Canal and the waterpower potential of the Owasco Outlet provided an advantage to any user who needed power to process agricultural or timber products that could be shipped or consumed by operation of the canal. The 1859 map by Gray and Lothrop in particular is the earliest identified map to depict a definitive mill structure within the Project Area, while the 1884 Sanborn fire insurance map of Port Byron provides the earliest representation of a measured plan view for a mill within the Project Area (Figures 7, 9). Successive publications of Sanborn fire insurance maps depict a similar mill footprint as the one featured in the 1884 publication, but include written descriptions of the use of the mill with each updated edition (Figures 9-12, 14-16). JMA believes that the mill structure depicted in the 1884 Sanborn edition is the same core mill structure depicted in the following six editions of Sanborn fire insurance maps for Port Byron because of the similarity in their plan designs and lack of strong evidence to suggest that the mill had either been entirely replaced or destroyed by fire or other catastrophic event since 1884 (Dawn Roe and Delvin E. Wilt, personal communications). The core mill structure depicted in Figures 9-12 and 14-16 probably corresponds to the structural sections denoted as "H" through "O" in Figure 4. Figure 17 features an undated postcard view of the Owasco Outlet adjacent to the Project Area with the mill dam intact and an extension of the mill structure visible in the center right of the image that probably corresponds to section "E" in Figure 4.

Like other waterpowered mills of the nineteenth century, the Green Street mill could be adapted for the production of any number of commodities or finished goods, with machinery replaced to meet the demands of the owner or operator without the need for major reconstruction of the basic mill layout. Such adaptation over time is evident in research conducted on the Green Street mill. In addition to the mill's ability to provide power, unused space within the mill could serve other purposes, such as offices or warehouse space for local manufacturing firms (Dawn Roe and Delvin E. Wilt, personal communications). Various operators managed a creamery on site from as early as 1901 to the 1930s in buildings attached to the south end of the mill, while the electroplating facility began operation in the "mid-section" of the mill as early as 1946. The operators of the electroplating facility adapted the former mill headrace for the construction of a settling tank on the exterior of the building (corresponds to section "P" in Figure 4). Map research, municipal tax assessment records, and informant interviews provided names associated with the property (owners or operators) and an extensive use chronology of the site and associated buildings located in the Project Area (Table 3). Altogether, these records demonstrate that the successive owners and operators of the Green Street mill (including previous industrial operations on the same site) adapted the property over its long history by following multiple avenues of profitable use instead of focusing production on only one or two activities alone.

Table 3. Industrial uses and major events within the Project Area, 1829 to present

Date/s of source/s	Associated names	Functions/Event	Sources
1829	unknown	saw or gristmill	Burr atlas map (Figure 5)
1853	unknown	possible tannery and/or furnace	Geil county wall map (Figure 6)
1859	John C. Foster	planing mill/lumber yard	Gray and Lothrop county wall map (Figure 7); earliest definitive representation of a mill within the Project Area
1861	unknown	machine shop	municipal assessment records
1872	C. B. Adams	lumber yard, foundry	municipal assessment records
1873	C. B. Adams	lumber yard, foundry, with a dwelling	municipal assessment records
1874	I. Peck	lumber yard, tannery	municipal assessment records
1875	I. Peck	planing mill	F. W. Beers county atlas
1884 to late 1880s	Tanner; T. L. Brooks and Company	planing mill; offices/farm implements	Sanborn fire insurance map; Dawn Roe; earliest probable map depiction of the current mill structure
1890	Tanner	planing mill, box factory	Sanborn fire insurance map
1896	Tanner	planing mill, box factory	Sanborn fire insurance map
1901	Tanner	planing mill, feed mill; The Senate Creamery	Sanborn fire insurance map
1904	J. J. Tanner	“Mentz Mills”; feed mill	New Century Atlas map
1906	T. T. Tanner	feed mill (gasoline engine included); The Senate Creamery	Sanborn fire insurance map
1911	T. T. Tanner	feed mill (gasoline engine included); Port Byron Creamery	Sanborn fire insurance map
1912/1913	Delvin M. Wilt purchases property	continues operating feed mill, creamery	Delvin E. Wilt (grandson and current property owner); municipal assessment records
1927	unknown	on-site blacksmith ceases operation	Delvin E. Wilt
1934	Fred Wilt	feed mill, creamery, ice house	Sanborn fire insurance map
1930s	unknown	donut-making on-site	Delvin E. Wilt
1946	David Hitchcock	electroplating facility	Delvin E. Wilt
1950	Fred Wilt	discontinued making feed at the mill	Delvin E. Wilt
1960s	Army Corps of Engineers	removes dam, straightens the Owasco Outlet, removes nearby disused canal aqueduct	Delvin E. Wilt, Dawn Roe
1975	Delvin E. Wilt	discontinued milk bottling operation	Delvin E. Wilt
2003	--	discontinued electroplating facility	Delvin E. Wilt
2011	Ron Ward	antiques storage	Delvin E. Wilt

4.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GREEN STREET MILL

In the opinion of JMA, the extant (at the time of the original Phase IA survey) mill structure attached to the electroplating facility met eligibility requirements for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under: Criterion A because the mill is “associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history” in its association with the Erie Canal; Criterion C because the mill contains “characteristics

of a type, period, or method of construction” related to local waterpowered mills of the nineteenth century; and Criterion D because the mill “may be likely to yield information important” to local history and the history of the Erie Canal. JMA further concludes that the Green Street mill meets Criteria C and D eligibility requirements because of the following four conditions:

1. *The Green Street mill possesses a remarkable degree of integrity in construction, materials, and machinery related to its operation*

A January 2011 field visit to the mill provided ample evidence that the overall structure is sound and not in danger of immediate collapse (Photographs 1-7). In addition, several key functioning parts of the mill, such as two horizontal water turbines and box conveyors used to transport grain through the structure, remain intact and in situ (Photographs 8-11).

2. *The Green Street mill possesses evidence of how owners and operators adapted the mill for different uses over a period of several decades*

Background research on the mill demonstrates that a succession of owners adapted the property and mill to meet immediate needs without complete reconstruction of the core mill structure. As such, the building possesses unique material evidence of how owners and operators chose to redesign the use of the building. This evidence has probably not been recorded through other means, such as architectural drawings or photographs.

3. *The Green Street mill is intrinsically connected to the history of the Erie Canal and the development of the local economy*

Background research on the mill has also demonstrated the importance that saw and grist mills played in the development of local economies such as Port Byron and the reinforcing role that the Erie Canal played in bolstering the local economy. Although Port Byron contains another extant mill (the I. R. Warren mill, located at the intersection of Pine and Maine Streets), the direct connection of the Green Street mill with the adjacent Erie Canal lends it added importance as an industry that probably existed to serve both the canal and local demands.

4. *The Green Street Mill is the most intact example of a waterpowered mill in Cayuga County*

Local canal researcher Mike Riley believes that the Green Street Mill is the most intact example of a waterpowered mill in Cayuga County (personal communication). As such, the Green Street mill is a surviving example of a resource that was at one time commonplace and integral to the local economy and connected to the operation of the Erie Canal. As a result, the Green Street mill possesses data that are irreplaceable by other means of research and study. This distinction underscores the value of the mill as discussed in Conditions 1 through 3.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

John Milner Associates, Inc. (JMA) conducted a Phase 1A cultural resources survey of the former Hitchcock Electroplating Facility and associated property located at 58 Green Street, Village of Port Byron, Cayuga County, New York, on behalf of Lockheed Martin IS&GS (SERAS# 0-107) in December 2010. Lockheed Martin, in conjunction with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), was investigating the former Hitchcock Electroplating Facility for contamination of structures and soils by hazardous materials related to electroplating activities carried out on site between the mid-1940s and early 2000s. The results of the Phase 1A survey were used by the EPA to assist them in meeting their obligations under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and implementing regulations of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (36 CFR 800). The results of the survey were reviewed by the New York State Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP), acting in its capacity as the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO).

Subsequent to the completion of the original Phase IA cultural resources survey by JMA in January 2011, the EPA determined that contaminated soils and materials could not be removed from the site of the former Hitchcock Electroplating Facility without complete removal of the former mill structure and its contents, which lie wholly within the zone of contamination. To document the existing conditions of the structure and gather historical data of the former mill site prior to its demolition and removal, Environmental Restoration, LLC, contracted with JMA, Inc. to complete photographic documentation (exterior and interior) of the former mill structure (see Appendix I) and complete an oral history of the mill site with the current and long-time owner of the property, Mr. Delvin E. Wilt, who resides in a house (60 Green Street) adjacent to the mill property (see Appendix II). Color digital photographic documentation was completed according to archival standards established by the National Park Service for nominating sites to the National Register of Historic Places. Copies of documentation materials are being submitted to the Cayuga County Historian's Office and the New York State Archives.

Structures utilized by the former Hitchcock Electroplating Facility are connected to a former mill (the "Green Street mill") that dates to the nineteenth century. Through most of its history, operators of the mill provided feed for canal boat mule teams working on the adjacent Erie Canal that passed along the southern edge of the property, but also sold feed after the closing of the canal in 1917. JMA focused its Phase IA investigation on this structure, while including a pedestrian survey of the surrounding property to record the presence of associated features or outbuildings. In the opinion of JMA, the extant mill structure attached to the electroplating facility meets eligibility requirements for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under: Criterion A because the mill is "associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history" in its association with the Erie Canal; Criterion C because the mill contains "characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction" related to local waterpowered mills of the nineteenth century; and Criterion D because the mill "may be likely to yield information important" to local history and the history of the Erie Canal. JMA further concludes that the Green Street mill meets Criteria C and D eligibility requirements because of the following four conditions:

1. *The Green Street mill possesses a remarkable degree of integrity in construction, materials, and machinery related to its operation*
2. *The Green Street mill possesses evidence of how owners and operators adapted the mill for different uses*

over a period of several decades

3. *The Green Street mill is intrinsically connected to the history of the Erie Canal and the development of the local economy*
4. *The Green Street Mill is the most intact example of a waterpowered mill in Cayuga County*

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the results of soils and structural materials testing within the Project Area, the EPA proposed complete removal of contaminated soils and structural materials found within the Project Area, leading to the demolition and removal of the Green Street mill in October 2012. Given this course of action by the EPA, JMA recommended that site and structural background research and documentation be undertaken prior to demolition of the mill structure. To fulfill these recommendations, JMA completed photographic documentation (exterior and interior) of the former mill structure (see Appendix I) and an oral history of the mill site with the current and long-time owner of the property, Mr. Delvin E. Wilt, who resides in a house adjacent to the mill property (see Appendix II). In the opinion of JMA no further documentation or archeological investigation of the mill site is warranted.

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FIGURES

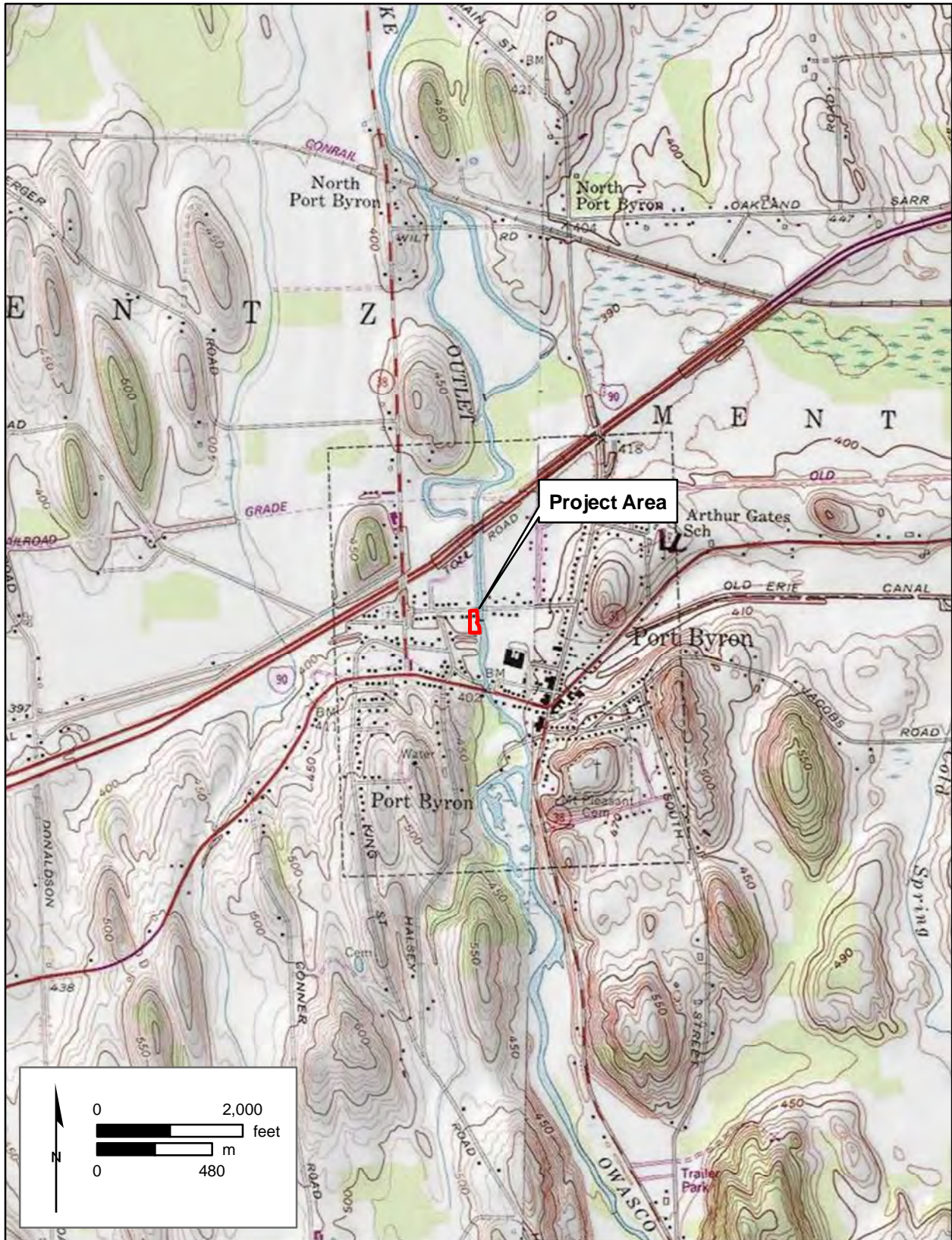


Figure 1. Detail of the Montezuma, N.Y. (1978) and Weedsport, N.Y. (1978) USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangles showing the location of the Project Area within the Village of Port Byron, New York.



Figure 2. Eel (Ee) series soils encompassing the Project Area (USDA 1971).



Figure 3. Two-foot pixel resolution aerial imagery depicting the Project Area and references for photographic views (Statewide Digital Orthoimagery 2006).

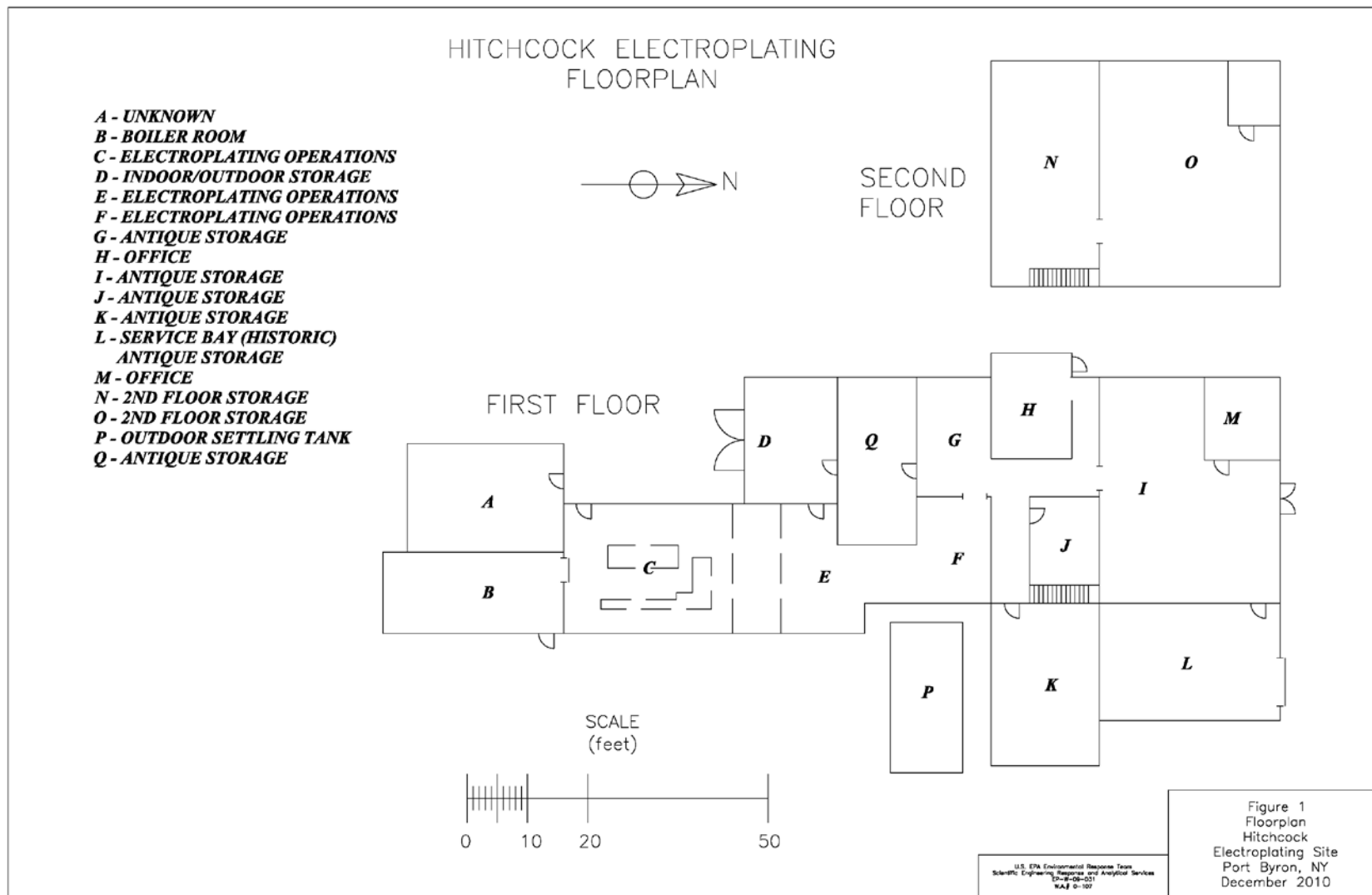


Figure 4. Current floor plan of the first and second stories of the Green Street mill, depicting the several sections and extensions of the mill. Drawing courtesy of Mathew C. Fuller, associate with Barton & Loguidice, P.C.

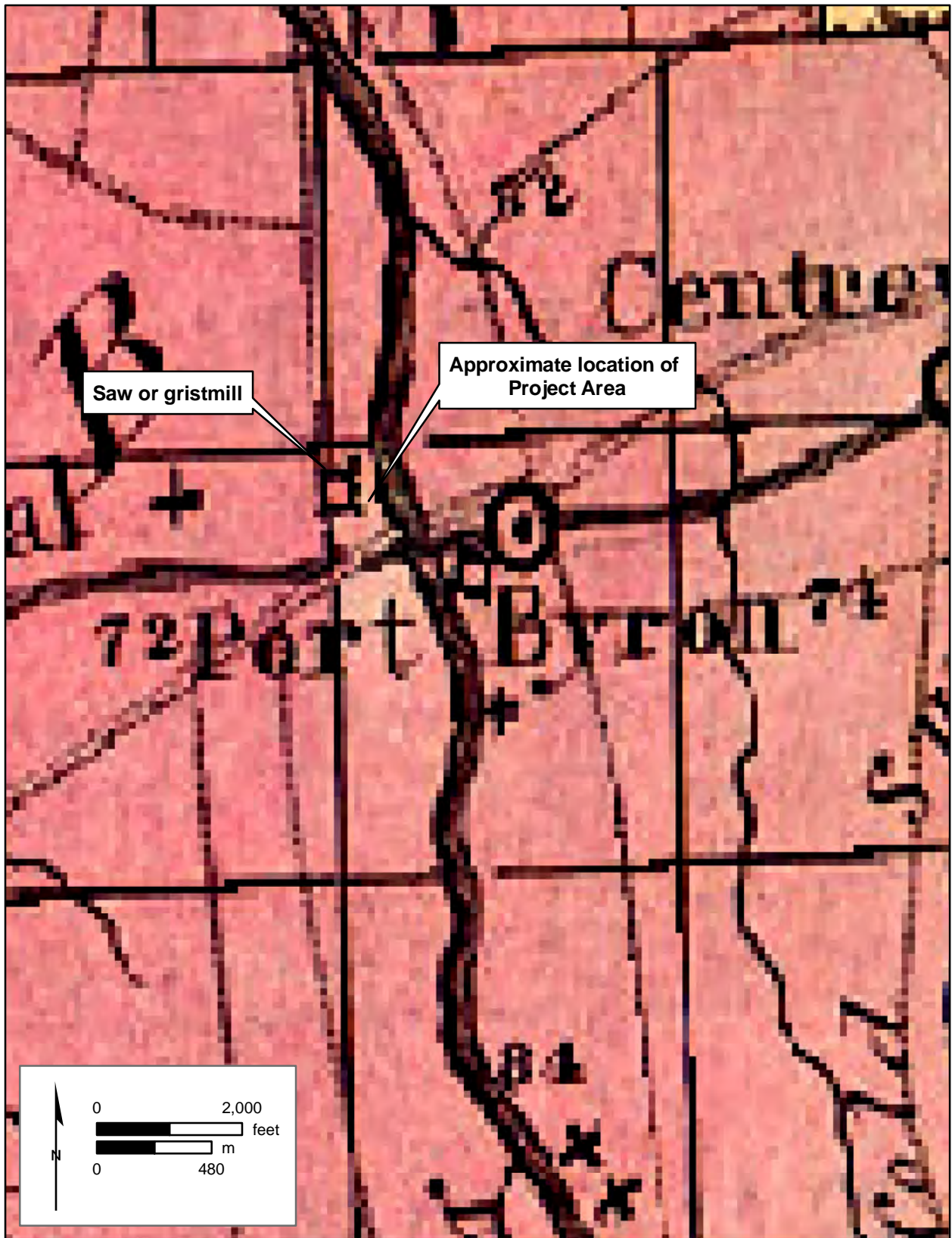


Figure 5. Detail of the 1829 Burr Atlas of New York State showing the location of the Project Area.



Figure 6. Detail of the 1853 *Cayuga County, NY Land Ownership Wall Map* showing the location of the Project Area.

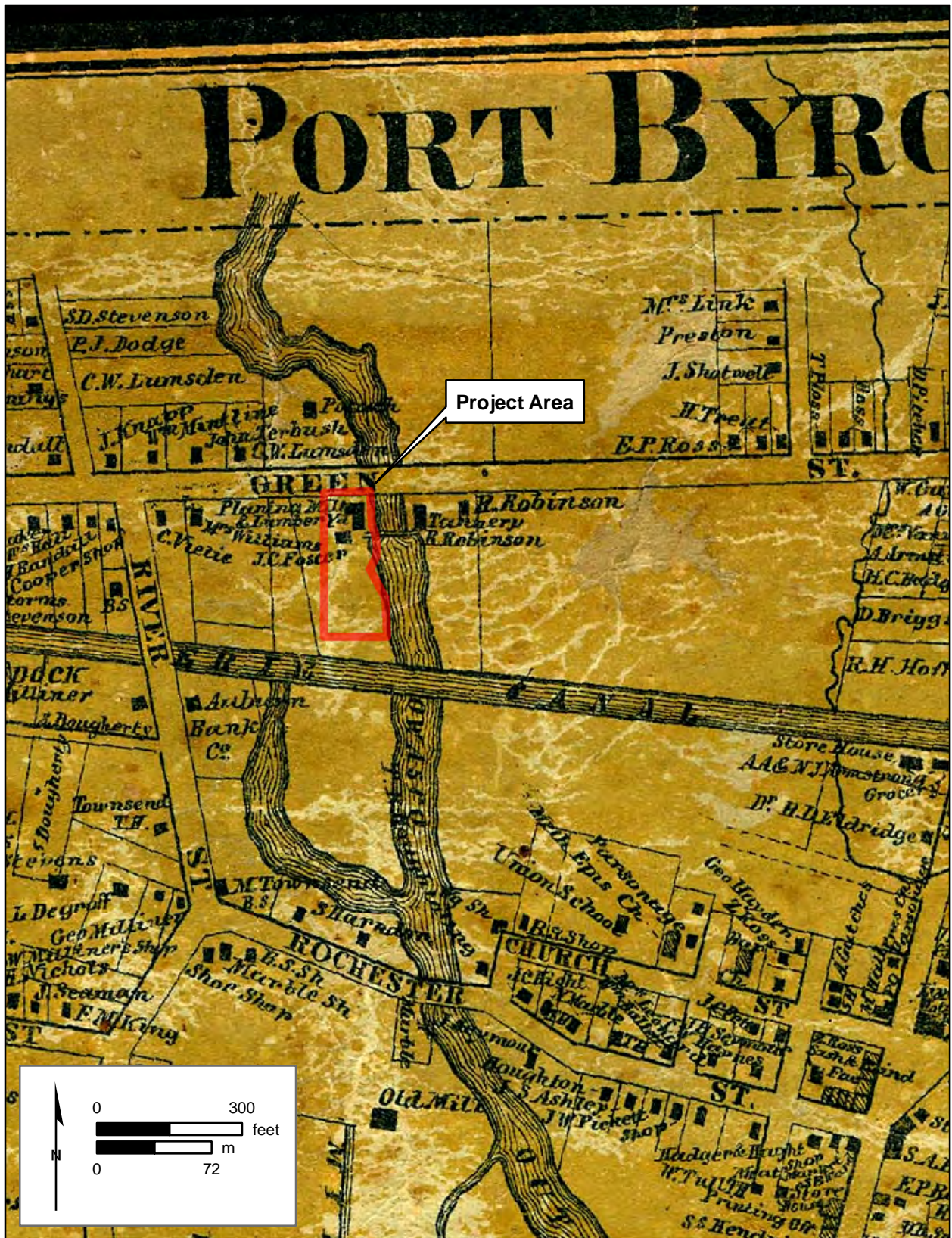


Figure 7. Detail of the 1859 Cayuga/ Seneca County, NY Land Ownership Wall Map showing the location of the Project Area.

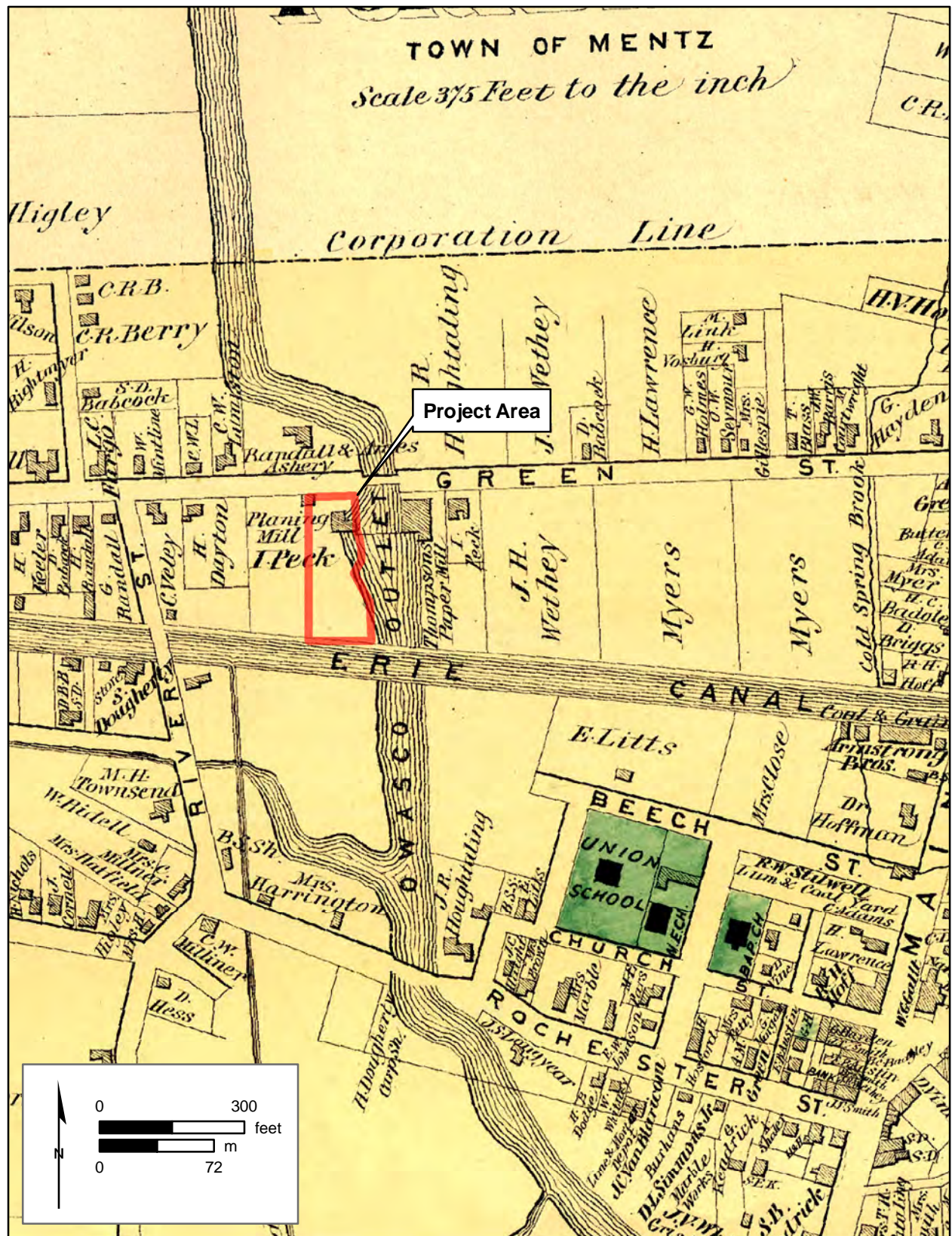


Figure 8. Detail of the 1875 County Atlas of Cayuga New York showing the location of the Project Area.

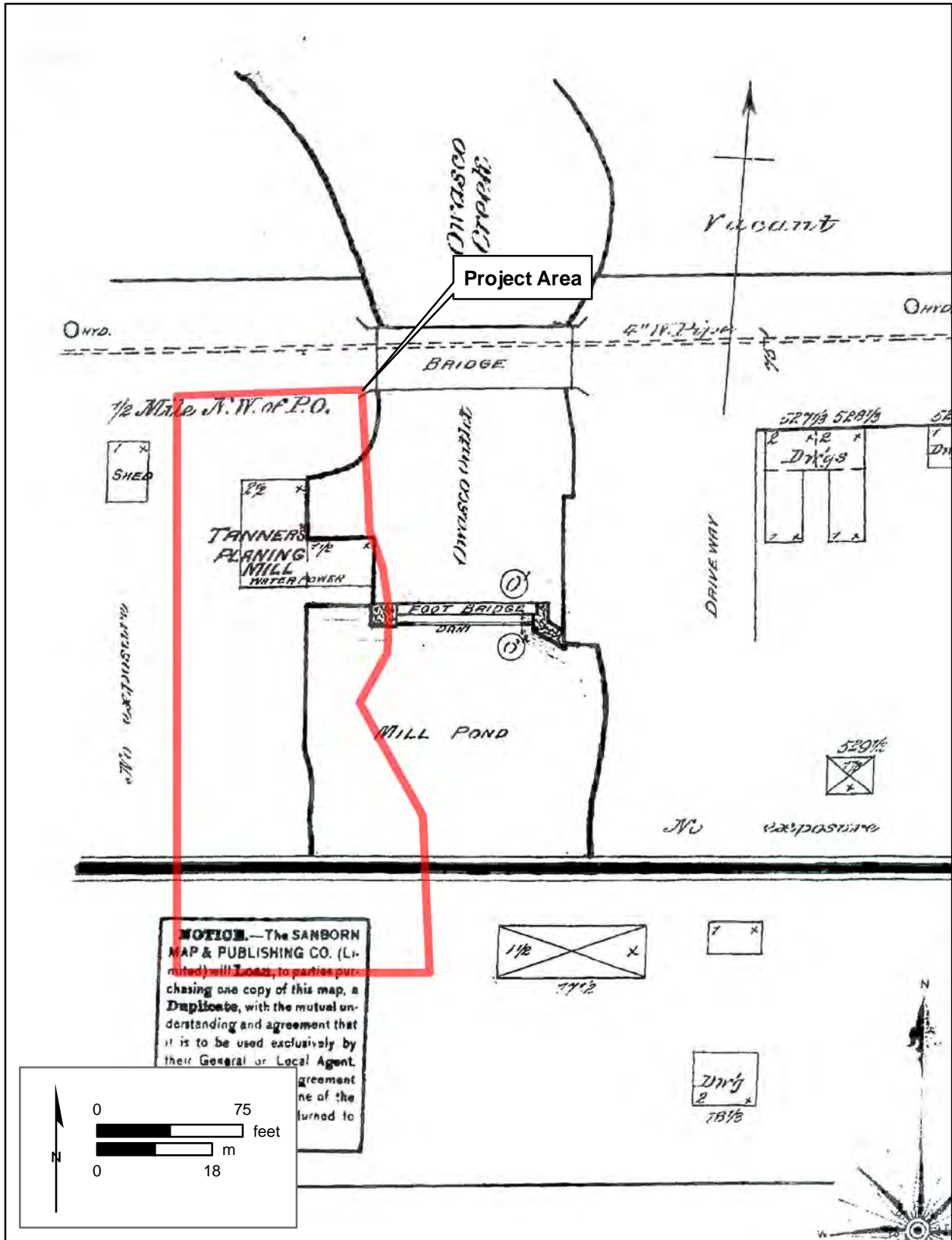


Figure 9. Detail of the 1884 Sanborn fire insurance map showing the location of the Project Area.

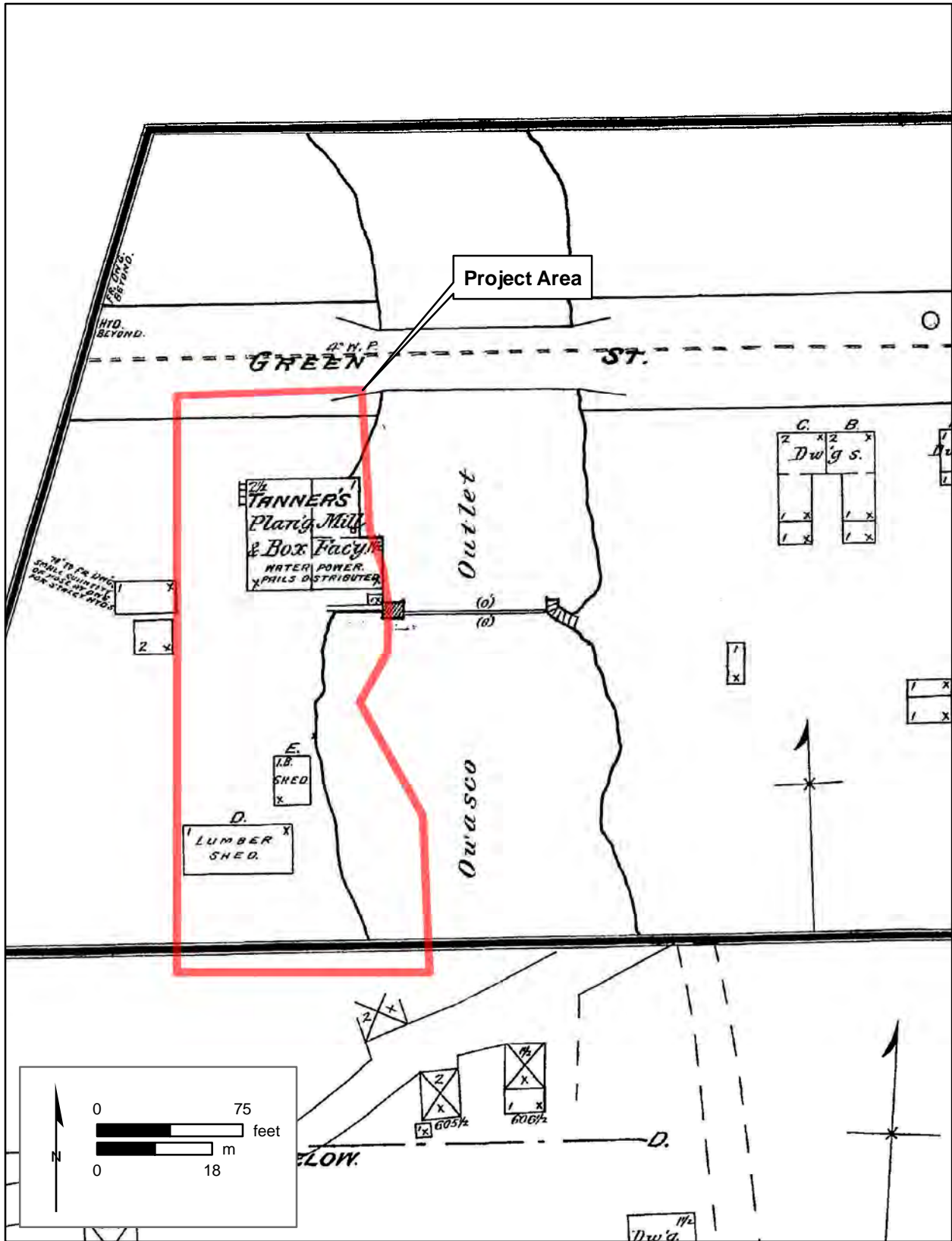


Figure 10. Detail of the 1890 Sanborn fire insurance map showing the location of the Project Area.

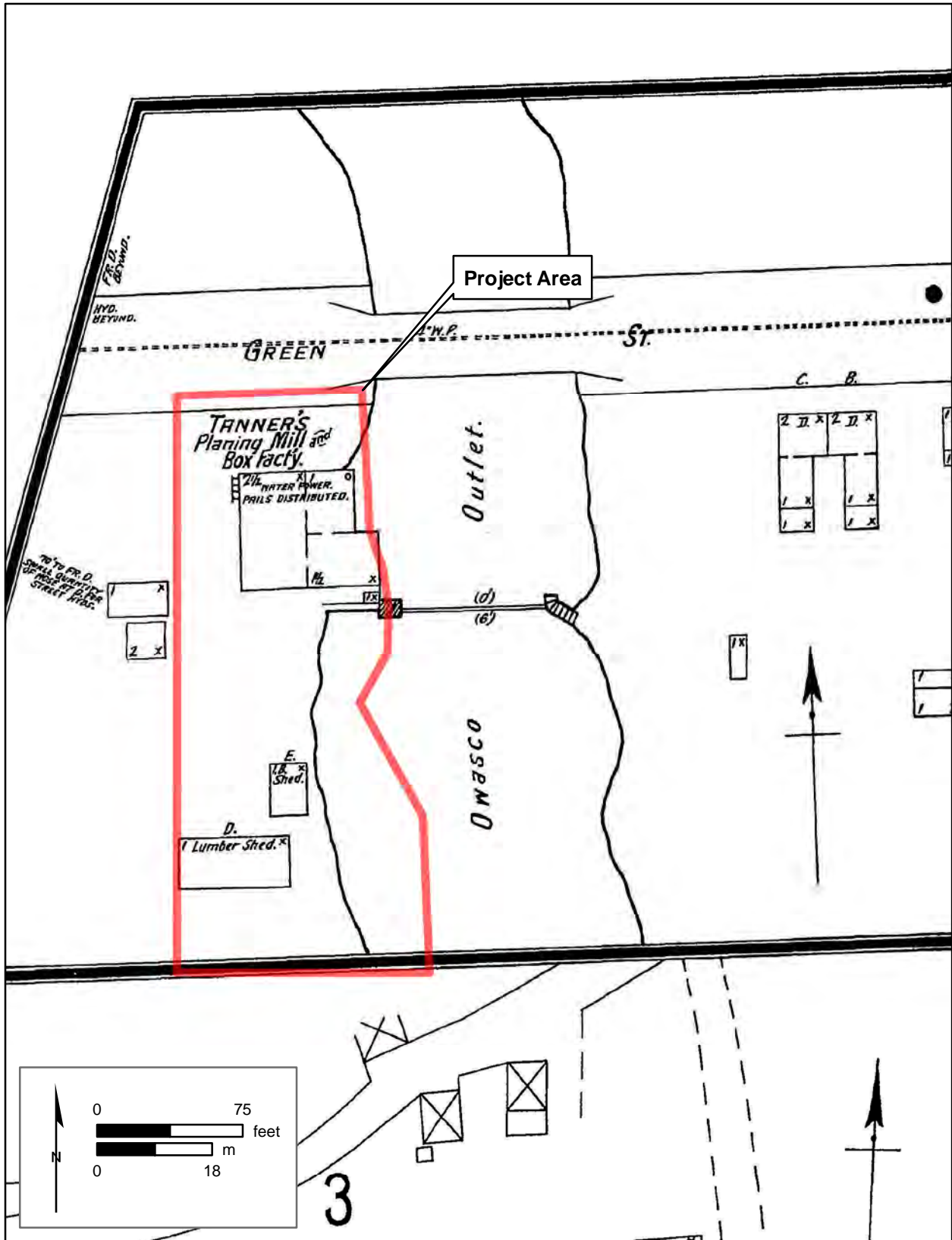


Figure 11. Detail of the 1896 Sanborn fire insurance map showing the location of the Project Area.

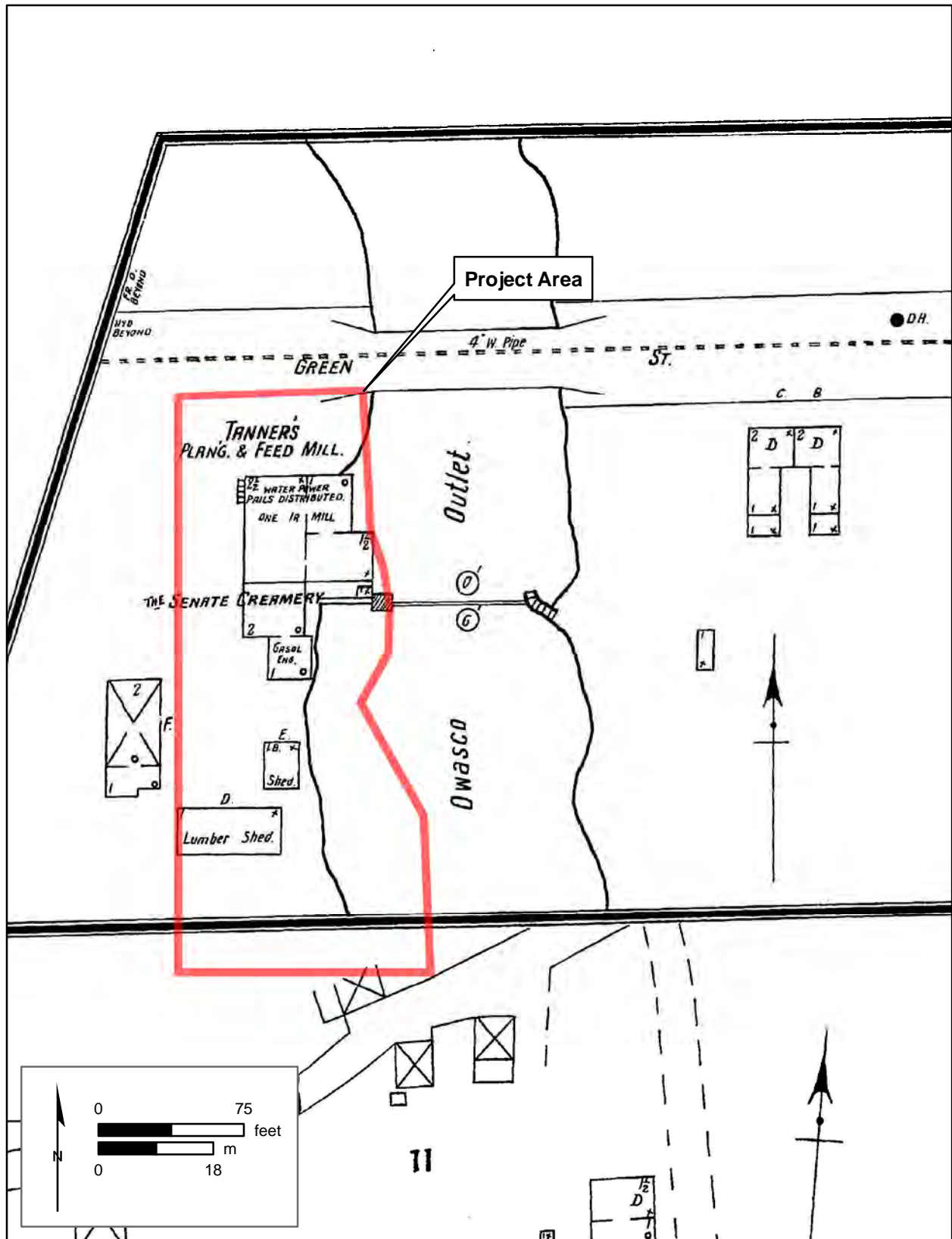


Figure 12. Detail of the 1901 Sanborn fire insurance map showing the location of the Project Area.

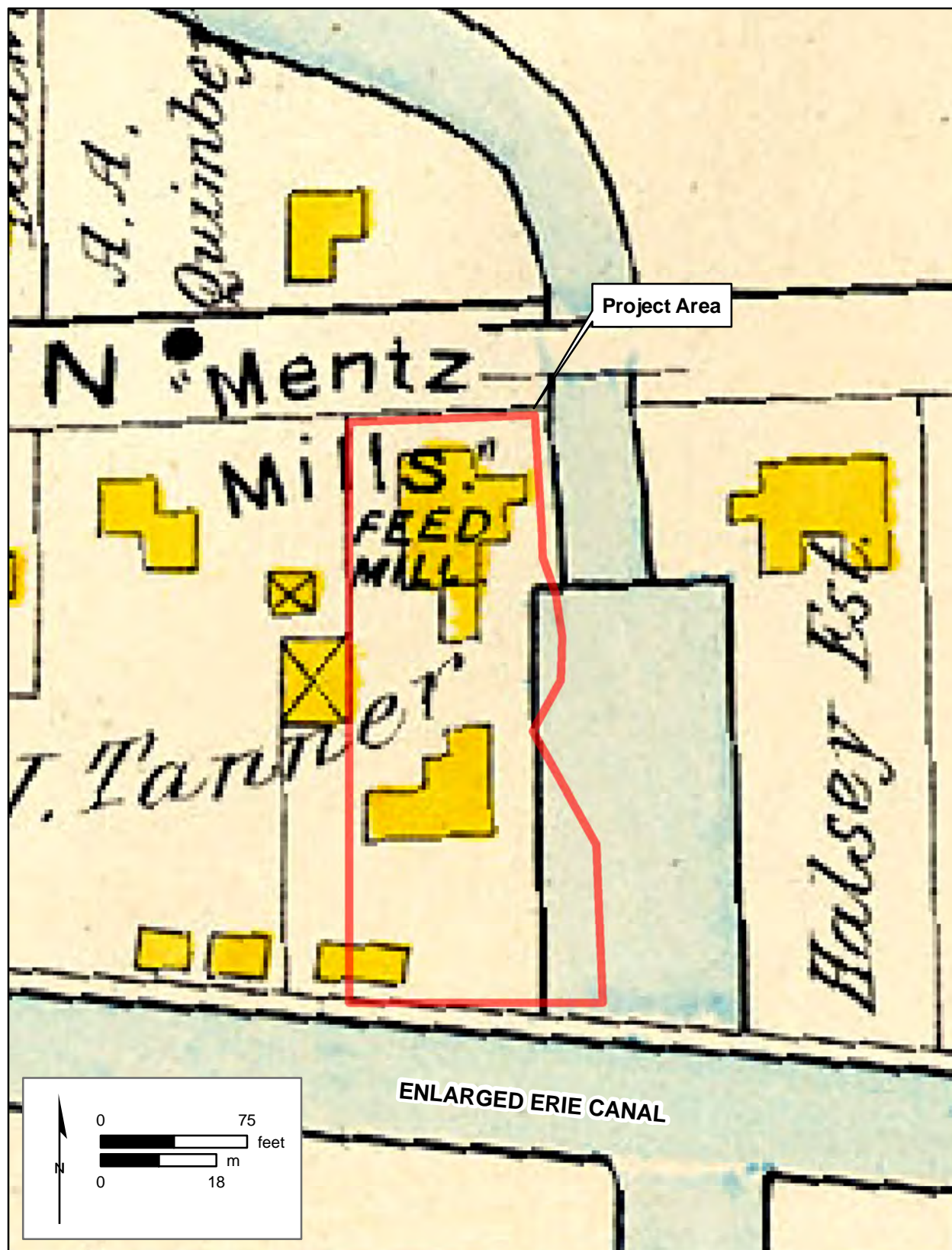


Figure 13. Detail of the 1904 *New Century Atlas of Cayuga New York* showing the location of the Project Area.

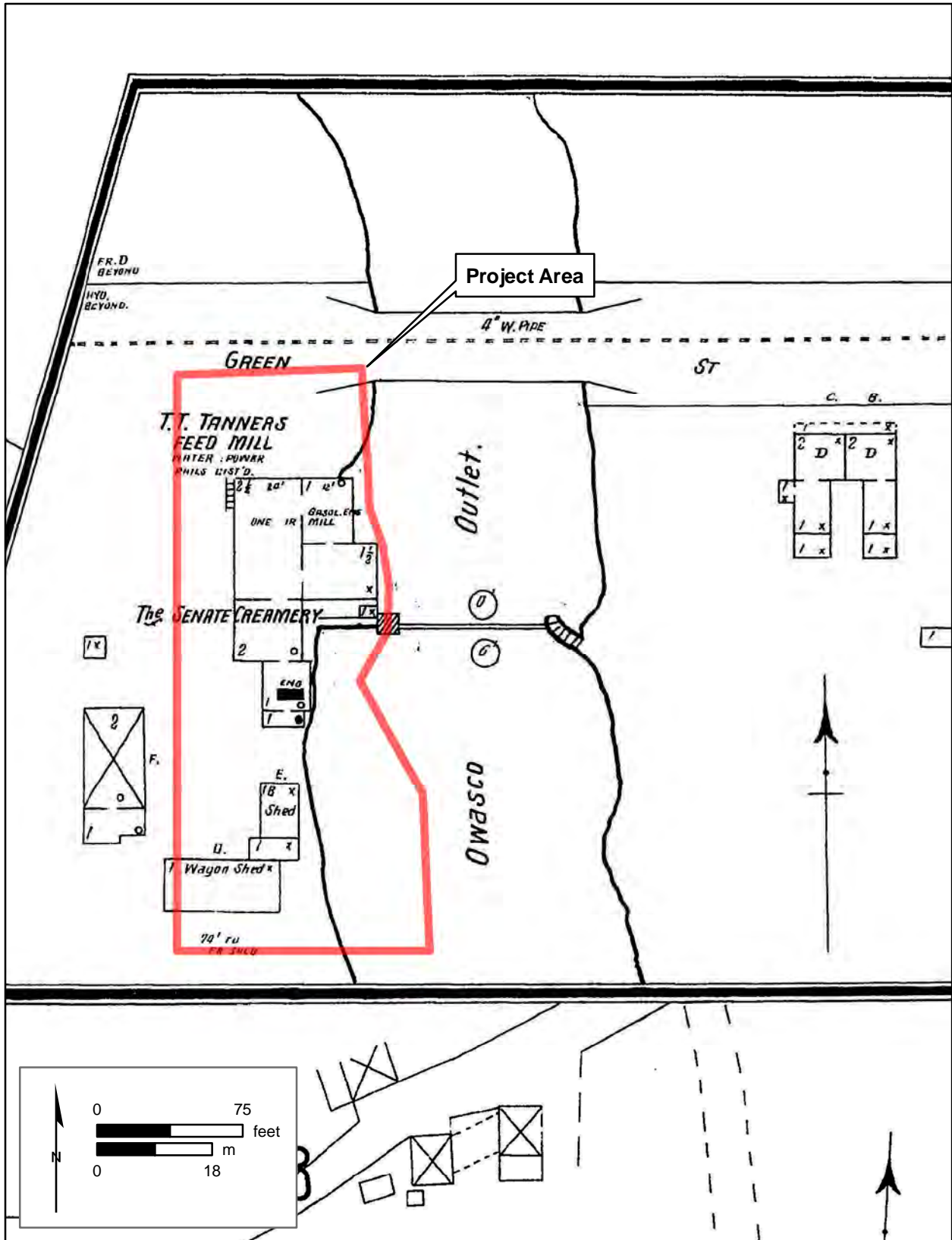


Figure 14. Detail of the 1906 Sanborn fire insurance map showing the location of the Project Area.

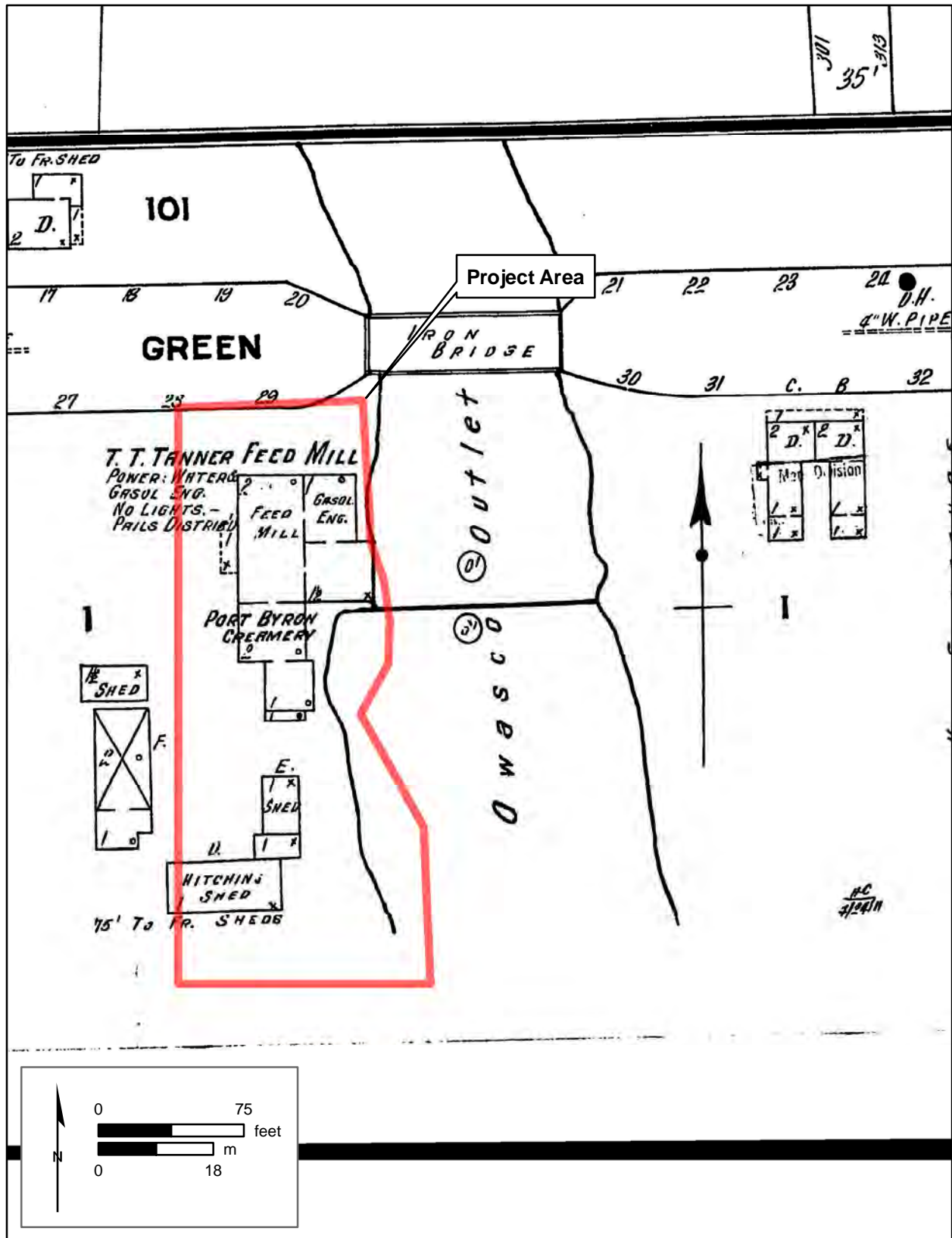


Figure 15. Detail of the 1911 Sanborn fire insurance map showing the location of the Project Area.

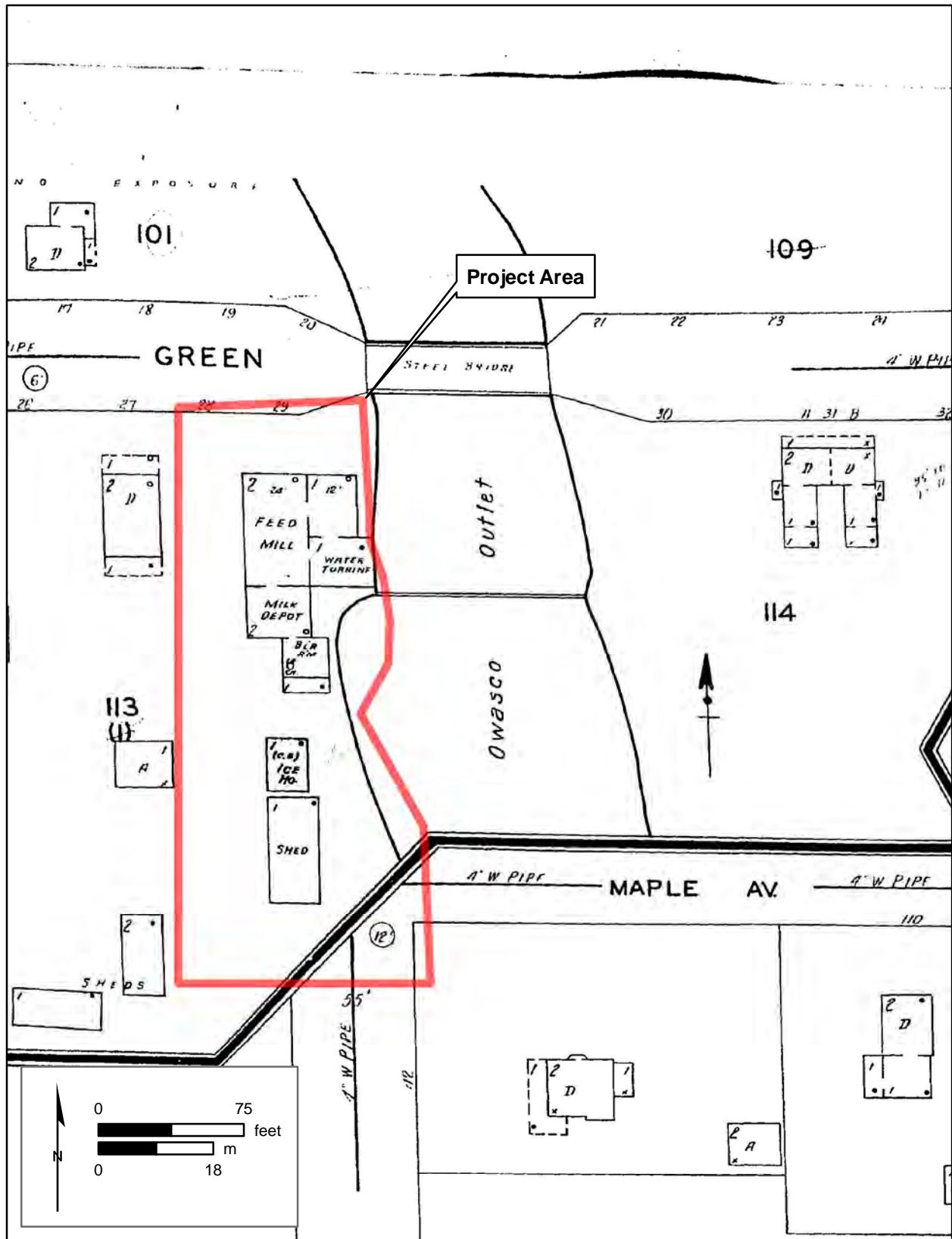


Figure 16. Detail of the 1934 Sanborn fire insurance map showing the location of the Project Area.



Figure 17. Undated view of the Owasco Outlet adjacent to the Project Area with the mill dam intact and an extension of the mill structure visible in the center right of the image that probably corresponds to section “E” in Figure 4. Note the masonry pier of the Erie Canal aqueduct in the image background. Image courtesy of Mike Riley.

PHOTOGRAPHS



Photograph 1. View of the front and east face of the mill building/former electroplating facility along Green Street. View to the southwest.



Photograph 2. View of the front of the mill building/former electroplating facility along Green Street. View to the south.



Photograph 3. View of the front and west face of the mill building/former electroplating facility along Green Street and driveway between the mill and dwelling. View to the southeast.



Photograph 4. View of the rear of the mill building/former electroplating facility. View to the north.



Photograph 5. View of concrete block building that partially housed a creamery operation until 1975. The steel rings set into the lower wall were used for hitching horses to the building.



Photograph 6. View of the rear of the mill building/former electroplating facility. The sheet-metal smokestack provided draft for a boiler and later furnace. View to the northwest.



Photograph 7. View of the east face of the mill building/former electroplating facility, with the structural extension that housed the mill waterwheel featured in the center of the photograph. This extension corresponds to section “K” in Figure 4.



Photograph 8. Detail of the two intact water turbines, gearing, and shafting in situ beneath the extension denoted as section “K” in Figure 4.



Photograph 9. Detail of in situ iron trash racks, seen jutting above the snow at the center of the photograph, at the base of the mill extension (section “K” in Figure 4”).



Photograph 10. Detail of intact box conveyors used for transporting grain through the mill (located in section “I” in Figure 4).



Photograph 11. Another detail of an intact box conveyor used for transporting grain through the mill (located in section "I" in Figure 4).

APPENDIX I:

HIGH-RESOLUTION DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY
CATALOG

(Photographer, John Herr) – October 2012

APPENDIX I - LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

- Photograph 1. Front facade. View to the south.
- Photograph 2. North and west elevations. View to the southeast.
- Photograph 3. North and east elevations. View to the southwest.
- Photograph 4. East elevation with bridge. View to the west.
- Photograph 5. South elevation with Green Street Bridge.
- Photograph 6. South elevation. View to the north.
- Photograph 7. Outbuilding (ice house), horse hitching rings on wall. View to the southeast.
- Photograph 8. Spatial arrangement of mill, house and outbuilding. View to the northwest.
- Photograph 9. Owasco Outlet, extension "K" and outbuilding. View to the northwest.*
- Photograph 10. Green Street to west of mill. View to the west-southwest.
- Photograph 11. Front door detail. View to the south.
- Photograph 12. Service bay entrance, northeast corner. View to the south.
- Photograph 13. Window detail, south side of "K." View to the north.
- Photograph 14. Bell on front of mill, roof of attic. View to the north.
- Photograph 15. Iron trash catches (racks) on south side of "K." View to the west-northwest.
- Photograph 16. Drive machinery beneath "K." View to the northeast.
- Photograph 17. Drive machinery, south end of first floor space "L." View to the northwest.
- Photograph 18. First floor, east interior space "L." View to the south-southwest.
- Photograph 19. Detail of grain elevators. View to the northwest.
- Photograph 20. First floor space, northwest corner. View to the northwest.
- Photograph 21. Second floor south (rear) space. View to the southwest.
- Photograph 22. Second floor front space, northeast corner. View to the northeast.
- Photograph 23. Elevator, second floor, west side. View to the west.

Photograph 24. Chimney, northwest corner. View to the northwest.

Photograph 25. Detail of grain elevators in attic and second floor. View to the south-southwest.

Photograph 26. Attic space and framing at south end. View to the south.

Photograph 27. Milling equipment in attic. View to the northeast.

*“K” is the extension on the east side of the mill. See Figure 4.

“L” is the first floor space at the northeast corner, directly in front of “K.” See Figure 4.



Photograph 1. Front facade. View to the south.



Photograph 2. North and west elevations. View to the southeast.



Photograph 3. North and east elevations. View to the southwest.



Photograph 4. East elevation with bridge. View to the west.



Photograph 5. South elevation with Green Street Bridge.



Photograph 6. South elevation. View to the north.



Photograph 7. Outbuilding (ice house), horse hitching rings on wall. View to the southeast.



Photograph 8. Spatial arrangement of mill, house and outbuilding. View to the northwest.



Photograph 9. Owasco Outlet, extension "K" and outbuilding. View to the northwest.



Photograph 10. Green Street to west of mill. View to the west-southwest.



Photograph 11. Front door detail. View to the south.



Photograph 12. Service bay entrance, northeast corner. View to the south.



Photograph 13. Window detail, south side of "K." View to the north.



Photograph 14. Bell on front of mill, roof of attic. View to the north.



Photograph 15. Iron trash catches (racks) on south side of “K.” View to the west-northwest.



Photograph 16. Drive machinery beneath "K." View to the northeast.



Photograph 17. Drive machinery, south end of first floor space "L." View to the northwest.



Photograph 18. First floor, east interior space "L." View to the south-southwest.



Photograph 19. Detail of grain elevators. View to the northwest.



Photograph 20. First floor space, northwest corner. View to the northwest.



Photograph 21. Second floor south (rear) space. View to the southwest.



Photograph 22. Second floor front space, northeast corner. View to the northeast.



Photograph 23. Elevator, second floor, west side. View to the west.



Photograph 24. Chimney, northwest corner. View to the northwest.



Photograph 25. Detail of grain elevators in attic and second floor. View to the south-southwest.



Photograph 26. Attic space and framing at south end. View to the south.



Photograph 27. Milling equipment in attic. View to the northeast.

APPENDIX II:

TRANSCRIPTION OF INTERVIEW WITH
MR. DELVIN E. WILT

INTERVIEW DATE: OCTOBER 16, 2012

Timothy: Today's date is October 16, 2012, and this is an interview with Mr. Delvin E. Wilt, and his son Nelson Wilt [in attendance], and daughter-in-law Anne Wilt [in attendance], and, my name is Timothy Arron Kotlensky. I'm with John Milner Associates and this is an interview concerning the history of the Green Street Mill here in Port Byron, New York. So, uh, go ahead and just, uh, Mr. Wilt, just talk about, uh, you know, some of your earlier memories of the mill. Like, what are some of your early memories of when your grandfather owned the mill?

Delvin: Well, yeah, I remember grinding the feed and, uh, I was tagged him around a lot. He had me doing a lot of little things, you know. He used to pay me for things. He believed in earning your money. Yeah, and, uh, there was--I was just a little kid and there was an old Civil War vet down the street. He lived to be, I think they said, 97 years-old. He remembered as a little bit of a kid, the man that built this [mill]. He used to say, I can, just his mother brought him down to watch them. They started with the dam and he said-- I asked how long had-- or my grandfather asked how long it took and he says, "A long time." Yeah, because it was-- a lot of it was done by hand and, um, they had a mix and he said after they built the dam then they built the mill, and, uh, the high part of the mill was put on there. That was not on there when they built it the part that sticks out, and he said to my grandfather, that didn't come until it changed to a mill, and they had to have the elevator, have heights.

[00:02:15]

Anne: What was it before it was a mill?

Delvin: It was a, a planing, like a saw mill I guess, you know? He did woodwork, you know? That's why he built it; to work on the canal, that's why he put it there, yeah.

Timothy: That's one of the earlier points, I know it's mentioned here and also someone else had mentioned it.

Delvin: He did business with the canal mostly.

Timothy: Right. And he ... before it was a feed mill or at the same time it was a—they made boxes, like wooden boxes and things, yeah?

Delvin: Yeah.

Timothy: I'd, uh, I think I remember seeing on a map, a, uh, I think it was a soda ash. Um, I don't know if you recall this, I think this may have been gone before, you know, your recollections, but there had been a small mill for making soda ash or pot ash. I think they would just take the scraps and burn them over there, just across the street, um, but...

Delvin: I don't have a--know a whole lot about how long he was there, uh, probably quite a

while. There are kind of lapses in between there. There was a blacksmith shop. I don't know when that came, too, but there was a blacksmith shop that came along after the canal was out there that took care of, uh, of shoeing the mules and, uh, horses, if they used at the canal, and on, uh, local people, too I guess. I can re--that was still going on when I was a little kid. The canal was closed, uh, but the, uh, blacksmith shop was still going, because I remember going out there and, uh, the smell was terrible because, you know, they didn't have ventilation and they had to heat the shoe and then put it on and it gives off a lot of smoke.

[00:04:05]

Anne: Where was that building?

Delvin: That was out there, in the yard, yeah. I got old pictures, apparently when the canal was gone it was crossways, but, uh, one ... after I was born it was uh, they turned it around and it was on the end of the ice house there, yeah. That's where it was, uh, when I remember it, you know.

Timothy: Just to back up, you had mentioned that, uh, they had added a second story to the mill in order to accommodate the elevators moving grain up and down.

Delvin: Yeah.

Timothy: So, it sounds like you're suggesting that the lower story may date to the original mill. Is that what you understand or is it not known? If the original mill, what I'm saying is, the lower story, is that the original mill that dates back to late 18 ...

Delvin: It's just like it is now, except it didn't have the high part on it.

Timothy: Didn't have the high part.

Delvin: All the parts that they took down, was added on later, that was the original building but it was only two stories instead of--I guess you could call it three but they never put the floor in up in the attic, you know.

Timothy: Right, right.

Delvin: That was for the elevators. They have height so they could lift the grain, um, going to the different bins, yeah.

Timothy: When did your grandfather purchase the mill?

Delvin: It tells right there, I think it was, what 1913?

Timothy: That's what I remember.

Delvin: Yeah, I knew it was around there, I think it tells there.

Timothy: 1912-1913.

Delvin: Yeah.

Timothy: And, why did your grandfather purchase the mill?

Delvin: Well, he owned the one up by the railroad.

Timothy: Okay.

Delvin: It's all grown up and falling down there now. He built that, yeah. Uh, his family was all millers, and, uh, he got up, that place for sale, I guess, and that's why he--he was looking for a mill and that's why he came down there. And, uh, there [00:06:05] was another man by the name of Miller that was looking for a mill for his son. He was from Pennsylvania. He had three sons and all of them had mills, and the younger son, uh, well he couldn't find one, so he was out this way, you know. That's what my father told me, anyway. And, uh, he kept ... uh, first turned to my grandfather and offered him a lot of money for it, I guess. My grandmother was totally against it, but she wanted to stay there. But, he sold that mill, so he had to do something, so he bought this one, which, she didn't approve of at all, you know. She wanted to stay there. And, uh, this one was strictly a feed mill. The one down there was a farm mill and a cider mill, you know, and they were doing real well and wanted to stay, but, uh, he bought—he bought this, uh, place. This house wasn't here. Uh, it was all one piece of property--the mill, and this, and next door, was, uh, apparently a, uh, I don't know who built the house over here, but, uh, it was all one piece of property, yeah, until my grandfather bought it and he, uh, he bought this part, and, uh, you know, this was vacant, and he built the house in 1920, you know, after the canal had gone out. The canal went out, uh, in 1917, uh, the same year I was born, so I don't reme—I don't remember the canal at all (laughing). I can remember there was a little water in it and everything was left for a couple years before they started tearing the bridges down in the aqueduct out here, so I remember that just a little bit, you know.

[00:08:11]

Timothy: And this is, to clarify, this is the earlier canal; when the barge canal then took over the traffic from this one, correct? Okay.

Delvin: Yeah, the barge opened up in '18, I think. The spring of '18 I think it did, yeah. This closed in '17, you know.

Timothy: And when your grandfather purchased the mill was he hoping to continue to ... so, well, he buys the mill in about 1912-1913 and he's hoping to continue to make

money from the canal by selling feed to the--to...

Delvin: I imagine he had that in mind, you know, probably didn't know then that the canal was going out. I never heard him say that but I imagine probably that, um, ...

Timothy: And so after the canal closes what does he do? Does he continue to operate his...

Delvin: Well, he kept on going because there was, uh, a demand. Just about everybody in town had some kind--either chickens, some of them had pigs. There was, uh, two or three places where there was horses. Just about everybody had chickens and they had their own eggs, so there was quite a lot of business for quite a while. And of course, there were farmers around here. Yeah, we had a lot of customers when I was a kid. And, um, and a lot of farmers, at that time, they were doing a lot of grinding. The farmers had to bring the grist in, yeah. And, um, there was, uh, uh, quite a lot of demand until, uh, well the automobile began to get more popular [00:10:06] and people got rid of their horses and, uh, uh, then they'd begin t--the store would begin to carry more food line items, so a lot of people got rid of their chickens, and they didn't have as many pigs--had a few cows, there was cows right across the street. People would come get milk and the milk man, uh, peddled the milk out of cans, people were bringing their containers out in the earlier days, he told me. And, um, they'd come along and they'd bring their containers out and get the milk, you know. But as things changed, why people got rid of a lot of their animals, and, uh, the farms were getting bigger and then the portable grinder came around, you know, and that's when the small mills really, because then the farmers didn't have to bring their grain in anymore and that's when business really started going down, and, um, and, um, it kept getting, um, getting less and less, um, business. So, um, it went along--my grandfather died in '32 and then my father took it over until, uh, he had it until about 1950. Hitchcock came in at '45; he rented a back part to him. About 1950, my father closed it up because it wasn't a paying proposition.

Timothy: But he had a milling operation until 1950?

Delvin: About that, yeah. He was on, yeah, but things were going downhill fast. He just closed it up. Hitchcock took over the whole thing.

[00:12:00]

Timothy: What powered the mill? What powered the mill from the...

Delvin: Well, they started with water power.

Timothy: Right.

Delvin: When I was a kid it was water power. But then, then they had to get . . . have auxiliary, so they uh, uh, they bought a Cadillac engine (laughing) out of a car. I

remember...

Anne: Where did they get the water from dad? From that, I mean, from that outlet?

Delvin: Yeah..

Anne: Was there a mill, mill?

Delvin: Yeah, that's why the dam was there. It raised the level so the water had to go down through the turbine and that's what gave it power. Yeah.

Anne: When did they take that wheel off?

Delvin: Uh, let's see. The dam went off ... I was trying to think. I think it was in the late '50's. It was the day it broke in the middle, and, uh, that was the end of the water power. Yeah. But, it wasn't too good before that, and that's why they had the Cadillac engine, the V-8 Cadillac engine.

Timothy: Do you know about what time it was put in? When the Cadillac engine was installed?

Delvin: It must have been put in in the--sometime in the '40s.

Timothy: The 1940s. So, it's still--you're still running the two water turbines all the way up to the 1940s.

Delvin: Yeah, yeah, we were the, the water for shelling the corn and grinding cobs, but, and elevating. But, for the grinder, which took a lot of power and a lot of high speed, we used the Cadillac V-8 engine.

Timothy: But, that doesn't come in until the 1940s, though, right?

Delvin: Right.

Timothy: Wow. There are two, um, intact, what's probably sad about losing this mill, there are two intact turbines. It's not like it's a water wheel, and so the water would hit these turbines, it kind of what replaced water or what we should think of as a water wheel; much like the 1880s and 1890s. And they're still there. [00:14:01] It's just amazing.

Delvin: I know. There was a, we think anyway, there was a, there was a, a shaft that run off from the main shaft that had a big clutch on it and a big pulley and they think that some time when that planing mill was in there that he had a gas engine. They think. When the, because when you get high water, uh, you don't have much power because there isn't a fall, and, um, they think that uh, although they're not sure, from what that looked like with that pulley and the clutch that, hooked up to the light shaft from the, from the uh, turbine, that uh, when he couldn't get power from the, with water,

he used this old big gas engine. Now, it was pup pup.... pup. The kind with a big flywheel. Yeah. There was evidence that it was there. There was dirt and grease on the floor and there was some blocks, and they figured that, uh, that's a big clutch and everything that you could, they figured that, uh, that that's what they used when the water power was not. But, that was long, uh, long gone when my grandfather bought it and I can remember, you know, yeah. He used to think that's what it was and so did some of the others from looking at it. They had something in there for auxiliary power. Of course, they didn't have, uh, electric in those days. There wasn't much here and it was 25-cycle. I can remember we had 25-cycle from when I was born. I was a good sized kid when they changed to 60, you know. You had to change all, but you didn't have too much equipment because they change all your motors and everything because it wouldn't work anymore. I can remember that, you know.

Nelson: But they didn't use any electricity for power and...

[00:16:00]

Delvin: No. Never did out here. No.

Anne: When did the electricity come in?

Delvin: Huh?

Anne: When did electricity come in?

Delvin: Well, I guess it started in the '20s. Yeah. But, there wasn't many, they had a streetlights, the streetlights were changed, but there weren't many people that used electric, because, uh, uh, when I was a kid, that's why they had so much kerosene over here, because people were using lamps. And, um, um, near everybody in town was, we sold quite a... My grandfather had a kerosene tank and he also put the gas pump in, which is gone now, and um, uh, and I can remember people coming over with gallon cans, two gallon cans, and five gallon cans, you know, to get... They used, everyone in town used kerosene for one thing or another, you know. And, um, it was, um, I think, um, in the early '30s I think when they changed over to 60-cycle, and then there was more and more equipment coming and, um, and they had a major overhaul of all the lines in Port Byron. And I think in the '40s, uh that the, uh, village owned it, but there was too much of an upkeep for them to keep up with progress. They sold it to the gas and electric.

Timothy: Um, hmm.

Delvin: Yeah. So, it's all nice right now.

Nelson: I know Mike's, the EPA engineers, showed him a copy of that. But, that's, that's a picture of...

Anne: That's not a very good copy.

Nelson: No, that's not. That's a terrible copy. I have it on the computer in there and it's a lot better detail. That was taken some time, probably, we think in the late 1800s or early 1900s, I guess.

Delvin: That was taken before I...you know.

Anne: Yeah. It needs new printer cartridges?

Nelson: Uh, maybe so. But, um, Mike can give you, uh, he can, he can send you the file, or something, and then you can...

[00:18:04]

Timothy: The dam is still intact.

Nelson: Yeah, and you can see a horse out in front of the mill, and, you know...

Timothy: Is his is the edge of it, right there?

Nelson: Yeah.

Delvin: I think that was before...

Anne: It is a horse. They keep telling me there's a horse, but it must be right here.

Timothy: That's him right there.

Delvin: I think that was before my grandfather bought it. Because, uh, my grandfather put gasoline ... there's no gas pump there. My grandfather put the gasoline pump in, and the kerosene in; and, if it's not there, there's no, uh...

Anne: It would be a little further over wouldn't it, then? Wait, the gas pump was over about here.

Delvin: You'd see it there if it was... It couldn't be there because a horse, the horse is right up close. There's no loading dock there.

Anne: Oh, yeah. Right. There's no loading dock in. Right in here was the gas pump.

Delvin: So, I think that was before my grandfather bought it, you know.

Anne: Sonoco.

Delvin: I, uh, remember, dad saying that my grandfather or his father put the gas pump in, and the kerosene, you know. Yeah.

Timothy: I think the gas pump was there two years ago when I visited.

Delvin: Yeah. I just went to...

Nelson: ...to check it out on Friday. Yeah.

Timothy: Yeah, that's right. There it is.

Delvin: I had a chance to sell that for a long time, but I wanted to keep it as long as the mill was there.

Timothy: I bet you had all kinds of offers on that.

Delvin: Yeah. Yeah, well I had...I got pretty good money for it, yeah. Well.

Timothy: So, he's...he has... he's selling gasoline from, do you, when did he put the gas pump in?

Delvin: I don't know; sometime after he bought [the mill].

Timothy: Okay. So, it was pretty soon after.

Delvin: I don't have any dates on it, you know. No, I uh...

Anne: Do you remember it when you were a kid? Has it always been there?

Delvin: Yeah. As long as I can remember it was there.

Anne: Listen, I can tell you that probably you can go online and see the style of it and you'll be able to tell what year it was.

Nelson: Well, that wasn't the original pump, and you said they changed what, three times or two or three times? The supplier of the gasoline kept changing the pump every so often?

[00:20:08]

Delvin: Yeah.

Delvin: It was a hand pump. When I first got it, it was one of these gravity flow, it had a 10-gallon wooden globe, you might call it, and you fill that up. You pumped it...I did, I

sold a lot of gas like that. Pump it up. Then you...it held 10 gallons. And you had a sliding pipe and there was a needle on it, a big needle and if somebody wanted two gallons you put it on two, and then you would turn the crank and then it lowered, uh, the pipe and you got two gallons of gas. And if you wanted 10 gallons of gas, well you went all the way down to the bottom of the tank. And that's the way it worked. Yeah, that was the first one that I can remember. Whether he had one before that, I don't think he did; I think that was it. Yeah.

Anne: When you changed that pump, who changed the pump, your dad?

Delvin: Uh, no, the gasoline dealer; in those times, F. R. Drake, his name was, yeah.. They did things different in those days. You could get as little as 100 gallons of gas, because they had small trucks. I think the truck only held 1,000 or 1,500 gallons anyway. You used to have to fill the thing every week, or sometimes less than that, yeah. Of course, it's only, uh, I think it's only a 500 or a 550 gallon tank under the pump. In those days people didn't buy a lot of gas. I mean the cars were...had small tanks and they didn't drive like, the roads weren't that good you didn't have the Thruway you didn't have.. So, I pumped a lot, lots of people come in, "Give me three dollars' worth," you know, something like that. You had a chart that told about how close they could come. Yeah, I pumped gas for six gallons for a dollar. That was the cheapest. And then it started going up. And motor oil was, of course, you bought it in bulk and you put it in glass bottles. It had a spout on it and it was, uh, ten cents a quart or three quarts for a quarter. [00:22:24]

Things have changed a lot. And kerosene was five cents a gallon. I sold a...pumped a lot of kerosene for a nickel. And I, uh, we pumped, uh, my grandfather put in an air pump and so we pumped, we checked tires, we washed the windshield and checked the oil. People in those days wanted all that done, you know. So, if you sold gas you did all that, yeah. And we didn't have a decent place to change oil, but he had a few customers and, uh, it was my job to crawl under the car with a pad on because I thought, in those days they didn't worry about pollution, so you used some of the motor oil to burn on the corncobs. That's what they burned in the office in the winter time; the corncobs. That gives a lot of the heat, but they don't last long. But the rest of it we just tossed over the bank. And it went in.

Anne: Uh, oh.

Delvin: I dumped a lot. It's all been filled in there, now, but, uh, where the big door is over there. There was some cement they put down and I had to crawl underneath and, uh, change the oil. We had probably had, oh, maybe seven or eight customers that wanted their oil changed. A lot of people changed it themselves, and some of it did go, but, they didn't have the service stations like they got now. Most of them were repair shops and, uh, you did a lot of the ... Of course, cars were simple in those days they didn't have all this liquid stuff, spark plugs, a timer or something, and a battery and that was about it. Didn't have fuses, didn't have any controls, yeah.

[00:24:35]

Timothy: Did you, um, did you or your father, or your grandfather do much auto repair here?

Delvin: None.

Timothy: You didn't?

Delvin: None. No, we didn't, we didn't go into that at all.

Timothy: Okay.

Delvin: We didn't change tires or anything at all. No, they had a, they had a garage uptown that would, uh, change your tire, just one. You know. There was a couple other, there's some other gas stations, there were about five or six of them that had a pump, but they didn't give any outside, washing the windshields and, um, pumping the tires. They didn't do anything either. Yeah. The garage had a, the garage, uh, had a rack where you could raise your car up, you see. You had to get under it, like this, because they didn't have a hoist or didn't have hydraulics in those days so they just had this ramp that came up. It probably was maybe as high as this table a little bit, here, and they could, some of them did dig a hole underneath with steps so you could get down, uh, this guy did that finally, yeah. First he just raises up and then he, um, he started to do it that way. Yeah.

Timothy: About when did your grandfather or I guess your father stop selling gasoline here at the mill?

Delvin: Uh, he stopped when he quit the mill; about 1950.

Timothy: Oh, so when quit he stopped selling gasoline. Ok.

Delvin: You know, the pump said, uh, uh, when I looked at it the other day, the last time they sold gas it was 37.5 cents a gallon.

[Inaudible 00:26:13.9]

Delvin: Right around 1950 was the year it went down.

Timothy: I remember when we spoke two years ago you had mentioned, uh, there were several different, you know, stories of what you did there, what you worked, you know, what work you did for your grandfather. Uh, tell me about the, well I know you didn't do some of this work, but tell me about the, the fellow that sold doughnuts.

Anne: That was back in the...

Timothy: That was...

Delvin: That was in the, in the old blacksmith's shop.

Timothy: Okay.

Delvin: You know, uh, that was in the, in the '20s, you know. I'd say probably, maybe 1925, maybe, you know. Yeah. Yeah, I used to, after school, I used to come in and work for him for peanuts, you know, and, uh, he-he would, uh, make the doughnuts in the morning and they'd put them in racks to cool and then in the afternoon, uh, he would package them or sugar them. He had a big aluminum bowl that was about as big as this table and he used to buy, uh, sugar in a 100 pound bag, and he'd dump it in there and he'd dump the doughnuts in and all hand work; stir them around and then you tapped them on the side and put them in a box; a dozen in a box, yeah. I used to, after school, uh, I used to, uh, help him do that, you know. He baked, uh, three times a week, you know. But he didn't last long, he only lasted, I guess, a couple three years. The Depression come along and that was the end of that. Yeah.

Timothy: Other than the feed mill, uh, you were with, I think, the creamery, the Senate Creamery.

Delvin: Yeah.

Timothy: Tell me about the creamery.

[00:28:04]

Delvin: Yeah. I don't know a whole lot about it, but apparently, I don't know when it started. It was there when my grandfather bought the, some time, that was added on. I, um. I-I don't know, um ... maybe Mr. Tanner. My grandfather bought it from J. T. Tanner, you know, and um, it might have been, he might have added on. Somebody added it on there, and the Port Byron Creamery was there; came in there, and that was there until 1925. [The report] tells who lived there, you know, and then they bought a place over on the other street. Uh, my grandfather, I think they said, wanted more rent and he didn't want, Mr. [inaudible 028:44.2] didn't want to pay that, and so he, he bought house over there on the outlet. It's gone now, but it was, uh, right in front of the school, you know, by the bridge, and he added a building on. It was handy because everything just went in the outlet. He just run the pipe just like here. You know, all those toilets and all the crap, you know, the whey and, uh, dirty water, pretty much everything went right in the outlet.

Timothy: So right down there, right?

Delvin: Chester Street. Yeah.

Nelson: I think I remember it being out there...that building was still there. It wasn't functioning, but...

Delvin: Yeah. And then my grandfather and my father got the idea that they were going to go into the creamery business, because it was idle, and I remember my grandfather bought a churn, and he bought a pasteurizer, and a separator, and, um, they started making butter. They made butter for, and cottage cheese, I guess, for a couple three years, along with running the mill, too. I mean, which was, I thought it was quite an undertaking, really, but they did. But, it didn't pan out so they, they, uh, quit that. Um, I used to have to help there, too, had to wrap the butter. They put it in, uh, in pound squares, you know, and, uh, I had to learn to wrap it and put it in a carton. I used to have to do...help with that sometime. They only churned but maybe twice a week, maybe, I guess.

[00:30:14]

Timothy: And, would they, uh, I guess...

Delvin: Well, it wasn't a very paying proposition, I guess, because they didn't stay in it very long, you know.

Timothy: They just bought, would buy milk from local farmers?

Delvin: Cream.

Timothy: Oh, just bought cream?

Delvin: Yeah, cream. It was cream, mostly cream. They had a separator. I guess there was a few places where they got milk, but, the farmers would've bring the cream, maybe. It wasn't sweet cream, it was sour. You know, and, uh, 'cause they didn't have much refrigeration, and they might bring it in twice a week. But they did have a separator, so there must have been some, some, uh, milk there. But, uh, that went out. Then my, my, my grand-my grandfather was always ambitious about business. Then he, he had a friend that was in International Harvester, uh, I don't know what you would call him. Uh, he was in charge of sales and he was looking for new outlets. So, he talked my grandfather into handling, um, light equipment. It was mostly horse-drawn, this is still in the 1920s, 1930s, along in there. So, I can remember they had manure-spreaders, they had mowing machines, then they had cultivators, and plows; all handy equipment. They started handling it and they hid it all over here, like the front yard, all over the house, in the side yard. And I can remember that. But, that didn't last long either. That was only another two or three years, I guess, and then that went out. Yeah. Yeah. They went back to the, stayed in the, in the feed business, yeah. Really, you know. And, in the meantime, uh, in the creamery, uh, Dairy Lee come in here. They wanted a receiving station, yeah. So, they-that only lasted a couple three years, too. And, uh, they fixed it all up in there and, uh, put in equipment, put in a

new boiler, did a lot. So, in about 1932-33 they went out, and then it was empty until Hitchcock came along in '45. Yeah. My father used it for storage. He, uh, sold some bale straw and some hay for people that only wanted a little bit, you know. It was full of that stuff until Hitchcock came along in '45, you know.

[00:32:52]

Anne: Gary Hitchcock must've been really young.

Nelson: Gary's my age.

Anne: Huh?

Nelson: Gary's my age. He was born in '48.

Anne: Not Gary, his father, must have been really young when he started the mill.

Delvin: Oh, he was. He wasn't even married. Uh...

Nelson: This is Dave.

Delvin: Huh?

Nelson: David Hitchcock.

Delvin: Oh, David Hitchcock. I thought you were talking about my father.

Anne: Oh, well, that's an interesting thought, too.

Delvin: Well, my father was real young. He wasn't even married when, uh, when he first went to work in the mill. He was only, I think he said, 16, I think. He got married when he was 17. Yeah. And he was working over there. In fact, I've got a picture of it.

Nelson: Yeah.

Delvin: He, uh...Grandma Burke gave me a, a card that they sent. She said, "He really had a crush on me, but he was a little bit bashful." But he s-my father sent a picture of himself in the mill to her. I've got it someplace. She gave it back to me years later and said, "You ought to keep this." It says on there, "Guess who," underneath it. She said he was a little too bashful and then he wrote that on the bottom of it. Yeah. Yeah. Then he married my mother, you know. She lived up where Uncle Bob lives. That's where she lived, and Mrs. Burke lived up further. She was born there, yeah. They were all neighbors. Yeah. I'm getting off the subject here a little bit, but...

[00:34:33]

Timothy: Oh, that's ok. It's good. Good context. When was the house built?

Delvin: The house was built in 1920. In 1921 they finished it, yeah.

Timothy: And your grandfather and you grandmother lived here?

Delvin: Yeah. Yeah.

Timothy: Where were you living? At, uh...

Delvin: I was living with my other grandmother in the second house out, yeah, on my mother's side, Emmons, the Emmons' family. Her name was Emmons. Yeah. So, I had a grandfather here and I had a grandfather there, so I used to be going back and forth. But, I lived with my grandfather, Wilson Pat, because I was named after Delvin. I never heard that name, but that was his name and it was his father or somebody's name ahead of that. So, that's why he got that name, you know. And, uh, he always favored me. And, he was always giving me money, but I had to do something to get it. Yeah. Yeah.

Timothy: When did you move into the house here?

Delvin: When did I move in?

Timothy: Mm-hmm.

Delvin: I moved in in '43.

Timothy: '43.

Delvin: Yeah.

Nelson: Right when you got married, right? Right after you got married, right?

Delvin: What? Yeah, yeah. That's where we got married. Your mother wanted to go Auburn to live, and I didn't like the city.

Anne: Had the house been empty? Had the house been empty?

Delvin: What? No. Grandmother Wilt was still alive.

Anne: Oh, so you moved in with your Grandmother Wilt?

[00:36:08]

Delvin: She conveniently passed away and, uh, the hou...

Anne: Conveniently.

Delvin: My Aunt Irene, uh, suggested to me, she says, uh, "We've been thinking, why don't you two get married and live in the house?" And, uh, we had a house over in Concord, we wanted but we couldn't get it so it was very convenient for us to have this. We rented it for a little while, and, uh...

Anne: When was the house next door built?

Delvin: ...we got married and moved in here, yeah. It was all furnished. My grandmother had all of her stuff here, but we didn't have to buy anything. We just got married and moved in. Of course, some of it was old and right away quick we started, you know, changing some things, you know.

Anne: Were you working at the mill then?

Delvin: No, I was, uh, I was working in the, uh, let's see, where was I, '43? I started in the Columbia Rope in '37 and then I went to the Auburn Spark [Plug], I went to the Auburn Spark... '43, I was in, uh, I think I was in Auburn Spark Plug, yeah, working, yeah. It was during the war. I-I got married, but I thought maybe I was going to have to go to war, but, I had had kidney problems for a couple of years and they couldn't find ... I had a lot of albumin and pains in my back and they took x-rays of my kidneys, which wasn't pleasant in those days, and there was, uh, inflammation in there, and, uh, I kept going back to the doctor every couple of weeks and I had to take capsules. And, in the mean time, uh, the draft, but they, they told me to go get it fixed, and, uh, I talked to my doctor and he said, "Why don't you [00:38:02] let them fix it?" He said, "You know, you're going to be tied up if we do anything or have any kind of surgery you're going to be tied up for about two or three months," in those days; that's because they gotta make a big slit into the side. He said, "Let them do it." Well, they didn't want to do it. So, I never, I never got in the service. But, after several years it cleared up. They think that, they think that maybe I had a transparent kidney stone, and, passed it, finally passed it, because, about the time, just before the war ended, uh, I passed.

Nelson: You passed the physical?

Delvin: Yeah, I passed the physical. My urine was still good and I didn't have the pain anymore, and they put me back in 1A, but, uh, the things were winding down and so I never got in the service, you know, so... Otherwise, I would have. Yeah. But, they, that's the only thing that the doctor said that they could determine was that most kidney stones are not transparent, you know, you could see them. But, there was something that was causing, uh, inflammation in the bottom of my kidney. And, uh,

they wanted to know by, they said they usually hurt you and you know it. But, I said, "No, I never feel it, felt it." But, that's what, because it cleared up anyway, you know. I was taking this medicine, oh, for three or four years, I guess. Now, I had to go to the doctor every couple of weeks to check on it. In those days, three dollars; I paid the doctors, every time I went, three dollars.

Anne: That was probably a lot. That was probably a lot for...

Delvin: It probably was. Three dollars, or he'd come to the house for four. But, he had a, I always had to sit around waiting about two hours because his office was full all the time, you know, you know, you know. Sometimes I'd have to stand up to wait, you know. He didn't have appointments, he just was there. They didn't have appointments in those days. You just, you just walked in and took your chance.

[00:40:20]

Anne: Did they ever have any accidents at the mill?

Delvin: Not that I know of.

Anne: That needed a local doctor?

Delvin: Not that I know of, no. No.

Anne: Okay.

Delvin: My grandfather didn't believe in insurance, either. He said, "Why should I give them all my money?" He said, "I'll do my own insuring." He put money aside, he said, for it, yeah.

Timothy: So, I guess there were never any major fires? The mill never burned down and had to be replaced, as far as you can remember?

Delvin: Not this one. He lost the one down below and had to rebuild it. That caught on fire. He had to go work for the railroad to-for the New York Central, near Auburn there, to, uh, get money to... He did, he just only had it for about six months, or something like that, and it burned down on him. So, he had to go to...so they told me. He went from Auburn to Syracuse.

Anne: Now, why did they have the bell? You mentioned the bell yesterday, you took the bell down.

Delvin: The only thing they can decide is, one time, there were 12 people working there. They had a thing stuck on the ... there was an old office upstairs. It wasn't very, it was kind of crude, but it was an office. They had a sticker that said, "These following

people worked here," and there was 12 names, each person signed their name. I didn't know any of them. And, they figure that, uh, and the bell had a rope that went down by the door so that you could, uh, you could either pull it, which is where you pull it and the, uh, what they call the clapper, I guess, or something, or you could pull and have it swing. You know, pull the other rope it w-it goes back and forth like this. And, um, that was, I, that was there, that was there for a long time. That was there when I was a kid. I used to monkey with it and my father used to follow me home. You could hear it all over town, you know. My father would be like, he said, "Don't do that." I said, "Why?" I was like 10 years, yeah. But he said...

[00:42:33]

Anne: Did you think that it was used to call people to come to work?

Delvin: That's what they figure. That they used to, I don't who did, but, uh, but there was 12 people working there, so I... Was it a guy who liked bells or what? I don't know. It was quite a lot of work getting it...because it's heavy, but they got it up there. Yeah.

Timothy: Is it possible it was also maybe used for in case of a fire? You know, if the mill was on fire, they needed to call...

Delvin: They had a big fire bell uptown.

Timothy: Ok. So, that one wouldn't be... Ok.

Delvin: No. That's down from the firehouse now, I think, isn't it? I think. Yeah. Maybe it is, yeah.

Timothy: Yeah. I remember seeing it.

Delvin: Yeah. I remember using that, too, you know, before they had sirens. That's what they figure it was there for. Either that or else somebody just liked the bell. Uh, they looked, uh, I got a, they just took it down, uh, let's see,yesterday? Yeah, day before, yeah.

Nelson: Yesterday.

Delvin: I'm going to put it out in my yard, I guess, eventually. They looked for, uh, a manufacturer's name, but there's none on it so I can't tell what the history of it is. Yeah. So, either-either that or somebody just liked the bell. I don't know. But, they figure that might have been... Since you caught... To make sure they were working, because it was right by the front door where you come in. So, that's the only thing they can figure, you know. And, they...

Anne: Have you ever heard anything about bells in a mill before?

Timothy: In New England it was typical to use them, they were talking like in big textile mills to call workers to work. That's not uncommon. Um, but it was also used in case of fire. Because they needed some way to quickly signal to the local fire brigade to, uh, hurry up and get to the mill. Sometimes they had their own fire brigade. If they were big enough.

[00:44:16]

Delvin: That's the only way we can figure, anyway. Yeah.

Timothy: Yeah. That makes sense. So, you said at one point there were 12 people working at the mill. About when was that?

Delvin: I don't have any idea. There was no dates. There was no dates. It just looked like it was old. It was stuck on there.

Timothy: Ok. So, this may be before...

Delvin: It was there for a good many years, but it finally... but, uh, some of the names you could read, some you couldn't. Each one his own and they weren't too good of writers, I guess. But, I counted them and there was 12. It said, "Some of these, the following worked here," something like that, it said, and each one of them signed it. No, I don't who they, because they said there was this box factory and somebody said there was a cigar factory there, once, upstairs, and then I read its history that, I-I couldn't hardly believe this, but they said the H. C. Gutchis factory, which was uptown, started, the man started it in this building upstairs. That's what the-the re ... but, nobody has much on it. But, I read that someplace where he actually started it, but they didn't do much until they moved up... And, of course, I don't have anything else. All I know is hearsay, you know.

Timothy: And, is this supposedly the first mincemeat company?

Delvin: Yeah.

Timothy: Did I understand that right? And what was the name, again?

Delvin: H. C. Gutchis.

Timothy: H. C. Gutchis?

Delvin: I read it in something that said that they believed it originally started in the mill on Green Street, but, it was too small and they moved uptown.

Anne: Are they still there?

[00:46:05]

Delvin: Oh, they're long gone. They went. The buildings gone and the village owns the property now, yeah. I couldn't hardly believe that, but I saw it someplace. It said that the man, they started there, but I don't know. It wasn't Mr. Gutchis, it was, uh, somebody else, but he went in with them or something; yeah, and that, that was a good business, at the time, but, it was like this place here. Uh, as long as Mr. Gutchis and Mr. Langworthy were running it was a booming business. But, then it went down to the heirs and some of them didn't want it and the guy that took it was sort of, uh, uh, an easy going, do what you want, and, uh, I mean, and he was, they used, uh, the formula called for rum. Putting rum in it, you know, and, uh, he wouldn't do it because he was strictly against alcohol. Well, they say he done business with Borden's and that's why Borden's went, you know, finally went into it themselves, uh, it had rum in it, but he wouldn't do it, so he... Because they used to ship it out by the car load.

Anne: So, what did they do during the Depression?

Delvin: Huh?

Timothy: Do you mean during the prohibition?

Anne: Prohibition, I mean. Not the Depression.

Nelson: No. You didn't use rum, so...

Delvin: No. He wouldn't do it, so... and, he wasn't a go-getter, he wouldn't go out and get it. They had a salesman on the road. They sold a lot of mincemeat in the South. I remember. But, when I was a kid, uh, I was always looking for jobs to get some money, and this Clay Derby was a trucker. He had an old truck. And they used to take the, every day they used to take the mincemeat down to the railroad and put it in the freight house until they got enough for a car load. And, uh, I used to go help him some. It would only take... You drove the truck up and he'd give me maybe 25 cents or something like that. So, with the truck we'd take it down, I'd do this after school. I had a lot of little jobs here and there, any place where I could make a little money. You know. Sometimes I'd get, he'd give me a little tip, yeah, if everything went good. They'd put it in, there it is, right out, see that? See that out there? Prairie-o Pie Proofs, A. C. Gutchis Co.?

[00:48:33]

Timothy: Ok. Ok.

Delvin: That's one of the, that's one of the boxes; or that's the edge of the box. That's what it

said. I don't know if that will come down or not, though. That's it. That was the size of the box. It was wooden boxes and we used to take those down and pile them up in the fridge there.

Anne: Is that the top or the side?

Delvin: That's the side.

Anne: Okay.

Timothy: So, that says... I see.

Delvin: I saved one of the boxes. I took it apart and put it up there, because they had hundreds of those. It was wood, they didn't have cardboard yet then. I used to help with, do that and when they got enough for a carload, then they shipped it, yeah.

Timothy: How often would they ship a, how long would it take for them to fill a car?

Delvin: It would take them, uh, uh, maybe a week, two weeks. . Yeah. They, they had, it was all done, uh, by, uh, mostly women. There were just one or two men there. They, they put a, uh, they had some that was bulk, but most of it was put in these little packages. They had we-they had tables. They used to have six or eight tables with two or three women on each table, you know, wrapping them and putting it in the, uh, in the cartons, and then putting them in these boxes. That's the way they shipped it, you know. They did put a few in cans. I don't know, uh if that was for, uh, restaurants, or something, probably, yeah. Looked like gallon cans, maybe.

[00:50:10]

Timothy: So, to go back, you said that, you know, that there were upwards of 12 people working the mill, but that was before your grandfather owned it, right?

Delvin: Oh, yeah. Long... yeah.

Timothy: That's the sticker on the wall, that they...so...

Delvin: We don't have any idea whether it was before the mill, uh, before my grandfather got it, yeah, but, yeah, it was back. I don't know if there is any way to do that, if they put a date on it, but they didn't. It just said the following people worked here, and they signed their name. Some of them you could read, some of them you couldn't. Nobody that I ever knew...

Anne: Is it still in there?

Delvin: Oh, no it finally moved.

Anne: Where are they?

Delvin: Due to age it finally, you know, it-it was still, it was still there for a long time, but, I mean, it gradually faded out and, you know...Like everything does. It might have been there for 100 years, I don't know. Yeah.

Nelson: When you were growing up, how many people worked in the mill? Was it just your grandfather and your dad or...

Delvin: My grandfather never hired anybody, yeah, except when he had repairs, he had a guy up the street, but, I mean, he did it all himself. He was a worker, a big, strong man, yeah. And, uh, my father never hired anybody either.

Nelson: Just you to do the odd jobs.

Delvin: Yeah, I used to be the helper, I guess, yeah. And, uh, he didn't have anybody until, uh, when the creamery, the creamery had a couple of people. Dairy Lee hired my father, because that was only, the milk, he had to receive the milk, and they brought it in and dumped it on the side there. It was all in cans in those days. Farmers would bring it in and a conveyor went inside. Uh, he would dump it in a tank that weighed it. He had to sample and make sure it was alright, and, then it went down into a big vat and went up into a big cooling apparatus. The milk ran down through these tubes that was refrigerator with ice water. And then they, all they did, all they did was receive it, really. They didn't process it. Then they put it in cans and it went some other place.

[00:52:29]

Timothy: And you'd mentioned, that's what you had mentioned earlier, uh, a receiver? I didn't quite catch the name. Uh, you said they were doing receiving for, um, someone, yeah, it was like a local dairy.

Delvin: Dairy Lee, right?

Timothy: Dairy Lee, ok.

Delvin: Yeah. They had farmers bringing it in, yeah. They had to, so that it wouldn't spoil, you know, in those days, yeah, because summers were hot and they didn't have refrigeration, so, rather than ship it, take it to some place warm, they wanted it cold. So, they, um, that's what it was. Of course, they checked it, strained it so it was clean, it went through sieves, and we didn't, kept track of who brought it in and how much and if it was alright. And then it all went in together, and they cooled it and out it went, in a truck some place, you know. Every day. Yeah.

Timothy: You had mentioned that he-he would sample it. How would he sample it? Like, how would he know if it was good quality or not good quality.

Delvin: Well, they had a little, they had a little, little bit of a thing that held two or three tablespoons, maybe, and he'd dip into each can before, he also had to smell of it to make sure. You had to have a pretty good nose to make sure if it didn't smell just right, and then the added question, he took a taste of it. He had this little ladle-like thing and they had these bottles. They had these, uh-uh, testing bottles, I guess, and, uh, he had to, uh, put a little bit in there. And then they kept adding in ice water to those samples, and they, um, they tested it all the time to make sure that, uh... because it had to be, I think, at least 3-5, 3.5 butter fat. That's how they paid their milk, on the amount of butter fat. I think 3-2 was the 3.2 was, uh, absolutely the lowest, but they wandered around 3.5. So, when you get up to 4 percent, then you're getting into, uh, uh, uh, Jersey and Guernsey produces. Holsteins, run around 3.5, and that's, they still based on it, I guess, from what I've heard, 3.5 is what they want, yeah, now, yeah.

[00:54:52]

Nelson: So, your dad would do that? Or your dad and your grandfather would do that testing? Or did somebody else do it?

Delvin: Uncle Ray did it.

Anne: Alright.

[Inaudible 00:54:56.7]

Delvin: He-he didn't do much work. He didn't do the test. He learned how to test. They had a, they had a tester there that they, uh, put it in and spin it. Run by steam. It was a funny thing. Then he p-he p-he had a, he had a certain, uh, chemical that they put in and then you held that up and you, uh, with figures on it, and it... I can see him now. And he had a needle-like thing. You pointed it and it told you how much it was.

Timothy: And he was your dad's brother?

Delvin: Brother, yeah. But then the Dairy Lee, uh, they took, uh, finally they took it someplace. He didn't do it anymore, you know.

Nelson: You just received it and didn't do anything with it at all? Or did he...

Delvin: Yeah. He had the samples, but they took the samples, they didn't do it here anymore.

Nelson: I got you.

Delvin: Yeah. He had another man, a different way, or something doing it. Anyway. But, that only lasted two or three years and that went out, you know.

[00:56:06]

Timothy: You mentioned the separator was run by steam?

Delvin: That was run by water power.

Timothy: Oh, run by water power.

Delvin: Yeah, there was a light shaft that went the entire length of the building. That was run by the, uh, they, uh, had two water wheels and that was run by the, there was a 25-horse and a 40, and, uh, the 40-horse was for the mill and the 25-horse was for the, uh, creamery, yeah. For the mill, too, the elevator and some of the equipment ran on the small one.

Timothy: So, I take it the bigger wheel is the 40-horse power one and the 25...

Delvin: That was for grinding the feed, that run the corn sheller, and the cob crusher, and, uh, oh, they had another machine there at one time, but I never saw them use that, you know. The grinder was, uh, what took the pulp.

Timothy: Your dad, your dad's name is Fred? Is that correct?

Delvin: Yeah.

Timothy: He takes over the mill in about 1934? Is that...

Delvin: He took it over right after, my grandfather died in '32.

Timothy: '32? Okay.

Delvin: Yeah, he took, he took it over after that, yeah.

Timothy: Ok. And, from that point on he pretty much, he operates the feed mill...

Delvin: Yeah.

Timothy: ... the creamery?

Delvin: The creamery was gone.

Timothy: Was gone by then.

Delvin: After my grandfather died, uh, they didn't do anything, he didn't do anything but just run the mill, because he also had chickens. He liked to have 4 or 500... He had the old blacksmith shop with the chicken house. He made that a chicken house, and he had, there was a barn out there, uh, along the canal and he had chickens in that, and, um, he liked chickens so he, he, uh, took care of the chickens. My job was to help take care of them, clean them up, the house. Cleaning the house, that was another job.

Anne: Had you doing everything, didn't they?

Delvin: (Laughing) I took care of most everything.

[00:58:01]

Anne: Cheap labor!

Timothy: I don't know how voluntary that was.

Delvin: I was busy. I had my own, uh, as I got bigger I had my own, um, uh, lawn-mower service. I had, um, seven or eight people that I mowed their lawns. It was a push mower, you know, the old reel type, and some of them were old cast-iron heavy things so I saved my money and bought a ball-bearing lightweight one from Montgomery Ward; and, um, I'll never forget it, the lady up the street there, she had a great big old, boy it was hard pushing it. I brought my new one, I got 35 cents, and I asked her if I could get a raise of 40 cents, and she said, "You are going to use my mower. I don't want to pay for your damn new mower," she said, but, I used it anyway because it was so much easier.

Anne: 40 cents to do the lawn?

Delvin: Yeah. Well, that was a lot of money.

[Inaudible 00:59:10]

Anne: You should tell Connor that. You should tell Connor that.

Delvin: People were working in shops for that. That's all they were getting in the factories. So, I always had money in my pocket, though, yeah, because I had all these different jobs that I was doing. That's why I never got in sports. I didn't have time, because when I got out of school I had something to do, you know. I had to do it. Yeah.

Anne: How did you know where you were supposed to be?

Delvin: I'd have four or five dollars in my pocket and that was a lot of money in those days, you know!

Timothy: Yeah, that's, uh...

Delvin: My buddies would have a 25 cent allowance. I never got an allowance. My folks didn't believe in that. They said, "You got to earn it." My grandmother said, "There's money out there, go and earn it." That's what she told me. So, that's what I did. My grandfather Wilt was a little easier. He used to, he used to, he used to always say, "Go over and ask grandma if she's got anything she wants you to do." He said, "I think she wants you to go uptown and get something." And, he said, if it's raining, he didn't want to take the car out in the rain. He'd have to cover it up and all. I'd get 10 or 15 cents for going uptown. He'd say, "Go ask grandma if she has anything she wants you to do."

[01:00:39]

Timothy: And on foot.

Delvin: Huh?

Timothy: And on, on foot.

Delvin: Yeah. I had a little wagon, rubber tire, um, I saved money and got a wagon that had rubber tires. Most of them were steel that they were coming out with, and, I used to pump that. I'd put on knee and pump from my other leg, and go up the sidewalk. I'd get uptown in three or four minutes, you know, with that. The sidewalks were pretty... you had to take care of their sidewalks in those days, they were fussy. If you didn't keep them clean and take care of them, they'd put it in your taxes. You know, they'd come along and, like shovelin' it, so, I used to use that, I had that car-I wish I had it now, it would be worth a lot of money, you know, because, I saw something like it...

Anne: Was it a pull cart or a...

Delvin: Huh?

Anne: Was it a pull cart?

Delvin: Yeah. It could be, but I put my knee, I had a thing, like a...

Anne: It had a pump on it?

Delvin: ... pillow I put in, I pumped it.

Delvin: I put one leg in there and pumped it. When I was ready I put one leg in there and pumped it, and boy you could get going pretty good.

Timothy: You put one knee on it?

Delvin: Uh, I saw one, uh, down in, when I went to Vermont several years ago, in one antique place. There was one just like it, \$1,800.00. It was...

Anne: You should have kept your pump, then!

Delvin: Oh, yeah. I had that so I...that was a good thing for me. I used that until I was a pretty good big kid, you know. Dogs used to come out, some of them, and bark at me, you know. I never got bit, but I, I used to, uh, watch out for them. There was one over there, he used to, he used to chase cars, too, they would; some of those dogs. I don't know why, but they did, you know. So, uh...

[01:02:27]

Timothy: Did you, uh, did you help with the ice house?

Delvin: No. I was too small. Uh, I can remember, uh, they hired men. Uh, they cut ice from there up to just past the canal, and they had a big thing they pulled with a horse that marked it, that had sharp needles or pins, big pins. They'd shovel off the ice and then they'd use, take this, uh, one guy would take his horse with this thing and they'd cut a box, and then they had men with, uh, saws, like this, that followed them, and it was all done by hand. I can, I can remember that one, and, uh, it floated down and they had, uh, I guess they had an old telephone pole or something that went up in, so that the ice wouldn't go over the dam and it came to shore, and they had two guys there with ice tongs. There was a shoot that went up to the front of the ice house and they had a horse with a rope. They'd get three or four pieces of that. They were squared about like that, I guess. I'd say two foot square, maybe, and maybe that thick. You get them lined up and on the last one they put these big tongs, they had a rope on it, and they had a horse, and the horse [01:04:13] would come over, about, uh, to the edge of the grass, maybe not quite that far, in there some place, and pull the ice off. There'd be two old men up the top that would take it off and bury it in sawdust. That's how they kept it, and it kept real well. I mean, it didn't hardly melt at all, because that's not insulated with just the block, but they used sawdust; but you had to use new sawdust every year. Old sawdust wouldn't work, I guess because it had moisture or something in it. So they did that for a long time, the creameries, uh, used that. Dairy Lee didn't. They bought their ice from, they had an ice truck come in. A big truck come in with, uh, I don't know, seven or eight of those big cases, 300-pound cases, I guess, and, uh, they hoisted it up in a big tank there, they had a big tank there, an ice water tank. Just, uh, a guy that did it took an ice pick and cracked them into several sections, and, uh, that's how they did it. That was years later. But, the creamery, that's how they did it, got the ice and kept it cool.

Nelson: That was a totally separate operation from the mill, though, your dad and grandfather

didn't have anything.

Delvin: No, they didn't have anything to do with that, no.

Timothy: Where was the ice buried? Was it within the building, like the back building of the mill or was it actually outside?

Nelson: It was in that green building right there. That was the ice house. So, they stored it in there.

Timothy: Ok.

Delvin: Yeah, that's where they stored it, right there. That's why there are no windows. That door, I put that in because it was all open, and then they put boards in as they raised the ice. See...

Anne: Who owned the ice operation?

Delvin: They did it themselves.

Anne: Who owned it?

Nelson: No. Do you remember the name of it? Or...

Delvin: It was part of the creamery. They did it themselves.

Nelson: Ok. So, it was connected with the creamery before your dad, before your dad owned it.

Timothy: Okay.

[01:06:04]

Delvin: Yeah. Before... Yeah.

Nelson: Alright. I got you now.

Timothy: I wasn't certain if the ice was being sold separately.

Nelson: Yeah, that's what I thought, too. That was my impression.

Delvin: That's the only way to get ice around here. You had to, you know, they didn't make it, and, they had a big ice house in Auburn that they were getting ice out there at the lake, but there wasn't any, in those days there wasn't any place to manufacture ice. You had to get it naturally, you know, and, of course, if you had to go someplace it

cost a lot of money. It was cheaper for them, right here handy, to do, uh, so, that's what they did.

Nelson: Would it last through the summer? The ice?

Delvin: Oh, yeah. It wouldn't melt at all.

Nelson: Really!

Delvin: I can remember, all they had to do was, uh, bring it out and, uh, wash off the sawdust, and there it was. Yeah.

Nelson: I'll be darned.

Delvin: Yeah. I was real surprised, but, it had to be new sawdust every year. They had to, they'd dump the old sawdust in the, I remember, when they brought it in, they brought it, sometimes they'd come with a wagon, sometimes they'd come in with an old truck, but they had a big pile of new sawdust there in the driveway, it was all tied up. Between the new sawdust and the old sawdust, you know. They usually tried to get the old sawdust all out because, when they started, that was about three feet below ground, you know. There's no bottom in there and it went down to about three or four feet. They put a layer of sawdust, and then start it and kept going all the way up, you know, 'til they got to the top.

Anne: I'm confused. When was that building built?

Delvin: I don't know. It must have been built for one of their creameries.

Anne: Ok, that's the question. He decided, your grandfather decided to go into the creamery business. That means he had a connection with the creamery in Auburn, or the connection with another creamery?

Delvin: No, he didn't have any connection. He, they went on from scratch after the Port Byron creamery moved. The Port Byron Creamery was the one that started it and that was long....

[01:08:01]

Anne: And they built that building?

Delvin: Must have, somebody must have, yeah, because it was there when my grandfather bought it. Yeah, it was there. Yeah. The creamery was there. He didn't put the creamery in, it was already there, yeah. They figured, they thought, they thought that the creamery started sometime around the 1890s. I heard, that's what I heard. I don't have anything on it, but they thought maybe that's when the creamery started.

Anne: Ok.

Timothy: That's what I have. The earliest, I mean, I have 1911 when T. T. Tanner still has the mill? Or is it J. J. Tanner?

Delvin: J. J. Tanner.

Timothy: He still has the mill; the Port Byron Creamery is there, or the Senate Creamery is before 1906, so...

Delvin: I guess it was the Senate Creamery first, and then they changed it to, you know...Port Byron Creamery.

Anne: Right here they called it Tanner's Mill. No, that's not it, wait a minute. It just says a creamery. Alright. So, it was known as Port Byron Creamery.

Delvin: In the older days it's kind of vague. I don't think that they kept too much track of it, really. Yeah. Yeah.

Timothy: I know, with so many owners going in and out and the way it was changing hands, it's gets a little...

Delvin: Yeah. In those days they didn't keep the...

Timothy: It's, and I noticed, the Port Byron Creamery, "Butter is Better" thermometer...

Delvin: Yeah. That's one of the things that they gave away to people, those thermometers. Port Byron butter is better. Try it. You know.

Timothy: Yeah.

Anne: What year is that?

Delvin: Doesn't say.

Timothy: Is that from, would that have been made from when the creamery was still here in the mill?

Delvin: Yeah.

Timothy: Wow!

Delvin: Yeah. Phone 1-5-6.

Timothy: 1-5-6.

Delvin: Grandpa's phone was 1-1-1. Yep. After the creamery moved out...

Anne: That was after the phones were done.

[01:09:55]

Delvin: After the creamery move out, that was the only phone on the street. I can remember people coming and using the phone. They didn't have, the phone system was, they only, they only had, uh, maybe, I don't know when it started. They started at the number 100, you know, so I think the reason my grandfather got it was because, uh, they had to, people had to put money in it to get it in here. My grandfather put money in it. He was one of the original that he bought stock in it. My grandmother had a fit because it never paid anything. She said, "What did you put money into that for. We're not getting anything for it." They finally did buy the stock back, but, y-y-you know, it never...I tell you, she had a fit, but, I think that he did it to help get... He also put money in to start a bank. We didn't have any bank. I remember when I was a kid, you had to go to Weedsport or take the trolley and go to Auburn. My grandfather, he's done a lot of his own, but he had so much money he had to put it someplace, because, if he were to carry it in his pocket, he'd have a big wad of it, and then he had a safe over there and put it in there, and after he got too much, then he'd, uh, go over to Weedsport on the trolley or go to Auburn on the trolley, because they didn't have a bank. Well, then they decided to form a bank, the business people, so he put money in there, too, to get it going.

Timothy: What was the name of the bank?

Delvin: National Bank of Port Byron. This might, I don't know if there's anything up there on the wall, or not. There might be. I think this, his bank book is up there, isn't it? [Inaudible 1:11:34.1] I found that in the safe.

Anne: The National Bank of Port Byron. An account with D. M. Wilt. Right.

Delvin: Yeah. I found that over there in the safe.

Nelson: Did ya?

Delvin: Yep, yeah.

Anne: And here's George...

Delvin: That's my father, George Fred Wilt, yeah. When he took the...

[01:12:00]

Anne: Yeah, I thought that. You said Fred Wilt, but his name actually was George Wilt.

Timothy: When he come over, he went by his name, he went by his middle name?

Anne: Yes.

Delvin: Yeah. When he went business, he put a sign up there G. F. Wilt, you know. He didn't the mill, uh, G. F. Wilt. George Frederick Wilt. That's the lay mason way. We used to mix that on the floor there.

[01:12:28]

Anne: And here's a receipt from 1914 from G. M. Wilt Flour and Feed. Alex somebody or other.

Delvin: Alex Savoreis. Yeah.

Timothy: Alex Savoreis?

Delvin: Alex Savoreis. Yeah.

Anne: For Union brand feed. \$1.60.

Timothy: When did your father pass away?

Delvin: Uh, let's see, 1953.

Timothy: So, you don't have too many recollections of your grandfather?

Nelson: I can remember riding with him in the truck. I sort of remember him going to the mill over there, you know, the one you were talking about, um, I don't know why, because he had no connection with it then, did he? But I have recollections of riding with him over there. Um...

Delvin: Well, George ran...I don't know if he did a little bit, this, not much of, whether he would have went over there for something or, but he had a connection with the... George Grass used to come here, too, but, uh, they were competitors until they, not a lot, but they did something there, yeah. They were always friends, you know. It was a rivalry, I mean...

Nelson: I was born in; I was born in '48.

Nelson: Did your mother die in '48?

Delvin: No, she died in, uh, '43.

Nelson: Okay.

Delvin: She died, she died right, right after she came to. No, let's see. She died, no, she died in '44 because Kathy was a little baby. Yeah. She was born in, come to think of it, it was almost '45 when she died, you know? Yeah. She took care of Kathy just once, so we could go out, and then she got sick and that was it.

Nelson: From what I can remember, yeah, she was pretty mild mannered. I don't think it ever got...

Delvin: She got sugar, and she didn't take care of herself. In those days, you had to check it every day and it was a hard way of doing it and she used to drip, drip, drip...drip, drip, drip... talk to herself sometimes wouldn't do it and she went into a sugar shock. They took her to the hospital, but she didn't make it, you know. She was young when she died, yeah.

[01:14:45]

Timothy: When did, uh, just to clarify, the mill came into your ownership in about 1975? Is that when....?

Delvin: No, I bought it, let's see...

Anne: Was it left to you or did you buy it?

Delvin: It was in the will in order to get the house. I didn't get any money. I got the property. The rest of them got money, but I got the house and I got that.

Anne: Was that in 1943? That was 1943?

Delvin: What, no, I think that was about 1953 or 4, I think.

Nelson: It would have been when Grandpa Wilts died, right? That's when, because there, he owned it up until then, right, and then he died and then it was passed on to your brothers and sisters and you?

Delvin: My grandmother had it.

Timothy: But, was she alive in 1953?

Anne: You just said she died in '43.

Delvin: I gotta stop and think, yeah. Uh, it was in the estate for a long time. It belonged to all the kids.

Nelson: Right.

Delvin: My grandmother died in '43, that's, so I moved in here, but I didn't own it.

Timothy: The house...you didn't own the house.

Delvin: I had to pay rent.

Nelson: Right.

Delvin: I paid \$25 a month rent. It went into the estate, I guess, and, uh, my father got, when did he get it? When they settled it, uh, he got his share. He had to buy out his brothers and sisters, I guess, yeah.

Nelson: Okay.

Delvin: And, uh, I'm trying to think just how that was anyway.

Anne: When did your grandfather die?

Nelson: '53.

Anne: Okay.

Delvin: I guess it went to my grandmother and she died in '43. Then it went into the estate. I paid the rent for several years. I think it was, um, probably somewhere in the '50s when, uh, they settled everything out, because I remember the lawyer had it for a long time and, uh, uh, Uncle George, he got disgusted with them because he wanted to get it settled out so they didn't have to monkey anymore with anything, you know. I think, my father died, when did he die, '53?

Nelson: That's what I thought.

Delvin: Yeah, and, and I think, uh, he had made, my father made a will, you know, and it went to, it went to the estate and was supposed to be divided equally, I guess, somehow. I wanted...

Anne: Then you bought it from the estate?

Delvin: I wanted the house, but I didn't want anything else, but, uh, uh, there was this property, there was a property across the creek, there was a property down on Shotwell, where the big hen house was. Um, the lawyer wanted me to take it all. I

says, "No, way." He was, I was in business. I said, "I need my money for business." I said, "All I want is the house." He said, "If you want the house, you should take, you've gotta take this property and you oughta take the property across." He bought the property across; the vacant lot. They took it down. I said, "I don't want the house over there, that old house and that property." So, finally they come to an agreement and I got this place. I took this, and they sold, they finally, had a hard time, but they finally got rid of it, you know.

[01:18:46]

Nelson: The house across the street.

Delvin: Yeah. It was an old house. Nobody lived in it. It was uninhabitable because it had been there for years and nobody had been in it. He bought it because of the water rights. You know, for the water power.

Anne: So, it was '53 or '54 that you got, that you bought the house and the...

Delvin: Yeah. Some time, it was a little while because of the lawyer dragged his feet and Georgia's a little upset with them because nothing happened, you know? I mean, they were paying taxes on it, and, uh, I would because, I don't know if I paid enough rent to pay the...I don't know. It was kind of a mixed up, I can't remember. Uh, I know they had quite a time, though, yeah. I finally got this, but I didn't get any money. But, I, um...

Nelson: But, you got this and you got the mill property. I mean, just you. Not your brothers or sisters, just you.

Delvin: Yeah, I got it. Yeah. They had, they had, they had to have it appraised so that, uh, I was, uh, not getting any more in dollars than the rest of them because it was supposed to be, you know, divided equally. So, they came and appraised the house and they appraised the mill, yeah, and, uh, the rest of them got money, but I didn't get any. Almost seems that I had to pay a couple hundred dollars, he said, to make it even. It was a little money, not much, yeah. But I had to take the mill, which I really didn't want, you know.

[01:20:22]

Anne: But, you don't remember what year it was? '53, '54, '55?

Delvin: It was in the '50's. I would have to look at the deed, probably, and see, but, my father died in '53, so it probably was maybe '56 or something like that, probably, when I actually got it, because it went on for, probably a couple of years, you know what I mean. You know. The lawyer dragged his feet. I remember they were kind of disgusted. Just like you see a lot of them do that, you know, they take their time.

Timothy: I'm sure that's more hours that they can add. It doesn't hurt.

Delvin: Yeah. The longer it takes the more they can charge, I guess; even though they don't do much.

Timothy: While that's going on and the property is, you know, transitioning into your hands and thereafter, just to clarify, you didn't do anything, you didn't do much with the mill property, right?

Delvin: No.

Timothy: Other than lease it out?

Anne: It was already being used, wasn't it?

Delvin: Yeah. Yeah. It was already being, the only thing I did was, uh, uh, I put a new loading dock in for my milk, you know, so we could unload the truck. I had to add on a little bit. Uh, I added on about 10 feet there.

Anne: The loading dock on the front?

Nelson: No, on the back.

Delvin: In the back.

Nelson: When did you start the milk business?

Delvin: '43, or, uh, '45. '45. I had it from '45 to '75.

Nelson: Was Mr. Batsom operating out of here, did he move...

Delvin: No, he operated out of his own place.

Nelson: So, you bought his business and you moved it to here.

Delvin: We moved it to here.

Timothy: So, what were you doing with your creamery? What was your business here? What was the...

[01:22:05]

Delvin: I, uh, sold milk. I didn't produce it or, uh, process it. I just went into selling it. I had to furnish my own bottles and cases and trucks and everything, but I bought the milk

all bottled. I was in the selling end of it. I sold to houses, the stores, and the schools.

Nelson: And you got the milk, it was bottled for you by Webster Dairy in Alcott, right?

Delvin: Yeah. Yeah. It wasn't Webster then, it was Holmes.

Nelson: Holmes? Ok.

Delvin: Holmes, they sold out. Webster bought them out, and then he sold out to [inaudible 1:22:41.2] That's what it was when, uh, when I quit. It was still [inaudible 1:22:48.1].

Timothy: And did you bottle it under your name or is it under a different name?

Delvin: Wilt's Dairy, I called it.

Timothy: Wilt's Dairy?

Delvin: Yeah.

Anne: Catchy name.

Delvin: No. It wasn't.

Timothy: Are there bottles still around that you can find Wilt's Dairy?

Anne: There's one in the kitchen; right on the kitchen, uh...

Delvin: Yeah, sure.

Nelson: This is one of them. This is, uh, a half-pint.

Delvin: Those are school bottles. That's what I used them for.

Anne: That's big. Yeah.

Delvin: Until they went to paper, now. We wound up...

Anne: Did you have different; I want to ask you something about the bottling. Your bottles, because somebody asked me the other day, because I had one of those bottles at home, were they all printed, or were they embossed?

Nelson: Well, he had several different kinds. He had quart bottles, glass bottles...

Delvin: All my bottles were printed.

Anne: Were printed. You never had any embossed ones?

Delvin: No. I had bottles, but were Batsom's. They were bottles E.M. batsom's. Uh, I don't know. Is there one up in there, Nelson?

Anne: Yeah. There's two on the shelf over there.

[01:24:00]

Delvin: Well, maybe there is. I, uh... They had the old round iron, or, the old round bottle...

Nelson: Yeah. Here you go.

Anne: What did that guy, Chaunce, that place in New Carlson, there... That one?

Devlin: There, that's, that's the way, that's a gill. Where's the half pint? It looks like, I don't know.

Anne: It's less than that one.

Devlin: Looks like it, I don't know. Maybe it is a gill. A gill is less than half.

Nelson: One gill.

Anne: What's a gill? I've never even heard of a gill before.

Devlin: Gill babies. I sold those and got \$50 a piece for them. I only had, uh, maybe 25. Yeah.

Timothy: Bottle, bottle collectors?

Delvin: Yeah, no, people, but, they, and I, uh.

Anne: But yours were all printed, like this?

Delvin: Yeah. That's the guy I bought it from. All his bottles were like that. I had quart bottles, and pint bottles, and, uh, the gill. That, that's the cream bottle. It says for cream, yeah. A gill is half of that. It only...

Anne: How can you tell the difference with the round and the square? There's something about the dating on these bottles.

Delvin: It might tell on the bottom.

Anne: Oops!

Delvin: That bottle was made in 1948. E-48.

Anne: Is that right? Let me see. Now I've got to go back and look at the bottle you gave me.

Nelson: It was an E-51.

Anne: Well, cool!

Delvin: This doesn't, I don't know if it has the date on it. It's got a number seven on the bottom, that's all; Made by Thatcher Glass. You see, Thatcher, that's where I got them. They're a big glass company in Elmira. Thatcher, uh, manufactured bottles; mostly milk bottles, but, it's got a seven there, that's all. I don't know what, you know.

Anne: Is it Charleston? Savannah.

Delvin: I could get good money for that. That glass is the only one I got left.

[01:26:00]

Anne: Don't sell it.

Timothy: So, you were operating the creamery until 1975.

Anne: The milk, was not... yeah.

Timothy: The milk. It was not a creamery. It was milk.

Delvin: I, I never used these bottles. They pulled a fast one on me. Um, uh, they didn't tell me they were switching to paper until about three weeks before they did, and I had run out of bottles, so I had about 3,000 of these that I had just, they just took them out. I mean, a guy's got them and I'm supposed to get a, whether I ever will or not, I'm supposed to get a cut on them if he sells them. But, I didn't have any place to put them or handle them, I can't do anything so I was glad to get rid of them; but, if he sells, we'll see, anyway, but I, uh...

Nelson: They were upstairs in the mill?

Delvin: Yeah. There were almost 3,000 of these, I think.

Anne: And then, right after you bought those the milk company changed to cartons, cardboard cartons?

Delvin: Yeah. They changed to cardboard or to paper from bottles. Yeah. I think when I

bought those, I bought these in, uh, what's it say? I've never done that. '48, I believe.

Timothy: That one says '51.

Delvin: '51, '51 I bought it. Well, '51. I probably only paid about 10 cents apiece for those. They were cheap in those days, you know.

Nelson: But you had...

Delvin: But, I had...

Nelson: You had some other bottles like that weren't quite that big, right? The tall neck, because I can remember when I helped you. You were still using glass, but the bottle wasn't quite that...

Delvin: No, I got this...

[01:28:00]

Nelson: This is the last ones that you bought, but you had a version in between this one.

Anne: He needs help with the milk...this is when I came in, his turn.

Delvin: I got the ones that are straight. They're about that high. These I never used.

Nelson: They switched to paper after I was working for you, so, that would have been in the '60's, probably, when you switched from glass to paper. Right? Don't you think? Because I can remember helping you had the metal, you had the metal carriers and you'd get the empties and I'd my fingers in the bottles and bring them back.

Delvin: All I know is that, if I bought those, I couldn't use them.

Nelson: Yeah, but you may have bought them...

Delvin: I hadn't had them very long and I told them, I said, "I wish you would've told me that you were going to do this. We said we hadn't made up our minds." The bottle washer, uh, something happened to it and it was going to cost a lot of money to fix it, and, they figured, they knew paper was coming in anyway.

Nelson: Plastic.

Delvin: No, it wasn't plastic. They couldn't sell the plastic because the plastic hadn't come in yet. That came in a little later. You know. Uh, they said, "We didn't know we were going to, but this machine uh, uh, has got to have a lot of money spent on it." It was a big thing, and they said, "We decided to go to paper." That's why they hadn't told

me, you know. It's just, unfortunately I needed store bottles, and so, I bought these, and pushed, the more you buy the cheaper they are, you know, buying them, so I bought about 3,000 of them and figured they'd last for a long time; because store bottles, the life of store bottles is not too long. People would pay a nickel and then bring them back, you know. But a lot of people break them or they come back cracked, or come back dirty or something or other, and you've got to throw them away, so that's why I bought so many because the life of those. The bottles are as used with the houses. They had a lot longer life. I mean, people would break them, but most of them would be very careful, you know, about it and, uh, they didn't have to pay anything for 'em, but it's just common courtesy they would put the back out for me to fill them again. They were store bottles. Store bottles...

[01:30:13]

Nelson: And, they were shaped a little differently than that bottle.

Delvin: Yeah. I don't know why I bought that tall one. I could have bought the other ones and just had "store" put on them, but I don't know if the salesman wanted me to take those. I can't remember now. It was so long ago, but anyway, um, I never used them. They were still in the cartons when they took them, never been opened. Only... I sold a few of those, but not many, but, I've still got the regular squares, there's some out in the ice house here. Some, but I kept those, you know. Um, and I have, I've got some of these left yet. They were for the school. When I first came to the school, they were glass, like these only bigger. So, twice as high as that, a little bigger around and, uh, built a little different, you know.

Timothy: So, I guess you've got your one quart, your half pint, so that must mean you have a pint size...

Delvin: I had pints, too, yeah. Pints weren't a big seller because, uh, uh, well, when they first started to pay the mill, light users would get a pint. I had a few pint, they were a pain, really. So, I got out of pints. I mean... Of course, then, then we went anyway from daily delivery, we went to every other day. I was the first one to start that. Nobody wanted to start because they were afraid... And, I had people, "Well, what am I going to do?" I said, "You're going to get enough milk to last you two days." One woman [01:32:01] says, I mean she really, "Oh, I can't do that!" I said, "Yeah, you can. You're going to have to because..." I'm sweating around, I had too much for one, because I had, the business was growing, so I, uh, decided, I had talked to other dealers and they had thought about, everybody thought they'd lose a lot of business doing that. I had a little competition here, but, but there was a guy from Weedsport. He didn't have a lot, but he had some, but, I said, "Well, I've got to do it." I said, "I can't afford to hire anybody to help me full-time." And, so I notified everybody. I put out, I figured out how I wanted to do it and I put out notices under the milk boxes that, as of such and such a date, your dealer will deliver Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The other dealers would do Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. You know. So,

I was one of the first ones. They, they had a, uh, um, County Association of Milk Dealers. There were about 27 milk dealers when I bought the business in '4- uh -5. There were 27 milk dealers in the county that belonged to this. You belonged to that, and you got your bottles back. You know, people would take bottles and go someplace, visit somebody or something, and they'd leave the bottle. Well, uh, they had a bottle exchange and they bring your bottles back to you. You belonged to that and I think it cost you two cents a bottle to get them back, you know. Not much, because you belong to the association. That kept getting smaller and smaller until, finally, there was only four or five left, you know. I finally, I was, uh, one of the last ones of the smaller ones to go out of business. I sold out to my supplier. He kept it for a year and, uh, he gave it up because he had to buy a truck, he had to pay the drivers that had joined the union, he had to pay union scale. (Laughs) So, he wasn't making any money so he went into strictly wholesale. You know. [Inaudible 01:34:50].

[01:34:45]

Timothy: How long did you operate the delivery business? Was that all the way the whole span of the ...?

Delvin: Yeah, 30 years. '45 to '75.

Timothy: So you delivered all the way to 1975.

Delvin: Yeah. I worked six years without a day off. (laughs)

Timothy: When you first started? Even on Sunday?

Delvin: Yeah. I'd go in on Sunday. I was one of the first ones to cut out Sunday, and that wasn't a good thing, either, because people were upset with it. And of course there were ice boxes. You couldn't get refrigerated ice right after the war. I mean, they hadn't really set it up and when I got married we had to use ice and that did work to keep it cool. They started pasteurizing the milk just before I took it over. Before that it was raw milk. But, uh, a year or two before I took it over they went to pasteurization, which is a good thing because they checked the milk. That's another reason why you couldn't go in the other day. Because it was pasteurized, it had a longer life. Now, they, uh, pasteurize at a higher temperature. It kills the cream line. When I bought it

[01:36:07]

in glass, you sold your milk on the cream line. People wanted it, they wanted cream way down to here, you know. They wanted to get one of these in every bottle. That's what they wanted. And, there was days when the cream was a little bit not quite as great. I used to get a lot of complaints. They'd say, "You're, you're skimming the milk!" (Laughs) Yeah. But, then the homogenization hadn't come in yet. There

wasn't any when I first took the, but then it got so everything had to eventually. So your cream line is gone when you homogenize it. That way you don't have to worry about that anymore. But ... People wanted, a lot of women especially, they wanted to get one of these on the milk (laughs) and scoop it off to make desserts and stuff like that. And some days a cream pie just wouldn't be good and that's when I used to get, I usually get complaints. They'd go, "What are you doing with the milk? There's no cream on it." (Laughs) You know.

Nelson: I can remember when I first started helping you. You had customers who wanted what we call regular milk which had the cream line and then he also had customers who would just take the homogenized milk.

Delvin: You know, they came in shortly after. That reminds me of when I first took it over. But it came in. I remember for the first month or so, I only had two or three customers that wanted homogenized. They all wanted the cream, you know. Then they got, the state began to put restrictions in. And finally, um, just like they did with, uh, raw milk, you couldn't sell raw milk anymore unless you had a special permit. And it cost you a lot of money and everything to discourage you, and, finally, homog... and finally decided that it better be homogenized. Politicians started working on it and they started passing restrictions, and everything. I mean, it all went to homogenized, which was better.

[01:38:24]

Nelson: Yeah, I think you had different colored caps. You had caps for the regular and different for the homogenized. I don't know if you had blue for skim milk, or not.

Delvin: Yeah, I sold a, I had a few skim milk customers. But skim milk never kept very well. It always had to be a pain because you had to use it up in a day or two or it would go tainted—it would not be sour, but it would be off flavor, you know. And they would say it was sour. That was a pain! Trying to keep... You had to refrigerate it. I kept it more ice on it than skim because something about the life of it. But, it was... You can still buy skim milk, I guess. But it's, they treat it now, too. They got milk now that will last a month. I don't know what they do to it, but they do... They add something to it, too, I think.

Timothy: It's interesting. There's a move within a few states to move backwards. I know in Texas a law is being passed to allow the sale of raw milk. So, I know there's a demand for it. There'll be a label stating that you're buying this understanding the conditions.

Delvin: Is that right? Huh. You know now that you don't have to refrigerate it for a while.

Nelson: Yeah, we saw that in Europe.

Delvin: Yeah. There's stuff in it, I guess, you know... I mean, they're always working on it.

Nelson: I think that's the ultra pass right there. But, yeah, wouldn't need to refrigerate it. It can just stay on the shelf. Yeah.

Anne: You know who wouldn't buy it, right?

[01:40:14] (Laughing)

Delvin: I mean, when I've had milk, you didn't want the milk in the store over a couple of three days at the most. You know, you wanted to make sure that you got rid of it. You know. I'm very careful when I put milk in the cooler or in the showcases or in a case like a showcase, you want to make sure that you've got all the old milk off the front because you know you're running into trouble because it didn't... Now, I buy my milk by the gallon and it's got a label on that it's good for maybe 10, 14 days. You know. You know. It's good for that long. And that's selling date, I think. Not consuming it, but the storekeeper should get. That's why, a lot of these places, they only get milk once a week. They get a truckload once a week, and, yeah, it's cheaper. Yeah.

[01:41:02]

Timothy: I guess they're radiating it, too.

Delvin: Yeah. It's changed a lot since, uh, the old days. Yeah.

Timothy: So, while you're running the, the milk-bottling business, David Hitchcock is also in the electroplating business; just before you started the bottling business.

Devlin: Yeah. Yeah. He came in the same year that I did. Um...

Timothy: And that's 1948?

Delvin: I came in in, uh, uh, I came in, uh, let's see, I came in, I think I came in the spring and he came in the fall, I think. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Timothy: Of '45? Right.

Delvin: It was a little bit of the operation that he bought because the guy was doing the plating in his basement. He only had three or four wooden tanks and he was doing real small stuff. Yeah. Something you could get a whole handful of, little bits of things. And when he shipped it out it was only in a small box of plastic bags or something. You know. That was real small. But he went into bigger stuff, you know.

[01:42:14]

Timothy: And, first of all, what do you remember of the electroplating business. What did he do? I mean, it operated it up until not that long ago, right? Ten years ago?

Delvin: Uh, yeah. It, it changed hands, uh, three times, the fourth time, actually the fourth time is when they really, or the fourth owners are the ones that really quit. And, uh, and you want to know what?

Timothy: Well, what all did they do. I mean, it's electroplating, but what would they electroplate?

Delvin: Well, it was all kinds of small parts; machine parts. Um, he had a, his biggest thing was tire gauges. Uh, but it wasn't his first, uh, he, some guy, uh, put a patent on some kind of a food slicer; slicing up stuff. That was one of his biggest jobs in the beginning. He was doing those by the truckload, you know. I think they were putting, uh, kind of putting...

Anne: The slicer fixer?

Delvin: Yeah. The guy was doing real well. I guess he sold out to somebody with a bigger volume because he was just a little guy. I mean, I guess he had made it himself and patented it. And, then, when they sold it, he lost that, but he was doing all kinds of custom plating for these small shops, you know, machine shops; bolts, screws. He did plating for the Auburn Sparkplug. He did the bottom part of the sparkplug. Uh, some with...

Anne: That would be a pretty big job, wouldn't it? For a spark plug company?

[01:44:00]

Delvin: Yeah, yeah, uh, he did a lot of work for AC plugs. I think his biggest thing for a long was points and, uh, and points, and, when cars used points. He had to do those and he was doing those and he was supplying, um, three or four automobile factories because they were making thousands and thousands of those every day. And he had to ship them out every day. And they were, he would make a plating coiled bracket. The coil had to have a bracket around where it fastened on. And, um, they were black oxide. Um, I used to draw those. They were made in Auburn and I used to go up and get them sometimes after I got through peddling milk. I'd take my pickup and I had a rack and I'd pile them, they come in bags, and I'd pile them as high as the cab. And, um, he did a lot of those. That was a big job and it was, it was steady. I mean, he worked on it every day. Then he got into this tire gauge business. And that was a big thing. He sold to some gauge company in Syracuse. He, he was doing, I want to say, a thousand a day, that was close. He did the outside shell and the part that goes into the tire on top, you know, and down into the valve.

Timothy: Was it generally chrome that he would electroplate with or other metals?

Delvin: Well, that was one of his big ones. That and black oxide.

Timothy: Black oxide?

Delvin: He did some others but, um, um. He also, he got into a little gold plating, too. You know, a little gold plating they used it. Anyway, he didn't stay in that too long. And, uh, he had gold over there. And because they were having break-ins, so he had to deal with the town cops. They'd come in every day on his beat and turn around and check it, because he had gold over there. (Laughs) He was afraid they might break in, so he kept it in his safe, I guess. He had a lot of money invested in it. He said it was too much, so he got out of that.

[01:46:30]

Timothy: And this is all...

Delvin: He did a little silver there for a while for certain people. But, his primary business was, uh, for, golly, those tire gauges. That was a big thing for, uh, a good...I used to wonder where did they all go. How often do you buy a tire gauge? Yeah. (Laughing) This was after I got out ... retired, yeah. Oh, what was it, fifteen years ago, maybe. I had to go, his truck driver had to have surgery, so I drove the truck to Syracuse three times a week. And I had, uh, I don't know how many, I had these big wooden boxes that you use as foot truck to get under and I had three or four of those. I don't mean something was in them. I used to think, where was these all going? How often do you buy a tire gauge?

Timothy: I don't know. I think I'm still using the one my dad gave me.

Delvin: Yeah. They were in the store, but there were other brands, and Japan was getting, got into it. That's when it started going down. Then he stepped out and he was only going twice a week because Japan was....He was, it was a money-maker for a long time, but then Japan got into it and they started to redo some things. They didn't do as good a job, but the people they target; I don't think they cared what's going on the outside, as long as the gauge works. He even did, for the big shots, he did some gold ones. How often do you use a gold tire gauge? (Laughs) Yeah. I often wondered, though, where in the world do they go?

[01:48:59]

Timothy: Yeah, that's strange.

Delvin: He gave me one and I got it, yeah. I use it every year.

Timothy: Yeah, I guess people mess around with their cars less and less each year.

Delvin: And if you buy umpteen times now. The automobiles change over. But when he got sick he was still doing some, but it was way down because Japan had gotten in there and, of course, they've got everything. At first, these were made in the United States. These shelves started coming from Japan. They come in these great big wooden boxes and they were all lined with some kind of stuff so the salt water wouldn't bother them, you know. And, uh, Japan was making them and then all he [01:50:01] was doing was cleaning them and there were assembled in Syracuse. It was in the end, it was in the end that Japan decided they could do the whole thing. Why, why bother with... so, his market had gone He was still doing business, but it was, it had gone down quite a bit. Then he got sick and he sold it to his help.

These two guys knew what they were doing, but they weren't business people. So, he kept for a little while and then he sold it to another one that didn't have any idea at all about plating, but he was in the machining business. So, they relied on his help that was here to run the plating and they put machines in the front. They were going to do machine work. They had two, three, they had two automatics and a hand-lathe and, and uh, they were going to make, their idea was to make the parts and then plate them and do the whole thing and all. Well, that started all right, but the one guy, uh, was the money man. He furnished the money, but he didn't work here. He had his own business. So, the fellow that was doing this was doing the work, had charge of it, um, they were there a little over a year and they were increasing in business. But, uh, one day he didn't show up. He used to get there at 7:30. And, uh, He went to his car and he had a heart attack and died. And, um, so the man that had the money didn't know anything about plating so he, uh, um, he sold it to the workers, two guys doing the plating. I knew it wasn't going to work, but he got out of it. I don't think he got much money, but he got out of it, somehow. And that's when the violations they were having violations like crazy over here with them. And they did, and they were around in maybe two years they were bankrupt. He owed everybody and, uh, got in trouble with the government and pollution. They were dumping everything any old place and didn't pay their bills. I had a \$900 water bill that I had to pay. They had a, I don't know, a couple hundred, almost \$2,000 electric bill, I wouldn't pay that. I said, "That's not, I'm not, I'm not going to pay that, that's theirs." I wasn't going to pay it. That was theirs. So I owe the electric company, but they couldn't shut my power off because it wasn't mine. Wasn't me in the first place...they thought I was going to pay it, I guess. So, I said, "Go away."

[01:52:59]

Timothy: What year was that when they...

Delvin: I think it was 2002, I think, maybe the end of 2001. I don't know exactly. I don't know without looking.

Timothy: And the original owner, just to back up, the original owner was David Hitchcock, where the lessee, and that passed from David about when and to the next, you said there were three different owners.

Delvin: Yeah, about Hightower or something or other, in, uh, in, uh '96. He kept it, he kept it... He went to the hospital and his brothers were here and they did, they did a fairly good job running it. He came back, but he wasn't the same, he couldn't do much. He was a great worker himself, he worked as hard as the rest of them. But, uh, he couldn't. And, um, he told me one day, he says, "I'm selling out." I said, "Who to?" And, he said, "Jake, Siri." That was one of his helpers, you know.

[01:54:10]

Anne: So, was that '98?

Delvin: That was probably around '98. You know. Well, he went good for a year and I could see... His raw materials delivery was down and, uh, some suppliers wanted me to pay them here. They came at nine o'clock at night and they wanted \$800 before they dropped the stuff off. And I said, "I'm not paying that!" (Laughs) And, um, it just got worse and worse. That's when he sold it to the guys with the machine shop. Then the machine shop sold it to, they still had some workers who had been there awhile. They were good workers, but they weren't business people. You tell them what to do and they would do it, but, if they had to do it on their own, [inaudible 01:55:10]. So, after he died, they sold it to them and that didn't work out very well. I mean, I knew right away how quick it was... So, I was, after my rent, I had a talk with them because I figured I'm going to get stuck, too. Which I did in the end, but I kept it down some. Yeah.. So, they were only in business a couple of years and that was the end of that. That's when they quit. There was all kinds of violations and they had all this stuff over there. And they had an auction and they auctioned off what they could. And, uh, some of the machines, they had some of the machines there that the man didn't want so they auctioned them off. And they were going to pay me what they owed me after the auction. That was the agreement. They had the day of the auction and they left. They disappeared.

[01:56:19]

Timothy: And you never, never got down...

Delvin: I never got anything. In fact, there was a lot of finished work over there and there was a lot of unfinished work. I didn't know... And people were coming here and wanting to get their work back and I didn't know if I should do it or not but, the guy says, "I've got \$2500 worth of stuff over there and I've got to ship this stuff out otherwise I'm going to lose the contract." So, I let him in and he got it. You know. There was a lot of it. But, then, uh, the EPA started coming around and they come over there and, uh, there was a lot of stuff left. I don't know whether they did to it or

if it wasn't done, and whether... Of course, I didn't want to get mixed up in it anyway. It wasn't mine, so either way I stayed I figured it was better. (Laughs) Yeah.

Anne: When did your renter come in, then, and...When did your renter come in that was storing the furniture?

Delvin: What? Oh, it was empty for, because I was worried what we were going to do with it. I mean they left all those chemicals over there. The tanks were full. I think it was almost three years, I think, and, uh, I didn't let anybody in. Somebody told me I better not let anybody in. The fire department told me that, if the place caught on fire, they weren't coming because they weren't, because all the chemicals in there. And, they said, "We'd probably have to evacuate half the town!" with the fume. So, uh, I'd say it was two to three years when the EPA come and started looking the stuff over, and uh...

[01:58:14]

Timothy: Well, when did, it was Mr. Ron Ward, he was storing antiques up until? When did he start storing antiques after...

Delvin: He told me the other day, "I've been here five years." So, that would have been what...2007.

Anne: 2007.

Timothy: I remember two years ago going in there and that place was pretty full. I was amazed at how much stuff he had in there!

Delvin: Well, that didn't turn out like I thought it was going to, either. He, he led me to believe that he was going to have a store there and he was going to have someone there and people could come in there and look stuff over and buy it. But, it, it never worked out that way. He kept bringing this stuff in and piling it up. People were coming there wanting to get in and see what he had. But, I said, "Well, he lives in Weedsport," and uh, I told them, I gave them a phone number. But he was never here to... He did it all with dealers, other dealers and I don't know if he had anything on the Internet or what. But, I mean, he come here when somebody wanted something. I had people asking me, "I'd like to get in and see what he's got." I said, "Well, you'll have to contact him," because they thought he was there all the time, you know. And, he kept piling his stuff in and I told him, because the EPA had taken the stuff out, but the whole back of the building was contaminated. They checked it under the floors and on the walls and everything, and I told him not to put anything in there, but he kept putting it in! He says, "They're not going to do anything." He said. Well, for three years they didn't. They said, "We'll be back in the spring." Three years later they came back. You know. In the meantime, he had it all full out there. I told him, I said, "I don't want you..." He said, "Well, I didn't have any place to put it and I got a

good price on it.” So, he offered me \$25 dollars more in rent so I took it. But I told him, “Don’t put it...” But, he kept bringing it in a lot more than he was selling, you know. So, when they finally came here, there was a mess there. I mean, it was full. So, they came in here and they junked a lot of it. The rest of it they crammed in the truck. So...

[02:00:52]

Timothy: When did the EPA first get involved? What tipped them off to investigate the mill?

Delvin: Well, it probably would have been about 2005, I think. Yeah. From 2002 to 2005 it lay dormant. And... I kept everybody away. I didn’t go in there myself because I knew all that stuff was in there. They just left it, you know.

Anne: I sort of remember him. I think it was a tax issue. You know, when you file for bankruptcy and you have a certain kind of business, it has to go through that, that department. That’s what I remember at the time; now, whether that’s true or not. What tipped off the EPA that they needed to come in here? It seems to me it had to do with their bankruptcy.

Nelson: Well, I thought it was because you said they were getting violations, so I’m sure when they just walked away from it they would have had some kind of trail that they needed to look into.

Delvin: Everyone who bought it, things got worse. He told me some things. He said, “I don’t know how they got it away with it for as long as they did!” He says, “There’s violation after violation here.” It’s like they had an ok! “Somebody,” he said, “was, was covering up!” Like that stuff they’ve been dumping 14 feet in the ground! It was supposed to be going in the tank and instead it was going in the ground! That was a big violation right there! They had to get down 14 feet to....

[02:02:33]

Nelson: But, did they know when that happened? I mean, you said...

Delvin: No, not at all. They don’t, no; which was a big violation!

Nelson: Out of all those series of operators, you don’t know which one was the one that put that stuff in the ground. So, it’s not necessarily Dave, it could have been one of the guys....

Delvin: I don’t know, I don’t know how.... Of course, I didn’t pay much attention. I didn’t even go in there, I would go in there and get my rent and once in a while I went and talked to them a little bit. I, I stayed away from the place pretty much. Well, the fact that the owners, they had ventilators, but if you go in there some days you could

hardly breathe, if they were running something, you know. Some of them wore masks for a while, and some of them didn't wear anything. So, I kind of... I never really knew too much about what was going on over there really.

Timothy: From the fumes? And it was the fumes?

Delvin: But they figured, they had been building this stuff underground. They had put some rocks in, I guess, and graded it. They don't know how, but it was saturated. They kept going down and going down and went down 14 feet. And, they didn't have it all the way up, but they were putting chemicals in. They had a chemist come in here and analyze it. And they put some kind of form of, form of stuff in there and pumped it in. They had some kind of pump and they pumped it down in there because they had so far to go that the creek bed, it was hard to keep the water out. They tried to keep the water out...

Timothy: Was that when Chris or was that when Mike was doing it?

Delvin: That was when Mike was doing it last year.

Timothy: Mike's the guy that's here now.

[02:04:01]

Delvin: They didn't even know that was there!

Anne: What, when they went 14 feet down?

Delvin: Yeah. They were digging and all of a sudden the shovel operator, uh, stopped, and Mike said that he had this awful smell come up. He put something over his nose and mouth and come in and told me, "We run into something, and there's something there that's bad!" So, they, they looked at it and they covered it right up quick. And they called in some of these chemists, I guess. And, um, they stopped operations, I remember. And, uh, when they started digging they had a tent over it, and they had a fan running, and a pump running, and everything. And they kept digging and digging and digging, digging the stuff, you know. Then they had the water problem.

Timothy: Was that in the past year or two?

Delvin: That was last, that was last year. Yeah.

Nelson: Yeah, it was this last year. They started...

Delvin: They never intended on running into that.

Nelson: They started this second phase of the operation. Chris did the first phase where they

emptied out the tank. And, then the second phase started a year ago this fall when Mike came in and that's where they started tearing down the building and then they were doing the digging and found all this other stuff, so.

Delvin: There was no record of this at all. Nobody ever knew that was there. I mean the inspectors or anybody. (Laughs) They didn't even know until they accidentally, they thought they were alright, then they started digging and then they ran into this. There was a spot there they said was eight or ten feet wide and, and it had rocks in it. Apparently all the bad stuff was just going down in there and seeping. And that's one reason why they kept checking the outlet and there, there was stuff going in the outlet. And, uh...

[02:06:02]

Timothy: And, so, the concern is that there is leaching of heavy metals into, into the creek bed.

Delvin: Yeah. That was real bad stuff! I mean, they had gas masks on, and...

Anne: How are the tests now with the water and the outlet?

Delvin: It's a little bit, yeah. But, it's coming from underneath there, I guess, you know. They figure, because it's already over there. When they covered that back up, that solution that they put down in there neutralized it. And, uh, the state came over and checked it and said it was alright. But, there's a little bit yet and they figured... I told them, I said, "I think there's stuff under the mill." "Oh, no, there couldn't be anything over there. It wouldn't go that far." I said, "I think there is." Well, now they've found out there is some in the river, a little bit, I guess. And so, they figure they're going to have to take some stuff away on this end.

Nelson: Have you talked to Mike? Not yet. Is that part of your, you deal?

Timothy: Maybe, but I think mostly it's just the interview.

Nelson: Ok. Because he, he knows exactly how many loads of this stuff they have to take out because some of the stuff just went to, for lack of a better word, a regular hazardous waste site, which is, you know, and then some of the stuff they had to truck all the way to Ohio. 1,800 tons. Remember when they were digging down that 14 foot that was the bad stuff and they had to find someone and to transport it, put it, and they had to find a place for it to go.

Delvin: 1,800 tons of it went. That was a big expense! The trucking bill was terrible. Because they had these tractor trailers come in and they had to haul these lines and cover it up and they could only draw a certain amount because the state checks all those guys and if they're violating any, it isn't covered right, or they get too much of it, they get a heavy fine. So, every one of those guys was right there and had scales right on the

trailer. I watched them. I they got too much the guy had to get the shovel and take some back out. And they all had to be, it took them about a half hour after they got loaded to get this plastic to be all doubled over and folded. And there was that plastic and then there was another one up over the top. And they had to put the signs on the truck, you know. And one of the guys said, "We're targets on there. Boy, they look for us every day." He said you've got to be in line or you'll get rapped. I mean...

[02:08:37]

Timothy: A lot of them have been taking a walk around. Have they been digging out within the building? And then digging the soil out within the building, or...

Nelson: You mean this part right here? Well, I think...

Delvin: They didn't do much checking under there.

Nelson: They, uh, after they were finished with that part, that's when they, this is when they come upon the fact that there has been some structural damage out here in this building, and so they were underneath it, and um, I think when they were in the southeast corner of it they were in the area where the water wheels and stuff were. And I think that's when Mike said, yeah, I think you did some sampling over there, not a whole lot of sense of the amount, but you did do some. Um.

Delvin: He said, because there was a cement wall that went down between two, he said that they felt the cement wall would keep it...

Nelson: You're talking about the structure that remains?

Delvin: Yeah. That was the building. Because that was the original building, there was a wall that went down quite a ways and I told them, "I think there's stuff under there." He didn't think so because that wall would hold it. But, there was high water and [02:09:55] the water came under the building and I think that some of that stuff got back in there with the high water. And, um, but they said they didn't think so. Well, after they got all done, well there was still some stuff going in. So, it had to be coming from there. So, I think I was right when I told them, "Well, I think there's stuff under there." You know. But, they would, they said, "Well, we looked under there," they took a full sample or something, and they said it looked good and they didn't do it anymore. But, then, after they got it all done and they come back later, they were still, still picking up some stuff. Not as much, they got a lot of it, but there was a little left. But, the state wants it 100% clean because they don't want anything going in. It goes to the canal and the canal goes all over the state. You know. They, they told me that, if this had been by itself some place, they would never have touched it. It would have been my responsibility to do something or leave it, but I would have to leave it because I haven't got that kind of money. Well, because of the outlet, with the pollution going all over, they had to take care of that.

Timothy: They're not holding you responsible? For it?

Delvin: No.

Timothy: Oh, that's good to hear.

Delvin: No, because I told them I can't afford anything. They can't be, I guess. They, um, they got a job down in Weedsport, um, here to go to W. R. Grace Co. and [inaudible 02:11:40.0]. It's insulation, but it's bad stuff. Made out of that, uh, polluted ground. And the neighbor there, it's been closed for years. They sold out, sold the plant or something and closed it up. But his neighbor, Applebee, they put something in the paper claiming that the odor was getting in his house and there was days when he could hardly breathe around there. This, this had been going on for several years. Uh, so, finally the EPA got, right, had to go down there. There's a lot more down there than they thought. It's going to cost \$3 million, that's what it's going to cost. But, uh, Mike had to go down and talk to the officials of W. R. Grace Co. and they're going to pay for it because they've got, that's a big outfit. They're worldwide, I guess. So, they've got to pay for it. But, Mike says that guys that don't have any money or the, the EPA does it now.

[02:12:51]

Timothy: Just to kind of wrap up, do any memorable events of the mill stick out in your mind, like something, um, like a holiday or anything like a story sticks out, your earliest memory of the mill or something, anything like some, oh, I don't know. Anything special?

Delvin: No. It's pretty much just... (Laughs)

Nelson: Just kind of an accumulation of things, not just one special event. Yeah.

Delvin: I can't remember anything. Most everything was kind of routine-like.

Anne: Is there any kind of special event having to do with, uh, Erie Canal off here that would encompass the mill, like when the dam was put in? Or, did the do anything at that time?

Delvin: I don't know. Uh.

Nelson: We weren't, we weren't around when they put the dam in. Yeah.

Delvin: That old Civil War vet I was just a little kid. He always liked me. I could see him yet. He had a beard, gray beard.

[02:14:11]

Anne: This was your grandfather?

Nelson: No, the Civil War guy.

Delvin: He had no teeth, he smoked a corncob pipe and he had to hold it. And, uh, he said, "People ask me how..." he says, "I never went to the doctor. I fought in the Civil War with guys begging to be shot because they were dying." You know, he used to, I was just a little kid. I used to listen to him, but he used to get talking about that. He said, "People don't realize what they..." He said, "The good Lord was good to me." He said, "I don't know why, but I never got a scratch. But people died around me."

Anne: Did he say where he served during the Civil War?

Delvin: In the Civil War.

Anne: Did he say where?

Delvin: Down South. Uh, some place. It didn't mean a lot to me in those days, but he used to say that, "The Good Lord was good to me, but I don't know why." And, I asked him, uh, he used to brag about his health and he says, "I have two shots of good old liquor every day. That keeps me, that keeps me in shape." He says, "I don't get drunk, but I have a couple of good swigs every day." He said. He lived until he was 97 and he had his mind.

Anne: Did he live here in town?

Delvin: Yeah. He lived down the street. He was born in Wicke's old house.

Nelson: Oh, is that right?

Delvin: Gus Sweet was his name. He was born there because he remembered them building this. He was a little kid. His mother used to bring him. He says, "I remember when they built this damn place." I heard him say. (Laughs) "I used to come over every day and watch them."

Anne: That place was built before the Civil War? What was that, Wicke's? That one's not that old.

Delvin: The one next to it there. Yeah. They're the ones. [inaudible 02:15:55] Yeah. They fixed it up a lot because it was run down more than that before. You know. I could see him. He talked to me, for some reason he used to talk to me and he used to come to the mill every day and talk to my grandfather. He was pretty spry for... He, um, he never felt bad. He was well right up to two months before he died. He just died of

natural causes, I guess.

[02:16:22]

Timothy: About what year did he die?

Delvin: Oh, it had to be in the '20s.

Timothy: In the '20's and he was 97.

Delvin: I was a small kid, you know.

Timothy: His name, you mentioned, was Gus? What did you say?

Delvin: Gus. Sweet was his name.

Nelson: Sweet? S-w-e-e-t? Sweet. I can look him up.

Delvin: Yeah. He used to like to spear fish. They had hole in the middle over there where the water wheel was there and he used to come and spear fish. When the pickerel come up in the spring, you know.

Anne: Are there fish in the outlet now?

Delvin: Yeah. In the spring.

Delvin: Pickerel. They used to say they'd come up to spawn. They couldn't get any further than the dam, so they'd come in under the mill. I can remember spearing them. But they only stayed just long enough to spawn in the spring.

Timothy: The fish that are there now are what, carp and...

Delvin: Well, there's some small fish in there, I guess.

[Inaudible 02:17:16.8]

Nelson: You know, there's the Warren Mill just on the other side of town. Was there a lot of competition between this mill and that mill or were they different things, or....

Delvin: Oh, yeah. There was, yeah.

Anne: Who owned that mill?

Delvin: The Warrens'.

Anne: The Warrens', oh. I thought you said Warren Mill.

Timothy: So there was, I mean you were conscious of, I guess they were conscious of the prices they were charging...

Delvin: Oh, yeah. I can remember my father changing his voice and call them and ask how much feed was because somebody said they could go there and buy it 10 cents cheaper. And he used to call Ollie [inaudible], who was the bookkeeper, and he changed his voice a little and say, "How much is cracked corn today?" And she'd say, Oh, it's 95 cents..."

[02:18:02]

Anne: And she'd say, "Oh, Mr. Wilt it's 95 cents."

Delvin: She never said that. He'd do that. He even had me do it a couple of times. Call up and ask how much a . . . was or something just because there was people who'd say, "We can go there and buy it cheaper." So, we'd just call.

Timothy: Now was the Warren Mill, was there basically just two mills? Here in...

Delvin: Well, then there was the one where [inaudible 02:18:28.7] go down by the railroad, down by the railroad. So, it was the New York Central. Not anymore, uh, the big one, Anne, what is that?

Anne: CSX? Burlington? Northern?

Delvin: No. The rail line's called, you know, yeah...

Timothy: Norfolk Southern?

Delvin: Well, he built that, but, uh, it burnt down on him. Yeah.

Nelson: There are basically doing the same stuff, enterprise, or...

Delvin: Oh, yeah. That one made cider. The other...This mill never made flour. That mill made flour and so did my grandfather's mill down...that made, but this one strictly just feed.

Nelson: But, there was competition.

Delvin: Yeah. I mean, a lot of people were looking to see, just like they are now, where they can get the cheapest thing. You know. Some people didn't, but some people did do it. So... You can buy it from Warren's for 10 cents cheaper, you know. Call and say, "How much is cracked corn or how much is . . .," you know. (Laughs) She'd say just

a minute and then she'd go and she told you the price.

Timothy: Well, good thing they didn't have caller id then.

Delvin: She never said though. Well you get tired of hearing, "I can get it 10 cents cheaper" because you really wonder if they are or if the guy is just trying to Jew you down.

[02:20:12]

Timothy: I wanted to just as a last thing to wrap up, uh, Mr. John Hurt was here on Saturday and did the photography, if you want to just look through the photos quickly; these are just the prints of the photos. Does anything stand out, like... anything that just kind of jogs your memory or sparks some kind of thought.

Delvin: I'm just trying to figure out where this is, you know.

Nelson: That's the elevator. [Appendix I - Photograph 23]

Delvin: Oh, yeah. Now I see. The elevator. Yeah. This looks like the upstairs. Yeah, that's upstairs. Yeah, see that, that was all, that cement wall there was all bad stuff, saturated. That's why the color of it was now. Yeah. Yeah. [Appendix I - Photograph 23]

Nelson: So, that's the office at this end of the building? At the end? At the south end? This is the south wall? I guess.

Delvin: It looks like it. I never had them add any chemical, but it looks like that is the way the wall has turned. See the funny color it used to get. You know. That's the old office up there. Oh, yeah. But, it looks like that's the way the walls did, the way they work it got discolored like that. I used to paint that, you know. Yeah. Let's see now, where is this? [Appendix I - Photograph 20]

[02:22:09]

Nelson: It's upstairs, right?

Delvin: It's hard to recognize because I haven't been up there lately, in quite a long time. Yeah. What's this anyway?

Nelson: It looks, it looks like a fairly, an, an added platform of some sort.

Delvin: I don't remember it.

Nelson: That's new looking lumber right there.

Delvin: I don't remember that being up there.

Nelson: These are the shoes, right, for the train tracks, whatever.

Delvin: Oh, no. Well, this, this is, this is downstairs. [Appendix I - Photograph 18]

Nelson: Oh, is it?

Delvin: Yeah, that's it. Now I think I know what that is.

Nelson: So, who added that?

Delvin: It's over, over on the wing on the... There it is.

Nelson: Oh, yeah.

Anne: Is that a stove?

Delvin: This is upstairs and there's the grain elevator. See, that's why they had to put another story on. Because this went way up there. They had to have height in order to have the grain come down chutes in different bins. Yeah. That's why they had that, that top part on it. Yeah. [Appendix I - Photograph 19]

Nelson: Was that the original stove for the mill?

Delvin: No, that was one of Ron's. Yeah. No, we, we had a pot-belly stove.

Nelson: Were those chutes there as long as you can remember in the mill?

Delvin: Yeah. Yeah.

Nelson: I mean, that's not your old favorite toboggan in this stuff, is it?

Delvin: This is all Ron's stuff. No, I didn't have any. No, this is all Ron's stuff.

Timothy: Now, this will be good to clarify, especially with an interview, because people might think, "Oh, this is the right date to the original." No, it couldn't be in the same period...

Delvin: Now that's a great picture of this! You took this after the gas pump's gone. When did they take this? Today? [Appendix I - Photograph 2]

[02:24:04]

Timothy: Saturday.

Delvin: Oh, Saturday. Yeah. That used to say G. F. Wilt on it, that sign. Yeah. And that, that used to be, when I was small, that was, that door was a big sign. I mean. It said, it advertised “Winged-Horse Flour.” That was a picture of a horse with a wings. Winged-Horse Pastry Flour. Yeah.

Anne: Was it the same Winged-Horse that the, uh, the company Mobile used? That design, I mean. The same.

Delvin: Something like that. That’s not quite the same, but it was the same idea. Yeah. Yeah. And this is the part, see they had to add. When they originally built the cleaning mill, it was the way it is now, but it didn’t have this. That didn’t come on until they made it into a feed mill.

Timothy: It didn’t have the extension?

Anne: Now, where’s the bell, dad?

Delvin: The bell’s right there.

Anne: Is it up above?

Timothy: You can see it right there.

Anne: I don’t remember this bell that we’re talking about. Oh, how about that.

Nelson: Yeah. That’s been here the whole time. They’re right over here.

Delvin: These are good pictures, alright.

Anne: Too bad you couldn’t have printed this one out. I remember seeing it when it was sent to the email.

Delvin: Is there any way I can get any of these?

Timothy: Absolutely.

Anne: They’re nice pictures.

Timothy: He’s, uh, yeah. This is John Herr’s trade. These are professional architectural photos.

Devlin: You see, that was all, all water.

[02:26:00]

Anne: Now the windows were just put in last year, right?

Delvin: They're, they're in the back, yeah.

Nelson: Which ones is he talking about?

Anne: These. These look like they're brand new, too.

Delvin: No. No. No, they, no they aren't.

Anne: Only the ones on this wall were replaced?

Delvin: Yeah. Yeah, the three on that wall. [Appendix I - Photograph 3]

Nelson: And the veranda, because...

Anne: And, the roof was replaced. Your dad did the roof last year.

Nelson: Well, this, this on the east end. Just that last one re... because that one wasn't. It had to be...

Anne: I thought he was replacing the big roof.

Nelson: He had done this part. He had reroofed that a number of years ago. But, this part here had to be replaced. Because, that time I thought they were going to be able to maintain the building and keep it up. But, that was out of his hands.

Anne: Ok. I thought he was doing the whole thing.

Delvin: See, I put a brand new roof on it.

Nelson: A nice metal roof.

Delvin: By the way, he tells me it's leaking over there. So, I don't know if there's something. Either the building settled or something wrong. But, won't matter now.

Anne: Which you're going to have if it's not structurally...

Delvin: We just got it on last summer. I don't know.

Nelson: Um, you're not from this area, I guess. Back in 19..., what? 1973?

Anne: '73.

Nelson: ...'73, when they had some hellacious rains in the summertime...

Anne: Straightline winds and...

Nelson: They had water; actually they thought they were going to have to evacuate the street because they had water all the way up to the top. That was the summer of '73.

Delvin: Yeah, they, they thought...

Anne: We were visiting, yeah, it was '73. We had gone out to eat dinner and found that they had evacuated the street when we came home. We had no power...

Nelson: Looks pretty lazy out there now, but boy...

Delvin: The lake was so high and they thought maybe the dam might go.

Nelson: It certainly would.

Delvin: The dam wasn't in very good...

Anne: I personally have pictures of that.

Delvin: They even made me go. I went over to Cassie's and stayed all night one time. I didn't want to go because I'd been here all my life and never had any trouble. But, I did go over there and stay. Clark Taver across the street, he moved all his furniture out and took it up and put it in the church parking lot, which is way upside of the hill. And he said, "You fool, you. Why don't you take your stuff out?" I says, "I've been here all my life and nothing's happened yet." (Laughs) That's why, I ...

Anne: All this was under water out here.

[02:28:22]

Anne: Yeah, I have, we have pictures of it.

Delvin: Yeah, there was water up to there.

Nelson: Well...

Anne: And it had come close to the house, close to the driveway, but that was all under water. Even I can remember. (Laughs)

Delvin: When I first got married, we had to get boots on to come in the house. Your mother had to wear boots and I did to get in the house. There was no...

Nelson: Well, that was before the straightened the creek... right?

Delvin: Yeah, it had, well, two foot of water in it.

Nelson: But, they straightened the outlet.

Delvin: That was before they straightened the outlet. Yeah. The Thruway hadn't been built. That was shortly after we were married. Probably about '45.

Anne: Did the outlet wander around going out that way?

Devlin: Yeah.

Anne: It wasn't...

Nelson: It wasn't a straight shot.

Delvin: A two-way street.

Anne: That was when you were a kid?

Nelson: Well, in the...

Delvin: The Thruway opened up in '51 or '52 and it was in the late '40s when they started it.

Timothy: And then lots of water crested in 1973 and came up...?

Nelson: It was...

Delvin: Yeah, the problem with the building is they were sitting in it. Because this, this, that part right there, that's where the water was, right there. The bottom of the building, that wing out there, was sitting in water. That's the only time I ever saw it like that.

Anne: It was a really bad storm in between here and the Thruway. That was completely forest. It was a forest out there, remember?

Delvin: Well, they had a lot of snow down South...

Anne: And, they lost all the trees. Right, dad? There was a big stand of woods between here and where the Thruway is, and in that particular storm blew down all those trees and it was a complete loss of trees.

Delvin: There were some trees that it took down, yeah.

[02:29:55]

Timothy: Just if we can back up for a second, when did the area beside the mill get filled in? The soil. I think it was early, early like 18... You know. At one point, it's water comes up to the middle, but somebody put, there's a fill...

Anne: There's a fill right here.

Delvin: When they put that, the, uh, Army engineers finally come in here, I would say it was probably, I don't know for sure, but I would probably say, um, in the

Nelson: Early '60s?

Delvin: Late '60s or early '70s.

Nelson: I was still in school so it wouldn't have been the '70s. It would have been the '60s.

Nelson: I think I was in grade school.

Delvin: Yeah. The engineers come in and they took out the dam, they took out the aqueduct, and they started filling in, the big stone over there are from the aqueduct. Yeah. And they did dirt fill the creek area.

Nelson: So, was that when they filled that....

Delvin: They put all that stuff in.

Nelson: Yeah, they did that.

Delvin: There is silt, started off at the aqueduct, started off in here somewhere, and went down as far as the bridge. And, they filled that all in and they pushed it under the mill as far as they could with the bulldozer. They got under a way, but they didn't get under all the way with it, yeah. Well, they had, uh, I had to give them permission because they were going to throw all this stuff away and then they talked me into putting it there, which was a good idea. So, it wouldn't cost me anything and I just had to sign something to give them permission to come in here to put the fill in. So, I did, you know. And they did a good job. They put all those, because that was all water there. You know. It was all water over here. The water came within six feet of the ice house, I think.

[02:32:01]

Nelson: Was that a separate channel or was it just water all the way?

Delvin: It was water all the way. They just dug it out to divert it over here, you know.

Timothy: And that was for the head race for the turbines, right?

Delvin: Yeah. The Civil War vet, he told me how they did it. When they put the dam in, they put a thing across the creek and routed the water, all the water, over on the east side so where they put the dam was dry. He was quite fascinated with how they did things. It was all pretty much by hand. But he said, I remember, I asked him how long it took them and he told me it took them a long time. (Laughs) Yeah. He said they built the dam, they built the dam first, and then they built the building. Of course, the building come out over the water, you see, after they built it.

Timothy: Did he ever mention about when he remembers the mill being built? Did he say about...

Delvin: He just said he was a little kid when they did it all.

Timothy: So, he 97 in the '20s, so sometime before the war, I guess, then.

Anne: He was here in 1830.

Delvin: He was a little kid, he said, and his mother used to bring him down to watch.

Timothy: Would have made sense then.

Delvin: He always said it took a long time.

Nelson: So, it sounds like they must have dumped a bunch of dirt or something in the water.

Delvin: He said they built a thing so the water would run over on the east side. That's where the gates were that they could pull off. And they could take out the dam end. Then they did it the other way. They put it so the water would run over the dam and put the gates there so they could control the water. Yeah. We were all done with... Oh, yeah he said they did use some horses once in a while, or something.

Nelson: Well, that would be a lot of dirt to move by hand! Holy, moly!

[02:34:12]

Delvin: They brought in a horse and wagon. Yeah. They didn't have steam...

Anne: They had to do it, that's the way they had to do it. Wouldn't they, in the 1830's?

Delvin: Yeah.

Nelson: Well, they could have horse-drawn blades and carts and stuff like that. I mean, they just didn't do it by shovels, you know.

Anne: When was the dam put in?

Nelson: Well, you said they built the mill in the 1830s, so that's when they put the dam in, right? They put the dam in first and then they built the mill.

Delvin: I think he built the dam first and then put the mill in. He always said it took them a long time. So, I should have paid a lot more attention because I was just a little kid. I was probably what, seven or eight?

Anne: You had no reason to pay attention...

Delvin: I liked him, though, you know and he liked me.

Nelson: This was a house that was here when the mill was built, right? This is our house now. This house was here with the mill. [Appendix I - Photograph 10]

Delvin: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Anne: That house? That was already here? How old is that house?

Delvin: I don't have any idea.

Nelson: And then, this is where grandpa lived, right, and your grandma lived up there?

Delvin: Right, yeah.

Timothy: And this is the blue house... [Appendix I - Photograph 10]

Nelson: The blue house, yeah, right next door to us here. They tale of the house is that it went with the mill. I guess the guy who owned it, uh, lived there, I guess. I assume, I don't know. [Appendix I - Photograph 10]

Anne: So, that's 1850-ish?

Delvin: So, the house had to be older than that, yeah. I guess, anyway.

Anne: So, you really need some pictures 1870-ish to find out if the house is still there, right?

Delvin: Who took these pictures? That's right, I remember.

Timothy: Was this sided not that long ago? [Appendix I - Photograph 5] [Appendix I - Photograph 8] [Appendix I - Photograph 6]

Anne: Yeah, actually, December.

[02:36:02]

Timothy: It looked newer than that when I was here.

Delvin: Yeah. They were going to keep the building when they did that. I mean, Anne found out that the floors hadn't settled and uh...

Anne: It was slanted so they had to put an end cap on it.

Nelson: You don't have any films or pictures of . . . before they tore this part down, do you? I guess. There was a structure, it was made out of cinder block, right, that ran from the back of, from the back here all the way around to the ice house. So, when they tore that part down, that exposed, this was all open, so they had to put some kind of a...

Timothy: This was just torn down recently?

Nelson: This was last fall when they put on the extensions.

Timothy: Right, yeah. I remember the extensions.

Delvin: Yeah. They got that done just before winter. I think it was snowing a little when they finished it.

Anne: December 8th.

Nelson: December 8th? Why?

Anne: Because we were here.

Nelson: We were here that early?

Anne: Maybe the 16th. We were here for Christmas. And that's when they were working on the wall. The weather was so good last year so they could keep working on it and taking the soil out. They thought they weren't going to be done because of the season. And they worked on the wall of the ice, back on the ice house. That corner. And they fixed that corner. The east corner. And then they put the siding on.

Delvin: That's what I... Yeah. That was the old grading to keep the stuff from going into the water wheels. That was, there was five or six of those things and you had to clean them out every day because you got a lot of sticks and leaves and everything coming down. You didn't want to get that stuff in the turbine or you'd plug it up. Maybe even something big might even stop it, you know. So, the water had to go through those, yeah. I used to rake it up, too, sometimes. I would rake it up and then just throw it back into the creek. Take it over and throw it back in there! (Laughing) Let

somebody else... [Appendix I - Photograph 15]

[Inaudible 02:38:18]

Anne: That's probably why the mill downstream burned up in a fire because you put so much stuff...

[02:38:22]

Nelson: Easy, now. It's grandpa.

[Inaudible 02:38.3]

Delvin: See, here are those turbines right here. See them. [Appendix I - Photograph 16]

Timothy: Yeah. That's one of the more amazing . . .

Delvin: There's the small one. That's 25-horse. And this is, uh, the 40-horse power. This one runs the mill, this one runs part of the mill, but mostly the creamery and the elevator. The elevator was run by that one, too. Yeah. Most of the mill stuff was run by the bigger ones. I used, I used to help my grandpa get down there every year in the summertime. He'd pull the gates, lower the water, and clean it all out and fix anything that needed to be fixed. [Appendix I - Photograph 16]

Timothy: It looks like there are wooden teeth on the big gear there.

Delvin: That was, yeah, that was, those are, we used to have to replace some of those, they're wooden teeth. He used to buy a lot of, there might be some of those over there. Or was. He used to check those every year. And, they were wood, but the gear that laid on top of it was iron. I don't know, I don't know why they didn't have iron on iron, but they didn't. It was real, hard wood. But, it lasted a long time. But, once in a while you just had to replace one. You see, there's one gone there now, or something. But, uh. Of course, this hasn't been used in a long, long time. Yeah. I used to get down in there with him and help him clean out the rubbish. Some grass and stuff would get in and a little mud, but nothing very big. He did that every summer. [Appendix I - Photograph 16]

[02:40:23]

Nelson: Did they ever have to replace any of this part here, or is that the original equipment, I mean, as far as you know?

Delvin: Uh, we had to put some new; he had to take the gates out. Once in a while you get a broken gate that was on a pin like. And they would open up when...That big gear right there opened them up. That big ring one around there and that would open and

close them. And, um, those things on the end would wear. He used to take it out and take it up to Dan Pultz. He was a welder and he'd, uh, weld metal back into it. You know. I mean, it was expensive and grandpa didn't like to do it because he felt he was being overcharged, but there was nobody else who could do it. Yeah. It would take him a while and he would build that up welding and build that up somehow until, because if he didn't fix it, it would break off after a while and then you'd have to buy a whole new gate, you know. So, he used to be fussy about that and sometimes it didn't come out too easy, but he checked those every year. There was another big wheel that went out through the floor and they said that's how you opened them. You turned it one way, big wheel about this big, big iron wheel you turn it one way, opened the gates, and then when you didn't want to use it anymore and you wanted to stop it, you turned it around the other way and it closed the gates again. That's how you controlled it, yeah. He tried once to combine the two of them. He put a shaft in, but it never worked very good because, uh, uh, he thought he'd have a lot more horse power if he added the 25 horse to the 40. But it didn't work out too good. I mean, it probably would have if he would have worked on it a little more, but, uh, he kind of gave up on it because it didn't seem to turn together. I don't know if the couplings kept breaking or something, but they finally gave up on it. But there was his idea I remember. He thought he'd get more power by turning both on, but sometimes it would be hard, I guess to have both going the same speed, you know. One would be dragging the other or something. You know. They wouldn't be... He finally gave up on it.

[02:42:49]

Timothy: Did the Army Corp fill in the area around the turbines?

Delvin: Did the what?

Timothy: Did the Army Corp fill in all the rocks...

Delvin: Yeah. No, they did this. They did, they did this, uh, last spring, filled this all in with rock.

Nelson: Oh, they were filling it in. You mean it was all open before them? I mean, there...

Delvin: It was open, it was all mud and crap and it was about two foot deep. I think Hitchcock used to dump some of the crap in there, too. Yeah. When they cleaned out the holding tank I think he dumped it in there for a while. Until they got after him and then they took it away some place. They wouldn't tell where they did it so that was a violation, right there, because that was all the chemicals that had settled to the bottom of the holding tank. I asked the driver one day, uh, where they took this and he says, "This is for me to know and you to find out." That's what he told me, because that was supposed to have been put in, you know, a hole, so I had suspicions that he had a nephew that was a farmer and I got the idea that they dumped it some place on his

farm, but I don't know. But, that's what I thought. He was only gone an hour or so. But, I asked him what they'd done and said, "That's for me to know and you to find out." (Laughs)

[02:44:12]

Anne: Then there's another spot out there.

Delvin: Yeah. There's another violation. It didn't go where it was supposed to, and there was bad stuff...

Anne: Quit looking underneath it, yeah. Right in here...

Nelson: This is on the opposite side of the building, from the west to the east, um... It would be like this area right in here.

Anne: Right in here? Where you were last year, doing the supports?

Anne: Because here, there's some supports here.

Nelson: Well, those supports were back on this side of the room.

Delvin: They did that there.

Nelson: The shipping and receiving? You put that...

Delvin: That's where the stuff came in. Yeah. And where it went out. Well, some of it came in the back door. Yeah. If you had a lot of something and they could handle it, they'd come in the back. If it was big stuff it came in on the dock and then they took it out on the fork lift. Yeah. [Appendix I - Photograph 4]

Now, this door was originally over here. Uh, when they put the cob crusher in, I remember that, they um, so they could back in with a wagon or a truck. So, they moved it over, yeah. They took this and moved it over there. Or, the other way around. This was over there and the door was here and they put it over there so they could back in and unload inside. Because originally you couldn't do that. That was done in my time, I remember that. [Appendix I - Photograph 12]

Nelson: When you were a little boy?

[02:45:57]

Delvin: Well, teenager, I guess. Now here, that's part of some mechanism. The water wheel, one of these went to the corn-sheller and the other one got the power... I guess that's underneath there yet, I guess. Yeah. A belt came to run that. I forgot that's under

there, yeah. You never could see that unless you got under there, but that's how they hooked it up. Yeah. [Appendix I - Photograph 17]

Timothy: That's under the first floor, or second floor?

Delvin: I think this was, I think this was the driver wheel. They got the power from the, because it's bigger, they got the power from the...

Nelson: But, this is underneath the main floor of the building. This is not on the main floor. Right?

Delvin: Yeah. It's over, uh, where you drive behind. It's, uh, right in here, only back farther.

Nelson: That, ok.

Anne: It's on the main floor.

Delvin: On the back end. That's where it is. Yeah. Yeah. I remember my grandfather getting under there and having to fix the belt once. Yeah. The belt broke, I guess. I never got under there.

Anne: What kind of belts did they use?

Delvin: Well, they, some were leather and some were combination of plastic and fiber strings, some kind of fiber. And, it was, uh, you uh, the leather you cut, the fiber you used a saw to cut it, was uh, because it was funny stuff, you know. It was like big threads, but plastic or something around it. It was manmade. The leather, of course the leather belts were... And then there was rubber belts, too.

Timothy: Do you remember the belts ever snapping? Did they break...?

[02:48:03]

Delvin: Oh, yeah. You fixed them. He taught me. You laced them. If you put a piece in you used rawhide. He taught me. I could do that. He taught me. I could do that, yeah.

Nelson: Your grandfather taught you how to do it?

Delvin: He taught me how to do it.

Nelson: As a young boy was that one of your jobs?

Delvin: Yeah. Although, it would get bad, you know, or break or you cut it out and you get, put a new piece in, that was a piece of rawhide. That was with your leather. With rubber, you had to use, uh, uh, oh, what did you call that? Yeah. Metal...

Timothy: Staples...

Delvin: Staples, somehow, yeah. You had to buy it, see. You had to buy it. It was already made. You had to put it in and knock the, then pound, pound the things down.

Nelson; So, did they have different belts for different pulleys or you went from one to the other to see which worked best?

Delvin: I don't, I don't know. It was just that way. I don't know whether one was... uh, I don't ever remember him buying a new one. They were all there. But, he was there, he had spare belts. I can't remember whether they were new or whether he got them some place. He also had 25 or 30, there was 25 or 30 pulleys there. You could take the pulleys apart and change your speed. The pulleys come apart, you know. They were bolted together and onto the... He used to change them sometimes, either make them bigger or smaller or change your speed. Um, he used to do that. He had, he had about 20 different pulleys lined up in a row there, in case he wanted to change one he knew exactly which one he wanted. Well, most, I thought most of them stayed the same. He did all his own fixing pretty much. He was handy.

[02:50:10]

If a bearing, I remember, if a bearing, if they use flat bearings, they weren't more a ball bearing or roller bearing; they were just a common bearing. Um, they used to get bad and he used to take it apart. And, he, he used to, they were lead or babbitt or something, and he had a little furnace and he would re-pour it. I never did it, but he showed me how to do it. But, uh, he got that stuff red hot so it would pour like, pour like milk. You didn't want to spill any on you or it would burn a hole right through you. But that's how he fixed a bearing. If you oiled them, you had to oil them, probably every day, he had a little thing on it, a little thing with a cap on the top. Not a grease, it was oil, you know. If you took care of them, which he did, they'd go a long time. If you didn't, then they would get dry and...

Timothy: It looks like he had a little lubrication point right there.

Delvin: Yeah. There's one right there. There it is. Yeah. Yeah, he had a big oil can and he used to, well... That's why he didn't have to do it very... I remember on the drive shafts and the main shaft once, he did it once on that once, because they got knocking. It was playing, you know, when you was using it, and you had run something. When you slowed it down a little bit, you'd hear it. It would knock. That's when he would change it and you put new bearings, new stuff in there. [02:52:19] Well, the railroad's the same way. I mean, they didn't... I used to go over there and pick up the babbitt and sell it for junk because car-knockers they called them. All they did was jack up the truck and haul it out with a big hook. It would melt hot journal, it would melt. The stuff would melt and how they oiled those was they,

they put this waste in, old cotton waste, you know, stringy stuff, and then they fill it with oil. And that would keep it lubricated. But, once in a while you had to put some more oil in it. If they didn't they would have a hot journal. They used to, I remember, over here in the siding, I was a kid, I used to talk to them. They first come on motor cars then finally they got a truck. I said when I was talking to the guy, "Why don't you just take that out." "We don't want that," he said. I remember the guy said, "You want, take it." So, I used to go over there all the time to get those. And, first I had my cart and I took it. Then I finally got, I had a car when I was 16 I got a driver's license and got an old Model T. I used to go to the siding and look for that because they... and, I would take it to the junk yard. I'd get four or five dollars for a pail full. Yeah.

[02:53:42]

Nelson: Really.

Delvin: It was lead mostly, I guess.

Timothy: There was some babbitt, though?

Delvin: Yeah. And, uh, the guy would say, "Where'd you get this?" And I would say, "The guy on the railroad gave it to me." You know. They didn't pick it up. I go there and I'd watch quite often. A car would come in there, just sitting there, and car knockers they'd call them, all they did was take the old ones out and slip the new insert in through it. They had a big jack, jacked it up. It only took them about, maybe an hour, to do it. They'd make a bigger job out of it, but... I thought they'd probably pick up the stuff, but they said, "You want it, take it." So, I did. Yeah. That shaft is still there, I see that now. I knew it was there, but I never got under there. That runs the corn-sheller and the cob-crusher.

Nelson: I see that.

Anne: The cob crusher, what?

Delvin: This is upstairs, right? Yeah. This is where the floor settled all along here. [Appendix I - Photograph 21]

Timothy: And this is to the north end of the building, to the north end of the mill or towards the south...?

Delvin: This is the south end, right up there. Upstairs. See, and that's, there's the top of that grain elevator. [Appendix I - Photograph 25] See, it's way up near the roof. I think that's where the grain went up like this and then they came out here and they had a spout so you could move it around. It was on a swivel-like. It came up, wait, it came up this way, let's see, this way. It came up this way, like this, and dumped it here. And then you put it where you wanted to. But, you had to have height. You had to

have it up above everything for the law of gravity. That's why they had to put this, this's all up, there's where the roof was originally, down here. But, you see it wasn't high enough to, uh...

Nelson: Right, so you had to put that extension.

Delvin: That's the only way you could elevate grain in those days. The elevator that was...composition. Some kind of belt composition and it was built of the composition with all these cups on it. They carried it out and dumped it right here. They had a thing on it and you moved that around to where you wanted it. You know, that is why they had to put that on. [Appendix I - Photograph 25]

[02:56:35]

Nelson: That's like you're... to the north.

Delvin: There's the old original building. There's some of them. See that there? That was the old original roof. They left some of that, you see. That's where they added on for this. Yeah. Some of those are, they took some of those out, but I know there are some of them left. Yeah. To make room for these they took some of them out. But, that's, this was the original roof, yeah. And there's the hole where they cut out of the other day out on the roof. I went... [Appendix I - Photograph 26]

Nelson: Yeah, to help, to get the bell out, yeah.

Delvin: Now we're getting to the bell. Now there's the bell. [Appendix I - Photograph 14]

Nelson: Anne.

Delvin: Here's the other elevator. Yeah. That was for the grinder. That was where they brought the grist in. They come up here, you know and went into it with special bins. [Appendix I - Photograph 27]

Nelson: This is looking to the north, so this is the front of the mill here along the top. And this was the original roofline before they added this part.

Anne: Oh, how about that!

[02:57:58]

Timothy: So, this is the grinder?

Delvin: No, that's the elevator. That's the top of it. [Appendix I - Photograph 27]

Timothy: Oh, that's just the elevator? Oh, I see what it is. There's the shaft and there's the...

Delvin: Yeah. That's where the belts and cups went all around like that and dumped it. And when they come over the wheel, then it dumped in here and you had your spout here and that was on a swivel and you could send it any place you wanted to with the metal, well they used some wood drop, but they also used the metal, big metal pipe-like. And then, you could put that any place you wanted to up there.

Timothy: So, it wasn't like a...

Delvin: It swiveled like, you know. My dad could put an extra length on for some of them. If you get up there and put an extra... if you get up there and want to move it far away. This is the old chimney, yeah, yeah, which they took out a long time ago, , but they left it inside. Yeah. [Appendix I - Photograph 24]

Timothy: The chimney, this is interesting. Is this original the way this is angled, like this, going through?

Delvin: Yeah. Yeah. Did you notice this?

Anne: Yeah. That's what I just said. That's an interesting chimney!

Delvin: It was probably put in when they built the building. I imagine, it...

Timothy: I've never seen one like that.

Delvin: That had to, that had to...

Anne: Chimney, a slanted chimney.

Delvin: Yeah. Whatever you want to call it. For some reason they had to do that. Whether something was in the, maybe one of the big beams was in the way. I wonder. I guess it looks like they had to go around the beam. Yeah. See that beam right there? It would have went right through it, probably. Instead of that they go around it.

Timothy: Hmm. It's interesting to do that instead of having a flue up through the roof. (Laughing)

Delvin: Of course, in those days they didn't have...

Timothy: They didn't have many flues.

Delvin: They didn't have anything with a real chimney. You didn't have any... Of course, they burned wood, too, or corn cobs, which made a hot fire. So, that pipe probably got pretty hot, you know.

[03:00:10]

Anne: You should go collect corn cobs from the farm now so you can have a big bon fire.

Delvin: See. That's the elevator, there's the grain bin. When the farmer brought in grain or if you wanted to grind anything, it went up in the elevator and it went in this. This had two spouts and it had, like pockets, you know. You had two ways you could send it. There were two ways you could send it. There were two of those there, yeah. [Appendix I - Photograph 22]

Anne: Did they do one job at a time? Like a farmer would come in with his grain, and then...

Delvin: Yeah. You had to. You had to do one at a time. You took them when they came in usually. Unless some farmers, some farmers didn't care. They'd come back the next day. I mean, some of them had waited or some of them would go uptown to shop or go to the hotel and get a shot or something. When they come back you don't want to ask.

Anne: Miss Kathleen is here. [enter Miss Kathleen through back door]

Timothy: Would they, when farmers come, would they pay, um, would the farmers pay your grandfather or would they take a portion of

Delvin: They'd do both. What do you, there is a term for that. What do you call it? I was trying to think, when you took out, when you took out what you thought it was worth. Um, there's a name for that, but I can't think of what it is.

Nelson: See, I've missed the first part of the question again.

Timothy: So, in for payment, would the farmer take, or would his grandfather take...

Nelson: Oh, you mean take part of the product as payment? Yeah. The payment is...

Delvin: There was a word for that, but I can't think of it.

Anne: Bartering.

Nelson: No. Bartering is when you like trade services

[Inaudible 03:02:05]

Nelson: ...like trade for services...

Delvin: They had a word. The code word is, you know, [inaudible]...and then you took out

what you thought it was worth.

Timothy: It used to be called like the Miller's Tenth, or something like that.

Delvin: I'm trying to think. It was a short word. I can't think of it. I remember, in the early days, there was fifteen cents a hundred that you took. You had to weigh it. They had four scales over there and they put the feed out of the truck, four-wheeled truck and they weighed it on the fourth scale and it was fifteen...

Nelson: So, 100 pounds of the...

Delvin: One hundred pounds and fifteen cents. Then, in the olden days...

Kathleen: That's when dad was born. In the olden days.

Delvin: It got to be, uh, what's that word.

Nelson: I can't think of it. We'll have to Google it. [the word may be "toll"]

Delvin: What's funny is that you took the feed out, you were supposed to weight it and tell them how much you took. You'd say, "We took this much."

Anne: Was it a miller's portion? I'll look it up.

Timothy: The words, I've heard it too, before. Can't think of what they called it. One last question, I was reading through the article by Penny here, and I remember this story from when I came two years ago. And you just reminded me. I think a group of boys formed a club called the Old Mill Club in 1937. What can you tell me about that?

Delvin: I started that.

Timothy: You started this?

Delvin: Yeah. She had the wrong dates. It didn't add up that way. Now, a bunch of us pal'ed around and we didn't have anything to do and we were playing pool over on the corner where the market is now, [Inaudible 03:04:07.4], at McCumber's they had a pool [03:04:12] table in there. They were going to get rid of it. They were going to put a store in and it didn't have room for the pool table. One of the guys just said, "That would be good for us." They said, "Well, where would we put it?" We spent a lot of money over there playing, you know. I got thinking the mill was there and there wasn't anything in it much, some storage stuff, and so I asked my friends, and one of them said, "How about the mill?" I said, "Well, I don't know about that." He said, "Why don't you ask your father if you could use it?" So, we started downstairs first. This was before that was empty, but, uh, we didn't like it. It didn't look good, the cement floor, it wasn't level on... We looked upstairs and there was this chimney.

You could have a stove and there was a lot of room there. We'd figure we'd like to go up there. My father said, "Go ahead." We thought we might have to pay him something, but "I don't want anything," he said. We wanted some electricity and we had one, he didn't want to fix anything for us. He said, "Anything you do you got to do on your own." We had one of our guys was a common jack, he could do anything. Johnny Davis. He wired it. He finally went in the plumbing business, but, uh, he wired it. We run water from downstairs where the crew had a water line. We had a sink. We got an old stove. We hooked that up. We took, we bought the table. It seems we paid 75 bucks for it, which was a lot of money in those days. We had to take it down and the guy said when you take it down there's a lot of work to it. You will have to, it's slate, so you got to put it back, you got to fill in with plaster of paris, you'll have to check your cushions, you'll have to check everything, level it out, and Davis did all that. We bought a new felt I remember felt was expensive in those.... 100 bucks! For a felt. And the cushions were good. Well, we looked into cushions and cushions are very expensive. Well, we didn't need any. So, we took it down. And, uh, um. Davis had an old truck, an old pickup truck. We had to do it, take it apart, move it, and everything, because he said, "It's yours and you got to get it out of here." Then we had to take it upstairs. We took all we could with the elevator, but some of the stuff we had to go up the stairway with. Which was the inside one. I mean, we didn't have the outside one. We built that later. Yeah. And, that's how it got started. We got the pool table, then we decided we had to have something else, so you can't play cards or gamble so they found an old antique round table. The auctioneer grabbed that. I guess, I don't think we paid enough for that, but they did. The color of the felt, it was an antique, really. And we used to play pitch for 10 or 15 cents a game. You know, gamble a little.

[03:08:00]

Nelson: But, that room was on this side of the building just right out here, right?

Delvin: Yeah. Well, it's gone now. Yeah, we had the whole upstairs. The part they tore down was two stories. We had it all for the club.

Nelson: Ok. So it was before that, that room was?

Delvin: Yeah, we had the ping pong table, we had the pool table, we had the gambling table, there the round table, we had the sink, we had the stove, uh, we had a, uh, uh, safe where we kept records.

Nelson: You met pretty regularly until the war started?

Delvin: What?

Timothy: You met pretty regularly until the war started?

Delvin: Yeah. We were there, somebody was there, we all had keys. Somebody was there every night. Uh, we had a meeting, uh, once or twice a month. And, everybody had a key and they could go and come as they wanted because we built an outside stairway. I did. There was an outside stairway.

Timothy: You built that stairway?

Delvin: I built that, yeah. So we didn't have to go in the mill to go up the inside stairway. That's how it started.

Timothy: Penny reported that in 1940 you had about four... or you corrected it, that in 1940 you had about 14 members?

Delvin: Yeah. It got that big once. We started with just a handful. We had laws. We had, uh, uh, a bag with numbers in it and when anybody wanted to come in we had to vote on it by, and we had a black ball in there.

Timothy: You guys are mean.

Delvin: The black ball meant that you couldn't get in. We had a couple of people, guys we really didn't want. That's the only time we did that. Yeah. We figured they wouldn't get along good with us and they might want to do things that we didn't want to do. Most of us had the same idea, but we questioned those two guys. So, I forgot who they were, but they didn't get in. They didn't like it very well, but, uh. And once in a while we'd get somebody in there, who didn't stay, but most of us did and it grew. You, know.

[03:10:12]

Nelson: Did you collect monthly dues, or...?

Delvin: Yeah. We paid, I think, 50 cents a month or something like that. That was to pay for things, you know. We used to have a party out there. We got some dishes and running water. And, uh, one of the guys went hunting and caught a deer so we had venison. We didn't cook it, we didn't have a stove there, but they brought it in and we had a venison dinner. I don't like venison anyway, but I ate it. Yeah. We used to have a big celebration at Halloween. We'd have a scavenger hunt. We'd go and get stuff and bring it in, you know. The one who brought in the most crickets would get maybe five dollars. Boy, we used to run all over town. We'd, uh, put things in a basket that said you've got to get this, you know. First off, a couple of us went around town and see what we could pick up. See if or get it any way we could, asking for it or something. So, we'd list those things and then we'd put them on a slip. And then you drew a slip and you were supposed to get that and bring it in. (Laughs) That's the way it worked. And the guy that brought in the most won. You could go by yourself or you could go by teams. So, uh, I used to put stuff in because I went around town. I lived here and I

went around getting stuff that could be available. There was a lot of horse chestnut trees and one of the things was to bring in 25 [03:12:07] horse chestnuts. That was one of those things. And, we'd see some old stuff around, junk or something someplace, we'd put that down. Maybe bring in a short piece of limb, or bring in...most anything. We worked on this for about a month before Halloween, so that it, it was available, but you had to find it, it was available some place.

Timothy: Was this strictly a boys club or did you bring dates, or no?

Delvin: Uh, pretty much. We had a couple parties where you could bring a, you could bring a guest if you wanted, but it was strictly boys. Yeah.

Timothy: The pool table. Was it still up there? I remember seeing it.

Delvin: It was. They junked it. That was it.

Timothy: Two years ago it was still there.

Delvin: When Hitchcock took over, of course, the war had pretty much ended. One fellow lost his life over in France. And, a couple three of them, uh, got a job someplace else. And, a couple of them got married. And, we tried to keep it going and it went for maybe a year, but we saw that it was going out. There just wasn't room for it anymore. I mean, we had all changed, we were all older.

Nelson: Yeah, by that time you were in your mid-twenties, right?

Delvin: Yeah. And, um, so we, uh, could see that it was going to die. So, we just stopped. Everybody left everything there for a long time. It stayed there. I had charge of it. It got all dusty and it got dirty. And, uh, uh, then Hitchcock came in and he wanted to [03:14:00] put in, um, a big motor up there for his ventilating system, and so he moved the pool table and some of the stuff over and, uh, things started disappearing, too. Yeah. We had a whole bunch of cues and I went in there one day and I noticed that three or four of them were gone. And, then, uh, we weren't using it anymore, I went in there one day and I checked on the balls and somebody had taken two or three balls. And, one by one things were starting to... of course, they were there and people come in. How they got out there, I don't know, but they did things started disappearing, and, uh, Hitchcock and his men were out there and they were using it. And, then, the auctioneer came along and he bought the pool table, too, but he never come back to get it. I guess he, he gave me something for it, I don't know, 20 bucks or something like that. But, he says, uh, and he bought the gambling table, and uh, he bought something else and I got paid for that. I don't think I got paid enough probably, but anyway, I got rid of it. And, uh, but the pool cues disappeared. The racks, probably, somebody took the racks. I went up one day and the rack was gone as well as the cues. I checked the balls and some of those were gone. The felt was all shot and the rubber was dead. I mean, it was prob... it was an antique, but you

probably have that. Although some of these guys probably rebuild them, but it might cost \$1,000. But, at least you rebuild it, you know. And do the work yourself, because if it's expensive and you have a guy come in and do that and retake it, it's expensive. That's why you... But they are, it's the same. It was that thick on that one. It was heavy. On the new ones, the slate, if you buy a cheap table the slate is fiber board or some composition board. But the slate, uh, we bought like half, those are heavy and they come in two sections and it would take two guys to handle one. But, when they took it, they just picked it up with a shovel and dropped it and banged it a couple of times and broke it up.

[03:16:48]

Timothy: So, all the antiques, including the pool table, that were left, that's not really antiques, did the EPA just haul it all away because it was all contaminated?

Delvin: Yeah. Along with all the rubbish. They told me to get everything that I wanted out of there. I had a little stuff there, not much. I had a lot of these young tools, you know. I had some bottles up there. I left a few of them that were pretty dirty, not very good. And a couple three broken cases. A few other things up there. It all went. When the truck came they just shoveled it all right in. So that was the history, but from '37 for about four years, until the war, they started drafting. There was only a couple of them, I was around and one didn't go, I think maybe all the rest of them, yeah, went into the service. Yeah. And, when they come back we tried it again, but it didn't go. People were older, they were looking for jobs, and, you know, they got married, and, you know. It was fine for us when we were young and no responsibilities or dependents or anything. We could hang out and there were nights when we stayed all night long. We gambled a little bit, we'd sit around playing cards for a dime. We'd only play for a dime. Mostly dimes. We'd play pill pool. That's where you'd take a pill out of a leather bag and you had to get that, you had to pocket that ball. But, uh, you had to do it a certain way, how was that?

Delvin: But they could tell what you were doing the way you were playing, you know, you were trying to kiss one ball to get your ball in. So, if that guy didn't get wise to you, they did, they'd play against you. Everybody was playing against us. You'd get five guys playing or six, every time you won you got 50 or 60 heads. They wanted to go over a quarter, but we thought that was quite a lot of money, but, uh, if you watched your guy you could almost tell what number he had. When he was, his ball was out in the open and you couldn't hit it direct. You had to go according to, you had to start in with the one ball and work your way up. Let's say you had the 6 ball. You couldn't just put that in. You had to be trying to get the one ball, but you were trying to hit the one ball and go over and kiss your own ball. They call it "kissin," kiss your own ball. If you could figure out a way to hit the one ball, and then the cue ball, or then the one ball could go over and hit your ball in. That's the way it was. And, uh, if you had [03:20:05] the black ball, you had to be very careful with that. It wasn't easy, and there's guys, you didn't tell anybody what ball was yours, but a lot of times you could

tell, by the way he was playing, what ball was his and everybody was against everybody else. Until, finally, somebody did knock it in. If it went long enough you might get your own ball. It wasn't easy! But,uh, I remember, sometimes it would take us, we would play, we would do that half the night sometimes. George, my uncle, was like that. He used to come down, a married man. He was an older man and he used to come down from Rochester every couple of weeks. He would come in there and we would let him in and he would teach the boys a lesson or two. And, uh, we fixed Christmas toys for two years. We went around, got old toys, and we painted them. They were hand toys. There wasn't electric toys, it was just simple toys, you know, trucks and things. Things that you push. A few of them might wind, but most were just hand-operated or something. And we gave them to several families that had kids and kind of poor. We got a nice write-up in the paper about it once or twice. We did that for something to do. Yeah, we did. Yeah. We got some paint, and we painted them and straightened them all up then Johnny Davis was handy. He could fix most anything. Yeah. And we enjoyed it. And then, Christmas, or Halloween, no we did it for Christmas, yeah. Yeah. I'm just thinking. We did give some poor families one year some candy. We bought some candy and gave that out. So, just before Christmas, we'd go to these poor families, and knock on the door, say, "Here's a, here's a gift from the club, OMC." We had pens that said, "OMC." [Old Mill Club]

[03:22:39]

Nelson: Jeepers creepers, you really got into it, didn't you!

Delvin: It was, well, we thought about it for quite a while before. If it hadn't been for that pool table. If they hadn't wanted to get rid of it, it would never have matured. But, we spent a lot of time over there. That's why the guy said, "You ought to buy that." You know. So, he was going to get rid of it so he could put a store in. They figured they'd make more money on the store than they would on the pool. So, that's how we got going, you know. We had a lot of fun. Yeah. Yeah,, we'd get up there and play cards, play pool, play ping pong, you know. It was something you could do. We had brought in books and magazines and you could sit and read. We had a radio. We used to listen to "The Day They Sank the Graf Spee," or they beached it. You know, we had that and listened to that and tell them or they were going to beach it, Germans were going to beach it, or something. We listened to that, remember. Telling us, the Germans were going to beach you. They were cornered and they couldn't go anyplace. That was the only thing we could do. And that was on radio. And [03:24:06] we'd listen. And comedians. We'd listen to comedians then. It was fun. It was a good, clean operation. You know. The gambling was just dime stuff, but we never got into any trouble or anything. We didn't drink, didn't bring any bad stuff, you know, yeah. We spent our time, hours and hours. Somebody was there every night, just about. Maybe Sunday nights, because Sunday night was kind of a movie night. Uh, a lot of us would go, some of us would...funny, but at that time there nobody had a steady girlfriend. Some of them had girlfriends. Um, I went out with one once, but nothing steady, I mean, we were pretty much ourselves. And, uh, that's

- why it worked out so good. You could do what you wanted to do when you wanted to. (Laughing) Yeah. Yeah. It was fun.
- Timothy: Well, I could probably get you to talk all day, but I've already, you've given more than I thought there was even there. I didn't know there was this much there.
- Delvin: Here, thanks to my father, since we didn't use any electricity, we didn't have to pay for light; we didn't have to pay for that. Uh, you know. We didn't have to pay for the water we used, we bought our own wood or coal or whatever, we bought that. And, uh, he never charged us any rent. Anything we wanted to do, we could do it. Hadn't it been for that we never would have had it.
- Nelson: So, you take this interview back and write up a report, I guess?
- Timothy: Yeah. This will be transcribed. I don't think, given the length of this, I didn't know if it was going to be an hour, or...
- Delvin: Yeah. You probably won't put all in there, will you?
- Timothy: What was that?
- Delvin: I said, you won't, everything I said, you won't put it all in there.
- Timothy: It will be...
- Delvin: Some of that's not really...
- Timothy: Actually, uh, they'll transcribe all of it and then, what we'll do, we'll get it back and go from there, we can edit it and...
- Delvin: Some of it really doesn't pertain too much to it, to the mill so much.
- Timothy: Well, we'll wrap up the interview. This is, what time, it's uh...
- Delvin: So far as I know, there's only one other guy that's alive. The rest, the one passed away here, Vernie Jede, I didn't know it, but he passed away about a month ago. Yeah. I knew he wasn't good. He lived over in Waterloo. But, I hadn't seen him in three or four years. But, [inaudible 03:27:04.8] Clyde Miller, they called him Polly, I don't know why for a man, but they did. Everybody called him Polly. He was an insurance agent. He got a job at Metropolitan after he got back. He went to war with most of them except me and the women, I guess. Yeah. And, uh, he moved away. We didn't have much contact with him, but Barbara, my tenant over here, uh, worked for Metropolitan and she's got a way of checking on everybody. And, uh, I asked her one day, I said, "I wonder if he's still alive." And she checked, "He is." And she wrote down Vestal, New York, which is near Binghamton. Yeah. So, he's the only other

one, but the rest of them are all, all gone.

[03:28:01]

Nelson: He's going to wrap up the interview now, dad, so.

Delvin: What?

Nelson: He's going to wrap up the interview now, unless you can think of anything else you want to add to it about the mill.

[03:28:02]

Delvin: I guess that's it pretty much.

Nelson: Yeah. It's gone on for, geez, several hours.

Timothy: Three and a half hours.

Nelson: Yeah, you've given him a lot of stuff.

Delvin: Well, a lot of stuff happened there.

Nelson: Yeah. Yeah.

Timothy: So, this is the end of the interview with Mr. Delvin E. Wilt. Interviewer is Timothy Arron Kotlensky, who was also assisted with Mr. Wilt's son, Nelson T. Wilt and daughter-in-law, Anne Wilt. And, this is again, October 16, 2012. And, that's it.