

Trimbleville Historic District
 West Bradford & Pocopson Twp.
 Chester County, PA

Proposed boundaries shown on
 Unionville USGS Quadrangle
 7.5 series

TRIMBLEVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT

- A 44 20 320/ 4 41 120
- B 44 20 650/ 4 42 040
- C 44 19 740/ 4 42 030
- D 44 19 900/ 4 41 130

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Trimbleville Historic District

and/or common Trimble's Ford

2. Location

street & number Northbrook, Broad Run, and Camp Linden Roads

not for publication

city, town Pocopson & West Bradford Twps. ^{N/A} vicinity of

state Pennsylvania

code 042

county Chester

code 029

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
X Multiple		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name See Continuation Sheet # 1, Multiple Ownership

street & number

city, town ^{N/A} vicinity of

state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Chester County Courthouse-Recorder of Deeds

street & number High Street

city, town West Chester

state Pennsylvania

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Chester County Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1979-82 federal state county local

depository for survey records Chester County Historical Society

city, town West Chester

state Pennsylvania

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Continuation sheet 1

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Property Owners - Trimbleville Historic District

<u>Map #</u>	<u>Tax Parcel #</u>	<u>Owner of Record</u>
1	50-9-26	[REDACTED]
2	50-9-25	[REDACTED]
3, 4	50-9-24	[REDACTED]
5	50-9-31	[REDACTED]
6	63-1-12	[REDACTED]
7	50-9-38	[REDACTED]

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Building Inventory - Trimbleville Historic District

<u>Map #</u>	<u>Evaluation</u>	<u>Historical name/use</u>	<u>Est. Date</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
1	C	Robert Ingram house	c.1799	Pointed stone farmhouse, 2 stories, 3 bays wide flanked by 2 kitchens. Many fine interior features
2	C	Blacksmith's house	c.1800	Pointed stone core and major wing, each 2 stories, 2 bays wide with gable roofs and end chimneys. Contributing stone and frame shop.
3	C	Trimble house	c.1820	Pointed stone core with kitchen addition. Five bays wide with center hall and fanlight over door. Excellent interior.
4	C	Miller's house, Stone barn, stone and frame mill	c.1750	Pointed stone core with addition. 2 stories, 3 bays wide with end chimney. Stone barn has vertical ventilators and appears on 1798 tax list.
5	C	Greenwood Dell Boarding School	c.1780, 1820	Stone core and major wing. Each is banked with gable roofs and end chimneys. Contributing stone barn has 1811 datestone.
6	C	Baily/Trimble Farm	c.1770	Pointed stone core with stone major wing. Banked, two stories. Victorian wraparound porch and window additions. Contributing outbuildings include stone/frame barn.
7	N-C	House	c.1970	2 stories with flat roof, well-concealed in wooded area.

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Trimbleville is a small hamlet located just above the forks of the Brandywine River on its West Branch. It includes land in the two Chester County townships of West Bradford and Pocopson. In addition to the Brandywine, which takes a large bend at Trimbleville, it is drained by Broad Run, a picturesque stream in West Bradford which empties into the river. Since 1740, a mill has been in place on Broad Run at this important junction. Approximately a mile upstream is the larger village of Northbrook where there was another mill. Marshallton is two miles to the north along the Strasburg Road.

Trimbleville sits in a broad valley formed by the two bodies of water. Much of the land is flood plain. Most of its buildings are poised on slopes just above the level plain, and look down upon the Brandywine River and Broad Run. Moderately steep hills rise behind them to a height of 250-300 feet and to a degree enclose the area.

There are six significant principal buildings in the district and one intrusion. All six are high quality stone houses dating from the late 18th and early 19th centuries. They are typical, but excellent, examples of rural vernacular architecture from the Colonial to Federal periods. They reflect the plain tastes and conservative lifestyles of their Quaker builders, all of whom were related by blood or marriage. The farmsteads (3,5,6) historically occupied large tracts (50-100 acres) of land, whereas the mill land and the blacksmith's property were situated on less than ten-acre tracts. The Trimble family, which established itself at this location on the Brandywine about 1750, eventually controlled most of the property in Trimbleville. The Miller's House (4) also features a significant stone barn and a frame and stone mill. Adjacent to the Blacksmith's House (2) is a restored wheelwright shop.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400-1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500-1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	___ social/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	___ commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ theater
___ 1900-	___ communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	___ politics/government	___ transportation
		___ invention		___ other (specify)

Specific dates

1777

Builder/Architect

1777

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Trimbleville is a beautifully situated hamlet along the Brandywine's West Branch whose history mirrors major themes in Chester County's history: settlement and occupation by a Quaker family; a prosperous mill seat for nearly 200 years; a five-generation family farm; location of a distinguished school; and a role in the 1777 Battle of Brandywine. With its backdrop of hills, lush meadows, flowing waters, and handsome stone houses and farm complexes, Trimbleville is an outstanding example of a rural Chester County landscape.

Trimbleville's origins go back to a three-way partnership agreement for a grist and saw mill and 70 acres along the Brandywine. In 1744 William and Elizabeth Marshall sold this property to Robert Mendenhall and brothers William and James Trimble. In addition to its commercial potential, the property was the site of a fording place over the Brandywine's West Branch. The Trimbles had emigrated from Ireland, settled in Concord Township, and married sisters in the 1730's. James (1707-1792) and his wife settled along the Brandywine in 1738, transferred to the Bradford Meeting, bought a one-third interest in the mill there in 1744, and in 1751 purchased the other two shares. In 1758 James acquired 28 acres of adjoining land and by his death in 1792 owned 121 acres in three tracts. This land became the core of Trimbleville.

It was during James' tenure, on September 11, 1777, that Trimble's Ford, as it was known in the 18th century, was visited by more than 12,000 British troops advancing toward Chadds Ford under Generals Howe and Cornwallis. Trimble's Ford was the first crossing point on the Brandywine for this sizable army. That march concluded in the legendary Battle of Brandywine in Birmingham. Numerous reports of damages were filed by area residents, among them Francis Trimble (28 barrels of flour), Joel Baily (6), and James Marshall (5).

As was customary, James' eldest son, also James (1739-1816), inherited the farm and mill. His five siblings received cash inheritances. James and his wife, Mary (Sellers), had eight children and enjoyed considerable prosperity. James' 1798 tax assessment showed him owning a stone house, well house, stone barn, frame grist mill, saw mill, and log tenement. At his death the 121-acre farm and mill property descended intact to his eldest son, Isaac.

Isaac (1781-1859) seems to have improved and enlarged upon his family's holdings. It probably was he who built the elegant mansion house (3) c.1820. In 1825 he acquired an adjoining farm (1) of 50 acres from the estate of Robert Ingram. Isaac leased the mill to his son-in-law, Joel Woodward. According to an item in an 1856 newspaper, the old mill was torn down and a new one--four stories high--erected on the site.

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Isaac left his property to his two sons, Jacob and John. John (1825-1901), who was born on the farm, settled at the homestead with his wife Anne (Matlack). Jacob and his wife, Celia, lived across the Brandywine in Pocopson (6) and shared the milling business with John. The brothers leased the mill to various individuals, among them Alfred McFarland (c.1874) and W. H. Evans (c.1876). Much later, Jacob's only child, John F. Trimble (1862-1942), ran the mill for 17 years. After Jacob's death in 1877, John Trimble sold the mill property to H. N. Woodward, presumably a relative by marriage. In 1883 it was reported the grist and saw mill were totally destroyed by fire. The mill was rebuilt and a cider mill added in 1884. Ten years later John Trimble bought back the property as Sheriff's sale.

John's first-born son, William (1869-1943) was the fifth and last generation of the Trimble family to live at the homestead in Trimbleville. Like his ancestors he was a farmer and a miller, and spent his entire life at the homestead. The mill tract, which had been split off from John Trimble's estate in 1902 and went through a succession of non-family ownerships, was returned to the homestead tract in 1936. William Trimble also bought the blacksmith property (2) in 1909 and in 1929, sold off the Ingram house (1). He died in 1943 and his daughter, Anna T. Woodward, disposed of the family holdings in the 1950's.

Despite this, there has been minimal physical change in Trimbleville since. The former homestead still occupies over a hundred acres of rich land along the river; the mill tract is as William left it; and Trimbleville's other houses and buildings repose in a still rural setting.

Trimbleville was typical of rural hamlets in that it featured a blacksmith and wheelwright shop. Fortunately two principal buildings (2,2a) associated with this trade have been preserved. It appears that Robert Ingram (1761-1824) was Trimbleville's first blacksmith. Ingram was descended from a long line of blacksmiths. He may have settled in Trimbleville because of family connections to the Trimbles. In 1795 he purchased a 57-acre farm (1) from John Carpenter, a farmer who had lived there since 1764. In 1798 Ingram was taxed for a 13' x 15' log blacksmith shop and a log and stone house. The next year he built a larger house (probably retaining the stone portion of the existing structure, making it all stone.) In 1824 it was advertised as a "good two story stone house with 4 rooms on a floor, 2 kitchens, one at each end, a pump of water in the yard..." The property was purchased in 1825 by Isaac Trimble and stayed in that family for 104 years.

Robert Ingram split off the blacksmith shop (2) from the main farm. By 1822 his son, Joseph, was advertising for sale "a stone dwelling house with a pump of excellent water near the door, a large stone smith shop, with three fireplaces, a large stone wheelwright shop, frame barn, with stabling...all new and in good repair." The 3½ acre tract was purchased by Caleb Pennock, Jr. in 1822 and went through a number of ownerships until it was acquired by William M. Trimble in 1909. The property was described in that deed of sale as containing a "messuage, tenements, shops and land."

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Despite its small size and rural location, Trimbleville was the location of an important private school run by one of Chester County's most distinguished teachers. Jonathan Gause (1786-1873) first came to West Bradford in 1807 to teach at a Friends school in Marshallton. In 1810 he married blacksmith Robert Ingram's daughter, Ann, and three years later was hired by the newly established West Chester Academy. After a few years, he left the Academy over a salary dispute and seems to have opened his own boarding school in Trimbleville. In 1820 he purchased a 54-acre farm (5) from his father-in-law, who had acquired it in 1812 from the estate of Jacob Marshall via Elisha and Mary (Trimble) Ingram. Presumably Gause operated his first school on this farm. After 1820 Gause returned to the West Chester Academy, where he remained until 1829. In 1832 he moved the West Chester Boarding School to his farm in Trimbleville. By this time Gause had a strong following. The Greenwood Dell Boarding School was filled to capacity, despite Gause's enlargement of the existing farmhouse.

In 1839, Gause was hired as principal of the new Unionville Academy, a position he held until 1847. He then returned to Greenwood Dell and ran a boarding school there until 1865. About 1867 a huge reunion of the former student body, neighbors, and friends was held nearby in the meadow known as "Trimble's Bottom." Until his death in 1873, Janathan Gause lived with only child, Mrs. Matthais Pennypacker, on an adjoining farm. He educated his grandson, Thomas, at Greenwood Dell. Gause's most famous pupil was Bayard Taylor, Chester County's eminent man of letters.

In 1925, the old Greenwood Dell School was purchased by the Society for Ethical Culture of Philadelphia. It was used for many years as a summer camp for underprivileged children from Philadelphia. The house served as the office and kitchen; bunk houses were erected on the hill to the north, but out of sight.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Chester County Historical Society - Clipping File: West Bradford, "Lands," "Jonathan Gause," "Camp Linden," surname files. Chester County Road Papers. Vol. 25, page 263. Direct Tax of 1798 - West Bradford Township. Palmer, L. Genealogy of the Trimble Family, pp. 674-5. Pinkowski, Chester County Place Names (1962), p.250.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approximately 125 acres

Quadrangle name Unionville, Pennsylvania

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	<u>118</u>	<u>442</u>	<u>1140</u>	<u>4420</u>	<u>51710</u>	B	<u>118</u>	<u>442</u>	<u>080</u>	<u>44119</u>	<u>6610</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing				Zone	Easting	Northing		
C	<u>118</u>	<u>441</u>	<u>440</u>	<u>4419</u>	<u>950</u>	D	<u>118</u>	<u>441</u>	<u>0710</u>	<u>44210</u>	<u>2810</u>
E	<u>118</u>	<u>441</u>	<u>5910</u>	<u>4420</u>	<u>6110</u>	F					
G						H					

Verbal boundary description and justification The boundaries of the Trimbleville Historic District are based on the viewshed of the hamlet ^{from} the bend of the Brandywine River. The center of the viewshed is located approximately at the district's key resource--the five-generation Trimble farm. Boundary lines follow both property and arbitrary lines which approximate the 250 foot contour line of the surrounding hills which enclose the district.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	<u>PA</u>	code	<u>PA</u>	county	<u>PA</u>	code	<u>PA</u>
state	<u>PA</u>	code	<u>PA</u>	county	<u>PA</u>	code	<u>PA</u>

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Martha Leigh Wolf, Historic Preservation Specialist

organization Brandywine Conservancy date 12/84

Environmental Management Center

street & number P.O. Box 141 telephone 215/388-7601

city or town Chadds Ford state PA 19317

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Larry E. Tise, State Historic Preservation Officer date _____

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date _____

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date _____

Chief of Registration

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Verbal Boundary Description - Trimbleville Historic District

Beginning at a point in the L.R. 15077, Northbrook Road, at the intersection with T-383, Broad Run Road;

Thence west along T-383, Broad Run Road, a distance of approximately 1295 feet to the point of intersection with the property line of Carl and Anne Larsen on the north side of the Road, being the intersection of T-383;

Thence along the property line of C. and A. Larsen in an easterly direction two courses to a point in the line of the lands of David E. Davis, III, a distance of approximately 660 feet;

Thence in a northerly direction along the property line of David E. Davis, III, a distance of approximately 70 feet to a corner of the said lands;

Thence in an easterly direction along the property line of David E. Davis, III, a distance of 269 feet to a corner;

Thence leaving the line of the lands of Davis in a northeasterly direction a distance of approximately 450 feet to a point in the bed of L.R. 15077 being approximately 500 feet north off the intersection with T-383;

Thence northerly along L.R. 15077, Northbrook Road, a distance of approximately 1240 feet to a point approximately 400 feet north of the intersection with L.R. 15153;

Thence in an easterly direction through the lands of the Society of Ethical Culture a distance of approximately 1800 feet to a point in the bed of L.R. 15153, Camp Linden Road, where the property line of the Society of Ethical Culture crosses the said road;

Thence in a southerly direction along the property line of the Society of Ethical Culture a distance of approximately 300 feet to a point in the West Branch Brandywine River;

Thence across the lands of W. John and Helen M. White in a southwesterly direction a distance of approximately 1980 feet to a point in the trackbed of the former Reading Railroad line where the railroad line meets the western property line of the Jane Mather Sullivan lands;

Thence in a southeasterly direction along the property line of Jane Mather Sullivan a distance of 260 feet to a corner of the said lands;

Thence leaving the lands of Sullivan in a southerly direction through the lands of W. John and Helen M. White to a point in the bed of T-371, Bragg Hill Road where it is intersected by the property line of the said Whites a distance of approximately 700 feet;

Thence along T-371, Bragg Hill Road, in a northwesterly and westerly direction a distance of approximately 550 feet to a point in the road;

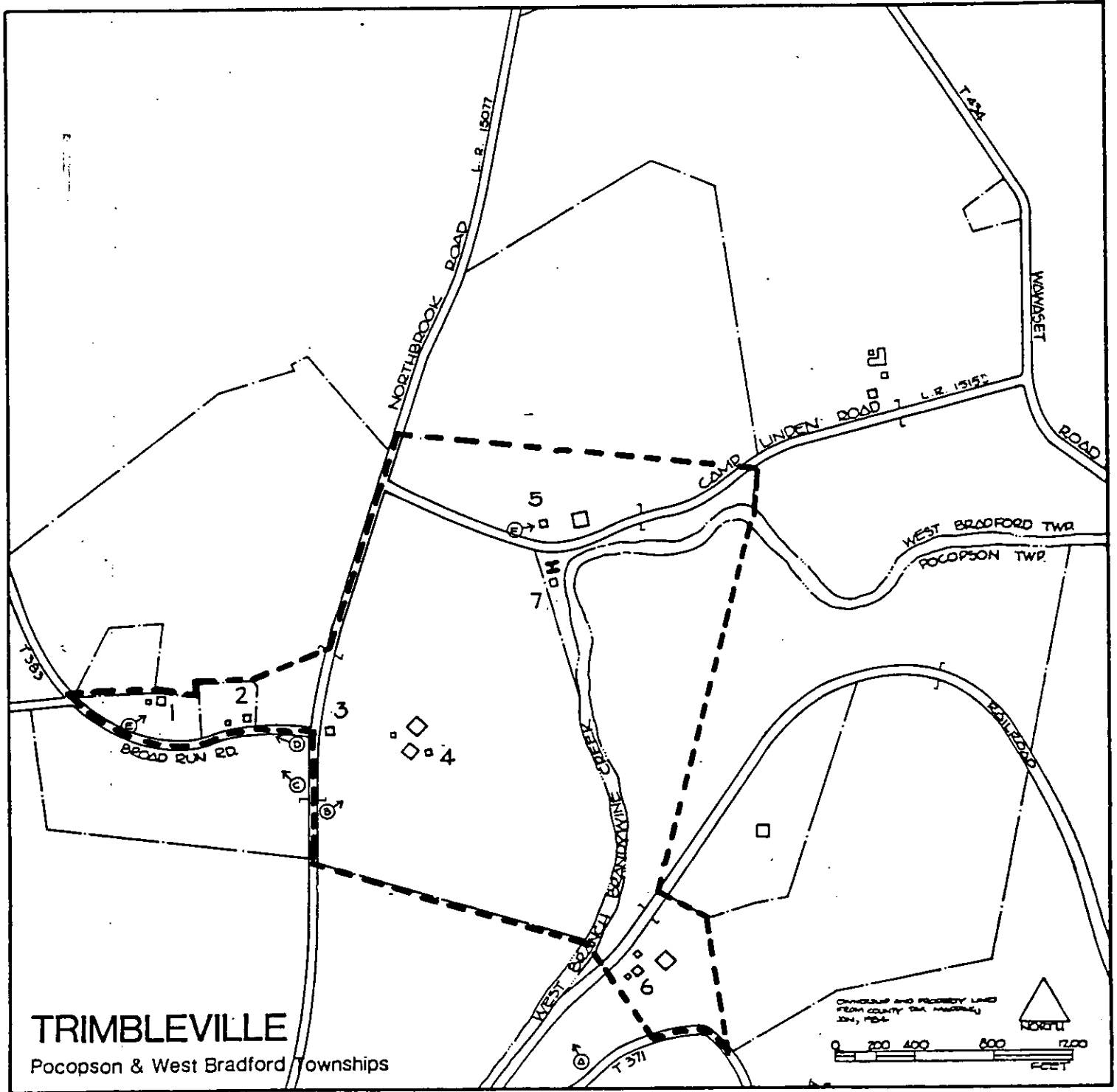
Thence in a northwesterly direction leaving T-371 and crossing the right of way of the Reading Railroad a distance of approximately 550 feet to a point in the West Branch Brandywine River where it is met by the property line of Robert E. and Gertrude Maier;

Thence along the property line of the said Maiers in a northwesterly direction a distance of approximately 1460 feet to a point in the bed of L.R. 15077, Northbrook Road;

Thence along Northbrook Road in a northerly direction a distance of approximately 650 feet to the point of beginning;

Containing approximately 125 acres.

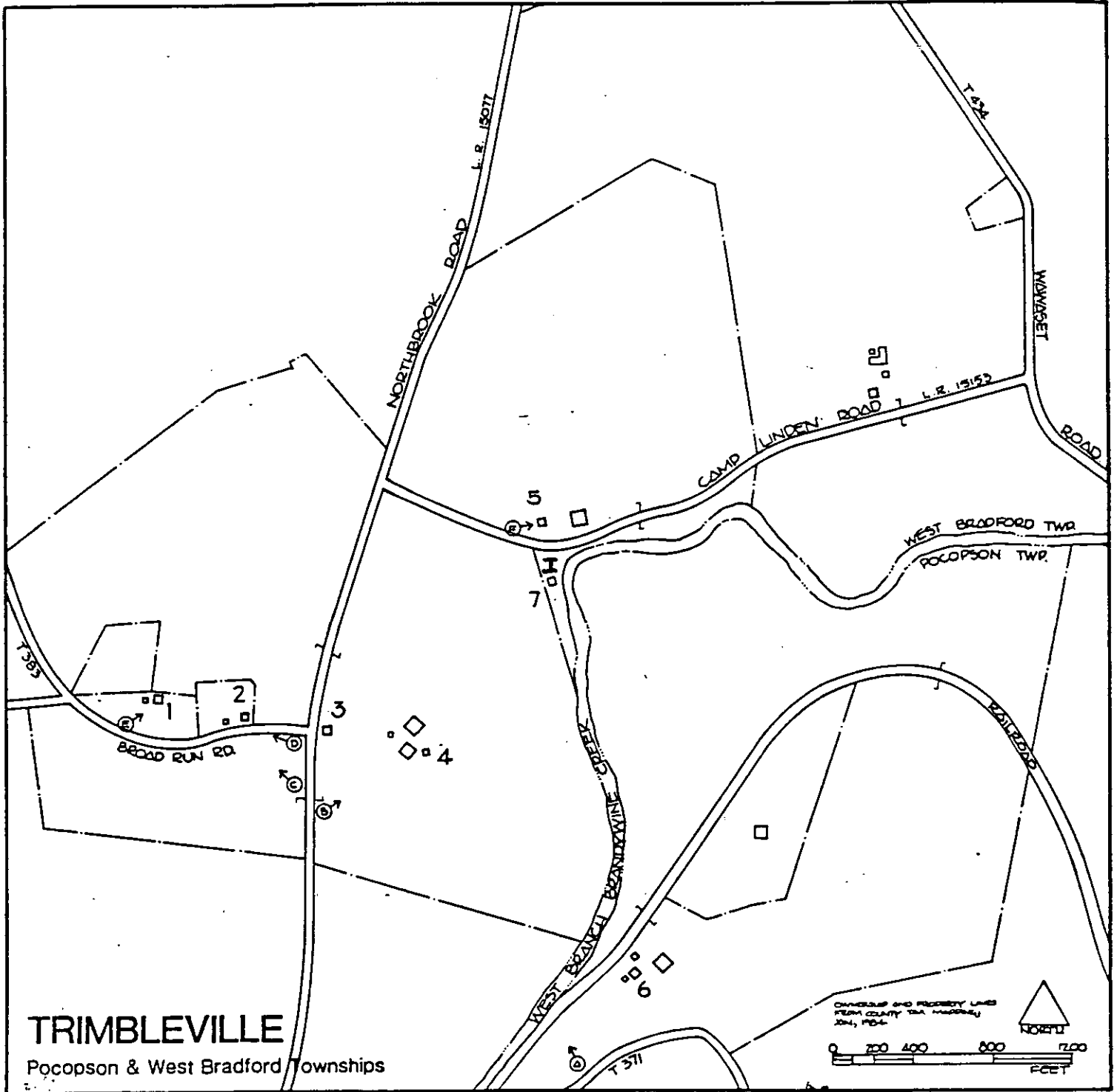
BOUNDARY MAP



TRIMBLEVILLE
Pocopson & West Bradford townships

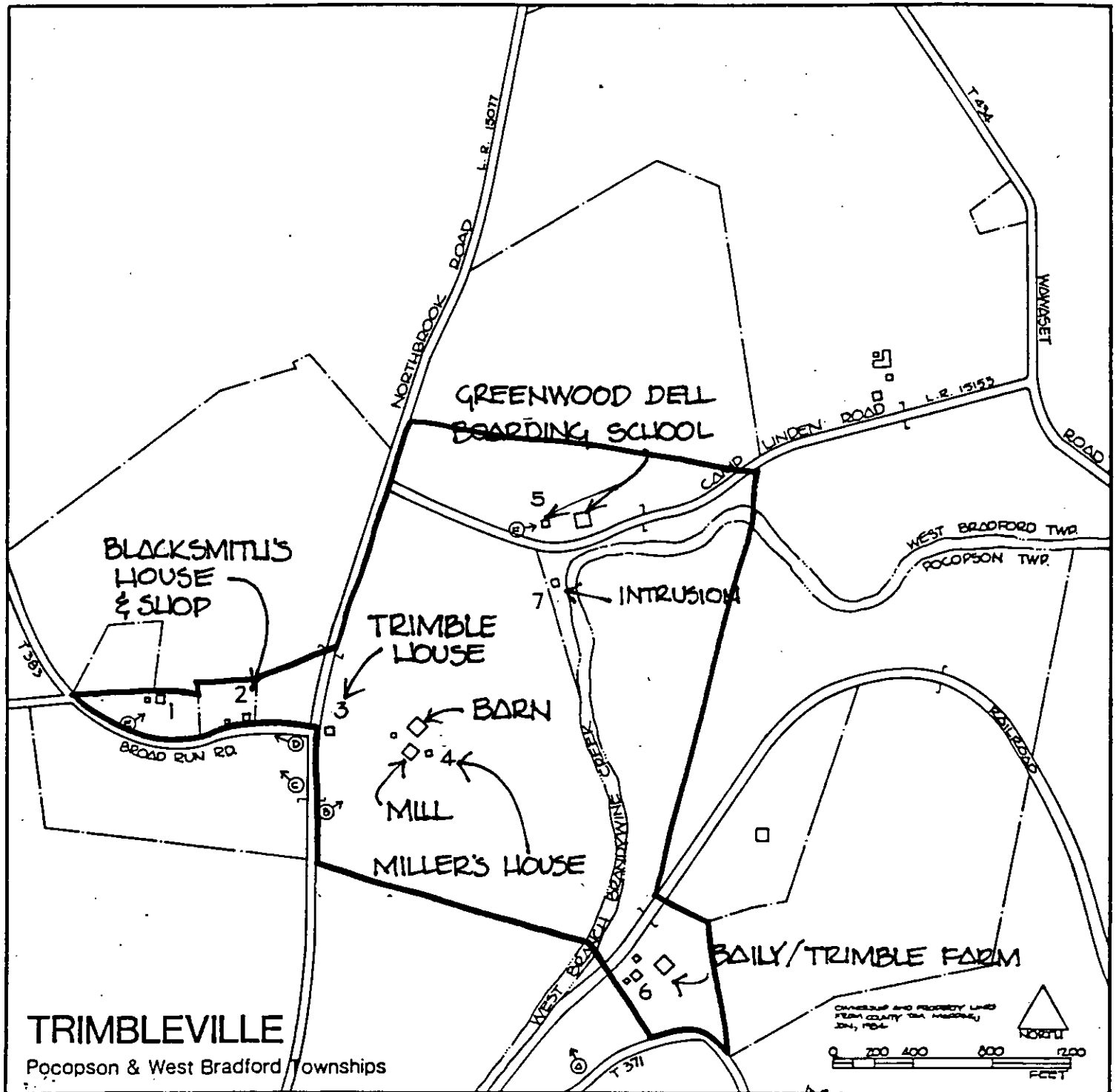
I - Intrusion

PHOTO VIEW MAP



I - Intrusion

HISTORIC USE MAP



- District Boundaries
- Ⓐ Photo Views