

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

For HCERS use only

received

date entered

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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

## 1. Name

historic Hallville Historic and Archeological District

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number Hallville Road \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Exeter \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district #2-Rep. Edward Beard

state Rhode Island code 44 county Washington code 009

## 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Felix Muller Richard Johnson

street & number Hallville Road Hallville Road  
Exeter Exeter

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state Rhode Island

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Exeter Town Hall

street & number Victory Highway

city, town Exeter state Rhode Island

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title "Broadbrush Archeological Survey of Exeter, 1978" has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

city, town Providence state Rhode Island

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input checked="" 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

The Hallville Historic and Archeological District is located in the predominantly rural town of Exeter, Rhode Island, stretching along the banks of the Sodom Brook and Hallville millpond for 1600 feet. The proposed district includes the remains of the two lowest (in elevation) textile mills on Sodom Brook: Dawley Mill (figure 2, #15) and Hallville Mill (figure 2, #19), together with their dams and waterways (figure 2, #6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, and 14); a standing late-18th century house formerly occupied by the Dawley family (figure 2, #16); and the archeological remains of two dwelling houses (figure 2, #1, and 3), a store (figure 2, #5), a barn (figure 2, #11), and an outbuilding (figure 2, #2), all related to the Hallville mill. Of particular visual and architectural impact and a monument to rural engineering is the elevated masonry headrace of the Hallville mill (figure 2 and 3, #8), a massive dry-laid, dressed granite structure extending 146 feet and providing a head of water of nearly 25 feet.

Initial research and site inventory occurred during a 1978 Broadbrush survey of rural mill and schoolhouse sites in Exeter by Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission.<sup>1</sup> Preliminary documentary research and field investigation identified the remains within the proposed district, and focused specifically on the Hallville Mill. Probably the best known of those in the district, its elevated headrace had been sketched and included in a Victorian travel book entitled Pleasant Places in Rhode Island, written by Maria Tallman and published in 1894. The mill and surrounding buildings were described as a picturesque ruin of a vanished era. During the summer of 1979, the site was investigated by a survey team which recorded all structures and archeological features, carried out limited archeological testing at several of the sites within the district, and reviewed pertinent secondary literature and land evidence records.

The Hallville mill was the earlier of the two textile mills erected sometime between 1814 and 1825 by Beriah Brown, and initially produced wool yarn. In 1825 the "Mill Lot" included 15 acres<sup>2</sup> of land, the mill waterways, one dwelling house, and "other buildings".<sup>2</sup> By 1827, it was listed as a cotton factory.

Ownership passed into the hands of the Hall family in 1835, where it remained until 1871. It was during their tenure that the complex was<sup>3</sup> expanded and referred to as Hallville, containing four dwellings by 1860.<sup>3</sup> Containing a store and post office, this rural industrial hamlet was the central mill and "village" among the four mills owned by Halls in the mid-nineteenth century, containing a store and post office. The mill burned in 1872, and was never rebuilt.

(See Continuation Sheet #1).

<sup>1</sup>Virginia Adams, "Broadbrush Archeological Survey of Exeter, Rhode Island," RIHPC, 1978.

<sup>2</sup>Land Evidence Records, Exeter, R.I., Beriah Brown to Benjamin C. Gardner, 7 Dec 1875, BK 9: 478

<sup>3</sup>Land Evidence Records, Exeter, R.I., Jeramiah Franklin to Wm. R. Allen, 5 Nov 1827, 10:122; P.J. Hall to T.Z. & C.A. Hall, 28 Jan 1860, 15:471.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 1

Item number 7

Page 2

The Dawley Mill (figure 2, #15) was originally built as a gristmill between 1846 and 1854 by John C. Dawley, who resided on adjacent land. His house survives as the only standing structure in the district. Probably built in the late-eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries, the house is a simple central-chimney Cape with a small kitchen ell to the rear. In 1854, the mill was sold to the Halls, who converted it to the manufacture of jeans.<sup>4</sup> It also was destroyed by fire in the early 1870s.

Also included in the district is the foundation of a barn (figure 2, #11) located midway between the Dawley and Hallville Mills. It was formerly associated with a dwelling house erected in the late seventeenth century which stood across the road from the farm. However the house was demolished in the mid-seventeenth century and the site bulldozed, destroying any archeological integrity; hence, it is not included within the district.

Structural features within the district, including building foundations, the wheelpit of the Hallville mill, dams, and head-and-tail-races are all constructed of cut and uncut stone and in generally fair to good condition, probably due to the neglect of these sites since the period of industrial occupation. Since no development plans exist at any of the sites within the proposed district, no immediate threats to the preservation of these sites are known. One landowner has expressed interest in stabilizing the Hallville Mill and headrace ruins, with the possibility of restoring waterpower use at the site.

#### Relation to Environment

The two mills and related buildings lie along the banks of Sodom Brook. Falling almost 100 feet in one mile, the stream provided power for three textile mills, of which the Dawley and Hallville Mills represent the two lower mills. A fourth mill was located about one half mile downstream, just below the junction of Sodom Brook with Fisherville Brook.

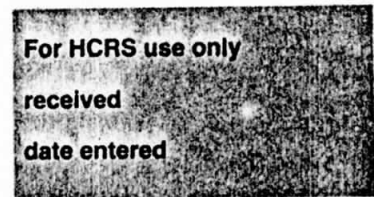
Soil conditions vary within the district; the area around the Dawley house and mill is underlain by unstratified gravel, silt, and clay of glacial till, while glacial outwash made up of sand, silt, and clay in stratigraphy predominates at Hallville village. Secondary forests of oak, beech, and maple presently cover most of the district, but it is probable that the area was nearly or entirely cleared of timber during the time of

(See Continuation Sheet #2).

<sup>4</sup>Land Evidence Records, Exeter, R.I., J.C. Dawley to D.J., T.Z. & C.A. Hall, 23 Feb. 1854, 14:174.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet 2

Item number 7

Page 3

occupation. The Hallville mill pond ranges in depth from six inches to three feet, and covers an area of approximately three acres.

Archeological Information

Very limited archeological testing was undertaken within the proposed district. Six 50 centimeter X 50 centimeter test pits were excavated in and around one dwelling site, the store, and an outbuilding in the Hallville village. The goal of excavation was primarily to confirm and identify former structures, and to determine archeological integrity and the types of data that could be recovered. All pits were excavated to sterile soil (figure 2).

Excavation of test pits #1 and #2, placed in and to the north of structure 1 (cellar-less house foundation), contained cultural material dating to the mid- and late-19th century, including machine-cut nails, glass, and ceramics.

Two test pits (#3, 4,) were placed in and to the north of structure 2, the foundation of an outbuilding. Materials recovered paralleled the date of structure 1, and included glass, nails, and coal. Excavation of test pits #5 and 6 at the stone site (structure 5) yielded building rubble, ceramics, glass, and metal dating from the nineteenth century.

None of the test pits yielded high quantities of material nor did they particularly reflect the uses of the buildings. However, the test pits did illustrate that no disturbance to the sites has taken place, nor were they used for trash disposal during the 20th century.

Hallville Historic and Archeological District

Inventory (See figure 2)

1. House foundation (no cellar).
2. Outbuilding foundation (no cellar).
3. House foundation (full cellar, center chimney base).
4. Well (stone-lined).
5. Store foundation (full cellar).
6. Spillway in mill dam.
7. Mill dam, dry-laid fieldstone and earth.
8. Elevated stone roadrace--dry-laid, dressed stone.
9. Hallville mill foundation.
10. Stone-lined tailrace.
11. Barn foundation.
12. Mill dam, dry-laid fieldstone and earth.
13. Spillway, concrete (mid twentieth century).
14. Former wheelpit, tailrace.
15. Dawley mill foundation.
16. Dawley House (late eighteenth century).

# 8. Significance

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

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The value of the sites which comprise the proposed district lies in their historical, archeological, and anthropological research potential. As a phase of post-War of 1812 industrial development, Hallville represents an example of a small, rural mill community that developed very slowly within the framework of the "Rhode Island System" of manufacturing. This involved small scale capitalization, ownership by only a few parties, employment of children and families, and specialization in manufacture, often involved in only one phase of textile production. This system was most common in the non-urban portions of southeastern New England. The growth of the mills at earlier sites of occupation and the continued importance of agriculture in these areas is attested to by the late date of construction of a gristmill at the Dawley Mill site, and its conversion to textile manufacturing.

As the mills and villages underwent several phases of growth, archeological investigations might be used successfully to discern periods of occupation and use of former buildings and thereby chart the evolution of this industrial complex prior to, during, and after the manufacturing phase. The good state of preservation of the mill foundation and power canal at the Hallville Mill are of value to interpreting the power system of the mill. The few surviving rural mill structures from this period have all undergone structural changes and alteration to their power systems due to continued use. But the Hallville and Dawley mills, undisturbed since the 1870s, can illustrate successive phases of site adaptation and may illustrate technological advances or continued use of outdated technology. The massive, elevated-masonry headrace is a dramatic example of the engineering solutions devised to create a head of water during the nineteenth century, when the most desirable locations had already been long developed.

The recently renewed interest in hydro-power as an energy-generating resource adds greatly to the significance of these sites. As demands for alternate energy sources increase, small-scale, low-head/hydro-power sites like Hallville, unused for more than 100 years, can once again be revived. The study of their layout and technological adaptations will contribute to the understanding of this readily available power source.

The presence of a company store adds further research potential. Together with the domestic sites, archeological investigations could yield information regarding the spread of goods through the community, assist in identifying distinctions within the village, and changes of type and use of store-bought goods. As the central village in the small network of Hall-owned mills, Hallville may be able to yield information on inter-village economic relations and distinctions.

(See Continuation Sheet #3).

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet 3

Item number 8

Page 2

Summary

The Hallville Historic and Archeological District, containing the remains of two mid-nineteenth-century small textile mills, housing, and a store, has the potential for enhancing our knowledge of rural technology and understanding the economic and cultural variability within, and demise of a rural manufacturing community.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Adams, Virginia, "Broadbrush Archeological Survey of Exeter, R.I." manuscript at Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, Providence, R.I. 1978.

(See Cont. Sheet #4)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 32 (approx.) acres

Quadrangle name Slocum

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A 

1	9
---	---

2	8	5	7	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	6	0	4	9	3	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

  
Zone Easting Northing

B 

1	9
---	---

2	8	5	6	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	6	0	4	4	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

  
Zone Easting Northing

C 

1	9
---	---

2	8	5	2	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	6	0	4	3	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

D 

1	9
---	---

2	8	5	2	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	6	0	4	8	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

E 

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F 

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G 

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H 

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary of the Hallville Historic and Archeological District was drawn to include all archeological sites and their associated features. (See Cont. Sheet #5).

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

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Myron O. Stachiw, Archeological Consultant

organization R.I. Historical Preservation Comm. date

street & number 17 Forest Street

telephone 401-751-9633

city or town Providence,

state Rhode Island

## 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Frederick R. Williams*

title

date July 10, 1980

For HCRS 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

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 4

Item number 9

Page 2

Cole, J.R. The History of Washington and Kent Counties.  
New York: W.W. Preston & Co. (1889), p. 671

Land Evidence Records, Exeter, Rhode Island (unpublished).

United States Census. 1850 and 1870. Washington County.  
Rhode Island.



**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

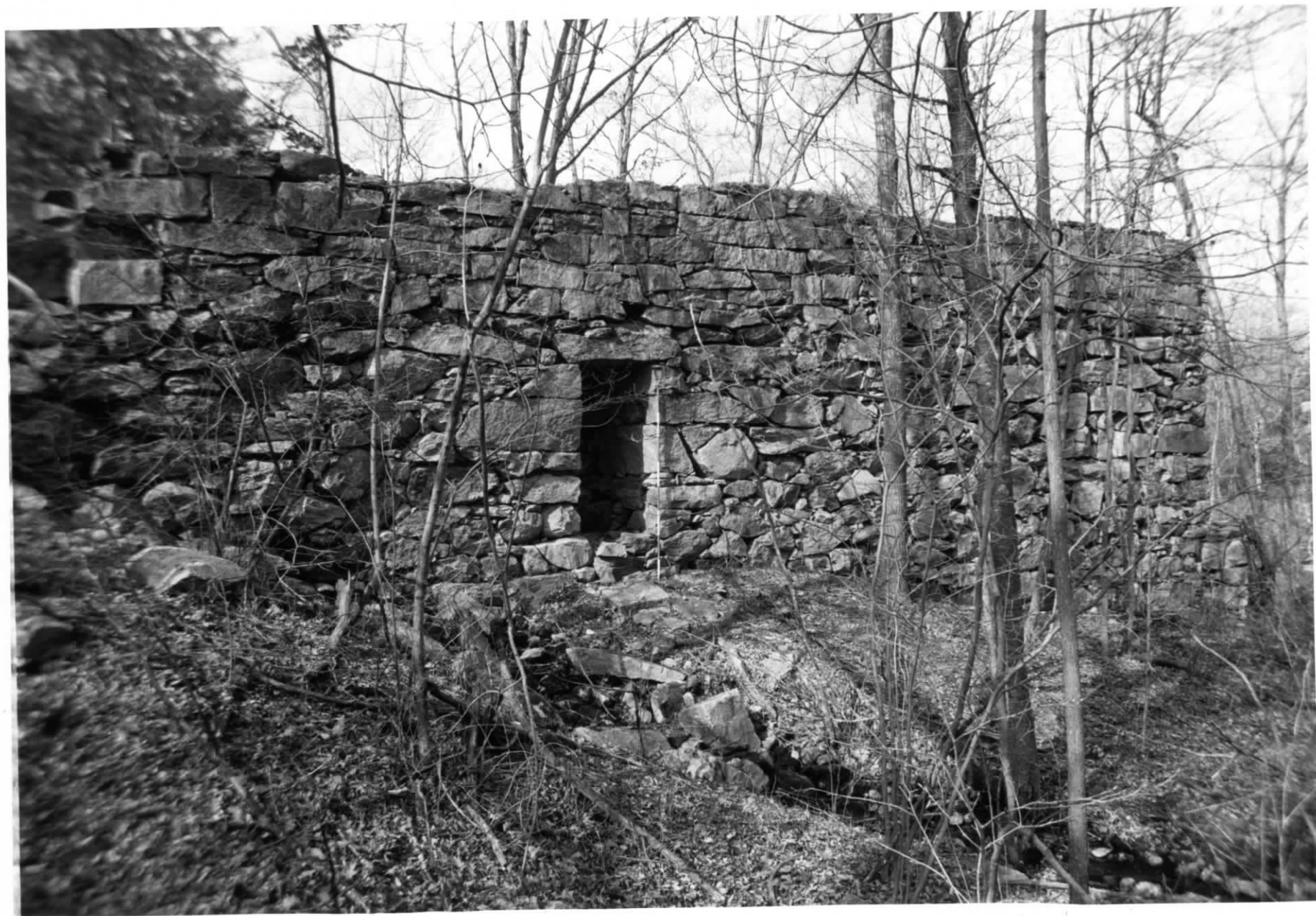
Continuation sheet 5

Item number 10

Page 2

The boundary was drawn to leave at least 25 feet on all sides of sites and Sodom Brook and was drawn to follow current property lines and natural features.

At a point 175 feet south of the western end of the Hallville Mill head-race the Hallville Historic and Archeological District boundary begins, proceeding south and south-southwest 450 feet along the western edge of the mill pond, then generally west 950 feet along the southern edge of the mill pond and Sodom Brook, then south-southwest 650 feet along the eastern edge of Hallville Road, then northwest 200 feet along the southern edge of a dirt road, then north-northeast 850 feet through the mill pond to a stone wall, then east 210 feet along the northern side of a stone wall to Hallville Road, then north-northeast 575 feet along the northern edge of Hallville Road to the start of Sodom Trail, then southeast 500 feet along the northern edge of Hallville Road, then north 100 feet along the western edge of Hallville Road, then east 300 feet, then south 200 feet to a dirt road, then northeast 200 feet along the northern edge of a dirt road, then south-southeast 150 feet across Sodom Brook, then southwest 450 feet along the southern edge of Sodom Brook to point of origin.



Hallville Historic and Archeological District  
Exeter, Rhode Island

Photographer: Geoffrey Moran  
Date: March 1980

Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation  
Commission

Elevated raceway--overall view with wheelpit  
on right. (figure 2, #8).

Photo #2.



Hallville Historic and Archeological District  
Exeter, Rhode Island

Photographer: Geoffrey Moran  
Date: March 1980

Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation  
Commission

Elevated masonry flume/headrace.  
(figure 2, #8).

Photo #3.



Hallville Historic and Archeological District  
Exeter, Rhode Island

Photographer: Myron Stachiw  
Date: August 1979

Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation  
Commission

J.C. Dawley house. View northwest.  
(figure 2, #16).

Photo #4.





Hallville Historic and Archeological District  
Exeter, Rhode Island

Photographer: Myron Stachiw  
Date: August 1979






Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation  
Commission

House foundation. View northeast,  
(figure 2, #3).

Photo #5.

figure 1

# HALLVILLE HISTORIC and ARCHEOLOGICAL DISTRICT EXETER, R.I.

-  Standing Structure
-  Foundation
-  Dam
-  Race
-  District Boundary

200 100 0 200 feet

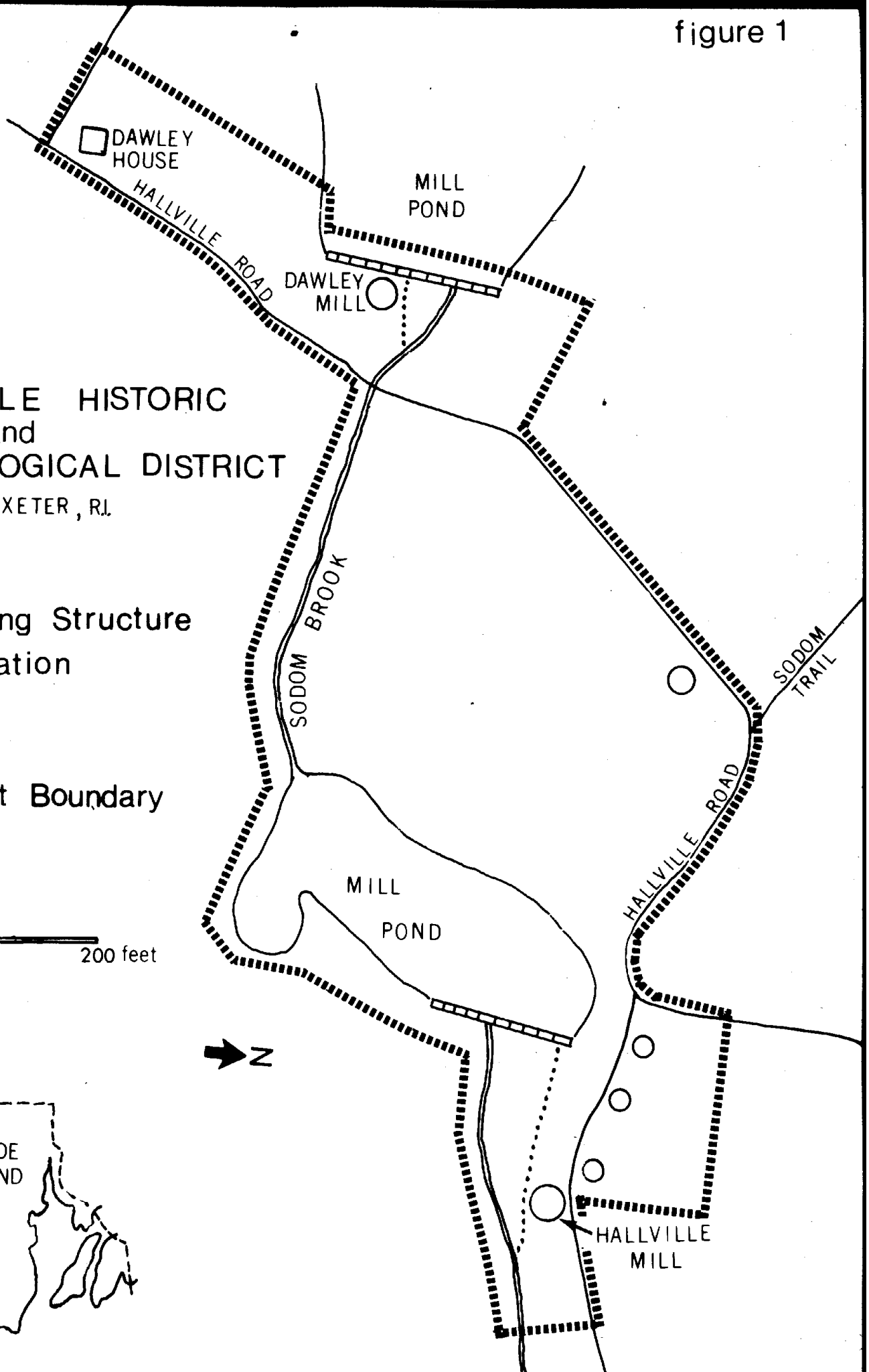
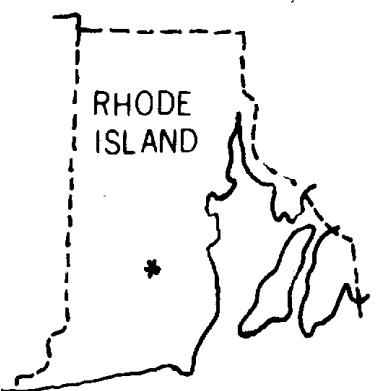
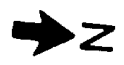
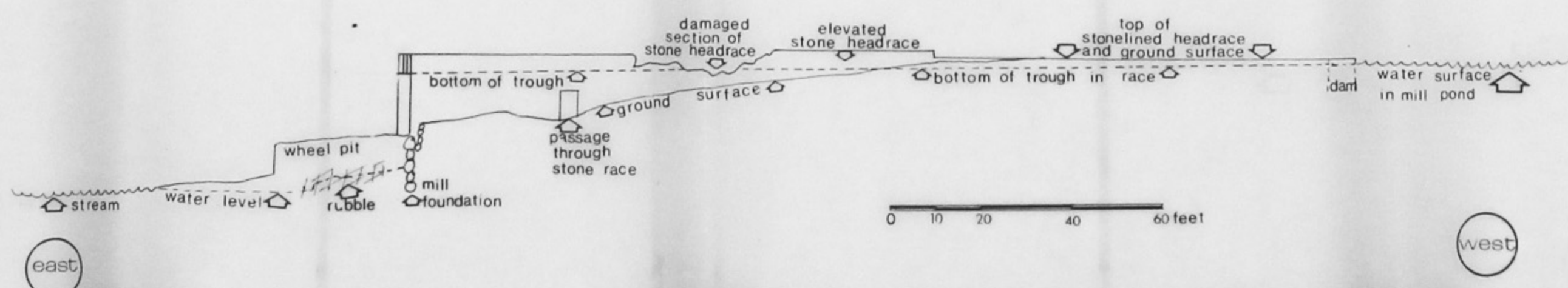


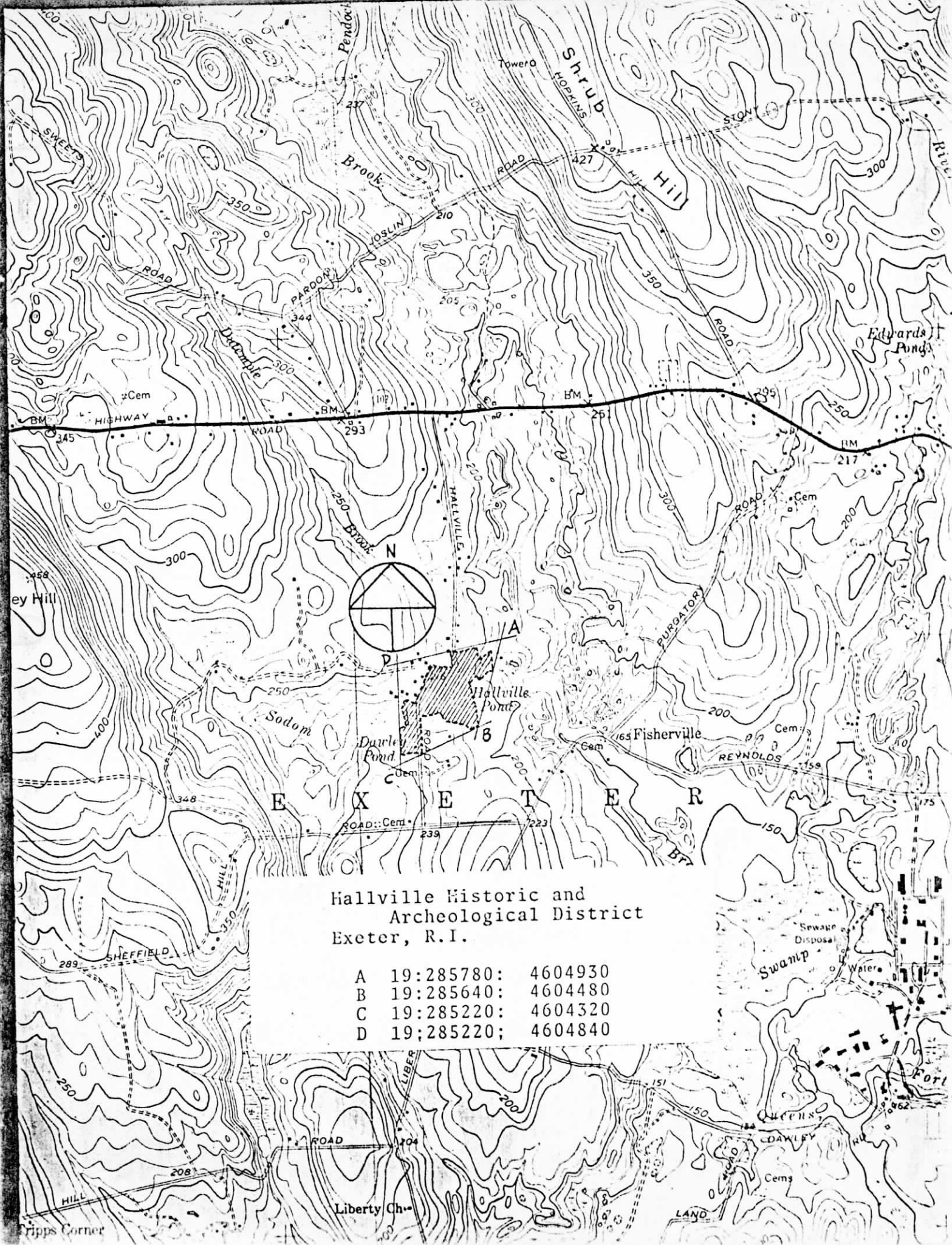
FIGURE 2



FIGURE 3

PROFILE  
HALLVILLE MILL HEADRACE





Hallville Historic and  
Archeological District  
Exeter, R.I.

A	19:285780:	4604930
B	19:285640:	4604480
C	19:285220:	4604320
D	19:285220;	4604840



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Old State House  
150 Benefit Street  
Providence, R.I. 02903  
(401) 277-2678

January 23, 1981

Town Clerk Evelyn M. Greene  
Exeter Town Hall  
Victory Highway  
Exeter, Rhode Island 02822

Dear Ms. Greene:

The Preservation Commission is pleased to inform you that Hallville Historic and Archeological District, Hallville Road, Exeter was entered in the National Register of Historic Places December 5, 1980. I am enclosing the town's copy of this nomination for you to keep.

Included also are folders explaining the purpose and scope of the National Register of Historic Places and the Grant-in-Aid Program, for which this property is now eligible.

Entry of a property on the National Register also makes it eligible for the provisions of the Tax Reform Act of 1976 (PL 94-455, Section 2124) if the property is used for commercial or income-producing purposes. The Tax Reform Act provides tax incentives for certified rehabilitation of commercially-used certified historic properties and tax disincentives in the case of detrimental alteration or demolition of a certified historic property.

If you have any questions concerning the National Register, or the Tax Reform Act, please feel free to contact Mrs. Ancelin Lynch, National Register Coordinator, at the Commission office. Questions concerning Grant-in-Aid should be directed to Mrs. Patricia Sheehan, Chief of Grant Services.

Sincerely yours,

Frederick C. Williamson  
State Historic Preservation Officer

/aa

Enclosures