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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REPORT

MILFORD KNOB

Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area

September 2020



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Introduction

The Milford Knob is located on the Raymondskill Ridge in the Dingman Township of Pike's County, Pennsylvania. The landscape is owned by the National Park Service and is part of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. In August 2020, the Region 1 Tribal and Cultural Affairs office reached out to the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation for the creation of a Technical Assistance Report that captures the history of the Milford Knob, and the relationship that generations of Milford community members have had with the landscape.

Beginning in 1930, members of the Milford Lions Club constructed a metal frame for an illuminated Star on the Knob and continued this annual tradition for over 80 years — without interruption when the property became federally-owned. In 1965, the Tocks Island Dam project was planned to be constructed on the Delaware River. The land of the Milford Knob was taken into federal ownership for this purpose in 1974, but the project was discontinued the following year. The Milford Knob property was then transferred to the National Park Service for the designation of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. Under National Park Service ownership, Milford community members continued to use the Knob for their yearly tradition of erecting an illuminated Star and Cross. In 2017, the members of the Milford Lions Club were told by park staff that they could no longer preform this tradition and the structure was removed from park property. The decision to remove the Star and Cross was made based on an understanding of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment — which prohibits federal agencies (NPS) from encouraging or promoting religion (the Cross) in any way. However, the community members of Milford do not believe their monument violates the Clause:

“We respectfully communicate and commit that the privately owned and supported historic structure of a cultural and ethnographic nature, which the community at large for almost nine decades identifies lovingly as the ‘Milford Knob Displays,’ is reflective of our community, borough and county heritage versus any religious affiliation.” — *Milford Lions Club Presentation to NPS*, April 2017.

This technical report has been prepared by Brenden Bowman, a Designing the Parks Associate with the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, and provides an overview of historic use of the Milford Knob by Milford residents for cultural and community purposes. In addition, this report provides brief contextual histories of the development of the Borough of Milford, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, and activity on the Raymondskill Ridge.

Chronology — Main Events

Date	Category	Description
Pre-Contact	Borough of Milford	The Milford area is inhabited by the Lenni Lenape, or Delaware Nation, Native American tribes.
1712	Borough of Milford	German Mennonites arrived in the Milford vicinity, soon followed by more settlers from Germany, as well as Switzerland and France.
1793	Borough of Milford	John Biddis, Sr. from Philadelphia acquired the land that would become Milford and proposed his design plan for the town.
1814	Borough of Milford	Earliest known map of Milford recorded.
1856	Milford Knob	Development on the Milford Knob recorded on a map.
1861	Milford Knob	Community members placed a flag on the Knob during the Civil War.
1865	Milford Knob	The Milford Cemetery on the Knob was officially dedicated.
1874	Borough of Milford	Borough of Milford incorporated.
1890	Milford Knob	The earliest record of Milford community members giving “The Knob” its name.
1898	Milford Knob	During the Spanish-American War, a flagpole was erected on the Knob, roughly the same location as the future Star, by the Milford community and an American flag was flown as a symbol of patriotism (Lions Club, 2017). ¹
1902	Milford Knob	An official road was constructed to make the Knob more accessible to community members and tourists.
1915	Raymondskill Ridge Trails	The first known map of the trails associated with the Milford Knob recorded.
1930	Milford Knob	Milford community members erected a metal frame for an illuminated Star on the Knob, powered by the water-wheeled generator in the Metz Ice Plant (Lions Club, 2017).
1958	Raymondskill Ridge Trails	A trail follows the same path as the current Knob Trail from the contemporary NPS trailhead and ends at the Raymondskill ridgeline. The cemetery’s property border and the winding paths within it are also shown (USGS).
1960	Milford Knob	The fold down metal Star and Cross array was put on the Knob (Goldstein, 2019). ²
1965	DEWA Park Development	Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (DEWA) is established and discussion of land acquisition begins for the proposed Tocks Island Dam.
1974 07 22	DEWA Park Development	U.S. Army Corps took possession of the Jonas Anchel property where the Milford Star is located on the Knob and it was then transferred to NPS. The community continued their yearly tradition of setting up and lighting the Star and Cross (Lions Club, 2017).
1975	DEWA Park Development	Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) voted to discontinue the Tocks Island Dam project. The land already acquired by the federal government was transferred in its entirety to the NPS for stewardship, and DEWA became a national park property.
1998 07 28	National Register Events	The Milford Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Date	Category	Description
2002 09 09	National Register Events	The National Register of Historic Places boundary for the Milford Historic District was expanded.
2010	Milford Knob	NPS constructed a gate on the Milford Knob and provided the Lions Club with a key for full access to the overlook (Lions Club, 2017).
2015	Milford Knob	NPS requested for the Lions Club to surrender the gate key, limiting access to only with NPS supervision. NPS required a special use permit application be submitted and approved for access to the Knob and set up of the display (Lions Club, 2017).
2016 09 09	Milford Knob	The Milford Lions Club submitted a special use permit application to NPS for the Star and Cross (Goldstein, 2019).
2017 03 20	Milford Knob	Bill Harkness withdrew the application for the Cross on behalf of the Lions Club (DEWA Park Archives).
2017 11 16	Milford Knob	Star and Cross structure removed from the Knob by DEWA Maintenance staff at request of Superintendent Donahue (DEWA Park Archives).
2017 12 01	Milford Knob	The Milford Lions Club retrieved their property at Dingmans Maintenance from NPS Roads and Trails staff. It was moved to behind the Milford Town Maintenance Yard (DEWA Park Archives).
2019 07 03	Milford Knob	At request of DEWA, David Goldstein, Region 1 Tribal and Cultural Affairs lead, wrote a memo to Associate Regional Director Jonathan Meade that the Star: - As a fixture within the park it should be considered a park/public resource and should be evaluated for eligibility for the National Register. - Evidence exists that the monument is a landscape feature that the NPS inherited this element of the landscape and it continues to be regarded as culturally important to a significant portion of the community across generations.

Landscape Contexts

Borough of Milford Settlement and Development

The Borough of Milford is the county seat and largest municipality of Pike County and lies in the Pocono Mountains on the west shore of the Upper Delaware River in northeastern Pennsylvania, at an elevation of 503 feet above sea level. The river divides Pennsylvania's Poconos region from the Catskill Mountains in New York, in what was historically a heavily forested area. Milford is also located on an escarpment above the Delaware River. All waterways there which drain into the river fall the 100-foot difference in height, creating what is known as a *fluviarchy* — a network of waterfalls. These also provided waterpower to mills, which contributed to Milford's economy in the nineteenth century. In fact, it is believed that the name Milford arose from the large number of mills and fords located on several streams in the township.³

Indigenous tribes who settled in the Milford area were of the Lenni Lenape, or Delaware, Nation. Mennonites from Germany arrived in the Milford vicinity around 1712. William Penn sent English and Welsh settlers to Milford and they were later joined by Lutherans, individuals from the German Palatinate who had reformed, as

well as Swiss and French Huguenots.⁴ In September of 1778, the Treaty of Fort Pitt was signed as the first formally written treaty between the United States and any Native American tribes, which in this case were the Lenape of Delaware.⁵ The treaty gave the United States permission to travel through the Delaware territory and called for the tribes to afford American troops whatever aid they might require in their war against Great Britain during the American Revolution. In exchange, the United States promised “articles of clothing, utensils, and implements of war” and to build a fort in Delaware country “for the better security of the old men, women, and children . . . whilst their warriors are engaged against the common enemy.” However, unknowingly to the tribes, the American leaders intended to use the fort for offensive campaigns and wrote into the treaty that the Delaware would attack other tribes nearby.⁶ Within a year, the Lenape were expressing grievances about the treaty and a delegation visited Philadelphia in 1779 to explain their dissatisfaction to the Continental Congress, but nothing changed, and the peace between the United States and the Delaware Natives collapsed.⁷ The Lenni Lenape settlements were extirpated from the Milford area soon after.

Less than 2 miles south of Milford and down the Delaware River is Minisink Island — a traditional burial ground for the Munsee (the northern branch of the Lenape) that was in use for thousands of years and is the largest Archaeological National Historic Landmark in Region 1. The island is part of the Minisink Historic District — a site that consists of over 1,320 acres of land that extends to both banks of the Delaware River in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The district is one of the best preserved and most intensively studied archeological locales in the northeast. Excavations have uncovered artifacts that illustrate contact between Native tribes and Europeans in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁸

Settlement of Milford’s rugged terrain was slow throughout the balance of the eighteenth century. In the 1790s, the pristine and picturesque character of the Milford area, with its abundance of natural resources, attracted the attention of John Biddis, Sr., a Philadelphia-based circuit-riding judge. Biddis acquired the land that would become Milford, and in 1793 published a lofty prospectus outlining the benefits of the area — including the ability to erect and power mills on the Sawkill and Vandermark Creeks, which roughly form the boundaries of Milford on the northwest and southeast outskirts.⁹

When Judge Biddis laid out the lots for the new town, he generally followed the urban plan of his hometown of Philadelphia. He laid out High Street — the equivalent of what is now Market Street in Philadelphia — running northwest-southeast to the Delaware River, while Broad Street runs perpendicular to High, creating a grid. At the intersection of Broad and High is a public square — just as there is at Broad and Market in Philadelphia.¹⁰ Within the Milford Historic District, Biddis reserved large lots for public use — a land use planning strategy that was a deciding factor in Milford’s being named county seat of Wayne County in 1798. The earliest found map of Biddis’ grid-plan for Milford is dated 1814 (*Figure 1: A Map of Pike County, 1814*). On the Knob, land is separated into large tracts, though they are unnumbered and landowners cannot be determined based on it alone. With the formation of Pike County from Wayne County in 1814, Milford was named county seat. The community remained an unincorporated village until the Borough of Milford was incorporated in 1874.¹¹

Milford Historic District

The Milford Historic District was originally entered into the National Register of Historic Places on July 28, 1998. The district is located in the commercial heart of the Borough of Milford. The Milford Historic District consists of the traditional historic central business district of the community. Within the district, the original 1793 plan of the town platted a series of large blocks, each containing twelve lots and bisected at right angles by alleys.¹² The Milford Historic District boundary was increased in 2002 to include a primarily residential area of 212 acres, which surrounds the original 22-acre commercial district and the previously listed 6-acre Jervis Gordon Grist Mill Historic District. The boundary follows natural topographical features and was drawn to include both a majority of historic resources which are not altered significantly and to exclude new development within the Borough of Milford (**Figure 2: Milford Historic District Map, 2001**).¹³

The Milford Historic District, containing fifty-five contributing, five previously-listed, and fourteen non-contributing resources, was listed in the National Register in 1998 under Criterion A in the areas of *commerce, politics/government, entertainment/recreation, conservation, and education*, and under Criterion C for *architecture*, with a Period of Significance of ca. 1740 to ca. 1947. The Milford Historic District Boundary Increase cites significance for the period ca. 1765 to ca. 1951.¹⁴

The district's Criterion A significance derives from Milford's position as an important northeastern Pennsylvania resort community throughout much of its Period of Significance and for its close association with the early film-making industry in the first decades of the twentieth century. Milford is sited on a bluff overlooking the Delaware River and was famous as a nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century summer resort destination for Philadelphians and New York City metropolitan area residents. The town's commercial life was linked inextricably with recreation and tourism, which supported downtown mercantile activity. The district is significant under *conservation* and *education* due to the early twentieth-century siting of the Yale School of Forestry in the district¹⁵ — established by Gifford Pinchot and regarded as the “birthplace of the American conservation movement.”¹⁶

Under Criterion C, the Milford Historic District is significant for its cohesive concentration of historic buildings — primarily residential but also including secular and religious institutional architecture and resort hotels — representing most of the popular styles which were in vogue during the district's Period of Significance. In addition to reflecting specific architectural styles, the Milford Historic District reflects locally significant historic construction technology. In the nineteenth century, bluestone quarries were opened north of Milford in Shohola and at Pond Eddy. Several buildings in the district use native bluestone in their construction and/or ornamentation and remain as tangible evidence of this important industry which flourished in the Milford area during the late-nineteenth century.¹⁷

Milford Cemetery

Prior to using the cemetery located on the Milford Knob, the Laurel Hill Cemetery was the first community cemetery in Milford, with the oldest grave dating back to 1810. Laurel Hill is located at the Grey Towers National Historic Site, northwest of the Knob. Grey Towers was the home of Gifford Pinchot, founder and first

chief of the U.S. Forest Service and two-term Governor of Pennsylvania. Today the U.S. Forest Service manages the family ancestral home, Grey Towers, as a conservation education and leadership center and museum.¹⁸

Laurel Hill was the burial site for many of Milford's early residents, including several generations of the Pinchot family. Due to spatial limitations and a growing town population, Laurel Hill was gradually displaced by the Milford Cemetery, which was dedicated in 1868.¹⁹ Laurel Hill's location can be seen on an 1872 map near Pinchot's Grey Towers, though the Milford Cemetery isn't marked on this map (*Figure 3: Map of Milford, 1872*). Milford Cemetery's most notable grave is a mausoleum that sits amid a forested burial plot for Gifford Pinchot, who died on October 4, 1946 (*Figure 6: Pinchot Mausoleum in Milford Cemetery, 2012*).

The earliest found map for this study that shows the Milford Cemetery was made in 1915 (*Figure 4: Map of Milford Cemetery, 1915*). Most notable on this map is the detail of the walking paths within Milford Cemetery. A trail runs southwest to northeast along the Raymondskill ridgeline that aligns with sections of the current Milford Knob Trail and Cliff Trail. The trail ends at the entrance to the Milford Cemetery. The origin of this trail or how it became a means of access to the cemetery remained undetermined. The trail does not connect to Milford at all, and Milford community members would have been able to access the cemetery from Federal Road/U.S. Highway 209.

Milford Knob

This study's earliest image identified of the Milford Knob is from Sherman Day's *Historical Collections of the State of Pennsylvania* published in 1843 — a sketch of Milford drawn from near the intersection of High and Broad Streets that shows the Knob in the distance (*Figure 7: Sketch of Milford, ca. 1843*). A map from 1856 shows the earliest found development on the Milford Knob vicinity. A road branches from the town of Milford and runs south, following the approximate alignment of the contemporary Federal Road/U.S. Highway 209 that runs between the Raymondskill ridge and Delaware River (*Figure 8: Map of Milford and Raymondskill Ridge, 1856*).

Possibly the earliest instance of Milford community members utilizing the Knob for a specific cause was during 1861-65 for the Civil War, when a flag was flown at the same spot that the Star was later installed. There is no reference to what kind of flag was flown during the Civil War, but an American flag was erected on the Knob during the Spanish-American War in 1898:

"Patriotic citizens led by Thomas and Lancelot Armstrong placed a large American flag, 20x30 feet, on the Knob ... The flagpole is about 60 feet in height and can be seen from all parts of the village."²⁰

An article published the next day mentioned the same American flag again, stating that it would "wave until Cuba is free and Spain had received her quietus."²¹

The earliest identified record of Milford community members giving "The Knob" its name comes from a *Pike County Press* article published on July 24, 1890. The article describes a picnic for about 30 people, held on the Knob by the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor.²²

A clear record of exactly why the Milford community started using the Milford Knob for recreational and cultural purposes has yet to be found, but it can be speculated. The Knob sits on top of the ridge at one of its highest elevations and faces directly towards the town. The Knob and Star placement are almost perfectly aligned with Milford's Broad Street and Center Square. Broad Street is one of Milford's two major roads — the other being High Street, which runs perpendicular to Broad Street and towards the Delaware River. From the heart of Milford's historic downtown, the Knob is easily viewable — as would be a large flag or an illuminated Star and Cross. It is possible that the trails leading to all the way to the Knob were created by community members and became more established over time as they carried out different cultural activities — raising an American flag during military conflicts, hosting community picnic trips, developing wilderness-tourism, and annual holiday-lighting traditions.

Just as individuals can see the Knob (and any large-scale cultural object placed on it) from downtown, even more of Milford can be viewed from the Knob. When visitors reach the end of the Milford Knob Trail at the overlook, they are rewarded with a spectacular view of Milford's historic downtown and structures, the Delaware River, and the surrounding lush landscapes that remain mostly undisturbed (*Figure 9: Historic View of Milford from the Knob, ca. 1905*). From this bird's-eye-view of the town, trail hikers will have a better understanding and appreciation of Milford's relationship to the regional landscape, designed town plan, and significance.

Milford Knob Circulation

The earliest identified mention of circulation for recreational uses on the Raymondskill ridge near the Milford Knob comes from an article published in the *Pike County Dispatch* on November 27, 1890. The author muses that, as Milford had become a popular tourist destination for Philadelphian and New York City residents, the natural resources close to the town should be made more accessible for visitors. Specifically, the need for new infrastructure that would connect the town to the ridge:

“... to secure for them the privilege of fishing in the Vandermark, Sawkill, Raymondskill and other near-by waters; a few roads and paths to fishing grounds and a few of many enviable and attractive places that few of your pleasure-seeking visitors ever see.”

The author also mentions that a creation of a road would allow disabled guests “a valuable drive to the Knob and on top of the mountain to the Raymondskill Falls.”²³

An article published in 1896 recounts a picnic trip made by several community members, who “walked to Raymondskill Falls by way of the Knob and Utter's Peak.” This route would include portions of the Cliff Trail that exists on the ridge today. The article concludes that the group returned home in the evening “by the river road” — this road being the modern-day Federal Road/U.S. Highway 209.²⁴

An August 29, 1902 article in the *Pike County Press* describes an ongoing project to improve circulation on the ridge:

“Mr. James W. Pinchot, believing that picturesque drives would add to the attractions of Milford, is turning attention to having a road built to make access to the Knob comparatively easy. That is a slightly spot and a driveway down over the cliffs to the Raymondskill would afford several magnificent views ... The idea of a drive

over the cliffs has been heretofore suggested and several years ago was partially carried out. It should now, as it doubtless will with the active encouragement and aid of Mr. Pinchot, become an accomplished fact.”²⁵

For this study, the earliest identified map of the trails associated with the Milford Knob was made in 1915 (*Figure 11: Map of the Milford Knob, 1915*). A trail runs southwest to northeast along the Raymondskill ridgeline that aligns with sections of the current Milford Knob Trail and Cliff Trail and ends at the entrance to Milford Cemetery. The southwest-running trail passes through “The Cliff” and continues along the river for several miles. The exact beginning of this trail is undetermined, but it connects to multiple other trails and access roads along the ridgeline.

Three different trails are shown leading to the Knob on a 1934 map (*Figure 12: Sports’ Map of Milford, PA and Vicinity, 1934*). On this map, the Knob is marked by the flagpole that preceded the Star. A trail on the Raymondskill ridge follows the same route as the one described on the 1915 map — though this map splits the trail into two, with one going north to the Knob and the other continuing east to the Milford Cemetery (as it did in 1915). This trail follows a route comparable to the Milford Knob Trail that exists on the ridge today. A shorter trail seen on this map connects the cemetery to the Knob, as they are connected today. On the historic map, there is another trail that descends the steep slope from the Knob to “Wells’ Dam” (Sawkill Glen), where presently unofficial desire paths parallel Sawkill Creek. The Sawkill Glen area has had social paths since at least the early nineteenth century, though it is likely that they existed as early as the beginning of the eighteenth century when mills were first constructed there. On the trail that connects the Knob with the cemetery, there is an additional trail that branches perpendicular from it and runs downhill to connect with the Sawkill Glen trails. This is the only map found during this study that depicts any trails descending downslope from the Knob.

The loop-shaped parking lot on U.S. Highway 209 that still exists today is depicted on a map for the first time in 1958 (*Figure 13: Map of the Milford Knob, 1958*). The appearance of a parking lot contributes to the evidence of the Milford Knob being used for recreational purposes prior to the land coming into National Park Service ownership. From the trailhead located at the parking lot, the beginnings of the current Milford Knob Trail are drawn. The trail for this map follows the same path as the current Knob Trail, though it is not drawn past where the trail turns east and continues alongside the ridge to the Knob. The Cliff Trail is not included on this map; however, the Milford Cemetery is. The map shows the cemetery’s property border and the winding paths within it.

An article published in 1964 states that a bulldozer cleared a passable road to the site of the Star on the Knob.²⁶ This road is mentioned again two years later in an article that discussed a group visiting Milford from St. Jacobi Lutheran Church of Shohola:

“The entertainment feature of the afternoon was the breath-taking ride to ‘The Knob’ in Mr. Stroyan’s and Mr. Olmstead’s trucks. The ladies drove their own cars to the top of the cemetery hill and there boarded the trucks for the sky-lift ride to the Knob.”²⁷

This article is the only found mention of a sky-lift being in the vicinity of the Milford Knob, and little else is known about it.

It’s unclear where the exact location of the “bulldozed road” is on the Knob. Beginning in 1958, the Milford Cemetery appears to be accessible from multiple locations (*Figure 13: Map of the Milford Knob, 1958*). One

could drive from the town of Milford using Mott Street to cross a pond on Sawkill Creek, then turn southeast onto Milford Beach Road, and make a final turn southwest onto an unnamed road that leads up the Milford Knob until it connects to a road within the Milford Cemetery. Additionally, there are two locations to access the cemetery from Federal Road/U.S. Highway 2019 seen on this map. Since this map predates the bulldozed road mentioned in the 1964 article, it is possible that one of the cemetery access roads described on the 1958 map were being used as informal passageways and later became official, paved roads. Or, perhaps the road bulldozed in 1964 is within the cemetery itself.

Lastly, a map made in 2019 illustrates the trails on the Raymondskill Ridge and Milford Knob as they exist today (*Figure 14: Map of Raymondskill Ridge, 2019*).

Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area

The Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area is a 67,210-acre park that includes the Middle Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. At the southern end of this park, the river cuts a pass through the mountains, forming the Delaware Water Gap. The park contains an environment of unique geologic and natural features as well as cultural landscapes and historic resources.

Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area was established in 1965 as a way to provide for public outdoor recreational use and enjoyment of the reservoir that was to be created by the proposed Tocks Island Dam. Throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s, the costs of the dam project and associated infrastructure climbed, the available funding diminished (largely due to the Vietnam War), engineering challenges became evident, and opposition to the project from grassroots organizations representing local and environmental concerns began to sway popular opinion about the need and appropriateness of the dam.²⁸

In 1975, the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC), composed of the four governors of the basin-states (Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Delaware) and one federally appointed commissioner, voted to discontinue the Tocks Island Dam project. The land already acquired by the federal government was transferred in its entirety to the National Park Service for stewardship, and Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, originally intended as a narrow swath of land around a reservoir, became a 67,210-acre park. The Milford Knob and associated Star are located on DEWA land segment-125²⁹, tract 12510 (*Figure 15: Map of Tract 12510, 1979*). The 99.39-acre tract was part of the park's Acquisition #4 (public law 89-158 [dated 9/1/1965] and REDM 1B [dated 7/10/1969]).³⁰

Preliminary Findings

The purpose of this report was to analyze the historic relationship between the community members of Milford and the Milford Knob. The research compiled for this study discovered that the Knob has been of importance to Milford residents for at least the last 160 years — beginning with the raising of a flag on the Knob during the Civil War. In 1868, the Milford Cemetery — located directly southeast from the Knob — was dedicated as the second and only additional cemetery for the community. This cemetery is still in use and available for new burials today. By the end of the nineteenth century, “The Knob” was recognized by the community as the

landscape's official name and newspaper articles provided evidence of community interest in making the Knob accessible as a tourist attraction through the creation of infrastructure. Before the turn of the century, there were recorded instances of Milford residents taking picnic trips to the Knob by way of trails on the Raymondskill Ridge. The Milford Knob was utilized for a cause important to community members again when an American flag was flown on it during the Spanish-American War to represent the community's support for the liberation of Cuba.

The nineteenth century began with the completion of an ongoing project to create roads that made the Milford Knob more accessible to community members and tourists. During the first few decades of the century, trails that had been in use by Milford residents on the Raymondskill Ridge began to appear on maps. These trails lead to both the Milford Knob overlook and the Milford Cemetery. The majority of these trails still exist and remain in use today. The yearly tradition of placing an illuminated Star on the Knob began in 1930, with a Cross being added in 1960, and was carried out and appreciated by generations of Milford families for nearly a century. By the mid-nineteenth century, additional infrastructure had been created that continued the effort to make the Knob more accessible — including paved roads, a parking lot, and sky-lift. These resources provide further evidence of the Knob being used for recreational and cultural purposes by the residents and tourists of Milford — prior to the land becoming a federally-owned recreation area. There are additional, more detailed records of Milford community members taking visiting guests to the top of the Knob — where the entirety of their town can be observed. This illustrates the deep appreciation that Milford residents feel for their town and how they have utilized the Knob to showcase it.

This study has established a record of the historic importance that the residents of Milford have held for the Knob as a cultural landscape. This report concludes that the Milford Knob has potential of being eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places in the areas of *recreation* and *tourism*, recognized at a local or state level. The contents of this document could serve as the foundational research for a Determination of Eligibility and/or listing in the National Register. However, additional research and documentation would be necessary to define the boundaries of the Milford Knob landscape and fully document the significance and historic integrity of the landscape and its associated resources based on National Register Criteria — such as the trails, Milford Star, and Milford Cemetery. If the park is interested in pursuing an official Determination of Eligibility or listing on the National Register, there are a few approaches that can be considered:

1. Prepare a Determination of Eligibility for the Milford Knob landscape,
2. Prepare an individual National Register nomination for the Milford Knob landscape, and
3. Prepare an amendment to the existing Milford Historic District nomination to expand the boundaries to include the Milford Knob landscape (preferred approach).

With regard to the Milford Star as a Traditional Cultural Property on the National Register, Region 1 Tribal and Cultural Affairs Lead, David Goldstein, provides the following findings:

The Milford Star follows on a longstanding tradition in the Town of Milford of placing commemorations, e.g. flags, monuments, on the Milford Knob, clearly within the original National Park Service boundary of 1967.

Remnants of the Star monument remain in place on the site, including guy wire supports, electrical infrastructure, and the armature footprint. These elements, being over 50 years old, certainly meet National Register of Historic Places Criterion D ‘information potential’ for its architectural footprint and archaeological remains. Additionally, they likely meet Criterion A ‘event’ based on its use to commemorate Milford Holiday Lighting ceremonies, 9-11 Attacks, and the site for past armed conflict events, Spanish American War and the U.S. Civil War.

Given the current potential to change the boundaries of existing Town of Milford’s National Register Historical District, this would be the best avenue to proceed in recognizing the site and Star.

Future steps, given the scope of this report and this report’s information on the commemorative and tourism landscape on the Knob, support the eligibility of the Star and the site’s placement on the National Register of Historic Places. Once completed, a final step would be to complete research assigning value to the site as a Traditional Cultural Place, that is conferred once National Register Criteria are established positively for eligibility. Traditional Cultural Place designations follow once eligibility based on standing National Register Criteria is established.

Chronology — Detailed Events

Date	Category	Description
Pre-Contact	Borough of Milford	The Milford area is inhabited by the Lenni Lenape, or Delaware Nation, Native American tribes.
1712	Borough of Milford	German Mennonites arrived in the Milford vicinity, soon followed by more settlers from Germany, as well as Switzerland and France.
1793	Borough of Milford	John Biddis, Sr. from Philadelphia acquired the land that would become Milford and proposes his design plan for the town.
1798	Borough of Milford	Milford is named the County Seat of Wayne County, PA.
1814	Borough of Milford	Pike County is formed from Wayne County and Milford is named Pike County's Seat.
1814	Borough of Milford	Earliest known map of Milford recorded. The map shows the grid-plan of Milford laid out. On the Knob, land is separated into large tracts, though they are unnumbered and landowners cannot be determined.
1856	Milford Knob	Development on the Milford Knob is recorded on a map. A road branches from Milford and runs south. This is the road that will become the modern Federal Road/U.S. Highway 209 that runs between the Raymondskill ridge and river.
1874	Borough of Milford	Borough of Milford incorporated.
1898	Milford Knob	During the Spanish-American War, a 60-foot flagpole was erected on the Knob, roughly the same location as the future Star, by the Milford community and a 20-foot by 30-foot flag was flown as a symbol of patriotism (Lion's Club, 2017).
1915	Raymondskill Ridge Trails	The first known map of the trails associated with the Milford Knob recorded. A trail ran southwest to northeast along the ridge line that aligns with sections of the current Milford Knob Trail and Cliff Trail and ended at the entrance to the Milford Cemetery.
1930	Milford Knob	August Metz, the owner of the historic Metz Ice Plant (which is now preserved by NPS) and other Milford community members erected the frame for an illuminated Star, powered from the historic water-wheeled generator in the Metz Ice Plant (Lions Club, 2017).
1944	Raymondskill Ridge Trails	A new trail shown from the location of the contemporary NPS trailhead, but this trail continued northwest over the Raymondskill ridge instead of northeast toward the Knob (USGS).
1948	Milford Knob	Indications from the community and the newspaper record demonstrate that the Star on the Milford Knob was constructed in 1948 as a non-permanent wooden frame and was wired to the Metz Ice Plant (Goldstein, 2019).
1958	Milford Knob	The loop-shaped parking lot on U.S. Highway 209 that still exists today is depicted on a map for the first time this year. From the contemporary NPS trailhead located at the parking lot, the beginnings of the current Milford Knob Trail are drawn. The trail for this map follows the same path as the current Knob Trail, though it is not drawn past where the trail turns east and continues alongside the ridge to the Knob. The Cliff Trail is not included on this map; however, the Milford Cemetery is. The

Date	Category	Description
		map shows the cemetery's property border and the winding paths within it (USGS).
1960	Milford Knob	The fold down metal Star and Cross array was put up this year. The erection of the monument and its lighting between the end of the Thanksgiving Holiday and through Epiphany is noted in the Pike County Dispatch nearly every year following 1960, and it coincided in later years with annual Milford Town holiday tree and neighborhood lighting events (Goldstein, 2019).
1965	DEWA Park Development	Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (DEWA) is established and discussion of land acquisition begins for the proposed Tocks Island Dam.
1966 04 28	Milford Knob	Recorded in Pike County's Dispatch, the Star on the Milford Knob was discussed during a public meeting as DEWA was being developed. NPS Planner Peter DeGelleke stated that the monument would remain on the Knob (Goldstein, 2019).
1974 07 22	DEWA Park Development + Milford Knob	U.S. Army Corps took possession of the Jonas Anchel property where the Milford Star is located on the Knob and it was then transferred to NPS (<i>Figure 14: Map of Tract 12510</i>). The community continued their yearly tradition of setting up and lighting the Star and Cross (Lions Club, 2017).
1975	DEWA Park Development	Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) voted to discontinue the Tocks Island Dam project. The land already acquired by the federal government was transferred in its entirety to the National Park Service for stewardship, and Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area became a 67,210-acre park.
1975 11 20	Milford Knob	After coming into NPS ownership, the <i>Pike County Dispatch</i> shows members of the Milford Lions Club checking the Star's powerline on the Milford Knob (<i>Figure 16: Milford Community Members, 1975</i>). Interviews with Milford residents indicated that their family members across three generations took part in the raising, wiring, lighting, and maintenance of the Star monument over time (Goldstein, 2019).
1976	Milford Knob	The Milford Knob Star was lit on other occasions of note in the community – the 1976 Bicentennial Celebration and weeks following September 11, 2001 (Goldstein, 2019).
1998 07 28	National Register Events	The Milford Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
2002 09 09	National Register Events	The National Register of Historic Places boundary for the Milford Historic District is expanded.
2006	Milford Knob	The Pike County Light and Power Company arranged for the placement of a code rated fixed pole meter, outdoor grade external supply cables, and breaker boxes to support the monument. They additionally supplied the Lion's Club with a reimbursement/buyback program allowing zero cost for the operation of the monument (Lions Club, 2017).
2010	Milford Knob	NPS constructed a gate on the Milford Knob and provided the Lions Club with a key for full access to the overlook (Lions Club, 2017).

Date	Category	Description
2015	Milford Knob	NPS requested for the Lions Club to surrender the gate key, limiting access to only with NPS supervision. NPS required a Special Use Permit application be submitted and approved for access to the Knob and set up of the display (Lions Club, 2017).
2016 09 09	Milford Knob	The Milford Lions Club submitted a Special Use Permit application to NPS for the Star and Cross, but they were advised that only the request for the Star would be evaluated at this time (Goldstein, 2019).
2016 09 29	Milford Knob	Special Use Permit sent to Milford Lions Club for signature. Authorized mid-November- mid-February (DEWA Park Archives).
2017 03 03	Milford Knob	Per request, the Milford Lions Club sent an application for the lighting of the Cross on the Knob (DEWA Park Archives).
2017 03 20	Milford Knob	Bill Harkness withdrew the Special Use Permit application for the Cross on behalf of the Lions Club (DEWA Park Archives).
2017 03 30	Milford Knob	NPS received a completed Special Use Permit application requesting a display on the Milford Knob, starting on October 15 th , for a display not related to either the Star or Cross and the Milford Lions Club. Denial letter based on non-designated First Amendment site on file (DEWA Park Archives).
2017 04 01	Milford Knob	1905 people sign a petition supporting the effort to keep the Star and Cross on the Knob. 301 of these signatures came from Milford, and an additional 302 came from other PA locations (Lions Club, 2017).
2017 04 03	Milford Knob	NPS met with Milford Lions Club at Myers Realty Office to discuss moving forward. Superintendent Donahue stated he would write a letter to the Region concerning the ethnographic consideration of the Star. Lions Club agreed to consider alternate power sources if a Special Use Permit would be issued. An application for the 2017 season was not accepted as a letter to Region was pending, and an answer had not been provided. Mr. Harkness contacted the Permits Coordinator on a regular basis to see if there were any updates (DEWA Park Archives).
2017 11 16	Milford Knob	Star/Cross structure removed from the Knob by DEWA Maintenance staff at request of Superintendent Donahue (DEWA Park Archives).
2017 11 27	Milford Knob	Superintendent Donahue contacts Mr. Harkness to advise him that structure has been removed from the Knob and to decide to pick it up (DEWA Park Archives).
2017 12 01	Milford Knob	The Milford Lions Club retrieved their property at Dingmans Maintenance from NPS Roads and Trails staff. It was moved to behind the Milford Town Maintenance Yard (DEWA Park Archives).
2017 12 03	DEWA Park Development	DEWA Superintendent Donahue retired (DEWA Park Archives).
2017 12 11	Milford Knob	Kirsten Talken-Spaulling, Acting Superintendent, began to follow up on the letter sent to Region concerning the Star (DEWA Park Archives).
2019 07 03	Milford Knob	At request of DEWA, David Goldstein, Region 1 Tribal and Cultural Affairs lead, wrote a memo to Associate Regional Director Jonathan Meade that the Star: The monument is comprised of a steel framed iron star and cross approximately 20' x 20' (Quick) that was mounted to the ground and raised and lowered with guy wires anchored into

Date	Category	Description
		the ground (see figures). An array of 87 incandescent light bulbs was wired along the frame outline of the star. Within the star was a cruciform support to which incandescent light bulbs could also be wired. The wired light arrays were tied to the frame. All wiring, maintenance and securing of the monument was facilitated by members of the general public in a volunteer capacity. • As a fixture within the park it should be considered a park/public resource and should be evaluated for eligibility for the National Register. • Evidence exists that the monument is a landscape feature that the NPS inherited this element of the landscape and it continues to be regarded as culturally important to a significant portion of the community across generations.

Figures



Figure 1: A Map of Pike County, 1814 (Library of Congress).³¹ Note: the original map has been modified by the author to better capture the location of Milford's town plan.

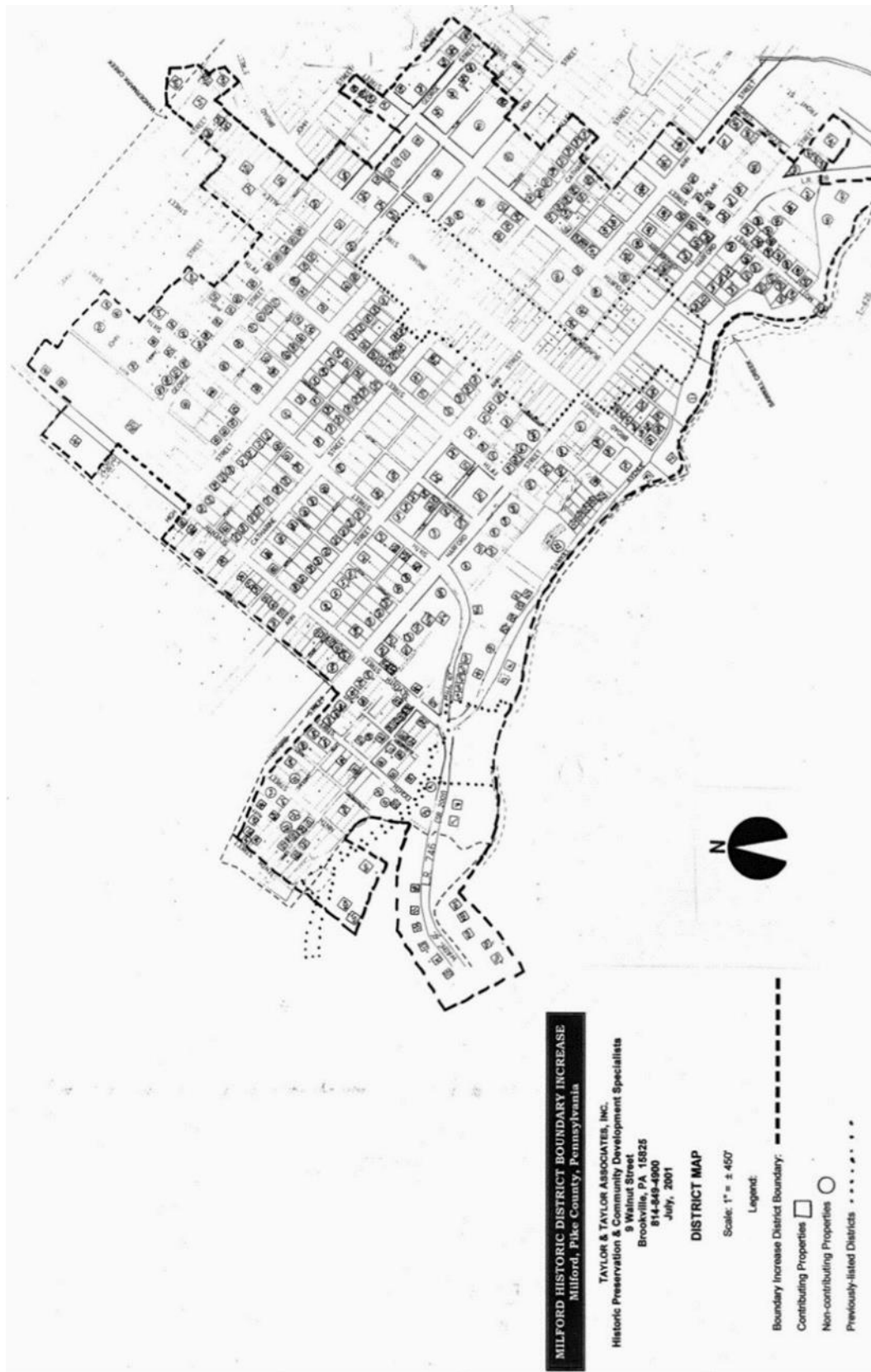


Figure 2: Milford Historic District Map, 2001 (National Register of Historic Places).

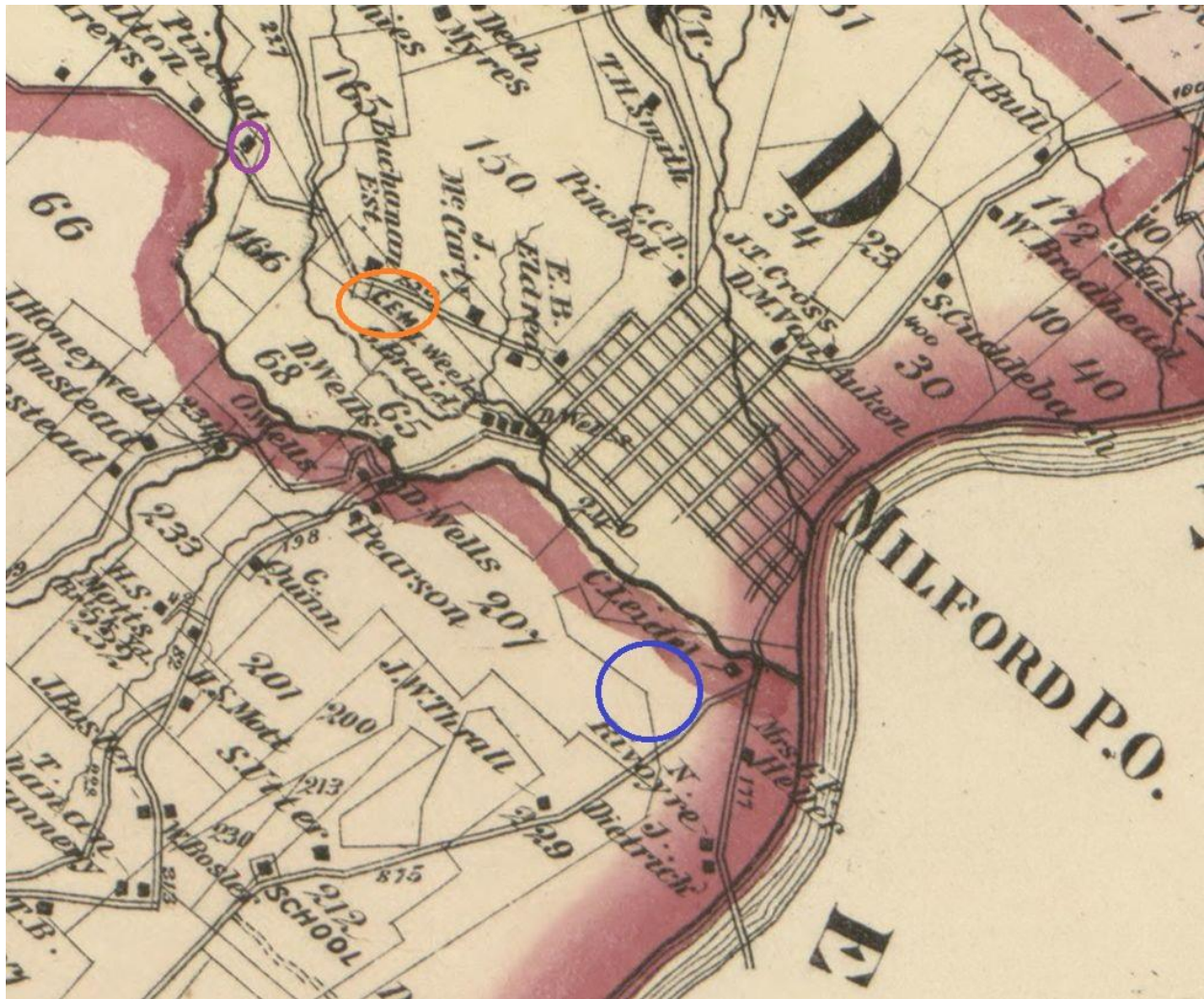


Figure 3: Map of Milford, 1872 (Library of Congress).³² Note: the original map has been modified by the author to better capture the location of Milford, Pinchot's Grey Towers (upper left, circled in purple), Laurel Hill Cemetery (center, circled in orange), and the approximate location of Milford Cemetery (circled in blue).



Figure 4: Map of Milford Cemetery, 1915 (USGS).³³ Note: the original map has been modified by the author to capture the location of the Milford Cemetery (center).



Figure 5: Aerial of Milford Cemetery, 2015 (USGS). Note: the original image has been modified by the author to capture the location of Milford Cemetery.



Figure 6: Pinchot Mausoleum in Milford Cemetery, 2012 (*Engraved: The Meanings Behind Nineteenth-Century Tombstones* [blog]).³⁴



View in Milford.

Figure 7: Sketch of Milford, ca. 1843, with the Knob in the distance (Sherman Day).³⁵

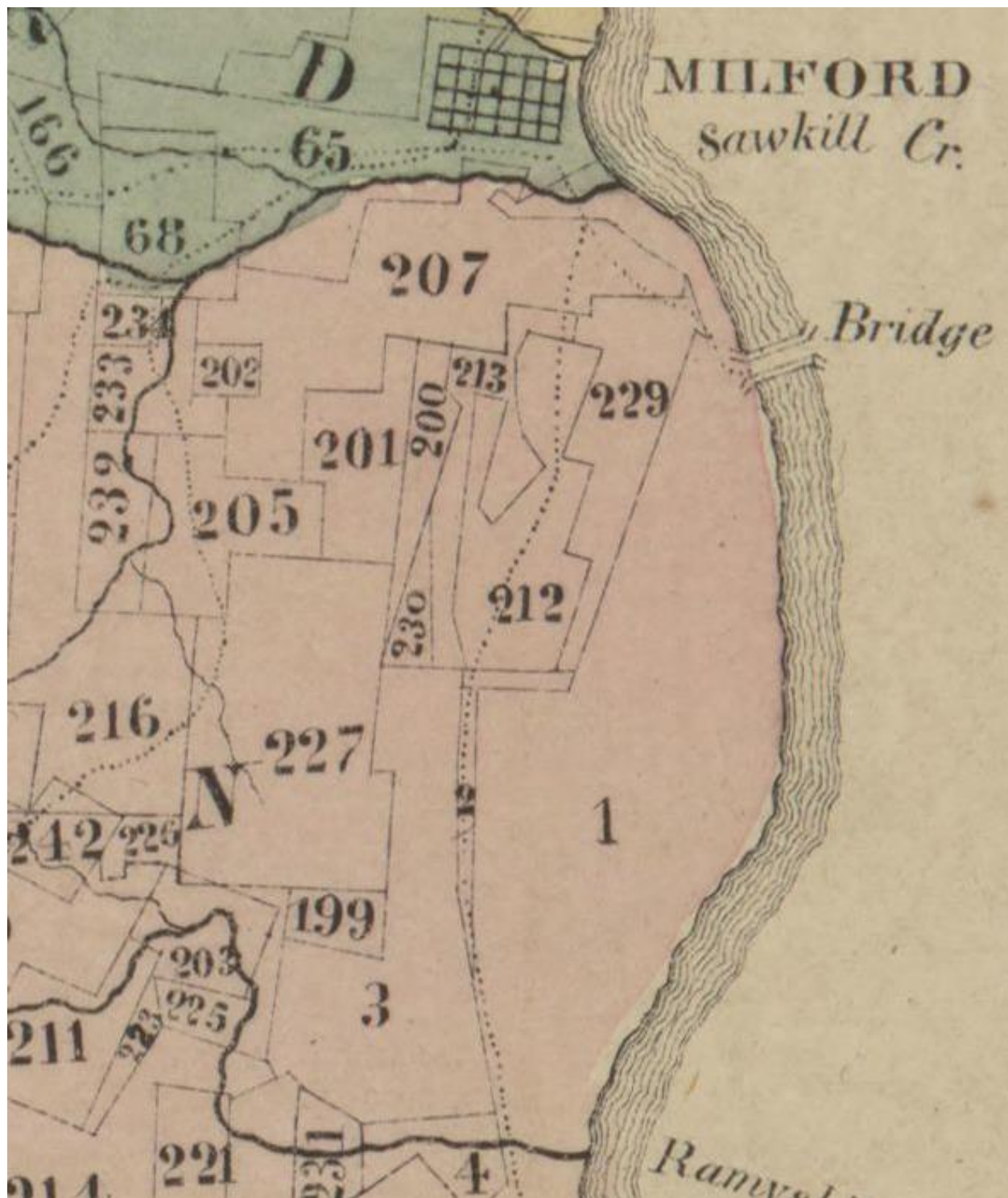


Figure 8: Map of Milford and Raymondskill Ridge, 1856 (Library of Congress).³⁶ Note: the original map has been modified by the author to illustrate the location of Milford and the modern-day Federal Road/U.S. Highway 209 (center, dotted line).

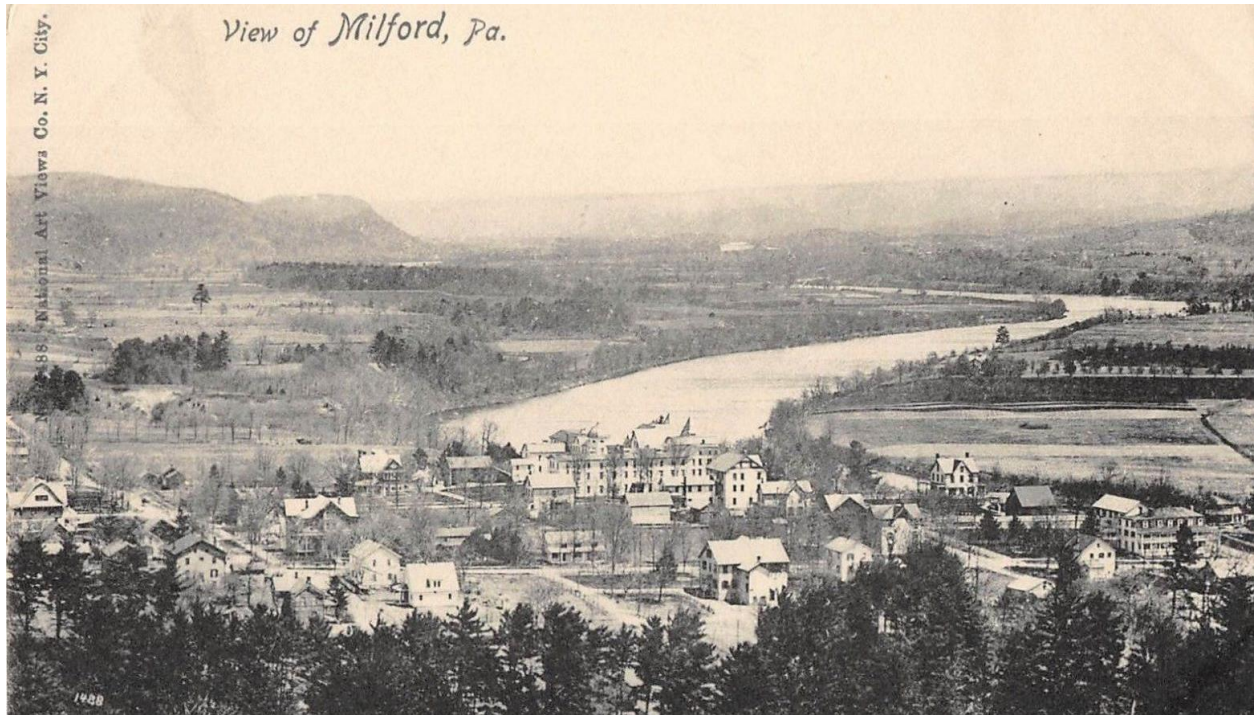


Figure 9: Historic View of Milford from the Knob, ca. 1905 (DEWA Park Archives).

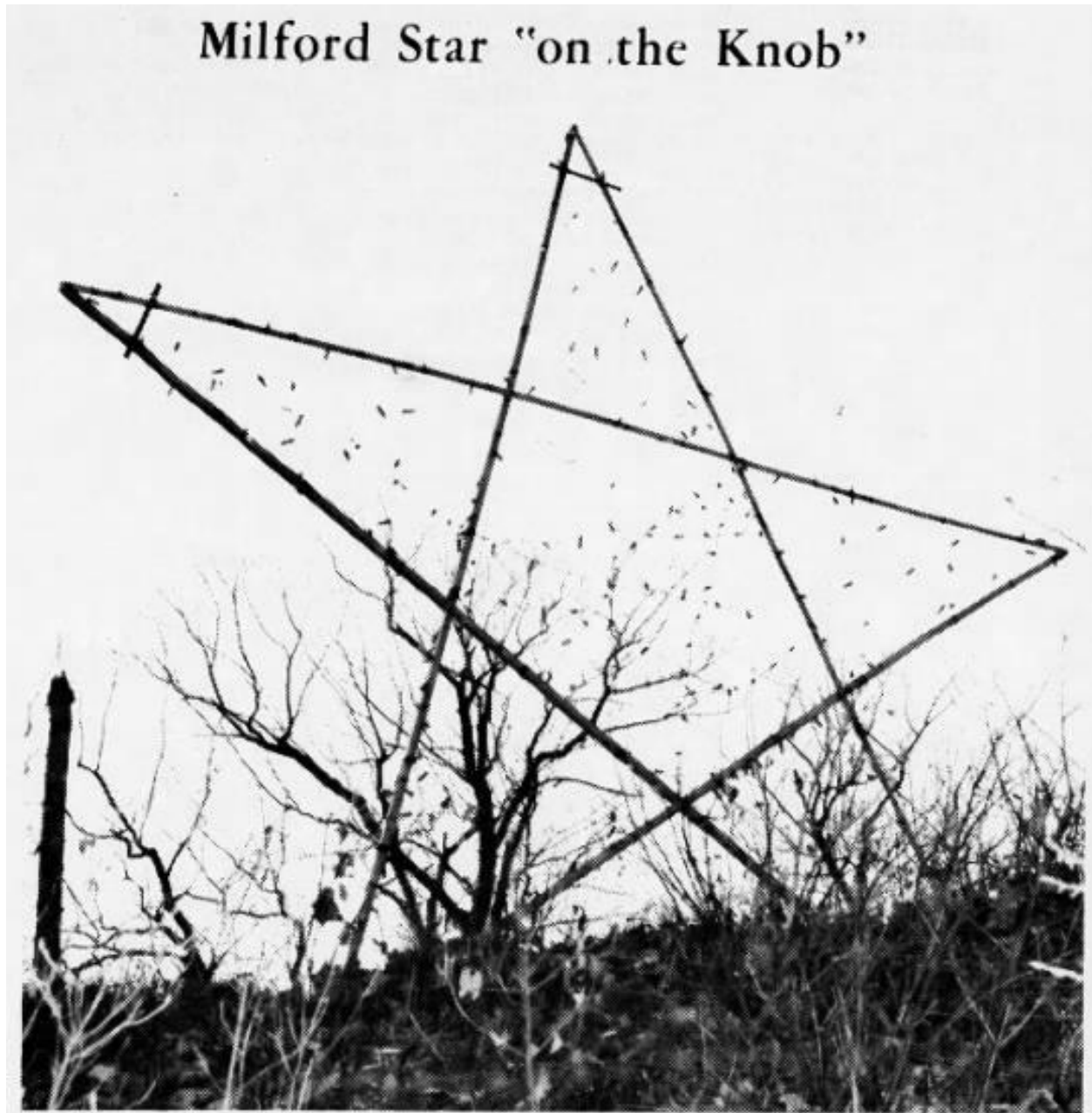


Figure 10: Milford Star on the Knob, Dec. 24, 1964 (*Pike County Dispatch*).³⁷

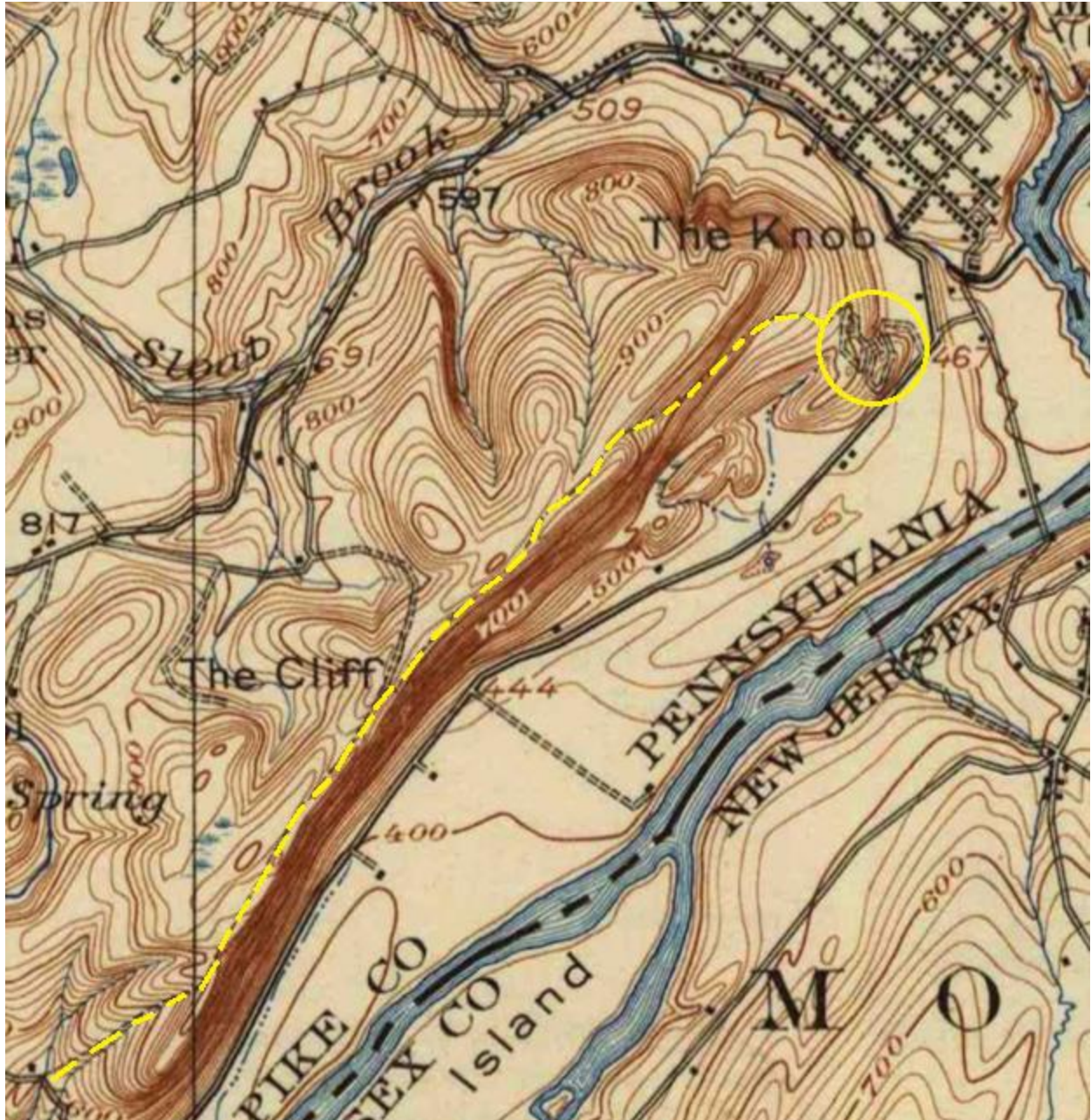


Figure 11: Map of the Milford Knob, 1915 (USGS). Note: the original map has been modified by the author to illustrate the trail and cemetery locations. The path of the trail has been highlighted by the yellow dashed line and the cemetery has been circled in yellow.



Figure 12: Sports' Map of Milford, PA and Vicinity, drawn by J.E. Myer, 1934 (DEWA Park Archives). Note: the original map has been modified by the author to capture the details of the trails (dotted lines) and cemetery on the Milford Knob.

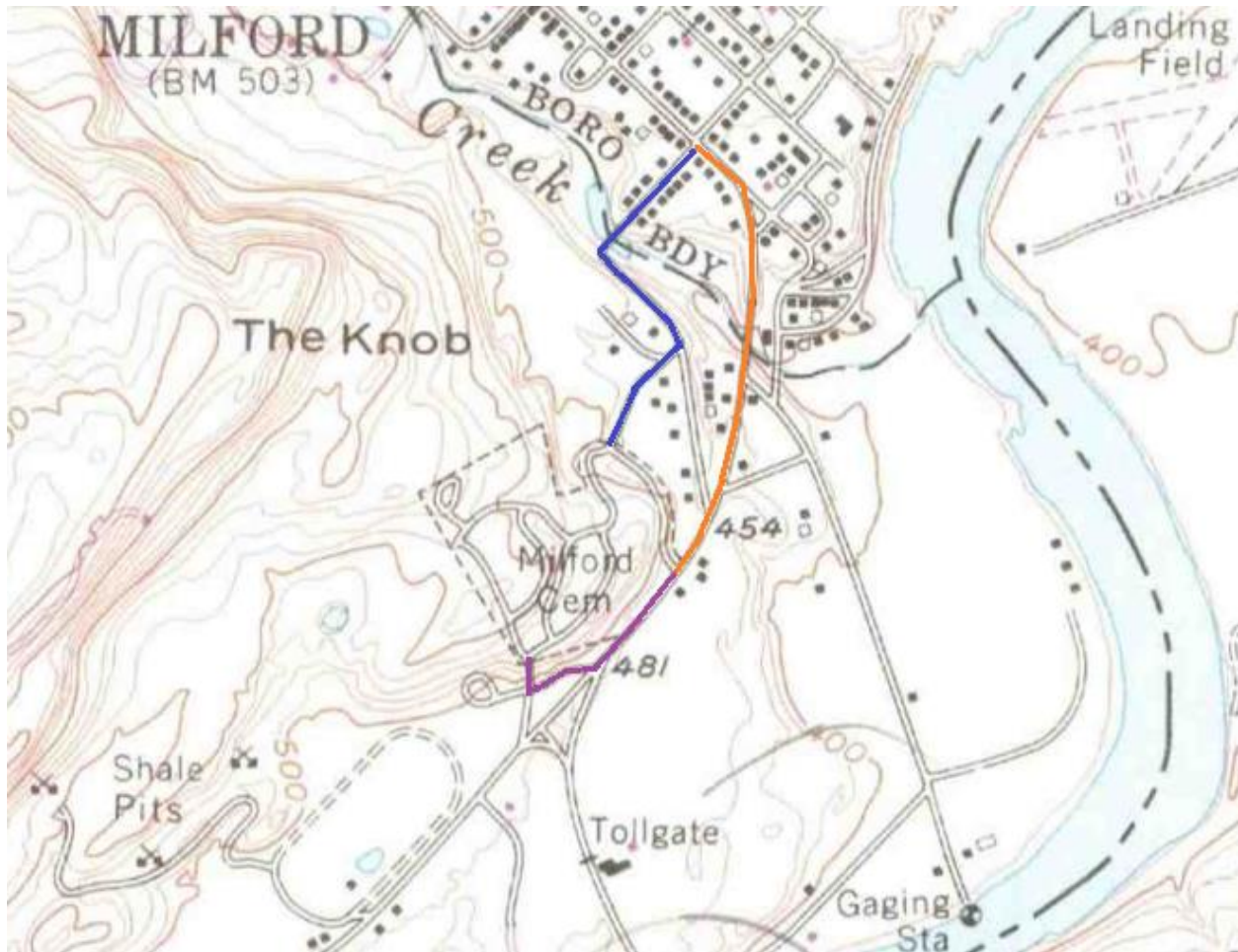


Figure 13: Map of the Milford Knob, 1958. (USGS).³⁸ Note: the original map has been modified by the author to capture the location the loop-shaped parking lot on U.S. Highway 209, the Milford Cemetery, and possible access roads that connect the town to the cemetery — starting from the intersection of Mott and East Harford Streets and overlaid in blue, orange, and purple.

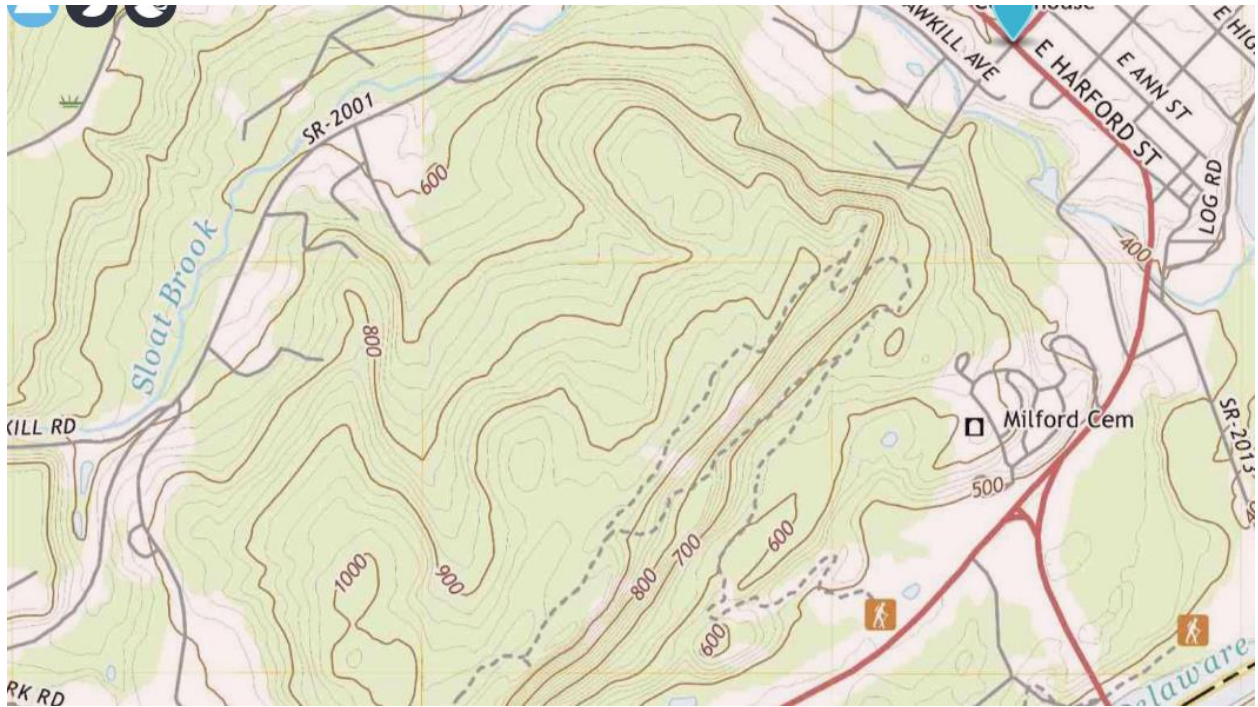


Figure 14: Map of Raymondskill Ridge that shows the trails how they exist today, 2019 (USGS).³⁹ Note: the original map has been modified by the author to capture the location of the trails (dashed lines) and cemetery on the Milford Knob.

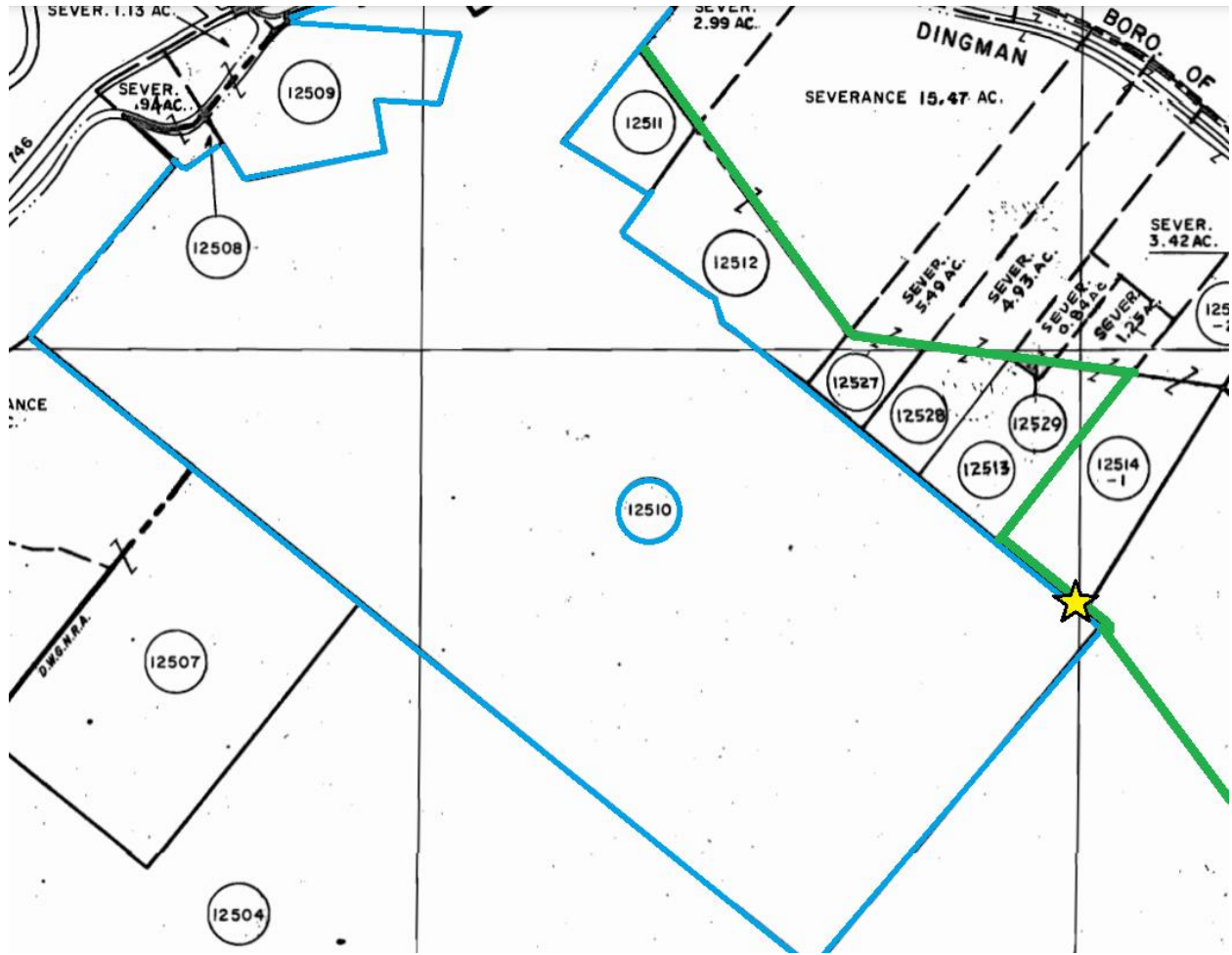


Figure 15: Map of Tract 12510 on DEWA Segment-125, 1979 (NPS LandsNet). Note: the original map has been modified by the author. The tract is outlined in blue and the DEWA boundary is marked in green. The yellow star on Tract 12510 marks the approximate location of the Milford Star on the Knob.



A sign of Christmas! Lions, Werner Tschopp and Al Steiner perform the regular seasonal check of the powerline to the star on the knob.
Photo by Moore

Figure 16: Milford Community Members were permitted to continue lighting the Star on the Knob several years after the land comes into NPS ownership, 1975 (*Pike County Dispatch*).⁴⁰

Endnotes

- ¹ Milford Lions Club, “Presentation to: NPS Superintendent John J. Donahue DWGNRA,” Apr. 3, 2017, 2.
- ² David Goldstein, “Memo to Jonathan Meade, DEWA request for Study Historical Display on Milford Knob,” Jul. 3, 2019.
- ³ “A Tour of Milford, Pennsylvania,” *Travel and Leisure*, May 19, 2020, <https://www.travelandleisure.com/trip-ideas/a-tour-of-milford-pennsylvania>.
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- ⁵ Randolph C. Downes, *Council Fires on the Upper Ohio: A Narrative of Indian Affairs in the Upper Ohio Valley until 1795* (Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg Press, 1940), 216.
- ⁶ Daniel Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2003).
- ⁷ Dennis Zotigh, “A Brief Balance of Power — The 1778 Treaty with the Delaware Nation,” *National Museum of the American Indian*, Smithsonian Magazine, May 21, 2018, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/blogs/national-museum-american-indian/2018/05/22/1778-delaware-treaty/>.
- ⁸ “New Jersey/Pennsylvania: Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area,” National Park Service, last modified Aug. 7, 2017, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/watergap.htm>.
- ⁹ Milford Historic District Registration Form, *National Register of Historic Places*, 1998, 8:2.
- ¹⁰ “Guide to Pike County, Pennsylvania,” *Pike County Chamber of Commerce*, 2001.
- ¹¹ Milford Historic District, *National Register*, 1998, 8:2.
- ¹² Milford Historic District, *National Register*, 1998, 7:1.
- ¹³ Milford Historic District Boundary Increase Registration Form, *National Register of Historic Place*, 2002, 10:4.
- ¹⁴ Milford Historic District Boundary Increase, *National Register*, 2002, 8:1.
- ¹⁵ Milford Historic District, *National Register*, 1998, 8:1.
- ¹⁶ Stated on a “Welcome to Milford” sign in town.
- ¹⁷ Milford Historic District Boundary Increase, *National Register*, 2002, 8:5.
- ¹⁸ “Cemetery Tours Take Us Back in Time,” *Grey Towers National Historic Site*, United States Department of Agriculture – Forest Service, Oct. 2015, <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/greytowers/news-events/?cid=FSEPRD475115>.
- ¹⁹ “Laurel Hill Cemetery,” Grey Towers Heritage Association, accessed Aug. 31, 2020, <https://www.greytowers.org/laurel-hill-cemetery/>.
- ²⁰ “Flag on the Knob,” *Pike County Dispatch*, May 12, 1898, accessed via Newspapers.com.
- ²¹ *Pike County Press*, May 13, 1898, accessed via Newspapers.com.
- ²² *Pike County Dispatch*, Jul. 24, 1890, accessed via Newspapers.com.
- ²³ “When Not Fishing Mend Your Nets – A Pike County Man in the West,” *Pike County Dispatch*, Nov. 27, 1890, accessed via Newspapers.com.
- ²⁴ *Pike County Dispatch*, Jul. 16, 1896, accessed via Newspapers.com.
- ²⁵ “A Road to the Knob,” *Pike County Press*, Aug. 29, 1902, accessed via Newspapers.com.
- ²⁶ “Letters to the Editor,” *Pike County Dispatch*, Dec. 10, 1964, accessed via Newspapers.com.
- ²⁷ “Shohola,” *Pike County Dispatch*, May 5, 1966, accessed via Newspapers.com.
- ²⁸ National Park Service, “Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and Middle Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River,” Foundation Document, Oct. 2014, 3.
- ²⁹ National Park Service, “DEWA Segment Index,” Map, *LandsNet*.
- ³⁰ National Park Service, “DEWA SEG-125,” Map, 1979, *LandsNet*.
- ³¹ Joseph Rakestraw, *A map of Wayne & Pike counties, Pennsylvania*, Philadelphia: 1814, Map, accessed from Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2007625040/>.
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- ³³ Map of Milford, PA, 1915, ed. 1944, accessed via USGS topoView.
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- ³⁶ Charles Vinten Lithog, *A map of the county of Pike, Pennsylvania* (New York: 1856), Map, accessed from Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2012592195/>.
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³⁸ Map of Milford, PA, 1958, ed. 1970, accessed via USGS topoView.

³⁹ Map of Milford, PA, 2019, accessed via USGS topoView.

⁴⁰ *Pike County Dispatch*, Nov. 20, 1975, accessed via Newspapers.com.