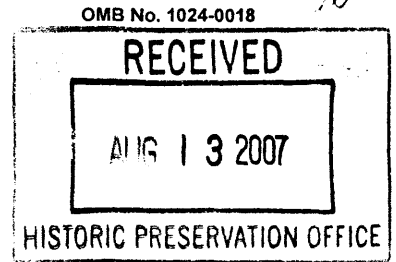
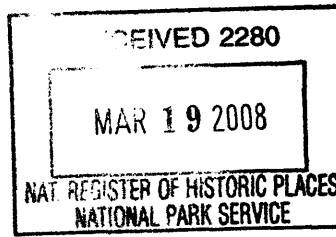


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Trenton Friends Meeting House  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 142 East Hanover Street  not for publication  
city or town Trenton City  vicinity  
state New Jersey code NJ county Mercer code 021 zip code 08608

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally.  See continuation sheet for additional comments.

Amy Cradic 1/25/08  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Amy Cradic, Assistant Commissioner Natural & Historic Resources/DSHPO  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet for additional comments.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action  
Edson H. Beall 4.30.08

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		<b>Total</b>

**Name of related multiple property listing**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Religion/Religious Facility

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Religion/Religious Facility

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Colonial Revival

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Brick, Stucco

roof Slate

other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See Continuation Sheet.

8 Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria considerations

(mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Military
Social History

Period of Significance

1739-1896

Significant Dates

1776
1777

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

William Plasket (1739)
George Fuhrman (1872)

Primary location of additional data

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore College
Trentoniana Collection at Trenton Free Public Library

**Trenton Friends Meeting House**

Name of Property

**Mercer County, New Jersey**

County and State

**10. Geographical Data**Acreage of property Less than 1 acre**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	18	520220	4452380	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2				4			

 See continuation sheet**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**name/title Sheila Koehler, Associateorganization Westfield Architects & Preservation Consultants date 8/2/07street & number 425 White Horse Pike telephone (856) 547-0465city or town Haddon Heights state New Jersey zip code 08035-1706**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets****Maps**A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.**Photographs**Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Trenton Meeting of Friendsstreet & number 142 East Hanover Street telephone (609) 278-4551city or town Trenton state NJ zip code 08608**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.470 *et seq.*)**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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### NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

#### **SUMMARY**

The Trenton Friends Meeting House is a two-story, stuccoed brick building with a stone foundation and a multi-cross-gabled slate roof. (photographs 1, 2, 3, and 4) The exterior features a five-sided bay on the east side, two lunette windows, doors with bolection moldings and door hoods, and a denticulated cornice. Most windows on the building are six-over-six, double-hung sash, along with two taller, nine-over-nine, double-hung sash windows on the south elevation, and four-over-four sash in the bay. The current building is a result of three major programs of construction that date to 1739, 1872, and 1896 and one major program of repair and alteration in 1840. The current appearance generally reflects the renovation and expansion in the Italianate style in 1872 and the further expansion in the Colonial Revival style in 1896. The building is set in the southeast corner of a roughly rectangular, flat lot in an urban neighborhood made up of commercial and residential buildings. Grave markers are set in rows on the lot to the west of the building and to the north of the building along the east side. A parking lot is located on the northern half of the lot. (photograph 3) A paved walkway connects the parking lot to the three exterior doors. Mature deciduous trees and shrubs are located around the building. The lot is bounded by a wrought iron fence along the south and east boundaries, a brick wall along the north boundary, and a building along the west. The property is in good condition and has not been significantly altered since 1896.

#### **BUILDING EVOLUTION**

The Trenton Friends meeting house was constructed in 1739 with major alterations/additions in 1872 and 1896. Full details of the 1739 building, particularly on the interior, are not known. A few nineteenth-century references provide some information. The building was a two-story rectangular building constructed of red brick laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers, and covered with a gable roof, according to most sources. One source notes that the date 1739 was laid in glazed headers in one of the gable-end walls. The south elevation, facing Hanover Street, was an eaves elevation. The entrance was reportedly located along this elevation. The interior was reported to have been a single space on the first floor and a room (presumably a gallery) on the second floor that was used as a school room and for the men's business meetings. The facing benches were located against the north wall.

In 1840, the reported exterior changes included moving the entrance to the west elevation, replacing the old entrance with a window, and stuccoing the exterior, while interior changes included extensive replacement of floor boards, carpentry repairs to window frames and possibly trim, and moving the facing benches to the east wall. A photograph taken in 1869 shows the west and south elevations. It shows a symmetrical, three-bay, two-story south elevation with six-over-six sash windows with three-panel shutters on the first floor and smaller windows with closed shutters on the second floor. There is a shallow box cornice directly above the second floor windows. The roof is covered with wood shingles.

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The north elevation is presumed to have been similar or identical to the south elevation. The west elevation was a gable-end elevation with two windows flanking a door at the first floor level. The door has a door hood, which is mentioned in the contract for the 1840 work. At the second floor level there are two more shuttered windows of the same size as those on the second floor of the south elevation. The appearance of the east elevation is not known.

In 1872, a new program of renovation and enlargement was undertaken, altering the appearance of the building. The 1739 building was enlarged by an addition on the west side of a two-story, stuccoed brick building with a gable roof running perpendicular to the original roof. This new addition carried through the use of six-over-six sash windows from the earlier building, even as the windows in the east two bays on the south (and presumably north) elevation were replaced with tall nine-over-nine sash windows. Two new doorways were added, one on the south elevation and one on the west. The doors were typical of the late nineteenth century, as were the door hoods, supported on curved brackets. A five-sided bay was constructed on the east elevation. The entire cornice on the building was replaced at this time with the denticulated cornice that is still present on the building. On the interior, the new space on the first floor served as a vestibule with a single staircase up to the second floor, where the gallery had been extended over the new space to provide a large meeting room that could be separated from the worship space below by sliding paneled shutters above the gallery half-wall. The doors and trim were replaced and the walls were replastered. Tiers were built into the floor of the bay in the east wall, creating additional room for the facing benches.

The last major addition/alteration to the building took place in 1896. A new section was built along the north elevation of the combined 1739/1872 building. This new space also used six-over-six sash windows and continued the cornice from the 1739/1872 section. On the east elevation, two windows each on the first and second floors were paired, unlike any of the other windows in the building. The second floor windows on that elevation were separated from a louvered, semi-circular attic opening by a wood panel, another atypical detail in the building. The interior of the 1896 section was designed for flexibility. At the first floor level, the library was separated from the social area by folding sash doors. The social area was open to the worship area due to the removal of a section of the north wall of the worship area (1739 section). A new door was also added at the north end of the west elevation and was presumably separated from the library by a vestibule. That vestibule later became the pantry and bathrooms. At the second floor level, the room at the west end was designed as a kitchen, while the middle and east rooms could be joined by opening a set of folding sash doors. The south wall of the east room had sliding paneled shutters over a half wall to match the gallery. A door also provided direct access from the middle room to the original gallery/meeting room. The finishes in the 1896 section were not matched to the earlier section.

The meeting house has been substantially unchanged since the 1896 renovations. The first floor vestibule in the northwest corner, as noted above, became a pantry and bathrooms over time and the sliding panel shutters in the south wall of the 1896 east second floor room were removed and replaced with a stud wall and plaster. No other

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major changes to the building have been noted. On the site, the nineteenth-century wood fence was replaced with iron and the grave markers have been moved around. A horse shed that was located along the northern edge of the property in the nineteenth century has been replaced by a parking lot.

### CURRENT APPEARANCE

#### *Exterior Description*

The south elevation serves as the facade of the building. This asymmetrical elevation is four bays wide and two stories high. (photograph 1) The walls and foundation are both stuccoed, with a slight water table marking the top of the foundation. The eastern three bays mark the extent of the original 1739 building, but the elevation does not read as the original building plus an addition. Instead, the eastern two bays contain two tall, nine-over-nine, double-hung sash windows beneath a box cornice at the eaves. The cornice consists of a denticulated bed molding set between two ovolo moldings and an upper cornice comprising a cyma recta molding over an ovolo, a bead, and a cyma reversa. The western two bays are divided from the eastern two by a shallow pilaster. This pilaster and a matching pilaster at the west end of the elevation together visually support the cornice returns of a gable end that has the same cornice as the eastern half. Six-over-six, double-hung sash are located in the east bay and the second floor of the west bay. The windows are set within plain, unmolded frames within stucco that projects beyond the face of the frames. This is typical of all of the windows on the building. A double-leaf entrance with bolection panel moldings is set beneath a hipped-roof door hood supported on carved, foliated brackets. Two stone steps, the second providing a wide stoop, with a basic wrought iron railing, lead up to the door. Other features on the elevation include the lunette in the gable end and a bronze commemorative plaque on the east pilaster. A second plaque is set into the plaster at the east end of the elevation.

The west elevation is two stories high and five bays wide. (photograph 2) The elevation is asymmetrical, with windows in the first, third, and fourth bays from the south end and doors in the second and fifth at the first floor level. A small four-pane sash window has been added between the fourth and fifth bays. At the second floor level, windows are located in all but the second bay from the south end and all are set high in the wall, cutting into the bed molding of the cornice. The windows are all six-over-six, double-hung sash and all have plain trim and are recessed from the face of the stucco. The windows in the north two bays, which date to 1896, however, are slightly smaller and have larger, projecting sills than those in the southern three bays, which date to 1872. Basement windows are located in the first and third bays from the south.

The south door consists of double-leaf doors with four recessed panels with applied panel moldings and plain trim around the opening. The door hood is similar to that on the south elevation, but has less-ornate brackets without foliate carvings on them. A single concrete step with a basic wrought iron railing leads up to the door. The north entrance has a single, four-panel door beneath a door hood matching that over the south door. The north elevation is two stories high and seven bays across. (photograph 3) It is made asymmetrical by the change in roof line from an eaves over the eastern three bays to a gable end over the western four with an

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exterior brick chimney in between. The elevation is also made asymmetrical by the window placement in the western bays. All of the windows are six-over-six, double-hung sash with plain frames and projecting sills. Those on the first floor are taller than those on the second, with the exception of the window in the west bay, which is a smaller window. In the eastern three bays, the windows are placed symmetrically and, as on the west elevation, the second floor windows cut into the bed molding of the cornice. In the western four bays, three regular windows are grouped in the second, third, and fourth bays from the west, with a smaller window in the first bay, as described above. There are three second floor windows located in the first, third, and fourth bays from the west end. Four basement windows are located across the elevation, between the two outer bays in the eastern half and roughly beneath the second and fourth bays from the west end in the western half. The brick chimney that divides the elevation has been stuccoed and painted up to the level of the raking cornice.

The east elevation is two stories high and three bays wide. (photograph 4) This elevation comprises the 1739/1872 section as its southern half and the 1896 section as its northern half. Each half is gabled, with the two gables intersecting at their midpoints in a combined cornice return. The cornice matches that on the other elevations. The southern half of the elevation consists of a five-sided bay with four-over-four, double-hung sash windows in the bays to either side of the center. The bay has a standing seam metal roof and a cornice to match that on the building. A small basement window with a cover over it at grade is located in the center wall of the bay. A lunette with a wood frame with louvers is located directly above the bay roof. A date stone above the lunette reads "1739/1872." The northern half of the elevation consists of a pair of six-over-six, double-hung sash windows in the southern bay at the first floor level and a single window in the north bay at that level, as well as a smaller pair of six-over-six, double-hung sash windows in the southern bay at the second floor level set beneath a panel separating them from another louvered lunette above. A date stone located above this lunette reads "1896." A bulkhead entrance to the basement is located beneath the paired windows.

### *Interior Description*

#### **Basement**

The basement of the Trenton Friends Meeting House is divided into three sections. The earliest section is the crawlspace beneath the 1739 section. It is bounded along its west side by a full basement under the 1872 addition. (photograph 6) Both of these sections are bounded along their north side by the full basement under the 1896 addition. (photograph 5) The 1739 section has ironstone walls to the south and east, a brick wall to the west, which was apparently rebuilt at some point, and a partial ironstone wall with a large area missing and rebuilt as brick and brick piers on the north side. The north and west walls of this section were originally the foundations of the north and west exterior walls. In addition to the opening in the north wall due to previous collapse that has been rebuilt, there is a smaller opening in the ironstone portion of the north wall featuring board-and-batten shutters and a large opening in the west brick wall. Within that latter opening is a partial brick wall, built in a semicircle rising from the floor level of the newer sections of basement up to the level of the dirt



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in the crawlspace. Within the crawlspace, there is a center dividing wall built of rubblestone that runs north-south, as well as additional wood support structures for the floor joists, which run east-west.

To the west of the 1739 crawlspace, the full basement under the 1872 addition is formed by the west brick wall of the 1739 space and three ironstone foundation walls. (photograph 6) The floor has a concrete slab. A small window is located in the west wall near the south end. The joists run east-west and stairs to the first floor are located in the northwest corner. An opening in the north wall leads into the full basement under the 1896 addition. (photograph 5) This last section of basement also has ironstone walls, except on its south side, which is the north wall of the 1739 section. Four small windows are located along the north wall, along with another window in the west wall. A bulkhead with stone walls is located in the east wall, adjacent to the south wall. This space also has a concrete slab on the floor. The joists run north-south and are supported at their center point by a beam on brick piers.

### **First Floor**

The first floor interior is divided into a main worship area and several smaller spaces. The worship area is enclosed by the 1739 walls, with the addition of a bay at the east end. The benches face east, while the facing benches, located on two tiers in the bay, face west. This space is carpeted, has uniform-width, vertical beaded-board wainscoting with a cap rail below plastered walls, and a plaster ceiling. (photographs 15, 16, 17, 18) Along the south wall, there are three windows, two tall, nine-over-nine sash windows and a smaller, six-over-six window at the west end of the wall. (photograph 16) The trim around these windows, which is generally consistent throughout the 1739/1872 sections, consists of an outer backband, a cyma recta, a fascia, and a transition bead at the jamb. (photograph 19)

Along the west wall, a deep gallery projects out into the room. (photograph 15) The half-wall of the gallery has five horizontal panels with bolection moldings. (photograph 20) The sliding shutters above the half wall each have three recessed vertical panels. A molded cornice separates the lintel above the sliding shutters and the ceiling. Beneath the gallery, a six-over-six window is flanked by two four-panel doors. This arrangement is the reverse of the 1840 arrangement which had two windows flanking the original entrance door. As a result, the wainscoting beneath the window has been infilled. The window and doors lead into the 1872 vestibule.

The north wall was altered during the 1896 renovations. (photograph 18) A six-over-six sash window is located near the west end of the wall, beneath the gallery. This window was presumably an exterior window prior to the construction of the 1896 section. It now faces into the library. Between the gallery and the east wall, the wall has been removed at the first floor level. The wall above is held up by a single post. Above the opening, the same horizontal paneling found on the gallery half wall continues across the wall. The wall above the paneling is plaster, but the wall itself is frame and is therefore substantially thinner than the other walls in the section. The east wall is plain plaster around the bay. (photograph 17) The opening into the bay is a flattened arch and the floor at the bay is tiered for the facing benches.

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To the west of the 1739 section, which is the worship area, a vestibule was constructed in 1872. (photographs 11 and 12) This space has a cork tile floor, plaster walls and ceiling, and a baseboard with a cyma recta cap. A double-leaf door entrance is located in the south wall. A second set of doors is located near the south end of the west wall. To the north of that second entrance is a set of half-turn stairs with turned spindles and a turned newel post. Wainscoting similar to that in the worship area runs up the west wall along the staircase, along with a wall-mounted railing. The staircase crosses a six-over-six sash window. The staircase wall is also beaded, as is the section of wall projecting down from the ceiling under the upper run of the staircase. A six-panel door beneath the staircase leads to the basement staircase. The north wall of the vestibule contains two doors, a narrow four-panel door leading into the men's room and a pair of narrow four-panel doors leading into the pantry and library. Two doors, flanking a window opening, are located in the east wall, which is shared with the worship space.

The space in the northwest corner of the first floor is divided into a pantry, with a vinyl floor, wainscoting, plaster walls and ceiling and modern cabinets, and a small women's bathroom. (photograph 7) Each room has a window in the north wall, both without interior trim. The library is an ell-shaped room to the east of the pantry. (photographs 8, 9, and 10) It has a carpeted floor, plaster walls and ceiling with wainscoting similar to that in the worship area, and a row of six folding sash doors along the east wall. Each door has nine frosted panes above two slightly-raised vertical panels. The trim around this opening is similar to that in the 1739/1872 sections. The northeast room on the first floor, called the social area, is open to the worship area on its south side. The floor is carpeted, the walls and ceiling are plaster with the same wainscoting as in the worship area. There are three six-over-six windows in the north wall and three in the east (one single and one pair). (photograph 14) None of the windows have interior trim. The west wall contains the folding sash doors connecting the social area with the library. (photograph 13)

### **Second Floor**

The 1739 section is a two-story space with a gallery over the western portion of the space. That same gallery extends over the 1872 foyer, creating a first and second floor. The stairs in the 1872 foyer lead to a small landing from which a door on the right provides access to the gallery, now called the conference room, and a door on the left leads into the kitchen. The conference room has a wood floor, plaster walls with a baseboard with cyma recta cap, and a plaster ceiling that slopes with the roof line above. (photographs 26 and 27) The south wall contains two six-over-six sash windows, as does the west wall. The north wall steps in at the location of the stairs, second floor landing, and a small closet to the east of the stairs and then out to the original north wall location. A sash door with four panes over two vertical panels leads to the stair landing, while a second door leads directly to the First Day school room. A window provides light into the closet from the short east wall around the closet. The east wall is the gallery wall overlooking the worship area. The half wall is finished with vertical beaded board.

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The 1896 section across the north of the building is divided into three spaces on the second floor. In the northwest corner, there is a kitchen with a linoleum floor, plaster walls and ceiling, and two windows in the west wall and one in the north, none of which have interior trim. (photograph 21) A sash door with four panes and two vertical panels and typical trim in the south wall leads to the stair landing. A closet with wainscoting, a four-panel door, and typical trim is located in the northeast corner of the room. A similar four-panel door at the north end of the east wall leads into the First Day school room. To the south of that door, a pass-through with a paneled door also connects the two rooms. Built-in cabinets, possibly original to the 1896 section, are located along the east wall to the south of the pass-through.

The middle room on the second floor in the 1896 section is the First Day school room. (photographs 22 and 23) The room has wood floors, plaster walls with a high, vertical beaded-board wainscoting, and a plaster ceiling. This room has two sash doors similar to the others on the second floor in the south wall leading to a closet and the conference room. The east wall contains the pass-through and door that connect to the kitchen. The north wall contains two windows without interior trim and the east wall contains a row of folding doors similar to those between the library and the social area directly below.

The room on the second floor in the northeast corner of the building is the dining room. (photographs 24 and 25) The finishes match those in the First Day school room. Three windows are located in the north wall, while another pair is located in the east wall.

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### NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

#### SUMMARY

The Trenton Friends Meeting House is significant under National Register Criterion A for its association with events important to the history of Trenton and the events surrounding the battles of Trenton of 26 December 1776 and 2 January 1777. The building meets Criterion Consideration A as a religious building that is significant for its association with important events in local and national history. Members of the Religious Society of Friends (also known as Quakers) were among the first settlers of the Trenton area. The Friends had been present in Trenton since its settlement in 1679 and had held meetings in members' homes since 1685. In 1734, they received permission to hold First Day (Sunday) meetings and by 1737, their strength was such that they requested to build a meeting house. The Meeting House was completed around 1739. Members of the Friends Society continued to be integrally involved in the development of the town through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Trenton Friends Meeting House represents the importance of this segment of society that had significant influence over the growth of the town and lifestyle of its citizens during Trenton's first two hundred years. The Meeting House is also significant for its association with the battles of Trenton on 26 December 1776 and 2 January 1777. These battles were considered a turning point of the Revolutionary War. Washington was facing a cold winter with underprovisioned, demoralized troops, was having difficulty rallying the militias, and was facing the mass expiration of enlistments on the first of the year. His surprise attack on the Hessians stationed at Trenton on 26 December 1776 (and his subsequent tactics on 2 January 1777 that led to the defeat of British troops both at Trenton that day and later at Princeton) had a major psychological impact on the troops and the local citizens, who had seen the British as invincible. The Hessians had commandeered the Trenton Friends Meeting House for quarters. It was reportedly damaged by cannon balls during the fighting, and was near the site of the Hessians' surrender in an apple orchard. The Meeting House was once again used by British troops on the 2 January 1777. The Meeting House is one of the few buildings involved in the Battles of Trenton that is still extant.

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Members of the Religious Society of Friends landed at Burlington in 1678. Over the next several years, settlements around the area grew. Trenton, then called the Falls of the Delaware, was among them. One Friend, Mahlon Stacy, settled and built a grist mill along the Assunpink Creek in 1679.<sup>1</sup> The Monthly Meeting at Chesterfield, now Crosswicks, was the center of Quaker activities and influence in the area. In the 11<sup>th</sup> Month 7<sup>th</sup> Day 1685 minutes of the Chesterfield Monthly Meeting, it is recorded "It is agreed that a meeting be kept at ye Falls on Fifth day of ye week...one day at Mahlon Stacy's – one day at Thomas Lambert ..."<sup>2</sup> The minutes of the Monthly Meeting for 12<sup>th</sup> Month 1<sup>st</sup> Day 1693 record "It is agreed by this meeting that a week-day meeting be held every 4<sup>th</sup> day of ye week at ye Falls in ye School house."<sup>3</sup> By 1690, the Monthly Meeting was rotated through six private homes, three in the Chesterfield area and three around the Falls.<sup>4</sup> Early discussions regarding the construction of a meeting house included the idea of constructing one at Chesterfield and another at Trenton, but eventually the decision was made to build a single building at Chesterfield. By 1695, the Friends had

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decided to establish burying grounds at both the Falls and Chesterfield, suggesting that there was an established settlement of some size in Trenton by that time.<sup>5</sup>

In 1734, Friends in Trenton were granted permission to hold meetings on First Days for a trial period of six months. The minutes note "Our friend, Isaac Harrow, with other Friends, requested liberty to keep a meeting for worship at Trent Town on first days, hoping it may be of good service. Therefore this meeting grants them their request for six months, and longer, as it may be found of good service."<sup>6</sup> In the Chesterfield Monthly Meeting Minutes of 12<sup>th</sup> Month 6<sup>th</sup> Day 1734, it was recorded that the "Trentown friends reported their meeting is well kept up, and is of good service."<sup>7</sup> The meetings continued and in 1737, William Morris and Isaac Harrow requested on behalf of Friends in Trenton permission to construct a meeting house. The Monthly Meeting gave permission and in 1738, Joseph Reckless was appointed to draw a deed for a meeting house and graveyard in Trenton to be conveyed to several of the Friends in Trenton. The land was reportedly given by Mahlon Stacy, Jr., a West Jersey proprietor.<sup>8</sup>

The meeting house is reported to have been completed by 1739, although there are later references to money in relation to the meeting house in the Chesterfield Monthly Meeting minutes. The Monthly Meeting minutes of 11<sup>th</sup> Month 4<sup>th</sup> Day 1740 note "William Morris made application to this meeting setting forth that there is occasion for twenty-five or thirty pounds he being in advance for the Meeting House at Trentown & in behalf of Friends at Trentown desires that this Meeting would endeavor to raise twenty-five pounds at least." The Monthly Meeting minutes of 1<sup>st</sup> Month 5<sup>th</sup> Day 1741 notes "The Quarterly Meeting desires each Monthly Meeting to make a collection towards building the Meeting House at Trentown. This Meeting requests Aaron Hews, Michael Newbold, John Middleton, Samuel Satterthwaite, and Thomas Potts to procure subscriptions, collect the same and pay what is wanting to William Morris." These entries either suggest a slightly later date of construction/completion or indicate that the costs were not paid in full when the building was constructed. The first entry has typically been interpreted to mean that Morris was owed money after the completion of the meeting house for cost overruns that he had financed. It is unclear whether the Quarterly Meeting is referring to the same amount as the earlier entry or to different funds in the second entry. No mention is made in the minutes of the completion of the building.<sup>9</sup>

The original building is described in documents. An 1896 newspaper article stated:

The first meeting house was a plain brick building, two stories in height, the upper story being used for a school room and for the men's business meeting, the lower floor not being divided, as was usual in Friends meeting houses.

The entrance was on what is now Hanover street, over which there was placed in the wall a stone bearing the date 1739, the year in which the house was built....The gallery seats were on the sides directly opposite the entrance. The house remained in this manner for one hundred years, or probably a little over.<sup>10</sup>

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An 1872 article in the *Friends Intelligencer* notes:

...This agrees with the date (1739) placed with blue glazed bricks in one end of the house, and well remembered by some of us who were school boys here from 1820 to 1830."<sup>11</sup>

Finally, an unpublished, undated paper (written after 1872 and possibly before 1896) in the archives at the Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore College provides the following information:

The Friends Meeting House was fresh built by William Plasket during the reign of King George II (1739) and was a plain red brick building of blue headers. The date of its building was put on by our Thomas Royal an apprentice to William Plasket. The entrance was first where it is now but it fronted on Montgomery Street therefore its entrance was in the end of the building. The facing benches were just as they are now, but there was [sic] only two rows of seats for the members with a long isle [sic] between them, and their [sic] was a long gallery with two entrance [sic] to is [sic] over each side one for the woman [sic] and one for the men.<sup>12</sup>

William Plasket was a Friend who purchased 12 acres of land in Trenton on the 18th day of January 1734. This property was apparently located directly to the west of what would later be the lot for the Trenton Friends meeting house. He also purchased a half-acre lot on Assunpink Creek beginning at a small bridge on the east side of King Street on the 19th of June 1734. He married at the Falls meeting house on the 29th day of October in 1734. Plasket built a house on the lot on the Assunpink Creek in 1735 and, due to distance, was removed from the Falls meeting and given a certificate for the Chesterfield Monthly Meeting, which was read and approved. Plasket and his wife were active members of the Chesterfield Meeting and involved citizens of Trenton. Plasket is described in at least one document as a mason. He not only constructed the Trenton meeting house, he was one of the committee to whom the meeting house deed was conveyed. Plasket was also one of first councilmen for Trenton when it was incorporated as a town in 1745. Plasket's will, made shortly before he died in 1748, disposed of four lots of land, at least two with dwellings, to his sons and cash legacies for his daughters. The inventory of his belongings was calculated at a worth of over 423 pounds. Plasket's life is a testimony to the political involvement, economic wealth, and good standing of Friends in Trenton in the first half of the eighteenth century.<sup>13</sup>

The Meeting House then stood in the same configuration for about one hundred years. The Meeting flourished until the Revolutionary War. The repeated commandeering of the meeting house for soldiers' quarters, the number of members read out of meeting for supporting military activities, and other privations of the war generally combined to reduce the numbers who attended meetings, when they could be held.<sup>14</sup> By 1797, however, the meeting had revived and become strong enough to be named a preparative meeting.<sup>15</sup> In 1827, when the Religious Society of Friends experienced a schism, the "Hicksites," followers of Elias Hicks, were stronger in number at the Trenton Friends Meeting and so retained the meeting house, while the Orthodox found other accommodations.<sup>16</sup> By 1840, the meeting house was in considerable disrepair, having had little in the way

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of maintenance during the previous century. Extensive carpentry repairs were made, the entrance was moved to the west wall from the south wall, and the benches were rearranged on the interior.<sup>17</sup> The exterior was stuccoed at this time, most likely to cover the exterior alterations, as well as possibly to cover the by-then old-fashioned patterned brickwork. In 1872, the meeting house was again deemed in disrepair, as well as being considered inadequate to meet the needs of the Meeting.<sup>18</sup> An addition was constructed on the west side to provide a vestibule and a meeting room for the men's monthly business meeting and the exterior appearance was substantially altered, although the shape of the original building could still be delineated. By 1896, the space was again determined to be inadequate for the needs of the society. An addition was built along the north side of the building, providing several flexible new spaces, most of which could be opened to the worship area or closed off for other activities.<sup>19</sup> The Meeting has continued to worship and conduct other religious and community-oriented activities since that time. The building remains substantially unchanged since the 1896 period and the lines of the original building are still easily read on both the exterior and interior.

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

#### *Social Context*

The history of the Society of Friends is one of gradual transformation, from its inception as a group focused on religious and social rebellion in England in the mid-seventeenth century to a major force in the early settlement of New Jersey and Pennsylvania through its members' presence in significant numbers, their economic wealth, and their involvement in early government in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries to a guiding force on social issues and an important contributor to the growing economy in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The history of the Friends in Trenton mirrors the larger history of the whole Society and the Trenton Friends Meeting House, which served as a religious and social center for the Friends community in Trenton, is representative of that history. Furthermore, the building's evolution over time reflects the resurgence of the Trenton Friends Meeting during the second half of the nineteenth century.

The Religious Society of Friends originated as a group of political and religious radicals during the English Revolution of the 1640s. They were one of several religious groups that challenged the authority of the Anglican Church. They also denounced the ruling class for exhibiting what they saw as gluttony, corruption, and arrogance and rejected the traditional social hierarchy that had prevailed for centuries because they believed that Christ's grace is given freely to everyone and thus that everyone should be treated as equals. They were penalized for dissenting from the Church of England through fines and imprisonment in England. Many Friends traveled to the North American colonies beginning in the 1650s to seek religious freedom, among other reasons. Away from the environment in which the group had first developed, the focus of the Friends began to change, gradually changing from political to social activism, embracing pacifism, and turning toward monitoring the behavior of their members. By the time the Toleration Act of 1689 was passed in England, allowing freedom of worship to Protestants without penalty (subject to oaths of allegiance), Friends' settlements in the colonies that promoted religious tolerance, particularly in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, had already been established.<sup>20</sup>

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The history of the town of Trenton is intrinsically linked to the Friends community. The land on which Trenton developed was purchased by a group of Friends from Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire England. The town was settled in 1679 by one of the Friends, Mahlon Stacy.<sup>21</sup> By 1685, Friends in the Trenton area were permitted to hold weekday meetings, demonstrating that a Friends community had been established in the area.<sup>22</sup> Settlers of other religious persuasions moved to the area soon after. By 1703 and 1712, respectively, the Episcopalian and Presbyterian Churches had established congregations in the area.<sup>23</sup> From the time of Mahlon Stacy's settlement through the mid-eighteenth century, Friends had a prominent role in the civic affairs of Trenton. Stacy served as a justice of the peace and member of the Colonial Assembly. Numerous other members of the Friends community in Trenton served in public capacities including: justice of the peace; assemblyman; Council members; registrars; constables; and high sheriff of Burlington County.<sup>24</sup> Friends in the colonies began their withdrawal from political life in the mid-eighteenth century when the advent of the French and Indian War highlighted their philosophical differences with the British and colonial governments. It should be noted, however, that the Friends' withdrawal from public life in Trenton was gradual, lasting through the rest of the century, and that they continued to be important to the town's economy. For instance, Thomas Cadwalader, the first Mayor of Trenton, was a prominent physician and man of wealth who headed many cultural and scientific societies (Cadwalader was disowned for participating in war activities). His son, Colonel Lambert Cadwalader, was a member of both the Continental and Federal Congresses. Stacy Potts, whose house was commandeered by the Hessians as a headquarters during the Revolutionary War, was another Friend of wealth and property in the town. Other eighteenth century Friends were prominent citizens involved in businesses such as tanning and stove manufacturing (Hancock Stoves).<sup>25</sup>

The construction of the meeting house in 1739 (the second religious structure in the town) showed the strength of the Friends community in Trenton during the first half of the eighteenth century. The Friends did not compose the largest percentage of the populace, but the construction of the building in brick in a town that was largely composed of frame buildings was an indication of the intended permanence of the Society. At the same time, its location, a block away from the other important buildings in what was, at the time, still a small village may have reflected the gradual philosophical separation of the Friends from the rest of the community due to their differences from the majority of the population in Trenton and their growing tendency to look inward, a practice which extended to their social relationships. Finally, the use of the glazed headers to form the date in the gable end appears to be the first use of patterned brickwork on a Quaker meetinghouse in New Jersey, representing the introduction of this practice, which was already in use in finer brick houses in Southern New Jersey, to the construction of meetinghouses. This may also be the earliest example of patterned brickwork in what is now Mercer County. Later uses of patterned brickwork in the area, which include the John Rogers House (1751), Brearley House (1761), the Beck House (1769), the Isaac Pearson House (1773), and the Abbott-DeCou House (1797), may be a reflection of the influence of the Trenton Friends Meeting House, since common building practices spread among Quakers through the familiarity with the work of other Quakers. As the central meeting place for Friends, the meeting house, from the time of its construction, housed the on-going



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discussions and reflections that resulted in the evolving Friends' philosophies about the personal, social, religious, commercial, and political behavior of its members. Its significance derives not from its association with one significant person of the period, but rather from its representation of the communal agreement on standards of behavior in the community and as a community.

Even as their role in the political world was changing during the eighteenth century, the Society of Friends spent more time considering ethical questions in light of its beliefs and on monitoring its members adherence to the codes of behavior that the Society had developed. While the Society gained members through birth and through conviction in the eighteenth century, it also lost members through disownment for their failure to see the error of their ways. They particularly lost members during periods of war, when any form of support for the war could be grounds for disownment. Thus the Society did not grow at the rate they otherwise might have at the same time that their members' focus was moving from the development and governance of the settlement to the development of social philosophies based on their faith. The members of the Society in Trenton in the second half of the eighteenth century continued to be an economic force in Trenton, but gradually moved from being a political force to a social force through their testimonies and their actions. Among the social and political reform causes undertaken by the Friends were opposition to war, opposition to slavery advocacy for, the right to education for African-Americans, prison reform, and reform of the treatment of the mentally ill. Support also developed over the course of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for women's equality, including equal education for women, and public education available to all.<sup>26</sup> Consideration of Trenton Friends' actions on some of these issues illustrates their practical contributions and significance to social causes in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The history of Quaker thought on slavery dates back to George Fox, a founder of the Religious Society of Friends, who spoke against the owning of another person. Over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Society was engaged in on-going dialogue regarding whether it was a sin or not to own slaves. Some believed it was not addressed by religious texts and was therefore permissible, while others believed that owning another person (and the acts necessary to retain ownership and to control that person) went against the exhortation by Jesus to do unto others as you would have done unto you and was therefore a sin. In addition, there were financial implications to manumission for those Friends who did own slaves, which most likely influenced their views on the issue. There was no initial consensus, therefore, and there were on-going discussions, both in meeting houses and through publications. Many of the Friends who were wealthy enough to own slaves were also prominent in politics. As their power declined toward the middle of the eighteenth century, the sentiment in favor of the abolition of slavery grew, culminating in the decision in 1776 by the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (to which Chesterfield Monthly Meeting and therefore Trenton Meeting as well belonged) that the Friends in the Meeting must either liberate their slaves or be disowned.<sup>27</sup> The Burlington Quarterly Meeting recorded its progress in convincing the members of the various meetings under its care to free their slaves. The issue was addressed at many quarterly meetings from 1774 to 1778, when it was replaced

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first with a concern for offering advice and instruction to freed slaves and later in the 1780s to religious meetings for freed African Americans, perhaps reflecting the small number of slaves left among the Friends.<sup>28</sup>

In addition to the Friends' efforts among their own members to secure freedom for their slaves, the Trenton Association for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery was formed in 1802. It "pledged itself to ameliorate the conditions of the slaves, to secure the gradual abolition of slavery, and to help all blacks and other people of color."<sup>29</sup> They also took upon themselves the task of supervising the morals and conduct of the freed men, as well as instructing the young, seeing that they attended school and learned trades, and assisting in job placement. The Association stated that although it might not realize its goals in the life term of the Association, that it would be satisfied to have laid the groundwork for future generations of African Americans to build a life of social happiness.<sup>30</sup>

Friends continued to be involved in the abolition movement until the Civil War, although major participation by Friends receded in the 1830s in the wake of the increasing organization by free people of color and a change in the nature of the movement from demands for gradual manumission with supervision and assistance by Friends and others to calls for the immediate abolition of all slavery.<sup>31</sup> Some of the reduction in effort in New Jersey may also have reflected the gradual manumission that was underway due to the law of 1804 requiring that all slaves born after a certain date be freed at the ages of 21 for women and 25 for men.<sup>32</sup>

Friends also championed a cause related to slavery and its abolition: the education of African Americans. Even as Friends were struggling with the question of slavery and its abolition, calls were repeated in both the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and Burlington Quarterly Meeting (both of which include Trenton Meeting) over time for Friends to teach the slaves within their care and eventually for them to teach their slaves with the purpose of preparing them to support themselves as free men and women. Efforts in the middle decades of the eighteenth century were unorganized, but in the 1780s and 1790s, as the number of slaves owned by Friends began to decrease, more organized efforts were made to teach both slaves and free people of color.<sup>33</sup>

The Friends in Trenton supported this movement through the formation of a school for African American men and women in 1790. Evidence of this is recorded in the minutes of the Society for the Free Instruction of Orderly Blacks and People of Colour in Philadelphia, which noted in its February 13th, 1790 meeting minutes: On information that a number of well-disposed persons have undertaken to instruct the blacks at Trenton, and are desirous to have a copy of our rules, John Biddle, Joseph Sansom, and Thomas Bartram are desired to write to them on our behalf, and furnish them with copies of our different regulations for their assistance and encouragement.<sup>34</sup> and on the 13th of March 1790:

The Committee appointed to furnish the Society at Trenton with copies of our rules, and write to them respecting their undertaking, report that service to have been performed; and a copy of the letter accompanying them being produced was read, and approved.<sup>35</sup>

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The letter, which is included in an appendix to the minutes dated February 16, 1790 reads in part:

We now affectionately salute and inform you, that it has been cause of encouragement and renewed strength to us to find that it has pleased the Author of mercy and love to affect your minds with the like benevolent sentiment towards this long benighted and oppressed race, which have for some time past engaged us to lend our hands in removing the veil which hath covered their understandings: that whilst the rulers of the land are liberating their bodies, they may also be enabled to learn those means of liberation for their immortal soul to which they have been unhappily kept too much strangers; as well as reputably to support the character of fellow citizens or countrymen, to which they are gradually advancing by breaking of that strong fetter of tyranny, ignorance.

Continue endeared Friends...may we with you continue with a perseverance [sic] that will prove the motives of our undertaking to be to pursue the good of these poor Africans in the way wherein we are engaged....<sup>36</sup>

A response, not recorded in the appendix but referenced in the April 10, 1790 minutes, was received, giving "a satisfactory account of [the Trenton group's] proceedings." The Philadelphia Society wrote once more in response on October 9, 1790:

We observe with pleasure that our labour has not been in vain, by the instances you mention of remarkable progress in some of those black people who have had the benefit of your instruction....[We] feel a wish to encourage you in the continuance of the arduous task that we have mutually undertaken. There is no reason to doubt that a just sense of the brotherly kindness and Christian duty of instructing the ignorant, and raising the depressed, will qualify us to encounter the difficulties which may attend the attempt.<sup>37</sup>

Although no more correspondence is indicated in the Philadelphia Society's minutes and the further fate of the Trenton Society is not known, the efforts by the Philadelphia and Trenton groups, as well as related groups in Burlington and Baltimore, Maryland represented "one of the pioneer efforts in the field of adult education designed to facilitate adjustments to the problems of social living...."<sup>38</sup> This effort was later followed by the Trenton Association for promoting the Abolition of Slavery in 1802, which was dedicated in part to teaching the freed people in order to allow them to be self-supporting, and by a First Day School started by the Trenton Friends Meeting in 1809.<sup>39</sup> The Friends First Day School effort failed due to lack of funding to pay the teacher, but inspired a First Day School supported by a society formed by a number of denominations in Trenton in 1811.<sup>40</sup> Friends continued in their education efforts through the remainder of the nineteenth century, especially after the Civil War, and into the twentieth. Members of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, of which Trenton was

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a part, established the Philadelphia Association for the Aid and Elevation of the Freedmen, which "helped the Negroes plant gardens and build cabins on government grants of land, opened stores for the necessities of life, and established schools from Washington, D.C., down to North Carolina and Tennessee. By 1870, the Association managed forty-seven schools and sixty-seven teachers and six thousand students."<sup>41</sup> A 1927 newspaper article indicates that the Trenton Friends were still involved in education for African Americans in the south in the first quarter of the twentieth century.<sup>42</sup>

In addition to their concern for the condition of African Americans, the Friends were also interested in the welfare of American Indians at the end of the eighteenth century. In 1795, the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting ran a subscription to raise funds for the American Indians. A subscription book for this purpose reads in part:

The interesting concern under which this meeting from time to time in years past has been exercised, and wherein relation to the former and present condition of the Indian Natives, and with reference to events and occurrences respecting them through a long course of years, being now in a solid manner revived, and spread with life over the meeting; to give the subject more fully that weight and deliberate consideration its importance calls for, the following friends are named, and also to report their sense, whether a fund might not be fitly appropriated for the desirable purpose of promoting the civilization and well-being of the Indians....The friends on the concern of this meeting relative to the Indian Natives, produced their report thereon, which being read and considered is united with being as follows....<sup>43</sup>

The committee report that follows notes the kindness of the Indians to the Friends' predecessors and the Friends own principles of peace and goodwill to men and concludes that their charitable exertions toward the Indians should include the principles of Christian religion, school learning, agriculture, and useful mechanical employments and that a subscription ought to be raised to fund this work. The report also references the need for government approval, as the Indians are now on lands agreed upon by treaty and are being protected, apparently, from bad influences by the government. A follow up report prepared shortly after notes in detail how the Indians were the original inhabitants of the land, that they made room for the colonists, that the colonists took over the land and subsistence of the Indians, and that it is now the Christian duty of the Friends to provide the Indians with the means to support themselves through agriculture and handicrafts. The subscription book concludes with letters from Indians to the Friends ranging over a period of some twenty years, touching on their desire to join the Friends' religion, describing the changes and privations they had suffered at the hands of the colonists, their recognition that their world was changing, their desire to be educated and to learn to support themselves, and their needs. The Friends of Trenton responded to the subscription by promising just under \$40.00, as recorded in the subscription book.<sup>44</sup>

Other issues on which Friends took action, and were addressed by other means than action by committees, were clearly documented in meeting minutes. The belief in education for women is a thread that runs through Quaker

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engaged at that time, including religious and social rehabilitation of prisoners, international peace efforts, post-war relief, education (including schools for African-Americans in the South), the sick, hospitals, and the welfare of African-Americans in Trenton. The article closes with this observation:

Quakers have lost whatever vision they once had of a rather mystical religion which would sweep the world of the "worldly." In its stead, they have come to hope humbly that they may aid the world to free itself of war and other violence. They have come to the conclusion that there is virtue in religious views other than their own. They are proud of their traditions of virtuous dealings and the uprightness they have demanded of themselves. They are even proud of many of the "disowned" Quakers of another day and regret only that the Society lost some of its best blood. The staunchness of those who would not be turned from their own convictions even by threat of disownment was a Quaker staunchness and they are proud of that.<sup>47</sup>

### *Military Context*

The early months of the Revolutionary War in 1776 produced defeats, inconclusive engagements, and heavy human losses for the Continental Army in New York. General George Washington retreated across New Jersey in the late fall, commanding just 4,000 ill-equipped and demoralized troops. Washington and his troops fell back through Princeton and Trenton in early December and crossed into Pennsylvania with all available boats on December 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 1776.

The British General, William Howe, decided to cease fighting for the winter. The Hessians, German soldiers under British command, were stationed in Trenton and Bordentown.<sup>48</sup> The Continental Army, as George Washington noted in a letter on December 18th, was in a desperate position.<sup>49</sup> Throughout the following week, Washington and his officers discussed an attack on the Hessian outposts. On the evening of December 25, 1776, the Continental troops crossed the Delaware and marched on Trenton in the midst of a snowstorm, reaching it on the morning of December 26, 1776 and catching the Hessian troops by surprise. The battle lasted a mere 90 minutes and netted Washington over eight hundred prisoners and new military provisions.<sup>50</sup>

The army and its prisoners returned to Pennsylvania immediately following the battle. Washington then sent General Nathanael Greene and 300 men back to Trenton to take the town and followed them with the main body of the army on December 30, 1776. The army remained there until January 2, 1777. In the wake of the first battle of Trenton, the army was revitalized, new enlistments ensued, and Washington was granted extraordinary powers by Congress. The Hessians were no longer thought to be invincible.<sup>51</sup>

The second battle of Trenton occurred on January 2, 1777. The British marched on Trenton, where the Continental Army had assumed the high ground south of Assunpink Creek. The Continental Army slowed the British progress enough that it was near dark by the time they reached Trenton and then turned back three charges on the single bridge across the Assunpink. The Continental Army, victorious for the night but facing

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near certain defeat the following day, marched out of Trenton during the night while fooling the British Army into believing it was still present. The army went on to capture Princeton the following day before marching to Morristown.<sup>52</sup> Washington's actions over this ten day period changed the early course of the war, buying him more time at a point when defeat seemed a near certainty and altering the psychology of the war from one of defeat and defense to one of possible victory. The Revolutionary War battles at Trenton are therefore highly significant in the history of the United States of America. The Trenton Friends Meeting House, located on what was then called Third Street (now Hanover Street), was occupied by Hessian Soldiers leading up to the first battle. The battle was fought in the area of the meeting house and the Hessians' surrender took place nearby. On the evening of January 2, 1777, the Meeting House was again near the fighting and was occupied that night by British Dragoons. An 1896 newspaper article recorded the following history.

We shall now turn back and note a few historical events of which these old walls bore silent witness. History relates that in 1776 the house was used for soldiers' quarters, when a part of the Continental Army were [sic] marching from Pennsylvania to Amboy, and again at the time of the battle of Trenton. One of our Friends remembers the mark of cannon balls in the east gable, and the marks left on the floor by the bayonets of soldiers. At the battle of Trenton the remnant of the Hessian forces were captured in the orchard then standing near the meeting house.<sup>53</sup>

This information is echoed in an unpublished history, which states, "This building was the headquarters of the Hessian's [sic] during the Revolutionary war and the foot prints and cuts and places where they had stuck their bayonets when [sic] in the floor...."<sup>54</sup>

While the Chesterfield Monthly Meeting Minutes did not acknowledge the events that took place at Trenton, the Burlington Quarterly Meeting minutes did address the occupation as a side note to its concerns about the stability of the Trenton Meeting. The minutes of 5<sup>th</sup> Month 26<sup>th</sup> Day 1777 note:

We the Committee appointed to Enquire into the State of the particular meetings of Bordentown and Trenton; and to assist the Monthly Meeting of Chesterfield so far as should appear needful having attended to the service, agree to report...that those belonging to the Meeting of Trenton had declined using the Meeting House here, as judging the Soldiers [sic] abuse of it had rendered it unsuitable to that Occasion, and had since met at a private house, where we understand it is but feebly supported....<sup>55</sup>

Reports to the Burlington Quarter for the duration of the war record that the Meeting was not regularly kept and that the Meeting House was repeatedly occupied by soldiers.<sup>56</sup> The Trenton Friends Meeting House is one of only a few remaining buildings occupied during the Battles of Trenton, the Old Barracks and the core of St. Michael's being two others.

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Mercer County, New Jersey

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### ENDNOTES

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2. Chesterfield Monthly Meeting Minutes, 11<sup>th</sup> Month 7<sup>th</sup> Day 1685.
3. Ibid.
4. Dowdell, 1.
5. Ibid.
6. T. Chalkley Matlock, *Brief Historical Sketches Concerning Friends Meetings of the Past and Present with Special Reference to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting*, vol. 1 (Moorestown, NJ, 1938), 197.
7. Dowdell, p.3; Chesterfield Monthly Meeting Minutes, 12<sup>th</sup> Month 6<sup>th</sup> Day 1734.
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9. Chesterfield Monthly Meeting Minutes, 1740-1741.
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14. Chesterfield Monthly Meeting Minutes, 1775-1781.
15. Burlington Quarter Meeting Minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> Month 27<sup>th</sup> Day 1797.
16. "Society of Friends Here in Trenton: The Marked Influence They Have Exercised Upon Local Business Circles," newspaper article 11/8/1896.
17. Trenton Preparative Meeting Minutes, 6<sup>th</sup> Month 18<sup>th</sup> Day 1840; Contract for repair work November 5, 1840; Matlock, 198.
18. Matlock, 198; Trenton Preparative Meeting Minutes, 1872-1873; "At Friends Meeting."
19. Trenton Preparative Meeting Minutes, 1895-1896; Matlock, 198.
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21. Edwin Robert Walker, LL.D., "The Colonial Period" in *A History of Trenton, 1679-1929*, vol.1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1929), 3.
22. Chesterfield Monthly Meeting Minutes, 11<sup>th</sup> Month 7<sup>th</sup> Day, 1685.
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24. Dowdell, 6.
25. "The Friends Meeting House," n.p. available from the Trenton Meeting of Friends; "Society of Friends Here in Trenton."
26. Margaret Hope Bacon, *The Quiet Rebels* (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1985), 151-175.
27. Christopher Densmore, "Friends in the Delaware Valley" in *Silent Witness: Quaker Meetinghouses in the Delaware Valley, 1695 to the Present* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, [2001]), p.1; Emma Marie Trusty, *The Underground Railroad: Ties that Bound Unveiled, A History of the Underground Railroad in Southern New Jersey from 1770 to 1861* (Philadelphia: Armed Literary, 1997), pp.31-35; Marion Manola Thompson Wright, *Education of Negroes in New Jersey* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1941), 14-18.
28. Burlington Quarter Minutes.
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30. Ibid.
31. Wright, 59.
32. Trusty, 36-37; Wright, 3-4.
33. Wright, 18-33.
34. Society for the Free Instruction of Orderly Blacks and People of Colour, minutes, 1790, 7.
35. Ibid., 8.
36. Ibid., Appendix no.I.
37. Ibid., Appendix no. III.
38. Wright, 27.
39. Ibid., 58, 71.
40. Ibid., 71.
41. Bacon, *The Quiet Rebels*, 119.
42. "Members Today Assist Charities of Every Creed," *Trenton Sunday Times-Advertiser*, 4/24/1927.
43. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, "Indian Affairs Subscription Book," 1.
44. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, "Indian Affairs Subscription Book," 2-9.
45. Bacon, *The Quiet Rebels*, pp.122-150; Margaret Hope Bacon, *Mother of Feminism: The Story of Quaker Women in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), 120-137.
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48. Frederick L. Ferris, "The Two Battles of Trenton" in *A History of Trenton, 1679-1929*, vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1929), 1-2.
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50. Ferris, 4-9.
51. Ferris, 10-11.
52. Ferris, 13-15.
53. "At Friends' Meeting."
54. Uncatalogued paper document, untitled, handwritten and typed, in the archives of the Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore College.
55. Burlington Quarter Meeting Minutes, 5<sup>th</sup> Month 26<sup>th</sup> Day 1777.
56. Burlington Quarter Meeting Minutes, 1777-1781. The Meeting House is listed as a "potential witness site" of the March of the Right Column of the Continental Army from Princeton to Trenton on 31 August 1781. [Robert A. Selig, *The Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route in the State of New Jersey, 1781-1783: An Historical and Architectural Survey*, Vol. II (Trenton: New Jersey Historic Trust/State of New Jersey, 2006), pp. 313, 314]. Although the precise location of these men in Colonel Lamb's Regiment and the Second New York Regiment while encamped in Trenton is not known, the movement of troops through Trenton as part of the Yorktown campaign would be consistent with the reports to the Quarterly Meeting.



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### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Block 5-C, Lot 50, in the City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey.

### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries represent the property currently associated with the meeting house.

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National Park Service

*Trenton Friends Meeting House  
Mercer County, New Jersey*

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### PHOTOGRAPHS

The following information applies to all photographs:

1. Trenton Friends Meeting House
2. Mercer County, New Jersey
3. Sheila K. Koehler
4. 16 October 2006
5. Westfield Architects & Preservation Consultants  
425 White Horse Pike  
Haddon Heights, New Jersey 08035  
(856) 547-0465

### LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

Photograph 1 of 27. View facing north, showing the south elevation.

Photograph 2 of 27. View facing east, showing the west elevation.

Photograph 3 of 27. View facing south, showing the south elevation, as well as the parking lot and cemetery. Grave markers are located to the west of the building, extending back to the parking lot and near the east end of the building, extending north to the parking lot.

Photograph 4 of 27. View facing west, showing the east elevation. The bay marks the location of the facing benches.

Photograph 5 of 27. View of the basement facing east, showing the basement under the 1896 section.

Photograph 6 of 27. View of the basement facing south, showing the basement under the 1874 section.

Photograph 7 of 27. View of the first floor pantry facing north.

Photograph 8 of 27. View of the library facing west.

Photograph 9 of 27. View of the library facing northwest.

Photograph 10 of 27. View of the library facing east.

Photograph 11 of 27. View of the 1896 hallway at the southwest corner of the building facing south.

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Photograph 12 of 27. View of the 1896 hallway facing north.

Photograph 13 of 27. View of the social area adjacent to the worship space facing northwest.

Photograph 14 of 27. View of the social area facing east. Note the opening at right, which leads to the worship space.

Photograph 15 of 27. View of the worship space (the original meeting house space) facing west.

Photograph 16 of 27. View of the worship space facing south.

Photograph 17 of 27. View of the worship space facing east.

Photograph 18 of 27. View of the worship space facing north.

Photograph 19 of 27. Detail of an 1874 window in the south wall of the worship space.

Photograph 20 of 27. Detail showing original wall plaster behind later paneling.

Photograph 21 of 27. View of the second floor kitchen in the northwest corner of the building in the 1896 space facing north.

Photograph 22 of 27. View of the First Day school room facing southeast showing the movable partitions.

Photograph 23 of 27. View of the First Day school room facing west showing the passthrough to the kitchen.

Photograph 24 of 27. View of the dining room facing east.

Photograph 25 of 27. View of the dining room facing west.

Photograph 26 of 27. View of the conference room located over the west end of the original meeting house space and over the 1896 hallway facing south.

Photograph 27 of 27. View of the conference room facing northeast.



Trenton Friends Meeting House  
142 East Hanover Street  
Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey

Tax Map  
Trenton Friends Meeting House  
142 East Hanover Street  
Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey

SHEET NO. 6

City of Trenton

dimensions not certified

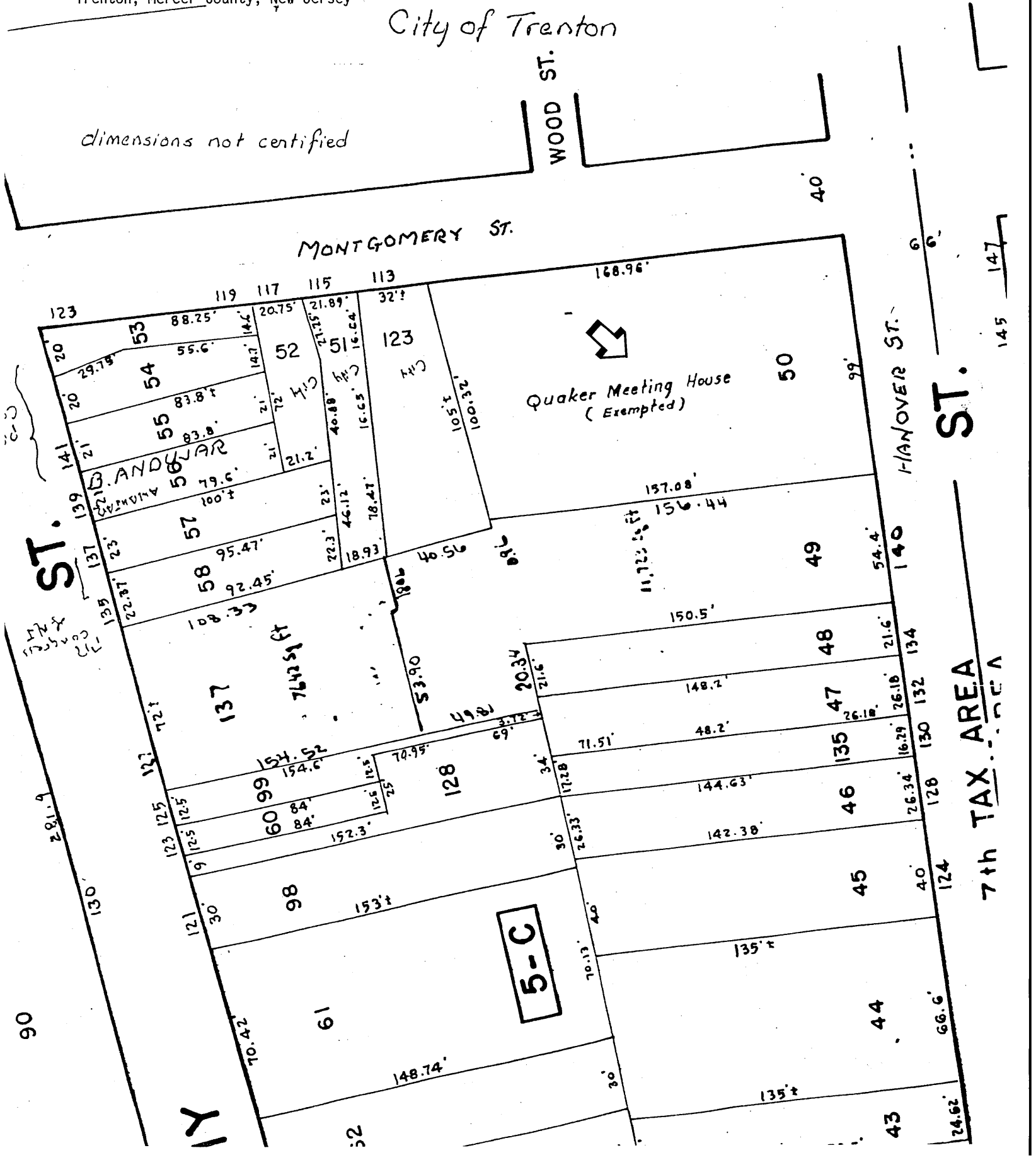
WOOD ST.

MONTGOMERY ST.

HANOVER ST.

ST.

7th TAX AREA



TRENTON MEETING OF FRIENDS  
142 E Hanover St. TRENTON NJ 08608  
Mercer County, NJ

Parking Area

Grave Yard

Grave Yard

YWCA Building

Fire Escape

Meeting House

Side Entrance

Gate

Iron Fence

Sidewalk

Montgomery Street

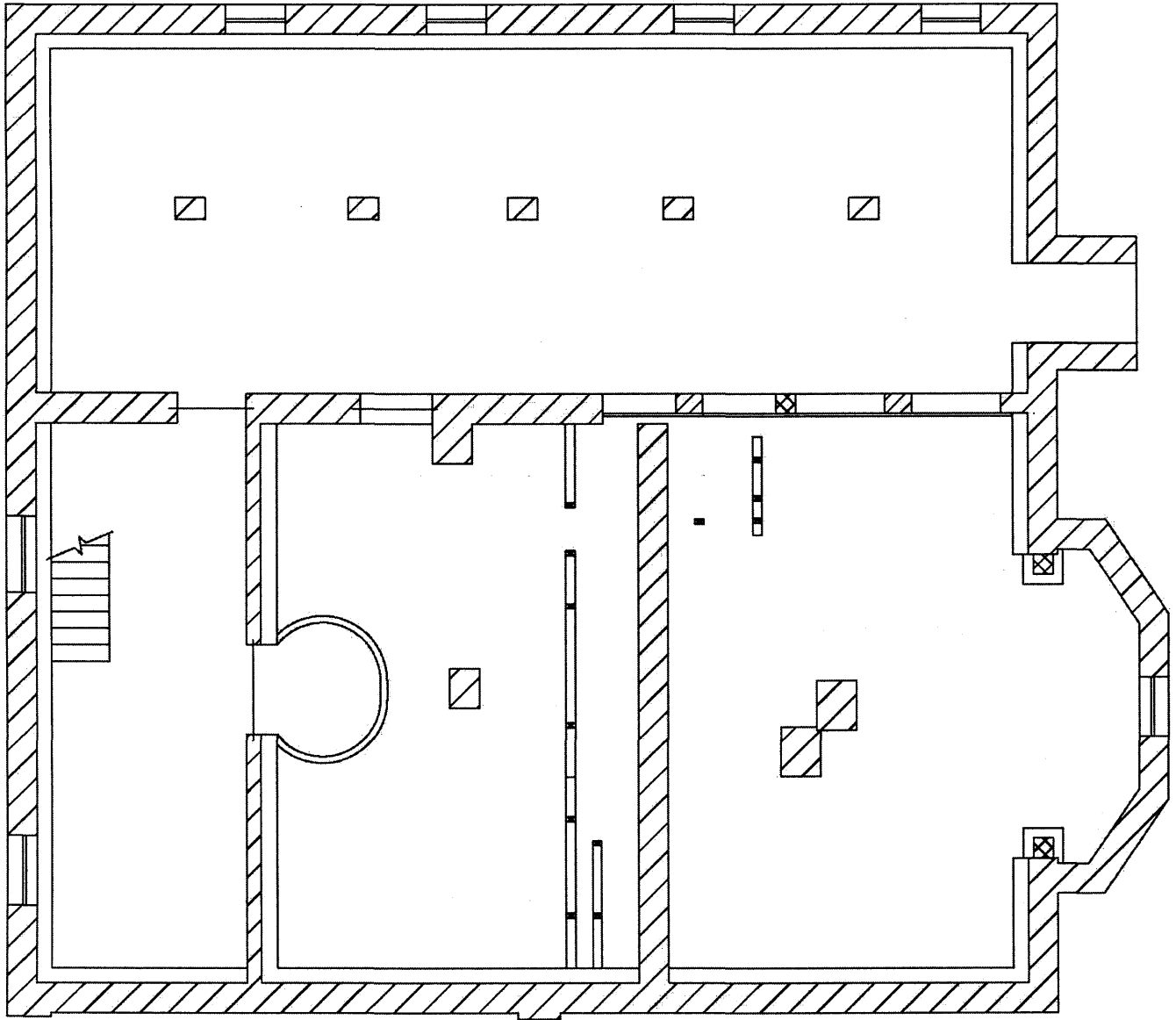
Sidewalk

Hanover Street



Scale 1" = 20'



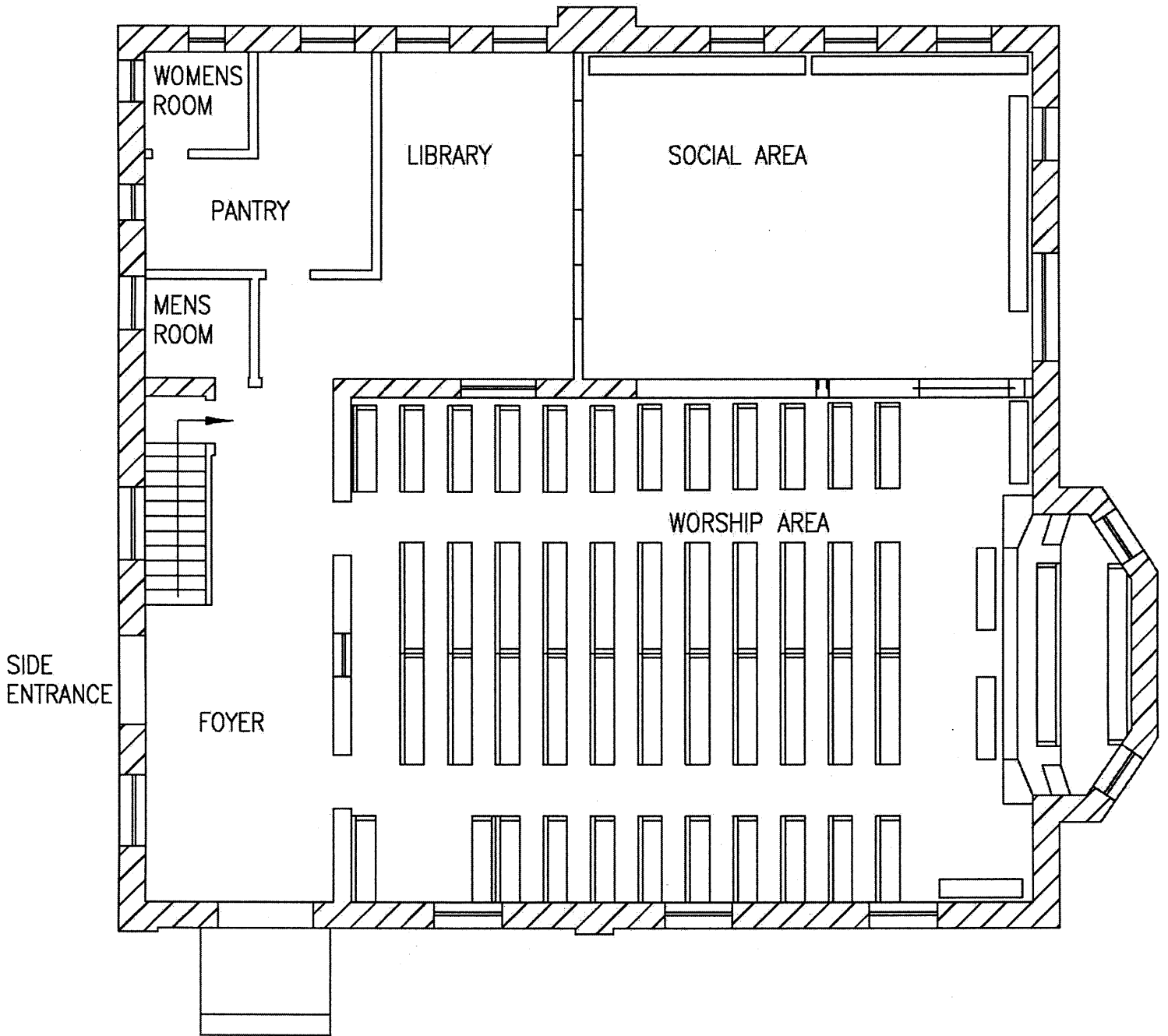


**Basement Floor Plan**

Approximate Scale: 1" = 7'4 1/2"



Trenton Friends Meeting House  
142 Hanover Street  
Trenton, Mercer County, NJ

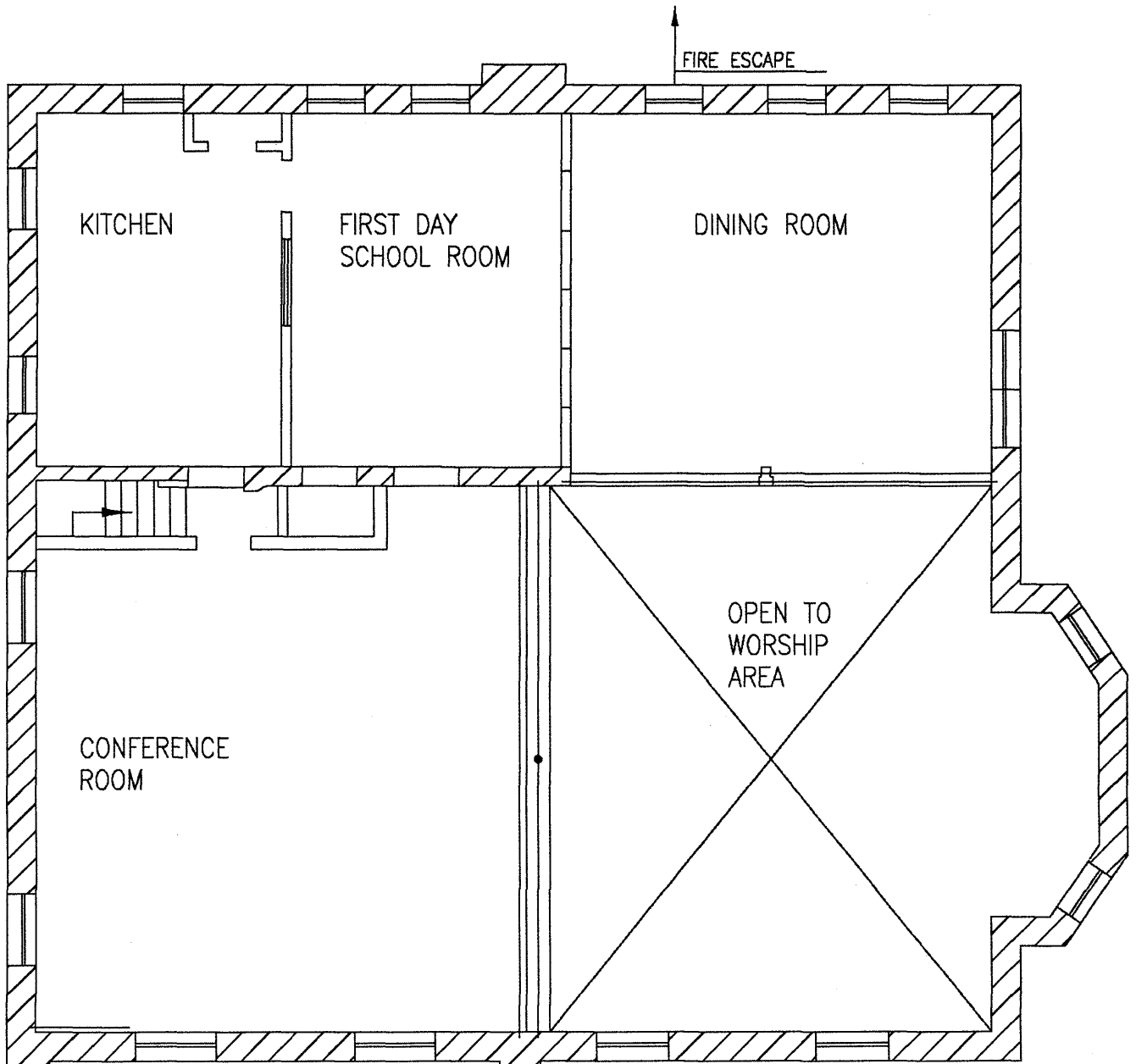


**First Floor Plan**

Approximate Scale: 1" = 7'4 1/2"



Trenton Friends Meeting House  
 142 Hanover Street  
 Trenton, Mercer County, NJ

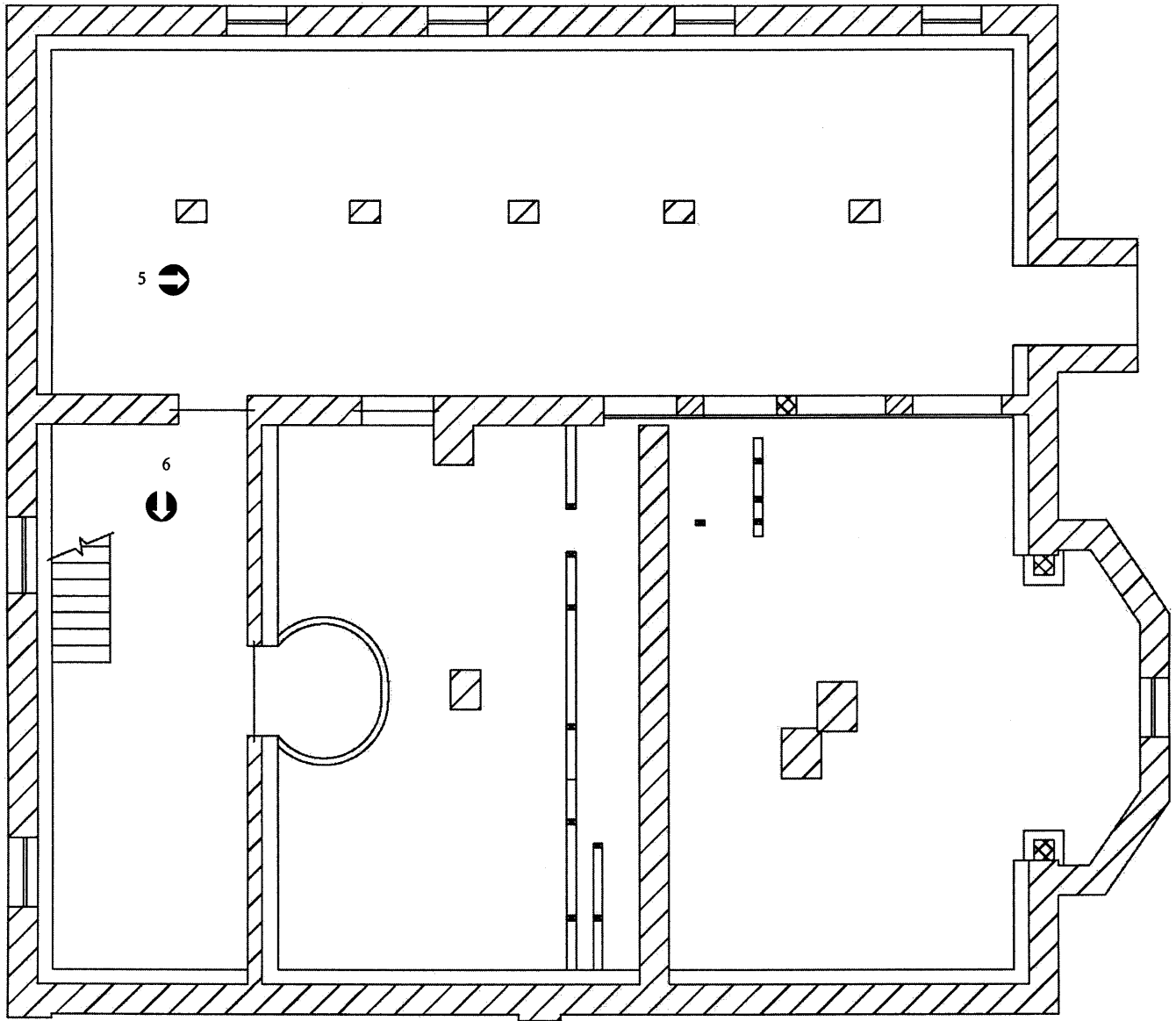


## Second Floor Plan

Approximate Scale: 1" = 7'4 1/2"



Trenton Friends Meeting House  
142 Hanover Street  
Trenton, Mercer County, NJ

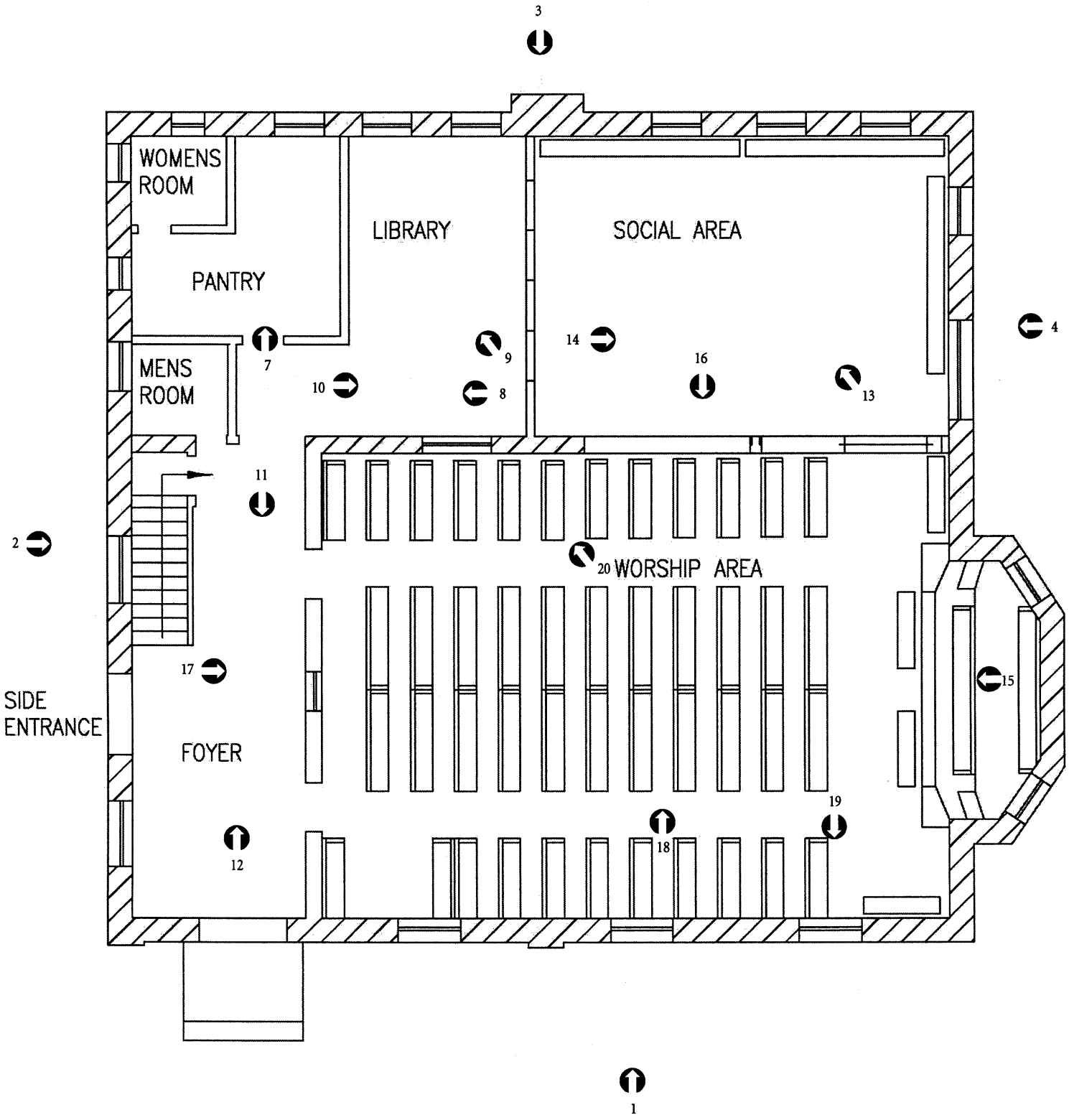


**Basement Floor Plan - Annotated**

Approximate Scale: 1" = 7'4 1/2"



Trenton Friends Meeting House  
142 Hanover Street  
Trenton, Mercer County, NJ

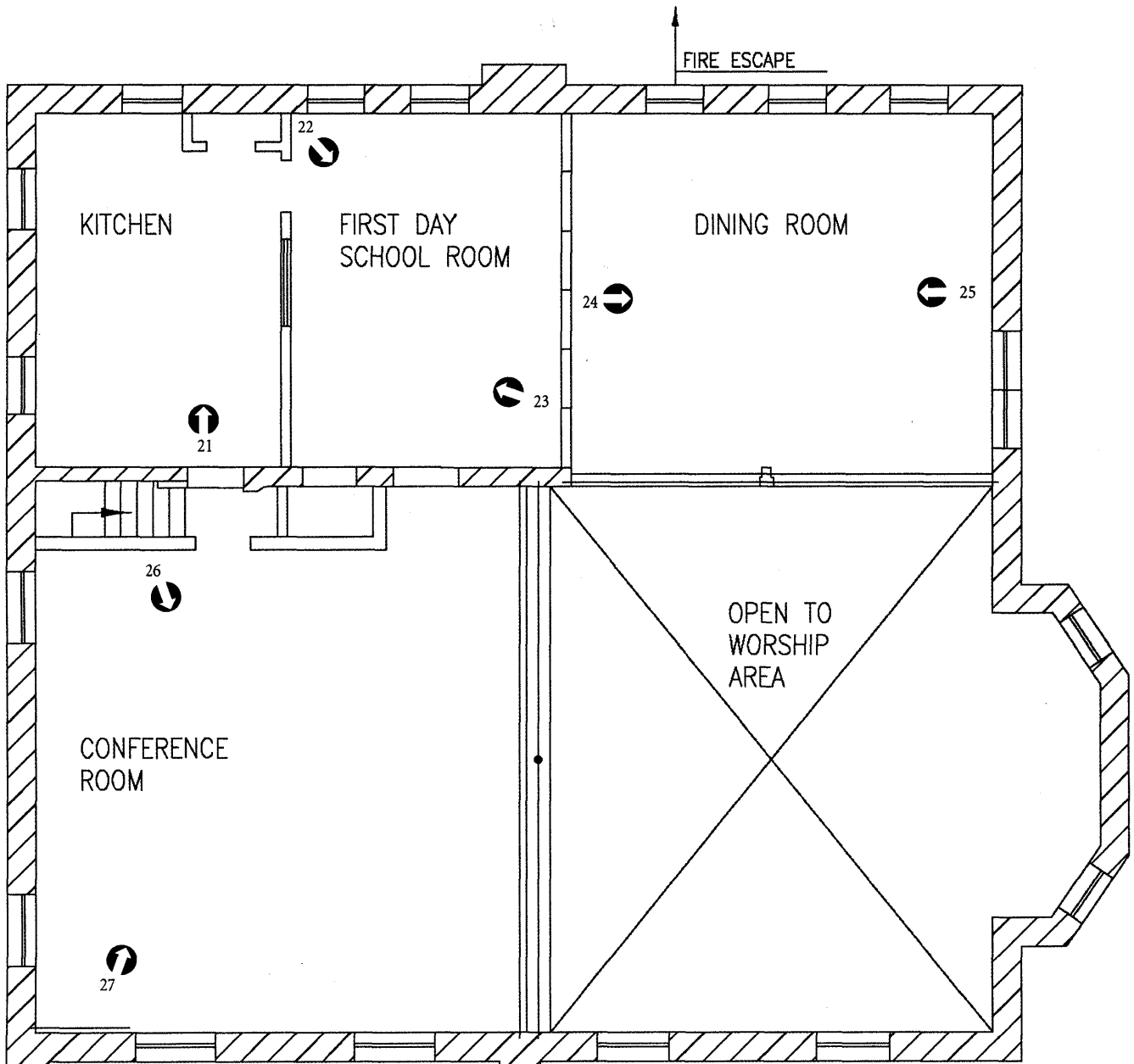


**First Floor Plan - Annotated**

Approximate Scale: 1" = 7'4 1/2"



Trenton Friends Meeting House  
 142 Hanover Street  
 Trenton, Mercer County, NJ



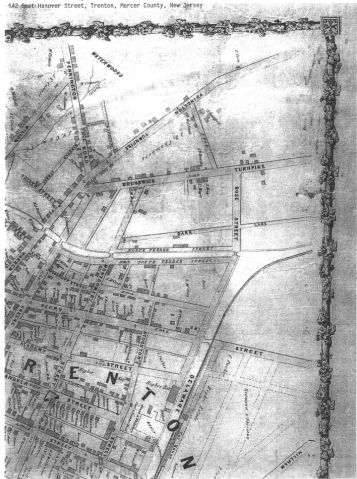
**Second Floor Plan - Annotated**

Approximate Scale: 1" = 7'4 1/2"

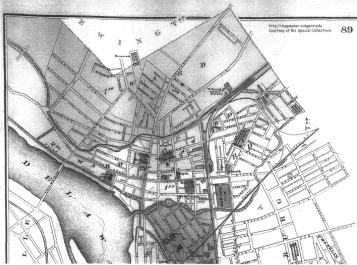


Trenton Friends Meeting House  
 142 Hanover Street  
 Trenton, Mercer County, NJ

Map of the City of Trenton, pub. by M. Dripps, Phila., 1849  
Trenton Friends Meeting House  
442 East-Hanover Street, Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey



City of Trenton Map c.1872  
Trenton Friends Meeting House, 142 East Beaver Street, Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey



<http://logosaker.utpjens.edu>  
Courtesy of RJ Special Collections





1869 view of the building taken prior to the construction of the first major addition showing the west (gable end) and south elevations of the 1739 sections.

Historic Photograph #1

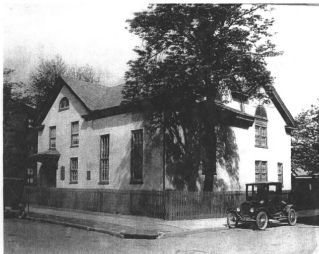
Trenton Friends Meeting House  
Hanover and Montgomery Streets  
Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey



View of the building in 1874 after the construction of the first addition showing the south and east elevations.

Historic Photograph #2

Trenton Friends Meeting House  
Hanover and Montgomery Streets  
Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey



View of the south and east elevations in 1926 showing the 1896 addition at right.

Historic Photograph #3

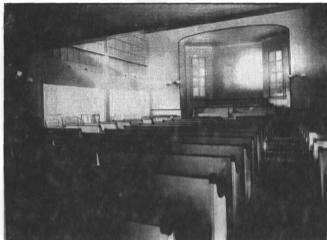
Trenton Friends Meeting House  
Hanover and Montgomery Streets  
Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey



Undated photograph of the north and west elevations showing the 1896 addition at left and the 1874 addition at right (gable end section of north elevation and all of west elevation).

Historic Photograph #4

Trenton Friends Meeting House  
Hanover and Montgomery Streets  
Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey



View of the interior after 1896, showing the movable shutters installed between the original meeting room space and the 1896 addition, which required the removal of a section of the original north wall of the meeting house.

Historic Photograph #5

Trenton Friends Meeting House  
Hanover and Montgomery Streets  
Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey