Form No. 10-300 REV. (9/77)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMEN NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

New Jersey

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AND/OR COMMON				
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2 LOCATION	J			
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	Office of Historic Pro	eservation	STATE	
CITY, TOWN			STATE	

109 West State Street, Trenton



X GOOD

FAIR

#### CONDITION

\_\_DETERIORATED

UNEXPOSED

#### CHECK ONE

UNALTERED X

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XORIGINAL SITE

#### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Littel -Lord farmstead (Spring Farm) is located in the developed suburban municipality of Berkeley Heights, southwest of the intersection of Mountain Avenue and Horseshoe Road. The farmstead is comprised of 18 acres and 7 structures. Almost a third of the property consists of lawn, fields enclosed by rail fences, and a ½ acre pond. The remaining property is wooded. The buildings include an 18th century colonial farmhouse, a carpenter gothic style house, a stone spring house, a shed covering the spring, a Gothic Revival summer kitchen, a pump house and a corn crib.

The colonial farmhouse (the Littel -Lord House) is situated on a slight rise facing the lawn, the pond, and woods. (Its east gabled end faces Horseshoe Road). From the front of the dwelling, one can also see the spring house and the banks of the small watercress filled stream which feeds into the pond.

The carpenter Gothic style house, known as the "Grandmother House", is located immediately to the north of the Littel -Lord House. The "Grandmother House" faces east toward Horseshoe Road. The spring house, covered spring and summer kitchen are positioned in a westwardly direction behind the Littel -Lord house. The pump house and corn crib are established in a northwest direction behind the "Grandmother House".

#### \Littel -Lord House

The Littel -Lord House has seen many changes through the years. It is believed that the original part of the structure was initially a half house in the cape cod style, built during the mid 18th century, with 3 rooms and a lean-to kitchen. Additions to the west side of the house include a 19th century expansion of the kitchen (one story, about 10 feet long by 11 feet deep) and a furnace room, once a pantry, and bathroom (early 1900's, one story, 15 feet long by 12 feet deep). These two additions have shed roofs. The north addition consisted of extensions to the rear of the house. One addition was probably built between 1850 and 1880, and is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  stories, 15 feet long by 11 feet deep. The other north addition was an L-shaped porch, which was most likely added in the 20th century. It has since been removed due to extreme decay.

The east addition (surmised to have been built between 1810 and 1840,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  stories, 28 feet long by 12 feet deep), completes the house into being a full cape cod. A one story alcove was added to the east addition in the late 19th century. During the 20th century, two gabled dormer windows and a bay window were added to the facade. A shed dormer was added to the rear at an earlier date.

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Littell-Lord Garmstead
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#### DESCRIPTION (continued)

Currently the Littel -Lord House is L-shaped, is 1 to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  stories, and is 6 bays wide by 5 bays long. The structural system is eastern braced frame. The cellar only lies under the living room, and the cellar bulkhead is located inside the kitchen. There is a low foundation composed of uncoursed fieldstone. The exterior walls are covered with white clapboards. A small portion of clapboards have been removed, and evidence of brick nogging can be seen within the wall. Asphalt shingles (over wooden shingles) now cover the gable roof. There are 2 brick inside end chimneys, and one brick interior chimney in the second west side addition.

The one bay entrance porch has three steps, two 6" by 6" hollow wooden square support columns, and wooden railings. The entrance doorway has a 19th century two-paneled wood door with 4/4 lites on the top portion. There is one 19th century two-paneled wood door on the west side of the house, and three 20th century rear doors, all with two wood panels on the bottom and 2/2 lites on the top.

The windows have plain exterior trim and wood sills. Nearly all of the windows are double hung sash, mainly with 6/6 or 2/2 lites. Four eyebrow windows remain on the  $1\frac{1}{2}$  story facade, and one in the rear. Louvered vents serve as attic windows in the east addition. Many windows have movable louvered shutters.

It is believed that the Littel -Lord House started as a side hall plan, two rooms deep. On the first floor, the living room and "borning room" (two of the original rooms) have, respectively, wide horizontal board and vertical matched board wainscot, a chair rail, and plastered walls. Original tongue and groove floor boards and original beams are presently covered over with modern material. Investigative removals also show hand-split laths. These two rooms and most of the other rooms have square plain window and door trim. Most of the rooms have baseboards. Doors are both batten type, with cast iron hardware, or wood paneled, plain and architrave trim, with porcelain or glass knobs. Two of the original hand planed doors survive.

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Littell-Lord Farmstead
Berkeley Heights Township
Union County New Jersey 034
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#### DESCRIPTION (continued)

The living room fireplace has a wooden mantel featuring urn-shaped columnettes and three carved sunbursts in the frieze. West of the living room is the lean-to kitchen where there has been uncovered a bricked in fireplace to which a slate mantel was added. The cellar is located in the south end of the kitchen. In the cellar may be seen the original floor joists and evidences of a corner fireplace.

To the east of the kitchen is a large room (half of which was an original room later exteded by an addition) which connects to the living room. The borning room is located north of the living room and behind the stairs. To the east of the living room is the entrance hallway, where traces of pre-Civil War paint and striping, and of 19th century wallpaper remain. Through the entrance hallway to the east side of the house is a large room from which the dividing partitions have been removed, converting the two rooms into one.

An enclosed straight flight staircase leads to the second floor. This floor contains a large hall, four bedrooms, two with original 8" wide floor boards exposed, and a bathroom. The second floor doors are paneled or board and batten, with either cast iron latches or door knobs. A small door in the bathroom gives access to the rafter space over the kitchen. In this space can be seen hand wrought rafters and posts and the remains of a 19th century staircase which once led into the kitchen. This cut-off staircase is now partially enclosed in a kitchen closet.

The main attic is reached through a trap door in a passageway. Visible in the attic are the chimney constructions, handwrought numbered rafters for the original part of the house, and sawn-over rafters for the later part.

#### 2 Grandmother House

The "Grandmother House" was built in the carpenter Gothic style around 1880. The house has a central block of two stories, which is three bays long by two bays wide. The wing which extends on the north side of the house is square, has two stories, and is two bays long by one room deep. Two one-story additions have been added to the north and west sides of the wings. The north addition is one bay long by one bay wide. The west addition is 18 feet by 8 feet. Both additions have shed roofs.

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Littell-Lord Framstead
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#### DESCRIPTION (continued)

The foundation is course fieldstone, and there is no cellar. Six inch exposure clapboards cover the lower three-quarters of the house, while the last quarter is finished in vertical board and batten. The additions are also covered in clapboard. On the south gable end of the house is located an outside end chimney, supported by sawn wood ornamental brackets at the eaves. An inside endchimney is located within the two story north end addition.

The gable roof has eaves with exposed ends, sawn wood ornamental trim, and crest-like pendants at the roof corners and at the wall dormers. The front wall dormer contains a porthole window, and sawn wood ornamental vergeboards with a crest-like finial and pendant.

The entrance doorway is covered by a pedimented hood on decorated wooden brackets. Sawn wood ornamental trim surrounds the hood. The hood has ornamental vergeboards with a crest-like finial and pendants featured on the rest of the house. The entrance doorway presently has a storm door with a wood panel bottom and 12 lites in the rest of the door. The original inside door has a wood two paneled bottom and one large lite on top. There are four other exterior doors, three on the main facade (one of these is a small board and batten shed door), and one in the rear. The exterior door in the two story north wing addition facade is unique, in that it is half the width of a normal door. It has two wood panels on the bottom and 1/1 lites on top.

Most of the windows are double hung sash, with 2/2 lites. There is a mullion window over the entrance doorway. The one story north addition has a window with 3/3 lites, and the one story west addition has casement windows on all three sides. Window trim is plain and sills are wooden. Most windows have louvered shutters. The rear of the main house is the same as the facade, except that in the rear a window is located in place of the entrance doorway.

The first floor interior of the main house consists of a small entrance hall and one large room, with a fireplace added in the center of the south wall. Corresponding space upstairs consists of a hallway and three bedrooms. The walls and ceilings of the rooms are paneled with tongue and groove paneling. The room cornices are of ornamental sawn wood. The two story wing contains a kitchen downstairs and a bathroom upstairs. Additions consist of an enclosed porch and a furnace room.

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Littell-Lord Farmstead
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DESCRIPTION (continued)

### 3,4 Spring House and Covered Spring

The one story spring house is 15 feet by 15 feet by 1½ feet high. The walls are constructed of random uncoursed fieldstone and brick. The gable roof is presently covered with asbestos shingles. The only window faces east towards the road, and the door is on the west side. A 7 foot by 7 foot by 7 foot high shed covering the spring is situated behind the springhouse.

#### 7 Summer Kitchen

The summer kitchen was moved from its original location just east of the Littel-Lord House and set further back on a poured concrete foundation. It is a  $1\frac{1}{2}$  story building, 15 feet by  $16\frac{1}{2}$  feet high, with a gable roof. The walls are board and batten. The chimney and fireplace have been removed, and the doorway enlarged for a pair of doors so that the building could be used as a garage. The windows have 6/6 lites, plain wooden trim, and wood sills. A doorway on the north side has been boarded up.

#### 5 Pump House

The pump house is a one story building, 20 feet long by  $14\frac{1}{2}$  feet deep by 14 feet high. Built in 1913, it has novelty siding and a gable roof.

#### 6Corn Crib

The 19th century corn crib was moved from another location to the Littel -Lord farmstead in 1977. This narrow building is 14 feet long, with typical corn crib sloping walls, and 10 feet high, with a gable roof.

\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\	COMMERCE COMMUNICATIONS	_EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT _INDUSTRY	PHILOSOPHYPOLITICS/GOVERNMENT	TRANSPORTATIONOTHER (SPECIFY)
1700-1799	X ART	ENGINEERING	X_music	THEATER
_1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	EDUCATION	V-MILITARY	_SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
_1400-1499 _1500-1599	ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC X-AGRICULTURE	CONSERVATIONECONOMICS	LAW LITERATURE	SCIENCESCULPTURE
_PREHISTORIC	ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	COMMUNITY PLANNING	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	RELIGION

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Littel -Lord farmstead has significance in the areas of architecture, exploration and settlement agriculture, commerce, and music.

#### Architecture

The property's architectural significance may be dealt with separately, while the other areas are more intertwined. The contrast between the simple colonial farm home and Victorian house immediately adjacent is rarely found on a single farm tract. The earlier house, although altered at various times during a period of approximately 200 years, retains much of its mid 18th century aspects. The Victorian house, built approximately a century later, exemplifies the fondness for ornamentation associated with the carpenter Gothic style. It is the only house in Berkeley Heights ornamented with carpenter's lace.

#### Agriculture and Settlement

The property is the only sizeable farm tract with early buildings on it remaining in Berkeley Heights or northwestern Union County. It provides a picture of the evolution of the area from the mid 18th century, when the core of the house was built by Andrew Littel, through the 19th century when a slow population increase included people from the cities who had decided to become farmers or to purchase country homes, into the 20th century when increased commuting and a development boom which virtually ended farming days were followed by a recognition of the importance or preserving open land.

Although several present day residents state that they have seen a stone with the initials A.L. and the date 1760 adjacent to the farmhouse this is no longer in evidence. The earliest available written record of Andrew Littell's residence on the property is contained in the 1771 Road Records of Essex County. Simeon DeWitt's map, circa 1780, clearly shows the house in its present location. John Littell's Genealogies of the First Settlers of Passaic Valley (1852) states that Andrew Littell lived in Stony Hill Valley, where James Bryson now lives (Bryson purchased the property in 1845). Littell, like many 18th century farmers in the region, also practiced a craft. Genealogies list him as a weaver. In his will he left to his "dutiful daughter, Temperance Valentine, my loom, and all and every of the reeds, geers and utensils thereunto belonging."

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Hanover, N.J.: Redwood Press, 1977 (pp. 1274 80, 1564 58). Baldwin, Edward. Interview. June, 1978. Beattie, Roland. Interview. September, 1977. 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_ 1:24000 QUADRANGLE NAME \_\_ Chatham QUADRANGLE SCALE \_\_ UTM REFERENCES All 18 | 15 | L 18 | 3 16 10 | B|1.8| 1514,811,2 VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Beginning at the S.W. corner of the intersection of Mountain Avenue and Horseshoe proceed S. along Horseshoe Road 970 feet , approximately opposite the intersection of Horseshoe Road and Watchung Way. Thence, proceed (Con't.) LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES STATE CODE COUNTY CODE STATE CODE COUNTY CODE **III** FORM PREPARED BY (Terry Karschner, OHP 609-292-2023) NAME / TITLE Grace Hagedorn, Fred Best, Sandra Glidden, Charles H. Detwiller, Jr. ORGANIZATION Historical Society of Berkeley Heights July 19, 1978 STREET & NUMBER TELEPHONE Box 237 201-464-0490 CITY OR TOWN STATE Berkeley Heights New Jersey 07922 2 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS: STATE. LOCAL X NATIONAL \_\_\_\_ As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedure set forth by the National Parl Deputy STATE HISTORY TITLE Deputy Commissioner, Dept. of Environmental Protection FOR NPS USE ONLY I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER DATE

Form No. 10-300a (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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#### SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

Littel died in 1790, but his wife Mary survived him, and, according to <u>Genealogies</u>, "died very old." John Tilyou bought the property from Littell's estate in 1817. Another farmer, Tilyou's grandson Moses Frazee, inherited it in 1840. James Bryson came from Newark to buy and settle on the property in 1845. Egedius Vielbig, also a farmer, purchased it in 1853. Vielbig, whose immediate past residence was New York City, was part of the wave of German settlers who came to Berkeley Heights (then New Providence Township) during the middle of the 19th century. Descendants of a number of these families still live in Berkeley Heights.

Purchase of the property in 1867 by Mary Ann Townsend (Estes) Lord represented the beginning of a new type of ownership. Mrs. Lord, descendant of a prominent Massachusetts family, and her husband, Charles Wait Lord, also had a home in Brooklyn. Charles Lord was a commission merchant in New York City, and employed laborers to work on the farm. When the family was in residence at Spring Farm, as they called it, he was a commuter, an early example of what was to become an increasing trend. His neighbor, James B. Carter, of the firm of Kent, Tucker and Carter, manufacturers of rope, bags and related materials, also commuted to the city from country property he had purchased in 1867. The Carter property, adjacent to Spring Farm, was called Bonnie Burn. In 1911 it was purchased by Union County to serve as the location for Runnells Hospital.

In the 1880 census, Charles Lord was listed as a farmer and may have participated in the farm work. About 1884, however, the family went to Europe, where they spent most of their time for almost two decades, living principally in Munich. The five children received further education there. The children's earlier private school education reputedly took place in the Victorian or "Grandmother House," believed to have been built for Mrs. Lord's mother and other visitors.

During the family's stays in Europe, their Berkeley Heights land was farmed by tenants, some of whom are remembered by old time residents. This practice continued after the youngest son of the Lord family, Ellis, returned to the U.S. to study law, clerk for Elihu Root, and manage the family property, He moved to Spring Farm during the second decade of the 20th century with his wife and small daughter, Elizabeth Constance, and commuted to his law and real estate offices in New York City. By the time of his death in 1944, other commuters had helped to swell the population of Berkeley Heights to approximately 2,500.

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#### SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

Harrison Wemett, husband of Ellis' daughter, was a partner in the New York law firm of Anderson and Wemett and continued the commuting tradition. Traditional farming gave way to timber cutting and the keeping of horses, a family hobby.

In 1972, the Wemett's recently orphaned 19 year old daughter, who at first had fought to keep the farm and the horses, yielded to economic pressures for development. She and her trustees submitted plans for a 31 lot subdivision on the 18 acre tract. Government awareness of the importance of environmental concerns interfered. A sewer capacity related building ban temporarily halted subdivision approvals, and the Township Committee applied for a Green Acres grant to buy the property in order to preserve the buildings, conserve the land and ward off drainage problems. The grant was received, and the purchase was made in 1975.

The farmstead is significant because many of its owners were people of importance; with wide ranging interests and connections. Both Andrew Littell and Moses Frazee were members of well known early New Jersey families, prominent in the history of what is now Union County. The story of their families is recorded in the <a href="Geneatogies">Geneatogies</a>.

The Lords moved in a wider sphere. The most prominent of the three sons was Edwin Chesley Estes, a geologist listed in Who's Who. George William was an artist and inventor, and, as previously noted, Ellis was a lawyer. Ellis and the two daughters of the family inherited the musical talent evidenced by several older relatives. This interest was reflected in an extensive collection of piano and vocal music, to which the neighboring Carter family also contributed. Much of the music was left in the house, where it will be displayed in future.

The May-September marriage of Rose Thomae, whose mother was a Carter, and George Lord cemented the long time friendship between the families and involved the Lords in still wider interests. Rose's father, Robert Lowry Thomae, was a pioneer in the talking machine business. He and other members of the family also participated in mining ventures in the West. Rose's great grandfather, Robert H. Lowry, was a Baptist minister in Plainfield, an author of hymn texts, and chancellor of Bucknell University. When Rose and George Lord lived at Spring Farm in the 1930's, the attics of the two houses became store rooms for the extensive papers of the Carter and Thomae families. Many of the papers remain.

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SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

#### SUMMARY

The Littel -Lord farmstead, or Spring Farm, in unique in Berkeley Heights and Union County. A sizeable tract of land and an 18th century farmhouse remain after more than 200 years during which Berkeley Heights grew from a sparsely settled region of scattered farms to a developed suburb of 13,400 people. The charm of the colonial farmhouse is heightened by the contrast with a 19th century carpenter Gothic house immediately adjacent and by several 19th century outbuildings.

The farmstead's story and that of its owners reflect the evolution of the area: pioneer farmers, immigrants from the cities, early and latter day commuters to New York City, and effects of pressures for development, the effects of planning regulations, and finally the effects of the environmental movement.

The people who lived on the farmstead add interest to the picture. Littells and Frazees were landholders in the area in the early 18th century and subsequently figured prominently in its history. The Lords, with their relative wealth and wide ranging interests including travel, commerce and music, opened windows on the world for the once sleepy and still quiet area which was their home for over 100 years.

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#### GEOGRAPHICAL DATA (CONTINUED)

West 445 feet and then N.W. 317 feet along the line of the lands of Union County (P.A.L. field) and then West 617 feet along the back property lines of Sutton Drive homeowners and past Rangely Drive Thence proceed North 566 feet along a drainage ditch to Mountain Avenue approximately 350 feet west of its intersection with Woodwild Way. Thence proceed East along Mountain Avenue to the point of beginning.

