

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

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

received SEP 20 1988  
date entered

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

**1. Name**

historic Kirch-Ford House

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number 1 Reinman Road

NA not for publication

city, town Warren Township vicinity of

state New Jersey code 034 county Somerset code 035

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Township of Warren

street & number 46 Mountain Boulevard

city, town Warren vicinity of state New Jersey 07060

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Somerset County Office Building

street & number North Bridge & East High Streets

city, town Somerville state 08876

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title See continuation sheet. has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

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

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Kirch-Ford House is a type of early 18th century New Jersey domestic "vernacular" that was expanded as the needs and means of its owners expanded. It has four parts:

- 1) its early 18th century KEEPING ROOM and attic above;
- 2) a NORTH ADDITION consisting of a "cold" room (sunken to ground level, with brick floor), a "borning" room--small, low-ceilinged extra room, and above, a "secret" attic room formed when the roof was raised to cover this addition;
- 3) a WEST ADDITION built later in the 18th century which consists of two rooms (each with fireplace) and hall down, two rooms (front room with fireplace) and hall up, with large 24' x 30' attic overall, post and beam with brick-filled walls; and
- 4) an EAST ADDITION, shed kitchen and pantry which is relatively modern, of sheetrock over 2" x 4" beams, replacing an earlier shed shown in turn of the century photographs.

Sections 1, 2 and 3 have fieldstone foundations and long-leaf yellow pine floor boards, some 16" wide. Section 3 has an added old brick veneer on the outside front (rafters were raised with wedges to cover this additional width). All other outside walls are covered with clapboard.

Brick nogging is covered with clapboard which is painted white. Most of the windows on front and west end have louvered shutters painted green.

Section 1) The original KEEPING ROOM section is 15' x 21', with a massive 10' stone fireplace. This fireplace has a stone-lined semi-circular opening to the oven in the rear wall at left, with an ash chute to guide the oven coals to the hearth below. The room walls are plaster over brick with baseboards 5" to 7.5" wide, chair rails 2.5" to 6.5" wide, built-in cupboard, wall shelves, hooks on the wall for coats, a niche on the west wall which may be an ancient window opening, and two windows and a door to the outside on front. Board and batten doors (some boards of which are 14" wide) lead to the two north addition rooms.

Above, a high loft rises to the underside of the shingle roof, with one gable and one dormer window. The loft has its own fireplace with niche of unexplained function. The brick chimney face in the loft shows evidence of a bad chimney fire, with black pitch in bubble and drip patterns. Side walls of loft are of brick. The west loft wall reveals the inside of its original clapboard

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6. Representation in Existing Surveys

The Kirch-Ford House has been included in numerous surveys of Warren Township's old and historic houses made by civic groups and ad hoc agencies. The Warren Committee for New Jersey's Tercentenary in 1964 made such a list, as did the Bicentennial Committee in 1976. In addition, Warren's Environmental Commission, Township Library, Lion's Club, JC's, Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops have all compiled lists of old and historic buildings in the township, and in every case, the Kirch-Ford House has been included. Julia Mason of Somerset County Library made a survey in the 1970's. Somerset County's Heritage Commission has also compiled surveys, and in each case Warren Township has submitted the name of Kirch-Ford House along with others.

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siding, and a window frame that served before Section 3 was adjoined. Rear loft wall is brick, and the double rafters give evidence to the raised saltbox roof of the addition.

On the first floor of Section 1, three steps and 17" up is the three-board and batten door (with widest board 17") to the hallway of the West Addition.

Section 2) The NORTH ADDITION has two rooms, each 9' x 11'. The western room of this addition is sunken 17" below the keeping room floor level, with three steps down to its brick floor, and is noticeably cooler in summer. Shelves are built around the room to store food, and one small window gives light. The eastern room of this section has the exposed beams of a low, slanting ceiling about 6.8" high, and a chair rail around the plaster walls.

The 7' x 22' loft above these two rooms is the "Secret Room" that has come down in local parlance as the hiding place of runaway slaves on their way to Canada, a stop on the Underground Railway before the Civil War. This room had no apparent entrance. Its existence was suspected by comparison of the dimensions of the inside and outside of the house. It was revealed only by lifting one of the ceiling boards (the only unnailed board) of the east room below.

Section 3) The WEST ADDITION shows evidence of having been moved from another location and attached to Sections 1 and 2. After being attached, its stairway was narrowed and reversed, the rooms widened, and the front windows reset to be symmetric within the lengthened facade.

The two rooms below, each 15' x 15', have corner fireplaces back-to-back, with chair rails on plaster walls and beaded ceiling beams. The front room has three windows and two inside doors, and a mantel 65" high. The rear room has two windows, two inside doors, fireplace mantel 53" high. Two shelf boxes are built into the plenum of its fireplace in a style found in other early Central New Jersey farmhouses. Its back window is smaller than its side window, and may be original.

The three doors of this section are four-panel, painted and grained, 34.5" wide by 6'2" high, with 17" strap hinges held to the door by six mashed rivets in each hinge.

The 8' x 30' hallway has a large, 38" wide front door with iron strap hinges, set in a deep recess, with two lights above. A stairway leads to the second floor. A rear door to the outside was blocked when previous owners built

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a bathroom in the back of the hall, but the bathroom has been removed and this door is being restored.

The second floor rooms of Section 3 reflect the arrangement of the first floor, with enclosed stairs to the attic and a door to the loft of Section 1. These rooms have been equipped as an apartment for the tenant.

The 24' x 30' attic of Section 3 has two windows on the gable ends.

Section 4) THE EAST ADDITION, a shed kitchen 9' x 27', is believed to be 20th century. It includes a small back room (pantry), two outside doors, three windows, and a very steep stairway to the loft above Section 1.

#### ALTERATIONS

When the Township of Warren took title to the house in 1980, it found water damage between Sections 1 and 3, and a need for extensive repairs to walls and floors. A new cedar shingle roof was put on. Walls have been replastered, and woodwork repainted in original colors discovered by scraping. A new hot water heating system was installed. An appropriate interior lighting system is in progress. Repairs and renovations continue and are not yet complete.

Section 1 had its west wall reconstructed and floor repaired. The wooden doors and frame covering the fireplace were removed, and the fireplace lintel reset to its original 5' height. An iron damper was installed in the chimney, and the back of the beehive oven reconstructed (extends into Section 4).

Section 2 was cleaned.

Section 3 has had extensive repair and redecoration. Fireplaces were cleaned and repaired, and dampers installed. Painted and grained woodwork has been replicated where needed.

A lavatory was built under the downstairs stairway. The old bathroom was removed and a back door is in process of being designed and installed.

Upstairs, a bathroom was created in the back hall and the two rooms refitted into an apartment for the tenant.

Section 4 had its kitchen appliances removed and the beehive oven (with its opening in Section 1) reconstructed. It also was given a stairway and opening to

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the Secret Room. A telephone was installed in the pantry, the future office. This room and pantry need further work toward their functions as reception room, office and display area.

Overall, a fire alarm and security system have been installed, as well as an outdoor lighting system. A wellhouse was built to cover the original source of water.\* Existing shrubs and trees are maintained in the yard, and an herb garden was created and is maintained by the Washington Valley Garden Club.

All outbuildings had been removed from the property prior to its donation to Warren Township.

\* The eighteenth century "stoned" well constitutes a contributing structure.

## 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** c. 1740-1830      **Builder/Architect** Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Kirch-Ford House has significance on two levels: 1) architectural, and 2) historical.

1. ARCHITECTURAL - One of the oldest farmhouses in Warren Township, the Kirch-Ford House is a good example of an eighteenth century New Jersey farmhouse with later enlargements to accomodate the growth of the family. The Kirch-Ford House exemplifies mid-eighteenth century construction practices despite its isolation in a remote area of the county. The late eighteenth-early nineteenth century expansions express local craftsmanship and design associated with Federal style architecture. The brick front facade is a rare feature in the region. Such three-part houses with their rather bare-faced jointures were not uncommon. The massive keeping room fireplace alone, with its early rear oven and ash chute, is architecturally significant. Many details such as strap hinges, painted and grained woodwork, large beaded beams, wide pine floors, and mullion windows are evidences of early building practices.

2. HISTORICAL - Warren Township (separated from Bernards Township in 1806) was a relatively isolated farming area up in the three ranges of the Watchung Mountains and away from main rivers and roads. The Kirch-Ford House has been in private ownership until recently, hence, examination and analysis had to wait until ownership of the property passed to the Township.

The Kirch-Ford house sits alongside the main road connecting the area to Basking Ridge and Morristown on the north and the plains settlements of Scotch Plains, Quibbletown, Perth Amboy, Bound Brook and New Brunswick to the south. This road is shown on a 1766 map of Somerset County. A Captain Ford is indicated at this location in several of Erskine's Route Maps for General Washington's army in 1776. Marching orders through the Warren area during the Revolution and the story of the Secret Room on the Underground Railway prior to the Civil War are two of Warren's few specific ties with main events of American history.

The Kirch-Ford House is valuable also because it has ties to the very beginnings of Warren, created as a separate township in 1806. It was owned by the first clerk of Warren Township, Thomas Terrell.

The history of Thomas Terrell recreates a whole era of lifestyle that today's citizens find hard to believe. He died December 11, 1830, "in his 59th year". That would make him about 5 years old in 1776. He married Mary Dunn of Piscataway; they settled in Warren and had nine children. He farmed his 229 acres and served as Clerk of Warren Township, member of the School Board, Magistrate and then Judge of Somerset County.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .372

Quadrangle name Bernardsville

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	8	5	4	2	0	2	0	4	4	9	8	0	4	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Block 311, Lot 20D of the Warren Township Tax Map.

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

NA

state code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title William T. Halsey

organization Historic Sites Committee

date July, 1986; revised April 1987

street & number 46 Mountain Boulevard

telephone (201) 647-5875

city or town Warren

state New Jersey 07060

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

Deputy

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title Assistant Commissioner for Natural & Historic Resources date September 15, 1988

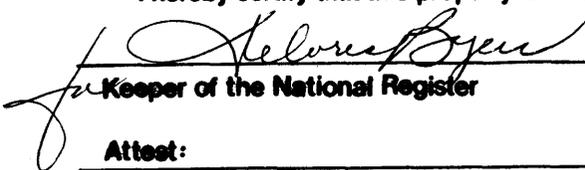
### For NPS use only

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

entered in the National Register

date

10/20/88

for  Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Upon his death, an Inventory was made of his estate, and it indicates valuable crops and livestock, as well as notes due him. Perhaps he acted as banker, lending money at interest, to the people in sparsely-settled Warren.

Thomas Terrell, to interpret his history, was an intelligent, diligent, and ambitious man--an all-round leading citizen. He was the father of Squire Terrell, another civic leader and Somerset County judge who also fathered nine children.

Thomas Terrell was a leader of his time, and died in 1830 a prosperous man. His house and his household inventory from Somerset County Surrogate's Court tell what prosperity meant in the early decades of the Township. Thomas Terrell's wealth was in his field crops. The inventory of his household goods gives them modest value.

Those who visit the Kirch-Ford House will see the keeping room fireplace with its crane, trammel, and great iron pots, and will have an opportunity to imagine what toil went into preparing food in Thomas Terrill's day.

**FUTURE PLANS**

The Warren Township Historic Sites Committee, according to the Ordinance which created it, is mandated to preserve and interpret the two 18th century structures owned by the Township, of which the Kirch-Ford House is one.

The Committee is presently meeting its commitment with an open house once a month to the public (second Sunday), guided tours to school and civic groups, a special program at Christmas, and gathering of data and photographs on the house and its era.

Programs in process of development are a videotape of Warren's early structures and a participation program on brick oven bread making, and changing exhibits in the Section 4 display area.

More research is planned on William Ford and the Terrell family.

Future plans include ongoing development of the Kirch-Ford House as a center for the Township. The Warren Township Historical Society is presently meeting in the house. To encourage use of the house as a center for appreciation of Township history, period furnishings are kept to a minimum and flexible equipment for group use is a goal. This includes folding chairs, tables, slide projector and video equipment, and food service for simple refreshments.

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A donated display case in Section 4 is being fitted with illumination, and changing exhibits in this case, plus wall maps, are being planned.

The office (former pantry of Section 4) is being planned to house books, maps and correspondence relating to Kirch-Ford and Warren Township history.

LIST OF OWNERS OF KIRCH-FORD HOUSE

1980 Township of Warren, Somerset County, New Jersey  
1978 Bell Laboratories  
    ? Raymond Kirch (inherited from his father)  
1894 William Kirch  
1876 John D. Kirch  
1857 John Kirch (owned during Civil War years)  
1854 Joseph Blake  
1852 Harris Wilson  
1851 Josiah Hill  
1849 Franklin D. Pierson (shown on 1850 Somerset  
    County map)  
1848 Joseph Dennison  
1848 George F. Butler, land agent, New York City  
1847 Patrick White  
1844 Coffin Colket, Philadelphia  
1840 Michael Kavastion, Piscataway, NJ  
1839 Stephen Vail, Westfield, NJ  
1831 Squire, Drake and Madison Terrell, sons of Thomas Terrell  
1830 Thomas Terrell  
1776 William Ford

Access to Somerset County's early history is handicapped by the British having burned Somerset County Courthouse and its records in 1780 when it was located at Millstone.

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Inventory of Thomas Terrell, dec'd, September 8, 1831

Bed, bedding & high post bedstead	\$30.
Bed and bedding in kitchen bedroom	20.
Bed in upper room \$10, in upper entry 5	15.
Cherry corner cupboard 6 crockery ware in do. 7.50	13.50
Dining table 2, large looking glass 7	9.
Clothes cupboard 5, brass clock 20	25.
1/2 doz. chairs 5, 1/2 doz. do. 2.50	7.50
2 sewing do. 50, residue of ch. 1	1.50
Tea table 2, nine plate stove & pipe 15	17.
Pair brass top andirons 2, carpets 3	5.
Stand 1, old table .25	1.25
Kitchen andirons, shovel tongs & tramels	3.
Common corner cupboard & contents 3, writing acct 1	4.
Book case 1, two pr brass candle sticks 2.25	3.25
Warming pan 1, 1/2 doz silver teaspoons 4	5.
Table spoons, knives, forks 1.50, smoothing irons 1.25	2.75
Large iron kettle 2.50, pots & kettles 1.50	4.
Ten tin milk pans 2.50, frying pan .25	2.75
Churn .75, do otr. .25, earthen pots & jug 1.37	2.37
Three tin milk pans & 2 cedar do	.62
Wooden wheel 1.50 linen do & reel \$3	4.50
Flour barrels & gums	.62
Flax hatchels .50, bags 1.50, vinegar & barrel 1.25	3.25
Lye cask 1.50, barrel & spirits 6.50	8.
Two barrels & cider 4, four empty bbls 2.50	6.50
Looking glass 3, 10 pair sheets 18	21.
Twelve do. pillow cases 4.50, lumber in garret, 1.50	6.
Wool in do. 1, Steeliards .50, firkin & hog's lard \$3.50	5.
Watering pot .25, residue in kitchen chamber .25	.50
Lumber in leuter .25, lot of goose feathers 4.50	4.75
Pickled pork & barrel .25, do beef .14	.39
Hams & shoulders 10, barrel of fish 3	13.
Soap & tub 1.50, kegs .25, residue in cellar 1	2.75
Turnips in hole .75, potatoes in hole 10.25	11.
Three cedar rubs .75, corn in crib 62.50	63.25
Wheat in stack 18, rye in do. 4, oats in do. 14.	36.
Stack of hay 8, hay in barn 70.	78.

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Ox cart 25, pair silver spectacles 5	(?)	35.
Weavers loom & tacking		2.
Wearing apparel 30, cash on hand 120.		150.

Much more--horses, cows, sheep, hogs, poultry, bees, oxen, tools, harness,  
vehicles, notes due \$1,055.89 (1/2 of estate)

This inventory on file in Somerset County Surrogate's Office.

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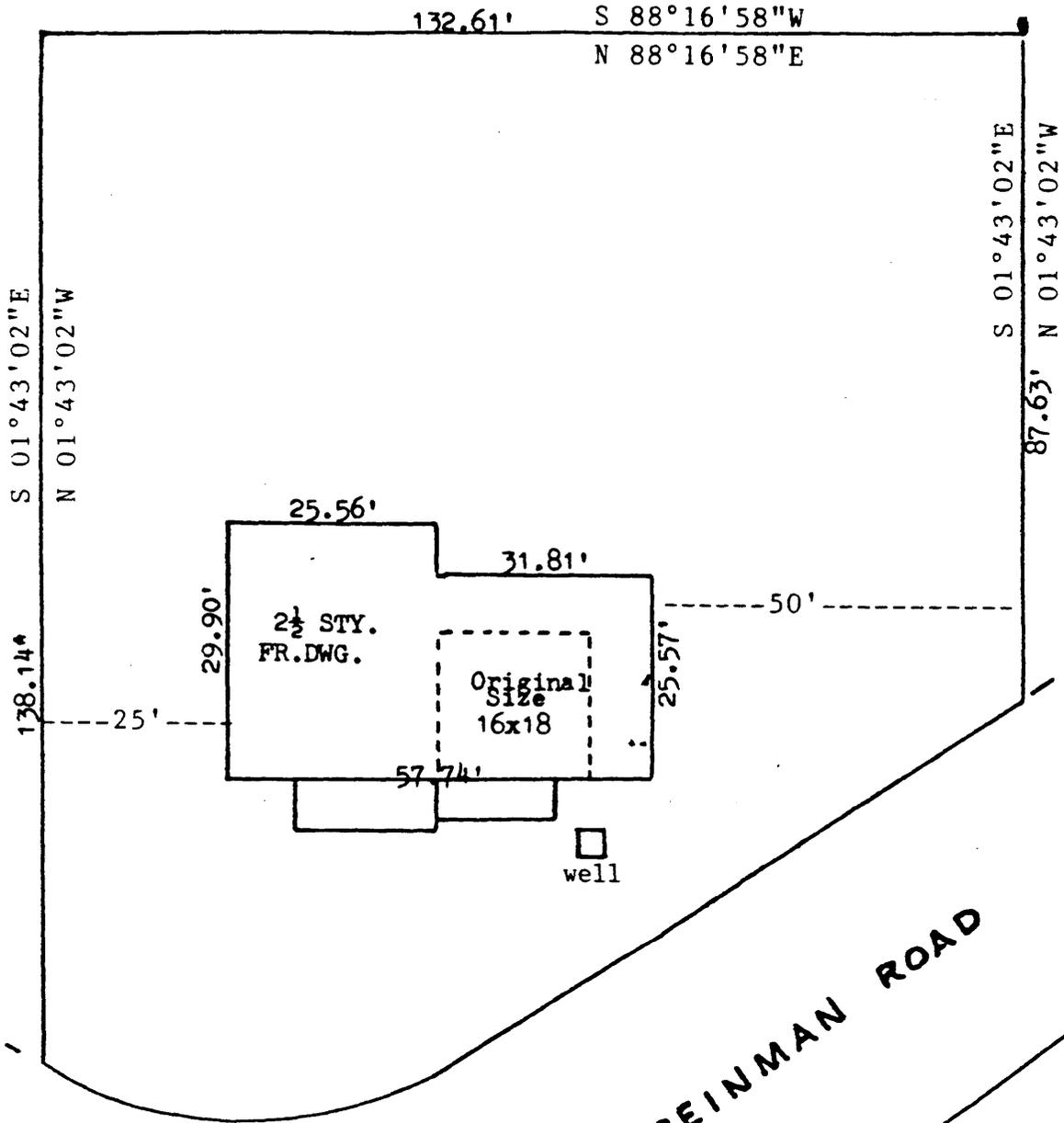
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MAPS

- 1766     Survey Map of Somerset County by Benjamin Morgan (original in Houghton Library, University of Michigan)
- 1776     Erskine's maps:     No. 70C, Rutgers University Library #3,  
  Dead River-Passaic River area  
  No. 70D, Rutgers #4, Road from Mount  
  Bethel Meeting House to Quibbletown  
  No. 98, Rutgers #14  
  No. 98B, Rutgers #15
- 1834     Gordon's Map of New Jersey
- 1850     Otley and Keily Map of Somerset County
- 1873     Beers, Comstock & Cline Map of Warren Township, North Plainfield

# KIRCH - FORD HOUSE

WARREN TOWNSHIP, NEW JERSEY (SOMERSET COUNTY)



REINMAN ROAD

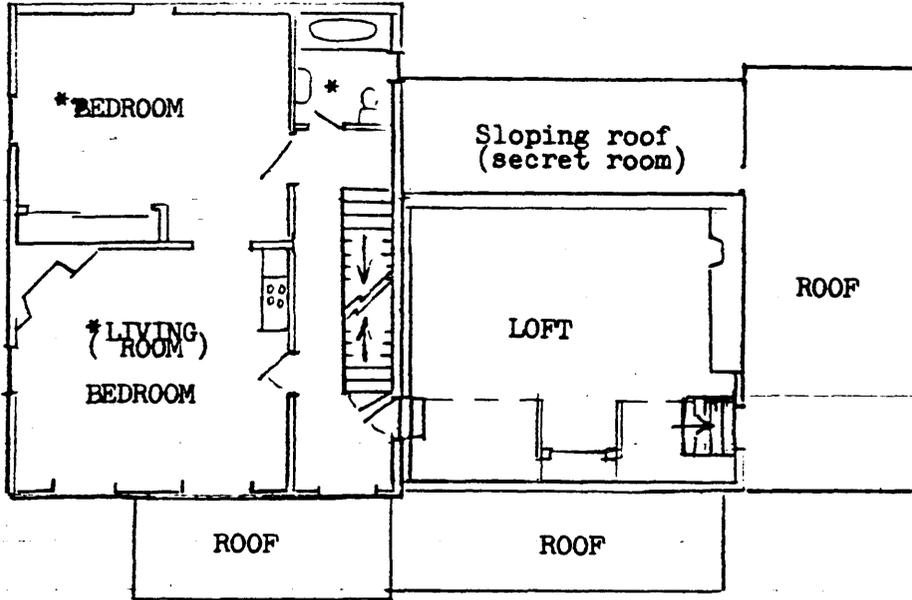
MT BETHEL ROAD



BLOCK 311  
LOT 20D  
0.372 Ac  
16,198 S.F.

*20th July 1988*

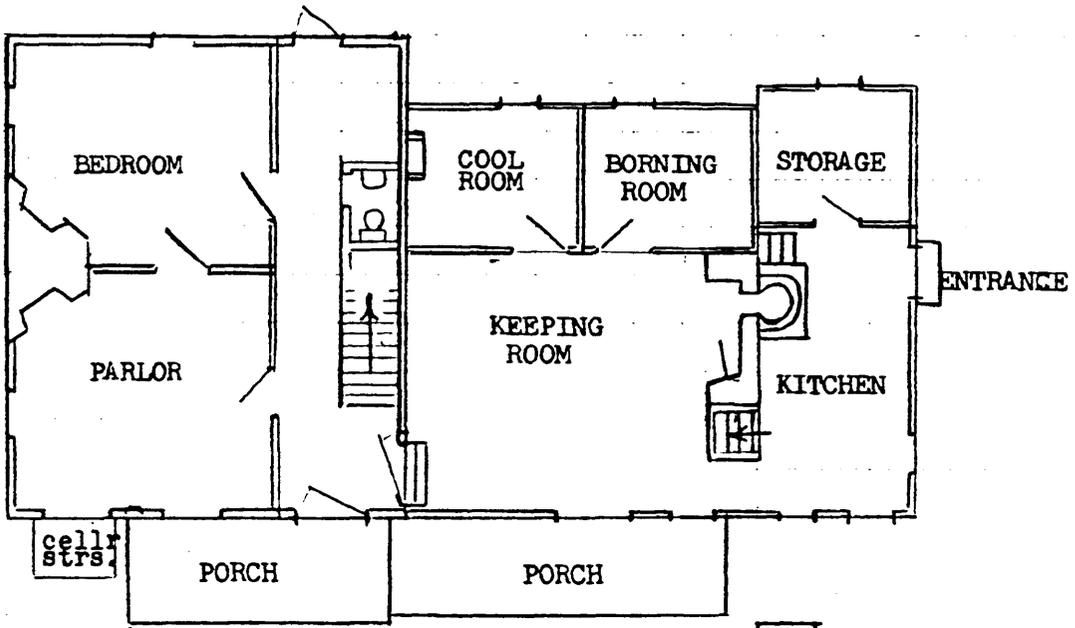
KIRCH-FORD HOUSE



1/4" = 3'

SECOND FLOOR

(\*Now caretaker quarters)



1/4" = 3'

FIRST FLOOR



CONC. CURB  
N 03° 52' 09" E

**HISTORIC SITES COMMITTEE**  
Warren Township, New Jersey

SEPARATELY WOODED TO OPEN

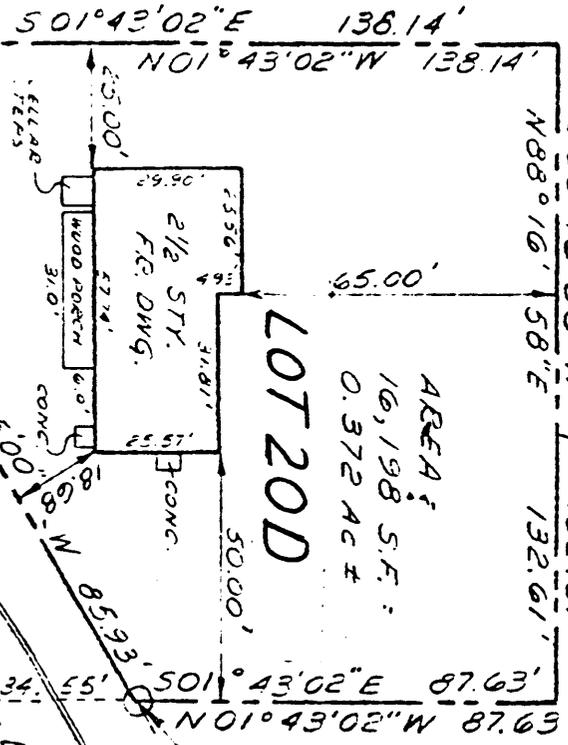
**KIRCH-FORD HOUSE**  
WARREN TOWNSHIP, N.J. (Somerset County)

BLOCK 311 LOT 20D

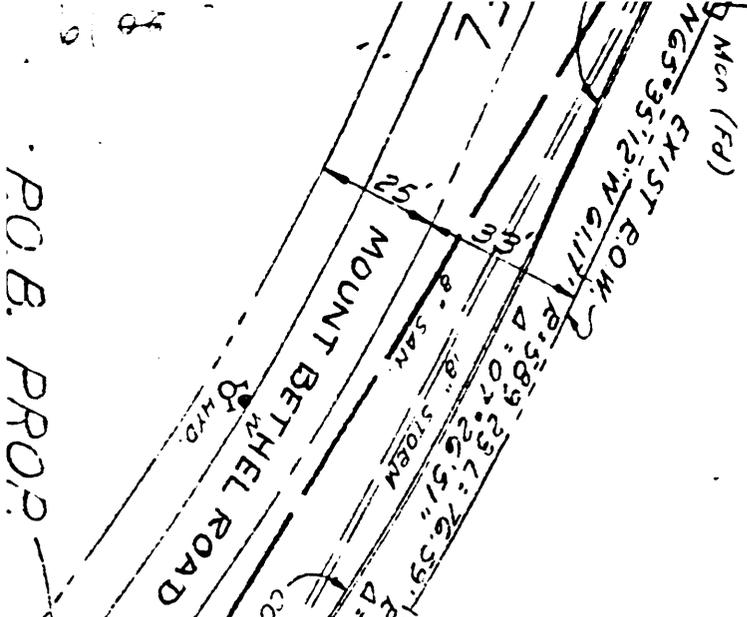
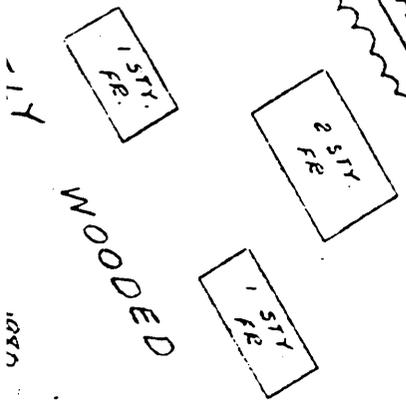
LOT LINE

LOT 20D

AREA:  
16,198 S.F.  
0.372 AC ±



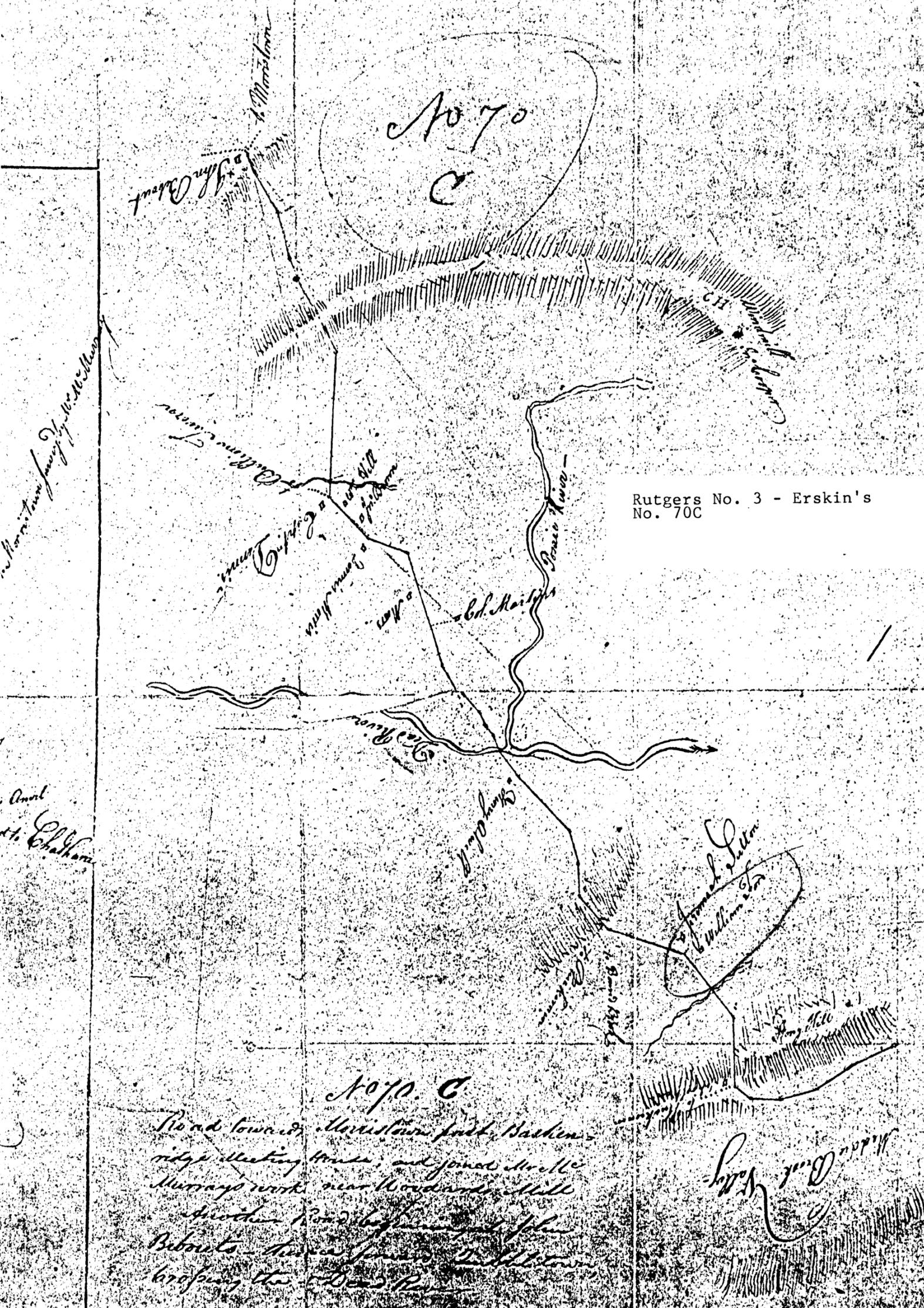
P.O.B. PROP.



TRUE POINT BEGINNING  
PLACE OF LOT 20D  
PROP. LOT 20D  
558° 05' 00" W  
141.79'  
REINMAN







Rutgers No. 3 - Erskin's  
No. 70C

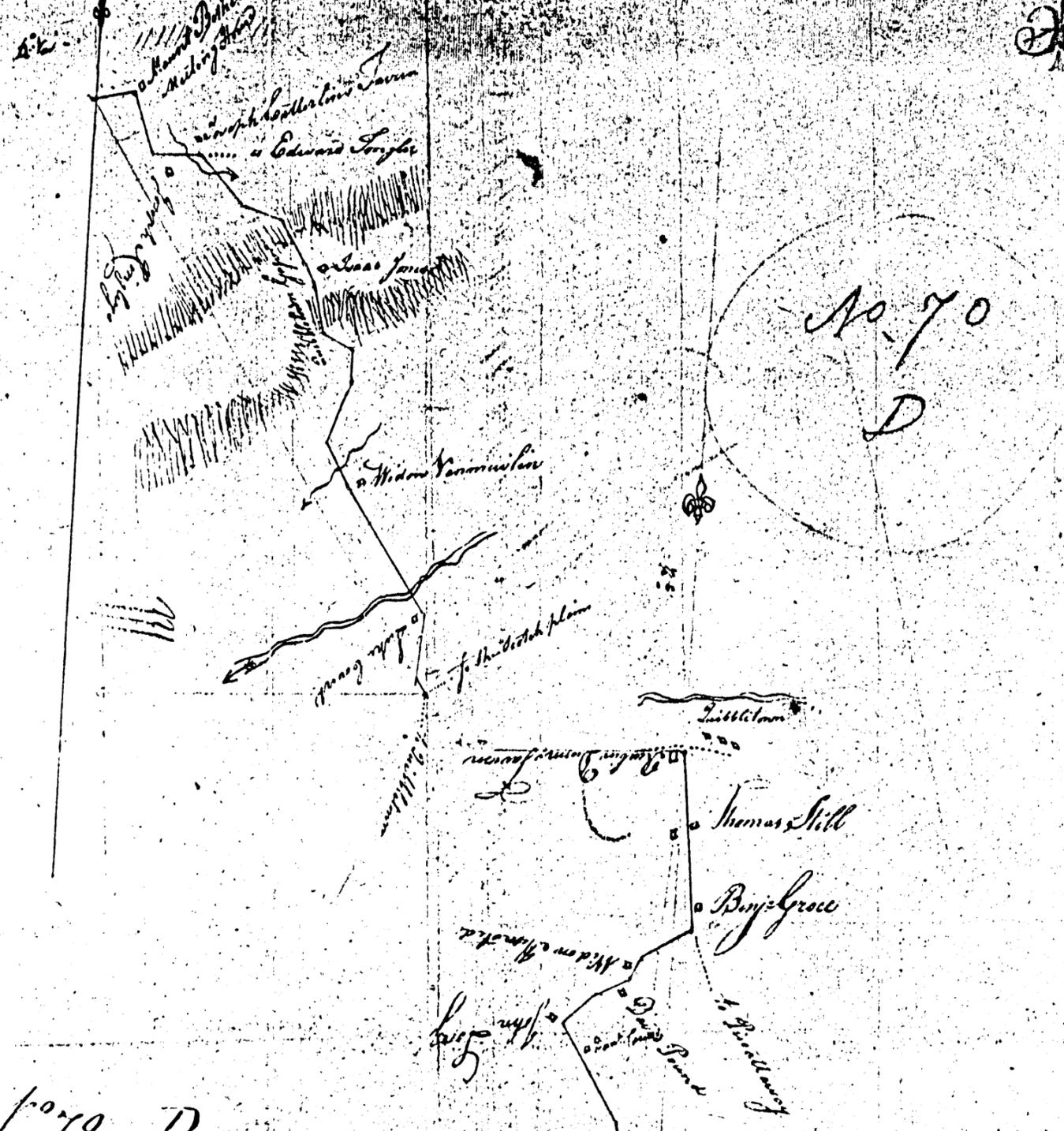
No 70 C

Road towards Morris town past Baskin's  
ridge meeting House, and found Mr. Mc  
Murray's work near Woodland Hill  
Another Road between and from  
Babou's house towards Morris town  
crossing the Deer River

James Smith  
Road towards Morris town

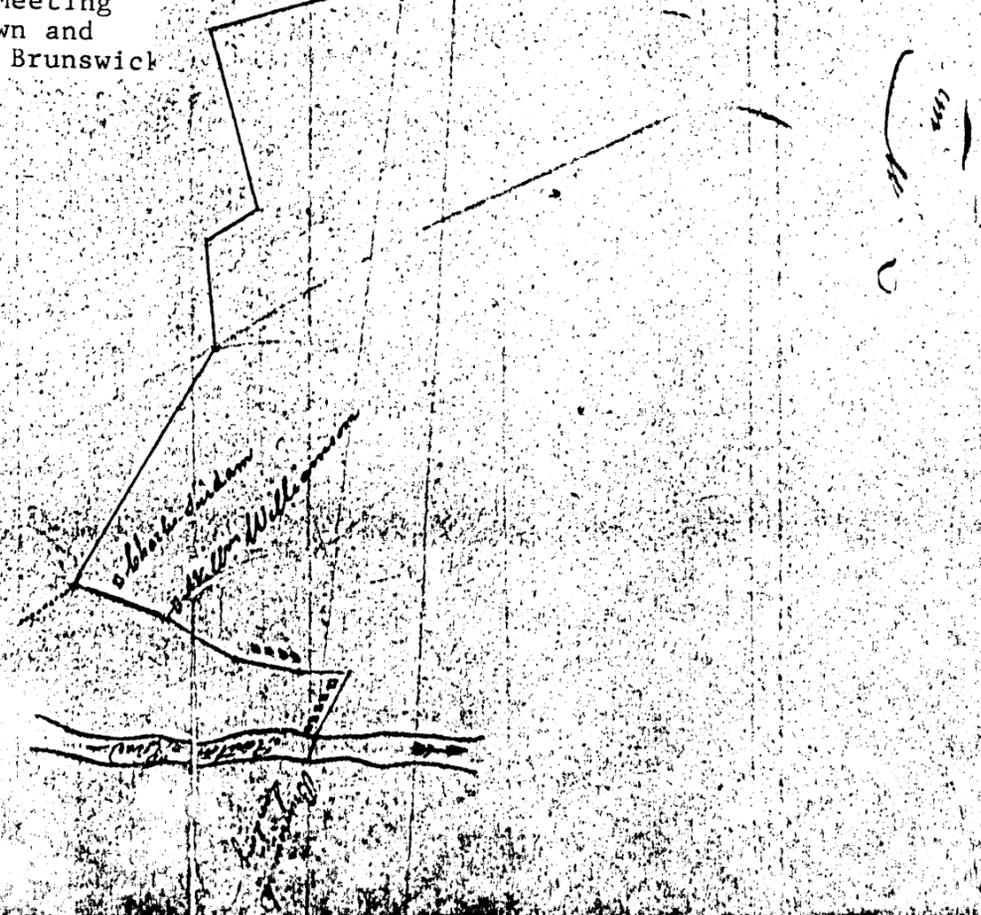
Road towards Morris town  
past Baskin's ridge

Road towards Morris town  
past Baskin's ridge



No. 70, D  
 Road from Mount Bethel Meeting  
 House to near Quibbletown and  
 from Quibbletown to Brunswick

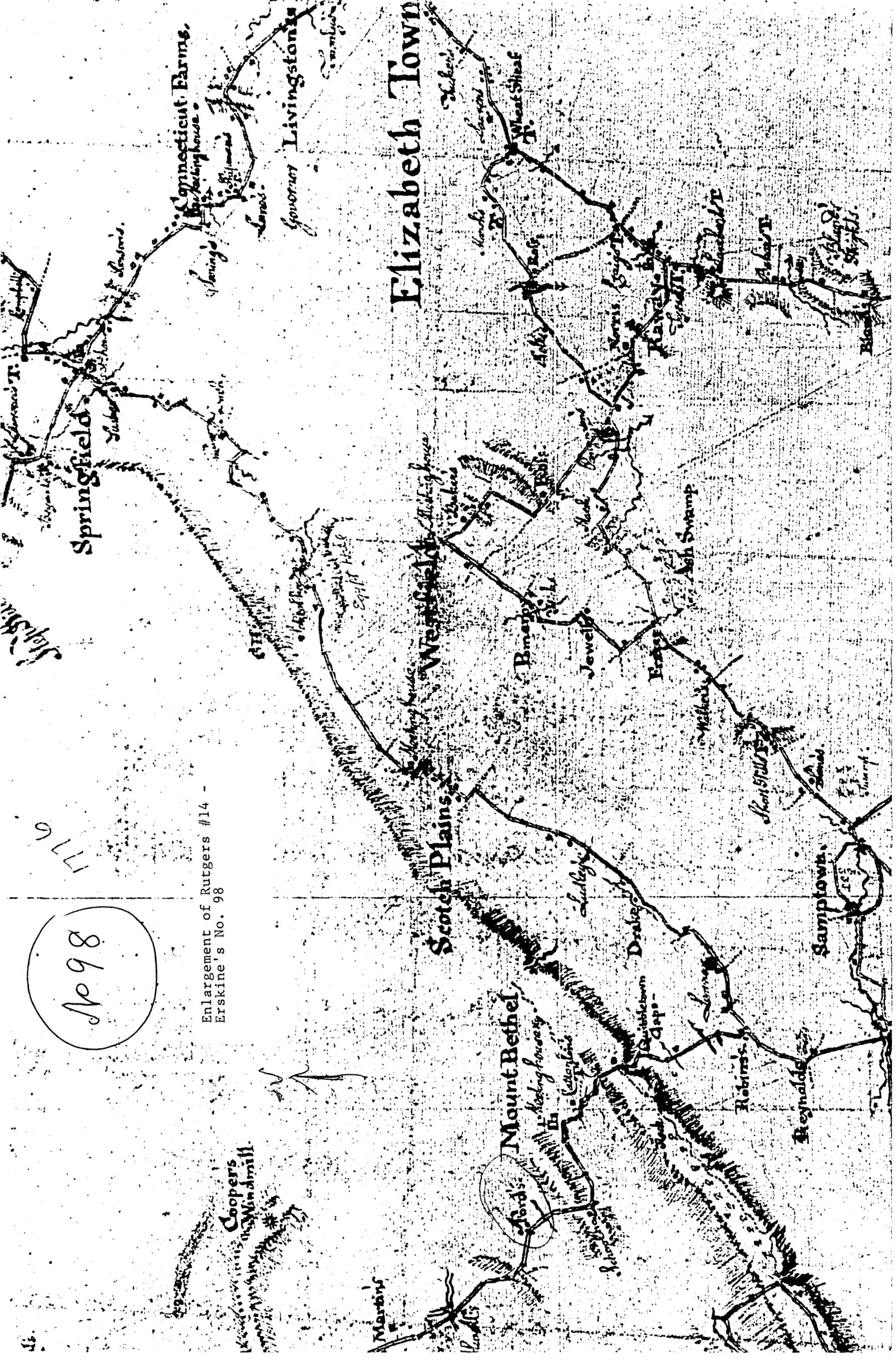
RUTGERS #4 - Erskine's  
 No. 70D  
 Road from Mount Bethel Meeting  
 House to near Quibbletown and  
 from Quibbletown to New Brunswick



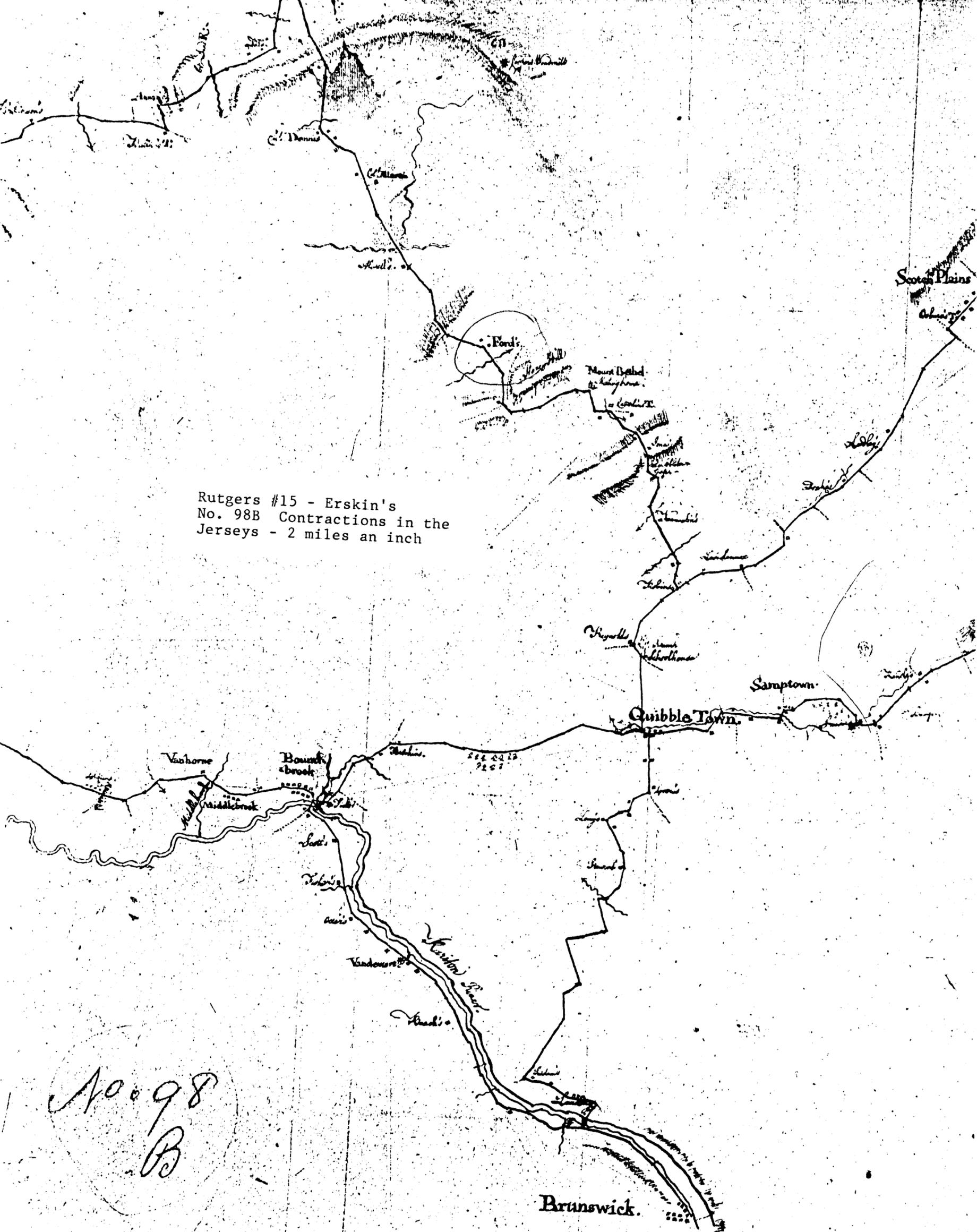
8698

1776

Enlargement of Rutgers #14 -  
Erskine's No. 98



Rutgers #15 - Erskin's  
No. 98B Contractions in the  
Jerseys - 2 miles an inch



No. 98  
B