

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and 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 from 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 Carpenter Street School

other names/site number Bethel A.M.E. School

2. Location

street & number 53-5 Carpenter Street N/A not for publication

city or town Woodbury vicinity

state New Jersey code NJ county Gloucester code 015 zip code 08096

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby 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.)

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official/Title

7/17/97
Date

Assistant Commissioner for Natural & Historic Resources/DSHPO
State of 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 the 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]
Signature of the Keeper

Edson H. Beall

Date of Action

8/21/97

Carpenter Street School
Name of Property

Gloucester County, NJ
County and State

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	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

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

NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION - SCHOOL

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

MID 19TH CENTURY - GREEK REVIVAL

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation FIELDSTONE
walls WEATHERBOARD UNDER
ASBESTOS SHINGLE
roof WOOD UNDER ASPHALT SHINGLE
other _____

Narrative Description

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

(See Continuation Sheets.)

Carpenter Street School
Name of Property

Gloucester County, NJ
County and State

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ETHNIC HERITAGE - BLACK

EDUCATION

Period of Significance

1840 - 1889

Significant Dates

1840, c.1870, 1881, 1889

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

AFRICAN-AMERICAN

Architect/Builder

BUILDER - JOSEPH TATUM

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): N/A

- 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 #

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Gloucester County Historical Society

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .2624 acres Woodbury Quad

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	18	486740	4408860
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
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 Margaret Westfield, R.A. and Caroline Gavin, Preservation Specialist

organization Westfield Architects & Preservation Consultants date 10 February 1997

street & number 425 White Horse Pike telephone (609) 547-0465

city or town Haddon Heights state NJ zip code 08035

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church

street & number 32 Courtland Street telephone (609) 845-1965

city or town Woodbury state NJ zip code 08096

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

The Carpenter Street School is a rectangular, one story, originally one room, wood frame schoolhouse located in the northwest corner of a ¼ acre lot owned by the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal church on Carpenter Street in the City of Woodbury (photograph 1). Built in 1840, the school had a second room added to the rear c.1870. A front addition dating to c.1930 extended the building's form and detailing. Although architecturally vernacular in its interpretation, the mid-nineteenth century building's chief stylistic influence is Greek Revival, mainly visible in the building's gable end orientation, the detailing of its cornice returns, and the symmetrical arrangement of its fenestration (photographs 2 and 4).

The 52'5" x 20'3" schoolhouse faces north and is set back from the street to accommodate an original play yard in front. An open (but covered) well that taps a natural spring and once serviced the school, is located adjacent to Carpenter Street. The back of the lot is heavily overgrown; the building is closely surrounded by vegetation on the sides and rear (photographs 1 and 3).

The structure is slightly raised on a random laid, fieldstone foundation (photograph 9). The gable roof is currently covered in asphalt shingles over wood shingles and the exterior walls in asbestos shingles over clapboard. Long two-over-two windows light the interior and access is through a centered, five horizontal panel door on the front facade (photograph 2). A second door is set in the far right bay of the east facade. On the front, or north, facade, two windows flank the door (photograph 2). The door is set above a single stone step, and the windows extend from mid-door height to about a foot above the top of the door. Above the door is an old cast plaque stating, "First Negro School in Woodbury occupied this building 1840-1889." A square, four-pane window is diagonally fixed in the front gable end (photograph 2).

Each of the longer facades has four somewhat evenly placed windows, with a slightly larger bay spacing at the ends and in the center, set about nine inches below the cornice and aligned with the two windows on the front facade (photograph 3). The rear opening on the west wall has a door that leads to the c.1870 addition. The south wall has two windows. Along the eaves and the gable end returns, the box cornice is detailed with applied cyma recta and cavetto moldings (photograph 4). Remnants of metal half-round gutters exist along the eaves (photograph 4).

The basement is about 7' deep and corresponds to the 30' x 18'3" floor area of the original one-room school house (photograph 9). The main space and northern crawlspace are enclosed by a fieldstone foundation; the crawlspace to the south by concrete masonry units. Joists run in an east-west direction with an access hatch south of center. The basement floor is poured concrete over packed dirt except for a circle where a previous central heater had been located.

Above, in the main room, the ceiling and walls are plaster and lath with beaded board wainscoting below the chairrail, and unmolded wood window surrounds and simply molded, aproned sills (photographs 7 and 8).

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(Currently, failing acoustical ceiling tile and modern wall paneling remain over some these finishes.) A vestibule and closet were added on the south wall c.1930, and a kitchen was added along the length of the opposite end wall around 1870* (photograph 7). The finishes in these rooms match that of the main space. There is a hatch in the kitchen ceiling that gives access to the attic.

As in the basement, the framing of the attic is aligned in an east-west direction, and the ceiling lath is nailed directly to the bottom of these joists (photograph 5). The rafters rest on the top plates and they come to a point where the rafter tails meet the box cornice and the top plates. The roof substrate is of spaced lath and wood shingle in most areas with some butted solid board sheathing in others (photograph 6). The framing lumber is vertically sawn and the nails are machine cut in both the main section and the kitchen addition. The top plates from the original end wall framing of the one room construction are visible, complete with the mortises for the tenons of wall studs removed for the front and rear additions. Also visible in the attic is the inside face of the irregular, vertically sawn clapboard on the north end wall (photograph 6).

When the school function was moved down the street to a new structure in 1889, the building then served as a Parish House. Around 1930, the Building Fund Committee added the vestibule and closet to the space, and in 1981 the entire congregation moved to their new church on nearby Courtland Street. Subsequently, the 1874 church burned and was demolished in 1989, and the School/Parish House left vacant.

* The church was being entirely rebuilt in 1874 and it is recorded that the congregation worshipped in the schoolhouse temporarily. Therefore, it is possible that this addition may actually date to the 1874 construction period and may have been built to prepare for (or as a result of) this temporary use.

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NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Carpenter Street School is historically significant as the earliest known surviving African-American schoolhouse structure in New Jersey. Under Criterion A, the school is associated with the development of education in the state and the ethnic heritage of the African-American community. It is also the earliest surviving building associated with the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church of Woodbury, New Jersey. Since its 1840 construction, it has continuously been under the aegis of the Bethel A. M. E. Church who had the foresight to create a school for their neighborhood at a time when few children, and fewer African-American children, had access to any education at all. It is believed to be the first building constructed expressly for the education of black children in the State of New Jersey; first as a semi-private school (1840-1881) and then a public school (1881-1889). When the expanding student population was moved to a larger school house, the building continued to serve the church as the Parish House and Sunday School (1889-1981).

Formed in 1817 by the Rev. Richard Allen and Rev. W.P. Quinn and incorporated in 1840, Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church was, during their year of incorporation, in the process of constructing a house of worship.¹ The congregation had been meeting in members' homes, and any other space they could borrow.² A quarter of an acre was purchased for \$25.00 by the trustees of the church: James James, Doran Wilson, and James Murray; from James Saunders.³ This property, the second site considered for the church and school, was located "in the lower end of Woodbury on the road leading to the Glassborough Road".⁴ This road was known as Hayti/Haytean Street, which subsequently became Otter Street, and finally evolved into the current name: Carpenter Street. Four houses existed on Carpenter Street at that time; the property of the American Protestant Society, the home of David and Betsy Wright, the house later owned by Mrs. Cassie Moore, and the Ricco house, host to many meetings and traveling ministers.⁵ The Carpenter Street School was built by Joseph Tatum, and the congregation was assisted by the Religious Society of Friends in Woodbury, who had before shown interest in and support of Bethel projects.⁶

Only 53% of the children in the state of New Jersey between the ages of five and sixteen were attending school in 1839.⁷ Education had yet to become a priority for many children in the state. The education of African-American children began as a Sunday School started by the Rev. W.W. Blauvelt in 1817, first in Flemington's Academy, and then, due to town pressure, from the Rev. Clark's back porch.⁸ As many of the children were working, a Sunday School was the most logical method for reaching them, so many such schools began in the first three decades of the nineteenth century.⁹ It was also more acceptable at that time to teach African-Americans via the Scriptures.¹⁰ Most of eighteenth century education had been under the guidance of church groups, a trend that continued in the early nineteenth century for the black population, as the local common schools did not always serve their needs.¹¹ During this time, the African-American churches were beginning to organize, Bethel under guidance from Philadelphia, and the new congregations took on the religious and moral instruction, the community service, and the education of their populace. The white churches did not serve such a global purpose as their congregants could vote and were able to have their needs met elsewhere in the community.

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The African-American students from the vicinity of Woodbury had been attending the Old Deptford School located on Delaware Street, an arrangement that had become inadequate as it "was now over-crowded with white children."¹² (The Old Deptford School was among those schools that served both white and black children.¹³) Localities varied widely in their ideas of how to address the education of their constituents. They ranged from schools that were fully integrated from their inception to grossly divergent quality of services to white, black, those able to pay tuition, and the poor.

In 1840, coinciding with the construction of the Bethel A.M.E. Church, the Carpenter Street School was built. Situated on the same lot, the physical relationship of the school and church reflect the paternalistic and symbolic role the African-American church traditionally played in the development of education for African-American children.

Miss Cassie Patterson became the first African-American teacher at the Carpenter Street School.¹⁴ One-room schoolhouses of this type were typical of the nineteenth century schools throughout New Jersey, but rare for the schooling of African-American students. They adapted to or retrofitted existing buildings, or had part-time arrangements with groups in possession of their own facilities. The Carpenter Street School was constructed with 547.5 square feet of floor space, high windows, a good natural lighting angle, a practical storage cellar, and a quarter of an acre lot. Many of these attributes would be standardized by about 1850 by reformers such as Henry Barnard and Thomas Burrowes. They would specify qualities such as: 572 square feet for 49 students and a teacher, at least a half acre of land, and a full cellar. So, although not "ideal" by reform standards, the 1840 Carpenter Street school showed considerable progress toward those goals, especially since the school was built to educate African-American children.

A public school fund had been enacted with the Constitution of 1844, but it was not until 1867 that the New Jersey State Board of Education was established and public taxes were mandated specifically for public school use, thus installing a statewide system of public instruction.¹⁵ By 1871, New Jersey had finally abolished tuition, rendering all public schools free of cost.¹⁶ Schooling then became compulsory for all children in 1874.¹⁷ The Carpenter Street School was a semi-private institution from its construction in 1840 until 1881, when, through the state desegregation policy, it was included among the public schools of the City of Woodbury, enabling it to receive funds from the state.¹⁸ While the school had only been open for three months per year in 1851, it is believed that by this time it was open eight months annually to correspond with the school schedule for white children in Woodbury.¹⁹

In 1874, the congregation temporarily met in the school while construction of a new church was being overseen by Reverend Robert M. Turner, the church's first resident pastor, and constructed by Messrs. E. Stokes & Co.²⁰ This use of the schoolhouse coincides with the period of a kitchen addition on the north wall. Then, in 1889, eight years after the Carpenter Street School became a public school, a new and bigger school was built one block to the west and the 1840 structure became the church's Parish House.²¹

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Carpenter Street School
Gloucester County, NJ

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From 1889 to 1981 the Parish House accommodated local meetings, Sunday School, and other church functions. Around 1930 the Building Fund Committee set about "remodeling and enlarging the old school house (now known as the Parish House)." ²² This consisted of the addition of a vestibule and closet on the south wall. Subsequently, modern finishes were installed over the original interior finishes. The building has stood vacant since 1981 when a new church structure, incorporating the Parish House functions, was built to the north on Courtland Street. ²³

The Carpenter Street School is a prototypical example of a mid-nineteenth century, one-room schoolhouse, built with the form and simple details typical of church-sponsored community schools. The relationship between the African-American church and school is particularly important, as they emerged simultaneously, unlike the white churches and schools which were typically independent of one another. The education of the spirit and the mind was seen as a means to self-sufficiency for the individual and the African-American community. The building is to be preserved and rehabilitated with a grant from the New Jersey Historic Trust's Historic Preservation Bond Program, matched by federal funds administered by the County of Gloucester. Upon project completion, the historic Carpenter Street School will serve as a community education and outreach center to be administered by the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal congregation, thus restoring the building's original 1840 purpose and educational use.

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ENDNOTES

1. P.H. Barnes, "Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, 61 Carpenter Street, Woodbury, New Jersey," Gloucester County Historical Society, October 18, 1940, p.1; "Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church," Gloucester County Historical Society, n.d., p.2; and "History of Bethel A.M.E. Church," Gloucester County Historical Society, 1940, p.1&3
2. Barnes, p.1 and "Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church," p.2
3. Barnes, p.1 and "Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church," p.3
4. Barnes, p.1; "Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church," p.3; and "History of Bethel A.M.E. Church," p.1
5. "Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church," p.4 and "History of Bethel A.M.E. Church," p.2
6. "Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church," p.3 and "History of Bethel A.M.E. Church," p.2
The Quakers' strong belief in both education as a means of betterment and in the rights of African-Americans would have recommended this particular project to them. Many Meetings allocated funds for the education of their own poor and those who had no other learning opportunity. They also contributed money and efforts toward training teachers for the schools, asking, as early as 1805, for the help of the African-American community in this task (Marion Thompson Wright, Ph.D., *The Education of Negroes in New Jersey*, 1941, New York: Arno Press & The New York Times, 1971, p.66).
7. Wright, p.119
8. *Ibid.*, p.71
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 69-72
10. *Ibid.*
11. Robeta Marx Delson, "New Jersey Schools: Recommendations for Conservation of the Legacy," undated manuscript from the files of the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office, p.190
12. "Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church Woodbury, 5th Anniversary Celebration." 1986, p.4 and "History of Bethel A.M.E. Church," p.2
13. Barnes, p.2; "Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church," p.5; and "History of Bethel A.M.E. Church," p.2
14. "Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church," p.5 and "History of Bethel A.M.E. Church," p.2
Teachers at exclusively black schools were usually African-American, although Sunday Schools were taught by both white and black women.

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15. Delson, p.188 and Wright, p.121
16. Delson, p.191
17. Wright, p.123
18. Barnes, p.2; "Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church," p.5; and "History of Bethel A.M.E. Church," p.2
19. Wright, p.128
20. Barnes, p.1; "Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church," p.6; and "History of Bethel A.M.E. Church," p.2
21. "Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church," p.6; and "History of Bethel A.M.E. Church," p.2
22. Barnes, p.2; "Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church," p.11; and "History of Bethel A.M.E. Church," p.2
23. "Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church Woodbury, 5th Anniversary Celebration," p.4

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

Barnes, P.H. "Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, 61 Carpenter Street, Woodbury, New Jersey." Gloucester County Historical Society, October 18, 1940.

"Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church." Gloucester County Historical Society, n.d.

"Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church Woodbury, 5th Anniversary Celebration." 1986.

Delson, Roberta Marx. "New Jersey Schools: Recommendations for Conservation of the Legacy." Undated manuscript from the files of the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office.

Guzzo, Dorothy P. "Certification of Eligibility." New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Historic Preservation, January 10, 1996.

"History of Bethel A.M.E. Church." Gloucester County Historical Society, 1940.

Jansen, Deborah. "New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Historic Preservation, Individual Structure Survey Form for Bethel A. M. E. Church and School, Woodbury Multiple Resource Area." December 30, 1983.

Wright, Marion Thompson, Ph.D. *The Education of Negroes in New Jersey*. 1941. New York: Arno Press & The New York Times, 1971.

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Gloucester County, NJ

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the northwest corner of the property, 192.5' from the southeast corner of the intersection of Carpenter Street and Allen Street, proceed 97.68' east along Carpenter Street, then 140' south, then angle back 107' northwest, and 94' north to the point of beginning, encompassing the whole of Block 100, Lot 7.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries described are taken from the tax map, Sheet 25 of the City of Woodbury, Gloucester County, N.J., surveyed by Carter, Edgar & Wittwer Consulting Engineers, October 1, 1928. These boundaries enclose the property historically associated with the Carpenter Street School.

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Carpenter Street School
Gloucester County, NJ

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PHOTOGRAPHS

The following is the same for all photographs:

1. Carpenter Street School
2. Gloucester County, New Jersey
5. Negatives held by:
Margaret Westfield, R.A.
Westfield Architects & Preservation Consultants
425 White Horse Pike
Haddon Heights, New Jersey 08035
(609) 547-0465

List of Photographs

3. Caroline Gavin, Photographer
4. 6 February 1997
6. View of the site looking southwest (the church stood to the right of the school at the front of the lot.)
7. Photograph 1 of 9

3. Caroline Gavin, Photographer
4. 6 February 1997
6. Front facade looking south
7. Photograph 2 of 9

3. Caroline Gavin, Photographer
4. 6 February 1997
6. View along west side of school looking southeast
7. Photograph 3 of 9

3. Rebecca A. Hunt, Photographer
4. 22 August 1995
6. Detail of cornice at gable end return
7. Photograph 4 of 9

3. Rebecca A. Hunt, Photographer
4. 22 August 1995
6. View of attic looking north, showing framing of c.1930 front addition
7. Photograph 5 of 9

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3. Rebecca A. Hunt, Photographer
 4. 22 August 1995
 6. View of attic looking south, showing rear face of clapboards on the gable end, spaced roofing lath, and underside of wood roof shingles
 7. Photograph 6 of 9
-
3. Caroline Gavin, Photographer
 4. 6 February 1997
 6. Interior space within c.1870 kitchen addition looking southwest
 7. Photograph 7 of 9
-
3. Rebecca A. Hunt, Photographer
 4. 22 August 1995
 6. Original interior finishes in original school room looking east
 7. Photograph 8 of 9
-
3. Rebecca A. Hunt, Photographer
 4. 22 August 1995
 6. Basement of original school room looking south; opening to crawlspace of c.1870 kitchen addition near center of photograph
 7. Photograph 9 of 9

CARPENTER STREET

97.68'

WELL

94'

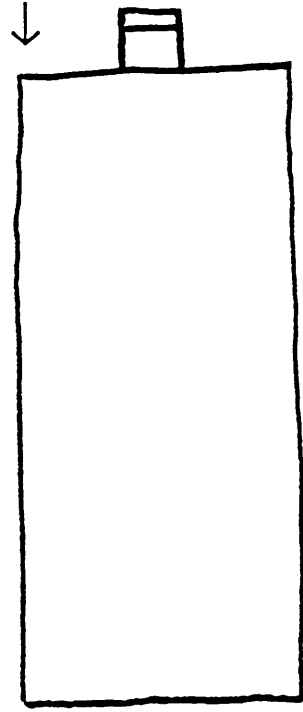
3 ↓

2 ↓

4 ↓

190'

107'

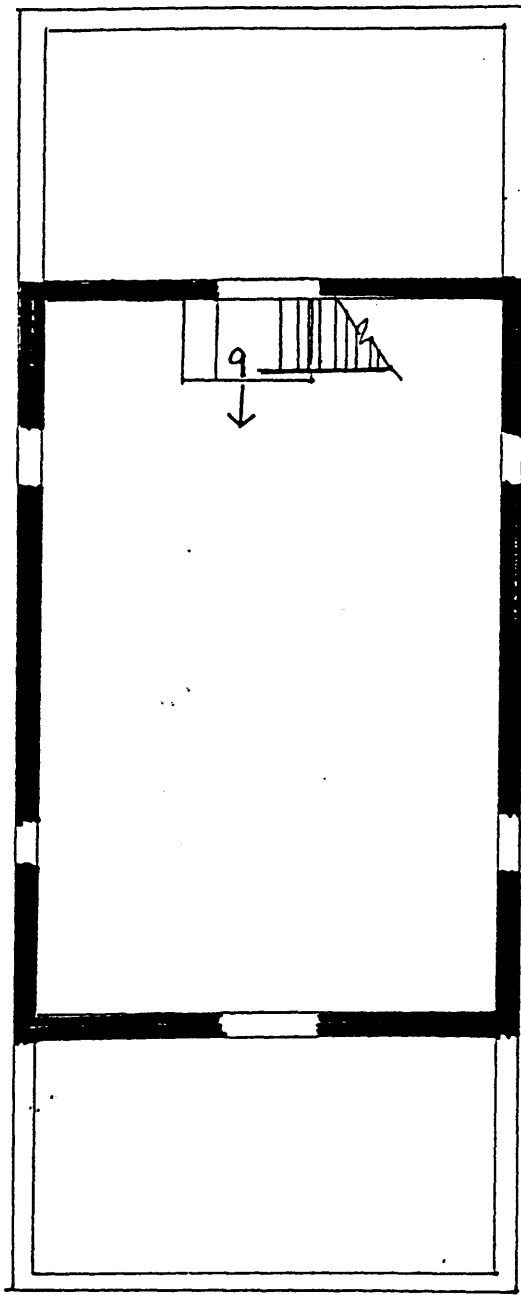


CARPENTER STREET SCHOOL - SITE PLAN

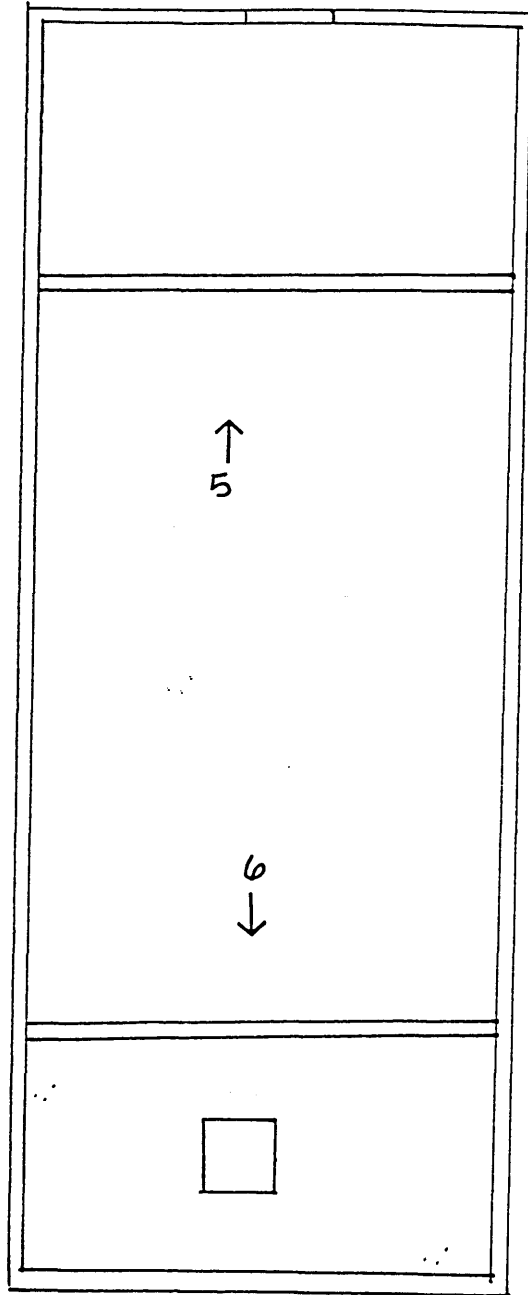
GLOUCESTER CO., NJ

SCALE 1/16" = 1'

N ↑



CARPENTER STREET SCHOOL - BASEMENT
GLOUCESTER CO., NJ
SCALE $\frac{1}{8}'' = 1'$



CARPENTER STREET SCHOOL - ATTIC
GLOUCESTER CO., NJ
SCALE $\frac{1}{8}'' = 1'$