

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: New Jersey	
COUNTY: Mercer	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
JAN 21 1974	

1. NAME

COMMON:
The Isaac Watson House

AND/OR HISTORIC:
The Isaac Watson House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
151 Westcott Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Trenton
Hamilton Township

STATE: New Jersey CODE: 34 COUNTY: Mercer CODE: 021

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Mercer County (Leased to DAR 99 year lease)

STREET AND NUMBER:
Mercer County Court House, Broad Street

CITY OR TOWN: Trenton STATE: New Jersey CODE: 34

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Mercer County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:
Broad Street

CITY OR TOWN: Trenton STATE: New Jersey CODE: 34

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

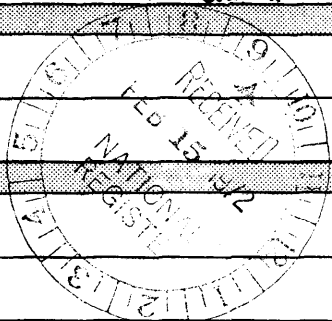
TITLE OF SURVEY:
New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory #1352.1

DATE OF SURVEY: Circ. 1960 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Historic Sites Section, Department of Environmental Protection

STREET AND NUMBER:
P.O. Box 1420, John Fitch Plaza

CITY OR TOWN: Trenton STATE: New Jersey CODE: 08625 34



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1/13 E 523 200
2/17 20448 720

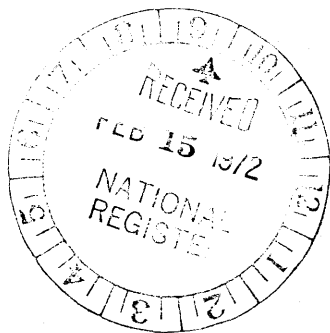
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2-28 74

7. Description

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE						
<p>The Watson House is probably the earliest surviving stone house in Mercer County. Reflecting English house construction of the late 17th century, we notice the overriding concern with basic protection from the elements in the steeply pitched roofs, the small window openings, and the pent eaves. House building at this time in America and England was still late medieval in its necessary concern for survival. It is two stories high with tall windows in the attic level. Two assymmetrically placed windows open up the long facades along with center doors. A huge fireplace occupies each of the end walls of the first floor, which is divided into two large simple rooms. The walls were reputedly mahogany planked, although modern pine is now in place. Three lateral chamfered beams support the floor joists of the second floor. A restored enclosed spiral staircase to the left of the west facade center door ascends to the second floor, laid out in a center hall, side bedroom plan. The south end bedroom has a restored segmental arch brick fireplace. The two rooms on the other side of the hall have none.</p> <p>The most fascinating aspect of this house is the heavy, bowed timber A-frame construction. The three principal roof supports spring in graceful arcs from inside the masonry walls. Lesser rafters, many of which are original and pegged at their peaks, rest on the outside walls. The intersections of the tie beams along with horizontal roof supports into the large timbers constitute virtuoso house frame joinery.</p> <p>The house was extensively restored under Mr. Mountford. New roofs, chimneys, pent eaves, windows and interior woodwork infer how seriously ravaged the house was over the years. The DAR has furnished the house and use it as a museum and headquarters. The basic house form and frame construction tell us much of competent house building in New Jersey at this time.</p>						

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



8. Significance

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1708**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

William Watson, a member of the Society of Friends, gathered his three children and left his home in Nottinghamshire, England, on May 29, 1684. They sailed from Bristol on June 5th and arrived in Philadelphia eight weeks later. He lived there for a while but then bought 700 acres of land "in the township of Nottingham in the County of Burlington, in the Province of West Jersey". He sited his log cabin on a bluff overlooking a stream which provided good transportation to the produce markets of Philadelphia. The Leni-Lenape Indians had lived on these bluffs. Archeological activity has uncovered the evidence of an Indian village and pottery.

Isaac Watson became a farmer, surveyor, constable and Overseer of the Highways. After his father died, about 1708, he built this imposing stone house on the property on the bluffs of Watson's Creek, a plot which had increased to 800 acres. His continued prosperity is revealed by an inventory of July 22, 1727, which totalled just over £ 800 (800 pounds).

Watson donated land, now part of the Riverview Cemetery in Trenton, as a burying ground for members of the Society of Friends, where he is probably buried. The modest initialed grave markers have deteriorated under the ravages of time and weather.

The last Watson to live here was Isaac's grandson, Joseph, who died in 1837.

The house, now owned by the county, was restored by the State Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution of New Jersey under the guidance of architect William Mountford, as part of the New Jersey Tercentenary.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Isaac Watson House, Pamphlet published by The State Society, Daughters of the American Revolution

Groff, Sybil C. New Jersey's Historic Houses. A.S. Barnes, 1971

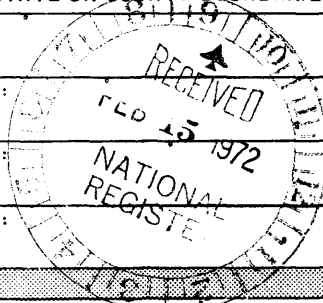
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		40° 11' 25"	74° 43' 39"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: **Constance Greiff and Channing Blake**

ORGANIZATION: **Heritage Studies** DATE: **September 8, 1971**

STREET AND NUMBER: **17 Clover Lane**

CITY OR TOWN: **Princeton** STATE: **New Jersey** CODE: **34**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION **NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: *Richard J. Sullivan*
Richard J. Sullivan

Title: Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection

Date: January 14, 1972

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

A. R. W. [Signature]
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 1/21/74

ATTEST:

George J. Emery
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: Jan. 21 1974

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(Continuation Sheet)(1)

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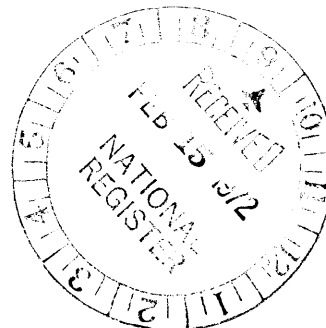
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Congressional Representation

Frank Thompson, Jr., Congressman (4th District)

Clifford P. Case, United States Senator

Harrison A. Williams, United States Senator



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Isaac Watson House
New Jersey 34
Mercer County 021

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

7. Description

RESTORATION: The Watson House was in a state of neglect and disrepair before its restoration in the mid 1960's. On the exterior all the doors and windows were out. The windows were replaced with the present leaded casement windows, and exterior oak doors were added. The caretaker's wing was added, copying a form from a similar house of the period. Cedar shingles were used on the roof replacing the tin roof, and pent roofs were built as indicated by remaining evidence. The dormers were removed; they were not original as clearly indicated in the attic roof framing. A winder, enclosed stair was reconstructed, following marks in the framing, replacing a later period straight run stair. The plaster walls on the first floor were removed, revealing evidence of former panelled walls; these walls were reconstructed using vertical pine boards. Apparently only the second floor mantel was intact. The other mantels have been reconstructed. Though most of the floor framing is original, all the flooring is new. Most of the roof framing is original. Of particular note are the 5 great rafters bents. These rafters are of a single timber, and several feet from the plate of the stone walls. The rafter timbers are crucked.

In summary the masonry walls and framing is original, however, much of the fabric has been replaced.

