

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED DEC 17 1978
DATE ENTERED MAR 13 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Williams/Harrison House *HHHS*

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

126 Eagle Rock Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Roseland

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

11th

STATE

New Jersey

VICINITY OF

CODE

34

COUNTY

Essex

CODE

013

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<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
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

The Roseland Historical Society Incorporated

STREET & NUMBER

126 Eagle Rock Avenue, P.O. Box 152

CITY, TOWN

Roseland

VICINITY OF

STATE

New Jersey

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Essex County

STREET & NUMBER

Broad Street

CITY, TOWN

Newark

STATE

New Jersey

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic American Buildings Survey (6-109)

DATE

1935

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D. C.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Harrison House stands on the original site on which it was built ca. 1824, on high ground, facing southwest and overlooking the juncture of Harrison and Eagle Rock Avenues in the center of the Borough of Roseland, New Jersey (formerly Centerville, a part of Livingston Township). The house, on a three quarter acre lot, is fronted by very tall boxwoods planted about 1840. On the southeastern side are three gardens for vegetables, flowers, and herbs.

Built on a foundation of cut brown sandstone, the building is a story-and-a-half farmhouse of frame construction with exterior clapboard walls painted white with green shutters on the windows of the parlors. Exterior red brick squares delineate the outer walls of the two parlor fireplaces on the southwest. The house constitutes two main rectangular parts--the main section contains the hall and two parlors; a wing contains the modern kitchen and the original kitchen-dining room. Behind the modern kitchen is a summer kitchen added some time after 1865. In front of the kitchen-dining room is a small porch whose posts are Victorian.

One enters the main hall through an original double-cross doorway with panels on both sides and surmounted by a delicate fanlight. The two windows on one's left are large and Jeffersonian in character with six-on-six pane division and finely carved heads. The hall has an ashwood floor, a door at the rear and a stairway with delicately turned balusters and curved newel post. The plaster of this room is fully marbled and extends through the hall of the second floor; it has never been painted or papered since the house was built.

The two parlors have double-cross doors with original brass knobs. The original wood trim is a refined design typical of the 1820's but not usual for a farmhouse. Both parlors have closet cupboards at the sides of their fireplaces, and the back parlor has a secret cupboard within the chimney area. The original floors are wide pine boards.

The original kitchen-dining room has a large fireplace with stone hearth and an original Dutch oven attached, which extends beyond the exterior wall where the beehive structure is visible. The room has a wide plank oak floor and wainscoting. One door leading to the modern kitchen was once balanced by a second door that is now sealed (The modern kitchen was constructed in 1872 by joining a small bedroom and a pantry that contained a back stairway).

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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY tanning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1824

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Harrison House is an example of a New Jersey farmhouse of unusual elegance, representative of the best of rural domestic Federal architecture of northern New Jersey of the early nineteenth century. The house was built and occupied by members of the same family for seven generations, after which it was sold to the Roseland Historical Society, which had been founded to restore it. The related Williams and Harrison families were business and political leaders in Essex County and in New Jersey. Although the house is on its original site, the original small dairy house of Henry Becker and Son (1880) has been moved to the property, where a part of the Becker Collection of agricultural equipment will be exhibited.

The house was recognized as architecturally important when it was included in the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1935¹. It was built ca. 1824 by Amos Williams (1793-1876), whose career as leather manufacturer and banker made him the center of industry in the Livingston community before the Civil War. His son-in-law Rufus Freeman Harrison (1818-1907), co-owner of the house from 1875 to 1887, was the most prominent community leader in the post-Civil War period. William Henry Harrison, Rufus' eldest son, was a store owner and county freeholder.

The original owner of the property was David Ogden, whose title to it was based on the Horse Neck Tract title, the deed to which was lost in a Newark fire of 1744. After the Revolution the property was confiscated probably because Ogden was a Tory who had fled to New York State. There was an eighteenth century house on the property, but its precise location has not been determined. The salvaged beams of the Harrison House are said to have come from this earlier house, occupied by Silas Whitehead, who built a tannery here some time after the Revolution.²

Industry

Amos Williams, a veteran of the War of 1812, purchased the Whitehead tannery about 1820, and probably in the same year married Elizabeth Steele, daughter of the schoolmaster Josiah Steele, a descendant of Governor Bradford of Plymouth.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bush, Robert. "A Chronology for the Harrison House" and "A Note on the Harrison House, Roseland, N.J.," unpublished mss., 1976.

WPA Writers' Program in New Jersey. Livingston, The Story of a Community, American Guide Series, Livingston, N.J., 1939.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3/4 acre, 24,000 square feet

QUADRANGLE NAME Caldwell

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 559880 4518860

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property nominated is a rectangular lot 140' by 178', to which an irregular parcel of land has been added comprising an additional 7,700 square feet. The lot faces Eagle Rock Avenue on the southwest and will

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Robert Bush, President

91 Hathaway Lane

Essex Fells, N. J. 07021

ORGANIZATION

The Roseland Historical Society

DATE

July 5, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

126 Eagle Rock Avenue, P.O. Box 152

TELEPHONE

201-226-0909

CITY OR TOWN

Roseland

STATE

New Jersey 07068

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

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 *[Signature]*

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Deputy Commissioner

11-27-78

TITLE Department of Environmental Protection

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

[Signature]
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

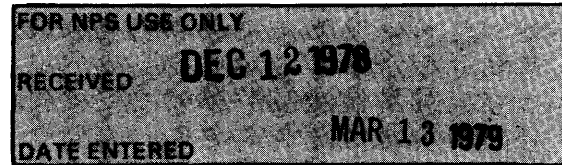
DATE 3-13-79

ATTEST:

[Signature]
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE March 9, 1979

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

There is a cellar under the two parlors, the hall, and the kitchen-dining room. Arches of stone and brickwork support the three fireplaces of the first floor. The cement floor is not original. Stairs lead from the southeast side of the house into the cellar, and it is also reached by a stairway under the main stairway of the hall. A variety of beams are observable in the cellar, several of which indicate salvage from an earlier house.

The height of the ceilings in the house varies. The two parlors and hall are appropriately high to conform with the elegance of those rooms: 10 feet, 3 inches. In the kitchen wing, ceilings are 8 feet, 9 inches. On the second floor the rooms over the hall and parlors have ceilings at 7 feet, 6 inches; and the rooms over the kitchens have ceilings at 7 feet, 10 inches.

The hall stairway has a landing with a window looking out on the rear of the property. On one's right are three original bedrooms, the central one 12 feet, eight inches by 12 feet, six inches, the two flanking rooms under the roof slant measuring eight feet by 12 feet, 8 inches. The distinguishing characteristic of the central bedroom is a window with arched fanlight, which complements the fanlight of the hall doorway. The floors of these bedrooms are of painted wide-plank pine. Walls are now papered; much of the wood trim was originally painted a dull blue. These three rooms enter n a fourth bedroom that was left unfinished until the early years of the twentieth century. It was originally a storage space and was sometimes used for the hanging (not smoking) of hams.

From this room one steps down to another hall, leading to a bathroom (c. 1936), which replaced the back stairway ascending from the modern kitchen. This hall also leads to a bedroom (15'8" X 12'6 1/2"), which once contained a small alcove, made into a large closet about 1936. The front dormer window was added about 1900 to give light to this bedroom.

Access to the attic space over the two parts of the house is by two overhead openings. Beams over the kitchen wing of the house are hand-fashioned; beams over the larger section of the house are machine sawen. These facts may be evidence to support the argument that the kitchen wing may have been built earlier than the main part of the house. But since the style of the two parts of the house suggests the same period, we cannot be sure that both parts were not built at the same time.

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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

A small frame and clapboard dairyhouse (c. 1880, 10 feet by 18 feet, the only outbuilding on the property, was moved in 1978 to a site behind the kitchen garden and facing the driveway. It was the original milk house used by Henry Becker and Sons, whose business was of importance to the area from about 1880 to 1950.

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

The Williamses reared five children in the house. Their one daughter, Harriet Matilda Williams, married Rufus Freeman Harrison in 1841 in the front parlor of the house.

Livingston Township's prosperity before and during the Civil War was largely due to the energy and leadership of Amos Williams. Across the road from his house he opened the first general store in Centreville. He tanned leather, cut out shoes and turned them over to local cordwainers for completion. He could be considered the first banker of the area. Local people invested money in his prospering business. He paid interest as high as the nearest bank in Orange and "his business acumen and honesty were security enough for the friend and neighbors". During the Civil War, when his main purchaser of shoes was in the Union Army, "backed by the loans of his friends, Williams went into the leather business on a large scale. He was able to stabilize the local price of leather and the earnings of the men who worked for him."³ But his little empire crumbled when peace was signed at Appomattox in 1865. He then held large quantities of leather and no purchasers. He sold at auction his most valuable household goods to pay his heavy debts managing for the moment to save his house and land.⁴

Politics

As he declined during the decade following his financial ruin, his son-in-law, Rufus F. Harrison, became the major magistrate of the area. In 1863 he was elected a member of the New Jersey Assembly.

He was also responsible for the erection of a monument for the New Jersey men slain at the Battle of Antietam, his own youngest son George having been killed in that battle. In 1872 Harrison was appointed lay judge in the Essex County Court of Common Pleas, an office he had until 1877. For forty-one year he was a school trustee in the Roseland district.⁵

Rufus' eldest son, William Henry Harrison, married Harriet Augusta Moore, in 1872. She was a niece of William's second wife and had been reared by her aunt in the old house. The Harrisons, father and son, then bought the house and all of William's land at sheriff's sale in 1875 for \$980.00.⁶ Amos himself died in 1876. Rufus maintained his part ownership of the property until 1887, when he sold his share to William Henry for \$3,000.00⁷

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

The William Henry Harrisons reared three daughters in the house. Their eldest, Gertrude, married Percy L. Teed and settled permanently in the house. Gertrude Teed inherited the property on her father's death in 1935. She died in 1972, leaving the property to her husband, who left it to their eldest son Arthur Harrison Teed.⁸ Arthur and his wife Marion reared two children in the house--Andrew and Louise Teed. Counting the parents of Amos Williams, who lived in the house, the Teed children were the seventh generation of the same family to live in the house.

The Harrison House is an idyllic relic of the past facing a four-lane modern highway. It dominates its community and is now the central respository of its history. The Williamses and Harrisons were archetypal families, representative of the rural yeoman-class pioneer settlers who came from England and Wales to Connecticut and then became founders of Newark and the Oranges. In the early nineteenth century branches of the Harrisons went west to settle in Ohio, Iowa, and California.

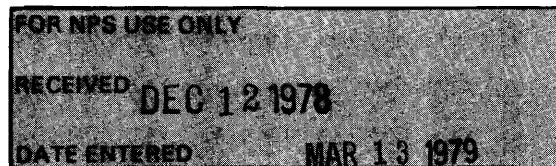
Because land was their major wealth, they were Whigs, and with the coming of Lincoln, Republicans. Their industry produced a variety of products--shoes, harness, dairy products, and the many items available in general stores. They maintained their Puritan heritage, and in New Jersey this meant that they were elders of the Presbyterian Church. Their responsibility meant that they were invariably magistrates and public servants--school trustees, postmasters, justices of the peace, judges, freeholders, and assemblymen. Their lives were essentially the lives of nineteenth century rural America, Northern style. They were not afraid to work with their own hands; they had no need for slaves. One of their sons died, as he put it "to free the slaves." The Harrison House embodies much of this old American way of life that as social history is most important to preserve for the nation.

Notes

¹ Historic American Buildings Survey Number 6-109, Library of Congress.

² From an interview with Mr. Percy L. Teed, fifth owner of the Harrison House.

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

³ Workers of the WPA Writers' Program of the Works Progress Administration in the State of New Jersey, Livingston, The Story of a Community, American Guide Series, Livingston, N. J., 1939, p. 60.

⁴ Ibid., p. 61.

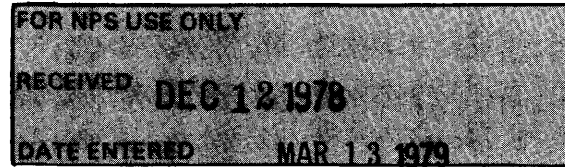
⁵ Obituary of Rufus F. Harrison, Newark Evening News, April 29, 1907, p. 9.

⁶ Deed: James Peckwell, Sheriff, to Rufus F. Harrison and William H. Harrison, Book K18-321, August 17, 1875.

⁷ Deed: Rufus F. Harrison to William H. Harrison, Book P23-212, January 20, 1887.

⁸ The last wills of Rufus F. Harrison, William H. Harrison, Gertrude L. Teed, Percy L. Teed, and Arthur H. Teed are in the hall of Records (Essex County), Newark, New Jersey.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (continued)

Obituary of Judge Rufus F. Harrison. Newark Evening News, April 29, 1907, p. 9.

Wills of William H. Harrison , Gertrude L. Teed, Percy L. Teed, Arthur Teed.

Deeds from Newark Hall of Records, William and Rufus Harrison, 1875 and 1887.

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA (continued)

be bounded on the southeast and northeast by a curved cul de sac, Tannery Lane. It is bounded on the northwest by the property of Antonino and Concetta Di Bartolo.