

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: New Jersey
COUNTY: Somerset
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE MAY 12 1975

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Franklin Corners Historic District

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: *W of Bernardsville*  
Hardscrabble and Childs Roads *and OS 202*

CITY OR TOWN: *Willie Hill*  
Bernards Township

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
5th

STATE: New Jersey      CODE: 34      COUNTY: Somerset      CODE: 035

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>Vacant</u>

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Multiple Ownership

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE: New Jersey

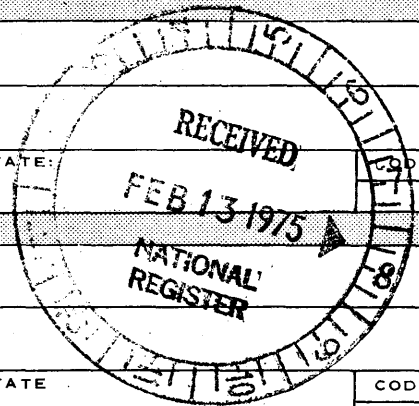
5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Somerset County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
Somerville

STATE: New Jersey      CODE: 34



6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Buildings Survey (NJ-533 & 67)

DATE OF SURVEY: 1941     Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington

STATE: DC      CODE: 11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: New Jersey

COUNTY: Somerset

ENTRY NUMBER: MAY 12 1975

DATE: 11

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

Excellent  Good  Fair  Deteriorated  Ruins  Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered  Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved  Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Franklin Corners is a small farming and milling hamlet which dates from approximately 1770 to 1850.

This small village is located north of the town of Basking Ridge, along the Passaic River at the intersection of Childs Road and Route 202.

The land was originally purchased by William Penn in 1717 and sold to John Budd in 1718. Budd's widow, Sarah Budd Scott, sold the land in the middle of the 18th century to the farmers and millers who settled the area prior to the Revolution. The Brees, Johnson, Lewis and Southard families were among the earliest inhabitants. Of these only the Samuel Johnson House still stands.

Generally, most structures date from the 1st and 2nd quarters of the 19th century when there were 2 mills, a school, a general store, and several farms at Franklin Corners. All of the commercial buildings still exist. Diaries and documents indicate that during the 19th century this village was a bustling agricultural community centered around two small one-family industries -- a grist mill and a saw mill.

Select buildings are herein described:

- 1 Van Dorn's Mill (Carl Ferenbach), Route 202 and Childs Road, 1842-43. Built on or near the site of an earlier mill (1768). 3 1/2 story random fieldstone with cut cornerstones. Outstanding example of mid-19th century stone masonry. Windows are 6/6 with trapazoidal keystones. Gambrel roof. Originally an undershot mill, but converted to turbines late in the 19th century. At about the same time the mill stones were replaced with rollers. Much of the 19th century mill machinery remains. Exterior unaltered. Building is vacant and beginning to deteriorate.
- 2 Ferdinand Van Dorn House (Lewis Robertson), Childs Road, 2nd quarter 19th century. Greek Revival style 2 1/2 story clapboard rectangular structure. Gambrel roof with intersecting triangular dormer. Paired gable end chimneys. Five bays, center entrance. First & second floor windows are 9/6 sash with louvered shutters except for the first floor windows east of the door which are full length. Stone foundation. Full cellar with a basement kitchen. Small brick outbuilding and a modern garage on the property
- 3 Van Dorn House (J. A. Ziebarth), Childs Road, 19th century, extensively altered. Conglomerate dwelling with many alterations and additions. Original unit appears to be rectangular 2 1/2 story clapboard structure with a gable roof and gable end chimneys. Probably originally 5 bay, center halls. Stone foundation nearly every facade has been altered and added on to.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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

Franklin Corners represents a way of life in the first half of the 19th century before New Jersey was heavily influenced by the Industrial Era. This small, nearly self-sufficient village, boasted of a saw mill, a grist mill, a general store, a school, and several houses in the 19th century.

Farmers surrounding the area travelled to the village for sawn timbers, to have their grain milled, and, perhaps to buy the latest manufactured goods from the small general store. The village, consequently, was a center of commerce for the Township.

The area comprising Franklin Corners had been settled some time prior to the American Revolution. The Brees, Johnson, Lewis and Southard families were the first settlers. Of these first families, however, only the Johnson House remains, as the others were variously destroyed.

Industry:

The first mill, on or near the present Van Dorn Mill, was built in 1768 by Samuel Lewis. It was from this mill that the Continental Army was provided with grain during the encampment at nearby Jockey Hollow in the winter of 1779.

This mill was probably operated by Samuel Woodward and owned by Richard Southard in the early 19th century.

Ferdinand Van Dorn bought the Southard place in 1842 and proceeded to build the present mill. This new grist mill was said to have been the finest flouring-mill in Somerset County and from its size and appearance the statement was probably not far from the truth. Van Dorn apparently designed the mill himself and selected a location which would provide the most efficient water power. The mill originally was fitted with three runs of stone which were replaced in 1893 by roller-type equipment. This modernization coupled with the installation of 3 turbines in the late 1880's laid the basis for a more productive mill operation. The mill operated until 1941 and much of the 19th century mill equipment is still intact.

The saw mill, which was originally constructed in 1828 by Samuel McMurtry and re-tooled around 1850 by his son Abnah, remained in the McMurtry family for nearly one hundred years. Until a generation ago the mill, with its vertical "up and down" saw was nearly completely intact and an excellent indication of early 19th century sawing techniques. Presently a private home, only the original form of the mill exists as an indication of

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Deeds. Somerset County, Book D, p. 705, 1772  
 Book D, p. 299, 1805  
 Book P, p. 287, 1832

Snell, James P., History of Hunterdon and Somerset Counties, New Jersey. Philadelphia: Everts & Peck, 1881 (pp 749, 751-2)

Historic American Buildings Survey. New Jersey - 67, 533.

Historical Booklet of Bernard's Township, New Jersey. 1960

Atlas of Somerset County, New Jersey. F.W. Beers, New York: 1873 (p. 23)

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

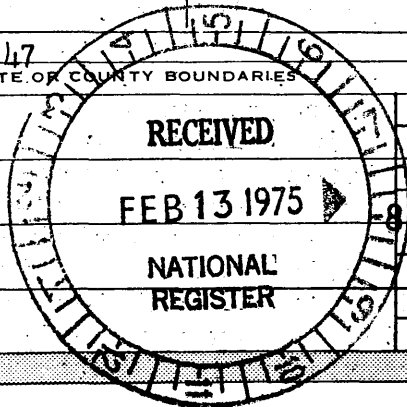
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	40° 44' 06"	74° 33' 09"				
NE	40° 44' 06"	74° 32' 26"				
SE	40° 43' 53"	74° 32' 26"				
SW	40° 43' 53"	74° 33' 09"				

NO  
COM  
C

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 47

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

STATE:	CODE:	COUNTY:	CODE:



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: Terry Karschner, Historian-Curator

ORGANIZATION: Historic Sites Section, Dept. of Environmental Protection

DATE: August, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER: Box 1420

CITY OR TOWN: Trenton

STATE: New Jersey

CODE: 34

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION	NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION
<p>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:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name: <u>David J. Bardin</u>                      David J. Bardin</p> <p>Title: <u>Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection</u></p> <p>Date: <u>December 12, 1974</u></p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p><u>Arnet A. Connally</u>                      Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date: <u>5/12/75</u></p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p><u>Ronald M. Hunshey</u>                      Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date: <u>5/9/75</u></p>

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

(Continuation Sheet) 1.

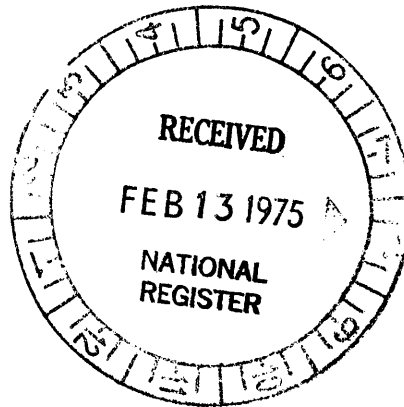
STATE New Jersey	
COUNTY Somerset	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	MAY 12 1975

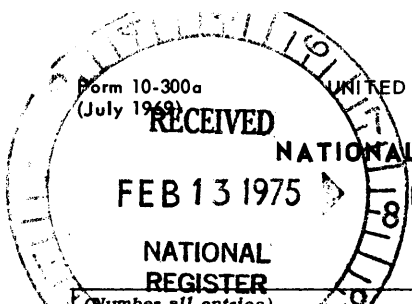
(Number all entries)

Franklin Corners Historic District  
Bernards Township  
Somerset  
New Jersey 34

6. Representation in Existing Surveys (cont'd.)  
Title of Survey:

New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory (#'s 237.6, 413.6, & 414.1)  
State, 1962, 1964 & 1973





Form 10-300a  
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER**

(Continuation Sheet) 2.

STATE New Jersey	
COUNTY Somerset	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
MAY 12 1975	

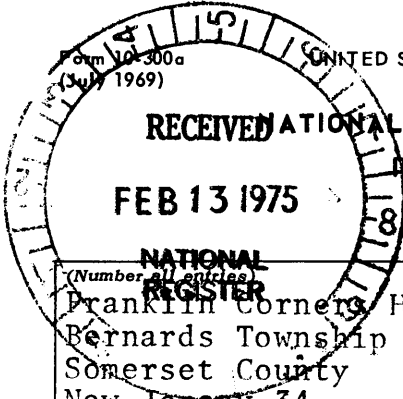
(Number all entries)

Franklin Corners Historic District  
Bernards Township  
Somerset County  
New Jersey 34

7. Description (cont'd.)

- 5 Joab Johnson House/William Gordon's General Store (Charles Allen), Childs and Hardscrabble Road, ca. 1805, 1850. Built by Joab Johnson. Two story clapboard dwelling with 1 1/2 story wing on east gable end. Main unit is 3 bay, side entrance. Windows are 6/6 sash with batten board shutters. Gable roof with modern outside chimney. Smaller unit has 2 bays and a gable roof with a modern dormer. Functions as general store ca. 1832-1850. Modern double garage in basement.
- 7 Samuel Johnson House. (Harry Ottinger, Jr.), Childs Road, ca. 1770. Oldest house in the district. Main unit is a 1 1/2 story rectangular clapboard building. Five bays with a center through hall. Windows are 6/6 sash with batten board shutters. Modern porch over center three bays. Gable roof with two shed dormers. Gable end chimneys. Smaller wing may be of a later date. This small rectangular unit is also 1 1/2 stories, clapboard, and a gable roof with a center shed dormer. Gable end chimney. The front facade of this unit is obstructed by a semi-enclosed leanto porch. Modern garage attached.
- 11 Schoolhouse (Richard Sanford), Childs Road, 1832. Single 2 story Greek Revival style clapboard building. Twenty by forty foot brace frame. Three bay, side entrance on the gable end. Windows are 6/6 sash. Second floor windows on the gable end may have been added in the 20th century when building was converted into a private residence. Corner pilasters and a simple entablature below the eave. Numerous additions in the rear.
- 9 McMurtry Sawmill (Robert F. Lewis), Hardscrabble Road, ca. 1827, 1850, altered. Two and 1/2 story vertical board structure with hand hewn timber frame. Stone foundation. Vertical saw mounted over fireplace. Between 1941 and 1962 this saw mill was converted into a private residence and much of the 19th century milling equipment as noted by Historic American Buildings Survey was removed during the remodeling. Exterior changes include the removal of large double

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
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(Continuation Sheet) 3.

(Number all entries)  
**NATIONAL REGISTER**  
Franklin Corners Historic District  
Bernards Township  
Somerset County  
New Jersey 34

7. Description (cont'd.)

sliding doors, the addition of exterior chimneys and modern window placements.

- 10 McMurtry House (John Nooney), Hardscrabble Road, opposite sawmill, 18th century. 1 1/2 story clapboard building. 5 bay, center hall. Windows are 9/6 sash on first floor. Attic windows, on gable and are 6/6 Gable roof with three dormers and gable and chimneys. Full length early 20th century porch on front facade which disguises age. Stone foundation. Modern garage at the eastern end of the property.

The Franklin Corners district is approximately 50 acres and contains 10 private residence and the vacant grist mill. Of these eleven structures two are 18th century, six are 19th century, and three are modern encroachments. Two of these were apparently constructed in the 1930's using timbers of old nearby barns.

Much of the district, especially along Hardscrabble Road, is undeveloped land covered with forest and dense undergrowth.

Furthermore, the district is adjacent to a nature study area and that area abutts up against Jockey Hollow, which is part of the Morristown National Historic Park.

The modern buildings are as follows:

- 4. Loysen House (Hilda Loysen), Hardscrabble and Childs Roads, 1930's. Built around the frame of an old barn. Two dwelling units and an attached garage. Main unit is 2 1/2 stories while smaller section is 1 1/2 stories with eyebrow windows. Clapboard with gable roof.
- 6 Wallace Childs House (R. Crump), Childs Road, Built in the 1930's in the colonial revival style by the nephew of millionaire restaurateur Willam Childs, Jr. Part of the was originally the frame of an old barn. The property is the site of another early 19th century barn built by Job Johnson.
- 8 House and Garage. (M. Gallagher), Hardscrabble Road, Early 20th century. Frame building with a small garage dependency. Said to have been a 19th century schoolhouse, but there is no surface evidence of any 19th century characteristics.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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(Continuation Sheet) 4.

STATE	New Jersey	
COUNTY	Somerset	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER		DATE
		MAY 12 1975

(Number all entries)

Franklin Corners Historic District  
Bernards Township  
Somerset County  
New Jersey

8. Significance (cont'd.)

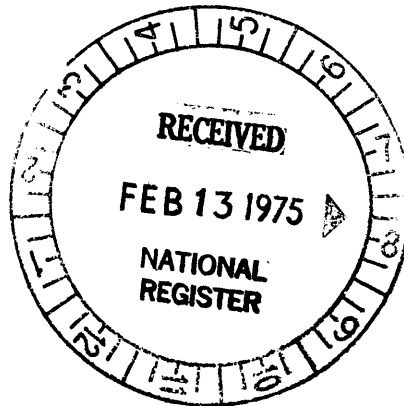
the structures former use.

Education:

Franklin Corners, small as it was, had citizens prosperous enough in the 2nd quarter of the 19th century to build their own school. This small school was private and required tuition from parents in order that their children might attend. The school was called Franklin Academy and functioned as an educational facility until the early 20th century.

N.B. William Childs, life-long resident of Somerset County and noted restaurateur, hoped to create what he termed an historic town around the nucleus of Franklin Corners in the 1930's. The preliminary plans actually called for the construction of a housing development which would encircle the village. Although a few buildings were constructed, the project never completely materialized as Childs died in 1938.

Consequently, Franklin Corners remains relatively unobstructed by modern development and has maintained a 19th century atmosphere up to the present day.





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

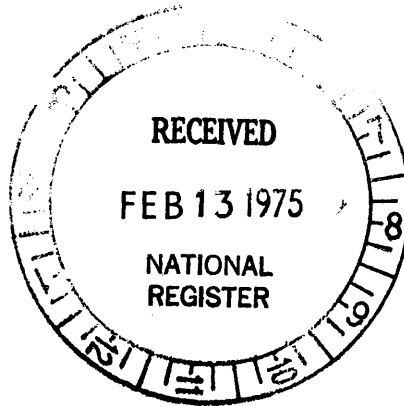
(Continuation Sheet) 5.

STATE New Jersey	
COUNTY Somerset	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	MAY 12 1975

(Number all entries)

9. Bibliography (cont'd.)

Additional information supplied by:  
Susan Ottinger, Chairman, Old House  
Study Group, Childs Road, Box 61  
Basking Ridge, New Jersey



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

(Continuation Sheet) 6.

STATE	
New Jersey	
COUNTY	
Somerset	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	MAY 12 1975

(Number all entries)

Franklin Corners Historic District  
Bernards Township  
Somerset County 034  
New Jersey 34

2. Location (cont.)

Verbal Description

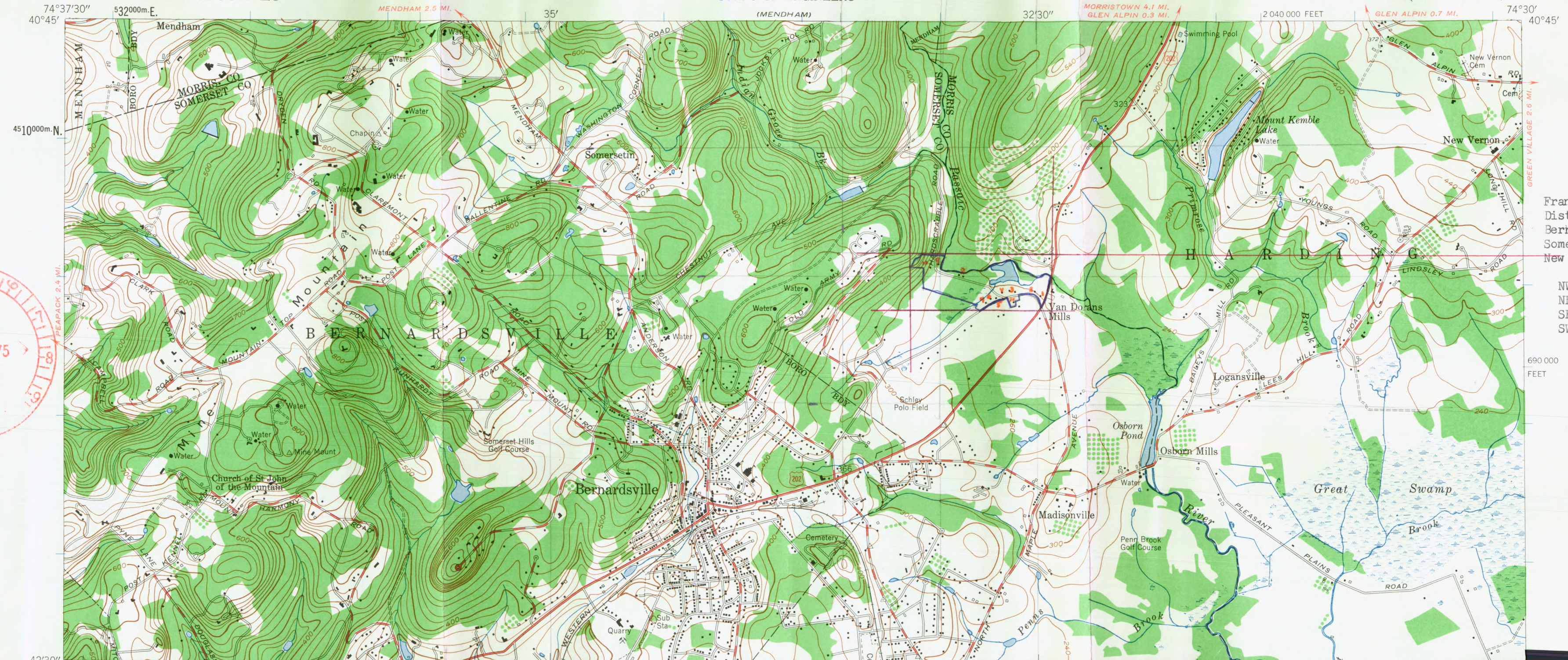
Beginning at the intersection of Route 202 (Mt. Kemble Avenue) and Childs Road, proceed north on Route 202 to the Harding-Bernards Township border at the Passaic River. Thence, proceed west along the main branch of the river to the bend at Hardscrabble Road, directly opposite Lakeside Slope Road (now closed). Thence, proceed north approximately 300 feet along the township boundary to the projected property line of J. Nooney (#25) and G & J Apgar (#24). Thence, proceed west along the Nooney property 370', southwest 147', south-southwest 254' and east 295'. Thence, proceed 476 feet south to Lakeside Slope. Thence, proceed easterly parallel to Hardscrabble Road (approximately 500 feet away) to the back property line on the north side of Childs Road. Thence, proceed southwest along the Ottinger property 215 feet. Thence, proceed southeast along Childs Road to the property line dividing E. Sandford and D. Carr. Thence, proceed south 371 feet, east 136 feet, north 220 feet, east 137 feet, and north 152 feet to Childs Road. Thence, proceed along Childs Road to the point of beginning.



UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BERNARDSVILLE QUADRANGLE  
NEW JERSEY  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



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Somerset County, 035  
New Jersey, 34

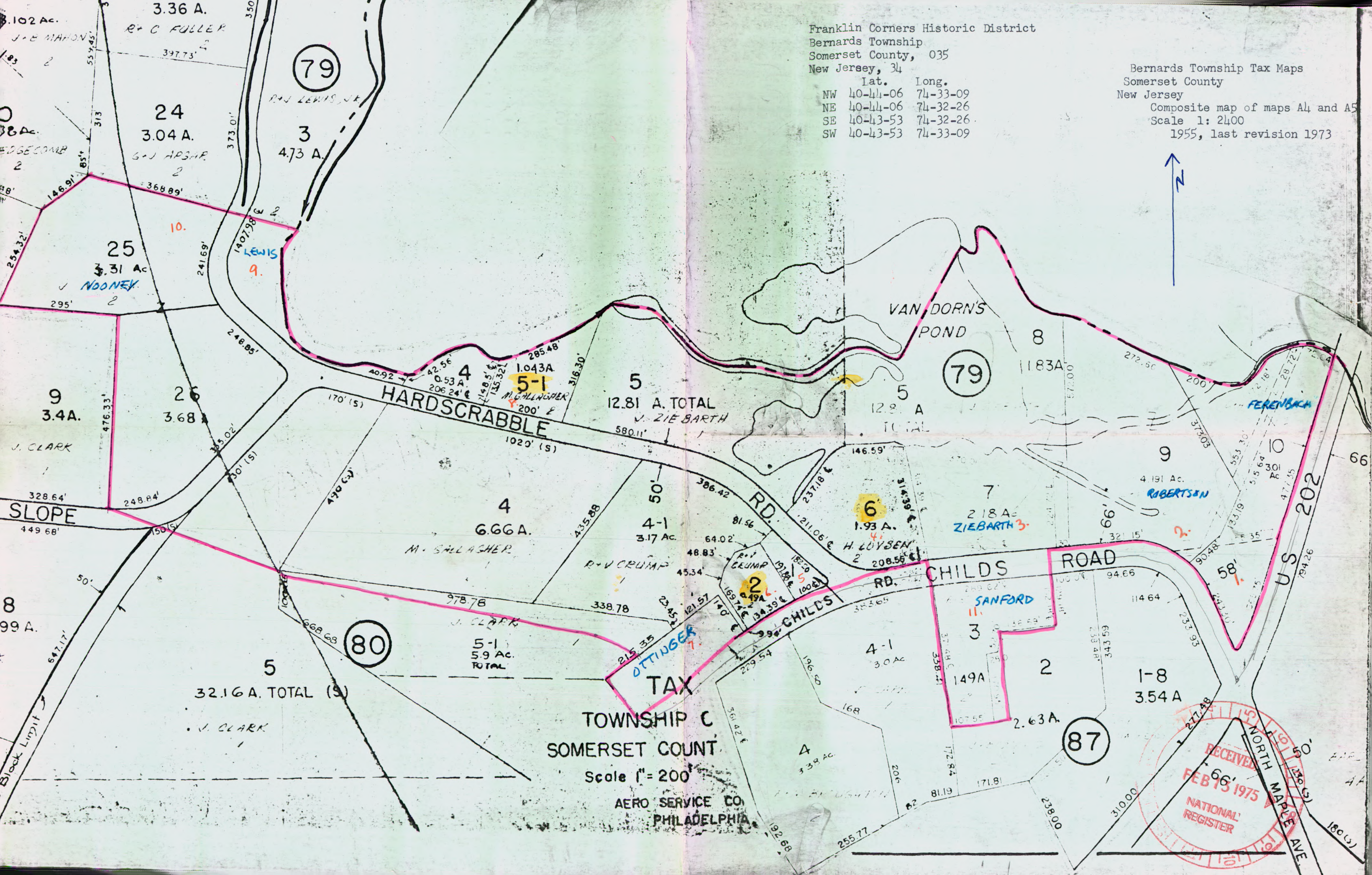
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NE	40-44-06	74-32-26
SE	40-43-53	74-32-26
SW	40-43-53	74-33-09

690 000  
FEET

Franklin Corners Historic District  
 Bernards Township  
 Somerset County, 035  
 New Jersey, 34

	Lat.	Long.
NW	40-44-06	74-33-09
NE	40-44-06	74-32-26
SE	40-43-53	74-32-26
SW	40-43-53	74-33-09

Bernards Township Tax Maps  
 Somerset County  
 New Jersey  
 Composite map of maps A4 and A5  
 Scale 1:2400  
 1955, last revision 1973



TOWNSHIP C  
 SOMERSET COUNTY  
 Scale 1" = 200'  
 AERO SERVICE CO.  
 PHILADELPHIA

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