National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

OMB No. 1024-0018

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or 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 listed in the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a

typermier, word processor, or computer, to compute uniterior.	
1. Name of Property	
historic name Ramsaysburg Homestead	
other names/site number	
2. Location	
street & number Route 46	not for publication
city or town Township of Knowlton	_ vicinity
state New Jersey code NJ county Warren code 041	zip code07833
3. State/Federal Agency Certification	
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I certify that this request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering propertie of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. x meets	In my opinion, the property idered significant
In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See additional comments. Signature of certifying official/Title	continuation sheet for
State or Federal agency and bureau	
4. National Park Service Certification I hereby certify that this property is: entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet. determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.	Date of Action
determined not eligible for the National Register. removed from the National Register. other, (explain:)	

Ramsaysburg Homestead	<u>1</u>	Warren, NJ County and State		
5. Classification				
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within (Do not include previously listed resources)		
☐ private ☐ public-local	☑ building(s) ☐ district	Contributing 5	Noncontributing	_buildings
☑ public-State ☐ public-Federal	☐ site ☐ structure ☐ object	1	2	_sites
	2 05)000			_structures
				_objects
		6	2	_ Total
Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)		Number of contributing reso in the National Register	ources previously	listed
N/A		0		
6. Function or Use				
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)		Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)		
DOMESTIC/single dw	elling	VACANT/NOT IN USE		
COMMERCE/TRADE	/restaurant			
7. Description				
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	1	Materials (Enter categories from instructions)		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Greek Revival		foundation stone		
Georgian		walls <u>clapboard</u>		
		roof slate		
		othor		

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

		ysburg Homestead Property	Warren, NJ County and State
8.	Stat	ement of Significance	
Ap (Ma	plica	able National Register Criteria in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property hal Register listing.)	Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)
	TOLIO!	an regional neurigi.	Architecture
×	A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.	Commerce
	В	Property is associated with the lives of person significant in our past.	
×	С	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.	Period of Significance
	D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.	<u>c. 1795-1874</u>
		a Considerations in all the boxes that apply.)	Significant Dates
Pro	pert	ty is:	N/A
	A	owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.	
	В	removed from its original location.	Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
	С	a birthplace or grave.	(confidence in chance, a contained above)
	D	a cemetery.	Cultural Affiliation
	Ε	a reconstructed building, object, or structure.	N/A
	F	a commemorative property.	
	G	less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.	Architect/Builder
		William the past of years.	unknown
		ve Statement of Significance	
		the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) or Bibliographical References	
		graphy	
		books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or m	nore continuation sheets.)
Pro		us documentation on file (NPS): preliminary determination of individual listing (36	Primary location of additional data: ☐ State Historic Preservation Office ☐ Other State agency ☐ Federal agency ☐ Local government ☐ University ☐ Other
		ecorded by Historic American Buildings Survey	Name of repository:
		#	SHPO Letter of Opinion HPO-C2001-39P
		ecorded by Historic American Engineering Record #	

Dawlis Mill/Spring Mills Historic District Name of Property	Hunderdon, NJ County and State
10. Geographical Data	
Acreage of property 11.72 acres	
UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)	
1 18 495158 4525183 Zone Easting Northing 2 18 495300 4525259	3 18 495488 4525030 Zone Easting Northing 4 18 495295 4525030 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	
organization Dennis Bertland Associates	date <u>June 2003</u>
street & number PO Box 24	telephone <u>(908) 213-0916</u>
city or town Bloomsbury	state NJ zip code <u>08804</u>
Additional Documentation	
Submit the following items with the completed form: Continuation Sheets	
Maps	
A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the p	property's location.
A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having	ng large acreage or numerous resources
Photographs	
Representative black and white photographs of the programme of the program	roperty.
Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)	
Property Owner	
(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)	
name	
street & number	telephone
city or town	state zip code

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 from 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

Located along the Delaware River in Knowlton Township, northern Warren County, the Ramsaysburg Homestead occupies an almost 12-acre tract of bottomland at the foot of the hills framing the east side of the river valley. Fronting on US Route 46 at its intersection with Ramsaysburg Road, the property constitutes the remainder of the land acquired in 1795 and settled by Irish immigrants James and Adam Ramsay. An earlier tayern continued by the Ramsays and a store established by them, later joined by a post office, lumberyard and sawmill, comprised elements of a dispersed hamlet which took their name. Unoccupied for many years, the deteriorating complex consists of several frame, mostly 19th-century buildings -a combination dwelling and store/or possibly tavern, a barn and several outbuildings- as well as the sites of a small hotel or summer boarding house, a drained pond/dam on a small spring-fed watercourse near the north end of the tract, which possibly provided hydropower for the saw mill, and a ruinous cottage. The property is largely wooded, except for open areas, rapidly becoming overgrown, near the buildings, and another small unnamed tributary of the Delaware crosses it diagonally from the Ramsaysburg Road intersection to its southwest corner. The surrounding area is a mix of woods and open land with scattered dwellings and commercial buildings along the highway. The abandoned Warren Railroad alignment adjoins the east side of the highway. It forms part of the Old Main DL & W Railroad Historic District, which received a SHPO opinion of National Register eligibility in 1996. Other elements of the dispersed hamlet of Ramsaysburg -several dwellings, a cemetery and former church- are scattered north and east of the homestead property. The village of Delaware, recently listed on the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places, is located one mile north of the homestead.

The resources comprising the Ramsaysburg Homestead are sited on the northern half of the property between the two watercourses. The homestead dwelling stands east of the spring and pond site, set back about sixty feet from the highway, near the northeast corner of the tract. The 2-story, gable-roofed, double-pile-plan building was built in two parts, a 6-bay block of late 18th/early 19th-century date with a 2-bay north extension added circa 1830 – 1850, and exhibits simple Georgian and Greek Revival detailing typical of those periods. A ring of dead trees about 100 feet to the south marks the site of Spring Brook Place, a summer boarding house established between 1899 and 1901, possibly incorporating portions of an earlier building, which was destroyed by fire a few years ago. About 150 feet southwest of the latter cluster the barn and three outbuildings: a cottage/out kitchen, smoke house and wagon house. Constructed of hemlock lumber

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presumably rafted down the river, the English barn dates circa 1850-70; the outbuildings are roughly contemporary. The collapsing ruins of the mid-20th-century frame cottage located northwest of the barn near the high riverbank constitutes a non-contributing site, as does the hotel site. Despite deteriorating conditions and minor modern alterations, the Ramsaysburg Homestead still reflects its circa 1795-1874 period of significance. While some original fabric and detailing have been lost, the complex retains its essential integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

Homestead dwelling/store:

(feature #1 on the site map)

Exterior

A frame, 2-story, gable-roofed building with double-pile plan and interior gable-end chimneys, the Ramsay homestead was erected in two parts. It consists of a five-over-six-bay, center-hall-plan block to the south and a two-bay, northern extension (photo #s 1 & 10). Vertical siding seams on the east and west elevations between the second and third bays from the north end demarcate the junction of the two sections, which also is readily apparent in places where the frame is exposed to view (photo #s 2 & 11). The lack of corresponding seams in coursed rubble stone foundation may indicate that the north extension replaces an original portion of the building, perhaps a kitchen wing (photo #13). Both sections are of traditional mortise-and-tenon, frame construction, incorporating a mix of hewn and saw cut timber. In the English "box frame" tradition, perimeter walls are framed with studs between the large posts at the bay divisions. The spaces between the uprights in the original section are infilled with mud-and-straw nogging packed on oak slats, exposed to view where the porch roofs have been removed and siding is missing (photo #s 4, 6 & 11)).

Physical evidence like the nogging suggests a late 18th or early 19th century date for the southern portion of the house, which probably was erected not long after brothers James and Adam Ramsay acquired the riverfront property in 1795. That it accommodated both residential and commercial uses is expressed on the front or east elevation by two entries, one to the south with flanking windows serving what appears to have been commercial space —a fenestration pattern typical of the region's early stores— and a transomed entry to the north providing access to domestic quarters (photo #s 3 & 8). Original exterior features typical of the region's early architecture include beaded clapboard siding (attached by the distinctive cut nails with hand-hammered heads in use between

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circa 1790 and 1820) and architrave trim with the Roman ovolo outer molding associated with the Georgian style on the second-story front and rear windows (photo #s 4, 7 & 13). Beaded siding on the west side of the house retains traces of what appears to be original iron-oxide paint (photos #12 & 13). Other early fabric includes the 9/6 window sashes, transomed rear entry with panel door, box cornices and flush raking eaves (photo #s 2, 4, 7 & 12). The two-bay north addition exhibits simple Greek Revival detailing and can be dated circa 1830 – 1850 on stylistic grounds. Grecian ovolo moldings were used for the surrounds of its 6/6 sash windows, as well as the transomed front entry, rear entry and their panel doors. The heavy box cornice at the front roof eaves is articulated as a simple Greek Revival entablature, a treatment carried across the front of the earlier portion (photo #s 3, 7 & 9). The latter's first-story front was reworked around the same time (its windows and two entries feature the same Grecian ovolo molding for trim and door panels, photo #s 6 & 8). A shed-roofed porch concurrently was constructed across the full width of the front of the building, and the wall beneath the porch roof plastered above a horizontal, flush-board wainscot (photo #8). The porch, extensively rebuilt in the 20thcentury, incorporated early, mortise-and-tenon, roof framing members, saved during the recent removal of its collapsed remnants (photo #14); stone foundation piers also survive. A hatch entrance with stone steps at the south end of the porch provides access to the cellar. Another shed-roofed porch extended across the building's west or rear elevation; judging from its collapsed remains, it was entirely rebuilt in the 20th-century (photo #s 10 & 11). The rear porch originally may have been limited to the north addition, since only that portion of the west wall is plastered above a wainscot (photo #s 11 & 13). The louvered shutters at several of the windows probably date to the later 19th century, as probably does the slate roof (photo #8). The clapboard siding and window trim on the south elevation appear to be 20th-century replacements (photo #2).

Interior

The interior of the Ramsay house similarly retains a considerable amount of early fabric and exhibits Georgian and Greek Revival stylistic influences consisted with the above-mentioned construction dates for its two sections. However, some fabric has been lost to vandalism and deterioration, most notably the flooring and floor beams in several rooms recently cut out and stolen by scavengers. Early features present throughout the first and second stories include random width flooring, plaster walls and ceilings, molded woodwork, panel doors, two staircases and a brick cooking fireplace in the north addition. A notable, early alteration was the removal of an internal chimney in the southern section.

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The original southern portion has a center-hall flanked by two rooms on each side on both floors, a small cellar at the southeast corner and an open attic. Large hewn floor joists and summer beams are exposed to view in the dirt-floored cellar and adjoining crawl space; the attic floor joists and common rafters are saw cut. The first-story hallway (Room 101) contains an open, single-run staircase with Georgian style railing which rises to the second floor hall (Room 201), where another staircase, whose vertical board enclosure has been removed, continues up to the attic (photo #s 28, 29 & 41). The cellar staircase below retains its wide vertical-board sheathing. The removed internal chimney, which was located just north of the hall, provided corner fireplaces in at least the two adjoining first-story rooms (Rooms 104 & 107), as evidence by diagonal hearth support timbers and patched wall plaster and woodwork (photo #s 33, 34, 38 & 40). It probably had been removed by the late 19th century, if not earlier, judging by the fact that a small chimney, presumably intended for venting heating stoves, replaced it. The second chimney also has been removed. The hallway, two first-story north rooms and the four second-story rooms feature architrave door and window trim with Roman ovolo outer molding, molded chair rails and baseboards, and raised panel doors hung on butt hinges (photo #s 28, 29, 33, 34, 36 – 46 & 49). A rare feature, at least locally, is the way the chair rail is stepped down and returned under a number of second-story windows (Rooms 201, 202 & 208, photo #s 41, 42 & 43).

Rooms 102 and 103 to the south of the center hall differ markedly from other rooms in the original portion of the house, and several interior features bolster the interpretation of them as having had a commercial use. The rooms originally encompassed one large space suitable for commercial purposes such as a store or tavern bar room, the partition now dividing them clearly being a later, possibly 20th-century, addition. Unlike the rooms to the north of the hallway, the space was heated by wood stoves instead of fireplaces, as evidenced by the small brick chimney with pipe thimbles. Instead of a chair rail, vertical-board wainscot is present, and nail holes in the plaster above may be evidence of removed shelving (photo #s 30, 31 & 32).

The north addition has a two-room plan on both floors, as well as a full cellar and open attic. Room 105 served as the kitchen and retains a large brick cooking fireplace, now blocked up, whose mantel has been removed (photo #47). Room 106 to the front lacks a fireplace, but may have been heated by a stove vented into the kitchen chimney. Enclosed stairs located on the south side of Room 105 provide access to the cellar and a hallway above, Room 205. The latter leads to Room 206, a small rear chamber, Room 207, a larger one to the front, and Room 204 in the original portion of the house (photo #s 47 & 48). Early finishes in this part of the house include random-width, plaster walls and

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ceilings, architrave door and windo hung on butt hinges.	w trim, simple baseboards, and recess-paneled door
Contributing	Photo #s 1 – 13 & 28 – 49

Barn:

(feature #2 on the site map)

The English barn consists of a three-bay, gable-roofed block with central wagon way/threshing floor and a one-bay extension to the north whose paired wagon entries indicate that it was added for vehicular storage; a small shed-roofed appendage is located on the west side towards the north end (photo #s 15 & 16). Exterior features include slate roof with overhanging eaves, clapboard siding attached with modern machine cut nails, batten doors hung on strap hinges and regularly spaced 6/6 sash windows with plain trim. Judging from the relatively small size of its major framing members and the use of hemlock timber, which presumably was rafted down the Delaware to the saw mill & lumber yard operating on the property in the mid 19th century, the barn can be dated circa 1850-70. The poured concrete foundation and floor is a 20th-century replacement.

The barn is of traditional braced-frame construction, utilizing saw-cut lumber (photo #s 17 - 20). The major framing members are connected with mortise and tenon joints; studs of the perimeter walls are spike-nailed, as are probably the rafters. The bents flanking the central wagon way and other bay divisions consist of two horizontal members of about equal size and carried by upright posts and diagonal braces. The posts continue up to the purlins, which support the common rafters about midway on each side of the roof. Typical of 19^{th} -century construction, the roof slates are nailed to closely spaced lath, and the underside seams are chinked with mortar. Mezzanine or loft floors, covered with rough planks, occupy the bays flanking the central wagon way and the north addition, the latter reached by a single-run staircase along the east wall. Partitions dividing the bays on the lower level appear to be latter additions.

Contributing

Photo #s 15 - 20

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Cottage/out kitchen:

(feature #3 on the site map)

The frame, three-bay, one-and-one-half story, gable-roofed building has a coursed rubble-stone foundation, interior chimney with small brick stack and a shed-roofed appendage on its north side (photo #s 21-23). The main block probably dates circa 1850-74, and may have remodeled some years later, perhaps in conjunction with the early 20^{th} -century north addition. Exterior features include novelty siding, overhanging eaves and 6/6 and 2/2 sash windows with plain trim. Two windows are doubles, and several have raked header trim. The 3-bay south side has an off-center entry with batten door and 1-bay, shed-roofed porch with turned posts. A second entry at the south corner of the east gable-end wall has a door with a single large clip-cornered panel, slightly recessed with an outer molding. The shed appendage has 2-panel doors and 1/1 sash windows more typical of the early 20^{th} century. A broken slate sidewalk leads from the building towards the smokehouse (photo #24).

The main block contains two first-story rooms, which feature tongue-and-groove flooring, plaster walls and ceilings, plain door and window trim and a baseboard with cap molding (photo #25). The small brick chimney has a pipe thimble, indicating that it vented a wood or coal stove. The interior of the shed appendage is unfinished.

Contributing Photo #s 21 - 25

Smokehouse:

(feature #4 on the site map)

The smokehouse is a small frame building, square in plain, constructed of saw-cut lumber and featuring a slate-clad gable roof, overhanging eaves, clapboard siding and a gable-end entry. The modern-machine cut nails used for the siding suggest that it dates to the middle of the 19th century or slightly later. The poured concrete foundation is a 20th-century replacement. While the entry door has been removed, pintels driven into its plain trim indicate that it was hung on strap hinges. The smoke-blackened interior retains rows of modern-machine cut nails, which served as hooks for hanging meat. The roof has partially collapsed; the slate may be a later replacement of a wood shingle roof.

Contributing Photo # 26

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Wagon shed:

(feature #5 on the site map)

The frame, 1 ½ story, gable-fronted wagon shed appears to have begun as a two-bay building, probably dating to the third quarter of the 19th century, which was subsequently extended to the south and west in the early 20th century. The older portion is of mortise and tenon, saw-cut frame construction; the additions are more lightly framed. The exterior features vertical tongue-and-groove siding attached with modern machine cut nails, corrugated metal replacement siding, overhanging eaves, and gable-end vehicular entries with sliding doors constructed of double-bead tongue-and-groove boards.

Contributing Photo # 27

Hotel site:

(feature #6 on the site map)

A ring of dead trees marks the site of Spring Brook Place, a small hotel or summer boarding house, established between 1899 and 1901 and destroyed by fire a few years ago. A frame 3-story, gable-roofed block with rear service wing and attached out kitchen, the building possibly incorporated portions of an earlier building on the site. Although all above-grade remains have been clear away, portions of the cellar presumably survive as a potential archaeological feature.

Non-contributing

Photo # 50

Pond/dam site:

(feature #7 on the site map)

A stone and earth berm-like feature crossing feature in the ravine draining the spring to the west of the store/dwelling presumably is a remnant of the dam once creating a small pond that possibly provided hydropower for the saw mill indicated on the 1850 and 1860 county maps.

Contributing

Photo #

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Cottage site:	(feature #8 on the site map)
The collapsing ruins of frame, 1-story cottage, apparently dating to the mic century, are located northwest of the barn on the bank above the river.	
Non-contributing	Photo #

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NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Ramsaysburg Homestead possesses significance under Criterion A and C in the areas of commerce and architecture. The property's association with Delaware River trade gives it commercial significance. As Durham boats and rafts plied the river during the 18th and 19th centuries, taverns and stores sprang up along its banks catering to the needs of boatmen and other travelers, along with storehouses for shipped goods. Such evidently was the case at Ramsaysburg, where the Ramsays opened a store upon settling there in 1795, continued an earlier tavern and later established a lumberyard and sawmill, presumably supplied by timber rafts. Serving both river and road traffic, as well as the neighborhood's dispersed rural population, these enterprises operated into the third quarter of the 19th century, when the locality's focus of commercial activity shifted one mile north to Delaware Station on the newly constructed Warren Railroad. The property has architectural significance because of its house and barn. Despite the negative effects of vandalism and neglect, the Ramsay house remains an important document of the region's early domestic architecture, exhibiting such typical characteristics as traditional frame construction and simple stylistic embellishment, as well as less common features; internal chimney placement and stepped chair rails. The house also is notable as a locally rare example of what may be an overlooked early building type, a dwelling combining domestic and commercial functions. The English barn is a good mid-19th-century example of its type, and the use of hemlock timber for its construction speaks to the importance of the Delaware rafting trade as a source of lumber during the 19th-century to replace the dwindling local supply of timber suitable for building. In addition, archaeological resources relating to the area's 18th and 19th-century material culture may be present in the environs of the Ramsaysburg Homestead's buildings and sites.

The original portion of the Ramsay house clearly appears to have been designed to accommodate both domestic and commercial functions. Such multi-use buildings may have been more common throughout northwestern New Jersey than the scarcity of surviving examples would suggest. One known example is a large, brick, gambrel-roofed building, located in Pohatcong Township, Warren County, which was erected circa 1830 and served as both dwelling and store, and possibly a tavern. However, it differs from the Ramsay homestead in plan, having commercial space on the ground story and domestic quarters above. A Princeton house advertised for sale in 1817 appears to have more closely resembled the Ramsay house. As described in a newspaper advertisement

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The dwelling house, occupied by the family, is forty-eight feet in front and two stories high, with a large entry through the middle, two rooms and a spacious store below, and five rooms upstairs, with a large garret...; —a large kitchen back, two stories high, with rooms for servants upstairs²

While the original location of the Ramsay house kitchen is unknown, quite probably it similarly occupied a wing. The house and shop of chair maker David Alling in Newark, as documented by a circa 1835 painting, also bore a striking resemblance to the Ramsay house (figure 1).³ As is the case with the Ramsay house, Alling's shop, located at one end of the building, had a central entry and flanking windows. A second entry, presumably providing access to his residence, similarly occupied an inner façade bay with two windows to one side.

The design and detailing of the Ramsav house are clearly rooted in the region's traditional construction practices and forms but also reflect the influence of stylistic fashions on relatively isolated rural builders. The house is representative of traditional timber-frame construction, incorporating such features as mortise and tenon joinery and mud and straw nogging in the perimeter walls. Such details as the Roman-ovolo door and window surrounds and the main staircase reflect the continuing local popularity of the Georgian style in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Of particular note is the original internal chimney placement in the earlier southern portion of the house, which, although altered, still clearly can be discerned. Throughout northwestern New Jersey, where internal end-wall chimneys predominate in surviving 18th and early 19th-century dwellings, internal or central chimney placement is largely associated with Germanic and New England "folk" building traditions. However, there are some early houses in the region with Georgian-derived center and side-hall-plans in which internal chimneys provide back-toback fireplaces. The Ramsay house is a rare local example of a center-hall-plan house in which an internal chimney served corner fireplaces, the only other known example being the late 18th-century Croxall house in nearby Belvidere, New Jersey.⁴

European settlement of the Ramsaysburg neighborhood occurred as early as the middle of the 18th century, initiated by pioneer agriculturists of varied ethnic background, the population reaching sufficient numbers to warrant the founding of Knowlton Township in 1768.⁵ Among the early settlers in the vicinity was Jacob Engle, a German, who occupied a large tract along Delawanna Creek about a mile north of what became Ramsaysburg, and Nicholas Albertson, grandson of a Dutch emigrant to America, who came to Knowlton in 1760, settling land to the southeast of Delawanna Creek. Robert Allison,

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who emigrated from England shortly before the Revolutionary War, acquired and settled property between Albertson and Ramsaysburg homestead site.⁶ The neighborhood's earliest community focal point may have been the stone church erected in the 1780s on a lot subsequently deeded by Allison and his wife, along with a nearby cemetery lot, to the "legally chosen trustees of St. James," an Episcopalian congregation, in 1789.⁷

A 150-acre tract adjoining Allison's land on the south and encompassing the future site of the Ramsaysburg Homestead was acquired by Peter Appleman in 1785. Appleman appears to have been the first to establish a tavern there, receiving a license to do so in 1788, his application noting that

his house [was] commodiously situated for that business near the Banks of the Delaware at the junction of three public Roads.⁹

Appleman's tavern evidently remained in operation until the spring of 1795 when he sold 50 acres of his land to brothers James and Adam Ramsay, Irish emigrants. On April 28, 1795, one day after the date of the deed for their land purchase, both Ramsays signed the tavern license petition of Richard Steer which explained that his proposed tavern's

said situation [was] near the Delaware River, and near to a Public house, now in occupation of Peter Appleman which will be and is now void.¹¹

Steer, who most likely rented his house from the Ramsays, operated the tavern at least until 1803. Steer probably was followed for a few years by Daniel Shannon, who received a license "to keep a tavern in the house [where] he now dwells" in 1804, James Ramsay being the first signatory of his petition, which appears to be in Ramsay's handwriting. In subsequent years, James Ramsay signed several other tavern license petitions, including those of Philip Platz in 1806 and 1807 (the first noting that Platz had "removed to the house lately occupied as a tavern by Daniel Shannon") and that of James Ridgeway in 1821. No Knowlton Township license survives for either of the Ramsays, suggesting that the tavern remained a rental.

The Ramsay brothers held the property jointly until 1801 when Adam sold his half interest in the 50-acre tract, along with an adjoining 6-acre parcel, to James for \$2,000, a price suggesting the presence of substantial improvements. The 1801 deed refers to Adam as a "Merchantof Greenwich Township," indicating that he had relocated to that township by then. According to the 1881 county history he settled in Phillipsburg, then a village along the Delaware River in Greenwich Township:

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The stone house now occupied [in 1881] by Charles Reese as store and residence was built shortly after 1800 by Adam Ramsay, a Presbyterian preacher, who came from Manunka Chunk [another place name for the Ramsaysburg neighborhood] to Phillipsburg for the purpose of store-keeping.¹⁵

Whether or not the Ramsay house, which also apparently combined residential and commercial functions, was erected before or after the brothers divided the property remains unknown. However, the building itself may be evidence that one or both of the brothers kept a store there at an early date.

That James Ramsay was elected to the Knowlton Township Committee for two terms in 1806 and 1808, and served as county freeholder for fourteen years between 1803 and 1822, indicates that he became a well-known, presumably prosperous and well-established resident of the community. However, little documentation of his business activities during the period has come to light. Nevertheless, his riverside property clearly was the focal point of a small, scattered hamlet by the late 1820s. A post office under the name of Ramsaysburg was established in 1827 with Ramsay as first postmaster, a position typically held by merchants and storekeepers at that time, and the community consisted of "a tavern, store, an Episcopal church, and some half dozen dwellings" by 1834. James Ramsay evidently remained in the mercantile business until his death in 1851. His 1839 will describes him as a merchant, as does the 1850 census.

A number of sources provide limited information about Ramsaysburg and the Ramsay property in the third quarter of the 19th century. According to the 1850 census, eighty-year-old James Ramsay, born in Ireland, owned real estate valued at \$50,000, a substantial figure placing him among Knowlton's wealthiest citizens. His household had six other members: wife Catherine, age seventy-five; son James, Jr., a forty-year-old merchant; granddaughter Mary Catherine, the eight-year-old daughter of his widower son; grandson James R. Dey, the fourteen-year-old son of his daughter Mary; and two women, Sarah Atten, age eighteen, and Lydia Bennet, age thirty-five, who probably were servants. Several households listed before and after that of Ramsay in the census were headed by property-less individuals: three farmers, a laborer and a widow, one or more of whom may have been his tenants. While the Ramsaysburg tavern may have been closed at the time of the 1850 census, since none of the household heads in the vicinity was identified as a tavern keeper, the hostelry was operating two years later. The 1852 Warren County map depicts "J. Albertson's Hotel" at Ramsaysburg. John Albertson was one of the landless farmers living there in 1850, presumably as Ramsay's tenant. ¹⁹ An adver-

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tisement placed in a local newspaper on July 23, 1850, which continued running for at least one year, documents the existence of a substantial, newly established lumberyard at Ramsaysburg operated by the partnership of "Ramsay and Swayze." Their stock, as advertised, included several hundred thousand feet of "White Pine, Yellow Pine, and Hemlock Lumber," varieties of timber then being harvested in the vast forests of the upper reaches of the Delaware watershed and rafted down the river. The lumber, offered for sale as siding, flooring, scantling, boards, planks and joists, presumably was processed at the on-site sawmill depicted on the 1852 county map.²⁰

Durham boats used in the Delaware River trade purportedly were built in Ramsaysburg before the coming of the railroad. As told by local informant Matthias Cummins (whom the 1850 census identified as a thirty-five-year-old farmer):

We shipped our grain to Philadelphia by Durham boats, which were made here in Delaware at the Hartung saw mill. The boats we tried to sell at Philadelphia, but if we could not we poled them back, getting them through foul rift by the help of rings in the rocks.... If the boats came back they brought sugar and molasses mainly. Our pigs, turkeys, chickens, etc. we took overland to Newark or New York.²¹

The Hartung saw mill, located near the old Episcopal church about a half mile north of the Ramsay property, was established in 1840. A circa 1820 view of the Columbia Glass Works, a village located a few miles upriver from Ramsaysburg, depicts a Durham boat being poled by several men (figure 2).²² Durham boats, if not manufactured at the Ramsay's sawmill, may well have been used decades earlier by the Ramsays in their mercantile business for shipping.

Within one decade after 1850 the Ramsaysburg property passed first to James Ramsay, Jr., and then to his wife. By his will, probated on October 16, 1851, James Ramsay. Sr., bequeath his entire real and personal estate to his son James, except for a farm devised to his grandson James R. Dey. The bequest was subject to the proviso that his widow was to live with their son and was entitled to any personal property she might choose during "her natural life." James Ramsay, Jr., evidently continued to reside and conduct business at Ramsaysburg until his death in the spring of 1859, less than a month after writing his will. Among other bequests, he devised his real estate, including "the farm where I now live containing fifty acres" and another farm tenanted by Nicholas Albertson, to his wife Elizabeth (whom he had married in 1851) for life, further ordering

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that upon her death the property was to be sold and the money realized divided between his daughter Mary and son James.²³

The 1860 census and county map indicate that the Ramsays continued to live at Ramsaysburg and that the tayern, store and sawmill remained in operation, along with a blacksmith shop. Elizabeth Ramsay, age thirty-one, headed a household with seven other members. Family members included stepdaughter Mary, age eighteen, son James, age seven, nephew James R. Dey, a twenty-year-old merchant, and twenty-one-year-old Elizabeth, presumably his wife. The three other members of the household were Dennis Getes [?], an eighteen-year-old farm laborer, Michael [?] Hutchinson, a twenty-nine-year old clerk, and eighteen-year-old Jemima Shafer, who probably was a servant. The census credited Elizabeth Ramsay, her son and stepdaughter as each owning real estate worth \$9,066. The personal property of the mother was valued at \$14,000, that of the two children at \$10,000 each. James Dev owned rear estate worth \$11,760 and personal property worth \$7,500. The two households preceding that of Elizabeth Ramsay evidently were her tenants. "Hotel keeper" John Albertson, age thirty-three, headed a household of six, which, besides his wife Susan, age thirty-four, and daughter Ariella, age seven, included fifty-year-old farmer Richard Albertson, railroad "section boss" Philip Lyon, age thirtynine, and twenty-two-year-old Caroline Raub, presumably a servant. John Albertson and Philip Lyon owned personal property valued, respectively at \$1,500 and \$1,000. Richard Albertson owned real estate worth \$1,000. The household of blacksmith Charles Johnson, age twenty-two, also included his wife Jane, age nineteen. He had personal property worth \$300.²⁴ The 1860 Warren County map depicts five buildings on the property of the "J. Ramsay heirs." While the sawmill, blacksmith shop, store and "hotel by J. G. Albertson" are named, the scale of the map and placement of the labels make it hard to identify individual buildings with any certainty. The map also shows the alignment of the Warren Railroad, running parallel to the river along the east side of the Ramsay property.²⁵

The Warren Railroad began operations in 1856, and the establishment of Delaware Station on the rail line a mile north of the Ramsay property markedly decreased its attractiveness as a place of business. John I. Blair, founder of the Warren Railroad, acquired and platted land around the station into a rectilinear grid of streets and building lots, which soon developed into a thriving village. Early train schedules included a ten or fifteen minute stop for meals at Delaware Station, and a hotel, the Delaware House, was erected in 1858 by Charles Cool on a lot near the station. The post office was transferred from Ramsaysburg in that year, and Cool appointed postmaster. Blair constructed a brick store at Delaware Station in 1860, and James R. Dey abandoned Ramsaysburg to become the new community's first merchant and succeeded Cool as postmaster. How long the

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Albertson hotel at Ramsaysburg survived is unknown; along with the store, saw mill and blacksmithy, it evidently ceased operation by the 1870s. The 1874 county atlas depicts four buildings at Ramsaysburg belonging to the "J. Ramsey estate," but drops the use identifications given on the 1852 and 1860 maps, seemingly an indication that the Ramsays' commercial and industrial enterprises had disappeared by then.²⁷

Within a few years of her husband's death, Elizabeth Ramsay married Dr. Little C. Osmun. The Osmuns resided in Ramsaysburg, where he practiced medicine, until 1873 when they too moved to Delaware Station. In the following year, the Osmuns subdivided and conveyed the Ramsaysburg property to Mrs. Osmun's son James Ramsay III and stepdaughter Mary Van Kirk. James received title to a 23.83-acre tract encompassing the southern portion of the property, and Mary, the 30.42-acre northern end. The siblings concurrently gave each other quit claim deeds, which insured James III the right to pipe water from the spring to his house. While the exact location of the division line between the two tracts is unclear, it seems likely that the house occupied by James III stood on or near the site of Spring Brook Place and that Mary Van Kirk's portion included the extant house.

James Ramsay III retained ownership of his share of the family property until 1885, when, having relocated to Phillipsburg, he sold it to James Prall, a retired businessman from Delaware Station, for \$3,400. Prall, in turn, sold it in 1899 to Louisa Kimenour for \$2,750. The conveyance purportedly was in exchange for the house she and her husband Joseph owned in nearby Belvidere, New Jersey. The local newspaper noted at the time that

Joseph B. Kimenour has moved to Ramsaysburg in the house purchased of James Prall. He will deal in fancy poultry and increase his growing business in that line.³¹

Whether or not Kimenour's poultry business flourished at Ramsaysburg, he soon turned his new property into a summer boarding house that did. As reported in 1901:

J. B. Kimenour's "Spring Brook Farm," near Manunka Chunk, will again entertain a number of city boarders during the coming Summer months. There's plenty of good fishing there and the locality is one that should be highly pleasing to city folk in quest of wholesome country air.³²

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Kimenour apparently conducted Spring Brook Farm or Place with some success for many years thereafter, his guests purportedly enjoying boating, swimming and carriage rides, as well as fishing and fresh air.³³ Within a year of his death in 1929, his widow sold the property to Lydia C. Dean of New York, who may have continued the business. Three years later, Dean's mortgage was foreclosed, and the property was sold at sheriff's sale to the bank holding the mortgage. In 1935, the bank sold the property to Margaret Gibson of Scranton, Pennsylvania.³⁴

Mary Van Kirk's portion of the Ramsay homestead evidently remained in the possession of her heirs until they too lost it at a court-ordered sale in 1950. Myron Gibson, presumably Mary Gibson's husband, was the successful bidder, and the property was conveyed to him in 1951. The Gibsons are said to have used Spring Brook Place as a summer residence for many years. Upon Myron Gibson's death, his executors sold the property, much reduced in size, to Peter and Janet Cunningham in 1987. The Cunninghams planned to renovate Spring Brook Place as a bed-and-breakfast inn, a project that ended with the destruction of the old boarding house by fire in 1997. More recently, the State of New Jersey acquired the neglected and vandalized property with Green Acres funding and assigned its management to the Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife. The Township of Knowlton, currently negotiated the lease of the property from the state, has begun taking steps to preserve the buildings and formulate a plan for the reuse of the property as a cultural facility and open space reserve.

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Footnotes

- Frank Leary, *Pohatcong: the Prologue*, pp. 61 & 62; Warren County Historic Sites Survey, site #; Michael Hughes, *Farm Map of Greenwich Township, Warren Co.*, N. J., 1860.
- ² "Valuable Real Property At private Sale....Eliza Kelsey. Princeton, May 1, 1817," *Trenton Federalist*, May, 26, 1817.
- ³ Artist unknown, "House and Shop of David Alling," circa 1835, New Jersey Historical Society.
- ⁴ Dennis N. Bertland, *Early Architecture of Warren County*, pp. 5, 98, 103, 119, 143 151 and 180. Two Morris County houses, the Wick House, Morristown National Historic Park, Harding Township, and the Silas Riggs House, Roxbury Township, both listed on the NJ and National Registers of Historic Places, are good examples of. New England central-chimney plans. See the Stone Houses and Outbuildings of Washington Township Multiple Property NJ & NR nomination for discussion of Germanic central-chimney plans in northwestern New Jersey.
- ⁵ Peter Wacker, Land and People. A Cultural Geography of Pre-industrial New Jersey: Origins and Settlement Patterns, page 127; 213–216 and 220; Snell, pp. 623 & 625.
- ⁶ J. P. Snell (ed.), History of Warren and Sussex Counties, New Jersey, pp. 623 & 625; William C. Armstrong, Pioneer Families of Northwestern New Jersey, pp. 127–129; Sussex County Deeds, Book D, pp. 51 & 290; George Wyckoff Cummins, History of Warren County New Jersey, pp. 187 & 276.
- ⁷ Snell, pp. 630 & 632; Sarah E. Albertson, "History of St. James' Parish, Delaware, N. J.," *The Newark Churchman*, Vol. XVIII, No. 5, February, 1924, pp. 1 & 2; Sussex County Deeds, Book D, page 51.
 - ⁸ Sussex County Deeds, Book F, page 394.

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- Sussex County Tavern Licenses, Peter Appleman, 1788.
- ¹⁰ Sussex County Deeds, Book F, page 394; Snell, page 624.
- ¹¹ Sussex County Tavern Licenses, Richard Steer, 1795
- ¹² Sussex County Tavern Licenses, Richard Steer, 1798, 1799, 1802 & 1803 and Daniel Shannon, 1804, 1805 & 1806.
- $^{13}\,$ Sussex County Tavern Licenses, Philip Platz, 1806 & 1807, and James Ridgeway, 1821.
 - ¹⁴ Sussex County Deeds, Book F, page 394.
 - ¹⁵ Snell, page 551.
 - ¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 626 & 627.
- ¹⁷ John L. Kay and Chester M. Smith, Jr., New Jersey Postal History, page 136; Thomas F. Gordon, A Gazetteer of the State of New Jersey, page 134.
- ¹⁸ New Jersey Wills, 1034U; U. S. Census, Knowlton Township, Schedule of Population, 1850.
- ¹⁹ U. S. Census, Knowlton Township, Schedule of Population, 1850; D. McCarty, *Map of Warren County, New Jersey*, 1852.
- ²⁰ "450,000 Feet of Lumber.....Ramsay & Swayze. Ramseyburgh, July 28, 1850," *The Warren Journal*, June 6, 1851; McCarty, 1852.
 - ²¹ Cummins, page 63.
- Snell, page 635; William Strickland, engraver, Thomas Birch, painter, "View of Water Gap and Columbia Glassworks-River Delaware," circa 1820.
 - ²³ New Jersey Wills, 1034U & 1426U.

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²⁴ U. S. Census, Knowlton Township, Schedule of Population, 1860.

²⁵ H. F. Walling, Map of Warren County, New Jersey, 1860.

Larry Lowenthal and William T. Greenberg, Jr., *The Lackawanna Railroad in Northwestern New Jersey*, page 49; Snell, page 628; Kay, page 136. Snell names the pioneer merchant at Delaware Station as James R. Dye, but this must have been a misprint for James R. Dey.

F. W. Beers, County Atlas of Warren, New Jersey, page 19.

²⁸ Ibid.; Cummins, page 184.

²⁹ Warren County Deeds, Book 91, pp. 155 & 157 and Book 94,pp. 381 & 383.

³⁰ Ibid. Book 128, page 55 and book 165, page 347; Cummins, page 185.

³¹ Local items, *The Warren Journal*, April 17, 1899

³² Ibid., June 7, 1901.

³³ Cummins, page 184; A. Van Doren Honeyman (ed.), Northwestern New Jersey: A History of Somerset, Morris, Hunterdon, Warren, and Sussex Counties. Vol. 2, page 714; Frank Doyle, Vigorous Villages of Yesterday, page 29; Historic Sites of Knowlton Township, page 26.

Joseph Kimenour obituary, *The Washington Star*, May 9, 1929; Warren County Deeds, Book 258, page 467, Book 272, page 88 and Book 277, page 366.

³⁵ Warren County Deeds, Book 354, page 318, Book 1064, page 1, Book 1120, page 293 and Book 1710, page 288; Doyle, page 29.

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Washington Star, Washington, NJ

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New Jersey Archives, Trenton, NJ

Sussex County Tavern Licenses

New Jersey Archives, Trenton, NJ

Sussex County Tavern Licenses New Jersey Wills

Sussex County Court House, Belvidere, NJ.

Sussex County Deed Books

Warren County Court House, Belvidere, NJ.

Warren County Deeds Warren County Marriages Warren County Mortgages Warren County Road Returns Warren County Wills

United States Census

Population Schedules, Knowlton Township, Warren County, 1850-1870 Industrial Schedules, Knowlton Township, Warren County, 1850-70

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BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries of the Ramsaysburg Homestead are delineated on the attached map entitled "Ramsaysburg Homestead Site and Photo Identification Map," and are verbally described in the following paragraphs. The site and boundary map was made using a survey recently prepared for the property.

The boundaries of the nominated property are those of block 57, lot 20, the lot on which the Ramsaysburg Homestead stands. The boundary begins at the southeast corner of block 57, lot 20, which point is located on the west side of Route 46. It proceeds north along the east side of lot 20 and the west side of the highway, to the northeast corner of lot 20. From there it turns west along the north aide of lot 20 to the northwest corner of lot 20 and the bank of the Delaware River. The boundary proceeds south along the west side of lot 20 and the river bank to the southwest corner of lot 20. From there, it runs east along the south side of lot 20 to that lot's southeast corner and the place of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary of the nominated property corresponds to those of block 157, lot 20, which lot comprises all of the remaining lands appurtenant to the Ramsaysburg Homestead.

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PHOTOGRAPHIC IDENTIFICATION:

The following information is the same for all of the photographs submitted:

Name:

Ramsaysburg Homestead

Location:

Route 46

Knowlton Township, Warren Co., NJ 07833

Photographer:

Dennis Bertland and Janice Armstrong

Date of photographs: October 2002 and 2003

Negative repository: Dennis Bertland Associates PO Box 24

Bloomsbury, NJ 08804

Photograph direction of view:

- #1 Site #1, house, south & east facades, northwest view.
- #2 Site #1, cornice detail.
- #3 Site #1, East facade, northwest view.
- #4 Site #1, East facade, detail of mud noggin.
- #5 Site #1. Southwest corner detail.
- Site #1, Detail of south entry. #6
- #7 Site #1, East facade detail, cornice detail.
- #8 Site #1, East façade, southwest view.
- #9 Site #1, East eave detail, north view.
- #10 Site #1, West and south facades, northeast view.
- #11 Site #1, West facade, southeast view.
- #12 Site #1, West facade, center entry detail.
- #13 Site #1, West façade detail.
- #14 Site #1, Porch roof framing.
- #15 Site #2, East facade, southwest view.
- #16 Site #2, West facade northeast view.
- #17 Site #2, Northeast view.
- #18 Site #2, Barn framing, north view.
- #19 Site #2, Southwest view.
- #20 Site #2, Framing detail, north view.
- #21 Site #3, Overall shot, north view.
- #22 Site #3, West and south facades, northwest view.
- #23 Site #3. East facade west view.
- #24 Site #3, Sidewalk detail.
- #25 Site #3, southwest interior room, northeast view.

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#26 Site #4, North and east facades, southwest view.
#27 Site #5, North façade, southwest view.
#28 Site #1, Room 101, southwest view.
#29 Site #1, Room 101, southwest view.
#30 Site #1, Room 102, southeast view.
#31 Site #1, Room 102, northwest view.
#32 Site #1, Room 103, southeast view.
#33 Site #1, Room 104, southwest view.
#34 Site #1, Room 104, southeast view.
#35 Site #1, Room 105, northwest view.
#36 Site #1, Room 107, door detail.
#37 Site #1, Room 107, northwest view.
#38 Site #1, Room 107, southwest view.
#39 Site #1, Room 107, southeast view.
#40 Site #1, Room 107, chair rail detail.
#41 Site #1, Room 201, east view.
#42 Site #1, Room 201, southeast view.
#43 Site #1, Room 202, northeast view.
#44 Site #1, Room 202, southwest view
#45 Site #1, Room 203, south view.
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#46 Site #1, Room 204, northeast view. #47 Site #1, Room 207, northeast view. #48 Site #1, Room 206, southwest view. #49 Site #1, Room 208, northwest view

#50 Overall shot, southwest view

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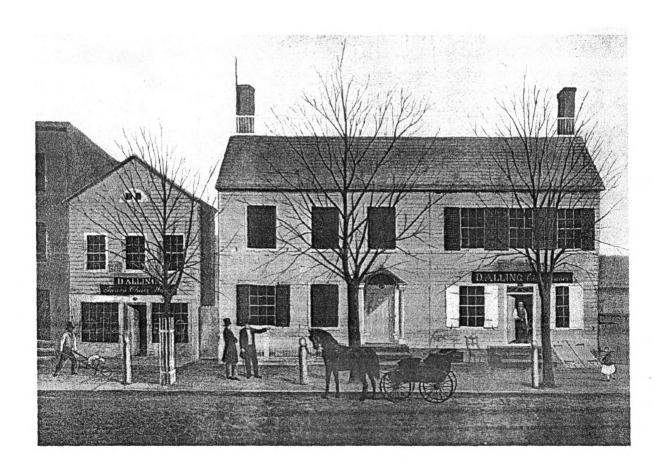


Figure 1. The House and Shop of David Alling. Painted by unidentified artist in oil on canvas about 1835. David Alling (1777-1855) was a successful chair maker in Newark, New Jersey. In this unusual painting, he is seen standing in the doorway of his shop at 349 Broad Street, Newark.

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Section number Photos Page 27 Ramsaysburg Homestead, Warren County, NJ

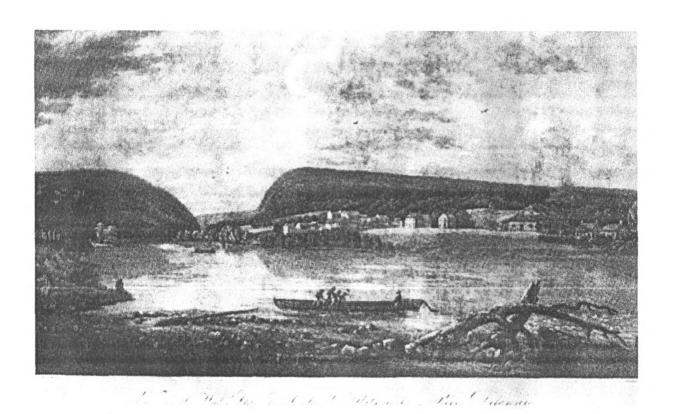


Figure 2. "View of the Water Gap and Columbia Glassworks—River Delaware" Aquatint by William Strickland, from an oil by Thomas Birch. Circa 1820.

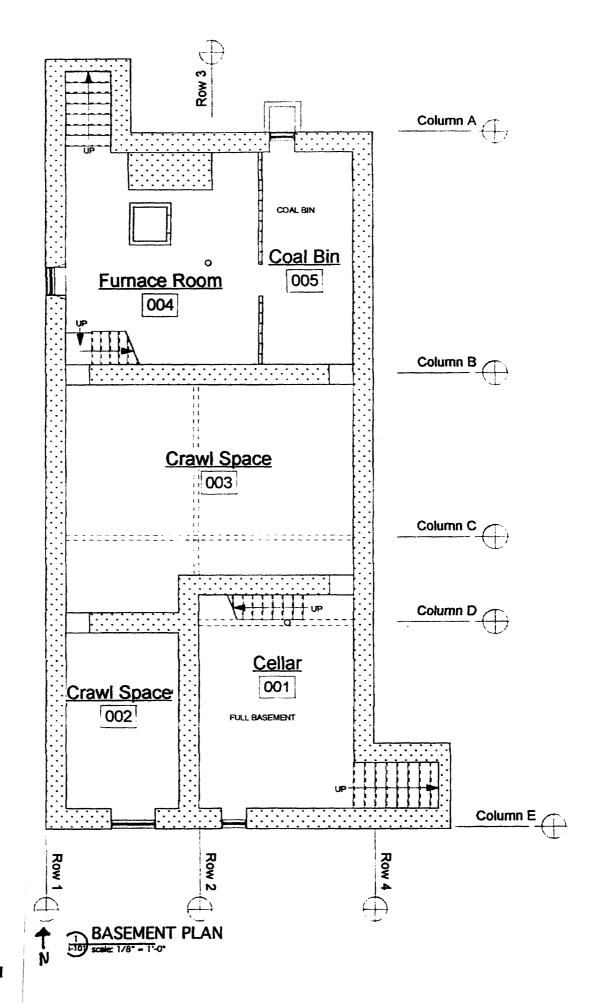


Photo ID#



(Direction of view)

Ramsaysburg Homestead Warren County, NJ

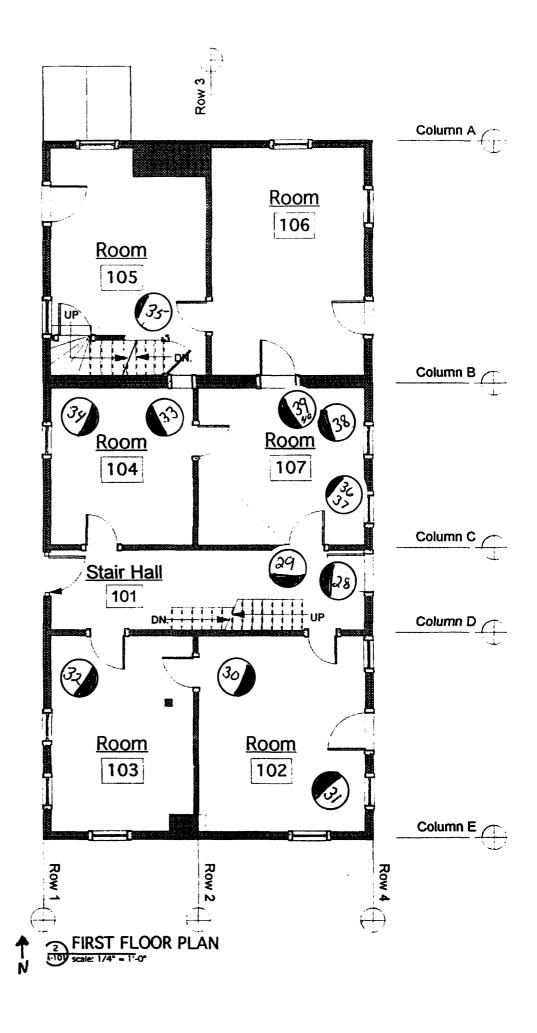


Photo ID# 3

(Direction of view)

Ramsaysburg Homestead Warren County, NJ

