

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:  
**New Jersey**

COUNTY:  
**Union**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY DATE  
**NOV 19 1974**

1. NAME

COMMON:  
**Seventeenth Century Clark House**

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**593 Madison Hill Road**

CITY OR TOWN:  
~~Township of Clark~~ **Rahway vicinity**

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
**12th - Matthew Rinaldo**

STATE: **New Jersey** CODE: **34** COUNTY: **Union** CODE: **039**

3. CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY<br>(Check One)   | OWNERSHIP   | STATUS  | ACCESSIBLE<br>TO THE PUBLIC  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> District<br><input type="checkbox"/> Site<br><input type="checkbox"/> Object<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building<br><input type="checkbox"/> Structure | <input type="checkbox"/> Public<br><input type="checkbox"/> Private<br><input type="checkbox"/> Both<br>Public Acquisition:<br><input type="checkbox"/> In Process<br><input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered | <input type="checkbox"/> Occupied<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work<br>in progress | Yes:<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted<br><input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

|  |                                     |  |  |                                   |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural  | <input type="checkbox"/> Government | <input type="checkbox"/> Park              | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Comments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial    | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial | <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)<br><b>Vacant</b> |                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational   | <input type="checkbox"/> Military   | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious         |  |                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> Museum     | <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific        |  |                                   |

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
**Township of Clark**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Municipal Building, Westfield Avenue**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Westfield**

STATE:  
**New Jersey** CODE: **34**

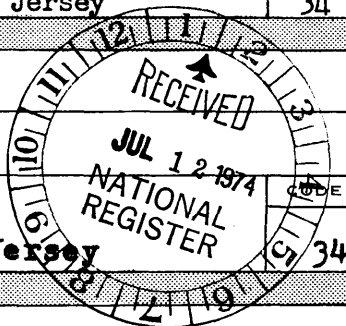
5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Union County Courthouse**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Broad Street and Rahway Avenue**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Elizabeth**

STATE:  
**New Jersey** CODE: **34**



6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory**

DATE OF SURVEY: **1973**  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
**Historic Sites Section, Dept. of Environmental Protection**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Box 1420**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Trenton**

STATE:  
**New Jersey** CODE: **34**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: **New Jersey**

COUNTY: **Union**

ENTRY NUMBER: **NOV 19 1974**

DATE: **NOV 19 1974**

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7. DESCRIPTION

|           |   |  |                                |   |                                |                                    |
|-----------|---|--|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| CONDITION | (Check One)                                 |  |                                |   |                                |                                    |
|           | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair  | <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated             | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins | <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed |
|           | (Check One)                                 |  |                                | (Check One)                                       |                                |                                    |
|           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered       | <input type="checkbox"/> Moved | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site |                                |                                    |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Clark House at 593 Madison Hill Road in the Township of Clark, Union County is a rare example of late 17th century frame construction surviving in New Jersey. More plentiful examples of this type remain in New England.

This 1½ story frame house measures 21 feet by 31 feet. The original floor plan had a 5 foot by 20 foot bay (west end) probably containing the original entrance hall and stair. The remainder of this bay contained the large end wall fireplace. The original stair has been removed. The chimney stack and fireplace has been taken down to the floor level, though the solid stone base remains in the cellar. A new stair has been built in this area. The large center room measures approximately 16 feet by 20 feet with a massive summer beam through the center, terminating at the center of the original fireplace location on the west end and on the cross girder on the east end. This beam is 11" by 20" by 16 feet long. The east end bay is approximately 8 feet by 20 feet, possibly originally two small chambers off the main center chamber.

The summer beam, girder & bent posts are finished with chamfered edges and carving. The bent posts are flared at the tops to provide additional bearing for the girders.

The cellar has stone walls. The house is built on a slope allowing entrance to the cellar at grade level on the east gable end. The second floor presently has three rooms with what are probably 19th century windows cut into the knee-wall. This area is partially unfinished revealing original construction details. The approximately 6 by 6 hewn oak rafters are spaced five feet apart and pruned at the ridge. The shingle lath is notched into the rafters and are 12 to 15 inches apart, a considerably large exposure for roof shingles. The east gable end framing was also notched for shingle lath with 15 to 18 inch shingle exposures. Although the exterior walls were probably all shingled, presently the exterior has weatherboards. Another unusual feature is the projected east gable end over the first floor.

The house does not have any original windows or doors, having been replaced during the 19th century. There are several early doors on the second floor. A modern leanto addition has been added across the rear, containing the modern utilities, consequently not mutilating any of the remaining features of the early house.

The principal features of this house are the framing members which are exposed and decorated with the chamfered edges. These are all intact.

Plans are currently under way to have Columbia University graduate students do a detailed evaluation on the house concerning methods of construction and any other architectural elements that might be presently somewhat vague and to provide some insight into the feasibility of restoration.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

## SIGNIFICANCE

## PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

## SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The 17th century Clark House, architecturally, is of unique importance to New Jersey.

Those brave souls who first settled in the state in the 17th century had various backgrounds. Probably the most common in the northern half of the state were those with English and Dutch roots. Innumerable characteristics were derived from these ancestors; physical appearances, temperments, intelligence, traditions, superstitions, building methods, etc. All of which were brought over from England and the Netherlands.

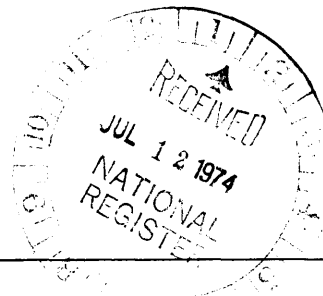
Unfortunately, there are few of the European building forms still in existence in the United States. The Clark House is one of only a handful of survivors.

Abbott L. Cummings, Director, Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, examined the house and found it to be an outstanding survival, particularly for New Jersey. It reveals traits derived both from post-medieval carpentry techniques in England and Holland. The summer beam is the largest Cummings has seen and is even larger than any surviving examples in New England, where the existence of this building form is more common.

Early research indicates a medical significance, also. Preliminary documentation suggests that the house may have been that of Dr. William Robeson (Robinson). A 1685 map of the immediate area lists the property owner as Robison. Dr. Robison died in 1693, but perhaps this was his home prior to his death.

Since the colonies had few doctors in the 17th century, the possible existence of Dr. Robison's house in New Jersey is highly important.

Hopefully, further research will result in clarification.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

New Jersey Archives. Volume XXI. Dr. William Robeson, conveyances and transactions.  
 "Sotts Propr 1175 Head Land being 8 and 10 wherein William Docrory is concerned." Copy of 1685 map of area compiled by R. Simson, Sculpr. Copy located at East Jersey Proprietors, Perth Amboy. Location of original map unknown.  
 Several Architectural Historiens visited the site and made comments:

Abbott L. Cummings, Director, Society for the (cont.)

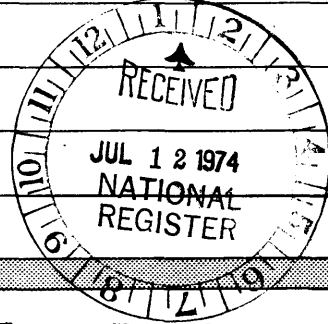
**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

| LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY |                         |                         | O<br>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 |
| NW  | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |        | 40  | 36        | 49      |
| NE  | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |        | 74  | 18        | 36      |
| SE  | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |        |   |           |         |
| SW  | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |        |   |           |         |

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1.25

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

| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY  | CODE |
|--------|------|---------|------|
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: **Charles Tichy, Restoration Architect & Terry Karschner, Historian**

ORGANIZATION: **Historic Sites Section, Dept. of Environmental Protection** DATE: **03/02/1974**

STREET AND NUMBER: **Box 1420**

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

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

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: David J. Barden  
 David J. Barden

Title: Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection

Date: July 1, 1974

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

AR. Winters  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 11/19/74

ATTEST:

Charles H. Stewart  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 11.14.74

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

|                            |                    |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| STATE<br><b>New Jersey</b> |                    |
| COUNTY<br><b>Union</b>     |                    |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY           |                    |
| ENTRY NUMBER               | DATE               |
|                            | <b>NOV 19 1974</b> |

(Number all entries)

Seventeenth Century Clerk House  
Township of Clerk  
Union County 039  
New Jersey, 34

9. Bibliography (cont.)

Preservation of New England Antiquities, Boston, Mass.

John M. Dickey, Restoration Architect, State Preservation Coordinator, Pennsylvania.

Charles R. Tichy, Architectural Restoration Consultant for New Jersey.

Daniel Hopping, Architectural Historian.

William B. Bassett, Architectural Historian.

