

NEW JERSEY OFFICE OF CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

HISTORIC PRESERVATION SECTION

INDIVIDUAL STRUCTURE SURVEY FORM

HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY NO.

0713 3 9 1

HISTORIC NAME: M. F. Reading, Esq. Residence

COMMON NAME: Swartz house

LOCATION: 87 Midland Ave.

BLOCK/LOT 2307/01: 37-A/1

MUNICIPALITY: Montclair

COUNTY: Essex

USGS QUAD: Orange

UTM REFERENCES:

OWNER/ADDRESS: Swartz, Walter V.  
338 W. 72nd St., N. Y., N. Y. 10023

Zone/Northing/Easting

DESCRIPTION

Construction Date: circa 1878

Source of Date: Map of 1881

Architect: Henry Hudson Holly

Builder:

Style: Queen Anne

Form/Plan Type: Extended square

Number of Stories: 2½ + B

Foundation: Stucco

Exterior Wall Fabric: Stucco, 1st floor, stucco + half-timber work on 2nd story.

Fenestration: 3 bays; D.H. sash 1/1. some w/ multi-light top sash.

Roof/Chimneys: Multi-gable/ panelled brick chimneys/ corbelling below caps, ext. east, int. & end chimneys south wall.

Additional Architectural Description:

Bay 1 projects slightly forward w/ large divided windows at center, 1st floor. Single windows articulate corner bays on the 2nd floor & triple window marks the steep attic gable.

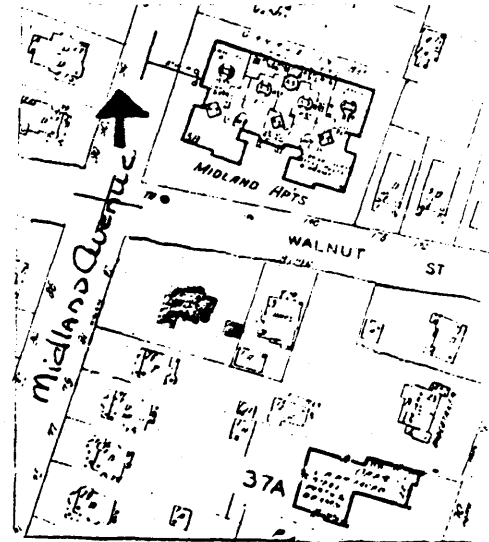
Ent. door w/ side lights in the 2nd bay w/ divided horizontal window placed high on right wall (bay 3).

Open porch w/ square columns on solid balustrade, across bay 2 & 3, extends south where it becomes enclosed, wrapping around the south elevation; two right-hand porch bays show glass panelled ent. door w/ 1 light window right & single 6/1 sash to the left. Bay window in the 3rd bay, 2nd fl., & hipped dormer w/ triple sash in roof above. Secondary entrance on the north elevation. Hipped dormers flank ent. end chimney south.

Alterations - see "Surrounding Environment" on reverse side.

PHOTO Negative File No. R18, 18

Map (Indicate North)



NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, OFFICE OF CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION SECTION, 109 WEST STATE STREET, TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625 (609) 292 - 2023

SITING, BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION, AND RELATED STRUCTURES:

House sited close to east property line on 106' x 156' corner lot; garage in south-east corner.

Less than one acre.

SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT: Urban  Suburban  Scattered Buildings   
 Open Space  Woodland  Residential  Agricultural  Village   
 Industrial  Downtown Commercial  Highway Commercial  Other

Alterations/modifications: The second floor porch on the southeast corner is now a greenhouse. The triple sliding window and door to south porch are recent additions and out of character with the original structure.

SIGNIFICANCE:

House designed by architect Henry Hudson Holly, prior to the publication of his book, Modern Dwellings in Town & Country, 1878. It is entitled design #4 & is referred to as having been erected at Montclair, N. J. for M. F. Reading, Esq. Vincent Scully's book, The Shingle Style, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1971, p. 74 - 75, refers to Holly's work & ascribes this type of plan as the basis for most vernacular dwellings until the early 20th century.

Holly had many ties to Montclair. He once resided here and the community was later home of one of his sons, H. Hudson Holly, Jr. According to Michael A. Tomlan of Cornell University, Montclair contains the largest cluster of extant houses identified as being designed by Holly. Two other Holly houses have been inventoried here (see #67 & #73) the sites of two demolished ones have been found, and local history sources point to more. Although this residence has been altered, most of the changes were well done many years ago and primarily involve surface treatment. This house is significant because of Holly's importance in 19th century American architecture and as a link to the architect's presence here. (see "Comments")

ORIGINAL USE: Residence PRESENT USE: Residence  
 PHYSICAL CONDITION: Excellent  Good  Fair  Poor   
 REGISTER ELIGIBILITY: Yes  Possible  No  Part of District   
 THREATS TO SITE: Roads  Development  Zoning  Deterioration   
 No Threat  Other

COMMENTS: (Continued)

Tomlan's extensive research has revealed surprisingly few Holly houses survive and others have been altered more extensively.

\*. . .on Upper Mountain Ave., both included in the Mountain Historic District.

REFERENCES:

Pidgeon, Roger H. Atlas of Essex County. New York: E. Robinson, 1881.

Holly, H. Hudson. Country Seats and Modern Dwellings. Watkins Glen, N. Y: American Life Foundation, 1977. (See the introduction by Michael A. Tomlan and footnote #16).

Telephone interview 1/19/84 with Professor Michael A. Tomlan, Graduate Program in Historic Preservation, Cornell University. House included in the 1976 Montclair State College Photographic Exhibit, "Villages, Cottages and Country Residences".

RECORDED BY: Preservation Montclair DATE: 5/19/81  
 ORGANIZATION: by Eleanor Price

Revised by Maynett Breithaupt, Preservation Montclair, 1/19/84.

ges when the owner desires them, and he alone is able to make uniformity with the other parts of the plan.

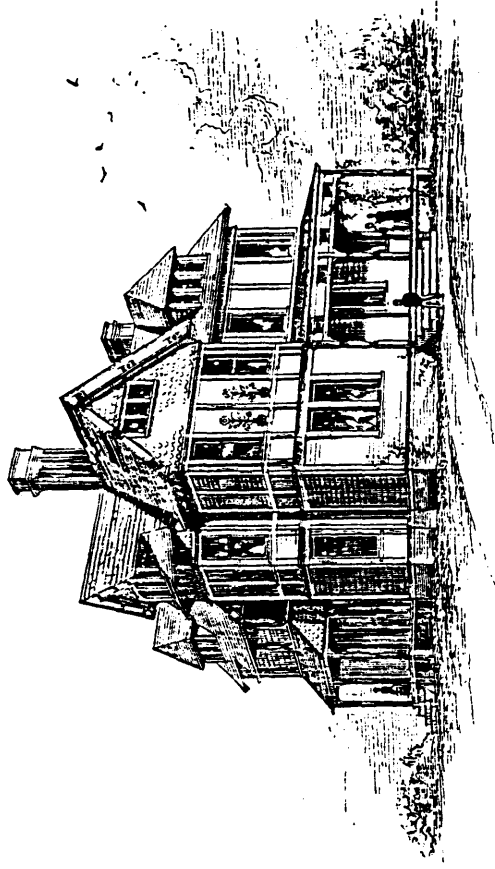
ite, as an exemplification of this, an instance of an expensive or which an architect had prepared the plans, on the line of metropolitan railroads. The design was prepared with especial reference to the rules to which we have alluded, and he had laid out on the ground accordingly, ready for the building to proceed. In the place a few weeks after, he found, to his dismay, that, for trivial reason, suggested by the mason, it had been turned and placed in a different direction. Immediately all the advantages of the view, and the general appearance of the building—so much of which he had expected such good results—were entirely lost.

One point on which he had depended making a favorable impression was that from the railway, from which hundreds of passengers commanded a view of the building. Another was from the commanding view of the village. The side of the house least considered, the north, from whence it was little seen, and had no particular value where he had located the kitchen. Imagine his chagrin, then, when the picturesque grouping turned entirely away from the points which he had calculated, and in their place those parts he had most desired to conceal. The kitchen seemed to have been the object of the ride to the owner, as it was this he had placed fronting the railway. It now occupies the agreeable exposure designed for the living-room. There shortly after offered just the opportunity for rectifying the error, as, wishing to enlarge this department, he could build a tower, relieving its gaunt and meagre appearance. But instead of this his architect, he was again guided by his builder, who assured him the way to accomplish his design was to lengthen the kitchen some ten or twelve feet. Then the error assumed a magnitude of some time, for the blemish was intensified at least tenfold, as it overtook and destroyed all the proportions of the house.

is the solution of the question I have so often heard asked, as to why in the cars, why Mr. B——'s house so much resembles a lunatic asylum; and, I might add, had not his obstinacy stood in the way of his interests, the building might, in case of trouble, have been a fair profit, instead of a loss of fifty per cent. on the original investment, and the architect's reputation might not have suffered, as invariably does when these charlatans thus distort his plans, and he sustains overbalances by far any pecuniary advantages he

ve.

There are times, however, when buildings are so remote that it is impossible for the architect to visit them, or, if at all, perhaps not more than once or twice during their construction. In such cases, by retaining copies of all the drawings and specifications, with a practical superintendent upon the grounds, the architect may be consulted almost as well as if he were making constant visits to the works. I have at this time buildings in Canada, Tennessee, and Texas, which I am superintending in this manner, the results of which are entirely satisfactory.



Design No. 4.

There is a commercial value to be attached to a well-arranged plan and carefully studied grouping of the exterior of a house; for it is evident that a dwelling built on these principles requires no more material or labor, but is simply a scientific rendering to produce harmonious and convenient results; and the difference between a house of this kind and one of ordinary construction, when placed in the market, is invariably apparent. I remember a neighborhood in New Jersey which had been built before the present decline in prices, but, owing to the results arising from the panic, many of the houses were offered for sale for which not more than half their cost was realized. Now, had they been constructed with a greater regard to these principles, it is certain that this sacrifice would not have occurred; for there was one instance of a gentleman who had built a house no more expensively than the others, but in which the arrangement and proportion had been better studied, and the price realized at its sale was sufficient to pay a fair profit.

Frequently persons bring their own plan of arrangement, which mate-

pantry contains sink and dresser, and communicates with an ample store room. The kitchen, though small in itself, has a large pantry, and is connected with the laundry, where much of the rough work may be done.

There are four large bedrooms and one bath-room in the second story together with finished rooms in the attic. The main staircase ascends to a landing, at the top of which there is a stained-glass window opening on to a second-story balcony. The house is of frame, sheathed on the outside and clapboarded. The panels between the windows are smooth-ceiled, upon which flower patterns are stencilled. The gables and attic walls are covered with ornamental cut shingles, the whole having broken and varied effect.

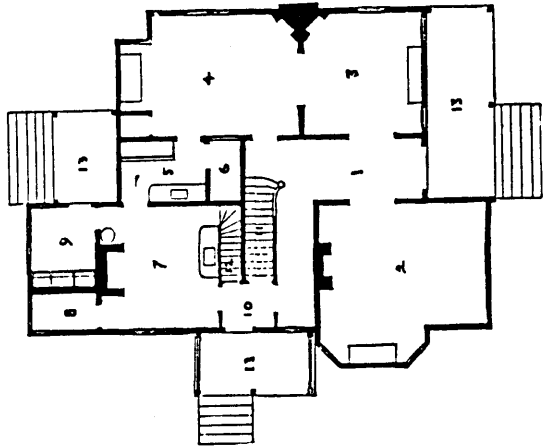
## MODERN DWELLINGS.

rially transgresses these principles; and when their attention is called to the fact that certain rooms have no closets, they state that they require none for this apartment, or that there is one in the adjoining hall. When it is remarked that certain rooms are inaccessible except by passing through others, they answer that, although it may be in violation of general principles, yet in their particular case it is especially suitable. It is then suggested that though this may be so, yet, should they desire to sell the house, such an arrangement might prove an insuperable objection to a purchaser. But the answer generally is that the house is not built for sale. It is intended for their own use; and as their children are small, there is not the occasion for much independent privacy. I then remind them that in case of their demise they little know what disposition may be made of the establishment, and it would be well, at any rate, to consider it as an investment for their families after they are gone; also, that their children will not always be young, and as they advance in years they will require different accommodations from those of the nursery. But suggestions and arguments are in vain. They will follow their own notions, and when, from some unexpected calamity, they are compelled to sell, they find, too late, the warnings verified.

## DESIGN No. 4.

## First-floor Plan.

1. Main hall; 2. Parlor, 14 × 20; 3. Library, 14 × 14; 4. Dining-room, 14 × 18; 5. Butler's pantry; 6. Store-room; 7. Kitchen, 14 × 15; 8. Pantry; 9. Laundry; 10. Vestibule; 11. Main stairs; 12. Back stairs; 13, 13, 13, Verandas. — *Estimated cost, \$65,000.*



First-floor Plan of Design No. 4.

This building has recently been erected at Montclair, New Jersey, for M. F. Redding, Esq., and is a

specimen of how a simple square structure may be broken up into picturesque outlines. The hall is of the L shape, having double doors near the entrance, connecting the parlor and library. A broad pier is left in the parlor for a piano, and a similar one in the library for the bookcase, while the dining-room has a special niche for the sideboard. The butler's

87, Midland Avenue