

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 91001484 Date Listed: 10/11/91

Mt. Freedom Presbyterian Church Morris NJ  
Property Name: County: State:

Multiple Name \_\_\_\_\_

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Patrick W. Andrews  
Signature of the Keeper

10/11/91  
Date of Action

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

Because the church building was moved during its Period of Significance, the National Register Criteria Consideration for Moved Properties applies to this nomination. This has been clarified with the NJ SHPO. The nomination form is officially amended to include this information.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Mount Freedom Presbyterian Church
other names/site number Mount Freedom Parsonage & the Drake House

2. Location

street & number Sussex Turnpike at Church Road
city, town Randolph Township
state New Jersey code 034 county Morris code 027 zip code 07970

not for publication
vicinity

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes sub-rows for Contributing and Noncontributing resources.

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official Assistant Commissioner for Natural & Historic Resources/DSHPO
Date 8/16/91

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
[X] entered in the National Register.
[ ] See continuation sheet.
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register. [ ] See continuation sheet.
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[ ] removed from the National Register.
[ ] other, (explain:)
Signature of the Keeper Patrick Ardus
Date of Action 10/11/91

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
Religious Structure - Church  
Church-related residence - Parsonage  
Domestic - single dwelling  
Funerary - Cemetery

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
Religious Structure - Church  
Domestic Single dwelling  
Domestic - single dwelling  
Funerary - Cemetery

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)  
  
Mid-19th century - Greek Revival  
Other - East Jersey Cottage

Materials (enter categories from instructions)  
  
foundation stone  
walls wood - clapboard, shingles  
  
roof Asphalt shingles  
other \_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Mount Freedom Presbyterian Church, its parsonage, cemetery, and the nearby Drake House form a well-preserved cluster of early-to-mid 19th century buildings at the western end of the unincorporated village of Mount Freedom along Sussex Turnpike, in Randolph Township, New Jersey. The church sits near the top of "Mount Freedom", with its associated cemetery extending to the sides and rear. The parsonage lies secluded from busy Sussex Turnpike by the church and its own small garden. The Drake House, now owned by the church, and for much of its history occupied by families intimately connected to the church, lies across Sussex Turnpike. All three buildings maintain a high degree of historic integrity, and are locally important landmarks through their ability to confer a sense of place in this rapidly suburbanizing township.

The Mount Freedom Presbyterian Church is a simple frame house of worship in vernacular Greek Revival style, with a rectangular floorplan, a gable end entry marked by a square tower, and broad frieze and pilasters framing the building. The church achieved this appearance in the mid-19th century and has been little altered since that date. Electricity was introduced into the church in 1921, but plumbing was never added, and the small wooden privy to the rear of the church is still a functioning auxillary building (Photo 4). The restoration of the building in 1985 further reinforced its historic appearance, so that today it stands as a good example of a once-common country church type in Morris County.

The original church building was completed in 1823. It was nearly square in plan, containing a single room on one level, and it was more like the traditional "meetinghouse" than the architecturally ambitious churches that were beginning to be erected in town centers of Morris County in the early 19th century. By 1868, the congregation had increased such that an addition was required, and at that time the Greek Revival elements were added to the church. The additions of this period are known to have been the extension of the church eleven feet off the south facing gable end to create a new facade and the creation of a bell tower. Further interior alterations were carried out in 1868-1869.

The church is presently one-and-a-half stories in height, covered with narrow width clapboard siding (Photo 1). It is relatively long and low in appearance, serving as a transition in scale between the simple one-story

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Religion

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

1823-c.1869

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1868-1869

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

NA

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

NA

Architect/Builder

NA

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Mount Freedom Presbyterian Church is, apart from the National Register-listed Randolph Friends Meeting House, the oldest religious edifice in Randolph Township and its congregation is the oldest religious society still meeting in the township. The congregation was organized, in part, through the efforts of Jacob Drake, whose house, standing across Sussex Turnpike from the church, served as a parsonage on occasion. The parsonage later constructed by the congregation for its regular ministers stands behind the church building. This trio of buildings is significant under National Register Criterion C, because as well-preserved examples of local vernacular architecture, with detailing in the simplest Greek Revival style, they "embody the distinctive characteristic of a type." They are also eligible under Criterion A, for their association with "broad patterns of our history", particularly the religious revivals which were an expression of the evangelical zeal of the Presbyterian Church in the early 19th century. As a religious property, it meets National Register Criteria Consideration A, for its significance derives primarily from its architecture and historic associations rather than from its religious use.

**I. The Church and the Second Awakening**

Mendham Township, one of the four original townships created when Morris County was set off from Hunterdon in 1740, was settled early by Presbyterians of Anglo-Scotch descent. They established a town center near the church by the mid-18th century, and the leaders of the township were derived for many years from the closeknit circle of church members and village land owners.<sup>1</sup> This emerging rural society had little use for the steeper and rockier hills in the northern part of the township, and so made no complaint as it was gradually settled by Quakers and Baptists. In 1805, this section was set aside as Randolph Township.

Both the Baptists and the Quakers were unforgiving of marriage outside their faith, and they sought an attitude of withdrawal from the world in an attempt to achieve salvation. As a result, both denominations began to experience a decline in membership and vigor as the first generation believers

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Previous documentation on file (NPS): NA

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

State historic preservation office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Specify repository:  
Church archives of Mount Freedom  
Presbyterian Church

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property Total 7.18 Mendham, N.J. Quad

UTM References

A 1 8 5 3 5 2 7 0 4 5 1 9 6 2 0  
 Zone Easting Northing

C 1 8 5 3 5 2 6 0 4 5 1 9 2 6 0

B 1 8 5 3 5 3 0 0 4 5 1 9 5 1 0  
 Zone Easting Northing

D 1 8 5 3 5 1 4 0 4 5 1 9 4 6 0

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

All the property contained within Randolph Township Block 97, Lot 1, and the property within Randolph Township Block 93, Lot 11-2.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The church and cemetery lands were the original acquisition of the newly formed Mount Freedom Presbyterian Church congregation in 1821, supplemented by the gift of a lot for the location of the parsonage in 1836. These together form modern Block 97, Lot 1. The Drake House, now owned by the church and closely connected to it since the church's founding, is Block 93, Lot 11-2.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Reverend Warren Crater, Ed Cunningham, & Janet W. Foster

organization Acroterion date February 7, 1991

street & number 71 Maple Avenue telephone (201) 984-9660

city or town Morristown state New Jersey zip code 07960

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gable-end-entry one-room schoolhouse and the full two-story tall height of most of the area's 19th century frame churches. The corners are marked by full height Doric pilasters in wood. The pedimented facade gable end is flushboarded, a common hallmark of the local interpretation of the Greek Revival. The rear gable is not enclosed, but marked by full gable end returns above pilasters. The church rests on a rubblestone foundation over a crawl space.

The south-facing entry is marked only by the double leaf doors which enter the church from a small concrete-and-brick raised landing with a stairs down to ground level. The side walls of the church each contain six bays, tall twelve-over-nine windows with low arched heads and almost all their original glass. These are flanked by operable louvered blinds. The gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles, and pierced by a single brick chimney which serves the present heating system. The single-stage bell tower is also clapboarded, with pilasters flanking the central louvered panel. It is topped by a wide frieze with dentil molding and a quatrefoil railing.

Inside, the tower addition created a small vestibule, a storage room, a narrow balcony, and stairway to the belltower. The main sanctuary is arranged on a two-aisle plan, rising the full height of the building to a shallow vaulted ceiling. Within the room fourteen rows of wooden pews, which appear to date from the mid-19th century, flank the aisles. Their backs and seats are pine, but the scroll-like decorative molding at the end is mahogany.

The plaster ceiling and walls were covered with embossed tin in 1916. This decorative patterned surface has always been painted according to church records. It forms an overall wall pattern with a Greek key border above the original wainscot of horizontally laid pine boards which encircles the sanctuary. The pressed tin ceiling imitates coffered work, and four chandeliers (not original) are suspended from it (Photo 10).

The original wide pine floor boards survive throughout the church. At the northern end of the church, a two-foot high raised platform was installed in 1868 to distinguish the altar area from the body of the church. The fifteen-foot wide platform allowed a communion table to be placed in front of the pulpit, creating a much more formal liturgical setting than had existed before. A central pulpit with paneled front was constructed in the center rear of the platform, flanked by stairways with stock turned balusters of the mid-19th century (Photo 7).

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The rear balcony, occupying the second floor space created by the tower addition, is supported on two wooden Doric columns. The balcony front, running parallel with the facade wall of the church, is paneled (Photo 8).

The church building is surrounded on its northern and eastern sides by its cemetery. The cemetery was begun with the founding of the congregation in 1820, and the earliest markers are the simple brownstone tablets commonly used in this area in the latter 18th century and early 19th centuries. These are clustered immediately behind the church. Later burials reflect the changing aesthetics of the 19th century, with marble and granite stones carved with motifs of Gothic, Romanesque, and Tuscan architecture. The cemetery extends to the northeast to the crest of a gentle hill. The whole is surrounded by a cemented stone wall, capped with a deteriorating concrete coping. The cemetery driveway is accessible by an elliptical driveway with entrance onto Sussex Turnpike some one hundred feet east of the church building.

Also northeast of the church building is a one story concrete block and frame building used as the fellowship hall and to house a daily nursery school (Photo 6). It was built in the 1940s on the site of the earlier stables for the church. The present building is not considered a contributing part of the historic church property.

Some church records indicate that the entire church building was moved during the 1868 renovations, pulled back (or north) from Sussex Turnpike to accommodate additions to the front of the original structure. The congregation could hardly have imagined the volume or speed of traffic on present-day Sussex Turnpike, or they would have moved the church back an additional distance. Presently, the church is threatened with the widening of Sussex Turnpike from two lanes to four, which would bring the road to within 20 feet of the front door. As this is the only entrance to the building the potential disruption to the use of the church is great.

**Mt. Freedom Presbyterian Church Parsonage**

The old parsonage of the Mt. Freedom Presbyterian Church is a typical example of the vernacular expression of the Georgian house plan in the 19th century, embellished with modest details which refer to the Greek Revival style. Built in 1836-38 by the congregation of the Mt. Freedom Presbyterian Church about 100 feet north of the church building, the house was used to shelter ministers to the congregation and their families until 1980. Still owned by the church, the old parsonage is rented as a single-family house.

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The house faces south toward the church, and is sited close to Church Road. The five bay, center-hall plan, two-and-a-half story frame dwelling is covered with wooden shingles (Photo 12). These shingles are relatively new. The gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles, and finished with simple gable end returns. The facade eaves are bracketed; there are no brackets on the rear of the house. Interior brick chimneys in each gable end have been removed; the flues are capped beneath the roof. A stucco-covered replacement chimney serving the basement furnace is located on the outer face of the eastern gable end wall. The house rests upon an uncoursed fieldstone foundation, which forms a full basement with dirt floor under the easternmost three bays of the dwelling.

The windows are all two-over-two sash, except for a six-over-six sash window in the eastern attic gable (Photo 15), and paired four-over-four sash in the western attic gable. All are set in simply molded frames. The spacing of the windows is slightly irregular, although the overall impression is of a symmetrical facade. The central front door is set between multi-pane sidelights, and the enframingent is a very simple interpretation of the Greek Revival with a broad flat lintel supported above pilasters. The door itself is turn-of-the-century, with a large window fixed above a paneled base. The entry is further defined by a porch covering the center three bays of the first floor facade. The porch has turned and fluted columns and a square-section balustrade (Photo 13).

To the rear of the house, a single story frame addition with gable roof projects from the westernmost two bays. A shed roof on turned columns extends across the rest of the rear. The floor of this addition is poured concrete (Photo 14). The rear shed addition contains the remains of an abandoned kitchen of early 20th century vintage, with tongue-and-groove wooden wainscot, large soapstone sink with a hand-pump, and shelving. The bulk of the space is presently used for storing lawn equipment and tools.

Inside, the house is arranged with a wide center hall, containing a staircase which appears to have been constructed about 1920. The square section balustrade and blocky newell post with a low pyramidal cap are characteristic of commonly available millwork in the first third of the 20th century. At the end of the hall is a two-panel Greek Revival style door with large wrought iron strap hinges. Originally an exterior door, it now leads to an enclosed shed. The hall has no other decorative features except a baseboard with molded trim.



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The double parlors on the eastern side of the house each feature a fireplace in the gable end wall with a wooden mantel. The exaggerated ogee opening of the mantel is carried on paneled pilasters. A wide opening between the two rooms has a molded enframing and the hinges to show where broad double doors once attached (Photo 16). The doors themselves have been removed, and are currently stored in the basement. They feature three vertical panels above and three below the knob-height rail. The four paneled doors leading from the parlors to the hall are painted, but show evidence of originally having been grain painted. This would have matched the wood grained-look ceramic doorknobs which survive. Graining was a popular decorative treatment for interior woodwork in the 19th century, and would not be unexpected in a home of this vintage and style.

The two rooms to the west side of the central hall are a step lower than the hall and parlors. In addition, there is no basement beneath this portion of the house, suggesting that it is an addition to the main building. The much simpler molding around internal doors, and the wide floorboards further confirm that belief. The fireplace in the southwest room is taller and deeper than those in the eastern part of the house, and has only a simple mantel shelf. However, significant enough alteration has taken place to conform this addition to the rest of the house, that speculation about its age or origin is difficult without demolition to investigate physical fabric further. The northwestern room has been even more modified to accommodate a modern kitchen, and has no historic fabric evident.

The second floor follows the first floor in plan. A tongue-and-groove wooden closet has been added along the second floor hallway, thus reducing the width of the passage but providing much needed storage space. The bedrooms on the east side of the house each have a fireplace; the mantel in the southeast room is particularly noteworthy for its naive treatment of the Greek Revival style. End columns with exaggerated entasis each support a broad panel, above which extends the molded mantel shelf. A third panel, marking the center of the mantel, is visually unsupported in the broad, flat frieze (Photo 17).

The second floor doors are all bead-edged vertical boards with iron rimlocks and grained-look ceramic knobs. Horizontally mounted boards with original clothes hooks provide a place to hang clothes in each bedroom. The only significant alteration of historic fabric on the second floor is the installation of an acoustical tile ceiling over original plaster; the plaster walls remain intact.

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The southwest bedroom has a corner fireplace with simple mantel. The northwest bedroom does not have a fireplace, but contains the stairway to the attic. The full attic does not have any indications of an addition or juncture of buildings. Sawn framing members form a simple roof truss, pegged together at the ridge. Clapboard is visible in the attic gable ends on the outer face of the framing, indicating that the original surface of the house was clapboard rather than shingles.

The parsonage is elevated slightly above adjacent Church Road by a dry-laid stone retaining wall. There are evergreen shrubs and mature deciduous trees immediately around the house and in its small yard. A garden to the east of the house is presently overgrown with wild raspberry and bittersweet. No outbuildings directly related to the parsonage are extant. The house is in a fair to good state of preservation, retaining the forceful simplicity of vernacular architecture.

**The Drake House**

The Drake House is a fine example of the traditional vernacular architecture of the region, with later additions reflecting the influence of non-vernacular architecture in America. The house evolved to its present form through the 19th century, but has not been significantly altered in the 20th. The good condition and high degree of architectural integrity of the Drake House make it a valuable resource for studying the assimilation of 19th century American "styles" into vernacular building practice.

The house at present is a five bay, center hall plan, frame and clapboard building of a story-and-a-half (Photo 18). Four eyebrow windows whose lintels are right at the eaves line mark the high knee wall of the facade. The broad gable roof with molded returns is pierced at either end by interior end brick chimneys, and punctuated by a pedimented wall dormer centered on the facade. A hipped roof porch across the center three bays of the facade further emphasizes the symmetry of the building, although close inspection reveals that the spacing of window openings is slightly irregular, and that the door is placed just off-center of the facade. A rear addition extends at right angles to the main part of the building; also one-and-a-half-stories with clapboard siding, the addition contains a fireplace with exposed brick fireback on the rear (southern) elevation. The second floor now contains four bedrooms, and a bathroom within the center wall dormer. Finishes are simpler and more rustic on this floor. Doors are formed by vertically-laid bead-edged boards and retain iron thumb latches. Wide floorboards, simple baseboards, and plaster walls mark the rooms which each have a sloped ceiling as they fit in under the eaves of the house.

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The original Drake house was the western half of the present dwelling. Built within the English vernacular architectural tradition, it had the frame construction, high knee wall, three-bay facade and double-pile side-hall plan typical of the East Jersey cottage. This was the most commonly built 18th century house type in Morris County's English communities, especially Mendham Township (from which Randolph Township was formed in 1805) and Morris Township. The house had an uncoursed fieldstone foundation and clapboard walls. Inside, each main room on the first floor had a fireplace in the gable end wall, and wide plank floorboards which survive to this day. It is probable that the house faced south, as many early houses did, its gable end toward its primary access road, now known as Brookside Road.

Apparently about 1850 (based upon stylistic evidence), the house was enlarged and updated, and its primary access made to face Sussex Turnpike, which had been completed just to the north of the house in 1809. At that time, the eastern wall of the old house was removed, and a double pile addition made, creating a center-hall house. The original stairway, which had been located inside the eastern wall of the old house, was torn out and a new stairway with a robustly turned walnut newell post and banisters was installed on the western wall of the now-central hall. This stairway survives, and it is typical of the stock millwork of the mid-19th century which is often found in carpenter-built houses of the period (Photo 24).

Interior detailing, such as internal doors, door frames, and window frames is simple, although clearly inspired by the Greek Revival style. The fireplace mantel in the northwest room has the heavy frieze and vertically paneled supports of the simplest Greek Revival detailing (Photo 22); a door leading to a first floor closet under the main stairway has two vertical panels characteristic of the Greek Revival style. Flooring for the mid-century additions was oak planks, up to one foot wide.

The new portion of the house was built upon a stone foundation separate from the original, resulting in two basements side-by-side, with no interior access between them. Although fieldstone like the earlier portion, the masonry work of the mid-19th century addition is much finer quality, and the stones are roughly coursed and more evenly sized. The fireplace supports are brick. The visible beams in this portion of the house are sawn, evenly dimensioned lumber, in contrast to the more unevenly sized wood used in the original portion of the house.

The new, centered entry on the facade was a four-panel wooden door flanked by sidelights. It is unknown whether a porch was added at the time; the present porch appears to date from the late 19th century. In order to unify

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the facade appearance of the house, two-over-two sash were installed in the old window openings to match the new windows in the house. However, the newer windows were slightly larger, and their trim more pronounced than that of the old windows. Original six-over-six sash windows survive on the western gable end of the house.

The rear kitchen wing was also added to the house in the mid-19th century, and its foundation is integral with the rest of the addition of that period. The narrow frame wing was quite simply detailed, in keeping with its utilitarian function. The large brick fireplace with simple mantel in the kitchen is a reminder that hearth cooking was still widely practiced in rural areas through the first half of the 19th century. The remains of a bake oven can be seen at the back of the fireplace (Photo 21). The kitchen wing had a separate second floor attic room reached by a winding, enclosed staircase.

The third major period of alteration to the house occurred in the latter 19th century, when the eclectic Victorian styles had captured the imagination of the American public. The symmetrical, unadorned lines of the old farmhouse were painfully out of fashion, and so some embellishments were added. The shingle-clad wall dormer was added on the facade, a bay window was extended on the east gable wall of the main house, and a front porch added with fluted, turned supports and a square-section baluster (Photo 19). Inside, the old mantelpiece in the southeast room was replaced with one featuring tile insets, machine-made fluted pilasters, and an overmantel containing a bevel-edged mirror (Photo 23).

Along with decorative changes, some functional changes were made to the house, reflecting expectations for domestic efficiency which had developed during the 19th century. A pantry with wooden shelves and countertop over oak drawers and cabinets was added on to the kitchen wing, and it remains remarkably intact. A closet was built of stock tongue-and-groove wood on the second floor. Later in the 20th century, plumbing and electricity were introduced into the house, but no decorative or structural changes were made.

The Drake House is sited on a one acre lot, the remains of the larger farm associated with the house in the 19th century. The house lot is surrounded on three sides by a low stone wall of native "puddingstones" a purple-hued conglomerate rock widely used for decorative walls (and occasionally for whole buildings) in the latter half of the 19th century in Morris County. A stone-lined well capped by a small frame wellhouse stands outside the kitchen door. There are two modest frame outbuildings of some age extant, although they are in poor condition. The chicken house, with a shed roof covered in peeling tarpaper and a large south-facing window, is attached to a corn crib of

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vertical wooden slats under a shallow gable roof (Photo 25). They illustrate the type of subsistence agriculture which was often found associated with country houses in the past. A two story garage west of the house is actively used and in good condition. The first floor of the garage is made of rusticated concrete blocks, while the second floor is shiplap siding. All of these accessory buildings are considered contributing to the Drake House's setting and historic architectural integrity. A frame outhouse also on the property is old, but its dimensioned lumber and modern nails indicate that it is not "original". It is in poor condition and without any evidence of any design intent, so it is not considered a contributing building for the property.

The main barn which was associated with the Drake Homestead stood south of the house, on land which has been subdivided to a separate lot. The barn was demolished and a four-square style house erected approximately on its site. There is historic and archaeological evidence for a blacksmith shop south of the Drake House within the bounds of the present property.<sup>1</sup>

The present lot also retains a few old and gnarled apple trees, raspberry bushes, and other perennial remnants of the historic farm garden. The only intrusion upon this well-preserved house and its setting is heavily-traveled Sussex Turnpike, just twenty feet north of the northeast corner of the house. The actual right-of-way for the road exists just six feet off this corner of the house, and includes the historic stone wall surrounding the yard. Current plans for widening Sussex Turnpike threaten the integrity of the setting and the liveability of the house, thus jeopardizing its future preservation.

<sup>1</sup> Randy Witwick "New Jersey Historic Trust Preservation Survey Form - The Drake House", on file with the Randolph Township Landmark Committee.

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and settlers failed to effectively transmit their religion to the second generation. At the same time, Presbyterians were experiencing a revival of evangelical zeal, which came to be called the Second Awakening (ca. 1800-1835). The Second Awakening was characterized by strong leadership from the laity, and a notably high percentage of women assuming lay leadership positions.<sup>2</sup> Through locally organized prayer meetings, and charismatic preaching, particularly by itinerant pastors, entire communities were brought to a heightened awareness of the state of their souls, and the possibilities for spiritual improvement. While the 18th century Great Awakening may be characterized to a great extent as the community-felt effect of many personal emotional responses to a charismatic preacher, the Second Awakening was less emotional and more of a community-wide movement, instigated by people who perceived a chasm between Christian ideals and the behavior and attitudes of the members of a particular community.

Such events seem to have been exactly what transpired in the turnpike village of Mount Freedom beginning about 1818. Prayer meetings were held in homes, and touring preachers, most of whom were sponsored by the Presbyterian Church, were invited to conduct services. This quest for a new spirituality took hold among the children of Mount Freedom's Baptists, some Quakers, and non-observant Presbyterians. In fact, the Second Awakening may be embodied in Jacob Drake (1787-1866), a resident of Mount Freedom who had been a member of the local Baptist Church. He withdrew to attend the revival meetings which began to be held in the area about 1818, and by 1820 was a founding member of the congregation.

The Reverends Barnabas King of Rockaway, Jacob Green of Hanover, and Samuel Cox of Mendham came to Mount Freedom to conduct Presbyterian services in 1820. As representatives of three of the oldest and largest Presbyterian congregations in Morris County at the time, their presence demonstrated how seriously the presbytery took the small local prayer meetings, and how the vague desire for more spirituality was now being channeled into the formation of a new church.

Organized on May 11, 1820, the Mount Freedom Presbyterian Church was constituted by the Presbytery of Elizabeth on July 9, 1820 - a date postponed from June 25 because of a "sudden and violent occurrence of rain"<sup>3</sup>. Nine persons were received into membership at the first service; eight of them women. Some transferred membership from the established Presbyterian Churches at Mendham, Chester, or Morristown; others on the confession of their faith. The first ruling elders selected for the new church were John Corwin, Elijah Wells, and Jacob Drake, who opened his home to the various preachers sent by the Elizabeth Presbytery who came to minister to the new congregation.

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Membership increased rapidly, with twenty more souls seeking admission at the conclusion of the first service. Talk of building a meeting house commenced almost at once, both because the rapidly expanding congregation would not comfortably fit into most members' homes for services, and because there was a deep-seated desire to give physical expression to the spiritual change which had so dramatically taken over the community in recent years.

**II. Land and Buildings for the New Church**

Land for a church and burying ground was purchased from Morris Aber on May 1, 1821. During the three years it took to raise funds for a building, the congregation, now nearing 76 people, met in the old Mount Freedom Baptist Church. The Presbyterian Church lands were at the westernmost end of Mount Freedom, facing the Sussex Turnpike, and thus the new church, dedicated in 1824, stood on the "Main Street" of the community.

With the completion of a suitable house of worship, the Mount Freedom congregation called a minister, the Reverend Jacob Bryant. A native of the community, Bryant served the church until his death in 1846. He was "boarded out" with different members of the congregation, church records report, and also lived for a time in the house owned by Jacob Drake. In 1836, M.W. Davis donated a small lot of land to the north of the church for a parsonage. The construction of a parsonage commenced immediately, and by 1838 it was ready for occupancy.

The parsonage utilized Greek Revival style decorative elements, such as mantelpieces, doors, and window enframements on a basic, vernacular building with the two-story, center-hall form first used in Georgian architecture. The parsonage's Grecian woodwork was a rather elementary expression of the style which was then sweeping the country, but its "sober" and "chaste" architectural association made it a dignified choice for the decoration of a country pastor's home. Nearly thirty years later, the congregation chose the Greek Revival style again when the church required an addition to accommodate a membership of over one hundred and twenty. The style was evident in tall corner pilasters, a squared bell tower, broad frieze, and the pedimented gable end of the front entry. By this post-Civil War date, Greek Revival was quite out of fashion in American architectural circles, but not apparently in Mount Freedom (or Walnut Grove, as the community was known for a time in the mid-19th century). The old Drake House was also renovated and enlarged in the mid-19th century with the same type of simple, Greek Revival work influencing a basic vernacular dwelling. It is quite likely that the same craftsman carried out the work at all three buildings.

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Neither the church nor the parsonage have been substantially altered since the mid-19th century. The Drake House, however, was renovated around the turn-of-the-century with some stylish Queen Anne elements - notably, a bay window, shingled wall dormer, and a front porch. The updating of the Drake House may correspond to its acquisition in 1912 by Annie Drake Osborne, a descendant of the original owner.

A portion of the Drake House appears to have been built in the late 18th century. It is commonly referred to as the Daniel Drake House, to honor a veteran of the American Revolution, although Daniel died in the late 1780s, soon after his only child Jacob was born. Jacob's mother, Catherine Lozier Drake remarried in 1792, apparently bringing her new husband, Henry C. Clerk, to live in the house left to her and her infant son. With Henry, Catherine had four more children. In 1807, Henry and Catherine and their four children moved to Washington County, Pennsylvania, leaving Jacob Drake, who had just married Caroline Stewart, in possession of his father's home in Mount Freedom. Relations between Jacob and his step-family must have remained warm despite their moving, for Jacob named two of this own children, Eliphalet (1807-1853) and Catherine, for a half brother and sister.

Jacob Drake remained in Mount Freedom for the remainder of his life, devoting much energy and time to the church he helped to found. He must have moved from the old homestead by 1824, when it began to be used as a parsonage by the first minister of the Mount Freedom Church. After completion of the new manse for the church in 1838, Eliphalet Drake, Jacob's son seems to have acquired the house, although there is no deed extant to verify this transaction. When Eliphalet died in 1853 (predeceasing his father by 13 years) without a will, the administrator of his estate, Daniel Merchant, sold the house to Elijah Hulbert.<sup>4</sup> Both Merchant and Hulbert were among the stalwart members of the Mount Freedom Church.

Both the 1868 and 1887 maps of Morris County identify a blacksmith shop immediately south of the house lot. Elijah Hulbert was identified in the 1850 census as a blacksmith, although at the time he did not own the house. His occupation in 1860 is not given in the census. Whether he remained active as a blacksmith after he moved to the old Drake homestead, or limited his work to making equipment repairs and shoeing horses on the farm, is not clear.

The house returned to the Drake family in 1875, after Hulbert had died, and the house was purchased by Silas H.H. Clark., who had married Eliphalet Drake's eldest daughter Annie. Silas Clark was a railroad man, and worked his way up from handling freight at the Dover railroad station to President of the



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Missouri Pacific Railroad in the latter 19th century. On Silas' death, the house and lot passed to his widow, Annie M. Clark in 1886, and then to her daughter, Annie C. Drake Osborne in 1912.

Annie Drake was the second wife of Conover S. Osborne, who served as minister of the Mount Freedom Presbyterian Church from 1910-1918. The Osborne family, like so many other occupants of the house were closely tied to the church. Recognizing the long and close connections between the house and the church, and the importance of steady income to the church, Annie Drake Osborne willed the Drake House to the church, reserving a life right of tenancy for her step-son, Clifford. In 1983, title to the Drake House officially passed to the Mount Freedom Presbyterian Church.

Many of the faithful who lived in the Drake House are buried within sight of it in the cemetery adjacent to the church. Jacob Drake and his family are there, as are Clarks, Hulberts, and Jacob Bryant, the first full-time minister of the church. A cluster of brownstone markers around the sides and rear of the church identify the earliest graves; a later 19th century movement toward the Picturesque is evident in the more elaborate marble and granite carved headstones sited on the side of the low hill. A stone wall with cement cap encloses the cemetery. The cemetery provides the appropriate, traditional setting for this country church, and unites the present congregation with its founding fathers.

### III. Church, Village, and Turnpike Growth

The church and the Drake House face one another across the Sussex Turnpike built in 1809, connecting Morristown with Stanhope and Succasunna. It was an extension of the Morris Turnpike, which when chartered in 1801 was the first New Jersey Turnpike Company. The important first leg of the Morris Turnpike was from Elizabeth to Morristown; several years later as the investment proved profitable, the Morris Turnpike Company extended the route, which became known as the Sussex Turnpike for its hinterland destination. As with many other early 19th century turnpikes, this one served not only to facilitate transfer of the produce and raw materials (in this instance, iron ore) to urban centers, but provided impetus for the creation of villages along its length, such as Mount Freedom.

The Sussex Turnpike was a profitable venture for its investors, but was overshadowed in a generation by construction of the Morris Canal (begun 1824), which ran just north of Randolph Township. Removal of ore traffic from the road by the 1830s marked a slowdown in the prosperity of the villages along its route.

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Because of the relatively short period of heavy use, Sussex Turnpike is the best-preserved of the early 19th century turnpikes in Morris County, particularly its arrow-straight run from in front of the Mount Freedom church to the crest of a hill a mile to the northwest. Open fields, woodland, and scattered houses dot the rolling landscape traversed by the old turnpike, scenes not too different from those along the turnpike in the past. The two residences associated with the Mount Freedom Presbyterian Church and the sanctuary itself are, perhaps, the best preserved remnant of the early 19th century turnpike village of Mount Freedom, which while still extant, has largely lost its historic character through insensitive alterations to historic buildings, the proximity of a heavily-traveled thoroughfare, and modern commercial intrusions.

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FOOTNOTES

- 1 See the Mendham Historic District National Register Nomination by Janet W. Foster, 1984.
- 2 Martha T. Blauvelt, "The Mechanics of Revival: New Jersey Presbyterians During the Second Awakening" in Religion in New Jersey Life Before the Civil War, edited by Mary R. Murrin, New Jersey Historical Commission, Trenton, N.J. 1985.
- 3 Session minutes of the Mount Freedom Presbyterian Church.
- 4 Morris County Deed Book E-5, p. 249.  
Morris County Hall of Records, Eliphalet Drake estate  
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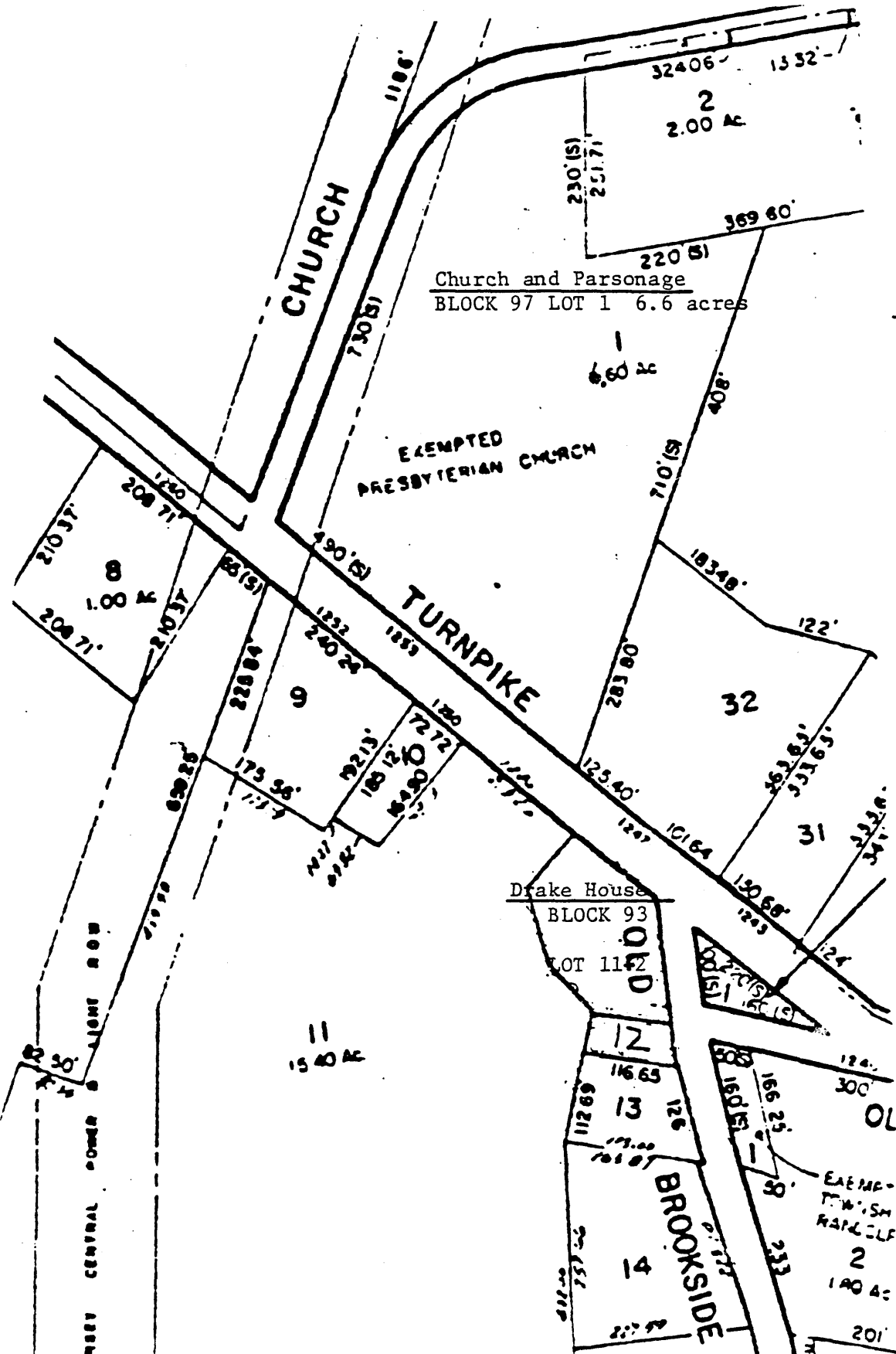
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MT. FREEDOM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sussex Turnpike at Church Road  
 Randolph Twp.  
 Morris County, N.J.

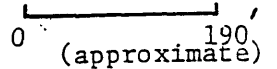


Church and Parsonage  
 BLOCK 97 LOT 1 6.6 acres

CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
 BLOCK 97 LOT 1  
 6.6 acres

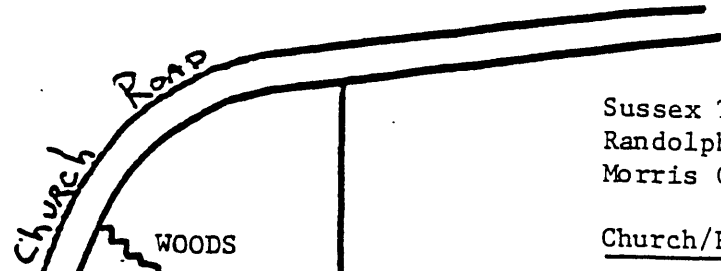
Drake House  
 BLOCK 93  
 LOT 11-2

DRAKE HOUSE  
 BLOCK 93 LOT 11-2  
 .58 acres





MT. FREEDOM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



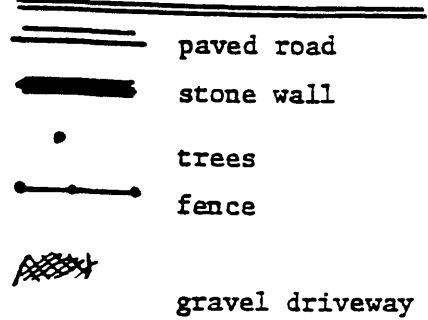
Sussex Turnpike at Church Rd.  
Randolph Twp.  
Morris County, N.J.

Church/Parsonage; block 97  
lot 1  
6.6 acres

Drake House; block 93  
lot 11-2  
.58 acres

Sussex Turnpike

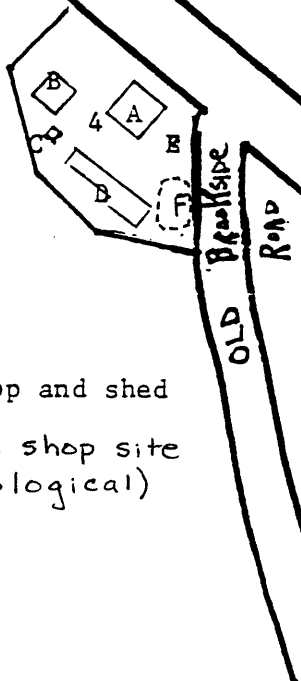
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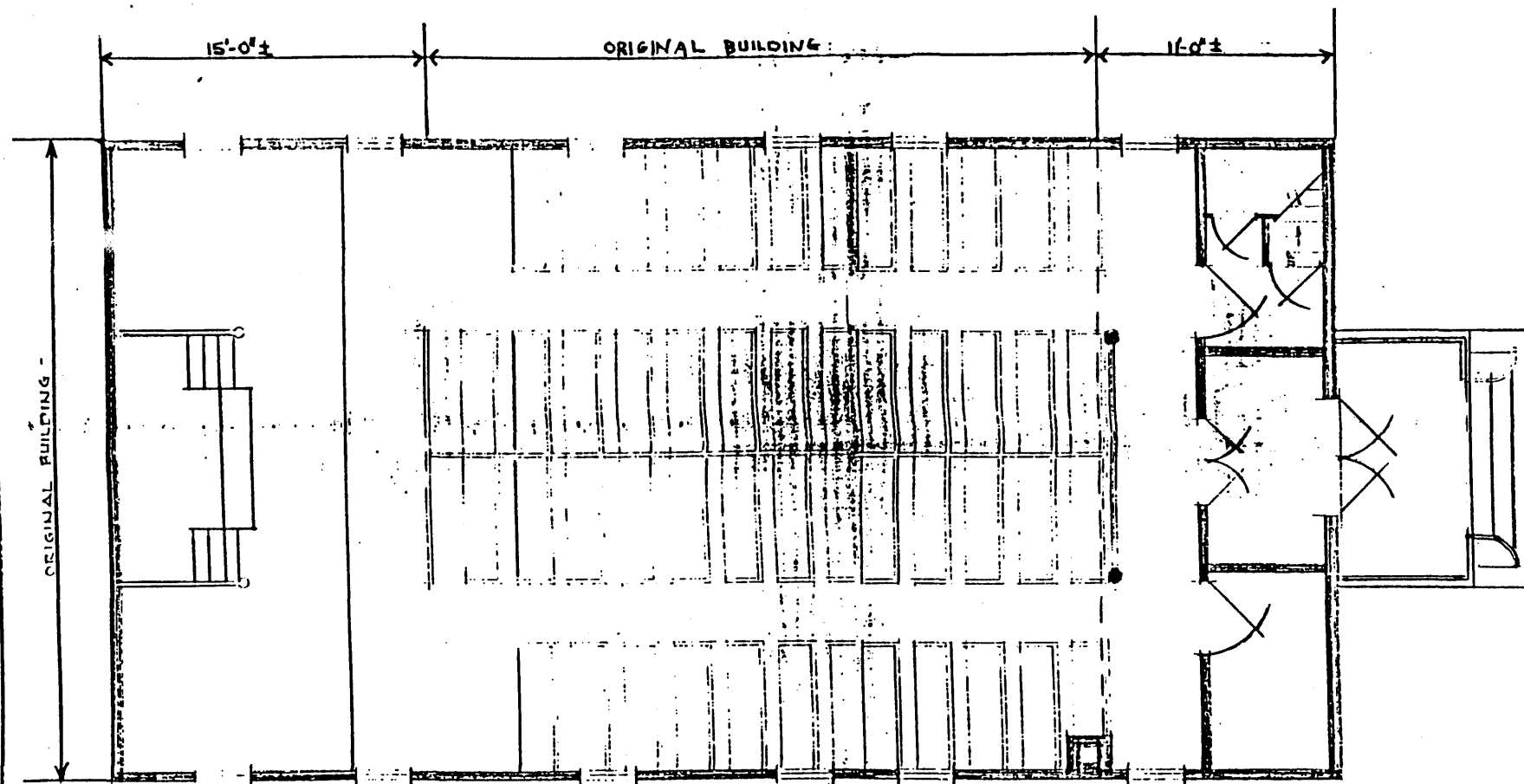


- 1. church
- 2. house
- 3. fellowship hall
- 4. Drake house
- 5. cemetery

0 185'

- 4. Drake House
  - a. house
  - b. garage
  - c. outhouse
  - d. chicken coop and shed
  - e. well
  - f. blacksmith shop site (archaeological)





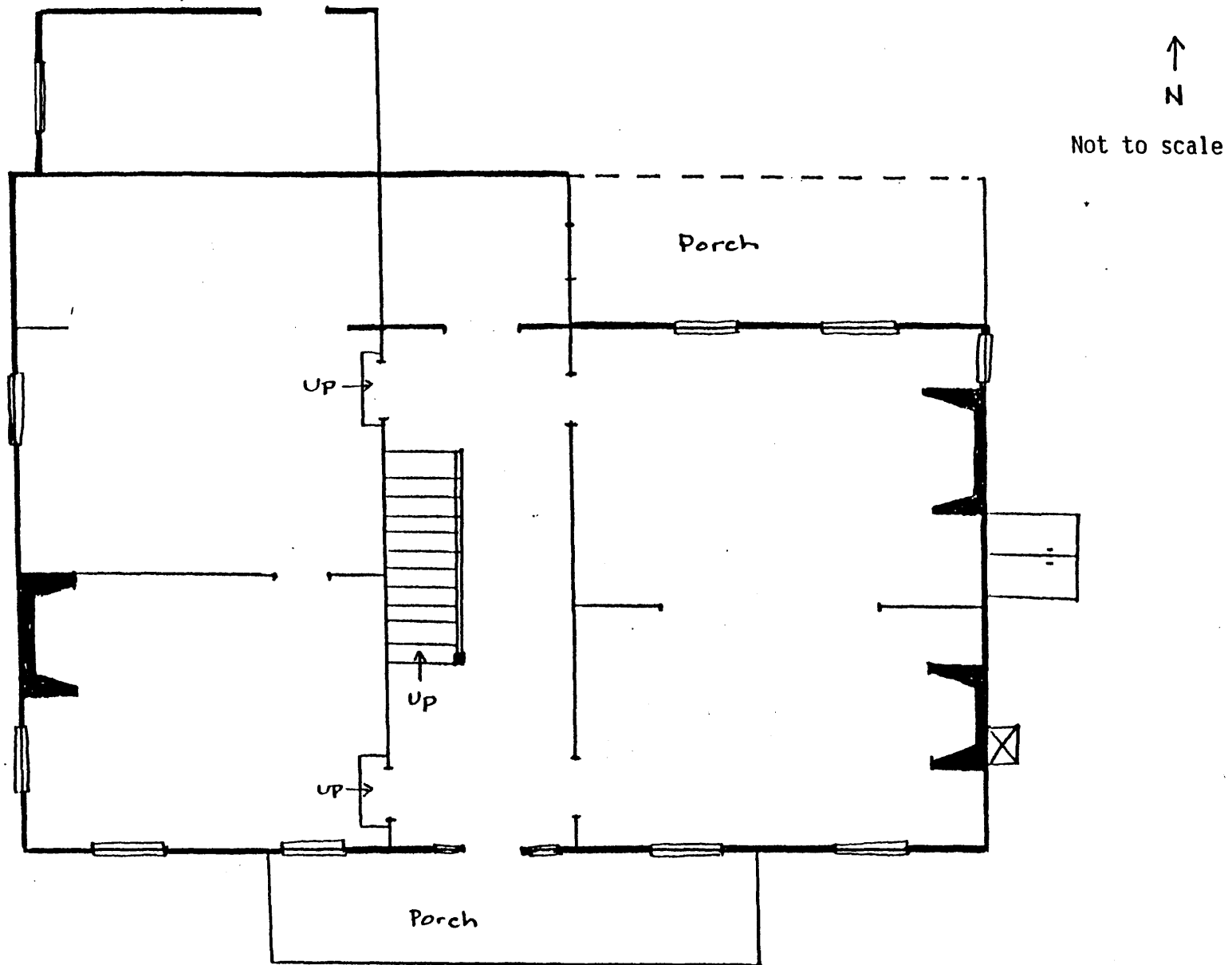
MOUNT FREEDOM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
MOUNT FREEDOM, NEW JERSEY

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

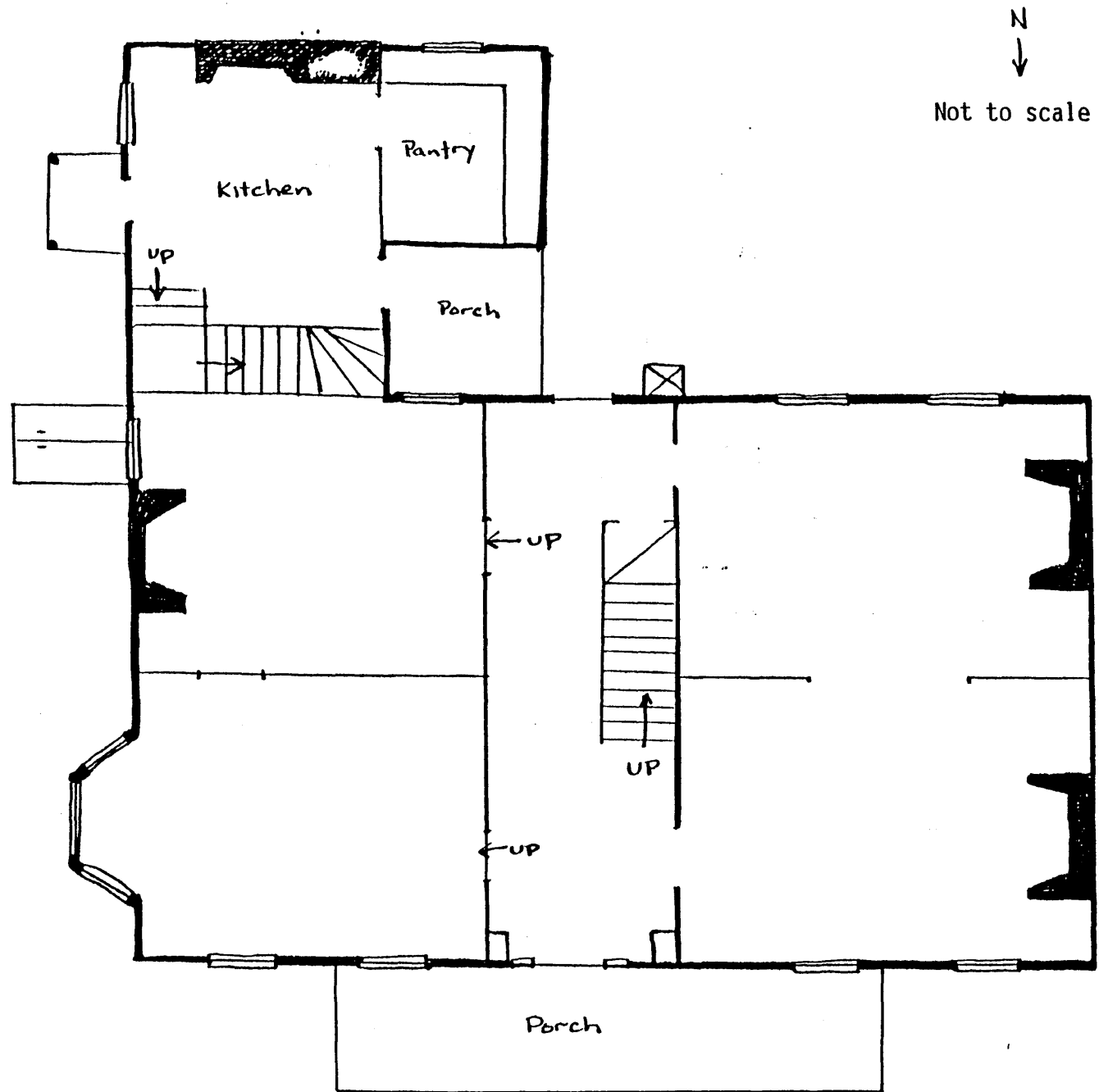
(DATE OF PLAN UNKNOWN)

Mt. Freedom Presbyterian Church  
Sussex Turnpike at Church Road  
Randolph Township  
Morris County, N.J.





First floor plan of the Mount Freedom Presbyterian Church Parsonage  
Mount Freedom, Randolph Township, Morris County, N.J.

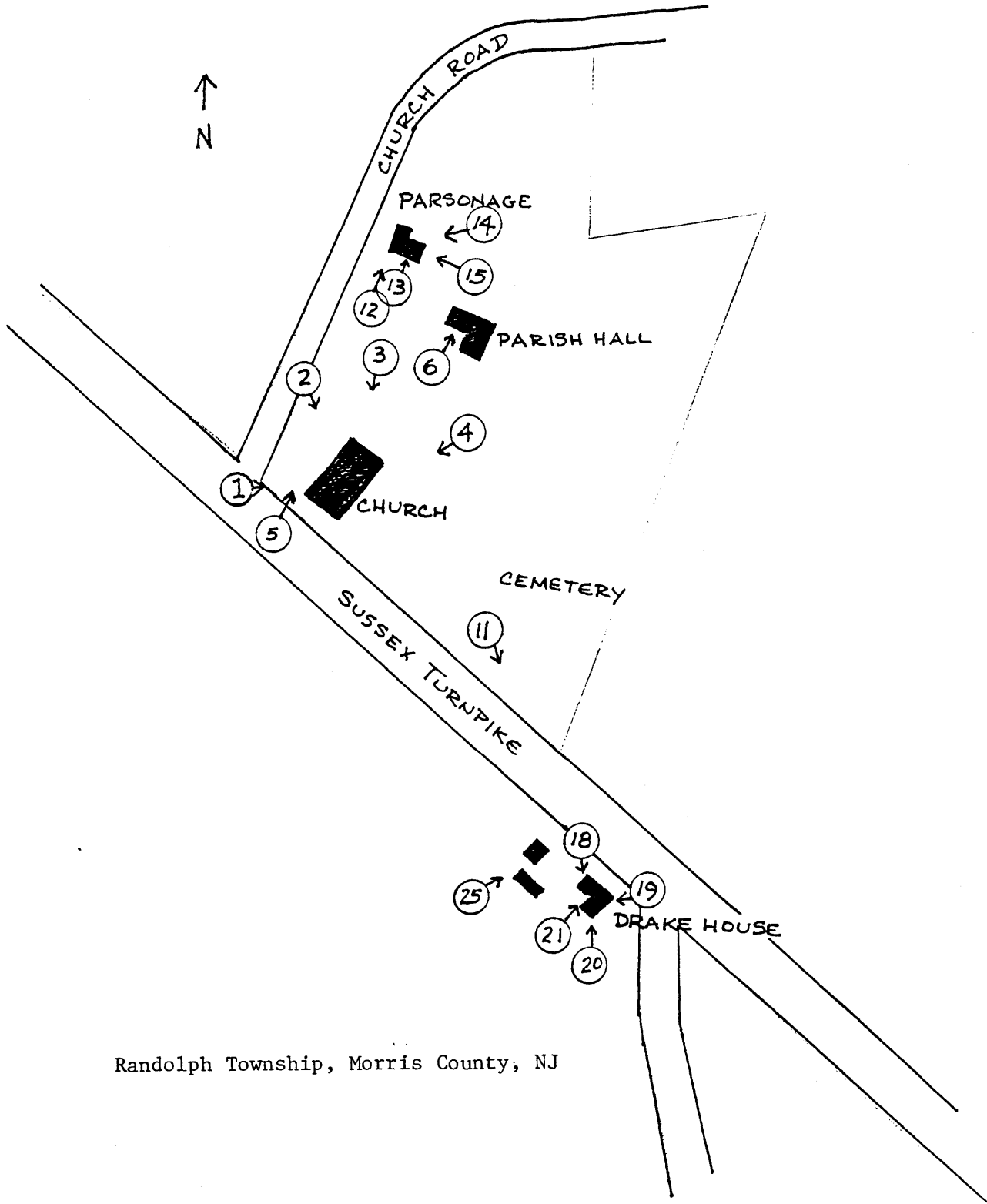


First floor plan of the Drake House, Mount Freedom, Randolph Township, Morris County, N.J.

MT. FREEDOM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Photograph Locations for Exterior views

← ① Photo number and angle of view

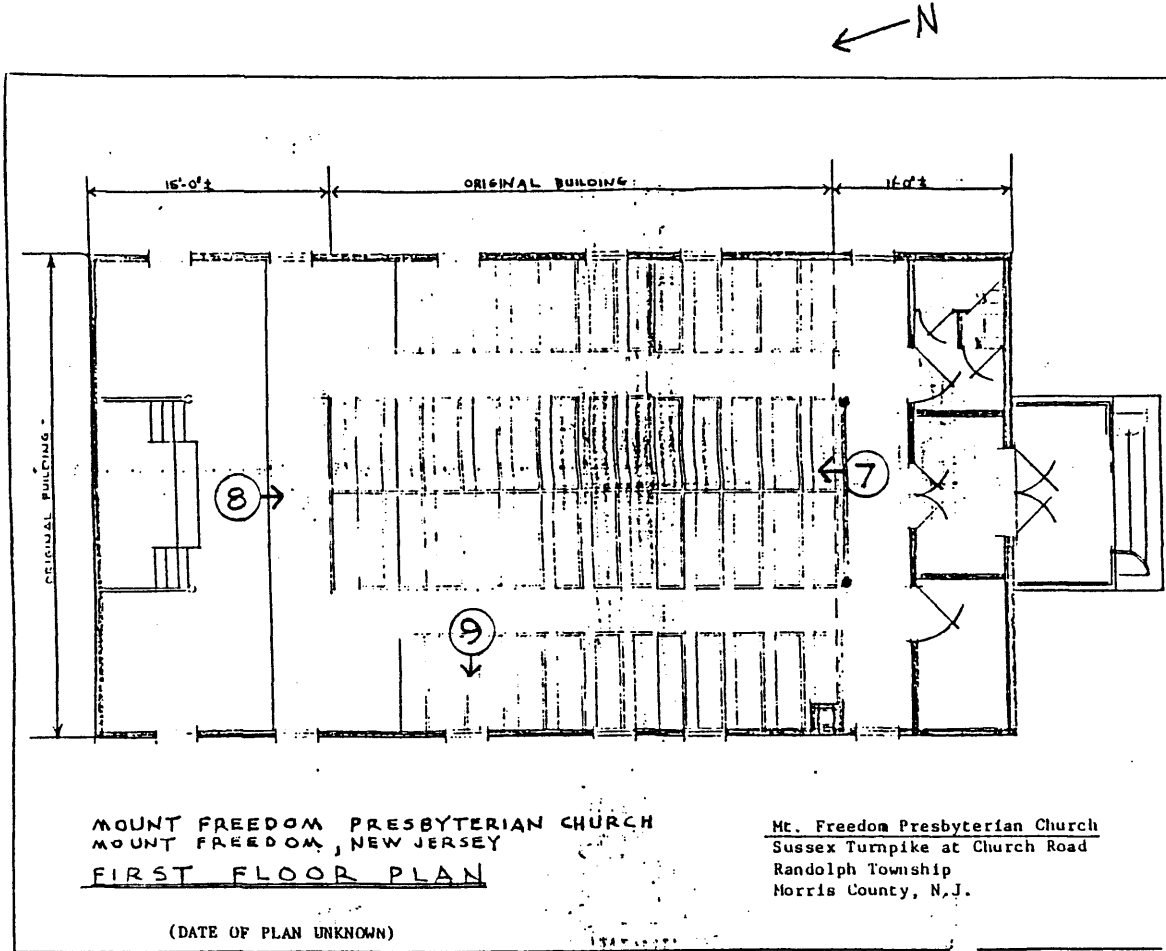


Randolph Township, Morris County, NJ

MT. FREEDOM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

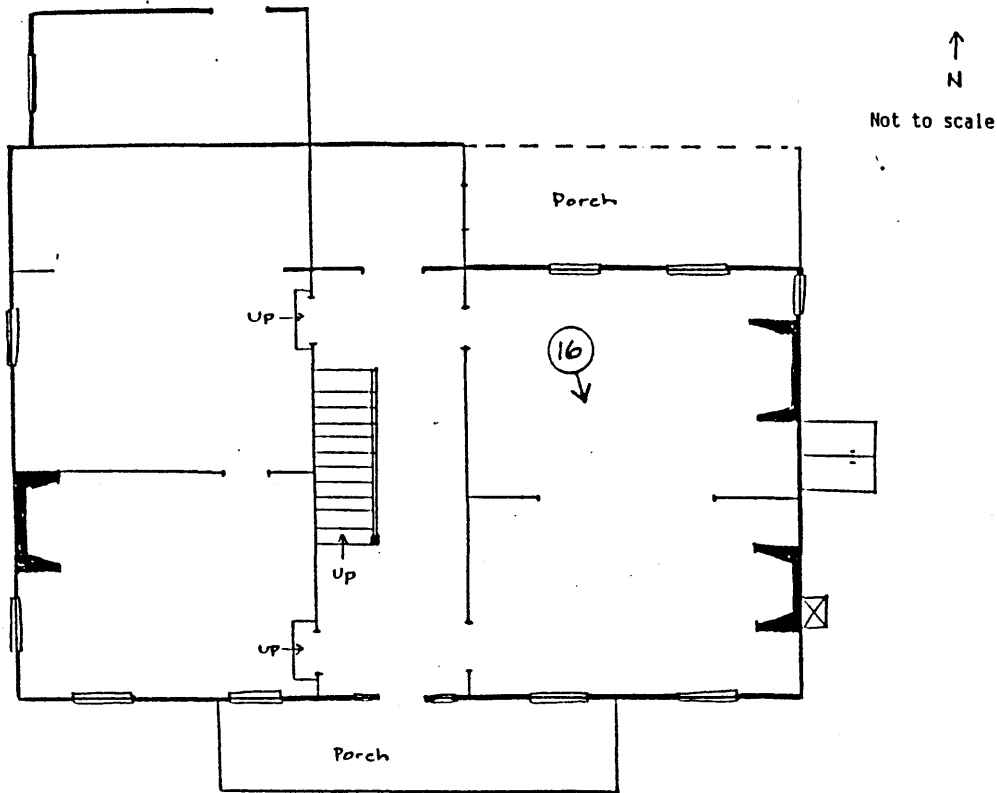
Photograph Locations for Interior Views

← ① Photo Number & Angle

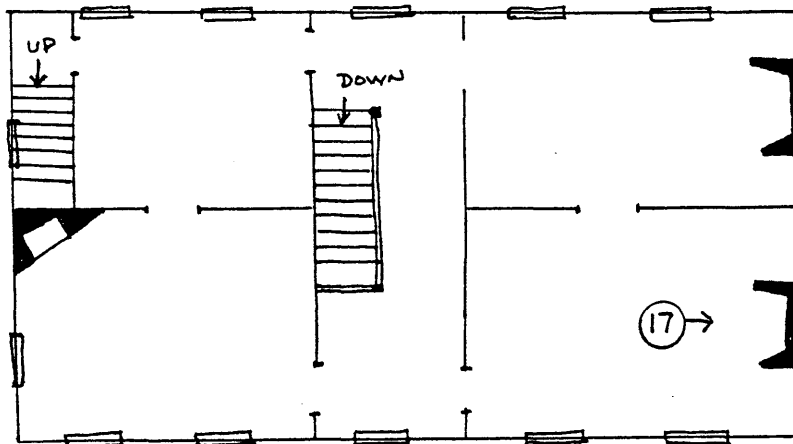


MT. FREEDOM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
Photograph Locations for Interior Views

① ← Photo Number & Angle



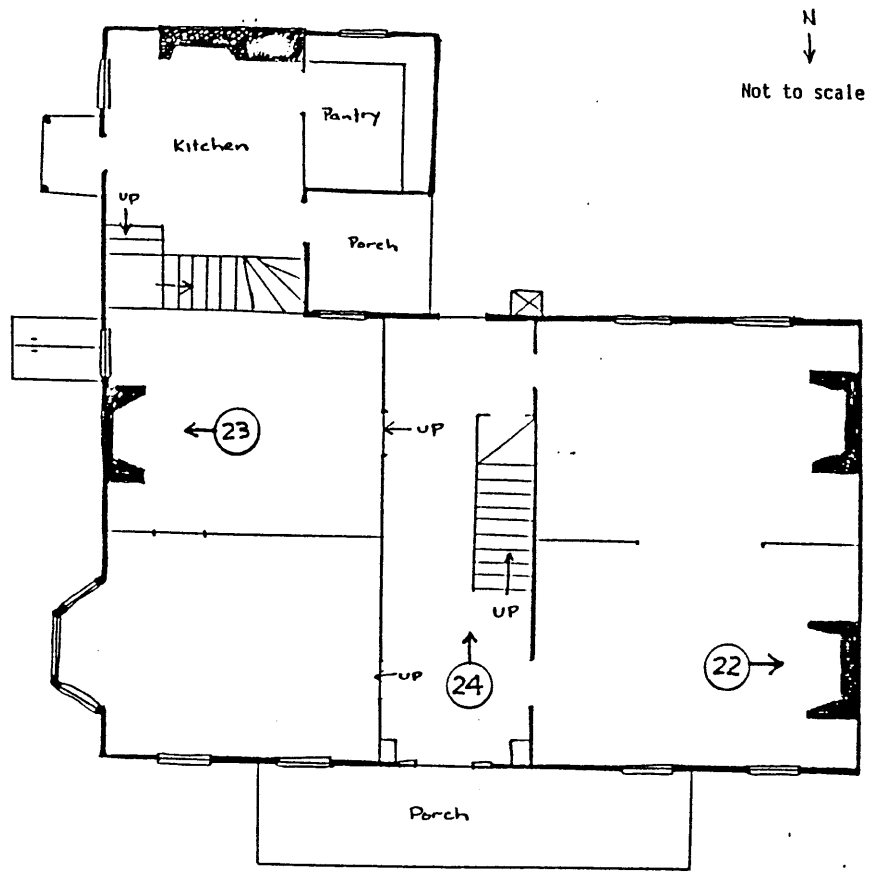
First floor plan of the Mount Freedom Presbyterian Church Parsonage  
Mount Freedom, Randolph Township, Morris County, N.J.



Second Floor Plan for the Mt. Freedom Presbyterian  
Parsonage

MT. FREEDOM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Photograph Locations for Interior Views ← ① Photo Number & Angle



First floor plan of the Drake House, Mount Freedom, Randolph Township, Morris County, N.J.