National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

AUG 2 0 1989

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			
	aniel Smith H	ouse	
other names/site number Best	House		
2. Location	C . 1 1 A		IN Anat for publication
	field Avenue		N Anot for publication vicinity
city, town Berkeley H state New Jersey code		Union code	039 zip code 07922
state New Jersey code	034 county	Union code	zip code 07522
3. Classification			4,444
Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Re	esources within Property
X private	X building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
public-local	district	2	buildings
public-State	site		sites
public-Federal	structure		structures
	object		objects
		2	0Total
Name of related multiple property listing	g: 		ntributing resources previously lational Register
4. State/Federal Agency Certifica	tion		
In my opinion the property I meets Signature of certifying official Assistant Commission State or Federal agency and bureau In my opinion, the property meets Signature of commenting or other official	er for Natura	1 & Historic Resour	08/14/89 Date
State or Federal agency and bureau		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	
5. National Park Service Certifica	tion		
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:)	Allous, 	Entered in National F	<u> </u>
	Tr	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action

6. Function or Use	
Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Domestic/Single Dwelling	Domestic/Single Dwelling
7. Description	
Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter categories from instructions)
	foundation <u>Stone/Uncoarsed Rubble</u>
Colonial/Post Medieval	walls Wood/Weather Boards
English/New England Colonial	
	roof Wood/Sawn Shingle
	other Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Nathaniel Smith House is a braced-frame, 1 1/2 story, gable-roofed farm house that was built in several sections over the course of the 18th and 19th centuries. It consists of a 5-bay, double-pile plan main block and a lower 3-bay single-pile west wing.

Physical evidence indicates that the house began as a one-room unit with an east gable-end chimney (the southwest portion of the main block) that is clearly of 18th century construction and may well be the house occupied by Nathaniel Smith depicted on the 1741 Lawrence Survey Map. (Map A)

Also evidently of 18th century date, the first addition was the L-shaped west wing, a larger two-room unit whose integral ell wrapped around the back of the original house, creating a double-pile plan. This configuration is unusual; however the foundation, floor joists and wall frame reveal that the wing was built at one time. The west wing itself was enlarged by an extension of several feet on its west gable end, clearly visible in the framing, which incorporated the large chimney with exposed back visible in the 1899 photograph and later removed.

Physical evidence of an 18th century construction date for these portions of the house includes hand-wrought nails in the flooring, siding and hand-split lath, heavy timber braced-frame construction with brick nogging, and wide random-width flooring with "dust boards" between the joists covering the butt joints. Extant early decorative moldings are limited to quarter-beads on some door and window trim and base boards.

The main block of the house reached its present form in the early 19th century with the construction of the east half of the main block. Physical evidence suggests that this occurred ca. 1830-1850. Smaller saw-cut timbers were used for its frame and modern machine-cut nails are found throughout.

The roof of the main block is wood shingle with clipped eaves and has one brick chimney forward of the ridge in center of the block located at the boundary between the 18th and 19th century sections of the house in the easterly direction. The windows are plain 6 over 6 with only lower sash movable and without weights. The center entrance door (ca. 1830-1850) is a two tier four panel type

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Nathaniel Smith House Berkeley Heights Township Union County, New Jersey

with plain trim. Replacement board-and-batten storm doors have been added to all outside entrances.

When the eastern addition to the main block was constructed (ca. 1830-1850), the windows and siding of the entire front of the main block were replaced, creating the present unified appearance. The siding on the south (front elevation) and north (rear elevation) are 5" exposure and the east and west ends are both 8". Shutters with movable slats are on all front and end facades of the main block, added ca. 1890.

The four walls of the oldest portion of the main block (southwest) were originally filled with brick nogging, but the bricks were removed from the front (southern) facade when the 1830-1850 eastern addition was constructed. The remaining three walls are still nogging filled. The foundation of the entire house is uncoursed rubble except the 1960 rear addition.

Behind the main block (on north facade) is a 2 X 2 bay rectangular single story addition which is the only major 20th century exterior change to the house. It was designed to resemble a 19th century addition to an older house.

The kitchen wing, which was added to sometime in the 18th century, consists of a 1½ story 3 X 1 bay single room with attic space above. The north (rear) facade of the wing is in line with the rear main block, but the south facade (front) is set back nine feet from the main block. A simple five foot deep porch is attached to the south (front) facade. A wood shingle roof covers this wing. The 1899 photograph of the house shows a cooking fireplace on rear end of the west facade. The 1910 photograph (No. 9) shows the fireplace removed and a small end chimney serves a wood cooking stove. A window was then placed where the former fireplace was located, where it is today with the inside chimney placed to the rear of the ridge.

Continuing through the dining room, two steps down lead to the kitchen which fills the first floor of the western wing. The floor is random width boards and the ceiling is painted random width boards supported by hand-smoothed beams with chamferred edges that were meant to be exposed. A wood stove is on the western wall below the chimney that was built ca. 1900 to replace the former cooking fireplace. A rear kitchen door leads to a brick path and the barn.

A door facing east from the kitchen leads to a hallway in the kitchen's integral ell behind the dining room. On the left is a stairway that leads to the second floor. It is not original to the house and has an early 20th century

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appearance, although it may be earlier in part. The kitchen formerly extended into the space now taken by the stairs. This section was originally divided by a partition whose ghost is visible on the floor. Beyond the stairway, the hall continues with a door on the left which opens to a combination laundry/lavatory room with wide original floor boards as in the hallway and exposed beams smoothed and chamferred, with hand-smoothed random width ceiling boards.

The hallway ends with a step up to a back room that is part of the 1830-1850 addition to the house. Walls and ceiling are plaster. The floors are ten inch tongue and groove original pine boards. Ceiling height is eight feet and no beams are exposed.

On the north wall of this room is a door that was formerly a window which opens to a family room added to the rear in 1960. The room has an eight foot ceiling with exposed ceiling beams. A small contemporary window was added to the north wall.

Returning to the back room, a door leads to a front parlor. It has the same construction as the back room except that it is larger and contains a fireplace on the wall adjacent to the dining room fireplace, with both using the same chimney. A front doorway leads to the starting point at the entry way.

Interior, second floor

Returning to the stairway, it consists of two short flights with a landing at mid point. At top of stairs, a door on right opens to attic area above kitchen. The original hand-shaped rafters can be seen, pegged at the top and marked with Roman numerals. The floor is random width pine boards. At top of stairs a short landing leads to one of two bathrooms that were made from space formerly used as a small bedroom. Moving toward front of house at this point, ascend one step to hall level and a door leads to front bedroom with pine floor boards. The upstairs hall has pine boards of single thickness and is directly above the dining room. The rear wall of the hall has been converted to a bookcase with shelves supported by hand-adzed frame timbers of original portion of house that were revealed when plaster was removed.

Near the end of the hall is a door on the left to the second added bathroom. At the end of the hall are two steps upward to a small landing with a bedroom door on left and right. The steps are there because the rooms below have higher ceilings at this point. The front and rear windows of these rooms are level with the floors which are made of ten inch pine boards, the same as in the rooms

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below. The ceilings are eight feet high, which causes the walls to slant front and back and restricts the usable floor space. There is usable attic storage space above rooms in main block reached by a pull-down stair (formerly a trap door).

Carriage Barn

The 1899 photograph of the house (No. 8) shows a wagon shed west of the house near the road, but the present carriage barn was not there at that time. The barn frame is made entirely of structural members salvaged from 18th and 19th century houses and barns. The covering boards are all 10" tongue and groove pine. The stairway in the barn could have been taken from the house, and it is assembled with hand-wrought nails. By 1910 (No. 9) the wagon shed was gone and the carriage barn was present. The 1906 map (map F) shows both the house and carriage barn in their present relationship.

PHASE I:

ORIGINAL ONE ROOM PLAN UNIT 18TH CENTURY, POSSIBLY 1740

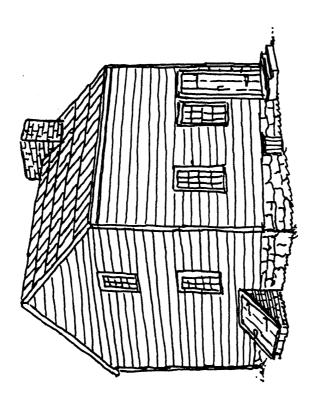
Nathaniel Smith House Berkeley Heights Township Union County, NJ

One room downstairs

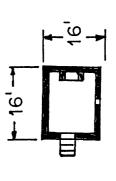
Sleeping loft above probably reached by ladder.

Ceiling height 6 1/2 feet

Walls filled with brick and clay Clay floor cellar



Roof pitch and front windows are conjectural.



FOUNDATION PLAN

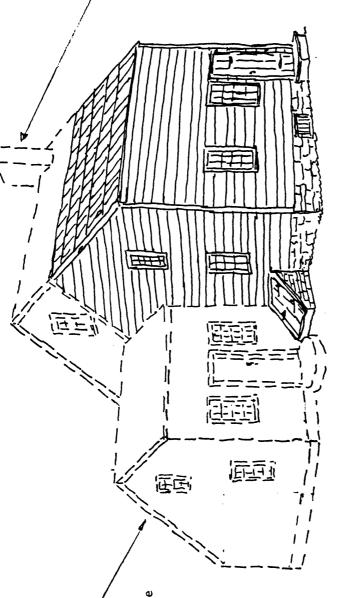
L-SHAPED FIRST ADDITION TO REAR AND WEST END OF HOUSE 18TH CENTURY

Nathaniel Smith House Berkeley Heights Townsh: Union County, NJ

Appearance of this end facade is conjectural.
There could have been a fireplace but evidence was destroyed by later extension.
"Salt box" form is indicated by frame and rafters.

The attic floor joist which was the gable-end wall girt preserves the mortise holes of the removed wall studs.

Ceiling height of addition to house is 6 1/2 feet except that it is spliced to existing frame 8 inches lower.



raised, but indican

configuration is only conjectural.

Roof obviously was

were replaced.

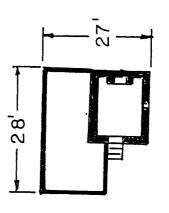
Roof rafters

roof peak location

angle preserving

rebuilt on an

Chimney was



FOUNDATION PLAN

PHASE III:

18TH CENTURY KITCHEN EXTENSION

Nathaniel Smith House Berkeley Heights Township Union County, NJ century replacements sawn and secured with

modern machine-

cut nafls.

This roof pitch is conjecture. Present

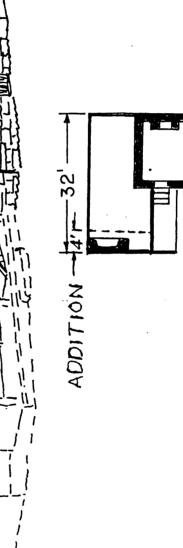
rafters are 19th

Large kitchen fireplace
was built into 4 foot
addition. It had an
exposed back visible
in 1899 photograph.

Kitchen rafters are all hand-adzed and connected with a pegged lap joint at the peak. The added rafters are similar.

Open porch added to front of kitchen.

The junction of the west extension and the original wing is clearly visible in the front wall framing of the front wall.



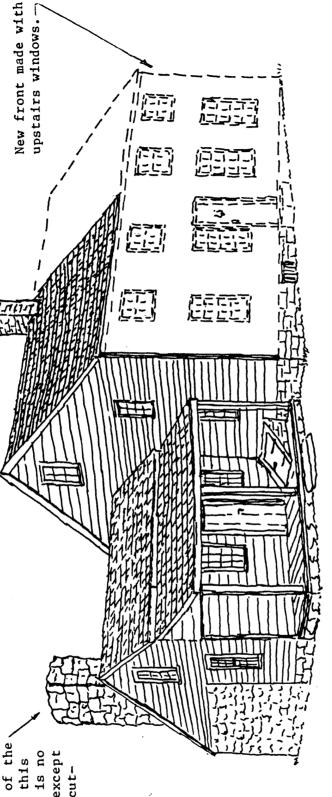
FOUNDATION PLAN

PHASE IV:

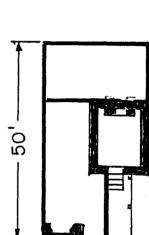
ADDITIONS MADE IN 1830-1850 PERIOD

Nathaniel Smith House Berkeley Heights Township Union County, NJ

The 1899 photograph of the house shows part of this fireplace but there is no evidence remaining except for an unexplained cuttout on former first ceiling girt.



The cellar of the house is only under the original unit. All additions were built slightly above ground level.



This addition was made with 8 ft. ceiling height and with same floor level as original house. A parlor stove was once placed behind the original fireplace and was later (1932) changed to a fireplace.

FOUNDATION PLAN

8. Statement of Significance		
Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in nationally state	relation to other properties: wide X locally	
Applicable National Register Criteria A B XC)	
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)	D	
Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
Exploration/Settlement Architecture	c. 1740 - 1850	1741
	Cultural Affiliation NA	
Significant Person	Architect/Builder Unknown	

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

The Nathaniel Smith House is an excellent example of an early settler's dwelling that was enlarged to serve the needs of later generations of farm families throughout the 18th and 19th century period. It represents the early 19th century settlement of the western area of the Elizabethtown tract, the first permanent English settlement of New Jersey. The 1741 Lawrence Survey shows nine farm houses along a three mile length of Turkey Road (presently Springfield Avenue). Early houses survive at only three of those sites and of them, the Nathaniel Smith House is the only one in Berkeley Heights that, through maintenance and restoration, evokes its 18th century heritage. In addition, there are few other period farm houses within the county as a whole that retain both integrity of architecture and integrity of setting.

According to County histories, Nathaniel Smith is assumed to have come from New England to what was then known as Turkey about 1720, the accepted year for the first settlers. Their land was registered with the Elizabethtown Associates and Smith's name appears with those who arrived in the first forty years following 1664 (Clayton, page 345).

Soon after settlement of the Turkey area, tension arose related to the settlers' right to retain ownership of their land. In 1664 Deputy Governor Richard Nicolls, who had been ordered to settle the land as quickly as possible, exempted the early settlers from taxes for a few years. He was soon replaced by a proprietary government, led by Phillip Carteret, that eventually required settlers to pay taxes (quit rents) or lose title to their land.

East Jersey Surveyor General James Alexander hired surveyor John Lawrence to divide a large section of this area into tracts of 688 acres each and then proceeded to serve settlers with ejectment notices because they refused to pay taxes or to register their land with the proprietors. The survey shows twenty-five established farms, nine of which were located on Turkey Road (Appendix, Map

	See continuation sheet
Previous documentation on file (NPS): NA	_17000 CONTINUATION SHOOT
preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)	Primary location of additional data: NA
has been requested	State historic preservation office
previously listed in the National Register	Other State agency
previously determined eligible by the National Register	Federal agency
designated a National Historic Landmark	Local government
recorded by Historic American Buildings	University
Survey #	Other
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #	Specify repository:
necold #	
10. Geographical Data	
Acreage of property 0.56 Chatham Quad	
UTM References	
A 1 8 5 4 8 1 8 0 4 5 6 0 Vorthing	B Northing
	Zone Easting Northing
ÇLıl Llılıılı Lılılı	
	See continuation sheet
Verbal Boundary Description	
Block 401, Lot 9, Berkeley Heights,	Union County, NJ
	See continuation sheet
Boundary Justification	
The nominated property is the origin	al farmstead of Nathaniel Smith.
	See continuation sheet
11. Form Prepared By	n 11 n WT 770/F
name/title <u>Fred S. Best w/ Dennis Bertland</u>	
organization	date June 7, 1988
street & number 105 Springfield Avenue city or town Berkeley Heights	telephone <u>201-464-0747</u> state <u>NJ</u> zip code <u>07922</u>
only or town	stateNJ zip code

9. Major Bibliographical References

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A). Smith's house is labeled with his name, and a nearby brook is identified as "Smith's Brook".

Honeyman (p. 95) described the settlers of this area as follows: "Northwest of Westfield over the mountains in the valley of the upper Passaic were a number of hardy pioneers; the settlement was originally known as Turkey but on the formation of a township became New Providence."

Nathaniel Smith left no personal records. However, he is mentioned in Littell's Genealogies of Families of the Passaic Valley. John Littell lived about one-half mile west of the Smith House from 1770 to 1854. Known for his Genealogies, he was also Commissioner of Deeds from 1829-1835. His book, which was based upon local family histories contributed by residents, does not include Smith, but notes that Smith's land was sold as follows (p. 102): "Joseph Crane, brother of Isaac, came up from Westfield and purchased of Nathaniel Smith in May, 1764, the farm of 154 acres lying north of Isaac Crane, and west of Benjamin Petit's farm and extending to the river." This land is to the east of Smith. On the west side, (p. 297) "... Jonathan Mulford . . . April 1740, bought of John Pierson a tract of land containing fourscore acres lying adjoining and west of Nathaniel Smith's tract, and adjoining the river . . . " The third mention of Smith is as follows (p. 319): ". . . Benjamin Petit . . . purchased in 1737 of the Committee of the Freeholders of Elizabethtown 100 acres adjoining and lying west of the other tract, and between that and Nathaniel Smith's tract, and both adjoining the river "

More proof for Smith's early settlement on Turkey Road is found in the records of the New Providence Presbyterian Church, organized in 1737 and located about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles east of Smith's house. Although he was not buried in the cemetery, he is listed as a member.

Smith retained ownership of the property until 1764 when it was purchased by Joseph Crane. About 1790 Samuel Bailey acquired the farm. During his occupancy, the Crane family lived next door to the east. That family left an excellent record of rural life during the early 19th century. From 1824 to 1828 Betsey Mulford Crane wrote daily in her diary about farm activities, church, her children, and her husband John Crane, who was a cabinet maker, coffin maker and a farmer. Her husband, the son of Joseph Crane, grew up in the Smith house and she was raised in the Mulford house next door to the west. In her diary, Betsey wrote of the 1824 death of Samuel Bailey who lived in the Smith house at that time. She told how her family helped his widow take care of farm chores and maintain her house. (Diary of Betsey Mulford Crane).

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Nathaniel Smith House Berkeley Heights Township Union County, New Jersey

The Nathaniel Smith House is a rare and important document of the region's early domestic architecture and illustrates the evolution of the area's vernacular braced frame construction practices over the course of the 18th and early 19th centuries. Three distinctive methods of construction are found in the house.

The earliest construction, as seen in the original one room unit, used the braced frame system with hand adzed members joined with the mortise and tenon The three foot spaces between the substandard studs were filled with brick nogging and set with clay, smoothed on the inside and whitewashed. outside was covered with weather boards fastened with hand-wrought nails. kitchen wing was constructed in the same manner except less nogging and about half of the walls inside covered with hand-split lath fastened with hand wrought nails and plastered. The early 19th century east addition was built with sawn frame members of modest size, mortise and tenon joints, unfilled walls with sawn lath and plaster, covered on the outside with unbevelled clapboards attached with During the construction of the addition, the entire front machine-cut nails. wall of the original section of the main block, including windows and doors, was rebuilt, evidently to give a symmetrical Georgian-like appearance to the front of the house.

Restoration activities undertaken during the past forty years have revealed many artifacts such as hand wrought iron tools, an 18th century pen and ink holder, a dozen hand-made marbles, a hand-made wooden top, coins dated 1787, 1828 and 1845, and many shards of china and crockery. The unexcavated portions of the house may yield additional material in the future.

The present owners of the Smith house realized that the site had a great potential for restoration in a manner that would preserve the qualities and appearance of the periods of construction. Much of the modern interior fabric was gradually removed and original surfaces were revealed as much as possible. Interior additions such as closets, bathrooms and utilities have been either concealed or constructed in a manner to blend with Colonial and early American architecture. During the restoration, the early construction stages of the house became evident, making it possible to produce an accurate picture of each stage.

As the house stands today, it is one of the finest examples in all of Union County of an 18th century farm house. Although the County's land was formerly the first English settlement in New Jersey (Elizabethtown), it has been intensively developed in the 20th century. This house, as it stands hugging the ground closely, without pretension of style, along what was once Turkey Road,

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Nathaniel Smith Hosue Berkeley Heights Township Union County, New Jersey

evokes a picture of 18th century and early 19th century rural development in the area.

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Nathaniel Smith House Berkeley Heights Township Union County, New Jersey

Date Purchased	<u>i</u>	Owners
Between 1730 and 1764	In 1740, a large tract of land was sold by John Pierson to Jonathan Mulford. The survey noted that the entire easterly boundary was adjacent to Nathaniel Smith land.	Nathaniel Smith (from Lawrence Map) (no information on family)
1764	In 1798 the above tract was divided between Jonathan Mulford's sons. The easterly half, willed to Daniel Mulford, was bounded by Joseph Crane's land, formerly owned by Nathaniel Smith.	Joseph Crane. Married Ruth Miller. Had eleven children: seven sons, four daughters: Samuel, John, Stephen, Jonathan, Abner, Joseph, Moses, Joanna, Annar, Ruth, Betsey
Between 1790 and 1830	Betsey Mulford Crane kept a diary of local events from 1824 to 1828. She lived on the easterly side of the former Smith land and recorded that her neighbor, Samuel Bailey died in May, 1824. (Page 4 of Betsey Crane Diary)	Samuel Bailey, Captain of the Militia. Married Sally Tappan (1795), died May 1824, 52 years. Had three children: Jonathan, Samuel and Esther.
Between 1830 and 1839	When Benjamin Hand purchased the property in 1839, his deed, as noted below, records the transfer of land from the previous owner, Stephen Marshall.	Stephen Marshall. Married Amanda Smalley. Had three children: Hutchings, Samuel and Mary Augusta.
1839	Essex County Deed Book E-5, p. 100	Benjamin Hand. Married Betsy Tice. Had three children: Carolina, Mahala Tice, Sarah Elizabeth.

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1889	Union County Register Deed Book 205, p. 335 No. 3851	Mary W. Johnson. Through heirs of Benjamin Hand and Albert Crane; Sarah Elizabeth Hand, Samson and William Samson.
1899	Union County Register Deed Book 347, p. 1	John W. Repsher (no information)
1900	Deed Book 365, p. 278	J. Henrietta Repsher
1903	Deed Book 419, p. 164	W. J. Fryer. Married Mary K. Robertson 6/12/01; one child, died in infancy. Died 6/2/07.
1908		Telephone easement
1922		Widen road easement
1925		Mrs. W. J. Fryer, widow, title transferred.
1926		William E. Dulay (2nd husband of Mrs. W. J. Fryer) title transferred. (Property sub-divided into lots and streets).
1931	Deed Book 1229, p. 33	Samuel B. and Helen Adler (no information)
1937	Deed Book 1352, p. 112	Home Owners Loan Corporation, due to non-payment of loan.
1940	Deed Book 1407, p. 512	John B. and Margaret R. Lager Had four children: Hallye, Sarah, John and Barbara.
1945	Deed Book 1537, p. 470	Frederick S. and Lois G. Best Had five children: Nancy, Suzanne Lawrence, Jean and Audrey.

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NEWSPAPERS

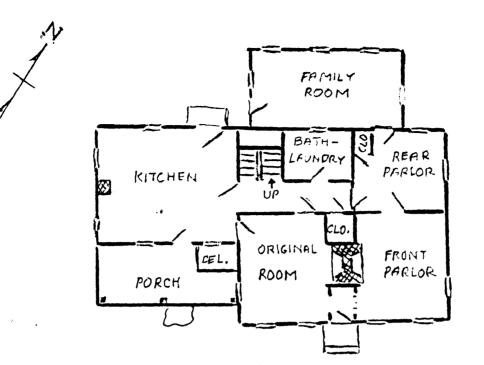
Johnson, Willis Fletcher, Dr., <u>The Founders of New Providence</u>, The Summit Herald, 1920-1923.

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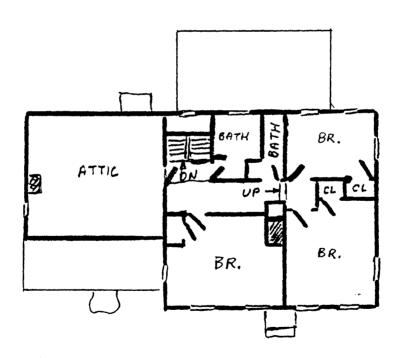
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Nathaniel Smith House Berkeley Heights Township Union County, New Jersey

MAPS (Listed accord	rding to date)
A. 1741	Survey by John Lawrence for the East Jersey Proprietors.
B. Ca. 1780	Map by Simen DeWitt (No. 107) showing roads between Chatham, Scotch Plains, Turkey and Springfield.
C. 1845	Map by John Littell of Passaic Valley.
D. 1850	Essex County Atlas.
E. 1872	Map by Beers Comstock and Cline; N.J. Atlas.
F. 1906	Place No. 30, Union County Atlas showing New Providence Borough and Township.
G. 1986	Official Berkeley Heights Township Map by Township Engineer Howard Shershinger.
н. 1987	105 Springfield Ave. Site Plan.



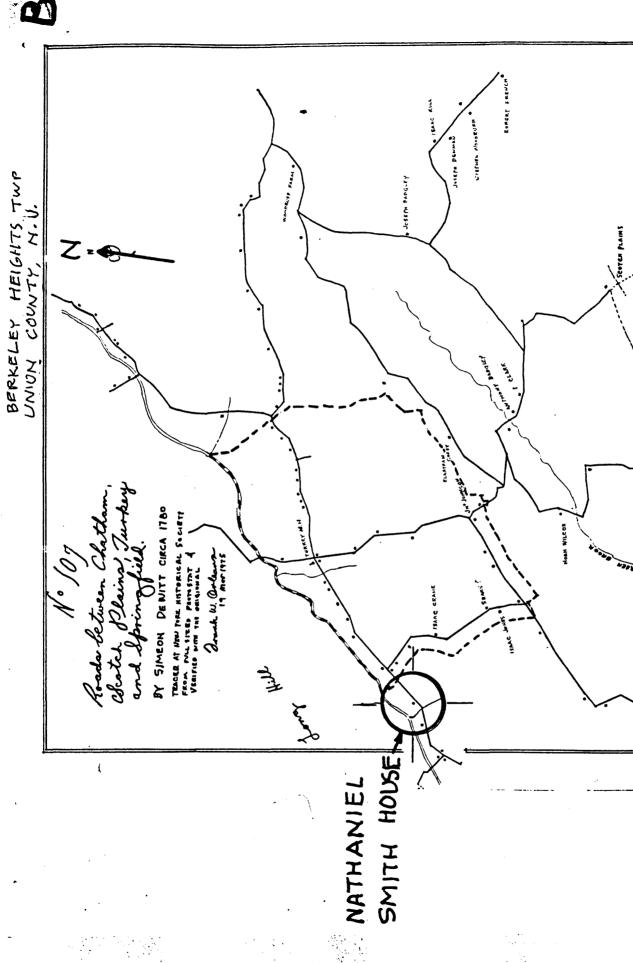
1 STFLOOP

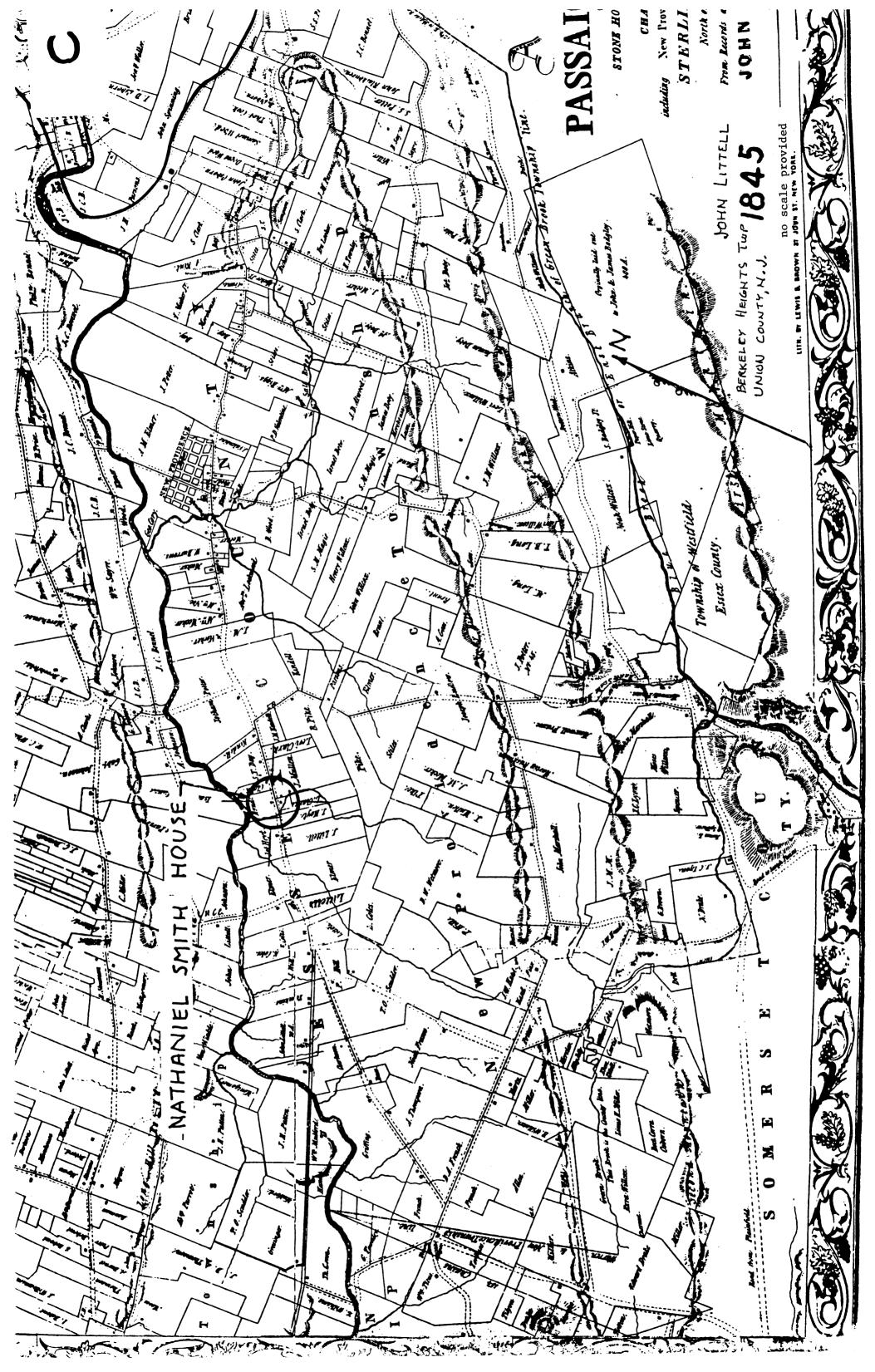


2ND FLOOR

1987 FLOOR PLAN OF NATHANIAL SMITH HOUSE 105 SPRINGFIELD AVE, BERKELEY HGTS, N.J.

NO SCALE PROVIDED





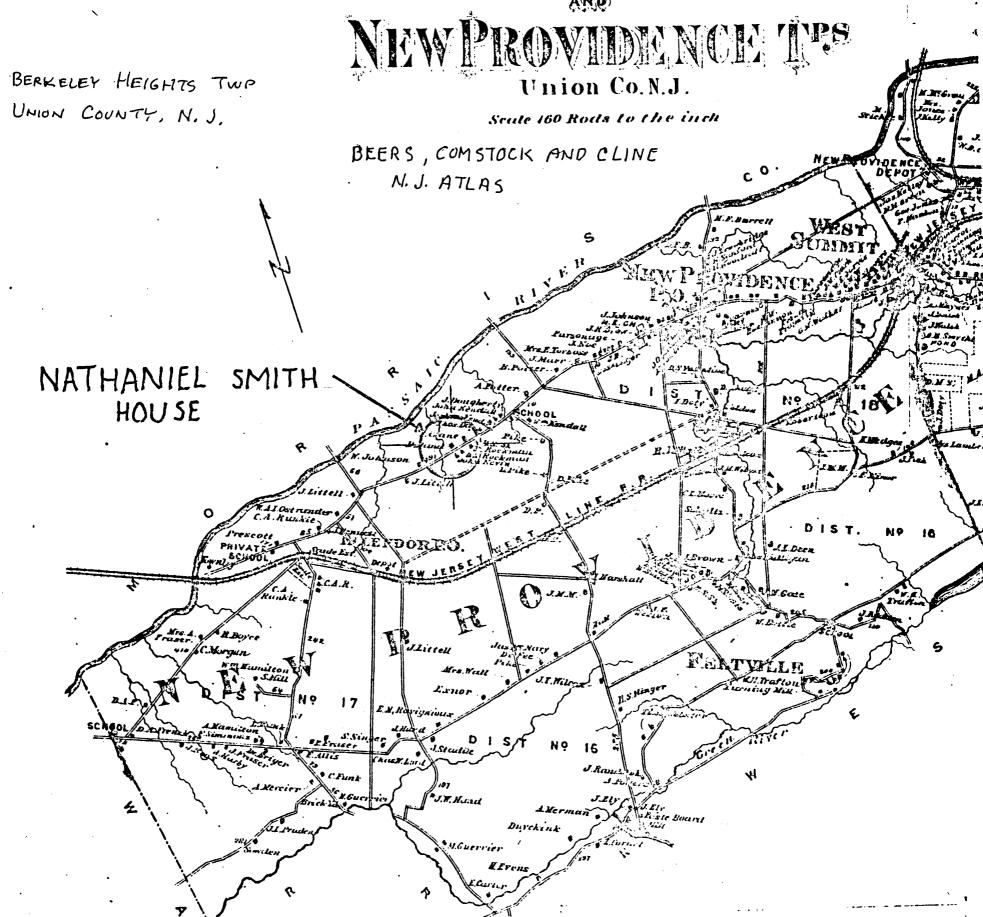
MAP OF

MILLBURN

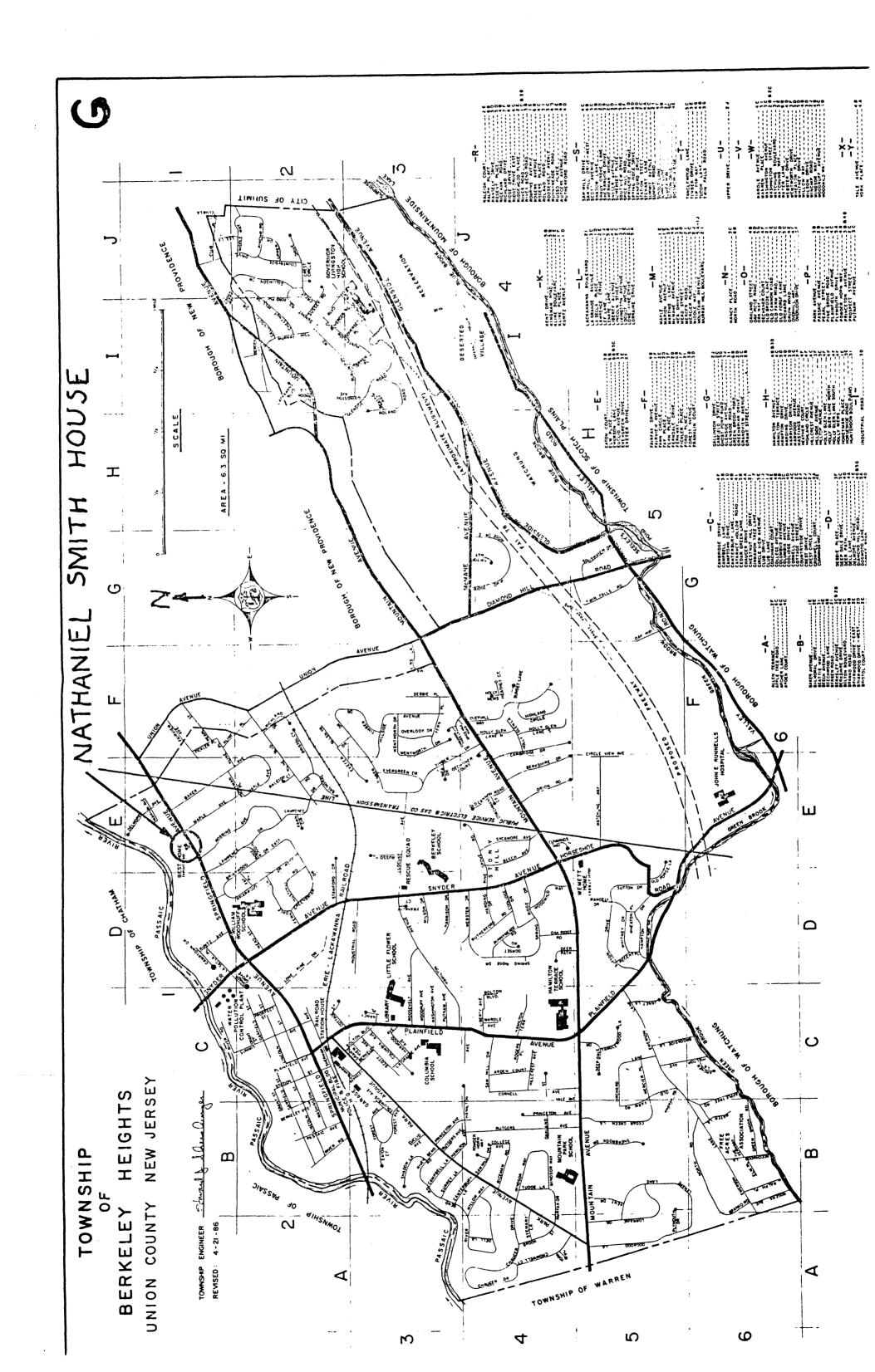
Essex Co.N.J.

VAID

SUMMIT, SPRINGPELD



BERKELEY HEIGHTS UNION COUNTY, M.J

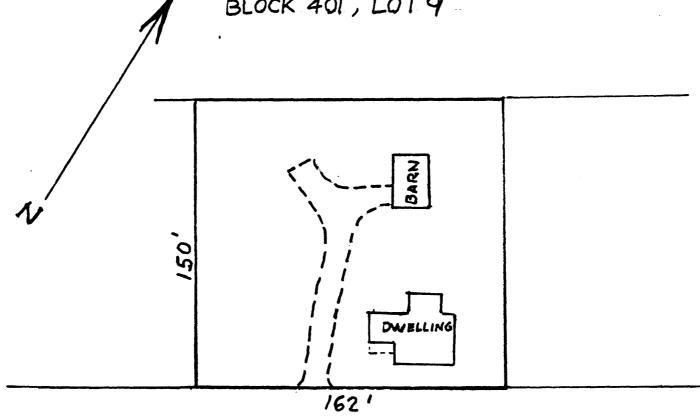


SITE PLAN

NATHANIEL SMITH FARM HOUSE

UNION COUNTY, BERKELEY HEIGHTS, N. J.

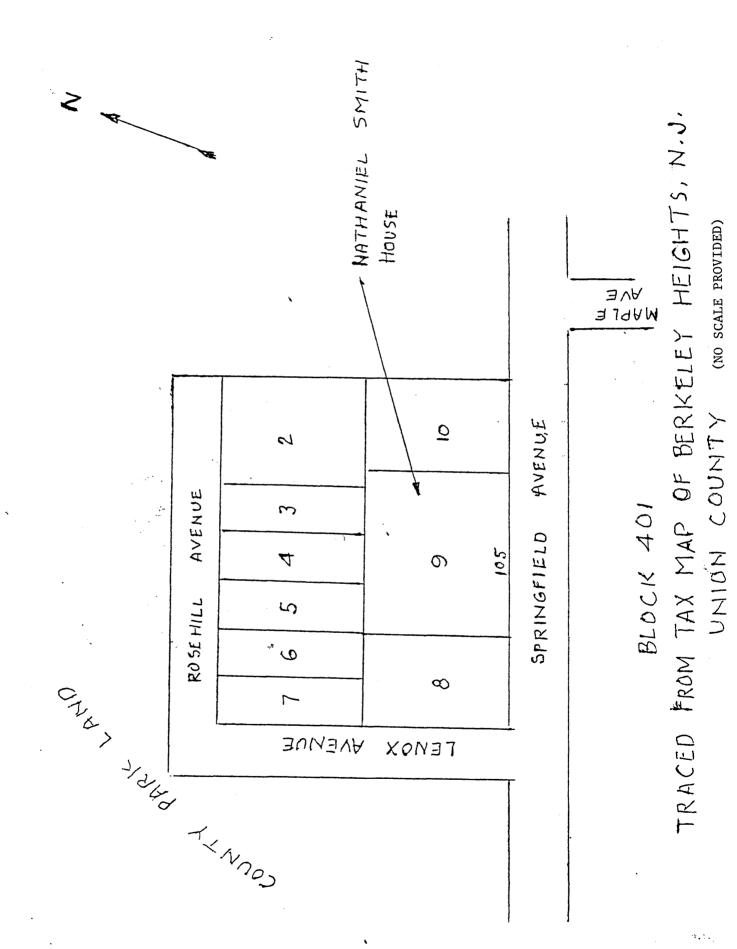
BLOCK 401, LOT 9



SPRINGFIELD

AVE

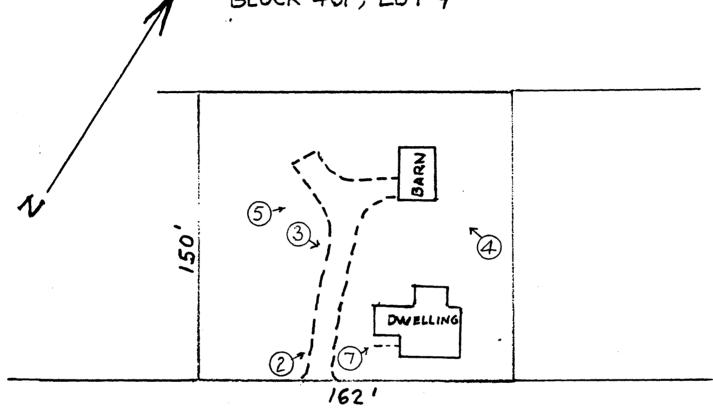
SCALE 1" = 50'



SITE PLAN

NATHANIEL SMITH FARM HOUSE

UNION COUNTY, BERKELEY HEIGHTS, N. J.
BLOCK 401, LOT 9



SPRINGFIELD

AVE

9 0 8

SCALE 1" = 50'

PHOTOGRAPH IDENDIFICATION