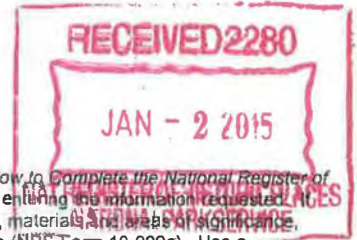


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name John Corson Jr. House Site

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 1542 Shore Road not for publication

city or town Upper Township vicinity

state New Jersey code NJ county Cape May code 009 zip code 08230

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. See continuation sheet for additional comments.

John Rooney Signature of certifying official Title Asst. Commissioner Date 12/17/14

NJ DEP State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet for additional comments.

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

John Rooney Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 2/12/15

John Corson Jr. House Site

name

Cape May County, New Jersey

county and state

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 1 | 2 | buildings |
| 1 | 0 | sites |
| 0 | 1 | structures |
| 0 | 0 | objects |
| 2 | 3 | Total |

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: privy

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Other: cinderblock

walls Wood: clapboard

roof Wood: shingle

other

Narrative Description

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

See attached continuation sheets

John Corson Jr. House Site

name

Cape May County, NJ

County and State

8 Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria considerations

(mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHAEOLOGY: Historic—Non-Aboriginal

ETHNIC HERITAGE: European

Period of Significance

ca. 1710 to 1956

Significant Dates

ca. 1710; 1956

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

unknown

Primary location of additional data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Cape May County Historical Society

John Corson Jr. House Site

Name of Property

Cape May County, NJ

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 0.33 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

| | | | |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| 1 | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 2 | | | |

| | | | |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| 3 | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 4 | | | |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Joan Berkey, architectural historian

organization _____ date August 14, 2014

street & number 707 N. Delsea Drive telephone 609-861-2208

city or town Cape May Court House state NJ zip code 08210

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Richard and Denise Regensburg

street & number 1542 Route 9 telephone 609-545-8010

city or town Ocean View state NJ zip code 08230

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Continuation Sheet

John Corson Jr. House Site
Cape May County, New Jersey

Section number 7 Page 1

Summary Description

The John Corson Jr. House Site comprises a one-third acre lot located on the west side of US Route 9 (Seashore Road), a major north-south route that was laid out in 1706 and which runs the entire length of the county from the Great Egg Harbor River south to the City of Cape May. The lot is mostly level except for an 18" drop from the built-up road bed that forms the lot's east boundary. The major building on the lot is the 2-story, 1216 square-foot John Corson Jr. House which is setback approximately 20' from the road. A non-contributing building, it is a wood frame residence composed of three sections, the oldest of which is the first story of the main block which was built ca. 1710 with heavy timber frame construction consisting of exposed gunstock corner posts, exposed front and rear girts, and exposed beaded floor joists. Around 1825, the house was raised to its present 2-story configuration; it has a modern two-story addition to the side (south elevation) that stands on part of the foundation of the house's original lean-to, and a modern one-story addition to the rear (west). Located immediately behind the house is an extensive perennial garden and a small ornamental water pond. Farther to the rear (west) of the dwelling stand a one-story, modern storage shed (non-contributing), a ca. 1900 privy (contributing), and a 1990 wood arbor (non-contributing). This stretch of Route 9 is residential and consists of houses spaced about 200' to 250' apart. Neighboring houses represent a variety of mostly-vernacular styles and range in date from the early 1800s to an early 21st-century house next door to the south.

Description of Archaeological Investigations and Areas/Features at the John Corson Jr. House Site:

The archaeological investigations at the John Corson Jr. House (state number 28-CM-58) were done over a period of 30 years beginning in 1983, when the current owners—Dick (a professional archaeologist¹, now retired) and Deni Regensburg—took possession of the property. [see *Site Plan Annotated to Show Archaeological Features/Areas*] Prior to the Regensburg's purchase of the house, the property was landscaped with hedges around the perimeter. The surrounding properties were farmed until the 1970s, which stopped the air borne soil erosion or deflation process, sealing the unplowed homestead with 10-15 inches of top soil.

¹ All of the field work, with the exception of the septic system site, was done by now-retired archaeologist Dick Regensburg who is familiar with environmental impact study methods having worked with Dr. Jeffrey Coe of North Carolina (as assistant state archeologist from 1972-1974), Dr. Joel Grossman at Rutgers University (as archaeology field supervisor in 1976-1978), the late Ed Rutsch of New Jersey (as archeology field supervisor in 1983), the late Ron Thomas of New Jersey (as assistant state archaeologist from 1969 to 1970 and as field supervisor from 1978-1980), Richard Hunter, of Hunter Research in Trenton, New Jersey (as field supervisor from 1984-1990), and as a consultant for many years before retiring in 1990.

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The first area to be examined was the former vegetable garden, located behind the house, in 1984; it was only stripped down to the subsoil. This section was used as a dump for construction materials by a former owner (a builder) from 1947 to 1956. The entire 20' x 25' garden was sifted to remove 50 pounds of broken modern glass and nails so that the vegetables would grow. No pastures were found but historic artifacts, including 18th- and 19th-century pearlware, harmonica fragments, and sharpening stones, were saved.

The only quasi-formal work was done by Dick Regensburg and former NJ Department of Transportation supervisor and archaeologist Janet Fittipaldi when a new septic system was installed in 1986. The topsoil and subsoil were exposed using a flat blade shovel to reveal any subsurface features. The field work showed the absence of plow scars in this area, but did reveal two trash pits and a late 19th-century French drain system. [see fig. 8 in the *Supplemental Images* section]

In 1987, a brick patio in front of the house was removed and replaced with a brick walkway. In the process, a conch shell feature enclosing an unknown plant(s) was uncovered, as was a fine gravel walkway in front of the front door to the original section of the house.

Around 1988, eight post holes for the block and brick footings for a porch (converted ten years later into a den) built against the rear (west) wall of the main block were dug in its 10' x 20' area. The soil underneath the porch (now den) still contains the historic house sweepings including salt glazed and scratch blue ceramics. The southeast corner under the den consists of bonded phosphates (urine) making the sandy soil like concrete.

In 2004, an addition was built against the south (side) wall of the ca. 1710 main block, replacing a ca. 1825 shed-roofed lean-to buttery that, in turn, replaced an original, one-story shed-roofed buttery at this location having the same footprint. The 16' x 18' (288 square feet) footprint in this area was destroyed, but was examined prior to being dug out for the addition.

The soil was disturbed when a gas main was installed along the front of the house (3' in from the curb) in 2006 but no artifacts were observed.

Over the thirty year period of the Regensburg's ownership, artifacts encountered while planting flower gardens and installing or re-installing water gardens located behind the house were saved and bagged. If a trash pit was encountered while digging a hole for flowers and other garden plants, it was dug, sifted, photographed, and drawn; the artifacts have been retained for future study.

Undisturbed Areas

The area under the 20' long by 16' deep original main block has not been examined and still holds artifacts that were thrown underneath or dragged there by animals. The road side ground level of

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the main block is nearly 18" above its original level, the fill consisting of washed or blown sand and soil. The main block stands on stacks of three 6"-thick Brunswick sandstone foundation rocks placed in the four corners and the soil is now almost up to the house's white cedar sills. [fig. 9]

The brick patio in the rear of the house and the brick sidewalk in the front of the house are sitting on top of the 19th-century soils and are undisturbed. All other areas of the one-third-acre lot remain intact.

Evidence of Features

In 1832, Elizabeth Corson, widow of Seth Corson who owned the farmstead from 1820 until his death in 1830, received her one-third dower in a subdivision made by order of the Orphan's Court. The legal description mentions a north lot line, which corresponds with the present day north lot line, as running through the middle of a well which was shared by this house and another one on the farmstead. The exact location of the well along that 144' long lot line has not been identified.

Underneath the back brick patio an unusual drainage pattern appears after a light snowfall. The pattern is about 4' in diameter and it aligns with the back door. It has not been dug and might represent an abandoned well site.

The farmstead's barn, according to deeds for adjoining properties, was located north of the north property line. Surface finds have been noted on this adjacent property (lot 51 of block 566), but the property is privately owned and has had no archaeological study.

When the chimney foundation was exposed during the 2003-2004 construction of the addition on the south side of the main block, the soils were found to contain a large quantity of clay saturated with charcoal, suggesting that a wattle and daub temporary chimney was first used. An area just north of the main block is littered with bricks and might indicate the construction site for the first or second phase of the chimney construction. It has not been dug.

Out of the roughly 17,000 sq. ft. area of the one-third acre lot, only about 10% has actually been destroyed, leaving 90% left for future archaeology work.

The highly diagnostic objects are on display in a cabinet in the house; these objects include gun flints, early ceramic fragments, coins, buttons, and various pewter pieces. The remainder of the artifacts, which consist of whole and broken bottles, ceramics, and even historic women's shoes (in singles only) found under the buttery, is contained in a large chest (33 cu. feet) on the property. Soil samples were also collected including the soils on the conch shell feature [fig. 7] lining the historic pathway to the left of the main front door to establish the plant species. All artifacts retrieved have been placed in plastic bags with their provenance noted.

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John Corson Jr. House Site
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Areas that Were Disturbed

The locations of the areas that were disturbed by various improvements over the years are shown on the annotated site plan. The following partial list of items/artifacts of significance that were found in these areas suggests what might be discovered if a serious archaeological study of the site were to be undertaken:

Feature 1—a small trash pit containing lead glazed redware and a gun musket flint made in France [photo #26]

Feature 2—large 1860s+ trash pit containing a large quantity of bottles [photo #19, 21, 24]

Feature 3-- a late 1800s French drain leading from the original lean-to; it contained redware, conch and clam shells, drainage tiles, numerous brick fragments, and an old style monkey wrench [fig. 8, photo # 25]

Feature 4-- a conch shell border in front of the house which dates to the 1800s. [fig. 7] Conch shells were once commonly washed up along the South Jersey coast line and their use for a decorative border illustrates an early vernacular gardening feature. Unfortunately, the border was destroyed by a car crash (2002), but those shells that did survive have been saved; the soil within them can be used for future seed and pollen studies. [photo #18, 22]

Feature 5—back door broadcast: found oldest coin to date—a 1787 large cent—along with white salt glazed ceramic fragments and piles of coal cinders/coal ash [photo #18, 19, 20]

Feature 6—west side of chimney—1827 large cent found during restoration [photo #19, 20]

Feature 7—nearly whole, lead-glazed legged crock as well as large milk dishes [photo #22, 23]

Feature 8—a true surface dump with numerous glass shards; no artifacts were found underneath [photo #18, 20, 23]

Feature 9—found here were a hole filled with hundreds of clam shells and a surface clean out of a fire hearth

Other items found in these areas include horse shoes, shellfish, a variety of animal bones (deer, pig, cow), a number of pewter fragments, pipe stems from different time periods, buckles, a variety of iron objects [photo #25] and pearlware.

All artifacts have been bagged, labeled as to where found, and identified/dated. They are safely stored on site in a dry location. No state report has been completed to date for the property.

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Ideally, completion of an archaeological report with analysis of the artifacts could be a college student project.

Integrity under Criterion D:

Because the house stands on its original site, just feet from a road that was established in 1706, the integrity of this spatial relationship has been maintained since the house was built ca. 1710. The subdivision of the original 300+-acre farmstead after 1900 impacted the site's integrity of setting with the proliferation of houses, historic and otherwise, to the north and south of this property. However, many of the cultural deposits around the house, including those related to wells, privies, and other outbuildings, remain intact.

Description of the ca. 1900 Privy (contributing)

Built about 1900, the privy is located in the northwest corner of the property. It is wood frame, has a solid concrete block foundation, and its clapboards are held with round head nails. [photo #15] The privy has a 4'2" square footprint and is fronted by a board and batten door that appears to be original. Its shed roof has wide eaves and is covered with wood shingles. The south (side) and rear (west) elevations have small ventilation slots that are covered with bronze screens. The interior seats have been removed and there is no clean-out door on the rear elevation. The privy was relocated from its original site, 15' southwest of the back door, by the current owner to its present position. At the original site, it had no hole underneath it, so it had been relocated previously.

Exterior Description of the Non-contributing John Corson Jr. House

the original section:

The main block of this two-story house is three bays wide; it is sheathed with white cedar clapboard, and has a center door flanked by a window on each side on the façade (east elevation) at the first story level. [photo #2] The gable roof runs parallel with the façade and is pierced at the south end by a large, corbelled brick chimney on the interior wall. The north gable end has two 6-light, single sash wood windows; this fenestration is extant in the south gable end, but is now covered by the 2004 addition. There is a boxed cornice with no returns along the front and rear roof lines, and modest rake boards in the north gable end. Windows are predominately 6/6 double-hung wood sash, which appear to date ca. 1825, except for a double window on the north wall of the original parlor (now used as a parlor) added in 1956. [photo #3] The second floor of the north (side) and the rear (west) elevations has two windows, while the first floor of the rear (west) elevation has a single window to the south and a center door. The door and the window on the first floor of the rear elevation are now protected by the one-story modern den addition. This part of the house sits

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on a Jersey sandstone foundation of piers that are three stones high, placed in the four corners and one each side of the front and back doors.

the 2-story addition:

The 2-story addition, built in 2004, is also clad in white cedar clapboards and has a red cedar shake roof. Windows are new 6/6 double hung wood sash. The fenestration pattern of the façade (east elevation) matches that of the original main block, with a center door flanked by two windows on the first floor and three windows on the second floor. The south (side) elevation has two windows on each floor and a single 2/2 double hung wood sash window in the gable end. The first floor of the rear (west) elevation has a double window to the south and a single window to the north, while the second floor has two windows. This section stands on a cinder block foundation. Its gable roof also runs parallel with the façade (east elevation). [photo #2 and #4]

the one-story rear addition:

The one-story modern addition is also sheathed in white cedar clapboards and has asphalt shingles on its shed roof. [photo # 3 and #4] There is a single modern wood door on the south elevation, one modern wood casement window on the north elevation, and four modern wood casement windows on the rear (west) elevation. This addition stands on a foundation of brick piers.

Interior Description

Main block:

In plan, the oldest portion (the main block) of the house has one room on each floor—a parlor on the first floor with a fireplace on the south wall, a chamber above also with a fireplace, and an attic (now finished) above the chamber. This section is approximately 20' long by 16' deep. [photo #5 and #6]

The parlor on the first floor has original oak gunstock corner posts and beaded ceiling joists of white cedar that are both pit sawn and hand-hewn, then hand planed. Except for the corner post in the southeast corner, which was originally in a closet and is chamfered, the corner posts are beaded. Also beaded, but hidden under the plaster walls, are rising corner braces that are hand planed and painted; six of the original seven braces are extant. There is an original cooking fireplace on the south wall with an adjacent winder stair. Most walls are covered with modern sheetrock and the floor is covered with ca. 1825 yellow pine, random-width boards that run east to west. The board and batten back door on the west wall appears to be original to the house's early 18th-century construction date while the front door is a modern replication of the back door. The board and batten doors to the closet under the stairs and to the winder stair in the southwest corner appear to date to ca. 1825.

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The chamber above features exposed, beaded joists overhead [photo #7 and #8], modern sheetrock walls, and original floor boards of hand-planed, random width (4" – 10" wide) pine with a beaded edge. Corner braces in the southeast corner are exposed. The south wall consists of two small cupboards adjacent to the ca. 1825 fireplace on the west and a winder stair leading to the attic to the far west. Two of the four straight corner posts on this floor are exposed.

The attic above the chamber has been finished for use as another room. It features 10½" wide, ca. 1825 white pine floor boards. The rafters were re-used from the ca. 1710 one-story house and are both pit sawn and hand-hewn, except for two rafter pairs which are comprised of one original pit sawn rafter and one ca. 1825 machine sawn fir rafter. All rafters are pegged together with mortise and tenon joints, and are numbered with Roman numerals.

2004 addition:

In plan, the new addition has a footprint that is 18' long and 16' deep. It contains a hallway, kitchen, and combination laundry room/bathroom on the first floor [photos #9 and #10] with a hallway, craft room, and bathroom on the second floor. [photos #11 and #12] The interior features exposed, pegged heavy timber framing with oak corner posts on both the first and second floors. Walls are composed of 7/8" thick white pine flush boards and floors are varnished yellow pine with a ship lap joint.

Den:

The den has exposed, modern framing members (plates, girts, and braces), a carpeted floor, and sheetrock walls. [photo #17]

Original Appearance and Subsequent Alterations:

The main block of the house was originally one-story tall when built and was sheathed in vertical board siding (no longer extant). Interior framing members were exposed and painted barn red. A one-story lean-to was located against the south fireplace wall and the chamber in the garret above the parlor was likely accessed by a ladder. The house also had no interior walls when built, with the exterior vertical board sheathing acting as the interior finish. The original lean-to was removed about 1790 and the entire south wall, which was now exposed, was sided with clapboard. Around 1825, the roof of the house was literally raised and a second story was built on top of the first one. The original chimney stack was also rebuilt and extended to incorporate an additional fireplace on the "new" second floor. Two winder stairs were added in the southwest corner to provide access to the chamber and attic above. The original exterior vertical board sheathing on the first story was probably removed and replaced with beaded clapboard at this time. A new lean-to, built of re-used framing timbers, was added sometime in the mid-19th century along the south wall of the main block; a bathroom was added to it in the mid-1900s. A small porch to the rear of the main block was added in the mid-20th century; it was converted by the current owners into a year-round den. In

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John Corson Jr. House Site
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2002, the main block and the early 19th century lean-to were damaged by a car crash. The owners repaired the façade of the main block and replaced the heavily-damaged lean-to with the present 2-story heavy timber frame addition.

Integrity of the John Corson Jr. House:

The main block of the house has a high degree of integrity in terms of original historic building fabric, retaining its original gun stock corner posts, joists, studs, girts, sills, one door, and most of its corner braces from the ca. 1710 construction of the first floor. Although the house was raised a story approximately 100 years after it was built, that alteration has also become historic in its own right, and it significantly represents the transition from the vernacular exposed heavy timber framing of the post-medieval style in Cape May County to a vernacular Federal style. However, because the new 2004 addition creates a false historic appearance, the house is considered as a non-contributing building on the site.

Other Non-contributing Buildings/Structures on the Property:

There are two other non-contributing buildings/structures on the property, both located to the rear (west) of the house:

A wood arbor, built in 1990, is located to the southwest of the house and defines the easternmost edge of a large perennial garden. [photo # 16]

A one-story storage/tool shed is located in the southwestern corner of the property. [photo #14] This building, sheathed in wood clapboard, was erected about 1965 as a small wood pump house (6' x 6') to shelter the water pump; it was then enlarged in 2002 by the present owners to provide outdoor storage for tools and garden equipment. It presently has a footprint of 12' wide by 18' deep and its shed roof is covered with wood shingles.

Setting:

The house stands on a one-third acre lot on the west side of Seashore Road/SR 9, set back approximately 20' from the road. A modern split-rail fence, covered with two varieties of clematis [*clematis*], separates the house from the heavily-traveled road. [photo #2] Also in front of the house are Japanese boxwoods [*Buxus microphylla*] and chrysanthemums [*Chrysanthemum*]. A brick sidewalk in front of the house provides access to a side parking area sited to the south of the house; this parking area is covered with gravel and dirt. To the rear (west) of the house are a brick patio, a water pond,

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John Corson Jr. House Site
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and a large flower garden, all of which are located to the east of a split rail fence that encloses the westernmost section of the back yard. [photo #13]

Trees found in the back yard and along the side and rear lot lines include red cedar [*Juniperus virginiana*], black walnut [*Juglans nigra*], hackberry [*Celtis occidentalis*], white pine [*Pinus strobus*], blue spruce [*Picea pungens*], flowering cherry [*Prunus sargentii*], hemlock [*Tsuga Canadensis*], and wild cherry [*Prunus*].

Shrubs found in the back and side yards include azaleas [*Azalea*], rhododendrons [*Rhododendron*], boxwood [*Buxus sempervirens*], privet [*Ligustrum*], mountain laurel [*Kalmia latifolia*], Rose of Sharon [*Hibiscus syriacus*], hydrangea [*Hydrangea*], wisteria [*Wisteria*], lilac [*Syringa vulgaris*], Russian olive [*Elaeagnus angustifolia*], budleia [*Buddleia*], variegated arborvitae [*Arborvitae*], trumpet vine [*Campsis radicans*], forsythia [*Forsythia*], and beauty berry bush [*Callicarpa*].

Groundcovers include grass [*Poa*], sweet woodruff [*Galium odoratum*], low growing phlox [*Phlox*], nettle [*Urtica dioica*], and lamium [*Lamium maculata*].

The south garden, located to the southwest of the house in the back yard and rectangular in shape, has been developed as a perennial garden over the past twenty years. Among the many flowers and plants contained within its irregular borders are Ladies Mantle [*Alchemilla*], Pasque flower [*Pulsatilla*], two varieties of bee balm [*Monarda didyma* and *Monarda citriodora*], anise hyssop [*Agastache foeniculum*], nandina [*Nandina*], clematis [*Clematis*], three varieties of aster [*Aster*], several varieties of coral bells [*Heuchera*], three varieties of astilbe [*Astilbe*], three varieties of Crane's Bill [*Geranium*], dianthus [*Dianthus plumarius*], several hostas [*Hosta*], three varieties of ferns [*Adiantum* (maidenhair fern), *Athyrium naponicum* (Japanese Painted Fern), and *Osmunda cinnamomea* (cinnamon fern)]. Also in the garden are black eyed susans [*Rudbeckia hirta*], speedwell [*Veronica longifolia*], heather [*Calluna*], spirea [*Spiraea*], Gentian sage [*Salvia patens*], and dwarf Jacob's Ladder [*Polemonium*].

The trellis, which helps to define the easternmost edge of the south garden, has growing on it or near it: climbing hydrangeas [*Hydrangea anomala* ssp. *petiolaris*], trumpet vines [*Campsis radicans*], penstemon [*Penstemon*], and white clematis [*Clematis* 'Sweet Autumn'] intertwined with a rose [*Rosa* 'Alchymist'].

The water pond, which was first built in 1998 then rebuilt in the spring of 2005, has many plants growing in the water or around its edges. These plants include several types of water lilies [*Nymphaea*], white fringed orchids [*Spiranthes cernua* 'odorata'], a pitcher plant hybrid [*Cephalotus*], pickerel rush [*Pontederia cordata*], miniature cattail [*Typha*], thalia [*Thalia*], water irises [*Iris ensata*], cardinal flower [*Lobelia*], several varieties of hens-and-chicks [*Sempervivum*], several varieties of thyme [*Thymus*], dwarf foothergilla [*Fothergilla gardenia*], corydalis [*Corydalis*], two varieties of parrot feather [*Myriophyllum aquaticum*], and liatris [*Liatris*]. Three plants around the pond are native to south Jersey: barrenwort [*Epimedium*], bloodroot [*Sanguinaria*] and Jack-in-the-Pulpit [*Arisaema sparatum*].

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Beyond the fence that separates the south garden and water pond from the remainder of the back yard fence is a grassy lawn dotted with numerous shade trees, the most notable of which is a 4' diameter black walnut located in the southwest corner of the lot. The division fence is covered with two climbing rose bushes [*Rosa*]: America Pillar and Red Blaze. Located on the west side of the division fence is a cutting garden that contains tulips [*Tulipa*], irises [*Iris*], larkspur [*Delphinium consolida*], peonies [*Paeonia officinalis* and *Paeonia suffruticosa*], and several varieties of roses, among them *Rosa* 'Cardinal de Richelieu', *Rosa Variegata di Bologna*, *Rosa* 'Yellow Pilgrim', and *Rosa* 'Charles de Mille'.

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Summary Statement of Significance

The John Corson Jr. House Site is locally significant under criterion D/archaeology for its potential to contribute important information, absent in historic documents and accounts, about southern New Jersey's dispersed farm settlements, trade patterns and consumerism, agricultural practices, and diet. Within these contexts, the site's known and probable data sets have the potential to provide answers to important research questions that include: how have the dispersed settlements of Cape May County's early farmsteads been occupied and used by English-speaking settlers through space and time; how were their agricultural practices different from, or the same as, those in other southern New Jersey counties; were trade patterns and consumerism influenced by their proximity to the major cities of Philadelphia and New York, by the areas from which they immigrated, and/or by local conditions; was their socio-economic status different through space and time; was their diet reflective of locally-available food sources and did it differ from those living on other southern New Jersey farmsteads; and, what does evidence of the 18th-century landscape reveal about land use practices then?

Historical Background

The primary extant building on the site is the John Corson Jr. House, built about 1710, which stands on a one-third acre lot that is part of what was originally a 300-acre tract of land in Upper Township, Cape May County, New Jersey. This tract was about a half-mile long and a mile deep, with frontage on the marshes of Corson Sound along the seaside of the Cape May peninsula. The land was purchased by John Corson Sr. (ca. 1660-1728) in 1695 from the West New Jersey Society.¹ Corson, and his brother, Peter (ca. 1660-1731), immigrated to Cape May from Long Island in the late 1600s along with many of the county's earliest settlers and were the sons of Carsten Jansen, who emigrated in the mid-1600s to Gravesend, Long Island from either Holland or Scandinavia.² John and Peter both settled in Upper Township and John bought at least another 250 acres in 1713 that adjoined to the south the original 300 acres he purchased in 1695.³ Because his will devises his personal estate only, John Sr. appears to have sold or given portions of his land to his three sons—Andrew (bapt. 1681, d ?), John, Jr. (ca. 1685-ca. 1739), and Jacob (ca. 1687-1737)—prior to his death in 1728. John Sr.'s dwelling originally stood north of the John Corson Jr. House (where a golf course is currently located), and a house appears at that location in the 1842 and 1856 maps.⁴

¹ Orville Corson, *Three Hundred Years of Corson Families in America* (privately printed, Middletown, Ohio, 1939), Vol. II, p. 22-23-- note that this deed was not recorded, but a transcription of it is given in the book.

² Orville Corson, p. 8.

³ Deed Book B, p. 185

⁴ NJ State Archives, file #97E; Corson Family notes, Corson vertical file, Cape May County Historical and Genealogical Society; 1842 Coastal Survey Ma; 1856 Cook Map.

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The land on which this house stands appears to have been sold or given to John Sr.'s son, John Jr. (ca. 1685-ca. 1739), and the house was probably built by John Jr. about 1710. Because a greater number of archaeological artifacts have been found scattered beyond the back door (where trash and refuse were more typically thrown) rather than near the front door, it appears that the house has always faced the road, which was laid out in 1706.⁵ Seashore Road (USR 9) is a north-south road that follows the fast land along the eastern side of the Cape May peninsula and which historically provided access from the northern part of the county to Cape Island (now Cape May City) at the southern end.

John Jr. died intestate around 1739, leaving his wife, Susannah (no dates, maiden name unknown), in addition to two children, David (b. ca 1735- d. 1810) and John III (b?-d. 1779?). John Jr.'s inventory of 1739 was modestly itemized and included eight yards of cloth, three beds and bedding, pewter and earthenware, a gun, shoemaker's tools, husbandry tools, wheat and rye "up chamber" (which probably referred to the attic), livestock, and seven gallons of rum.⁶

The land appears to have been inherited by John Jr.'s son, David, a Revolutionary war veteran who is listed in the tax records from 1774 (the earliest date tax records are available) until his death in 1810.⁷ David increased the size of his land holdings around 1775 by purchasing a 99-acre tract south of the farmstead but separated by another farmstead.⁸ By 1785, he owned 212 acres of improved land and 470 acres of unimproved land.⁹ The inventory of David Corson's personal estate taken in 1810 was not highly itemized, but it does mention "farmer's and carpenter's utensils," livestock, and household goods; he also owned over 700 acres which suggests he was a man of wealth.¹⁰

The first recorded legal transaction for the land is found in 1811, when David's properties were divided among his ten children.¹¹ Of the 184-acre homestead tract, David's son, Enos, received a 120+ acres with the house on it; although the tract was called the "homestead" in the division, no house was specifically mentioned. Enos bought out his brother's shares and in 1820, sold the 184-acre tract to his sons, Seth (1792-1839) and Enos, Jr. (1787-1852), both of whom were members of Cape May County's First Battalion, which served during the War of 1812, but wasn't disbanded until 1835.¹² The sons divided the property nearly in half four years later, with Seth receiving the

⁵ Lewis T. Stevens, *The History of Cape May County, New Jersey* (1897, reprint Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1997), 65.

⁶ NJ State Archives, file #97E.

⁷ Orville Corson, p. 14; misc. tax records on microfilm at the Cape May County Clerk's Office.

⁸ The deed was not recorded but the land is mentioned in the 1832 partition and is shown in the land divisions, Book of Reports, A, 218.

⁹ Upper Township tax records, 1785, 1.

¹⁰ Book of Inventories B, 252.

¹¹ Book of Reports A, 205.

¹² Orville Corson, 14-15.

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northernmost part on which the house stood.¹³ On Seth's death in 1830, his widow received her dower portion in a partition dated 1832 which "excepts there out all that part of the dwelling House called the old part being that nearest the road."¹⁴ This is the first mention of the house in any legal documents. The remainder of Seth Corson's land holdings were divided among his five children.¹⁵ Interestingly, no will or estate was filed for Seth Corson, nor was his personal property inventoried.

Seth Corson's son, Curtis (ca. 1822-1881) bought out his siblings' and mother's shares in the farmstead. He died intestate in 1881 and the property descended to his widow, Millicent, and their son Seth W. Corson. Seth and his wife, Minnie, sold the farmstead to William T. Corson in 1907.¹⁶ William Corson and his wife, Mabel, sold the farm in 1947 to Richard and William Cameron of Ocean City.¹⁷ In 1956, the house was subdivided from the farm and given its present one-third acre size.¹⁸ The current owners purchased the house in 1983.¹⁹

Cape May County's First-Period Farmsteads and their Evolution

The original parcels that Cape May County's first-period (ca. 1690 to ca. 1730) settlers purchased from the West Jersey Society proprietors were typically one mile (322 perches) deep with side lot lines running in a southeast - northwest direction, roughly from the seaside marshes or the Delaware Bay to the interior woodlands. These deep tracts provided important access to the water (either the bay or the ocean) and included forest land whose timbers could be sold for a profit or used for heating and construction. Typically, the early settlers paid £1 for every 10 acres that they purchased. Their parcels, which averaged between 100 to 300 acres in size, were strung like pearls from north to south predominantly along the seaboard side of the county. Not surprisingly, the area at the tip of the peninsula which comprises Lower Township and which offered access to not only the ocean, but the bay and the Delaware River, too, was the most heavily populated.²⁰ [see fig. 4 in the *Supplemental Images* section]

Some settlers also owned lots that ranged in size from 5 to 31 acres in a town called alternatively New England Town, Cape May Town, and Portsmouth, located on the Delaware Bay near New England Creek in Lower Township. For reasons not fully understood nor explained in the written record, the town concept failed to succeed in Cape May County even though similar towns flourished in Burlington (Burlington County), Salem (Salem County), Middletown (Monmouth

¹³ deed book L, 111; deed book M, 114.

¹⁴ Book of Divisions C, 40.

¹⁵ No division map was filed, however.

¹⁶ Cape May County Deeds, book 209, 274.

¹⁷ Cape May County Deeds, book 708, 319.

¹⁸ Cape May County Deeds, book 905, 47.

¹⁹ Cape May County Deeds, book 1540, 246.

²⁰ Joan Berkey, *The Early Architecture of Cape May County, NJ: The Heavy Timber Frame Tradition* (Cape May County Historical and Genealogical Society, 2008), 3-6.

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County), and Elizabeth (Union County), and despite the fact that approximately three-quarters of the county's earliest settlers had immigrated from such Long Island, New York towns as Hempstead, Gravesend, Southampton, and East Hampton.²¹

While first-period farmstead sizes in neighboring Cumberland and Salem counties were similar to those in Cape May County, their layout and relationship to each other were vastly different. None had the mile-deep configuration necessitated by the Cape's relatively narrow, peninsular shape; instead, they tended to have extensive frontage along a stream or river which brought settlement further into the fast land and away from the Delaware Bay. This fostered a scattered settlement pattern that contrasted with the linear placement of Cape May's early farmsteads, one above the other, along the north-south roads that serviced the east and west sides of the Cape May peninsula.

By September of 1699, Cape May County had 70 freeholders who owned their land in fee-simple.²² Of the 70 freeholders, sixty-three have been identified. Of these, fifty-nine were men and four were women—the latter all widows—who purchased or inherited tracts ranging in size from Shamgar Hand's plantation of 700 acres to Elizabeth Pyne's "town lot" of five acres. Of the 63, only two considered themselves as "planters," but colonial post-mortem inventories reveal that almost all farmed the land they owned, using "implements of husbandry" to grow a variety of crops that included wheat and Indian corn, and to raise livestock that included cattle, sheep, and pigs. According to values given in inventories, approximately one-half of a decedent's wealth was in his or her livestock.²³

Testimony in court records is terse, while no colonial-era diaries, letters, surveys, or maps remain to inform the building composition and spatial relationships of these early farmsteads. Similarly, inventories of deceased county residents, the overwhelming majority of whom were farmers, are rarely as detailed or complex as those taken in the Massachusetts Bay and Long Island areas, and typically cite only summarized values of household goods, livestock, wearing apparel, and book debts. Items stored in "ye barn" are occasionally cited in these inventories, but rarely are other outbuildings mentioned.

A study of historic maps and extant first-period houses that line Seashore Road shows the settlers' houses were built close to the road, often just feet from it as is the case with the John Corson Jr. House which faces east onto the road. Few historic barns survive, but historic photographs and mention in deeds and subdivision maps show they were sited not far from the house. The location and function of other outbuildings on these first-period farms can only be guessed. Even the few mid- to late 18th century newspaper ads for Cape May County properties rarely identify specific outbuildings.

²¹ Ibid., 5-7.

²² Peter Wacker, *Land and People* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1975), 413.

²³ Berkey, 9-10.

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As cultural geographer Peter Wacker observed:

Eighteenth century [newspaper] advertisements do not discuss building techniques and the HABS [Historic American Buildings Survey] is skewed in the direction of high style residences. Outbuildings and folk or vernacular structures are rarely covered... The fact is that with certain classes of structures, one of the best data sources may well be in the sub-surface. Thus, the farmstead, with its complex of structures, should be a research and preservation priority.²⁴

Wacker also notes that the average farm size in New Jersey declined during the 18th century, a trend that was mirrored in Cape May County as well.²⁵ Some farms were either willed or sold wholly to the oldest son in the practice of primogeniture, but as the 18th century progressed, more were typically divided amongst the decedents' children with the wife getting a dower interest of one-third. By the early 1800s, it was not uncommon for a farmstead to be equally divided between 10 to 12 children after their father's death. Post-colonial records, particularly maps filed for subdivisions ordered by the Orphan's Court, show these divisions, often citing (or even drawing) the main house and barn but rarely other outbuildings. It was not uncommon for one heir to buy up part or parts of his sibling's shares, but just as often siblings chose to retain their inheritance, which resulted in smaller farmsteads and more closely-spaced houses.

The 1842 Coastal Survey Map, the first to show houses, farmland, and woodland, along with the similarly-delineated 1856 Cook map [figs. 1 and 2], illustrate the trend toward smaller farms and more closely-spaced dwellings. Both maps show development concentrated along Seashore Road on the east side of the county and along Bayshore and Delsea Drives on the west side of the county. The interior portions of the county were still heavily wooded, but the farmsteads show with cleared land for raising crops and livestock. By 1872, many of the original farmsteads had become smaller still, usually through subdivision to heirs. [fig. 3]

Although the county's population steadily rose throughout the 19th century, some of it resulted from the introduction of train service from Philadelphia which advanced the settlement and development of resort communities on the barrier islands beginning mid-century. The county's mainland remained largely rural in nature, with concentrations occurring in scattered villages established in the early 19th century. The process of industrialization, urbanization, and suburbanization that characterized most of northern New Jersey was unknown in Cape May County. Indeed, a 1931 aerial photograph shows many farm fields lining both sides of Seashore Road as agriculture continued to be an important part of the economy. [fig. 5]

²⁴ Peter Wacker, "New Jersey's Cultural Resources: A.D. 1660-1810," as included in *New Jersey's Archeological Resources. A review of Research Problems and Survey Priorities: The Paleo-Indian Period to the Present*, Olga Chesler, ed., (Trenton, NJ: Historic Preservation Office, Division of Parks and Forestry, NJ Department of Environmental Protection, 1982), 206.

²⁵ Wacker, *Land and People*, 400.

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The introduction of the Garden State Parkway in 1954 “fundamentally altered Cape May County life, accelerating seasonal travel and the growth of permanent population.”²⁶ Gradually, farms were sold for residential subdivisions, a trend that accelerated in the 1980s when casinos were established in nearby Atlantic City and casino workers found that Upper Township was an easy commute there via the Parkway.

Thus, 100+-acre farmsteads, many dating to the first period of settlement, had largely vanished by the late 20th century, replaced by tract-house subdivisions, commercial buildings in designated growth zones, campgrounds filled with mobile homes, and houses—both modern and historic—standing on 5+-acre lots that were once farm fields. [fig. 6]

Research Potential, Research Questions, and Data Sets

First occupied around 1710, the John Corson Jr. House Site presents a resource base for research into the categories of southern New Jersey’s dispersed farm settlements, trade patterns and consumerism, agricultural practices, and diet. Within these contexts, the site has the potential to provide answers, not found in the written record, to important research questions. These questions include: how have the dispersed settlements of Cape May County’s early farmsteads been occupied and used by English-speaking settlers through space and time; how were their agricultural practices different from those in other southern New Jersey counties; were trade patterns and consumerism influenced by proximity to the major cities of Philadelphia and New York, by the areas from which they immigrated, and/or by local conditions; was their socio-economic status different through space and time; was their diet reflective of locally available food sources and did it differ from those living on other southern New Jersey farmsteads; and, what does evidence of the 18th-century landscape reveal about land use practices then?

The subject of dispersed settlements is one of three areas that were determined to be priorities for archaeological research in the 1660-1765 time period in New Jersey.²⁷ As cultural geographer Peter Wacker notes, the cultural resources associated with New Jersey’s farmsteads in existence by 1765 have many scholarly uses. By this date, New Jersey “possessed the greatest cultural heterogeneity of any English colony” and contained within its borders a Dutch-settled area in the extreme northeast, a New England-settled area immediately to the south, an English Quaker region in the southwest, and a Pennsylvania-settled area in the northwest.

Known and potential data sets composed of evidence of farm buildings, farming implements, animal bones, and artifacts (ceramics, glassware, metal ware) from everyday use will inform about the use and occupation of Cape May County’s early farmsteads and their evolution over time. They might

²⁶ Jeffrey Dorwart, *Cape May County, New Jersey: The Making of a Seaside Resort* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994), 235.

²⁷ Wacker, “New Jersey’s Cultural Resources,” 212.

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reveal if crops or livestock was the more important farm product, the kinds of animals that were raised, and what types of everyday items were typical.

The Corson site has tremendous research potential within a regional context to determine if there were any significant differences in agricultural practices when comparing first-period settlement in Cape May County (which attracted Quakers, Presbyterians, and Baptists, most of them from northern New Jersey, Long Island, and New England) with the contemporaneous, largely-Quaker settled areas along the east bank of the Delaware River on the other side of the state, of which one-half of its residents came directly from England and the other half from northern New Jersey, Long Island, and New England. To further expand this question, some of the site's data sets (farming implements and daily life artifacts like ceramics and glassware) have the potential to be compared and contrasted with those from other areas of New England, northern New Jersey, and Long Island, since that is from where the majority of Cape May County's earliest settlers came.

The soils in two other southern New Jersey counties—Salem and Cumberland—are much better suited for crop farming than the soils in Cape May County. A research question would ask if there were significant differences or similarities in the types of crops and livestock between these three counties, and did the trend continue into the 20th century?

Archaeological study might reveal, through soil tests for organic phosphates²⁸, the location of chicken coops, pig pens, and stables, thus informing the spatial relationship between the house and related outbuildings, something not discussed in the written record. With careful stripping, one could also uncover post hole stains revealing fence lines that inform about segregation of spaces on the farmstead near the house and might also reveal the location of root cellars, corn cribs, storage buildings, and other related farm buildings

Some historians have long claimed that Cape May County was a remote settlement that had little contact with Philadelphia or New York through most of the 18th century because there were no good overland routes off of the Jersey cape. The written record—primarily diaries and account books—suggests trade with Philadelphia might be more common than thought, with the Delaware River providing an important transportation route. Examination of such data sets as ceramics and glass has the potential to inform what trade patterns Cape May County residents engaged in, whether New York, Philadelphia, both, or neither, and what impact—both cultural and economic—this trade produced. Was Cape May County more connected via water routes with larger cities than previously thought? If so, that would be reflected in the ceramic data sets. For example, pottery shards might inform if the redware came from Philadelphia, New England, or Long Island, the latter where the Corsons had immigrated from in 1695, if they were purchased from South Jersey potters

²⁸ Johanna M. Ullrich, "Assessing Interior and Exterior Divisions of Space Using Phosphate Analysis Spot Test Methods," http://www.assemblage.group.shef.ac.uk/pdfs/issue12/Ullrich_-_Assessing_Interior_and_Exterior_Divisions_of_Space_Using_Phosphate_Analysis_Spot_Test_Methods.pdf (accessed 3-10-2014).

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operating in Burlington and Salem counties, or if they were made from small, local clay deposits. Local clay deposits in Cape May County are thought to have been too small to make commercial pottery-making viable and examination of pottery shards at the Corson site has the potential to confirm or deny this hypothesis. Ceramics like later stoneware may have been imported from England or salt-glazed ware may have been brought in from Philadelphia or the Raritan area of northern New Jersey via boat. Similarly, a study of the artifacts would answer the research question about how extensive was their use of locally-made glass and iron products. Did Corson farmstead occupants use window glass, bottles, and other glassware made in southern New Jersey, or were they importing these items from elsewhere?

A late 20th-century scholarly tug-of-war has one side claiming that documentary evidence provided in wills and inventories suggests that in New Jersey there were few economic differences during the 18th century between people with different cultural origins, while others claim that—based on the above-ground built environment—there were great contrasts.²⁹ Data sets composed of everyday items like pewter and ceramics would provide a framework in which to compare the relative wealth of the Corson farmstead occupants (English-speaking) with that of other New Jersey residents with different cultural backgrounds (e.g. German, Dutch, Finno-Swede) to determine if there were few economic differences or great contrasts as the debate contends.

By the late 1700s, the original 300+-acre Corson plantation had increased to 700+ acres. An important research question asks if the ceramics changed or improved in quality from the increase in land wealth and if their socio-economic status was different, or remained the same, as land holdings increased or decreased through space and time. Data sets of ceramics and clothing items like buttons and buckles have the potential to answer this question.

Archaeological study would also inform about diet and its change over time. With ready access to the Atlantic Ocean and Delaware Bay, were the first-period settlers eating more seafood (e.g. clams, fish, oysters) than beef, pork, and fowl? Since the majority of the county's settlers came from northern New Jersey and Long Island, areas which also had ready access to seafood, a research question would ask if their diets in Cape May County were similar to what they had eaten in these other locales. Similarly, how did their diet compare with that of farm families living in neighboring Cumberland and Salem counties, which had direct access to the Delaware River and Bay but not to the Atlantic Ocean? Data sets of animal bones and seeds would also inform if the Cape May County farmers' diet changed as overland transportation improved through time, facilitating the purchase of foodstuffs not grown locally. The Corson site has produced both whole bones from animals and bones that were cut by a saw into small pieces for consumption, so another research question would ask when this method of preparing animals for consumption changed?

²⁹ Wacker, "New Jersey's Cultural Resources," 207.

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Because wells and privies were often abandoned and re-dug after an ownership change, artifacts retrieved from their excavation also have the potential to inform about changes in diet (particularly through the study of seeds) and socio-economic status through items discarded in either.

Excavation might also reveal changes in well construction, and the water table, over time: wells in Cape May County are lined with either brick (most common) or cedar planks (more rare). A well on the north lot line is mentioned in an 1832 partition, but its exact location along that line has yet to be determined. Similarly, a 4'-diameter anomaly in the bricks of the rear patio seen after a snowfall suggest a well was located there, too. No privy location has been identified to date.

Limited investigation has revealed a 19th-century conch shell border feature around the front door of the Corson House main block. Investigation of seeds contained within the border would reveal what plant feature was being enclosed. Similar investigation might reveal the location of paths in the rear of the house like the pea gravel pathway to the front door which still exists. Using this data, the site has the potential to inform 18th- and 19th-century land use practices as they relate to domestic buildings, and compare these relationships and features with others to see if there exist variations from region to region through time or cultural affiliation.

There is a very small potential for Native American archaeological resources on the property. In Cape May County, most Native American resources are found along streams and rivers. The stream closest to the John Corson Jr. House site is Cellar Creek, located about one-half mile to the northeast; many Native American artifacts have been retrieved there. The Corson site owners have found three points from the Archaic and Woodland periods, but they have no way of knowing if they came in with pre-potted plants purchased from garden centers or if they were original to the site.

Period of Significance

The period of significance extends from ca. 1710, which represents the approximate date the house was built, to 1956, the date when the house and its present one-third acre lot were subdivided from the farmstead.

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- Wacker, Peter. "New Jersey's Cultural Resources: A.D. 1660-1810." *New Jersey's Archeological Resources, A Review of Research Problems and Survey Priorities: The Paleo-Indian Period to the Present*. Olga Chesler, ed. Trenton, NJ: Historic Preservation Office, Division of Parks and Forestry, NJ Department of Environmental Protection, 1982.

Interviews

- Regensburg, Richard and Denise. Interviewed by Joan Berkey, various dates from 2001-2014.
- Albertson, Randolph. 11-16-1983, notes from interview by Richard Regensburg. [Richard Regensburg]

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 2

John Corson Jr. House Site

Cape May County, NJ

Maps

- Beers, Comstock, and Cline. *Map of Cape May County*. 1872. [Cape May County Public Library, Cape May Court House, NJ]
Cook, George. *Map of Cape May County*. 1856. [Cape May County Historical and Genealogical Society]
U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, 1842. [Cape May County Historical and Genealogical Society]

Newspapers and Periodicals

- “Crashing Lunch: Car smashes historic home, startling man, dog sharing sandwich.” *The Press of Atlantic City*, 12-10-2002.
Miller, George L. “Classification & Economic Scaling of Nineteenth Century Ceramics.” *Historical Archaeology*, 1980.
Olson, Stanley J. *Dating Early Plain Buttons by Their Form*. *American Antiquity*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (1963).
Quimby, Ian M.G., ed. “Ceramics in America.” *Winterthur Conference Report*. University Press of Virginia, 1972.
Ullrich, Johanna M. “Assessing Interior and Exterior Divisions of Space Using Phosphate Analysis Spot Test Methods.” http://www.assemblage.group.shef.ac.uk/pdfs/issue12/Ullrich_-_Assessing_Interior_and_Exterior_Divisions_of_Space_Using_Phosphate_Analysis_Spot_Test_Methods.pdf (accessed 3-10-2014)

Public Documents and Archives

- Cape May County Deeds, Mortgages, Tax Records, and Road Returns [Cape May County Clerk's Office, Cape May Court House, NJ]
Corson Family notes, Corson Family vertical file, Cape May County Historical and Genealogical Society.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet
Section number 10 Page 1

John Corson Jr. House Site
Cape May County, NJ

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary comprises block 566, lot 52 in Upper Township, Cape May County as shown on the current (2014) tax map.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The boundary of the nominated property is the one with which the property has been associated since 1956 and while extending the boundary might include archaeological sites which have an historical association with the property, those sites currently stand on privately-owned property.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Photographs**

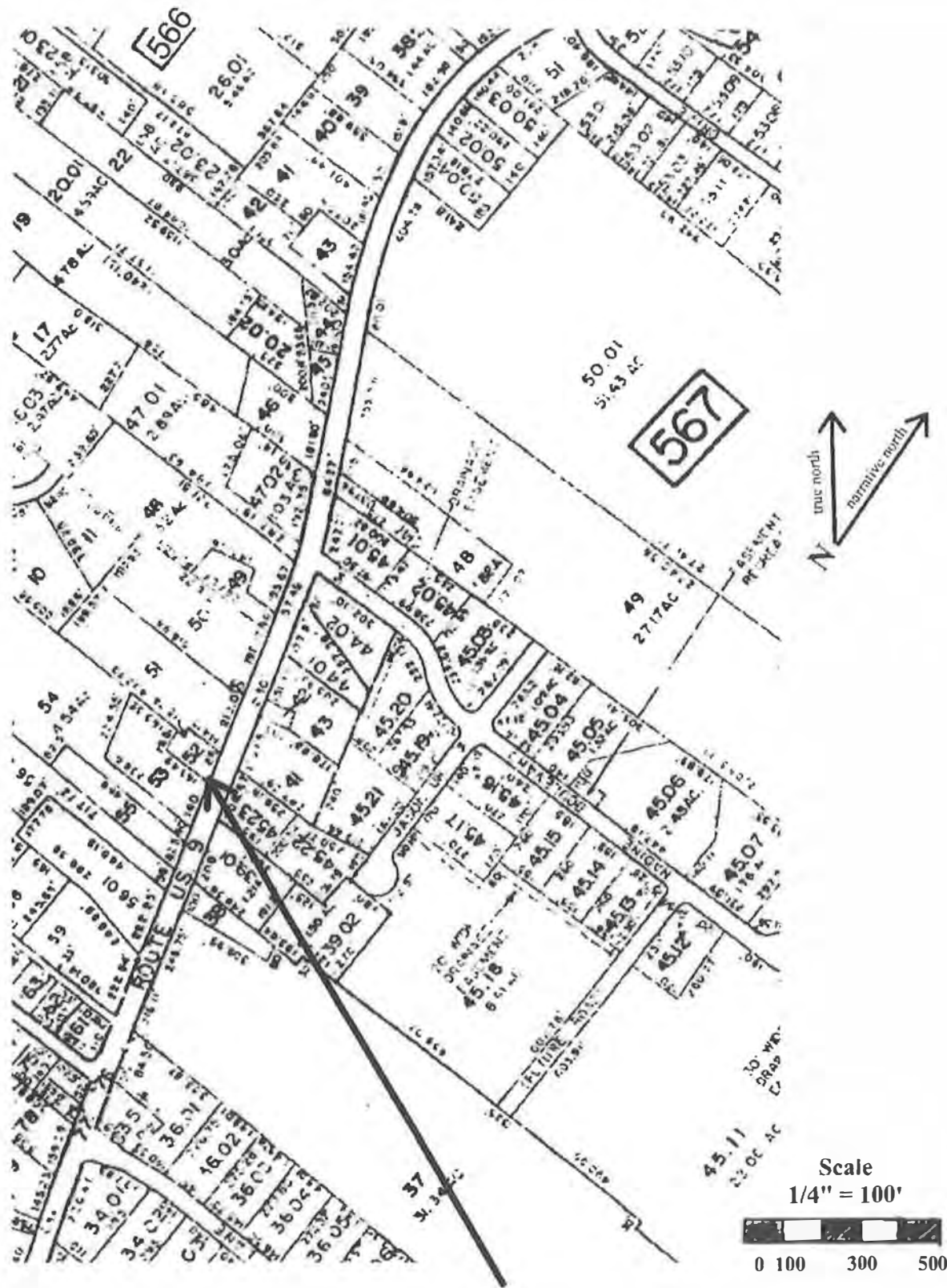
**John Corson Jr. House Site
Cape May County, NJ**

Typical Information for All Photographs

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. Name of Property | John Corson Jr. House Site |
| 2. County and State | Cape May County, New Jersey |
| 3. Photographer | Joan Berkey |
| 4. Date of Photographs 1-17 | June 2005 |
| Date of Photographs 18-27 | March 2014 |
| 5. Location of Digital Copies | Joan Berkey 707 N. Delsea Drive Cape May Court House, NJ 08210 and NJ State Historic Preservation Office |

Photo # and Description of View

18. Pottery shards found on the site.
19. Buttons and buckles found on the site.
20. Coins found on the site.
21. Pewter and lead found on the site.
22. Pottery shards found on the site.
23. Redware and stoneware found on the site.
24. Bottles found on the site.
25. Iron objects found on the site.
26. Gun flints found on the site.



John Corson Jr. House Site
 Upper Township,
 Cape May County, NJ

*tax map of Upper Township annotated to show location (block 566, lot 52)***

***note that the shape of the lot is inaccurate on the tax map*

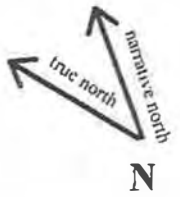


John Corson Jr. House Site
Block 566, Lot 52

UTM Coordinates

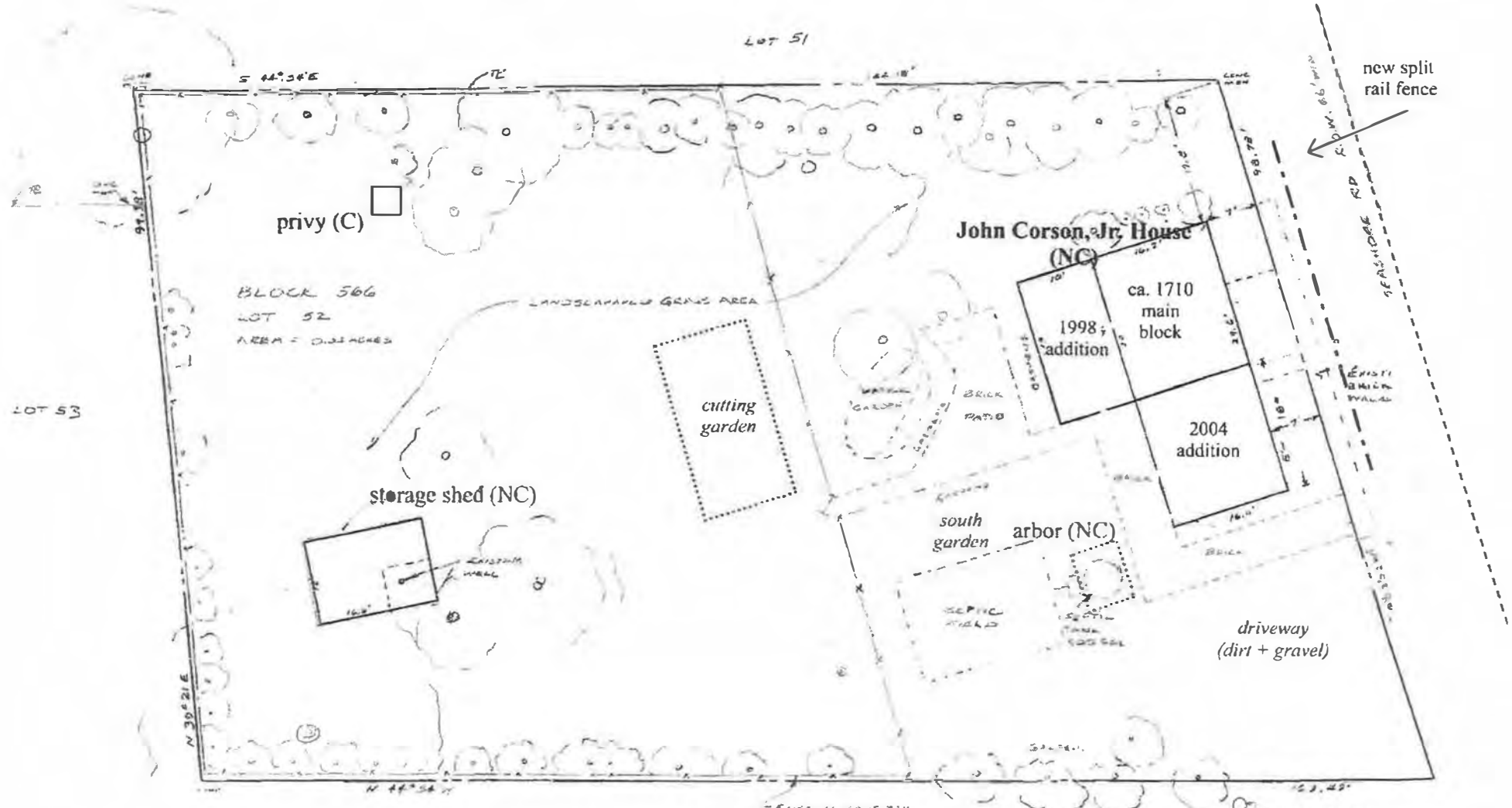
Zone 18

- | | | |
|-----|----------|-----------|
| (1) | 527106mE | 4342271mN |
| (2) | 527065mE | 4342310mN |
| (3) | 527080mE | 4342332mN |
| (4) | 527120mE | 4342298mN |



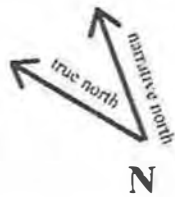
C = contributing
NC = non-contributing

Scale
1" = approx. 25'
0 5 10 15 20 25



John Corson Jr. House Site
Upper Township, Cape May County, NJ
site plan

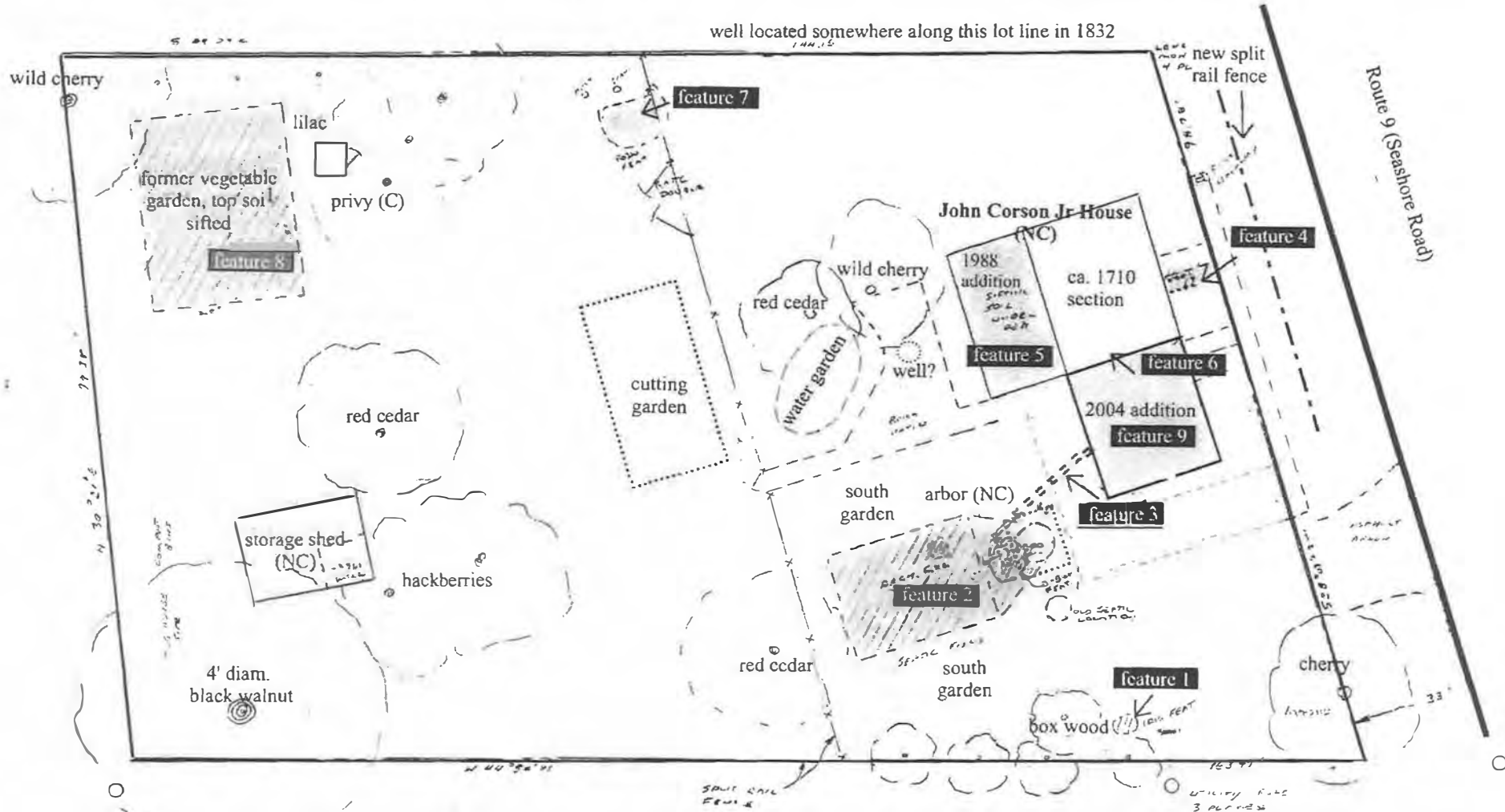
7/2005
rev. 3-2014
Joan Berkey



Scale
1" = approx. 25'
0 5 10 15 20 25

archaeology areas

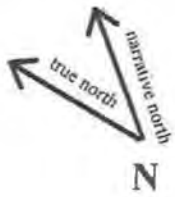
C = contributing
NC = non-contributing



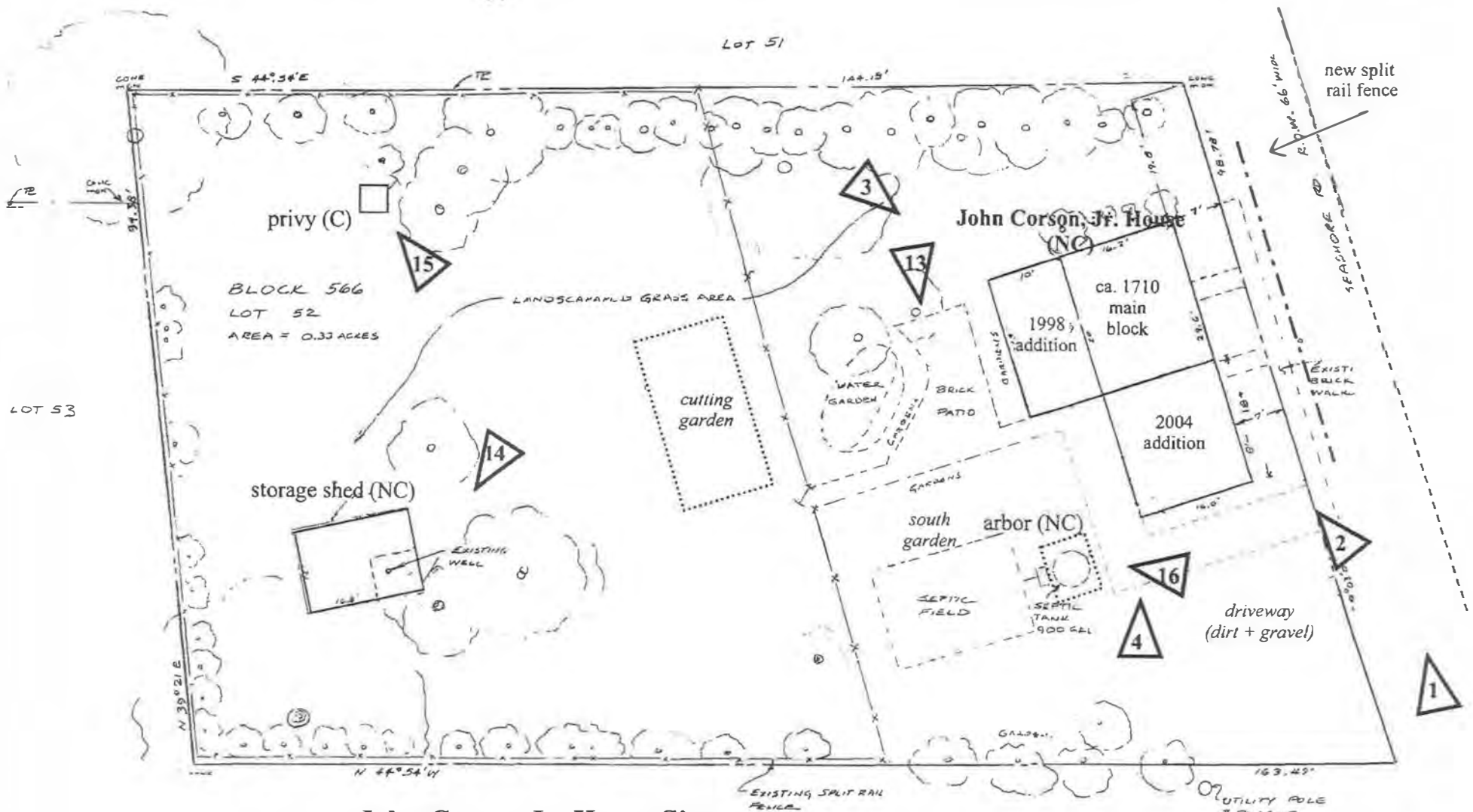
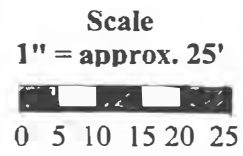
John Corson Jr. House Site
Upper Township, Cape May County, NJ

site plan annotated to show archaeological areas/features

7/2005
rev. 3-2014
Joan Berkey



C = contributing
 NC = non-contributing



John Corson Jr. House Site
 Upper Township, Cape May County, NJ
site plan annotated for photographs

7/2005
 rev. 3-2014
 Joan Berkey



Figure 4: map showing the location of lands owned by the county freeholders in 1699

[From Joan Berkey, *Early Architecture of Cape May County, New Jersey: The Heavy Timber Frame Tradition* (Cape May County Historical and Genealogical Society, 2008), 6.]

Supplemental Images

(unless otherwise noted, north is at the top of the page)

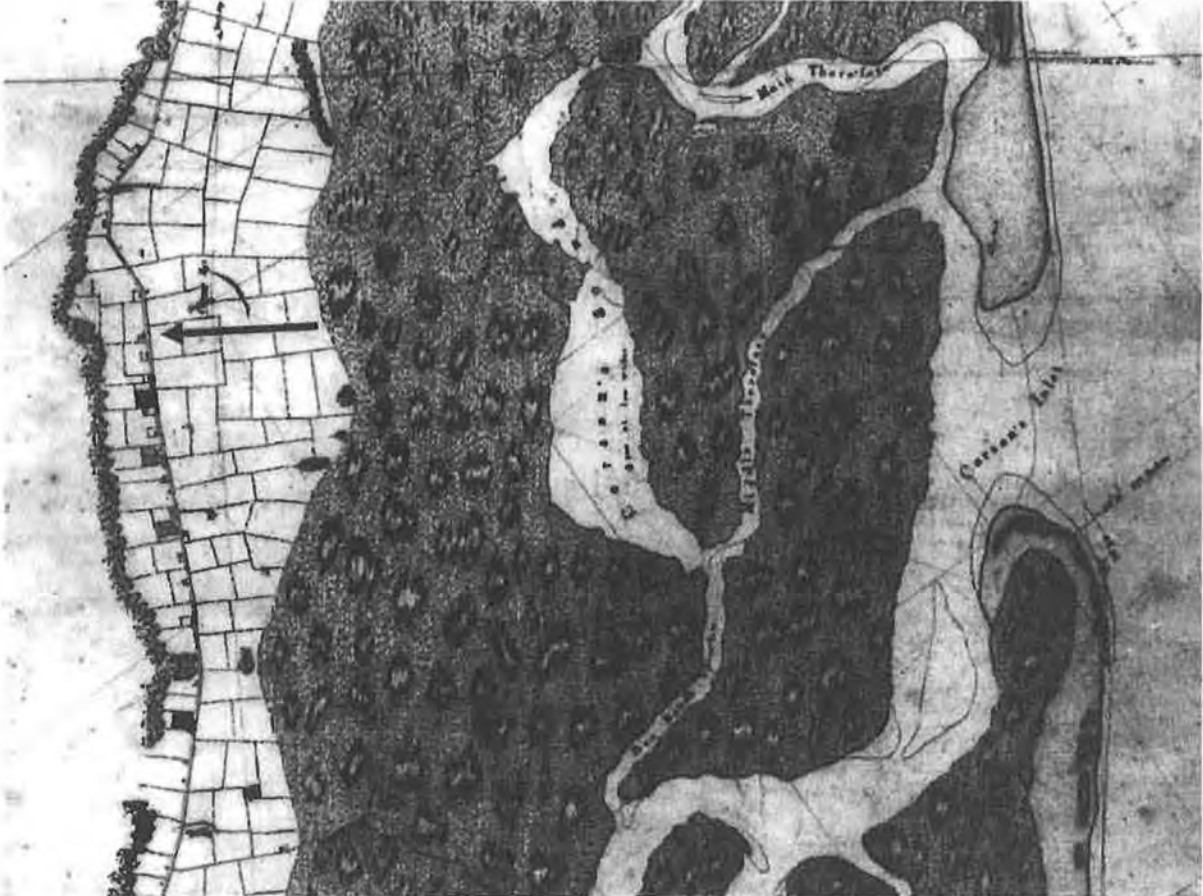


Figure 1: 1842 Coastal Survey Map (T-147) showing the location of the John Corson Jr. House with woodlands along the western edge, marshlands and the Atlantic Ocean (via Corson's Inlet) to the east.



Figure 2: 1856 Cook Map showing the farmsteads, woodlands, and marshes along Seashore Road in Upper Township. The arrow points to the approximate location of the John Corson Jr. House.



Figure 3: 1872 Beers Map, Seville inset

On this map, the house appears as the residence of C. [Curtis] E. Corson.



Figure 5: 1931 aerial photograph; the arrow points to the John Corson Jr. House Site



Figure 6: Current (2014) Aerial photograph showing SR 9 and the location of the John Corson Jr. House Site
 Note the lack of farm fields.



Figure 7: Conch shell border
 This garden feature in front of the house was discovered by the owner when installing a brick walkway.
 Photo taken in 1984.

[photograph courtesy of the owners]

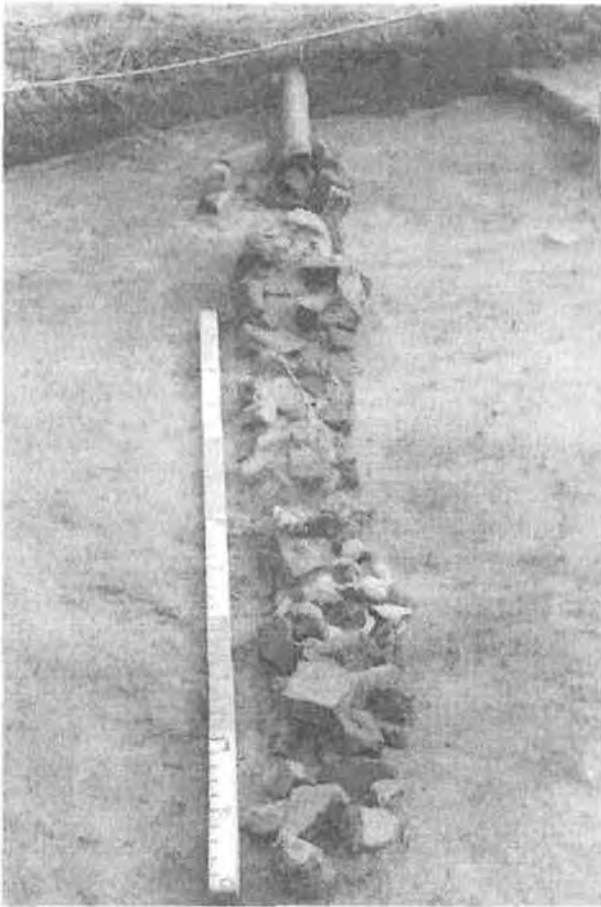
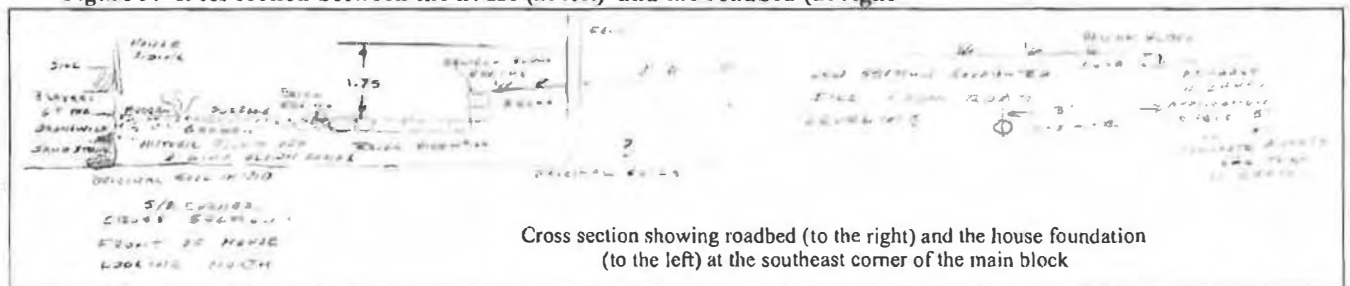


Figure 8: French drain feature

This photograph, taken by the owner in 1986, shows the artifacts comprising the French drain feature. View northeast.

[photograph courtesy of the owner]

Figure 9: cross section between the house (at left) and the roadbed (at right)



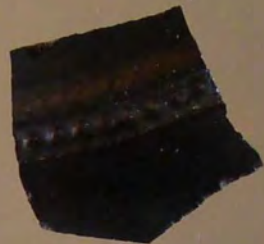
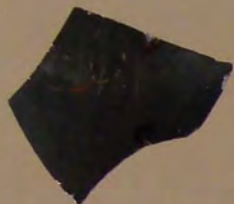
Cross section showing roadbed (to the right) and the house foundation (to the left) at the southeast corner of the main block

[drawn by Dick Regensburg 3-2014]

28-cm-58
north property line
jackfield redware
c.1745-1790

28-cm-58
n.property line
jackfield redware
c.1745-1790

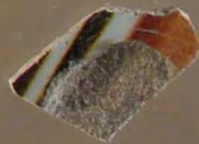
28-cm-58
n.property line
jackfield redware
c.1745-1790



28-cm-58
old veg. garden fea.8
finger-painted annular ware
creamware c.1785-1820

28-cm-58
feature 5 area
polychrome pearlware
c.1790-1815

28-cm-58
feature 4 area
hand-painted pearlware
c.1795-1825

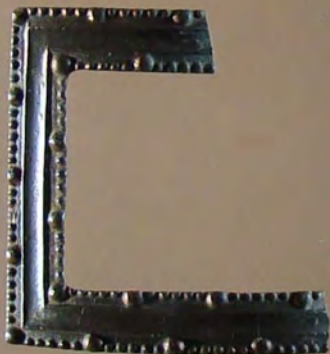


28-cm-58
exc.feature 2
cast brass button
c.1760-1785

28-cm-58
sifted back door fea.5
2 piece brass shallow button
queen victoria 1837



28-cm-58
s/w corner of fireplace
cast brass button fea.6
c.1760-1785



28-cm-58
sifted back door fea.5
women's shoe buckle
casted letters ib on rev.
c.1755

28-cm-58
s/w corner of fireplace fea.6
men's pewter shoe buckle
late 18th century

28-cm-58
gen.surf near shed
silver dime
1893



28-cm-58
sifted veg. garden fea.8
indian head cent
1889



28-cm-58
sifted back door feat.5
copper conn.large cent
1787



28-cm-58
s/w corner of fireplace fea 6
1827 large cent

28-cm-58
s/w of fireplace
lead strip cut edges



28-cm-58
gen.surface fea.2
pewter spoon
mid 1700's

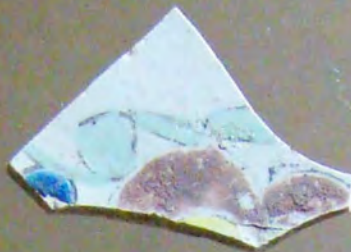


28-cm-58
exc.feature 2
pewter spoon
mid.1700's

28-cm-58
general surface hostas 6/07/07
scratch blue salt glazed
stoneware c.1744-1765



28-cm-58
feature 4 area
hand-painted salt glazed
stoneware c.1740-1780



28-cm-58
gen. surf.rear prop.line
scratch blue salt glaze
stoneware c.1744-1775



28-cm-58
gen.surf.new water feature
american westerwald
grey bodied stoneware c.1730's




28-cm-58
feature 4 area
moulded white salt glazed
stoneware c.1740-1765



28-cm-58
n.property line plant fea.7
scratch blue salt-glazed lid
c.1744-1775






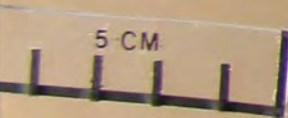
28-cm-58
n.p/l plant rhododendron fea 7
lead glazed redware pipkin pot
c.1820



28-cm-58
western property line
lead glazed slipped ware
mid 17th. to 1830's



28-cm-58
old veg garden feat. 8
brown stoneware bottles
c.1820-1900



28-cm-58
surf.collection s. of buttery
oil of balsam moulded bottle
c.1820's



28-cm-58
trash pit feature 2
hand blown moulded bottle
late 19th.century



28-cm-58
soffit of main bldg.
hand blown medicine bottle
c.1760's



28-cm-58
gen.surface s/w p/l
moulded glass med.bottle
late 19th. century

28-cm-58
large door hinge
shell driveway west end
interface between top/sub soil
18th century

28-cm-58
south east gun stock post
rose head hand wrought nail
18th century

28-cm-58
found in lath road side
lg. hand wrought nail
18th century

28-cm-58
french drain feature 3
19th century monkey wrench

28-cm-58
2nd floor window trim
1-headed cut nail
c.1798-1815

28-cm-58
french drain feature 3
hl hinge large passage or cloest
18th or 19th century

28-cm-58
west house plate 2nd floor
cut iron spike
18th century



28-cm-58

sm.trash pit feat.1
honey colored french flint
round heeled spall
late 18th.century



28-cm-58

n.property line gen.surface
dark english gun flint
double edge blade
18th century

National Register of Historic Places
Memo to File

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY NAME: Corson, John, Jr., House ~~Site~~

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW JERSEY, Cape May

DATE RECEIVED: 1/02/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/17/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 06000686

DETAILED EVALUATION:

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 2/12/15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Please note the name change to the
John Corson Jr., House Site.

RECOM./CRITERIA D

REVIEWER Saubert

DISCIPLINE Archaeology

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 2/12/15

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N (C)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

RECEIVED
JUL 29 2005
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

6800
OMB No. 10024-0018
RECEIVED 2280
JUL 3
NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name John Corson, Jr. House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 1542 South Shore Road not for publication

city or town Upper Township vicinity

state New Jersey code NJ county Cape May code 009 zip code 08204

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Amy Cradic 7/28/05
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Amy Cradic, Assistant Commissioner Natural & Historic Resources/DSHPO
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- 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

Date of Action

John Corson, Jr. House

Name of Property

Cape May County, NJ

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 1 | 2 | buildings |
| 0 | 0 | sites |
| 0 | 1 | structures |
| 0 | 0 | objects |
| 1 | 3 | Total |

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Returned

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Postmedieval English

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls WOOD/weatherboard

roof WOOD/shingle

other

Narrative Description

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

see attached continuation sheets

John Corson, Jr. House
Name of Property

Cape May County, NJ
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

C: architecture
D: archaeology/Historic--non-aboriginal

Period of Significance

C and D: ca. 1710 to ca. 1825

Significant Dates

C: ca. 1710

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

see attached continuation sheets

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Cape May County Historical & Genealogical Society

Returned

John Corson, Jr. House
Name of Property

Cape May County, NJ
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acres of Property 0.33 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|---------|---|---|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 11 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 4 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Zone | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|---------|--|--|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Zone | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.) see attached continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.) see attached continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Joan Berkey, Historic Preservation Consultant

organization _____ date September 26, 2005

street & number 1003 Bartlett Avenue telephone 609/927-7950

city or town Liwood state NJ zip code 08221-1137

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Mr. and Mrs. Richard Regensburg

street & number 1542 S. Shore Road telephone 609/390-9199

city or town Ocean View state NJ zip code 08230

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Returned

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet
Section number 7 Page 1**

John Corson, Jr. House
Cape May County, NJ

Narrative Description

Summary Description

The John Corson, Jr. House is a wood frame residence comprised of three sections. The modestly rectangular 2-story main block, located to the north, was originally built ca. 1710 as a one-story dwelling with heavy timber frame construction consisting of exposed gunstock corner posts, exposed front and rear girts, and exposed beaded floor joists. Around 1825, this section was raised to its present 2-story configuration. Attached to the south wall of the main block is a modestly shorter 2-story addition, also built with heavy timber frame construction, erected in 2004 to replace a ca. 1850 one-story lean-to that was severely damaged by a car crash. To the rear (west) of the main block is a small modern one-story, one-room (den) addition built in 1988; it replaced a smaller ca. 1956 open wood shed at this location.

Located in Upper Township, Cape May County, New Jersey, the Corson house stands on a one-third acre lot on the west side of Rt. 9 (Seashore Road), a major north-south route that was laid out in 1706 and which runs the entire length of the county from the Great Egg Harbor River south to the City of Cape May. Set back approximately 20' from the road, the house faces east onto the highway; an extensive perennial garden and a small ornamental water pond are located immediately behind the house. Further to the rear (west) of the dwelling is a one-story, late 20th century modern storage shed, a ca. 1900 privy, and a 1990 wood arbor, all of which are non-contributing.

Neighboring houses along Route 9 range in date from the mid-1800s to a new house that is being constructed next door to the south; house styles include vernacular Victorian, turn-of-the-last-century bungalow, and ranch.

Exterior Description

the original section:

The main block of this two-story house is 3 bays wide, is sheathed with white cedar clapboard, and has a center door flanked by a window on each side on the façade (east elevation) at the first story level. [photo #2] The gable roof runs parallel with the façade and is pierced at the south end by a large, corbelled brick chimney on the interior wall. The north gable end has two 6-light, single sash wood windows; this fenestration is extant in the south gable end, but is now covered

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet
Section number 7 Page 2

John Corson, Jr. House
Cape May County, NJ
(section 7 continued)

by the 2004 addition. There is a boxed cornice with no returns along the front and rear roof lines, and modest rake boards in the north gable end. Windows are predominately 6/6 double-hung wood sash, which appear to date ca. 1825, except for a double window on the north wall of the original parlor (now used as a parlor) added in 1956. [photo #3] The second floor of the north (side) and the rear (west) elevations has two windows, while the first floor of the rear (west) elevation has a single window to the south and a center door. The door and the window on the first floor of the rear elevation are now protected by the one-story modern den addition. This part of the house sits on a Jersey sandstone foundation of piers that are three stones high, placed in the four corners and one each side of the front and back doors.

the 2-story addition:

The 2-story addition, built in 2004, is sheathed in white cedar clapboards and has a red cedar shake roof. Windows are new, historically appropriate 6/6 double hung wood sash. The fenestration pattern of the façade (east elevation) matches that of the original main block, with a center door flanked by two windows on the first floor and three windows on the second floor. The south (side) elevation has two windows on each floor and a single 2/2 double hung wood sash window in the gable end. The first floor of the rear (west) elevation has a double window to the south and a single window to the north, while the second floor has two windows. This section stands on a cinder block foundation. Its gable roof also runs parallel with the façade (east elevation). [photo #2 and #4]

the one-story rear addition:

The one-story modern addition is also sheathed in white cedar clapboards and has asphalt shingles on its shed roof. [photo # 3 and #4] There is a single modern wood door on the south elevation, one modern wood casement window on the north elevation, and four modern wood casement windows on the rear (west) elevation. This addition stands on a foundation of brick piers.

Interior Description

Main block:

In plan, the oldest portion (the main block) of the house has one room on each floor—a parlor on the first floor with a fireplace on the south wall, a bedroom above, also with a fireplace, and an attic (now finished) above the bedroom. This section is approximately 20' wide by 16' deep. [photo #5 and #6]

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The parlor on the first floor has gunstock corner posts of oak, as well as beaded ceiling joists of white cedar that are both pit sawn and hand-hewn, then hand planed. [fig. 13] The joists are spaced 3'4" on center and the corner posts measure approximately 7" by 10" at the top. The front, rear, and end girts are also made of white cedar, are beaded, and are not faced. Except for the corner post in the southeast corner, which was originally in a closet and is chamfered, the corner posts are beaded. Also beaded, but hidden under the plaster walls, are rising corner braces that are hand planed and painted; six of the original seven braces are extant. The corner braces are tied into the corner posts and girts with an unusual half-dovetail, or half-lap joint, rather than the more typical mortise and tenon joint. [fig. 12] All of these framing members appear to be original to the ca. 1710 construction date. Scars of the former closet (or cabinet) are visible in the southeast corner as are un-mortared spaces (now infilled with modern mortar) on the bricks on the east wall of the fireplace box; these spaces originally supported the ends of the cabinet/closet shelves.

The parlor fireplace, located on the south wall, has a Federal-style mantel and surround (typical of those found in Cape May County for the time period) that consists of a projecting, molded cornice and plain frieze supported by molded columns, all hand-planed. Directly over the mantel are ca. 1940-1950 wood panels, placed over the original random-width vertical boards (with a hole for a chimney pipe) which can be seen *in situ* from in the closet under the stairs. The remainder of the fireplace wall features ca. 1825 hand-planed vertical boarding laid flush. The chimney girt was moved approximately 3" to the north ca. 1825 to accommodate the second floor fireplace when the building was raised to two-stories, and the vacant butt cog pockets in the front and rear girts have been filled in. The east, west, and north walls are plaster over lath.

An early, perhaps original, floor of random width boards is extant, but is now covered with ca. 1825 yellow pine, random-width floor boards that run east to west. The early floor features thin wood strips placed under each of the cracks between the floor boards to prevent drafts; these strips are set into shallow open gains on each of ½ log floor joists.

Of particular note is the back door on the west wall, which appears to be original to the house's early 18th century construction date. Heavily pitted from the weather, it is a board and batten door made of 1" thick wood with alternating male (tongue) and female (groove) boards. It has its original wood trim and also has a spring-loaded metal latch that appears to date from the late 18th/early 19th century. Its bolt is not original. The front door is a modern replication of the back door that was made by the present owners from wood taken from a ca. 1806 building located outside of Princeton. The doors to the closet under the stairs and to the winder stair in the southwest corner are also board and batten, with alternating male and female boards, 1" thick;

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these appear to date to ca. 1825. Baseboards are 5" high with a beaded upper edge; some are original while the remainder is a replication of the original.

The bedroom above features beaded floor joists that are more refined, showing neither saw, adze, or plane marks; they are spaced 2'10" on center. [photo #7 and #8] The floor boards are hand planed, random width (4" – 10" wide) pine with a beaded edge that faces down to the parlor below. The floor is laid with hammer-headed, T-head, machine cut nails. The room has both rising and falling corner braces and those in the southeast corner are exposed. The fireplace wall (south wall) consists of two small cupboards adjacent to the fireplace on the west, and a winder stair leading to the attic to the far west. The fireplace surround appears to date to ca. 1825 and consists of a simple, horizontally reeded entablature under a 1" thick mantel shelf, all supported by reeded pilasters. Walls are sheetrock and the baseboards are original (ca. 1825), 5" high, 1" thick, with a 3/4" bead. Two of the four straight corner posts on this floor are exposed; they have adze marks and are 5" x 7" in section.

Of particular interest in the bedroom is a "coffin door" opening in the floor boards located between the joists near the fireplace wall. [fig. 7] This provides access to the parlor/parlor below.

The attic above the bedroom has been finished for use as another room. It features white pine floors of tongue and groove, 3/4" thick and 10 1/2" wide, which appear to date to ca. 1825. The rafters, which are re-used from the ca. 1710 one-story house, are all pit sawn and hand-hewn, except for two rafter pairs which are comprised of one original pit sawn rafter and one ca. 1825 machine sawn fir rafter. All rafters are pegged together with mortise and tenon joints, and are numbered with Roman numerals. Of particular note is the chimney stack, which shifts about 5"-6" to the west so water will not enter the fireplaces below. [fig. 10]

2004 addition:

In plan, the new addition has a footprint that is 18' wide and 16' deep. It contains a hallway, kitchen, and combination laundry room/bathroom on the first floor [photos #9 and #10] with a hallway, craft room, and bathroom on the second floor. [photos #11 and #12]

The interior of the addition features exposed heavy timber framing with oak corner posts given a gun stock profile on both the first and second floors. The plates, girts, corner braces, and joists—all exposed—are made of Douglas fir. The joists have a chamfered edge that ends in a lamb's tongue stop; joists on the first floor measure 4.5" x 7" while those on the second floor measure 3" x 6"; all joists are spaced 27" on center. Walls are comprised of 7/8" thick white

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pine flush boards (tongue and groove) painted off-white, and floors are varnished yellow pine with a ship lap joint. All framing members are held with pegged mortise and tenon joints. Interior trim consists of simple, unbeaded wood molding that is between 3" and 3.5" wide/high.

Den:

The den was originally built in the late 1980s as a sun porch, which replaced a smaller open wood shed at this location. The porch was then converted for year-round use as a den in 1998. It has modern framing members of white cedar (plates, girts, and braces) that are exposed, a carpeted floor, and sheetrock walls. [photo #17]

Original Appearance and Subsequent Alterations:

As evidenced by the corner posts which terminate at the second floor, the main block of the house was originally one-story tall when built. At the time of its construction ca. 1710, the house was sheathed in vertical board siding. Evidence for this siding is seen in a horizontal stud that was mortised into the exterior face of each corner post and vertical stud; this stud ran the entire perimeter of the house (except for the south wall) and acted as an intermediate nailer for the siding. Although the studding has since been removed, a piece of it was found *in situ* in the corner post that was recently broken by the car crash [see fig. 6] and other pieces have been reused around the fireplace, suggesting that the vertical board siding was removed at the time the house was raised to two stories and the chimney re-built. Vertical board siding has earlier precedents in the Massachusetts Bay area, but it appears to have been used with greater frequency in Cape May County than there, or on Long Island.

The house also had no interior walls when built, with the exterior vertical board sheathing acting as the interior finish. This is known by the fact that the horizontal stud, or nailer, was beaded, as are the corner braces (now covered with sheetrock), which means both framing members were originally exposed. [see fig. 5] The corner braces and studs also bear traces of a red paint, further evidence that they were originally exposed. Traces of blue paint are found on the overhead floor joists and on the interior face of the front and rear girts, while the bottom face of these girts is painted red.

In the fall of 2003, the framing of the south end of the original main block was exposed and examined carefully. Evidence in the form of a deep chamfer or gain on the southwest corner post [fig. 11] and another on the sill suggest that the house was originally built with a lean-to on the south end and that it was accessed by a door at the westernmost end of the south wall where the present winder stair is located. The deep gain, or chamfer, on the corner post would have held

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the door frame header, while that on the sill would have held the upright stud. This explains why there is no corner brace in this corner (as well as no evidence of one) and also suggests that the garret may have been accessed by a ladder, rather than by a winder stair. The ladder may have been placed where the "coffin door" is presently located. Although a winder stair could have been placed in the southeast corner, no physical evidence to confirm its presence here has been found to date.

When built ca. 1710, the house may have had casement-type windows with diamond-shaped panes of glass. Double hung wood sash windows were introduced in the colonies about 1705, but may have come into common use later in Cape May because of the county's remoteness from such urban centers as Philadelphia and New York.

The corners of the house's main block stand on fieldstone piers, with stone piers placed for additional support under the front and rear doors, following the traditions set in the Massachusetts Bay area in the 1620s-1630s, and later on Long Island in the 1640s-1650s. Also indicative of the house's first period construction date is the extensive use of pit sawn lumber—since the first known saw mill was not established in the county until ca. 1735, any dwelling built prior to this time would most often (but not always) have used framing members that were sawn by hand rather than by machine. The house also would have had a wood shingle roof, just as it does today, although shingles only had a life expectancy of no more than 50 years, and the shingles on the roof today were placed there by the current owners.

The fireplace on the first floor appears to be original, although the box has been re-worked at a later date. The upper portions of the chimney were added/re-worked in the ca. 1825 remodeling [see below].

In Cape May, plaster walls did not come into general use until ca. 1825, although they had been used elsewhere in New Jersey beginning ca. 1725, and even earlier in the Massachusetts Bay area. Because of this, the county's houses usually had either no interior wall finish (as in this house), or the walls were clad with hand-planed boards laid horizontally on all but the fireplace wall, where they were laid vertically. Because the corner braces have only one coat of paint (red) although the joists and girts had multiple layers of paint, it appears that flush board walls (which would have covered the braces but left the corner posts, girts, and joists exposed) were added to the interior probably in the mid-18th century.

Examination of John Corson, Jr.'s personal estate inventory, taken at the time of his death in 1739, was not highly detailed, but it does mention "wheat and rye up chamber" which would have referred to the living space in the attic. It should be mentioned that colonists often stored

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grain, wool and flax, and other foodstuffs in their bedrooms (referred to as a "chamber") or in the attic (often called the "garret"). The inventory also mentions three beds and shoemaker's and husbandry tools, as well as "puter" (pewter) and books, the latter two which suggest he was a man of some wealth and learning.

As evidenced by nail holes on the south face of the southwest and southeast corner posts, the original lean-to was removed about 1790 and the entire south wall which was now exposed was sided with clapboard. This finding is also supported by archaeological evidence which showed (1) a deposit of shells in a hole, and a charcoal pit, that could only have been made when the lean-to was not there, and (2) the presence of pearl ware, annular ware, as well as some red earthenware which date from ca. 1790 to the 1830s, in this location.

Sometime during the Federal period, probably around 1825, the roof of the house was literally raised and a second story was built on top of the first one. Evidence of the roof raising is seen in the original, pit-sawn rafters that are extant in the present roof framing. Similarly, the soffit was also kept intact, and is today still clinched with rose head nails (with pointed shanks), which signal a construction date for the original one-story main block before ca. 1798. The ca. 1825 floor joists which support the attic floor are more refined, and bear no pit-saw or adze marks. The original chimney stack was also rebuilt at the second story and attic levels to incorporate an additional fireplace on the "new" second floor, and two winder stairs were added to the southwest corner to provide access to the bedroom and attic above. The new second floor room was probably given plaster walls at this time.

The mantels on both fireplaces are also typical for the Federal period, and are similar in appearance to many seen in Cape May County that were built, or altered, ca. 1790-1825. The second floor mantel also has traces of a bright orange paint, which is likely original to its Federal period construction, when bright colors were popular for interior spaces. The upstairs bedroom also shows evidence (paint and nail scars in the joists and floor) of having been divided into four separate small rooms at one time.

It is also likely that the original exterior vertical board sheathing on the first story was removed and replaced with beaded clapboard when the house was enlarged to two stories about 1825. Many pieces of the original horizontal studs, or nailers, were re-used at this time (in a show of typical New England frugality) and are today found in trim around the first floor fireplace and in a small joist inserted to the east of that fireplace.

A new lean-to, built of re-used framing timbers, was added sometime in the mid-19th century along the south wall of the main block. [see fig. 3] This date is conjectured because one of the

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foundation stones used to support the lean-to's north sill was imbedded in the same plaster used on the first floor of the main block. That plaster appears to date to the mid-19th century because it was laid over circular sawn lath.

Later alterations added a small porch to the rear of the house in the mid-20th century, which has since been converted by the current owners into a year-round living room. The lean-to contained a kitchen to which a bathroom was added in the mid-1900s. Previous owners removed most of the plaster walls on the first and second floors and replaced them sheetrock; the original lath, however, remains *in situ* and the original plaster walls are extant overhead in the winder stair.

In 2002, the façade of the house and the early 19th century lean-to were damaged by a car crash. The crash severed in half the original gunstock corner post in the southeast corner, split the south side girt lengthwise, damaged several windows, and shifted the lean-to and part of the house 1" to the west.

The owners repaired the façade of the main block and removed the heavily-damaged lean-to, which was beyond repair. The lean-to (which had a footprint of 9.5' wide by 20' deep) was then replaced in 2004 with a 2-story heavy timber frame addition having a footprint that is 18' wide and 16' deep; this depth is identical to that of the ca. 1710 original main block which measures 20' wide by 16' deep. The addition was purposely made about 4" shorter than the ca. 1710 original section to visually separate it from the main block; it was also given 6/6 double hung wood windows (modern replications), a board and batten front door (modern replication), and 3/4" thick white cedar clapboard on the exterior that matches the clapboard on the ca. 1710 original section. The damaged gunstock corner post was repaired, strengthened, and returned to its original position while the original south side girt was repaired *in situ*.

In June of 2004, the façade of the ca. 1710 original section was damaged yet again by another car crash. This time, only the early 19th century window to the south of the front door was heavily damaged, so it was removed and replaced with the early 19th century window extant on the west (rear) wall of the original section. The damaged window was repaired and then installed where the other one had been removed on the rear wall of the original section. The owners also added a split rail fence along the front of the property; the fence camouflages metal, cement-filled pipes placed behind each post to act as a crash barrier and to protect the house from further damage in the event of any more car accidents.

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Integrity:

The main block of the house has a high degree of integrity in terms of original historic building fabric, retaining its original gun stock corner posts, joists, studs, girts, sills, one door, and most of its corner braces from the ca. 1710 construction of the first floor. Although the house was raised a story approximately 100 years after it was built, that alteration has also become historic in its own right, and it significantly represents the transition from the vernacular exposed heavy timber framing of the post-medieval style in Cape May County to a vernacular Federal style.

The new 2004 addition was designed to be sympathetic with the appearance of the original main block. The overall massing of both sections—with each being nearly identical in fenestration (especially with two front doors) and massing—is also found in several other historic houses throughout the county, among them the ca. 1800-1825 Spicer Learning House (2-stories, Lower Township, see fig. 8), the ca. 1720 Isaac Smith House (1½ stories, Upper Township), the ca. 1842 Baker Corson House (2-stories, Dennis Township) and the ca. 1695 Reeves-Iszard-Godfrey House (2-stories, originally Middle Township, moved to Upper Township). Of these, the Learning and Baker Corson Houses were built with 2 front doors and 2 sections at the initial construction (although both sections are the same height), while the others received the second section (of the same height) with an additional front door at a later time. The decision to replace the one-story lean-to with a 2-story addition was based on the fact that a 2-bedroom house would likely be much more saleable than a 1-bedroom house and would thereby ensure the preservation of the house rather than its demolition in the future.

Non-contributing Buildings on the Property:

There are three non-contributing buildings/structures on the property, all of which are located to the rear (west) of the house:

- A wood arbor, built in 1990, is located to the southwest of the house and defines the easternmost edge of a large perennial garden. [photo # 16]
- A one-story storage/tool shed is located in the southwestern corner of the property. [photo #14] This building, sheathed in wood clapboard, was erected about 1965 as a small wood pump house (6' x 6') to shelter the water pump; it was then enlarged in 2002 by the present owners to provide outdoor storage for tools and garden equipment. It presently has a footprint of 12' wide by 18' deep and its shed roof is covered with wood shingles. A privy, built about 1900, is located in the northwest corner of the property. It is wood frame and its clapboards are held with round head nails. [photo #15] The privy has a 4'2" x 4'2" square footprint and is fronted by a board and batten door that appears to be

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original. Its shed roof has wide eaves and is covered with wood shingles. The south (side) and rear (west) elevations have small ventilation slots that are covered with bronze screens. The interior seats have been removed and there is no clean-out door on the rear elevation. The privy was relocated by the current owner to its present position.

Setting:

The house stands on a one-third acre lot on the west side of Rt. 9, set back approximately 20' from the road. A modern split-rail fence, covered with two varieties of clematis [*clematis*], separates the house from busy Route 9. [photo #2] Also in front of the house are Japanese boxwoods [*Buxus microphylla*] and chrysanthemums [*Chrysanthemum*]. A brick sidewalk in front of the house provides access to a side parking area sited to the south of the house; this parking area is covered with gravel and dirt. To the rear (west) of the house are a brick patio, a water pond, and a large flower garden, all of which are located to the east of a split rail fence that encloses the westernmost section of the back yard. [photo #13]

Trees found in the back yard and along the side and rear lot lines include red cedar [*Juniperus virginiana*], black walnut [*Juglans nigra*], hackberry [*Celtis occidentalis*], white pine [*Pinus strobus*], blue spruce [*Picea pungens*], flowering cherry [*Prunus sargentii*], hemlock [*Tsuga Canadensis*], and wild cherry [*Prunus*].

Shrubs found in the back and side yards include azaleas [*Azalea*], rhododendrons [*Rhododendron*], boxwood [*Buxus sempervirens*], privet [*Ligustrum*], mountain laurel [*Kalmia latifolia*], Rose of Sharon [*Hibiscus syriacus*], hydrangea [*Hydrangea*], wisteria [*Wisteria*], lilac [*Syringa vulgaris*], Russian olive [*Ealeagnus angustifolia*], budleia [*Buddleia*], variegated arborvitae [*Arborvitae*], trumpet vine [*Campsis radicans*], forsythia [*Forsythia*], and beauty berry bush [*Callicarpa*].

Groundcovers include grass [*Poa*], sweet woodruff [*Galium odoratum*], low growing phlox [*Phlox*], nettle [*Urtica dioica*], and lamium [*Lamium maculate*].

The south garden, located to the southwest of the house in the back yard and rectangular in shape, has been developed as a perennial garden over the past twenty years. Among the many flowers and plants contained within its irregular borders are Ladies Mantle [*Alchemillia*], Pasque flower [*Pusitillela*], two varieties of bee balm [*Monarda didyma* and *Monarda citriodora*], anise hyssop [*Agastache foeniculum*], nandina [*Nandina*], clematis [*Clematis*], three varieties of aster [*Aster*], several varieties of coral bells [*Heuchera*], three varieties of astilbe [*Astilbe*], three

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Summary Statement of Significance

The John Corson, Jr. House is locally significant under criterion C/architecture as a well-preserved example of first period (ca. 1695-ca. 1730) heavy timber frame construction in Cape May County, New Jersey. It has many of the hallmarks of that method of construction as it was expressed earlier on Long Island and in the Massachusetts Bay area, including exposed gunstock corner posts and exposed floor joists, both of which were decorated with a beaded edge. The house is notable (1) for its use of half-dovetail joints on its corner braces, a method of joining not typically found in the county's first period houses, and (2) as one of eight known first period houses in the county to have been originally built with its framing members exposed wherein the backside of the exterior sheathing served as the interior wall finish.

The John Corson, Jr. House, which stands on its original site, is also locally significant under criterion D/archaeology because its site has the potential to contribute important information, which is absent in historic documents and accounts, about the settlement and development of farmsteads on the Jersey cape in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. More specifically, it has the potential within a statewide context to determine if food habits were distinct, if the artifacts are different, what trade patterns its residents engaged in, what differences or similarities might exist between the Quaker settlement in Cape May County and those along the Delaware River on the western side of the state, and, if acculturation occurred, to what extent.

Historical Background:

The house stands on what was originally a 300-acre tract of land purchased by John Corson, Sr. (ca. 1660-1728) in 1695 from the West New Jersey Society.¹ Corson, and his brother, Peter (ca. 1660-1731), emigrated to Cape May from Long Island in the late 1600s, along with many of the county's earliest settlers, including the Leaming and Stites families. They were the sons of Carsten Jansen, who emigrated in the mid-1600s to Gravesend, Long Island from either Holland or Scandinavia.² John and Peter both settled in Upper Township and John bought at least another 250 acres in 1713 that adjoined to the south the original 300 acres he purchased in 1695.³

¹ Orville Corson, *Three Hundred Years of Corson Families in America* (privately printed, Middletown, Ohio, 1939), Vol. II, p. 22-23—note that this deed was not recorded, but a photo of it was printed in that book.

² Orville Corson, p. 8.

³ Deed Book B, p. 185

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varieties of Crane's Bill [*Geranium*], dianthus [*Dianthus plumarius*], several hostas [*Hosta*], three varieties of ferns [*Adiantum* (maidenhair fern), *Athyrium naponicum* (Japanese Painted Fern), and *Osmunda cinnamomea* (cinnamon fern)]. Also in the garden are black eyed susans [*Rudbeckia hirta*], speedwell [*Veronica longifolia*], heather [*Calluna*], spirea [*Spiraea*], Gentian sage [*Salvia patens*], and dwarf Jacob's Ladder [*Polemonium*].

The trellis, which helps to define the easternmost edge of the south garden, has growing on it or near it: climbing hydrangeas [*Hydrangea anomala ssp. petiolaris*], trumpet vines [*Campsis radicans*], penstemon [*Penstemon*], and white clematis [*Clematis 'Sweet Autumn'*] intertwined with a rose [*Rosa 'Alchymist'*].

The water pond, which was first built in 1998 then rebuilt in the spring of 2005, has many plants growing in the water or around its edges. These plants include several types of water lilies [*Nymphaea*], white fringed orchids [*Spiranthes cernua 'odorata'*], a pitcher plant hybrid [*Cephalotus*], pickerel rush [*Pontederia cordata*], miniature cattail [*Typha*], thalia [*Thalia*], water irises [*Iris ensata*], cardinal flower [*Lobelia*], several varieties of hens-and-chicks [*Sempervivum*], several varieties of thyme [*Thymus*], dwarf fothergilla [*Fothergilla gardenia*], corydalis [*Corydalis*], two varieties of parrot feather [*Myriophyllum aquaticum*], and liatris [*Liatris*]. Three plants around the pond are native to south Jersey: barrenwort [*Epimedium*], bloodroot [*Sanguinaria*] and Jack-in-the-Pulpit [*Arisaema sparatum*].

Beyond the fence that separates the south garden and water pond from the remainder of the back yard fence is a grassy lawn dotted with numerous shade trees, the most notable of which is a 4' diameter black walnut located in the southwest corner of the lot. The division fence is covered with two climbing rose bushes [*Rosa*]: America Pillar and Red Blaze. Located on the west side of the division fence is a cutting garden that contains tulips [*Tulipa*], irises [*Iris*], larkspur [*Delphinium consolida*], peonies [*Paeonia officinalis* and *Paeonia suffruticosa*], and several varieties of roses, among them *Rosa 'Cardinal de Richelieu'*, *Rosa Variegata di Bologna*, *Rosa 'Yellow Pilgrim'*, and *Rosa 'Charles de Mille'*.

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Because his will devises his personal estate only, John Sr. appears to have sold portions of his land to his three sons—Andrew (bapt. 1681, d ?), John, Jr. (ca. 1685-ca. 1739), and Jacob (ca. 1687-1737)—prior to his death in 1728. In 1851, a Corson descendant wrote that John Sr.'s dwelling originally stood where the current golf course to the north of this house is located, and a house appears at that location in the 1842 and 1856 maps.⁴

The land on which this house stands appears to have been sold or given to John Sr.'s son, John Jr. (ca. 1685-ca. 1739), and the house was probably built by John Jr. about 1710. Because a greater number of archaeological artifacts have been found scattered beyond the back door (where trash and refuse were more typically thrown) rather than near the front door, it appears that the house has always faced the road, which was laid out in 1707.⁵

John Jr. died intestate around 1739, leaving his wife, Susannah (no dates, maiden name unknown), in addition to two children, David (b. ca 1735- d. 1810) and John III (b?-d. 1779?). John Jr.'s inventory of 1739 was modestly itemized and included eight yards of cloth, three beds and bedding, pewter and earthenware, a gun, shoemaker's tools, husbandry tools, wheat and rye "up chamber" (which probably referred to the attic), livestock, and seven gallons of rum.⁶

The land appears to have been inherited by John Jr.'s son, David, a Revolutionary war veteran who is listed in the tax records from 1774 (the earliest date tax records are available) until his death in 1810.⁷ Sometime between 1774 and 1780, David purchased another tract of land that was separated from his homestead by a 75-acre tract owned by the Smith family to the south. The tax records of 1774 suggest this additional tract may have been the property of David's brother, John Corson, who may have been the John Corson who died in 1779. Tax records indicate the title was transferred between 1774, when David is taxed on 152 acres, and 1780, when David is taxed on 212 improved acres and 170 unimproved acres.⁸ The deed was not recorded, but the land was part of a later subdivision.⁹ The inventory of David Corson's personal estate in 1810 was not highly itemized, but it does mention "farmer's and carpenters utensils,"

⁴ NJ State Archives, file #97E; Corson Family notes, Corson vertical file, Cape May County Historical and Genealogical Society.

⁵ Lewis T. Stevens, *The History of Cape May County, New Jersey* (1897, reprint Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1997), p. 65.

⁶ NJ State Archives, file #97E

⁷ Orville Corson, p. 14; misc. tax records on microfilm at the Cape May County Clerk's Office

⁸ Tax records, 1774, p. 2; 1780, p. 1

⁹ Book of Reports A, p. 205.

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livestock, and household goods; he also owned over 1,000 acres which suggests he was a man of wealth.¹⁰

The first recorded legal transaction for the land is found in 1811, when the property was divided among David's children.¹¹ David's son, Enos, received a 120 acre tract with the house on it; although the tract was called the "homestead" in the division, no house was specifically mentioned. In 1820, Enos sold the tract to his sons, Seth (1792-1839) and Enos, Jr. (1787-1852), both of whom served in Cape May County's First Battalion, which served during the War of 1812, but wasn't disbanded until 1835.¹² The sons divided the property nearly in half four years later, with Seth receiving the northernmost part on which the house stood.¹³ On Seth's death in 1830, his widow received her dower portion in a partition dated 1832 which "excepts thereout all that part of the dwelling House called the old part being that nearest the road."¹⁴ This is the first mention of the house in any legal document. Interestingly, no will or estate was filed for Seth Corson, nor was his personal property inventoried.

The property remained in the hands of Corson descendants until the mid-20th century.

A Brief History of Heavy Timber Framing

Simply defined, heavy timber frame construction is a method of building that uses large, wood framing members (6"-8" wide or larger), which are joined and held together with pegged mortise and tenon joints. The key components are a box frame composed of sills, posts, plates, girts, and bridging and/or binding beams; above the house frame itself is a roof constituting a separate structural system. Typically, the framing members—corner posts, floor joists, girts and beams—were meant to be exposed, and were sometimes decorated with molding that was either carved by hand or wrought by a molding plane.¹⁵

This type of construction was brought first to the Massachusetts Bay area of New England by English settlers in the 17th century. Heavy timber frame, or post and beam, construction had

¹⁰ Book of Inventories B, p. 252

¹¹ Book of Reports A, p. 205

¹² Orville Corson, p. 14-15.

¹³ deed book L, p. 111; deed book M, p. 114

¹⁴ Book of Divisions C, p. 40

¹⁵ The author wishes to acknowledge the contributions of Robert Craig, Principal Historic Preservation Specialist with the NJ State Historic Preservation Office, for his comments regarding the history and evolution of heavy timber frame construction.

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been used in 16th century East Anglia, and it was only natural for New England colonists to use the same building methods in the New World with which they had been familiar in their native land.

The presence of a timber frame characterized all frame houses in America until the advent of the balloon frame in the nineteenth century, which came to most places in New Jersey in the 1850s at roughly the same time as the Italianate style. The balloon frame was composed of dimensional lumber (e.g. 2x4s and 2x6s), not timbers, hence it was not a “timber” frame. All frame building in New Jersey (and elsewhere) before the 1850s—for about 200 years—had a timber frame. In common parlance many of these structural systems have been loosely referred to as “heavy” timber frames, to distinguish them from “light” balloon frames.

The techniques of building timber frames were not static across the two centuries. Methods evolved, in part to make erection of buildings simpler, faster, and cheaper, and in part because stylistic concerns demanded that the old ways which originally prevailed be abandoned. Generally, this evolution followed a course of a progressive lightening of the members themselves together with a simplification of their joints. It is usually possible, even through casual inspection, to distinguish between early and late timber frames; with a more careful inspection it is sometimes possible to distinguish between “middle” and “late” frames.

As typically defined, the term “heavy timber frame” denotes only those frames that survive, generally speaking, from the “first period” of timber framing in New Jersey, a period that covers the 17th through the early 18th century. A more strict definition would include only those timber framed buildings with a summer beam. However, within the context of those houses which survive in Cape May County, the term is more broadly used to denote those heavy timber frame buildings with *exposed* framing members, held with pegged mortise and tenon joints, as found in Cape May County from ca. 1695 to ca. 1845.

The earliest examples of heavy timber frame construction in the United States are found in the Massachusetts Bay area of New England. Settled in the 1620s and 1630s by predominantly English religious dissenters largely from East Anglia, the Massachusetts Bay area contains more than three hundred extant examples that range in date from ca. 1640 to ca. 1750. These buildings were extensively studied by Abbott Lowell Cummings in the 1970s and he eventually published a well documented and heavily illustrated book about them entitled The Framed Houses of Massachusetts Bay: 1625-1725 (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press, 1979). This groundbreaking volume marked the first intensive analysis of this construction type in the country, and set the standard for bringing together primary sources with physical evidence to document the derivational heritage, evolution, and eventual demise of a construction method. In 1990, 113

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heavy timber frame structures in the Massachusetts Bay area were also recognized with a thematic nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.¹⁶

As Massachusetts Bay area colonists migrated to other parts of the eastern seaboard in the 17th century, they took their building traditions with them. In the 1640s and 1650s, they settled on Long Island, New York, many lured by the thriving whaling industry there. Long Island's heavy timber frame buildings have also been studied, but to a lesser degree than those in the Massachusetts Bay area. The Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) documented eight of them between the 1930s and 1980s, and those studied have construction dates ranging from ca. 1649 to ca. 1740. HABS compiled brief histories of each house, took exterior photographs and sometimes interior photographs, and prepared measured drawings of them. These houses have also been written about in several books, among them, Long Island Landmarks, published by the Society for the Preservation of Long Antiquities in 1971, and Manor Houses and Historic Homes of Long Island and Staten Island, published in 1928 and written by Harold Eberlein), but neither book deals exclusively, or in-depth, with their construction type, nor are the buildings placed within historic contexts.

From Long Island, these New Englanders (or their descendants) moved to New Jersey in the last quarter of the 17th century, settling not only in East Jersey (including Essex, Union, and Middlesex counties), but in West Jersey as well, particularly in Salem (now Cumberland), Gloucester (now Atlantic), and Cape May counties. Those who moved to Cape May County were attracted by both the lucrative whaling industry there and the availability of large tracts of land which could be purchased relatively cheaply. More often than not, these new residents turned to heavy timber frame construction for their dwellings, not only because of their familiarity with it, but also because of the great availability of lumber with which to build.¹⁷

Although heavy timber frame construction was once common in New Jersey, few examples remain. Because other early New Jersey settlers built with more lasting materials—the Pennsylvania-influenced Quakers with brick and the Dutch settlers with stone, for example—their buildings have survived to a larger degree than those built of wood, the latter of which were more easily lost to fire, rot, or demolition by neglect.

Because of the migration from New England to Long Island and New Jersey, there are strong physical ties between Cape May County's first period buildings (ca. 1695 to ca. 1730) and the

¹⁶ *First Period Buildings of Eastern Massachusetts Thematic Resource Nomination*, 1990. A copy of this National Register nomination is available at the NJ State Historic Preservation Office.

¹⁷ It should be noted that large stones for building were not locally available in Cape May County.

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earlier precedents built beginning ca. 1650 on Long Island and ca. 1640 in the Massachusetts Bay area and continuing until ca. 1725. Heavy timber frame buildings in all three areas have large, exposed framing members: in the Massachusetts Bay area almost all timbers were usually hewn from oak, while in Cape May County almost all upright posts were hewn from oak, while the horizontal framing members (joists, girts, plates, and sills) were often made from Atlantic white cedar, and occasionally from hard pine.

In comparison, Cape May County's heavy timber frame buildings are smaller and more humble expressions than their New England counterparts, and despite their commonalities, there are subtle differences in the way they were framed, with more obvious differences in their floor plans, their placement of stairs, the size of their chimney bays, and their choices of interior finishes.¹⁸ Generally speaking, Cape May's buildings: (1) typically consisted of a single room on the first floor with a single bedroom or parlor on the upper floor and a single, shallow end wall chimney, rather than two parlors on the first floor with a large center chimney and a stair hall; (2) placed their winder stairs so they were accessed from the room they served rather than from a hall or "porch;" (3) used a smaller chimney bay that usually contained one fireplace rather than two; (4) placed their lean-tos to the side rather than to the rear, and (5) used flush board walls as an interior wall finish until ca. 1820, even though boarded interior walls were superceded by the use of plaster walls beginning ca. 1730 elsewhere in the state and in New England.¹⁹

The Heavy Timber Frame Tradition in Cape May County

The heavy timber frame buildings in Cape May County were the subject of an in-depth intensive level survey of 69 buildings conducted by Joan Berkey under the auspices of the Cape May County Historical and Genealogical Society and published under the title, *A Survey of the Heavy Timber Frame Buildings of Cape May County* (2003).²⁰ This year-and-a-half long project marked the first time these structures were intensively studied, researched, and compared to earlier precedents and contemporaries on Long Island and in Connecticut and the Massachusetts Bay areas of New England. The survey determined that Cape May County appears to have the

¹⁸ For an in-depth discussion of these similarities and differences, consult *A Survey of the Heavy Timber Frame Buildings of Cape May County* (Joan Berkey, Cape May County Historical and Genealogical Society, 2003), copies of which are available at the NJ Historical Commission, the State Historic Preservation Office, the Cape May County Historical and Genealogical Society, and the Cape May County Public Library.

¹⁹ Joan Berkey, *A Survey of the Heavy Timber Frame Buildings of Cape May County* (Cape May County Historical and Genealogical Society, 2003), p. 10-69.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

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most extant examples of exposed heavy timber frame construction in the state, and in numbers large enough, within Cape May County at least, that they cannot be considered as rare survivors of this construction type.

According to the survey, the following three distinct building periods were identified in the county.

First period buildings are defined as those built in Cape May County between ca. 1695 and ca. 1730. They most closely resemble those heavy timber frame buildings erected earlier on Long Island (ca. 1650-ca. 1730) as well as in Connecticut and in the Massachusetts Bay area (ca. 1640-ca. 1725). These houses are generally characterized by overly large, hand-hewn framing members (between 8" and 12" in size), some of which are carved or decoratively molded, flush board interior walls or no interior wall finish at all, exposed posts that are usually heavier at their tops, exposed floor joists often chamfered or beaded on the edge, and a large chimney bay between 4.5' to 10' wide. Often, such framing members as studs, floor joists, and rafters are pit sawn. Lamb's tongue stops were also commonly used to decorate framing members, and some of the county's first period buildings have summer beams, which were also a common element in New England construction.

No single building height or fenestration pattern prevailed in the county during this period, rather 1-, 1½- and 2-stories houses were found, with both center and off-center door placement. The most typical floor plan consisted of a single room with a large fireplace and winder stair at one end, and of the 20 first period buildings surveyed, only six (6) center chimney/double parlor plan houses have been identified. Although leaded glass windows may have been used on these first period buildings, none were found extant in the houses examined in this survey.

Second period buildings are defined as those built in the county between ca. 1730 to ca. 1780-90 and they reflect the gradual slimming of framing members that occurred as the 18th century progressed. Although corner posts were still exposed, they were usually enclosed, or "chased," with boards having a beaded edge on the corner. Since plaster did not come into general use until about 1820 in Cape May County, interior walls were still covered with flush boards, usually vertically sawn and planed smooth, then laid vertically on the fireplace wall and partition walls, and horizontally on the other walls. Floor joists continued to be exposed overhead; these were planed as well, and were often decorated with a beaded edge. Like the framing members, the chimney bay was also reduced in size, although the size of the fireplace opening itself remained large, running up to 6' wide in some instances. The single room floor plan continued to prevail, with no particular dominance between 1-, 1½-, and 2-story heights.

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During this construction period, particularly in the 1760s, there was a revival, or survival, of the first period framing characteristics of gunstock or molded corner posts, summer beams, and decorative lamb's tongue stops on framing members. Of the 69 buildings surveyed, six are thought to represent this revival/survival, possibly spurred by the construction in 1763 of the Seaville Friends Meeting House (#30), which has these characteristics.

Third period buildings are those erected between ca. 1780-90 and ca. 1845, and they represent the final phase of heavy timber framing in the county. These buildings show the continued diminishing in the size of not only the framing members, but the fireplace openings as well. Although winder stairs adjacent to the chimney continued in their popularity, this period saw the introduction of the 5-bay wide Federal style dwelling, with its center hall/double parlor plan. As a building form, though, it was rarely used in the county and single room plan houses continued to predominate. As plaster walls came into common usage ca. 1820, surprisingly, corner posts and girts were still exposed, although modestly so, and were usually faced with beaded edge boards to dress them up.

Despite the introduction of plaster walls, flush board walls and exposed joists continued to be fashionable and are found being used as late as ca. 1832 in the Jesse Gandy House in Upper Township. The latest house in the survey to have both plaster walls and exposed corner posts and girts is dated at ca. 1847 (the Stillwell Smith House, Dennis Township) and its mid-19th century interior belies its mid-18th century exterior appearance.

Lean-tos in all three construction periods were typically placed to the side, not to the rear, and are found with this placement as early as ca. 1695 in the Reeves-Iszard-Godfrey House (moved from Middle to Upper Township) and as late as the previously mentioned ca. 1847 Stillwell Smith House (Dennis Twp.).

The Significance of the John Corson, Jr. House Within These Contexts

The earliest part of the main block (the first floor) has all of the characteristics found in Cape May County's first period buildings, including exposed corner posts that are heavier at the top than at the bottom, exposed joists overhead that have a decorative bead, and rafters that were first hewn from a log then pit-sawn into the proper size.

Within the context of the *Intensive Level Survey of the Heavy Timber Frame Buildings of Cape May County*, the John Corson, Jr. House is one of twenty-one first period buildings among the 69 that were studied. Of those twenty-one first period buildings, the Corson House is one of four

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that were originally built with a one-room, one-story floor plan, while five were 1½-stories tall and twelve were built as 2-story dwellings. The original floor plan of fourteen of the twenty-one first period buildings consisted of a single room per floor regardless of story height and on the whole, that floor plan was the most popular in Cape May County regardless of story height or construction period. The Corson House is most similar to the ca. 1700-ca. 1730 Owen Coachman House (#1, Lower Township, also known as the *Batts Lane Whaler's Cottage*), which has flared corner posts, was also originally sheathed in vertical board siding, and was also raised to two stories around 1846. The Corson House is also similar to the early 18th century rear portion of the Cresse-Hand House (#59 in the survey, Lower Township), which is still sheathed in vertical board siding, is still one story tall, and has a garret that is still accessed by a hatch in the floor overhead.

The John Corson, Jr. House exhibits several interesting differences when compared to other first period houses in the survey. The use of half-lap, or half-dovetail joinery, rather than a mortise and tenon joint, to tie the corner braces to the frame is unusual, and is called by Abbot Lowell Cummings, a mid-20th century expert on the heavy timber frame houses of Massachusetts Bay, "an unreasoned harking back to earlier English practice when, in the absence of a tie beam, the collar functioned as a tie resisting extension."²¹ The half-dovetail joint is used in the collar beams of at least two 17th century Massachusetts houses—the ca. 1636 Fairbanks House in Dedham and the late 17th century Peake House in Medfield—and was documented in the collar beams of the recently-discovered ca. 1704 Cresse-Leaming House in Middle Township, Cape May County. The true extent of its use in the county to tie corner braces to the frame is not known, however, because this construction feature is typically exposed only on those rare occasions when the exterior cladding is removed.

With its beaded framing members (corner braces, corner posts, floor joists, studs, and horizontal studs), all of which were exposed during the house's first 100± years of habitation, the Corson House also significantly illustrates an attention to detail unexpected for a one-story, one-room house on the Jersey cape. As previously mentioned, Cape May County's heavy timber frame buildings are typically smaller and more humble than contemporary examples on Long Island and in the Massachusetts Bay area. In the latter two areas, flush boards or plaster over lath were the most common interior wall finishes in the decades just before and after the turn of the 18th century.

²¹ Abbott Lowell Cummings, *The Framed Houses of Massachusetts Bay, 1625-1725* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), p. 64.

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In Cape May County, however, six of the twenty-one first period houses exhibit signs of having no interior wall finish at the time of construction, with the backsides of the exterior clapboards or vertical flush boards providing the interior finish. These include the ca. 1700 Seagrave-Stites House (Middle Township, #61 in the *Survey*), the ca. 1695 Reeves-Iszard-Godfrey House (moved from Middle to Upper Twp, #25), the ca. 1695-ca. 1720 Garretson House (Upper Township, #69), the Richards Stites Jr. House (#27, originally thought to date to ca. 1765 but now dated at ca. 1694), and the ca. 1700 rear portion of the David Cresse-Clinton Hand House (Lower Township, #59). Of these, all but the rear portion of the Cresse-Hand House have some decoration—bead, chamfer, carving—on the corner posts and/or the corner braces, and all of these buildings, again except for the Cresse-Hand and the Corson houses, are two stories tall. The beading on the Corson House's exposed framing members suggests, then, that the builder of this small, one-story/one-room house with no interior wall finish felt his home was nevertheless worthy of an interior decorative sophistication, albeit modest, despite the plainness of the exterior finish and the most simple of floor plans. Although its builder may have lacked the financial resources to erect a larger home, he purposely chose to add the beaded edges—a time consuming task—to its frame.

Significance Under Criterion D/Archaeology

As an intact, early 18th century dwelling on its original site, the house also is eligible under criterion D/archaeology because it has tremendous potential to yield important archaeological information about the settlement and development of the New Jersey cape in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Because of a paucity of primary source documentation, very little is known about the lifestyles, socio-economic status, and habits of the county's earliest settlers.

Testimony in court records is terse, while diaries and letters from this time period are almost non-existent. Similarly, inventories of deceased county residents, the overwhelming majority of whom were farmers, are rarely as detailed or complex as those taken in the Massachusetts Bay and Long Island areas, and typically cite only summarized values of household goods, livestock, wearing apparel, and book debts. As cultural geographer Peter Wacker noted:

Eighteenth century [newspaper] advertisements do not discuss building techniques and the HABS [Historic American Buildings Survey] is skewed in the direction of high style residences. Outbuildings and folk or vernacular structures are rarely covered...The fact is that with certain classes of structures, one of the best data sources may well be in the sub-

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surface. Thus, the farmstead, with its complex of structures, should be a research and preservation priority.²²

Because the house stands on its original site, just feet from a road that was established in 1706, the integrity of this spatial relationship has been maintained since the house was built ca. 1710. Thus, many of the cultural deposits around the house, including those related to wells, privies, and other outbuildings, likely remain intact.

One of the current owners is a professional archaeologist (retired) who has undertaken a limited archaeological study during the course of making improvements to the house or surrounding landscape. The locations of the areas that were destined to be disturbed by these improvements are shown on the enclosed annotated site plan. The following partial list of items/artifacts of significance that were found in these areas suggests what might be discovered if a serious archaeological study of the site were to be undertaken:

Feature 1—a small trash pit containing lead glazed redware and a gun musket flint made in France

Feature 2—large 1860s+ trash pit containing a large quantity of bottles

Feature 3-- a late 1800s French drain leading from the original lean-to; it contained redware, conch and clam shells, drainage tiles, numerous brick fragments, and an old style monkey wrench [fig. 9]

Feature 4-- a conch shell border in front of the house which dates to the 1800s. [fig. 2]
Conch shells were once commonly washed up along the South Jersey coast line and their use for a decorative border illustrates an early vernacular gardening feature. Unfortunately, the border was destroyed by the first car crash, but those shells that did survive have been saved; the soil within them can be used for future seed and pollen studies.

Feature 5—back door broadcast: found oldest coin to date—a 1787 large cent—along with white salt glazed ceramic fragments and piles of coal cinders/coal ash

²² Peter Wacker, "New Jersey's Cultural Resources: A.D. 1660-1810," as included in New Jersey's Archeological Resources, A review of Research Problems and Survey Priorities: The Paleo-Indian Period to the Present, Olga Chesler, ed., (Trenton, NJ: Historic Preservation Office, Division of Parks and Forestry, NJ Department of Environmental Protection, 1982), p. 206.

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Feature 6—west side of chimney—1827 large cent found during restoration

Feature 7—nearly whole lead glazed legged crock as well as large milk dishes

Feature 8—a true surface dump with numerous glass shards; no artifacts were found underneath

Feature 9—found here were a hole filled with hundreds of clam shells and a surface clean out of a fire hearth

Other items found in these areas include horse shoes, shellfish, a variety of animal bones (deer, pig, cow), a number of pewter fragments, pipe stems from different time periods, buckles, and pearlware.

Because the house's period of significance ranges from ca. 1710 to ca. 1825, it presents a resource base for research into the topic of *dispersed settlements*, which was one of three areas that were determined to be priorities for archaeological research in the 1660-1765 time period in New Jersey.²³

Based on historical research and the owner's limited archaeological study, several important data sets are known or are expected to be represented on this site. These data sets can contribute important information, largely absent in historical accounts, about four main topics: (1) the relationship between the house and its outbuildings, (2) building techniques and materials, (3) contrasts in artifacts, and (4) evidence of dietary differences.

As Wacker notes, the cultural resources associated with farmsteads in existence by 1765 have many scholarly uses. By this date, New Jersey "possessed the greatest cultural heterogeneity of any English colony" and contained within its borders a Dutch-settled area in the extreme northeast, a New England-settled area immediately to the south, an English Quaker region in the southwest, and a Pennsylvania-settled area in the northwest.²⁴ A late 20th century scholarly tug-of-war has one side claiming that such documentary evidence as wills and inventories suggests that in New Jersey there were few economic differences during the 18th century between people with different cultural origins, while others claim that—based on the above-ground built environment—there are great contrasts.²⁵

²³ Wacker, p. 212.

²⁴ Wacker, p. 207.

²⁵ Ibid.

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Thus, this site has the potential within a statewide context to determine if food habits were distinct, if the artifacts are different, and, if acculturation occurred, to what extent. Similarly, since the seaboard side of Upper Township was home to a large group of Quakers (the Corsons among them), the site has the potential to determine if there were any significant differences between this late 18th-early 19th century Quaker settlement and those along the east bank of the Delaware River on the other side of the state. The site also has the potential to determine the relationship between the house and its outbuildings, and to compare this relationship with others to see if there exist variations from region to region through time or cultural affiliation. Excavation of its site might also shed light on what trade patterns Cape May County residents engaged in, whether New York, Philadelphia, or both, and what impact—both cultural and economic—this trade produced.

Integrity under Criterion D:

Because the house stands on its original site, just feet from a road that was established in 1706, the integrity of this spatial relationship has been maintained since the house was built ca. 1710. However, the prolonged subdividing of the original 700+ acre farmstead over the years has impacted the site's integrity of setting with the proliferation of houses, historic and otherwise, around this property. Regardless, many of the cultural deposits around the house, including those related to wells, privies, and other outbuildings, likely remain intact.

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“Crashing Lunch: Car smashes historic home, startling man, dog sharing sandwich.” *The Press of Atlantic City*, 12-10-2002.

Public Documents and Archives

Berkey, Joan. *A Survey of the Heavy Timber Frame Buildings of Cape May County*. Cape May County Historical and Genealogical Society, 2003. [Cape May County Historical and Genealogical Society; NJ State Historic Preservation Office]

Cape May County Deeds, Mortgages, Tax Records, and Road Returns [Cape May County Clerk's Office, Cape May Court House, NJ]

Corson Family notes, Corson Family vertical file, Cape May County Historical and Genealogical Society.

First Period Buildings of Eastern Massachusetts Thematic Resource Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, 1990. [NJ State Historic Preservation Office]

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet
Section number 10 Page 1

John Corson, Jr. House
Cape May County, New Jersey

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary comprises block 566, lot 52 in Upper Township, Cape May County as shown on the current (2005) tax map.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The boundary of the nominated property is the one with which the property has been associated since 1844 and to extend the boundary would include buildings which have no known historical association with the property.

Returned

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
photographs**

John Corson, Jr. House
Cape May County, NJ

Typical Information for All Photographs

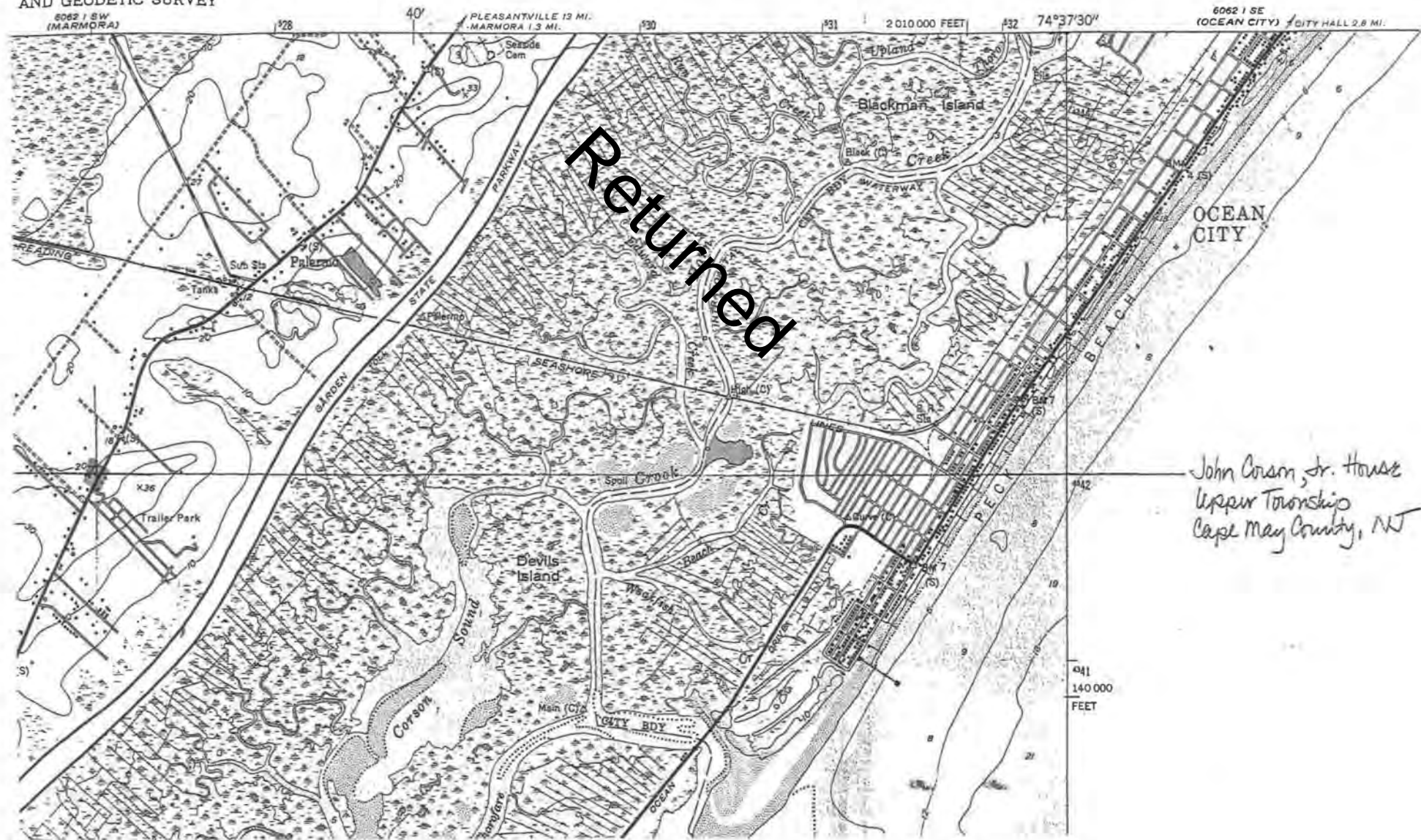
| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. Name of Property | John Corson, Jr. House |
| 2. County and State | Cape May County, New Jersey |
| 3. Photographer | Joan Berkey |
| 4. Date of Photograph | June 2005 |
| 5. Location of Digital Copies | Joan Berkey 1003 Bartlett Avenue Linwood, NJ 08221 and NJ State Historic Preservation Office |

Photo # and Description of View

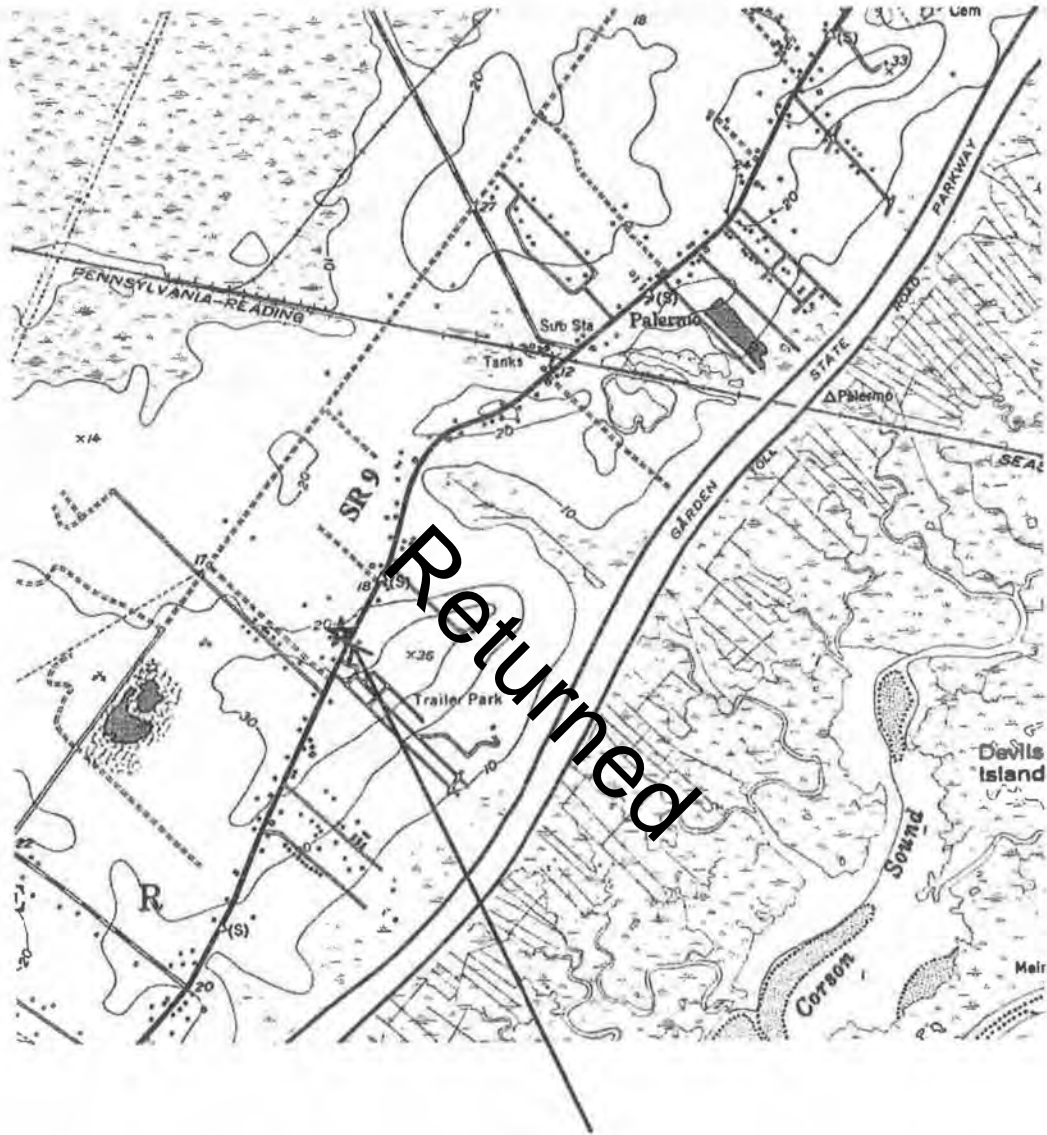
1. Exterior view showing setting and street scene; looking north along Route 9 (Seashore Rd.)
2. Exterior: façade (east elevation) and south (side) elevation; looking northwest
3. Exterior: north (side) and west (rear) elevations; looking southeast
4. Exterior: south (side) and west (rear) elevations; looking northeast
5. Interior: ca. 1710 parlor, first floor; looking southwest
6. Interior: ca. 1710 parlor, first floor; looking northeast
7. Interior: ca. 1820 bedroom in main block; looking southwest
8. Interior: ca. 1820 bedroom in main block; looking northeast
9. Interior: kitchen in 2004 addition, first floor; looking southwest
10. Interior: kitchen in 2004 addition; looking southeast toward front door
11. Interior: view north from 2004 addition to ca. 1710 parlor
12. Interior: craft room on second floor of 2004 addition; view southwest
13. Rear (west) yard showing water pond in the foreground, brick patio, and south garden; view south
14. Tool/Storage shed (non-contributing): east (façade) and north elevations; looking southwest
15. Privy (non-contributing): façade (east elevation) and south (side) elevation; looking northwest
16. Arbor (non-contributing); view northwest
17. Interior: den, view north

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
AND GEODETIC SURVEY

SEA ISLE CITY QUADRANGLE
NEW JERSEY—CAPE MAY CO
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

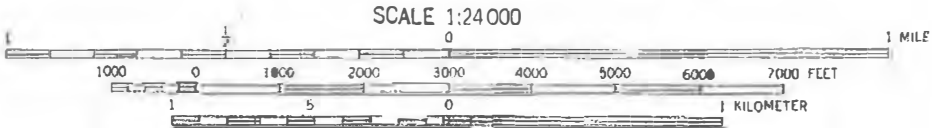


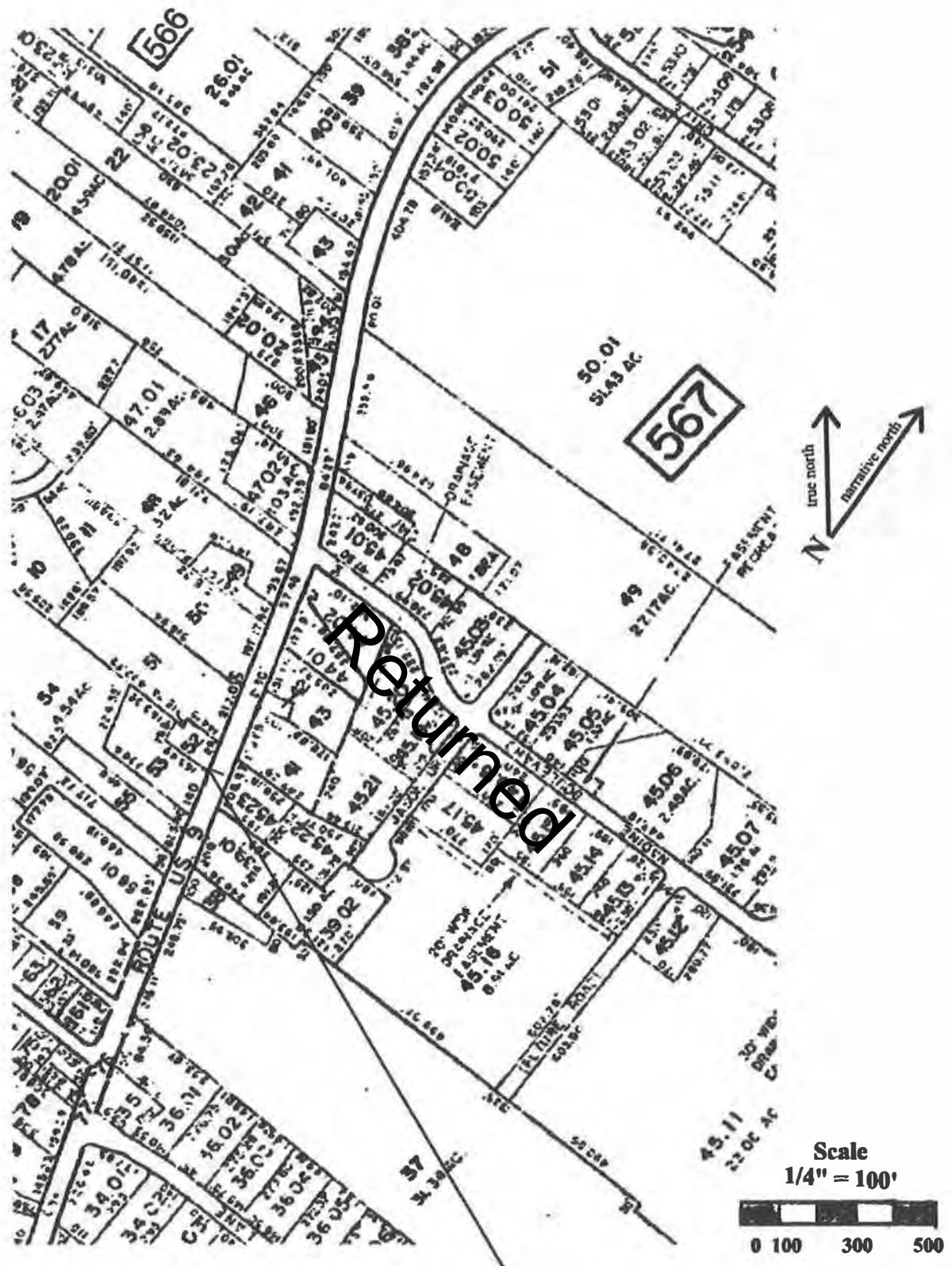
John Corson, Jr. House
Upper Township
Cape May County, NJ



**USGS Map
Sea Isle Quad**

partial photocopy
showing the location of the
John Corson, Jr. House

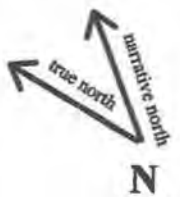




John Corson, Jr. House
 Upper Township,
 Cape May County, NJ

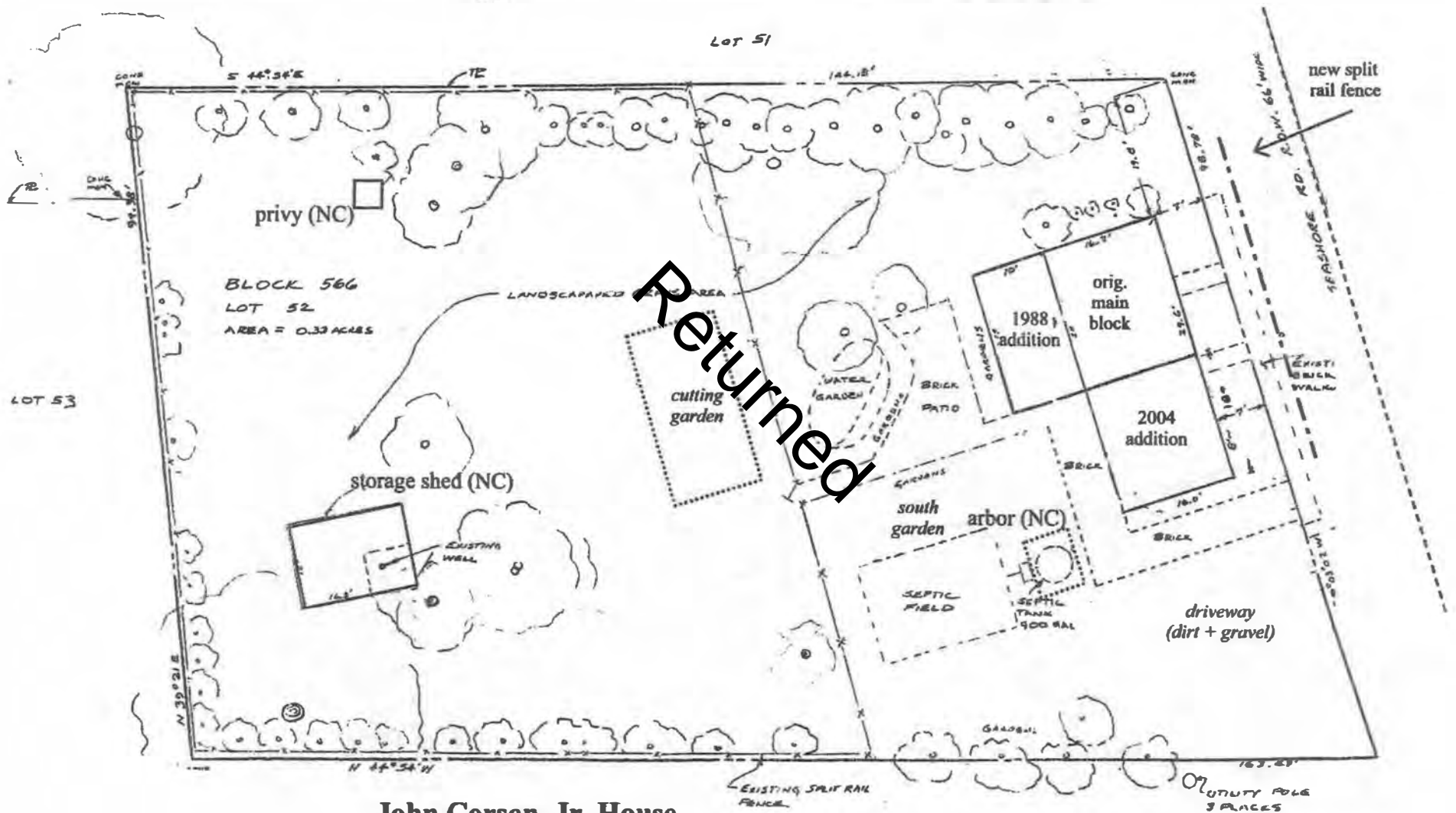
*tax map of Upper Township annotated to show location (block 566, lot 52)***

***note that the shape of the lot is inaccurate on the tax map*



NC = non-contributing

Scale
1" = approx. 25'



John Corson, Jr. House
Upper Township, Cape May County, NJ
site plan

7/2005

John Corson, Jr. House
Upper Township,
Cape May County, NJ

second floor plan with reflected ceiling plan

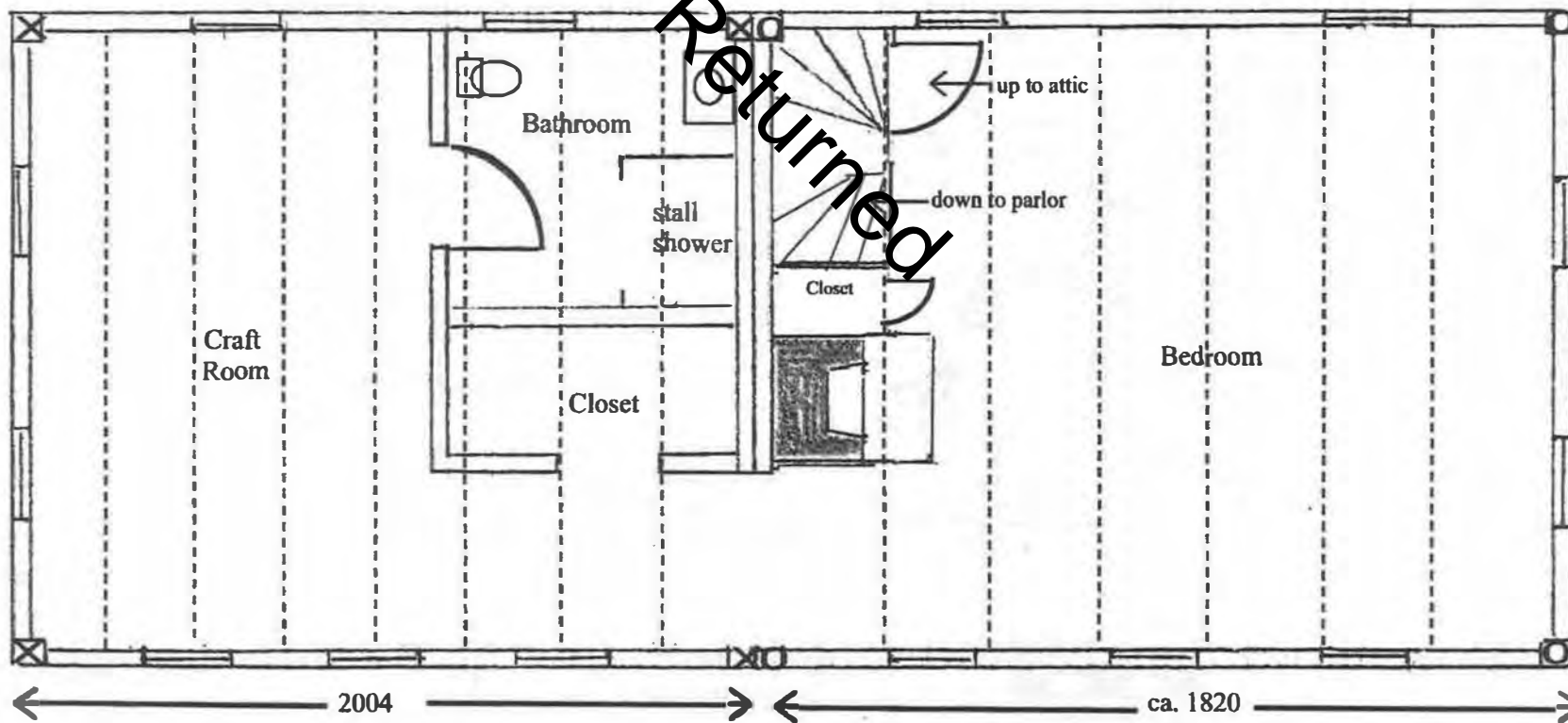
Scale
1/4" = 1'

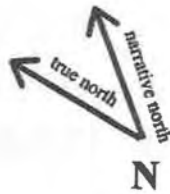


☒ exposed gunstock
corner post

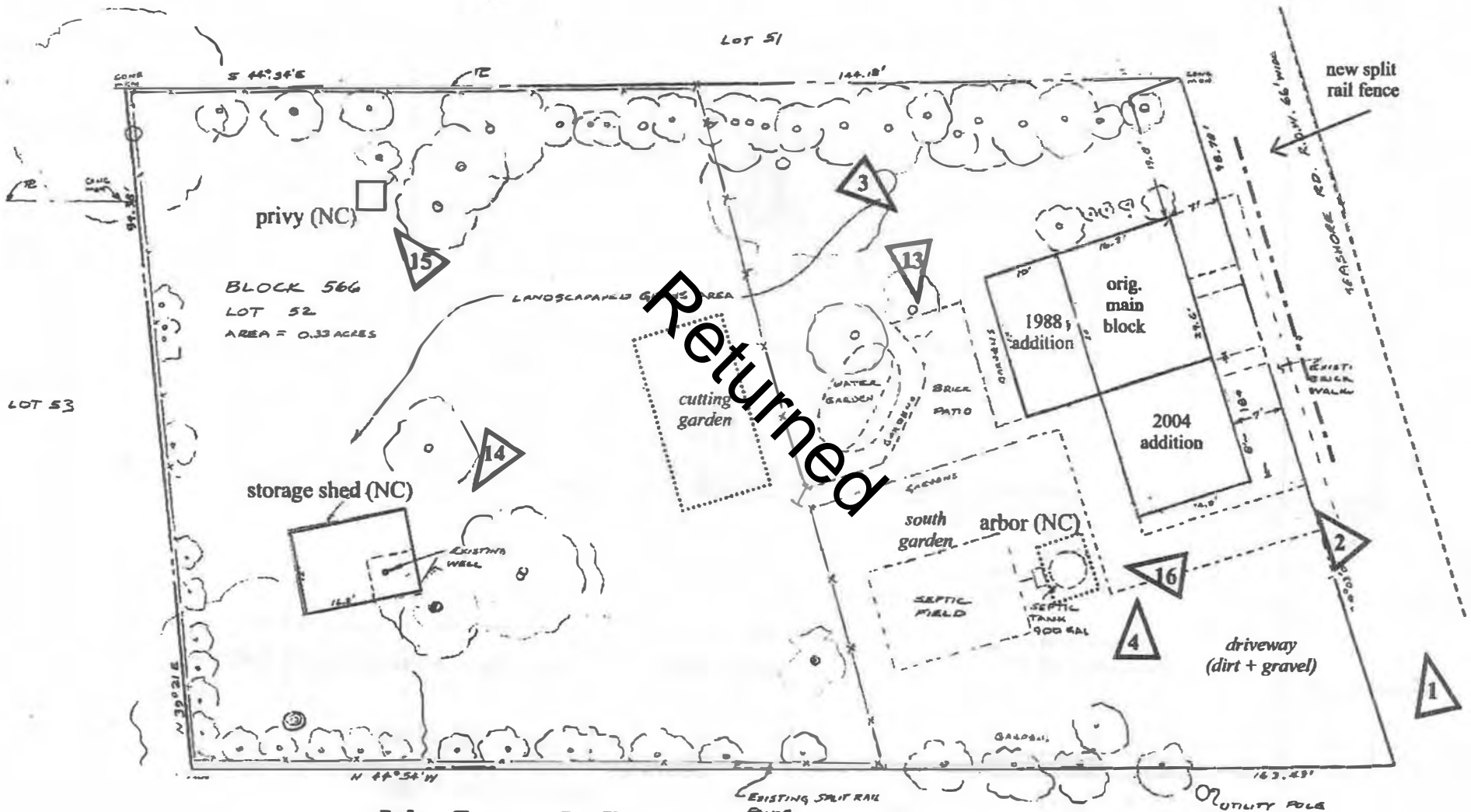
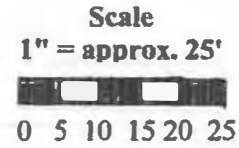
○ straight corner post

7/2005





NC = non-contributing



John Corson, Jr. House
Upper Township, Cape May County, NJ
site plan annotated for photographs

7/2005



Figure 3: the house before the 2002 car accident

View northwest, showing the mid-19th century lean-to on the south end of the house.



Figure 4: the house immediately after the December 2002 car crash

[The Press of Atlantic City, 12-12-2002]

Supplemental Images



Figure 1: 1872 Beers Map, Seville inset

On this map, the house appears as the residence of C. [Curtis] E. Corson.

Returned

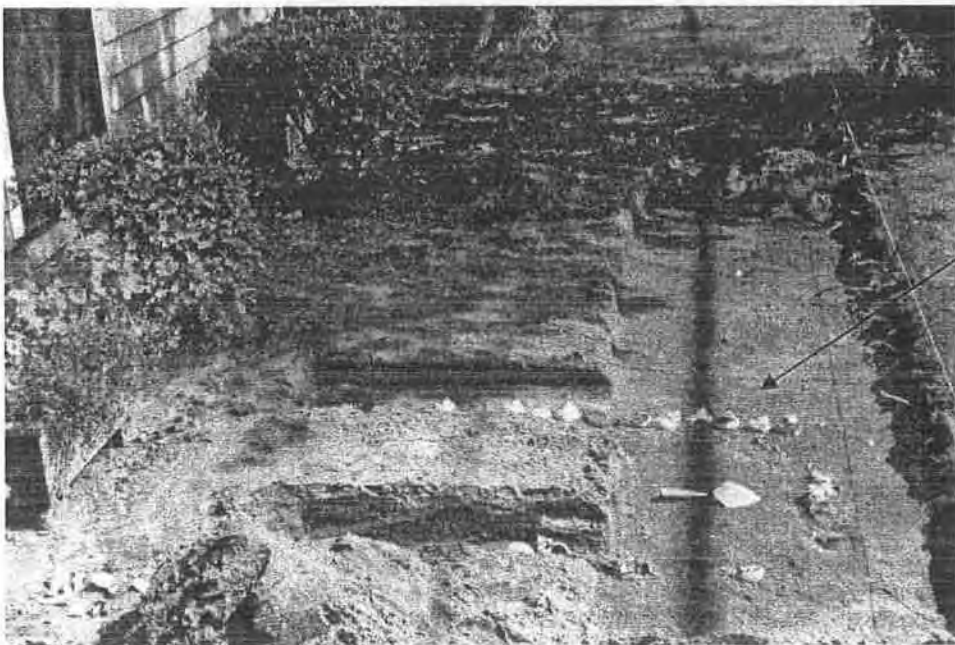


Figure 2: conch shell border

This garden feature in front of the house was discovered by the owner when installing a brick walkway. Photo taken in 1984.

[photograph courtesy of the owners]



Returned

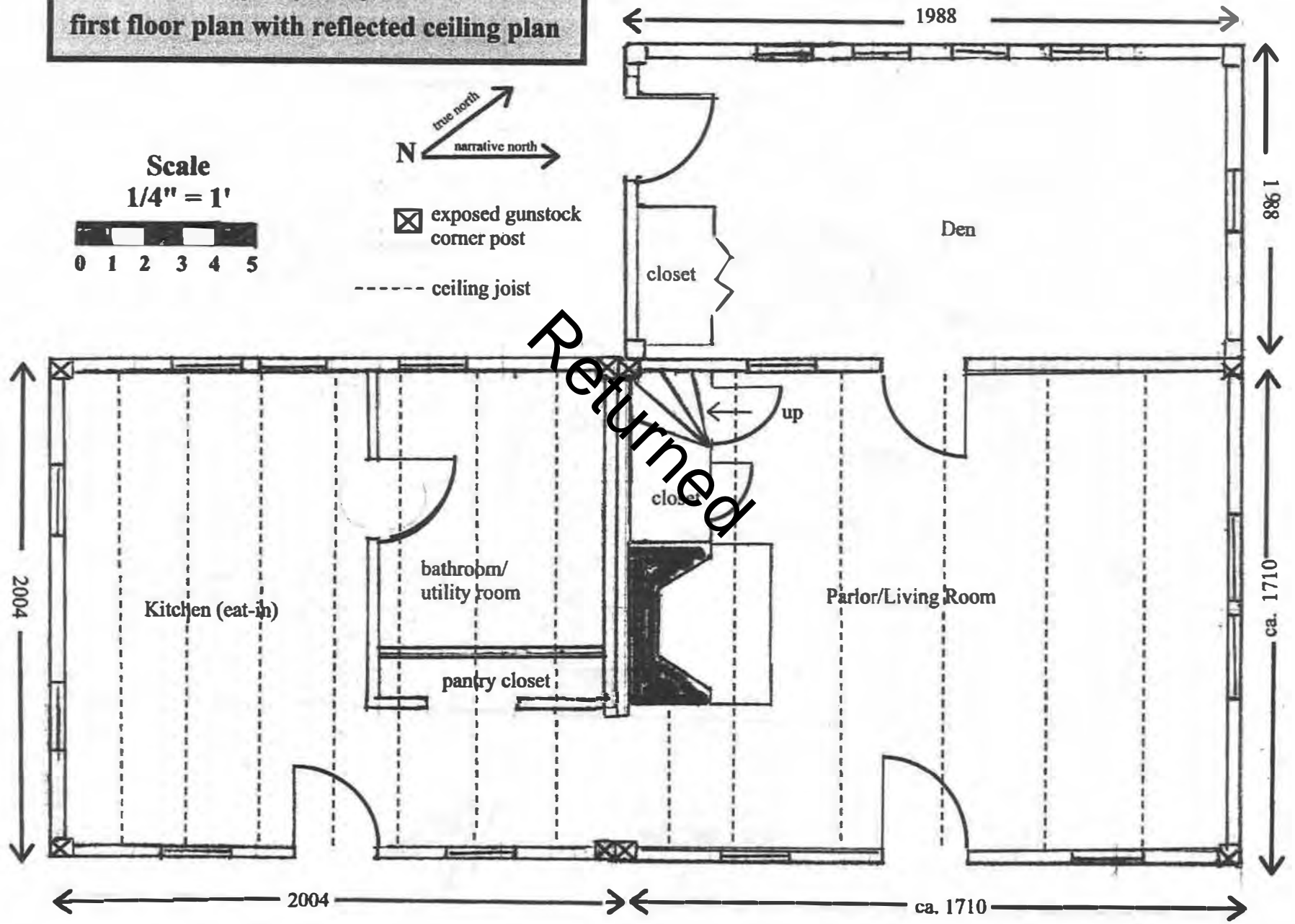
John Corson, Jr. House
 Upper Township,
 Cape May County, NJ
first floor plan with reflected ceiling plan

Scale
 1/4" = 1'
 0 1 2 3 4 5



⊠ exposed gunstock corner post

----- ceiling joist

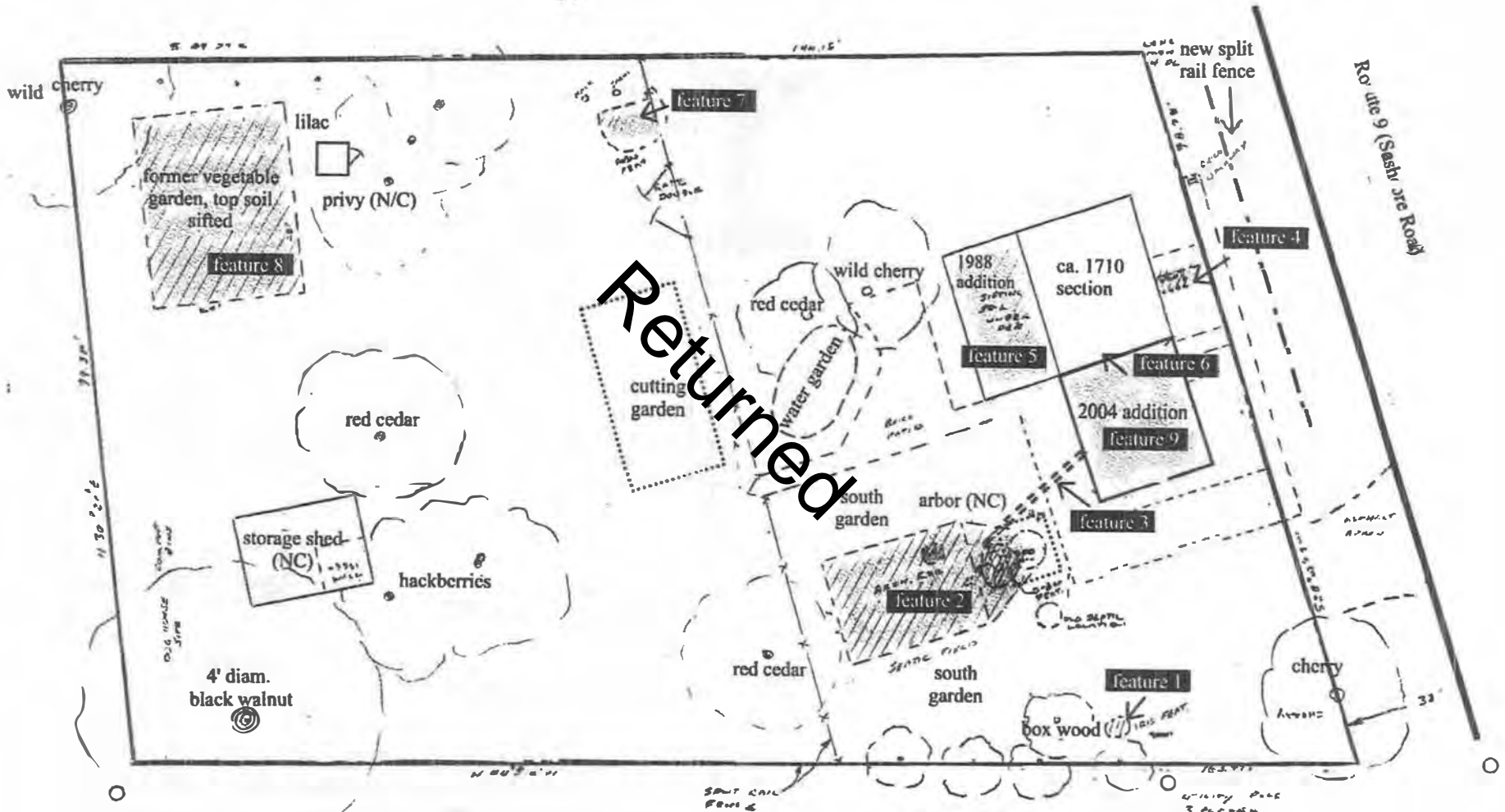




Scale
1" = approx. 25'
0 5 10 15 20 25

archaeological areas

NC = non-contributing



John Corson, Jr. House
Upper Township, Cape May County, NJ

Lot 53

7/2005

site plan annotated to show archaeological areas/features



Figure 3: the house before the 2002 car accident

View northwest, showing the mid-19th century lean-to on the south end of the house.



Figure 4: the house immediately after the December 2002 car crash

[The Press of Atlantic City, 12-12-2002]

John Corson, Jr. House
 Upper Township,
 Cape May County, NJ

second floor plan annotated for photographs

Scale

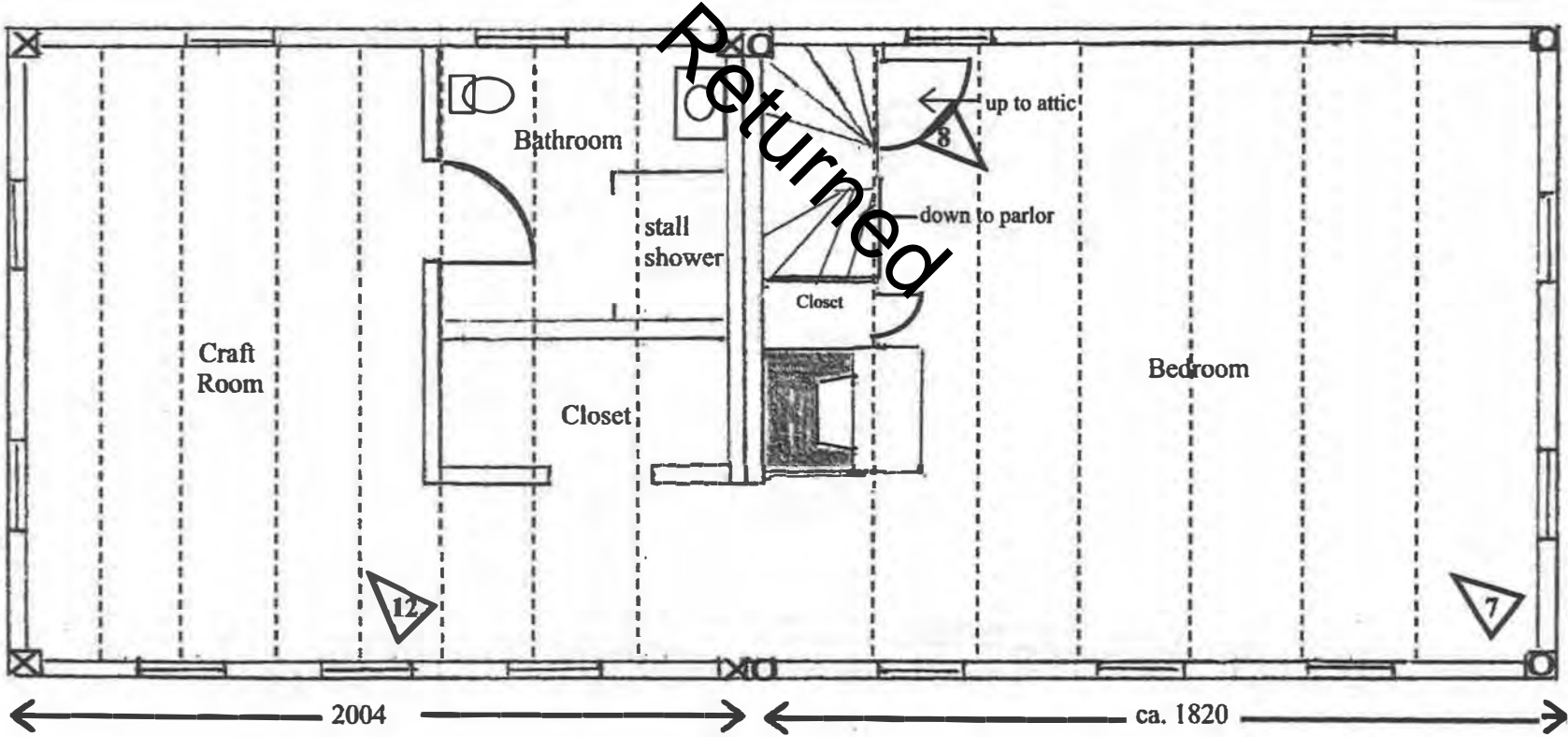
1/4" = 1'



⊠ exposed gunstock corner post

⊡ straight corner post

7/2005



John Corson, Jr. House
 Upper Township,
 Cape May County, NJ
first floor plan annotated for photographs

7/2005

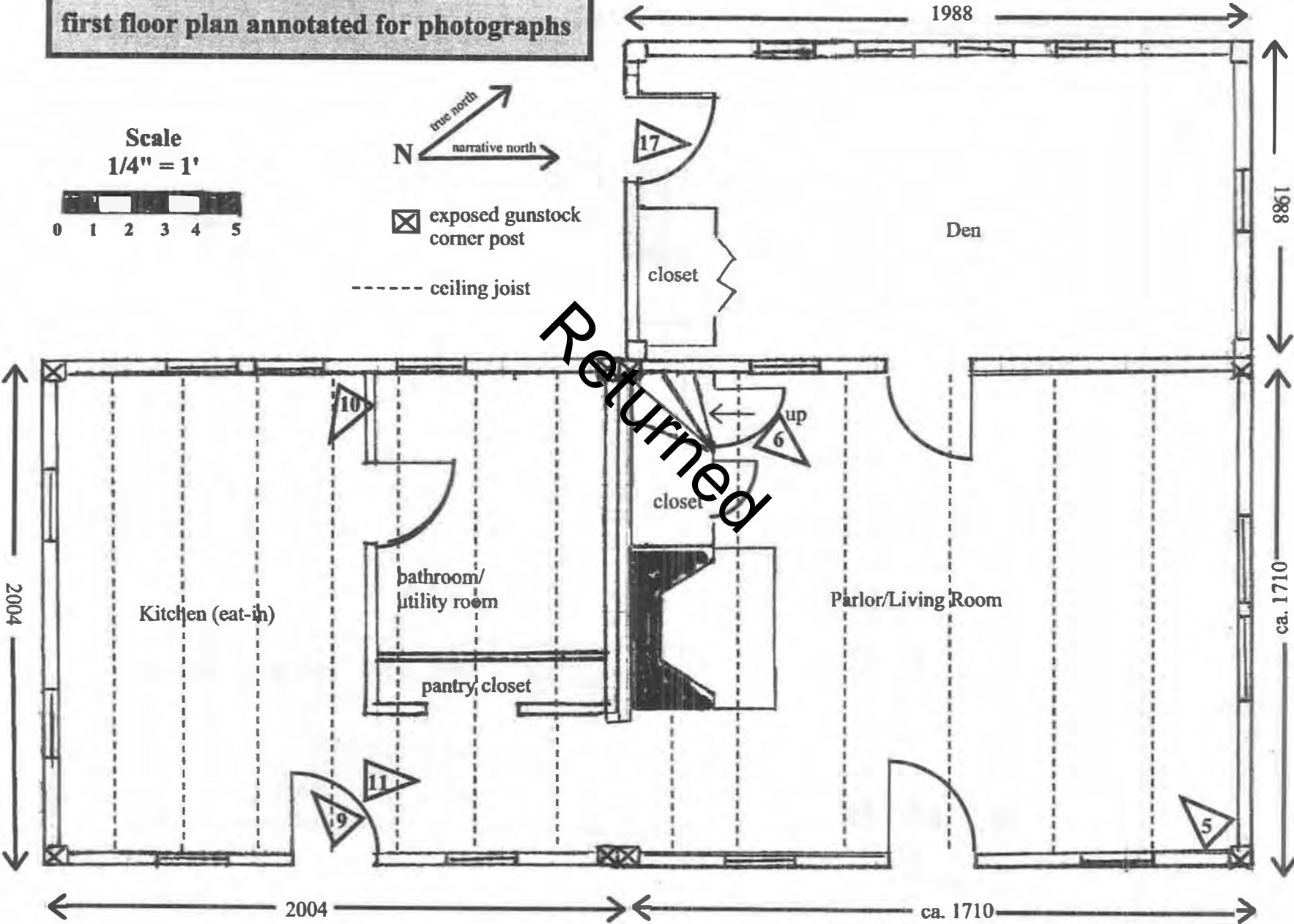
Scale
 1/4" = 1'



☒ exposed gunstock corner post

----- ceiling joist

Returned



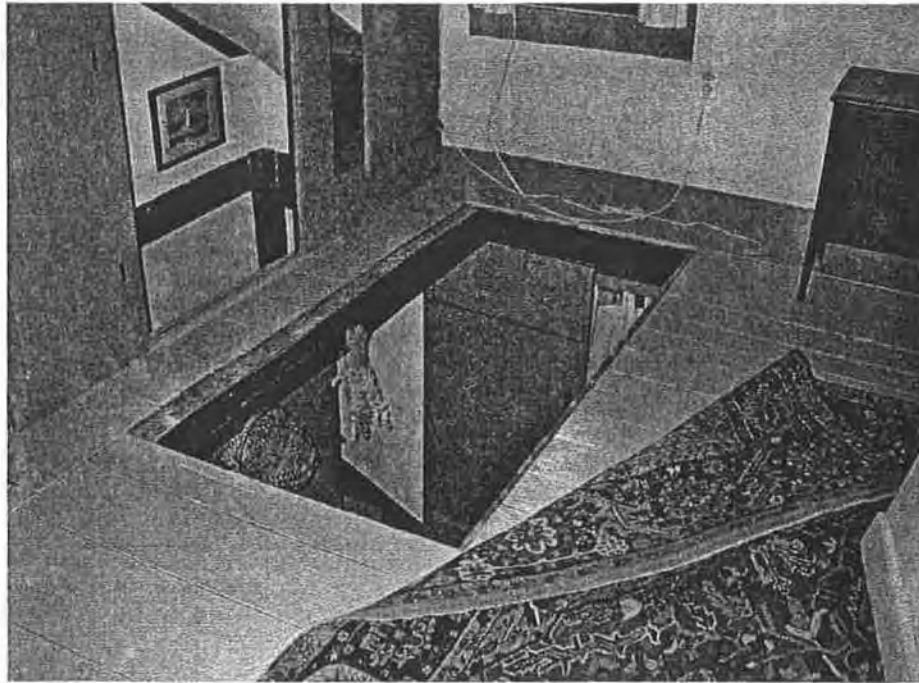


Figure 7: "coffin door" opening in the floor of the bedroom

Left: bedroom, view of "coffin door" in southwest corner, looking southwest; the upper faces of the two floor joists which support the door show marks of a pit saw. Also note that the top of the corner post in the winder terminates at the second floor—visible proof that the house was originally one-story tall. View southwest.



Figure 8: ca. 1800-1820 Spicer Leaming House

Although the house looks as though it was built in two sections, it was erected with two front doors from the beginning. The house stands in Historic Cold Spring Village in Lower Township, Cape May County, NJ.

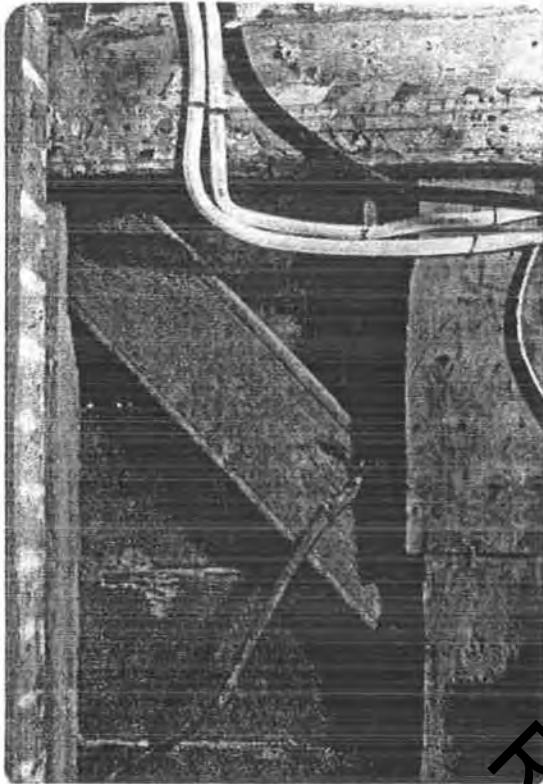


Figure 5: one of the original beaded corner braces, showing bead on both interior edges

This photograph was taken during renovations to the house prior to the car accident in 2002. Note also the wallpaper fragments on the top girt under the wires.

[photo courtesy of the owners]



Figure 6: corner post showing part of horizontal nailer *in situ*

Left: exterior (east) face of the southeast corner post that was broken in half after the car crash in December 2002, showing the piece of original horizontal studding *in situ* which acted as a nailer for the original vertical board siding. The nailer's interior face is beaded on both edges.

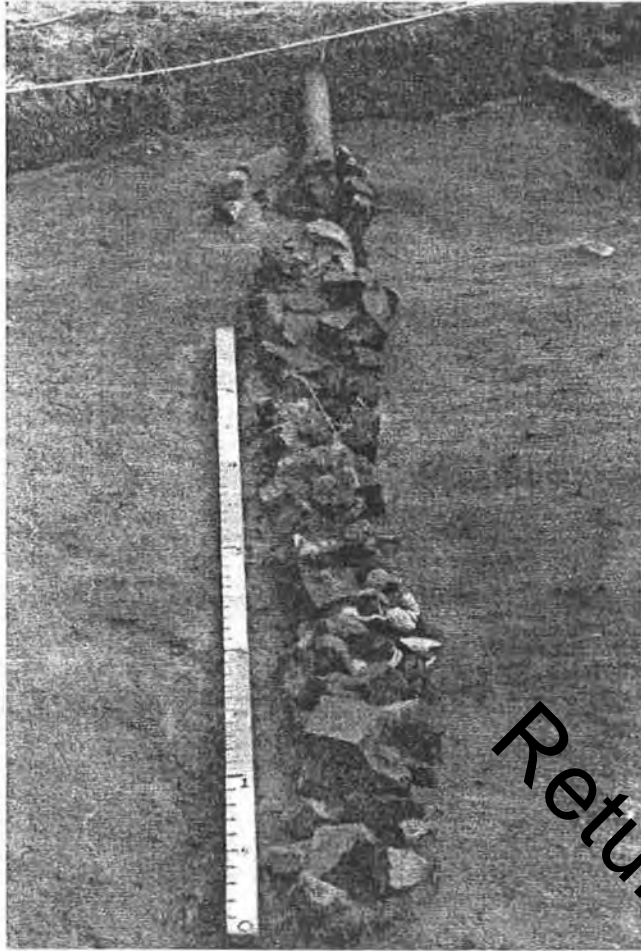


Figure 9: French drain feature

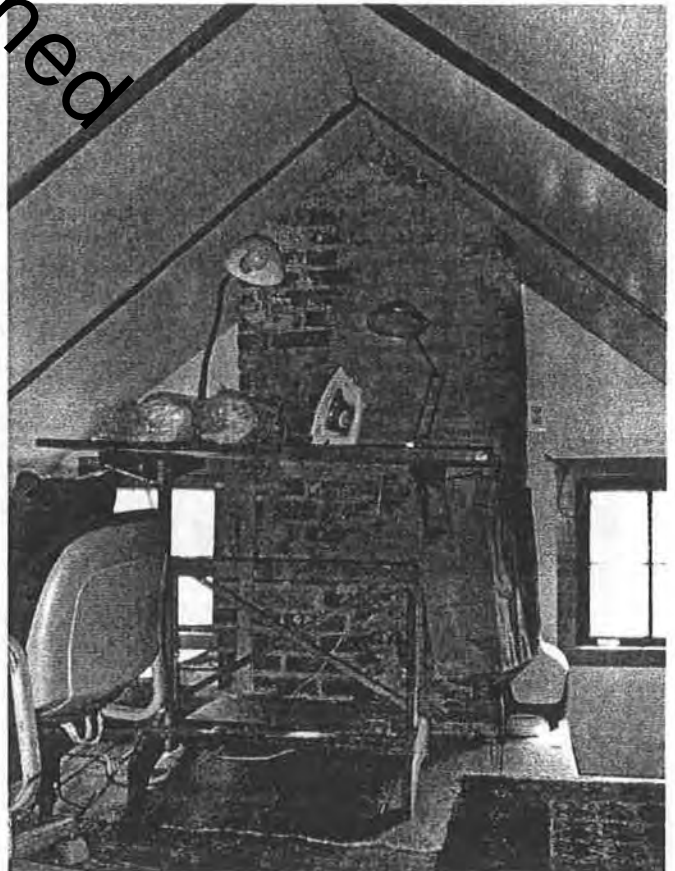
This photograph, taken by the owner in 1986, shows the artifacts comprising the French drain feature. View northeast.

[photograph courtesy of the owner]

Returned

Figure 10: attic in main block

This view, taken in 2003 before the building of the 2004 addition, shows the large chimney stack at the south end of the main block. View south.



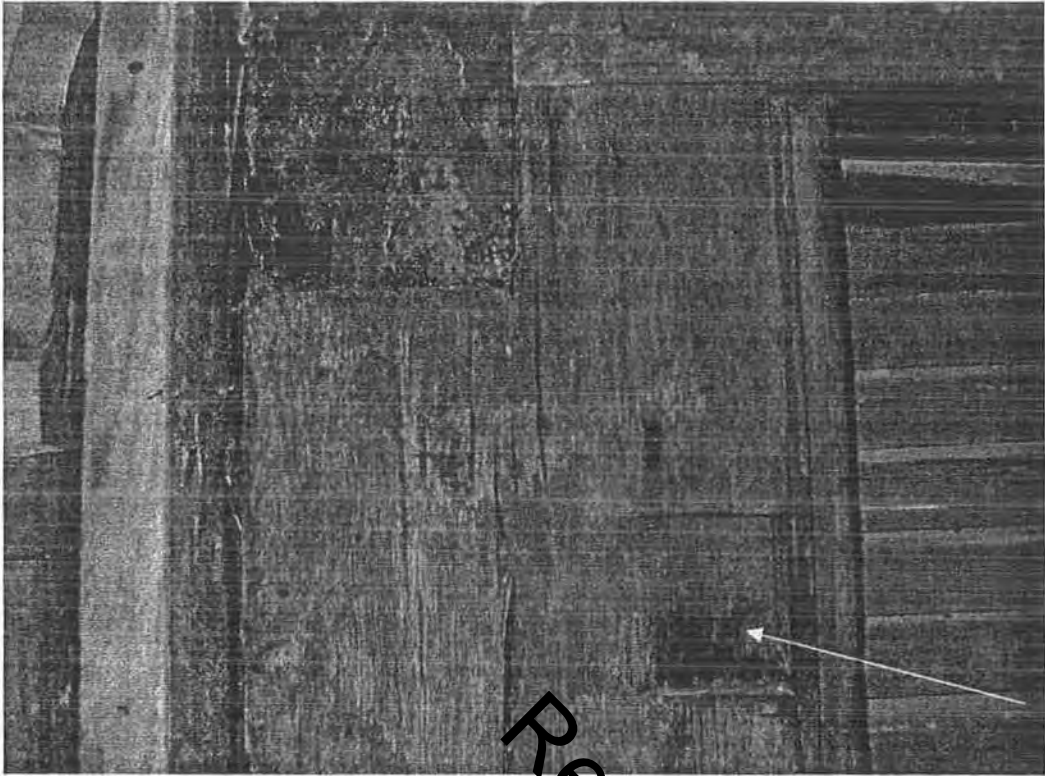


Figure 11:
exposed south
wall of main
block, 2003

This view shows the original, ca. 1710 southwest corner post (to the left) with the open gain that originally held a door header. This door opened into a lean-to, no longer extant. View north.

Open gain in corner post

Returned



Figure 12: Vacant mortise for half-dovetail joint on south (side) girt

This view shows the vacant mortise, with a peg in the hole, for the half-dovetail joint that joined the corner brace (no longer extant) on the south wall of the main block in the east corner to the south (side) girt. View north.

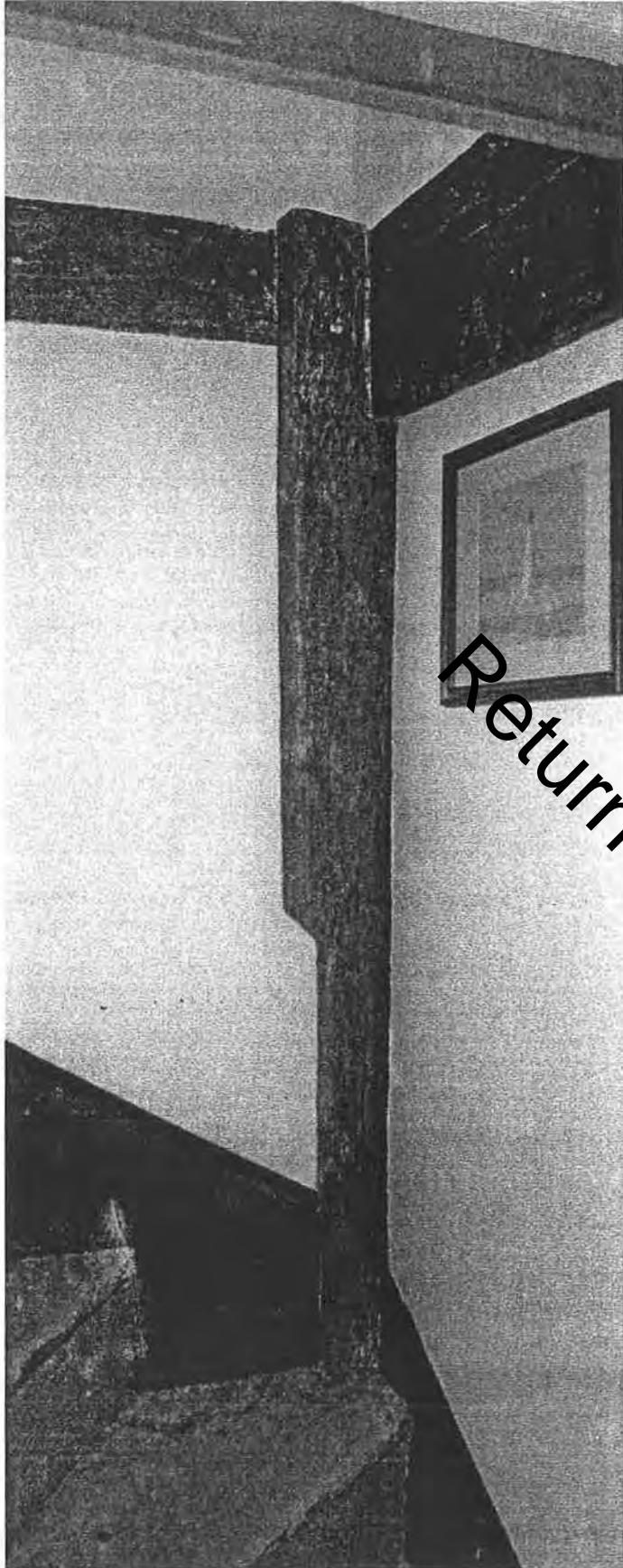


Figure 13: gunstock corner post in the southwest corner of the main block

View southwest. Note that it terminates at the one-story level.



Figure 3: the house before the 2002 car accident

View northwest, showing the mid-19th century lean-to on the south end of the house.



Figure 4: the house immediately after the December 2002 car crash

[The Press of Atlantic City, 12-12-2002]



HPO-F2006-235

State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

JOHN S. CORZINE
Governor

Natural and Historic Resources
PO Box 404
Trenton, NJ 08625
TEL: (609) 292-3541 FAX: (609) 984-0836

LISA P. JACKSON
Commissioner

John W. Roberts, Acting Chief
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240



Dear Mr. Roberts:

I am pleased to submit the John Corson, Jr. house, Cape May County, New Jersey for National Register consideration.

This application has received majority approval from the New Jersey State Review Board for Historic Sites. All procedures were followed in accordance with regulations published in the Federal Register.

Should you want any further information concerning this application, please feel free to contact Dorothy P. Guzzo, Administrator, New Jersey Historic Preservation Office, P.O. Box 404, Trenton, New Jersey 08625 or call her at (609) 984-0176.

Sincerely,

Amy Cradic
Deputy State Historic
Preservation Officer

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Corson, John, Jr., House

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW JERSEY, Cape May

DATE RECEIVED: 6/30/06 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 7/14/06
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 7/29/06 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/13/06
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 06000686

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: Y PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 8/11/2006 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

See Attached Return Sheet for detailed comment.

RECOM./CRITERIA Return
REVIEWER Patricia Andrews DISCIPLINE Historian
TELEPHONE _____ DATE 8/11/2006

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Property Name: John Corson, Jr. House
Cape May County, NJ

Reference Number: 06000686

Reason for Return:

The John Corson, Jr. House was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places for architectural importance under National Register Criterion C and for information potential under National Register Criterion D. The nomination is being returned because the John Corson, Jr. House has lost historic integrity due to a new addition and the form has not established that the property meets Criterion D.

The Statement of Significance claims that the John Corson, Jr. House is architecturally significant as a well-preserved example of First Period (ca. 1695-1730) heavy timber frame construction in Cape May County, New Jersey. In 2004 the historic integrity of the John Corson, Jr. House was destroyed when an addition was added to the facade of the building. The size, placement, and detailing of the addition all violate the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* and gives the John Corson, Jr. House an appearance it never had historically.

The standards and guidelines for rehabilitating historic buildings provide that in order to preserve the historic integrity of a building, modern additions should be located at the rear or on an inconspicuous side of the historic building, that the addition should be limited in size and scale in relationship to the historic building, and that the new addition should be designed in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new. The 2004 addition, which was placed on the building's facade, doubled the size of the John Corson, Jr. House, and is designed to appear historic (being copied from other historic houses in the county). While the addition was made 4 inches shorter than the original section of the building, this slight difference is not sufficient to distinguish the addition as new construction.

While the John Corson, Jr. House does not meet National Register Criterion C, it may be eligible for archeological significance under Criterion D. To be listed under Criterion D the form would need to

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Property Name: John Corson, Jr. House
Cape May County, NJ

Reference Number: 06000686

p. 2

be rewritten to nominate the property as a site and additional information would have to be provided. See the attached comment by National Register of Historic Places archeologist Erika Martin Seibert.



Patrick Andrus
Historian
National Register of Historic Places
8/11/2006

The John Corson, Jr., House may be eligible for the National Register under Criterion D for the potential to provide important information about the layout of the property (i.e., relationship of the buildings and other features), building techniques, and information about the lifeways of New Jersey's early settlers, however the nomination should be rewritten to nominate the archeological site at this property and be resubmitted. Perhaps a more appropriate name for the property that would reflect its nomination under Criterion D would be the John Corson, Jr. House Site. Information about the physical features and investigations of the site should be moved to Section 7. More detailed information about the archeological resources and investigations should be included (see below) as well as any additional maps and photos related to the artifacts, features, and excavations. Additional context with regard to 17th and 18th century farmsteads in New Jersey may also be appropriate. Please do not hesitate to call with questions or concerns.

Section 7

Please move all information with regard to the physical description of the site to Section 7. Please make sure the description includes information on the extent of the site and its boundaries, how these were determined, any detailed information about the excavations, any detailed

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Property Name: John Corson, Jr. House
Cape May County, NJ

Reference Number: 06000686

p. 3

information from the excavations about the stratigraphy and integrity of the archeological resources, and any information on the methodology of the investigations (When was it done? Who did it? How many units, stps, etc. were put in, where, and why? Where are the artifacts stored? Will the artifacts be analyzed/curated?). While not necessary for the site to be eligible, please specify if the property has a state site number and if a report was ever completed, or is in progress, for the investigations.

Since it appears that the majority of the features located during excavations were destroyed, what evidence (besides the fact that there were artifacts and features recovered during the previous investigations) do the authors have that cultural deposits on the remainder of the property are likely intact? Does documentary research indicate the location or existence of other outbuildings at the property? Are these other outbuildings/features within the proposed boundaries of this property? Please be specific about how the disturbances to the property have affected the archeological resources here. What percentage of the site is destroyed? What percentage is left?

Section 8

The historical background section of Section 8 is still appropriate, as is the summary paragraph on Criterion D and information on the research potential, but if resubmitting the property for Criterion D only, please remove the context on timber framing and perhaps add context appropriate to the research potential of the site (i.e., perhaps information on the settlement and development of 17th and 18th century farmsteads in New Jersey).

Photos/Maps

Any other photos and/or maps of the excavations, artifacts, and/or location of features would be helpful.

Erika Martin Seibert,
Archeologist, National Register of Historic Places
(202) 354-2217
8/06



Proj. #05-0873
Chrono #: L2014-272

RECEIVED 2280



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION NATURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES

Office of the Assistant Commissioner
MAIL CODE 501-03A
PO Box 420
Trenton, New Jersey 08625
609-292-3541 / FAX: 609-984-0836

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

December 17, 2014

Paul Loether, Chief
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the John Corson Jr. House Site, Upper Township, Cape May County, New Jersey. The nomination – National Register reference number 06000686 - was previously submitted in 2006 as the John Corson Jr. House, and was returned. Please see the attached Evaluation/Return Sheet.

A revised nomination was unanimously approved by the State Review Board for Historic Sites at their meeting of November 13, 2014. The nomination was sponsored by owners Richard and Denise Regensburg as being locally significant for its potential to contribute important archaeological information, absent in historic documents and accounts, about southern New Jersey's dispersed farm settlements, trade patterns and consumerism, agricultural practices, and diet. The site has the potential to provide answers to important research questions about the 18th century English-speaking settlers.

All procedures were followed in accordance with regulations published in the Federal Register.

Should you want any further information concerning this application, please feel free to contact Daniel D. Saunders, Administrator, New Jersey Historic Preservation Office, Mail code 501-04B, P.O. Box 420, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0420, or call him at (609) 633-2397.

Sincerely,

Rich Boormazian
Deputy State Historic
Preservation Officer