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NATIONAL REGISTER

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Merchiston Farm
other names/site number Bamboo Brook

2. Location

street & number Longview Road N/A not for publication
city, town Chester Township N/A vicinity
state New Jersey code 034 county Morris code 027 zip code 07930

3. Classification

Ownership of Property		Category of Property		Number of Resources within Property	
				Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	6	0 buildings		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	1	0 sites		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	6	1 structures		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	2	1 objects		
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	15	2 Total		

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Helene A. Swache
Signature of certifying official Date 9/5/89
Assistant Commissioner for Natural and Historic Resources/DSHPO
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register. Entered in the National Register 11/13/89
 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:)

for Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Landscape
 Landscape/objects
 Domestic/single dwelling
 Agriculture/agriculture field
 Agriculture/agriculture outbuilding

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Landscape
 Recreation and Culture
 Education
 Domestic/single dwelling
 Other: Maintenance facilities

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Cent. Revivals/Colonial
 Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone/sandstone
 walls Wood/shingle
 roof Asphalt
 other Wood columned porch, pilasters
 Wood swan's neck pediment

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Merchiston Farm is a 100 acre estate comprised of a main house with five acres of designed landscape, a farm quadrangle of several buildings, and approximately 90 acres of fields and woods that are integral to the overall plan of the property. Owned by Martha Brookes Hutcheson from 1912 - 1959, the property retains much of the plan and features designed by Mrs. Hutcheson, the second professional female landscape architect in the United States. Built on a diminished scale from the huge Long Island and Massachusetts North Shore country estates Mrs. Hutcheson designed professionally, Merchiston Farm incorporates the fundamental precepts of design and components built into the grand estates of the early 20th century Country Place Era of landscape design. In addition, the simple 19th century farmhouse the Hutcheson's purchased in 1912, was transformed into a rambling, shingled Colonial Revival inspired residence around which the landscape was designed. The farm buildings of the 19th century working farm were also altered to fit into an overall scheme of the site while they continued to function for farming purposes until World War II. Today, Merchiston Farm, now known as Bamboo Brook, is owned and maintained by the Morris County Park Commission as an outdoor education center for the study of horticulture and is open year round for self-guided tours. The property is a gift from the daughter of Mrs. Hutcheson, Mrs. C. McKim Norton, who donated the site in parcels from 1972 to 1986.

Description

Merchiston Farm is located on Longview Road, a short distance from Rt. 206 in Chester Township, Morris County, New Jersey.(Fig.1) The approach to Bamboo Brook on Longview Road continues to look much as it did seventy-five years ago along a dirt road that passes under shade trees and passes rural

 See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

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

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Landscape Architecture

Period of Significance

1912-1935

Significant Dates

1912
1927

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Hutcheson, Martha Brookes

Architect/Builder

Hutcheson, Martha Brookes

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

Merchiston Farm is significant as the home of Martha Brookes Hutcheson, landscape architect, and for the extant landscaping Mrs. Hutcheson designed and executed on the property as an example of the Country Place Era of landscape design practised during the first three decades of the 20th century in America. Mrs. Hutcheson lived at Merchiston Farm from 1912-1959 and designed two site plans for the farm in 1912 and again in 1927, which embody the precepts and components of landscape architecture as practised on the large country homes of wealthy Americans between the turn of the century and 1933, the year of income tax reforms. As the second female landscape architect in the United States, Mrs. Hutcheson designed and supervised the implementation of over a dozen large commissions for estates in Massachusetts and Long Island as well as numerous smaller gardens around New York City and northern New Jersey. A major portion of Mrs. Hutcheson's design and its components remains at Merchiston Farm today, renamed Bamboo Brook, Outdoor Education Center, owned by the Morris County Park Commission.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A
 preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Morris County Park Commission

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 100.9 acres Gladstone, NJ Quad

UTM References

A 18 524540 4509060
Zone Easting Northing
C 18 524680 4508020

B 18 525180 4508520
Zone Easting Northing
D 18 524240 4508640

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

All 100.9 acres of Bamboo Brook/Merchiston Farm is included for nomination as Mrs. Hutcheson's landscape designs covered the entire property. The spatial relation between agricultural fields, woods and designed gardens is integral to her plans.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Nancy Strathearn Curator/Historian
organization Morris County Park Commission date February 3, 1989
street & number P.O. Box 1295 telephone (201) 326-7646
city or town Morristown state New Jersey zip code 07962-1295

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countryside. The simple dirt driveway, entering in the northern most corner of the property, gently curves into a circle axially aligned with the rear entrance of the house before continuing on to the quadrangle formed by farm buildings to the west of the residential area.

Main Residence (Domestic single dwelling- contributing bldg.)

The main dwelling as it appears today had been altered by the Hutchesons creating an amalgam of styles from 18th to 20th century architecture. The original structure was a simple side hall farm house with two rooms on the first and second floors and a full basement formed with two foot thick stone walls (Wood & Tower, 1970). Built in the late 18th century by Huguenot immigrants who fled Catholic persecution in France (Hunnel genealogy), the land was owned by Frederick Hunnel through the first quarter of the 19th century before selling a major portion to his daughter and son-in-law in 1839. An addition replicating the existing dwelling was built in 1848 (dated cornerstone) enlarging the home to a center hall with two rooms per floor on both sides. Greek architectural features including pilaster corner boards, entablature, and columned portico supporting a pedimented gable were probably added at that time. The land passed through several owners from 1854 through the 19th century eventually being sold to the Hutchesons in 1912 (chain of title among Hutcheson papers.)

The Hutchesons immediately set out to enlarge the dwelling. Early photographs show the house before alterations as a white clapboard house, five windows symmetrically placed across the second story of the east (front) elevation, two interior end chimneys, and a central door with side lights and columned portico. Floor plans and elevations drawn by Martha Brookes Hutcheson show the new addition for a two story wing having a first floor kitchen with central fireplace against the west wall, servants rooms, bath and sewing room on the second floor, and a one-story breezeway with arched doorways connected to a fourteen foot square ice house with ventilator atop the hipped roof. The addition was built onto the northern end of the house.

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A second addition by New York City architect, William Bottomley, of Bottomley, Wagner & White, in 1927, enlarged the house to its present configuration. A music room was added to the south elevation with two bay windows on the east side and a large bay window on the end elevation. The paneled interior included built-in bookcases and a large fireplace on the west side. The doorway on the east elevation was aligned with a garden axis (Axis D). A portico, arched to mimic the 1912 breezeway, was built over one of two west side doors, and supported a sleeping porch on the second floor. Bedrooms and a bath were built above the music room. The porch, built on the western elevation of the main block in 1912, was removed and a wooden swan's neck pediment was added over that door to mark the rear entrance to the driveway.

The house remains practically unchanged today from its 1927 appearance with the exception of kitchen renovations that appear to date to the 1940's. The music room serves as a meeting/classroom for Park functions and the bedrooms above are offices. The 19th century block and kitchen wing provided housing for the Secretary Director of the Park Commission until 1987. Currently vacant, the house is proposed to serve as office and meeting space for a non-profit organization based in Morris County in the near future.

Designed Landscape

Overview

As the house was altered in 1912 and again in 1927, Mrs. Hutcheson designed five acres of informal gardens, paths, hedges, axes, vistas, arbors and waterways to integrate the dwelling with its landscape. Her first plan, designed in 1912 and published in her book, The Spirit of the Garden (1923), still serves as the backbone of the site.(Fig.2) After the 1927 alterations to the house, Mrs. Hutcheson designed a new site plan, listing her scope of work for Merchiston Farm as a farm treatment combining gardens, swimming pool, wood walks, uses of springs, brook and wild growth, tennis court, observation arbor, vistas, walls,

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seats, farm and house approaches, and farm yard grouping of outbuildings (Hutcheson papers). (Fig. 3)

To relate the house to the landscape, photos show raising the grade around the house on a level with a nearby orchard by introducing broad rough stone steps and turf approaches. Two retaining walls remain, partially shrouded in masses of flowers and boxwood planted in the natural grade.

The early site plan shows eight axes aligned with the house and several allees. Mrs. Hutcheson writes in her book that the arrangement of the axis should not be barren and unimaginative in the treatment along its length and the objective point and its relation to the starting point should not be interrupted. Three axes through the house establish the relation between plantings and building. As stated in her book, "There are parts of the garden which are as essentially parts of the house, and there is no separating them if a successful scheme of the whole is to be realized." (p.50 The Spirit of the Garden) Paths, hedges and allees continue to be used to define the axis lines, e.g. cedars that create a tunnel effect directing the eye to a distant view.

Hedges, an important element in Mrs. Hutcheson's plans, serve as accent and background to border many of the paths. More pleasing to the eye than any other form of fencing, box hedges are used to delineate paths and as background for a stone bench built into a wall. Used as an enclosure, box hedges flank some of the broad descending paths leading to the swimming pool as well as the driveway to the farm quadrangle.

Arbors and gateways continue to add interest as they did in Mrs. Hutcheson's plans. The arbor placed at an intersection of two paths still achieves its original effect to draw the stroller under its interlacing branches of roses and clematis while allowing glimpses of the structure and sky above. Beyond the arbor a small gate is left ajar, a simple way of arousing curiosity beckoning the stroller to continue exploring (p.5 "Bamboo Brook Self Guiding Trail"). The

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observation arbor built next to the tennis court still provides a dappled shade that must have offered cool relief to tennis players when first built in the early 1930's. The tennis court is represented by a mowed grass surface including the net stanchions where the court surface once existed.

The use of water in Mrs. Hutcheson's plan is particularly effective at Merchiston Farm. The original pond, exposed and unattractive as seen in early photos, was improved with willow cuttings, Clethra, iris and spice bushes to soften the water's edge. With the alterations of 1927, the pond was replaced with a round swimming pool of stone lined with cement. An extensive water system created at that time still functions today. The spring, as noted in the early site plan, is used to create a small pool (Upper Water) that gently cascades down the slope of the land, passes underground into the swimming pool and reappears a short distance away as it travels under the Little House/Studio.

Many other features which Mrs. Hutcheson incorporated into her design still exist in good condition. Stone walls built by a mason she employed from 1927 to 1935 include two semi-circular walls with built-in benches, one of which provides the terminus for an axis. Baskets of fruit made of crushed stone manufactured in Italy still sit atop various walls. The ha-ha fence is still standing keeping the split rail fencing of the old cow run on each side out of the line of an axis. The child's playhouse, built for the Hutcheson's daughter, was moved to its present location in the 1927 change and serves as a potting shed and children's classroom for visiting school groups.

The gardens at Merchiston Farm were never designed as formal plantings by Mrs. Hutcheson. In keeping with a farm landscape, the effect of informality and naturalness was maintained with ordinary plantings probably selected for their hardiness and color. Unfortunately, no plant lists have been located to date, and very few survived the years of neglect before the Park Commission acquired the property. Based upon the few plant labels found in the ground, gardens have been planted with species that like the heavy shade that

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exists today in colors that were indicated on the surviving labels. Open turf areas are used more frequently than gardens to create spatial relationships with distinct boundaries. Indigenous trees used for allees and focal points are an important part of the design that remains. To replace the orchard that died off, flowering crab trees have been planted

Almost all of the structures incorporated in Mrs. Hutcheson's designs exist today which embody the important features of landscape architecture as practised by Mrs. Hutcheson. She clearly described those features in her book, The Spirit of the Garden, with numerous illustrations of Merchiston Farm as well as the large country estates for which she designed landscape.

Structures and Features of the Designed Landscape
(Landscape/objects)

Most of the features incorporated into Mrs. Hutcheson's 1927 site plan, as well as additions made in the 1930's, exist today in their same locations. Minor changes by the Park Commission are noted but essentially enough remains to maintain their historic significance associated with Mrs. Hutcheson.

Axes and Vistas (contributing object)

Perhaps the most important feature of Mrs. Hutcheson's plans is the use of axes and vistas. The 1912 site plan (fig.2) illustrates eight axes, two of which ran through the house. The rest were delineated by paths bordered by trees and lines kept open in the landscape to afford distant vistas. With the 1927 site plan, all the axes remained including Axis D which began in the new music wing built on the house.

Mrs. Hutcheson planned three important vistas. (fig.4) Two were part of axes (Axis C and Axis F) that began at the house and widened to broad views. The first vista started at the front porch, followed Axis C through the gardens and widened between two larches as it extended in a southeasterly direction. "Bow of Woods" vista began at the music wing and followed Axis F in a southern direction, broadening in scope to include part of distant woods. The third vista could be

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viewed from three points in the designed gardens including the music wing, the studio, and from a line at the eastern edge of the gardens. This vista diverged as it headed in a southwesterly direction towards the neighboring village of Pottersville. Today, Axes B, G and H afford distant views as initially designed. The remaining axes are shortened by overgrowth of trees but have distant terminating features such as gardens or benches. The Pottersville vista has been closed by far off woods but two red cedars, planted by Mrs. Hutcheson, in the furthest field of Merchiston Farm serve as the terminus.

Cedar Arbor (non-contributing object)

The original arbor was built into Mrs. Hutcheson's 1912 site plan. It was designed in a T pattern over the junction of two paths, one of which was Axis C. In the 1927 plan, the arbor was extended along Axis C.

The arbor was recreated with cedar poles by the Park Commission in the same design as the 1912 plan. (Fig.5:1) The structure supports roses and clematis which are kept trimmed to allow viewing patches of sky while walking through.

Because this arbor is a recreation, it is considered a non-contributing structure.

Playhouse/Potting Shed (contributing bldg)

The octagonal-shaped structure was built as a playhouse for Mrs. Hutcheson's daughter and is located on the 1912 site plan between the house and pond. It was moved next to the tennis court as seen in the 1927 site plan where it remains today. (Fig.5:2) Its function changed from playhouse to potting shed when Mrs. Hutcheson's daughter outgrew its original use. It serves as potting shed and classroom today. A small addition extending towards the tennis arbor was built by Mrs. Hutcheson in the 1930's.

The vertical board siding is stained in gray. The wood shingled roof has rolled tin seams over the joints of each wedge of the octagon. Three sets of windows with both six and nine lights are built along the southwestern side facing the gardens. The extension is built on a lower level as it descends towards the tennis arbor. An arched door on the arbor side mimics the arches in the main house.

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The interior of the octagon is built in diminutive scale for a child. Tongue and groove paneling fits between exposed joists on the walls. The ceiling has exposed rafters and lath. Simple 2x4 boards are built between wall joists to serve as shelves. Two dutch doors open to the outside and a double hung door opens into the extension. Three inch cedar floor boards still exude a pleasant aroma. A bench is built along one of the walls.

Stone Walls (contributing structure)

Stone walls are an important feature in Mrs. Hutcheson's designs. (Fig.5:3) She employed a caretaker/mason for eight years who constructed walls throughout the five acres of designed landscape. They define parts of the driveway, walkways, and terraces. They also serve as retaining walls throughout the sloping hillside, the tennis court and for a garden that borders part of the potting shed. Of particular interest are two built in stone benches. One is the terrace wall outside the music room and the other forms a semi-circular terminus for the path that travels under the cedar arbor. Six stone fruit baskets, made in Italy for Mrs. Hutcheson, are placed throughout the property on various openings in the stone walls.

Little House/Studio (contributing bldg)

Although not drawn on Mrs. Hutcheson's 1927 plan, a topographical map for the entire property, dated in the 1930's, shows the Little House situated on the edge of the designed landscape bordering the farm lands. (Fig.5:4) It was incorporated into the water features of Mrs. Hutcheson's plan with the same stream that originates in the Upper Water, feeds into the swimming pool, goes underground and surfaces in two cascading pools above the Little House. The Little House was built over the stream as it continues its course towards Bamboo Brook.

The one story, gable roofed structure is imitative of a bungalow with an overhanging roof forming a porch facing the farm fields. Decorative arches form each end of the porch which has a flagstone deck. The roof is in asphalt shingle. Small one room extensions form an abbreviated T plan to the house. The clapboard siding is painted a cream color with white trim and plank shutters. The east and west facades of the main body each hold a large window made of four windows with eight panes per window. Double sets of the same eight-paned windows are found on the porch facade, the opposite side facing the gardens (three sets of these windows) and on

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each side extension. A door opens in the porch facade and a dutch door on the opposite side.

The interior remains in its original rustic condition. One large room makes up the main block with two small rooms formed by the side extensions. The ceiling has exposed wood rafters and the walls are unfinished with exposed joists and sheathing for the clapboard. The space is heated with a wood burning stove centrally located. The floor is cement.

Remnants of a cedar arbor outside the door facing the garden remains.

Believed to have been used as Mrs. Hutcheson's studio and now as storage space, the cottage has no alterations to its original design.

Tennis Court and Arbor (contributing structure)

The tennis court, as shown on the 1927 site plan, originally had a clay court. (Fig.5:5) Stone retaining walls create a flat playing surface built into the gently sloping hillside. The northwestern wall, built into the side of the hill, creates one boundary. A semi-circular viewing area was built on the hill above the court with a three foot high stone wall for seating. (Fig.5:6)

Built along the southwestern boundary is a rectangular-shaped arbor with a semi-circular entrance. (Fig.5:7) A stone wall in heights varying from two to four feet high, depending upon the slope of the hill, creates the edges of the arbor. Fourteen stone pillars support the overhead framing, rebuilt by the Park Commission, upon which wisteria is clinging.

Today the court surface is maintained as a closely clipped grass area. The net stanchions remain in place in line with the path that exits the arbor. Although the tennis court is gone, the stanchions and walls clearly define the original use of the area.

Cold Frames (contributing structure)

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Three cold frames, two of which appear on the 1927 site plan, remain in the ground to the southwest of the cedar arbor. (Fig.5:8) The two on the plan are made of cement, the third is of stone and probably built in the 1930's while the mason was employed at Merchiston Farm. They are approximately four feet deep and twelve feet long. Their southern walls are slightly lower than the opposing wall in order to capture the sun.

One frame continues to function as a protected starting area for young plants. Slat covers protect seedlings from excessive sunlight. The other two frames now function as compost bins without affecting their construction.

Ha-Ha Fence (contributing structure)

The ha-ha fence is noted on the 1927 site plan. The stone wall was built into a section of split rail fence that was originally a cow run. The ha-ha is part of Axis H as seen on the 1912 site plan which, in 1927, became a continuum of the axis as it parallels the front of the house beginning with an allee of white cedar trees, crosses over the swimming pool and through the ha-ha for an uninterrupted vista. The cow run side of the fence retains the ditch that prevented the cows from escaping yet allowing the retaining wall to not be seen from the opposite side. (Fig.5:9)

Water Features of the Designed Landscape (contributing object)

Upper Water

Water is another important feature of Mrs. Hutcheson's landscapes. For Merchiston Farm, the extensive use of water appears natural, yet an elaborate underground system of pipes artificially channels the water. The Upper Water was created for Mrs. Hutcheson's 1927 plan and is the highest visible source of water from which the water is gravity fed throughout the rest of the system. The quiet pool is

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bordered with shrubs and the dipping branches of a small tree. A wooden bridge straddles the stream that cascades out of the southern end of the pool. (Fig.5:10)

The stream submerges a short distance from the pool, re-emerges as a gently cascading stream for twenty-five feet in a southerly direction, submerges again through pipes until it flows into the swimming pool. The stream continues underground and surfaces on the far side of a stone-walled walkway where it passes through two small pools, travels under the Little House and on down the property to Bamboo Brook.

Swimming Pool/Reflecting Pool

When the Hutcheson's purchased the farm in 1912, there existed a plain, functional farm pond to the south of the house. Mrs. Hutcheson's 1912 site plan and photos taken for her 1923 book, show the effective use of shrubs, willow trees, and flowers to soften the water's edge and incorporate the pond into the designed landscape. The 1927 plan shows the transformation of the pond into a swimming pool. Designed as a round pool with an underwater bench built into one half of the circular wall, the pool is part of the elaborate water system. The walls are stone and lined with cement. Six paths, some with broad stone steps, and some bordered with boxwood, descend to the pool. (Fig.5:11)

No longer used as a swimming pool, the Park Commission maintains it as a reflecting pool. Flower gardens seen around the pool in 1935 photos have been put into grass.

Lily Pool and Watercress Tank

The lily pool, located to the east of the Little House, is built of stone and lined with cement on the walls. Its irregular shape blends with its surroundings. The pool was uncovered only a few years ago but its function is labeled on a sketch of the water system by Mrs. Hutcheson who noted that its water came from an overflow of the watercress tank.

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Today it merely holds water as the water is too cold to support lilies. (Fig.5:12)

A crescent-shaped pool of cement lies a few feet to the northeast of the lily pool. Its function is unclear but could well be the watercress tank referred to by Mrs. Hutcheson and could again serve that use. (Fig.5:13)

Dipping Pool

The half-circular pool was built as part of Mrs. Hutcheson's water system and was originally used to water the gardens in the 1930's. Built of stone and lined with cement, the flat side borders on the path leading towards the tennis arbor. Water is piped in from the underground system. The pool is approximately eighteen inches deep and five feet across. (Fig.5:14)

Agricultural Buildings

The farm quadrangle and remaining 90+ acres of land are still an integral part of Bamboo Brook as they were during the Hutcheson's ownership. The quad is comprised of three buildings, a barn, garage and the farmer's or tenant's house. The fourth side is formed by a split rail fence which allows viewing Axis G over the fields.

Barn (contributing bldg)

The barn, located on the southwestern side, is of frame construction, and consists of a two-story main structure with a one story addition. Fenestration is irregular consisting of randomly placed windows containing 6/6, 2/2 and 3/3 lights. Two pairs of large double doors penetrate the main section, the second story hay loft has been closed. A dutch door is located in the one-story section. The entire barn is faced in dark stained shingles. A gabled square ventilated cupola is located in the center of the asphalt shingled roof. (Fig.5:15)

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Formerly used to house livestock, the barn now serves as a maintenance office and shop.

Garage (contributing bldg)

The frame construction garage, forming the northwestern side of the quad, is built against a bank and contains five bays below arched entrances in the ground level with a loft above and rear wood shed attached uphill. Two of the bays are enclosed by wooden doors. Uncoursed field stone composes the lower third of the walls. The gabled asphalt shingle roof features a rectangular gabled ventilator. A projecting bracketed cross-gable contains a pair of wooden doors. (Fig.5:16)

The building still functions as garage and wood shed.

Tenant's House (contributing bldg)

The former farmer's house, now a tenant's house, is on the third or northeastern side of the quad. It consists of a one and a half-story main block with gabled roof and central brick chimney joined to a gabled two-story transitional room between the two structures. A shed roofed addition extends beyond the rear of the block. Sketches by Mrs. Hutcheson in 1912, shows the original farmer's house with an attached hen house and wagon house which was converted to a cottage, tool shop and studio. Irregular fenestration consists of 6/6 double-hung windows occurring singly and in groupings of two and three. Shed dormers project from both sections. The shingled siding has been painted green. (Fig.5:17)

The farm quadrangle was part of Mrs. Hutcheson's site plan. The drive to the farm yard was bordered with a low box hedge that continues to be maintained today. An arbor, built from the designed site of the main house to the rear of the studio, served to unite the house and farm buildings while the function of the two spaces was preserved. The arbor does not exist today but can be seen on her site plans and in photos.

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The cottage houses a Park employee today.

Corn Crib (contributing structure)

Three other small structures are located off to the southwestern side of the farm yard. A corn crib, seen in Mrs. Hutcheson's plans, remains adjacent to the garage. On raised cement footings, the slat sides with base narrower than the roof, is typical of corn cribs in order to allow passage of air to keep the corn dry. The north end is clad in shingles and the south end with bead-edged boards where the door is located. The gabled roof is covered with cedar shingles. In its original condition, the corn crib is considered a contributing structure. (Fig.5:18)

Dog Kennels (non-contributing structure)

Two small sheds to the west and south of the corn crib were built in the 1950's as dog kennels, both of which are probably conversions of an early hen house and a pig house. Both have a pitched roof with openings on the south side to allow passage to individual runs enclosed in cyclone fencing. Because of the adaptations, the kennels are considered non-contributing structures. (Fig.5:19)

Root Cellar (contributing structure)

One last structure, a root cellar, seen in Mrs. Hutcheson's 1927 plan, is located off the northern corner of the wood shed attached to the garage. The ten foot high cement walls reach five feet below ground with earth built up around the above ground walls. Two pipes near the rear ventilate the room. A wood bulkhead with a four light transom above it is located in the southeastern wall protecting four steps that descend into the root cellar. In good condition, the cellar remains empty today.

The farm buildings were remodeled and adapted to fit in with Mrs. Hutcheson's plans for the whole property. Their

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function in the 19th century was less esthetic than functional as judged from a lease between Edward Sutphen, last owner before 1912, and the McConnells, the farm tenants. Sutphen received one half of the grain raised on the farm to be threshed within two months after gathered and the straw to be put in the barn, hovel or barnyard. The lease described terms for keeping cattle, horses, poultry and hogs and the distribution of the fruit harvest (Hutcheson papers).

On a much reduced scale, the Hutcheson's continued to farm their property with hired farm tenants. According to the farm records, the operation supported a small herd of cows while providing help in constructing and maintaining Mrs. Hutcheson's landscape designs. All vestiges of farming appear to have ceased before World War II.

Fields, Woods and Streams - Unoccupied Landscape

Physiographic Features

Merchiston Farm straddles two geologic formations. The Losee Gneiss, a pre-cambrian age igneous rock forms the hillside on which the northern two-thirds of the farm is sited. This hill slopes to the south down to a major stream, Bamboo Brook, for which the property is named today, which cuts through the site from east to west. The hillside to the south of the stream sits on the Brunswick Formation, a Triassic age shale which forms a landscape of a different character than the Losee Gneiss. A fault line runs east-west, down the stream valley at the contact of the Losee Gneiss and the Brunswick Formation (Andropogon Associates, 1981). (Fig. 6)

The fields, shown with crops of oats, rye and hay in photos ca. 1915, continue to be kept open today although the

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woods have gradually decreased the amount of open acreage. (Fig. 7) The field over which Axis G extends (noted as Sheep Meadow on drawing) is open and preserves much of that vista. The field is south east of the quadrangle and gently slopes to the south covering approximately five acres. It is grown in grasses and mowed periodically to eliminate growth of shrubs and invading trees.

The largest field is to the southwest of the barn quadrangle, reached by vehicle on a track that swings eastward and down to Bamboo Brook. Simply noted as a Meadow today, the open field is surrounded by woods as it, too, gently slopes southward. The upper edges of the field curve in a northerly direction to form a narrow strip of field that runs behind the barn quad, almost reaching the northern most point of the property as it approaches Longview Road. This field is maintained in the same manner as the Sheep Meadow. It encompasses approximately ten acres.

The last field, again noted as a Meadow today, is a small area of less than three acres directly south of Mrs. Hutcheson's designed landscape. Originally covering almost twice its current size, surrounding woods have encroached upon the edges of the field over the past twenty years. The area is marshy and mowing is infrequent to allow tall grasses and natural field plants to grow. Remnants of Mrs. Hutcheson's orchard survive as do stately cedars that once denoted edges of the "Bow of Woods" Vista.

Various paths, most of which were part of Mrs. Hutcheson's plans, are kept open for walkways to Bamboo Brook. They travel from Axis B, deviate from the axis at the woods, in a southerly direction, and along the old cow run as it borders the Sheep Meadow and meanders through the woods to reach the brook.

Woods comprise the balance of the property. The hill that gently slopes from the north to the south throughout the northern two-thirds of the property to meet Bamboo Brook, again rises on the opposite side. The hillside is in woods and presents a backdrop for Mrs. Hutcheson's vistas. Approximately three quarters or around 75 acres of

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Bamboo Brook is in woods.

Bamboo Brook, for which the property takes its name today, runs from northeast to southwest, intersecting the property at its boundary on Longview Road to the east and its back boundary line to the west. As an integral part of Mrs. Hutcheson's plan, the land is cleared along the north side to allow easy walking. Three pools, created by small dams Mrs. Hutcheson had built, allow quiet respite from the flowing water. A wood plank bridge affords vehicle passage to the southern hillside.

Two smaller streams feed into the brook towards the west, one of which forms the western most boundary of the property.

The Hutcheson's lived in New York City and initially summered at their country home which continued to function as a gentleman's farm until World War II. Eventually, Merchiston Farm became their year round residence. Mrs. Hutcheson outlived her husband and continued to live at the farm. She died in 1959 and in 1972 Mrs. Hutcheson's daughter, Mrs. C. McKim Norton, gave Merchiston Farm to the Morris County Park Commission with the understanding that the Park Commission would "keep this land in its natural state as a public park or garden for the use of the general public...."(speech by Mr. Norton, Nov. 2, 1974)

Today, Bamboo Brook is maintained by the Park Commission as an educational center for the study of horticulture. Children's school groups are regularly scheduled during the school year for classes conducted by trained horticulturists on the Park staff. Open year round, the public is welcome to wander throughout the property and to take a self-guided tour.

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Historic Context

By the end of the 19th century, the fashion of "landscape gardening" was coming to an end in America. A.J. Downing's, A Treatise on the Theory and Practise of Landscape Gardening Adapted to North America (1841), had been extremely influential for almost fifty years in American landscapes. The picturesque landscape, especially the pastoral, rooted in a romantic notion of a natural landscape, was praised by Downing. Exotic ornamental trees, shrubs and plants were favored plantings over indigenous species. The result was often formless "landscape gardening" of rolling lawns, shrubs and specimen trees with vague references to particular sites for certain "styles" of architecture.

Olmstead's design for the World's Fair Court of Honor at the World's Columbian Exposition (1893) and for Biltmore House, (1894), Richard Morris Hunt's chateaux in Ashville, North Carolina, were the turning point for a new era in landscaping design. The new age of the opulent country house in architectonic line and volume demanded that the surrounding landscape be as architectonic as the house. The "country place era" of landscaping replaced 19th century landscape gardening by the turn of the century.

A major influence upon the new landscape design was Charles Adams Platt whose publication, Italian Villas and their Gardens (1894), had a profound impact upon organizing the new form. Of greatest importance was the integration of indoor and outdoor space and the integration of architecture and the landscape. Platt pronounced two basic fundamentals: 1) a line of sight connecting one or several spaces with another imparts a clear sense of inter-relationships, structure and strength, and 2) when spaces are tied together with perceptively defined boundaries, the sense of strength is greater and more satisfying. Thus, design includes the house, gardens, terraces, groves, and all their surroundings and embellishments as a whole, never as independent components (Newton, p.372-384).

By the turn of the century, landscape architecture, especially in residential projects, came into its own.

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Platt's book became widely read by professionals and their clients. Although persistently associated with large estates, the characteristics of the Country Place Era could be applied on a smaller scale, without the classic architectonic residence, as was done at Platt's own summer home at Cornish, New Hampshire and by Martha Brookes Hutcheson at Merchiston Farm. Certain characteristics were usually present: meticulous care for detail, proportion and scale, clarity of spatial structure, and generally restrained plant lists. Components of a country place design often include service buildings, vegetable garden, tennis courts, bathing facilities, and an orchard (Newton, p.427-446).

The Country Place Era ended with the 1933 tax policies that greatly reduced those incomes that could afford to build such grandiose estates. The legacy of that era, however, has resulted in high standards of design that persist today.

Merchiston Farm and the Country Place Era of Landscape

Merchiston Farm is an example of an early 20th century landscape designed by Martha Brookes Hutcheson in the mode of the Country Place Era. Although the preferred practise was a combined effort of residential architect and landscape architect to design and oversee construction of an estate, the changes Mrs. Hutcheson made to the 19th century farm house she purchased in 1912 were specifically integrated with the landscape - Platt's fundamental precept. Considered a "farm treatment" by Mrs. Hutcheson, her 1912 and 1927 site plans incorporated most of the characteristics and components of Country Place Era landscape design. She executed a plan between the formalism of Platt and the naturalism of Gertrude Gekyll, English designer. Attention to detail is evident in the cast stone sculptures, concrete urns and planters, a stone wall with bench that wraps around a sophora tree terminating an axis, controlled use of water that appears to surface at random, arbors to offer shade and interest, and, most notably, axial alignment to integrate the house with the landscape and carefully chosen vistas.

The clarity of spatial relationships is particularly

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evident on this farm property. Lawns are an open space enhanced with backgrounds of hedges and garden accents. The swimming pool becomes part of the water system that starts with a quiet pool at a higher elevation, gurgles under a bridge and goes underground to flow into the swimming pool. Broad flat steps and paths enclosed with box hedges and plants define the pool space yet the constant in-flow above the pool's surface integrates the pool with the continuum of an elaborate water system. The tennis court is set to one side of the designed area to keep axes and vistas open, yet aligned with intersecting paths that pull the court into the design. Farm spaces are separate yet integrated. Situated on its own space, the box hedge bordering the driveway to the farm quadrangle leads from the residential to the farm area. In Mrs. Hutcheson's plans, this was amplified with an arbor that led from the Upper Water to the rear of the tenant's cottage, a devise not extant today.

Proportion and scale are well adapted to the farm. As the house was enlarged, so the landscape was adjusted to its changing scale. Features, plantings and hedges are scaled to unify the whole without overemphasizing any one part. The use of axes and vistas serve to draw the eye to distant points without overwhelming the viewer.

Although Mrs. Hutcheson's plant lists have not been found, it is obvious from surviving trees, all indigenous, that her choice of trees is restrained. Period photos that catch glimpses of her gardens indicate native and commonly grown flowers were selected. Indications are that her choice of color was muted and restrained as well.

Many components of the Country Place Era are also found at Merchiston Farm. Service buildings, vegetable garden, a tennis court, bathing facilities and an orchard were all part of Mrs. Hutcheson's plans. The vegetable garden was eliminated by the 1927 plan and the fruit orchard today is represented with flowering crab apple trees.

Martha Brookes Hutcheson

As a landscape architect, Martha Brookes Hutcheson was

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widely respected during her thirty year career from 1902 to the mid-1930's. Her interest in landscape design of the Country Place Era was heightened, after her training at MIT, through travels in Europe with special attention to the villas of Italy. She was one of three remarkable women, Beatrix Farrand, Martha Brookes Hutcheson, and Marion Coffin, who broke away from the image of the woman gardener to enter a profession dominated by men, landscape architecture.

Martha Brookes Hutcheson (nee Brown) was born in 1873 and raised in Burlington, Vermont. Her interest in horticulture began at age ten when she worked in her mother's garden. In 1893, she attended a women's school of applied design for two years where, among other things, she learned mechanical drawing. She took water color painting, specializing in flowers, with Rhoda Holmes Nichols from 1895-1897. For two summers she studied native trees and shrubs with Professor Jones of the University of Vermont (Hutcheson papers).

From 1900-1903, Martha Brookes Brown (she did not marry William Hutcheson until 1911) attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as a special student. Notes taken from the MIT catalogue of 1899-1906 describe the course as follows:

Due to the steadily increasing attention being paid to all questions concerning the designing of public and private grounds, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1900 offered an option in its Architectural course to men and women who desired training in Landscape Architecture. This training being closely allied with Architecture and Civil Engineering drew largely from these courses for instruction. Besides the architectural and engineering subjects, courses in Landscape Design, Landscape Architecture, Construction, Specifications and Working Drawings and Horticulture were given. The landscape work followed closely along with architecture and was a four year course from 1900-1905. The option was withdrawn after the class of

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1905 and thereafter the study of Landscape Architecture was given as a post graduate course for advanced study. (Mrs. Hutcheson, Hutcheson papers)

A note written and signed by Mrs. Hutcheson in 1933 was attached to the above transcription stating that the course was the first in Landscape Architecture ever given in this country. Also, that Marion Coffin (noted in Newton's Design on the Land, p.441-43) attended MIT after Mrs. Hutcheson started and that they were the first women to take this training and establish themselves in the profession. Beatrix Farrand, noted for her collegiate landscape designs, trained under Professor Sargent of the Arnold Arboretum and at Columbia University a few years before Mrs. Hutcheson. "Therefore (1) Beatrix (Jones) Farrand (2) Martha Brookes (Brown) Hutcheson & (3) Marion Coffin were in this order the first 3 trained women to open the profession to women in this country." (Mrs. Hutcheson, Hutcheson papers)

Martha Brookes Brown set up an independent practise in 1902 in Boston. A year of travel in Europe to study public and private gardens, attendance at lectures by Professor Watson of the Bussy Institute and two summers of study at Horsford's Nursery and the Arnold Arboretum contributed to her knowledge. A leaflet, printed in 1905, gave a statement regarding her professional methods and charges (Hutcheson papers).

Mrs. Hutcheson's commissions were largely confined to the country estate along Massachusetts' North Shore and later outside New York City in Westchester County and Long Island and estates in Nors along Massachusetts' North Shore and later outside New York City in Westchester County and Long Island and estates in Northern New Jersey. Her designs for the grounds of the Mosely estate, Maudsleigh, in Newburyport (currently owned and being restored by the state of Massachusetts and in the process of being nominated for the National Register of Historic Places), the Whitehouse estate, Crowhurst, in Manchester, the Ames estate, Highwall, in Prides Crossing, and the Longfellow homestead, Craigie House, in Cambridge, are some of the country places she designed all or part of in Massachusetts. In New York, Mrs. Hutcheson

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designed gardens and estates for the Head estate, Headlands, in Westport, the Lord estate, Sosiego, in Lawrence, Long Island, the Harold Pratt estate, Welwy, in Glen Cove, Long Island, the Frederick Pratt estate, Poplar Hill, In Glen Cove, and the Bacon estate, Oldfields, in Westbury, Long Island (The Spirit of the Garden, 1923). In addition, Mrs. Hutcheson designed planting plans for Bennington College and assisted Beatrix Farrand for a garden plan for Bryn Mawr College (Hutcheson papers "Professional Record").

In 1920, Martha Brookes Hutcheson was elected for membership to the American Society of Landscape Architects and advanced to Fellow of the Society in 1935 (certificates in Hutcheson papers). She also wrote extensively on landscaping for the Garden Club of America and various magazines and lectured widely in New York, Philadelphia and New Jersey.

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Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the intersection of Bamboo Brook and the centerline of Longview Road, Chester Township, proceed N42° 20'W along the centerline of said road for 1750.15 ft.; then S52° 53'W for 1775.00 ft.; then 209.20 ft. at S33° 50'E; then S30° 15'E for 840.71 ft.; then S31° 16'E for 585.40 ft.; then N48° 14'E for 97.02 ft.; then S64° 45'E for 584 ft. to a hickory tree; then N51° 17'E for 375.46 ft. to a second hickory tree; then N82° 25'E for 795.89 ft.; then N26° 15'E for 947.70 ft. to the intersection with the centerline of Longview Road; then N63° 51'W for 391.38 ft. to the beginning point according to the New Jersey Title Guarantee Co., 1912, modified Feb. 1933.

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Photographs keyed to Figure 5, Sketch map

For all photographs EXCEPT #11:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Name of property: | Merchiston Farm |
| 2. City/State: | Chester Township |
| 3. Photographer: | Nancy Strathearn |
| 4. Photographed on dates as noted | |
| 5. Negatives located at: | Morris County Park Commission |

- #1. Cedar arbor looking northwest towards front door (Axis C) of main residence, May 1988
- #2. Playhouse/potting shed looking north, May 1988
- #3A. Stone wall with bench looking southwest, May 1988
- #3B. Stone wall along walkway looking west, May 1988
- #4. Little House/studio looking east, May 1988
- #5. Tennis court looking northwest, Jan. 1989
- #7. Tennis court arbor looking south, May 1988
- #8. Cold frames looking west, Jan. 1989
- #9. Ha-ha fence looking east, Jan. 1989
- #10. Upper water looking east, Jan. 1989
- #11A. Farm pond looking north, 1920
Photographer: Martha Brookes Hutcheson from The Spirit of the Garden
- #11B. Swimming pool looking north, May 1988
- #11C. Swimming pool looking south, Jan. 1989

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- #12. Lily pool looking north, Jan. 1989
- #15. Barn looking west, Jan. 1989
- #16A. Garage looking northwest, May 1988
- #16B. Garage with woodshed to rear and hedges along drive, Jan. 1989
- #17. Tenant's house looking east, Jan. 1989
- #18. Corn crib looking north with dog kennel to northwest, May 1988
- #20A. Main residence looking northwest, Jan. 1989
- #20B. Main residence looking northwest, 1912 kitchen addition, May 1988
- #20C. Main residence looking east, 1927 music room addition, May 1988
- #21. Meadow looking southeast (Axis G), Jan. 1989
- #22. Bamboo Brook looking northeast, May 1988

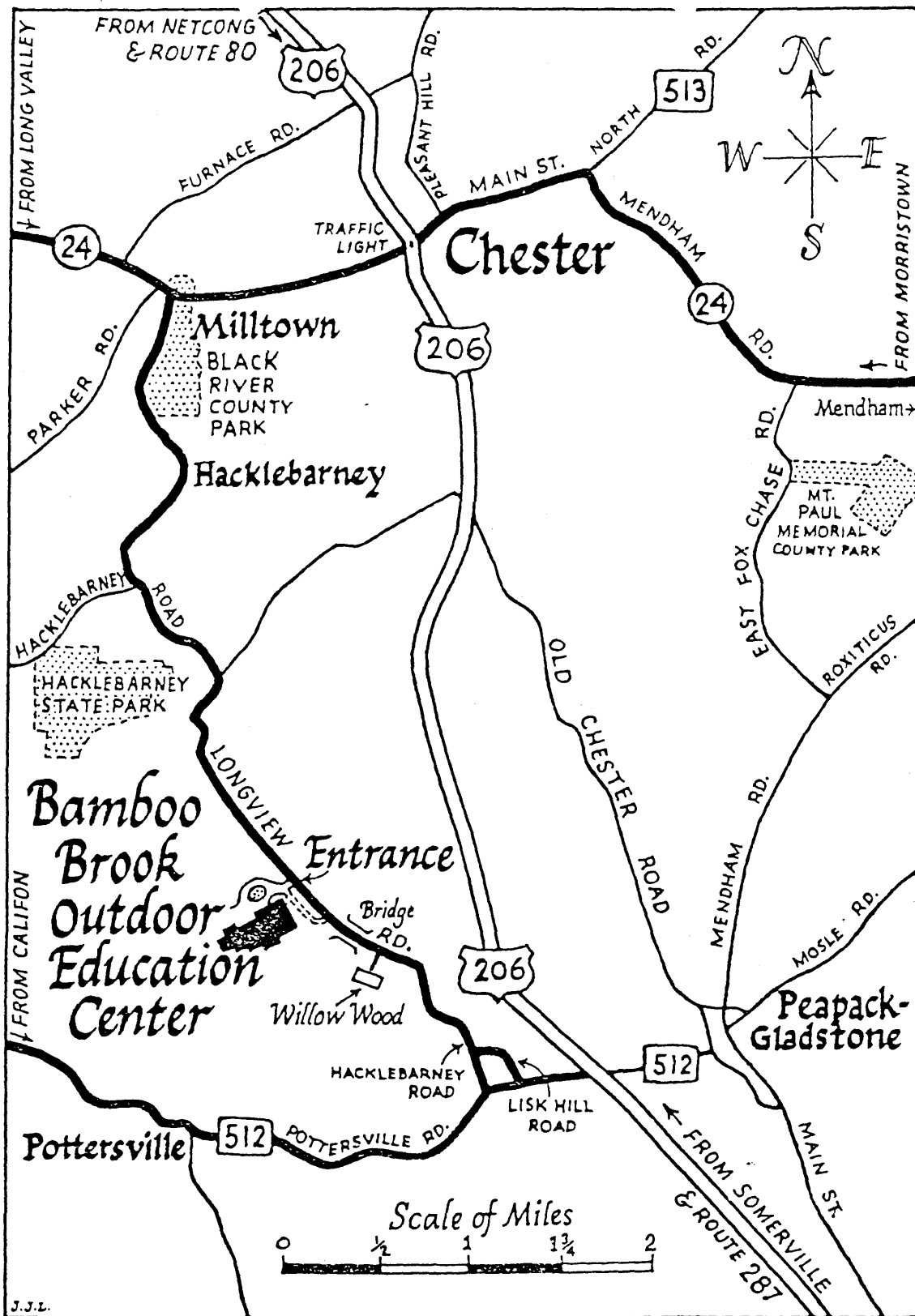
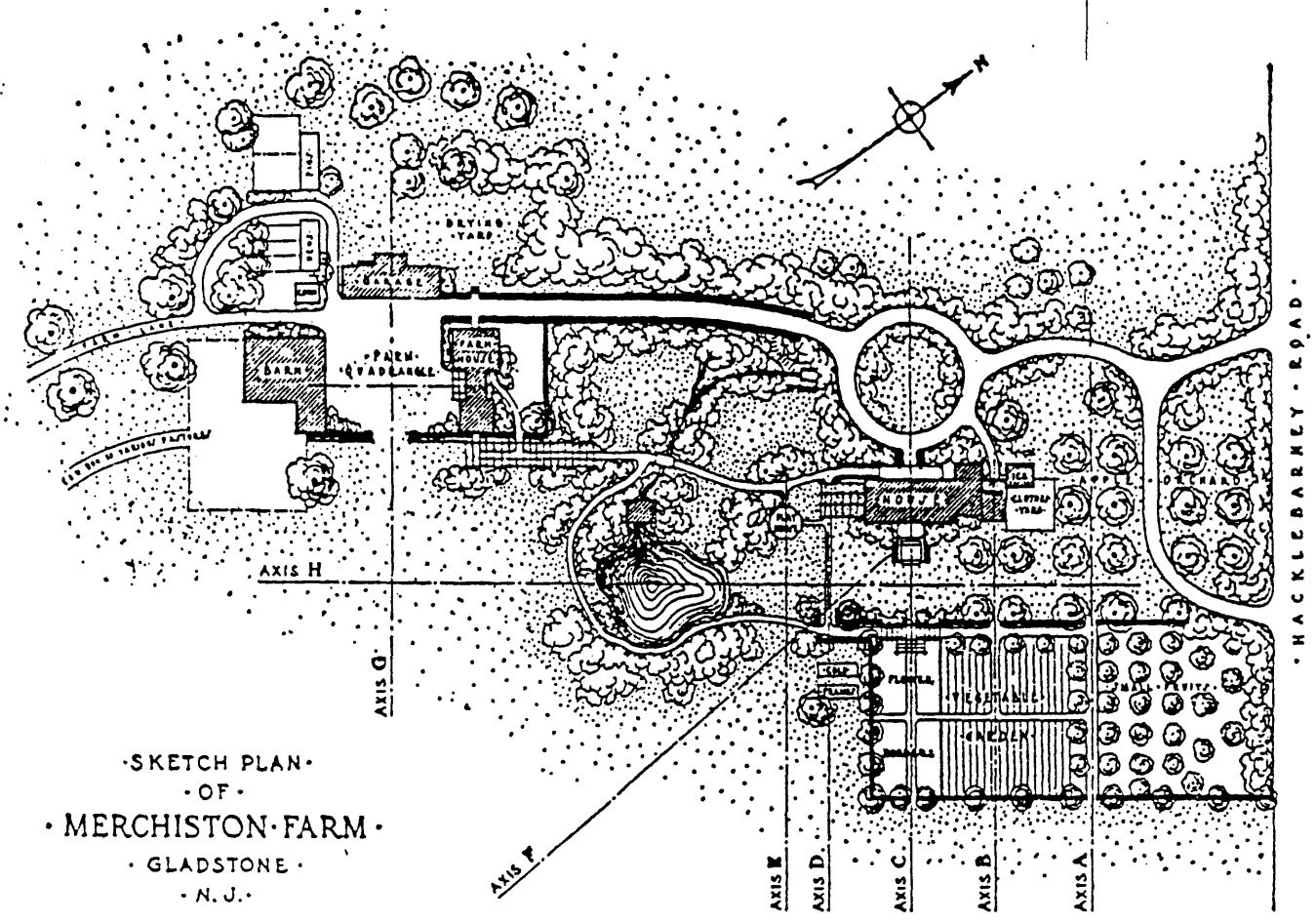


Figure 1. Directional Map

Merchiston Farm
 Chester Township
 Morris County, NJ

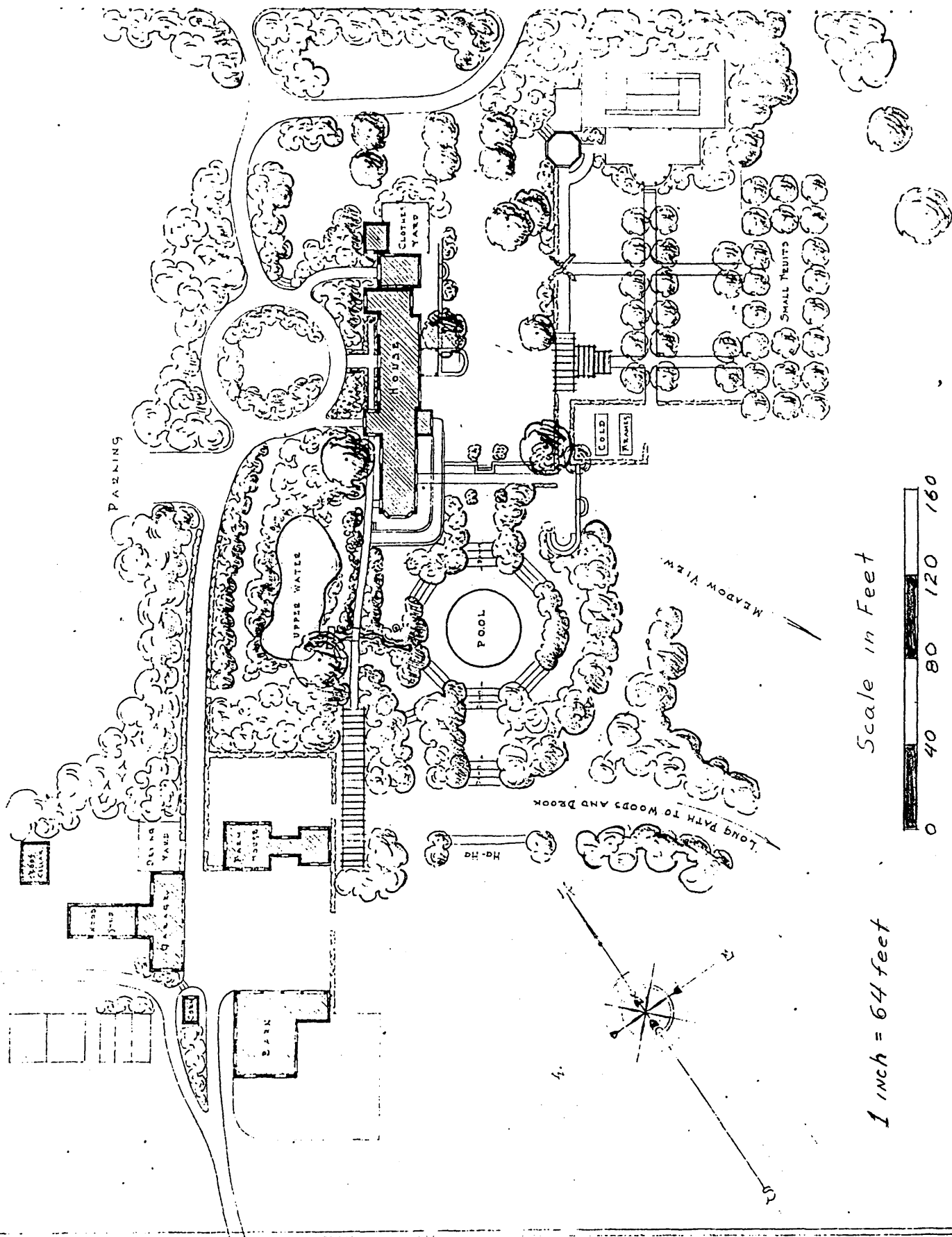


SKETCH PLAN
 OF
 MERCHISTON FARM
 GLADSTONE
 N. J.

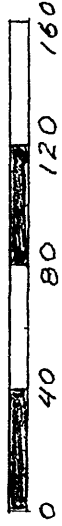
Figure 2. 1912 Site Plan for Merchiston Farm by Martha Brookes Hutcheson.

No Scale Provided.

Merchiston Farm
 Chester Township
 Morris County, NJ



Scale in Feet



1 inch = 64 feet

MARtha BROOKES HUTCHESON
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT.

MERCHISTON FARM
GLADSTONE, N.J.

Figure 3. 1927 Site Plan for Merchiston Farm
by Martha Brookes Hutcheson
Chester Township, Morris County, NJ

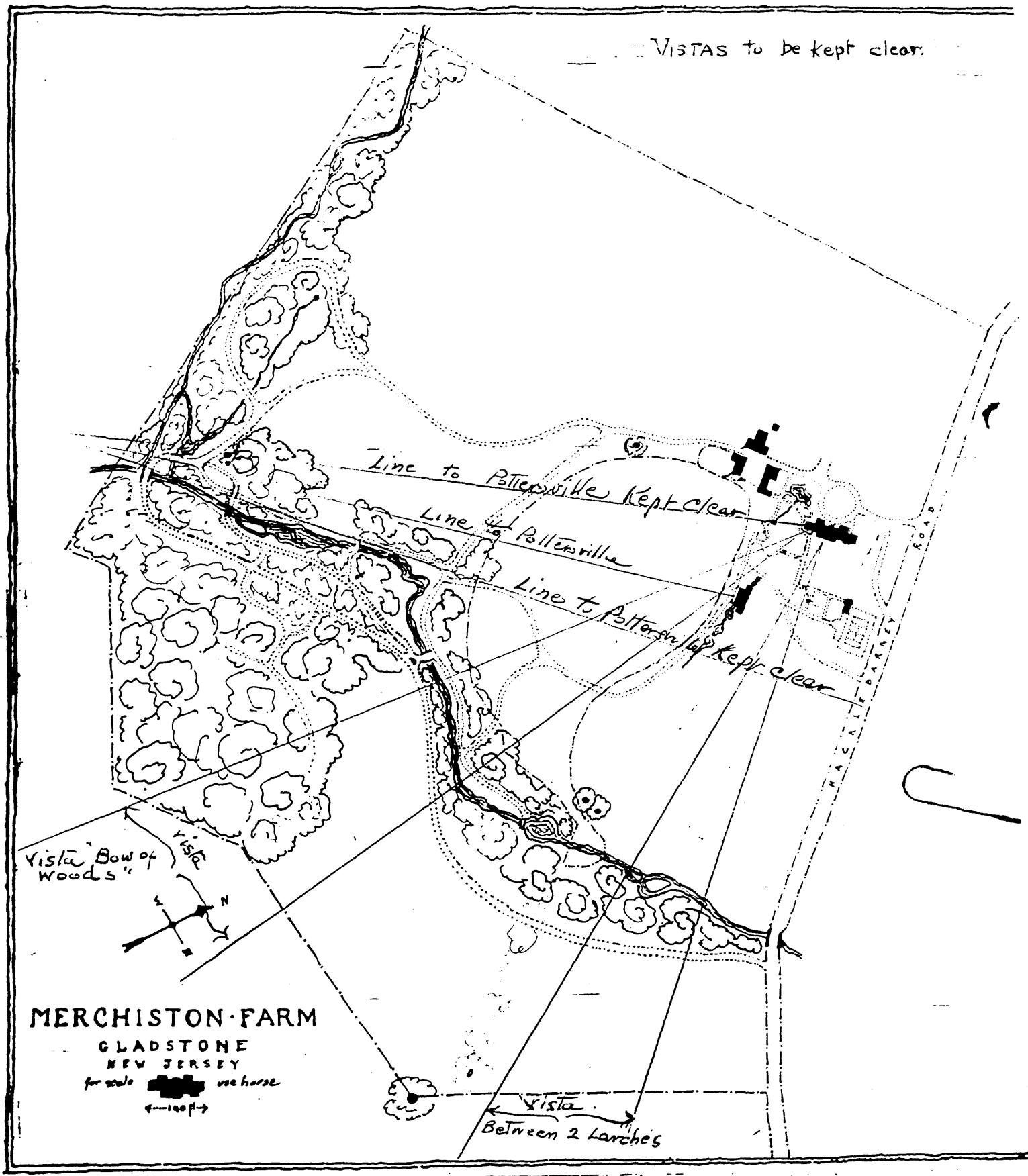


Figure 4. Vistas as Drawn by Martha Brookes Hutcheson for Merchiston Farm ca. 1927

Merchiston Farm
Chester Township
Morris County, NJ

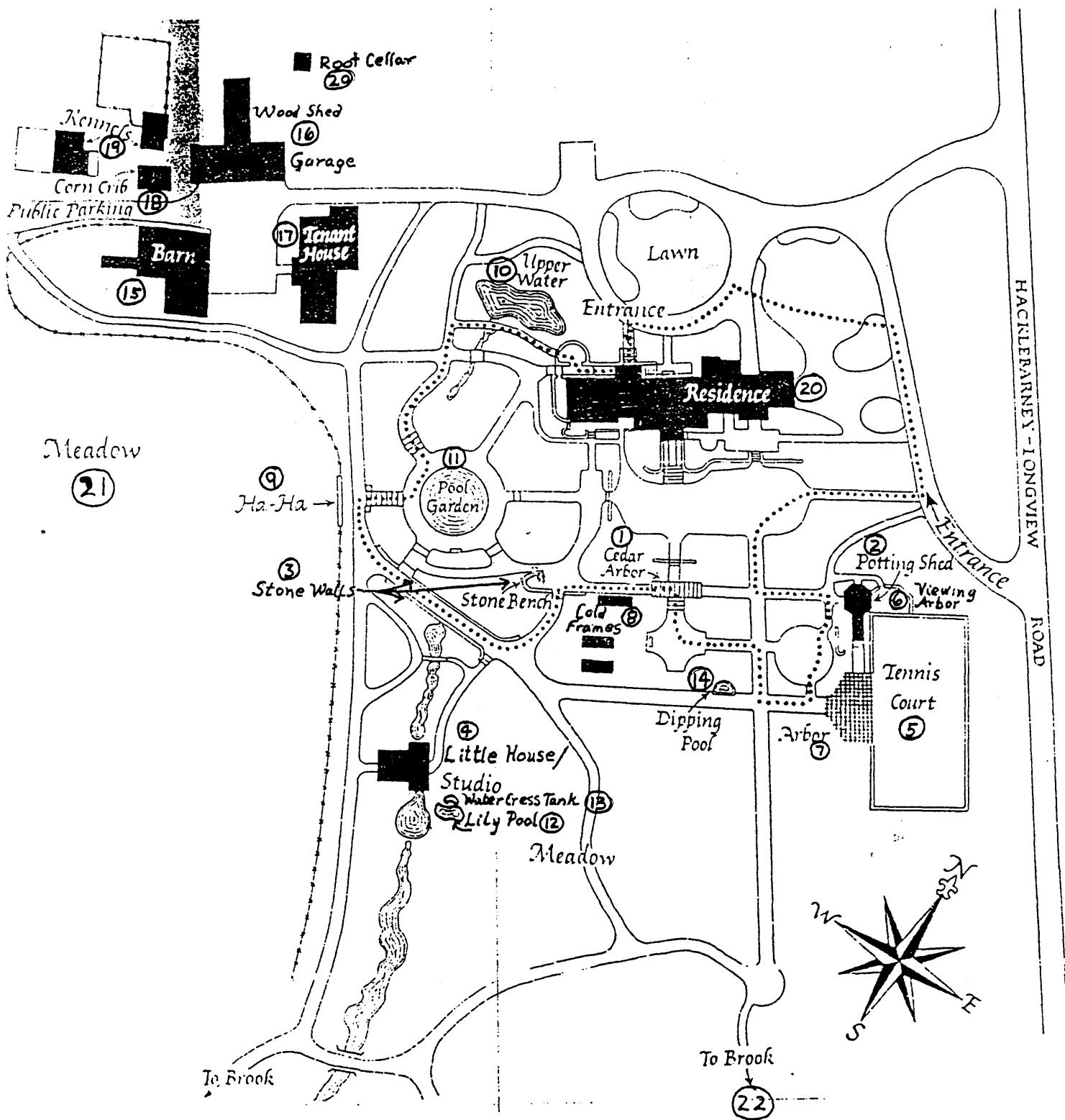


Figure 5. Designed Landscape with Structures and Objects, 1989.

No Scale Provided.

Merchiston Farm
 Chester Township
 Morris County, NJ

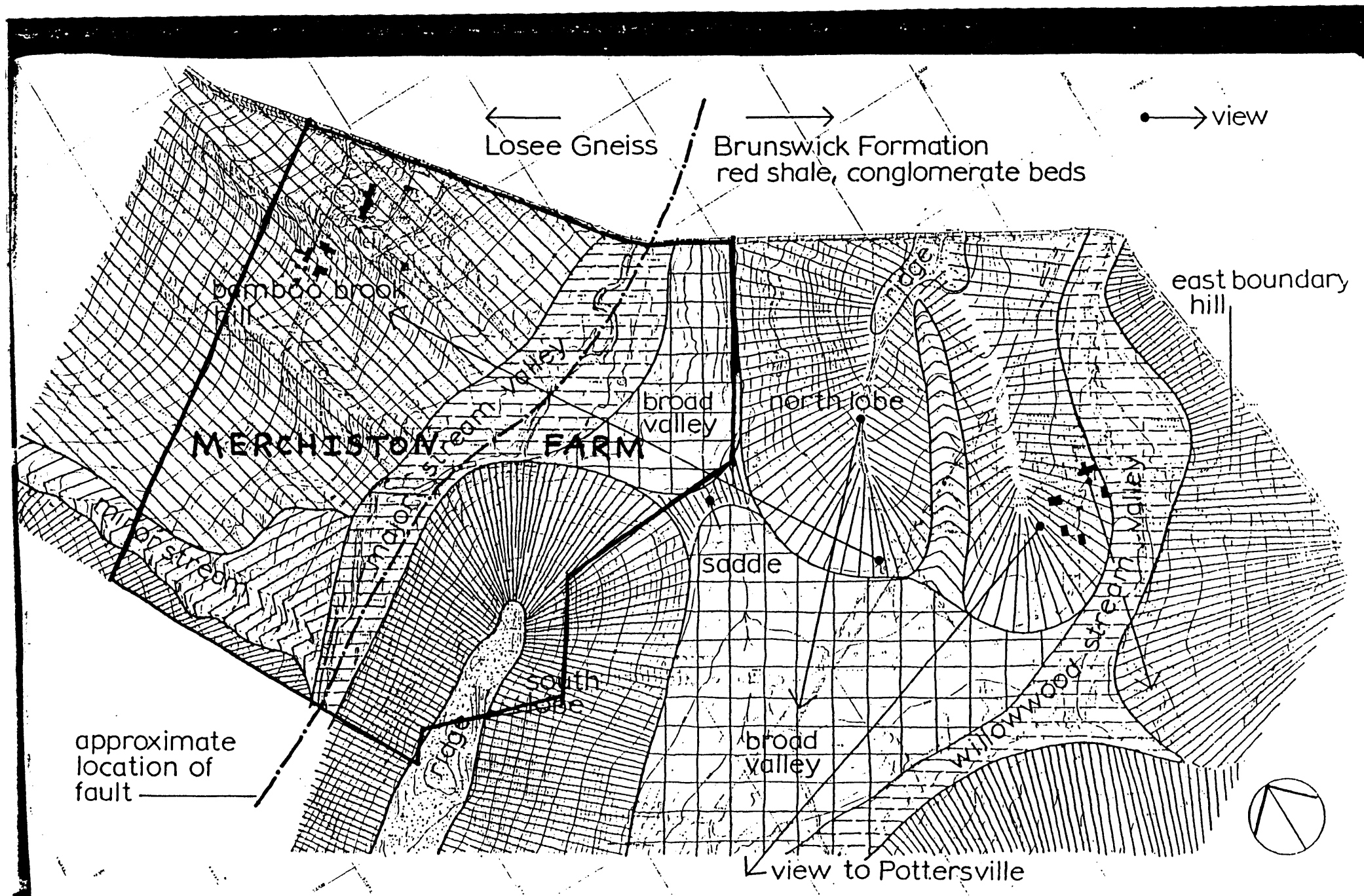


Figure 6. Fault Line Along Bamboo Brook Stream Valley. Andropogon Assoc., 1981.

Merchiston Farm, Chester Township, Morris County, NJ

No Scale Provided.

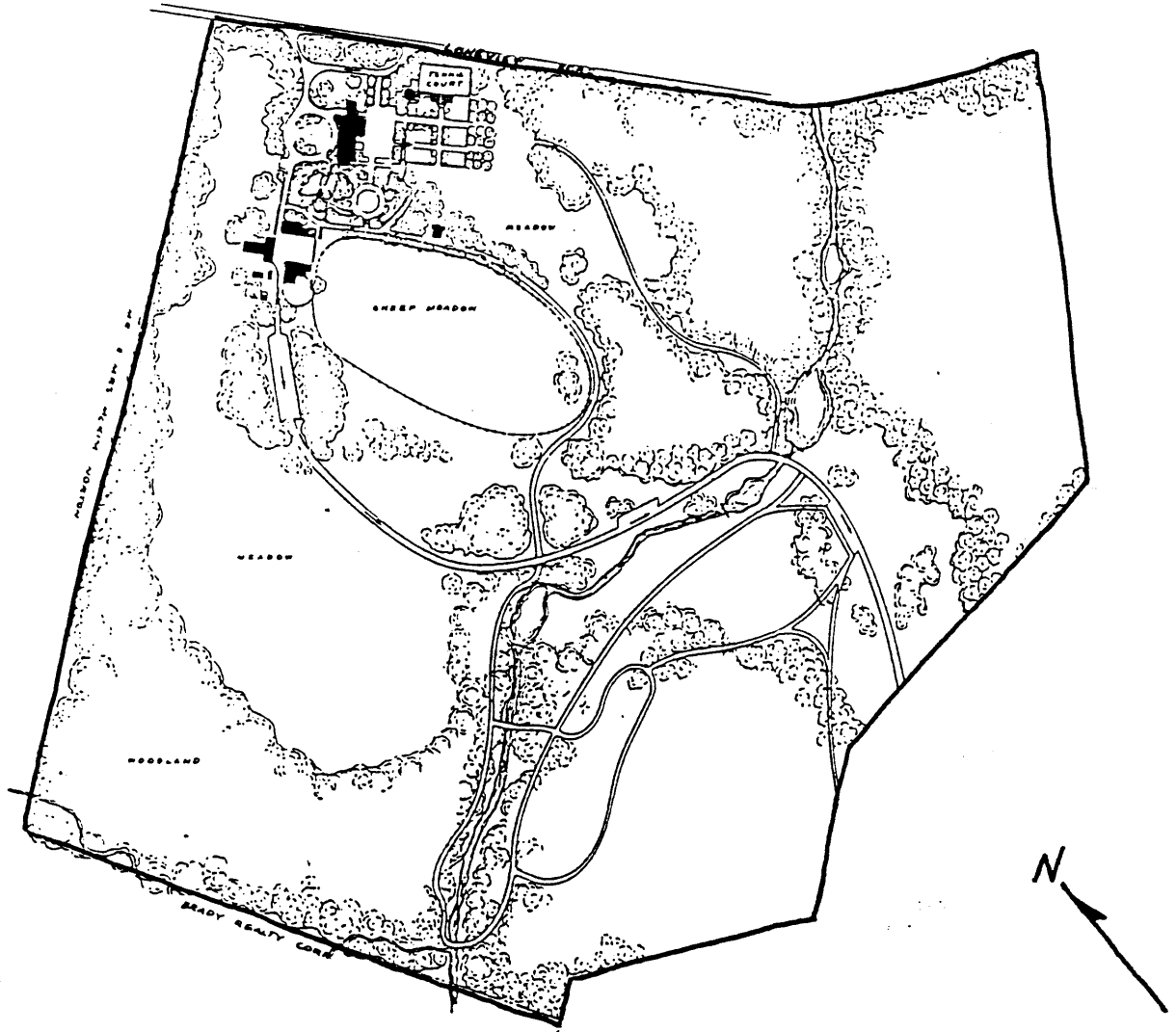


Figure 7. Fields, Woods, Streams and Occupied Land
Merchiston Farm/Bamboo Brook, 1989.

Merchiston Farm
Chester Township
Morris County, NJ