

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Blawenburg Historic District

and/or common

2. Location

Both sides of Georgetown-Franklin Turnpike (County Rte. 588); both sides of street & number Great Road/County Route 601; west side of Mountain View Rd. not for publication N/A

city, town Montgomery Twp. vicinity of

state New Jersey code 034 county Somerset code 035

3. Classification

| Category                                     | Ownership                                 | Status  | Present Use   |
|--|---|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district | <input type="checkbox"/> public           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> building(s)         | <input type="checkbox"/> private          | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied                   | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both  | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site                | <b>Public Acquisition</b>                 | <b>Accessible</b>                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object              | <input type="checkbox"/> in process       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government        |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial                   |
|  | N/A                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> no                           | <input type="checkbox"/> military                     |
|  |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> museum                       |
|  |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> park                         |
|  |   |   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence |
|  |   |   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious         |
|  |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific                   |
|  |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation               |
|  |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> other:                       |

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Somerset County, Administration Building., County Clerks Office

street & number North Bridge Street

city, town Somerville state N.J.

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

N/A

title has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

|  |                                       |   |   |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Condition</b>                         |                                       | <b>Check one</b>                            | <b>Check one</b>                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent       | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair            | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed    |   |   |

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Situated in a rural section of Montgomery Township, the Village of Blawenburg is one of two surviving community centers that came into being in the first half of the 19th century; by 1873, it had stabilized with one church, one school, a blacksmith and wheelwright shop, general store, post office, 12 houses and a cemetery. The village core consists of a series of relatively stylish houses--Greek Revival and Italianate in detail--that were erected along one side of the Georgetown-Franklin Turnpike (begun 1816) during the period 1830-1870, following the earlier construction of a fashionable tavern house and a neighborhood church in Federal style on the opposite side of the road; the village was rounded out and brought to its present size during a second small wave of development, 1920-1939, with a final infill of vacant lots between 1940 and the present.

Of the 42 sites identified, 17 are key properties (15 are buildings; 2 are sites); all of these related to the original period of village formation; another 17, mainly constructed in the early decades of this century, strongly contribute to the final composition of the village. There are 8 non-contributing properties, mostly small scale modern residences. All but three of the significant buildings are of frame, the exceptions being the blacksmith shop (#32), 1853 school house (#19), and the Italian villa of James Van Zandt (#8), which are of brick. All are two-story except for the Widow Whitenack's House (#27). Excepting again Site 8, they are rectangular boxes, one or two rooms deep, most with wings. One offers its gable to the street. Three of the key structures are of side-hall plan, with open staircases running to attic. All the houses but one existing in 1873 survive, surprisingly intact with considerable integrity. Alterations have been few and not severe. Changes chiefly represent additions, either at the rear or side (Sites 14, 31 and 36). Some Greek-style porticos have been removed and/or replaced with modern replicas, namely on T. Whitenack (#30), Judge Cornelius Stryker (#36), and Bernardus Van Zandt (#2) houses, and the parsonage (#22). During the Victorian era a number of houses gained piazzas across the front, including the B. Van Zandt House, Abraham Whitenack House (#31), and John Van Zandt House (#26), and the parsonage; these have been removed. The store had a typical plain porch in 1907, now removed. The Judge Stryker House has received rear dormer windows following repair of a roof recently. A pair of oriel windows has been inserted into the facade of the John Van Zandt House. Synthetic shingles have been applied to the Thomas Whitenack House and vinyl siding to the John Van Zandt House. The Italian villa has lost its belvedere as a result of a fire many years ago. A portion of its verandah has been enclosed in recent times, and wing added.

The Blawenburg District encompasses the linear Village of Blawenburg including one farm field historically related to village life and portions of the two large farm tracts that flank its southern and western boundaries. The village matrix, composed of small building lots, lies along County Route 518, the former Georgetown-Franklin Turnpike, between Mountain View Road and Great Road/County Route 601, the latter double-named road representing a crossroad dating back to the 1740s. There are a few structures, as well as the community cemetery, on the

# 8. Significance

| Period  | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below    |  |   |  |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric          | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric  | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning                | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499            | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic     | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation                      | <input type="checkbox"/> law                    | <input type="checkbox"/> science             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture  | <input type="checkbox"/> economics                         | <input type="checkbox"/> literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> education                         | <input type="checkbox"/> military               | <input type="checkbox"/> social/             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering                       | <input type="checkbox"/> music                  | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian        |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy             | <input type="checkbox"/> theater             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-     | <input type="checkbox"/> communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> industry                          | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government    | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation      |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> invention                         |   | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)     |

**Specific dates** mid 18th c.-1930's **Builder/Architect** Various

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

### Significance

Blawenburg is a small village--in essence, a streetscape--aligned on both sides of a county highway of colonial origins for a distance of about a half mile. It is in a rural setting that has evolved from the 18th century, being surrounded by open farm fields which formerly related to the houses within the district.

Historically, the community of Blawenburg spans over two centuries, its nucleus being found in the neighborliness that developed among families living side by side on farms first settled in the 1740s and 1750s. A study of the "founding" of the village and the quality of architectural design chosen from its origins reveals that this village differs from the typical 19th-century villages that evolved from early crossroads to a concentration of modest buildings and service industries. Blawenburg evolved by intent and design, with the few leading farm families of the area, affluent descendants of the original settlers, primarily responsible. Transportation, religion, and education were all factors used in the press for a community center, but at the heart of the matter may well have been a desire for prestige. One might even discern a little rivalry among peers, as this neighborhood watched other communities build.

From its development as a village a high level of architectural taste was expressed. The first building was a tavern; the next to come--the Reformed Church--paid for in advance by the community--exceeded it in architectural aspirations. The third building-- the parsonage-- took four years to construct, and additional mortgage money was required in order to complete it in all its called-for finery of details. These set the tone. Those that followed in rapid succession, even to the new district school house, employed elements of style within and without, with extensive copying from one another, and apparently other communities as well, to match the standard established.

In that Blawenburg history covers the first half century after the Dutch community abandoned its folkways and attempted to become mainstream America, the village's array of architectural styles in its matrix--1815-1870--becomes a showcase for local taste, a measure of the impact of the use of architecture as social statement even in rural areas.

Blawenburg is unusual, however, in that it developed in two stages; the second occurred between 1920-1940. The village had rested between stages but continued to be viable as a community, which it remains to this day. Its early 20th-century accretions merely met new housing needs of the native population,

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheets

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property  $\pm$  336

\* discontiguous property

Quadrangle name Rocky Hill, NJ Quad

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

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

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

|   |     |             |               |
|---|-----|-------------|---------------|
| C | 1 8 | 5 2 5 2 2 0 | 4 4 7 3 0 4 0 |
|---|-----|-------------|---------------|

|   |     |             |               |
|---|-----|-------------|---------------|
| D | 1 8 | 5 2 5 9 0 0 | 4 4 7 3 0 2 0 |
|---|-----|-------------|---------------|

|   |     |             |               |
|---|-----|-------------|---------------|
| E | 1 8 | 5 2 5 9 6 0 | 4 4 7 2 2 8 0 |
|---|-----|-------------|---------------|

|   |     |             |               |
|---|-----|-------------|---------------|
| F | 1 8 | 5 2 4 4 6 0 | 4 4 7 2 8 2 0 |
|---|-----|-------------|---------------|

|     |     |             |               |
|-----|-----|-------------|---------------|
| * G | 1 8 | 5 2 5 8 2 0 | 4 4 7 2 9 4 0 |
|-----|-----|-------------|---------------|

|   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| H |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheets.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries N/A

| state | code | county | code |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|-------|------|--------|------|

| state | code | county | code |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|-------|------|--------|------|

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ursula C. Brecknell

organization Historic House Surveys date October 1984 / Revised, June 1986

street & number 36 Ellis Drive telephone (201) 359-3498

city or town Belle Mead state New Jersey

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ state X local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Aileen J. Senneker*

title Assistant Commissioner for Natural Resources date 02/08/88

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*Patrick W. Andum* date 12/7/90  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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Blawenburg Historic District, Montgomery Twp.,  
Somerset County, NJ

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Contributing/Non-Contributing Properties

The Blawenburg Historic District encompasses approximately 42 principal properties. Key properties include 15 buildings, 2 sites, and 1 structure. Fifteen principal properties have been identified as contributing and 10 as non-contributing. All outbuildings have been evaluated as well, however, and the totals of both principal and secondary properties are as follows:

Contributing

|                           |                         |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Buildings (including key) | - 46                    |
| Structures                | - 2 (Sites #2.1 and #7) |
| Sites                     | - 2 (Sites #6 and #21)  |
|                           | <hr/>                   |
|                           | 50                      |

Non-contributing

|            |                         |
|------------|-------------------------|
| Buildings  | - 21                    |
| Structures | - 2 (Sites #36 and #40) |
| Sites      | - 0                     |
|            | <hr/>                   |
|            | 23                      |

# 7. Description

|  |                                       |   |   |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Condition</b>                         |                                       | <b>Check one</b>                            | <b>Check one</b>                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent       | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved    date _____      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair            | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed    |   |   |

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

Situated in a rural section of Montgomery Township, the Village of Blawenburg is one of two surviving community centers that came into being in the first half of the 19th century; by 1873, it had stabilized with one church, one school, a blacksmith and wheelwright shop, general store, post office, 12 houses and a cemetery. The village core consists of a series of relatively stylish houses--Greek Revival and Italianate in detail--that were erected along one side of the Georgetown-Franklin Turnpike (begun 1816) during the period 1830-1870, following the earlier construction of a fashionable tavern house and a neighborhood church in Federal style on the opposite side of the road; the village was rounded out and brought to its present size during a second small wave of development, 1920-1939, with a final infill of vacant lots between 1940 and the present.

Of the 42 principal properties identified in the district, 17 are key properties all related to the original period of village formation; another 15 mainly constructed in the early decades of this century, strongly contribute to the final composition of the village. There are 10 non-contributing properties, mostly small scale modern residences. All but three of the significant buildings are of frame, the exceptions being the blacksmith shop (#32), 1853 school house (#19), and the Italian villa of James Van Zandt (#8), which are of brick. All are two-story except for the Widow Whitenack's House (#27). Excepting again Site 8, they are rectangular boxes, one or two rooms deep, most with wings. One offers its gable to the street. Three of the key structures are of side-hall plan, with open staircases running to attic. All the houses but one existing in 1873 survive, surprisingly intact with considerable integrity. Alterations have been few and not severe. Changes chiefly represent additions, either at the rear or side (Sites 14, 31 and 36). Some Greek-style porticos have been removed and/or replaced with modern replicas, namely on T. Whitenack (#30), Judge Cornelius Stryker (#36), and Bernardus Van Zandt (#2) houses, and the parsonage (#22). During the Victorian era a number of houses gained piazzas across the front, including the B. Van Zandt House, Abraham Whitenack House (#31), and John Van Zandt House (#26), and the parsonage; these have been removed. The store had a typical plain porch in 1907, now removed. The Judge Stryker House has received rear dormer windows following repair of a roof recently. A pair of oriel windows has been inserted into the facade of the John Van Zandt House. Synthetic shingles have been applied to the Thomas Whitenack House and vinyl siding to the John Van Zandt House. The Italian villa has lost its belvedere as a result of a fire many years ago. A portion of its verandah has been enclosed in recent times, and wing added.

The Blawenburg District encompasses the linear Village of Blawenburg including one farm field historically related to village life and portions of the two large farm tracts that flank its southern and western boundaries. The village matrix, composed of small building lots, lies along County Route 518, the former Georgetown-Franklin Turnpike, between Mountain View Road and Great Road/County Route 601, the latter double-named road representing a crossroad dating back to the 1740s. There are a few structures, as well as the community cemetery, on the

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latter road. These are also considered part of the village. The early singling out of the two east corners of the intersection for tavern and store locations (1815-1844) reserved the crossroads for future public and commercial use, and housing did not spill over to this side road. There are also a few sites along Mountain View Road.

The village's outer edges are defined by tracts of land surviving from two 18th century farms: the Nevius/Van Zandt farm to the west of the intersection, lying on both sides of the highway, and the homestead portion of the Covenhoven/Stout farm fronting on Mountain View Road. The village was carved out of the latter farm.

The half-mile stretch of Route 518 bordered by the village is straight and flat, but at a relatively high point topographically, being on a crest between two valleys. To the south the land gently falls away to Bedens Brook with the Princeton spur of the Sourland Mountains beyond it in the distance. To the north, the land descends to nearby Rock Brook, a stream which parallels Bedens Brook in an easterly flow and eventually unites with it. Beyond Rock Brook, looking northward, there can be seen a vista of mountain ranges many miles away. These vistas across farm fields are part of the historic character of the village.

Along Route 518, in both directions, the land is largely undeveloped. The north side of the highway east of the village, with the exception of a few modern one-story houses, remains in uncultivated fields. On the south side of the road there are three modern 1-story houses clustered near Mountain View Road, and beyond them, widely separated, three others, and finally the current Blawenburg fire house. Beyond the proposed west boundary line of the District the land also remains in farm fields; at some distance, more or less opposite each other across Route 518, can be seen two 19th-century houses.

Many of the sites have farm outbuildings relating to the earlier village economy based on crop and dairy farming. Site 20 has a specially good collection of barns, silos, and corn cribs. The Bernardus Van Zandt House has a windmill, stone spring house, ice house, and milk house. At the Covenhoven/Stout homestead site (#21), the carriage house and the wagon house, both converted to residences, are in a grouping with the last barn of three originally on the site. These outbuildings all follow a conventional placement to the rear of the dwelling houses. Post-1900 buildings, such as the chicken coops, now used as a garage, at Site 29, and the barn (#1), were erected where convenience dictated.

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The extant 1838 blacksmith shop and the corner store, begun in the 1840s and later enlarged and attached to the Judge Stryker House, represent the sole services that were enlarged in the 19th century. These buildings contained the wheelwright's work area and the post office respectively. An early 20th-century one-room post office building stands behind the above-mentioned house.

Blawenburg came into existence within a single decade--the 1830s--but the Covenhoven Family, settled 1753, was largely responsible for advancing its formation. In 1802, Catherine Covenhoven's husband, James Lake, first sought permission for the neighborhood to have its own church building but was refused. Years later, in 1830, when permission was finally granted, Catherine, with her next husband John Stout, Esq., then provided the land from their homestead farm. Catherine's daughter and her husband, William M. Griggs, built the house, c. 1815, which became the tavern on a portion of the home farm they had obtained from her mother, and in 1832, they divided a portion of their farm into village lots, including one for the church parsonage. Grigg's sale of his roadside frontage in acre lots from the intersection to the parsonage tract triggered the rise of the village. His lots were bought largely by members of the well-to-do Voorhees, Whitenack, and Nevius families, who were much intertwined by marriage, and somewhat later by the Van Zandts. All these families already owned farms within the vicinity. On these lots they erected houses of some sophistication in terms of architectural merit, more in character with a town street than a country roadside. Inasmuch as the entranceway of the Judge Stryker House recalls a style of entrance used by the builder-architect Charles Steadman in his development of new streets in Princeton at just this time, there may well have been an intention on the part of these affluent families to emulate the comfortable gentility of this taste-minded town. Since Steadman was personally known in the area, and at work on the Abraham Cruser House on Bedens Brook Road a short distance away in the 1830s, it seems a reasonable possibility that his Princeton structures were looked at for inspiration. Even the lesser houses built by young marrieds and widows aspired to some architectural presence despite smaller scale. Of all the structures of note, the Federal-style church and the Italian villa are the most outstanding for the sophistication they display in a rural setting.

The houses in the village matrix are mainly in alignment on shallow setbacks. Small lawns and occasional hedges separate them from a now-widened thoroughfare. The deference shown the first pastor, in 1832, however, is still obvious in the large-sized tract of land with the parsonage set back deeply (#22). The Widow Whitenack's House (#27), originally next door, is also set back at the rear of the lot, the intention perhaps being not to upstage the parsonage. Years later, however, the lot was divided, and another house erected (or moved to



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and placed) at roadside (#26). The 20th-century houses just beyond the District's east boundary have somewhat deeper setbacks but are on village-scale lots, and a march of mature shade trees at roadside offsets the contrast and tends to pull together both sides of the street. These buildings blend well, being of modest size, one to 1½ stories. On the south side of the road, three lots detached from the parsonage tract contain two-story houses erected between 1920-1933 on shallow setbacks, which in turn blend well with the earlier houses of similar size. All these houses, though excluded from the District, are representative of the popular styles of their time, from the "Four Square" and the bungalow to variants of the ranch. Included are two prefabricated houses ordered from the last catalog (1937) of Sears, Roebuck (#15 and #16). Two wooded areas, mainly of maples, separate the old village from its 20th-century additions and greatly enhance it with spectacular fall foliage.

Among 20th-century non-domestic architecture are a 1920s-design two-room schoolhouse (#17) and a structure housing a garage and a former dance hall; also, two buildings originally constructed for the first fire house and its successor, both altered (#10, 11, and 38).

What distinguishes this village in aspect from a town, such as Princeton, and at the same time ties it to rural life, is its home-spun quality. There is no undue consideration given to siting or lot size, except for the parsonage. The 20th-century additions gave even less thought to esthetics. Elmer Height's moving of the barber shop to a location behind the blacksmith shop to convert it into a house, and the owner of the adjacent property then building a dwelling house on his back property (#33 and #35) are illustrative. The post office, too, was squeezed in behind the corner house (#37). A certain practicality prevailed as well, if folklore that still lingers can be believed. It is apparent that the Fannie Van Zandt House (#39), built in the 1930s, incorporates a barn in its wing. Legend has it that the John Van Zandt House was transported to its site from Skillman. Chicken coops at Abram Cruser's house (#29) were made into a garage.

The one jarring non-contributing site in the District is the Hilltop Inn (#5), a drive-in ice cream stand and restaurant housed in a distinctive commercial style of architecture adopted by a chain for identification purposes. Built originally as a Dairy Queen franchised operation, its design is intended to suggest a gambrel-roofed barn, but its paved surroundings deprive it of visual association. Its lack of landscaping does, however, serve to open up the view to the large village cemetery (#6) and the vista of distant mountains. The 20th-century stuccoed structure on the corner opposite (#12) also is out of

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keeping with the village architecture; though the house portion of this building dates to the 1930s, it has been severely altered as well as enlarged.

The sites, categorized as key, contributing, and non-contributing, as defined by the State and National Register Nomination Manual, follow. The key sites have been listed separately, but their numbered position within the District is also indicated in the total list of sites that follows.

### KEY SITES

Site 2. Nevius/Van Zandt Homestead Farm, 1740/1811 (Bernardus Van Zandt House), Route 518

This site, with a portion of its farmland, is pivotal to the District, serving to define its western boundary and helping to interpret its history. The intersection at Blawenburg came about when a road was laid between the two farms belonging to Peter Nevius and John Covenhoven at mid-18th century. Nevius purchased his farm of 267 acres from the estate of absentee landholder Garret Van Horne, c. 1740. He died in 1767 and is buried in the Blaw-Nevius Cemetery (not in District). The farm was willed to his son James and passed from him by will to his niece and her husband Bernardus Van Zandt in 1811, on condition that monthly payments would be made for it. Prior to this, Van Zandt had lived on his father's homestead farm on Skillman Road, a short distance north of the village. Apart from a brief interval, this farm has remained in the ownership of the Van Zandt Family to this day. At the time Bernardus Van Zandt assumed ownership, the farm contained 190 acres. It was divided between sons, c. 1860, and the remaining portion has since been enlarged by the purchase of the farm to its west, but at the same time some parcels of small size have been sold.

The extant house is 19th century, but a wing of two stories which formerly was attached at east end, laterally, has now been removed and relocated behind the house. (site 2.1) An 1829 map of the Georgetown-Franklin Turnpike shows a sketch of the house that somewhat resembles but does not truly correspond with the present structure. It is depicted with central 2-story block, flanked either side by 2-story wings. The extant house is a 3-bay, two-story rectangular mass, side-hall plan, two rooms deep, now of four-room arrangement (the west rear room containing an open staircase running to attic), on stone foundation under pitched roof, with lateral, two-story wing on west, flush with facade, originally one-room deep and two rooms wide, now doubled in size with rear addition across the whole, of one story under shed roof, added in Late Victorian period. Main block has paired chimneys on east elevation. Both sections are clapboarded. A

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synthetic slate roof has recently been installed to replace a slate roof added in 1907. Structure incorporates various periods of styling and remodeling. Remaining 9/9 and 9/6 sash on rear facade place house in Federal period. Surviving raised-panel door and keyhole latch may date to Nevius house. An update in Greek Revival mode largely characterizes the present structure. Fenestration consists of 6/6 sash, with paneled shutters below, flushboard above, and some movable-louver blinds. The entry is of a complex form of Greek Revival style, with paired pilasters incorporating sidelights, and surmounted by an 8-pane transom. Current portico of that style is of recent date, replacing a verandah that had been added in 1905. A classical Doric cornice of triglyphs and metopes appears to be original. Woodwork of wing suggests either the remodeling of the interior c. 1850, or its total construction at that date.

Stylistic elements such as stair balustrade, columned mantelpiece, shouldered architraves and surbases with distinctive cutout patterning indicate a copying from neighbors' houses, these elements all being found in the village and/or the near vicinity.

This house\* is the oldest residence in the District. Its owners, the Van Zandt Family, generation by generation, played a significant role in the life of the village ranging from contributions to the church, providing a community cemetery, serving as storekeeper and postmaster, running a model farm and introducing advanced technology, and finally founding the area's agricultural supply and equipment center, which contributed to the modernization of 20th-century farming. This century the Van Zandts were also the employers of a number of village residents. In 1921, the farm was featured in the magazine, Country Gentleman (Feb. 5 issue), described as "Real Farm Home on a Thoroughly Modern New Jersey Farm." In 1950, the Soil Conservation Service of Somerset County held a demonstration on the farm to illustrate proper soil contouring, tree planting, and irrigation ponding. The present owner, J. Percy Van Zandt, in his youth conducted an egg and dairy business. He devised the first covered henyard and used electricity to increase egg production. He shipped milk from the nearby train station at Skillman to New York and Philadelphia markets. He also had a chicken market.

Site 2.1 Free-standing house, the former wing of Site 2. Circa 1800 (per haps earlier)

A 2-story structure 2 rooms deep, 3 (originally 4?) bays, frame (clapboard, with later shingling in south gable apex), 9/6 and 6/6 sash; plain fascia board; gable roof, eaves return. Altered in 1915: interior of ground floor gutted to

\*including its removed side block #2.1

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serve as new machine shop business founded by Van Zandt at request of area farmers wanting to have the advanced models of farm equipment he had purchased for himself. House faces west; south gable wall at ground level opened up as wagon entrance, with doors on tracks. Narrow 2-story flat-roofed extension on east (rear) wall to contain stairway to upper floor now used as an apartment. Barn under shed roof attached at north gable. (C)

Outbuildings: These are clustered together adjacent to Site 2.1, to rear of Site 2, and are of 20th-century date. They include a milk house and an ice house. Nearby is a windmill tower, 1905, with head, marked "Aermoter" brand, Chicago, 1920. A rubble-stone spring house, with steep-pitched, wood-shingled roof, stands to northeast of Site 2. (3 contributing buildings & 1 contributing structure)

Site 6. Blawenburg Cemetery. 19th century  
Route 601.

Van Zandt Family private burying ground; appears on 1850 Map of Somerset County. In 1859, 1873, 1910, and 1984 parcels of adjacent land given to community for their use with Blawenburg Reformed Church the trustee. Contains graves of many families associated with the Blawenburg area. Stones range from early 19th-century design to classical monuments, but not expressive of period architectural styles, as found in large cemeteries opened in mid-19th century. Fenced as early as 1859 at expense of church congregation; in 1873 deed, fencing is described as of iron. Existing iron fence is of two styles, that facing Route 601 consisting of alternating-height bars capped with spear-shaped finials. This fencing is seen on postcard, c. 1907, which also shows the extant cobblestone portals. Fencing on south side is loop-headed and resembles that at Site 45. Posts are rounded, with squared projections, ornamented, at midpoint; ring-necked and molded cap, with cast-iron ornament. (Contributing site)

The history of the cemetery is integral to the village's history.

Site 7. Rock Brook Bridge, late 19th century or first decade  
20th century  
Route 601

A bridge spanned Rock Brook at least as early as the first decade of the 19th century. A lithograph of the James Van Zandt Italian Villa (Site 8) appearing in the 1881 county history by James P. Snell (copy enclosed) includes a sketch of the then standing bridge. A resemblance can be found between this bridge and the one on the site, and since the Somerset County Bridge Department

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has no file on the current bridge, there is the possibility that they are one and the same, though later modified.

This is a Warren truss form with four bays, the center two rectangular, the end two triangular, resting on stone abutments; of steel. Roadway is 24 feet, but a portion of it on west side has been partitioned off to create a pedestrian walk.  
(Contributing structure)

Site 8. James Van Zandt House, 1860-1865  
Route 601

Erected on portion of original Nevius/Van Zandt farm on north side of Rock Brook, the farm totalling 172 acres. Intended as a Victorian showpiece, the Italian Villa was picturesquely sited in a dell near the stream, which it faced (south), with an avenue of arching trees for its approach from the road at its east. County historian James P. Snell in 1881 duly noted the mansion as reflecting the cultured taste of its owner and included a lithograph of it in its landscaped grounds as the passerby would view it from the Rock Brook Bridge. This is one of the most fully realized houses in the District in stylistic terms.

Of Early Victorian mode, the (now somewhat altered) Greek cross plan is relatively symmetrical and static for a villa with its well-defined rectilinear blocks, but resembles to a degree one of the plans (No. 16) tendered by H.H. Holly in his Country Seats. J. Percy Van Zandt, grandson of the builder, does not believe, however, that any architect was involved and doubted that purchased plans were used, though perhaps a source was a farmers' publication such as the Agriculturist. It is built of brick which Van Zandt was told had been made at the site from clay brought from the nearby Skillman Station area.

All four arms extend from a central square tower containing a spiraling staircase, which was originally capped by a four-sided glazed belvedere with finial. This was destroyed by a fire early in this century and not replaced. It rises from a high foundation, now cemented over, 2½ stories. A verandah with inchboard sawn slats and paired Italic posts on pedestals wraps around the south arm, but a portion facing east has now been enclosed. The right angles between west and south arm, and east and south arm, are enclosed with obliquely angled walls which terminate in gables, under their own roofs with bracketed extended eaves. These brackets, and others, are mounted on rectangular blocks incised with a decorative pattern. The gables are filled with oculi. The roundheaded entry containing double leaved octagonal-panel doors is located in the west angled wall. It gives access to the stair vestibule within the tower.

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The balustrade, of heavily turned newel and balusters, spirals upward for three stories to roof.

Each arm is under its own gable roof, bracketed at eaves. Triple round-headed windows fill three of the four gables. The east elevation contains a three-sided bay window at ground level and paired flat-headed 4/4 sashed windows on second story. All windows are similar and paired.

In recent times, under ownership of the State of New Jersey, an addition of brick and frame was built to the rear (west wall) on alignment with the north wall; a second story mounted on the roof of the first story is of smaller size. The north wall of the main block has also been altered somewhat, with an apparent slight extension and an insertion of a bay window at ground level. Other alterations include the removal of the end gable chimneys, the enclosure of the east segment of the verandah, substituting a new projecting wall of brick to create an additional room, and installation of a non-matching railing on the verandah when repairs were needed. (C)

No outbuildings remain. A one-room clapboard structure under pyramidal roof, purpose unknown, stands at midpoint on the south side of the lane. (NC)

J. Percy Van Zandt, grandson of James, was born in this house. He recalls the days of grain farming, with hay shipped by railroad to Newark for horse-drawn vehicles and other crops grown to feed chickens and cows. Later, up to 6000 chickens a year were shipped to New York.

Site 14. Blawenburg Tavern/William M. Griggs House, c. 1815  
404 Route 518

The Blawenburg Tavern is one of the earliest houses in Montgomery Township to register the shift in community outlook about building styles, marking a departure from the 1½-story Vernacular Dutch type that had satisfied the colonial population as a whole to a two-story, single-depth type (so-called I-form) that gradually became a norm in Central New Jersey. Locally, the provenance of the style doubtless was Princeton's 18th century example. The tavern not only marks the transition in type but also an intentional effort to conform with the newly emerging Federal style, reflected on the facade by diminishing window sizes from 9/6 sash on ground story level to 6/6 above, and by inclusion of a highly stylish entrance with wood-traceried fanlight in keystone arch and swelled reeded inserts in the pilasters of the architrave. While exterior decor is discreet, if not conservative, the motifs of the fine entrance are repeated in the interior on

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mantelpieces. Original treatment of gable-wall chimney-side space for wall cupboards survives in two rooms. Recessed-panel doors, one with H-hinges, and chair rails remain.

It is five-bay wide, with centered entrance, frame (clapboard) construction, with exposed stone chimney base (now cemented) at east end. Foundation is of stone rubble; roof is pitched. Exterior window trim is molded, with mitered corners. Exterior door, originally of four panels, now contains two inserts of cast-iron grillework, which open as casements, an apparent fad of later date, similar grillework being seen on side door of wing of Site 2 and on the Mayor William Duryea House on Route 518, some distance east of the village.

Alterations: a one-story wing of 2 (?) rooms, single file, originally stood as rear ell, as seen in c. 1907 photograph; this has been removed (possibly recycled in the barn) and replaced by two additions across the rear wall, one of two stories, put on at different times. The interior staircase has been changed to connect with the wing. (C)

Outbuilding: horse barn, gable-fronted, frame, of clapboard and vertical board construction, with open-fronted, hovel-like additions to each side, one on west, shed-roofed, the other flat-roofed. Interior wall of main section contains fragments of wallpaper. (C)

This house was erected on the 100 acres sold by John Covenhoven's granddaughter Susannah, owner of the ancestral homestead, to her daughter and son-in-law William M. Griggs, in 1817, at the time of construction of the Georgetown-Franklin Turnpike in front of its door. It was sketched on the 1829 Turnpike Map, roughly resembling its present appearance, without fenestration, and labeled "Blawenburg Tavern". Its importance lies not only in its introduction of a new architectural style in the area destined to become the village, thus establishing an early standard for tastefulness, but also in its role as community meeting place and one further honored by the holding of the township's annual meetings by its committeemen.

Site 18. Blawenburg Reformed Church, 1831  
424 Route 518

A separate nomination to the State and National Registers was previously prepared for this site. It was listed in the National Register on September 5, 1985.

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This handsome edifice, 3 bay by 5 bay, with double-aisled auditorium above which Wren-Gibbsian-type steeple is mounted, has platformed end sanctuary and three-sided gallery. It represents a departure from the traditional square, hipped-roof Dutch meeting house form--which records of the Harlingen Church, and a description contained in the county history by James P. Snell indicate prevailed in this township in the 18th century--into mainstream ecclesiastical architecture. This is not surprising for its date of construction, but the degree of elegance is. There is strong reason to believe that the style was copied from the Hillsborough Reformed Church in Millstone, built in 1828, which it resembles. The plan itself seems to have been drawn in a loose fashion from Asher Benjamin's pattern book of 1797, The Country Builder's Assistant. It is not an uncommon design for a New England meeting house, however, and many prototypes in other regions can be found. In the two surviving Somerset County examples, we find the more mature incorporation of the steeple within the main mass, mounted over the vestibule rather than over a pavilion advanced before the gable-ended facade. The steeple, too, has been reduced from multi-staged increments to two stages without spire, terminating instead with a bonnet-domed cupola, a popular treatment for public buildings in this area as elsewhere in the nation. In a remote way, it recalls a Chirogic monument. The architectural elements remain traditional, reflecting an over-all conservatism; the Hillsborough church still treats the gable end as pediment. On the other hand, Blawenburg still uses pedimented architraves above fanlights, whereas Hillsborough does not. Both have oculi and quarter segmental fans for ornament.

The interiors of both churches follow Benjamin in aisled nave, with paneled railings supported on columns for the gallery enclosure and staircases accommodated within the side walls of the vestibule. Both are neo-classical in their balanced double range of windows. Both are vernacular in their shingled covering and undressed stone foundations.

(C)

Site 19. Village School House, 1853  
Route 518, No. 432

Two-tenths of an acre adjacent to the church property on the east was obtained in 1853 for the site of a new district school house through the will of Susannah Covenhoven Stout. Previous to this time, there had been a neighborhood school on the highway to the east of the village near the Burnt Hill Road intersection, as indicated on the 1829 map of the turnpike. Families who lived southwest of the village had in the 1830s requested a new road as a shorter route to the school, and in 1849 parents assembled to discuss their dissatisfaction with the building itself, possibly motivated by seeing the large-scale, two-story



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structure erected in Rocky Hill Village for their children. In 1843, the Blawenburg School District contained 40 scholars according to the superintendent's report. Although quite spacious, the new building still contained but one classroom on the ground floor. The upper story, reached by a stairway in the vestibule, was reserved for lecture rooms. This school continued in operation on the premise until 1925, teaching grades 1 through 8.

Of brick construction, now stuccoed, the 3-bay-deep building, is two-storied, gable front to road, in front of which is a one-story gable-roofed pavilion clad in board and batten. On its roof is mounted a simple gable belfry. Two-leaved, 6-panel doors under a 2-pane transom, still in situ, provided originally a single entrance for students of both sexes, going against the prevailing policy of separate entrances. The apex of the main facade is also overlaid with board and batten covering. Extended eaves cover exposed rafter tails. Windows contain 6/6 sash.

After its closing as school, the building was leased to the Blawenburg Church for its community house up to 1960. For the last 13 years it has been rented to the Rock Brook School, a school for children with learning disabilities. The church enlarged the building with a one-story shingle-clad, gable-roofed extension, 32 x 20 feet, on the left (west) in 1950, and a second flat-roofed cinderblock extension behind both wing and main block.

With its close physical relation to the community's church edifice in the heart of the village, the central role of these two institutions is underscored. Taken together visually, they contribute to the understanding of 19th-century village life. (C)

Site 21. Covenhoven/Stout Homestead Complex  
388 Mountain View Road

This site is pivotal to the District both for historical associations and for definition of the east boundary line. The Covenhoven Family played the most prominent role in the emergence of the village, being responsible in part for its founding and for its chief institutions. The entire village was laid out within the bounds of the original farm of John Covenhoven and his wife Catherine Voorhees, purchased 1753, by his great-granddaughter and her husband, Catherine and William M. Griggs. The Griggs bought 100 acres of the farm in 1817. After the separation of their tract, the homestead portion of the farm remained in the occupancy of Catherine's mother Susannah, wife of John Stout, Esq., until her

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death. In 1853, it passed to her heirs. In 1873, according to the Atlas Map, N.H. Hagerman was in possession.

Susannah and John Stout's house is doubtless the one indicated on the 1829 map of the turnpike, the only house other than the tavern and Bernardus Van Zandt's then standing in this vicinity. Whether or not accurately depicted, it is shown as a 1½-story structure, which is certainly believable if this represents their inherited homestead. This was replaced by another, occupied by her heirs after 1853, which burned down c. 1930. The appearance of this house is known from a c. 1900 photograph, and its dimensions have been determined from an excavation of its foundation. During the 1920s, it became the Green Flash Tavern.

The site includes:

Excavated foundation of house, dimensions 30 by 50 feet. Photograph shows a rectangular 2½-story center-hall-plan, 5-bay box, with paired end chimneys and center cross-gable. A verandah flows across the facade, and possibly there was an attic frieze with windows, but that feature is unclear. Excavation revealed a kitchen ell at right (west rear) and adjacent to it an intact domed brick cistern with an arched opening. During the Prohibition years, new owners from New York made it into a restaurant and speak-easy. As an elegant estate in the second half of the 19th century, it had an approach from the highway which it faced, through a tree-lined lane. Some of this roadside property, now wooded, still remains attached to the farm (Site 20). The major associated buildings, including three barns, carriage house and wagon house, were characteristically grouped to the rear of the dwelling house, with a separate lane leading to them from the highway, the basis of present-day Mountain View Road. (Contributing site)

21.1 Shingled cattle barn and carriage house, embanked on the south on stone foundation, with gable end to Mountain View Road. Has two-story elevation on north wall, 3-story on south, each of 7 bays. Embanked level open to fields, without foundation. Contains series of sliding-track doors, above which are granary door openings, centered. Hood protects hoist and hayloft door on west gable apex. Each floor level is ceiled. The second level, entered from the north, was used for carriage storage. Barn, one of three originally on site, dates to second half of 19th century. Windows contain 6/6 sash, have triangular lintels, and are shuttered. Extensive repairs with new materials are in evidence. (C)

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21.2 Former 22-foot square 19th-century wagon house, frame, with wagon doors at south gable; loft above now converted into apartment and artist's studio with west-facing bay window. Internal loft stairs run against east long wall. New exterior stone chimney on north gable wall. Shingled. (C)

21.3 Modern structure on barn foundation built by current tenant Harold ("Hap") Heins, local artist, to house his blacksmith's forge, workroom, and garage. (NC)

21.4 Carriage house, 19th century, converted by Mrs. George Gallup, Sr., into residence in 1930s. Original use now unrecognizable but framing timbers are preserved and exposed in interior, and bay window, facing west, occupies place of carriage doors. It is a two-story frame structure, originally shingled, now aluminum-sided, with slate gable roof; 2 rooms deep, it has entry in south gable wall. To it has been joined a one-room kitchen on the north, connected by a passageway that serves as hyphen and contains street-facing entry. New addition is of half depth of main block and is on alignment with east facade. The property is beautifully landscaped with evergreens, has post-and-rail fence at roadside, and an interior garden set against a dry-laid stone retaining wall. (NC)

Site 22. Blawenburg Church Parsonage, 1832-1836  
431 Route 518

Built as part of agreement with the first minister, a mortgage was taken out in 1832 for 5-acre parcel across the road from the church and work was begun. Apparently ministerial demands kept the work in progress for a four-year period, and exceeded funds raised for a total cost of \$2,091, which surpassed by a few hundred dollars the cost of the much larger Thomas Whitenack House (#30) built ten years later. Original structure was of side-hall plan in Greek idiom, with trabeated entrance, lit by multi-paned transom and sidelights framed by paired fluted pilasters. A portico mentioned in records as being at rear may originally have been in front until the addition of a verandah in 1870, later removed. Original plan of double parlor with gable-wall chimneys and a service wing to east side of through hall was doubled in 1882 to make a full house of symmetrical treatment (5 bays); unified by a broad fascia board across the facade. Single chimney of addition is in internal position between rooms, emerging at ridge. Original wing, removed for addition, was attached at rear and since then has been enlarged. Only other noteworthy alterations are the combining of double parlors into one room, loss of one fireplace, and insertion of additional windows on rear wall with appropriately styled Greek Revival moldings, post-1950.

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Church records indicate that a lawn of "pearister" seed was planted in 1836. Interior was wall-papered in 1870. Central heating was added in 1910, and water system in 1919. House was made two-family in 1922, one side reserved for minister. It was sold in 1950.

This is a frame house, clapboarded over brick intersticing, with rubble stone foundation and pitched roof of synthetic shingles, a replacement for slate. Windows are large-scaled, with 6/6 sash and louvered blinds. Although the outward appearance is modest, a seeming general characteristic of rural architecture, the interior is embellished more richly than is the norm. Balustrade of staircase has slender tapered balusters, a slightly bulbous turned newel, and rounded handrail, which terminates in downward swirl, and a recessed-panel wall below string course. Ground-floor ceiling height is 10 feet, and tall doors have 8 panels. Window architraves are broad and double-finned, with blank cornerblocks on lintels. A heavily molded crown cornice incorporates cornerblocks at room angles. Mantelpiece is broad friezed with center and end tablets and fluted pilasters. Second-story mantelpieces are similar. (C)

Original barn at left rear was taken down by current owners and replaced on site with barnlike structure of approximately same dimensions for garage and storage area. (NC)

The building of this parsonage marks a turning point in Blawenburg's history. It was the anchor, the first dwelling on the streetscape, on an oversized village lot. It obviously created the vision of a village, and there was a rush to buy other lots between it and the intersection, changing the character of the landscape almost overnight. Its architectural merits also served to inspire future builders; the community nucleus of tavern, church, and parsonage, all showpieces of a sort, forecast an attractive place to live. Perhaps Princeton's growth at this time aroused a competitive feeling.

Site 27. Widow Catherine Whitenack House, c. 1834  
415 Route 518

The Whitenack Family came to Montgomery Township in the second half of the 18th century. Cornelius, born 1781, married Catherine Skillman, descendant of another pioneer family, in 1809. They owned a farm south of the Covenhoven property early in the 19th century, bringing them into close contact with neighborhood residents. After this, they bought another farm contiguous to the east bound of the Covenhovens on the south side of the turnpike. When Cornelius died in 1831, his estate sold the property to the first minister of the church, Henry

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Heermance, in 1833, for his own use, and the widow then obtained a half-acre lot from William Griggs adjacent to the parsonage lot.

The house is a small single-depth rectangular structure of two rooms, 1½ stories, of appropriate size for a single woman occupant. Not Dutch in plan, it is a styleless house that relates to no movement except perhaps the return to smaller houses then being advocated as more fuel efficient. It is 3 bays wide, with the entry squeezed in the right bay, in front of which stands a c. 1920 gable-roofed porch held by Queen Anne posts, similar to others in the village and doubtless the work of local carpenter Elmer Height. It is of frame construction (clapboarded), with 2/2 sash. One of two end chimneys survives; although fire-place opening has been closed, it has stack (cemented) of conventional rectangular shape with corbelled drip courses near cap. An exterior brick chimney replaces the west chimney. To left (east) is single-room wing, with shed roof, behind which is flat-roofed breakfast room, added this century. Wing is also clapboarded except for east wall, which is of asbestos shingles. Spare of ornament, the interior once had a chair rail. Exterior window frames have molded caps of Greek profile. (C)

The Widow Whitenack's House helps to place the remainder of village dwellings in sharp relief. The smallness of lot, the deep setback, and the proximity to parsonage and church speak to the modest and cautious life of a widow of the time.

Site 28. Mrs. Mary and Sarah Q. Voorhees House, 1870  
418 Route 518

These two women, possibly mother and daughter, have not been identified within the Voorhees family tree, but undoubtedly they were related to the local family. In 1870, they bought one of the last two village lots available from Martin Nevius, who had purchased them in 1867 from Griggs' estate. Nevius owned the house (#30) to the west at that time. These ladies, apparently of sufficient income to live alone, bought in 1871 two other properties, one the former Whitenack/Heermance/Sherman farm, holding it for one year, perhaps as an investment. Their house, which appears on the 1873 Atlas Map, is a diminutive two-story framed structure, three bays wide, with entry to right, offering a room and hall plan. The foundation is of rubble stone, roof of slate. Walls are clapboarded, with cornerboards. A narrower 2-story wing of two rooms to floor, single file, extends as west ell, with flatroofed open porch along one side, incorporating cellar bulkhead for main block.

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Despite its smallness, it is relatively stylish in the Italianate mode. Entrance is overscaled for facade, with double-leaved, octagonal-panel doors and 2-light transom. Roof eaves return, and both the plank fascia board and rakes are adorned with paired sawn scroll brackets. Original chimney is in east gable wall. A new external brick chimney rests against the west wall. Windows are 2/2 sash, have molded caps, and are full length on ground floor. Movable louvered blinds surround them. Interior trim displays shouldered architraves on openings and staircase carries heavy turned balustrade.

Of interest is the presence of two windows of 9/6 sash in the wing. There is no reason to believe the wing predates the main block. This appears to be another example of the thrifty use of available components saved from another building, of which many examples are found. (C)

With the erection of this house, building ceased in the village for several decades. This final house to go up, like all the others before it, excepting the Widow Whitenack's, made its bow to the street with its au courant stylistic elements.

Site 30. Thomas Whitenack House, 1844  
403 Route 518

The Whitenack brothers, Thomas and Abraham, sons of the widow, were among the earliest to buy house lots once the land was subdivided by Griggs. Thomas Whitenack purchased his in 1841, and sometime thereafter proceeded to erect his dwelling, the largest in the village, costing him about \$1800, judging by the insurance policy that was taken out in 1844. It is an extraordinarily large house for its setting, of center-hall plan, with side wing of full depth. The original kitchen was incorporated as one of four ground-floor rooms, a change from the practice of isolating it in a separate wing. According to the Hillsborough Mutual Fire Assurance Association policy, the house was 44 by 32 feet, with shed rooms west side 16 by 32 feet, and room and porch on south side 54 by 6 feet. It is a rectangular block of two stories, 5 bays, two rooms deep, frame construction with brick intersticing, now clad with synthetic shingles. Each room has its own chimney, with stacks originally emerging separately on either slope of the pitch roof, as seen in an old photograph. Chimneys have now been combined in attic and emerge as single stacks on roof crest. Another apparent alteration is the insertion of 6/9 sash in the attic windows. A sash of 9/6 is also found in a shed-roofed porch attached against the west wing.

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The house stands on a stone rubble foundation. Windows on facade are large, with 6/6 sash, 2/2 in gable walls. Sunk-panel shutters are at ground-floor level; movable louvered blinds above. Entry is Greek Revival style, but side-lights have been replaced with single panes of glass. A portico formerly stood before the door, but only the pilasters remain; these are broadly channeled. Above the entry is a tri-part window. This Greek style grouping is also seen on Site 31 and the Judge Peter Voorhees House, c. 1845, some distance west of the village on the highway (not included in the District).

The roof is flush with the walls. A banded architrave serves as fascia. Original raking boards remain. The wing has a Jersey wind screen or parapet.

The rear porch has not been changed, but the end room has been raised a story and given a flat roof.

Interior decor is in Greek idiom. Large blank cornerblock trim is on lintels of broad architraves containing pyramidal-shaped moldings. Window surrounds incorporate panels. Doors are vertical paneled in style of Erechtheum Temple. Staircase ascends to attic in similar fashion as in the parsonage, with first floor landing window and closely resembles it as well as the one at Site 36, even to downturned swirl of handrail at newel. (C)

Whitenack took out three mortgages, each of \$500 and found himself in financial trouble in 1845. The house was then sold at a sheriff's vendue to Martin Nevius. Nevius already had his own farm and dwelling house on Great Road, inherited from his father. He may have seen this purchase as a real estate venture: in 1853, he sold it to his sister Sarah Nevius. The next decade he purchased it back, and also bought the two empty lots lying to the east of it. Later owners included Abram Cruser, who purchased it as well as the 49-acre farm field behind the village lots and is thought to have erected the ramped barn on the lot; Dunlap, who came from New York City to Blawenburg and operated the village car garage (#10) besides farming on his own; and Herbert Hobler, who assembled a parcel of some 700 acres for his large-scale dairy operation, Wood Acres, headquartered in the John M. Nevius House on Great Road (not included in the District). Hobler housed his farm hands in the Whitenack House. For a period of time in this century the west wing was rented as an apartment to a widow. Despite such a history of occupancy, the interior has retained its integrity.

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As an expression of the aspirations that fired the individuals to have new houses in the rising village, the Whitenack House, as the largest and most ambitious, takes its place alongside the parsonage and the Judge Stryker House (#36).

Outbuildings: Complex of farm buildings, the oldest being a 19th-century ramped cow barn of wood frame, with vertical plank siding and corrugated tin roof, to which was attached, c. 1950, a one story cinderblock extension at back. A second building, a wagon house formerly (according to Charles Cruser, son of Abram Cruser, an early owner), was converted into another cow house. A remaining small structure was used for milk processing. All these are grouped together at some distance from rear of house near the 49-acre farm field. Beneath the floor of the original house porch is a cistern. Just beyond the porch are two concrete-capped wells. (3 contributing buildings. Cistern & wells not evaluated)

Site 32. Blacksmith-Wheelwright Shop, 1838  
399 Route 518

This building with a datestone, 1838, set in the apex of the front-facing gable, is a two-story, rectangular brick structure, now stuccoed, with pitched roof and overhanging eaves. On its front facade are hinged carriage doors, above which a c. 1920s scalloped-edge pediment has been placed. Similarly wide door openings are found on the upper level, west side and rear, which served the wheelwright. The blacksmith's door, under a hood supported by struts, is on the east wall opposite the house he owned (#31). Just within are the stairs to the upper story. Window openings on side walls contain 6/6 sash. Sills are prominent.

It is unclear who built the shop at this date. Possibly it was John Dean, whose name surfaces in the deeds of this time. Abraham Whitenack, a blacksmith, bought the property, possibly with house, from his brother Thomas in 1844 for \$2,200. It contained 1.15 acres. Barber and Howe in their Historical Collections of 1844 mention only the blacksmith shop, but the 1850 map of Somerset County indicates the existence of a wheelwright shop as well. Both trades continued to be pursued in this building up to the end of the century, at least, Potter being the last blacksmith of local memory. After Elmer Height bought the property, in 1909, including Site 31, he--a bachelor--made an apartment out of the upper story of the shop, while his brother Charles lived in the blacksmith's house. During one period of vacancy, the Blawenburg Band held its rehearsals there.



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As the one artisan's shop built in the village during its formative years, this site, on its original location, contributes to the detailing of life in a 19th-century village. (C)

Site 34. William Sherman House, c. 1856  
395 Route 518

The property on which this house stands was originally sold in 1833 to John A Voorhees, who seemingly was at that time a land broker, and passed in 1842 to John Dean, reduced to half size. Although Dean lived in the neighborhood, his child being buried in the Blawenburg Cemetery in the 1840s, it cannot be said with certainty that he occupied this house. Now predominantly of later style, with apparent important structural changes made, the house is thought to date from 1856 as the home of William Sherman. Sherman had purchased the minister Heermance's farm in the 1840s and presumably lived there until 1856 when he sold it and bought this property. The site is indicated on the cadastral map of 1860 of Philadelphia and its environs, under his name. The blacksmith Whitenack sold the property to him.

Sherman's house reflects its date in late Greek Revival features, with an overlay of Italianate. An I-style in form, 5 bays wide, it wears monumental paneled pilasters at the corners, above which is carried an attic frieze, pierced by formally spaced eyebrow windows flanked by solid wood brackets. The low-pitched roof has heavily molded eaves returns, also bracketed. Window enframements on the exterior are shouldered and hung with paneled shutters below, louvered blinds above. The entry is trabeated form, with sidelights and transom, and pilasters remain from a Tuscan portico (seen in 1907 photograph), which has been replaced with current pedimented porch of one bay, centered.

A two-story wing, under its own gable roof, spreads entirely across the rear, but indications are that the two-room-deep wing was half this size at first, extending from the east side of the house. There are no end chimneys in main block (nor chimney bases in cellar), and original chimney placement has not been determined. There is now an interior chimney on the rear wall of the west side with openings with fireplaces in the main block and the segment of the wing behind it. A plain Greek-styled mantelpiece now fronts the wing fireplace.

In 1865, J.A. Voorhees bought back the house and willed it to his daughter Sarah upon his death, which occurred in 1876. Victorian flourishes, such as stair balustrade in narrow hall between rooms, and exterior door of 4 heavily molded panels, probably were installed about this time. (C)

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The Sherman House introduced to the village still another then current choice in architectural features, making the streetscape a documentary of the wide range of taste found in a rural area.

Site 36. Judge Cornelius C. Stryker House and Store, 1830s  
391 Route 518

The property on which this house stands was sold by Griggs to John A. Voorhees in 1832, the same year as the parsonage lot sale. Voorhees then sold it to Judge Cornelius C. Stryker, for \$250. It was a slightly oversized corner lot, containing  $1\frac{1}{2}$  acres. At the time Stryker was a member of the Township Committee, a Commissioner of Deeds, and a judge. At about the same time, Stryker also purchased a village lot in Harlingen, opposite the church, also a corner location. From this we assume he did intend to settle in one of the newly emerging villages. He built his house in Blawenburg, however, presumably shortly afterward.

Judging by the size of the house and its stylishness, one is led to believe that he had a vision of the future village as a street of good town architecture as then being observed in Princeton's enlargement under the hand of land developer and builder-architect Charles Steadman (Alexander Road, Library Place, and environs). Nationally it was also a period of townhouse building in growing cities, but this influence seems remote for Blawenburg. To add support to this thesis is the fact that Steadman himself was at work in the neighborhood, employed by Abraham Cruser of Bedens Brook Road nearby for work on his new house. A resemblance between Steadman's entrance for 72 Library Place, Princeton, and that of the Stryker House is evident, although the latter's is considerably plainer and lacks the refinements, especially of carved details. It also lacks columns, free-standing and engaged, which must be imagined to have been among its components originally. The tracery filling the transom and sidelights is similar to that used on other Steadman houses; it also strongly calls to mind the same features found on the entry of the c. 1830 addition to the Abraham Staats House of South Bound Brook, suggesting a common source used by carpenters of the time.

The house follows side-hall plan of three bays and is two rooms deep, 2 stories high, under a gable roof. The foundation is of coursed rectangular stone blocks. Typically each room had its independent chimney, which emerged in separate stacks on the roof slopes. The rear chimney has now been removed within the structure, but its stack still remains. Windows are of 6/6 sash with one exception (6/1). A Greek-style entrance is recessed, with molded cornice, which breaks out into projections before the sidelight panels. Interior woodwork is

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also Greek in style, including a mantelpiece with free-standing Doric columns similar to one in the Abraham Cruser House, mentioned above. (The Bernardus Van Zandt House and the Joost Duryea House to the east of the District also have mantelpieces of this type). An open staircase ascends to attic in double runs with landings and has a graceful balustrade with downturn spiral at railing's termination. Vine-and-tendrill carved scrolls mark the stair ends for two flights. Architraves around openings are broad and finned, with double-framed cornerblocks on lintels.

Before 1850, Stryker had begun his store and post office operations. They are indicated on the 1850 map, but may have been housed in a separate building. At some time, the store became an addition to the house, attached along its west wall. It appears to have originated as a much smaller structure at first, judging by its foundation. Eventually it was brought to present size and aligned with the house facade, creating a double dwelling of 6 bays. Both sections were then tied together by a plain fascia at the eaves. The eaves return. The entire structure is sheathed with clapboard, but those incorporating the store front were originally laid flush.

The store facade consists of two three-sided, multi-paned oriel windows flanking a side-lighted entrance. In a photograph of 1907 the same facade appears, but a shed-roofed porch supported on square posts then ran across the entire front, protecting a wooden deck at street level. Set back half-way along the west elevation is a one-story warehouse, also clapboarded, on stone foundation, with a hipped roof. Its west wall contains a wide door with ramp for receiving goods and a window of 9/6 sash, doubtless another example of a re-used component. The store interior has been totally altered. The last general store ceased to operate about 20 years ago. Since that time, the space has been used for various business enterprises, including its recent use as antiques shop. A c. 1940 photograph shows the last shopkeeper, Reuben Musselman, behind the counter of a typical country store.

Attached to the east side of the rear wall of the house is a two-story wing, with two rooms to the floor, single file, raised from a stone foundation. An old photograph shows a wing on the east side of the structure. Possibly this is the same wing in a different location. Running across the rear of the house from the wall of the wing is a passageway under shed roof. From this projects a small breakfast room added for the store after 1926.

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Approximately 1982, the current owners added a wing of one story against the east wall of the house. This is clapboarded and gable-roofed. Its two windows contain 1/1 sash.

After Judge Stryker's ownership the property was briefly held by Abraham Skillman, who then sold it to John N. Van Zandt in 1867, along with the 49-acre farm field. Van Zandt took on the duties of store keeper as well as postmaster, filling the latter role well into this century. His son succeeded him as store keeper. (C)

Outbuildings: To the rear of the house are the 20th-century post office (#37), a well in rebuilt squared stone housing, a privy in poor condition, and the board-and-batten structure that was incorporated into the first fire house (now current post office), Site 38. The barn incorporated into Site 39, the house built for John Van Zandt's daughter, also belonged with the house. (NC)

The Judge Stryker House serves as the other anchor to the village streetscape. The village filled in between his house and the parsonage. Both being architectural specimens, they introduced a high level of quality for domestic building from the outset. This combined house and store structure, with the 49-acre farm associated with it, encapsulates the history of Blawenburg and is of paramount importance to the District.

### Inventory of Remaining Sites:

1. Elks Club (former Van Zandt Cow Barn), c. 1900  
Route 518  
Harmonizing/Non-contributing

Barn configuration, with main axis parallel with road, now covered with new vertical siding, clapboarded west gable. Partly obscured from road by high wall of similar siding, which curves back at west and terminates in wood-shingled, gable-roofed open porch before entry. Barn extended to left (west) with one story gabled addition. (NC)

At rear of property 2 small barns covered with corrugated metal, c. 1930s. (C)

East gable of barn as seen from adjacent site (No. 2) still retains original appearance. Before conversion to Elks Club for dining/meeting room and offices, barn had served agricultural purposes and had also been used as agricultural and farm machinery shop with sales room housed in an addition on front wall.

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Operated by J. Percy Van Zandt, it was a well-known regional center, offering the latest in equipment including milk machines, farm tractors, and gasoline engines. It remained in business between the 1920s and 1960s and then moved to Flemington. The annual community strawberry festival has long been held on its grounds.

2. Key. Nevius/Van Zandt Homestead Farm

3. 372 Route 518, 1957  
Harmonizing/Non-contributing

Colonial Revival, Cape Cod style; 1 story, block and wing under gable roof with boxed eaves, each unit of 2 bays (modern bay window in each); with garage housed in wing at other end (east) in 1-bay wing (entrance of east gable). Concealed from road by hedge. (NC)

4. 382 Route 518, c. 1935  
Harmonizing/Contributing

Colonial Revival, 2 storied, 3 bays (entry to right), gable roofed, internal chimney at crest; frame (clapboard); entrance heavily articulated with door architrave carrying scroll pediment; recessed wing at right (east) for garage, gable-roofed; west wing, 1-story gabled sun porch, enclosed. (NC)

5. Hilltop Inn (formerly Dairy Queen), c. 1957  
Route 518  
Non-contributing

Commercial structure built as part of Dairy Queen franchised chain of combined ice cream stand and restaurant employing their trademark style of architecture of Dutch gambrel-roofed barn. Gable end, containing glass-enclosed counter, faces Route 518. Attached at west side is squared one story building, with flat roof, widely extended over walkway, which houses restaurant. Bands of windows on front and side wall. Both structures are of brick. (NC)

6. Key. Blawenburg Cemetery.

7. Key. Rock Brook Bridge.

8. Key. James Van Zandt Italian Villa.

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9. 1131 Route 601, built 1920s, by Joseph Hillpot (it is believed)  
Contributing

Craftsman style, deep 1½-story frame (clapboard) with low-pitched roof and extended eaves, penetrated on left (east) wall by stepped brick chimney. Shed-roofed dormer contains 3 single-pane casement windows and has stick struts at each end. Faces north and is fronted by pergola, now roofed over, with rafter tails of curvilinear shape; pergola is carried to west wall for one bay. Chimney is flanked by small vertical windows with tracery at top, an arrangement similar to one illustrated in the Craftsman, October 1905 issue. Facade of 3 bays has centered entry of double doors, glazed, and two single-pane picture windows. Remaining windows have 6/1 sash. House style resembles Plate 74 in Herman Valentin von Holst's Modern American Homes (1913), reproduced from Ladies Home Journal. Gable-roofed ell at west rear contains entry door, also a straight-walled bay projection under extended main roof on east rear wall. Similar projecting bay is found on west wall under separate roof with exposed rafter tails.

(C)

Outbuildings: wagon/carriage house, now 2-car garage, gable-fronted with two vehicular openings, and enclosed stairway on east wall. Pent roof, with asbestos shingles, over openings. East one-bay extension under flat roof with single entrance. Frame construction, concrete foundation, gable roof of asphalt shingles.

(NC)

10. B&V Garage, 1143 Route 601, built 1920s/30s (?)  
Contributing

Long the neighborhood garage, owned by Dunlap, built by Joseph Hillpot, local carpenter. The upper floor was the community hall.

Two-story, gable-fronted structure with a two-story addition to right (south) under a sloped continuation of the roof, 4 bays across upper story with 6/1 sash windows, and very deeply extended to rear with irregular fenestration in size and placement, and multiple doors on south wall, beyond which is another section, recessed, with own entrance, facing south. Main facade and portion of north wall contain square-paned show windows, with store of 2 bays in extension. Frame (novelty siding) and cinderblock construction.

(C)

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11. That Foreign Car Place (former second fire house),  
1147 Route 601, early 1950s  
Non-Contributing

One-story, flat-roofed, cinderblock building with parapetted false cornice, raised in center; 3 bays wide, two for vehicles, and one deep. Rear 5-bay extension of novelty siding, also flat-roofed. (NC)

12. 1149 Route 601, c. 1920s, 1950s  
Non-contributing

Double structure combining house and commercial quarters, built originally by Joseph Hillpot, according to some long-time residents. Severely altered. The commercial section is a replacement building for the original store, which served village needs, was local ice cream emporium, and contained the post office for a period of time. House structure faces Route 601, gable to road, and extends deeply with additions at rear, and north ell. Ground floor contains a 3-bay shop. Commercial structure faces both Routes 601 and 518, with entries on each facade. Broad flat roof extends over walkway; at corner, a large lantern-shaped four-sided sign is suspended. Store contains plate-glass multipaned show windows on both facades. The house is clapboarded; the store, stuccoed. (NC)

13. May's Insurance House/Office, 400 Route 518, built 1920s  
Contributing

Cape-Cod-style, 1½ story, 3 bay (paired windows), gable-roofed, with 2 gabled dormers. Slate roof, 6/6 sash. Exterior chimney on right (east) wall. Stone-faced on facade; other walls clapboarded. Smaller recessed gable-roofed extension on east wall with flat-roofed clapboarded addition to its front containing door and Chicago-window (wood framed). Built by Joseph Hillpot for his residence; later became residence and office of Everett May. (C)

14. Key. Blawenburg Tavern.

15. Sears, Roebuck bungalow, 410 Route 518, built 1937  
Contributing

Catalog Model #13333, "The Marion," costing \$1553, ordered and erected by local carpenter Elmer Height. Frame (clapboard), 1½ story, 22 x 24, with center dormer containing triple window under gable roof with curved solid brackets on eave. Main gable roof sweeps over porch in Dutch Colonial flair. Porch piers

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clapboarded; posts square, slightly tapered; windows, 6/1; interior chimney on ridge. House has been extended on left (west) with 1-story addition; otherwise, closely resembles the model. (C)

16. Sears, Roebuck bungalow, 412 Route 518, built 1937  
Contributing

Catalog Model #3407, "The Dayton," described as "typical American home." Reflects Craftsman-style influence; resembles Craftsman design for "Cottage for a Small Family" (1909). Frame (clapboard), 1½ story, 28 x 20, gable to street, with full porch under slightly hipped roof, 2 bays wide. Applied Eastlake-type sunburst fills apex, not in original design. Extended roof has exposed rafter tails. Porch posts of square columns on large pedestals. Windows of 6/1 sash have louvered blinds. Sold for \$1,376. (C)

17. District Schoolhouse, 406 Route 518, built 1925  
Contributing

This replacement school for the 1853 building was erected to meet educational standards of its time and follows general plan already adopted by Montgomery and Hillsborough Townships for new schools during the preceding decade. Although intended to serve grades 1 through 8, it contained just two classrooms. In 1948, the enrollment was limited to K-2, and it met that need up to 1966. After that year students attended a new centrally located elementary school. In 1968, the building was used for the offices of the Board of Education and continued in that service for some years. It was then sold to a local entrepreneur for his business, SLI Learning Systems.

A rectangular block of one story with a flattened hip roof, it is of frame, originally shingled, now covered with aluminum siding, and raised on a high foundation of cinderblock. The central stair entry is enclosed in a squared flat-roof pavilion, which possibly at one time had a tower, as seen in other examples, although no record has been found of this feature. Two groupings of four windows, with louvered blinds, flank the entry, such window bands probably reflecting educational theory about limiting the source of light to one wall as against the use of cross-lighting. Squared windowless bays project from the side walls. Side lights flank the entry.



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Under present ownership, an additional room and rear entrance have been placed at back, and a two-bay lateral extension, slightly recessed against the east wall, is now under construction. This will match in materials the original structure.

(C)

18. Key. Blawenburg Reformed Church.

18.1 Church's Community House, 424 Route 518, built 1966  
Harmonizing/Non-contributing

This building is set back deeply on the church grounds and shielded from view by the number of mature trees, including oaks, landscaping the property.

Single story, 13 bays, raised on high foundation. Centered entry in projecting gabled vestibule of 3 bays. Frame (shingles).

(NC)

19. Key. Village School House.

20. Mountain View Road: 41.7-acre farm tract and buildings

Parcel of land is portion of original Covenhoven farm, dating to 1753. Map of 1873 indicates residence (one of two) owned by N.H. Hagerman at approximately the site of current complex of buildings. From this period a ramped cattle barn survives. Circa 1930, George Gallup, Sr., purchased this tract, which then included Sites 29, 30, 31 and 32 as well, and extended to Route 518. Site includes:

Cape-Cod style house, built 1952, center entrance, 8/8 sash windows, clapboarded. 3 bay.

(NC)

1920s house, a bungalow originally, since enlarged by series of additions to create a Cape-Cod type structure facing north; house lot enclosed by picket fence. Has 4-bay facade, with centered entrance contained in projecting pedimented porch. Frame (clapboard).

(NC)

Embanked 3-bay cattle barn, shingled, 3-stories high. Exposed rafter tails under eaves, hoist hood on east gable wall, which contains three doors at ground level, and attic window. Main facade, ramped on north, has barn doors on tracks. From threshing floor on main level, trap door leads to embanked stabling area

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below. This level formerly open on south elevation; now partly enclosed with framing and cinderblock. Dates to second half of 19th century. (C)

Attached to above barn on west is 1940 1½-story dairy barn, cinderblock, in E plan, with concrete silos at end of near and far bars of plan. (NC)

Chicken houses, 1940. (NC)

Double corn crib with wagon drive-through, slat construction with doors, raised on cinderblock foundation. Wood-shingled roof, with rafter tails. (C)

Second corn crib, slatted construction, wood-shingled roof. (C)

Skeleton-framed, pole construction, open-fronted storage shed with end corn crib, c. 1950. (NC)

Barn, moved from Site 29, about 1940, and mounted on one-story foundation used for horse stables. Barn itself rises about 40 feet; 2 stories; shingled. Originally ramped; now faces north, with large wagon door on hinges opening to threshing floor, which is supported on logs. East gable apex contains loft door and hoist. Interior construction, with two transverse timbers running parallel with long walls to interior posts, squared tongues projecting beyond posts, suggests possibility of conversion to English barn from Dutch barn. (C)

21. Key. Covenhoven/Stout Homestead Complex

22. Key. Church Parsonage

23. 423 Route 518, built c. 1933 by Elmer Height  
Contributing

Built for bridal home of Norman Height, Elmer Height's nephew. Two-story, 5-bay, 6/1 sash, louvered blinds, frame (clapboard), minimally traditional. Centered entrance flanked by small single-sash windows; pedimented porch on paired square columns. Extended eaves and returns. Recessed on right (west) wall is 1-story flat-roofed sun parlor. Internal chimney emerges on rear slope of gabled roof. Thought by old-timers to be another Sears, Roebuck House, (C)

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24. 421 Route 518, built 1920s by Westervelt and Blackwell of Skillman for Augustus Terhune  
Contributing

Vernacular Prairie Style, so-called Four Square. Two story, 3 bay, centered entry with porch under hipped roof. Hipped-roof dormer, containing paired windows. Slate roof, overhanging eaves, and exposed rafter tails. Windows, 1/1 sash, with louvered blinds on second story. Latticework below porch. Side entrance, also. (C)

25. 419 Route 518, built 1920s by Elmer Height  
Contributing

Late Victorian eclectic, with Queen Anne porch; gable-fronted, 2½ story, 2 bay house with keystone round-headed window in apex; pedimented porch in front of entry, with miniscule spool-filled corner brackets, and balustrade of wood slats and turned newel post. Under-porch area enclosed with boarding containing geometrical-shaped cutouts. Curved wood brackets support eaves; scalloped molding trim at base of gable apex. The last two features seem to be trademark of Height. Frame (narrow clapboards), 1/1 sash. At rear there is 1-story leanto; side porch, with shed roof. Facade window, 4 panes, oversized. (C)

26. 417 Route 518, John Van Zandt House, built 1850s  
Contributing

In 1846, the Widow Whitenack (#27) died, and her estate sold the property to John Van Zandt for \$450. The 1860 map indicates two houses on this half-acre tract, the deep-set widow's dwelling and another near the road. However, not until 1865 was the property divided, with Van Zandt retaining the front portion, the back being sold to Joseph V.H. Reid.

This appears to be house indicated on the map, although severely altered now and converted into a duplex. A village resident, now deceased, had claimed that this house had formerly belonged to one of the railroad companies at Skillman and had been moved to this site. This seems unlikely, however, as the railroad building period did not occur for another 20 years. On the other hand, it is still possible that a house was moved to the site, for the framing system that is visible suggests an earlier period of construction than mid-19th century, in fact, largely resembles the bent system of heavy timbers employed by the Dutch for their vernacular houses. Whatever its provenance, after being placed on this site, the structure became two-story and was sheathed with board and batten. The

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house is two rooms deep, with rooms of Dutch proportions, and gable-wall chimneys decked with mantelpieces of late Greek Revival style. A step-down wing of two stories, shed-roofed, spreads across the rear. In this was formerly contained the kitchen fireplace.

Early this century the house was re-sided with aluminum. The present owners removed a Queen Anne porch in front of the center of five bays and replaced it with the current pyramidal-roofed portico on square posts. The former porch resembled the one still in place on the west side of the house, and this is similar in post and bracket detail to the porch on Site 25. The second-story windows in double groupings have also been altered and hung with synthetic louvered blinds. Chimney stacks have been removed. Roof eaves extend.

Despite its modern look, the proportions, scale, and siting all suggest its age and relationship to village history. (C)

27. Key. Widow Catharine Whitenack House

28. Key. Mrs. Mary and Sarah Q. Voorhees House

29. 409 Route 518, built by Abram Cruser, c. 1907  
Contributing

Abram Cruser grew up in the Blawenburg area on a farm in family ownership since early in the 19th century. Becoming a farmer himself, he purchased the Thomas Whitenack House (#30) and the 49-acre tract of land behind the village lots. Circa 1907, he erected this house as two-family dwelling. It is now owned and occupied by his son. This house serves as an interesting example of the continuation of a long-popular vernacular style of architecture, a rectangular box with end chimneys and minimal stylistic treatment. It is two-storied, 2 rooms deep, with two-story leanto at back; frame construction. There are four bays on the first story, the interior two for separate entrances; on the upper story, the end two bays are separated by a centered applied Eastlake-inspired vertically hung, cut-cornered rectangular plaque featuring the sawtooth pattern often employed by the carpenter Height. Original slate roof remains; windows have 2/2 sash. Porch spans the facade: plain columns and balustrade; lattice-work below. (C)

Outbuilding to west of house: original chicken coops facing road converted into a garage with 3 vehicular bays. (NC)

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30. Key. Thomas Whitenack House

31. Abraham Whitenack House, 399 Route 518, built 1840s (?)  
Contributing

This property of 1.15 acres, including the blacksmith shop (#32) was sold in 1842 to Abraham Whitenack by his brother Thomas for \$2200. The 1860 map indicates a house at this site, owned by Matthew Perrine, who had purchased the property in 1855. Perrine's wife was Sarah Voorhees, sister of John A. Voorhees, the man who first invested in village lots. Abraham Whitenack, the blacksmith, bought more than one property, and it cannot positively be asserted that he built this house. Possibly it was erected by Perrine.

It is gable-fronted, 2½ story, one room wide, 3 rooms deep, with former leanto at rear now converted to a greenhouse and additional construction currently taking place. There is a suggestion of colossal pilasters having formerly been applied to facade corners, hinting at Greek temple style. However, the apex contains a Gothic-framed round-headed window (which could have been inserted later). The facade has a conglomeration of window types. Possibly original is the tri-part window centered on the second story, which closely resembles a window in the adjacent Thomas Whitenack House of 1844 (#30). Squeezed to the left (east) of this window is an oriel window said to have been added by Elmer Height, whose brother William lived in the house 1909-1948. Remaining windows are 2/2 sash. The entry is jammed into the third bay (right) on the facade with a recently installed shed roof cantilevered above it. Eaves overhang, with plain fascia beneath, outlined by sawtooth molding which is continued across the gable as well. On west wall, centered, there is multiple-windowed, one-story porch, remodeled, having formerly been in Queen Anne style with spindle valance. There had also been a Queen Anne style porch across front and carried to one bay on east wall. Centered on east wall, ground story, is square-sided bay window, with transomed windows on front face, a 20th-century addition. (C)

Post-1907 iron fence, with alternate spokes looped together, others spear-finialed, and square gateposts of open work, surrounds front and west side of property.

32. Key. Blacksmith/Wheelwright Shop

33. Converted barber shop/residence, 397 Route 518, built 1920s, 1940s  
Contributing

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A barber shop, thought to have been built by Joseph Hillpot, stood amidst the other commercial buildings on Route 609. It was moved in 1944 to this site by Elmer Height, after he split the property on which the blacksmith shop stands. It consists of two discrete units; the smaller, with gable roof, is the original structure. House faces west, with two bays, one the entry. Behind it, extending more westerly, is Height's addition under hipped roof. (C)

34. Key. William Sherman House, built c. 1856

35. 395 Route 518, post-1950 (?) on property of Site 34  
Harmonizing/Non-contributing (demolished in late 1986)

A styleless 1-story 3-bay house, asbestos-shingled. Built by former owner of Site 34. (NC)

36. Key. Judge Cornelius C. Stryker House and Store

37. 391 Route 518 (on property of Site 36), one-room post office, 20th century  
Contributing

Two-bay, one-room structure, frame (novelty siding), 2/2 sash, built for this purpose after the mail service was removed from the Hillpot store building (#12), c. 1950, thus returning the post office to a building lot where the first building for that purpose had stood since 1850. It is thought by villagers that this building had been moved to the site from a nearby location, but no further information was available. This one roomer, heated by a pot-bellied stove in winter, continued in use into the 1960s, at least. Judge Stryker had been the first village postmaster, succeeded by John N. Van Zandt, who was honored in 1926 by President Calvin Coolidge and again in 1932 by President Herbert Hoover for being the oldest postmaster in the United States. He was followed by Jacob Stryker, and then by Mary Musselman (1954-67). (C)

38. Blawenburg Post Office (former first fire house), built c. 1946,  
1693 Great Road  
Harmonizing/Non-contributing

Built to house Blawenburg's first fire engine, it incorporated a gable-roofed outbuilding, board-and batten sheathed, at east end. A portion of this structure extends northward as an ell. A cinderblock addition was extended westward from it and afterward modified when the building was converted into the current post office. Now gable-fronted, the apex filled with vertical boarding,

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the facade contains plate glass window and entry. Two-thirds back on its south wall a loading deck projects under its own roof which partly overlays the gable roof of main block. Exterior walls are now stuccoed. (NC)

39. Fannie Van Zandt House, 1689 Great Road, built 1930s  
Contributing

2-story, 2-bay block and cross-gable plan, vaguely Classical Revival, faces west. Two-bay gabled projection advances westward from main block. Side-lighted and pedimented entry is in interior bay of main block. Above it is tri-part window. Two story wing extending northward from recessed position on gable wall of house is former barn of Site 36, converted for garage and second-story bedrooms. (C)

Fannie Van Zandt was the daughter of John N. Van Zandt, the postmaster, who lived in the Judge Stryker House at the time.

Site #40. Cyrenus T. Voorhees House, 1843  
476 Route 518  
Key

The C.T. Voorhees House, although not physically contiguous to the rest of the district, is significant because of its historic associations with the development of the Blawenburg community.

This house, built 1843, marks the early outer limit established for the village, and its construction by a young married couple related to other participants in the start-up of the village casts further light on the forces at work at that time. C.T. Voorhee's identity has not been determined, but it is doubtless true that he belonged to one of the branch lines of that family, all settled upon farms within a radius of five miles of the village. His wife was Sarah Whitenack, whose mother and brothers built houses within the village. Voorhees, however, bought his less expensive lot (\$100 as opposed to \$250) from the farmer who owned the tract adjacent to Susannah Covenhoven Stout's farm on the north side of the turnpike. The next year he bought a half acre adjoining this lot from his brother-in-law Thomas Whitenack at sheriff's sale. While removed from the village center, and on the side of the road where no other houses were being built, he was still in close proximity to the founding family of Blawenburg, having their homestead complex opposite his door.

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The Voorhees House is of interest in that it contrasts with the more expensive, architecturally styled houses that were filling the village and relates to the more typical house as being constructed in Harlingen, Montgomery's other village, for more than a decade. This is a modest I-style house of five bays with transomed center entry, offering two rooms on the first story, separated by an enclosed single run of stairs. A shingled porch, c. 1900, now sweeps across the 3 internal bays. It is a characteristic vernacular farmhouse, with end chimneys originally (one of west gable since removed), and a kitchen in T-ell. Of frame construction, it is shingled. Ground floor windows have 1/1 sash; second story, 6/6.

What the exterior lacked in elements of style was made up for in the interior, where Greek Revival vertical-panel doors hang in openings, window surrounds extend to the floor incorporating panels, and an elaborate surbase encircles the rooms. A plain classical mantelpiece in the parlor is overscaled, with side cupboards enclosed by matching panel doors.

After Voorhees' death, the property eventually became the home of his daughter Annie Reid and her husband, who worked at carpentry and was responsible for the timberwork ceiling of the Blawenburg Church, installed in 1892. In 1922, Stanley Dorey, a local resident, bought the house and rebuilt the wing, which had been enlarged by a number of rooms, by tearing down some of the accretions and reducing it to two rooms at ground floor, and one above. The current owners have built a two-room deep, two-story extension beyond the wing, doubling the floor area. Covered with flush vertical siding, it is unobtrusive. (C)

Outbuildings include a combined wagon house and horse barn, consisting of a mix of materials from reused timbers to cinderblock, representing stages of remodeling. Wagon doors are on front and east walls; a granary door is on rear loft wall, fastened by Dutch strap hinges. Internal stairs flank the west wall. The roof is of wood shingles. Another small building of one room with doors and two windows of unmatched sizes on facade rests on new concrete foundation to the east of the barn. Its original wood-shingled roof remains but its interior wall coverings have been removed. Its original purpose and location are unknown, but it was used by the Doreys as a chicken house. (Both buildings contribute)

Some suggestion of the original setting can be obtained by the two surviving (of three) majestic old oak trees planted in alignment more or less from roadside to rear of property alongside the house on the east. Also on this side, rather than at rear, is the well, now in replacement housing. (NC)



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particularly employees of the newly established State Village for Epileptics (now the North Princeton Development Center) a mile's distance north on Route 601, and updated services to meet changing times. The later additions illustrate national popular taste in building styles of that era as adopted for use on streetside building lots. Brought to completion and maturity by this increment, the two periods have totally integrated to become a compact village.

Blawenburg's character remained basically unchanged until the 1960s. Up to that time, its economic basis was still agricultural, although some dairy operations were conducted on a larger scale. J. Percy Van Zandt's farm equipment and supplies center served a wide region. Sites 1, 2, 20, and 30 contain the buildings related to 20th-century activities and explain the survival of large fields surrounding the village. The village has adjusted to this change, too, with new residents as well as old, who never left, pleased with the old-time flavor of life in an historic community, enjoying the setting, the vistas, the church events, and continuing sense of neighborliness.

In the 18th century, Montgomery Township was a hinterland, composed of farms ranging from 200 to 300 acres, as a rule. The pioneer families were Lowlanders who had come chiefly from the New York City area, buying their homestead tracts from earlier land investors, many of whom were also Dutch. The present Princeton Township was then a part of the municipality; however, long before it was separated as part of Mercer County (1838) it had been settled by a population of English extraction. Despite the cultural influence of these neighbors to the south and like neighbors to the west on the other side of the Province (Keith's) Line in Hopewell Township, the character of Montgomery remained overwhelmingly "Dutch".

Settlers began to arrive as early as the second decade of the 18th century before roads existed. The entire southern portion of the township, some 6700 acres, was held by one family, the Van Hornes, who had purchased it in 1705 and divided it into seven numbered tracts apportioned among themselves. It was the leasing of and eventual sale of portions of those tracts that led to the establishment of farms across the southern sector from Province Line to the Millstone River. Garret Van Horne's tract was offered for sale in 1740, shortly after his death, but was already in occupancy according to the real estate advertisement. Peter Nevius bought into this tract. Between 1738 and 1740, Michael Blaw bought two tracts, totalling 500 acres, and John Blaw bought another 100 acres adjacent to him, out of another Van Horne tract, south and east of Nevius' farm. The Blaw properties lay on both sides of the present-day Great Road. On September 11, 1743, the county road commissioners recorded their approval of a 4-rod road to

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begin in a road from Hopewell and end at "Blau's land." The following January 28, a road was approved to begin "at Michael Blau's Mill" thence continue over the mill dam and end in the road from Princeton to Trenton.<sup>(1)</sup> The road from Hopewell had been opened in March 1723 by Hunterdon County commissioners and began "at ye division line of East & West Jersey, at, or near, the division line of John & Abraham Van Horne."<sup>(2)</sup> Another roadlaying, approved October 1749, ran along the land of Peter Nevius to the land of John Blaw, Michael Blaw, and Frederick Blaw "joining to a pond or brook."<sup>(3)</sup> The Blaws, as great landowners and local millers, gave their name to the neighborhood. Michael Blaw was buried on his home farm in 1751, his tombstone being the earliest in the cemetery now know as Blaw/Nevius burial ground.

In 1753, a 700-acre tract belonging to Abraham Van Horne was put on the market and sold as three homestead farms. One of these--of 233 acres--was purchased by John Covenhoven and his wife Catherine Voorhees. Its northern boundary was Rock Brook (a northern branch of Beden's Brook) and its western boundary the Peter Nevius farm, later delineated by laying of County Route 601/Great Road. The other two farms were taken up by Joost Duryea (known today as "Washington Well Farm"), lying to the east of Covenhoven, and by John Van Voorhees (state-owned today) north of Rock Brook. These five families--Blaw, Nevius, Voorhees, Covenhoven, and Duryea--were chiefly responsible for the opening up and development of the area. The Village of Blawenburg was later carved out of the Covenhoven farm.

By 1760, the whole of Montgomery Township (then called the Western Precinct) was settled, and large farms well established. Indication of slave ownership in wills suggests the level of prosperity of the farmers. Theological struggles between residents and the first Dutch Reformed minister assigned to Somerset County, Theodorus Frelinghuysen, which had led to the formation of a dissident congregation, were over, and the reunited parties had agreed to build a new church on a lot provided at "Sourland" (Harlingen) in 1751. The "neighbors of Blawinburk," however, found this site too distant, and in 1760 requested a new road "to the Meeting House," though it was less than five miles away. This resulted in the opening up of present-day Burnt Hill Road across Duryea's<sup>(4)</sup> and Van Voorhees' land from the main thoroughfare, today's Route 518. Its intersection is about a quarter mile east of the village. Interestingly, this crossroad played no part in the siting of the future village, despite the fact that the first school house was placed at its corner. In fact, as later events show, the residents of Blawenburg found even this corner too far removed for their children.

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That the name Blawenburg was in general use at this time is apparent from various records, such as the will of Peter Nevius, 1767, an advertisement for a stolen horse placed by David Covenhoven, Esq., son of John, the pioneer, in 1771, and an inquisition against Jacobus Voorhees of "Blowenborough," as a Loyalist, in 1780. One might even detect in their request for a road to the meeting house an implied complaint about the location chosen for the community's sole church.

By the time of the Revolution, the highway that cut through the farms was known as a major artery, which offered an alternate route from New York to the Delaware and to Philadelphia. It was along this highway that Washington led the Continental Army in June 1778 on his way from Valley Forge to Monmouth Court House.<sup>(5)</sup> Blawenburg men, under the leadership of Joost Duryea's son, made up a battalion in the Continental Army.

The records indicate no community services at the crossroads until the end of the century, though in 1788, a tavern keeper requested a license to open an establishment at about halfway point between the Rocky Hill Tavern and a tavern in Baptist Meeting House (Hopewell).<sup>(6)</sup> He may actually have had in mind a site on Cherry Valley Road, where taverns were listed in the 1790s or perhaps at Stoutsburg further west on Route 518, at Province Line Road, where a tavern was opened c. 1800, as the signers of the licensee's petition represent residents of that vicinity.

A mounting sentiment for an identity of its own is first detected in 1802, when James Lake, a man whose family had first come to Montgomery in 1739, and who had married Susannah Covenhoven, the granddaughter of the pioneer, petitioned the Harlingen Church consistory for permission for Blawenburg residents to form their own congregation. He was turned down. The Harlingen Church was about to replace its old meeting house with a new building of Federal style and probably wanted to retain the financial support of all its members. It may also have enjoyed its role as sole Reformed Church in the township. The frustration of these residents was partly overcome by their decision in 1817 to hold prayer meetings in their homes, and this was followed a few years later by conducting Sunday School classes as well. The Rev. Peter Labagh, minister at Harlingen Church, had been one of the leaders in the new Sunday School movement in America within the church at large. Another seeming indication of community loyalty came with the deeding of the Blaw/Nevius Cemetery by Blaw heirs "to all the people of Blawenburg" in 1814.<sup>(7)</sup>

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Another impetus to the creation of a community center for the neighborhood of Blawenburg came with the announcement that the colonial highway which intersected their farms was to become a turnpike. In 1816, the Georgetown (Lambertville)-Franklin (Township) Turnpike Company was formed as part of the great movement for improved roads in early 19th-century America. Within a year, Susannah Lake, now a widow and heir to the original Covenhoven plantation, sold 100 acres adjacent to the crossroads to her daughter Catherine and son-in-law William M. Griggs. The invitation to open a tavern must have been irresistible. The Griggs House (site 14) on the northeast corner of the intersection reflected their social status and more: it marked a shift from the conventional Dutch vernacular, squat and deep structures that typified this area from its origins to an English type, tall and narrow, of single depth, with wing tucked in back, and stylish in the new Federal mode. By the 1820s it was known as the Blawenburg Tavern, run by professional bonifaces. One such was Peter Hortman, whose name is known only because the Minutes<sup>(8)</sup> of Township Committee meetings record their annual sessions held at his tavern. By 1833, Hortman had departed to operate the so-called Woods Tavern in Hillsborough and was succeeded by Amos Wyckoff. The Blawenburg Tavern, so identified, is illustrated on the map of Montgomery's segment of the turnpike drafted in 1829 by William Lytle, a sometime County Commissioner of Deeds.<sup>(9)</sup>

During this same quarter century, Montgomery Township as a whole, being an affluent community, entered upon a fairly expansive building program, perhaps partly dictated by property damages inflicted by passing armies in the Revolutionary War, but also, it would appear, by a new American outlook that put them into the mainstream regarding architectural display as status symbol.<sup>(10)</sup>

At the Blawenburg crossroads, where stood the 1740s farmhouse of original settler Peter Nevius, a new family--the Van Zandts--made their appearance, a family which would become a leading force in the community. Bernardus Van Zandt, related to Peter Nevius' son James by marriage, inherited the farm in 1811 on condition that he made monthly payments for it. Bernardus had grown up on a farm purchased by his father about 1760 just a short distance north of Blawenburg. Sometime after the Van Zandts took possession of the house (#2) extensive remodeling if not total replacement occurred, bringing the structure to almost mansion proportions, with two-story, 4-bay central block flanked on either side with two-story wings, if this representation of it on Lytle's 1829 map is accurate. Farther along the turnpike, to the east of the future village, the 1½-story Dutch dwelling of settler Joost Duryea was converted during this period to a two-story house and adorned with a Federal-style entrance and roof cornice.

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By 1829, as registered on Lytle's map, the Blawenburg area had its own school house. This was located near the "Road to Harlingen" as previously noted. Between the school house and Van Zandt's dwelling only one other house is depicted, shown as 1½ story. This probably represents the home of Susannah Covenhoven Lake, (now remarried to John Stout of Stoutsburg,) on the remaining 133 acres of her ancestral farm (#21). The same site appears on the 1850 map of Somerset County as the dwelling house of her daughter Catherine Griggs.

In 1829, 54 long-time families of the neighborhood raised \$2791 by subscription, and with money in hand--and a promise that they could easily increase it to \$3,000--advanced upon the Harlingen consistory with another request for permission to build their own church. This time approval was granted, but the church was to be an adjunct of the mother consistory. Once again it was Susannah Covenhoven who took the lead in advancing a community focal point by offering an acre lot near the tavern for the edifice, accepting the right to a pew as payment. Construction began at once, under the overall supervision of Richard Brown, a hired local carpenter, with a team of paid artisans and laborers and a corps of volunteers who were reimbursed only for their expenses. Accounts kept by Martin Nevius for the year 1830 indicate the extent to which the congregation went to erect an edifice that would measure up to the best of the period in architectural terms.<sup>(11)</sup> The church (#18) may have been modeled after the Hillsborough Reformed Church, erected 1828, as a replacement building for its meeting house of 1766, and this new church had been copied from the recently built Six-Mile-Run Reformed Church, which was also a replacement for their colonial structure. It was a common enough practice to borrow plans one from another, as primary records of churches and governmental bodies indicate. Although a small structure in original dimensions when compared with its probable model, it far surpassed in design what might be expected for a first church building paid out of pocket by a newly formed congregation. Not of Dutch vernacular meeting house form, it was in the traditional Wren-Gibbsian style to the degree that it had a gable-fronted entrance, a staged steeple, and classical facade. The building was completed in 1831.

The individuals dedicated to this task--signers of the petition, subscribers to the building fund, and volunteer construction team--then pushed in 1832 for entire independence, with right to form their own consistory, and it was granted. Among their names are found the descendants of the early settlers, names such as Voorhees, Nevius, Duryea, Van Zandt, Skillman, and Terhune, some of whom subsequently bought up the village lots. The roster of members in 1832 adds Widow Catharine Whitenack, William Cruser, and several members of the Stryker family.

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The affluence of the community is again evidenced in its immediately assuming the costs of erecting a parsonage to the apparent requirements of its first minister, Herman Heermance, who refused a rental allowance, demanding a house and 10 acres. Turning down available building lots which they regarded as too far removed from the church, they turned to Susannah Stout's son-in-law William Griggs to purchase five acres opposite the church from his 100-acre farm. They proceeded to build during a four-year period a residence in the latest and still new Greek Revival mode (#22), having to take out a second mortgage to complete it. Ironically, after its completion, Heermance accepted another church's call and departed.

In the same year as the parsonage tract sale, 1832, Griggs offered for sale as building lots all of his road frontage on the south side of the turnpike, which ran from the parsonage lot to the intersection. The corner lot of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  acres was bought by Cornelius C. Stryker in 1832, a man of considerable local stature, being a Township Committeeman and Commissioner of Deeds, as well as a justice during this period. The judge had also bought a village lot in Harlingen, but he disposed of this and proceeded to build in Blawenburg. His house in Greek Revival style, with special detailing at the entrance to set it apart from the conventional form, at first blush seemed an uncommon building for a village (#36). Why he chose to live in a village is perhaps explained by the fact that he soon afterward established a store and also became postmaster.

John A. Voorhees, a church deacon and also a Township Committeeman, bought up a number of lots, apparently as an investment, as he sold them to others. Some years later, he purchased one with a house upon it (#34), which he willed to his married daughter Sarah Q. Staats. His sister Sarah, along with her husband Matthew Perrine, also decided at a later date (1855) to move into the village and purchased the next lot with house after its original owner offered it for sale.

The Whitenack brothers were the next most interested buyers at the time the lots were first offered. Thomas and Abraham obtained adjacent lots near the corner, the latter with the intention of being the village smith. Thomas built the most imposing house the village had yet seen (#30), of two-room-deep, center-hall plan, its spacious interior in Greek Revival idiom, with two-room-deep lateral wing, a novelty at the time locally. (12) It apparently was so costly to construct that he took out three mortgages and subsequently went bankrupt. (13) His property and another half acre he owned next to the house of his sister and her husband Cyrenus Voorhees were sold by the sheriff, Cyrenus acquiring the latter. Abraham Whitenack fared better. Having gained additional strips of land next to his lot, he operated his blacksmith shop (#32) and also

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wheelwright shop (unless he leased space), as both are indicated on the 1850 county map.

Cyrenus Thompson Voorhees, who had helped build the church, bought an acre lot in 1843 outside the village core and adjacent to the east boundary line of Susannah Stout's farm from the next farm owner, Joost Duryea's descendant, at a considerably lower price than village lots, his intention being to erect his bridal house. He had just married Elizabeth Whitenack, the Widow Whitenack's daughter. Although isolated from the hub of activity, he had Susannah Stout herself as neighbor across the road. Additional members of the Voorhees family--two comfortably situated ladies on their own--later (1870) built a small, two-story house, room and hall plan, with rear wing, in the village (#28). Despite its small scale, this house projects dignity with its Italianate trappings.

The Nevius Family, descended from the pioneer settler, had a number of farms in the Blawenburg area, but they too showed an interest in the village and its growth. Martin Nevius--whose father John M. had bought in the 1830s a large farm (originally Blaw's) on the Great Road and later built his residence upon it--obtained Thomas Whitenack's house at sheriff's sale, possibly as real estate investment, later sold it to his sister Sarah, a maiden lady, and then repurchased it. In 1867, he bought the two remaining unsold acres adjacent to this house on the east, holding them until 1870, when he sold off one acre to the Voorhees women mentioned above. At this date, he had come into possession of his father's homestead farm.

Barber and Howe in their Historical Collections (1844) described Blawenburg as having one store, 12 dwellings, and a church. This assessment of the village bounds is of interest in that there were not yet 12 houses in the matrix and therefore the count included those on its fringes, the homes of Cyrenus Voorhees, Susannah Stout, and Bernardus Van Zandt, as well as others on Great Road/601.

The momentum of village formation was in full swing in the decade of the 1840s. The church added horse and carriage sheds for the accommodation of its worshippers. In the previous decade, another road had been opened from Great Road south of the village across the farms of Griggs and Stout for a shorter route to the school house for some children. In 1849, the parents and guardians of the Blawenburg School District met "to take into consideration the expediency and necessity of erecting a new and suitable building to be occupied as a school-room and for other lawful and useful purposes," and 11 attendees pledged \$150 "to purchase or lease land and build."<sup>(14)</sup> Four years later, a 2/10th-acre lot next

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to the church--and therefore in the village--was acquired from the estate of Susannah Stout in accordance with her will for this purpose. The school building (#19) erected 1853, is still another manifestation of the scale on which these villagers built. In comparison with the typical one-room rural school, examples of which are at Griggstown, Franklin Township (1847) and in Montgomery Township (Bedensville, 1853; Harlingen, same period), this is a two-story brick structure, with the newly faddish board and batten exterior siding applied to a projecting entry pavilion attached at gable front. It is reminiscent of the academies, often of brick, such as the one at Basking Ridge, which proliferated in the early decades of the century. It might also be compared more pointedly with the new school house built in 1847 at Rocky Hill, also two-storied and gable-fronted. (Rocky Hill, about three miles east on the turnpike, was a rising mill community.)

At the same time that the villagers were pressing for a "suitable" school house building, the Turnpike Company was forced to close down because of financial difficulties.<sup>(15)</sup> The tavern also had closed by 1850, but in fact it may have closed some years earlier, since it is not mentioned by Barber and Howe. It then reverted to a private residence for a member of the Griggs family. The village was still on a course of expansion, and far from being discouraged when another Reformed Church edifice was built at Rocky Hill in Gothic Revival style in the 1850s, to which some of the congregation transferred, it enlarged its own house of worship by another 14 feet in 1860 and made additional improvements such as installation of a furnace in the cellar and the construction of a privy. About that time (1859) John Van Zandt decided to formalize the use by Blawenburg neighbors of the family's burying ground on his father's farm and donated land adjacent to it for the purpose (#6). After this enlargement, it was enclosed with "substantial fencing."<sup>(16)</sup> Further gifts of land were made by later generations of Van Zandts in 1873, 1910, and 1984.

The original Van Zandt farm lay on both sides of Rock Brook. Bernardus was succeeded in ownership by his son John in 1850. It is imagined that after John and his wife took possession the house (#2) was given its Greek Revival facelift. John's son James at about this time came into possession of the portion of the farm north of the brook, which in 1850 had a house upon it. During 1860-1865, the Civil War years, James replaced this dwelling with his own--a picturesque villa in the Italianate style, sited in the dell by the brook and approached by a tree-lined lane with a prospect of nature. It would seem he had imbibed the dictates of Andrew Jackson Downing, though perhaps learned by some indirect means. There is no question, though, that James Van Zandt fully realized that he was building in the grand Victorian manner, and his contemporary, the county



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historian James Snell, recorded that his estate (#8) was held in high regard locally. (17)

During this period of village development, which was paralleled at Harlingen and Rocky Hill, the remainder of the township continued to concentrate on farming. There were surprisingly few mills, and no industry except at Rocky Hill. James Van Zandt was also described by Snell as a leading agriculturist, committed to advanced technology, including the laying of underground drains in his fields. (18) The male residents of the village, too, were engaged in farming. Since 1853, the 49-acre field lying behind the village lots had been attached to the corner house property through a purchase made by Judge Stryker from the Grigg's heirs, and was included in subsequent sales of the residence itself.

Even the frenetic period of railroad building in the 1870s, when two companies competed to lay their lines across the township on parallel routes, wrought no noticeable changes. The Bound Brook and Delaware Company (Reading; Conrail) won out over the Mercer and Somerset Line (Pennsylvania) and completed its roadwork in time for the opening of the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. There were a number of stops in Montgomery, one a short distance northwest of the village given the name Skillman after landowners on whose farm it was located. The station consisted of no more than a vernacular wood structure and a passenger shed, now gone, in contrast to the handsome masonry buildings under mansard roof (Second Empire Style) erected at Hopewell and Pennington, from which it can be inferred that there was not much of an expectation of passenger travel. Farmers, however, saw it as means of extending their produce markets, particularly peaches, which then became a popular crop. It also brought about an eventual shift to dairy farming, with early milk trains carrying this product daily to New York and Philadelphia. It was on these same milk trains that (19) the community youth who sought a high school education traveled to Bound Brook.

Village growth ceased after 1875 for a quarter century. Historian Snell in 1881 described it as still a small village with but one store, then kept by John N. Van Zandt, who was also postmaster. During this Late Victorian era, some attention was given to landscaping, especially of the church property. Photographs, c. 1900, show other properties with wood fences as street architecture. Some house improvements were made, notably (20) the doubling of the size of the parsonage, and the addition of a verandah. A number of other houses also spouted piazzas. Iron grillwork inserts appeared in exterior doors of the tavern house and the side entry to wing of the Bernardus Van Zandt house. Sometime after 1907, the cast-iron fence with boxed gateposts was put up alongside the Abraham Whitenack house.

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Though the village had stabilized, life had not become static. Church activities loomed large, with the traditional harvest home an annual event. The congregation continued to improve on creature comforts and esthetic beauty, adding a pipe organ and carpeting. Another evidence of vitality was the formation of a band in 1890. Intended primarily for the pleasure of amateur musicians to perform popular music, it demanded no high level of talent, only enthusiasm. (It still exists and is now regarded as the oldest band in New Jersey in continuous operation.) After the first World War, it was reorganized by J. Percy Van Zandt. The band wore uniforms paid for by its members, who also purchased their own music and instruments from New York City shops. As a marching and concert band, in the style of John Philip Sousa, it was in demand--and still is--for harvest homes, carnivals, and fairs throughout New Jersey. (21)

Between 1900-1920, only two new houses were built. These reflect a quite different attitude about the role of architecture in that they make no statements at all and in fact hark back to vernacular 19th-century farmhouse style in being rectangular boxes. One just outside the district's bounds, is I-style, the other (#29) of double depth but with gable end chimneys. With Shoppell's and others' guides of house plans available at the time for inspiration, it appears obvious that the individuals building these homes eschewed novel conservatism--perhaps simply because they desired nothing more than a compactly built house. Abram Cruser (#29), in fact, had abandoned his larger house, the Thomas Whitenack dwelling, for the new two-family house he was building. The former was then rented out for a number of years before he sold it. Meanwhile, he continued to farm.

For several decades, at least, a stagecoach route had been operated locally along the highway, with George Durling--who lived up the road at Washington Well Farm--the driver, but the automobile age was gradually being ushered in and there were other changes in store for the countryside. One was the purchase of several farms north of the village by the State of New Jersey to create the State Village for Epileptics, beginning about 1898. Its new employees sought residences nearby. This may well have motivated a local carpenter, Elmer Height, an employee himself, to launch a new wave of house construction on available lots in the village during the period 1920-1940. (Two houses just outside of the District have been identified as employees' homes; a third, #24, is in the District.) A further indication of change is seen in the church's decision, in 1922, to rent the parsonage to a layman. Portions of its land were also sold to Height for building lots. Height, who had been building since 1900--the A.M.E. Church on Hollow Road is credited to him--kept apace of the times in current suburban fads, and by 1937 ventured into catalog-ordered housing (sites 15 and 16). His further

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influence on Blawenburg is detected in a number of Queen Anne-type details surviving on the structures he himself owned and on other village houses. Another individual who contributed to the updating of Blawenburg during these same years was Joseph Hillpot. The commercial sites fronting Route 601 (Sites 10 and 12) are identified with him. He also built two houses near this intersection (Sites 9 and 13), the latter becoming his home. The rise of these new structures gently modified the intersection, but answered to needs of that time: a garage, originally known as Dunlap's, above which was the community's dance hall; and a second general store. Between the two buildings stood the barber shop (#33).<sup>(22)</sup>

In 1925, the village school was replaced with another immediately to the west of the church. Although such replacements with larger buildings that met state specifications were occurring throughout the county, the placement of the new structure in the heart of the village might be viewed as another indication of the vitality of its life in this second surge of growth. The church then leased the 1853 school for its "church house," using the upper story for a lecture room.

During the Prohibition years, even a speakeasy could be found in Blawenburg, the activity being operated by New Yorkers under the subterfuge of a restaurant. Known as the "Green Flash," it was housed in the former home of Susannah Stout's heirs (#21), now gone.

The continuing viability of farming in the first half of the 20th century is attested to by the opening of an agricultural supplies store by J. Percy Van Zandt. It came about because he was buying for himself the latest of equipment, which became of interest to others. Site 2.1 became the first store, and after business grew, it was transferred to Site 1 (from old house to barn). Van Zandt's modern farm ideas became so well known that they were subject of a feature article in Country Gentleman, issue of Feb. 5, 1921. The land associated with Van Zandt's farm is included in the District.

Another aspect of the modernization of farming in this century was the increased magnitude of the operations, such farms as these becoming the suppliers of New York and Philadelphia. Another large farm, Wood Acres, was headquartered in the former J.M. Nevius House (not included in the district). This dairy operation, however, did extend into the district by the acquisition of the Thomas Whitenack House and barns relating to it, and the 49-acre field behind. This tract and the one to its east (#20) are included. On the latter are preserved buildings relating to two periods of farm activity some 75 years apart, the earlier barns exemplars of the masterful craft of hand construction. Farming as

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a prime means of livelihood has now ceased, though some of these tracts are still in cultivation or used as pasture.

It may be assumed that the Village of Blawenburg will not grow further. There is little opportunity to do so within its matrix. It is generally viewed as a discrete entity and clearly identified in the public's mind, and also in the Municipal Master Plan, as historic for its concentration of 19th-century buildings. Although its economic basis has changed, it survives because it attracts home-owners bent on its preservation. While some have enlarged the original houses, they have done so with a sense of the appropriate.

Blawenburg appears to have always been home to a more diverse population than is usually found in a country village. Judge Stryker was the local squire, a man with apparent talents and a sense of civic duty, as seen by the many varied positions to which he was elected or appointed--tax collector, 1836-37, 1844-45; school superintendent, 1851, 1860-61; commissioner of deeds, 1828, 1834; and justice, 1839, 1845, 1850, 1855, 1859, 1860, 1864; and also member of Township Committee. He was also a farmer, store keeper and postmaster. As church member he helped paint the edifice, but distressed the consistory with his enjoyment of the bottle. Besides the judge, two or three others were entitled to the use of "esquire" after their names during various periods of Blawenburg history.

Even the ministers who were called to the pulpit had special attributes. Herman Heermance's notion of the standard of living due a minister apparently coincided with the consistory's standards, and they willingly acceded to his demands. They sought clerics of stature. Heermance's successor, James Talmage, was of the notable Talmage family of churchmen; during his residency, his brother John N. Talmage was given financial aid by the congregation for his theological training. He afterward became a world missionary of renown. Theodore Romeyn, next pastor, came from a prominent New York family that had long supplied the pulpits of the Reformed Church. (23)

The Van Zandt Family has an unbroken history of association with Blawenburg from the beginning of the 19th century to the present. Toward the latter part of the preceding century, they owned a third of the houses making up the district. From 1873 on, for several decades, John N. kept the post office. President Calvin Coolidge honored him in 1923 as the oldest living postmaster in the United States. He was again honored in 1932 by President Herbert Hoover. Snell's praise of James Van Zandt as "model agriculturist in the county" has already been cited.

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The Nevius and Voorhees families had come to the Blawenburg area about 1740 and had continued to buy farms in its vicinity over the next hundred years. They were among the affluent who paid for the church building and helped to erect it and later invested in village lots while farming elsewhere.

The architecture of the Village District, like its original residents, is pure local vintage. Both acquire significance as they record the cultural history of a particular rural segment of America in different time slots.

Similar national origins and frequent intermarriages knit together the Dutchmen who first established their plantations in this township. Attention to business rather than to social image--their barns were said to be more impressive than their houses--had contributed to their prosperity. As Dutch Americans they cared little, within their own circles, for ostentatiousness. A Dutchman preferred to have money in his pocket, according to traveler's accounts. The wills of the pioneers John Covenhoven and Peter Nevius indicate considerable wealth accumulated by the 1760s. A survey of local architecture has indicated that the overwhelming style of house building was Dutch vernacular, a 1½-story dwelling two rooms deep. The thematic Dutchtown Historic District, in process of nomination to the Registers, is illustrative. Within the vicinity of Blawenburg, but removed from the proposed boundaries of the district, four such houses survive; two of them, however, have been much altered.

Third-generation descendants of the pioneers were a different breed, more Americanized, embarrassed to use their native tongue <sup>(24)</sup> and ready to integrate into national cultural patterns emerging in the New Republic. This move is expressed in the earliest architecture of Blawenburg, which preceded the founding of the village. The move toward the eventual realization of a village center took place during those early decades of the 19th century when America was finding its own identify and putting behind itself its colonial past. The countryside has always lagged behind the cultural centers in adopting architectural style for its own sake; the Dutch had shown even less inclination than other nationalities to abandon their own forms. The Dutch of Central New Jersey, however, had long been exposed to other cultural mores, and after half a century of living side by side it is not surprising that acculturation had taken place.

Blawenburg captures this swing from Old-World traditions to national style, basically of English provenance, in the house/tavern and the church. The former marks the early appearance of a single-depth, two-story house on the local scene; it is a type that gradually gained great popularity as the 19th century rolled on. The church is remarkable for its high style, since it was the effort of a

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newly formed congregation. The people of Blawenburg were not alone of the Dutch Reformed congregations to adopt English ecclesiastical form in Federal dress, but other examples marking this transition are gone from the landscape of Somerset County, excepting the Hillsborough Church at Millstone. For Blawenburg itself, the building can be viewed both as a part of the architectural record and as a specific status symbol for the surging sentiments of a self-conscious community. Part of this record includes the building accounts, which cast light on how such an undertaking was handled in that period of history. Materials were selectively chosen and brought from considerable distances: shingles from New Brunswick, lumber from New Hope, hair from Princeton. Logs were rounded up from local farms but carted to a sawmill in Hopewell to be made into planks and lath. Stone and sand were also hauled in. (25) Further to put their commitment to quality and style in a local context, a comparison can be made with the Pottersville Presbyterian Church, Bedminster Township, Somerset County, built about the same time. This building was so plain, simple, and ordinary that both the congregation and minister became ashamed of it as the years passed.

The adoption of the "new style" of architecture--the Greek Revival--for the parsonage at relatively early date for the countryside, 1832, further evidences community outlook. This was the first house to be built in the insipient village, and it was followed shortly by the Judge Stryker House, also in the same mode. Like most houses built in this countryside, both were of side-hall plan. While not high style in sophisticated terms, they yet spoke in the correct vocabulary in their considerable number of interior embellishments. The proximity of Blawenburg to architecturally aware Princeton has been noted as a probable influence, both in a desire to emulate and in model to follow.

The Thomas Whitenack House (#30) and the William Sherman House (#34) were both designed as center-hall, five-bay rectangular boxes in Greek idiom, the former clearly the most ostentatious and modern to be erected by 1844. The insurance policy taken out that year carried a valuation of \$1800. The Sherman House, of the next decade, was distinguished by its colossal pilasters carrying an attic frieze and shouldered architraves encasing the exterior fenestration. All these houses stand cheek by jowl.

That extensive copying one from another occurred is fairly obvious. There is a remarkable similarity of detail in the stair balustrades of the parsonage, Judge Stryker, Thomas Whitenack, and Bernardus Van Zandt houses, and all these staircases grace hallways with an open ascent to the attic. The Stryker House stair ends are enriched with an applied scroll, as found in the pattern books but perhaps taken from some other source. They are even found as late as the 1860s

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in the Italian villa (#8). Similarities extend to mantelpieces, door architraves with cornerblock motif, vertical-panel classical doors, and raised surbases.

The most sophisticated example of domestic style is the Italian villa of the early 1860s (#8). Because there was little house construction occurring in this decade in the rural areas, it is difficult to determine how much impact the proliferation of published house plans had on the conservative farmer. The James Van Zandt House therefore takes on significance. Though said by the builder's descendant to have been erected without formal plans, it is obviously based on current designs. One is directed again to look to the influence of Princeton, the town, where the prominent Stockton Family was putting up a number of Tuscan villas at this time. There, they are found on landscaped town sites; Van Zandt's, though relating to a rural village of town mien, was in actuality serving double duty as farmhouse. His site selection conformed to current Victorian attitudes about picturesque settings, and a scarcely more romantic site could be found than at brookside. This house can be seen as a culmination of village ambitions. The diminutive house of the Voorhees women, hung with Italianate elements (#28), further under-scores the particularities of this village in its engagement with architecture as compared with other villages of like size of the same period.

The second stage of development in the 20th century, if it were not so integrated into the village schematicism, might be observed of itself as a microcosm of architectural theories advancing new designs, with the Craftsman and Wright schools trickling down to popular variants in use across the nation, as illustrated here in the hands of local carpenters. Once again, though with less emphasis, one might ask whether these builders were taking a look at the new streets of housing being added in Princeton, where similar plans were being followed, particularly the "Four Square." With the arrival of the Sears, Roebuck houses, easily obtained by shipment to the nearby Skillman Station, Blawenburg joined Main Street across America.

Although the two buildings that originally housed the community's first fire engines are considerably altered and no longer identifiable in that capacity, they do register another phase of history, the rise of a motorized volunteer fire company (#s 11, 38). Finally, the 1925 school house stands as a survivor of a vanished era in education, that last phase of rural schooling, at least in Montgomery Township and Somerset County. Its function in that role until the 1960s, while startling, puts changing times in New Jersey into perspective.

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Blawenburg as a village is not unique as a 19th-century phenomenon, but its founding and aspirations distinguish it. It affords a showcase of architectural styles that made their way to the rural scene. In its span of years, it touches upon all the institutions and folkways that typified life in the small communities of an agrarian society.

The village remains a compact residential area occupied by people of various economic levels, some living alone, some as families, and some as tenants in shared houses. A number are in professional fields: artists, editors, writers, educators, photographers. The 1853 School House is again in use as a specialized school. The church still functions meaningfully, with some members still bearing the names of the founding fathers. There is a strong sense of preservation, overall. Properties are well maintained. House tours have been held on two occasions. The local post office continues in business still because the village united to save it when the Federal Government proposed its closing. The original corner store building was, until very recently, in use as an antiques shop.

Blawenburg is nonetheless a fragile discrete area, which could be overwhelmed by surrounding growth and highway widening. As one of two local villages that have survived, its continuing life and preservation are of paramount importance to the township.



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FOOTNOTES

1. Somerset County Road Records, Book A, 1733-1776
2. Ralph Ege, Pioneers of Old Hopewell, pp. 106f.
3. Somerset County Road Records, Book A, 1733-1776
4. Ibid.
5. National Register nomination, Hunt's House, Hopewell Township;  
James P. Snell, History of Hunterdon and Somerset Counties, p. 71;  
Ursula C. Brecknell, Montgomery Township, An Historic Community, p. 23.
6. Tavern Licenses, Somerset County, New Jersey State Archives.
7. Somerset County deed, G, 584.
8. Minutes of Township Committee, Municipal Building, Montgomery Township
9. Lytle's map is in the possession of the Hopewell Museum, Hopewell, N.J.
10. Brecknell, op. cit., passim; also architectural studies
11. Original records belonging to William Nevius, descendant; copies with Van Harlingen Historical Society, Belle Mead, N.J.
12. Shortly after this, Judge Peter Voorhees erected his new house some distance west on the turnpike, which was described as modern and in the newest mode when it was offered for sale in the 1850s, after his death. The neighborhood was style-minded.
13. Nevius Papers, loc. cit.
14. School Records as cited in Anne Pauley, "Blawenburg: Development of a Community."
15. Pauley, op. cit.
16. Records of the Blawenburg Church, as cited in David W. Cochran, By Grace Through Faith: Blawenburg Reformed Church, 1832-1982.

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17. Snell, op. cit., p. 849
18. Ibid.
19. J. Percy Van Zandt, taped interview, in oral history files, Van Harlingen Historical Society
20. Cochran, op. cit., pp. 21, 43
21. Personal interview with J. Percy Van Zandt, cited in Pauley, op. cit.; also taped interview, in Oral History files, Van Harlingen Historical Society.
22. Interviews, 1982-1984, with J.P. Van Zandt, Martha Van Zandt, Edward Terhune, Thomas and Harold Skillman, Mary and Reuben Musselman (storekeepers), Kenneth Dorey and Charles Crusier (son of Abram).
23. Cochran, op. cit., passim
24. Minutes of the Harlingen Church tell of requests to drop services in the Dutch language.
25. Nevius Papers, loc. cit.; Cochran, op. cit., pp. 7f.

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Somerset County, NJAddendum:

Although the extant village of Blawenburg is composed of 19th-century buildings, structures, and sites, its evolution from crossroads is very closely associated with 18th-century families whose farms created the crossroads. The roads themselves were opened to serve these farms and to reach Michael Blaw's mill in the 1740s and 1750s. The Nevius and Covenhoven families continued to live at the same locations, but replaced their original vernacular dwellings with new or enlarged houses. A road survey (1829) of the Georgetown-Franklin Turnpike, which was laid on the earlier road, shows the Dutch story and a half house of the Covenhovens on or near the replacement house (Site #21) which later burned down. A barn belonging to their farm remains and incorporates the framing peculiar to a Dutch barn. This building is believed to date to the 18th century. (#20) The entire village of Blawenburg was later laid out on the Covenhoven farm as a result of the selling of building lots. The Nevius House (#2.1) later treated as a wing of the Bernardus Van Zandt House (#2), and now free-standing again as a separate building behind the prime residence, is by tradition claimed to date to the 18th century as home of the first settlers of this farm, and a late 18th-century dating is acceptable in terms of its architectural features. The present main block of the Van Zandt House is sketched on the 1829 road survey map, showing it with an additional side block, which suggests the attachment of one unit to another giving some credence to the tradition. The large stone spring house standing close to the vicinity of the former (Nevius House) wing is undatable, but perhaps also of 18th-century construction. These two outbuildings and the house, along with the road (later turnpike) and segment of the Great Road up to Bedens Brook, are the physical resources that predate the rise of the village.

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Maps

"Map of 18th-century Landholders, Montgomery Township." Created by Ursula C. Brecknell, 1980. Presented to Montgomery Township. Framed and hung on wall of Municipal Building.

"Map of a Section of the Georgetown and Franklin Turnpike." Surveyed and drawn by William Lytle. 1829. Original is in possession of the Hopewell Museum, Hopewell, N.J.

"Map of a section of the Georgetown and Franklin Turnpike." Surveyed and drawn by William Lytle. 1834. Original in possession of the Van Harlingen Historical Society, Belle Mead, N.J. A copy is available at the New Jersey Historical Society, Newark.

"Map of Somerset County, New Jersey," 1850. J.W. Otley and J. Keily. Camden: Lloyd Van Derveer. The Montgomery Township segment has been separately reproduced by the Van Harlingen Historical Society, Belle Mead, N.J.

"Map of the Vicinity of Philadelphia and Trenton," 1860. Surveys by D.J. Lake and S.N. Beers. C.K. Stone and A. Pomeroy, Camden.

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Personal Family Genealogies

Dorothy Whitenack, Montgomery Township, The Whitenack Family

Charles Crusier, Blawenburg, The Crusier Family

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J. Percy Van Zandt, Blawenburg, The Van Zandt Family

William Nevius, Philadelphia, Pa., The Nevius Family

Wayne Nelson, Kendall Park, N.J., The Crusser Family

### Interviews

A number of interviews were held in 1979, 1982 and 1984 with residents of Blawenburg and other longtime residents of Montgomery Township. These were conducted with:

Mary Musselman, of Blawenburg, the former postmistress and resident of the village for more than 30 years. Mrs. Musselman and her husband owned the Judge Cornelius Stryker House and conducted the store attached for several years. Mrs. Musselman also served as a volunteer in deed research and made available her findings. She is in possession of the c. 1907 photographs and postcards of the village.

J. Percy Van Zandt, of Blawenburg. He is a direct descendant of Bernardus Van Zandt, who owned the homestead farm since c. 1811, and of James Van Zandt, who built the Italian Villa on a portion of the homestead farm. Mr. Van Zandt owns deeds and other papers pertaining to the farm and has a collection of photographs. Interviews included one taped by the Van Harlingen Historical Society of Montgomery.

Edward Terhune, of Blawenburg, who lives in one of the Sears, Roebuck houses, which he purchased from the builder, Elmer Height. His father, who was an employee of the State Village for Epileptics, had a house, Site 24, built for him in the 1920s. Mr. Terhune had attended the village school, built 1853.

Kenneth Dorey, of Blawenburg, whose father had bought the C.T. Voorhees House. His father and grandfather had lived in the village before him.

Thomas Skillman, of Montgomery Township, whose family traces back locally to the 18th century. Mr. Skillman has a collection of photographs.

Harold Skillman, of Mountain View Avenue, brother of Thomas, who lived in the Abraham Whitenack House for a number of years.

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Mrs. Calvin Lovering and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Cruser, who supplied information about their houses. Mr. Cruser also related history about the Thomas Whitenack House and the Wood Acres Farm.

Mrs. Frederick Boise, of Gladstone, N.J., in 1982, and Mrs. Hoog, formerly of Princeton, prior to 1982. Both ladies supplied information about the Parsonage. Both had lived there at different times.

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Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

The boundaries are largely those of existing tracts of land as delineated on the enclosed tax maps of the Municipality of Montgomery. Portions of the following blocks are included: 25001, 26001, 26002, 30001, 32001, and 32002.

The boundaries of the Blawenburg Historic District are described as follows:

Beginning at Point A, which is the southwest corner of Block 30001, Lot 13, the southerly line continues thence on an easterly course, following the ancient lines of original tract divisions (1705), never altered, as they appear on the tax map for a distance of 2229.24 feet to the Great Road; thence continuing on same course across Great Road and east to Mountain View Road for another 2481.77 feet to Point B, on the west line of said road; thence proceeding northward along the west side of said road to include east line of Lot 3 in Block 32001; thence west along north line of Lot 3, and continuing west along the south (rear) lines of Lots 23, 22, 21, 20, 19, 18, 17, 16 and 15 (all in Block 32002), and thence along the west line of Lot 15 to Route 518; thence on south side of Route 518, westward to a point opposite Lot 10's (Block 26002) east south corner in Route 518; then crossing said road to said corner; thence along east line of said lot to its north (rear) line, and along this line west, and north (rear) lines of Lots 9 through 6, thence south on Lot 6 to south line of Lot 2, and west on said line to a point which is 132 feet east, of Route 601, Point E; thence running northward, on an arbitrary line of convenience behind sites fronting on Route 601 up to Rock Brook; thence along its south bank to east side of Route 601; thence proceeding northward, crossing the brook on the east side of the bridge, and continuing northward on the east side of said road for approximately 700 feet, to Point F; thence on a westward course across said road for a distance of 1625 feet, the line being 250 feet north of the north elevation of the James Van Zandt House; thence southward to Rock Brook, Point G; thence following the courses of said brook westward to Point H; the last several courses from the crossing of Rock Brook lying in Block 26001, Lot 27; thence proceeding southward in a straight line, the line representing the original boundary line of the Bernardus Van Zandt farm, with the exception of a small piece of land by the brook extending westward that has been excluded, crossing Route 518 and continuing to Point A, point of beginning, approximately 3373.12 feet.

The Cyrenus T. Voorhees house (site #40) is discontinuous to the district. It is located on the north side of Route 18, Block 26001, Lot 5. This property was the traditional beginning of Blawenburg and still provides an important visual signal approaching the village.



OCT 24 1999

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 2 Blawenburg Historic District, Montgomery Twp.,  
Somerset County, New Jersey

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The district boundaries are justified thus:

The boundaries have been drawn to include the village core and portions of the two farms, with their sites, that are primarily contiguous and historically related.

The southern line of the District has been made to conform with the original boundary lines of the John Covenhoven and Peter Nevius farms of mid-18th century. These boundaries, in turn, go back to 1705, when John Van Horne first bought the land and subsequently divided it into 700- to 800-acre tracts for various family members. These lines still exist as tract boundaries. Two of these tracts lie behind the village lots, offering the same vistas of the Bedens Brook valley and the Princeton Ridge of the Sourland Mountains that have always been associated with the houses. The tract to the east was part of the homestead farm of Susannah Stout until her death, 1853, and afterward was owned by her heirs. Since the 1930s, it has been owned by the family of George Gallup, Sr., and contains Site 20. The tract west of it is the 49-acre tract that served as farm for the Judge Stryker House (#36) since 1853 when Stryker purchased it from the estate of William M. Griggs. It remained attached to the house property until c. 1890, when it was sold to the then owner of the Thomas Whitenack House (#30), Abram Cruser, and was farmed by him. Later owners of the house continued to use the field for cow pasture until recent times, while putting up their farm help in the house itself. Barns at this site relate to the tract. It is now owned by Montgomery Township as open space.

The third farm tract south of Route 518 is west of Great Road. It represents a portion of the original Bernardus Van Zandt farm. After a division of the total Van Zandt farm in the 19th century to create a separate farm north of Rock Brook for James Van Zandt, this tract lying in front of the homestead served as the major farming area. Apart from historical justification, this open field serves as a buffer to the rather fragile village and is needed as visual reference point. It also gives balance to the District.

The western boundary line was drawn to follow the original boundary line of the Nevius/Van Zandt farm. (In the 19th century the Van Zandt's purchased the next farm west and combined it with their own, making the line meaningless for practical purposes. It is shown, nonetheless, on the tax map enclosed, but has since been eliminated). By including this land, the surviving farmhouse and its outbuildings can be interpreted in their original context. This farm was always regarded as an outstanding model of enlightened practices down to 1950 when the Soil Conservation Service of Somerset County held its day-long demonstration

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 10 Page 3 Blawenburg Historic District, Montgomery Twp.,  
Somerset County, New Jersey

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there. The pond and forestation practices commended on that occasion are located there.

North of Rock Brook the District boundaries have been arbitrarily drawn to set off the Van Zandt House and immediate surroundings from the much larger tract of which it is a part. The tract itself belongs to the State of New Jersey and is used for the State School for Boys at Skillman. The boundary line as drawn passes approximately 250 feet north of the north elevation of the house to include its parking area but cuts off structures just to the north, which have no significance.

The east line of Route 601 southward to the brook was chosen on the basis that it was reasonable to include the road, inasmuch as the roadway of the bridge was included. From the bridge south to Route 518, the boundary line was placed behind the sites fronting the east side of Route 601, separating them from non-historic structures that stand on the rear of their lots, some of which extend eastward for a considerable depth.

The north boundary line east of Route 601 was drawn to follow the zoning map, running on the rear lines of the original lots on the north side of Route 518. The land behind these lots descends to Rock Brook and is undeveloped with the exception of one new house in contemporary style erected a few years ago and one other 20th-century structure. Both the vacant land and the houses have been excluded as serving no purpose to the District, although the land was originally a part of the Covenhoven farm. Even if this land were to be developed--unlikely because of poor soil conditions--it would not be a visual intrusion as there exists a natural shield of woods at lot lines.

Although the municipal zoning map, under village zoning, includes some modern dwelling houses on small lots fronting Route 518 on both sides up the Mountain View Road intersection and for about a tenth of a mile east of it, the District's boundaries as proposed do not conform with this. While their inclusion could be argued, we have chosen to exclude them since these structures, including the current fire house, have no historical or special architectural value and are basically non-contributing.

Also excluded are four period houses south of the village. While they do relate to the broad history of Blawenburg, they are at scattered locations and would be better grouped in a separate historical district. These are the Captain William Covenhoven House, Great Road, with several hundred acres, c. 1820, on the original farm of Michael Blaw; the John M. Nevius House, c. 1835, on the west

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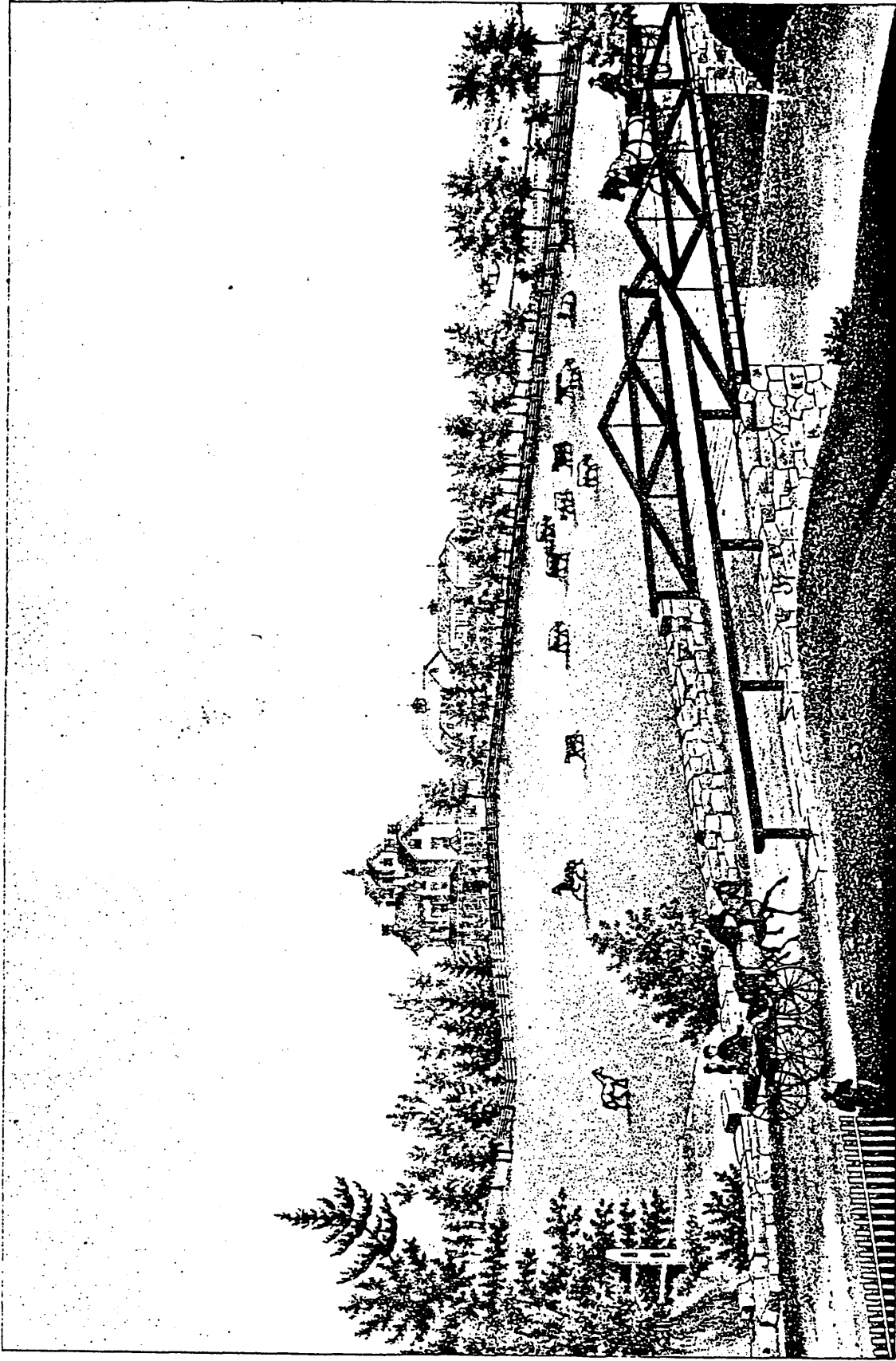
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Somerset County, New Jersey

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side of Great Road; the John Blaw House, a Dutch vernacular house, c. 1740, near the Blaw-Nevius Cemetery, and the Frederick Blaw House, c. 1800, both on Bedens Brook Road. The Joost Duryea House and outbuildings (Washington Well Farm), mentioned elsewhere, lies along Route 518 but too far east of the village to justify its inclusion. An 1840s house on the Whitenack/Heermance farm tract, recently relocated on the property, home of W.W. Sherman in 1850, has also been excluded for the same reason.



RESIDENCE OF JAMES VAN ZANDT, MONTGOMERY TWP., SOMERSET CO., N.J.

Blawenburg Historic District  
Montgomery Township  
Somerset County, NJ

# THE MARION

▲ FIVE ROOMS AND BATH

THIS story and a half bungalow type design contains everything to be desired in a small home. Exterior attractiveness and practical interior arrangement at a very low cost. Note the graceful way the main roof curves down over the large front porch. At a small additional cost, the porch can be screened in for summer. The exterior walls as shown, are planned to be covered with clear bevel siding, but the Marion will look equally as attractive with shingles stained, or painted a light color.

The first floor plan contains a large living room and kitchen. The location of the fireplace in the center of the house enables the kitchen flue to be carried in the same chimney. Combination grade and cellar entrance is located under the main stairs.

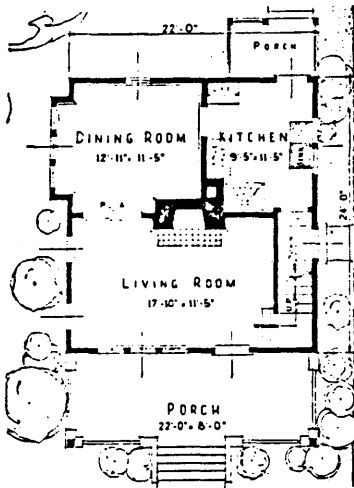
SITE 15, PLANS  
410 Route 518  
Blawenburg, N. J.

**MODERN HOME**  
No. 13333  
ALREADY CUT AND FITTED

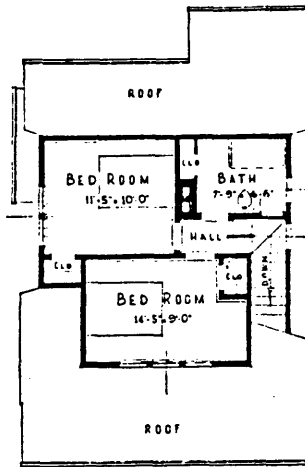
The kitchen is planned for a convenient step saving arrangement of sink, range, refrigerator, work table and cabinets which are furnished as an option.

The semi open stairway leads to second floor hall which connects the two bedrooms and bath. The plans are well engineered so you can install our modern plumbing fixtures as illustrated on pages 12-13 by Specification 21A or 22B. An attractive Venetian mirrored medicine case is included to be placed over the lavatory.

Each closet is equipped with shelf and clothes pole.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

This "Honor Bilt" home is 22 feet wide and 24 feet deep with 22x8 foot porch and can be built on a 30-foot lot. The first floor ceilings are 8 ft. 3 in. high and the second floor 8 feet. The basement is planned for a full excavation, providing space for furnace, laundry, fuel and fruit storage and future recreation room.

What Our Price Includes: At the catalog price quoted, we will furnish this five room and bath home consisting of lumber, lath, millwork, flooring, shingles, building paper, hardware, metal and painting materials according to specifications shown on pages 8-9-10-11. See enclosed price list for catalog price and options.



# THE DAYTON ▲ ▲

▲ ▲ FIVE ROOMS AND BATH ▲ ▲

SITE 16, PLANS  
412 Route 518  
Blawenburg, 1

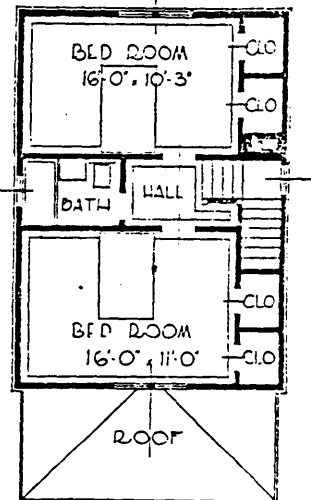


## MODERN HOME No. 3407 ALREADY CUT AND FITTED

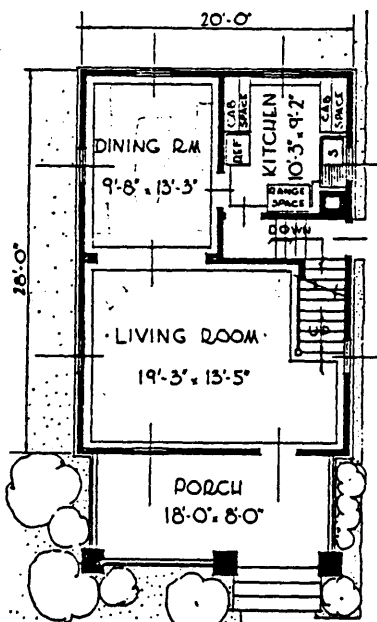
THE designers of this home kept in mind a plan which would give the maximum livable floor area at the lowest possible cost. It is a typical American home with a semi-bungalow appearance on account of the wide overhanging eaves—suitable for a narrow city lot or in the country. The exterior is planned to be covered with clear bevel siding with clear Cypress exterior trim and moldings. The quality of all material furnished for "Honor Bilt" homes enjoys a national reputation and the fact that over 100,000 homes have been built by our famous ready cut system, testifies for the labor saving features. The large front porch, size 18 ft. by 8 ft. can be screened for summer comfort and will be appreciated by every home owner.

"I CAN truthfully recommend every dollar's worth of material I received from you people, to be first class in every respect. Upon comparing prices, I find I saved over \$1000.00 in buying my home from Sears, and I got better material. My heating plant can't be beat. I will gladly show anyone through my home who is interested, and explain it to them."

Walter Brumitt,  
Bradley, Ill.



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

## THE FLOOR PLANS

The living room size 19 ft. 3 inches wide by 13 ft. 5 inches in depth, has a large window in each outside wall. It is well balanced for wall space and the semi-open stairs along the right wall are designed with attractive newel and railing.

The wide arch opening from the living room to the dining room gives these two rooms the appearance of one large "L" shaped room, easy to furnish and decorate.

The present day kitchen is judged by the efficiency in placing equipment for model work center. Note this compact square room contains space for two cabinets, refrigerator, sink and range—also has cross ventilation. Side entrance is provided by a grade door with stairs to the basement and kitchen level.

The second floor has two large bedrooms, 16 feet by 11 feet and 16 feet by 10 ft. 3 in., four closets and bath.

Our complete plans and instructions enable considerable of the work to be done by the owner.

## WHAT OUR PRICE INCLUDES

At the catalog price quoted, we will furnish all materials needed to build this five room and bath, home, consisting of lumber, lath, millwork, flooring, roof shingles, building paper, clear bevel siding for sidewalls, hardware, metal and paint materials according to specifications. All framing material completely ready cut.

Heating, lighting, plumbing and other options shown on the price list.

Select your garage from designs shown on pages 62 and 63.



Notice—Write for Delivered Price Today

Also Prices on **Optional Equipment and Material**

Obtain Freight Prepaid Price to Your Station

Blawenburg HD  
Montgomery Township  
Somerset County, NJ

|                          |   | Optional Equipment and Material for Modern Homes |                                     |                             |   |  |   |                                     |                                 |   |  |
|--------------------------|---|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Name and Number of House | Medium Weight Linoleum Kitchen and Bath | 1 1/2" x 2 1/4" Clear Oak Flooring               | Cabinets as indicated on Floor Plan | Back Band Trim for Interior | 3/4" x 8-Inch Redwood or Red Cedar Bevel Siding for Outside Walls | 3/4" x 10-Inch Redwood or Red Cedar Bevel Siding for Outside Walls | 2 1/2-Inch Red Cedar Shingles for Outside Walls | One or Six Panel Doors for Interior | 4-Coat Enamel for Interior Trim | Sheet Plaster and Plaster Finish Instead of Wood Lath |  |
| Amherst 3388             | \$58                                    | \$54   | \$90                                | \$21                        | ...   | ...  | ...   | \$13                                | \$14                            | \$190   |  |
| Attleboro 3384           | 96                                      | 69   | 69                                  | 23                          | *\$16   | \$11   | ...   | 12                                  | 14                              | 193   |  |
| Auburn 3382              | 62                                      | 44   | 35                                  | 18                          | 6   | 13   | ...   | 11                                  | 10                              | 154   |  |
| Bayside 3410             | 60                                      | 27   | 44                                  | 13                          | 9   | 11   | ...   | 8                                   | 9                               | 104   |  |
| Belfast 3367A            | 65                                      | 59   | 57                                  | 17                          | 43  | 68   | \$60  | 10                                  | 12                              | 184   |  |
| Berkley 3401A            | 44                                      | 37   | 32                                  | 14                          | 37  | 54   | 46  | 9                                   | 9                               | 115   |  |
| Berkley 3401B            | 44                                      | 50   | 32                                  | 18                          | 42  | 63   | 56  | 11                                  | 11                              | 144   |  |
| Brentwood 13394C         | 52                                      | 27   | 39                                  | 12                          | 34  | 50   | 42  | 9                                   | 7                               | 92  |  |
| Brentwood 13394D         | 52                                      | 27   | 39                                  | 12                          | 3   | 12   | ...   | 9                                   | 7                               | 93  |  |
| Bridgeport 13337A        | 68                                      | 33   | 64                                  | 13                          | 32  | 50   | 42  | 8                                   | 9                               | 105   |  |
| Bridgeport 13337B        | 57                                      | 41   | 44                                  | 15                          | 37  | 58   | 50  | 10                                  | 9                               | 126   |  |
| Bryant 3411              | 63                                      | 29   | 35                                  | 15                          | ...   | ...  | ...   | 10                                  | 10                              | 110   |  |
| Cape Cod 13354A          | 47                                      | 27   | 59                                  | 11                          | 30  | 43   | 35  | 7                                   | 7                               | 92  |  |
| Cape Cod 13354B          | 54                                      | 37   | 45                                  | 13                          | 35  | 54   | 46  | 8                                   | 9                               | 119   |  |
| Carver 3408              | 63                                      | 27   | 26                                  | 15                          | 32  | 49   | 40  | 7                                   | 5                               | 118   |  |
| Chatham 3396             | 58                                      | 53   | 62                                  | 20                          | 38  | 64   | 57  | 13                                  | 15                              | 171   |  |
| Chester 3380             | 55                                      | 44   | 38                                  | 17                          | 9   | 12   | ...   | 11                                  | 10                              | 157   |  |
| Collingwood 3280         | 67                                      | 41   | 93                                  | 13                          | 26  | 40   | 34  | 9                                   | 9                               | 134   |  |
| Concord 3379             | 67                                      | 39   | 38                                  | 15                          | 43  | 65   | 58  | 10                                  | 9                               | 144   |  |
| Cornell 3412             | 57                                      | 42   | 35                                  | 17                          | 36  | 54   | 44  | 12                                  | 12                              | 132   |  |
| Crafton 3318A            | 45                                      | 27   | 44                                  | 11                          | 6   | 14   | ...   | 8                                   | 7                               | 96  |  |
| Crafton 3318C            | 49                                      | 44   | 39                                  | 11                          | 6   | 14   | ...   | 8                                   | 8                               | 104   |  |
| Crafton 3318D            | 54                                      | 42   | 44                                  | 14                          | 8   | 15   | ...   | 10                                  | 9                               | 125   |  |
| Crafton 3318X            | 54                                      | 42   | 44                                  | 14                          | 8   | 15   | ...   | 10                                  | 9                               | 125   |  |
| Dayton 3407              | 49                                      | 44   | 76                                  | 13                          | 36  | 54   | 45  | 6                                   | 8                               | 124   |  |
| Dover 3262               | 68                                      | 59   | 66                                  | 21                          | 42  | 63   | 55  | 15                                  | 12                              | 163   |  |
| Ellison—5-Room 3359      | ...                                     | ...  | ...                                 | ...                         | 204   | 230  | 216   | ...                                 | 12                              | 164   |  |
| Ellison—7-Room 3359      | ...                                     | ...  | ...                                 | ...                         | 204   | 230  | 216   | ...                                 | 15                              | 248   |  |
| Ellsworth 3341           | 73                                      | 36   | 38                                  | 13                          | 4   | 13   | ...   | 9                                   | 9                               | 115   |  |
| Gladstone 3414A          | 75                                      | 46   | 38                                  | 18                          | 46  | 64   | 58  | 11                                  | 11                              | 154   |  |
| Gladstone 3414B          | 63                                      | 41   | 35                                  | 18                          | 45  | 59   | 51  | 12                                  | 11                              | 160   |  |
| Hammond 3347             | 49                                      | 37   | 62                                  | 15                          | ...   | ...  | ...   | 11                                  | 9                               | 129   |  |
| Haverhill 3368           | ...                                     | ...  | ...                                 | ...                         | ...   | ...  | ...   | ...                                 | ...                             | 213   |  |
| Homestead 3376           | 62                                      | 39   | 38                                  | 13                          | 23  | 65   | 58  | 8                                   | 9                               | 115   |  |
| Homecrest 3398           | 68                                      | 46   | 63                                  | 24                          | 29  | 82   | 75  | 13                                  | 15                              | 209   |  |
| Lewiston—5-Room 3287     | 55                                      | 40   | 82                                  | 15                          | 9   | 11   | ...   | 11                                  | 9                               | 123   |  |
| Lewiston—7-Room 3287     | 55                                      | 58   | 82                                  | 21                          | 9   | 11   | ...   | 16                                  | 13                              | 187   |  |
| Lorain 3281A             | 47                                      | 50   | 84                                  | 17                          | 36  | 54   | 47  | 9                                   | 9                               | 147   |  |
| Lynnhaven 3309           | ...                                     | ...  | ...                                 | ...                         | 11  | 13   | ...   | ...                                 | 12                              | 197   |  |
| Marion 13333             | 57                                      | 38   | 35                                  | 11                          | 40  | 58   | 51  | 9                                   | 9                               | 116   |  |
| Mayfield 3326            | 44                                      | 35   | 32                                  | 11                          | 5   | 13   | ...   | 7                                   | 8                               | 106   |  |
| Milford 3385             | 75                                      | 51   | 63                                  | 18                          | 9   | 12   | ...   | 9                                   | 10                              | 150   |  |
| Milford 3385A            | 62                                      | 47   | 69                                  | 14                          | 5   | 13   | ...   | 9                                   | 9                               | 127   |  |
| Mitchell 3263            | 47                                      | 42   | 66                                  | 16                          | 8   | 11   | ...   | 8                                   | 11                              | 131   |  |
| Newcastle 3402           | 58                                      | 49   | 69                                  | 18                          | 39  | 60   | 53  | 10                                  | 11                              | 147   |  |
| Newbury 3397             | 67                                      | 54   | 76                                  | 23                          | 2   | ...  | 5   | 11                                  | 12                              | 160   |  |
| Norwich 3342             | ...                                     | ...  | ...                                 | ...                         | 23  | ...  | 10  | ...                                 | ...                             | 215   |  |
| Oakdale 3314             | 55                                      | 41   | 35                                  | 15                          | 37  | 54   | 48  | 11                                  | 10                              | 127   |  |
| Oxford 13393C            | 52                                      | 30   | 39                                  | 12                          | 4   | 14   | ...   | 9                                   | 7                               | 94  |  |
| Parkside 13283A          | 54                                      | 36   | 35                                  | 13                          | 4   | 13   | ...   | 9                                   | 8                               | 109   |  |
| Plymouth 3323            | 52                                      | 33   | 50                                  | 11                          | 29  | 45   | 35  | 8                                   | 7                               | 115   |  |
| Portsmouth 3413          | 76                                      | 48   | 124                                 | 21                          | 12  | 14   | ...   | 13                                  | 14                              | 179   |  |
| Ridgeland 13302          | 49                                      | 46   | 51                                  | 14                          | 7   | 13   | ...   | 10                                  | 9                               | 146   |  |
| Riverside 3324           | 42                                      | 39   | 66                                  | 14                          | 13  | 12   | ...   | 11                                  | 9                               | 122   |  |
| Salem 13377X             | 57                                      | 31   | 56                                  | 12                          | 32  | 51   | 43  | 8                                   | 8                               | 98  |  |
| Swathmore 3306           | 58                                      | 49   | 61                                  | 18                          | 9   | 11   | ...   | 12                                  | 11                              | 157   |  |
| Sunbury 3350A            | 75                                      | 38   | 38                                  | 13                          | 5   | 11   | ...   | 8                                   | 9                               | 121   |  |
| Sunbury 3350B            | 75                                      | 38   | 38                                  | 14                          | 2   | 12   | ...   | 8                                   | 8                               | 121   |  |
| Vallonia 13049A          | 67                                      | 42   | ...                                 | 18                          | 40  | 62   | 55  | 13                                  | 10                              | 141   |  |
| Vallonia 13049B          | 67                                      | 63   | ...                                 | 25                          | 42  | 65   | 57  | 17                                  | 15                              | 219   |  |
| Willard 3265             | 57                                      | 47   | 62                                  | 15                          | 9   | 12   | ...   | 8                                   | 12                              | 137   |  |
| Wilmore 3327             | 52                                      | 39   | 40                                  | 13                          | 7   | 13   | ...   | 9                                   | 8                               | 120   |  |
| Winona 12010A            | 49                                      | 36   | 67                                  | 14                          | 33  | 52   | 45  | 11                                  | 9                               | 121   |  |
| Winona 12010B            | 58                                      | 40   | 67                                  | 15                          | 36  | 55   | 47  | 11                                  | 9                               | 132   |  |

\*This indicates amount is to be deducted instead of added.  
See Page 1 of this price list for explanation of what is included with above option prices.  
Above prices do not include freight. Use information blank on Page 4 to obtain freight prepaid price to your station.

SEARS, ROEBUCK AND CO.



NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
INDIVIDUAL STRUCTURE SURVEY FORM

Supplement to nomination for Blawenburg  
HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY NO. **RECEIVED**

NOV 10 1986

HISTORIC NAME: Cyrenus T. Voorhees House  
LOCATION: County Route 518, Blawenburg

COMMON NAME: -  
BLOCK/LOT 26001/ 5-B

MUNICIPALITY: Montgomery Township  
USGS QUAD:

COUNTY: Somerset County OFFICE OF  
UTM REFERENCES: NEW JERSEY HERITA

OWNER/ADDRESS: Dr. David W. Cochran  
Route 518, Blawenburg, N.J. 08504

Zone/Easting/Northing

DESCRIPTION

Construction Date: 1843

Source of Date: Deed for purchase of lot; also  
appears on 1850 County Map

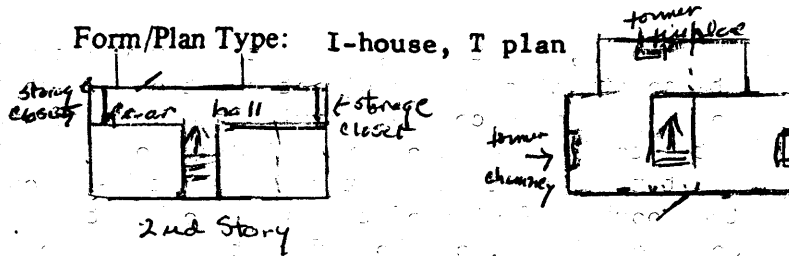
Architect: -

Builder: -

Style: Vernacular N.J. farmhouse

Form/Plan Type: I-house, T plan

Number of Stories: 2



Foundation: rubble stone, high foundation

Exterior Wall Fabric: wood shingle

Fenestration: 1/1 ground story; 6/6 second story; east gable wall blank; one window (probably added later) on ground story west gable wall

Roof/Chimneys: gable roof, with asphalt shingles; extended eaves; two internal end chimneys originally, only east brick stack survives; new external brick chimney on west wall; chimney

Additional Architectural Description: bases in cellar survive, one corbeled to wall.

5-bay house, center entry, with multi-paned transom. Porch across internal 3 bays, with convex-shaped solid balustrade, shingled, half-height, carrying tapered square posts supporting hipped roof. Ell, original kitchen, enlarged by one room to east long ago, and of 2-story height, under altered gable roof. Large new 2-story addition attached to rear of wing, 3 bays wide with facade facing west. Sheathed with stained vertical-board siding

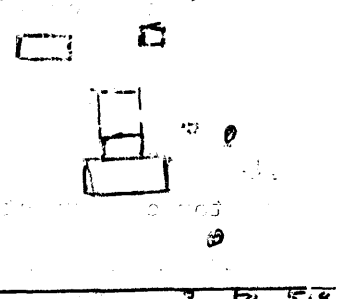
Interior stylish in Greek mode: vertical panel doors, finished on both faces on ground floor rooms; flush-backed on upper story. Classical over-scaled mantelpiece with parson's cupboards in side walls of chimney, closed by single, vertical-paneled doors. Under-window panels incorporated in window framing, and high baseboards with cap molding. Metal boxlocks on some doors. Floorboards average 6" width.

Exterior fenestration is plain-framed; no shutters. Plain fascia board.

PHOTO

Negative File No.

Map (Indicate North)



Coverhouse  
stout  
complex

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

House faces south to old turnpike road, with good setback. Property size, slightly under 1½ acres, allows for spacious setting. Two enormous oak trees are to side side of house more or less in alignment; a third oak has been lost.

Outbuildings: barn of two periods of construction, making combined wagon house and horse stabling area, with granary above. Older section contains internal stairs to loft; built of hewn timbers, some recycled; newer section partly of cinderblock. Barn doors found on south and east facades. Granary door on rear wall, attached by Dutch strap hinges. Wood-shingled roof. ~~To east of barn is small one-room structure with two doors and two windows (see continuation sheet)~~

SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT: Urban  Suburban  Scattered Buildings  (see continuation sheet)  
Open Space  Woodland  Residential  Agricultural  Village   
Industrial  Downtown Commercial  Highway Commercial  Other

House faces to head of Mountain View Road. There are a few houses at this T intersection, including a c. 1880 dwelling to east of C.T. Voorhees house. However, the prevailing feeling is rural, with farmfields and wooded areas at roadside nearby. A short distance south on Mountain View Road are buildings associated with the original Covenhoven-Stout farm, which is included in the National Register nomination for the Blawenburg Historic District.

**SIGNIFICANCE:**

This house, built 1843, marks the early outer limit established for the village of Blawenburg. Its construction has a direct relationship to the rise of the village. Built as their bridal home by a young couple, married the year before the purchase of the lot, they were both related to families who were building houses in the heart of the village. C.T. Voorhees' identity has not been determined, but he undoubtedly belonged to one of the branch lines of the Voorhees family of the area who had taken up lands in the mid-18th century. The wife of John Covenhoven, on whose farm the village of Blawenburg later took rise, also was a Voorhees. Cyrenus Voorhees' wife was a Whitenack, whose mother and brothers built houses within the villages. The fact that their building lot was removed from the main core reflects the economics of the day. They bought the closest lot available that they could afford, which was the most westward lot in the next farm east. It happened to be opposite the Covenhoven-Stout farmhouse complex, which dated back to the 1750s, and was still occupied by descendants of the settler, and could therefore be considered village-related. Because of the peculiar pattern of land sales, the land between it and the village school house and church complex was never developed until the 1940s. Unfortunately, this latter-day development has served to sever its visible relationship with the village.

The Cyrenus Voorhees House is of interest in that it contrasts with the more expensive, architecturally styled houses that were filling Blawenburg's core and relates (see continuation sheet)

ORIGINAL USE: dwelling house PRESENT USE: same  
PHYSICAL CONDITION: Excellent  Good  Fair  Poor   
REGISTER ELIGIBILITY: Yes  Possible  No  Part of District  (supplement)  
THREATS TO SITE: Roads  Development  Zoning  Deterioration   
No Threat  Other

COMMENTS. The possibility of highway widening, discussed but not imminent, could have an adverse effect by reducing its frontage and detracting from the quality of life with increased traffic.

REFERENCES: See Bibliography for the National Register nomination for the Blawenburg Historic District.

Also: Deeds to Cyrenus T. Voorhees; Annie Reid; Stanley Dorey  
Interview with Percy Van Zandt, elder resident of Blawenburg

RECORDED BY: Ursula C. Brecknell  
ORGANIZATION: Historic House Surveys

DATE: prepared 11/5/86

Siting, Boundary Description, and Related Structures:

of unmatched sizes on facade rests on new concrete foundation. Its original wood-shingled roof remains, but its interior wall sheathing has been removed. Its original purpose and location are unknown, but it was used earlier this century as a chicken house. The survival of these two buildings helps to record the small-scale farm activities conducted by village dwellers from mid-19th century into the earlier decades of this century.

The original well location is marked by a new well house to the east of the wing.

Significance:

to the more typical village house as being constructed in Harlingen, Montgomery Township's other village, for more than a decade. In this instance, it is illustrative of the economically scaled house type built by a young married couple, but it is the same type built by widows or single ladies. The interior is perhaps a little more fashionable than usually found in houses of this genre, which can probably be accounted for by the direct influence of family members' homes and the considerable interest in architecture expressed in the new village houses.

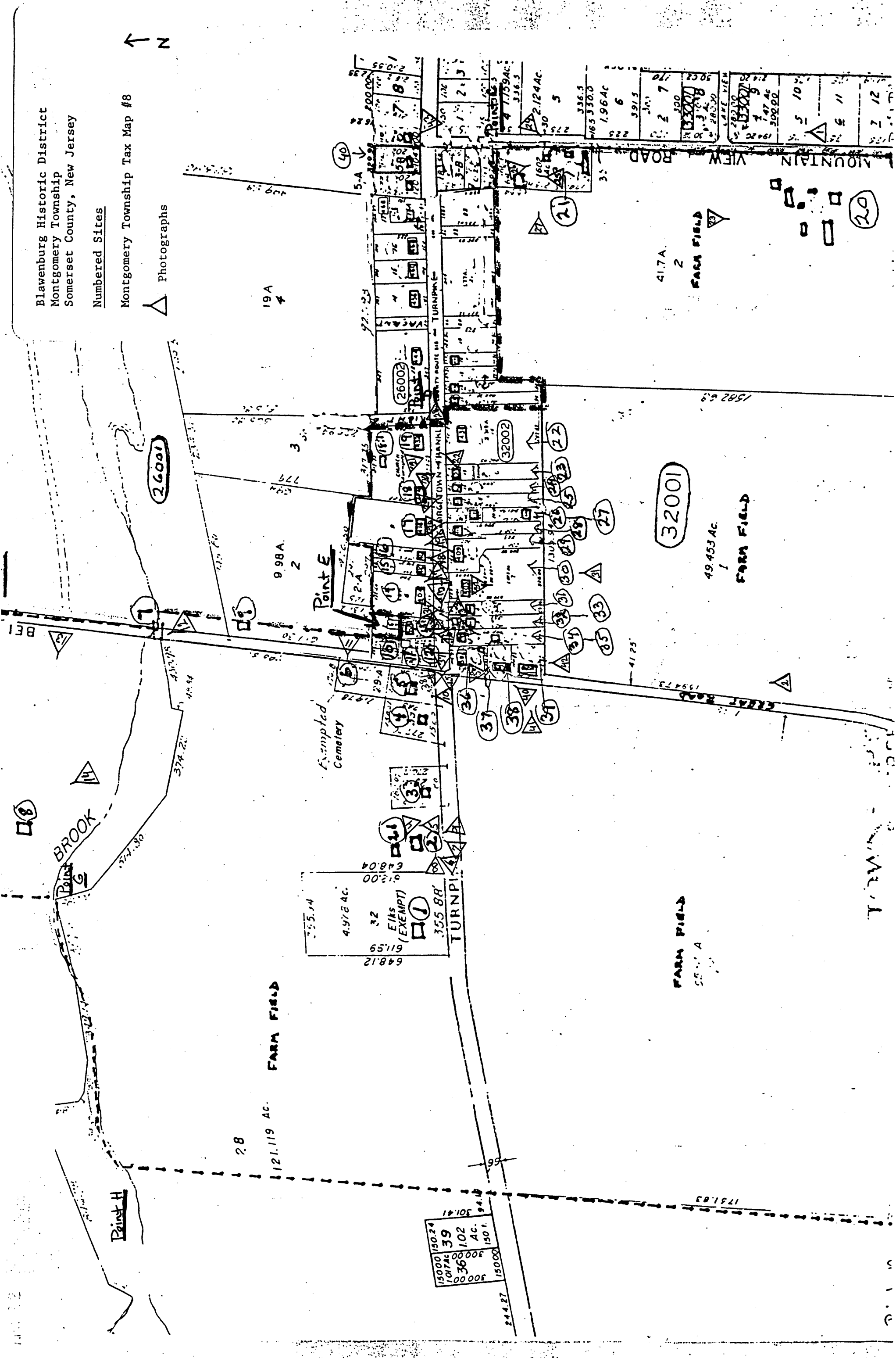
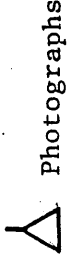
After Voorhees' death, the property eventually became the home of his daughter Annie Reid and her husband John Van Horn Reid, a Civil War soldier. Reid, a carpenter, was responsible for the much-admired timberwork ceiling of the Blawenburg Church (recently placed on the State Register as a separate nomination), added in 1892. In 1922, Stanley Dorey, a local resident, whose parents' 18th-century home stands on the east side of Mountain View Road, bought the Voorhees house and rebuilt the wing, which had been previously enlarged by a number of rooms, by tearing down some of the accretions and reducing to two rooms at ground floor and one above along with storage area. The cooking fireplace was removed. The current owners added the large wing at rear, doubling the floor area. It is unobtrusive and not objectionable.

Until recent times, the Voorhees House marked the gateway to Blawenburg from an east approach. It still does so, to a degree, standing apart from the cluster of houses nearby with its open sweep of lawn, recognizable vernacular house form, and ancient oaks.

Blawenburg Historic District  
Montgomery Township  
Somerset County, New Jersey

Numbered Sites

Montgomery Township Tax Map #8



T W N