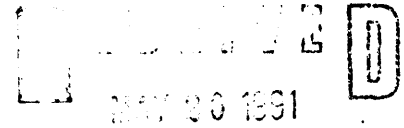


United States Department of the Interior National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Reading Town
other names/site number Readington Village Historic District

2. Location

street & number Readington, Hillcrest, Centerville, & Brookview Roads
city, town Readington Township
state New Jersey code 034 county Hunterdon code 019 zip code 08870

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: [x] private, [ ] public-local, [ ] public-State, [ ] public-Federal
Category of Property: [ ] building(s), [x] district, [ ] site, [ ] structure, [ ] object
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing (43), Noncontributing (16) buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total (46)

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this [x] nomination [ ] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [x] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. [ ] See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: James Hall (James Hall)
Date: 5/10/91 (05/10/91)
Acting Assistant Commissioner for Natural & Historic Resources/DSHPO

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

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
[x] entered in the National Register.
[ ] See continuation sheet.
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register. [ ] See continuation sheet.
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[ ] removed from the National Register.
[ ] other, (explain:)
Entered in the National Register
Signature of the Keeper: Melvyn Byer
Date of Action: 6/24/91

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ single dwellingDOMESTIC/ multiple dwellingINDUSTRIAL/ manufacturing facilityCOMMERCE/ store (general)RELIGION/ religious structure (SEE CONT. SHEET)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ single dwellingDOMESTIC/ multiple dwellingINDUSTRIAL/ ruinCOMMERCE/ store (general)RELIGION/ religious structure**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

COLONIAL Dutch vernacularMID-19TH CENTURY Greek RevivalOTHER: Colonial Revivalbanked I-form

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stonewalls clapboardsynthetic: vinyl, shingleroof asphaltother wood porches, brick chimneys**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

The Village of Readington stands at the easternmost edge of Readington Township, Hunterdon County, within 6/10ths of a mile of the western boundary of Somerset County. It lies alongside Holland Brook, a stream that flows easterly from the Cushetunk Mountains to the South Branch of the Raritan River, approximately three miles east of the village. Readington Road (County Route 620) serves as the village's main street. The brook is bridged at about midpoint of the village scape, leading to a road forks, along the routes of which are the remainder of dwellings comprising the district. There are 43 contributing and 16 noncontributing buildings, 2 contributing sites, and one contributing structure, the bridge. These include a few 18th-century dwelling houses, but the greater number of buildings date to the second quarter of the 19th century, when the village entered upon a period of growth, reaching full prosperity by mid-century. These buildings are, in general, vernacular renderings of local and national styles. The Dutch Reformed Church (1864/65), however, is noteworthy as the exception, the community's pride in its local institution being expressed through significant architectural display.

The village spans less than a mile along Readington Road, its westernmost dwelling being at the corner of Airport Road (opened 1853), beyond which the brook, woods and open fields of former farms border the road for a considerable distance to the next surviving farmhouse. The eastern end of the village is clearly demarcated by a series of three 19th-century houses on the northern swing of the road and a nine-acre property opposite, formerly part of the 18th-century tavern lot, beyond which are a few modern buildings.

Coming from the west, the road descends to Holland Brook where the village's first mill stood, parallels the brook eastward for about a quarter mile, then swings northward again over a hill and continues east to the confluence of the North and South Branches of the Raritan. Just before the road's northward swing, the brook makes a sharp southward turn in its course, continuing in a southeasterly direction to the river. Holland Brook is spanned by a bridge several hundred yards west of the downward swing. On its south side, just past the flood plain's edge, two roads fork: Hillcrest Road (formerly part of a major colonial highway) climbs the hill slope and travels southwesterly, and Centerville Road southeasterly, connecting with the Old York Road, another 18th-century main artery to Philadelphia. A third road, Brookview, opened in the 1860s, follows Holland Brook, providing roadside frontage to an 18th-century farm and farmstead relating to the village.

A few buildings cluster near the road forks. Hillcrest Road then ambles

See continuation sheet

**8. Statement of Significance**

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

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Exploration/Settlement  
Community Development  
Architecture

Period of Significance

1738-1903

Significant Dates

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

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Significant Person Lane, Adrian

Architect/Builder Dilts, Asa

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

The Village of Readington is significant for its role in history as one of Hunterdon County's earliest hamlets, settled just beyond the Somerset County border, which led the way for westward expansion by the Dutch of the Raritan River Valley. It grew up around a grist mill that Adrian Lane, the township's traditional first settler, built about 1716. By providing farmsteads for his several sons, Lane opened up a new community to which many settlers came during the first half of the 18th century. Lane became an important officeholder, and his activities shaped the village until his death in the early 1740s.. By mid-century, Readington was an established center clustered near the mill, with a Dutch Reformed Church as centerpiece. In the next half century, the village gained a resident physician, a school, an inn, and probably a merchant store. Subsequent growth, mainly between 1830-60, led to the rise of a small service center adjacent the mill complex and homes for tradesmen and professionals, bringing the village to its present size and appearance. In its role as service center for much of Readington Township, the hamlet retained its importance into the 20th century. Some farmhouses and outbuildings as well as the mill site relate to the community's history of settlement. The remainder of buildings date to its 19th-century period of growth and prosperity and reflect the conservative use of prevailing regional styles. The village meets Criteria A and B under the categories "Exploration/Settlement" and "Community Development," and Criterion C under the category "Architecture."

Readington is the earliest village of Readington Township. George Willocks, an important East and West New Jersey Proprietor, who owned the northeastern quarter of the township, bought the Indian title to the site of Readington Village.<sup>1</sup> Sometime before 1717 Adrian Lane, a Dutchman--native of Monmouth County--bought a large tract of land from Willocks on the north side of Holland Brook, and built a mill there. In 1718 he bought a second large tract on the south side of the brook from Thomas Stevenson, another absentee land investor. Lane's mill is mentioned in a deed of January 1717 for abutting property held by other initial investors, James Logan and John Budd, which refers to "the brook on which Adrian Lane has erected a mill, called by the Indians Amemehchunk and by the Christians Hollands Brook."<sup>2</sup> Combined, Lane's

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**SEE CONTINUATION SHEET**

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

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

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

Specify repository:

Township Historian's Files

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property ± 73 acres Raritan, NJ Quad

UTM References

A              
 Zone Easting Northing

C

B              
 Zone Easting Northing

D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

**SEE CONTINUATION SHEET**

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

**SEE CONTINUATION SHEET**

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Ursula C. Brecknell, Consultant (with research conducted by Township Historian)  
 organization Historic House Surveys (for Readington Twnsp. date May 11, 1990; revised July 1990  
 street & number 36 Ellis Drive telephone (201) 359-3498  
 city or town Belle Mead state New Jersey zip code 08502

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(Hunterdon County)

6. Function or Use (continued)--Historic

FUNERARY/ cemetery  
EDUCATION/ schools ( 1903; 1839)  
AGRICULTURAL/SUBSISTENCE: agricultural  
outbuilding  
DOMESTIC/ hotel  
AGRICULTURAL/SUBSISTENCE: agricultural  
field  
LANDSCAPE/ unoccupied land  
TRANSPORTATION/ road-related

Current Functions

FUNERARY/ cemetery  
DOMESTIC/ single dwelling; storage  
AGRICULTURAL/SUBSISTENCE: agricultural  
outbuilding  
DOMESTIC/ single dwelling  
AGRICULTURAL/SUBSISTENCE: agricultural  
field  
LANDSCAPE/ unoccupied land  
TRANSPORTATION/ road-related

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off into the countryside, devoid of buildings with the exception of a new firehouse and another knot of 19th-century houses, including the second parsonage (1828), too far removed from the community core for inclusion. Centerville Road straggles past farmland and through wooden areas before being overtaken by a new housing development. New houses are beginning to edge toward the district, however, on Brookview Road.

The principal roadscape is relatively open, with the historic buildings limited to the north side (Photos 3, 6, 10, 11, 20) except for the mill site and tavern lot. Irregular setbacks of buildings directly reflect the stages of growth, the earliest being sited at an angle to the road (perhaps preceding its opening) (Photo 4), 19th-century houses set back on the hill, and store and merchant's residence on one narrow lot directly at roadside. Irregular spacing between buildings is largely due to the dominance of one farm historically connected with the mill from which land was provided for the Dutch Reformed Church and its cemetery in several transactions in the 19th century, beginning in 1804, now amounting to some seven acres flanking the church edifice and spreading across the hillside back of it. The farm itself still retains about 24 acres, with original farmhouse. Tightly grouped at the head of the bridge on small lots are the original miller's cottage, the country store, and the sometime physician's house, all detached from the farm. (Photo 6) The miller's dwelling is sited at about a 45 degree angle to the road, looking downslope to the site of the former mill.

In the period 1830-50, growth occurred on the far side of the brook along Hillcrest Road through the establishment of a small service center adjacent the flood plain. Two surviving houses of three built at the time relate to its activity and are crowded into the hillside at road edge. (Photos 30, 31, 32) Another two represent a farmhouse crowning the hill, built at an earlier date, and a small embanked dwelling, probably a tenant house for an 18th-century farm, on the opposite side of the road. (Photos 29, 28) Mature trees, including maples, sycamore, and black walnut, and an occasional gnarled old osage orange from a hedgerow stand in proximity to most of the village's buildings.

Included in the District are two sites. One is represented by the remaining traces of the mill complex (the house standing on its lot excluded) and another the church cemetery, which incorporates a burial ground for blacks. (Photos 7, 8, 13) The bridge structure is on or close to its original early 18th-century site. Rebuilt in 1839 (when the replacement schoolhouse was erected near it) and again in 1879 (according to stone plaques incorporated in the masonry wing walls), it was further rehabilitated with concrete deck and side walls in the 1930s after sustaining damage from a vehicular accident. (Photo 21) An old photograph shows it with an ornamental iron railing, typical of the period. (See Addenda Sheet 1)

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The main housing stock is composed of 18th- and 19th-century vernacular buildings that reflect country conservatism in exhibiting elements of style. In configuration they express regional forms, the earliest showing the influences of national origin. The majority of settlers of Readington Township were Dutch, flowing in from Somerset County throughout the 18th century, but there were also Germans entering from western Hunterdon County. Three houses (#s 5, 18, and 19) appear to have followed the Dutch plan found in neighboring Somerset County, of which Site # 19 best illustrates it. There is one example of an early single-pile house (# 21; Photo 28) with banked cellar kitchen, possibly of German influence, as this feature has been found in some instances to be favored by this nationality. The majority of buildings date to the period 1830-50 when I-form houses were generally popular in the countryside; those in the village for the most part have an ell typically placed at back but some have lateral wings.

The village's heritage of 18th-century buildings is discernible not only by siting but to some degree by style of construction and architectural features. These include the miller's house (# 5; Photo 4), the configuration of which still hints at its origin as a Dutch vernacular story and a half dwelling, despite its later enlargement. The mill, begun in 1716 (perhaps even earlier), appeared as a landmark on an Erskine military map, c. 1779. Another building shown on the same map was Casper Berger's tavern. The building (# 18; Photo 18) standing on the same site today possibly incorporates a portion of this inn, though its appearance as a large and deep 5-bay two-and-a-half story house with center cross gable and broad Greek Revival portico suggests a mid-19th-century date. The east front room, which is larger than the room behind it, has a side entrance (also porticoed), a corner fireplace, and a large patch in the floor suggesting the possibility of a trap door. All of these features may relate to a tap room. The upper floor plan offers a longitudinal hall between front and back bedrooms, with boxed attic stairway at its end, ascending in the same direction, terminating at west gable wall. This unusual spatial arrangement strongly records the building's use as an inn. Berger's hostelry, dating to the early 1770s, was continued under Peter Tenbrook in the early decades of the 19th century. Sash of 9/6 left in place on rear bedroom windows (those on the principal facade are large-scaled 6/6 sash) and a surviving raised-panel door also contribute to the belief that the building evolved over time to its present size while an inn and received its update with Greek Revival elements after its sale to a prominent village resident in the 1850s.

The Aron Lane house (# 19) exemplifies the Dutch vernacular style in its 4-room plan with garret above. This plan is generally found in Somerset County, and apparently was brought to that county by pioneers from the earlier Long Island settlements. It represents a distinctive plan used by if not actually developed by the Dutch of the Mid-Atlantic Colonies. The hall-less Lane House represents one of the simplest variants of the layout. Sited atop the hillside, overlooking the brook and church to north, the house originally related to a farm of some 140 acres belonging to Lane's father. Today, the property still retains

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several acres including floodplain, along with two early outbuildings, which taken all together convey a sense of the village aspect in its earliest period. (Photos 23, 24, 25, 26)

The John Lane House (# 22) is curiously located at roadside at the very edge of a farm that bordered the east side of Hillcrest Road and was probably not the residence of the farmer, but rather a tenant house. It is of diminutive size, a single file of two rooms above an embanked kitchen, with a side wing that might have been added later. (Photo 28) Large exposed beams are to be seen in one of the rooms as well as the kitchen. Narrow chimneyside stairs, along which is a wall niche, descend to the embanked cellar where is found the large deep stone cooking fireplace with its bake oven cavity intact. This plan reflects another cultural source. Also unusual (or at least not generally encountered in Dutch vernacular houses) are cabinets on H hinges built into the chimney breast. The smaller lateral wing, flush with roadside facade of house, consists of first story room, in which a fireplace with identical mantel and chimney cupboards is found, with flanking chimneyside wall, covered with vertical boards enclosing winders to garret.

The Federal style is illustrated by one surviving building. The home of the major landowner Aaron Berger (# 10), who inherited about half of his father's farm, it is typical of the style as employed by well-to-do country squires of the area: two-thirds Georgian plan, with smaller room at rear, an apparent carry-over of the traditional Dutch arrangement. Separate chimney flues are paired at gable end, with brick chimneybacks exposed, a fairly common practice. (Photos 10, 11, 20) The interior finishes and mantelpieces are executed in the same style, the front-room mantel delicately detailed. Subsequently, the house was enlarged by a two-room addition, changing its configuration from cube to rectangle and giving it an off-center doorway in a 4-bay facade. The change was dictated by practicality to provide an office for the village physician, Dr. Thomas Johnson, third-generation occupant (by inheritance of wife, Ann Berger), and separate rear entrance and patient waiting room created out of the back hall. The home of John Morehead, Jr. (# 23) on the 150-acre farm his father purchased in 1796, is possibly of this era as well. A deep-form 5-bay center hall structure, with side wing, it has unfortunately lost some of its identifying features, although a period balustrade remains. (Photo 29)

Four I-type houses (#s 9, 15, 16, and 17) on Readington Road date to the period 1835-50. Of these, two--built on old homestead farms--offer a degree of detailing in Greek Revival mode, the house occupied at one time by the physician Dr. Johnson and his wife (# 9) having plain board pilasters and simple frieze and a Greek Revival portico before a transomed, pilastered entry. (Photo 9) The other, home of Cornelius C. Lane (# 17), exhibits the style mainly in the interior. Site # 16 contrasts with the others by its seemingly earlier floor plan of two rooms, one with cooking fireplace and chimneyside stairs. (Photo 16) The plot of land on which it stands was purchased in 1845 from the Berger farm



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by Peter D. Rockafellow, according to an unrecorded deed, but perhaps the dwelling was already in existence, possibly a tenant house. Two surviving houses of the same era on the back street, Hillcrest Road, are straightforward unpretentious buildings fitted on small lots with foundations banked into the hillside. One is a double house, with separated mirror-image 3-bay units expressed on the facade. (# 24; Photos 30, 31) The tavern (# 18), in its final renovations as private residence in the 1850s, also adopted the Greek Revival style in adding a trabeated entrance fronted by a large columned portico and period appointments on the interior. (Photo 18) On the same property remains a 19th-century tenant house (# 18.1; Photo 19), of interest as a surviving example of an ancillary building. A two-bay, two-story, two-room-deep dwelling over a banked foundation, its commodious size is found surprising for its function but serves to reveal the variety of housing available for tenants.

In summary, all but one of the houses are two storied (with attics above), of frame construction, with stone foundations, some of which are embanked providing a floor level at grade. For the most part they display little alteration in terms of additions, although two, Site #s 5 and 18, appear to have evolved to present size from an earlier form, and a third (# 10) added a bay to a two-third Georgian plan. In a few instances, wings were brought to two-story height; this is particularly evident at Site # 19, where the enlarged unit is taller than the main 1-1/2 story block and conveys the impression of being a new addition. (Photo 24)

The Dutch Reformed Church is the main example of a formal style. Built in 1864 by a local carpenter to replace its predecessor of 1833, which had been destroyed by fire, it follows a modified version of neo-classical style long popular for such edifices in the region's backwaters. A large gable-fronted rectangular box, it has corner pilasters carrying an entablature along the longitudinal walls, the front facade interrupted by a projecting bell tower (with spire until it was blown off in a tornado, 1912) in which the central of three entrances is disposed, each entrance surmounted by a fanlight. Round-headed windows of stained glass, traceried within the arched head, illuminate the balcony level above the door openings. Multi-sashed two-story windows of clear glass panes march along the side walls, the final top semi-circular segments filled with pointed-arch tracery in basket weave. Openings in the tower, including round-headed louvered windows on all faces of the squared belfry, are set in shallow recesses. The introduction of the round window head marks the edifice as au courant with the incoming Romanesque style, as Protestant churches of this decade made a conservative departure from the long popular Greek Temple style and side-stepped the Gothic Revival, choice of the more formal, traditional religious bodies. As it is the work of a local builder (the foundation itself was laid up by volunteers), conceivably the model was copied from another church, a not uncommon practice.

The two schoolhouses are notable as exceptions to the traditional rural

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forms. The 1839 structure, which replaced a one-room classroom on the site, is a Georgian-derived rectangular box of two stories, symmetrically fenestrated, recalling the architectural style of early-century "academies" that appeared in some country towns. (Photos 21, 22) Entirely an amateur effort, contributed lumber and volunteer labor kept the cost down to \$756. The upper story was intended for public gatherings and was used after 1872 as the Grange Hall. After its abandonment in 1903, the building was subsequently used by the Junior Order of American Mechanics Union and after 1950 as first firehouse. Additions of a stair vestibule adjoined by a one-story projection for fire trucks on the north long wall detract from but do not seriously damage the integrity of the building. Original 9/6 window sash have been preserved in the additions. The successor school, 1903, is a relatively early example of the introduction of Colonial Revival styling for educational buildings. (Photo 27) An early photograph (Addenda Sheet # 2) shows its balanced organization of four-bay central unit, with 1-bay offsets for paired entry doors, all units under relatively steeply pitched hipped roofs with slight overhang. Until the building was converted into a dwelling after 1950, it carried a belfry and a board-filled cross gable over the central unit. In the next two decades, this style was further elaborated upon with lower roofs and greater overhangs, approaching the Prairie Style. Although the facade has been altered for its present use, the range of tall classroom windows being replaced with new smaller windows and entry with porch, the distinctive organization of the space for schoolhouse use remains clearly evident.

Apart from the remaining segment of the mill foundation (# 27; Photo 8) nothing survives of the economic enterprises of the village during its prime except the general store (# 6; Photos 5, 6), in existence before 1850. A gable-fronted building spanned by full porch, it exemplifies a form seemingly universally used in 19th-century villages. Crowding a small lot, with very little setback, the store was nonetheless ideally located opposite the bridge and close to the mill. A blacksmith shop, built in 1898 by William Dow (# 5), also stands, a functional large frame building resting in part on boulders, now converted to a double garage. The grist mill, as described in the 19th century, stood 3 stories high, with an undershot wheel, and also had a vertical-blade sawmill, and silk bolting cloth for flour. This building was dismantled in the 1930s, with but one segment left standing, in order to build a house on the lot. A boulder-embedded embankment opposite relates to the milldam. (Photo 7) A metal historical plaque stands at roadside identifying the mill's site.

As a country village based on a farm economy for two centuries, there is the usual complement of outbuildings for the dwelling houses. Although cloth for fulling was picked up at Casper Berger's inn by owners of area fulling mills in the 18th century, apparently no structures associated with that activity remain. The bulk of buildings are barns for grain and hay storage, also used for dairying toward the end of the 19th century. Wagon houses also have granaries on an upper level and corncribs incorporated into side walls. The earliest barn, belonging

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to the house exhibiting a Dutch plan (# 19), is in its current condition a hybrid form of Dutch barn. According to a church history written by Vincent, the Minutes of the Readington Church mention that the congregation worshipped in the "Dutch barn" of this farm while the new church was under construction, but its form as now seen is not a true expression of the genre. Its system of framing bents is limited to two in an internal position, and these run perpendicular to the long walls, with but one side aisle. The barn is embanked on a hill over a full-story stone foundation (Photos 23, 26), with a ramped approach to wagon doors on the far side of the building (facing south). It is evident, however, that the barn was enlarged by mounting posts above the original bent posts. The three-story ramped barn suggests the influence of the Pennsylvania German barn for separating functions. A genuine expression of the form apparently stood until the 1950s at Site # 4, associated with the miller's dwelling (# 5), but was removed and carted away as lumber when the present residence was built on the lot. Undoubtedly there were additional Dutch barns on the early village farms, but they have vanished.

Another three-story ramped barn on embanked stone foundation stands to the rear of the early 19th-century Aaron Berger house (# 10). Of impressive scale, its ramped level is composed of three large bays exhibiting English framing. The remainder of barns date to later in the century. One additional cow barn (at # 16) is of interest as an example of a prefabricated catalog item shipped by Sears, Roebuck sometime in this century. It has the popular gambrel roof of its time, reiterated as a feature over decorative barn doors, giving it an architectural fillip.

Of the earliest surviving outbuildings, another on the Aron Lane farm (# 19) serves to illustrate one manner of functional organization. The building is a large gable-fronted two-story frame structure over an embanked stone foundation, its first level more than commodious to store wagons and agricultural implements. A corncrib fills one side wall. (Photo 25) Boxed stairs along the rear wall lead to an enormous loft for grain storage. A cold storage or spring room is incorporated in the cellar. Dutch strap hinges are found on the loft door attached by wrought nails, and another of the type, on a unique pintle, is in use on an internal stair door. Some of the weatherboard siding is fastened by rose-headed nails.

The four noncontributing post-1940 houses are not particularly obtrusive, all being one story in height, two of them of ranch design. Two are close to the west end of the District and have deep setbacks on open tracts of land. A third may have once reflected features of the Prairie School but has been altered. The village is exceptionally clear of clutter from added garages and modern sheds. Hillside vistas across road and brook present a landscape practically unchanged from mid-19th century except for the church edifice, a replacement building of the 1860s on the same site. (Photos 6, 20, 21, 22, 26, 32) There has been no change in use of the houses, all remaining residential. One school

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building has been converted into a dwelling; the other one, privately owned, is used for storage. Although outbuildings no longer serve a farm economy, some still shelter horses and cows, and a number of properties contain from 5 to 25 acres. The still functioning, basically unaltered country general store, with its wooden roadside signpost, reinforces the hamlet character of Readington as it appeared in its prime.

An inventory of all buildings, structures, and sites, categorized as contributing and noncontributing, follows.

Page 8 omitted.

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1. Van Syckle Dwelling (Block 67/Lot 4) Contributing  
Vernacular Greek Revival, side hall plan. C. 1850

2-story, double pile, frame house, clapboarded with cornerboards, block and wing plan. Rubble stone foundation; gable roof, with extended eaves; modern returns, and plain frieze. Cinderblock exterior chimney on main block; internal end chimney with corbelled brick stack on recessed lateral 1-1/1 story wing. Main block 3 bays wide with entry in end bay (right), fronted by somewhat stylized Greek Revival portico, with square posts, capped, plain frieze and flattened projecting roof, wood floor and steps. Shed-roofed porch enclosing new bulkhead entry spans 3 of 4 bays, the fourth bay built out to edge of brick-floored porch. An enclosed porch runs alongside end wall and continues across rear facade as shed-roofed leanto with triple casement window. Window sash of main block are 6/6, including those in attic; windows in wing, 3/3.

2. Modern Dwelling (Block 67/Lot 5) Non-contributing

1-story ranch, red brick, hipped roof, embanked at one end. Doorway accented with irregular courses of white brick.

3. Conover Dwelling (Block 67/Lot 6.1) Contributing  
Vernacular, styleless, last quarter, 19th C.

2-story, double pile, frame, aluminum siding. Stone rubble foundation; gable roof with slightly extended eaves, rafter tails. One internal chimney, brick stack with corbeled cap. House has been converted for two-family occupancy; has 3 bays over 5, with entries in center and end bays. Windows contain 2/2 sash. Hipped-roof porch spans facade, with west end enclosed with two unmatched window sash. Posts are in Queen Anne style, resting on solid balustrade.

4. Modern Dwelling (Block 56/6.2) Non-contributing

2-story, 2 bays, plus an advanced projection to one side for additional room and garage, with roof of extension spanning across one bay of main block to create porch.

5. Miller's Dwelling (Block 67/Lot 7) Contributing  
Vernacular, 18th-century, enlarged early 19th century

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2-story, double pile, frame, sheathed with wide beaded and plain clapboards and some asphalt shingles. High rubble stone foundation. Gable roof with extended eaves; plain frieze. Internal end chimneys, with brick corbeled stacks. Cellar framing suggests that one fireplace was cater-cornered in front room. Now 5-bay wide with center entrance following the removal of Queen Anne double-story bay window; 3 bays on second story. Windows have 2/2 sash above, 1/1 below, 4/2 in attic; movable and fixed louvered blinds. New Greek Revival style portico before entrance and internal bays, with square posts, brick floor. House is angled about 45 degrees from road, facing southeast in direction of mill site. Cellar framing suggests an original unit of two rooms possibly with side hall and lateral wing over crawlspace. Federal style mantelpieces on fireplaces in both end walls.

Outbuildings: 1) Former blacksmith shop of William E. Dow (1898), frame, newly resided; cornerboards. Raised from ground on boulders. Gable roof, with solid brackets under shallow eaves. Three new openings (formerly had track doors) for use as garage. Two pairs of track doors in gable end, facing road. Forge and free-standing chimney removed by present owner (grandson). 2) Pig house, narrow vertical siding, raised on boulders. 3) Horse barn and wagon house (1898), 2 story, vertical siding, asphalt roof, hinged doors for wagon entrance; pedestrian entry. 4) Wood storage shed, narrow vertical siding. New 3-bay facade with center entrance and fixed sash windows. 5) Unhoused spring in a land depression, with natural canopy of stones. (At road edge there is stone retaining wall constructed by county 55 years ago.)

4 Contributing

6. General Store (Block 67/Lot 8) Contributing  
Vernacular commercial, 1830s-40s

2-1/2 story gable-fronted structure, frame, with new wood shingle siding; stone foundation (concreted). Building is 2 bays wide on upper story over store front of entry and fixed-sash display window, reflecting alterations. Replacement porch across facade with wood steps (to one side originally), now at center and both ends. Windows have 2/2 sash; with 4-pane fixed sash in gable peak. Exterior flight of wood stairs across east longitudinal wall. Shed-roofed addition at rear, vertical siding. External brick chimney against addition.

Outbuilding: Large 2 story, 2 bay structure, functions unclear; shingle and vertical board siding. Non-contributing

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7. Merchant's Dwelling (Same lot) Contributing  
Vernacular, modified Folk Victorian, C. 1872

2-1/2 story gable-fronted rectangular, deep block, with extension of same dimensions at rear; no side wing. 3 bays wide by 2 bays deep. Frame, sheathed with vinyl siding and vinyl cornerboards. Foundation of stone rubble. Original Victorian porch with spindle frieze across facade has been replaced with concrete stoop and gabled hood. Windows have 2/2 sash, and vinyl louvered blinds. Center chimney stack with several courses of corbeling.

8. Modern Dwelling (Block 67/Lot 10) Non-contributing

1-story bungalow, suggestive of Prairie style, frame, vinyl siding and louvers; hipped-roof with broad overhang, front dormer containing triple window sash of 6/1; interior brick chimney stack. Flush facade (no porch) with variety of window sash irregularly placed.

Outbuilding: 2-car garage, gable-fronted, with track doors.

9. Aaron Berger Dwelling (Block 67/Lot 9) Contributing  
Greek Revival, I-form, C. 1830s

2-story, frame, with old clapboards, plain corner pilasters, front and rear; coursed stone foundation; gable roof, with slight overhang, boxed; plain fascia, bed molding at eaves. Flush rake, molding on boards suggests architrave. Facade has 5 bays with centered entrance, surmounted by narrow single-pane transom. Greek Revival portico stands before entrance; pilasters flank doorway. Posts are squared, with caps. Stairs are of concrete. Windows contain 9/6 and 6/6 sash; paired attic windows have fixed sash. Shutters are louvered. Ell of 1-1/2 story, having semi-open porch to one side that shelters bulkhead of main block. Leanto addition extends beyond porch and runs across rear.

Outbuildings: Gable-fronted storage structure, with shed-roofed extension at one side. Flush raking course.

10. Berger-Johnson Dwelling (Block 67/Lot 12) Contributing  
Federal; enlarged by 2 bays (probably in 1870s)

2-story, frame (clapboards and synthetic shingles with cornerboards); low rubble stone foundation; gable roof with eaves return, patterned slate shingles, slightly boxed cornice, plain frieze. Paired internal end chimneys, with brick stacks and

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exposed brick chimney backs at west end of 4-bay house, the first 3 bays at west end representing original dwelling of side hall plan. Final bay represents addition of double file of rooms with some internal reorganization of space. Second internal end chimney on gable of addition. Recessed on gable wall is 1-story 2-bay wing, with parapet; at rear, a glass-walled mud room. Main block has flat-roofed porch across all but first bay (left); posts are square in section with caps and pedestals. Windows have 2/2 sash with louvered blinds and board/batten shutters. Paired windows of 2/2 sash in attic. Federal unit has finely detailed mantelpieces and slender chair rail; sunk (6) panel doors and period surrounds. Chimneyside two-sectioned paneled cupboard in larger front room.

Outbuildings: 1) 2-story east-facing wagon/carriage house and corncrib with board/batten sheathing. Leanto attached against north wall. 2 openings with track doors, two 6/6 sash windows on south gable wall. 2) 3-story banked barn with stone rubble foundation, narrow clapboards above. Ramped at rear for wagon entry at upper level. Wagon doors on tracks found on both elevations; additionally, 2 windows and farmer's entrance on banked elevation. 3) Attached to barn, recessed against its west gable wall, is another 2-story barn of smaller scale, on high stone rubble foundation. Frame construction, vertical plank siding. Track doors, sash windows at ground level and loft door on second story. 4) Cinderblock hovel for 2-car garage. 5) Shed, vertical siding, gable roof extended at rear. Two fixed sash windows on long wall.

3 Contributing

11. Modern Dwelling (Block 67/Lot 13) Non-contributing

1-story, ranch, frame. Gabled porch.

12. Readington Reformed Church (Block 67/Lot 14) Contributing

Greek Revival, slight Romanesque influence, 1865; steeple replacement after 1912 tornado

2-story, 56 by 76 feet, frame building (aluminum-sided) 3 bays by 5 bays. Square tower carrying belfry is advanced from center of principal gable-front facade. Corner pilasters carry an architrave and frieze up to tower projection and along longitudinal walls. Three pairs of double-leaved entry doors in round-headed surrounds containing traceried fanlights of circular motif are disposed across facade, the chief entrance being in tower. Set in alcove above central tower entrance is a large multi-paned round-headed window, topmost panes outlined with tracery. Similar windows flank the tower at balcony level above entries. These windows are



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filled with stained glass. Full-height multi-sashed windows containing small panes of clear glass fill the longitudinal elevations. These are round-headed also, with basket weave tracery pattern in topmost segment. Tower terminates with bell-cast dome (replacement for spire) above square belfry. Belfry contains round-headed louvered openings in recesses; segmentally arched moldings set off belfry from tower and dome; stubby turrets with pyramidal caps rise at each corner.

A flight of steps runs across the entire facade. Segment of a former road on church property runs in front of building, bordered by iron picket fence. A coped stone wall runs at road edge. The church property continues on opposite (south) side of public road to brook and across it to other side. Course of Readington Road was slightly altered sometime in the past, bringing it closer to the church. Oldest gravestones are found close to the structure.

13. Church Community House, 1963

Non-contributing

1-story frame structure over full-story windowed cement foundation, attached to church between third and fourth bays of east elevation by 2-bay "hyphen" passageway of same height and construction. Principal unit has gable front to road, containing 2 bays of paired sash windows, with peak treated as pediment, containing an oculus. Front elevation faces east to parking lot: 3 bays wide with centered entrance, flanked by sidelights, fronted by pedimented portico.

14. Church Cemetery

Contributing

Begun in 1804 with first contribution of land from Casper Berger, enlarged several times with additional gifts of land from Berger's descendants taken from their adjoining farm, now totaling about 7 acres. It replaced two earlier graveyards, one said to have been on the farm behind Site # 3, the other at the original location of the church off North Branch Road, Branchburg Township. Reinterments were made from both cemeteries, including the body of the Rev. Simeon Van Arsdalen (died 1786). Casper Berger, first identified tavern keeper and millowner after 1784, is buried here (died at 83 years) along with his wife, as well as other elderly residents of the village who died shortly after the turn of the century. Gravestones are for the most part simple stone slabs without ornament other than rounded or scalloped heads. A burial ground for blacks was added at the most distant northeasterly

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corner sometime in the 19th century.

15. A.L. Stout Dwelling (Block 67/Lot 15) Contributing  
I-style, 1840-50s

Frame block (clapboards with cornerboards) of 5 bays with rear flat-roofed 2-story ell at west end, adjoined by 1-story addition on brick foundation, spanning the rear elevation. High foundation of coursed stone blocks; wood-shingled gable roof, internal end chimneys with stuccoed brick stacks. Entrance is centered. Porch, spanning internal 3 bays, is flat-roofed, supported by Queen Anne posts with fan-shaped spindle-filled brackets. Balusters are square in section; floor and stairs are of wood. Geometric-patterned latticework apron. Windows have 6/6 sash, 4/2 sash in paired attic windows. Fixed louvered blinds.

Outbuilding: 2-story frame barn with vertical siding and corrugated metal roof. Pent on main facade, asphalt shingled. Principal facade has three pairs of doors on strap hinges and a fixed sash window. Loft has two doors. 3-bay-deep addition runs across rear wall.

16. Judge Peter D. Rockafellow Dwelling (Block 67/Lot 16)  
Contributing  
Vernacular, I style, C. 1840 or earlier

Frame block (clapboarded, with cornerboards) of 4 bays, 2-room plan without hall, and lateral 2-bay wing of 2 stories of same depth (added some 20 years ago, replacing a leanto). Foundation of coursed stone blocks. Gable roof; bed molding on frieze and large bead at bottom edge. Two end chimneys, one rebuilt on exterior. Second chimney serves cooking fireplace. Chimneyside stairs adjoining are boxed out into room. Windows have 6/6 sash, movable louvered blinds. Shed-roofed porch stands before main entrance in second bay from left. A similar porch is on entry for wing. A third porch with hipped roof, Queen Anne columns, and monolithic jigsaw brackets serves the wing at gable end.

Outbuilding: Small 2-bay, 2-story barn, newly clapboarded, with extensive lateral addition of 1-bay 2-story unit and 2-bay 1-story leanto containing together three rollback garage-scale doors. Original building has pedestrian entrance. New standing seam and corrugated metal roofs add to fresh crisp appearance of total building.

17. C.C. Lane Dwelling (Block 67/Lot 17) Contributing  
Vernacular, I style, C. 1830s, Greek Revival elements

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Frame block of 5 bays, with 1-1/2 story ell, clapboarded with cornerboards. Coursed stone foundation; moderately pitched gable roof; flush raking course; plain fascia. Internal end chimneys have brick stacks with open caps. Centered entrance has 3-pane transom; windows have 9/6 and 6/6 sash. Paired attic windows have 4/2 sash. Gabled Colonial Revival style porch fronts entry. Ell has internal end chimney for cooking fireplace. East slope of roof extended to shelter a porch in front of 3-bay facade incorporating bulkhead entrance to main block. Shed-roofed additions across rear include a sun room with jalousie windows and new kitchen. Dutch strap hinges from earlier doors have been reinstalled on replacement two-sectioned exterior door of ell and on bulkhead doors.

Outbuildings: 1) Sears, Roebuck gambrel-roofed barn, with gambrel-roofed cross gable. Novelty-sided. Full-height paired entry doors, flanked by 2 windows on each side. Pedestrian entries are found at each corner of one side wall. 2) Gable-front wagon house, with shed addition to one side, under extended roof slope. Two vehicular entrances, one in the addition. Loft door flanked by two 6/6 sash windows. Vertical plank siding. 3) Privy in excellent condition (not original to site), narrow vertical siding. 4) Well house, square boxed enclosure, horizontal board siding; pyramidal roof; slender square posts. Old gnarled specimen of osage orange.

18. Berger-Tenbrook Dwelling (Block 68/Lot 11) Contributing  
Georgian block form, Greek Revival elements; late 18th c.(?),  
19th c.

2-1/2 story frame double pile building (40' by 30') with rear wing and 2 leantos, clapboarded with cornerboards, raised on a foundation of coursed stone blocks of irregular sizes, one 2 feet long. Gable roof has synthetic shingles, shallow boxed eaves; cross gable. Internal end chimneys have shouldered brick stacks, corbeled. A 5-bay facade, with centered entry, Greek Revival door, flanked by 4-pane sidelights, and 3-pane transom. Sash of 6/6 on main facade (larger openings on first story), apparently replacements for 9/6 sash, which survive on upper story of rear facade. Windows have louvered blinds. Greek Revival portico with Tuscan columns spans internal bays; replacement flooring, no stairs. Second entry with similar portico on left (east) gable wall in front of first two (north) bays of 3 bays. (Building faces north to Readington Road.)

Rear wing of 2 stories under flattened pitched gable roof across half of main block, flush with its west wall, 2 bays by 2

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bays. Former end chimney now in internal position through addition of stair passageway and utility rooms against gable wall. A glass-windowed leanto attached to a shed entry on east elevation of ell fills re-entry angle and encloses cellar bulkhead of main block, the steps of which run parallel with rear wall rather than perpendicular to it.

Despite present mien, this building possibly dates to 18th century (the Casper Berger Tavern shown at same site on Robert Erskine's map; as early as 1738, according to the deed for the church lot, Daniel Slover had a dwelling on the same lot) and may have originated with a side hall plan represented by the east 3 bays. Front room of 2-room-deep plan contains a corner fireplace (with Greek Revival mantelpiece), although the chimney base does not correspond in shape, being flush against wall (stone-piered with an outside stone lintel). A raised-panel door (4 panels) hangs in rear bedroom. Upper floor plan of present structure suggests use as an inn. A transverse hall runs between front and rear chambers terminating with a half-width boxed stairway to attic, with a single run of stairs ascending to west gable wall. There are 3 rooms at back and 2 at front, one of which may have been divided originally into 2 rooms. West end of house formerly had separate chimney flues (now altered), which still survive in attic, where they combine into one at roof crest. Extensive updating of interior details in Greek Revival style appears to have occurred about mid-19th century, possibly after the sale in 1855 to J.V. Schomp.

Outbuildings: (Site # 18.1) 2-story frame (clapboarded with cornerboards) tenant house of 2 bays with internal end chimney (open-capped stack) and a shed-roofed porch. Ground story embanked. Cellar construction suggests first half of 19th century. Interior recently rehabilitated after a fire. (Contributing)  
2) Pole barn, new construction from old materials; vertical siding.  
3) New gambrel-roofed barn. 4) Pump house. (1 Contributing)

19. Aron Lane Dwelling (Block 69/Lot 1) Contributing  
Dutch vernacular, 18th c.

1 and 1/2 story, deep form, hall-less frame house (vinyl sided), main block set on a rise of ground with barely visible stone rubble foundation. Gable roof with synthetic shingles, slight returns; internal end chimneys with brick stacks on base, corbeled caps. 4-bay facade (facing north), with entry in second bay from left (east), flanked by double-hung sash as sidelights. Shed-roofed porch across facade, with Queen Anne posts; new wood plank floor;

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lattice-work skirting; no stairs. Windows have 2/2 sash, vinyl louvered blinds; 3 eyebrow windows in half story. Against east gable wall is 2-story wing, flush with main facade, 2 bays wide by 3 bays deep having an I-form appearance but in actuality being the original 1 story kitchen wing recessed against main block with front porch containing bulkhead entrance to cellar that was enlarged over time to present proportions, with porch incorporated into interior space. Its longitudinal elevation contains 3 entries, one with braced hood, leading to separate divisions of internal space. Window sash 1/1 and 6/6. A cater-cornered fireplace is in east front room of main block, and one flush on wall in west front room, both having simply detailed Federal mantelpieces. Two raised-panel doors survive, one rehung on upper story, one long ago installed in spring room under outbuilding. Bulkhead doors retain 4 Dutch strap hinges.

Outbuildings (in form of courtyard): 1) Large 3-story banked rectangular frame barn on rubble stone foundation, coursed with stone blocks on front elevation, with smaller 2-story barn recessed against its east gable and leanto combined with silo partly incorporated into ground level of west gable wall. Exterior leanto joined to cement silo is partly of cinderblock, partly frame with German siding. Entrances to banked (north) level are through centered milk room addition of cinderblock and through track doors to left of it. This level last served as cow barn. Upper level entered from opposite longitudinal elevation through track doors. Interior framed with modified Dutch bent system (one side aisle only) running perpendicular to entrance. Hewn posts have been raised above plate with circular sawn timbers to increase barn height. 2) Attached barn dates to second half of 19th century. Both barns have new standing seam metal roofs. 3) Large wagon house/granary with side-wall corn crib incorporated into its 2-story height. Gable-fronted, with wagon doors swung on English strap hinges and loft door on Dutch strap hinges. Vertical siding attached with square-headed nails. It is embanked on stone rubble foundation, creating a cellar in which an area was enclosed for a milk room, using a door of 6 raised panels (fields outlined with single bead). Door to boxed-in stairway running against rear wall of wagon house has Dutch strap hinge. Attached to opposite gable end is cinderblock garage, added as leanto. Entire structure has new standing seam metal roofing. 3) Series of attached chicken houses sided in various materials closes off courtyard on west. (4 Contributing)

20. School House (Block 69/Lot 1.1)  
Colonial Revival, 1903

Contributing

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1 story frame structure composed of central block flanked by recessed 1-bay wings of lower height, each unit having a relatively steep-pitched hipped roof, with extended eaves. Foundation of stone rubble. Appendages at rear include a 1-story addition and open porch. Now a residence, facade has been altered from a 4-bay block of tall windows in central unit and paired doors in each wing to a tri-partite window unit with 6/6 sash and an entry with porch, and single doors in end units. Bell cupola and cross gable (seen in old photograph) have been removed.

Outbuildings: Double privy for boys and girls; frame construction, gable roof, rectangular shape.

21. School House (Block 70/Lot 1) Contributing  
Vernacular, Georgian-derived form, 1839

2 story rectangular box, frame, with clapboards and cornerboards, gable end to road, which once served as principal facade containing entrance in right (southerly) bay of 2 bays. A second entry, perhaps introduced later (now on interior), was squeezed next to final west bay of 3 bays on north elevation. Window sash of 9/6. Windows in gable peak have 6-pane fixed sash. Gable roof has boxed eaves. Cinderblock gable-end chimney. Later additions include 2-story flat-roofed squared projection containing vestibule and stairs on west half of north elevation flush with west gable wall (entry on side wall with glass and panel door, 9/6 sash window on front wall), and a one-story projection on remainder of north facade of main block to provide vehicular entrance and storage area for fire trucks with multi-paned rollback door (post-1950).

Outbuildings 1) Privy, plywood-sheathed gable roof, exposed rafter tails; 2) storage building, entrance in gable end. 1 story, narrow beaded vertical siding. ( 2 Non-contributing)

22. John Lane Dwelling (Block 70, Lot 2) Contributing  
Vernacular, probably late 18th century

1-1/2 story single pile frame house (clapboarded) over banked stone foundation, with smaller lateral unit over excavated (?) foundation, flush with main facade and recessed from rear wall. Now room and hall plan, originally (seemingly) two rooms, but one without fireplace. Gable roof, flush rakes, plain fascia. Both units have internal end chimneys with brick stacks, open caps. Main (west) facade faces directly on road; 3 bays wide in main block, 2 bays in side unit. Front entry in north end bay altered by recessing in wall. Walk-in entry on opposite banked elevation

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contains two-sectioned Dutch door swung on Dutch and English strap hinges. Leanto porch in front of it has solid balustrade. Entry to side unit is above grade on rear elevation and is reached by a flight of stairs to a shed-roofed porch having plain posts and railing. Small-sized windows contain 6/6 sash; half story has eyebrow windows. Side unit has one gable-roofed dormer on rear roof slope. Kitchen in banked level contains a stone cooking fireplace across one wall with narrow winding chimneyside stairs. Deep firebox with lintel log; intact bake oven at rear right end, with beehive below-ground. Exterior stair-side wall contains niche, possibly for candle. Simply detailed matching Federal style mantelpieces are on first floor fireplaces. Built-in chimneyside cupboard with recessed-panel doors and scalloped shelving in main block. Cupboards also built into chimney breast, doors fastened with H hinges. Chimney of smaller unit also has over-mantel cupboard and is flanked by flight of stairs. Chimney wall is finished with beaded vertical boarding. First-story hall/room has exposed beveled beams. Beams also exposed in banked kitchen.

Outbuildings are strung out on downslope of land between dwelling and a run of water flowing north to Hollands Brook

1) Wagon house/granary, hewn frame with clapboard sheathing; synthetic roof materials. Adjacent entrances for wagons and stairs to granary. In need of repairs. 2) Shed, vertical siding, wood-shingle roof; double doors with strap hinges. 3) children's playhouse, frame, on opposite side of run reached by plank bridge. (NC) Cast-iron water pump. (2 Contributing)

23. John Morehead Dwelling (Block 55/Lot 23) Contributing  
Vernacular Georgian-derived block, C. 1830s

2-story, double pile, 5-bay, frame (vinyl siding) over low stone foundation, part of which has been concealed by a brick-faced water table projection. Two-bay, lower 2-story wing to one side, with 1-story new addition of 3 bays at its rear. Gable roof; internal end chimney stacks. Some changes have been made in recent years, probably including the reversing of window sash to 6/9 from 9/6 (conventional in this area) and modification of principal entrance, which now displays a 4-pane sidelight to one side of a modern panel door, both components incorporated in an architrave frame featuring sharply fluted pilasters and diminutive dentil molding on top of frieze. Windows of wing are of 6/6 sash, with 8/8 in rear addition. Vinyl louvered blinds.

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Outbuildings: Wood shed, gambrel-roofed with wood shingles; vertical siding. Two doors on main facade in clipped-corner opening.

House is sited back from road on hill crest with extensive views, including one downslope to mill site. Original farm of 150 acres, purchased by Joseph Morehead in 1796, extended along Hillcrest Road to Holland Brook.

24. Morehead Tenant House (Block 55/Lot 23.1) Contributing  
I style, 1839 (per tradition)

Frame, double tenement, close to road, embanked into hillside, with retaining wall of railroad ties in front. Frame, sheathed with synthetic shingles, over rubble stone foundation. Gable-roofed, flush rakes, wide plain fascia. Internal end chimneys with exposed stone backs; modern open-capped stacks. Facade breaks into two groupings of 3 bays, with cantilevered-hood entry centered in each. Window sash of 1/1. No windows in gable peaks. Shed-roofed projections on both gable walls for bathrooms.

25. Dwelling (J.J. Cagshaw estate) (Block 55/Lot 25) Contributing  
I-style, C. 1840s

Banked main block with lateral 2-story shed-roofed wing; frame (aluminum-sided), with stone rubble foundation, built into hill-slope. Gable roof with synthetic shingles. Four bays with entry in second from left; full porch on brick piers wraps around north gable wall. Queen Anne posts, latticework skirting. Wing extension has own entry. Windows have 2/2 sash.

Outbuildings: Barn/wagon house, each unit with opening containing paired doors. Corrugated metal roof.

26. Holland Brook Bridge Contributing  
1839; 1879; 1930s

Narrow 2-lane bridge, with concrete side walls and cartway constructed this century, resting on stone wings built from embankments, those on north side extending eastward parallel with Readington Road. These supports are of roughly coursed stone blocks. Site dates to 18th century. Rebuilt and repaired at in 19th century; two such constructions are recorded on stone tablets inserted on back face of wing wall. One reads: "Built 1839. Rebuilt 1879. 18 miles to New Brunswick." The second contains the names of several individuals (possibly the road commissioners of the time), with date: A.D. 1879. Stone walls have slate coping,



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which may date to 1920s. Present cartway was built in the 1930s, per county records.

27. Mill Ruins (Block 55/Lot 27) Contributing  
18th C. site

Remains of mill house on north bank of Holland Brook survive as approximately 10-foot high segment of rubble stone wall, running perpendicular to brook, beginning several yards from its edge and extending for a distance of about 15 feet. A modern house now blocks its continuation northward. The bulk of the building had been taken down c. 1935. A giant sycamore tree, circumference of 26 feet, crowds against east face of wall. On opposite side of brook the embankment contains remnants of a boulder inlay that probably related to mill dam. The original structure, according to 19th-century descriptions, had stood 3 stories high, with dimensions 40 by 55 feet. The structure was at first a corn mill (1716). A sawmill was added in the 1770s, and remained part of mill operation thereafter. In its final years it was used for sausage-making.

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several hundred acres extended east to the county and Province Line (dividing New Jersey into East and West Provinces) and lay between Leslie's Brook, a branch of Chambers Brook, to the north and Campbell's Brook (Pleasant Run) to the south, Holland Brook being halfway between the two, all three flowing to the nearby branches of the Raritan River.<sup>3</sup> Lane's purchase of virgin land just across the Province Line, in close proximity to settlements established but a decade or two earlier in Somerset County at the confluence of the branches of the Raritan, illustrates how unoccupied lands were claimed in the earliest years in an ever westward expansion. Prior to this time, Lane had purchased (1711) another tract in Somerset County on its western boundary (the same Province Line) from his brother-in-law, New York merchant John Van Horne, an absentee holder of some 7000 acres in Montgomery Township. He sold this at about the same time he decided to locate along Holland Brook. The widow Jannetje (Van Horne) Van Sycklen (later spelt Sickle) was Lane's second wife. By this marriage, he added a number of stepsons to his family of four sons. It seems to have been his intention to provide farms for these young men as they reached adulthood, as existing deeds from 1730 on indicate the transfer of good-sized tracts of land to several of them, which served to create a family-based community of itself. Lane sold additional tracts ranging from small lots to 300-acre farms to unrelated individuals, some of whom resided in Somerset County. Clearly, some sales represented adventures in real estate, as properties changed hands frequently. One property, eventually the tavern lot, changed hands nine times before 1773, and another of six acres had a similar history.<sup>4</sup> These transactions provide a close-up view of how a settlement could eventually take shape.

At nearly the same time that Lane built his mill, Dutch families living nearby in the vicinity of the confluence of the Branches of the Raritan, three miles distant, organized the "Church at the Forks," later called the North Branch Church, and in 1719 they erected a meeting house on the west bank of the Branch, just north of the "Road up Raritan". This highway, opened in the 1680s, originally terminated at the river's confluence but was afterward made part of the Old York Road running through Hunterdon to the Delaware River and on to Philadelphia.<sup>5</sup> This church soon became part of a circuit of five Dutch Reformed congregations in Somerset County, which were served by the illustrious Theodorus Frelinghuysen, who was sent to America by the mother church in Holland c. 1719, upon the request of settlers. One notable couple in the original congregation was Maritje Reyersen and her husband John Reading, a notable political figure who lived along the South Branch of the Raritan River. Lane seems not to have joined the church, according to its printed records, though one source says he was an elder; in any case, one of his stepsons received such an appointment.<sup>6</sup> When the meeting house burned down (as tradition claims) in 1738, Lane provided a small lot for a new site in his own neighborhood three miles distant, described in the deed as being "on the King's Highway leading from his mill to the (Raritan) Landing near the

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dwelling of Daniel Slover," whose house was on the later tavern lot.<sup>7</sup>

The church and the village were drawn together, as it were, by the emerging highway system. A number of roads in Hunterdon were being linked together to make a connection from the Delaware River with the shipping dock on the Raritan near New Brunswick at the point of navigation, established by Adolphus Hardenbrook in the 1720s. It flowed northeasterly through Readington Township heading toward the rising village, traversing present-day Hillcrest Road, then crossing Holland Brook within a stone's throw of Lane's grist mill, thereafter becoming Readington Road flowing in an easterly direction to the confluence. A deed of 1740 between Adrian and his stepson Garret Van Sickle for a 141-acre tract of land adjoining the mill on the south side of the brook (Site # 23 tract) describes the road "as it is used and beaten."<sup>8</sup>

Lane appears to have died in the 1740s. Almost single-handedly, it would seem, as family benefactor, real estate salesman, and provider of essential services he had created this new settlement and had been its leader. In 1716, sometime after he had settled in, he was appointed "Committer of ye peace for ye County of Hunterdon," and in 1721 he was chosen Freeholder for Amwell Township, per a civil list in Snell's History. Lane's next appointment was to be as Justice of the Peace for the years 1724 through 1726.<sup>9</sup> In 1730, a portion of Amwell Township, including Readington Village, was set off as the Township of Reading (now Readington Township) as a result of the growth that had occurred.

All the factors making for a core community--crossroads, highway, mill, church, and homes on adjoining farms and small lots-- were in place by 1738. There may even have been a tavern, since Lane's son Abraham applied for a license in 1732 for a "publick house of entertainment in the Township of Reading."<sup>10</sup> To these were added tavern, school, and physician's services in the next half century, as the village took final shape. Mill activity continued to be the most important industry. Sometime close to his death, Lane deeded his corn and grist mill in half shares to two of his stepsons, one of whom afterward had a fulling operation (although it is unclear whether on the same site) and another a windmill.<sup>11</sup> In turn, these shares were sold to others, with a sawmill added at some time before 1778. Single ownership was restored in the 1770s under Jacobus Van Sickle, who also acquired the adjacent farm of 250 acres on the north side of the road from his father, Johannes, Adrian's stepson. Tax ratables of 1778 indicate that he also had three stills. Two years later, two of these had come into the possession of Casper Berger, a German redemptioner, who had been brought to a nearby village by a member of the Van Horne family and had worked off his debt as a mason (building in one instance the stone house of the German Johannes Moelich in Bedminster).<sup>12</sup> In 1784, Berger purchased the mill complex and a farm of 100 acres on the north side of the road (part of Jacobus Van Sickle's farm) on which stood the

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meeting house, and was later to enlarge his holdings, becoming by his death in 1815 the village's largest landowner.<sup>13</sup>

Casper Berger also established the first permanent tavern, his first endeavor in Readington, describing himself as an innkeeper when he bought the 19 acres by the brook opposite the meeting house in 1773 and set up a hostelry. (# 18) Helped by its location on a main road, it appears to have had a good trade, with drovers making it their stopping point and fullers making it a place of call to pick up wool for their services. Berger continued to operate this enterprise until about 1804, when he relinquished its management to Peter Tenbrook, who enjoyed the patronage of local government officials for public meetings.

First mention of a physician appears about 1750 with the presence of the German, Dr. Garret Van Wagoner, noted as property holder of a small parcel of land on the south side of Holland Brook in the vicinity of the mill.<sup>14</sup> Next to arrive was Dr. Jacob Jennings, who bought a 140-acre farm immediately east of the mill farm in the 1770s. Jennings was a native of Basking Ridge (northeastern Somerset County), and his wife Ann was the daughter of the notable Rev. Dr. Samuel Kennedy, founder of the academy at that place. He was seemingly well known, as Robert Erskine included his house on a military map, c. 1779, as an area landmark along with Van Sickle's mills, Casper Berger's tavern, and the church. In 1788, Dr. Jennings sold his farm to Andrew Verselius, son of another well-known Readington physician, the German immigrant George A. Verselius, who had his practice in a nearby hamlet. Andrew Verselius had married Lenah Van Sickle (one example of many of cross-cultural marriages), and the couple chose to live in the village, where he became a saddler.<sup>15</sup>

At about the time of Dr. Jennings' arrival in Readington, a small group of residents determined to have a school, as is evidenced by a newspaper advertisement for the runaway teacher.<sup>16</sup> Although Jennings was not a trustee, there seems reason to believe, with his background, that he could have encouraged the endeavor. The effort to have a school was taken up again in 1794 when several immediate neighbors organized themselves into a Board of Trustees. In 1804, they finally achieved their goal, when a lot adjoining the flood plain "at fork of roads near Holland Brook," became available "for the use and benefit of the neighborhood as a skolhas" through the settlement of the estate of a recently deceased member of the Lane family.<sup>17</sup>

The village became center for a well-settled farm area, and was noted on maps of the 1760s-80s, called variously Reading Town and Reading Meeting House. Tax ratables of the late 1770s suggest that agriculture was the main activity with small numbers of livestock and horses kept. Jacobus Van Sickle,

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millowner, is listed with 6 horses, 11 cows, and 6 pigs. A similar picture emerges in the inventory of the estate of John Lane (1812), which reports 4 horses, 3 milch cows, 2 milch calves, 4 heifers, one steer, and 7 sheep. There is evidence that the Dutch type of barn was the chief outbuilding, well suited for hay and straw storage; one of hybrid form at Site # 18 perhaps dates to this time. Farmers had wool processed at area fulling mills. In the 1780s and again in the 1790s millers advertised that they would collect cloth for processing if left at Berger's tavern. One was James Alexander of Lamington, who with his wife Elizabeth Livingston had joined the Readington Church in 1789 by transfer from the Episcopal Church in New York City.<sup>18</sup>

Up to 1782, religious services had continued to be provided by notable preachers as part of their circuit, the last being the Rev. Jacob R. Hardenburg, who afterward became the first president of Queen's College (Rutgers University). His departure opened the door for change in the post-Revolutionary period. For the first time, the congregation obtained its own resident pastor, Simeon Van Arsdalen. During the brief three years of his ministry, the issue arose whether services should be continued in the Dutch language or replaced by English. A vote based on financial contributions settled the matter in favor of the latter. The next dominie, Peter Studdiford, a nearby resident of the South Branch mill community in Hillsborough Township, Somerset County, could not even speak in the Dutch tongue. The church property was enlarged in 1804 by a gift of land from Casper Berger for a cemetery so that graves of all church members could be next to the house of worship. Reinterments were effected from the two earlier burial grounds, one in the village on the property of Site # 3, the other at the former location of the meeting house in Somerset County. The ministers Van Arsdalen and Studdiford and their wives, and Casper Berger and his wife were among the first burials.

The opening decades of the 19th century saw the return of physicians to the village, Snell's history of 1881 reporting that both Dr. Henry Schenck and his son practiced in the vicinity during the period 1810-22. Dr. Josiah Quimby settled in Readington, c. 1812, and remained until his death in 1854.<sup>19</sup> (He was then succeeded by his son Dr. William Quimby.) A few services were also introduced about this time. Cornelius Lane, who had become heir to another farm adjoining Berger's farm (# 17), opened a blacksmith shop at roadside opposite the tavern lot. Bergon Brokaw, who lived on a farm at village edge, reportedly kept store in the village, possibly at the mill, with a partner named Berger, probably Peter Berger, Casper's son and the miller. (Brokaw's daybook is at Rutgers University Library.)

The only record of house building during these early years is the Federal-style house of Aaron Berger (# 10), thought to have been built after he inherited the greater part of his father Casper Berger's farm in 1815 (his

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brother Peter receiving the mill and 55 acres opposite it).<sup>20</sup> This house and a portion of the farm still remain within the same family ownership, one indication of the degree to which the past history of the village still lives on.

A noticeable spurt of growth began in the 1830s and continued into the 1860s, paralleling the period when growth is generally noted in rural villages, perhaps sparked by a younger generation reaching their prime years and an overall increase in rural population. It was partly expressed in the replacement of existing buildings. In 1833, the church consistory determined to take down its old-fashioned meeting house and catch up with the times. The new edifice, built by local carpenter Jacob Voorhees, was of imposing size, 55' by 70', two stories in height with a gallery, presumed to have been executed in a formal style perhaps resembling the Dutch Reformed churches raised in Millstone and Blawenburg at about the same time. In 1839, the earlier small schoolhouse was replaced with a building of impressive scale for its function, having a second story for consistory and other groups to meet in. (# 21) At the same time the nearby bridge over Holland Brook was built anew (# 26). During this decade, the mill complex and farm passed from Peter Berger to the Nevius family, who operated grist and sawmills during most of the century.

What constituted the only service center to emerge in Readington developed about this time on the small strip of land below the milldam fronting on Hillcrest Road. It included a blacksmith shop, successor to one built next to the new school, and two stores, one selling boots and shoes for a while before becoming a general store. All these structures are now gone. Two extant houses, Sites 24 and 25, record the expansion of the village along this side road. Both appear to have been, as they are today, relatively plain buildings on small lots crowding road and hillside, one a double tenement built by John Morehead on his home farm, using discarded lumber from the earlier schoolhouse that he hauled away when it was taken down in 1839.<sup>21</sup>

During the same decades, several new houses were put up along Readington Road. A residence of some stylish pretension exhibiting Greek Revival elements (# 9) was built on Aaron Berger's home farm for his son John; this attractive dwelling later became home for village doctors. Additional houses (#s 15, 16, 17) were built beyond the cemetery at the village edge on the sharp hillside. All of these houses reflect the current popularity in the countryside of the I-form, although Site # 16 lacks an entry hall and appears to be of an earlier plan. A final house was built on the far west end of the road by the miller Minna Nevius, who also owned the original miller's cottage, purchased along with the mill in 1832. The new house reflected his prosperity in its ample proportions and side-hall plan. Amidst this residential row, sometime before 1850 Herman Hageman obtained a small lot from

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the Berger farm near mill and bridge and established a general store (# 6) dealing in groceries, drygoods, and hardware. This still remains in business. A post office was installed in it for a time. When a later storekeeper, J.T.B. Schomp, married in 1870, he added a house (# 7) to his lot, which also remains, making an interesting pair of simple gable-fronted buildings, the only examples of this form in the village.

Happenstance added the final crowning building to Readington. A fire in the stove pipe of the church in 1864 led to the destruction of the edifice. It was replaced with the present structure built by local carpenter Asa Dilts at a cost of \$13,326. It shows a selection of a conservative style already to be found in the countryside, incorporating features carried over from Federal and Greek Revival neo-classicism with a timid use of incoming Romanesque. As part of beautification, an iron fence was added at this time. Through periodic purchases the cemetery was extended back of the church and a burial area for blacks included at its most distant reach up the hillside. The congregation had attained a great size, with whites as well as blacks filling the gallery, although there was but a small population of Freedmen in the broad community. Of these, some continued to live with the families by whom they had been raised and assisted with farmwork, and a few owned their own farms. Day laborers were also employed and may have occupied the tenant houses.

An 1860 map of the village includes a directory of 11 listings, among which are found Dr. William D. Quimby as both physician and dentist, Minna Nevius, millowner, operating both grist and sawmill, the local J.P., Peter D. Rockafellow, and storekeeper C.B. Stout. Eight men described themselves as farmers, including Major Aaron Lane, J.C. Lane, and C.C. Lane (showing a strong continuing presence of the settler's name), John Morehead, Jr., and John S. Berger. J. Thompson, owner of a new shoe shop, and the blacksmith, shown on the map, did not advertise.

Readington Village, at its most prosperous, was recalled in a memoir by the Rev. J.E. Stillwell, who lived there as a youth (1867-76). Although life had a homespun quality, he noted, families were not out of touch with the larger world; and they had business acumen and political savvy. One was a cousin to Governor Vroom, who grew up on the South Branch; another a warm personal friend of U.S. Vice President Garret A. Hobart. The clergy were well educated. Families were generally financially comfortable and many of their sons ambitious, leaving home for college educations and degrees in medicine and theology. Among their number were a founder of an insurance company, a bank president, a lawyer, an engineer, and a railroad company director. At one time, the local justice, Peter Rockafellow, served as school superintendent, and at another, the post was filled by the highly regarded judge, Joseph P. Thompson, who served on the bench in both Hunterdon and Somerset counties.<sup>22</sup>

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The last quarter of the century saw an over-all slowdown and some change in farming practices. A grange was organized in 1872 and continued to meet in the upper room of the school. In the 1890s, as dairying became an economic pursuit in the region, a creamery was added to the mill complex and products were sold from a roadside stand. Milling was on the decline, but grain was still being ground the old-fashioned way through 1908. The equipment was never modernized. In 1916 the mill was converted to a sausage grinding factory. The Junior Order of United American Mechanics established themselves in Readington by acquiring the two-story schoolhouse in 1903, after the school board deemed it necessary to have a more up-to-date building. The replacement schoolhouse (# 20), now a residence, was built a few hundred yards away on an acre lot. This spacious and airy building in Colonial Revival style continued in school use up to 1950 when it was sold.

Vernacular Architecture

The architecture of Readington Village illustrates the various influences in building form and stylistic choice that played a role in the founding and development of a rural settlement over the course of two centuries. The history of every 19th-century New Jersey village with 18th-century roots displays its own unique pattern of growth in the particulars, but there is a considerable commonality in the kinds of buildings that make up the community by the time it reaches its maturity. A comparative study of backwater villages of the region serves to establish how similar they were in life styles through most of the century. Carried further, such a study also reveals the spread of a knowledge of architectural styles from town to countryside, from village to village. How these styles were used, how much ornamentation employed, how much wealth displayed, however, reflects the local character and influences upon it over time. Taken together, these surviving villages through their physical layout, their collection of buildings recording the activities and economic livelihood of residents, and their variety of architectural styles present an overall view at close range of rural life in the region.

Readington's 18th-century buildings reflect the cultural influences of its settlers--German, English, and Dutch--with the last predominant. Early records, such as a 1741 freeholders' list, church membership records, road returns, and deeds and mortgages, reveal the national backgrounds of the township's residents. Apart from adding to the documentation of use of certain floor plans and details of construction, replicated in the new community by settlers, these surviving examples provide additional and possibly new information on interiors. Although the earliest dwellings do not survive, there is evidenced in the oldest extant houses (#s 5 and 19) a use of the Dutch floor plan in spatial organization and height. Built as the miller's residence (# 5), perhaps mid-18th century, it was enlarged and remodeled under



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19th-century owners, beginning with Peter Berger, who inherited the mill and the house he already occupied from his father in 1815. The Aron Lane farmhouse (# 19), a hall-less four-room plan, with one corner fireplace, exemplifies one of the forms of Dutch dwellings found in Somerset County in the second half of the 18th century. Its equidistantly spaced small single-sash windows in the half story, if original to the house, may indicate a date close to century-end, although the farm property had been held by his father before him from the 1730s. Despite the fact that the kitchen wing, a typical lateral addition with open leanto at front, has since been quite altered through the creation of a full upper story and the incorporation of porch into the interior space, its original dimensions remain and it includes the bulkhead entrance to the cellar of the main block, with doors still fastened by Dutch strap hinges. This house site is of special interest in its retention of two of its early outbuildings, a barn incorporating Dutch bents and an embanked 2-story wagon house with corncrib, granary, and spring room. A third early dwelling, the John Lane House (# 22), exhibits a different form, and its provenance is probably German. It is a small 1-1/2 story structure of two rooms single file, over an embanked kitchen. Its cooking fireplace has a very deep and broad firechamber, a feature that often appeared in Delaware Valley houses. Its underground beehive oven is a rare survival and adds to the interest of this building. Its storage spaces--in-wall niche and chimney-breast cupboards--perhaps were adopted as well from a non-Dutch cultural source, possibly English. The presence of an exterior Dutch door attached on Dutch strap hinges, however, suggests how much cultural exchange could take place over a period of time. Appearing to date from the 18th century, this diminutive dwelling built at roadside close to the bridge may have first served as a tenant house for the neighboring farm (# 19) and passed by inheritance to John Lane, whose farm lay alongside Hillcrest Road for a considerable distance.

The inn (# 18), built as a tavern rather than a converted dwelling house, is interesting as a record of spatial organization. In rural areas, the handling of overnight accommodations apparently was left to the imagination of the individual hosts. The solution found for Casper Berger's inn was the development of an unusual floor plan that made possible up to six rooms on the upper story by means of a longitudinal hall.

Readington's 19th-century domestic architecture documents a conservative rural attitude that favored building straightforwardly and unpretentiously, except for institutional structures. There is the occasional exception of additional "dressing" in terms of elements of style on the facade, including porticos (#s 1, 8, 18) employed by a leading citizen or well-to-do resident. The vernacular forms themselves are those common to the region in the 19th century, many in fact in use statewide, especially the I-style (#s 8, 15, 16, 17, 24, 25) and Georgian-derived side-hall or full plan (#s 1, 10, 18, 23).

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The embankment of the majority of dwellings, the topography itself dictating it from the time of village origin, reveals a comfortable attitude about this living arrangement.

The District affords examples of tenant housing as well, a form of housing common in the countryside and apparently in villages as well, although not always recognized and noted in architectural accounts. At least two buildings have been identified (#s 18.1 and 24), with the possibility that Sites 16 and 22 also served that purpose. Stillwell's account reveals that his own family--widowed mother and sons--shared John Morehead's house with him, each occupying one half. This may have been a special arrangement, however, out of kindness for an out-of-town family (with local connections) in need of housing. In terms of scale and ornamentation, no great differences are discovered between rental dwellings and private residences, which perhaps offers a favorable social commentary for the period.

Stylistic treatment for institutional buildings seems to have been a country rubric. Observed taking place in many communities during the Federal era, it first found expression in Readington with the replacement school house of 1839, based on classical symmetry. The community's venture into use of formal style is evidenced also in the extant Reformed Church edifice of 1864. Stylistically, it follows regional trends, although no architect was engaged, and a local builder was hired for its construction. It had long been a custom of this denomination, and doubtless others as well, to copy from each other (the earlier Franklin Park Church, the Hillsborough and Blawenburg churches, examples of Federal idiom; the earlier White House Church and South Branch Church in Greek Temple style). The village edifice resembles the Pottersville Reformed and the Westfield Presbyterian church buildings, reflecting conservatively a familiar neo-classical reference in gable-front plan with fanlighted entries but featuring as well a projecting tower carrying a traditional squared belfry, formerly with a spire. Round-headed windows, rather than flat-linteled, mark an advance toward the incoming Romanesque style.<sup>23</sup> Stillwell recalls the great community pride taken in this edifice, and histories of the church detail constant improvements made to the interior. The selection of the Colonial Revival style for the 1903 schoolhouse seems somewhat surprising for its time. It represents in this region an early departure from conventional school house architecture and appears to have been a forerunner to Prairie School-inspired design for larger school buildings, which made its appearance in the next decade, several examples of which are to be found in Somerset County.

Readington Village is all of a piece, a mellowed assemblage of buildings that tell of the life and times of this particular community from its settlement to its mid-19th century prime, after which it ceased to grow. The village as it appears today would be recognizable to a resident of 1875 so

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little has taken place to change its visage and composition as indicated on a map of 1873. (Photo # 1) All of the principal buildings in existence by 1875 remain, with relatively minor changes (the most noticeable being the enlargement of wings and synthetic siding).

Readington Village can be studied as part of rural New Jersey, and similarities with its counterparts noted; its own personal character is found in its continuing existence as a residential farm-based hamlet with no economic or commercial basis other than a mill, which serves to illustrate another mode of community organization--largely composed of related families--that is part of the history of the state's agrarian past. Passed over by the railroad age, and its population on the decline because of the exodus of its youth this century, farming on a local scale lost importance.<sup>24</sup> The mill converted to sausage grinding for a few years and then closed down in 1920; the creamery, too, closed its doors. Readington Village has since survived as a residential community, still home to some longtime families, but mainly to newcomers attracted by the serenity of its uncrowded spaces and its historic aura.

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2. West New Jersey Proprietors, Surveys, I, Book A, p. 268, at Rutgers University Library; Book B-2, p. 284. West New Jersey Deeds: DD, 220-222; DD, 245
3. Leslie's Brook marked the southern boundary of a very large tract of land known as Lesleyland--some 500 to 600 acres of land also extending east to the Province Line--that was inherited by George Willocks Leslie, grand-nephew of the land investor after whom he was named. The name appears in many 18th-century records. A place called Leslie's Ridge was sometimes identified as Readington. (New Jersey Archives, Abstracts of Wills, III (1751-60), pp. 197f.)
4. Unrecorded deeds: John Van Sickle of Readington Township to Casper Burger (sic) of the aforesaid place, tavern keeper, 1773, for 2 tracts, one of 19 acres, (gives a recital of ownership back to sale by George Willocks to Adrian Lane), the other of 6 acres. The 19-acre tract, later the tavern lot, was described as "being on northeast side and near to Holland's Brook a little below the road leading from the mill formerly Adrian's Lane's to the Landing." After being bought and sold by two Somerset residents, Daniel Slover bought it in 1731 and built a house. The 1773 deed excepts a half acre sold to Philip Prost where his "dwelling house stands."
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6. Fred Sisser, III, article, "Ariaen Lane...", Somerset County Genealogical Quarterly, 6 (1988), 3 (September), pp. 59-65; Church records, in Henry P. Thompson, History of the Reformed Church at Readington, N. J., 1719-1881
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9. As cited by Sisser, loc. cit.
10. James P. Snell, History of Hunterdon and Somerset Counties, New Jersey, p. 194.

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14. Unrecorded deed to Casper Berger for six acres. See Reference 4.
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18. Thomas B. Wilson, Ed., Notices from New Jersey Newspapers, 1781-1790, p. 232, New Jersey Journal, Elizabethtown; p. 381, Brunswick Gazette, Sept. 4, 1792; Church records, membership, in Thompson, op. cit., p. 112, passim
19. Snell, op. cit., pp. 221, 222, 748
20. Casper Berger will, 1811; estate partition, Book 25, 297
21. Readington's Reflections, Readington Township Bicentennial Committee, p. 50
22. John L. Stillwell, Old Readington, passim
23. Carole Rifkind, A Field Guide to American Architecture, pp. 138, 143
24. Schmidt, Rural Hunterdon, passim; Stillwell, op. cit., passim

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New Jersey Archives, Newspaper Extracts, First and Second Series, covering years 1704-1782. Trenton, N.J.

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Somerset County Genealogical Quarterly, Vol. 6 (1988), 3 (September) article, Fred Sisser, III, "Ariaen Lane, Progenitor of the Lane Families of Somerset and Hunterdon Counties, New Jersey," pp. 59-65.

Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vols. 2-6. Records of the Readington Reformed Church baptisms run through several of the volumes.

#### Primary Sources:

Wills, Inventories, and Estate Administrations, Surrogate's Office, Hunterdon County, Flemington, N.J.

West New Jersey and East New Jersey Conveyances, New Jersey State Archives, Trenton, N.J.

Hunterdon County Deeds and Mortgages, Court House, Flemington, N.J.

Unrecorded deeds to Casper Berger, 1773, from John Van Sickle, and 1784, from Peter Schamp; and to Andrew Versellius from Dr. Jacob Jennings, 1788, in possession of Robert Cole, Readington.

#### Personal Interviews, Fall and Winter 1989-1990 with longtime residents:

Robert Cole (direct descendant of Casper Berger, living on home farm)  
Clarence E. Dow (grandson of William Dow, blacksmith, and son of Lillie Dow, longtime local teacher)  
Patricia Siebert (longtime resident)

#### Maps and Atlases

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Beers, S.N. and D. J. Lake. Map of the Vicinity of Philadelphia and Trenton. Philadelphia: C.K. Stone and A. Pomeroy, 1860. A small map and village directory for Readington appears in the margin.

Cornell, Samuel C. Map of Hunterdon County, New Jersey. Philadelphia: S.C. Cornell and Lloyd Vanderveer, 1851

Erskine, Robert, Map 71-A, showing a portion of Hunterdon County, c. 1779

Hammond, D. Stanton, "Hunterdon County, New Jersey, Sheet E," Genealogical Society of New Jersey, 1965. Deed searches conducted by Stephanie Stevens, Historian, for Readington Township, have found inaccuracies in this map in the area of Readington Village.

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### DESCRIPTION OF BOUNDARIES

The boundaries of the Readington Village Historic District run along the following lot lines including the entire lots as shown on the current tax map, with two exceptions, noted below: BLOCK 67, Lots 4, 5, (6.2 in part), 6.1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17; BLOCK 68, Lots 11, 12, 13, 14, 1, and Lot 2 in part; BLOCK 69, Lots 1.17 and 1.01; BLOCK 70, Lots 1 and 2; BLOCK 55, Lots 23, 23.01, 23.02, 25, 26, and 27.

Lot 6.2 in Block 67 will be intersected by a line of convenience drawn to connect the east side line of Lot 5 with the rear line of Lot 6.1. Lot 2 in Block 68 will be intersected by a line of convenience drawn as an extension of the south line of Lot 1.17 to a point on Holland Brook, crossing Brookview Road easterly.

### JUSTIFICATION OF BOUNDARIES

The boundaries were drawn to reflect the historic past of Readington Village as a hamlet that was created out of a few 18th-century farms with the detachment of a handful of roadside lots in close proximity to each other and to the mill. The farms, now reduced in size, ranging from 5 to 24 acres, are related to sites that front on village roads. This farmland, some of which is used for crops and pasture, is important in representing the historic visage of the village and strongly contributes to its character. Readington Village is a particularly small community that has experienced few changes through growth since mid-18th century and therefore approximates more than most New Jersey villages its original layout and land use. One reason for this is the descent of property in the same families through most of the 19th century, with only a few lots subdivided in that century and this century for family members, with very few exceptions. Its small commercial center adjoining the mill--two artisans' shops and a store--has vanished, leaving the land open as it was originally. When possible, new buildings in close vicinity, such as the firehouse in Block 69, Lot 1.13, and on lots to west of mill complex, have been excluded.

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Hunterdon County, NJ

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## UTM REFERENCES

- A - 18/522260/4491060
- B - 18/522700/4490880
- C - 18/522720/4490640
- D - 18/522440/4490520
- E - 18/522460/4490280
- F - 18/522240/4490260
- G - 18/521840/4490520
- H - 18/521980/4490720
- I - 18/521860/4490960
- J - 18/521920/4491040
- K - 18/522160/4490920

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READINGTON VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT  
Readington Township, Hunterdon Co., N.J.

Photographs

These photographs were taken by the consultant and by Stephanie Stevens, Readington Township Historian, during 1989 and 1990. The negatives have been placed in the files of Readington Township.

1. Photograph of wall exhibit at Municipal Building, showing enlarged Atlas Map of 1873, with photographs leading to sites.
2. Site No. 1, westernmost house in District, at intersection of Airport Road. Facing northwest.
3. Site No. 4, late 19th-century house built on former miller's farm, showing western entry into village on Readington Road. Core of village is just beyond bend. Facing easterly.
4. Site No. 5, the miller's cottage, angled on property to face in direction of original mill site. Village store sign seen just beyond. Facing easterly.
5. Site No. 6, Readington General Store, pre-1850. House to right originally built for shopkeeper and occupies same building lot. Facing north.
6. Streetscape at village core taken from south side of Holland Brook by bridge. Seen, left to right, are miller's house, store, shopkeeper's house, and west corner of early 20th-century house. Shows closeness of Readington Road to brook. Facing north.
7. Holland Brook a few hundred feet west of bridge, at location of former milldam. The embankment is rock-embedded and bears some relationship to dam which collapsed in the 1920s. The hill slope climbs deeply on far side. Facing south.
8. Portion of mill remaining after most of structure was removed in the 1930s to create a building lot. This segment varying in height extends from flood plain edge to top of embankment where foundation of new house was erected. Facing northwest.
9. Site No. 9, John S. Berger House, built by Aaron Berger for son on homestead farm. Facing across Readington Road in northeasterly direction. Shows the open spacing of buildings on this side of road.
10. Site No. 10, Aaron Berger House, showing the Federal gable end of house, with paired chimneys and exposed chimney backs. On homestead farm with extensive acreage in back of house. Facing northeasterly.
11. View of streetscape looking westward along Readington Road, showing relationship of structures to one another, with Aaron Berger House and outbuildings in foreground and John S. Berger house beyond. Land in foreground is part of farm.

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12. Sites 12-14: Church, community house, and cemetery. The church frontage runs to the brook to south of road. Road used to run closer to brook, but was relocated on church land. A private road runs beyond the stone wall in front of church stairs. In distance at left is ranch built for son of present owner of Bergen farm. Facing northwest.

13. View from the steep hill to east of church, taken from behind house (Site No. 15) to show how road descends to brook and site chosen for original meeting house in 1738. The cemetery occupies about seven acres, flowing far behind church and beyond parking lot at its east.

14. View taken from foot of hill that descends from east to brook edge. Three houses are built in a grouping at this eastern end of village. Site No. 15, and its outbuildings in foreground. Facing easterly.

15. Site No. 15 and its near neighbor, Site No. 16, which may be older. Facing northeast.

16. Site No. 16. Four-bay unit to left is original house of two rooms to a floor, with cooking fireplace and chimneyside winders in east room. Wing is new construction, replacing a leanto. May have been a tenant house initially. Facing westerly.

17. Site No. 17. Cornelius Lane House, Greek Revival interior. On much larger piece of property than neighboring houses, this final dwelling occupies a tract of land in ownership by a man of this name back in 1816, when he had blacksmith shop at roadside. Facing northeasterly. Gable roofline of Site No. 16 can be seen at left of picture.

18. Site No. 18. Dwelling on tavern house lot. Incorporates an earlier house, possibly the tavern. Original lot was 19 acres. The present lot is 9 acres and contains farm buildings and tenant house.

19. Site No. 18.1. Tenant house on tavern lot farm. At right edge of photograph can be seen rear wing of principal house. Holland Brook flows south behind this east-facing structure, having made its sharp bend at west boundary of tavern lot. Facing west.

20. Linear view to show relationships of buildings to brook and road. Photograph taken from bridge, facing eastwardly, showing Aaron Berger House and church. Road was at one time closer to brook, and brook may have slightly altered its course.

21. General view from bridge looking south toward crossroads at foot of hills. Hillcrest Road swings to right, with area of mid-19th-century commercial center in foreground. Schoolhouse of 1839 is at center on site of earlier schoolhouse. To near left is site of blacksmith shop before 1850. In distance is Aaron Lane farmstead, sited on a hill with farmbuildings grouped behind. Centerville Road turns off just beyond schoolhouse. Brookside Road runs in front of Lane house. Bridge piers date to 19th century.

22. Site No. 21, the 1839 schoolhouse. Photograph taken from Hillcrest Road, looking downhill (northward), with glimpses of structures on opposite side of brook.

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23. Site No. 19. Aaron Lane Farmstead, with Dutch vernacular house, which facing north, and outbuildings grouped in courtyard. Barn has some Dutch framing bents, but otherwise does not express that form of construction.

24. Site # 19. Facing east, showing its siting on hilltop and details of raised wing with front gable.

25. Outbuilding at Site No. 19, combining wagon house, corncrib, granary, and spring room. Dutch strap hinges can be seen on loft door. Rosehead nails are found in some of the siding.

26. View from rear of barn (ramped side) at Site No. 19, showing the hillcrest siting of farmstead on south side of Holland Brook and its close relationship to buildings on far side. Facing north.

27. Site No. 20. The 1903 schoolhouse on Centerville Road, erected near the crossroads on an acre lot removed from Aaron Lane farm property. Although now a residence, few changes have been made and the distinctive hipped rooflines have been preserved. Facing southward.

28. Site No. 22, the John Lane House. Small embanked dwelling on John Lane's farm, possibly tenant house. Farm ran alongside Hillcrest Road (to left) down to brook (in distance, with schoolhouse showing, which was built on same lot). Land falls away rather sharply at back of house to a small run of water that feeds into Holland Brook.

29. Site No. 23. John Morehead House. Beautifully sited on top of hill on 150-acre farm bought by Joseph Morehead in 1795 that extended to brook and ran along Hillcrest Road, it has extensive views of village. Facing northwesterly.

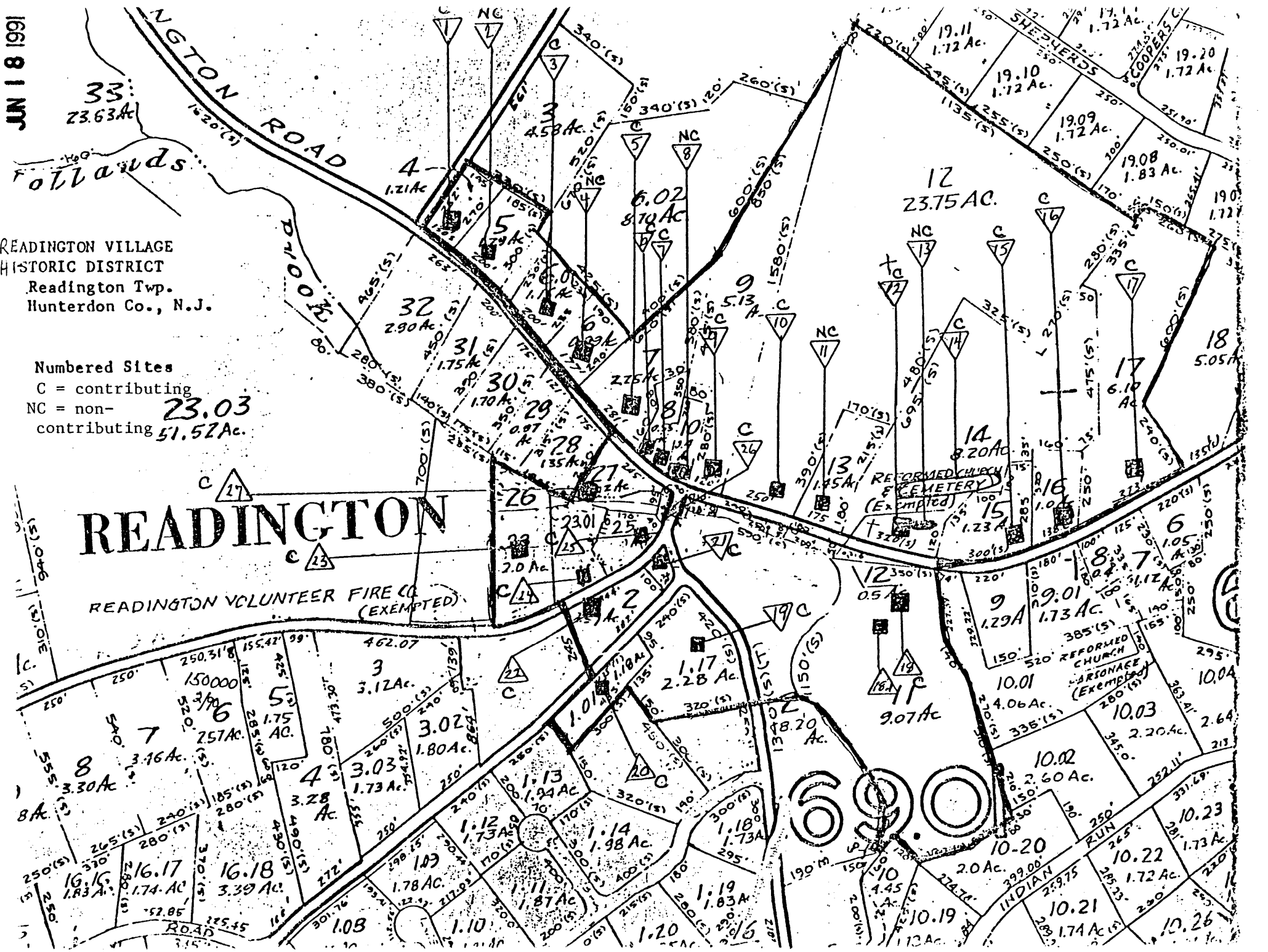
30. Site No. 24. Double tenement built by John Morehead in 1839 at roadside edge of his farm. Deeply embanked into hillside. Chimneys have exposed stone backs. In distance on road can be seen next house that has survived, one having originally stood between these two. Facing northeasterly.

31. Site # 24, opposite view from Hillcrest Road, showing facade organized into two units. Note closeness to road. Photograph 30 shows how house was embanked into hill immediately behind.

32. Site No. 25. I-type house built next to commercial center (to north of it, not visible) and opposite the 1839 schoolhouse (to right, not visible) It, too, is embanked in the steep hillslope that rises from the floodplain.



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READINGTON VILLAGE  
HISTORIC DISTRICT  
Readington Twp.  
Hunterdon Co., N.J.

Numbered Sites  
C = contributing  
NC = non-contributing

23.03  
51.52 Ac.

# READINGTON

READINGTON VOLUNTEER FIRE CO.  
(EXEMPTED)

REFORMED CHURCH  
& CEMETERY  
(EXEMPTED)

REFORMED CHURCH  
PARSONAGE  
(EXEMPTED)

6900

33:  
23.63 Ac

Follards

16.17  
1.74 Ac

16.18  
3.39 Ac

16.19  
1.78 Ac

16.20  
1.83 Ac

16.21  
1.74 Ac

16.22  
1.72 Ac

16.23  
1.73 Ac

16.24  
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