

PH0367524

# DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED FEB 17 1977  
DATE ENTERED AUG 10 1977

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

### NAME

HISTORIC  
Point Breeze

AND/OR COMMON  
Divine Word Seminary

### LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER  
Rt. 206 and Park Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN  
Bordentown

VICINITY OF  
4th

STATE  
New Jersey

CODE  
35

COUNTY  
Burlington

CODE  
005

### CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

### OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME  
Divine Word Seminary

STREET & NUMBER  
Rt. 206 and Park Street

CITY, TOWN  
Bordentown

VICINITY OF

STATE  
New Jersey

### LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.    Burlington County Court House

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN  
Mount Holly

STATE  
New Jersey

### REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE  
New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory

DATE

FEDERAL     STATE     COUNTY     LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS    Labor and Industry Building

CITY, TOWN  
Trenton

STATE  
New Jersey

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Point Breeze is a country estate of approximately 165 acres. Although the property has irregular boundaries, it is rectangular in overall shape. The west side of the district follows a winding precipice which overlooks Crosswicks Creek. Beyond the creek is a system of tributaries, wetlands and ponds. The south side of the property fronts onto a low lying swamp which is just east of the mouth of Crosswicks Creek. The swamp extends north into the property a considerable distance, thus dividing the southern portion of the estate into 2 peninsulas of high ground with a lake bed between. Beyond the southern portion of the property is the aforementioned marshy area, which terminates in a heavily forested embankment. The east side of the property is bounded by Park Street and Route 206. Beyond these roads are stretches of woods, some houses, and a cranberry juice factory. However none of this is visible from the Point Breeze property whose east side is screened by trees. The northern boundary is merely a property line drawn in the midst of a heavy wood.

The northern half of the property is heavily wooded. The southern half is characterized by open flat fields, with a wooded area in the southeastern corner.

In the southwest corner of the district, on a high bluff overlooking the mouth of Crosswicks Creek, is the site of the original Joseph Bonaparte mansion, (See Sketch Map). The mansion, which was built in 1817, had a central portion of 2 full stories and 7 bays, with a mezzanine 3rd floor. This central block was frame, and there were masonry end pavilions of 3 bays each. The end pavilions were each surmounted by a Grecian pediment with an inscribed window. To the east of the mansion was a 2 story square dome tower, which was connected to the mansion by a low wing. Beneath the mansion was a brick vaulted tunnel which ran to the bluff, emerging just below the cliff edge. Today only the tunnel remains. However, the setting is much as it was in Bonaparte's time and the impressive view from the bluff is preserved.

At the main entrance (see map) is the Louis Maillard House, the only building which survives from the time when Joseph Bonaparte was in residence. It is a 2 story, 3 bay, hip roof house, with a central fanlight door and corner blocks in the friezes above the upstairs windows.

In the southeastern portion of the property, east of the old lake bed, is the site of the second Bonaparte mansion. (see map). It was remodeled from a stable in about 1820. It was described as follows:

It was plain, long and rather low, and of brick covered with white plaster. It had its grand hall and staircase; its great dining-rooms, art gallery and library; its pillars and marble mantels, covered with sculpture of marvelous workmanship; its statues, busts and paintings of rare merit; its heavy chandeliers, and its hangings and tapestry, fringed

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	FEB 17 1977
DATE ENTERED	AUG 10 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

DESCRIPTION (CONTINUED)

with gold and silver. With the large and finely carved folding-doors of the entrance, and the liveried servants and attendants, it had the air of the residence of a distinguished foreigner, unused to the simplicity of our countrymen. A fine lawn stretched on the front, and a large garden of rare flowers and plants, interspersed with fountains and chiseled animals, in the rear.

There was also a subterranean passage from the lake shore to the mansion. Today this is all that remains, though it is broken through in several places.

The present mansion, which was first built in 1850, is some distance north of the lake bed (see map). It was a large Italianate building, simply detailed and elegantly proportioned. The house was entered on the south, with 3 bays on each side, a front porch, and wing out back. There was also a 3 story tower on the west side. The building had high ceilings, and a crusiform plan with the following condition. A hall extended from front to rear, another hall extended from side to side. This cut the building in 4 pieces with a 2 story circular space at the center, where the halls crossed. This space was surmounted by a dome. The central bay of the house had a shallow pitched roof with flat foofs on the side bays. In 1924 the house was modified as follows. The entrance was shifted to the center of the east side. A wing was built on the south side of the house to balance the wing on the north side (this was the old back extension of the Italianate house). The new wing contained the living room and a large bedroom upstairs. The east side fenestration pattern was altered so as to produce a 5 bay central block with a parapet, and flanking 2 bay, 2 story wings which have arched windows on the ground floor. A full aedicule motif with inscribed fanlight was placed at the new entrance, and the tower was removed.

The present interior detailing is more or less the result of the 1924 remodeling. The present entrance hall has a light frieze with anthemion and urn motifs. The doors are decorated with carved moldings which are light and elaborate. The outer molding is decorate with rosettes and the inner molding is garnished with criss-crossing strap work. These motifs are repeated throughout the house. Some of the doors have pediments on pulvinated friezes with strap work, rosettes, or accanthus leaves, as a decoration. South of the entrance hall is a parlor which is now used as an office. It has similar decorative motifs, to the rest of the house except for its fireplace

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	FEB 17 1977
DATE ENTERED	AUG 10 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

DESCRIPTION (CONTINUED)

with rococo chippendale mantel and over mantel, which are against the south wall of the room. There is also a molded cornice without a frieze.

The living room, (whose floor is 3 feet lower than the rest of the house) has a pair of pladian windows flanking a central chimney against the south wall. The room has an elaborate frieze with eagles holding festoons. The frieze, which is supported on brittle looking ionic pilasters, is discontinued over the paladian windows, leaving only the cornice. There is also a white and yellow marble fire-place of the Adam's type, and 3 ceiling medallions with thin and light sun burst patterns.

The domed, circular central hall has 4 heavy Grecian doorways, one of which leads to the front hall, on the east. One leads to the present stair hall, on the north. One enters a hall on the south, which leads to the living room. The last enters a rear hall, on the west, which leads to the garden entrance. These doorways probably date from 1850. The tops of these doorways, hall were modified in 1924. They were capped with elaborate rococo scroll pediments whose design was taken from a portrait of Joseph Bonaparte as King of Spain. The first floor of the domed hall is capped by a light frieze which is decorated with anthemion motifs. The second floor of the 2 story hall is surrounded by a circular passageway which leads to the bedrooms. The passageway views the 2 story hall through 4 window size openings. The second story of the hall is capped by a doric frieze. The hall also has a black and white marble floor, laid in a variation of the checker board pattern.

North of the domed hall is the stair hall, which has a second story pladian window in the north wall. The half turn stair with landings, is light and adamesque in appearance. The floor has a black and white marble checker pattern and the room is surmounted by a doric frieze.

North of the front entrance hall is an area of offices and a kitchen which was once the servants area. It extends into the north wing. The north wing also contains a game room on its west side. The game room is reached through a parlor in the northwest corner of the ground floor. The game room floor is 3 feet below the main house. The west wall of the room has 2 paladian windows, the east wall has 1,

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	FEB 17 1977
DATE ENTERED	AUG 10 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

7

PAGE

4

DESCRIPTION (CONTINUED)

which is at its north end. The north wall has a fireplace with a marble adams type mantle. The room also has a molded cornice with no frieze.

All of the formal ground floor rooms have parquet floors except for the domed hall the stair hall, and the front and rear halls. On the whole the existing mansion is a combination of Adamesque and paladian revival features which are designed to approximate an English country seat of the later 18th Century.

Immediately west of the mansion is a formal garden which terminates in a swimming pool with an adjacent 5 bay wrought iron pavilion, in the Adamesque Style.

Some distance north of the mansion is an artificial ruin. (See Map) Constructed in the 1920's, it occurs in an open field with the remains of a circular pond in front. The crescent shaped ruin has a central cavern opening, with an inner chamber and a dome. The opening of the 8 foot high crescent faces east and has the appearance of an old foundation. It does not imitate any particular style of architecture. Today it is overgrown with vines.

South and east of the mansion are 3 school buildings which form a quadrangle, open on the north side. (see map) The buildings are 2 stories high, and are built of light brick with large windows. The buildings do not dominate their surroundings because of their color. They are not visable from either of the Bonaparte mansion sites. They are not visable from the ruin or, the Maillard House, and they are screened from the present mansion by trees. The buildings can only be readily seen from the approach road before it forks to the mansion. (see map) Despite the presence of these modern buildings, the property retains the character of a great country estate.

Some distance north of the Maillard House is a pitched roof, 1 story, stucco athletic building.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Point Breeze, as Bonaparte called it, retains the character of a great country estate. As such it dates back, as a continuing entity, to the time when Joseph Bonaparte former king of Spain, was in residence. The sites of the two Bonaparte mansions are in tact and the property is widley associated with Bonaparte and his retinue.

The present mansion is an opulent example of the fashionable Georgian Revival of the 1920's and evokes a life style which is no longer attainable today. In addition, the property contains an artificial ruin, an architype of which there are very few examples in New Jersey.

The two Bonaparte mansion sites still contain the original vaulted subteranean tunnels. There are therefore of considerable archeological impotence.

Point Breeze was part of one of the original tracts located by Thomas Farnsworth, in 1681, and, upon his death, descended to his son John. Jospeh Borden, the founder of Bordentown later purchased it, and from him it passed to his son-in-law, Joseph Douglass. Joseph, by his will, dated September 5th, 1777, and proved August 15th, 1783, about which time he died, devised the plantation to his son, George Douglass. George kept a store there during the revolutionary war, and offered for sale "French Brandy in hogsheads, Handkerchiefs, Bohea Tea, Grass Scythes, etc." Being unfortunate in business, he made an assignment to Abraham Hunt. Hunt disposed of the real estate. In 1783 Stephen Sayer purchased the property. Sayer had been born in Long Island, New York in 1745. His career took him to England where, with a fortunate marriage and a successful banking business, he was chosen High Sheriff of the City of London. However his support for the independence of the colonies caused him to be imprisoned in the Tower of London, on a charge of attempting to kidnap the King. He was acquitted, but the resulting financial loss produced his ruin. For a time, Sayer served as Secretary to Benjamin Franklin. In 1801, Stephen and Elizabeth Sayer conveyed the Point Breeze property to their son, Samuel Wilson Sayer. However, the entire Sayer family continued to occupy the property until 1816.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

F. M. Woodward Bonaparte's Park and the Murats 1879  
 1974 Blue Prints on file in Seminary Office Divine Word Seminary

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 85  
 UTM REFERENCES

A	1,8	5,2,4,9,7,0	4,4,4,5,4,7,0	B	1,8	5,2,5,4,1,0	4,4,4,5,1,1,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1,8	5,2,4,6,8,0	4,4,4,4,3,1,0	D	1,8	5,2,4,3,3,0	4,4,4,4,7,2,0

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the intersection of the present driveway, at its westernmostpoint, and Park Aven. proceed due north to the Bordentown City Boundary, thence west along the boundary to Crosswicks Creek, thence generally southwest to Thornton Creek, thence generally southeast to Park Ave., thence east to the starting point

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE  
 New Jersey Historic Sites Staff

ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

STREET & NUMBER  
 Labor and Industry Building TELEPHONE (609) 292-2024

CITY OR TOWN \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL \_\_\_ STATE X LOCAL \_\_\_

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE *David J. Bush*

TITLE Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection DATE Oct 22 1976

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *Charles Herring* DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER DATE 8/14/77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER DATE 8-10-77

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	FEB 17 1977
DATE ENTERED	AUG 10 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

SIGNIFICANCE (CONTINUED)

Trust for the property was held by Doctor William Burns. In the Spring of 1816, he was stopped on a road near Bordentown by 2 Frenchmen, in a carriage, who inquired as to what land was for sale in the area. Knowing that Sayer wished to dispose of the property, Burn entered the carriage and directed the men to Point Breeze. The men were Joseph Bonaparte and James Carret, who acted as his agent. Shortly after this incident, Carret began acquiring land in the vicinity, and eventually assembled a park of about 1,000 acres. Bonaparte could not hold the land in his own name until the following year when he was granted permission to own real estate without becoming a citizen, by the New Jersey Legislature.

Joseph Bonaparte, the elder brother of Napoleon, was born in Corsica, in 1768. He was educated at a college in Burgundy, where he completed his course of studies with distinction.

Corsica renounced France in 1793 and the English took possession of the Island. The Bonapartes fled to Marseilles where Joseph received an appointment as Commissary of War.

In 1794, when he was dependent on his salary for support, he married Julie, daughter of M. Clari, one of the richest capitalists of Marseilles. Joseph accompanied his brother, General Bonaparte, as a Commissary of War in his Italian campaign, and was sent by him to demonstrate to the Directory at Paris the necessity of concluding a peace treaty with Sardinia.

Later that year, Joseph became a member of the Council of Five Hundred. Soon after, he was appointed by the Directory minister plenipotentiary, and subsequently envoy extraordinary, to the court of Rome. This was to open treaty negotiations with his Holiness Pope Pius VI. The treaty was in progress, but the intrigues of the Austrian party, and the imprudence of the Republicans of Rome, who relied upon French countenance and support to enable them to effect a revolution in the city, defeated it.

In the Council he was known for sound sense and moderation. On one occasion, when the Directory, made an attack upon Napoleon, who



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED FEB 17 1977

DATE ENTERED

AUG 10 1977

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 2

SIGNIFICANCE (CONTINUED)

was then in Egypt, Joseph defended him with so much energy and ability that his accusers were confounded, and a unanimous vote was obtained in his favor. A few days afterwards he was appointed secretary of the Council.

Under the Consulate, Joseph was a member of the Council of State, and in 1800 he was appointed to settle the differences between France and the United States.

In 1804, the Senate declared Joseph and his children heirs of the throne, on failure of issue of Napoleon.

During the campaign of Austerlitz he remained in the direction of affairs at Paris. Soon after that battle he was placed in command of the army sent for the conquest of the kingdom of Naples. In February, 1806, he entered that kingdom at the head of 40,000 troops, and soon after, his brother conferred upon him the crown. He still, however, remained Grand Elector and a Prince of France.

He was generally credited with successful administration of the state. His reign lasted 2 years and one half.

As a response to the mounting discontent of Spanish nobles, Napoleon designated Joseph King of Spain in 1808, a crown he reluctantly accepted. Although Joseph reigned, his armies took their orders from the French Minister of War. Troubles with the nobles continued and as a result, Napoleon instituted military governments in the Spanish provinces. Joseph protested this move, and threatened to leave the country if the system of military governments was not abandoned. With the fall of France in 1814, Joseph retired to Switzerland. In March of 1815 the Emperor returned from Elba. Joseph accompanied him to Paris but with his defeat at Waterloo, Joseph made arrangements for them both to flee to America. However Napoleon was sent to the Island of St. Helena by the allies. Joseph Bonaparte arrived in New York and stayed in a suite which had been given him by Henry Clay. Bonaparte's decision to locate in New Jersey is possibly attributable to a story related by Louis Maillard secretary to the King Joseph. Once when Napoleon was speaking on the subject of escape, in the presence of Joseph, he unrolled a map of the United States. He then said "If I am ever forced to fly to America, I shall settle somewhere between

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	FEB 17 1977
DATE ENTERED	AUG 10 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 3

SIGNIFICANCE (CONTINUED)

Philadelphia and New York, where I can receive the earliest intelligence."

When he took up residence in America, the former kind took for himself the title Count de Survilliers. The Count's party included his secretary Louis Maillard, his daughter Zenaide and her husband Prince Charles, and his other daughter Charlotte.

When Joseph Bonaparte acquired the Point Breeze property it contained a large frame house which the Count, for sometime occupied. He then sold it, and it was moved to another location. He planted many new trees and created several miles of carriage drives. The first mansion the count built was immediately back of the bluff overlooking Crosswicks Creek. It had a passageway leading from the cellar to the water side of the bluff. (see description) Whether this new house incorporated an older house is hard to say. The design suggests this possibility. In addition, an English traveler Mr. Fearon, described the mansion as "equal to a moderate English country house." He also wrote Bonaparte was "said to have bought it for \$10,000 and to have laid out \$20,000 more in having it completed in a splendid style." This also supports the theory that the mansion incorporated an older house. However the fact that a major structure was sold and moved tends to refute the theory. The most likely possibility appears to be that Bonaparte sold the old house and used the foundation to construct the middle portion of the mansion. He then built the side pavilions. By all accounts the house was lavishly furnished. Bonaparte entertained freely and his house was of easy access to anyone who wished to see it.

However, on January 13, 1820 the mansion was consumed by fire. Contemporary accounts attributed the fire to a careless guest who left a fire burning in his room while the count was away. The ladies assisted in the effort to put out the fire. The towns people acted quickly in removing objects of art, furniture, jewelry and wine casks from the house before it was completely consumed. These were all returned to the Count who expressed his gratitude with monetary rewards. This the town's people resented. They felt that it was not necessary to give money as a reward for common honesty. However, they quickly got over their ill feelings.

The Count wasted little time in replacing the mansion. He constructed a new residence by remodeling the stable which stood in

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	FEB 17 1977
DATE ENTERED	AUG 10 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 4

SIGNIFICANCE (CONTINUED)

front of the ruined mansion. He pulled down the ruins and expanded the stables to create a residence hardly inferior to the original mansion. The new house was located along the bluff near the point where a lagoon merges with the mouth of Crosswicks Creek. Further upstream in the lagoon, the Count erected an arched stone bridge. He also built an embankment at the point where the lagoon merged with Crosswicks Creek. This created a lake about 200 yards wide and about half a mile long. He also planted several islands as well as the banks with shrubbery and new trees.

Joseph Bonaparte lived at Point Breeze until 1832 when he paid an extended visit to England. During his time in Bordentown, he maintained excellent relations with the local people. He loved to entertain, and to recount his experiences with the Emperor. Sometimes he showed guests souvenirs of his reign including ceremonial robes, documents, and jewelry. In winter time the Count allowed the boys of Bordentown to skate upon his artificial lake. He would often throw oranges on the ice and watch the boys scurry after them.

Further down the lake shore from the mansion, the Count built a house for his daughter Zenaide and her husband Charles. He also built a covered gallery by which Zenaide could visit him without exposure to the weather.

The Count's art collection was considerable. It included works by Rubens, Sneyders, Rembrant and others. His private apartment was filled with paintings and statues of young ladies, most of whom were scantily clad.

The Count entertained a great number of important visitors, among them Lafayette, Moreau, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and John Quincy Adams. In 1820, the Count received a deputation from Mexico, offering him the crown of that Nation. "He replied to the deputation: I have worn two crowns; I would not take a step to wear a third. Nothing can gratify me more than to see men who would not recognize my authority when I was at Madrid, now come to seek me in exile; but I do not think that the throne you wish to raise again can make you happy. Everyday I pass in this hospitable land proves more clearly to me the excellence of republican institutions for America. Keep them as a precious gift from heaven; settle your internal commotions; follow the example of the United

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	FEB 17 1977
DATE ENTERED	AUG 10 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 5

SIGNIFICANCE (CONTINUED)

States; and seek among your fellow-citizens a man more capable than I am of acting the great part of Washington."

A grand ball was given for the delegation before their departure.

In 1832 the Count left Bordentown for England. Returning in 1837, he received a visit from Prince Louis Napoleon, later Emperor Napoleon III of France. He left permanently in 1839 dying in Florence in 1844, aged 76 years.

Bonaparte willed his holdings in America to his grandson Joseph, son of Charles Bonaparte and his daughter Zenaide, except for a farm near Groveville, which he willed to M. Maillard. However, the young Prince no sooner inherited the properties than he commenced to dispose of them. At last the Point Breeze estate itself came up for auction, in 1847. It was sold to a Thomas Richards who held it for only a few years. In 1850 he sold the estate to Henry Beckett. Esquire, the son of Sir John Beckett an English Baronet and the British Council in Philadelphia. Mr Beckett's wealth resulted from a fortunate marriage. He was not satisfied with the old Bonaparte house, as a result he demolished it and erected a "modern" residence with "gas and hot and cold water". The only things Beckett saved were 2 mantle pieces which were sent to the Count by his uncle, Cardinal Fesch. Popular legend has it that the reason Beckett demolished the old mansion was that he hated the Bonapartes. However this is not substantiated by proven fact. In any case the mansion was replaced by a large Italianate house with a tower, erected near the old site (see description).

Later, the estate passed to the Priests of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

Harris Hammond, son of the American engineer John Hays Hammond, bought the property in 1911. He proceeded to remodel the house, and relandscape parts of the grounds. The top story of the tower was removed, the detailing was replaced, and a wing was built. In effect the Italianate mansion was converted into an English Georgian Country Seat. The work was done by the New York architectural firm of Marion Sims Wyeth and Frederic Rinlander King in 1924. Hammond

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED FEB 17 1977
DATE ENTERED AUG 10 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 6

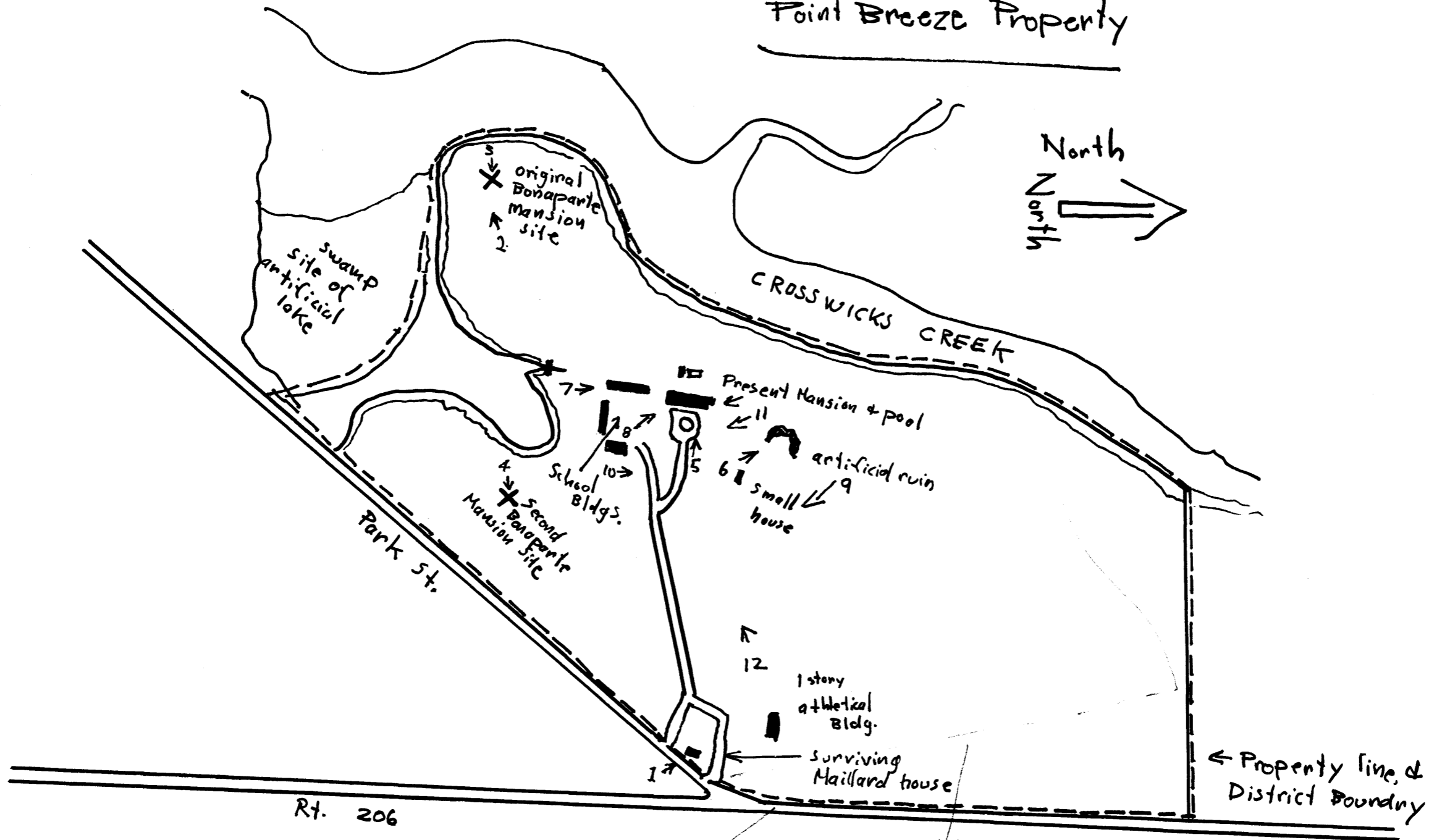
PAGE 6

SIGNIFICANCE (CONTINUED)

also planted oriental shrubs and created an artificial ruin on the property. The shrubs were later removed in payment of debt. Hammond also installed a swimming pool and built an adjacent cast iron pavilion. However, Hammond lost the property in the depression of the 1930's, and in 1937 the estate was sold for \$200 plus debts, which were considerable.

In 1941 the Divine Word Mission purchased the estate, and in 1947 started a seminary. In 1963 the seminary constructed 3 school buildings around a quadrangle adjacent to the old mansion.

# Sketch Map Point Breeze Property



Point Breeze, Bordentown, Burlington  
County, N. J. Sketch map no scale

AUG 10 1977 FEB 17 1977

Rt 206 is  
boundary line  
(see 1895 map)

crosswicks creek - see 1895 map  
via the phone call, 1/11/77 5/2/77 35