

**SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD**

NRIS Reference Number: 91000256 Date Listed: 3/21/91

River Road Hist. Rural Dist. Somerset NJ  
Property Name: County: State:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Multiple Name

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

*for* Patrick Andrus  
Signature of the Keeper

3/21/91  
Date of Action

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

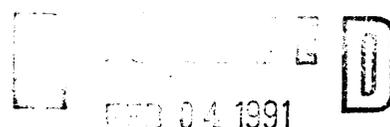
The Significant Dates section is amended to show 1777-1783 as the period when the road was associated with military activity during the American Revolution. This has been verified by Sue Pringle with the NJ SHPO. The form is now officially amended to reflect this change.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DISTRIBUTION:**

National Register property file  
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

256

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 "Millstone River" (identifying address used in 18th century)  
other names/site number River Road Historic Rural District

### 2. Location

street & number Millstone River Road  not for publication  
city, town Hillsborough and Montgomery Townships  vicinity  
state New Jersey code 034 county Somerset code 035 zip code 08502

### 3. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

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

#### Category of Property

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

#### Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>53</u>	<u>47</u> buildings
<u>6</u>	<u>      </u> sites
<u>15</u>	<u>1</u> structures
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> objects
<u>74</u>	<u>48</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

James V. Hall  
Acting Assistant Commissioner for Natural & Historic Resources/DSHPO

Date

1/29/91

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.  
 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:)

Patricia W. Andrews

3/21/91

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation/road related

Transportation/water related

Domestic/dwelling

Education/School

Funerary/cemetery (see continuation sheet)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation/road related

Domestic/dwelling

Residence

Funerary/cemetery

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Colonial/Dutch vernacular

Early Republic/Federal

Mid-19th century/Greek Revival; Norman

villa Late Victorian/Italiante; Queen Anne

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

walls weatherboard, shingles

roof asphalt

other slate; synthetic

wood porches

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Located in Montgomery and Hillsborough Townships, Somerset County, N.J., the River Road Historic Rural District includes the remaining 6-mile segment of Millstone River Road to its southern terminus, serving as a continuation of a listing of historic sites along this road placed on the Registers in two earlier nominations. These are the Millstone Valley Agricultural Preservation District, Hillsborough Township, and the Millstone Historic District, Millstone Borough, which abut each other.

The common thread for all three Districts is the 18th-century River Road, which parallels the Millstone River, with meadowlands on one side and historic farm complexes on the other. The District begins at Hillsborough Road, the southern boundary line of the Millstone Valley Agricultural Preservation District, and continues southerly to the road's ending at Van Horne Road (Route 206). Its easterly boundary is the Millstone River up to the mouth of Bedens Brook, a once fast-flowing stream that enters it from the west. The boundary line then is contiguous with the brook to the point it passes under a concrete highway bridge carrying Van Horne Road (Route 206). At about halfway point, the river is spanned by a bridge to Griggstown Village in Franklin Township, a crossing that dates at least to the 1740s. Griggstown, which shares in the same cultural and historical heritage, has also been placed on both Registers. The Delaware and Raritan Canal--separately listed on the Registers--courses through the Griggstown District, running alongside the river. This nomination serves to complete the historical record of the Dutch settlement of the Millstone Valley in Somerset County.

The District has a collection of 120 buildings, structures, and sites relating to its settlement and development as a farming community, homogeneous in nature, for a continuum of 200 years. Of these, 71 are contributing, consisting of 53 buildings, 9 structures, and 9 sites. Those considered noncontributing include car garages, houses and outbuildings constructed after 1940, and two 19th-century dwellings that have been so altered as to have lost integrity (#5, #41). The District contains two 18th-century Dutch vernacular dwellings, and a third represented as a wing; three Dutch barns (one converted to a residence); four family burial grounds with 18th-century gravestones; five houses dating to the Federal period, one with possibly earlier wing; a dwelling dating in part to the 1830s, with Greek Revival interior details, and another of the style built in the 1840s. It also includes three large-scaled "prestige" houses of the 1860s exhibiting Early Victorian styles and one of Queen Anne mode. Most of the houses have a complement of outbuildings, including spring and smoke houses (two of stone, one with Dutch strap hinges on door), chicken houses, barns, wagon houses with corncribs, windmills and silos. Outbuildings dating to 1939 have been included, as they directly relate to the continuance of farming in this District, albeit its final stage, and represent the type, fabric, and function of buildings serving a

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  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Transportation  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Architecture  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance  
 c. 1740-1939  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates  
 1778-83  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation  
 N/A  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person    N/A  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder    N/A  
 \_\_\_\_\_

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

The River Road Historic Rural District is nominated under Criteria A and C of the National Register for its significance in early settlement and cultural association, transportation, and architecture. Its period of significance as a rural historic landscape spans from 1740 to 1939. Criterion Exception D has been checked to indicate the inclusion of four significant burial grounds established on the farms of the pioneer settlers.





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land use that has largely vanished in this part of New Jersey. These include barns under gambrel roof, machine sheds, concrete silos, a milk processing station, and a round chicken brooder. River Road is the District's spine and serves also to define the interior boundary between historic homesteads.

First officially opened in the 1740s on a pre-existing route of travel, the road was laid out on the "uplands," skirting great and deep meadows, one called Punch Bowl Meadow in the earliest deed on record. It can be determined from 18th- and 19th-century maps and road returns, that the road still follows the same approximate course today. The relation of extant houses to roadside additionally documents its path. River Road is but two lanes wide, without shoulders, flanked by drainage ditches. Its course is serpentine, making an occasional sharp turning, and it rises and falls with the terrain. For the most part, the terrain is hilly, with moderate slope to river and brook. The cutting of the roadway, improved over time with paving, has served to accentuate hill inclines on the interior side, particularly along Bedens Brook for its final mile, between Griggstown and Line Roads in Montgomery Township and much of the interior roadside in Hillsborough. The road is foliage-lined for most of its length. Farmers' hedge rows of osage orange and wild cherry remain near the Skillman-Beekman Cemetery and the Van Derveer farms; elsewhere, second growths of mature native trees fringe its edge as field borders.

Meadowland lies alongside river and brook from the vicinity of Griggstown Bridge to Van Horne Road (Photo 47). The north-flowing river makes a large bend westward near the bridge and at this point the road runs close to a steep embankment to the water course. (Photos 50, 51) It continues to travel north on high ground, with the river still some distance below, at times close to the road and at others more distant with an embankment sometimes gradual, sometimes steep, descending to a small swath of floodplain (Photo 54) up to its point of joining with the next district. In Hillsborough, the growth between road edge and river is dense; wild flowers including day lilies, daisies, Queen Anne's lace, and floribunda rose line the shoulder with thick stands of trees their backdrop, descending to floodplain. (Photos 48 and 54) A more graduated embankment in Montgomery--historically used as pasture land for the Brokaw-Taggart farm (#5)--has recently been claimed for a few new houses.

Several small runs of water, now mostly nameless, flow across farm fields and under the road into the Millstone. No Pike Brook (Indian name: "No Poick"), which flows into Bedens Brook, is the only stream of any size and is crossed by a concrete span. Bedens Brook widens as it nears the bridge over Van Horne Road, reflecting the fact that it has been dammed since the 1750s to serve various mills that continued to operate into late 19th century. (Photos 55, 56) South of the Griggstown Bridge, where the river is distant from the road, are three great meadows, across which a view is obtained of Ten Mile Mountain in Franklin Township. Meadowland, sometimes narrow, sometimes broad, also lies along Bedens Brook. (Photo 47) Interspersed between the river meadows are two clusters of new housing. One hugs the road on

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small lots. These are heavily screened from view by pines and other plantings. (Photos 44, 45) The second cluster of houses is distantly seen from the road on a gentle incline of the land on properties mostly of three acres. A long march of white pines planted over fifty years ago at road edge largely keeps them from view. Since several of these houses are pseudo-colonial in design they tend to complement the landscape. Others of ranch design are inconspicuous because of the deep setback. (Photos 46, 47)

On the interior side of the road the survival of a number of the early homesteads suggests the original rhythmical spacing of farm tracts, all having been of the same approximate size originally--deep rectangular tracts averaging 300 acres, which extended back from the river bank. A number still retain their flanking farm fields, used in some cases for a limited degree of farming and animal pasture. Others lie passive. The size of tracts with historic buildings ranges at minimum between two and ten acres. The Garret Hagaman House (Site #1) has 13 acres; the John A. Beekman homestead (#15) has 22. The former was actively farmed up to recent times, and horses are now raised. At the latter, a gentleman's farm, horses are bred and a large egg business carried on. The Van Derveer-Campbell Farm (#18) still retains 69 acres of its original size and is actively farmed by a 92-year-old descendant who also keeps cows and horses. (Photos 23; 33-36) The neighboring Laurence Van Derveer House (#19) occupies 52 acres, of which those lying alongside No Pike Brook are used for cow pasture. The current owners are a young couple representing the third generation of their family to run the farm.

Within the last few decades, a number of modern houses on roadside lots have been interspersed between the old farmsteads, especially north of Griggstown Road. Most of these are built on a rise of land, which is in some cases an almost vertical embankment at road edge, and are so well screened by foliage that they are not visible. There are three residential developments, whose interior streets exit into River Road. In two of these, the end houses are set well back from the road; and in one instance, a berm planted with pines will eventually soften the impact. North of Staats Farm Road, on Aertsen's Brook, a sewage treatment plant has been built, but it too has been heavily screened by plantings, and stream-side trees also help to blur its presence. All post-1940 construction on this side of the road has been excluded. Because most of these buildings are hidden from sight, the impact is minimal, and the visual perception of this District as an historic rural landscape still prevails.

The architecture expresses the various stylistic fads to the degree that affluent but conservative farm families felt free to follow fashions. The earliest dwellings (#4, #9) clearly follow the Dutch building plan employed in Central New Jersey in height and floor plan. The Dutch cultural presence is also apparent in the surviving Dutch barns. (#6, #10, #16) This Old World form of construction was abandoned in the 19th century after passing through a transitional stage to the English-derived American barn. Extant examples of the craft are limited in number and are being lost through neglect and deterioration and through sale and removal to other parts

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of the country. There are two other Dutch barns along River Road in the Districts to the north and one in Griggstown, which taken together reinforce the cultural character of the Millstone Valley landscape.

The majority of houses in the District were erected in the first decade of the 19th century and illustrate how clearly a break had been made with past traditional forms by these particular residents. These new houses are two-third Georgian in plan with considerable ornamentation in the Federal style, including lunettes, fan-lighted and pilastered entrances, and delicate roof cornices. The two Beekman houses (#15 and #16) and the Hoagland house (#13) are noteworthy examples.

Little building activity occurred when Greek Revival styles were in vogue, the single example in this mode being site #6, which is distinguished by corner pilasters and broad frieze, afterward adorned with brackets, and diamond-shaped attic window. A minor building boom occurred in the 1860's, which may be attributed to "keeping up with the Joneses" or more personally with one's relatives. Each house is highly individual and distinctive in style; all are large piles dominating their sites. The 3-bay Garret Hagaman house (#1) features an elaborately molded double-leaf entrance way and porch and has clustered flues in Tudor chimneys, windows with both Italianate cornices and Gothic pointed-arch hoods, and a bracketed frieze.

The Van Derveer-Campbell House (#18) is based on William Ranlett's pattern book design for a Norman Villa with full corner tower and cross plan with penetrating roofs. Sited on the sharp bend of River Road as it swings west along the brook, its two street facades display bay windows and an asymmetrical wrap-around porch incorporating the tower. The Laurence Van Derveer House (#19) is a more serene expression of the Italianate with balanced facade marked by a central pavilion with tall mullioned windows, some individually round-headed, others under a unifying triangular pediment. Two other houses updated at about this same time, the Garret Wyckoff House (#8), and the miller's house (#20) also exhibit the Italianate style, the style most favored in the countryside. For that reason, the picturesque Gothic Revival features applied to the 18th-century Cornell-Nevius House (#4) stand out uniquely on this landscape, recalling the fact that pattern book publishers illustrated on occasion how the "old homestead" might be made picturesque in the then current style.

All the houses are of frame construction on stone foundations with gable roofs. The earliest have internal end chimneys, serving corner fireplaces in some cases. Those of the Federal era reflect a new style for the countryside in having chimneys between interior room walls or else paired with separate flues on end walls. Over the years, entrance porches were removed and replaced with verandas. These too have been removed under owners' recent restoration efforts. On the other hand, Victorian verandas appropriately added to houses of that era are unusually elaborate with jigsaw balusters and brackets, pedestal ornament, and in one instance, ba!!-

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bedecked cast iron newel posts. (#18) Some details on the porches of Sites 1 and 18 are identical, suggesting the work was done by the same carpenter.

These homesteads retain their basic integrity as representations of their form and style, with recognizable historic updates, and their immediate environment has been preserved. Additions, except as noted, have been minimal and usually limited to lean-tos. A lithograph of 1881 and an early 20th-century photograph of the Hoagland House (#13) and photographs of the William Baird and Laurence Van Derveer houses show these buildings in relation to the road but set off with picket fences. (Addenda Sheets 2, 3-5, 7) The road relationship remains the same today; the scene has changed to a degree, mostly because the meadowland no longer functions as part of agrarian life. Baird's house, described in early records as being at the Griggstown Bridge, is just as visible today on its hill rise, with Dutch barn (now residence) behind, and winding narrow dirt lane to one side. The most striking vista of an early farmstead in its entirety is still offered by the Garret Beekman House (#16) when it is seen from a distance across its open field, and the Van Derveer-Campbell farm (#18) affords a timeless view of rural life with its cluster of agricultural buildings at the end of the farmer's rutted and puddled lane. (Photo 33)

Because this nomination is concerned with the preservation of an historic rural landscape based on an early cultural hearth, some buildings with a degree of lost integrity through additions, alterations, or conversions to other use have been included as contributing if their overall form is recognizable and they remain on their original site. The 18th-century Dutch barn (#10) is one instance. Viewed from the exterior, there is no question that this is a barn of its distinctive type. Its lines are clean. Its size is impressive. Its relationship to the landscape is unaltered. The fact that it survives along with the house for which it was built adds to the importance of this shared site. (See Addenda Sheet 2)

The Riverside School House, c. 1912, occupies the same site provided for the first school before 1771, a corner location also near the bridge, making it convenient for children coming from Griggstown across the river as well as from interior farms. A survey map of 1828 shows the school house on this site. (Addenda Sheet 8) This is the earliest identified site for a school in Montgomery Township. The present building replaces one of perhaps mid-1850 (Photo #20), planks from which were then re-used on a kitchen addition of the Hoagland House (#13). The shape and proportions of the extant building clearly identify it as a type of structure--the bungalow--adopted for school use in the early 20th century. It is the only known example on the local scene. Photos 18 and 19 show that the conversion to residence has been minor. The Peter V.D. Derveer House (#25) is important for its location at the edge of Bedens Brook near the Millstone River, with the great sweeping meadow all about it. This marks the location of John Skillman's house "in the wilderness," the words of a family history. This afterward became the first home of Peter Van Derveer, 1770, where he resided when taken captive by British soldiers in 1777. It remained the original homestead for decades more, becoming Peter V.D. Van Derveer's home in the 1830s.

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That portion of the house which is Greek Revival dates to his occupancy. An earlier larger block was removed at a later time, and a portion of another house on an adjacent Van Derveer farm was attached at eastern end. The simple lines of the rectangular block thus created convey the feel of a 19th-century farm dwelling, and most of all its presence preserves a feeling of the early landscape.

The River Road Historic Rural District when combined with the two adjacent Districts to its north offers an exceptionally good collection of surviving farmhouses and outbuildings spanning three centuries, depicting the ongoing farm life of the Millstone Valley as carried on largely by descendants of the original Dutch settlers.

An inventory of buildings, structures, and sites follows with cross-references to photographs.

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#### Inventory of Sites

All sites are located along the Millstone River Road. The first four sites are in Hillsborough Township. The remainder are in Montgomery Township. Two sites are continuous in both municipalities.

1. Garret Hagaman House (207/5959) Photo #1, #2

Style: Early Victorian, with elements of Gothic Revival and Italianate. 1862

Two and one-half stories, frame (wood shingle and aluminum siding) on raised coursed stone block foundation; gable roof, slate-shingled; cross-gabled front and rear facades; eaves and rakes decorated with paired sawn brackets; Tudor-style brick chimney stacks, four-sided for clustered flues, similar to those illustrated in Calvert Vaux's Villas and Cottages (1864), in interior positions. Main block is three bays wide with center entry. Double doors are round-headed containing quadrant panes of glass above single molded panel with applied ornate "C" shape moldings on sunk field; trefoil-like applied ornament in corners of curved door frame; a bracketed cornice above. An original pull-type doorbell on coil spring. Flat-roofed porch spans facade openings; plain slender squared posts on bases inscribed with rosette are paired together (triplicate at corners). Sawn balusters and sawn brackets; wood floor and steps; latticework skirting with square ornament at intersections. Narrow windows contain four-over-four sash and are paired on both stories and in cross gables; those on first story have protecting molded cornices, on second and attic level separate pointed-arch hoods. North gable fenestration is similarly treated.

Wing: Is recessed against south gable wall. Lower two-story height on rubble stone foundation. Two bays over three bays, with entry in internal position, fronted by porch similar to that of main block. Six-over-six sash; molded cornices; paired attic windows under arched hoods.

Interior features: Fireplace with crane and beehive oven in cellar. Center hall plan, with dividing arch. Four (electrified) oil-burning-type chandeliers. Wing contains salvaged elements of earlier house razed at time of erection of this pile, including mantelpiece, nine-over-six window sash, doors and hardware.

History: Original construction records survive, indicating builder's name was Buchanan, and his carpenters were Schenk, Neary, and Silcox. Cost was \$3421.83. In 1891, Garret Hagaman's daughter married James G. Wyckoff. Property has remained in Wyckoff family ownership since then. [Contributing]

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Outbuildings: Farm now of thirteen acres, recently subdivided from large surrounding tract. Horses kept for pleasure. Farmyard at rear; lawn and old catalpa trees by house.

1. Hovel, with four divisions, vertical siding, now used as horse stall, formerly for pigs and chickens [Contributing]
2. Milk house, clapboard and beaded siding; standing seam roof; two four-pane windows [Contributing]
3. Shed, clapboard, wood-shingle roof; plank door on strap hinges [Contributing]
4. Headless windmill [Contributing]
5. Grouping of three chicken houses; two attached [Contributing]
6. Another chicken coop [Contributing]
7. Concrete silo, with metal banding [Contributing]
8. Pole barn leanto, corrugated metal roof [Non-contributing]
9. Large leanto, three track doors and pedestrian entry on strap hinges; vertical siding; corrugated metal roof [Contributing]
10. Well house, square, hipped roof, with square finial; latticework enclosure; on round brick base. Next to dwelling [Contributing]
11. Cinder block well house in outbuilding complex [Non-contributing]
12. Surviving full-height stone wall from 2-level, early 20th- century barn [Contributing]
13. Corrugated metal shed [Not counted]

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2. Williamson Farmstead (207/10-C) Photo #3, #4

Style: Queen Anne influence. 1901

Six-acre cattle, sheep, and horse farm with two mid-19th-century (possibly earlier) outbuildings and a number of 20th-century outbuildings; a dwelling house built partly on foundation of farmhouse that burnt down, and small farm worker's house.

Principal dwelling: two stories, frame (clapboard and shingle), cornerboards; cemented stone foundation. Gable roof newly shingled with imitation slate shingles; boxed eaves. Two bays over three, with south bay a two-story semi-hexagonal bay window under separate gable roof. Bay window is conventionally shingled for two-story height, with imbricated shingling in gable peak. Plain entry with modern door; gabled portico with returns supported by Tuscan columns; wood floor and steps, brick piers, lattice-work skirting. Windows contain small one-over-one sash and have movable louvered shutters.

Two-story one bay by one bay ell at north end of rear elevation, said to have been part of earlier house on site. Enclosed four-bay shed-roofed addition across remainder of rear wall, with six-over-six and one-over-one sash windows. [Contributing]

Surroundings: Farm complex at back; old sugar maples and black walnut trees.

Outbuildings: Farm bell on post (Not counted)

1. Three-story barn of four bays, heavy hewn beam construction. Present vertical siding seemingly applied over similar earlier sheathing. End north bay has been converted into two-car garage, with paneled rollback doors; third bay contains barn doors on sliding track concealed by boxed wood housing. Two additional doors for pedestrian entry. Recently re-roofed with imitation slate shingles. North gable contains a massive loft door which swings downward on three hinges below a hoist hood. A two-story leanto, partly of concrete block, partly of frame, two bays wide, with loft door is attached against south gable wall and continues across entire length of barn's rear elevation. Used for horse stalls. This addition has corrugated metal roof. Fenced horse yard with pole shelter is adjacent to side wall of leanto. Sheep pasture is behind barn. [Contributing]
2. Wagon shed/double corn crib to southwest of house at right angle to barn. Gable-fronted with loft door on strap hinges. Paired wagon doors on strap hinges, flanked either side by farmer's entries, having planked doors similarly hung. Raised from ground on boulders. Siding of wood shingles and wide clapboards applied to horizontal flush sheathing on rear

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- wall. Cornerboards; roof overhang. Hewn beams used in construction. [Contributing]
3. Work shed adjacent to wagon shed. Raised from ground on boulders. Wood-shingled. Cinder block chimney. [Contributing]
  4. A silo [Contributing]
  5. Cattle barn, two stories, with metal batten construction, corrugated metal roof; one-story leanto "loafing" shelter for cattle at gable end. Post-1940. [Non-contributing]
  6. Second building of similar construction to west of it, used at times for granary, corn crib, and horse shed. Post-1940. [Non-contributing]
  7. Large equipment storage structure, granary in loft (barley, wheat), open on one long wall. Narrow siding and cinder block. Built in 1940's. [Non-contributing]
  8. Movable chicken house of narrow vertical boarding, post-1950 [Non-contributing]
  9. Farm worker's cottage. One-story, originally one room enlarged to four rooms, with addition across gable front. Clapboard siding. [Non-contributing]

#### 3. Cornell-Nevius Cemetery (207/11) 18th Century.

Located some distance to north of Cornell-Nevius House (#4) on property now separated from original homestead farm. When recorded in 1939, four 18th century stones were legible, the earliest fieldstone having the initials "J.C., 1777" (for Joseph Cornell, who owned the farm). Another stone inscribed "J.C. 1782" perhaps marks the grave of his wife Jannetie. The Nevius family, successor owners of the farm later in the century, are also buried here. There are a number of undated footstones as well. [Contributing]

#### 4. Cornell-Nevius House (207/12.01) Photo #5

Style: Dutch vernacular; later Gothic Revival facade. 18th Century

One and one-half stories; frame clapboard, cornerboards; imbricated shingles); brick insulated; rubble stone foundation, with walk-in entry to rear of south gable wall, closed with 18th century raised-panel door on Dutch strap hinges. Gable roof of synthetic shingles has three steep cross gables, largest in center, asymmetrically placed. Internal end chimneys with

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brick stacks. Six bays wide, centered entry with non-original Dutch door. Second bay from left (south) contains full-height semi-octagonal bay window, with octagonal cap. Window projection rises in front of one-half of center cross gable. Windows of six-over-six sash, with sunk panel shutters and louvered blinds; six-over-six sash window are in each gable.

Interior: Two-room-deep Dutch plan, approximately 40 feet by 28 feet. North two rooms probably built first with massive corner fireplace in front room (now removed but base remains), then enlarged by addition of two rooms with back-to-back cater-cornered fireplaces (one since removed) and center hall, with closed-string stairway compartmentalized at rear, now partly rebuilt. Beaded beam floor supports run through front to back.

Alterations and additions: Rear wall of north room removed in order to add a breakfast sun room; adjacent to this against the remainder of rear elevation is glass enclosed flat-roofed porch. Gothic Revival cottage features added late in 19th Century. [Contributing]

Outbuildings: small wagon house, gable fronted, with flanking leantos. German siding and vertical planks. North leanto enclosed. [Contributing]

History: The Cornell family were said to have purchased this tract of land in 1717, being the mostly southerly corner on the river of the Barker Tract patented to this absentee investor by the East New Jersey Board of Proprietors. In 1730, the Cornell family purchased an adjacent tract to south, representing the most northerly river corner of the tract patented to Thomas Hart by the same Board. William Cornell and his wife Grietje are the first to be identified with this farm. William died in 1762. In 1771 when the division line (present-day Line Road) between Hillsborough and Montgomery Townships was drawn, based on the boundary line between the Barker and Hart tracts, this farm was referred to as Widow Grietje Cornell's. Lucas Nevius became owner of the farm sometime in the 1780's. He was son-in-law of William Cornell. Nevius died before 1797, and his son John succeeded him in ownership. Peter Nevius was the resident in 1835 when Township Line Road was opened.

### 5. Brokaw-Taggart House (7001/48) Photos #6, #7, #8.

Style: Vernacular, styleless, with hint of Italianate. 1850-60

Small two-story frame house, deep form, to which larger gable-fronted block is attached. Smaller unit, now wing, frame (clapboard and synthetic shingle), rubble stone foundation, gable-roofed, with synthetic shingles. Three bays on upper story with 6/6 sash; first story limited to half facade of three bays with centered entry; remainder of wall removed for forward extension of interior room. Shed roof over extension continues as roof for porch area.

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Wing was perhaps raised to two stories, as its roof line partly conceals a cross gable on main block. New one-bay shed-roofed addition on south gable wall toward back and another shed-roofed two-bay projection across rear elevation on cinder block foundation. Main block, two and one-half story, gable-fronted, deeper than wide; cross-gabled on longitudinal walls. Roof has extended eaves, with returns; periodically spaced single brackets are on frieze. Rubble stone foundation. External brick chimney on north gable wall; small cinder block chimney at rear corner. Three-bay facade with plain entry, modern glass and panel door to left, and multi-paned fixed picture window flanked by narrow four-over-four sash windows. Porte cochere, hip and gable roofed, supported by Queen Anne posts, extends from facade across brick balustraded porch and drive to brick wall paralleling the drive. Brick piers rise from wall to carry roof. Porch floor of flagstone. Lateral addition on north gable wall of one story, brick-faced for approximately one-half height from ground, synthetic shingles above. Two bays, one with double multipaned fixed windows, the other with triple window section each of six-panes, casement style. Enclosed projecting entry with storage shed to one side at north gable end extending under sloped roof to rear wall. Foundation cemented.

Interior: Rough-surfaced beams of moderate size have been exposed in front room of wing. Newspapers found in walls of main block were of Civil War period. Roof may have been raised in 1875 according to evidence reported by owner. [Non-contributing]

Outbuildings: Earlier this century, this was the Reverie Farms Dairy. It is now a tree farm and offers landscaping services. The property falls away at rear to a deep gorge through which flows Aertsen's Brook, named after the original land purchaser.

1. Generator-operated windmill [Contributing]
2. Gambrel-roofed barn with bell eaves supported by struts; German siding; range of windows on both longitudinal walls; cement-block shed with corrugated metal roof attached against south gable; barn-scaled doors on facade facing road. [Contributing]
3. Milk-processing structure, gable-roofed; clapboarded, with cement-block reconstruction in some areas. Has addition laterally of cinder block shed-roofed structure. Raised cement platform under shed roof, held by sturdy struts, runs in front of structure. Three doors open onto platform, two of narrow vertical boards, third of wallboard. [Contributing]
4. Round chicken brooder, pyramidal roof, narrow vertical siding [Contributing]
5. Foundation of Peter Cornell house (later W.A. Voorhees), c. 1830 [Contributing]

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### 6. Rynear A. Staats House (8001/1.01) Photo #9

Style: Rectangular block and ell, late Greek Revival elements. 1840's

Two-story, frame (clapboard); stone foundation with brick facing on main and north facades; gable roof parallel with road; internal chimney, brick stack, drip course; external brick chimney against north wall. Three bays, with entry in left (south) bay, double-leaf door with octagonal molded panels; broad door architrave with dentils; large six-over-six window sash, molded lintels; diamond-shape window in the south gable apex; corner pilasters of flush boards with capitals on all four corners; extended eaves with returns, ornamented with paired sawn brackets; denticulated raking course. Porch spans facade and wraps around to south for one bay, under shed roof supported on octagonal columns; pediment above stair opening. Balusters are slender and turned. Porch piers are of brick; floor and steps wood. Porch was extended this century by a Staats descendant to flank south gable as an enclosed windowed unit raised on concrete blocks.

Rear ell: Two story, two bays, with end chimney, clad with synthetic shingles and clapboard. Window sash six-over-one and six-over-six; added dentil trim. Leantos attached to gable end and south wall, the former under hipped roof, the latter under shed roof having four Tuscan columns for support. Corrugated metal roof.

Interior: shouldered architraves on openings; Greek Revival mantelpiece with ornate frieze; period stair balustrade. [Contributing]

Outbuildings: Some of the outbuildings of the 88-acre Staats farm were included in the sale of the two-acre property to present owner. Some have collapsed and others are so deteriorated that they will be removed. The most significant building, a Dutch barn, was earlier given to the local historical society. One wall is collapsed, and roof and siding are in poor condition, but it is not beyond restoration. One anchor beam is inscribed with initials "B.C." (for Barent Cornell) and date 1816. The barn stands on stone piles placed at strategic points. [Contributing]

Two-story frame barn moved to farm from Bound Brook area, c. 1930. [Contributing]

History: This property dates back to the John Aertsen tract in the Hart Patent and was purchased by Peter Stryker from Aertsen's heirs in 1710. During the 18th century, Cornelius Wyckoff appears to have gained ownership of the river portion of the tract. By 1790, Albertus Cornell owned the land, and his son Barent inherited the farm. Cornell sold to Henry Stryker c. 1824. It was purchased from his estate by Rynear A. Staats in 1840 when he was thirty years

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old. His father owned a neighboring farm. From that date to the present time, the farm--excepting this two-acre lot--has remained in the ownership of his descendants. Until Donald Staats' retirement, he raised corn and wheat and had a chicken and egg farm in the Depression period, selling to the New York market.

7. Wyckoff-Cornell burying ground Photo #10 18th century

On farm property presently owned by Donald Staats (see history for Site #6), located at roadside in clump of trees. One fieldstone contains the initials "C.W." (Cornelius Wyckoff) and year 1756; another "S.C., 1765," for Seyte Wyckoff Cornell, who married Peter Cornell, son of William Cornell of Site #4, and died in childbirth; also "A.C." for Albertus Cornell, who died in 1790. The cemetery was disturbed by roadwork c. 1930, and some stones were lost at the time. [Contributing]

8. Garret Wyckoff House (8001/11) Photo #11, #12

Style: Federal, with some Italianate elements. c. 1803

Two story, frame (clapboard and shingle), stone foundation, gable roof (new standing seam metal roof), side-hall plan, internal chimney, brick stack; three bays wide, entry with sidelights in right (north) bay. Window sash nine-over-six and six-over-six; pair of round-headed fixed sash in gable apex. Italianate treatment of eaves and raking course, with extended eaves and bracketing. Bracketed cornices above windows. Louvered blinds. In 1860, dining room wall was broken out to enlarge room sideways. Projects as two bay by one bay flat-roofed addition.

Kitchen ell: One and one-half stories, three bays with two diminutive rectangular windows in attic level. Centered entry with modern Dutch door. Brick chimney stack in gable end. Leanto, now enclosed with three nine-over-six window sash (not original to house), shelters summer kitchen. Against north wall of leanto is a stone-wall enclosed room one step down from floor level of kitchen proper, possibly a milk room.

Interior has Federal style mantelpieces. Cooking fireplace of summer kitchen (reversed opening of wing chimney) contains crane and bake oven with wooden door at one side. [Contributing]

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### Outbuildings:

1. Rubble stone smoke house, with low plank door on Dutch strap hinges, re-roofed by owner [Contributing]
2. Barn, moved to site to replace a lost barn; gable to road with two bays; three openings on south longitudinal wall [Non-contributing]

History: In 1803, Garret Wyckoff of Monmouth County, a Revolutionary War soldier, bought the farm of 200 acres for 1700 (British) pounds. It had earlier belonged to Garret Terhune, Esq., who was married to Willemppe Wyckoff, daughter of Cornelius Wyckoff. There appears to have been a family connection which brought the buyer to this location. From that date to 1946, the house was occupied by Wyckoff descendants. The Italianate update occurred in 1860, as learned from a piece of sandpaper found in house left by carpenters Archie Skillman and John Silcock, who wrote their names on it.

9. William Baird House (8001/26 ) Photos #13, #14, #15, #16;      Addenda Sheet 2

Style: Dutch vernacular style, 1740.

One and one-half story Dutch, deep form, frame (clapboard), constructed in three sections, clearly visible from cellar beams, affording a plan initially of 4 rooms without hall. Set on hill, south-facing, gable end to road. Stone foundation (concreted). Gable roof (new wood shingles), boxed eaves, occasional decorative modern bracket; internal gable end chimneys, modern brick stacks. Original five or six bay fenestration has been altered. A range of five Craftsman-type casement windows were installed in the late 1920's to replace single double-hung sash windows to east of now centered entry. Current owners opened exterior wall of west room and found evidence of earlier framing. Added a six-over-six sash window to match others. Shed-roofed dormer with paired double-hung six-over-six sash. Porch added this century and spans three center bays. Tall gable roof with stick-style and folk art elements; Queen Anne posts; balustrade of sawn slats.

Interior: Original west unit contains corner fireplace. Beaded floor support beams run through front to back. Wall between rooms filled with mud and straw daub between posts. Framing apparently of bents. Cellar construction gives evidence that after the addition of a lateral unit, the house was further enlarged by another extension east, with crawlspace beyond foundation wall. A board/batten door with Dutch strap hinges was apparently used to cover an opening to this space, as it remains today firmly affixed with other flooring under another layer of flooring. Heaped boulders serve as base for chimney fireplace, which survives, although redesigned, in room above. Local people believe there had also been a corner

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fireplace for the rear room, but no trace remains of it since the two rooms above have been combined into one and remodeled. Brick interstices in exterior walls; interior walls plastered. Some early hardware, including spoon/elbow/latch.

Additions: A one-bay leanto (undatable) extends from west gable wall. Early this century, a room was added at east rear. For a period of time, when owned by A.C. Hoagland, farm workers occupied the house. The house was then rehabilitated by the Ellis family, Mrs. Ellis being an artist and musician. The Ellises introduced folk art elements of decor. In 1971, the architectural firm of Holt and Morgan designed additions for both gable ends to provide study, snooker room, and children's suite for concert singer Bethany Winham and her family. East one-story addition of study is recessed against gable wall, under gable roof of lower height, and resembles typical house wing. West addition of two bays projects forward from leanto to align with porch edge and contains "snooker" (billiard) room. Beyond the room's rear wall is outside walkway to an entrance vestibule shared with a second addition of 4-room suite of rooms at northwest corner of house. The earlier rear addition of one room was extended northward to add another room. The additions are harmonious. [Contributing]

Outbuildings: Frame, clapboarded, two-story structure, with garage space and office reached by outdoor stairs. Gable-roofed; dormer. [Non-contributing]

History: Alexander Baird, a Scotsman of Long Island, married to the grand-daughter of William Beekman, in 1730 bought Lot #2, 360 acres, of the four-part division of the Gerardus Beekman river tract (purchased by Col. Beekman as investment in 1702), from his son Henry Beekman, who had inherited it. Ten years later, in making his will, Baird left it to his son William, who was in bad grace because "William has not behaved and conducted himself toward his parents as ought to have done; nevertheless, that he shall not want bread...I give him the use of all my plantation...in Somerset Co." William Baird settled almost immediately. When River Road was officially laid out from the Griggstown Bridge to the new court house in Millstone in 1744, his house near the bridge was mentioned. He was appointed a highway commissioner in 1745. During the Revolution he served as Captain, later Major, of the Second Battalion of the Somerset County militia. Four of his sons also served as commissioned officers, including Major John Baird, who succeeded him on the homestead after his father's death in 1794. One son, Benjamin, was a war casualty. William Baird provided the corner lot (intersection of River Road with Griggstown Road, opened 1745) for the first neighborhood school, and was named a road overseer from the schoolhouse to Hillsborough along River Road in 1772. Baird served on Township Committee, 1790-91. John Baird lived on the farm until his death in 1834. The farm was then reduced in size, and the homestead portion sold to J.B. Wyckoff. This century, C. Augustus Hoagland owned it for some time and added the small back room. In tenant occupancy, it fell upon hard times. The purchase by the Ellises renewed its life.

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10. Baird Farm Dutch Barn/residence (8001/25) Photo #17; Addenda Sheet 2. 18th century

Three-bay frame barn, synthetic shingles, H-frame bents, with threshing floor measuring twenty and one-half feet between posts, and side aisles eleven feet wide. Barn depth, thirty-six feet. Posts are six and one-half inches square, and diagonally braced. Possibly the earliest barn of this type surviving in Montgomery Township, it has the steepest pitch to its roof and two levels of struts above side aisles. Anchor beam tongues (one visible) are rounded.

The conversion to residence has made the entire threshing floor a vast living space. The original barn doors have been removed, and the north gable end now has windows and an exterior brick chimney and the south gable end has sliding glass doors. The west aisle serves as kitchen and mud room; the eastern aisle as entry containing an open flight of stairs of two runs and a family room. A floor has been laid where originally mow poles stored hay over the central aisle. At an intermediate point over the side aisles, floors also have been laid, offering two bedrooms over one aisle and a bath and open storage over the other. On the floor level spanning the central aisle is a passageway with two rooms to each side.

Standing 150 feet to 175 feet back of the William Baird House (#9), the barn is oriented north rather than toward the dwelling house. The land slopes downward toward a run of water, which raises an interesting question whether this situation always prevailed. If so, the southern gable entrance would have required a ramp. A hint that this topography existed at time of building is found beneath the central aisle where the ground has been excavated. A strong support system of hewn beams, one running crosswise with several others let into it, held on hewn posts, can be seen. This excavated area, which extends from south gable wall to about midpoint under the threshing floor (stopped by a wall of stone blocks) was used to install a heating system. The remainder of ground under the south end of the barn was later excavated in the 1950's to create a full-height apartment. A recent owner added a glass-enclosed extension of two story height across three-fourths of the south gable wall, the ground level on the slope leading into the apartment below the barn, the upper level leading into the original central aisle. This addition is light and airy, with groupings of transomed windows ranging across all walls. [Contributing]

### Outbuildings:

1. Gable-fronted frame (clapboard) one-car garage with paired doors and two-over-two sash window adjacent providing light for storage area for a second bay [Non-contributing]
2. Modern three-car garage, wood-shingled, gable-roofed [Non-contributing]

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History: The size of barn suggest an 18th century date. Since William Baird settled in the 1740's, and barns were often the first structure to go up, this barn may date to that decade. A legend has it that a Tory hanged himself in the barn when he learned of the approach of Washington's Army to River Road after the Battle of Princeton.

11. One-room School House/residence (8001/28) Photo #18, #19, #20

Style: Bungalow. c. 1912

Four square in dimensions, frame (synthetic shingles), pyramidal roof, with boxed eaves; six-over-one sash, originally six-over-six, and additional windows added on side wall; original pedimented roof dormer, paired windows, now has replaced double-hung sash. Flat-roofed porch, originally open with end entrances, now enclosed with windows over solid balustrade. Converted to residence in 1931. Small addition at rear facing River Road for three-car garage, with deck on top. Alterations have been minor, and basic integrity remains, as seen when compared with a photograph of it taken in the 1920's. [Contributing]

History: This building represents the last replacement for the neighborhood schoolhouse first established before 1772, when it is mentioned in the Township records on land set aside for it by William Baird at the intersection of the only road, then in existence to connect interior farms with River Road. In 1812, Major John Baird, his son, issued a 99-year lease to the school district for the property. It was known through the 19th Century as the Griggstown School because of its nearness to this village on the opposite side of the river. This century it was known as the Riverside School. In 1914, the property owner A. C. Hoagland deeded it with one acre to the Montgomery Board of Education for \$200.

This schoolhouse was the last of its kind to be built in the township to serve eight grades in one room. Because of its late date, it differs in design from the characteristic 19th century schoolhouse, and is the only example of its type, a bungalow style. The centered entrance was flanked by boys' and girls' cloakrooms, and these in turn were flanked by a wood storage space on one wall and niche for piano and library on the other. The school was closed in 1928 to create a consolidated school district at Harlingen Village.

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12. Hoagland Family Cemetery                      18th century

Original burying ground of the Hoagland Family established on their farm. Located a short distance northwest of the extant house (#13), it is presently reached by a right of way along a private driveway for a modern house fronting on Griggstown Road. Cemetery is rectangular in shape with tombstones in two rows facing east. An anchor-type fence encloses it. The earliest surviving stone marks the grave of Christopher Hoagland, 1699-1777.  
[Contributing]

13. Christopher Hoagland House (18001/23)    Photo #21; Addenda Sheets #3, #4, #5, #6

Style: Federal, c. 1808, possibly earlier wing.

Two-story, frame (shingles and clapboard), rubble stone foundation, new gable roof, imitation slate shingles, internal chimney, brick stack, cemented. Main block three bays wide, side hall plan, entrance in left (south) bay, with narrow sidelights and fanlight of colored glass (not original); portico with flat-roofed architrave and fluted columns a replacement for full porch made in 1960's. Windows of twelve-over-twelve and twelve-over-eight sash on principal facade; nine-over-nine and nine-over-six on other elevations; six-pane single sash in attic. One original sunk-panel shutter on H hinges; other shutters are of fixed louver type. Concealed by eaves overhang is a cornice of gouge work. Rear hall exterior entrance has pilastered architrave and denticulated frieze.

Lateral wing: Two stories, two rooms deep of lower height, recessed against south gable end of main block. Gable roof, with two shed-roofed dormers, and end brick chimney stack. Two bays wide, internal bay is in 2-story flat-roofed projection on alignment with facade of main block. Old wood shingles sheathe the end gable wall. Leanto against this wall (converted to modern kitchen), has two small rooms at back, one of which, a pantry, extends behind the wing as well. Greenhouse attached to outside wall. Roof of leanto is flat, with parapet. Windows contain sash of assorted sizes, two-over-two, four-over-four, and six-over-six. Shutters are two-paneled. A shed-roofed porch spans wing and leanto.

North addition: (19th century). Recessed on north gable end of main block. One-story, two room wide wing, later enlarged by extension of roof slopes to create porch and additional room at front and two small rooms at back. End north room at rear was then expanded under a flat roof, using salvaged materials from the 19th century Griggstown School House. Windows, paired, contain two-over-two sash. Gable wall has a square bay window. Porch roof is pedimented.

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Interior: Ten-foot-wide side hall widens at rear beyond the wall at back of stair run, with angled corner cupboards on back wall. Federal-style mantelpieces, one with dentils and gouge work. Some doors on H hinges. Brick infill in wall interstices.

Wing of undetermined age, perhaps reconstructed. Two rooms deep, smaller at back, with under-sized cater-cornered fireplaces and exposed beams of moderate size. Sunk-panel doors have strap hinges. Stairway to upper floor originates in leanto, boxed in against rear wall. Segment of wall panel containing door painted with 18th century folk motifs found in attic, either saved from an earlier house or just possibly removed from this wing. It is now owned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City. [Contributing]

#### Outbuildings:

Gable-fronted small barn, raised on brick base; constructed of hewn posts. Vertical siding. Fiberboard and batten addition parallels side wall of barn, connected by hyphen; has three openings on longitudinal wall. Contains woodshed and horse stalls, storage area. [Contributing]

Woodshed, rectangular frame building, vertical siding, with cut-cornered openings on both long walls. Newly roofed with imitation slate shingles. [Contributing]

Square frame structure of two bays, with vertical siding, former outhouse. Stripped interior. [Non-contributing]

Ruins of large, probably ramped, barn, consisting of two surviving full-height stone walls. Additional fragments of foundations at higher ground level angle out from rear corner then run parallel with it suggesting an attached building of considerable size. [Contributing]

To north of this ruin are remains of another farm building, consisting of one foundation wall of low height, which had been cemented on one face.

According to a county history of 1881, this farm had once had a Dutch barn, a tannery, blacksmith shop, wheelwright shop, weave house, rope works, etc. A photograph probably taken early this century shows numerous outbuildings.

History: The first Christopher (Christoffel) Hoagland (one of three spellings of surname) lived in New York City area. He married Helena Aertsen, c. 1698, of the family of John Aertsen, an original purchaser in the Hart Patent in 1702. He had three sons, Christopher, Martinis, and Johannes, to whom he willed two tracts of land, Nos. 1 and 3, purchased from the heirs of

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Gerardus Beekman, another of the initial land investors of 1702. Lot No. 3, on which the Hoagland house is located, was purchased c. 1739. Christopher, his son, born 1699, died 1777, and buried in the family cemetery, was resident in the 1740's, being mentioned in the opening of one segment of River Road in 1749 and a relay of the Griggstown Road the same year. Following the death of all three brothers, Lot No. 3 passed to a Christopher Hoagland, Jr., 1727-1804. In the 1789 tax ratables, Christopher Hoagland, Esq., and his son Christopher were listed with eight horses, sixteen cattle, two slaves, and a riding chair. He was a local assessor, member of Township Committee, 1772-73 and 1785; a justice of the peace in 1776, 1777, 1778, and 1786. He was elected to the State Assembly in 1780. His son Christopher, 1765-1837, was responsible for building the extant house. If the wing preceded it, as some traditions assert, it has lost its identifiable features by becoming two stories and being otherwise altered on the interior. Henry Hoagland, his son, added the north wing, and Augustus Hoagland expanded its kitchen. The Hoagland family continued to live in the house until the 1960's.

14. Hoagland Farm Tenant House (18001/22) Photo # 22. Addenda Sheet 5. C. 1800-25

One and one-half stories, frame; embanked. Originated as one room with garret. Enlarged in 1963 to present size by doubling space under gable roof, and adding a room to south under a hipped roof. Original part of house contains large hewn timbers in cellar and floor boards averaging eight to nine inches. Now three bays wide, with center pedimented entry. Windows of six-over-six sash; recessed panel shutters. Two shed-roofed dormers, each with pair of four-pane sash. External brick chimney against north gable wall. Screened porch added behind original north room above embankment. [Contributing]

History: This has been traditionally known as the "slave house" in Hoagland Family lore. Since it was customary for the Dutch to have slaves (inventories of neighboring families indicate as many as four), it is possible that this building was erected for this purpose. Later in the 19th century and up to 1963, it was used continuously to house farm help. It represents a type of outbuilding not often seen in Montgomery Township. Its siting close to but separated from the master's house by a run of water is of interest. The run is spanned by a plank bridge, a reconstruction, and its banks are fortified with stonework.

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15. John A. Beekman House (18001/30) Photos # 23,24

Style: Federal, with Greek Revival addition, 1803. c. 1840

Oriented south, gable end to road; two-story, frame (clapboarded), low foundation of rubble stone, slate-shingled gable roof, boxed eaves. Original east block, side-hall plan, expanded to five bay, with two-story addition to west. East block has internal chimney; west block, paired gable-end chimneys; all with brick stacks. Cornice spanning entire facade has running grapevine and oil cruse motif. Entrance contains segmental fanlight and sidelights, with lead tracery, a restoration; semi-lunettes are in both gable apices. Window sash is six-over-six. East block has mud daub interstices (visible behind a glass pane); west block has brick, infill.

Rear ell on west addition: Two story, two rooms single file, with end leanto. This was original kitchen with cooking fireplace and bake oven; and chimney-side stairs, but has been remodeled. A one-story enclosed leanto, with band of windows is against west elevation.

Interior: Scenic canvas wallpaper panels with panoramic views depicting West Point, Niagara Falls, and San Francisco, dating to Civil War era, purchased from the Princeton Inn when it was under renovation. It is said that another set of panels was sold at the same time to then First Lady, Jacqueline Kennedy, for the White House.

West block has arched opening with pocket doors between double parlors; marble mantelpiece with engaged columns in Greek Revival style; deep ceiling cornice with acanthus-filled corner blocks. Wood mantelpieces on upper story have diamond motif on frieze.

Alterations and additions: Replacement mantelpiece and stair balustrade in Federal style in east block. Expansion of rear room at northeast corner and addition of semi-enclosed porch. Shallow bay window added to front room of east elevation. [Contributing]

#### Outbuildings:

Large gable-fronted barn extended sidewise on one wall under roof continuation; newly sided with board and batten; newly roofed. New one-story side addition of wood, board-batten sided, replaces cinder block milk room. Contains stalls for eighteen horses and ponies. Had formerly been cow barn for herd of sixty. Stands on a stone foundation (now concealed); has large hewn upright timbers in loft. [Contributing]

Gable-fronted, frame (clapboarded) carriage house and corn cribs, newly re-roofed. Former track doors removed. Slatted walls to each side, with concrete troughs below. Wide floor

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boards for loft; hewn timbers visible over troughs. Left stairs run along one wall.  
[Contributing]

Embanked large rubble-walled structure of one-story height, used in the 1930's to 1960's for cows, presently used for hen house. Long walls now board-and-batten sheathed. Newly roofed, air ventilator under a gable roof riding length of ridge. [Contributing]

Large one-story long rectangular unit facing south. Open at west end for farm equipment. Adjacent area has tall cut-cornered opening for storage space. Three similar openings to its right are for garages. Cinder block unit of one story recessed against east gable end added for apartment. Synthetic slate-shingled roof; two cupolas. [Non-contributing]

Pair of cement silos. [Contributing]

History: This house was built on the original homestead farm of the Beekman family, Lot #4 of the subdivided 1400 acres purchased by Gerardus and Adrian Beekman in 1702. His son Gerardus, who inherited it in 1722, was first to occupy the land. A road opening of 1748 indicates the farm as Gerardus'. He was succeeded by his son Abraham (1739-1817), who worked the farm with his son John A. Beekman (1782-1829). Abraham submitted a claim for Revolutionary War damages. In the 1790 tax ratables the farm had two hundred acres. According to family tradition, John built the east block in 1803. In 1821, John and his cousin, Abraham C. Beekman, son of Christopher, who had inherited the back portion of the homestead farm, swapped land. A.C. Beekman (1787-1887) retained ownership until 1865, when it passed to his daughter and her husband Dr. Lewis Mosher, a physician who served a wide area of the countryside. A.C. Beekman also owned a blacksmith shop, opposite the dwelling house, on the deep curve at Site #41, mentioned in a road return of 1832. Dr. Mosher's son, Dr. Abram Mosher, was noted for the horses he kept for racing. Purchased in the early 1930's by a German farmer, it became a prosperous dairy farm.

16. Garret Beekman House (18001/ 29 )      Photos #25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30

Style: Federal, with Dutch vernacular wing. 18th century, c. 1800-10.

Main block, two-story, frame (clapboard and shingle); stone rubble foundation; gable roof, with slight overhang and returns; slate shingles; side hall plan, almost square three bay by two bay; paired gable end chimneys with exposed brick backs; entry with leaded fanlight--rays springing from figure (similar design also found in Princeton); bowed and reeded pilasters; Colonial Revival gable-roofed portico with wood floor and stairs added 1980. Rear Greek Revival style portico removed to be replaced with a Dutch stoep. Window sash, twelve-over-

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eight and twelve-over-twelve on principal facade; nine-over-six and nine-over-nine on gable end and rear wall. Lunette in gable apex.

Wing: Recessed against main block on west, originated as two-room-deep one and one-half story building; extended early in 19th century at gable end and brought to two stories, with internal chimney between rooms and an end chimney.

Rear wall retains original shingles of first unit before its enlargement. Above shingles and to one side is clapboard sheathing with some beaded boards. As enlarged, it has four bays, with entry in second from left. Windows of nine-over-six have been recently replaced with six-over-six sash. A wide two-bay leanto has been attached at gable end; this extends beyond rear wall by about six feet and returns against portion of rear wall. An external chimney has been added. Wing is fronted with porch on square posts, under shed roof. Cellar bulkhead to main block is at one end, with doors hung on Dutch strap hinges.

Interior, main block: Nine foot wide side hall, with staircase of two runs and midpoint landing; Federal balustrade with ramped railing, carved scroll ends, circular snail newel and square balusters. Plain under-stairs wall of wide horizontal boards to which plaster has been applied. High-ceilinged parlors; front room has elaborate Adamesque mantelpiece, with oval and fan motifs on central block of frieze and engaged fluted columns. Built-in chimney-side two-sectioned cupboards in each room. Main bed chamber has another delicate period mantelpiece, and a wide ornamental plaster ceiling cornice. Door architraves on both stories are of Federal style, except for front parlor, which was updated about mid-century.

Wing interior: Both ground-floor rooms have exposed ceiling beams, those in first room running front to back, with mortise holes for uprights marking former room division. The beams in added room are of two types, the larger--one of which is beaded on both edges--indicating the extent of the original unit. The front south wall of first unit has been partly exposed under glass to show hewn uprights of structural system and infill of mud and straw. Some interior walls have vertical beaded boards; a boxed-in staircase is located against rear wall of second room. On second story are two old doors, one of five raised panels. Both are attached with H-L hinges. One of two four-over-two sash windows in attic has 18th century muntins. Evidence of the raising of wing's roof height is seen at gable end of main block, where former window has been blocked.

Alterations: Installation of bay window at rear wall of first room of wing. [Contributing]

Outbuildings:

Dutch barn, three bay, with round tongues on anchor beams. Portions of sheathing have been

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replaced with cinder block to preserve barn, but restoration is planned. It has already received a new synthetic roof. Barn raised on a series of boulders. Attached at north gable end: dairy house of cinder block adjoined by frame dairy barn. [Contributing]

Concrete silo. [Contributing]

Barn, at right angles to Dutch barn has centered loft door and three pedestrian doors, two hung on Dutch strap hinges. [Contributing]

Small chicken coop, frame. [Contributing]

Shed-roofed cinder block structure used as garage. [Non-contributing]

An ancient buttonwood tree stands in close vicinity to wing's front facade.

History: This farm tract was first purchased from absentee investor by Abraham Van Voorhees in 1724, and his son Lucas was in occupancy in the 1740's, when a portion of River Road was officially laid out. Its northern boundary line with the Beekman purchase of 1702 was unclear and became subject of arbitration. In the last quarter of the century the Beekmans came in possession of it. It was listed in the tax ratables of 1782 in Gerardus Beekman's name. In 1793 Christopher Beekman, Sr., brother of Abraham, who had the home farm, bought it. His son Garret apparently occupied it, as his name appears in the ratables of 1794. The father sold to the son in 1800. Garret probably occupied the smaller Dutch vernacular house, now wing, until the farm became his, when he built the main block. Garret Beekman served on the Township Committee in 1814-17, 1818, 1819, 1823, and 1828. In 1848, the farm passed to his son John.

### 17. Skillman/Beekman Cemetery Photo #31 18th century

Enclosed by a high wrought-iron fence, it is roughly square in shape, with several rows of grave markers. It is maintained by a family association, and burials still occur. On Memorial Day 1989, the association dedicated a large granite stone with brass name plate identifying the cemetery.

The earliest stone contains the initials A.S., and date 1773. It is believed to be for a member of the Skillman family, possibly Annie, mother of John Skillman. The tract on which the cemetery is located was first purchased in 1729 by Thomas Skillman for his sons Isaac and John. In 1760, Isaac's farm was sold by his heirs to Peter Van Derveer. Van Derveer sold it to Christopher Beekman in 1770. When the tract was sold in 1782, the burial ground was reserved. In a sale of 1812 between Gerardus Beekman and Abraham Van Derveer, one quarter

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acre was again reserved for the burial ground. Following that purchase, members of the Van Derveer and Campbell families have been buried there. Some 19th-century stones were engraved by a man named Sillcocks, possibly the carpenter who helped build the Victorian houses of the 1860's, and added a room to the Garret Wyckoff house. [Contributing]

18. Van Derveer-Campbell House and Farm (22001/21,22) Photos #32, 33, 34, 35, 36; Addenda Sheet 6

Style: Anglo-Norman Villa from William H. Ranlett's pattern book, The Architect. 1860-62

Two and one-half stories, frame (asbestos shingles), three-arm cross plan with interpenetrating gable roofs, fish scale slate shingles; two-story tower at corner with wraparound veranda; rear two-bay porch in re-entrant angle; and projecting one story pantry at rear. Stone ashlar foundation. Front and side gable peaks have slightly extended eaves, sawtooth trim, and short returns; inverted U finial. Tower roof is pyramidal with finial; has log-like projections under eaves. Front gable elevation joined with tower by one-story, one-bay shed-roofed wall segment which expresses location of interior staircase. Windows on second story and both levels of tower are round-headed and narrow, containing three-pane sash, mullion-separated, set in segmentally arched recesses. Ground story fenestration consist of two bay windows of triple openings, the largest window in center; window heads are arched, supported on shafts; the roofs are flat. These are located on front and east elevations, both of which front on road, house being sited within sharp curve. Oculi fill gable peaks. Wraparound porch appears to have been an addition as it conceals projecting bracketed molded cornices over entry and side window of tower. It has paired slender beveled posts on rectangular bases with sunk panels ornamented with deeply inscribed rosette. Posts are bracketed and balustrade of jigsawn slats. Floor and steps are wood; patterned newel posts are of cast-iron, ball-capped. Underskirting is of sawn slats of another pattern. Flat roof has medallions on frieze. Double-leaf entry door is under round-headed transom filled with three segments of etched glass, two fanning upward bordered with red glass, the third, topmost, bordered with blue. Doors have six small square panes over one large pane, above a rectangular wood panel.

Interior: Tower vestibule laid with Minton tiles from Stoke on Trent. Staircase makes graceful ninety degree turn to right near end of run, with open balustrade above it in upper hall supported on large consoles. Double parlors, each with marble mantelpiece, are separated by segmental-arched opening, with sliding paneled doors. Bay-windowed dining room at rear of vestibule has its own chimney with marble mantelpiece. Ceilings of all rooms have elaborate plaster medallions and deep cove cornices and picture rail on walls. Kitchen, with wood and

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coal-burning stove, has intermediate floor level above between stories, containing servants' rooms, reached by in-wall stairway which continues to attic. Working fireplace in cellar; bulkhead entrance by rear porch. [Contributing]

### Outbuildings:

Victorian era setting: romantic house lawn, with "Lincoln pines," maples, and other trees; barnyard on own lane at rear.

Nineteenth century horse barn, moved from another part of farm; bull pen addition of concrete block on one long wall. [Contributing]

Nineteenth century large wagon house with double corn crib and granary; hovel to one side; six-over-six sash window; doors on strap hinges. Also moved. [Contributing]

Frame (vertical siding) tool shed and wood storage bin. [Contributing]

Gambrel-roofed cow barn, concrete block foundation; built 1926. [Contributing]

Concrete silo. [Contributing]

Milk house, concrete block, made into dog kennel. [Non-contributing]

Three-car garage, hipped roof; built 1932 on same foundation of carriage house and horse stall it replaced. [Contributing]

Cottage, c. 1935, for farm workers; one-story, frame. [Contributing]

Storage building for tractors and equipment, 1950's. [Non-contributing]

History: Peter Van Derveer bought his first farm in 1760 from Isaac Skillman's heirs; his second farm (adjacent) from John Skillman's heirs in 1770. His 400 acre farm nestled between the Millstone River and Bedens Brook, extending as far west as No Pike Brook. A private in the militia, he was at home after the Battle of Princeton (1777) and was taken captive by British soldiers who stumbled upon his brookside dwelling after losing their way in fleeing from Princeton. He died later that year. (A roadside marker erected by Montgomery Township relates the incident.) In 1797 his farm was divided into four parcels for his sons. Present farm represents No. 2 of the subdivision. Original house was on Site #25. Peter L. Van Derveer, who occupied Lot # 1 to north, bought the farm from his cousin, Peter V.D. Van Derveer, in 1852. He built the extant house over a period of two to three years, according to

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family tradition, employing the carpenter Buchanan, who afterward was builder of the Garret Hagaman House (Site #1). The plan for an Anglo-Norman Villa found in William H. Ranlett's pattern book was chosen. After his daughter married William A. Campbell, he turned over the house and farm to her in 1876. Their descendants have continued to occupy it. In 1978 the New Jersey Agricultural Society honored it with an award as part of its program of recognition of farms in the same family for at least one hundred years.

19. Laurence Van Derveer House (22001/20.01) Photo #37, 38; Addenda Sheet 7

Style: Italianate, vaguely villa. 1866 datestone.

Two and one-half stories, frame (aluminum siding), gabled roof, slate shingles, coursed stone foundation in front and under part of gable walls, rubble for remainder, advanced centered tower-like pavilion with cross gable on principal facade containing entry of paired paneled doors, and two-pane transom filled with red glass and applied moldings as corner ornament. Two internal rectangular brick chimney stacks with drip course and broad base. Facade three bays wide with paired six-pane mullioned window sash under triangular-shaped lintels on ground story; similar windows also paired but round-headed on second story and in cross gable, with umbrella molding. Gable peaks are similarly treated, with two-over-four sash. Two-sectioned shutters of movable louvers. Squared bay window projects from ground story on north gable wall. Rear elevation offers a variant plan, with wall projection of approximately four feet immediately to south of center hall, with cross gable. Eaves are deeply extended; wide plain frieze and rake decorated with solid brackets.

Porch added later in the century flows across entire facade on south gable wall to front elevation of recessed lateral wing. Oversized square posts have stopped bevels. Railing is of thin turned balusters. Posts flanking doorway are joined to porch posts by solid wood arches, cut on underside with series of molding profiles. Roof is of standing seam metal; floors and stairs of wood. Original brick piers have been replaced with concrete blocks.

Wing: Lower height, two story, one-room-deep, two bays wide with six-over-six sash. End chimney stack replaced with modern square cemented stack. Gable roof, slate-shingled. Leanto at gable end encloses cellar bulkhead entrance and rear pantry containing ten-foot-deep round stone cistern. Two windows on rear elevation contain earlier nine-over-six sash windows.

Interior: It appears that elements of style of earlier house on site (as shown on 1850 county map) were re-used, including some windows. Two south bedrooms have Federal mantelpieces; some six-panel doors also appear to be earlier. Ceilings are eleven feet high. Molded cornices remain in some rooms. Ceilings have elaborate plaster medallions. Original marble mantelpieces

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are in first-story rooms. Cast-iron coal stove in form of a house is in dining room. Doorway and window surrounds have their original moldings. [Contributing]

### Outbuildings:

On lane, stone smoke house, dirt floor, in which was built a brick beehive oven over a rubble stone base. Gable roof, wide plank door. [Contributing]

On lane, milk house, 20th century, cement block construction. [Non-contributing]

On lane, iron well pump near milk house. Recently enclosed in period-style housing, based on photograph. [Contributing]

Two-story cow barn, frame, 1940's, with one-story cinder- block milk house attached at right angle to longitudinal facade. [Non-contributing]

All-purpose storage barn, clapboard, also 1940's. Recent addition at one end of deep leanto of corrugated metal. [Non-contributing]

New pole barn of board and batten corrugated metal. [Non-contributing]

Chicken house, horizontal siding. [Contributing]

Pair of 1930's chicken houses. [Contributing]

Path of paving stone from rear door to site of former privy. [Contributing]

Surviving 19th century landscaping includes three buttonwood trees. Pasture lies to south of lane, extending to No Pike Brook, and is still used as cow pasture.

History: The property comprising this farm was originally part of the Peter Van Derveer home plantation of five hundred acres (Site #18). In 1797, it was subdivided as Lot No. 3 and given to his son Garret. Upon Garret's death, his son Laurence became owner. The 1850 map calls it the homestead farm of Garret Van Derveer, but shows Laurence's name as well. The farm was called Brookside. A datestone on south corner of foundation reads: Built 1865, A.W.C.; additional initials are illegible. Sold in the 1930's, the third generation of this family now works the farm. Earlier this century, the livestock included cows, pigs, geese, sheep, chickens and turkeys.

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#### 19.1 Joseph Weingart House (22001/20.02)

Modern, colonial-style house built in farmfield of Laurence Van Derveer House for owner's son. Subdivided on two-and-one-half acre lot officially, but without boundaries visibly indicated. [Non-contributing]

#### 20. Covenhoven-Updike Miller's House (22001/18) Photos #39, 55

Style: Federal side-hall house, with Italianate enlargement. First quarter 19th century; c. 1860.

Two-story, frame (aluminum siding); rubble stone foundation, coursed, joints possibly galleted; gable roof parallel with road and south-oriented to Bedens Brook where mills stood. Internal brick chimneys; overhanging boxed eaves; originally three bays, now four with Italianate addition, which has semi-hexagonal bay window with round-headed windows on first floor and paired similar windows above. Remaining fenestration, two-over-two sash, except for round-headed window in cross gable. Entry is in third bay at center; double-leaf door, with segmentally arched transom, having single pane of glass; doors are four-panel, upper panels of glass. Shutters are louvered. Porch across first three bays from left (west); flat-roofed, Italianate posts, beveled, on capped paneled bases.

Wing: One story at rear, flush with west gable wall of main block; flat-roofed. Two bays deep; nine-over-six window sash. One-story shed attached on east wall.

Interior: Federal mantelpiece with gouge work in front parlor. [Contributing]

Outbuildings:

Four-bay garage; frame, hipped roof. [Non-contributing]

History: As early as 1753, mills were recorded in a road return. These belonged to Rulif Van Dike, whose dwelling house was about two miles north (in the Bridgepoint Historic District on the National Register). His son Col. Hendrick Van Dike eventually became owner of the mills and the property adjoining them on both sides of Bedens Brook. He sold the property, "where he lives," in 1804, to William Covenhoven for his son Elias. William transferred the mills to Elias in 1814 and the rest of the property, where Elias was then living, to him in 1823. In a relay of River Road in 1833, the house is shown as William Covenhoven's (or Conover, as the family then spelt its name). William was Elias' son. Elias fell into debt, and the 186-acre property was sold to Peter Williamson in 1836 for \$9,975. Jeremiah Williams or Updike became

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owner in 1849. The mills thereafter bore his name through the end of the century. Updike presumably enlarged the house.

### 21. Bedensville Mills Site Photos #40,55,56

From the 1750's, perhaps earlier, Bedens Brook was dammed at this site for operation of mills, first a grist mill, and at later times also a fulling mill and sawmill. The mills ceased operation, seemingly, at the end of the 19th century. The buildings appear to have been located on the north side of the brook, judging by two of three mid-19th century maps, about two hundred to two hundred and fifty feet east of the present 1958 concrete bridge across Van Horne Road (Route 206). Traces of stone bridge abutments survive on both sides of the brook about one hundred and fifty feet east of bridge. A reference in an 1833 road return to a road originating west of the mills refers to an "arch bridge." The surviving vertical walls do not suggest an arched support bridge, but perhaps represent a replacement on the same site.

A map accompanying a Road Return for Montgomery Road (1833) illustrates the mill pond. Deeds of 1789 and the 1790's for abutting properties also locate the millpond at this site. The mill pond is also shown on the 1850 map of Somerset County. Archeological research conducted in 1982 as part of the NJDOT's EIS of Highway 206 found no clearly identifiable trace of the mill dam but determined its approximate location along with mill house from a number of factors. A scattering of rocks on both banks may represent remnants of the dam. An earlier survey, c. 1980, by Edward Larrabee, reported that the stones from the collapsed dam lay 145 feet east of bridge on south side. The Industrial Report of the 1880 Federal Census reported that the dam created a seven-foot fall of water. The brook today is about fifty feet wide at this location. Considerable landfill took place to raise the bridge above flood level.

History: The first identifiable reference to a mill at this site is found in the Road Return of 1753, which provided for a road to connect the mill dam of Rulif Van Dike (names spelt variously in different records) with the road through Rocky Hill (Washington Street) to a bridge across the Millstone. In 1756, its course was somewhat altered from a more easterly route south to approximately the course of Van Horne Road today. In 1773, another road was opened from the north at Amwell Road in Hillsborough, and proceeded along Bridgepoint Road to the mill (earliest path of present-day Route 206). At this date, the mill was owned by Van Dike's son, Colonel Hendrick Van Dike. (It also made access to his uncle's mill at Bridgepoint easier.) Both Rulif and his son were prominent and well-to-do members of the local community. In 1804 the property was sold to William Covenhoven for his son Elias.

Under Elias's charge, the complex was expanded to include a sawmill, plastermill, and

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briefly, a fulling mill. In the teens and 1820's, William issued deeds transferring both farm and mill property to Elias. Elias fell into financial difficulty, and the mill property was placed in the trust of his sons. The sons sold the farm and mills in 1836 to Peter Williamson of Long Island. In 1849 the site was sold to Jeremiah Williams Updike. He and his son of the same name ran the grist mills, custom and merchant operations, thereafter almost to the close of the century. [Contributing]

[22.] Back Acres 2, 49 River Road (23001 12.01) Photo #41

Frame, one-story house built 1933 featuring a large glass-enclosed atrium containing swimming pool bordered by trees and plants set on flagstone floor. Adjoining rooms are laid out in railroad-flat plan. Designed by owner Carroll Smith, president of the Smith Pharmaceutical Company of New Brunswick. [Excluded]

[23.] Back Acres 1, 65 River Road (23001/11.01) Photo #42

Frame, clapboard, one-story house, built 1947-56. U plan, built in stages, also designed by Carroll Smith as first home. Features high ceilings with exposed beams and barn siding salvaged from a barn in Griggstown. [Excluded]

24. 113 River Road (23001/10)

Modern house, two story, frame with stone veneer and clapboard, three bays, center entrance with sidelights, fixed multi-pane bay window on left. [Non-contributing]

Outbuilding:

Two-story structure containing double garage and apartment [Non-contributing]

25. Peter V.D. Van Derveer House (23001/8.06) Photo #43

Styleless vernacular with interior Greek Revival elements 1830's

Two-story, frame (asphalt shingled), rubble stone foundation, gable roof, with slightly extended eaves. Entry in west gable end, two bays over three, with enclosed multi-windowed, hipped-roof porch across facade. Main north elevation three bays, with semi-hexagonal bay

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window under hipped roof at end (east) bay. Internal chimney, cemented stack. Sash windows six-over-six; board/batten shutters. Enclosed porch at east gable end.

West half of house represents surviving portion of older house on property; east half represents portion of a 19th century house on Van Derveer homestead farm, which was attached at a later time. [Contributing]

Outbuildings:

Well house, square, with latticework, pyramidal roof. [Contributing]

Two-car garage. [Non-contributing]

History: This house occupies first recorded site of early settler John Skillman, c. 1735-40, by the side of Bedens Brook. The Skillman house served as first dwelling for Peter Van Derveer, who purchased the Skillman farm in 1770, and it was here that he was taken captive by British soldiers fleeing after the Battle of Princeton. This first house was subsequently enlarged as the first Van Derveer homestead until the division of the farm among four sons in 1797. Family tradition suggests that one room represents the surviving portion of the original house. A larger structure on its east was demolished. Peter V.D. Van Derveer, grandson of the settler, acquired the house and its farm in 1832. It was sold to Peter L. Van Derveer, his cousin, in 1852. Descendants of the latter owned the dwelling until recent times, using it as a summer cottage. The great meadow, filling the angle created by the brook and the river, was used for cow pasture until its sale to the Green Acres program.

26. 249 River Road (23001/8.09).

Modern split-level, frame (clapboard), with attached two-car garage. Central two-bay, two-story unit, gable-fronted, contains entrance. Fixed multi-paned picture window in one-story level at left. [Non-contributing]

27. 259 River Road (23001/8.10)

Modern, two story, frame (clapboard), with partial overhang of upper story; entrance centered, tripartite window to right, boxed out. Paired six-over-six sash to left. One story two-car garage attached at left end. [Non-contributing]

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28. 265 River Road (23001/8.11)

Modern ranch, frame (synthetic shingles), hipped roof; two-car garage recessed at north end. [Non-contributing]

29. 271 River Road (23001/8.12)

Modern ranch, wood shingles, center entrance with sidelights; front-gabled to right (south) of entrance. Porch and two-car garage attached at north end. [Non-contributing]

30. 279 River Road (23001/8.13)

Modern ranch, frame (clapboarded), gable-fronted; three-unit division, with five-bay main block having recessed side-lighted entry; recessed three-bay hyphen, and two-car garage, the latter under asymmetrically sloped gable roof. [Non-contributing]

31. 287 River Road (23001/6.03)

Modern ranch, similar to #30 reversed. [Non-contributing]

32. 297 River Road (23001/6.02) Photo #45

Modern ranch, set far back from road. [Non-contributing]

One-story horse stables and riding ring set far back from road. [Non-contributing]

33. 309 River Road (23001/6.01)

Modern ranch. [Non-contributing]

34. 315 River Road (23001/6)

Modern ranch. [Non-contributing]

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35. 325 River Road (23001/5)

Modern ranch set far back from road. [Non-contributing]

36. 391 River Road (23001/3.11)

Modern ranch, frame, vertical siding and brick veneer; recessed bay for entry; fenestration irregularly disposed. Attached two-bay garage angled forward. [Non-contributing]

37. 401 River Road (23001/3.10)

Modern "colonial," two-story, five bay, center entrance with pediment; two-bay lateral wing advanced from facade. Belt course. [Non-contributing]

38. 407 River Road (23001/3.08)

Modern "colonial," frame, five bay, center entry flanked by sidelights; internal gable end chimneys, brick stacks. [Non-contributing]

39. 415 River Road (23001/3.07)

Modern, two-story, frame, brick veneer, three bay main block, and lateral one-story wing. Shed-roofed porch across facade. External gable chimney. Two-bay garage attached. [Non-contributing]

40. 423 River Road (23001/3.06)

Modern two-story, frame, clapboarded, three bay, centered entrance; tripartite fixed window to left of entry; one-story wing at south end, triple-windowed; attached one-story garage of two bays, vehicular entrances in side-wall. [Non-contributing]

41. Beekman Farm Tenant House (23001/3.01) Photo #49 19th century; enlarged 20th century

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Two-story, frame (aluminum siding), narrow form, cemented foundation, gable roof, extended boxed eaves. Originally one-over-one structure with cellar, doubled in size, and additional wing of single room over two-car garage attached, c. 1960.

Occupies approximate site on sharp road bend of Abraham C. Beekman's blacksmith shop mentioned and shown on a road return of 1832. It was asserted at time of enlargement that building was then about one hundred years old. Hired hands for Beekman farm when in ownership of the Hoffmans (1960's) were housed here. Now a private residence. [Non-contributing]

42. Griggstown Bridge Photos #50, 51  
1903 (?)

Pony truss iron bridge on stone piers. One lane wide. Spans Millstone River at approximate site first mentioned in road return of 1743. It may also have been included within the boundaries of the Griggstown Historic District (individual sites are not numbered in the nomination). [Contributing]

43. 723 River Road (9001/6.02)

Modern one-story house with extended umbrella eaves, distinctively detailed; designed by owner-architect. [Non-contributing]

44. 731 River Road (9001/6.03)

Modern, contemporary, with irregular rooflines, one story; oval glass panes in double-leaf door. [Non-contributing]

45. 739 River Road (9001/5.01)

Modern, soft contemporary, siding laid vertically and diagonally; irregular roof slopes. [Non-contributing]

46. 745 River Road (9001/5)

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Modern, one story, frame, Cape Cod influence, four bays, entry second from left; smaller unit projects from north gable end. [Non-contributing]

47. 755 River Road (9001/3)

Modern, soft contemporary, frame, vertical and diagonal siding; irregular roof slopes, clerestory windows; embanked. [Non-contributing]

48. 769 River Road (9001/4)

One-story, frame, shingled; two horizontal units, one advanced, with porch of rustic construction with brick floor in re-entrant angle. Main block three bays, two rooms deep, embanked, on cinder block foundation. Casement windows, arranged in pairs; board/batten shutters with moon cutouts.

A mid-19th century map indicates a structure on approximately this site. It is a possibility that it is subsumed within this building. [Non-contributing]

49. Millstone River Road

That segment of road that is continuous throughout the District and is its spine. Approximately six miles. Eighteenth century.

Two lanes wide, serpentine in course, bordered by drainage ditches and swales. [Contributing]

50. Meadowland and floodplain

The most distinctive feature of the landscape, continuous throughout the District, totaling 344 acres, practically all of which is now reserved forever as passive park land in the Green Acres program of New Jersey. [Contributing]

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River Road, an Indian path paralleling the Millstone River for its entire length from the Raritan to Bedens Brook, became route of entry and future connector for their farms. Becoming an established north-south artery within the interior of Somerset County, on which was located the county seat in 1738, the road played an important role as line of defense for the Continental Army and route of march for both the American and British military during much of the Revolutionary War. The farmsteads, laid out all along the west side of the road, survive in considerable number, their rhythmic spacing suggesting their original size. This array is continuous along River Road through the two Districts on the north, earlier placed on the National Register, adding to the total impact of the record of Dutch cultivation of the valley. Generation by generation, descendants of the pioneers remained on, occupying the homestead farms, as a clannish people enjoying their own society in a community of considerable size that bore their stamp, thus perpetuating to a degree their cultural mores.

The District contains some of the original settlers' dwelling houses and barns, illustrating the Dutch form of building first employed in this area, preserved in their relationship to each other, to private burial ground, and to road. Successive houses built on these same farms by descendants after the War of Independence serve to show the impact of exposure to English architectural styles within the surrounding region. The majority of buildings in the District are in Federal style, using two-third Georgian plan, and among the finest to be seen in Somerset County for spatial proportions, modern features of the time, and ornamentation applied within and without. Layered on this landscape is still another representation of architectural taste--the Early Victorian. Built by a later generation of the same farm families, sometimes at the expense of the earlier dwelling, these are prestige houses, competing with one another. When the frugal Dutch spent their money to build, they built solidly and well.

Neither commercial nor industrial growth occurred along this segment of River Road. No new roads from the interior connected with it until the 1830s, and then only three short connectors were made throughout the century and down to the 1960s. Farmers continued to raise the same crops and keep the same livestock up to about 1900, after which dairying gradually became the principal activity. Farmyards contain a collection of buildings of various periods, reflecting replacements with structures of improved designs as well as others to serve new functions. The same lone mill site, school house site, and river crossing continued to serve this community up to

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this century, and the river is still spanned at this location with an early 20th-century bridge.

### Exploration/Settlement

The Millstone Valley was known to 17th-century explorers who ventured westward from the settlements of New Amsterdam along the Raritan River from its mouth near New York Bay. The land was not taken up, however, until the creation of the Board of East New Jersey Proprietors in 1682, the Board's intent in purchasing the province being to induce settlement and thereby profit from the improvement of the lands. A map of the province made by John Reid, c. 1686, shows the land west of the river as unappropriated. By 1690, however, all the land flanking the Millstone River in Somerset County had been taken up and patented to absentee investors, mainly overseas English and Scots. John Royce claimed from the Raritan as far south as Peace Brook in Millstone Village for his Manor of Roycefield. South of this was Clement Plumstead's tract, its lower boundary line much later becoming the basis for Hillsborough Road. Thomas Barker's patent for a 2000-acre tract next followed, its lower boundary line chosen in 1771 to set off Hillsborough as a separate township from Montgomery. Adjoining Barker's tract was the Thomas Hart patent of 4000 acres fronting on the river as far as Bedens Brook. To south of Hart was his son-in-law Walter Benthall's 2000-acre parcel extending to Rocky Hill. The farms described in this nomination were established in the Barker, Hart, and Benthall tracts.

The Dutch of New York and the Hudson Valley early joined the English in land investment in Somerset County, particularly along the Raritan River. Some of these men, representing old and prestigious families who had arrived in America in the third quarter of the 17th century, were in a position to purchase tracts at several locations. Investing either alone or in partnerships that sometimes included Englishmen, they became the primary landholders in the Raritan and Millstone valleys. While as many English names as Dutch are found in these early land transactions, the latter nationality far outnumbered the other in actual eventual settlement, making the valley their cultural hearth. The mounting migration to this area from the old settlements came about through close family ties with a great many connections through decades of intermarriage, as indicated in family genealogies and Bible records. Marriages between English and Dutch took place as well, explaining such names as Baird and Skillman among the early settlers.

The earliest sale of significance took place in 1702, when London merchant Thomas Hart's entire 4000-acre tract was sold to six investors, the Dutchman Rip Van Dam serving as New York agent. The partnership included three Dutch, the brothers Gerardus and Adrian of the prestigious Beekman family and John Aertsen, and three Englishmen, Lancaster Symes, Thomas Carsdale, and William Crood. The tract was divided into six parcels, five of which had river frontage. Of these initial buyers, only the Beekmans retained their land, but it served as the opening step to the creation of a new Dutch community. The whole process comes clearly in view in following the

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Beekman family's transactions. Gerardus obtained Adrian's share and willed the whole 1400-acre share to his four sons in 1722. In 1727, one son sold his tract, Lot #1, to Christopher Hoagland, who was related by marriage to investor Aertsen; in 1730, another son sold Lot #2 to Alexander Baird, who was married to the granddaughter of William Beekman. Lot #3 was held by Christopher Beekman, who died in 1724, and it seemingly remained in his widow's hands until about 1739, when the same Hoagland family purchased it. Lot #4 also remained in the ownership of the heir Gerardus.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile Beekman's fellow investors were finding Dutchmen interested in their land. Aertsen "of the Brooklyn ferry" died early, and his sons disposed of his 700-acre share through a sale to John Stryker in 1710. Symes' share was sold in 1729 to Henry Polhemous, son of the well-known early Dutch Reformed dominie, and Cornelius Cornell of Kings County, New York, the latter already holding a tract of land in the adjoining Barker tract, purchased by him in 1714. The combined Carsdale-Crood share, lying along the river and Bedens Brook as far as No Pike Brook, passed into the hands of John Harrison, a prominent and major land investor in Franklin Township, the Harrison family selling it in 1721 to John Van Horne, an equally important investor in southern Montgomery Township. In turn, Van Horne sold 150 acres to Abraham Van Voorhees in 1724, and 400 acres to Thomas Skillman in 1729. These two individuals intended to retain the land for future family settlement. Skillman bought the land in order to provide farms for his sons, John and Isaac.<sup>2</sup>

The Thomas Barker tract was initially purchased by John Harrison as well, then sold as smaller farm tracts to Dutchmen during the early decades of the 18th century. The Plumstead patent, included in the Millstone Valley Preservation Agricultural District, was leased out to Dutch farmers up to the 1740s; the Benthall patent came into the possession of two Englishmen, who established farms with river frontage in the 1720s and set a different course of development. An interior location through which River Road runs was eventually sold to men bearing such names as Covenhoven, Hageman, and Van Dike. (In the early records, these and other names are spelled in a variety of ways.) These men also settled in the area, the brothers Jan and Rulif Van Dike, both millers, at Bridgepoint. (National Register Bridgepoint Historic District). Rulif Van Dike established a mill on Bedens Brook in the 1750s, which led to the extension of River Road from No Pike Brook to its location.

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<sup>1</sup> Colonial Conveyances, State Archives, Trenton, N.J. Deeds: C-2, 429, 431, 432; F-2, 203. Also copy of deed in Hoagland Papers, Rutgers University Library, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J.

<sup>2</sup> Deed C-3, 158ff; Ralph Voorhees, Our Home, p. 468; A. Dix Skillman, Esq., Belle Mead, information from his family genealogy. Deed Book B-2, 379 for 1721 sale of same property.

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Possibly in the 1720s but certainly in the 1730s, these landholders or their children took up the land, establishing the farms detailed in this nomination. These several plantations of the Hoagland, Beekman, Skillman, Van Voorhees, Cornell, Baird, Stryker, Wyckoff families and others adjoined one another along the unifying River Road. They represent the first established community in Montgomery Township and among the earliest in Hillsborough as well.

The River Road farms for the most part remained in the ownership of the original families well into the next century, and some into this century, an exceptional record. The one additional family to join the early settlers was that of Peter Van Derveer. Born in Flatbush, L.I., Van Derveer acquired, first, in 1761, the farm of Isaac Skillman upon his death, and afterward, that of his brother John in 1770, gaining the whole of the 400-acre tract nestled alongside the Millstone River and Bedens and No Pike Brooks. Over time the farm was enlarged by another 100-plus acres, also along the river on the opposite side of Bedens Brook. A map of the total farm, divided into four lots for Peter's sons, was made in 1797.<sup>3</sup> A portion of the farm that was assigned to Jeremiah Van Derveer remains today in the ownership of his descendant, Duncan Campbell. The farm of Jeremiah's brother Garret adjoins it, on which stands the Italianate mansion, "Brookside," built by his son Laurence.

#### The Millstone River Road: Indian Trail to Major Colonial Artery

At the time of the Proprietary Board's claim to the soil, there was clearly an Indian presence on the land. To obtain title honorably, it was policy to negotiate a second deed of purchase with a tribal chief. The records show that the 4000-acre Hart Patent was purchased a second time over from the sachem Wickwala in 1709. Traces of encampments of the Lenni Lenape have been found at several locations along the west side of the Millstone, starting at the Raritan. Two large stone mortars have been recovered, one in Millstone, and the other on the 18th-century farm of Peter Staats, "The Brookie," in Hillsborough. An early deed for this farm refers to the run of water at its boundary as Wigwam Brook. Arrowheads in quantity were found alongside the run of water that cuts a gorge next to the Garret Wyckoff House (#8). (A part of this collection has been given to the State Museum.) What made this site particularly attractive, it would seem, is the spring of good water that empties in the run from an embankment (still flowing this century and visited weekly by the late Albert Einstein, who filled large containers to take home). On other Staats' farms lying south of Aertsen's Brook, large numbers of arrowheads have also been turned up with the plow and saved by present-day descendants of this family. (#6)

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<sup>3</sup> 1761 deed, original in Somerset County Historical Society, Finderne, N.J.; 1770 deed, original in possession of Virginia M. Beekman, Belle Mead; Van Derveer papers in possession of descendant Duncan Campbell, River Road, Belle Mead.

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The pioneers scouting for prime land for investment and possible homesteads undoubtedly entered the valley along an Indian path. Having first traveled the "road up Raritan," opened c. 1682, where the "Raritan Lotts" were first taken up, they gradually purchased the lands by the Millstone, progressing in a southward direction.<sup>4</sup> By the 1720's all the lands had been claimed, but settlement was still sparse. The County Freeholders made their first official "road" opening in 1733: "There layed out by us...at ye request of ye inhabitants of Somerset County, beginning at four rood road laying cross (sic) the river at ye Widdow Beekman's, commonly called...the Millstone River; from thence running threwe ye middle of said Millstone down said river under ye bridges until it goes down to ye mouth of said Millstone River, four rodde wide."<sup>5</sup> This reference to the Widow Beekman, thought to be the former wife of Christopher Beekman, deceased 1724, places the road origin close by the Griggstown Bridge. The "four rood road" across the river may in fact have been a reference to the bridge itself. The road's direction northward is understandable as it followed the direction of flow. Whether in reality it meant to describe a water course for boat travel or whether it was an action to claim a public right of way on the river (to prevent its damming), it is impossible to determine.

The reference to bridges is a further indication of an embryonic roadway on this side of the river by that date. Settlement had begun along the Raritan River at first, and the pioneer Reformed Church congregation "of the Raritans" had been organized in 1699 at the mouth of the Millstone. Expectedly, River Road would at first flow northward. When the locating of a replacement court house for one that had burned was called for in 1738, the county by that date recognized the importance of the central location of River Road, and chose the embryonic village of Millstone, which had a bridge over the Millstone.

Evidence of a bridge crossing at Griggstown is established through the opening of another road in 1744 on the opposite side of the river to originate in east Rocky Hill (Franklin Township) and cross over the bridge near William Baird's (# 9), then to pursue a course leading to the newly relocated court house. In 1748, at the request of the Beekmans, a road already in existence was relaid in part--two rods wide--to begin at the bridge at Christopher Hoagland's (#13)--the same bridge as above--and run south to Bedens Brook and alongside it to No Pike Brook, "as the road runs," and continue on beyond the brook to a fulling mill and southward to the Great Road running through Rocky Hill (present borough; also on the National Register) eastward to the

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<sup>4</sup> Ursula C. Brecknell, "The 'Rariton Lotts' of Franklin Township," Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Commemorative Issue, 1882-1982.

<sup>5</sup> Somerset County Road Returns, Old book A (#1), p.1.

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river. In this same decade, c. 1745, a road from the interior was opened to the Griggstown Bridge (combined Griggstown-Harlingen Road). This created the only road to connect with the river settlements in Montgomery Township for almost a hundred years. Another was opened in Hillsborough--Hillsborough Road--after Peter Schenck built a mill in 1747, now known as Blackwell's Mills. In 1753, River Road was altered on its final courses south of Bedens Brook, and changed again in 1757, but in both instances touching upon or traversing the land of Rulif Van Dike, first identified miller at the crossroads of River Road and Van Horne Road (later called Bedensville). These changes were for the convenience of Rocky Hill residents to reach his mill.<sup>6</sup>

River Road today follows approximately the same alignment as chosen in the colonial era. The road appears on maps drawn by Benjamin Morgan and others in the 1760s and 1770s; and a map by Robert Erskine covers the northerly segment from the Raritan to the court house. Louis Alexandre Berthier also made a rough sketch of it depicting the French Army's route of march to Virginia in August 1781. Such minor relays that occurred in the 19th century appear to have been dictated by flooding, but its course seems to correspond to the same curves and bends as shown on the earliest maps, sometime close to, sometimes removed from the river. In 1832, a road return with map shows a plan for the road to cross Bedens Brook just to east of No Pike Brook, then to continue its course to Covenhoven's (formerly Van Dike's) mill on today's Montgomery Road. The following year the road was re-established on the north side of the brook as it runs today, called at that time the "road to Griggstown School House." The crossing at No Pike Brook continued to be remembered and used by farmers into this century to take their herds to other pastures, and stepping stones used by the herdsman can still be seen, according to one farmer.<sup>7</sup>

In 1767, Griggstown Road, which served as mutual property boundary line for Christopher Hoagland and William Baird, was surveyed at their request. In 1828, their sons had it resurveyed. A map of the latter survey exists and is valuable in confirming the path of River Road to be the same today by showing the relationship of their houses and barns and the corner school house to its course.

#### Cultural Landscape and Architecture

The Millstone River Valley was selected by the Dutch of the Long Island settlements for numerous reasons. For one, their original farms were becoming diminished in size after subdividing among children, and they welcomed the opportunity to make a new start on pristine soil close to

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<sup>6</sup> Somerset County Road Returns Old Book A (#1), February, 1743/44, p.5; September 13, 1748, p. 15; May, 1753, p. 27; October, 1756, p. 36.

<sup>7</sup> Somerset County Road Returns, Book B, pp. 187 ff (1832); pp. 211 ff. (1833).

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waterways. The first of their number to make a move were the wealthy who purchased tracts of land along the Raritan River, and in Franklin Township, locations closer to their home community in terms of travel. As a tight-knit cultural group, the later investors and purchasers sought adjacent lands, which took them to the distant side of the Millstone. While far-sighted investors also bought interior tracts, those with some thought of settling sought the best lands by the river. For much of the century, the residents would describe themselves in public documents as "of Millstone River."

The size and configuration of farms followed no particular tradition, as far as is known. The depth of the Hart and Barker patented tracts dictated the depth of each farm; in order to provide each with river meadow, the lots were wedge-shaped, deep rectangles, widest at the river. The rear of these tracts was reserved for wood lots. The smallest had 150 acres; the rest averaged about 300. They concentrated their buildings along the rudimentary River Road for convenience of travel and closeness to neighbors and also for easy reach of the meadowland. The boundary lines between farms in Montgomery Township can still be detected on current tax maps and can be sensed by the spacing between sites, particularly from the Garret Wyckoff House (# 8) to the end of the road. The extensive hillside area from No Pike Brook to the final house (# 20) was used historically for farming and animal grazing and never built upon, and at present still remains open land.

Despite considerable evidence that early homesteads were oriented southward, only two of the three extant dwellings follow this rule. Of the three Dutch barns (one erected in 1816), two have a north-south orientation. One of two others in the historic districts to the north also is so oriented. From observations of other Dutch dwellings and barns in the region, there appears to have been no firm custom regarding the matter. There was no fixed rule, either, about the siting of these barns, some being at roadside on an alignment with the house, others at the rear. In two instances (# 7, 10) barns were mounted on a hilly slope.

The cultural mores of burying their dead on the homestead farm is evident in the survival of four cemeteries; a fifth on the farm of Garret Hagaman (# 1) vanished this century. The location of these burying grounds was in all instances near the road, doubtless for convenience, and in proximity to the house. The Cornell-Nevius and the Wyckoff-Cornell burial places contain fieldstones with only initials and date inscribed, illustrative of a type of marker used at first, 1750-75. (Photo 10) Unfenced and neglected, they appear to have lost some of their gravestones, a known fact in the case of the latter as a result of road improvement earlier this century. The Hoagland and Skillman-Beekman cemeteries, on the other hand, are fenced in and cared for by descendants' associations. The tombstones, dating from the 1770's, are arranged in neat rows, some with foot stones. The earliest stones, rectangular in shape and placed vertically, also contain only initials and date.

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The Dutch cultural imprint also survives on the landscape in vernacular building forms. The William Baird House (# 9) and the Cornell-Nevius House (# 4) exemplify the type of dwelling erected in Central New Jersey by Long Island Dutch, at least by the 1740s. Since these settlers came directly from the home community, this style may have replicated a form that evolved there. It is a 1-1/2 story house, two rooms deep, with smaller room at back. The half story was used as garret, left open to the rafters. In these two houses, the framing--as far as can be determined--is typically Dutch, a series of H bents, with transverse beams left exposed, spanning the full depth. Both houses have internal end chimneys, which is characteristic of all Dutch houses of this area. These chimneys are (or were) cater-cornered in the rooms, (Photo 15) a relatively new feature at that date, possibly copied from houses of Englishmen with which they were familiar. Both houses also illustrate the usual means of enlargement by a lateral duplication of the original unit. (Photo 14). The first section lacked a side hall; the enlargement provided a central passage now altered in both cases but known to have existed. A third example survives as the wing of the c. 1800 Garret Beekman House (Photo 16). The remaining wood shingles on the rear elevation define the original proportions of the dwelling, showing it to have been a two-room unit of 1 1/2 stories before its enlargement in the 19th century. In the Baird and Cornell-Nevius houses bricks fill the interstices of the exterior walls but in the Garret Beekman house mud and hay is seen. The interior wall of the first unit of the Baird house is of interest in that, despite its early date, it is a framed wall with an infill of daub (photo 16) rather than simply a board partition.

As late as the first decade of the 19th century, mud daubing appears to have been an accepted practice for insulating exterior walls, as it is found in the Federal block of the John A. Beekman House (#15). By contrast, however, the Hoagland House (# 13), its neighbor, uses large bricks. One matter in which the Dutch were consistent was in the size of timbers used for framing. It has been observed of Dutch houses in general that they were over-built, using great-proportioned beams and perhaps more than were needed. These houses exhibit the practice, but even larger transverse members can be seen in Hudson River Valley dwellings. Such framing continued into the 19th century where cellar timbers, even if closer spaced, are of the same large proportions. One other distinctive building feature is the use of a strap hinge with round nail plate, a type of hinge used in Holland which was replicated in America and not abandoned until the 19th century. Examples are seen in the Cornell-Nevius and Baird houses (#s 4, 9) and on the cellar bulkhead and a barn at the Garret Beekman House (# 16). One was found on the ground by the doors of the Barent Cornell Dutch barn (# 7), and a pair remains on the smoke house of the Garret Wyckoff farm. (# 8)

This vernacular form overwhelmingly prevailed in the Dutch communities of the Millstone and Raritan River Valleys throughout the 18th century. There appears to be no evidence that the Dutch departed from it except on the odd occasion. They were not isolated from exposure to other national styles, especially that of the English, as the township (originally the Western Precinct) once extended as far south as Princeton, and farmers frequently had business there. Further,

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after the village of Millstone became the county seat, it attracted lawyers and others from northern county, who introduced their own building traditions. The extant Van Doren House (1750s) in the village, built by a wealthy member of a family of millers from across the river, is one exception. A brick Georgian mansion, built 1761-63, by Montgomery's leading citizen, is another. The Baird and Cornell-Nevius houses, despite faddish and picturesque updates on their front elevations dating back to 100 years ago (now part of architectural history in themselves), convey in proportion and height their 18th-century appearance.

The surviving barns relating to the William Baird (#10), Barent Cornell (#6) and Garret Beekman farms particularly characterize the Dutch building heritage brought to America in the 17th century. In the Netherlands, this form of architecture also combined the domestic living space under the same roof but no firm evidence has yet been found that this practice was introduced into America. The barn has a unique form, with broad front gable and low eaves, containing a center drive-through threshing floor flanked by low aisles for stalls and storage. It is framed over its central aisle with a series of H bents, transverse (anchor) beams protruding through the uprights. It was the most dominant and most important structure on the farm; according to the observations of Peter Kalm during his tour of America in the 1740s.<sup>8</sup> Real estate advertisements of the 18th century indicate that the English, too, built barns in the Dutch manner; however, the situation reversed itself the next century, and for whatever reason--perhaps the desire not to appear too provincial--the form was abandoned sometime before mid-century. Of the three barns in this District, the Baird barn (# 10; photo) is earliest and appears to be largest, with double strut system over aisles, although it is but three bays deep, which seemingly was characteristic of this area. Although converted into a residence in the 1950s, with an airy, glassed-in addition later attached to one gable end, the distinctive configuration has not been lost, and the interior preserves the original distribution of space. The Garret Beekman barn (# 16; photos 29, 30), also 18th century, exhibits the round "tongues" of the protruding tenons of the anchor beams through the uprights of the H-bent system of framing. In need of some restoration now, this is scheduled to take place by the second-generation owners of the farm. The Cornell Barn (# 6), which contains date of building, 1816, and Cornell's initials carved into an anchor beam, is smaller, with square-ended tongues, perhaps a later practice. Used by the farmer, a descendant of R.A. Staats (# 6), until his retirement, it has never been altered. It is noteworthy in that it still rests on stacks of large flat boulders strategically placed around the perimeter, the characteristic method of raising the structure from the ground.<sup>9</sup> It is now badly deteriorated but can still be restored, a plan of the local historical society.

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<sup>8</sup> Peter Kalm's Travels in North America, p. 118 (1937 reprint), cited in John Fitchen, The New World Dutch Barn, pp. 81f.

<sup>9</sup> Fitchen, op. cit., pp. 87, 143f, and passim.

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The Dutch barn as cultural artifact is fast vanishing from the landscape, partly from neglect and partly from intentional removal. Three survive in this District. Doubtless every farm once boasted such a structure. There are known to have been four others on River Road. One at the Van Derveer-Campbell farm burnt in 1926, and its site is marked by the present gambrel-roofed barn. The Hoagland's barn, which existed in 1880 when the family was interviewed for Snell's county history, was taken down in the 1960s and sold for lumber. One of the three ruins of outbuildings behind the house relates to it. In the last fifty years, the barns at the John A. Beekman and Garret Wyckoff farms (#s 15, 8) were demolished as well. These remaining barns when counted with others in the two National Register Districts along River Road (2) and across the Millstone in Griggstown (1) create a rare resource of Dutch culture.

The initial layout of the Dutch farm complex is uncertain, since the buildings now congregated about the houses date mostly to the 19th and early 20th centuries. Judging by the Dutch barn alone, however, it would seem that no uniform pattern was adhered to.

### River Road as Line of Defense and Military Route in the Revolution

As part of the colonial network of major roads, which were limited in number, River Road had an important role in everyday travel but especially so during the Revolution, when it offered an alternate but nearby parallel route to the King's Highway (Route 27) flowing north to south in Central New Jersey. River Road also had the military advantage of skirting a river, providing the possibility of cutting off the enemy by burning bridges. Topographically, the townships through which the road ran had an additional feature, the Sourland Mountain, which enclosed the Millstone Valley on the west and made possible its military protection, as well as containment of the enemy from a westward march to the Delaware. Both armies were aware of its advantages, and the road became part of military planning.

In 1774 and 1775, the Somerset County Freeholders met at the Millstone Court House and prepared for war with the Mother Country, appointing in the latter year a Committee of Correspondence that included River Road area residents Peter Wyckoff, Thomas Skillman, and Rulif Van Dike, mill owner. In 1776, the Revolution came to New Jersey. According to T.E. Davis, a historian writing in 1903, "No county suffered more than Somerset [which] became the great highway for the armies."<sup>10</sup> That year the British pursued the Continental Army across New Jersey from Staten Island. Washington had hoped to take a stand in New Brunswick on the great highway

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<sup>10</sup> T.E. Davis, article (1903), in Somerset County Historical Quarterly (hereafter SCHQ), V, pp. 162 ff.; also articles in Unionist-Gazette (Somerville), January, 1904.

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(Route 27) connecting New York with Philadelphia, but was unable to do so and kept traveling south as far as Princeton, where he set up a detachment, and then moved on to Trenton. The British halted at New Brunswick, making an earlier-erected barracks their headquarters and chief depot and treasury. From this vantage point, which commanded the Raritan and Millstone Valleys, the British held control through the middle of 1778, with troops stationed in Princeton and Hessian mercenaries in Millstone.

After Washington's surprise night march from Trenton to Princeton on January 3, 1777, leading to the successful routing of two British regiments, he left that town and headed north for a winter encampment at Morristown, choosing a turnoff at Kingston from the main road to New Brunswick to skirt the Millstone River on the east side as far as the Griggstown Bridge, there to make a crossing to River Road. He was aware of this back route from military maps already in existence. It was also shorter and more direct to his destination north of the Raritan. At Griggstown, as at Kingston, he burnt the bridge behind him. Hoagland family tradition asserts that Christopher Hoagland helped by holding the Commander's horse. The Continentals halted for the night at Millstone. According to officer James Willson Peale, the portrait artist, they "bedded down in straw in barns still warm from Hessians."<sup>11</sup> Also among their number was James Madison, future President of the United States. Washington stayed in the Van Doren House, still extant, included in the Millstone Historic District.

The British fled Princeton for New Brunswick in two directions, the 40th Regiment heading directly along Route 27, the King's Highway, and the 55th taking a back route, described by General Howe in his report as traveling "by way of Millstone."<sup>12</sup> This would have been along Mount Lucas Road to Rocky Hill, and from there along the road to Van Dike's mill and thence on River Road to the court house seat. This retreat took three days, according to the British report. Some soldiers from this regiment lost their way and reached Bedens Brook by another means. Seeing Peter Van Derveer's dwelling on the opposite bank, they crossed the ice-filled river on rails and burst in upon his household as it was preparing its morning meal. Seeing mush on the fire, they scooped it up, saying that they had had nothing but hot bullets for breakfast.<sup>13</sup> They then made Van Derveer their prisoner and forced him to guide them to New Brunswick. Van Derveer died later that year from an illness related to his capture and forced march.

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<sup>11</sup> Portrait of a Village: A History of Millstone, New Jersey, pp. 7-8.

<sup>12</sup> New Jersey Archives (hereafter NJA), Newspaper Extracts, I (1776-77), pp. 369ff.

<sup>13</sup> SCHQ, V, p. 18; James P. Snell, History of Hunterdon and Somerset Counties, citing Jacob Magill, article in Newark Journal, c. 1870, p. 76.

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Washington set up winter quarters in Morristown, but established a line of defense on River Road under General John Sullivan. Redoubts were built from the Raritan to Princeton. Sullivan was stationed in Millstone, but other officers including Captain John Polhemous were assigned to guard more southerly along the river as far as Rocky Hill. On January 20, Sullivan took by surprise a foraging party of the enemy as it was sacking Van Nest's mill (Weston) two miles north of Millstone Village and captured 104 horses, 118 cattle, 70 sheep, and 43 wagon trains.<sup>14</sup>

A number of soldiers' accounts of their tours of duty--recited at the time they submitted their requests for pensions--mention patrolling River Road. Oliver Hunt's account states that in 1777 he served three tours of a month each (two for himself and one as substitute for the man to whom he was apprenticed) "all along the River Millstone guarding that section of the state, and frequently down along the lines and occasionally capturing some of the enemy." John T. Skillman, who was born on his father's River Road farm, joined the militia in 1775 and served in battle under his neighbor Major William Baird. "...in the fall and winter of 1776," his account states, "he marched to Millstone and remained there two months. This was at the time when the British overran New Jersey and (had) their headquarters at New Brunswick....That while at Millstone he was one of a party sent to a place called Mile Run (near New Brunswick) to surprise a British Guard stationed at this place, and that he with the party succeeded in capturing two or three Hessians." An account provided by a slave relates that on his fifth tour he marched along the Millstone under Capt. Van Arsdale and Col. Schamp and escorted Col. Frelinghuysen to Princeton via Griggstown.<sup>15</sup>

In a letter to General Benjamin Arnold dated June 17, 1777, Washington described the enemy as being to the right at New Brunswick and to the left at Somerset, adding that he had a considerable body of his army at Sourland Hills (western Montgomery and Hillsborough Townships) under General Sullivan. The British estimated it at 2000 men. It included 400 New Jersey militiamen and 500 Pennsylvania riflemen. Two days prior to this, Major-General Mifflin wrote to General Arnold, "I have received no intelligence from General Washington since...last evening, at which time the enemy were encamped at Somerset Courthouse, supposed to be eleven thousand in number, under the command of Generals Howe and Cornwallis. This is doubtless their main body. Their first design seems to have been to cut off General Sullivan's retreat and possess themselves of this place...(They) now wish to draw Gen. Washington from his stronghold...Gen. Washington will

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<sup>14</sup> NJA, Newspaper Extracts, I (1776-77), p. 275.

<sup>15</sup> Pension Applications, National Archives; SCHQ, III, 187.

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doubtless disappoint them...."<sup>16</sup> The British maneuver consisted of dispatching two columns by different routes to take Millstone and the village of Middlebush on the Amwell Road in Franklin Township and set up a number of redoubts. While occupying Millstone, they burned down the Dutch and English churches, and reputedly set afire the court house as well, besides torching a number of dwellings. Failing their mission to draw Washington from his Watchung Mountain post, after five days they withdrew.

Washington departed the Middlebrook Encampment in the summer. He returned to it again two years later, 1778-79, for another winter encampment. At that time, the Pennsylvania camp and General St. Clair's headquarters were on River Road north of Millstone, as shown on a map. A military hospital was temporarily established in three village barns. Soldiers were sent out to press the countryside for supplies. Bed sheets were taken from William Baird for bandages along with his fence for firewood. This is but one example through the years 1770-80 of seizure of property by both armies, which were dependent on the local populace for their support. Reparation claims made at a later date for damage and losses at the hands of both armies indicate that every household along River Road had suffered from soldiers' visits. Forage, flour, cattle, horses, carts, household utensils, and clothing were among items taken. The British and Hessians went further in burning houses and kitchens, taking away bricks, stone, planking, and panes of glass, as well as personal possessions of value. The Cornell family of River Road told the reporter Jacob Magill (c. 1870) of the seizure of the family's home for occupancy by British officers. After forcing the father to flee, they took his three-year-old son from bed, and then plunking an officer's cap on his head paraded him about, claiming they would make a British soldier of him.<sup>17</sup>

Among River Road residents who have been additionally identified as being in military service are William Baird, eventually made a Major, and his four sons, all officers, one--Lt. Col. Benjamin Baird--being a war casualty; Peter Van Derveer, a private; and Hendrick Van Dike, son of Rulif, a Colonel in the State troops. In 1779 Baird and his neighbors were responsible for getting an inquisition against John Honeyman's goods and chattels in the belief that Honeyman, who lived in Griggstown, was a Tory supplying cattle to the enemy. He was in actuality one of Washington's

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<sup>16</sup> NJA, Newspaper Extracts, I (1776-77), p. 398; William S. Baker, General Washington in Somerset County (Lippincott, 1892), cited in SCHQ, II, 13.

<sup>17</sup> Reparations Claims for Damages and Losses During Revolutionary War, State Archives, Trenton; SCHQ, I, 281ff; III, 260; Jacob Magill, typescript of articles from Newark Journal, in Somerset County Historical Society Library.

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spies.<sup>18</sup> That same year, although the British were no longer in New Jersey, Colonel John Simcoe, with his Queen's Rangers, which included a number of British sympathizers, swept into the Millstone Valley from Staten Island, heading first for the mouth of the river on the Raritan, where they burned flat boats tied there on Washington's orders, as well as the pioneer Dutch church (1699), then raced down to Millstone, where they released prisoners in chains in the court house and set it afire before making a fast retreat. Simcoe was captured, however, on the road to New Brunswick.

With the reinforcement of the Continental Army by the French under Comte de Rochambeau, the war strategy took another turn. Washington resolved on a plan to march in separate columns all the way to Virginia to confront Lord Cornwallis. Starting in the summer of 1781 at Dobbs Ferry, N.Y., the Americans were to travel the major artery through New Brunswick, Princeton, and Trenton (Route 27/206 today). The French Army was assigned a route through Somerset County, which included River Road from the Raritan River to the Griggstown Bridge, there to cross the river and continue down its east bank as far as Rocky Hill, and cross back again to follow Mt. Lucas Road into Princeton. This army was composed of two brigades, some 5000 foot soldiers, and a few hundred mounted dragoons, and included field artillery and a long wagon train. Their two-day march in Somerset was mapped by Rochambeau's cartographer, Louis Alexandre Berthier. (Addenda Sheet 9) After Lord Cornwallis' surrender at Yorktown, the French Army returned the following year by the same route, traversing River Road again but on this occasion following its entire course from point of origin to the Raritan River, according to Rochambeau, who reported that they kept the Millstone always to their right.<sup>19</sup>

River Road as Washington's line of defense and as route of marching armies played a significant role in American history.

### 19th-century Dutch Community in a Larger World

By the turn of the century, second and third generation sons of the pioneers had reached maturity. The fathers were ready to pass on their farms. The original dwelling houses had aged, and in some cases wore the scars of war. What followed, beginning about 1800, might be described as a mass building wave, with every house in the new Federal style, following a side-hall plan.

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<sup>18</sup> Original record of Inquisitions, 1779, in Somerset County Clerk's Office. For one of many accounts of Honeyman as spy, see Laura L. Terhune, Episodes in the History of Griggstown.

<sup>19</sup> The Revolutionary Journal of Baron Ludwig von Closen, trans. and ed. by Evelyn M. Acomb (Chapel Hill, 1958), p. 234, cited in Elizabeth G.C. Menzies, Millstone Valley, p. 229.

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There are in the District 5 extant examples, the bulk of the residences. There were eight originally, but one burned down accidentally (Lucus Van Derveer's) and another (R.J. Staats) was burnt for firemen's practice. Garret Van Derveer's house was replaced by his son Laurence. A ninth house (1803, John R. Staats) has been excluded because of its location on a farm behind River Road. At the same time, at least three other similar houses were built across the river in Griggstown. Others went up along the northern reaches of River Road, most notable of which is the miller John Blackwell's house of full Georgian proportions, built 1816. This seeming phenomenon must be interpreted as a manifestation of a Dutch characteristic, a spirit of competitiveness within their own close circle. Taken together--the majority being in the proposed District--these residences are among the finest examples of the Federal style to be found in Somerset County,

The replacement houses are all in the same spirit, not transitional in design, plan, or decor from the vernacular dwelling of the preceding century, but true expressions of the Federal style as interpreted in the countryside in practically all communities. Of those extant, two were built by Beekman cousins, one by a Hoagland, a fourth by Garret Wyckoff of Monmouth County, who had just purchased a farm, 1803, near the homesteads of earlier Wyckoffs, and a fifth by the Covenhovens, who had at about this same date purchased the mills on Bedens Brook from the estate of Col. Hendrick Van Dike. Their interiors are in the American mainstream of architectural taste, with high plastered ceilings, some with cornices (#13, #15), quarter-segmental windows and lunettes (#15, #16), large multi-paned sash windows (#15, #16), Adamesque-type mantelpieces (#15, #16, #20) with gouge and drill work and plaster ornamentation, built-in cupboards, molded door casings and sunk-panel doors. The Christopher Hoagland and Garret Beekman houses (#13, #16) retain pilastered exterior entrances, swelled and reeded at the latter, with a traceried fanlight with figure at base of rays, similar to some found in Princeton. The rear exterior hall entrance way of the Hoagland House has a denticulated frieze. It also has a running fret on the roof cornice, as does the John A. Beekman house (#15), which was added when this pile was brought to full Georgian proportions, c. 1840. The Wyckoff (#8), Hoagland, John A. Beekman, and Covenhoven (#20) houses have an interior chimney between rooms, an idea that at last reached the countryside when two-story buildings were being substituted for the low snug-to-ground Dutch vernacular form. Garret Beekman's house has paired end chimneys with squared brick-laid expose bases, as also found on the elegant Blackwell's Mills House in the Millstone Valley Preservation District.

These new residences either retained the earlier structure as kitchen wing, in which case it is located against one gable end, or else included a kitchen in a rear ell. Over the years, some of these houses were enlarged, the doubling in size of the Covenhoven house clearly detectible by its addition in Italianate style, but others only in a relatively minor fashion, with a one-story extension at the Hoagland house, and kitchen leantos. The Wyckoff House has a summer kitchen and adjacent sunken room with stone walls, probably for cold storage, attached against the rear

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ell.

During this same period (1812) Major John Baird, who inherited his father's real estate, drew up a formal 99-year lease with the school district for the corner lot of his farm, where a school house had stood since at least 1770.<sup>20</sup> It seems reasonable to believe that this gesture came about because the neighborhood wished to have a replacement building erected.

The adoption of an incoming national style for architecture by these farmers, culturally Dutch in other respects (in fact, the very impulse to replace the vernacular homestead is revealing), seems to indicate a developing outlook about integration into the larger society on one hand by following its lead, while on the other making a proud boast to its own group as well as to outsiders of its financial ability to afford a replacement house and to build in the most stylish manner. The abandonment of their own form of barn for the English form possibly reflects the same desire toward conformity with an accepted American style of architecture.

Aside from these changes, the farm itself still remained the prime economic activity and source of wealth for generation after generation of the same family. Improvements and additions to the farm layout, as noted through surviving outbuildings, tell of its organization and operation.

There are stone smoke houses standing to one side of the houses at Sites # 8 and 19. Both probably date no earlier than the opening decade of the 19th century. The Wyckoff smoke house has a door swung on Dutch strap hinges. (Photos 12, 38) The Hoagland descendants, when interviewed in 1880, remembered that there had once been a number of buildings used for blacksmithing, weaving, tanning, rope-making, and like activities. The Dutch of this community, as well as in general, were slave holders and thus able to run large farms. One structure that survives in connection with the Hoagland farm is the so-called slave house<sup>21</sup> (#14) in which paid laborers were housed at a later time. This is positioned to one side of the principal residence, removed from it by a run of water, over which a plank bridge was thrown for convenient pedestrian use. Some impression of the collection of outbuildings of this farm can be gathered from an early photograph. (Addenda Sheet 5)

When the next farm south (#15), was in ownership of John A. Beekman, his cousin Abraham C. had a blacksmith's shop directly opposite the dwelling house on the meadow side of the road, as indicated in a Road Return of 1832. It is quite possible that Beekman himself worked the forge

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<sup>20</sup> Lease from John Baird, 1812, cited in Somerset County Deed, G-14 (1914).

<sup>21</sup> James P. Snell, History of Hunterdon and Somerset Counties, p. 838; personal interview with Mrs. Raymond Hoagland, former resident in "slave house."

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although the owner of a prosperous farm, since social status seems to have counted for little. The site now is occupied by a tenant house (#41) that later served the farm, and has since been doubled in size and so altered, unfortunately, that it has lost its integrity.

By and large there is an absence of any further building activity along this segment of River Road for another fifty years, which doubtless makes a statement about personal values regarding needless replacement of good buildings. Interestingly, the next ripple of building occurred along the more northerly reaches of River Road in Hillsborough, where most of the houses included in its Register nomination reflect the period 1830-60. The majority of houses found elsewhere in Montgomery Township are also of this period, and for this reason this concentration of Federal dwellings on the original river farms offers a rare opportunity to experience the architectural influences prevailing at the time in a Dutch community.

There is but one residence in Greek Revival style (# 6), built by R.A. Staats in the 1840's on a farm he purchased adjacent to homesteads of his family and relatives. An interesting observation can be made concerning his choice of au courant style. The related Staats family in Hillsborough appeared to strongly compete with one another in having stylish houses from Grecian brick mansion to Italianate to Second Empire.<sup>22</sup>

There was a decline in building in these townships during both early and late Victorian times, except within villages. As a whole, there are few distinctively styled structures, most minimally expressing Early Victorian features of bracketed eaves and central cross gables on a building of rectilinear form such as the Brokaw-Taggart House (#5) in this District in its prime. Therefore, it is surprising that another wave of building occurred along River Road in the 1860s. It is suspected that old money, rather than newly acquired wealth, financed it, and the indications appear to point to another round of "keeping up" with relatives and neighbors in a competition of architectural styles. A competitive spirit among the Dutch has been noted in other activities as well, even into this century, in competing to be the first to take in the harvest and in acquiring fast trotters to overtake each other on the road and to race for sport.

The Garret Haganan House (#1), a somewhat eclectic impressively scaled building set upon an eminence overlooking the valley, was erected in 1862 shortly after Haganan's cousin had built a handsome Italianate-styled structure across the river. The Van Derveer-Campbell House, built shortly before the Haganan House over a two-year period, was put up in response to seeing the stylish townhouse of New York City cousins--so family tradition claims. Long an affluent and educated family, they lived in a genteel manner. Furniture ordered in New York was shipped to

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<sup>22</sup> Architectural survey by Consultant Ursula C. Brecknell.

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them via the Delaware and Raritan Canal.<sup>23</sup> Their house design, "Anglo Norman," was chosen from Ranlett's pattern book and was large enough to include rooms for servants on a mezzanine floor level. (# 18; Addenda Sheet 6) Another house based on the same plan stands in Rocky Hill and is thought to be earlier. It is an unusual design not generally found in the countryside and perhaps was copied from the village example, although it is more grandiose in scale. Shortly after the rise of this modish towered mass, the Van Derveer cousin, Laurence, owner of the next farm west, replaced his father Garret's house with a new residence of vaguely Italian villa appearance, having a tower-like central projection, such as had been designed by William Sloan in the 1850s.

Built in 1866, it shows--as does the other Van Derveer house--a slight time lag in the adoption of new styles. In this decade, too, mill owner J.W. Updike doubled his Federal-era house (#20), with a bay-windowed addition in Italianate mode. Unaccountably, he did not update the original side-hall structure, unless he felt less reason to compete with neighbors being new man on the block. The Wyckoffs went further, updating in Italianate style when expanding the rear room of their Federal house to one side (#8). About the same time, the new owners of the 18th-century Peter Staats farm in Hillsborough added a splendiferous main block in Italianate style, with outside porch scroll brackets for final emphasis.

The Hagaman and the Van Derveer houses are noteworthy for fine features and details on both exterior and interior. The Hagaman House combines Gothic and Italianate elements of style on the facade and has Tudor multi-flue chimneys. The particular detailing expressive of Norman villa--chevron trim along the raking courses, log-like projections under tower roof, oculi--and additional Italianate motifs are exhibited on the Van Derveer-Campbell House. Pairing of elegantly tall windows distinguishes the quiet symmetrical facade of the Laurence Van Derveer House. All three dwellings have ashlar foundations and handsome double-leaf doorways, with elaborate transoms, that of Site # 18 noteworthy for its etched and stained glass. Interiors feature marble mantelpieces, deep room cornices, and florid plaster medallions. The Van Derveer-Campbell House has a flooring of imported Minton tiles in the tower vestibule.

Despite their high styling, these rural farmhouses were constructed by local builders, seemingly from plans provided them by the owners. Both the Van Derveer-Campbell and Hagaman houses were the work of a man named Buchanan, who had as his assistants the carpenters Silcocks (Silcox), Neary, and Schenck. Silcocks was also employed by the Wyckoffs. This may also be the Silcocks who added his name as carver to tombstones in the Skillman-Beekman cemetery. These are excellent examples of good craftsmanship, with many expensive features, and clearly make a social statement of wealth and taste.

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<sup>23</sup> Personal papers, Van Derveer Family, in possession of descendant Duncan Campbell.

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This marked the end of domestic building along this segment of River Road. The final house to be built, 1901, represents a replacement for one that had partially burnt. The Williamson House (#2) minimally expresses the Queen Anne style in its independently roofed, asymmetrically projecting two-story bay window and mix of sheathing fabric. In actuality, its interest lies in its collection of outbuildings, representing farm activities of the early decades of this century and certain improvements in design of the structures employed.

There has never been any commercial activity other than the operation of mills along River Road, except for a store at Blackwell's Mills, since needs were met by services provided in the nearby villages of Millstone and Griggstown, which evolved in the 19th century, and at Bridgepoint, a mill hamlet located on No Pike Brook, to which Dead Tree Run Road was opened c. 1836. When John A. Beekman's daughter married Dr. Lewis Mosher about mid-19th century, the neighborhood received a circuit-riding physician. Their son, Dr. Abram Mosher, also lived on the homestead.

In 1912 the 99-year-lease on the school house property expired, and the School District purchased the site. The building was replaced with the extant structure, now a residence. (# 11. Photos 18-20). A four-square bungalow with porch, it still had but one room for all grades. This is the only example locally of the final form of rural one-room schools.

### Lifeways: Cultural Background and Character

Although the original settlers of New Amsterdam were of various national backgrounds--French, Flemish, Rhinelander, as well as Netherlander--these people had amalgamated into one culture in the New York settlements and they primarily worshipped in Dutch Reformed churches. Practically all the settlers in the Millstone Valley came from one community, Flatbush, making them an even closer-knit group. Despite being under the English Crown, they clung to the mother tongue. Not until the end of the century was it abandoned, as sons and grandsons chose to speak in the language of the nation.<sup>24</sup>

The Dutch Reformed Church was early introduced into Somerset County (1699) and remained the sole denomination in Montgomery, Hillsborough, and Franklin Townships into this century, excepting a Presbyterian church for English in the county seat briefly in existence before the Revolution, and another church of that denomination in Kingston which was influenced by the Presbyterian character of nearby English-settled Princeton. Just prior to settlement along River Road, a "kirk op de Millstone" was founded by about a half dozen people from Franklin Township

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<sup>24</sup> Records of the Harlingen Reformed Church, in church archives.

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and northern Hillsborough settlements, taking advantage of a 160-acre tract that had been set aside for a parsonage farm in the present Belle Mead area, as part of a great interior land sale to a company of Dutch investors in 1710. This congregation fell apart over internal dissensions. When an effort was made to reunite it in 1751, those along River Road joined in signing a petition for a resident minister. This led to the building of the Sourland Meeting House, now Harlingen Church, which served all of Montgomery Township. In 1766, permission was granted to establish another congregation in Millstone, and several River Road residents were transferred to it by the church authorities. Since preaching was done in the Dutch language, this was another aspect of life that kept their culture alive. This religious tie continued to bind their descendants, as evidenced in the founding of two additional neighborhood churches at Griggstown and Rocky Hill about mid-19th century.

The original families constituted a well-to-do class of society. Their parents had arrived in America in the third quarter of the 17th century and accumulated wealth through frugal habits. The Beekmans descended from the prominent New York family of the name, after whom Beekman Place and William Street are named. Alexander Baird was a lawyer, who like Col. Gerardus Beekman, invested in property on a large scale. Peter Van Derveer and Rulif Van Dike kept pedigreed horses for breeding, one having been bought from the Earl of Stirling, its parent imported from Europe. Horse breeding was a popular 18th-century activity of the well-to-do, and could produce a substantial return. As late as 1790, the elderly Major William Baird and Lucas Van Derveer, Peter's son, were advertising such a service. Personal wealth was evident as early as 1757, when an inventory was made of the estate of Cornelius Wyckoff "of Millstone," which listed four Negroes, a looking glass with seven pictures, and a Bible and several books. The estate of Johannes Hoagland, brother of Christopher (2nd), also included four slaves at his death in 1767. When Peter Van Derveer died prematurely in 1777, his estate was valued at 2050 English currency.<sup>25</sup>

Inventories also suggest comfortable interiors, especially as time passed. The Dutch habit of keeping goods and possessions and recycling materials provides a further glimpse into their thrifty ways. Family records of the Hoaglands and the Van Derveers containing deeds, mortgages, surveys sales receipts, agreements, etc., are intact. The latter family still has the template for their sawn porch balusters. Furniture, too, was stored away when out of date. Among the valued possessions saved by the Hoaglands was a segment of wall paneling with a small door, painted and decorated with traditional Dutch folk motifs. It was stored in the attic of the extant house until this century when it was sold c. 1926 to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (Addenda Sheet 5) This panel, which casts light on the interior of the Dutch house, may well have been painted by Daniel Hendrickson of Monmouth County, 1723-88, a multi-talented man who engaged in ornamental

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<sup>25</sup> NJA, Abstracts of Wills, Volumes III, IV, V.

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painting on woodwork, chairs, wagons, signs, etc. It is believed that Hendrickson painted a door with similar motifs for the Wyckoff family of Franklin Township, which is now at the Zimmerli Art Museum of Rutgers University.<sup>26</sup> That Hendrickson would come from another county to render his special service gives insight into the close ties between geographically separated Dutch communities. In this instance, the Wyckoffs of Somerset County were directly related to those of Monmouth County (later, Garret Wyckoff of the latter county would buy a River Road farm, Site # 8) and word of Hendrickson's talents were undoubtedly communicated.

The tight-fistedness of the Dutch was acknowledged by the Rev. Henry Wyckoff when he wrote his sister Nellie, the new bride of Christopher Hoagland (3rd) in early 19th century, to learn to loosen her grip on the purse strings, a habit she had learned, he stated, by example of their elders.<sup>27</sup>

This frugal nature--commented upon by their contemporaries as well--is evidenced in the salvaging of building components for re-use in less important locations of the current house or in an outbuilding. The original shingling of the Dutch wing of the Garret Beekman House (#16) was left undisturbed when the building was enlarged, with the additions sheathed around it with clapboard. (Present owners have preserved this feature.) An earlier heavily muntoned window was reinstalled in the attic. Raised-panel doors with H-L wings were rehung in new openings. A similar door with Dutch strap hinges was put to duty in the cellar of the Cornell-Nevius House (# 4). Raised-panel shutters of the John A. Beekman House (# 15) were made to serve as shelving in the barn. A batten door with Dutch strap hinges attached was used as flooring in the Baird House. (# 9) As late as this century, Augustus Christopher Hoagland salvaged the wood from the one-room school house when it was taken down to be able to build an extension on his kitchen. (#13) A pair of rafters in the same house appears to be of molded boards from an eaves. The wing of the Garret Hagaman House (# 1) was largely constructed of components saved from the replaced dwelling on the farm. The Laurence Van Derveer House (# 19) incorporated 9/6 sash and Federal mantelpieces from the house it replaced in 1866 As a result of the saving of these artifacts, considerably more is learned about earlier stages of appearance of these buildings.

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<sup>26</sup> Roderick M. Blackburn and Ruth Piwonka, Remembrance of Patria, pp. 272f. The panel from the Hoagland House is described and illustrated in Nina Fletcher Little, American Decorative Wall Painting 1700-1850 (new enlarged edition), pp. 12, 13, 18. A photograph of the panel is also included in Ursula C. Brecknell, Montgomery Township: an Historic Community, 1702-1972, p. 48.

<sup>27</sup> Hoagland Family Papers, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J.; Peter O.Wacker, The Cultural Geography of Eighteenth Century, New Jersey, No. 4 in New Jersey Historical Commission series, New Jersey's Revolutionary Experience, pp. 19f.

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### Lifeways: Public Service and Education

Although the Dutch as a whole preferred not to accept public office, choosing to apply themselves to their farms, they did not lack interest in governmental matters. After Hillsborough was separated out of the Western Precinct of the county and given the status of township, 1771, a handful of residents, mostly of River Road, drafted a petition to Governor Franklin requesting that the remainder of the Precinct also be made a township. Signers included Joseph Cornell, William and Benjamin Baird, two Christopher Hoaglands, Sr. and Jr., two Gerardus Beekmans, Sr. and Jr., Peter Van Derveer and Rulif and Hendrick Van Dike.<sup>28</sup> When the time came to take a stand for independence from England, practically all the Dutch of the area actively supported the war. William Baird and his four sons, all officers, made an important contribution, as did Hendrick Van Dike, who served on county committees and became a colonel in the state troops.

A surprising number of River Road families did fill public office through the years, particularly the Hoaglands, who over several generations assumed posts on all levels of government, including in the State Legislature. As early as 1745, shortly after settling in, William Baird and Isaac Skillman both became Road Commissioners. The mill owners Rulif Van Dike and his son Hendrick were members of the State Assembly in the 1770's. Hendrick was also municipal clerk, 1772-74, 1785-89, and member of Township Committee, 1792-1803. He was also elected Freeholder in 1799. Others elected to that office were Christopher Hoagland, Jr., Cornelius Cornell, Barent Cornell, Garret Van Derveer, Abram Van Derveer, Peter V.D. Van Derveer, and the miller J.W. Updike.<sup>29</sup>

Those who served on Township Committee included the early 19th-century miller Elias Covenhoven, John Baird, Garret Beekman, Cornelius Cornell, Garret and Lucas Van Derveer, Christopher Hoagland, 3rd, and Henry V. Hoagland, and Rynear A. Staats. Lucas Van Derveer and Peter V.D. Vanderveer also served as municipal clerk in the 1830's. Peter V.D. Van Derveer was appointed School Superintendent for the period 1849-52 and his cousin Laurence for 1857-59.<sup>30</sup>

There is some indication that these well-to-do families sought education for their children beyond that offered in the public school. The leading citizen of Montgomery Township in the 18th century, Cornelius Ten Broeck, hired tutors for his children. In a letter written to his sister in

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<sup>28</sup> Cited in Snell, History of Hunterdon and Somerset Counties, p. 841n.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., pp. 842ff.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

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early 19th century, the Rev. Henry Wyckoff urged her to write back to him, reminding her that she had been taught this skill. Most families owned a Dutch Bible. When Peter Labagh became dominie of the Harlingen Church, c. 1819, he founded a neighborhood library. (Labagh's daughter later married Laurence Van Derveer, and Labagh then farmed on River Road next to their homestead, Site # 19.) The Van Derveer-Campbell family papers indicate that both sons and daughters were sent to private schools away from home in the 19th century. Later in that century, some daughters were even given a college education, one of the Staats family attending Mount Holyoke College, the newly founded college for women.

It is possible as educated people these individuals more than others were agreeable to performing public service. They served side by side with such distinguished figures as John Witherspoon, president of the College of New Jersey (Princeton), and others elected from time to time from Princeton Township, which was a part of Montgomery Township until 1838. In numbers, however, the Dutch always were in the majority.

### Lifeways: the 19th-century Farm

The national character of the people--thriftiness, practicality, clannishness--appears to have prevailed also in the 19th century. That they were not indifferent to or detached from the larger world about them, however, is revealed in their choice of architectural styles, but the evidence suggests that a fashionable home and furnishings was not ordinarily a goal in life but a matter of affordability. Their life style was based foremost on having a prosperous farm.

The Van Derveer Family Papers are particularly informative about life in the 19th century. An inventory of Lucas Van Derveer's possessions in 1828 includes 4-1/2 tons of hay, 20 bushels of buckwheat, hay in the hovel (4 loads), 100 bunches of flax, 8 loads of stalks, and 135 bushels of corn. House furnishings included an 8-day clock, tea table and stand, carpet, curtains, looking glass, Franklin stove and other items. A bill of sale is for a pianoforte, with extra keys, harp stop, etc., packed and shipped, \$260. When the farm containing Sites #18 and 25 was sold by Peter V.D. to Peter L. Van Derveer in 1852, the seller was allowed to "come and gather the winter grain that may be growing on said premises," and buyer "shall furnish a barn for the threshing of said grain, the grain to be reserved" for him, and the straw "to be left on the premises." A contract between Peter V.D. Campbell and Peter L. Van Derveer in 1867 represented a transfer of ownership of 10 hogs, 11 lambs, 35 sheep, one bull, and a patented hay rake, patented threshing machine, a fanning mill, and 3 acres of potatoes, 9 acres of corn, 1 acre of buckwheat. The next year he sold sleigh, reaper and mower, farm wagon, wagon and rack, harrow, hay rake, 6 plows, one spring farm wagon, cultivator, wood sled, thresher, and windmill, and a pair of matched horses, one bay horse, one burrow, and one bull. Also included were hay rakes and forks, beetle and wedges, heavy leather net, 55 grain bags, a beef roller, grain cradles, and grass scythes.

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These farms were still large, although reduced from their original size to about 150 to 200 acres. They required help. Slaves had been employed at first, but as that institution was brought to an end through legislative acts, paid labor was substituted, and it is suspected that this included some at least of the men emancipated. The apprenticing of young boys--"bound boys"--to farmers in need of help was also practiced. One such contract remains in the Van Derveer papers. Housing was supplied to the farm help. Tenant houses survive at the Beekman and Hoagland farms (#41, #14), that at the latter said to have housed slaves at first. These two buildings continued to serve this purpose well into this century, and for a short time workers were also living in the Baird House (# 9) when owned by A.C. Hoagland in the 1920's. The custom of providing housing was still in effect in the 1930's when Duncan Campbell added a cottage to the Van Derveer-Campbell farm.

A road return of 1832 filed with a map indicates that farms were fenced with gates to confine livestock and also to mark boundaries. Garret Van Derveer, who lived next to No Pike Brook before his son Laurence took over the farm (# 19), had a house garden in front. Early photographs (undated but probably c. 1900) show neat fences at roadside in front of the residences. Today, in some instances, replacement fencing has been installed. An old gate survives at the Hagaman lane (Photo # 1 ), and the Cornell-Nevius House is set off by a picket fence (Photo # 5). These photographs also reveal the landscaping of the Victorian era as mainly consisting of shade trees around the house. At the Van Derveer-Campbell house, built 1862, "Lincoln pines" planted shortly afterward and maples still stand. An ancient buttonwood flanks the farm lane near the earlier section of the Garret Beekman house. Old catalpas are scattered about the grounds surrounding the Garret Hagaman House.

### Lifeways: 20th-century Continuum

Elderly retired residents still living on the home farm recall that in their fathers' time--late 19th century--the growing of grain crops was the primary activity, with hay raised in quantity to sell to city markets for livery stables, shipped via the Delaware and Raritan Canal at Griggstown. Welford Campbell planted an apple orchard and had a cider press. Campbell and the physician Abram Mosher also raised horses for their own pleasure and to sell to the carriage trade.<sup>31</sup>

Experiencing the loss of city markets for their produce to large western agriculturists, the local farmers gradually turned to dairying, becoming the regional suppliers of milk through creameries and dairies which operated local delivery routes and also shipped to the cities. Most

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<sup>31</sup> Personal interviews with Donald Staats and Duncan Campbell, River Road residents.

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farmers had herds of 15 to 20 cows. Milk, not pasteurized as a rule, was placed in 40-quart cans, which the farmers would stand at the end of their lanes or assigned places, to be picked up by a dairy agent. George Wyckoff, father of the present owner of Site #1, engaged in this middle-man activity on the side.<sup>32</sup>

The purchase of the Brokaw-Taggart farm (# 5; Addenda Sheet I) by Oswald Hoepfner, Sr., an artist, in 1916, for a country home, was a unique exception to prevailing land use. Hoepfner, a sculptor, who worked for John Donnelly and Co., in New York City, at first commuted daily to work by train from East Millstone. When the architect Cass Gilbert came to Donnelly as a client, he chose Hoepfner to sculpt ornament for the Woolworth Building. Hoepfner also sculpted figures for Grand Central Station and the Riverside Church. His son Oswald, current owner of the property, as an apprentice worked on the church spire, c. 1930. The name "Reverie Farms" was chosen by the senior Hoepfner to reflect his pleasurable state of mind when in the countryside. In the 1920's, he took up farming and was succeeded by his son.<sup>33</sup>

Dairying, too, went on the decline after 1925, when state inspectors, who checked on farms two or three times a year, began to find tuberculosis in cows, making their milk a health risk. The Campbells replaced their herd of Holsteins with Jerseys, but some discontinued dairying and switched to chicken and egg production. Oswald Hoepfner, Jr., who kept registered and certified Holsteins and pasteurized his milk, continued to sell to New Brunswick dairies until he determined there was more profit in having his own delivery route, which he continued until 1968. Farmers like Hoepfner and Duncan Campbell studied at the Agricultural College of Rutgers University, where the latter earned his degree. Those who turned to egg production found fulltime work sorting, candling, and crating as many as 300 eggs a day. Eggs and chickens were sold at the Flemington auction. During the Depression years, some had egg routes, going as far as Brooklyn on a day's trip.<sup>34</sup>

Outbuildings on some of these farms date to this era--the early decades of this century--and represent the advances in design of agricultural structures and the development of new features. Hoepfner's farm (Site # 5) has a milk-processing station largely built by himself and a round chicken brooder. As early as 1921, he purchased a barn through the Sears Roebuck catalog, which twice burnt down, and was finally replaced in 1926 with the extant gambrel-roofed building,

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<sup>32</sup> Personal interview with Mrs. Harry Staats, Staats Farm Road.

<sup>33</sup> Personal interview with Oswald Hoepfner, Jr., River Road.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*; personal interviews with Mrs. Harry Staats and Mrs. William Graeber, River Road; Terhune, Episodes in the History of Griggstown, p. 151.

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featuring widely flared eaves to protect grain sacks on the platform below. A similar barn on the Van Derveer-Campbell farm (# 18) was erected by Welford Campbell on the site of a Dutch barn that burnt to the ground. Cement silos on some farms mark the replacements of turn-of-century silos of wood staves. The over-sized hinged drop-down granary door installed on the Williamson barn (# 2) made loading the hay loft easier with mechanical equipment. The chicken house on wheels on the same farm was an innovative idea to avoid being taxed on a permanent structure. Most farmers installed milking machines, some of which still remain in cow barns.

Old lifeways continued up to the 1930s. Children attended the one-room school house until 1928. Although Updike discontinued milling at the end of the century, other nearby mills continued to operate, substituting motors for water power. A blacksmith shop in Millstone, owned by a Wyckoff, remained in business until his death in 1959. Electrification came to the farms in the 1930s, possibly egged on by a letter to Public Service asking why the rural areas were not receiving service. A local electrician wired houses on an individual basis, with a charge of \$100 a pole unless an electric stove was purchased from his store. Indoor plumbing, the water supplied from a tank filled by a generator-run windmill (Photo 8), also came in this period. Still seemingly displaying an inherited Dutch trait of practicality, not many farmers invested in automobiles during the first quarter of the century. Buggies, shays, surreys, buckboards, turn-out wagons, and bobsleds drawn by horse teams met their varying needs for transport.<sup>35</sup> Paving of River Road with macadam was begun in segments as late as the 1930s. Duncan Campbell was among the first to build a garage, in 1935, replacing the carriage house and horse stall on the site.

Up to this decade, practically all the farms still remained in the same family ownership, although perhaps reflecting the names of sons-in-law: Van Derveer (Campbell), John A. Beekman (Mosher), Wyckoff (Cortelyou), Hagaman (Wyckoff). During the Depression, a few sold their farms to outsiders, new immigrants in two cases, who infused new life into them, returning to dairying, raising beef cattle and sheep, and filling the barnyard with all manner of fowl. New barns, sheds, and utility structures were put up. Those who remained on also kept up with the times, Duncan Campbell as one example adding besides his 2-car garage, an equipment storage structure, tenant cottage for workers, and bull pen.

The rural way of life came to a close in the 1960's. The purchase of the river meadows by the State of New Jersey for Green Acres has been given as one reason for its demise since it took away the cow pastures. The closing of the neighborhood creameries was another. Only the Van Derveer-Campbell farm, which was honored in 1978 by the New Jersey Agricultural Society as a 200-year-old farm still in family ownership, and the Hagaman (Wyckoff) farm provide an

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<sup>35</sup> Terhune, Episodes in the History of Griggstown, chapter, "Farming in the Area," passim.;  
Down on the Farm, commentary by Stewart H. Holbrook.

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unbroken link with history. The John R. Staats Farm (1803) on Staats Farm Road, not included in this nomination, can also make this claim.

A few farms are still in operation by current owners; others are leased out. Horses--historically a part of the landscape--are still kept for pleasure on some properties. (# 1, 2, 15, 18) Sheep, chickens and other livestock are kept at Sites 2, 15, and 19. Under modern management and limited in size, these farms make for a tidier landscape today, but a sense of the past is visually imparted still through pastures in use, fields in cultivation, and the farm complexes themselves, which afford an overview of rural architecture in this Dutch cultural hearth. Up to 30 years ago, the names predominating in the valley showed a Dutch ancestry; and even today many of the same historic names--Beekman, Covenhoven (Conover), Nevius, Voorhees, Hoagland, Terhun Brokaw, and others--are encountered in the near community.

### Summary

The Dutch migration into the Millstone Valley began within 20 years of the creation of East New Jersey Province. The Dutch established themselves and remained on their farms into this century, making this their own community. Springing from the same heritage, they largely socialized among themselves, leading parallel lives, worshipping in the Reformed churches rooted by their ancestors, and sharing a common inherited viewpoint on life. Only in recent decades has their cultural presence waned. The landscape, nonetheless, preserves their imprint. River Road can still be said to exemplify that pattern of country farmsteads established along an artery that typifies the settlement of America. In architectural design, materials, and setting, the District has historical integrity. The survival of Dutch houses, barns, and burial grounds together on pioneer farms is rare, and the concentration of high-style houses of the Federal and Victorian eras along one rural road is probably exceptional.

Today, River Road is considered one of the most scenic drives in Somerset County, and the county intends to designate it such as a new classification. Its very charm has become a threat to its future, as builders seek to sell its vistas at considerable profit. An alarm has been given by residents, who have organized themselves in Montgomery as the River Road Association and with Hillsborough and Millstone Borough residents as the Millstone Valley Preservation Coalition. Both organizations meet on a periodic basis with local and county officials seeking to preserve the road alignment and present width, limit new road cuts, reduce vehicular speeds, and mount roadside markers proclaiming it to be a "road of history."

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Reproduction map made by C.J. Kupper, 1931, of map prepared for the Hon. Lord Sterling showing River Road from the Raritan to Griggstown. Somerset County Historical Society Collections.

Map by Hessian Lieutenant, in French, showing the military positions along River Road from Raritan as far as Hillsborough Road. Weston (or Van Nest's Mills) is mislabeled Middlebush. Hillsborough was an alternate name for Millstone Village. Somerset County Historical Society Collections.

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### BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The River Road Historic District extends from the intersection of River Road with Van Horne Road (Route 206), Montgomery Township, to Hillsborough Road, Hillsborough Township and lies on both sides of (Millstone) River Road, the road itself between these points being included in its entirety. Its western boundary includes the north, west, and south boundary lines of the following properties, beginning with Lot 3, Block 207, Hillsborough Township, the north line of which runs on Hillsborough Road. Progressing southward in Hillsborough Township, the following lots are included in their entirety, except for those two on which cemeteries (burial grounds) are located: Block 207, Lots 10-C and 12.01, and all the tombstones of the Cornell-Nevius cemetery encircled by an imaginary line in Lot 11, using driveway as right of way.

Continuing southward in Montgomery Township, the District's western boundary line follows the rear and side lines of the following properties: Lots 48-50 (combined), Block 700I; and Lots 11, 26, 25, and 28 in Block 800I, and so much of the road frontage to immediate south of the driveway of Lot 1 as to encompass the remaining tombstones of the Wyckoff-Cornell burying ground; in Block 18023, Lots 22 and 23 and the Hoagland Cemetery, the last defined by an enclosing stone wall, with driveway as right of way, in Lot 26; in Block 1800I, Lots 30 and 29, and the Skillman-Beekman Cemetery, enclosed by an iron fence with a right of way in Lot 27; Block 22001, Lots 21, 22, 20.01, 20.02, and 18, Block 22001, the last-mentioned lot having Van Horne Road as its westerly side line, marking the southern terminus of the District. The property edge of the right of way on the westerly side of (Millstone) River Road--the south lane--demarcates the west boundary line of the District between properties above-described, with the line drawn at road intersections in a straight course.

The east-southerly boundary line of the District starts in the Millstone River at the end point of a line of convenience drawn as an extension of Hillsborough Road (excluding, however, Lot 9 in 206 which it adjoins) to be contiguous in the river with the south boundary line of the Millstone Valley Agricultural Preservation District. The District line then continues southward upstream to the point of confluence with Bedens Brook and includes the Griggstown Bridge which spans it. All meadowland, flood plains, wooded embankments (some held under the New Jersey Green Acres program), as well as buildings are included, with the exception of a sewage treatment plant in Block 206, Lot 11-B, Hillsborough Township. The southerly boundary line follows the north embankment of Bedens Brook, from its mouth in the Millstone River westward until it reaches the western sideline of Lot 11, Block 23001, and then follows the said line northward to the southern edge of River Road and proceeds westerly along it to the west property line of Lot 12.01 at brook edge, Lots 11.01 and 12.01 being excluded. The boundary line then crosses the brook to its south

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embankment and continues westward up to the east piers of the bridge spanning the brook to carry Van Horne Road, at that point recrossing the brook northward to connect with the terminus line of River Road as it joins with Van Horne Road, creating the final boundary line.

#### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The River Road Historic Rural District serves to continue the recording of the settlement and history of the Millstone Valley in Somerset County by adding to the two contiguous Districts to the north the buildings, structures, and sites along the final southern segment of the road to its terminus. It has in common with these Districts the road and the river, both of which served primary roles in the original pattern of settlement. Both of these, therefore, provide unifying elements of the District. The same types of architectural styles, from 18th-century Dutch vernacular to late Victorian, are found within this District on farm tracts laid out on the inner side of the road as in the District to the north. These buildings and structures, some on large lots, some on small, have significance either individually or as part of a district.

The east-southerly boundary line of the District therefore is drawn to include the road in its entirety and segments of the Millstone River and Bedens Brook (which make a natural boundary) paralleling River Road to its end. Between these two elements, all the land is included. Most of it remains open retaining an aspect of its historic appearance as meadowland, pasture, flood plain and wooded river embankments. However, there are three separate clusters of modern houses in Montgomery Township, one at roadside on acre lots, the others set back on larger lots, and these are included, although non-contributing, as their overall impact is minimal. To a degree, their interruption of the open landscape serves to enhance the drama of its far reaches, and no further building will be permitted. The west-northerly boundary line is drawn to include only the historic buildings, structures, and sites on their present lots, as unfortunately modern developments and individually built houses have consumed some of the original farmland surrounding these buildings, which--though not necessarily detracting from the historic ambiance of the District, some on high embankments being almost totally screened from view--remain non-contributing to it. Open farmland between the included lots has also been excluded if it has received approval for development. Reviews of such development proposals, however, have been subject to comment by historical preservation commissions in both townships, and recommendations have been made to design future subdivision lots to preserve roadside foliage and screen new construction. Lots fronting on River Road must be at least two acres in Montgomery Township, five acres in Hillsborough Township, and will mainly have reverse frontage. New road cuts will be kept to absolute minimum. Montgomery Township, through its Landmarks Preservation Commission (recently formed), will create an Historic River Road District to be incorporated into its Master Plan, and Hillsborough's Historic Commission will consider extending its Historic District if this proposed River Road District is placed on the Registers of Historic Places.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

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River Road HD, Montgomery & Hillsborough  
Townships, Somerset County, NJ

UTM REFERENCES

A -18 529480 4473820  
B -18 530340 4474240  
C -18 530080 4474940  
D -18 530560 4475200  
E -18 530920 4474920  
F -18 532080 4476660  
G -18 533380 4477880  
H -18 533500 4477800  
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K -18 535980 4479500  
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M -18 532940 4477040  
N -18 532380 4476220  
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P -18 531600 4474040  
Q -18 531040 4474380  
R -18 530340 4473740  
S -18 529600 4473540

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National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

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River Road HD, Montgomery & Hillsborough Townships,  
Somerset County, NJ

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**RIVER ROAD HISTORIC RURAL DISTRICT**

Montgomery and Hillsborough Townships, Somerset County, New Jersey

Photographs

All photographs were taken by Arthur and Ursula Brecknell during 1988 and 1989, except for Numbers 25 and 26. These two were taken by John A. Carnevale, a professional photographer, in 1972. The details shown remain the same today. The negatives are in the files of Arthur Brecknell.

1. Millstone River Road flowing south in front of Garret Hagaman Farm.
2. Garret Hagaman House, facing southwest.
3. Williamson Farmstead, facing west.
4. Williamson Farmstead: wagon house/corncribs and workshed, facing south.
5. Cornell-Nevius House, facing west.
6. Brokaw-Taggart House, earlier section, facing west.
7. Brokaw-Taggart House, main block and 20th century addition, facing southwesterly.
8. Brokaw-Taggart House, windmill, facing westerly.
9. Rynear A. Staats House, facing west.
10. Wyckoff-Cornell Burial Ground, facing south.
11. Garret Wyckoff House, facing northwesterly.
12. Garret Wyckoff House, smoke house, facing west.
13. William Baird House, facing north.
14. William Baird House, showing sills side by side for original dwelling and first addition (facing south).

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River Road HD, Montgomery & Hillsborough  
Townships, Somerset County, NJ

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15. William Baird House, showing construction of cater-cornered fireplace in original dwelling, with beaded beam running through to rear wall (facing northwesterly).
16. William Baird House, original dwelling, showing daub of mud and straw for intersticing of interior wall (facing southerly).
17. William Baird Dutch Barn/Residence, as seen when looking north from decline. Threshing floor is on second level. Its north entrance is (was) at ground level.
18. Riverside (Griggstown) School House, 1920's, facing northwesterly.
19. Riverside (Griggstown) School House/Residence, facing northwesterly.
20. Riverside School House, c. 1928.
21. Christopher Hoagland House, facing west.
22. Christopher Hoagland Tenant House, facing west.
23. John A. Beekman House, facing easterly.
24. John A. Beekman House, outbuildings, facing northerly.
25. Garret Beekman House, facing northerly.
26. Garret Beekman House, earlier unit, and new leanto (facing easterly).
27. Garret Beekman House, fanlight and portion of doorway, facing north.
28. Garret Beekman House, stair balustrade, facing westerly.
29. Garret Beekman House, outbuildings, including Dutch barn, facing northwesterly.
30. Garret Beekman House, Interior of Dutch barn, showing bents and anchorbeam tongues, facing southerly.

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Continuation Sheet

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River Road HD, Montgomery & Hillsborough  
Townships, Somerset County, NJ

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31. Skillman-Beekman Cemetery, facing west.
  32. Van Derveer/Campbell House, facing north.
  33. Van Derveer/Campbell House, outbuildings behind house seen from end of farm lane, facing northwesterly.
  34. Van Derveer/Campbell House, storage end of cow barn showing ongoing use (farmer-owner Duncan Campbell and grandson of same name), facing north. (There were 36 barnyards cats at last count.)
  35. Van Derveer/Campbell House, showing distant cow pasture on sixty-plus acre farm, facing northwesterly.
  36. Van Derveer/Campbell House, showing baled hay and cow herd, facing north and taken from farm field well behind building complex.
  37. Laurence Van Derveer House, facing north.
  38. Laurence Van Derveer House, milk house and smoke house along lane, facing westerly.
  39. Covenhoven-Updike Miller's House, facing north.
  40. Site of mill and mill pond on Bedens Brook, with segment of stonewall on embankment, facing east.
  41. Unique modern house, "Back Acres 2," built around greenhouse atrium, facing westerly. Excluded from district.
  42. River Road, as it travels eastward paralleling Bedens Brook to south (right), showing hilly embankment (up to 10-12') on opposite side of road.
  43. Peter V.D. Van Derveer House, facing southeasterly. Bedens Brook is just beyond the far side of house. Great meadow lies back reaching to river. Ten Mile Mountain is seen on far side of river.
  44. Cluster of modern houses to north of Peter V.D. Van Derveer House which are screened from River Road by hedges and other thick plantings as seen on left.

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River Road HD, Montgomery & Hillsborough  
Townships, Somerset County, NJ

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45. Same cluster of houses as seen in Photo #44, facing southerly and showing their dense screening from River Road.
46. Modern ranch and horse rink (297 River Road), facing east, showing how unobtrusive it is as noncontributing building.
47. Great meadow, thought to be the "Punch Bowl Meadow" mentioned in deed of 1702 and based on description of boundary lines between buyers.
48. Typical view of River Road, foliage-lined for most part, facing north.
49. Tenant House of John A. Beekman farmstead of 19th century, enlarged and altered, facing south. Another great meadow surrounds it.
50. Griggstown Bridge over Millstone River. Embankment in foreground is at roadside facing north.
51. Griggstown Bridge, showing River Road at its far end. Historic marker, erected by Montgomery Township, tells of road's Revolutionary War role.
52. Cluster of modern houses on road north of Staats Farm Road, looking northeasterly, partially screened by plantings.
53. Floribunda and other wild foliage on top of embankment, facing north. Typical scene in Hillsborough.
54. View of River (distant center), showing roadside embankment descending to a sunlit flood plain, facing east. Typical scene in Hillsborough.
55. Road's end, showing mill pond, miller's house, and road between, facing north from far side of Bedens Brook.
56. Mill pond site on Bedens Brook, with Van Horne Road (Route 206) bridge in distance, facing westward.

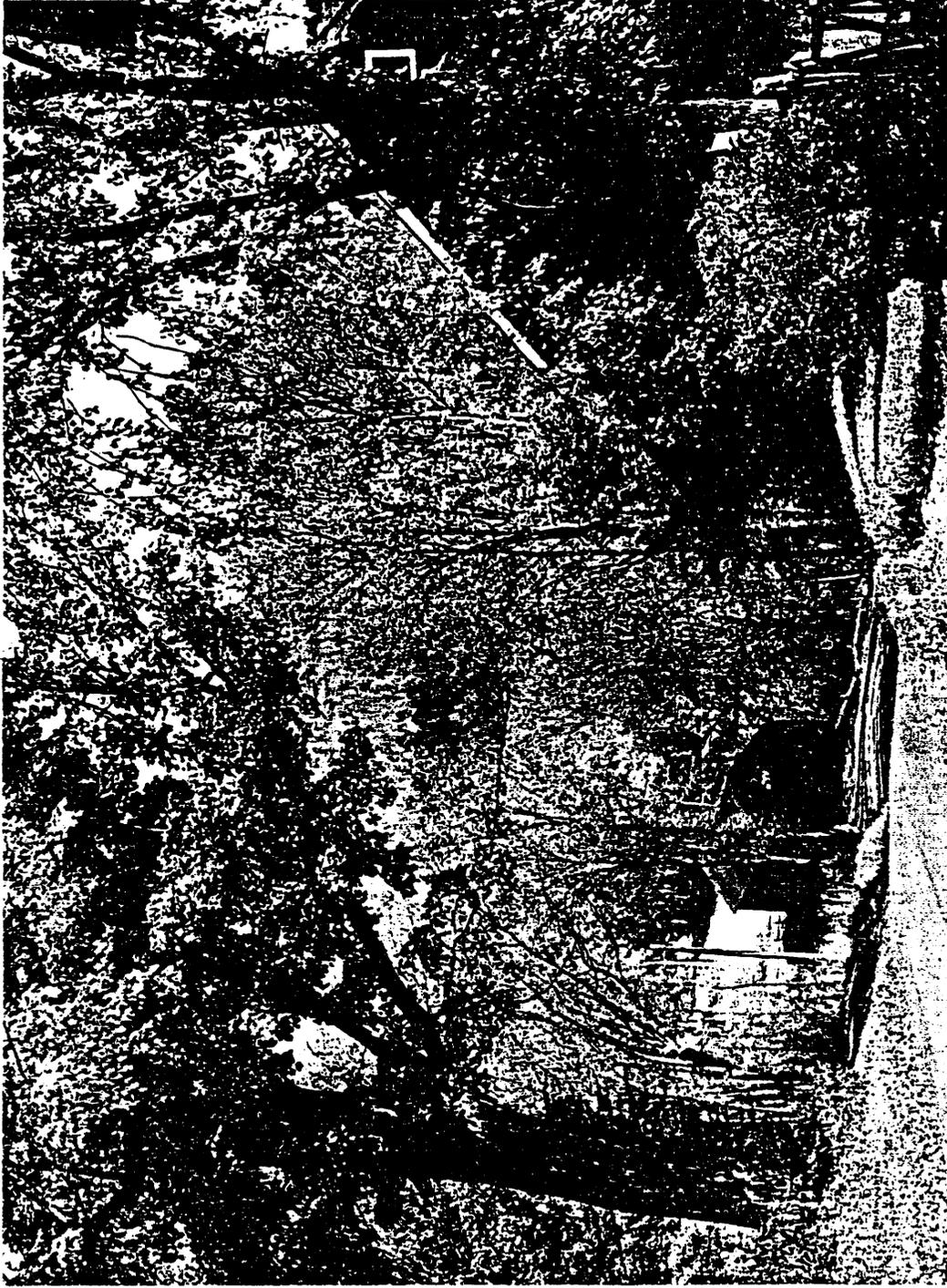
RIVER ROAD

HISTORIC

RURAL DISTRICT

Montgomery and  
Hillsborough  
Townships,  
Somerset County, N.J.

Addenda Sheet 1



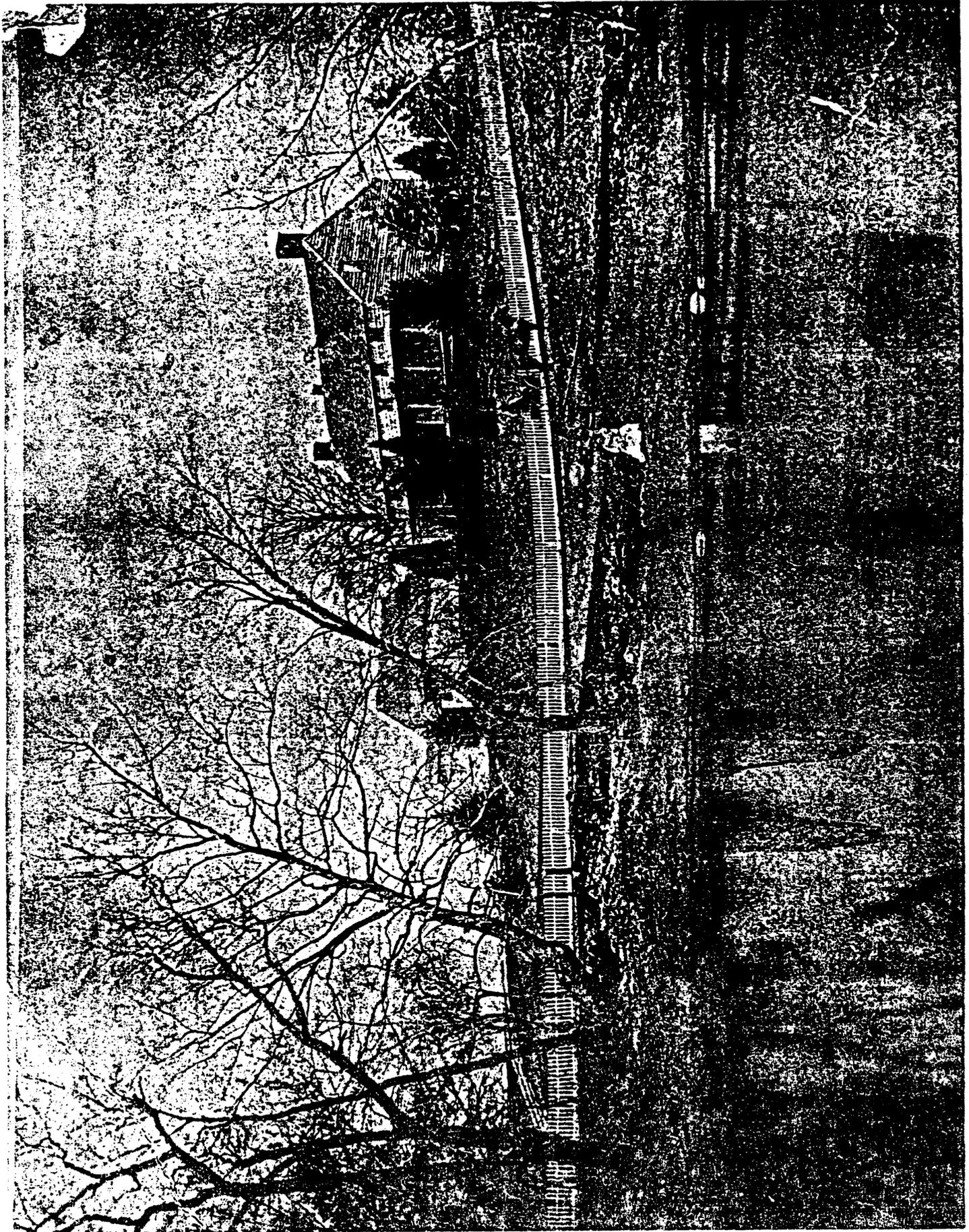
## REVERIE FARMS DAIRY

O. HOEPFNER, Prop.

RIVER ROAD • BELLE MEAD, NEW JERSEY

DIAL 359-5556

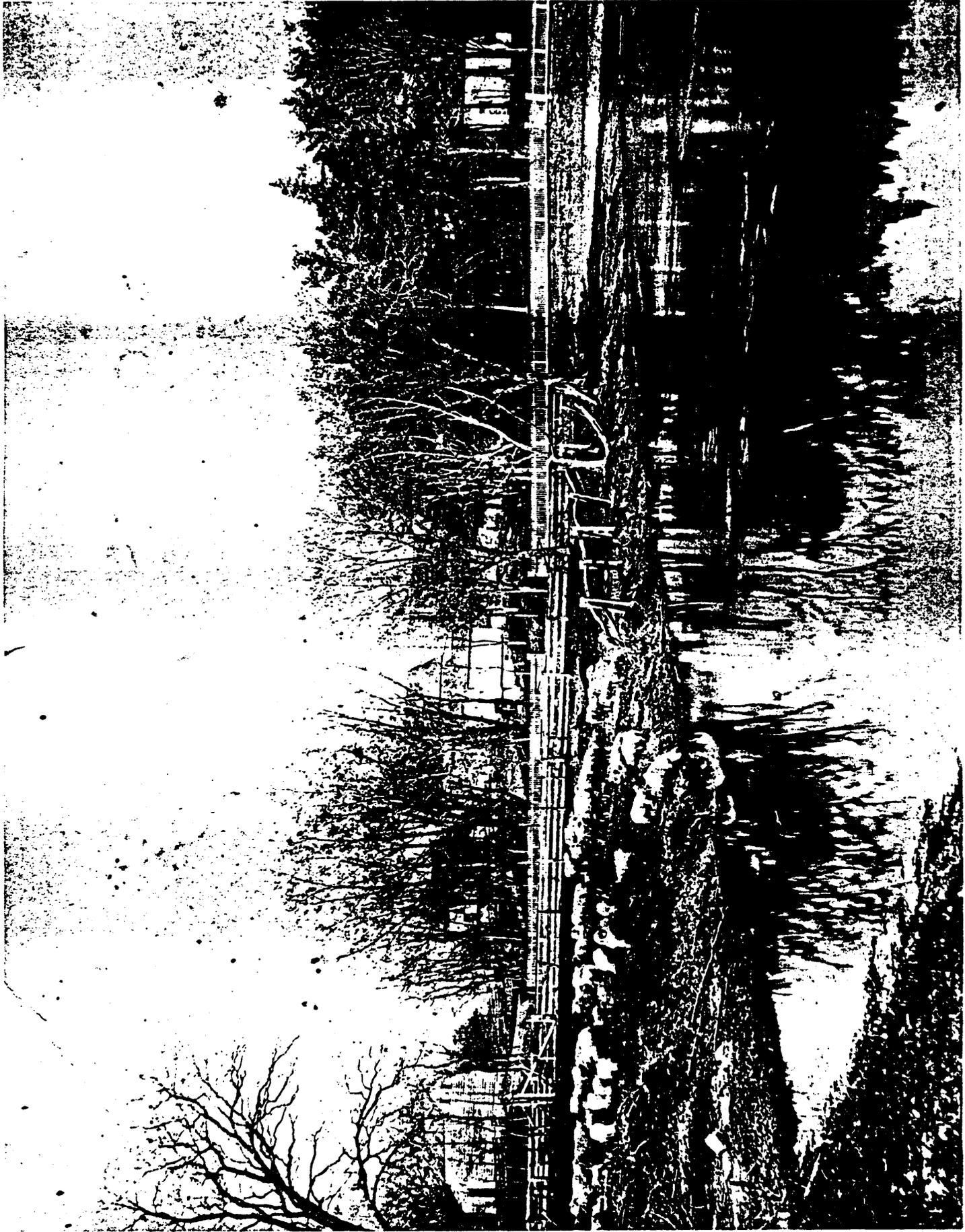
The Brokaw-Taggart Farmstead, about 1960, when owner Mr. Hoepfner operated his dairy.



RIVER ROAD HISTORIC RURAL DISTRICT  
Montgomery and Hillsborough Townships

Addenda Sheet 2

The William Baird House and Dutch Barn  
From an early photograph



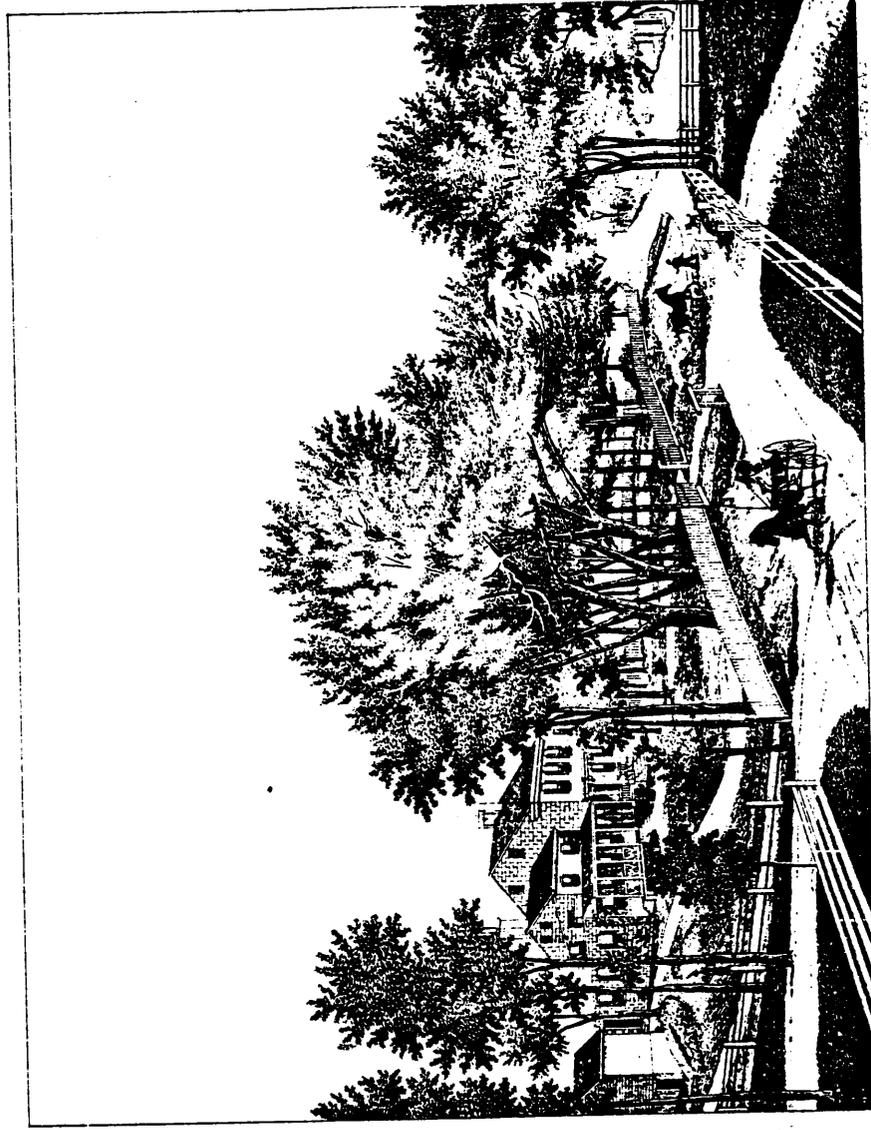
RIVER ROAD HISTORIC RURAL DISTRICT  
Montgomery and Hillsborough Townships  
Somerset County, N.J.

Addenda Sheet 3      The Christopher Hoagland Farmstead  
from an early photograph

RIVER ROAD HISTORIC RURAL DISTRICT  
Montgomery and Hillsborough Townships  
Somerset County, N.J.

Addenda Sheet 4 4

The Christopher Hoagland House, 1881  
as illustrated in James P. Snell,  
History of Hunterdon and Somerset  
Counties



RES. OF HENRY V. HOAGLAND, MONTGOMERY TWP., SOMERSET CO., N.J.

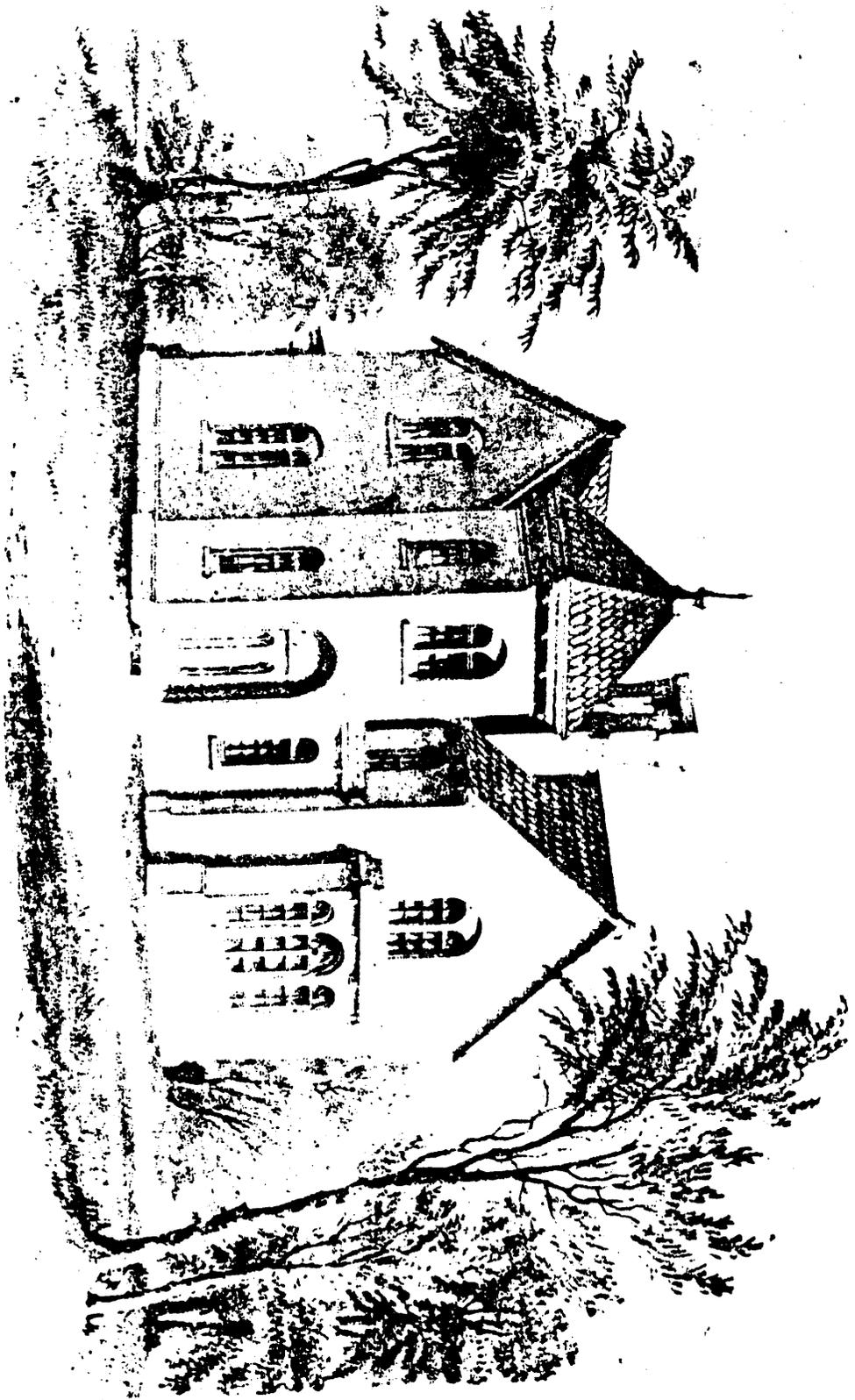
Photograph of paneled and painted  
wall segment found stored in  
Christopher Hoagland House attic and  
sold to Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
New York, as reproduced in Montgomery  
Township, an Historic Community, 1972



*The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1925*

RIVER ROAD HISTORIC RURAL DISTRICT  
Montgomery and Hillsborough Townships  
Somerset County, New York  
DESIGN No. 1851.

Addenda Sheet 6  
William H. Ranlett,  
The Architect, 1851  
Van Derveer/Campbell House  
PLATE 35.  
VOL. 2.



COTTAGE VILLA

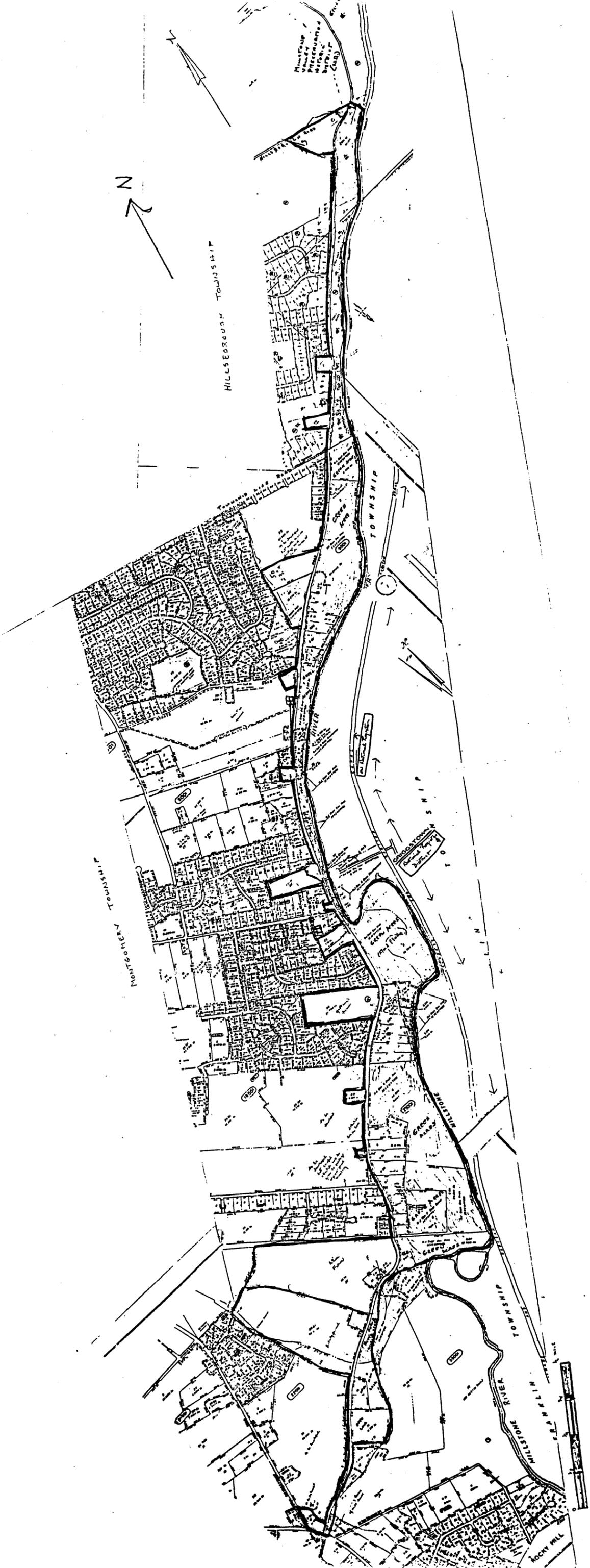
*in the Anglo-Norman Style*



RIVER ROAD HISTORIC RURAL DISTRICT  
Montgomery and Hillsborough Townships  
Somerset County, N. J.

Addenda Sheet 7

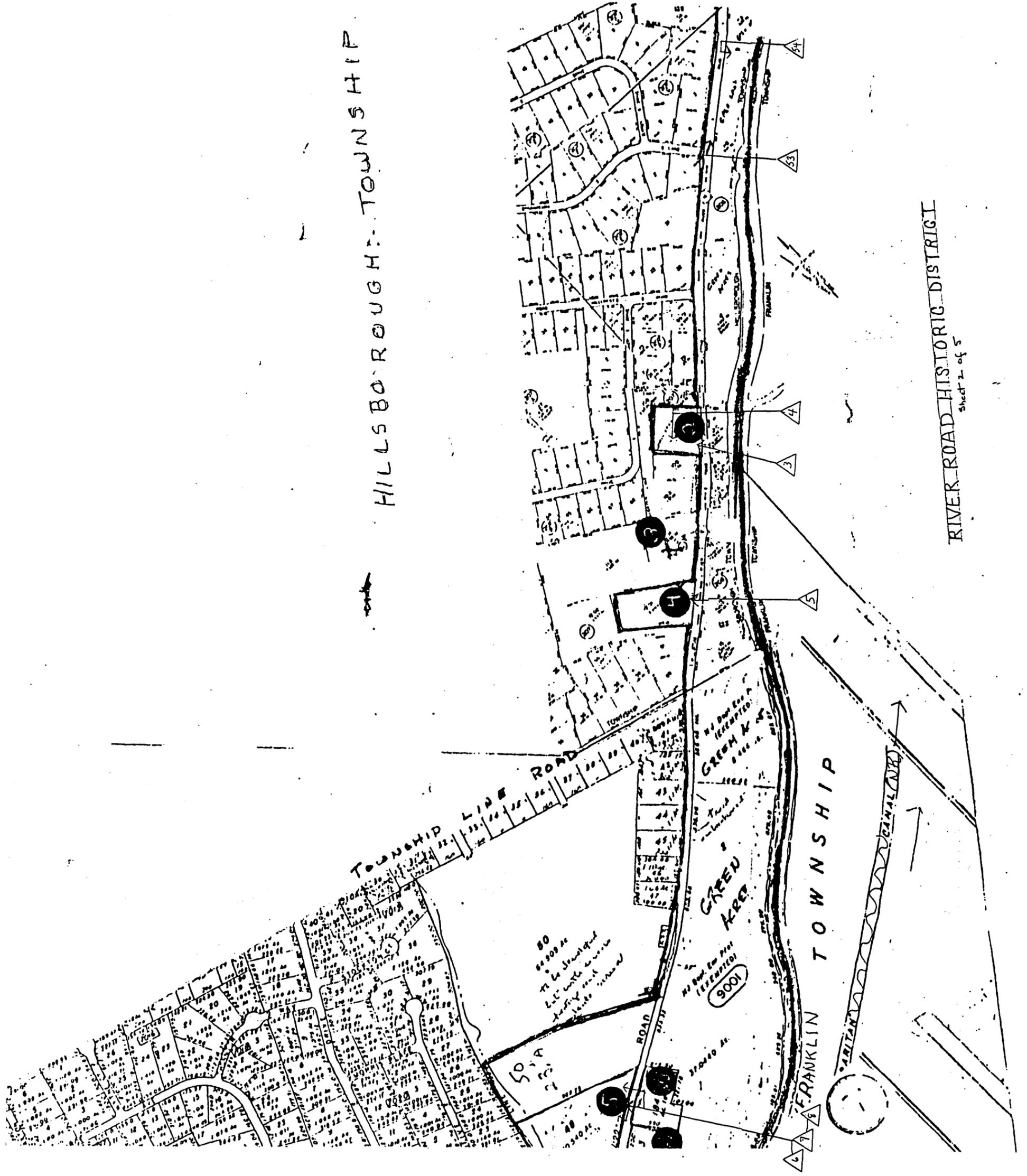
The Laurence Van Derveer House  
From an early photograph  
before the porch addition



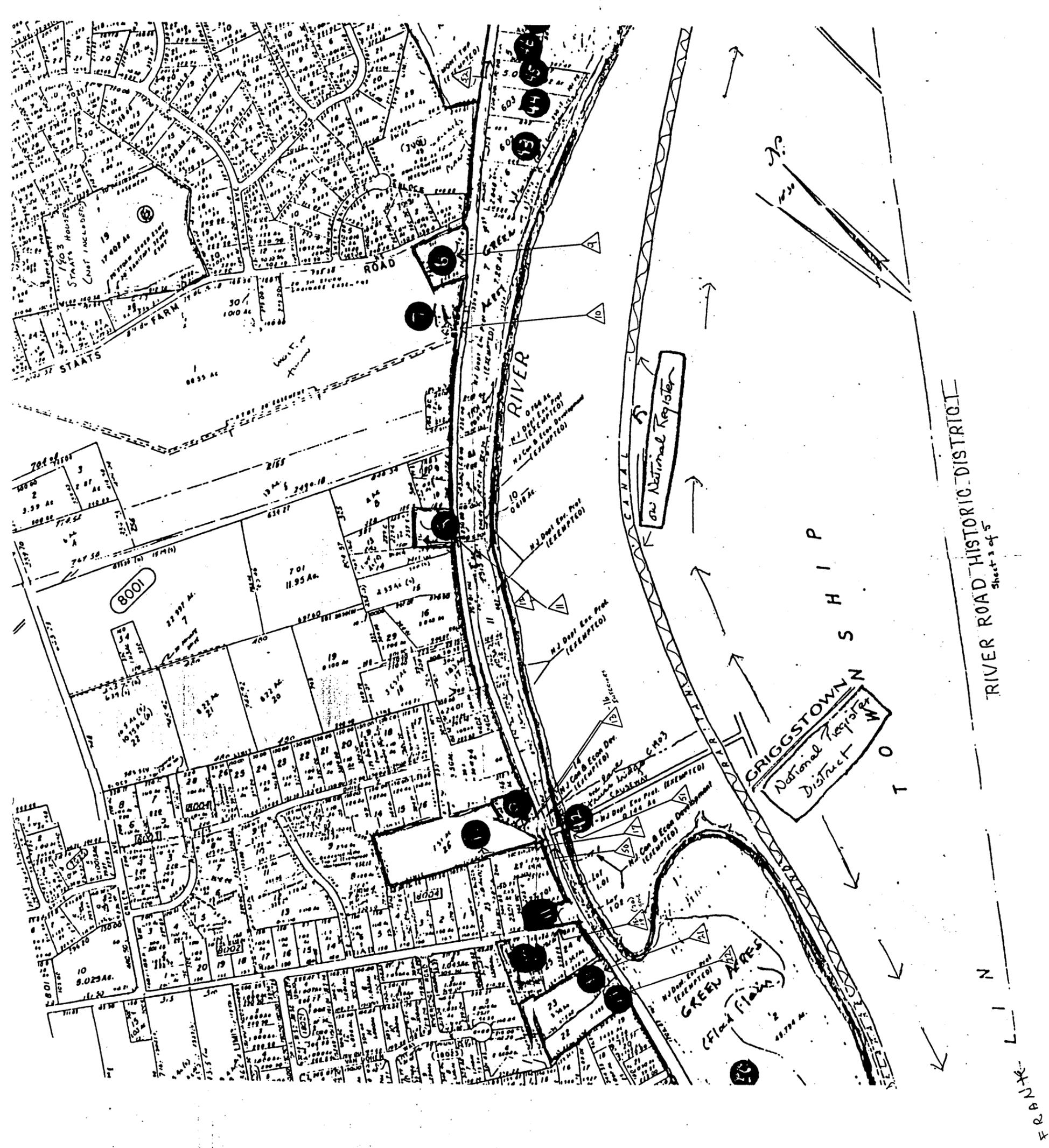
RIVER ROAD HISTORIC RURAL DISTRICT  
MONTGOMERY & HILLSBOROUGH TOWNSHIPS, SOMERSET CO., N.J.



HILLSBOROUGH TOWNSHIP



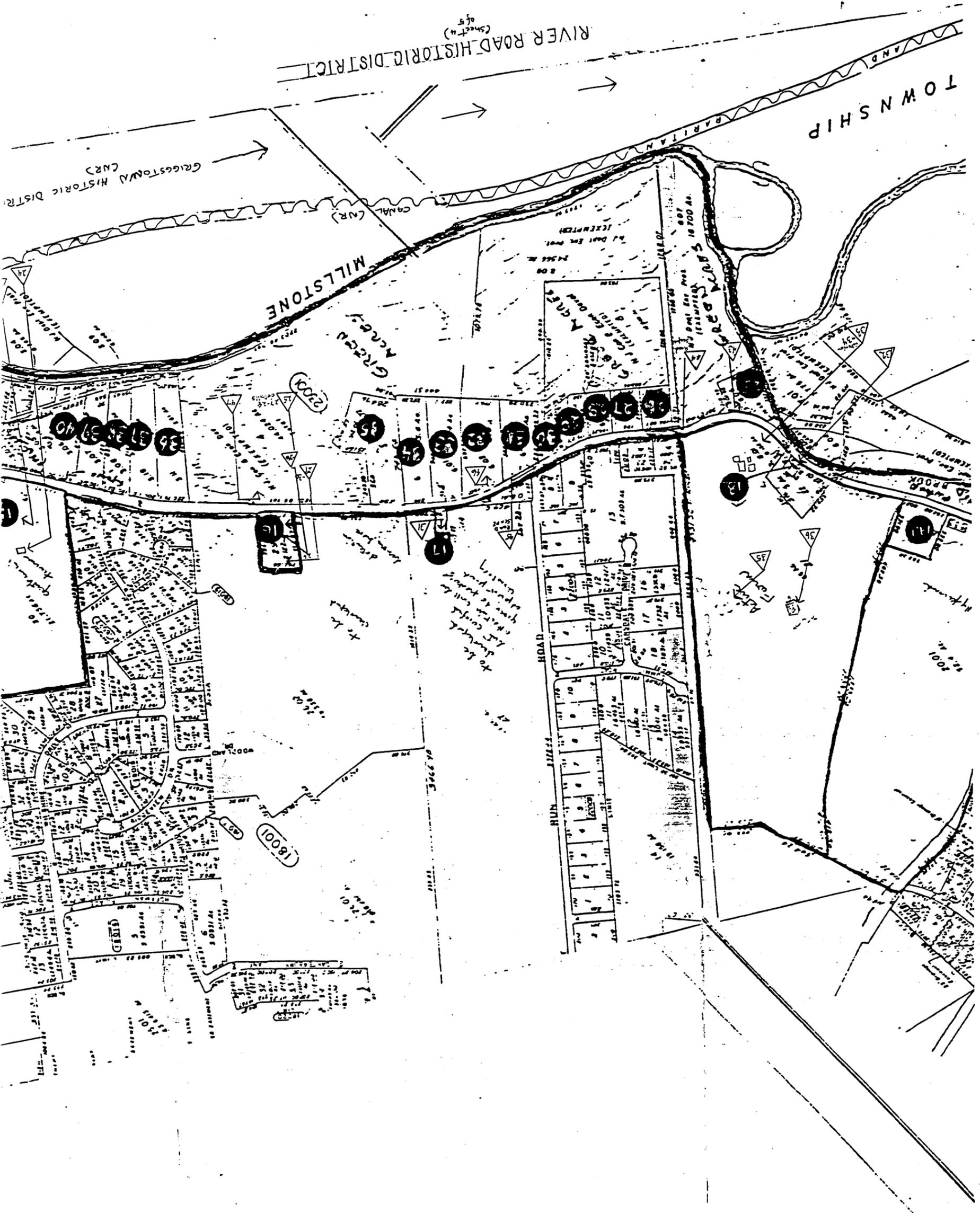
RIVER ROAD HISTORIC DISTRICT  
Sheet 2 of 5

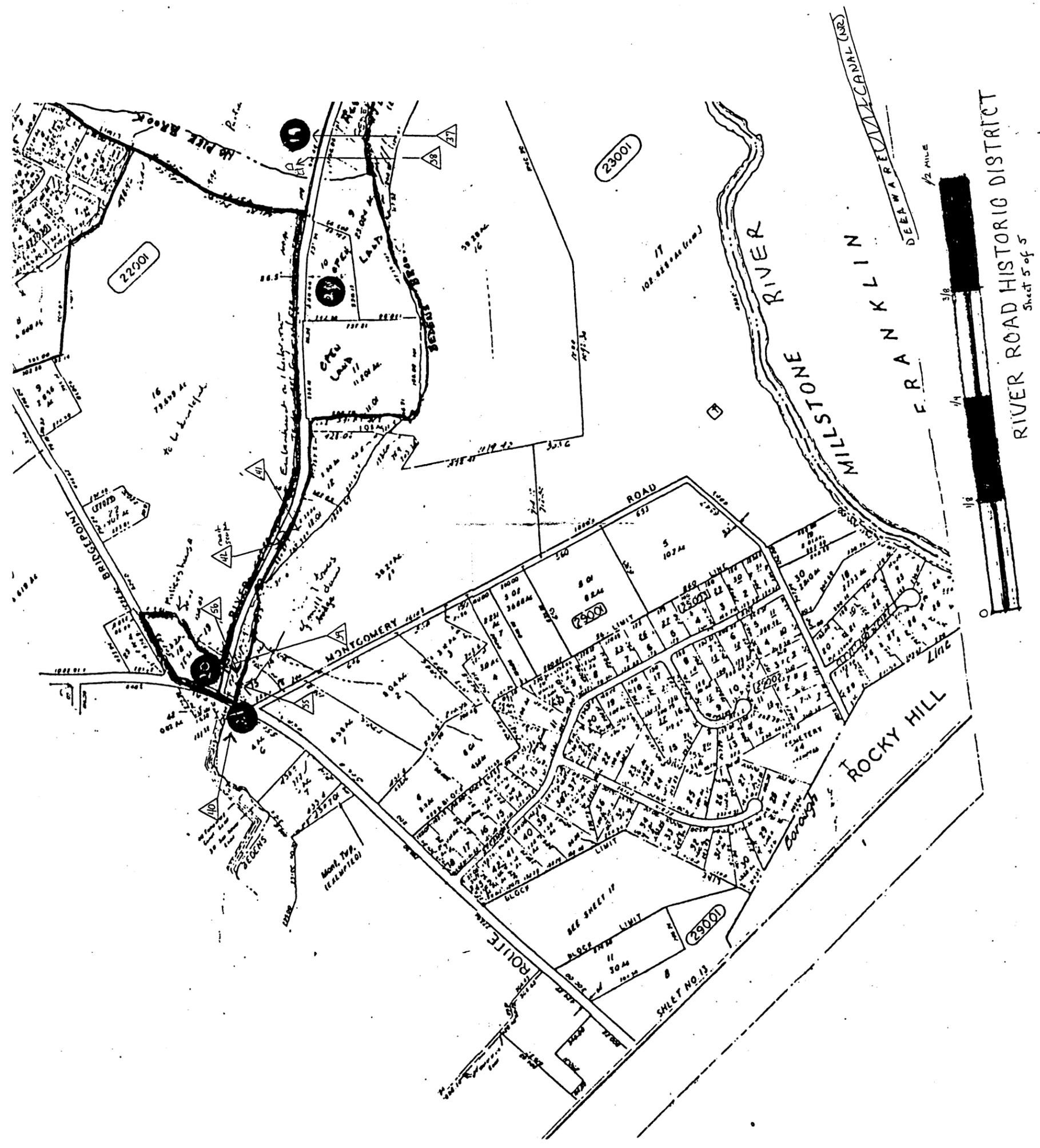


RIVER ROAD HISTORIC DISTRICT

Sheet 3 of 5

FRANKLIN





RIVER ROAD HISTORIC DISTRICT  
 Sheet 5 of 5