

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 68 Lafayette Avenue (formerly 68 Morris Avenue)

City or town: Morristown

State: New Jersey Code: 034 County: Morris Code: 027 Zip Code: 07960

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___ A ___ B X C ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Morris County, NJ
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private: ☒ X
Public – Local ☐
Public – State ☐
Public – Federal ☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s) ☒ X
District ☐
Site ☐
Structure ☐
Object ☐

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Morris County, NJ
County and State

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

1 – Acorn Hall Main House

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

AGRICULTURE

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Museum

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Morris County, NJ
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: STONE

Walls: WOOD: Clapboard

Roof: ASPHALT: Shingles

Trim: WOOD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Acorn Hall is situated on a large lot on Lafayette Avenue, a major artery to Morristown's central business district. The front of the house faces south toward Lafayette Avenue. The house sits back from the street with an expansive front lawn, has minimal landscaping with shrubbery set against the house, and has both small and large trees scattered on the property (Photos 0001 and 0002). There is a circular drive from the street that provides vehicular access to the parking lot located along the west side of the property. The three-story frame Acorn Hall exemplifies grand Italianate style architecture. Distinctive of the style, the house has low-pitched gable roofs with wide overhanging eaves supported by decorative brackets; tall, narrow paired windows and

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

doors; and a tower. The site also includes a contributing Carriage House located northwest of the house, a non-contributing Gazebo located north of the house, and a contributing foundation from a greenhouse located east of the Carriage House.

Narrative Description

Acorn Hall (Contributing)

Acorn Hall today largely reflects major renovations that were completed c.1860-1870, and limited information is known about its original appearance. It originally consisted of a simple four-square, two-and-one-half-story building with a one-story rear wing projecting from the east elevation, and likely had front and rear porches. The major renovations in the 1860s-1870s included addition of the front tower including modifying the roofline, expansion of the east wing forward and through the addition of a second floor and attic, addition of the bay window at the west elevation, addition of the one-story wing at the west end of the north elevation, expansion and location of the kitchen to the basement, the addition of a second-floor bathroom, and reconfiguration and possible expansion of the front and rear porches.

Site

During the expansion Acorn Hall in 1860-1870, the landscape was developed. The historic images and existing conditions reveal the house was (and still is) sited at the top of a north-facing slope with a deep front yard. The yard was relatively level featuring a crescent-shaped driveway and a circular planting bed. A wooden fence ran along the east property line, and a concrete and metal fence ran along the property line at the sidewalk with a hedge set behind the fence. Immediately to the rear of the property there were a number of outbuildings including a carriage house, greenhouse, stable, and hennery, along with a small garden plot and orchard; the remaining back acreage remained dense woods. Today, the carriage house and the foundation of the greenhouse remain. Unfortunately, the dense woods were decimated by the effects of Superstorm Sandy in 2012.

In 1971 at the time the Morris County Historical Society took control of the property, the Home Garden Club of Morristown implemented a garden design plan that was to reflect the tastes and practices of the mid-nineteenth century. At that time, plantings were installed that screened the property from the street, and a curvilinear scheme was introduced that added numerous plants in beds around the foundation of the house and the rear lawn. Terracing at the rear and the gazebo were also added at that time. Other than a few key features, such as the mature trees in the front lawn, the circular drive, the house's relationship to the street and its neighbors, and the retention of 5.8 of the Crane's original 9 acres, the current landscape at Acorn Hall does not fully reflect its historical layout with regard to the landscape design as implemented by Augustus Crane.¹

¹ Webster Associates, Landscape Architects. "Acorn Hall Landscape Preservation Plan." July 2012, Revised November 2012.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

Exterior

Acorn Hall is composed of a three-bay-wide, three-story, main section with a two-bay, two-and-one-half-story wing at its east end. Each section has a side-gable roof. Projecting from the west end of the north elevation is a one-bay wide, one-story addition (c.1860-1870), and projecting from the north end of the west elevation is a one-story bay window (c.1860-1870). The main section features a center projecting octagonal tower (c.1860-1870) that rises well above the roof at the front elevation and is in-line with the center hall at the interior (Photo 0003). The house is wood frame construction. Each elevation is clad with narrow clapboard and is set primarily on a stone foundation. The corner boards and skirt board are set flush with the siding, creating a frame around the clapboard. Corner boards run at each edge of the central tower bay. The full-width front verandah and the back porch (both modified c.1860-1870) have thick, flat, scroll-cut wood trim supports; spandrels; and an oval-cut frieze (Photo 0004). The visible portions of the foundations at the porches and south bay projection are brick, while the back porch has a stone foundation below grade. The exterior of Acorn Hall has an overall large, simple massing with decorative detailing. Although the window types vary, the fenestration pattern of the house is fairly regular. The majority of windows, including all of the paired windows, and the French doors were installed during the c.1860-1870 renovations. The exterior detailing of each elevation including the treatment of the material is consistent. Most of the windows have decorative shutters and have corbels beneath the exterior sill. There are small brackets that support the overhanging eaves of the dormer roofs, the tower roof, and the eaves of the first-floor-level bay roofs (Photo 0005). All of the windows have thick molded trim.

Roof

The main and east wing gable roofs are clad with slate shingles, and the ridges of both run east/west. The roofs are low-pitched and have wide overhanging eaves supported by decorative brackets. The tower has a hipped roof clad with metal with a cast iron finial at the center. Terne-coated stainless steel (TCS) flat-seam metal roofing is used over the porches and at the small, one-story north addition. The house has three brick chimneys. The chimney at the east wing is centered on the ridge and located at the center of the roof. The other two chimneys are set at either end of the main gable roof. The roof drainage is composed of TCS gutters and leaders. All leaders flow into leader sleeves to an underground drainage system. The porch roofs are fitted with built-in gutters and integral leaders.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Morris County, NJ
County and State

Elevations

South Elevation (Photo 0006)

The south elevation serves as the primary façade and displays symmetry through its fenestration pattern, ornamentation, and overall massing. All of the windows on the south elevation at the first and second floor levels have shutters. The main section of the house has a full-width front verandah and a grand entry at the projecting octagonal tower (c.1860-1870). The verandah has thick, flat, scroll-cut wood trim supports; spandrels; and an oval-cut trim frieze. Above the verandah is a detailed balustrade with similar thick, flat decorative trim in place of balusters. The shape of the porch mimics that of the house, projecting in a bay shape at the center. The verandah is three bays wide. At the entry are tall paired doors with large-pane glazing, a transom, and elaborate surround above and around them. In the outer bays at the first floor are tall paired French doors (Photo 0007). The doors have decorative asymmetrical glazing where the glass is divided into twelve panes of different sizes.

At the second floor above the French doors are tall paired windows. All of the windows at the second floor level are atypical four-over-four hung wood sashes with decorative asymmetrical glazing reflective of the French doors below. Centered at the second floor are paired, arched windows with an individual bracketed roof. The scroll-sawn brackets that support this small roof are the largest and most ornate of the building.

At the third floor level of the center projecting bay of the main building is a tall eight-sided tower (c.1860-1870). At the center bay is a set of tall paired one-over-one hung wood sash round-arched windows. The hipped tower roof is octagonal in shape with wide overhanging eaves supported by decorative scroll-sawn brackets; this fenestration pattern continues onto the east and west sides of the tower. Beneath the eaves of the tower roof, in between each bracket, are decorative panels with single-pane fixed windows at each corner instead of panels. To either side of the tower at the third-floor level is a small gable dormer with decorative brackets and two-over-two pointed-arch hung wood windows; the dormers were likely added c.1860-1870.

Centered on the first floor level of the east wing is a projecting five-sided bay with tall, round-arched windows on three of the five sides (Photo 0008). The central bay wall is the widest side and features paired one-over-one hung wood sashes; these are the only windows that do not have shutters. The other two windows on either side of the center bay wall are single one-over-one hung wood sashes. In the round-arched top of each window are small half-round top shutters. Below each bay window are panels and thick surrounds. At the second floor of the wing are a set of tall paired windows in each bay reflective of those on the main section. A single central dormer with an arched six-over-six hung wood window and less distinctive brackets punctuate the roof.

West Elevation (Photo 0009)

The fenestration on the west elevation is irregular. At the foundation in the south and center bays is a rectangular basement window (Photo 0010). At the first-floor level the

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

two southern bays contain a wider, shorter, two-over-two hung sash window; centered between them is a brick chimney. At the north bay is a five-sided projecting bay with detail and a fenestration pattern reflective of that on the five-sided bay at the south elevation (c.1860-1870). The windows of this bay are tall, rectangular one-over-one hung wood sashes with shoulder heads. In the single bay at the north block addition (c.1860-1870) there is a small over window with decorative trim and an oval shutter.

The outer bays at the second floor each contain a six-over-six hung wood sash window. In the center bay is a large oval with decorative trim and a shutter. Centered at the attic level are two small, round-arched, six-over-six hung wood sash windows. In the arched top of the windows are small half-round top shutters.

North Elevation (Photo 0011)

Extending east from the north block addition (c.1860-1870) is a one-story, four-bay-wide porch. The ornate detailing of the porch echoes that of the south (front) verandah (modified c.1860-1870). The porch wood railing has diamond-cut thin trim in place of balusters. Unlike the verandah openings, the porch openings are not arched, but have scroll-sawn spandrels. Wide wood steps access the porch off-centered towards the east. West of the stairs below the porch is a long, narrow, multi-lite wood basement window, while east of the stairs is a wood lattice vent covering the basement level opening. At the west end of the porch, stone steps lead down underneath the porch to access the basement level.

Centered at the north block addition (c.1860-1870) is a set of four tall, narrow casement windows with the decorative glazing exhibited on the paired windows on the south elevation. In the center bay of the main section is a pair of doors reflective of the main, front entry. East of the doors is a low oval window with decorative trim and a shutter. In the east bay of the main section is a wide eight-over-eight hung wood sash window with a transom. The west bay of the wing contains a single four-paneled wood door with a transom. East of this is another wide eight-over-eight hung wood sash window with a transom.

At the second floor level, there are paired hung wood sashes in each bay of the main section and wing. The paired windows in the west bay of the wing are taller than the rest of the second floor windows. The decorative glazing of the paired windows at the second floor level reflects that of that paired windows on the south elevation. Projecting from the main gable roof, centered above the paired second-floor windows, are three symmetrically placed gable dormers reflective of those at the south elevation.

East Elevation (Photo 0012)

There are two symmetrical bays at the east wing. The north and south bays at the first floor each contain a single two-over-two hung wood sash windows. At the second floor level of the wing are two six-over-six hung wood sash windows set above the first floor

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

windows. Centered in the gable end of the wing is a single round-arched, six-over-six hung wood sash window with half-round top shutters.

In the one visible bay at the south end of the main section is a single two-over-two hung wood sash window at the first floor. At the second floor above is a six-over-six hung wood sash window.

Interior

General

The interior of the main section of Acorn Hall is composed of a basement, two floors of living space, and an attic. The main section is rectangular in shape with a center-hall plan, plus the small, one-story rear block addition. A central straight-run staircase connects the first and second floors within the main section. The original layout of the main section consisted of a simpler four-square, center-hall plan that lacked the present front foyer, the west-side bay window, and the north block addition. The smaller east wing is composed of two floors of living space and attic set over a crawlspace. The dog-leg Rear Stair connects all floors from basement level to the attic. The original interior layout of the east wing consisted of only the smaller rear portion with one or two rooms at the first floor; the exact configuration is unknown.

Basement

The basement of Acorn Hall is divided into many spaces of varying sizes and reflects the growth of the building in over two major construction builds. The areas under the east wing are crawlspace where the remaining basement under the main section is full height. Interior access is only via the dog-leg Rear Stair at the northwest corner of the east wing that connects to the adjacent full-height basement area. There is a direct entrance to the exterior along the north wall of the main section.

Storage 1 (former Kitchen)

Storage Room 1 occupies the southeast portion of the main section basement. The room is entered from the Rear Stair at the northeast corner of the room. Shelving occupies most of the east wall. The west wall is mainly finished with plaster over brick with fieldstone under the window. The brick fireplace located to the north of the window is painted white. The southwest portion of the south wall is fieldstone and the top half is coated with either a lime paint or white wash. The southeast portion of the south wall is finished with a rough-coat plaster. The north wall is rough-coat plaster over brick. The east wall is constructed of a rough-coat plaster over brick with a small section of the east wall being fieldstone. The floor is concrete. The ceiling is rough-coat plaster.

Storage 1A (Wine Cellar)

Storage Room 1A occupies the southeast corner of the basement under the front porch. The room is accessed from Storage Room 1. The floor is concrete. The walls are rough-coat plaster over brick. The arched ceiling is stucco over brick.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

Mechanical Room

The Mechanical Room occupies the southwest corner of the basement. The room is entered from Storage Room 1. There is a window at the south end of the east wall. The floor is concrete. The north wall is brick. The south wall is fieldstone. The east wall is brick finished with either white wash or lime paint. The west wall is half fieldstone and brick at the fireplace support. The floor is concrete. The ceiling is rough-coat plaster.

Utility Room

This Utility Room occupies the center section of the west side of the basement between the Mechanical Room and Storage Room 2. The room is accessed from Storage Room 1. A window is located at the south end of the east wall. The floor is concrete. The wood base is a little over five inches tall on the west wall and is seven inches tall on the east wall. The north, south and east walls are brick finished with either lime paint or whitewash. The west wall is composite board. The ceiling is rough-coat plaster.

Bath

The Bathroom is accessed from the Utility Room. The floor is wood. The walls are composite board. The ceiling is plaster.

Storage 2

Storage Room 2 occupies the northwest corner of the basement. The room is accessed from Storage Room 3. There are two windows at the north wall. The floor is concrete. The south and east walls are brick finished with either lime paint or white wash. The west wall is fieldstone and brick. The north wall is fieldstone finished with either lime paint or white wash. The ceiling is rough-coat plaster.

Storage 3

Storage Room 3 is in the center of the north portion of the basement. The room is accessed from Storage Room 1, and there is an exterior door at the north wall. Two windows flank the exterior door. The floor is concrete. There is a simple base with simple molding. The north and west walls are finished with plaster. The east wall is finished with plaster and exposed brick. The ceiling is rough-coat plaster.

Storage 4

Storage Room 4 occupies the northeast corner of the basement. The room is accessed from Storage Room 3. There is a window at the north wall. The floor is concrete. All walls are plaster-coated brick. The brick is exposed at the west wall. The east wall has shelving attached to plywood. The south wall has shelving attached to plywood and several wood planks attached to the wall. The ceiling is rough-coat plaster.

Rear Stair

The Rear Stair is located within the east wing, but leads to Storage Room 1 within the main section. The floor is concrete. There is a plain base molding at the south wall and stairs. There is quarter-round molding at the landing only. All walls are finished with

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

plaster except for the west wall, which is plaster finished and masonry. The ceiling is plaster. The tread and risers are painted wood, and there is a turned wood balustrade with curved wood railing.

First Floor

The interior arrangement of the first floor is established by its centrally located front and rear door with corresponding Center Hall. To the west of the Center Hall are two adjacent Parlors and a Gift Shop; all three rooms combined extend across the full depth of the house. To the east of the Center Hall is located the Library, which runs about one-half the depth of the house. To the east of the Library is the Dining Room. The Office is located to the north of the Dining Room, and the Rear Stair is located to the west of the Office. A Butler's Pantry or kitchen is located west of the Rear Stair. South of the Butler's Pantry is a Hallway with a bath. This hallway runs east/west back to the central hallway.

Vestibule

The front entrance at the south elevation enters into a Vestibule, which is essentially the footprint of the central tower. Double doors at the north wall lead into the Center Hall. The wood floor is oak that is stained in an alternating dark and light chevron pattern with a central diamond. The base is ten inches high including an elaborately molded top with a faux-grained finish. Windowing of the wall finishes reveals an early trompe l'oeil design; portions of the original wall designs are still covered (Photo 0013). The ceiling is painted plaster with a central medallion and a replica lighting fixture.

Center Hall (Photo 0014)

The Vestibule enters into a Central Hall with a staircase running north/south at the north end of the east wall. Two sets of double doors at the west wall access the Front and Rear Parlors, double doors at the north wall access the exterior, and doors at the east wall access the Library and the Hall. There is a door to a closet under the stair. The floor is carpeted, and there is a ten-inch base with an elaborately molded top. The trompe l'oeil walls depict marble panel inlays and a chair rail. The ceiling is painted with an elaborate deep crown molding. A lighting fixture, which may be original or early material fabric, hangs in the center of the room. The north wall features an exterior door.

Front Parlor (Photo 0015)

The Front Parlor is located west of the Center Hall. The south wall features double French doors to the front porch, and there are pocket doors to the Rear Parlor at the north wall. The room features a carved marble fireplace on the west wall (Photo 0016), which is flanked by hung wood windows. The wide-pine flooring is covered with an early carpet and several smaller rugs. There is a ten-inch base with an elaborately molded top. The walls are painted and stenciled in a gilded wall frame. An ornately decorated deep ceiling molding leads to the trompe l'oeil ceiling. A replica lighting fixture hangs in the center of the room from an ornate medallion.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

Rear Parlor (Photo 0016)

The Rear Parlor is located west of the Center Hall and north of the Front Parlor. The room has access to the Gift Shop to its north. The room features an alcove with a curved bay composed of four hung wood windows at the west wall. The floor is covered with carpet and various smaller area rugs. The ten-inch base has an elaborately molded top. Wallpaper, paint and stenciling compose a very elaborate design that is accented by gilded frames to create a paneled effect. An ornately decorated deep ceiling molding leads to the trompe l'oeil ceiling. A large gilded ceiling medallion centers the room with a period replica light fixture.

Library

The Library is located east off of the Center Hall. The room features a marble fireplace with a round arched mantle and a butterfly shelf on the east wall. Double French doors at the south wall access the Front Porch and a door at the east wall leads to the Dining Room. There are ten-inch wide painted pine floor boards. The faux grained ten-inch base with elaborately molded top is finished with narrow gilded trim. The plaster walls are covered with wall cloth. A gilded molding strip at the ceiling leads to a deep elaborate molding. The ceiling is painted plaster with an unusual pierced medallion.

Dining Room (Photo 0018)

The Dining Room is located to the east of the Library and Hall. The north wall features a carved marble fireplace and access to the stair. Directly across from the fireplace to the south is an alcove with a curved bay window. Corner closets are built into the northeast and southeast corners. The narrow hardwood floor is stained in an alternating dark and light geometric pattern forming a central diamond. The ten-inch base with an elaborately molded top is faux grained. The walls are wallpapered and the ceiling is painted plaster with a deep elaborate molding. There is a decorative medallion and replica lighting fixture at the center of the ceiling.

Hall

The Hall is located east of the Center Hall and west of the Dining Room. Doors at the north wall access the Restroom and the Butler's Pantry. The Hall has narrow oak wood flooring and a ten-inch base with an elaborately molded top. The plaster walls are covered with plain paper and the ceiling is painted plaster.

Restroom

The Restroom is a small space located north off of the hall. There is a multi-pane windows set high on the north wall. There is a toilet and sink along the west wall. There is a multi-pane window set high on the north wall. The floor is strip wood with a seven-inch base with a small decorative molding along the top. The walls are finished with plaster and a chair rail runs the perimeter. The ceiling is plaster.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

Butler's Pantry

The Butler's Pantry is located north off of the Hall and west off of the Rear Stair. There is a single hung wood window at the north wall. The room has hardwood floors and a plain six-inch wide molding with quarter-round molding. The walls and ceiling are painted plaster. Built-in cabinetry flanks the west wall.

Rear Stair (Photo 0019)

The Rear Stair occupies the northwest corner of the east wing and provides access to all four floor levels of the house. The dog-leg staircase runs north/south on the east wall. There is exterior access at the north wall, two doors to the Butler's Pantry on the west wall, a door to the Dining Room at the south wall, and a door to the Office at the east wall. The floors are narrow oak boards, and the nine-inch base has an elaborately molded top. The walls, ceiling, and underside of stairs are painted plaster.

Office

The Office is located north of the Dining Room and east of the Rear Stair. The room is accessed via a door at the west wall from the Rear Stair. The north and east walls both features a single hung wood window. The room features a cast iron fireplace on the south wall. The floor is carpeted and the base is over eight inches high with a decorative top. The walls and ceiling are plaster.

Gift Shop

The Gift Shop is located north of the Rear Parlor within the small, one-story north addition. There are four tall casement windows at the north wall and an oval window at the west wall. The floors are hardwood and the ten-inch tall base has an elaborately molded top. The walls are horizontal painted wood boards. The ceiling is composed of wood boards with a deep elaborately painting molding. A replica period lighting fixture hangs from the center of the room.

Second Floor

The interior arrangement of the second floor is determined by the Center Hall and is generally similar to the first floor. The Center Hall runs north from the staircase to the Nursery at the south side of the house. There are two Bedrooms to the west of the hall. Exhibit Room 1 is located east of the Center Hall and the Nursery. A Hall located to the east of the Center Hall leads to an Office and the Rear Stair. The Office is located in the northeast corner of the building to the east of the Rear Stair. Exhibit Room 2 is situated in the southeast corner of the house, which is accessible from the Rear Stair, the Office, and Exhibit Room 1 in the main block of the house. A Restroom is located on the west wall of Exhibit Room 2

Center Hall (Photo 0020)

The main staircase leads up to the Center Hall. Two doors at the west wall access Bedroom 1 and Bedroom 2, a door at the south wall accesses the Nursery, and doors at the east side access Exhibit Room 1 and the Hall. There is a pair of windows at the

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

north wall. The floor is carpeted and has a 10-inch base with elaborate molding. The trompe l'oeil design on the walls matches the first floor Center Hall. The ceiling is a painted plaster with a central medallion and replica lighting fixture.

Nursery (Photo 0021)

The Nursery is located at the south end off of the second floor Center Hall. A door at the west wall leads to Bedroom 1. The south end of the space is within the tower creating an alcove. There is a pair of windows at the south wall. The floor is carpeted and also layered with area rugs. The eight-inch base has an elaborately molded top. The walls are plaster decorated with paint and wallpaper. The paper is framed with half-round gilded molding. The ceiling is plaster.

Bedroom 1 (Photo 0022)

Bedroom 1 is located in the southwest corner and is accessed from the Center Hall and the Nursery. There is a metal fireplace and hung wood window at the west wall, and a pair of hung wood windows at the south wall. There are two doors that lead to closets in the north wall. There is carpet over wood flooring and varying sizes of area rugs over the carpet. The eight-inch base is finished with an elaborate top. The walls are wallpaper and the ceiling is painted plaster. The two closets are finished with wood flooring and plaster ceilings and walls. The closet to the west was previously a bath.

Bedroom 2

Bedroom 2 is located in the northwest corner and is accessed from the Center Hall. There is a single hung wood window at the west wall and a pair of hung wood windows at the north wall. A door at the south wall accesses a closet. The wide pine floor boards are painted. There is a nine-inch base with an elaborate top. Plaster walls are finished with wallpaper and a border at the ceiling finished with a gilded narrow molding. The ceiling is painted plaster. The closet is composed of painted plaster walls and a wood floor.

Office 1

Office 1 is located on the north side of the Hall. There is a pair of hung wood windows at the north wall. The flooring is narrow oak floor boards. There is a seven-inch base molding with an elaborate top. The north and south walls are painted plaster with a chair-rail. There is a closet in the northeast corner, which has wide pine floor boards, wallpapered walls, and built-in shelves with doors.

Hall

The Hall is a narrow and short corridor that runs east/west from the Center Hall to its west. There are doors to Office 1 and a closet on the north wall and a door to the Rear Stair at the east wall. The ten-inch wide pine floor boards are painted. There is an eight-inch base with an elaborately molded top. The walls are plaster covered with wallpaper. There are built-in shelves on the south wall. The closet has wood flooring and plaster walls with built-in shelving.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

Restroom

Restroom is located west off of Exhibit Room 2. The roof has narrow oak flooring and a seven-inch tall wood base with a simple molded top. The walls are wallpapered with tile at the shower area. The ceiling is plaster. There is a storage closet in the west wall, which has painted plaster ceiling and walls.

Exhibit Room 1

Exhibit Room 1 is located east off of the Center Hall. The east wall features a marble fireplace; a door to Exhibit Room 2 is north of the fireplace and a single hung wood window is to the south. There is a pair of hung wood windows at the south wall. There is a closet in the north wall. The walls are white painted plaster. The floors are ten-inch wide pine floor boards, and the base is nine inches with an elaborately molded top. The ceiling is painted plaster. The closet has narrow wood flooring and plaster walls and ceiling.

Exhibit Room 2

Exhibit Room 2 occupies the south portion of the east wing. Doors at the west wall access Exhibit Room 1 and the Restroom. Doors at the north wall access the Rear Stair and Office 2. There are two pairs of hung wood windows at the south wall and a single hung wood window at the east wall. There is a marble fireplace on the north wall. There are corner closets in the northeast and southeast corners of the room. The floors are carpeted. There is a nine-inch base with an elaborately molded top. The walls and ceiling are painted plaster with a deep elaborate ceiling molding.

Office 2

Office 2 is located in the northeast corner of the building. The room is accessed via the Rear Stair to its west and Exhibit Room 2 to its south. There is a pair of hung wood windows at the north wall and a single hung wood window at the east wall. There is a cast iron fireplace surround on the south wall. Carpeting mostly covers the medium-width wood flooring. There is a nine-inch base with an elaborately molded top. The walls and ceiling are painted plaster, and there is a deep elaborate crown molding. Modern kitchen appliances and kitchen cabinetry appear on the north and west walls.

Rear Stair

The Rear Stair is located east of the small hall, north of Exhibit Room 2, and west of Office 2. There is a pair of hung wood windows at the north wall. The floor is medium-width painted wood boards. The walls and ceiling are painted plaster. The eight-inch base with an elaborately molded top and the balustrade matches that above and below. The tread and risers are painted wood, and there is a turned wood balustrade with curved wood railing.

Attic

The attic of Acorn Hall consists of five storage rooms and one office that radiate from a main hallway west of the rear stair with two additional storage rooms located in the east

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

wing. The hall runs from west to east and ends at the stairwell. The room at the top of the stair hall serves as a landing and entry point to the storage room within the east wing.

Hall

The Hall extends east-west through the center of the main section of the attic. The Hall provides access to many of the other attic-level spaces. Storage 1 and the Bathroom are located south of the Hall, Storage 2 and the Office are located west of the hall, Storage 3 and Storage 4 are located to the north, and Storage 5 is located east of the Hall. The flooring is nine inches wide. The painted wood base is six inches tall with a fat ogee profile at its top edge. The east, south, and west walls are painted plaster. The north wall is painted composite board, except a portion at the northwest corner, which is painted plaster. The ceiling is composite board. There is no molding at the ceiling.

Storage 1

Storage Room 1 is set centered along the south wall of the main section and accessed via the Hall. There is a dormer window at the south wall. The wood flooring is nine inches wide. The base is 6-inches tall. The walls and ceiling are painted plaster. There are built-in cabinets along the north wall.

Bathroom

The Bathroom is set along the south wall of the main block to the east of Storage Room 1. The floor is wood strips running east/west. The base at the east wall is 6-inches tall with a fat top ogee molding at its top edge, while the other three walls have a flat stock wood base. The three-inch tall chair rail consists of a wood strip with a molded top that is placed four feet from the floor. The walls and ceiling are finished with plaster. There is a two-over-two hung wood interior window with privacy glass at the south wall.

Tower Room

The Tower Room provides access to the tower and is located in the southwest corner of Storage Room 1. The floor is unpainted random-width wood flooring. There is a six-inch tall wood base with a bead. The walls and ceiling are plaster. There is an angled wood ladder for tower access. The treads are wood and the risers are tongue-and-groove wood planks running continuous between the treads. The railing is attached with three metal half-inch dowels. There are thirteen risers. There is a pair of tall round-arched hung wood windows at the south wall, and single tall round-arched hung wood windows at both the east and west walls.

The tower, also covered in this description, has a wooden railing at the opening of the stair. The floor of the tower is wood, and the wall and ceiling are finished with plaster. The ceiling is sloped in line with the roof structure. A simple wood base runs the perimeter of the space.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

Storage 2

Storage Room 2 occupies the southwest corner and is accessed from the Office to its north. There is a hung wood window at the west wall. The floor is painted wood boards of varying widths. The wood base is six inch tall with a fat ogee profile at its top edge. The walls and ceiling are plaster. There is no ceiling molding. Two doors at the south wall access corner closets, which have wood flooring that is continuous with the room. The closet walls and ceiling are plaster with hook rails along the side walls and shelves along back wall. A dormer window is set between the corner closets.

Office

The Office is located in the northwest corner and is accessed from the Hall to its east and Storage Room 2 to its south. There is a hung wood window at the west wall. The floor is painted wood boards of varying widths. The wood base is six inches tall with a fat ogee profile at its top edge. The walls and sloped ceilings are painted plaster. There is a closet in the northwest corner, which has wood flooring and plaster walls and ceiling with shelves along the back wall. There is a dormer window east of the closet, centered at the north wall.

Storage 3

Storage Room 3 is set centered on the north wall of the main block and is accessed from the Hall. The painted wood floor boards vary in size. The six-inch tall wood base has a single bead. The walls and ceiling are painted plaster. There is a dormer window at the north wall and a closet in the northeast corner.

Storage 4

Storage Room 4 is set in the northeast corner of the main section and is accessed from the Hall. The floor is wood boards. There is a six-inch tall base with a bead. The walls and ceiling are plaster. There is a dormer window at the north wall and a closet in the northeast corner.

Storage 5

Storage Room 5 is located directly at the top of the Stair in the northwest corner of the east wing. The floor is wood floor boards of varying size. The six-inch tall wood base has a single bead border. The walls and ceiling are painted plaster.

Storage 6

Storage Room 6 is located at the east end of the east wing and is accessed via Storage Room 5 to its west. The floor is wood boards of varying size. The six-inch-tall wood base has a fat ogee profile at its top edge. The walls and ceiling are plaster. There is a hung wood window at the east wall, and a dormer window at its south wall.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

Rear Stair

The dog-leg Rear Stair is located in the northwest corner of the east wing and continues the same finishes from the floor levels below. Refer to the previous Rear Stair descriptions.

Carriage House (Contributing) (Photo 0023 and 0024)

The Carriage House is located northwest of Acorn Hall. The front of the building faces south. The building is surrounded by scattered bushes and mature trees and fencing alongside its west façade. The site slopes towards the north and slightly towards the west. Consequently, the building's stone foundation is exposed along the east, west, and north elevations, as well as along the west end of the south elevation.

The one-and-one-half-story Carriage House exemplifies vernacular barn architecture with Victorian style influences. The building has a low-pitched gable roof with projecting eaves, board-and-batten siding, and a square cupola with louvered window openings at three of its four sides. The roof ridge runs east/west. The roof is low-pitched with wide, overhanging eaves and is clad with asphalt shingles. The roof has a built-gutter at both sides. The gable ends have raked molding. A four-sided cupola emerges from the center of the ridge near the east end and has a flat roof with overhanging eaves.

The rectangular wood-frame building is three bays wide by two bays deep. All elevations are clad with board-and-batten siding with flat, narrow corner boards.

There are several points of entry to the Carriage House, and all four entries are located on the south side of the building. In the east bay is a wide, paired diagonal plank door. In the center bay are cellar storm doors. In the west bay is a diagonal plank door and shorter diagonal plank door, side by side. The windows vary by elevation, but typically are multi-lite wood sash.

The interior of the Carriage House includes a basement level, a Stall Room and Carriage Room at the first-floor level, and a second-floor Loft space. The interior is currently used as storage.

Foundation from Greenhouse (Contributing) (Photo 0025)

Ruins of brick foundation from a former greenhouse are located east of the Carriage House.

Gazebo (Non-Contributing) (Photo 0026)

A late-twentieth-century gazebo with conical roof is located in the rear yard behind (north of) Acorn Hall and to the east of the Carriage House and Greenhouse Foundation.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Morris County, NJ
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☐ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Morris County, NJ
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1853-1935

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

This nomination provides clarifications and additional documentation thereby updating the nomination that resulted in the listing of Acorn Hall in the National Register of Historic Places on April 3, 1973 (NRIS Number 73001124). The statements made in the 1973 nomination were based on the historical documentation available at that time and

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

some inaccuracies, such as the house's architectural evolution, are being rectified with this nomination submission. In addition, the history and development of the site and the architectural description of the house and outbuildings are expanded upon. The carriage house (contributing), greenhouse foundation (contributing), and gazebo (non-contributing) were not previously listed as resources within the property.

Acorn Hall is a well-preserved Italianate building that provides insight into the agrarian origins of Morristown and the picturesque ideals of the mid-nineteenth century in domestic architecture. It is significant at the local level under Criterion C as a distinctive example of Italianate architecture. Constructed in 1853, the building was renovated and enlarged by Augustus Crane in the 1860s; much of its present-day appearance is reflective of the 1860s modifications. Acorn Hall exhibits integrity of design, materials, and workmanship at both the original core and additions, which reflect the Italianate style as popularized in architectural pattern books of the period. Acorn Hall has a period of significance that begins with its 1853 construction date and ends in 1935, the date of Augustus Crane Hone's renovations, which were the last major renovations conducted under private ownership of the building.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Architectural Significance

Acorn Hall was constructed essentially in two parts with the first part being of a smaller type, which was later expanded upon as the family unit grew. The house in both iterations utilized the ideals and characteristics prescribed by American architects and landscape designers of the period, such as Andrew Jackson Downing, Alexander Jackson Davis, Calvert Vaux, and Samuel Sloan. In the mid-nineteenth century, these individuals and others produced architectural pattern books that promoted healthier living through the landscape and architecture. These pattern books emphasized their authors' interpretations of the ideal country home and provided floor plans, details, perspective drawings, and estimates of cost. The books were rooted in late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century English picturesque theory, which found its initial expression in gardens featuring naturalistic plantings and irregular walkways. Such features were seen as a deviation from the conservatism and axuality of earlier French gardens.² Picturesque theory argued that accompanying architecture should similarly react against strict classical ideals, feature irregular massing, and be designed to facilitate views of nature.³ Gothic Revival homes and Italianate villas were considered two of the most appropriate romantic styles with regard to both domestic functionality and picturesque design.

In the case of Acorn Hall, the features of the Italianate style were embraced by both owners, but to a greater extent with Crane's modifications in the 1860s. The Italianate

² James Early, *Romanticism and American Architecture* (New York: A.S. Barnes and Co., Inc., 1965), 53.

³ Early, 54.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

style rose to popularity in America in the years leading up to the Civil War, leaving behind earlier classical styles such as the Greek Revival. The style was first found in the publications of British authors and design experts such as John Claudius Loudon, and was alternately called the Italian Villa or simply the Italian style. Loudon described the Italianate style as derivative of Italian landscape paintings and characterized “by irregularity, by strong contrasts, and by other painter-like effects.”⁴ Downing drew inspiration from Loudon’s work and in his *Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening, Adapted to North America* (1841) calls Loudon a “valued correspondent” and “the most distinguished gardening author of the age.”⁵ The American form of the Italianate, as popularized by Downing, was highly successful; it ascended from a virtually unknown style in 1840 to one widely used in domestic architecture by 1860, with its influence beginning to spread to public architecture.⁶ Key features of American Italianate architecture included irregular massing to correspond with principles of the picturesque, balconies, verandas, terraces, overhanging eaves supported by brackets, round-arched windows, square *campaniles* (bell towers), and paired or triple windows. Projections creating contrasts of dark and light were desirable because they contributed to the sense of irregularity, and brick and stucco were the preferred building materials. Ideally, the Italianate mansion was to be located in rural or suburban areas, as its verandas and irregular layout suggest an intended interaction between indoor and outdoor space. As illustrated in Downing’s and other pattern books, the Italianate mansion had most or all of these features, was often shown in isolation, and was generally surrounded by well-tended gardens.⁷

The ideals of these professionals as described in their pattern books were further reinforced by such domestic theorists as Catharine Beecher in her *Treatise on Domestic Economy*, which was published in 1842.⁸ This publication emphasized that a house needed separate areas for family social life, personal privacy, and household production. As such, the kitchen and pantry were usually set off from the main body of the house and placed in a rear wing. Household interiors of the period were correspondingly adorned to denote function. There was often a hierarchy between public and private spaces within the house; the public spaces received the most elaborate ornament and higher-quality finishes such as flooring, ceiling decoration, and wall coverings, and were the most opulently furnished. Beecher’s *Treatise* also showed an interest in technology and making the house a comfortable and healthy environment by detailing modern innovations in domestic technology. In line with these ideas,

⁴ John Claudius Loudon, *An Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture and Furniture* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1867), 82.

⁵ Andrew Jackson Downing, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening, Adapted to North America* (New York: A.O. Moore, 1859), x.

⁶ Charles E. Brownell, “The Italianate Villa and the Search for an American Style, 1840-1860,” in *The Italian Presence in American Art, 1760-1860*, ed. Irma B. Jaffe (New York: Fordham University Press, 1989), 211.

⁷ Gwendolyn Wright, *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1981), 82.

⁸ Wright, 77.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

homes were more likely to include modern domestic advances such as cooking stoves, central heating, and plumbing.

Acorn Hall reflects the characteristics of mid-nineteenth-century domestic architecture utilizing the detailing of the Italianate style. The most distinctive of these exterior features are the central tower, the steeply-pitched gable roof with bracketed eaves, paired and generally taller windows at the main elevations, round-arched windows, porches that occupy the majority of the front and rear elevations, and bay window projections that carry the detailing of the main house. The contrasts of light and dark created by the overhanging eaves and the porches add to the sense of picturesque irregularity. Ornamental features, most prominently the intricate woodwork and curved openings at the porches and the brackets at the roof eaves, are clear departures from the conservatism and straight, clean lines of the earlier Greek Revival. As a whole, Acorn Hall adheres to the picturesque ideal of interaction between the building and nature. The tower is a direct reference to the *campaniles* of Italian villas, which were meant to enable views of open countryside and gardens, while the porches further encourage enjoyment of the outdoors. Augustus Crane's cultivation of the grounds at Acorn Hall resulted in a landscape comparable to illustrations found in mid-nineteenth-century pattern books, featuring a spacious lawn, a variety of plantings including shrubberies and deciduous and coniferous trees, curving paths, and a clear view of the house from Morris Avenue.

Acorn Hall also embodies at its interior the defining characteristics of the period both in the layout and the finishes. The building originally had two distinct precincts: the central core and east wing served as the public and family rooms, and the basement, rear sections of the east wing, and third floor served as the utilitarian and servant areas. When the c. 1860 additions were made, utilitarian and servant areas increased overall within the house, but remained separate from the public rooms. There is a difference in the elaborateness of the finishes in each space, which further distinguishes between the public and private areas; the moldings also differ slightly between the original construction and the c. 1860 additions. The first- and second-floor main rooms are the most elaborately finished with wood floors with decorative borders; plaster ceiling cornices; fireplaces with richly ornamented mantels and fireplace surrounds; tall, paneled, paired, and pocketed doors; floor-to-ceiling windows; and elaborate wood trim. Augustus Crane also embraced the latest domestic technologies by constructing a kitchen, adding a bathroom, and fitting both with hot and cold running water. The building remained little changed after Crane's initial investments in the 1860s and his descendants tended to maintain the building rather than make any major alterations, with few exceptions.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Morris County, NJ
County and State

Brief Historical Overview of Morristown

Morristown, the county seat of Morris County, today has a population of 18,411 and a total area of 3.026 square miles. It is generally agreed that the village of Morristown was settled between 1710 and 1715. Known as the village of West Hanover at the time (although called "New" Hanover in some histories), the area was settled by English Presbyterians from New York and Connecticut. These settlers originally inhabited a location still known today as "The Hollow," where they built their first small dwellings. By mid-century, village life slowly began to move uphill from "The Hollow" to center around the "Green" which was owned by the local Presbyterian Church of Hanover. Soon, the village claimed 250 settlers, along with two churches, two schools, and several taverns, stores and mills to provide for their needs.⁹ As the growing center of Morris County, the village was soon renamed "Morristown" and designated as the County seat of government. A courthouse was built on the Green in 1755 and it is said that the town grew largely due its construction.¹⁰ The end of the century brought the American Revolution to Morristown, leaving a lasting mark on the still young village. Morristown is perhaps most well-known for its association with the Continental Army and its leader, General George Washington. During the winter of 1777, Washington and the Continental Army first settled in Morristown, with Washington establishing his headquarters at Jacob Arnold's Tavern on the Morristown Green. During the winter of 1779 to 1780, Washington and his troops returned to the Morristown area, this time to stay at Jockey Hollow. About 12,000 troops settled here throughout that winter, considered to be the worst of the eighteenth century.

Throughout New Jersey in general, the war stimulated agriculture, industry and commerce. In Morris County, specifically, the post-revolutionary period was one of expansion. The iron industry, after a period of stagnation, grew in the early-nineteenth century; the industry is considered one of the most important factors in the development of Morristown and neighboring communities during this period.¹¹ The County became an industry leader due its wealth of iron ore, nearby streams to provide power for mills, and embracing advances in transportation. In addition to industry, Morristown had also begun to mature in other areas in the eighteenth century. Like many small villages at the time, though, it was with the improvement of its transportation systems that Morristown truly began to develop. The organization of turnpike companies was the first step toward Morristown's transportation expansion.

The evolution of transportation within Morris County as a whole and Morristown specifically continued throughout the early half of the nineteenth century, first with the building of the Morris Canal, and soon after with the establishment of a railroad line in

⁹ Joan M. Williams, *Images of America: Morristown* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, Inc., 1996), 7.

¹⁰ Peter O. Wacker, *Land & People: A Cultural Geography of Preindustrial New Jersey Origins and Settlement Patterns* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1975), 397.

¹¹ *The WPA Guide to 1930s New Jersey*, compiled and written by the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Project Administration for the State of New Jersey (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1986 (reprint); originally published 1939), 284.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

the area. For many years during the nineteenth century the Morris Canal played a significant role in industrialization throughout northern New Jersey, with the transportation of such materials as anthracite coal and iron ore. Many towns grew with the construction of the canal, with increased residential settlement and commercial development following its path. In 1838, the tracks of the Morris & Essex Railroad reached Morristown, further connecting the village to surrounding areas. The railroad's backers had chosen its path based mainly on residents' willingness to donate land or buy stock¹² and it became the first New Jersey railroad to climb hills, in this case the Orange Mountains. On January 1, 1838, the train opened to Morristown, providing eastbound and westbound trains for commuting businessmen working in New York City.¹³ The Morris & Essex Railroad "transformed and strengthened the areas through which it ran."¹⁴

After the initial changes that came with the creation of the turnpikes and the railroad, Morristown remained much the same between the late 1830s and the Civil War. Like many northern towns, though, Morristown experienced a period of expansion in the post-Civil War years. The first major change came on April 6, 1865, when the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey approved a bill that incorporated Morristown as an official city. Until that time, Morristown had been only the village center of Morris Township; the incorporation set boundaries and established "Morristown" as the area's official name. Further changes centered mainly on the railroad. By making Morristown easily accessible to visitors, the railroad encouraged growth in the town. With the help of the popular press, which praised and promoted Morristown for such qualities as its ideal climate, the town became increasingly attractive as both a vacation destination and permanent place of residence. By mid-century the town had become a favorite resort for invalids, and hotels and boarding houses soon began to flourish. The permanent population also increased at this time, with the subdivision of large land parcels into building lots. By the late 1880s and early 1890s, Morristown had evolved into a very different town than it had been a century before. The iron industry in Morris County had begun to falter, and Morristown was becoming a shopping and residential center.

Acorn Hall's Beginnings

When Acorn Hall was constructed in mid-nineteenth-century Morristown, the area consisted largely of farmland and development was restrained mostly to select areas such as the Morristown Green and Speedwell, where Stephen Vail had established an ironworks. Due to the expansion of industry and manufacturing, in part because of construction of the Morris Canal in 1831 and the introduction of the railroad in 1838, Morristown developed at a greater pace than seen previously, particularly with residential development in the areas outside the center of the town.

¹² John T. Cunningham, *America's Main Road* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Publishing, 1966), 139.

¹³ Cunningham, *America's Main Road*, 139.

¹⁴ Cunningham, *America's Main Road*, 140.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

John Hone, a lawyer from New York City, purchased fifty-one acres of land along Morris Avenue from John B. Johnes in 1851, including the future site of Acorn Hall. Hone had begun spending summers in Morristown in 1849 due to poor health and permanently retired there in 1851, prompting him to purchase the Morris Avenue parcel. Hone was a founding member of the Church of the Redeemer in 1852; the church was originally located at the intersection of Pine and Morris Streets, relatively close to his new land.¹⁵ Hone soon began subdividing his Morris Avenue property and sold an approximately three-acre parcel to Dr. John Peter Schermerhorn, his friend, in May 1852.

Schermerhorn (b. 1808) was also from New York City and received his degree from the Columbia School of Medicine in 1831. He moved to Morristown sometime in the 1840s and married Louise Williamson in New York on September 6, 1849. The couple soon had two daughters, Louise and Alice, and planned to build a house on the land they had purchased from John Hone. Tragedy struck the family when baby Alice died of dysentery in July 1852. The Schermerhorns buried their daughter in New York and pushed forward in their efforts to settle in Morristown. John had plans drawn up for a building that would become Acorn Hall, and construction was completed in 1853. The builder of the 1853 house is unknown. The original house was a simple, four-square, two-and-one-half story building with a one-story rear wing projecting from the east elevation, and likely had front and rear porches.¹⁶ It served as the family home and as Schermerhorn's medical office.

In December 1853, John Schermerhorn expanded his property, purchasing another 1.3 acres from John Hone. The next year, Schermerhorn's wife Louise died due to complications giving birth to their third daughter, Rosalie. Despite continued difficult times for his family, Schermerhorn purchased another five acres from neighbor Joseph Lindsley in 1855, resulting in an estate roughly double its initial size.¹⁷ Soon after this purchase, however, Schermerhorn moved back to New York so his sister-in-law could help to raise his young daughters. He sold the estate to Augustus Crane in 1857. An inventory compiled at the time of the sale valued the contents of the house at \$833.75 and mentioned such items as "Kazack" rugs, Japanese pieces, and numerous silk-covered chairs including some "very handsome Turkish chairs."¹⁸ Schermerhorn's 1876 will left most of his estate to his daughters, stipulating that if either daughter should marry, her share of the property would remain free from her husband's control and not liable to his debts.¹⁹ Louise Schermerhorn married her first cousin, Charles Augustus Schermerhorn, in 1880; Rosalie never married and lived with Louise and Charles.

¹⁵ On historical maps, Morris Avenue was referred to as Morris Street.

¹⁶ Jude M. Pfister, *Morris County's Acorn Hall* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2015), 35.

¹⁷ Richard Porter, "Historical Background," in various reports on the history and development of Acorn Hall prepared in the early 1980s, courtesy of Morris County Historical Society.

¹⁸ Manuscript AH 8, June 11, 1857, folder 2, box 1A, Acorn Hall. Manuscript AH 8, folder 1, box 11, Acorn Hall.

¹⁹ Manuscript S 26, folder 2, box 1A, Acorn Hall.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

Louise's daughter, Elizabeth, later donated much of the Schermerhorn-era materials found in Acorn Hall today.²⁰

Augustus Crane and Acorn Hall

Augustus Crane's 1857 purchase of Acorn Hall included 8.93 acres and the house and outbuildings constructed by Schermerhorn.²¹ Crane (1817-1906) was a native of New York who worked in importing, merchandising, and in the stock market. He and his wife, Mary Bolles Crane, married in 1848. Prior to moving to Morristown, as shown in the 1850 Federal Census, Augustus and Mary were living with their daughter Mary (born 1849) in the Seventeenth Ward of New York City and Augustus's profession was listed as distiller. They had one household servant, Margaret Fagan, a native of Ireland.²² Having purchased Acorn Hall in 1857, the 1860 Federal Census shows the Cranes living at Acorn Hall with three additional children: Julia (born 1850), Augustus Jr. (born 1852), and Benjamin (born 1854). According to the Census, the family lived with four servants: Mary A. Murphy, Patrick Mulhall, and Ann Gray, all from Ireland; and Jacob Ader, a Black coachman from New Jersey.²³ Their neighbors were Phebe Lindsley, the widow of Joseph Lindsley; Henry Olmsted, a merchant; and John Hone. Augustus Crane was listed as a "gentleman," and owned \$12,000 in real estate and \$25,000 in personal assets. Crane was ill when the family moved to Morristown and retired from business for a time, but he appears to have recovered enough to return to work on a limited basis and to be an active member of the local community. He served as director and vice president of the First National Bank of Morristown and was an incorporator of the Library and Lyceum and the Morristown Female Institute.²⁴

The Cranes named their new home for the many oak trees that stood on the property and in the 1860s began major renovations; today's Acorn Hall is largely a reflection of these modifications. The resulting building was an architectural showpiece in the Italianate style befitting the Cranes' elevated social standing, and the additions allowed ample space for the family of six and their servants. Major changes included addition of the tower, east wing, and picture gallery; expansion and relocation of the kitchen to the basement; the addition of a second-floor bathroom; and the reconfiguration of the front porch. The Cranes' newly-remodeled home followed fashionable architectural tastes and was ideal for the frequent social gatherings that the family often held. The Cranes were accomplished musicians; every member sang, played an instrument, or both.²⁵ Augustus was an avid art collector, as evidenced by the inclusion of a picture gallery in

²⁰ Pfister, 47.

²¹ Porter.

²² *Seventh Census of the United States, 1850*; (National Archives Microfilm Publication M432, 1009 rolls); Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29; National Archives, Washington, D.C.. Available from the Internet: www.ancestry.com, accessed: October 2015.

²³ *1860 U.S. Census, Population Schedule*. (NARA microfilm publication M653, 1,438 rolls. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.), Available from the Internet: www.ancestry.com, accessed: October 2015.

²⁴ Manuscript BF 54, folder 2, box 1, Acorn Hall.

²⁵ Pfister, 49.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

his modifications to Acorn Hall. He purchased many paintings in New York and in his 1876 will named each painting and its intended recipient.²⁶ The eldest Crane daughter, Mary, excelled at singing and playing the piano and organ. In 1869, she married John Hone, Jr., son of John Hone, the original owner of the Acorn Hall property. The couple's wedding was held at Acorn Hall and they appear to have lived there for a time while a new home was constructed for them across the street. Mary and John had three sons: John, Jr., Frederic de Peyster, and Augustus Crane. Sadly, Mary Crane Hone died in 1876 at the age of twenty-seven after contracting typhoid fever. John and the three children eventually moved to New York, splitting their time between the city and Morristown. John remarried and was a successful businessman, serving as Governor and Vice President of the New York Stock Exchange. In 1886, the Crane family commissioned a stained glass window in Mary's memory that was installed at the Church of the Redeemer in Morristown.²⁷

The year 1876 was difficult for the Crane family for another reason: Augustus appears to have been audited that year, as he wrote a detailed defense of his use of accounts established in his name with his business in New York.²⁸ The reason for the audit is unknown, but Augustus had other financial problems in the 1870s that were likely due in large part to the nationwide Financial Panic of 1873. Augustus drew up a will in 1876 in which he included a bequest for his son-in-law, John Hone, and divided the remainder of his estate between his wife, brother, nephew, and eldest son Augustus, Jr.²⁹ Mary Bolles Crane received most of the contents of the house and was given use of the house for the remainder of her life; the two sons received \$10,000 lump sums; and Julia was to receive \$1,600 per year for life.³⁰ Unfortunately, financial difficulties reduced Augustus's estate to the extent that he had to write a new will in 1877, canceling the first; in 1879, he wrote a third will, canceling the second.³¹ These changes are reflected in clauses appended to the original will.

By 1900, the Crane children had all moved out of the house and Augustus and Mary remained at Acorn Hall with one live-in servant, Charles DeWit, a coachman from England.³² Their son, Augustus Jr., was a banker and had moved to Washington, DC, in 1883 to establish his own financial firm, Crane, Parris & Co.³³ Younger son Benjamin also worked in the banking industry in DC, primarily as a bank clerk. Julia Crane, the second-oldest child, trained as a singer in New York for a time and traveled extensively in Europe in 1881; she married Dr. James Leonard Corning of Connecticut in 1883.

²⁶ Pfister, 64.

²⁷ The Mary Crane Hone memorial window has since been removed.

²⁸ Pfister, 63.

²⁹ Manuscript AC 39, unnumbered folder, box 1, Acorn Hall.

³⁰ Pfister, 64.

³¹ Pfister, 64.

³² *Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900*; (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1900), T623, 1854 rolls. Available from the Internet: www.ancestry.com, accessed: October 2015.

³³ Porter.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

Augustus and Mary spent most winters the last twenty years of his life in Washington, DC, visiting their sons. Augustus's final will and testament, written in 1901, was similar to his previous will but reduced Julia's inheritance to \$1,000 per year during the life of her mother, Mary, and allotted \$5,000 to each of his grandchildren.³⁴ Augustus Crane died July 25, 1906, at the age of 89.

One aspect of Crane's tenure at Acorn Hall that is not overtly obvious today, is his role as "gentleman farmer." Crane undertook small-scale animal husbandry, orchard tending, and gardening. At Acorn Hall, outbuildings on the property that supported these activities included a carriage house, greenhouse, possible stable, and hennery. A three-and-one-half-acre forest was located behind the house. There was also a kitchen garden in the current location of the herb garden behind the house.³⁵ The family kept at least one cow, hens, and other poultry, and stored sleighs, carriages, and other horse-drawn equipment in the carriage house.³⁶ Crane owned the 1857 edition of *The Young Gardener's Assistant* by Thomas Bridgeman and used it as a reference; Crane's original copy remains in the collections of the Morris County Historical Society and contains his notes in the margins. Crane's notes mostly concentrate on the care of apple and pear tree varieties. He also clipped newspaper articles concerning meetings of various fruit-growers' organizations and inserted them in the book; the articles discuss the advantages and disadvantages of different types of fruit trees.

In addition to the limited agricultural uses of the property, the front of the house appears to have reflected many of the landscape design tools popular in the mid-nineteenth century, including a circular drive; an open front yard dotted with deciduous and coniferous trees; and the use of ornamental plantings such as rhododendrons, wisteria, peonies, lilacs, blue and white hydrangeas, and trumpet vine.³⁷

Acorn Hall in the Early-Twentieth Century

Following Augustus Crane's death in 1906, his widow, Mary Bolles Crane, made plans to modernize Acorn Hall. Plumber William Kay worked with Charles Lindsley to draw up the plans, which were for new plumbing fixtures and a range for the kitchen in the east wing. Kay advised the installation of a new "20" x 36" white enameled iron sink with back in one piece and concealed hangers (without any legs). The old range copper boiler can be used in the new kitchen."³⁸ These plans were never executed; about another twenty-five years would pass before the building was fully fitted with electricity and plumbing.³⁹ Mary Bolles Crane died in 1913, and her daughter and son-in-law, Julia and James Corning, moved into Acorn Hall the following year.

³⁴ Pfister, 72.

³⁵ Morris County Historical Society, "Acorn Hall Gardens," brochure, c. 1971.

³⁶ Porter.

³⁷ Deborah Barcan, "Acorn Hall Gardens," *Victorian Homes*, Spring 1992, 39.

³⁸ Manuscript AH 20, folder 1, box 11, Acorn Hall.

³⁹ Pfister, 73.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

The Cornings had been living in New York City but were amenable to living in a more suburban setting, and were well-off enough to live comfortably without needing to work. In addition to her singing talents, Julia was a well-known member of society and a friend of the Vanderbilts of Newport. She was invited to the Newport wedding of Alva Smith and William K. Vanderbilt in 1875, and to other exclusive events hosted by the family.⁴⁰ Dr. Corning had studied medicine at the University of Würzburg in Germany and conducted research in Europe before starting a medical practice in New York. Corning made significant contributions to the field of neurology, including the discovery and clarification of spinal anesthesia, and authored many essays, medical articles, and books throughout the late-nineteenth century.⁴¹ In 1897, he was called to serve as an expert defense witness in a murder trial in which the defense sought acquittal of the client on the basis of insanity. The defense won the case and Corning's intellect was highly praised by the lead attorney, who told Corning in a letter, "To your skill, your wisdom, your genius is due in a large degree this great victory. You were the vitalizing and illuminating force of the fight we made."⁴² After Dr. Corning's death in 1923, Julia remained at Acorn Hall but faced financial struggles due to the stock market crash of 1929. She passed away in 1935, leaving inheritances to members of her extended family and her residuary estate to nephew Augustus Crane Hone, son of her late sister, Mary Crane Hone.

Augustus Crane Hone was a civil engineer and had attended Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. In the late 1890s, he moved to Indiana and served as superintendent of the Evansville and Terre Haute Railroad at the young age of twenty-six.⁴³ He then relocated to Louisville, Kentucky, where he was appointed general manager of the Louisville and Atlantic Railroad and met Alice Castleman; Augustus and Alice married in 1903. Alice's family was part of Kentucky's high society, as she was the daughter of Civil War Confederate General John Castleman. Augustus and Alice's only child, Mary, was born in 1904, and in 1916 the family moved back to New York, where Augustus established his own consulting business.⁴⁴ The family had a close relationship with the Cornings, Augustus's aunt and uncle, and visited them often in Morristown.

Acorn Hall at the time of Julia Crane Corning's death was in need of significant repairs to meet the needs of its new owners. A February 9, 1935, appraisal valued the property at \$11,500 and noted that it consisted of the approximately nine-acre plot of land, main house, frame barn, a small wood house, and a tool house. The appraisal also provided a detailed description of the main house, listing the function of each room, construction materials, and utilities, which were certainly outdated; the house had no electric light except in two rooms and no gas or town water. The appraisal noted further deficiencies:

⁴⁰ Pfister, 62-63.

⁴¹ Pfister, 81.

⁴² Manuscript JCC 15, folder 2, box 6, Acorn Hall.

⁴³ Pfister, 90.

⁴⁴ Porter.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

The house is heated by steam, but the present steam plant is not adequate to heat the house sufficiently. The bath room fixtures and all the plumbing fixtures are of the old style type. The house, both on the inside and outside is in a poor state of repair.⁴⁵

It was left to Augustus Crane Hone to decide the fate of the house. When Augustus inherited Acorn Hall from his aunt, he moved to Acorn Hall with his family, completing renovations in August of 1935 for a cost of \$10,000.⁴⁶ The renovations allowed for modern conveniences and included roofing, chimney, and masonry work; the installation of new bathrooms; wiring the house for electricity; and painting, among other work.⁴⁷ This was also likely when the elevator was installed and the kitchen moved to the first floor, including modifications to the pantry.⁴⁸

Mary Crane Hone – Morris County Historical Society (1939 – Present)

[Post-Dates the Period of Significance]

Unfortunately, Augustus Crane Hone did not have the chance to enjoy the renovations to his home for long, as he died in 1939 at the age of 65, leaving the house to his wife and daughter. Mary Crane Hone (1904-1990), daughter of Augustus Crane Hone and Alice Castleman Hone, was the final individual owner of Acorn Hall, and the building's current excellent state of preservation is due largely to her efforts. Mary was born in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1904; she and her parents moved to New York in 1916 but visited Morristown often. In 1920, when she was only sixteen, she attended the Democratic National Convention in San Francisco with her mother and maternal grandmother, hinting at her future as a political and social activist. Mary was educated at Rosemary Hall, a college preparatory school in Greenwich, Connecticut, but never attended college. Instead, she pursued a career in acting and met with a great deal of success both in the United States and abroad. She studied acting at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) in England and went on to have prominent parts in plays in the United States, Canada, England, and even Egypt. A résumé she submitted in 1946 for a position with the United Nations Organization reads more like a short, informal autobiography. It details her acting career and provides a glimpse of her self-deprecating sense of humor:

Dramatic school in London (R.A.D.A.) because I... had to learn to speak English. Back to this country and a wonderful opening break with the Theatre Guild... From there to good parts in bad plays, and seasons of trouping cross-country... An excursion to England hell-bent to play Shakespeare and succeeding in doing so with an old-fashioned repertory company in Egypt. Back to N.Y. again due to

⁴⁵ Manuscript JCC 42, folder 3, box 5, Acorn Hall.

⁴⁶ Pfister, 96

⁴⁷ Pfister, 96.

⁴⁸ Greiff.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

family pressure and the lead on Broadway in Ibsen's "Lady from the Sea," a 'distinguished flop'; and a play written for me about a witch, also a flop.⁴⁹

Mary's other accomplishments in theatre included organizing the Federal Theatre Project for Connecticut and producing a Broadway play.⁵⁰ She retired from acting in 1937 and when her father died two years later, she returned to Morristown to care for her mother, who was living at Acorn Hall. At this time, Mary kept apartments in both New York and Washington, DC. Her résumé indicates a degree of boredom and frustration with the relatively small-town atmosphere of Morristown, where she "couldn't cope for long with too much unhappy leisure and the deadening mental attitudes of all the nicest Morristonians."⁵¹ This boredom prompted her to take a secretarial course and subsequently work for the New York office of the British Broadcasting Company (BBC). She worked other odd jobs, including a year as a secretary to the comptroller of the Swiss Bank Corporation in New York, a position she left in 1940 to contribute to the war effort. That year, Mary joined the Morris County Unit of Fighting Funds for Finland, an organization that aimed to raise funds to aid in Finland's defense during the World War II.⁵² She continued to help the Finnish cause, and that of Scandinavia and other parts of Europe, throughout the war by making donations, writing editorials, and inciting activism.⁵³

Mary's involvement in politics and social activism continued to grow during and after the war. She maintained her residences in both Washington and New York, but often visited her mother at Acorn Hall. Though Mary had many suitors, she never married; instead, she devoted her time to advancing several causes for which she had a passion. She supported the Democratic Party and the advancement of labor causes through organized unions.⁵⁴ In 1944, she wrote a song called "Let's Re-Re-Re-Elect Roosevelt" in support of Franklin Roosevelt's campaign for a fourth term. Following the war, Mary continued to work for the BBC as a secretary and attended three major conferences, including the 1945 United Nations (UN) Conference on International Organization in San Francisco.⁵⁵ An issue that greatly concerned her was the arms race for the atomic bomb, and she believed that the UN's peacekeeping efforts were of the utmost importance, prompting her to apply for a job with the organization in 1946. In DC, she worked for radio commentator Raymond Gram Swing, a member of the United World Federalists (UWF), which was "a national, non-partisan citizens' organization working to

⁴⁹ Manuscript MCH 43, folder 1, box 16, Acorn Hall.

⁵⁰ Manuscript MCH 43, folder 1, box 16, Acorn Hall.

⁵¹ Manuscript MCH 43, folder 1, box 16, Acorn Hall.

⁵² Pfister, 101.

⁵³ Pfister, 103.

⁵⁴ Pfister, 105.

⁵⁵ Morris County Historical Society, "Mary Crane Hone and the United Nations," Morristown Patch, <http://patch.com/new-jersey/morristown/mary-crane-hone-and-the-united-nations> (accessed October 2015).

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

develop public opinion in support of UN power to prevent war."⁵⁶ Mary was only able to work a short time in this position, as she had to return to Morristown on a more permanent basis to take care of her ailing mother; however, she continued her work for the UWF in New Jersey as director of the state branch.

Mary was faced with a new set of obligations when her mother died in 1949, leaving her in charge of Acorn Hall and the rest of her mother's estate. She stayed on with the UWF in New Jersey temporarily but resigned in 1950 due to financial reasons and the stress of attending to the estate.⁵⁷ She began living at Acorn Hall that year and would remain for the next twenty-one years. Mary's active lifestyle did not mesh well at first with the slower pace of life in Morristown, but she soon found a new passion: historic preservation. She became fascinated with the history of her ancestral home and of Morristown as a whole and advocated for historic preservation before it was an established profession. Early work in the field was taking place at the nearby Ford Mansion in Morristown National Historical Park, the preservation of which was the charge of the National Park Service. Mary was familiar with the park's superintendent and staff and often turned to them for guidance in her efforts at Acorn Hall.⁵⁸ The Morris County Historical Society, future owner of Acorn Hall, was also linked to the park. Park superintendent Dr. Francis Ronalds and park research historian Melvin Weig were involved in the Society's creation and its first meeting was held at the park's museum auditorium in December 1945.⁵⁹

Throughout the 1950s, Mary's main objective became finding a new owner for Acorn Hall and ensuring its continued preservation. While this issue occupied much of her time, she continued to be involved in various organizations at this time including the Democratic Party, the SPCA, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. By 1953, Mary determined that the best solution was to turn the building over to the town to serve as a museum. In the spring of that year, she met with Morristown Mayor W. Parsons Todd at Acorn Hall to discuss the potential of such an arrangement. She had plans to take a job with the projected UN Economic Commissioner in Turkey, which would require her to live abroad for two years, but she hoped to first settle the matter of Acorn Hall's ownership.⁶⁰ The town did not agree to take ownership of the house, so Mary turned down the job and continued her search. She then became increasingly interested in donating her home to the recently-established Morris County Historical Society and met frequently with Superintendent Ronalds and members of the Society.⁶¹ Acorn Hall presented an unusual challenge in terms of its preservation: the idea of a Victorian-themed museum did not align with Morristown's traditional associations with

⁵⁶ Manuscript MCH 46, folder 3, box 16, Acorn Hall.

⁵⁷ Pfister, 106.

⁵⁸ Pfister, 107.

⁵⁹ Pfister, 107.

⁶⁰ Manuscript MCH 48, folder 4, box 16, Acorn Hall.

⁶¹ Pfister, 109.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

Revolutionary War history.⁶² Many other properties contemporaneous with Acorn Hall were lost, likely for this same reason, making Mary's success in finding local support and the building's preservation all the more exceptional.

In May 1959, the Morris County Historical Society voted to accept Acorn Hall as its new headquarters. A variety of considerations complicated the donation of the building, however, and the property was not legally transferred to the Society until 1971. These considerations included the maintenance of the building and grounds, security, artifact preservation, public access, and determining Mary's rights in terms of visiting the property.⁶³ In the intervening time, Mary became more deeply involved in the historic preservation of Morristown at large. In the early 1960s, plans were moving forward for the construction of Interstate 287 through Morristown, which had major implications for the town's historic resources. Mary joined the movement to stop its construction in order to protect these resources; despite tremendous efforts, construction proceeded and the highway was completed in 1969. Mary encouraged other preservationists to learn from this defeat and not let the government have all the power in such matters, saying "...we'll just have to sully our dainty hands with the political approach if we seriously intend to save anything in this threatened greater metropolitan area." She remained active in the local preservation movement until 1971, when the legal transfer of Acorn Hall to the Morris County Historical Society was complete. She donated the house to the Society along with furnishings and a collection of family artifacts, papers, and photographs, and then retired to Nantucket, where she remained until she passed away in 1990. The Morris County Historical Society has operated continuously out of Acorn Hall since the property transfer and remains its faithful steward, fulfilling Mary Crane Hone's wish. Today, the Society is a leading resource in a wide variety of subjects related to the county's history, and Acorn Hall stands as one of the best-preserved examples of Italianate architecture in Morris County.

⁶² Pfister, 110.

⁶³ Pfister, 110.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Morris County, NJ
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

- Barcan, Deborah. "Acorn Hall Gardens." *Victorian Homes*, Spring 1992.
- Bridgeman, Thomas. *The Young Gardener's Assistant*. New York: C.M. Saxton and Company, 1857.
- Brownell, Charles E. "The Italianate Villa and the Search for an American Style, 1840-1860." In *The Italian Presence in American Art, 1760-1860*, edited by Irma B. Jaffe, 208-225. New York: Fordham University Press, 1989.
- Clark, Clifford Edward, Jr. "Domestic Architecture as an Index to Social History: The Romantic Revival and the Cult of Domesticity in America, 1840-1870." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 7, no. 1 (1976): 33-56.
- Cunningham, John T. *America's Main Road*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday Publishing, 1966.
- Downing, Andrew Jackson. *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening, Adapted to North America*. New York: A.O. Moore, 1859.
- Early, James. *Romanticism and American Architecture*. New York: A.S. Barnes and Co., Inc., 1965.
- Loudon, John Claudius. *An Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture and Furniture*. London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1867.
- Morris County Historical Society. "Acorn Hall Gardens." Brochure, c. 1971.
- Morris County Historical Society. "Mary Crane Hone and the United Nations." Morristown Patch. <http://patch.com/new-jersey/morristown/mary-crane-hone-and-the-united-nations> (accessed October 2015).
- Pfister, Jude M. *Morris County's Acorn Hall*. Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2015.
- Roth, Leland M. *America Builds: Source Documents in American Architecture and Planning*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1983.
- Seventh Census of the United States, 1850*. National Archives Microfilm Publication M432, 1009 rolls. Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.. Available from the Internet: www.ancestry.com, accessed: October 2015.
- Webster Associates, Landscape Architects. "Acorn Hall Landscape Preservation Plan." November 2012.
- The WPA Guide to 1930s New Jersey*, compiled and written by the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Project Administration for the State of New Jersey. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1986 (reprint).
- Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1900. T623, 1854 rolls. Available from the Internet: www.ancestry.com, accessed: October 2015.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Morris County, NJ
County and State

Various Reports on the History and Development of Acorn Hall prepared in the early 1980s, courtesy of Morris County Historical Society.

Richard Porter, "Historical Background."

Constance M. Greiff, "Development of the Property."

Wacker, Peter O. *Land & People: A Cultural Geography of Preindustrial New Jersey Origins and Settlement Patterns*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1975.

Webster Associates, Landscape Architects. "Acorn Hall Landscape Preservation Plan, Morristown, Morris County, New Jersey." July 2012; Revised November 2012.

Williams, Joan M. *Images of America: Morristown*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, Inc., 1996.

Wright, Gwendolyn. *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1981.

1860 U.S. Census, Population Schedule. NARA microfilm publication M653, 1,438 rolls. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d. Available from the Internet: www.ancestry.com, accessed: October 2015.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

☒ previously listed in the National Register

☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

☒ Other

Name of repository: Acorn Hall Library and Archives

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 5.369 acres

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Morris County, NJ
County and State

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 40.796915 Longitude: -74.459895

2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary corresponds to Block 1001, Lot 2 of Tax Map 10 of Morristown, New Jersey

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The parcel has historically been associated with the Acorn Hall and reflects the property given by Mary Crane Hone to the Morris County Historical Society in 1971.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Margaret M. Hickey, AIA, and Beth A. Bjorklund, Historic Preservation Specialists

organization: Connolly & Hickey Historical Architects, LLC

street & number: PO Box 1726

city or town: Cranford state: New Jersey zip code: 07016

telephone: 973-746-4911

date: December 12, 2016

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Acorn Hall

City or Vicinity: Morristown

County: Morris

State: New Jersey

Photographer: Beth A. Bjorklund

Date Photographed: May 23, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0001

Overall view of Acorn Hall and the Carriage House, camera facing north.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0002

Partial view of the east and south elevations of Acorn Hall, camera facing northwest.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0003

View of the central octagonal tower.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0004

Close-up view of the front verandah with scroll-cut wood trim supports, spandrels, and an oval-cut frieze.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0005

View looking up at the west elevation showing the paired decorative brackets at wide, overhanging eaves

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0006

View of the front (south) elevation of Acorn Hall, camera facing north.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0007

Detail view of a pair of French doors at the front verandah.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0008

View of the decorative five-sided projecting bay at the front elevation of the east wing.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0009

View of the west (side) elevation of Acorn Hall, camera facing east.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Morris County, NJ

County and State

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0010

Close-up view of the stone foundation showing a basement-level window at the west elevation.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0011

View of the north (rear) elevation of Acorn Hall, camera facing south.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0012

View of the east (side) elevation of Acorn Hall, camera facing west.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0013

Detail view of the windowing of wall finishes in the Vestibule revealing an earlier trompe l'oeil design.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0014

Overall view of the first-floor Center Hall looking to the rear of the building.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0015

View looking south in the Front Parlor.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0016

Close-up view of the carved marble mantel in the Front Parlor.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0017

View looking north in the Rear Parlor.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0018

View looking east in the Dining Room.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0019

View of the Rear Stair, originally the servants' stair, at the transition between the second and third-floor levels.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0020

View of the second-floor Center Hall looking toward the rear of the building.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0021

Overall view of Bedroom 1 looking southeast.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0022

View looking south in the Nursery.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0023

Overall view of the south elevation of the Carriage House.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0024

Overall view of the north elevation of the Carriage House.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Morris County, NJ
County and State

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0025

View of the remnants of the brick foundation from the former Greenhouse.

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall_0026

View of the non-contributing Gazebo.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

DRAFT



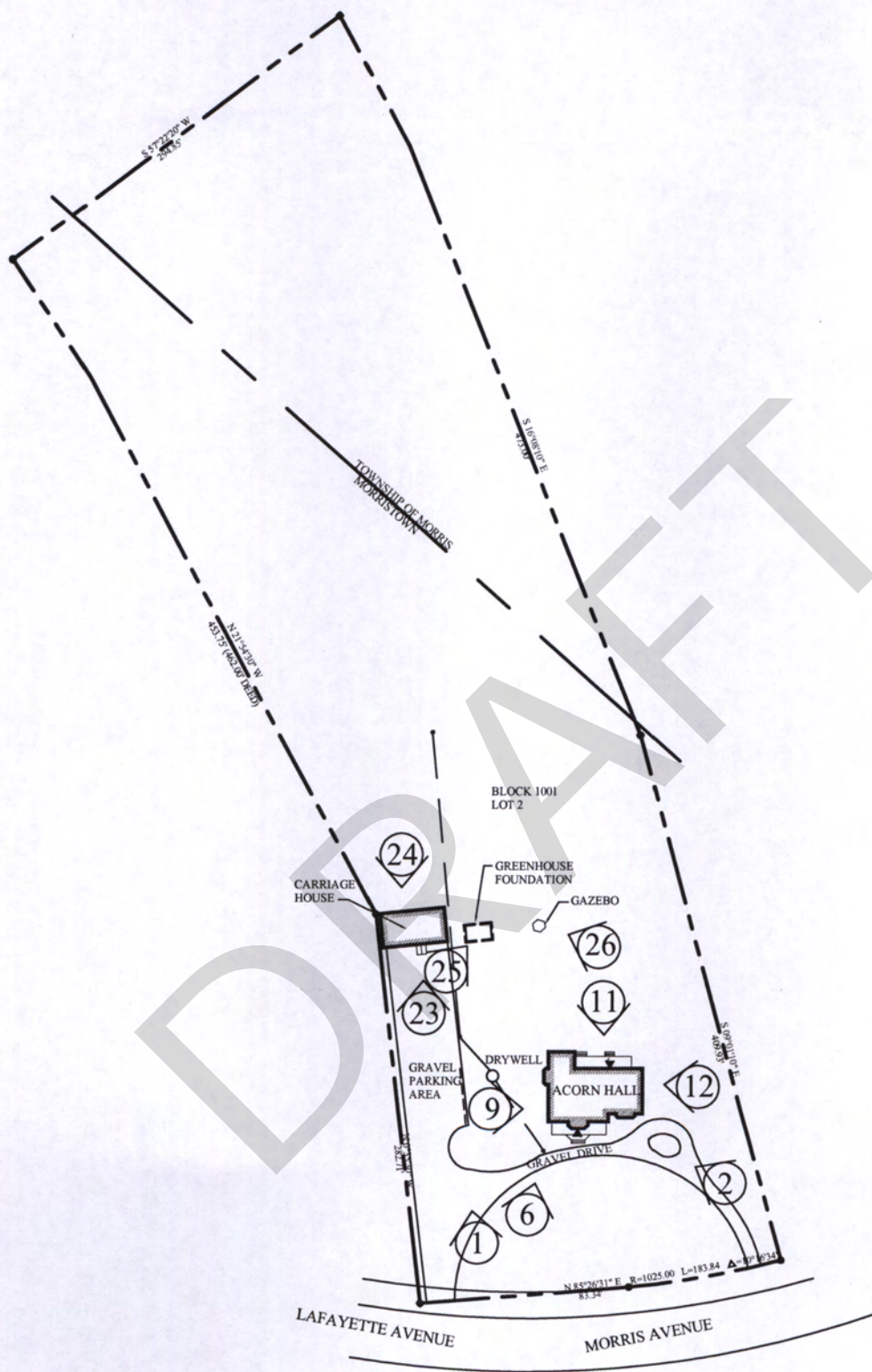
Google earth

feet
meters 100 500

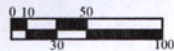


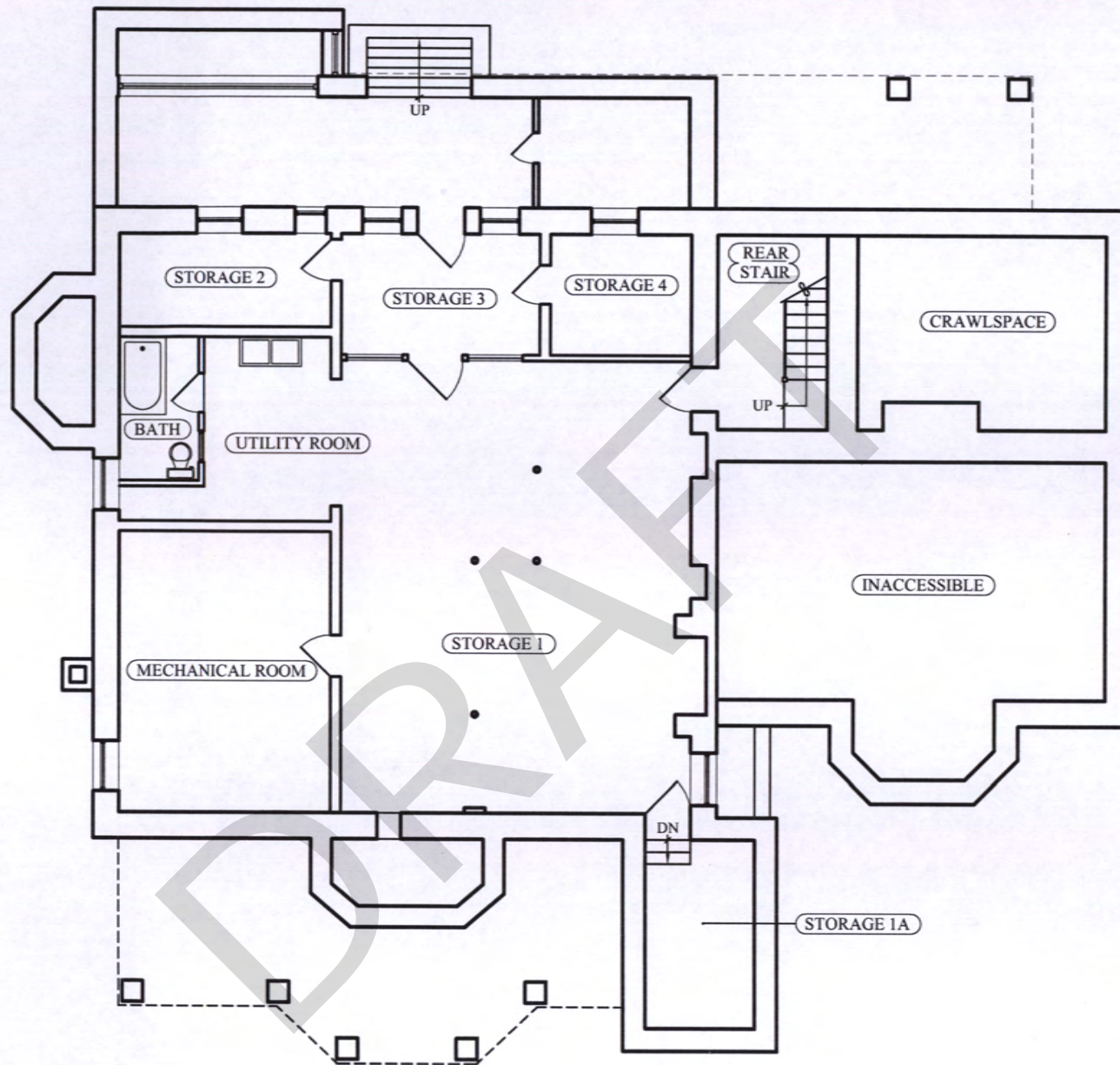
Map Datum: WGS 84

NJ_Morris County_Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

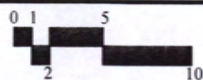


SITE DIAGARM



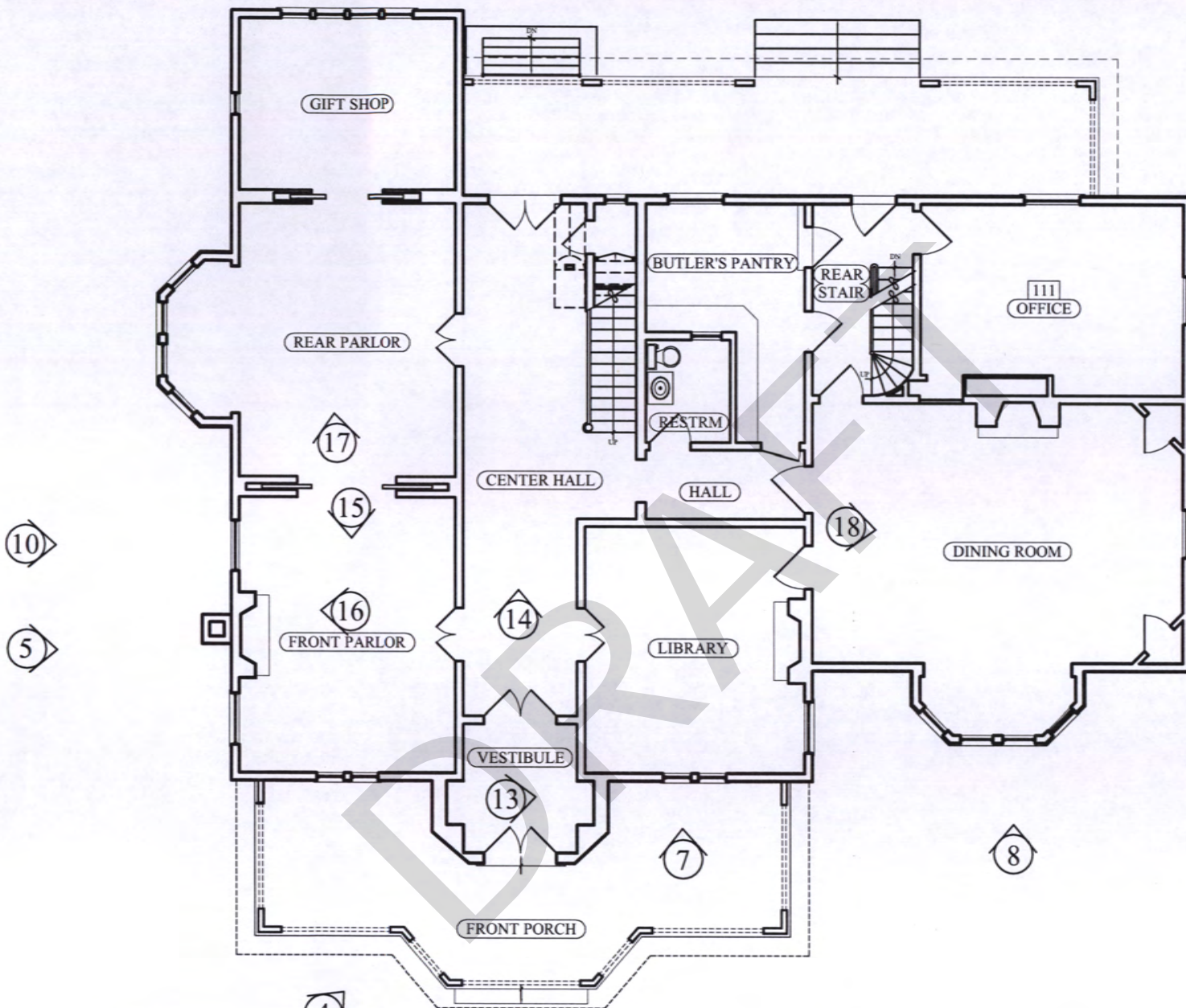


BASEMENT PLAN

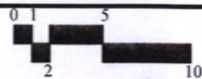


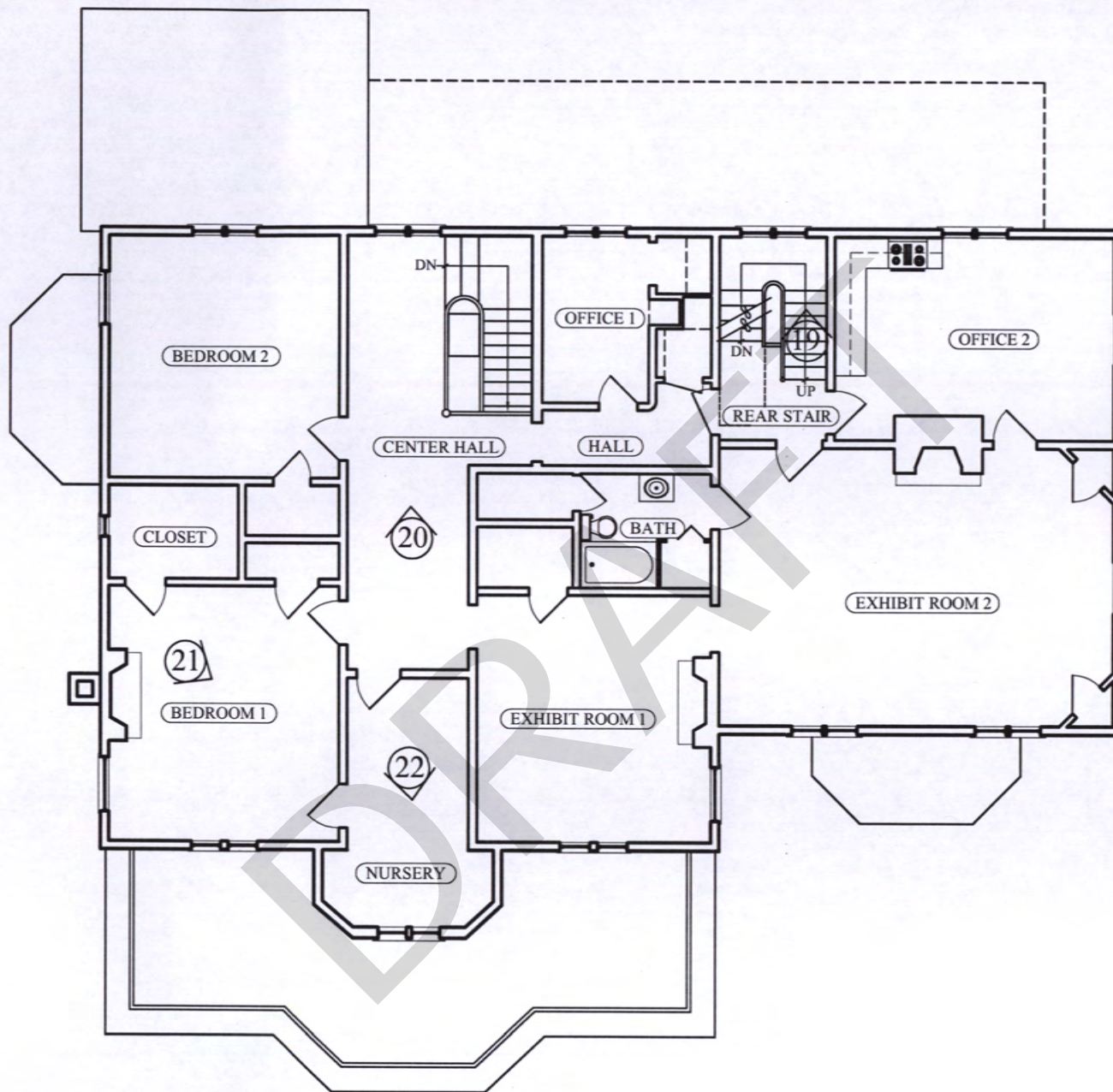
ACORN HALL (ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION)
PHOTOGRAPH KEY

2

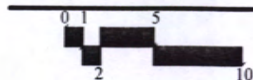


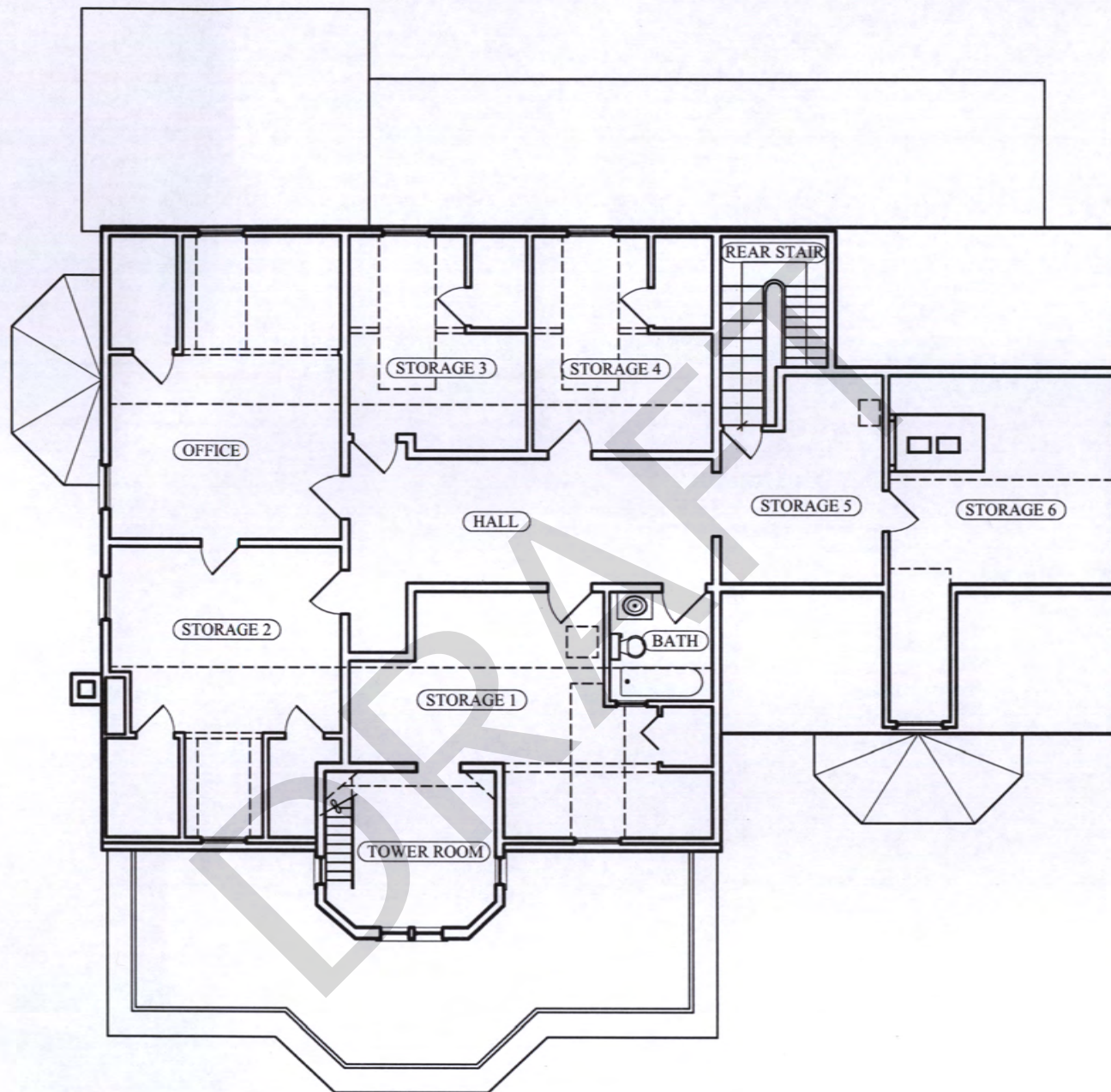
FIRST FLOOR PLAN





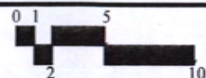
SECOND FLOOR PLAN





NORTH

THIRD FLOOR PLAN



ACORN HALL (ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION)

PHOTOGRAPH KEY

5



Historic Map No. 1

Map of Morris County, 1853

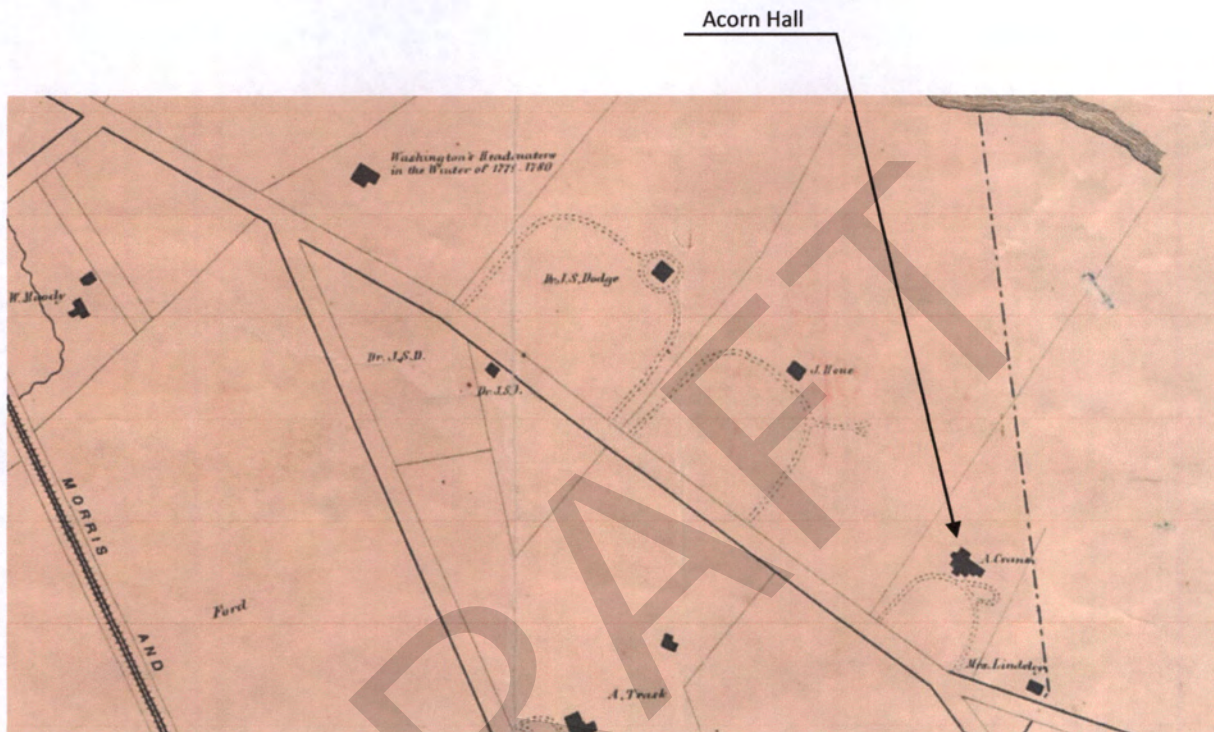


The circle indicates the approximate location of where Dr. Schermerhorn was constructing his new residence in 1853.

Credit: *Map of Morris County, New Jersey from Original Surveys* by J. Lightfoot and Sam Geil. Published by J. B. Schickls, Publisher, 1853. Available online at <http://mapmaker.rutgers.edu>. Courtesy of RU Special Collections.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Morristown, Morris Co., NJ



Historic Map No. 2

1868 Atlas of Morris County, Plate 10



1868 *Beers Atlas* showing Acorn Hall. This map shows the general configuration of the house after Augustus Crane added to the original core. This map does not depict the outbuildings.

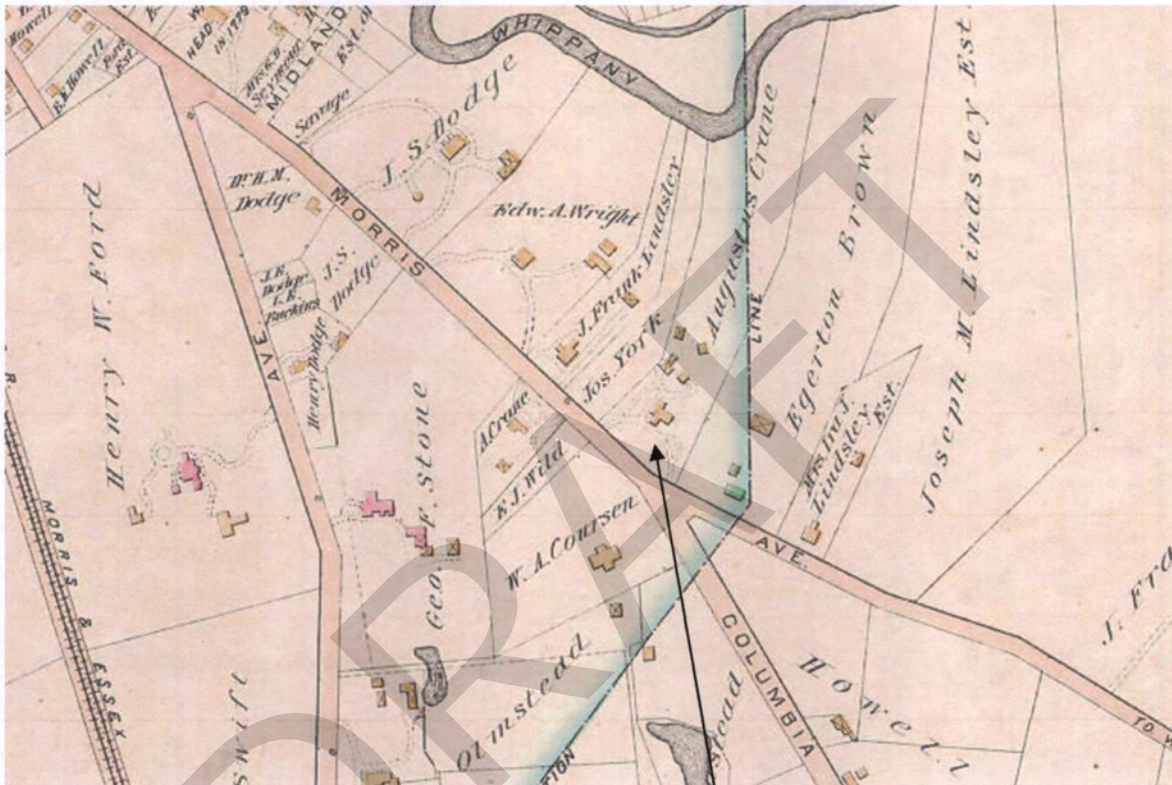
Credit: *Atlas of Morris Co., New Jersey from actual Surveys by and under the direction of F. W. Beers.*

Published by F. W. Beers, A. D. Ellis & G. G. Soule, 1868. Available online at <http://cdm15387.contentdm.oclc.org/>. Courtesy of the North Jersey History & Genealogy Center

Digital Collections.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Morristown, Morris Co., NJ



Historic Map No. 3

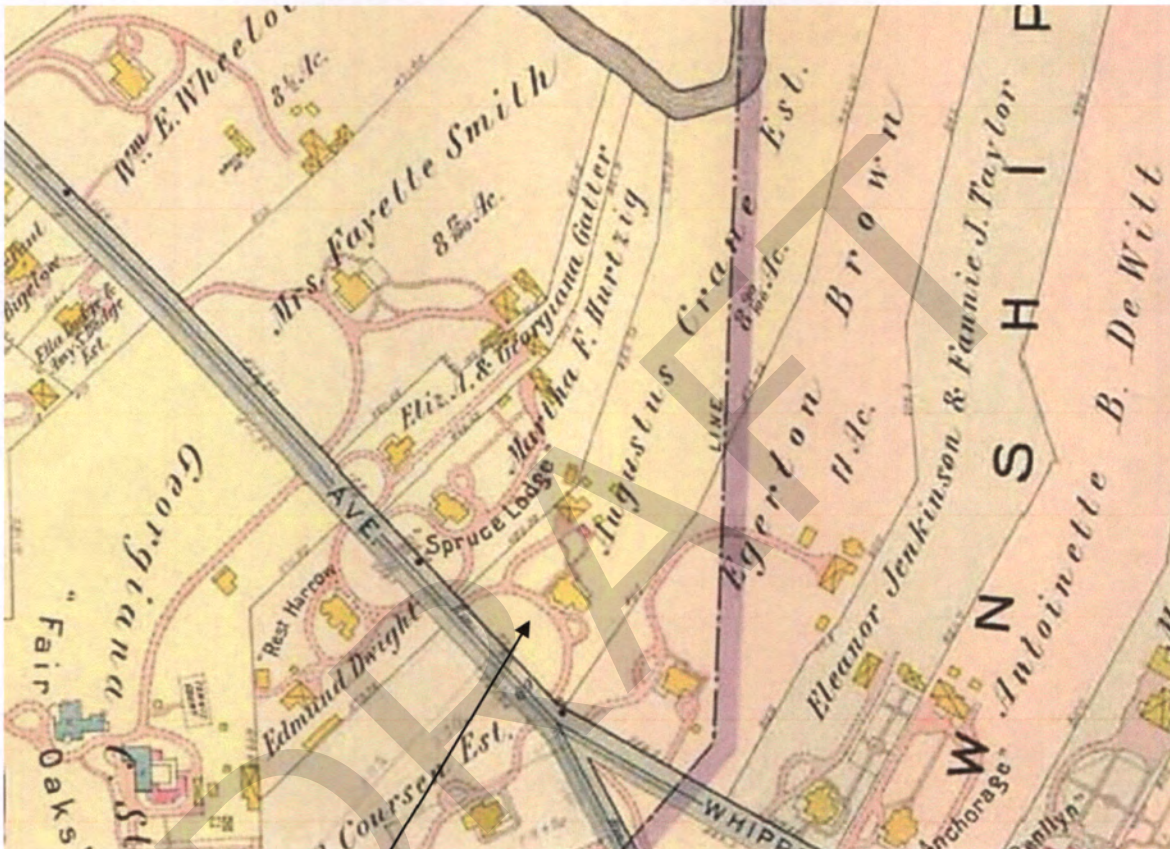
1887 Atlas of Morris County, Plate 5



1887 Atlas showing Acorn Hall. The property includes Acorn Hall, the Carriage House, and three other outbuildings.

Credit: *Robinson's Atlas of Morris County, New Jersey; Compiled from Official Records, Private Plans & Actual Surveys.* Published by E. Robinson, 1887. Available online at <http://cdm15387.contentdm.oclc.org/>. Courtesy of the North Jersey History & Genealogy Center Digital Collections.

Morristown, Morris Co., NJ



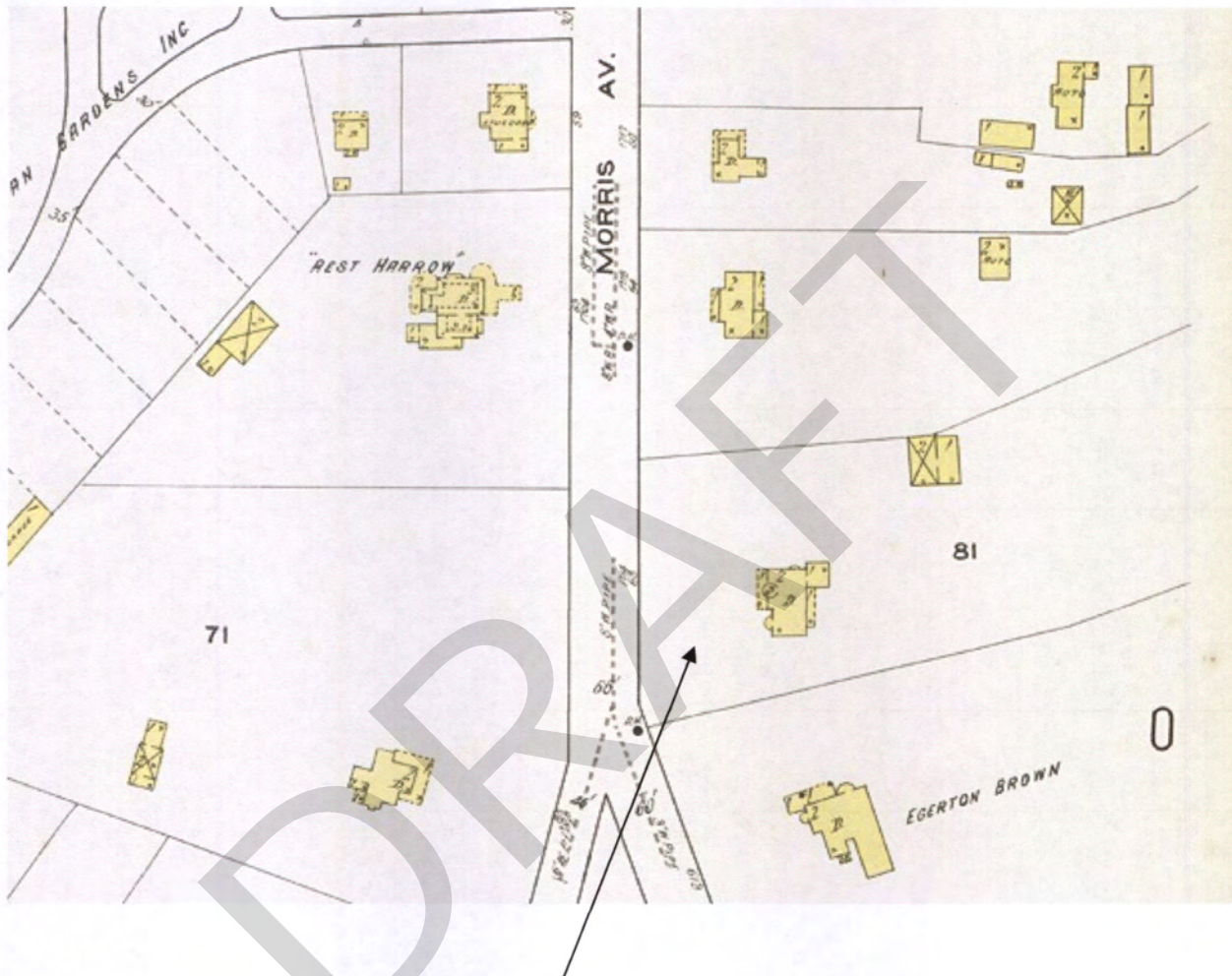
1910 Atlas of Morristown and Surrounding, Plate 13



Credit: *Atlas of Morristown, Madison, Florham Park, Chatham, Mendham and Part of Morris Co., New Jersey*. Published by A. H. Mueller, 1910. Available online at <http://cdm15387.contentdm.oclc.org/>. Courtesy of the North Jersey History & Genealogy Center Digital Collections.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Morristown, Morris Co., NJ



Historic Map No. 5

1918 Insurance Map of Morristown, Sheet 36



1918 insurance map showing Acorn Hall and the Carriage House.

Credit: Sanborn Map Company, *Morristown, Morristown Suburbs, Whippany, Morris Plains and Mt. Tabor, New Jersey* (Sanborn Map Co., New York: 1918), sheet 36. Available online at <http://library.princeton.edu/libraries/firestone/rbsc/aids/sanborn/morris/morristown.html>. Courtesy of Princeton University Library.



Historic Map No. 1

Map of Morris County, 1853

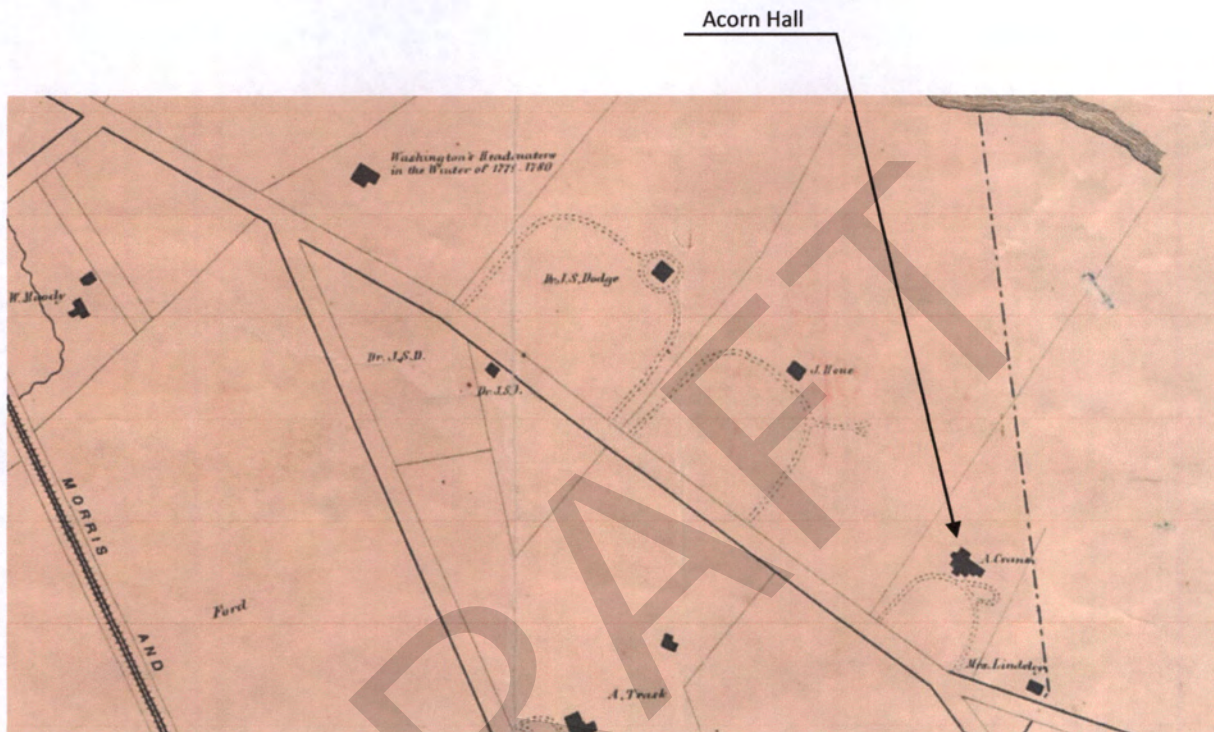


The circle indicates the approximate location of where Dr. Schermerhorn was constructing his new residence in 1853.

Credit: *Map of Morris County, New Jersey from Original Surveys* by J. Lightfoot and Sam Geil. Published by J. B. Schickls, Publisher, 1853. Available online at <http://mapmaker.rutgers.edu>. Courtesy of RU Special Collections.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Morristown, Morris Co., NJ



Historic Map No. 2

1868 Atlas of Morris County, Plate 10



1868 *Beers Atlas* showing Acorn Hall. This map shows the general configuration of the house after Augustus Crane added to the original core. This map does not depict the outbuildings.

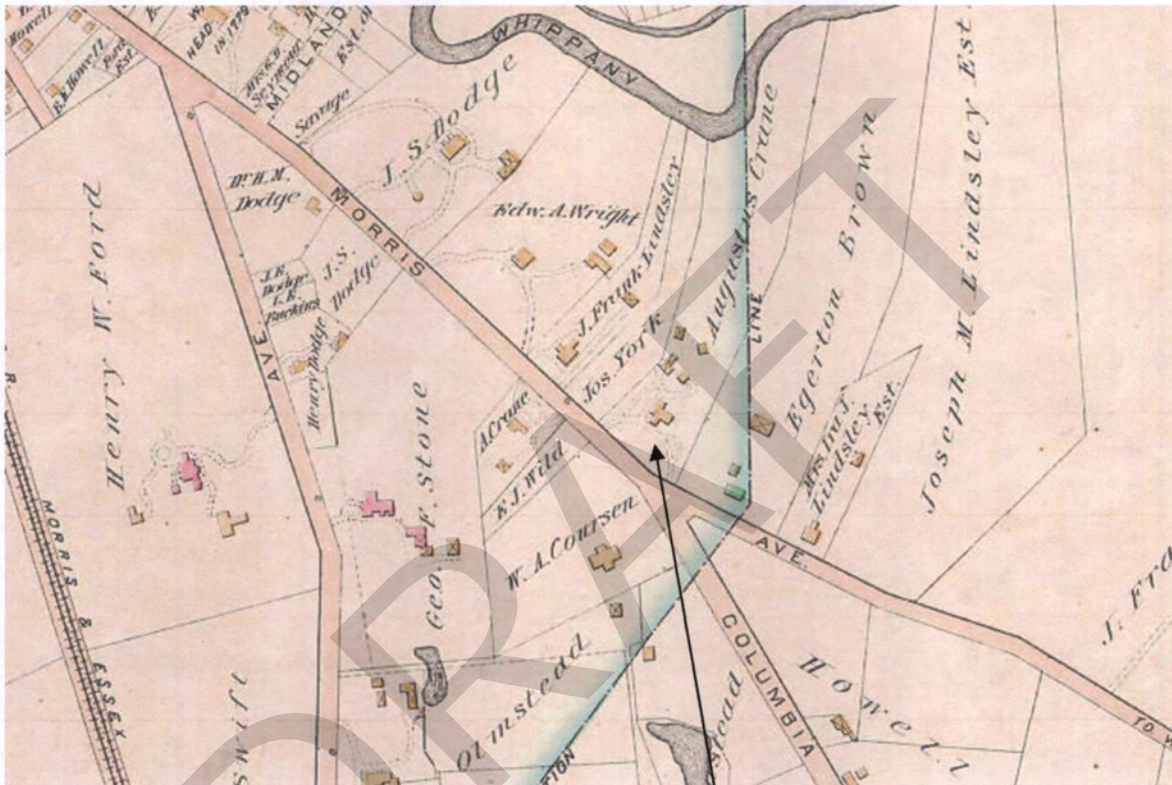
Credit: *Atlas of Morris Co., New Jersey from actual Surveys by and under the direction of F. W. Beers.*

Published by F. W. Beers, A. D. Ellis & G. G. Soule, 1868. Available online at <http://cdm15387.contentdm.oclc.org/>. Courtesy of the North Jersey History & Genealogy Center

Digital Collections.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Morristown, Morris Co., NJ



Historic Map No. 3

1887 Atlas of Morris County, Plate 5

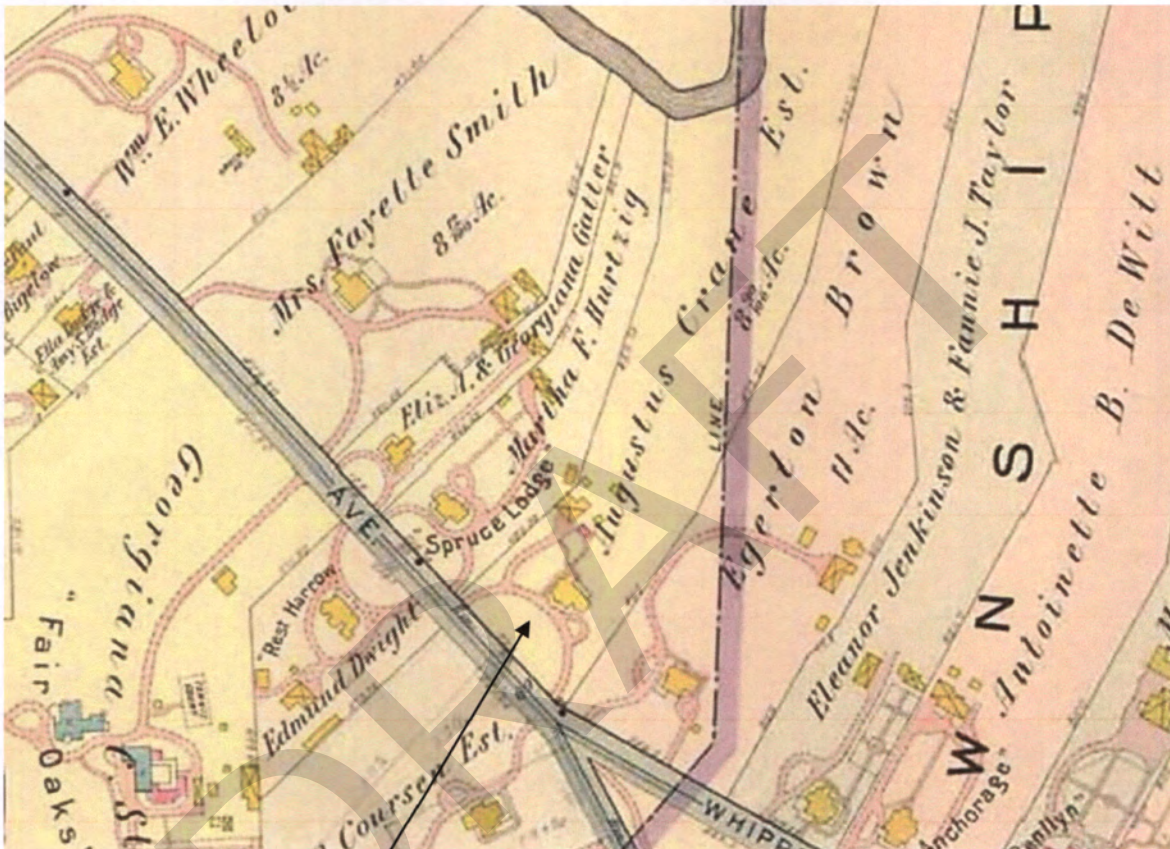


1887 Atlas showing Acorn Hall. The property includes Acorn Hall, the Carriage House, and three other outbuildings.

Credit: *Robinson's Atlas of Morris County, New Jersey; Compiled from Official Records, Private Plans & Actual Surveys.* Published by E. Robinson, 1887. Available online at <http://cdm15387.contentdm.oclc.org/>. Courtesy of the North Jersey History & Genealogy Center Digital Collections.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Morristown, Morris Co., NJ



Historic Map No. 4

1910 Atlas of Morristown and Surrounding, Plate 13

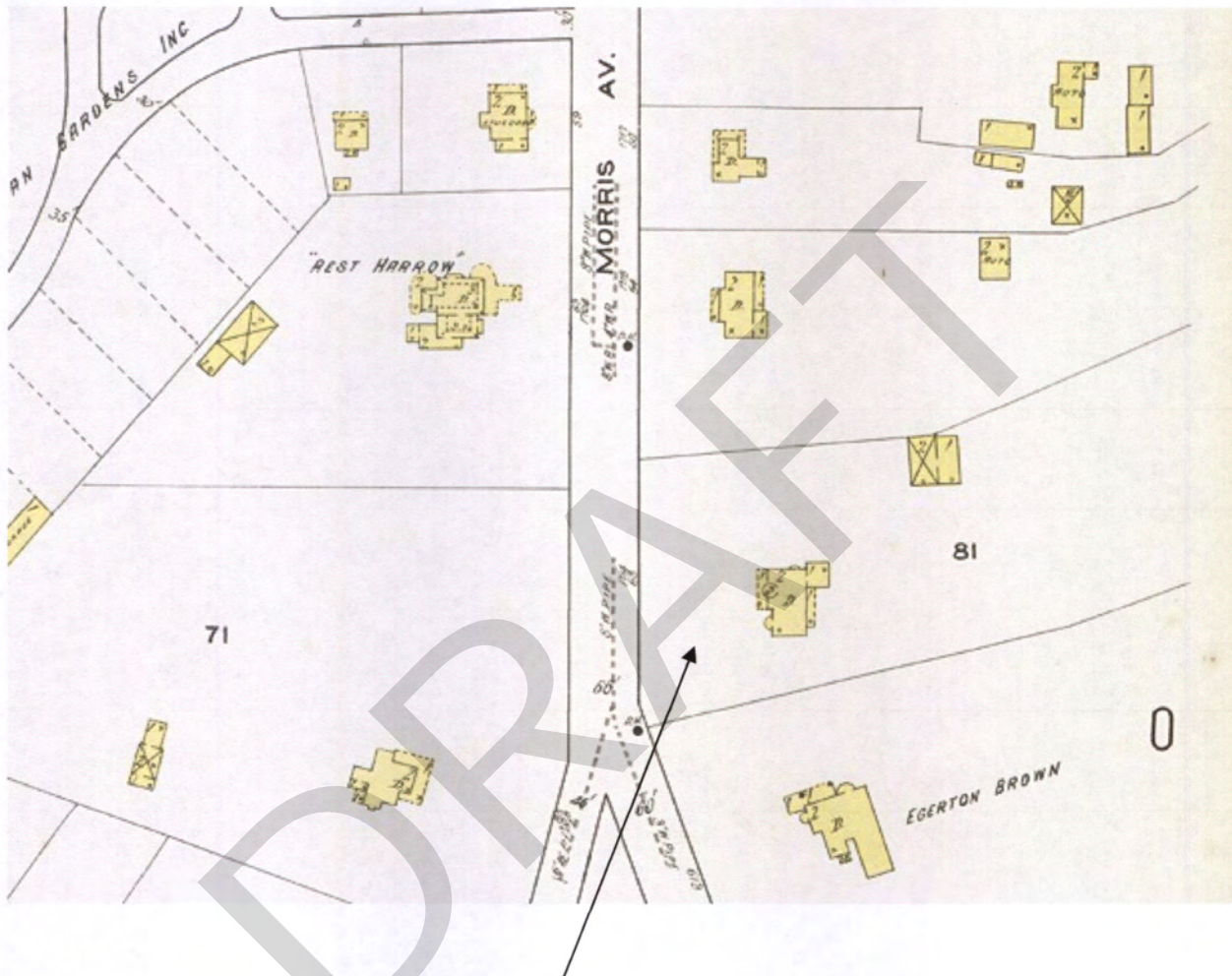


1910 Atlas showing Acorn Hall. The property includes Acorn Hall, the Carriage House, and three other outbuildings.

Credit: *Atlas of Morristown, Madison, Florham Park, Chatham, Mendham and Part of Morris Co., New Jersey*. Published by A. H. Mueller, 1910. Available online at <http://cdm15387.contentdm.oclc.org/>. Courtesy of the North Jersey History & Genealogy Center Digital Collections.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Morristown, Morris Co., NJ



Historic Map No. 5

1918 Insurance Map of Morristown, Sheet 36



1918 insurance map showing Acorn Hall and the Carriage House.

Credit: Sanborn Map Company, *Morristown, Morristown Suburbs, Whippany, Morris Plains and Mt. Tabor, New Jersey* (Sanborn Map Co., New York: 1918), sheet 36. Available online at <http://library.princeton.edu/libraries/firestone/rbsc/aids/sanborn/morris/morristown.html>. Courtesy of Princeton University Library .

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Morristown, Morris Co., NJ



Historic Image No. 1

C.1890 view looking northwest at the Crane family in front of Acorn Hall.

Credit: Joan M. Williams, *Images of America: Morristown* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 1996).

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Morristown, Morris Co., NJ



Historic Image No. 2

Late-nineteenth-century view looking north at Acorn Hall.

Image from "The Crane Papers," courtesy of the Morris County Historical Society.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Morristown, Morris Co., NJ



Historic Image No. 3

Late-nineteenth-century interior view of the rear parlor looking north into the picture gallery (current gift shop).

Image from "The Crane Papers," courtesy of the Morris County Historical Society.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Morristown, Morris Co., NJ



Historic Image No. 4

Early-twentieth-century view looking southeast at Acorn Hall.

Image from "The Crane Papers," courtesy of the Morris County Historical Society.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Morristown, Morris Co., NJ



Historic Image No. 5

1930s view looking northwest at Acorn Hall.

Image from "The Crane Papers," courtesy of the Morris County Historical Society.

Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation)

Morristown, Morris Co., NJ



Historic Image No. 6

Mid-twentieth-century interior view of the Front Parlor looking south.

Image from "The Crane Papers," courtesy of the Morris County Historical Society.



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #1



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #2



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #3



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #4



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #5



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #6



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #7



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #8



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #9



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #10



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #11



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #12



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #13



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #14



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #15



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #16



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #17



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #18



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #19



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #20



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #21



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #22



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #23



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #24



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #25



Acorn Hall (Additional Documentation), Morristown, Morris County
Photo #26