

Shaker Church Family Brethren's Shop
S. side of U. S. Rt. 20 near intersection
with State Rt. 41, 5 mi. W. of Pittsfield
Hancock
Berkshire County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MASS-722

HABS
MASS
2-HANC
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

SHAKER CHURCH FAMILY BRETHERN'S SHOP HABS No. MASS-722

HABS
MASS
2-HANC,
1-

Location: South side of U.S. Rt. 20 near intersection with State Rt. 41, 5 miles west of Pittsfield, Hancock, Berkshire County, Massachusetts

Present Owner and Occupant: Shaker Community, Inc., Hancock, Massachusetts

Present Use: Exhibition area for brethren's industries

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of erection: Built before 1833. In a water-color chart of the Church Family area, dated 1833, now owned by Mrs. Morris Austin of Clinton, Conn. (formerly a member of the Hancock Church Family), this building is shown in its present location.
2. Architect: None.
3. Original and subsequent owners: United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing; Shaker Community, Inc.
4. Builder, suppliers, etc.: The builder is unknown. The supplies used were local.
5. Original plans, construction, etc.: The building is original, planned symmetrically, with a central stairway and one room on each side on both the first and second floors. These rooms have been divided into smaller areas at different times. The attic and cellar stairs are original, but the first to second floor stairs have been added and the rise made more gentle.
6. Alterations and additions: The hooded porch on the south side, which was not original, has been removed. Several modern window sashes have been replaced with old sash. The west room on the first floor has been restored to its original condition. The toilet, bath tub, and plumbing have been removed. The original partition has been restored in the east room on the first floor. The plaster walls have been whitened and the woodwork on the first floor has been painted old Shaker red. The new floor in one room upstairs has been taken up to reveal the original floor and color. The woodwork in the west room on the second

floor has been scraped to a natural state and stained. An old paneled door replaces a "store" door leading from outside to a stairway. Partitions have been removed in the east room on the second floor. The Shakers have altered the original stairway to make it less steep.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

None.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: Chart of Hancock Church Family in 1833 by Mrs. Morris Austin (formerly a member of the Church Family) of Clinton, Conn. Shaker Community, Inc. possesses some photographs.

2. Bibliography:

Mrs. Morris Austin, formerly a Shaker sister at Hancock, reported that the building had several uses: one room was used as a school room, another area as a coffin storage, another as a clock repair shop, one room as a carpentry shop, etc.. In a sketch made early in the century by a Williams College student, by the name of Wright, (now in the Williams College library), the building is called a shoe shop. Table swifts were also made here.

3. Sources not yet investigated: Official Hancock Church record - when located.

Prepared by Edward Deming Andrews
Curator
Shaker Community, Inc.
March 22, 1962

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. Description of Exterior:

1. Foundations: Approximately 5-1/2 foot deep basement with a stone foundation.
2. Structural system, framing: The building is a typical post and beam framing, all is original to the structure. There is a heavy ridge member and purlins supporting the rafters at mid-span which in turn are supported by means of connecting columns by the second floor ceiling girders. The columns and girders are either encased in finished boards or are neatly chamfered and finished in all finished areas.

3. Openings - Windows: The sash are twelve-over-eight lights.

B. Description of Interior:

1. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls in all areas are either sheathed with wood panels or plaster.
2. Trim: There are wood wainscots at varying heights made of horizontal planks.

Prepared by Terry Hallock
Architect
Shaker Community, Inc.
1962

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

The information in this report is incomplete, but has been included in the Historic American Buildings Survey's collection because of the special knowledge of the authors. Edward Deming Andrews, a notable author on Shaker history, religion, and arts, compiled the historical data. The restoration architect of the Hancock Shaker community, Terry Hallock, supplied the architectural data. June, 1975.

ADDENDUM TO:
SHAKER CHURCH FAMILY BRETHREN'S SHOP
U.S. Route 20
Hancock
Berkshire County
Massachusetts

HABS MA-722
HABS MASS,2-HANC,1-

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001