

FIRST FREE WILL BAPTIST CHURCH, PARSONAGE HABS No. NH-233-A  
Dover Road, south side, corner of Blackhall Road  
Epsom  
Merrimack County  
New Hampshire

HABS  
NH  
7-EP50,  
1A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
Northeast Region  
Philadelphia Support Office  
U.S. Custom House  
200 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, P.A. 19106

HABS  
NH  
7-EPSO,  
IA-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

FIRST FREE WILL BAPTIST CHURCH, PARSONAGE

HABS No. NH-233-A

Location: Dover Road, south side, corner of Blackhall Road  
Epsom, Merrimack County, New Hampshire

Quad: Gossville  
UTM: 19.309410.4788265

Significance: The First Free Will Baptist Church Parsonage contributes to the village of Gossville Historic District under Criterion A, for its associations with the Free Will Baptist Church which played a central role in the development of the village in the 19th century, and under Criterion C, for its contribution to the understanding of 19th century construction techniques and the vernacular mix of building stock in the village. The village of Gossville developed in the early 19th century on the First New Hampshire Turnpike which was constructed c.1800 and expanded later with the arrival of the Suncook Valley Railroad in 1869. The 1860's and 1870's were a significant period of development in the district.

Description: The First Free Will Baptist Church Parsonage was built c.1853 as a modest Greek Revival style dwelling standing 2½ stories high with a sidehall plan. Interior investigation revealed that the current structure was created from an earlier (c.1800) cape that was raised to form the second story of the sidehall house. The original location of this earlier structure is not known. Interior evidence of the pre-1853 structure includes the post and beam framing, ridge pole with purlin and rafters in the attic, cased corner posts in all four corners, and Federal period chair rail and six panel doors with delicate, compound moulding surrounding the slightly raised panels.

The gable end facade is oriented east, facing the Baptist Church. The wood frame structure is supported by a granite foundation and sheathed in synthetic siding. The siding covers original flat board trim around the windows and entry, as well as the wide corner boards. Like many Epsom residences of this period, this house has slightly projecting eaves with no returns. The rectangular windows have double-hung, 2/2 sash. A historic photograph shows all windows flanked by wooden shutters, but only a few shutters remain on the house today. The Greek Revival style recessed sidehall entry has a six panel door flanked by full-length sidelights. A brick stove chimney is centered on the ridge. A taller brick stove chimney appeared in the same location historically (Photograph Collection of the Epsom Historical Association).

A later, 20th century, 2 story wing projects from the south elevation of the house. This is supported by a concrete foundation, sheathed in synthetic siding and has windows with 2/2 sash. In the corner formed by the house and wing is a 1 story porch with scroll brackets and railing of square balusters. The existing wing replaced a smaller 1½ story wing shown in historical photographs. The photographs show a small carriage barn connected to the south end of the wing, with the gable end oriented north towards the turnpike (Photograph Collection of the Epsom Historical Association). Currently, a

FIRST FREE WILL BAPTIST CHURCH, PARSONAGE  
HABS No. NH-233-A (Page 2)

detached wood frame, one car garage, built c.1970, is located south of the wing, facing Blackhall Road.

**History:** The structure that served as a parsonage of the First Free Will Baptist Church of Epsom was assembled in 1853. The first pastor to reside here was Moses Quimby, who served the Epsom Church for many years (McComber 1949).

The First Free Will Baptist Church had been formed in Epsom in 1824. The first church building was erected on the site of the existing church in 1834. This stood east of the parsonage until 1861, when it was moved to the town center to serve as the general store and the current Baptist Church building erected. The parsonage was sold into private ownership in 1991 (Gifford 1991).

The building is presently owned by the State of New Hampshire Department of Transportation and is vacant. As stipulated in the project Memorandum of Agreement, the building was marketed for relocation with historic preservation deed restrictions. It was then marketed without restrictions. Marketing efforts were unsuccessful and the building will be demolished.

**Sources:** McComber, Donald E.  
1949 "The Founding and Early Years of the Baptist Church in Epsom."  
Collection of the Epsom Historical Association, Epsom Public Library.

**Maps**

Hurd, D.H. & Co.  
1892 Town and County Atlas of the State of New Hampshire. Boston: D.H. Hurd & Company.

Walling, Henry F.  
1858 "Epsom County Wall Map." Collection of the New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, N.H.

**Photographs**

Collection of the Epsom Historical Association, Epsom Public Library.

**Interview**

Nancy Gifford, church secretary, May 16, 1991.

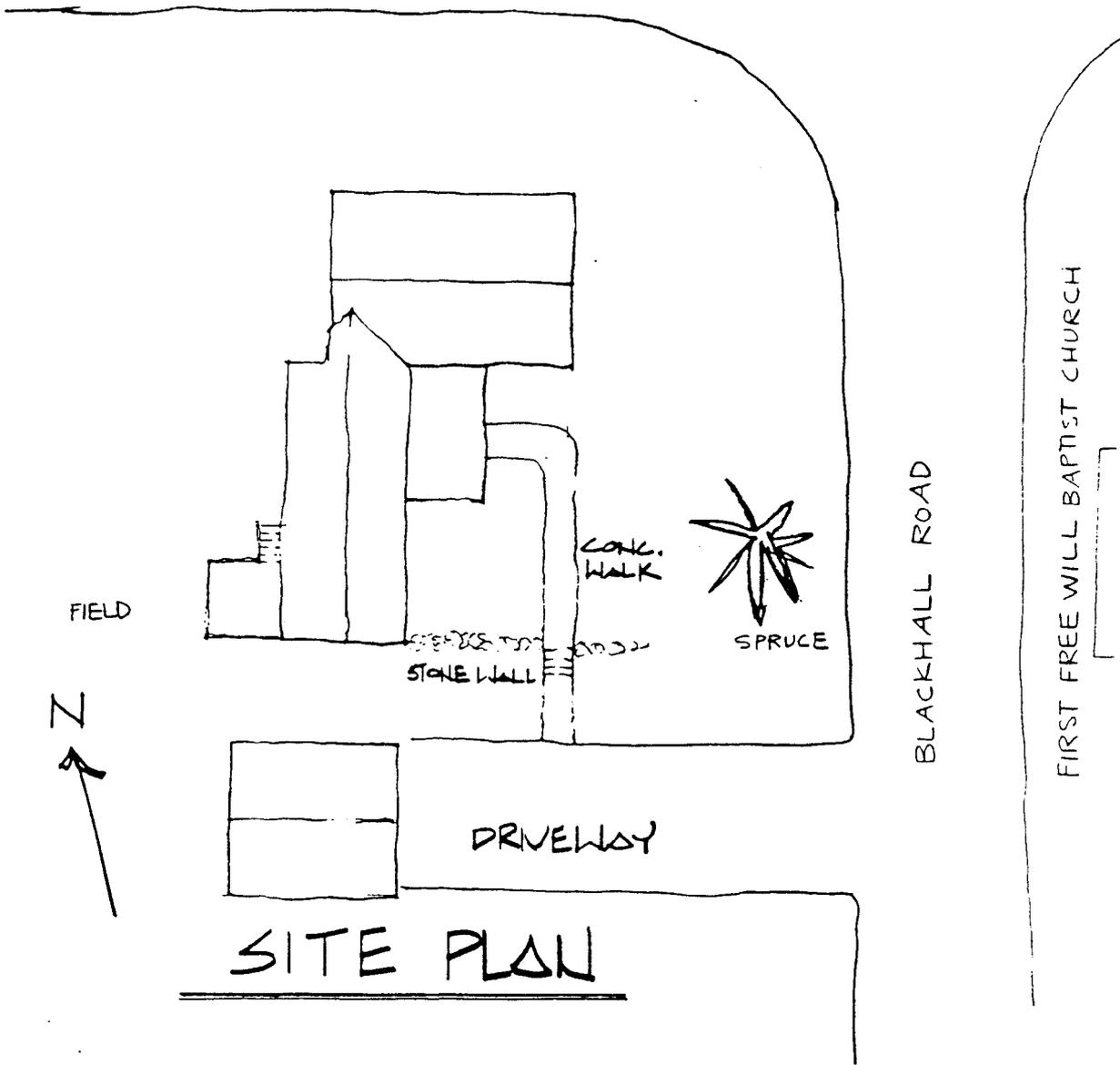
**Historian:** Prepared by Lynne Emerson Monroe, Preservation Company, 5 Hobbs Road, Kensington, New Hampshire, for the New Hampshire Department of Transportation, Concord, New Hampshire.

FIRST FREE WILL BAPTIST CHURCH, PARSONAGE  
HABS No. NH-233-A (Page 3)

SITE PLAN

Drawn by: Robin Wunderlich, Lee, NH

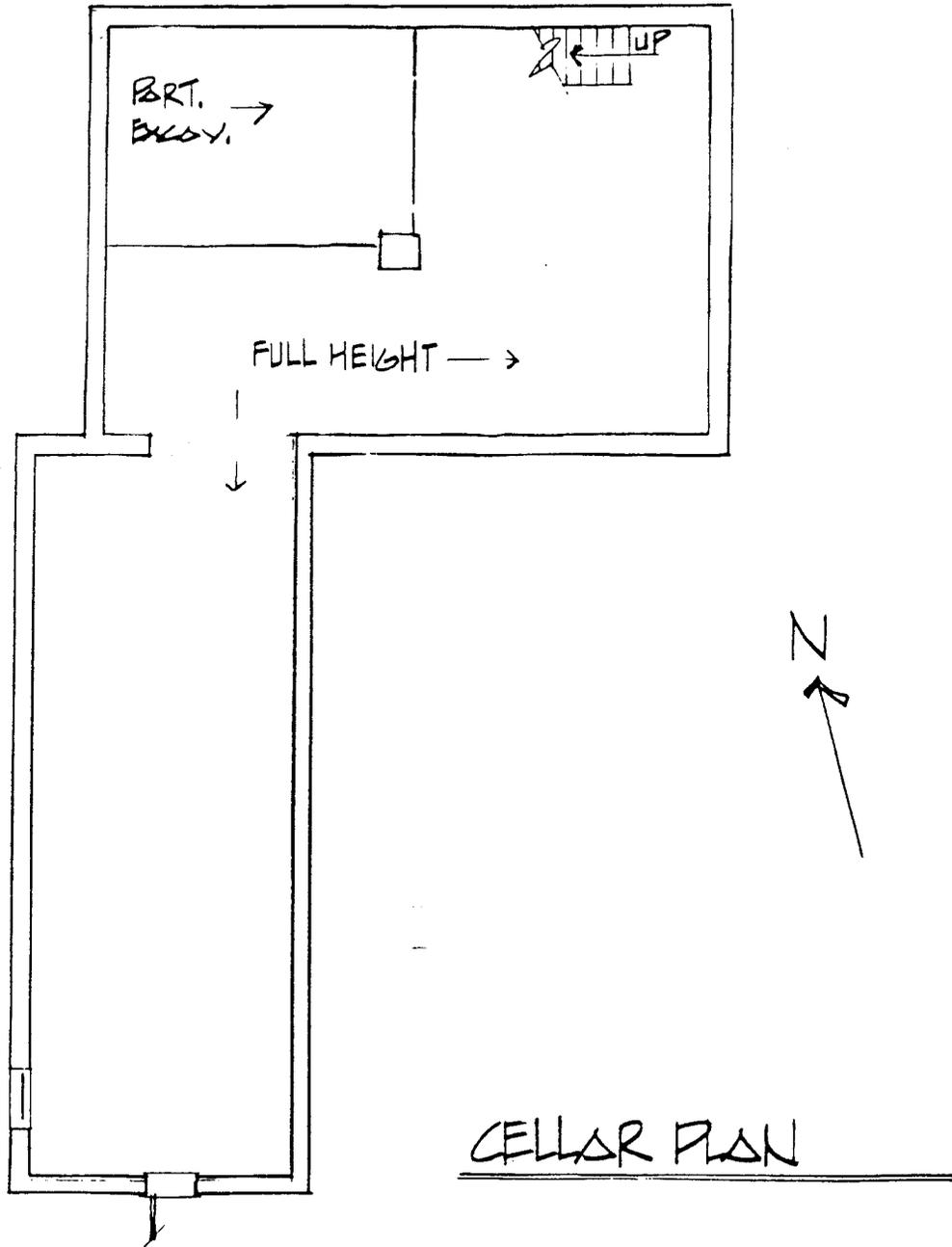
ROUTE 4 (FIRST NEW HAMPSHIRE TURNPIKE)



FIRST FREE WILL BAPTIST CHURCH, PARSONAGE  
HABS No. NH-233-A (Page 4)

CELLAR PLAN

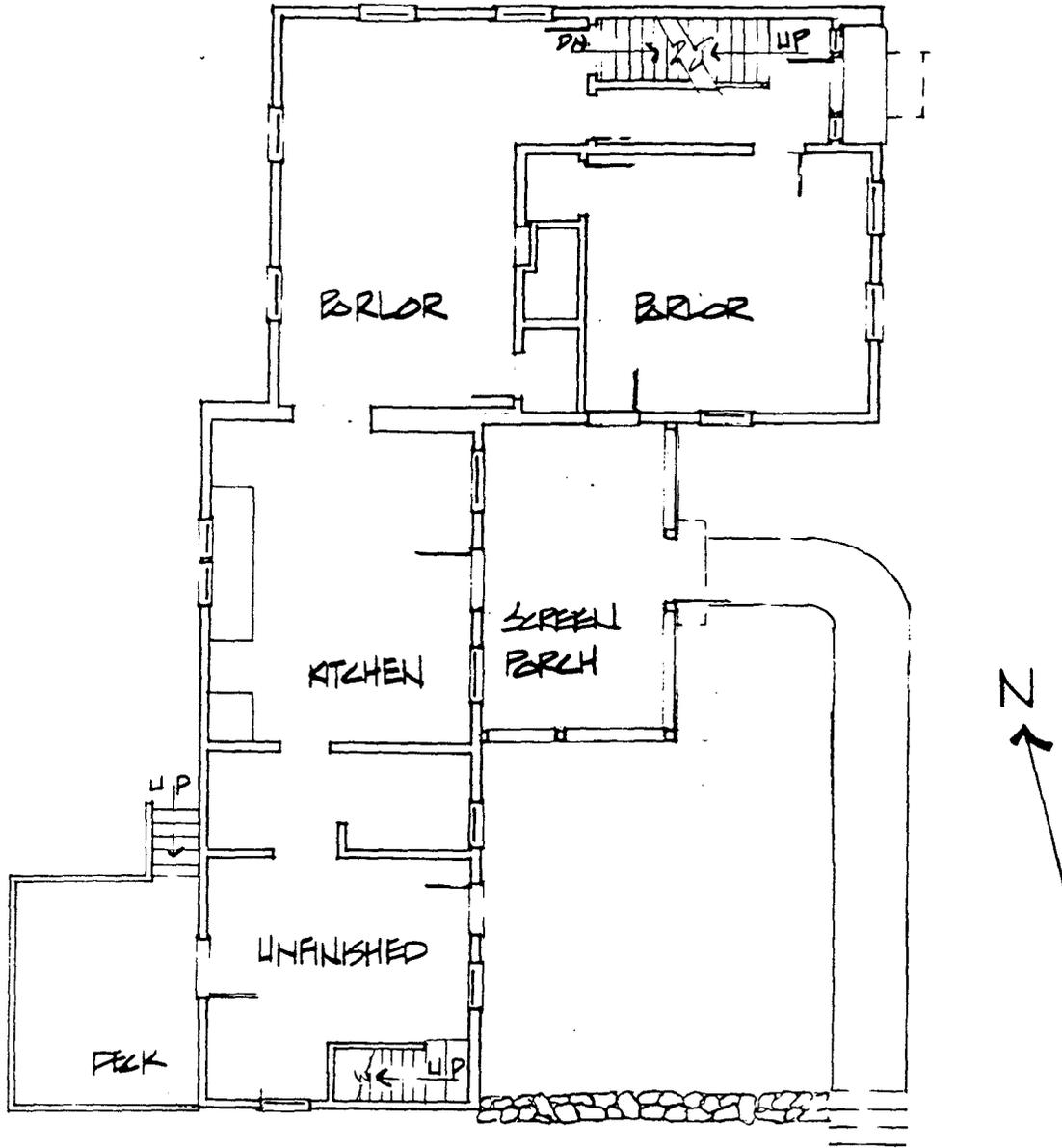
Drawn by: Robin Wunderlich, Lee, NH



FIRST FREE WILL BAPTIST CHURCH, PARSONAGE  
HABS No. NH-233-A (Page 5)

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

Drawn by: Robin Wunderlich, Lee, NH



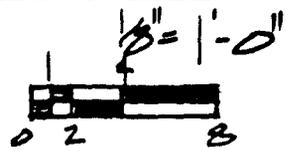
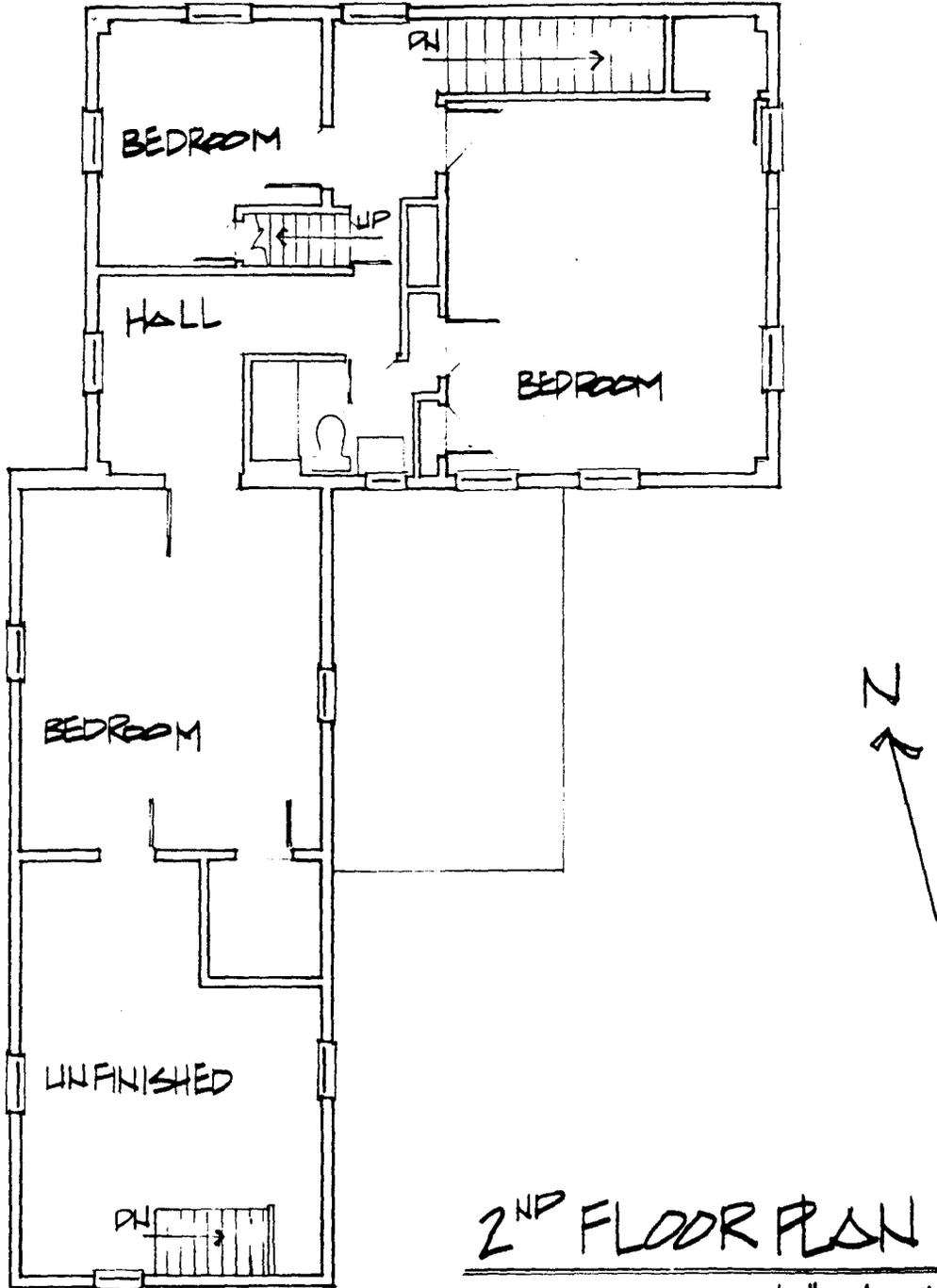
1<sup>ST</sup> FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FREE WILL BAPTIST CHURCH, PARSONAGE  
HABS No. NH-233-A (Page 6)

SECOND FLOOR PLAN

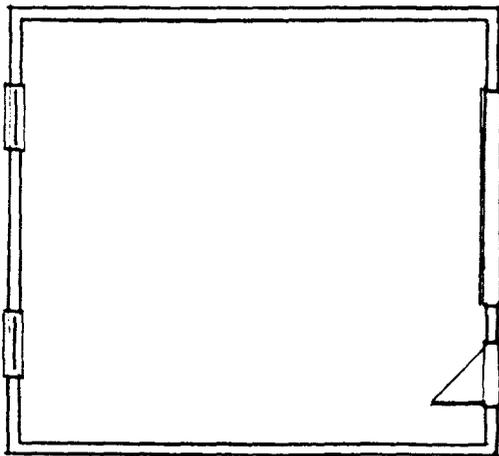
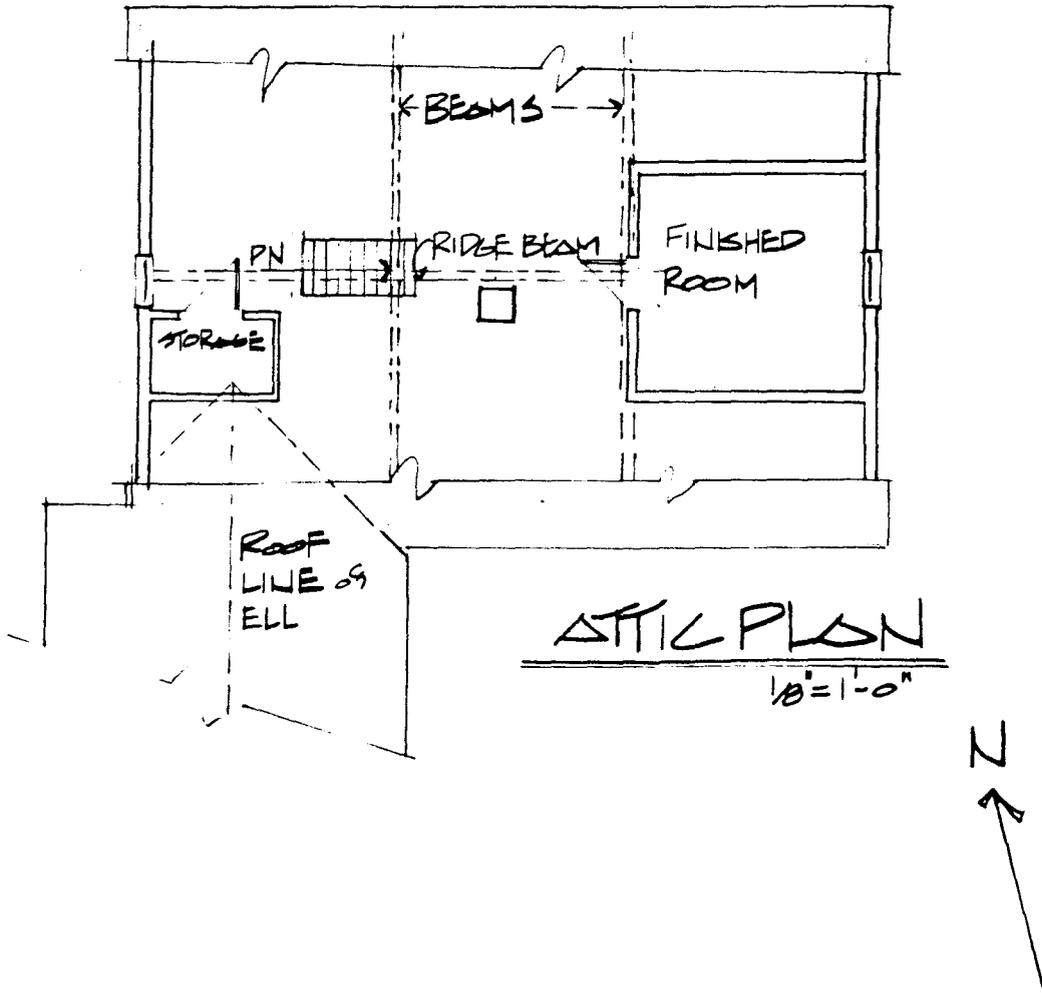
Drawn by: Robin Wunderlich, Lee, NH



FIRST FREE WILL BAPTIST CHURCH, PARSONAGE  
HABS No. NH-233-A (Page 7)

ATTIC PLAN

Drawn by: Robin Wunderlich, Lee, NH



GARAGE PLAN  
1/8" = 1'-0"

