

JOHN M. WILLIAM HOUSE
Route 664, approx. 1,350 feet east of
Jay Street Bridge
Lockport Vicinity
Clinton County
Pennsylvania

HABS NO. PA-5529

HABS
PA
18-LOKPT.V,
3-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Mid-Atlantic Region
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

HABS
PA
18-LOKPTV,
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

JOHN M. WILLIAMS HOUSE

HABS No. PA- 5529

Location: Route 664, approximately 1350 feet from the Jay Street Bridge, ~~Lower~~
Lockport, ~~Lock Haven~~ Vicinity, Clinton County, Pennsylvania

USGS Lock Haven Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator
Coordinates: 18. 295470. 4556975

**Present Owner
and Occupant:**

Richard E. Chilcot
R.D. #2, Box 91
Lock Haven, PA 17745

Present Use:

Residence.

Significance:

The John M. Williams House is significant as an example of vernacular Italianate architecture within the nineteenth-century canal-era housing of Lower Lockport. As a collection, the canal-era houses of Lower Lockport exhibit simple design and minimal ornamental detailing. They also share similar two-story, side-gabled massing and a uniform setback from the road. The mid-nineteenth-century John M. Williams House displays these characteristics in a vernacular Italianate design, particularly with regard to its arched windows and raised brick hood crowns.

Lower Lockport's development followed a local pattern of early nineteenth-century agricultural land use yielding to residential subdivision in the wake of the development of the West Branch of the Pennsylvania Canal in 1834. Lock No. 34 of the canal system was sited in Lower Lockport in 1834 and the canal remained in operation until 1889, at which time it was rendered useless by a damaging flood (see HAER No. PA-188). The canal served as a major transportation route in the pre-railroad era. In conjunction with the canal, the lumber industry also played a major role in the development of Lower Lockport and was central to its economy. Lower Lockport served as the head market for the lumber rafting trade on the West Branch. Many of the extant dwellings in Lower Lockport housed merchants and skilled professionals--blacksmiths and carpenters--dependent upon the lumber trade. Other residents included relatively prosperous boatmen and laborers who worked on the canal. The original owner of the house, John M. Williams, worked as a raftman or log-floater.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: circa 1875. The change of ownership on the property in 1875 probably resulted in the construction of the dwelling.
2. Architect: Not known.
3. Original and subsequent owners: Legal description from the most recent deed: Beginning at an iron stake on the Northerly line of the State Road leading from Lock Haven to Dunnstown, said iron stake being North eight-one (81) degrees West, twenty-seven and five-tenths (27.5) feet from the intersection of the Northerly line of said State Road with the Westerly line of a Public Alley; thence along the Northerly line of said State Road, North eighty-one (81) degrees West, twenty-seven and five-tenths (27.5) feet to a concrete monument; thence North nine (9) degrees, East, along land now or late of C. LeRoy Englert, one hundred twelve (112) feet to a post; thence South eighty-one (81) degrees East, twenty-seven and five-tenths (27.5) feet to an iron stake; thence South nine (9) degrees West, along land now or late of Lester Englert, one hundred twelve (112) feet to an iron stake on the Northerly line of State Road, the place of beginning.

References are to deeds filed at the Clinton County Recorder of Deeds, Lock Haven, Pennsylvania.

1875 Deed, August 8, 1875, recorded in Book 30, Page 246.
Abraham Maurer to John M. Williams.

1889 Deed, March 13, 1889, recorded in Book 44, Page 335.
John M. Williams to John Clymer.

1904 Deed, August 20, 1904, recorded in Book 72, Page 74.
William J. Clymer to Elizabeth Clymer.

1922 Deed, February 14, 1922, recorded in Book 94, Page 178.
Elizabeth Clymer to Clara and Helen M. Grover.

1935 Deed, July 29, 1935, recorded in Book 125, Page 157.
Clara Grover to Helen Grover.

1955 Deed, November 12, 1955, recorded in Book 182, Page 478.
Helen Grover to Richard Emery Chilcot, et ux.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Not known.
5. Original plans and construction: No original plans have been located for this building. The brick two-story building was erected circa 1875 and has a linear plan, with its entrance in the westernmost of three bays. The stairway is located against the west wall and the second floor plan is similar to the first floor. There is an attic

above the second level. A two-story, two-bay section was added to the rear wing, apparently in the late nineteenth century.

6. Alterations and additions: The most prominent addition to the John M. Williams House is a two-story, two-bay apartment addition to the rear of the building. The addition employs the same materials and details as the original section and, in plan, is an extension of the rear wing. For all of these similarities, the addition was probably built in the late nineteenth century. Another addition is a one-story shed, built of plywood, against the rear facade of the above addition. According to the current owners, there was once a pantry addition built onto the house, but its deteriorated condition led to removal in the late 1950s. The current owners have undertaken a number of interior renovations, prior to and after the 1972 Flood. This included remodeling the kitchen, whereby a staircase to the second floor was removed, the ceiling was lowered, panelling was added, and an exterior doorway was closed-in. Throughout the rest of the house, panelling, acoustical tile, and wall-to-wall carpeting were added. The 1972 Flood caused extensive damage, especially to the first floor, of homes in Lower Lockport. As a result of the flood, the porch and main staircase were replaced. The altered porch consists of metal posts and a metal railing balustrade. Coupled with this alteration was the addition of a concrete porch foundation. Other alterations include the infill of window lunettes and the doorway surround on the first floor of the front facade.

B. Historical Context:

The lot upon which the John M. Williams House was built was originally part of Abraham Maurer's property (HABS No. PA- 5530). Maurer, a laborer who worked on the river in the lumber industry, divided the property and conveyed the western half to stepson John M. Williams. Most likely, Williams built the present house on the lot soon after acquiring it. Williams also worked on the river; his occupation was listed in the 1874-75 city directory as a "log-floater." In 1888, Maurer died in debt, and his property was handled by the Clinton County Orphan's Court, who auctioned it. Williams was the highest bidder at \$650 and acquired the adjacent property, and the two lots were again under single ownership. In 1889, Williams sold both properties to John Clymer, who lived in the John M. Williams House, and rented the Maurer House. At some point during the late nineteenth century, the two-story rear addition was added and was probably used as an apartment. The house stayed in the Clymer family until 1955. According to the current owners, the previous owner lived on the second floor and rented the first floor. For more information about later tenants, see Vento et al.: 1989.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The John M. Williams House is a two-story, three-bay, L-shaped brick building designed in the Italianate style. The house displays the Italianate influence in its arched windows and raised brick hood crowns. The brickwork is further elaborated with rusticated quoins at the corners.
2. Condition of fabric: Fair condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The John M. Williams House is an L-shaped, two-story, three-bay building. The two sides that form the "L" are the front, or south, facade, which measures approximately 24', and the side, or west, facade, which measures approximately 59'9". The rear facade measures approximately 17'.
2. Foundations: Rubble-stone foundation.
3. Walls: Brick cladding, with rusticated brick quoins and raised brick hood moldings.
4. Structural systems, framing: Balloon frame construction with brick cladding.
5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: Full-width concrete slab located on front facade with contemporary metal railing and posts supporting a hipped roof. The side porch is original, and consists of a wooden porch with beveled posts, plank flooring, a stone foundation, and a shed roof.
6. Chimneys: Interior brick chimney located on roof ridge near east facade.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Main entrance is located in the western bay of the front facade and is framed by a raised brick crown. The door frame consists of an infilled fanlight and modified sidelights.
 - b. Windows and shutters: The front facade windows are framed by raised brick (double rowlock) crowns and wooden sills. The front facade sash are the original two-over-two, double-hung arched windows. The first floor windows have been partially infilled. The side facade windows are similar to the front facade, however they are not arched and have wooden lintels.
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: The John M. Williams House has a gable roof with asphalt shingles.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: Cornice consists of a wooden box design with an overhanging eave and simple friezeband.
 - c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: None.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: See accompanying sketch plans.
2. Stairways: As a result of the 1972 Flood, the original stairway was replaced with a contemporary design consisting of wood panelling and a metal railing.
3. Flooring: Standard-width hardwood flooring.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Originally, the John M. Williams House had plaster walls and ceilings, however these only remain in parts of the second floor. Most of the walls have been replaced with wood panelling, and acoustical tile ceilings now cover the plaster finish.
 5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The main entrance consists of a modern flush door with a single, central vertical light and flanking sidelights. Original, four-panel solid doors, with simple architrave trim, are located on the second floor. On the rear porch, there is a boarded-over doorway. The other rear door is a modern door with a large light and four panels.
 - b. Windows: Original two-over-two double-hung windows are located throughout the house. The first-floor, front-facade lunettes have been infilled.
 6. Decorative features and trim: As a result of the major interior renovations performed by the current owners, original decorative features have been removed.
 7. Hardware: Some of the doors on the second floor are original and have their original handles and escutcheons.
 8. Mechanical Equipment:
 - a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: Early-twentieth-century steam radiators are extant.
 - b. Lighting: The house has non-historic lighting fixtures.
 - c. Plumbing: All original plumbing fixtures have been removed from the house and replaced with non-historic fixtures.
 9. Original Furnishings: As a result of interior renovations and numerous changes in ownership, original furnishings are no longer extant.
- D. Site:
1. General setting and orientation: The John M. Williams House faces south on the West Branch of the Susquehanna River. Between the river and the house is Route 664. East of the house is the Maurer House (HABS No. PA- 5530) and west is the Reader House (HABS No. PA- 5531).
 2. Historic landscape design: The Williams House's surrounding landscape has historically been a general residential landscape, consisting of a rear yard.
 3. Outbuildings: None.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural drawings: None.
- B. Historic views: None.
- C. Interviews: Mrs. Richard Chilcot, owner, October, 1991.
- D. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Clinton County Legal Records. Located at the Clinton County Courthouse, Lock Haven, PA.

Dashiell, David A. III. *Chilcot House*. Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey Form 035-WW-010. Harrisburg, PA: Bureau of Historic Preservation, January, 1985.

Hannegan, Susan. *General History and Description of Clinton County, Preliminary Research Report, Clinton County Historic Sites Survey, 1985-86*. Harrisburg, PA: Bureau of Historic Preservation, 1986.

Vento, Frank J., Philip T. Fitzgibbons, Scott D. Heberling, and James Herbstritt. *Phase I Inventory Investigations of Potentially Significant Prehistoric and Historic Period Cultural Resources for the Lock Haven Flood Protection Project, Clinton County, Pennsylvania*. Prepared for the Baltimore District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers by Vendel Environmental Consultants, 1989.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Directory of Lock Haven, Bellefonte, and the Philadelphia & Erie Railroad, 1874-1875. Altoona, PA: Thomas H. Greevy and William H. Renner, 1874.

Linn, John Blair. *History of Centre and Clinton Counties*. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1883.

Richie and Stranahan. *Map of Lock Haven, Flemington, and Lockport*. Philadelphia: Richie and Stranahan, 1869.

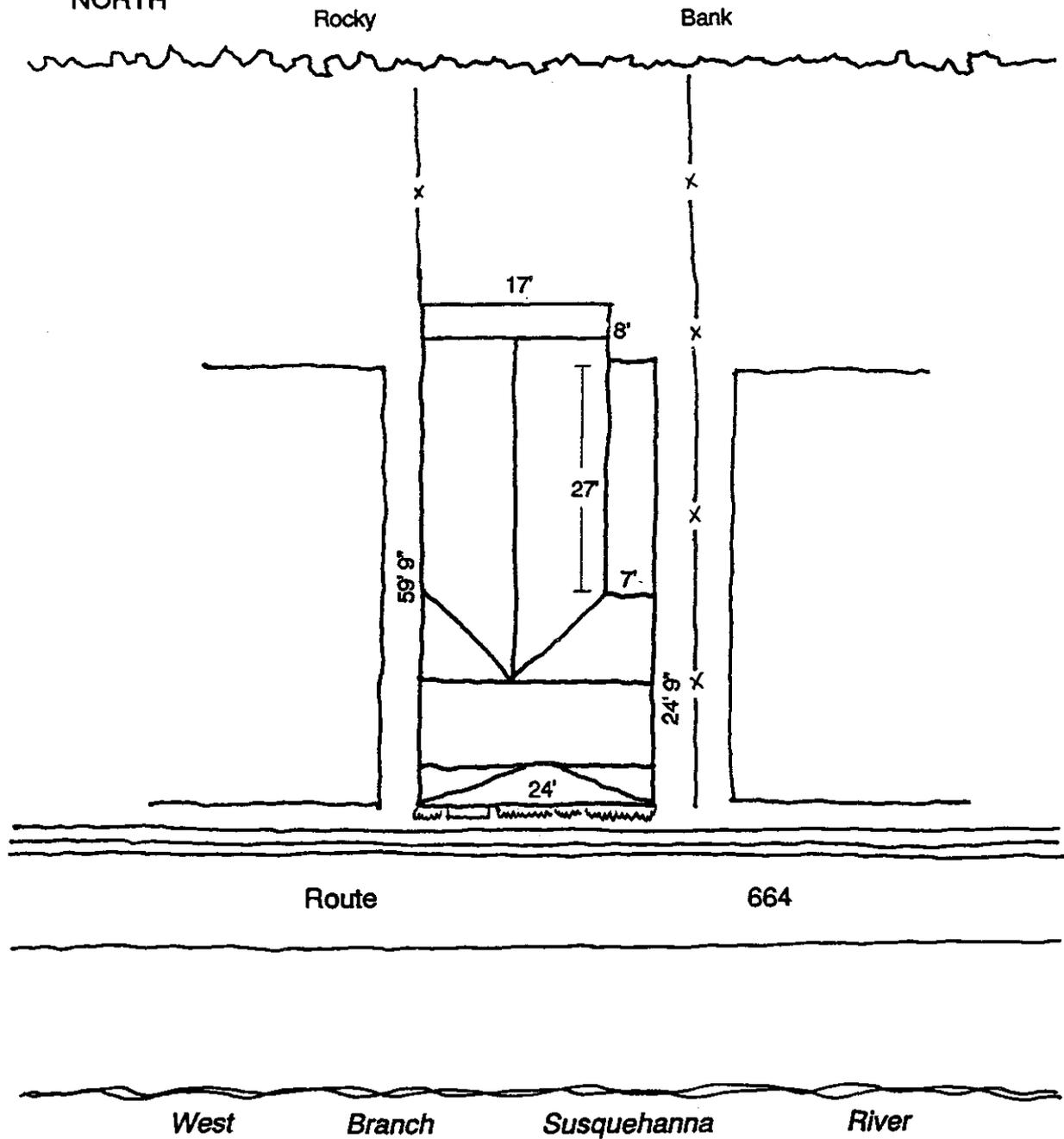
Walling, H.F. *Map of Clinton County, PA*. New York: Way, Palmer, and Company, 1862.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

Documentation was undertaken in October and November 1991 in accordance with a Memorandum of Agreement between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, and the Lock Haven Area Flood Protection Authority. The documentation serves

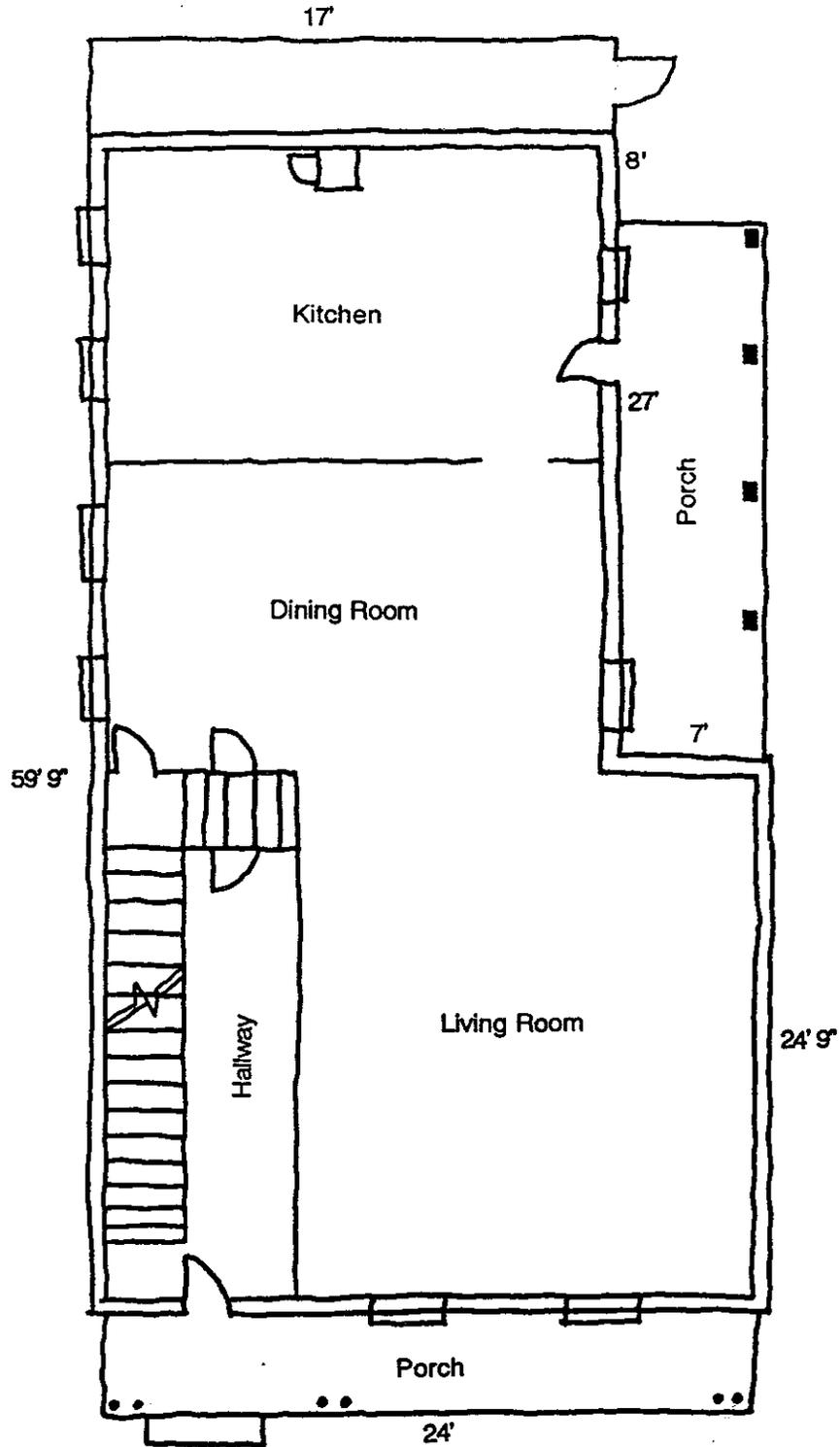
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as a mitigative measure for the treatment of historic properties that were identified and evaluated in a series of studies and that would be affected by the proposed Lock Haven flood protection project. The John M. Williams House is slated for removal to accommodate an induced flooding zone. The house will be marketed for sale in an attempt to have it removed from the property. If the house cannot be sold, it will be marketed for architectural salvage. The last recourse for the house is demolition. Documentation was prepared for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, by the Historic Preservation Group of Kise Franks & Straw, Inc., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: M. Todd Cleveland, project manager; Susan C. Nabors, historian; Martin B. Abbot, historian; and Jill Cremer, graphics. Robert Tucher provided the documentary photographs.



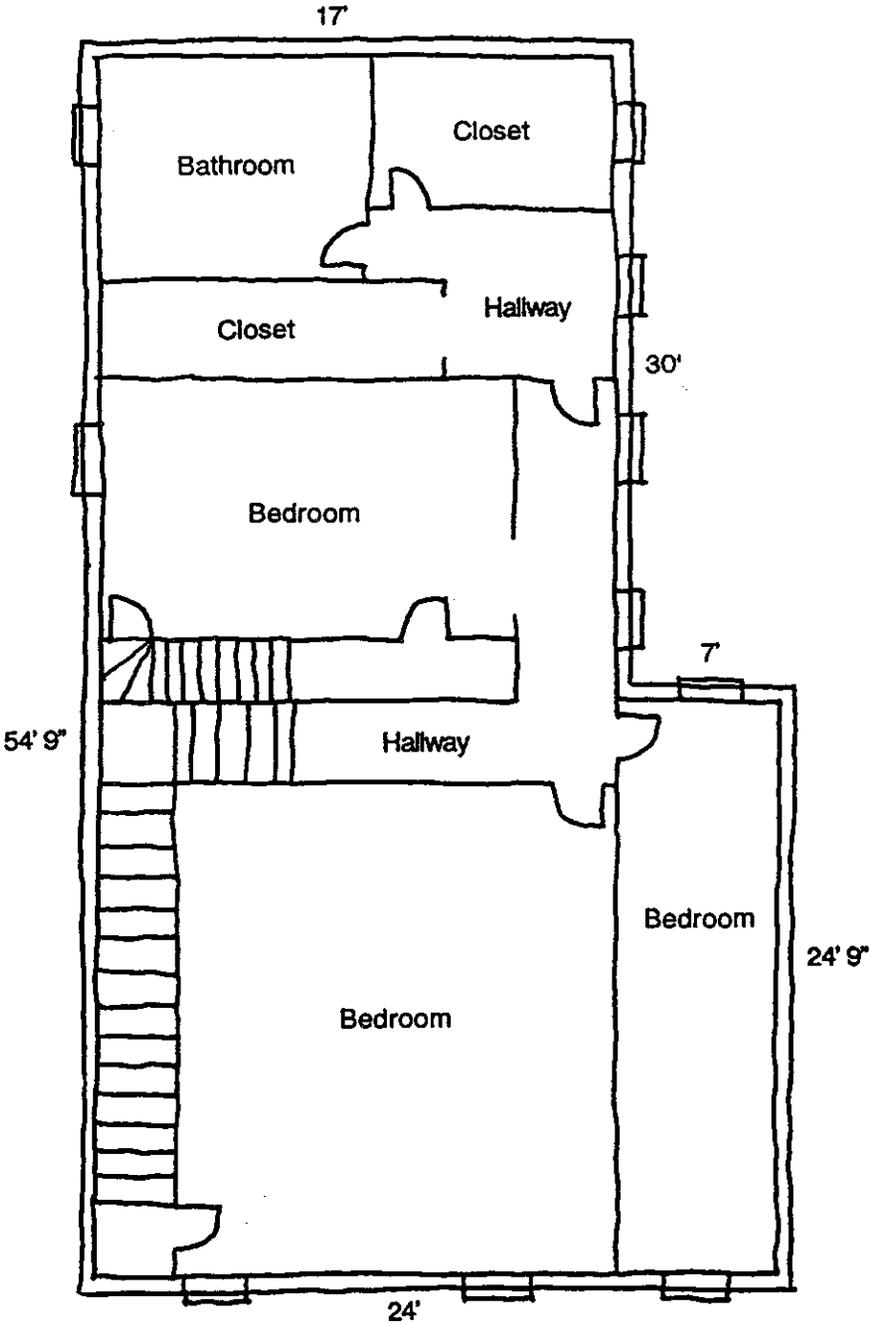
Site Plan
(Not to Scale)

Date Drawn: 1992
Prepared By: Jill Cremer



First Floor Plan
(Not to Scale)

Date Drawn: 1992
Prepared By: Jill Cremer



Second Floor Plan
(Not to Scale)

Date Drawn: 1992
Prepared By: Jill Cremer