

A STUDY AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DESHLER-MORRIS LANDSCAPE
IN HISTORIC GERMANTOWN

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Dedication

To Helen Audrey Stephens and Carla Renee Stephens, with love.

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INTRODUCTION

Historical Overview and Project Scope

This thesis is a study of the Deshler-Morris landscape in Historic Germantown. It encompasses its past and current management. The history of the site includes the landscape's building and ownership by David Deshler in the late seventeenth century; its occupation by President George Washington and British Revolutionary War General William Howe; its ownership by Issac Franks and the Perot and Morris families and its stewardship by the National Park Service (NPS) from 1950 until today. This thesis will also provide an evaluation of the landscape's values and a revised statement of significance informed by the research and study of existing conditions. The landscape's significance was established by a previous report, the Historic Structure/ Furnishing/ Grounds Report for the Deshler-Morris House and Bringhurst House written by Anne Coxé Toogood on behalf of the National Park Service in 1974.¹ However, a new evaluation of the site's heritage values is necessary in order to support new management planning. This thesis also provides a framework for management planning for the site that has both short-term recommendations and long-term goals and recommendations. The Deshler-Morris landscape is ripe with possibility to become both a stronger asset of

¹ Anna Coxé Toogood. *Historic Structure/Furnishings/Grounds Report, Deshler-Morris, Bringhurst House, Historical Data Section*, (Independence National Historical Park. Denver: Denver Service Center, 1990).

Independence National Historical Park and a more integral site enmeshed in the network of historic landscapes of Germantown, Philadelphia.

The Deshler-Morris is a distinct and significant landscape in Germantown with a diverse history. It was the site of early German horticultural practices in the Colonial Period, a designed Victorian ornamental garden, and most recently a 20th century women's preservation society garden. Currently, its narrow interpretation does not reflect the culturally diverse landscape heritage of Germantown and is also in need of a sustainable preservation maintenance plan.

Format and Methodology

Chapter One of this thesis relates the landscape's history as a residential property for three prominent Philadelphia families and their guests. It provides a background for the settlement of David Deshler and other German and Dutch families in Germantown. It details his original plan and organization of the property and garden as reflection of the rich horticultural heritage of the Germantown community. British General William Howe occupied the house in the fall of 1777 after the Battle of Germantown in the Revolutionary War. Isaac Franks' purchased the house from Deshler in 1792 and lived at the house for less than ten years. President George Washington leased the house from Franks in the fall of 1793 to escape the yellow fever epidemic devastating Philadelphia (the national capital) and again to spend the summer of 1794. This brief period of

occupation by Washington is the dominant subject of the landscape's interpretation and adds historical value to the site's significance. The chapter concludes with the occupation of the house by the Perot and Morris families for the period, 1802-1948.

In 1948, the property was bequeathed to the National Park Service, which has since overseen the landscape's management and incorporated it into Independence National Historical Park. Chapter Two covers the transformation of the landscape into a house museum by NPS and the Germantown Historical Society. From the 1950's until the 1980's the Deshler-Morris Women's Committee was responsible for the site's management. Through the dedication of local women—Mrs. Mildred Montgomery—the garden was tended and altered into its present form. Though dedicated, Mrs. Montgomery erased much of the garden's intact historical traces in favor of creating a charming garden setting for the house. From 1980 until today, the volunteer organization, the Deshler Morris House Committee, Inc., in contractually supported by the National Park Service and Independence National Historical Park, has managed the site, but has not made substantial alterations.

Chapter Three documents the landscape's current setting including spatial organization, use, vegetation, buildings, structures and current interpretation. Chapter Four will use Chapter Three as a guide to discuss the site's historical, social, associative and aesthetic values, identify the site's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and conclude with a new statement of significance for the Deshler-Morris cultural

landscape. This new statement of significance is the basis for future management planning, recommendations and suggested landscape treatments.

In order to identify some successful and appropriate strategies that could enhance the Deshler-Morris' interpretation, Chapter Five assesses the neighboring historic landscapes of Wyck, Cliveden and Grumblethorpe. Cliveden benefits from ample funding and new management. Wyck has adopted measures to attract community participation and has made partnerships with its neighbors in Germantown through its program of community sustained agriculture. It has also attempted to represent a wide range of time periods and stories to tell in the interpretation of both its house and garden so that they operate as a whole more readily. Grumblethorpe has tailored its landscape's interpretation around its new education program.

Chapter Five identifies issues related to the management of the Deshler-Morris landscape. It also outlines treatment recommendations with maintenance goals and interpretive strategies that would better convey the landscape's significance and enhance the site's integration within Germantown. It identifies both short-term and long-term strategies to rescue the landscape from the "house museum crisis" that has negatively affected so many of our nation's historic places and left the Deshler-Morris landscape in a state of relative neglect. This is an opportune moment to envision a sustainable future for the landscape.

CHAPTER ONE: c. 1740-1948

“Germantown is a place which every foreigner interested in American trees should visit, as the people of this suburb of Philadelphia one hundred years ago were especially interested in the introduction and cultivation of rare trees, and the first cultivated specimens of several American trees were planted here, and may still be seen. The roads of Germantown are shaded with beautiful rows of native trees, and behind them stretch the green lawns of innumerable villas”

--George Nicholson, curator of the Royal Botanical Gardens of Kew, London²

1740-1792: David Deshler and Germantown in the 18th Century

The history of the Deshler-Morris landscape is rooted in the history of Germantown itself. The existence of so many significant and notable gardens and elegant Georgian homes in Germantown today reflects the lasting contributions of the original settlers of this area of Northwest Philadelphia. Deshler bought the property, constructed the house, and arranged and planted its garden in the horticultural style of his German countrymen.

Prominent Philadelphian David Deshler purchased the first lot of his Germantown property in 1740 and constructed the first portion of a house for use as a summer residence in 1752. Part of a community of prosperous country houses where horticulture was highly esteemed, Deshler established an admirable property. During the Revolutionary War's Battle of Germantown, the house was used as the command headquarters of British General William Howe. After the War, Deshler sold the house to Isaac Franks. Franks' occupation was short, but was decisive because he leased the

² Edwin Costley Jellett. *Germantown Old and New; Its Rare and Notable Plants*. (Germantown: Germantown Independent-Gazette, 1904).

house to first US President George Washington and his family in 1793. Washington needed the house as an escape from the yellow fever epidemic and chose it as a summer retreat the next year. In 1802, the house was sold to the brothers Elliston and John Perot. The Perot-Morris family occupied the house for thirty-three consecutive years. From 1836 until 1948, the family lived in the house and maintained the house and garden with respect to its rich history. The Morris family was very proud of the site's occupation by Washington. The Colonial Revival Movement, incited by the Centennial, ensured that any place inhabited by Washington would thrive as a national and local landmark.

Because of its known historical significance, the Morris' gave the property to the National Park Service after the death of Elliston Perot Morris in 1948. The National Park Service also recognized the site's value and immediately began to restore the house to the state that it was at the time of Washington's residence so that it could be converted to a house museum. Later chapters address whether this interpretation honors the site's significance fully and whether the landscape has a sustainable future. This chapter articulates the history of the landscape from its incorporation and construction until the Morris family bequeathed the house to the National Park Service and will begin to frame the site's significance.

The Lenni Lenape Indians occupied southeast Pennsylvania for thousands of years before contact with Europeans. They once fished and hunted in the Wissahickon

Valley in and around what is now known as Germantown.³ After William Penn's arrival and subsequent treaty with the Lenape Indians in 1682, the Lenape moved west, away from Northwest Philadelphia. The Lenni Lenape imprint on Germantown's landscape has not been detected on the Deshler-Morris landscape. After William Penn's treaty with the Lenni Lenape Indians, he planned the settlement of central Philadelphia and encouraged the settlement of its early suburbs including Germantown.

Francis Daniel Pastorius established the village of "German Town" in 1685. At the invitation of William Penn, Pastorius facilitated the passage of thousands of Mennonite families to Philadelphia from the Rhine Valley.⁴ Following his encouragement, many Dutch and German settlers to Philadelphia immigrated to the new village in the late 17th century. In Germantown, these families established homes, places of worship, schools, farms and gardens.

Pastorius had an active role in the planning of the community in the late 17th century. His Main Street, the center of community activity, was superimposed over an old Lenni Lenape trail and is known today as Germantown Avenue.⁵ In reference to the spatial planning of Main Street, Charles Jenkins in a 1913 pamphlet writes, "The early descriptions of Germantown tell of the long and crooked Main Street, the fruit trees lining it and the fact that many of the houses had their gable ends to the street."⁶

³ Judith Callard. *Germantown, Mount Airy and Chestnut Hill*. (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2000), 7.

⁴ Klaus J. Bartel. "Germany and Germans at the Time of the American Revolution." *The Modern Language Journal*. Vol. 60. No. 3 (Mar., 1976): 96-100.

⁵ Ibid, 7.

⁶ Charles Francis Jenkins. *The Guide Book to Historic Germantown*. (Germantown: Site and Relic

German settlers farmed for sustenance, but also clearly had an interest in horticulture, gardening and experimental botany. They planted fruit trees along Main Street, imported seeds, tree grafts and roots from the Old World, and established nurseries. A center for New World horticulture, Pastorius believed that the community would benefit from the agricultural, medicinal and aesthetic improvements that gardening would provide. Jellett writes, “Here then was an interesting group living and working together as neighbors and plant growers, Pastorius acting as justice, as teacher, cultivating his garden, and raising grapes.”⁷ Jellett also quotes a letter Pastorius wrote to his parents, dated March 7, 1684 that states:

“As relating to our newly laid out Germanopolis or Germantown, it is situated on a deep and very fertile soil, and is blessed with an abundance of fine springs and fountains of fresh water... Each family has a plot of ground for a yard and garden three acres in size. The air is pure and serene, the summer is longer and warmer than it is in Germany, and we are cultivating many kinds of fruits and vegetables, and our labor meets with rich reward.”⁸

The first professor of botany in the American colonies, Adam Kuhn, grew up in Germantown and later taught at Philadelphia College.⁹ He was trained in Sweden, where he studied under the most famous naturalist of the day, Carolus Linnaeus. In the 1750’s and 1760’s, the central commercial nursery for the region belonged to Christian Lehman

Society, 1926), 7.

⁷ Edwin Costley Jellett. *Germantown Gardens and Gardeners*. (Philadelphia: H. F. McCann, 1914), 13.

⁸ Edwin Costley Jellett. *Germantown Old and New; Its Rare and Notable Plants*. (Germantown: Germantown Independent-Gazette, 1904).

⁹ Edwin Costley Jellett. *Germantown Gardens and Gardeners*. (Philadelphia: H. F. McCann, 1914), 18.

and was located on Armat Street in Germantown.¹⁰ His selection of tree seedlings, plants, shrubs and seeds supplied the great number of gardens flourishing in his community, including Deshler's.

Germantown existed as a self-sufficient village until better access to central Philadelphia was created in the late 18th century. At this time, wealthy families established homes in Germantown as respite from the poorer living conditions of the central cities. This outward migration was exacerbated by the yellow fever epidemic of 1793. When the yellow fever hit, Germantown was a logical retreat due to its airy position and refined homes, many of which stood empty in the summer.

In 1733, David Deshler arrived in Philadelphia from Baden, Germany.¹¹ He was 21 at the time and immigrated to assist his uncle, John Wister, in his countinghouse.¹² Six years later, he married a daughter of a prominent Huguenot family, Mary Le Fevre. In 1741, he built a house for his family between Second and Third Street on High Street (now Market Street) in Philadelphia. After this time, he broke off from his uncle's business and established himself as a paint and hardware merchant. Over his career he worked increasingly in the import business trading with both the West Indies and England. He was so prominent and successful at this time, that the phrase "as honest as David Deshler" has been noted in several sources as a popular saying.¹³

¹⁰ Ibid, 31.

¹¹ Philadelphia pre-incorporation, which did not include Germantown at this time.

¹² Toogood, 11. Much of the history in this chapter is based on the information in the Historic Structure/Furnishings/Grounds Report published in 1980.

¹³ Charles Francis Jenkins. *The Guide Book to Historic Germantown*. (Germantown: Site and Relic

In 1740 or 1741, David Deshler acquired at least part of the property on which the Deshler-Morris house is currently located.¹⁴ Today, that location is 5442 Germantown Avenue, a block and a half southwest of the major intersection at Germantown Avenue and Chelten Avenue. George and Anna Bringham sold the full two acre lot to Deshler in 1751-52; the measurements of the lot were 100' wide by 792' deep (see Figure E.1). Most lots in Germantown of the time were narrow rectangles because property was taxed by length of its frontage along Main Street.¹⁵ The property was prominently located on Market Square, the social center of the Germantown community since the beginning of the eighteenth century. Deshler constructed a house along Germantown Avenue in 1752 due to its "airy, high situation commanding an agreeable prospect of the adjoining country."¹⁶ The initial structure was a two-story stone kitchen, with a bedroom on the second floor, that would serve as a summer home for his family. Kitchens were a typical initial structure of a home among German settlers and it is likely that the Deshler family resided above the kitchen in the initial years of the house as a summer residence.

In 1772, Deshler built a larger, more elegant Georgian addition in the front, facing Germantown Avenue, that contained a spacious central hallway, the two-story open newel staircase, twenty-four paned windows with eight-by-ten sashes imported from

Society, 1926), 65.

¹⁴ The archival resources guide to house by NPS Independence National Historical Park Library and Archives dates the house to 1752, while Crozier dates the house to 1750. There are also conflicting sources about when Deshler first obtained the property for the house. The archival resources guide dates it to 1740, while Crozier dates the earliest purchase of the land to be by 1741.

¹⁵ Interview with Richard Vogel, 11 April 2007.

¹⁶ "Teatime at the White House." *Philadelphia Inquirer*. 6 December 1973.

Germany, and fireplaces in six rooms. The exterior was constructed a simulated ashler of in emulation of the finer houses in the neighborhood, such as Cliveden.¹⁷ The plan of the house is unusual compared to other houses constructed in Germantown at this time because of its narrowness and how far off-center it sits on the property (see Figure E.1).¹⁸ The odd plan of the house is usually attributed to a legend about a plum tree that Deshler was known to have been fond of and did not want to remove in order to expand the house. In Old Gardens in and about Philadelphia, John T. Faris writes, “it is said that when David Deshler built, the house would have been larger, but a fine plum-tree grew to the left of the site. He would not consent to cut this down”.¹⁹ Almost all books about notable Germantown Gardens in which the Deshler-Morris house is mentioned retell the story of the plum—Charles Jenkins writes, “The house is about forty feet square, and it is said the front would have been wider had David Deshler not wanted to spare a plum tree which stood at one end.”²⁰ David Deshler is noted in several sources to have been an avid horticulturalist and the plum tree story is usually told as an example of his care and devotion.

¹⁷ Toogood, 59.

¹⁸ National Park Service, Department of the Interior. *National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form for the Deshler-Morris House*. July 1969.

¹⁹ John T. Faris, *Old Gardens in and about Philadelphia*. (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1932), 102.

²⁰ Charles Francis Jenkins. *The Guide Book to Historic Germantown*. (Germantown: Site and Relic Society, 1926), 66.

Gardens in Germantown at the time were mostly functional kitchen gardens and did not follow after the trendy pleasure gardens prevalent in Europe at this time. Over time, however, kitchen gardens began to obtain ornamental qualities. Faris writes:

First place was given to the kitchen garden, and most of the settlers were sufficiently thrifty to combine utility with beauty. Thus many plants that were valued for their medicinal qualities were also given prominent position, such as mustard, sage, tansy, wormwood, pennyroyal, purslane... Gradually, however the garden-makers came to think of the enjoyment of beauty as an end itself. Gradually, however, the garden-makers came to think of the enjoyment of beauty as an end itself. Then more was made of the planting of lilacs, roses, snowball, lilies, pinks and some varieties of tulips.²¹

It is probable that Deshler purchased his rare fruit trees from Christian Lehman's nursery.²² His landscape, with its orchard in the rear and kitchen garden, was both typical of the style developing in Germantown and exceptional among his neighbors. Among the praise for his garden among horticultural enthusiasts of the time, Hotchkin notes, "the garden was the marvel of the region during his [Deshler's] occupancy of the country seat, and was flanked by thrifty orchards and vineyards."²³ Faris also praises him by saying, "Not only did Deshler have a garden about his fine country sea, but there were also fine orchards and vineyards."²⁴

²¹ John T. Faris., *Old Gardens in and about Philadelphia*. (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1932), 81.

²² Toogood, 80.

²³ S. F. Hotchkin. *Ancient and Modern Mount Airy and Germantown*. (Philadelphia: Ziegler and Company, 1889), 80.

²⁴ John T. Faris., *Old Gardens in and about Philadelphia*. (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1932), 102

Even though there are many references to how fine and elegant his garden was, there are very few sources that directly reference the size, spatial organization and plant typology of the garden. The only two direct descriptions are advertisements for the sale of the property. The *Pennsylvania Gazette* advertisement from April 25, 1782 describes the garden as “the lot contains about two acres, in which is an orchard of the best grafted fruit of various kinds, and a large garden pailed in.”²⁵ The only other description available at this time is another advertisement for the sale of the property ten years later describing it as “a great variety of the best grafted fruit trees, a large garden enclosed in pail.”²⁶

Anna Coxe Toogood in the Historic Structure/Furnishing/Grounds Report for the Deshler-Morris House and Brighthurst House surmises the types of plants that Deshler probably would have had in his garden. She writes:

“Like all contemporary gardeners, Deshler would have fenced his garden to keep the livestock from grazing with the vegetables and herbs that he grew for his family’s food and medicinal supplies...Deshler also probably planted boxwood hedges along gravel paths that bordered beds of colorful perennials.”²⁷

It appears that, at the time of his death in 1793, Deshler’s fortune had changed and he may have died in poor finances. He eventually found a buyer for the property in Isaac Franks, who was looking to buy property in the healthful environment in Germantown. Franks’ occupation would be short, but eventful.

²⁵ Toogood, 77.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid, 81.

1792-1801: Isaac Franks' Occupation Including Washington's Visit in 1793 and 1794

Isaac Franks purchased the property from David Deshler in 1792 (see Figure E.2.). Franks moved to Philadelphia in poor health and lived there for ten years under constant supervision of a prominent doctor. He opened a brokerage facility and occasionally dealt in the slave trade. He broke ties to his Jewish heritage after marrying Mary Davidson, a ship captain's daughter. Germantown was a pleasant healthy surrounding for him and was in accord with his social aspirations. Franks and his family did not make any notable physical alterations to the house or its garden.

The 'Washington Slept Here' trend was pervasive within the early colonial revival historic preservation movement. It heavily affected the selection of houses for early historic house museums. The Deshler-Morris house is an exemplary example of the "Washington slept here" phenomenon in which historic sites have been valued for the historic events or famous visitors, especially from the colonial and Revolutionary War era. These moments in history are exaggerated through relics, strict interpretation, revivals and reenactments to draw tourists into the theater of history.²⁸

The Deshler-Morris house' significance since the nineteenth century has always placed the highest value on the time it was a residence for the first president. The

²⁸ Karal Ann Marling. *George Washington Slept Here: Colonial Revivals and American Culture, 1876-1986*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1988.

statement of significance in the Historic Structure/Furnishing/Grounds Report for the Deshler-Morris House and Brighthurst House for the house reads:

In April 1948 the Advisory Board on National Park, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments declared the Perot-Morris (now Deshler-Morris) House of national significance on the basis of its historical and architectural character and its location on the Battle of Germantown (1777). The house was constructed in 1772-74 by prominent German merchant of Philadelphia, David Deshler, who used it as a summer residence. Its Georgian architecture made it a noticeably elegant addition to the main street of colonial Germantown. For a brief period after the Battle of Germantown, General William Howe used the house as his headquarters. In November 1793, during the yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia, the National Capital, President George Washington leased the house as his residence and headquarters. The following summer he leased the house again as a family retreat from the oppressive heat and fevers of the city. Here the President could spend many comfortable days and still be within easy commuting distance of Philadelphia when business required his attendance.²⁹

This statement assigns historic and architectural value to David Deshler's preeminence and his construction of the house. It also assigns historical value to the Battle of Germantown and the events associated with President Washington's occupancy. However, it neglects to mention the garden that this thesis argues is significant to the holism of the landscape. It also neglects to mention the Perot and Morris families, slavery, landscape features and the site's aesthetic values. It will be fundamental to place Washington's visit in a historic context as well as in the context of the colonial revival movement in historic preservation in order to contextualize the Deshler-Morris landscape's historically narrow period of significance.

²⁹ Toogood, 5.

David Deshler was assumed to be sympathetic to the American cause during the Revolutionary War because of his known hostility towards the British interventions in commerce. His signature on a petition against a proposed importation tax in 1765 and individual reminiscences are the most available proof.³⁰ Even though Deshler's alliance with the patriots has been documented, General William Howe chose Deshler's house to be his headquarters after the Revolutionary War Battle of Germantown in October of 1777. During the Battle of Germantown, General Howe and the British army moved as far north as Market Square, adjacent to the Deshler-Morris house.

The British won the battle, but the obstinate American army influenced European positions on the war. An alliance with France, determined heavily by the tenacity of the Revolutionaries, eventually assured the American triumph. After the American victory in the War, Germantown became a preferred summer retreat for residents of the new nation's capital.³¹ General Howe's occupation during the War may have been a reason for Deshler's disillusionment with his Germantown property and may have led to him to advertise the property for sale in 1782.³²

The yellow fever epidemic hit Philadelphia hard in the last decade of the eighteenth century, killing as many as 5000 people, or 10% of the city's population.³³ Ships coming into Philadelphia's dock may have brought the disease, and it spread

³⁰ Toogood, 23.

³¹ "The Battle of Germantown." Pennsylvania Museum and Historical Commission. (Accessed February 2, 2007). <<http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/ppet/germantown/page1.asp?secid=31>>.

³² Toogood, 21.

³³ J. H. Powell. *Bring Out Your Dead: the Great Plague of Yellow Fever in Philadelphia in 1793*. (Philadelphia : University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), ix.

quickly among the city's residents. At the time, there were only ten doctors and ten clergy members in the city at the time, and the disease had no known cure.³⁴ The city's prominent families fled in droves to the outlying areas, including Germantown.

Washington took refuge from the fever at Mount Vernon during November of 1793. He had to return to the nation's capital to conduct cabinet meetings after a spending time in Virginia. On September 30, he sent a letter to the Attorney General, Edmund Randolph, requesting that "a tolerable convenient lodging for myself, one Gentleman of my family, with three Servants and as many horses could be had in or near German Town."³⁵ Washington most likely was acquainted with Isaac Franks, who served as a militia member who helped to quell the Whiskey Rebellion. Washington may also have been acquainted with David Deshler. In addition, he had previously found accommodations in Germantown before the war at Chew and Stenton.

He is said to have rented the house because it was "more commodious for myself and the entertainment of company".³⁶ In his stay at the Deshler-Morris house, Washington lived with his wife, Martha, their two adopted children, Eleanor Parke Custis and George Washington Parke Custis, and a number of slaves. The family created a stir in Germantown. George Washinton Parke Custis attended the Germantown Academy located just southeast of Franks' property.³⁷ They attended Christ' Church on Market Square, just north of the property across Germantown Avenue. Washington "was often

³⁴ Toogood, 24.

³⁵ Toogood, 28.

³⁶ "Teatime at the White House." *Philadelphia Inquirer*. 6 December 1973.

³⁷ Ray Thompson. *Washington at Germantown*. (Fort Washington: Bicentennial Press, 1971), 74.

to be seen riding abroad, with a black servant, having a guard and some officers in company”.³⁸

A more detailed account of Pres. Washington’s enslaved Africans is in the article, *The President’s House Revisited*.³⁹ Edward Lawler writes:

Austin and Lewis List, a white servant, accompanied Washington and his secretary on a return trip from Mount Vernon in late October 1793, but Philadelphia was in the midst of a yellow fever epidemic so their destination became Germantown, Pennsylvania, six miles northwest of the city. Initially, he and List may have been the entire staff of the Deshler-Morris House, which served as the executive mansion for two-and-a-half weeks until the crisis was over. The following summer, the Washingtons vacationed at the Germantown house, and their staff likely included Austin, Moll, Hercules and Oney Judge.⁴⁰

There are a few sources about Washington’s occupation that reference the importance of the Deshler-Morris garden and the rich, lush landscape of Germantown as an attraction and delight to the Washington family. Martha Washington is the only family member known to have cultivated the landscape.⁴¹ She grew hyacinths under globes of cut glass during the summer of 1794. She later presented them as a gift to David Deshler's daughter, Catherine.⁴²

³⁸ Toogood, 26.

³⁹ Edward Lawler Jr. “The President’s House Revisited” *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*. (January 2002).

⁴⁰ The footnote to this statement reads: The presence of the enslaved Africans at the Deshler-Morris House in 1794 is presumed based on entries in the household account book. Shoes were bought for Moll the day before the July 30 move to Germantown, and for Hercules (Aug. 15), Oney Judge (Aug. 23), and Austin (Sept. 8) during the Washingtons' vacation. "Washington's Household Account Book, 1793-1797," PMHB 30 (July 1906) 3:312, 315, 316, 318.

⁴¹ Edwin Costley Jellett. *Germantown Gardens and Gardeners*. (Philadelphia: H. F. McCann, 1914), 13.

⁴² Ibid.

Anne Coxe Toogood supposed that the Washington family would have enjoyed the garden's shade and air:

“During the characteristically hot, muggy months of August and September, the Presidential family doubtless found the airy, shaded, rural setting of Germantown a pleasurable retreat from their quarters in Philadelphia. The long, narrow sweeping yard behind the house provided a variety of play areas for the children, including a section with chickens and their chicks.”⁴³

In a talk before the New Century Club in 1944, Arthur Kennedy stated:

What a marvelous experience it must have been to sit with the president and his cabinet when, in the summer of 1793, they met under the spreading trees of his Germantown home to make some of the most momentous decisions of his second administration.⁴⁴

Some momentous moments of Washington's second administration that occurred during his stay at the house included four cabinet meetings held in the house—on the 18th, 21st, 23rd, and 28th of August. Also of note is that Gilbert Stuart painted his famous portrait of the first President in Stuart's Germantown studio that summer. Washington and his family did not make any significant alterations to the house, garden or their contents.

1802-1948: The Perot-Morris Family Residence

In 1802, the brothers Elliston and John Perot purchased the house from Isaac Franks. Reared in Bermuda, these Huguenot brothers became wealthy merchants in

⁴³ Toogood, 83.

⁴⁴ Arthur Kennedy. “When the White House was in Philadelphia, 1790-1797: an Informal Talk before the New Century Club, on February 21, 1944.”

Philadelphia. It is important to recognize the diversity of residents to have resided in this house by this time—the German merchant Deshler, the Jewish broker Franks, President of the United States George Washington, and now the Huguenot brothers Perot, and all of their respective families and servants. The brothers occupied the Deshler-Morris landscape for thirty-three consecutive summers.

Samuel B. Morris married Elliston Perot's eldest child, Hannah, in 1825. He purchased his father-in-law's Germantown property in 1836, five years after the death of Hannah (see Figure E.3). It is probable that the garden at this time followed some of the conventions of tudor England, with rows of boxwood filled in with trees, flowers and herb plots.⁴⁵ Morris then quit his shipping firm and he and his three small children moved into the house permanently. His income was derived mostly from his investments and properties. He spent the rest of his life focusing on taking care of his family and philanthropic activities.⁴⁶

During the mid and late nineteenth century, railroad connections transformed Germantown into a prototypical suburb—nuclear middle-class families lived in the stable, tree-lined neighborhood while heads of household commuted downtown for business.⁴⁷ . Robert Fishman writes in Bourgeois Utopias: The Rise and Fall of Suburbia that by the 1860's, Germantown “had achieved the three characteristics of suburbia: first,

⁴⁵ Toogood, 81.

⁴⁶ Toogood, 51.

⁴⁷ Robert Fishman. *Bourgeois Utopias: The Rise and Fall of Suburbia*. (New York: Basic Books Inc., 1987), 141.

an identity as a middle-class community; second, the exclusion of other classes and nonresidential functions; and finally, an open design that distinguished it from the city.”⁴⁸

In 1859, Samuel B. Morris died and left the property to his second son, Elliston Perot Morris (see Figure E.4). Elliston, like his father, participated in many philanthropic associations. Samuel B. Morris and his son, Elliston Perot Morris, made more focused effort towards the design and contents of the garden as the first year-round owner. They realigned the garden to champion Victorian garden ideals of the time and made the first land divisions, shortening the length of the yard substantially.

In 1850, the construction of Greene Street bisected a short portion of the back end of the yard, isolating a portion of the property that measured 218ft by 40ft deep. In 1871, Morris’ son, Elliston Perot, divided that portion into three, constructed two small houses and sold the properties. He compensated for the loss of property by purchasing the house, backbuildings and lot of Albert Ashmead to the North and West of the Deshler-Morris property (see Figure B.2). In 1867, he again sold a substantial portion of land (139ft by 300ft), a rear portion on the east side of Greene Street to Dr. E. F. Rivanus (see Figure E.5). Landscape architect Charles H. Miller redesigned the garden in the same year.⁴⁹ Miller redesigned the garden with respect to the historicity of the many older

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Edwin Costley Jellett. *Germantown Gardens and Gardeners*. (Philadelphia: H. F. McCann, 1914), 13.

trees in the garden.⁵⁰ In 1907 and 1908, Elliston Perot purchased another lot to the north and west measuring 47ft by 372ft in order to enlarge the yard.⁵¹

We have a description of the garden as it appeared during Elliston Perot's time from Jellett's book Germantown Old and New: Its Rare and Notable Plants published in 1904. Jellett corresponded with Elliston Perot Morris and asked him to describe the positive qualities of his garden:

“At the Deshler-Morris home, owned and occupied by Elliston P. Morris, in one of our finest gardens, possessing several of our largest and finest trees. Mr. Morris wrote to me, 'The exact age of my fine old trees are uncertain, the family tradition is that some of them were planted by my grandfather, or members of his family. I doubt not some of the older trees were there when it was President George Washington's residence during the yellow fever epidemic of 1793. The great storm two years ago with its wind and sleet sadly spoiled my most attractive trees, and in some cases left me but skeletons of their former beauty, notably a 70-year old elm planted by my father, Samuel B. Morris, which stands in the middle of my grounds... The great secret of my lawn is the unbroken expanse of grass, and the planting in conformity with established rules of landscape gardening. I still have some choice specimen trees, notable and immense English horse-chestnut (*aeculus hippocastanum*), with a girth I should think of some 10 feet; a hybrid English walnut (*juglans regia*) and a butternut (*juglans cinerea*) very unusual, about 70 feet high and a girth of say 8 feet; a pretty specimen of the lovely cut-leaved beech (*fagus S. heterophylla*); a 70 year old magnolia glauca, a fine box tree (*boxus arborescens*), and some 100-year-old box bushes (*box pervirens*) and a good variety of shrubbery, with its ever changing bloom”⁵²

The unbroken expanse of lawn can be observed in a series of family photographs

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Toogood, 85-86.

⁵² Edwin Costley Jellett. *Germantown Gardens and Gardeners*. (Philadelphia: H. F. McCann, 1914), 13. Some of the landscape features that Morris mentions are included in the evolutionary diagram of 1906, Figure E.6. A tree decimated by the storm of 1902 is depicted in Figure D.9.

and sketches of the landscape from the mid nineteenth century (see Figures D.4-12). In these photos—the earliest visual documentation of the landscape—Elliston P. Morris and his siblings pose and play in the wide expanse of lawn. The photos also recorded the diverse and imposing specimen trees, the long curved gravel path, the box bushes, shade trees and ivy enveloping the house.⁵³ There is also an indication of the garden's grape arbor, trellis, and pathways from a sketch facing the back of the house drawn by Samuel B. Morris in 1842 (see Figure D.1).

In 1882, Townsend Ward describes the grounds as follows:

“Alongside the house, to the south, commences the beautiful garden, one hundred feet wide, and extending westwardly four hundred and thirty-five feet, in which may be seen box bushes more than a century old”⁵⁴

Jellet again appeals to Elliston P. Morris to describe his care of the garden for his book Germantown Gardens and their Gardeners in 1912. Morris reports:

"In early June when the grass is springing green and fresh, comes perhaps the most attractive time for my lawn, when after the winter storms and snows, my 2500 or 3000 bulbous roots come into bloom in all their glory. These are freshly imported each year, sending out my orders in June or July, and receiving the bulbs in October."⁵⁵

Figures D.7 and 8 show a few of the flower beds as they appeared in the late 1880's.

During the first half of the twentieth century, the property changed hands a number of times and the landscape was largely neglected. In 1914, Elliston Perot Morris

⁵⁴ Townsend Ward. "The Germantown Road and Its Associations." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*. (Vol. 5, 1881), 147.

⁵⁵ Edwin Costley Jellett. *Germantown Gardens and Gardeners*. (Philadelphia: H. F. McCann, 1914), 73.

died leaving the house to his wife, Martha Canby Morris. In 1919, Martha died and willed the house to her unmarried daughter, Elizabeth. Elizabeth died in 1947, leaving the house to her brother Marriot Morris who died a year later. In his will, Marriot wrote a codicil to his will leaving the house to the United States of America upon his death, but contained a clause that stipulated that the house would be left to his son, Elliston Perot Morris if he should die within 30 days of the codicil's signing. Even though Marriot did die within thirty days of the codicil's signing, Elliston Perot Morris donated the house to the United States government in accordance with his father's wishes—Marriot “donate[d] the property to the government in order to preserve the structure that was George Washington's residence in 1793 and 1794.”⁵⁶

There is no doubt that Marriot and others in the Morris family were influenced by the colonial revival movement, the emergence of house museum and the preservation movement. The historic preservation movement found widespread appeal during the celebration of the American Centennial. The fact that the house was both a site of Revolutionary War activity and the site of presidential visits was a high source of pride for the Morris family. In their garden transformations, they were careful to preserve the older trees in the yard that may have been enjoyed by President Washington.⁵⁷

Even though the Deshler-Morris house was a residence to a diverse array of families and the center of different types of activities, all of the owners and occupiers took great pride in the quality of the landscape. Its shade trees, box bushes, expansive

⁵⁶ Toogood, 54.

⁵⁷ Edwin Costley Jellett. *Germantown Gardens and Gardeners*. (Philadelphia: H. F. McCann, 1914), 72.

lawn, variety of trees were valued and highly regarded within the Germantown community and considered a national asset. The Deshler-Morris landscape was an asset to the National Park Service and an ideal attraction.

CHAPTER TWO: 1948-2007

“However fascinating or boring one may find George Washington of Virginia, the sheer ubiquity of his persona makes him an excellent figure through which to trace out the workings of the media, the changing content of public discourse, and the private preoccupations of American society in the modern era... The more modern we become, in fact, the more we desperately cling to our Washingtons, to our old-fashioned heroes, to an imagined colonial past, to the good old days when patriots stood firm on their pedestals.”

--Karal Ann Marling in George Washington Slept Here: Colonial Revivals and American Culture, 1876-1986

On December 16, 1948, the Deshler-Morris landscape officially became property of the United States Government. Before then the landscape had only been accessible to the Morris family and their friends among the elite of Germantown and Philadelphia society. The National Park Service accepted Marriot Morris' donation of the house and facilitated its transformation into a house museum. Its brief occupation by the first United States President as well as its part in the Battle of Germantown were reason enough to give the landscape distinction amongst its Germantown neighbors. The house was added to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places in 1956.

The National Park Service selected the Germantown Historical Society as the first co-managers. Three years later, in 1951, the Germantown Historical Society imparted management decisions to the Deshler-Morris Women's Committee. For about forty years, women have been the primary managers of the interior, exterior and landscape of the property. Women have always been driving forces of Historic Preservation. They

have been especially influential in the field of landscape restoration. In the 19th and 20th centuries, women self-segregated themselves to the world of landscape restoration, design and formal gardening. The Women of Deshler-Morris transformed its landscape greatly.

Since the 1980's, Independence National Historical Park and the Deshler-Morris House Committee have managed the landscape. Over this period of time, they have made infrastructural improvements, contended with controversy concerning Washington's enslaved Africans, and attempted to strengthen connections with the Germantown community and other historic landscapes. This chapter will elaborate on women's contributions to the Deshler-Morris landscape, changes in the site's management, and set a context for the next chapter concerning the site's current significance and managerial concerns.

1948-1951: Transformation by the National Park Service

On Dec. 16, 1948, the Deshler-Morris house and its grounds became property of the National Park Service. The agreement included a grant of \$20,000 from the Park Service to restore the house to its 18th century appearance.⁵⁸ On July 20, 1949, the Department of the Interior and the Germantown Historical Society signed an agreement (CA-ASFW-49-01) for Independence National Historical Park to operate and preserve

⁵⁸ National Park Service, Department of the Interior.. *Archival Resources Guide to the Deshler-Morris House*. National Parks Service, Independence National Historical Park Library and Archives, Philadelphia.

the house.⁵⁹ The first manager of the historic site was the president of the Germantown Historical Society, Leighton P. Stradly.

Restoration work in preparation for opening to the public in 1949 included the cleaning and repainting of the interior of the house.⁶⁰ At this time, architectural restoration took precedent over the landscape preservation. In 1949, the National Capital Parks Planning Division produced a proposed restoration plan for the garden (see Figure C.2). They supplemented this restoration plan an existing conditions map that in 1950 (see Figure C.1). However, the planting plan was never implemented. The Committee focused on interpreting the house to the time of identified significance, 1793-4—the years that it was occupied by President Washington. To enhance the interpretive value of the interiors for the site’s grand opening and reception, they used furnishings that were on loan from the Philadelphia Museum of Art, portraits that were on loan from the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, and rugs loaned from Howell Jones for the opening. They also accepted donations of antique furnishings from the Morris family including Chippendale and Hepplewhite chairs and fine china. Mrs. Owen B. Wilson, chairwoman in charge of furnishings stated:

“We have tried to use only antique things and of the right period, but it hasn’t been easy to borrow all we’d like in such a short time... Someday we hope to follow it exactly. Not the same actual pieces, of course, but similar ones, and of the same number”⁶¹

⁵⁹ National Park Service, Department of the Interior. *Independence National Historical Park Statement for Management, 1993*. National Parks Service, Independence National Historical Park Library and Archives, Philadelphia.

⁶⁰ “Germantown Morris House Open to Public.” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*. December 10, 1949.

⁶¹ Ibid.

On December 10, 1949, the house was opened to the public. The first price of admission was 25 cents. An article in the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* from that day emphasizes that for the first time both “rich and poor” could be given access to the historical site.⁶² The event was commemorated by speeches, a flag ceremony in the garden, men, women and children dressing in colonial attire, and a parade of horses and carriages. Photos show a crowd of hundreds observing the ceremonies from Market Square and along Germantown Avenue in front of the house.

The biggest initial transformation of the landscape was the truncation of the yard to its current length of 407ft and 9in. and donation of a large portion to the Friend’s Society (see Figures E.6 and 7). Heirloom box bushes were transplanted from that part of the yard to the Deshler-Morris property.⁶³ A 1950 Invitation, Bid and Acceptance contract that states the National Park Service’s responsibilities to maintaining the landscape. They agreed to provide all labor, plant materials, equipment and machinery for the grounds, initial planting and pruning, replacement of sick or dying plants for a year, and plant watering, cleanup and restoration. It also included specifics about the transferal of plants from the Friend’s Society grounds and the creation of stone walkways.⁶⁴

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Toogood, 88.

⁶⁴ National Park Service. *Invitation, Bid and Acceptance*. Independence National Historical Park Archives, Philadelphia.

The National Capital Parks Planning Division plan from shows a temporary wire fence erected at the rear boundary, intact crushed stone walkways created by the Morris family, several traces of English boxwood, planting beds and a “little garden” in the northwest corner of the rear (see Figure C.1). The restoration plan from 1949 specified the replacement of the temporary wire fence with an ornamental iron fence, the reconstruction of a line of ferns in the front section of the garden, the addition to the stone pathway to create a circuit, the addition of an herb garden and formal rows of roses and mixed flowers in the “little garden”, and the addition of hedges, sod borders to the stone walkway, and the removal of sick or dying plants (see Figure C.2). Unfortunately, lack of finances and a transfer of management meant that many of their recommendations were never implemented.

1951-1984: Management by the Deshler-Morris Women’s Committee

The Deshler-Morris Woman’s Committee was a committee of volunteers comprised of women from the Germantown Historical Society, from elite Philadelphia society families, descendants of the Morris and Perot families, and residents of the surrounding community. Their organizational responsibilities and activities included leading tours, holding fundraising events such as teas and parties, maintaining the house and garden’s interpretation and sponsoring yearly reenactments. The work initially planned to be done for the yard was halted due to the US involvement in the Korean

War.⁶⁵ In 1952, the Deshler-Morris Woman's Committee sponsored a flower mart to support their landscape face-lift. The article discussing the Flower Mart describes the yard as follows:

“The work of bringing the grounds back to their former charm is especially interesting, with the faint tracery of planting to guide the workers. At the rear of the house are traces of an herb garden, surrounded by boxwood and here and there are some of the old moss rose bushes. Winding walks still bear the marks of borders that once were filled with old fashioned flowers”⁶⁶

The restoration work that was planned never materialized and the gardens grew untended for most of the 1950's and 1960's.⁶⁷ A series of letters archived at the Morris files at Independence National Historical Park document a dispute between a landscape contractor hired to clean and tend the garden and The Deshler-Morris Women's Committee and Germantown Historical Society. On November 29, 1954, the contractor, Henry Reibe writes:

"To clean the Morris House Garden thoroughly would require the following: (1) Rake out leaves in entire lawn area. (2) Pull weeds in beds and in the little garden. (3) Dig up the little garden and plant grass seed for permanent lawn... I have given up the idea of planting the little Kitchen Herb Garden, as it was in Colonial days, for the reason that there is no proper maintenance available in the summer. Once this area is put in grass and regularly mowed with other lawn areas (obligation by tenant) the weeds will ultimately disappear. I am sorry that I have to give up my little project for this historic garden; after the spring clean up when the beds were dug and ready for planting, I personally planted some plants which I raised in my own garden in pots. However, as soon as the first hot weather came, everything dried up for lack of watering. Perhaps at some

⁶⁵ “The Work of Restoration.” *Philadelphia Inquirer*. 31 January 1952.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Toogood, 89.

future, we may be able to carry out this idea, if the Society agrees”⁶⁸

Mr. Riebe was clearly personally invested in the care and restoration of the garden beyond his contractual duties. He wrote another, angrier letter two years later on September 4, 1956 that read:

“What I saw [took after taking a look over the rear fence of the Morris House garden] shocked me and strengthened my disgust in the ways and means this fine garden is being handled. The Timanus oak died and was cut off. This tree had a beautiful start, but died part way during the hot spell two years ago, and last summer’s drought finished it. Just a few buckets of water or a soaking by hose once a week during those short hot dangerous months would have saved it. I will replace this oak, free of charge, same size and variety, as soon as a new and different caretaker moves into the Morris House—whenever that is... The little garden which I intended to restore a kitchen garden is covered with weeds 5-6 feet high. After I gave up the idea, it was cleared of weeds, dug up and seeded with grass, but since the grass was never cut the weeds took over. The most horrible thing that I noticed was that the fine old English boxwoods are being sheared into a formal hedge—this is an inexcusable crime! I still have hopes for this garden some day—but this day hasn’t come yet.”⁶⁹

On September 26, 1956, Harold Saylor, President of the Germantown Historical Society, wrote two different letters in response. One to Dr. George Venable and the other to Mrs. George Lippincott. The letter to Dr. Venable says:

"Most certainly we should be careful about the garden and should insist that our tenant take proper care of it. If the present caretaker is 'new and different' as I imagine he is, then Henry F. Riebe will be willing to pay for an new oak tree to replace the Timanus oak that died, through neglect... The National Park Service's man Mr. Grossman told me that there was

⁶⁸ Henry F. Riebe. *Letter to Mrs. George E. Lippincott*. 4 September 1956. National Parks Service, Independence National Historical Park Library and Archives, Philadelphia.

⁶⁹ The Timanus Oak probably refers to a tree planted for the volunteer, Caroline Timanus, who died after falling in the garden in 1952. The record of this occurrence is in "Mrs. C.O. Timanus is Killed in Fall." *Philadelphia Inquirer* 1952.

little chance of the Service planting another tree so we should welcome Mr. Riebe's offer."⁷⁰

The letter to Mrs. Lippencott states:

"I feel much ashamed that things have gone so badly with the garden and I will do what I can to put it back in proper shape. I only regret that Mr. Riebe, who is also supposed to be in charge of the garden at the Society's Museum...does not come to some of our Board Meetings so that he can bring to our attention such matters as he writes to you about and we could ask him to help us with the gardens we maintain."⁷¹

There is not any evidence that management of the Deshler-Morris landscape changed as a result of this controversy. Probably not much, because when the next dedicated volunteer began her work, it was "a neglected tangle of plants."⁷²

Mildred Montgomery, married name Mrs. Knowlton Montgomery, began to work at the Deshler-Morris garden in 1969 (see Figures D.20 and D.21). She was the primary caretaker of the garden for around twenty-five years until the early 1990's. In 1990, she was nominated for an award from the Philadelphia Horticultural Society for her dedication to the Deshler-Morris landscape. Her award nomination letter acknowledges that garden had suffered neglect since the death of Elizabeth Morris in 1949. This supports evidence that the 1952 Flower Mart and related proposals for restoration were not very successful. The Nomination states that, "[s]he almost single handedly brought a

⁷⁰Harold Saylor. *Letter to Dr. Gordan W. Venable*. 26 September 1956. National Parks Service, Independence National Historical Park Library and Archives, Philadelphia.

⁷¹Harold Saylor. *Letter to Mrs. George E. Lippincott*. 26 September 1956. National Parks Service, Independence National Historical Park Library and Archives, Philadelphia.

⁷²*Nomination for Mrs. Montgomery for Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Award, 1990*. National Parks Service, Independence National Historical Park Library and Archives, Philadelphia.

neglected tangle of plants into a beautiful, tranquil garden spot.”⁷³ In addition, it stated “Mildred Montgomery’s devotion to this enormous project for the past twenty years is a gift to the nation that few Americans can equal in a lifetime.”⁷⁴

Her accomplishments described in the Nomination included:

- Eradication of Dutch Elm disease that killed many large specimens in the garden
- Trimming the rear garden, which was “a jungle of overgrown shrubs and vines.”
- Uncovering a Great Yew described as “one of the finest in the Delaware Valley.”
- Pruning of Box Island—the circle of tree box that protected a Magnolia Grandiflora. She “fed, staked and eased [the box] into a vertical stance.”
- Discovering and grouping and English Boxwood to form a U in the rear garden. She also placed a white Chippendale bench near the Boxwood.
- Overseeing the cleanup of the east boundary of the property, including the discovery of a Plum tree that may be a volunteer of Deshler’s legendary Plum tree.
- Designating appropriate replacement material for barren areas including: Azalea, Mahonia, Acuba, Holly, Dogwood, Skimmia, Pine, Hosta, and Magnolia.
- Feeding, spraying and pruning large trees including a great Oak and Azalea.
- Added three Cedars with the design philosophy that, “the garden should be as elegant in the winter as it is refreshing in the summer. Month after month this garden surprises its visitors, be it the coldest day in January or the hottest July day, brimming with cutting garden color.”
- Adding a cutting garden behind the outhouse with Tupils, Daffodils, Lupines, Perennials, and Chrysanthemums.
- Adding an herb garden in 1973 located between the laundry and the outhouse.
- Offsetting the loss of a Korean Dogwood in 1989 with Franklinia and a dwarf Magnolia Grandiflora

Her diary was saved by member of the Deshler-Morris Women's Committee and is available at the Independence National Historical Park archives.⁷⁵ It is a composition

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Mildred Montgomery. *Mrs. Mildred Montgomery's Personal Diary*. Independence National Historical Park Archives, Philadelphia.

notebook filled with short entries cataloguing some of her daily activities from 1969 until 1978.⁷⁶ She records some plantings, she makes references to the health of some plant features, she makes commentary on some of the organizational drama of the Women's Committee and she records some seasonal changes. As an example, she notes that on July 24, 1970, the National Park Service brought a group of Penn State students to plant 15 Sweetgum and Ash trees in order to conduct an experiment on smog.⁷⁷ Her entries indicate that Dutch Elm disease was very bad that year.

Through her entries, we can discern her attitude toward landscape treatment and distinguish the differences between the management of the house and the garden. She planted many trees as memorials for people either close to her or the landscape—on October 25, 1969, she planted a Blue Atlas Weeping Cedar in memory of her father and on April 19, 1970 she planted a dogwood in memory of Delphine Donahue.⁷⁸ She was also very proud of her accomplishments. In 1972 and 1973, she was rewarded by the Philadelphia Horticultural Society for her work with a blue ribbon and a silver trowel, respectively.⁷⁹

Mrs. Montgomery also participated in house activities and event planning. A 1973 *Philadelphia Inquirer* article reflects on her impressive dedication to the public appearance of the site:

⁷⁶ No Sweetgum or Ash trees were observed in the garden in 2007 (see Figure A1).

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ There were several dogwood trees in the garden in 2007. Because Mrs. Montgomery gave no indication in her diary of the location that she planted most of the plants, it will be difficult to discern the geography of her alterations.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

“Nobody did more to get ready for the Christmas party than Mrs. Knowlton D. Montgomery. She was chairman of decorations...Mrs. Montgomery spent two weeks—looking for the perfect pieces of fruit for the epergne on the dining room table. She went through three crates of pineapples before she found “just the right one” to place on the top of the epergne. As you know, the pineapple is the symbol of hospitality. We hereby award Mrs. Montgomery the “pineapple prize” for her perseverance...She is in charge of the Deshler-Morris gardens.”⁸⁰

Although her work on the garden had positive aesthetic improvements and gave the landscape attention at a time when attention to the landscape was mostly focused on the house, she did not return the garden to its eighteenth century appearance as had been recommended. In fact, in an interview with Anna Coxé Toogood, she described her repeated attempts to remove the gravel paths from the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries.⁸¹ Toogood's response to Mrs. Montgomery's alterations reflected the enduring sentiment that the Deshler-Morris' landscape should be limited to reflecting the time of Washington's occupation. She writes, “[h]er steady and constant gardening has produced many changes that if historic restoration of the grounds is funded, will eventually have to be erased.”⁸²

It would be hasty to recommend that all of Mrs. Montgomery's influential modifications be invalidated. Her alterations reduced the historical value of the landscape—especially the picturesque values of the Morris family—but they also reflect other colonial revival efforts by women's groups at the time. These landscapes may have even accumulated from some additional social values attributed to the contribution and

⁸⁰ “Teatime at the White House.” *Philadelphia Inquirer*. 6 December 1973.

⁸¹ Toogood, 89.

⁸² Ibid.

dedication of women. Emily T. Cooperman addresses the same issues of a Women's club designing a colonial revival garden in her Cultural Landscape Inventory for Stenton. She refers to Kenneth Ames work The Colonial Revival in America:

“not surprisingly, the domestic spheres of colonial revival activities (including the creation of house museums and the mounting of colonial artifact displays at international expositions) were women's activities, and were, of course, extensions of the more general cultural spheres in which women operated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Part of this female domestic sphere was the flower garden, while agriculture was seen as a masculine undertaking. While these cultural gender roles at least partly persist to the present, in the case of Stenton, and other house museums, they led to an emphasis on flower gardening that was not necessarily historically appropriate. In addition, flower gardening process, and a notable flower garden, were valued personal and social achievements for elite women at the turn of the century, as they still are to a certain degree.”⁸³

The alterations of Mrs. Montgomery reflect her gardening values. Her contributions may have modified the site resulting in a loss of historic integrity, but her dedication and maintenance gave the landscape much needed attention and revitalization.

The last formal landscape restoration effort at the Deshler-Morris House was in 1975 and 1976 in preparation for the Nation's Bicentennial. Many historic house museums prepared for the public's renewed interest in American colonial history, but attendance at many sites was lower than expected and funds to implement or maintain these new management plans and interpretations never materialized.⁸⁴

⁸³ Emily Cooperman, Stenton Colonial Revival Garden: 1910-1917 Cultural Landscape Inventory (Stenton: Philadelphia, 2000)

⁸⁴ John Groff. “To Thine Own Self Be True: The Small Historic House Museum in the 21st Century.” American House Museums: An Athenaeum of Philadelphia Symposium. 20 March 2007. <<http://www.philaathenaeum.org/hmuseum/groff.htm>>. Also in the spirit of the bicentennial, the

In 1973, the Bringhurst house, neighboring the Deshler-Morris House on the northwest, was donated to the National Park Service from the Germantown Savings Bank in order to “assure access, light, and air for the historic structure.”⁸⁵ The Bringhurst property is currently in the process of conversion into an exhibition space and welcome center for the Deshler-Morris landscape.

In 1984, an agreement was reached between the Women’s Committee, the Germantown Historical Society, and Independence National Historical Park that transferred legal management of the house to the newly incorporated Deshler-Morris House Committee.⁸⁶ The Deshler Morris House Committee performed many of the same functions as the Deshler-Morris Women’s Committee including coordinating visits and tours and fundraising activities such as the popular Annual Christmas tea.. This name transferal coincided with different attitudes towards Women’s Preservation groups and the deaths and loss of many long-term volunteers.⁸⁷ Head Gardener of the Deshler-Morris House Committee, Ellie Schleicher, noted in an interview that the name of the Committee was changed simply because a widower of a Committee member sought to join the group after his wife’s death.⁸⁸ Since then, there have been a handful of male members of the organization. In fact, In 1989, Agreement CA-ASFW-49-01, signed in 1949, was

Deshler-Morris house was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1972.

⁸⁵ Toogood, 54.

⁸⁶ Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of State, Corporation Bureau. *Deshler-Morris House Committee Articles of Incorporation*. 19 November 1984. National Parks Service, Independence National Historical Park Library and Archives, Philadelphia.

⁸⁷ Ellie Schliecher. Personal Interview. 28 March 2007.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

terminated and the Deshler-Morris House Committee and Independence National Historical Park (INHP) signed five-year cooperative agreement CA-4450-9-8005. The terms of this new agreement were that: the Deshler-Morris House Committee would operate the house and grounds INHP would support the committee professionally, technically and financially; INHP would also provide all maintenance except regular custodial care, but would support custodial care financially.⁸⁹

1984-Present: The Deshler-Morris House Committee

The Deshler-Morris landscape's history reflects the social and economic conditions of its surrounding Germantown community. In the 18th century, Germantown was a self-sufficient village—at the same time, Deshler was a German merchant with an elegant summer home with a productive garden. In the 19th century, the Morris family was an eminent Philadelphia family while Germantown was a desirable railroad and streetcar suburb. In the 20th century, the Deshler-Morris historic house museum was a part of a bustling commercial corridor and densely populated residential neighborhood.

White flight, suburbanization, the rise of malls and government disinvestment fueled Germantown's economic downturn after 1950. The neighborhood's demographics shifted to become predominately African American, and business and residential vacancy increased steadily. Poor attendance to the Deshler-Morris house and lack of attention to its landscape mirrored the decline of the surrounding community. In 1996, only 677

⁸⁹ Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of State, Corporation Bureau. *Deshler-Morris House Committee Articles of Incorporation*. 19 November 1984. National Parks Service, Independence National Historical Park Library and Archives, Philadelphia.

visitors came to the Deshler-Morris house.⁹⁰ In the post-9/11 resurgence in patriotic fervor in 2001, 1,487 people visited. By way of contrast, approximately 1.2 million visitors visited the Liberty Bell that same year.⁹¹ In 2004, only 1,035 people visited the site and it had the lowest visitation of any INHP unit in Philadelphia.⁹² Jenn Carbin, attributed low visitation at the site to lack of transportation options for tourists:

“Why aren't more people visiting Deshler-Morris? Mostly, it's transportation. There is no regular tourist service from Center City to historic Germantown, even once or twice each week; SEPTA routes from Center City to the area (a few regional rail stops and at least one bus) are not adequate for out-of-towners who want to be deposited directly at sites outside of downtown. And if the city doesn't provide a way to get there, it's unlikely that it's promoting the spot as it could.”⁹³

She later ascribes the lack of transportation to the fact that Philadelphia neither has the resources nor the mandate to provide transportation for tourists. Phil Sheridan, a spokesperson for Independence National Historic Park, however feels that it is in Philadelphia's interest to attract tourism with its colonial resources, he states, "With a little transformation, Germantown could be Williamsburg."⁹⁴ Anne Roller, public outreach coordinator for Cliveden, says that city officials need to think of ways to foster economic improvement. "If they're serious about creating a tourism economy, they need to look much beyond the [Center City] historic district."⁹⁵

⁹⁰ Jenn Carbin. "Out of the Loop." *Philadelphia City Paper*. 2-8 May 2002.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Independence National Historical Park Visitation 2004. Independence National Historical Park. 24 February 2007 <www.nps.gov/archive/inde/stats/2004a.pdf>.

⁹³ Jenn Carbin. "Out of the Loop." *Philadelphia City Paper*. 2-8 May 2002.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

In 2005, Independence National Historical Park began the Deshler Morris House/Bringhurst Utilities Improvement Project that cost around three million dollars. It involved a value analysis, and environmental assessment and construction.⁹⁶ Figure C.3. is a plan for some of the interventions on the grounds. A 2003 Business plan for Independence National Historical Park describes these improvements:

“Both the Deshler-Morris and the Bringhurst houses suffered from antiquated utilities, hazardous materials, deteriorating historic fabric, and a lack of basic visitor facilities, (including public restrooms). Staff completed National Environmental Protection Agency and Section 106 compliance. In addition, the park replaced and relocated a 40-year-old heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system, provided a complete fire suppression system, emergency electrical lighting, a video communications link with the park headquarters, subsurface drainage, a new orientation area, and universally accessible ramps. Finally, Cultural Resources Management and Maintenance completed overdue repairs on the original wood and masonry, replaced leaking roofs, improved structural supports, and upgraded plumbing and electrical systems.”⁹⁷

John Milner Associates, Inc. will be conducting rehabilitation and restoration of the Deshler-Morris and Bringhurst houses that will include visitor reception and orientation at the Bringhurst house.⁹⁸

Recent thinking about the Deshler-Morris House’ interpretation have been shaped by 21st century controversies surrounding the construction of a new pavilion for the

⁹⁶ *Independence National Historical Park Business Plan 2003*. Independence National Historical Park 24 February 2007 <www.nps.gov/inde/upload/business_plan.pdf>

⁹⁷ *2005 Annual Superintendents Report for Independence National Historical Park*. Independence National Historical Park. 24 February 2007.
<www.nps.gov/inde/upload/2005%20Annual%20Superintendents%20Report.pdf>

⁹⁸ John Milner Architects, Inc. “New Horizons.” 24 February 2007.
<<http://www.johnmilnerarchitects.com/horizons/>>

Liberty Bell. Critics of the design and interpretive programs chosen by Independence National Historical Park thought that there should have been some attention given to the history of slavery in the early years of the US in spite of the founding fathers' ideals of liberty. President Washington was known to have slaves and the new Liberty Bell pavilion was a short distance away from where his slaves' quarters were located. This controversy reveals how the centrality in American history of the figure of George Washington and the slavery of African Americans are at odds with the concept of freedom as an American ideal. It was an opportunity for INHP to work through important tensions in the foundation of this nation through dialogue and interpretation. Jill Ogline writes, "Throughout the controversy, the fundamentals at stake have been nothing less than the place of slavery in the American narrative and Independence National Historical Park's own sense of self-understanding and mission."⁹⁹

Independence National Historical Park's response was to suggest that the story of Washington's slave ownership might better be addressed at the Deshler-Morris house.¹⁰⁰ The Deshler-Morris landscape was also site of enslavement. Both Washington and Isaac Franks had enslaved Africans. In 2002, a plan was formulated to create a virtual tour of the Deshler. Superintendent of INHP, Martha Aikens wrote in an April 2002 editorial to the *Philadelphia Inquirer*:

"The Deshler-Morris House in Germantown is the oldest surviving presidential residence in the nation. Currently, the National Park Service is

⁹⁹ Ogline, Jill. "'Creating Dissonance for the Visitor': The Heart of the Liberty Bell Controversy" *The Public Historian*. Summer 2004, Vol. 26, No. 3: 50.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 51.

developing a virtual tour. It includes a section on Hercules — a slave and cook to George Washington — and generally discusses Washington as a slave owner. While not adjacent to the Liberty Bell, the Deshler-Morris House is an intact, complete residence where Washington held state dinners and cabinet meetings, and where the slaves of his household also lived. With the current emphasis on heritage tourism in the region, the Deshler-Morris House should be one of the crown jewels of an area rich in historic sites.”¹⁰¹

Many people were outraged that the National Park Service would suggest that an interpretation change at the Deshler-Morris house—miles away from the Liberty Bell and with a fraction of its visitation—was an appropriate solution to neglecting to address the issue of slavery in the foundation of this nation. O’line argued that the value of the Liberty Bell has always been its memorialization and the mythology surrounding liberty and freedom. In addition, the Deshler-Morris house gets 0.2% of the visitors per year that the Liberty Bell does.¹⁰² Linn Washington Jr. in the *Philadelphia Tribune*, Philadelphia’s historical African American newspaper writes:

“NPS relegating the Washington slave story to the Deshler-Morris house robs the million-plus Liberty Bell visitors of valuable information that can begin reversing the ravages of the slavery-spawned racism soiling contemporary American society.”¹⁰³

There are no definitive answers to whether an interpretive program on Washington’s ownership of enslaved Africans is reflected in the significance of the Deshler-Morris landscape. Is the Deshler-Morris landscape the most appropriate venue

¹⁰¹ Linn Washington Jr. “Park Service Compromises Black Rights.” *Philadelphia Tribune*. 7 May 2002.

¹⁰² *Independence National Historical Park Visitation 2004*. Independence National Historical Park. 24 February 2007.

¹⁰³ Linn Washington, Jr. “Park Service Compromises Black Rights.” *Philadelphia Tribune*. 7 May 2002.

for the issue of enslavement and African American inservitude for Independence National Historical Park? How would the inclusion of such a program, virtual or onsite, affect visitation? How will attention paid to slavery and African Americans affect the Deshler-Morris landscape's integration within Germantown's predominantly African American community? An inclusion of information regarding African Americans could make the Deshler-Morris house more relevant to local residents or it could risk alienating important stakeholders in its future without thoughtful research or presentation.

The historic house museums in Germantown united in the mid-1980's to form the organization, Historic Germantown Preserved (HGP). Their initial goal was to be an invisible organization with a low profile that would help create a marketing tool for the historic sites. Through branding and advertising, Historic Germantown would attract the type of cultural tourism that has grown in popularity in recent years.

Over the past decade, however, the partner sites discovered that there was more that could be gained for both the sites individually and the Germantown community-at-large through the economy of scale of a unified Northwest Philadelphia heritage organization. They have widely expanded their activities over the past few years and continue to increase their scope. This larger organizational capacity has allowed them to apply for grants from prestigious programs as Heritage Philadelphia. Three other historic house museums in Germantown are discussed as comparables to the Deshler-Morris landscape in Chapter Five.

The Deshler-Morris house is somewhat distinctive from the other Germantown colonial houses and gardens due to its inclusion into Independence National Historical Park. The fact that it tells a national, rather than local story further distinguishes the landscape from some of its house museum neighbors. The landscape's treatment and management have been tremendously transformational since 1948. A new era is about to begin with the site's upcoming closure for architectural restoration work, the expansion of exhibition space in the Brighthurst House, and a forthcoming Cultural Landscape Report that will suggest appropriate landscape treatment. In the next chapter, I will document the current landscape setting based on observations on site and interviews with persons familiar with the landscape's current condition and interpretation.

CHAPTER THREE: CURRENT FEATURES AND LANDSCAPE INVENTORY**Landscape Setting: Site Identification**

Germantown is located in Northwest Philadelphia, north and east of the Schuylkill River and west of the Delaware River. When Francis Daniel Pastorius brought settlers to the area, Germantown was characterized by fertile black soil and natural springs.¹⁰⁴ Even though the neighborhood has been built over and transformed into an urban context, these springs still run under the surface of the contemporary landscape. Gardeners continue to appreciate its fertile soil through the cultivation of Germantown's many extant gardens. The historic gardens of Germantown are important ties to the natural ecology of the neighborhood.

The Deshler-Morris landscape is located within lower Germantown on the southwest side of Germantown Avenue with Greene Street to the southwest, Schoolhouse Lane to the northwest and Coulter Street to the southeast. Schoolhouse Lane was named so for the Germantown Academy, which was located adjacent to the Deshler-Morris landscape on its rear boundary. As mentioned in Chapter One, George Washington's

¹⁰⁴ Faris, John Thomson. *Old Gardens in and about Philadelphia*. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1932.

adopted son George Washington Custis attended the Germantown Academy in 1794 during the family's stay at the Deshler-Morris house.¹⁰⁵

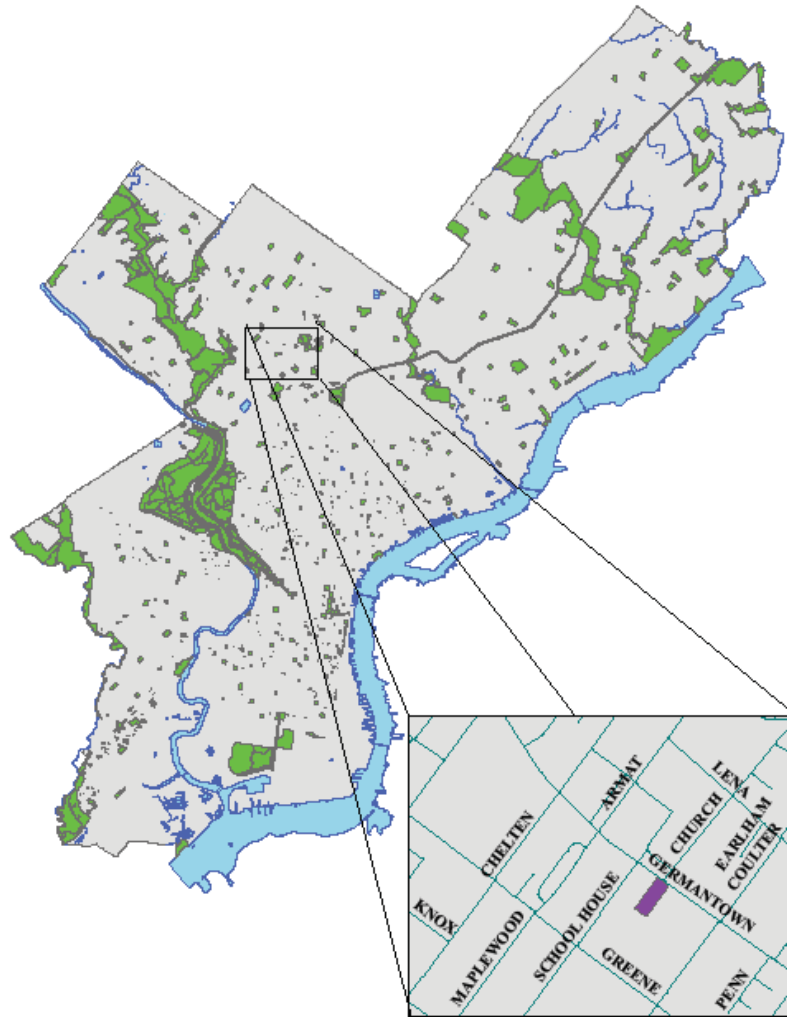


Figure 1. Location of Deshler-Morris property in Philadelphia

Today, the Deshler-Morris landscape is bounded by the Bringham House to the northwest, the William Ashmead house to the southeast, and the Second Church of Christ

¹⁰⁵ Thompson, Ray. *Washington at Germantown*. Fort Washington: Bicentennial Press, 1971: 74.

Scientist to the southwest (see Figure D.21). Neighborhood landmarks include: Vernon Park, landscape of another Wister family mansion and current site of a Germantown senior center and public park; Grumblethorpe, located two blocks southeast of Deshler-Morris along Germantown Avenue (and a comparable site to Deshler-Morris evaluated in Chapter Five); and the Germantown Historical Society and Visitor's Center across Germantown Avenue on the north side of Market Square.

Landscape Setting: General Organization

The Deshler-Morris landscape is a narrow rectangle 99' wide and 277' deep—much shorter in length than its original dimensions of 99' wide by 792' deep. The landscape's transformations—including boundary changes—are illustrated in the evolutionary diagrams in Appendix E. In addition, a map of existing conditions, Figure A.1, supplements this chapter. This map of existing conditions was created after multiple visits to the site in March and April 2007. AutoCAD files provided by INHP of site conditions in 2005 were referenced in creating the existing conditions map of the landscape. This map provides visual documentation of the property boundary, buildings and structures, plant features, and spatial organization of the Deshler-Morris landscape in the Spring of 2007. Appendix F also supplements this chapter as a table of all major vegetation features. This table provides the names of all major plant features, their estimated age and their condition, if noted, on site visits.



Figure 2. View after entrance from street gate.

There is a clear view of most of the garden from the street entrance or from the house's side doorway. The lawn is the central feature of the landscape and gives the whole property visibility. There is also access to the landscape via a gravel driveway that spans about fifty feet from Germantown Avenue along the boundary with the Ashmead

house.¹⁰⁶ Bushes, shrubs and specimen trees encircle the lawn along the front of the property, the eastern boundary, and the rear. Adjacent to the boundary with the Bringhurst house, there is an outhouse surrounded by various landscape features and vegetation. Other structures include a garden shed in the rear of the Ashmead section and a cold frame in the rear of the Bringhurst section. Between the outhouse and the cold frame, there are the remains of Mrs. Montgomery's cutting garden. Adjacent to the house's kitchen and rear addition, there is a patch of roses, bushes and ground cover. Not visible from the lawn is an herb garden set in stone between outhouse and the main house. There are a few low-scale trees, bushes and stone slab pathway between main house and Bringhurst property west of the kitchen. The landscape features are of various ages—the mature specimen trees are the most historic features.

Landscape Setting: Spatial Organization/Land Use

The landscape is not formally divided into discrete sections—the lawn is its most distinct feature. The majority of the other landscape features are situated around the lawn. This pattern is broken only in the areas adjacent to the outhouse and an alley between the Deshler-Morris house and the Bringhurst house. For descriptive purposes, the sections of the lawn can be parsed out by their directional situation in reference to the lawn (see Figure 3). In this chapter, the front section refers to the landscape area between the Deshler-Morris house and the Ashmead house nearest to Germantown Avenue and in

¹⁰⁶ Driveway installed in 1973 according to Montgomery, Mildred M. Mrs. Mildred Montgomery's Personal Diary. Independence National Historical Park Archives, Philadelphia.

the north and easternmost part of the property. The Ashmead section refers to the area to the south and east of the lawn, with a narrow crushed stone or gravel path running along the eastern property barrier. The rear section refers to the plant features in the rear of the property anchored by the u-shaped box discovered and grouped by Mrs. Montgomery. A young plum tree, some oak trees, and a historic yew are located in the rear of the Brighthurst section of the property. Mrs. Montgomery's cutting garden, the landscape features surrounding the outhouse and the ground cover and rose garden adjacent to the kitchen and rear additions are the other components of the landscape.



Figure 3. Orientation map of Deshler-Morris landscape

The Front Section

Figure 4. A view of the front section, facing northeast.

The Deshler-Morris house is positioned on the north side of the property facing Germantown Avenue. As mentioned in a previous chapter, legend has it that the odd placement of the house on the side rather than middle of the property—typical of the time—was because Deshler did not want to cut down a fine plum tree. Currently, there are no plum trees, nor any other type of fruit tree in that section.

The front section of the landscape between the front portion of the house and the Ashmead house has a variety of plant features of varying ages. The features with the most historic value are: two Northern Red Oak trees from the mid-nineteenth century,

and one American Beech tree from the turn of the twentieth century. Samuel B. Morris or Elliston Perot Morris probably planted the Northern Red Oak trees. Elliston Perot Morris most likely planted this section's American Beech around 1900, possibly after the Great Storm of 1902 that destroyed many significant evergreen trees, and American Beech may have been a smarter replacement.

There are about four major areas of thicket on the landscape that are filled with azalea, various species of holly and other bushes and shrubs that were added in by Mrs. Montgomery in the time that she was head gardener, around 1970 until the mid-1990's. The front section is characterized by one of these thickets containing identified azalea, holly, baby maple and magnolia. Some of these bushes and small trees have overgrown or produced volunteers in the past decade. Some were not added to the map of existing plant conditions, because current head of the Deshler-Morris House Gardening Committee, Ellie Schleicher, identified seedlings that she and the Gardening Committee are having them National Park Service removed.¹⁰⁷

Mrs. Montgomery also planted two Blue Weeping Atlas Cedars sometime between 1970 and 1990. As mentioned in her nomination for an award from the Philadelphia Horticultural Society (from now on, will be referred to as PHS), she planted these with the design philosophy that, "the garden should be as elegant in the winter as it is refreshing in the summer. Month after month this garden surprises its visitors, be it the

¹⁰⁷ Schleicher, Ellie. Personal Interview. 28 March 2007.

coldest day in January or the hottest July day, brimming with cutting garden color.”¹⁰⁸

One of these Blue Weeping Atlas Cedars was planted on November 25, 1969, because in her diary entry on that same day, Mrs. Montgomery writes that she planted a ‘Cedras Atlantica Glouca’ in memory of her father.¹⁰⁹

Also mentioned in the PHS Nomination was a plum tree that Mrs. Montgomery discovered to the east of the house that she determined to be a seedling of the famous plum tree saved by David Deshler. Unfortunately, that tree must have been removed since then and there are only three fruit trees on the landscape in the rear. Mrs. Montgomery was most likely also responsible for planting a tree of Chinese Holly in a little section of grass between the Deshler-Morris house and the brick sidewalk to the east of the house.

¹⁰⁸ Nomination for Mrs. Montgomery for Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Award, 1990. National Parks Service, Independence National Historical Park Library and Archives, Philadelphia.

¹⁰⁹ Montgomery, Mildred. *Mrs. Mildred Montgomery's Personal Diary*. Independence National Historical Park Archives, Philadelphia.

The Ashmead Section

Figure 5. Trees and bushes in the Ashmead section of the property, facing south.

The Ashmead section of the landscape is, by far, the most thickly planted area of the landscape. There is a continuous line of trees, bushes and ground cover from the front of the property to the rear, with a pathway of gravel or crushed stone between them and the eastern property boundary of Ashmead house and property of the Germantown Friends School.

From the front to the rear, the most significant and historic landscape features in this section are an American Beech, a Wild Cherry tree, a group of English Boxwood, a

Ginkgo tree, and various Oak trees. The evolutionary diagrams in Appendix E indicate how long these features have existed on the landscape. Again, Mrs. Montgomery probably planted the Azalea, Mahonia and the exotic species of shrubbery, such as the Holly, Variegated Holly, Skimmia, Euonymus, Spottel Laurel and Hydrangea in order to fill out this area of the garden with variety and color. Specific information about these plants is provided in the vegetation subsection of this chapter and in the map of existing conditions.

One of the most historic landscape features in the whole landscape is an American Beech tree near the front of the Ashmead section aged about 250 years old (see the evolutionary diagram of 1772 in Appendix E.1). David Deshler probably planted it himself in his original garden.



Figure 6. ~250 year old Beech tree, possibly struck by lightning, facing north.

Unfortunately, this tree is dangerously near the end of its life. There is a remarkable streak rising from the roots of the tree, up and around its trunk. This streak in the tree's bark may be attributed to the bark of the trunk splitting, but more likely, lightning struck in the past decade. The streak is very lightly colored, but appears slightly burnt around the edges. Besides the streak, this tree is discolored in areas and

there are other signs that it is very near the end of its life cycle. This tree should be removed as soon as possible, because it may split and cause damage either to the Deshler-Morris house or the Ashmead house.¹¹⁰

Scattered within the most crowded area of thicket are a few trunks of English Boxwood, a White Pine, and Northern Red Oak. There is also a Wild Cherry tree about 70 years old. This tree is significant, because it is one of the few extant fruit trees on the Deshler-Morris landscape. David Deshler was once known for his orchard “of the best grafted fruit of various kinds, and a large garden pailed in.”¹¹¹ Though this tree was not planted by David Deshler, it could be incorporated into an interpretive program about the landscape’s German heritage.

As mentioned before, one of the most prominent landscape features of the lawn is a patch of English boxwood that protrudes into almost in the very center of the property. During the twentieth century, this must have been a very distinguished landscape feature as English boxwood has always been prized in horticultural communities.¹¹² Ms. Shleicher believes that there is some sort of underground infestation of the soil causing these trees to die, because some new Boxwood plants that she planted within the past decade are also in poor health.

¹¹⁰ This is preliminary analysis based on a landscape evaluation conducted by the author, Professor Randall Mason and the landscape architect, Theresa Durkin on April 14, 2007.

¹¹¹ Toogood, 77.

¹¹² Relf, Diane and Appelton, Bonnie, eds. “Boxwood in the Landscape.” *Environmental Horticulture* 426-603, 2001: 1.



Figure 7. Sick English Boxwood, facing north.

Ms. Shleicher and the Garden Committee planted a few small evergreens, Northern White Cedars, along the eastern boundary adjacent to property of the Germantown Friends School. The adjacent concrete yard is used as a play area for elementary school children; Ms. Schleicher planted the evergreens to block out the noise and view of the children at play during the daytime.

Along with the American Beech, one of the landscape's most historic features is a Ginkgo Biloba tree aged around 250 years old. Charles Hamilton, a relative of the founding father, Alexander Hamilton, was the first to bring this exotic species to the New

World.¹¹³ The connection between Grumblethorpe's landscape and the Deshler-Morris landscape through their possession of these historic Ginkgo trees should be considered another important connection between these two sites. David Deshler was a great-nephew of John Wister, the patriarch of Grumblethorpe.



Figure 8. ~250yr old Ginkgo tree, facing south.

¹¹³ Richard Vogel. Personal Interview. 11 April 2007.

The Rear Section

The thicket in the Ashmead section breaks up a little around a garden shed near the rear of the garden. There is a prominent Azalea bush, a Flowering Dogwood, a young Magnolia, Forsythia, a Hemlock aged 150 years, a Cut-leaf Beech around 160 years old and some English Yew. The most eastern part of the rear portion contains an overgrown area of English Yew.

The middle of the rear section is anchored by an cluster of English Boxwood shaped into a “U”. The 1950 plan of existing conditions shows that the Western part of this cluster was in existence then. Mrs. Montgomery completed the U-shape and installed the white Chippendale bench that currently sits in the indentation of the U. To the right of this bench is the memorial to C.O. Timanus, a volunteer at the Deshler-Morris house who tragically died after falling in the yard in 1952.¹¹⁴ An Oak tree was immediately planted, but this tree died within two years.¹¹⁵ It is unknown whether any of the other Oaks on the property or in this section were planted in her memory, but the plaque is her enduring memorial.

Behind the U-shaped English Boxwood is a Bur Oak around 140 years old. In front of the Timanus memorial is another Bur Oak, around the same age. To the west of the U-shaped Boxwood is a Maple tree and a Holly tree. This area was the site of the

¹¹⁴ “Mrs. C.O. Timanus is Killed in Fall.” *Philadelphia Inquirer*. 1952.

¹¹⁵ Riebe, Henry F. *Letter to Mrs. George E. Lippincott*. 4 September 1956. National Parks Service, Independence National Historical Park Library and Archives, Philadelphia.

Morris family's "little garden" of flowers, herbs and plants documented in NPS' existing plan of 1950 (see Appendix C.1).

Along the eastern boundary, across from the garden shed, is a cold frame to keep plants warm if needed. The age of the cold frame is unknown, but it existed before 1950. A plum tree was planted within the past decade to the south of the cold frame in order to honor the legend of Deshler preserving his plum tree. The Deshler-Morris House Committee is not satisfied with this tree, because of its location far from where the original plum tree and the fact that its species is different from the species of Deshler's plum tree. They do not have plans yet, for the tree's removal but also lack a plan to incorporate it into the site's interpretation

At the end of the stone walk leading from the house and the outhouse and to the north of the cold frame are an English Yew around 110 years old and Bur Oak around 150 years old.



Figure 9. The cold frame, English Yew and White Oak, facing northwest.

Mrs. Montgomery's cutting garden is located along the boundary with the Bringhurst house between the cold frame and the outhouse. At the time of this conditions assessment, not many of its contents were identifiable. Mrs. Montgomery's Nomination outlines that she planted tulips, daffodils, lupines, perennials, and chrysanthemums in her

personal garden. Ms. Shleicher revealed one primary use of the cutting garden was for use of its contents in the Deshler-Morris house for special events.

Surrounding the Outhouse



Figure 10. The outhouse and the Korean Dogwood trees, facing northwest.

The outhouse is first documented in a 1884 insurance policy survey, but there is no known date of when it was constructed.¹¹⁶ It has four separate compartments and is presently used for storage. The outhouse is currently closed to the public and houses more landscape materials. In front of the outhouse are some flowers and two Korean

¹¹⁶ Toogood, 95.

Dogwood trees probably also planted by Mrs. Montgomery. She also added an herb garden between the laundry and the outhouse in 1973. Behind the outhouse is an azalea bush.



Figure 11. The herb garden, facing southwest.

To the west of the herb garden is a patch of shrubbery containing *Pieris Teutonica* and English Boxwood. The *Pieris Teutonica* has been infested with lace bug and is in

poor condition. The English Boxwood is at least a century old. There is a dirt and cut stone pathway leading to a gate to the Bringhurst house. Another historic English Boxwood tree is located along the path between the Deshler-Morris house and the Bringhurst house. The only other vegetation in this section are a few Gooseberry Current bushes Ms. Shleicher planted in the past decade and an azalea bush most likely planted by Mrs. Montgomery.

Ground Cover Adjacent to House

There is an area of vegetation across the brick pathways near the house's rear additions and the outhouse. In this section, there is a bush of Blue Weeping Atlas Cedar, a rose garden, a White Oak tree, and a Flowering Dogwood. The ground cover in this section is mostly Pachysandra. The Weeping Cedar needs trimming.



Figure 12. Weeping Cedar and rose garden behind it, facing north.

The rose garden has been an ongoing project of the Deshler-Morris Gardening Committee over the past decade. Ms. Shleicher has planted historic varieties of roses including “China”, “Four Seasons”, and “Old-blush” roses. She has chosen these roses because of their popularity during colonial times. For example, she planted the “Old-blush” roses because Thomas Jefferson once gave President Washington a gift of “old-blush” roses for his garden at Mount Vernon. Taking care of a rose garden can be very work intensive and may not be feasible to keep up with the limitations of the Deshler-Morris Garden Committee. The rose garden is in fair condition and a bit overgrown, with

some of the plants' vines blocking the pathway to the outhouse. The roses may be more effective if they were planted at a greater distance away from the pathway.

Landscape Setting: Circulation

Samuel Morris installed gravel pathways to provide pedestrian circulation in the early 19th century. His curvilinear pathways allowed his family and visitors to easily walk about the property. The pathways also allowed admirers to stroll through the garden without trampling the lawn. During Morris' ownership, the depth of the property was shortened by the construction of Greene Street and the sale of the lot northeast of Green Street that measured 99' by 300' (see the transformations documented between the evolutionary diagrams Appendix E.4 and Appendix E.5). Garden photos from the 1880s and 1890s show that the pathways reached far back into the rear of the landscape. Trees and bushes were planted on either side of the pathways as they encircled the central lawn.

The Garden and Grounds Survey of the existing conditions of the Deshler-Morris Landscape created by Independence National Historic Park in 1950 shows the exact location of Morris' gravel paths reaching back past the rear boundary of the property with a temporary wire fence cutting the paths off (See Figure C.1). The Morris House Planting Plan from the year before showed that a major initiative was planned to enclose the two, rear ends of the pathways to create a circuit around the landscape (see Figure C.2). There were also plans to reconstruct new paths in the front section where there were the remains of a path of ferns and in other sections in which the connections

between existing pathways could be improved. These plans to renovate the pathways were never implemented.

Some time during her tenure as head gardener, Mrs. Montgomery took out the gravel pathways. Today, the brick pathways connecting the house, the outhouse and the remains of Mrs. Montgomery's cutting garden are the only methods of pedestrian circulation. There is also a gravel, stone and dirt path along the eastern boundary of the property that has some semblance to some portions of the older eastern pathways, but is not interpreted. These two pathways remain because they seem to be the most functional to the maintenance of the landscape. The remains of the Morris family's pathways are still legible on the landscape and have vestiges under the surface of the lawn.¹¹⁷ An archeological study of the lawn would most likely reveal the exact location of the historic pathways for documentation or to aid their reinstallation.

Currently, pedestrian circulation around the garden is unstructured. Because, there is such low attendance to the site, damage to the ecology by visitors has not been much of an issue. There is also a gravel driveway for vehicles coming from Germantown Avenue to park within the property. It is located between the Ashmead house and the front section of vegetation. This driveway is on access with a continuous pathway between the eastern boundary and the vegetation of the landscape.

¹¹⁷ Schliecher, Ellie. Personal Interview. 28 March 2007.



Figure 13. Gravel Driveway

The next chapter evaluates these current conditions and features to reveal the landscape's values and significance.

CHAPTER FOUR: VALUES AND SIGNIFICANCE

“A garden is a living thing, expressing the times, the interests and life of those who make and tend it”

-Suzanne Wister Eastwick¹¹⁸

Since its inception, the caretakers of the Deshler-Morris landscape have possessed varied attitudes towards its design and use. Each owner has been guided by different values towards enhancing its beauty, creating an inviting atmosphere for visitors and preserving its history. This chapter assesses the influence of these values, determines the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the ways that these values are expressed in the present day, and concludes with a statement of significance for the Deshler-Morris landscape.

Landscape Values

When David Deshler bought his lot in Germantown, cleared the landscape and did the first formal planting, he was influenced by German horticultural values. Deshler imposed on his garden many cultural values of German immigrants including scientific horticultural innovation, the planting of rare and exotic trees, and tending fruit trees. His cultivations style was influenced by historical figures, such as Francis Daniel Pastorius. Deshler also shared information and tree cuttings with his contemporaries, such as Christian Lehman and John Wister. He planted a garden and orchard with rare and exotic trees imported from Europe and Asia (see Appendix E.1). His garden was also a

¹¹⁸ Suzanne Wister Eastwick. “The ‘Grumblethorpe’ Garden: A Historical Sketch.” *The Herbarist*, 1963.

productive space through his large kitchen garden. The garden was typical amongst his neighbors, but notable enough to gain significance locally.

Today, the only remaining features of the Deshler era are two trees that he probably planted himself—the Ginkgo tree and Beech tree. Deshler also planted English Boxwood, but it is unknown whether any of the extant older box bushes date from his time period. Deshler also planted many fruit trees in his orchard. None of his fruit trees remain, but the Wild Cherry trees, the recently planted plum tree, and Gooseberry Currant bushes, were all planted by the Deshler-Morris Woman's Committee or House Committee in order to express Deshler's German horticultural values. Unfortunately, the Beech tree is in such poor condition, that its removal is necessitated. Nonetheless, the Ginkgo tree is the most historically significant character defining feature of the landscape for its age and its associations with other ornamental Ginkgo trees in the Delaware Valley.

Isaac Franks and President George Washington did not make any major landscape alterations. They primarily maintained the orchard and kitchen garden. Isaac Franks and President Washington were also known to have enslaved Africans as servants during their occupation who servants may have assisted in the landscape's maintenance. Even though Washington's occupation of the house is the landscape's identified period of significance, Washington and his family had little more influence than enjoy the shade of the garden's trees and traverse the expanse of the lawn. The only documentation available about Washington's family tending the landscape was that Martha Washington grew hyacinths

under cut glass just outside of the kitchen.¹¹⁹ Regardless, the historical value of President Washington's stay has been overemphasized. He and his family's created a negligible lasting imprint on the landscape.

The Morris family transformed the landscape into an ornamental, designed picturesque garden. Elliston Perot moved his family to the property year round, just as Germantown was becoming a popular railroad suburb of Philadelphia. Samuel B. Morris hired a prominent landscape architect to design his formal garden. Elliston P. Morris had a great regard for the historic and aesthetic value of his garden, reflected in his narratives and reminiscences referenced in Chapter One.

They were immensely proud of Washington's visit, so they did not attempt to completely redo the garden—they valued the mature trees for their witness to the great historical figure. Nonetheless, they manicured the lawn, imposed circulation, created formal flower beds, and identified replacement plants and trees for those that died. The landscape maintained continuity over the 150 years that the family occupied the house. The historical value of the family was reduced by later transformations—especially the removal of the landscape's gravel pathways—but many of the specimen trees that they planted, including Oaks, Cedars, Beech, English Boxwood and English Yew are extant in the present day (see Appendix E, figures 3-6).

Since the National Park Service and INHP have taken over the management of the Deshler-Morris landscape, these institutions have not taken a proactive approach to its

¹¹⁹ Edwin Costley Jellett. *Germantown Gardens and Gardeners*. (Philadelphia: H. F. McCann, 1914), 73.

interpretation. The Deshler-Morris Women's Committee and the Deshler-Morris House Committee have had an inconsistent record of interpreting the site's values. Mrs. Montgomery performed much of the landscape's management and alteration. She and the Deshler-Morris Women's Committee conducted such restoration activities as: the identification of replacement materials to fill out the garden after the neglect of the early twentieth century, the eradication of Dutch Elm disease, the removal of trees and plants in poor condition and maintaining the vibrancy of the landscape.

The Deshler-Morris Women's Committee also added social value to the landscape. Prominent women in Germantown created community gathering spots out of the area's many historic landscapes. Restoration of historic landscapes and preservation activities became "causes" for these women to support. The events at the Deshler-Morris house were often announced in the society sections of local and regional newspapers.¹²⁰ One of the reasons that the Deshler-Morris Gardening Committee is overburdened with the task of maintaining the landscape is that there is no longer a cadre of local volunteers invested in supporting Germantown's historic gardens.

The aesthetic values that guided Mrs. Montgomery's improvements were that the garden should be "brimming with cutting garden color" and was as "elegant in the winter as it is refreshing in the summer." To this effect, she introduced the colorful holly and

¹²⁰ See: Ruth Seltzer. "A Christmas Tea in the Germantown White House." *Philadelphia Inquirer* 10 December 1976, and Ruth Seltzer. "George and Martha to Have the Same Room Again." *Philadelphia Inquirer* 14 March 1976.

spotted laurel bushes, the dogwood trees, filled out the thicket with Azalea and Skimmia, and planted the Weeping Cedars.

Her work should be valued as an example of the contribution of women and women's gardening societies to the historic resources of the Delaware Valley. Unfortunately, also her work seemed somewhat uninformed by historical documentation. It is as if she gently erased some of the major landscape features—such as the Morris family's gravel pathways and formal planting beds—and imposed her own garden ideals, such as the introduction of exotic plants. These doodles and flourishes reduced some of the historic value of the landscape but did improved its aesthetic value.

SWOT Analysis

Identification of the landscape's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats is a fundamental exercise in order to assess the site's needs and develop treatment and recommendations for the future. This analysis informs and supplements the Deshler-Morris landscape's statement of significance and serves as a reference for Chapter 5's treatment and recommendation strategies.

Strengths

The biggest strength of the Deshler-Morris landscape is that its historical value has already merited its preservation and has been guiding its management for more than fifty years. Unfortunately, its limited period of significance has overshadowed the

landscape features that have historical value outside of the time of Washington's occupation. The garden is the site of extant mature trees such as the Ginkgo tree, the Oak trees, the English Yews, and English Boxwood bushes that are all significant historic resources that have contributed to the landscape over hundreds of years—not just in 1793 or 1794. The aesthetic values of the exotic species that Mrs. Montgomery introduced are unique within Germantown gardens and notable for their representation of the contribution of women to the preservation of the landscape. The “unbroken expanse of lawn” from the Morris family's time is still an evidentiary central feature of the garden.

Supporting future interpretive activities would be the variety and broad amount of documentation available of the landscape. Also, the remaining Philadelphians with knowledge of the historic site may continue to support future interpretive programming and activities. The Deshler-Morris landscape has been three different types of gardens over the past two hundred and fifty years: a fruit and vegetable garden, a designed picturesque garden, and a stage for a Women's garden society. As Chapter Three proved and Appendix A displays, these three different gardens are legible in the garden's current manifestation.

Weaknesses

The weaknesses of the current landscape are numerous. Most of these weaknesses stem from organizational complications. Since the end of the 1990's Deshler-Morris House Committee has not had enough volunteers to conduct interpretive

programming or perform sufficient maintenance. Also, communication on landscape activities between DMHC and INHP has been incommodious. Each has contributed to the extended periods of time it has taken to resolve issues of maintenance, access to the garden and renovation activities to in the past decade.

INHP's Deshler-Morris/Bringhurst House Infrastructural Improvement Plan has taken over seven years to develop. As of 2007, the Deshler-Morris historic site has been closed to the public in preparation for the initiation of these improvements. However, members of DMHC were unsure of the scope or duration with which these improvements were going to take place. These great changes to the management of the house as a historic site would undoubtedly lead to changes in management. Unwillingness to adapt to change characterizes many historic house museum committees—including Deshler-Morris'. For example, some members resisted the change of the name from the Deshler-Morris Women's Committee to the Deshler-Morris House Committee.¹²¹ It may be difficult for many long time members to adapt to the organizational changes that would be necessitated after a landscape improvement plan is implemented. Another organizational weakness that has characterized many Germantown historic sites has been the perception that these sites are in competition. This issue is addressed more in depth in Chapter Five.

Deferred maintenance has been slowly diminishing the landscape's beauty and value as a site of retreat and relaxation. Recently, a historic Oak tree was removed

¹²¹ Schliecher, Ellie. Personal Interview. 28 March 2007.

without appropriate replacement materials being identified.¹²² Another mature tree, the dying American Beech acknowledged in Chapter Three, should be removed as soon as possible. This will be another great loss of a mature shade tree. There is no guiding preservation plan that indicates how large shade trees should be replaced. There are also some infestations of bugs and other pests that make the landscape less pleasant to visit and are threatening the plants. A preservation plan for the landscape would enumerate ways to deal with changes in the landscape and help diminish these weaknesses.

Opportunities

This is a timely moment to rethink the management of the garden and develop a preservation plan. The Bringhurst house renovation and impending infrastructural maintenance plans make the next few years opportune to evaluate the site holistically—house, visitor’s center, and landscape—and interpret the Deshler-Morris landscape as strongly as possible for the Germantown community and beyond.

Above all, the period of significance of the garden should be expanded to include the values discussed at the beginning of this chapter. With an expanded period of significance, the management will be free to make more culturally diverse choices in interpretation. For example, they could consider introducing interpretive programming addressing German colonial horticultural practices, the use of African slaves for agriculture in the north, picturesque garden design, or the creation of a new garden club.

¹²² In Mrs. Montgomery’s diary, she notes that in 1975, this Oak was declared “an Historical Tree” and was not to be removed.

Community outreach is another way that the Deshler-Morris House Committee could expand membership. New blood within the rank and file could refresh the organizations outlook on the Deshler-Morris landscape's role as a heritage site in Germantown. They could also incorporate community sustained agriculture and educational programming that would ensure that they would get landscape maintenance assistance from the surrounding community.

A landscape preservation plan for the Deshler-Morris landscape should mitigate current maintenance problems. The management determine infrastructural adjustments, such as the instillation of a stormwater irrigation system that would make the landscape lower maintenance. This relates to the opportunity to make the landscape sustainable. Many of these possibilities are included in Chapter 5's recommendations.

Threats

Neglect is the biggest threat to the Deshler-Morris landscape. There is no on-site caretaker, nor reliable maintenance procedures. The Gardening Committee has limited resources and manpower to address the gardens present and future needs. Deferred maintenance has already been detrimental to the landscape and will increasingly threaten the landscape over time.

The site will also continue to be incumbered by its narrow interpretation. Reverence for George Washington is becoming increasingly irrelevant to contemporary culture. President Washington has not sustained his popularity since the colonial revival

movement of the turn of the twentieth century. The last major cosmetic restoration activities during America's Bicentennial—which solidified the static interpretation of the house—was also the last great disappointment in attracting tourists. The site's narrow interpretation will continue to create a disparity with the surrounding, predominantly African American community unless the Deshler-Morris management creates ways to communicate relevant historical programming to Germantown residents. If there is no way to bridge the significance of the Deshler-Morris landscape's with the cultural values of the contemporary Germantown community, the landscape will minimize its justification for local landmark status.

Statement of Significance

The Deshler-Morris landscape has been three different gardens since the 18th century. German merchant David Deshler cultivated his property as an orchard “of the best grafted fruit of various kinds, and a large garden pailed in.”¹²³ He imposed German horticultural values on his property by cultivating fruit vegetables, specimen trees and English box bushes on Germantown's fertile soil, like many of his countrymen.

The landscape was in similar condition during the time of the Battle of Germantown and President George Washington's occupancy in 1793 and 1794. Until now, preservationists have selected these two, narrow years to justify the management of the landscape. This limited period of significance does not do justice to the enduring

¹²³ Toogood, 77.

historic, aesthetic and social values that have characterized from the Deshler's fruit and vegetable garden, through the Morris family's sesquicentennial residency, and the restoration work of the Deshler-Morris Women's Committee. In addition, the site's representation of Washington's figure should be revised to incorporate the condemnable reality of Washington's slave ownership.

The Perot and Morris family treasured the garden for nearly 150 years. Elliston Perot, Samuel B. Morris and Elliston Perot installed pathways, formal garden plots and continued to plant tall specimen trees. Elliston Perot's pride in his family's work was evident when he stated that, "the secret of my lawn is the unbroken expanse of grass, and the planting in conformity with established rules of landscape gardening." Today, the lawn remains the landscape's central feature. The Morris family's attention to the landscape's heritage ensured that the historical value of the shade trees, box bushes and garden circulation continue to contribute in the present day.

After the National Park Service began to manage the landscape as a historic site in 1948, the prominent Deshler-Morris Women's Committee and its long time gardener, Mrs. Montgomery, made alterations that may have attenuated some of the landscape's historical value, but they treated the garden with great care and devotion. Mrs. Montgomery's additions of exotic species, evergreens and colorful shrubbery ensured that the landscape was "brimming with cutting garden color" and was as "elegant in the winter as it is refreshing in the summer." The Women's Committee's social value

guaranteed that the Deshler-Morris landscape was a community gathering place within Germantown.

Each of these eras is still present on the landscape and contributes to its significance. The Deshler-Morris landscape's transformations reflect the changing cultural values of Germantown and the Greater Philadelphia area. It serves its local community and region as an urban oasis with an expansive lawn to stroll through, a source of local fruits and herbs, a sanctuary of large, shade trees, and an example of European and American landscape design.

CHAPTER FIVE: COMPARABLES

"To me there are four distinctive types of landscaping in our Germantown gardens. Whenever in the garden at 'Grumblethorpe' I think it the most beautiful garden of the perennial type in out midst. Whenever in the garden at 'Wyck,' I feel that there is our finest specimen of the 'wild flower garden' type. Another type is...a stiff, geometrical, and to me a negative type, which I have always thought had better not been born. The last of these types in mind is the 'classical,' picturesque, dignified, impressive type, most beautifully exhibitted upon the grounds of Elliston P. Morris..."

-Edwin Jellett in Germantown Gardens and Gardeners¹²⁴

Deshler-Morris Landscape's Context within Germantown

Today, a network of historic landscapes are managed within Germantown. About a dozen historic house museums interpret German culture, colonial history, the Colonial Revival movement, horticulture and gardening history and the history of significant families in Philadelphia. The stewards of these historic houses and gardens have tried over the past century to work in tandem to present an accurate and compelling story of the Germantown landscape. They have tried to increase awareness through promotion, events, tours and better transportation. The cultural legacy of German and Dutch settlers to this area of northwest Philadelphia are interpreted in the cultural landscapes of Stenton, Grumblethorpe, Cliveden, Wyck, the Johnson house and others (see Figure 14).

¹²⁴ Jellett, Edwin Costley. *Germantown Gardens and Gardeners*. Philadelphia: H. F. McCann, 1914: 72.

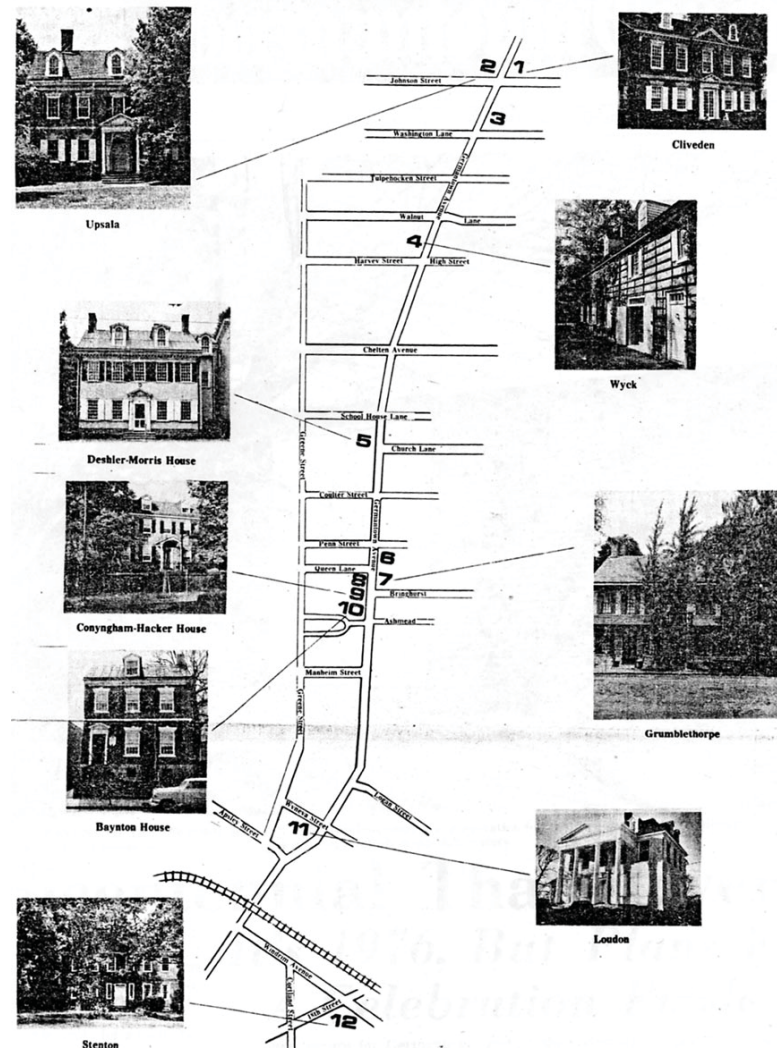


Figure 14. Map of Germantown historic sites in 1976¹²⁵

Even though these house landscapes share a degree of similarity in their heritage, they vary widely in how they are interpreted, approached by the preservation community, and utilized by the public. Each landscape's interpretation is a product of a significant

¹²⁵Ronnie L. Cook "A Bicentennial that Never Happened: Its 1976, but Plans for Celebration Fizzled." *Germantown Courier* 8 January 1976.

period of management, fluctuations in funding, and the evolution of the field of historic preservation. This chapter evaluates of the landscapes of Grumblethorpe, Cliveden and Wyck. Their successful historic and more recent management decisions might be appropriate to be reapplied at the Deshler-Morris landscape. Ineffective strategies will also be noted so that similar mistakes will not be perpetuated.

Historic Germantown Preserved and other initiatives have attempted over the years to enhance the cooperation and integration of these landscapes; this process is ongoing and evolving. Historic landscapes in Germantown have also been affected by the poor attendance and financial crises that have threatened the over three hundred historic house museums in Philadelphia in recent decades. These landscapes have both individual and collective options for improvement. The Deshler-Morris is a part of this network and its future is largely dependent upon relating its significance to its neighbors.

The Deshler-Morris' history of interpretation and inclusion in Independence National Park through stewardship by the National Park Service distinguishes the house from its neighborhoods.

Comparable 1: Cliveden

Cliveden is a historic house museum in Germantown, Philadelphia that was once home to the prominent Chew family and a major site of the Battle of Germantown during the Revolutionary War. It is one of the largest and most influential historic landscapes in Northwest Philadelphia. It also has an extensive collection, dedicated staff, and is well funded.

Benjamin Chew, a wealthy English attorney, built Cliveden in the 1760's and was one of the first Englishmen to build a home in the Dutch and German community of Germantown. He represented the interests of the Penn family and was appointed by King George to be the Chief Justice of the Colony of Pennsylvania. Chew was born a Quaker but left the faith when he found it incompatible with his support of the military. He also owned slaves in Philadelphia. Because of his ties to the Crown, his loyalties to the British were suspected at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. He spent a year of the war under house arrest in New Jersey. After laying low for a few ensuing years and relinquishing the house after the war, he returned to public life in the 1780's and reclaimed Cliveden in 1797.

Like the Deshler-Morris landscape, Cliveden was an important site in the Battle of Germantown. On October 4, 1777, American troops under General George Washington marched on British troops stationed in Germantown. About 125 members of the British army barricaded themselves in Cliveden and defended against the Americans. The British successfully defended their positions at Cliveden--Washington's army lost many men and they were eventually defeated. The Battle of Germantown is a major component of Cliveden's interpretation. The house still bears the scars of gunfire and cannonballs. An annual reenactment of the Battle of Germantown is a major event in Germantown.

During the nineteenth century, the Chew's were one of the most prominent Philadelphia society families whose activities were well documented. They also amassed

a collection of distinguished furnishings and were dedicated to preserving the house with respect to its colonial heritage and significance to the public. Although the family has been assumed loyalist, the Chew's were able to transform their British heritage from something negative into a positive value through exposure of their wealth: "[the] family had successfully recast any question about their colonial loyalties into an affirmation of their colonial aristocracy."¹²⁶

To this day, Cliveden unapologetically represents the family's British heritage and connections, its strategic location in the Battle of Germantown, and the opulence of the Chew family. It remained home to descendants of original owner Benjamin Chew until 1972. Cliveden maintains the collection of seven generations and over two hundred years of Philadelphia's Chew family. The National Trust for Historic Preservation maintains the house, its original furnishings and decorative arts, its collection of documentation, and six acres of landscaped grounds.

Cliveden is one of only 28 sites owned and managed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the only National Trust site in Pennsylvania. This status gives it a distinction from other historic house museums in the Philadelphia region for having secure and ample funding. It is the only site in Germantown to have paid guides.¹²⁷ Having funding is regarded as a positive asset in management, but can sometimes prevent

¹²⁶Cliveden of the National Trust. "Basic History." (Accessed February 15, 2007)
<http://www.cliveden.org/int.asp?cat=aboutus&page=historical_overview#basic_history>

¹²⁷ Lucienne Beard, Education Director of Cliveden. Personal Interview. 23 February 2007.

sites from having to prove their worth incrementally. Cliveden had not fully reexamined its role in the Germantown community until this century.

In order to maintain currency and not give in to the perceived “historic house museum crisis”, Cliveden has attempted a few management adjustments including reinterpretation and increasing connectivity with other sites in historic Germantown such as Wyck, Johnson house, Deshler-Morris house, Stenton, and Historic Rittenhousetown.

In recent years, the Board of Directors of Cliveden has adopted an attitude toward reevaluating Cliveden’s role in Germantown’s neighborhood revitalization. In 2006, the Board of Directors of Cliveden and the National Trust made a concerted effort towards effective and long-term management by hiring a new director, David W. Young. Robert A. MacDonnell, chair of the Cliveden Board, said the hiring of Mr. Young was in concordance with a newly established management plan:

“Our long-range plan calls for Cliveden to continue to remain a premier historic house museum but also to be a pro-active advocate of preservation as a guiding principle in neighborhood revitalization in coordination with our parent, The National Trust. These multiple roles require a leader with a unique set of historic preservation and neighborhood action skills. We believe David brings these skills to us and are delighted to have him on board to lead us in forcefully and successfully executing our long-range plan.”¹²⁸

Young’s assets within the community include being a member of Germantown’s Business Improvement District, and connections with the neighborhood’s community

¹²⁸ National Trust for Historic Preservation. "New Executive Director Announced for Cliveden of the National Trust" (Accessed February 13, 2007)
<http://www.nationaltrust.org/news/2006/20060125_cliveden.html>

development corporations. He also has new ideas about Cliveden's interpretation and use by the community.

He has advocated for alternate uses for Cliveden than as just a house museum. There has been some effort to allow community organizations such as Girl Scout troops or church organizations to use the house as a meeting location. This initiative has been resisted by some of the long-term staff old enough to remember the Chew family and oppose multiple uses out of respect to the family. Nonetheless, alternate uses for historic house museums are ways to increase visitors who may not have considered the value of historic houses, increase the profile of neighborhood landmarks, and increase the amount of civic space in a community.

Another issue that has caused some disagreement is the interpretation of the house as a family abode rather than for its instructional historical value. The National Trust, Stenton (the historic house museum of the Logan family) and Cliveden's long-term volunteers advocate the preservation of Cliveden to the time of the Chew family's residence. This presentation would include items from different historical periods and generations coexisting next to each other in the way that the Chew's left them. Some visitors to Cliveden have complained that it was confusing to have something of the Chew family's from the twentieth century next to artifacts of the Battle of Germantown. Young has advocated the segregation of the site's collection into thematic rooms that would be more instructive and less confusing to visitors. This has also met with some resistance from the long-time volunteers and members who still highly regard the

family's stewardship and significance. These debates and tensions between the new and old guard of management will hopefully be productive and foster an improved identity and profile.

Cliveden also hosts the Northeast Regional Field Office of the National Trust.

This gives it a dual advantage to community participation. This office is attempts to:

“bring the programs and tools of the National Trust to local communities... by offering technical and financial assistance... to jump start local and individual preservation efforts, convening educational programs that give grassroots and professional preservation leaders greater knowledge about the broader historic preservation movement... [and] provide leadership to save historic schools, fight sprawl, and revitalize cities through historic preservation.”¹²⁹

The perceived management issues of Cliveden are few: there needs to be more attention paid to the physical landscape, the traditional interpretation needs to be modified and the site needs to better contribute to and integrate with the surrounding community. For the latter two out of three of these concerns, the new director, Mr. Young, the executive staff and the Board of Directors seem to be seeking improvement.

Comparable 2: Wyck

Edwin Jellet wrote this passage in his book Germantown Gardens and Gardeners in 1914, but it still has resonance to this day. In fact, the timelessness of the “impossibility to properly present Wyck” in face of its accumulated mass of meanings,

¹²⁹Cliveden of the National Trust. “Community Preservation.” (Accessed February 15, 2007)
<http://www.cliveden.org/int.asp?cat=community&page=national_trust#national_trust>

uses, innovations and productivity of the land is the best indicator of its significance as a cultural landscape in Germantown, Philadelphia. The Wyck Association is currently working to apply new approaches to cultural landscape interpretation to make it one most effectively managed of the Germantown landscapes. Wyck has taken advantage of its abundant documentation, availability of funding, and the contributions of various generations of the Wistar/Haines family to Philadelphia to give a variety of visitors different ways to experience the landscape.

In 1689, Hans Milan, a Quaker from Germany and descendent of Swiss Mennonites, purchased 50 acres in Germantown and built the first structure on the Wyck landscape. From 1760 to 1794, some of the property was rented to tenant farmers. The tenant farmers used portions of the land for domesticated animals and vegetable gardens. In 1794, Milan's daughter, Catherine Jansen, married Caspar Wistar. Caspar was the first to use the house as permanent domicile for the growing family. He added the barn to the southeast portion of the property and the brewhouse to the north. He also purchased 100 fruit trees, planted the seedlings using cold frames, and laid pathways.¹³⁰

From 1814 to 1843 Reuben Haines III reinforced and enhanced the family's horticultural legacy by conducting experiments in scientific agriculture on the property. He became prominent in Philadelphia society and helped found the Academy of Natural Sciences, the Franklin Institute, and the Pennsylvania Horticulture Society. Even though he planted and tended the gardens of Wyck, his wife's interest in the horticulture has

¹³⁰ Wyck Association. "Family" (Accessed December 2, 2006) <<http://www.wyck.org/family.html>>

made the largest impression of any single landscape feature. Jane Bowne Haines planted the famous rose garden from 1814-1829 that has been tended to as an old rose garden since. Today, it is one of the oldest continuously cultivated rose garden in the United States. It is notable for its Victorian ornamental design and rare varieties of roses. Its famous rose varieties include Gallica, Silver Moon, Frau Karl Draushiki.¹³¹ The annual rose tea at Wyck each year is the site's biggest event of the year.

In the 1850's portions of the land were sold off. The owners tended to the garden less attentively because of the poor health of the family's matriarch. Fortunately, in the early 20th century, Caspar Wistar Haines II and his sister, Jane B. Haines, revived the garden. Caspar II contributed to the rose garden, planted flowers vegetables and fruit trees, and won horticultural prizes and was involved with establishing connections with other Germantown historic gardens. These connections were sometimes symbolized by the trading of cuttings.

Jane B. Haines spent her summers and some for her adult years at Wyck. She was a member of a movement of women in the Philadelphia area to encourage landscape design and horticulture as career choices for women. In 1904, the Philadelphia Garden Club became the first garden club of America comprised of dedicated women. In 1910, Jane founded the first school of horticulture for women. A horticulture graduate of Temple University's program in horticulture—the descendent of Jane B. Haines' School of Horticulture for Women—remarked in 2005:

¹³¹ Wyck Association. "Roses" (Accessed December 2, 2006) <http://www.wyck.org/g_roses.html>

“Jane [Bowne] Haines was a social reformer at a time when there wasn’t very much available for women... [Young, educated women] looked at the world in terms of what we were doing to it — cutting down trees, spoiling the waterways — and what we could do to make it better. We have their foresight to thank for many of the green spaces, the open space and arboreta that we enjoy in the Philadelphia region today that otherwise might never have been preserved.”¹³²

From 1935 until 1973, Wyck was used as a summer home for Robert and Mary Haines, but fell into disrepair. Nonetheless, it was considered a premiere landmark in Germantown. Visitors had access to the site, but preservation planning for the house was not assumed until 1974, when the transformation of the house to a historic house museum and garden began.

In 1973, the Haines family created the Wyck Charitable Trust to oversee management of the house as a house museum through a local bank.¹³³ The Wyck Association was later formed to manage the house’s assets, collections, finances and interpretation. In the late 1970’s the first director of Wyck, Sandra Mackenzie Lloyd assisted the transition to a major house museum in Germantown in an age when historic house museum attendance was declining. Annual teas, the sale of cookbooks and the location of Wyck along the route of historic homes in Germantown began to spark interest in the site and its potential as a compelling, distinctive landscape in Germantown.

When John B. Groff assumed the director’s position in 1990, he saw the

¹³² James Duffy. “Ambler Explores Women’s History with Philly Flower Show Exhibit” Temple Times. 3 March 2005. (Accessed December 2, 2006) <http://sfsworld.temple.edu/temple_times/3-3-05/ambler_flower.html>

¹³³ The Trust is now managed through Wachovia Bank.

management of Wyck as an opportunity to organize the tens of thousands of artifacts and documents collected by the Haines/Wistar family, the creation of a long term financial plan and the expansion of its visitorship.

The most revealing complete resource on Wyck's recent interpretation and preservation planning is in the speech, "To Thine Own Self Be True: The Small Historic House Museum in the 21st Century" at a Philadelphia Athenaeum Symposia on the American House Museum in 1998. In this speech, Groff uses his management of Wyck as an example for the future of the house museum in Philadelphia and Germantown in particular.¹³⁴ He reflects that he was able to implement several of his own recommendations for successful management of struggling historic house museums. Accomplishments that Wyck was able to achieve in the time of Groff's tenure include the expansion of funding through grant applications, the maintenance of the connections with the University of Pennsylvania Department of Historic Preservation to provide interns and architectural conservation support, the establishment of educational programming, a long term management plan, and the creation of the Wyck-Strickland award to raise the site's profile through the yearly award and lecture.

Groff has also looked towards innovation in the field of historic preservation that makes his site more inclusive, accurate, respectful and accessible. He invited the lecture guests at the Athenaeum to:

¹³⁴ Groff, John. "To Thine Own Self Be True: The Small Historic House Museum in the 21st Century." *American House Museums: An Athenaeum of Philadelphia Symposium*. (Accessed March 20, 2007). <<http://www.philaathenaeum.org/hmuseum/groff.htm>>

“Look for non-traditional opportunities for interpretation especially focused on family lives, women's roles, childhood and the current interests of you audience whether it is local or national. But don't jump on band wagons, contrive story lines with no basis for support, or make assumptions about your audience just because of their background.”¹³⁵

Recently, the Wyck Association has developed a new program of community-supported agriculture as an additional way to attract community members to experience the Wyck's landscape through farming. The rear garden that was once the site of tenant farming has been selected as the site to initiate this program. A large tree dominated that portion of the yard until a few years ago after a storm damaged it and it was removed. The tree's void, exposing light to the area and its historical use for agriculture aided its selection for the initiation of the CSA program.

The rear garden is divided into three different patches of land: a fruit patch, a vegetable garden and an herb garden (see figs. 4-6). In each of these, community members or school children are educated in colonial and Victorian agricultural techniques and horticulture. Among traditional techniques that they apply is the use of natural supports made of twigs found on the property and local bamboo.¹³⁶

The vegetables, fruits and herbs that they grow are all heirloom—meaning they are organic local varieties that would have been used in the yard historically. Wyck beets have been particularly successful and notable. The connectivity to the Germantown community is reinforced even further by the donation of these vegetables to the local

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Groff, John. Personal Interview. 9 August 2006.

restaurant, Geechee Girl, which is located one mile north and west on Germantown Avenue. Wyck gardener, Missy Randolph, has also given lessons in traditional crafts and organic farming at Geechee Girl.

The CSA program is still in the formulation stages with limited community engagement. The success or failure of this program at Wyck will have significant implications for other historic landscapes in Germantown. Community Supported Agriculture may not be appropriate for other sites less rooted in agriculture or with less room for additional interpretation, but the fact that Wyck has deviated from traditional preservation management of historic houses and introduced a new way to engage with the horticultural heritage of Germantown will implicate if it is possible to implement new strategies to revive tourism to these sites.

The continuous use of Wyck's landscape by the same family is its most unique attribute. The interpretation of the house reflects the Wyck Association's intention to express the multiple meanings and periods of significance of the house. The furnishings, photographs and archived family belongings exhibited within the house all express different family members, their accomplishments and correspondences. The Wyck Association's mission statement reveals the landscape's significance and their intention for Wyck to enhance the community life of Germantown:

“The Wyck Association tells the story of Wyck, the quietly elegant home, historic gardens, farm buildings, and collection of objects and papers that reflect the everyday life of one Philadelphia family over three hundred years. Programs at Wyck draw on this family's passion for education, its Quaker simplicity, and its love of natural history and

horticulture. Through the preservation and interpretation of this rare resource, the Wyck Association works to enrich and strengthen community life.¹³⁷

The social transformation of the Germantown community over the past century necessitated modifications in the use of house museums as instructive tools. For example, Geechee Girl uses traditional Wyck herbs and vegetables—representing the German culture and Victorian values in Philadelphia—in its modern soul food cuisine. This is a simple but revealing illustration of the complimentary marriage of heritages that will enhance Germantown’s distinctiveness in the future.

Comparable 3: Grumblethorpe

Grumblethorpe represents yet another historic house in Germantown that is in a transitional period moving from neglect and isolation towards sustainability and connectivity. In recent years, its interpretation has focused on expanding an education program for community children. Also, its landscape has effectively been revitalized over the past decade and become an integral component of its overall interpretation.

Grumblethorpe was originally referred to as “John Wister’s Big House”.¹³⁸ Wister built the house in 1744. He became a prominent Philadelphia merchant after immigrating to America from Germany. He was also David Deshler’s uncle.

¹³⁷ Wyck Association. “About” (Accessed December 2, 2006) <<http://www.wyck.org/about.html>>

¹³⁸ Most of the information of the history of Grumblethorpe was gathered from a site visit on 11 April 2007 and supplementary pamphlets provided at the site.

Interestingly, his brother may have been Caspar Wistar of Wyck and his descendents would marry into Stenton's Logan family. Not only do history and social standing connect Germantown's historic houses, but they are also a part of a common lineage. This common heritage is not publicized within each historic house, yet has the potential to connect them further.

Another common thread between Grumblethorpe and Germantown's historic sites is that the house also proclaims its significance through its role in the Battle of Germantown. During the American resistance, British general James Agnew kicked the Wister family out of the house in order to occupy it. He led a counter attack against the Americans, but was wounded, brought back to Grumblethorpe and died in the parlor. His blood stains are still visible on the floor and are one of the house's most compelling physical imprints.

The house was built in a similar Georgian style to the other Germantown homes of the time from stones found on the property and oak from the Wistar Woods, currently a park a few blocks away. It was originally the family's summer house, but they moved to Grumblethorpe permanently after the yellow fever epidemic of 1793.

The family lived in the house continuously for 160 years. The Wister family continued to be prominent over those years. In the early 19th century, Charles Jones Wister's was well known for his interest in the sciences such as meteorology and astronomy. His diary of weather records are still utilized today by weather forecasters. Owen Wister, author of the book, The Virginian, spent his summers at Grumblethorpe.

Since the 1950's has been managed by the Philadelphia Society for the Preservation of Landmarks founded by family member, Francis Wister.

The Wister family had a great interest in horticulture just like many of the other German migrants to Germantown. John Wister is said to have made his first money in the Americas from wine produced by the blackberry bushes on the Grumblethorpe property.¹³⁹ He planned his garden around a central garden path was lined with English Boxwood bushes. Within the garden, there was an orchard, a rear section for farming with barley and wheat, a barn, a cider press, a blacksmith shop and fields.¹⁴⁰ The orchard was formed by rectangles of box bushes filled with fruit trees. Fruit was in high demand at the time; Grumblethorpe was one of the most productive in Germantown. The orchard included plum, pear, quince, cherry and peach trees.¹⁴¹

John Wister also planted many specimen trees for shade. One of the landscape's most character defining features today is a Ginkgo Biloba tree dating from John Wister's time. The management claims that the Grumblethorpe tree is the first blooming Ginkgo tree in the United States. Bartram's garden is commonly considered to have the oldest Ginkgo tree in the US. The Deshler-Morris landscape also has a Ginkgo tree from this time. These distinctions are not that important since the Ginkgo tree was in vogue and these prominent families probably acquired the trees from the same source. It is impressive nonetheless that so many have survived and matured as the most exotic Asian

¹³⁹ Eastwick, Suzanne Wister "The 'Grumblethorpe' Garden: A Historical Sketch." *The Herbarist*, 1963: 4.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

trees in the Americas. There are of other mature trees dating from Wister's time that remain at Grumblethorpe.

After the death of John Wister, his son Daniel Wister introduced flowers and flowering shrubs onto the grounds. Charles Wister was the first to move to the property permanently after the yellow fever epidemic and kept a diary of his horticultural activities from 1806-1865. He introduced a variety of ornamental, exotic and productive plants and shrubs. His diary provides the greatest amount of historical documentation of the landscape as there is available. The diary contains information about the contents of the garden as well as the design of its fields, but not of the spatial organization of the gardens features.

Edwin Jellett also visited Grumblethorpe in 1909 and provided a very detailed description of the garden. In his description of his visit, he mentions:

“Immediately in the foreground near the entrance gate is a ‘memorial tree,’ a superb example of overcup oak (*quercus lyrata*) grown from an acorn collected in Washington Square, Philadelphia by Samuel B. Morris (Captain of the First City Troop) who presented the developed plant to Charles Jones Wister, Sr.”

This is even more proof that the heads of these historic houses were in communication with each other, enjoyed sharing gardening tips and exchanged cuttings and seeds.

Grumblethorpe, like most historic house museums in Germantown, has had to adapt to the loss of tourism to Germantown and its historic houses during the past few decades. Their most significant adaptation has been to focus on their educational

programming. They have developed the Grumblethorpe Education Program in order to provide instruction to school age children in Philadelphia's Northwest. The program currently serves four partner schools: Wister Elementary, Kelly Elementary, St. Martin de Porres, and King High School. The program is supported by grant money and it is wildly popular. The Grumblethorpe Education Program is not associated with History Hunters program, but has the similar mission to educate local elementary school children. The Grumblethorpe management is planning on expanding the program to other schools as well as explore the possibility of joining History Hunters.

The program offers free weekly field trips and a free summer day camp. Children learn colonial history, Philadelphia history, the sciences and gardening. This program is a crucial opportunity to provide local children with an expansive knowledge base since their in-school education is increasingly geared towards standardized testing. Children are also invited to learn about and participate in German culture. Annual events, such as the Battle of Germantown reenactment, Oktoberfest, and Easter include activities about German heritage such as making pretzels, shortbread and preserves. Instruction is such a large part of Grumblethorpe's present and future that they want to convert the adjacent tenant house into classrooms. They are currently looking for grants to fund this conversion. Once this conversion is complete, the management may run the risk of limiting itself to becoming primarily a learning laboratory, but if they are unsuccessful at attracting outside visitors, this may be the landscape's most appropriate use.

Another asset that Grumblethorpe has been able to utilize is its new Grounds Manager, Richard Vogel. Vogel is a retired landscape architect who started working at Grumblethorpe seven years ago. He lives a few blocks away and dedicates at least two to three days a week to landscape maintenance and interpretation. He has initiated a number of the restoration projects including the construction of plant beds, restoration of the grape arbor, clearing of overgrown plant material and overseeing the landscape component of the Grumblethorpe Education Program.

He has attempted to restore the gardens to how they appeared when Charles Wister, John Wister's grandson, inhabited the home. Popular plants of the early 19th century including hyacinths, pinks, hellebores, flags, and a variety of irises were chosen using Charles Wister's diary and archeological work as a guide. Vogel is not working from a formalized landscape preservation plan developed by the management, but with some improvisation—working with the available funding and the available research. He has taken some license with the contents of the flower beds. After archeology study revealed the historic location of the beds, they were raised. The students of the Educational Program had an active role in the landscape's restoration. They helped not only to plant the flowers, but to build the beds themselves. The 4th grade class from Wister Elementary also helped to build a greenhouse to store plants and garden tools in 2006.

Vogel has deviated from restoring the landscape to its established period of significance—the time of Charles Wister—by planting fruit trees that invoke John

Wister's period. Currently, there are crabapple trees, plum trees, quince bushes and apricot trees. The fruit from these trees are gathered to supplement the jam and preserves making activities for the children. Vogel has also restored the grape arbor that once ran along along the kitchen pathway. This choice is supplemented by historic watercolors that are a part of the house's collection from the 19th century.

One interpretive choice that the management has not made is to interpret the tenant farming that occurred in the rear of the property for generations in the 18th and 19th centuries. There may be sufficient reasoning for this fact, but it is not publicly available. None of Grumblethorpe's landscape interpretation is guided by a preservation plan. Their decisions on what to plant, over what period of time seems largely improvised and based on a lot of educated guessing. The landscape's significance would be better supported if the management was more transparent, organized and guided by a common mission and plan.

The revitalization of Grumblethorpe's landscape has been tied to community outreach through the Grumblethorpe Educational Program. Children benefit from this partnership because they learn about historic landscape design, and gardening. Grumblethorpe benefits because the children actively participate in the landscape's beautification. The Wister elementary school property is directly adjacent to Grumblethorpe. The properties are separated by a gate.

Grumblethorpe has the most similarity to the Deshler-Morris landscape of any other Germantown historic house based on proximity, common heritage, land use and

historical management context. A large difference between Grumblethorpe and Deshler-Morris is the fact that Grumblethorpe is lucky enough to have a dedicated, volunteer landscape architect who has taken the initiative to oversee maintenance and interpretation. Another significant difference is that Grumblethorpe has been able to utilize their resources effectively not only to invite the surrounding community into its gates, but encourage active revitalization even by those of a tender age.

Conclusion

All of these sites have gone through incredible transformations in the past decade. They have each, on their own, discovered ways to connect with the Germantown community through expansion of their interpretive programming.. Wyck had been able to effectively incorporate community sustainable agriculture. Cliveden is not as directly comparable, because its garden is very high priority in the sites interpretation, but its recent management changes and its relationship with the National Trust are good examples for the National Park Service and Independence National Historical Park and Deshler-Morris. Grumblethorpe has the biggest similarity and connectivity to Deshler-Morris. Their educational programming and extensive landscape restoration activities have many lessons for the interpretation of the Deshler-Morris garden.

Historic Germantown Preserved is the most important focal point of communication and coordination of activities between the historic sites in Germantown.

The strength in communion of these historic sites in Germantown is reflected in their annual Battle of Germantown reenactment. This is the only real annual expression of the connected histories of these sites. Historic Germantown Preserved has also shown interesting in revealing the contributions of women to Germantown's Historic Sites. They sponsored a Women's Weekend in Philadelphia's Historic Northwest in 2004 as a part of the Valley Forge Convention & Visitors Bureau's *Women Advancing* program.¹⁴² With stronger funding, HGP would be able to coordinate education programs, create a core of knowledgeable guides that could instruct visitors on both individual sites and ways in which they are interconnected and sponsor community activities.

The Deshler-Morris garden would benefit greatly from its management adapting to the new energy emerging from the surrounding historic sites in Germantown.

¹⁴² The Friends of Stenton. "Stenton Garden Party Honors Long Time Volunteers." Spring 2004. *The Newsletter*. 24 February 2007 <<http://www.stenton.org/newsletters/spring04.cfm>>.

CHAPTER SIX: TREATMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

For the Deshler-Morris landscape to retain cultural significance and be continue to be utilized by the public as a historic resource, the National Park Service and the Deshler-Morris House Committee need to reevaluate its current management, develop a management plan and/or preservation maintenance plan based on available documentation and realistic financial and managerial resources. This chapter sketches a number of recommendations for treatment and development of a preservation maintenance plan that could better enhance the landscape's values, prepare the landscape for expanded use as an urban oasis, enhance its utilization within the Germantown community, integrate the landscape with the house and its new interpretive programming, and incorporate some of the strengths of other programs of Germantown historic resources.

Any management of the Deshler-Morris landscape must have both short term and long term goals to ensure the sustainability of the landscape. The sustainability of the Deshler-Morris landscape should not be considered a lofty or unreasonable goal. The landscape is already beginning to suffer from deferred maintenance and lack of a long term vision for the site. Direct action should be taken to ensure that the landscape's significance endures use by for future generations.

Independence National Historical Park and the Deshler-Morris Women's Committee have worked together over the past 54 years. If they are going to continue to

manage the landscape through the indefinite future, these organizations need to determine what they want the Deshler-Morris landscape to look like in 5-10 years as well as the next 50 years and beyond. The history of the site under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service and Independence National Historical Park has had a patchy history of preserving the historical value of the site and giving it due attention. Whether they still the most appropriate managers to oversee the management or whether another group could be identified to take care of the site with more attention or with more adequate resources should be taken under consideration. However, if INHP identifies that they have the ability to fund attentive maintenance and implement a long-term preservation maintenance plan, they should begin efforts to do such as soon as possible.

Treatment

The Deshler-Morris landscape should retain its cultural value and remain an urban oasis.¹⁴³ A vision for a healthy and vibrant Deshler-Morris ecology would include proper drainage and irrigation, identification of new plant materials, interpretation of the landscape's values, mitigation of the impacts of tourism, and document conditions and alterations. A preservation plan could be informed by the National Park Service Guide to Protection Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment, and Management of Historic

¹⁴³ Much of this guided Page, Robert R., Cathy A. Gilbert, and Susan A. Dolan. *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques*. Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program, 1998. section on Treatment of Planting.

Landscapes.¹⁴⁴ For example, some components of a Preservation Maintenance Plan are abridged below:

Six Components of a Preservation Maintenance Plan:

- Define objectives of how a preservation maintenance plan will support an existing maintenance program
- Delineate areas and categories of features to help describe the composition of the landscape
- Inventory landscape features including their names, origins, ages, and sizes
- Conduct a field inspection and summarize work needed for different types of landscape features and associated tasks
- Keep records relating to the maintenance of each feature type
- Develop a seasonal calendar listing when preservation maintenance tasks should be implemented throughout the year¹⁴⁵

The Deshler-Morris landscape's management is different than other neighboring sites. It follows the management objectives of INHP. A more attentive, detailed and specific plan should be tailored to fit in with the surrounding Germantown community. This could involve coordination of programming with the other historic resources in the area and incorporate successful strategies of surrounding sites. It is critical to create an implementable preservation maintenance plan the integrity and condition of the biotic and abiotic features and integrate the cultural landscape historic values into the site's contemporary use.

¹⁴⁴Birnbaum Charles. *Protecting Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment and Management of Historic Landscapes*. Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service (Accessed April 14, 2007)
<<http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief36.htm>>

¹⁴⁵ From: Olmstead Center for Landscape Preservation. Landscape Preservation Maintenance Plans. (Accessed April 14, 2007)
<http://www.nps.gov/oclp/presmaint_plans.htm>

Recommendations

Both these functional objectives and interpretive strategies were developed over several visits to the Deshler-Morris landscape. They are supported by consultation with Susan J. Edens, the Cultural Landscape Architect in charge of the Deshler-Morris landscape for INHP; Ellie Shleicher, Head of the Deshler-Morris Garden Committee; Randall Mason, Associate Professor of Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania who is currently preparing a Cultural Landscape Report for the Deshler-Morris landscape; and Theresa Durkin, Landscape Architect for Andropogon Associated, Ltd.

The objectives to these policies are to broaden the interpretation of the landscape's historical values, expand the site's social value to the surrounding community, provide attainable maintenance provisions, and address specific issues identified on site visits. They were also guided by the principle that the Deshler-Morris landscape should be an interpretive space on which to project Germantown's diverse heritage. They are ordered beginning with functional recommendations relating to maintenance issues and followed by interpretive recommendations. Recommendations for landscape treatment are, as follows:

- Survey, health assessment and inventory of mature trees by arborist

Mature historic trees are significant character defining features of the garden. The removal of historic Oak tree in the past decade and impending removal of the dying

Beech tree will leave the site exposed and reduce the significance of the site as a picturesque garden typified by variety and shade trees. A professional arborist should be contracted to examine mature trees and estimate their life expectancy, safety concerns, aesthetic contribution, pruning requirements, cable support requirements, pests and maintenance requirements.

- Plant Replacement

Assessments by arborist should be supplemented by the replacement of sick or dying plant material with appropriate replacement plant material. Assessing appropriate replacement material is another opportunity for managers to consider selecting replacement materials more native to Germantown.

- Removal of sick Beech tree

INHP has already been informed about the poor health of this tree. They should place a high priority to remove this tree as soon as possible.

- Investigate poor health of English Boxwood, *Pieris Teutonica* and others

Discover the cause of the poor health of the most historically significant cluster of English Boxwood in the garden and repair and protect it. If the historic box bushes cannot be rehabilitated, the source of their sickness should be identified and contained. Other landscape features, including the *Pieris Teutonica* shrub to the south of the kitchen should be treated.

- Implement a sustainable watering system

The sprinkler system that has been installed does not appropriately suit to the landscape's ecology. The system was not installed with respect to the shape and needs of the garden features. It also requires maintenance and wastes potent water. A sustainable storm water management system should be put into place to capture the storm water in a cistern and then be redirected to irrigate the lawn.

- Trimming and removal of plant materials

Managers should trim and control of the growth of the bushes around the perimeter of the lawn to an appropriate form and scale. Maintenance should encourage uniformity and balance so that different features are highlighted throughout the seasons and support various interpretive programming.

- Develop different approaches to ground cover, shrubs and bushes, and trees

These different landscape features have different maintenance needs as well as interpretive value. These values should be articulated and be strategically incorporated with respect to the needs of the different species.

- Planting of new shade trees

The Deshler-Morris house is an urban oasis. Young trees should be planted so that they can adapt to the soil and environment. There were once evergreens on the landscape before the great storm of 1902. Evergreens may not be the most appropriate replacement for the landscape because of their high growth rate, but the planting of new shade trees would supplement the replacement of mature trees in returning the garden to the height and density of the Morris family era, seen in Figures D.4-8.

- Reinstitute circulation plan of the Morris family

The layout of gravel pathways installed by the Morris family welcomed the public and the family to admire the grounds. When they were removed, a critical way to experience the landscape was obscured. There are currently underutilized benches along the perimeter of the central lawn with no clear organization. The reintroduction of gravel pathways could return more attention to the landscape could give these benches relevancy and make the garden more commodious to visitors. This recommendation also has a maintenance element, because if attendance increases, the lawn and tree roots might be compacted. Porous pathways will prevent the erosion of the lawn's grass and soil.

- Interpret Kitchen Garden

The introduction of a kitchen garden in the rear north area could reflect the productivity of land in Deshler/Colonial era. It is unknown exactly where David Deshler's kitchen garden was located, so there is some freedom to where this interpretive strategy could be implemented. The southwest corner of the landscape near the U-shaped English Boxwood and the cold frame would be a non invasive area for interpretation, since it is sparse and was once the location of the Morris family's ' little garden". This area is also somewhat hidden from front area of the garden—this could the perfect opportunity to interpret the marginalization of servants and enslaved Africans from the history and heritage of the site on the landscape.

- Transparency about Washington's slave ownership

INHP's plans to incorporate interpretation of President Washington's slave

ownership are currently limited to the Bringhurst House/Welcome Center. They do not necessarily need to also interpret this issue in the garden, as suggested above, but they should have an open discussion with the public about the possibility. If they are considering to revise Washington's figure within the house, they should also revise the way his figure is interpreted in the landscape.

- Historic Gardening Methods

Managers could explore the use of natural supports and historically appropriate gardening methods. This approach has been utilized successfully at Wyck. If deemed appropriate for the Deshler-Morris landscape, these gardening methods could enhance the authenticity of the of the landscape upkeep and interpretation as well as serve as an instructive tool.

- Community Sustained Agriculture

Management planning could explore successful programs of Community Sustained Agriculture at historic sites. This would be a way to perform outreach with the local community, fulfill needed gardening needs and instill a culture of volunteerism. Currently, there is no managerial mindset to create local attachments of the landscape among members of the Germantown community. There is also no full time manager on-site. Continued landscape treatment strategy of trying to screen out the outside world, such as the planting of evergreens along the boundary with the Germantown Friends School is a dangerous and detrimental attitude. This leaves the landscape open to

vandalism and resentment from the community. Treatment and planning should not undermine community relations and has the opportunity to add social value to the site.

- Incorporate educational programming

Programs like History Hunters at Stenton, and educational gardening programs at Grumblethorpe and Wyck have been increasingly successful and increasingly important to the interpretation of these historic sites. The Deshler-Morris landscape is missing out on a great opportunity to become a historic resource for children in the Philadelphia region to learn about gardening, ecology, colonial history and Philadelphia's heritage.

- Restore grape arbors

There need to be more ways connect the house with the landscape. Many historic photographs, like Figures D.1 and 2 show grape arbors growing along the side of the house and ivy growing along the side and front. The restoration of a grape arbor has been successful at Grumblethorpe and could also be a way to introduce the German historical values of fruit tending in Deshler-Morris' interpretive program.

- Restore fruit trees or orchard

In addition, fruits trees have been planted at Grumblethorpe. There is the opportunity for the Deshler-Morris landscape to interpret the orchards and fruit trees of David Deshler. Currently, there are two wild cherry trees, gooseberry currant bushes, one red-leafed plum tree behind the house. The expansion of planting fruit trees could be

coordinated in conjunction with an educational program such as the one at Grumblethorpe where children help make preserves, jam and German treats such as plum duff.

- Restore and Interpret Mrs. Montgomery's cutting garden

Mrs. Montgomery's cutting garden should be rehabilitated and restored. It is currently in poor condition with no formal preservation activity. She was influential in fostering the connection between the landscape and house. Her use of holly and other decorative plant materials within the house helped to maintain the holism of the landscape.

- Informed interpretation of rose garden

Currently, the justification for the rose garden across from the rear additions is not very well substantiated. Functionally, tending roses is a lot of work, for very little aesthetic reward. In addition, the Deshler-Morris Garden Committee's selection of appropriate rose varieties is not very well founded in the history of the landscape. If the direction that the managers want to go is colonial or colonial revival, more appropriate plants should be selected. There is documentation that Mrs. Washington grew hyacinths on property. Maybe those and other species, such as the tulips grown by the Morris' should be planted instead.

Conclusion

These recommendations suggest a number of steps that Independence National Historical Park and the Deshler-Morris House Committee could take in order to satisfy a number of goals: sustainable improvement of the ecology of the Deshler Morris landscape, retaining and enhancing its rich heritage, and making it a pleasant destination garden for visitors. In its past management, this balance has leaned to far in the direction of the latter. If no managerial or financial resources are identified soon to fund ecological maintenance and interpretive programming, it might be better to lean in the other direction—for the ecology if the landscape continued its natural process of succession into forest. However, INHP and the Deshler-Morris House Committee’s mission is to manage the site as a regionally and nationally significant cultural landscape, decisive improvements to the landscape is imperative.

Another crucial issue of the fate of the Deshler-Morris landscape is that it is dependant on its relationship of its surrounding community. Germantown will only become a destination area for tourists visiting to Philadelphia if the neighborhood is well cared for. They would more likely visit the Deshler-Morris landscape if the network of landscapes in Germantown were easily accessible to each other and each emphasized its distinctiveness, while they worked together to tell a unified story of Germantown’s rich heritage. These historic landscapes must become active participants to improve the vitality of their community through celebrating its historic value and horticultural heritage.

As a corollary, these landscapes will not survive without support from community residents who value history and are active in maintaining the local character of Germantown's gardens. As Chapter 4 indicates, Wyck's program of Community Sustained Agriculture and Grumblethorpe's educational program are effective ways to perform outreach in the Germantown community that may reap rewards in future generations. The reason that the Deshler-Morris Garden Committee is currently struggling to manage the landscape today is because there is no emerging, local "Mrs. Montgomery" to take care of maintenance and interpretation full time. Local outreach combined with internal improvements would be an auspicious combination.

The Deshler-Morris landscape's distinctiveness and is rooted in the historic events of the late 18th century, but its significance extends beyond then. This landscape has continuously valued for around 250 years—first by David Deshler; then by the families and admirers of Isaac Franks, President George Washington and the Perot-Morris'. The landscape's historic and aesthetic values will continue to slowly wilt, unless its latent social value is harnessed and its current threats are mitigated.

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Appendix A. Existing Plan

Figure A.1 was created in Spring 2007 by the author from observations made on multiple site visits. Landscape Architect Theresa Durkin, Deshler-Morris Gardener Ellie Schleicher, and Professor Randall Mason assisted in plant identification. Figure C.3 was also utilized as a reference.



Appendix B. Historic Fire Insurance Maps

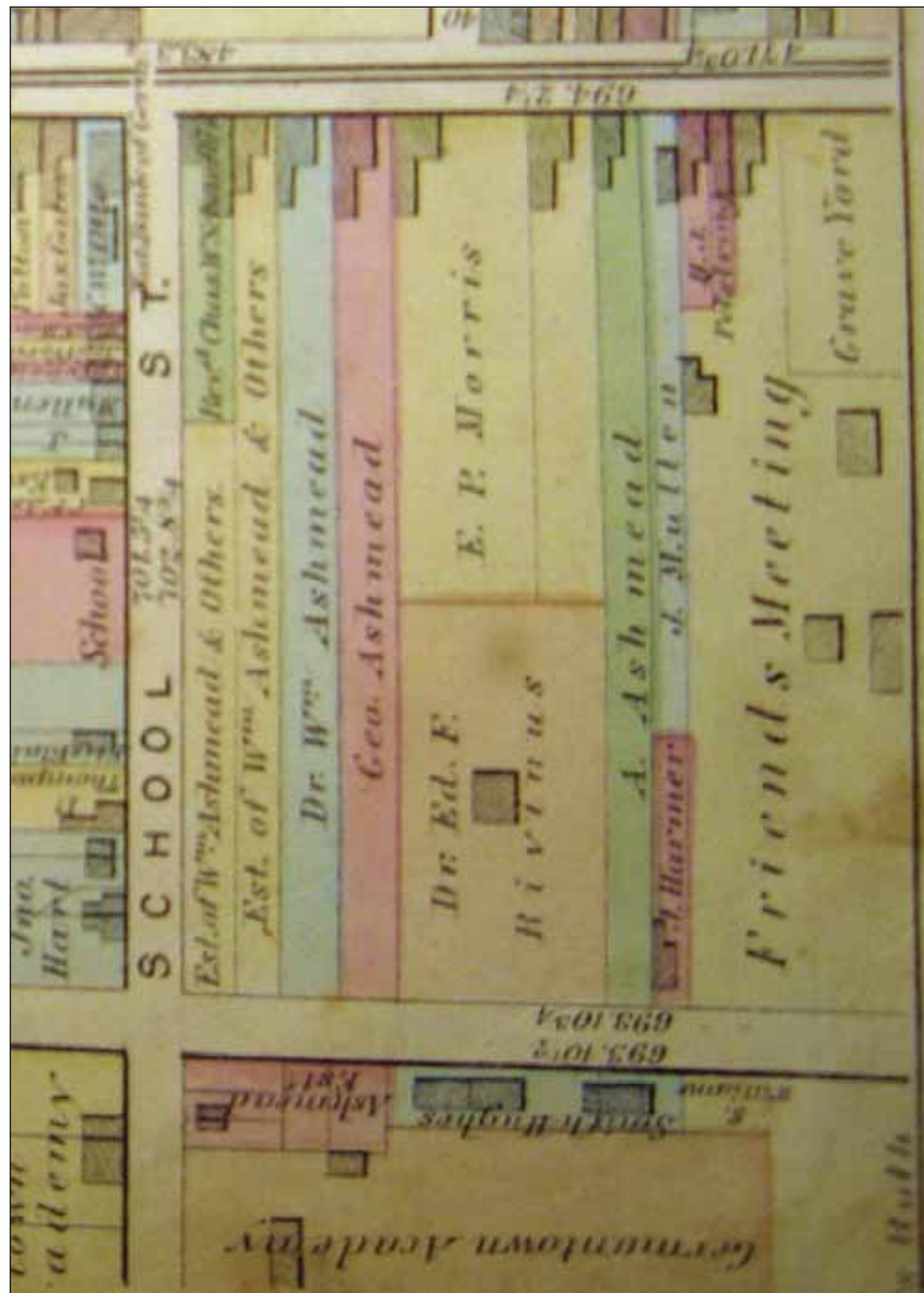


Figure B.1. Detail of Hopkins Atlas of the late borough of Germantown, twenty-second ward, city of Philadelphia, 1871 (Source: Temple University Libraries, Urban Archives, Philadelphia, Pa)

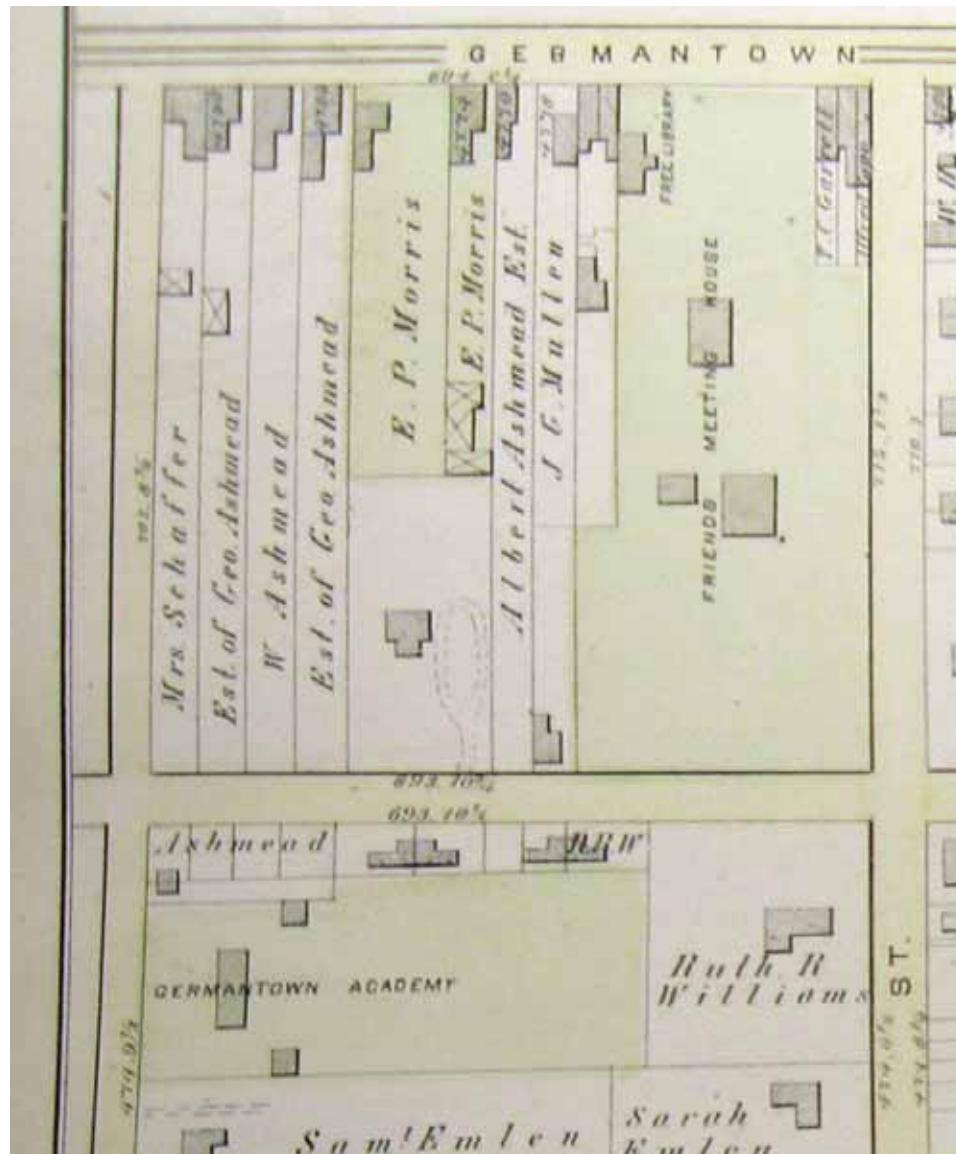


Figure B.2. Detail of Hopkins City atlas of Philadelphia by wards: Vol. 1. 22nd ward, 1876 (Source: Temple University Libraries, Urban Archives, Philadelphia, Pa)

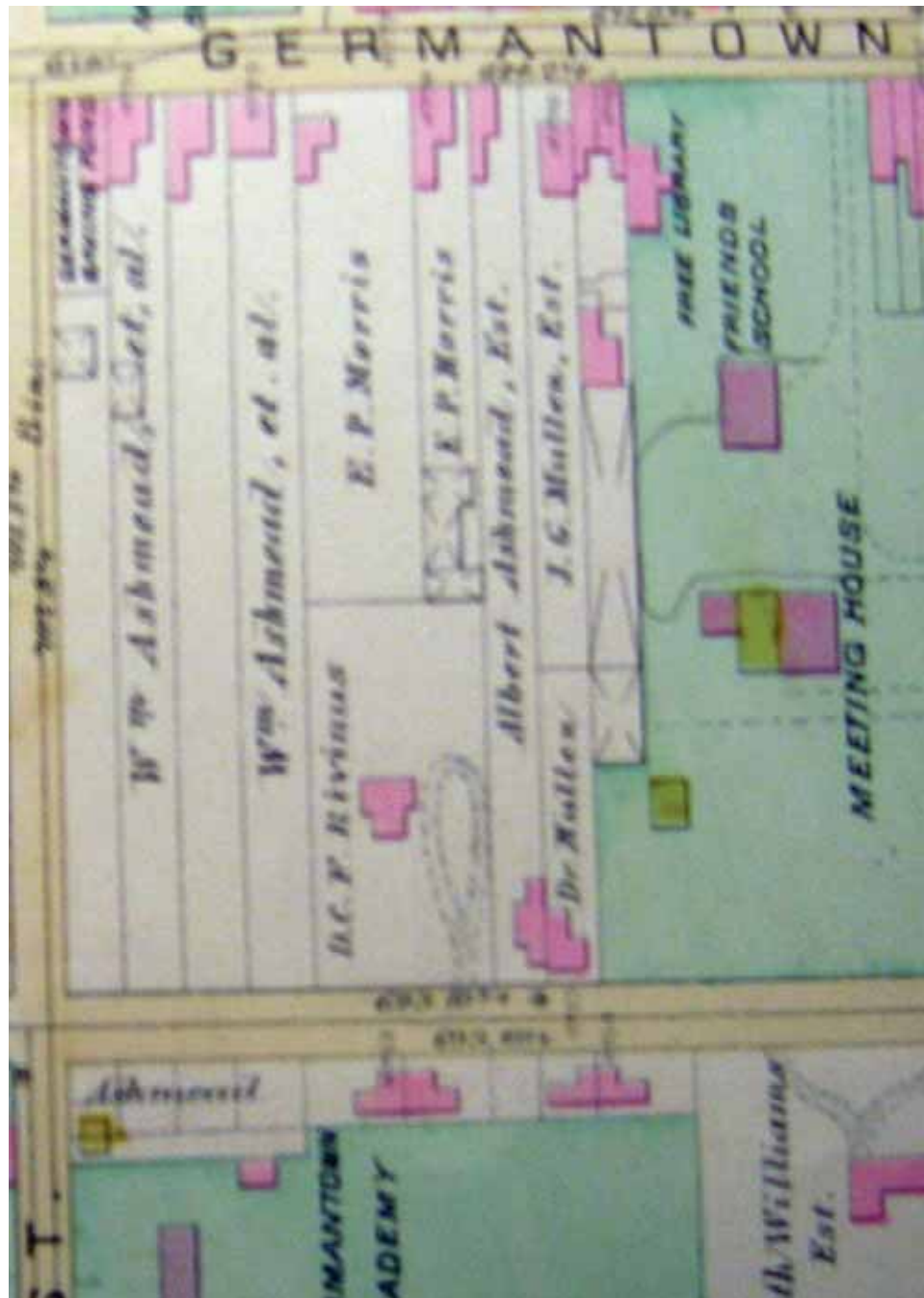


Figure B.3. Detail of Hopkins Atlas of the city of Philadelphia: 22nd ward; properties near Philadelphia, Germantown, and Chestnut Hill Rail Road, 1885 (Source: Temple University Libraries, Urban Archives, Philadelphia, Pa)

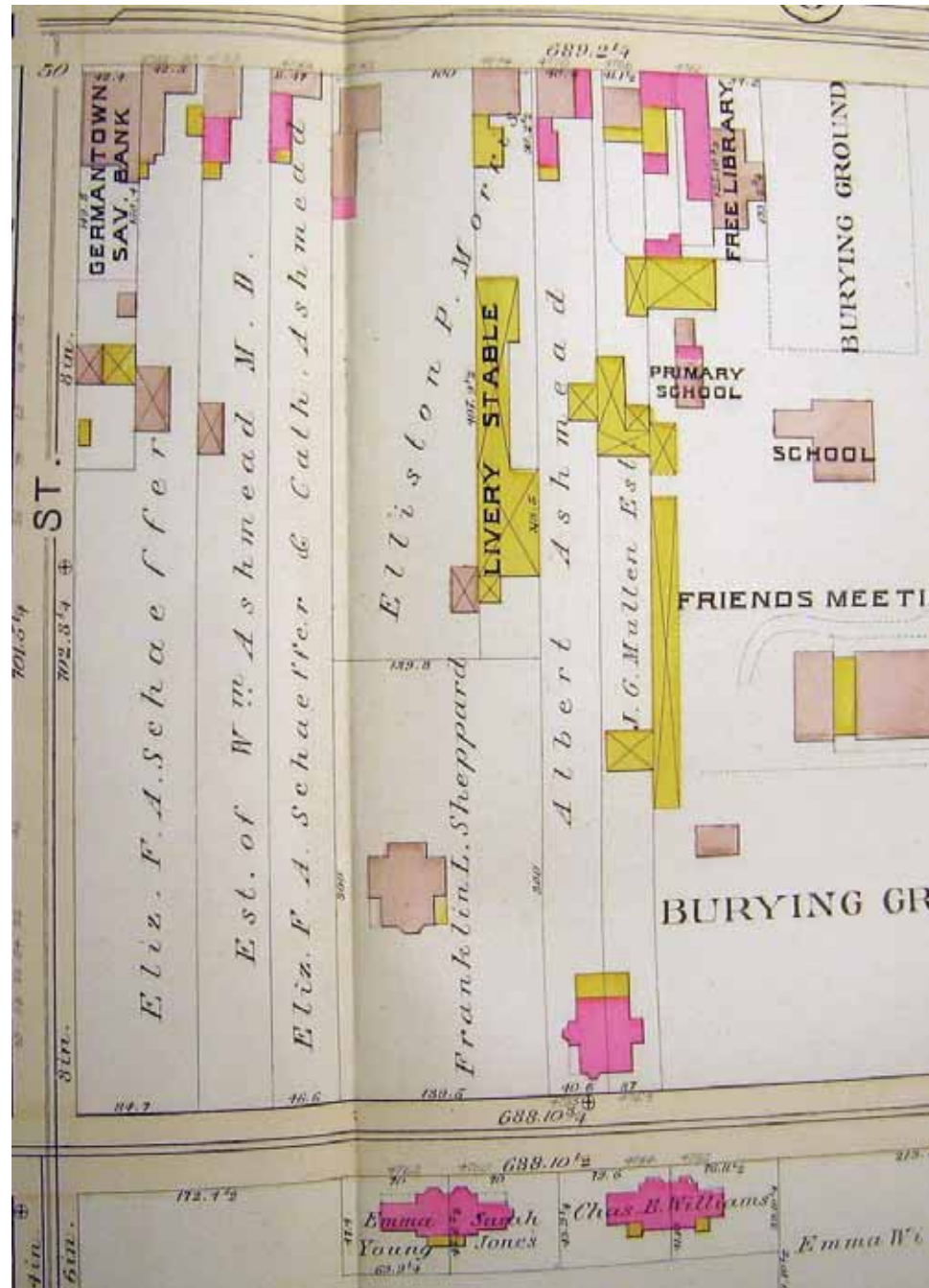


Figure B.4. Detail of Bromley Atlas of the City of Philadelphia. Vol. 7. 22nd ward, 1889 (Source: Temple University Libraries, Urban Archives, Philadelphia, Pa.)

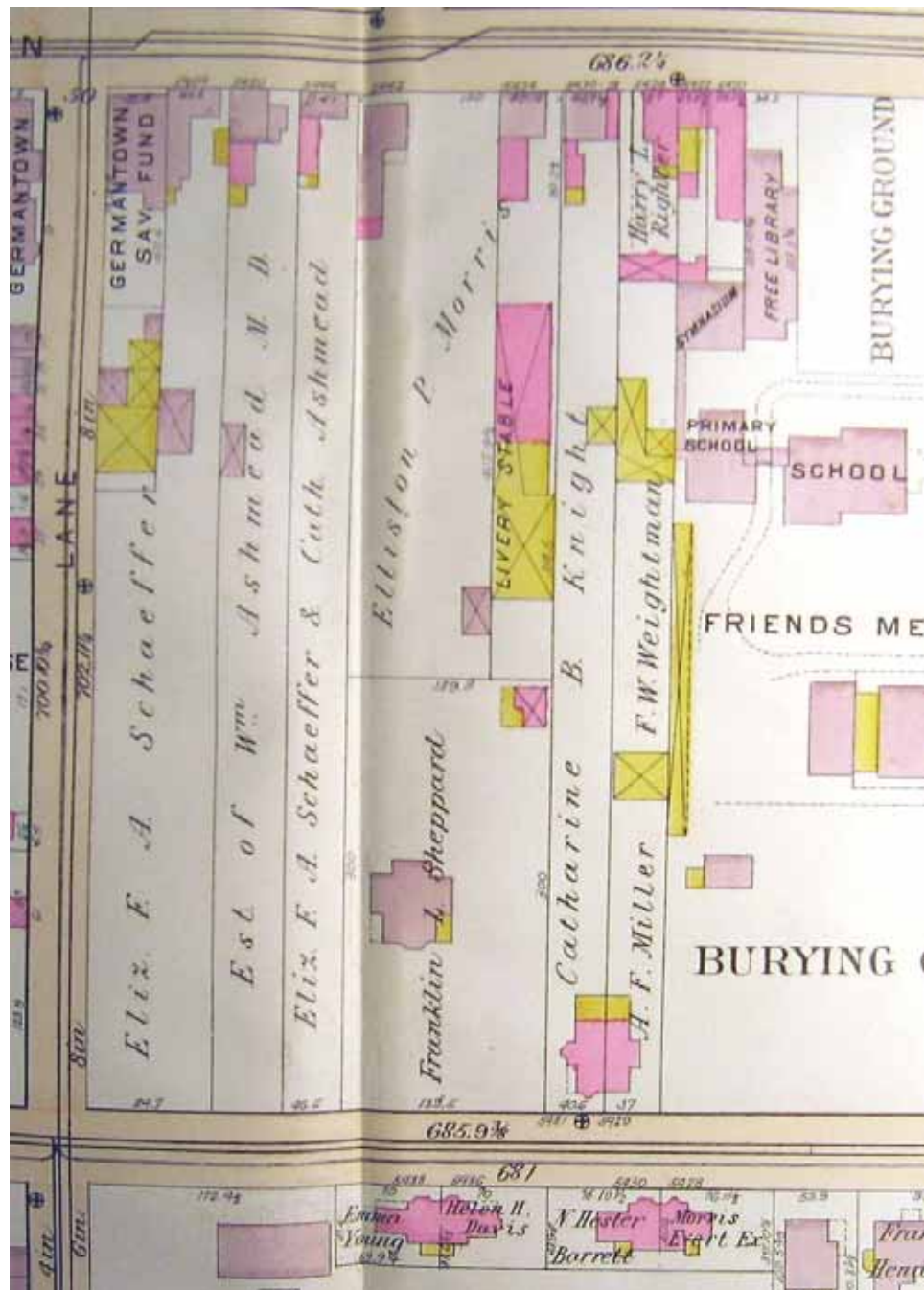
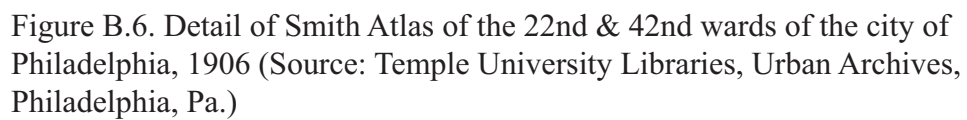


Figure B.5. Detail of Bromley Atlas of the City of Philadelphia. 22nd ward, 1899 (Source: Temple University Libraries, Urban Archives, Philadelphia, Pa.)



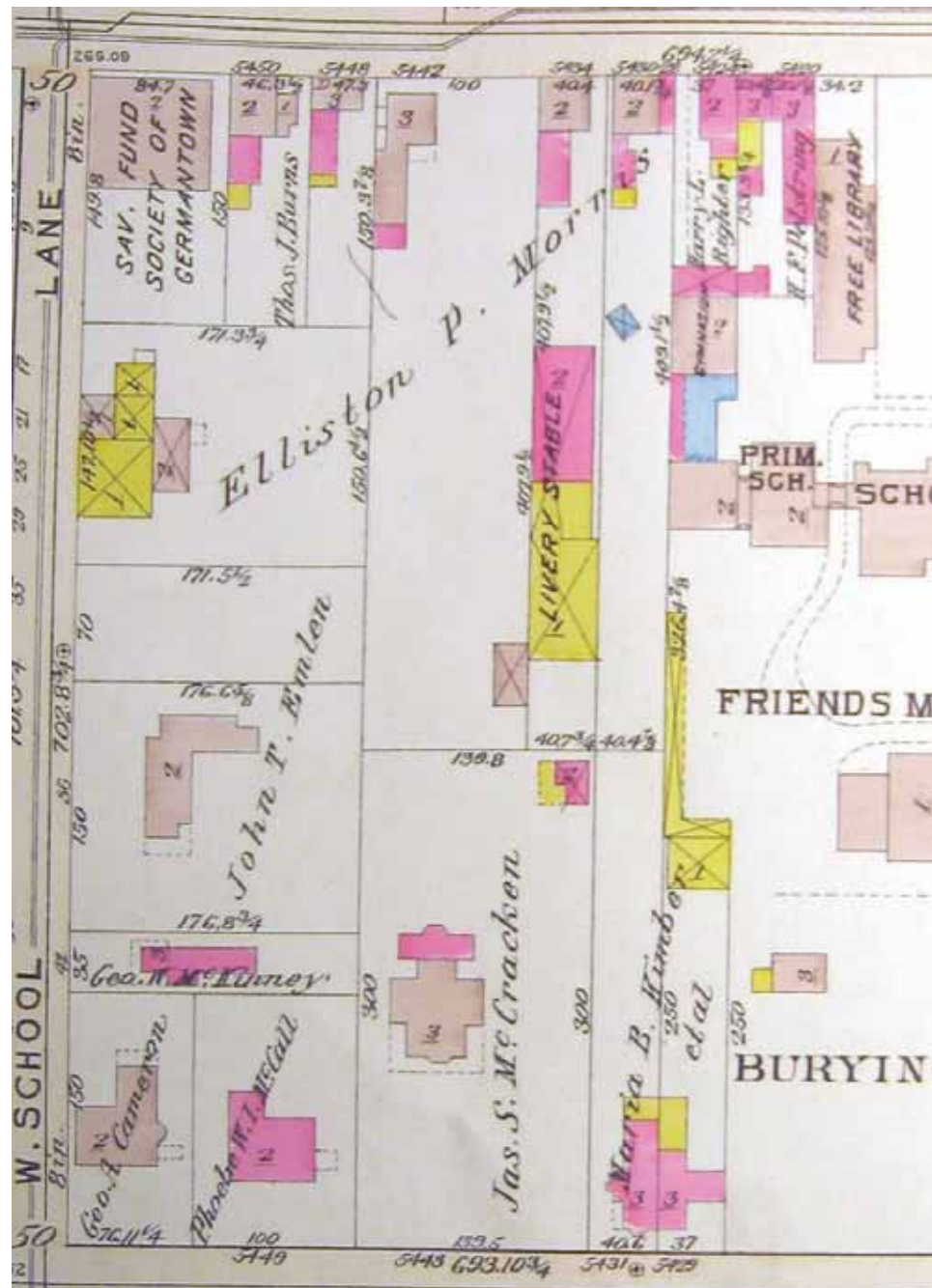


Figure B.7. Detail of Bromley Atlas of the City of Philadelphia. 22nd ward, 1911 (Source: Temple University Libraries, Urban Archives, Philadelphia, Pa.)

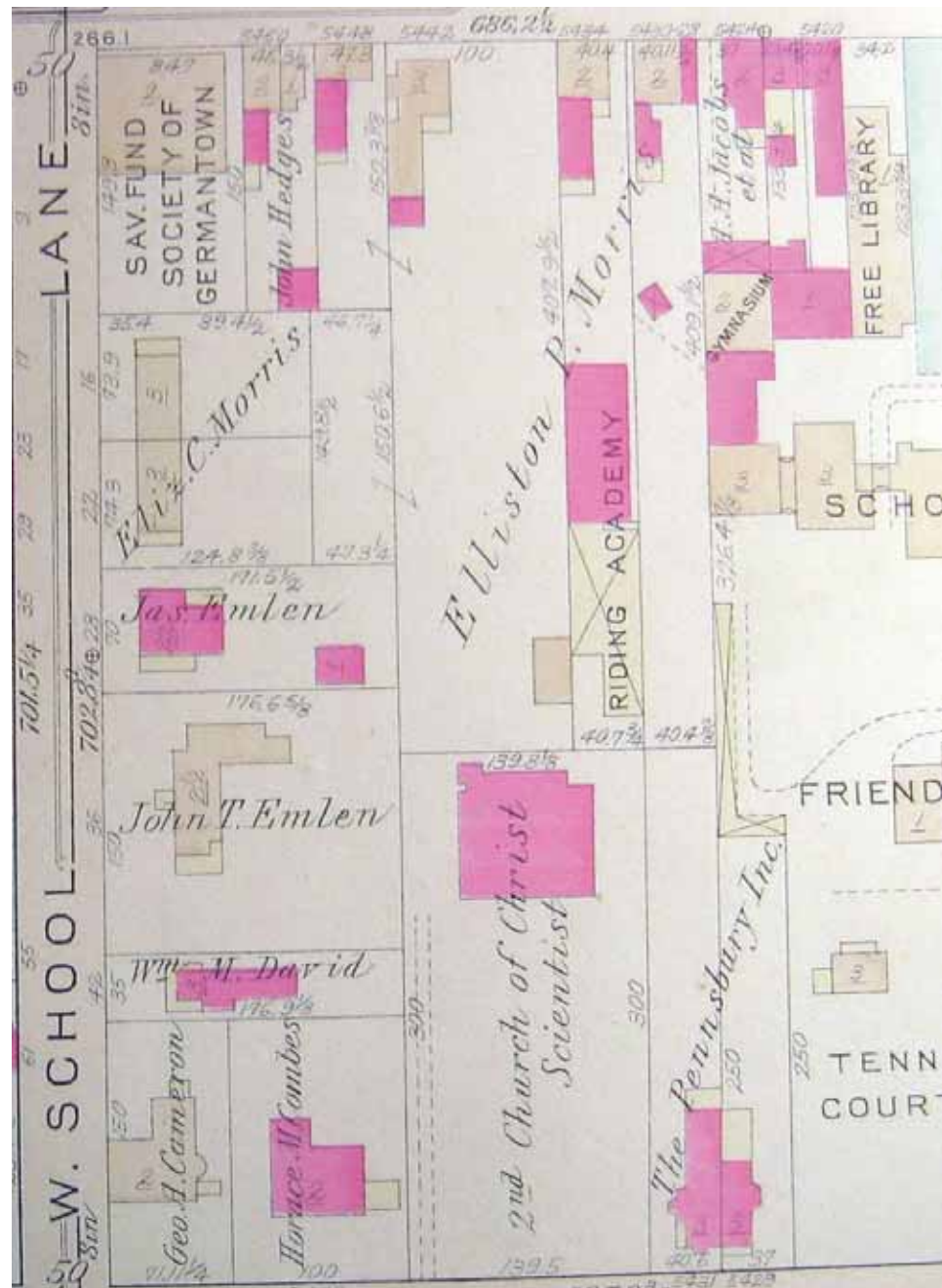


Figure B.8. Detail of Bromley Atlas of the City of Philadelphia. 22nd ward, 1923 (Source: Temple University Libraries, Urban Archives, Philadelphia, Pa.)

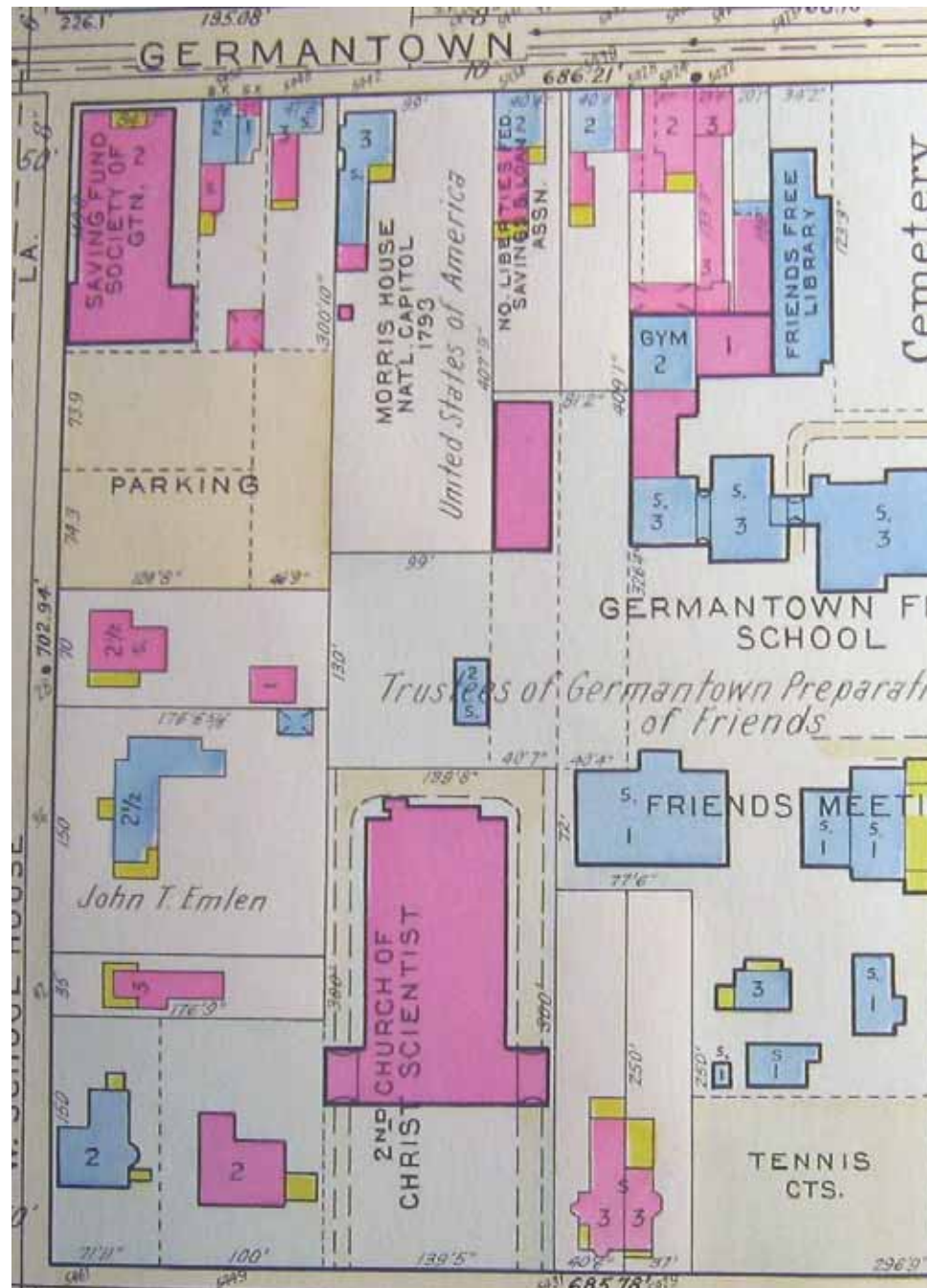


Figure B.9. Detail of Franklin Atlas of the 22nd ward, Philadelphia, Penna.. Vol. 11. 1955 (Source: Temple University Libraries, Urban Archives, Philadelphia, Pa.)

Appendix C. Historic Planting Plans

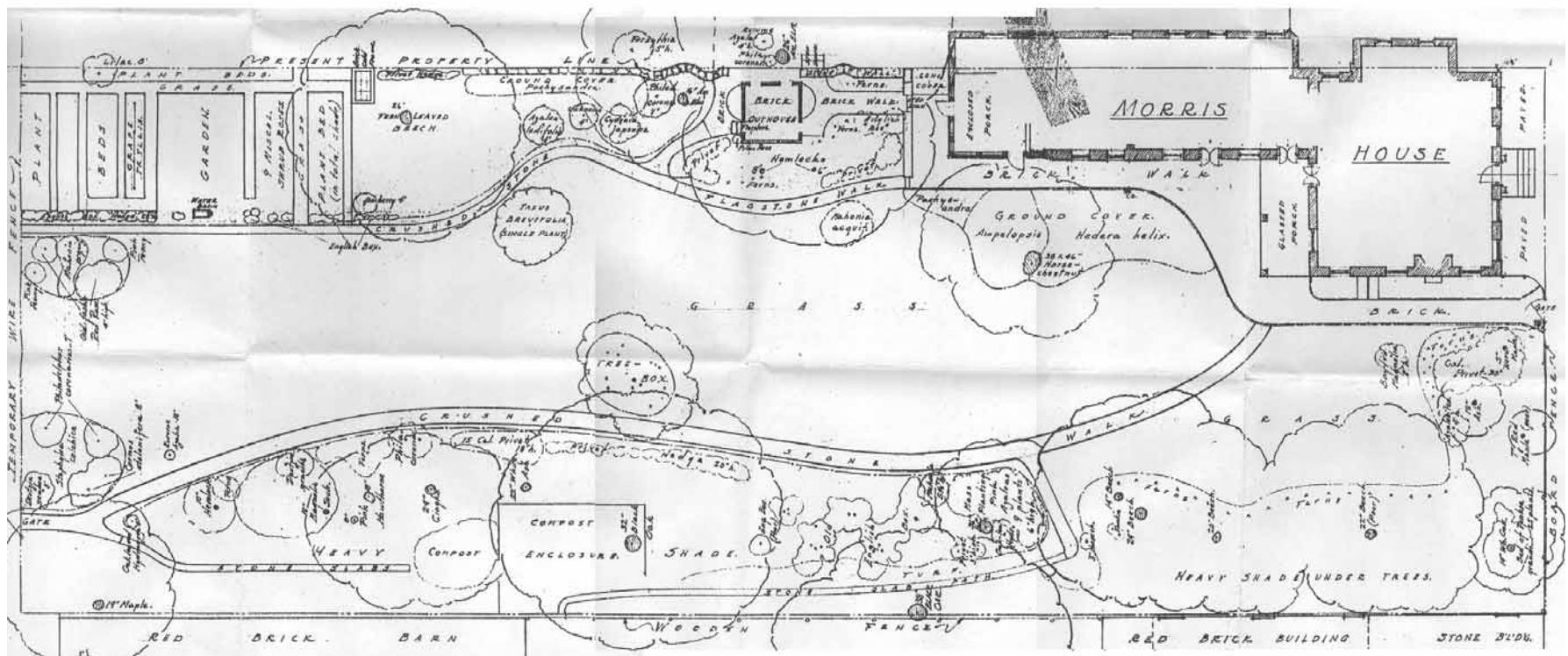


Figure C.1. National Park Service Existing Conditions Planting Plan, 1950 (Independence National Historical Park Archives)

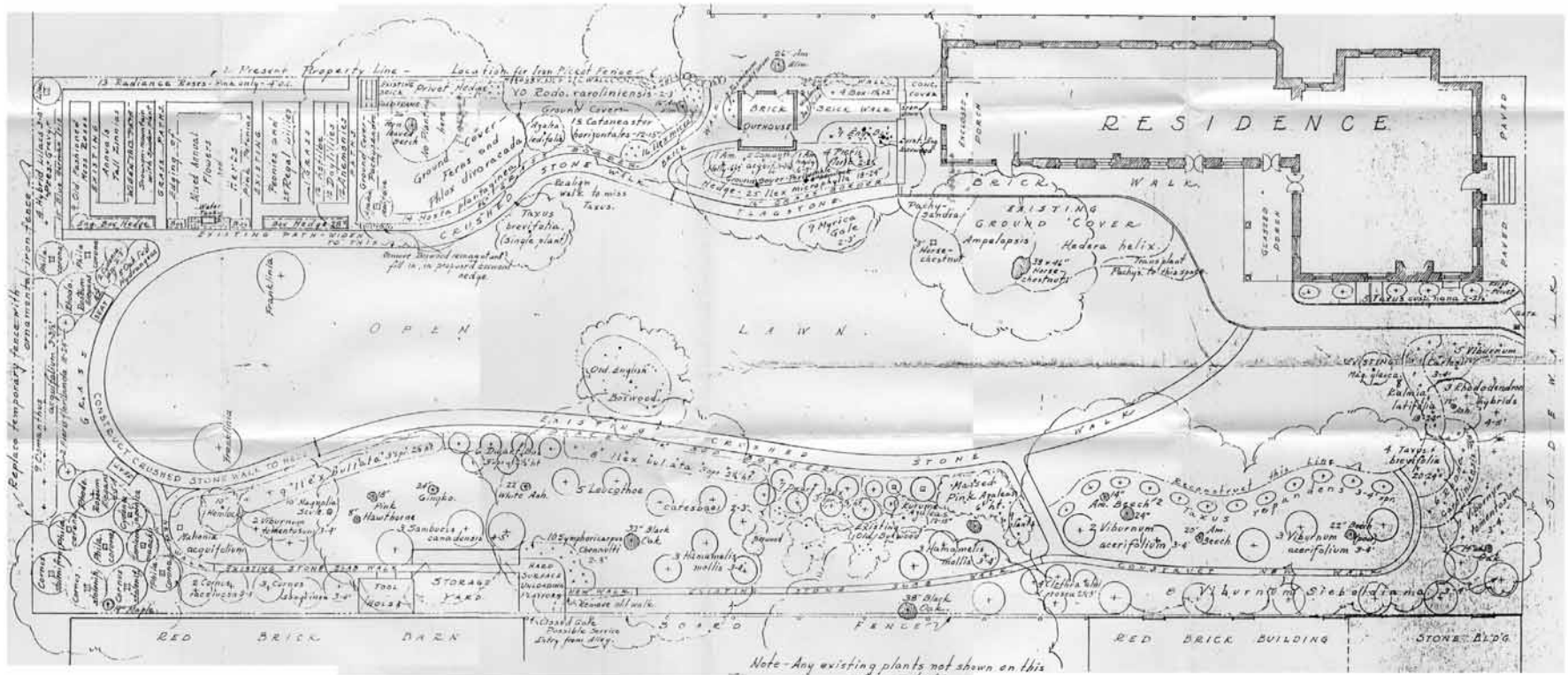


Figure C.2. National Park Service Proposed Planting Plan, 1949 (Independence National Historical Park Archives)



Figure C.3. National Park Service Proposed Infrastructural Improvement Plan, 2005 (Independence National Historical Park Archives)

Appendix D. Historic Photos



Figure D.1. Samuel Morris' sketch of the rear of the house and grounds, 1842 (Historic Structure/Furnishings/Grounds Report, Deshler-Morris, Bringham House)



Figure D.2. Deshler-Morris House, 1876 (Library Company of Philadelphia)



Figure D.3. T. H. Wilkinson watercolor, late 19th century (Byrn Mawr Places in Time website)

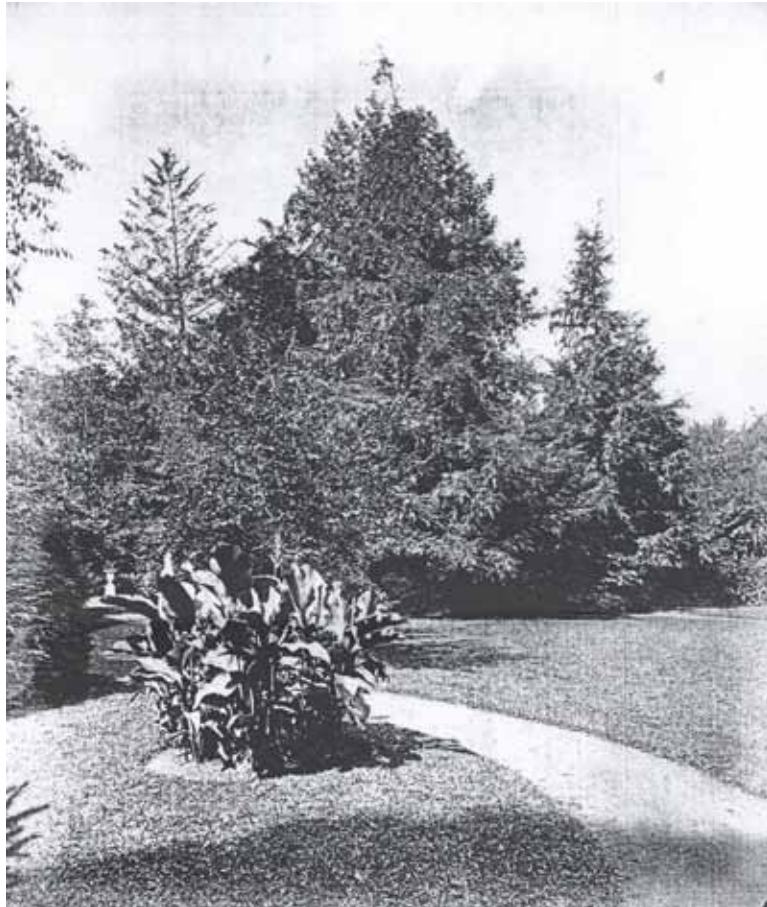


Figure D.4. Morris Family garden in the 1880's (Independence National Historical Park Archives)

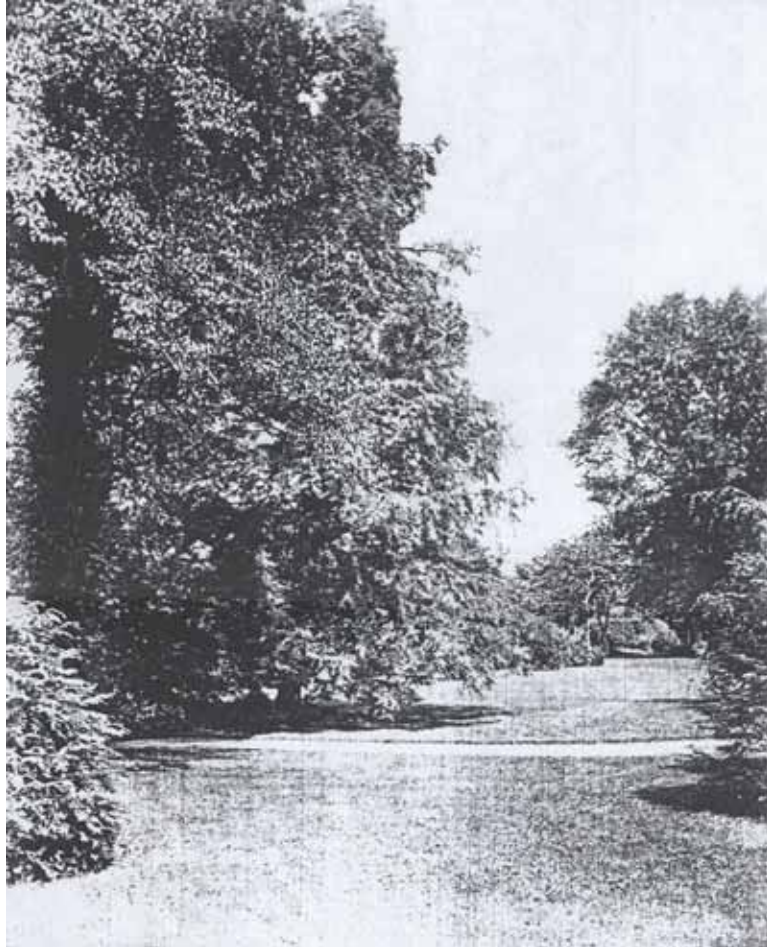


Figure D.5. Morris Family garden in the 1880's (Independence National Historical Park Archives)



Figure D.6. Morris Family garden in the 1880's (Independence National Historical Park Archives)

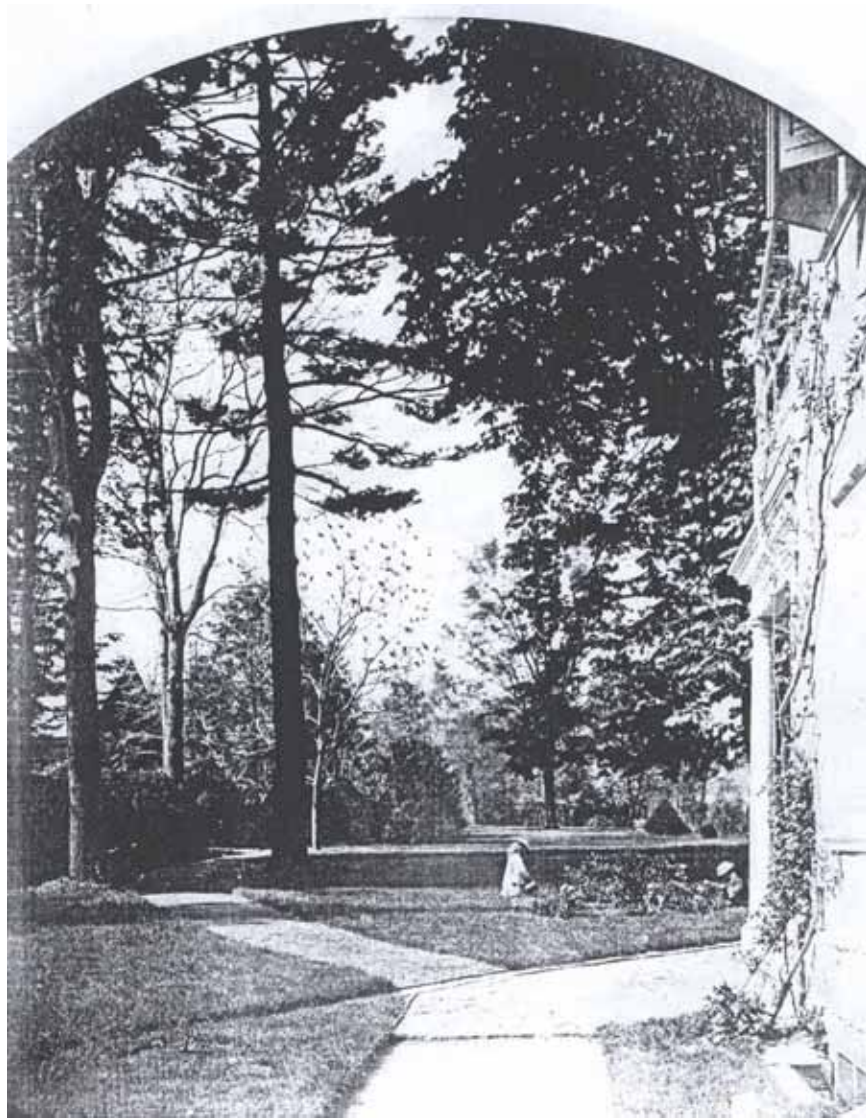


Figure D.7. Young E. Perot Morris in the garden in the 1880's, facing southwest from the Germantown Avenue entrance (Independence National Historical Park Archives)

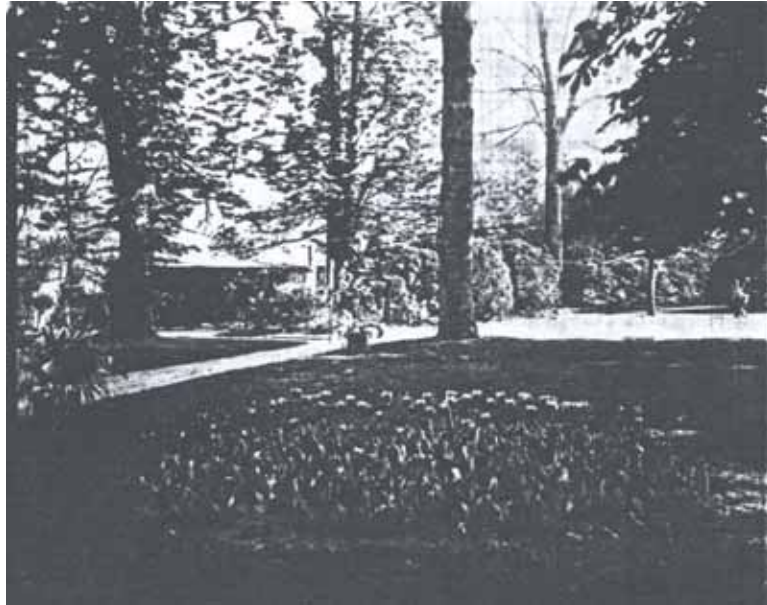


Figure D.8. On of Elliston Perot Morris' many flower beds, date unknown.
(Independence National Historical Park Archives)



Figure D.9. Damage to garden after storm of 1902 (Historic Structure/Furnishings/Grounds Report, Deshler-Morris, Bringham House)



Figure D.10. Elliston Perot Morris and son, Marriott, in the Deshler-Morris Garden, 1904 (Independence National Historical Park Archives)

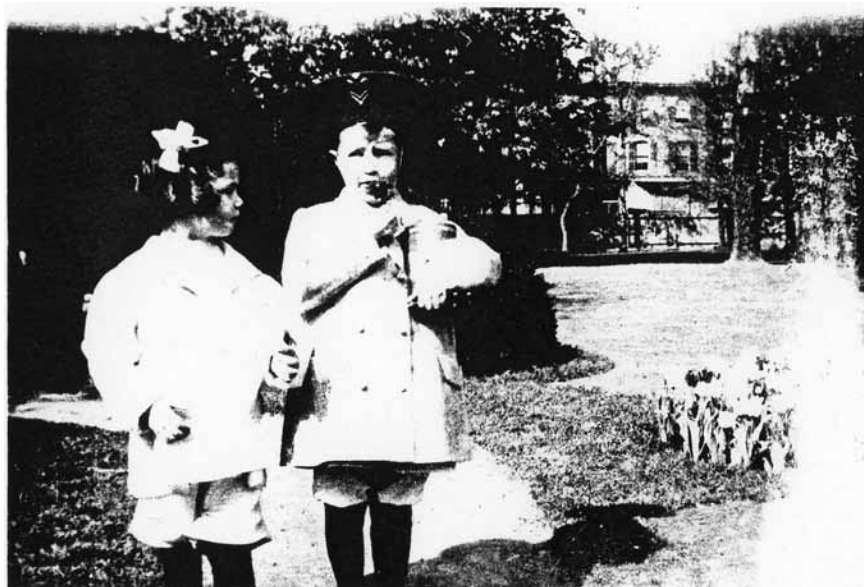


Figure D.11. Marriott and Elizabeth Canby Morris in the Deshler-Morris Garden, 1905 (Independence National Historical Park Archives)



Figure D.12. Elliston Perot Morris with wife and daughter in the Deshler-Morris Garden, 1905 (Independence National Historical Park Archives)



Figure D.13. Deshler-Morris House, 1925 (Temple University Library, Urban Archives, Philadelphia, PA)



Figure D.14. Deshler-Morris House, 1932 (Temple University Library, Urban Archives, Philadelphia, PA)



Figure D. 15. Deshler-Morris House, 1948 (Temple University Library, Urban Archives, Philadelphia, PA)



Figure D.16. Deshler-Morris House Rehabilitation by the National Park Service, 1949
(Germantown Courier)



Figure D.17. Deshler-Morris House, 1951 (Temple University Library, Urban Archives, Philadelphia, PA)



Figure D.18. Deshler-Morris House Historic American Building Survey Photo, 1970
(Historic American Buildings Survey)

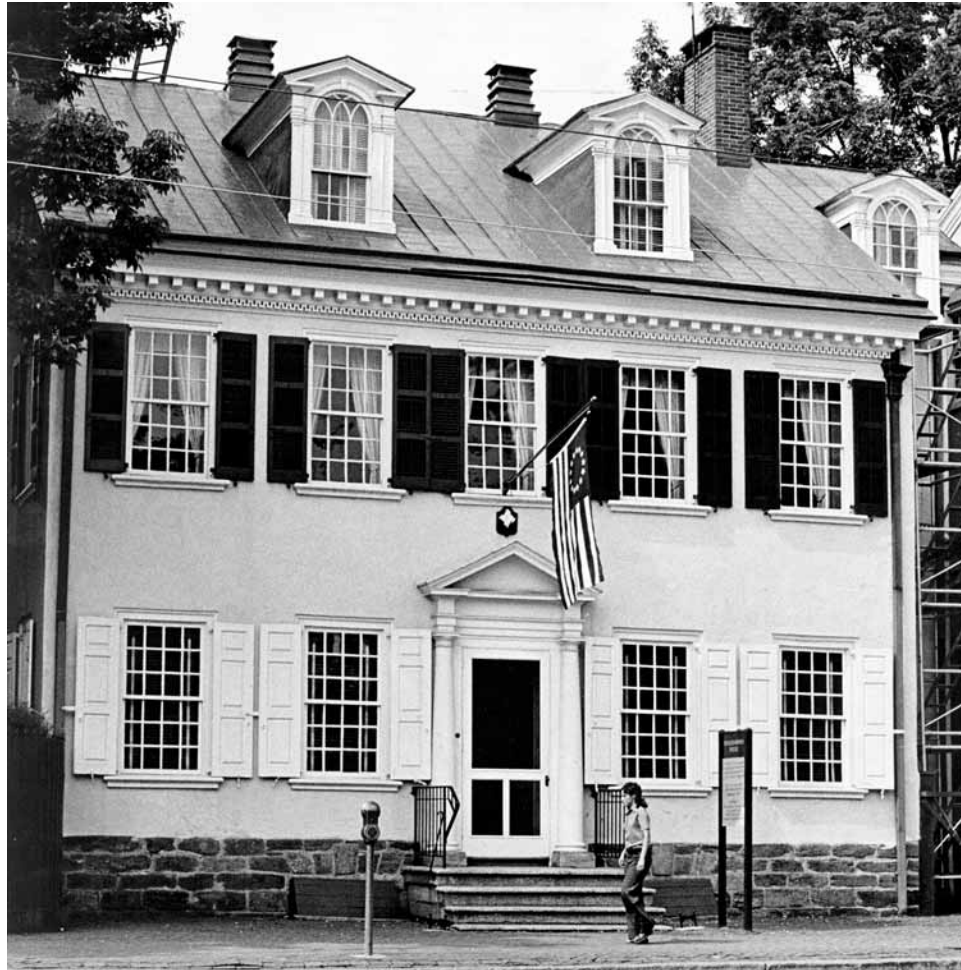


Figure D.19. Deshler-Morris House, 1973 (Temple University Library, Urban Archives, Philadelphia, PA)



Figure D.20. Mrs. Montgomery at the Deshler-Morris House Annual Christmas Tea, 1973 (Philadelphia Inquirer, December 2, 1973)



Figure D.21. Mrs. Montgomery at the Deshler-Morris House, 1976 (Philadelphia Inquirer, December 10, 1976)



Figure D.22. Deshler-Morris House, October 2006 (photo by author)



Figure D.23. Satellite image 2007 (Google Earth)

Appendix E. Evolutionary Diagrams

These Evolutionary Diagrams were synthesized by the author from the historic sources cited in Chapters One and Two, the historic fire insurance maps in Appendix B, the historic planting plans in Appendix C, the vegetation table in Appendix F, and schematic descriptions in Appendix J of the Historic Structure/Furnishings/Grounds Report, Deshler-Morris, Brighthurst House.

Choices to represent different landscape features over different time periods were based on available evidence. Where there was documentation to corroborate the existence of landscape features and their locations, these features were represented. In the earlier diagrams, the Deshler-Morris landscape may appear as though it was sparse, but it is because most landscape features were never documented. The narrative descriptions in Chapters One and Two and the photos and illustrations in Appendix D give indications of the Deshler-Morris landscape's contents and design over time.

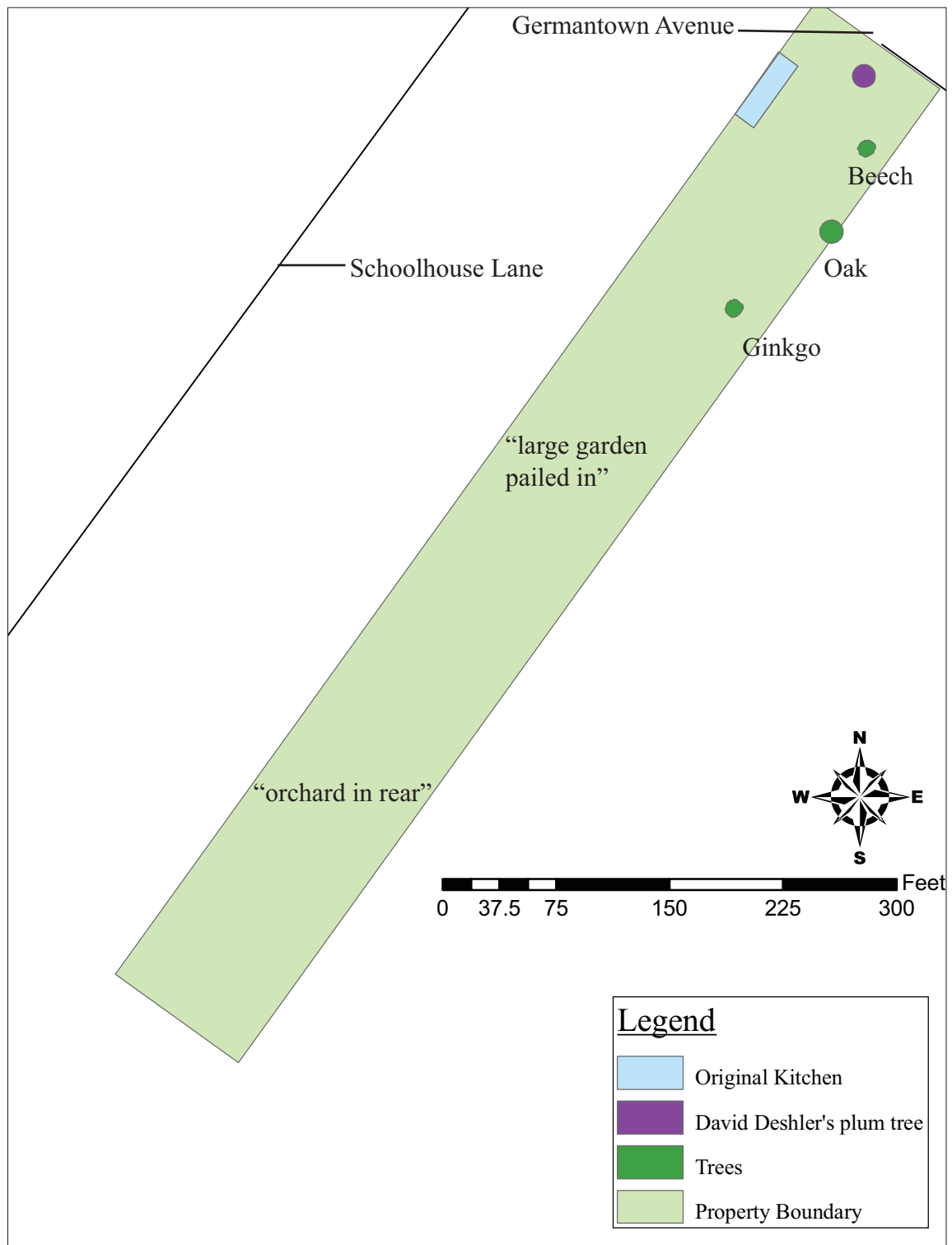


Figure E.1. Diagram of the Deshler-Morris Landscape in 1772 (Author).

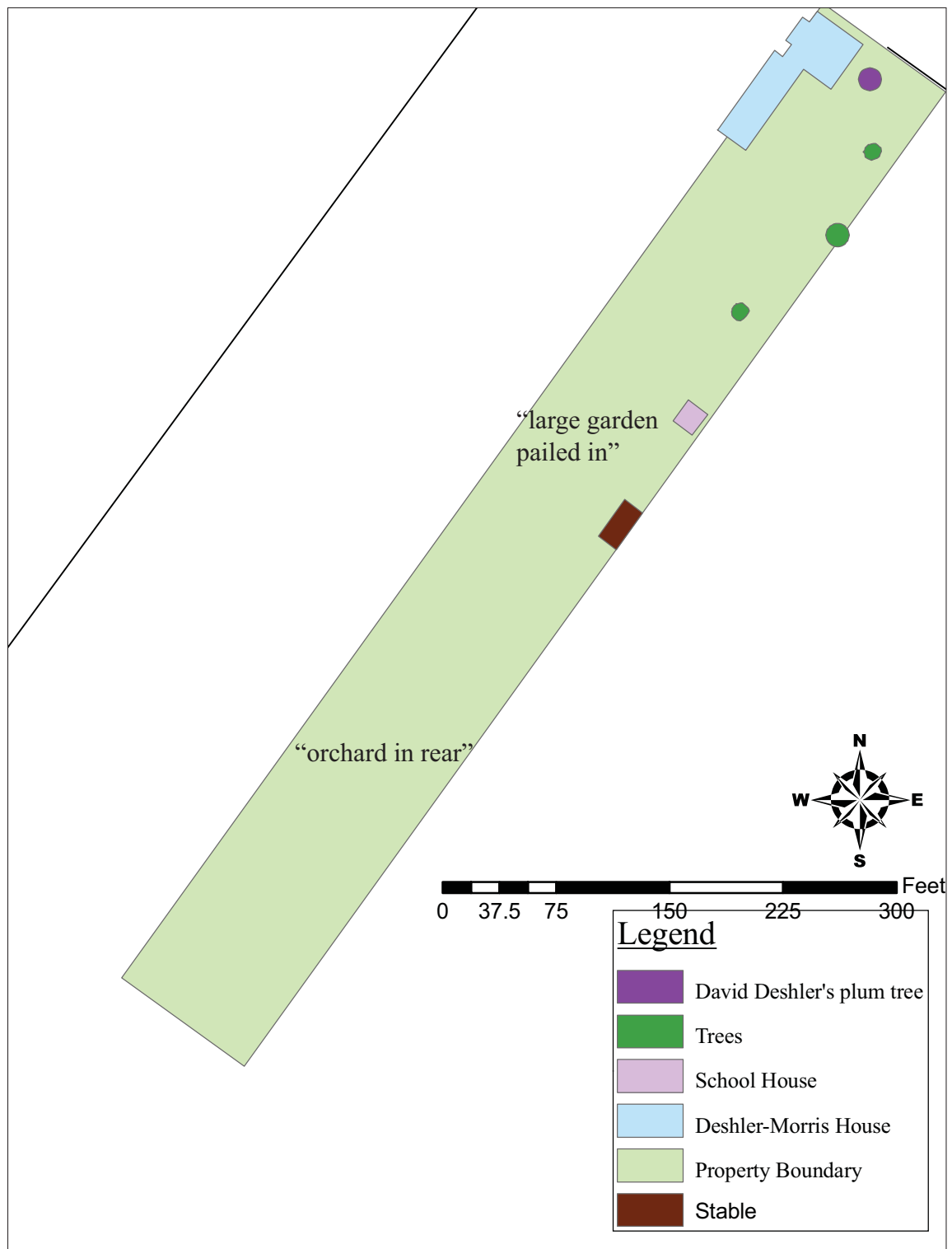


Figure E.2. Diagram of the Deshler-Morris Landcape in 1792 (Author).

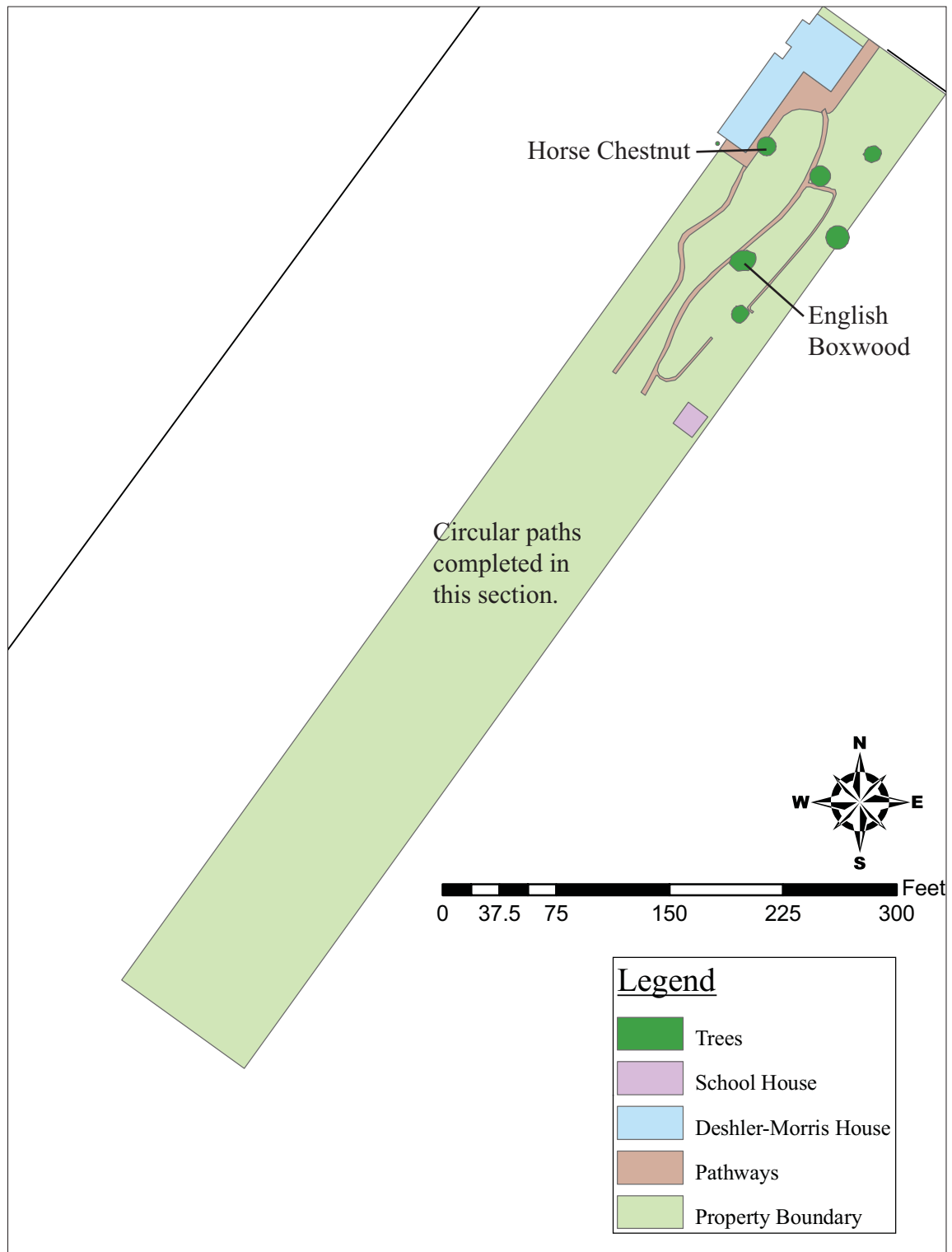


Figure E.3. Diagram of the Deshler-Morris Landscape in 1836 (Author).

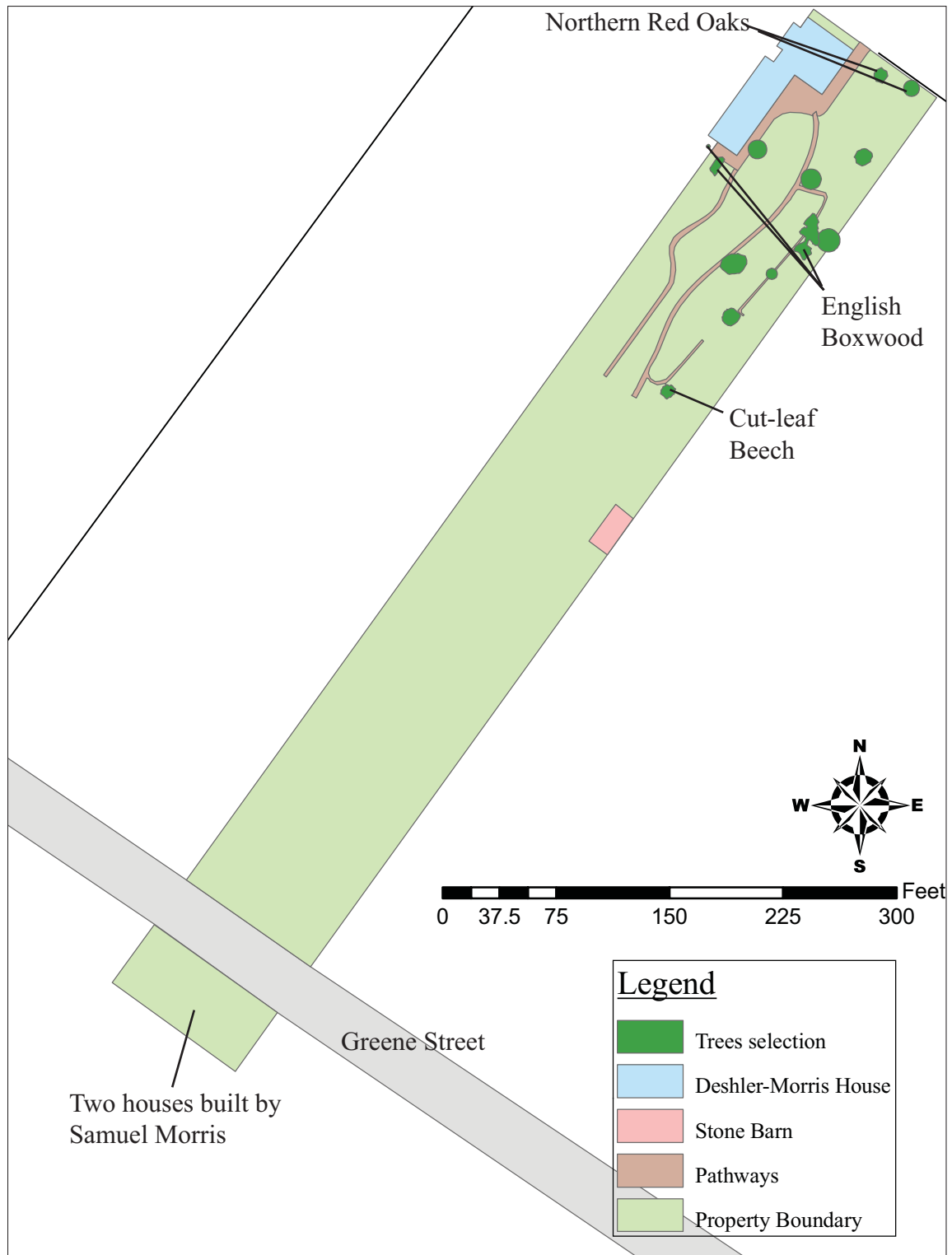


Figure E.4. Diagram of the Deshler-Morris Landscape in 1859 (Author).

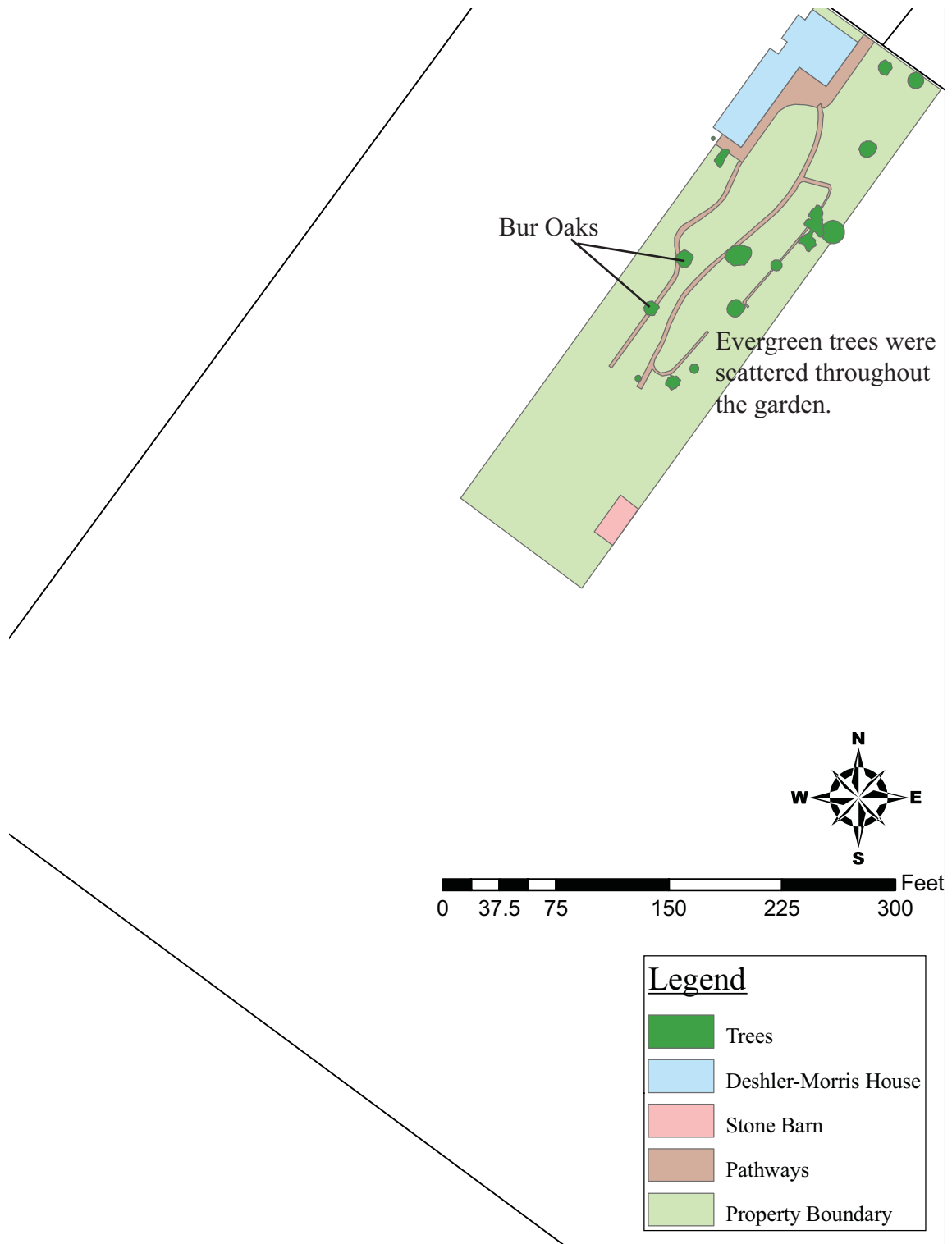


Figure E.5. Diagram of the Deshler-Morris Landscape in 1871 (Author).

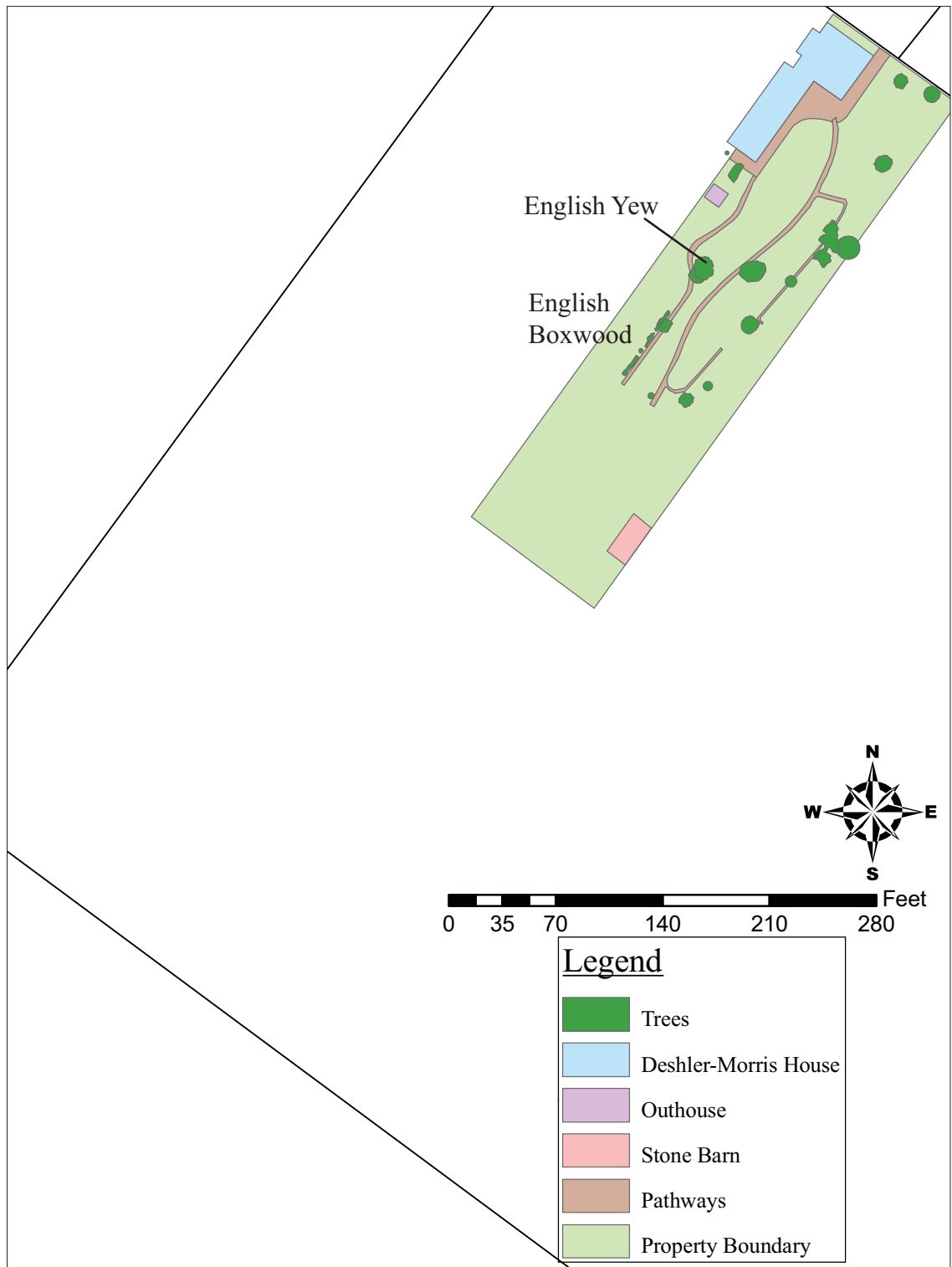


Figure E.6. Diagram of the Deshler-Morris Landcape in 1906 (Author).



Figure E.7. Diagram of the Deshler-Morris Landcape in 1950 (Author).

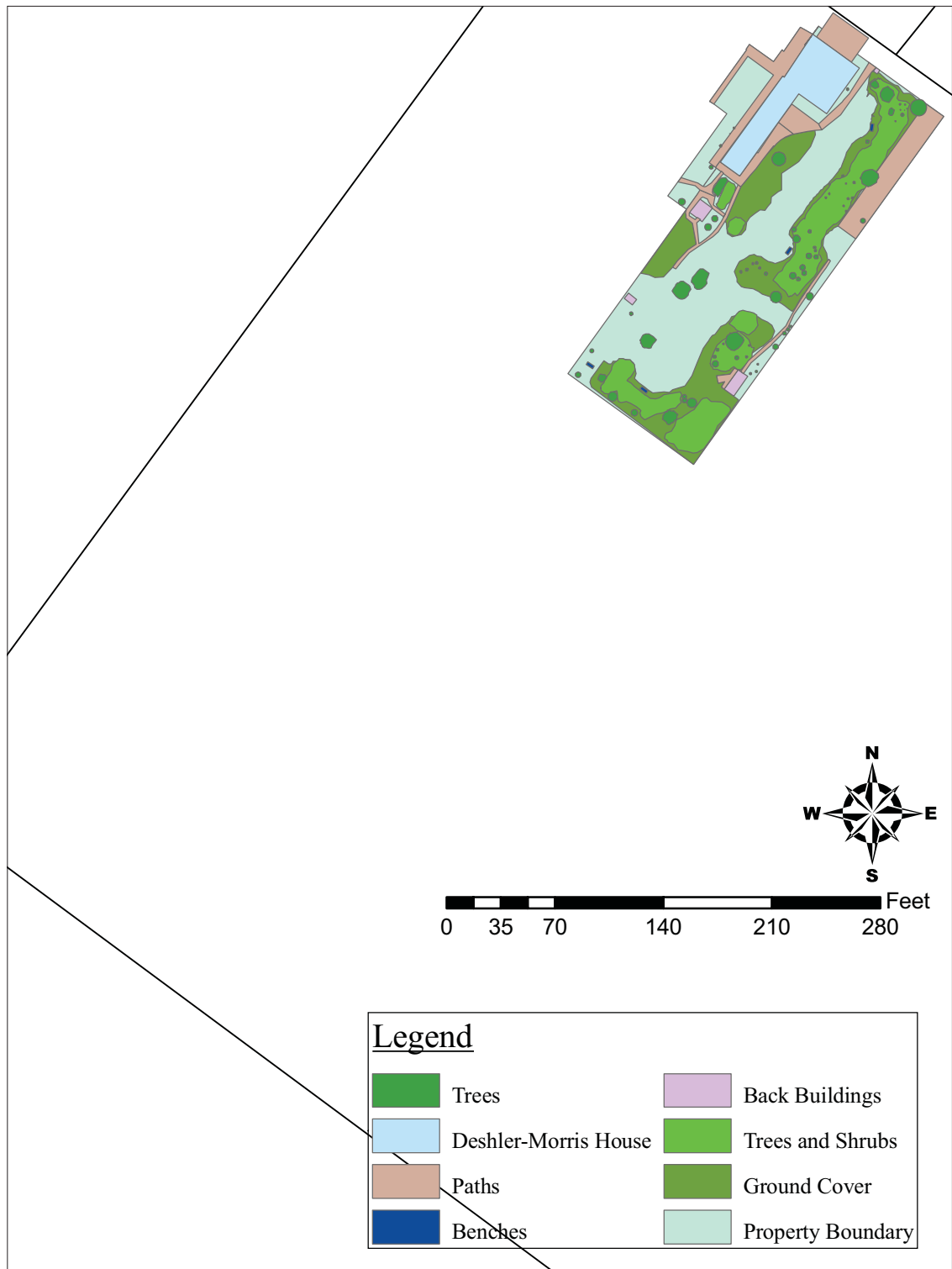


Figure E.8. Diagram of the Deshler-Morris Landscape in 2007 (Author).

Appendix F. Vegetation

This Appendix was compiled in Spring 2007 by the author from observations made on multiple site visits. Landscape Architect Theresa Durkin, Deshler-Morris Gardener Ellie Schleicher, and Professor Randall Mason assisted in plant identification.

A method of multiplying the diameter of trees by the growth rate for respective species helped to determine the ages for the mature specimen trees on the property. The growth rates utilized were: 5 for Oak, 7 for Beech, 3 for Cherry, 7 for Hemlock, 15 for English Boxwood. A separate method of estimation, based on a formula published by Tabbush and White (1996), was used for the English Yew. All other plant ages were estimated conjecturally by historical sources cited in Chapter's One and Two. For example, Mrs. Montgomery probably planted many of the exotic, Eastern species of shrubbery between 1965 and 1990, because many sources mention that she preferred these varieties.

In cases where the exact species was unknown, a genus or family was approximated.

Plant name	Latin Name	Location in Landscape	Year/Period Planted	Condition
American Beech	Fagus Grandifolia	Close to house in the front section	~1900. Possibly after the great storm of 1903	Good; 17.5” diameter
American Beech	Fagus Grandifolia	Adjacent to the gravel driveway in the Ashmead section	~1760. Possibly planted by David Deshler	Very poor; 41.4” diameter
Azaelea (many)	Rhododendron	All over.	1965-1990	Overgrown in some areas
Blue Weeping Atlas Cedar	Cedrus atlantica 'Glaucia Pendula'	In the center of the thicket in the front section	1965-1990. possibly from 25 November 1969 in memory of Mrs. Montgomery's father	Fair; Nicked by woodpeckers
Blue Weeping Atlas Cedar	Cedrus atlantica 'Glaucia Pendula'	In the Ashmead section, near central boxwood feature	1965-1990. possibly November 25 1969 in memory of Mrs. Montgomery's	Fair; Nicked by woodpeckers; 16.5” diameter
Blue Weeping Atlas Cedar?	Cedrus libani	A small shrub in the Bringham section, to the southeast of the outhouse and southwest of the rose garden	1965-1990	Fair-Poor
Bur Oak	Quercus alba	In the rear section, between the U-shaped boxwood and the	~1866	28.3” diameter

		rear fence		
Bur Oak	Quercus alba	In the Bringham section, just south of the English Yew	~1869	Good; 27.7" diameter
Bur Oak	Quercus alba	In the rear section, to the north of the U-shaped boxwood	~1864	Good; 28.6" diameter
Chinese Holly (several)	Ilex	Adjacent to front section of house, also in cutting garden	1965-1990	
Cut-leaf Beech	Fagus sylvatica	In the rear section, to the southeast of the U-shaped boxwood	~1845	Good; 23.2" diameter
English Boxwood	Buxus sempervirens	In the center of the property, close to the thicket in the Ashmead section	1752-1880	Very poor; 7 trees around 5" in diameter
English Boxwood	Buxus sempervirens	U-shaped in the center of the rear boundary. Surrounds a bench. Initially designed to protect a magnolia tree that is no longer extant	1965-1990	Good
English Boxwood	Buxus sempervirens	In the Ashmead section between the Ashmead house and the gravel driveway	1752-1950	Good
English Boxwood	Buxus sempervirens	In the Ashmead section, in the thicket to the	1752-1880	Good

		northeast of the wild cherry tree		
English Boxwood	Buxus sempervirens	In the thicket between the outhouse and the rear addition	1752-1950	Fair
English Boxwood	Buxus sempervirens	In the yard between the Deshler-Morris house and the Bringham house	1752-1950	Good
English Yew	Taxus baccata	In the center of the Bringham section	~1900	Good; 40" diameter
English Yew	Taxus baccata	In the southern corner of the rear section	1950-1990	Overgrown
Flowering Dogwood	Cornus florida	In the Ashmead section, south of the 250 year old American Beech tree within a thicket of shrubbery	1965-1990	young
Flowering Dogwood	Cornus florida	Within the ground cover to the southeast of the kitchen	1965-2007	young
Forsythia	Forsythia	In the rear section, bounding the U-shaped boxwood to the west	1965-1990	good
Ginkgo	Ginkgo biloba	In the Ashmead section, north of the garden shed	1750-1790	Healthy
Gooseberry Currant (2)	Ribes montigenum	In alley between Deshler-Morris house and Bringham house	2000-2007	Healthy
Herb Garden	N/A	Between	1973	Poor

		outhouse and house		
Holly	Ilex	In cutting garden, surrounding house	1965-1990	Good
Holly	Ilex	In the Ashmead section, west of the Ginkgo tree	1965-1990	Good
Holly	Ilex	In the rear section, to the west of the U-shaped boxwood	1965-1990	Good
Hydrangea	Hydrangea	In the Ashmead section south of the 250 year old American Beech tree, within a thicket of shrubbery	1965-1990	Good
Japanese Lilac	Syringa reticulata	Nothwest of outhouse	1965-1990	
Korean Dogwood (2)	Cornus coreana	Both in front of outhouse	1965-1990	
Euonymus	Euonymus	In the Ashmead section, south of the 250 year old American Beech tree ,within a thicket of shrubbery	1965-1990	Overgrown
Hemlock	Tsuga	In the rear section, between U-shaped box and garden shed	~1860	Good; 28” diameter
Magnolia		In the Ashmead section, in a thicket to the west of the garden shed	~1925	Good; 11.7” diameter
Mahonia	Mahonia	Ground cover	1965-1990	

		adjacent to house		
Maple	Acer	In the front section, to the northwest of the driveway	1965-2007	
Maple	Acer	In the rear section, adjacent to the boundary with the Bringham property	1965-2007	
Northern Red Oak	Quercus rubra	In the eastern corner of the very front of the property adjacent to the gravel driveway	~1828	Good; 35.6" diameter
Northern Red Oak	Quercus rubra	In the middle of the front section, within thicket	~1848	31.8" diameter
Northern Red Oak	Quercus rubra	Within ground cover, to the east of the Deshler-Morris kitchen	~1848	Good; 31.8" diameter
Northern Whitecedar	Thuja occidentalis	In the Ashmead section, north of the garden shed	2000-2007	
Northern Whitecedar	Thuja occidentalis	In the Ashmead section, east of the garden shed	2000-2007	
Pachysandra	Pachysandra	Ground cover adjacent to house	1965-1990	healthy
Pieris Teutonica	Pieris Teutonica	In a thicket between the outhouse and the rear addition of the house	1965-1990	Poor; infested with lacebugs
Red Leaf Plum	Prunus x cistena	In the rear of the Bringham section, to the south of the cold	2000-2007	To be removed?

		frame		
Red Maple	Acer rubrum	In the rear section, along the boundary of the Bringham house	1950-2007	Young
Rose garden	Several varieties	Within section of ground cover adjacent to kitchen	1990-2007	Varyinng—some very poor
Skimmia	Skimmia	In the Ashmead section, behind a bench	1965-1990	
Spotted Laurel	Aucuba japonica	In the Ashmead section, in various locations	1965-1990	
Variegated Holly	Ilex aquifolium variegata	In Ashmead section, north of a bench	1965-1990	
White Pine	Pinus strobus	In the Ashmead section south of the 250 year old American Beech tree, within a thicket of shrubbery	1965-2007	young
Wild Cherry	Prunus avium	In the Ashmead section, south of the sick patch of English boxwood	~1942	Good
Wild Cherry	Prunus avium	In the Ashmead section, east of the sick patch of English boxwood. Probably seedling of the other Wild Cherry tree	young	Good

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