

# **NOMINATION REPORT**

**Nathaniel Crane House  
110 Orange Road**

**BLOCK 1304  
LOT 12**



**Prepared By:  
Barton Ross, HPC Consultant  
The Township of Montclair Planning Department  
205 Claremont Avenue  
Montclair, NJ 07042**

**April 2013**

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This report has been prepared in accordance with **Montclair Code Section 347-135B(1)**.

347-135B(1): Nomination Proposals. The party proposing for designation under this section shall prepare and submit to the Commission a nomination report for each proposed property, site or district. For individual landmark designations, the report shall include one or more photographs, the tax lot and block number of the property as designated on the Official Tax Map of the township and a physical description and statement of significance and proposed utilization of the site.

## **I. Executive Summary**

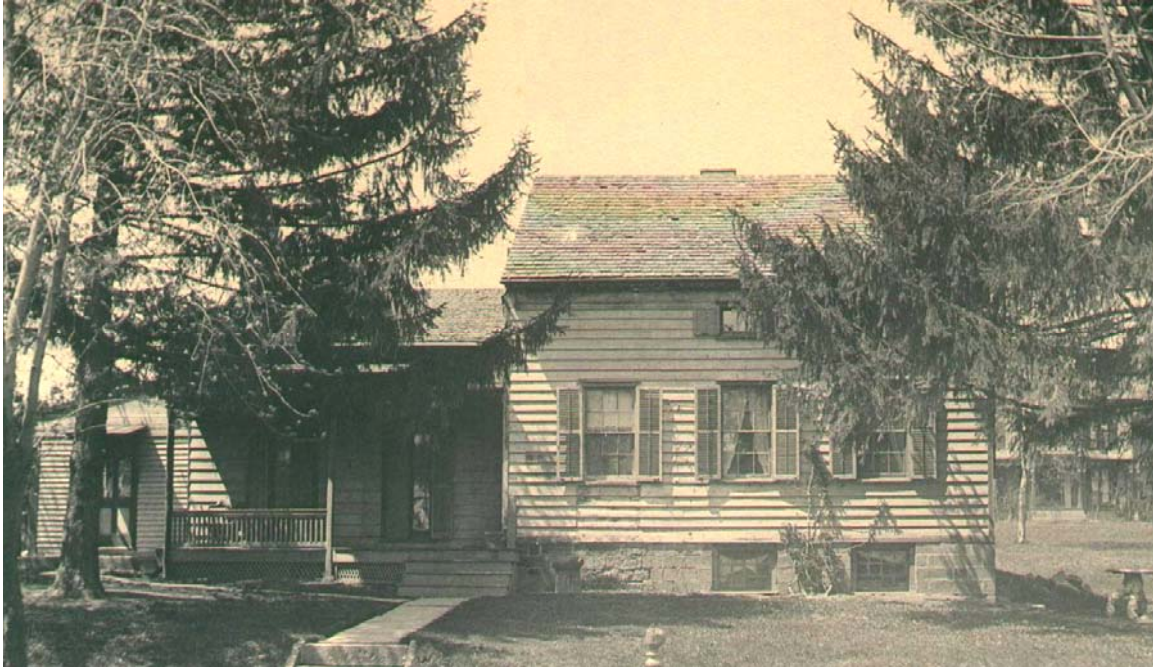
The Township of Montclair Historic Preservation Commission was created by ordinance in June of 1994. The Historic Preservation Commission is charged with accomplishing the protection, enhancement and perpetuation of especially noteworthy examples or elements of the township's environment in order to:

- (1) Safeguard the heritage of Montclair by preserving resources which reflect elements of its cultural, social, and architectural history
- (2) Encourage the continued use of historic and/or noteworthy buildings or structures
- (3) Foster civic pride in the history and architecture of the Township
- (4) Promote the economic welfare of the township through the preservation of historic sites and landscapes
- (5) Enhance the visual and aesthetic character, diversity continuity and interest in the township and its neighborhoods
- (6) Discourage the unnecessary demolition or other destruction of historic resources
- (7) Encourage beautification and private investment in the township
- (8) Promote the economic welfare of the township through the preservation of its historic sites and landscapes

As per **Montclair Code Section 347-135A**, criteria for designation, "the Commission shall consider as worthy of designation those buildings, structures, objects, sites and districts that have integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association and that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- (1) Are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- (2) Are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- (3) Embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; that represent the work of a master; that possess high artistic values; or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- (4) Have yielded or may be likely to yield information important to prehistory or history.
- (5) Are otherwise of particular historic significance to the Township of Montclair by reflecting or exemplifying the broad cultural, political, economic or social history of the nation, state, region or community."

## II. History of the Site, Physical Description, Statement of Significance



View from Orange Road, circa late 19<sup>th</sup> century

The Nathaniel Crane House was built in 1818 by Captain Nathaniel Crane, Jr., Israel Crane's cousin. In 1894, it was moved from the front to the rear of 108 Orange Road by Dr. James Henry Clark, Jr. to make way for his new residence (now known as the Clark House). During this time, the house apparently was no longer used as a residence. In fact, the smaller portion, likely a kitchen, was demolished right before being moved to the back of the property. It seems to have been used as an outbuilding that supported the Clark family occupancy, which lasted until 1962 when the Clark House property was purchased by the Sampson family.

In 1974, the Sampsons donated the Nathaniel Crane House to the Montclair Historical Society, but retained the Clark House as their residence. It was moved about seventy-five feet south in order to be located on the adjacent property of the recently relocated Israel Crane House.

Today, it houses two permanent exhibits: a general store, much like the one that Israel Crane established in Montclair, with artifacts from a 19<sup>th</sup> century general store in New England; and an 19<sup>th</sup> century school room with a collection of 19<sup>th</sup> century schoolbooks.

### **History**

Captain Nathaniel Crane, Jr., who was a militiaman and patriot from Essex County, built this farmhouse in 1818 on land that was part of the original three-hundred acres Jasper Crane (1605-1681) had willed to his sons Azariah and Jasper, Jr. in 1681. In 1694, Azariah built one of the first homes in the area on 55 Myrtle Avenue, near its intersection with Orange Road. A cornerstone from Nathaniel Crane's farmhouse dates back to 1732 from an even older structure. Made from solid oak framing timbers that are fastened by wood joints

instead of nails, Nathaniel's house stayed in the Crane family until 1851. That year, it was sold for \$4,000 to Stephen Paul along with 25 acres of land. Ossian Hatch bought the property four years later. A year before the American Civil War began, Henry Mason acquired the property. Three years after that, in 1863, Dr. James Henry Clark (1814-1869) purchased the house and used it as a retirement home until he passed away. At the time, Dr. Clark was an Army surgeon stationed in Newark.

In 1894, the ell (likely the kitchen) of Nathaniel Crane's old house was torn down while the larger section was rolled on logs by Dr. James Henry Clark, Jr. towards its new location in the backyard of 108 Orange Road. After being placed onto small brick piers, James likely used it as an outbuilding, such as a carriage house or a barn. While he was building the house that now bears his name, Dr. Clark incorporated some original Nathaniel Crane House artifacts such as a mantel piece, the brass andirons and fender, and even the mahogany stair rail.

In 1962, the Nathaniel Crane House was purchased by Dr. and Mrs. Martin Sampson. As part of the purchase of the larger Victorian house next door, it was sold by Dr. Clark's grandniece, Ann Borden-Smith. In 1974, the Sampsons donated the Nathaniel Crane House to the Montclair Historical Society. It was moved about seventy-five feet south in order to be located on the adjacent property of the recently relocated Israel Crane House. The 1732 stone was moved along with it, where it has remained ever since. A front door was added to the center bay and a window was added to the second floor for symmetry.

Today, the Nathaniel Crane House is used by the Montclair Historical Society as an exhibit of a nineteenth century general store on the first floor, much like the one owned by Israel Crane in the early nineteenth century. On the second floor, there is an exhibit featuring a nineteenth century schoolroom illustrating nineteenth century education in Montclair. During tours, visitors can view a portion of the house's interior simple framing construction through a glass window



**The general store exhibit at the Nathaniel Crane House**

In the late 18th century, Israel Crane opened a general store in Cranetown, on the Old Road to Bloomfield, now Glen Ridge Avenue. By 1805, Crane's store became such an important trading post that Israel Crane organized a company to construct the Newark-Pompton Turnpike, which connected the city to the farming regions. Townspeople could buy "dry goods," such as light weight articles that were not weighed or poured, "notions," such as pins, needles, and thread, "hardware," such as iron tools, nails, and crockery, "produce" such as salt pork, smoked hams, and dried fruits, and "West Indies goods and groceries," such as sugar, molasses and rum. Crane's store also carried medicine.

The general store at the Nathaniel Crane House is an authentic 19th century store, similar to the one owned by Israel Crane. The store merchandise, equipment, sales counters, gates, and post office pigeon holes were donated to the Montclair Historical Society in 1967 by Mrs. Roy Tomlinson.

*Photographs and Historical Narratives courtesy of the Montclair Historical Society.*



Moving the House, 1975



During exterior renovations, 2010

# Appendix A: Tax Map

110 Orange Road  
BLOCK 1304 LOT 12





[New Search](#)

Block: 1304 Prop Loc: 110 ORANGE ROAD Owner: MONTCLAIR HISTORICAL SOCIETY Square Ft: 4109  
 Lot: 12 District: 0713 MONTCLAIR Street: 110 ORANGE ROAD Year Built: 1796  
 Qual: Class: 15D City State: MONTCLAIR, N.J. 07042 Style:

Additional Information

Prior Block: Acct Num: Addl Lots: EPL Code: 24 3 375  
 Prior Lot: Mtg Acct: Land Desc: 43070SF Statute: 54:4-3.52  
 Prior Qual: Bank Code: 0 Bldg Desc: Initial: 110169 Further: 110109  
 Updated: 01/26/12 Tax Codes: Class4Cd: 0 Desc: DWELLING  
 Zone: R1 Map Page: Acreage: 0.9888 Taxes: 0.00 / 0.00

Sale Information

Sale Date: 00/00/00 Book: Page: Price: 0 NU#: 0

Sr1a	Date	Book	Page	Price	NU#	Ratio	Grantee
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TAX-LIST-HISTORY

Year	Owner Information	Land/Imp/Tot	Exemption	Assessed
2012	MONTCLAIR HISTORICAL SOCIETY 110 ORANGE ROAD MONTCLAIR, N.J. 07042	290800 664400 955200	0	955200
2011	MONTCLAIR HISTORICAL SOCIETY 110 ORANGE ROAD MONTCLAIR, N.J. 07042	596000 744700 1340700	0	1340700
2010	MONTCLAIR HISTORICAL SOCIETY 110 ORANGE ROAD MONTCLAIR, N.J. 07042	596000 744700 1340700	0	1340700
2009	MONTCLAIR HISTORICAL SOCIETY 110 ORANGE ROAD MONTCLAIR, N.J. 07042	596000 744700 1340700	0	1340700

# **Appendix B: Base Survey**

**Property Name:** NATHANIEL CRANE HOUSE

**Street Address:** 110 Orange Road

**Nearest Cross Street:** Union Street

**Apt/Unit #:**

**Local Place Name:** Montclair

**Municipality:** Montclair

**Ward (District):** 3 (7)

**Zip Code:** 07042

**Block / Lots:** 1304 / 12

**County:** Essex

**Map Reference:** 46-A/32

**USGS Quad:** Orange

**Lot Size:** 133' x 320' - 16'

**Owner Name:** Montclair Historical Society

**Ownership Type:** Private - Nonprofit

**Owner Address:** 108 Orange Rd., Montclair

**Ownership Updated:**

**Property Description**

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**Current Photograph**



**Elevation:** SE

**Image File #:** 100\_08951.jpg **Ref:** 9/18/12



Property Name: **NATHANIEL CRANE HOUSE**

**Property  
Description**

HISTORY

Captain Nathaniel Crane, Jr., who was a militiaman and patriot from Essex County, built this farmhouse in 1818 on land that was part of the original three-hundred acres Jasper Crane (1605-1681) had willed to his sons Azariah and Jasper, Jr. in 1681. In 1694, Azariah built one of the first homes in the area on 55 Myrtle Avenue, near its intersection with Orange Road. A cornerstone from Nathaniel Crane's farmhouse dates back to 1732 from an even older structure. Made from solid oak framing timbers that are fastened by wood joints instead of nails, Nathaniel's house stayed in the Crane family until 1851. That year, it was sold for \$4,000 to Stephen Paul along with 25 acres of land. Ossian Hatch bought the property four years later. A year before the American Civil War began, Henry Mason acquired the property. Three years after that, in 1863, Dr. James Henry Clark (1814-1869) purchased the house and used it as a retirement home until he passed away. At the time, Dr. Clark was an Army surgeon stationed in Newark.

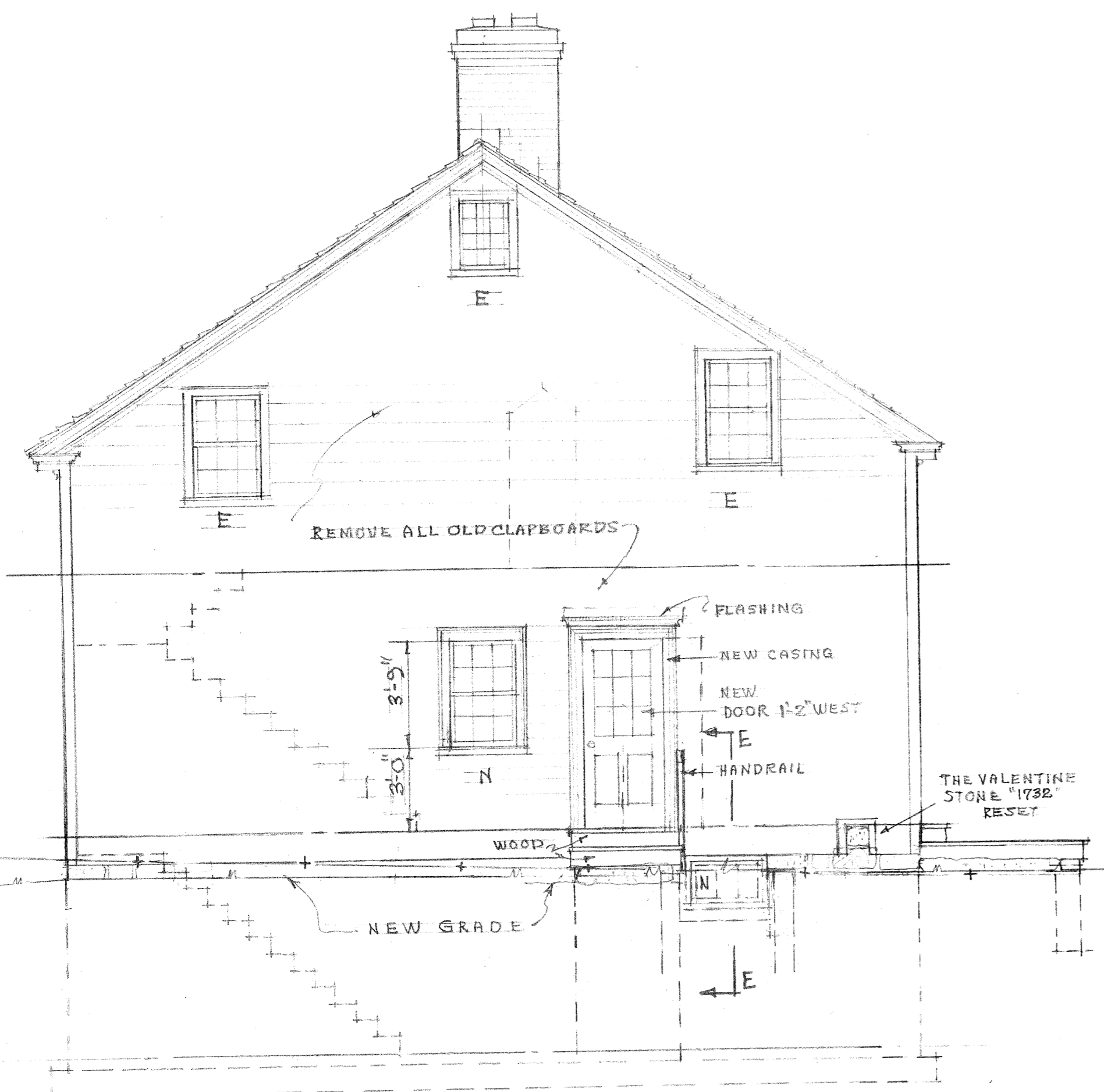
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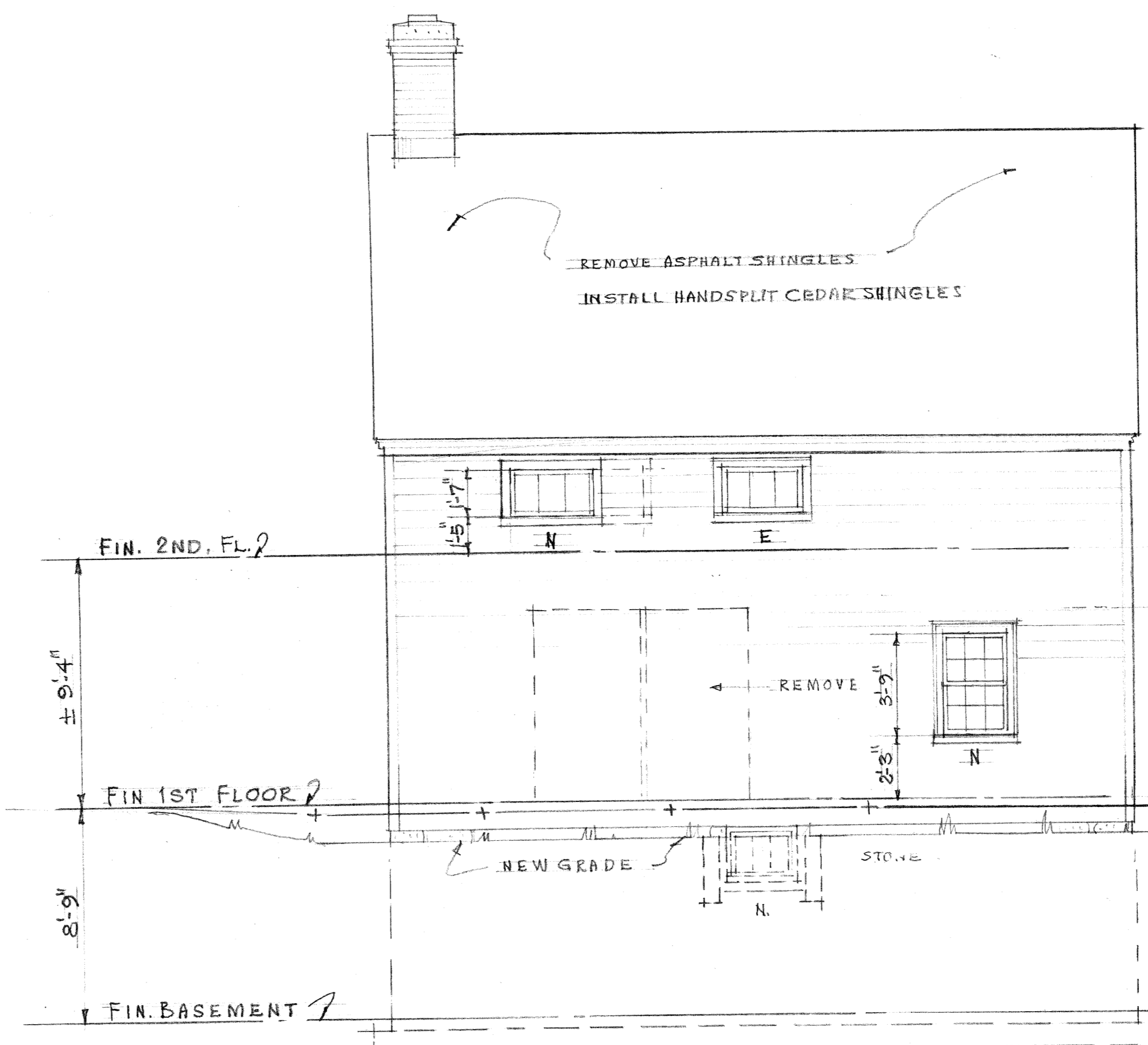
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# **Appendix C: Restoration Drawings**

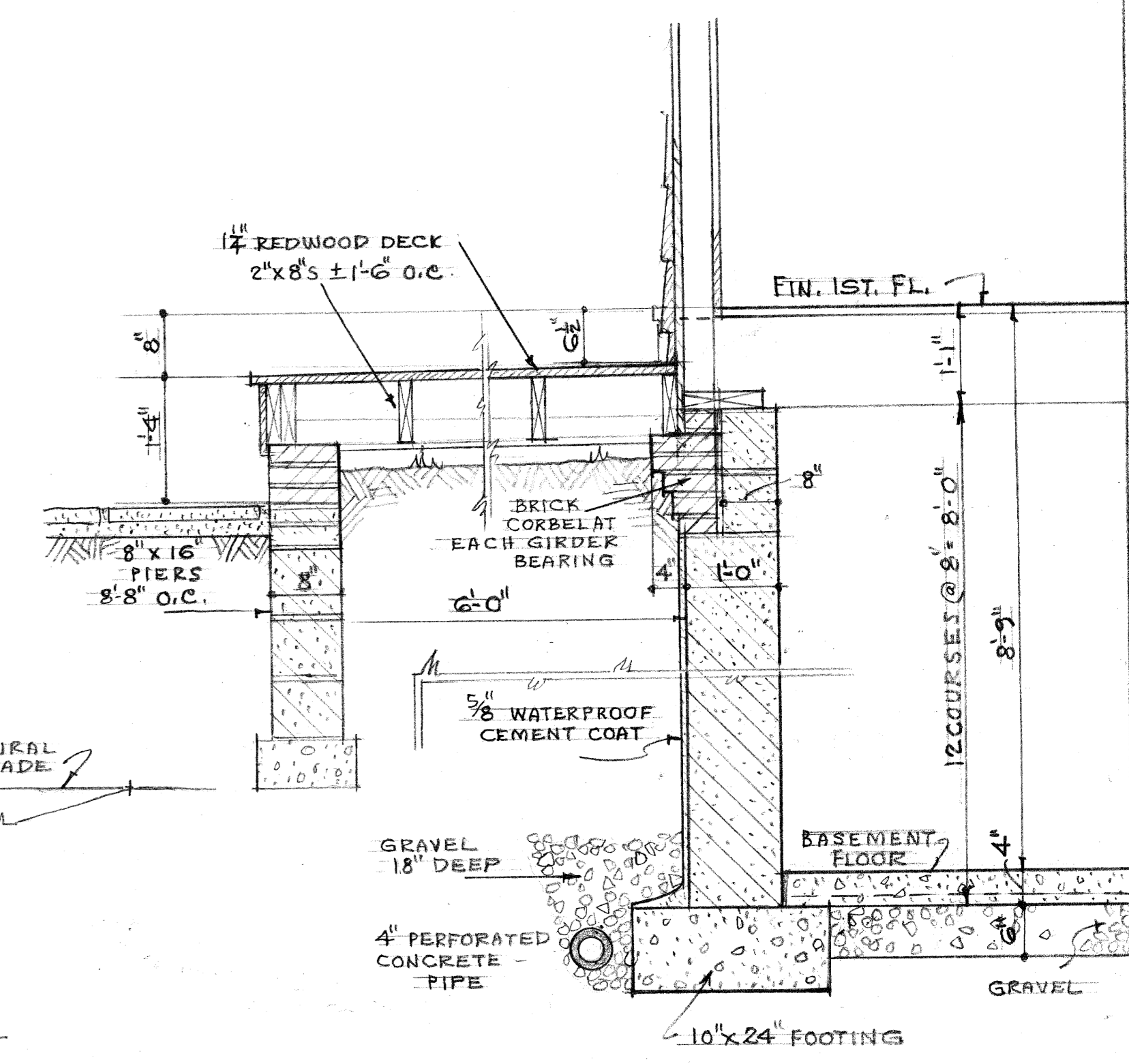




SOUTH ELEVATION

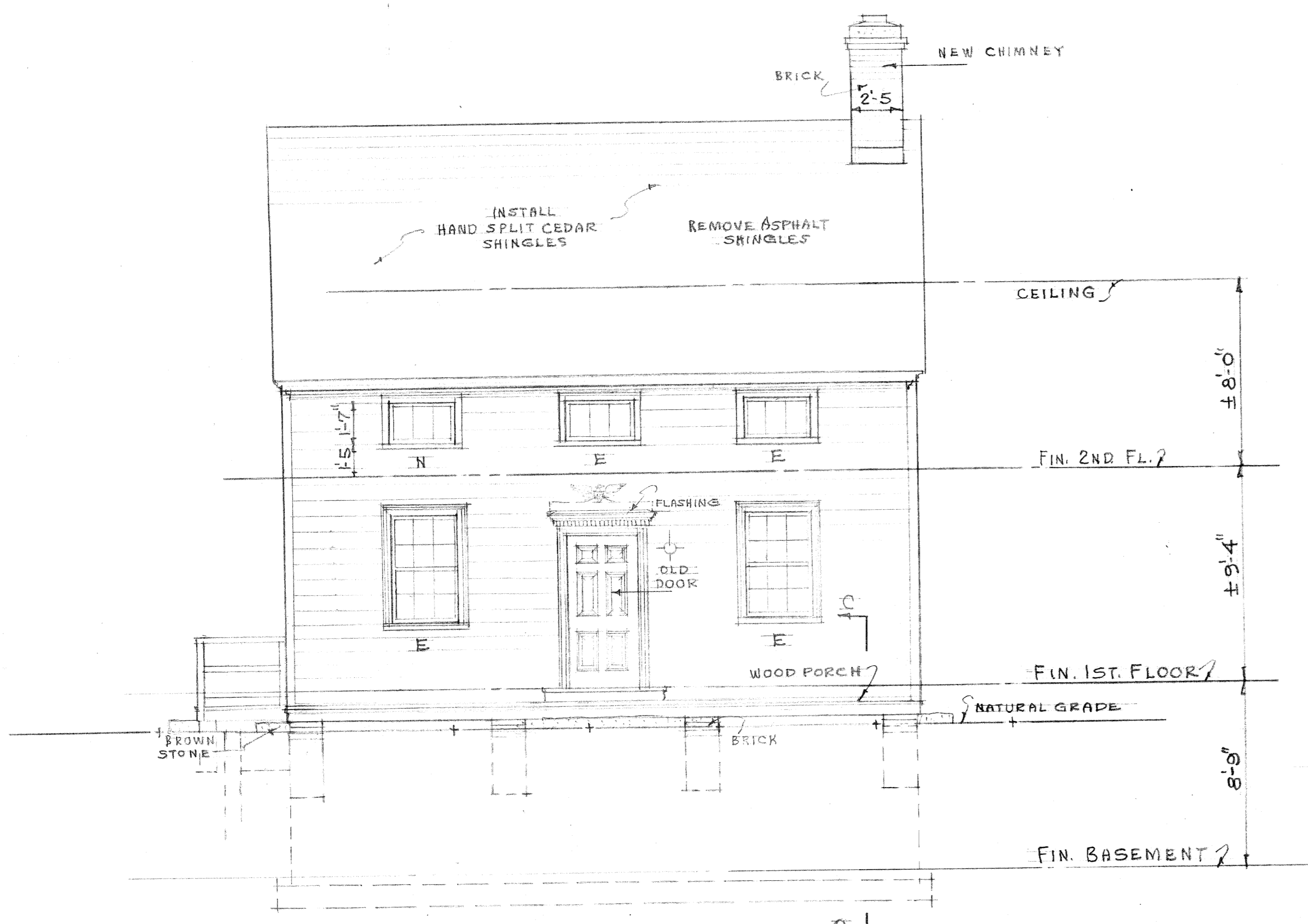


WEST ELEVATION

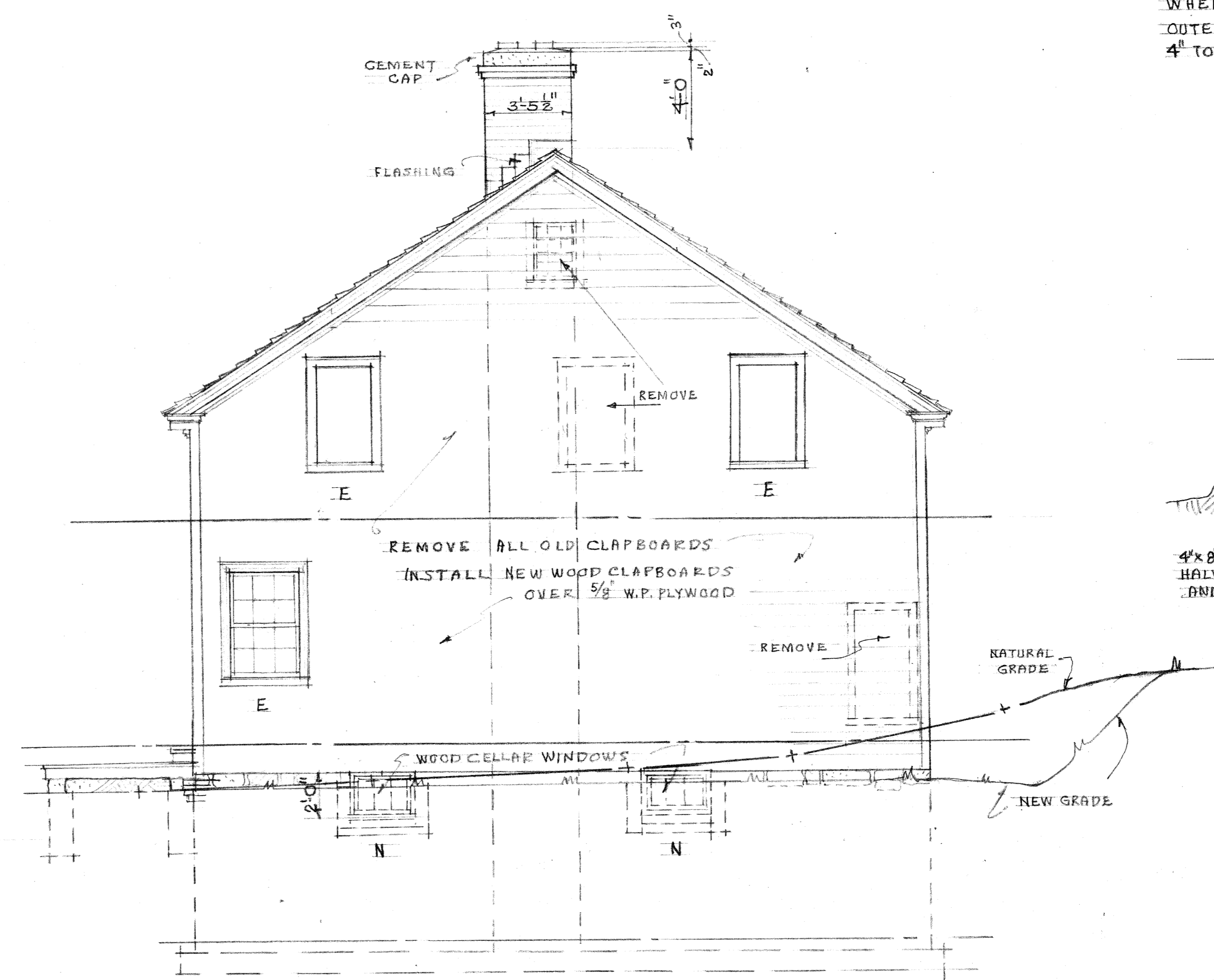


WALL SECTION C-C  
SCALE 3/4" = 1'-0"

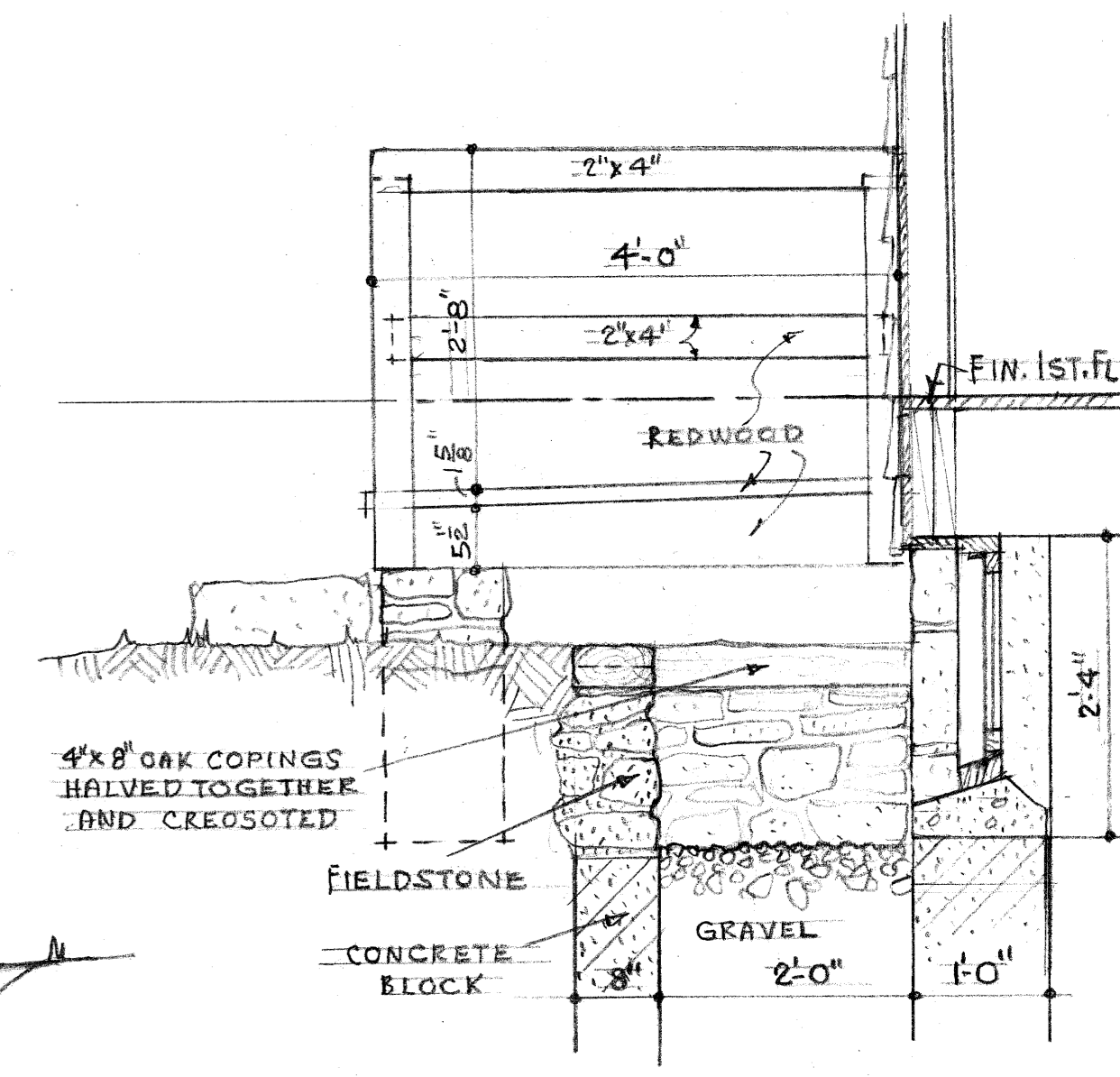
**NOTE** WHEREVER FOUNDATION WALLS SHOW, ABOVE GRADE, OUTER COURSES SHALL BE BROWN SAND STONE 4" TO 6" THICK.



EAST ELEVATION  
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



NORTH ELEVATION



SECTION E-E  
TYPICAL WINDOW WELL AND  
SMALL ENTRANCE PORCH  
IN SOUTH WALL  
REV. B SOUTH DOOR & WINDOW 1/14/75  
CHIMNEY  
REV. A PORCH CHANGED 12/11/74

**NOTE** "E" INDICATES EXISTING WINDOW OR DOOR OPENING.  
"N" INDICATES NEW WINDOW OR DOOR OPENING.  
ALL OLD WINDOWS TO BE REPLACED

J. L. BERRALL ARCHITECT 8 South Fullerton Ave., Montclair, N.J.	
<b>ELEVATIONS</b>	
ANTIQUE STORE BUILDING MONTCLAIR HISTORICAL SOCIETY 110 ORANGE RD., MONTCLAIR, N.J.	
<i>J. L. Berrall</i>	
2/30/74	DRAWING NO. 101