

# History of the John Buckelew House at the Pulda Farm Township of North Brunswick, New Jersey

Margaret Newman, Historian  
19 April 2016

Prepared for the North Brunswick Historical Society, Inc.

Grant funding has been provided by the Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission, Middlesex Board of Chosen Freeholders through a grant provided by the New Jersey Historical Commission, a division of the Department of State.



*Middlesex County  
Cultural & Heritage  
Commission*

## **INTRODUCTION**

In the fall of 2015, the North Brunswick Historical Society, Inc. commissioned a history report of the Pulda Farm, 300 Old Georges Road, North Brunswick. This 70-acre farm consists of a house and several outbuildings, set back from a major 17<sup>th</sup> century road. The physical form of the house and its location on Georges Road points to an early construction date but because the property has been in private hands until 2010, the history of the property is largely unknown. In 2013, the Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission undertook a brief evaluation of the house. This was supplemented by a May 2015 conditions assessment of the house by HMR Architects and a review of the barns by the New Jersey Barn Company.

This history report takes into account previous secondary sources about the history of the Farm as well as these recent reports. Additional research was completed online as well as at the Middlesex County Office of the County Clerk, the New Jersey State Archives and the Special Collections and University Archives at Rutgers University. Ultimately, it appears that the Pulda Farm was built in three major campaigns. John and Mary Allen Buckelew built the original house between 1746 and 1764; this original house is now a part of the eastern wing of the house. Obadiah Buckelew and his wife Abigail appear to have added the 2-story, 3-bay sidehall Federal-style section ca. 1796 after inheriting the house from John Buckelew. Following the Buckelew family tenure, the Austins owned the property for about five years and sold it to James and Eliza Webb who added to the south and east of the original house ca. 1860 to 1870 giving the house the basic footprint it has today.

The Pulda family followed the Webbs on the property, owning the house from 1906 until 2010. The Township of North Brunswick acquired the property in 2010. While the Puldas made some changes in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the house is in a remarkable state of preservation retaining most of its fabric from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL RESEARCH**

Because of the broad scale of Hill's 1781 map, it is difficult to confirm whether the Pulda Farm is shown on Georges Road. However, another set of maps, made in conjunction with the Revolutionary War, may help confirm the existence of a house on the property at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Robert Erskine made a series of maps beginning in 1778 documenting New Jersey. The "Rough Contractions in the Jerseys" series would probably confirm the original house's existence. These maps are available at the New-York Historical Society.

## IMPORTANT DATES IN THE HISTORY OF THE HOUSE AND THE LIVES OF ITS OCCUPANTS

Late 1600s	Black Horse Tavern and the Red Lion Tavern both exist on Georges Road <sup>1</sup>
1717	Birth of John Buckelew in North Brunswick, Middlesex, New Jersey. Son of Peter (born ca. 1695, Cheesquake to Peter and Mary or Lydia Buckelew, died 13 April 1780, Cheesequake) and Abigail Buckelew. <sup>2</sup>
12 June 1745	John “Buckerlew” of Middlesex County married Mary Allen (1727-1814), widow of Thomas Bartow of Middlesex County <sup>3</sup>
1746	<b>Peter Buckelew, yeoman of P.A. buys Tract 17, 154 acres, on the north side of Lawrence Brook from Joshua Smalley<sup>4</sup></b>
1746 -1764	<b>John and Mary Allen Buckelew built the original 1 ½ -story section, employing Dutch framing</b>
1750	Grist mill in North Brunswick
1761	First permanent settlement in North Brunswick <sup>5</sup>
15 September 1764	Birth of Frederick Buckelew (son of John and Mary Buckelew), North Brunswick <sup>6</sup>
July 1767	Birth of Obadiah Buckelew (son of John and Mary Buckelew), Middlesex County <sup>7</sup>
1778	Robert Erskine made a series of maps beginning in 1778 documenting New Jersey. If a house existed at this time, the “Rough Contraction in the Jerseys” series likely would show it as owned by John Buckelew. These maps are available at the New-York Historical Society

---

<sup>1</sup> North Brunswick Historical Committee, *North Brunswick* (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2011) 7.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.geni.com/people/John-Buckelew/6000000000334766964>

<sup>3</sup> NJ marriage records, Liber B (Part I 1711-1765), 45 <http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/ALLEN/1999-11/0942207139>

<sup>4</sup> Gerry Green, *Mary's People—The Buckelews* (Nursery, Texas: Privately Published, 1985), 24,25.

<sup>5</sup> *North Brunswick*, 7.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.geni.com/people/Fredrick-Buckelew/6000000000334762696>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.familycentral.net/index/family.cfm?ref1=4648:45&ref2=4648:54>

1781

Map of Georges Road. The scale of the map makes it difficult to pinpoint which house is the Pulda Farm but there are several houses between Georges Road and the Lawrence Brook that could be a possibility.<sup>8</sup>

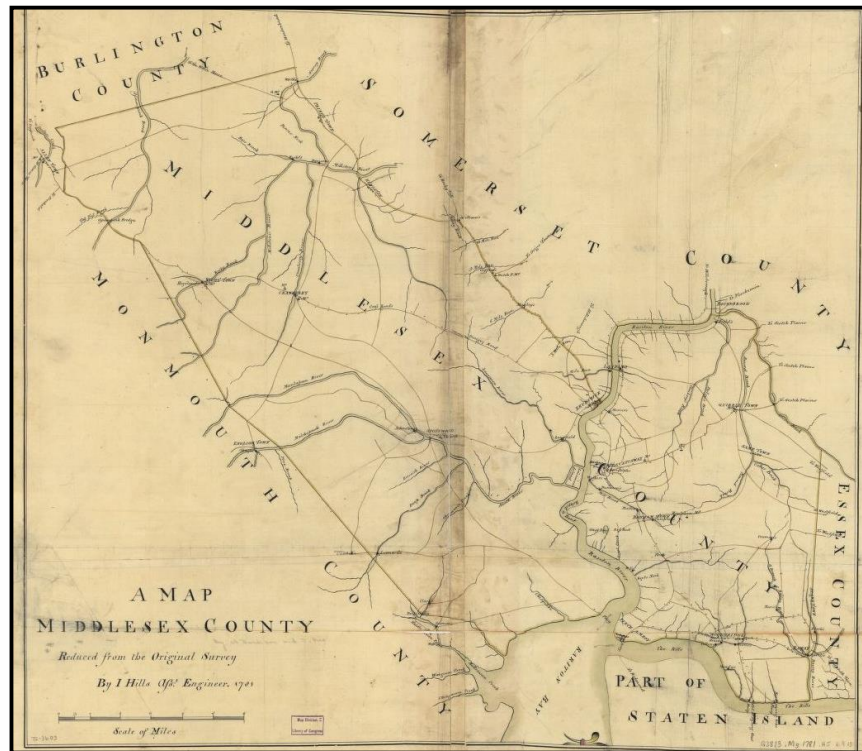


Figure 1: John Hill's 1781 Map of Middlesex County

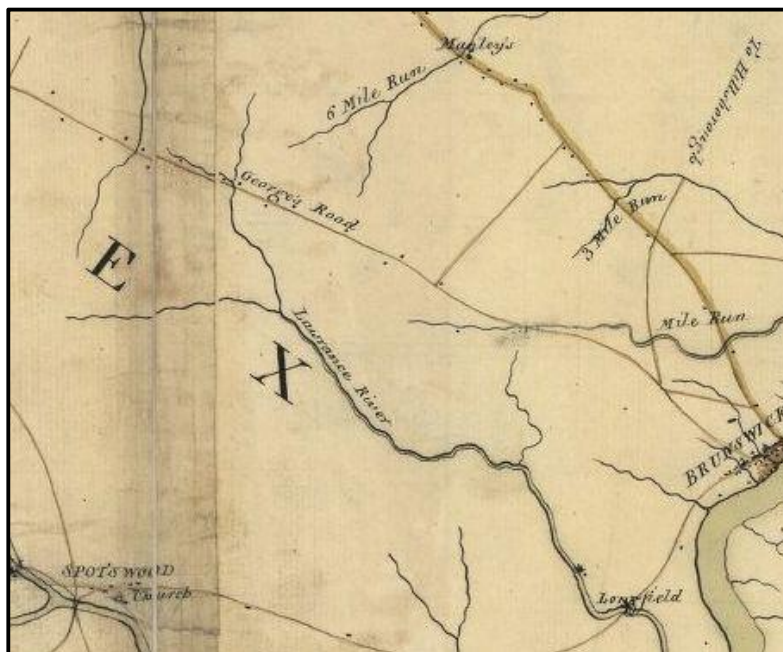


Figure 2: Inset of 1781 map. The Buckelew house may be shown between George's Road and the Lawrence River

<sup>8</sup> John Hill, "A Map of Middlesex County," 1781. <https://www.loc.gov/item/gm72003603/>

- 1793 Military census John Buckelew, 37; Peter, 41; Abraham, 36; Frederick, 30; Zachariah, 24.
- 17 January 1795 Lydia Buckelew (daughter of John and Mary Buckelew) married to Peter Bennet, New Brunswick Reformed Church
- 27 February 1795 Zachariah Buckelew (son of John and Mary Buckelew) married to Phebe Bennet, New Brunswick Reformed Church
- 3 April 1795 John Buckerlew wrote his will. Beneficiaries include:  
 Son Peter, given plantation he, Peter, was living on  
 Son John, money  
 Son Abraham, land plus part of a salt meadow  
*Sons Frederick and Obadiah, "the homestead or plantation" where John lives, equally divided as well as part of a salt meadow...decently and comfortably maintain my said wife, Mary Buckerlew on the farm which they shall possess after my Decease And she is to have the best bed, bedding and furniture"*  
 Wife, Mary, money  
 Son Zachariah, plantation where John Jr. lately lived  
 Daughter Hannah, wife of Peter Prevost, money  
 Daughter Abigail, wife of Jonathan Prevost, money  
 Daughter, Mary, wife of David Pettee/Petter, money  
 Daughter, Elizabeth Anne, wife of John Dehart, money  
 Daughter, Jane, wife of Nicholas Messeroll, money  
 Daughter, Lydia, wife of Peter Bennet, money  
 Daughter Margaret Burcerliew (later married William Caywood)<sup>9</sup>  
 John's negro man, Pompey was to become the property of his wife, Mary. If Pompey lived to become unfit for service, he was to live with any of John's sons and all of the sons were to contribute equally throughout his life.<sup>10</sup>
- 17 April 1795 Frederick Buckelew (son of John and Mary Buckelew) married to Phebe Meserol, New Brunswick Reformed Church
- 7 January 1796 Obadiah Buckelew (son of John and Mary Buckelew) married to Abigail Denton

<sup>9</sup> Joseph Klett, *Genealogies of New Jersey Families* From the Genealogical Magazine of New Jersey Volume 1  
[https://books.google.com/books?id=k4zStKaPmsEC&pg=PA169&lpg=PA169&dq=John+Buckerlew+married+Mary+Allen+of+Middlesex+County&source=bl&ots=6TK51FSSHj&sig=rklRXfT3qqrkr2m3VqSSrpm138M&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CDwQ6AEwBWovChMlp\\_7XwLHlyAIVAVQ-Ch3UpgZR#v=onepage&q=John%20Buckerlew%20married%20Mary%20Allen%20of%20Middlesex%20County&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=k4zStKaPmsEC&pg=PA169&lpg=PA169&dq=John+Buckerlew+married+Mary+Allen+of+Middlesex+County&source=bl&ots=6TK51FSSHj&sig=rklRXfT3qqrkr2m3VqSSrpm138M&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CDwQ6AEwBWovChMlp_7XwLHlyAIVAVQ-Ch3UpgZR#v=onepage&q=John%20Buckerlew%20married%20Mary%20Allen%20of%20Middlesex%20County&f=false)

<sup>10</sup> Green, 233

15 February 1796	Death of John Buckelew
March 1796	Inventory of John Buckelew
<b>Ca. 1796</b>	<b>Obadiah and Abigail Buckelew built the 2-story section using Dutch framing</b>
February 21, 1798	North Brunswick's second incorporation a result of lost records from the first incorporation on February 28, 1779
1797-1821	Obadiah Buckelew taxed for 153 acres; Frederick for 147 acres.
1803	Mary Ann Buckelew born, only child of Obadiah and Abigail Buckelew <sup>11</sup>
1808-1810	Obadiah Buckelew owned a slave
1813 and 1817	Obadiah Buckelew was taxed for a covered wagon, one of the few men in the township. Frederick Buckelew owned a slave
1820 and 1821	Obadiah Buckelew was taxed for a distillery
9 October 1823 (Book 16, page 488)	Obadiah and wife Abigail get easterly side of Georges Road Frederick and wife Phebe westerly side
1830	Federal Census for the Obadiah Buckelew family. Seven people living in the house including Obadiah and Abigail both in their 60s; a male between the ages of 30 and 40 and another 40-50 and two young girls 5-10. There is also a free colored male 10-24. <sup>12</sup>
23 January 1834	Death of Abigail Denton Buckelew, Obadiah's wife, 60 years:20 days <sup>13</sup>
1840	Federal Census for the Obadiah Buckalew Family. Obadiah is in his 70s and has three white women living with him: two between the ages of 15-19 and one in her 30s. Obadiah is listed as a farmer. <sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.oocities.org/~buckalew/rr01/rr01\\_048.htm](http://www.oocities.org/~buckalew/rr01/rr01_048.htm)

<sup>12</sup> 1830 Federal Census, [http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?gss=angs-g&new=1&rank=1&msT=1&gsfn=Obadiah&gsfn\\_x=0&gsln=Buckelew&gsln\\_x=0&mswpn\\_\\_ftp=North+Brunswick%2c+Middlesex%2c+New+Jersey%2c+USA&mswpn=8410&mswpn\\_PInfo=8-%7c0%7c1652393%7c0%7c2%7c3244%7c33%7c0%7c2012%7c8410%7c0%7c&MSAV=0&msbdy=1767&cp=0&catbucke=rstp&pcat=ROOT\\_CATEGORY&h=1453926&recoff=8+9&db=1830usfedcenancestry&indiv=1&ml\\_rpos=4](http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?gss=angs-g&new=1&rank=1&msT=1&gsfn=Obadiah&gsfn_x=0&gsln=Buckelew&gsln_x=0&mswpn__ftp=North+Brunswick%2c+Middlesex%2c+New+Jersey%2c+USA&mswpn=8410&mswpn_PInfo=8-%7c0%7c1652393%7c0%7c2%7c3244%7c33%7c0%7c2012%7c8410%7c0%7c&MSAV=0&msbdy=1767&cp=0&catbucke=rstp&pcat=ROOT_CATEGORY&h=1453926&recoff=8+9&db=1830usfedcenancestry&indiv=1&ml_rpos=4)

<sup>13</sup> Green, 234

<sup>14</sup> 1840 Federal Census  
[http://interactive.ancestry.com/8057/4409454\\_00078?pid=3695051&backurl=http%3a%2f%2fsearch.ancestry.com%2f%2fcgi-bin%2fsse.dll%3fgss%3dangs-g%26new%3d1%26rank%3d1%26msT%3d1%26gsfn%3dObadiah%26gsfn\\_x%3d0%26gsln%3dBuckelew%26gsln\\_x](http://interactive.ancestry.com/8057/4409454_00078?pid=3695051&backurl=http%3a%2f%2fsearch.ancestry.com%2f%2fcgi-bin%2fsse.dll%3fgss%3dangs-g%26new%3d1%26rank%3d1%26msT%3d1%26gsfn%3dObadiah%26gsfn_x%3d0%26gsln%3dBuckelew%26gsln_x)



- 12 March 1847      Death of Obadiah Buckelew, 80
- 21 April 1847      Estate papers of Obadiah Buckelew establishing Peter O. Buckelew and Isaac G. Williamson (Obadiah's son-in-law) as executors of Buckelew's estate who died without a will<sup>15</sup>
- 1 June 1848  
(Book 47, page 427)      Deed, Heirs of Obadiah Buckelew to Edward Austin of New York containing 101.5 acres for \$3,346
- 1850      Map, "E. Alston" but really Edward Austin<sup>16</sup>



Figure 3: 1850 Map with Austin as owner

- 28 March 1853      Deed, Edward Austin of North Brunswick to John A. Austin of Putnam County, NY containing 101.5 acres for \$3,346  
(Book 60, page 441)
- 6 June 1853      Deed, John A. Austin to Eliza Ann and James Webb containing 101.5 acres for \$3,356  
(Book 61, page 579)
- 1860      Federal Census for the James Webb family. With the exception of the two young children who were born in South Carolina (Julia) and New Jersey (John), the Webbs and the Austins were all born in New York. The value of Webb's real estate was listed as \$6,000 and his personal estate as \$1,000.

%3d0%26mswpn\_\_ftp%3dNorth%2bBrunswick%252c%2bMiddlesex%252c%2bNew%2bJersey%252c%2bUSA%26mswpn%3d8410%26mswpn\_PInfo%3d8-  
%257c0%257c1652393%257c0%257c2%257c3244%257c33%257c0%257c2012%257c8410%257c0%257c%26MSAV  
%3d0%26msbdy%3d1767%26cp%3d0%26catbucket%3drstp%26ti%3d0%26pcat%3dROOT\_CATEGORY%26h%3d36  
95051%26recoff%3d8%2b9%2b20%2b21%26db%3d1840usfedcenancestry%26indiv%3d1%26ml\_rpos%3d20&treei  
d=&personid=&hintid=&usePUB=true

<sup>15</sup> [http://interactive.ancestry.com/8796/005676220\\_00717?pid=12778&backurl=http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv%3Dtry%26db%3DUSProbateNJ%26h%3D12778&usePUB=true#?imageld=005676220\\_00719](http://interactive.ancestry.com/8796/005676220_00717?pid=12778&backurl=http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv%3Dtry%26db%3DUSProbateNJ%26h%3D12778&usePUB=true#?imageld=005676220_00719)

<sup>16</sup> J.W. Otley, *Map of Middlesex County, New Jersey* (Camden, N.J. : L. Van Derveer, 1850).

Presumably Eliza Webb's maiden name was Austin so it was an extended family that lived in the house including her parents and a niece and a nephew.

James H. Webb, 48, a farmer

Eliza A Webb, 47

James H. Webb, 18

Castella Webb, 16

John H. Austin, 77

Martha Austin, 76

Julia F. Austin, 8

John H. Austin, 2

Leonard Jackstadtner, 24, a farm laborer

1861

Map, Jas. H. Webb<sup>17</sup>

1860-1870

**Webb constructed the addition to the east and south of the original house turned kitchen wing**

1870

Federal Census for the James Webb family. The value of Webb's real estate was now listed as \$10,000 with personal estate as \$2,490. James continued to be listed as a farmer as was his son. His daughter continued to live at the house as did Sophia Hardenburgh, age 13 and William Henry, age 18. Presumably these were paid staff. John Austin, age 56, also lived in the house.

1872

Death of James H. Webb , buried Van Liew Cemetery

1876 Map, Estate of James Webb<sup>18</sup>

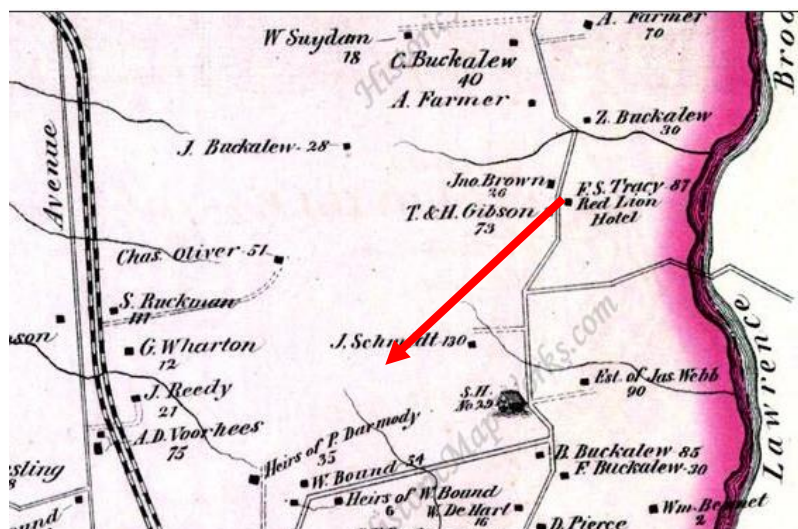


Figure 4: 1876 Map, Webb as owner

<sup>17</sup> H.F. Walling and Smith, Gallup & Co. *Map of the County of Middlesex, New Jersey : from actual surveys* (New York : Published by Smith, Gallup & Co., 1861).

<sup>18</sup> Everts & Stewart, *Combination Atlas Map of Middlesex County* (Philadelphia: Everts and Stewart, 1876), 37.



1878	Death of Eliza A. Webb, buried Van Liew Cemetery <sup>19</sup>
19 May 1879	Louis Pulda born in Austria <sup>20</sup>
1880	Federal Census for the Webb Family James H. Welb [sic], Farmer, 37 Castella Welb [sic], House Keeper, 35 William H. Austin, Uncle, Retired from Show Business, 63 <sup>21</sup>
26 May 1881	Death of William H. Austin, buried Van Liew Cemetery <sup>22</sup>
1883 and 1886	James Webb was no longer listed in the farmhouse. The house may be uninhabited. <sup>23</sup>
1892	Louis Pulda immigrated to the U.S. from Bohemia <sup>24</sup>
1895	New Jersey State Census, James Webb living with the David Pearce family, neighbors
1900	Federal Census. James H. Webb, boarder, 58, lived with Thomas and Mary Backelew, neighbors
1900-1920	Federal Census. Castella Webb lived in Jersey City, NJ with the Austin family, Samuel, her uncle and then 1910 and 1920, Martha, her cousin <sup>25</sup>
1905	New York State Census. Louis, 24, and Cecelia (born in the U.S. to German parents), 22, Pulda living in Brooklyn with Cecilia's parents, Anton and Ateldia Aveltdt with their son Frank, 2. <sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gsr&GSln=Webb&GSiman=1&GScnty=1918&>

<sup>20</sup> New York, Petitions for Naturalization: [http://interactive.ancestry.com/2280/32955\\_151413\\_0061-01289?pid=1177724&backurl=http%3a%2f%2fsearch.ancestry.com%2f%2fcgi-bin%2fse.dll%3findiv%3d1%26db%3dNYNaturalizationPetitions%26h%3d1177724%26tid%3d%26pid%3d%26usePUB%3dtrue%26rhSource%3d2442&treeid=&personid=&hintid=&usePUB=true](http://interactive.ancestry.com/2280/32955_151413_0061-01289?pid=1177724&backurl=http%3a%2f%2fsearch.ancestry.com%2f%2fcgi-bin%2fse.dll%3findiv%3d1%26db%3dNYNaturalizationPetitions%26h%3d1177724%26tid%3d%26pid%3d%26usePUB%3dtrue%26rhSource%3d2442&treeid=&personid=&hintid=&usePUB=true)

<sup>21</sup> <http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?db=1880usfedcen&indiv=try&h=49675261>

<sup>22</sup> [http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?gss=angs-g&new=1&rank=1&msT=1&gsfn=William+H.&gsfn\\_x=0&gsln=Austin&gsln\\_x=0&mswpn\\_\\_ftp=North+Brunswick%2c+Middlesex%2c+New+Jersey%2c+USA&mswpn=8410&mswpn\\_PInfo=8-7c0%7c1652393%7c0%7c2%7c3244%7c33%7c0%7c2012%7c8410%7c0%7c&MSAV=1&msbdy=1817&cp=0&catbucket=rstp&uidh=3k4&pcat=ROOT\\_CATEGORY&h=497265704&recoff=9+10+11&db=FSNewJerseyDeath&indiv=1&ml\\_rpos=3](http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?gss=angs-g&new=1&rank=1&msT=1&gsfn=William+H.&gsfn_x=0&gsln=Austin&gsln_x=0&mswpn__ftp=North+Brunswick%2c+Middlesex%2c+New+Jersey%2c+USA&mswpn=8410&mswpn_PInfo=8-7c0%7c1652393%7c0%7c2%7c3244%7c33%7c0%7c2012%7c8410%7c0%7c&MSAV=1&msbdy=1817&cp=0&catbucket=rstp&uidh=3k4&pcat=ROOT_CATEGORY&h=497265704&recoff=9+10+11&db=FSNewJerseyDeath&indiv=1&ml_rpos=3)

<sup>23</sup> New Brunswick City Directory

<sup>24</sup> Louis Pulda Naturalization petition

<sup>25</sup> [http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?gss=angs-g&new=1&rank=1&msT=1&gsfn=Castella&gsfn\\_x=0&gsln=Webb&gsln\\_x=0&MSAV=1&msbdy=1846&cp=0&catbucket=rstp&uidh=3k4&pcat=ROOT\\_CATEGORY&h=65846964&db=1900usfedcen&indiv=1&ml\\_rpos=3](http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?gss=angs-g&new=1&rank=1&msT=1&gsfn=Castella&gsfn_x=0&gsln=Webb&gsln_x=0&MSAV=1&msbdy=1846&cp=0&catbucket=rstp&uidh=3k4&pcat=ROOT_CATEGORY&h=65846964&db=1900usfedcen&indiv=1&ml_rpos=3)

<sup>26</sup> New York State Census, 1905 <http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&db=General-7364&h=234859&tid=&pid=&usePUB=true&rhSource=7884>

1 April 1906	Deed, James H. Webb and Castella R. Webb, heirs of Eliza Ann Webb who died intestate, of North Brunswick to Louis and Cecilia Pulda of Brooklyn containing 101.5 acres for \$4,200
1909-10	Lewis [sic was spelled Louis] Pulda listed in the New Brunswick City Directory on Rural Route 4 as is James H. Webb <sup>27</sup>
1910	Federal Census for the Pulda Family. Louis, 30, a "general" farmer and Cecelia, 28, Pulda living on Georges Road with sons Frank, 7 and John, 1 and daughter Cecelia, 4. <sup>28</sup>
1920	Federal Census for the Pulda Family. Louis and Cecelia with Cecelia, 13, John, 11, Agnes, 9, Walter, 5 and Joseph, 2. Interestingly, Joe Pulda, a wagonmaker, lived on Georges Road as well with same birthplace and immigration date. It seems likely that this was Louis's brother. <sup>29</sup>
1922	Death of Cecilia Pulda, buried in St. Peters Cemetery, New Brunswick <sup>30</sup>
1928	Louis Pulda conveyed title of the property to his daughter, Cecilia Pulda.
1930	Federal Census for the Pulda Family. Louis Pulda, a dairy farmer, was living with his children, Cecilia, John, Agnes, Walter, Joseph and William. Joe Pulda and family also remain on Georges Road. <sup>31</sup>
1940	Federal Census for the Pulda Family. Louis, 61, a farmer with Celia, 33; John, 30, a millwright at an asbestos plant; Agnes, 27, a packer at a fireworks company; Walter, 25, and Joseph, 22, both machinist at a machine shop and William, 18, a new worker. <sup>32</sup>
1965	Death of Louis Pulda, buried in St. Peters Cemetery, New Brunswick
1984	Death of Cecilia Pulda, daughter of Cecilia and Louis Pulda, leaving as heirs her brothers, William, Walter and Joseph Pulda

<sup>27</sup> <https://archive.org/stream/newbrunswicknewj19091910polk#page/648/mode/2up> pages 648-49

<sup>28</sup> [http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-](http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?db=1910USCenIndex&h=16577930&indiv=try&o_cvc=Image:OtherRecord)

[bin/sse.dll?db=1910USCenIndex&h=16577930&indiv=try&o\\_cvc=Image:OtherRecord](http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?db=1910USCenIndex&h=16577930&indiv=try&o_cvc=Image:OtherRecord)

<sup>29</sup> [http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-](http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&db=1920usfedcen&h=81392086&tid=&pid=&usePUB=true&rhSource=7884)

[bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&db=1920usfedcen&h=81392086&tid=&pid=&usePUB=true&rhSource=7884](http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&db=1920usfedcen&h=81392086&tid=&pid=&usePUB=true&rhSource=7884)

<sup>30</sup> [http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?gss=angs-](http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?gss=angs-g&new=1&rank=1&msT=1&gsfn=Cecilia+&gsfn_x=0&gsln=Pulda&gsln_x=0&mawpn__ftp=North+Brunswick%2c+M)

[g&new=1&rank=1&msT=1&gsfn=Cecilia+&gsfn\\_x=0&gsln=Pulda&gsln\\_x=0&mawpn\\_\\_ftp=North+Brunswick%2c+Middlesex%2c+New+Jersey%2c+USA&mawpn=8410&mawpn\\_PInfo=8-%7c0%7c1652393%7c0%7c2%7c3244%7c33%7c0%7c2012%7c8410%7c0%7c&MSAV=1&cp=0&catbucket=rstp&uidh=3k4&pcat=ROOT\\_CATEGORY&h=38158701&db=FindAGraveUS&indiv=1&ml\\_rpos=9](http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?gss=angs-g&new=1&rank=1&msT=1&gsfn=Cecilia+&gsfn_x=0&gsln=Pulda&gsln_x=0&mawpn__ftp=North+Brunswick%2c+Middlesex%2c+New+Jersey%2c+USA&mawpn=8410&mawpn_PInfo=8-%7c0%7c1652393%7c0%7c2%7c3244%7c33%7c0%7c2012%7c8410%7c0%7c&MSAV=1&cp=0&catbucket=rstp&uidh=3k4&pcat=ROOT_CATEGORY&h=38158701&db=FindAGraveUS&indiv=1&ml_rpos=9)

<sup>31</sup> [http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-](http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&db=1930usfedcen&h=18722226&tid=&pid=&usePUB=true&rhSource=6061)

[bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&db=1930usfedcen&h=18722226&tid=&pid=&usePUB=true&rhSource=6061](http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&db=1930usfedcen&h=18722226&tid=&pid=&usePUB=true&rhSource=6061)

<sup>32</sup> [http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-](http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&db=1940usfedcen&h=132947744&tid=&pid=&usePUB=true&rhSource=6224)

[bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&db=1940usfedcen&h=132947744&tid=&pid=&usePUB=true&rhSource=6224](http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&db=1940usfedcen&h=132947744&tid=&pid=&usePUB=true&rhSource=6224)

1987	Walter and Katherine Pulda give their 1/3 share of the property to Joseph and William Pulda
1988	Joseph Pulda died giving his interest in the property to his brother William
2010	Township of North Brunswick acquired the Pulda Farm
2012	Walter Pulda died <sup>33</sup>
2014	William Pulda died <sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> Piscataway Funeral Home obituary, Walter Pulda (November 10, 2012)

<sup>34</sup> *Asbury Park Press* (June 30, 2014)

## CONSTRUCTION CHRONOLOGY OF THE HOUSE

### PHASE I

#### *Original construction, John and Mary Allen Buckelew, 1746-1764*

European settlers arrived in the area that became the Township of North Brunswick in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. While the Red Lion may have existed on Georges Road since the late-17<sup>th</sup> century, an established community didn't exist until later; this began with a grist mill on what is now Farrington Lake which was joined by a snuff factory and tannery. The community grew and by 1781 houses can be seen dotting George's Road. The early settlers were of Dutch and English descent.

According to one source, the Peter Buckelew family purchased land in North Brunswick in 1746. While this cannot be confirmed as deeds are not readily available in Middlesex County before 1784, it is known that by 1764, John Buckelew, Peter's son, was living in North Brunswick and that by 1795 when John Buckelew wrote his will, there was a house on the property that later became known as the Pulda Farm.

This early house, which is presumed to have been built between 1746 -1764 by John and Mary Allen Buckelew, was a 1 ½ story, 16 ft.-by- 16 ft. frame dwelling with a gable roof probably with little or no overhanging eave, typical for Middlesex County Dutch farmhouses.<sup>35</sup> It was set back from George's Road and faced southeast. It sat above a shallow crawlspace and although additions to the south and east and later remodeling somewhat obscure the original plan, it likely was one room on both floors with a center door at both the north and south elevations (these openings remain) which on the north side definitely was flanked by windows (although the sash have been replaced the original openings remain; their small size indicate an early date of construction). The window on the south side could also be an original, albeit enlarged, opening. A large fireplace was roughly centered on the west wall with an adjacent enclosed stair or ladder providing access to the upper half story. The low ceiling of this space, which originally had a plaster ceiling above the exposed floor framing of the attic above, is also indicative of an early construction date.

According to Harrison Meeske, early Hudson Valley Dutch homes were typically a single 18-by-18 or 20-by-20 room with a floor raised one to three feet above the ground.<sup>36</sup> In Bergen County, New Jersey, these early one-room Dutch houses were typically 19-by-19 and began to be constructed starting roughly in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>37</sup> The dimensions of these early Dutch houses were based on the Dutch system of structural framing in which wooden bents—or structural members with a capital-H shape with the crossbar serving as the floor framing of the upper ½ story—were spaced 3 ½-4 ft. a part. The Dutch employed an odd number of these H-bents, generally 5 or 7, resulting in

---

<sup>35</sup> Rosalie Fellows Bailey, *Pre-Revolutionary Dutch Houses and Families in Northern New Jersey and Southern New York* (New York: Dover Publications, 1968), 386.

<sup>36</sup> Harrison Meeske, *The Hudson Valley Dutch and Their Houses* (Fleischmanns, New York: Purple Mountain Press, 1998), 279.

<sup>37</sup> T. Robins Brown and Schuyler Warmflash, *The Architecture of Bergen County, New Jersey: The Colonial Period to the Twentieth Century* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2000), 14.

the 18-20 foot footprint. While the original house that John Buckelew constructed was smaller than was typically constructed—if it had 5 bents originally, they only were spaced 3 ft. 2 in. apart—it did have a square footprint and the first floor was raised up a couple of feet from grade, similar to early Bergen County and Hudson Valley examples.

This one-room deep plan was the typical beginning to a Dutch farmstead. Because of the necessity to quickly establish shelter, first houses were often small with only a single room topped by an attic.<sup>38</sup> The south façade of this early house, like today, had a central entrance. Originally, there may have been a Dutch “stoep” at the entrance; a platform in front of the door with railings and backless benches at either side which was a popular gathering place for the family.<sup>39</sup>

On the interior, the first floor had a large cooking fireplace on the west wall and was the main living area of the house. The interior walls were likely plastered, tradition holds that the Dutch tended to plaster their interior walls.<sup>40</sup> This room was the center of the Buckelew family life. Here is where most of the indoor living—cooking, eating, and laboring—occurred. In addition to the numerous activities during the daylight hours, sleeping may very well have occurred in this dwelling room. “The division of public rooms and private bed chambers was a late eighteenth-century development. In early homes, and in small houses into the later colonial era, rooms were seldom used for a single purpose...Many families did all their living in one or two rooms.”<sup>41</sup> John and Mary Allen Buckelew had thirteen children and at least one slave. By today’s standards this would have been a very cramped house. However, in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, this was a traditional Dutch vernacular house.

Features remaining from the original construction include the size, shape and ceiling height of the first floor, possibly some of the plaster walls, the floor framing of both the first and attic floors, the large fireplace base, possibly the fenestration, especially on the north side, and the door openings. In addition, there is Dutch door that survives up in the attic, separating the original house from the western addition. It is possible this is an original exterior door.

According to a Buckelew Family genealogy book, the gravestones of the family cemetery date between 1796 and 1860. The members who lived in the house include:

16 August 1815	Frederick Buckelew, age 8 years
15 February 1825	Frederick Buckelew, age 60 years, 5 months
23 January 1834	Abigail Denton Buckelew, Obadiah’s wife, 60:20 days
7 March 1837	Zachariah Buckelew, 68:15 days
12 March 1847	Obadiah Buckelew, 80 <sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup> Geoffrey Gross and Roderic H. Blackburn. *Dutch Colonial Houses in America* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2002), 48.

<sup>39</sup> Bailey, 27.

<sup>40</sup> Meeske, 278.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 276.

<sup>42</sup> Green, 234

Besides the house and these gravestones, it is unclear what else remains of the 18<sup>th</sup> century landscape.



Figure 5: The smaller wing of the Zabriskie-Christie House in Dumont, Bergen County was the original house, likely built in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. Aside from the different building materials, it is similar to the house the Buckelews built with its 1 ½ height, steep roof with minimal eave and asymmetrical fenestration. HABS NJ,2-DUMO

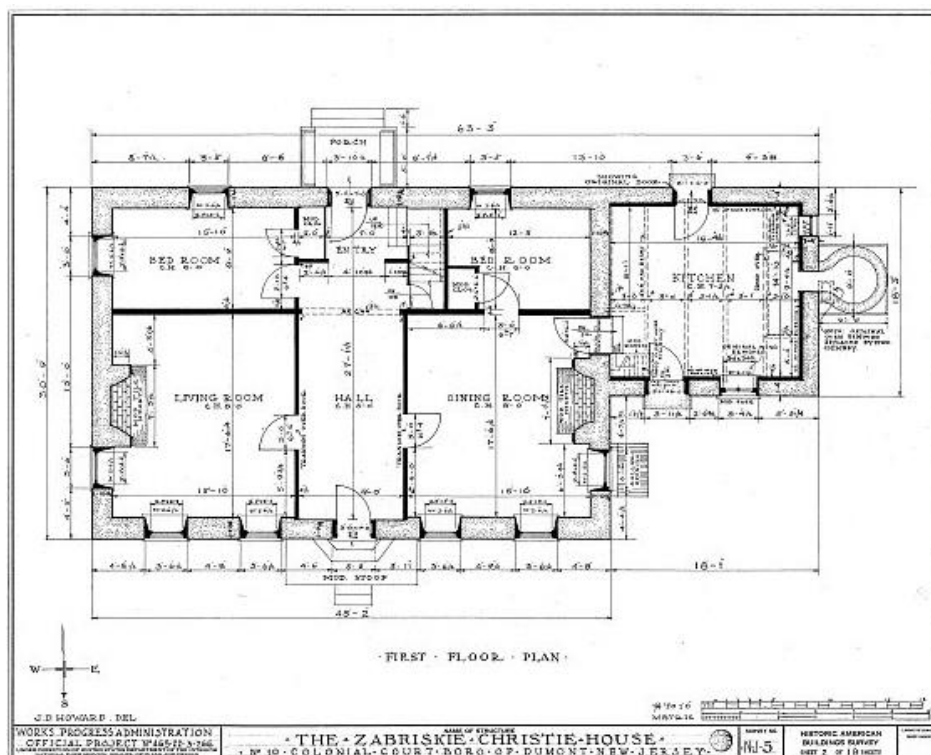


Figure 6: The square plan of the original section of the house (right wing), large fireplace on the gable end wall and exterior doors on each side is similar to the original house the Buckelews built. HABS NJ,2-DUMO



## **PHASE II**

### ***West addition, Obadiah and Abigail Denton Buckelew, ca. 1796***

John Buckelew died in 1796. His newly-married son, Obadiah, inherited the property. It is believed that soon thereafter, Obadiah and his wife, Abigail Denton Buckelew, built the two-story west section. This two-story, three bay sidehall plan addition in the Federal style is less Dutch than the original house and more English in style. However, Obadiah Buckelew continued the cultural tradition of his father and used Dutch, H-bent framing. This resulted in a Dutch-English hybrid, common in central New Jersey at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. While Middlesex County was settled largely by English and Scotch, the Dutch settlers continued their own building traditions. By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, these cultures and through it the architectural traditions and styles had merged, creating English floor plans built using Dutch building systems. The formal hall with doors on each end flanked by stacked parlors with centered fireplaces and decorative mantels and built-in cupboards are quintessentially English in the Federal style. But the framing system of 8-bents spaced 4 feet apart is Dutch in tradition.

This was a typical development pattern in New Jersey. The first settler, in this case John Buckelew, tended to build a utilitarian, culturally vernacular house on his undeveloped property. As the family became more settled and wealth increased, the descendant Obadiah, added onto the original house, often laterally at the wall opposite the original fireplace. These additions were typically more formal and more high style, representing the family's prominence in the community as well as the later 18<sup>th</sup> century desire for architectural styles and use-specific rooms. By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, communal living was no longer acceptable and separate parlors and individual sleeping chambers became the norm.<sup>43</sup>

Following the construction of the addition, the original house became the kitchen wing above which was likely occupied by the slave that Obadiah owned through 1810. The Buckelews used the parlors on the ground floor—one was likely private and one more public—and inhabited the two bed chambers above. The Buckelews appear to have had one child—a daughter Mary Ann, born in 1803. The censuses listed other occupants of the house—free blacks, farm hands and domestic servants. These people probably occupied the room above the kitchen and may have used the attic in the addition.

Most of the features in this wing date to its original construction. The hand-hewn floor framing in the basement and the exposed fire backs on the exterior confirm an 18<sup>th</sup> century date. The wood floors, plaster walls and ceilings, decorative trim, the mantels, the cupboards, windows, doors and hardware all appear to be original in the Federal style. The reeding of the mantels, the oversized 12-over-12 sash, the 12-over-8 sash, the stile and rail paneled doors, the simple balustrade at the stairs, the Suffolk latches, the clinched nails at some trim, the hand-planed vertical board partition

---

<sup>43</sup> Meeske, 97.

as well as the extant original weather board with bottom bead visible in the stair to the basement all point to an 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century period of construction and the Federal style.

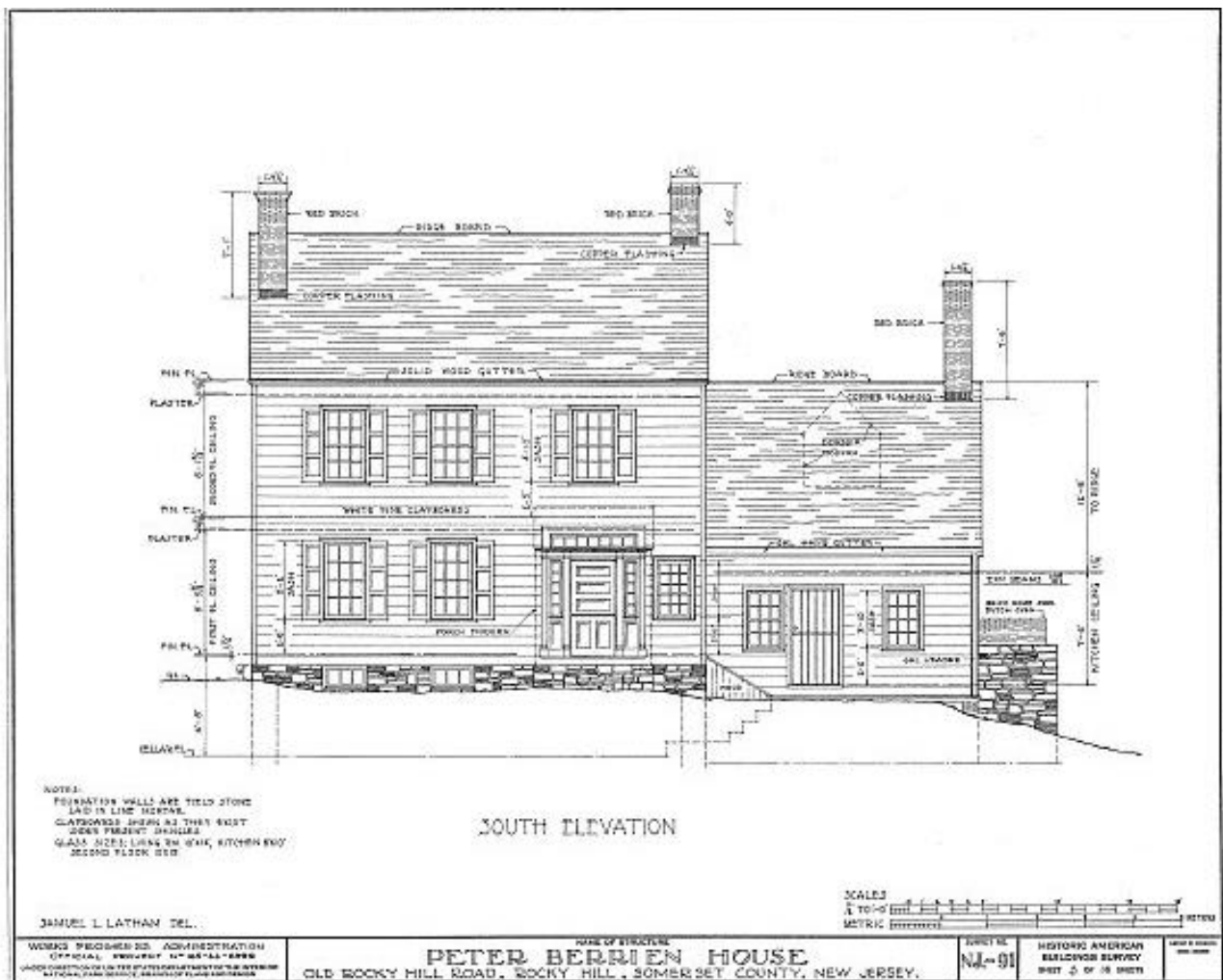


Figure 7: Following the addition, the Buckelew family house likely resembled the Peter Berrien House in Rocky Hill, Somerset County which has similar dates of construction—mid-18<sup>th</sup> and post-Revolutionary War—and the same styling with the original in the Dutch vernacular style and the addition in the Federal style. HABS NJ,18-ROHI



Figure 8: The Federal style mantel of the 1798 Mount Lubentia in Prince George's County, Maryland (HABS MD,17-LARG) is a more elaborate version of the reeded and paneled mantel constructed by Obadiah Buckelew, below.



### ***PHASE III***

#### ***East addition, James and Eliza Webb, 1860-1870***

With the death of Obadiah Buckelew in 1847, his estate sold the farm. It was purchased by Edward Austin of New York in 1848 who sold it in 1853 to John Austin, presumably his brother. Two months later, John Austin sold it to Eliza and James Webb. Eliza appears to have been his sister.

The Webb family owned the property until 1906 but after 1880, the family may not have always occupied the house. James and Eliza Webb both died in the 1870s; the 1880 Federal Census listed their adult children living in the house with their uncle. After this, although the son James, stayed in North Brunswick, he appears to be a boarder and laborer living with other families in the area. By 1906, the children sold the property to the Puldas.

When the Webbs bought the property in 1853, the original 18<sup>th</sup> century kitchen was probably still in use. Under the Webbs, the east wing was enlarged and a modern kitchen added. Work included extending the kitchen wing to the south and east, removing the original mid-18<sup>th</sup> century cooking fireplace and creating a sitting room where the original kitchen was with a smaller fireplace, adding a new kitchen, and possibly bathing room or other utilitarian space to the front and adding bedrooms with full stairs to the upper half story. A significant jump in real estate value between 1860 and 1870 per the Federal Census may indicate the Webbs made this change during this period. The Webbs reused the original Dutch roof framing on the north side and added new framing to the south and east, extending the framing further south to create an open porch. The kitchen had a fireplace which probably held a cook stove; the mantel remains. The windows of the new section are two-over-two. Exposed clapboard siding within the stair to the attic and bulkhead doors confirm that this section was enclosed after the two-story addition was constructed.

During the Webb family tenure, a multigenerational family with as many as nine people lived in the house. More bedrooms would have been desirable. In addition, technological advances in cook stove and domestic amenities made this addition vital for comfortable 19<sup>th</sup> century living. Most of this addition remains extant today including the plaster walls and ceilings, floors, windows, doors and trim. In addition to the addition built by the Webbs, one of the wagon houses may date to the Webb family tenure on the property.

### ***PHASE IV***

#### ***Remodelings, Pulda Family, 1906-2010***

Louis and Cecilia Pulda purchased the property in 1906. While it is unknown definitively, it appears that the house may not have been occupied; this may account for the lack of significant increase in purchase price of the property. In 1853, the Webbs purchased the 101.5 acres for \$3,356; over 50 years later, the Puldas purchased the same 101.5 acres for \$4,200.

Whether it was unoccupied or not, it doesn't appear that the Puldas made any real changes to the house aside from cosmetic wallpaper and linoleum. They upgraded the kitchen in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

Their real contribution was on the exterior. They added porches on both elevations and later in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, enclosed the porches. They also built most of the surviving outbuildings on the property and added most of the landscape features including the pavings, gardens and pergolas.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### **Primary Sources**

Estate papers of Obadiah Buckelew

Everts & Stewart. *Combination Atlas Map of Middlesex County*. Philadelphia: Everts and Stewart, 1876.

Federal Census 1830-1940

Hill, John. "A Map of Middlesex County," 1781. <https://www.loc.gov/item/gm72003603/>

Middlesex County Deeds

New Brunswick City Directories

Otley, J.W. *Map of Middlesex County, New Jersey*. Camden, N.J. : L. Van Derveer, 1850.

Walling H.F. and Smith, Gallup & Co. *Map of the County of Middlesex, New Jersey: from actual surveys*. New York: Published by Smith, Gallup & Co., 1861.

### **Secondary Sources**

Bailey, Rosalie Fellows. *Pre-Revolutionary Dutch Houses and Families in Northern New Jersey and Southern New York*. New York: Dover Publications, 1968.

Brown T. Robins and Schuyler Warmflash. *The Architecture of Bergen County, New Jersey: The Colonial Period to the Twentieth Century*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2000.

Green, Gerry. *Mary's People—The Buckelews*. Nursery, Texas: Privately Published, 1985.

Gross, Geoffrey and Roderic H. Blackburn. *Dutch Colonial Houses in America*. New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2002.

Klett, Joseph. *Genealogies of New Jersey Families* From the Genealogical Magazine of New Jersey Volume 1

Meeske, Harrison. *The Hudson Valley Dutch and Their Houses*. Fleischmanns, New York: Purple Mountain Press, 1998.

North Brunswick Historical Committee. *North Brunswick*. Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2011.

### **Websites**

<http://ancestry.com>

<http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com>

<http://www.familycentral.net>

<http://www.findagrave.com>

<http://www.oocities.org>

<http://www.geni.com>