

Marlpit Hall

of Monmouth County Historical Association

Constructed in the Year 1756

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By way of INTRODUCTION...

Welcome to Marlpit Hall. While four of the five historical houses owned by Monmouth County Historical Association have ties to the Revolutionary War, this is the only house that represents a Loyalist family. Both the structure and the site are rich in historical significance. The property was received in one of the original land patents in 1667 and stands on lot #36 of that patent. Because of the lack of recording documents from this time, the history of ownership is not clear until the 1750s when Bernardus Rider owned the 10-acre lot. Edward Taylor bought the property in 1771 and took up residence with his wife, Mary Ogborne of Middletown, and their five children. The Georgian-style house reflects the various lifestyles and tastes of its occupants.

The Taylors were a family of farmers and merchants, which strengthened their political relationships in the local government and their trade links with New York and Europe. These political and business connections brought the family much property and wealth. The house stayed within the Taylor family for 160 years.

The house was bought by Margaret Riker Haskell in 1935. Mrs. Haskell donated the historic house to Monmouth County Historical Association in 1936 and it became the first historic house museum in Monmouth County open to the public for visits. Marlpit Hall is a key property in the National Register of Historic Places, Middletown Village district and is listed on the New Jersey Women's Heritage Trail.

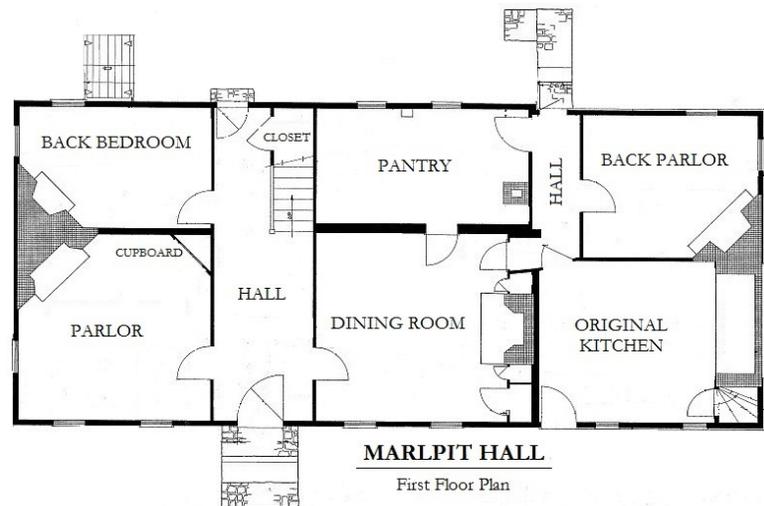
THE EXTERIOR

The EXTERIOR of the house has three framing sections in different styles – the west and central parts use English-style framing and the east portion, which contains the

KITCHEN, is Dutch-framed. In 1919, Marlpit Hall's long existence was threatened by plans to alter Kings Highway. Mary Holmes Taylor III, a descendant of Edward Taylor, fought to save the structure. The state finally agreed and moved the house approximately 50ft east of its original location.

THE KITCHEN

The KITCHEN wing was built using typical Dutch framing practices, which is characterized by vertical posts spaced 4 feet apart and joined front to back by horizontal joists. This type of framing requires only simple carpentry skills, which is appropriate for one-and-a-half story structures like the KITCHEN. Unlike Southern plantations, at Marlpit Hall, the slaves slept and lived in the kitchen wing under the same roof as the Taylors. The exposed beams on the ceiling have dressed joints with chamfered edges and were meant to be seen. The fireplace and chimney were rebuilt in 1920 after the house was moved to its current location.



THE HALL

Typical English architectural features that you see at Marlpit Hall include a house plan with a central HALL and open staircase with rooms on either side of the hall. A few Dutch-style features are a hooded entry, referred to as a "stoop", and a Dutch front door, which is split to keep the children in the house, improve airflow, and keep the farm animals out. Note the special "bull's eye" glass windows over the front door. The HALL was also used as a multi-purpose

room with a desk to conduct business and several chairs that were moved about as needed.

THE PARLOR

The PARLOR played many roles as a room for entertaining guests. It contains a tilt-top tea table to serve tea and a card table at which to play various card games. The English-style architectural details include the paneled fireplace surround, built-in corner cupboards with shell hoods, and other classical items such as pilasters and dentils. The red paint inside the cupboards is original and was exposed during the 1935 restoration.

THE BACK BEDROOM

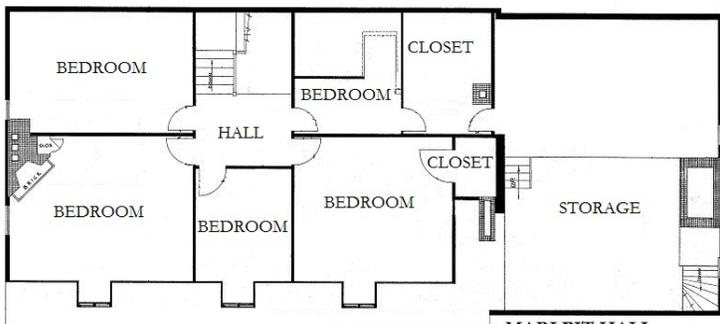
When more prestigious guests had to stay the night, they would be accommodated in the BACK BEDROOM, the room behind the PARLOR. It was a room for entertaining overnight guests and to show off the family's wealth by the elaborate bed hangings and fine furnishings. The architectural details are similar to the PARLOR, but the cupboards are built into the fireplace surround. The high chest of drawers and dressing table were made in Middletown and belonged to the Taylor family.

THE DINING ROOM

In the larger homes of the wealthy, rooms started to become more specialized and moved away from multi-purpose uses. The DINING ROOM is an excellent example of this new practice. In the late 18th to the early 19th century, dining in a separate room began to be a common practice among the wealthy. The architectural details blend the English and the Federal styles of the colonial Georgian form which was commonly used in the American colonies.

UPSTAIRS ROOMS

The four UPSTAIRS bedrooms are large and the master bedroom shows off a lovely corner fireplace. There is also a small room with a dormer window to the left on the upstairs landing. Through this small room, there is access to a large closet, and further on, the attic storage over the KITCHEN.



THE FAMILY – WHAT WE KNOW

The property was part of the original land patent of 1667 and we also know that Bernardus Rider owned the property in the 1750s. Barnardus then sold it to Edward Taylor (1712-1783) in 1771. Edward resided there with his wife Mary and their five children. By 1778, Edward Taylor was the largest landowner in the area with 1,200 acres to his name. While his political career was not as extensive as his brother's, he was a

popular and respected assemblyman, miller, and large landholder. When the country's political leanings turned toward independence, Edward took a loyalist stance. His son, George, was the captain of the first Regiment Monmouth County Militia, but deserted to the enemy in 1776. After Edward's house arrest for his Loyalist leanings, the Taylor family resided quietly for the remainder of the war.

After Edward's death in 1783, the estate went to his third son, John (1740-1818) who married Mary Holmes. In his will, John divided his estate equally among his six children. John's son Edward had a daughter, Mary Holmes Taylor II, who owned Marlpit Hall by 1850. She and her husband built "Orchard Home", which is now known as Taylor-Butler House and stands next door. After moving into Orchard Home, the homestead was leased to tenant farmers. Mary Holmes Taylor II died in 1897, leaving the estate to her children, Edward and Mary Holmes Taylor III.

A portrait of John's son, Edward Taylor, hangs in the dining room. Edward was a successful New York City merchant and was active in local politics. His staff and mace, symbols of his time as a city Alderman, are displayed here as well.

REVOLUTIONARY TIES...CHOICES

Edward Taylor (1712-1783), local businessman, farm owner, and mill owner, was a staunch loyalist. During the Revolutionary War, Taylor made no secret of his feelings towards those who wished to break with England and on at least four occasions, he was declared "dangerous" by the New Jersey Council of Safety. His son, George, worked with the local Loyalist militia and led raids in Shrewsbury, Middletown, and Freehold.

Edward was accused of being a spy by providing his son with information about their neighbors and on July 2, 1777, he was placed under house arrest at Marlpit Hall. At this time, most Loyalist residents lost their property and possessions due to their political leanings. Edward formally disinherited his son George to prevent the government from seizing the property and leaving them destitute.

Edward did not live to see the end of the war, dying a few months before the surrender at Yorktown. The Taylor family continued to own Marlpit Hall until 1931.

VISIT OUR OTHER HOUSES...

Holmes-Hendrickson House	62 Longstreet Road, Holmdel
Taylor-Butler House	127 Kings Highway, Middletown
Covenhoven House	150 West Main Street, Freehold
Allen House	400 Sycamore Ave., Shrewsbury
Museum & Library	70 Court Street, Freehold

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