

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Swatara Ferry House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
400 Swatara Street

CITY, TOWN
Middletown

STATE
Pennsylvania

--- NOT FOR PUBLICATION
VICINITY OF CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
CODE 17

COUNTY CODE
Dauphin 043

3 CLASSIFICATION

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| CATEGORY | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | PRESENT USE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC | <input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> BOTH | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SITE | PUBLIC ACQUISITION | ACCESSIBLE | <input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT | <input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED | <input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> NO | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM |
| | | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: |

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Dauphin County Redevelopment Authority

STREET & NUMBER
Second and Chambers Streets

CITY, TOWN
Steelton

--- VICINITY OF STATE
Pennsylvania

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Dauphin County Court House

STREET & NUMBER
South Front Street

CITY, TOWN
Harrisburg

STATE
Pennsylvania

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
NONE

DATE

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
--- FEDERAL --- STATE --- COUNTY --- LOCAL

CITY, TOWN

STATE

DESCRIPTION**CONDITION**

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The old fort is a one-and-one-half story log house with a full stone foundation and cellar. It was built in two sections; the second section being apparently a mirror image of the first. Each section has a separate entrance and chimney, and each section had a basically German floor plan. However, the first floor has been greatly altered, making the original floor plan unclear. The second floor apparently retains its original floor plan with a large hall and two rooms. The fireplaces in the first, or left hand, section of the building have been covered; those in the second remain exposed.

The building is currently sheathed in wide clapboards on three sides. The fourth, or porch, side is covered with horizontal, flush, beaded boards. The logs under these boards appear to be slightly weathered, suggesting that they were exposed at one time. The porch covering the cellar entrance seems to be original.

The left hand, or first, section of the building was constructed with full dovetail netching on all four corners. The right hand section was similarly constructed, except where it adjoins the first. There, the logs are apparently mortised into a vertical post.

81 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES c. 1820

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The so called "Old Fort" was not a fort and is not as old as local legend would suggest; however, it is still very important. It represents a type of structure that has not survived in any great numbers in the State. The U.S. Direct Tax of 1798 indicates that 1½ story log houses were one of the most common styles at the time. The Swatara Ferry House is the sole known survivor in Dauphin County.

The use of machine cut nails throughout the structure indicates that it was built after 1800. In 1808 George Fisher, Esquire subdivided his property to form the town of Portsmouth. A plot of this town was filed in the Dauphin County Courthouse. The following year the whole track, less a few parcels, was conveyed to John Swar for forty thousand dollars. The first deed to mention the specific property is an 1827 deed from John Swar to Peter Fishbourne. However, several earlier deeds for other properties in Portsmouth reserve the right to operate a ferry across the Swatara Creek to lot 62, suggesting that the building was there by 1812.

10 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

NONE

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .5

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	8	3	5	2	5	2	0	4	4	5	0	2	3	0
ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING								

B

ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING							

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N.A.			
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Vance Packard

Craig Zumbrun

ORGANIZATION
OHP/PHMC

DATE

June 21, 1976

STREET & NUMBER
Box 1026

Second & Chambers Streets

TELEPHONE

717-787-4363

CITY OR TOWN

Harrisburg

Middletown

STATE

Pennsylvania

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Executive Director

TITLE Pa. Historical and Museum Commission

DATE

8/19/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

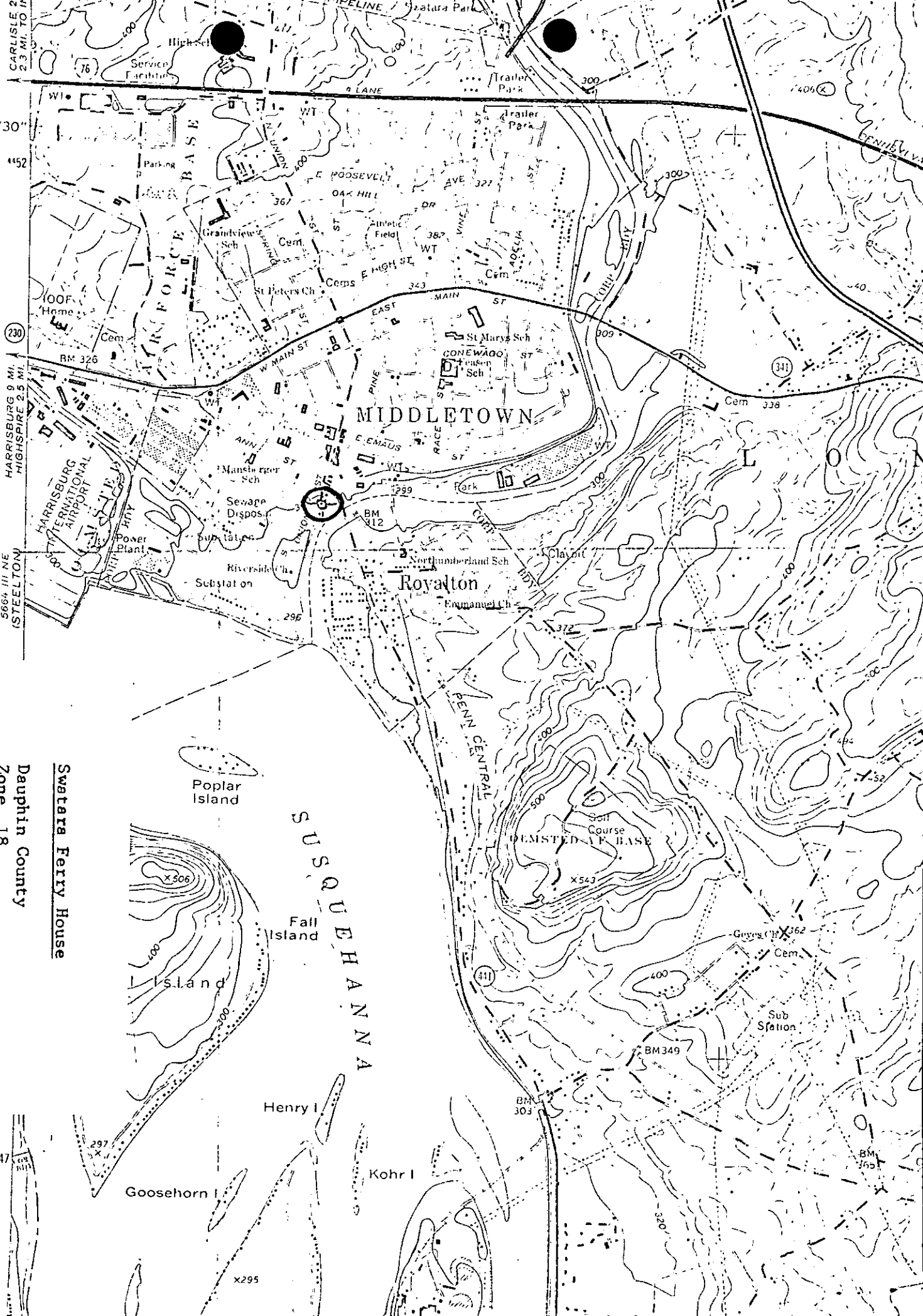
DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



CARLISLE 2.3 MI. TO IN

HARRISBURG 9 MI. HIGHSPRE 2.5 MI.

56 1/4 MI NE (STEELETON) 49995

Swatara Ferry House

Dauphin County
Zone 18

352 520

4450 230

12'30"

4452

(230)

(341)

(411)

447

297

x295

BM 303

BM 349

BM 365

Service Facility

Trailer Park

WT

Trailer Park

Grandview Sch

Trailer Park

Home

St. Peter's Ch

St. Mary's Sch

HARRISBURG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Mansberger Sch

MIDDLETOWN

Riverside Ch

ROYLTON

Northumberland Sch

Emmanuel Ch

Poplar Island

SUSQUEHANNA

Fall Island

Island

Henry I.

Kohr I.

Goosehorn I.

DEMSTED AIR BASE

Guyton Ch

Sub Station

x297

x543

x362

x