

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

MAY 12 1975

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Tulpehocken Manor Plantation

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER R.D. #2, on Rte. 422, 2 miles west of Myerstown

CITY, TOWN Myerstown

-- NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE Pennsylvania

VICINITY OF

16th

CODE  
42

COUNTY Lebanon

CODE  
075**3 CLASSIFICATION**

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

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Miss Esther Nissly

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Tulpehocken Manor Plantation, R. D. #2

CITY, TOWN

Myerstown

VICINITY OF

STATE  
Pennsylvania**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Lebanon County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Lebanon

STATE  
Pennsylvania**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

1973

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

William Penn Memorial Museum, Box 1026

CITY, TOWN

Harrisburg

STATE  
Pennsylvania

# 7 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 present Tulpehocken Manor includes 150 acres of the original 240 acre tracts purchased by Christopher Ley and Jacob Lower c. 1738. Located on this tract are a number of significant 18th and 19th century buildings including two Swiss/German bank houses, a Victorianized manor house, and several unusual outbuildings.

Perhaps the two most outstanding buildings on the tract are the bank houses built by Christopher Lay and Jacob Lower between 1740 and 1745. These two houses, almost identical in size and plan (the Ley house is 14 inches wider), were built with their north gable end partially buried in a steep bank along the Tulpehocken Creek. Both houses are constructed of limestone and have 7 foot central arches which shelter small springs.

The kitchen and cellar areas of both houses are largely original. Stone steps lead from the upper level to the large vaulted archway. The spring located beneath the arch provided water for both the kitchen and the food storage cellar. The kitchen located in the south room has a brick floor and a massive 10 foot wide fireplace. A trough located along the wall opposite the fireplace carries water from the spring through the kitchen.

Entrance to the main level of the houses is through the north gable. The entrance way opens onto a hall which leads to a living room and two bedrooms. Fireplaces are located in the living room and one bedroom. Both houses originally had a second story loft. This is still extant on the Lower/Spangler house. (Michael Spangler bought the Lower house in 1745.) However, c. 1850 a full second story was added to the Ley houses. Aside from this, alterations to the two properties have been minor. Later proches have been added and the pent eaves on the gable ends are gone. Except for the addition of modern utilities the interiors are largely original.

Directly to the northeast of the Lower/Spangler house is the George Spangler house. Built around 1780 this four bay limestone house with rear extension has undergone extensive alterations. The house was originally a center chimney building with arched windows. Both the windows and the chimney have been removed although the stone window arches can still be seen.

Two hundred feet to the northwest of the Christopher Ley house is the Michael Ley Mansion house. Ley built this Georgian house in 1769. Constructed of limestone with large red sandstone quoins, the house had an eight room plan with a center

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Description:

hall. This house was extensively remodeled and enlarged by Samuel Urich in 1883. A long two story section was added in the rear of the original house. A full mansard roof replaced the original gable roof. Elaborate hooded dormers were located in the roof of both the main section and the new addition. The dormers in the main facade have twin and triple arch windows with carved finials, brackets and mouldings. The wide overhanging cornice of the mansard roof is set off by a series of modillions and brackets. Square bay windows were added to each gable end. The new addition has a two story porch/balcony running the full length of the east and west sides. The porch is decorated with elegant gingerbread scrollwork. An equally elegant Victorian porch was also added to the front of the building at this time. The victorianization of the Ley mansion was completed with the addition of iron grill work along all the rooflines including the porch and bay windows. Since the 1883 "modernization" the house has not been altered. The interiors are particularly good examples of Victorian design.

Immediately to the west of the manor house is a small frame gambrel roof house. Known as the Cyrus Sherk house, it was built for Mrs. Urich's father who was not allowed to smoke in the newly remodelled manor house.

The numerour barns and outbuildings which dot the farm date largely from the early or mid 19th century. These buildings include two barns, several sheds, two corn cribs, a sheep cote, greenhouse, cider house, chicken house, cob house, granary, smokehouse, washhouse and necessity. Of particular note is the mid 19th century, 129 foot stone bank barn located in the western complex. The victorian necessity with its hip roof, cupola and facilities for seven individuals is unusual both in size and design. The frame green house immediately behind the necessity has bands of consoles and dentil mouldings, quite unusual for such a utilitarian building.

Also on the property is a large stone quarry. Stone was quarried here for the construction of the various buildings on the plantation and also for shipment south on the Union Canal. The ruins of a workers village for the Italian quarry workers is located on the north bank of the quarry.

The ruins of four locks of the Union Canal are located along the south bank of Tulpehocken Creek near the quarry. These locks were constructed in 1794 by the Schuylkill & Susquehanna Navigation Company and mark the highest point on the Canal.

# 8 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input 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 1740, 1769, 1883 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This tract of land along the Tulpehocken Creek was originally settled by Christopher Ley and Jacob Lower. Ley and Lower, recent immigrants from the Rhine Valley, purchased contiguous 240 acre tracts from Casper Wistar of Philadelphia c. 1738. Shortly thereafter they built identical stone houses only 300 feet apart. Both men died in 1745 and the Lower tract was sold to Michael Spangler. Michael Ley, Christopher's son, built the large Georgian manor house in 1769. Michael was an important merchant of the region and during the Revolutionary War served as a colonel in a Lancaster County regiment. Ley was also a friend of George Washington who visited the Ley Plantation several times from 1777 to 1794.

The Tulpehocken Manor Plantation contains an unusual number of architecturally significant buildings. In addition it is representative of an early farmstead and also played an important role in the commerce of the region.

The various buildings on the plantation are architecturally quite important. The Christopher Ley and Lower/Spangler houses are excellent examples of the European influence on early American architecture. Such central arch bank houses, common in the Lower Rhine Valley, are seldom to be seen in this country. The manor house although seriously altered in its Victorianization nevertheless is an elegant example of the styles of the late 19th century. Its highly ornamental dormers, porches, and iron grillwork are good examples of 19th century craftsmanship. The various outbuildings including the stone bank barn, necessity, and greenhouse are also to be noted for their architectural merit.

Tulpehocken Manor has been operated as a working farm since 1740. Most of the structures associated with 18th and 19th century farms are still preserved. The various auxiliary farm buildings such as the ciderhouse, pig pen, smokehouse, granary, etc., are in good condition.

Tulpehocken Manor also played an important role in the 19th century commerce of the region. The Union Canal ran through the property and the summit locks of the canal were located just north of the stone quarry. Because of its location at the summit locks, the farm became an important transshipment point. These locks built in 1794 are now in ruins.

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Significance:

At present Tulpehocken Manor Plantation is operated as a working farm and tourist attraction. Accomodations for visitors are available in the Manor House and adjacent buildings.



**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Aungst, Dean M., The Two Canals of Lebanon County. Lebanon County Historical Society, Vol. XIV, No. 1, 1966, pp. 4,5,7,9-18,24-25, 28-30, 38.

Mohn, Viola Kohl. Shadows of the Rhine Along the Tulpehocken. Lebanon County Historical Society, Vol. XIV, No. 5, 1970, pp.153-172

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 150

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,8	38,517,90	44,6819,80	B	1,8	38,615,80	44,692,40
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
c	1,8	38,615,90	44,685,80	D	1,8	38,518,70	44,682,00
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

William K. Watson/Historic Sites Survey

ORGANIZATION

Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

DATE

3-12-75

STREET & NUMBER

Box 1026

TELEPHONE

717; 787-4363

CITY OR TOWN

Harrisburg

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

*William J. Weaver*

3/21/75

TITLE

Executive Director

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 5/1/75

ATTEST  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Robert A. Connally*  
*Ronald M. Gansberg*

DATE

*actg*

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Boundary Description - TULPEHOCKEN MANOR PLANTATION  
Lebanon County

The present area of the Plantation encompasses the heart of the original land grant of Christopher Ley and Jacob Lower. The area included in this nomination is rectangular in shape and bounded on the north by Route 422 and on the south by the Reading Railroad right-of-way. Beginning at a point on the south side of the highway right-of-way where the Tulpehocken Creek crosses the road, the property line runs in a southerly direction for 2700 feet to the Reading Railroad right-of-way; thence along the right-of-way in an easterly direction for 2525 feet; thence in a northerly direction for 2380 feet to the highway right-of-way; thence in a westerly direction along the south side of the highway for 2900 feet to the beginning point.

