

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

1. Name

historic Rex House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number North Market Street

___ not for publication

city, town Schaefferstown

___ vicinity of

congressional district 16

state Pennsylvania

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 type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" 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 Mr. and Mrs. Frank Maldonado

street & number P.O. Box 495

city, town Schaefferstown

___ vicinity of

state Pennsylvania

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Lebanon County Courthouse

street & number South Eighth Street

city, town Lebanon

state Pennsylvania

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places

has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes ___ no

date August 21, 1979

___ federal state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

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 Rex House is a two and one-half story half-timbered house measuring 32 ft. X 27 ft. with a gable roof and interior gable end chimneys. The half-timbering is covered with random width, horizontal wooden siding. To the rear of the house is a stone lean-to addition measuring 32 feet by 12 feet.

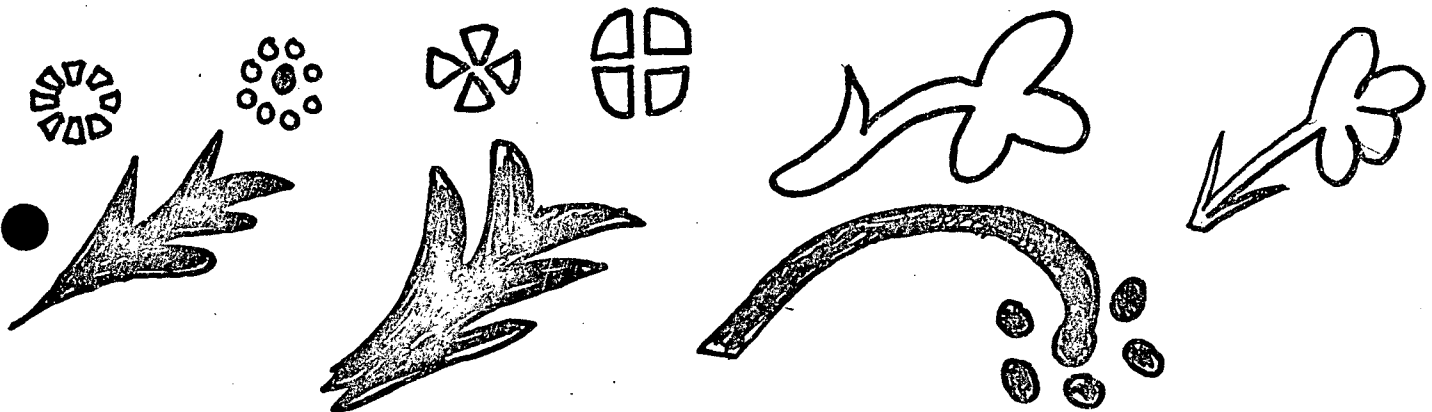
In a small attic of this lean-to addition can be seen the original half-timber construction of the main house that was not covered over with wooden siding. Over the half-timbering there is a layer of plaster that was then lined to simulate bricks. These simulated bricks measure about 4 1/2 inches wide and from 5 to 13 inches long. The simulated bricks were painted red and black in an apparent random fashion that gives it a sort of checkerboard effort. (Photo #6)

The gable roof has wooden shingles which have been covered with a raised-seem tin roof.

The north and south ends of the house have brick chimneys. The north chimney goes to the kitchen, to an arched walk-in fireplace that had a bake oven. The fireplace has been restored to its original condition. (Photo #12) The south chimney sits between the living and dining rooms. In the living room the chimney opens to a fireplace with paneled wooden doors. (Photo #10) In the dining room the chimney opens to a Franklin stove which is designed and has the motto "Be Liberty Thine" across the front. (Photo #11) Both the dining and living room fireplaces are about 5 inches off the floor. Over the Franklin stove is some raised paneling. To the left of the paneling is a built-in cupboard with arched glass doors on top and paneled doors on the bottom and much elaborate dentil work. (Photo #11) The dining room also contains a door and barred window which appears to have led to a bar keep. The north wall of the dining room is paneled with random double beaded boards. The southeast corner of the dining room has a 6 inch deep recession in the ceiling measuring 16 X 18 inches. It is believed it was made to accommodate a tall clock. The dining room ceiling is 99 inches high.

The living room has built-in storage cupboards with paneled doors over the fireplace. The fireplace has doors which are also paneled. The fireplace is completely bordered by elaborate paneling and dentil work. (Photo #10) One of the doors leading from the living room to the front hallway is only 69 inches high. (Photo #9) The living room, kitchen and all three bedrooms have random board, beaded ceilings. The entire house sags to the middle considerably, indicating a weakness, perhaps caused by the removal of a central fireplace.

Under the paneling in the kitchen walls, were found at least four layers of red paint with hand painted designs and stencils. Most of the designs and stencils appear to have been white but some seem to be yellow and others black. Each layer of red had different designs from the other layers. The old paint and stencil designs were covered with a preservative and new paint and stencils to duplicate the originals were applied. One section of the original stenciling was left exposed. Some examples of the many designs found are as follows:



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DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET Rex House ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

The stairway leading to the second floor has no support railings and has elaborate carvings and dentil work on the side of each step and unusual carvings on the bannister.

Historians who have seen the hardware state that the amount and variety is very unusual and valuable. The front door key escutcheon is a Hession soldier to one in the William Penn Museum in Harrisburg. The locks are Moravian and Dutch-elbow locks, many with varied designs. The hinges are rat-tailed, ram's horns, tulips and various designs of strap hinges.

The out buildings consist of a smoke house and bake oven. The smoke house is limestone with shingle roof. The bake oven is constructed of brick with a brick chimney and shingle roof. The roof over the bake oven extends out to provide a protecting overhang. To the rear of the house there is the stone foundation of a barn and attached outhouse. Also immediately behind the house there is a cistern approximately 8 feet deep, 4 feet wide and eight feet long.

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 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Rex House is a unique survival of a half-timbered structure which was once common in Lebanon County and usually associated with the Pennsylvanian German settlers. The unusual and fine hardware, stencilling and cabinet work made this structure interesting as well as a valuable reference for other early Lebanon County Pennsylvania German structures.

This house is half timbered construction with plastered simulated bricks of red and black which renders it quite unusual. Alexander Schaeffer, the founder of Schaefferstown, owned this house and sold it in 1758 to Paul Gemberling. The house apparently was built before Alexander Schaeffer's time and local legend has it that it may have been built by Jewish fur-traders who settled in this area. While doing some foundation work in the cellar in December 1978, the following inscription was found on the stone foundation - "Repaired in 1929 by Ph. Weidman & Son. Built in 1729". The house changed hands at least 6 times between 1758 and 1799, when Samuel Rex bought it for 555 pounds. From that time until 1974 the house was in the possession of the Rex family all lineal descendants of Alexander Schaeffer. The Rex family were very prominent, prosperous merchants for many generations and accumulated valuable 18th century and 19th century this spring.

The free-hand painted designs and stencils found in the kitchen walls appear very primitive and research up to the present time has failed to uncover anything similar anywhere else.

This Rex House remains almost totally intact as a unique surviving example of early and late 18th century architecture. The present owners are in the process of complete restoration and are returning the house to its 18th century appearance.

Archaeology-History

There are terrances, undelations, and stone retaining walls throughout the grounds which suggest previous usage and would probably merit some archaeological investigation.

While digging for garden many fragments of early pottery have been uncovered. The house has been continuously inhabited to present time.

Landscape-Architecture

The grounds have been called "among the best preserved 18th century urban garden landscaping in Pennsylvania", by historians and preservationists. The English boxwood, 15 ft. high by 15 ft. wide, has been estimated to be over 200 yrs. old.

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .49

Quadrangle name Richland, Pa.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	8	3	9	0	0	8	0	4	4	6	1	4	3	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Rex House occupies the lot located at the NE corner of the Schaefferstown town square. The lot measures 238.13 feet by 86.6 feet by 237.33 feet by 90.0 feet.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title H. Frank Maldonado

organization

date

street & number Box 495

telephone 717-949-2233

city or town Schaefferstown

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title

date

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>3</u> <u>9</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>4</u> <u>6</u> <u>1</u> <u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C			
E			
G			

B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D			
F			
H			

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name/title H. Frank Maldonado

organization _____ date _____

street & number Box 495 telephone 717-949-2233

city or town Schaefferstown state Pennsylvania

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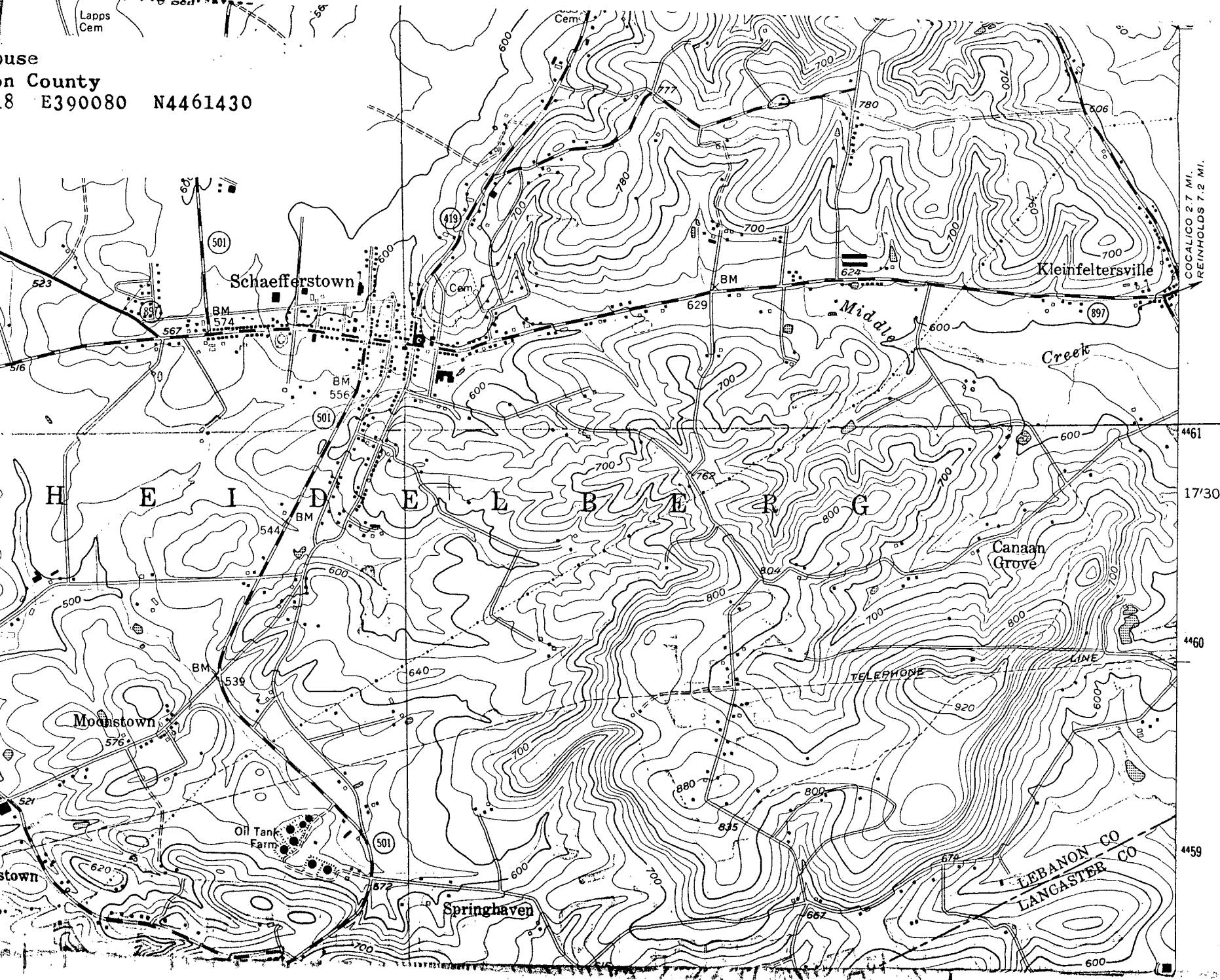
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State Historic Preservation Officer signature Ed Weintraub
ED WEINTRAUB, Director
title Office of Historic Preservation date 12-10-79

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
	date
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Lapps
Cem
House
in County
8 E390080 N4461430



COALICO 2.7 MI.
REINHOLDS 7.2 MI.

NEW
STOWN

4461
17'30"
4460
4459