

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

For HCRS use only
received OCT 02 1979
date entered MAY 1 1980

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

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NOV 19 1993

1. Name

The Ephrata Tract

Use this

historic Whitefield House/Gray Cottage

HISTORIC
PRESERVATION

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 214 East Center Street

not for publication

city, town Nazareth

vicinity of

congressional district 15

state Pennsylvania

code 42

county Northampton

code 095

3. Classification

Category

- district
- building(s)
- structure
- site
- object

Ownership

- public
 - private
 - both
- Public Acquisition**
- in process
 - being considered

Status

- occupied
 - unoccupied
 - work in progress
- Accessible**
- yes: restricted
 - yes: unrestricted
 - no

Present Use

- agriculture
 - commercial
 - educational
 - entertainment
 - government
 - industrial
 - military
- museum
 - park
 - private residence
 - religious
 - scientific
 - transportation
 - other:

4. Owner of Property

name The Moravian Historical Society

street & number 214 East Center Street

city, town Nazareth

vicinity of

state Pennsylvania 18064

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Northampton County Courthouse

street & number 7th & Walnut Street

city, town Easton

state Pennsylvania

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 5/21/79 federal state county local

depository for survey records PHMC

city, town Harrisburg

state Pa.

7. Description

| | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Condition | | Check one | Check one |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed | | date _____ |

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

During the first months of labor, the workmen (who were building the Whitefield House) lived in a simple log house thrown up for the purpose, and when it became obvious that winter would find the stone building with walls but one story high, Boehler and his men stopped work to construct a more solid log dwelling for winter use. This second house yet stands, but a few yards from Whitefield House, and is known by the unfortunate name of the "Gray Cottage", the word designating color only, for no resident by that name provided even a weak excuse for such a cognomen. This little house...is not unlike the many small dwellings built by German farmers at that time. Yet, though now garnished with a Victorian stoop, it commands respect as the oldest American Moravian building now standing, and bears the simple charm of a forthright German cabin as constructed in this country.

The Gray Cottage is a one and one-half story log structure with a wooden shake covered gable roof. The squared logs are dove-tailed and chinked with smooth mud and ash mortar. Vertical board shingles cover the gable-ends. Windows are 6/3 and have full window shutters. The door ways have full-log jams. The center fireplace is backed with a stone wall in the rear of the cabin. A small 3 light dome is located over this wall in the rear. This structure has been completely restored in 1971. Many of the original oak logs had to be replaced at that time. The slate roof was restored to the original wooden shakes. Electric heat and modern toilet facilities were also added.

This building has served many uses, including use as a residence for the widows of Moravian missionaries. Its original size was 36' x 56' with a full basement, where the kitchen was located, a sleeping room in the attic, and a chapel on the first floor. Part of the second floor is today given over to exhibition space of the museum of the Moravian Historical Society. The remainder of the structure (was) a series of apartments.

Whitefield House is a stone structure fifty-six by thirty-five feet in size, with a basement of the same dimensions. It is two stories in height, and has a gambrel roof beneath which is found a third floor of sleeping rooms surmounted by a low attic. On the South side of the building, the central door is balanced by three windows on each side, while the end walls are pierced by a door in the center with a window lighting each story placed directly above.

These windows are larger than the next few buildings the Moravians are to build, and therefore give an English feeling to the fenestration, each opening having twenty-four lights. Above each window is a relieving arch of brick, which we will come to regard as a Moravian feature in studying their other buildings. The arches are assumed to be but a facing of brick as is known to be the case in other buildings, for no test of this fact has been made.

There is a single line of brick above the first story windows which pursues its horizontal course until near the end of the wall, where it goes up a few inches before leveling out again. In English architecture such a molding in brick or stone is found over doors or windows, but with the ends dropped to enclose the aperture, not raised as in this example. In no other Moravian house does this ornament appear. It might have been a suggestion by Whitefield, remembering such work at home, or it could have been Boehler's way of giving protection to the unfinished walls by capping them with brick intended for the arches of the second story windows. It is not known if the brick is the thickness of the wall, but the fact that the line does not extend around to the ends of the house make this last idea seem improbable. In some later farm houses, such a projection was used as a sort of flashing for a porch or other roof, but the Moravians did not use long porches at this time, and the raised ends of the brick course would rule out this explanation.

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Another curious feature of this house is shown on old drawings, which cannot be taken to be exact under most circumstances. This particular view shows six dormer windows with truncated gables instead of the usual peaks. The form would not be out of place in Georgian architecture, but we must remember that when these were built, Whitefield was no longer connected with the project. If Whitefield actually took part in the planning of the house, these dormers could be part of the design. The present dormers are peaked, so we have only the old drawing to rely upon. Whether or not the English truncated or hipped dormer was first used and later changed, the Moravians did not use such a form on any of their other buildings.

The chimneys also show English style, for they are located at the gable ends, two to the east and one (according to old sketches) to the west. The western gable has two chimneys today. These deviations from Early Moravian practice seem to be good evidence that Whitefield had more to do with the plans of this building than has been assigned to him up to this time.

At one time on this site were located the Bell cottage and the Jordan cottage. These two buildings were used as additional housing for retired missionaries and clergy of the Moravian Church. These were mid 19th century dwelling houses that have since been razed, circa 1850.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input checked="" 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

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Whitefield House and the Gray Cottage at Nazareth, Pennsylvania, mark the spot where the Moravians in 1740 first struck permanent roots in America after the failure of their mission among Europeans and Indians in the Savannah area of Georgia, 1735-1740. The last of the Georgia Moravians, led by the Reverend Peter Bohler, landed in Philadelphia on April 25, having come as passengers aboard the ship of the evangelist George Whitefield. They were hoping to find fellow church members from Europe who were coming to launch a settlement in Pennsylvania.

Disappointed in not finding the European contingent yet on the scene, they accepted an offer of employment from Whitefield. The evangelist was in the process of buying 5000 acres of land in the Forks of the Delaware for a proposed village and orphanage for Negro children. Bohler and his party agreed to undertake the construction of the first building. Purchase of the land for 2200 pounds from William Allen who had acquired it from Laetitia Penn, was completed on May 3. Four days later Bohler and two others selected the building site for Nazareth, the name chosen by Whitefield. May 30 found Bohler, six other men, two women and two boys on the scene prepared to begin their assignment.

The first task was the building of a log cabin for temporary shelter. It proved sturdy enough to last well over a hundred years. Bad weather and a scarcity of competent workmen slowed progress on the main project so much that by early September only the foundation walls of a large stone building were completed. A second log cabin was built for additional housing. This cabin is still standing, having been in use as school and residence for nearly 240 years, during which time it acquired the name Gray Cottage.

Before the onset of the winter of 1740-41, Whitefield had a theological quarrel with the Moravians and ordered them to vacate his property. Land agent and justice of the peace Nathaniel Irish, living where the Saucon Creek joins the Lehigh River, intervened to soften Whitefield's displeasure to the extent of postponing the departure of his tenants. Irish also sold the Moravians 500 acres of land at the site of the present day Bethlehem. About the same time the group at Nazareth was augmented by arrivals from Europe. By early spring, the Moravians had built the first home on the Bethlehem tract nine miles south of Nazareth.

In the meantime, Whitefield's financial agent died, leaving the evangelist short of funds. Unable to carry out his plans for Nazareth, he sold the tract to the Moravians in the summer of 1741 for 2500 pounds. During the next two years, the Brethren devoted their major effort to Bethlehem, not resuming building at Nazareth until 1743. By that year's end the 56 by 53 foot stone building was completed. From then on, Bethlehem and Nazareth were twin communities for some twenty years, after which they went their separate ways as Moravian settlements.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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The building which the Moravians began in 1740 and completed in 1743 soon became known as the Whitefield House. For the first century and a quarter it was used as an apartment dwelling and at various times a school. Both this building and the Gray Cottage were during this time the property of the Nazareth congregation. In 1871 John Jordan, Jr., Philadelphia philanthropist, purchased the two properties and deeded them in trust to the Society for Propagating the Gospel, a missionary arm of the Moravian Church. Terms of the gift were that they be used to provide homes for retired missionaries and pastors and that the large second floor room of the Whitefield House be used as a museum and headquarters of the Moravian Historical Society. For many years following its use as a retirement home, the Whitefield House was also known as the Ephrata House, but in recent years the latter name has succumbed to the original. In 1906 the east end of the structure was extended to almost double its capacity.

The Whitefield House and Gray Cottage represent the earliest and enduring efforts of the Moravians in the Lehigh Valley.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

10. Geographical Data

ITEM NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property 2.68

Quadrangle name Nazareth, Pa.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

| | | | |
|---|-----------|---------------|----------------|
| A | <u>18</u> | <u>474020</u> | <u>4509860</u> |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |

| | | | |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| B | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |

| | | | |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| C | | | |
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| D | | | |
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| E | | | |
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| F | | | |
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| G | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |

| | | | |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| H | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

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

| state | code | county | code |
|-------|------|--------|------|
| | | | |
| | | | |

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Angelo Spinosa, Department of History, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pa. 18015

organization The Moravian Historical Society
Lehigh County Historical Society

date

street & number 214 E. Center Street

telephone 691-7000 ext. 639

city or town Nazareth

state Pennsylvania 18064

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

Ed Weintraub, State Historic Preservation Officer

title Office of Historic Preservation

date 9/25/79

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

Keeper of the National Register

date 5/1/80

Attest: [Signature]

Chief of Registration

date April 19, 1980

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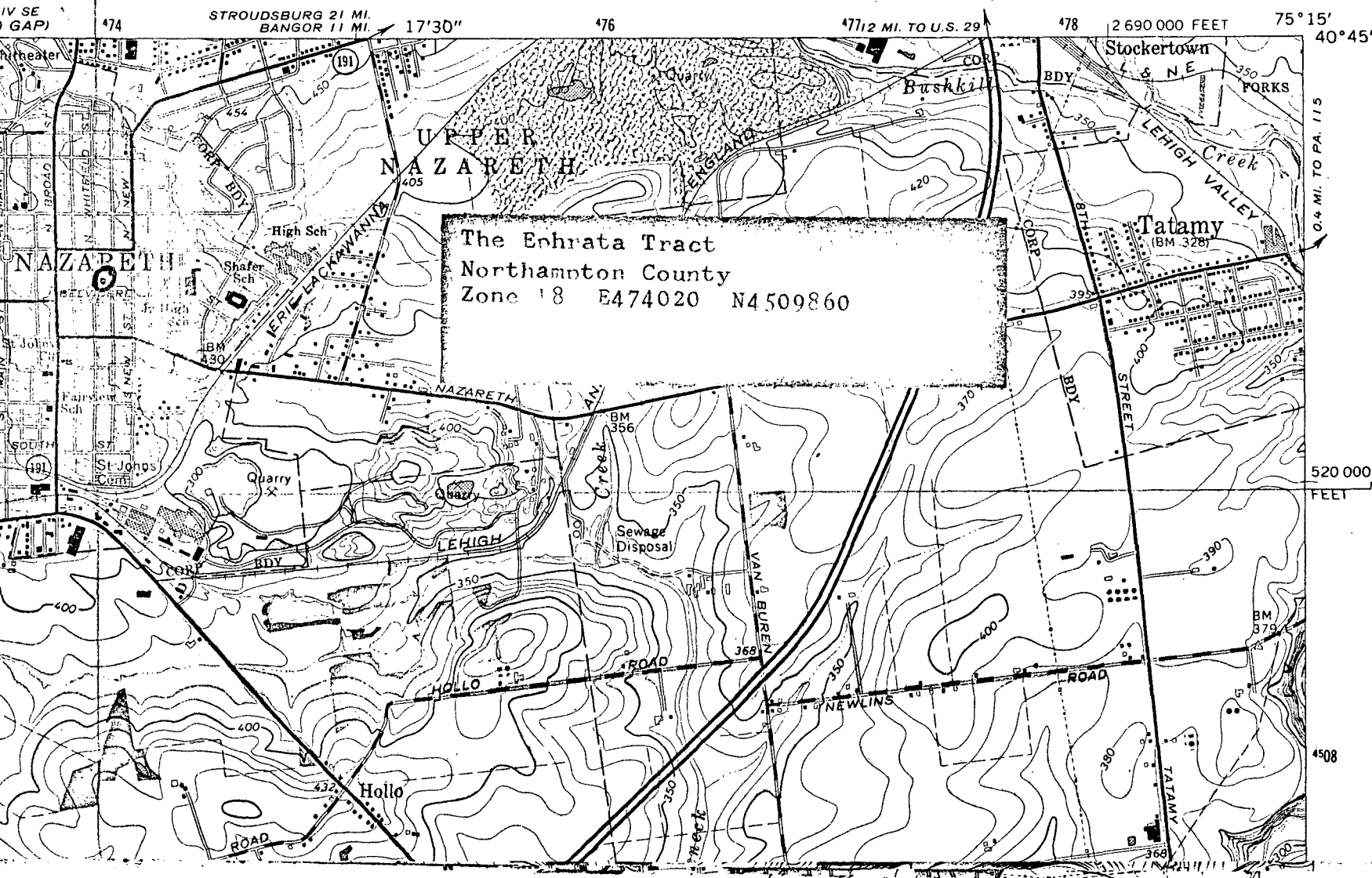
Primary Source Material:

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NAZARETH QUADRANGLE
PENNSYLVANIA-NORTHAMPTON CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

NE/4 ALLENTOWN 15' QUADRANGLE

5965 1 SW
(BANGOR)



The Ehrata Tract
Northampton County
Zone 18 E474020 N4509860

520 000
FEET

4508