

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Pennsylvania
COUNTY: Northumberland
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Sodom Schoolhouse

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Eight-cornered Schoolhouse, Chillisquaque Schoolhouse

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Pennsylvania Route #45, 1 1/2 miles east of Montandon

CITY OR TOWN:
West Chillisquaque Township

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
17

STATE: Pennsylvania CODE: 42 COUNTY: Northumberland CODE: 097

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
Box 1026

CITY OR TOWN:
Harrisburg

STATE:
Pennsylvania

CODE:
42

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Northumberland County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Sunbury

STATE:
Pennsylvania

CODE:
42

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Pennsylvania Register of Historic Sites and Landmarks

DATE OF SURVEY: 1970 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
William Penn Memorial Museum

STREET AND NUMBER:
Box 1026

CITY OR TOWN:
Harrisburg

STATE:
Pennsylvania

CODE:
42

STATE: Pennsylvania

COUNTY: Northumberland

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Sodom Schoolhouse is one of several octagonal schoolhouses in Pennsylvania. It is a single story limestone structure with a single chimney in the middle of the roof, a single window in seven of the walls, and the entrance on the south elevation. An old Scotch type in style, the arrangement of windows and walls secured maximum amount of sunlight. At one time a cupola appeared on the roof. The stone for the building was quarried from a field to the southeast of the site in an area known as Krum's woods. The owner Mr. Krum supposedly donated the land for Sodom School.

The school was entered by a door on the south side to a small vestibule where coats and hats were hung. Another door then led to the large main room, and on both sides of the inner door, within the room, were shelves for lunch pails and books. The walls were painted slate gray, and in the rear of the room was a blackboard. There was a wood burning stove in the middle of the room that was later replaced by a coal cylinder casting stove. A furnace was never installed.

Along the north side of the room was the teacher's platform which was 30 feet long, ten feet wide, and raised eight to ten inches above the floor. [The teacher's desk and chair were painted red and added color to the rather sterile atmosphere. Two recitation benches were situated in front of the platform and six long, rough wooden desks were placed parallel to six sides of the building and two desks placed across the center of the room. The bulky wooden desks were later replaced by the more comfortable two seater style.

The restoration project for the school began in 1935, and was eventually completed in 1961 primarily due to the efforts of the Junior Historians Club of the Milton High School.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | losophy | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | itarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Sodom School is one of several octagonal schoolhouses built in Pennsylvania and was named for the small village, Sodom, where it was located. The peculiar eight-sided design for the schoolhouse is the result of the Scottish-Irish influence in the area. Several dates for the building of the school have been proposed, some based purely on legend, others on factual evidence.

Legendary reports say that the school was originally built in the 1770's as a fort for protection against the French and Indians; still others suggest that it was built during the period 1812-14. Construction, if begun during this latter period, was interrupted by the War of 1812. Supposedly the workmen were recruited while on the job and did not return until 1814. Another date, 1819, comes from a fifty cent piece coin found in a chalk box buried in the cornerstone. The coin bears the letters L. Carson and refers to Lot Carson, tavern proprietor and village official. Sodom village was named in his honor in reference to the Biblical passage. A very generous man, Mr. Carson donated most of the material for the schoolhouse. The latest and most generally accepted date for the building of the structure, however, is 1835 when county records indicate the first survey for school use was made then. If 1835 is correct earlier dates probably refer to school sessions held either in the Sodom tavern or in local homes. The school remained in service until 1915.

Sodom School served a three mile radius and during its four month winter term was attended by 40 to 60 students with as many as 100 at certain periods. Its record of school masters and mistresses as well as successful graduating students was very good. Besides the traditional curriculum associated with one room schoolhouses the teachers experimented with educational methods. Geography lessons were taught by setting rhymes to music and singing the verses.

In its early days the school was also used as a Methodist church until the congregation was able to build its own structure in 1858. Then the school appeared with a cupola built on the front of the roof and a cemetery surrounding the grounds. All traces of the cemetery have disappeared. Later in the nineteenth

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Pennsylvania	
COUNTY Northumberland	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

8. Significance

century several party caucases were held there and the building was used on election days. After the school closed it was left unattended until 1835 when restoration began. By 1961 restoration was completed and the school became a property of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission in 1968.

The schoolhouse is significant because its octagonal shape is unusual in early Pennsylvania architecture, and it is the only building of this design found in the north central region of the state. It also indicates the strong influence of the Scottish-Irish element in the upper Susquehanna Valley and serves as a reminder of a past era in American education.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Bureau of Historic Sites and Properties File on Sodom School.

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission File on Sodom School.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		40°	57'	57"
NE	° ' "	° ' "		76°	49'	39"
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 3 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:

Pennsylvania Register of Historic Sites and Landmarks

ORGANIZATION

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

DATE
Aug. 1971

revised July '73

STREET AND NUMBER:

Box 1026

CITY OR TOWN:

Harrisburg

STATE

Pennsylvania

CODE

42

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name

William J. Weaver
State Liaison Officer

Title

Executive Director, Pa.
Historical and Museum Comm.

Date

11/16/73

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

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

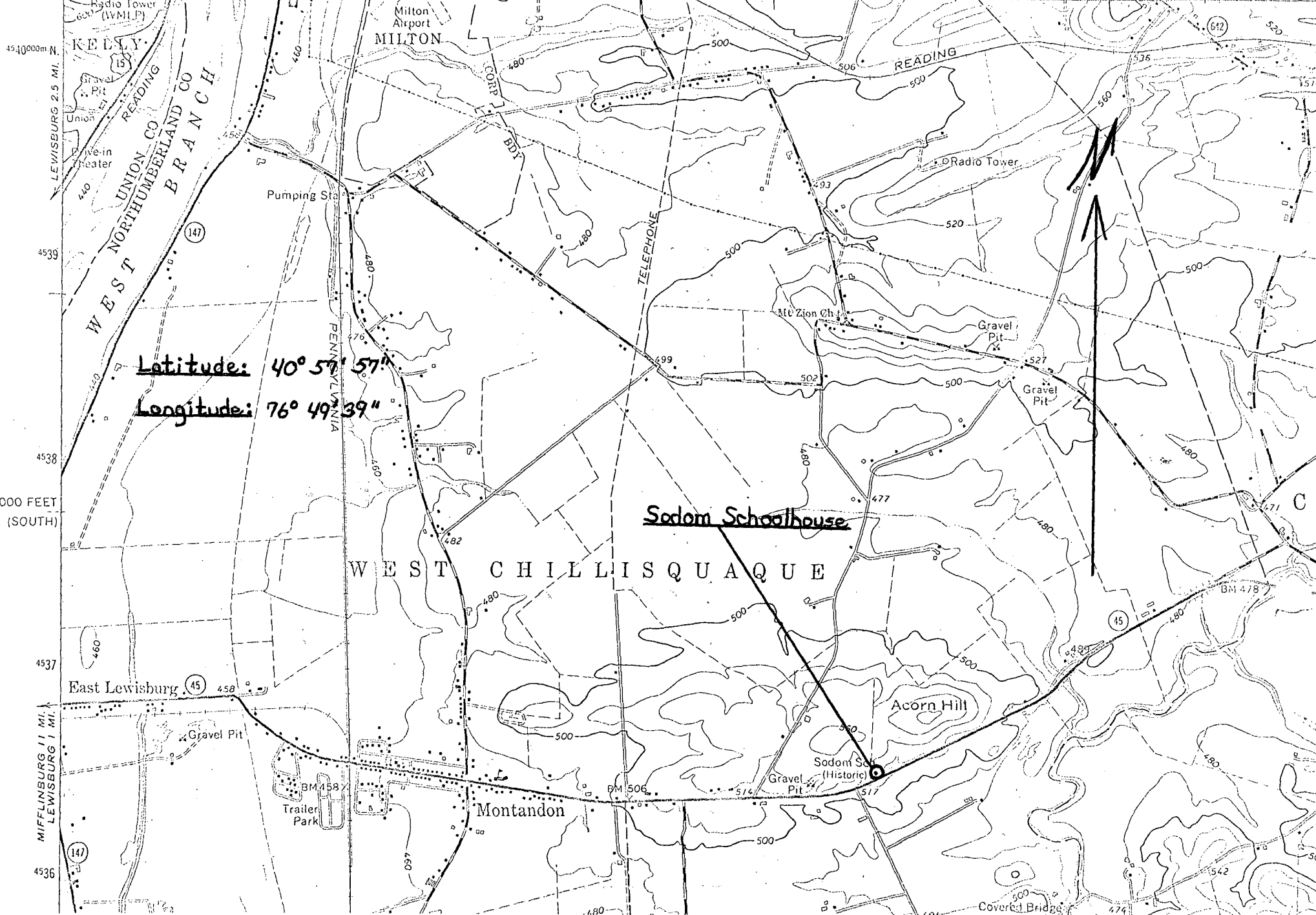
WOOD
SW 1/4

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Northumberland Pa. Quad
NE/4 Sunbury 15' Quadrangle
N 4052.5 — W 7645/7.5
1965

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS
TOPOGRAPHIC AND GEOLOGIC SURVEY

76° 52' 30" 41° 00" 344000m.E. 2 250 000 FEET (SOUTH); 345 50' 346 347 5666 III SE (MILTON) MILTON (P.O.) 3 MI.



Latitude: 40° 57' 57"
Longitude: 76° 49' 39"

Sodom Schoolhouse

WEST CHILLISQUAQUE

Acorn Hill

Sodom Sta. (Historic)

Montandon

East Lewisburg

MILTON
Milton Airport

WEST NORTHUMBERLAND CO. BRANCH

LEWISBURG 2.5 MI.
MIFFLINSBURG 11 MI.
LEWISBURG 1 MI.

5666 III SE (MILTON) MILTON (P.O.) 3 MI.