

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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 NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
 INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

HISTORIC

Sprenger Brewery

AND/OR COMMON

Excelsior Brewery Complex

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

125-131 East King Street

--NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Lancaster

-- VICINITY OF

16

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Pennsylvania

CODE

42

COUNTY

Lancaster

CODE

071

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

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

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Jon B. Tremellen

W.E. Overly

STREET &amp; NUMBER

137 East Grant St.

P.O. Box 218

CITY, TOWN

Lancaster, Pa. 17602

-- VICINITY OF

Reading, Pa. 19603

STATE

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

Lancaster County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

50 North Duke Street

CITY, TOWN

Lancaster

STATE

Pennsylvania

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

6/15/79

--FEDERAL  STATE --COUNTY --LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

PHMC

CITY, TOWN

Harrisburg

STATE  
Pennsylvania

# 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 DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The property consists of street/lot numbers 125, 127, and 131 East King Street, Lancaster, Pa. Included in the complex, which encompasses 16,723 square feet of land area and stretches 252 lineal feet north-south from East King Street to East Grant Street are five structures and a 3,375 square-foot open area. For descriptive clarity, the buildings and open areas have been lettered A through F on an enclosed street-level plan.

Open area A: A 36'-6" X 71'-6" open area at the same grade elevation as the city sidewalk.

Building B, The Excelsior Hall: The overall deminsions of this stately building are 33'-0" X 105'-0". The building has four stories with ceiling heights ranging from 15'-4" to 11'-6" and a full basement. The only apparent alteration to the building was the replacement of a heavy, sculptural mansard roof in the style of the French Second Empire, with brick infill in the early 1950's. The remainder of the facade has survived intact; the first story being a Victorian street elevation store front and the second and third stories having four, 2 pane over 2 pane, window openings flanked on either side by pilasters. The window sash and jambs have deeply milled surface relief to compliment the brick corbelled pilasters. The characteristic brackets adorn the underside of the sills while ornate pedaments top the window heads. The third floor window heads are arched and fit symmetrically into brick arches spanning the pilasters. The overall effect is one of structural expression in ornament with structural elements detailed as decoration and decoration placed to appear structural.

Structural decoration is again apparent on the interior of the first floor with fluted cast-iron columns supporting the center supporting beam... The beam supports 3 X 10 floor joists that span approximately 15 feet from the exterior brick bearing walls. The remaining floors are clear span of approximately 30 feet with wood members of unknown size. Space for these larger wood members is available due to the window spacing on the facade, achieving an enlongated appearance important to the style. Other significant interior features include a grand curved staircase from the first to the second floor, pressed tin ceiling panels and coves on the first floor and ornate woodwork throughout.

Building C: Building C, measuring 22'-0" X 8'-0" is the wing of a larger Federal building that was demolished approximately 1910. The first two stories and stone basement vaults were built first, circa 1857. The upper two stories are more victorian in architectural characteristics and were added 30 to 40 years later. Southern portions of the structure were used as living spaces or offices, with several rooms retaining early wallpaper. The northern portion and the stone vaults were the heart of a local brewing operation (Sprenger Brewery).

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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

Sprenger Brewery  
Lancaster County

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DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 2

The structural system is load-bearing brick walls with wood floor joists spanning 19'-6". The bearing walls are supported by massive stone barrel vaults, twelve feet thick where they spring from the side walls and eight feet thick in the center. The floor of the vault is a series of enormous stone slabs laid edge to edge.

The west wall faces into a courtyard area and presents the viewer with four stories of nicely proportioned 6-pane over 6-pane windows. In addition to the regular fenestration, the first floor boasts a graceful twelve-foot-wide archway and a pair of delicately crafted sash, complementing the arch. The interior wood trim is typical of Lancaster houses of this period.

Building D: The overall dimensions of this infill structure are 49'-0" by 69'-0". Although structurally independent, this four story building borrows portions of exterior walls from buildings B,C,E, and F. The structural system consists of a steel column grid varying from 16'-0" by 16'-0" to 16'-0" X 18'-0", connected with steel beams. The steel frame supports wooden floor joists and buttresses the brick veneer exterior walls. The date of construction is circa 1910.

Building E: Measuring 44'-6" X 88'-6", this Victorian warehouse appears to have been structurally altered to achieve a larger dead load capacity for its most recent use as a furniture warehouse. The present steel post and beam frame replaced an all wooden frame at the time building D was constructed. The earlier brick veneer exterior walls remain intact and are characteristic of Lancaster warehouse construction circa 1850. The East Grant Street facade represents a relatively intact example of Victorian warehouse architecture with nine small 6-pane over 6-pane windows evenly spaced over the upper three stories and two large garage door openings on the street level. A 10' X 12' skylight highlights the south west corner of this building and illuminates adjacent portions of building C and D. Four stories below the skylight one can walk on the top of the stone barrel vaults.

Building F: The Excelsior Brewery stable building (building F) is a 51'-0" X 65'-0", two story brick structure with a wooden structural frame.

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED

Sprenger Brewery  
Lancaster County

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

The East Grant Street facade is irregular with 6'-4" X 10'-10" and 10'-0" X 12-8" arched openings on the street level and two windows and a door opening on the second floor. High relief brick corbelling on the roof parapet achieves the appearance of a bracketed cornice, characteristic of Victorian architecture and indicative of the building style of J.A. Sprenger, the property owner during the stable construction. The roof slopes gradually toward the building's east edge where a downspout collects the water through a hole in the parapet.

On the first floor, the east and west facades, covered by more recent buildings, have a series of symmetrically-spaced small stable windows. Inside the building, the east and west walls are lined with original horse stall partitions. A loft area above each row of stalls is supported by posts that show evidence of being chewed by livestock over a period of many years.

A large, manual, gear-driven carriage hoist is located near the middle of the building, directly in line with the largest arched opening on the East Grant Street facade. The hoist is a 6'-0" X 11'-0" rectangle and is raised and lowered on a continuous rope system.

The four evenly-spaced windows of the second floor western facade retain original six-pane over six-pane sash, and are indicative of the number and quality of original features possessed by this building. Alterations have been minimal, and aside from maintenance items such as roofing and rain leaders the only changes have been the addition of a few wooden partitions, some lavatory plumbing and the brick infill of the small stable windows on the western facade.

# 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 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 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

1857-73

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

A wealth of architectural and social heritage has been discovered during an investigation into the potential reuse of one of Lancaster's largest downtown properties. Important features of this property include the existence of Lancaster's last relatively intact brewery complex (Sprenger Brewery) and the role it played in the development and prosperity of Lancaster county.

From Lancaster deed records it can be established that Sprenger purchased the first 32'-4" wide portion of the property (measured along East King Street) in 1857. He demolished a two story dwelling and erected a brick residence and brewery. Of this original construction building C remains. In 1864, Sprenger purchased the adjoining property to the west in order to enlarge his brewing operation. Two years later, the brewer completed his acquisition of ground for the King Street brewery with the purchase of a 32"-2½" X 95'-0" piece of ground adjoining his property in the northeast corner. Since this acquisition, the property configuration has remained unaltered. It can be surmised the remainder of the existing buildings were built after 1864 since buildings D, E and F cross the original lot boundaries.

Building C appears to have been the main entrance to the brewery and contained some office and residential space. Large stone vaults under the building were used for cool storage and aging beer.

The actual brewing process probably took place in building E, judging from the East Grant Street service type entrances, the lack of a full basement (there is a stone storage vault in the southwest corner) and the proximity to the stable and storage building (building F). Although the interior has been "modernized", it is assumed that the exterior brick walls of building E were built between 1864 and the construction of the Excelsior Hall, circa 1873. Building E has no exterior wall of its own on the first two floors of its western exposure, indicating that building F was built first. Building F, the brewery stable, is complete with original livestock stalls and a manual, gear-driven carriage hoist to the second story.

The creation of storage space for the distribution process was imperative to a brewers operation and it was structurally more feasible to use a loft and second story than to build a basement. The loft area was undoubtedly used for hay and straw while the second story enjoyed a variety of uses from empty keg storage to overflow storage of hay and feed. Housing the livestock was the remaining major building function and judging from the number of stalls (12), Sprenger distributed large quantities of beer. Two horses pulled each wagon and the

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Sprenger Brewery  
Lancaster County  
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

wagons could carry up to 30 kegs. The manually operated carriage hoist is a very distinctive feature of the interior. It was probably used to raise and lower loaded wagons to save tedious manual labor. The location of the hoist in relation to the stalls would indicate the horses were hitched and unhitched very close to the hoist.

In summary, this stable building is an intact example of industrial and manufacturing technology of the 1860's. It contains all available innovations relative to stable buildings of the period and boasts a beautifully proportioned, masterfully designed street facade.

The Excelsior Hall building (building B) may have been designed by the brewery owner, John Abraham Sprenger. Its elegant French second empire facade was an unusual addition to the streetscape and intended to draw the Lancaster pedestrian into the saloon on the ground floor and the "meeting halls for societies" on the upper floors. It is reputed to have had the longest bar in the country at the time of the building's construction.

The brewing industry in Lancaster County was in full swing in 1873 when the Excelsior Hall was built. This frantic hayday for the relatively small brewers in Lancaster County lasted until the prohibition at the turn of the century, when larger big-city brewers began to inflict economic hardship on the local brewers with more mechanized production methods. The grandeur of this building indicates the prosperity of the brewing industry in general and the Sprenger Brewery in particular.

# MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .384

QUADRANGLE NAME Lancaster, Pa.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 38181610 443261410  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B           
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C         

D         

E         

F         

G         

H         

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See Continuation Sheet

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

Levengood Associates, Architects

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Ken Hamel/ Richard Levengood

717-299-0080

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

P.O. Box 963

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Lancaster

Pennsylvania

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE   

LOCAL x

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

TITLE

Ed Weintraub

DATE

State Historic Preservation Officer

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION



Sprenger Brewery  
 Lancaster County  
 Zone 18 E388860 N4432640

