

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

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

For HCRS use only
received
date entered

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

**1. Name**

historic Lancaster County House of Employment

and/or common (Old County Hospital) (Building No. 1)

**2. Location**

street & number 900 East King Street not for publication

city, town Lancaster  vicinity of congressional district 16

state Pennsylvania code county Lancaster code 071

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" 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 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 County of Lancaster

street & number 50 North Duke Street

city, town Lancaster  vicinity of state Pennsylvania

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Lancaster County Courthouse

street & number 50 North Duke Street

city, town Lancaster state Pennsylvania

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Lancaster's Heritage has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1972  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Lancaster County Planning Commission

city, town Lancaster state Pennsylvania

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<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

#### EXTERIOR

##### Facade (facing East King Street)

This is a two story building with high basement windows and fifteen bay facade. The placement of the fenestration and doorways follows the original. The front stone wall is covered with stucco scored and painted red in imitation of brick; this is not the original surface treatment. The wood cornice appears to be original, as are most of the wooden window frames on the first and second stories. These windows frames are pegged and consist of a single faced, molded architrave. The central pedimented doorway is original, although the peak of the pediment has been truncated. Some elements of this doorway have been transposed or reworked. The two minor first floor doorways on the facade have late Victorian enframements. The original masonry belt course remains evident between the first and second floors.

In brief, the basic integrity of the original facade design survive, although the following aspects have been altered:

1. The simulated brick is not original; it might date to the late Victorian period. according to the diarist John Pearson, the exterior of the stone walls was originally rough cast.
2. The long porch stretching across the front, supported on stone piers, is NOT original. It may date from Victorian alterations done c. 1875-1876. It is possible that the sixteen Tuscan Order columns which now support the porch roof were re-used from the original piazza that faced the Conestoga River at the back of the building.
3. The two secondary doorways occupy the original locations, but the wooden enframements are Victorian.
4. The six-over-six window sash that fill the twelve window openings on the first floor and the fifteen window openings on the second floor are very old, but almost certainly not original.
5. Roofing materials have been altered; the original dormer windows and chimenys have been removed.

The original appearance of this facade is documented by the view of c. 1869 in Mombert's Authentic History of Lancaster County. (See enclosure).

##### East Gable End:

Here the original rough casting has been removed to reveal the rough stone masonry that never was intended to be seen. The large fire escape is a recent addition. There is a three bay elevation on the base, first, and second floors, with a single central window on the gable section of the attic story. The six-over-six window sash appear to be old, but not original. The original roofline and cornice remain, as do many of the wooden window frames. The back corner basement window has been filled with stone, and a second floor window has been altered to a doorway to accommodate the fire escape.

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

Lancaster County House  
**CONTINUATION SHEET** of Employment ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

Back - (facing the present parking lot and the Conestoga River):

Here, too, the original stucco has been removed to reveal rough stone masonry that never was intended to be seen. There are signs of white wash on the first floor area; this would have been the back of the original wall in the area once covered by a non-lost piazza. On the first and second floors, most of the fenestration and placement of doors appears to be original; several openings give evidence of reworking, and thus merit further investigation. The wooden cornice is original, and most of the wooden window frames on the first and second floors appear to be original. Some of the basement windows have been altered in form or closed. There is one late dormer window on the roof. The six-over-six window sash are old, but not original. The roofing materials are modern. The chimneys that originally appeared at the back of the building are gone.

West Gable end:

This entire wall is stuccoed and painted and scored to simulate brick. The original masonry belt course remains evident. Most remarks about fenestration and fire escapes made for the east gable end apply to this wall, as well. The present central doorways on the attic level and the second floor (third floor from the ground level, that is) obviously are original window openings altered for the recent fire escapes.

**INTERIOR**

The enclosed floor plans, although approximate, give the basic configuration of rooms and halls. It appears that most of the general plan of the original room arrangement survives, with some alteration to doorways and halls.

Almost NO original interior woodwork remains on any of the basement, first, or second floors. Most of the extant woodwork, including the central curving stairway, appears to be of late Victorian date. It is possible that most of this Victorian woodwork dates from work done in 1875-1876. The red, white, and blue glass in the fanlight of the central pedimented doorway is of Victorian vintage. The tradition that this is "Stiegel" glass is impossible.

In the attic survives a great deal of workwood and the chimneystacks from the original building. These elements merit further serious investigation and research.

# 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/ 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Medical
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1799-1801 **Builder/Architect** William Hensel, George Brungard,  
Charles and Thomas Wilson

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

**Architecture:**

1. Important example of Georgian institutional architecture in Pennsylvania.
2. Basic integrity of exterior remains.
3. Very well documented.

**Politics/Government:**

This is an important example of a building under continuous ownership by the County since construction in 1799-1801.

**Social/Humanitarian**

Through a variety of changing functions, the structure has always served community needs.

**Medical:**

This is one of the oldest hospital type structure now surviving in the United States.

**Cultural History:**

The Georgian architecture of the original design illustrates the following processes in the perspective of cultural history:

1. The impact of Philadelphia oriented taste throughout the counties of inland Pennsylvania.
2. The acculturation of Lancaster area Germans (like William Hensel and George Brungard) to English oriented tastes and styles.

An act passed by the State Legislature 27 February 1797, "An Act to provide for the erection of a House of Employment and Support of the Poor in the Counties of Chester and Lancaster" required an election of reputable citizens of the County to be "one body politic and incorporate in law." This group, known as "Directors of the Poor and House of Employment of the County of Lancaster" consisted of Dr. Edward Hand, Thomas Boude, George Musser, James Morrison, John Funk, Peter Ellmaker, Frederick Seegar, George Illig and Zachariah Moore. They purchased 89 acres of land from Matthias Slough bordering Lancaster City to the West and Philadelphia and Lancaster turnpike to the North near the reservoir for L3129-17-6. It was on this site that the House of Employment was erected at a cost of L 5573.

Even before the purchase of the land, the Director of the Poor selected the plans and craftsmen. The Minutes for the Directors of the Poor for Tuesday, January 22, 1799, record the following:

"Having taken into consideration divers plans of a building present by Sundry Carpenters Have adopted that by Hansell (SIC) & Brungard as the most eligible except the projection therein which is rejected."

"The said Hansel (SIC) & Brungard contracting to do the Carpenter work..."

"Charles and Thomas Wilson of Chester County, Masons, having made their proposals in writing to do and perform the mason work..."

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

Lancaster County House  
CONTINUATION SHEET of Employment ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

Finally, it is very likely that many of the Victorian alterations on both the exterior and interior of this building were done between March, 1875 and the summer of 1876 at the time when the adjacent mansard roof County Home was being built by the Lancaster contractor, John Evans. (This building was demolished about five years ago.)

The Building was used as a House of Employment to 1876 when the Almshouse (County Home) was completed and from then until recently it was used for the Hospitalization of the physically ill, for office use, and nurses home. It presently houses offices for several County agencies including the Lancaster County Children and Youth Social Service Agency, the Lancaster City County Human Relations Committee, and the Consultation and Education Department of the Lancaster County Office of Mental Health/Mental Retardation.

On 2 December 1800, Dr. John D. Perkins was elected to attend the House as physician and surgeon for \$90.00 a year. Dr. Edward Hand and Dr. Frederick Kuhn were nominated as consulting physicians for one year. On 8 April 1801 Dr. George Moore was appointed physician and surgeon to visit the House at \$100.00 a year. Medicines were at the expense of the county.

The appointment of the aforementioned physicians to provide medical care and the services of a full time steward and matron to supervise the physical comfort of the inmates entitles the House of Employment to be classified as a hospital from its inception and thus one of the oldest hospitals in the United States still standing.

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

Lancaster County House

CONTINUATION SHEET of Employment      ITEM NUMBER 8      PAGE 2

Thus it is evident that the jointers of Lancaster Borough, William Hensel (1755-1842) and George Brungard (?-1831) actually designed the building and executive all the carpentry. George Brungard was working in Lancaster Borough speculated in real estate. Evidently he died in obscurity in 1831. William Hensel (correct spelling) was a joiner in Lancaster Borough at least as early as the 1780's. He was the progenitor of a family that left numerous distinguished descendants, including the Honorable William Uhler Hensel. In his old age Hensel moved to Martic Township, where he died September 14, 1842.

It is interesting to note that the Directors simplified the design submitted by Hensel and Brungard by eliminating the "Projection"; this may be interpreted to mean a pedimented central pavillion. If this original design had been followed, the derivation of the basic exterior design from prototypes in the Philadelphia area would be all the more apparent. In particular, this design is related to works by the noted Philadelphia master builder, Robert Smith (1722-1777). Although Lancaster's House of Employment has often been compared to the Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia (built in stages c. 1755-1805), its basic design of facade and interior room arrangement is even more closely related to collegiate, hospital, and prison buildings done by Robert Smith. In particular, the "multiple entrance" plan, seen in the three doors on the facade of the House of Employment, seems to be derived from buildings by Smith. Two of Smith's buildings that strongly suggest a role in influencing the design of the Lancaster structure are Nassau Hall at Princeton (1754-1756; now greatly altered) and the 1769 Mental Hospital at Williamsburg, Virginia (now destroyed).

In so much as the basic design for the Georgian style House of Employment was influenced by Philadelphia prototypes, so too was the detailing of woodwork. In particular, the original pedimented front door, although truncated, belongs to the mainstream of high-style woodwork of the greater Philadelphia-Lancaster area in the period (c. 1780-1805). In particular, the basic design of the doorway, allowing variations in scale and detailing, is virtually identical to several others in Lancaster County, including the following: 1783-1785 by Jasper Yeates at the northwest corner of South Queen and West Mifflin Streets in Lancaster, the front doorway at Rock Ford which probably dates from the early 1790's, and the one surviving pedimented doorway on Lancaster's Public Offices of 1795-1797 (this building is now the small museum commonly called the Heritage Center.) The configuration of the muntins in the fanlight is very similar to that in the four simulated doorways in the steeple of Lancaster's Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity (1794).

It is evident that construction on the House of Employment was commenced in 1799. Most work was completed by the Fall of 1800. However, some finishing work may not have been finished until about November, 1801.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See cont. sheet

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 1.3

Quadrangle name Lancaster, Pa.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 

1	8	3	9	0	3	2	0	4	4	3	2	5	4	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

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 Robert M. Behling, Associate Community Planner

organization Lancaster County Planning Commission date June, 1978

street & number P.O. Box 3480, 50 North Duke St. telephone (717) 299-8333

city or town Lancaster 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

*[Handwritten Signature]*  
title SHPO date 1-4-80

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

FOR HCRS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED  
DATE ENTERED

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

Lancaster County House  
CONTINUATION SHEET of Employment ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE

Bibliographical Sources:

The major primary source for documenting the construction of the House of Employment is a manuscript book entitled, Minutes of the Directors of the Poor 1798-1826 at the Lancaster County Historical Society, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, the "plan" submitted by Hensel and Brungard is not known to survive.

Biographical information about the now-forgotten joiners William Hensel and George Brungard is derived from the records of the Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity in Lancaster (both were Lutherans), Lancaster Borough Tax Lists at the Lancaster County Historical Society, and original deeds and wills at the Lancaster County Court House, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

For Philadelphia prototypes and relations to Robert Smith Buildings, the following are most useful:

1. George B. Tatum, Penn's Great Town, (1961), pl. 35
2. John F. Miller, The Architects of the American Colonies (1968), pp. 128-142.
3. Charles E. Peterson "Notes on Robert Smith", pp. 119-123 in Historic Philadelphia, vol. 43, TRANSACTIONS of the American Philosophical Society, 1953.

For descriptions by early diarists, the following are important:

1. Eliza Cope Harrison (editor), Philadelphia Merchant: The Diary of Thomas P. Cope 1800-1851, 1978.
2. James H. Mast (editor and commentator) "John Pearson's Descriptions of Lancaster and Columbia in 1801", pp. 49-61, vol. 61, JOURNAL OF THE LANCASTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 1957.

The main printed sources about the general history of the building are as follows:

1. Ellis and Evans, History of Lancaster County (1883), pp. 211-212.
2. Henry Showalter (Henry A. Showalter), "Brief Outline on the Care of the Poor, the Sick and Insane of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania", PAPERS OF THE LANCASTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, vol. LV, No. 4, 1951, pp. 93-123.



FOR HCRS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

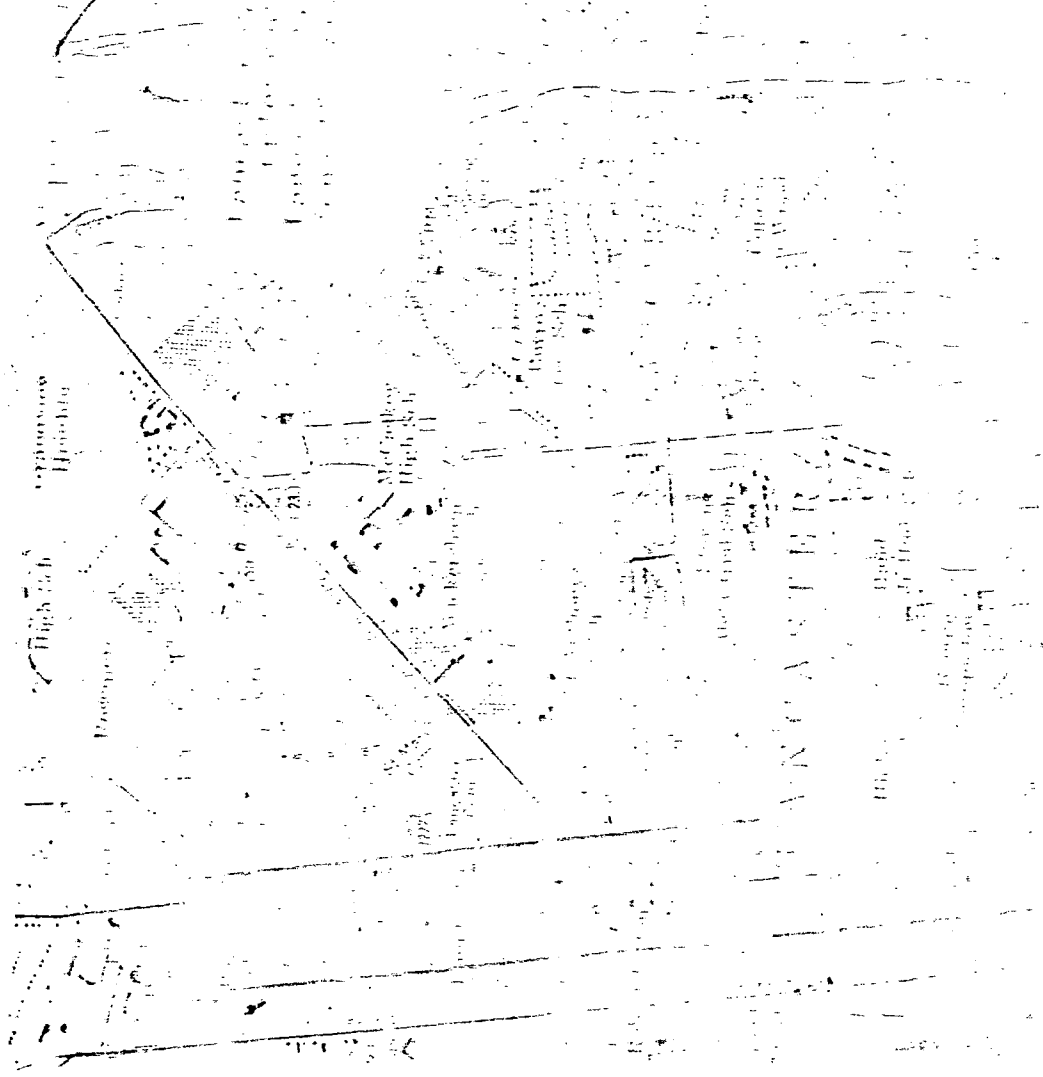
Lancaster County House of Employment

CONTINUATION SHEET

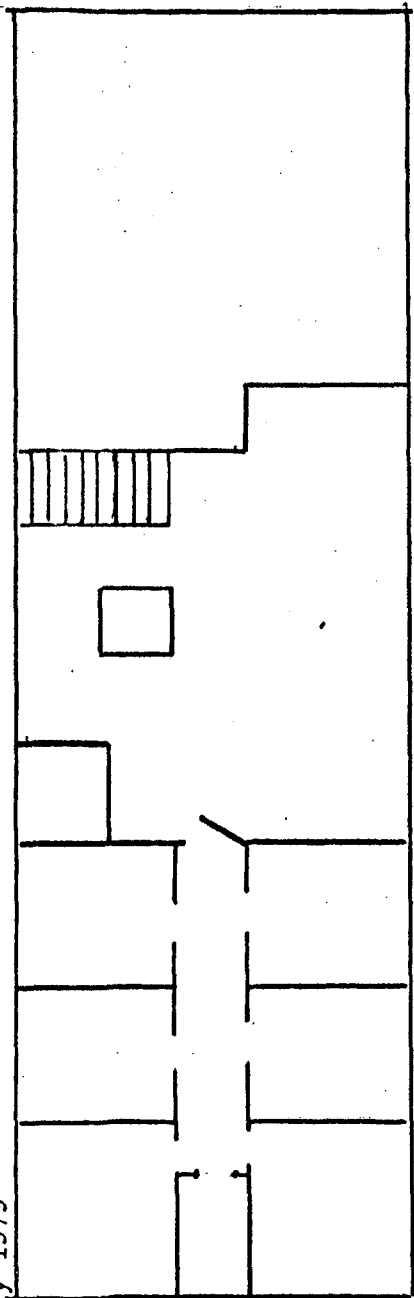
ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

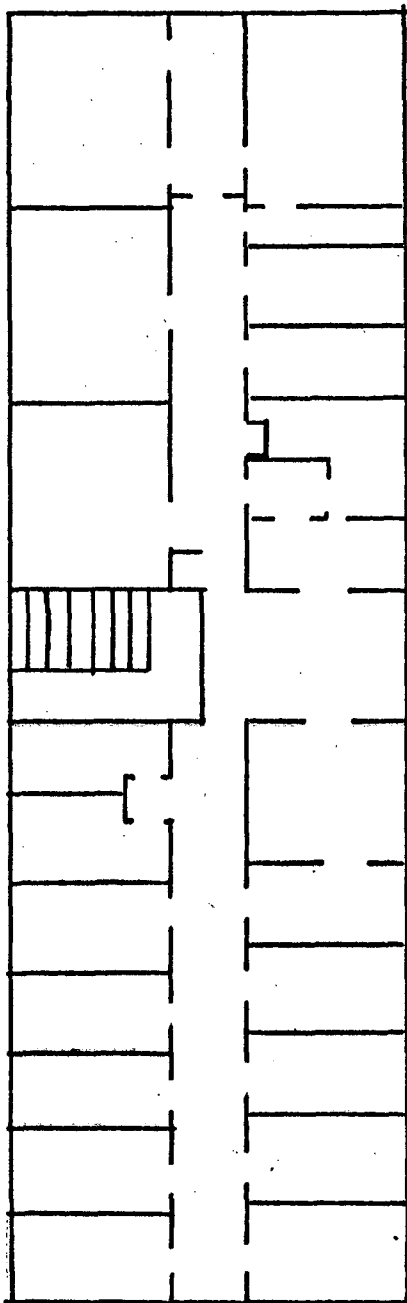
All that land located within the private access drive which completely encircles the Lancaster County House of Employment in an oval approx. 300-foot wide along a north-south axis and approx. 200 feet wide along an east-west axis, containing a total of approx. 1.3 acres, and situated approx. 500 feet south-southeast of the intersection of East King Street and Broad Street in the Township of Lancaster, County of Lancaster, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.



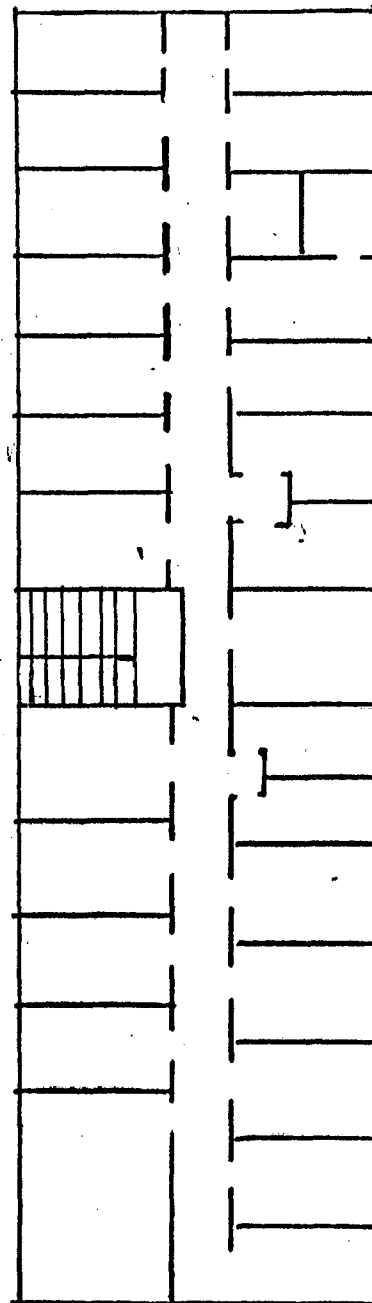
Lancaster County House of Employment  
National Register of Historic Places Nomination  
July 1979



BASEMENT

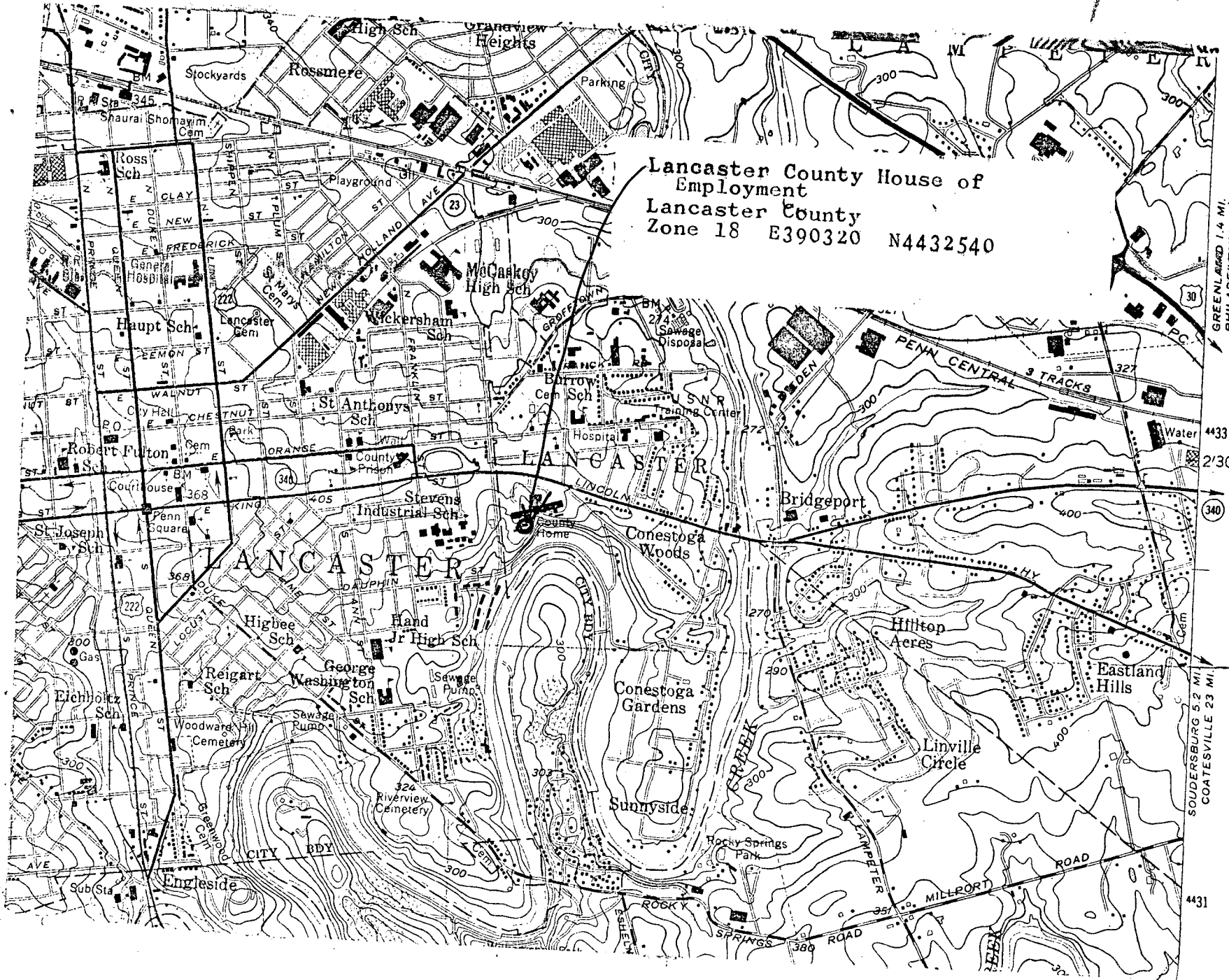


FIRST



SECOND





Lancaster County House of  
 Employment  
 Lancaster County  
 Zone 18 E390320 N4432540

GREENLAND 1.4 MI.  
 PHILADELPHIA (CIVIC CENTER) 61 MI.

SMOKETOWN 2.5 MI.  
 INTERCOURSE 7.6 MI.

SOLDERSBURG 5.2 MI  
 COATESVILLE 23 MI.

4431