

MALVERN QUADRANGLE  
PENNSYLVANIA-CHESTER CO.  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

5894 III NW  
(COLLEGEVILLE)

NE  
XVILLE)

53

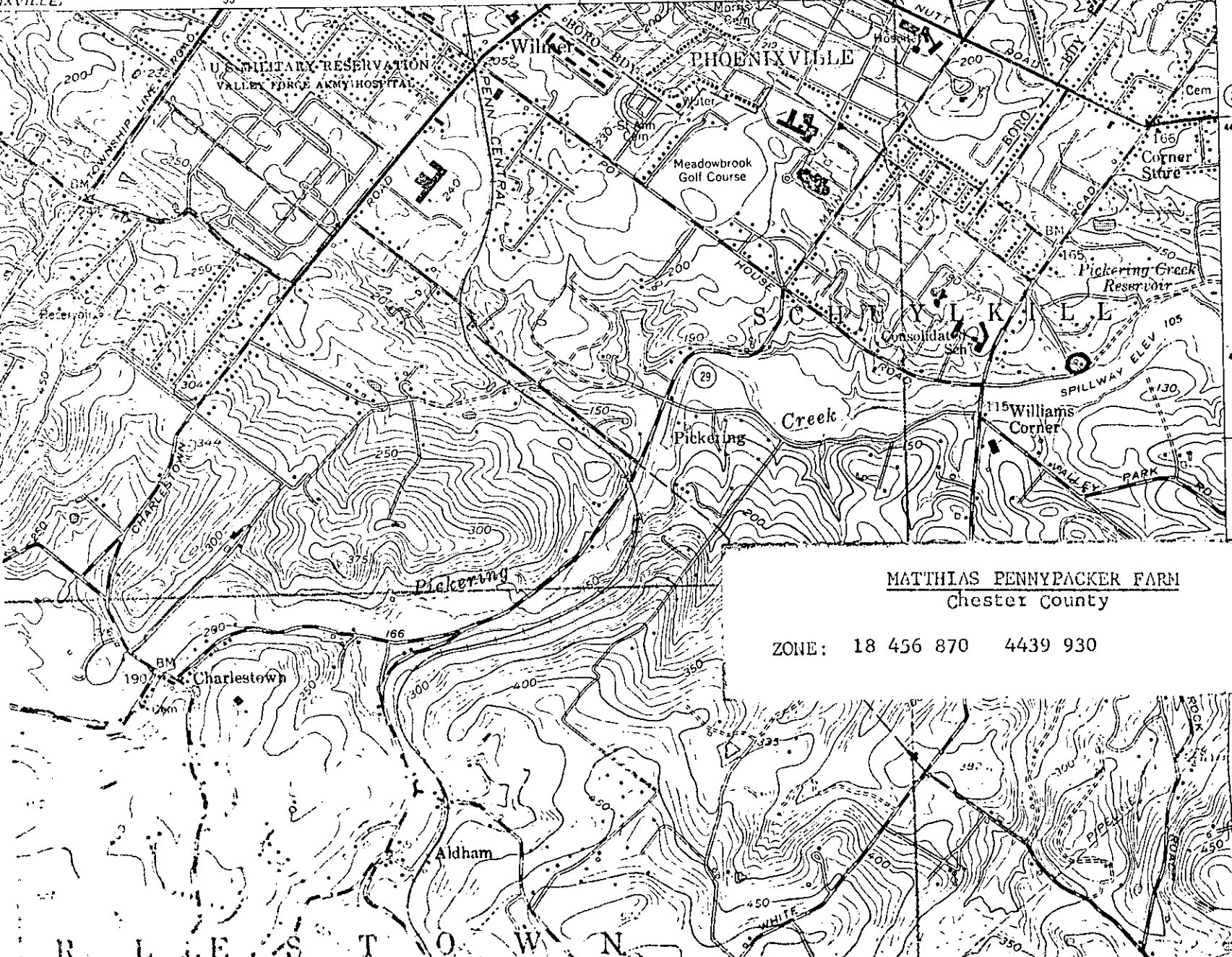
32'30" 454

11 MI. TO PA. 100  
2 620 000 FEET PARKER FORD 6.6 MI.

29 29 0.7 MI. TO PA. 113

457 75°30'

40°07'30"



VALLEY FORGE 2.6 MI.  
PENNSYLVANIA TURNPIKE 6.2 MI.

23

441

440

290 000

FEET

39

4438

MATTHIAS PENNYPACKER FARM  
Chester County

ZONE: 18 456 870 4439 930

R L E S T O W N

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 Matthias pennypacker farm

AND/OR COMMON  
Tinker Dam Farm

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
White Horse Road

CITY, TOWN  
Phoenixville,

--- NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
5th

STATE  
Pennsylvania

CODE  
42

COUNTY  
Chester

CODE  
029

**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME  
Mr. Lawrence Drake

STREET & NUMBER  
White Horse Road

CITY, TOWN  
Phoenixville,

STATE  
Pennsylvania

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Chester County Court House

STREET & NUMBER  
High Street

CITY, TOWN  
West Chester

STATE  
Pennsylvania

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
A. Is of Phoenixville and Its Vicinity: From the settlement to the Year 1871  
DATE BY Samuel Whiteaker Pennypacker, Esq.  
Bavix & Pennypacker: Philadelphia 1872

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input 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 Pennypacker house at the end of Mill Road is primarily Georgian style. It is composed of two sections forming an "L" and constructed of rubble masonry stuccoed with pebble dash and roofed with slate.

The main section had a porch added on the front probably in the mid-eighteen hundreds. This was removed in the 1930s. Back of the house stands a large stone bank barn 40' x 60' with a datestone in the gable, "1805," and the initials "M&MP." The barn is evidently the replacement of an earlier wood barn standing at the time of the Revolution.

There is also a small stone smoke house, a spring house and a root cellar with an extension at back containing the original dug well. In addition there is a wagon shed, shop and chicken house unit now converted to living quarters, and in field back of the barn and shed is a pit, probably the remains of an ice house.

The house runs east and west facing the Pickering Creek (Reservoir) to the south. The old section to the west is two stories high of two bays, having a fireplace on each floor with evidence of a winding stair at the back running from the cellar to the second floor, now removed to allow for a bath on the second floor and cupboards on the first. Original wood deck open porch on front refloored in brick and enclosed for plants in 1973. This portion, built prior to the Revolution, has a door and 6/6 window front and back on the first floor and a 6/6 window front and back on the second with a second window in back added in 1956 replacing the original now in the bathroom. The back window on the first floor has a cash drawer under the sill.

The main portion of the house with gable datestone "1830," is three stories high of five bays with "L" shaped wing on the east rear containing the kitchen with bedroom above. The main block has a central hall separating living room and dining room. On the second floor are three bedrooms in the main block in addition to the one over the kitchen and the other in the old section. Windows in the main block are 9/6 on the first floor and 6/6 on the second.

The third floor has two bedrooms which have one each segmental arch dormer on the south with gothic sash, flanking a later bathroom eyebrow window with fan lights. On the ends are two each, four light attic windows. There is an attic over the "L" with another four light attic window at back.

All main floor rooms have operating fireplaces as well as the three bedrooms on the second floor. The kitchen in the "L" has a large fireplace 6' wide by 4'-8" high which originally had a bake oven projecting on the outside. The oven had been removed prior to 1955 although the

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 2

door was still in place on the inside.

The front south facade of the main block had the stucco removed about 1965 and the stone ribbon pointed. The appearance of this facade had been spoiled by having had a porch added and then removed leaving the unsightly outline of the porch in smooth stucco against the background of pebble dash. When removing the stucco, evidence of an earlier or original pent eave or Germantown hood was discovered.

There is a full basement under the house with dirt floor except in the furnace room under the "L" kitchen which is brick.

The back kitchen porch on the "L" was enclosed and carried around the back to house a mud room and laundry in 1956; at the same time the present owner made minor interior modernizations, consisting primarily of eliminating non-original closets and modernizing some of the plumbing and most of the electrical wiring.

Lawrence Drake A.I.A.

# 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 checked="" 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 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 circa 1780's, circa 1830 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

After Charles Pickering reached the shores of America with William Penn he explored the region of the lower Schuylkill River. Thinking he had found precious metal he obtained a grant from Penn for a large tract of land (Charlestown) along the creek (Pickering) both named for him. Pickering added to his holdings by acquiring land from other grantees until he had 5358 acres.

Upon the death of Pickering in 1701 the tract was divided amongst 16 of his friends, one of whom was Griffith Jones. The 340 acres that Jones received was passed on to Alexander Ross and then to James Anderson in 1713. Anderson was the first actual settler on the Pickering tract.

In 1735 Anderson built a saw mill. This was the third in the area. It was this mill and 51 acres and buildings that John Custer and Matthias Pennypacker, his son-in-law, purchased in 1774. When Custer released his half ownership to Matthias in 1787, the property also included a grist mill.

Matthias Pennypacker was one of several grandsons of the first Pennypacker settler in Pennsylvania to come to Chester County. The house in which Matthias raised his family was small, one room up and one room down. Matthias was a Mennonite bishop and a well known preacher. His authority extended over the congregations of a wide area including those in Phoenixville, Skippack and Germantown. Although a pacifist, Matthias sided with the Colonists during the Revolution.

In September 1777, when the British came through Phoenixville on their way to Philadelphia after the Battle of Brandywine and the Paoli Massacre, they ravaged the farms of the Colonists sympathizers. The Pennypacker farm was ransacked and the machinery in the grist mill was hacked to pieces.

In December of that year when Washington brought his troops to Valley Forge for Winter Encampment the property was commandeered. Its use in the ensuing months is described in the Annals of Phoenixville and Its Vicinity.

A company of horse was stationed at the residence of Matthias Pennypacker. The orchard was used as a parade ground and the barn as a magazine. The powder was kept in kegs and barrels upon the floor and the building was surrounded by a guard continually. It is also told of this good Mennonite that he

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 2

secreted a quantity of his neighbors' clothing in barrels. There was a constant picket guard through the winter, on his property, where the West Chester Road crosses the Pickering Creek.

After the war, Matthias was appointed by the Pennsylvania Assembly as one of the commissioners to provide for the navigations of the Schuylkill River.

In 1807, the property passed to Matthias' son, Matthias. The second Matthias built a large addition to the house which included a broad hallway separating the downstairs rooms, four bedrooms and a kitchen. The addition bears the datestone "1830". Additional land was acquired and the mill and farming operations were expanded. By this time Schuylkill Township had been created out of part of Charlestown Township, taking its name from the River.

Matthias married Sarah Anderson. He was elected to the Pennsylvania Assembly in 1826 and 1827 and was a member of the Pennsylvania Constitutional Convention in 1837. He was also chairman of the group which organized the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad.

At the death of Matthias in 1852 the Orphans' Court ordered his property sold. The Public Sale Notice gives a detailed account of the thriving mill-farm complex which had developed from the simple and rudimentary beginnings in 1774.

No. 1. The Mansion Farm, is situated in Schuylkill township. . .containing 90 ACRES and 84½ perches. The improvements consist of a large two storied stone HOUSE, with two kitchens attached, and cellar under the whole, large stone Barn, wagon house, carriage house, spring house, and other necessary out buildings; a fountain of good spring water runs near one kitchen door. There are about 9 acres of valuable timber land, 15 acres of watered meadow; the remainder is arable land, in a high state of cultivation, divided into convenient fields, by good fences, with running water in each field; an apple orchard, and a variety of other fruit trees. Pickering Creek passes through the farm, upon which is erected a stone Grist Mill and Saw Mill, driven by two breast wheels, with power of 8 feet head and fall. The grist mill contains 2 run of French burrs,

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

for flouring and chopping, and one run of country stones suitable for grinding plaster, with hoisting, bolting and packing apparatus, for carrying on a country business. The saw mill is in good running order. At both of these mills a large business has formerly been done.

The land that supported this complex was divided into seven tracts. These included wood lots with "excellent chestnut timber", a tract with another house, barn and outbuildings, a "Sand Hole Lot" where sand was quarried for the area iron works, and a small holding of less than an acre on the Schuylkill River adjacent to Moore Hall which was formerly used as a landing for the mills described on Tract No. 1" The account notes that three of these lots were ". . . situated in the Lead and Copper Mining Districts of Chester County, 3 miles from Phoenixville, 2½ miles from the Reading Railroad and Schuylkill Navigation. . ."

Time, the machine age, the expansion of Phoenixville and the Suburban Water Company Dam have wrought changes to the landscape and to this fine old property. In 1885 the saw mill was torn down by Dr. M. J. Pennypacker, yet another Matthias. In a newspaper article concerning this event the writer, with regret, notes:

The old mill had become delapidated as there was but little lumber to saw now in that vicinity, the doctor decreed it useless to repair the mill again and concluded to demolish it and so another of the old landmarks of that vicinity has disappeared.

In 1929 the grist mill was demolished when the Suburban Water Company Dam was built and the land on which the grist mill stood was inundated. The stone from this grist mill was used to build the Schuylkill Township Building across the creek. One of the old millstones acts as a flagpole holder at the nearby Schuylkill Township Elementary School.

Bit by bit the acreage of the old property was reduced, as Phoenixville expanded, until it reached its present size of 5.973 acres. The house passed out of the family in 1934.

The Matthias Pennypacker residence is significant as the remains of

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 4

what was once an outstanding mill-farm complex. It is significant for its associations with the Valley Forge Encampment and for its connections with the Pennypacker family.

The Pennypackers were not only leaders in the community but in the Commonwealth, too. From 1902 to 1906 Judge Samuel Pennypacker, great grandson of the first Matthias, was Governor of the Pennsylvania. It was under his governorship that Valley Forge was enlarged as a State Park, the new Capitol building was erected and the Health, Highway and State Police Departments were organized. His Annals of Phoenixville and Its Vicinity: From the Settlement to the Year 1871 is the source of much of the history for Phoenixville and Schuylkill Township. The old Pennypacker homestead in Schwenksville, Montgomery County, in which Governor Pennypacker lived for part of his life, has recently been placed on the National Register of Historic Places.





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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

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H 6, pp.583-5; B 12, pp.54,55; F 19, Vol. 453, p.147; P 19,  
pp.188,189; S 22, p.201; A 28, p.110.

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Pinkowski, Edward. Washington's Officers Slept Here. Philadelphia:  
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# MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 5.937 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	18	456870	750	4439930	B			
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C					D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

J. David Jackson, Violet Tucci, Lawrence Drake A.T.A.

ORGANIZATION

DATE

French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, Inc

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

R.D. 2, Box 360

(215) 469-6287

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Pottstown

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE WILLIAM J. WEWER, Executive Director  
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

DATE

6/13/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER