

13

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**FOLIO USE ONLY**

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED *02*

**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  
**CARVERSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT**  
AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN  
**Carversville**

STATE  
**Pennsylvania**

VICINITY OF  
**8th**

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
**8th**

COUNTY  
**Bucks**

CODE  
**42**

CODE  
**017**

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<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  
**Multiple Ownership**

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

VICINITY OF

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
**Bucks County Courthouse**

STREET & NUMBER  
**Court Street**

CITY, TOWN  
**Doylestown**

STATE  
**Pennsylvania**

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
**Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places**

DATE  
**3/28/78**

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
**Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission**

CITY, TOWN  
**Harrisburg**

STATE  
**Pennsylvania**

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

*The Carversville Historic District is located in a pronounced valley formed by the Paunacussing Creek.*

*Carversville Road, along - and above - the north fork of the Paunacussing Creek drops sharply toward the village at the western approach to the District, and is joined by Stover Mill Road descending from an adjacent ridge. Aquetong Road winds into the southern approach, somewhat less steeply. There are many springs along this stretch, some of which once served dairy farms and a creamery. Pipersville Road drops steeply from the north, around several sharp curves, joining Carversville Road in the village. All roads converge at the town square, from which Fleecydale Road continues downstream after crossing over the combined waters of the Paunacussing. There are three arched, stone bridges and one steel-girded span within the District.*

*Much of the land within the District would currently be described as flood plain, adjoined by gradual and steep slopes that are also within the boundaries. As a result, many residences are of "side hill" construction, resulting in 2 or 2½ story fronts and 3 and 3½ story rears facing the streams.*

### Structures Less than 100 Years Old:

*Twenty-one percent of the structures in the Historic District were built within the last 100 years. These are all residences, and for the most part were erected along the approaches to the village and only six have been erected within the last 25 years. All are quiet, plainly styled, neat residences of frame or mortared concrete block construction.*

### Structures 100 to 200 Years Old:

*This is, numerically, the largest category, and gives the District its early 19th century overall character. They are mostly 2 and 2½ story residences built in the Federal or Victorian style, usually without the benefit of an architect. The Victorian are mostly frame, with clapboard or german siding, and with walls that are "plank built" or stone filled. In addition, there are a few homes of French Huguenot, clay block construction faced with stucco or mortar. These Federal and Victorian homes have "grown up" in, and around, an area dotted with gracious Colonial structures. The result is a harmonious, architectural blend that is truly unique.*

### Structures 200 Years Old or More:

*Except for the restored grist mill and mill house, all were built as residences or major outbuildings; were of typical 18th century stone construction, colonial in style, and designed to be farmhouses or village homes. Some have been pointed, some mortared, and all are in from a good to excellent state of preservation.*

*Of outstanding significance in this category is a village home built Ca. 1703-1716 and known as the Overpeck homestead. The present owners, Clarence and Joyce Overpeck, are completing a painstakingly thorough and authoritative restoration of this colonial dwelling, once owned by Thomas Ellicott. His brother, Andrew Ellicott was to become an outstanding engineer and ultimately the Surveyor General of the United States.*

# 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 checked="" 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 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) <i>community development</i>
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES \_\_\_\_\_ BUILDER/ARCHITECT \_\_\_\_\_

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

*Carversville is a small rural, residential village in Solebury Township, Bucks County. The architectural character of the 18th and 19th century homes bordering its two main streets, each paralleling a stream produces a quiet village of the nineteenth century rapidly disappearing from the American scene. The proposed historic district encompasses practically all of this unbounded village.*

*More precisely, the village envelops the convergence of Carversville and Fleecydale Roads (LR 09066); Aquetong and Pipersville Roads (LR 09060); and Stover Mill Road (T399). It lies in a valley formed by the three forks of the Paunacussing Creek. The north fork flows northeastward and parallels Carversville Road. The middle fork flows eastward and drains the area of Sawmill Road. The south fork flows northward parallel to Aquetong Road. The three meet near the center of the village, whence the main stream journeys for the further two miles to the Delaware River.*

*Bucks County was established in 1682 on large tracts of land mapped and granted by William Penn to certain English settlers, as well as to other Englishmen who never came to America. Many tracts were, in turn, soon sold off in smaller parcels. The site of Carversville, originally within a 5000 acre tract granted to James Harrison, Penn's Commissioner, is partly within the Randal Blackshaw tract of 500 acres - bounded by Aquetong Road and that part of the Plumstead Township line paralleling Carversville Road; and the Upper Pike tract of 400 acres - bounded by Aquetong Road and that part of the Plumstead Township line paralleling Fleecydale Road.*

*In Bucks County's earliest years the only settlement at the present site of Carversville was an Indian village reportedly located on the hilly rise on the west side of the Paunacussing Creek's north fork. Legend has it that the local area that is now Carversville was first known as "Indian Village".*

*The fertility of Bucks County's soils soon brought farmers to the area, and by the early years of the 18th century there was much development of the agricultural potential in Solebury, Buckingham and Plumstead Townships. While the earliest settlers used bridle paths to travel from one place to another, clear evidence of development is always demonstrated by the creation of roads. The oldest area highway, dating from 1702, is Street Road - one mile northwest of Carversville, and a boundary between Buckingham and Solebury Townships. "Suggin" (now Sugan) Road is the oldest in Solebury Township and, starting right in the heart of what is now Carversville, was laid out and used by farmers in the Paunacussing Valley and adjacent Plumstead Township to take their grain to the Aquetong Mill near New Hope. By 1730 there was also a road from Lumberville ( on the Delaware River) to the Barcroft Mill, located in the center of what is now Carversville. By 1785 there was a road from Kugler's Mill in Lumberton (below Lumberville on the Delaware River) to Carversville, still known as "Indian Village", but soon to be called "Milltown", and later, "Milton".*

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*Carversville Historic District*

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

*Thus the pattern throughout the 18th century for this immediate area was one of slow but steady agricultural development, with settlers mostly Quakers establishing their farmlands and their mills at intervals along local waterways to serve their expanding needs. As "Carversville" had the Paunacussing Creek, mills were built along its banks, and roads were laid out to reach them. Within the area of the present Historic District was the above mentioned Barcroft Mill, the land for which was sold prior to 1730 by Nehemiah Blackshaw to John Hough and Ambrose Barcroft. The existence of this mill in 1730 is evidenced by the owner's petition in March, 1730 for a road to the mill, "lately erected". This mill still stands, and is currently the residence and studio of Raymond Granville Barger, sculptor.*

*Also within the Historic District is the site of another 18th century mill (now razed) which was built on the main stream of the Paunacussing along Fleecydale Road, below the confluence of the three forks. The mill house has been faithfully preserved and is now the home of James Cullen.*

*In the early 1800's today's Carversville was known as Milton and was slowly working its way onto the map. In 1804 "The Pennsylvania Correspondent" helpfully reported that papers would be left for subscribers "at Israel Child's shop in Milton". A later issue noted that they would be left "at Carver's Mill shop". In 1813 Isaac Pickering opened a tavern, and Milton was emerging as a regional center. But no building boom yet, for Gordon's "Gazetteer of Pennsylvania" reported in 1832 that Milton had "six or eight houses, a tavern, a store and a grist mill". With one or two possible exceptions, these structures are still standing in an excellent state of preservation and in residential use.*

*Federal recognition of Milton as a center of significance came in 1833 when a post office was established. Since there was already another Milton in Pennsylvania with a post office, the local Milton, being the newcomer, was renamed Carversville, after George Carver, the first postmaster.*

*The spiritual life of the community was given its first focal point in 1832 when a small group not associated with the Society of Friends formed a "Christian Society". They met at a number of locations prior to erecting a meeting house on the site of the present Carversville Christian Church. While this "Christian Society" was Protestant in composition, the house of worship was called "The Free Christian Meeting House", and its charter made particular provision for the use of the church house by any other group of Christians who applied. A growing congregation brought about the demolition of the first meeting house and the erection of the present church structure in 1866, which was called then as now the Carversville Christian Church.*

*In 1873 a small, stone Presbyterian church was built on Aquetong Road about 500 feet east of the Christian church. It was active until about 1933. Its exterior architecture unchanged, it is now the home of the Fred Clark Art Museum.*

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*The years 1840-1875 represent the period of Carversville's greatest growth, approximately one half of the present structures having been built within that span of years. It coincided with a period of growing commercial activity that prompted Carversville to offer such enterprises as a tannery, a saw mill, grist mills, a wheelwright shop, a cobbler and a carriage shop; plus a hotel, a tavern and several retail stores. Clearly the village was the commercial center of the area.*

*In 1859 a preparatory school, the Excelsior Normal Institute, was built on a bluff to the north overlooking the village. It flourished in its earlier years, and matriculated over 1000 students in its career and in 1877 it closed.*

*The character of the village and the general level of activity that had been generated in the post Civil War era was more or less maintained through the first quarter of the 20th century. New construction in this period was all but non-existent. Then, following the close of World War II, the early effects of the burgeoning automobile era began to exert a subtle influence. A gradual decline in commercial activity had its beginnings, and during the ensuing 25 years a number of the works and shops phased out - largely those that had been engaged in servicing area agricultural and livestock interests. For the most part, these small businesses had been carried on within residential structures or in barns or other out-buildings. In many respects they were just a cut or two above the level of what today would be characterized as cottage industries. As they gradually disappeared, most of the areas they had utilized were converted to residential use, and the village took on a steadily increasing "residential only" character. At the present time, the only commercial activity is in the immediate area of the "village square", and comprises two cabinet maker's shops, the 1813 hotel housing a small, gourmet restaurant, two antique shops and a custom blender of pipe tobaccos.*

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

*Davis, History of Bucks County*  
*Reeder, History of Solebury Township*  
 Records at Bucks County Historical Society

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 188

QUADRANGLE NAME Lumberville

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 | 495020 | 4471180

B 18 | 495170 | 4471100

ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
 C 18 | 494820 | 4470560

ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
 D 18 | 495520 | 4470100

E 18 | 495410 | 4469900

F 18 | 494720 | 4470300

G 18 | 494180 | 4471020

H 18 | 494100 | 4470120

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

I 18 494540 4470360

J 18 494310 4470700

K 18 494320 4470760

L 18 494560 4470610

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

*Alvin S. Roberts*

ORGANIZATION

*Historic Carversville Society*

STREET & NUMBER

CITY OR TOWN

*Carversville*

DATE

TELEPHONE

*215-297-5469*

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE *ED WEINTRAUB*  
*STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER*

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

ATTEST *KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER*

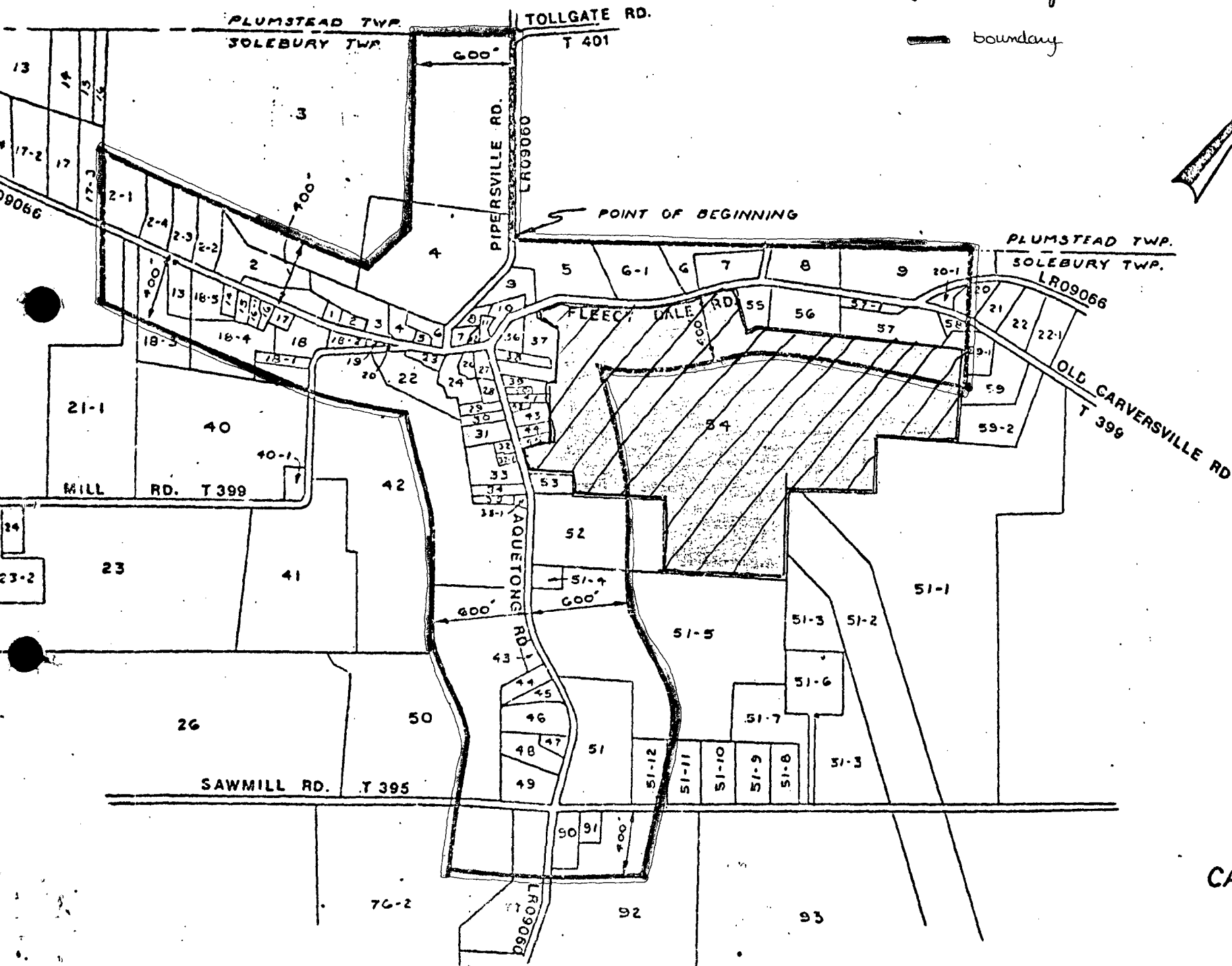
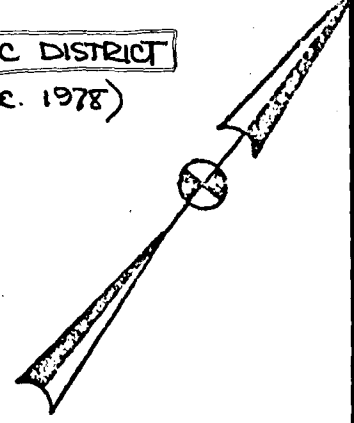
DATE

*CHIEF OF REGISTRATION*

CARVERSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT

(National Register Dec. 1978)

— boundary



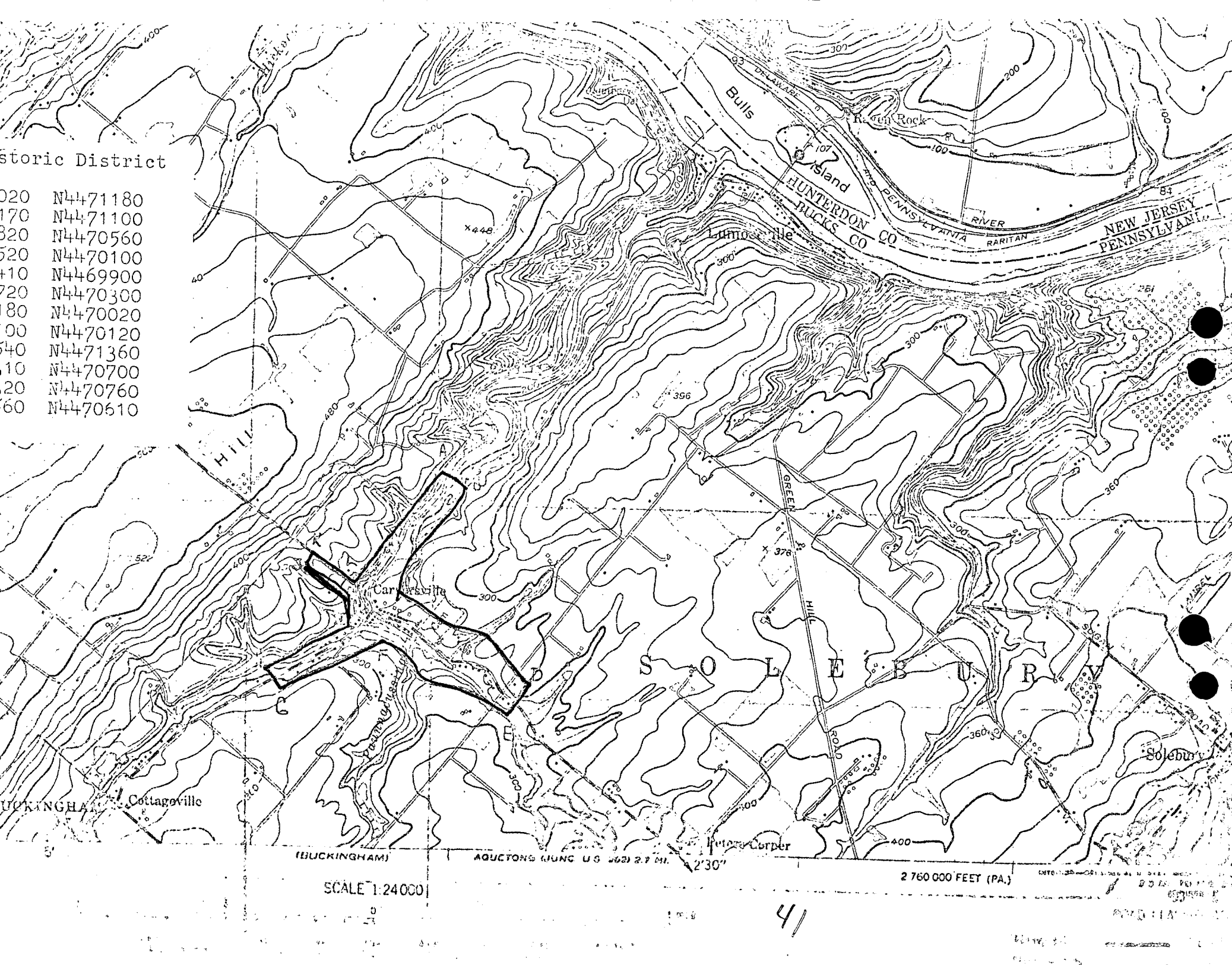
BOUNDARY  
CARVERSVILLE

SOLEBURY TWP.

SCALE: 1" = 800'

Historic District

- 020 N4471180
- 170 N4471100
- 320 N4470560
- 520 N4470100
- +10 N4469900
- 720 N4470300
- 880 N4470020
- 900 N4470120
- 940 N4471360
- 910 N4470700
- 920 N4470760
- 960 N4470610



(BUCKINGHAM)

AQUICONS (MUNC U.S. 563) 2.7 MI.

2'30"

2 760 000 FEET (PA.)

SCALE 1:24000

41