

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Pennsylvania	
COUNTY: Bucks	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Historic Fallsington

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
South of U.S. 1, East of New Tyburn Road

CITY OR TOWN:
Fallsington

STATE Pennsylvania	CODE 42	COUNTY: Bucks	CODE 017
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Individual ownership; 6 structures owned by Historic Fallsington, Inc., non-profit corporation formed in 1953 to preserve the village

CITY OR TOWN:
Fallsington

STATE:
Pennsylvania

CODE:
42

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Register of Deeds, Bucks County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:
Court Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Doylestown

STATE:
Pennsylvania

CODE:
42

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Pennsylvania Register of Historic Sites and Landmarks

DATE OF SURVEY: 1971 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

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input 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 village of Fallsington evolved around the Friends Meeting House, which is situated at the junction of five roads, said to have been early Indian Trails. The nucleus of the historic area is still Meeting House Square, nearly intact because a new, four-lane Tyburn Road was built in the 1950s, bypassing the old part of the village. Fortunately, this road is not visible because of a stand of trees purchased by the County to act as a buffer zone.

The structures that survive around the "square" area are: (clockwise)

The Gambrel Roof House, or second Meeting House, of 1728. A large three story stone structure, with a small two-story frame addition, and two stone outbuildings. Used as a school for many years, it now contains five apartments. It was purchased by Historic Fallsington, Inc. in 1969; no architectural research has yet been done. The original beams can be seen in the dirt floored basement; some interior woodwork is still intact.

One-room school house ca. 1840. Private residence, now covered with asbestos siding; enclosed front porch.

Cemetery, belonging to Friends Meeting, enclosed by old stone wall with modern cement coping.

Schoolmaster's House with two date stones: 1758. Partly restored. A modern frame addition containing kitchen and bath were recently ripped off, and a new wood shingle roof put on, to make house weather-proof till further funds available. Two rooms downstairs, two up. Unoccupied.

A small frame house, one-and-a-half stories, covered with siding. Unresearched, but architects believe it is very old.

William Penn Center, 1789, the third Meeting House, now used as a community center. A large stone building, with covered porch added in this century, replacing hoods over doors. Copied after the Wrightstown Friends Meeting.

Stone wagon shed. The grounds once held as many as five.

Falls Meeting House, 1841, the fourth one, built next to an eighteenth century stone school house. Adjacent is another old walled cemetery.

Bronze tablet commemorating the first Meeting House of 1690, which was attended by William Penn, and is no longer standing. Erected in 1933.

Stagecoach Tavern, probably 1760s, converted into a tavern in 1798. Restored by Historic Fallsington, Inc. 1960-66. Large frame wing, added in the late nineteenth century, almost completely obscured the facade of the original stone building. This was ripped off, and a new wood shingle roof was added. The interior contains a parlor with cross-corner fireplace, small wall cupboards; two smaller rooms each with fireplace, and "Great Room", or kitchen, with large cooking fireplace, exposed beams, bee-hive oven. Two gracefully

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7. Description (continued)

carved hearts give light and ventilation to the cellar stairs. Second floor: two small rooms, one large (the partition is omitted to permit large meetings). Third floor converted into apartment for caretaker. Full brick-floored basement, once used as a bar. Roofed well house rebuilt; stone outbuilding restored.

Gillingham Store. Headquarters of Historic Fallsington, Inc. Rebuilt after fire in 1910. Flat-roofed two-story frame structure, with large covered front porch. Contains several offices, two apartments. It had been a one-story-and-loft frame building, attached to the house next door, with a wind-mill in back.

Burges-Lippincott House, ca. 1767. Large stone house with new wood shingle roof. Noted for its beautiful doorway, with fanlight, "Bible" paneling, broken pediment, and unusual vertical carving on the pilasters. House is in three sections: northern part is separate apartment, one room on each of the three floors, with old cooking kitchen in basement. Central portion contains three rooms on each floor, with handsome mantel in living room showing same motif as carving on front door; built-in corner cupboard in dining room with butterfly shelves; gracefully carved, double-railed stairway. Third section is mid-nineteenth century addition of one-and-a-half stories, used as a doctors office. House is now a museum.

Pleasants House, datestone 1788. Stone house of three stories, with evidence of basement kitchen with dry sink. Heart carved in pediment over door. Since side of house faces square, it probably once faced an early road spur right-of-way no longer in existence, but indicated on early maps.

Hough House, ca. 1768. The larger section was added in 1790 for the daughter of John Merrick, the ruins of whose tannery can still be seen in the rear. Six fireplaces, original pine floors.

World War I Monument, standing on a small island in front of the Gambrel Roof House. Formerly, there was a small wooden building on this plot which housed a cordwainer, later a harness-maker. This was removed in the early 1920s to make way for the monument.

No longer standing:

A small old frame house next to the Burges-Lippincott House, demolished in the 1950s.

The first Court House, 1670s, reputed to have been a "block house", just south of the tavern. Said to have been demolished in 1860.

Outbuildings and stables of the Tavern.

The first Meeting House, 1690.

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7. Description (continued)

On the five roads that radiate from the square, the following structures survive within a two block radius:

Log cabin, Swedish-influenced, ca. 1685, now being restored. The front section has low Dutch doors, open-joint ceilings, and a corner fireplace of distinct Swedish type. The "framed" addition to the west indicates it was actually a very early settler's cabin, moved from its first site, and attached to the log house. It is sheathed outside with "lock-joint" boards, hand wrought nails. Because of the sloping ground, this section was built partly into the bank. Walls of the lower floor are of stone. A rare unroofed balcony, similar to those found on Renaissance houses in seventeenth century England pierces the pent roof, just restored. A later eighteenth century second-floor addition over the log cabin is to be removed (G. Edwin Brumbaugh, Architect).

Colonial brick house, painted white, behind the tavern. It is the only old brick house in Fallsington. Built in three sections, the earliest ca. 1700. Large cooking fireplace intact. Old barn in rear.

Seven Colonial stone houses (in addition to those on the square).

Eleven Federal frame houses. Internal evidence indicates many were built around an older section. One is now a store, with modern siding and plate glass. Three are attractively set in a row, with identical fan-lights (one has recently been replaced). Front porches, added before 1900, recently removed.

Seventeen classic revival structures. One is a Library.

Five Gothic revival buildings. One is a Church; three are set in a row.

Sixteen early, three late Victorian houses.

Fifty-odd late nineteenth or twentieth century houses of eclectic style.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify):
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	<u>Historic village</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Historic Fallsington is a "walk-through" of the architectural and social history of the Delaware Valley.

No other village in the region possesses such a concentration of old, remarkably untouched buildings on their original sites. It weaves together a fabric of architectural styles, from a log cabin of the 1680s to Victorian extravagances of the 1880s. It demonstrates "better than textbooks, lectures, and even pictures can ever do" (Antiques, July, 1956) the life style of the "ordinary" unrenowned American, over nearly three centuries.

Situated only three miles from the Delaware River, and five miles from Pennsbury, William Penn's manor house, the village was founded by Pennsylvania's earliest settlers.

The oldest house, now being restored, is a late seventeenth century log cabin which shows definite signs of the early Swedish settlers. However, the Swedes never effected a permanent settlement in this area. The first to do so were a group of English Quakers, who arrived five years before William Penn. A petition of 1680 to the Court of New York (which originally had jurisdiction for several miles across the river from "New Jersey") indicates the settlement was then called "Crewcorne", after a market town of that name in Somersetshire. It was a "seated" town; Bucks County's first Court House was here, said to have been a "block house", situated just south of the tavern.

At first these pioneer Quakers held Meeting in their homes. This proved inconvenient, and in 1686 they rented the Court House, allowing the County "ten shillings for use thereof". In 1689 a committee was appointed to look into the cost of a building "25 feet by 20 feet". On Seventh month 5th, 1690, the "first-Day Meeting is ordered held in the new Meeting House", built of brick and timber; a few months later a "stable for horses" went up. This is where William Penn worshipped when he returned from London; he attended his steward's wedding here in 1701.

Most of the early information about the village and its inhabitants comes from the Minutes of the Falls Meeting. Six of the seven men who signed the first minutes of 1683 later became members of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania. The Falls Meeting House was used as a point of reference in most of the early road surveys. It was, in short, the nucleus

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8. Significance (continued)

around which the village developed. Ultimately there were to be four Meeting Houses on the six acres Samuel Burges gave for that purpose. Three are still standing.

By 1728 the first modest structure was too small. A new one was built nearby, the old one "to be used for a school." In 1758, the minutes show a stone house was ordered built for the schoolmaster. In 1768 the established land-owners pursued a real estate development scheme, in a conscious effort to foster the growth of a town; in that year the name "Fallsington" was first used on deeds.

In 1789 a still larger Meeting House went up. By 1798 the number of travelers and farmers en route to the ferries and wharves of the Delaware warranted a tavern. A general store flourished. All these buildings plus the houses of the tanner, the carpenter, the tailor, the saddler, are still in existence, their handsome exteriors virtually untouched, surrounding Meeting House Square.

In the 1790s Fallsington and the surrounding area was considered for the Federal District; but Congress voted for the Potomac over the Delaware.

In the 1820s, new houses went up in the Federal style on the five roads that radiate out from the Square; older buildings were enlarged. Two general stores did a brisk business. Smithies and mills were scattered nearby on waterways that have long since disappeared. In 1835 the Pennsylvania railroad was chartered from Morrisville to Philadelphia; at the end of the century the "Trenton cut-off" provided the village with its own passenger station for a few years.

By the middle 1700s most farms had been cleared, and the second and third generation from the original settlers had prospered sufficiently in their trade with Philadelphia to build stone farm houses. In the middle and late 1800s the sixth and seventh generations were tearing down the remaining log houses to which Federal wings had been attached, and building Victorian wings on the old foundations. Two Churches were built, and a library.

The twentieth century brought oblivion to Fallsington--a development which, in a sense, preserved it. Now surrounded by U.S. Steel, U.S. 1, and Levittown, "the fact that so many old buildings in nearly original condition are still standing in the midst of such a rapidly changing area is remarkable"(Ann Hawks Hutton).

The following houses are considered most important, and have been registered with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission:

Moon-Williamson House, a log cabin of Swedish type, currently being re-

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8. Significance (continued)

stored. Mr. G. Edwin Brumbaugh, architect for the restoration, says: "It is possible to say that this structure is one of the most important, and we feel, one of the earliest pioneer cabins surviving in Pennsylvania...This house could have been built in 1685...Structural features, especially original finish, could date from late seventeenth or very early eighteenth century...We have searched for Swedish seventeenth century Delaware Valley log houses of comparable quality in vain. Two are still standing, both re-erections, with many changes, and no scholarly restoration...The result (of the restoration) will give you an unique and very valuable record, largely original, of the region's first type of construction."

Two former inhabitants are noteworthy: Samuel Moon, descendant of one of the early settlers, owned the house from 1769 to 1803. He was a well known Windsor chair-maker (It was local custom for the father of the bride to give the new couple two Moon chairs).

Miss Mary Williamson bought the house just after the Civil War. She came to Fallsington only in the summers from Philadelphia. (She was a descendant of Dunck Williams(on) who operated the famous "Dunk's Ferry" in the seventeenth century). She brought with her orphaned girls for two-week holidays--the beginning of the Girls' Friendly Society. For them, as well as the community, she had the Episcopal Church built across the street.

Gambrel Roof House. The second Meeting House, built in 1728. Since the building belonged to the Falls Meeting until 1940, there are no old deeds or records except those found in the Minutes. It cost 1000 pounds, and was enlarged in 1758 "to better accomodate our women Friends at Quarterly Meeting; may cost 50 pounds". (Since "repairing the roof" is referred to, this may indicate when the Gambrel Roof was added).

From a recently discovered sampler, the building was already a thriving girls boarding school in 1802. In the later nineteenth century, it housed the Fallsington Library, and Dr. Adams' dental parlor. From 1927 to 1940 it was a Friends elementary school. In that year, it was converted into five apartments, as it is today. Now owned by Historic Fallsington, Inc., but has had no architectural research.

Burges-Lippincott House, ca. 1766. Bought by Historic Fallsington, Inc., in 1953, when the organization was formed "in a crisis" to save the lovely old house from possible ruin. For many years it served as its headquarters. Its commanding position at the end of the square, and its beautiful woodwork make it one of the focal points of the village. Its name derives from its first owner, Daniel Burges, a descendant of Samuel Burges, who gave the Meeting House land across the square; and Dr. Henry Lippincott, a much-loved family doctor, who added the southern wing for his office in the mid-nineteenth century. An 1858 map contains a sketch of the house, considered important even then.

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8. Significance (continued)

Stagecoach Tavern, built some years before 1798, when a liquor license was granted to operate it as a tavern. The building belonged to John Merrick, a well-to-do cordwainer, whose will of 1793 tells much about the village at that time. In 1820 the Fallsington Inn Company purchased the property for \$2000. An advertisement in the Bucks County Intelligencer of November 10, 1855, describes it this way: "Good two story Stone Tavern House...Old established stand and doing business for many years...Village handsomely situated and fast improving, surrounding country is surpassed by none, society of first order, convenient to meetings, mills, stores, mechanics, and schools..."

After the Civil War the name changed to the National Hotel. High, and commanding the square, the tavern was where itinerant circuses performed; in the basement bar prisoners were kept in detention; World War I veterans were welcomed home on the front steps of a wooden addition by the proprietress. Prohibition closed its doors, and it was sold to the Knights of the Golden Eagle. In 1934 it was turned into a hardware store, and so it remained until bought and restored by Historic Fallsington, Inc. in 1960.

Schoolmaster's House, 1758. Owned by the Falls Meeting, which had it built to house the schoolmaster, it is on a long-term lease to Historic Fallsington, Inc., which hopes to restore it when funds are available.

Miller House, ca. 1700. This house probably belonged to Samuel Burges, who gave the land for the first Meeting House, and was hired to clean it and make fires on cold days "to receive 20 shillings per annum." It is the only brick house in the village.

The Manor House, ca. 1690-1710. The large, imposing addition, also of stone, was added in 1816. The property was owned in the nineteenth century by Eseck Howell, the banker for most of the community.

The Hough House and the Pleasants House, two handsome stone buildings of the eighteenth century facing Meeting House Square. In the back stand the ruins of the tannery owned by John Merrick.

William Penn Center, 1789, the third Meeting House, now used as a Community Center.

Falls Monthly Meeting, 1841, the fourth Meeting House, still in use; attached to an eighteenth century stone school house.

The Terraces, a Federal frame building with one of the best locations in Fallsington; it sits high, and back from the road.

The Burlingame, Wildman, and Gade Houses: Three houses in Federal style, lined up in a row and presenting an attractive townscape.

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8. Significance (continued)

All Saints Episcopal Church, 1876, a charming example of Gothic revival.

In addition to the above, the following have also been registered with the state:

The Wilson House, Newportville and Tyburn Roads; unresearched, but appears to be extremely old.

Gillingham Store, now Headquarters of Historic Fallsington, Inc. Modern, on old foundations.

Winder House, 10 Yardley Road. Old stone house Victorianized after a fire. Orice attached to store.

Church Rectory, 15 Locust Avenue, Federal with Victorian addition, said to be build on log cabin foundations.

Barnhill's, 11 Yardley Road. Colonial with modern siding. Mentioned in Merrick's will as a store moved to the site and converted into a dwelling.

121,127,133 on Yardley Road. 3 Federal Style houses in a row.

Fallsington Library, 1878, built with a matching grant from Isaia Williamson, well-known Philadelphia philanthropist.

Stratton's, 11 Main Street, Classical Revival fram house near the Square.

Prevost's, 25 Main Street, Federal frame house of unusual proportions.

45, 51, 57 Main Street, 3 houses in a row, 2 Gothic, 1 Classical Revival

64 Main Street, Davenport, Frame Gothic Revival

59 Locust, 89 Lower Morrisville Road, Colonial stone houses, early.

Van Sant's, 77 Lower Morrisville Road., Federal with full length pilasters.

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9. Major Bibliographical References (continued)

Bucks County Historical Society, Archives, "Book of Arrivals", and other records of Phineas Pemberton, first Clerk of the Court under William Penn.

Thomas Holme survey, 1681, "Map of the Improved part of the Province of Pennsylvania." published in London.

Life of Isaiah Williamson, Wanamaker, John. J.B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia and London, 1928.

Falls Township - 1692-1968, Booklet commemorating 275th Anniversary.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Minutes of Fallsington Friends Meeting, 1683---, Friends Library, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore Pennsylvania.
 McNealy, Terry A., "The Early Years of Fallsington," The Historian, published by the Bucks County Historical Society, XLV, No. 5 Winter 1970-71.
 History of Bucks County, Pennsylvania, by William W.H. Davis, A.M. The Lewis Publishing Company, New York & Chicago, 1876; republished in 3 volumes in 1905.
 Bucks County Records, Bucks County Courthouse, Doylestown, Pa. Office of the Register of Deeds. (Sub-groups: Deeds, Wills, Inventories, Road Surveys).
 (continued)

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	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	40° 08' 55"	74° 49' 19"				
NE	40° 08' 56"	74° 48' 35"				
SE	40° 08' 25"	74° 48' 36"				
SW	40° 08' 23"	74° 49' 20"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 170 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: July, 1971

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: S. K. Steyer
 State Liaison Officer

Title: Executive Director
 Pa. Historical & Museum Commission

Date: _____

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

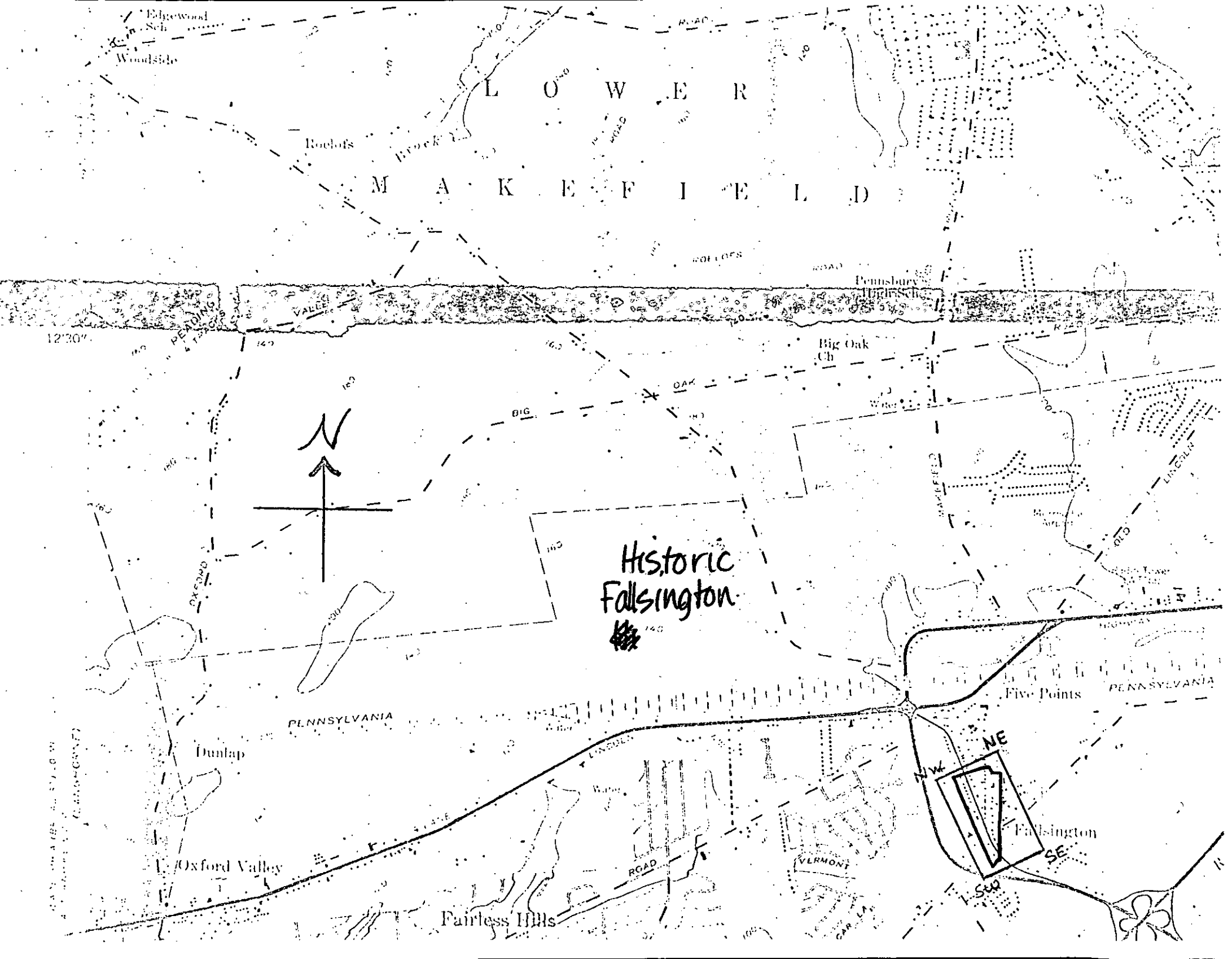
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: _____

ATTEST: _____
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: _____

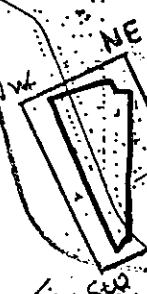
SEE INSTRUCTIONS



L O W E R

M A K E F I E L D

Historic Fallsington



12'30"

OXFORD VALLEY

VALLEY

Pennsbury High Sch

Big Oak Ch

BIG

OAK

WAYFIELD

LINCOLN

PENNSYLVANIA

PENNSYLVANIA

Dunlap

Five Points

Oxford Valley

Fallsington

Fairless Hills

VERMONT

ROAD

1:25,000 (1:50,000)