

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Jacob Keller Farm

and/or common Covered Bridge Inn - Bed and Breakfast

2. Location

street & number 990 Rettew Mill Road

N/A not for publication

city, town Ephrata Twp.

N/A vicinity of

state PA

code 042

county Lancaster

code 071

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 checked="" 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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	N/A 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 Leland C., Jr. & Betty Lee Maxcy

street & number 990 Rettew Mill Road

city, town Ephrata

N/A vicinity of

state PA

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder of Deeds, Lancaster County Courthouse

street & number 50 N. Duke Street

city, town Lancaster

state PA

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Architectural Survey of Lancaster

title County

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1983

federal state county local

depository for survey records Historical Preservation Trust of Lancaster County

city, town Lancaster

state PA

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 <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Jacob Keller House, the stone foundation of the Keller Barn, and the Keller Mill, also known as Rettew's Mill or the Akron Roller Mill, are located on Rettew Mill Road in Ephrata Township. These buildings stand in a rapidly developing residential area and are some of the last remaining historic structures in the area. The original house, dated 1814, is two and one-half stories, five bays wide and constructed of lime-stone. A two story, three bay frame addition, c. 1856, is attached to the west. The stone barn foundation and the stone mill are located across the road from the house and were also constructed c. 1814.

The Jacob Keller House is a fine example of a Federal and Germanic style Pennsylvania farmhouse. The exterior of the house is in excellent condition. There is structural evidence at the rear of the building (division in masonry) that the house may have been built in two sections or that construction commenced for a three bay limestone facade house and plans were changed to create a larger five bay house. This may explain why the five bay facade is widely and irregularly spaced. The gabled roof house has a central paneled reveal entry with Indian door and rectangular transom with tracery. Above this door is an entry portico added after 1814.

On the south, front facade paired date stones inscribed "1814 Jacob Keller" and "Alicesabeth Keller" flank the central second story window. All the facade windows are nine over six double hung sash with molded framing and sandstone sills. The first story windows have original three panel shutters with hold backs and the second story windows have louvered shutters with hold backs.

On the eastern elevation is a later one story roof porch, and rebuilt gable end chimney. A second Indian door is in the south corner on the first story. The gable end windows are four over two double hung sash, while a round arch fan light with wooden keystone and stone lintel is found in the western gable end.

The frame addition to the west has a gable roof with brick end chimney. The first story has one six over six sash, one paired nine over six sash, and a simple entry door. The second story has three six over six sash with wooden pedimented hoods. The first story is sided with clapboard while the second story has rows of square and scalloped shingles. The gable end to the west is bracketed.

The interior of the Jacob Keller House is also in excellent condition. The rectangular stone section of the house has a central entry/hallway and flanking rooms. Originally there were two rooms flanking each side of the hallway on each floor. The first floor eastern rooms have been made into one large room without disturbing the architectural integrity of the house.

The central hallway has an open stairway with carved stair ends and an unusually high banister with thin posts. The central hallway extends from the south, front entrance to a six light dutch door with strap hinges on the north, rear facade of the house. Original panelled doors, most of which retain their original hardware, open from the hallway into the flanking rooms.

The first floor rooms in the stone section retain many of their original features. The western front parlor includes a corner cupboard with round arch multi-light doors, decorative corner moldings and pilasters. Chair rail molding in this room reflects the molding of the corner cupboard. The windows have deep set openings. The parlor to the east was remodeled in 1945-1947. However it retains deep set round window openings, a fireplace with simple mantle, and the corner Indian door complete with wrought iron strap hinges with tulip heads.

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The main second floor chamber in the stone section features a decorative fireplace mantle with cornice, frieze and pilasters. A beaded chair rail molding wraps around the room. The deep set windows in this room are the only windows in the house that have wooden reeded reveal panels. Above this room in the attic is a smoke house with horizontal lath and plaster supported by hand hewn vertical boards.

The only remaining original interior features in the 1856 frame addition are the windows and interior doors.

Located northwest of the limestone section of the house is a frame, one-story one room shed roof structure believed to have been used as a bake house.

Located across Rettew Mill Road from the Jacob Keller House, and once associated with the house, are a 2½ story stone mill building and the remains of a stone bank barn foundation. The stuccoed stone mill, once known as Keller's Mill, Rettew's Mill and the Akron Roller Mill, was constructed c.1814 by Jacob Keller. This 1814 structure is the third mill on this general site. The first mill on or near this site was built in 1769 and was a taller 3½ story building, which was lowered one story after a fire. The present 2½ story mill has deep set windows with pedimented window hoods and six over six sash. The round arch opening for the mill race still remains. The condition of the vacant mill has deteriorated rapidly in the last few decades. Unfortunately, no millwork remains inside the mill today. Along the Cocalico Creek and dry mill race are some remains of dams and mill race sluices used to direct and control the water to operate the mill. The barn was a typical Lancaster County stone and frame structure, two and one-half stories high. It was constructed c.1814 by Jacob Keller and his wife, Alicesabeth Keller. The barn was a victim of fire in December 1984. The present owners of the property plan to rebuild the structure based on early photographs.

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/		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)		

Specific dates 1814, 1856 **Builder/Architect** Jacob Keller

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Jacob Keller Farm includes an excellent example of a Federal and Germanic style Pennsylvania farmhouse once found throughout Lancaster County. The house is characteristic of the additive type house of eastern and central Pennsylvania.

The house is one of only three Federal and Germanic style houses that survive in Ephrata. A second Federal and Germanic house, the John Keller House, is similar in several ways to the Jacob Keller House. It was built by a brother of Jacob Keller in 1813, one year before the Jacob Keller House was constructed. It too has a five bay, two-story stone section with a single front entrance. It also contains much fine original woodwork, including panelled dados in the two front rooms on the first floor and two arched door corner cupboards with pilasters and keystones. Unlike the Jacob Keller House, however, the John Keller House has a first floor porch that spans the front facade, and a central entry/hallway that penetrates only about half the depth of the structure.

The John Sweigart House, erected in 1810, is the third surviving Federal and Germanic style house in Ephrata Township. However, it differs significantly in appearance and integrity from the Jacob Keller House. The John Sweigart House has a five-bay, stone front facade with two entrances. A first-floor porch added later to the house spans the front elevation. Parts of the side and rear stone facades of the house have been covered with wooden siding. Frame additions have also been built on the house, and some windows have been altered.

In addition to being one of the few surviving Federal and Germanic style houses in Ephrata, the Jacob Keller House has architectural features — the two Indian doors — which are seldom found in Lancaster County today. These doors were used to protect residents from unwelcome intruders. In general use each of these doors would appear to be nine lights over two wood panels. If intruders approached, the lower two panel section could be slid up an exterior track to cover the upper nine lights and expose a second lower wood section. With the nine lights hidden by the two panel section, the door would appear to be made entirely of wood. Only a few remaining examples of Indian doors have been observed in Lancaster County, none of which retain the original hardware or integrity as those on the Jacob Keller House.

The Jacob Keller Farm is part of an original tract of land purchased by Jacob B. Keller in 1730 from John, Thomas, and Richard Penn, sons of William Penn. Jacob B. Keller came to America from Canton Basel, Switzerland and settled in Cocalico Township (now Ephrata Township). He died in 1794 and is buried in the Cloister Cemetery.

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The first generation Keller is listed as a member of the Seventh Day Baptist and Ephrata Cloister community with the date of his death recorded in 1794 at age 87. He was probably a "Householder". He is on List #12 published in a booklet as a supplement to Booklet Seven of the regular series of Milton H. Heinick's, History of Ephrata.

In 1814, Jacob Keller, Jr. great grandson of Jacob B. Keller, and his wife Elizabeth (Alicesabeth) Shirk Keller built the Jacob Keller House on part of the tract of land purchased from the Penns. At that time they also constructed a two-story grist mill, a saw mill and a stone foundation bank barn.

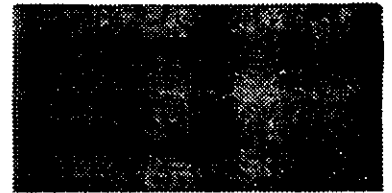
According to the 1815 Direct Tax of Cocalico Township, the Jacob Keller property consisted of twenty-four acres, "with one dwelling of stone two stories, a large stone barn, grist mill and saw mill." Today the only structure remaining intact is the stone house. The mill is in rapidly deteriorating condition, and only remnants of the stone barn remain.

The mill property included in this nomination was originally owned by the Ephrata Cloister. There was no request for this land until December 3, 1760, when the Penns had it surveyed and on May 13, 1762, patented it to Charles Halaker. It was Halaker who constructed the grist mill on this site, which served the milling needs of the local community from c.1762 to c.1930. The present stuccoed mill is the third to stand on this site. Members of the Keller family operated the mill until 1895, when members of the Rettew family became owners and operators of the flouring mill. Over the years the mill was referred to as Keller's Mill, Rettew's Mill and the Akron Roller Mill. The mill ceased operations in the 1930s, probably because of modern competition. The mill is not considered an outstanding example of architectural type compared to other mills in Lancaster County including Oregon Mill in Manheim Township and Sickman's Mill in Conestoga Township. The mill is also not a prime example especially because of the damage it has suffered due to neglect and flood waters. However, the building's importance lies in its connection with the Jacob Keller family and its physical proximity to the Jacob Keller house.

Little has been written on Jacob Keller or the Jacob Keller family. What we do know is that Jacob Keller constructed an excellent example of the Federal style Pennsylvania farmhouse for his family in 1814. Although a country house, many Federal architectural features can be found both on the interior and the exterior. It stands today as one of the few remaining Federal houses in Ephrata Township.

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Babcock, Dale, "From Ephrata A Ghost Story",
Intelligencer Journal Newspaper, Library of Lancaster Newspapers, Inc., 8 W. King St.,
Lancaster, PA.

Biographical Annals of Lancaster County, pp 882-888, Published by J.H. Beers & Co.,
address unknown, 1903.

"1815 Direct Tax Cocalico Twp.", Lancaster County Historical Society,
230 N. President Avenue, Lancaster, PA.

Evert & Stewart, New Historical Atlas of Lancaster County, Phila., PA 1875

Heinicke, Milton H., History of Ephrata, Published by the Historical Society of
the Cocalico Valley, Ephrata, PA.

"Keller Geneological Files", Lancaster County Historical Society, 230 N. President
Ave., Lancaster, PA.

"Keller Geneological Files", Lancaster County Historical Society, 230 N. President
Ave., Lancaster, PA.

Pflieger, Martin, "Old Farmhouse Serves as Bed & Breakfast", the Ephrata Review
Newspaper, 50 E. Main St., Ephrata, PA., October 11, 1984.

Rohrer, Kay, "Keller House; Haunted House with A New Lease On Life", Sunday News,
Library of Lancaster Newspapers, Inc., November 18, 1984.

Interviews

Bard, Susan, Reading, PA. sister of Judge Guy Bard, lived in the house 1945-1965.
December, 1984.

Becker, Mary, Ephrata, PA. friend of the Rettew Family, January 1985.

Gockley, Miriam, Ephrata, PA., spent summer vacations in the house, 2/26/85.

Newkirk, Sadonna, Denver, PA., sister of Judge Guy Bard, December 1984.

Neely, Anna Mohler, Mechanicsburg, PA., letter, 1/16/85.

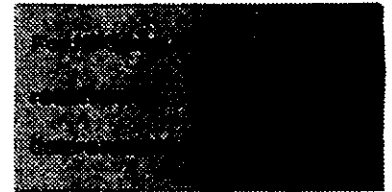
Petersen, Mrs. Richard, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, letter 1/7/85.

Weaver, Mary, Lititz, PA., lived in the house 1924-28, January 1985.

Witters, Katharine, Akron, PA., visited grandparents in the house, 2/26/85.

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Deeds of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania situated along the east side of T656, "Rettew Mill Road" in the Township of Ephrata, County of Lancaster and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The certain tract of land shown as Lots Nos. 48 and 49 Block 'D', situate on the south side of Rettew Mill Road, north of and including Cocalico Creek, and bounded on the west by Lot No. 1 and No. 3 of the Elpee Ltd. Subdivision recorded in office of the Recorder of Deeds of Lancaster County and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Included on this property is the site of the 1762 original mill and the stone foundation of the original 1814 barn.

The boundaries have been determined to encompass the buildings and their immediate settings. Surrounding the property to the north are residential properties dating from the 1960's and 1970's. To the east and south is new residential construction. Also to the north, work on a 98 unit apartment and condo complex will begin in spring 1986. Adjoining the nominated property on the east is Keller's Covered Bridge which was listed on the National Register on December 10, 1980.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(See continuation sheets)

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 2.904

Quadrangle name Ephrata

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	8	3	9	7	3	3	0	4	4	4	7	1	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

That certain tract of land with improvements thereon erected, shown as Lot No. 46, Block 'C' on a plan of Subdivision known as "Covered Bridge Estates, Phase 1" and recorded in Sub-division Plan Book J 122, Page 15 in the Office of the Recorder of (see continuation sheet)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state B/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Betty Lee Maxcy, Owner & Mary T. Wiley, Director of Preservation Services

organization Historical Preservation Trust of Lancaster County date 5/29/85; 12/14/85; 1/20/86; 2/25/84

street & number 990 Rettew Mill Road telephone (717) 733-1592

city or town Ephrata state PA

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 Dr. Larry E. Tise, State Historic Preservation Officer date 6/4/86

For NPS use only

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

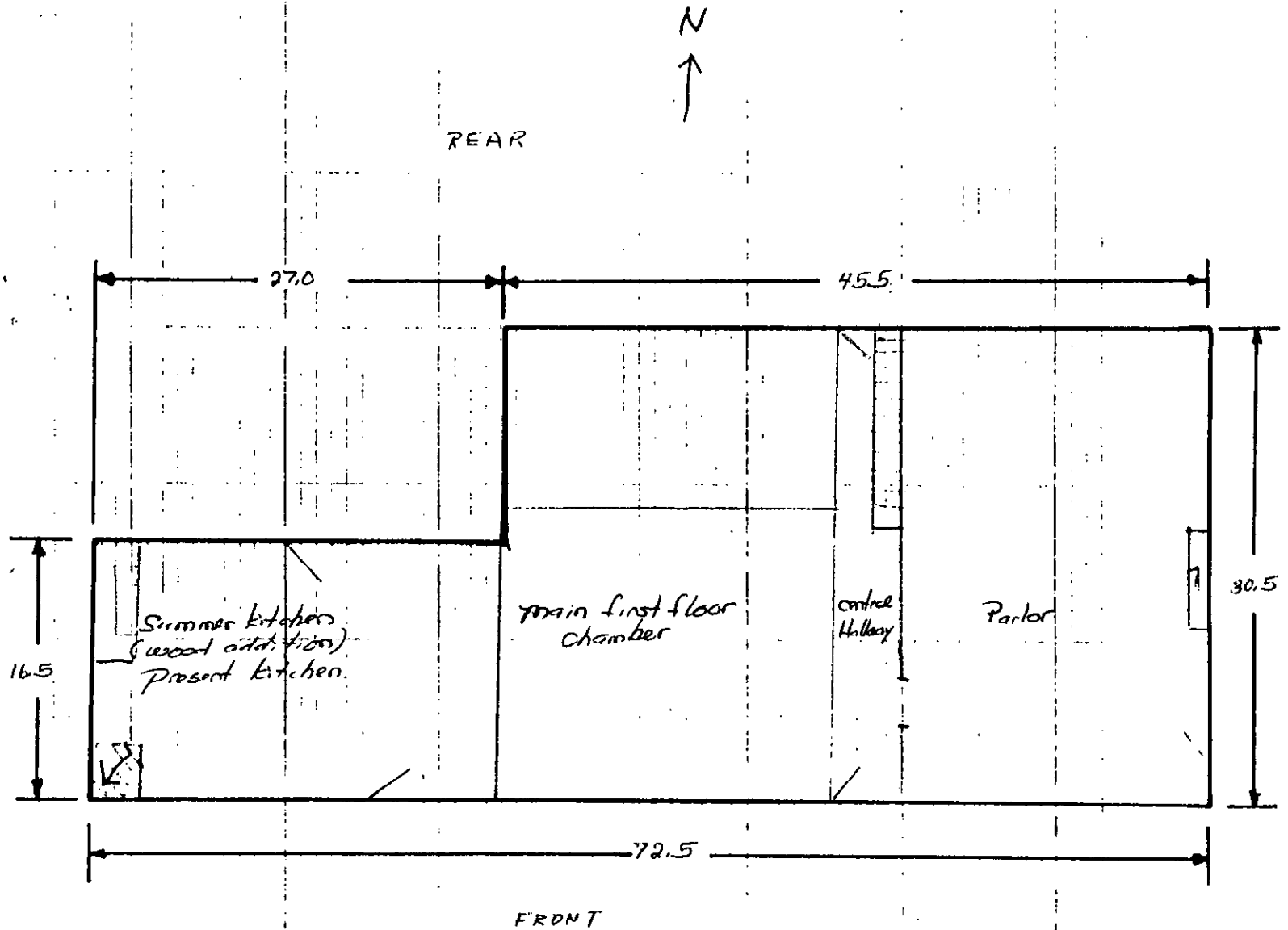
date

Keeper of the National Register

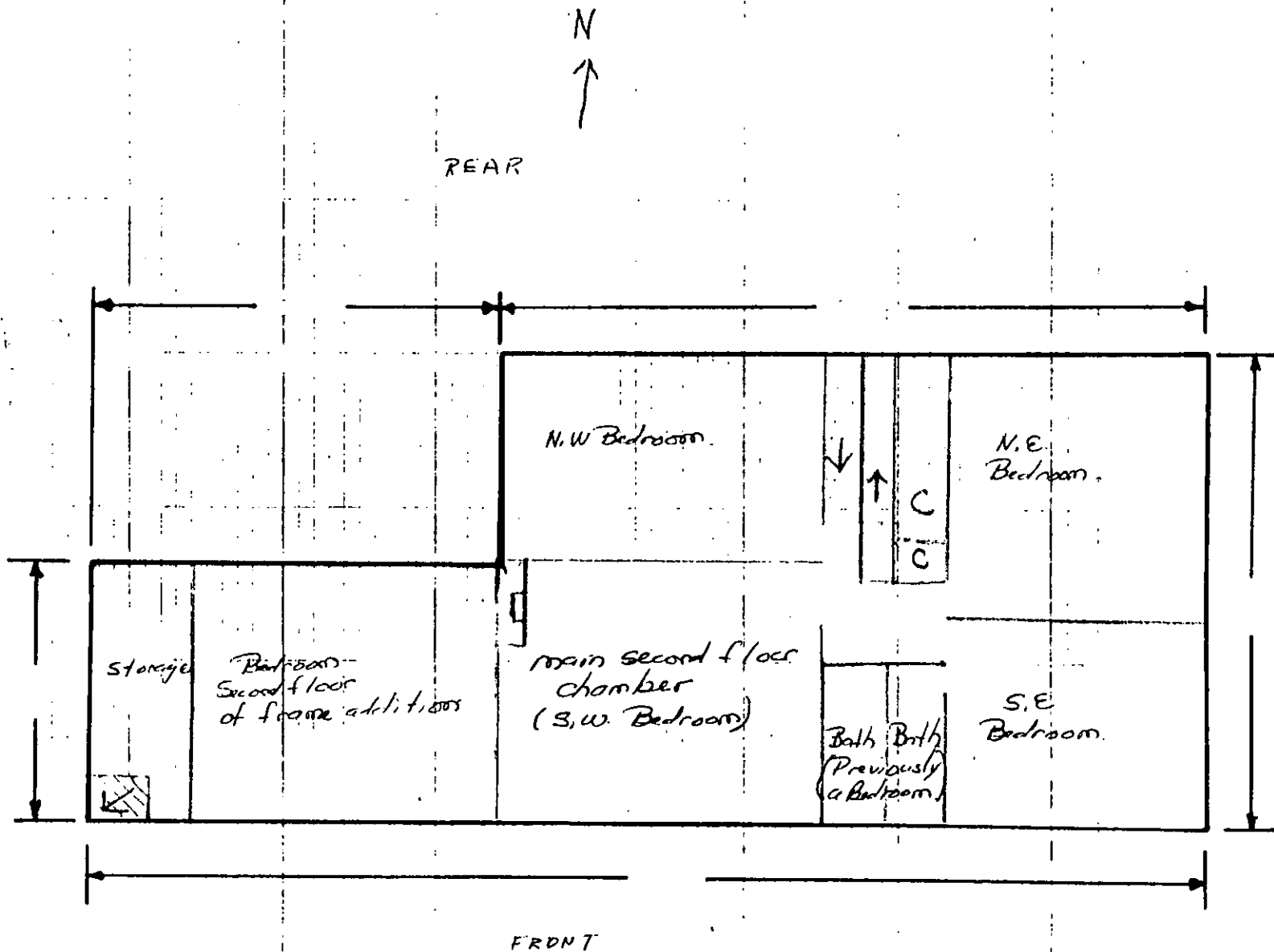
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



First floor Plan
 Jacob Keller House, Jacob Keller Farm
 Lancaster County



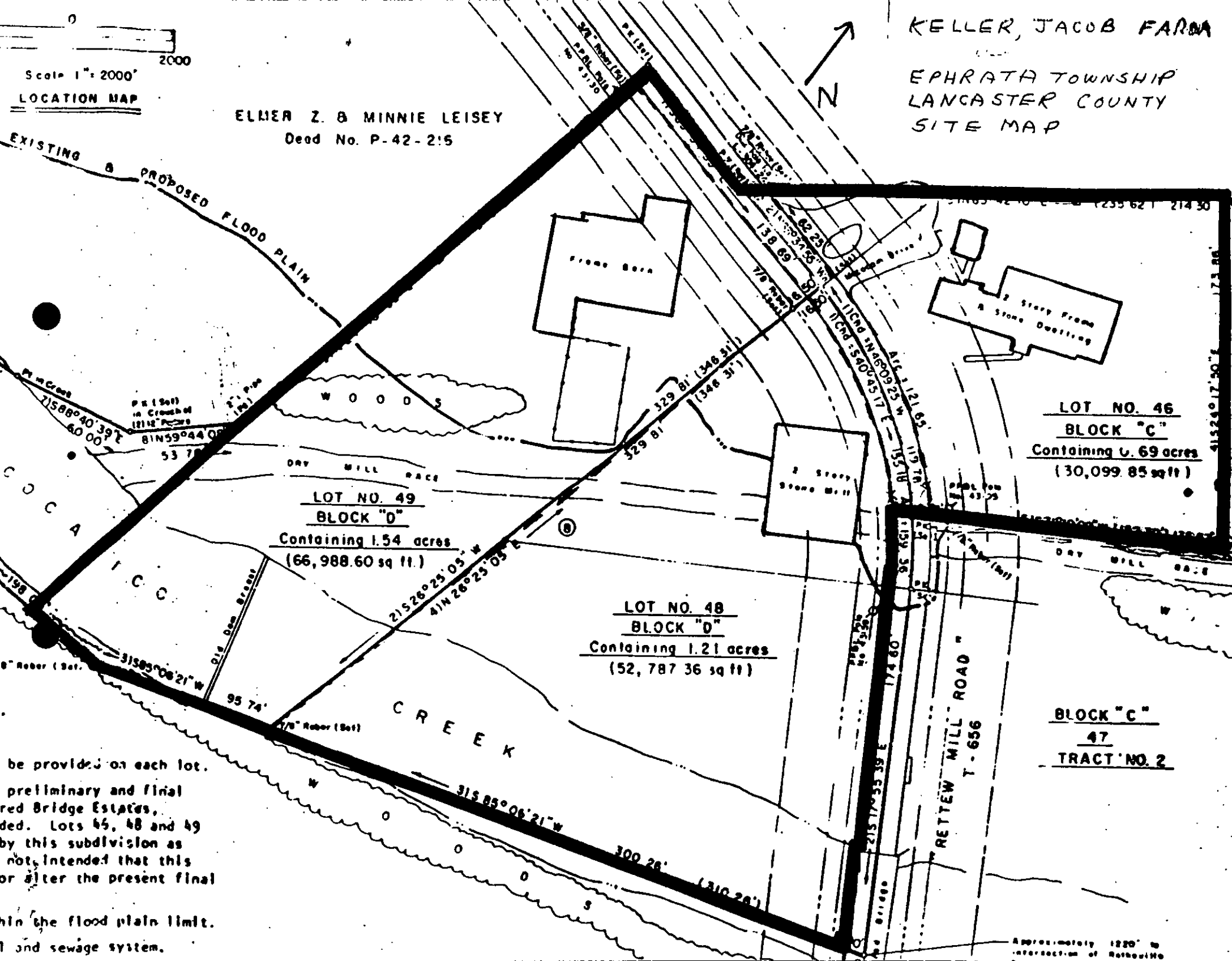
Second Floor Plan
 Jacob Keller House, Jacob Keller Farm
 Lancaster County

Scale 1" = 2000'
 LOCATION MAP

KELLER, JACOB FARMA
 EPHRATA TOWNSHIP
 LANCASTER COUNTY
 SITE MAP

ELMER Z. & MINNIE LEISEY
 Deed No. P-42-215

EXISTING & PROPOSED FLOOD PLAIN



LOT NO. 49
BLOCK "D"
 Containing 1.54 acres
 (66,988.60 sq ft.)

LOT NO. 48
BLOCK "D"
 Containing 1.21 acres
 (52,787.36 sq ft)

LOT NO. 46
BLOCK "C"
 Containing 0.69 acres
 (30,099.85 sq ft)

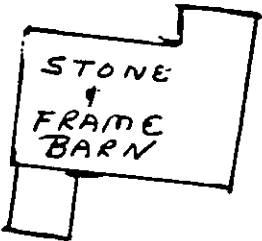
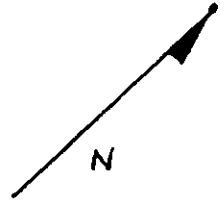
BLOCK "C"
47
TRACT NO. 2

be provided on each lot.
 preliminary and final
 red Bridge Estates,
 ded. Lots 45, 48 and 49
 by this subdivision as
 not intended that this
 or alter the present final
 in the flood plain limit.
 and sewage system.

Approximately 1220' to
 intersection of Rettew Mill

KELL, JACOB FAAM

EPHRATA TOWNSHIP
LANCASTER COUNTY
SITE MAP

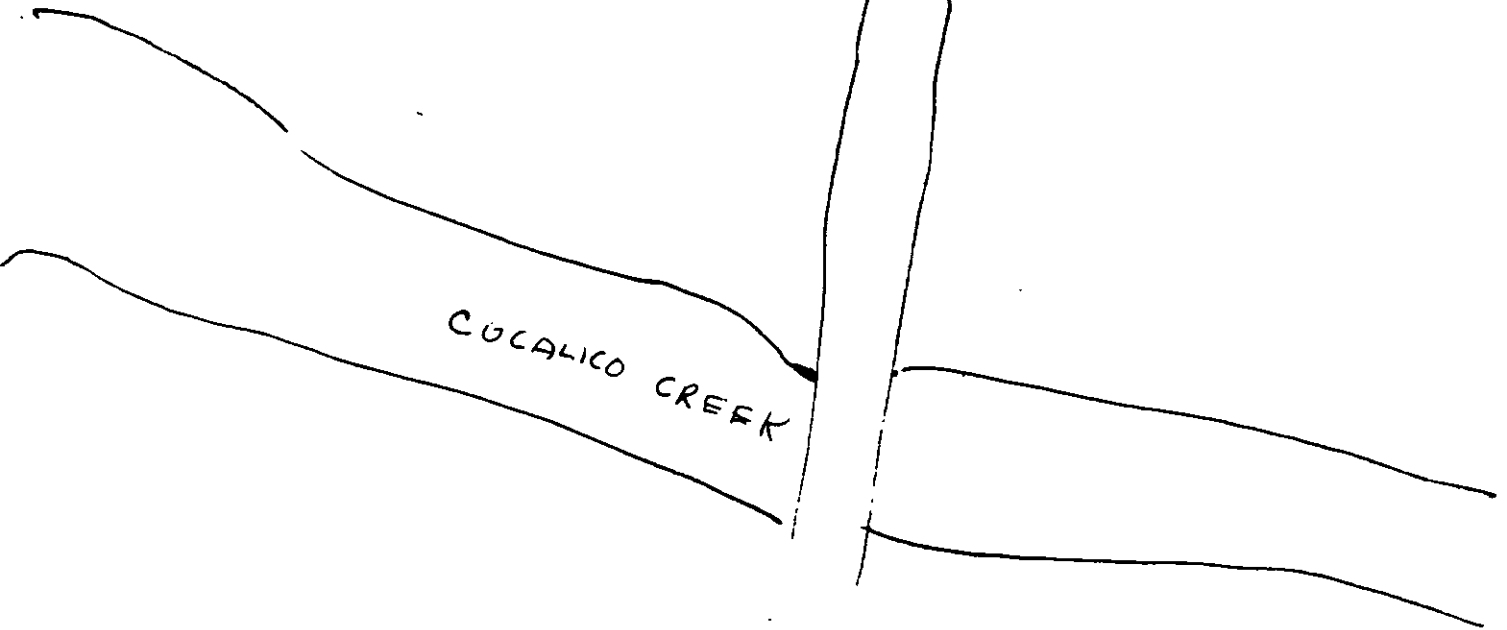


RETTEW MILL ROAD



DRY MILL RACE

COCALICO CREEK



JACOB KELLER HOUSE
Lancaster County
Epitapha Quadrangle
Zone 18
E397330 N4447140

