

**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 Henry Walter House

and/or common -----

**2. Location**

street & number Greenville Road

N/A not for publication

city, town West Cocalico Township \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of near Reinholds

state Pennsylvania 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 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	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<u>N/A</u> being considered	<input 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 checked="" 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 Dr. & Mrs. Warren Robbins

street & number 1406 Ridge Road

city, town Lancaster \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state Pennsylvania 17603

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds and Archives - Lancaster County Courthouse

street & number 50 North Duke Street

city, town Lancaster \_\_\_\_\_ state Pennsylvania

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

Survey of Lancaster County  
title Architecture has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1983 (Second Stage of Survey) \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state  county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County

BHP of the PHMC

123 North Prince Street, Lancaster

city, town BHP of the PMC \_\_\_\_\_ state Pennsylvania

## 7. Description

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

Located along Greenville Road in Lancaster County's West Cocalico Township, the Henry Walter House is a rectangular structure, two stories in height. This residential building has walls of local brown and reddish-brown sandstone. The facade, which faces west, has a three bay treatment on the second floor, and a four bay treatment with a single doorway on the ground floor. The southern gable end has a three bay design on both the second and the first floors; the northern gable end has a two bay design on both floors. The rear of the house, which faces the Cocalico Creek to the east, has a two bay elevation. Due to the slope of the ground toward the creek, the rear wall of the house is taller than the facade wall; hence, the house could be considered as a variant of a bankhouse.

The facade of the house is distinguished by precise cut stone masonry, with a polychromatic effect being achieved through the variations of the stones' colors. The other walls of the house have rough, random masonry. There are segmental arches of stone over the first floor windows; this treatment also appears on both first and second floor windows of the south gable end. On this south gable end may be seen the flashing course for a now-lost pent eve which once marked the division of the second floor and the attic levels. Near the center of the roof is the prominent chimneystack. The present roofing material is slate, which may be more than seventy years old. The original roofing material could have been either wooden shingles or red tiles.

The front doorway leads to the formal entry room, called a vorstube in German. The major architectural feature of this room is the elaborate panelling which encloses the staircases leading to the second floor and the basement. Curving stone steps lead to a notable arched or vaulted cellar, which is perfectly intact. The panelling of the staircase enclosure is distinguished for the arrangement of the panels, and the complex shaping of the panels themselves. This original woodwork bears paint decoration in shades of dark blue, gold, and red; this paint probably dates at least to the early 1800's, and it might be original. To the right of the vorstube is the stube, or parlor, measuring about twenty feet square. This room was originally heated by a stove installed in the rear wall of the central chimney. The chair rail and architraves in the stube are products of a c. 1820 remodelling; the five panel doors are original. The kammer is situated behind the stube; it retains its original five panel doors and bold chair rail. The fourth room on the first floor is the kitchen or kuche, with its original cooking fireplace. The floor plan on the second floor matches that of the first floor. All the woodwork on the second floor is original; it includes five panel doors, chair rails, the mantel of the fireplace in the best chamber, a panelled enclosure of the staircase leading to the attic, and a balustrade with rare flat balusters. There is a remnant of painted wall decorations on the pilaster wall of the best chamber.

Complementing the external architecture of the Henry Walter House is the stone and frame bank barn located to the south. This barn evidently evolved through several stages of construction; portions may predate 1815. An interesting feature of the barn is the projection of the stone end to enframe the sides of the forebay. This method of construction is found on a small number of barns in East and West Cocalico Townships.

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The overall integrity of both the interior and the exterior of the Henry Walter House is outstanding. Indeed, the very preservation of the interior may be considered unique for eighteenth century Pennsylvania German architecture. Minor alterations to the exterior include the loss of most of the original window sash, the loss of the attic-level pent eave on the southern gable end, and the presence of a twentieth century front porch. However, all major aspects of the original exterior design are intact. Restoration of lost or altered features is now being planned. The present summer kitchen and external bake oven are of recent construction; they are not considered as contributing elements to this nomination.

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1. Overall view of the barn, showing the forebay.
  2. Overall view of the barn, showing the bank side.
  3. Overall view of both barn and house, as seen from the Cocalico Creek.
  4. Overall view of the facade of the house, and the three bay gable end.
  5. Overall view of the rear and the north gable end of the house.
  6. View of the enclosed, panelled staircase in the formal entry or vorstube.
  7. Detail of the panelled door on the first floor level of the enclosed staircase.
  8. Staircase; door to basement.
  9. Cooking or walk-in fireplace in the kuche.
  10. Vaulted or arched basement.
  11. View of the door leading from the stube to the kammer.
  12. Detail of the flat balustrade on the second floor level.
  13. Fireplace and mantel in the best chamber, second floor level.
  14. Detail of surviving remnant of wall painting in the best chamber.
  15. Xerox of c. 1890 period photograph showing the front of the house.

A plot plan which shows the relative positions of the house and barn is included.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** c. 1750-1768      **Builder/Architect** Henry Walter (?)

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

The Henry Walter House is a significant Germanic building in Pennsylvania's architectural heritage; it is also the tangible monument to some facets of pre-Revolutionary industrial history. This sandstone residence was built c. 1750-1768 for Henry Walter (1713?-1768); there is the strong possibility that the woodwork in the house was produced by Walter.<sup>1</sup> This relatively unknown house is a major example of Germanic architecture from eighteenth century Pennsylvania. In contrast to well-known Germanic houses like the 1719 Herr House near Willow Street (Lancaster County), the Walter House represents a more formal and sophisticated house type. Its four room floor plan is rare for its vorstude (formal entry) and the elaborately panelled, enclosed staircase. This floor plan, although traceable to antecedents in southern Germany, has been overlooked by most writers on Pennsylvania German architecture.<sup>2</sup> In addition to the Walter House, only one other stone German type house of pre-Revolutionary date with this plan has been found in Lancaster County.<sup>3</sup> This basic four room plan seems to have been important for the evolution of the interior plan that was common for vernacular building in Pennsylvania during the nineteenth century. The character of the original woodwork in the Walter House complements the floor plan; the complex configuration of panels reveals an orientation to woodworking in a German baroque tradition, albeit in a provincial context. No more intact example of formal Germanic interior woodwork survives in Lancaster County; it is also likely that this interior has few rivals in southeastern Pennsylvania.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the quality of the Walter House is a testimony to the prominence of Henry Walter in industries which flourished here during his lifetime: on this site was a gun shop, boring mill, saw mill, and joiner's workshop.

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1. This possibility is suggested by the carpenter's and joiner's tools included in the 1769 estate inventory for Henry Walter.
  2. For example, it was not mentioned by Brumbaugh, Kocher, Lay, or Long. For the German sources, see book by Meringer and Meitzen.
  3. This house is the Neff-Graeff House in Manheim Township. It is located near the Conestoga River, east of Lancaster City. In general, the Neff-Graeff House is less intact and less elaborate than the Walter House.
  4. The strongest rival may be the 1759 Benedict Eshelman House near Conestoga; however, this house has lost most of the original stairway and four fireplaces. Outside Lancaster County, the house which most closely resembled the Walter House is the famous House of the Miller at Millbach (1752) in Lebanon County. However, the interiors of that house were removed years ago and installed at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

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8. Significance

Documentation and Additional Information

In view of the major architectural importance of the Henry Walter House, it is unfortunate that so little is known about Walter himself. The land on which this house is situated was purchased by Henry Walter on May 10, 1749 from Hans Zimmerman (John Carpenter). This 1749 deed indicates that Walter already owned adjacent property. This purchase seems to be the first conclusive evidence of Henry Walter's presence in Lancaster County. Tentatively, he may be identified as the "Henderick Walter", aged thirty, who arrived in Philadelphia on the Ship Francis and Elizabeth in August, 1743. The signature on the 1743 shiplist compares favorably with that on Henry Walter's 1768 will. Moreover, on the same ship was "Hannes Cockley"; evidently, Henry Walter later was associated with this Caquelin/Cockley family. However, it should be noted that the name Walter, with variant spellings, was fairly common in Pennsylvania in the third quarter of the eighteenth century. There was a Walter family in the present-day Montgomery County, another in the Lehigh Valley, and a Henry Walter "blue dyer" in Lancaster Borough (present Lancaster City). At present, it cannot be determined whether these other Walter families may have been related to Henry Walter of Cocalico; it is intriguing to note that these families favored the first name "Henry".

Henry Walter appeared on the Tax List for Cocalico Township in 1751. He was also mentioned as "Henry Walter of Cocalico" in the will of Henry Kreyder, made December 8, 1751. Evidently Henry Walter was married at this time, although the name of his first (presumably...) wife is unknown. Henry Walter's daughter Juliana Marie was baptized by the German Reformed minister John Waldschmidt on June 1, 1755. Apparently Walter's wife died shortly thereafter. On April 17, 1758, Rev. Waldschmidt married Henry Walter and Margaretha (Margaret) Nott. In his will made October 25, 1768, Walter named his wife Margaret and eleven children: Henry, William, Hanna, Elizabeth, John, Jacob, George, Barbara, Julia (Juliana), Salome, and Charlotte. Some of these children, including the sons Henry and William, were of age. Henry Walter died sometime between October 25, 1768 and November 10, 1768, when letters for his estate were issued. His burial place is unknown.

Although three marriages and one baptism for the Henry Walter family are recorded in the records of the Reformed minister John Waldschmidt, this does not necessarily prove membership in a Reformed or Lutheran Church. Indeed, Mennonites in colonial Pennsylvania often were married by Lutheran or Reformed ministers for legal reasons. It is probably significant that Henry Walter's widow Margaret married Jacob Bricker, a member of a Mennonite family, on March 14, 1769; further, his daughter Juliana married a Mennonite, Abraham Bear, on January 25, 1774. Moreover, Martin Burkholder, an executor of Henry Walter's will, is believed to have been a Mennonite. Thus, it seems plausible that the Walter family may have been Mennonites in the third quarter of the eighteenth century.

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In both a 1763 deed and his 1768 will, Henry Walter is designated as being a "Miller". However, this word does not necessarily mean that he operated a grist mill. The estate inventory for Henry Walter, filed March 25, 1769, lists nothing pertaining to a grist mill. To the contrary, this inventory indicates that Walter operated a gun manufactory with a boring and turning mill on this property. In 1769 there were listed "Turner's tools" and many entries for making guns, such as "Several Sorts of Iron tools for tougher gun barrals..." There were many tools relating to making guns, plus others, like the "Nail Smiths tools" implying other crafts. Walter evidently operated a saw mill here, too, as witnessed by the inventory entry for "2 old Saw Mill Saws". Either Walter, or someone in his household, was a carpenter and joiner, as is indicated by the listings for "Carpenters tools" and "Joyne(r..) tolls". Further, the inventory mentions a "Surveyor Compass & Tools"; in 1767, Alexander Schaeffer of Schaefferstown had paid Henry Walter for surveying the road from Cornwall to Heidelberg. Thus, it appears that Henry Walter was a remarkably versatile person who employed the water power from the Cocalico Creek for a saw mill, turning lathe, and boring mill (for gun manufacture). In addition, he or an associate evidently was a joiner. Thus, it is plausible that Henry Walter may have executed the notable woodwork for this house. Although all the buildings related to the industries on this site perished long ago, there is no doubt that this site was important for the industrial history of Lancaster County in the two decades following c. 1750.

In view of his diverse business interests, it is not surprising that Henry Walter built a house of unusual quality for the time and place. Evidently this house never bore a datestone: Thus, it may be safely dated between c. 1750 and the time of Henry Walter's death in 1768. Possibly, the house was built in the late 1750's; it is generally similar to the much altered 1759 Peter Bricker house in West Cocalico Township. In this light, it is plausible that the house may have been erected at the time of Walter's marriage to Margaret Nott in 1758. The formal German plan with vorstube and elaborate interior woodwork, revealed that Walter was oriented to the culture of German towns. When the house was built, it surely was not the only one of its character in Lancaster County; however, the loss of most similar houses through two centuries has given this house its distinct rarity. The 1769 estate inventory for Henry Walter documents that his household enjoyed a relatively comfortable lifestyle. Some items in the inventory, like the "6 Silver tea Spoons" and "one English bed and Bed Sted" were unusual in a rural German house at that time. Presumably more typical of Germanic affluence as prestigious possessions were "a Clock & Clock Case" and a "Cloth Closed" (wardrobe or schanck).

In his will made October 25, 1768, Henry Walter devised the land which he had purchased in 1749 "...with the Buildings" to his wife Margaret and four minor children John, Jacob, George, and Barbara. Within the next decade, Margaret Walter remarried to Jacob Bricker, and the four children moved to Allen Township, Cumberland County. They sold the property including the house to Matthias Bittner in 1788; he may have been in actual (if not legal) possession of the premises by the early 1780's. Matthias Bittner was noted on Cocalico Township Tax Lists as late as 1797-1798; he operated a saw mill here. Between about 1798 and 1801, the property was sold in an unrecorded transaction to John Smith (Johannes Schmidt).

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The acquisition of the Walter house and land by John Smith marked the end of saw mills and manufacturing on the property. Thereafter, the premises became a farm. John Smith (1762-1826) married Catharina Gebwanger (1767-1833); they had at least thirteen children. In the 1815 Direct Tax, this farm, then numbering 145 acres, with stone house and a barn of log and stone construction, was valued at \$5,333.33. From John Smith, the farm passed to his son Daniel Smith (1805-1880). It thence became the property of Daniel Smith's son Jacob (1848-1918). This barn evolved to its present size and appearance during the Smith family ownership. It is interesting to know that the house was briefly mentioned in the 1883 History of Lancaster County, then being the farm of Jacob Smith.

For more than a decade following the death of Jacob Smith in 1918, the farm was occupied by tenants. After more than 125 years of descent in the Smith family, the farm was sold in the early 1930's. In the 1940's, the house and barn were abandoned; they were sold at Sheriff sale in 1948. In March of 1949 the Henry Walter House was bought by Mr. & Mrs. Garvin Ross, who owned it until 1982.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Refer to the appended list.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 7.98 acres

Quadrangle name Womelsdorf

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A 

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4	0	1	8	3	0
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4	4	5	8	2	1	0
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**Verbal boundary description and justification** The tract of land on which the Henry Walter House and its barn are located commences at a point on Greenville Road in West Cocalico Township, thence by other property of W. Robbins 540.7 feet, thence approximately north by property of E. Martin to a point; thence southwestward for 404 feet by property of K. Hosler; thence from a point north 233.34 feet also by Hosler land; from this point approximately southwestward by Hosler land 195.47 feet to a point on Greenville Rd; thence 509.09 ft. south to a point of beginning.

**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 John J. Snyder, Jr. - Architectural Historian

organization Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County date March 1984

street & number 123 North Prince Street telephone 717-291-5861

city or town Lancaster state Pennsylvania 17603

# 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 Larry E. Tise

Larry E. Tise, State Historic Preservation Officer title date 6/12/84

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



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9. Major Bibliographical References

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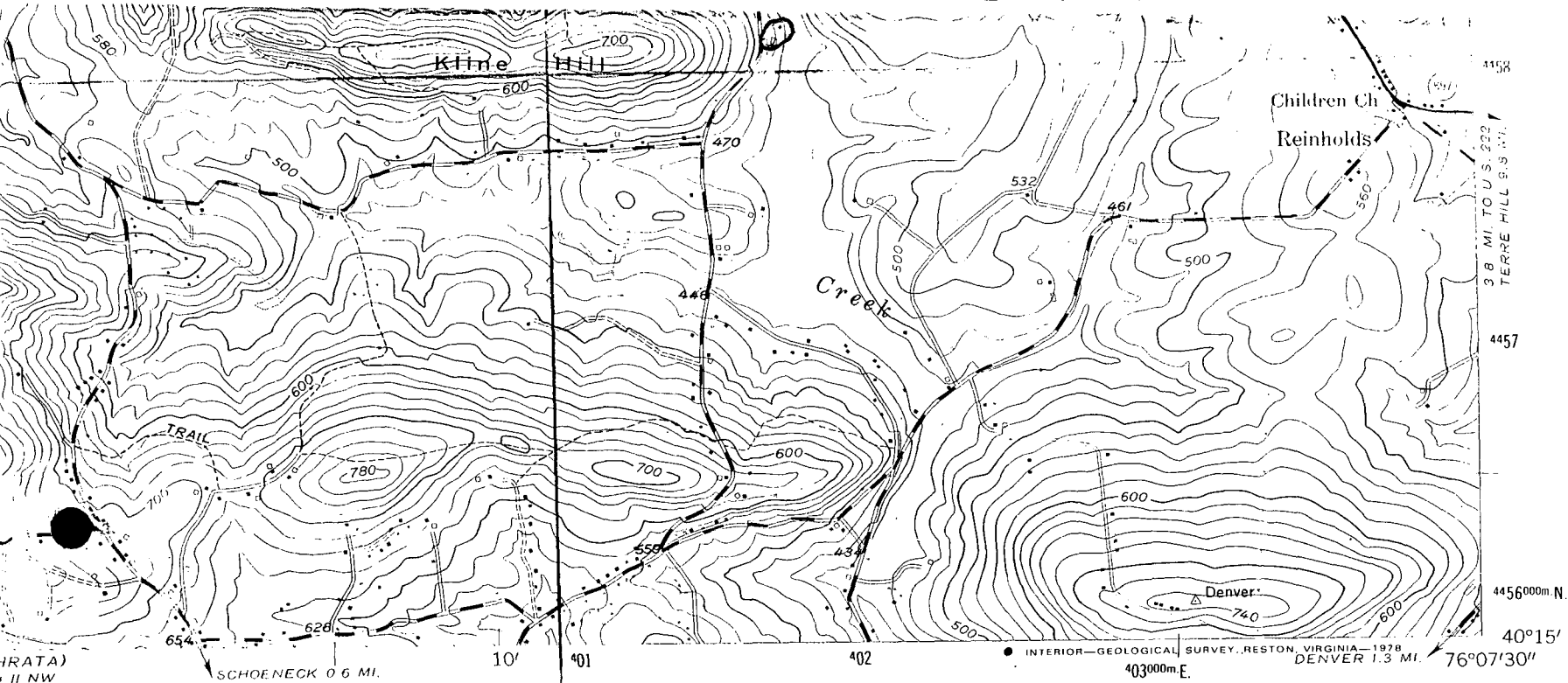
Pennsylvania Archives, Series 6, vol. 6, p. 198 and p. 259; pastoral records of Rev. John Waldschmidt.

Report of the Fourth Burkholder Reunion, privately printed, 1931; p. 17.

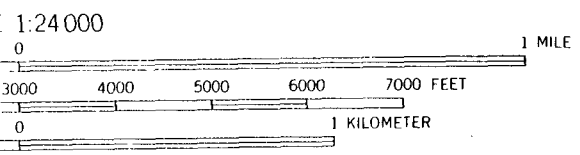
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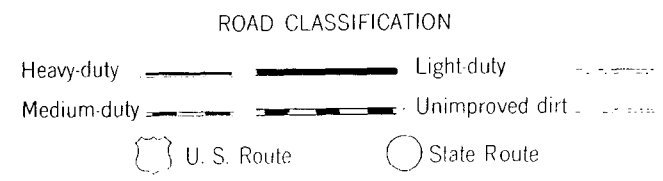
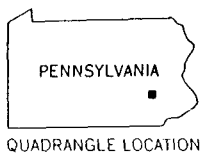


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3.1 MI TO U.S. 222



INTERVAL 20 FEET  
VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
A LIST OF MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



WOMELSDORF, PA.

N 4015 — W 7607.5/7.5

1955  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY THE U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
AMS 5764 I SW—SERIES V831

4458  
3.8 MI. TO U.S. 222  
TERRE HILL S.S. NW  
4457  
4456000m N.  
40°15'  
76°07'30"

(TERRE HILL)  
5764-11 NE