

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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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 Malvern Hall

and/or common Malvern Hall

2. Location

USE THIS COPY  
FOR DUPLICATION

street & number 6655 McCallum Street

not for publication

city, town Philadelphia vicinity of

state Pennsylvania code 42 county Philadelphia code 101

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Malvern Hall Partners

street & number 320 King of Prussia Road

city, town King of Prussia vicinity of state PA 19087

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Philadelphia City Hall

street & number Broad and Market Streets

city, town Philadelphia state Pennsylvania

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Philadelphia Register of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date Feb. 19, 1980  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Philadelphia Historical Commission, 1313 City Hall Annex

city, town Philadelphia state Pennsylvania

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>1974</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

## Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Malvern Hall is located in Philadelphia's suburban West Mount Airy section, close to Lincoln Drive, a tree shaded avenue which winds and climbs through the rolling terrain which is closely associated in Mount Airy and Germantown with the northernmost section of the city's famed Fairmount Park. Set back on terraced grounds which accentuate its prominence above McCallum Street and Lincoln Drive, Malvern Hall relates to a one acre plus property which is bounded on the north by the Chestnut Hill line of the Pennsylvania Railroad and on the east by a nine story apartment house. On the south, the property extends 200 feet along McCallum Street; on the west it abuts the residential properties which refer to 6701-6705 Lincoln Drive and extend in varying degrees to the railroad right of way. McCallum Street, between Lincoln Drive and Horter Street, is a narrow street which curves and crests just east of the adjacent high rise apartment (Photo 1), then slopes at a lesser grade to end at Horter Street. A turn in a southeastern direction one block leads to Upsal Street and Upsal Station (Pennsylvania Railroad).

Across Lincoln Drive, streets curving about the hillsides relate to the handsome residential neighborhoods which were built-up before and after the turn of the century when land, largely owned by Edward T. Stotesbury and his associates, was subdivided for middle class suburban development.<sup>1</sup> The wooded glens of Fairmount Park's Wissahickon and Cresheim Valleys are about five or seven blocks from the corner of McCallum Street and Lincoln Drive.

The Malvern Hall property is composed of two buildings: (1) a four story brick, stone, and steel apartment unit, H-shaped in plan (Photo 2), and (2) a one story stone and cast concrete garage unit, rectangular in Plan (Figure 1). The latter is lit by glass block windows and centrally set skylights (Photo 3). Set at the rear of the 200 foot wide lot in line with the railroad right of way, the garage is approached by a narrow drive which follows the east property line (see Photo 2). Egress is allowed by a similar west-side drive which relies on retaining wall construction for ballast (see Photo 1).

The apartment unit, while necessarily H-shaped in plan to provide proper ventilation and light to all housing units, emphasizes the extended arms of its south section and thus reads from the street as a U-shaped building (see Photos 1 and 4). The front facade depends upon a two-stage terrace which requires a double flight of cast-stone steps to rise from the sidewalk to a paved terrace which then directs circulation to either of a pair of similar flights which rise to the formal courtyard (Photo 5). The south terminal of the courtyard is defined by a bold cast stone ballustrade which surmounts a retaining wall; concrete walks lead from either side of this architectural edge to the apartment entrances at the rear of the court. Both the first stage of the terrace and the courtyard entrance feature light standards which were stock items of the era, executed in iron; these are composed of freely interpreted classical columns with foliated bases and each unit is mounted on a cast-stone pylon. Light standards also are incorporated into the centerpiece of the deep entrance court (see Photos 4 and 5); cast iron light standards are also featured as corner elements in a cast-stone reflecting pool, centered by a fountain (Photo 5) which originally depicted three putti bearing a mollusk shell.<sup>2</sup> Continuing the Baroque scheme suggested by the pool element, the apartment building is deliberately planned as a series of seven facades, placed in a hierarchical arrangement which emulates late seventeenth century English palace design. The pavilioned principal courtyard facade is set up at the terminus of the axis of the reflecting pool; two pavilioned secondary facades, approximately equal in size to the main facade, attend to the flanking corners of the courtyard; and the south walls determine the street-side

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facades. Other principal features include two tertiary facades referring to the inverted corner spaces which connect the others. Overall, this courtyard complex is faced in buff-toned, textured brick set on a paneled foundation faced in cast stone which simulates tooled limestone. The overall design, which clearly integrates the courtyard landscape with the walls of the building, also relies on this "tooled" cast stone to define significant horizontals and verticals and other decorative embellishment.

Significantly, the principal courtyard facade does not provide entrance to the building; it serves rather to reinforce the architectural intent of the plan, that is, to create a posh, private environment and to provide, by means of high-placed ornament, a visible public image to the distant street (Photo 1). The entrances are located, in the manner of French courtyard housing, in the recessed corners where ornament is concentrated at pedestrian level.

The principal courtyard facade breaks forward from the inset areas, allowing cast stone quoins to define its projecting corners. Minus doorways, its fenestration is dominated by paired banks of triple double hung windows articulated in cast stone surrounds and paneled spandrels which seem vaguely reminiscent of the stone mullioned counterparts of Tudor and Stuart England. Iron balconies masque the upper spandrels and emphasize the third floor elements; a stringcourse placed in line with the fourth floor sill level balances the vertical effect of the windows and provides visual limits for the robustly embellished curved pediment which affects the uppermost architectural finish (see Photo 5).

The decorative treatment of the pediment is surmounted by a geometric finial, visually supported by a garland-draped bull's head that breaks through the pediment. Below the bull, concentric foliated wreaths surround the Malvern Hall monogram that bears a not unintentional resemblance to the alpha and omega. Opposing fantastic griffins and lanterns finish off the composition 3 (see Photo 5).

The secondary pavilions refer to wings which reach toward the street; while the ornamental devices here repeat the intention of the main facades, the cartouches on the flanking walls neither violate the cornice line nor make use of more than a simple, foliated composition, centered by a rondel (see Photo 1). The wings take advantage of their streetside south walls, however, to articulate the first floor fenestration with end-placed, blind-arched windows and axial triple elements (see Photos 1 and 2). The outer flanks of these wings are walls similar to the front and side; i.e., they are faced in textured brick with cast stone foundations. The rear flankers, conforming in part to these wings and to the corner pavilions as well, are treated in yellow brick set on a rubble schist foundation. At the rear, "grade" is approximately four feet above driveway level and is contained by schist retaining walls and by the south wall of the garage.

In the courtyard, the inserted corner facades are accorded a lesser place in the architectural hierarchy; they balance their tertiary position by serving as the only public access ways to each of the two halves of the complex. Each entrance exhibits a portico which is segmentally arched in plan so that in elevation it connects the angles of the building and provides a protected entry to a vestibule and inner lobby. These brick-paved portals feature columns of Doric inspiration and appropriate plinths, again

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executed in cast stone. Iron railings define the curved outer edge of the deck (Photo 6).

In each entrance, double-leaf doors glazed with beveled glass lead from the portico to a triangular vestibule space from which similar double-leaf doors, flanked by beveled glass "French-door" partitions, provide entry to an intimately scaled lobby area. The east lobby evidences a significant amount of surviving original material and here the necessary conservation work, limited to paint color, was based on a definitive paint seriation analysis accomplished in the fall of 1982.<sup>4</sup>

In the lobby, all surfaces are embellished with decoration or decorative materials, providing the only significant architectural features for the interior of Malvern Hall. The floors and high wainscot are marble; the walls above the wainscot are stone color, marbled, and scored to resemble ashlar. Executed in plaster, the ceiling design is based on the relationship of concentric ovals as they each in turn refer to the four corners of the space. The outer oval refers to the rondels which infill the cornices, providing a transition to the free classical forms employed in the entablature. The inner oval concentrates on a spider-web medallion which is embellished externally with beaded swags and marked in the square with lesser rondels. The design is polychromed in shades of yellow and brown. An inverted dome, veiled with crystal prisms and suspended from the center of the spider web, refers to the principal source of artificial light for this public space; sconces on the east and west walls supplement this feature (Photo 7).

The lobby is a self-contained space only indirectly relating to the horizontal and vertical circulation which emanate from the space. An elevator is concealed behind mirrored doors on the north wall; other double doors lead to a transitional passage which provides access both to a stair tower and to the spinal corridor which provides access to the various housing units. The basic plan (Figure 2) is repeated on all floors and duplicated in reverse arrangement in the west-side section.

While interior renovation is currently underway, one housing unit has been completed. Here, the original textured and scored finish of the walls is evident (Photo 8). In the housing unit relating to the northeast corner, construction reveals that the original baseboards and crown molds have been carefully removed, to be re-set when retrofitting is complete; otherwise, original trim survives and includes all doors and windows (Photo 9). (See Item 8, page 2, for Notes to this section).

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

Specific dates 1925

Builder/Architect Henry Beckerman/Ballinger & Co.

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Malvern Hall is a significant expression of popular architecture as it applies to Philadelphia's multiple family housing development within the city-limit suburbs in the 1920s. Designed by Ballinger & Company, successors in 1921 to Ballinger and Perot, pioneers in industrial housing during World War I,<sup>5</sup> Malvern Hall emphasizes the continued interest of the firm in the residential applications of institutional design. (At the time it was built, Ballinger and Company were responsible as well for the designs of two hospitals in adjoining counties<sup>6</sup> and the firm has long maintained a reputation for excellence in commercial and institutional architecture). The terraced, low-rise apartment house, enhanced by its private courtyard, also evokes a sense of the exclusive, a characteristic of multi-dwelling units in the northwest suburbs of Philadelphia. In so doing, it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the particular low-rise apartment type which features an open-end, landscaped courtyard.

Malvern Hall is one of the city's earliest examples of such a type; by a matter of a few months, it is the earliest to have been built in the Lincoln Drive neighborhood. It is, in fact, only the second apartment to have been constructed in the immediate neighborhood from 1911 to 1926.<sup>7</sup> As precursor to a new wave of housing history in the northwest, it is striking but conservative in scale and design vocabulary.

Philadelphia is a city with a conservative history of housing and a long-time prejudice against anything other than single-unit family housing. By the 1920s, however, the city's populace had accepted the apartment house as a necessary, convenient, and often elitist form of urban housing; by the mid-1920s people had also accepted the apartment house, either in its high-rise or its low-rise courtyard form as a reasonable housing option for the suburbs. In 1925 and 1926, Builders Guide records at least ten apartment houses being planned or built in the area; twenty-five Philadelphia architectural offices were working on apartment houses in the city and its suburbs.

In relation to the environs of Lincoln Drive, the same romantic topography which had lent itself to random single-family residential development in the 1880s proved also to be well suited for planned complexes catering to middle class tenant housing. In answer to the need for denser development, apartment plans took two forms: they made use of the few attractively wooded lots or corner lots which had remained vacant, or emphasized redevelopment of older estate properties.

Some estates of more than an acre were sacrificed or their space renovated to accommodate new multi-dwelling housing. Less than a mile from Malvern Hall, for example, Alden Park Manor (National Register) was built on the former Justus Strawbridge estate, providing the lower Lincoln Drive area with what is now considered to be the country's first high-rise apartment complex planned around open park lands in the manner advocated by Le Corbussier.<sup>8</sup> Significantly, a few months prior to Alden Park's construction, Malvern Hall replaced Charles M. Trump's commodious home on the prominent lot on McCallum Street.<sup>9</sup> Admittedly, Malvern Hall relates to a more restricted setting than

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the noted Alden Park, but it was Malvern Hall which quietly initiated the redevelopment process and provided a model for a system of housing which others could match or improve upon.

Malvern Hall is set in a neighborhood dominated by comfortably scaled Queen Anne and Colonial Revival single houses which, in the best examples, epitomize the stylistics of the Arts and Crafts aesthetic. Relative to this environment, Malvern Hall afforded its tenants not only the suburban life in a neighborhood rich with traditional styles, it also offered a share of a rich architectural treatment which was affordably realized and comfortably traditional. By adopting the style of a late seventeenth century English nobility and then making use of mass produced materials, the architect offered the tenants of Malvern Hall amenities that imitated the well-born carved stone detailing; classically ordered stone porches, reflecting pools, and terraced gardens.<sup>10</sup> In this sense, Malvern Hall--one of the earliest of the several apartments which aped English precedent in both elevation and name--implies both the social and economic ambitions of Philadelphia's middle class in the prosperous years which preceded the Great Depression.

NOTES

1. George Bromley & Co. (1911), plate 20.
2. A comparable fountain has been recorded in Ardmore. John Milner Associates, Inc. (1982), photo 15. Credit for this location goes to Felber Studios, Ardmore, Pennsylvania.
3. Carl Doebly (1980), section 7.
4. John Milner Associates, Inc. (1982), parts 1 and 3 of 3.
5. Sandra Tatman, April 20, 1983. The Philadelphia Athenaeum holds a major portion of early Ballinger records. For Malvern Hall, four "as built" photos are on record.
6. Builders' Guide, 1925, 1926. This journal limited its specific references to Delaware County Hospital and a hospital in Quakertown.
7. Bromley (1911), plate 20.
8. Richard Webster (1976), page 255.
9. Bromley (1923), plate 20.
10. Doebly (1980), section 8.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1.3 acres

Quadrangle name Germantown

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A 

1	8	4	8	3	6	3	1	4	4	3	2	6	4	1	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** The property begins on the NE side of McCallum St., 94' 3-3/8" SE from Lincoln Drive, then extends N 70 degrees 54' 11" E 319' 7-3/8", then extends S 4 degrees 50' 55" E 201' 5-1/8", then extends S 70 degrees 54' 11" W 232' 6-1/4", then NW 200' to point of origin.

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

state WA code WA county WA code WA

state WA code WA county WA code WA

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Alice Kent Schooler, Principal Architectural Historian

organization John Milner Associates, Inc. date April 22, 1983

street & number 309 North Matlack Street telephone (215) 436-9000

city or town West Chester state PA 19380

# 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 Larry E. Tise, State Historic Preservation Officer date

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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Brey, Cynthia and Doebly, Carl. "Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey Form: Malvern Hall," May 14, 1982.

Bromley, George and Bromley, Walter. Atlas of the City of Philadelphia: 22nd Ward. Philadelphia: G. W. Bromley & Co., 1911, plate 20.

\_\_\_\_\_. Atlas of the City of Philadelphia: 22nd Ward. Philadelphia: G. W. Bromley & Co., 1923, plate 20.

Doebly, Carl. "National Register of Historic Places Inventory, Nomination Form, Malvern Hall," March, 1980.

John Milner Associates, Inc. "Historic Preservation Certification Application, Part 2," October 29, 1982.

Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders Guide, microfilm reels. 1925-October 1926 and October 1926-1928, on file, Free Library of Philadelphia.

Tatman, Sandra. Telephone communication, April 20, 1983.

Webster, Richard. Philadelphia Preserved. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976, p. 255.



# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

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Acreeage of nominated property 1.3 acres

Quadrangle name Germantown

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A	<u>18</u>	<u>483631</u>	<u>44326410</u>
Zone	Easting	Northing	
C			
E			
G			

B			
Zone	Easting	Northing	
D			
F			
H			

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

state	<u>PA</u>	code	<u>PA</u>	county	<u>PA</u>	code	<u>181A</u>
state		code		county		code	

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State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Larry E. Tise*

title Larry E. Tise, State Historic Preservation Officer date 7/18/83

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

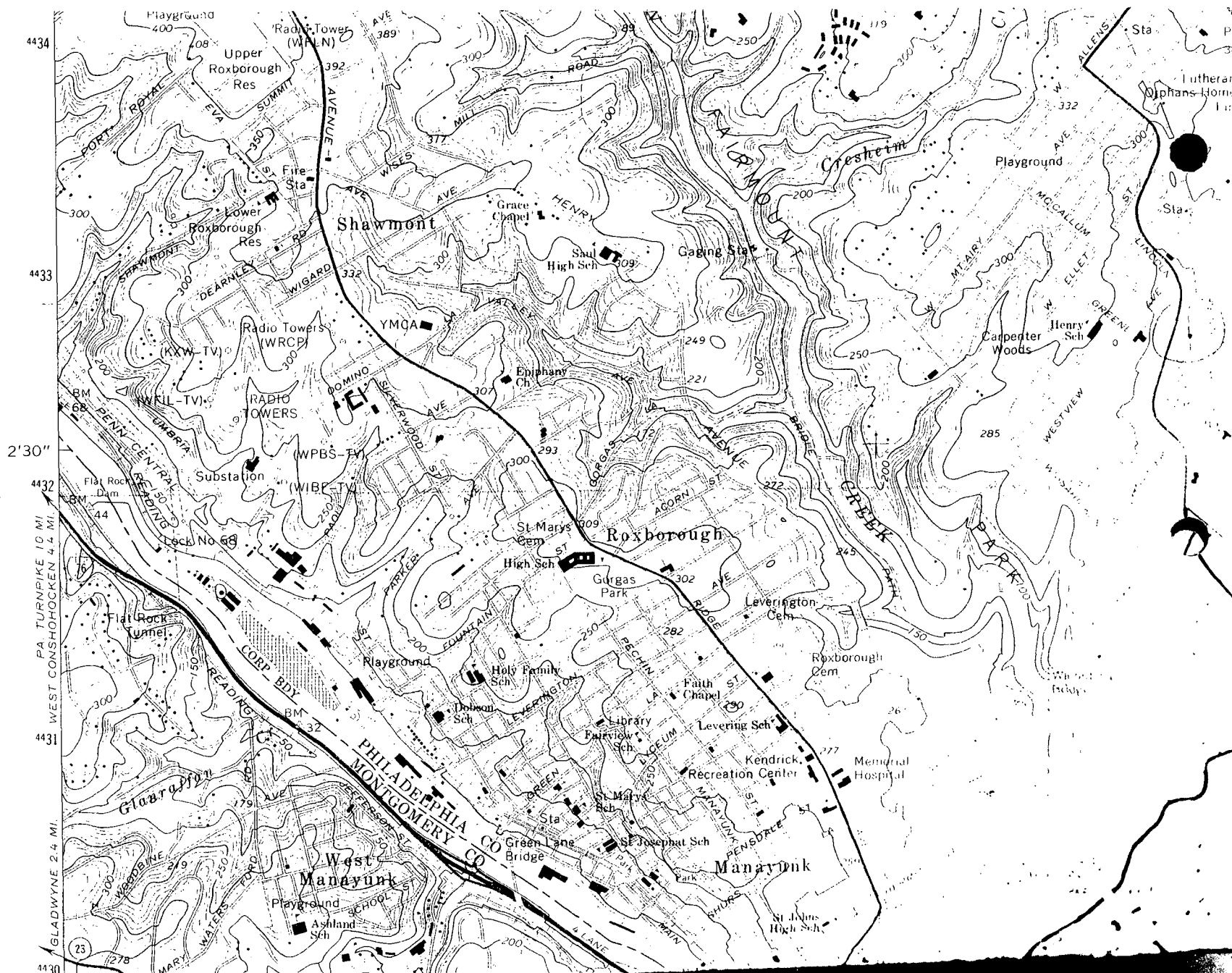
date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



4434  
4433  
2'30"  
4432  
4431  
4430

PA TURNPIKE 10 MI  
WEST CONSHOHOCKEN 4.4 MI  
GLADWYNE 2.4 MI

Shawmont

Roxborough

West Manayunk

Manayunk

PHILADELPHIA CO  
MONTGOMERY CO