

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY FORM
 OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION Box 1026
 PA HISTORICAL & MUSEUM COMMISSION Harrisburg, PA 17120

7. Local survey organization
 West Whiteland Historical Commission

8. property owners name and address

Ship Inn, Inc.
 100 North Ship Road
 Exton PA 19341

9. tax parcel number / other number
 41-5-75

10. U.T.M. zone easting
 18 4 4 7 8 9 10

11. status (other surveys, lists etc.)
 CCHSS

MAP#1 4 4 3 1 1 0 2 0
 northing

usgs sheet: Malvern 1.1581A

12. classification
 site () structure () object ()
 building (x)
 in N.R. district yes () no ()

13. date(s) (how determined)
 1796

15. style, design or folk type
 Georgian/Federal
 Transitional

19. original use
 Commercial

20. present use
 Commercial

16. architect or engineer

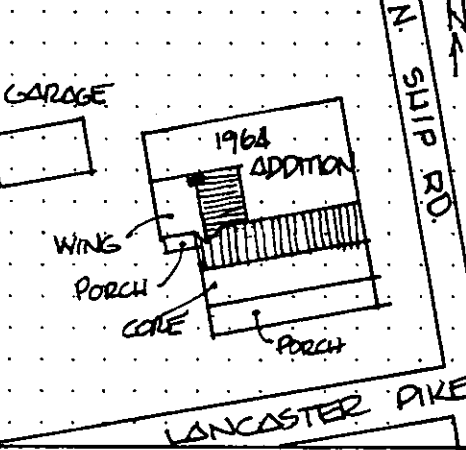
17. contractor or builder
 John Bowen

18. primary building mat./construction
 Stone

21. condition
 Above average

22. integrity
 Above average

23. site plan with north arrow



24. photo notation

PG: John Ronayne
 PV: South elevation
 PD: 11/1981

25. file/location
 CCHS, WWHC #09-72 #8

26. brief description (note unusual features, integrity, etc.)

The Ship Inn was constructed in 1796 in response to the completion of the Lancaster Turnpike in 1794. It was built specifically as an inn incorporating the most up-to-date and elegant features available at the time. Despite years of hard use and thousands of visitors, the Ship Inn is admirably preserved and a useful example of late 18th century commercial architecture. Built when the distinction between residential and commercial architecture was barely apparent, the design of the Ship Inn is thoroughly rooted in late Georgian traditions. It is 50'x37', two stories, stone with a plain gable roof and brick chimneys set flush with the gable ends. The kitchen was located in a separate wing which in 1798 measured 20'x19' but has since been slightly enlarged to 29'x20'. Presenting its best face to the Turnpike immediately south, its six bay facade features two asymmetrically

(continue on back if necessary)

27. history, significance and/or background

Transportation

In 1796 John Bowen, a very experienced innkeeper, opened a tavern on the new Philadelphia and Lancaster Turnpike. Although John Bowen had the tavern and its out-buildings built specifically to serve the travellers and stages on this new road, he used the sign and name of an old inn that had ceased operation in 1792 in Downingtown. The sign which John Bowen hung

(continue on back if necessary)

28. sources of information

CCHS: West Whiteland Twp. Clipping File-Business Houses, L. Carstairs Pierce Collection, Tavern Papers, Reid Title Search, VR10-31-1843, 11-30-1825, ARL-19-1847, 11-11-1856

(continue on back if necessary)

29. prepared by:

M.L. Wolf BC
 L. Goldstein WWHC

30. date
 12/1981

revision(s)

1. County Chester
 5. present name The Ship Inn

2. municipality West Whiteland Twp.
 6. other name (historic name if any) The Ship Inn

3. street address or specific location
 100 North Ship Road

4. survey code 029-09-41-311

#26 cont.

arranged entrances. The eastern door opens into a handsome entrance passage. A rectangular arch frames the hall and marks the distinction between the reception hall and the wider stairway area at the rear. This arch features outstanding Chester County punch and groove work in a simplified garland motif. The open string staircase ascends four flights to the attic and shows a gracefully curved hand and wall rail. The four rooms which open off the passage are each served by fireplaces. Of these, it is the southeast room which is the most formally decorated, primarily by the floor to ceiling mantle treatment. The fireplace surround uses pilasters, fluting, and punch and groove work similar to that in the hall. Above the mantle is a Georgian-style "tabernacle frame." The western door opens into the southwest room which, despite its attractive punched and groove mantle, appears less formal than the room to the right. Paneled window reveals and chairrail are used throughout the first floor. The second floor hall contains a decorated arch nearly identical to that in the passage below. Although the rooms are generally less richly trimmed on this level, there is some use of the punch and groove work in the mantles as noted previously.

The stone kitchen which was originally one and a half stories was enlarged and the roof raised. A winding back stairway leads to the second floor and attic where evidence of the roof alteration is clear. The pegged rafters, absence of a ridgepole, and other details indicate the rebuilding occurred in the mid-19th century. On the first floor of the kitchen wing is a cooking fireplace and bake oven on the north gable end which are supported by double stone arches visible in the basement.

#27 cont.

outside his new tavern had been shot, according to legend, thirteen times during the Revolution by patriotic Continentals because its owner was a Tory. Of the many fashionable inns which once lined the Lancaster Turnpike, the Ship ranks as one of the best preserved and most thoroughly documented.

Commerce

The new Ship Tavern served the public for over 50 years. John Bowen ran the tavern until 1815 when his son Holland took over as proprietor. Holland Bowen inherited the tavern after his father's death in 1818 and ran it until his own death in 1823. The operation was leased while Holland's estate was being settled, and in 1826 Levi Evans - who had married Susanna, the widow of John Bowen, Jr. - purchased the tavern and associated farm. Susanna inherited the property upon Levi's death in 1837 and kept it in operation until 1854. The Ship Tavern served as a focal point for the eastern part of West Whiteland as well as a stop for the Turnpike traveller. Many local auctions were conducted there. On February 22, 1821, Holland Bowen hosted a lavish Birth Night Ball honoring George Washington. It was the regular meeting place of the Lafayette Rangers (part of the 143rd Regiment of the Pennsylvania Militia) and the Hickory Club, which supported Andrew Jackson. It also was the residence of Dr. David D. King in 1834.

It became a private residence for many years and was reopened as a restaurant nearly 100 years after its closing, continuing as such today.

Architecture

As noted previously, the Ship Inn is a well preserved example of late Georgian architecture. It is of particular interest due to its construction as a commercial building. Although West Whiteland was a rural, conservative township, the architecture of the Ship Inn reflects a knowledge and taste for urban style, largely derived from its location on the heavily travelled Lancaster Turnpike.

EVALUATOR(S)

West Whiteland Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania
Multiple Resource Nomination

Survey Code 029-09-41-311 Page 3
The Ship Inn Map #1

Summary Statement of Significance:

The Ship Inn is eligible for listing under criterion C as a well preserved example of a commercial building that incorporates Georgian and Federal design elements and demonstrates the transition between the two periods. It is also eligible under criterion A for its association with the Lancaster Turnpike. While not built as part of the Turnpike, it was erected to serve turnpike travellers as a tavern and inn just two years after the turnpike was completed. This Inn would not have existed here if it were not for the Turnpike.

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laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, (the

West Whiteland Township,
Chester County, PA
Multiple Resource Nomination
Survey Code 029-09-41-311
The Ship Inn Map #1

Witnesseth. That in consideration of One (\$1.00)

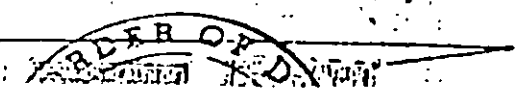
in hand paid, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, the said Grant
Grantee, its successors _____ and assigns, _____

ALL THAT CERTAIN piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and
improvements thereon erected, situate in the Township of West Whiteland,
County of Chester and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, known as "Ship Inn",
bounded and described as follows: _____

BEGINNING at an iron pin, said pin being located in the center
line of Old Ship Road two feet (2') northerly from and measured at right
angles to the center line of U. S. Route #30; thence South eighty-nine de-
grees fifty minutes West ($89^{\circ} 50'$) one hundred fifteen and five hundredths
feet (115.05') to a point; thence North eighty-seven degrees thirty-six min-
utes West (N. $87^{\circ} 36'$ W.) one hundred thirty-five (135) feet to a point;
thence at right angles to the last described course and bounded westerly by
other lands now or formerly of the Atlantic Refining Company, a distance of
two hundred twenty-one (221) feet to a point; thence northeasterly on a line
at right angles to the above mentioned center line of Old Ship Road and
bounded northerly by land now or formerly of the Atlantic Refining Company,
a distance of one hundred fifty-three (153) feet, more or less, to a point
in the aforementioned center line of Old Ship Road; thence along the center
line of Old Ship Road, South nineteen degrees forty-five minutes East (S. 19°
 $45'$ E.) a distance of two hundred ninety-four (294) feet to the point and
place of beginning. _____

CONTAINING 1.1581 acres of land, more or less. _____

BEING the same premises which Walter W. Eshleman and Helen B.
Eshleman, his wife, by Deed dated September 28, 1956, and recorded in the
Office of the Recorder of Deeds in and for Chester County, Pennsylvania, in
Deed Book B-28, Vol. 674, Page 693, granted and conveyed unto Walter W. Eshle-
man and Helen B. Eshleman, his wife, and the said Walter W. Eshleman died on
June 21, 1968, wherein the whole above premises vested in the survivor, Helen
B. Eshleman, the grantor herein, in fee. _____



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

West Whiteland Township, Chester County, PA MRA

Continuation sheet

Item number

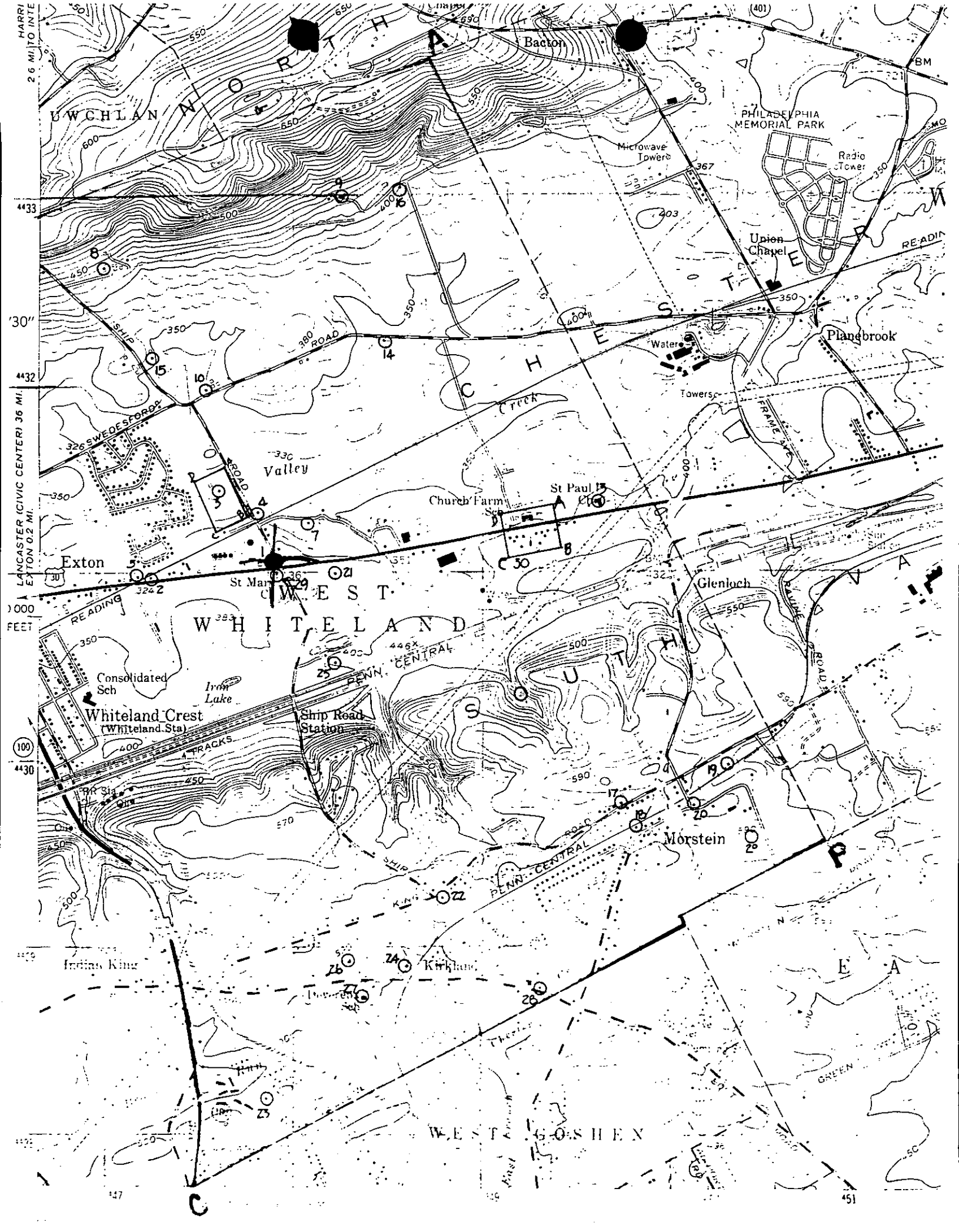
Page

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Survey Code 029-09-41-311
The Ship Inn

Page 4
Map #1

The nominated acreage consists of all land presently associated with the Ship Inn and includes a modern, 1 story, fieldstone, multi-car garage which does not contribute to the overall significance of the resource.



2.6 MI. TO INTERTOWN
LANCASTER (CIVIC CENTER) 3.6 MI.
EXTON 0.2 MI.
1000 FEET
4433
30"
4432
4430

HARRISBURG
BACTOR
PHILADELPHIA MEMORIAL PARK
MICROWAVE TOWERS
RADIO TOWER
UNION CHAPEL
PLANEBROOK
WATER TOWERS
CHURCH FARM
ST. PAUL
ST. MARY
EXTON
WHITELAND CREST (WHITE LAND STA.)
SHIP ROAD STATION
MORSTEIN
KIRKLAND
INDIAN KING
WEST GOSHEN
GREEN

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