

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

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

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

1. Name

historic Hampden Firehouse

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 1101 Greenwich Street

___ not for publication

city, town Reading ___ vicinity of congressional district 6th

state Pennsylvania code 42 county Berks code

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" 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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name City of Reading

street & number City Hall, 8th and Washington Streets

city, town Reading ___ vicinity of state Pennsylvania

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Berks County Courthouse

street & number 33 North 6th Street

city, town Reading state Pennsylvania

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Adaptive Reuse Feasibility Study has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes no

date July, 1979 ___ federal ___ state ___ county local

depository for survey records Bureau for Historic Preservation

city, town Harrisburg state Pennsylvania 17120

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Hampden Firehouse is located at the northeast corner of Eleventh and Greenwich Streets, on the western slope of Mount Penn in northeast Reading. The structure was built in 1887, and is in the Renaissance Revival style with a Greek Revival influence in the roof design. It is two stories high, with a brick facade (now painted light grey) and a double pedimented roof. The foundation is made of rusticated granite blocks.

The eastern portion of the southern facade is the major focus. It projects slightly forward from the rest of the facade. The first story contains the engine door, over which are four tall round-arched windows on the second story. This section is surmounted by a pediment containing a lunette window. The western portion of the facade contains the main pedestrian entrance, with brownstone steps leading up to it, and a round-arched window, directly over which are two round-arched windows in scale with the other second-story windows.

On the western facade, the pedimented southern portion projects a bit, much like on the southern facade. This section contains four round-arched windows on the first story and four on the second. The remainder of the facade contains an entrance with a brownstone stoop on the first floor and a window on the second. A lower two-story brick horse stable, also with a pediment roof, is connected to a portion of the northern end of the firehouse, having on its western facade a door and two windows on the first story, and two windows on the second. The northern facade of the firehouse contains a door which now has a cement stoop, but once had a wooden porch which extended the length of the western facade of the stable. There is a small wooden bay projecting from the corner formed by the western facade of the stable and the northern facade of the firehouse. The stable's northern facade is the pedimented end, and has a large window on the first story and two windows on the second. The eastern facade has two arched windows and one arched entrance on the first story. On the second story, the firehouse has three arched windows and the stable has two rectangular windows.

The rustication does not extend to the northern facade or around the stable. Brick quoins establish the edges of the facade surfaces on the firehouse. There is a stone belt course across the western and southern facades of the firehouse at the level of the second-story window sills, and brick belt courses at the levels of the bases of the window arches on the first and second stories. A course of ornamental brick runs beneath the cornice. There are arches of molded ornamental brick over all the windows and entrances of these two facades. The wooden cornice has large

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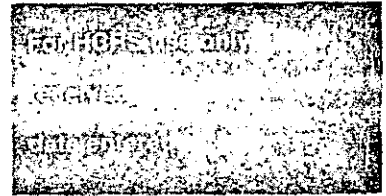
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Hampden Firehouse

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Renaissance-Revival brackets, and on the southern facade there is a rosette between each bracket. The raked cornice on the southern pediment features modillions while those of the other pediments do not. The cornice of the stable has smaller brackets, and the stable's windows lack the molded-brick arches.

The only changes in the structure since its construction are: the engine doorway, which was installed in replacement of a pair of tall round-arched engine doors; the blocking-in of the arched portion of all the windows with recessed wood; the addition of the wooden bay; the removal of the wooden porch; and the installation of additional windows in the stable.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 1887

Builder/Architect Levi Focht/Edwin F. Durang

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Hampden Firehouse, constructed in 1887, is one of the few remaining structures in Reading designed by the noted Philadelphia architect Edwin F. Durang, the most famous architect who contributed to the City's architecture during the 1870-1890 period (the other two known Durang structures in Reading are the South Reading Market House, constructed in 1871, and St. Paul's Memorial Reformed completed in 1874). All three of these buildings are major architectural and historical landmarks in Reading, and they had an immediate and noticable influence on the inventiveness of design and the construction technology of Reading's public architecture. In addition, the "Hampden" is one of only four remaining old firehouses in Reading which are worthy of preservation.

The design is a daring and elegant blending of styles, well suited to the functions of the firehouse as garage, civic meeting hall and clubhouse, as well as to its two-sided orientation: a blending of classicism, Renaissance detail and mid-Victorian taste. The essential design is that of an L-shaped composite of two Greek-Revival pediment-roofed structures. The addition of the flat-roofed northwest corner renders an overall plan that is square, yet is asymmetrical in facade design. The combined pediment-roofed structures are clearly delineated on the facades by the brick quoins, the heavily-corniced pediments and the varying window and entrance patterns. The main cornice and the belt courses give the whole an increased sense of unity as well as decorative appeal.

As a landmark, the firehouse is the predominant focus of its residential neighborhood. Its two-story height relates it to the adjoining streetscapes, yet the width of its facades, its imposing design, and its location at an intersection make it stand out. As architecture, the structure's Greek-Revival background commands special attention, while its Italianate trim relates it to the residential taste of the neighborhood. It is an indispensable part of the streetscape.

The Hampden Fire Company was organized on September 7, 1867, provoked by the need for another company in the rapidly-expanding City. Northeast Reading had grown too far from the nearest firehouse, and the steep grades on this lower slope of Mt. Penn made much of the area difficult to reach. The first firehouse was constructed on the southwestern corner of Eleventh and Greenwich Streets. By the early 1880's, this firehouse had become insuf-

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ficient for the needs of the company, and plans for renovations to the original firehouse were drawn up. These plans were rejected in 1883 as being too costly. In 1885, under the direction of a committee of Hampden firemen, Edwin Durang was commissioned to design a new firehouse. A site was purchased on the northeastern corner of the same intersection. Construction costs were paid by the City with money made from the sale of the old lot and buildings. The prolific local contractor, Levi Focht, completed the firehouse in 1887. It became the property of the City on November 7, 1887, the fire company being part of the City's fire department.

The Hampden Company was renowned for its effectiveness in protecting Northeast Reading and the adjoining forest on Mount Penn. This company organized the first lifesaving corps in the City, stemming from an 1899 fire at the nearby Nolde-Horst Knitting Mills which resulted in the loss of over 50 lives. The "Hampden's" first president, Sydenham E. Ancona, served in the post for 45 years, and established a tradition of community service for which the company was much praised. Ancona was instrumental in encouraging the foundation of other local fire companies, and he also organized the Reading Fireman's Union, which was designed to diminish the fierce rivalries between companies and establish a better working cooperation.

The fire companies ranked second only to the churches in their importance to Reading's social life. The Hampden's members at any given time numbered in the hundreds, many of whom lived in the neighborhood. The company was a popular and respected local institution. The firehouse was in constant use as a meeting hall by many area organizations, and the company organized a year-round calendar of dances, concerts and charitable activities and, like the other fire companies, participated fervently in parades and other civic events. To this day, the "Hampden" has been the center of the social lives of thousands of City residents. This, along with the firehouse's architectural significance, the company's role in safeguarding the development of Northeast Reading, and its heritage and pride as a volunteer organization, makes the Hampden Company an exceptional representative of an institution which in Reading has been of unusually great heritage and meaning to the public.

9. Major Bibliographical Reference

City of Reading, Bureau of Planning
Adaptive Reuse Feasibility Study

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less Than One Acre .14

Quadrangle name Reading, Pa.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 18 422210 4466160
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification Starting at a point on the NE corner of Greenwich & Eleventh moving north along eastside of 11th for 100 ft; the east along southside of alley for 60 ft; then south for 100 ft; then west along northside of Greenwich for 60 ft to starting point.

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

organization City of Reading date July 7, 1981

street & number 8th & Washington Streets telephone 215/373-5111; ext. 326

city or town Reading state Pennsylvania

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Executive Director

title date

For HCRS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

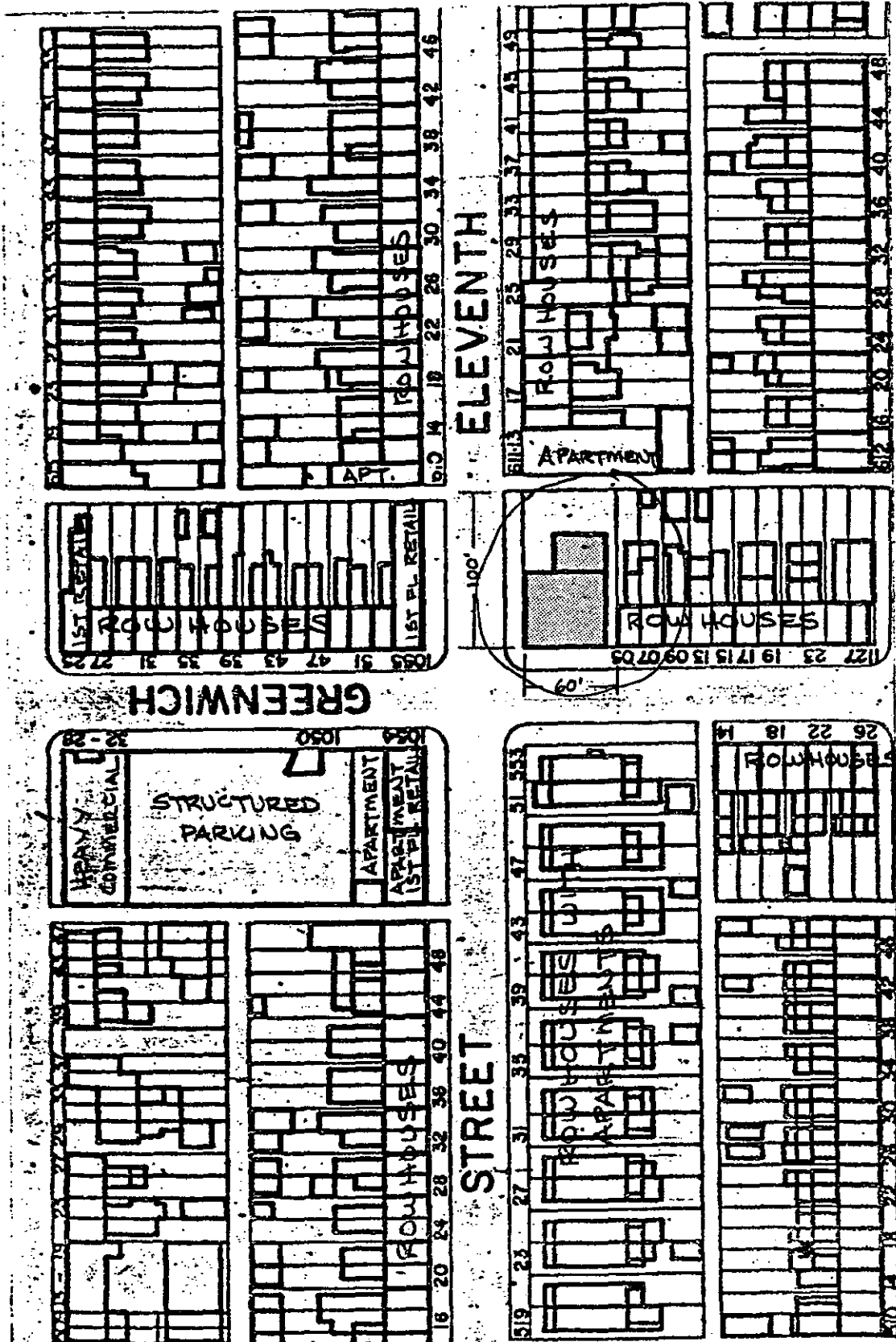
Chief of Registration



SCALE 1" = 100'

HAMPDEN FIREHOUSE
BERKS COUNTY

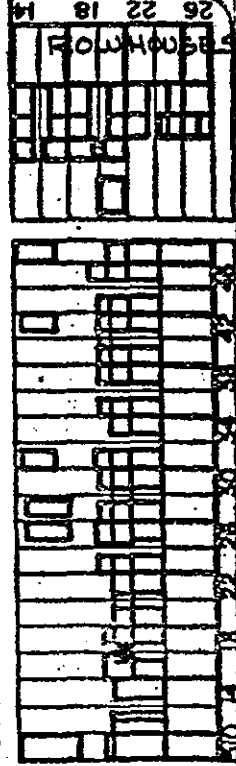
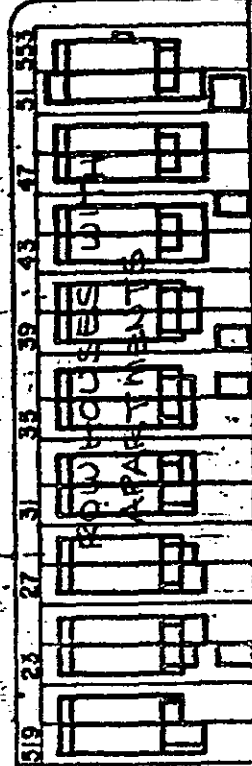
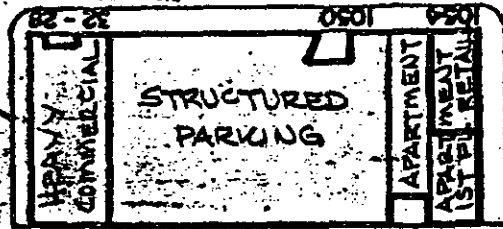
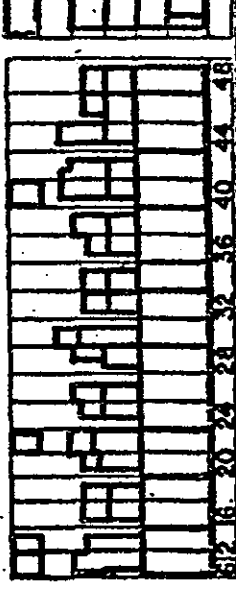
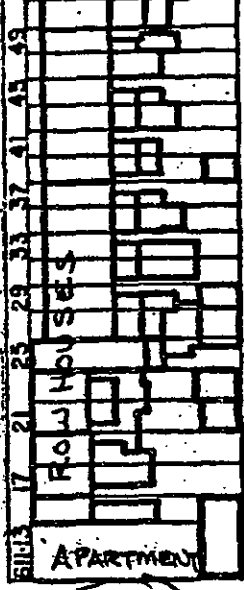
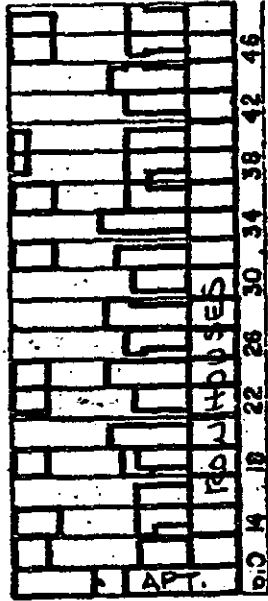
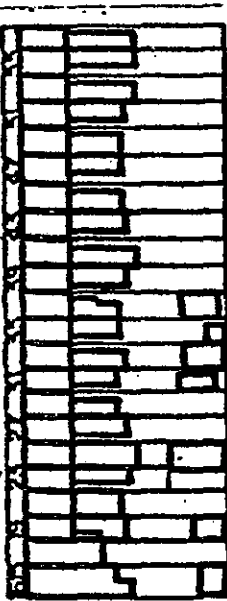
SITE MAP

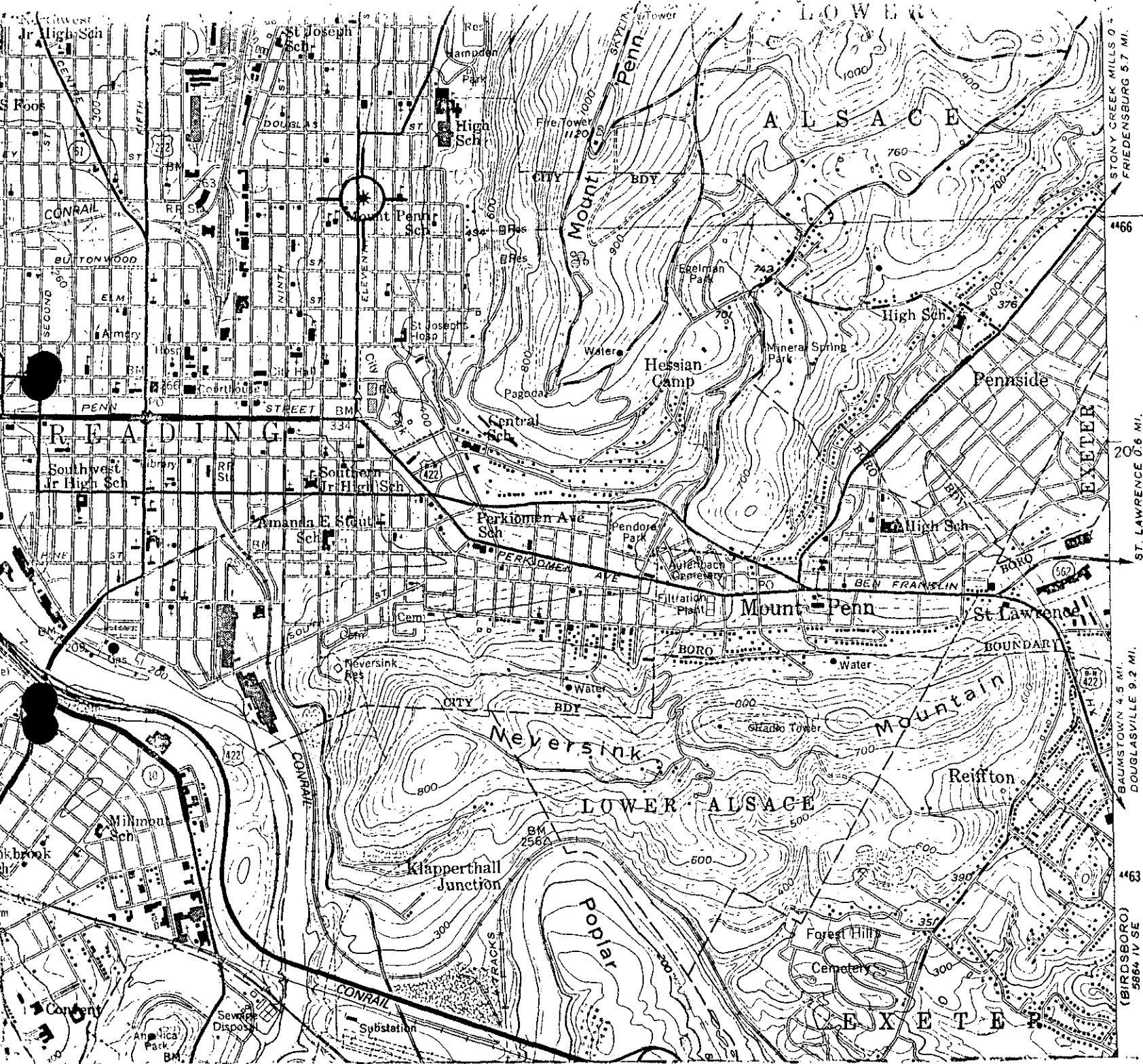


GREENWICHE

ELEVENTH

STREET





Hampden Firehouse
 Berks County
 Zone 18 2422210 N4436160

STONY CREEK MILLS 0.7 MI.
 FRIEDENSBURG 5.7 MI.
 4466
 ST. LAWRENCE 0.6 MI.
 BOYERTOWN 13 MI.
 20
 BAUMSTOWN 4.5 MI.
 DOUGLASVILLE 9.2 MI.
 4463
 (BIRDSBORO)
 5884 IV SE